



## Ellen Sue Jaffe

March 16, 2022

Ellen Jaffe died on March 16th, 2022, a day after her 77th birthday, in Toronto, Ontario. Ellen's passion was writing and she found immense joy in working with others to explore creativity. Three days before her death, a reading of Ellen's poetry was held in her honour, which she received as a gift exemplifying her life's work, and can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nbl1122yYNo>

Ellen was diagnosed with cancer in 2019 and was fierce in making the most of every day she had. Her family is forever appreciative of Dr. Chen and the team at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, whose treatment gave Ellen three years of happiness, as well as the palliative team at Bridgepoint Hospital, who provided her with dignity, comfort, and safety during her final days.

Ellen is survived by her loving partner, Roger Gilbert, who was by her side every day she took on her cancer. Ellen loved and will be missed by Roger's children, Terri, Vance, and Simon, and grandchildren Alexis, Sydney, and Cameron. Ellen was admired and will be remembered by her beloved, her son, Joe Bitz, whose life is a reflection on the outstanding traits Ellen provided as a parent. Ellen had never ending love for Joe's partner Christina, and boys Emilio and Elijah. Ellen was born in New York, NY, and was predeceased by her parents, Dr. Harry and Viola Jaffe. Ellen's memory will be held by her

cousins, Lisette and Paul Jacobs, their children Alexia Palmer (Michael) and Caroline Masters (Jonathan), and grandchildren James and Teddy; and Orville and Stephanie Simon. Too numerous to name, a special acknowledgment to all of Ellen's friends who meant the world to her.

Ellen's legacy will be commemorated by The Ontario Poetry Society with the Ellen S. Jaffe Humanist Award for Poetry, which was an honour she was fortunate enough to be advised of before her death.

Ellen's charities of choice were: Doctors Without Borders, Amnesty International, the Canadian Cancer Society, TVOntario, Tarragon Theatre, Daily Bread Food Bank, the David Suzuki Foundation, and the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Ellen lived a life worth living and even at the end was filled with love. Her family and friends are grateful for having of had her to travel the road.

From Ellen:

When you lose someone you love,  
They return gradually, shyly, to your heart,  
Growing roots, then flowers,  
Cherished, delicate, visible  
Only to you.

Shalom.

# Tribute Wall

BK

“ *Ellen was so many kind things. She supported and participated in the annual Shadow Project in Hamilton. We'll miss her.* ”



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**Bryce Kanbara** - March 31, 2022 at 11:22 AM

CM

“ *I am so sorry to hear of this loss. Ellen and I crossed paths many times as fellow arts facilitators, in the rooms and halls of the Royal Conservatory. I always looked forward to seeing Ellen and hearing about what she was working on. Her skill and talent as a poet and facilitator of words with others was something that always left me in such awe. I'm so thankful I was able to know her. To learn from her. To share with her and eat lunch together at those gatherings from time to time. Sending deep condolences to all of you in her family. I hope you know how respected and admired Ellen was.* ”

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**Catherine Mellinger** - March 29, 2022 at 10:50 PM

KM

“ *My thoughts and prayers to Ellen's family. I had the privilege of meeting Ellen through Shepell/FGI EAP in 2006. I was her manager but sincerely, it is she who had the grace and wisdom and likely the shoe should have been on the other foot! As a team of colleagues we were always spirited by Ellen's deep knowledge and humanity and she led by example in the way she respected and cared for others. She shared her poetry and her writing, and one article I have to this day, ironically on grief. I've shared this article many times over and today I read it with a more heavy heart. Ellen inspired through her writing and she leaves us this legacy. She is fondly remembered.*

*Kelly McNaughton*

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**Kelly McNaughton** - March 29, 2022 at 08:29 PM

DL

“ *Sending my sincere condolences to Joe and Roger and to Ellen's family members.*

*Ellen was a friend and mentor to me for many years and we met at a workshop over 25 years ago in London, On. Over the years, she gave me valuable guidance and offered me support and encouragement for my writing and my career in the healing arts. Her honesty, warmth, sincerity and humility always touched my heart.*

*I will miss you dearly my friend.*

*Daniel Leonard  
Salt Spring Island, BC*

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**Daniel Leonard** - March 28, 2022 at 08:00 PM

MO

“ Please accept my deepest condolences on the passing of Ellen. My grade 6 students were fortunate to have had Ellen teach poetry to them a number of years ago. Ellen was able to draw amazing poems out of some very vulnerable students. I will not forget how passionate she was about writing and how my students were inspired by her. Thinking of her family and friends at this difficult time,

Mary Ellen Opie  
Queen Victoria School  
Hamilton

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**Mary Ellen Opie** - March 27, 2022 at 03:30 PM

RH

“ I had the pleasure of contributing a short story to the anthology *Brought to Light: More Stories of Forgotten Women*, and a story of Ellen's, "Another Twist of the Double Helix," came directly after mine. We also participated together in several literary events over the years. Even though we were not very closely acquainted, she was always so kind and friendly. I would like to offer my condolences to her loved ones.

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**Richard Van Holst** - March 26, 2022 at 06:51 PM

NL

“ Sorry to hear of Ellen's passing. Sending sympathy and good thoughts to her family.

Larry and Nancy Lester

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**Nancy Lester** - March 25, 2022 at 02:03 PM

SF

“ A marvellous spirit and a brilliant writer; for years my Hamilton neighbour and friend . I know Ellen will be terribly missed by the many many lives she touched as a writer, poet, mentor, teacher, volunteer, and cheerleader.. My condolences to her family and friends.

Suzanne Foreman - March 24, 2022 at 09:18 PM

TA

“ Ellen, we miss your smile and your poetry. The CanLit poetry world is a lesser place with your passing. Thank you for your poems.

Tai - March 21, 2022 at 10:55 PM

SA

“ I was in Ellen writing 📖 class she was a beautiful woman I will miss her 😭💔 RIP 🙏😭💔😭

Shyroon Ali - March 21, 2022 at 08:43 PM



Ellen was an amazing lady, well liked in the writing community in Hamilton. She was kind . I shall miss her.

Wilma Seville - March 24, 2022 at 04:44 PM