

Eleanor Deines

June 23, 1913 - Jan. 7, 2017



One of Bainbridge Island's oldest residents, Eleanor Deines died peacefully, surrounded by her family, on Jan. 7, 2017.

Eleanor was born on June 23, 1913 near Greencastle, Missouri. When she was only seven, she, her father, brother and two friends made their way down the Mississippi

River, from Davenport, Iowa to Gulfport, Mississippi in a flat-bottomed boat. It was quite an adventure for a little girl.

Ultimately her family settled near Pass Christian, Mississippi where she had fond memories of sitting in front of her school in a great live oak reading novels. She loved reading and books her entire life. She served as a dedicated volunteer at Kitsap Regional Library on Bainbridge even into her final years.

Before her high school graduation, Eleanor moved to Schenectady, New York to care for an ailing relative. It was there that she met the love of her life, Harry Deines. Together they lived in homes all over the United States: in New York, Connecticut, Virginia, Minnesota, Colorado and Washington. In the 1950s, when they lived on their farm in Virginia, Harry worked in New York City and came home on weekends. During the week, Eleanor was the one who managed the 640-acre farm, looked after 200 Herefords, took care of their four children and even ran the Civil War-era, stone-ground cornmeal mill.

An intrepid traveler, Eleanor continued to take trips abroad well into her 80's. A life long dream came true when she and other family members went on a safari in Kenya; she loved seeing the big animals. One of her last trips was to Southeast Asia where she had a great time riding on the back of an elephant. The world was a fascinating place to her; she followed the news with keen interest and she was always eager to know what everyone was up to.

Eleanor will be remembered especially for her elegance, grace, warmth and generosity. Her positive outlook and joyful spirit were an inspiration to all who knew her. She was a wonderful hostess and loyal friend. She was also a loving wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and great-grandmother. Her belief in Christian Science was at the core of her life. She worked daily at being a faithful follower of its teachings.

She was preceded in death by her husband of sixty years, Harry Deines, and by her daughter Gretchen (Chuck) Langston. She is survived by her children: Mark, Trina (Galen Minah) and Stephen (Barbara), her grandchildren: Tracy DeBlois, Sarah (Colin) Hall and Ben Deines and her great-grandchildren: Peter and Jacob Hall and Chris, Matthew, Patrick, and Margaret DeBlois.

There will be a memorial service in Eleanor's honor at two pm on Saturday, Feb. 11, at Bethany Lutheran Church on Bainbridge Island. All are welcome.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Friends of the Library, Kitsap Regional Library, Bainbridge Branch.