

# ELEANOR G. COWELL (1919-2011)

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Eleanor G. Cowell died peacefully on January 9, 2011, after a short illness at the age of 91. She was born to N. Henry and Edna Smith Gellert in Wayne Pennsylvania on October 26, 1919. The second of four children, Eleanor grew up in a loving and intellectually stimulating household. She was an avid reader, crossword puzzle solver and accomplished pianist who played for the assembly at her high school. At the age of 15 she met her future husband, John (Jack) R. Cowell, also an accomplished pianist. After graduating from Abington High School, Eleanor attended Converse College in Spartanburg, SC, received a degree with a double major in Psychology and Sociology. She went to work at DuPont until the war intervened. Eleanor joined the Navy in 1942 and was in the first class of the WAVES. She quickly rose in rank to Lieutenant. Eleanor's keen mind was put to use in Military Intelligence where she ran a department of several hundred personnel. Her group broke important enemy codes aiding in the war effort.

Eleanor and John married in 1943. In 1946, their son John Jr. was born in New Haven, CT, while John was attending Yale, studying composition with Paul Hindemith. Then they followed her parents and siblings to Seattle, where her father was President of Seattle Gas Co. In 1951, their second child, Edna, was born.

Eleanor spent the rest of her life taking care of her children, volunteering and supporting her husband's music career. In addition to frequent trips to New York for John's performances, they crossed the ocean four times by ship where John played concert tours of Europe and was an artist-in-residence in Paris. In 1966 they moved to Arkansas, where John became Chairman of the Music Department at the University of Arkansas. From there they traveled yearly to Switzerland where John taught students for the Hindemith Foundation.

In 1985, they moved back to Seattle to be close to their daughter Edna, son-in-law Don Martin, and only grandchild Anna Marie. In 1999, Eleanor and John began to share a home with Don and Edna in West Seattle, where they spent many happy and productive years.

Eleanor loved her family. She was a woman of strong emotions, noted for her strength of character and loyalty. She was predeceased by her husband "Jack" and her brother Nathan Gellert in 2007. Besides her daughter Edna, son-in-law Donald Martin and grandchild Anna Martin Siadek, she leaves behind son John DeCoville of Tucson, sister Helen Gary of Honolulu, brother Edward Gellert of Boise, and numerous nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Seattle Art Museum and Peace Lutheran Church.