



In Memory of
Dr. Mary Patricia 'Pat' White
1924 - 2019

On Boxing Day, December 26, Mary Patricia, “Pat,” White, MD, MA, FRCP, slipped gently into her lasting rest. Pat was born March 8, 1924, the only daughter of David and Matilda Armstrong of Toronto and younger sister of Jim and Bill. Pat described her upbringing as strict but very loving. She would recount many memories of her youth, notably a visit to their home by the Mayor of Toronto, when her father, a police detective, was seriously injured in a Depression era riot. At the age of fourteen she formed the firm desire to become a physician, not a common career goal for women at the time. She devoted herself to her preparation for medicine with remarkable dedication and success, becoming both Valedictorian and Head Girl of Oakwood Collegiate. In due time Pat was one of only fifteen women to graduate from the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine, class of 1947, and the newly fledged Doctor Armstrong crossed the country to take up her internship in the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria, BC, where she was the first ever woman intern. From 1948-50, Pat held a Poliomyelitis Research Fellowship from Sick Children’s Hospital, concentrating on field work in Dufferin County that contributed to the understanding of the epidemiology of polio. For this work Pat was awarded an MA by the University of Toronto. Pat’s mother had initially feared that becoming a physician would doom her daughter to “old maid” status. But in 1949 Pat met a young United Church minister named Peter Gordon White at a Friendship Hour at Bloor Street United. The couple married in 1950 and delighted in a nearly sixty-three year marriage until Peter’s death in 2013. It was almost impossible to think of one without the other. They were always “Peter and Pat.” Pat had intended to become a pediatrician but noticed that her patients seemed to want chiefly to talk about their relationships rather than their medical problems. This realization led her to Residency Training in Psychiatry, completed in 1964. She then undertook further training in the Toronto Institute of Psychoanalysis, completed in 1975. Pat and a woman colleague in the programme were the first female psychoanalysts trained in Toronto. Pat would hold the status of Training Analyst with the Institute until her death. Pat served as Lead Psychiatrist at the University of Toronto Mental Health Division of the Student Health service from 1964 to 1984, the first such appointment in a Canadian university. From 1984 until her retirement at age 86 in 2010 Pat engaged in a private practice of Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis. Even after retirement, she continued

to read and write in her field and to share her wisdom with younger psychoanalysts. Peter and Pat moved into the Russell Hill Retirement Home in 2012 where they found a welcoming and supportive community of fellow residents and staff. The family is profoundly grateful to all staff of the Russell Hill, to the Temmy Latner Palliative Care team and her devoted Personal Service Workers who helped Pat through her short final illness. Towards the end, her son David asked his mother whether she had a message for family and friends. She replied, "I have loved my life. I have loved my family and my career. And I loved Peter. He was a remarkable man." To this her family would only add, "Pat was a remarkable woman." Pat is survived by children David (June Carroll), John (Sophia Grigoriadis) and Patty Farris (Stephen); by grandchildren Adam, Julia (David Gould) and Laura (Taran Chadha); Emil and Theo; Allan Farris (Judith) and Daniel Farris (Gillian); and by great grandchildren Anna, Peter and Idris Farris.

The family will receive friends at the Humphrey Funeral Home A.W. Miles – Newbigging Chapel, 1403 Bayview Avenue (south of Davisville) from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2020. Funeral services will be held in Timothy Eaton Memorial Church (230 St. Clair Avenue West, Toronto) on Wednesday, January 8th at 11:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, consider donating to a charity of your choice. Condolences may be forwarded through www.humphreymiles.com.