



Elly Angelides Christofilos

OCT 7, 1918 - JAN 23, 2012



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Elly Angelides Christofilos, a longtime resident of Berkeley, was born in Corinthos, Greece, in 1918, into a historical and political family. She studied foreign languages at the Greek gymnasium (high school), and later at the American College for Girls. She was well educated in French, English and Philosophy. After the German occupation of Greece, Elly worked with the newly formed government under the leadership of Themistoklis Sophoulis. She worked as a private secretary to the Secretary of State, Constantin Rentis. Instead of continuing a political career as her father had wanted, she came to the United States in 1951. In 1952 her close friend from Greece, Nicholas Christofilos, the renowned physicist, also came to the U.S. and they were married. One son was born, Nicholas C. Christofilos, Jr., in 1956. He was born with congenital anemia and died at the age of 27. Elly always maintained a high standard of values and lived by high principles. With her sharp mind and brilliant common sense she applied these principles to the upbringing of her son. After the tragic death of her son, to whom she devoted her life, she was consumed with bereavement and never fully recovered. Her son was a brilliant student at UC Berkeley studying mathematics and music. After his passing, the Music Department hosted two concerts in his memory and Elly established the 'Nicholas C. Christofilos, Jr. Award.' This prize is special in that it recognizes human values as well as academic excellence. The majority of her estate is given to the Music Department Library, a portion of which will be named in memory of Nicholas. A longtime resident of Berkeley, Elly was active in Berkeley civic affairs. She was one of the founders of the Berkeley Property Owners Association. She was also a member of the Berkeley Democratic Club, the League of Women Voters, the UC Art Museum, the Berkeley Early Music Society, the Berkeley Chorus, the Chancellor's Circle, the Gordon Sproul Associates, and the Council of Foreign Affairs. Elly put her political acumen to work in Berkeley politics in the 1970's. As a moderate Democrat, Elly realized that her



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party needed the Republican vote to win. In one election, after she was informed of the absence of the Republicans from the polls, Elly singlehandedly made hundreds of telephone calls to Republicans. As a result of her efforts, the Republicans came to the polls and gave the moderate Democrats a victory, which made Elly very proud. This alliance between moderate Democrats and Republicans which Elly pioneered changed the course of Berkeley politics. Elly will be remembered for her strong character and compassionate nature. She was a lady of stature and grace with a wonderful sense of humor, despite her great losses. She died in Concord, California on January 23, 2012 at the age of 93 in the loving home of her longtime caregiver Aya Avecilla and her family.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Elly by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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