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Zora Elka GROPPER

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ZORA ELKA GROPPER July 23, 1918 - October 24, 2019 Zoe led a long and rich life for just over 101 years, and died early on October 24, 2019, quickly and peacefully, as she wished. Zoe credited her birthplace, Saskatoon, for providing the foundations for her essential character: strong ethical and progressive principles, integrity, pragmatism, steadfastness, Jewishness, community involvement and the central role of family. Zoe was a beautiful, elegant, dignified, graceful presence. She lived in Saskatoon for the first half of her life, marrying her perfect partner, Nathan, in 1939. They raised their four children: Mitchell (Lynne), Peter (Marla), Risa Levine (Bill) and Miriam (David Whiteley), in Saskatoon. After following their children to Vancouver in 1975, they established themselves solidly in their new community. Zoe was smart and studious. She entered the University of Saskatchewan at 16, graduating three years later with a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics. She spent the next year in post-graduate studies of dietetics in Toronto. Returning to Saskatoon, she worked as a dietician until marrying Natie. For the next decades, Zoe was an active "professional" volunteer in many local and national organizations and returned to university to earn a degree in Adult Education. After she moved to Vancouver, Zoe became a committed volunteer with the UBC Women's Resource Centre, where she became a mentor and guide to generations of women, many of whom continued to seek her company and friendship. After Natie died in 1996, Zoe's focus was on her growing family. She established a relationship with each of her 9 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. With the help of FaceTime, Facebook, Instagram and email, using her iPad, she kept in constant touch with them and shared their lives. Zoe said often that she led a wonderful life, untouched by trauma or tragedy. The loss of her granddaughter, Naomi Gropper Steiner, in 2005, was a devastating exception. Zoe had a huge impact on the lives of so many. We will miss her every day. Donations may be made to the Gropper Philanthropic Fund for Leadership Development at

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Published in The Globe and Mail from Oct. 26 to Oct. 30, 2019

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