



Elinor Harris

JUN 5, 1929 - JAN 24, 2026



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Elinor Harris passed away on January 24, 2026

I stand here today as Joyce, but also as something Elinor used to call me with a smile—her “adopted daughter.” and that is exactly how I felt with her: loved, guided, teased, and protected, just like family. I was blessed to know Elinor for a lifetime. Ninety-six years is a long time for anyone to walk this earth, but if you knew her, you know that she filled those years with a wonderful mix of wisdom, laughter, and a Spark of mischief that never really faded. When I think of Elinor, the picture that comes to mind first is of us sitting together for one of our long talks. We had so many of them. Sometimes it felt like the world outside had stopped, and it was just the two of us talking.”

Elinor was a special woman, and if you really want to know who she was, you only had to sit with her for a while and listen, she was full of stories and jokes, and there was always that little twinkle in her eye that told you she was about to say something clever or funny. She could be stubborn, — anyone who knew her would smile at that— but even in her stubborn moments, somehow, she would have you laughing in the end.

One memory that stays with me, and always will, is simply those long talks we shared. They weren’t about anything grand or fancy. Often, it was just us, sitting together, and her talking about life, about people, about what she had seen and learned in her 96 years. She loved to share her wise words, and she always made sure I was listening. She would look at me and say, “Now remember this,” and give me some piece of advice that, might have seemed small— but later I would realize how true it was.

In those moments, I saw every side of her: the wise woman who had seen so much, the witty woman who could turn anything into a story, and the soft-hearted woman who cared so deeply. She didn’t just talk to pass the time. She talked to teach, to comfort, to make you think — and always, always, to make you smile. Those talks are the heart of my memories of her, and they hold everything she was to me.

Her life was filled with work. She was proud of, and I believe one of the greatest achievements was the years she spent as a seamstress for actresses in the New York playhouses when I think of that, I



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picture her careful hands, her eye for detail and her quiet strength behind the scenes. The audience might never have known her name, but the women she dressed and fitted sure did. She helped them step out under the lights, feeling beautiful and confident, and that is no small thing. That work took skill, patience, and creativity. It suited her perfectly: she was precise, she cared about how things were done, and she had that little extra touch that turned something simple into something special. She poured herself into that work, stitch by stitch, costume by costume, and it was a part of who she was.

Elinor also loved writing stories. That love of storytelling showed in everything she did. Whether she was actually putting words on paper or just talking across the table, she had the heart of a writer. She could turn a moment from everyday life into something you would remember, because she knew how to find the meaning and the humor in it. Her stories were her way of leaving pieces of herself behind, and those pieces now live in all of us who heard them.

And then there were her dogs. Her dogs were her life — especially her little Susie. The way she talked about them, cared for them, and lit up when she mentioned Susie told you so much about her. She had a big, tender heart for those small, furry souls. They were her companions, her joy, and part of her family. If you heard her talk about Susie, you could hear the love in her voice. That love is a reflection of the love she carried for all of us too.

To me, Elinor was more than a cousin. She was, as she liked to say, my “adopted mother,” and I was her “adopted daughter”. I will always remember her wise words, her stories, her jokes, and yes, even that stubborn streak that’s so often ended, and both of us laughing. She shaped me in quiet ways, through those long talks and gentle reminders. She made sure I knew I was loved.

Elinor, I will miss you. I will miss your voice, your laughter, your stories, and the way you can make a room feel warmer just by being in it. But I will carry you with me — and the lessons you gave me, and the jokes you told, and in every memory of us sitting together, talking as if the world outside could wait

I will miss you, Ellie.

With all my love,

Your adopted daughter,

Joyce



Memories only last if you share them

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



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