



Frances S. White

December 29, 1915 - February 10, 2012

Frances S. White, age 96, resident at the Quadrangle and former long-time resident of Radnor, PA, died in her sleep peacefully on Feb. 10, 2012. She was the beloved wife of the late Bernard H. White with whom she had been married for 60 years. Born and raised in Schenectady, NY, she attended local public schools then graduated from Emma Willard School (1933) and was a Magna cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Smith College (1937). During WWII, she was a Director of the American Red Cross Programs of Services and Recreation in the 81st General Hospital stationed in Wales and France. Upon return from overseas, she completed her MSW degree in 1946 at Columbia University School of Social Work and worked as a medical social worker at New York Hospital, Cornell Medical Center.

Married in 1947, she and her husband lived in Washington, DC, Schenectady and Syracuse, NY before settling on the Main Line where examples of her life work will remain.

Mrs. White and her husband were founding members in 1958 of the Main Line Unitarian Church. Frances was a founding member and first president of the Main Line Mental Health Group (MLMHG, 1979), which became affiliated with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of which she was also a founding member, having attended the first meeting in Wisconsin with other MLMHG members. They subsequently changed their name to AMI of the Main Line and eventually, NAMI PA, Main Line. Under Frances' presidency of MLMHG and because of her perseverance, this group raised enough funds to

renovate the former Atwater Kent Estate on the grounds of the former Haverford State Hospital and persuaded the State to use it as a residence for those with mental illness. Renamed "Torrey House", it was dedicated in March 1986 in the presence of renowned mental health expert, E. Fuller Torrey. Frances and her husband Bernard founded Planned Lifetime Assistance Network (PLAN of PA) to help those with a mental illness with their current needs and to help families plan for the future when they are no longer living. Frances was an advocate. Often described as "gentle and soft-spoken", it was written, "Frances is living proof that you don't need to have a loud voice to be a strong political force. Rather it's what you say, and how you say it that really counts."

Frances had said she wanted to be remembered especially for her mental health activities. But she balanced her life as a Philadelphia Museum of Art guide (Emeritus) for over 20 years. She was a board member of the Smith College Alumni Association, the Radnor Memorial Library, the League of Women Voters and Congressional District Coordinator for Common Cause. She enjoyed playing tennis and golf into her 90s and had enjoyed bridge and French classes.

Frances is survived by her daughters, Valerie White, Barbara White Waterman (Kevin) and Carolyn White-Lesieur (Jean); her sister Barbara S. Longfellow and five grandchildren: Elizabeth and Hunter Waterman and Jonathan (Maud), Nicholas and Geraldine Lesieur.

A Memorial Service is planned for March 24, 2012 at 11:00am at the Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon, PA.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: NAMI PA, Main Line: 320 Woodley Rd. Merion Station, PA 19066-1413