



Betty Jo Riter

February 27, 1926 - May 3, 2017

Obituary for Betty Jo Baxter Riter

Betty Jo Baxter Riter was born on February 27, 1926 in Henderson, Texas to Pauline and David Brown Baxter. She passed into eternity on May 3, 2017.

B.J., as she was known to all, was a lifelong resident of Tyler and enjoyed a full and long life in her beloved community. From an early age, she was raised in Tyler by her aunt and uncle, Bennie and Buddy Henson and graduated from Tyler High School in 1943. B.J. attended and graduated from the University of Texas, Austin in 1948, where she was a proud member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. When she met a handsome young banker named Dub Riter, she broke off an engagement to pursue her relationship with this debonair “playboy” (as she liked to call him).

B.J. and Dub were married on January 14, 1950 and began their 53-year marriage and life together in Tyler. She was a busy mother of two children, Melinda and Whit, and was a generous benefactor and active in her community throughout her life. She was President of the Junior League of Tyler, The Gertrude Windsor Garden Club, and the Tyler Junior Garden Club. She also served on many boards and was active in many organizations including: The Tyler Museum of Art, East Texas Crisis Center, Hospice of East Texas, University of Texas at Tyler, The Cowan Fine and Performing Arts

Center, Tyler Junior College, The Salvation Army, The Women's Symphony League, The Texas Rose Festival, The Tyler Rose Museum, Willow Brook Country Club, The Badminton Club, and The Jolly Green Investment Club.

Even though she had slowed down after losing Dub in 2003 and at the end of her life, she continued to be a loving mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and precious friend to so many. She spent much of her time reading her Bible and watching her favorite preachers on television. B.J. loved her Savior, Jesus Christ, and in her latter days on this earth, wanted nothing more than to go be with Him and to see her beloved Dub again.

So, while we mourn her death and miss her greatly, we celebrate her eternal life with Jesus and know without a doubt, that we will see her again.

B. J. was preceded in death by her husband, A. W. "Dub" Riter, Jr. and her sister, Jeanine Gothard.

She is survived by her children: Melinda Riter and A. W. "Whit" Riter III (Cynthia) of Tyler.

B. J. was blessed with six grandchildren: Riter Kerr (Alyssa) of Tyler, Alysia Kerr Terry (Steven) of New York, Caleb Kerr (Meredith) of Montana, Cameron Kerr (Jessica) of Austin, Kaylyn Kerr Bergfeld (Brad) of Tyler, and Paxton Riter (Elise) of Dallas and ten great grandchildren: Colton and Olivia Kerr of Tyler, Rowan and Salem Terry of New York, Morgan and Weston Kerr of Montana, Adalaie Kerr of Austin, Welles Bergfeld of Tyler, and Dub and Boots Riter of Dallas.

She is also survived by her two nieces, Susan Easley of Tyler and Gay Dowden of Henderson.

Her family wishes to thank her precious companion and caregiver, Mary Sue Carter, for her devotion and loving care for the last few years. We have been blessed by her and the wonderful team who has been so faithful to care for her: Pablo Tarango, Maxine Smith, Ann Scott, Saleen Hearon, Denise Warren, Martha Hayter, Shcrenna Bircher, Yuvette Erwin, Yoyo Bircher and Mary Docktor.

Special gratitude goes to Hospice of East Texas, specifically to her nurse, Kathryn Martine, and to her aide, Lenora Owens. We deeply appreciate their loving compassion and care during the last few months.

Pall bearers are: Henry Bell, Bill Brelsford, Gates Brelsford, John Bufe, Raymond Hedge, John Hills, Randy Key, Jack King, Peyton Lockett, Jim McCain, Bill McCain, Burt McCain, King Ramey, Tom Ramey, Smith Reynolds, Andy Swann, Elam Swann, Chris Woldert, Tom Woldert, Sam Wolf, James Wynne and Trey Yarbrough.

Private graveside services will be at Rose Hill Cemetery, and a memorial service is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 6, 2017 at Christ Episcopal Church with The Rev. David Luckenbach presiding, under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hospice of East Texas, 4111 University Blvd., Tyler 75701 or Christ Episcopal Church, 118 S. Bois D'Arc Ave., Tyler 75702.

Previous Events

Mem. Service

MAY 6. 11:00 AM (CT)

Christ Episcopal Church
118 South Bois d' Arc
Tyler, TX 75702

Tribute Wall

RB

“*B.J. was a wonderful example of what a Christian woman can accomplish in every area of her life! She inspired me in many ways and was always full of kindness and a sort of "classiness" that I admired so much. Even with all of her accomplishments and ways she contributed to and served her community, she maintained a humility of spirit where she was approachable and accessible to all. She will be missed, but I look forward to sharing with her for Eternity around the Throne of God. RIP, sweet BJ!*”



Rebecca Bafford - May 08, 2017 at 10:41 AM

YS

“*Your friends at Grace Community School purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Betty Jo Riter.*”



Your friends at Grace Community School - May 05, 2017 at 10:18 AM

JJ

“*Jay Thompson & Connie Johnson purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Betty Jo Riter.*”



Jay Thompson & Connie Johnson - May 04, 2017 at 09:49 PM