



## Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis

June 21, 2024

Memorial services for Tyler civic leader Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis are scheduled for Tuesday, June 25, 2024. Graveside services begin at 9 a.m. at Rose Hill Cemetery, followed by a 10 a.m. service at Christ Episcopal Church downtown. Friends are invited to celebrate Betsy's life at Willow Brook Country Club afterward. Betsy died at home surrounded by her family, having lived life to its fullest for 82 years.

Betsy, the daughter of the late Elizabeth and William H. Marsh II, was born in Newcastle, Pennsylvania, and grew up in Tyler as a descendant of the city's early settlers and community leaders. After attending Camp Waldemar for years as a proud Aztec and graduating from Robert E. Lee High School with her 16 best friends, Betsy attended The University of Texas at Austin, earning a sociology degree. She was an active member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority and then the alumnae association in Tyler, which recently acknowledged her 64 years of Kappa service.

Betsy married the late Elmer G. Ellis, former president and CEO of the East Texas Medical Center Regional Healthcare System (ETMC), in 1992. They cherished more than 25 years together through a focus on family, home, travel and service. She adored her three children – Kingsley Edward Smith, Evans Swann Smith and Elizabeth Smith Ortega – and was a devoted grandmother who celebrated each grandchild's accomplishments.

From 1984 to 2018, Betsy served on ETMC's leadership team. As director of volunteer services, she supervised a dynamic workforce of more than 150 adult volunteers in the ETMC Tyler Auxiliary and fostered the hospital's Junior Volunteer program for teens. She then became an integral part of ETMC's corporate administration. With "Mr. Ellis," she shared in the advancement of healthcare throughout East Texas under ETMC's mission to bring hospitals and related services to home communities. Together they participated in professional advocacy organizations, including the Texas Hospital Association and the American College of Healthcare Executives.

Betsy exemplified the spirit of community service. As a member of the Junior League of Tyler, she held a wide variety of leadership roles, including president. Betsy inherited her mother's abiding love for the natural world, as reflected in her long service to the Gertrude Windsor Garden Club (twice president) and the Garden Club of America. She prized her longtime home, Ravenwood, which features the beauty of Tyler's original azaleas and holds the special designations of a Texas Historic Landmark and inclusion in the Smithsonian's Archives of American Gardens.

Betsy served as a board member for a host of organizations, including Hospice of East Texas, East Texas Crisis Center, Salvation Army Auxiliary, Tyler Mental Health Association, City of Tyler Parks and Recreation Department and the Camp Tyler Foundation. She also provided enthusiastic leadership as chair of the Tyler Museum of Art Gala, American Heart Association, Heart Ball, Order of the Rose Ball and multiple other committees of the Texas Rose Festival, which honored Betsy as the honorary chair of the 90th Texas Rose Festival. In 2007, she and Elmer were jointly recognized by the East Texas Council of the Boy Scouts of America with the Distinguished Citizen Good Turn Award; she was extremely proud of her two Eagle Scout sons. She was a member of Christ Episcopal Church and Willow Brook

Country Club.

In May 2023, Betsy donated the Elizabeth Sweet Peacock Marsh Garden at Tyler Junior College in honor of her mother. This beautiful addition to TJC could not be more fitting, given her spirit of service to others and her love of gardening and conservation.

Betsy was preceded in death by her husband, Elmer, and her parents. Survivors include son Kingsley Smith (Robin Sax), Los Angeles; son Dr. Evans Smith (Carrie Caton Smith), Tyler; daughter Elizabeth Smith Ortega, Houston; and her brother William (Bill) Marsh III, Tyler. Grandchildren are Taylor Margaret Smith, Marshall King Smith, Hannah Sarah Katzenstein, Hattie MaGee Smith Shelton and husband Jakob, Henry Marsh Smith, Eliza Caton Pillsbury, Mark Hampton Pillsbury Jr., Elizabeth Sweet Tapp, and Aurora Luciana Ortega. Additional survivors include Mignon Adams and husband Bill, William Harold Marsh and wife Louisa, Audrey Marsh Wharton, and Lucy Marsh Breedlove and husband Nick. Other survivors include a bevy of nieces, nephews, godchildren and special friends. The family would like to thank Katy Cuevas for her longtime friendship and care, as well as Angelica Martin, Nancy James and Hospice of East Texas.

Due to Betsy's love of nature and conservation, she would encourage friends to plant a remembrance tree. If desired, gifts in her memory may be made to the City of Tyler Trees Committee, Betsy's Garden, 2000 W. Front St., Tyler, TX 75702 or [www.cityoftyler.org](http://www.cityoftyler.org/) (<http://www.cityoftyler.org/>)

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

JUN 25. 9:00 AM (CT)

Rose Hill Cemetery  
2400 S. Donnybrook  
Tyler, TX 75702

## Memorial Service

JUN 25. 10:00 AM (CT)

Christ Episcopal Church Downtown  
118 S. Bois d'Arc  
Tyler, TX 75702

## Reception Following Memorial Service

JUN 25 (CT)

Willow Brook Country Club  
3205 W. Erwin  
Tyler, TX 75702

# Tribute Wall



“ Stewart Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis



Stewart Family Funeral Home - June 24, 2024 at 05:31 PM

CD

*Her smile brightened up the room with love. Sending my condolences to the Stewart Family.*

Christine Dominguez - June 25, 2024 at 11:50 PM

SC

*Betsy had a great and full life. We worked and played with her her and Elmer for forty years. We all had a lot of fun but accomplished many good things. Our condolences to her family and all that loved her. She will be missed. Steve and Barbara Claiborn*

Stephen Claiborn - October 09, 2024 at 09:11 PM

GT

“ Gay A Tyra lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis



Gay A Tyra - June 25, 2024 at 04:47 PM

AS

“ Angela S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis.

Angela S. - June 25, 2024 at 09:36 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis.



June 25, 2024 at 09:35 AM

DJ

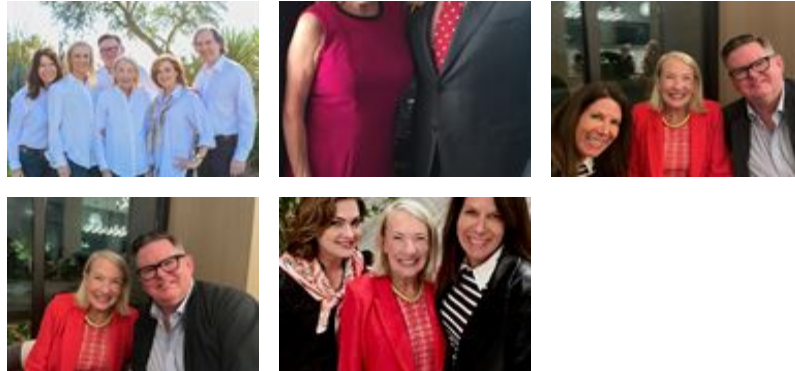
“ Doyle W. Morse, Jr. lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis



Doyle W. Morse, Jr. - June 24, 2024 at 07:21 PM



“ 235 files added to the album *LifeTributes*



Stewart Family Funeral Home - June 24, 2024 at 01:22 PM

HH

“ *Holley Howard lit a candle in memory of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis*



Holley Howard - June 23, 2024 at 06:02 PM

SR

“ *Stephen and Diane Rydzak planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis.*

Stephen and Diane Rydzak - June 23, 2024 at 12:42 PM

SR

“ Stephen and Diane Rydzak purchased the Count ry Basket Blooms for the family of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis.



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**Stephen and Diane Rydzak** - June 23, 2024 at 12:42 PM

EG

“ Betsy was such a gracious, kind and beautiful person. She was by cousin by marriage on my father’s side and always took a genuine interest in me. It meant so much that she came to my mother’s funeral even though I know she wasn’t in good health. Sending my love to her children and grandchildren.  
Love, Ellen Baldwin Graham and Greg Graham

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**Ellen Graham** - June 23, 2024 at 11:41 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis.



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June 22, 2024 at 07:51 PM

JP

“ Janet and Earl Peacock planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis.

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**Janet and Earl Peacock** - June 22, 2024 at 06:39 PM



“ *Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Elizabeth (Betsy) Swann Marsh Ellis.*



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June 22, 2024 at 06:39 PM



“ *We are so saddened at the loss of your beautiful Betsy. What a remarkable life and legacy she leaves. Her smile and genuine happiness are lasting memories for us all and the community at large. Truly, she gave of herself to family and community. We will miss her dearly,  
In friendship and faith,*

*Adele Regan and Family*

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**Adele Regan** - June 22, 2024 at 03:02 PM



“ *My heart goes out to Betsy's children and grandchildren and friends. Betsy and I pledged Kappa together at The University of Texas at Austin and remained friends all those years after. We shared a love for nature, especially the rich biodiversity of the Neches River bottoms. And I thank Betsy for her efforts to protect that last wild river in Texas--a true treasure. Betsy was also a true Texas treasure in her love for the people and places that make East Texas special. With love, Ellen Temple, Lufkin TX.*

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**Ellen Temple** - June 22, 2024 at 12:46 PM