



Dr. Welby Clell Edwards

December 9, 1914 - September 9, 2013

Services for Dr. Welby C. Edwards, 98, of Tyler, will be held on Saturday, September 14th, at 2 p.m. at First Baptist Church, Tyler with Reverend Pike Wisner, Dr. Paul W. Powell and Dr. Dub Oliver officiating.

Burial will follow at Rose Hill Cemetery in Tyler under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home.

Mr. Edwards passed away Monday, September 11th at home. He was born December 9th, 1914 to Clell and Lily Deed Smith Edwards.

Welby began his business career as a senior at Tyler High School in 1933, graduating in 1934 and was in business in Tyler for 80 years. He was a participant in the first Rose Festival in 1933.

He entered Federal Business Institute, graduating in 1938 with a certificate in accounting. He then had the opportunity to attend Tyler Junior College night classes and accounting courses from La Salle Accounting Institute that eventually led to his interview with GM where Mr. Edwards began traveling as an Auditor in East Texas and North Louisiana for General Motors. The experience with GM in the parts department led him to the auto and truck parts field and later as office manager for Welch Auto Supply in Tyler. In 1941, Mr. Edwards went to work for Lockheed Aircraft Manufacturing and Modification Center as purchasing agent at Love Field in Dallas, delivering planes to the Air Force Air Transport command, classified in top secret operations. He volunteered to join the Air Transport Command of the US Army Air Corps in 1943 to be assigned to modify B-25s and other planes in Kansas

City, Missouri and deliver them to combat areas in the European and Pacific Theatres. Welby was classified as a 791 Air Operations Specialist Staff Sergeant and served in combat air traffic control. He was an officer with a 4 man crew in the Pacific with the Far East Air Force. He also served as flight engineer on B-25s. Discharged from Camp Fannin on November 16, 1945, receiving the Philipino Liberation Medal, 3 Battle Stars, 1 Bronze Star, and 35 cents bus fare to Tyler to meet his family.

Mr. Edwards entered business as Edwards and Associates in the Peoples Bank building, as a manufacturers' representative in 1946, serving 6 states. He was founder of A&B Brake and Alignment in 1946, which he then sold in 1950, and then established WC Supply Company in 1959, which was later sold in 2001.

Welby was President of WC Square shopping center, located at Front and Bonner streets, where his office, WC Edwards Company, was located, dealing in investments and oil interests. W.C. purchased the shopping center in January, 1966, from Cecil McCullars and D.K. Caldwell Investments and changed the name to WC Square, refurbished it, and had immediately had 100% occupancy. In 1977, he purchased additional land and doubled the original size of the center with new construction. He also purchased adjacent property and commercial buildings bordering WC Square, which included 613 West Front St., 320 and 321 South Vine St. and 501 West Front St.

Welby was a charter member of the Radio Bible Class in 1935 and Deacon of First Baptist Church for 50 years. He was an East Texas Baptist University Trustee, where he and Davida funded the creation of the School of Nursing in 1989. He was Chairman of Timberline Baptist Conference Center and Camp, President and Board Member of East Texas State Fair and East Texas Farm and Ranch club. He was also past Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #1779 for 2 years, past Texas State Chaplain for Disabled American Veterans for 2 years. A member of National Society of American Inventors and in 1988 was selected "Heavy Duty Professional of the Year" for the United States by the National Automotive Service Industry Association

and in 1989 served as President of Suspension Specialist Association of North America. Welby always said that “If I am considered a success in business or life, my wife, Davida, with love and devotion, was the prime factor”. In 1979, he was an organizing director of Rose Capital Bank (now Regions Bank – South Loop).

Welby was a family man and his hobbies included working, traveling, hunting, fishing and golf.

Mr. Edwards was a member of many organizations. He was founder of the East Texas Saddle Club in 1959. In the 1960’s, he was president of the East Texas Hereford Breeders and 1969 – 70 president of the East Texas State Fair. He was a Mason for more than 60 years and member of St. Johns Masonic Lodge. Welby was one of three founders of Meals on Wheels Ministry in 1973, now celebrating its 40th anniversary. He was also a member of the East Texas Symphony Orchestra Association, the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce, and Hollytree Country Club.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his loving wife of 48 years, Davida M. Edwards, his two sisters Vivian Edwards McNeill and husband, Dr. H. B. McNeill, and Veo Edwards Mallard and husband A. R. Mallard.

He is survived by his loving family including son, D. M. Edwards; daughter, D’Ann Edwards Stripling and her husband Rick; grandson, Travis Stripling and his wife Sheila; great-grandson Spencer Stripling; wife, Sue Edwards, stepson Donald Dudley and his daughter Elizabeth, stepdaughter Elizabeth Lampin and her husband Kevin and their son Wesley, as well as several nephews, nieces, and cousins.

Pallbearers will be Travis Stripling, Dennis Noble, Jim L. Crow, Charles Conklin, James Finch, and Bob Hodges

Honorary pallbearers will be deacons of First Baptist Church and Members of the Radio Bible Class of First Baptist Church.

Visitation is scheduled from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Friday, September 13, at

Stewart Family Funeral Home, 7525 Old Jacksonville Highway, in Tyler.
If desired, memorials may be made to the Edwards Endowed Nursing
Scholarship at East Texas Baptist University, One Tiger Drive, Marshall TX
75670; the First Baptist Church of Tyler Building Fund, 301 West Ferguson,
Tyler TX 75702; and the East Texas Symphony Orchestra Association, 107
Erwin, Tyler TX 75701.

Cemetery Details

Rose Hill Cemetery

2400 S. Donnybrook
Tyler, TX 75702

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 13. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Stewart Family Funeral Home
7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 581-2008

Service

SEP 14. 2:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church
301 W. Ferguson
Tyler, TX 75702

Tribute Wall

MJ

“ D. M. - I am sorry to hear about your dad's passing, but I am assured that you, as a Christian brother, will take comfort in knowing that he is in the glorious presence of our Lord and Savior. May God give you and your family peace during this time.
Mark Johnson

Mark Johnson - September 12, 2013 at 06:32 PM

MM

“ May the peace of Jesus Christ bring the comfort that only He can bring because He is our Savior.

Mike Midkiff - September 12, 2013 at 09:48 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Welby Clell Edwards.



September 11, 2013 at 11:37 AM

JO

“ JOHN & KATHY OBANNON lit a candle in memory of Dr. Welby Clell Edwards



JOHN & KATHY OBANNON - September 11, 2013 at 11:36 AM

CG

“ Welby Edwards was a tremendous influence in my life. He was a warm, sincere and loving person who was admired and honored by so many. I will always be grateful for his friendship and guidance and for the loving care he showed for the association so close to my heart. Condolences to his family but I know he has left you a wonderful legacy and a treasure trove of memories. Rest in peace. I will always remember.

Cara Giebner - September 11, 2013 at 10:23 AM

SH

“ We know there is nothing that we can say that would do this man justice. W C was a wonderful man and Jerry and I will always remember him as being a sweet and gentle man who we had the pleasure knowing. W C lived a long productive life and had wonderful stories and accomplishments throughout his life but more importantly he was a good Christian man who set wonderful examples for all that knew him. We love You and rest in peace our wonderful friend! Our sincere condolences go out to his wife Sue, his son D.M. Edwards and his daughter D'Ann Stripling and family. Love Always,
Jerry and Shirley Hanks
Odessa, Texas

Shirley Hanks - September 11, 2013 at 09:53 AM