



Mrs Mollie Dee Smith

April 16, 1924 - May 16, 2017

Mollie Dee Sewell Smith, 93, died Tuesday, May 16, 2017 in Caldwell, after a long struggle with Parkinson's Disease. A graveside service will be held Saturday, May 20, 2017 at Caldwell Masonic Cemetery at 1:00 p.m. with Pastor Steve Johnson officiating. The visitation will be held Friday, May 19, 2017 from 6-8 p.m. at Phillips & Luckey Funeral Home.

She and her husband of 70+ years, the late Joe C. Smith, MD, were well known in Burleson County and beyond.

Travelers on Highway 21 know their home and grounds well. They stand out on the often dull trip between Texas A&M and the University of Texas. Huge sculpture dots the well-tended lawn, and spectacular flower beds and hanging baskets make a vibrant background statement. Mollie was the creator of the outdoor spaces. Joe was the creator of the sculpture and more. Together they created a well-balanced and enviable small town life that was always connected to the great and wonderful world outside of Caldwell.

Born in Blooming Grove, Texas, to Thomas Monette Sewell and Beulah Griffis Sewell on April 16, 1924, Mollie was the first born. Two little brothers, Tom and Bill, came later. She grew up in Navarro County where her parents were cotton growers and buyers and ran beef cattle on country property that has been in the Sewell family for years. Her mother was determined that Mollie would go to Baylor University in Waco and she made sure that happened. Mollie and Joe met at Baylor in the early 1940s. They both worked in one of the dining halls on campus. Mollie admired Joe's strong forearms and he

admired everything about her. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Joe enlisted in the Marines and was sent to Quantico and eventually to the Pacific theater. Mollie stayed at Baylor, finished her BBA, graduated in 1944 and taught school in Mesquite while she waited for Joe's return from the war. He sent for her in September 1944 before he finished his wartime duties. Mollie's father told her she better get on that train and go to Joe right away. She rode the train from Dallas to Arlington, Virginia, in the height of the wartime crowds, most of the time sitting demurely on her suitcase. Apparently, a woman had to be 21 to get a marriage license in Virginia at that time. She was 20. She fudged a bit on her age and off they went. They were married Sept. 2, 1944. A wonderful story told over and over throughout their years together.

Mollie was always the backbone of family life. She supported Joe as he finished Baylor and then through Baylor Medical School and to a residency in the U.S. Army. They finished his second military stint in Killeen at Ft. Hood and came to Caldwell in 1953, with their two daughters Lynn, born in December 1946 in Waco, and Susan, born in January 1952 in San Antonio. Gayl followed in October 1954 and Griff in February 1958.

In 1957 Joe returned to San Antonio to get specialty training in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Mollie held down the fort at home. She taught typing and business at Caldwell High School during the year he was gone and, as always, was heavily involved in her children's activities. During those days, she was a leader in the Girls Auxiliary and vacation bible school at the First Baptist Church of Caldwell. She was committed to literacy and helped to establish the Caldwell's Harrie P. Woodson Library which is in Joe's former medical offices on Highway 21. She was a strong advocate for Planned Parenthood and a staunch Democrat for her whole adult life, as was Joe. She did everything she could to help her husband establish Caldwell's first hospital and made it possible for him to put in the long hours necessary to tend the medical needs of the people of Burleson County for many, many years. After Joe retired at 65, he and Mollie toured the world making many new friends and bringing back fascinating stories from their travels. They

loved their annual trips to Pagosa Springs, Colorado, and to Williamsburg, Virginia, as well family visits to Joe's home state of Tennessee. Also after his retirement, Joe became very serious about large-scale metal sculpture, enrolling in Glassell School of Art to study under Texas sculptor Ben Woitena. Mollie knew Joe needed that creative outlet and made it easy for him to do what he loved.

She always did what she loved too. Working in her yard and growing beautiful flowers was a passion as was reading. She was an inventive and skilled cook. All of her family was required to eat what was put before them, even if they didn't know what it was. From her example and that of her mother before her, all her daughters are excellent cooks. She also made sure all three of her girls knew how to act like ladies – no bare feet or giant curlers in their hair downtown, no gum smacking, no sprawled legs in dresses, no talking to boys on street, no singing at the table and more. She was lover of beauty in all things. Her home was comfortable, lovely and, of course, filled with Joe's paintings, sculpture and photography. She and Joe trained all their children to respect people of all colors, religions, nationalities, social status and sexual orientation.

She and Joe were huge Baylor sports fans their entire married lives. They had season football tickets for years. And, after it became too difficult to make the games in person, they loved watching Baylor sports on TV, especially Lady Bears basketball.

Mollie Dee Sewell Smith was preceded in death by her husband Joe C. Smith, MD, who died in March of last year, her parents and her brother Bill Sewell. She is survived by children Lynn Pearson of Waco; Susan Hoffmeyer and Charles of New Ulm; Gayl Newton of San Antonio and Griff Smith of Caldwell; grandchildren Arnold Pearson and Shelley of College Station; Justin Smith of Olympia, WA; Tessa Goolsby and Clint of Plano; Sara Asberry and Trey of Plano; great grandchildren Corey and Carly Pearson; Raven and Gavin Smith; Roxie Goolsby; and baby Kate Asberry; her brother Tom Sewell of Blooming

Grove; several nieces, nephews and cousins and her cat Cleo.

Mollie's family thanks especially the wonderful caregivers who made it possible for her to stay in her own home. They include Sue Smith, Linda Hamilton, Doris Rawls, Ta'Chic Rogers, Lisa Williams, Shannon Castaneda, Sandra Terry, Stacy Vance, Ethel Mitchell and Cynthia Schultz. They were a stellar care team!

Memorials may be made in Mollie's honor to the Harrie P. Woodson Library in Caldwell or to any branch of Planned Parenthood.

Cemetery Details

Caldwell Masonic Cemetery

1411 W. Buck St.
Caldwell, TX

Previous Events

Family Present for Visitation

MAY **19**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Phillips & Luckey Funeral Home - Caldwell
404 W. Buck St.
Caldwell, TX 77836
(979) 567-3232
phillipsandluckeyfh@yahoo.com
<https://www.phillipsandluckey.com/>

Graveside Service

MAY **20**. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Caldwell Masonic Cemetery
1411 W. Buck St.
Caldwell, TX

Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mrs Mollie Dee Smith.* ”



May 19, 2017 at 10:22 AM



“ *Your Ladco Family purchased the Bountiful Rose Basket for the family of Mrs Mollie Dee Smith.* ”



Your Ladco Family - May 19, 2017 at 09:03 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mrs Mollie Dee Smith.* ”



May 19, 2017 at 08:06 AM



“ *Basket of Joy was purchased for the family of Mrs Mollie Dee Smith.* ”



May 18, 2017 at 10:19 AM

TG

“ *The Plano Boudreaus & Goolsbys purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Mrs Mollie Dee Smith.*



The Plano Boudreaus & Goolsbys - May 17, 2017 at 11:49 PM

MK

“ *Marilyn K. purchased the Lavender Reflections S pray for the family of Mrs Mollie Dee Smith.*



Marilyn K. - May 17, 2017 at 11:53 AM