



## Mrs. Merrell Midyett Rhodes

October 22, 1927 - December 3, 2018

Merrell Ross Midyett Rhodes, who grew up in Carthage and spent much of her adult life in Shreveport, passed away peacefully at her home in Snap Community, Texas early Monday morning of heart failure. She was 91.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph Lee Rhodes, who died in 1999. She is survived by her three children, Joseph Jr., based in Dallas, Michael, who resides in DeBerry, Tx. and Carrie Rhodes Babin, who lives in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida with her husband, Dana Babin and their two children, Merrell's only grandchildren Luke and Braegan.

Funeral services will be held Thursday at 10 a.m. at St. John's Episcopal Church, 308 Cottage Road, in Carthage followed by a procession to Six Mile Cemetery in Snap Community where burial services will be held.

Visitors are welcome to pay their respects in a public viewing Wednesday from 5-7 p.m. at Hawthorne Funeral Home, 307 West Wellington Street in Carthage.

Born in Tyler on October 23, 1927, the third daughter of Felix Spencer and Ela Ross Midyett, Merrell was six years old when the family, including older sisters Marjorie and Susan, moved to Carthage. Spence Midyett owned a general store in Carthage for several decades and was also a well-known local cattleman. Both the Midyett and Ross families had deep roots in Panola County and the home in which she passed away was on property that had been in the Ross family for seven generations.

She graduated from Carthage High School in 1944, the salutatorian of her

class, and attended the University of Texas in Austin, where she received a degree in home economics in 1948. In the early 1950's she worked as a home economics service advisor for Lone Star and United gas companies, demonstrating the newfound wonders of natural gas ovens and stoves at schools and trade shows all over east Texas and north Louisiana.

The press release for a "cookery show" in Whitewright described her as an "expert in the art of gas cookery with a wide knowledge of practical phases of modern homemaking methods."

She met Joe Rhodes, working for an oil field seismic crew, in Jacksonville, Texas, where she was based. Their first date was to a local circus. They married on November 28, 1953 in Carthage and after a brief stint in west Texas, moved to Baton Rouge, where Merrell worked to put Joe through college at LSU, where he received a degree in petroleum engineering.

After he took a job with Arkansas Louisiana Gas Company, they moved to Shreveport, where they would raise their family and reside for the next 25 years.

After their children were grown, they built a house on the Snap Community property in 1985, where they lived out the rest of their lives surrounded by pine trees, gardens, an assortment of purebred Irish setters and the occasional feral cat. Merrell was a member of the local garden club, a gourd club and various herb-growing and painting groups. For many years, she took her Irish setters to regional dog shows where they won lots of prizes and enjoyed lots of treats.

She loved cooking and painting and music. As a teenager she was a bobbysoxer, one of the screaming throngs at a Frank Sinatra concert in Dallas. As a young single woman and in her later years, she enjoyed traveling and history and Broadway musicals, especially Rodgers & Hammerstein. (South Pacific was her favorite.)

In her final years, she was grateful for the support of her loving team of professional caregivers – Pansy, Candy, Lisa, Bernie and Amy, many of whom were with her in her final moments. In addition to her children and

grandchildren, she is survived by two Irish setters, Lucy and Ainsley, one-lap-sized Bijan, Lilly and one fascinatingly loyal feral cat, Mrs. Carlson.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Six Mile Cemetery Association, c/o Sharon Holcomb, P.O. Box 603, Judson, TX, 75660

An online guestbook may be signed

# Cemetery Details

## Six Mile Cemetery

Snap Community, TX

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 5. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Hawthorn Funeral Home  
307 West Wellington Street  
P.O. Box 188  
Carthage, TX 75633  
(903) 693-3816  
info@hawthornfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.hawthornfuneralhome.com>

# Tribute Wall

LL

“ *Such a sweet lady! Loved hearing her stories! She loved her dogs and plants so much!!! Will miss her!! Prayers to her family! Love, Lacie LaGrone*

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**Lacie LaGrone** - December 15, 2018 at 08:57 PM

EG

“ *Sending my condolences to Merrill's family, I feel so blessed to have visited with her these past couple of months. She was a dear friend of my grandmother Nelda Cox, they shared wonderful memories together in Austin and trips to the Hill Country together. Prayers for all who loved Mrs. Rhodes, she was a very special lady!*



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**Emily Vance Gomez** - December 06, 2018 at 10:53 PM

GB

“ Merrell and I were classmates from 2nd grade through 1944 CHS graduation. She beat me for Salutatorian by a fraction of a point! I always told her that was because I worked several nights a week as a soda jerk at Carthage Drug while she was home studying. We remained friends through the years. She hosted one of our Class Reunions at her home.

*I knew Merrell's parents and sisters, too. My Dad worked for her Dad at M&M Grocery for many years.*

*Merrell resisted my urging to move to a retirement community as I have. She could not bear leaving her dogs. She at least got to live out that desire until the end. She didn't mention the cat.*

*I will miss Merrell. My sympathy and blessings on all her family and others who knew and loved her.*

*Rev. Dr. Guston Browning  
Austin*

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**Guston H. Browning** - December 05, 2018 at 08:19 PM

HC

“ Carrie - I am sad for your loss, but delighted in reading the details of your mother's long and colorful life. I pass the house on Martha Anne often and surprisingly, it is your parents I think of - of their kindness and the home they shared. May both their memories always be a blessing. Hollie

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**Hollie Crowder-Nash** - December 05, 2018 at 05:28 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mrs. Merrell Midyett Rhodes.*



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December 04, 2018 at 07:34 PM



“ *Judy Narde lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Merrell Midyett Rhodes*



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**Judy Narde** - December 04, 2018 at 03:16 PM



“ *Lovingly, Cynthia Hall purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mrs. Merrell Midyett Rhodes.*



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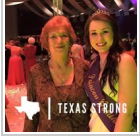
**Lovingly, Cynthia Hall** - December 04, 2018 at 01:48 PM



“ *Carrie, Mike and Joe, Please accept our deepest sympathies on the loss of your mother. Know that our thoughts are with you.  
Love, Edrie and Rainey*

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**Edrie Lyons** - December 04, 2018 at 12:02 PM



“ *Patricia-Gulley Aaron lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Merrell Midyett Rhodes*



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**Patricia-Gulley Aaron** - December 04, 2018 at 09:44 AM