

Renshaw, Martha Belle | 1924-2012

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Martha Belle Renshaw

Funeral for Martha Belle Renshaw, 88, of Tyler is 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 18, at Stewart Family Funeral Home in Tyler. A graveside service is 11 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 22, at Oaklawn Cemetery in Decatur. Paul Powell will officiate both services.

Renshaw died Tuesday, Aug. 14, 2012, in Tyler.

Born April 1, 1924, in Decatur to John James “Tige” and Marion “Elsie” Drew Renshaw, she attended Decatur High School where she was elected to be the first drum major of the high school band. She sang in the choir, which won the “All Texas Best Choral Club” award. While in high school, she represented Decatur three years in the Miss Texas contest.

She attended a summer art class in Taos, N.M., sponsored by the Hockaday School in Dallas, before attending Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. While at TTCU, she was chosen Ranch Week Queen and studied art, mechanical engineering and draftsmanship. She also designed and etched the horned frog used to represent the school and was also awarded a teacher of art certificate.

Upon graduation, Renshaw was hired by Consolidated in Fort Worth where she designed manufacturing devices and components for military aircraft.

After the war, she opened an art studio on McKinney Avenue in Dallas where she painted many portraits. She designed the program covers, posters and stationery for the State Fair Horse Show and the Dallas Charity Horse Show for 28 years.

She was preceded in death by an infant son, Bill Blanton Defee Jr. on April 30, 1944, and an infant daughter on April 5, 1945.

She is survived by her son, Jim Bray and wife, Linda, granddaughter, Lacy Finn, and great-granddaughter, Leila Finn, all of Prosper; and several cousins.

Memorials may be made to the Wise County Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 427, Decatur, TX 76234.