



Betty F Besser

JAN 10, 1935 - FEB 16, 2023



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Betty F. Besser, 88, of the Woodfield Country Club and Boca Lago communities of Boca Raton, Florida, died February 16, 2023.

Born in Quentin, Mississippi, January 10, 1935, on a hardscrabble family farm, Betty Besser was the second-to-last of eight siblings. She attended school in nearby Natchez, Mississippi, graduating Natchez High School, and shortly thereafter married Robert Rubin Besser who had opened a scrap and metals yard in Natchez: Natchez Scrap Material which later became Natchez Steel & Pipe, Inc.

Her rise from a rural farm girl to become president of the international steel company is a remarkable tribute to her own abilities as well as those of her husband of 56 years, deceased in 2010. Betty was a striking, 5-foot-8 blonde, in high school a part-time model and jewelry salesperson at Raymond's Department Store in Natchez.

Swept off her feet by Robert and entering the scrap business, she was his guiding right hand and supervisor of the firm's office staff through the late 1950s and 1960s. She attended night school earning her credentials in accounting. The business thrived and evolved from scrap metals to new steel, becoming a supplier of structural steel throughout the Mississippi Delta region, extending into Louisiana and Alabama.

During these years, Betty Besser was the mother of two boys, Bren Besser, now of Boynton Beach, Florida; and of Bruce Lawrence, a resident of Boca Raton, Florida who passed away in 2016. She was active in B'nai Israel, Natchez's Jewish congregation, now on the National Historic Register. She served as president of its sisterhood for many years. On the home front Betty was a gourmet cook, an exuberant party planner, and an elegant hostess.

Husband Robert, a WWII veteran in the 42nd Rainbow Division, was a regional officer in B'nai Brith who flew his own plane to conferences and meetings over the Deep South. Later Natchez Steel & Pipe owned a piloted plane that took the



CEO couple to business, religious and family events, especially to Little Rock, Arkansas, Robert's home city where numerous relatives resided.

As the company grew, it opened branches in Alabama, Mississippi and then headquartered in Houston, Texas in the early 1970s where Betty and Robert resided in the Galleria district. During this time the couple became world travelers, both for business and pleasure, making numerous trips to Europe, Japan and Israel. Betty was an officer in Houston's United Orthodox serving terms as its first female president and receiving an appreciation banquet in her honor.

Natchez Steel & Pipe had become a \$60 million dollar operation with more than 100 employees and offices across four states. Robert retired as CEO of the business and Betty Besser became its president in the early 1980s with her son Bren heading the computer department of the family business.

By the mid-1980s, Betty and Robert retired to Boca Raton, Florida where they resided in Woodfield Country Club. Betty became a financial officer of the Woodfield governing community and both were active congregants of B'nai Torah, where Robert led Torah services.

The couple led the kind of fairytale life movies and novels depict about Boca Raton retirees, garnering countless close friends, traveling and summering in Hawaii, California, Vermont, Chicago and Maryland, plus Europe and the Middle East. Both sons moved their families to Boca Raton and began their own businesses; they were followed by Betty's step-daughter, Donna Besser Stone in Boynton Beach, Florida.

Following Robert's death, Betty became a duplicate bridge player earning masterpoints at several Palm Beach County bridge clubs and competing in regional tournaments. Bridge became her passion as she built dozens of new Boca Raton relationships and a following of both competitive and very dear party bridge friends.

Betty Besser was preceded in death by her husband Robert, her son Bruce L. Besser, and grandson Dylan K. Besser of Boca Raton; step-daughters Miriam Besser of Jerusalem, Israel, and Sheila Besser Fine of Sulligent, Alabama. She is survived by: son and daughter-in-law Bren and Joanie Besser of Boynton Beach;



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daughter-in-law Marcella Besser and husband James Kirley of Boca Raton; step-daughter Donna Besser Stone and husband Gerald; Step-grandchildren: Bella Besser, Israel Besser, Rabbi Shmuel Besser, Adam Fine, Abbe Fine, Aric Fine, Alec Stone, Leah Stone; Grandchildren: Madeline Besser, Rachel Thomas, Henry Besser; 16 Great Step-grandchildren; as well as many nieces and nephews.

A graveside service will be held on Sunday, February 19 at 12:15P.M.


Eternal Light Memorial Gardens


11520 State Rd. 7


Boynton Beach, FL. 33473.

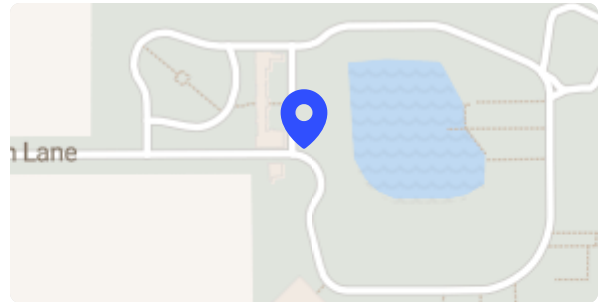


Graveside Service


 **Sunday**, February 19, 2023


 12:15 PM ET

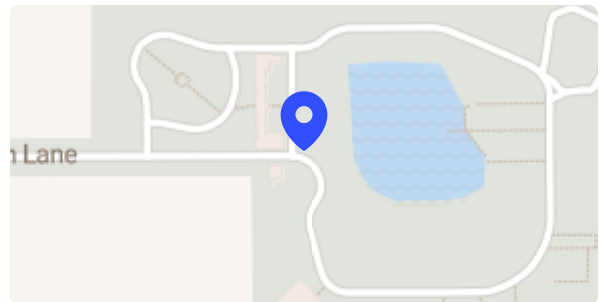
 **Eternal Light Memorial Gardens**
11520 State Road 7, Boynton Beach FL 33473



Cemetery Details

 **Eternal Light Memorial Gardens**
11520 State Road 7, Boynton Beach FL 33473

 **(561) 600-9218**





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Betty by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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