



Maxine Darst Flatt

August 25, 1930 - November 7, 2025

Maxine Darst Flatt, age 95, passed away in a Dallas hospital on November 7, 2025, following a short illness. Visitation will be held Thursday, November 13, 2025 from 5:00-7:00 pm at Max Slayton Funeral Home, 642 N. Rockwall Ave, Terrell, TX. Memorial service will be Friday, November 14, 2025 at 2:00 pm at St. John the Apostle Catholic Church, 702 N. Frances St, Terrell, TX. A private interment will be held at Oakland Memorial Park in Terrell.

Evelyn Maxine Valentine was born August 25, 1930 in Edgewood, TX to Thomas Jefferson and Oma Lee (McEnturff) Valentine. She and her parents and brother, John, moved to Terrell, TX when she was a small child and she attended Terrell public schools. In high school, she was a Class Favorite, majorette, member of the tennis team and she graduated from Terrell High School in 1947. She attended North Texas State University for one year before marrying Joseph Frederick Darst of Terrell. Fred and Maxine had two daughters, Mary and Martha.

In 1957, with two young daughters at home, she resumed her studies at Henderson County Junior College, now Trinity Valley Community College, and in 1985 she was honored by her alma mater by being named an Outstanding Ex-Student of TVCC.

In 1966, she continued her non-traditional role as a student by commuting to

Commerce, TX to East Texas State University (now East Texas A&M University), completing her degree in 1970. In 1972, she was admitted by the Texas Bar Association into the Independent Law Office Study Program. She studied under the direction of three attorneys and after completing the prescribed course of study, she took the Bar Exam and was admitted to the State Bar of Texas in 1976. She was the first woman in Kaufman County to be a licensed attorney.

In 1981, after five years of law practice with her husband Fred, she was appointed Terrell Municipal Judge. Two years later, she was elected Kaufman County Judge, a position she held for 16 years and she was the first woman to hold this office in Kaufman County. In addition, she became one of the longest serving judges in Kaufman County history.

As chief administrator of the county, she was responsible for adopting budgets and securing funding for all county services, in addition to addressing a multitude of county legal issues. Accomplishments during her tenure as Kaufman County Judge include the automation of integration of the various county departments; the construction of a new Law Enforcement Center; the construction of a County Children's Shelter; the hiring of a chief juvenile probation officer and a juvenile probation officer. Also during this time the sub-courthouses in Terrell and Forney were improved and enlarged, and a new sub-courthouse was built in Kemp.

Judge Darst served in a number of government-related, civic and professional organizations. She served as President of the North and East Texas County Judges and Commissioners Association, the Women and the Law Section of the State Bar of Texas and the Kaufman County Bar Association. She also served on the Board of Directors of the Texas Association of Counties, the Texas Association of Counties Judicial Education Committee and was a trustee on the Texas County and District Retirement System Board.

Additionally, she was a regional member of the Texas Constitutional Revision Committee.

She was active with the Kaufman County Child Welfare Board, Terrell Pilot Club, the Girl Scout Little House Board, and the Social Science Club of Terrell.

Her husband, Fred Darst, passed away in 1988 and she retired in 1998. In 2000, she married Douglas Flatt, a friend since high school, who lived in Tyler, TX - beginning a wonderful new chapter in her life. She moved to Tyler and enjoyed traveling with Doug and serving the Tyler community by serving on many volunteer boards, and in clubs and organizations, including the East Texas Symphony Board, Tyler Sister Cities Board, University of Texas – Tyler Development Board and the East Texas A&M University Foundation Board of Directors.

Doug passed away in 2020 and in 2023, she moved to Dallas where she enjoyed being closer to her daughters. She lived at The Tradition Lovers Lane, where she made many new, wonderful friends.

Survivors include daughters Mary Kling and Martha Darst, both of Dallas, grandson Jason Evans and wife Haleh of Calabasas, CA and their son Samuel, step-son Darrell Flatt and wife Donna of Tyler and their children John and Madeline, many nieces, nephews, and very cherished friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that those who wish to make a donation contribute to the Terrell Heritage Museum, (207 N. Frances St, Terrell, TX 75160 or at <https://www.zeffy.com/donation-form/c9d5983d-3180-4873-9329-b29dd4d3fbc6>) the Terrell ISD Excellence Foundation, (700 N. Catherine St, Terrell, TX 75160 or at <https://www.terrellexcellencefoundation.org/in-honor-memory>) or a charity of your choice.

It is with heavy hearts that we say goodbye to our beloved mother, grandmother, aunt, and friend, but we are proud of the meaningful life she led and the loving example she provided for us. She had the flexibility and intelligence to enjoy traditional roles as well as professional ones, and to take advantage of new opportunities that were offered to her. She embraced every chance to explore the world, forming lasting memories with family and friends. She visited 48 states in the United States and 39 countries, with plans to visit many more. She was dearly loved and will be missed forever.

Cemetery Details

Oakland Memorial Park

1000 W. Moore Avenue
Terrell, TX 75160

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **13.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Max Slayton Funeral Chapel
642 N. Rockwall Ave.
Terrell, TX 75160

Memorial Service

NOV **14.** 2:00 PM (CT)

St. John the Apostle Catholic Church
702 N. Frances St.
Terrell, TX 75160

Tribute Wall



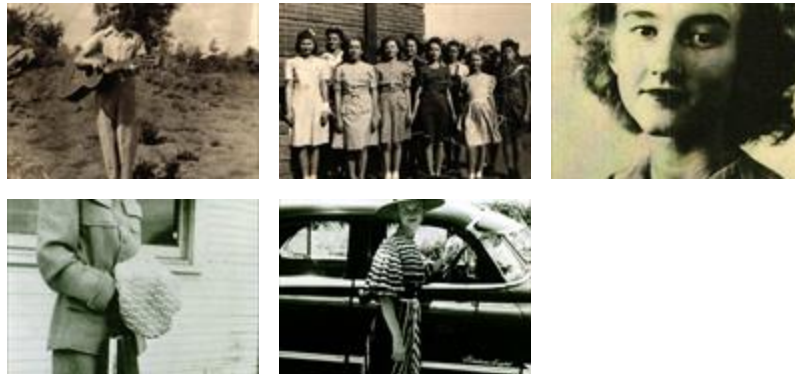
“ *Max Slayton Funerals and Cremations created a Tribute Video in memory of Maxine Darst Flatt* ”



Max Slayton Funerals & Cremations - November 14, 2025 at 01:00 PM



“ *167 files added to the album Memories Album* ”



Max Slayton Funerals & Cremations - November 14, 2025 at 01:02 PM

KS

“ *Maxine will be remembered as a wonderful mother and friend.* ”



Kay Squires - November 14, 2025 at 12:18 PM

RW

“ Rebecca W. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maxine Darst Flatt.

Rebecca W. - November 14, 2025 at 09:21 AM

VA

“ Mary and Martha; How blessed you are that both of your parents lived useful lives of service to the community and our country. Your heritage is rich. Our world is better because of their lives. Our love and prayers go to you

Van - November 13, 2025 at 08:39 AM

MV

“ Mary & Steve Vogds purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Maxine Darst Flatt.



Mary & Steve Vogds - November 12, 2025 at 12:57 PM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Maxine Darst Flatt.



November 12, 2025 at 11:03 AM

MD

“ Mary Darst-Yarbrough planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maxine Darst Flatt.

Mary Darst-Yarbrough - November 12, 2025 at 11:03 AM

CS

“ Dear Mary, Martha & family,
We were so sorry to hear about your Mother's passing. She was a beautiful & stunning lady who was the epitome of graciousness! She had a smile that would light up a room! Even though we have not seen her in awhile we truly enjoyed seeing your travels & beautiful places the three of you shared! Priceless memories! Sending prayers for both of you & your families!
With Deepest Sympathy,
Karo (Smith) & Wilson Stewart



Carolyn (Karo Smith) Stewart - November 11, 2025 at 07:49 PM

FM

“ On behave of the Dr. Jorge Martinez Family
A donation was made to the Terrell Heritage Museum in remembrance of one of their dearest friend.

Family of Dr. Jorge Martinez - November 11, 2025 at 04:51 PM

NS

“ Always graceful, charming and gracious, Maxine showed us how a life could be lived with quiet strength, intelligence and compassion. And joy. I will miss her so very much.

Nancy Stahl - November 11, 2025 at 03:52 PM

LP

“ Law Offices of Houston M. Smith, P.C. purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Maxine Darst Flatt.



Law Offices of Houston M. Smith, P.C. - November 11, 2025 at 09:34 AM

CP

“ I remember the lovely time spent in Tyler with your mom and was able to see all her Christmas decorations--esp. her collection of nutcrackers--when visiting in DECEMBER, 2021. She was a gentle and gracious lady. I will always think of that time in Tyler as our hostess.

Carolyn Pfeiffer

Carolyn Pfeiffer - November 11, 2025 at 09:06 AM

AR

“ Dear Mary, Martha and family

On behalf of the Rodriguez family please accept our deepest and most sincere condolences. We share in the saddeness and hurt that both of you as daughters are experiencing in these most difficult moments. Ms. Maxine made a great impact in our lives and we are sure that impact spreads far and wide to all who had the pleasure of knowing her especially loved ones and friends. We knew her to be the kindest, most compassionate and overall a very extraordinary woman. Ms. Maxine will always hold a very special place in our hearts. My family and I will keep you and all of your family in our prayers. May God comfort you and bring you peace in this difficult time.

Rodriguez Family

Arody Rodriguez - November 10, 2025 at 07:35 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Maxine Darst Flatt.



November 10, 2025 at 12:12 PM



“ Mary, Martha, and family, I have known Maxine since I came back to Texas in 1968. My Dad, would make sure we met her and saw her when we could. Now I know he was trying to guide us about what a woman can do. She was something else and did a great job with Kaufman County. She's seen many things in her life. Mary & Martha know this she was a very special lady. My prayers are with you during this trying time.



Sharon Collins - November 09, 2025 at 08:42 PM



“ Mary, Martha, and family, Please accept our sincere condolences for Maxine's passing as she had touched so many lives with her kindness and always present intelligence. We should all be so fortunate as to present ourselves to the world as she did. We are hoping that fond memories fill the void she leaves. With sincere sorrow, Rick and Sandy

Rick / Sandy Traylor - November 09, 2025 at 03:23 PM

NW

“ Delighted in knowing her in her Tyler years... initially when she served on the East Texas Symphony Orchestra Board. Supportive from the wings, she advocated with me for the Orchestra, the Orchestra Foundation and the Women's Symphony League, a Family of integrated organizations. As Executive Director, I appreciated her insight and foresight as a valued "sounding board".

Revered, Respected, and of immeasurable wisdom, graciously shared.

Nancy Wrenn - November 09, 2025 at 12:18 PM

JC

“ Jim, Debbie, Travis And Kayla Chastain lit a candle in memory of Maxine Darst Flatt



Jim, Debbie, Travis and Kayla Chastain - November 09, 2025 at 09:31 AM

DH

She will be missed dearly.

Detrese Harkey - November 09, 2025 at 10:16 AM

DH

She will be missed Dearly

Detrese Harkey - November 09, 2025 at 10:16 AM

ST

“ My thoughts and prayers are with the whole family. The greatest gift someone can offer is to make a positive impact on other. I'm deeply sorry for your loss today, but what an inspirational life it was!

SuzAnne Beard, formerly of Terrell - November 09, 2025 at 07:18 AM



“ *To a very special lady.*



Janis Blair - November 09, 2025 at 04:18 AM

FK

“ *Praying for your family.*



Frank and Elaine Kasper - November 09, 2025 at 12:15 AM

GR

“ *I am so very saddened to hear of your mother's passing. She was one of the kindest lady that I ever met. I was blessed to have know her. My thoughts and prayers are with you. My God give you comfort in this sad time.*

Gena McHone Radcliff - November 08, 2025 at 11:03 PM

PS

“ *Mary and Martha, I am so saddened to hear of your moms passing. What a dear dear, friend and employer she was to our mom and special lady to us. She will be greatly missed. You are in my prayers and thoughts. Love Pam Sitzes*

Pam Sitzes - November 08, 2025 at 10:26 PM



“ *Richard Brazell lit a candle in memory of Maxine Darst Flatt*



Richard Brazell - November 08, 2025 at 09:49 PM



“ *Judge Darst was a wonderful lady. She always had a ready smile to greet you with. She was a wealth of information on many subjects. She was a smart and very talented lady but also a great friend to many. She will be missed. Our hearts go out to Mary, Martha and all the family. Rick and Cindy Hunter and Ginger Adams.*

Cindy Hunter - November 08, 2025 at 09:18 PM