

OBITUARY

The Honorable Theodore Zanderson (Ted. Z.) Robertson passed away in his sleep at his Dallas home on October 13, 2017, two weeks after celebrating his 96th birthday.

During his judicial career, he served as a judge at every level of the Texas civil court system, from Probate court, to Juvenile court, District court, and the Court of Civil Appeals, to the Texas Supreme Court where he was appointed by Governor William P. Clements in 1982 and subsequently elected to that position where he served until 1989. Before becoming a judge in 1965, he practiced law in San Antonio and Dallas. In 1960 he became chief of the civil department in the Dallas County district attorney's office and worked on the Lee Harvey Oswald case. After his time on the bench, he served as counsel to the Law Offices of Frank L. Branson. He was also a guest lecturer at SMU Law School and has received the distinguished alumni award from St. Mary's University School of Law in 1981.

Judge Robertson came by his devotion to public service for the people of Texas naturally. His ancestors were among the earliest settlers in Texas from east of the Mississippi river. His great-great grandfather, Sterling Clack Robertson, was an empresario from Tennessee who founded Robertson Colony in the Brazos River valley in the 1830s. Sterling Robertson fought at the Battle of San Jacinto, signed both the Texas Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the Republic of Texas, and was a Texas senator in the first two sessions of the Congress of the Republic of Texas. Judge Robertson's maternal ancestors included Colonel Theodore H. (Ted or T.H.) Zanderson, born in Denmark, who co-founded Jourdanton, Texas and was appointed by President Grant as U.S. Consul to Denmark for 7 years.

Judge Robertson was born in San Antonio on September 28, 1921, where he grew up and attended public schools. He went to both YMCA camp and law school with Maury Maverick Jr. In between, they fought together in WWII, just as their ancestor Robertsons and Mavericks (who were also friends) had in the Texas Revolution.

He served in the South Pacific during the war. His ship, the Etamin, was sunk by a Japanese torpedo and he spent the night in the water off the coast of the Philippines.

Judge Robertson is preceded in death by his first wife, the former Avis Cole; his second wife, the former Margie Brewer Gardner; his sister Catherine Letitia Steinkraus; cousin Betsy Madden Welch; and his “double-cousin” Charles A. Robertson II (Cotton) and his first wife Sigrid Elizabet Granberg and second wife Charlotte Beckmann. He is survived by a host of family and friends who loved and admired him, including his cousin Fred O. Stone and his wife Helen; his step-daughter Terry Pletcher and her husband John; sister-in-law Barbara (Bobbie) Brewer; his nieces and nephews Robert Sidney Blake and his wife Anna, Barry Scott Brewer, Steve Brewer and his wife Ashley, Leslie Hagin and her husband Mike Subit, Charles A. Robertson III and his wife Patty, and Robert F. Steinkraus and his wife Julie.

Thanks to his second wife Margie, as well as his extraordinary caregivers and dear friends Beverly Mays and Juventino Juarez, he lived his last years in the peace and contentment of his home with his four-legged best buddy, Rocky. He remained engaged with current events and people to the last day of his life. He could often be found sitting on a rocking chair in his beautiful backyard garden, enjoying a cigar with Rocky, the birds, and friends or family.

He was a kind, generous, and humble soul, chock full of honesty, integrity, emotional and intellectual openness. He was also a wise and inspirational friend, advisor and mentor, who cherished true stories and good people. He will be greatly missed by those fortunate enough to have known and loved him and who will always remember him with adoration and deep gratitude.

A private celebration of his life with family and friends will be held in Dallas.