

*Cecile
James
Scribner*

An Autobiography – Book 1

Cecile James Scribner

An Autobiography

Daughter

Sister

Wife

Mother

Grandmother

College Graduate

Missionary

This book is written for my children and my grandchildren.

As you read it, I hope you will feel happiness and gratitude for the wonderful life that we have all had together. I hope you will feel the love that I have for all of you and for your father (and grandfather), and for those of you who have joined our family through marriage. I hope that all of you who carry the name of *Scribner* (in one way or another) will be as proud of that name as I am. I am also proud to carry the name of Jesus Christ. I am so grateful for the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is because of my faith in the Savior and his teachings that *I know* we will always be together now and forever, along with those many loved ones who have already left us.

With much love,
Mom and Grandma
(Christmas 2006)

Holding Time

A second passes quickly and
then before you know it
another has already gone
Running, you fall with fingers
grasping the air where seconds once were

The years move like the
seconds now. Falling weightlessly
through powdered snow
Unable to stop or hold tight
The years race on

by *Christianne Scribner*



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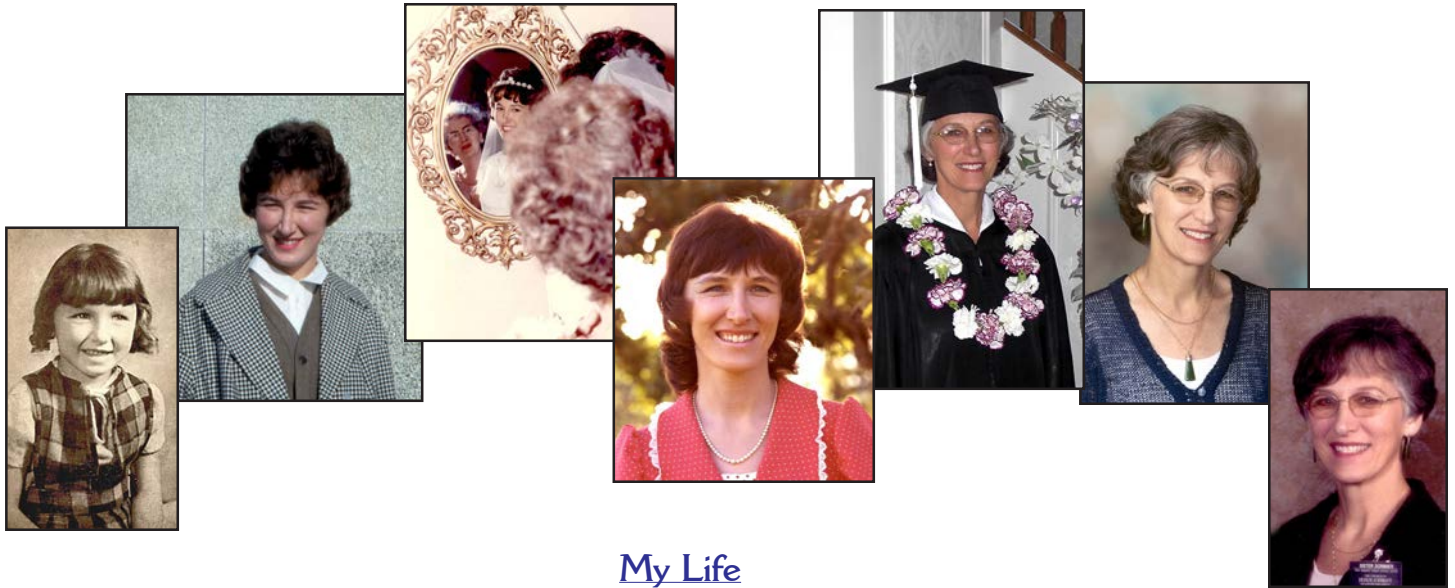
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My sentiments exactly. . . Thank you for expressing this, Christy,

Lacking Words

I sit very still
 with my pen held steady over
 a blank piece of paper
 frozen in place
I know words used to describe my family
 would never express the truth
 never could I explain even one person
 adequately enough
 to be satisfied
Love, support, friendship, and intellect
 are a few descriptive words
 but at the minimum
 volumes could be written

by *Christianne Scribner*



My Life

Life Stories are meant to be written when old
 And old, I never shall be!
 So perhaps I will write just a short line or two
 And a bit of my poetry.

My life is wrapped up with my family and friends
 And my faith and my love for God,
 And so many things that surround me each day
 (I'm sure I appear to be odd)

But *odd* I am (and so are you)
 Perhaps the word is *unique*,
 So carefully read with an *open mind*
 As I allow you to take a peek

Of my life which is better and better each day
 (Though sadness creeps in now and then
 When loved ones are lost—some from this earth,
 While others let go of God's hand.)

You'll read of love as babies are born,
 And children who "sure done us proud."
 Yet life is not smooth, many tears I have cried—
 Quietly—never out loud.

Our story is good —yes, it's your story too
 My hope is to make you smile
 It should be told—over and over again
 Until it is truly worthwhile!

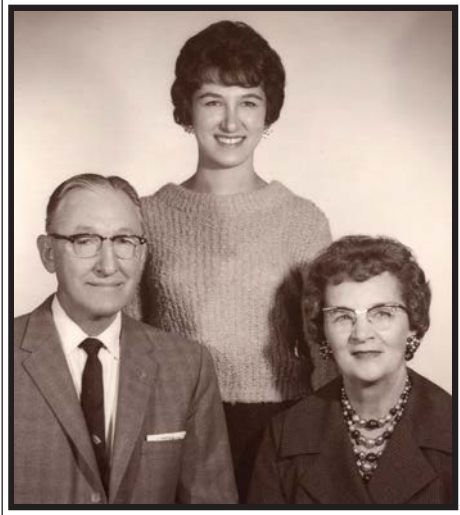
Cecile Scribner 2006

My Mother and Father and Patriarchal Blessings

Remember my mother—*my hero*—who said:

“If it’s not worth exaggerating, then it’s not worth telling!”

Pid I say my mother was *my hero*? Well, there’s a good place to start. I wish so much that I could’ve been just like her, particularly as a mother. I wanted to be. I tried to be. Oh, she had some faults, and I was aware of them even as a child, but they are small compared to the magnitude of the strength I gained from her as I grew up. I was a better housekeeper than she was, but she was a better gardener than I could ever be. Even today as you walk through the Old James Home on 1815 North 650 East in Provo, you can see the trees, the roses, and the flowers that she planted—they persistently bloom every year. You can even see the walks and some of the patios that she laid. I also come up short as I compare my expertise in the kitchen to her cooking, but nevertheless, I can make her bread, her roast, her eight egg cake, her clam chowder, her macaroni and cheese, her chili and her orange rolls—and I’m good at these things! I had to learn how to make these so I could keep her alive in our hearts forever. She’s been gone now for over twenty-six years, and yet I think of her with great warmth almost every day.



I wish I knew how she and my father taught us to be good. I don’t remember any lectures--any severe *talking to*. But somehow I knew in my heart that I would not make too many wrong choices

because I could not envision bringing hurt to my mother or father—somehow I just felt that they expected me to make right choices, and had faith in me that I would. I’ve talked many times to my children about the blessings given to them in their patriarchal blessings if they would be faithful, but I’ve never talked to my children about my own patriarchal blessing. I don’t think any of them have read it. But it says:

“Honor your parents. They would give their very lives for you and are anxious and concerned about you. I promise you if you do that, you will not only have a long life, but a happy and a useful life here in the earth and throughout eternity.”

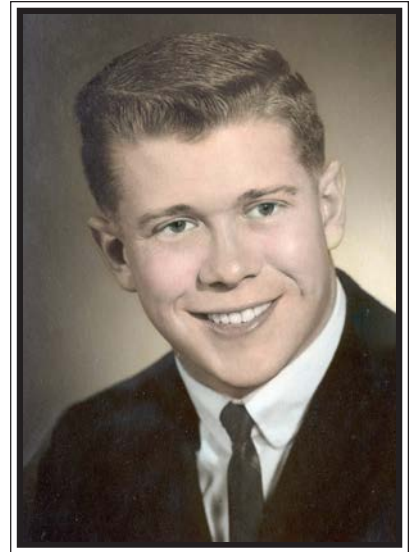
And then there were great promises given me if I honored them all the days of my life. Death, and the veil that has been drawn between us has not ever broken that bond. I feel it all the time. Not even now could I make a choice that would hurt them, for if I did, they would feel it, and I know I would feel the pain I caused them. Even something as simple as drinking a coke—it’s a line I couldn’t cross. And yet I don’t remember my father ever telling me to not drink a coke. And if I had, what would he have done? Or what would my mother have done? I don’t think they would’ve done anything—coke simply was not allowed in the house. There was never any fear. So, how did they do it? I wish I knew.

There’s much to write about my marriage to Doug. But I’d like to write something else about patriarchal blessings. I don’t think my children have ever read their Dad’s patriarchal blessing either. But his has given me as much strength as my own has given me because in a marriage we share each other’s blessings. There’s a part of his that applies to me very much. It says,

“Marriage is ordained of God and when you consider taking this most important step seek the guidance of your Heavenly Father and you shall find a companion who will join with you in the Holy bonds of eternal marriage for your everlasting happiness, and together you will make a home that will be blessed with lovely children. They will love you and follow your teaching and grow up in the ways of righteousness and through them your posterity will increase and your name shall be known and honored.”

(given October 16, 1960 at twenty-two years of age).

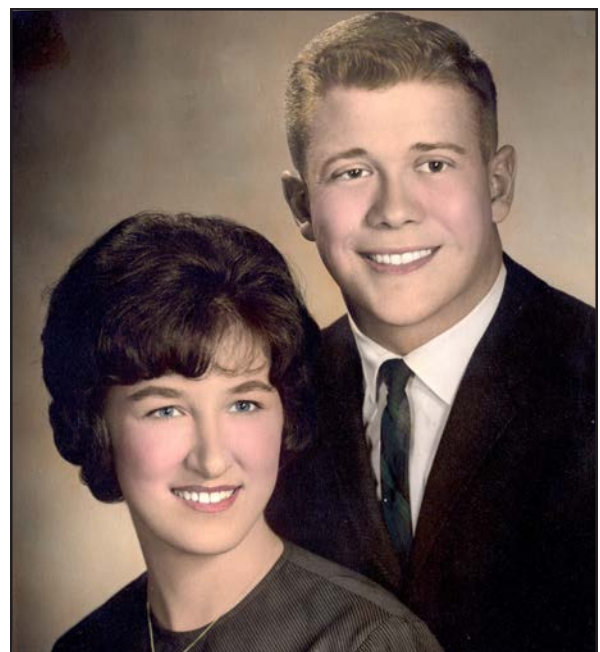
This gave me great hope and helped me take the step of faith into the dark when I married him. I say this because when I met Doug, and we started *falling for each other*, I found out that he had the mumps during his senior year in high school. Mumps hardly exist anymore because of vaccines, but everyone was aware (back then) that for a boy during his early development, during puberty, it was the wrong time to get mumps. This made boys sterile. My blessing had said something about children, and when Doug later joined the Church and received a blessing from his patriarch, his contained this great blessing of children who would love him! And yet. . . I was so scared to take that step of faith. Being able to have children meant everything to me. I was very anxious to be a mother—much more interested in that than finishing college. Would God give us a miracle and give us the promised blessings? With much fear and trepidation and only a little faith, I said, “yes” across that altar in the Manti Temple.



Which, of course, brings me next to my children—or did I miss something? Should I say something about the courtship first? Well, I’ve written a lot about this in other places, but maybe I can think of something—something juicy—that I haven’t said before. While I’m thinking, I’ll include a poem that Doug wrote me while we were serving our mission together in New Zealand.



Cecile, age twenty-two



Cecile, age twenty-three (almost) and Doug, age twenty-six -- May 1964

Our Fortieth Anniversary

2 June 2004

Cecile,

So many memories cross the years,
Some with joy – some with tears.
Who would dream when we began
This journey together; Our Father's Plan
Would lead us and quell our fears.

We thought that children wouldn't come,
But Father sent them one by one.
It was raising them that gave us trials
Through surgeries galore. But yet their smiles
Repaid us well when all was done.

Missions too were in our dream,
From Australia's plain to Scotland's stream.
Our children hearkened to the call
And took their turn. And yet, not all –
For each must find their way to lean.

Grandchildren are a new delight,
Their faces radiant and bright.
Missing them gives hearts a twinge
Of occasional sorrow. But out upon the fringe
We know they pray we lead aright.



Forty years have come and gone,
Which challenged both our brain and brawn.
But love has grown and blossomed more
As we mature. What joy I felt in store
To see you in New Zealand's dawn.

I Love you.
Doug

Courtship

Oh my goodness—how do I backtrack and cover the last forty years, and yet keep this interesting! Well, let me write something fun about our courtship. Doug and I met in Australia while we were both serving missions. No, we did not court on our missions! Quite the opposite. You see, I had my heart set on someone tall, someone with extraordinary eyes, someone from Utah or Idaho, and did I say, *someone tall*? In fact, the person I was going to marry was the person I had already met—he was on a mission in the Eastern States, and we were writing each other faithfully! I just knew the Lord had led me to this other man. He was a wonderful person (and I think is now making someone else quite happy). So all Doug and I

did on our missions was *meet*. Well, perhaps a little more than that—he was my Zone Leader, and he had a special way of describing me in those days:



Cecile and Lucie together in Adelaide, Australia 1962

“I never met anyone who worked harder with less success than Sister James.”

Well, now that’s pretty romantic! I also had a way of describing him in the missionfield:

“I’ve never known anyone so short to have such long fingers!”

In the mission field we kept *Goal Boards*. We kept a list of *Twenty Golden Contacts*. Then in another column we would write down those who were the most interested in the Gospel and who were allowing us to teach them. Then

... we would put them on a *three week schedule*. This meant that we would teach them once or twice a week, but during that time we would also contact them daily in one form or another—a note, a phone call, etc.—just to remind them of how interested we were in keeping their friendship. At the end of the three weeks, hopefully they were ready to be baptized and enjoy the full blessings of membership in the church.



President McConkie and Cecile 1963



Doug in 1961

Well, Doug thought this was a wonderful system! If it worked so well in the mission field, then why wouldn't it work in finding a wife? So he kept a *goal board*!! He listed twenty girls that he needed to *weed through*. Then all he had to do was find one that he could put on a three-week schedule, and whammy! Engagement! Oh man, if I had known I was on a *goal board*, I would've run sooooo fast! That was tacky! He came home from his mission a year before I did, and of all crazy things, he was dating a beautiful girl from Oregon, who was already advanced to the *three-week schedule*. However, she only made it to about two and a half weeks and decided to quit poor ol' Doug!

I came home from my mission and met a lot of returned missionaries from Australia—such great friends who provided me with quite a bit of good social life! After only two dates, my missionary from the Eastern States totally broke my heart. I can't even explain to anyone how this hurt, how much I felt that the Lord had forsaken

me. How could I have written him for two and a half years and based the hope for my whole eternal life with him, and then to suddenly have it washed away after only two dates? I guess there were reasons that I won't go into here (and it wasn't that I wasn't cute and fun to be with—cuz' I was!). But at the very lowest point of my life up to that point, I got a phone call:



“Hello.”

“Hello, Doug Scribner here.”

“Oh, hello.” (and who even cared—I didn't)

Well, he asked me out. We ate dinner (\$5.00 each), and then we walked home to his house. On the way, we bought a milkshake at a Dairy Queen. When we got to his house, he popped popcorn, then he put a record on the record player, and we danced, and then he sat me down and played his ukulele and sang songs to me. Well, you know what he sang:

Down the Way Where the Nights are Gay, Froggy Went

A'Courtin, The Fox Went Out On a Chase One Night, and You Are My Sunshine. It was a busy night!!

I was only among the *twenty golden contacts* on his goal board, so I didn't get asked out again for another whole month. (You know, rotate and weed out, etc.). I was sure I would never see him again. Too bad, because I found myself kind of liking him (but please, no more dates like that first one!). That was October. At the end of November I got another phone call:

“Hello.”

“Hello. Doug Scribner here.”

(“Oh, you again”—I thought). This time we went bowling. It was a GREAT date!! A magic moment. Strikes all over the place! You just have to hug somebody after you've thrown a strike! That was really a great night! But man, he was still working through other names on that list! I never got another phone call until

December! And by this time, I was doing some chasing (you know, just *happening* to be in the right places at the right time). I just found him so comfortable to be around—something quite intriguing about him. What was it? I decided *Tall* wasn't so important anymore (Dancing? Yes. But, Tall? Maybe not). It was now Christmas vacation, and Doug went to California, and I started dating another one of the Australian missionaries—



he was tall, and his name was Wes. I didn't mean to fall for him, but I really did like him. He happened to also be a good friend of Doug's. There was a third friend—his name was Dave (another Australian missionary) and a good friend of mine, Doug's and Wes'. When Doug came back from California, Dave pulled him aside while studying on the top floor of the library, and said,

“Why don't you cool it with, Cecile—Wes is pretty interested.”

When Doug realized there was some fairly serious competition, he put me on that *three-week schedule* so fast! Man, we were dating every other day in January, and in between times I was dating Wes. Wow, this was social life at its best!! I know you must be worried about my

school work. Well, when I say “*dating*,” I mean study-dates—all of us (Dave, Doug, Wes and me) on the fifth floor of the library! But after the library closed, the walks home were productive! On the 31st of January 1964, Doug asked me to marry him! I could feel it coming, but nevertheless I said (and meant),

“Does this mean I have to break my date with Wes on Sunday?”



Courting Days -- 1964

MARRIAGE

Eternity

A Sabbath's morning's early rays
With trills of birds which voice their praise,
Amidst lush green, beside a stream
Where we spent many days,

All brings to mind God's plan divine,
That many things change not with time;
Eternal things, everlasting things,
As your own soul and mine.

And beautiful music knows no end,
For though by man it has been penned,
It was before, and will be more,
Where heavenly voices blend.

And Godly principles we'll see,
Like Honor and Integrity –
They will not fail, though men may rail,
But last Eternally.

The love that's shared by man and wife,
Increased by courtship all through Life,
Fades not with years, nor death, nor tears,
But yields Eternal Life.

by Doug Scribner

4 June 1964



We were married in the Manti Temple on the 4th of June 1964. How did I decide between Doug and Wes? It wasn't really black and white. It was a feeling, I guess. I suppose I could say that it was because Doug asked me and Wes didn't! I was so drawn to Doug's spiritual strength. I remember that it crossed my mind a few times that there would be moments in our lives that my spiritual strength would be drained, and I would need to rely on someone stronger than I was—and I think I'm a strong person spiritually. Doug has always been spiritually strong. He's unwavering—absolutely, totally, unwavering. It took him a couple of years of being taught by the missionaries, but when he finally got over trying to intellectually know whether or not the Church was true and finally let the Spirit touch his heart, he received a testimony that was, and has been all these years . . .unwavering. I didn't know at the time he proposed that this would be the case, but I felt I would need that kind of strength, and I felt it in him. Sometimes, there have been conversations with my children about who makes the decisions, and whose stronger willed, etc. and most of them agree that it's *Mom*. They couldn't be more wrong. I'm more verbal, and Doug is quiet, so what seems *to be* on the outside, is really just a façade. I totally rely on Doug's judgment and final word. We've had some disagreements in our marriage, but very, very few arguments. Doug usually always sees through things more clearly than I do. I most always have him read what I write, check for better ways to say things, or even see how I look in something before I buy it. But just to keep everybody guessing, Doug used to always say,



“Celie makes the small decisions in the family, like, ‘how many children we will have,’ ‘what house to buy,’ ‘where we should live,’ and ‘what car we should buy.’ You know, little decisions like that. I make the big decisions like ‘who’s going to be the next president of the United States,’ ‘who should we go to war with next.” You know, big decisions like that.”



First Family Photo --
1964

A companion from
the missionfield in Australia--
Anne Milburn (from Melbourne)



A Poem and Picture from
My Nephew, Ron Hirschi

TAKE CARE AND BEWARE
FOR PEOPLE ARE ROUND TO STARE
AT THE WEE SMALL MUMMY
CARRYING THAT GREAT BIG TUMMY

OH IT WAS SUCH A SHORT TIME AGO
THAT SHE WAS THE FANCY OF EVERY BEAU
BUT JUST LOOK AT WHAT 9 SHORT MONTHS CAN DO
TO THE FIGURE, IT JUST WONT DO!

JUST WAIT, IN A FEW WEEKS SHE CAN SEE
HERSELF, AS SHE USED TO BE
BUT THE RELIEF FROM HER TRAVAIL
WILL BE REPLACED BY A KID THATS BOUND
TO WAIL.



Little did either of us know that this strength I needed would be tested so early in our marriage. We had severe complications with our first pregnancy—a placenta prevea, and an emergency C-section that was done because my life was in danger. I was only seven months pregnant and only seven months married. Obviously, the mumps were not a problem! — That alone was a miracle and blessing, but the loss of our first little boy who was stillborn was very difficult. I relied on Doug’s blessing that he gave me before they performed the C-section. So many, many times have I been thankful that Doug was worthy to give those blessings to me and to the children—to give us the strength to fight through illnesses in the middle of the night, and to get through the hard times. Our baby was named Scott Alan Scribner.

Cecile by Doug Scribner (4 January 1965)



Just seven months since we were wed;
 Oh darling how the time has fled.
 And yet this night as I review
 Experiences I’ve shared with you,
 I feel there’s much I have not said
 To you, my dear Cecile.

Boots’ concussion, a thesis to write,
 A ‘top Timpanogos—spectacular sight;
 Each Mia Maid who earned her award
 Laid down her rose as her spirit soared
 With love for one who taught her light. . .
 My heart was filled, Cecile.

My pregnant wife, you left your home
 To stand beside your husband alone.
 You worked to budget, scrimp, and save;
 And as devotion thus you gave,
 I noticed that a softness shone
 Within your eyes, Cecile.

And now this week in bed you lay –
 The soul of Scott has slipped away
 To await with God the Millennial reign
 When he’ll come forth our son again.
 How I’ll rejoice that day to say,
 “We’re all together, Cecile.”

Still deeper now and more mature,
 A lovely luster of love does pour
 Out from your heart as we can see
 These losses bring humility.
 A beautiful woman—no wonder you’re
 The one I love, Cecile

We were young and so inexperienced with life. We were alone in this. My parents were on a mission in Australia. The doctors asked us if we wanted to see our little baby boy, but we said, “*No.*” The hospital took care of the burial. We were trying to swallow all our hurt and disappointment, and almost pretend the whole thing didn’t happen. If I could go back, I would want to hold that baby in my arms and look at him, and memorize his face, and kiss him. I was in the hospital for a week, and in bed for another week at home. I didn’t cry much until I received a letter from both my mother and my father from Australia. Then I cried. We were so alone without any family member with us, and just new in the area so we had very few friends. Nevertheless, the church members were good to us. For some reason, I remember this one lady who brought us a huge chocolate cake—the whole cake just for us—not just a couple of pieces, but a whole cake! And I remember this other lady in the ward who brought us macaroni and cheese—I knew that she could hardly afford to feed her own several children. Then another lady came in and cleaned my whole bathroom, and another took my ironing basket and the next day brought all my clothes back—ironed and on hangers.

A few things brought me some strength during that time. First of all, the letters from my mother and father just gave me the realization that there was somebody out there hurting as much as we were. I began at that time to wonder about my Grandmother Howard. How was she able to bury three of her twelve children who were only hours old when they died? I read some of her history. She wrote, “*Just a tiny life, Sweet as a Perfumed Kiss. But we are nearer heaven, I know, because of this.*” I’ve always loved the poem that Doug wrote to me while I was in the hospital. All these things came together to give needed strength.

- Our First Christmas And A Couple of Unusual Experiences:

When we talk about memorable Christmases, we always seem to remember our first one the best. And yet, it was our very poorest (money-wise). We didn’t and never have believed in going into debt to buy *things*. But, unless we did something like that, were we going to have a good Christmas?



We only had about fifteen dollars we could allot to Christmas that year. This was our first year out of school, and Doug had a good job, but we had made one major mistake—we were renting a furnished home that was more than we needed. Doug came out to California a week before I did to do some house or apartment hunting. We were both so excited with the amount of money that Hewlett-Packard was going to be paying him—\$800.00/month—that Doug found a house right in the middle of expensive Palo Alto homes. It was furnished with antiques, it was right next to the chapel where he had joined the church and it had three bedrooms! And it was only going to cost us \$200.00/month rent! Only one-fourth of our income. . . Well, this sad story lasted for eight months before we were able to find a place more suitable to our income. In the meantime, Christmas was coming and we only had those fifteen dollars. I spent \$5.00 on material and sewed Doug a plaid bathrobe, and he bought me a pair of nylons. I also bought him a pair of socks. We then bought styrofoam balls and toothpicks and pink snow spray. With this we built ourselves a

Christmas tree. It was so pretty! Doug made up a bunch of rhyming notes that led from one *clue* to another until I found my one gift. We also drew names in my family and I had Dick and Lorna’s family. Since we couldn’t buy anything, I went into my hope chest and pulled out items that I thought they and their family could use. They were small, so I wrote poems to go with them to help convince them they were getting a great gift. For my brother Dick, we gave him our best and biggest boomerang from Australia, but told him he could only keep it for five years and then must give it back because it was so valuable to us. It was a fun Christmas!

991 Lincoln Avenue
Our first home to rent in
Palo Alto, CA.
We paid \$200/month.
It was killing us!!



Then about a week later, this unusual thing happened. I was so overtired because of my pregnancy that I started to yawn. This one night, I yawned so BIG that my jaw locked open! There I was, unable to close my mouth—it was stretched wide open—and stuck! It hurt, but mostly it seemed rather embarrassing. Was I going to be like this the rest of my life? We rushed to the emergency room—me with my hand covering my stuck wide-open mouth—and gently the doctor manipulated the joints of my jaw, and my mouth snapped shut. The muscles in my face hurt so badly. It was the next evening when my labor prematurely started and we lost our first son. We sometimes reflected on this, and wondered if one trauma helped to bring on the second.

Only a couple of months earlier, Doug had to be rushed into the emergency room for another unusual incident. We were in our bedroom going to bed when suddenly he just went WILD. A moth that was flying around in the room, suddenly flew straight into his ear, and its wings were beating against his eardrum, driving him WILD! The doctor carefully took it out with tweezers. All this added to a rather eventful first year of marriage.



The first home we lived in was the Old James Home in Provo, the home where I grew up. I lived here with eight other girls during the year we were courting. My parents were still on their building mission in Australia.



Doug was living in the Old Knight-Mangum Home on Center Street in Provo. This is where he proposed to me. Then, during the summer while Doug was finishing his Masters' Degree and writing his thesis, we lived in the James Home in the apartment while the girls still lived in the other part of the house. Doug rather enjoyed



being surrounded by all those girls! Then we moved to our great (mistake) house in Palo Alto, but after eight months of being *rent-poor*, we found a house on 1336 Emerson Avenue. It was furnished, had three small bedrooms, had a piano and a fenced in yard so we could keep our dog, and it only cost \$125.00/month. It was fabulous!



Celie

As Christmas Season comes again,
And laughter fills the air –
I have some feelings deep inside
That I would like to share. . .

At least a part of our success—
Six happy married years—
Is: We enjoy each other more
Through time; with glee and tears.

Not strangers, held in common BOND
By law or custom, we
Know each other's mind and soul;
Our friendship makes us FREE.

Russ and Gina, what a PAIR!
And now that Craig makes three;
But as each Spirit joins our clan,
It builds our UNITY.

A hand made crèche, a Christmas TRAIN,
In these, what do I see?
Family traditions that you began
With love and NOVELTY.

It's that same charm that brings me joy
While watching a creative dance
That you designed and taught to YOUTH,
Their talents to enhance.

You love to decorate our HOME –
A talent the James girls share—
Just for the joy it brings our kids
In knowing that we care.

Your body is a thing of beauty,
A slim and graceful form;
I love to watch you, hear you laugh,
Or hold you until morn'.

Your face reflects the thoughts inside
Mischievous or sweet;
The purity and peace show through
And make my life complete.

So as our Christmas Season ends
I'm thankful for your LOVE;
And grateful for God's plan for us—
A Heavenly Life Above.



Gina and Rusty and our first Christmas Train

Doug
(Christmas 1970)



Grandma James and Craig

Teamwork

The Homely Girl Story:

Over the years Doug and I worked on many things as a *team*. Perhaps our first bit of teamwork was when I decided to have a Christmas Australian reunion party at Doug's place—this was the Christmas of 1963 before we were married and the reunion was for all the returned Australian missionaries that we knew. If you'll remember up to this time we had only had one date in October and one date in November, and I was worried that there weren't going to be any more dates, so this *great idea* occurred to me. Doug and I could plan this party together. It gave me an excuse to call him—so I could suggest the idea to him. That's right, he fell for it! I went digging through our basement to find some of my mother's Christmas decorations so we could have a lot to do together. You know, we would have to pile all the decorations in a car, take them to his place, decorate, and then after the party, we would have to do everything backwards and get those decorations back into my mother's basement. My mother and father were still on their mission in Australia, so they'd never know the difference. This would require a lot of *togetherness*, and perhaps in the whole ordeal, I was hoping Doug would ask me to be his *date* at the party. It was a brilliant idea! I'm certainly no dummy. In fact, it was such a good idea that when I got on campus the next day, I ran into Elder Fergus, and said,

“Elder Fergus (couldn't think of his first name), guess what? We're going to have a party for all the missionaries, etc. . . . Be sure to ask someone and come.”

Without even a moment's hesitation, Elder Fergus said,

“That really sounds great. Do you have a date yet?”

I just about swallowed my tongue. I didn't have a date. . . . not yet . . . but I was hoping Doug would ask me. After all, that's what all this was for! I couldn't lie, but simply said,

“Well, no not yet. . .”

It was still two and a half weeks away! The next day, Doug met me at the Honor Council office and asked me to come into a room where we could be alone for a minute. Oh. . . . I knew what was coming. He said,

“Since we're going to be doing all this planning and decorating together, why don't we go together that night.”

He *took the bait* exactly as I wanted him to!!! But I had to answer,

“I really want to go with you, but as I told Elder Fergus about the party yesterday, he asked me to go with him.”

Oh my goodness, you should've seen the surprised look on Doug's face. I wanted to crawl in a hole. There's so much more to the story. Doug went out and asked the most beautiful girl on campus (well, the most beautiful one that would go with him). She said “yes.” I was super upset! She was beautiful! Why didn't he just ask some *plain Jane* and be happy with it? Well, I had another plan. As we took all the stuff out of the basement, into his car, out of the car, into his place. . . well, I made him run. We ran here, and we ran there. We both knew what I was doing, and it became a good game. I just wanted him to be so tired that he'd never be able to enjoy the evening with that pretty girl! So, I must say, even though we didn't go together that night, the afternoon of

decorating was a wonderful success story. Just listen to this—great music on the record player, pretty Christmas decorations lighting the room, snow falling outside, no one in the house except us—the most perfect setting for a romantic dance. I got a pretty nice kiss from that dance. Do you want to hear the rest of the story? Truly unbelievable!

Just as we were about to enjoy another romantic dance (and possible kiss) the phone rang. It was the beautiful girl on campus who “unfortunately” had to break her date with Doug for that night. Oh. . .now I felt bad. So I called *our good friend Wes* and asked if he knew anyone to line up with Doug that night. He did. When she showed up, she was the homeliest girl I had ever laid eyes on. But this is where Doug’s true character came shining through. I was sure that he would just ignore her, and send *signals* with his eyes to me all night (after all, he had just kissed me that afternoon!), but no, not Doug. He gave that homely girl one hundred percent of his attention and made her feel like she was beautiful. I admired him and kind of hated him all at the same time. But he was no dummy either. This only increased my interest in him.



A Thesis. . .then Debt:

Well, that was one of our experiences of working as a team. Another was right after we were married and together we finished his thesis—he wrote it, I typed it. However, it was all about electrical engineering stuff, so even though I typed it, I hardly understood a word. We had another experience. Right after we lost our little Scott, we found ourselves deeply in debt. We had no insurance to help us pay for the week in the hospital or the C-Section or the burial. This money, added to the money that we owed for Doug’s schooling, put us over \$4,500 in debt—the equivalent of \$45,000 today! And somehow we felt that we had nothing to show for it—except his education did get him a good job with Hewlett-Packard Company. Nevertheless, we didn’t know how we were going to get this *rock* from around our necks.

An opportunity—a great blessing—was given to us. Our new Bishop (Jack Wheatley) of the Palo Alto Ward, was looking for a way that he could leave his five children and take his wife to Europe. We were the answer to his prayers, and he was certainly the answer to ours. We took on the job of watching the family of five for over six weeks. Our new family—John, Victoria, James, Elizabeth and Charles Wheatley—what an experience we had with them! Only once was there a near casualty. One day James came running down the stairs and ran right through the glass door that went outside. The maid had just cleaned the windows, so it didn’t look like a door at all. Fortunately, the glass didn’t start falling down until he had gone all the way through, but then the glass crashed to the ground. It frightened all of us. We quickly gathered the family together and said a prayer of gratitude. We lived in a mansion, the maid came once a week and changed all the beds and did the washing, the credit card bought the gas for the car that we used that wasn’t ours, and a large spending allowance bought our food, but no one came and cooked those meals. It was great training for our future life as we learned to cook in big pots! This was a lot of luxury for two kids right out of school. And when all was said and done, we got a check for \$600.00 for the six weeks of work (again, that would be like receiving \$6,000 today!). However, for two months we never had to pay rent, utilities or gas, so we made out like bandits! Everything went straight into paying our debt and part of it went into saving for a down payment for a home. That job started a series of jobs that brought us right out of all our debt. Other very rich families asked us to baby-sit their kids for a week here, two weeks there, and the Wheatleys asked us several times. We sat for Ron and Claire Pohlman’s children several times as well.

A Missionary Experience—almost:

Well—how did this *teamwork* start? Perhaps it was on our mission when we very first met each other. Since I had never seen a baptism yet, Doug was determined that Sister Smith and I get someone *in the water* before he left for home. So he asked us to take him to an appointment with whoever was closest to baptism. We were going to teach a missionary discussion together! The two companionships met at this *golden* investigator's house. We knocked on the door. Sure enough. . . they told us that they never wanted us to come back. That was our most golden contact. Well, at least we walked up to the house together. That's *teamwork* isn't it?? Doug, on the other hand, met someone the very last night of his mission. She had been taught by other missionaries, but would not commit to baptism. Doug went to see her the last night he was in Australia. She said something like,



Sister Smith and Me

“You young kids come out – all younger than I am – and try to tell me something I don't already know.”

Well, Doug smiled at her and said,

“That's where you're wrong—I'm older than you are.”

He was older than most missionaries—twenty-four years old. She was surprised, and for some reason that *did the trick!* She didn't want to wait another minute and was baptized that night about midnight! Now, that's a good ending to a mission!



The Era of Plays, Dances, Roadshows and Babies:

Somehow, our church callings over the years have been an effort in teamwork. One of the most interesting and exciting times we had together was when Doug was Chairman of the Stake Activity Committee and I was called as the Cultural Arts Specialist. We had some fabulous years. That was when we decided to do some things that we'd never done before. We put on some plays over those years: *Within These Walls, Annie Get Your Gun, The Field Is White, The Sound of Music, Fiddler On The Roof, and Music Man*. As I look back, our good friend Ralph Hoyal had a part in every one of these productions.



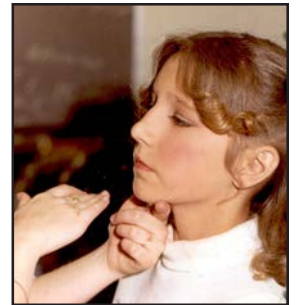
Our own children had amazing opportunities as well. Craig was in *Within These Walls* and *The Sound of Music* (played the part of Rolf), Russ and Gina were dancers in *Annie*, Scott and Jimmy were dancers in *Music Man* and even Spencer and Lora were part of the townsfolk in *Music Man*. Christy was in a play at her Junior High that year so couldn't be in it.



Russ in *Annie Get Your Gun*



Gina in *Annie Get Your Gun*



Craig in *Annie Get Your Gun*



Craig in *Within These Walls*



Music Man



Lora and Doug



Jimmy



Jimmy



Spencer



Scotty



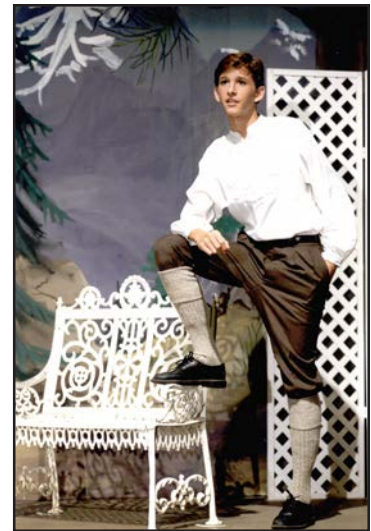
Scotty and Jimmy



Cecile Music Man



Gina in Annie Get Your Gun



Craig as Rolf in Sound of Music

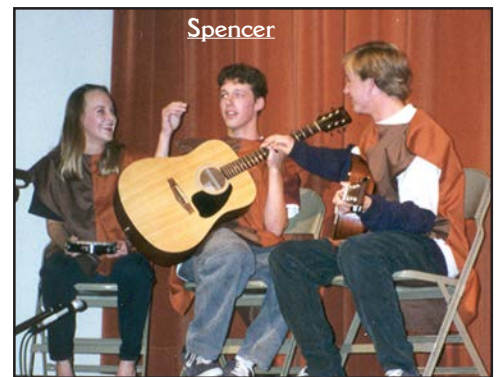


Nettie Clark and Cecile
Annie Get Your Gun

...and Roadshows



Craig



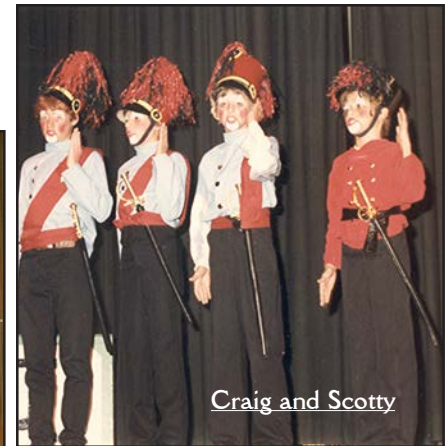
Spencer



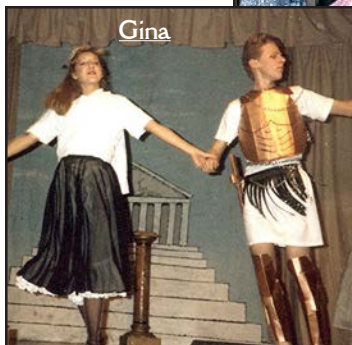
Russ and Gina



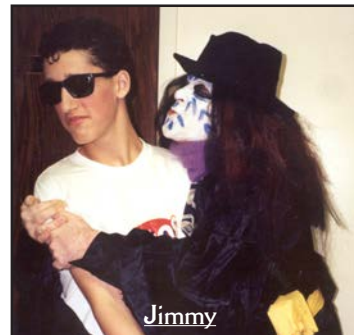
Christy



Craig and Scotty



Gina



Jimmy



Christy

Lora

In between the plays and roadshows, we produced *Family Dance Parties*. Over a five year period we must've done about fifteen of these. They all had a different theme, and we encouraged everyone who attended to wear costumes according to the theme. We also had huge floorshows at each dance—so these things together would help bring a crowd every time. There was no age limit on the dances, but we suggested that the children at least be old enough to dance. We had *The Gay Nineties, The Roaring Twenties and Eighties, The Fabulous Fifties, The Sizzling Seventies, The Grand Bi-Centennial Ball, An Evening in Paris, The Halloween Dance, Mardi Gras, Polynesia, Texas Hoedown*, and so many others.

All of our children at one time or another participated on these floorshows. They all became good dancers and performers doing clogging, square dancing, waltz, salty dog rag, jitterbug, country, charleston, hulas, and whatever was required. Hundreds of members of our stake had the opportunity to act, sing and dance in these events. The last big event we produced before we left for Scotland in 1984 was the Northern California Regional Dance Festival, which involved about 300 dancers. Russ, Gina, Craig, Scott and Christy all danced in this. Gina at age fifteen even choreographed one of the major dances. My goodness, we were going to practices constantly. Doug and I also danced a couple of numbers in this festival. It was held in the gym at Santa Rosa High School. The festival was held in the end of May 1984—the same month that Russ received his Eagle Award, the same month that Rochelle Barlow died, the month before Russ graduated from High School, and only a month before we had to move our whole family of ten to Scotland, plus send Russ off to Brigham Young University. Not to mention that we had a brand new baby! This was a year deeply embedded into our memories.



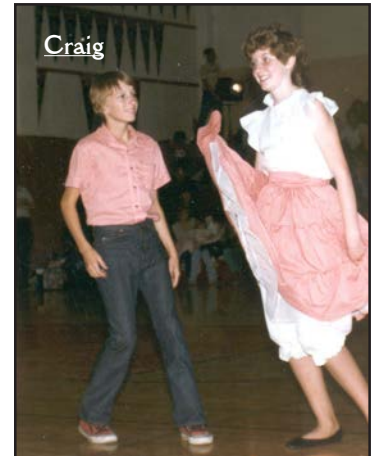
Russ and Gina



Scotty



Christy



Craig



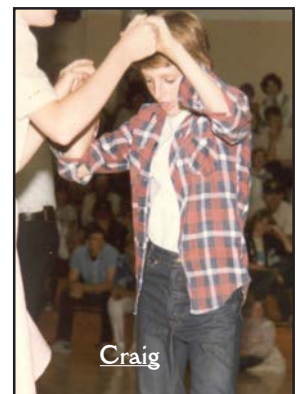
Russ



Cecile and Russ



Gina



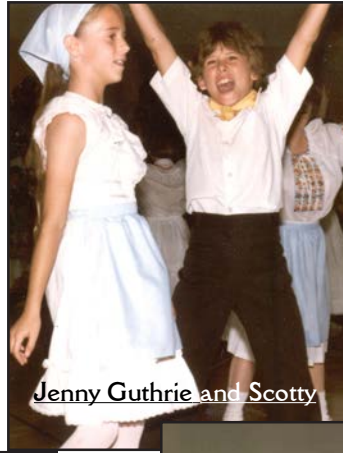
Craig



Christy



Torey Davis and Spencer



Jenny Guthrie and Scotty



Russ and Gina



Joan Ogden and Russ

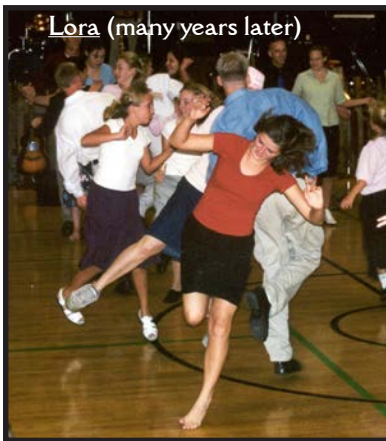


Craig



Mardis Gras

Craig Russ Gina Cecile Doug



Lora (many years later)



Cecile and Scotty



Russ and Gina



Christy and Doug

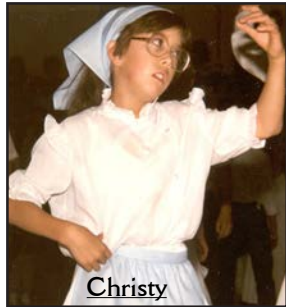


Jimmy and Michelle



Jenny Guthrie and Scotty

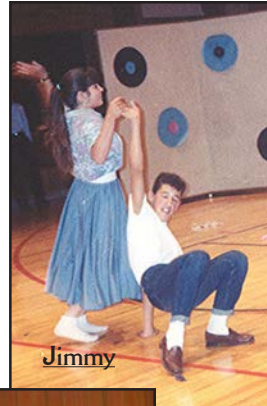
These were our years of plays, dance parties, dance festivals and road shows--about twelve years! We were certainly kept busy during this time both in practices and performances. In fact, the Stake Road Shows ended on November 23, 1983, and practices for the Regional Dance Festival began January 1, 1984. In between those two dates, we had to plan, create, think of the music, the color of costumes, etc. that each of the three stakes would create—we needed a plan. Only one little hitch—Lora was born December 5, 1983. What happened in that period of time is included in the section of my life entitled, “Spiritual Experiences.” I don’t think of that period of time ever without knowing that there is a God in Heaven who watches over us, helps us, and answers our prayers of need and desire.



Christy



Cecile and Cecil



Jimmy



Cecile and Craig



Cecile and Doug



Jimmy, Markie Hoyal, and Spencer



The Powells



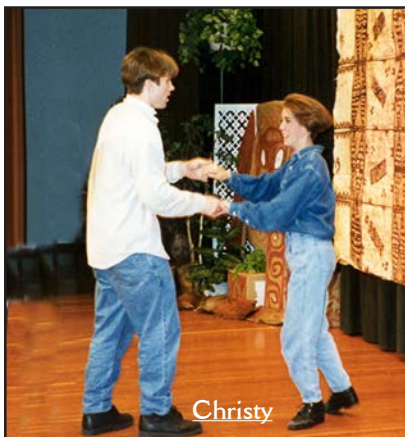
The Smiths (Smurfs) Halloween Dance Party



Jimmy

Christy

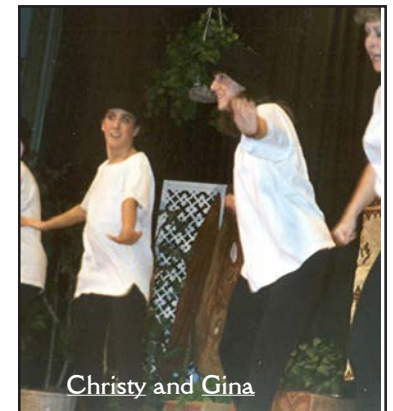
Scotty



Christy



Cecile and Scott



Christy and Gina

In these events, Doug and I learned how to be producers—the *behind the scenes* people. It’s a wonderful place! There were always talented directors, ticket sellers, technicians, performers, costumers, set builders and set designers—all we ever had to do was find them! Everyone accuses me of being the person that no one could ever say “no” to. However, that’s not true. Many, many people have said “no” to me, but I have to admit, more have said “yes.” Doug was one of my easiest “yes” people. Well, if her ever said “no” to me, I would threaten him!! I could always get him to be in a production. He was the Rabbi’s son in *Fiddler On the Roof* and joined other Bishops and High Councilmen in the train scene in *The Music Man*. He was always willing to be in any filler spot that we needed. And me? . . .well, I would sometimes dance on the floorshows and fill in for missing people, but only once did I fill in on the stage. We couldn’t find a *little man* to be the actual *fiddler* on the roof, so finally (one week before opening night) I asked Joan Stam, our director, if she thought I looked like a *little man*! I was making the beards that year, so I just constructed a beard and bushy eyebrows for myself and fiddled on that roof for six glorious nights! So many good and happy memories.



The Music Man



Fiddler On The Roof



The Field Is White



Jitterbug!
(My favorite dance!)



Luau at Hoyal’s House
Dick Stam and Doug



Thank you Party for Bishop Scofield
Doug put in as the new Bishop - 1974
Sentimental Journey

Single Adults and Us:

After we came home from Scotland in 1987, we joined together (more teamwork) in another Church Calling that took us into new uncharted territory. We were advisors to the Stake Single Adults. This was a monumental challenge! Just a few people were coming out to the firesides. The firesides were horribly boring—the people didn't look happy to be there, the room we were in felt cold. I wanted to run. I liked to have fun jobs, and this wasn't going to be fun. Oh, how wrong I was. Doug and I had a small disagreement right at the beginning, but I *pushed* on this one. Doug felt that the Single Adult Leaders just had to have a *good heart*, good testimony, etc. and I felt, said, and insisted that yes, they had to have those things, but the first requirement was that they had to be good looking!!! Else how in the world were we ever going to get some of the people to stay once we had pulled them out of the woodwork! The leaders just needed to be good looking! Well, he let me fly on this one. And we did find a good looking guy and a good looking gal to lead this group. We changed the firesides to our own home and held them every month. We concentrated on the thirty and forty year olds, and just let the older ones come as they would. But we wanted to find the younger people who had become discouraged with being single, divorced, and fitting into a church that was family-oriented. We had parties, went canoeing, went to the temple and also went to multi-regional dances with them—trying to organize a lot of people so all could go together and enjoy whatever was *out there*.

Two wonderful things happened in our lives during these years: We witnessed several courtships and marriages, and many receptions in our home, and the second thing was that our own marriage became better because we added all this social life to it. It was like courting years all over again! Sometimes when we would pull into bed about two or three in the morning, our kids would say,

“Mom, Dad, didn't you get in a little late last night? You need to watch that curfew!”

So much could be said about our love for this group of people and about the many, many valuable lessons we learned from them. We looked at the Church in a new light, and realized and even felt the challenges that so many of the singles have as they strive to live worthily and to keep all the covenants they have made in the Temple, and also as they strive to be successful single parents. Perhaps the greatest lesson we learned from them is that happy marriages are made by happy people. And you are the only one who can determine your own happiness. I'll never forget one of the *unhappy* women that came to a fireside one night and looked up at our family pictures and said to me,

“If I had a family like that, and a husband like yours, and a home like this, I would be happy.”

I looked at her and realized that those things wouldn't make her or anybody else happy—not if she didn't know how to find happiness without them. For sure, these things could help, but happiness comes from within and radiates outward. You can't *pretend* happiness. It was usually those people who radiated happiness from within that became attractive to the opposite sex and had some of those wedding receptions in our home. For example, a memorable one was Ray and Kuulani Reynolds wedding in August 2001. We worked with this couple long after we were released. They finally remarried after being divorced for ten years. That was a glorious day in the Temple to see this family all put together again! Well, our calling with this group came to an end when Doug was called as Stake President in 1993.





Yep, that's right. . .
Bill Moffett (our first leader)
was good-looking!



Rob and Sheila Pratt 12 Sep 1992



Roger and Chellise Sessions
December 1992



Bill and Mylene Moffett
20 Feb 1993



Lora w/Johnny Whitaker
(Family Affair Fame)



Steve and Olivia Whitaker
28 September 1992



Kerry Ann and Randy Sides
11 December 1993



Annette Breazeale and Mark
18 December 1993



Doug w/Katie Schällich



Sessions and Pratts

Okay. . . this picture is indicative of all the fun we had w/the singles. This was a *Bad Taste Party!* Dianna Paulson and Sharon Daly came pregnant! Really bad taste!



Cecile and Zemen Magos



Mike & Wendy Cupp and family



Always supportive!
Donna and Ray Smith



Sharon Daly and her sons performing at one of the annual Singles' Christmas Firesides at our home.



Ray and Kuulani Reynolds and children.
August 2001



The 1997 Sesquicentennial Pageant:

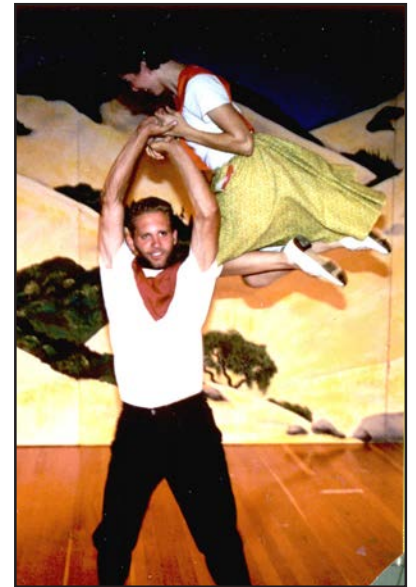
Perhaps the biggest thing we did together in Santa Rosa was to produce the *Sesquicentennial Pageant*—Celebrating 150 years since the first Mormons arrived in California. Christy had just come home from her mission in France, and Rob had just come home from his mission in England, and there they were—both dancing in the Pageant. Christy did the hula and Scottish number, plus choreographed and taught the clogging number, so naturally she just had to spend a lot of hours with Rob. Well, they were engaged a few months later. Lora also danced in the Pageant, and particularly in the clogging number—she was young, but a very good dancer.



Rob, Aaron, Christy, Lora in *Gold Fever*



Christy with Kuulani Reynolds and her daughter, Kaipo (Hawaii)



Rob Jones and Christy



Christy Leslie Huber Jessica Stratford Lora

Aaron Stahl and Lora

Christy
Rob
Aaron
Lora
(Scotland)



Perhaps my great specialty in all these productions has been to involve the busiest people ever in some small (or big) way. For example, I believe that when you're a bishop, stake president, high councilman or mission leader, you need an *outlet*—and not only that, but it's good for your *flock* to see you enjoying life and setting an example by involvement. Two of my greatest successes:

The *first* was *Music Man*, and the train scene was done by bishops and high councilmen. President Reed Ogden was the Conductor, and of course, Ralph Hoyal was the one and only music man—Professor Charles Hill. I can still see Jack Hershey, standing up, swishing his newspaper back and forth, and saying, *"Wha'doyatalk, wha'doyatalk, wha'doyatalk?"* It was no small feat to get this group of non-professionals to do this difficult scene, all in the rhythm of a train. We just lost Jack Hershey this week—he died on 31 August 2006. He was a Stake President's Counselor, Bishop, Contractor and Builder, Great Friend, and a "Wha'doya talk" Specialist. He also said something once that Doug and I have quoted for years: *"By the time a person's thirty-two years old, he's even responsible for the way he looks!"*



Ralph Hoyal, Val McOmer, President Reed Ogden Bishop Ray Smith, Bishop Gary Thompson, President Jack Hershey,

The *second* great success was during *The Sesquicentennial Pageant* in California in 1997. We gathered this same *sort* of men (this time Doug was Stake President) plus a few others, and they became the *Mormon Battalion*.



Al Daley, Don Daley, Randy Sides, Val McOmer, David Freebairn, George Potter, Tom Payne, Ron Dunford
David McOmer, Martin McOmer, Mike Ginn, Rob Jones, Doug Scribner, Philip Terrbillini, Jared Fullmer,
Ray Smith, Bryce Davies

This was one of my moments of inspiration. The script of the whole pageant was written by three of us, and at one point it just seemed too *heavy*. One day while fretting over this, the words for the Mormon Battalion just rolled off my pen. It still makes me smile:

The Mormon Battalion

We are a Battalion—500 Mormon Men
Called to Serve
In a War, we heard
To help our Country Win!

We marched and marched from Council Bluff
In the State of I-O-Way
Then blazed through mountains, desert sand
To Cal-i-for-ni-A.

A pack on our back we carried
A musket at our side
A heavy load in a desert
The sun so hot, we DIED

Our wagons DIED in that heavy sand
Our beasts? They died as well
Twenty men would push and pull
We tell you, it was. . . SWELL

Yes, our tongues would SWELL—our mouths were dry
We often had to dig
For water in that desert sand,
Our TROUBLES—they were BIG

Those Mountain walls were BIG as well
And often very close,
We chiseled with our crowbars
We got a great big dose. . .
. . . Of TRIALS. . . TRIBULATIONS. . . BUT. . .

We are a Battalion—500 Mormon Men
Called to Serve
In a War, we heard
To help our Country Win!

We marched and marched from Council Bluff
In the State of I-O-Way
Then blazed through mountains, desert sand
To Cal-i-for-ni-A.



David McOmber, Pres. Daley, Bishop McOmber,
Don Daley, Mike Ginn



Bishop Ron Dunford



President Ray Smith and Jared Fullmer

Our tattered clothes were falling off
Our boots were barely shreds
The courage to “go on” was gone
And sweat poured off our HEADS.

Our HEADS and hearts were far away
We dreamed of fam-i-ly
This gave us strength to carry on
To make this Country FREE!

For six long months we FREELY marched
To war -- 2,000 miles!
When we arrived there was no WAR
Sooo, we added to our TRIALS. . .

By marching further up the coast
To join the Brooklyn Saints
We needed work to earn some dough
And TIRED? NO, WE AIN'T. . . . 'cuz

We are a Battalion—500 Mormon Men
Called to serve
In a war, we heard
To help our Country Win!

We marched and marched from Council Bluff
In the State of I-O-Way
Then blazed through mountains, desert sand
To Cal-i-for-ni-A.

Words by *Cecile Scribner*

Music by *Lora Scribner* (written 1997)

Orchestrated by *Rick Laurell*

Did you see Lora Scribner's name there for writing the music? She was only thirteen years old at the time. I had written the words, but needed a catchy little tune so I could present it to the committee for approval. She went to the piano and made up the tune, and Brother Laurell liked it, orchestrated it, and it was sung by all these fabulous men—led of course, by the three men in the Stake Presidency—Doug, Ray Smith and Al Daley. I can still see these men, marching up from the back isle, through the audience, carrying their wooden rifles on their shoulders, and every single night bringing the *house down* with cheers and hollers from the audience! I could've died and gone to heaven on that memory!

Perhaps our finest moments of teamwork were spent in New Zealand from 2004-2006 when we served as Directors of the Visitors' Centre there. Doug and I could not have accomplished anything on this mission without each other. We each had strengths that the other didn't have, which added completeness to both of our lives. Doug appreciated my abilities, and I appreciated his. Had either one of us been alone, it would've been impossible to do a Pageant or to do the Readers' Theatres or to organize Christmas Lights in the Centre. We had the time of our lives!! More on this later. . .



Bishop McOmber, Mike Ginn, Rob Jones,
President Scribner, David McOmber



Rob Jones, Randy Sides,
Val McOmber, President Scribner

*Our
Children*

Russell Glenn

Gina

Craig Douglas

Scott Howard

Christianne

James Daniel

Spencer John

Lora Michelle

Mom

I know that I don't give her
All the respect I should
And I don't always provide her with
All the love I possibly could.

But I've got a Mom
Who will never let me go
No matter how much I might hurt her
Or the bitterness I may show

Because I know she loves me,
My strife and sorrows she'll endure
It helps me know I'm Special
To have a Mom like her.

By *Craig Scribner*

(15 years old - March 1985)



My Parents

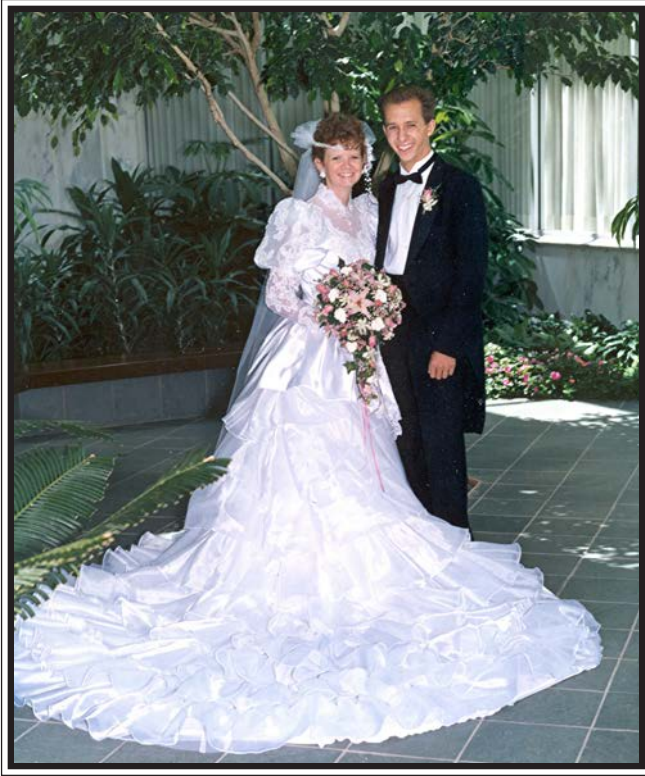
I could hardly believe
what my eyes told as true
Around their eyes and laughing mouths
 were creases
Their soft dark hair streaked with grey
But when the music started
and they began to waltz together
 I saw
Youthful eyes full of love and acceptance
Knowing each other
Becoming a porcelain figurine
 Frozen together, but
 moving with grace
Timeless feelings bind them to each other
and they are young again

by *Christianne Scribner*



Russell Glenn Scribner

Today is September 6, 2006 – Russ turned forty years old today. How do I describe Russ today as compared to how I would describe him thirty years ago? Well, I will include some of those old descriptions, and I think you will find that many characteristics stay with us all the way through our lives. Russ is a faithful and devoted husband to Kari (Gee). They were married the 19th of July 1990 in the Portland, Oregon Temple, and have now been married for over fifteen years. They have three boys—Benjamin Douglas, Daniel Jerry, and Jacob Russell. These are good boys who are now in the process of growing into very handsome young men.



Russ was named after two of our favorite missionaries while we were serving in Australia--Russ Fotheringham and Glenn Hawkes. We've kept in touch with both of these elders all of our lives, and they are wonderful men. They both served outstanding missions forty years ago, and have lived exemplary lives. Russ (*our Russ*) has a way of understanding human nature. I find him very easy to talk to. He listens, and he's very perceptive at what is a driving force in someone's character, or what is making someone unhappy, or whatever. Over the years I've often gone to him for advice, and I always listen carefully to what he says.

I've watched him in his marriage as he's made very intricate and beautiful creations for Kari. He just recently painted their bedroom and did such a beautiful job on it that we *hired* him to come paint three of our rooms. In his early years of marriage I remember a beautiful well-balanced mobile that he made out of shells for Kari. I remember a fancy wall piece that he made so she could hang a display quilt on it. He also just recently painted his office and designed it very artistically. It's an extremely comfortable room to be in. No matter what he does, it's creative—he strives for perfection. He designed the backyard of a rental house and then put it together according to plan—very artistic! I believe in all of this, that he and Kari work together on designs and picking colors, etc. They're good at this, and their ideas are complimentary to the other's ideas.

Russ is good at detail, and I think that is a good quality as he designs databases for people. I think Russ enjoys working alone and being alone, but he's quick to respond with people and in crowds as well. He knows how to keep things happening. Russ is a superb teacher. Doug and I have been in many classes that he has taught at Church. He has an amazing ability to draw comments out of his classes, and he seems to always have a wealth of knowledge to back up all that he presents. As far as the Gospel is concerned, Russ doesn't try to make it complicated. He's never fought against principles or commandments.



Much of what a man achieves has much to do with the kind of wife he has. For example, in the Church a man cannot take on leadership if the woman demands all of his time at home or for her or for the children. She has to be willing to take on a bigger load. I believe Kari has done a good job in encouraging Russ to do his Church callings, to participate in community leadership, to enjoy more development of his talent in singing, to attend the temple, to achieve success in his own business—she's been unselfish in these things. He's also been encouraging to her to develop her talents—particularly in the writing that she does regularly for local newspapers. They've both learned to budget and to live economically. Are these two people perfect? No, I don't think so, but it's a lot more fun to write about the highs rather than the lows.

As a child growing up Russ had wonderful talents and successes—he could play the piano well, he could sing, he was very good in scouting, but for some reason he didn't seem to like himself a lot. We had a hard time getting him to talk to us, and later on when we asked him, he said,

“I just didn't think I had anything important to say.”

He didn't think his opinion mattered much. His Patriarchal Blessing was interesting. It seemed to be describing a person we didn't know at all—someone with confidence. When it was sent to our home, and Russ let us read it, I was amazed. I asked Doug to read it, but when he got about a fourth of the way through, he put it down and said,

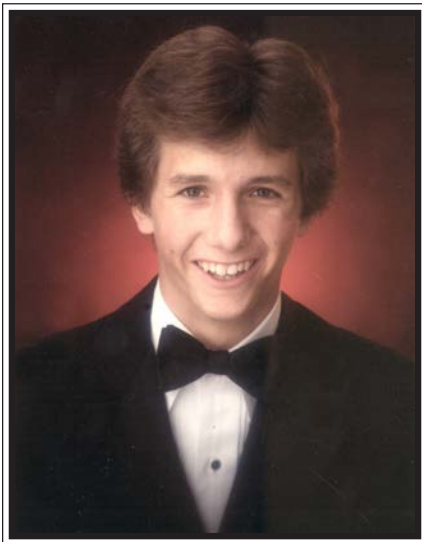
“It's too much revelation for me.”

In other words, we could not yet see Russ as Heavenly Father saw him. Parents tend to see more of what their children are not achieving rather than what they are. Russ' Patriarchal Blessing was given to him in 1983 when he was about seventeen years old by a patriarch who he had never seen before, and we just didn't understand how such abilities were part of our son, especially when we didn't feel like our communication with him was going anywhere. So how much faith did we have in patriarchal blessings? Russ' blessing talked about him in his pre-mortal life and said,



“You were one who was highly favored because you accomplished all of your works faithfully and completely, always endeavoring to do a little more and a little better. You had an inclination and a desire to work toward achieving some degree of perfection in everything you did. . .”

Could this really be our Russ he was talking about? Here was a good test of our faith. We couldn't even get Russ to pick up his clothes! His ability to be creative came out in a very interesting way when he was in his early teens. We were going to be gone for several hours and gave him an assignment to get the rest of the sand from the front driveway to the backyard under the swing set. When we came back, to our dismay, only one-fourth of a bucketload had been taken to the backyard. Without assessing the situation, we got mad at him; but after assessing the situation, we realized how creative he was being. He had rigged up some fancy way of taking a bucketload of sand, bringing it up to the treehouse on a pulley, and then putting it on a long rope that led all the way across the yard to the swingset. We had new lawn planted and didn't want him to take the wheelbarrow over it. Well, this was his fancy solution! It didn't really work because the sand was too heavy, but he had spent the whole three hours setting it up, organizing the younger kids to help him, and trying to get it to work. We asked him to be creative, and he was. This was one of those times that I had to backtrack and apologize profusely to Russ for getting angry with him. This creativity is still a big part of his nature.



1984
Russ receiving his Eagle Award in
Scouting and Graduation from
Santa Rosa High School



Russ was always very close to Spencer. Spencer got all of his love when Russ was a teenager and Spencer was just a little tyke, and there were some big tears rolling when Russ flew away from Scotland that first summer and went to BYU as a freshman.

October 1984

Dear Russ,

A way up here in Scotland
We think of you each day,
And hope for you, and care for you
And especially for you. . . pray.

But there is one who misses you
And wonders how you are,
And wonders why his favorite friend
Has gone away so far.

Remember, Russ, you've got to be
A leader for this lad,
He'll follow you and be your *bud*
Through thick or thin or sad.

Please feed your spirit every day
A prayer both night and morn
And then observe the Sabbath day
To goodness you were born.

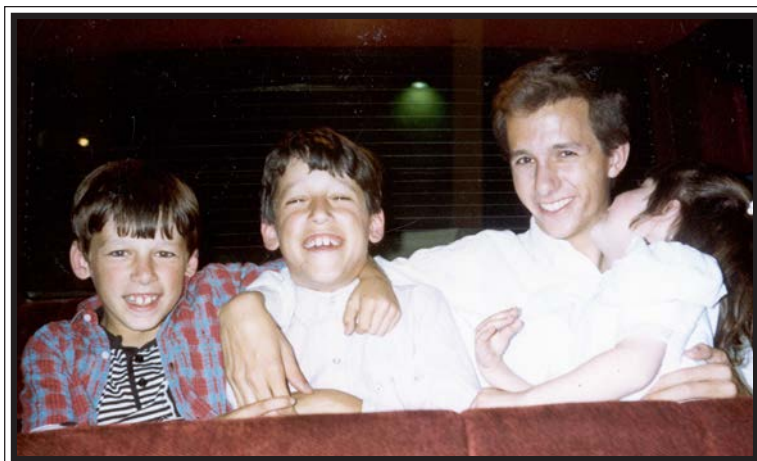
Then everything will come your way
Good grades, good friends, good fun,
And most of all your little *bud*
Will do as you have done.

You're his ideal – don't let him down
Be everything you must
You've got support from all of us –
You have our love and trust.

*With love, Mom (Dad, Spencer,
Gina, Craig, Scott, Christy,
Jimmy and Lora)*



Spencer saying "good-bye" to Russ in Scotland
September 1984



The children welcoming Russ home from his mission
Spencer, Jimmy, and Lora -- 1988

When Russ was in his first years of college at BYU, he goofed around enough with his roommate that his grades went *south*. We were living in Scotland and talked to Russ every week. He always said, *“I’m doing the best I can.”* Well, what more does a parent want to hear than that? Yet, we had such a feeling that things weren’t going right. Doug planned a trip home for work, and while he was in California, he took a quick weekend trip to Utah just so he could hopefully get inspiration to do something to help Russ. He didn’t know how, or if, our prayers were going to be answered. He went to Church with Russ, and asked him,

“Which one of those men is your Bishop.”

Russ said, *“I guess it’s one of those three men.”*

Things weren’t looking good. Doug went up to *one of those three* men and introduced himself. He found out the counselor’s name was *Butters*. In amazement Doug said, *“We have an older couple in our ward in Scotland by the name of “Butters.”* The fellow said, *“Those are my parents!”* Then Doug knew that Heavenly Father had heard our prayers. He knew what to say.

“Have I got a deal for you. We’ll take care of your parents in Scotland if you’ll take care of our son here at BYU.”

Maybe Russ doesn’t even remember that man, but we knew that at least there was someone in that ward, 8,000 miles away from us, who knew who Russ was and probably watched over him more than Russ knew. Coincidence? I don’t think so. . .

When Rusty got his mission call, he (at that time) was basically kicked out of BYU for bad grades—no longer on the *warning* list. However, he was worthy to go on a mission. But he didn’t seem to have a *burning*



testimony. Interesting to us that you can raise someone in the church, have home evenings almost without fail, encourage him in his talents, but when the time came for Russ to give his farewell talk for his mission, he didn’t know what he was going to say—he didn’t know if he even had a testimony. I asked him if he’d ever had a prayer answered, and he said, *“Of course.”* I said, *“When?”* Well he had remembered praying for help to find his horn because it was band day at school and he had misplaced his horn (this was a very BIG horn!) He prayed and asked Heavenly Father where it was, and then he got up and walked right into the closet and found it—right where he had put it. I told him to tell that story, which he did. In 1984 when Russ came home for Christmas after his first semester in school, I found a piece of paper that belonged to him, and it had some scribbling on it. I guess he was writing some notes of introduction for a Sunday School Class. This is what it said,

“I am a student at BYU and plan to go on a mission next year. I was born a member of the church and have grown up believing in its principles and teachings. But a testimony is not believing, it is knowing. My testimony is probably not what it should be, for while I believe, I do not know the gospel is true. But there is something I do know. I KNOW that my Dad knows the Church is true. He has a very strong testimony that the Church is true. My Dad is the person that I respect and love the most and I know that even if my testimony is not very strong, knowing that my Dad knows helps my testimony to grow.”

Well, like I said before, where was the person that the patriarch was talking about? His blessing also said,

“Thou shalt have the great ability of understanding human nature and using the talents and abilities of thy friends and associates in such ways as to bring the maximum happiness into their lives. . .”

Changes don't take place suddenly—not usually. When Russ came home from his mission I asked him what was the greatest thing he learned. He said that he learned to like himself. Well, that alone is a great story. I think a lot of that was because he took control of a lot of his habits that were pulling him down – one of them was the desire to watch television and play arcade games. He said that he never did those things in the missionfield, but that it took him a year to *get over the desire* to do them. So profound! Well, Russ' potential has always been great, and he has blessed our lives greatly. Now it is easy to read his patriarchal blessing and see that person in Russ. We now see him as the Lord always saw him.



Russ in Colombia on his Mission



Don't ask me why, but I've always liked this picture of Russ. He's always had some *goof-ball* in him. This is he and his companion enjoying the Colombian food!

It seems like I could write a book about each of my children, but I have to remember that this is my life I'm writing about and not theirs. On the other hand, I can hardly think of any part of my life that hasn't involved my children—they're the *subject* of every prayer I offer morning and night. Nevertheless, I do have more than one child, so I have to pick and choose some good tidbits about each one. I'll finish Russ' story with some of those good tidbits.

Back there a ways, did I say that Russ wasn't perfect? Well, Russ is forgetful. Remember the lost horn? Every time he lost something, I would say, *“Where did you take it off?”* One day, after his mission, a lot of the family were home in Santa Rosa. We had all gone to church in a few cars and then we came home to the usual big Sunday dinner. On Tuesday, Russ was going somewhere, and he came running back into the house, all concerned, and said (fairly animated—as animated as Russ gets),

“My car's gone. It's been stolen!”

Well, this got everyone else concerned—even Doug came running into the kitchen to make sure I'd heard what had happened. I rolled my eyes, and said,

“Doug, this is Russ we're talking about. . .”

So I turned to Russ and calmly said, *“Okay, Russ, where did you take it off?”*

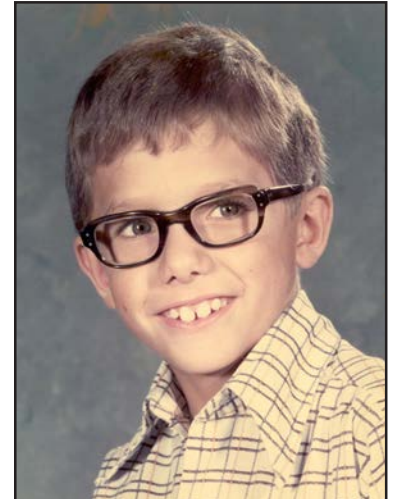
He calmed down and started thinking of when he had last used it. Sure enough, he drove it to church on Sunday, and then came home with someone else. He hadn't missed it until Tuesday. A carload of family drove over to church to see the end of the mystery. There, all by its little 'ol self in the church parking lot, was Russ' car—lonely, but safe!

Just for fun (so you can see the workings of Russ' mind), I'm going to include two stories that he wrote in grade school. The first when he was eight years old and the second when he was ten.

My Life as a Pencil

Rusty Scribner (Eight years of age)

When I started I was just a speck in an acorn. Then I started to stretch and stretch. I don't remember how long it was but finally I felt myself being moved. Then I felt myself separate from the rest of the tree. Next they put me in a machine that cut off some of my corners and drilled a hole through me. Then they put some lead in me that made my insides BLACK. Next they painted me and put a round piece of metal on me and stuck some rubber on it. Then they put me, with a lot of other pieces of wood, in a box. Then somebody took me out and started writing this paragraph!



A Talk With Mr. Chair

Rusty Scribner (Ten years of age)

I am a table and I live in room seven in Binkley School. One day I struck up a conversation with Mr. Chair about our "hard" day. He spoke first:

"Ya know, this morning I thought it was like the end of the world. Two boys kept pulling at me and pulling at me until I thought I was about to crack! But finally my hero the teacher. . ."

"I thought your hero was the janitor." "That was last week." "Oh," I said.

"Well, anyway the teacher came and stopped the fight. And, well, only one other thing happened (but it was the worst thing). The worst person in the class (but I'm not mentioning any names, mind you) picked me up, and I was thrown all over the place."

"Well now it's my turn." (the Table) "I had to be moved to another spot, and as I was being moved one of my legs got stuck in the rug and I fell over, and the boy that was pushing me, fell on top of me. And the rest of the day I got books slammed on me, pencils drawing on me, and almost threw everything else at me."

And so we both awaited another dreadful day.

Russ has been a wonderful son. As I said at the beginning, I've learned to lean on him extensively for advice, for counsel, and for a lot of help in getting my degree from college! I love him immensely!



Rusty doing magic tricks

Happy 20th Birthday, Russ
(serving a mission in Colombia)

I'm tempted to write a word or two
About the feelings I hold for you
But somehow I feel
It would ruin your meal
If I said mushy words, full of yummy and goo. . .

So instead I think I will write just a line
About how the family is all feeling fine
That you have arrived
And even derived
A full 20 years out of 90 and 9.

What have you done in those 20 short years
That would make me think you were easy
to rear
Now that is a laugh
I'll split in half
For you NEVER were easy to rear, my dear!

You were quiet, and very cleverly teased
Your brother Craig whenever you pleased
Now that is through
But I'm telling you
The teasing at home has never eased!

Another great legacy you left
To honor your mother, you noble "cheft"
You hated tomatoes
And uncooked potatoes
So now do the others in Scotland you left!



You also left a girl behind
And now when Craig is in a bind
He calls for a date
With sweet "Sadie-bait"
He's sure you won't care—or even mind!

The clothes you left are also in use
In fact I would say they are feeling abuse
Craig wears them all
Now that he's tall
Are feeling like putting his head in a noose?

Well, just relax on your birthday today
We'll all shed tears while you are away
We'll also have fun
Like you would've done
To help the pain and sorrow delay.

The truth of it all, we all love you so
You've paved the way for all to grow
We think you are great
A real soul-mate
Just give us a call when you are low!

Love, *Mom*

by Cecile Scribner, 6 September 1986



On the way to the hospital to get Russ twenty years earlier.
And Russ as a baby. Pictures taken in Los Altos, California

I wrote Russ' story a few months ago, but now (December 10, 2006) I think I need to add a page. Besides thinking of a few interesting things to add, Russ has also been called into the bishopric of their ward in Tooele, Utah. We flew up for the day, and it was a wonderful experience. He was called by President Ray Ashby. Ray was a boy who grew up in the same ward as I did clear back in the 1950's. He was younger than I was, but both the Ashby and James families were well connected. It was his brother Johnny whom my brother Tom named his son Johnny after. And it was Johnny James whom we named Spencer after. So it was a wonderful experience to see President Ashby and get reacquainted with him. Russ gave a super talk that day in Sacrament meeting. Doug ordained him to be a high priest. A good day!



Now I've got some space on this page, so I'm just going to tell you something very interesting about Russ. He was the *King of Costumes*! One time he won the first prize in the whole stake for his costume on Halloween, and there were a few hundred kids in the costume parade. He always made up his own costumes. He was a one-legged pirate, and it looked just like he had chopped his leg off! He was so skinny that his leg just folded up in the leg of a pair of pants. He was pretty tired after that night of walking with a cane, but it was worth it to win First Prize! He also won first prize at school when he was a Senior at Santa Rosa High. They had a costume day, and about 10:30 the night before he got an idea of what to do. It was absolutely amazing. I'll put a picture of it here and you can try to figure out just how he did it! He was *Oscar the Grouch* inside a garbage can that was being carried around by *Mr. T*.

Another of his great talents is to come up with prize-winning carved pumpkins every year. Of course, he never gets a prize because he just does them for his family. But he's done some amazing ones. I just wish I had a picture of all of them. Russ always has great ideas. I love him and rely on him a great deal.



“Why I Believe”

by *Russ Scribner*

17 September 2006

Dear Benjamin, Danny & Jacob,

There is a story in the scriptures about a young man who goes hunting into the woods. While he is there he starts to think about the things his father has taught him about God and life. He says, “the words which I had often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart.” After contemplating on these things he decides to go to the Lord in prayer and find out what was God’s will concerning him. In a way, I wish I was more like that young man’s father. I hope that you, my boys, will remember what I have taught you in your youth and that you will be able to lean upon that knowledge in your own search for truth. In many ways, that has been my own experience.



When I was young, I had many good role models to follow. I remember being influenced by church leaders, by schoolmates, and by world events. But the thing I feel influenced me far more than anything else was the years I spent at home, watching my parents as they tried to live their lives and raise us kids at the same time.

For my parents, religion was never separated from the tasks of daily life. When they made a decision about what direction the family would be going, whether it was what kind of entertainment we would participate in, the kind of music we would listen to, or where we would go on vacation, they did so with an “eye single to the Glory of God.” In other words, they didn’t just ‘go to church,’ the church was an integral part of their lives.

My memories of growing up are inseparable from my experience with my religion. It wasn’t that my parents made me attend church, youth activities, temple trips, or early-morning seminary classes. It was just who we were, a part of our lives that was all rolled up into an integrated whole. In many ways, we were as much involved in our religion as is a Hasidic Jew praying before the Western Wall in Jerusalem, or a Muslim prostrating himself five times each day towards the Ka’bah, the House of God, in Mecca. Growing up in a religious household may seem odd to someone who has never experienced it, but to me it simply seemed part of the natural order of things.

My mother grew up in a similar household, her parents being strongly integrated into the religious and cultural environs of Provo, Utah. But my father’s experience was quite different. As a convert to the Church, he went through many experiences that slowly brought him to a knowledge of and a belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

It was a combination of learning about these two very different experiences that influenced my own search for spiritual truth. In my mind, I never envisioned any grey area surrounding religion. It was either true or it wasn’t. I have always felt that there is ultimate truth – that we, like Paul, “see through a glass, darkly” and only understand a part of the whole truth that God has. I felt that obtaining that truth was more important than relying on whatever the popular theories of the day might be. I guess it appealed to my logical side, that if there was an all-knowing God, that He would be the source of true, immutable knowledge. I also have always felt, from a very young age, that finding and following that truth would make my life better in ways that I couldn’t always define, but that I knew waited for me in the future.

My parents would often tell us of the experiences of their youth. Mom would tell us of wondrous church and school parties, where romantic boys and shy girls would meet on the dance floor. My Dad would relate stories of missionaries in far off lands. They shined a light on a world where righteous young men and women would meet, fall in love, and be married in a Temple of the Lord for time and all eternity. While I had not the slightest idea what I wanted to pursue as a career, or what I would be when I “grew up,” I knew that I wanted what they had. More than anything I wanted to have a beautiful wife at my side, joined with me for eternity, someone who would share my hopes and fears, who would understand my moods and who would laugh at my stupid jokes. That is why I married your mother.

With these types of experiences and feelings, I came to the point where I had to make a decision. I believe everyone comes to this point at some time in their lives. It is the fork in the road – the place where one decision will determine the rest of the trip. For me, that decision arrived in the form of a letter – a mission call. I had been called to go to South America to preach the gospel. For the first time, I felt that I had a decision to make that would be instrumental in shaping the direction of my life, for good or for evil, for the rest of my existence. I know it sounds overly dramatic – but I really had a sense of being at a crossroads, a place in my life that would determine all the other places where I could end up.

The mission call was not a surprise. I had filled out all the papers myself. I had had the doctor’s appointment. I had saved money for years. In some fashion, I had been preparing to go on a mission my whole life. But now that I stood at the edge of the precipice, knowing that the first step would determine all the others, I was forced to consider the reasons I had for going forward. My parents’ voices were there – their steadiness, their faith like a stone wall that I would always have at my back to keep me balanced and secure. My confidence in their faith was sure – but what of my own faith?

I know it seems silly, but I reasoned that the one sure way of testing my faith was to enter the Missionary Training Center. I felt that such a place would challenge my faith and that I would either leave with a sure knowledge of the truth of the gospel, or with just as sure a knowledge that there was no such truth. I believed completely that the Lord, if he really existed, would not let my prayers go unanswered if I was obeying his command to “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” So with this thought in mind, I sat with my aunt in the “crying room” at the MTC – where at the end of a short presentation, the parents are instructed to exit out one door, and the missionaries out another. My parents were in Scotland at the time, but I believe my mom was crying anyway.

My time in the MTC was different than anything I had yet experienced. I was surrounded, like I had been my whole life, with young people of my own age and experience, but with the difference that we were all there for the same purpose. I realized that they were all facing the same struggles that I was, and that they had all made the same life-changing decision that I had. I prayed harder than I had ever prayed. Although I was trying to absorb a new language and learning how to preach the gospel, my mind was constantly considering my dilemma – how could I teach the Gospel to anyone without a sure knowledge of my own?

My questions centered on the thought that I didn’t really know what it meant to have God speak to me. I had never had what I considered a real spiritual experience. I’m not sure what I expected, maybe a voice, or a vision, or perhaps simply a knowledge of the truth. I found that God doesn’t *always answer you in a way that you would expect*, but I came away from that experience with the sure knowledge of the truthfulness of the Gospel.

While my faith is not solely based on that experience, I look to my time in the MTC as a turning point in my life, a time of decision and dedication. I do not suggest that you take the same path I did – I believe that everyone

must find their own way to the truth – but I can personally confirm that God will answer your prayers and will give you the truth if you earnestly seek it.

I would like you to know that I have found truth, and know that the truth is there for you to find as well. I hope that piece by piece, I am building a wall of faith that you can lean upon until you find that truth for yourselves.

Boys, I love you,

Dad



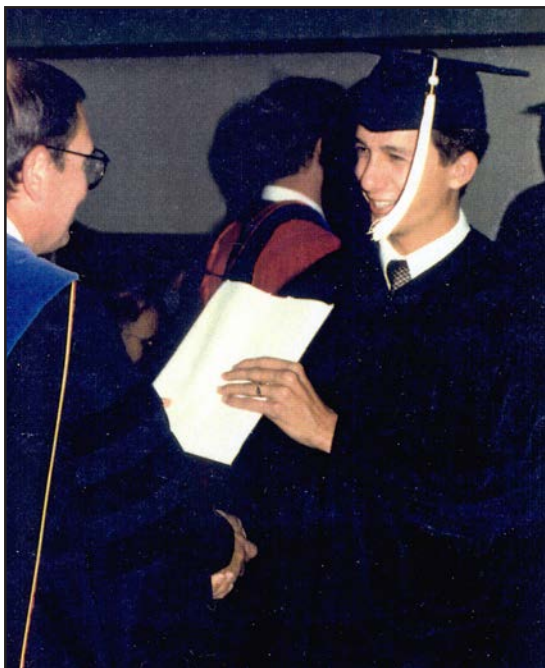
Rusty with Grandpa James -
1969



Russ, Kari,
Benjamin, Danny, Jacob



Rusty (2 months) and Doug -
1966



Russ graduating from BYU in 1990



Russ with his Master's Degree from George Washington
University 1992 (with Kari, Cecile and Doug)

“Why I Believe”
by Kari Nina Scribner

17 September 2006

Dear Ben, Danny & Jacob,

Your Grandma Scribner has asked me to write to you about “Why I Believe” or who has been a big influence on my life. Since this is a very personal subject I had to think about it for a while. I decided to write about how I came to believe in our Heavenly Father, His son Jesus Christ and in the Holy Ghost and how that led me to joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



As you know, I was not raised a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the early part of my life, my dad was a minister (someone who preaches a religion) who was of the Pentecostal faith. I remember being in my Dad’s church and all the excitement that came on Sundays. One of my favorite things to do was to help my Dad and Mom fill the cups for what we call the *Sacrament*. In the morning I would sit on the counter in the church kitchen and squeeze a bottle that had a long skinny neck that went up and came back down, kind of in an upside down U. Grape juice would come out and I would squirt it into each of the little cups on the tray, a lot like the trays we use for Sacrament in our church. Ever now and then I would sneak a squirt right into my mouth – I have always loved grape juice!

Grandma Carol played the organ for church and Grandpa Gee would preach (this is while they were still married). It was fun to see them do all those things. I was pretty young then (between 0-8 years old). For a while my dad didn’t have a church. He was a proselyting minister, meaning we would travel to different churches, stay with the people who were a part of their congregation and he would preach at their churches. We drove around in our Volkswagen pulling a trailer that looked kind of like an outhouse.

I think the most important thing your Grandpa Gee and Grandma Carol taught me was to listen to and to understand the Holy Spirit. They always spoke and taught of Jesus with great love and respect and told me it was very important to learn to listen to the Holy Ghost, so that I could make good decisions throughout my life. I believe that our Father in Heaven gave me a special gift in having a very strong influence from the Holy Ghost. I also believe that listening to the Holy Ghost is really important and that is why I talk to you about it so much.

They also taught me about the importance of tithing and paying 10% of all we earn. This has always helped me out throughout my life.

I didn’t understand about Heavenly Father at that time. I was raised to believe in Jesus Christ and that He and the Father were the same God. This is true in that they work together, but I now understand they are three separate beings – the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

When I was about nine, my Dad stopped being a preacher and started working in the restaurant business. We eventually stopped going to church much and your Grandpa Gee and Grandma Carol got divorced when I was twelve years old.

Around the time I turned sixteen, I started going to church by myself. I had a car and was able to get to church on my own. I went to the Pentecostal church in Roseburg, Oregon for a while and was healed at that church from the terrible arthritis I had. I knew God could heal me, and when they prayed for me, it went away and I never had a problem with it again.

I didn't really feel that they had all the answers I was seeking for, however, so I started to check out different churches. I was a Conservative Baptist for a while, I studied Judaism a little, Catholicism and a whole bunch of other churches. You might wonder why I would do something like that – go to so many different churches. I was looking for the church that I felt had all the answers I needed and that God wanted me to join. I kind of felt like there was a hole in me that needed to be filled up and I kept looking for the right thing to fill it up.

When I was a junior in high school I did a report for school on Mormonism. I read a lot of different books and talked to a number of people. I thought it was interesting, but because of my families strong belief that it wasn't a good church, I just did the report and didn't really pray about it or anything like that.

It wasn't until I was nineteen years old and living in Evanston, Wyoming that I first attended an LDS church. I was dating a boy who was not active in his religion, but he took me home to meet his parents. While I was there I really liked the feeling I had while I was in their home and they took me to church and I really liked the feeling I had there as well. I broke up with that boy shortly after that, but I did go to another ward in the town I lived in a couple of times.

Later on, I was dating another boy who was raised LDS, but not living his religion. He took me home to meet his family, but I did not get the same good feelings in their home. They were not very nice to me because I wasn't LDS. So, it is important to remember, no matter who comes to your house you should always be nice to them – whether they believe the same as you or not.

One day I was in Evanston sitting in my car and I started to pray. I asked God to take me where I needed to go. I started to drive and drove for over an hour. I ended up in Salt Lake City, Utah at the Visitors' Center at Temple Square. I had never been there before (other than when I was a kid and my Aunt Bonnie took me). I walked inside and found a big statue of Jesus. I sat in front of that statue, the one that is surrounded by space in the North Visitors' Center and started to cry. I cried because I felt the Spirit, and I felt like I had finally found home. I suddenly felt that I may have just found the fill for the hole I felt inside.

Shortly after that, I decided to move to Salt Lake City. I got a job at the Enterprise Newspaper in downtown Salt Lake just two blocks from Temple Square. I met a nice boy there who invited me to go to church with him. His name was John Brinkerhoff and he ended up baptizing me and has been a friend of mine ever since.

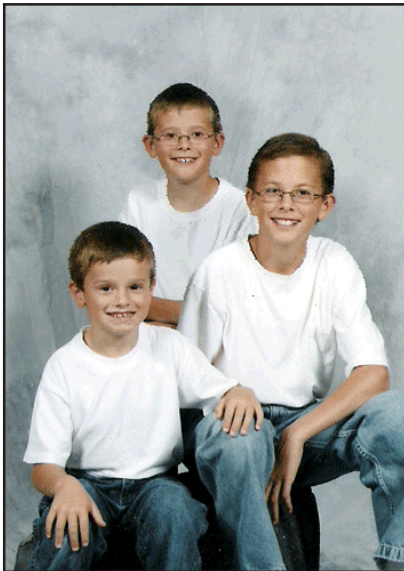
I spent a lot of time at Temple Square, on my lunches and after work. I had the missionaries come and teach me all about our Heavenly Father's Gospel and knew all they taught me was true, because the Holy Spirit bore witness to me that it was true. I felt grateful to finally get all the answers to the questions I had been seeking. For example, why would Jesus pray to himself in the Garden of Gethsemane. I suddenly came to know I had a Father in Heaven who loved me and wanted good things for me.

I knew without a doubt that I needed to be baptized and become a part of the Lord's church. It is a decision that I have never regretted. It was a hard time for me, though, because I knew it was very upsetting to my family that I was making that choice. Despite that fact, I was baptized and given the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

Now I have an even closer relationship to the Holy Ghost and hear and understand even more than I did before.

I hope someday you will get an answer for yourself, as strong as the answer I received. I hope that you will know that what I am sharing with you is true. You have a very good heritage to live up to on both sides of your family. Your Grandparents are all strong believers in Jesus Christ and they want what is best for you. I love you and am so grateful to have been blessed with three awesome boys who make life such a wonderful adventure. we are blessed to have the Gospel in its fullness here upon the earth and am so grateful to have found it; and I'm grateful for the difference it has made in my life.

I write these things and tell you that I know they are true, in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.



Benjamin, Dan, and Jacob



Grandma and Grandpa at Leatherby's with Ben, Danny, and Jacob



Cecile (Grandma) with Danny and Ben



Russ, Kari, Ben, Danny, Jacob and Aunt Lora

Gina Scribner

Today is August 24, 2006, and it's Gina's thirty-eighth birthday. For more than ten years I was hoping to someday have a little girl and name her *Jennett* and call her *Jenny*. I was twenty-seven when Gina was born, and found that I had grown tired of that name—I had just waited too long to use it. In 1968, the song *Gina*, sung by Johnny Mathis, was top on the charts. It sounded somewhat like *Jenny*—I liked it, and besides Johnny Mathis was my favorite singer in the world! So, on a rather sudden whim, we named our first little girl *Gina*.

I still think it's one of the most beautiful names I've heard. Gina was born on my oldest nephew's birthday, which is quite significant to me. I'm very close to Ron (in friendship as well as age), so it was a good date to be born. His name is Ronald Gene Hirschi. If Gina doesn't like being named after a song, then she could always claim the good name of *Ronald Gene*—a man of many talents, great determination, a very *off the wall* kind of guy, and a person who knew the worth of every soul. He lost his life in a truck/bicycle accident in 2004 while we were serving our mission in New Zealand. I think about him every single day. (In the picture are Gina, Cecile and Russ--all wearing our homemade clothes so we could match the sweaters knit by Grandma Scribner)



Gina was married to Shawn Whiting on December 11, 2004, and they came to New Zealand for their honeymoon. We did have a few days to look into their starry eyes—we're not sure yet if they ever noticed we were there in New Zealand also!



Shawn and Gina with Doug in New Zealand, December 2004. Gina just pushed the magic button that turned on the thousands of Christmas Lights on Temple Hill and on the Visitors' Centre. It was magic!



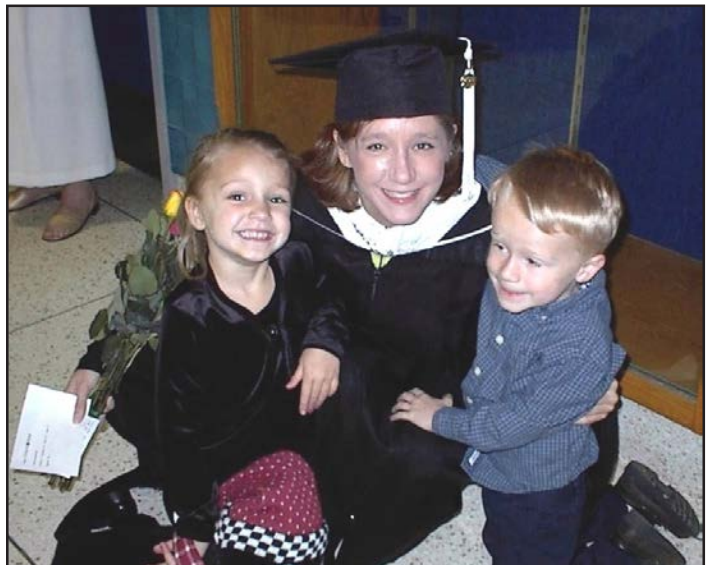
Gina and Shawn's wedding and reception in Salt Lake City--December 2004

To this marriage Shawn brought three beautiful children—John Bryant, Thatcher Porter and Tessa Kaye. Add these to Gina, Zachary Hunter and Isabella Bryn, and you have this gorgeous family of seven! Before we returned home from our mission another child was added to this family—
Chey Douglas Scribner Whiting!

Thatcher, Bryant, Gina, Hunter
Shawn, Bella, Tessa and Chey



My mind is bouncing all over the place trying to figure out what I should write about our third child and first daughter. We have a chart that we have used here at home to determine what personality type each of our children is. It has helped us immensely in dealing with our children, particularly when each has been under stress—it has helped us to still like them even when they were being impossible! We have never been able to pinpoint Gina’s personality type. Sometimes she is a *driver-driver*. This means she can be so determined to do something that you couldn’t stop her with a bulldozer. For example, after her divorce, she became determined to go back to school at BYU with her two babies and earn her Master’s Degree. It was an extremely high (almost impossible) goal, but she was determined. And she got that degree in a little over three years—always striving for excellence. It was hard, but she did it. If she wants to buy something, she saves her money until she can get it. Right now she is extremely determined to be *on top* of everything that’s going on in each of her children’s lives—they’re in soccer, music, dance, other sports, etc. In their home, they are organized, and all appears to be perfectly put together—dishes done, house clean, and yard manicured. I personally think that she’s going to run herself ragged, but surprisingly, she doesn’t look ragged—she looks beautiful. She is also teaching a night class of Spanish at the Santa Rosa Junior College. How does she do it all? No one knows. Another good example of this personality was when we were skiing in France, and Jimmy was having a hard time. We gave up trying to teach him, and turned him over to Gina. Boy, she got tough!



She said, *“Jimmy, get up and stop crying. You’re going to learn how to ski. You can do it!”*

She stuck with him, and by the end of the day, he was skiing down the hill! Gina is also a total *Driver* when it comes to games—on the soccer field or in a home setting playing a card game with the family. She's all competition!

Then if Gina can get in a relaxed mood or a teaching mode, we find her at the other end of the chart—she's an *expressive-expressive!* I've sat in some of her classes, and it's easy to understand her Spanish because she's so expressive—she's an actress. All you have to do is follow her hands and her body language and you seem to know the words that are coming out of her mouth! A very high percentage of her students do very well in her classes. When she was teaching high school, she was given the AP Class, and most of those students passed with high grades, all set for college. She has a gift for teaching. Most of my children have this gift. It's the most fun to be with Gina when she's telling her embarrassing moments or the times that she talked policemen out of tickets. She's alive, expressive, fun and so beautiful at these moments. You truly feel you're *in the moment* when you're with her.



Gina teaching at BYU while working on her Masters'

Then, it seems that Gina has another facet of her personality which leans towards being an *amiable*. Somehow I think this seed is quite deep within her to be a peacemaker. She always tried to keep the peace between Russ and Craig. It's a personality that is much less reactive, much less driven, but is definitely a part of her. I've seen it often, particularly when she was young. Her Patriarchal blessing speaks this part of her personality:

“As you came to mortality, He planted in thee many seeds, and you are capable of doing many things with considerable excellence, but there is one seed that will be especially effective in thy life, and that is the seed of love. In your pre-mortal life, you were one who was always welcome in His presence, and you came many times pertaining to the welfare of others, and this shall again be true in your mortal life, for again you will go to our Father with the needs of many others in your mind, and He will bless them and thee. . .”

We saw this gift early in Gina. In fact, when the Patriarch gave Gina her blessing, we were wondering how this man who knew her not at all, could know her personality so well. Well, in actuality, it's the Lord who knows who Gina is--perhaps even more than Gina knows herself. Gina cared for most of our children when they were born. She was such a natural mother. As each one came, she cared for them lovingly, but when Jimmy was born, she grew extremely close to him. One day as she was dressing Jimmy she said,

“Oh, Jimmy, I'm afraid you're going to grow up and be just like the other boys.”



Gina and Jimmy

Then a few days later she said to me, *“I think I will always love Jimmy.”*

When it was time for Christy to start school, I think all of Gina's personalities came to surface. I told her that the mothers were suppose to meet with the new kindergarteners the following day. So Gina woke up early and got ready, helped Christy get ready, and came into the kitchen and said, *“We're ready to go.”* That's right, she assumed the role of *Mother* and took Christy to school on her first day. I stayed home!

She was determined to do this, and she was talkative and expressive (I was told) with the other mothers, and she had a great love and concern for Christy. When Christy gave birth to her twins in 2005 while we were on our mission, Gina took my place again and became the mother. She took Hunter and Bella and spent her valuable summer vacation in Colorado to help Christy keep those little tiny babies alive. I've often said about Gina,



“Anything I can do, she can do, better.”

Gina Scribner
(12 years old)



Christy, Cecile, Gina

Gina, a girl with light shining hair
Gina a girl with a manner so fair
A joy to her Mom, and a *princess* to Dad,
Gunna to Spence, her two-year-old lad,
A *mother* to Chris and *Best Friend* to Scott
And Rusty and Craig even like her a lot!
But a most special bond which never will dim,
They're closer than close—*Gina and Jim.*

Her Dad says he'd call her a “dependable” gal
To her Mom she's a *rose*, a friend and a pal.
“A *rose*?” you would ask—Well, she knows
what I mean
She's pure and she's lovely—her thoughts are
all clean.

Gina can cook both cookies and cakes
And bacon and eggs and toast and corn flakes.
She baby-sits all the family with ease
Plus cleans the kitchen, just hoping to please.
She likes to earn money so she works very hard,
She irons for “9” and helps in the yard.
A *roller-skate athlete*, she loves to swim,
And soccer and tennis help keep her so trim.
And *rhythm* she has—she loves to dance
In front of a mirror—the steps to enhance.
And also she dances on floorshows at Church,
The *Charleston* step left us all in the lurch.
She loves piano, will perform any day,
Saves half of her money for a mission some day.

I love her so much—she's a real *go-getter*,
Why, she can do anything I can do, better!!

By her mother, *Cecile Scribner*
(October 1980)

She loves lots of people—Uncle Tom,
Sister Bott
And especially loves Elders, though I think she
should not!
Gina loves grandmas—especially her own,
When Gina's around, they're never alone.
Her Grandpa James drove 800 miles
To baptize our gal and keep her in smiles!



Russ and Gina

While going to school at Brigham Young University, Gina had a roommate who was addicted to substance abuse. In this letter she told us of her feelings for this girl:

“Every night she would call me over to her bed, have me lay down next to her and with tears rolling down her face tell me again and again what a terrible person she was and how Heavenly Father hated her. . .Over and over I would tell her that Heavenly Father loved her and was reaching out to help her if she would just take hold of His hands. I don’t think I’ve ever prayed harder for anyone than I prayed for that roommate. And as I watched her attitude of worthlessness and self-pity turn around, and as I saw her come back to church the first time and get touched by the spirit, and struggle with the cravings of her body. . .my testimony grew. Never before have I had such a strong testimony of prayer. . .”



Gina’s testimony seems to grow the strongest when she is praying for other people. She also learned a great deal about human nature on her mission and her deep caring nature was so evident:

26 November 1996 (written while on her mission in Argentina)

“...Sometimes I see so many people suffer. . .from poverty, from broken homes, from alcohol that has destroyed a family, children that live in the street. . .When I see them suffer, I suffer too, but I do understand that I have only one purpose here—to bring souls to Christ. . .Unfortunately, as much as the people suffer, they don’t look for God and don’t accept his help. There’re so many problems in this branch. . .the members don’t put God first in their lives. It’s only when they’re desperate. Like Esteban. Now that the Lord has lifted him up and literally ‘freed him. . .,’ he doesn’t recognize the hand of God in his life. He is now free from drugs, and the people who pursued him, but doesn’t want anything to do with the Church of God. That hurts me even more than seeing him in drugs because he’s denying the Holy Ghost. . .”



Gina on mission in Argentina



Gina and other sister missionaries in the Salta Argentina Mission

Gina knows what it's like to suffer when others suffer. She's such a mixture! Will the real Gina please step forward! It's possible for a person to be so flexible that they can act and react in all four *corners* of the personality chart—that's how they best get along with all people. But a person is usually most comfortable in one—usually only one defines that person. So for the life of me, I don't know where Gina is happiest, where the *real* Gina is. Sometimes I think I know her, and then something happens that causes me to think I don't know her at all. Gina, in her expressive mode is an open book, but in her other modes, she is full of surprises. Maybe she's none of the above, but is a closet *Analytic!* The good news is that all personalities are great.

Gina's true maternal nature came out when she was eight years old, and it was time for her to get baptized. When we asked her who she wanted to have baptize her, she said, "Grandpa James." Well, this would be impossible it seemed because he was old and in Utah, but we called and told him what Gina had requested,



nevertheless. The night before her baptism, we got a phonecall from my mother, telling us that Dad was on his way to California so he could baptize Gina. He was so honored to be asked because he hadn't baptized anyone since his first mission in Australia in the 1920's! Well, I was so excited that I ran into the bathroom where Gina was in the tub and I exclaimed,

"Gina, guess what? That was Grandma James on the phone and the most wonderful thing is going to happen!"

Gina, without even a second's hesitation replied, *"Is Grandma going to have another baby?"*

Such delightful innocence! Well, whatever Gina's personality is, she's a *Dancer!* In her teens she was choreographing dances and teaching them to others, and even had the chance to perform these dances in front of hundreds of people. In this great love, Gina and I are very much alike. I used to wear a shirt that said, *"To live is to dance. And to dance is to live."* It was my life, and for many years, it seemed to be Gina's life. In her early teens she taught two other friends movements to *"Elvira"* sung by the Oak Ridge Boys. Somewhere we have a video where she performed this for her Grandma Scribner at the cabin at Big Bear Lake, Arizona. Later she choreographed a huge number for many girls for the Northern California Regional Dance Festival in 1984. Plus she performed umpteen times in floorshows and plays during her high school years both in Santa Rosa and in Scotland. Then when she went to college she joined the International Folk Dance Troupe. Her performances were many, including a trip to Japan and Hawaii. She was particularly fabulous at clogging! Her interest spread to the rest of the family, and now we all know a little bit about clogging. Jim was even a clogging Christmas tree one year!



Jill Thompson, Gina, and Tina Hoyal in their dance outfits for "Elvira"

Gina "on parade" with the Brigham Young University International Folk Dancers





Gina dancing "Beat It" with Russ
Gina doing the "Highland Fling"



Gina with Doug doing the
"Virginia Reel"

One thing that surprised me while Gina and Russ were in college was her dependence and closeness to Russ. We thought that because of her strong personality and social nature, that Russ may have leaned on her. This was after Russ came home from his mission, and she would line him up on some dates. I asked her one day,

"Is involving Russ in your social life a burden on you?"

She looked at me so strangely, as if I didn't even know what I was talking about, and then finally said,

"Oh no, it's just exactly the opposite. I lean on him totally."

I think Gina's a good talker and Russ was a good listener. Well, I think it's time for me to share some fun things. When Gina was in the MTC (Mission Training Center) at Provo, we sent her a Candy Bar Card for her twenty-first birthday -- And this is the perfect picture to go with the card. This was taken just a few days before she went into the Mission Training Center, and just a week before she turned twenty-one!



I see a few familiar faces in there: Russ, Scotty and Craig. But the others? Folk Dancers, I suppose. All of them saying, "Here you go, Gina -- one and half years without dating!"

To Gina, Twenty-one Years!

We hear you have turned twenty-one—
Life as woman for you has begun!

You may now (SKOR) with guys from Earth and from (MARS)
Or the (MILKY WAY) – Shoot for the Stars!
Or look for a guy on (5TH AVENUE)
And holler, “(OH HENRY), I think you will do!”

Or better still, look for (MR. GOODBAR) –
Don't worry when (SNICKERS) are heard from afar
For girls will swoon when they hear your (PAY DAY)
Is (100 GRAND) at least twice a day!

But this (BOUNTY) could prove a (ROCKY ROAD),
You'll have (WHOPPERS) of problems—a terrible load.
In fact, I'll be honest and tell you the truth,
You're likely to end up with a (BABY RUTH)!

But you'll barely be saved by (3 MUSKETEERS)—
That's right, they'll be Elders, your very own peers.
They'll quote you a scripture and say, “(TOOTSIE, let's ROLL)
And work fifty hours to save every soul!”

A (BIT-O-HONEY) will come into your life,
You'll be a Great Missionary and a Perfect Wife—
(BAR NONE)!!

Love, From Your Family

(24 August 1989)

Gina served a good mission and brought the Gospel to many people in Salta, Argentina. She returned to BYU and finished her degree and graduated in 1992. Gina went through the hard experience of a divorce, but survived it very well, particularly as she kept a group of singles active and strong here in Santa Rosa. There were some good and lasting friendships made among this group. Then she met Shawn while on the way to Colorado to help Christy take care of her twins. She was lined up with him on a stopover in Utah. And the rest just followed naturally. I admire her greatly for all that she has accomplished.



Doug (Grandpa), Hunter, Bryant, Thatcher, Cecile (Grandma)
Bella, Chey, Tessa (taken 7 October 2006)

Miracles come in many ways—so often we don't even recognize them. Does something really happen that is *miraculous* or do we just look at it later and give it some spiritual significance? What about when we pray earnestly for a miracle for one of our children, and we fast, meaning we go at least twenty-four hours without food or drink, and then in this humble state we kneel again and pray for a miracle. Then, when even a greater miracle is given than we even asked for, can we possibly call it a coincidence? What happened with Gina as a baby was truly a miracle.

She had extremely high fevers within two weeks after she was born. It was the kind of fever that scared us, for it left her almost without life. The doctors found that she had a urinary or kidney infection. After antibiotics, the fevers came back. They put dyes in her so they could x-ray, and found that she had a bad kidney—it was shriveled up, the tubes were swollen and connected in the wrong place, and nothing else could be seen that gave us any hope. She would have to have it removed when she was bigger. We kept her on antibiotics for five and a half months until she was big enough for the operation. This was done by a specialist at the Stanford University Medical Center in California. We prayed and fasted for her, and particularly we were fasting the day of her operation. All we really wanted was for the operation to go well, and

for Gina's second kidney to be good enough to take her through life. They repeated the x-rays, just in case anything had changed with the good kidney.



Gina, Doug and Rusty in front of our home in Los Altos



Gina was only two when I was teaching a nursery school in our home in Los Altos, CA



In amazement, the doctor came to us and showed us the miracle. He compared both sets of x-rays and couldn't imagine how this happened, but there was a shadow of a third kidney behind the ruined one. It had its own set of tubes that connected in the right place. However, the kidney was swollen because the tube was looped and not draining correctly. He said, *"Perhaps this kidney is good. We will take a biopsy of it while we have her open, and if the tissue is healthy, we will keep it."* I remember saying, *"I know the tissue will be healthy."* I said this because I knew at that moment that neither we nor the doctors were in charge. We were being given a much greater miracle than we would've even dared pray for.

I will try to shorten this now. The kidney was good, but they took the loop out of the tube and sewed it together. In order to keep pressure from that tube while it healed, Gina had a rubber tube that came out of her side from her kidney. This tube emptied urine straight into her diaper. She had this for over nine months! By the end of that time, they felt the kidney could then work on its own—it wasn't perfect, but it could carry the load if she ever lost her other good kidney.

Just look at the life that Gina has lived with all of her soccer and dancing and athletic pursuits. She was given not only life, but quality of life that day. I could never doubt the Lord and his goodness after that experience.

It was overwhelming to both Doug and me. Gina has a huge scar that stretches all around one side—from her front to her back. Hopefully it's been a constant reminder of how blessed her life is, and how carefully God is watching over her.



Gina and Scotty



Gina and Jim



Scotty
Gina
Craig

To Gina (September 2006)

So often as mothers we reminisce
Of our children when small -- when they get their first kiss
When they learn how to drive --when they stay out 'til two
When they pack up for college -- like we knew they would do

Then off on a mission -- cut away from our strings
To learn for themselves -- a joy this brings
Their wings take them places, far away and above
One day they announce, "Guess what, we're in love."

Well, feelings come often -- some calm and some wild
Like the day that brings forth the birth of their child.
A mother feels lost when the children are gone
A loss of their music, their laughter, their song.

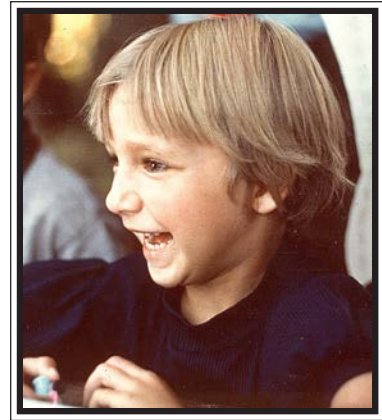
So Gina, I'll try to say things about you
With colorful words--Green, Red, White and Blue
They'll help me explain the love that I hold,
Some Black I will add to bring out your Gold.

At nine years of age (1977) *Gina* wrote:

*Red is a color
Lots of things are red
Like apples and raspberries
And Roses.
The things that red reminds me of is
The pretty flames in a fire when you're
Burning something red.
And it reminds me of my cousin's death
Just last month.
It is a pretty color.
It is on some things too, like signs and
Stoplights.
I like the color red.
It is a pretty color and it has a lot of meanings.*

Gina, This is how the Color **RED** reminds me of YOU:

RED is LOVE — GINA is LOVE





Love for little sisters and brothers
 Special bonds with Jim and Chris,
 Love for your parents and so many others
 Gran'pas and Gran'mas are all on the list.

And now a LOVE that's different, you see
 Given to Shawn, just two years ago
 This love is built more carefully
 Than any love that you will know.

Sacrifice is part of this love—
 It even hurts and makes you cry.
 Repentance, forgiveness and help from above
 Will cause this love to never die.

This love is strange 'cuz it makes you feel
 Like sometimes you're not in love at all—
 The *other loves* are no effort for you
 But THIS love requires ALL effort – your
 ALL!

RED is LOVE – GINA is LOVE

The Color BLACK by Gina Scribner, (aged 9)

*Black is a bat flying at midnight across the
 open sea.*

*Black is a deep sigh you get when you're
 feeling low.*

*Black is the smoke coming out of a burning
 fire.*

*Black is a stove with a black printing on it
 spelling 'black.'*



*Black makes me feel like I'm a little black
 kitten wandering in the street at midnight.
 And it makes me feel like a giant black rock that
 is floating in the air with me on top of it.*

Gina, this is how the Color BLACK reminds me of you:

***BLACK is an exciting ACCENT
 GINA is an exciting ACCENT***

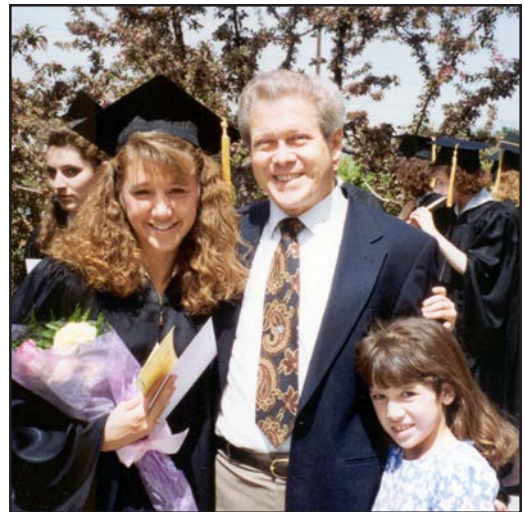
Black makes everything exciting
 It accents all our clothes.
 YOU stand out, like the color BLACK,
 When you're around, everyone knows!



Within you is this accent "BLACK"
 To bring more Life to Life,
 To draw from Shawn the best he has –
 He'll bless you as his Wife.

You know the art of having fun,
 Shawn loves to hear you laugh and play.
 Let all your qualities under the sun
 Bless your marriage every day.

Dance a lot, GO OUT OF YOUR WAY
 Have parties and dinners with family and friends
 Use all your accents and gifts, start Today,
 Your happy Marriage will never end!



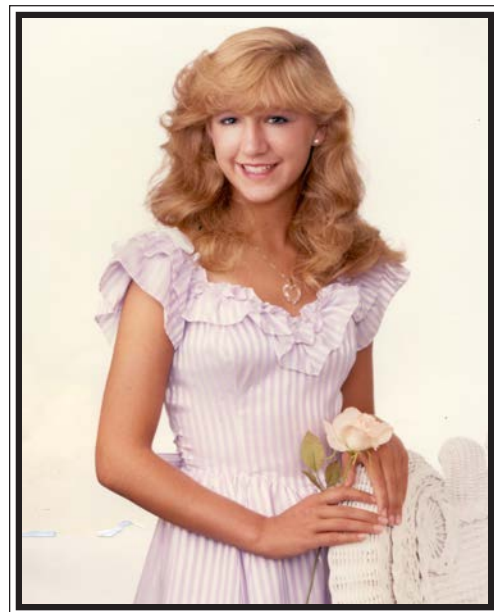
BLACK is an exciting ACCENT – GINA is an exciting ACCENT

The Color WHITE, by Gina Scribner, aged 9
 White reminds me of my mother's marriage,
 And the pretty white dress she was wearing.
 White is a pretty color.
 It is the color of doves, clouds and milk.
 The color white makes me feel like I'm
 floating on a cloud
 And like I'm dancing in thin air.
 White gives me a wonderful feeling.
 White is a bunny hiding in the snow.
 White is the icicles on the top of a
 house, hanging down.
 White is a beautiful color.

Gina, this is how the Color WHITE reminds me of you:

WHITE is LIGHT – GINA is LIGHT

You're not perfect, but you're on the path
 You seem to know your Way.
 But the bumps and rocks are stumbling blocks
 And would blind you from day to day.



So look inside and find the light
 That has always been specially yours,
 The *Light of Christ* on Your Countenance
 And the warmth that out of you pours –

You have the *Light* that can overcome
 Any hurt, any pain, any grief;
 You have the *light* that can always
 Forgive --
 Let it *Warm* you and give you relief.

YOU could **LOVE** anyone – **RED IS YOU**
YOU add **LIFE** to all life – **BLACK IS YOU**
YOU can **FORGIVE** and give **LIGHT** – **WHITE IS YOU**



On the 22nd of March 1977 *Gina* wrote:

Green

*Green is not like red at all. It has all different meanings.
It is leaves, grass, moss and flower stems.
Green reminds me of St. Patrick's Day
And the color of green you sometimes see in the sea
In the afternoon
There are things I don't like that are green
Like peas and broccoli and asparagus. Yukkk!*

Yes, **GREEN** is a wonderful color that now reminds me of
you, **Gina**.

Green is newness, freshness – a chance to begin again.
It is spring –the dawning of new life

Time to put away the darkness of winter,
the hurts of the past
New hopes, new growth—a new love.

Green has a million different shades
Just like Loch Lomond after a rain
Excitement, joy, happiness, a love that
could possibly be
Forever, and ever, together now
and eternally.

On December Thirteenth, Two Thousand
and Four
You married three kids and a man
A newness, a freshness came into your life
Your future. . .again. . .began . . .

Just pluck from your past great
lessons of life –
No grudges, no anger, no pain
Accept with your heart the love that
Shawn gives
This chance for life once again. . .

My love to you forever,

Mom



“Where I Find My Inspiration”

by *Gina Scribner*

As I sit here trying to begin - staring at a blank page (was it this way for any of the rest of you?) what keeps coming into my mind – is a story mom has often told us of the first time she met dad. He was going to give a talk and from all the exaggerated flattery she had heard about him from her companion, she expected him to stand up and say how awesome he was. But instead, he spoke about each of the elders in his district, saying what he had learned from them. That might not be a perfect account, but it is how I remember it. Well, my district is my family. I guess what I’m trying to say is that why I believe, what I believe, and *what is important to me in my life* – have a lot – actually, have everything to do with my family. It is from my parents and brothers and sisters – the people I loved and cared about more than anyone else while growing up, that gave me faith. I am the person I am today because of what they taught me through word, example, and love. Who I am and what I believe is in constant flux. (Hopefully on a slow but steady upward road despite the big dips). But what is constant and unswerving is *where I find my inspiration*. Who I am is a little bit of each of you. So here it is.



I have five amazing and intelligent brothers. I have two beautiful and compassionate sisters. Growing up with them was a unique experience for me and I am sure it was completely different than the way they remember it. I guess because I was the oldest. All right, technically Russ was the oldest, but you know, he was a pineapple-eating book-worm who didn’t have that innate nurturing side that compelled me to care for my younger siblings. So I always felt like the oldest. And being the designated Friday night babysitter, I watched my brothers and sisters grow up. I saw them face struggles I had already faced and endure challenges and trials I knew nothing about. I always felt like I had to be the protector or the mediator, and yet I’m sure they all would have been just fine without me. Ironically, in the end it has been me who has needed them. I have laughed with them, cried with them, and leaned on their strength when I had none. Each one in their own inimitable way has reached out and lifted me up. I have listened to them, observed them, and learned from them. Thank you. I love you all. Here is what you have done for me:

Russ: I always thought I was looking after you with my unsuccessful attempts to introduce you to girls and involve you in parties, not realizing all along, it was you looking after me. You were there for me when I needed someone to talk to. I love all the memories we share of growing up together (midnight cereal, seminary, dances, making movies, traveling, I could go on and on). You are the most respectful man I know. You’re kind and non-judgmental. You have a quiet strength and deep love for all those around you and I have always felt it. Always. Remember that talk we had in Cloverdale sitting around your table? I’ll never forget the things you said to me – it was exactly what I needed to hear. Thank you for never giving up on me. You’re my rock.

Craig: I often think about the day you came home from your mission and hugged me so tight and roared “I LOVE YOU!” It seemed so strange coming from someone who I thought always hated me. But from that day on, I have never felt anything but love from you. And not just any love. I LOVE YOU!” love – the thunderous piercing gigantic hug love that emanates from you wherever you are. You love your children and your wife in a way that is matchless and exceptional. I admire your brilliance. Thank you for always encouraging me to do more and learn more. I would never have made it through graduate school without you. You know that’s true. One last thing - I’ll never forget what you did for Hunter when he was trapped inside of his own world. I hope you know what I mean.

Scott: Scotty. Scott-the-dot. You were my first baby. So, yeah, sorry – I did all my practicing on you and made the worst mistakes with you. (good thing you don't remember all those diaper pins I accidentally stuck you with!) I smile every time I look at you now because in my mind, you're still that baby I held in my arms when I was only four or five years old – or that little boy I took to school when I was nine. I smile because you're a man and I can still hardly believe it. But more than that. You're a good man. A really really good man. A dedicated and loving husband. A fun and kind father. A man willing to sacrifice anything and everything to make those he loves happy. I always wanted you to look up to me – but it's me who now looks up to you. You're truly amazing.

Christy: Wow. Tough one. There really aren't words to describe what you have meant to me. I can't even finish writing your name without tears rolling down my face. I can honestly say that without you, I would not have survived. I feel like my day really hasn't started until I've heard your voice. I love listening to your stories and just hearing what you've already accomplished that day gives me the encouragement I need to do something with mine. You make everything so real. And then you make me face reality. There's nothing I've confronted in this crazy life alone. You've been by my side every step of the way. No, more than that. You've confronted it with me. You've cried my tears and felt my pain. We're in this together. Forever. (“we are sooo connected”). I love you more than I know how to express. I love your sweet angels. I even love Rob! Thank you for being my light, my inspiration, and my strength.

Jimmy: So I'm down to the little boys. Jimmy, I miss hearing you play the piano. That may seem like a strange thing to say, but I've had the special experience of living very close to you for several years – and now you're gone. Now that I think about it, it was the first time since you were little – and I was a teenager living in Scotland that we have really spent time together like that. I have come to know you - not as a little boy but as a husband and father. As a teacher, an intellect, and a friend. And I miss hearing you play the piano. I miss Scrabble games, I miss your stories, and I miss your wife and daughter. Thank you for sharing your life and your family with me and for taking care of my children. I know that I would not have made it through the two years mom and dad were gone if it were not for you. Not one day of it. Thank you.

Spence: aka Uncle Penny. The first thing that comes to mind every time I think about you is sitting in your old room (the green room) talking and listening to music. You were in high school and I was a wreck – recently separated with a baby – oh yeah, and knocked up! We hardly knew each other before that. You'd think, me being so much older and “wiser” – and you just some teen-age punk, that I would have had something to teach to you. But whether you realized it or not, you taught me. I leaned on you. You made me feel young and significant. You loved my kids. It was such a hard time for me and you made it fun. You still make me laugh and remind me how to enjoy life and be happy despite the challenges. You are such a hard worker and a brilliant engineer. You are so accepting of others and make everyone feel important. You are a wonderful husband and father. Thank you for always making me smile. (freakin' laser beams people!)

Lora: Never thought I'd get here, eh? I was just saving the best for last. Daddy's favorite! Actually, everybody's favorite. You were our unexpected baby and we couldn't get enough of you. I'll never forget being there the day you were born and how the doctor delivered you and handed you over to me. I was the first to hold you. I've loved you intensely ever since that moment. I have loved watching you grow up, singing, dancing, and throwing parties. Your love for life is contagious. You are a compassionate woman (I can't believe I have to use that word with you! The baby can't be a woman!). Thank you for always listening to me and for being the most positive person I know. Thank you for not being embarrassed about taking your “way older sister” swing dancing on Friday nights. I miss watching you dance. Good times!

Phew. That took longer than I thought. But, alas, the fun doesn't stop here. I can't accept this Oscar without also thanking my parents. Without them, I wouldn't be standing here today. I'd also like to thank the Academy,

my agent, the directors and producers, the key grip, and okay, snap out of it. There is no Oscar. But that doesn't change the fact that my mom and dad are the voice (voices?) in my head whether I'm baking bread, planning a party, buying a house, singing Maori songs, or teaching my children. And cheesy or not, without them, I really wouldn't be the person I am today. So, here's to the two of you (and it's a good thing I waited till the end because no doubt, you are the only two still reading this saga!)

Mom: I love that you taught me to dance and sing. So many of my memories of growing up include music – anything from *Nga Waka*, to *Phantom of the Opera*, to the many many 80's tapes you made for our trips to Utah. I loved watching you put together musicals. It always (and still does) amazed me how you could get so many different people working together and generate an extraordinary production – every time. I wanted to be just like you. It was always fun when you were in the room. You have an amazing ability to make everyone you talk to feel good about themselves. You can find the good in anyone. I love that you taught me to make applesauce, to dance (slow-slow, quick-quick), to throw parties, to do my very best, to believe in God, to serve others, to be Christ-like, and above all to love. You love your children so much. And you love the people they have brought into their lives – friends, spouses, and children. If there is one thing I have never doubted for one day for as long as I can remember, is that you love me. Thank you for loving me so much. Thank you for always worrying about me and my family and our happiness. Life is always a little bit easier to face when you know there is someone who is there for you no matter what. I love you very much.

Dad: Some of my favorite memories of you are sitting at a table doing homework. I know that sounds crazy, but it was a time when I had you all to myself. Even when I had absolutely no idea what you were talking about, I loved listening to you. I would sometimes even pretend to not understand something at school so that we could sit together and I could listen to you teach me about electrons or World War II or sine and co-sine. You were always so passionate and excited about what you were teaching that it made me excited too and want to learn it just to share that with you. But even more, I wanted you to be proud of me. You were my hero, my protector, and the man I compared every guy to. And of course, no one ever measured up. I guess every daddy is perfect in his little girl's eyes. But now I'm a woman, and nothing has changed. You still are, and will be forever to me, the epitome of perfection. And no-one could ever convince me otherwise – not even you. Your faith is inspiring. You're genuine, patient, accepting, perceptive, and the most kind-hearted man I have ever known. Someone once told me that you have a visible light or aura that surrounds you. I wanted you to know that I've always seen it too. I love you.

Now – you'd probably think that that would be the end. (well it is but to prove I'm a liar, I'll sing it to you once again – only this time I'll sing it higher) I wanted to write about all of you because my family is everything to me and all of you have influenced me in ways that you'll never know. However, there are a few other people that have been in my life – a few less years than the rest of you, who have also touched my life and changed me and continue to affect and shape me on a daily basis—my husband and my children. I have learned so much from them and love them intensely. This long narrative has been a tribute to my family since it is because of them that I believe what I do and why I take that belief to try to be the best person I can. But I have a new family now, and I just can't end without saying just a few sweet things about each of them. I promise to be brief.

Hunter: He is 'without guile.' He doesn't just look for the good – he truly only sees the good in everyone. He's creative, fun and the perfect example. He's absolutely brilliant and infectiously unique. I love his sense of humor, his angelic smile, and his 'great big hugs.'

Bryant: He always has great ideas about how to have fun. He enjoys eavesdropping on grown-up conversations and cuddling with mom while reading books. Mom loves it even more. He's kind, generous, and unbelievably obedient. He's a wonderful 'big-brother.'

Bella Bryn: My angel. She loves everybody – and makes it impossible not to love her back. She keeps us all laughing because she’s fantastically quirky. She’s our little princess and is the glue that keeps us together. She is compassionate, talented, and beautiful – inside and out.

Thatcher: Our never-ending energizer bunny. He always has great questions and is a reading maniac. He loves babies and is always the first to ask to sit by Chey in the car. I love his Lego creations and inventive paper air-planes and bright blue eyes. He’s incredibly funny and has a big, big heart.

Tessa: She’s extremely inquisitive. She has a million questions each day. She’s always the first of the kids to notice a new skirt or hair-cut. She’s unbelievably clever and loves to copy grown-up talk. I love her sweet smile and love it when she does mommy’s hair.

Chey: He’s got the most contagious smile. He’s always happy and loves to bounce and cuddle. He loves to be read stories and adores all his big brothers and sisters. He’s a hugger and is so curious. Chey is a perfect baby. I love his loud laugh and kind heart.

SHAWN: Last but not least. Definitely not least. In fact, he’s the most. The most patient. The most sacrificing. The most hard-working. The most loving. He’s my best friend and I love him acutely. He’s the smartest and strongest man I know. (and not just because he can beat Craig in arm-wrestling!) Shawn is a dedicated, caring husband and father. He is a survivor and teaches me to never give up. I love the way he loves me (is that a song??) and I love his willingness to learn and grow. He’s a brilliant and talented engineer but more importantly he’s a thoughtful and good man. Te amo nene. Eres mi vida, mi risa, mi todo.

“What Is Important To Me”

By *Shawn Whiting*

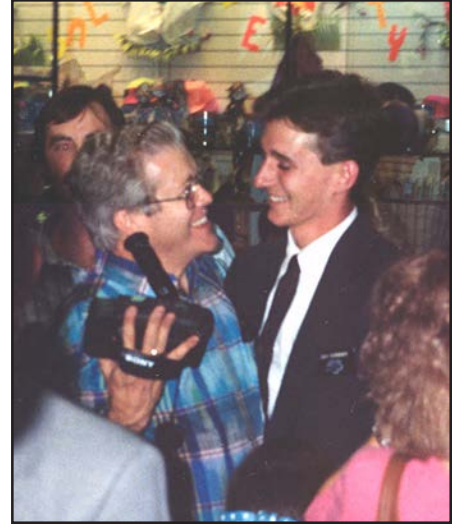
My family inspires me to be a better husband, father, and person. If I were to ever doubt or get down, I just have to think of them and I get a boost to do better. Gina is the love of my life. I’m happy just being around her. She’s my life, the air I breathe and my light (sun). She’s so solid and she keeps me anchored in what I need to be. She’s beautiful but doesn’t know it; talented in lots of ways; very supportive of me; and fun to be around. I’m lucky to have her in my life and I’m grateful for everyday that we have together. The kids are each sweet, loving, smart,

talented, funny, helpful. The girls are beautiful, like their Mom, and the boys are handsome when their hair isn’t too shaggy. They each bring special things to our family that we couldn’t do without. Thinking of them always reminds me that I need to be a good Dad and be worthy of their love.



Craig Douglas Scribner

Today is October 10, 2006. Let's see now - that makes Craig thirty-six years old! So where do I start to tell you about Craig? Let's start with his name. Craig is just one of those names that we really liked, and we combined it with Doug's name, Craig Douglas Scribner. Of course, a man always wants a child to be named after him, but this is something I wanted as well because I was named after my father whose name is Cecil--and in my life, it's made a difference to my identity and in the way I acted. I don't know how Craig actually feels about being named after his father, but maybe I can just tell you a little bit about his namesake--I've come to know him quite well over the years. Doug has a good knowledge about the world, about geography, about the workings of math and microwaves and acoustics and such. He likes to explore into the depths of these things. Finding the Gospel was another exploration for him, but finding the truth in it finally took him into a realm different from all other explorations for knowledge. The truth couldn't be totally grasped by reading and studying--all this had to be combined with prayer, allowing the spirit to touch the heart and bear witness of the truth. That's where Doug was amazing. Many men like him would never be humble enough to let truth come to him in this way--dependence on another being except himself. So if Craig could emulate something wonderful from his Dad it would be to find the kind of humility his Dad has. Interestingly enough, Craig and his father are worlds apart in personality. Doug is an analytic, and Craig? Definitely an expressive-expressive! For example, if an earthquake happened, Doug would say something like,



"Wow, that rumbling feels like an earthquake. We'd better make a plan to make sure everyone is safe, etc."

Craig would be different. At the first rumble he'd run into the house yelling, *"It's an earthquake, it's an earthquake. Hey, Jimmy, did you feel it? That's an earthquake!"*

Of course, every personality has its qualities and its problems. Craig has the ability to immediately connect with people. Now whether or not he really truly feels connected and concerned about this person or persons is only for him to know, but this connection and this concern can make another person feel like a million dollars. I've seen him do this over and over. On so many occasions, I've introduced Craig to someone, and Craig immediately pays close attention to names and facts. He centers his whole attention on that person and can engage him in a conversation, always referring to him by his name. A moment I will never forget was when Craig had returned from his mission and was conducting a choir in his BYU ward. He took them to heights that were beyond a ward choir. He brought them all over to the James House where he was living and had a practice with them there. I happened to be visiting and observed this. It was a spirited *Spiritual* that they were singing. He was never critical of any mistakes, and somehow they were *one* with Craig, responding just exactly as Craig led them. When the song was over, it was quiet--they knew they sounded fantastic. Craig broke the silence (*and Craig can break the silence*) with,

"You were sooo good!! Oh my goodness, you were sooo good! Unbelievable! Fantastic!"

And yes, they felt like a million dollars. You could see it in their faces.



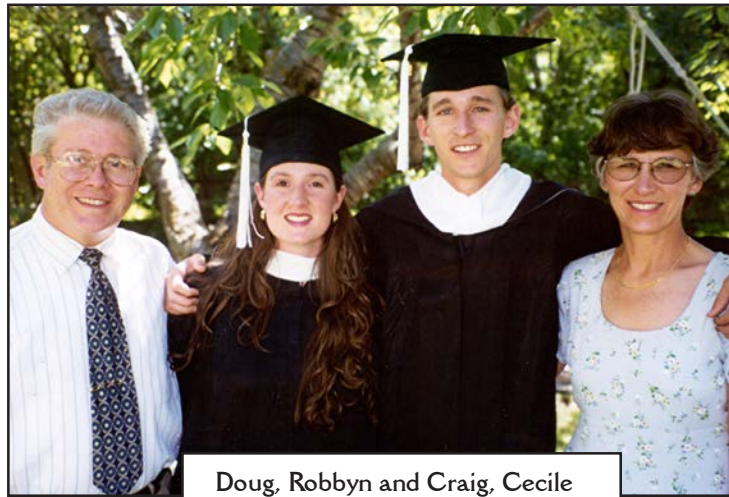
Craig married Robbyn Thompson in the Logan Temple on the 1st of July 1994. They met at Brigham Young University while singing in the Concert Choir under the direction of Mack Wilberg. They traveled quite a bit with this group and I'm sure had wonderful memories from this experience. Robbyn is just as expressive (meaning responsive to people and situations) as Craig is. In a marriage I guess this could be explosive--but, on the other hand, it could mean there's a lot of action, commotion, and interesting things going on at all times! Robbyn is a very accomplished singer, and they've had the fun of performing many musical items together. In that, they are such a good match for each other.



Bachelors' Degrees - 1994

They have four gorgeous children: Magdalena Faith, Thompson MacKenzie, Lucy Noel, and Jack Nelson (born earlier this year--March 2006).

Surprisingly, they've done some other very major things together. They both received their Bachelors' Degrees from BYU at the same time, both graduating with honors, and they both received their Masters' Degrees from BYU at the same time--quite amazing!



Doug, Robbyn and Craig, Cecile Graduation from BYU August 1998



In case any of these gorgeous children of Craig and Robbyn's ever push the wrong buttons with their parents and cause them grief, I think I should tell a few stories about Craig. Russ was an analytic like his father, and Craig, as you now know is totally reactive in every situation. Well, for years these two boys would drive us WILD! Russ would just love to *quietly and decisively* tease Craig, and then immediately we would hear Craig screaming in a loud voice,

“MOM!!!”

Well, I then would call down the stairs and say, ***“RUSS!!”***

Can you just picture it? I sure can because it happened over and over and over again. Russ, the quiet one would *turn the knife* and Craig the expressive one would Explode! Russ just loved to watch the explosion! And Gina was always just trying to be friends with both of them, wishing they'd get along. All the time I was thinking,



“How can I force this boy to change his personality before he's eight years old and is baptized? If I don't, he'll be in trouble all the rest of his life.”

Finally with all of our *exploring* personality, I accepted the fact that Craig's personality was just fine. His job would be to put in the controls when needed so he could be flexible and manage his life. This, of course, is called maturity. With the acceptance of his and all our other children's unique personalities, our life became so rich.

The children are all so different. This has assured me many times over that there is a pre-existence—that all of our children have existed long before I gave birth to them. Their uniqueness shows up in the very first months of their lives.



One of our favorite stories of Craig is when he was only eighteen-months-old. Craig spoke very early and very clearly. We knew we'd be moving to Santa Rosa, so we came up to look around. It was Sunday, so we visited the ward where we thought we'd be attending. I was about seven months pregnant with Scotty, so was starting to get uncomfortably big. Craig started making a fuss in church, so I picked him up and balanced him on my big stomach as we walked down the aisle for the quick getaway. He just threw himself from one side to the next calling out, ***“Help me, help me!”***

Man, I was embarrassed. I kept trying to shut his mouth with my hand, but he moved too quickly, and I kept missing. Another *interesting* time happened after we moved into our first home in Santa Rosa on Bridgewood Drive. Craig slept on the bottom bunk. He started drawing with crayons on the wall next to his bed. I would try to get it off, but it was becoming impossible. Pretty soon I just gave up and let him draw all he wanted because I had plans to wallpaper the walls, and that would cover up all the damage! Well, we invited these new acquaintances from Hewlett-Packard to dinner one night. We didn't have much furniture—nothing at all in the living room—but we had a table, so we could invite guests for dinner. They were also new in the neighborhood, so we excitedly showed them our new house. We even took them into the boys' room, and we just smiled and made a slight apology for the way Craig's wall looked. Well, this woman was from France, very well-bred, the kind who would never allow her children to eat on the white carpets in the dining room with the grown-ups, and when she saw that wall she exclaimed,

“Oh, if my child had done that, I would have killed him!”

I kept very calm and with wide-eyes replied,

“Oh, I understand. We tried killing Craig, but he just wouldn’t die!”



Who knows what they continued to think of us! Craig was unique, and we always had some frustrations in raising him. But he had some amazing qualities. For one thing, he loved to sing. We gave him piano lessons, and finally the teacher called me and said,

“Craig doesn’t really want to play the piano. He wants to sing. Instead of playing the pieces, he sings them.”

So Craig never got beyond anything in piano except the *Pink Panther*. We had very regular home nights, and they always started off with the kids playing their piano pieces that they were learning. For years and years, Craig took his turn and every time played the *Pink Panther*. I don’t ever want to hear that piece again!

It would be easy to write a whole book about Craig and all the experiences that we had, but very early I knew that his life was important, and that he was given

his life as a gift many times over. The first experience I recall was when he was just crawling. I was getting ready for Relief Society and he was downstairs with Gina. He was wearing his fuzzy warm blue sleeper and managed to push a chair up to the stove and pull himself up on top of the stove. He started playing with the dials. I was upstairs and Gina (about three and a half) came up to me and said something about Craig and the stove. Something set off an alarm in me, and I ran down those stairs and into the kitchen in about two seconds. Craig was

sitting on a burner and the one next to him was red hot. He was just about to touch it. I grabbed him, held him tight, and started crying as I envisioned how quickly his sleeper would’ve caught fire. I knew then as I’ve been assured many times over that the spirit is at work in our homes. Another time I felt a particular alarm when I heard a little voice calling, *“Help.”* He had climbed up on the top bunk and was hanging by his neck between the bed and the wall. Again I received a strong warning to *move fast*. My biggest problem was that Craig always moved fast. As a baby he never crawled normally, but crawled with hands and feet, not hands and knees. He was like a bug. He was always in a hurry.



Another brush with death came when we had a severe car accident in 1983. Craig was thirteen years old. The van had rolled three times, and the children (seven of ours and two others) were thrown out of the van with each roll. When it came to a stop all four tires were blown and the van was upright. Craig was pinned between the gas tank and the ground. So many details to this story, but I will just say that we were sent an angel—a truck driver who had been trained as a paramedic, and who knew the urgency of the situation. Several people had stopped to help us, but he organized everyone so the van could be lifted just an inch. He knew that Craig was being crushed to death—he couldn’t breathe.



When it was lifted, that man pulled Craig out and he immediately started to breathe. The skin on his back was cut to the bone, right at the edge of his spine. There have been other such incidences with Craig. I know the Lord has blessed him and has blessed us.

I've always felt that Craig has much to accomplish in this life and that's why his life has been spared so many times. In his Patriarchal blessing (given to him at age fifteen on March 1985 while we lived in Scotland) it says:

“. . .There is a place awaiting for you in the eternities where you will receive great blessings--blessings greater than you can understand or comprehend at this particular time, but as you are a choice spirit the Lord has much to give you. . .grow very close to the Lord Jesus Christ, know him well and personally and as you live an exemplary life you will qualify to see the Saviour face to face. . .I say to you now that you will see the Lord and will meet him face to face and you will serve Him and know Him personally. . .”

His blessing also told him about his mission:

“. . .You will be called to serve and as you apply yourself, great will be your rewards as you see those who have been searching for the truth and have not had the opportunity of hearing it, accepting it and going into the waters of baptism. You will be able to bring about much righteousness and bring many souls to the truth.”

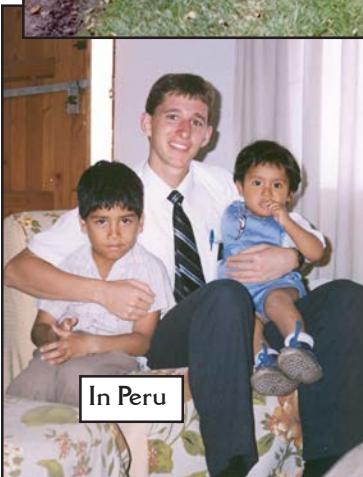


At age twenty, Craig was called to serve a mission in Peru. Because of dangerous threats in Peru, he and the other North Americans who came out with him served their last six months in Venezuela. Like Russ and Gina, he learned the Spanish language very well, and I'm sure learned about humility as he witnessed the conditions that many of the people in Peru live in. Craig wrote many letters home describing his mission. He has a great ability to write, and wrote a paragraph on *Self-Esteem* that I have quoted in many lessons and talks. He wrote:

“There's nothing that will destroy a person's self image like the chains of sin. . .I can see so clearly now that I've been saved from the consequences that an uncontrolled life leads to. . .Happiness

is when you Know that the life you're living is acceptable to God. . .”

We were happy when Craig made it back to the good ol' USA--safe and sound. His one and only pair of shoes were held together with a safety pin. The only clothes he brought home were on his back. He loved Peru and wished he could've finished his entire mission there.



Craig has so many qualities. He's a wonderful letter writer. He wrote faithfully to other siblings while they served their missions—probably better than anyone else in the family did. And he often would write a special letter just for Lora (just eight years old) while he was gone. He has a marvelous way of expressing himself, and even though both of us are capable of writing better poetry, it was fun to have this following communication with Craig:

A Poem for Craig -- Twenty Years Old -- 10 October 1990

A "writer's block" has come upon me
I can't seem to write my poetry,
Scott is just teasing and laughing at me
"Da da da, da da, da diddeley dee!"
He thinks it is easy to write unto thee
For he is now writing prolifically
He writes about bugs and thinks he is funny
He prints like a child and his pen
is all runny
He can't understand what is hindering me
But a "writers' block" is all it can be!

For I have been known to write classically
Of people and places, of Men and TV
I once had a son who was struck with TB
And also a girl--a mission air ee.
She got a "Dear Jane," but we all agree
Another fine guy will weaken her knee.
Dad says I'm writing ridiculous lee
And he sealed up his letter and won't
let me see--
I'll bet he was claiming to be 53,
But that is a lie--he looks older to me!



Cecile on the way to the hospital to get Craig --
10 October 1970--Los Altos, CA (Check out the hairdo!)

Christy's 16--and 5 foot 3
Or thereabouts--Oh, fiddle dee dee.
There's something amiss--I'm "bugged"
you can see
But so is Rags with many a flea.
Perhaps the problem is more sim plee
The fact that you're gone away from me.
I try not to think how long it will be
'Til you're coming home like Cousin Tro ee.
You are my boy most definitely
For you are so clever--just like me!
We both have a way with words, Bumblebee--
You write them, I read them creative a lee.

I hardly can wait for your letters, Sweet Pea,
They come when I'm "down," but fortunately
I read them and like them, and occasionally
I share them with others--Are you Proud of me?
Well, I just wrote this poem, so now I am free
To wish you a Birthday--oh, Happy, Happee!
Twenty years old--Craig, promise me
That you will be safe and come back to me.
I LOVE YOU "as is" -- oh, yes sir ee!
As Craigie, as Craig, and a song with my "tea."

You're my kinda guy--from your

Dearest Mommie

Craig enjoying a
Knickerbocker Glory!



I think you may have already guessed--Craig had a quick response to this poem:

Dearest Mom,

I 'd like you to knoo
That I wasn't aboo
t to write you a poem. Hoo
ever, things change anew, and the noo
I want to write, of Peru,
And talk of the blue
Sky I'm missing, the girls I'm not kissing,
And the good news I'm hissing (*D&C* _____)
But God's the magician,
For I'm now on my mission,
And it's a whole lot like fishing
Among men, like Jesus said, Wishing
They'd hook on, and give us the mention
That they'd like the prevention of the awful invention
Called Sin.
And there's a whole lot of haggling,
Upset and agony, convincing the families
What it is they need.
But the joy is amazing when they quit being lazy
And follow the laws of our creed!

But right now it's P-Day, a free day
To think, and relax, and relay
To our families news of the way
That the week has gone, and to say
"Continue to pray that in a coming day
Their boy will get this language" -- Hooray!



Craig's Senior in High School
Picture--Santa Rosa High



Craig and Cecile after his
Mission--1992--Santa Rosa, CA

And now I'm a bit sad
For my rhythm is bad
And this poem has just about had
it.

I love you a lot, I think of you too,
And it's certainly NOT just for all
that you do.
It's for all that you've done,
And the good boy I've become,
No more fe-fi-fo-fum,
Or bein' a regular old hum-drum,
Or a crumb or a bum,
All thanks to my Mum!
And the blessings of God in my life,
His guidance through whatever strife,
And I'll always be thankful for
His gift of you
During these first 20 years of my Life!!
I Love You!

Craig

Craig is a natural teacher. While he and Robbyn were living in Australia for three years, they had some unusual challenges. Their ward was made up of Polynesians, and many of them from Tonga. Both of them used their energy in learning all of their names, and going to their family affairs, to the funerals, the weddings, etc. They particularly became acquainted with the Tongan culture, and were well-loved by these people. We visited them a couple of times while they were there and heard Craig teach the Gospel



Doctrine Class. He was like Russ in his ability to bring out comments and make people feel good about what they said. Somehow he can make a person feel like he (that person) knows the answer. He knows how to discover knowledge that is within someone. Craig always knew so much about the subject—I watched his preparation during the week. Craig knows and understands the scriptures very well. We saw so much excitement for the Gospel in his heart and in his voice as he taught. I hope he never loses this excitement and love for the Gospel that we observed in him in Australia.

Colors by *Craig Scribner* (Nine Years Old)

March 17, 1979

Green

Green is. . .

A leprechaun sitting on a shamrock in
Ireland

When you want to enjoy the breeze and the
The sand,

Not in Santa Rosa where you have brothers
that shoot you with rubber bands,

But high in the hills with green grassy
Lands

White

White is. . .

My teacher using squeaky chalk

On an April night, on a cold, cold rock,

With a carnation beside the cold, cold rock
Which my teacher is using squeaky chalk

On an April night.

White is my sister eating marshmallows in my ear

Like wild deer running in fear

Like little whispers going through one ear

And they disappear.



I need to tell you about two more *phases* in Craig’s life before I’m finished. The first I will call the *Scotland Phase*, and the second is the *Present Phase*. There’s much to be said about our three years in Scotland, and particularly much to be said just about Craig’s time in Scotland, but I’ll limit this to a small, but very important part—Elly, José, Andrew and Roland. These five individuals greatly contributed to Craig’s life, and they are all still close friends. I don’t know how it happened, but Doug and I felt that we were doing everything we could to help our children gain confidence and particularly self-esteem. We found that we could lead them into areas that would enhance their natural talents, help them to achieve good grades in school, give them opportunities to meet and associate with the right people, go on lots of camping trips, follow the guidelines that are meant to hold families close together and close to God—such as morning and night family prayer, regular family home evenings, morning scripture reading, stories and songs at night before bedtime, regular church attendance, and evening meals together.

“It takes a heap of livin’ to make a house a home.” (Edgar Guest)

We did all that. . . and yet, to our amazement, so many of our children grew up without a lot of self-esteem. Did we not tell them we loved them enough? What would’ve made the difference? Perhaps these are those things that we have no control over—we concluded that whether or not a person has self-esteem is up to them.



We don’t control who our children were before they were given to us at birth, and we can’t control their thoughts, and all the outside influences that face them. Perhaps the best decision we made for Craig was to move to Scotland so he could meet Elly, Jose, Andrew and Roland—and yes, I’ll add Louie. These were good friends that saw Craig as so wonderful, and Craig saw the same in them. We asked Elly to give Craig singing lessons and to help him realize his potential in this area. She was twenty-four years old and he was fifteen. She had a glorious singing voice, but performed with Craig often. She enjoyed his natural talent, and it never phased her at all to allow herself to perform with this younger *novice*. The climax of all this effort came when the two of them performed *Marching Along the Open Road*. They

sang it in English, then French, then German, then Spanish and then Arabic. Oh my goodness, what a memory for all of us! They even *prum, prum, prummed* between each language as they donned costumes from those countries.



When Craig turned sixteen, we asked him who he wanted to ask out for his *first date*. He said,

“I’ve asked the most beautiful girl in Scotland to go with me—Elly!”

Elly was ten years older than Craig, but she would never have let him down. She dressed as young as she could—cute skirt and blouse and pony-tail. They rode on the train and sang all the way, they climbed a fence into a park in the middle of Edinburgh and they ate a packed dinner, and then they rode a taxi to the Mission Home and sang “Happy Birthday” to President Joel Dunn because it was his birthday too. When Elly returned from her mission she married a fellow about ten years younger than herself, to which Craig said,

“Man, I could’ve asked her to marry me!”

Well, fortunately, Elly and her brother José, Roland Axten, Louie Giboin, and Andrew Cunningham have all become good friends of Robbyn's as well. Craig is his most natural self in the world when he's with these friends. It's definitely like being with family when we're together with them. When Craig was called on his mission I was fretting over what I should say. It wasn't as if I could say, *"Getting to this point in our lives has been the most natural course of events. We knew that Craig would achieve these heights, and we're grateful the Lord helped us raise him in such a way that he is now worthy to go."*



Andrew, Roland, Craig, Jose, Louie

No, I sure couldn't say that. I almost wondered how we managed to get to that point at all. For sure, I didn't feel like much of the credit was mine. I had a dream that night that I have never forgotten. In fact, I think I shared it when I gave my talk at his farewell. Craig was speaking at the podium, and lined up on both sides of him were a group of people—there were many on both sides. These were the people that helped Craig get to this point in his life. It wasn't just Doug and me. I particularly remember Elly, José, Roland, Louie and Andrew standing there. My mother was also there, but other than that, I don't remember the faces. Who was it that said, *"It takes a whole village to raise a child."??* Well, I would like to take the credit for that success, but I'm very proud to share it with all those other wonderful people. Doug and I prayed often for help in raising Craig, and he answered our prayers through all those people.

Now, the *Present Phase*. Craig's Patriarchal Blessing told him a great truth, *"...prepare yourself mentally, physically, and spiritually. Avail yourself of every opportunity of studying the scriptures, of participating in all the classes that you can in order to learn those wonderful truths, because the mysteries of God are great and we learn of them little by little, precept upon precept."*

Craig has always been hungry to learn, and he's got *what I think is* a brilliant mind. However, some things are best learned by experience. Craig has learned some amazing things about himself in these last ten years of

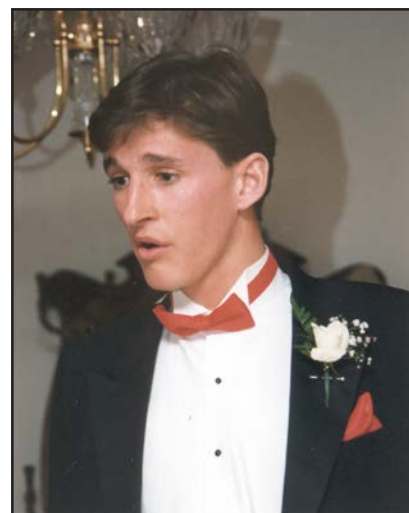
employment. I don't know all that he's gone through, but he shared some wonderful insights with Doug. When Craig and Robbyn were in Australia he worked with a company that loved him and gave him a lot of latitude. They expected a lot of him, but never watched him very closely. Perhaps he wasn't quite ready for that much freedom. He felt he didn't deliver like they had hoped he would. He chose not to stay with that company when they moved back to America because it would mean moving to San Diego, and yes, Craig is married to a *dyed in the wool* Utah girl! But that was fine with Craig.



Lucy, Cecile, Maggie, Robbyn, Jack, Craig, Tommy, Doug --April 2006

His first job in Orem didn't give him much freedom at all and he was watched *over his shoulders* all the time. He hated that. Now he has a new job that has given him a lot of trust and freedom, just like his job in Australia, but this time he is ready for that level of trust, and he really loves his work. It's made a big difference in his life. It's amazing that Doug got that much information out of him in one sitting. Craig has one defect—he's impatient—BIG TIME! We tease him a lot because he's only got so much energy that he's willing to put forth to listen (unless it's truly his choice to do so), so everything we say needs to be said quickly and to the point, 'cuz after that, Craig is off to conquer new horizons. You always know when the conversation is near its end because he'll say, "*Well, you're a sweet girl...*" After that, it's all over!

Craig, like all the boys in our family, is a GREAT father. He's not only a great father to his own children, but to all the nephews and nieces as well. Gina couldn't have made it through her Master's Degree without the help of Robbyn and Craig. He loved her children like his own. It would be impossible for his children not to know that he loves them—he tells them constantly. He thinks they are handsome and beautiful and delicious! He goes to great lengths to tell them stories, set up tents in the living room to have *sleep-outs* inside, and to sing to them. And yes, Craig sings all the time—he loves music. Perhaps, I'll just end Craig's story (for now) by saying that I love to hear Craig and the other boys sing. They always produce something fun for the weddings—lately it's been the boys plus Lora. But Craig and Russ make sure these musical renditions happen to honor each couple as they get married. Craig can make things happen! It's hard to imagine what our lives would've been like without him. I love him very very much.



Gina, Russ, Craig, Jimmy, and Doug

"Why I Believe"

by Craig Scribner

I've got faith coming out my ears. I believe it's a gift from God, and I can't figure out what I've done to deserve it, since I have such a long list of nasty habits to go with my very short temper. Plus, I'm a total pill. I'm one of the guys who will hunt down all of the different narratives that Joseph Smith ever dictated about his First Vision experience so I can find all of the inconsistencies between them, just to poke fun at the people who assume that they don't exist.



And this is the part where I'm supposed to say, "*I'm converted because I can never find any flaws.*" Not so! They're all over the place. But my efforts peter out, because I get distracted by the *sights* along the way. Heavenly Father's a real trickster. When he says "*Come reason with me, and I will show you my strong reasoning,*" it's really just a trap. At least in my case, he never gets around to the silly questions I started the conversation with. Instead he shows me much more interesting and valuable things.

Moroni said that the *Book of Mormon* was published for the *doubters* rather than the *believers*. Almost in the same sentence he confessed the whole book was riddled with errors. Which doubter among us wouldn't rise to the bait? It's as irresistible as honey to a bear. But it's absolutely a trap. The power of the scriptures is absurd, which means that it can't be contained by the words themselves. It's something that flows through them, and I've felt it often enough to agree with the Psalm that describes the stuff of scriptures as sweeter than honey. In fact, when I turned to that passage just now, I discovered this one along side it:

*Who can understand his errors?
cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

Look how suddenly and perfectly the smear campaign I begin with segues into something far more important and personal! That's been my experience with the scriptures ever since I was old enough to start taking them seriously. I remember one time cracking open a book called *The Words of Joseph Smith*. You may already know that we don't have a single recorded word that Joseph Smith wrote down himself. Everything we've got was either dictated by him, or simply spoken in private or public and happened to be written down by somebody else. So that's what was in this book—and I opened it up with the sole intention of finding something really quirky that I could shock my mother with. Within ten minutes I caught myself weeping over his earnest admonition to the Saints to care for the poor.

I've carried another thing that Joseph Smith taught around with me for nearly half my life. He spun the traditional reading of Peter's words on its head, saying, "*If you throw a cloak of charity over my sins, I will over yours—for charity covereth a multitude of sins.*"

I see a parallel between this couplet and the one from Psalms I quoted before. Maybe I started out as a doubter, seeking the flaws in the messengers or in their message. But the power in that message has commanded an about face where I instantly see that my own life could never withstand that kind of investigation. I see with clarity my own need for a cloak of mercy and atonement. And time and again, it makes a believer out of me.

“Why I Believe”

by Robbyn Rae Scribner

When Mom called with this assignment she said, *“This is a hard essay to write. It’s easy to write what you believe, but harder to write why you believe.”* I personally think the first essay would be just as hard to write. Christy once told me that one of Mom’s greatest gifts is her unshakable faith—I have to admit that I don’t have that gift. I think I’m much more skeptical than faithful by nature, and so even the question of *what I believe* is never really a cut and dry issue.

But no matter where I am on my life-faith continuum, I do have a constant belief in a few basics: the existence of God, the divinity and mission of Christ, the reality of life after death. I think my faith in those things is constant because I find the alternative truly unthinkable.

Yesterday in a doctor’s office I was reading an article called “God vs. Science,” which featured a debate between two men, one of whom was arguing the importance of completely abandoning any belief in God. The article really shook me up because I can’t imagine the utter hopelessness in not believing in something bigger than myself. I think something inside me needs to believe in a benevolent God who knows me and loves me, and I need to believe that my life and my family won’t end at death. So even when my personal spirituality is as low as it gets, I do believe in those fundamental truths—mostly because I can’t bear the thought of *not* believing.

That said, most of the time I believe in a lot of things. I have had enough spiritual experiences in my life to recognize when the Spirit is speaking to me and teaching me things that I need to know. About a year ago I was praying to develop a stronger testimony of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the Church. I read a conference talk by the Relief Society general president in which she spoke about a woman who was dying of cancer. The woman received a great deal of service from the sisters in her ward: *“They provided car pools, tutored homework, played her piano, changed bedding. And they did it day after day after day, without complaint, with boundless charity.”* Before she died, this woman turned to another sister and asked, *“How does anyone die without Relief Society?”* As I read that talk the Spirit spoke to me and testified that this church is good—that it does good work in the lives of its members and that it facilitates our becoming better people. I was reminded of the phrase in Matthew 7:17, *“Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit,”* and I thought about the many many good fruits of the gospel and the church on the earth. I feel like this was part of an answer to my prayers about the restoration.

Probably the most significant spiritual influence in my life is my kids—things really started to change for me when I became a mom. My feelings for my kids not only help me understand how my own parents feel about me, but how God feels about me. I find comfort in the idea that there is someone who loves me like I love them (certainly much more, since I’m a mere mortal, and an unexceptional one at that). I have a tendency to get really overwhelmed by the horrors of the world, and at those times I want to know there is someone out there who wants everything good for me, the same way I want everything good for my kids. I think becoming a parent has given me a greater personal understanding of the nature of God.



I also think having kids has given me a better overall sense of God’s plan. I’ve had a few moments of true clarity when I am so overwhelmed with love for my kids that I know that this can’t be coincidence—that life and love aren’t merely a biological accident. As I wonder at my amazing little babies and their purity and innocence I feel, again, like there is something out there bigger than we are. More than anything else, my feelings for my family make me hope that there is life after death—that I can be with these little ones forever. And hope is a precursor to faith, right?

So I know that this sounds a lot like I believe mostly because I want to believe, and maybe that’s really true, that faith is my opium to deal with the nightmares in the world. But I think I have a little more to hang onto than that. My favorite scripture is Matthew 11:28-30:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

I believe this scripture. I believe this promise and I feel like it’s been delivered in my life. In some of my darkest and heaviest moments I have felt the rest of the Lord. I believe that His yoke is easy and I have felt my burdens become lighter as I’ve tried to let His peace fill my life. In all the ups and downs of my spiritual journey, the love and peace of the Savior have been a constant blessing. (The story I quoted comes from “Belonging is our Sacred Birthright” by Bonnie D. Parkin, in the November 2004 *Ensign*.)



Scott Howard Scribner

Today's date is the 28th of October 2006. Scotty entered the world thirty-four years ago on the 8th of July 1972. I'm having a good time as I look at a blank piece of paper and start writing whatever comes into my mind about each of my children. I really like all the things that pop into my head as I try to recall particular events that happened with each child. Telling you about Scott, or should I say Scotty, will be fun. Every single day and every single prayer that Scotty ever said (as a boy growing up) included, *"Please bless us to have a good time."* And I suppose that's what it was (*a good time*) from the first moment he appeared on the scene. Dr. Verne Voakes was the doctor who delivered him in the Redwood City Hospital. He seemed as excited as we were when Scotty was delivered. He said,

"You've got the cutest little red-headed boy."

Well, that's the most that I seem to remember about his actual birth—were there labor pains? I suppose so. At that time, we were going through a major change in our lives—a move from our first home in Los Altos to our



next one in Santa Rosa. Doug was already working in a new position with Hewlett-Packard in Santa Rosa. We were the first family to move to Santa Rosa with HP, so Doug began his reputation as a *path finder*. He started in an abandoned printed circuit factory on Airway Drive with six employees, and it grew from there. However, we weren't going to physically move the family until Scotty was born. While I was in the hospital, Doug called the movers, and they cleared the house totally—all except a single bed in one of the rooms. After a couple of days in the hospital, I came home and rested on that bed until I felt strong enough to travel. We then traveled with this brand new little tyke and the three other children up to Santa Rosa. Now this I will never forget.

When we arrived and started to move into our new house, it was 118 degrees Fahrenheit outside. I remember that I couldn't put my bare feet on the sidewalk because it was too hot, and I couldn't turn the valve on the hose without burning my hand. Since they were moving furniture, all the doors and windows were open, only letting in all that miserable heat. We wondered what in the world this place was going to be like in Santa Rosa!

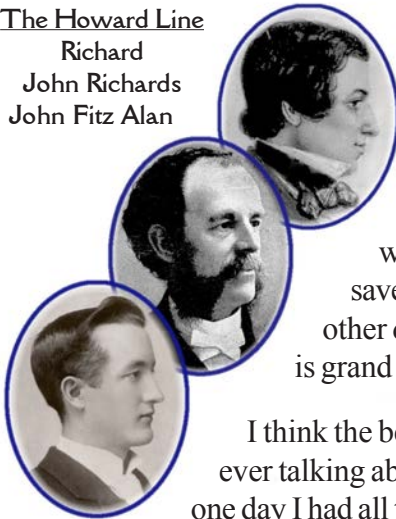


Where had all this heat come from? Well, the scary part was dealing with our new little Scotty. He was like a limp washrag. The heat was draining all the life out of him. There was no cool place that we could find. Constantly, we tried to force any kind of liquid down him, but he didn't seem to have the strength to suck. He just wanted to sleep, but we were fearful he would just keep sleeping and never wake up. Every hour we forced him to wake up and take some fluid. I couldn't get him to nurse right away, so we just dropped water or milk into his mouth. For a couple of days it was a terrible ordeal, and frightened us immensely. His weight dropped, but eventually the weather cooled, and we were able to resume a normal existence again, enjoying our new little son. Another remembrance from that time was a visit from Joyce and her girls—they all got to share in the welcoming of Scott to the world.

We didn't name Scotty right away because we kept debating on whether or not to give him the same name as our little Scott who was stillborn. We just loved the name *Scott* with *Scribner*, and felt a little cheated that we didn't really get to use that name every day. We finally decided it was okay to give him the same name, but with a different middle name. We used *Howard*. This is an honorable name. It was my mother's maiden name. I hope Scott reads extensively about his Howard ancestry because as he does, he will find great pride in carrying this name. Perhaps he'll want to identify with the strong faith that his grandmother Lucie Howard James had, or the strong belief in life after death that his grandmother Drucilla Sears Howard had as she lost so many of her children in their early adulthood with the terrible tuberculosis epidemic that was running rampant through the United States in the 1930's. Or perhaps he'll study about his

The Howard Line

Richard
John Richards
John Fitz Alan



grandfather John Fitz Alan Howard who has just recently (2006) been honored as the founder of The National University of Health Sciences in 1906. Or what about John's father, John Richards Howard who was that ten year old boy in 1852 who was thrown overboard when the *Birkenhead* was sinking near the coast of South Africa and who was also the first of our family to hear and accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Then there was Richard Howard who went down with that ship after throwing his little son overboard in order to save his son's life. That was the moment that inspired all the other officers in all other disasters at sea to save "**women and children first.**" The Howard legacy is grand and exciting. Scott Howard Scribner is an honorable name.

I think the best way to describe Scott's personality is to say he's positive. If we were ever talking about someone, he'd always have something positive to say. For example, one day I had all the kids in the car and for some reason, we stopped at the Hoyal's home. I knocked on the door, and all my children were standing on the porch with me. A girl came to the door. She was a relative visiting from Denmark and I suppose was thoroughly enjoying the warm weather and the Hoyal's pool. Well, when she opened the door, we were all a bit speechless because she had so little on. I didn't want to make a scene by trying to quickly cover the eyes of my children, so I just quickly got on with my business and asked about Mona, when she would be in, and thank you very much but we have to go (Right Now!). We got in the car and got a good block away before the comments started,

"Man, did you see that skimpy bathing suit she had on!" "She was hardly wearing anything!" Etc.

After everyone had managed to say their bit, Scotty finally had his two cents' worth,

"Well, she was wearing a LOT of suntan lotion!"

That is what you call a *gossip-stopper!* Scotty never wanted to hear gossip, never wanted to say anything bad about anyone, but if he did hear it, he would say something that would be positive and gently remind us that we can all be positive about anyone. I would guess that Scott still has the ability to be a gossip-stopper because I never really hear him say anything bad about anyone. Just the other night we were talking about his boss, and why it's been hard to advance in this particular company. Well, Scott could've been bitter and complained, but he instead tried to get us to understand what kind of person his boss was and why he made the kind of decisions he did.



Scott is an early-bird, and always has been. He might even desire now to sleep in a little more, but he's been getting up early for so many years that I doubt he'd be able to sleep in for very long. He's a people-person. This last weekend I suggested that he use one of his early hours to go out and swim, but the reason he couldn't was because that was his special time with their little Gracie—time to bond. When Scott was very little he was always the first to wake up. Doug would also get up early, and our little Scotty was right there to share the morning with him before Doug went to work. As Doug brushed his teeth, he'd sit Scotty on the counter so as to be closer as he watched. Then he'd sit him on the bed to wait for him as he said his morning prayers. One day, I was already up and walked into the bedroom just as Doug was praying, and Scotty was watching and waiting. Scotty looked at me and said,

“Shhh, Daddy's having a long-distance phonecall without a phone.”

One of the many miracles in our life occurred because of this relationship between



Scotty and Doug. I was in

the kitchen in our Bridgewood home in Santa Rosa. We had finished eating dinner, and the children were scattered in the front yard. Christy was a baby and Scotty was just two years old. Doug was a new bishop, and after dinner he had to get ready for a bishopric meeting. He came downstairs and started kissing the children good-bye. I could hear it all happening as I was in the kitchen putting a pitcher of milk away. A young girl was also in the kitchen talking to me—her name was Kathy Thompson and was one of the girls who baby-sat a lot for us, so in a way I was distracted from what was happening outside. Nevertheless, there was a picture



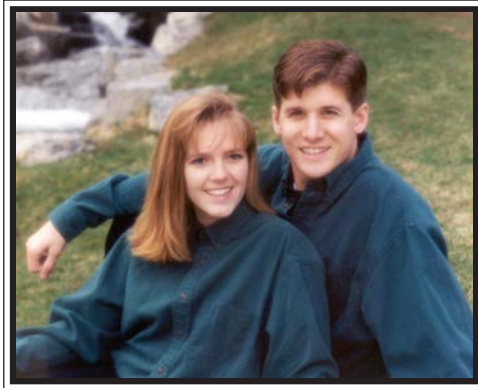
going on my mind. I could see Doug kiss Scotty, then Craig, then Gina and then Russ out on the sidewalk. They were all saying their *good-byes* to Daddy. And then he got in his car that was parked in the driveway. Immediately in my mind I saw a picture of Scotty running towards the car for another kiss from Daddy. It was so clear. I heard the car start. I dropped the container of milk and ran out of the kitchen, down the hall and through the front door and yelled, *“Stop!”* Doug heard me and slammed on the brakes. I kept running towards the car and sure enough, there was Scotty, his head touching the rear bumper of the car. Another second and Doug would've run right over him. These promptings don't happen by chance, or by luck. They are called *a mother's intuition* by some, but I never doubted that it was the promptings of the Holy Ghost that pushed me out of that kitchen, just as I was pushed to save Craig from burning on the stove. Scott's life was not only important to us, but important to Heavenly Father. There was more work for him to accomplish on this earth.

“Inasmuch as you have been sent to the earth at this time, Scott, be aware that the Lord is sending the most valiant and righteous, of which you are one, to help build His kingdom here upon the earth and to prepare the hearts of the children of men for His second coming and the ushering in of the Millennium.” (Scott's patriarchal blessing 1988)

Before Scott ever went on a mission, he had some experience with missionary work. In 1990, a man from Ethiopia became our friend. He heard the Gospel and accepted it and wanted Scott to baptize him. So Scott had that wonderful privilege of exercising his Priesthood and baptized Elijah Mutuku into the church.

This conversion, however, brought another set of problems for as Elijah was in our home quite often, he became enamored with Gina's picture, and was here waiting for her when she got off her mission. That is another story for another place!

Before I continue on with Scott's story, I should tell you about his family. He is married to Jenny _____. "Jenny who?" you say. Well, this one is Jenny Wilks. That's right, Scott has had many Jennys in his life, so it shouldn't be a surprise that his



wife's name is Jenny! His first Jenny was Jenny Guthrie who was also Christy's closest friend. She was a neighbor of ours on Bridgewood Drive here in Santa Rosa. Everyone seemed to know that these two little kids really liked each other. You'll have to ask Scott about the other Jennys. Jenny Rebecca Wilks and Scott were married in the Manti Temple in May 1995. They are the parents of three boys and a girl—Joshua

David, Matthew Scott, Aaron Jeffrey, and Grace McKenlee, and as we understand from a rather bold announcement last week, they will be parents again in 2007! Jenny has given birth to all of these children by C-section. Jenny knows what she wants and knows how to plan to get something. I'm usually trying to paint the *other side of the picture* because in my life nothing seemed to go as planned. However, as everything goes in their family, Jenny has always been right, and those children come when they're planned, in a planned manner of birth, and just on the very day they are planned! And all my warnings are to no avail.



Since Scott was always interested in girls, as a mother, I was a bit concerned about temptations that lurk, since I knew he could hardly wait to be sixteen so he could kiss a girl. Heavenly Father gave him particular counsel in this area in his patriarchal blessing, given in 1988 when Scott was sixteen-years-old. I guess in the pre-existence he was also interested in girls!

“Also, Scott, never take advantage of the tenderness and love of God's beautiful daughters, one of whom will become your eternal companion. Always treat them with gentleness and kindness. They are very important in the plan of salvation and are co-creators with Father in Heaven. . . you are also promised posterity of many beautiful sons and daughters who will bring you joy and rejoicing not only in this life but throughout the eternities.”



Yes, Scott always liked girls, and we could see that it was going to be a struggle to hold him back until sixteen years of age.

Holding him back was a hard thing to do on several fronts. Scott loved speed—anything that went fast. As a baby, he would sit in a little car seat next to me. This car seat just hooked over the back of the front car bench. One day we were driving down the road, and I stopped at a stop sign. Scotty was only about eighteen months at the time, but when we stopped, his two little cupped hands pushed out in front of him, and he started to rotate the cupped hands back and forth, and while he was doing this he would make a *revving up motorcycle noise*. That was exactly what he was doing. He was mimicking a motorcycle and doing what the motorcyclists always do at stoplights. They rev their motor back and forth ‘til they’re ready to shoot out at top speed and be the first in the intersection! Somehow I knew then that Scotty was going to like cars, boats, planes and



trains. When we took each of the children’s pictures at age seventeen, we had them doing the things they most liked. It was appropriate that we took a picture of Scotty with his swimming jacket (and another with his scouting uniform) and beloved mustang. It really didn’t start off as his—first it was Russ’, then Craig’s, but Scotty really knew it was his! After all, do those other boys have a picture taken with it?? It was also appropriate that Scott inherit Steve Scribner’s winning photo of a Porsche so he could hang it on his wall. When Doug’s father died, his camera was left to Steve. Steve hadn’t been that interested in photography before, but he set out to try out this expensive camera. He went to a race and caught this amazing picture of a Porsche. A few years later he sent it to the Porsche Company in Germany and it was one of the Grand Prize winners! The Porsche Company flew Steve,



Mary and Troy to Germany to have a tour of their plant and to drive in a Porsche at a very high speed around the race track. This winning picture of Steve’s took an honored place among eleven other pictures for the large calendar that the Porsche Company put out in 1984. Scott is now the proud owner of that framed picture of Steve’s. *Speed* . . . Scotty loves it!

A great remembrance was when Scott was about four-years-old. We were at a big family reunion in Fremont Lake in Wyoming with the extended James Family. One day as we were skipping rocks on the lake, we saw these two men in a small fishing boat with a little motor going *putt, putt, putt*. We watched it patiently for about ten minutes when Scotty just couldn’t handle it anymore. At the top of his voice, he yelled,

“Hit it!”

Scott could hardly wait to learn how to drive. As a tiny little boy, he would always sit by me. We had a Volkswagon bus that had a floor gearshift. He always did all the shifting. He learned the workings of a car very early. He always begged to sit on our laps and steer the car—well, the rules of the road and cars were much more lenient in those days, and we could do these crazy things—not being held back by seatbelts.



Craig and Scotty

While we lived in Scotland, Scott was fourteen, fifteen and sixteen-years-old, but the driving age in Scotland was eighteen. Scott couldn't wait, always begging and begging to drive. Well, just how much begging can a mother stand before she totally breaks down? So, often when we were all alone at night, coming home from scouts, I would slide tight against my door so Scott could slide in behind the wheel. We took the back roads home—the one particularly that went beside the Ratho Golf Course. I never felt it was daring or dangerous because Scott always had full control of his turns, of the amount of gas to give it, and his accuracy in everything on the road. The only thing I would remind him to do was to *slow down*. Where all of this came from I don't know. Well, I do know where his love for speed and cars came from—just ask his Dad who has the record for speeding tickets! Dad probably isn't the fastest driver, but he's the one that can't seem to talk the policeman out of the tickets. And I was just like Scott in begging my father to let me drive. Well, I was the baby of the family, so of course he let me do it. I begged him once when we were in Los Angeles in 1956 or thereabouts. He let me steer the car, and suddenly we were on a freeway going sixty miles an hour in the slow lane! Man, that was exciting! I had my driver's license the morning of the day I turned sixteen.



Scott always knew exactly what he wanted for Christmas, birthdays, and even suggested things that we could surprise him with. All the other boys would shrug if you asked them what they wanted for Christmas, but not our Scott. His list was always long. Perhaps this is Scott's *Achilles heel*. He has a lot of wants and desires—always dreaming. His ideas are big and usually expensive! He likes to dress nice, he likes nice cars, he would like a big house with a big yard, and he'd like to go on a lot of vacations, and he would probably like a lot of things that I don't even want to know about—a bigger and better computer? a fancier car? a dream vacation? a monstrous TV? Who knows? There's only one thing that holds him back—you guessed it—MONEY. Now that he's a husband and father,

his desires aren't necessarily for himself, but he desires and wants wonderful things for his family—as most people do. He's not selfish, but extremely giving.

Okay. An example. One day I was sitting innocently at my computer, doing innocent things like balancing my budget, writing stories or perhaps making a scrapbook when I get this phonecall from Scott. He'd like to borrow my credit card for just a few weeks so he could charge the money to rent a complete theatre so he could surprise Jenny for her birthday—the opening of *Harry Potter* just for her! Wow, that's a BIG idea, and fortunately for Scott, it worked out and we are still on speaking terms. I tried to say “no” so many times, but he convinced me that he knew he'd make the money back by selling tickets enough to fill the theatre. It's so hard to say “no” to Scott. He does have magnificent ideas. You'd never know he came from a family where a birthday was a cake and a few little gifts and yes, a party. It was interesting to me just the other day to read Scott's patriarchal blessing and to realize what insight was given him at a very early age. The Lord, through these blessings, gives us warnings about the paths that could lead us astray for he knows our personalities so well—He's known us for so long, and He knows what the world is like and how it could destroy us if we didn't guard ourselves with righteous principles. His blessing says,

“ . . . you are indeed a child of God and possess many of the divine attributes and talents that your heavenly Parents possess. Satan knows this, and he also knows your weaknesses. You will be subjected to adversity, trials, temptations, and afflictions, all of which will be the methods the Lord uses to prove you before Him to see if you will remain steadfast and keep His commandments.”

And then later it continues: *“I bless you that you will find happiness as you love and serve the Lord and your fellowmen. I bless you with the abundance of the earth as you keep the law of tithing and become financially secure and debt-free. . . Be wise in all your decisions and seek the Lord in prayer when making these decisions as well as thanking Him each day for the blessings you so freely receive.”*

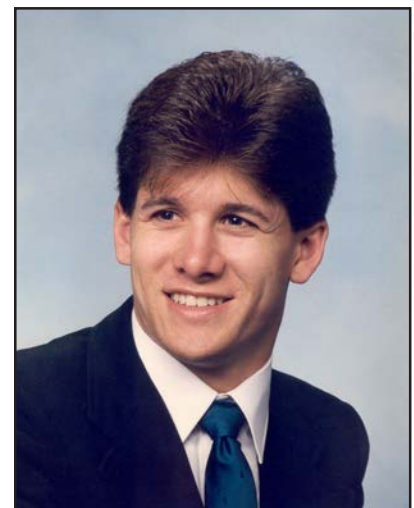
So the Lord also intends on giving in to Scott’s wants and desires as he follows the law of the harvest. In my mind Scott has already been blessed with the abundance of the earth. He has a beautiful wife and healthy, happy and talented children. He has talents that he’s willing to share. He has a great personality, many spiritual gifts and a very intelligent mind. Everyone could use more money these days to provide the abundant life for our children, but we usually have to stop and ask ourselves what they really need. Do they need singing lessons or just more time with us? Time is free. What will they remember the most?

Scott has talents. Besides being a kind person, willing to spend time talking, helping or just enjoying the companionship of other people, he has a beautiful singing voice. Now this wasn’t always true. He always liked to sing, and for one of his birthdays (yes, he let us know way ahead of time) he wanted an electric guitar. Well, we found this to be very expensive, so we looked for a used one and found this very small electric guitar. He worked and worked on it. Now a guitarist is also usually a singer.



That was when we realized sadly that Scotty sang monotone, but we didn’t tell him that he couldn’t sing (thankfully). We just listened to this off-tune singing as he played his guitar—and we smiled lovingly. Well, he tried out for the choir at Santa Rosa High School, and was accepted. We think that all the boys got accepted—the girls were the ones that actually had the competition. In that choir, Scott learned to *hear* music and he developed a very nice singing voice—right *up to snuff* with the other boys in the family. He has a good range as well so he can sing many different parts—but not all at the same time like Willie the Whale. Again I will say that one of my biggest thrills in this life is to hear my boys sing. I hope they sing a good number at my funeral! I’ll be listening.

Scott was successful in many areas while growing up. He, like his brothers Russ and Jim, received his Eagle Scout Award. And like Russ, he also attended a National Scout Jamboree on the East Coast. For me, the only drawback in scouting was the number of badges that had to be sewn on. I was so glad when Lora was born, and was a girl, so I didn’t have to go through another scout program with a boy! But love of scouting goes deep into the heart of our family. My father Cecil James was the recipient of both the *Silver Beaver* (a Council Award) and the *Silver Antelope* (a Regional Award). Very few men receive these high honors, particularly the Silver Antelope. I’m now happy that Russ and Scott have a slew of boys so they can return all the favors and see them through the great scouting program! In the end, it’s a wonderful time for fathers and sons, but it’s usually the mothers that help them day by day to get those badges earned! That alone may assure me of a spot in heaven.



When Scott was nineteen he received his mission call to the Minneapolis, Minnesota Mission. We knew where Colombia, Argentina and Peru were, but where in the world was Minnesota?! We had to get the map of the United States out and pinpoint the spot. We realized that Scott was going to freeze!



We still have a desire to go with Scott and his family to Minnesota and have him personally show us his missionfield. We've never been there. I want to go to the huge covered mall that Scott has told us about—the one so big that there's a roller coaster in it! I also want to buy a pair of muckluks—big warm sock/boots that can keep anyone warm through a cold winter night. And I definitely want to see Minnesota in one of the four months of summer, not winter. One of Scott's assignments in the missionfield was to watch over the fleet of cars—now, how painful was that for Scott? He sure didn't mind driving and delivering a mission car to the Canadian Mission. Scott prays for a good time, and he usually has one!



To Scott the DOT

8 July 1992 – Twenty Years Old

The years have come—the years have gone
And lo! what have we here?
A Boy? A Stud? An Eagle? A Man?
Oh yes – all of these, I fear!

And yet I'm not quite *up with the times*
For I often just see the *boy*.
That's why I have to *drum up these rhymes*
So you'll know what causes my JOY.



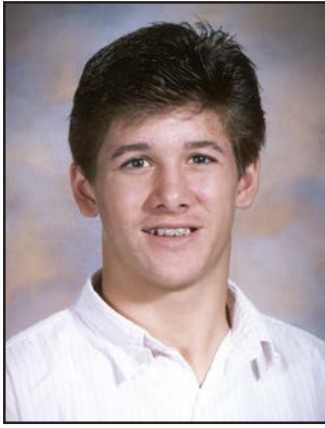
I see you at three or four years of age
Sitting on Daddy's sink
You'd talk and visit and watch him shave
Ask questions and make him think.

The glasses so thick and taped on the sides
With matching or cellophane tapes –
The *gears* you would shift on all of our rides,
And FRIENDS – all sizes and shapes!

I think of the teachers who liked you so well
They never could give you a "D:"
*"He cooperates well-we surely can tell
He'll catch up event-u-ally!"*

On Scotland's roads you learned very young
"Put that pedal to the metal," you said!
I'm amazed at all the songs you have sung
In the car, in the church, or in bed.





I miss the piano you played every night
"It's Hard To Say I'm Sorry,"
 And all of your friends – a true delight,
 Jenny, Josh, Jake and Taury (rhymes w/sorry!)

Is it really all gone – those TWENTY short years?
 Did it happen as fast as it seems?
 Good mem'ries are left – some laughter and tears
 But your pictures still seem to beam

With happiness, kindness – a bright friendly guy
 Who still likes to drive way too fast,
 Your letters reveal old feelings don't die,
 Can a mission be really a blast?

For you, SCOTT, a *blast* is the sum of your life:
"Bless us to have a fun day!"
 Cold weather, cold feet – or all kinds of strife,
"Let's just make it great! – OK?"

I miss you and love you, you're my kind of guy,
 I'll take you *as is* and never ask "why."

All my love, *Mom*



While Scott and Craig were on their missions, our home burned down. This was hard for both of them because they had both helped work on the building of our house. Scott was reflecting on this during the next Sunday after he heard from us, and on the back of a church program he sketched our home. It was amazing to me how accurate his memory was and how he had the ability to sketch in detail this house that is anything but square.



Well, a lot of Scott's talent lies in his ability to design. He does a lot of this kind of work now as he provides for his family. Doug published a book that I wrote in 1987, and Scott, just fifteen-years-old, designed the logo for the Trusthouse Book Company. It was a volunteer job so he never earned a dime (and neither did we!).

Scott seemed to be my first child that had a natural high self-esteem, and that is interesting because he had a lot of things that went against him. For one, he was so *near-sighted* that he had to wear extremely thick glasses in order to function.

Now he's had laser surgery, but when he was about eleven or twelve, he was fitted for contacts. Before that, he was constantly in thick glasses, which were usually held together with tape because they were always breaking. When he was a teenager he had a bad skin problem. These things took away from his physical appearance, but to Scott, he was just himself. He liked who he was, he liked people, and they liked him. He wasn't jealous of anyone, and he didn't wish bad on anyone. His confidence may have lagged in some areas—like in schoolwork—but not his esteem. He knew who he was and liked it.

Today, this same spirit of love comes through with every telephone call. It's always a big *"Hi!!!"* and *good times* in a telephone conversation from him. He usually calls us weekly to check up on us. He has a way of making us feel like we are loved and needed. And I guess he does that to everyone. We were reminded just this week by an old friend, Mel Payne, who told us of the times he used to convince *Scotty* to bury some rocks and watch them grow into marbles. He was so trusting as a little boy, and sure enough his rocks grew into marbles! Another favorite story of ours happened one evening in Scotland when we decided to look through our Books of Remembrance for home night. You could hear the other kids saying, *"Yuck, this is when I started looking ugly,"* and other comments like that. Over in Scotty's corner we heard, *"Wow, this is when I started looking good! . . . and look at this. . . this is when I really started looking good!!"* Scott is our child who overflows with good self-esteem! I love to be around him and enjoy his good nature--it's contagious! I love him so much.



Yellowstone Park - July 2006
Cecile, Josh, Scott, Jenny and Gracie,
Doug, Matthew and Aaron



Craig, Gina, Cecile and Scotty, Russ
Salt Lake City Temple Square



Gina, Rusty, Scotty, and Craig
Santa Rosa, CA. - 1973



Scott's graduation from Utah Valley State University
April 2000 - Josh, Scott, Matthew, Jenny

“Why I Believe”

by *Scott Scribner*

November 13, 2006

The more I think about this statement, the more I reflect back on the early days of my life in search of one specific moment or event that would explain everything. Surprisingly enough, I just can't think of one so it looks like this is going to take a little longer to write out than I had planned on.

I have always felt that my faith in Jesus Christ, His gospel, and latter-day revelation is very simple. It is a well-known fact to all who know me that I am not the most studious or intellectual of people. I have gone through my life gathering millions of tidbits of information that I find interesting but rarely take the time or make the effort to study out every facet of the whos, whats, wheres, and hows. When something interests me, I will do a little digging to increase my understanding but not nearly enough to gain a comprehensive knowledge. I think the proper term is “*Jack of all trades, Master of none.*” This is actually something that I have struggled with much of my life. I am sure in the eyes of many, I don't read the scriptures enough, I don't pray enough, I don't magnify my callings enough, but I know that when ever I have the opportunity to talk about my beliefs, whether in a talk or teaching my Sunday School class, I am reminded how deep my conviction goes and how personal my relationship with Jesus Christ truly is.

In the pursuit of finding out *why* I believe *what* I believe, I have to take my entire life's experiences into consideration. As far as I can remember, I know of very few, if any, life-altering spiritual experiences that I have singled out as the point in my life where I stopped relying on the testimonies of my parents and teachers and started my own spiritual journey. Even now at times I find myself leaning on the faith and testimony of my wife, the prophet, other church leaders and at times even my kids to support me in times of difficulty and trial. I do, however, remember countless blessings and miracles throughout my life that I have personally witnessed that I now recognize as a direct result of spiritual intervention. There have been car accidents that should have taken such a mighty toll on our family that we managed to escape from with only a handful of bruises and stitches. I know that I have been in some other car related incidents that should have ended up as serious accidents (some I know my parents still don't know about—and probably don't want to know about) that I have been spared from. I have always known that for some reason our family has been constantly watched over and protected and I have noticed that protection trickling down into my own little family. Other times I feel simple feelings of peace without knowing a whole lot of the whys. For example, six months into my mission, I received an early morning phone call from my mission president informing me that my parent's house had just burned down. Immediately my instincts told me to leave my mission and get home to help because for two years previous I was the oldest child and I felt it was my responsibility to take care of my family. However, the very next instant I felt peace and understanding that my family would be fine and I could help them best by serving an honorable mission. Wisely my parents never told me the full extent of the damage until after I returned home.

My mission was a time that my testimony grew. However, there was never a time that I can say I was moved by great spiritual events, or received great amounts of heavenly direction. If I was, I can't remember the circumstances. At the same time I always knew that I was doing the right thing and I never doubted my decision

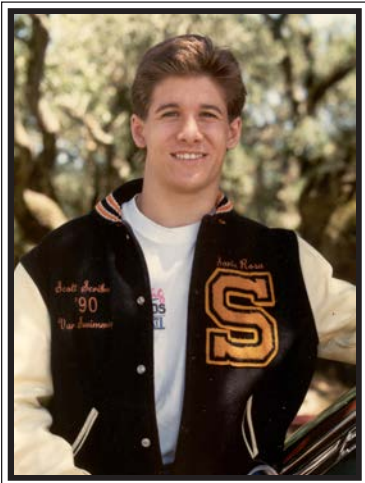


to go, or the hard work that I pushed myself to put into it. I progressed through my mission from greenie to a seasoned leader of many, never feeling like I was a huge success as a missionary, but I also knew I had hundreds of little successes and happy moments that sustained me and slowly fostered the growth of my testimony. It wasn't until I returned home that I realized how much my testimony had grown during that time.

Since my mission, my spiritual journey has continued to evolve in much the same manner. Countless small manifestations of the Spirit, small reminders that I am doing the right thing. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has always made sense to me. I have never found a reason to doubt the validity of the Gospel message as I receive it through the voice of the prophets or from the scriptures. I have never felt the need for further research to convince myself that what is being taught is the truth. I just feel and know that it is true. For some it may seem like my faith is weak and a *blind* faith, but truly, isn't that how our faith is put to the test--when we are asked to take a step without knowing where that step will lead?

Jenny has been my saving light. Her example of dedication and consistency in doing the small things on a daily basis and her deep, heart-felt faith and commitment reminds me of where I need to be and what I need to be doing. I know it frustrates her that I am not getting there as quickly as she would probably like, but I am doing better. Many times I slip and fall. Many times I ask for forgiveness and try to do better, and apparently from time to time I feel like I actually receive it. I know the Church of Jesus Christ is true. Because of the people that have taught me in my past and the people who teach me now and from what I know in my heart, I know to what source I may look for a remission of my sins. That source is Jesus Christ. This is *why* I believe. This is *why* I feel the way I do about the Church. And this is *why* I will teach my children the best I can to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. Because it is only in and through Jesus Christ my Savior that I may receive a remission of my sins and return to live with my Heavenly Father again. I know it. I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Scotty in high school
(letter for Swimming)



Grandpa James,
Gina, Scotty -
about 1973



Aaron, Cecile, Gracie, Joshua, Matthew, - 30 Oct. 2006



Cecile and Scotty
Mary and Lara
1972 in Santa Rosa,

“Why I Believe”

by Jenny Rebecca Scribner

November 2006

All of my life I have been taught to believe that there is a God. As a child I understood that I had a father who was in Heaven and he loved me very much. It has taken my lifetime to really begin to grasp what that truly means. The following is what began my journey of finding out for myself that what my parents told me was true.

When I was thirteen my very closest friend was Heather Payne. She and I used to sit by each other in eighth grade mixed chorus. We didn't sing as much as we should have because we loved to talk. Sometimes it was in whispers, but most often we sent notes back and forth. It was so fun to talk about boys and movies and songs on the radio—normal subjects for girls our age. Heather was a great girl. You would look at her and think she was the brightest, funniest, most confident eighth grader at our school. This may be surprising when you realize she is mostly deaf and wears a hearing-aid in each ear. From her outside appearance you would never suspect that she was struggling so much.

Over time I learned that Heather thought her Dad always wished she was a boy, that she felt like a failure to him and that she felt like a failure to herself. She told me that her belief in God was fading and that she really didn't believe He existed. We talked about these things a lot. I found myself digging deep to find the right words to say to give her comfort and encouragement. For the first time I was asking myself *if and why I believed in God*.

One day Heather told me she wanted to kill herself. What do you say when your very closest friend says something as horrible as that? I wanted to tell someone, ask someone for advice, seek someone's help. But, I couldn't. Heather made me promise. She told me that she had been cornered before by a school counselor about this and she couldn't take it again. I didn't know what to do. I begged her not to do it. I even told her that if she did take her own life, I would take mine, too. This seemed to help her step back and rethink.

When Heather brought a gun to school I knew she was sinking deeper. She had stolen a gun from her Dad's gun cabinet. I was so afraid that I felt paralyzed. I truly believed if I told someone, she would take that gun and kill herself immediately. I was thirteen.

The morning before I turned fourteen, my Mom received a call from our local police station. She was crying when she came to me with the news. Heather Payne had been found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot to her head the night before. The officer was worried about me because during his investigation he had come across some letters between Heather and me that said I would also kill myself.

The days, weeks, and even months following this tragedy were some of the hardest I have ever experienced. I cried so much that my head hurt all the time. I felt lost. I couldn't find any comfort. I had frequent nightmares about Heather and what she must have looked like when she died. It was a horrible time. I searched my memory for ways I could have stopped this. I couldn't find any. I thought deeply of all our talks to find some shred of comfort that I had been a good friend. Had I been?



My despair began to consume me. Was this how she felt in her last days? I couldn't figure a way out of this on my own. I needed a power far greater than my own. I knew in my heart there was a God and that He loved me. The thought finally occurred to me that He knew I was struggling. I begin to pray with all the sincerity of my soul. For the first time in nearly a year, I felt the warmth of my Heavenly Father's arms embrace me. I had the feeling that He had always been there, I just wasn't ready to let Him in. I had to get to my depth of sorrow before I would reach up to Him.

I don't think words adequately describe how that experience changed my life. From that moment on I learned to draw strength from my own testimony. When times get rough and I have the inclination to give up on the Lord and my beliefs, I think of Heather and how she let go of hers at the most critical time of her life. At crossroads like this, we have a choice. We can either cling to God and let Him steady us, or we can act as if He doesn't exist. I will always believe that God knows me and is there to give me aid. Would I ever abandon one of my children in their time of need? God is my Father and He will never leave me alone.

As a parent, I want my children to know their Savior. I teach them that they are never alone and that they have divine power in them because they, too, are children of God. And they have an older brother, Jesus Christ, who is always with them to look after them. I listen to my children's prayers and I know that they feel Him in their hearts.

I also believe because I have a little family that I love with everything in me, and I want more than anything to spend Eternity with them. When I was a young teenager I would sometimes imagine what my life would be one day. I couldn't come close to seeing how wonderful it would be. I am married to the most loving, patient, tender, kind man that I have ever known. It seems so easy for him to look past all of my bad parts! He is always (really, always) completely accepting of me. And I look at each of my kids and am overwhelmed with how amazing they are. Each smile, each laugh. Every kiss and embrace. These are my treasures. I have to have them with me forever. I cannot bear the thought of losing any part of my family.

Each step I take in this life, I hope will bring me one step closer to my Savior and one step closer to eternal life with my family. In my heart, there is nothing greater.

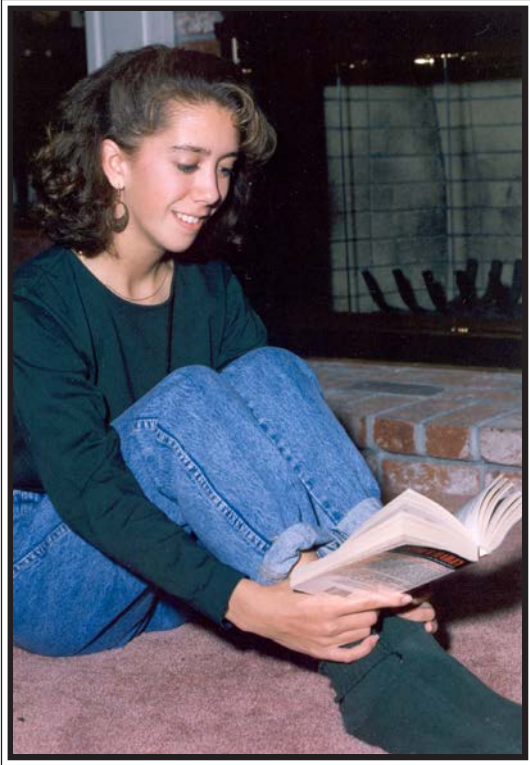


Photo taken in 2006
Scott, Jenny, Joshua,
Matthew, Aaron, and Gracie

Christianne Scribner Jones

At the top of our stairs in our home there is a long wall filled with pictures. The pictures have changed over the years, but it's always been a *Motherhood Wall*. Right now there are eight pictures on the wall, one of each of my children taken at age seventeen doing something that they were particularly good at—a couple are at the piano, a couple are dancing, one singing, one playing a guitar. Christy has

never liked her picture because in it she's reading a book by a fireplace—she never felt like it represented anything of worth, or at least, not a talent. Her reaction to this picture has always made me feel bad because I've always seen her as extremely talented, but not in the same areas as the other children. However, that even proved to be wrong because when she went to college, she learned to clog and to do country dancing, and she became very proficient in these. She's actually a fabulous dancer with great rhythm with a marvelous ability to teach others.



But Christy has a profound *gift*—surely it's a God-given gift. It's a gift that was impossible to photograph--not like dancing or playing the piano. She's a writer and a poetess. I've been troubled for days as I've tried to write about Christy. It would be so tempting to include one poem after another that she's written, and you would then start to discover who Christy is. There's a depth in Christy, and perhaps in all of my children, that I'll never discover no matter how badly I want to. Over the years she has put rather deep feelings into verse, and she is so eloquent, so expressive. As I read her verses, I often cry because I find as her mother I somehow never knew some of her pains and sorrows—

oh yes, I knew they were there, but I never knew they were so deep. I would like to go back (knowing what I know now) and live some of those years again to see if I could do it better—be more aware of each of my children's needs, but I'm left in the same place as Moroni as he recorded in the Book of Mormon (Mormon 9),

“Condemn me not because of mine imperfection, neither my father, because of his imperfection, neither them who have written before him; but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been.”

I think now that most of my children had moments like the ones that Christy wrote about. Is there any teenager that doesn't feel lonely, hurt and sad, left-out, ugly, and unloved at one time or another? I remember some of those feelings myself when I was young. As far as the *ugly* is concerned, I had a wonderful brother, Uncle Tom, who prepared me for life. He said,

“Now, Celie, the James' are not good-looking people—we all have big noses. So it's important for you to develop a good personality. A good personality makes up for not being good-looking.”

He was my idol and everybody seemed to love Tom, so that's exactly what I strived to do—develop personality to compensate for lack of looks. It seemed to work.



The difference with Christy, however, is that all these feelings—feelings that perhaps all of us feel at some time—are artistically described in beautiful poetry. As you read her words, you find yourself discovering long forgotten memories—you relive a beautiful summer day, or you are caught up with the relationship of sisters and brothers, you think of your own mother as you read her feelings for hers, or you remember the loneliness of junior high school when you didn't have a friend, or you experience once again the pain of a broken love affair, and you find yourself in that great wonderment of who God really is and your relationship with Him, and how does the Atonement of the Savior really apply to you. Yes, Christy has explored all of these things and much more. Somehow, I will endeavor to write my feelings and thoughts about Christy and also include some of the beautiful words she has written. Just wish me luck on this one. . .If I succeed, you will only be on verge of beginning to know Christy.



On September 15th, 2006 I wrote the following: *“This is Christy’s thirty-second birthday. Several years before she was born, we met Christiane Rudé, who become a very close friend. She had faced severe trials in her life, and yet her faith never wavered. She and her husband André heard the gospel in France and were active in the church there. Christiane had trouble getting pregnant, but eventually they were blessed with two boys, Willie and Frankie. Even though they had wealth in France, they left it all, came to America without a job and without knowing the language. And why? They sacrificed all so their boys could grow up where there was more strength in the Gospel. On more than*

one occasion, Christiane’s life was threatened with tuberculosis, even to the point of being hospitalized and taken from her husband and boys for nine months at a time. In all her trials, which continue with her every day, she gives thanks and praise to her Heavenly Father because of the gift of life that she’s been given, for the Gospel and for her two boys and their families.”



We were so hoping that our next child would be a girl so we could name her after this great woman of faith. Christy, named *Christianne*, was born in Santa Rosa

in 1974. How amazing to us that Christy’s life has also been filled with trials, and to even bring everything *full-circle* (in a way), she was called to France to serve her mission. While there, she became very aware of the reasons why the Rudés left that country and sacrificed all so their boys would have strength in the Gospel.

I particularly like what Albert Einstein said: *“There are two ways to live your life...one is as though nothing is a miracle, and the other is as though everything is a miracle.”*

You could say that hundreds of amazing coincidences happened in Christy’s life, but I prefer to say that her life has been one of continuous miracles. She has given us reason to trust in the Lord and to pray intently every single day. Because of her life, I know that God lives, hears our prayers, blesses us and, yes, allows our patience and faith to be tested.

Christy was born with a partial cleft palate. We couldn't get an ounce of water in her while at the hospital, but they sent me home with her the second day, assuring us that this nipple with a flap would help her learn to suck. It



didn't. My mother was with us, and as soon as I got home from the hospital, I got dressed, left Christy with my mother, and started looking in the stores for some solution. We finally rigged up a bottle that had a *plunger* so we could force-feed her with a combination of cereal, milk and bananas. Her weight went down to five pounds, but by six months she weighed twelve pounds—double her birth weight! She was so petite. That year was followed with a surgery, but her speech was very garbled. This was then followed a few years later with another surgery, a pharyngeal flap, put in so she could hopefully get closures on her *k*'s and hard *g*'s. By age five she finally started to talk in a way that



we could begin to understand her. Before that, however, her voice was a pure delight to Jim and Spence, the little boys—she could always make them laugh as she bathed with them.



We experienced many different physical problems with our children, and somehow I kept thinking that the Lord was always trying to teach me to have patience. I'm such an impatient person. And I'm not real good dealing with sickness—I just want everything to be solved with a little bit of Vicks and a hot bath! I can hardly wait for things to happen. I try to guess what's in all my Christmas presents long before Christmas—Doug has



learned to never buy me a Christmas present until Christmas Eve because that's the only way he can give me a *surprise!* But so much of what my children had to go through required a lot of patience on Doug's and my part. It took a year of watching Gina with a rubber tube coming out of her kidney before she was really better, and it took four years of caring for Jimmy before he was able to have his heart operated on, but with Christy it took fifteen years of steady speech therapy to teach her how to talk. The progress was so slow and tedious—it wasn't a *Vicks and hot bath* solution. If ever there was a miracle, it was the day that Christy gave her missionary farewell talk at Church. No one could've possibly known that she ever had a speech problem. It was beautiful. Better than I had ever heard her—better than she was even the day before it seemed. Reed Ogden was the Stake President and came up to us afterwards and said,

"I think we have already witnessed the gift of tongues with Christy. Her talk was beautiful and eloquent, crisp and clear."

I agreed. What a blessing was poured down upon all of us that day. And what an amazing accomplishment on Christy's part (with the help of many people's prayers and fasting). Perhaps because of all of these setbacks, Christy has always had words, but because they couldn't be expressed eloquently in a verbal setting, they became eloquent in her heart and mind, and were expressed on paper. These were my feelings of love for Christy at fourteen years of age.

Dear Christy – 15 September 1988

You're now fourteen – almost grown,
A student at Junior High
I look at these pictures and think of time
That is rapidly passing by—
I see you small—not even six pounds
At your birth in '74
And remember the struggle to keep you alive,
We fasted and prayed some more.

You've lived through much, when very small,
Two surgeries in your throat,
Your problems with ears and vision and speech
Could keep a city afloat!
The years you spent just learning to talk
Seemed endless, long and slow
You worked with doctors and therapists
But Elly helped you to “glow.”
She taught you with love, patience and song
With laughter, fun times and games
And now you can talk with confidence
Like others, you sound the same.

So, Heavenly Father knows you well
He let those struggles occur
And gave you many beautiful traits
So you'd know His love was secure
Although your eyes can't see very well,
He made them gorgeous and round
They give you beauty, they twinkle and shine
And tears will often abound—

For He also gave you a tender heart
Which deeply loves family and friends
I remember so well when Gina left home
You cried, for your heart wouldn't mend.
You missed her and loved her and longed for
the nights
When she told you about her life,
For you listened for hours, year after year
Of her happiness, sorrows and strife—

So Christy, you see, though your ears do not hear
As well as others do,
God gave you the gift of Listening
To others' point of view.

You haven't grown as tall as you want
But your fingers are slender and long—
God gave you the gift of using your hands,
Your artwork is sweet as a song.
Your eyes see beauty, your ears hear others,
Your heart feels pain and love
These are the traits an artist needs
To create her works of love!

For it's true you create for others
More often than for yourself
At Christmastime your gifts are homemade
Many items now line our shelf!
Your hands are so busy, they creatively clean
And Lora's hair looks often like *art*.
They do so much for others it seems
They're an extension of your heart.

Perhaps your life has had many trials—
Perhaps a blessing from God—
For the trials have *sharpened all* other gifts
To help you hold tight to the Rod.
Your beautiful eyes read stories on end
The scriptures you understand well.
You pray with your heart, your speech is now clear
And you hear much more than you tell—

So now at fourteen – I look at you
I love your short curly hair.
I love your good heart, your gifts from God
Of your needs I'm very aware.
You need to know that you are loved
As much as all the others
You need to be held and need to be praised
And noticed by sisters and brothers.

You are a big part of our family tree
And I love you “*Around the world*”
At least fifty times plus a thousand more
You are a most special girl.
Remember your gifts, have patience with others
Be sensitive, loving and true
It will all come back a thousand fold
God's miracles are seen In YOU!
With all my love, *Mom*

Ahh, now the moment you've all been waiting for. A look at the world through Christy's eyes.

Patterns

Etching an intricate web of feelings
on a clear wall of glass
creating my soul
Striving to form a complete picture
of those things I most admire
Cutting deep into the surface
an impenetrable nucleus of love
Alone I become confused
and wonder what lines to add
what characteristics I need
not knowing what the final outcome
should be

I look to my parents
and see pictures nearer completion
covered by marks of intelligence
patience and understanding
I begin to add some of their patterns
to mine

My sisters
although at different stages of progression
show distinct signs
of competence and assertiveness
lines of laughter

From my brothers shapes of determination
bold young sketches
full of direction

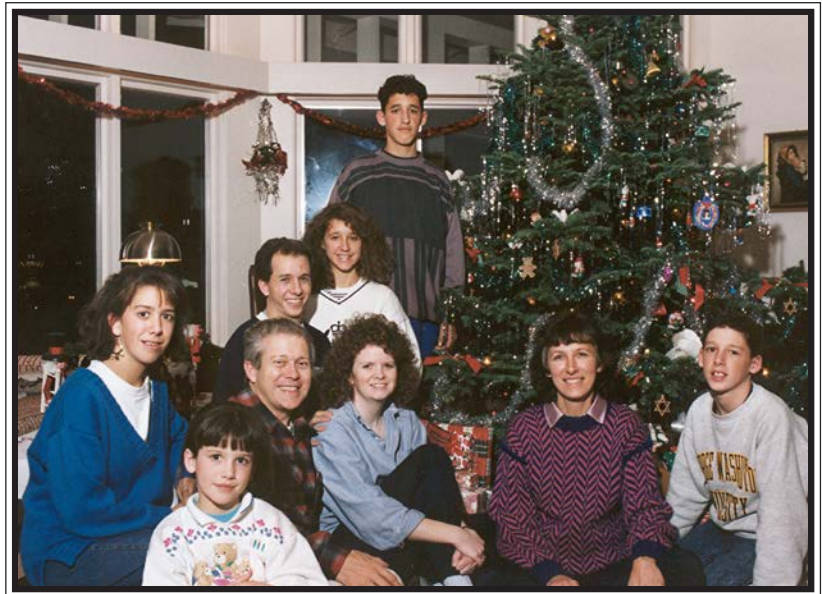
Others have given me pieces
and fragments I desired
a few I have omitted
and some I should have

Complete with flaws
and moments of inspiration
Discovering my image
Emerging

by Christianne Scribner



Graduation from High School



Christy wrote often of her family and the relationships she either had or desired with them. The first is written about her little sister, Lora. Then others follow about other family members.

Lora

On my toes now
 small feet creeping softly forward
 careful not to make a sound
I see you sleeping
 through the bars of your crib
 my eyes scarcely above yours
 if I stay on my toes
I reach through the space with my arm



and uncurl your hand with my finger
 then slowly trace your closed eyes and lips
 barely touching your soft face
 so you won't wake
As your tiny body moves slightly
 in time with your breathing
 There are so many things I want to teach you
 experiences to share
 secrets that I have experienced in my own ten years
But your are so small and delicate
 and so I sigh
 pull up your blanket
 to tuck you in
and sing a made-up lullaby
 Later, you will know

And for now I will love you
 my baby sister

Now the years have past
 and you are about the same age
 I was then

Every time I come home to visit
 You are so much bigger
 and your eyes are full of questions

What is going on in your mind now
Last time I was back
 I saw you sleeping
 your face so still and innocent
 in the moonlight

There are so many things I want to tell you
 experiences to share
 but you are so young
 and nature will force you to learn
 soon enough

For now I will just love you
 my baby sister

by *Christianne Scribner*



Mom

Take my hand
and reassure me with your smile
unsure and slightly off balance
I strive to grow
Mold me
encourage me
tell me again that I can make it
Push me into situations
that although I struggle
I come out better
and happier
Give me freedom
in small doses
making me believe I'm independent
but knowing you
stand right behind
ready to catch my fall
I seem ungrateful
and slip out of your reach
only to whisper the words
help me
and as you turn away
I mouth the phrase
I love you
with tears in my eyes
Turning, you don't see
but you won't give up
You take my hand
and reassure me with your smile

by *Christianne Scribner*



Elementary Days

A burst of light shines in our faces
as Dad throws open the curtains
singing those crazy-happy songs.
I moan and my little brother tosses a pillow
at his head
“Rise and shine,” he chirps, with that wild
maniac smile
Soon we are dressed and ready to go
the warm morning sun cheers us
and we walk, laughing
with our Transformer lunch boxes
and crayons

by *Christianne Scribner*

Brothers

Strong, tall men
easily lift me on one arm
confident and easy-going
with laughter on the edge of a smile
Each one so extremely different
And even so
I admire
and feel pride spread through me
each time I look at them
Handsome talented men
I stand on my toes to reach
Struggle to follow their bright
examples
My five wonderful, talented
brothers

by *Christianne Scribner*

Spencer, Craig, Scott,
Christy and Rob, Jimmy, Russ



The Family Band (in Scotland)



Scott and Christy



Gina

My Dancing sister,
 laughing
Smile flashing
 eyes shining
 daring to be yourself
Forever my beautiful sister
 you never could win
 the ugly contest
On those late nights
 huddled in the dark
 I would get to hear
 —whispered and sworn to secrecy
 sections of your diary
 sealed with a heart sticker

I looked up to you
 so much more mature than I
 Knowing what I never thought I would know
Always sharing your fears
 dreams, failures and success
I love to listen
 happy you can trust
 one so much younger
 always wondering how you could
 need my opinions
 when I felt so naive
 never laughing
 at anything I say
 and listening to me with intent

I know that
 with whatever path I take
 you will support me
And no matter what
 Choice you make
 I will be there for you
 I love you

My sister

by *Christianne Scribner*



Well, I could include poetry of Christy's for a hundred pages or more, and it's all so good. But I'll have to leave that for her to publish so she'll have money to retire on. She does have a gift. Her prose is just as amazing as her poetry. I will include some of it in other sections, such as when I write about our house burning down—you will be able to feel the sadness and despair that was felt that night. Or when she writes about our life in Scotland—I can promise you that you will be able to feel the cold that she and the others felt as they made their way to school each day. Just thinking about it makes me shiver with chills!

Christy never gave us any problems, but there were times that we didn't communicate well--these times were troublesome to both of us. She was an extremely faithful friend, and her very early friendships are still some of her closest. Lori Stewart and Jenny Guthrie will always be eternal friends of hers. Lori went through some very hard times in college, but Christy never deserted her. She kept a strong faith in her ability to overcome any temptations. Lori came back *full* force, went on to serve a mission and to marry a fine man in the temple. Christy's patriarchal blessing tells her.

“. . .you will be a great source of comfort and strength to those who especially need a special friend. You will ever be willing to reach out and to help those who are in need, to bless those lives who will need the love and strength and support of one who understands our Father's plan of salvation for his children. . .”

Christy is a good student, but she works diligently and very hard to get her good grades. She graduated from Santa Rosa High School, and then went to Ricks in Idaho to begin college. We loved to hear her tell about her struggles in College. Not that we wanted her to have them, but nobody can top the *disasters* that Christy experienced, and

to hear her tell them, in the end, either makes you laugh or cry. Either way, it's pure entertainment just to hear her tell it! For example, she was so petite and *light* that when she was walking to school in the icy winter, she would easily be picked up by the wind and find herself splattered on the sidewalk. Of course, the worst times for this to happen was when she stopped to talk to a boy, and right there in front of him would slip on the ice and land flat on the sidewalk—really impressive! Through all of her disasters, she pushed on in her schooling and graduated from Brigham Young University in August 1998. By this time she was married, and she and Rob then went to San Luis Obispo, California, where Christy went to school for two more years to get her Teacher's Certificate. This she received in April 2000 from Cal Poly. From there, she and Rob moved to Hawaii where Rob finished his schooling at Brigham Young University-Hawaii.

Well, now I realize that I forgot to tell you about Rob Jones, Christy's husband. However, I need to tell you about Christy's mission first. In 1995, Christy was called to serve in the Marseilles France Mission. French was a hard language for Christy to learn, and the mission itself is one of the harder missions--not many converts. Christy felt that perhaps her greatest contribution was to constantly help lift the spirits of the other missionaries because so many got discouraged. Could there be a greater contribution? Doug, Lora and I went to France to meet her after her mission. We loved seeing the little French towns, the Riviera, and meeting some of her friends. We also met Christianne Rude (Christy's namesake) who was now living in Grenoble, France.



We arrived home just in time for Christy to help teach some dancing in the Sesquicentennial Pageant in Santa Rosa Stake. Since she was a superb clogger, we incorporated a clogging section called *Gold Fever*. Well, Rob had also just returned from his mission in England, and we managed to involve him and his brother in the pageant as well. Would you believe that Christy and Rob were in the same dances? I don't want



you to ask me how that happened. They dated the rest of the summer and were married at Christmastime 1997, in the Oakland Temple. At this time, they are the parents of three gorgeous children who are really like triplets—two and three years of age. They experienced many years of trial and sadness as they tried to have children, but couldn't. Finally, they tried invitro-fertilization, which is what I call a very *mean* process—one that I'm pretty sure Christy and Rob will never go through again. She did get pregnant, but the pregnancy wasn't right. One of the eggs settled in the fallopian tube and burst, nearly taking Christy's life. Weeks later, the second embryo died within her. They applied for adoption, and by some wonderful



miracle received a beautiful little boy, Ethan Isaac. He was born the same week that her twins would've been due. Later that same year they had two more of the frozen eggs implanted and once more started the journey of pregnancy with twins. Even though they came early and even though Christy was hospitalized for several weeks, they now have Austin Kade and Alaina Jade, born a year and two months after Ethan was born. That's right—I call them our miracle triplets!

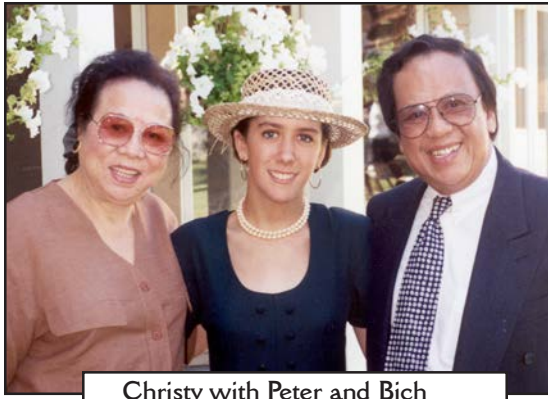
As with Christy and Rob I often think of Joseph Smith and his trials in the Liberty Jail, when he called out,
“O God, where art thou. . .”

And the Lord answered, ***“My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment. . .know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good.”*** (Doctrine and Covenants 121 and 122)

Christy received her patriarchal blessing when she was fourteen years old in 1989. In it she is told:

“Now I bless you Christianne, that though you may have challenges in your personal life, that you might have the strength to bear up and to be strong in the Lord, that you might be clothed with the full armor of God during your life, that you might strive to keep the commandments of the Lord;. . . that you might always keep in mind the importance of staying close to your Heavenly Father through praying always and being a serious student of the Holy Scriptures, which will enable you to be strong in the Lord. . .that your faith might be great in the Lord. . .that you might always remember, Christianne, the great and perfect love that your Heavenly Father has for you. . .”

I have to go back now and tell you a few wonderful incidents in Christy's life that always bring us warmth and joy. Saigon *fell* in 1975, and we were able to help sponsor a Vietnamese family to Santa Rosa. Doug was Bishop and did the organizing to get the Tran Family here and to help find Brother Tran a job. The Trans were new members of the church (just four months). Since most of them spoke no English, they particularly attached themselves to Christy, who was just a year old—babies speak a universal language and can tie two countries together very quickly.



Christy with Peter and Bich Tranvannohn in 1994

For that first year, Christy was as much Vietnamese and she was American. They loved her immensely. She spent time at their home and enjoyed playing with their chickens. One evening we were trying to get her to eat a piece of chicken (she was about two), and she just looked at it. We kept saying, *“It’s just a chicky. Just eat this little bit of chicky.”* (It was a drumstick). She just looked confused and didn’t seem to know what to do. Finally, she reached up and started petting it!

Another incident took place at Freemont Lake. My mother took care of Christy while the rest of us went back East to enjoy the

sights and celebrations of the nation’s Bicentennial (1976), and also to visit Uncle Steve (Doug’s brother). After our trip, we joined the rest of the James Family at Freemont Lake. Christy was almost two, but she became very close to my mother and didn’t recognize me when we got there. Grandma James was a special friend of hers anyway because she was there for both of her surgeries and helped keep her calm and comforted particularly after her second surgery. I was now the stranger. Every time I held her, she seemed to feel a little more familiarity, then finally she started playing with my string of pearls. These were given to me by my father when I was in high school. They were one of my treasures, and I wore them constantly. All the time as I held Christy while she was a baby, she ran her fingers through them. Now, as she played with them, it all came back to her, and we were mother and daughter again! Christy was given these pearls on the



day she got married. One of the saddest days for Christy was when her Grandma James died in 1980.



Cecile, Gina and Christy with Grandma James in 1979

Again I’m here at the end of a story, but I want to go on and on and tell more. One really good word to describe Christy is *curious*. She’s always seeking for answers. As a youth, some of her questions were: *“Why doesn’t God make it so Grandma can come down from heaven and visit us?”* After a few days of camping she asked, *“Why does God make the ground so hard?”* And while visiting the Grand Canyon, she asked the ranger, *“Why is it called the Grand Canyon?”* She’s an avid reader and probably drums up more questions than she herself can find answers to. She, like most of us, has spent time trying to understand the atonement of Christ. Perhaps there are some answers we’ll never know while we’re on this earth. That’s why we have to live in faith. But I do have a few answers. I know that Christy and Rob have been blessed greatly with these three wonderful children, and I love them all so much. My love for Christy continues to grow, and my admiration for her as she tends and mothers these three amazingly busy little children just grows beyond what I’m able to describe. I’m anxious for what each new moment brings, which Christy tells us about in her almost daily phonecalls, which truly light up our days.

And Then For Me

Alone
Coldness seeps through the pages
into my shaking soul
Finally realizing
but never fully comprehending
the life of the Savior
The unselfishness and love
Crying for one He knew He would soon wake
Asking support from friends He knew would sleep on
Trusting those He foretold would betray
Submitting Himself to be taken when the power was there
Bearing the cross, the nails, the pain
Pleading the Father to stay
And then for me
another burden
Every spit in the face
sharp lashes in the back ripping the skin and reaching the bone
the agony of the weight of His body pulling
on the nails that kept Him bound to the cross
thick thorns pushed deep into the tender skin of His head
and the mocking words, louder than the throngs of spectators
THIS IS JESUS
THE KING OF THE JEWS
Over His head
And when He was thirsty, He was given vinegar and gall
There He died
and the Heavens wept
And then for me
even the greater burden
My pain
My sins
My infirmities
Now days pass by
and I add to the torture
When He pleads to the Father
it is I who is helping
to make Him fall and bleed in Gethsemane
And then for me
on the cross, again
but without the Father
Sustained only by his great love
Alone

by *Christianne Scribner*



“What Is Important To Me”

by *Christianne Jones*

6 November 2006

Watching the wisps of clouds scream by my face at 13,000 feet over the ocean, I suddenly thought that maybe this wasn't the best idea. I froze momentarily in the doorway of that rickety old plane and started to voice that very opinion when the boy with the parachute pushed us both out in a freefall over Oahu Island. After the initial rush of adrenaline kicked through my body, I was filled with an overwhelming sense of awe. Below me the island appeared so small and insignificant. It was hard to imagine the number of people living their lives down there, attending to mundane activities: Work, school, running errands. All those people and all their worries were swallowed up in the wild beauty that belongs solely to the tropics. Even my own troubles were drowned in the vastness of the royal blue ocean stretching out to the ends of the earth in all directions. In those few minutes I felt like I was a part of the sky and my whole being was filled with clarity. I wondered if this was what it felt like to die... a sudden rush and then floating on air, becoming one with the world we once lived on. It was almost hard to remember what all the fuss was about back on solid ground. And then the world came crashing back to my feet.



My first words after I landed were, “I want to go back.” And I really did. If I had the money I would have gone back over and over. But, being poor students, Robert and I contented ourselves with verbally reliving the experience over the next few days until the magic gradually wore off. And eventually we busied ourselves with the mundane tasks of the everyday: work, school and running errands. By then, of course, I had remembered what all the fuss was about.

Sometimes I ponder those few minutes in the air. I try to recapture the clarity of life I felt. It wasn't so much knowing all the answers to life's big questions. It wasn't even knowing the questions, for that matter. Instead, it was a moment I reflected all I've done in my life and realized that I was good. Good decisions and bad decisions aside, I felt like I had good character and a true soul. And when I was falling down towards the ground, that is all I felt was important.

I didn't have time to define those characteristics during the jump, but I have since wondered what shapes a good character and what inspires a true soul. How are the two different and at the end of the day are both needed? Lifetime experiences, born out of adversity and struggle, forge core character but it is those single moments of inspiration, striking instantly, that enlighten the soul.

As it is with everyone, I have had both lifetime experiences and moments of inspiration. Although each and every person's individual experiences differ, I think most will agree that the majority of our experiences derive from the desire to communicate, to be heard, to love and to be loved. The measure of one's character is not the actual experiences but how we emerge through them. I felt the same six years ago as I do now, that despite my moments or days of doubting my ability to rise up, I have managed to, for the moment, stand up again. Lifetime experiences, like the waves on the shore, never stop coming and sometimes you get crushed under the weight and sometimes you ride weightlessly over the top. Either way, there is still another wave coming.

And what of a true soul? Whereas my character is formed from my reactions to my life experiences, my soul is merely a reflection pool of those lives who have touched it. From the sparkling eyes of my children to chance encounters with strangers, my soul has been moved and inspired. With so many moments compounded on top of each other, a person's soul is too complicated to categorize, but I will mention a few slices of time that have become a part of me.

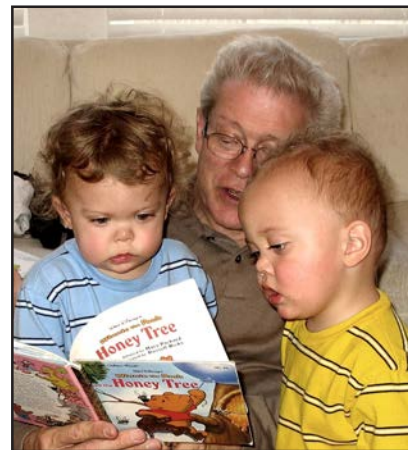
Even when the world of sound locked her out and grief offered to be her constant companion, Grandma Delma lived with a *joie de vivre*. It would have been easy to slip back and let those waves roll over her, but she kept going back for another ride. I can feel her squeezing my hand and through her wit and smiles I still feel her power to surmount and conquer my fears.



Standing in a charred, damp, blackened room with the smell of ash and soot heavy in the air, I can see my Dad asking neighbors and family to gather around. And then, under the light of a few portable lamps he thanked God for all of his blessings. No one moved for a few minutes after that prayer, so touched by the sincerity and selflessness of the moment. It was so out of place to feel such gratitude, but it forever connected everyone who stood in what should have been a place of despair.

Packed into the car like sardines, trying hard to ignore the thick stank odor of the very large women squeezed in next to us, it was hard to appreciate how hard my mom worked to help those who couldn't help themselves. But even a young girl like myself could see the gratitude on their faces, knowing that someone cared enough for them to drive through the cold Scottish roads to take them to church. With my Mom, charity is like a drug. She will search the streets to find someone who needs to be helped and give her everything she has to put them on their feet. She will deny this, but I have seen too many faces of gratitude not to believe it myself.

The more I think about moments people have reached out and touched my soul, the more memories flood through my head. I can't possibly write them all down. If I start, I won't stop and there are too many diapers to be changed and mouths to be fed to lock myself in a room and write forever. But, as I knew when I jumped out of that plane...and as I know now...I have a soul that reflects the lives of hundreds of people. It is full and it is true. It is my gift given from the life experiences of others. And when the day comes that the waves stop rolling by, I hope I'm still standing.



Doug and Cecile
(Grandma and Grandpa) with
Ethan, Austin and Alaina
February and July 2006
in Longmont, Colorado



“Why I Believe”

by *Robert Jones*

Often times I go through life just dealing with the day to day to make it through the rat race. It is so easy to get side tracked by all the little things that I find myself often needing to take a step back. It could be dealing with the whining of kids, needless entertainment, lack of sleep, or things that need to get done at work.

Everyday I come home from work, I have reinforced the importance of my family as my kids come running up to me and give me all their attention with the hugs of gladness to see me. It is at that instant when I wish I could have that forever. I start to think what life would be like if I was so concentrated with work, that I didn't have time for family--or if I became so sidetracked with all the material goods out there, that

my family took a back seat. I would be missing so much of what life is about... family. At the end of the day, they are the ones I am happy with—a best friend as my wife, kids who love me, and family members we can rely on when things get tough.

I look at how I was raised and the principles that my family tried to teach me, and most, if not all of them center around family. In the gospel sense, the eternal family is what we strive for. What it takes to have that is what we are taught in the gospel. To be sealed for time and eternity. One thing predicated upon another. Much of what I believe, I learned growing up. I will try and convey that with examples in my life. The example of my parents and much of my own trials has shaped me into who I am today. The understanding and devotion of one principle can affect the outcome of another, and can take a long, long, long time to master. For instance, having *patience* can change the outcome of accepting what is happening and dealing with it calmly, vs. exploding. I look at my kids and how they show me my inadequacies. Kids often have a tendency of doing that. They will often do something, whether it be taking a toy from someone else (this happens the most with us,) arguing about who watches or plays with what or what time to go to bed, doing something we know they can get hurt by, or displaying hyper active behavior, all of which really test my patience at times. When I am short on patience, my skin starts to boil, heart pounding, and a feeling like I want to jump through my skin. This is when I realize that my inadequacy is shown (often by my kids or being lost in traffic) and realize that it is a lack of patience I must work on. I am grateful for a loving wife that can see this happening and often reminds me to calm down or not to scream at the kids, which in turn helps remind me to get control of myself and help to improve my patience. At first I had a really hard time when she would tell me this, especially when I was ready to explode. I didn't like being told what to do. It is at that moment that I realized that I am not patient, but selfish because there is something I was doing or would rather do without being unconvinced. I have found that taking that extra time to sit, talk, and put aside my wants and desires helps my kids know I am there for them. This is something I saw my father trying to do as I grew up and now realize how much I appreciated it. I have found that having patience makes it a lot easier to understand where others are coming from, and gives a greater ability of tolerance, or love to those around you.

We have heard many times, “*Do unto others as you’d have done unto you,*” or “*Love thy neighbor as thyself*”—all which helps us as we are working towards the pure love of Christ. I constantly see this in my children. It is a great feeling to have someone love you with this kind of love. Every day I come home, I have the joy of them running into my arms, tackling me, and wanting my full attention for the next few hours, or days if I would give it to them. Now, that may change when they get older, but I will take what I can get now.

I have never been one to feel strong promptings telling me what is right or telling me to do one thing or another (except in a life threatening situation). That blasted tree will forever haunt me. For me it is mainly common sense and faith. I feel I have always been blessed with the gift of faith. A faith not just in God, but with family and friends. Knowing that when good or bad things happen, I will be able to make it through the situation. That help and support is just around the corner if needed. After I had the tree fall on me, I relied on faith that the rafting guide’s knowledge and skills would get us down the dangerous rapids and I could get the medical help needed for my injuries. I had faith that I would live, and faith that the doctors would patch me up well enough that I could make it and be on my merry way.

There are many events in our lives, and how we react and what we get from it helps mold and shape us into who we are today. Our beliefs help define who we are as a person and may determine how we act or what we will and won’t do on a daily basis. There are times we are put in many situations that we wish we weren’t put in. These usually end up being *character building moments*, and may bring up many questions, like “*Why did this happen to me?*” There are many challenges that await us, whether it be physical, emotional, mental or spiritual. I look around the world at all the living things and find it hard to believe that there isn’t a God—that He wouldn’t want us back, and that He wouldn’t prepare a way for us to return to Him.

Too often I go through life taking for granted what many struggle to find—the gospel. It is because of the gospel that I have learned and worked on many of the principles and traits that make me a better father, husband, and person. I just hope and pray I can pass these same things on to my children, that we may always be a strong and close family and live together in the eternities.



Rob and Christy
Ethan, Alaina and Austin
2006



Christy, Robert
and Ethan 2003



Alaina and Austin
May 2004



Jimmy and Christy



James Daniel Scribner

To Jimmy – Thirtieth Birthday

21 November 2006



It seems to me as I read of thee
I haven't a poem for just you alone
Russ had one, Craig and Gina's are done
Scotty's came through, Christy got two.

But where is the poem for just you alone?
Did I not write it down? Was it swept from the ground?
For you I will write some words that are quite
Astounding and true—they're perfect for you.

Jimmy is good, but misunderstood
Sometimes by me. He wants to be free
To choose his own way. He strives to obey
Those who would lead and give *sup* to his need.

Jimmy is kind—the best friend to find,
Your *past* he'll forgive—he'll just let you live
The way you would choose.
To judge? He'd refuse.
He's that kind of guy who never asks "why?"

Jimmy can laugh 'til you quite split in half,
He's trouble and fun all rolled into one
His laugh is contagious
And sometimes outrageous,
You want him around
Just to roll on the ground.

Jimmy's all heart—he fills a big part
Of our big family tree. We need him, you see,
For he loves and he gives.
He learns while he lives.
So, Jim—My own life would be, without thee, empty.



Love, *Mom*

Jimmy answers to many names: *Jimbo*, *Jim-Bob*, *Jimboberoo*, and my favorite, *Jimmy*. Today is Jimmy's birthday, November 21, and he is thirty-years-old—the big moment of saying *good-bye* to the *Twenties* forever! I remember so well coming home from the hospital with him. Our good friends, Chuck and Loye Mickelson, prepared a delicious Thanksgiving Dinner for us. Grandma Scribner and Uncle Steve arrived just in time to help welcome Jimmy into the world. Like most of our children, Jimmy was born on a Sunday evening, right after church (so no one would have to miss any meetings!!). Christy, Jimmy and Spencer were all born while Doug was serving as Bishop--and all on Sunday evenings.

Nothing out of the ordinary happened during his birth. My first child was a C-Section, but all the others were natural births, including Jimmy's—a quick rush to the hospital with the first inkling of a pain, and then after an hour or two at the most, with one good excruciating pain at the last, we'd have another beautiful baby Scribner. Jimmy came right on cue. He was our baby born at the time of the huge Bi-Centennial Birthday of America (1976). Earlier that year in July our family visited the East Coast in celebration of this great event.



Everything was perfect—so it seemed—but oh, did we ever have a road ahead of us. Within the first weeks of Jimmy's life I noticed that



he didn't respond to loud noises. Then I would purposely make loud noises, but no response. I took him for a two-week checkup and Dr. Meyer said,

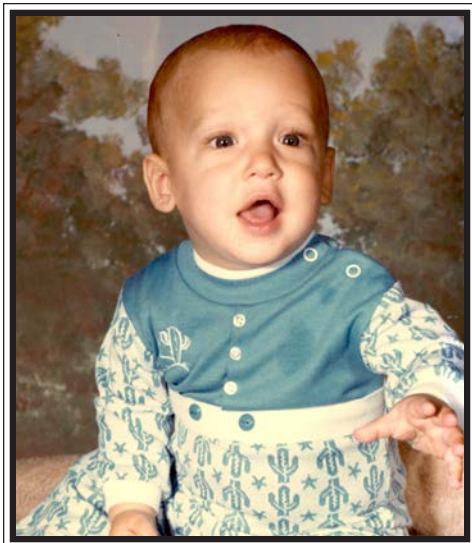
“Everything seems to be okay. Do you have any questions?”

I hesitated. Then I started to cry and said, *“He doesn't hear.”*

I thought Dr. Meyer would check him out, but instead he said, *“If you don't think he hears, then he probably doesn't. There is no medicine better than what a mother feels.”*

I actually wanted him to check Jimmy and prove me wrong, but his statement was correct. In my heart I knew I was right—Jimmy couldn't hear. As it turned out, after going to a specialist, Jimmy didn't hear anything at all unless the sound was extremely loud. So that started our weekly visits to the Marin Speech and Hearing Clinic where they taught us how to get the best use out of hearing aids. We made these visits for six months.

But I must tell you another experience before I go on. We need to go back to when Jimmy was only six weeks old. In January 1977, my brother Tom's fourteen-year-old son Johnny was killed in an accident on his school grounds in Springville, Utah. It was a tragic accident, and we joined the rest of the family in Utah for his burial.



The Spirit was so strong, so close—it was a feeling of the veil between heaven and earth being so thin. All of us could hardly stand the pain of Johnny's loss, and yet we knew the heavens were close. This feeling was prevalent with all of us, yet almost impossible to describe. With this strong feeling of *closeness*, we asked the men in the family if they would join Doug in giving a blessing of healing to Jimmy. So much priesthood power seemed to be surrounding Jimmy at that moment. But the words of the blessing troubled me somewhat:

“We bless you, Jimmy, that you will hear the sounds you are meant to hear.”

What sounds was Jimmy meant to hear? Why didn't Doug just *out and out* ask Heavenly Father to heal him? What were we to gain from those words in that blessing?

Well, we went through those next six months learning how to teach Jim to hear sounds and respond with the use of hearing aids. A therapist came weekly to our home to help us. I finally settled with the fact that Jimmy would learn to hear some sounds with these hearing aids. But the rest of the children persistently asked every morning and night in our family prayer that Jimmy would be able to hear—everything! Every so often I would try to explain to them how these hearing aids would help, but they didn't seem to comprehend what I was trying to explain.



Jimmy's picture was in the news sent out by the Marin Speech and Hearing Clinic ~ 1977

Then we went to Utah for a couple of weeks. If a mother's intuition and observations are perceptive, then a grandmother's are even more so. During the visit, my mother said,

"You don't need to put those hearing aids on Jimmy. He can hear without them."

I was such a prideful daughter. I didn't listen to her, and only felt that she was a little embarrassed to go out among her friends with this baby who was wearing hearing aids. So I didn't put his hearing aids in. However, I watched him carefully, and he was responding as if he could hear. When we came back from Utah, I immediately took him to the clinic to have him tested. I knew as the test went on, that he was hearing on a normal level. The doctor at this clinic told me that this was very unusual, that they never see changes in hearing like this. With tears rolling down my cheeks, I told her that I couldn't explain it either, but Jimmy had five siblings that would not give up praying every day for his hearing to return. Their faith had been much stronger than mine or Doug's.

Now we look back on all this and have been amazed at the course of Jimmy's life. What were the sounds he was meant to hear? Jimmy loved music even as a little child. When he was about three years old he would get the records out and try to put them on and play them. I think he broke a couple of record players and scratched a lot of records. Jimmy loves the piano. The minute he walks into the house, his first stop is always *the piano*. On top of the piano is where he can always find the keys to his car! Before he was eight-years-old, he could hardly



wait to start piano lessons, which we let him do while we were living in Scotland. He always practiced faithfully. Jimmy was certainly meant to hear music. He loves classical music. He also loves to sing. He's got a great bass voice, and he's a good addition to any choir, quartette or trio.

I also think that Jimmy was meant to hear the voices of children. So many of things I write about Jimmy can also be written about Spencer. These two boys are absolutely



Jimmy with Hunter and Bella

from Heavenly Father. Oh, why didn't I recognize it at the time? My biggest doubts often come because of my impatient nature. The Lord's time is always different than I want it to be.

Jimmy has faced more medical problems in the first four years of his life, than most people do in a lifetime—the only thing is, he probably doesn't have a lot of memory about it. By April 1978 (when Jimmy was seventeen months old), I had Jimmy in for another check-up—a simple one to see if his ears were clear so we could go on a plane trip. Dr. Meyer suddenly became concerned, and asked me to take him to the hospital for some extensive tests on his heart, and before long we



were seeing Dr. Popper, a heart specialist in San Francisco. Jimmy had a large hole in his heart and a defective valve. In a few years he would need surgery. Thus started another journey with Jim. Of course, all nurses and doctors take medical history of a child. When the doctors heard about his hearing problems and the miracles, one of them said,

“Well, Jimmy will need to have major heart surgery by the time he is four or five years old, but if you and your family decide to work on it otherwise, we won't be surprised if the hole disappears!”

Before he had this surgery at age four and a half, he could hardly walk across the lawn without getting winded. Doug carried him everywhere. But he was light, even fragile. We faced a hard decision. We were told that he could live without the surgery, but he would only live to twenty years of age at the most. But with the surgery, we were told of all the things that could possibly go wrong.

Again we found ourselves praying for miracles, and then expecting them to happen. While Jimmy was being operated on, I called my close friend, Pat Ashton, on the telephone. Her two-year-old son, Benjamin, who was a Downs Syndrome child, was going through treatments for leukemia. On the phone that day, we discussed the subject of miracles, and *how often should we beg the Lord to grant them to us*. We and our spouses had both prayed for plenty of miracles during those years. Finally, we came to the conclusion that Heavenly Father would expect us as parents to pray and plead for miracles to come into our children's lives. So we did, and both families were granted many miracles in the lives of these two little boys.

magic with little children. They're like magnets. I think of the school teaching that has become Jim's profession. He's so well loved by all of his students. We received a phone call from one of Jim's students this summer after Jim had moved to Arizona—she wanted his email so they could be pen pals. He cares about people so much. I don't think there's anyone that he doesn't like, or doesn't look for a reason to like, especially those who are under his stewardship. What a different life Jim would be living if he couldn't hear music and children's voices. I know that the blessing he received at the age of two weeks was a direct revelation



Jimmy with Ben Jacob, Hunter, and Danny

When Jimmy came out of surgery, he was still asleep and quite *frozen* it seemed because the doctors reduced his body temperature so drastically. The nurse with him never once stopped checking everything. She went to needles in veins, to tubes in his nose and down his throat, to blood pressure and heartbeat monitors, constantly checking temperature, watching his coloring, and then back over the whole process again. It was hard to turn aside and not hold and protect him. The only control I had was my constant communication with Heavenly Father to guide all the hands that seemed to be controlling Jimmy's life. But color started to come back into his face, and for hours and hours I just held his hands and thought, "*He is so beautiful.*"



Jimmy and Scotty

Well, Jimmy continued to be a beautiful looking child and beautiful on the inside. Oh, we had times of disciplining him, but there was never any guile in Jimmy. His looks changed as he got older. His brown straight hair turned to very black, curly hair! His nature has always been gentle and one of a peacemaker. Because of lack of physical exercise, he exercised his mind as a child by doing puzzles—it was amazing how fast he could put a 100-piece puzzle together. He was a slow walker (fifteen months), but a very early talker. And his memory was amazing. He picked up on what his brothers and sisters said, and would copy them. Doug used to tease him a lot (in order to test and teach him, I suppose) by saying things like, "*What color are those shoes, Jimmy?*" And Jimmy would answer and say "*black.*" Then

Doug would tease and say, "*Those aren't your black shoes, those are red!*" Jimmy would insist that they were black until Doug was convinced. Then one day, weeks after that, he was with me upstairs and saw Doug's black shoes on the ground. He said to me,



Spencer and Jimmy

"There are Dad's black shoes that he thinks are red!"

Jimmy was a very loving child. He cuddled and wanted to be held close. As a teenager, he was still warm and affectionate and wasn't ashamed to give me a kiss. I knew the day would come when he would stop, but I enjoyed it all those years while it lasted. As a child, he would scream when he was put to bed or when Spencer stole toys from him (Spencer was as big as he was though he was two years younger). So it wasn't always peaceful with Jim.



Spencer, Doug, Jimmy

I wish I could think of all the funny things that Jim has said. He can always make people laugh—very dry humor. It just comes out and rolls off the tongue so naturally. He knows how to capture the moment in humor.



substances and habits. Then he asked the kids if they could think of anything else that was addictive to which Jimmy answered, *“Yes. . .insurance money.”*

Here’s a very funny one: Jimmy and Spence were watching television, and I was visiting with someone in the kitchen when I suddenly heard from the T.V.: *“Get your _____ out of here.”* I quickly called in, *“What did I just hear?”* And Jimmy right on cue answered, *“Get your bottom out of here.”* I answered, *“That isn’t what that guy said,”* to which Jim immediately replied, *“Yeah, but that’s what he meant.”* (They knew I’d ask them to turn the television off!) Jim is very quick!

When Jimmy was about six and a half years old he was jumping on the trampoline and made the very unwise decision to jump from the trampoline into the sandbox. Well, he didn’t judge everything just right and his nose landed right on the wooden edge of the sandbox—a major break! This was one of those times that I nearly fainted in the hospital room when they were examining him. I react very well to any emergency, but when someone else takes over and I have time to think of what happened, I get very weak and need to sit down, put my head down and get the blood flowing back into my head. This happened when Russ was little and I had to pull a nail right out of his toe, or when Gina dropped a rock on her finger, splitting the finger nail and finger underneath it, or when Christy had a pregnancy and her fallopian tube burst, or when all of the children were hurt and needed cuts sown together, etc. when we were in the second car accident. I’ve been able to handle so many, many medical emergencies with my children, but given the moment to think after the emergency is over, I get weak. After the car accident, and after the cuts were all sown and each child was given a Priesthood blessing, I just cried uncontrollably.



It’s like you had to *be there* to understand the humor. I can only think of a few examples that may not sound funny, but at the time they were hilarious just because of the age he was when he said them or because of the situation. We were in Spain in 1986 and were in a chandelier shop. Gina asked how much the chandelier cost—the one we bought as we were leaving Spain. I answered, *“Not very much really, but it’ll be a nice reminder of Spain for us.”* Then Jim answered, *“How many reminders do we need?”*

Another time was when we were at a bed and breakfast place in the Highlands, and the woman was taking our order for breakfast. Doug said, *“My wife’s a very light eater.”* To which Jimmy quickly replied, *“But after she eats, she’ll be heavy.”* Like I said, sometimes you just had to be there to get the humor!

Another time I can remember was after our house burned in 1991. We spent the whole next year spending insurance money to replace our belongings. Later that year in 1992, he was sitting in a class at church, and the teacher was talking about addictive

Well now—back to Jimmy’s broken nose. This accident happened on the 28th of April 1983. Jimmy was so anxious for the surgery that he woke up much earlier than usual. Doug found him at the breakfast table. He had eaten one cherry! I took him to the hospital anyway, and told the anesthesiologist, and he said, *“He did what?” “He ate one cherry,”* I said. The reply, *“Then I’m canceling, I won’t give anesthesia!”* Pretty soon the word was traveling through the hospital floor from nurse to nurse to doctor: *“He ate a cherry!” Jimmy ate one cherry!”* Poor Jimmy was dumbfounded as to why his one cherry could upset so many adults. He remembered that he wasn’t supposed to eat anything that morning, but the hunger pangs were stronger than the remembering. As it turned out, they waited for seven hours and then did the surgery.



He chose good friends both in and out of the Church. He had a particularly good friendship with Tizzy Faulkner who lived across the street. Sometimes they were inseparable, and even today they have stayed closest of friends. Jimmy didn’t date particularly when he was in high school, but we urged him

to ask someone for the Senior Prom. Finally, as the time got close, we asked, *“Jimmy, do you have date for the Prom yet?”*

And he answered, *“Yes.”*

“Well, who is it? Who did you ask?”

He answered, *“Who do you think I asked? The only girl I know—Tizzy!”*



I’m so glad he took her. They were both extremely happy to be celebrating this important time in their lives together.

Jimmy is definitely **King of Puzzles**. He’s a master at putting puzzles together, at doing crossword puzzles, and even creating crossword puzzles. For example, on Christmas (2003) he gave each of us in the family a personalized Crossword puzzle—and they were big. All the *clues* were personalized to each person. It was amazing! It showed how observant he was of each person and how well he knew them. For example, here were some of the clues in the puzzle he gave Doug and me for Christmas:

- (1) Mom collects pairs of these for all seasons (socks)
- (2) Daughter with the longest “given” name (Lorabearmichellepigglespooscribner)
- (3) Mom’s impulse buy for \$5.88 (DVD)
- (4) Does this walking corpse have a _____? (name)
- (5) Christy throws many of these away and mom NEVER throws these away (pictures)
- (6) What mom and dad need at night (breeze)
- (7) Mom did this to Rob 3 times while dating Christy (slap)
- (8) Gotta little _____ here (problem)
- (9) What Dad eats for breakfast every day (toast)
- (10) Mom’s remedy for everything that ails you (bath)
- (11) Her children use “appropriate behavior” (Gina)

Mom -- August 2002

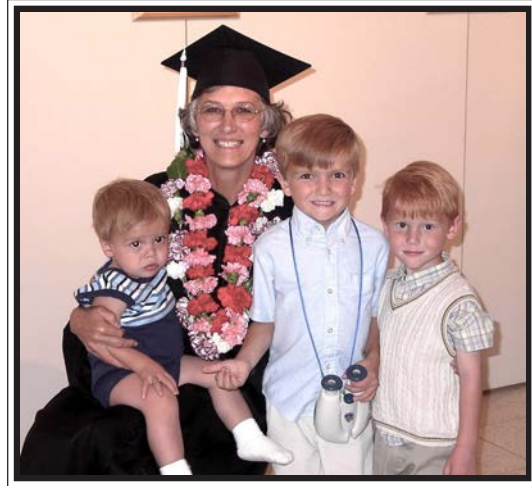
A poem, in the style of Cecile. . .

Many many years ago
You started with a master plan
Go to school, you'd learn and grow
And date some boys – life was grand.

A wrench was then thrown in the works
A man you found, his hand you'd take
He was funny, short, with rugged good looks,
And certainly, he was no *Flake!*

Your schooling was put to the side,
Instead you typed and worked and toiled,
Then came the kids, no place to hide
From dirty face and diaper soiled.

Forty years then came and went
With callings, kids, joy and strife
'Til a fateful day you'd not lament
When homework once again was *Life.*



Cecile with Josh, Matthew, and Aaron



Christy, Gina, Cecile, Doug, Lora, Stephanie and Jimmy



You trudged through Spanish class and math
Through “*Ir*” “*Estár*” “*Vivir*” and “*Ser,*”
You solved for “*y*” and graphed its path.
‘Twas enough to make you pull your hair.

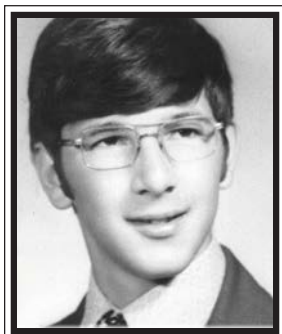
And now your day has finally come,
Your dreams and goals you now have met,
Your days of tests and school are done
You did it, Mom, you’re a **GRADUATE!**

Love you, Jim and Steph

by Jim Scribner

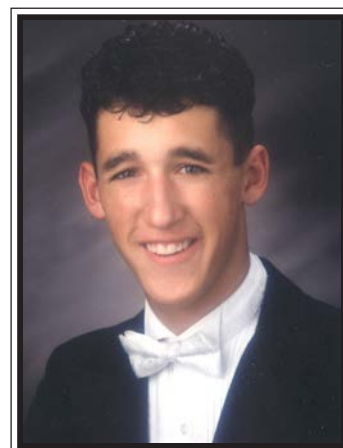
My goodness, I've written all this about Jim and never mentioned how he got his name. We were thinking that a little girl would be just right in our family—that would make three boys and three girls, and then Gina could spoil another little girl like she did Christy. But as I was praying one night, I had the feeling that we should name this child after Joyce's son, Danny, who was killed in May 1975, at age nineteen. So we thought *Danielle* would be a nice name. Then James Daniel started going through my mind so clearly, and as I talked to Doug about it, he said, *"It seems we're going to have a little boy instead of a little girl."*

These are wonderful names that Jimmy carries. *James*, of course, is an ancestral name—it is my maiden name, and it is a name that we Jameses are all proud to carry—one that I've always felt should be kept untarnished.



I think all of my siblings feel the same way about the James name. The James family is a strong family in the Gospel, with great ancestral stories of conversions from Wales. *Daniel Mark Jensen*, Joyce's boy, was killed just within the week after he was interviewed for his mission. He was parked on the side of the road waiting for his friend to raise the antennae of his car so they could listen to a BYU basketball game while driving to a dance in Pennsylvania. His friend jumped out of the way as a semi-truck was headed right for them. The truck ran right over the car, which burst into flames and Danny was killed. Dan had a friendly personality,

was obviously his Grandpa James' favorite, had achieved his Eagle Scout, was very mature spiritually, and had done all those things required of him to make him worthy to go on a mission. His parents had gone through a divorce and were both now remarried, and Danny had just spent the year at BYU, being close to his mother and urging her to keep her life spiritual, assuring her that he and the girls would be okay. He was spiritually mature beyond his years. When we asked Joyce if we could use Danny's name for our little boy, she consented by saying that perhaps Dan had a special interest in this little boy. I guess these are pretty *weighty* names that Jim carries.



Well, how do I see Jimmy now at age thirty? First of all, I see a man who we have been given the blessing of enjoying far beyond the years that we thought were possible when he was young. Now we are looking toward his being around forever. Who could imagine life without him? I can't. He's achieved greatly in very many areas. As a teenager he achieved his Eagle Scout award—just barely before the deadline like Russ and Scotty. His Dad is also an Eagle



Scout. It's a great honor to have this award and will bless his life many times over. In 1994, Jimmy graduated from Santa Rosa High School. While he was there he was part of the choral groups—Chamber Singers and the Men's Chorus. All five of our boys have been part of these same choirs at Santa Rosa High



School. It's been a great blessing and great training for them to go on in music. One great memory from his last year in high school was his performance at the *Anything Goes* Concert. He and his friend Jeremy Kern dressed up rather silly with crazy hairdos and performed a piano duet, *Beethoven's Fifth*. It was fabulous!

After High School Graduation, Jim started college at Brigham Young University and then was called to serve a mission in the Nashville, Tennessee Mission. Some of his mission was served in Kentucky. He had a great mission and coincidentally (a word I use rather loosely, since I often wonder how many actual coincidences take place in our lives), but coincidentally, one of his favorite companions was the son of an elder who served in Southern Australia with Doug and me in 1962--his name

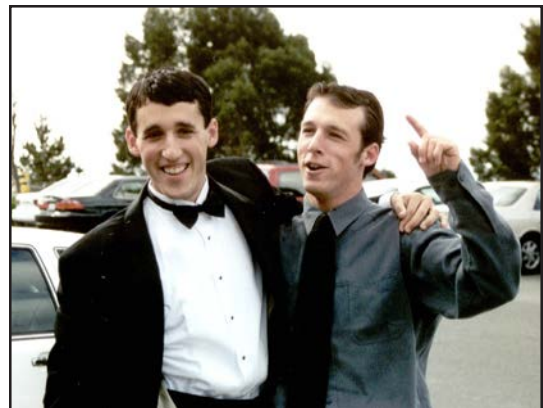


was Elder Owens. After Jim's mission, we went to Tennessee to meet him. Spencer and Randy and Kerry Ann Sides also went with us. We enjoyed seeing this wonderful state and a night at the *Grand Ol' Opry*—something that we always wanted to see! It was a grand knee-clapping and foot-stompin' night. We'll never forget it! I think we saw this without Jim, while we were waiting for his actual release date. It was good for him and Spence to be together again.

Jim and Spence—now that takes a little writing about. These were our two *little boys*. We called them the little boys so much, that even after Lora was born in 1983 and she grew up a little, she even called them the *little boys* --*“The little boys are upstairs playing, or the little boys are outside playing soccer, or the little boys are walking to school—the little boys this and the little boys that.”* They were together all the time. We think that they even had their own language. Even now if you play a game with them, like charades, they will give the strangest clues to each other and the other one *gets it* just like that! They're loyal friends to each other and seem to gravitate towards each other. Their wives probably feel left out when they're together.



Well, that should now bring me to Jim's wife and family. He met Stephanie Brooke Miller after his mission, and they were married in the Oakland Temple on the 13th of January 2001. She was also at Brigham Young University working on her Masters in Art. Stephanie is definitely not what I would call a *Molly Mormon*, but that's good because Jim also is not what I would call *Peter Priesthood*. They both like to read controversial subjects by church members—looking at all possibilities. Jim has a strong desire to sort things out for himself and not take someone else's word on it. They both have quirks in their eating habits—I don't even suppose these are similar to each other,



so who knows what meal times are like at their house. I do know that they both like to go out to eat—then they can each order what they want! Stephanie is the talker in the home, and Jim is the quiet one. They are together absolutely in one area: loving and spoiling their daughter, Yve Brooke Miller Scribner. Oh my goodness, this little girl gets so much attention, and boy, does she ever thrive on it. Well, Jimmy is a great father.

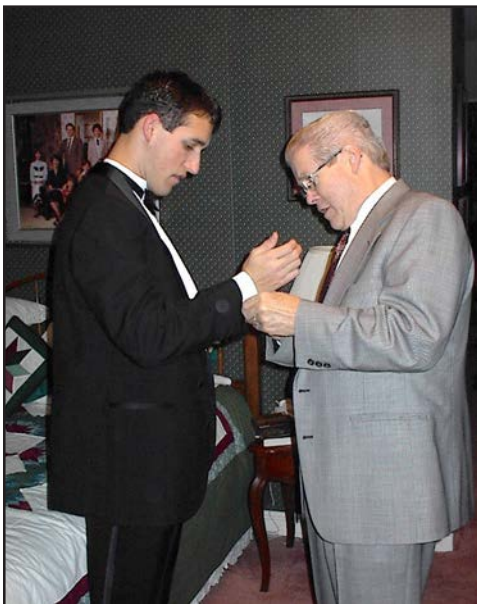


In his Patriarchal Blessing given when he was sixteen, Jimmy

was told: *“You shall have the greatest of blessings of having your children born in the covenant, raised in a household of faith, and taught light and truth that they, the offspring of God, might come to know the Lord Jesus Christ in this life, even as they knew Him before their birth. . . No greater responsibility or calling will come to you or any of the sons of God than that of the holy and sacred title of “Father.”*



I guess Jim is like his father because he avoids confrontation—yet he is very responsive to people—so he’s over there on that *analytic/amiable* side of personality. He’s very cautious and feels things deeply. He doesn’t seek any limelight and would be embarrassed by too much attention or credit. He’s very sincere and sensitive to people’s feelings. He loves being around family and being involved, particularly as the participant—maybe not so much the leader. Jim is somewhat of a worrier—well, more than *somewhat*. He wants to do things well, he wants to be on time, he worries about all sorts of things, but that’s just Jim for you! I think Jim likes



traditions in the family, and so does Stephanie. They both are super at making the holiday orange roll recipe that they now call **Mom’s Orange Rolls**, but actually they are my mother’s recipe—and perhaps her mother’s. That’s why it’s a good tradition! They build the Christmas train around the Christmas tree, and I’m pretty sure Jim believes in hot baths for curing ills. I found this paper that Jim wrote, which demonstrates a lot of his caring for family and tradition:

I had just sat down in front of the television planning to get into some late night movie. Just as I began to get comfortable, my mother walked in and told me that she had to show me something. Recently my mother had been busy working on a project that consisted of putting together all of our home videos of family trips onto one video tape. Slightly annoyed that I would not be able to watch a movie, I reluctantly agreed to watch the tape with her.

To my surprise, I soon found myself smiling and laughing at the scenes of our family at Yellowstone Park. I began to think about how different things are now than how they were then. It seems like every day my parents and I are getting into some argument that usually ends up with us not speaking to each other. My brother and I are constantly fighting about whose mess is on the floor or who stays in the shower too long.



While I was watching these old movies, I realized how many great times I have had with my family and how important they are to me. It is so easy to remember all the arguments and disagreements I have had with my mother and forget the hours she spent by my side during my open-heart surgery or the time she came into my first day of school because I was too frightened to go alone. It is so easy to remember all the pointless fights with my brother and forget the times when we would play for hours with legos or play ball in the park.

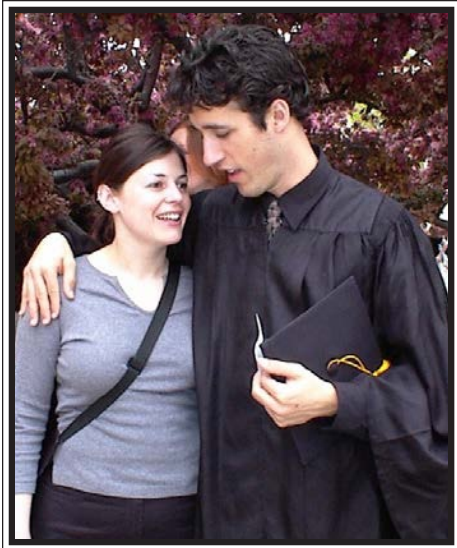
So many people in the world tend to forget how important families are in their lives. Children run away from home because they feel unloved by their parents, and they don't realize just how much their parents do love them and want the best for them. The scenes on our home videos made me realize that the memories I have shared with my family will last forever, and that although we may sometimes disagree, I will always be loved and cared for.

by Jim Scribner

Jim has a great love for soccer. He likes to play full back—or a least he used to. After all he's been through with his heart and lack of energy and life when he was little, it still amazes me when he's out there on the soccer field. I also need to include something here about Jimmy's ability to *dual-process*. He can listen and talk at the same time! All his teacher's at Church were so frustrated with him because he and Glenn Harris were always chattering. Even if they sat across the isle from each other, they'd find ways to send messages. And yet when we'd ask him what a particular speaker was talking about, he'd always know. So frustrating!! I think he can still do this. And yet, we can't really seem to get much conversation out of Jim—even now. He's a man of few words. But I don't think that is true in his classroom where he teaches. When he's in front of people giving a talk, he has the ability to hold everyone's attention--he's a captivating speaker!



Jim graduated from Brigham Young University on the 27th of April 2001 in Psychology. He worked in the State Hospital in Provo while Stephanie was finishing her degree at BYU. While we were in New Zealand on our mission (Jan. 2004-Jan. 2006), Jim and Stephanie took care of our home and some of our



finances, and during this time, Jim attended Sonoma State University and got his Teacher's Certificate in 2005. His first teaching job was in Forestville, California, and now he and Stephanie live in Tempe, Arizona, near the district where he is teaching school. Jim, I think, is just too tired to talk when he comes home from a whole day of teaching! I've never been in his classroom, but I know he's a good teacher just by the way the students respond to him when we're at a school activity with him. When Lora gave her homecoming address in Church, she wanted Jim to be the speaker with her. Both of them gave exceptional

talks. We were just amazed at Jim's ability to hold an audience in the *palm of his hand*. He had such a *presence* in front of people. We don't always see this side of Jim, so it was a wonderful experience for us



Jim getting ready for the Sixth Grade 50's Dance in Forestville, CA

when we did. Perhaps I'll say more about Jimmy and Lora when I write Lora's story, but right here I think I'll tell you what a wonderful and caring brother that Jim has been to Lora. This started from the day she was born and continues even now. He cared for her as she grew up and now he and Stephanie continue to watch her and help her when needed. This is the kind of sibling love that parents of big families are so thankful for--it's good for both the giver and the receiver.



Jimmy and Lora

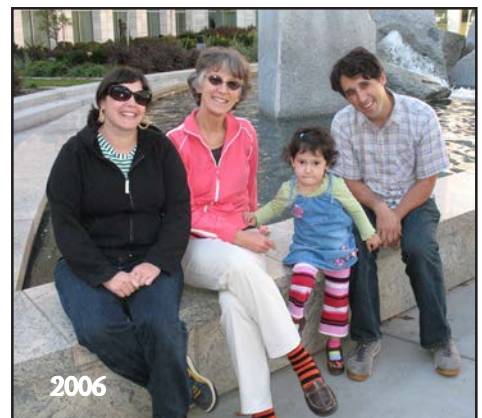
Jim was also the organist at church when we came home from New Zealand, so he continued to develop his musical skills. The only thing I know that Jim hates is finances! Wow, is he ever like Craig in this respect! Poor Stephanie and Robbyn.

When he got his first job, I don't think he even asked how much they would pay him. He was just glad to get the job. Jimmy has been a wonderful son to us. We love to be around him and watch his *magic* with the rest of the family and with

his own daughter Yve. He has shown us a great deal of love and respect. I probably respect him most for his ability to walk out of a room when there's gossip. He doesn't say anything to make the gossipers feel bad—he just simply walks out and doesn't become a part of it. I've been part of that gossiping sometimes, and I admire the way he teaches me to be better in this regard. He teaches by example. I love Jim so much!



Yve was my little shadow for six months before we left for New Zealand in 2004



“I Believe”

by *Jim Scribner*

10 December 2006

Yve,

I Believe,



I believe in the soul, that there is an eternal part of you and me that will not return to the dust.

I believe in a God, one with a love that extends to me and you.

I believe in poetry; the power of the right words in the right order.

I believe in love. That my love for you, my daughter, will last forever.

I believe in Zion. The world can find a way to connect and learn to love each other.

I believe in you Yve, that you will move mountains.

I love you,

Dad

11 June 1997

On March 25th Julia Corbin was baptized. . . I gave a talk in Sacrament meeting that went really well. I am really amazed at how God has helped me with my weaknesses and helped turn them into strengths. . . Julia asked me to confirm her. Well, to better explain this experience, I better back up to an experience I had in the MTC. I read a scripture in the MTC from the Book of Helaman, chapter 5, that describes how Nephi and Lehi were preaching, and how not only were they given the power to preach, but also given the words that they should say. I thought to myself, “Wow, isn’t that incredible—Nephi and Lehi were mouthpieces for the Lord. Because they were humble, diligent and obedient, the Lord gave them the power and the words.” I shared the scripture with my MTC class, and after I shared it, my teacher, Sister Hansen, promised me that I would have experiences like that. Well, that experience happened at Julia’s baptism. As I laid my hands on her head I began to speak. The words which I spoke were not mine. The Lord gave me power to speak and he gave me the words that I should say. I was really a unique special experience. I felt very close to the Lord that day.

I have been given so much. I am especially grateful for these two years I have been given to learn so many things. I know I’ll never have the opportunity again to concentrate all my efforts to the Lord’s work. What a unique time in my life. Mostly, I am grateful that I have grown so much closer to the Master. The Lord has played such a big part in my life, during these last sixteen months. I have come to know Him so much better.

He is so much to me. He's my Savior, Redeemer, the author of my salvation. He has given me the jewel of the Gospel and showed me the path to peace in this life and eternal life with him, my family, and loved ones. He has set the perfect example for me. He is a friend. He has allowed me to change my life, as I have learned to apply the Atonement to my life every day. He has given me His Spirit to lead, teach, enlighten, and comfort me. He has blessed me. I'm pretty far into debt, aren't I? But it's a good debt. It has humbled me.

July 1997

I feel so blessed to have been born to parents who have shown me exactly what it means to "take upon you the name of Christ." I wished I had learned to follow your example earlier, Mom and Dad. It seems like it takes me longer to learn important lessons that it takes most people. I'm blaming it all on Stickler's Syndrome.

... I have learned a lot about the importance of faith, prayer, trials, and endurance. I have learned a lot about my weaknesses ... but I'm trying to learn from my mistakes. I have learned that becoming a true disciple of Christ, and earnestly taking his name upon us is a life-long, every minute of the day process. ... a testimony is a living thing. It is either growing or receding, and that is really true. If you ever come to the point where you feel you can slack on building your testimony, you will lose what you have been given. ... When I think of Christ's statement, "*What manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am,*" I can easily get discouraged, but I am also reminded of my divine potential and it gives me hope. And fortunately He has given me a lot of help. I've been blessed with goodly parents, who love the Lord, a great mission president, the scriptures, the prophet, and most important, the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

March 1997

I asked Joe what he felt about his family and how he felt about being with them forever. He expressed to us how precious his family was to him, and how being with them forever is all he has ever wanted. His wife was brought to tears as she also expressed her great love of him and their children. The spirit was intense. I have never understood how the concept of eternal families is to people, and how much it means to me until that moment. My love for the Savior and his perfect plan of salvation grew immensely that night. There have been a few occasions on my mission where just for a moment, I am blessed with a small glimpse of eternity. This was one of those times. It's a hard feeling to explain. For just an instant, everything temporal and worldly disappears, and the only thing I feel/see are the things of eternity. I hope as I progress spiritually, that I will be able to feel that way more often. But even though these "*glimpses*" are few and far between, they are enough to let me know that the things we are teaching people re truth. Because of these feelings, I can say to people without any reservation, that God lives, and He loves us. That Jesus Christ lives, and he performed the Atonement for all those who will believe. I can say that I know Joseph Smith is the Prophet of the Restoration, and Gordon B. Hinckley stands at the head of the church as the Lord's Prophet, Seer, and Revelator. I know these things.

January 1997

... I can't remember if I told you, but before her last operation, we gave Judy a blessing. The doctors went in to check the tumor they had found, and it wasn't there anymore. The priesthood power is real, family. That's more evident to me now than it ever has been. I'm grateful that God has trusted us with such a great power. This has been such a neat experience. My testimony of the gospel is confirmed many times every day.

December 18, 1996

I can't wait to see what the next year holds. So many great experiences yet to be had. It even might be worth not being with my family on Christmas. That's going to be a little hard. I'll miss Dad walking around with the video camera, adding his cheesy commentary. And all of our Christmas traditions. I love you all.

Jim (Elder Scribner)

“Why I Believe”

by *Stephanie Brooke Miller*

26 November 2006

Dear Yve,

Grandma is composing her life history and has asked us, her kids by blood and by marriage, to write a statement/letter to our kids regarding “Why I Believe.” So here it is-- “Why I Believe.” Well, I can’t address that question until I define what I believe in. Here is a short list of what I believe. I believe there is a God, our Heavenly Father, and that he has a begotten son, Jesus Christ. I believe that we have a Heavenly Mother and that our Heavenly parents watch over us. I believe in the saving grace of Christ’s atonement. I believe that you and I are daughters of our Heavenly Father, and that everyone is a child of God and should be treated as such. I believe that the doctrines of Christ’s gospel change lives. I believe that we must love and forgive everyone. I believe that God created/set things in motion to create this world we live in. I believe in our free agency, that it is a gift from God to allow us to make our own choices to progress in life. I believe in eternal progression; that besides becoming a disciple in Christ, it is every human being’s principle duty to become better—physically, spiritually, mentally and emotionally. I believe in the importance of families and our duty to each other.

Now, to address Grandma’s topic, “Why I Believe.” Why do I believe these things? Well, some of it is simple in my mind and some of it is complex. Although it is hard for me at times to fathom the existence of a God because I have not seen him, I know he exists. I just have to look at the beauty of the earth or to the relationship I have with my siblings or into your beautiful face to know. I could only have these things if there was a God. I don’t believe that such happiness could exist in my life if there was no God. Not only that, but I have felt his presence as well as the presence of His son, my Savior. He has healed me and comforted me when I’ve needed it; burdens have been lifted, which could be by chance, but I know throughout the depths of my soul that they weren’t by chance, that it was by the power of God.

I believe God hears our prayers and answers them. When you were seven months old you had a bladder infection, which turned into a kidney infection. The infections seemed to have become chronic and there was concern that you may have reflux, meaning your urinary system wasn’t working correctly. Well we had to go to San Francisco, California, to have tests run on you. And to our amazement and the doctor’s, everything was fine; no damage had happened to your kidneys. It was a miracle. I know that you were healed by the prayers of your grandparents, aunts, uncles and by us, your parents. There is no other explanation in my mind.

So how can I not believe, especially when you see things so simply? You love so freely; you care for everyone and everything. You even care about the mean things, like the troll under the bridge in the Billy Gruffs story. One night you and Dad were talking about the story and how the troll gets washed down the river. Well you told Dad not worry because Jesus will save the troll and he won’t die. It was such a matter of fact statement, which came completely from your brain. They were your words, not ours. We have talked to you about Jesus but not about his true power. Your spirit, faith and trust underscore my belief.

Although I lack faith in some doctrines and principles in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and question a lot of things, there is one thing I never question and that is that Jesus Christ is my Redeemer, and *that*



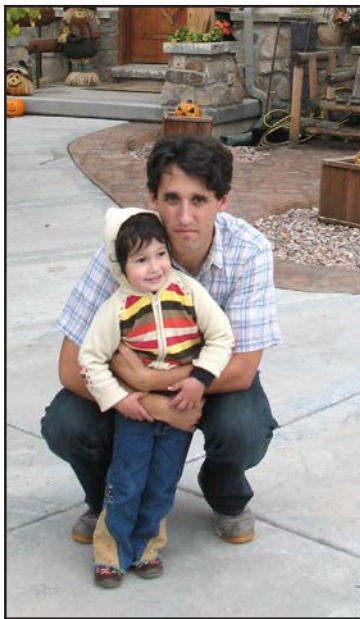
He died for me and for you, and for everyone. I know that Christ walked this earth and that He lives now. It is because of my belief of Christ that I believe the things I believe. I believe his teachings. I believe that Christ can change lives. I believe He is a part of us.

Yve, I love you with all my heart. You have changed my life in a way I never thought could happen. You are my joy and my light. I feel God's presence when I am with you. You are my beautiful angel sent from God to make my life better and to help me learn about the love our Heavenly Parents have for us, and the sacrifice they have made, as well as the love and sacrifices of my parents. I love you.

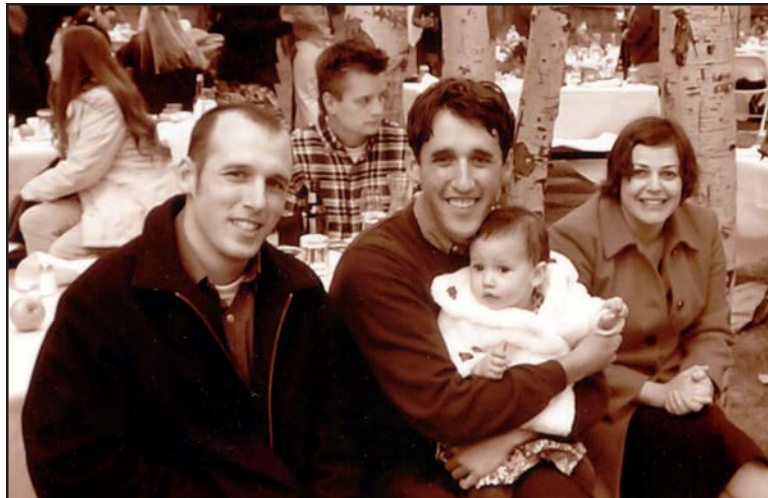
And without any further rambling that's your small insight into my soul.

Love, your mom,

Stephanie



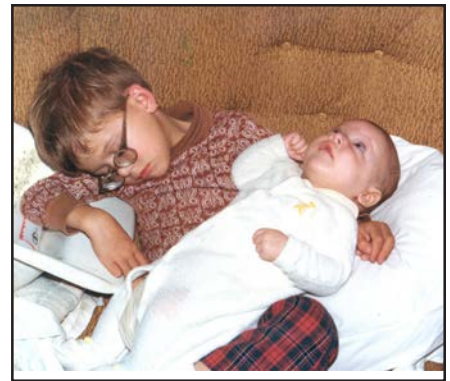
Jim and Yve



Spencer
Jim
Yve
Stephanie



Craig and Jimmy



Scotty and Jimmy



Spencer, Jim and Stephanie
with nieces and nephews



Jimmy
Doug
Scotty
Craig

Spencer John Scribner

You'd think after all this writing that I wouldn't have anything left to say about these last two children. However, never you fear because I still have a lot to say. I could write and write about Spencer and never get past the first two years. He provided a truly eventful set of experiences for the whole family! Never was there a child like this one.



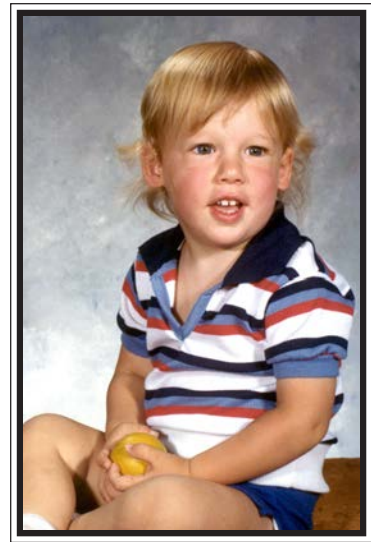
To begin with, he was so darn cute. I don't know if I just kept getting *softer* with each child, but Spencer just got under my skin. Just looking at his cute little face would delight me immensely. He had a low little voice, but he didn't use it very often. As a child, he was a *man of few words*, but if you asked him a question and the answer was "yes," he would just lower his chin once and at the same time would blink both of his eyes. Oh, I can still see this as if it were yesterday. He was chubby and like a teddy bear and was so strong. Not just Doug and me, but everyone in the family was so crazy about this little man/child in our family.



After he learned how to walk, he would manage to crawl out of his bed and crawl in with us every single morning. We'd always wake up with him in bed with us, never really knowing for sure when he got there. And like I said, he was so darn cute, how could we have turned him away? That brings me straight to Spencer's sleeping habits. I wonder if it



would be very far off if I said that less than fifty percent of his sleeping time was spent in his own bed. In high school, he fell asleep on the couch most of the time, or else he'd be doing homework on the floor in the boys' room and just sleep on the floor. As a baby, we found him asleep in many strange places. I went in to check him one night and he had crawled out of his crib and was asleep on top of the dresser. Another time on the top bunk, and yet another on top of the desk. Most nights we would read him a story, hear his prayers, put him to bed and close the door, telling him to stay in there



and go to sleep. However, we always left a pillow by the door. Inevitably, he would get out and fall asleep on the floor right next to the door. Some nights we'd have a hard time opening the door so we could pick him up and put him in his bed. Another time I remember, he crawled up on the back ledge of the car (an old fashioned car that had ledges behind the back seat) and fell asleep. Perhaps the funniest one was when he was outside with the older boys, and while they were folding newspapers, he fell sound asleep right on the driveway in the middle of the pile of papers.

Oh, there's so much to tell about Spencer. Maybe I'll go back to his birth—or even a little before that. Doug was serving as Bishop at the time of Spencer's birth on the 12th of July 1978. Ralph Hoyal and Bill Ashton were his two counselors. Nine months earlier all three couples decided to go on a retreat up the coast to Mendocino and stay at Heritage House. It's a pretty romantic place. Mona Lisa and I came back pregnant



Grandma James

(Pat Ashton was already a couple of months pregnant). So there we were every Sunday in Church, the three pregnant wives of the Bishopric—all sitting on the back rows taking care of the fifteen children between us. The three of us became closest of friends—after all, we spent every Sunday walking the halls together during Sacrament meetings. To this day, Mona Lisa has never forgiven me because Spencer arrived three weeks early and Markie arrived three weeks late, so there's six weeks difference in their ages! Nevertheless, for several years these two boys were like glue—wonderful friends.

We later realized that a kidney infection probably caused my labor with Spencer to start early. He was very small when he was born, and went down to just five pounds and five ounces before he started gaining. He also had breathing problems for about two days. I didn't get to take care of him in the hospital because I was burning up with fever caused from some raging infection. I would go from chills and shaking to burning fevers. When the fevers broke I would drench the bed with perspiration. But when I was shaking, they'd have to bring heated blankets to get me warm. They didn't know what was causing the infection so they gave me some high-powered shots, probably some form of penicillin, that would hopefully attack any infection. I'll never forget those shots. The serum was so thick that it took about forty-five seconds for the shot to be fully ministered into me (in the bottom). Oh man, I could just feel it going into my body and working its way through my veins—it was so painful that I just dreaded the thought of it every time I saw them coming with that needle! But it did the trick. My labor with Spencer was also the longest I had experienced—it wasn't painful at all (until the last ten minutes), but just longer. Frankly, he just wasn't ready to come. But come he did. And our lives were never the same.



A few other incidents happened before Spencer was born. When I was almost six months' pregnant, we took a group of young people to Salt Lake City, and miraculously were able to see the Prophet Spencer W. Kimball in the room where he meets with the Twelve Apostles. It was a highly spiritual experience. Anyway, he was shaking all the hands, but as he shook my hand, he also touched my stomach and smiled. That was one of the reasons Spencer was given his name. Another reason was quite interesting. Craig, only eight years old, was saying the blessing on the breakfast, and after the usual things said, *“Please bless us that we will love our prophet as much as the Nephites loved their prophet.”*



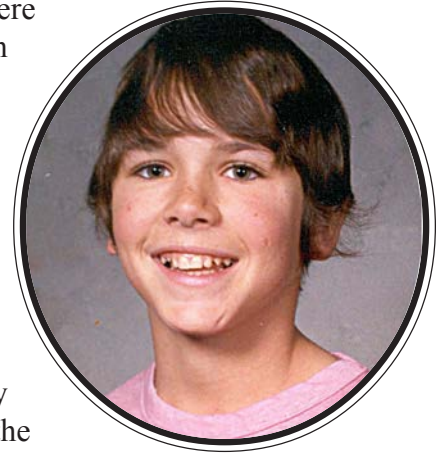
Well, our eyes popped open in amazement, and Doug said to Craig, *“What did you mean, when you said that in your prayer? How do you know they loved Nephi so much?”*

Craig answered, *“They loved him because after he died, they named all the leaders after him—I Nephi, II Nephi and others.”*

It was that simple. So we asked Craig, *“Then how can we love our prophet that much?”*

He said, *“We can name our new baby after him—Spencer.”*

So that was that. Again, it seemed that all indications were telling us we were going to have another boy. So we thought of the name that should go with *Spence*. My brother Tom had lost his son Johnny just a year and a half after Joyce had lost her son Danny. Jimmy carries *Danny's* name, and we wanted Spencer to carry *Johnny's*. *Johnny* was an amazing young man at the time of his death. He was a horse lover just like his dad, and the two of them were together all the time—taking care of the horses or riding in parades with full Arabian costumes. He was the kind of boy that would get up early in the morning and with his dad's snowplow, would go up and down the street and clear the snow from all the neighbor's driveways. I could tell you endless stories about this young man. He also was daring like most fourteen-year-olds, and one day at school he was playing with a toy that required a little gunpowder to get *a second life* out of it. All the other boys' toys worked when they lit the fuse, but Johnny's didn't. He picked it up, and it exploded, and a piece of shrapnel cut right into the artery of his heart. He bled to death in less than five minutes. Johnny



was a good boy with a beautiful face and the longest eyelashes you've ever seen. We were anxious to have another boy so we could give him Johnny's name.



Spencer never received a patriarchal blessing like the other children did, but I happened to take notes when his father gave him a father's name and blessing after he was born. Doug blessed him that he'd grow up with a knowledge of the Savior and that he'd pattern his life after the Savior's. To me there's already been some fulfillment of that blessing. First of all, I think of the second great commandment that the Savior gave: "*Love thy neighbor as thyself.*" And I also think of the story of the Good Samaritan in the New Testament. Spencer has been able, over the years, to gather friends from all walks of life. He's faithful to those friends. He seeks them out. He spends time with them, and gives them of his energy. He sacrifices for them.

Friendships are everything to Spencer. His own brothers and sisters are his good friends, as are all the nephews and nieces. They all love to be around him. He has friends that travel to San Diego to surf with him and spend time at his home. Somehow, he has made them all feel welcome. I'll admit that there have been times when I've felt jealous of some of those friends because of the time they shared with Spencer. We love to be around him as well. But years and years ago we had to accept the fact that Spencer wasn't just for us. He seems to belong to a lot of people.

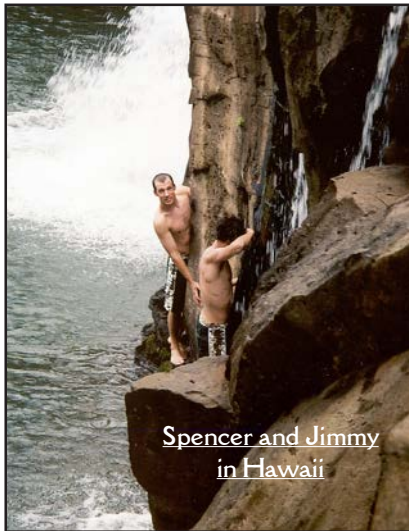


Markie Hoyal, Spencer, Matt and Jonner McOmer

His first close relationship started when he was about two or three years old with Markie Hoyal. These two little boys loved to be together. Mark was either at our house playing with Spencer and Jim, or Spencer was at his house—we figured they knew each other in the pre-existence and were only separated for those six weeks before Markie was born. One day I needed Mona Lisa to watch him. She said to bring him over, but she couldn't be there. Her housecleaner was there and could watch them. I remember feeling a little uneasy at the time. I left them

for a little while and then suddenly got nervous. I went back to their house to check on them, but the housecleaner who spoke only Spanish couldn't communicate exactly where they were. She first of all gave a story of them being upstairs, but I searched and they weren't there. Then she said *Grandpa* came by and picked them up, but I drove up to the farm, and they weren't there. Now I was panicked, and called Mona and Ralph at work so they could get home immediately.

Olga's story kept changing. As it was, she simply had not watched the boys, and they wandered off. We called the police. We searched everywhere. I remember we called Reed Ogden from work to communicate in Spanish with this girl. Ralph Hoyal put on some jogging clothes and started running. He found them! They had wandered all the way down to the Brush Creek and were standing right in the middle of the creek under the bridge with water up to their chests! They were only three or four years old and could've drowned so easily. We were just crying when he brought them home because we had searched everywhere. Also because of Olga's continually changing stories, we were more afraid that someone had come by and kidnapped the children.



Spencer and Jimmy
in Hawaii

Well, Spencer was never afraid of water. We were camping up at Richardson's Grove by the Eel River when Spencer was only two years old.

All day long he would stand by the river and throw rocks in it. He just didn't want to leave the water. And sure enough, he's been in water a lot of his life. He surfed a lot in the ocean here where we live, and he went to Cal Poly for his university work where he was able to surf those waters. He then got his Masters Degree down at San Diego State and now works in San Diego where he again can surf to his heart's delight. While we were in New Zealand, Spencer came to visit us for a few days, but I'm afraid a good friend and the ocean near the town of Raglan on the West Coast of New Zealand



Matt McOmber and Spencer

got most of his attention. We understand that some of the best surf in the world can be at this very beach Spencer was at. However, he has yet to explore *Surfer's Paradise* in Australia. Doug and I were there in 2001, and it is truly magnificent water. We were swimming in it by 8:00 in the morning, and it was very warm. No wonder the sharks like it!

A surf board isn't the only kind of board that Spencer can get attached to. In the wintertime he loves to snowboard, and as a teenager he was always on a skate board. He was made for the outdoors. These sports have always been important to Spencer. Another sport that Spencer really loves is soccer. In case you can't tell from all I've said about Spencer so far, he's got his own spot on that personality chart of ours. He's a *Driver-Driver!* You can see it when he's out on the field playing soccer. His attention never leaves the game. He pushes himself as well as keeping his teammates focused as well. It's fun to watch him play. He, Jimmy and Gina were our strong soccer players when they were young but now Craig is playing it as well. Craig also loves basketball, Russ is very good at racketball and Scott was always a strong swimmer. The girls wore themselves out on the dance floors. But Spencer has this big variety of sports that he loves.



Spencer, Jimmy and Christy

We were aware of this extreme *drive* and *determination* in him when he was very young. The *terrible twos* with Spencer were truly TERRIBLE!

We called him the *Destroying Angel*, because he was in fact, an angel to us that we all loved more than words could describe. The *destroying* part, you will now hear about! In my mind he was a *life-saver* for Russ because Russ was about fourteen-years-old when Spencer entered this memorable age of two. A fourteen-year-old finds it hard sometimes to give love and to receive love, but all these feelings of love Russ could express with Spencer better than anyone else. There was a real bond between them just as there was with Gina and Jim and then later with Jim and Lora. There wasn't anything that Russ wouldn't do for Spencer. But suddenly a door slammed so hard and so loud that our house actually shook. I ran into the dining room and was furious with Russ for being so out of control. What on earth could have caused him to lose his cool like that? So in answer to our big "*why?*" as we angrily glared at Russ, he said,

"Would you rather I have kicked Spencer?"

We didn't question anymore. We understood and were quite thankful that Russ only loosened all the joints in the house by slamming the door instead of *killing* Spencer. It was a wise trade-off. You see, Russ came into the room and Spencer had one of Russ' cats and was choking him to death! But you just can't kick (or kill) a two-year-old no matter how bad his behavior—especially when he appears to be quite innocent in nature. This incident was just one of a big series of incidents that I will now tell you about because at this point in this book, we could all use some entertainment. We can all smile now. . . but we weren't all smiling back then. . .

Just a few weeks before this happened to Russ, I also came into the dining room and to my dismay, Spencer had climbed up on the table and managed to empty all of my hundreds of slides. They were all over the table and floor. I had spent a week putting them in order by correct dates, events, etc, and was so thrilled to have this project finished. I just sat down and cried.



I don't remember the order that these incidents took place, but I'll tell you at least three of them, which are definitely unforgettable. We left our kids with Wendy Jorissen for a about five days. She was a responsible girl, and we trusted her. Nevertheless, we gave her a warning and repeated it a few times.

“Whatever you do, don't take your eyes off Spencie for more than five minutes at a time!”

Well, the very first day we called to check, and we heard of the disaster. Spencer went upstairs for five minutes, and Wendy hurried to check on him, and he was coming out of our bedroom and crawling backwards down the steps. *“Whew, everything was okay,”* she thought. Then several more minutes went by and she noticed water coming out of the ceiling in the dining room right where the chandelier was connected. She ran upstairs and found that in those five minutes that Spencer was gone, he'd gone into my bathroom, plugged the sink and turned the water on. He wasn't being malicious, but was just playing with gadgets, I suppose. The bad part about all this was that we had just put new carpet throughout the house. It wasn't even a week old. Well, that took some work and expense to fix.



The reason we had decided to put in new carpet also had quite a bit to do with Spencer. He was in the kitchen and pushed a chair up to the counter. He climbed on the chair and reached for a bottle of honey. He turned it up side down (at least a quart of honey) so he could drink it, I guess, and of course it poured all over him—and the chair and the garbage sack (full of garbage). He dropped the bottle, and with honey dripping off him, he started to walk out of the kitchen, then

down the hall, then into the boys' room. As usual, the older boys could never resist picking Spencer up and playing with him. So Craig was first to welcome Spencer into the room and pick him up. He immediately realized that honey was all over Spencer, so what did he do? Of course, he threw on the bed to get rid of him. So honey was all over the kitchen, all over the carpet, all over the boys' room and all over the bedspread. We cleaned and cleaned and could never fully get rid of all the stickiness out of the carpet. Thus, the decision to recarpet the place!

For such a little tyke, Spencer had this reputation! My worst moment was ahead of me. It was the morning of the Sunday that Doug was going to be released as Bishop of the Santa Rosa First Ward. Doug was already at meetings, so I was trying to get everyone dressed and ready and looking



perfect, so our last impression as a Bishop’s family would be positive. I got Spencer ready first, and then told the older kids to keep an eye on him. I had breakfast on the table so they could each eat before we left. Finally I was ready and called them all upstairs for family prayer so we could go. They all obediently came, but someone was missing! You guessed it. Spencer. Our eyes all just looked at each other, and together we panicked and started running in all directions in order to find him. Unbelievable! He had crawled on the kitchen table, was sitting in the middle with a gallon of milk poured out, the sugar poured out and the cherrios poured out. I called up Mona Lisa and asked her to come pick up my children for church, and she said,

“Why? This is the big day. What are you doing?”

And I very calmly said, *“What do you think I’m doing? I’m busy washing my kitchen floor in my black velvet skirt—that’s what!”*

Then Mona Lisa sighed, *“Oh, Spencer. I’ll be right there.”*

Well, those are times never to be forgotten. A huge part of Spencer’s young life was spent in Scotland—his first years of school. This is where he and Jim learned to play soccer with determination because they had to play in snow and rain (but not ice). Nothing stopped soccer practices or games in Scotland. At a later time, I will write much more extensively about our life in Scotland, but I can’t tell about Spencer’s life without some reference to our time there. Perhaps the best thing I can do is let Spencer explain this himself. He’s a very good writer, and for a high school assignment wrote the following description of a part of his life in Scotland. This you will enjoy!



Ratho School Basketball Team

The Journey

by *Spencer Scribner*

The cold, brisk wind blew gently on my red, shivering face as I waited for my brother to come out with our lunches. Jim was eight years old and I was barely six. Our house stood at the entrance of the little town of Ratho. It was on a hill right next to the old Church, which in Scotland is called a kirk.



Jimmy, Spencer, Christy

So the name of our house was Kirkton-hill, meaning the house on the hill by the kirk.



It was a warm house, but once we stepped outside, we were reminded once again that we were no longer in California. Jimmy came running outside with the lunch sacks. Once they were put in both of our gray, plain backpacks, we started down the driveway.



The driveway from our house was a long one that ended at a dark steel gate. We walked with our hands tucked tightly inside our pockets and our heads hidden behind the warmth of our heavy jackets to keep the freezing wind from hitting our warm skin. Underneath our jackets were our official school uniforms which consisted of dull, gray pants, a plain white collared shirt, and black and yellow striped tie.

Once we passed through the gate, we began our every day journey up to school. The weather was dark, cold and bleak, but we were used to it because there was seldom any sunshine during the fall and winter months in Scotland.

The journey started at the bottom of the hill where we had to first walk over an old stone bridge that crossed over a deep canal that ran all the way down from the city of Edinburgh to the city of Glasgow. After we conquered the climb over the bridge, we started through the gravel parking lot of the Bridge Inn, where the wind had begun to pick up quite abruptly.

Pushing on up through the gravel, we finally had reached the final stage of our journey—the dreaded ice fields. By then the wind was at full force against our frail bodies. We looked up nervously and headed up the field of ice, puddles and frosty grass. Our heavy boots sunk deep into the icy mud puddles, as water seeped through the small cracks and soaked our socks.

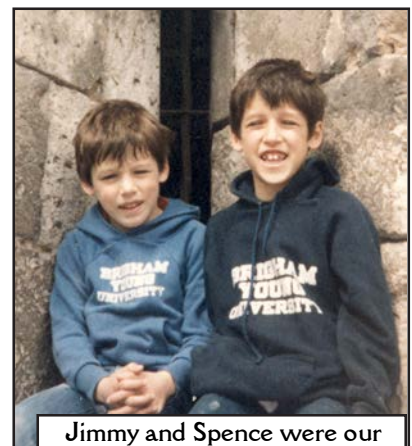
No words were exchanged between Jim and me, for fear of losing concentration on our footing. One simple thought drove us on, “There would be warmth and protection in the building after we arrived.”

We came upon the first ice patch and slowed down. We had found out the hard way that crossing patches too fast would surely result in a bruised arm or a sore leg. But even going extra slow, we still couldn't overcome the combination of what then seemed like gale force winds and slick ice. I would usually get blown down first, but Jim would usually follow. We both went stumbling down to the stiff, frozen ground, groping at each other's jackets, which only resulted in a much harder fall.



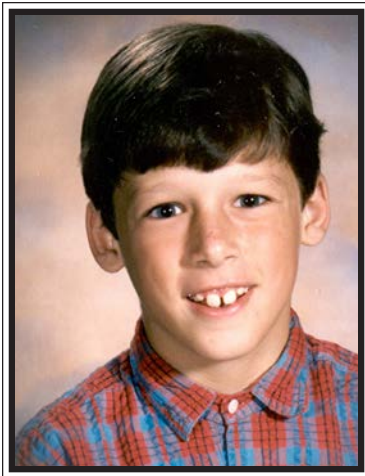
After several falls and recoveries, we trekked up what seemed to be a never-ending path. We could see our big yellow home from where we were, but the memory of the warmth inside was gone. We reached the home stretch of the icy terrain, a steep slick hill. In order to get up the hill safely, we had to grab on to branches of trees and pull ourselves up. Finally we reached the end

*of our escapade and for a brief moment, we were overcome with joy and pride, only to have these feelings cut short by the dismal realization we had arrived at the one place we least desired to be—**SCHOOL!!!!***

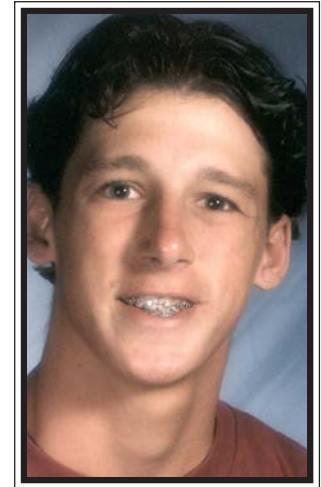


Jimmy and Spence were our “little boys” and were always together in each other's pictures!

Now it's time to tell you how I would describe Spencer today. I've spent all this time writing about him as a little child, and yes, I could go on with more stories, but Spencer is not a little child anymore. Twenty-eight-years-old this year! Wow, where does all the time go? As with all of my children, I can only describe Spencer to you now only as I see him. Perhaps you would write a different story. He, like some



of the others, has brought me many nights to my knees in prayer with Heavenly Father. When he was little, it was for his safety. I never did tell you about the many times he was saved in dangerous situations, but I did tell you about the one time he and Mark Hoyal wandered away. That was just one incident as a young child. As a teenager, the dangers continued and I prayed so often (in fact, continually) for his safety. Spencer followed a different *drummer* sometimes—different from what I wanted. I can actually say that was the case with most of my children at different times in their lives—and still is. All the *same* influences, the *same* shared spiritual family experiences, the *same* diet, the *same* summer vacations, *equal* amounts of love and macaroni and cheese, the *same* family friends, the *same* dance lessons in the kitchen, the *same* recorded music playing all the time on the tape player, and the *same* silly songs sung together for hours and hours as we traveled back and forth to Utah, sharing the *same* family traditions—yet, all of my children sought for happiness in their own different ways. And some have even found it.



What I used to say about Russ, I could also say about Spencer: ***“You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink.”*** In the pre-existence, there were two plans offered before the great war in heaven. One was Lucifer's plan to force each child back to Heavenly Father's presence, and thus Lucifer would be granted all the glory. The second was the plan of the Savior's—to give each of Heavenly Father's children his own moral agency, which is the ability to choose for himself. Was it wrong as a mother to sometimes (just

sometimes) think that Lucifer's plan wasn't so bad after all? How often I wanted to force my children to see things that were so clear for me to see. I've cried often for all of my children at different times. I thought this *sameness* in influences would keep them on the path that I wanted them to go on because I was convinced that my path would bring them the greatest happiness.

Well, I've said all this because I need to tell you that raising Spencer has taught me more about myself and about life than I was ready for. I found that love is a powerful force that continues no matter what choices our loved ones make. And despite the different route that Spencer took, I love him and appreciate the supreme amount of goodness that is in him. He chose faithfulness to friends, which is such a good quality. Friends like Eric Wood, Matt McOmer, Matt Davis and Brian Mead—it's been fun to see the fine men these boys have all become, just as Spencer has done.



Eric Wood, Matt Davis, Spence, Jim, Matt McOmer

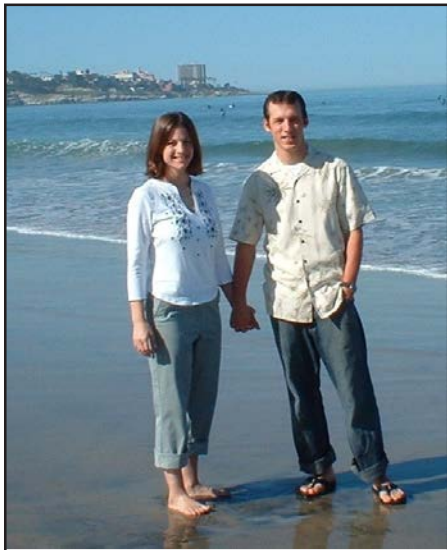
Spencer makes sure these friends stay active in his life, even though they've followed quite divergent paths. There are others, but these are the four I know the best. His friendship with Jimmy is still very close. When they're together, I still think of them as the *little boys*. They're still silly and fun and full of good times and puzzles when they're together, and we all like to be a part of this relationship. Spencer went with us to Tennessee to pick Jim up from his mission. That was a really good trip together!

Because of Spencer's great drive and determination, he applied and was accepted to Cal Poly's School of Electrical Engineering, and during that time of schooling also managed to fit in the required hours of surfing and snowboarding! I'm sure it was exciting for Doug to have one of his sons follow in his footsteps as an electrical engineer.



Gina, Spencer, Lisa

Spencer graduated from Cal Poly on December 15, 2001. After some time of discouragement with job-searching Spencer went on for his Masters Degree in EE at San Diego State and received that degree in 2005. We were on our mission in New Zealand at this time, but Spencer didn't go to his graduation, so alas, no pictures. During that time of schooling he also was dating Lisa Castro. They went together for several years and finally were married in the Catholic Church at Pleasanton in May 2004.



It was exciting to us a year earlier when they announced their engagement, but at the same time—in fact, almost the same week—Doug and I received a call to serve as directors of a visitors' center somewhere. Elder Didier was the General Authority who issued that call to us, and we explained to him that we had a son that would be getting married while we were on our mission. Well, most of the visitors' centers are in the United States, and Elder Didier said,

“No problem—you can easily leave the Center and fly to the wedding for a couple of days and fly right back.”

Three months later we found out that we were being called to the visitors' center that was furthest away from the United States as you can get—New Zealand. It was no longer an option for both of us to come, but I was able to leave for a week while Doug kept things under control in New Zealand. Those things that had to be kept *under control* will be described at a later date when we tell about our wonderful two years in the Land of the Long White Cloud—Aotearoa (New Zealand).

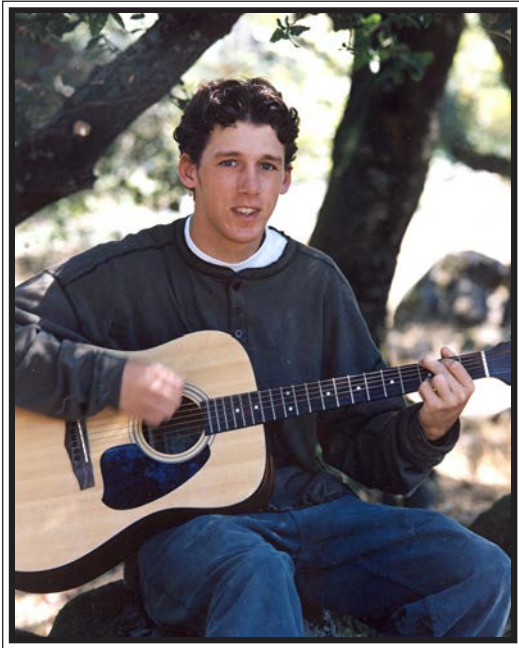


I almost felt like an *outsider looking in* at the wedding. Now I know what my mother felt like when she flew home for my wedding while my dad stayed in Australia when they were in the middle of their mission. I was basically alone in planning my own wedding, and Spencer and Lisa had to do everything without any of our help. As you can see from these pictures, they really didn't need our help because they were so capable of taking care of all the details themselves. As an *outsider* I looked at Spencer that day, and all I could think of was how blessed I was to have him as a son. He was sooooo handsome!! Everyone, except Christy and Rob, were there for his wedding. Christy was in the hospital trying to keep hold of those twins who were trying to be born too early. Again, all the brothers and Lora sang a *wedding song* to Spencer and Lisa. It was most definitely, *Oh, What a Feeling!* Another great memory. Lisa's a great addition to our family. I don't feel like I knew her much before this year, but I love being around her and talking with her.

Spencer and Lisa became parents this year to Myles John Scribner. He's a happy, strong and fast-learning little boy, and they are both such good parents. Spencer has had years of practice with nephews and nieces, and Myles is never lacking for attention from him. He gives it in every way he can. He can now join the ranks of *great fathers* that seem to be quite prevalent in our family.



Spencer, like all the other boys in the family, was part of the music program at Santa Rosa High. He's a good singer, and again I'll say that my biggest thrills in this life have been listening to my boys sing together. (Have I actually said that before?) Lora loves to sing with them. Spencer advanced fairly well on the piano, but he quit lessons and started teaching himself the guitar. He's very good on the guitar. He loves music.



All the boys are great with children, but when Spencer comes home to visit, the nieces and nephews can hardly wait. It's easy to see why. As soon as he enters the house, he's on the floor playing with them--rolling and laughing--and the kids are having the time of their lives. He'll be there a long time before he finally comes in and says "hello" to the rest of us!

One last thing that I must mention about Spencer. He has always been a very hard worker. He's creative as well. We have many things around our home that he's fixed, worked on and created, such as the pond and the playground in our backyard. He liked to earn the money, but at the same time, we always got a lot of work for the money. He's untiring and is a good finisher. He never left a job undone. His last achievement has been some extensive remodeling that he's done in his own home that they purchased in San Diego. Spencer's a wonderful kid! A wonderful son! He is definitely his own person. I have a great amount of love for him.

No poem for Spence? How can that be?
Well, of course, there's no poem –
He's not yet thirty-three.

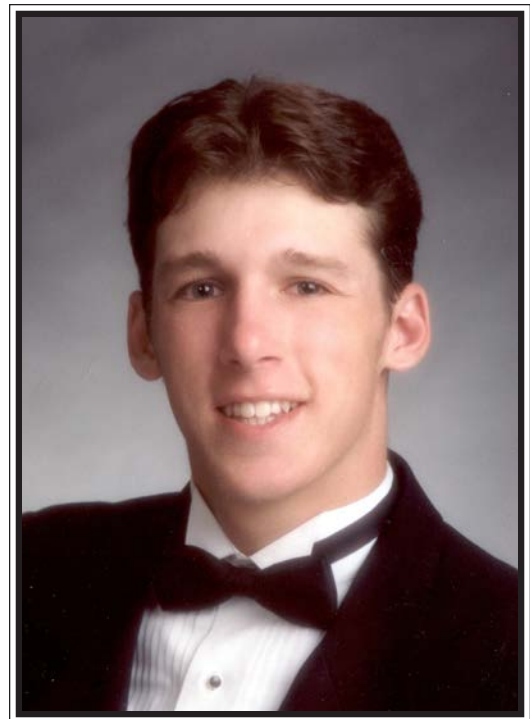
At age thirty-three I'll write such a tale
Of trips to far lands
Of this super strong male

But if I should wait 'til he's fifty and one
I'll tell of his kids
Ten gals and one son

The years add a lot—the stories get longer
The rhymes make them sound
A hundred times stronger

But should I not live to write this all down
I'll just take this chance to firmly expound
How much I love Spence at age twenty-eight
I'll take him *as is* –'cuz I think he is great!

All my love, *Mom*



“What Is Important To Me”

by *Spencer Scribner*

December 10, 2006

Myles,

I just wanted to write you a few things to let you know how important you are to me, and how grateful I am that you are a part of my family. That family is more than just me and your mother, but your grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins also. Can you believe that I grew up with three sisters and four brothers? I am the second to youngest among my siblings, which meant that I took a lot of flack from my older brothers and sisters. That is okay because we were just young kids, but as we’ve grown up, the sibilng rivalries have turned into respect, friendship and love for one another. I have found this to be a great source of comfort in my life to know that I have family that loves me for who I am. I hope you can grow up and feel like you can always turn to me for anything, and know that you can talk to me about anything. My life has been far from perfect and chances are if you are having a problem with something, I probably had a similar problem when I was your age. I’m going to love you no matter what, and there is nothing that is going to change that.

Growing up isn’t always the easiest thing, and there are a lot of hard choices to make. I hope you have the courage to stand up in what you believe in, and find friends who will help you keep your beliefs, not put them down. I have been lucky enough to have held on to a few close friends who have helped me, and have had great influences on me throughout my life. One of the things that has been important in my life is to not be judgemental of others. It is so easy to dismiss others that don’t talk the same way, or have the same beliefs as you do. I want you to keep your mind open to different points of view and make your own decisions, and I will do my part by trying to be a positive influence in your life.

I hope you always remember to be positive and laugh a lot. You are such a happy kid right now and you can’t believe how much your laughing and giggling warms me up. I’ve always felt I had a good sense of humor, and been a pretty laid back person. I’ve always loved to brighten other’s moods and create relaxed environments. You are going to find that there are lots of people out in the world whose lives you can make better just by making them smile or laugh. I actually got voted class clown in high school. How silly is that?



Well it is late, and your Grandma wants this letter tonight,

I love you tons.

Dad.



“Why I Believe”

by *Lisa Scribner*

December 12, 2006

Dear Myles,

Grandma Scribner asked each of her children and their spouses to write about “Why I believe.” She asked me to write something spiritual so that someday you would read my passage. As

I thought about this statement I realized that I did not have a quick answer. Furthermore, it was difficult for me to put my ideas and thoughts about my faith into writing. The reason was not because I do not believe in anything. The reason was that I seldom questioned my faith. I never needed to have clear-cut examples of why I believed. I simply believed in my Catholic faith. When I thought about my unquestioned faith it occurred to me that my spiritual background is very different from your dad’s faith. Your dad questioned his faith and Mormon religion early on.



Both Catholic and Mormon religions have some of the same building blocks. Faith, hope and charity seem to abound in both religions. In fact, many of the principles in each religion stem from these aspects. You are being raised in a family where I practiced Catholicism and your dad and his family practiced the Mormon religion. Because of this difference, I thought it would be important for you to understand my feelings about Catholicism and my feelings about raising you to be a religious individual. Your dad and I discussed the fact that you will be exposed to both the Catholic and Mormon religions. In the end, we will allow you to make your own decision about the religion of your choice based on the teachings you will have received.

I was raised Catholic from infancy on. I was baptized when I was just a newborn baby. I started attending religious education as a preschooler and continued through high school. My siblings and I went to mass every Sunday. My religious education classes instilled in me a strong faith in God and his goodness and forgiveness. I learned that if we believed in God and led a good life then we would enter heaven. My classes taught me to treat others just as I wanted to be treated. Our teachers also stressed the fact that we are human and as humans we would make mistakes. I was taught that God would forgive us if we were truly sorry for our sins. As a young child, I never questioned the fundamental teachings that I learned because I truly believed in them.

I am thankful that I was raised a Catholic because my religion has been a positive influence on my life. I hope and pray that I will be able to expose you to similar spiritual teachings that will have a positive influence on your life.

When your father and I were engaged I told him that it was important for me to be married in my Catholic Church. One of the requirements of being married in a Catholic church was for us to answer some questions about our religions and faith and then talk about our answers to a priest. The purpose of these questions and answers was for the priest to point out and discuss with us any potential problems that might occur in our marriage.

During our discussion with our priest your dad stated that he practiced the tenants of Christianity, which the Catholics and Mormons adhere to, but he does not want the structure of a church. Your dad agreed to have our children raised Catholic because it was important to me. However, your dad believes an individual has the right to question his religion and the individual may choose not to practice that religion. I agreed that this was okay with me.

Myles, you will have a strong influence of Catholicism from me and a strong influence of the Mormon religion from the Scribner family. Both religions are good and solid. Your dad and I agreed that we would support you in practicing the faith of your choice.

Myles, your dad and I love you very much and we want the best for you. We will guide you in spirituality but ultimately the decision is yours to make.

Love, *Mom*



Lisa, Spencer, Myles, Grandma and Grandpa



Grandma with Myles



Spencer, Grandpa James, Jimmy



Jimmy, Spencer and Scott at
Russ' Wedding 1990

Lora Michelle Scribner

Today is the 5th of December 2006—that’s right, we’re celebrating another birthday—Lora’s. She’s twenty-three this year, and I do believe I have a lot of wonderful things to say about her—twenty-three years’ worth. Everybody wants to spell her name differently, but *LORA* is an old-fashioned spelling. She was named after *Lora Howard*, who was my mother’s youngest sister. I never met her because she died when she was only twenty-three years old. I can’t even imagine how painful that would’ve been for her mother, father, brothers and sisters. Just a year before she died, Lora Howard had lost her sister Winnie, and the year before that they had lost their brother Alan. All three died of tuberculosis. In America, in the thirties, this disease was running in epidemic proportions, and



no one really knew how to stop it or keep it from spreading. I like everything I’ve ever heard about Lora Howard. After her siblings had died, and knowing that she too had this dreadful disease, she came to her mother and said,

“You know, Mother, don’t you, that I’m not afraid to die.”

My own mother Lucie James came to help Grandma Howard take care of Lora in her sickness. Both of them had a dream that night that Grandma Howard’s mother (Grandma Sears) had come to get Lora, so before they even went into her bedroom to check, they both knew she was gone. In the top drawer of her dresser they found the following poem:

All you who know me well, when I am dead
Look upon my quiet face that laughed the while it lived.
Restrain your tears and give instead,
A gentle word, an understanding smile.
Oh, if you really love me, do not cry
To see me lying there, my laughter stilled.
Surely you know that I can never die;
I, for whom every day is strangely filled
With some sweet happiness. Gather me flowers
And pile them high for me to come to see.
They will remind my spirit of the hours
Of joy I spent on earth. Think of me free
Of body’s pain, and you will find your grief
Changed to an overwhelming sweet relief.

So, this is Lora’s namesake. I had wanted for so many years to give this name to a daughter. Lora’s middle name is Michelle, and this name comes from *Michelle Jensen*, Joyce’s daughter. Michelle used to spend summers at our house and was just like one of our own kids.



Lora with Gina and Shawn
in San Francisco just a few days before
her 21st Birthday (December 2006)



Lora
Alan
Winnie



Michelle's a wonderful girl, she served a faithful mission in London, she married a good man, and now she's the mother of three wonderful children. Michelle, in actuality, looks a lot like Lora Howard. Lora has other names: *Pigglepoo* is one. The other is *Bear*—more precisely *Lora Bear*. I think she has friends in college who call her this, and of course, her brothers and sisters and parents have called her that her entire life. So there you have it, *Lorabearmichellepigglepoo*scribner. She, like her namesake, is a girl whose every day “*is strangely filled with some sweet happiness.*”



Lora loves laughter, she loves her friends, she loves excitement in her days, she loves to dance, she loves to sing, she loves to play certain pieces on the piano, she loves to stay up late, she loves to talk on the telephone, and she loves people no matter their nationality, their age, or their station in life. When we were working those five or six years with the Single Adult Program in the Santa Rosa Stake, Lora became close friends with all of them—and I mean ALL of them. When we started working with the *Singles*, Lora was only six or seven-years-old. She greeted them all warmly when they came to our home for the monthly firesides, and she has stayed lasting friends with a few of them. Two of her best friends from that group are Kate Shallich and Ray Reynolds—both in their fifties. When the group went to movies, Lora



often went with them when she was a teenager. She and Ray often sang together. When Ray remarried his wife (after a ten-year divorce) and moved to their home in Hawaii, he wanted to give Lora a most special gift for her graduation from high school. He gave her a gold bracelet with her name printed on it—it's a traditional Hawaiian bracelet most often given to loved ones.

Lora also made good friends with much older people. She would've loved to have her own grandmas, but Grandma James died three years before she was born, and Grandma Scribner died a year and a half after she was born. That's when we got serious about adopting Grandma Forsyth, and it wasn't just Lora who needed her—we all did. Delma Forsyth was very close to Lora, but she loved all the children and was happy to be our own Grandma.



Lora never had a speck of communication problem with Delma, even though Delma was totally deaf. You would always see them talking and laughing together. In fact, Lora was with me when I took Delma and Cleon on a trip to the Highlands when they came to visit us in Scotland. The picture I have of Cleon and Lora was taken just a few hours before Cleon had a heart attack and died.

Lora also loved some other older women. One was Rhoda Orcutt who celebrated her birthday with Lora every year—they were only five days apart (but more than seventy-five years apart). Another good friend of hers was Betty Keeler. Lora went with me several times to visit Betty, and Betty always made her something special for Christmas—especially her Christmas cookies. Betty loved Lora so much. When Betty Keeler died, we went to the home to visit the family. Betty was still in her bed. Lora was a teenager now, but she didn't hesitate to crawl on the bed and put her body right next to Betty's. She put her face next to hers and wrapped her arm around her waist, and just talked to her as if she were alive. She expressed her great love for her. She had no fear of death and knew they would be together again some day.

February 2, 1999

How it starts?
Can we recall?
From a chocolate kiss
To a hug in the hall.

For when we look,
Our memories fade—
All those sneaky ways
Our friendship she made.

The jokes turn to love,
The tricks to a kiss—
Her tender ways
That we will all miss.

But while she is gone
She gets us once more,
Though rid of her body
She left memories in store.



Cleon Forsyth and Lora in the Highlands (Scotland)

Graduation from Santa Rosa High in 2002



Like a tiger she fought
And, in the end, won—
With her Father she walks
The mortal life done.

The friend we turned to
Here in spirit instead,
For in this gospel she trusted
And put God at the head.

To a wonderful friend
Who knew what to live for
(and made sure everyone else knew too!)

I Love You Betty,
Sincerely,

Lora Scribner (sixteen years)

I think I should go back now and tell you about Lora's birth. Perhaps all this love that she was able to give so freely was a result of all the love that was given to her when she was born. Right after Spencer was born, I felt worn out and tired from having children. All seven had come very *orderly*—every two years. I was thirty-seven when Spencer was born, and certainly seven children is enough! I was worn out from the many medical problems we had to deal with, and felt quite satisfied with the number of children that we had. Then my forty-second year came. The forties were such good years for me. I had so much energy and felt healthy and strong. It's a good thing because some amazing challenges were ahead of us. The first challenge—I got pregnant. It wasn't really an accident, nor was it planned. We just had this feeling that if another child was sent to us, we'd be okay, and we weren't worried about any physical problems that might come with another child. My mother was forty-one when I was born, so forty-three couldn't be too old!

I was still the Stake Activity Specialist when I was pregnant with Lora, and it was a *roadshow year*. We finished the roadshows in November, and we had just three weeks before we were going to start into the production of the *Northern California Dance Festival*, which included Santa Rosa, Ukiah, and Eureka. Well, Lora was born on the 5th of December 1983, and amidst all the pressure, she was a blessing from heaven to soothe us, to comfort us, and to slow us down for a moment so we could reflect on the most important things in life. I had been suffering through a serious case of *guilt* because of the car accident we had when I was only three months pregnant with Lora. At that time, I felt like I had made a serious mistake that nearly cost the lives of all of us. I even prayed over and over again that the Lord would inflict some pain on me in exchange for the pain that I had caused my children. I asked Him to take my baby so I wouldn't be allowed to be a mother again to another child. I thought I had failed. The Lord didn't grant me that prayer. Even though I had made a mistake, I seemed to have nothing but blessings poured out upon me after that. The first blessing was the life of all my children. The second blessing was the birth of yet another child. As long as I live, I could never explain to anyone the great amount of Heavenly Father's love I felt at Lora's birth. It was so totally overwhelming. He actually loved me!



As usual, those last twenty minutes when my one heavy pain started and never let up were terribly painful. No matter how often I delivered a baby quickly, the doctor could never seem to get there in time to give me any relief medication! But without the after effects of any kind of medication, I felt absolutely wonderful immediately after the birth—a little sore in a few spots but nothing more. During those twenty minutes I remember saying to Gina,

“Next time, you’re here and I’m there.” (Meaning, of course, that I was not going to go through this again, and I’d be watching her deliver a baby instead of vice-versa.)

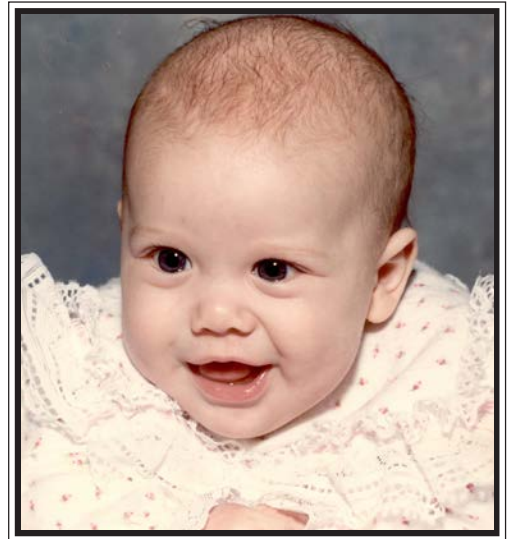
The minute she was born, the doctor put her unwrapped gooey body on my bare stomach, and then put a warm blanket on each of us. It felt sooo good. She never cried except for that tiny little bit after birth. If I remember right, Gina was the first one to hold Lora, and then Christy. Doug rushed home and picked up all five of the boys (none of whom wanted to watch the birth), and brought them to the hospital room. Each one took a turn holding Lora and talking to her. It was more than two hours of all of us sharing this moment together before the nurses even took her in and weighed and measured her.



Lora was a beautiful Christmas gift for all of us. She never was mine—not even from the start. It was Christmas vacation time, and I never did get to hold her—except in the middle of the night, and then Doug and I



would take turns after her feeding to put her to sleep on our chests. We never seemed to want to sleep her away from our own bodies. She was very seldom in a bassinet those first several months. Someone was always asking to hold her and rock her. Even in church, she slept in our arms or on our laps. In the car she slept in a bassinet that was like a basket so we could just carry her in the



basket while she still slept. As she grew, she continued to be physically close to people. One time Doug was napping on our bed, and Lora was sleeping beside him. She wanted to get closer, so pretty soon her arm was hugging his. Then she crawled a little closer and pulled her body right across his face, and that's where she wanted to sleep.

Well, what about today?—she's twenty-three and has been quite grown up for some time now. She was here in Santa Rosa with her whole dance team from BYU-Idaho. They were competing in a swing dance competition in San Francisco. We had beds and bedding for everyone, but I didn't provide anything for Lora. I knew she'd just come and crawl in bed with Doug and me. She still likes to be close. I'm sure the boys she has gone with have enjoyed



that part of her personality! She will be loving wife and mother—a blessing to her future husband and children.



Lora's first three years were spent mostly in Scotland. We arrived there when she was only six-months-old. She was my shadow every single day while all the kids were in school. I didn't know or trust anyone to baby-sit her, so she went with me everywhere. When friends or family came to visit, we would travel many places—to many castles, lochs, and fields of heather—and she saw it all. It's just too bad she was too young to remember.



Lora and Michelle Jensen
in Scotland 1986

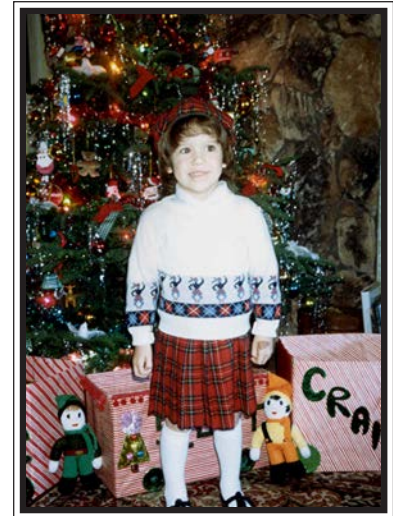
She had a beautiful little Scottish accent when we arrived back in the States. We did take her to Scotland when she was fourteen-years-old. In fact, we took her to France when we picked up Christy from her mission and together we all saw the French Riviera, Paris, Grenoble and Scotland. It was fun to show her Kirktonhill and to go through the old beautiful home that we were so privileged to live in for three years. Our old friends there all enjoyed seeing these two girls of ours who had grown up so beautifully.



Lora's talking was so delightful when she was about six-years-old. She tried to use big and difficult words, but often said a wrong one in its place, which made the sentence very funny. Some example of this:

"Scotty wears bracelets on his teeth."

"Mommy, would you help me get the little black lizard out of my foot."



Lora started praying. I said, *"I'm waiting for you to start."* She said, *"I already started. Now this time don't erupt."*



"I can still talk with a Scottish accent."

She hit her leg on the edge of the car, which hurt her. She rolled down her bottom lip and cried, *"It's just like breaking an uncle."*

One of our favorite quotes of Lora's (that we still use) is, *"Don't tell me!"* She would say this when she was very little when someone even slightly raised his voice to her.

The Koehles lived with us for several weeks while their house was being finished. All their kids played the violin, and one played the cello. At Church one day, she pointed to Johnny Koehle (the youngest) and said, *"There's the boy who plays the little jello."*



My favorite story was when we were riding in the car one day. Previously, we had suffered with an ant problem in the kitchen, and I had sprayed, mopped and done everything I could to get rid of these ants. While we were in the car I noticed that Lora was talking to two little ants that were crawling on her arm. She said, *"You are so cute and little. Do you know that I love you."* And then she said, *"I'm sorry but my Mommy has killed your mommy and daddy and all your brothers and sisters."*



At Christmastime in 1989 Russ brought Kari home for us to meet. After she was gone we asked him if he was in love. He answered, *“I don’t know. What is love anyway?”* We then asked Lora (who seemed to know all the answers) to describe love—after all, she received enough of it. She said, *“Well, it’s when you really, really like somebody.”* I said, *“I think it’s got to be more than just liking.”* Lora thought a moment and said, *“It’s when you really, really like somebody with your heart.”*

Another fun moment in 1989 was one day when I opened up the mail and said, *“Look at this, another wedding.”* Lora replied, *“I just can’t believe so many people have grown up so fast!”* I said, *“Well, at least Gina’s not getting married yet.”* (she had been in the missionfield four months). Then Lora said, *“Yeah, she’s taking a long time to grow up, just like I am.”*



Lora, Gina, Scotty, Christy, Jimmy, Spencer
at Kirktonhill 1986

The youngest child gets an education early. The older children bring music into the house, or friends into the house, and they watch movies that are no longer cartoons. As a result, sometimes the youngest child hears a word or words that they shouldn’t hear, and then repeats these words. One day, she took the Lord’s name in vain by saying, *“Oh my ___.”* Well, we wanted to change this quickly so we taught her to say something else every time she’d feel like making that kind of statement. So for years Lora said, *“Oh my goodness, gracious sakes alive!”*



Doug
Cecile
Rusty
Gina
Craig
Scotty
Christy
Jimmy
Spencer
Lora

1988

Lora and Scotty gave birth to the *Fish Song*. They performed this at Russ and Kari's wedding:



*"Oh, I Lobster and never Flounder
He wrapped his line around her
And they drove off in his Carp.
Oh, I Lobster and never Flounder
I Octopus his face in--he'll only break her Harp."*

*"You know, Huck, I Sword-a fish she'd come back to me
"What fer, she'll just give you the same ol' line,
'Not tonight, dear, I have a Haddock."
"Well, I've kept her picture in my Walla all these years.
Do you think she's kept my picture in her Perch?"*

*"Well, we better stop Seahorsin' around,
These folks look like they're goin' into a state of Shark."
"Did you say a 'state of Shark?'" "I shore did."*

"Frankly, Scallop, I don't give a Clam!"

Lora used to love singing this with Craig as well. These brothers of hers all watched over her and protected her. Jimmy particularly took a careful watch of her. He didn't even mind playing with her when she had smelly diapers. For so many years, they protected her, loved her and teased her. When she got to be a lot older, they still continued to tease her, but it wasn't so much fun anymore. One day, I said to her, *"Well, Lora, they've always loved teasing you, and you used to like it."* And she said, *"Yeah, but when I was little, they would tease with love."*



Two more little stories of Lora as a little girl in Scotland. When I was taking her up the stairs to put her to bed, I said, *"Come on, it's time for B-E-D."* She cried, *"I don't want to go to B-E-D, I want to go to E-R-F!"* (she was only three). Another time I was reading her a bedtime story. I said, *"There was a Momma-bear and a Poppa-bear."* and before I could finish, she blurted out, *"And a Lora-Bear!"*

Well, the person who cared for Lora more than anyone was Christy. They slept in the same room, and Christy changed her diapers and fed her quite often. They developed a real bond. In fact, Lora has always idolized Christy and wanted to have the same spiritual strength as Christy had. That's why she wanted to go on a mission. She talked about a mission from the very early days of her life.

Lora wanted to have her Patriarchal Blessing much earlier than any of the others requested it. So at the age of twelve, she received it on the 21st of April 1996. Many of her blessings have yet to be fulfilled, but again, it always amazes me how well the Lord knows my children, and knows their potential long before I ever see it. However, Lora always seemed to have spiritual strength—never ever questioning sacred things, always knowing where her beloved grandparents and old friends went after they died. Her blessing says,

“You have been blessed with great faith in the Lord’s latter-day work and this trust in the Lord will be a powerful and great blessing to you all the days of your life. . . Through this spiritual preparation, the time will come when the servants of the Lord will bless you and call you into the mission field.”



Cecile, Lora, Doug at New Zealand Temple
June 2004 - Lora took out endowments

Lora always wanted to go to Italy. She studied some Italian in high school. When we went to New Zealand, Elder Didier told us that Lora would be able to enter the missionfield earlier than what is normal for girls. She finished her year of college at Southern Virginia University, and then joined us in New Zealand for a few months while she waited for her mission call. She was convinced that if the General Authorities didn’t want to send her to Italy, that surely they wouldn’t want to pay for a trip back to the United States, so a call to New Zealand, Australia or Tahiti would be just grand. Her call came to the Visitors’ Centre so we brought it down to her while she was still in bed. She sat up, slowly opened it, and read it to herself. Was there some slight disappointment? Maybe. But with her usual humor she said, *“Well, it’s not Italy, but Fort Worth, Texas was my second choice!”*



Lora’s mission was very successful. Not because she got a lot of baptisms, but because of all that she learned while she served. So often she would say something like, *“Why isn’t there someone who can just teach me how to be a missionary—I just don’t know how to do it.”* But no matter how many days ended with rejection after rejection, she wrote home positive letters.

As with the other children while they were on their missions, Doug and I constantly prayed for her happiness and success. Right at the end of her mission, she saw some wonderful people come into the Church. Learning about and living the Gospel helped to save a couple of their marriages. They will bless Lora forever.

Lora just makes wonderful and fast friendships. Her patriarchal blessing says,

“Your association with other daughters of God will be sweet, precious and important to your salvation as you gather around your friends who will be your friends forever, both in time and in eternity.”

I think this part of her blessing is very important to Lora. She had a friendship with three other girls all the way through grade school on up through high school. Becca Davis and Piper Davis have particularly stayed close friendships with her. More close friends were made at Southern Virginia, and when she came to New Zealand she gathered (very quickly) some more lifetime friendships (boys and girls now).



Josh and Cody Ruple and Lora
February 2006 - Texas



Sisters at the Visitors' Centre in New Zealand



Lora, Becca Davis, Lolly Thompson, Piper Davis

Troy (part Maori), Daniel (Chinese), Rachel (Tongan), Justin (Kiwi), Missy (Samoan) and a few sister missionaries from America plus Sister Fina'i (a Samoan from New Zealand). All of us together got the same letter every week from Lora from Texas! As soon as she came home from her mission, she formed great friendships in the Redwoods Ward and in just a short time helped a young Chinese girl come into the Church. This girl always talks to us about Lora when we see her. She truly loves her as a dear friend. Now Lora's back at BYU-Idaho, and just today was talking to me about her friendships there. For once Lora was without words trying to describe how she felt about these wonderful friendships she had made in the Swing Dance Club. Many have shared the same kind of spiritual experiences, and so their friendship has become very deep, very fast. I think Lora will always make good and lasting friendships.

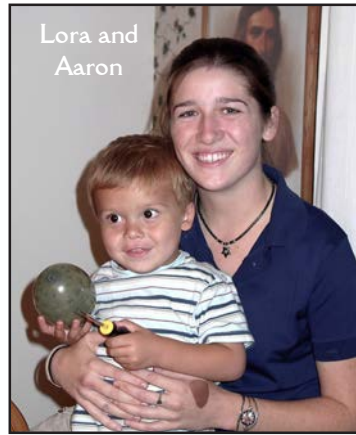
Lora also has a great love for her nephews and nieces. Perhaps this poem she wrote best describes how she feels:

My Kids

My body sits rigid,
uncomfortably twisted
in unnatural angles,
but,
as my limbs plead to shift
and plastic juts
into my hips and elbows,
I dare not move.
for, how often
am i lucky enough
to have angelic figures
resting their innocence
against my arms?
two beautiful children
sleep in their booster chairs
that have me
painfully placed in between.
but i will not stir.
i cannot wake them.



i feed on their
 energy and warmth that
 transfers to my
 inadequate soul,
 as they put their trust
 in my bony shoulders
 as a pillow for their
 pure dreams.
 do they comprehend what a
 glorious light
 they so unknowingly
 shed
 under my skin,
 so much that i feel the rays
 pushing all my fear,
 hatred, lust, evil,
 out
 out
 out of my tormented body,
 so that beams are radiant
 from my every pore.
 and i am happy.
 happy
 just to ache between their
 car seats,
 as they sleep,



and i put my head softly on theirs,
 smelling the refreshing scents
 of tearless shampoo
 and sidewalk chalk.
 Please, Heavenly Father,
 keep them safe,
 content.
 please, let them find
 the lives that are
 worthy
 of their good hearts.
 oh, i love these kids.
 so, i stay uncomfortably still
 for as long as possible,
 trying to capture
 their essence, and love,
 hoping they will not turn
 sleepily away from me
 on the car-ride
 home.



Maggie, Lora, Bella

by *Lora Scribner*



I guess most of what I have written is summed up in the poem I wrote Lora for her twenty-first birthday while she was serving her mission in Texas.

Lora Bear Michelle Piggie-poo Scribner
(21 Years!)

5 December 2004



Just twenty-one years since you came to earth
Everything changed on the day of your birth
All seven kids got to hold you that day
Each one in turn—each had their way.

They kissed you and held you and sang you a song
They all seemed to “soften” when you came along. . .

You always were held by one or the other
By father, by brother, by sister or mother.
If you started to cry, we raced to your side,
“It’s my turn,” “No, mine” – Oh, what a ride!



For many a year—more than three, more
than four
You were the one for us all to adore.
We taught you to sing and perform early on –
It’s hard to believe those years are long gone.

I still see you singing in Scotland—age three
You sang about Mary and the lamb
that was wee
You also can dance (and “stop” you will not)
The kitchen’s the place to swing ‘til you’re
hot.



When did you change from baby to girl?
As quick as a wink—as fast as a whirl—

I just wasn’t ready—you caught me off
guard
When you ventured from home—to lose
you was hard. . .
Well, it’s like being lost when you up and
leave home
And choices are made that are only your
own.



You were always determined to do your own thing
Before you were grown, or even a teen—
Sometimes you scared us—we often lost sleep—
Sometimes we'd laugh, but sometimes we'd weep.

Yet always we knew from that very first breath
We were bound with a love much stronger than death.
But bound as we were, we had to let go
And watch from a distance—it was always your "show."

Your choice to choose the dances you'd dance
The clothes you would wear and styles to enhance,
The music you'd hear, the songs you would sing,
The boys you would kiss (if that was the thing).

Your circle of friends was always your choice,
Though we sometimes raised eyebrows and opened our voice—
But mostly we've loved every one of your friends
All over the globe—through all kinds of trends.

Rebecca, Piper, and Jeff, Moss and Lisa
Troy and Rachel, Justyn, Missy and Nesque,
And then there's Don Juan (at one time, your beau)
Daniel and Mark and those we don't know.

A hard choice I know—A Mission to serve
It requires some prayer, some faith and some nerve,
Some patience, some tears, and a bushel of love
For the people, companions and your Father above.

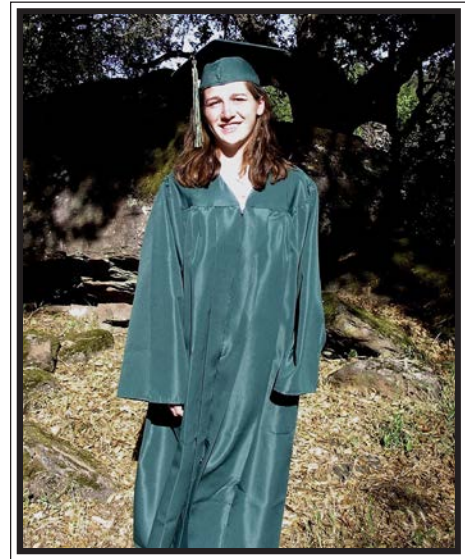
We still see you "little," singing fish songs and such
Just "added upon" with the Master's Touch.
He's given you freedom to choose—it's an art—
And he's given you **POWER** to choose the good part.

That's really the gift that is priceless—yet free—
The power to choose your eternity.

You're beautiful, loving and heaps of fun,
A good hearty laugh, and we miss you a ton.
So—yeah—that is it, but that is not all
We'll keep you "as is" with a strong Texan drawl!

All our love on your "21st,"

Mom and Dad



And before I end, did I mention that Lora loves to sing and loves to dance—I mean really loves to dance! Right now it's her life. Before she left on her mission, it was also her life. She's done some clogging, and other kinds of dancing, but *"It don't mean a thing, if it ain't got that swing!"* She's a fabulous swing dancer, and she's also a patient, loving and persistent teacher. She's taught many others to love it as much as she does. I'm sure her future husband will have to know how to Swing! But she's equally good at singing. She hears and can sing beautiful harmonies. She's even good at making up her own harmonies, which I think she learned how to do (at least partly) from the Polynesians. I wonder what the next twenty years will bring with Lora. I hope we don't ever lose the old Lora. She's a ball of fire and I love her!



Dave Goepel,
Russ, Doug,
Lora and
Scott



Jimmy, Scott,
Christy,
Spencer and
Lora at Russ'
Wedding 1990



“Why I Believe”

by *Lora Scribner*

December 2005

The life of a Latter-day Saint seems to always be one of self-examination. This can be a little too internally focused at times, but for the most part, questioning our testimonies seems to leave an avenue for faith-building experiences. It’s a compilation of these experiences that seems to flood into my mind while pondering *why I believe*. So I hope this story isn’t too scattered and helps someone besides myself—but if not, at least I can count on my parents saying how much they loved it!

I have to say that my knowledge that my Father in Heaven knows me and loves me, that the *Book of Mormon* is true, that Joseph Smith was Christ’s mouthpiece called 200 years ago, that we have a living Prophet (Gordon B. Hinckley) and Twelve Apostles today, and that miracles and the spreading of Christ’s Gospel are fueled by faith and diligence—all have come to me through prayer. This list of gospel truths, a few of which I would like to highlight, have come to me in different times of my life.

First of all, I’ve always known my Father in Heaven answers prayers. Being probably the most forgetful and *crises-minded* child in my family, I’ve had a lifetime of desperate pleas for a lost shoe, my homework assignment, a pen, a quarter, the keys, my temple recommend, and now my homework assignment again. Though I seem to be supplied with infinite weaknesses, the Lord has repeatedly and immediately shown infinite mercy.

The first big experience I remember having with building my testimony was while I prayed to know that the *Book of Mormon* was true. I was some age younger than ten, and I remember staying up past my bedtime, kneeling by my bed, and hoping for some heavenly manifestation of trumpeting angels and an echoing bass voice resonating, “*It’s true, it’s true, it’s true. . .*” No such luck, but I do remember feeling good enough about the experience that, in the end, I was willing to risk punishment for staying up past my bedtime, to tell my parents, “*I know the Book of Mormon is true.*”

To hear a resonating echo isn’t too difficult, for different variations of this foundational scene has replayed itself many times in my life. Of course, I always felt great at church. It was always the highlight of my week, giving me refuge and grounding in standards established by the inspired primary and young women’s programs. While the teenage world around me took turns going crazy with substance abuse and day-to-day deceit and cruelty, I knew that Church was good and helped me turn to my Savior for safety.

A few defining moments in those years:

EFY—Especially For Youth Program: Watching a video with Christ surrounded by little children and knowing that I wanted to be there and that I would strive to get there by living the way Christ wanted me to live.

Girls’ Camp: The theme was, “*If You Can’t Stand It, Kneel.*” I had a great experience one night on a hike to see the stars. The sky was covered from horizon to horizon with clouds, and we were invited to exercise our faith and pray to see the stars. We then laid on our backs waiting for the miracle as we shared our testimonies



of the Gospel. From the moment the first testimony began, sky appeared. During the major portion of the *meeting* the whole sky was clear and the stars were radiant. The moment the last testimony ended, about an hour later, the cloudy covering had quickly, thickly, reappeared over every portion of the sky. I gained a great testimony of prayer that week.

Defending Proposition 22: Being an LDS republican in a 90% liberal high school during a political proposition to allow *same-sex marriage* didn't exactly help me stick to my *stay ambiguous* four-year plan. As the school newspaper displayed the LDS position on the issue, my testimony of the reality of a modern day prophet and continuing revelation grew tremendously. I was able to testify to one of my best friends that "*gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal and eternal identity and purpose,*" and that "*marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God.*" Although my friend was homosexual, through a desperate prayer for mutual understanding, the Spirit of love that was between us testified that the things I was sharing were true.

After high school is always a different story. Spiritually riding on the coattails of family and friends doesn't have the sustaining power it once did, and distractions are EVERYWHERE. Simple commandments of daily reading of scriptures and praying never seem to fit in the routine. Black and white rules and lines turn grey, and soon, church attendance can become sporadic and purely social.

It was at the rock bottom of this time frame that my once miracle-minded faith seemed a joke or an illusion. All that remained was a desire to believe, and once again, I started where I began a decade before—by my bed, on my knees, in desperate prayer. This time, not only for the acknowledgment of eternal truths, but to know that my Heavenly Father loved me and could forgive me for neglecting Him so long and making uninspired decisions in the meantime.

I came into that prayer disturbed and foggy and left with a peaceful clarity, knowing that when we trust in the Lord, everything is going to be *OK*. I also received a knowledge that *day-to-day care* of our testimonies is essential—they grow or decay. There is no standing still. As I practiced repentance, I felt a freeing power, which grew in renewed direction through constant prayer and scripture study.

One year later, I again found myself on my knees in a clothes closet in Virginia. I was fasting and praying specifically about Joseph Smith and the *Book of Mormon* so that I could be converted as Nephi was, with an ability to testify with boldness and surety. I had to know if the Priesthood power had been restored, if Christ truly was at the head of this church and if the correct authority to baptize was restored to the earth. Since all of these questions hinge on whether or not Joseph Smith was a prophet and if the *Book of Mormon*, which is evidence of his divine calling, is true, I again asked if this record was correct. As I proceeded to read, I was filled with enlightenment and understanding as the *Book of Mormon* answered specific hardships I was facing. Again, I received a personal witness and communication from my Heavenly Father, and I was ready to serve a mission.

That is my testimony over and over again. The Savior's plan and restored gospel enables us. When you come with a troubled mind, reading the scriptures, going to church and praying will heal the wounded heart and fill spiritual voids with direction and peace that only Christ can give.

Now on a mission, I feel daily experiences adding tremendous depth to my knowledge and beliefs. I now cry out with all my energy of soul and voice: "*Come all that are heavy laden. Come to the Savior. Give Him your sins to truly know Him, and follow him through authorized baptism and receive the Holy Ghost, that He may give you rest!*"

I know it. I've seen the transformations of those around me, and my own *new* heart. Christ lives. He guides our living prophet today. The *Book of Mormon* adds its witness of the Savior to the Bible as a second testimony of Christ's reality, which answers questions to the soul.

I love this gospel, my Father in Heaven, and my Savior Jesus Christ. In his name and with His help, I strive to declare His words. Amen. (December 2005)



The Girls
Cecile, Gina, Christy, Lora





And. . . The Boys
Doug, Russ,
Craig, Scott,
Jim, Spence



With their spouses:
Robbyn and Craig
Jenny and Scott
Stephanie and Jim
Kari and Russ
Lisa and Spencer

“Why I Believe”

by *Cecile Scribner*

(Written while serving a mission with Doug in New Zealand from 2004-2006)

For one and half years in the Christus Room at the Visitors’ Centre here in New Zealand I’ve been listening to testimonies from people from Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, Samoa, South Africa, New Caledonia, Scotland, Denmark, Holland, China, Taiwan, Korea, England, Colombia, Italy, the Congo, America (including Hawaii) and India. Every story has been different—these firesides have been the most uplifting experiences I think I’ve ever enjoyed—week after week. My testimony of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ has grown immensely. Every person has struggled to answer the question, “*Why I Believe,*” and now I’m struggling with it myself. With every testimony that’s been borne, I’ve asked myself, “*How would I explain my own feelings?*” I will try.



In 1985 we were living in Scotland, and my oldest son was at Brigham Young University. He was preparing for his mission, and was asked to bear his testimony. He struggled with it, and wrote it down. That’s how I knew what he said—I found this scratch piece of paper with his testimony on it. He said, “*I don’t know myself that the Church is true, but my father knows it’s true, and he’s the best and most honest man I know. If he knows it’s true, then it is.*”

It’s okay to live on the strength of someone else for a while. I think I did that for several years. As a very little girl, I seemed to know the Church was true—the Holy Ghost bore witness to me of this many, many times. But I had not done anything for that testimony—I hadn’t worked for it. I simply was born into a family where the Gospel played a part of our every day lives. We weren’t a perfect family by any means, but as I search my early memories, I can remember kneeling as a family in prayer on Sunday mornings before we left for church. We never missed church. During my first six years of life, my father was the Bishop of the ward in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Then we moved to Utah in 1947, and my father had to stay in Wyoming to keep his business going, but my parents wanted the family to live closer to the heart of the Church where we could meet and marry the right people in the right place—the Temple. For the rest of my growing up years, I only saw my father on the weekends. He had his own small airplane and would leave work on Friday nights and fly to Utah. Every evening about five or six o’clock we would listen for the sound of an airplane to come through Provo Canyon. Soon we heard it and ran outside to search the skies. Sure enough, there he was! He circled our house a couple of times, tipped his wings and we would wave. Then we’d hop in the car and race down to the airport to pick him up. On Sunday afternoon after a big Sunday dinner and some relaxing time, we’d get in the car again and take my Dad back to the airport where he would fly back to Wyoming. I thought it was such an exciting way to live!

I remember hearing my Dad tell stories of his mission in 1921 to Australia. We enjoyed them no matter how many times we heard them. I loved Sundays. I loved my friends at Church, and I loved being with my family. After Church when we’d walk into the house, there was always this wonderful aroma of a roast and potatoes

in the oven. Sitting around the table on Sunday afternoon after Church with brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces and special guests—now, there were Sundays to remember! My Dad always said beautiful prayers. They were reverent (and sometimes too long!).

My mother told stories of her life. We loved to hear them over and over again as well. The stories that I loved the most were the “miracles.” Which one was my favorite? There were so many—but to mention a few, there was the time that she was at the dedication of a small chapel in Wyoming, and Melvin J. Ballard was there to dedicate it. A glorious choir sang for the dedication. My mother asked Brother Ballard afterwards why they didn’t build choir seats so the choir could be seen, and he answered, *“So you heard it too. This chapel must have been built with great sacrifice because what you heard was a heavenly choir.”* Then there were the many times we heard about her three younger brothers and sisters. They were young adults in the 1930’s when tuberculosis was at epidemic proportions in the United States. First of all *Alan, 24 years old*, had his tonsils out, and afterwards weakened. He caught tuberculosis and never got well. He died in Illinois, but he appeared at the foot of my mother’s bed that evening (she was living in Wyoming) and simply said, *“I’m going now, Lucie.”* She knew he was gone. Alan’s death was hard for the whole family, but ten months later, the family was beginning to feel *life* again. The girls were in a jovial mood, trying on their mother’s hats and laughing and giggling. *Winnie, 26 years old*, was healing from tuberculosis, but in a moment of laughter, she started coughing and couldn’t stop. Scar tissue on her lungs broke and she died almost immediately. Just the next year, it was obvious that *Lora, 21 years old*, was not well. She had a testimony of the Gospel and to her mother said, *“You know, don’t you, that I’m not afraid to die.”* She knew she would be with her beloved companions. My mother went to her mother’s home to help care for Lora, but during the evening she had a dream that her grandmother had come *to get Lora*. She joined her mother in the kitchen the next morning and told her about the dream. Neither had gone into Lora’s room yet, but her mother said, *“Yes, Grandma has come to get Lora—I had the same dream.”* They both knew she was gone.

These and many other stories were part of my growing up. Experiencing and hearing stories of miracles was a way of life for me. I think they are the reason *why I believe*. I learned about God just by listening and believing. Like my son, I knew that my mother and father were the best people on earth—they could not be deceived, and those things that came to them were real. The great experiences my Dad had in the mission field, the spiritual manifestations that my mother witnessed over and over again in her life—they *were real*, as real as we were. Without much effort on my part, I knew that God lived, that death was not the end of life, that families were meant to be forever, and that we needed the constant nourishment of God’s word that came through our activity in Church and study of the scriptures. I knew that someday I would marry in the temple and would continue to live this very kind of life that had brought me so much happiness in my childhood. I wanted my children to have what I had.

Now I’m sixty-four years old. My testimony of the Gospel has only strengthened as I’ve gained a personal testimony that is no longer leaning on my parents’ and other great leaders I’ve known. I’ve read the Book of Mormon many times over. I know it is the word of God as I know the Bible is. I’ve served my own mission in Australia and have my own miraculous stories to tell of conversions there. I’ve had the witness of the spirit that told me that I was marrying the right man. I’ve prayed for children who have come into our home and blessed our lives. Is there any woman who has gone through this experience of birth who could deny that God lives, that the birth of a baby is the greatest miracle on earth? My husband and I have had trials—a child born with a defective foot, a daughter who had to have a kidney removed at five months, a son who needed heart surgery at four years of age, a son who was born deaf, but through the blessings of the priesthood was given his hearing, a child who had a partial cleft palate and who spent fifteen years learning how to talk, children born with poor vision. I’ve seen God’s protective hand in severe car accidents when, for some reason, the lives of

my children were preserved—not once, but twice. Perhaps these were given to us as a *test* but as we prayed for miracles, we expected them to happen, *and they did*—not always in the way we asked, but miracles nevertheless.

I haven't witnessed miracles in the same way my mother did, but I cannot deny that there is a God in Heaven who loves me and my family and who has protected and guided us over and over and over again. But with everything I have witnessed, I'm not sure my feelings are any more heartfelt than they were when I was a little girl leaning on the testimony of my parents. In actuality, I do not know how NOT to believe. I would have to deny my very existence and turn against the people who I know to be the best on earth. I thank my Father in Heaven for goodness in my life, for all those who went before me and sacrificed for the sake of the Gospel—my great, great grandparents in Wales, Scotland and England who left their families and homelands when they heard the testimonies of great missionaries like Wilford Woodruff, who taught them of Joseph Smith and the restoration of the Gospel in these latter days. These ancestors of mine had greater faith than I can even imagine—and why did they leave homeland and families to join the Saints in Nauvoo and Salt Lake City? Sometimes I feel like they personally did it for me—that I might have this great love in my heart for the Saviour Jesus Christ, for God, his Father—my own Heavenly Father, for the great prophet Joseph Smith, and for President Gordon B. Hinckley, our living prophet on the earth at this time, and also that I might have this *forever feeling*—this strong bond that I feel with my own children and grandchildren and extended family and friends. I have been so blessed. And I leave this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.



Our family in 1984 (just before our first one, Russ, left home)

“Why I Believe”
by *Elder Douglas M. Scribner*

New Zealand Temple Visitors' Centre
Director (2004 - 2006)

About 700 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah gave us a priceless glimpse of the purpose of life. He said, *“Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? ... For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line; here a little and there a little.”* (Isaiah 28:9-10) *Gaining Knowledge* about God and his Doctrine has been a driving force in my life, and I have learned that it comes by searching for it just one little bit at a time. Gaining this knowledge of each precept is a process which begins with having a desire to know. If we then make a place for this desire to grow, it becomes a belief. The belief turns into faith as we actively strive to live by it. Then finally, following a trial of our faith, it becomes knowledge. I would like to share seven precepts that form the basis of *Why I Believe*.



This search for knowledge about God began for me when I was sixteen. I remember singing in our high school choir at an Easter sunrise service in Balboa Park in San Diego, California. There was a dense fog that morning and only a few people came to hear us, but as we sang *“The Holy City,”* something touched my heart deeply, and I wanted to know more about Jesus Christ. So I became active in a Congregational Church youth group where my parents occasionally attended. I enjoyed singing and joined the church choir as well as continuing with the high school choir. Still, my quest for knowledge about God was not satisfied. Finally, in frustration, I made an appointment with the minister of the Plymouth Congregational Church. When we met in his office, I said, *“I have two questions for you to answer: ‘Who is God?’ and ‘What happens to us when we die?’”* Perhaps it was because Reverend Barber had earned his way through theological seminary on a hockey scholarship, but I was very disappointed with the vagueness of his answers. So I decided to forget about it for awhile.

The next time this quest emerged was in my second year at Stanford University. Even though I was pursuing a degree in electrical engineering, the university required us to take courses in liberal arts including English composition. I was living off campus that year in a house with five other fellows, two of whom happened to be Latter-day Saints. One day I was in a basement study hall with one of my Mormon housemates and decided to write a paper about *“Who God is.”* Since I didn’t know, I made one up. I surmised that God was like a rain cloud and we all left his presence as individual raindrops to live our lives. Then at death we all got together in the rain puddle and evaporated our way back to God. I was proud of my paper so I asked my Mormon friend, Robert Gwynn, to read it. After reading it, Robert said, *“That was very interesting, would you like me to tell you who God really is?”* He took me into a small, private room and told me the experience of the Prophet Joseph Smith who prayed and saw a vision of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. Afterwards I told him that I appreciated his sincerity, but that I could never believe it. I wasn’t ready yet!

Two years later, my search began in earnest. A girl from my old church youth group had attended BYU and had been converted to the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. She introduced me to the missionaries who taught me the lessons. When I returned to the University for my final year, I started attending the Palo Alto Ward where the Stanford students went to church. Not only was this a chance to learn the doctrine, but I could see the example of Latter-day Saint families. Our Stake President at that time was David B. Haight, and he and his family were members of our ward. I remember two occasions of being invited to his home for dinner, even before I was baptized. Thus, the ***first precept*** of my testimony was, “***By their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them.***” The examples set by these families are still an important factor in *Why I Believe*.

After nine more months of meeting with the missionaries, reading the book, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, studying the scriptures, fasting, praying earnestly, and going to church, I realized the time had come when I had to make a decision. I was graduating from the university and starting a new career, so I needed to get the spiritual part of my life on a firm foundation. Finally, sitting on the library steps, unable to concentrate on anything other than the Gospel, I came to the realization that I knew the Gospel was true. I didn't yet know much about the life of the Prophet Joseph Smith, but I knew that the precepts which he taught were true. I had fasted and prayed and the Spirit bore witness that the doctrine was correct and relevant to my life.

The ***second precept*** was the simple but profound answer to my question, “***Who is God?***” In the grove of trees where the Father and the Son appeared to the young prophet, Joseph learned more about the nature of God in a few moments than men had been able to discover in the previous 1800 years. The ***third precept*** had to do with the ***purpose of life***. I knew innately that God would not create mankind without a purpose and a plan in mind. Yet the word *Plan* does not appear in the Bible. However, it does appear frequently in the *Book of Mormon*, as the *Plan of Salvation*, the *Plan of Happiness* or the *Plan of Redemption*.

The ***fourth precept*** has to do with the question, “***What happens to us when we die?***” Einstein's Law of Relativity explains that matter cannot be created nor destroyed, but can only change form between physical matter and energy. Thus, you strike a match and physical particles are replaced by light and heat. The same, I reasoned, must be true of the human spirit. It was not created from nothing at our birth so there must have been a pre-existence where our Spirits lived before we were born. Neither could our spirit be destroyed at the time of death so there must be a Spirit World where we go after we die. I suppose at this point I believed because of intellect, but I also felt the Spirit, so I was baptized. A year later I was serving a mission in Australia.

On my mission, my reasons for believing were changing. The basic reason, to gain knowledge about God, precept by precept, was still there. Our mission President, Bruce R. McConkie, encouraged Gospel Scholarship. However, I also came to believe in the ***fifth precept*** which is the ***power of God to change people's lives***. Teaching and testifying is wonderful, but seeing the Gospel and the Holy Spirit change lives was awesome. The words of the Apostle Paul were ringing in my ears, “***For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.***” (Roman 1:16)

My reasons for believing gained a whole new dimension through my love for the woman who became my eternal companion. Her personality, her faith, and her reason's for believing were all different from mine, but they were just as valid as mine were. Her greatest joy came from making other people happy. Her faith was built on generations of faithful saints who went before her. Slowly her reasons also became my reasons. Up until this point, I thought that I alone could determine whether or not I entered the Celestial Kingdom. Now I realized that we must go there together and, if she doesn't make it, then I don't either. The ***sixth precept*** was ***Celestial Marriage***. As we help and lift each other, Heaven has a whole new meaning. Our eight children

broaden that dimension even more. Granted, we can only teach them and they must decide, but we do have to teach them.

Now in the mature years of life, there is yet another reason *Why I Believe*. The ***seventh precept*** is that I have come to ***rely upon the Lord answering our prayers***. If we do what we are called to do, hold nothing back, and pray earnestly, the Lord will bless us in ways we never even imagined. I have come to know the Lord, and to feel his trust, by being the person through whom other people's prayers have been answered.

A short story will illustrate. We lived in Scotland for three years in the 1980's on a work assignment. Our oldest son was with us for one summer and then went off to BYU. Through our letters and occasional phone calls, we sensed that he was not being as active in church as he should have been. We were so far away that the only thing we could do for him was to pray and expect the Lord to answer. His roommate, who came from our home town, was at BYU for the wrong reasons and our son was influenced by him. At that time we had a full-time missionary couple in the Scotland mission whom we had come to know and love. Their names were Elder and Sister Butters. When I next had opportunity to make a business trip to California, I stopped in Utah to spend a weekend with our son. I asked him to take me to his ward, and I worried when he wasn't too sure where and when they met. Throughout the Sacrament meeting I prayed for a way to help my son. At the end of the meeting I said, *"Let's go meet your Bishop."* When we got to the front, the Bishop was busy, but his counselor greeted us warmly. When we met, he introduced himself as *Brother Butters*. I replied, *"We have an Elder and Sister Butters in our Mission in Scotland."* He said, *"They are my parents!"* With gratitude in my heart, I said, *"Brother Butters, I have a deal for you. If you will look after my son, I will look after your parents."* We both did so, and the prayers of both families were answered.

I'd like to close where I began. Not only did Isaiah promise us that we could gain knowledge about God, line upon line, but Nephi also added to that understanding. He said:

"Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough! For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have." (II Nephi 28: 29-30)

I believe we have a loving Father in Heaven who is pleased to grant each one of us knowledge about eternal truths. He blesses us with His perspective. Heavenly Father sees who we are from the eternities that preceded our birth to the eternities that will follow our death. He knows our potential and the blessings we will receive if choose to accept the Atonement of His only Begotten Son. To Joseph Smith he said,

"... what power shall stay the heavens? ...to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints." (D&C 121: 33)

This is *Why I Believe*. There is no way to prevent God from granting us knowledge to answer the two questions I originally asked, ***"Who is God?"*** and ***"What happens to us when we die?"*** In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.



Top: Christmas 1997

Bottom: Christmas 2003

