

# Stories

by Cecile Scribner and others



Bridgewood Drive, Santa Rosa, CA



Elk Ridge, Utah



Montecito Meadow Drive,  
Santa Rosa, CA



Provo, Utah



Ratho, Scotland



Los Altos, CA

# STORIES

BY

CECILE JAMES SCRIBNER

WRITTEN FOR

HER GRANDCHILDREN

BEN, DANNY, AND JACOB  
HUNTER, BELLA, BRYANT, THATCHER,  
CHEY AND SHYDEN ROME,  
MAGGIE, TOMMY, LUCY, JACK,  
PENNY AND PETER  
JOSH, MATTHEW, AARON,  
GRACIE AND NOAH  
ETHAN, AUSTIN, ALAINA,  
JASON AND EMMETT,  
YVE AND OLIVER,  
MYLES AND ELLIE  
PORTER, NAOMI, JOSEPH,  
AUDREY AND ANNA  
TESSA



*Children and Grandchildren of Doug and Cecile Scribner - Mt. Rushmore - July 2021*



*Russ and Kari Scribner Family*



*Craig and Robbyn Scribner Family*



*Robert and Christy Jones Family*



*Mark and Lora Spencer Family*



*Jimmy and Stephanie Scribner Family*



*Spencer and Lisa Scribner Family*



*Gina Scribner Family*



*Scott and Jenny Scribner Family*

*This book of stories is dedicated to Doug Scribner.  
He loved my stories (and he loved me!) and he loved to tell  
stories to his children and grandchildren (and he loved them!).  
He wanted to make sure I kept sending out my Mom's Monday Morning Musings  
even after he was gone. So here you are Doug. . .this book is for you.*



**THE PATHFINDER**

Presented by Network Measurements Division

May 30, 1984



I've written my autobiography. In fact, I've written two books full of facts, full of truth, full of actual events, full of stories. However, on Memorial Day, our family members gather around the graves of my Mother and Father and they want to hear Stories from me and Doug.

Some of these stories are in our autobiographies, but many of them never seemed important to me at the time of writing because I was busy documenting the facts.

However, my grandchildren love to hear the Stories - Spiritual, Humorous, Thrilling, Embarrassing, Sorrowful - or whatever.

Most of the following stories never appeared in my autobiographies, but they are as much a part of me as the ones I've already written, and many of them are the ones we tell around the gravesides every year.

And Stories need to be told when we're old because as my Grandmother Howard said:

*For I have observed that the years  
Add much to the thrill and the style,  
The stories get longer, and many times stronger  
Until they are really worthwhile!*



ENJOY “MOM’S MONDAY MORNING MUSINGS”

## GLENN HAWKES - BEST FRIENDS - #1

I met Glenn Hawkes in Australia. We served in some of the same areas together and were even in the same group that travelled home together in October 1962. He was one of the best friends I've ever had. In fact, Russ is named after him (Russell Glenn Scribner). We could talk about anything. About seven months after we got home, I was engaged to be married, and I started to panic a little because when it came right down to it, I didn't know what to expect on that *first night*. I was naive, unprepared, and scared (and only twenty-three years old)! I went to Glenn and told him my fears, etc. and he marched me right over to the BYU Bookstore. We looked over the books and then he found one, "*The Power of Sexual Surrender*." I was feeling embarrassed and made him promise to be discreet when he bought it for me. So there we were, together, me with an engagement ring on, and him with a big happy smile on his face, and he placed that book right down in front of the cashier, FACE UP! I just about died! Nevertheless, I took the book home and read every page, but was totally disappointed. It talked about psychological aspects, but never described the details. Just a lot of case histories. Such a boring book. Well, Glenn didn't really know anything about the book before he bought it, but now we can have a good laugh at that moment when he chose to embarrass me. At age 79, he's still one of my best friends.



## THE HONEY BUCKET MAN - #2

I started my mission in March of 1962 in an area called Glenroy, Australia. My first companion was Crystal Broderick, and I truly loved her, except for one time. Our first place of abode was in this old home, and the only bathroom was the outhouse. I was only with Crystal for two weeks before I was assigned to be with someone who had only been out one week less than I had, but, boy, did I ever learn about missionary work in that small moment of time. The first thing I learned was how tired you can be in that first week. The second thing I learned was how quickly gossip can fly through a missionfield (and ours stretched over 2,000 miles from Melbourne to Tasmania to Perth). This one day I left to go use the outhouse. Well, these outhouses had a bucket that caught all the waste that came out of a human body, and every so often the honey bucket man would come and open a little back door, pull out the bucket, and put in a clean fresh one. Well, while I was just in the middle of the "*process*," this man came and changed my bucket! I was horrified! I knew he must be out there waiting for the person to come out so he could see whose bottom it was that was so visible during that big exchange. I refused to go out. I stayed in that little house for thirty minutes, and then I ventured out, looking around to see if he was hiding behind a tree or a bush. I rushed in and Sister Broderick was rather alarmed and said, "*Where have you been.*" Well, I responded, "*I'll tell you if you promise not to tell anyone.*" She promised (cross my heart, hope to die, stick a needle in my grandma's eye). So, I told her, and of course, she laughed and laughed. We got dressed, ready to face the day, got on our bicycles, and travelled no further than about one block, and there were the Elders coming our way. Sister Broderick called out to them, "*Elder Hadly, Elder Ogden, just wait til you hear what I've got to tell you!*" I glared at her and uttered, "*You wouldn't.*" "*Oh, no, I promise.*" Then, right there in front of me, she told those Elders the whole story! And that story followed me my whole mission, "*Oh, you're that Sister James who . . . . .*" Oh yes, I was that Sister James.



### GEORGIA ANN - MATURITY CAN TAKE AWHILE #3



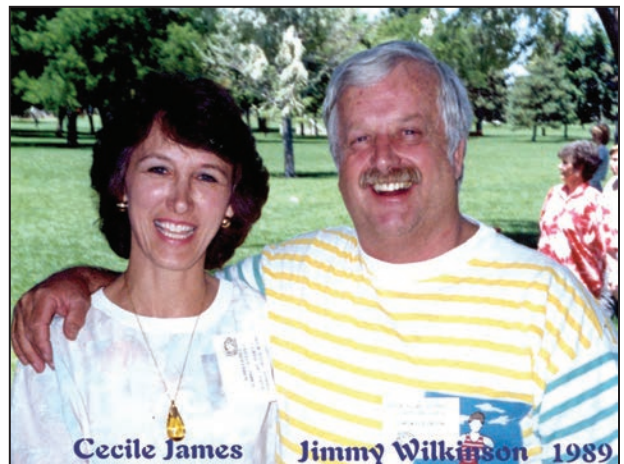
Georgia Ann was one of my best friends in high school. She was tall and thin as could be. When we were Seniors, she met a boy from Provo High School, and he also was tall and thin as could be. They decided to get married just within a few months after graduation. I was her *maid of honor*. Well, since she was married and I was far from it, we visited each other, but not real often. When we did, she bemoaned the fact that she was unable to get pregnant. I did feel sorry for her because that's what we always talked about - getting married and having babies. I left on a mission and came back in 1962, and got together with Georgia. Something happened. She had put on some weight, her voice had deepened, and she was absolutely radiant, and she was pregnant!

Nothing really happened except her body finally matured. She even had more children, but something else happened. Her husband's body also matured, and he didn't turn out to be the handsome guy she thought she had married. He started drinking, put on a lot of unsightly weight and got a big beer belly. They ended up in divorce, but Georgia always stayed a beautiful mature woman. Her story is one I've told before when given the chance to counsel young girls about getting married too young. "Wait awhile so you can discover who you really are. . . you might be surprised!"



### JIMMY WILKINSON - A THROW-AWAY TEENAGER #4

In my mind ( in High School), Jimmy Wilkinson was a *Greaser*, somebody I didn't want to even talk to, someone I didn't care to ever see again after graduation. I didn't really know him because he was Popular, and I was just ordinary, so he probably didn't even know I existed anyway. He was a Star in basketball and football, but he didn't impress me. Sure enough, after graduation, I never saw him again . . . that is, not for thirty years. For the first time, I finally attended a high school reunion - the thirtieth. Up front, conducting, was this mostly gray-haired, happy, friendly MC. He introduced himself as Jimmy Wilkinson. I couldn't believe it was the same person I knew in high school! He was from California, so just for the heck of it, I went up to him afterwards, told him who I was and that I also was from California. Well, he lived in Pleasanton, only an hour's drive from Santa Rosa. He was thrilled and started saying things like, "We need to get together!" "I need your number." "I want you to meet my wife." What was going on? Why would I want to know Jimmy Wilkinson better? Yet, I said, "Okay." Well, we became very good friends. He would call every so often, just to talk, and we'd talk for at least an hour, both of us with so much to say. Doug and I visited his home (humble - he was a house painter - not rich). He and his wife came to my 50th Birthday party and we had such a good time. Just a few years later, at a young age, Jimmy had a heart attack and died. Doug and I went to his funeral. The chapel and recreation hall were packed with people. When the first man got up to speak, he said, "If you or any of your children have been helped by Jim in any way or have been offered work to help him in his painting jobs, would you please stand up." It seemed like three-fourths of the congregation stood up. I could not hold back my emotion. Jimmy was as good a person as I had ever met - and I hadn't even come close to knowing all the good that he had done. He certainly did nothing but good for me. And to think I had *thrown him away* when we were teenagers.





## RUSTY SCRIBNER - "I HOPE YOU CAN SEE ME" - #5

My son, Rusty, grew up with some confidence - he was good at playing the piano, he was an Eagle Scout, he got good grades in high school, he played in the band, he'd danced in floor shows and festivals, and he had a good singing voice. As parents, we can help guide our children into these areas and help them gain self confidence. But we



can't force them to have a good self image. They have to get that on their own by the way they live and accept themselves. We could tell that he didn't particularly like himself, even after he left high school. Later on he would tell us that those times when we wanted to have a good conversation with him, and he didn't say anything, he said, *"I just didn't think I had anything important enough to say."* Well, he went on a mission and spent two years Giving Himself and caring about other people more than himself. He practiced Self Control by getting over the desire for television and penny arcades, etc, and he built a relationship with his Father in Heaven. He Knew Himself - knew who he was - knew he was an important child of God. The proof of his gaining self-esteem came when he gave his home-

coming talk. The Bishop introduced him by saying, *"Well, Russ was skinny before he left, and he's even skinnier now."* I wanted to cry. You could tell the whole audience was a bit uncomfortable. Russ got up, stood in front of the microphone, then he faced his body to the left, then to the right, adjusting the microphone each time, and then finally said, *"After what the Bishop just said, I hope you can see me behind this microphone."* The whole audience laughed, and for his entire talk he had their attention in the palm of his hand. He's always continued to be confident in giving talks especially, and confident in his life in everything. (Give, Control and Know - there's the secret)



## PARK RO SHE - FEAR OF WATER - #6

I made sure all of my children had swimming lessons, so they would never have the fear of water that I have. Doug practically grew up in the ocean, often diving for abalone, and many times in our marriage he has tried to teach me to swim and get over my fear, but the panic never quite leaves me. When I was about fourteen years of age, we had a Sunday School party, and all of us wanted to go swimming at Park Ro She in Springville. There were only two swimming pools in the Utah Valley area - the other was in Saratoga. Both had inside pools, so we could go any time of year. No one had their own pool at their home, so everyone had to learn to swim just by trying when we were at parties or in lakes. I couldn't swim at all, but at one particular party, two other girlfriends and I got on this big inner tube and floated down to the deep end, which was crowded with kids. Our teacher swam over to

us and thought she'd protect us by getting on the inner tube with us. When she tried, the tube flipped over and we all landed in the *Deep*. I was swallowed up in the water, fighting for my life, gulping mouthfuls of water, splashing and kicking like crazy. Finally, someone got behind me and pushed my feet and guided me over to the edge where someone pulled me up. But it was a panic I've never been able to shake off even after all these years. I know how to kick and use my arms, and I know I'm supposed to take a breath every so often, and when I start to lose it, I know how to turn my body over, arch my back and float 'til I come to a safe edge at a pool. But I would never venture my skills in a lake without edges near by. However, I did learn to water-ski and play in a lake as long as I wore a life jacket. I even learned how to dive off the high dive at a swimming pool, come up to the surface and quickly make my way to the edge. Only one disaster did I have there - I was at Saratoga (another party), and I dived off the high dive and lo and behold, my swimming suit ripped right down below my waist because of the force when I hit the water. So I had to stay in that Deep until I got everything secure again. There were people in that water, however, who had their eyes open and probably saw all the *nothing* that there was to see on me:)

## BRONSON OESER AND “THE OHIO” - #7

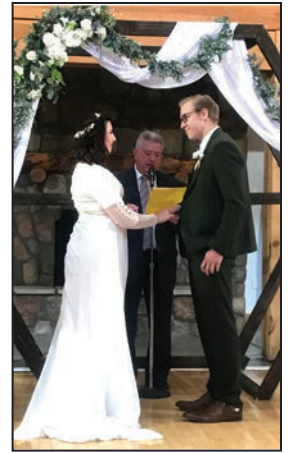
Today is the 23rd of September 2020, and Doug and I just came home from a lovely wedding and reception of Hannah Oeser, a returned missionary who served at Temple Square in Salt Lake City, and Tyler Foss, a newly baptized member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I thought how different this day might've been had her father made a different decision ten years ago. In January 2010, Doug and I were putting together a Readers' Theater in Elk Ridge, Utah. It was entitled, *“The Ohio.”* Our cast had already had the first of six practices required to put one of these performances together. After Church this one Sunday, a woman I hardly knew came up to me and asked how the practices were going. Her name was Lexie Oeser. I told her the practice went well, but I was still looking for one man to be Frederick G. Williams – it was a small part. Just as her husband was walking up to her, she asked, *“What does he need to look like,”* (age, etc.), and I answered, *“Like him,”* as I saw her husband, who I really didn't know at all. That resulted in Bronson accepting the challenge to be in a Readers' Theater to play this part I needed. (Bronson is furthest on the right).



He got very interested in the man he was portraying, was sad that he had left the church after being such a good friend and counselor of the Prophet Joseph Smith. He researched his life and was pleased that Frederick G. Williams repented, came back, and was rebaptized. When performances started, we usually had about thirty minutes of testimony bearing with the cast before the performance. At one of those testimony meetings, Bronson, got up and was thankful to be a part of this, and he revealed what none of us knew before. The very day that he walked up to his wife and we met him (and thought he would be just what we needed), was the day that Bronson had decided that the Church just wasn't *“doing it for him”* anymore. He didn't want to come back – wasn't going to stop his wife from coming – but he felt that day would be his last time at Church. But now he had developed a good testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the terrible challenges the early church faced – the persecution and the hatred, and the loss of strong members of the church because of their own pride or whatever – and many of their humble returns back to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We were all amazed – none of us knew what Bronson was experiencing.

The next six months of Bronson and Lexie's life was hard, and I even wondered why Heavenly Father had seemingly forgotten them, particularly when they were making such a humble comeback to the Gospel. He lost his job and couldn't find work in Utah, where his family resided. They lost their home and just about everything. He was qualified for a good job, but it just didn't seem to be in Utah. Yet they kept their faith and their positive attitude through this and kept strong in their activity in the Church. He finally applied for and got a job back East. So they moved away from their familiar surroundings and their family. After a couple of years, he applied for a job in Ohio, where he was accepted. It was just out of Kirtland in *“The Ohio”* – just the area which was the setting for our Readers' Theater. They were only there a matter of months before he was called to be the Bishop of that ward! We were blown away – mostly because we realized Heavenly Father knew things about Bronson that none of us knew. Heavenly Father had not forgotten him – he was put through the refiners' fire, but he came out the victor. He had to be released as a Bishop after a few years because his wife miraculously gave birth to triplets at the same time his twenty year old daughter was serving a mission in Salt Lake. They only had one more daughter and she was eighteen years old, but successfully enrolled in a University in Ohio when these triplets arrived! To me, it was a heart-warming experience today as we watched his wife carrying their little three year old boy up the aisle, and then their other daughter with the two little girls coming up the aisle throwing golden leaves on the ground for their sister to walk through as she was escorted by her smiling, proud Dad – Bronson. A different decision by Bronson ten years ago would've made a huge difference on what this family looked like today.





Bronson, Lexie, Haley, Emerson, Adaline and Agness Oeser. Hannah and Tyler Foss

## “WATCH OUT WHEN YOU’RE GARDENING, YOU MIGHT DIG UP THE BONES OF HANNAH GAILEY”



John Gailey (photo) was my Great Great Grandfather on my mother’s side. He was one of the United Brethren converted to the Gospel by Wilford Woodruff and baptized at Benbow Farm in 1842. His sister, Hannah Gailey Jones joined as well. About a year later they came to Nauvoo on a ship. John Gailey’s wife to be, Ann Greaves, and his mother were also on this ship. Hannah (Gailey) Jones had two children with her, Henry and George. Little George, age five, died on the trip and was buried at sea. They all came across the plains to Utah, but not at the same time. When Hannah got to Utah she met and married Jacob Hatch. Hannah’s husband either died or else they were divorced before she came to Nauvoo. Jacob had also been married before, and he had several children. However, when he was being persecuted in Missouri and trying to keep intruders from coming into his home and driving him and his family out, he mistakenly killed his wife instead of the intruder when she went to the door to try to keep the intruder out. So Hannah Gailey Jones married Jacob Hatch in Salt

Lake. Together, they had one daughter named Ellen Hannah Hatch. In 1857 when Brigham Young was getting prepared for Johnston’s Army to come through Salt Lake City, he sent many of the people to nearby settlements so they’d be safe. Hannah and Jacob came to Payson. However, it seems they were separated from each other and Jacob lived with one of his older children in Salem and Hannah and Ellen and her twenty-five-year old son, Henry, lived in a dugout in Payson, almost right where we live now (Elk Ridge). Henry and some younger boys plotted one night to steal some horses and possibly sell them to Johnston’s Army to get some money, but their plot was discovered, and they “*ran from the law*,” which was probably just the local church leaders and perhaps some other locals. They were some angry men who came after Henry. They went to his home (dugout), but only his mother Hannah and Ellen were there. Before they left, they killed Hannah Gailey and someone took Ellen (five years old) to her father. Later on that night, they found Henry and killed him. They put Henry in the dugout with Hannah and knocked it down and that became their grave. There’s a saying that is in a history book written on the town of Payson that says, “*Watch out when you’re gardening. You might dig up the bones of Hannah Gailey!*”

Well, the plot thickens. Ellen was with her father one time and saw George Hancock and said, “*That’s the man who killed Mama.*” But nothing happened then. Ellen (photo) grew up and got married to George Washington Hazelton Brown and lived in Salem. They had ten children, the last one just a baby in 1890. In 1890 there was a trial held for the murder of Hannah Gailey Hatch and among others, Ellen was called up to testify and help identify the man she saw kill her mama when she was just five years old. She was about thirty-five years old in 1890, but again she identified George Hancock as the man who murdered her mama. Well, he was found guilty, but nothing much happened to him. They just didn’t get



around to doing anything - after all, it did take thirty years to get around to having a trial! However, it was only a matter of days after the trial ended that a stranger came through Salem, went to Ellen’s home where she was in the kitchen holding her baby, and the stranger shot her and killed her *in cold blood*. The baby was also wounded and died a few days later. I’m not a detective, but it sure seems like her testimony at the trial made someone mad, and perhaps a hired gunman was sent out to Ellen to even the score. We’ll never know. But I do keep a lookout for Hannah Gailey’s bones when I’m gardening!

Story #8

## “KHIA CON BUOM VANG?” OR “ARE YOU SLEEPING, BROTHER JOHN?” -#9

In 1975 Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese, and Nhon and Bich Tran and their family were among those who needed to escape or be killed or go to prison. He had worked for the United States Government for about fifteen years, and needed help to get his family out. Well, their story of escape, of putting four of their children in an orphanage to be flown out by “*Operation Baby Lift*,” of having to burn the Books of Mormon and Bibles in the very font they had been baptized in, of failing to get help at the U.S. Embassy, of relying on a good Samaritan to help them, of barely making it out of Vietnam on one of the last planes and being shot at while they ascended into the sky, of making contact with the only person he knew in the United States (President Kimball) while on a stop in Guam - well, these and many other miraculous *coincidences*, which are part of their story of escape are all tremendous stories. But perhaps one that I haven't written about already was the time Doug and I and Reed and Beverly



Ogden, left to pick them up at the San Francisco Airport and bring them to Santa Rosa, where they were being sponsored by the good people of our ward. Their family consisted of ten people, so five went with us and five went with Reed and Bev. Well, they were lucky enough to have the father, Nhon, in their car because, after all, he spoke at least five languages. Unfortunately, his wife and children only spoke Vietnamese and Chinese - no English - and they were in our car. We struggled to communicate at first - but as we went up and down the hills of San Francisco, we learned the words “*up*” and “*down*,” and laughed every time we went up and laughed again every time we went down. Then we decided to teach them a song in English. We chose “*Are You Sleeping, Are You Sleeping, Brother John?*” Well, they loved it because they also sang that song in French, like we did, and they also sang it in Vietnamese with the same tune, only their song wasn't about

Brother John, but it was about a Flower - Hoa - just like the name of one of their children. So for the next fifty miles to Santa Rosa, they learned the song in English and we learned their version in Vietnamese.

*Khìa con bướm vàng, Khìa con bướm vàng*

*Xoè đôi cánh, Xoè đôi cánh*

*Trông bướm bay đôi ba vòng, Trông bướm bay đôi ba vòng*

*Trên vườn hoa, Trên vườn hoa*

Well, the Tran family became an extension of our own. We shared many, many home nights together, and taught them wonderful home night games like the relay game where you had to eat whatever was in the sack (like sour lemons). They adjusted pretty fast to us, and we loved to eat Bich Tran's dinners - delicious! I also shared my little baby girl, Christy, with them. They would beg to take her home after church - babies know how to speak everyone's language, and Christy helped all of us adjust to each other (Can you see her in that family photo?)



“HEAVENLY FATHER, IF YOU CAN PART THE RED SEA . . .” #10

Doug and I were the New Zealand Temple Visitors’ Center Directors between 2004 and 2006. 2004 was the Sesquicentennial Celebration in the Church in New Zealand – 150 years since the first missionaries came to New Zealand and brought the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Well, we had done a Sesquicentennial Celebration Pageant in 1997 in Santa Rosa, CA so we decided to take on this huge project again. Back in Santa Rosa, we had a Church visitor speak at *Know Your Religion Series*. He had been the director of the Hill Cumorah Pageant, which is huge. Afterwards, I asked him, “*Is there just one thing you could tell me that would make all the difference in a Pageant?*” And he answered, “*Pre-record everything.*” Well, we did this a little in Santa Rosa, not very successfully, but now in New Zealand we were determined to take his advice. It worked so beautifully, and the performers all mouthed their parts and not one word was lost. The choir was pre-recorded as well, but they were also miked and sang along with themselves. The sound was spectacular! We had videos on one DVD that ran through the whole pageant on a huge screen in the middle of the stage, and every voice of every scene was recorded on this same DVD. In the end, my only job was to put that DVD in the dvd player at the right time and take it out two hours later when the Pageant was over. Well, I knew as well as anyone else that homemade DVDs can stop or stick or do any other weird thing at any given time. There were no mikes on the stage except for the choir (just in case the DVD stuck and the performers had to do it themselves.) So during those two hours, I prayed – solidly the whole time – “*Heavenly Father, if you can part the Red Sea, you can keep this DVD going.*” Otherwise the performers would be *dead in the water*. 4,000 people came to see the Pageant over two weekends, four performances. 400 people were in it. It really was fabulous, but I’ve never been so glad to have anything over with as I was that. Every morning before a performance I would check the DVD on our new equipment in the Visitors’ Center to see if it was still running okay, and sure enough, every time it would stick, but no sir, not during any of the performances! I do have a testimony that Heavenly Father DID part that Red Sea so the Israelites could cross on dry ground (and not be *dead in the water*). I believe in answers to prayers - and particularly mine.





In 1962 I flew with my parents to Australia. They were called as building missionaries (for three plus years), and I simply went with them in the hopes that I would get a mission call to serve in Australia as well. I wouldn't turn twenty-one for six more months. We arrived in Sydney first, and while Dad was getting instructions on his first assignment, Mama and I decided to tour the Sydney Zoo – one of the most famous in the world. Well, I soon deserted my mother because this very handsome young Australian man started talking to me, and Mama didn't want to cramp my style so she walked either ahead or behind us, pretending she didn't know me. I spent about an hour talking to this fellow, but something quite unexpected happened. I was wearing a blue dress with a square cut neck in the back (photo), and suddenly, in the middle of our conversation, a bird flew over

and left a little surprise right on my back! I didn't know what to do, so I just pretended it didn't happen and kept walkin' and talkin'. I made sure he couldn't see my back. Finally, I decided I had to do something and tell him. I did a little play-acting (I wouldn't call it a lie) and all of a sudden went, *"Whoops! Oh my goodness, I think a bird just sent a dropping on my back."* He looked and sure enough, there it was! He got a big leaf from a tree and wiped it off, but I was sure he wondered why it was a bit dry and not fresh out of the bird:) I made no explanation, but decided I needed to leave and find my mother. I hoped he would forget that he ever met me, but now I'm wondering if he's telling the same story to his grandchildren, starting with, *"You wouldn't believe what this silly American girl pretended . . ."*

"I'VE BEEN WAITING ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD LONG ENOUGH" - #12



We were living in Scotland when we heard of the death of our Southern Australian Mission President, Bruce R. McConkie. He died on the 19th of April 1985. To the rest of the world he was Elder McConkie because he was one of the Twelve Apostles, but to us, he's always been *"President."* Our children have heard us talk about him, praise him, tell stories about him, express our love for him over and over again. I know some of them are tired of hearing about him and probably *"turn us off"* when we start talking, but President McConkie, in fact, has had a huge impact on mine and Doug's lives. He had a wonderful sense of humor, but when he talked about the Gospel, he was solemn and serious, and we paid attention. His last testimony of the Gospel given at General Conference just a couple of weeks before he died is one of the most powerful sermons ever given at that pulpit. I listen to it at least once a year if not more often. But the story I want to tell is about his mother. This was told to us at a missionary reunion by Sister Amelia McConkie, his wife. President McConkie had cancer, but wanted to be healed. Every morning he would get out of bed, make it, get dressed, and sit on his bed. He was too weak to go anywhere, but he wanted to face the day fully dressed and ready to go. Elder Boyd K. Packer visited him and gave him

a Priesthood blessing, telling him that his time was at hand, that the Lord was calling him home. After that, he got out of bed every morning, made the bed, and sat on it, but stayed in his pajamas. A few days before dying, his 96-year-old mother visited him and matter of factly said, *"Bruce, in a few days you'll be on the other side, and you will see your father. When you talk to him, I want you to tell him that I've been waiting on the side of the road long enough, and it's time for him to come and get me."* She was in good health and attending the temple every week, but three weeks after President McConkie died, on the 14th of May 1985, his mother followed him to the other side.



## OUR TIME ON EARTH . . . . IS UP - #13

This memorable event happened about six or seven years ago (not sure). It is now 2020. Doug and I were on a normal trip over to Tooele to visit Russ and Kari. It was a beautiful clear day so we decided to go the back route, turning off I-15 at Pioneer Crossing in American Fork. There are very few cars on this road – ever! But it's narrow, just two lanes and not much road surface on the edges. Sometimes it's a drop into the sagebrush and other times the earth is even with the road. We were clipping along at the top speed allowed, and in the distance ahead of us was a truck coming towards us. For some reason he was on our side of the road. We kept going as normal because we were sure he'd get over on his own side. *But was he asleep? Was it a new driver? Did he want to play chicken?* Soon (very soon), we were on a collision course because he hadn't moved an inch towards his side, so Doug reacted quickly and edged over on his side, the opposite lane, because it was a big drop if we went off the edge at the right. At that very moment the truck also decided to get in his own right lane. Doug quickly turned back to our lane, and we missed each other by an inch, if that. It all happened so fast, we didn't even see who was driving, but we were convinced they were playing a game of *chicken*. The strangest thing, however, was that neither Doug nor I were panicked, but honestly felt like this was IT – our time on earth was up. It seemed like such a strange, unlikely way for us to go, but in an instant we actually thought we were on our way . . . I just hoped I had on clean underwear when they found me!



## A MOTHER'S SILENCE IS THE WORST PUNISHMENT OF ALL - #14



Mama never got really nice and expensive things, but she bought this table that we all thought was beautiful. It was a coffee table made out of wrought iron and glass. The glass was a thick kind of opaque - the bigger rectangle piece was on the top and the smaller piece of glass on the bottom, and she displayed it in front of the living room couch. She hadn't even put anything on it yet, not even a magazine because it was so pretty. Well, in that same room was my Dad's favorite chair and in the corner was a new TV (about 1953). Cheril and I loved to sit in my Dad's chair during the week while he was gone. The TV was on and Cheril was sitting in Dad's chair watching her favorite show, "*I Love Lucy*." Well, I wanted to sit in the chair so I changed the

channel to a show I wanted to watch, "*American Bandstand*" with Dick Clark, and when Cheril got up to change it back, I got in the chair. She changed the channel back, so I got up to change it back again, and she got in the chair. We kept doing this three or four more times. Then the last time, Cheril got really mad at me, took me by the arm and swung me out of the chair and across the room. I went twirling and lost my balance and went down hard right through both layers of that beautiful glass table. It made a terrific noise of glass breaking. We both were motionless as Mama came down the stairs to see what happened – Cheril standing with a look of surprise on her face and me sitting amidst all that glass with my arms and legs dangling over the wrought iron frame. There was a look on Mama's face that I'll never forget. She was so disgusted and disappointed in the two of us, and so hurt to think we had ruined this beautiful table of hers, she couldn't say a word, but turned around and walked back up the stairs. I don't remember getting even one cut from the glass – it was a smooth break – but that look on Mama's face and her silence was a punishment that I'll never forget. I actually have that table in my home now. The wrought iron has stood the test of time – over sixty-five years – and the glass has been replaced any number of times. Now, I'm the one protecting it, and I get upset if any of the grandchildren even think of sitting or standing on it! If it broke, I'd be hurt, disgusted and so disappointed, I wouldn't be able to say even a word.

## OUR THANKSGIVING TURKEY (1949) - #15

So. . .my mother was the real story teller. I've told this story over and over to my children and grandchildren, especially when they want to hear stories of Grandma James when we're sitting by her graveside on Memorial Day. But nobody can tell it like my mother! In her words:

Our ward was having an auction in the intersection of Cherry Lane and Elm Street in Provo. The Auctioneer was in good form and it was great to see a one dollar handbag sell for ten dollars, etc. Then suddenly the man up front held up a huge turkey donated by Brother Joel Barlow (county agent). Bids were coming in fast when Cecil became a contender. "Fifteen dollars!" Cecil bid seventeen – eighteen – then twenty, and up and up. Finally Cecil was victorious and received a fine plump turkey and only one week until Thanksgiving. Cecil then took off for Wyoming, leaving the high priced bird with us girls in Provo.

But "where to put it?" – that was our problem. Finally we decided on the basement. The second problem was "what shall we feed it?" We decided on rolled oats. We dutifully placed water and oats a few feet from our huge bird. He did not move, but we knew he would when he got hungry enough. Early the next morning we decided to see if all was well in the basement. It wasn't! *Old Handsome* hadn't even moved – hadn't touched his oats. We decided he was sick and called Brother Ashton. He promised to come up and look at *Mr. Tom* as soon as he could. That evening he walked over to the bird, picked him up and said, "Your turkey is hobbled!" He cut the cords holding his legs together and lo and behold the turkey started to eat. We were doing all right now.

Then the day before Thanksgiving Day arrived, and nobody was willing to decapitate the creature. We girls, Joyce, Cheril, Cecile and I, took it out in the back yard, sharpened the ax and then tried to gather courage – no luck. Nobody seemed to care whether we had turkey or not, but company was coming and someone just had to swing the ax. Joyce agreed to hold its head, I was to swing – I did – it jerked – Joyce let go, and I missed. We reversed the order, and Joyce missed, but not entirely. The whole bird started to run, flip flopping his head around the yard, throwing turkey blood all over the place. We chased after him – turkeys are very strong, much stronger than one might imagine. Finally, he stopped dead and the fowl deed was done – only the picking, stuffing and baking left. The feathers refused to leave their place of growth. We pulled and pulled. Finally we got a pair of pliers and eventually succeeded after hours of straining in getting the feathers off, but it certainly was not beautifully clean like we expect birds to be when we buy a frozen one!

But alas and alack, when we came to the viscera (the innards), we discovered blood clots in the lungs. We made another call to Brother Ashton who asked us how we had killed it, and sight unseen he said, "Well, Sister James, I'm sure the turkey just breathed in blood when it was flapping around." This sounded logical, so we filled the cavity, placed him in a roaster, then finally, weak and weary, we slowly climbed the stairs for bed. Tomorrow was the day – the big holiday – and children would be coming home to celebrate.



Lucie, Cheril, Joyce, Alan, Lorna, Cecil, Cecile  
and "Old Handsome" - Thanksgiving 1949



## A PERSON OF GREAT IMPORTANCE HAS JUST ARRIVED IN SCOTLAND! - #16



Christmastime 1985 at the airport in Scotland was a memorable experience. Our first child to leave the nest to go off to school was coming home for Christmas, so with a great deal of excitement we all piled into our Volkswagen Bus and drove

the ten minutes from Ratho that it took to get to the airport. When we got there, the place was crowded and a big line of motorcycles were in front forming a mo-

torcade for someone important. We just assumed they had all heard about Russ coming home! We crowded into the airport with everyone else and could barely see the person in the middle of the crowd. He had a birthmark on his head . . . and oh my goodness, it was Mikhail Gorbachev- the new leader of the Soviet Union!! At the same time, coming through the crowd, was Russ, so all of us, plus many other friends who also met us there, started hooting and hollering, waving “welcome home” signs and making noise like crazy. A woman tapped me on the shoulder. She had no idea what all the excitement at the airport was and wanted to know who of importance was here. And I answered, “Why, it’s Russ Scribner. He just flew in from America.” She looked a bit bewildered, but stretched her neck to get a good look at him. In the meantime, Gorbachev was leaving the airport and joining the motorcade that would take him into Edinburgh. We basically only saw the top of his head and barely saw his face every now and again through the crowd, and also saw his wife – pretty exciting actually. However, the woman who tapped on my shoulder never took her eyes off of this Russ Scribner who had just arrived from America!



## 16TH BIRTHDAY SURPRISE (?) PARTY - #17

Everyone wants to remember their 16th Birthday. For sure, I will never forget mine. Parties were often held at our home in Provo (the Utah house). It had a wonderful yard, patios that provided a *floor* for dancing, a table under a rose arbor where many could sit and feast, and big trees that provided shadows all over the lawn so we could play, “*Shadow In the Dark.*” It took a lot of work to keep this place clean and pretty. By the time I was fourteen, this yard and house had to be kept up by Mama, Cheril and me. Well, for my 16th Birthday, my friends called my mother and wanted to surprise me – they wanted a party at our house and our yard. The task was far too big for my mother, so she had to *unsurprise* me, and tell me my friends were coming over so I could help her get the house and yard in order. We spent one whole day on the house, and another day on the yard (these were ten hour days). But I promised Mama that I would act surprised when everyone came. We put the finishing touches on the yard the third day, I put on a muu muu, then I laid down in my room for a pretend nap. Right on schedule, my room was filled with my friends saying “*Surprise!!!*” I did a good job of acting surprised (I think), and I have to say that I was so happy that they saw my room and the rest of the house totally clean. I did make sure that I put some eyebrows and lipstick on before they came – well, I would never take a nap without my “*face on*” – would you?

(Photo - the dress I made for my sixteenth birthday)



“JACK AND MARY LOIS” - #18



Jack Wheatley died on the 31st of October 2020, seven years after his wife Mary Lois died. He was 92 and she was 86. He was a great philanthropist, charitable in every sense of the word. He and Mary Lois were instrumental in the creation of the Museum of Art at BYU and in funding the acquisition of the Museum’s signature piece by Carl Bloch, *Healing at the Pool of Bethesda*. Mary Lois’ own works of art were featured at the Museum in an exhibition in 2003. They both had a great love of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – served as Mission President in Denver, Colorado, and they both served a later mission in Portugal. He was an extremely successful contractor and builder – homes, subdivisions, apartment buildings, civic buildings, churches, schools, hospitals, and was one of the builders of the Oakland Temple, where four of our children were married. I guess they had many different titles, including his as Mayor of Palo Alto, but to us they’ve always been *Jack and Mary Lois*. Their lives were dedicated to helping others – and we were two very grateful recipients of that love and care. When Doug and I were newlyweds (1964), we had \$2500 school debt, \$400 that we owed my brother for a car, and in our seventh month of marriage we had a stillborn child, and that hospital cost was \$1000 – plus our beautiful Brittany Spaniel, Boots, (a wedding gift from Cheril) was hit and killed by a car in Palo Alto, California, where we lived. We were

swarming in debt and drowning in sadness. Jack and Mary Lois were in our ward, and they offered an opportunity for us to dig out of our debt and to be actively engaged in a worthy cause! They wanted us (and trusted us) to watch their five children for six weeks while they went on a trip to Europe. We moved out of our rented house, moved into theirs, used their money to feed their children and us, used their car and money for gas, enjoyed their cleaning lady to sparkle the home every weekend and change all the sheets, and had the most wonderful time with their children, and I prayed that one day I would have a beautiful child like their little toddler Charles (I ended up with eight of them). The cleaning lady kept the windows so clean that you never knew whether they were open or shut. One day, Robert Wheatley, came running down the stairs at full speed and ran right through the glass door that went outside. It splintered into a million pieces, but Robert sailed through without a cut. At another time, one of the children got burned with a small firecracker. We felt the weight of our responsibilities. When the Wheatleys got home, we stayed on for another couple of weeks to do the cooking while Mary Lois visited her mother in Salt Lake. On top of it all, they paid us \$600 for baby-sitting and living in all that luxury! They also introduced us to other friends who hired us for baby-sitting, and we became debt free in one year – we even had money in savings for a down payment for a home. Oh, the freedom we felt!! A greater lesson could not have been taught to us at that time. During that same period, Jack became our Bishop, and we continued to be recipients of his great kindness and trust. Jack and Mary Lois became a light on the hill for both of us – a great example of goodness and charity. Did you hear a bell ring this Halloween (could have been a doorbell)? That was when Jack died and another angel got his wings.



JACK, MARY LOIS, VICTORIA, JOHN, ELIZABETH, CHARLES AND ROBERT - PALO ALTO, CA



ROBERT AND CHARLES WHEATLEY AND CECILE PLAYING WITH OUR NEW PUPPY, SKIPPER (FROM CHERIL AGAIN)

## GOING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS - #19

About ten days before Christmas 1980, I received a call from my brother, Tom. *"If you want to see mother alive, you need to come right now."* I bought a ticket and flew from California to Utah that very night, arriving about midnight. Right in the process of descending from the sky to the runway, our plane lifted up again because the fog was too thick to see the ground. It was frightening. For the next couple of hours, we joined several other airliners in the air which were circling from Provo to Salt Lake, all at different altitudes, until they could get each one landed by salting the clouds and producing a small *window* for each plane to come through and land. It took another couple of hours to drive through the heavy fog and get to the hospital in Provo. Mama was seemingly in a coma- she'd had a stroke and was paralyzed on one side. I stayed with her the rest of the night. Each day seemed about the same, and the days were getting closer to Christmas. She wasn't on any machines, but her condition didn't change. Each night before going to bed, Dad, Lois and I would kneel while Dad offered a prayer, pleading for Mama's life. Each day Dad was by Mama's side telling her how he'd move her bed downstairs by the fireplace to keep her warm and he would take care of her. I guess I never before realized how much he loved her, but it was evident through his prayers and his words. I thought the children were the most important in her life, but at the end, it seemed it was her relationship with Dad that mattered most. After several days, I went into her hospital room – I was in tears, knowing I'd never see her alive again and I pleaded for her to help me make a decision – I wanted to stay with her to the end, and yet I had seven children at home in California waiting for Christmas that would arrive in less than a week. As I wept and begged for help in this decision, in what seemed to be her comatose state, she raised her unparalyzed arm. I hurriedly rushed to the other side of the bed to hold her hand, but as I did so, she pushed me away with all the force she could muster. She did this three times. I knew what her answer was – *"Go home and be with your children – I will be okay."* It was so hard to do, but I kissed her on the cheek and said, *"Goodbye,"* knowing we would both be *"Going Home for Christmas."* A strange thing happened. While I was back home in California, word came that Mama was *"coming to"* and starting to use her arms to write messages on a blackboard such as, *"Water – Provo Water."* She was thirsty. I was a bit perplexed. I just knew I had seen her for the last time. Nevertheless, on Christmas Day, as we opened our gifts, Doug took videos, particularly as each child opened their homemade gift from Grandma. We planned to get this video to her to let her know how much we loved and appreciated her. The day after Christmas, another phonecall. Mama had had another stroke – this time, massive. The doctor warned the family that she would most likely be comatose for three months or more because she had a strong heart – the heart of a younger woman. Yet, she would be in a vegetable state – her brain was gone. I realized that it's possible for a person to determine for themselves when they should pass on. Mama didn't want to ruin anyone's Christmas – they should all be home with their families. But now with the festivities over, she could go. When I knelt that night to offer my personal prayer, I pleaded with Heavenly Father to take her now and not let her exist here on earth just to exist. She was too vibrant and too alive and needed to be with other people, particularly her family on the other side, whom I knew she was anxious to see. I found out the next day that the family in Utah were all praying for the same thing at the same time I was on my knees in prayer. They had gone into Mama's room in the hospital, and Dad asked Dick to bless her and ask Heavenly Father to take her. Dick didn't think he could offer such a prayer, but Dad was insisting. Another miracle took place at this moment. Dick had probably used his Priesthood power hundreds of times in giving blessings. He'd been a Bishop three times, but later he told us that he never understood the power of the Priesthood like he did that night. In the midst of his prayer he realized that all he had to say to Mama was, *"Be healed,"* and she would *be healed.* At the same time he got a very strong impression from above that her time was up, and he should let her go. It was the Lord's will. That's the prayer he finally offered. We knew she wouldn't have to wait those three months to die. Back in California, I was just lying in bed, eyes wide open, waiting for someone to call me and tell me she was gone. The call came three hours later at 3 a.m. *"Mother is gone – she's gone home for Christmas."*

*God took her hand and led her  
To her heavenly home above  
Where freed from pain she waits  
To welcome us with love*

(Grandma Howard – 1933)



*Cecil, Lucie and Dick (1975) - Richard Snow in background*

I didn't want much in life – just a marriage in the Temple to the right man, six perfect children, a load of grandchildren, no real hardships like sickness, and all my children and grandchildren and husband active in the Gospel from the beginning of their lives to the end, and enough money to buy necessities, like food, college, missions wedding receptions and summer vacations. I was the baby of the family and my siblings were everything to me – I wanted their love, their acceptance, their approval. Tom was eleven years older, but I admired him so much – *“Oh please, let me marry someone just like him.”* Well, I had a chance for marriage right before I left on my mission, but the desire to go to Australia was overpowering, so I made a choice. And there was another fellow I was writing to on my mission – I thought that might go somewhere, but it didn't. And *out of the blue* I got another proposal from a fellow missionary when I returned, but I hadn't even really dated him - I was confused. Then I bumped into Doug just two weeks or so after returning from my mission. I really liked him – and had a strong feeling that he was the *one* - or, could be. However, it was obvious that my siblings (whose opinions I respected greatly) weren't so caught up with my choice. Well, they hardly ever saw him because he was studying to pass his last semester of Graduate School, but they had plenty to judge him on: he was from California, not Utah - he wasn't a hunter, fisherman, or horseman - he wasn't born in the Church, he was a convert - he wasn't going to bring any height into our family, etc. Right before our Temple marriage, I was smothering with doubts and prayed fervently for some heavenly help to let me know I was doing the right thing – after all, this was for eternity! That help came right before I was about to say *“no”* as we were kneeling across the altar, and I said *“yes”* instead (June 2, 1964). As luck would have it, I got pregnant (the honeymoon, I'm sure) and was well on my way to having those six kids. Doug left to California when I was about two months along – he left to find us a place to live and to start his new job at Hewlett-Packard so we could start living happily ever after (August 1964). I stayed with Tom and Roberta for a week. On my last night there, Tom came home very late. I was still up and made a huge mistake by criticizing Tom (*what that was for is not so important and after all, I was the baby of the family and shouldn't have opinions anyway!*), but Tom lashed back at me in his defense and said some things that made me cry. We were both out of line. I left on the plane the next day, eyes red from crying all night, and even wondering if I was married to the right person, and why was I carrying his baby? Life went on – we were struggling financially - our *“happily ever after”* wasn't happening yet, and I swore I'd never speak to Tom again. However, that decision was eating my insides out. Then on January 2, 1965 pains started and Doug rushed me to the hospital. It was too early to have the baby, but I was hemorrhaging badly. The baby wasn't in birth position, but was turned crosswise, and even with instruments they couldn't get the baby to turn and give birth, but worst of all the placenta gave birth (placenta prevea) – my first little boy, Scott Alan (named after my nephew and Uncle) had lost his lifeline and died within my body. They finally got him out through a C-section. My parents were in Australia finishing their mission, so I had no Mother to understand my sorrow and help me to really cry. I was in the hospital for a full week recovering. Amidst all this sadness, I did get a phonecall. The first one I got. It was from my brother Tom. He told me how sorry he was, and he apologized for hurting me and asked for my forgiveness. And I quickly answered, *“No, no – it was my fault. You need to forgive me.”* And then the floodgates opened, and I couldn't stop crying. I don't remember much of the pain and sorrow anymore of losing my first child. but the relief and joy I felt from that phonecall from Tom stayed in my memory – even now I can feel it. *Tragedy or Destiny?*



*Tom and Cecile ) - by Utah House, 1965*

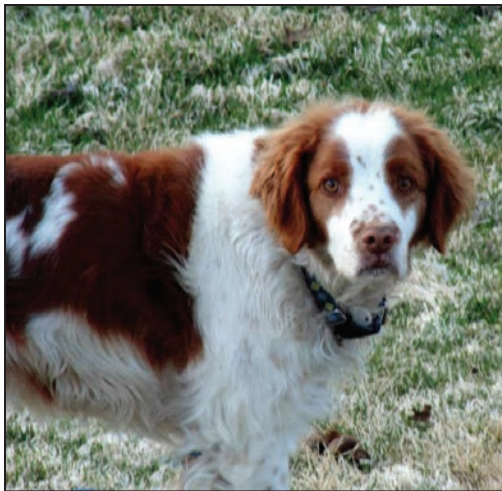
## TARANTULAS ARE DANGEROUS, HAIRY, BUT SLOW MOVING - #21

Our home in Utah had this big floodlight. This home was also surrounded by big trees – an apple tree, cherry tree, evergreen trees, and other big trees with no names. With the floodlight on, these trees would cast huge shadows everywhere. Quite often, at nine o'clock in the summer evenings, when it finally got dark, my friends and I would gather at my house, turn on the big flood light, and play *Shadow in the Dark*. We all wore dark clothes. And we simply turned the game of *Hide and Seek* into *Shadow In the Dark*. The rules were the same, only our hiding places were in these big shadows. When the person who was “it” discovered who it was in the shadow, they'd race that person back to home base and say, “1-2-3 for Mary” or “1-2-3 for Cecile,” etc. Well, this one night I was well hidden in a shadow under the apple tree, lying flat on my stomach, and pretty close to home base. I didn't budge an inch while waiting for the moment to run in and say, “free.” The only thing, I suddenly realized there was this HUGE, hairy tarantula spider about a foot in front of me. I knew tarantulas were dangerous, but also slow moving, not like black widow spiders that travel like lightning (so frightening), so I just kept an eye on it and stayed frozen as I watched it slowly travel across my pathway to home base. You can bet there was some adrenalin flowing (cuz I was so close to winning!), so I refused to let a little hick-up like a big hairy, tarantula ruin my chance to run in and say, “free!”



## LOCOMOKO (2005 - 23 JANUARY 2021) - #22

Doug and I came home from our mission to New Zealand in 2006. A lot of our family were there to meet us, and Christy and her family were staying right in our home for a few weeks.



Christy felt a bit sad for her children because we had always had a dog for the kids to play with, but now we were dogless - and she had three toddlers. So, we looked in the paper and found a Brittany Spaniel for \$300 – it was an outrageous price we thought for a dog, but this one WAS full bred – not quite like the mutts we had bred and sold for \$5.00. And this one looked just like Skipper, a Brittany that we had had for over fifteen years. We bought the puppy, the kids got to play with him for a week or so, and then they left, and we were stuck with the puppy/dog forever. He got the Maori name of Moko because of the freckles on his face (Maori face and body tattoos were called *Mokos*). Well, the shenanigans that we went through these last fifteen years - I'll just skip and get right to the one that *takes the cake* – literally!!!! On the Saturday after Thanksgiving in 2018, Moko jumped the five-foot fence in the pen (a

normal occurrence) and ran up the street – about four houses up from us. He ran into their garage, ran through their doggy door and jumped up with his paws on the kitchen counter and took one of their pumpkin pies. He then ran outside with it and ate the whole thing. Up to this point, no one had seen him, and no one would've suspected him of stealing and eating, and he would've gotten off scott-free, but he went in for seconds!!! And that's when he got caught! Red handed! We got a message on our phone, “Your dog has eaten our Thanksgiving pies:(” Well, we did feel bad (after we stopped laughing) and we did go right to Costco and replace them with a big pumpkin pie and a cheesecake – however, not homemade (the way Moko likes them). This by far is the best of the 500 Moko stories we could tell (unless we told you about the time he ran from Scott's house, with Scotty right behind him on a bicycle, and then ran into the main stream of traffic on Orem's State Street, got hit by a car, flew twenty feet through the air, and then jumped up and ran back home to Scott's house – don't ask. . . .)

## NOT A MIRACLE, I SUPPOSE. . .BUT VERY VERY CLOSE - #23

I could tell you many things about my first trip to the Hill Cumorah Pageant in the State of New York – something spiritual, something quite stupid that I did, something a bit romantic, something challenging. However, I think I will stick with just one thing – it has stayed with me all these years. Back in 1961 the Hill Cumorah Pageant was put on by all the missionaries serving in that mission, plus three busloads of girls who were brought from the West to join those missionaries. We were the performers - and our audience each night would be several thousand people. For most of us, our performance took very little time to learn, so we basically spent every day for about a week and a half in a study group – and the full-time Elders would teach us the missionary discussions, and we would memorize them and try to present them back to the Elders. Every now and again (about two or three times in the week) we were called out of our study groups and had to go on the hill and practice our “scene.” I was a wicked Nephite in the *Samuel the Lamanite Scene* and got to be part of the antagonizers who threw stones and arrows and tried to kill Samuel who was preaching on the wall. Many stories from the *Book of Mormon* were portrayed during the performance, but our little group only prepared for this one scene and also the closing scene, which portrayed the Savior coming from the sky after his resurrection and the hill filling up with people as they were going up to meet him. This was magnificent! Thrilling! I was basically



a nobody in this pageant, but every night I could hardly wait to be in this last scene, and feel what it might be like to greet the Savior one day. It took place on a moonless night, and you couldn't see where the hill met the sky. A special kind of black material that absorbed light was behind the actor who portrayed the Savior, so when a spotlight went on him, it appeared as though he was descending out of heaven. I often think of this, and can still get slight shivers the same as I felt on those nights – and I reflect on what a marvelous thing it will be at the Savior's Second Coming, and how marvelous it will be for those who get to witness it – perhaps some of my grandchildren will be there! But I already think I know what it will look like . . . Oh . . . unless it happens at noon. . .

## YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT MEN AND THOSE KILTS! -#24

The last year we were living in Scotland (1987) we were determined to make it to the REAL Scottish Games held in Dunoon. The weather that day was absolutely the worst we had ever witnessed in Scotland (and that's saying something). We were in our Volkswagen Bus, and our good friends (the Reynolds Family, also American, and also with a big family - of twelve) were in their big van, and we were following each other to the ferry that would carry all of us over to Dunoon. The rain was blinding and the wind was so fierce that we thought it would literally pick up our van and place us in the next lane. Well, we made it to the games, and all the bands were playing those bagpipes in the rain, the dancers kept slipping and falling on wet stages, but nevertheless the Games went on! Nothing stops in Scotland because of the weather. My friend, Sydney Reynolds and I were standing at the bottom of this small hill, and lo and behold we saw on the top of the hill this Scotsman, a band member, but now filled with more than his share of liquor, trying to balance himself as he tried to maneuver down the muddy hill. He caught our attention and I said to Sydney, “*I think we are about to find out what men wear under those kilts!*” Sure enough, this man did not disappoint us. He slipped and started to slide down the hill, topsy turvy, his kilt flying over his face, leaving the unspeakable exposed. Sydney and I just smiled and felt greatly rewarded. It was true! No more guessing and imagining. What they say is TRUE!



“A RAY OF SUNSHINE POURED DOWN UPON US” - #25

There have been many times that I felt the spirit working on me and allowed me to be part of a *Miracle*. I joined the Kia Ora Club at BYU in 1959 while I was still in high school. I guess I was an honorary member because my sister, Cheril, was there and I just went with her – and besides, they held a lot of parties in our home! I had squatting rights! In 1960, I was an official member because I was now a freshman in college and old enough. At the end of that year, we joined with the BYU Program Bureau and went together on one big bus on a program bureau tour, putting on performances all across the United States. On one occasion on the tour, we had travelled through the night in order to arrive in New York on time. We were scheduled to go to Palmyra and see



the Sacred Grove that morning. I was a natural for recording histories (yes, even when I was young) and woke up early (about 6 a.m.), sat on the step by the bus driver and worked on the history of our tour. We were on a big freeway, divided by this huge ravine from the traffic going the other way. It was raining pretty hard. Suddenly, a tire blew on the bus and we were headed down the ravine. Fortunately, everyone was asleep so the passengers were distributed evenly on the bus, which helped to keep the bus from rolling. It was only a matter of seconds and this bus driver managed to keep us upright as we headed down the ravine and came to a stop with a big maple tree about two inches in front of us. We waited three



hours for another bus to come pick us up. So after we piled into a new bus, we were at the Sacred Grove in just fifteen minutes. The rain was still pouring down. Nevertheless, the bus driver allowed us to run up this muddy and grassy road, see the Sacred Grove, and run back. In just a minute or two, we were in the Grove and stood in this one particular spot. It was so beautiful and peaceful. As we gathered there, the clouds above us literally cleared away in a small circle pattern, and a ray of sunshine poured down through the trees upon us. We made our own circle in this spot and bowed our heads and someone voiced a prayer of gratitude for all of us. While it was clear and *rainless* above us, we each took turns bearing our testimony of the reality of God and His Son, and the reality of their appearance to the Prophet Joseph Smith in or near the spot where we were standing, and also for expressing gratitude for our lives that day. Everyone's heart was touched and all of us were in tears as we stood on this sacred ground. After twenty minutes of testimony bearing, the clouds gathered in just seconds and started pouring down water again. We got soaked to the bone in those couple of minutes that it took to reach the bus, but all of us had witnessed and felt the Spirit touching our hearts. To us, we knew we were all part of a few miracles that morning and knew we were blessed to be alive.



*Not good quality, but this is the actual black and white photo I took while in the Sacred Grove in 1960*

## “DON’T TAKE YOUR EYES OFF SPENCER FOR EVEN FIVE MINUTES!” - #26

Spencer was born in 1978, and we’ve been telling this story for almost forty years. It never gets old! As a toddler we called him the “*Destroying Angel*.” We were crazy about him, and he was just this quiet little boy who mostly just nodded his head and blinked his eyes when you asked him a question. How could such a sweet little boy create havoc? Well, he did – over and over again. When we hired a baby-sitter, we cautioned her, “*Promise you will not take your eyes off Spencer for more than five minutes!*” Perhaps the honey story is the best, but if I ever run out of stories, I’ll come back and tell you the one about the faucet. This one evening after dinner, we were all busy here and there –kids doing homework, and I was just about to start cleaning up the kitchen, but left for just *five minutes*. I had a bottle of honey by the sink – all melted and runny and delicious. It was a full quart bottle and it was open. Spencer pushed a chair right up to the sink and picked up that bottle to see inside. It started dripping all over him, all over the chair and the garbage sack that was next to the chair. After pouring quite a bit out, he left it on the counter, climbed off the chair and started walking through the kitchen, then through the hallway by the staircase, then around the corner into Russ and Craig’s bedroom – dripping gobs of honey off his body all the way. Russ was always happy to see Spencer, so when he came into his room, Russ stopped his homework and picked up Spencer to play with him. As soon as he discovered this sticky honey all over Spencer, and now all over him, he threw him on the bed getting honey all over the bedding, etc. It was the worst sticky mess . . . everywhere! Almost everything eventually cleaned up, going over it and over it for several weeks, but the carpet in the hallway never was normal again. We had to pull it up, and install a wood floor because the carpet was too old to match. Yes, we continued to love him and we continued to tell babysitters, “*Don’t take your eyes off Spencer for even five minutes.*”



## AMBASSADOR ROBERT R. KING - #27



So. . .you didn’t think I knew any really important people – big whigs. Well, I know Bob King. He served as Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights Issues at the Department of State (2009-2017) under President Obama. He secured the release of an American citizen being held in North Korea, and represented the United States at the United Nations in Geneva and New York on North Korean issues. He’s held many more important titles. You might start to guess how I know him. Well, he and his wife and children are active Latter-day Saints, he was born in 1942 (eleven months after I was born), and he was born in Rock Springs, Wyoming (oh. . . now we’re making a connection), he got his Bachelor’s Degree from Brigham Young University, served a mission from 1961 to 1963 in the New England Mission (same years I served in Australia). And he was in Provo, Utah at BYU when I got home from my mission. We knew each other because of our Rock Springs,

Wyoming connection. He was the first boy to ask me on a date when I got home from Australia in October 1963. I had been traveling home from the other side of the world for two weeks, changing time zones all the time as I traveled to Townsville (Australia – to say good-bye to my parents), New Zealand, Fiji, Samoa and Hawaii. I didn’t know what was day and what was night. Bob called and wanted to take me to a movie. He didn’t have a car, so we walked from my house (by the MTC) all the way down to the Paramount Theater on Center Street, and guess what we saw? – *Lawrence of Arabia!* It was the loooonnnngggest movie I’ve ever seen - Ol’ Lawrence traveled through that Arabian desert forever! And I fell sound asleep. I was so tired – and Bob walked me all the way back home. I guess he didn’t think I was a very impressive date, falling sound asleep and all, cuz he never asked me out again . . .oh well. . . Too bad I didn’t get a good-night kiss to remember him by all these years - but I did hold his hand (well, I hope I did!).



Elder Robert R. King



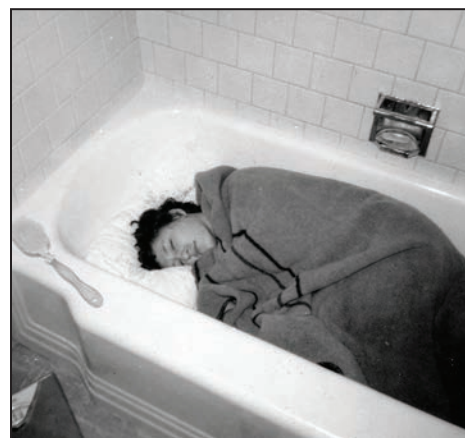
## YOUNG COWS IN NEW ZEALAND – YOU WON’T BELIEVE THIS, BUT IT’S TRUE! - #28

Yes, Yes, I know you believe there are young cows (calves) in New Zealand – everyone knows that – there are thousands! However, you won’t believe what I’m going to tell you, but it’s true – cross my heart! In 2004, Doug and I attended a Zone Conference with a bunch of young missionaries and a few older couples like us. Our Mission President, President Smibert, challenged each of us to find someone to talk to within the first six minutes after we left our house the next morning. Well, most mornings I got up early, about 5:30 a.m., and walked up to the New Zealand Temple and met some other ladies to walk with. I didn’t pass a soul on the way up to meet them the next morning, but I was thinking positively about the challenge, and my six minutes were just about up. Across from the temple is a cow farm, so as I passed this area, there were some young calves there who also got up early in the morning, like I did. So, I turned to them and said, *“Gather round folks, I’ve got something important to tell you.”* Well these calves all walked towards me and bunched up in the shape of a triangle – it looked like a perfect triangle to me – just as perfect as that triangle that forms the balls at the beginning of a billiard game. One cow by me was the point of the triangle and the others formed behind him. There were about fifty or sixty calves. Their ears perked up, their eyes were wide open with wonder, they were quiet as could be - they were motionless as they stood there staring at me - just waiting for that important message. Well, I was not shy. I stood my ground, and the preacher in me took over. *“It’s good to be with you this morning, and I want to bear witness to you that I know this Church is true. I know Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God, and I know positively that the Book of Mormon is the word of God, another witness of Jesus Christ. And I want to take this moment to thank each one of you ahead of time for the great and delicious sacrifice you will most likely make in the future in my behalf.”* When I was finished, I walked away and the triangle broke up and they went back to their breakfast. I swear on my great grandmother’s grave that this happened exactly as I told you! Oh, if I just had had a photo you’d believe me, but it just didn’t seem right to take a photo right in the middle of a good sermon.



## NO ROOM IN THE INN - #29

Years ago, when I was a teenager, I’d been on a date and came home rather late (after midnight). Dick and Lorna and their family were visiting from Rock Springs, and Lois and Carl and their family were visiting from Brigham City, and we also had boarders. When the families arrived for a weekend like that, I knew that my little bedroom (only big enough for one single bed and a small dresser) would be the first to be taken. So I didn’t even try to venture in there to check it out. In fact, I was tip-toeing around bodies everywhere – they were on couches in the den and living room, and on the floor with pillows and blankets. I didn’t want to turn on any lights and wake anyone. Apparently, I was out with a pretty *safe* boy because my mother wasn’t even awake waiting up for me. I knew there were some blankets and pillows in the cupboard above the fridge, so that’s where I tip-toed. I couldn’t figure out where to lay my tired body and head, so I went upstairs and made myself a nice comfortable bed in the tub in the bathroom. In those days, I was able to sleep almost anywhere and fall into a deep sleep. That’s where I was the next morning when my brother Dick came into the bathroom. I guess he did his business there, but it didn’t wake me. He got some more of the family to squeeze into that little bathroom to look at me, take a picture, and then, Dick being Dick, turned the water on. At first it was just nice and warm and felt good because the sides of the old iron tub were cold. But after a few minutes, soaked through and through, I woke up and found a million faces staring down at me, laughing their heads off. We had no automatic dryers in those days so I’m sure my mother was only concerned about how she was going to get that pillow and big wool blanket dry . . . Oh my. . . but she also knew how long-lasting and valuable a good joke was!



## CLAUSTROPHOBIA: “AN IRRATIONAL FEAR OF BEING IN A CONFINED OR ENCLOSED SPACE” #30

I definitely have that problem, and so do my sisters! Because of this, we can blame our brother Tom who used to chase us around the house, and when he caught us, he'd do anything to make us scream! And scream we would! One of those things was to put a pillow over our faces and hold it 'til he got the blood curdling scream that he desired. Then it was over. Of course, after Tom stopped torturing us, we'd then try to torture each other with the same blood curdling technique! (And you all thought we were angels growing up in the Fifties:) We're sure that's why we girls all have claustrophobia. It never goes away. One time that panicked me the most was when Doug and I were in Egypt in 1987. We were on a Brigham Young University tour with about fifteen other people. We had been in Israel and Italy and now a stop in Egypt! Our tour guide warned us about never being alone with one of the Egyptian men – “*Don't even ride an elevator alone.*” American women who were blond and wore levis were the most desirable targets. Well, I wasn't that. However, at one point of interest, we all entered a pyramid. Doug and I were near the end of the line, but the further in we got, the more we had to bend over because the ceiling was so low. Panic hit me, and I turned and couldn't get out of there fast enough. On the outside of the pyramid there was this huge, very white-skinned, black curly haired Egyptian man, about forty years old – he wore the Egyptian robes as most wore back in 1987. I froze. He kindly motioned for me to follow him and see the Egyptian drawings in this small museum that was right next to the pyramid. I didn't want to run for fear he would chase me, so I nodded, “*Okay.*” He went



into the museum, and I followed him, keeping my distance, and stood in the doorway. I kept nodding with interest as he showed me the paintings. Then he pointed to another room around the corner, and again I nodded, “*Okay,*” and gestured with my hand for him to go first, which he did. As he went into the other room, I turned and walked/ran outside and up the hill, past a couple of older Egyptian men. As I was going up the hill towards our bus, our tour guide was running down the hill, waving his hands in the air, and calling out, “*Ceee...ciiille.*” Well, as soon as Doug got to the bottom of the pyramid, our guide asked him where I was, and when Doug told him that I had panicked with claustrophobia and went out, the guide ran back up the path at record speed to find me. He knew the dangers. And he was



very scared when he got up to the bus and I wasn't there. I was a bit white when he called my name, and I asked him to please get rid of that man who was following me – pay him some money – anything. I wanted to leave Egypt and never see it again. For sure, I will never go back. Perhaps this is the most frightened that I have ever been in my life, and was equally so grateful that I made it through that experience unharmed.

“IS A COW LIKE A RABBIT?” - #31

In the summer of 1970, we were traveling with Russ and Gina, and I was expecting another child in October . . . Craig. We were headed for Utah from California for another annual or bi-annual visit to Utah to visit with family. We decided to take a different route – Hiway 50 – and that way we could also visit with Cheril and family in Delta. We got a late start, but decided to drive all the way especially since we weren't tired when we went through Ely, Nevada. A strange thing in Nevada – the road was constantly filled with rabbits and when our car lights hit them, they froze, and unfortunately we killed several. Another thing in Nevada – we got out of the car several times just to look at the open sky. Never had we seen so many stars. It was spectacular! It was close to midnight when we were forty miles out of Ely. It was open range, and suddenly in front of us were some cows crossing the road. Doug's first thought, “*Is a cow like a rabbit?*” He thought the cow would freeze when looking into our headlights, so he hurriedly turned into the other lane – but the cow kept moving, and sure enough we hit him straight on. Now even in the daylight there are not many cars on Hiway 50, and at midnight there are even less. Our car was ruined in the front, we broke all the legs on the mooing cow, and there we were with two little children and me pregnant. Soon a car passed and even had its windows rolled down. We asked for help, but they kept driving on. One more car passed, yet again, didn't stop. Then an old truck going back to Ely stopped and offered to give help. Doug sat in the back with our luggage, and I sat in front with two children on my lap, squeezed between an Arab man and a man from India. As we drove and conversed, the Arab man told me about having his car break down while he was working on a mine just the week before, and he hitch-hiked for thirty miles but no one picked him up – he had quite a pocked face and looked a bit tough. And yet, he was kind enough to save us in our predicament. These men helped us check into a hotel in Ely. They also made sure we had a good breakfast served to us the next morning. We had called my parents who left Provo immediately and arrived just as we were eating breakfast. At the same time, there was a police chase with sirens all around us it seemed as the cars whizzed past our hotel. We thanked our kind Samaritans and got the Arab's phone number in Palo Alto where he was attending Stanford. We lived in Los Altos, California at the time, so we invited him to join us for Thanksgiving, which he did. However, as we travelled with my parents back to our car, we were held up by police right where our car was. They wouldn't let us get out of the car. There was a *desperado* armed with guns who they had cornered up in the hills. The police

told us that if we had stayed in our car that night, we would've been held at gun point as this desperado's hostages. We were fortunate. The police had shot the cow to put him out of his misery. In the end, when they had captured their man, we were able to continue on to Provo, leaving our car and dead cow in the Nevada desert in the hands of the police. What an adventure!



*Cecile off to the Hospital to Get Craig - October 10, 1970  
(See our little blue Rambler all fixed up from hitting the cow)  
Grandma James with Craig at Christmas*

“I KNOW THESE COME WITH A KISS” - #32

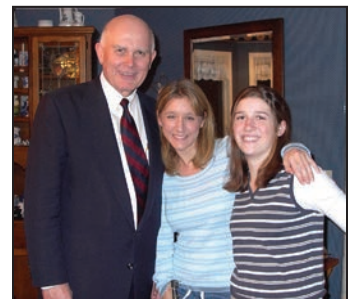
Doug was set apart as Stake President of the Santa Rosa California Stake in 1993 by John Groberg. He was a General Authority, and just a quick connection with him – he was the Elder who is depicted in the movie, The Other Side of Heaven, and if you’ll remember in that movie (and book) he had left a girl at home to wait for him. Her name was Jean. Well, at one point of his mission, Jean got interested in another man whose name was Dave (both were members of BYU’s Kia Ora Club). She, in the end, stayed true to her missionary, John Groberg, and they married after he came home. However, it was through Dave and his connection to our family that Cheril and I became members of the Kia Ora Club. That resulted in Cheril meeting Richard Snow and their marriage, plus friendships and experiences that never quit because of that connection. Now, back to Doug ... Nine years later, in April of 2002, Doug was released as Stake President by Elder Dallin H. Oaks, an Apostle. The excitement of having a General Authority in our home never got old. It was always a flurry of cleaning the house, beautifying the yard, fixing a special meal or dessert for when these men would come to our home on the Saturday night before Stake Conference, and then having them meet and visit with our own kids and other family members on that night. On this night with Elder Oaks, we asked him how he met and married his second wife, and we were given the whole wonderful story. However, the thrill of my whole life came the next day at conference. All the men were given beautiful handmade leis (made by Loki Webb), and they looked fabulous on these men who sat at the front of the congregation. Suddenly I was asked to come up out of the audience and say a few words. I got up, started walking towards the microphone, and as I was almost there, Elder Oaks got up and started walking towards me, and at the same time started to take his lei off. Well, we met right at the microphone, and as he was just about to give me his beautiful lei, I leaned into the microphone and said to the audience, “*I know these come with a kiss.*” Sure enough, he put the lei around my neck and kissed me on the cheek! A moment I shall never forget as long as I live! (That doesn’t sound as long and far away as it used to). But, oh, what a moment . . .



*Delma, Cecile, Jim, Elder Groberg, Spencer, Doug, Christy, Lora*



*Elder Dallin Oaks with members of our family: Benjamin, Danny, Scott, Jenny, Josh, Matthew, Aaron, Kari, Russ, (Sides in back), Lisa, Spencer, Gina and Lora. Also with our outgoing Stake Presidency: Ray Smith, Doug and Al Daley. . . and yep, I'm the one wearing Elder Oaks' lei!!*



Our good friend, Win Aker, was at our home just a week or so ago (about October 4, 2020). He was a close friend of ours when we lived in Scotland, and he knew our children well. Lora was only one to three-years old when he knew her in Scotland. However, he went up to her seventeen-year old picture that hangs in our home now and said, "Oh, this is your independent child." I answered, "Wow, how did you know?" Hardly any word describes Lora better. She's a people person like I am and she loves dancing as much as I do (but she's good at it!), and she's a night owl, but that's where our similarities end. There are no rules with her (except morality ones, of course), and she's dipped into areas that have scared me to death. When we visit her, she's daring! In Florida, she took us to the Gulf of Mexico to swim with the manatees – we had to put on wet suits – and we were seventy-seven and eighty years old, for heaven's sake! In St. George, she insisted that I go rappelling down huge cliffs with her, Christy and Gina (I was only seventy-five years old then). And then in China, she booked us all on a flight to southern China to bicycle through the streets of Guilin amongst cars, scooters, other bikers, and then take a trolley ride high up into the mountains and hike around the rice terraces (well, we were only seventy-eight and eighty-one at that time). But Lora has been daring and trusting and adventuresome all her life. Sometimes, she got carried away and made some bad decisions (Yes, I thought swimming



with manatees was a bad idea – I was scared out of my skin when I almost came face to face with one). She's always full of ideas and has gone to amazing places with Mark and the kids. Okay, one experience I will leave you with. She actually deserves to have a story told on her! When Lora was in tenth grade, We went to see her in her high school play, *West Side Story*. She didn't need my help on costumes – it was already taken care of (supposedly). The dance scene started, and out came Lora in a strapless dress that didn't even fit her snug enough. I sat there thinking, "If I never taught my girls anything at all, I taught them to be modest." However, my worries went way beyond my teaching. I was worried the dress was going to fall down cuz she just didn't have what it took to hold it up! I held my breath through the whole dance. Anyway, Doug sat there in quite a bit of shock as well, and he leaned over and said, "Everyone in this audience has now seen more of my teen-age daughter than I ever have. . . or will." Well, I'll leave you all with that, and leave you wondering as to what all the other stories are that I could tell on my independent child, who has friends of all ages, of all races, and you can find them in many many corners of the world - China (where they have lived for three years), Vietnam, Philippines, Scotland, England, Croatia, Venice, Bosnia, border of Tibet, California, Florida, Georgia, and Elk Ridge, Utah (her best friends! Dad and I!).

"MAMA, TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FIRST NIGHT" - #34

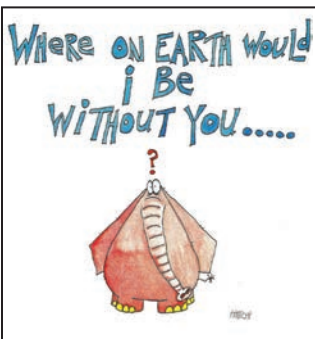
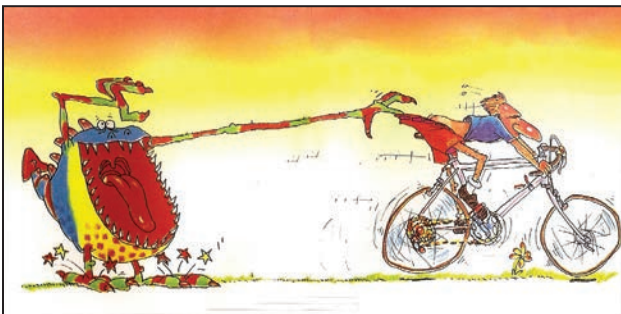
Well, I was a married woman with several children before I got into this conversation with my mother and dared to ask her the question, "Mama, tell me about your first night. What was it like?" She smiled and showed no resistance in answering me. "Well," she said, "it was like this. We entered the bedroom and I got dressed in my new sheer housecoat and negligee. Your dad was sitting on a chair near the bed and was reading his Reader's Digest. So I crawled into bed and soon fell asleep while he just kept reading." "And that was it???" I exclaimed. "Yes. That was it." "Well, then, why don't you tell me about your second night." "Sure," Mama answered, "it was like this. We entered the bedroom and I got dressed in my new sheer housecoat and negligee. Your dad was sitting in a chair near the bed and was reading his Reader's Digest. So I crawled into bed and soon fell asleep while he just kept reading." "And that was it???" I exclaimed (again). "Yes. That was it." "Well, then, why don't you tell me about your third night." "Ahh. . ." Mama sighed, "The third night. . . now there was a night!"



## RON . . . NOBODY'S PERFECT #35

I want to tell you all about Ron Hirschi. He was my nephew, but was only six years younger than I was. We did a lot of growing up together. To begin with he just barely made it into this life. In 1947, my sister Lois gave birth to him early – too early. The doctors could do no more for this little four-pound tyke, so my mother got permission to bring him home so she could try to keep him alive. She fed him milk with an eye-dropper, constantly dropping liquid into his mouth. He was definitely meant to live this life. His influence was huge, especially with the youth of the Church. When we were young, we spent time helping my mother in the yard. While we dug dandelions out of the lawn or picked up rotten apples and threw them away, we also looked for all kinds of bugs to put in bottles so we could have a bug zoo at the end of a work day. I spent several weeks out of every summer at their house in Brigham City, so Ron and I became very close. One of my best memories was going to a drive-in movie and seeing *Some Like It Hot*. Ron and I were in the back seat watching, and the end of the movie made us laugh so hard we just couldn't quit. I wonder if that's when Ron started being funny. After I served my mission in Southern Australia, Ron was called to serve that same mission a few years later, so we always shared that love of those people. After we were married, Ron and his wife, Beth, came to visit us in California quite often, and we would go sight-seeing. However, we never showed Ron anything because he had this uncanny sense, and he always was the one showing us new things in the very place we had lived in for years! We would be by the ocean, and he'd say, "Stop here." We'd stop, walk down to the ocean and spend the day walking around little tide pools of water that contained shells and little fish – it was fascinating and a lot more fun than us showing him the Golden Gate Bridge. I wish I could remember the humorous things that would just pop out of his mouth so naturally. He'd always have us in laughter. I think we term this *dry humor*. Actually, there's only a select group of people on this earth who can get away with it! We were driving home from Sausalito one night (after he introduced us to Sausalito), and it was late. Doug was weaving a bit on the road, hitting the *dit dits* on one side and then floating over to the *dit dits* on the other side (you know, those reflective things on the road to keep you on the straight and narrow). Instead of yelling, "Doug, wake up, you're falling asleep!" Ron just quietly made the comment, "Hmm, I've never seen anyone drive by Braille before." Doug started laughing as we all did, and we all managed to stay awake the rest of the way home. Ron just had a way about him. Much of his humor came to life in his business of making greeting cards - *Elephantz*. My favorite is the elephant inside the toilet with his sad eyes peeking out under the toilet seat, and on the toilet paper by the side it says, "My world without you." My world was always better with Ron in it. I loved him so much. He barely made it into this life – just long enough to bless hundreds of people (mostly teenagers, but many old), and then he left way too early, too quickly, when he was hit and killed on his bicycle by a truck. He was only fifty-seven years old. This happened while Doug and I were on a mission in New Zealand, so I couldn't join the family in saying

my "good-byes" to him. I did have a good very long cry all one night, and now I can hardly wait to one day see him again and say, "Hey Ron, remember that last scene in *Some Like It Hot*!" "Nobody's perfect." I know we'll both break into a fit of laughter!



## OLD SINS, NEW SINS #36

Our daughter Gina served her mission under President Francisco J. Vinas in Salta, Argentina in 1989-91. He was from a different South American country, but was actually born in Seville, Spain. I was just reading a quote of his from the October 2015 General Conference, and he said, *“Repentance is a Process and not something that happens at one particular moment. It requires consistency.”* Well, this quote reminded me of an incident in Santa Rosa when he was the visiting authority for our Stake Conference in April 2001. Again, it was while Doug was Stake President and we had the joy of having him in our home the night before Sunday Conference. Fortunately, Gina was there as well and could reunite with her Mission President. When he got up to speak in Conference on Sunday we learned that this was his first conference that he would be conducting in English and not his native Spanish. We could tell every now and again that he struggled with phrases and words, but not too much. His



*Gina, Lora, Elder Vinas, Rebecca Davis,*

subject was, again, *Repentance*, and he was speaking particularly about people who come to their Bishop to talk about changing their behavior – repenting. They want to start a clean slate. Then in six months, they come back, having committed the same sin or transgression over again. So then, Elder Vinas explained to us that we need to stop repeating the same sins over and over again. He was searching for the right words, and finally said, *“You need to stop repeating the old sins over and over again - you need to...you need to... (struggling for the right words)... you need to get NEW sins.”* Well, he knew he had made a mistake and the audience couldn't hold back the enjoyment of the moment, and together we all broke out in laughter! Quite a memorable moment at a Stake Conference!

## “WHAT E’ER THOU ART, ACT WELL THY PART” #37

In 1959 and 1960, I was a Freshman at Brigham Young University. Every Tuesday, we walked down that long staircase to the old fieldhouse for the weekly Devotional. What happened to me (and probably to others) on this one particular Devotional was totally unexpected. President David O. McKay was going to be the speaker. I hadn't really heard him speak before, but I wasn't particularly anticipating anything much different than other speakers. President McKay was a very tall and handsome man with a beautiful splash of wavy white hair. The fieldhouse was full before he arrived, and I started to feel the excitement in the air. Then he arrived and walked the full length of the basketball floor to the podium. The whole audience arose and without any prompting we all started to sing, *“We Thank Thee O God For a Prophet.”* Tears just flowed down my face – I couldn't stop them. My whole body was filled with light it seemed. I knew I was in the presence of greatness. I knew he was a Prophet of God – the first I had ever seen in person. He was eighty-seven years of age at this time, and lived to be ninety-six. For the rest of my life, I've held on to some of his teachings that I can remember:

1. *Gain a strong testimony of Jesus Christ, the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Restoration.*
2. *“Teaching Is the Noblest Profession in the World - a teacher is a person who is concerned about others, one who has a desire to touch the lives of his students and somehow leave them better than they were.”*
3. *“No Success Can Compensate for Failure in the Home.”*
4. *“Every Member a Missionary.”*
5. And lastly, *“What e'er Thou Art, Act Well thy Part.”*

President McKay's ancestry came from Scotland, as did Doug's and mine, and he was called in the late 1890's to serve a mission there. He graduated from the University of Utah and was the valedictorian. His profession was teaching, and he did much to improve the schools and universities in Utah. He became an Apostle at age thirty-two. He was a truly beautiful man - an extraordinary man! A Prophet of God. Because of this experience, I've never questioned any of the teachings of any of the succeeding Presidents and Prophets of the Church. They are called of God. Who am I to ignore such manifestations of the Spirit? My heart was touched forever that day.



“OH, THE PLACES YOU’LL GO, IT MIGHT BE TODAY . . . YOUR MOUNTAIN IS WAITING,  
SO . . .GET ON YOUR WAY!” #38

Fooled you, didn't I! You thought I was going to tell a Mt. Timpanogos story, which, of course, is my favorite place on this earth. Right there on top where you can see the whole world! On Resurrection Morning, that's what I want to rise up and see – Mt. Timpanogos. My Grandmother Howard said, *“If you want to have a thrill in life, you have to go out after it.”* This has spurred me on to some great adventures in my life. One of those happened right on the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco on February 1993. At Church we had a friend, Mike Cupp, who worked in various places, but this year he was working on the Golden Gate Bridge. No one really goes to the top except one or two workers at a time in a tiny little elevator at the side of the bridge. Every worker is invited to bring a family member to the top with him just once, but Mike's wife was probably scared of heights and wouldn't go. My Scottish friend, Mary Paton, was visiting that summer when Mike called to see if we wanted to go in his wife's place. Wow, I just jumped at the chance (being my grandmother's granddaughter!). Well, Mary and I drove down from Santa Rosa to the bridge, and we met Mike and his co-worker. We entered this little elevator – Mike, his co-worker, Mary and I. It was too small. We squeezed together and closed the door. I couldn't breathe. I panicked – my claustrophobia checking in again! My heart was beating as I called out, *“Stop, Stop – I've got to get out!”* After a few minutes of calming down, I asked them to talk me through it. They explained how long the ride up would take (five minutes), and I realized there was no roof on the elevator (open and airy), so we tried it again. One of us faced North, another South, another East and another West. To make more room, three of us held our arms and hands to the sky and the fourth one kept his hand on the door so he could open and close it. I kept my face towards heaven for all five minutes, breathing in air coming in from the topless ceiling – and suddenly there we were – on top of the world. Oh, the majesty of the view – the thrill of the moment – the warmth of being with good people, and the freedom of being out of the busyness of the world down below where cars were speeding across the bridge to get from *here to there*.

*Oh, the places you'll go, the things you will see,  
Where waterfalls flow, and the air makes you free.  
So . . . be your name Scribner, Jones, Spencer or Bray,  
You're off to Great Places! Today is your day!  
Your mountain is waiting. So . . . get on your way!* (by Scribner and Seuss)



*Mike Cupp, Cecile, Co-worker in elevator - Mary taking picture*

*There we are - Mary Paton and I - on top of the Golden Gate Bridge!*



## FIRE! FIRE! FIRE! #39

“One dark night, when we were all in bed, Oh, Father Scribner left some ashes in the shed. And when the cow kicked it over, he winked his eye and said, ‘There’ll be a hot time in the Old Town Tonight.’ Fire! Fire! Fire!” I heard once that most people will experience about three major fires in their lifetime. Well, my three are up! The first was in 1959 in our home in Provo. I hurried home from school to watch *American Bandstand* on TV. My mother kind of meandered up from the basement where she was burning old papers and said, “I think it smells like the roof is on fire.” She came running back and cried, “It IS on Fire! – call the fire department!” By the time the fire department got there, the top of the house was well and truly burning. I was running down the stairs when the fireman was going up and he said, “Tell everyone to get everything out of this house as fast as possible because the house will be down in fifteen minutes.” An amazing amount of stuff was taken out by all the kids who were walking home from school that day – even the big old upright piano. Fortunately, insulation had been poured into the walls when we moved there in 1948 and it was fireproof and stopped the fire from traveling through the walls of the rest of the house. Our second fire was our own home on



Montecito Meadow Drive, Santa Rosa, CA, which I’ve written pages and pages about already. It started with ashes in a petroleum based garbage can that literally torched the house. It was the day after Christmas, and Doug and I were at a movie, *Hook*, and the children were home alone. Gina was fresh home from BYU, and she was watching them. They were saved from the fire when Bishop Martin McOmber came over for a brief visit, found the fire when he was leaving, and got the children out of the house, except for Christy who was watching TV in our bedroom. Her electricity went out and when she stepped out of the bedroom, she could see fire on the outside of the house and so she ran. The fire broke into the



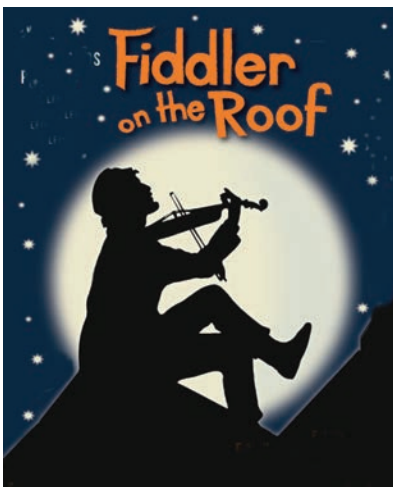
house at that very moment and she was barely saved. Of material possessions, we lost most everything. Our third experience with fire was in Elk Ridge just a couple of years ago, when a firestorm was coming over the mountains and hills towards our neighborhood. We all evacuated, but miraculously, just when the fire was only about one-half mile from our homes, the wind changed and turned the fire around. After ten days we all returned to our threatened homes. Ever since our fire in 1959, I’ve been a fire



engine chaser – I always wanted to follow it to see if it was going to our home. In 1965, after losing our first baby, I went to work for temporary agencies. This one time I worked at the fire department for two weeks. I couldn’t stand it when the sirens went off almost every day. I always stopped work and just wanted to go with them to the fire. Every day I begged the fire chief to take me with them – “just once, Please!” Finally, my last day of work, he pulled me up from my desk and said, “Let’s go.” I sat in the front seat of the big engine, and he put on his sirens and chased down two blocks from the firehouse to an empty practice field. He let me get in that little box on the end of the ladder, and the ladder went up and up, and so did I! When it was its full height, he let the ladder go around in a circle, and there I was in all my glory on the very top, ready to jump into any burning building and save someone! At the very top, where the whole world could hear me, I yelled, “Fire! Fire! Fire!”

## FIDDLER ON THE ROOF #40

Yes, I could tell you the story of my fiddling on top of a Jewish roof for six glorious nights – and I might some day, but *Fiddler On The Roof* holds a special spot in my heart for even more reasons than that. In July of 1969 Doug and I (with Russ and Gina) took a trip back East to stay with Joyce and Dave and their family in Pennsylvania. My biggest desire was to see a show on Broadway – it might be the only chance in my lifetime to do this, so we sent Joyce \$40.00 to get us four tickets for a Broadway show. *Fiddler On the Roof* had been playing on Broadway now for five years, and it was still very popular. When the night for the show arrived, Joyce, Dave, Doug and I piled into Dave's *air-conditioned-less* car and started to drive to New York. We were actually on this trip Back East for Doug's business, so he had a rental car he could pick up in New Jersey, right on our way. And it was air-conditioned! Right before we left Pennsylvania, Joyce handed Doug the four tickets to the Broadway show. He put them in his suit jacket pocket. It was so hot in their car that Doug took off that jacket and put it over the back of the seat. Then, we traded cars in New Jersey, Doug grabbed his jacket with the tickets - and we traveled in the comfort of cool air to New York. We parked the car and found our way amidst all the excited crowd in front of the Majestic Theater on Broadway! The air was electrifying to us! So much anticipation for what was ahead of us. As we started to enter the theater, Doug reached in his pocket for the tickets – they were gone! They had slid out of his pocket when he threw his jacket over the seat of Dave's car. Oh, how could this have happened to us? I told Doug to go up to the ticket booth and explain and give them our sad story. Surely they would believe us. But, oh no, this was New York. Doug just went up to the ticket booth and threw down \$40.00 more to buy new tickets. He asked for the best seats they could give him at this point. Well, some had just been turned in – four seats on the third row back in the front mezzanine – smack dab, right in front of the stage! The seats cost us \$8.50 (again) for each ticket, but it was worth the splurge. When were we going to see a show on Broadway again ever in our lives?? Never. And sure enough, we never have. The show was so thrilling, and we felt like we were almost on that stage with the performers, living their lives, understanding their value of *Traditions*, and feeling the pain of Tevye as his children broke out of those family traditions. It proved to be a highly spiritual experience for us. And, over the course of our lives, this show continued to have an impact on us as we produced it more than once on the stages of Santa Rosa Stake, and Dick Stam



became our own Tevye. Okay, I will tell you this part and get it over with. When we couldn't find a *fiddler for the roof*, and it was just a week before our show opened, I called the director (Joan Stam) and said, "Do I look like a little man to you?" She thought about it and said, "Yes." For that particular production of "Fiddler," I was in charge of making the beards for those men who hadn't grown their own (which was most of them). So, I proceeded to make myself a cute little beard and thick eyebrows, donned a Jewish hat and dressed myself in traditional Jewish garb, and sure enough, I looked like a little man and fiddled on that Jewish roof for six glorious

nights! You need a photo to believe me? Sorry, but those photos were lost in our fire - but you better believe that I was darn cute in all my garb . . . Wait . . . Wait . . . Joan Stam found an old photo and just sent it to me. Can you see me???

Whatever has taken me so long to write about Jerry? This is really one of the best stories of my life. While serving a mission in Southern Australia (March 1962-September 1963), like almost every other missionary who has ever served, I had some very hard experiences, and then I had some unforgettable, uplifting experiences. I learned life lessons from both of them. Early in 1963, I was serving in Adelaide in the little Torrens Branch of the Church with Sister Anne Milburn. It was an easy companionship, and we were so excited to do the work and hopefully see success (baptisms!). Every month, President Bruce R. McConkie would come to Adelaide and would speak at a *Share the Gospel* Fireside. We would work all month to invite people to these. Every Thursday we had lunch with a particular member of the Church, Aina Balodis, and every lunch was the same – a hot dog. They were poor, but generous in what they had, which was mostly a lot of love. She was from Latvia and spoke very broken English, and she was shy, but we asked her if she'd knock on the door of her neighbors and invite them to come to this upcoming Fireside. She was scared, but agreed to do it. When she had gone around most of her block and received one rejection after another, she then knocked on the door of the Michaelis Family. I believe it was Shirley Michaelis who opened the door, and only said "yes" because she felt so sorry for Aina and the task she was undertaking. So, Jerry and Shirley Michaelis went to the Fireside, and the next day when we knocked on their door to hopefully ask them if we could teach them some lessons about our church, well, Jerry informed us that he had already quit smoking! And, yes, we could teach them some lessons. In the first lesson, I told them the story of Joseph Smith and the First Vision, and the second I finished, Shirley said, "I know what you're saying is true." I couldn't believe it. I almost wanted to answer back to her and say, "How? How do you know it's true?" I was only beginning myself to understand how the Spirit teaches and testifies. I was just an insignificant young girl from Utah, and how was I experiencing something so unexplainable, so magnificent? Jerry was there all the time, taking it in, and also answering the questions. He was from Germany and Shirley was Australian, so we enjoyed listening to both, but we felt there was something different about this *German* – a strong, lasting commitment kind of person. It was only a matter of days and Shirley wanted to be baptized. It was late one night and we had finished one of the lessons, when Shirley asked if she could be baptized with another fellow who was also investigating the church. We went down to the beach for the baptism. I don't remember the time, but it was dark. Jerry was quiet and certainly did not want to stop Shirley – he was supportive, but we



could also tell that he was just as converted as she was – probably more so. He certainly wasn't as talkative, but you could just tell that he was "taking it in" and was very serious about what was being taught. The Spirit was working with him as well. At the beach, our investigator, John Gowin, was baptized, and so was Shirley Michaelis. The Elders were there ready to interview Jerry if he so desired, but we didn't have any more baptismal clothes. He kept saying, "No, no," but Sister Milburn and I kept saying, "Yes, yes." He even started to run away up the beach a bit, but we were right behind him. There was a lot of laughter and fun, but then things got serious, and Jerry said, "Okay, I'll be baptized." He was interviewed right there on the beach (if I remember right) and then he put on John's wet baptismal clothes, walked out in the ocean with the Elders and was baptized. We all went back to their home that night where



1963 - Jerry and Shirley Michaelis  
Karleen, Gary, Catherine, Rolf and Joan

the Elders performed the ordinance of giving them the gift of the Holy Ghost. Sister Milburn and I could've lived that night over and over again. The Spirit of the Lord was so strong, the closeness to each other was warm and binding, and to our new friends, the Michaelis family – well, the love was a love I had never felt before. And this love has lasted a lifetime. Our motto in those days, "Isn't it *Great* to be a Mormon!!" stayed with all of us forever. This family's life did not stay in perfect happiness like it was that night. Only one of their children, Gary, stayed active in the Church – but Gary and his wife, Lyn, have never wavered – theirs is another whole, wonderful story. Jerry and Shirley later divorced, but Jerry has never wavered in his testimony of the Gospel. He remarried and as far as I know, was a *rock* in that little branch of the Church, which eventually grew to be a Ward. When Doug and I visited Australia in 1991 (or thereabouts), we went to Torrens on Sunday where Bishop Jerry Michaelis was conducting. And in 2001 we also went to the Adelaide Temple together. Can you possibly even imagine the joy I felt? My heart was so full of gratitude – well, it was just bursting. Yes, Jerry is one of the best stories of my life.

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Jerry and Melva Michaelis, Cecile (1991)

“I GUESS THAT’S YOU UNDER THERE” #42

I’ve known Gary Bunnell all my life – well, ever since I was seven years old when we first moved to Utah in 1948. We were in grade school together, then junior high, then high school. In all those years I don’t know how many words I ever spoke to him – maybe twenty or thirty – or five. I had girlfriends who had crushes on him, but I never did. Wasn’t he cute? Of course he was. Wasn’t I cute? NO! Wasn’t he popular in high school? Of course he was. Wasn’t I popular in high school? NO! However, I finally made my way through high school with friends who were ordinary like I was and actually with some friends who were popular (I just wasn’t in their crowd). In the end (high school), I’d say I was “*sorta cute and fun to be with,*” but Gary never knew that. Gary went on to college and married Jackie, a girl from Pleasant Grove. I never heard of him or thought of him again – not until July 14, 1972. That was the day our family moved to Santa Rosa, CA, and it was also the day that Gary and Jackie moved to Santa Rosa, CA – just two blocks from our house. I saw on the ward roster that his name was there, but I didn’t dare just go knock on his door. However, the next year, Gina and his daughter, Monique, were in kindergarten together and they became good friends (and still are). Gina was invited to a birthday party, so this was my moment to finally face Gary and say more than five words. When I was invited into their living room he was sitting in a bean bag chair. His hair was down to his waist (it seemed) and his beard was down covering his chest. I was planning to say five important words, but all I could say was, “*I guess that’s you under there!*” So stupid, Cecile! Jackie, his wife, was beautiful and was the cutest hippie you ever laid eyes on with her short skirt and long hair. Well, we became good friends. Gary had become a psychiatrist and had studied many Eastern religions – he was brilliant! He hadn’t been active in the church probably since high school, but with his curiosity and knowledge of other religions, he wanted to know what went on in the temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Doug was a new Bishop, so when Gary asked him how to do this, Doug explained what he had to do to get a recommend that allowed him to go in. Gary started following that course. He came to church every week - alone at first, and we could see his hair and beard getting shorter and shorter as the months went by. He wasn’t required to cut them, but he wanted to. Soon, Jackie started attending Church with him, and as Gary’s hair got shorter, her skirts got longer. They became very faithful members of the Church, and sure enough Gary got his recommend to go into the temple where he was sealed to Jackie and his daughters for eternity. After a few years of dedication and carrying out church callings, he was called to be a counselor to Doug in the Bishopric. And in only a few years, he was called to be the Bishop after Doug was released. What an amazing journey Gary and Jackie both took! I’ll never forget the day he came to church with his beard fully shaved off – his face was so red and sore. It must’ve been terribly painful. Gary and Jackie took a complete turnaround in their lives, they made changes, and we became close and eternal friends. And Gary found out, after all those years since grade school, that I really was “*cute and fun to be with!*” and could say more than five words - a lot more!



Fourth Grade Class - 1951 - Gary is in front on the left,  
Cecile is fourth row, second from the back



Gary - 1959 -  
Senior in Orem  
High School



1970's - Jackie and Gary - Oakland Temple



Cecile - Fourth Grade

. . . I want my grandchildren to know what kind of man their grandfather was. Many have expressed Doug's ability to bring out the best in other people and not draw attention to himself. So I thought I'd tell you that this very quality is what first impressed me as well. In 1962, I had been a missionary in Melbourne, Australia for four months with the same companion. She was a young girl – only eighteen years old – and before her mission, had



been a youth missionary in Perth, Australia, where an *Elder Scribner* was serving as a leader. She had been under his leadership for over a year in Perth, and when mission reports came out, she couldn't stop talking about him. Well, by the end of four months, I had heard all I ever wanted to hear about the *Great Elder Scribner!* All I really wanted was a transfer. But that didn't come. Instead, Elder Scribner was assigned to our Melbourne Area as a leader there for the last six weeks of his mission. Oh, that was one Elder

I did not care to know any more about. We were already having some slight trials with our new Supervising Elder in our little area. He was kind of brash. And now, to my companion's excitement, but not mine, I was going to have to deal with this new leader that I was so tired of hearing about. The whole Melbourne missionary area met on a Saturday morning for a development meeting, and Elder Scribner was conducting. My first impression of him as he spoke was something that really stuck in my head. He was short, wore thick glasses, and used his hands a lot as he spoke, and for such a short person, he had such very large hands. As it was, the only other person who had the same size hands was our mission President who was Bruce R. McConkie, and he was 6 feet 6 inches tall! The second impression that has also stayed with me forever, was his talk. I was waiting for him to stand there and sing his own praises, but instead he talked about our new Supervising Elders. He seemed to know so much good about each one of them, and he praised them each for their wonderful qualities and talents and abilities and their contributions to the mission. He did this to the point that I realized I hadn't given my new supervisor a chance to prove his leadership to us. My heart was changed. When Elder Scribner was finished with his introductory talk to us, I realized that he hadn't said even one word about himself, but I left that meeting knowing volumes about him.



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Elder Scribner was a good missionary, a good person, and my respect for him increased. After six weeks of working under his leadership, Elder Scribner also learned about me and my companion and had some impressions. We hadn't seen anyone we were teaching join the church – we had meetings all the time with wonderful Australian families – but hadn't seen any of their hearts change towards the Gospel. Elder Scribner was determined to help us

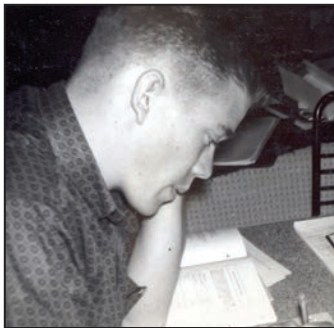


have some success so he asked to go with us to our very best family we were teaching, and he was going to help us teach them. We knocked on their door, but there was a message for us, that they didn't want any more lessons from the missionaries. By the end of Doug's mission he also had formed some opinions about me and my companion – however, he didn't share this until after we were engaged. I suppose you can look at this as a compliment really: He said, "*He had never seen two sisters work harder with less success in his whole mission.*"

Well, that was what we knew about each other when we met a year later on the BYU campus. He was still *Elder Scribner* to me and I was still *Sister James* to him. He hadn't grown any taller, but those thick glasses had



been changed for contact lenses. I hadn't changed in my looks except for ten pounds that I was anxious to get rid of. However, I now had some successes in the missionfield that I could tell him about. Our missions to Australia became the strength to both Doug and me throughout our lives. Doug was immovable in his testimony – I never ever saw him waver. Even things he did not understand fully in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he simply put on a shelf until it was made clear to him. He would not sacrifice those things he knew to be true for things he did not yet understand. I will miss kneeling with him at night for *together prayer* and private prayers, and I will miss his nice warm body for my cold feet. I will leave you with my testimony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – which is the most important thing that we can leave our children.



Doug's testimony is also my testimony. Never in my life have I not known the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be the path to happiness in this life and also in the life to come. I love my Heavenly Father. I know He is there, and I know He's been there for me all of my life - even during my hardest trials. Very often, I have to *look back* and see that his hand has been there to guide me. But I don't have to look back very far to see that his hand was in Doug's passing. Doug was hardly sick with this virus – some tiredness and slight chills for just a few days. That is all – no cough, no fever, no congestion, no loss of smell and taste. A prophet once said that we can shorten our time to go home, but there's not much we can do to lengthen it. Doug's time on this earth was up – he knew it better than anyone, and I knew it. I am more than willing to accept the Lord's will in my life. And I am at peace with all that has transpired here. I leave you this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ . . .

## A MIRACLE AT THE TOWER OF LONDON - #44

I've been scared before, but perhaps never like I was at the Tower of London in July 1984. We hadn't been in Scotland very long yet – in fact we were still getting settled for our three-year stay. Grandpa James (84 years) was with us, and Lora was just six months old. We all packed up in our Volkswagon Bus and headed for England so we could pick up Russ who was traveling with his high school choir and performing in England. We also were going to meet Doug's brother, Steve, and all of his family. We all came together at the Tower of London. Steve, Mary and Troy were headed for Germany, and for several days we were going to watch the rest of their kids and take them back up to Scotland with us. Our numbers were growing! All of us were going to travel back to Scotland in that Volkswagon Bus – at least fifteen of us! At this moment, however, we were all pushed together with a wall of people who were viewing the Crown Jewels, and it was taking a long time for this crowd to move. Steve and Mary felt they had to leave immediately if they were going to get their flight to Germany, so we attached all the small sets of hands with the more grown up pairs of hands, and said, *“Don't let go of these little ones!”* There were a *zillion* people at the Tower that day. We got through the Crown Jewels and then headed for the Chopping Block where a bunch of the *royal* and *not-so-royal* heads had been chopped off. We all arrived there with the little ones holding tight to our hands. Gina and I had sore feet so we decided to trade shoes at the Chopping Block, and for a second or two, we let go of our little ones. Then we started to walk again and leave the stone walls surrounding the Tower of London. Exiting the Tower was just as exhausting as entering because of the crowds. Never before or since have I seen so many people crowded together in one place. Gina had held onto Steve and Mary's little Ben's hand for so long that it felt like his hand was still in hers, but it had slipped away when we traded shoes. We got out on the grass where we could relax, but little Ben was missing. Gina



couldn't remember the moment when she was holding his hand and then when she wasn't. We were all scared – more than anyone could imagine. How were we going to find little Ben among those zillions of people? At that moment there was only one person who knew where he was – Heavenly Father. As a family group we all knelt on that lawn, not caring who was watching us, and Doug offered a prayer, pleading with Heavenly Father to guide him to Ben. Several of us were crying. Doug and Gina then



ran off, retracing their steps back to the Chopping Block. They ran past guards who were yelling at them, telling them they couldn't enter that way, but they ran right past them anyway into the wall of people. We were all frantic. When Doug and Gina got to the Chopping Block, there was little Ben who had sat down right where we had all left him, and he was also scared and praying for Heavenly Father's help.



July 1984 - In England on way home from the Tower of London - Christy, Lara, Russ, Gina, Jimmy, Grandpa, Chad, Scott, Craig (missing from picture: Doug, Cecile, Lora, Emily, Spencer, and Ben)

*“And now, O all ye that have imagined up unto yourselves a god who can do no miracles, . . . Behold I say unto you, God has not ceased to be a God of miracles . . . And behold I say unto you he changeth not; if so he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles.”* (Mormon 9:15, 19). Yes, we were all part of a great miracle that day – one that I have never ceased being grateful for - without the miracle, our lives would've been changed forever. Some prayers take years to be answered, and yet others are answered in an instant - particularly in an instant of desperation!

How do I put the stories of Delma into one long paragraph on one short page? We found Delma’s name on the rolls of the Church in Santa Rosa, California when Doug was a Bishop. We thought she was inactive, but found it was exactly the opposite. She just couldn’t come to church because she was caring for her diabetic husband, Roy Bott. This was her second marriage because her first husband had been hit by a train, just a short distance from their home and only minutes after kissing Delma “good-bye.” He was killed instantly. Delma was just thirty-three years old. About four years later she married Roy, who was also a widower. She helped him raise his children. But Delma was never able to have children of her own. She and Roy served a mission to New Zealand, where they taught and baptized the Strother Family – a family well-known and loved throughout the Church in New Zealand. While on this mission, they also became close friends to Elder Richard Snow, my future brother-in-law. So, when we met them, we had many things in common that connected Delma to us immediately and forever. When Doug and I served a mission in New Zealand in 2004-2006, we became acquainted with the legendary Strother Family, baptized by the legendary Delma and Roy Bott! After my mother died in 1980, Delma was a natural adopted Grandmother for our kids. By this time, her husband Roy had died, so I asked Delma, if she was going to look for another good-looking boy to marry. Her answer – “Honey, I’m not looking for a boy, but a Man!” In a short time, at age seventy, she married Cleon Forsyth - a seventy-seven year-old MAN! We all loved Cleon. Delma was unique – she was almost totally deaf, but read lips perfectly (unless you were wearing a mustache – that gave her a challenge). She dressed beautifully and was such a classy lady, and loved the Gospel with heart and soul. Her most endearing quality was her humor. After she came home from her honeymoon with Cleon, she came up to me and asked, “Have you been kissing your husband lately.” I answered, “Well, this wasn’t such a good week.” She just reached over and shook my arms and said, “Oh kid, you ought to – it’s such fun!” I was waiting for her to come out of a serious surgery, and when they finally wheeled her past me, she opened her eyes slightly, and I asked how she was feeling. She answered, “Well, they took out my gut, but I still have my gall.” (meaning of course, her impudent boldness). Then she opened her eyes again and whispered, “Oh, that doctor that operated on me – whew, he was handsome.” After giving a talk in Church and speaking of America as the Promised Land, Sadie, a young Scottish friend whom Delma met while visiting us in Scotland and who was now visiting us, went right up to her afterwards and said,

“I’ve got a bone to pick with you.” Without the slightest hesitation, Delma countered, “Well, then, it better have some meat on it!” One time I asked her if she believed in the hereafter, and she answered, “Oh my yes – every day I walk into a room, look around and ask myself, ‘I wonder what I came in here after!’” There’re so many stories to tell about Delma, but in this story I just want to thank our Heavenly Father for putting her into our path. Every one of our children, even the older ones, call her Grandma Delma – they love her, and she returned that love in kindness and huge hugs, delicious food, and funny stories from her past (even about her finger that was only a “half”). While visiting us in Scotland, her third husband, Cleon, had a sudden heart attack and died, and I



Scott, Christy, Delma, Jimmy, Craig and Spencer. Below: Cecile and Delma



flew back home to California with her to bury him. She lived well into her nineties, and in her last days, I flew from California to Utah (where she now lived) and cared for her for a week out of each month. During one of those visits, I asked her, “Delma, you’ve had three husbands who all love you and will fight for you on the other side. Which one will you choose?” She thoughtfully praised each one, and said that each had come into her life at different stages of her life and had fulfilled

different needs of hers, but in the end, “There’s no one quite like your First Love.”





I grew up at the foot of Mt. Timpanogos – the second highest mountain in Utah’s Wasatch Range (nearly 12,000 feet in elevation). Every year, during my teens, several hundred people gathered at Aspen Grove and made the annual hike to the top. The event started with a campfire program the night before where the legend of Timpanogos was told. The story basically is about a young Indian Princess (Ucanogas) who is part of a struggling tribe who are in the midst of drought, lacking food and hope. She is chosen to be the sacrifice to the Gods to end the drought. Of course there is a handsome Indian Brave who falls in love with her



and tries to stop her from climbing the mountain and jumping off as a sacrifice. His name is Timpanac. They lived in a cave for awhile after he was attacked by a bear, but when he was nursed back to health, she left and finished her sacrifice. He gathered her body and took her back to the cave. Their two hearts together are represented in the Great Heart, which all tourists can see in the cave of Timpanogos. As you look at the mountain, you can see the profile of the beautiful Indian princess lying across the top of the mountain. She’s always there in the warmth of the summer and also in the winter where she is covered with a blanket of snow – she never moves. In my teens,

I went with friends on that annual hike at least five times, and when you get to the top you get a little round metal pin that proves you made it! I still have some of my pins, and one of my children will inherit these valuable treasures after I die. The hike is hard and long – it takes more than five hours to get to the top and coming down is a constant pounding on your knees and calves, but, oh . . . it is worth it. Where else can you see the top of the world

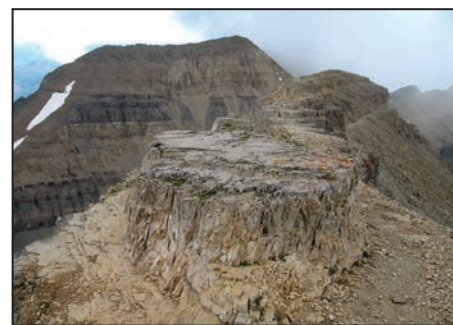


(besides on the top of the Golden Gate Bridge), or where do you see such a collection of wild flowers, streams, waterfalls, and a glacier that quickly slides you from the very top and ends at an Emerald Lake. The beauty of it all is breath-taking. Perhaps the annual hike ended because of what happened the year Doug and I climbed it in July 1964, the first month after we were married. At the Emerald Lake there is a cliff, hundreds of feet high that stretches to the top of

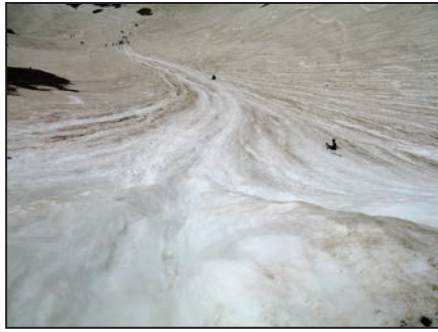


*The cliff as seen from Emerald Lake. You can barely see the little house on the top. Below: The five foot diameter rock landing for the helicopter.*

the mountain. For us, that year, hikers were stopped from going any further until a small boy was rescued from the top by a helicopter. Someone had a dog on the hike and he brushed past the five-year old boy, who tumbled down several feet almost falling off that cliff. His father bravely rushed down to save him from falling further. Then for a long time we watched that helicopter circle and circle until it reached the height of the mountain. It landed on a five foot diameter flat rock which is right at the top next to the little house. And while it balanced there, they loaded the boy and his father into the plane, but we heard that the boy died on the way to the hospital. Other deaths had occurred on that hike – one that I knew of was on the glacier where a falling bolder hit a girl, a freshman at BYU. So perhaps this is why they stopped the annual hike. Nevertheless, anyone can make the daylong journey, and many do every year. I got to the top two more times in my life. Once in 2009 when I was sixty-eight years old, I hiked it with some of my children, and other family members. It wasn’t the same as it was when I was a teenager or a newlywed. When I stood at the top of that glacier, I think I faced every demon I would ever face in my life. Could I possibly drum up the courage to slide down?



I was scared, but my nephew Don had twenty feet of rope and he tied it to my belt and inched me down the first twenty feet of the glacier – then I untied it and seemingly flew down that glacier on my bottom! Oh, the thrill and ride of a lifetime! On my next visit to see the Indian Princess in person, I was seventy-five years old and Don again became my guardian angel and held my hand over the rocks that led to the saddle, and then again all the way down the mountain so I wouldn't sprain an ankle. I owe him! Now, I just love where I live in Elk Ridge where every window that faces north looks out towards Timpanogos – mountain that I love.



PEOPLE I HAVE SHARED MY MOUNTAIN WITH:



*"Little House on the Mountain"  
The very top!*

## FRIENDS ARE FOREVER - #47

Friends have always been important to me – they're like family, and my greatest hope and desire is to be surrounded by them while I'm here on earth and in the hereafter. I look forward to joyous reunions when I die – just like I look forward to having friends and family come to my home for dinner or going to their homes for dinner or events. My life has been enriched by all those wonderful friends who have crossed my path in this life and from so many different places in the world. I have been blessed above and beyond my expectations! Someone I considered one of my closest friends in our early marriage was Pat Ashton. Almost every morning for several years we



*Abt 1978 - just after Pat gave birth to Benjamin, and just before I gave birth to Spencer*

called each other and with our phones tucked between our ears and shoulders, we visited for at least an hour while we each got our kitchens cleaned up. Pat died of cancer over twenty-five years ago. I've written and told her story as seen through my eyes many times over, but the details never leave me. The last day I was with her was March 15, 1996, just one week exactly before she died. I travelled with my son, Spencer, from Santa Rosa down to the Los Angeles area – I was actually chaperoning a high school choir group as they performed for several days. But I took this one day off and stayed with Pat in the hospital for one complete day – from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. This friend of mine who never had a hair out of place, who never went out without her make-up, who

always had beautifully curled eyelashes, was now bald and swollen from chemotherapy. All dignity torn away from her. I tried to hold her hand, but couldn't because a mere touch physically hurt her. She only had enough breath to talk for five minutes every half hour – so that's how we talked all day long – five minutes at a time. We finally started talking about death, for we both knew that this time in the hospital would be her last. At one point, I said, "Pat, in just a few days you will see Alicia and Benjamin," two of her children she had lost – one as a baby, the other as a five-year old, and her eyes lit up as she whispered, "I can hardly wait." That was the moment I knew – a feeling of warmth engulfed my whole body. I believed it all my life, but that moment I knew that life after death was real. I don't think I was ever the same after that experience. The reason for my whole existence was clear. Pat had several times the five years before, been through the refiner's fire. She knew the Saviour on a seemingly personal level, had prayed for miracles (as we all had fasted and prayed for her), and those miracles had been granted her many times. She knew something so much deeper than what I knew. At one point I touched her feet and they were like ice. "Pat, your feet are so cold." She answered, "Are they? Then why don't you rub them." She couldn't feel the cold or my touch on her numbed feet, but she knew that it would do something for me if I could just serve her even in the most humble of ways. I felt so honored to rub her feet, to be in the presence of greatness. I understood why the woman in the scriptures wept as she bathed the Saviour's feet with her own tears. The experience of rubbing Pat's feet made me weep as well. It was humbling. I am a better person because of my friend, Pat Ashton. I kissed her on her forehead as I voiced "Good-bye" to her that night, and said, "I will see you in twenty or so years." That time has passed, but I guess my time is not yet up – I still have more changes to make, more things to get done – for example, I need to get that dirty, stinkin', rotten garage cleaned once and for all – this will take a miracle of a different kind! I think we'll all find out that the greatest of all miracles is death itself, followed by the resurrection (the uniting of our body and immortal soul), life again and forever with our loved ones, our friends and family hopefully in the Celestial Kingdom, enjoying the presence of the Saviour himself – now there's a worthy goal - yes, I still have so much to do - and I need more time. . .



*November 1995 - just four months before Pat died.*

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MY POTTY WEEK IN COLORADO - #48

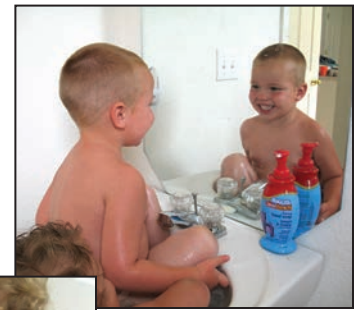
So . . . this story is best told in the poem I wrote describing the events that happened in July 2006. I'd write it up in prose, but really, I think this is one of the very best poems I've ever written - practically genius on this one! Enjoy!

Just five days and nights with three little tykes—  
I know why they cry and I know all their likes.  
They don't like a finger shut in a door,  
Hot oatmeal they love and always want more.  
They cry when clobbered on top of the head,  
They bathe in the sink—these kids are *well-bred!*  
They like to empty the books on the shelves  
And fill toilets with paper—such cute little elves.



“To  
Potty  
We  
Go”

The days are quite long, but I'm still holding on—  
We begin with the sun, and we end on a Song.  
The theme of the week is “*To Potty We Go!*”  
No rewards, no nuthin', for a total “*no show!*”  
Every half hour *they* sit on the “pot”—  
One does a little and one does a lot—  
The other one (female) is stubborn, you see,  
She won't do a poo and she won't do a pee!  
Unless she is naked and left quite alone,  
She'll *water the floor* and laugh while I moan.



Now Austin will *go* every time that he *sits*  
But he also fills diapers with water and grits.  
Ethan is big and goes potty “*on cue,*”  
But he's scared to put do-dos straight into the loo—  
So he puts them in *Big Boys* and waddles knock-kneed,  
Then empties his pants in the pot where he peed!



As for me, I'm going to *pot* so it seems  
My cooking is falling apart at the seams.  
I once took a bath—a quick “*in and out*”  
And once fell asleep—a snore in my snout.  
This happened one night in Austin's blue bed,  
And I slept so long, they thought I was dead!

But nevertheless, I've read just a bit  
I chose to mow lawns rather than knit.  
My “*brain is like mush*”—my rhymes even stink—  
Did I really say “*stink??*” I can't even think!  
Well, soon I will leave, and lo and behold  
I'll remember this time as Heaven-sent Gold—  
In less than a blink these kids will be *six*,  
Their pants will be dry (thanks to MY tricks!!)



Much love to all of you who are potty-trained—  
And to the others - “*Give me a Break!*”

Ethan, Alaina and Austin with Grandma

“A BICYCLE BUILT FOR TWO” - #49

I remember exactly when our relationship with Donna and Ray Smith began. Santa Rosa Church membership had grown, so when Doug was released as a Bishop, several new wards were formed. Our neighborhood got cut off when they split the wards and Ray Smith was our new Bishop. We hadn't known the Smiths before, but they were *cool* and fun to be with. We went together to hear a talk by Elder Ezra Taft Benson in Oakland and afterwards we lined up to meet him and shake his hand. While in that line, Ray, Donna, Doug and I started talking to each other to get to know each other better. Pretty soon Ray was telling us that he was in the Kia Ora Club at BYU, and I said, "No way - I knew everyone in that club - and you certainly weren't there!" But he actually later proved it, when we both went home and looked at our old BYU Yearbooks, and there, big as life, was Ray in this group photo of the Kia Ora Club, and there I was as well. I'll be darned! He was only there a short time. Well, so began a friendship for the rest of our lives. During those early years Doug and I were putting on Stake Family Dance Parties, and we always planned a super floorshow. Our first dance party was "The Gay Nineties," and I asked Ray and Donna to (please) get on this bicycle built for two and, as they pedaled it around the dance floor, would Ray sing, "Daisy, Daisy, Give Me Your Answer True. . . I'm half crazy all for the love of you. . ." Well, of course, they agreed - they are good sports! There was a catch, however, that Ray has never let me forget. I asked him if he'd go pick up the bicycle built for two that we were renting from a local bicycle dealer. He went, but before they gave it to him, he had to put down \$300 for some insurance that he'd bring the bike back. He was flabbergasted, but he did it - and never let me forget it:) Over the years, these two were the backbone of many of our activity events in Santa Rosa. We'll always remember them doing the jitterbug at the 1984 Regional Dance Festival and suddenly Donna's slip fell off - well, showman that she is, she casually reached down and wiggled it back on, all the time while Ray kept her dancing the jitterbug. I think she got some applause (or should have). Another time, she was in *Annie Get Your Gun*, and when she was about to get scalped by an Indian, she let out a blood-curdling scream that nearly shook the roof off and made people sit up in their seats - so hilarious! Ray was Doug's counselor in the Stake Presidency and both were among those fabulous men in the Mormon Battalion in our Sesquicentennial Pageant of the Church in California in 1997 - our future son-in-law Rob Jones was in that group as well. I've always said, "I could've died and gone to heaven," on that one performance! There was so much more that we shared, but for several Readers' Theaters in Santa Rosa, Ray and Donna played the part of Joseph Smith's mother and father. We even got Ray to bring out his trumpet for one of those performances. Honestly, they'd say "yes" to anything and could light up the stage wherever they were. Professional, yes, but mostly they were willing. Another truly wonderful memory with Donna was when we put on the Roadshow, *Jack's Back* in 2003. *Jack* was, of course, our Bishop who was Michael Rice - we always went for the busiest people in the Church to lead out. Donna worked on makeup and costumes and brightened up that stage like you would never believe, I worked on script and performance, my daughter-in-law, Stephanie, worked on art work, and our ever faithful George McCrea worked on set-building. It was good *old fashioned fun* at its best with some of the best people on earth. We're all getting old now, but I hope on the other side we'll get a review of our great moments in life, and something I want to see over again is Ray and Donna riding that bicycle and hearing Ray sing to his *Daisy* ". . . It won't be a stylish marriage, I can't afford a carriage, but you'll look sweet upon the seat of a bicycle built for two."

Ray in our 1997  
Sesquicentennial Pageant



Donna's colorful creation for the Road Show, *Jack's Back*. Can you find Doug, Hunter and Bella in there?



Ray, Donna, Tamera - Smurfs at Halloween Family Dance Party



Donna in our production of *Annie Get Your Gun*

## A MIGHTY TREE HAS FALLEN - #50

Today (25 September 2021) was my big brother Dick's funeral. He was only 95 years old. I loved all the talks and memories given, and realized that I too have some experiences with him that should be recorded. He was almost exactly fifteen years older than I, so my memories start mostly in the 1950's after Dick was married. He was a



*Dick, Joyce, Cheril, Cecile, Tom, Dad, Mother, Lois*

huge tease. Joyce had put sour cream on top of his Thanksgiving pumpkin pie once, and boy, did he make a holler. He put that sour cream on his spoon and flipped it across the table right back into Joyce's mouth (or face:.) After our mother died in 1980 and we were gathered back at the home, he came up to me, and said, "What I want to know is if Mother knew all of her grandchildren before she died?" It was his way of getting into my business and trying to find out if I was pregnant or going to be – just one more time. So, I answered, "I think she knew them all," but as fate would have it, three years later, I brought another granddaughter into the family. I came to respect Dick as the Spiritual leader in our big extended family. When Danny was suddenly killed in a car/truck accident at age nineteen, Mama got the word before Joyce because Joyce was on a trip with Alf. Mama didn't have the strength to relay



the message to Joyce, but asked Dick to do it for all of us. How does a brother relay to his sister that her son is gone? Another incident I will never forget was when Tom and Roberta's son, Johnny, was accidentally killed at age fourteen – just a year and half after Danny. We all had not yet had time to heal. Tom wanted Dick to speak at the funeral. That church building was packed from front to back with people – several hundred youth. Some were standing. Wonderful stories had already been told before Dick got up. I talked to him before the funeral and he was worried – he didn't think he could give the talk – we were all so full of emotion and pain. Sorrow hung heavily on all of us, so I think we were all silently praying for Dick that he could accomplish this task. He was a bit tearful as he gave the talk (Dick was tender-hearted), but he was getting through it just fine and expressing some of those things that we all felt. Right at the end of his talk, he stared at the audience, his face went red, tears streamed down his face, and for the longest time, it seemed, he was just too caught up in emotion to speak. In our seats we were praying for him to be able to just finish the talk and sit down. He finally got control and finished. Afterwards, I asked him what had happened up there at the pulpit, and he said, "You know how that chapel was filled from front to back with people?" Yes, I knew. "Well, it was also filled from top to bottom with people." Wow – I tried to envision what he saw. No wonder he couldn't speak. Well, like my Father, Dick could give long prayers. The last time he was at our

home for a sibling lunch – just a few weeks ago, we got to experience some of the funnier sides of dementia, which Dick, now at age 95, was experiencing. I asked him to give the prayer, but to please keep it short. He always addressed Heavenly Father with great reverence, and then he said, "There are those among us who talk too much and need to have their mouths shut with Grandma's fly swatter!" Then a bit later he prayed that our food would end up in our stomachs right where it belongs! Yes, I'm going to miss the Dick I knew at all these stages in life – the big tease, the spiritual giant, and the old man with the funny conversations (and prayers!). "Good-bye" to the first of us six siblings – a mighty tree has fallen in the forest. I can't help but wonder how soon he will be followed by the rest of us young saplings?



Everyone has Christmas Traditions, don't they? When we marry, we each bring something from our own side of the family and then we create traditions just for us. When Doug and I got married, one of the first traditions we created was our Christmas train - as our family grew, so did our train. We'd put Christmas presents in the trainbox for each child, and when that box was full, our buying for that child was over. Of course, Santa Claus always added just one more special thing on Christmas morning - unwrapped. Another tradition - Orange Rolls! And not just ordinary



orange rolls, but ones made from my mother's recipe and her mother's recipe - no fudging on this. For decorations: Santa Clauses everywhere, a good number of creche scenes and since we've been grandparents, our tree was (is) decorated with stuffed bears - at least a hundred. These bears are from Yellowstone, Glacier Nat'l Park, Yosemite, New Zealand, Australia, Scotland, Ron Hirschi's collection, NASA, Hard Rock Cafes, gifts, and the five and dime stores. Since early marriage Doug and I traditionally took some "just out of the oven" homemade bread and orange rolls to our neighbors and gave them our professional renditions of Christmas carols, especially "Christmas Is Coming, The Goose is Getting Fat..."

and as our family grew we could sing it for them in a round. Very often we would take the full-time missionaries with us - they always had good singing voices! In Scotland, we took a few carloads of friends with us and went a-carolling in the doggonest worst weather you could imagine. In Santa Rosa, we happened upon a new tradition that we kept up for years. We took a plate of goodies down to Martin and Suzi McOmbers's home, and they have a tradition of having a beautiful sit-down meal with the whole works - their dining room was "out of the movies" with cloth napkins, china and crystal settings on the table, turkey or ham, mouth-watering food all piping hot. So, every year, just as they were ready to sit down at the table with all their family gathered together, there suddenly was music coming from a ragamuffin group outside their front door - "Christmas is Coming, The Goose..." Oh no, it's the Scribners ruining Christmas Eve again! No matter how they adjusted their eating time to have a peaceful Christmas Eve family dinner, we managed to get there right on time to ruin it! Martin termed this "The Scribners' Annual Ignominious Destruction and Ruination of McOmbers' Christmas Eve Dinner." I had to look up the word Ignominious: "Shameful, Despicable, Disgraceful, Reprehensible and on and on." Oh Martin, such strong words to use for a friend:( After some years, they gave up, invited us in, and for quite awhile we would all sit in their living room, while Suzi played carols on the piano, and we'd all sing together. They even started writing Christmas songs for us to welcome us: To the tune of *Silver Bells* there were these few lines, "Christma Eve! (The Scribners are so sweet), With the Scribs (Now leave so we can eat!)..." So many more good times I could share, and now many miles separate us, but beware, McOmbers - at your door on Christmas Eve, I might be there!



"Out of the Movies" Christmas Eve Dinner Setting!



Ragamuffin Scribner Singing Group at McOmbers



Suzi, Miji, and Martin:  
"The Scribners come a-carolling  
And break our dinner up  
They knock and cheer and sing  
And refuse to let us sup..."

“CECILE, I KNOW JUST WHO YOU SHOULD MARRY” - #52

While I was on my mission in Australia, a friend from Kia Ora Club at BYU kept writing me and telling me about this new Maori girl who had arrived from New Zealand – Ani Clipper Watene – and what a great addition she was to the club. “*You are going to love her!*” I met Clipper in October 1963, just two weeks after arriving back home. A new semester had just begun at BYU, and after meeting her once at the club, I ran into her again just walking in front of the library on campus. As we talked and talked, it was like I had known her my whole lifetime, and more – I knew we would always be close. Then she boldly announced to me, “*Well, I know just who you should marry, Cecile.*” “*Really, Clipper...and just who would that be?*” (I was actually a bit excited to hear who it was). “*His name is Doug Scribner, and he’s Chairman of the BYU Honor Council, and I’m his assistant.*” Oh man, I was so disappointed. I thought she was going to tell me about someone new and exciting. “*Clipper,*” I responded, “*I knew Elder Scribner in the missionfield, and I’m pretty positive I’m not going to marry him – or even date him.*” Of course, everyone knows the rest of that story. Clipper was one of Doug’s closest friends, and she was also one



of mine. How to describe her? She was physically beautiful – no, gorgeous! Many a man’s heart was broken when *falling in love* didn’t work out for them. And why wouldn’t it break? Clipper had a way of making everyone feel better than they were. After we bought our home in Los Altos, California, Clipper moved in with us for a while after going through some sad relationships. The man who finally won her heart was Phil Maxfield – she met him on the East Coast. He was tall, blond, and as white-skinned as could be – just opposite to her. They were a perfect match, and stayed a perfect match all their lives together. They *produced* absolutely gorgeous children. We kept a constant communication all these years, visiting each other at our homes in California and Utah or their homes in the State of Washington 1969 – Tacoma and then Seattle. We were both called on missions at

the same time in 2003. They were going to Slovenia and Doug and I were going to her home, New Zealand (where we met several members of Clipper’s extended family). Clipper and Phil understood the Gospel of Jesus Christ better than anyone I’ve ever known. I called her and asked what they were going to do with their home when they left for two years. “*Sell it, Cecile*



– *we need to be ready to give everything to the Lord.*” I was reminded of the rich young man who came to Jesus, asking what he needed to do to receive eternal life. Jesus answered (after telling him to keep the commandments, etc.), “*If thou wilt be perfect (or complete which is the Greek translation), go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.*” I was more like the rich young man, not ready to part with my treasures, but Clipper and Phil were complete. They sold everything and for the next seventeen years served full time missions to Slovenia, Croatia, Russia, Philippines, Bermuda and Albania. During and after Bermuda she



was able to help her daughter (a wife and mother) through cancer, and then in the end, only a couple of years ago, bury her. Clipper, (with



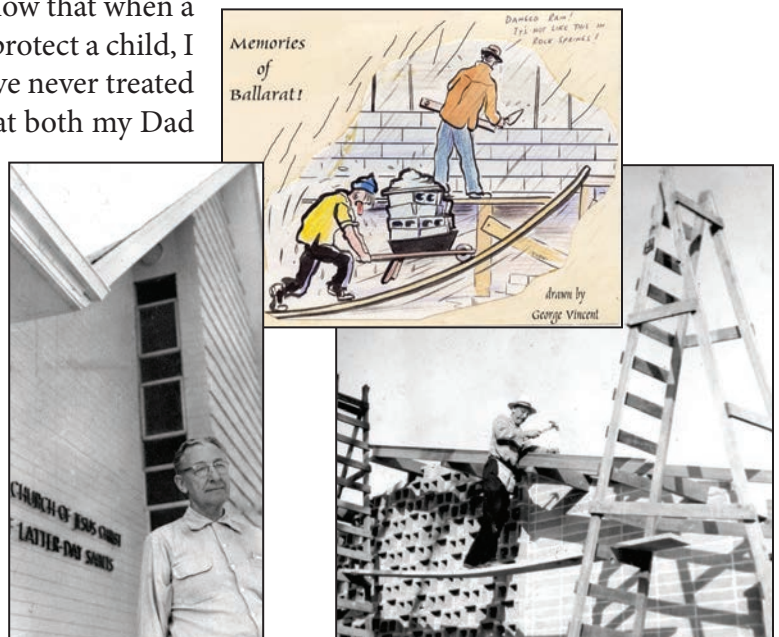
Phil) has survived the hardest pain that life can offer, and she has given in return love and kindness and has warmed the hearts of many family and friends. The last time I saw Clipper was in April of 2019 when we were on our way to China to visit Lora and her family. We had a big lay-over in Seattle, and she and Phil were between missions and also helping their daughter, Jenna, through cancer treatments. We had breakfast together and spent several hours visiting. Last month (September) Clipper and Phil were only days away from returning home from their last mission in Albania and they tested positive for Covid. Just three days ago, before ever returning home to her children, she instead joined her family on the other side. She died on the morning of October 6, 2021. “*Goodbye*” dear wonderful friend. “*I love you. I’m so grateful our paths crossed in 1963 - what a journey we’ve had!*”



Jenna, Phil, Clipper in April 2019



Everyone keeps talking about the longevity in our James family since my first sibling, Dick, just died at age ninety-five plus, and the others of us are still all alive (and kickin') and, at age eighty, I'm the youngest. But I like to look at it another way. One of the Ten Commandments says, "*Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*" When I was fifteen or sixteen I was given a blessing by an old Patriarch, and one of the things he said to me was, "*I say unto you, 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.*" I believed that was true then, and I believe it is true now. I could not have a clear conscience if I crossed the line of dishonoring them – even though they've been gone now for over forty years. I think that is one of the main reasons I was able to stay on the "*straight and narrow*" most of my life. Oh, I didn't live my life perfectly by any means, but the big things like honesty, integrity, chastity, word of wisdom (keeping our bodies free of harmful substances), loving God, and loving our neighbors was and (is) always on my mind, and I've always felt it would bring dishonor to my parents and their teachings and example if I crossed those lines without humbling myself, repenting, and asking forgiveness. Many of my children have laughed at me when I tell them that I won't even try a coke – I don't remember ever being told not to, but I do know it was never in our home and was considered *not good* for our bodies. So, I don't really know how a coke tastes:) There was one incident where I *crossed the line* for sure. When we were in Australia, I received a call to serve a mission there, and during those two weeks before I was to report to the mission home, I started dating a fellow in Ballarat. This is where my father was assigned to supervise the building of his first chapel in Australia. Well, two nights before I left on my mission, I was with this fellow - we were outside talking and talking (and a little kissing) and it was getting late. About 2 a.m. my Dad came out the door, and told this fellow it was time to go home. I was mortified. My father should have trusted me!! I was twenty years old for heaven's sake! He had never before done this. My mother, on the other hand, would every now and again turn on the floodlight of our home if I had been out long enough in a car with a fellow. But my Dad? Never! I came into the house, turned on the tub and sat in that tub for hours and cried and cried and cried because Dad had embarrassed me and didn't trust me. My eyes were swollen shut I had cried so much. I left the day after that for my mission and refused to kiss or even hug my Dad goodbye. My missionary work for the next four months was so hard with zero success and some unhappiness with my companion. My Dad needed this fellow (I had dated) to be one of his main workers on the chapel, but the work on the chapel wasn't going well either – in fact, they were falling way behind schedule. Fortunately, we were not that many miles apart and there was a conference in Melbourne that both my parents and I would be attending. When I saw my Dad, I threw my arms around his neck and asked him to please forgive me for being so childish. As a parent, I more than understand now what a worry it is if a child is out too long at night with a date – I know of the temptations that are out there – and I know that when a parent is worried, and perhaps steps over the line to protect a child, I know that is done purely out of love. My children have never treated me as harshly as I treated my Dad. I will tell you that both my Dad and Mother and I felt great happiness and success the rest of our missions. He finished that chapel and built another in Townsville, and two in Perth before coming home. And I somehow learned what it was to be a successful missionary and made great, long lasting friendships. As for my brothers and sisters, they have all stayed true to the principles taught in our home and as far as I can tell, have always honored our parents. Perhaps that's why they have lived long and healthy lives. Forget about the *James genes*. And then we have eternity together. That's how I like to look at it anyway.



I wish *ordinary* members of the church could meet Apostles and Prophets in person because there's something inside of you that changes when you meet one of these men of God. I'm an ordinary member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but years ago when the Church was much smaller, I was able to experience some of these choice moments of being in the presence of some of these kind, humble and great men. While I was on my mission, we had visits and personal interviews from Elder Ezra Taft Benson, Elder Howard W. Hunter and Elder Gordon B. Hinckley (all three later became Presidents of the Church), and of course, President Bruce R. McConkie, our Mission President who later become one of the Apostles. Elder Russell M. Nelson (now President of the Church), visited in Scotland while we lived there, as did Elder David B. Haight who (years earlier) had invited Doug into his home for dinner in Palo Alto, California on a few occasions while Doug was just a young man investigating the Church. In 1978, Doug was serving as a Bishop in Santa Rosa, California, and he and the Young Women's President, Lola Payne, decided to take a busload of our young men and women in our ward to Salt Lake City (800 miles) and somehow, by some miracle, find a way to introduce them to President Spencer W. Kimball and give them one of these life-changing moments. We wanted them to feel in their hearts some of those same feelings we had felt in meeting some of these great men. The young people even made him a beautiful quilt with squares that represented the beautiful place where we lived in Sonoma County. We filled a whole bus, and we travelled together, even experiencing a possible accident when one of the wheels came loose from the bus and travelled ahead of us and landed in the Great Salt Lake Salt Flats. Somehow, our bus driver, Chuck Michelsen, skillfully kept the bus upright. We watched conference together, and then asked someone if we could meet the

Prophet. We were told *“No, but you can meet Sister Barbara Smith, the Relief Society President, present the quilt to her and she will make sure the Prophet gets it.”* It was a thrill to meet her. After that meeting, we (all twenty-five of us) just walked to the old Church Office Building, to be *“close”* to the prophet. We told a receptionist why we were there. He left and then came back and said, *“President Kimball isn't available, but would you like to visit with his first counselor, President Marion G. Romney?”* I was excited because President Romney served a mission with my Dad in Australia in 1921! We were all ushered into the room where the apostles and the Prophet meet together. President Romney was personally shaking all our hands when their secretary came in and asked President Romney if he could use some help. He said, *“Yes!”* Then President Kimball walked in – he was a short man with a

gravelly voice because he had had throat cancer. There was a presence about him that caused all of us to tear-up as he carefully came to each one of the kids and spoke to them – he challenged all of the boys to serve a mission. He never spoke to us all as a group – but to each individually. When all the kids had left the room, it was just Doug and I left. He hugged me. He noticed I was pregnant and he touched my stomach and smiled – somehow I knew right there and then I was going to have a boy and his name was going to be *Spencer*. In those days we never knew the gender of our babies before they were born. When he approached Doug, he pulled him into his arms and whispered, *“Bishop, I love you more than you can possibly know,”* and kissed him slightly on the cheek. I have been greatly blessed in my life. Young people today have different kinds of experiences – probably just as great – but different. But for me and Doug and twenty-five young people that day, it was a *“forever moment.”*



President Romney



President Spencer W. Kimball



Doug at General Conference 1978 (only picture we have from the trip - others lost in our fire)

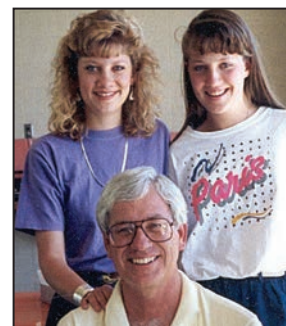
## LABELS AND INITIALS - #55

Young people in grade and high school can be cruel. I don't know if I was cruel to Stewart Roberts, but I don't remember being nice. I seem to remember him sitting in the back of the room in several of my classes. He didn't seem to be very smart. In fact, I can remember that some of us counted on him to be on the wrong end of the curve when grades were given, so our grades would actually look better. In my day, we didn't have "initials" or "labels" that seemed to identify who we were - *Initials* like ADD, ADHD, ODD, etc. or *Labels* like Dyslexia, Autism, Aspergers, etc. But there were a certain percentage who we thought were just unmotivated, lazy, different, etc. Stewart was one of those. Years later at a thirty-year-high school reunion, I saw him - he was a handsome man, happily married with a lovely wife and daughters. He had that *successful* look about him. I was curious and spent some time talking to him afterwards and complimented him on his beautiful wife and daughters. He started telling me about them and mentioned that one of his daughters suffered the same learning disability that he had in school. In my head I went "ding ding." Oh my goodness, we didn't even know about learning disabilities



2009 - Georgia Johnson, Joan Lischak, Cecile, Stewart

that could be dealt with. And we were cruel. Inside, I felt so ashamed for having judged him in those days. We have since become very good friends and have worked together on the last two high school reunions (55th and 60th). He and another classmate of ours, Brian Kelly, became hot air balloon operators/pilots and were there in Provo every Fourth of July to fly them. Oh, if we just took time to get to know people before we judged them (or even put labels or initials on them) - MOST, probably ALL, people are so much MORE than that!



1989 - With his daughters

## "HELP ME, HELP ME" - #56

There are so many *Craig-stories* I could tell. I'm sure I've already recorded a bunch of them - but here's one that is worth re-telling - and I promise you, folks, I am not exaggerating. First of all, when we were baby-sitting the Wheatley children, they had a toddler, Charles, that was such a *beautiful to look at*, blond boy-child. I wanted one - and I got one - Craig. Nothing was swollen on him when he was born. Everything just perfect. But what I wasn't ready for was his high spirit! He spoke early, so of course that meant he was smart:) But he was a handful. I particularly had a hard time keeping him quiet or still in Church. For some reason, as a baby and even as a toddler, and probably even older, Craig somehow sensed when we were in our last hour before we would arrive home from a trip - be it a two-hour or a thirteen-hour trip, he knew. And he became unbearable that last hour- fidgety, noisy, crying, wiggly you name it! Doug and I made a decision. This would be our last child. Three is a good number. Well, Scotty was our one "*surprise baby*." How I got pregnant, I'll never know, but there I was just another twenty months later, ready to give birth to another child. In June 1972, we were visiting the Santa Rosa Ward for the first time because we were getting ready to move there. We wanted to make friends. I was *big with child*, and Craig wouldn't sit still. We were near the front, but I had to take him out. He was disturbing everyone. I got myself up, settled Craig nicely on my big stomach and tried to hold him still. He was wiggling all over the place, and then he gave me one of my most embarrassing moments. He leaned to one side and called out to the people, "*Help me, Help me!*" I tried to put my hands over his mouth, but he then leaned over to the other side of my stomach and called out to those people, "*Help me, Help me.*" I tried again to stop him, but at least three more times as I waddled down that isle to get him out, he kept rolling from one side of my stomach to the other, calling to the people each time, "*Help me, Help me.*" And I couldn't catch his mouth to stop it no matter how I tried! Somehow he turned out to be a wonderful, caring son, husband and father. Go figure...



*"I hope they call me on a mission - when I have grown a foot or two..."* Doug and I met in our early twenties in Australia in 1962 while we were both serving missions. All our life of raising children, we planned on serving another mission someday - when we were freer and richer, and when we had reached that status of "Seniors." After Doug was released as Stake President, we applied (or were called - can't remember) to serve six months in the Mission Office in the Santa Rosa Mission, just a mile from our home. Then in 2003 we got a phonecall from Elder Didier, one of the General Authorities of the Church. He asked if we would like to serve a mission, and we told him we had always planned on applying, but we still had a dependent child who was attending a university. "Well," he said, *"Is she planning on serving a mission?"* We told him that we thought she was, but we knew that could possibly change - she was just nineteen. *"That's okay,"* he answered, *"We can extend a call to her now, and she can serve when her semester of school is over."* All our years of planning were here, and we suddenly felt unprepared for our future. We were excited at first. Elder Didier asked us to be directors of a visitors' center. *"Did visitors' centers have directors?"* We didn't know - but we responded with a *"Yes!"* It takes a long time to prepare your family, your home, your finances, etc. when you get a call to serve for two years. We didn't yet know where we were going. About two months later, Elder Didier called again. Doug answered, and then smiled. He looked at me and mouthed *"New Zealand!"* Oh man, I was so excited and thrilled. Ever since my college days in the Kia Ora Club, I wanted to spend some time in New Zealand. I was there for a few days when coming home from my mission in Australia, but that was only a small taste. I can't possibly explain how happy I was. Then, as the preparations got more intense and our time to leave was drawing near, we suddenly felt like going would be impossible. Gina was a single mother with two children and needed our help as she was teaching high school Spanish. Russ, Craig, Spencer and Jim were out of work, and Scott was planning on quitting the job he had. How could we help them if we were so far away? Spencer was going to get married while we were gone. After waiting through eight years of marriage with no success of having children, Christy had gone through invitro, but had lost those babies and nearly lost her own life. Now she informed us that there were still two or three viable eggs left and she was going to try to get pregnant with them again. I was desperately afraid for her - and I wouldn't be here to help her. Everything was wrong. Leaving these situations was one of the greatest quandries Doug and I had ever experienced. It was like walking blindfolded, knowing that there was a cliff ahead of us. We chose to have faith and take that step into the dark. It was so hard for us to do. In the Mission Training Center, the other twenty-five couples looked so relaxed. Some were headed out on their second or third mission together. We felt like babies among them - all these strong, prepared, confident couples. On our third and last day of training, Elder Boyd K. Packer spoke to us. Doug and I were all prepared to take complete notes and learn perhaps some new and exciting doctrine. He got up and looked at all of us, and then finally said, *"I know what all of you are worried about - your families."* All fifty of us started to cry - we couldn't stop the flow of tears. Those other couples were just as fearful as we were! Then he spoke again, *"I promise you that while you are gone, taking care of the Lord's children in other parts of His vineyard, the Lord will personally take care of your families."* Then, of course, we all cried again. After serving two glorious years in New Zealand, Doug and I have since served two other part-time missions in the Family History Center in Salt Lake City. We were assigned to the area where the geniuses who have created Family Search do all their work. We loved our work there and learned to love family search so much that we have now spent the rest of our free time for the last ten years doing this work and doing the work for our ancestors in the temple. However, as



much as we've loved any missionary work we have been assigned to, nothing made us feel more alive than when we sacrificed, left home and family in the hands of the Lord, and served our New Zealand mission, working through homesickness, and experiencing miracles beyond description - even in our families while we were away. Gina remarried, *inherited* three more children, and together she and her husband had one more. Our boys all found good jobs. Christy gave birth to beautiful twins who are now seventeen years old, Spencer got married and I was able to fly home for his wedding, and Lora served a good mission in the great state of Texas and came home and fell in love. And during those two years Doug and I became grandparents of seven new grandchildren! *"Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of Heaven..."*

I would guess that very few people have had this kind of experience that I had with my mother. In two weeks after arriving in Australia, I was in Melbourne learning how to be a missionary. It didn't take much for my mother to get started on her missionary work. While Dad built a chapel, she would plan a party, or an auction, or anything to build excitement among the people who lived in the area of the new upcoming chapel. These auctions would also help raise money for the chapel building. She was a great missionary - was never afraid to talk to anyone on the street. In fact, someone came up to her and asked, "Mrs. James, is it true in your church that you give as much as ten percent of your earnings back to your Church?" And my mother's answer was, "Oh my, No. We give ever so much more - why, we can give to a building fund for chapels, to a missionary fund to help support young people on their missions, to the welfare department to help those in need - Oh, there's ever so much more we can give!" That was my mother. When I was in Adelaide and half-way into my mission, I received the most wonderful surprise for Christmas 1962. President McConkie thought it would be a good idea to send me my mother for a missionary companion for a week! She would form a threesome with Anne Milburn and me. My dad was in Adelaide checking on chapels, but my mother was our missionary companion. She went tracting with us, spoke to our investigators, and particularly helped us teach Glenn Sheehan. In fact, before she left, she gave him a pair of white socks to wear the day he would be baptized. She taught us how to involve Glenn at an upcoming ward party saying, "You'll be perfect for this part!" My mother was short (only about 5 foot), but she was dynamite in getting things accomplished. Anne Milburn and I were teaching Glenn about the principles of the Gospel, but my mother taught him the JOY of the Gospel, which, of course, is involvement. I learned a little of her magic, but I couldn't work it to the degree that she could. She had the magic wand. This young twenty year old man, who my mother had never seen before and would never see again, was worth most of her time that week.



Elders Newbold & Blair, Cecile, Mom, Anne Milburn, Glenn Sheehan

Jesus taught the parable of going after "the one" when he spoke of the shepherd who would leave his flock to go after the lost sheep - from this parable we learn the value of each and every soul in God's Kingdom, of which we are all a part. My mother understood the meaning of this parable. I remember her telling us of a get-together that was planned up on one of the mesas just outside the town of Rock Springs, Wyoming. Everyone just wanted an open fire and some food and some gathering of folks for a nice evening. But my mother suggested they roast a pig over an open pit. And she knew *just the man* who could do this. Well, of course, he was an inactive member of the Church, and she knew this would make him feel important. She asked him, he came and roasted the pig, and was welcomed and thanked by all the other members. So he stayed with them - forever. I always loved that story and finally saw the opportunity where I could do the same thing - follow her example. A luau was planned at the Hoyal's backyard in Santa Rosa, CA in 1978. I knew that there was an inactive Samoan family who lived in our ward, and I also knew that every Samoan probably knew how to roast a pig in the ground for a large group. This was my opportunity. The event was well on its way, and I drove to this Samoan family's home and told this man that we wanted to roast a pig, but he was the only one who could do it. He said he'd love to help, but he was moving to Sonoma. Oh, my heart sank. But he said, "You tell me where and when and I will come and roast your pig." Yeah. Sure. I gave him the date and place, and then never saw him again. Would he really come? I was in a bind. The next Wednesday at a woman's luncheon, there were two young missionaries - one was from Samoa!! Oh, what a coincidence! Could he roast a pig? Of course he could - and would! My chance of duplicating my mother's experience was gone, but we would get the pig cooked. It was the night before the luau, and my Samoan missionary was there and guess who showed up just like he said he would! You guessed it. These two Samoans spent the whole night together, building a fire, preparing the pit, roasting a couple of pigs, and they talked about the Gospel. After the event, they parted. The Samoan family moved from Sonoma to another part of California, and of all things our young Samoan elder got transferred to that very town. He was tracting, knocking on doors and, lo and behold, knocked on the door of his good friend that he met while cooking those pigs together! This time, they spent some serious time talking together, realized the Lord's hand in their lives, and our faithful Samoan family once again became active in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "God works in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform." I just wanted to duplicate my mother, but both of us were simply instruments in His hands.



On the 8th of July 1946, when I was almost five years old, I stood in front of the fireplace next to Lois, who was almost eighteen years old, and she stood next to her husband to be, Carl Hirschi, and they were getting married in our home in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Maybe I was the flower girl. Or maybe I just wanted to stand by Lois. That's my first real memory of her. But after that, I have a bucketload of memories. When she had Ron and Dave, well, they weren't like nephews, they were more like my little brothers and that's how we grew up. We all lived more than two hours apart – Lois and her family moved to Brigham City, and we moved to Provo, but every summer, my mother sent me to Lois' to live for a week or two. Every time I was there, Lois sewed a new wardrobe for me – at least four or five outfits that would last me through my next year of school. In 1953, when our family went to Hawaii to meet Tom who was coming home from

his three year mission in Japan, well Lois sewed another five or six outfits for me to wear on that trip. She didn't go to Hawaii with us, she just made sure I was going to have fun in new clothes. I remember eating a lot of fish dinners at their home because her husband was a fisherman. We went to drive-in movies quite often, and I loved giggling with the two boys in the back seat. Every Thanksgiving, Lois was in charge of the pumpkin pies – she must've made at least eight of them – it was so exciting to see her come with her family and every one of them carrying in the pies. Thanksgiving to me has always been *pumpkin pie* because of Lois. Lois also helped me through some delicate situations that young girls go through as they start developing. This one family gathering day, there were a bunch of us eating dinner outside, and that day I put on a bra for the first time. Cheril came around the table and stopped behind me and flipped my bra! I was so embarrassed that I ran inside to hide and cry. Lois found me and started to talk to me. She told me how natural it was for us to get to this stage in our life, and look down under our blouse and see that things were changing. Then I started to cry even harder and I blurted out, *"That's the problem, Lois – I look down and nothing's happening yet – my bra was stuffed with socks."* I'll never forget that moment with her. Lois died just a couple of days ago at age ninety-three, just before Christmas. How appropriate because Lois was and is a *Peacemaker* – always in the background, never seeking glory, but anxious to come to someone's rescue. She withstood a difficult marriage, a difficult divorce, and then saw the hand of the Lord in her future. She married too young to go to college, and didn't know how she would survive with her children when her husband divorced her. My father said to her, *"Do you pay your tithing?"* *"Of course."* *"Then, you'll be okay."* She went to Henager's School of Business and graduated as high as anyone had graduated there, got a job at Thiokol, and met her future husband, Ernie, who had no trouble becoming a father to her four children. Lois had a brilliant mind – and she read volumes of books – and then read them over again because they were all her favorites. She, along with Joyce and Cheril, came (from Utah to California) to all of my children's weddings, and helped me with



the decorations and food and plain ol' support. I was her little sister, and she always took care of me when I was in need. My house (and many others in the family) is filled with many crocheted and cross-stitched momentos – two complete nativity sets, a set of carolers, two beautiful photos made just to comfort me after our house burned, beautiful doilies, a Madonna and child and decorator pillows. In fact, when our house burned and I lost the beautiful set of carolers that she made, well, she just made me another whole set. When does the transition take place? For so

long I was the child, the little sister, and then when I finally reached some of those *golden years*, I became the one to worry about her, and to deal with her as she became more childlike. Others in the family would write a different story about Lois, but this is mine. I love her four children



like my own. In the last few months I was told that she kept wondering where her son Ron was. Her childlike mind couldn't remember that he was killed in a bicycle/truck accident when he was just fifty-six years old. But now, her glorious reunion with him, I'm sure, has taken place. She had a hard time getting her four children into this life. Every pregnancy was hard, and with Carla, she only weighed eighty-two pounds after Carla's birth, but from those small beginnings came over twenty grandchildren, and over fifty great-grandchildren – I've lost count. *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant...enter thou into the joy of thy lord."*



## MEN!! -STORY #60

Okay. Just one last story before I really say, “*I’m done!*” It’s got to be about Doug. There are quite a few stories that the kids can tell to really *roast* him, which, by the way, they did when he had his final retirement party from thirty-seven years with Hewlett-Packard. Those stories went on for two hours around the breakfast table that day. There was so much laughter, and Doug enjoyed every single minute, particularly laughing at himself. The favorite



story of all is “*The Header,*” but it actually can’t be told without acting it out. So I will tell another. This happened about 1978 when Doug was a new young Bishop and Rusty was eleven or twelve years old. Rusty was a big boy now so we had a birthday party for him that lasted until 9:30 p.m. Doug was just home from his meetings and piled the boys in the car to take them all home. He was only about five minutes from home, and suddenly there was a bright spinning police light and a loud siren behind him. Doug pulled right over at a gas station. The policeman asked him to get out of the car and to try to walk in a straight line because he was apparently weaving all over the road! Doug passed that test. The next was a breath test for alcohol. He passed. The next was the policeman patting him down, checking for anything dangerous. All this time, these young boys’ faces and noses were all glued to the windows watching their *Bishop* get the once over by this policeman. Finally, the policeman told Doug to go home and get some sleep! Now skip forward twenty years when Doug was serving as Stake President. Our visiting authority from Salt Lake was Elder Loren Dunn, who was at least 6’6” tall. Doug had about an hour and a half break between afternoon and evening meetings so he came home to see if he could be of some help with the final preparations for Elder Dunn’s visit. “*Where do you need help?*” he asked. “*Well, just look around and see what needs doing.*” We were getting the house and yard nice and clean so Elder Dunn could come to our home that night (and be impressed!). So ... Doug looked around and decided that (of all things!) the gutters on the roof needed cleaning! In that hour and a half, he made the worst awful mess around our nicely cleaned yard, and then, of course, didn’t have time to clean the mess up. I worked like crazy with the kids to get that problem fixed. I was fuming when I arrived at the Saturday evening meeting. However, after the meeting I hurried home to get everything in order for Elder Dunn. I couldn’t sleep him in our guest room because I had been making videos and had photos all over the bed, the floor and the table. And besides, that single bed wouldn’t fit him. I prepared the two pre-Civil War beds up in the boys’ bedroom – I pushed them together so he could sleep diagonally on the beds so his feet wouldn’t dangle out. Doug arrived at our home and he seemed to be all alone. “*Where’s Elder Dunn?*” I asked. “*Oh, he had to make a quick phonecall and needed a quiet room, so I put him in the guest room.*” “*You put him where???*” I nearly cried. There wasn’t a worse mess anywhere than there was in that video room. I was so embarrassed and frustrated. Well, Doug got up in Stake Conference the next morning and his first words were, “*Sometimes I’m hard to live with. . .*” MEN!! Time heals all wounds. I’m sure I eventually forgave him. And now, of course, I just wish he were here to keep making those same silly mistakes. I did get him trained to only clean the garage when he had those sudden bursts of energy and time and wanted to help out at home. After retirement, he trained himself to wash my dishes and to pick up my messes in the yard after I weeded. Life was much more eventful when Doug was here, and my feet were a lot warmer at night. Miss you Doug. . .



*Cecile, Christy, Lora, Doug with Elder Loren Dunn*



## NO SMOKING ALLOWED - ESPECIALLY IN SACRAMENT MEETING! - #61

While we were living in Scotland in 1985, Hewlett-Packard was very generous and paid for Russ to fly home from BYU and join us for Christmas vacation. This was right before he left for Colombia on his mission. He was asked to play a piano solo for the musical number for Sacrament meeting - kind of his farewell to us. Well, he started to play. I was sitting near the front on the left hand side, right behind another lady, about fifty years old, and she was sitting with a couple of men. I had never seen them in church before. They were whispering (quite loudly) back and forth during the first part of Russ' solo. Then I realized that she was lighting up a cigarette, and then started to smoke it! I leaned forward and asked her to please not smoke in church, but she spoke back to me rather angrily. By this time, Russ was getting a little confused because of all the noise during his solo. The men were grabbing the cigarette from her, but she loosened their grip, picked up her purse, swung it back and clonked me pretty hard in the head! Russ stopped his presentation and watched with the other members of the ward as these men got on each side of this lady and basically forced her down the aisle and escorted her out of the meeting. As they were doing so, she yelled back a few times saying, "You Mormons are so intolerant, you Mormons are so intolerant!!" Nobody quite knew what to do. The bishop got up and asked Russ to start over again in order to bring the spirit back in the meeting. So Russ (now with some added pressure) nervously started his solo once again, and we all acted as if nothing had ever happened! (But I had a red spot on my head to prove that it had!)



Russ and Gina at Kirktonhill - 1985

## "I NEED LOVE, I NEED LOVE . . ." #62

One story from Scotland can always remind me of another. While we were in Scotland, Gina was just the age where she wanted to be noticed, she wanted to start dating, she wanted to be part of those around her, she wanted to be liked, perhaps even popular - well, she was sixteen. It was a hard age in a child's life for a family to move. But she had made some friends at her school that first year (1984-1985), and she wanted to be with them at a school dance. I was wary of the standards of some of the Scottish high school kids that we saw just in our neighborhood (our corner friends). But, finally, I gave in and let Gina persuade me to let her go to a school dance at Balerno High. I did insist on driving her those five miles myself instead of her catching a ride with a friend. It was raining hard that night. But we got there, and Gina assured me that there would be chaperones and no drinking or smoking allowed in the hall. I let her off and she said, "What time will you pick me up?" I said, "I'm not going any place. I'll just wait right here until you're ready to go home." It was a bit cold and my windows were constantly fogged up when my motor was off. I got wondering - I saw kids (mostly boys) leave the dance hall, go somewhere for awhile and then come back. This seemed to be a constant occurrence during the evening. *Where did they go? What were they doing?* They couldn't see me in my Volkswagon bus because of my fogged up windows. Then it happened! Some boy started pushing on my car, making it rock back and forth, and he was crying out, "I need love, I need love!" I suddenly knew what I needed. I needed to go into that hall and save my daughter! When I entered the hall, the chaperones were all visiting with each other at one end of the hall, the girls were sitting around on the chairs, some of them on each other's laps, and the boys? Well, they were in a big circle with all their arms around each other, moving slowly back and forth and singing along with the music - and yes, they were drunk as could be. *So, that's where they were going when they left the hall during the evening!* I boldly walked across that floor, knowing I'd be an embarrassment to Gina, but I couldn't think of anything else to do. I told her it was time to go home, so we both left. As you can imagine, the ride home was quiet. Perhaps she never forgave me for years, but I'll bet that now that she's been a mother of teenagers (and some still coming up), she would probably also choose to pull her child from an unhealthy situation. I would do it again. As a side note, just to explain the difference between a sixteen year old girl and a twelve year old boy, we were having a homelight and each child was looking through their own Book of Remembrance. Gina said, "Oh, this is where I started looking ugly," and then over in the corner, there was Scotty muttering to himself, "This is where I started looking good." And then a minute later, "This is where I REALLY started looking good!" Yep, there's a difference!



Scotty and Gina at Kirktonhill - 1984



## GOD'S HAND IN OUR LIVES - #63

Oh. . . this is a good story. I have so many good stories that came in the year 1991, following the evening when our house on Montecito Meadow caught fire and destroyed so much of our beautiful new two-year old home in Santa Rosa. Russ and Kari had just left for their home back East earlier that morning – they had been “*home for Christmas.*” Gina was home from college, Craig and Scott were both serving missions at the time – Craig in Peru and Scott in Minnesota - and of course, Christy and all the other younger kids were home. The fire started in front of the house in the garbage can, and it torched the front of the garage and went right up into the attic – everything in the attic was destroyed it seemed – that’s where the fire burned the hottest and longest. When the firemen had finally gotten the fire under control, everything left was soaking wet and smelled of smoke. The next morning we went through the house, and then into the attic. We saw something we couldn’t believe! The only things left in the attic were these two cardboard boxes, totally intact, and just barely singed. Right next to them was one of those old heavy Kirby vacuums that was made of heavy metal or steel, and it was burned and much of the metal melted from the heat of the flames. The boxes were on the floor of the attic - the fire had burned the wood all around them and the wood was even burned down into the wood. But there stood these two boxes. And what was in these boxes? Well, one was Craig’s and one was Scott’s. When these boys went on their missions, they gave away most of their clothes and other belongings, but the treasures they couldn’t part with, their most precious items (things like soccer trophies, or letters from girlfriends, pictures and other valuable things of that order) were in these two boxes. They were miraculously protected. I made sure that this piece of wood was cut out so I could keep it forever and see the spots where those two boxes sat. I can’t ever look at it without being reminded of God’s hand in our lives.



## SHEDDING THE COLD SHOULDER - #64

I’ve been facilitating a course in my home for *Emotional Resilience*, and our last lesson was on “*Controlling Anger.*” I don’t think of myself as an angry person, but I want to tell you about a sacrifice I made that I can truly say made me proud of myself. Another name for giving a “*cold shoulder*” is “*the silent treatment.*” Some of us Jameses were experts at this. I thought it was okay, but every time I gave it (because I was hurt, or angry), I had a miserable time getting out of it – it could go on for days and days. And it was destructive – to me as an individual, to my marriage, to any relationships where I used it. An example: On our honeymoon, we went to San Diego for an open house that Doug’s mother gave for us. Doug loved being home and loved working on projects with his Dad. He was caught up one night in a project of building a relief map of Paul’s journeys for the Sunday School class that he would be teaching when we got back to Provo. I was feeling ignored. I suggested we go to a movie that night, but Doug said, “*Why don’t I just stay here and work with Dad, and you and Mom can go.*” Aha – *the Silent Treatment!* Doug couldn’t figure out why I didn’t speak to him the rest of our honeymoon. Another example: I was pregnant with Gina, and one night at 11:30 I had a craving. I asked Doug to pour a bowl of raw oats, then a layer of milk, and then a layer of sugar and bring it to me to eat. He did it, and as he handed it to me, he said, “*This looks like something a pig would eat.*” I answered, “*Well, maybe I am a pig.*” Aha – *the Cold Shoulder!* I didn’t eat that delicious looking bowl of food, and I didn’t speak to Doug for two weeks (is that the same as *selling your birth-right for a mess of pottage?*). When you go into this mode, you can’t get out of it without swallowing pride, and it takes an apology, and asking forgiveness. Oh, I hated myself while I was in it. Finally, after ten years of marriage, I decided I could get control of myself in this area. I promised myself, and I promised God that I would never go into that mode again - ever! Yes, at times I was hurt or angered again and again, but I would keep talking, crying or doing anything, but I have never let myself continue with that destructive behavior of giving a cold shoulder. I guess we can be proud of ourselves for something, can’t we?



## THE HOUSE OF JOSEPH AND THE HOUSE OF JUDAH - #65

Years ago, maybe about 1979, we heard that Elder Ezra Taft Benson was coming to speak in Oakland. Anyone was invited, but they needed a ticket – that ticket was “a Jewish friend.” Well, we had several, but the one we invited was Dr. Les Shipley, our optometrist, and his wife, Janice. They were good friends of ours, and over the years Les had helped us all to “see better.” For an hour, Elder Benson told the story of *Joseph of Old* and the coat of many colors, and his being hated by his brothers and sold into Egypt as a slave, and then his gift of being able to interpret dreams, and his ability to stand up morally under great temptation. Elder Benson also told about his brother Judah and the strong role he played in Joseph’s life, particularly when Judah and his brothers and their families were starving because of the famine in the land and their need to go to Egypt where they heard there was food to be bought. Of course, the person they came face to face with was their brother Joseph whom they didn’t recognize. He was second only to Pharaoh in influence in Egypt. Joseph asked about the younger brother, Benjamin, and wanted to see him. This is where Judah got so involved, trying to convince his father, Jacob, to send Benjamin with them, even offering his own life if any harm came to this beloved son of their father’s. The touching moment of course, was when Joseph could no longer hold back his emotions and his love for his family, and he revealed himself to them. Elder Benson also told in detail the blessings that Jacob gave to both of these sons, Joseph and Judah. In that hour, we were all mesmerized and extremely caught up with the story of these two brothers. And then, he ended by saying something like, “Just as Joseph of Old revealed himself to Judah and his other brothers, tonight, we who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ and who for the most part are descended from the tribe of Joseph, reveal ourselves to you, our brothers and sisters, who are of the tribe of Judah.” You could’ve heard a pin drop among those hundreds of us that were sitting there in the audience, as we all felt this wonderful closeness to those Jewish friends we brought with us to share the evening. This instilled in me forever a love for our Jewish brothers and sisters. My children all know and love Odette Kemp, our Jewish family friend from the little town of Temple, Scotland, and they knew she was like family. One night in Ratho, when Odette came to visit us after our arrival in Scotland, I asked her to tell me about herself. I could tell she was holding back, and that’s when it dawned on me why she was hesitant. I suddenly said, “Odette, you’re Jewish!” She was worried about what that revelation might do to our friendship. With all the love for her that I was feeling in my heart, I proceeded to tell her in detail the same story in the same way that Elder Benson had told it to us that memorable evening in Oakland. Odette’s story of survival was much the same as Anne Frank’s - as a teenager, she fled from France during the war and came to Scotland. All her family, except her parents, were killed in the war. She feared that everyone hated Jews. But that night as we talked, I think she realized that I loved her as my own sister, and I’ve always known that she also loved me that way. We, in fact, were her only real family. Odette, in 1987, had the opportunity to meet an Apostle, Elder David B. Haight, during the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the Church in Scotland. When they met, he took her hand in his and gently rubbed it, looked deep into her eyes, and she in his, and then he finally said, “I know what you are feeling . . . Betrayal.” He knew that she felt that if she joined our Church, she would be betraying her family who had all died in the ovens in the war - a war that falsely raged under the guise of Christianity. She never said a word to him, but sat down and had tears in her eyes. To me she said, “How was that man able to put into one word the feelings I felt - feelings I couldn’t myself describe?” Odette has since died, but was one of the most Christian living women I’ve ever known. Odette, we’re not yet through with each other!



1986 - Odette with my sister, Joyce in front of Odette’s home in Temple, Scotland



1985 - My father, Cecil James, Odette, Richelle Snow (niece), Ernie Winfield (brother-in-law)



1985 - Christmas at Kirktonhill  
Odette, Jose Morlin, my son Craig

## FIRST TIME IN THE TEMPLE - #66

Sometimes a person gets hit with a powerful impression that stays with them forever. The first time I went through a temple (1962), it was the big one in Salt Lake City, and our session was one of the last sessions of the day. I just remember it being dark when we came out to the parking lot. I was there with my family. Everything was new to me inside the temple, and I felt particularly uneasy



Cecil, Cecile, and Lucie James - 1962

because I was in the front row with about ten other young women my age. They were all going through the temple to be married – and I? I was going to Australia with my parents in the hopes I'd get a mission call after I got there. I was twenty years old, but I suddenly felt like an *old maid* who had been passed over. All during the session I wished I was getting married instead. I knew nothing of what was going on – I was preoccupied with how uncomfortable I was to be there – and for the wrong reason it seemed. I felt I was in the wrong place at the wrong time with the wrong people. I wanted to run and hide. I just didn't want to be there. Then, at the end of the session, I went through the veil of the temple, which then entered into the room that represents the Celestial Kingdom, and there standing to greet me on the other side was my family – my parents and all my siblings. I suddenly felt like I knew everything about the Temple – “*being together with loved ones*

*forever.*” And also being welcomed with hugs and smiles and love. It was life-changing for me. I wish everyone could have that experience their first time through a temple.

## I COULD'VE DIED AND GONE TO HEAVEN - # 67

I can't write this story without the biggest smile on my face! In 1997, we undertook a big task. Doug was Stake President, and I was the Cultural Arts Specialist, so you can see that it was easy for me to get my ideas approved by the stake presidency:) And this particular year called for a big celebration – it was the Sesquicentennial of the Church in California. We decided on a Pageant! The writing of it (by three women) was going pretty good, but to me it seemed to drag right in the middle. One evening, the words of a song came to me. It was one of those times, when the words were right there, no cross-outs, no corrections, no nuthin.' The song just wrote itself – it was for the *Mormon Battalion*. I needed to be able to present this to the other two writers because it would mean leaving out what one of them had already written.

But I knew this was good! So I had my daughter, Lora – just fourteen years old at the time – make up a tune on the piano that would fit the words. In a few minutes, she had a tune. I presented this, and they all loved it! But we needed a bunch of men – so we went for the busiest men in the stake – the stake presidency, the bishops, the high councilmen and a few others. Coming in from the back of the audience, all dressed in matching blue battalion shirts, all carrying a gun, they had to sing while marching up the center aisle to the stage, “*We are a Battalion, 500 Mormon Men. Called to serve in a war we heard, to help our country win. . .*” They were fabulous!! Every single night they brought down the house– cheers and whistles, the works!



And the music that was used to go with the words? – that's right, they used Lora's tune! Such a high point in my life. Oh yes, I could've died and gone to heaven every night that they performed! Does life get any better than this? And when I look at this picture, even twenty-five years later now, I still can feel a tremendous High!

“A POOR WAYFARING MAN OF GRIEF. . .” #68

Doug and I started writing, directing and producing Readers’ Theaters over seventeen years ago (2005). This became one of the most fulfilling experiences I’ve ever had in the church - in my life! It began in New Zealand while we were serving our mission at the New Zealand Temple Visitors’ Center. Doug did the background history and research, and I wrote those histories into readers’ theaters. We’ve probably produced about eighteen performances. Most of them have been about the Prophet Joseph Smith and early history of the church. I can’t remember one of them that wasn’t highly spiritual, rewarding, and ever so much fun. In New Zealand, the family of Joseph Smith was made up of Polynesian, Dutch, English, Australian and a big mixture of other nationalities. But you would never question whether or not they looked like Joseph Smith, his wife, parents and siblings. They had the *hearts* of that good family. Every performance had humor, and every performance produced tears and brought pride in being a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. But I will tell you about one special moment in one performance. In New Zealand, we performed this in the Visitors’ Center. The stage was set up against the big windows that looked out at the New Zealand Temple, and the performers themselves were facing the huge Christus that stood in the middle of that room. That alone brought the spirit. But in the first performance of “*The Martyrdom*,” near the end, the performers were in Carthage Jail where Joseph Smith (Freddy Beijerling, a Dutchman) asked John Taylor (Nifae Fepulea’i, a Samoan) to sing “*A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief*,” a song Joseph loved. They knew that death would soon be upon them. As John Taylor sang the first line, he was overcome with the spirit, and couldn’t continue. A beautiful thing happened spontaneously – Joseph Smith stepped towards him and started singing the words, and then the others, in the jail, one by one, joined Joseph Smith in the song. And finally, John Taylor with tears streaming down his eyes, joined them. Everyone in the room, performers and audience alike were caught up in the emotion of the moment, and had a feeling of what it might’ve been like to be there in Carthage Jail when our Prophet was about to be martyred. It was so spiritual. I’ve expressed my gratitude and love to Heavenly Father many times over for my last seventeen years being filled with opportunities to work with Doug on readers’ theaters, and for the people (all of them in New Zealand, Santa Rosa, and Elk Ridge) who took on the “*heart*” of those they were representing. These are all special people and moments in my life.

*In pris’n I saw him, next, condemned To meet a traitor’s doom at morn.  
The tide of lying tongues I stemmed, And honored him ‘mid shame and scorn.  
My friendship’s utmost zeal to try, He asked if I for him would die.  
The flesh was weak; my blood ran still,  
But my free spirit cried, “I will.”*

(Sixth Verse of “*A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief*.”)



Did I say I was through writing stories? How silly of me. Maybe it's because I woke up at 4:00 this morning with the thought that another story needs to be told about Doug, and maybe it's because I've been thinking of him so much since it's just four days now from being a year since we all lost him. My children all know that their Dad loved telling them this story (but have the grandchildren heard it?). Doug was *well-thought of* by those who worked with him. When around Doug, they didn't try to be somebody they weren't, but they also all knew his standards and respected them (for the most part). This one day about ten of these Hewlett-Packard managers went to a popular place for lunch and they were all sitting around this big round table, talking, laughing and enjoying each other's company. Suddenly, in the middle of all this, an older woman walked up to the table and with a tone of disappointment in her voice said, "*There seems to be one too many green bottles on this table.*" She had all of their attention. Doug looked at her intently and realized she was one of the women living in our ward when he was a bishop several years earlier. He almost didn't recognize her. It quickly occurred to him that HE was the person in question. He looked around the table and saw that all the men were drinking beer out of green bottles. The bottle in front of him was also green. He quickly grabbed his bottle, lifted it high so the woman could see the label, and in a nice loud voice said, "*Perrier Water!*" A huge look of relief came over the woman's face, and she said, "*Thank you, Bishop,*" and turned and walked back to her own table. "*Who was that?*" one of the men asked. "*Oh, just a lady in our parish looking after me.*" Some of the men laughed, and others voiced comments like, "*Wow, I'm glad I don't belong to a church like that.*" But Doug? Well, Doug just smiled and was thankful that the woman had the strength and courage to face all those men and do what she did. What if she hadn't?



“She’s Mine, She’s Mine” #70



*Christiane and Christianne*

In 1966, we bought our first home in Los Altos, California. This is where we made our close *early marriage* friends – the Ashtons, the Posches (lived next door), the Barlows, and the Rudes. We were all far away from our extended families, so we all became family to each other. I love them all as my own *kith and kin*. The Rudes moved from France in 1966. In those days, we used to eat at each other's homes quite often – all of these women were superb cooks. I mainly just made the bread – the same as I do now! Christiane's mushrooms in dark gravy were the yummiest of all. When my daughter Christianne was born in 1974, we had moved from Los Altos and now lived in Santa Rosa. However, the Ashtons and Rudes made the two-hour trip and came for Christy's blessing. At the church, Christiane was sitting in the seat behind me and my family, and the men joined Doug in giving the blessing. We named our daughter after Christiane. However, since her name is said with a little bit of a French twist, we put two "*n's*" in Christy's name so it wouldn't be confusing and people would call her "*Christy Anne.*" More than once Doug has made a slight mistake when giving an ordinance or blessing to one of his children. With Christy's blessing he was making sure he said her name right and not exactly the way our friend Christiane said her name. He tried so hard that he named her "*Christianne Rude!*" I looked back at my friend, and she was smiling big and mouthed to me, "*She's mine, she's mine!*" Well, Doug corrected himself, and in the end got it right:) Amazingly, when Christy served her mission, she was called to France, and at the end of her mission we decided to fly to France and pick her up. Our friend, Christiane, was in Grenoble visiting her mother, so we all went to Grenoble to visit her there. When Jimmy was released from his Tennessee Mission, we also picked him up and again visited Christiane in Tennessee where she was visiting her son Frankie. The last visits we made to Christiane were in Ogden, Utah where she was dealing with dementia, and just a few weeks ago, April 18, 2022, at age 86, she passed away. I'm sure she was greeted by our *Los Altos family* - Doug, Pat Ashton, Elwood Barlow, and Mike Posch. "*Keep the home fires burning 'til we're all together again for dinner - I'll bring the bread!*"

## Snoopy, Charlie Brown, Charles Schulz, Amy and Brad #71

Brad Lowder was our connection to Charles Schulz and his daughter Amy. All of us lived in Santa Rosa, California. Brad and his family were our neighbors on Bridgewood Drive when we bought our home there in 1972, and years later he was engaged to be married to Amy Schulz, daughter of Charles Schulz, creator of *Peanuts*. The wedding



1977 -Brad with Christy, Gina, Kirsten Kenfield, Becky Ashton

would have to wait, however, because Brad was preparing to leave on a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints – he was called to serve in Germany. Well, they stayed engaged his whole two-year mission, and “picked up” where they’d left off when he got home. Amy had a surprise for Brad. She’d been seeing the missionaries, and she was planning to be baptized. We were all thrilled! Brad baptized Amy, and her faithful and famous father, Charles Schulz, came to her baptism. Usually when he goes places, the attention is all on him, but this night it was all on Amy. As Brad and Amy’s relationship continued, for reasons we don’t know, Brad broke the engagement and the relationship. Doug was Brad’s and Amy’s bishop, and Amy was devastated, but as she and Doug talked, he



Newspaper picture of Amy and her Dad at time of her baptism

asked her if she’d like to serve a mission. Amy was a little older now, but she felt excited about the prospect and decided that a mission would be a good idea. She received a call to England! At her farewell, Doug asked Charles Schulz to speak. He gave a wonderful talk telling about his own short stint with missionary work himself – of course, with a different denomination. He was kind, he was religious, and his talk was just right for this daughter he loved so much. While Amy was on her mission, she and an Elder John Johnson, realized they had feelings for each other. They took this to the mission president, who thought it would be a good idea to separate the two of them in their areas of service. John was nearing the end of his mission, so when he left for home, he and Amy corresponded, and he asked her to marry him. She took this unexpected news to the Mission President, and perhaps considering that she was an older sister missionary, he suggested that he give her an honorable release (six months early) to go home and marry John. They got married and became the parents of nine children. They live in Alpine, Utah. It is 2022 now, and Charles Schulz has since died – he was a good man who supported Amy fully. He provided the world with years and years of good clean comic strips with characters who have all wormed their way into so many of our homes and hearts – *Snoopy, Charley Brown, Lucy, Woodstock*, and so many others. So, what about Brad? Well, he married a beautiful girl, and they had some lovely children as well. Then, for reasons I don’t personally know, they got divorced after about twenty years of marriage. Several years later we were invited to Brad’s reception for his second marriage. When we got there (in Salt Lake City) we wondered why Elder Russell M. Nelson, who at that time was an Apostle in the Church, was there in attendance. Well, as it turns out, he’s Brad’s new father-in-law! I keep contact with both Brad and Amy – Brad and I share the same July 21st birthday (and we remember each other most every year), and I continue to get Christmas cards from Amy and her ever growing family. I love both of them and their families very much.



May 2013 - Brad with his new bride, Marjorie



Amy with Doug - Oct 30, 2007



Amy (Schulz) and John Johnson Family 2020

In my mind, one of the most beautiful temples in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Provo City Center Temple. For all the years I was growing up in Provo, this temple was a tabernacle, and we often had our Stake Conference in this



building. So I was familiar with the winding stairs and the balcony. This building dated back to the 1880's. I had two memories in this building that stand out above the others. Ben Lewis was



our Stake President, and he was trying to help us understand how we could be a missionary in a mostly LDS community. He brought a new convert up to the pulpit and asked her who taught her. Then he invited those missionaries up. He

asked her if she had had a visit from the Relief Society President. She had. He invited her up. Was there a family in the ward who befriended you and invited you into their home? That family was brought up. This continued until pretty soon there were fifteen or twenty people standing in the front who had had something to do with the conversion of this woman. Then President Lewis said, *"Brothers and Sisters, Every Member a Missionary!"* At another conference, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith (who became our prophet) and his wife, Jessie Evans Smith were there to speak to us. Jessie Evans Smith had a deep contralto voice that everyone seemed to love, and she was most often asked to sing a favorite song, *"He That Hath Clean Hands and a Pure Heart."* And it was announced that she would be singing for us. However, it wasn't to be a solo, but a duet. She got up to sing, and then we watched President Smith reluctantly walk towards her to join her in the song. As he passed the pulpit, he leaned into the microphone and said, *"This isn't a DUET, but a DO IT!"* We all had a good laugh. Those are some of my early memories. On 17 December 2010, Doug and I were driving home from northern Utah, and we heard on the radio that our well-loved



Tabernacle in Provo was on fire and had already been burning for fifteen hours. I felt a terrible sadness and asked Doug to get off the freeway and drive into Provo so we could see it. It was hard to believe what we saw. Many of us who stood around the tabernacle as it burned were experiencing some deep emotions. We had a hard time leaving the scene – it was still on fire. It burned for thirty-eight hours before it was finally put out. Doug and I had already experienced *"Beauty from Ashes"* when our own two-year old home in Santa Rosa burned and everything inside was turned to ashes, and then was slowly restored like new over a period of nine months. But we wondered if there was going to be anything salvageable from this terrible fire. It started to burn right after a Christmas concert had been performed. (Our house had also burned at Christmas-time). The Tabernacle took many years of miraculous construction,



but this destroyed tabernacle was restored with its original walls intact (see photo), and has been turned into a glorious Temple. There are some spectacular photos of this fire online, but my favorites are the ones I took with my own camera as I looked through the lens with moist eyes.



*Reconstruction took Six Years!*



How many of you have had the chance to play the big organ in the Conference Center in Salt Lake City? Aha – that’s what I thought. Well, I have! This all came about because of a friend of ours from New Zealand. His name is Rima Tamaparea-Puki. You all know that I have a gift - I know talent when I see it. And this boy is gifted! We met in New Zealand in 2005 when we were on our missions there and when my nephew’s son, Paul Hirschi, was there as well. He and Elder “Puki” were missionary companions. We were doing the Reader’s Theaters in honoring the 200th year since the birth of Joseph Smith. We had

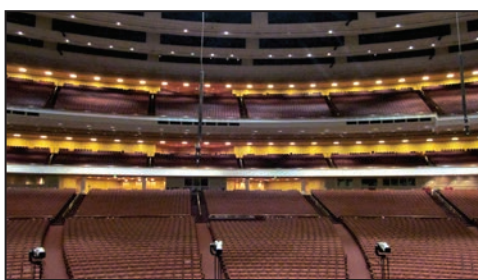
done four of them, and now we were ready to do the last one, “*The Martyrdom*.” In representing the conflict that was going on between the members of the Church and those who opposed them, I chose to use the hymn, “*We Are All Enlisted Til the Conflict is O’er*.” And I wasn’t sure why because it is my least favorite hymn, but the words were so appropriate for this conflict. First of all, I asked our Mission President if it were possible for Elder Puki to be transferred to Temple View for a few months (yes, I have another gift, I confess) and could we please use him to play the piano for this reader’s theater. Well, that worked out. Elder Puki was so good that when we sang one verse of any song, and then wanted it to be played half a note higher for the next verse, he could do just that! And then I asked him if it were possible to add some substance to the conflict song. Oh man, he really did something wonderful to that hymn! He was magic. He wrote some stanzas for the trumpet at the beginning, and he immediately turned “*A Poor Wayfaring Man*” into a minor key when the Prophet and some of the other leaders of the Church were in Carthage Jail, which turned the mood of everything into sadness and unease. Then. . . a few weeks later, Doug and I returned home – our two short years were up. We repeated those Reader’s Theaters in Santa Rosa, and then in Elk Ridge. After leaving New Zealand, we somehow lost contact with Elder Puki. Perhaps it’s because he left the Church and became a Priest in the Catholic Church. I guess his email had changed. Many years later, we were doing “*The Martyrdom*” in Elk Ridge and our son, Jim, was playing the piano for it. I tried to explain how Elder Puki changed those songs to bring excitement, but it wasn’t working. I couldn’t locate Elder Puki no matter how hard I tried. Then, a miracle! I got an unexpected email from Elder Puki, who we now will call “*Rima*.” He had been



invited to Utah to play the organ in the Conference Center and to put on a recital. This invitation came from Brother Clay Christiansen, the organist for the Tabernacle Choir at the time. And Rima wanted to visit with us for a few days. For Doug and me personally – it was a miracle. He brought all his original music for *the Martyrdom* with him and Jim was able to play it perfectly for our Elk Ridge performance of that readers’ theater. At the same time, Doug and I were serving a Family History Mission in Salt Lake, and Rima invited us to the recital. We were unable to go because of our commitments to the readers’ theater, but we joined him at the Conference Center to hear him rehearse for the recital. And yes, he asked me if I would like to



play something on the organ! Oh wow, what a thrill! I played the only hymn I knew from memory, “*We Thank Thee, Oh God, for a Prophet*.” When I finished, Rima slid in on the seat beside me and continued playing that hymn with lots of key changes and a brilliance that just filled that whole empty conference center. That’s right, no one was there to hear my solo performance, so who will even



believe my story?? My “*take*” from all of this? I know that these unexpected miracles in life are not coincidences. I am so thankful our paths crossed with Rima’s so many years ago now, and I pray for his happiness.

*My audience! on October 8, 2012*



In 1963, as a missionary, I labored in Perth, Australia for almost three months. My companion, Elaine Fielding, and I worked mostly among a group of immigrants from Scotland. In an effort to populate Australia, these immigrants only had to pay ten pounds for their passage to Australia, but if they returned home, they had to pay their own way. That's when I met Mary Paton. She and her husband Jim had two children, Lesley and wee Jim. Mary and I instantly felt such a strong connection. She loved everything that we taught her and would've been baptized (had her husband approved), but she had a problem – an addiction to cigarettes. She didn't grow up smoking, but started after she and Jim were married. She couldn't stop. We tried to help by loading her up with substitutes (candy, constant visits, prayer, etc.). An older couple, the Dunns, were there to help us – they loved Mary and Mary loved them. We hoped she would be baptized before all of us were transferred, but that wasn't meant to be. She promised that if all of us were ever together in the same place again, she would join the Church (a *“fat chance”* that would be!). All of us missionaries were soon transferred and sent to Adelaide, a place I loved so much. Many weeks later, I received a letter from Mary telling me that she was flying into Adelaide for a week's visit. I found a place for her to stay with the Michaelis family (recent converts from when I was first in Adelaide). Lo and behold, when she arrived, I told her that somehow the Dunns, Sister Fielding, and I were all together again in the same place, so . . . should we work towards a baptismal date before she flew home? (Oh, did I tell you that Mary was a bit superstitious?) She was still smoking. She was determined to be baptized, and about 11:00 p.m., the night before she flew home, she had stopped smoking for a few days, and was baptized! This lasted over four months for her, but the smell of her husband's cigarettes was too much to resist, and she started smoking again, and drifted away from the Church. We kept a constant contact. She was always looking for that *particular something* in her life, and they moved back to Scotland, and after some years and restlessness there, they moved to, of all places, Pennsylvania. Well, my sister lived in Pennsylvania and we were visiting her in 1969, and we found Mary and Jim in Philadelphia! More restlessness took them back home to Glasgow, Scotland. In 1977, she wanted to come spend two or three weeks in Santa Rosa with me and Doug. I prepared my children to accept her (and her smoking) because I knew she couldn't go without her cigarettes. After she had arrived and several hours passed, I said, *“Mary, you are welcome to smoke in my home.”* And in her beautiful and spirited Scottish brogue answered, *“If I thought I would ever have smoked in front of your children, I would never have come.”* Two years earlier, for health reasons, she and some co-workers decided to go one day at a time without smoking. She had made it two years! I was thrilled and said, *“Mary! You've done it – you've conquered the habit!”* She answered with, *“I only hope I have. There's not a day or an hour that goes by that my body doesn't crave a cigarette.”* Oh, my goodness! Well, the years have brought us together many, many times – our three years living in Scot-



land, other trips to Scotland, her many trips to America to stay with us. My kids all love Mary as well – they loved to tease her because she always cleaned up their plates to wash them before they were even finished eating their food! One time she was sullen because we had disagreed on a few things (she was like family to me –and yes, we disagreed) so Craig even made up a rap song for her, just to bring back her cheery mood. She always attended Church with us, but never really became active again, though she did attend every so often in Scotland. She lost her son and her husband (too early) with cancer, and at age 82, ten years ago, she also succumbed to cancer. I have manila envelopes filled with her letters. We were always *“in touch”* with each other. My kids have asked me why



1991 - Christy, Gina, Mary, Jim

I so persistently kept our relationship going when she obviously disagreed or teased me, and sometimes ridiculed me about my faithfulness in living the Gospel, even though I knew and they knew that she loved me. My answer was simple, and is the same with many of the people I've met over the years: *“God put her in my path, and my only job was to love her.”* And my job was easy!



## KEEPING CONNECTIONS #75

Today (31 August 2022) I finished watching the recorded funeral of David Battye, who died on the 30th of July 2022. He was only sixty-three years old. David was only about four years old when my missionary companion, Gwynn Young, and I helped the Elders teach John and Denny Battye in Payneham, Adelaide, Australia in 1963 – we’re looking at sixty years ago! When Doug was Stake President, he always told the new missionaries to keep connected with the people they taught – it would bless their lives. Well my life has been more than blessed, over and over again, for having kept track of the Battyes. In 1968, they suffered a terrible loss of their son, Andrew (five years old), when he was hit by an automobile, right in front of the church. At one time, they moved to Darwin, and I lost their address. Then I read in the *Church News* that a cyclone hit Darwin and that the Branch President, John Battye, lost his home and had to leave. Well, I almost found them – at least I knew they had lived in Darwin. Then in 1987, while we were living in Scotland, a lady at Church was visiting from Queensland, and I asked her if she knew a family by the name of Battye. She said that was the name of her Stake President. This had to be John! However, she said he was young, only about twenty-eight years old, and my heart dropped for a second, but then I realized their oldest son, David, would probably be about that age. Could it be? I gave her my name and address and asked her to take it to this family and have them write me. We connected! Denny got my address and said she would be coming to Utah for her daughter’s wedding in a few months’ time. We moved back from Scotland to California, and I arranged for a ticket to fly to Utah to meet them again – almost twenty-five years after their conversion. We met each other in the sealing room of the Salt Lake Temple and managed to hug and bury our heads in each other’s necks and have a good wonderful cry. What a joyous reunion that was. Since then, they’ve been to America several times, even served one of their many missions in this country, and we’ve also spent time with them in Queensland. Email has kept us permanently connected. Their son, David, is the father of nine children. We’ve been to his home where a kookaburra would come to their home and eat raw hamburger! Unfortunately, he and his wife divorced, but we saw him next right here in Salem, Utah (one mile from our home here in Elk Ridge) where we met up with him and his new wife. The next time we saw him was while we were visiting our daughter, Lora, and her family in Beijing, China in 2019. David worked many years in China as a

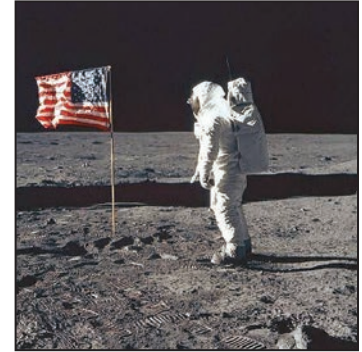


landscape architect, the same as Mark, Lora’s husband. We went to Church in Beijing, and there he was! Lora invited him for dinner that evening and we visited a good long time. Lora and Mark kept contact with him after we left for home. In these last years, he moved back to Australia to live with Denny and John and help them as they are now getting older. On the 30th of July, David was doing family research on his computer and suddenly died. I cannot express the sorrow I felt for this good family, nor can I express the thrill I felt as I watched his funeral today online, where four of his tall, handsome sons spoke of this great man who loved them as they loved him, and who brought great honor to his parents and his children and his twenty grandchildren by the way he lived. After these talks, these men joined with David’s brother, Jeff and they blended their voices as they sang, “A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief.” David’s twentieth grandchild was born just hours after he died. In a letter from Denny, with her usual love for the Gospel, she wrote: “The acceptance is there, but we know of the wonderful reunions in the Spirit World. I would love to have seen the reunion between David and our son Andrew who died in 1968.” That IS what the Gospel is all about – tying families together forever. This IS the reason Christ died on the cross. This IS why we must continue to live in such a way that this greatest of all blessings will be ours - to be with our families, to connect forever, even after our time on this earth is up. *Keeping Connections* will bring untold joy and blessings! I know!



Denny and John Battye

In July 1969 Doug and I, Rusty and Gina traveled to Pennsylvania to see Joyce, Dave and the kids. We did some fun things together, particularly seeing *Fiddler On the Roof* on Broadway. Other times, Joyce watched our two children while Doug and I ventured off to exciting adventures. This was a bit scary for Joyce because Gina had a rubber tube coming out of her side because of having a kidney removed. This tube was there in an effort to save a third kidney. It carried her urine straight into her diaper for nine months. If she accidentally pulled it out, then someone had to get her to a hospital within two hours and get the tube put in again. This is how we left Joyce when we traveled to Washington D.C. to go through the Smithsonian Institute. It was July 20th, 1969, the day before my 28th birthday, and we were in the Aviation Museum, standing right by the “*Spirit of St. Louis*,” and everyone became silent and watched a television set that was in that room situated high on the wall. We watched in awe as Neil Armstrong took those first steps on the moon and then famously said, “*That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.*” Buzz Aldrin was with him. On that same vacation, we almost became part of another famous incident in history. This happened four days earlier, July 16, 1969. Doug and I were stopped at a crossroads (again leaving Joyce with our kids, Rusty and Gina). If we turned one way we’d be going to Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts or we could go to Martha’s Vineyard, also in Massachusetts. Both were “*calling to us.*” We turned to the village, but on the way home, we were



listening to the radio – it was all over the news: “*U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy’s Oldsmobile sedan veered off a narrow bridge on Chappaquiddick Island, an extension of the resort island of Martha’s Vineyard in Massachusetts, and plunged into a moonlit pond. His passenger, 28-year-old Mary Jo Kopechne, drowned.*” Kennedy survived but his presidential ambitions did not because for some reason he waited ten hours to report the accident to police. To think we might’ve been close to where all that history took place! Fiddlesticks!!

Oh well, I have other moments that cause me to remember for always great moments in history. I was born in July 1941 and Pearl Harbor was bombed just five months later, December 7, 1941. It’s always been part of my own history – born in an unforgettable year!

I remember exactly where I was when I heard that President John F. Kennedy was killed. I arrived home from my mission in Australia in October 1963. I was registered and back attending classes at Brigham Young University, and I was also back at my old job in the Jesse Knight Business Building. On November 22, 1963, I was just leaving the back of the building, going towards my car, when my roommate, Bonnie



White, was running towards me with the news of President Kennedy’s assassination. I’ll never forget the shock we both felt and the tears that we couldn’t stop. How could this happen in America in our lifetime?



On September 11, 2001, we had the television on, and whatever we were watching was interrupted with the news that one of the towers of the World Trade Center was being attacked by terrorists, and then we watched the pictures of the second plane hitting the second tower. 2,996 people died, including 19 Al-Qaeda terrorists. We lived in Santa Rosa, California at the time, and our next door neighbors were Joan and Charlie Demitz. Charlie’s sister was in one of those towers and was killed. That’s when it hit close to home. Jill Dunn’s son was lucky and didn’t go to his office that day.



We watched, with the whole world it seemed, Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer's wedding on July 29, 1981. It was magnificent. I was remembering this event wrong because I thought we watched it while we lived in Scotland, but we actually watched it in Santa Rosa. It was the wedding of the century, and we couldn't (at least I couldn't) take my eyes off of it. Diana was so beautiful. It was like watching a fairytale princess. What we watched in Scotland was the celebration of the birth of Prince Harry, born 15 September 1984, just a few months after

we arrived there with our family to live for three years. Another event that happened in our little town of Ratho was a visit from Margaret Thatcher. She came to ride on a canal boat with some disabled people. This



took place right at the Bridge Inn, which is very close to our home. The crowds were huge so I climbed out of my bathroom window upstairs and watched the event from my roof (sometime between 1985 and 1987).

Another major event that stands out in my mind was in June 12, 1987 when Ronald Reagan gave his famous speech at Berlin's iconic Brandenburg Gate in view of the Berlin Wall and said, ". . . *If you seek peace. . . Mr. Gorbachev, Tear Down This Wall!*" We watched this on television just one month before we moved back to the United States from Scotland. This Wall was erected in 1961. The wall came down on November 9, 1989.



An event that I'll never forget that happened in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was when President Spencer W. Kimball, on June 8, 1978, sent a letter out to the whole Church announcing, "*Every faithful, worthy man in the Church may receive the holy priesthood, with power to exercise its divine authority, and enjoy with his loved ones every blessing that flows therefrom, including the blessings of the temple.*" This became a reality to us when, in 1979, Doug and I were in England and went to Church at Hyde Park Chapel, and the sacrament was passed to us by many young black young men who had just received the priesthood. This was an answer



*Doug, Cecile and Win Aker in 1994 at Craig and Robbyn's wedding Open House.*

to our prayers as well as the First Presidency and Apostles' prayers. I had always wondered why it was withheld in the first place since Joseph Smith had given the Priesthood to black members, but then it was withheld by Brigham Young. I thought it was because of "*lack of readiness of the black people themselves,*" but the more I've studied and watched, I'm convinced it was more because of the *lack of readiness of the members* of the Church, who were joining the Church from many different nations and had brought with them their prejudices. To me, personally, this was iconic because of the many friendships our family has had with this beautiful race of people.



Now, an event that I'll end with is the death of Queen Elizabeth II of England, who died September 8, 2022. Christy had just arrived from West Virginia the night before, and we heard the news on the radio as we were travelling to Idaho to take Austin to BYU-Idaho. She became Queen when her father died, on February 6, 1952. I was eleven years old. She was the longest ruling monarch in British history. Now I'm 81 years old and she died at age 96. I did see her once in person when I was on my mission in Australia. She came to Adelaide on the 21 of February 1963 to visit the new town of Elizabeth, named after her.

We watched the procession from the airport and then we went into the town to get another glimpse of her.

I wonder what world event I might witness next before I die? . . . What is left? *The Second Coming of Christ?* I promise I'll be there on one side or the other!

Years ago, just two years before my mother died, we asked her to write down her spiritual experiences. My mother lived close to the veil, and her experiences were quite miraculous in my mind. She had a spiritual gift, and she shared these experiences when we would ask her to tell us “*one more time.*” I knew what kind of person my mother was and knew these stories were true, and perhaps that’s one of the reasons I have never doubted the reality of God. To my mother these weren’t considered *miracles* because she felt that the real miracles in life were when young people were able to get through those teenage and young adult years “*unscathed*” by the world. Nevertheless, I have always valued the experiences she wrote down about what we considered the miracles in her life. I read them often, and I have shared them every so often when I felt the stories would be taken in the right spirit and hopefully do some good to an individual, as they have done to me throughout my whole life.

I’ve never really had the same kind of experiences my mother had – I would love to have had them, but perhaps that wasn’t my gift. Nevertheless, I will tell you of some of the great miracles I’ve experienced. Most of these have been recorded in length in my autobiographies, but I will briefly group them here together. I’ve been prompted to do this because this last week, through fasting and prayer, my family have all witnessed a miracle. My niece’s daughter, Jessica, was pregnant and a few weeks from delivery and got Covid. She was having trouble breathing. She was taken to the hospital where they took the baby by C-section, but Jessica still couldn’t breathe very well. She was life-flighted to another hospital where they were better equipped to save her because she couldn’t breathe on her own. Fasting and prayer took place by a large group of family members, and now a week later, she is home with her husband, three daughters and two-week old son. Her life is a miracle and a great Christmas gift to all of us.

In 1968, my daughter, Gina, was born, but right from the beginning something was wrong. She had high (clammy) fevers, which indicated kidney and bladder infections. Through x-rays they found she had a ruined, shriveled up kidney that needed to be removed – it was unhealthy, non-functioning, swollen, and the tubes ended in the wrong area in her bladder. They assured us that she could live on one good kidney. For the next five months, we kept her on antibiotics until she was big enough to have this major surgery. Again the whole family fasted and prayed. Even my nephew who was on his mission in Australia, asked people there to fast and pray with us. We just prayed that she would live. The x-rays were repeated right before the surgery and even the doctors were amazed because this time, behind the ruined kidney, they saw a third kidney that wasn’t there in the x-rays five months earlier. She went through several hours of delicate surgery at Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto, CA – there were a few complications and times when they couldn’t get her fevers down for days afterwards, and then nine months of having a temporary drain out of her side while her body healed from the inside, but she lived and grew to be a healthy, active, girl, even participating in soccer and dance. Many prayers were answered – a miracle.



Another miracle came, this time from direct revelation. It was about 1974 when Scotty was only about two years old. He was very, very attached to his Daddy. He was up early in the mornings with him, watched him brush his teeth, sat on the bed and was quiet while his Daddy knelt in prayer before he left for work. He was attached! Then there was this *normal* day. We had all eaten dinner, and Doug went upstairs to get ready to leave for a bishopric meeting. The kids were in front playing with some neighbors. A young teenage neighbor girl was in the kitchen with me while I was mixing up some powdered milk in a big plastic container. We were just visiting, and I subconsciously heard Doug come down the stairs, then heard his “*Good-bye, see you later,*” and then heard him open the door to go outside and then close it. In my mind, I seemed to be picturing it all as Doug said “*good-bye*” to each of the children and then got in his car, which was parked in the driveway. He started the car. I could see it in my mind, like a movie, as I was visiting with this girl in the kitchen. And then suddenly, in my mind, I saw Scotty running towards his Daddy for another kiss and hug. I panicked, dropped the whole container of milk, ran down the hall, opened the door and yelled to Doug, “*STOP!*” He slammed on the brakes, got out, and there was Scotty, his head touching the back bumper. Doug lifted him up in his arms and hugged him, and I just cried.

Christy's life was a different kind of miracle – it took many, many times of fasting and prayer, and about twenty years to realize. She was tiny at birth and was born with a partial cleft palate. She had two corrective surgeries, one when she was a baby and another when she was about five years old. Her biggest problem was speech. It was so garbled that only her family knew what she was saying or what she wanted when she spoke. Years and years of speech therapy followed. There were dental problems, and her mouth was small. She even had to undergo a chin surgery where it was cut and moved forward. She also had vision problems, which were corrected with glasses, then contacts, then laser surgery. Through all of this and many priesthood blessings, she kept a belief in Heavenly Father, which caused her to want to go on a mission. I'll never forget the day she spoke at her missionary farewell. Her speech was clear and beautiful and she spoke with confidence. Afterwards, our Stake President and good friend, Reed Ogden, came up to me afterwards and said, *"I do believe I have witnessed a miracle today."* I agreed. We had all witnessed a miracle (many).



Two years after Christy was born, our son Jimmy arrived. His was a normal, healthy birth – nothing seemed to be wrong. However, after I had him home, I was concerned that he wasn't responding to sounds. Then I'd test him with loud noises. Jimmy was born deaf. Again we fasted and prayed, and Doug gave him a blessing that he would *"hear the sounds he was meant to hear."* What did that mean? So we proceeded that next year to learn how to teach and deal with a deaf child. Expert help came into our home to help us on a weekly basis. He had hearing aids that helped him respond to some sounds. Every single morning and night when we knelt in prayer with our children, they continued to say, *"Bless Jimmy that he will hear."* I wanted to tell them that it would be an answer to prayer if he could hear some sounds with his hearing aids, but they never let up on that same prayer. About nine months later, it seemed that Jimmy was



responding to us. When I took him to his normal appointment at a hearing clinic in Marin, California, the technician, tested him with loud sounds, and then I asked her to keep lowering the sounds, and sure enough, he was responding to normal sounds. She said with his kind of hearing loss, she had never seen this kind of change – it usually got worse instead of better. I walked out of that testing room with Jimmy in my arms, and all the other children were there, sitting and waiting. I said to them, *"Guess what?"* And they all said almost together, *"Jimmy can hear."* My faith and trust in a miracle from Heavenly Father wasn't nearly as pure as my children's faith.

Jimmy gave us a double dose of *"troubles."* Only within months after we knew he could hear, I was headed on an airplane and wanted to make sure his ears were clear and that it would be safe to take him on the flight. After Dr. Meyer checked him, he left the room, came back after consulting with another doctor, and gently told me that Jimmy had a hole in his heart. When Rusty was born in 1966 and I was told that he had a partial club foot, I went home and cried and cried and cried. I didn't know how I would be able to handle such a terrible problem, but now I was being told that without surgery, Jimmy would never live longer than twenty years, and his quality of life would be poor that whole time unless he could survive the open heart surgery that would be necessary to save him and give him a longer life. I didn't cry this time. I anxiously said, *"Tell me what I have to do, and I will do it."* Enough had come into our lives that we had built a great trust in Heavenly Father and we had seen miracles. All that faith still didn't take away the fear Doug and I had four years later when they wheeled Jimmy through those doors to the operating room to perform open-heart surgery. We feel that most of our miracles have come through fasting and prayer. Friends told us that open-heart surgery was commonplace now. It didn't feel that way to me, and as Dr. Tsarnaki went through the process with us the night before, I knew it wasn't commonplace with him either. There were many things that could go wrong. But they didn't, and Jim is now forty-five years old. He sees himself growing older, I see him always as a miracle.

As I write these experiences down, it may sound as if our family was given more than our share of physical problems, but I seem (now) to only feel that we have had more than our share of blessings. I was never a tower of strength through any of these things, but I recognized the hand of the Lord in our lives. There was one time that I completely fell apart. In January of 1981, while driving home from my mother's funeral, we hit black ice in Nevada, flew off the road and then off a small cliff and landed with the car on its side. It was a fearful experience, and we were blessed to all be alive.

This was no small incident and wonderful people stopped and helped us, saved our belongings and drove us to a hospital in Wendover, Utah. We went by ambulance back to Salt Lake and these people with our belongings, followed us back, going opposite in direction to where they were going when they stopped to help us. They started their trip again the next day. Such kindness in the world! But this isn't when I fell apart.



In 1983, I was pregnant with Lora and driving a van full of children – six of mine and two others – from Provo to California. Just a few miles out of Battle Mountain, Nevada, I got distracted with some “goings on” in the back of the van and for a second my mind went off my driving. I was off the road and in trying to correct myself, turned too hard and the van rolled three times in the center of the freeways. As the van rolled, all but two of the children flew out doors or windows, and when the van came to a stop, all the tires were

blown and the van rested on top of Craig who was being crushed by the weight of the van. He couldn't breathe. It was more than a miracle that all the children lived, that there were no broken bones but only a few cuts, and that most particularly Craig lived. Was it a coincidence that one of the truck drivers who stopped to help us was a retired paramedic and knew exactly what we must do to get Craig from under the van? And who also knew how to protect me and my pregnancy from straining too much if I tried to lift that van from Craig? Oh, I wish I knew the name of this God-sent man who performed the miracles that day. He stayed with us and helped to get us settled in the small hospital there and made sure that the life-threatening cut that Craig had next to his spine was being well taken care of. After all was settled, and the hospital was quiet with all the children



sleeping, I fell apart. I couldn't bear the thought that I could've been responsible for the death of all those children that day. I prayed fervently, over and over again all that night, that Heavenly Father would somehow punish me by taking the baby I carried. I no longer felt worthy to be a mother – I certainly wasn't a good mother. I continued to pray that same prayer for the next five months. I could not forgive myself. Doug was terribly frustrated with me. But what followed was a great miracle – Lora was born. She was the Christmas gift to all of us that year – the kind of gift that never stops giving. Heavenly Father didn't answer my prayer at all. I felt forgiven, and to me, that was also a miracle. Heavenly Father doesn't want to punish us – He only wants to do those things (and allow those things) that will bless us.



Well, I could go on and on with miracles I've seen in my life. At age sixteen, Russ had an amazing surgery done by our friend, Ralph Hoyal, who corrected his partial club foot. He told us that he had never done this surgery before, but it worked! Fasting and prayers and Priesthood blessings have carried us through our whole lives of raising our children. And in all this, I haven't even mentioned Spencer. I wrote a story earlier about Spencer in this collection of stories, and yes, he had accidents and “close calls” like all children probably have while growing up, but the miracle is that WE lived through all of his shenanigans while he was just a little tyke. It's a miracle that he lived through them as well. It's true – we could never take our eyes off of him for five minutes. We've pulled him off the roof, he's been brought home by a policeman from walking down the middle of the street, etc. I'm surprised we weren't thrown in jail for being bad parents. And somehow, he's grown up to be so responsible, so good with every family member (who all tried to protect him when he was little), and is such a good father to his own children.



So, do miracles exist? Of course they do – every day. Does everyone recognize them as miracles. I suppose not. Do I still fast and pray for miracles? Of course I do, but now I totally agree with my mother on this. The most miraculous things that can happen in life are those things that help us and our children get through this life “unscathed” by the world – “unscathed” by sin, by temptation, by addictions, by pride, by politics, by our own bad choices, by leaning to the popular rather than by what's right, etc. I have yet to see the greatest miracle of all – one I pray for every day, and that is for me and each of my children, and their spouses and children, to be able to recognize the miracles in our own lives, to have spiritual integrity and remember all the goodness that has been poured down upon us in this life, and then for all of us to still be together on the other side – to be worthy of such a blessing. Oh, what a miracle that could be!

## Butch O'Hare and Easy Eddie - #77

This, of course, is not my story, but it's always been one of my favorites. I've been to the O'Hare Airport in Chicago and took the opportunity to go to Terminal 2 and see the display and story of Butch O'Hare whom the airport is named after. A full-sized replica of his plane from World War II is on display and the story of his heroic mission is displayed



below it. Chicago is reknown also for the home of Al Capone and his legacy. I've had these two stories for many years in my collection, and now have found them on the internet told by many different people. The substance of each story is the same.

STORY NUMBER ONE: Many years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for enmeshing the windy city in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder. Capone had a lawyer nicknamed "Easy Eddie." He

was Capone's lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie's skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time. To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big, but Eddie got special dividends as well. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block. Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocities that went on around him.

Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object. And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was. Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn't give his son - he couldn't pass on a good

name or a good example. One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Easy Eddie wanted to rectify the wrongs he had done. He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al "Scarface" Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against *The Mob*, and he knew that the cost would be great. So, he testified. Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street. But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he could ever pay. Police removed from his pockets a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medallion, and a poem clipped from a magazine. The poem read:



*"The clock of life is wound but once, and no man has the power  
to tell just when the hands will stop, at late or early hour.  
Now is the only time you own. Live, love, toil with a will.  
Place no faith in time. For the clock may soon be still."*

STORY NUMBER TWO: World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific. One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship. His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet. As he was returning to the mother ship, he saw something that turned his blood cold - a squadron of Japanese aircraft was speeding its way toward the American fleet. The American fighters were gone on a sortie, and the fleet was left defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet.





Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 calibers blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until all his ammunition was finally spent. Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible, rendering them unfit to fly. Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction. Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier.

Upon arrival, he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun-camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had, in fact, destroyed five enemy aircraft.



This took place on February 20, 1942, and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of W.W.II, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Medal of Honor. *(Photo showing Butch O'Hare being presented this Medal by President Roosevelt)*

A year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of twenty-nine. His home town would not allow the memory of this WW II hero to fade, and today, the third largest airport in the United States, The O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, is named in tribute to the courage of this great man.

### SO WHAT DO THESE TWO STORIES HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?

Butch O'Hare was Easy Eddie's son.



*Edward "Butch" O'Hare, Easy Eddie, Al Capone*

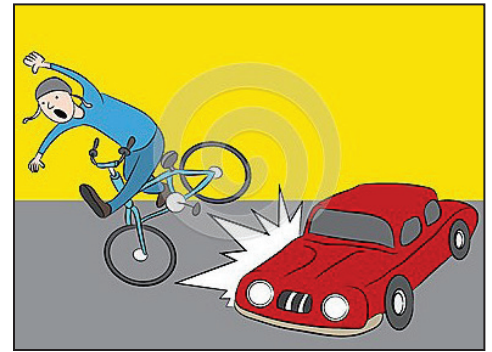
AND NOW FOR MORE STORIES!  
THESE ARE TOLD BY OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS  
AND FRIENDS

ENJOY  
“THURSDAY AFTERNOON  
AFTERTHOUGHTS”



## RUSTY AND THE TERRIBLE, HORRIBLE, NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY - (by Russ Scribner)

When I returned from my mission (1988), I started back to college and was working hard on picking up my grades (I had flunked out of college before my mission, but my mission president wrote BYU and recommended that they let me back in - which they did!). Unfortunately, all my bad grades before my mission were still on the record, so I had to work doubly hard to move the average GPA up. During this time I was taking several classes that I didn't have a natural aptitude for (I'm looking at YOU Accounting 101), and was spending a lot of time studying and not enough time sleeping. Then, in the middle of the semester, I got sick with a cough that I could not seem to shake. I visited the BYU Health Center and they gave me some antibiotics, telling me that it was bronchitis. I took the meds for a few days, but didn't seem to be getting any better, so I went back and they gave me a chest x-ray. When I went back to see the results, they gave me some news I didn't expect - I had an active case of Tuberculosis (TB) (with a hole the size of a quarter already in one of my lungs!) and they weren't set up to handle that, so they wanted me to go immediately down to the State Health Clinic in south Provo. Apparently I must have picked up the virus in Colombia and my white blood cells formed a tube around it (hence the name, tuberculosis), keeping it from escaping and multiplying in my bloodstream, but not able to kill it. So, when I was back in school and burning the candle from both ends, my immune system weakened and the virus was able to break through it's tubular prison and begin replicating. The BYU Health Center gave me my x-rays and said I should take them down immediately, so I hopped on my scooter and headed down to south Provo. A scooter may not sound like the most practical transportation option in a place where it snows all winter, but it was what I had, and as long as the roads were clear and dry, it wasn't much of an issue. I don't remember it being particularly cold, so I'm thinking it was the spring-time when this was happening. I didn't have any storage on the scooter, so I placed the large envelope with the x-rays in-between my knees and headed south. When I got to main street, I remember looking both ways, waiting for traffic to clear and then headed across the busy street. I don't know where he came from, but I do remember glancing over and seeing the pickup truck headed right for me. I tried to gun the engine, but it didn't get me quite out of the way and the truck, and it clipped the back of my scooter, sending me flying. I'm not sure how it happened, but I ended up on the grassy parkstrip next to the road and, remembering my first-aid lessons from scouting, decided that the best thing I could do is try to lay still. I didn't feel like I had broken anything, but I didn't want to chance it. When the ambulance arrived, they came over and spoke with me and I explained my diagnosis and the purpose of my trip to the State Health Clinic. Upon hearing that I had an active case of TB, they retreated back to the safety of the ambulance, and then proceeded to try to convince me that I didn't really need an ambulance, that it would cost a lot of money, and that I was moving around pretty well, and it didn't look like anything was broken. So I called up the first real adult that I could think of - Uncle Alf. He was a dentist and I called his office. He was busy (or maybe just didn't want to get exposed to TB :), and so sent his secretary to come pick me up. She drove me down to the clinic and I remember walking into the offices, bruised and bloody, with my x-rays clutched on one hand - I must have been quite the sight! I ended up on chemotherapy for the TB, had to withdraw from school and went home to Santa Rosa for the rest of the semester. After awhile I was able to return to school and met my wife, who became quite the expert on treating TB - she was doing poorly in her Microbiology class, but when her professor warned her off of dating me, because, he stated, that TB could not be cured and that I would infect her, she decided to set him straight. She spoke to my doctors and wrote a paper explaining how far medications for TB had advanced and that I was no longer a danger to anyone. The professor gave her an A in the class and she married me, thank goodness! While I still test positive for TB, I don't have any active problems with it, and it ended up with me getting a wife - so there's that!



“LET’S STAY UP AND SEE IF WE CAN HEAR SANTA ON THE ROOF! JUST YOU AND ME”

(BY LORA SPENCER)

It was a Montecito Meadow Drive Christmas, and I think I might have been somewhere between the ages of seven to nine. My mom's bed was always (and still is) a magical place, void of bad dreams, and always room for one more. On this night it held more magic than normal, because it was Christmas Eve, and as I was snuggled up with Mom, she had the most exciting idea: *"Let's stay up and see if we can hear Santa on the roof! Just you and me...but first, let's make sure everyone else is asleep."* So we tiptoed from room to room, counted the heads of my siblings in their beds, and made sure the lights were out. We then crept back into bed, kept the lamplight on and sat up to wait. Dad was sleeping next to us (I think. He didn't really get into the memory on this one). It seemed like forever, waiting in anticipation but then it happened. Heavy plodding and bells on the roof! The happy feeling I felt snuggled up with Mom in her magical bed is the end of this memory...but that happiness held on probably longer than it should have, since it would be as late as fourth or fifth grade that I was using it as evidence in an argument with that "Santa's Not Real" dream killer, Andrew Kadar. Hahaha.



I forgot about this story for years, but with Mom's Christmas assignment, it came to mind, and I was ready to make her 'fess up. All I got out of her was, *"I believe in Santa Claus, I heard his bells jingle on the roof."* hahaha- She's going down swinging. Here's a picture of my kids sleeping next to the Christmas tree in efforts to stay up and catch Santa, where they were fully equipped with a time-lapse aimed at the tree and a booby trap trip wire attached to bells. Santa

left only shadows on the video, and a note next to the wire . . . (Porter enjoyed playing both sides:)

ANOINTED FROM ON HIGH - (by Elly Morlin Taylor)

They say that being pooped on from on high by a bird is very lucky. If that were actually true, I would be one of the luckiest women alive! Birds have deposited their gifts upon my person no less than six times! Something about me must look like a practice target! One particular time, I was on my way to a job interview, standing at a bus stop. A seagull I think deposited an enormous amount of bird poo right on the top of my head just as the bus arrived! The bus driver wasn't very impressed. I assured him I had plenty of tissues on hand! It was all I could do to keep it out of my eyes as I rode the bus and then walked to the interview: for a post as a receptionist in the West End of Edinburgh at a posh lawyer's office.



I walked in there with as much poise as I could muster and asked where the ladies loo was. The ladies gawped at me in some astonishment and giggled! I ended up dunking my whole head in the sink (I had a lot of hair in those days!) and presented myself for interview with a wet, swept back pony tail, using a rubber band I borrowed from their office. The interviewer thought my story was hilarious and was impressed I think by me turning up at all. After praising me for my crisis management he offered me the job! On reflection perhaps being pooped on from on high CAN bring good luck!

“IT’LL PUT HAIR ON YOUR CHEST” - (BY CHRISTY JONES)

I always remember Grandpa James as the guy who had candy in his pockets. Specifically, caramel. It wouldn't be my first choice of sweets, but it always was delicious. Besides the candy, Grandpa also provided me hours of entertainment when I was young, by allowing me to go through his junk mail and keep whatever I wanted. I've never seen so much junk mail in my life. Grandpa was often sent the craziest things, like banana cutters, or boiled egg shapers, or cherry pitters. Really, just anything you could think of that was made out of plastic and could be stuffed into an envelope. Grandpa was always a little brusque in my opinion, but it was always a part of his charm. He would make us stacks of hot-cakes and then order us to eat them by saying, "you better eat'em all, it'll put hair on your chest." Or, "it'll make your hair curly." I never necessarily wanted curly hair, nor did I have the slightest desire to have hair on my chest, but I ate them all nonetheless. They were delicious!



*Gina, Christy and Scotty with Grandpa James*

About ten years after Grandpa died, I found myself living in his house while I went to college. A friend of mine, John Caldwell, was over and I was talking about many of these same memories as I told him about my Grandpa. He was especially interested because, well, one, I was cute, and two, he had grown up in the area. In fact, he went to church in the same building that Grandpa did. He got a kick about the junk mail, and we laughed about Grandpa telling little kids that eating hot cakes would put hair on our chests . . .but when I told him about the caramels, he got really quiet. By the time I finished, he smiled, and said, "I knew your Grandpa! He was the Caramel Man at church!" Apparently, every Sunday all of the kids would encircle him as he handed out caramels to all of them. It made me feel happy to know that one of my special little memories with my Grandpa was actually a shared memory with who knows how many people!

P. S. (From Cecile). When my father, Cecil James (Grandpa James) died, all of his children walked through the house, and we divided all the material things. I looked in the hall closet and decided to keep a lightweight jacket of his. Up to this point, nothing was so nostalgic that it made me cry for missing him, but when I put on his jacket, I reached into the pockets - and guess what I found? A pocket full of caramels! That's when I cried... And now that Doug is gone, it warms my heart to see many of my children and grand-children wearing some of their Dad's and Grandpa's clothes. Like I did, Gina chose to take her Dad's jacket (New Zealand coat). I wonder what she found in the pockets? Altoids?

A DAD MEMORY - (BY CRAIG SCRIBNER)

I went to breakfast this week with my friend Tim for advice in my job search. He started out by saying that I needed to find a role that fit my personality. He said, "Adobe's putting me through this class that groups people into four personality types. There are Drivers, Analyticals, I'm an Amiable, but you...you're the fourth one, which I can't remember its name but you're definitely that one." "Expressive?" I suggested, and his jaw dropped. "Yes! You're definitely an Expressive!" I tried to listen to his advice after that point, but mostly I was just remembering Dad and how he loved that paradigm. He had each one of us pegged somewhere in that grid and he would become so animated talking to us about the challenges we'd face from our specific quadrant and the strategies we should apply when engaging with other quadrantites.

Analytic	Driver
Amiable	Expressive

<b>Analytic:</b> Low Assertive, Low Reactive ( <b>Dad and Russ</b> ) First back-up: Go quiet. Second back-up: Explode
<b>Amiable:</b> Low Assertive, High Reactive ( <b>Scott, Jim</b> ) First back-up: Give in. Second back-up: Draw a line - won't budge
<b>Driver:</b> High Assertive, Low Reactive ( <b>Spencer, Christy</b> ) First back-up: Push harder. Second Back-up: Quit
<b>Expressive:</b> High Assertive, High Reactive ( <b>Craig, Mom</b> ) First back-up: Get bigger and louder. Second back-up: Go quiet, retreat (Lora is maybe Amiable or maybe Expressive - I think) (Gina is maybe Driver or maybe Expressive - I think)

There's no judgment - all personalities are great! To communicate, you need to get in someone else's "box" sometimes. Rigid is bad, wishy-washy is bad, but flexible is very good! **Danger:** Stay out of Second back-up!!

DAD  
(TALK GIVEN AT DOUG'S FUNERAL) BY SPENCER SCRIBNER

I always looked up to Dad, and when I was young, he was someone that I thought could do anything. He took us on camping trips and amazingly enough, our whole family out to Scotland where we lived for three years. He took us on road trips in the UK and Europe where I have many memories strangely enough of roaming around graveyards, looking to see if there were any ancestors buried there. He and Mom took us to Scottish festivals in the city and we even skied in the French Alps. I was young then but Dad was the coolest and could do anything.

As I grew and my interests swayed towards watching and participating in sports, I would have to say my belief that he could do anything waivered a little. Things turned a little suspicious when he would call a goal a basket or describe a tennis shot using some obscure handball reference (one of the only sports we found out he actually knew). He didn't seem to know any of my baseball heroes of Giants like Matt Williams, Kevin Mitchell or Will Clark but his lack of sporting acumen truly came to light when he actually participated in athletics. Occasionally we would go to play sports with friends and their dads and one time in particular we went to play tennis. Dad shows up with a shirt that probably resembled an athletic shirt, shorts that were borderline dorky and certainly too short, but the socks were devastatingly embarrassing. Dad never seemed to own anything other than thin brown work socks and that clearly was not what anyone should wear to play sports. In the early nineties, as a boy trying to stay cool, Dad had gone *over the line*. His lack of tennis skills came only in a distant second to the embarrassing socks.

As I grew and learned to get past some of these minor embarrassments I started to recognize some of the qualities that Dad had which I would eventually call mine. High school came and went and we drifted apart, a common occurrence with teenagers from what I hear. We didn't see eye to eye on social or religious fronts yet his quiet leadership, his love for our mother and strong convictions slowly seeped into my being. College came and went and we may not have drifted farther, but certainly were not getting closer, however in the times we had together he showed me his excitement for technology and engineering, and I was able to see his dedication to making personal connections in both his professional and personal relationships. I also had to work quite a bit to get myself through college which I'm sure was also another lesson of his, but one that took me longer to appreciate.

Taking a post College test I came upon an essay where I was asked to write about a role model in my life and it shocked me how quickly I was to realize that Dad was the obvious choice. I'd never really thought about it before, and given the challenges we had perhaps it shouldn't have been, but every word I wrote I felt the emotion of the realization that many of the positive aspects that I had come to call my own were qualities that Dad had been instilling in me since I was young.



*Yellowstone (Dad's 80th Birthday Celebration - 2017)*



*Norway 1986 - Dad and Spencer*

I realized that it was alright that Dad couldn't do everything because what he did do were the things that mattered the most, and all those brown sock moments all seem to just fade into special memories that make me smile. He was a man who was kind and generous beyond words. He would do anything to help his children succeed in all aspects of life and never put his own needs or accomplishments before others. His legacy is the life he lived and

One last story before I finish is of an event that occurred just a few days after his passing. Our families had been quarantining over at Mom's and the doorbell rang. I heard the intense chants of a powerful Maori song. Mom has always loved the culture and had celebrated their dancing, singing and traditions as if they were her own, as well as teaching them all to her children. I thought it was kind that a young man had been convinced by his parents to do that for my mother, but when I got to the door there was a grown man, whom many of us did not know, who was



performing the traditional dance and chants with such intensity, and a pained look on his face that hit us all as a sign of love for my parents and loss of my father. He didn't say many words after that, but he didn't need to as his actions shook us all to tears. I'd like to thank everyone for the outpouring of support over the last week for our family and many heartfelt messages, stories and memories about our father. It is not surprising that we continue to hear more unknown stories of his generosity and positive influence in others' lives. That is just the way he lived.

## DAD

(TALK GIVEN AT DOUG'S FUNERAL) BY JIMMY SCRIBNER

One particular philosopher described the human experience as a seemingly infinite library – with seemingly infinite books. The books in this expansive library contain every possible combination of the letters of the alphabet possible. In other words, while most of these books, miles upon miles of books, would be filled with unintelligible gibberish, if there were enough people earnestly searching, and reading, eventually, by the Law of Large Numbers, someone would come across a text that contains meaning: a worthwhile sentence, phrase, or entire book, something worthy to pass on to the rest of the seekers.



*Jim and Doug right before leaving for Jim and Stephanie's Wedding in Oakland Temple - January 2001*

Dad may have never read, or even heard of, this philosopher, but I think he would have enjoyed the imagery – and would find it especially relatable to his job as a father. Dad understood that the world his children were born into contained almost infinite choices, nearly infinite ideas, with countless perils and pitfalls. He had read many of life's books, found many fruitless, but was driven, like his parents before him, by his unyielding determination to pass on any of life's books that would bring joy and gladness to his children, and help them navigate the vast library of the world.

Dad passed on one lesson to me early in life, I was only ten or so. I was crammed into the back seat of our Dodge Caravan, in what is known to all children to be the worst of the seven seats available in a mini-van..... back middle! No legroom, no wall to prop a pillow against, worst access to the music coming through the speakers, farthest from Mom's trail-mix, and jammed between Spencer and Christy (if you know Uncle Spence and Aunt Christy, then you know my pain). Deep into dusk, I found sleep was not coming – my legs felt anxious, claustrophobia was coming on strong – I would have sold my soul to simply trade spots with any of the snoring shadows surrounding me. Then I heard a new sound – a whistle coming

from Dad in the driver's seat. I had no idea my dad could whistle. It was beautiful – full of rich vibrato, and I was truly mesmerized. The next morning I asked Dad to teach me to whistle, and I've never stopped. I whistle through my days – people at work know I'm coming around a corner, they hear me before they see me. True story - the only solo my high school choir conductor ever entrusted me with was a whistling solo. If teaching me to whistle seems trivial to you, it doesn't to me. For thirty years it has brought me a touch of happiness, and has been a small but genuine thread of connection between me and my dad.



Secondly, my dad taught me what it means to truly give yourself to the one you love. We never sat down together to discuss notions of true love – I don't even recall Dad giving much dating or marriage advice, unless I specifically asked. Most of this lesson came from my observations through the years. What did Dad know of love?

- 1) It's filling a bathtub at 5:00 am for the one you love.
- 2) It's dressing in costumes, and acting in countless plays for the one you love.
- 3) It's getting in bed, getting cozy warm, knowing that your own back was not your own, but a heating pad for the frozen feet of the one you love.
- 4) It's washing endless sinks full of dishes for the one you love.
- 5) It's joining together, in moments of greatest joy and greatest sorrow, hand in hand.



8 January 2021

The final observation, and the starkest, the one that will never leave my mind as long as I live came in Dad's final hours. When Dad's lips were too parched to speak, and his arms too weak to lift. When his sickness had sapped him of strength, and his body was drained of vitality. When his true love stood over him with her hand on his sunken cheek and all he had to give was a look and a nod – he gave it; he gave his last full measure of devotion. I see it clearly now - Love doesn't hold back, it doesn't give in pieces; love is forever – it outlives the hospital bed, it outlives the oxygen tank, it outlives the tears and the final breath. Love is all. Long may it live.



July 1964

Now I stand in the library. I am surrounded by the insurmountable task – find the worthwhile books. My wife seeks with me, my kids are in our arms. I will scour the shelves, I will stumble through some texts that offer only thoughtless absurdities – I am lucky if I find a sentence of any gravity or import – but I didn't

have to start from scratch. Thank you Dad for searching first – Stephanie and I will never forget – my kids will never forget.

I will finish with Maya Angelou, the last stanza of her poem “When Great Trees Fall”

AND WHEN GREAT SOULS DIE,  
AFTER A PERIOD PEACE BLOOMS,  
SLOWLY AND ALWAYS  
IRREGULARLY. SPACES FILL  
WITH A KIND OF  
SOOTHING ELECTRIC VIBRATION.  
OUR SENSES, RESTORED, NEVER  
TO BE THE SAME, WHISPER TO US.  
THEY EXISTED. THEY EXISTED.  
WE CAN BE. BE AND BE  
BETTER. FOR THEY EXISTED.

I LOVE YOU DAD!

## DAD

(TALK GIVEN AT DOUG'S FUNERAL) BY GINA SCRIBNER



Growing up with five brothers and two sisters, *alone time* with Dad was rare and precious. That's why every year I looked forward to what Dad called "*special days*." Twice a year, we got a *special day* - one day, all alone with Dad, doing whatever we wanted - tennis, ice-skating, a trip to the beach. Then he would buy us one big present and take us out to our favorite restaurant. Interestingly enough Dad seemed to convince me each year that "*my*" favorite restaurant was Heavenly Hamburgers which had "*his*" favorite chocolate shakes:) When I turned fourteen, for my special day I asked Dad to take me shopping for new school clothes. He sweetly allowed me to drag him to several bargain stores, (Mom taught me well) and every time I tried

something on, Dad slowly shook his head and said, "No." Finally he sat me down, put his hand in mine, smiled and said "*Okay sweetheart. Now, can we go to one of my stores?*" He promptly took me to Macy's. Some of you grandkids may or may not know this, but Grandpa had impeccable taste. He did pick Grandma after all:) When we arrived at the store, he chose one very beautiful, very overpriced outfit: Brown corduroy pants and a purple striped top. I'll never forget it. I loved it so much. Even more, I loved telling everyone that my dad bought it for me.

But it wasn't only on special days that Daddy made me feel important and loved. It was every day in a million different ways. Warming my hands before a piano recital, sitting on my bed and reading to me - even when I was older, telling and re-telling stories about his ancestors, holding my hand every time he sat down next to me, no matter my age, thousands and thousands of sweet kisses and long warm hugs, inviting me to hang out with him in the garage when he was working on his train or building that tree house - that I'm pretty sure never got finished. And of course, countless hours of tutoring. Although I don't think Dad knew that I often simply pretended not to understand my homework, because I loved seeing how incredibly excited he would get at the mere proof talking about math or physics. His eyes would get so big and with the happiest smile he'd say, "*Oooh. You're having trouble with math sweetheart? Fantastic!*" But I loved even more how he would then sit me down at the dining room table, and we would get to spend some alone time together, just him and me.



I loved hearing Daddy talk. Whether he was speaking at a stake conference in front of hundreds of people, or with one of my children around the dinner table, he always spoke with a calm, welcoming presence, a smile, and a gentle sincere love. And I was always in awe of his wisdom and his extensive knowledge of, well, pretty much everything. When Dad spoke, people were drawn to him.

Once when we were on a plane together, we sat down and it happened to be where the airplane seats were facing each other. Soon, three little old ladies sat down across from us, and a nice younger man by my side. Once we were in the air, I leaned over and quietly said to Dad, trying not to bother the people around us, "*Okay Daddy, give it to me again. World War 2. Go.*" (I had missed American History in high school - learned about Margaret Thatcher instead - so I was always asking him to teach me history). As he excitedly walked me through every battle, never forgetting a general's name, I realized that the people around us had stopped talking. Then bit by bit those three little old ladies started leaning in towards us, closer and closer. Next, the younger man put down his newspaper and glanced our way. Before long, all four of them were asking a myriad of questions and of course, Dad knew all the answers. Then they proceeded to tell me what a brilliant and amazing father I had, of which of course, I had

never had a single doubt. I was always so proud to be his daughter, except for maybe when he walked out of the house in the infamous bright orange jogging suit. Yeah, not so much then:)

Dad was not only a great father, he was the best person I have ever known. Gentle, kind-hearted, humble, compassionate, selfless. Dad always wanted to know everything about us and about what was happening in our lives. Our expectations, our fears, our successes, and our troubles. And he listened with sincerity, and with love. A real, true and genuine love. But his love and his gift of listening with benevolence and authenticity extended far beyond his children. Whether he was talking to a daughter, a grandchild, a friend, or a stranger on the street, Daddy only saw the good. When he listened, it's like he could look into our very souls and know our hearts. He saw the very best in every person he met and he hoped with his whole heart that we all could see ourselves the way that he saw us. So to slightly alter one of Daddy's favorite quotes from Robert Burns "OH WAD SOME POWER THE GIFTIE GIE US, TO SEE OURSELVES AS DADDY SEES US." To see ourselves as Grandpa sees us. To see ourselves as Douglas MacKenzie Scribner sees us. "IT WAD FRAE MONIE A BLUNDER FREE US. AN' FOOLISH NOTION." I love you Daddy. I'll miss you every day. Love, Gina



Gina (Graduation from BYU), Doug, Lora

## DAD

(TALK GIVEN AT DOUG'S FUNERAL) BY CRAIG SCRIBNER

Over the past week I've been poring through my dad's journals. I've been struck with the realization that almost everything he wrote was about other people's lives. He truly mourned with those who mourned, and celebrated other people's stories with giddy excitement as if they were his own.



Craig and Elly on Craig's 16th Birthday - 1986 - Scotland

For example, I only remember the details of my first date (on my 16th birthday) because he wrote them all down. And I mean all of them: the nearly-missed bus and the locked garden gate Elly and I had to scramble over, and the chilly wind that blew through our huddled picnic and which kept blowing out the candles on the bit of cake we brought. I can see my dad's grin as he first listened to my gushing account, and then again as he recorded them, weaving my stories into his own life's tapestry.

The moments of introspection he recorded were often shared experiences with his family, for better or for worse...including one really awful day when he'd been up all night working on an important document and then his computer crashed, he lost his temper and whipped the dog after it jumped the fence and chased our neighbor's sheep, and my brother and I were being rude and mean and another brother got suspended from school. "Sometimes I feel a total failure as a Father," he wrote, adding "Frankly, if Heaven is a continuation of what my home has been like today, I don't think I want to go there!"

He was, in fact, a wonderful father and Christian. And he absolutely loved the Restored Gospel of Jesus Christ. April 6th, 1980 was the Mormon Church's Sesquicentennial celebration. He used that occasion to set some goals for the rest of his life. He wrote:

*Today is a turning point! As the Church completes its first 150 years, it begins its second 150 years. This will be the era of the World-Wide Church. Similarly it is a turning point in my life. I have completed the first forty-two years, and begin the second forty-two years. By my watch, he left early—he owed us another thirteen months at least!*

He mentioned a few of the things he was most proud of having accomplished so far, then launched into the list of things he still wanted to become and achieve. *Without new goals, the Church would be adrift in this new era. Without new personal goals, I would suffer from an Identity Crisis, having already completed my life's ambitions.*

I'll just read a few of the goals he carefully enumerated—though, technically, it was an alphabetic scheme with numeric subsections. When his third major goal didn't fit entirely on the page, he started the next page section "C (continued)"...what a nerd!

- Remove Anger from my life - Totally!
  - o Deal with frustration through prayer (don't swear, use prayer)
    - Enjoy Life through a relaxed, enthusiastic, positive attitude! Keep a balance between work, service, home and recreation. Have more fun with my family. Especially, have more fun with Celie! Focus on our relationship as being more important and special than anything else.
    - Become More Reliant upon God!
      - o Pray for miracles and expect them to happen.
      - o Be more humble and courteous without being pious (be like President Kimball)
      - o Speak out about religion without fear of censure or embarrassment.
      - o Seek out and perform kind acts of Christian service.
      - o Be a missionary!
      - o Be a 100% Home Teacher!
      - o Fulfill my Current Church Job (whatever that may be) with complete dedication.



*Russ, Cecile, Gina, Doug and Craig singing, "There Once Was an Ugly Duckling"*

I'm not sure if Dad would claim to have achieved all of the goals he set that day, but they all sound like the man I knew. Over the past year, whenever he complained to me about the pandemic, it was always in the context of his church calling. He and Mom co-led activities for some of the young boys in the ward. He was always determined to serve them and kept working out creative alternatives when the usual venues for that kind of service were closed to him.



*1987 - Scott, Craig, Russ, Doug*

After listing his goals, he (of course) ended with a Conclusion, in which he quoted Joseph Smith, in a passage Dad called a "pure revelation from God to the prophet."

*Happiness is the object and design of our existence; and will be the end thereof, if we pursue the path that leads to it; and this path is virtue, uprightness, faithfulness, holiness, and keeping all the commandments of God.*

My dad lived a life of service. He loved that life, and taught us by word and deed how we should pursue happiness on our own.

DAD  
(TALK GIVEN AT DOUG'S FUNERAL) BY LORA SPENCER

First and foremost, just to get it out of the way, I am my Dad's favorite. When Dad passed away, it was wonderful to be on FaceTime together with my siblings as they surrounded Dad with so much love, but what I missed most about that time was being able to physically hold Dad's hand. Growing up, I always compared my hand to Dad's. He had long fingers that he always said would've been perfect for playing piano, and even though he only knew two little melodies, he would play them enthusiastically enough to draw me in, and then turn and ask me to play for him. He would then sit back and close his eyes, getting in a cat nap while tricking me into a piano practice. That is what missing Dad has felt like. Instead of one profound life lesson, it has been a lifetime of kind interactions, so that's what I wanted to talk about today.

Dad liked to hold hands all the time, and as a teenager I loved to go on errands and walk around with him, because he would always absentmindedly reach for my hand, and sway it to the rhythm of a quick pace. Holding hands was as natural as him calling me *Kiddo* or *Sweetheart*, and I will miss it tremendously.

Secondly, Dad was an excellent hugger. Actually, our hugs were never Dad's choice. I would come in and rest my head and then stay there long enough to make Dad squirm and push me off, while saying, "For goodness sakes, get out of here." He was also a hand patter, which he would do with a big smile, always ready with an accolade. Being a grandpa suited him really well. Although when he graduated to being an older man, he wasn't quite the same Dad I had growing up. I will miss both versions of Dad. I will miss the Dad of my teen years who had endless patience, and who I could force into a spontaneous jitterbug whenever I played Cab Calloway on the CD player. I will miss the older Dad, who yelled at their dog Moko through the window at 4:00am for barking awake the neighborhood, and muttered about that dumb dog all the way downstairs as he went out to bring him in.



But what I miss most is listening to him talk. He lived an engaged life, and could talk passionately about his and Mom's hobbies and interests to anyone who stepped in his study to sit for awhile.



He was terrible on telephones in his later years, and even struggled with background noise at the family get togethers, but he loved the quiet of his study. He would stop typing or reading the second anyone walked in, and if you asked what he was up to, he might tear up telling you stories from his family history, pull out a stamp collection from his childhood or get completely excited talking you through new projects or books he was working on.

I know I have learned a lifetime of lessons from Dad, but trying to pin one life altering moment or one particular conversation that changed my life is impossible. Dad converted to this church specifically because he wanted to know where he came from, why he was here on earth, and where he was going after he died. He found all those answers and then some in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and although watching him pass away felt sorrowful, I know his reunion on the other side was full of excitement. Dad kept his covenants specifically so he could have this moment, the tangible blessings of being able to cross over to the other side as a true servant of his Savior. He was diligent to the end - that is his legacy, but if we can be diligent too, that will be his greatest joy. I pray that we can.

I would like to end with part of a poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, that I admit I've taken a few liberties with:

*Such a blue inner light from his eyelids outbroke,  
You look'd at his silence and fancied he'd spoke:  
When he did, so peculiar yet soft was the tone,  
Tho' the loudest spoke also, you heard him alone --  
My Dad.*



*I doubt if he said to you much that could act  
As a thought or suggestion: he did not attract  
In the sense of the brilliant or wise: I infer  
'Twas his thinking of others, made you think of him—  
My Dad.*

*He never found fault with you, never implied  
Your wrong by his right; and yet men at his side  
Grew nobler, girls purer, as thro' the whole town  
The children were gladder that pull'd him around—  
My Dad.*



*None knelt at his feet confess'd lovers in thrall;  
They knelt more to God than they used,—that was all:  
If you praised him as charming, some ask'd what you meant,  
But the charm of his presence was felt when he went—  
My Dad.*

*The weak and the gentle, the ribald and rude,  
He took as He found them, and did them all good;  
It always was so with him—see what you have!  
He has made the grass greener even here ...  
My Dad.*

*My dear one!—when thou wast alive with the rest,  
I held thee the sweetest and loved thee the best:  
My Dad*



## DAD

(TALK GIVEN AT DOUG'S FUNERAL) - BY SCOTT SCRIBNER

I'd like to let you know that there's a correction to the program. That I am actually Dad's favorite – I think it is printed somewhere . . . So in working on the program and the video this week, I didn't get a chance to write my thoughts down until early this morning – and that's Dad's curse on me, by the way. I was the one that he passed on his early morning tradition. I can't sleep past seven – usually past six. It's his fault – I know it is because as a young child I would always be the one to wander into his bedroom while he was getting ready for work. I would sit on the sink, watch him brush his teeth. I would sit on the edge of his bed while he was saying his prayers. In fact, I don't remember this but Mom reminded me that while I was sitting there while he was saying his prayers, I turned to her and said, *"Shh, Dad's having a conversation with God."* I would watch him - I would catch him so many times in his office with no lights on, except for the dim light of a little lamp over his desk, long before the sun came up, studying his scriptures, writing notes in journals, whatever. But he was always busy, so it got me thinking, *"What kind of man was my dad?"*



- From a very young age I know that he memorized and took to heart the Scout Law: Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, and Kind, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean and Reverent. I saw all those things in him.
- He was a thoughtful man, a caring man, a patient man – most of the time. He could also be stubborn right up to the very end – getting mad at my mom for making him get up and walk around the house (to keep his oxygen level up), and get out of bed.



- He was a hard worker and loved to build things with his hands. As all the grand-kids know – little signs, little markers in the yard for them. He loved to do it. He always made those little signs for us – to hang our tools on and everything else.
- He was Adventurous. He went on many hikes with me in scouts, the hikes (hill walking) on the Moors in Scotland.
- And this probably wore off on me more than anyone else – that he loved cars! At sixteen he bought a 1938 Chevy Coupe for 100 bucks. He loved it because it was it was new the year he was born. At seventeen he traded that in and bought a 1939 Lincoln Zephyr with a quote: *"hot Ford V-8 engine"* with *"shimmering black paint."* During his senior year in college, his friend sold him a 1952 MG-TD. It's a beautiful car, right? I can't believe he got rid of it, but he later sold it to help finance his mission in 1960.

In fact I promised everyone last night that I had two favorite stories of Grandpa. I told them one last night and now it's time for the other one. I know that Dad loves cars. He doesn't tell this a whole lot – I know many people heard this when I left on my mission, but they're going to hear it again. When I was a teenager, I had a Ford Mustang. It was pretty fast. It was all fixed up and nice and clean, and had a little bit of a hair trigger on the gas pedal. One day we decided to take our mini-van into the repair shop. And Dad said, *"Hey, why don't I drive the Mustang,"* and I looked at him and said, *"Are you sure? Okay."* And so we were driving to the car dealership, and we happened to be right in front of the Court House, and I decided to play with him a little bit. So I pulled up next to him in the mini-van, and I started revving my engine a little bit at the light, looking over at Dad. Dad changed. Dad looked over at me. . . *"All right."* I knew what would happen. So when the light turned green, I didn't move – I watched. I watched Dad shift all of his body weight onto the gas pedal of that car. Vroom –





and then...panic...as he was fishtailing and smoking the tires, racing across the intersection. In fact, this is what he looked like. I remember that. I'll never forget it. He was so much fun.

- More seriously, Dad was sensitive to the Spirit, even from a very young age. He was a Seeker of Knowledge. He only had a 3.5 in High School, which means that Cal Tech turned him down, so he had to “settle” . . .for Stanford.
- He was a Man of Faith. Throughout all his high school and college career, Dad had many memorable spiritual experiences and he recorded them in his journal. While writing an English assignment in his sophomore year at Stanford, the subject was “*The Nature of God.*” So he wrote what he described to be the nature of God. He described God as a rain cloud and we were all individual raindrops. We all came from Him, lived out our lives hit the ground and ended

up in a puddle. Then we soon evaporated and returned back to God. When he read this essay to his roommate Bob



Gwynn who was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Bob asked him if he would like to know about the true nature of God. And then told him for the first time the Joseph Smith story of the First Vision. Dad was intrigued. It took another two years to finally accept what he already knew in his head and take action. In fact it was Albert Einstein that helped him. It was the equation  $E=MC^2$  that demonstrated that matter cannot be created or destroyed, but can only change form. And so Dad using his reasoning decided that if matter cannot be created or destroyed, then God's greatest creation, our Soul, obviously must have existed before our birth and must continue after our death. He was sold. He knew it was true. From that day on he was no longer a seeker of worldly knowledge. He was a Seeker of Spiritual Knowledge. It was a journey that would last him the rest of his life.

Prior to going on his mission, he received a Patriarchal Blessing. A small excerpt says:

*“ . . . 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. The privilege will be yours of being a missionary to the family of your Father and Mother and in love and patience you will teach them the true way of life, and one day they shall see and understand as you do. . . .”*

I believe that this statement became the mission of his life. As a witness of the last forty-eight years of his life and from all I have read from before I arrived on this earth, I can testify that All of his reading, All of his teaching, All of his writing, All of his study, All of his church callings, All of his lessons, All of his talks, All of his meetings, All of his friendships (which he treasures), All of his genealogy, All of his temple work, ALL of his efforts and energy spent until the day he returned to his heavenly home was focused on the eternal welfare of his family of which you and I are ALL a part.

Dad truly had an unwavering testimony of God the Father and Jesus Christ. His entire life stands in support of that testimony. I believe that he was in complete agreement with Nephi when he said:

*“And we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.” (2 Nephi 25:26)*

And I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.





*Craig and Scott are missing because they were on Missions - the rest of us gathered for Christmas 1991*



The day after Christmas, my senior year of highschool, we had a terrible fire sweep through our house. The fire burned so swiftly that pictures were burned off the wall but the wallpaper behind them stayed untouched. The brightly lit Christmas tree that had been surrounded by cheerfully wrapped presents just hours before, had been gutted, leaving only the stark trunk remaining. It was a devastating fire that burned through more than half of the house before the firemen came and put it out.

The first day we were allowed to reenter our home and walk through it, I was in shock. The darkness was overwhelming. A sickly stench of old smoke mixed with fumes of burnt furniture and plastic was so thick, you could taste it. The blackened carpet had melted in thick clumps and stuck to our feet when we walked. Everything was so dark, and damp, and only a lantern and a few flashlights lit up the charred walls. I had a lot of emotions go through my head at that time. A lot of self pity, a lot of anger and sadness. Seeing so much that was familiar and comforting to me destroyed in such a visual way was difficult for my teenage self to process. Many people had come to help us that day. Neighbors and friends shuffled in around me. We all had a goal. We were going to salvage what could be saved and remove what couldn't. But in those first moments, in that terrible blackness, we all just stood together, speechless. It was Dad who broke the silence. He invited everyone to step in closer and then he announced that he wanted to say a prayer before we started working on the house.



*After the Fire - Christmas 1991 - Doug with Deems Davis*

In that dim light we gathered together, people of different faiths and beliefs. Dad started by first thanking God for all his blessings. He thanked God that his children were safe and that no one had been hurt. He thanked God for the destroyed house we stood in, and all the many wonderful experiences that we had in that house. And then proclaimed that he was going to rebuild, but before he did, he wanted to dedicate it to God. He was determined to use it to bless those he came into contact with. He wanted to use it for gathering people together and enriching their lives. With this house that he was committed to rebuild, Dad promised to shelter those who needed refuge and comfort those who mourned. Breathing in the thick, dank air, I was floored. How could he think of blessing so many other people, while standing in the wreckage of his home.

When I had walked in there, all I could see was my personal loss. However, when he finished his humble prayer and I opened up my eyes, somehow, I too, caught a glimmer of his optimism. For that moment, I could see past the cinders and destruction and see our home built back to the way it was before. My heart felt lighter and a task that had seemed insurmountable just moments before appeared possible. Difficult, to be sure...but possible.

This was one of Dad's finest talents. Without lecturing or being boastful, he could always find a way to inspire those around him. It is this quiet strength that I have often leaned on. Through the years, I have faced my own dark days. I have experienced times of loss, and times of despair. I have faced challenges that felt insurmountable and was forced to make decisions that didn't seem to have any right answers. In each of these moments of my life, I have turned towards my parents. Whenever I described my struggles to my Dad, he would listen thoughtfully and comforted me. He would offer sage advice. But mostly, he expressed his belief that I was going to be able to figure it all out myself. In fact, he would most often end those conversations with a shake of his head, and a bit of a chuckle and say, "Well, good luck." Still, whenever I left, I knew that I could get through it. It was going to be difficult, to be sure...but possible.

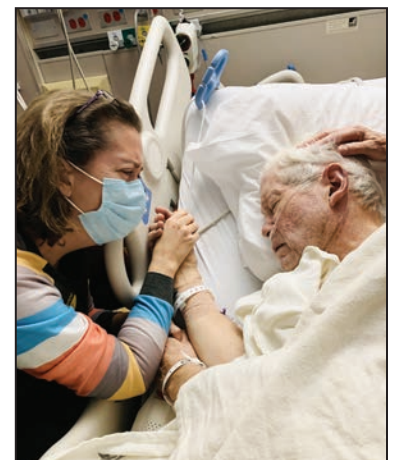


And now I find myself here, facing a new, difficult experience...that of losing my Dad. And this time I have to face it without him. In this new emptiness that he left behind, I feel that my Dad would want me to follow the example that he set for me so many years ago.



Like him, I will try to fill my heart with gratitude. Gratitude for a father who loved laughter, stories and games. Gratitude for his faith and wisdom that he generously shared all through my life. And most of all, I will fill my heart full of gratitude for the deep love that Dad gave to all who knew him. He was as authentic and sincere a man as I've ever met, and he loved us completely...warts and all. Dad was always up for a good adventure, whether it be moving a family of eight to a foreign country for three years or a quiet hike in the Redwoods. His enthusiasm was tangible and his zest for life was contagious. Even when hard things happened to him, rebuilding and starting over were just part of the journey.

There is so much I will miss of Dad. I will miss making him laugh with all my crazy life experiences. I will miss his warm hugs and him saying, "Well, good luck with that," at the end of our conversations. I will miss eating bowls of ice-cream with him after dinner and sneaking a last chocolate graham cracker when Mom wasn't looking. I will miss his quirky sayings like "Fiddlesticks," "Not you, Mahoney," and "We've got a little problem here." I will miss too much. It will be hard continuing on my own adventure without him. But maybe, like Dad, I too, can move forward with optimism and gratitude.



DAD  
(TALK GIVEN AT DOUG'S FUNERAL) BY RUSS SCRIBNER

I want to thank everybody who has participated and who has been here. I have learned so much from you. Each of you and your spirits and what you've brought has meant so much to me. I also want to thank each of my brothers and sisters and extended brothers and sisters who have eviscerated my talk, so I simply don't have too much more to say. I can tell you one thing though – it's a lot easier to see me now behind the microphone than it used to be (*in reference to the time he came home from his mission and was so terribly thin*). This morning as I was seriously thinking of discarding everything I'd written for my talk, I was rummaging through Dad's desk looking for one of his special pens which, of course, I now have as mine. And I came across some note cards - I'd never seen those before and they were – you know these were Dad's - and they were organized alphabetically and they were these 3x5 cards in one of these drawers. And as I pulled them out and started looking through them, apparently they were notes he had taken when he was a Bishop in the 70's, and they were very well organized. He had different topics that he had written different notes and quotes and things on them. And, you know, I said, *"I need material,"* so I thought *"Death,"* let's look at the D's, and under *"Death"* there was – well, you know, he was a Bishop and he had to give talks like this and there was a note there – a letter that was written to him by a lady I didn't know. And in it she was just pouring out her heart to my Father, thanking him, and telling him about her loss and her family. That was my Dad. He was always considerate about people.

There were a couple of quotes that I wanted to give you, my time's pretty short here, but I wanted to give you a couple of quotes that were ones that my Dad liked. They were ones that I liked, and I didn't realize that my Dad liked them as well until my Mom read my talk and said, *"Oh yeah, those are Dad's favorite quotes."* And I said, *"I thought they were mine."* So anyway, one of them is from a play about Joan of Arc and in it she says,

*"Every man gives his life for what he believes.  
Every woman gives her life for what she believes.  
Sometimes people believe in little or nothing,  
Nevertheless, they give their lives for that little or nothing.  
One life is all we have and we live it as we believe in living it, and then it's gone.  
But to surrender what you are and live without belief – that is more terrible than dying –  
More terrible than dying young."*

(Maxwell Anderson, "Joan of Lorraine," 1945, act 2, scene 4)

One of the last things that Dad said in the hospital was to ask for a new clean pair of temple garments to wear. Why would he care about that? Anyone who has ever worn the garment knows that it is not about *"covering our nakedness."* Rather it is a symbol - a symbol of our Faith that God will follow through with what He has promised, if we will but fulfill our promise to Love and Follow Him. Dad made that promise with God, and he was determined to see it through to the end. He gave his whole life to that belief.

I believe Dad died for what he believed in and lived for what he believed in. Ever since he made that decision as a young man, he has moved forward and lived his life according to that belief. And I think it's our turn, I think it's our turn to live our lives in what we believe in. And that maybe we can look to the example that Dad gave us and that we could incorporate some of that faith and some of that strength in our lives. I don't know, but one of my brothers or sisters said that his legacy was his life and the way he lived it, and I believe that.



*Rusty and Dad (1966)*



But you are also his legacy. You are. Each one of you. He loved all of you so much and he would want you to live your lives in a way that would make you proud of your life and make Heavenly Father proud of your life and would bring you back to Him.



Scouting and other LDS Youth Activities (Russ), Blessing of babies (Gina), Baptizing Children (Jim), Service to family and others (Spencer), Education (Christy), Missions (Craig), Supporting children in their activities (Scott), Creating Memories with loved ones (Lora), and of course, Family Reunions!

So I'm going to read a little quote that I found in those notes under "Death" and I think Dad kept this quote because it's very small writing and it would fit in his little 3x5 cards, but it's Victor Hugo. Dad loved Victor Hugo. I think we could easily hear Dad saying these words: *"The nearer I approach the end, the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the world which invites me. It is marvelous, yet simple, for half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode and song. I have tried all, but I feel I have not said a thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave, I can say like many others, 'I have finished my day's work.' But I cannot say, 'I have finished my life's work.' My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley – it is an open thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight. It opens on the dawn. My work is only beginning. My work is hardly above the foundation. I can gladly see it mounting forever – the thirst for the infinite proves infinity."*

I would say that Dad's work is just above the foundation. It is up to us to continue building. It's up to us to move forward in our lives. If I could say anything that Dad would say, I would say that he loves us, he loves you. He loves each of you and he wants the best for us, and I would just say that it's our turn to move forward with our own lives. And I think that is what Dad would want for you. And I say that in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.



Ever since I was a boy I've heard that the gospel is perfect, because it's from God, and the church is flawed, because it's got human fingerprints all over it. Usually that explanation comes in the context of why we shouldn't judge the gospel based on the actions of church members, even leaders—how our testimony needs to be rooted in the gospel, not the church.

Elder Holland agrees that the gospel is the true goal, and that the purpose of the church is to strengthen our belief and commitments to the gospel. But he defends the church, not because it's infallible, but because it is a vital instrument in our gospel faith.

He tells the story of a stake conference where David O. McKay visited his stake and where he felt the spirit so strongly confirm his gospel testimony. Gene England, a longtime English professor at BYU and lifelong advocate of Mormon discussion and dialog, wrote a personal memoir called "*Why the Church is as True as the Gospel.*" In it, he recalls an almost identical moment from his youth, where he remembered sitting in a quarterly stake conference, which for him at twelve



years old was the most boring church meeting of all. He was turned around in his chair, teasing his sister, when he felt himself physically turned around to pay attention to the visiting authority, Elder Harold B. Lee, who had suddenly interrupted his prepared remarks to give an apostolic blessing to the stake. The witness of the Holy Ghost that Gene felt became a priceless treasure for him, and he asked himself how many boring meetings would he sit through to have that kind of experience. The answer: "*thousands—all there are.*"

But both professor England and Elder Holland emphasize that the value in the church is not just for those special, infrequent but transcendent moments. He explains that in the life of the true Church ... there are constant opportunities to serve, especially to learn to serve people we would not normally choose to serve—or possibly even associate with—and thus there are opportunities to learn to love unconditionally (which, after all, is the most important thing to learn in the gospel). There is constant encouragement, even pressure, to be *active*: To have a *calling* and thus to have to grapple with relationships and management, with other people's ideas and wishes, their feelings and failures. To attend classes and meetings and to have to listen to other people's sometimes misinformed or prejudiced notions and to have to make some constructive response. To be subject to leaders and occasionally to be hurt by their weakness and blindness, even unrighteous dominion—and then to be called to a leadership position and find that we, too, with all the best intentions, can be weak and blind and unrighteous.

Church involvement teaches us compassion and patience as well as courage and discipline. It makes us responsible for the personal and marital, the physical and spiritual welfare of people we may not already love (may even heartily dislike), and thus we learn to love them. It stretches and challenges us, even when we are disappointed and exasperated, in ways we would not otherwise choose to be stretched and challenged. Thus it gives us a chance to be made better than we may have chosen to be—but need and ultimately want to be.

Gene England was my favorite professor in college. As I mentioned, he was an English professor. I had had over a dozen religion classes at Ricks college and BYU, but I never heard a professor bear his testimony of the Savior so frequently as Gene England—and that was in a class studying Shakespeare! But I also witnessed how, at the end of his career, he was pushed out of leadership positions and even out of BYU altogether because some people didn't like some of his ideas.

This is actually the kind of experience that compels some people to abandon the church. My closest friend from my childhood ended up in a bad marriage to a man who was successful in business and by all outward appearances, in the church. He was in the stake presidency when they finally divorced, and managed to turn everybody

against her—including her bishop, who was one of his middle-manager employees. It was an awful situation—and in many ways it still is—but I told her that I can see God’s hand in the whole thing, the same way that I see it in the personal trials of Joseph Smith, who was betrayed over and over by the people who should have been his friends. In fairness I need to admit that I don’t know the whole story. But that’s another critical aspect of both the Church and the gospel. In CS Lewis’ *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the boy finally learns why the Christ-figure Lion was so mean to him, but he never learned why he was so mean to his friend. When he asked, the lord replied that it was none of his beeswax. We are continually required in the Church to let go and let God be the judge of what we may perceive as ungodly behavior.

The path of discipleship leads us through places where we are bound to be misunderstood and misrepresented, even in the church. This is part of the schooling that we may not have chosen on our own. Professor England warned that, ...if we refuse to lose ourselves wholeheartedly in such a school, then we will never know the redeeming truth of the Church. If we constantly ask, “*what has the church done for me?*” we will not think to ask the much more important question, “*What am I doing with the opportunities for service and self-challenge with which the church provides me?*” If we constantly approach the Church as consumers, we will never partake of its sweet and filling fruit. Only if we can lose our lives there will we find ourselves.

My mother has been my best example of this kind of discipleship my whole life. I don’t know if I’ve ever heard her argue about doctrine. But I know that she loves people. She learned from her mother that there’s never a reason not to organize a party, or a play, or a road show, and in those capacities, and in her callings in the church, I’ve seen her get her feelings hurt countless times, but she’s unshakable. She never stops wanting to be involved and to involve others.

Ending . . .



*Cecile and Elly Morlin Taylor (2012)*

On 20 August 2021, Cecile, Joyce and Cheril were in St. George and visited with our cousins who live near there (LaVerkin and Hurricane). These are the children of Uncle Lloyd, my mother’s youngest brother. We met at Danny and Jackie Howard’s home. Danny was named after “Danny Boy” - Grandma Howard’s favorite song. Joyce named her Danny (Jensen) after Danny Howard. I named my James Daniel after Danny Jensen. Not sure, but I’m hoping Danny Scribner was named because of this beloved family name. Anyway, we met together in a family reunion and shared memories. The following story was told by both Lorraine and Danny - we were greatly touched by it, and I want to share it with all of you.



*Back: The Howards: Lorraine, Richard, Danny, Hugh  
Front: The James’: Cheril, Joyce, Cecile*

## WINGS ON HIS FEET

(written by Danny Howard, Lloyd Howard's son)

In 1959 my sister Loraine and her husband Chuck were living in the house that Dad owned in the backyard of our house on Saticoy Street. Loraine's oldest son Vern was one-and-a-half, and my brother Hugh was two-and-a-half. The two of them enjoyed playing together. Loraine and I have always been especially close, and I was there chatting with her as she prepared dinner. We heard a train whistle, a common thing, as we lived next to the Southern Pacific Railroad. While this meant nothing to me, it had a completely different effect on Loraine. She immediately began looking for Hugh and Vern. Unable to see them in the house, she asked me to quickly run to see if they were playing on the tracks. In my mind this was an unnecessary escalation as we hadn't checked in the yard yet. Still, the logic made sense because it didn't matter where they were playing, as long as it wasn't on the tracks, so I took off running.

I headed out the door, down the driveway, and toward the tracks. I was running as fast as I could, and as I approached the tracks, I could see that Loraine's intuition was tragically correct. The train was approaching at about 50 mph and blowing its whistle frantically to try and alert the boys or somebody about their impending doom. In their innocence, they just stood and watched the engine approaching them, obviously unaware of the danger. When I saw them, I was about the same distance from them as the engine was. I knew my running speed of 15 mph would not get me there in time to save them.

It was an impossible moment I will never forget. Just the thought of it moves me to tears all these years later. I knew that without wings on my feet, I would never reach them in time to save them, and that I was about to witness their deaths. As much as I wanted to, I could not will myself across the distance to save them from their impending doom, and I didn't want to witness their death. But how could I save them?

Suddenly I noticed movement to my left. To my relief and amazement, a man, who ran out from behind the trailer court next door, had also heard the train whistles and was also running to save them. He was already in the right-of-way and he was running at an amazing pace. The deep sand did not slow him at all. As I watched him, he seemed to be moving impossibly fast, as though he had wings on his feet. He crossed the sand dune in the middle of the right-of-way, then ran up the slope to the tracks. Without any hesitation or delay, he ran straight towards the small boys. Shortly before reaching them, he reached his arm way out, and from the outside of the tracks he scooped both boys up at once. With an impossible change of direction, which was at least 90 degrees, he pulled them and himself to safety right in front of the engine, which was by now inches away.

As I review this scene in my mind, it defies logic that he was able to change his direction so quickly and surely, and save them and himself from what had been sure death just seconds before. Loraine was following me to the tracks, and the man, who never identified himself, handed the boys to her while berating her negligence. Loraine, who was weeping with relief, was totally unaffected by his scolding, and thanked him over and over for saving Hugh and Vern.

Although we were familiar with virtually everyone who lived in the trailer court next door, we never saw that man before or after this incident. I have always wondered, then and now, if we had been assisted by someone not of this world. Whoever he was, he certainly performed a miracle for us that day. I'm very grateful that he was able to save Hugh and Vern. I'm also grateful that I was able to witness it, because what I witnessed was a miracle.

*(Note from Cecile: Lorraine also wrote up her version of this, which was the same story told through different eyes, but the miraculous details were the same. She added that afterwards they went up to the train tracks looking for the little boys' shoes. They were scooped right out of their shoes, which were still on the tracks where they stood, and which only added to the unexplained miracle that took place.)*

31 DECEMBER 1950 – *Letter from Grandma Howard to her son Lloyd Howard. This was written just one and half months before she died on Feb 11, 1951. I was not quite ten years old. She was 76 years old, and it's amazing to me how the things she enjoyed and wanted were so much the same as mine - over 70 years ago! - close to my same age.*

Dear Folks, . . . No doubt you had a lovely Christmas. It's so much fun when there are little children in the house at this time of year. We had a very nice Christmas here with Jessie, Roy and family. . . And wasn't it lovely to have Christmas Eve on a Sunday! Seems to me that it's the way it should be. People should really get the religious atmosphere that belongs to this special day. . . I have written to the Deseret News about the suitability of having Christmas Eve held on Sundays. After all – we celebrate Easter on Sunday in commemorating His resurrection. Easter is a moveable date – and we are not sure anyway of the exact date of His birth.

By the way – just before Christmas I won a Norbest turkey in a radio limerick contest. We haven't eaten it yet as Jessie bought two turkeys at Thanksgiving-time and she'd already had one ready for Christmas. So we popped mine into the deep freeze and we'll have it at some future date. It was already frozen anyhow. Last Thursday we, Jessie and the little girls and I, drove down to Provo to spend the day with Lucie and her family. . . The day we were at Lucie's we had a turkey dinner and afterwards she and Joyce put on a puppet show for the youngsters. It was really good. Lucie made all the puppets and built the theater. It was complete with footlights and everything. Several neighbors came-in for the show and the youngsters loved it. The play was "Cinderella." Ever heard of it? Jessie and I both remarked how much better it was for the children than to watch it on a television set as they had a chance to work-things themselves. They had helped make the puppets and now they are also learning to operate them.



*Lucie James, far right. The Handsome Prince and Cinderella, far left. Lucie made all these puppets*

When I read what Helen wrote about Loraine milking the cow, and carrying the milk into the house, I was thrilled to know that your children are being taught to work. For that's one of the important things that children should learn – that all must share in helping to keep the home and share in the work that needs to be done. That's something that is too often neglected these days. I often think of the days when I was young and of how we all had certain chores that we had to do. And then, in the evenings, we all sat around in the big old dining room and father read and mother knitted – and the rest of us did our homework or crocheted and all of us took-part in the conversation. Of course, in the winter-time, there would generally be only one or two warm rooms in the house. So of course that would be one reason why we would all be together until bedtime. Now, after the evening meal, each one goes to his or her own, warm room. But still I like the way it used to be.

. . . I am writing this in my room and listening to the broadcast from the Tabernacle of the "Messiah." It is sung every year and I love to hear it. So I have to stop writing occasionally just to listen. Well, we have snow at last. It must have snowed most of last night as it is quite deep now. But the sun is shining and there is a lot of snow that has melted. I am so glad, Lloyd, that you are working in the church. For I know that this is where we find our greatest satisfaction. And I am so glad also that you have such a splendid wife who upholds you and helps you. Also that you have a fine family.

Gord and Alta called-in last Sunday evening but we were all at church – except Donna. So they said they would come again during the holidays. Well I'd better close now as I want to also write your brother Mark and his wife Helen. Here's wishing for you all a happy and prosperous new year. And may the Blessings of the Lord be with you always. Affectionately, Mother



*My Grandmother Howard Sarah Drucilla Sears Howard*



## BIG FAMILY HOME EVENING - "THE PATH" - SEPTEMBER 19, 2021 (LESSON BY RUSS SCRIBNER)

Something that I have thought a lot about this past year, that is probably obvious to the young adults here, is that I am not my father. Over the years I have found myself comparing my life, my achievements and failures, my career path, my personal development, to what I observed and knew about my father's life. I felt that in most ways, I was not measuring up to the example that he gave me. Eventually, I came to the realization that I'm not the same as my father, and comparing myself to him was not only unhelpful, but in many ways hurtful to my own sense of well-being. I found that it was OK not to be exactly like him, to follow a different career path, to develop different talents and interests. In the past few years, I have also realized that my sons

are not me, that they also have their own path to discover, to find their own way in the world, and that it is perfectly ok for them to do it differently



than I have. Grandpa wasn't his Dad either - My Grandpa Scribner didn't initially graduate high school - he worked as a machinist and liked to make Monograms - eventually he got his diploma, served in WWI in the Navy and became an Optometrist. His death certificate lists "Chichen Itza, Mexico" as his

place of death. Chichen Itza isn't a town, it's a group of Mayan ruins. Great-Grandpa Scribner was visiting this place with my grandma and had a heart attack while climbing the pyramids. I've climbed the same pyramids and have tried to imagine what it was like when my Grandpa was there - to see it through his eyes.

This got me thinking about the path that we are all on - the path that leads us back to our Heavenly Father. There are many people that will tell you that the only path we should be on is a path of self-discovery. We should find out who we are, what we like and don't like, what talents we have, what are our wants, needs and desires.



And then, when we finally know who we are, we should spend our time fulfilling those wants, needs and desires, and then we will be happy. We should only do what makes us feel good, only have a career that inspires us, only have a spouse that supports us, only have children if it makes us happy. There is a cartoon I used to watch when I was young called Popeye the Sailor. Popeye had a catchphrase that he would often use: "I yam what I yam and that's all what I yam." But I do not feel that this attitude actually brings us the happiness it promises. The gospel of Jesus Christ offers us a different path. Instead of

saying "you do you," Christ says, "what manner of men ought ye to be? Even as I am."

The scriptures sometimes refer to this as "putting off the natural man." (Mosiah 3:19) *For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.*

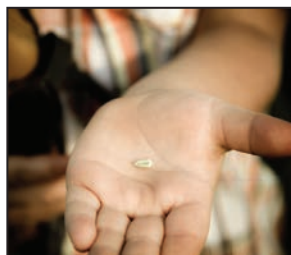
This path is described throughout the scriptures in many different ways. Recently President Nelson has referred to it as "the covenant path." I love the variety of ways the scriptures describe this path and how we are to follow it. Many times the prophets, both ancient and modern, have used imagery and metaphors and analogies to help us understand how we can move along this path. These are ways that help us understand the concepts by comparing them to things we are familiar with. Here is an example I recently read: "Night descended on the land like a great silken cat, its shadow darkening the woods in steadily deepening layers, stealing away the daylight with stealth and cunning." (Terry Brooks - Shannara)

These types of images help us understand and remember what is being described. Here are some examples from the prophets:

Alma - planting and nurturing the seed of faith

Moses - raising the staff with the snake on it

Elder Ballard - staying on the Good Ship Zion



Lehi - the wastelands, finding the tree of life, the iron rod

Paul - seeing through a glass (or mirror) darkly

Nephi - the Liahona

Moroni - raising the standard of liberty, building fortifications to protect

Jesus - I am the living water, the bread of life, the good shepherd



One of my favorite images is Jesus appearing to the Nephites at the temple in the land called Bountiful. Many thousands gathered to see him and be healed by him. The scriptures say he let them come to him one by one to feel his side and hands and feet - it must have taken hours! I picture myself being in line, waiting for my turn to see the Savior. I would not be able to see him clearly for a long time, but I would see and hear the people coming back from being with Jesus - the light in their eyes and the healing they have experienced would be incredibly encouraging and would help me stay on the path to him. This mirrors how I feel about my life and the people I meet as I am trying to return to my Heavenly Father.

All these examples try to help us understand what the doctrine of Christ, the covenant path is, and how we can follow it to return to our Heavenly Father. In a recent conference, Elder Mark D. Eddy spoke to our stake about the covenant path. He started with the first four principles and ordinances of the gospel. Do you know what those are?

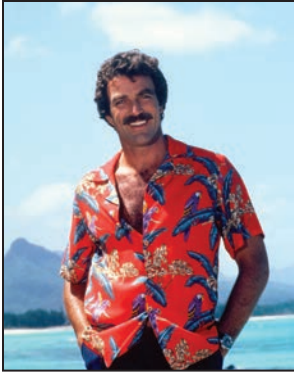
1. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ
2. Repentance
3. Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins
4. Receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost

Whenever these are mentioned in the scriptures, it usually ends up with "Enduring to the End" - but what does that mean? Elder Eddy said that this isn't actually just a one time occurrence, but that the process repeats. After we go through the process for the first time and are Baptized and Receive the Holy Ghost, we continue on this path - having our faith increase, continuing to repent of our mistakes, covenanting to do better, feeling the Spirit of God directing us along the way.

I believe that we are all on the covenant path - some of us are further along than others, some of us may go in the wrong direction for a time, but with the help of our Saviour, we can return to the path. We can all benefit from the blessings that come from exercising faith and repentance, covenanting with God to do better and receiving the help we need from the Holy Ghost. I believe that the direction we are going is more important than how fast we are going, or far along we are. God is always there, waiting for us - like the scriptures say - "My arm is outstretched, still." All we have to do is reach out to him. "Draw near unto me, and I will draw near unto you" is His message to us always. I would encourage you to be open to His Spirit - allow the light and healing to be part of your life and lead you towards a happier life. I know my life has been better because of it. I love each of you! Russ



Woodburning of Doug done by Russ Scribner  
(Christmas 2021)



I was a big Magnum PI fan when I was younger. Who wouldn't love those short shorts? When I was twenty-two, I was working for a publishing company in Sandy, Utah. The owner decided to have a conference on Oahu, Hawaii. As part of the staff I got to go help run the conference. I had lots of fun being in Hawaii, but there was one event that topped them all. One day with meetings finished, I decided to drive to the windward side of the island to investigate a Japanese burial ground I had heard about. After a beautiful drive I ended up at the entrance only to be stopped by a police officer saying the grounds were closed for the day. I asked why and didn't get much of an answer. I then glanced up the hill and I noticed a red ferrari and a brown, yellow and orange chopper! Oh my goodness, I was so excited. They were obviously filming Magnum PI at this location! I begged the officer to let me go up, but of course, got nowhere. I drove off totally disappointed.

As I went down the highway I saw a road off to the left and decided to see if there was any way to get to the burial grounds and to see Tom Selleck.

I had to drive quite a ways up the hill before I found a place with the possibility of hiking down to the set. I climbed over a fence, through several fields and over a few more fences. At one point I came face to face with a cow with horns (yes there are cows with horns) and started running like crazy to not get gored. Suddenly I heard a chunk sound as the chain around the cow's neck stopped it from getting to me. I kept going, wading through a stream. I eventually came to the edge of the burial ground and realized, much to my dismay, that there was a river with a



tall arched bridge I would have to cross to get to where they were filming. There was no way I could do that without being detected. I stood there with wet feet at the edge of the beautiful garden realizing it was all for nothing. Then, two men came around the curved path heading right towards me. I realized the jig was up. I was caught. Would they take me to jail? How would I explain this to my boss? Then I saw it was Tom Selleck and another man. I couldn't believe it! I stepped out of the side brush and walked towards them with my hand in the pocket of my skirt and said, *"This is the bravest thing I've ever done."*

Tom Selleck looked at me and then stepped behind the man he was with (obviously his bodyguard) and said, *"What exactly are you doing?"* I pulled my camera out of my pocket and said, *"Can I please take your picture?"*

He laughed (with his great recognizable laugh) and said, *"Sure."* I went over to take his picture and his bodyguard took the camera from me and pushed me over toward Tom Selleck, who put his arm around my shoulder (I was freaking out - Tom Selleck had his arm over my shoulder) and smiled. I got my picture! I said, *"Thank you very much"* and hightailed it out of there, not once looking back. I was careful to avoid the cow with horns on the way back, of course. Not one person at the conference believed me when I got back to Waikiki.

Another fun day, much later in life, I had the privilege of interviewing Sir Anthony Hopkins for the Tooele Transcript Bulletin while they were filming *The World's Fastest Indian*, here in Tooele. He and the filming crew were so nice, they invited me to hang out with them for two days on set - even feeding me when they stopped for meals. Anthony Hopkins was a kind and gentle man.



“LET THE LOWER LIGHTS BE BURNING” (WRITTEN BY ALAINA JONES, NOV. 2021)

In the 1800’s, there was a certain ship that was sailing through the Great Lakes, trying to make port in a city. However, the ship got caught up in a storm, and was thrown completely off course. They came across a lighthouse, and the captain told a crewmate to run below deck to check which lighthouse it was. When the cabin boy came back up, he said, “*Sir, that’s the lighthouse for Cleveland.*” The captain was shocked that they were that far off course, and asked if he was sure. The crewmate said he was. The captain decided to try and wait out the storm a little longer. However, the weather got worse, and they decided that their only option was to try and dock. The crew looked for the lower lights in order to line up correctly to come in, but realized the lower lights were out. They waited out in the storm for as long as they could, and finally the captain realized they would perish if they stayed out in this storm any longer. So the captain did his best to try and approach the lighthouse the safest route (without hitting any reefs or such) but unfortunately, the storm was too rough and they crashed along the rocky reefs. The ship wrecked before reaching land. In the morning, a rescue boat came, and managed to find one survivor; a sailor who had tied himself to the mast. Unfortunately, everyone else was lost to the sea. The story appeared in the headlines, and made it into the sermon of a pastor on Sunday. One of the men in the congregation, Philip Bliss, a Christian and writer of hymns, heard the story and wrote the inspired words on page 335 in the LDS hymnbook, “*Let the Lower Lights be Burning.*” The spiritual message: The lighthouse is like Jesus Christ and eternal life. However, we don’t always know the best way to get there free of harm. So, the members of the church are like the lower lights, put there to try to help people safely get the gospel without wrecking on some danger lurking just beneath the surface. If we don’t let our light shine, people who are searching for truth may never be able to get there as they can’t find a path through all the dangers.



*(Verse 2) Dark the night of sin has settled, Loud the angry billows roar  
Eager eyes are watching, longing, For the lights along the shore  
Let the lower lights be burning, Send a gleam across the wave  
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman, You may rescue, you may save.*

When I heard this story, I was at girls’ camp, and our bishop (Jared Nelson) got up on Saturday and gave this story. He did mention that he hadn’t been able to find proof for all the details, so take the story as you will. However, at the end of his talk, he and two of the other bishops stood up and sang the hymn. Bishop Nelson has a terrific baritone singing voice, and it captivated the attention of everyone in attendance. I don’t know if anyone else was sniffling by the end of it, but I certainly was.



*Bishop Jared Nelson, furthest man in the back. The youth in Alaina’s ward in Georgia on a service project in Florida - Mormon Helping Hands. Alaina and Austin in front. Rob on left.*

For my Children,

The other day after I got out of the shower, I took a good long look at myself. (Whatever, kids. Even Moms are naked underneath their clothes.) I know, you are groaning right now, probably saying, “Gross Mom!” And that isn’t too far off from my own sentiments at that moment. I mean, after doing a cursory assessment, even I could see that I was a hot mess. From my thin, scraggly hair and loose wrinkly skin to my missing nipples and disproportionate body...let’s just say that things were not as they once were.

But most of all, I noticed the scars. I now have scars literally crisscrossing some parts of my body. While some have mostly faded enough to blend into my stretch-marks others are still thick and strong. I still have my expanders in my body, so instead of smooth fake boobs, I have rock-hard, lumpy, bumpy pancakes stuck to my chest. Like I said, the reflection in the mirror wasn’t pretty.



However, as I stood there, feeling discouraged, I remembered a part of a talk from General Conference by President Uchtdorf. He recounted his experience as a child in Germany as bombs rained down over his town during the end of World War II. He told how not too far from him, in the city of Dresden, bombs also destroyed a Lutheran church. Apparently, when that church was rebuilt, the builders reused some of those black, scarred bricks



that survived the bombings sporadically throughout the reconstruction. During his talk, Uchtdorf had displayed a recent photograph of that church. It was amazing looking at a picture of that beautiful church with its war-torn history proudly displayed throughout its facade. Uchtdorf was using this experience as a metaphor overcoming trials, but standing in front of my mirror, I took it literally.

Right then I chose to see my scars as proof of life instead of a shameful visual of being damaged or less than I once was. It was a very conscious, very personal paradigm shift. To set my decision in stone, I decided to deconstruct each of the scars that I saw in front of me. I began with my very first scar. One that nobody sees and most people never know is even there. However, it is one that, at times, I am hyper aware of. It’s my cleft palate scar that I earned after two separate surgeries as a small child. That scar came along with about twelve years of speech therapy. These days, only children are uninhibited enough to ask why my voice is so different from others. Most people don’t ever mention it and those who know me best accept my voice as part of me. Like my short stature or my big eyes, my voice just makes me who I am. For the most part, even I forget about it. Only when I’ve told people about my cleft palate, and I know they are listening more intently to my speech, does my anxiety kick in and my speech goes kuptuz. At those moments, when the attention is focused on my speech, I can only think about everything that tiny scar represents to me. Years of frustration from not being understood. Anger at myself for not being able to communicate in the same fluid way that ideas and thoughts ran through my mind. That attention would often turn into anxiety that could freeze up my jaw and thicken my tongue so that anything I said after that would just be a garbled mess. But that isn’t all that scar means to me. It also represents years of hard work and the satisfaction of being able to clearly express myself in most situations. I’ve succeeded in enough public speaking, that the thought of talking in front of people hardly registers on my ‘greatest fears’ list. I am also rather proud that I was able to converse (no matter how poorly) in a second language. French, no less. I’ll hold on to that scar, if you please.

My crisscrossing scars are all about my babies. Little scars in my belly button from surgeries clearing out polyps and endometriosis. Four separate belly scars stretching hip to hip. The first one was from my ectopic pregnancy that caused my fallopian tube to burst. That emergency surgery saved my life even if it brought the grief of losing two little embryos. Next came an emergency C-section that brought out my twins nearly two months early, saving their lives and

sending them straight on to the NICU to be given the medical care they needed to survive and thrive. And then my two scheduled C-sections, introducing our lives to two very sweet, very active little boys. These scars are my children. All my children. Even though I didn't give birth to Ethan, if I didn't lose those first twins, I would never have gone on to adopt. So that first scar belongs to him. These scars along with the stretch-marks on my soft belly, thinning hair, smile wrinkles and the worry lines are my honor badges displaying the work and sacrifice I gave to bring those beautiful souls that I get to call my children, into our family. I deserve to wear the signs of all that work. I earned my scars and I'm not going to hide them because I am so proud of the children that changed my body and my life. Every "I love you" and sloppy kiss tips the scales back to my favor.

Now the two little inch long scars on my abdomen don't look like much, and I guess you could argue that my whole pancreatitis/cholecystitis debacle, where I ended up losing my gall bladder, wasn't worth gaining a scar over, but I disagree. Those two little scars represent the experience that led me to the most incompetent doctor who managed to do one thing very right. That doctor was the one who strongly advised me to get a mammogram. Me. A forty-one year old who has absolutely zero cancer in her family. A very busy mother of five who had about a million more important things to do than to get a unnecessary exam. It seemed like a silly thing to do at the time, and of course, looking back I will always be grateful for those two little scars. The cancer we found this year would have been a nightmare to fight a couple years down the road.

That leads me right to those angry, thick scars that deleted my nipples off my body. My giant hyphens. They come accessorized with two puncture hole scars on each side and one matching future scar on my back, to arrive in October. These very intrusive scars represent the advancement of technology and medicine that just gave me years of my life that might have been lost had I not gotten them. They gave me ball games and birthday parties. They gave me family trips and watching my little loves grow up and love and experience their own lives. No. I'm not trading in these specific scars either. They just might end up being my most treasured marks. My symbols of the future.

That leaves only one scar left. A long thin line down my shin. This one doesn't really represent anything. It's a scar left after slipping on a stone I was racing towards with my girlfriends in college. Seriously. Not everything has to mean something, you know. Sometimes we just do dumb things and pay the consequence for our actions. Geez. Ya'll are way too serious for your own good.

Now, I'm sure that I'm not done with this masterpiece I like to call my body. I'm going to keep changing it (or gravity will do that for me) and I'm sure I have more scars in my future. I mean, I hope I'm not done yet. I'm only at the half-way mark. I am just sorry that it took me forty years to understand what true beauty really is. It's not the make-up or trendy hairstyles. It's not in a sip from the fountain of youth or even in Photoshop (Really...isn't that the same thing?). It's in the scars.

So, my dears, I love you all so much. In the end, though, that won't be enough. The thing that will really bring you self-worth and happiness is if you love and accept yourselves. I hope, with all my heart, that you do and that it doesn't take you forty years to do it.

Love, Mama.



*Rob and Jason, Austin, Ethan, Emmett and Christy, Alaina*

## PUSH-UPS FOR DONUTS BY SCOTT SCRIBNER

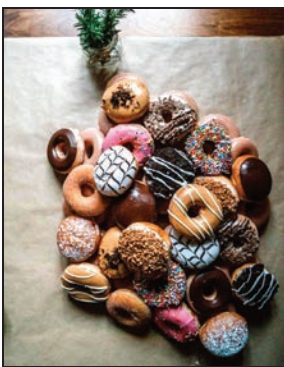


This was an object lesson that was taught by Brother Jack R. Christianson while he was a seminary teacher at a Utah high school. He was mine and Jenny's Institute teacher in college, our backyard neighbor for twelve years, our Stake President, our current Stake Patriarch and has been our friend for our entire marriage. Just a few months ago he was able to give Gracie her Patriarchal Blessing which was a very special moment for us.

There was a boy by the name of Steve who was attending school in Utah. In this school, seminary classes are held during school hours. Brother Christianson taught Seminary at this particular school. He had an open-door policy and would take in any student that had been thrown out of another class as long as they would abide by his rules. Steve had been kicked out of his sixth period and no other teacher wanted him, so he went into Brother Christianson's Seminary class. Steve was told that he could not be late, so he arrived just seconds before the bell rang and he would sit in the very back of the room. He would also be the first to leave after the class was over. One day, Brother Christianson asked Steve to stay after class so he could talk with him. After class, Bro. Christianson pulled Steve aside and said, *"You think you're pretty tough, don't you?"* Steve's answer was, *"Yeah, I do."* Then Brother Christianson asked, *"How many push-ups can you do?"* Steve said, *"I do about 200 every night."* *"200? That's pretty good, Steve,"* Brother Christianson said. *"Do you think you could do 300?"* Steve replied, *"I don't know... I've never done 300 at a time."* *"Do you think you could?"* again asked Brother Christianson. *"Well, I can try,"* said Steve. *"Can you do 300 in sets of 10? I need you to do 300 in sets of ten for this to work. Can you do it? I need you to tell me you can do it,"* Brother Christianson said. Steve said, *"Well... I think I can... yeah, I can do it."* Brother Christianson said, *"Good! I need you to do this on Friday."*



Friday came and Steve got to class early and sat in the front of the room. When class started, Brother Christianson pulled out a big box of donuts. Now these weren't the normal kinds of donuts, they were the extra fancy BIG kind, with cream centers and frosting swirls. Everyone was pretty excited - it was Friday, the last class of the day, and they were going to get an early start on the weekend. Bro. Christianson went to the first girl in the first row and asked, *"Cynthia, do you want a donut?"* Cynthia said, *"Yes."* Bro. Christianson then turned to Steve and asked, *"Steve, would you do ten push-ups so that Cynthia can have a donut?"* Steve said, *"Sure,"* and jumped down from his desk to do a quick ten. Then Steve again sat in his desk. Bro. Christianson put a donut on Cynthia's desk. Bro. Christianson then went to Joe, the next person, and asked, *"Joe do you want a donut?"* Joe said, *"Yes."* Bro. Christianson asked, *"Steve would you do ten push-ups so Joe can have a donut?"* Steve did ten push-ups, Joe got a donut. And so it went, down the first aisle, Steve did ten pushups for every person before they got their donut. And down the second aisle, till Bro. Christianson came to Scott. Scott was captain of the football team and center of the basketball team. He was very popular and never lacking for female companionship. When Bro. Christianson asked, *"Scott, do you want a donut?"* Scott's reply was, *"Well, can I do my own pushups?"* Bro. Christianson said, *"No, Steve has to do them."* Then Scott said, *"Well, I don't want one then."* Bro. Christianson then turned to Steve and asked, *"Steve, would you do ten pushups so Scott can have a donut he doesn't want?"* Steve started to do ten pushups. Scott said, *"HEY! I said I didn't want one!"* Bro. Christianson said, *"Look, this is my classroom, my class, my desks, and my donuts. Just leave it on the desk if you don't want it."* And he put a donut on Scott's desk.



Now by this time, Steve had begun to slow down a little. He just stayed on the floor between sets because it took too much effort to be getting up and down. You could start to see a little perspiration coming out around his brow. Bro. Christianson started down the third row. Now the students were beginning to get a little angry. Bro. Christianson asked Jenny, *"Jenny, do you want a donut?"* Jenny said, *"No."* Then Bro. Christianson asked Steve, *"Steve, would you do ten pushups so Jenny can have a donut that she doesn't want?"* Steve did ten, Jenny got a donut. By now, the students were beginning to say *"No,"* and there were all these uneaten donuts on the desks. Steve was also having to really put forth

a lot of effort to get these pushups done for each donut. There began to be a small pool of sweat on the floor beneath his face, his arms and brow were beginning to get red because of the physical effort involved. Bro. Christianson asked Robert to watch Steve to make sure he did ten pushups in a set because he couldn't bear to watch all of Steve's work for all of those uneaten donuts. So Robert began to watch Steve closely. Bro. Christianson started down the fourth row.

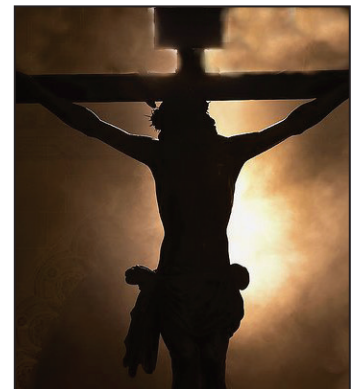
During his class, however, some students had wandered in and sat along the heaters along the sides of the room. When Bro. Christianson realized this; he did a quick count and saw 34 students in the room. He started to worry if Steve would be able to make it. Bro. Christianson went on to the next person and the next and the next. Near the end of that row, Steve was really having a rough time. He was taking a lot more time to complete each set. Steve asked Bro. Christianson, *"Do I have to make my nose touch on each one?"* Bro. Christianson thought for a moment, *"Well, they're your pushups. You can do them any way that you want."* And Bro. Christianson went on.

A few moments later, Jason came to the room and was about to come in when all the students yelled, *"NO! Don't come in! Stay out!"* Jason didn't know what was going on. Steve picked up his head and said, *"No, let him come."* Bro. Christianson said, *"You realize that if Jason comes in you will have to do ten pushups for him."* Steve said, *"Yes, let him come in."* Bro. Christianson said, *"Okay, I'll let you get Jason's out of the way right now. Jason, do you want a donut?"* *"Yes."* *"Steve, will you do ten pushups so that Jason can have a donut?"* Steve did ten pushups very slowly and with great effort. Jason, bewildered, was handed a donut and sat down.

Bro. Christianson finished the fourth row, then started on those seated on the heaters. Steve's arms were now shaking with each pushup in a struggle to lift himself against the force of gravity. Sweat was dropping off of his face and, by this time, there was not a dry eye in the room. The very last two girls in the room were cheerleaders and very popular. Bro. Christianson went to Linda, the second to last, and asked, *"Linda, do you want a doughnut?"* Linda said, very sadly, *"No, thank you."* Bro. Christianson asked Steve, *"Steve, would you do ten pushups so that Linda can have a donut she doesn't want?"* Grunting from the effort, Steve did ten very slow pushups for Linda.

Then Bro. Christianson turned to the last girl, Susan. *"Susan, do you want a donut?"* Susan, with tears flowing down her face, asked, *"Bro. Christianson, can I help him?"* Bro. Christianson, with tears of his own, said, *"No, he has to do it alone. Steve, would you do ten pushups so Susan can have a donut?"* As Steve very slowly finished his last pushup, with the understanding that he had accomplished all that was required of him, having done 350 pushups, his arms buckled beneath him and he fell to the floor.

Brother Christianson turned to the room and said. *"And so it was, that our Savior, Jesus Christ, pled to the Father, 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit.' With the understanding that He had done everything that was required of Him, he collapsed on the cross and died. And like some of those in this room, many of us leave the gift on the desk, uneaten."*





## DAD

BY CHRISTIANNE SCRIBNER JONES (21 JANUARY 2022)



Since a picture's worth a thousands words,  
I gathered what I could  
Searching life's sweet memories  
Of places where you stood

But the images I held so tightly  
lost their glitter and their stars  
The laughter and the color fading  
From the moments that were ours

I want a thousand more embraces  
At least a thousand more good laughs  
I'd need a thousand precious hours more  
To capture you at last

You must of known I'd be downhearted  
And forseen I'd be distressed  
For you filled my life so fully  
With your goodness and your zest

For me, you gave an abundant well  
Precious memories entwining  
A cache of stories big and small  
With our minds and hearts aligning.

I'll draw on these, my dearest Dad  
When I need my stalwart compass  
I'll imagine that I hold your hand  
When my life falls catawampus

Though a photo can't refill my heart  
I am blessed with a sharp mind  
So if, perchance, you care to chat,  
A dream would be just fine.

