

# A Collection of Life Stories





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# What was your Dad like when you were a child?



**T**he answer to this question is probably good therapy for me since I have been really confused in my feelings since Cindie came into my life.

As a small child I adored my dad. He was funny and affectionate and always telling me how beautiful I was. He'd sit and watch me dance for him like he was certain I'd be a great ballerina some day. I remember once when I was standing in the bathroom watching him shave, he told me he used to be a little girl. I giggled. He always made me laugh. Then he showed me a photograph of himself at age 3 with long golden curls and a short white dress with white tights and shoes.

Mother would punish me by telling me she was going to tell "your father" what naughty thing I had done when he got home from work. I'd feel sick all day worrying about it. Then I'd hear

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him come in the back door, all cheery and friendly. There would be hushed voices while I was sure Mother was telling him about my wickedness. My heart would simply ache as I no longer heard any cheery words from my adored parent. Long ago, probably when Marlene and John were little, he had taken the buckle off from an old leather belt which now hung in our broom closet for discipline purposes. I knew the drill well. He came and found me hiding behind a chair in the living room and told me to go get the “strap”. I slunk to the broom closet and retrieved the dreaded item. Dad and I would then walk upstairs to the family bathroom with him snapping the strap all the way. We’d go into the bathroom and he’d shut the door, giving the belt a snap on the edge of the bathtub. I would sit on the toilet lid while he sat on the edge of the tub and asked me about my side of the story. We would discuss it with him mostly trying to explain why my behavior upset my mother. Then he’d crack that belt a couple of times on the tub and let me go. I once asked Marlene and John if he ever hit them with the belt and they said no. But somehow we all had a healthy respect for that thing. And we also respected our father who we knew loved us.

Dad’s favorite car was an Oldsmobile. His father had been an Oldsmobile salesman in Laramie, Wyoming. Oldsmobiles were very classy cars. For years he enjoyed putting the whole family and all our bags easily into his big grey, then black, then green

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Oldsmobile and driving us to Laramie to visit his parents, Nannie and Pop Wallis. We always got to stop and eat at Little America. Later he would stop at some little town where there was a gas station with a sign that said, "Eat and Gas Up". He thought that was so funny that he would always buy gas there. In Rawlins, Wyo. (I think) he would always stop and use a pay phone to call Nannie and tell her exactly what time we would arrive because he knew she was making pot roast and lemon meringue pie for our dinner. We had fun reunions there. I knew my dad was loved like he loved us.

After a day or two in Laramie we'd drive up the canyon in the Medicine Bow National Forest where his sister, our Aunt Margaret, for whom I was named, and who we called Aunt Teen, had a lovely log cabin near a creek. That is where all of my happy memories I have of my childhood took place.

Dad had somehow gotten hold of a real nickel slot machine which he donated to the cabin and which was the source of lots of jokes and hours of fun. The rules were strict: any nickels you won went straight back into the white container that sat beside the machine. Thus there were always plenty of nickels available to play with.

He loved to go fishing in one of the several beautiful mountain lakes in the area. He always offered to take anyone

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who wanted to go but no one in our family ever accepted the invitation except me. I went once that I remember, and while I loved the first hour or so watching Dad, who was no longer paying any attention to me, I soon grew very bored. I knew better than to pester him, however. So when he was finally ready to quit fishing, after what seemed like ages and ages to me, I was thrilled to leave and never went with him again. I don't think he ever caught many fish, certainly not enough for an extended family fish fry, but he loved trying. He also claimed to like to hunt — for deer, I guess. He tried to get John to go with him but John never liked things like that. It was a source of pain between them.

Every September Utah had its State Fair. It was always greatly anticipated by me because that was when Dad would take me up on the big Ferris Wheel. He would help me see the marvelous view from on top even though he knew I was scared to death. I felt so safe with him that I dared to actually look out at the view. Our annual moments together on that Ferris Wheel were more important to me than he could have ever known. One of the big regrets of my childhood is the time I chose to sleep over at a friend's house rather than go to the fair with Dad in what turned out to be our last September together. I was ten years old.

There are happy little memories like when he would put me on his shoulders and sing a silly song while bounced downstairs

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with me. There were many Sunday afternoons when I would sit on his lap while he read the comics to me. There were summer days when he would turn on all the sprinklers, and there were many in our big back yard, so John and I could run through them. He bought us a collie puppy named Tim.

He began going off on a lot of business trips but he would always bring us presents from wherever he went. Then suddenly we moved to a newer more modern house in the county. It seemed like he was gone more than he was home. One night when he was home, I complained to him that John wouldn't let me watch television in his room. Very uncharacteristically Dad marched into John's room and slapped him! I was horrified! Another night Mom and Dad were having a party with a bunch of adults and there was a lot of liquor being served. I'm sure I must have let them know it was wrong because he took the time to show me how he just put vanilla in a glass of water so it looked like liquor but it really wasn't. I fell for it and was consoled into keeping quiet. At Christmas of 1952 he gave us all expensive and amazing gifts. I was ten years old and received a ruby ring, a bottle of Channel #5, and red under panties studded with rind stones! Then one day soon after Christmas he packed his suitcases and drove away and never came back.

He kept in touch. He really wanted to be our father. Marlene and John were both older, Marlene at the University and John a

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senior in high school. When I was eleven he took us on a ski weekend to Brighton where we stayed in the beautiful Alpine Rose Lodge. He would call every once in a while to take the three of us out to dinner at some expensive club where he was a member. Then before I turned 12 he left town and went to live in Wisconsin and found a whole new life for himself.





# What were your favorite toys as a child?



**D**olls. Dishes, cupboards, tables and chairs, and dolls. I was born wanting to play house and I got to spend my whole life playing house and I have always been grateful for that. I had one lovely Madam Alexander baby doll that could wear real baby clothes. My aunt even indulged me by sending my doll, Bonnie, her own Christmas present of a real baby dress. I put Bonnie to bed every night for about four years and I took her with me on trips and visits with my family. I still have her in a box in the basement but her head has come off. All my dreams of the future were to have my own home and children. I didn't think too much about a husband, but it sure came in handy to have a good one!

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# Where did you go on vacations as a child?



**T**his entry covers questions 2 and 3.

When I was a child I somehow got the idea that going to Hawaii would be the most wonderful thing anyone could ever do. When I was about five years old my parents took me with them on a United Airlines flight to San Francisco. The airplane ride was a thrill in 1947. When our plane landed in San Francisco the stewardess came on the microphone to say that this plane would be continuing on to Hawaii and those passengers who were going to Hawaii did not need to get off in San Francisco. My heart ached to be able to stay on that plane! Whatever we did in the city of my birth has entirely escaped my memory because all I could think of the whole time was that our plane had gone on to Hawaii.

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In about 1948 our family drove to Inglewood California to visit my dad's brother, Rick, and his wife and two sons. Their sons were older and closer in age to Marlene and John so, as usual, there was no one for me to play with. Rick's wife was a pretty blonde Scandinavian woman who kindly took me to the grocery store with her. I felt so special. She didn't do anything but shop, as I recall, but her kindness to me has been a sweet memory all my life! I don't think I ever even saw her again but I always remembered her.

In about 1949, Dad took our family to Las Vegas which was not much of a place then. I remember thinking how ugly it was! We got to stay in a nice motel with a swimming pool, and I felt like we were rich! Marlene and John were my baby sitters while Mother and Dad went off to who knows where. My siblings were always nice to me, their baby sister.

In 1952, the summer before Dad left us, he took us to Sun Valley, Idaho -- a ritzy ski resort in the winter. It was beautiful and our hotel was beautiful. I was thrilled to be there. But trouble was brewing in our family and I guess I knew it, even though I don't remember discussing it with anyone. I got my first nervous headache there and suffered in silence with it, not knowing what was wrong with me. My head hurt so much lying awake, not daring to bother anyone. Somehow I had learned that if I tried to explain things to anyone, it always only made things worse.

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in 1953 or 54, after Dad was gone, the four of us drove to San Luis Obispo, California to visit Aunt Teen. She was Dad's sister who, along with all of Dad's family, stood loyally beside Mother during the divorce. Her name was really Margaret and she always made me feel special as her namesake. During our stay, we spent a day or two in Santa Barbara on the beach where John found a brand new, unsmoked cigarette in the sand. The two of us went back to the motel room and he tried to smoke it. John never had any desire to smoke after that.

Mother relied on John to drive the car and basically be everything she had needed a husband for. But he and Marlene were getting older and moving on in life. In 1955 John left to serve a mission and Marlene married Ed Miner and moved away. Mother and I were alone from the time I turned 13. There were a few more trips to the cabin during that time, and we still went to Star Valley once a year to visit Grandmother and Grandad Kennington but our traveling days were pretty much over.

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# What was your Mom like when you were a child?



I have often wondered what my mother's life was like as a girl. She said her father was very harsh and strict. She loved her mother who was a midwife, busy all the time with caring for others. All mother could think of was getting out of Afton. She was the youngest of six children, the closest to her in age was a brother who was seven years older, much like me with John. Mother was never warm and loving. She was dutiful, always being sure to do her duty to take care of us and our home. I don't remember ever having fun with her but I do remember her sitting on my bed, tenderly feeling my forehead and bringing me water when I was sick. She was a stickler for obedience and wouldn't put up with any nonsense. She taught me to use good manners and wear proper clothes and most of all to keep quiet and not be a pest. She didn't go to doctors, preferring her own nursing techniques, which she had learned from her mother. So when I broke my arm falling off a rope swing, she ignored my

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complaints at first. Three weeks later when a lump was growing on my wrist, she got worried and took me to the doctor who had to re-break the bone in order to set it straight. She always felt bad about that.

She never tried to talk to me or explain anything about the divorce. Consequently, we fought and yelled at each other, neither of us understanding any deeper feelings or motivations in the other one. In later years, I felt sick to think of what she had suffered but at the time, I understood nothing and was completely insensitive to her feelings. I even blamed Dad's leaving on her coldness, and I let her know it. I never understood any of this until many years of my own experience with life. Even after she had been dead for forty years and Cindie showed up in my life, I was still learning to understand what she had gone through.



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# What was your first boss like?



I have been privileged in my life to not have to work full time. I never wanted a career, although I did graduate from U of U with a BA in languages. (In those days teenagers didn't have after school or summer jobs unless they lived on a farm.) During my time at the U of U I worked only for two or three weeks as extra help at two Christmas times in a ski shop/ sporting goods store called Zinik's. It was an upscale store on Main Street between South Temple and First South. (From a little window in the dressing room, I could see the Uptown Theater across the street where my heart throb, Ed Mayer, was an assistant manager.) The boss and owner of the store was Mr. Zinik. Can't remember his first name. He was a scary, sophisticated Jewish businessman who was always in his office and seldom out on the two floors of the store. He was fair, brusque, never had much to say. He left the behavior of us clerks up to his store manager, Pete. Pete was scared of Mr. Zinik and was more concerned with saving his own

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neck than any of ours. We couldn't trust him to ever defend us. I squeaked by basically unnoticed.

When Ed and I got married I worked part time for the telephone company, of which there was only one in those days. My boss was a pretty young woman named Colleen. She was a good teacher but kind of remote staying always at her own desk.

I had other part time jobs here and there throughout my life and got along pretty well with whoever was in charge.

# How did you get your first job?



Since my jobs were only temp jobs at best, I got them by applying! Nothing spectacular about it. I never applied for a job I did not get, I'm pleased to say. I even got one as a waitress that I quit after one month when I realized the very real truth that I was not cut out to be a waitress.

Since I haven't much to say about that question, I will say something about the previous question which I did not answer. Do I still have friends that I had in high school? Yes I do. Suzanne Clawson had no sisters, only a little brother who jumped all over me every time I went to her house. She and I were like sisters to each other. I ran away from home once and stayed at the Clawson's home for a week before my stepfather came to get me. I got married 2 months before she did. We were each other's bridesmaids and her husband, Robert Bowers, was also a friend of ours from high school. As married couples we spent a lot of

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time together playing board games and just talking. Suzy and I planned fancy dress dinners for New Years Eve and birthdays and any event we could think of. Robert loved getting dressed up and Ed went gamely along with it. When Ed and I left for school in Missouri Suzy and I kept in close touch. They came and visited us there once. The four of us rode the elevator to the top of the Missouri Arch when it was brand new. It was a scary ride and we wondered if we would all die together! We survived and the view was breath-taking!

When several babies began arriving, we just got together at the times when Ed and I were in Salt Lake. After we moved back to Utah we got together often and shared many adventures and long evenings eating and talking. Or at least, Robert was talking. He was racially prejudiced after having served a mission in Florida. It was a real snag in our relationship but even then we endured. Robert was a very talented artist. We have several gifts made by him in our home. Robert and Suzy made many events memorable for us. In 2007 Ed and I were in Lake Tahoe to watch our sons and their wives run a ragnar race. Our cell phone rang very early one morning and it was Suzy telling me that Robert had died. He was only 65 years old but had a bad heart. For several months I met Suzy for lunch on Temple Square near where she worked for DMBA. We also met to go to the temple together every other week for a couple of years. We have

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remained friends all these years. We are in a book club together so we always see each other there and catch up. She lives with her son, Tuck, and is very involved with her children and grandchildren. There are times when we reminisce about old times and have some good laughs. She and I were best friends in high school with Annette Bradford who also married a young man from our high school days, Wyn Dunford. A few years ago I got the three of us together for lunch in Salt Lake. Annette had changed a great deal and Suzy and I both felt uncomfortable that day. So we just have each other and we are happy that way.

Ed and I have also gotten together with Wyn and David Nielsen, two friends from high school who I have always just loved. One day in Missouri when Adrienne was only about five or six years old, she and I were talking about the gospel in our kitchen when the phone rang. I grabbed it and without thinking said "Heavenly Father". I hung up immediately and Adrienne and I had a good laugh. The phone rang again and I guiltily answered it. It was David. Luckily it was he to whom I had just spoken. He has teased me about that forever. When I talk to him on the phone even now he checks to make sure I am not busy with Heavenly Father.

This past May 2020 was to have been our 60th high school reunion. It had been long anticipated. I had been in touch with several old friends because of it. But it wasn't to be, thanks to Covid 19. It has been postponed until next May and I pray

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nothing will interfere with it then. Yes, I still have old friends from high school and I look forward to seeing them again very much. The years melt away even though we may not have communicated for a long, long time. They are lovely people and I cherish them all.



# What were your grandparents like?



## **G**randmother Wallis

Her maiden name was Anna Wilhelmina Sitter. She was known as Minnie. Her mother had emigrated to the U.S. from Sweden on her own when she was quite young, and she married a man of German decent. Her grandchildren called her Nannie.

Nannie was tallish and slim. Throughout her life she wore her hair in a long braid which she wound around her head. She knew lots of poems which she loved to recite. The one I liked best was about a girl named McGuffy Anne. Nannie took me visiting with her once to the immaculate, old fashioned home of a friend there in Laramie. She wanted her friend to see how well behaved I was. Actually, I was just too terrified to touch anything. One of Nannie's favorite stories was about a little girl who served water in her doll tea cups to all the visiting ladies one day. They all

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drank to play along. Later her mother asked her how she got the water, being only a small little girl. “From the toilet” was her reply.

Nannie was religious. She took me to her Methodist Church once or twice. I was surprised how much like our own church it was. All of the Wallis family thought Mormons were strange but they were all still loving and accepting. Whenever her boy, my dad, was coming for a visit, she made roast beef, mashed potatoes, and lemon meringue pie special for him, his favorites. All the women helped with the dishes afterward. Water was boiling on the stove and three big wash pans were placed on the table. The first pan was for washing, the second for rinsing, and the third for scalding the dishes with the boiling water. Nannie’s house was spotlessly clean and organized. It was a tiny house with only two tiny bedrooms where they had raised their five children, 3 girls and 2 boys.

She was a good cook. Her Swedish mother had taught her a lot. The Swedish crepes and German pancakes I always loved, and made for my family, were taught to my mother by Nannie. Once I was staying with Nannie and Pop for a few days while Mother was off in Denver with Aunt Teen. As I sat at dinner with them, I took a big drink of milk which turned out to be sour. Nannie realized what it was by the look on my face. She was beyond sorry! They tried to make me happy by taking me for a

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ride in their old black 1944 Oldsmobile. This was in 1955 and I was twelve. I was ashamed to be seen in such an old fashioned car and nearly sat on the floor to hide. I hope I didn't make them too miserable during that visit. They were so loving and kind.



Grandfather Wallis

His name was John Anthony Wallis. We called him Pop. He came from a long line of Wallis men who had farmed and ranched in the Midwest and western U.S. His mother, however,

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had been born in Cornwall, England and was brought to America by her parents as a small child. She definitely had her influence on her several children because Pop could dance an Irish jig and he knew stories from across the sea. In his younger years he had helped run the Wallis family ranch but later he had been an Oldsmobile salesman in Laramie, Wyoming where they lived.

Mostly I remember Pop just sitting in his comfy chair making people laugh; or sitting on a chair out on the front lawn holding a hose, watering. He watered his whole yard by hand with that hose. He was proud of his perfect lawn. He was shorter than Nannie with a ready smile, and when I was old enough to really notice, he was nearly bald and wore an old fashioned hearing aid in one ear with the cord dropping down to a battery somewhere in his shirt.

I was kind of scared of Pop. Maybe it was because I heard others say he could be grouchy. I remember sitting on his lap once, scared to move, but also kind of proud that he had put me there! He died in his 80's, long before Nannie, and she missed him terribly. She loved her "Johnnie".

Grandmother Kennington

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Her maiden name was Bertha Isabelle Blanchard, great granddaughter of Hiram Smith by his oldest daughter, Lovina. She wanted to be called Grandmother, not Grandma or for heavens sake, not Granny! She was petite with lots of nice hair, which was white during the time I knew her. She married young, as girls did in those days, and she had two children before her husband, Henry, went off on an LDS mission to the southern states. They had a small dairy farm of Jersey cows and I don't

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know what kind of arrangements were made to help her. Henry's father had been a carpenter and Henry was good at wood working and building. He built Grandmother a large two story white frame house with a big wrap around porch, surrounded by willows and cottonwood trees. It had many rooms, and Belle, as she was called, used one of the parlors as a substitute hospital there in the small town of Afton, Wyoming. Grandmother had a natural instinct for caring for the sick and she eventually became a kind of practical nurse, helping the local doctor who covered several small towns. Many babies were born in her parlor, about 300 as I recall.

Henry came home from his mission long enough to give her three more children, one of whom died, before he left on a second mission to the Northwest. When he came home from that mission he stayed put. Mother was born a few years later. I always felt sorry for myself because my brother and sister were both so much older than I. I felt like an only child. But my mother never told me she was raised the same way! Her nearest sibling, a brother, was seven years older than she. By the time she was twelve they were all married and gone, just as it was for me.

Mother loved her mother and admired her very much. She told us about one night when she came home from a date and found used sheets piled up on the kitchen table. It meant her

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mother had just delivered another baby and the sheets needed to be moved to the porch by the wash tub. Mother picked up the sheets which felt unusually heavy, and she immediately found out why when the body of an infant fell onto the floor! Mother was horrified. Babies never died in their house! Grandmother hurried in and handled the situation with love and kindness.

Grandmother baked delicious bread which was sometimes fresh from the oven when we arrived for a visit. I also remember her has playful at least once when she was watering her house plants and she tried to pour some water down my neck. I felt so special to get that attention from her.

Grandmother and Grandad came to visit us in Salt Lake when someone could bring them. They didn't feel good about driving that far in their little car. One summer I remember they were at our house when Grandad shut his thumb in our car door. I thought it was so awful he'd need to go to the hospital but he just toughed it out with Grandmother caring for him. That same visit a hornet flew into the neck of my dress and stung me. Grandmother came immediately to my rescue, calming me and knowing just what to do.

After all her good works she lingered long and was sick before she died. Others had to take care of her. Grandad was left alone for a few years and he seemed much sweeter and softer. At

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her funeral I was so proud she was my grandmother when I listened to all the praise people gave her.

### Grandfather Kennington

William Henry Kennington was born in Tooele, Utah, the son of pioneer who had crossed the plains in a handcart company. He was called Henry to keep him separate from his father who was also named William. Grandfather's grandfather had been a poor gardener in Louth England. He, his wife and their five children were converted to the church and emigrated to the U.S. Their son, William, married a convert he met in a wagon train where he was assisting. After Grandad was born, they moved up north into the beautiful land of western Wyoming and eastern Idaho. He grew up there and married Belle there. He was tall and sported a handlebar mustache which was red! Because he had learned carpentry from his father, he built Belle a beautiful house with rich polished woodwork inside. There was a perfect sliding door in the entry way where I used to play elevator lady. He served two missions for the church after he and Belle were married. He was a dairy farmer who also worked in the hardware store and besides his church callings, was also Mayor of Afton for a while. He kept a dog on the farm, and the one I remember was named King. He was a big brown and white dog, and I was told to keep away from him although somehow I remember petting him and liking him very much.



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Grandad was deeply religious and very strict with his children. I guess he was too strict with my mother because she didn't speak well of him. She said he wouldn't even let her listen to the Hit Parade on the radio because it was sponsored by Lucky Strike cigarettes.

I remember him as straight and tall and stern. I have a picture in my mind of him chopping wood for the kitchen stove and stacking it in the woodshed which was packed with stove wood floor to ceiling, wall after wall. He took me walking one morning up the mountain to the box of weather instruments where he kept track of the weather for all the farmers. I also remember going for a ride with him in his little green Chevy Coup (a two seater with a long stick shift between the seats). I really liked being with him.

A few years after Grandmother died, Eleanor and I stopped to visit him on our way home from Jackson Hole. He was about 92 or 93 years old, still independent in his big house. He knew me right away and seemed very glad that we had stopped. He got out a photo album from his missions and told us all about them. It was the only time I ever remember him mentioning his missions.

Every year on his birthday, which was July 30, the whole Kennington family had a reunion at a park in Afton. Grandad's father had had two wives so he had five half siblings besides his

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own six living brothers and sisters. They had all remained in the area, and when they all came with their children and grandchildren it made for a very big crowd. I never appreciated the significance of that posterity. I am now very proud of my Kennington ancestors: the Richard Kennington family who came from England to Salt Lake and walked over a thousand miles pulling two handcarts in the very first two companies. They settled in a dugout in Tooele living on practically nothing that first winter. Richard grew vegetables which he sold for a living but even then they nearly starved. After Richard died, his wife Mary Ann, went up north into eastern Idaho, western Wyoming where Grandad was growing up with his father, William, and his mother Annie. That land up there, so beautiful, has special meaning to me.

I have one really big regret from my youth: when Grandad died at age 94 I was busy planning my wedding and working at the telephone company. I did not attend his funeral with Mom like I should have. I chose to stay home with my much loved fiance rather than take two days to go up to Afton for the funeral. I've hated myself for it ever since.

# What is one of your favorite children's stories?



**W**hen I was between the ages of 4 and 8 we lived in a house where there was a playhouse in the back yard. It was painted white with red trim and had a little porch with benches facing each other. I didn't have any siblings to play with so I loved playing in that little house with my dolls. My dolls were my friends. Sometime after that, I read the book, *The Live Dolls*. I loved that book, a chapter book, about a girl like me with a playhouse or playroom where she played alone with her dolls. They came to life at times. It was magical and set my imagination soaring. I have never forgotten the book in all these years, after reading many many books. I looked it up on line and found it had been published in 1905, written by Josephine Scribner Gates. It showed she had written a series of books about the live dolls and I honestly don't know which one I read. I thought it was just called "The Live Dolls". It was red and hard bound and pretty thick. I wish I had saved it for my own little

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girls to read but I suppose my mother passed it on.

I read another book once I learned to read well, called Ballet Shoes by Noel Streatfeild. That too has stuck in my memory as a favorite. The little girls loved each other and had adventures together in ballet school. Maybe that was why when I got older I loved to dance so much! Noel Streatfeild wrote other books in the series which I read but none of them held my interest like Ballet Shoes.

Lastly, I remember my mother reading a Golden children's book to me called "The Pokey Little Puppy". That book has always been dear to me simply because she read it to me. If she read other books to me, I don't remember. Maybe she read to me when I was too young to remember it. I learned it was important to be obedient from that book.

# What were your favorite subjects in high school?



In elementary school I loved anything to do with words and learning to read and write. I was also good at math. The numbers made sense to me and I memorized the factors easily. In third grade I got to present a story I had written to the other third grade classes, even though I was terribly shy and begged my teacher to please not make me do it. She made me do it. In sixth grade I had a much more understanding teacher who read another story I had written to my class after he sent me out on an errand to the office.

Junior high school was the beginning of my realizing I wasn't as smart as I had thought. Algebra just left me in the dust when they started substituting numbers with letters! There were many talented writers ahead of me, and reading text books was not as much fun as reading the stories we had in elementary school. But still, in high school my favorite class was creative writing. I also

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loved French. I've always had a pleasant memory of my physiology class but didn't really know why until I looked over an old year book and found many messages from class members sighting the fun we had had together in that class. I did learn a lot about the human body which I have been grateful to know all my life. I went on to major in French at the university although I have never developed it and lost interest in it very quickly once I got married and my first child was born.

# What was your favorite candy as a child?



On Saturdays in the early 50's we kids could go to the local Holladay Theater and see one or two movies for 14 cents. I always liked to buy a box of Nibs licorice to munch on. One box would last longer than a movie. Nibs were little hard black morsels that you couldn't chew until you had sucked on them for ten minutes. Thinking back, Nibs are the only candy I can even remember from my childhood except, of course, the ubiquitous chocolate Hershey bar. But I never liked milk chocolate much. Once we started having semi sweet chocolate, I woke up to the pleasure of it. The first semi sweet chocolate I ever had was in the form of chocolate chips, a fun new invention to put in cookie dough. I imagine that was in the early 60's and boy, did that start a rash of cookie recipes! Soon you could get some candy bars in semi sweet chocolate. Almond Joy was my favorite then, and I've been eating too much chocolate ever since.

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# My Mother's Ancestry



**M**y mother's genealogy is very interesting. On her mother's side, we know it began with the cold rocky sailing of the Mayflower in September 1620. Among those sailing toward the west from England was a 28 year old young man named John Howland. He was traveling as an indentured servant to John Carver and his wife. There were five servants with the Carvers and I wonder if the Carvers were so wealthy they needed all that help or just why they had five servants with them. During the crossing, a fierce storm blew up forcing the captain to lower the sails and fold down the helm to allow the ship to drift. John Howland came up on deck, an inland man, and was blown overboard in the heavy gale. He was strong and managed to fight the currents to grab hold of the halyard trailing behind the ship from the lowered topsail. He was pulled underwater and battered in the hurricane but he hung on and eventually the sailors were able to take up the halyard and drag him onto the deck. His life was saved and he went on to become the father of ten children

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and a huge posterity —including ours.

Also on the Mayflower that year was a young family named Tilley. It was just the parents and their daughter, Elizabeth, age 13. They landed in the new world in November. It was cold and wet and they had to build very makeshift shelters. By the time the winter ended, fully half of the Mayflower passengers had died from sickness and exposure. Among the dead were both parents of Elizabeth Tilley. She wasn't the only orphan left behind. There had been many children aboard the Mayflower and several of them lost one or both parents. John Carver had been elected governor of the new settlement, and his wife, Katherine, took in Elizabeth and two other orphaned girls. However, in April John Carver died suddenly, followed six weeks later by his wife. So basically, within a year Elizabeth was once again an orphan.

It is interesting to contemplate the situation: young girls alone in a strange land with no one to care for them. They must have been cared for by the group as a whole, after all, they were religious people. But food and shelter were very difficult to come by for everyone. With the Carvers gone, John Howland was now a free man. He was 15 years older than Elizabeth but as we know, he was young and strong and single. Whatever the motivation, common sense, direction from leaders, genuine caring and love, or all three, John and Elizabeth were married. She was probably 14 or 15 years old. In 1623 together they received 4 acres of land,

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and John was put in command of the trading post in Plymouth where he served for 10 years. In 1632 there was a “land division” in which the Howlands received a large tract of good land along the Jones River. From then on, John became a successful land owner and seller. They eventually made a home in Rocky Nook, Massachusetts and had a family of 10 children, all of whom lived to marry and have families of their own. John served as a member or assistant of the Governors Council and was frequently a deputy or representative of the General Court. I see these ancestors as mighty pioneers, a man and woman of whom we can be very proud. John died in 1672 at age 80, and Elizabeth died in 1688 at age 80.

Through their daughter Hannah Howland eventually came the Smith line in which was born Asael Smith, father of Joseph Smith Sr. who was father of Hyrum Smith, my 3rd great grandfather. Much history of Hyrum is well known to our family and the whole Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day saints. He helped his brother, Joseph, who was a latter day prophet, establish the fullness of the gospel in 1830. The two of them died as martyrs in 1844. Hyrum had married Jerusha Barden and they had 7 children. The oldest was a daughter named Lovina. Living nearby in Nauvoo, Illinois, was the Walker family. John Walker and Lydia Holmes Walker had 10 children before Lydia died in childbirth. John was beside himself with grief and worry about

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his family with no mother. The prophet sent John on a mission while members of the church and other relatives took the youngest children in, and the four oldest went to the Mansion House to live with Joseph and Emma Smith. My 2nd great grandfather, Loren Walker, was one of those who lived with Joseph and Emma. He naturally became acquainted with Lovina Smith and eventually they were married June 23 1844, four days before Lovina's father was killed. They did not immediately go west with with the other members maybe out of respect for Emma to whom they were both very close. Also, I think Lovina was devastated by the death of her father since now she had no living parents. In fact, they did not go west until 1860 after Lovina had born 7 children, one of whom had died. They traveled in the John Smith company with 6 children, one of whom was my great grandmother, Jerusha, age 11. They lived in Farmington, Utah where Loren helped build the Rock Chapel on Main Street and 7 more children were born and 3 died. The last one died at birth with its mother. I am sure Lovina had happy days with her family but look at the children she lost and then gave up her own life when she was just 39 years old, having given birth to 14 babies! Loren took his children and moved up to Liberty, Idaho where he remarried and had more children. But Jerusha stayed in Farmington, having married William Cook Blanchard in 1867. Our Jill has Blanchard ancestors. She and I share a grandfather Blanchard back a ways. This William

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Blanchard would have been an uncle in Jill's genealogy. It makes John and Jill 3rd cousins or something.

Jerusha wrote a whort ittle memoir of her childhood. She remembered playing the Mansion House and how much she loved uncle John Smith. She said her mother, Lovina, was very young to marry but both Joseph and Hyrum knew their time was short and they wanted to be sure Lovina had a good husband to care for her. Jerusha played with Emma's boys. They played hide and seek in the Mansion House, and Jerusha said she hid in an old wardrobe which contained the mummies of an Egyptian king, a queen, and their daughter. In the arms of the king lay the roll of papyrus from which Joseph had translated the Book of Abraham. In 1856 when she was 7 years old, the Walkers began their move west. They spent time in Iowa City where they heard that Lucy Mack smith had died. From there they moved to Winter Quarters, passing many graves of saints who had not reached their goals along the way. Her father built a house from willows with a sod roof for them to live in during the winter. It was near a creek where they took shelter when a prairie fire rampaged through. It was terrifying and she said it smoldered in the grass and willows across the creek all winter. It is interesting that she never mentions the trek across the plains in 1860. After she was married she learned how to be a nurse. I don't know if that required formal schooling or not. But records show she was a

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“nurse” for 35 years and delivered many babies. During that time Martin Harris called for her. When she saw him he took her hands and he cried like a baby. He bore his testimony to her and told her never to miss a chance to bear her testimony that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God.

Jerusha and William gave birth to my grandmother Bertha Isabell Blanchard Kennington in 1874. Belle, as she was called, also became a nurse like her mother. She delivered 300 babies around the Afton, Wyoming area with only one death in a set of twins. I have already written my memories of her. She was a great lady, made strong by the harshness of life. She was left alone twice with young children while her husband served missions for the church. She was alone with her children when word of an Indian uprising came. I am sure prayers were answered with nothing came of the threat. At her funeral, tribute was paid to her about her kindness and love. It was said that women actually looked forward to the time of their delivery just so they could be with Belle for 10 peaceful days of rest and love.

# My Pioneers



Going back to 1804 my 2nd great grandfather Richard Kennington was born in Lincolnshire England. He was a vegetable farmer who sold his goods in town for a living. He married Mary Davison who lived nearby. They had 7 children, two of whom had died. In about 1850 Richard and Mary were converted to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Very soon they decided to leave their homeland and kin folk and take the daring trip across the sea to America. They saved up money to put with the perpetual fund offered by the church. It took them four or five years to get what they needed.

On March 23, 1856 they left Liverpool with their five children on the ship Enoch Train. Three months later they arrived, all together in Boston. They took a train to Iowa City where they, with all the LDS passengers from the Enoch Train, formed two wagon trains heading for the wild desert west. They traveled in the Daniel McArthur company along side the Edmund Ellsworth

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company. Edmund is the ancestor of Michael Ellsworth! So our ancestors were acquainted many years ago. I can only imagine what their thoughts were as they compared our prairies and mountains with the cool rich green of England. Had they done the right thing? Were they glad or sad? Running low on food, they were blessed from above when flocks of quail would fly into camp and seemingly just wait to be killed and eaten.

They straggled into the Salt Lake Valley three days behind the majority of the rest of the company. They were immediately sent to Tooele to settle. It took them three more days to arrive in Tooele. They had absolutely nothing by this time and sat in their wagon by the church wondering what they were supposed to do. Sires Tolman, who lived next door to the church came to talk to them. He had his wife prepare some soup for them. It had been so long since they had eaten a real meal that she strained the soup so it would not hurt their stomachs. They stayed with the Tolmans for three days until they found a dugout where they could make a home for themselves. Someone gave them an old wood stove, and with their pots and pans and bedding, they made a home. I wonder how they felt. At peace? Full of regret? Very few pioneer stories talk about feelings.

Richard got a garden in as quick as he could to get them through the winter. In the spring he planted a large garden for the whole town to benefit from. In the end, the town took most of the food



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and left the Kenningtons with very little. When Richard willfully took some food for his own family, some neighbors were upset and tried to have him disfellowshipped from the church! How powerful would your testimony have to be to put up with that? Richard continued to be a farmer in Tooele until he died in 1879 at age 75. All but one of their children had gone up north into Wyoming and Idaho when they married so when Richard died, Mary Ann moved up north to be near her children.

William Henry Kennington, eldest living son of Richard and Mary Ann was born in Lincolnshire England August 7 1842. He was 14 when his family emigrated to Utah and settled in Tooele. He worked in a grist mill in the canyon to help his family out. In 1863 he drove an ox team back to Council Bluffs Nebraska to meet the next emigrant train. There he met Annie Rebecca Seward with her mother, Esther Frewin Seward, and he invited them to ride in his wagon to Utah. Annie and Will were attracted to each other right away. They departed on August 11 1863 and arrived in the Salt Lake valley on October 13. Annie and her mother also settled in Tooele. Annie had a bright personality and a sense of humor. She was petite where Will was tall. She began working as “staff” in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Rowberry. A year and a half later on April 1 1865 Will and Annie were sealed in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City. They lived in Tooele while their first three children were born, two daughters and then a

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son, my grandfather Henry Kennington. When Henry was a baby Brigham Young invited folks to settle outside of the Salt Lake area. So Will and Annie moved to Liberty, Idaho where they had five more children.

They both taught school during the winter, and Will did odd jobs during the summer, one of them was logging. Will had a close friend named Aaron Bracken who logged with him. His health wasn't the best and one day he asked Will to take care of his family if he died. Will promised he would. Aaron did die from injuries in a logging accident and Will, true to his word, took Elizabeth Bracken as a second wife. It about broke Annie's heart but polygamy was practiced then in the church so she learned to adjust and accept the situation. She and "Aunt Tib" got along well. Now that Will was a polygamist, he had to watch out for the federal law who sent men west to arrest those practicing it. Will kept his wives in seperate towns: Elizabeth in Star Valley and Annie in Liberty. One day Will drove a team from Liberty to Montpelier to do some trading. On the way he stopped at the railroad station for about an hour. When he got to the store to do his trading there were two United States Marshals looking for him there. One of them asked Will if he knew William Kennington and he said, "Yes, I am well acquainted with him. In fact, I saw him down at the railroad station a little while ago. I'm going down that way now if you want to ride with me". When

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they got to the station Will bid them good bye and drove on home to Liberty. Will and Elizabeth had 7 children. In total Will raised 13 of his own children plus two of Aaron Bracken's.

Will became a dairy farmer. Later he was United States Land Commissioner and also U. S. water commissioner for many years. He eventually built a home for Annie in Star Valley where he died on April 7 1914 at age 72.



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# What is the farthest you have ever traveled?



I have been blessed to do a lot of traveling and even living in foreign places. But I am sure that the farthest away place I ever traveled to was Israel in 2007. We were on a guided tour with Mormon Heritage. We had gobs of stuff to study and assignments to present in various locations. We flew to New York and discovered that Tel Aviv had closed their airport temporarily. There was a little uprising of some kind. It was late at night and the New York airport (don't remember which one) practically shut down, leaving a plane load of us in a room full of little chairs with almost no backs where we were to spend the night. Needless to say, it was miserable. We walked around trying to find a place for a midnight snack but everything was closed! After nine hours, we were allowed to board our flight which was the longest one I had ever experienced. When we finally landed in Tel Aviv we were already behind on the scheduled tour so we missed being able to see Joppa. I stood on the shores of the

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Mediterranean Sea in awe of the history that had unfolded on those shores. I won't tell the whole amazing trip we experienced in 11 days but one place imparticular stands out and must be told. We went to Nazareth on the shores of Galilee where Mary had grown up and raised her family, including Jesus Christ. We were reminded how at one time Christ had been driven by an angry mob (of his neighbors, no less) to be thrown over the edge of a cliff. And we could see the cliff across the way. We stood on the edge of that cliff in the quiet and could almost hear the voices and the consternation when they realized Jesus had escaped. Down on the shore of the lake which is covered in round black rocks, we remembered the story of Christ calling to his apostles from the shore where he had prepared a meal of fish for them over a fire after his resurrection. I felt so close to Him, like a loving father making food for his family right there somewhere near where we stood. Later, out on the lake in a "fishing boat" simulation, we danced to Jewish folk music played by a group of four friendly young men. One of them taught us the dance in a circle, and I felt like I had a glimpse of Christ's life as a youth.

The flight home was even longer than the first flight because flying west there is a headwind to slow planes down. After that miserable flight I swore I would never fly for so long to any place ever again! So I haven't.

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# How did you celebrate your 21st birthday?



**I**t happens to be one birthday I actually do remember! July 17, 1963. Mom was planning to have a dinner party with their friends that night. Ed, with whom I had fallen head over heels in love, had to work at the Uptown Theater where he was an assistant manager. I never expected any special stuff on my birthday. It just wasn't done once you became a teenager. But Ed had said he would give me an engagement ring on my birthday. I was so anxious to get that ring and have security in knowing he was going to be mine. I waited all day for him to call and tell me when he would be able to come with the ring. But he never did call. It was typical of him to be totally unaware of how important something was to me. Mom got the tables all set and the food cooking and still no call from Ed. I knew he had to work but he promised he would still be able to bring the ring to me. Never one to accept defeat, I called him at the theater to remind him of his promise. I practically begged him to make the drive to

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Holladay from downtown Salt Lake City as soon as possible. In his casual way, he calmed me down and assured me he would come as soon as he could take a break.



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I sat by the window waiting to see his big long blue Chevrolet with the “fins” in back turn into our drive way on Walker Lane. He finally did come while Mom’s and Neil’s guests were eating their dinner. I was so thrilled to get that ring and make it official! We went to the dinner table and showed all the guests the ring and I introduced Ed. They all appropriately swooned and offered congratulations. Then Ed hurried back to work and I relaxed.

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# If you could go anywhere and do anything, what would your perfect Valentine's Day be?



**I**would go up Big Cottonwood Canyon to one of those beautiful cabins you can rent with all 49 members of our family and have a whole day of good food and talk and activities and picnics and long walks and end the day with each family presenting a skit to make us laugh and have good memories. I'd really like more than one day of this, maybe a whole week.

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# My Mother



Okay I am probably messing this all up but I think I pretty well covered my grandparents when I was supposed to be writing about my mother. So this time I will write a little about my mother instead of answering this question. I hope it doesn't get too confusing.



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My mother was born on a farm in Afton, Wyoming in the beautiful Star Valley. Her father was a strict religious guy who had served two missions while he and her mother were married before she was born, the youngest of six children. He was so strict, in fact, that Mother couldn't wait to get away from him. She went off to Laramie to summer school where she met my father, etc., etc.. Maybe because of her father she rebelled and began to drink coffee and social alcohol with my father, who was not a member of our church. But even though she continued this abuse of the word of wisdom throughout her life, she never lost her testimony. She often told me about graduating from seminary and going to church with her friends. She took us to church as children and even attended later in life occasionally. In Afton she had a boyfriend who's father owned a big farm there, and I guess they must have liked each other a lot because he asked her to marry him. But she wanted to escape from Afton so much that she refused. Years later she wondered if she had made a terrible mistake in that refusal.

Unfortunately for her, her youngest child (me) judged her harshly for her bad habits concerning the word of wisdom. From a very young age I could see the harm of it and I wanted her to "choose the right". After my father left her and she stopped eating, a kind neighbor who was a doctor (and not a member of our church) advised her to take a cup of wine before dinner to



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calm her down and help her eat. When she came home with that first bottle of wine, Marlene and John sat with her to encourage her and help her drink it so she would eat. I, on the other hand, was horrified and protested and was summarily shunned out of the way. But I was right. That was the beginning of her becoming an alcoholic, and I was the child who was left to grow up at home with her while Marlene and John went off on their own lives.

Whether she and I shared certain characteristics or not, I honestly can't say. I was blind to both our behaviors by her drinking. I never realized what a difficult and even unkind child I had been until many years later when I had children of my own. On the other hand, she never apologized or even tried to show me love or understanding. We were two stubborn "Zax" stuck in our tracks. We didn't talk. I would never share anything with her that was special to me. And I don't even know if anything was ever special to her. I learned to ignore her and just go ahead and do whatever I wanted without paying a bit of attention to anything she said. I earned my own money, or received some from Dad sometimes so I never asked her for anything. Oh wait, I did ask her to buy me clothes. She was nice about that and wanted me to look nice. I was probably totally unappreciative; it was her duty, after all.....

After she married Neil, things even got worse between us. Her language became very crude as well as her drinking. I vented in

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my journal which she read and burned. I don't remember her ever telling me she loved me. I made it my goal in life to always let my own children know they were loved and that they should love each other. I have always been "planted" in my faith but during those days with her I did not obey one very important part of the gospel which is to love without judgment. I wanted to escape from her and her lack of religion, the same way she wanted to to escape from her father for his strictness in religion! Extremes are never good in any situation. So we fought loud and mean fights. I ran away once when I was about 18 years old and stayed with my friend Sue Clawson. After a week or so, Neil showed up at the Clawson's door to tell me it was time to come home. Mother would have never ever begged me to come back.

So we had a very rocky relationship and even later in my life after all six of my children had been born she would say mean things to me like, "You think your pretty exclusive don't you?" She went to Seattle to visit Marlene and stayed for two weeks and hated to go back home. She also went and stayed for several days a couple of times with Eleanor in California but she never came to visit me during the seven years and three childbirths while we lived in the Midwest except right at the very end when Ed dragged her to Minnesota after he had interviewed at the U. of U. She was there for one day before she was on the phone making flight reservations to return to Salt Lake which she did after a

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four day visit. That doesn't speak very highly of me does it? Even when I honestly tried to be friendly and kind. There was just too much muddy water under the bridge between us. There was one day not long before she died when she actually paid me a compliment and told me I had a lot of patience and was a good mother. I was amazed! Oddly, it ended up that I, her nemesis, was the one who took care of her when she was sick and dying. Marlene was teaching school and struggling with her marriage at the time. Eleanor was off in California as was John. She was stuck with me. I don't know how she felt about it. Maybe she was too sick to care. But I wanted to help her and I treated her with kindness. I tried to be a good daughter. While she was sick here in my house I received many phone calls from women in her neighborhood who were concerned about her and told me how much they loved her. Her Relief Society president called to tell me that Mother had wanted to make me a temple apron but they couldn't let her because she had never been endowed. So she had hired a woman to hand stitch aprons for me and Ed, and the sister gave me the information so I could pick the aprons up when they were finished. Needless to say, I do a lot of thinking and regretting when I am sitting in the temple looking at that lovely apron. She had already died before I got them. That's how our relationship ended.

My dear daughters, I hope you're not sorry you asked.

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# What do you consider one of your greatest achievements in life?



I was born with family on my mind. I played house everyday growing up. I tended my dolls and fixed dinner in my little kitchen (no real food, of course) and I talked to my husband and children as if they were real. Even when I helped set the table for my mother I felt such satisfaction when all five of us were there together. So it is no surprise that I spent my entire life "playing house" and my greatest achievement by far was marrying the right man and raising a wonderful family of six children, all of whom turned out to be kind, caring, responsible adults with families of their own and no divorces! Now days it seems that being a housewife and mother is passe. How shameful to admit that all you do is keep up a home and teach your children! For me it was the greatest fulfillment I could have ever hoped for. I added in a college degree, political activism, teaching creative

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writing, part time jobs in ESL and WIC, and world travel but those things are nothing compared to the satisfaction of raising a good family with a good, loyal father and husband. Now in my old age I enjoy associating with all these wonderful family members and participating in their life experiences with their own families. How empty old age would be if all I had to reflect on was a job I once had.

# What was one of the best dates you've been on?



I had lots of fun dates in high school and my first years of college. But probably the one that influenced me the most just for the fun of it was a pool party at Gary Larsen's house which I attended with my then boyfriend, Ed Mayer, and met all of his best friends who were people I admired right off the bat. It began when Ed called for me at my house wearing only a colorful table cloth wrapped around his waist and legs. Some of the friends that night were also daters like Ed and me, and some were already married with a child. One of the married men was Bob Sperry who had served a mission in New Zealand. He too had on a table cloth, and at some point in the evening he jumped out of his seat in a crouch with some bamboo sticks and performed the Haka just as energetically as a real warrior (or football player...). I thought wow these friends of Ed's are really amazing people! It was so much fun and everyone was so nice that I was positive I wanted to pursue my relationship with Ed. His wonderful friends

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were the reason he joined the church with only a little push from me. They have continued to be close and fun for 57 years!



If you could travel back in time to any country and any era, knowing you'd be completely safe and could come back, where and when would you go?



I have thought a lot about this subject having read many books from various periods in history. So I really have two places and times of equal interest. The first is Israel 2000 years ago or more at the time Christ. I have seen the country in 2007 but I want to see what the streets were like 2000 years ago, how the people dressed and behaved. Was it as dirty as some have said? Was it crowded or was the population not too large? How were women treated by those who loved them? Were the people only dirt poor or abundantly rich, no middle class? Were the Roman soldiers as mean as they are depicted in movies? I want to see who the

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people were, what they looked like, who followed Christ. Where did He live and what was His relationship with His birth family? I want to see Mary and Joseph and Christ's siblings, their home, their family traditions. What made people happy in those days? I want to smell the smells and see their food and the fabrics they made for clothing. Their shoes are a wonder to me also, how they were made. What was in the market place? I want to hear the sounds of the streets and fields.

Just as much of interest to me would be to see England at the time of Shakespeare. I don't only want to see London but the country side too. I have been to Stratford Upon Avon and London of today and there is a feeling of pride and culture in the ancient buildings and streets. We know more about the history of that time than we do of 2000 years ago in Israel. We have some actual buildings and relics to look at. But how did people behave? How did they spend their days and what did they do for enjoyment? What was a night at the theater like? Was it only men and loose women or was it actually a decent event attended by many different people? Movies make it look so crude that I wonder where the English decorum came from. What were the regular people like? There must have been kindness and cleanliness, politeness, somewhere! What was it like to watch men playing the roles of women in a serious drama like Romeo and Juliet? How was life different under the rule of a king or queen? I guess

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that depended on who the king or queen was! Each one demanded his or her own unique regulations. But how did the people take it? Were they timidly obedient or sarcastically tolerant?

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# What was your weekend tradition when you were a kid?



Saturdays were housework days for kids. I was actually the only kid in the house but I had always observed that my older siblings changed their beds and cleaned their rooms which is what I did as I got old enough. When I was in junior high my mother even had me clean a bathroom or vacuum and dust other rooms besides my own. I felt like I was loved when she actually asked me to do something outside of my own little world. Most of the time it seemed like she just did everything herself. I used to wish she would ask me to iron or mop the floor or something like all my friends did in their homes. Until I was 13 years old, when Marlene got married and left home, Mother rarely asked me to do anything at all. I was okay with just entertaining myself but in my heart I felt forgotten.

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Sundays I always went to church twice a day. Sunday school in the morning and sacrament meeting in the afternoon. When I was very young we always went as a family but after Dad left us Mother was too ashamed to go so I went with Marlene or John. Then when they left home I went by myself. I went to church alone for many years but I never missed. Church propped me up for another week. I had friends there who let me sit with their families. We moved into Salt Lake and my church friends were my life there. Then we moved back to Holladay when I was 17 and I just went to church alone, sat alone, and hardly was even noticed by anyone. When I was about 18 or 19 my Bishop took an interest in me. He was Bishop Blanchard. Our stake president was James E. Faust, and I think my bishop must have told him about me because Pres. Faust called me into his office and asked me to serve as a stake missionary. I was floored! I didn't want to do it! He seemed to sense my feelings and asked if I were in school. I said yes, I attended the University. "Well then I rescind the call" he smiled. He told me to keep working at my education and be sure to graduate. I left his office feeling special that he had even known my name. So right after that Bishop Blanchard called me to be his "private secretary", a calling he just invented in an effort to keep me close. On Wednesday nights I would go to bishopric meeting. Once he had me come in to their prayer meeting and kneel with them in prayer. I was overwhelmed at their love! I had never knelt in prayer with anyone ever in my

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life, and there I was with those wonderful priesthood holders kneeling in prayer. I will never forget that night as long as I live. To do my job I would sit out in the clerk's office and type letters or file stuff or do whatever Bishop Blanchard could scrounge up for me to do. From then on I felt like I had friends at church even though I still always went by myself.

One snowy night my car slid off the road into a field as I arrived at church. Those three men went out into the snow and practically lifted my car back onto the road. I can't express how much I loved those men at that time, how they loved me to keep me close to the gospel. They made a big difference in my life at a very lonely time. So yeah, church was the main thing on Sundays. Mother always made a good dinner on Sundays too even though she never went to church anymore. I went out on Sunday evenings with friends sometimes, usually to their homes where their families had good snacks to eat. Girls often had church dates, where we went to sacrament meeting with a young man in his ward or he would come to ours. I loved church dates.

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# How did your parents pick your name?



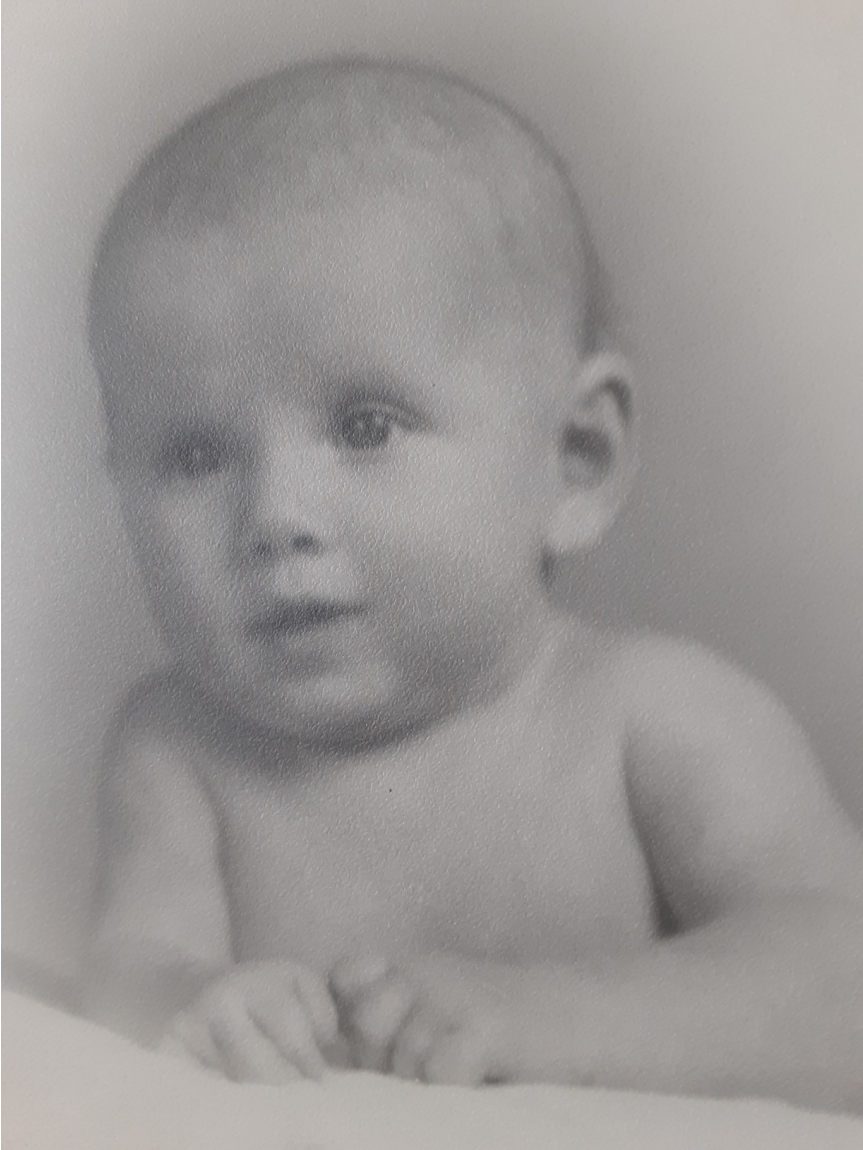
**T**hat is worth a tell. There seemed to be no arguing over the Margaret part of my name. My father's closest sister was named Margaret, and I was named after her. For my middle name my mother chose Louise. It just went well with Margaret she thought. So in the hospital when I was born, Mother had Louise put on my birth certificate as my middle name. A few weeks later when I was to be blessed in church, my father gave my name to the Bishop as Margaret Isabelle. Isabelle was the name of my maternal Grandmother. Apparently, he preferred that name to Louise, a name that was not found in the family anywhere. So depending on where I am or what I am doing, I use one name or the other. Adrienne was given the middle name of Louise after me and because it went well with the name Adrienne. But later in life I became partial to being named after my sweet grandmother so I started using that name everywhere except on legal stuff where my birth certificate might be checked. All my church

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records use the Isabelle middle name.

Margaret, it turns out, is a name very adaptable to nick names. Mother absolutely refused to let anyone call me Maggie. So I became Margie (with a hard G) to my family. Dad often called me Migget Cabigget just for fun. When I was just barely 14, I heard that Princess Margaret of England was called Meg. I liked that name! Just at that time I went to ninth grade in Milwaukee for a couple of months and I told everyone my name was Meg. I very much liked being called Meg instead of the big long Margaret. When I came back to Salt Lake I started in a new Junior High and told my new friends that my name was Meg. My family stumbled over it for a while but soon I was Meg to everyone, and I still am.

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# What personal expectations do you hold yourself to?



**T**his could be a really long list like increasing spirituality, being more thoughtful of others, getting daily exercise, losing weight, and on and on. But I think the thing that has been on my mind lately is Reacting. How do I react to other people? I have observed that the reactions I get from others makes a big difference in how I feel about them, even on a very superficial level. I say Hello, they say hello back. I say hello, they say "Well hello there! How are you?" I say "Did you do that because I'm old?" They apologize. I say "Did you do that because I'm old?" They laugh and say "Heavens no! you're not old!" I just never analyzed how much a response can mean. I have never put myself out to make sure I respond in a friendly way. Some people make you feel like you are important, and some people, like me I'm afraid, don't think enough of the other person to figure out

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how to respond in a way that will make that person feel good.

I've been purposefully observing responses for a while now, and I see that a good response is an art that can make a world of difference between two people. My personal goal is to think up some good, friendly responses so that I will be prepared and then try them out on our friends and neighbors and even the guy in the grocery store who is always so friendly while I slink away. I guess you would say I am waking up to a new awareness of others, conscientiously trying to forget myself and make someone else feel good. If only Covid 19 would go away so we could once again feel free to interact!

# What are some of your family traditions?



**A**s a child I don't remember any real traditions other than attending church on Sunday and having a nice dinner. But I do remember it was the only day of the week when my father was home to relax. I have a very fond memory of sitting in his lap while he read the Sunday Funny Papers to me. We both liked "Lil Abner" and "Prince Valiant". There were also some radio programs he liked on Sundays. I remember sitting in his lap listening to "One Man's Family" and "Blondie and Dagwood". Sometimes he would absentmindedly rub my arm until it almost felt sore. But I would not move or complain because if I did he might just put me down from his lap, and I did not want that to happen!

These memories, however trivial, are tender to me because by the time I was 10 he was gone from our home forever. He had been very loving and affectionate and always full of praise during

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the years he was home.





# What are some of the most important elections you've voted in, and what made them important to you?



I didn't get to vote for John Kennedy because at that time, 1959, you had to be 21 years old to vote and I was only 17. So when he campaigned again in 1963 I was really anxious to vote for him. He even came to Salt Lake, our president, and spoke at the tabernacle. Ed and I were newly weds and we were thrilled to be able to attend his speech in October. We both admired John Kennedy as a great leader. We voted on November 5, the first time I ever voted. You can imagine our grief when he was shot and killed just three weeks later.

The next most important election to me was the year 2000 when George Bush Jr. ran against Albert Gore. We were actually in Santo Domingo on election night, having voted by absentee

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ballots. All the missionary couples gathered together where one couple had a television set. I thought it was so totally obvious that Gore was a a wiser, better person who worried about the environment and other important domestic things, that I was certain every other Latter day Saint would be voting for him. To my surprise we were the ONLY couple there out of 12 missionary couples who had voted for Gore. The others were speaking rudely of Gore and dissing him. Ed and I sat quietly in their midst. It was a shock to me to discover that “Mormons” were ALL republicans, no matter what. I had never realized it quite so strongly before. I had always thought that people voted for the MAN, not the party. I felt sick they had chosen Bush who seemed weak to me. Over the years since, the divide has increased. We look back at the war in the Mideast which Bush and his father before him had begun. We are still there! How different things would be if Gore had been elected that year.

# Who have been your closest friends throughout the years?



I have thought a lot about this because, as it is with most of my current friends, once we got married our husband's friends became our friends and we kind of let former friends go. Since I have been married for 57 years, I can safely say that Ed's friends are my old friends too! Darrell, Gary, Bob, and Dick and their wives, Gayle, Suzanne, DeAnn, and Tiffany have been in my life for 58 years, ever since I met Ed. As far as friends I grew up with goes, my family moved away from Holladay in 1956 when I was 14, and I said a sad goodbye to the friends I had grown up with. I made new friends in Salt Lake but it was a hard time for me. I have kept one high school friend close to me for 62 years. Suzanne Clawson married a friend from our high school, and thanks to Ed's friendliness, he liked Robert and would call and invite them out over the years. Robert passed away in 2007 and

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then I made a big effort to keep Suzy close. We see each other at least once a month at Book Club, and we remember each other's birthdays and Christmas. She is now in a different world from mine, very much involved with her grown children and grandchildren who all live near her. Her oldest son lives with her and takes care of Suzy and her home, while I am blessed to still enjoy the company of my husband.

We continue to enjoy the company of Ed's old friends from high school. Before the pandemic we had a tradition of spending three days at Bear Lake with all of Ed's old buddies and their wives every July. We also always had a Christmas dinner together at someone's home sometime in December. I tend to feel much more comfortable when I am with Ed than when I am on my own.



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Another old friend of many years is Emily McLaws Despain. We became friends in Missouri in 1966 when Ed and I went to the University of Missouri where he worked to get his doctorate in Latin American History and Culture. The McLaws were there also with Monte working on a doctorate in history. Even though they moved away three years later, we stayed in contact and eventually both couples ended up living here in Bountiful where we were very close and our children grew up together. Monte passed away in 1996, and a few years later Emily married Loy Despain. Her second marriage was kind of hard for me to take. Loy's philosophy of life is extremely conservative where Monte had been more liberal like us. Loy changed Emily so that we cannot discuss life freely as we always did before. We have kept close, and we get together as couples once a month or so to eat and visit. Emily and I had started our Book Club in January 1977 and it is still in tact with many of the same women after nearly 44 years. So the book club keeps us together as old friends. But unfortunately the close friendship I once felt for Emily is now awkward and sometimes down right irritating!

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# What is one of your favorite holiday memories?



I guess I have two Christmases that stand out in my mind. When I was about 5 years old, maybe 6, my sister Marlene, who was 14 or 15 at the time, helped me memorize the poem "The Night Before Christmas". I had it down pat. She dressed up like a clown and she dressed me up like Santa Claus. She was my big toy.... On this particular Christmas our Wallis grandparents were with us, having taken the train from Laramie. On Christmas eve Marlene filled a pillow case with something so I could carry it on my back and we bounced downstairs into the living room to perform the poem for our family. I said every word right and still can to this day! I was so proud of myself! I don't remember any praise or attention, although I am sure I got some, but I do remember that wonderful feeling of having recited that long poem without a mistake and the fun we had.

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The other Christmas was when I was eleven years old. It was our first Christmas after Dad had left us. Our sweet Aunt Edna and Uncle Lloyd had come to cheer us up with their two children who were the ages of Marlene and John. Aunt Edna was a favorite of everyone so I was very excited to have them with us. They had traveled all the way from Rochester, Minnesota to help us have a merry Christmas. I sat in the living room listening to all the talk and enjoying the feeling that comes with Christmas lights and music, when the doorbell rang about 8:00 pm. Mother encouraged me to go to the door to see who it was. When I opened the door I was greeted with a hearty merry Christmas from a skinny little Santa Claus dressed in red ski underwear with a cotton beard. I wasn't sure just what to think but Santa was so jolly and happy that I let him in where he entertained us all with some silly jokes and candy. Gradually I realized Santa was dear Aunt Edna all dressed up just for me! As years passed that gift of love they gave us came to mean more and more to me. I have traveled those highways in the winter and I have never thought of interrupting my own traditions for the sake of someone who might be suffering. It came to be a great lesson of love and unselfishness, one I will never forget.



# What beliefs do you have that are different than your parents?



**A**s a young child I, of course, thought my parents were perfect, and maybe they were then. They taught me manners and good behavior, and we went to church together. Then things kind of fell apart. Dad left us for other women. He had once at least pretended to think church was important, but now he was in another world completely. He returned to his upbringing as a protestant because his new wife insisted on it. From then on we were on different pages. He estranged himself from me because I was a "planted" member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. He moved away and I really hardly knew him anymore even though we communicated and he visited occasionally. He was a strong Republican business man, and unfortunately it was his behavior that turned me away from the political party as well as the career.

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Mother was my main stay because she had been raised in the Church and was well aware of her pioneer ancestors who had forsaken all for the gospel. She meant well. She wanted us children to go to church and be married in the temple even though she herself never went to the temple and she eventually gave up attending church regularly, mainly because she was ashamed of herself, not because she didn't believe. She didn't tell me that we were descended from Hyrum Smith until I was a senior in high school or older. I learned about her pioneer roots on my own. But still there was that expectation, the knowing that she'd be disappointed if I strayed from the Church. She was not political but I assume she voted republican. I honestly don't know. When my brother, John, left the Church and his family and went off on his artistic life, she was devastated. But she couldn't say much, having basically left it all behind herself.

So I guess the answer to the question about our differing beliefs is complicated. I learned my beliefs from a mother who later deserted them. I learned to trust a father who was untrustworthy. My beliefs became my very own. I studied the gospel and I knew I wanted my life centered there. Temple marriage was always a goal for me. I went to church alone from the time I was a teenager. I never missed. It was very important to me, like a life preserver. Once I got into the University, I realized I needed to understand politics and make some choices

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for myself. I took a political science class and decided I was kind of neutral. There were things I liked about both parties. I met my future husband who was a "dyed in the wool" democrat, no sense in even discussing it. So I joined him in declaring myself but I have always reserved room to choose for the issue at hand, the candidate at hand. This is really a departure from my parents who were republicans without much thought as to why.

I never felt particularly loved as a child. I felt more like a liability they wished they didn't have. So one decision I made for myself when I grew up was that I wanted my future children to know they were loved and that we should all love each other. It was so very important to me that my children would feel loved by their mother. I'm not sure about how I succeeded but I do know I tried, I thought about it, I consciously worked at it. I have always turned to prayer for every question in life. I spent time on my knees. I wish my parents had done that. I think our lives together would have turned out much better.

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# Which musicians or bands have you most liked seeing live?



When I was in high school, 1957 - 1960, I don't really remember any music bands other than the big dance bands still around from the 40's. The Beatles hadn't gotten going yet. So my best memories are of singers I got to see in person. Actually many of the big bands and singers came through Salt Lake and performed at the Rainbow Rendezvous Dance Hall and Lagoon. It's kind of amazing when I think of it now because Salt Lake was very small back then. My first great memory is of Johnny Mathis who sang at the Rainbow when I was in high school and some nice guy took me there on a date. I don't remember who. It was so fun to see a famous singer in person, and he sang all his best songs. I also saw him again two years later at Princeton University when he told the audience off for being rude.

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I had a date to Lagoon to see Louis Satchmo Armstrong and his band. It was a thrill and he was well received, although I understand he was not allowed to stay at the Hotel Utah, our finest at the time.

Later on after Ed and I were married he took me to see John Denver up in Park City twice. Those were such special events for me being a life long fan of folk music. While he was singing the words "I am an Eagle" a real eagle flew overhead as we sat out on the grass in Deer Valley. He pointed it out as he sang. What a neat experience! Ed also took me to see Neil Diamond in the Salt Palace. I loved Neil and his songs but entertaining had gotten way out of hand by this time with fireworks and flashing lights and music that was so loud it hurt my ears! I had to clog my ears with my fingers during the entire performance!

In looking back I can name five more of the famous people I got to see in person, most all of them at Lagoon: Nat King Cole, Four Freshmen, Ella Fitzgerald, June Christy, and Pat Boone. Just as an aside, June Christy sang at our U Days Dance when I was a freshman at the U. I had a date with a kid named Dick Despain but a "stranger" called who said he was the "tall dark and handsome one from the cafeteria" and asked me to the dance. I knew who it was but I didn't even know his name! I turned him down. Two years later he became my darling husband!

# How has your life turned out differently than you imagined it would?



If it turned out much differently than I imagined, it is only that it has been better than I had hoped. I remember once having a vision of myself alone with small children and no father or husband to care for us. That never happened, of course, and for that I am very grateful to the loyal, conscientious and responsible man I married. Having come from a broken home, it meant everything to me just to keep a family in tact. In the beginning of our marriage, with Ed as a new convert to the church, I had no dreams of his ever really taking over in his priesthood. I was just happy to have him go to the temple and to church with me. Then he was given leadership responsibilities and he grew strong in his faith. That was more than I had dared to dream of. Then through his work, we were able to travel through Europe and even take all of our children there. That was

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certainly more than I'd ever dreamed of. He wanted to serve a mission so we lived in the Dominican Republic for a year and a half! Then we were able to travel on our own with friends to places I thought I would never see such as Israel, Scandinavia, and St. Petersburg. Then another mission with a year and a half in Argentina. Thinking back on what low expectations I had in the beginning, I would say my life turned out to be absolutely amazing. I bore six healthy bright children, and every one of them have made us proud by being good and kind, useful citizens with families of their own. I never dreamed of wealth, and we have never been wealthy but we have always had plenty and more than most folks.

I know a lot is said about following your dreams, and I guess I did follow the one dream I had which was to have a family of my own. I am glad I didn't think too much about future desires and just let life play out for me. The only thing I ever wanted and never got was a beautiful house with lots of windows and lawns and pine trees. But by comparison to what I did get, that seems like a silly dream indeed.



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# Did you ever get in trouble at school as a child?



**I**t only took once. I was in second grade, seven years old. My teacher was an older, single woman who was scary to all little kids. Her name was Miss Jacobsen. She must have been a pretty good teacher as I fully remember learning things in her class! On the day in question, I do not even remember what I was doing except that I was talking to someone nearby when suddenly I was removed from my seat and put into the closet where there was a chair, maybe even a desk, the light was turned on and the door was closed. Luckily I did not suffer from claustrophobia. My main worry was how do I face my class when I get out of here? I don't know how long I was in there but I do remember being totally repentant, and I knew I would forever follow the rules carefully for the rest of my life! And I did.

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# What things do you think you cannot live without?



**I** have thought a lot about this. My first thought was there is nothing I can't live without except water and food! I can adjust to whatever I have to adjust to. Then I realized that is really not what the question was about. It was about me, my life, not life in general. During Christmas I have been reminded how much my family, my children and husband, mean to me. If I were all alone in the world without any family I would be most miserable. Friends just don't do it like family does. I need family to survive!

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# How is life different today compared to when you were a child?



Oh that is almost a hilarious question! The old adage about Grandma remembering the good old days happens to us all, I now understand. There comes a point as we age when we realize the world has gone off and left us behind. I know ever since the 19th century, the world has been constantly changing. About the only thing that changed for centuries before that was manners and steam driven trains. My grandparents lived through automobiles, telephones and electricity. The telephone especially was a gadget that seemed more like a nuisance than anything else for a while. All these things were in place when I was born. Then when I was 8 years old our next door neighbors got a television set. It was a big console with a tiny 10 inch screen which we kids crowded around with great joy to watch Hopalong Cassidy and Uncle Roscoe. By the time I was 11 years old there

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were 21 inch table models. I actually won a 21 incher in a Wild Bill Hickok contest to give a name to one of the TV episodes. I named it "Traps Reverse" and won the TV. It was quite an unbelievable event but one which gave me courage to trust myself.

While televisions kept getting bigger and colored and the shows got better and better, we began to hear about personal computers. What? What would anyone ever do with a computer. They said you could keep your recipes on it..... But lo and behold, soon people started getting them and they were fun and useful. As for our family, we could see no earthly purpose for one. Then Ed got one for his office at the University. He saw how useful it was and brought one home. I ignored it. Then I was using it too. Next thing was tiny phones you could use out in your car. In the beginning all of this made some sense. But gradually, things got very sophisticated. Computers became mandatory to keep up with society. Cell phones were absolutely necessary for daily life. Now they are so complicated for us old folks who remember the good old days when things were simple and understandable, that we have a really difficult time dealing with the right buttons to push and what pathway leads where. Behind our television there are so many cords and connectors that we could never figure it all out. We have a cell phone but we only understand the basic use: a telephone to communicate with people. Young people use



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them to do their banking, buy airline tickets, watch movies and I don't even know what all.

I cannot leave out modern medicine. Kids died of polio when I was a kid. There wasn't any kind of a transplant or even open heart surgery. Vaccinations were just getting going to save us from the diseases that our parents' generation suffered from. I don't even know all the amazing discoveries to keep us healthy. But I do know that I myself would be suffering right now with a heart that quits beating sometimes. However, in the 1980's they developed a little device called a Pacemaker which keeps my heart going even when it tries to stop. Modern medicine has really changed the quality of life we live today.

So the difference now from when I was a child is simplicity. It was quiet when I was young. There was no TV blaring in the background, no computer or cell phone adding to the hodge podge going on around us. We played outside or in our playrooms. I entertained myself every day with my dolls and my friends, inventing plots for our adventures and making up games with stuff we found outside. I had no idea what life was like in New York or even Ogden. We got letters in the mail from aunts and grandparents which were fun to read and re-read. We wrote letters back and felt we knew all about each other's lives. Life was quiet and private. Today it is noisy and full of interruptions. Everyone knows too much about everyone else, and the

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impressions we make on others become a daily concern. The gorgeous people we see on TV all look alike. Everyone is trying to look like people who live thousands of miles away! I went to New York when I was 19 and was amazed at how different the fashions were from my city. Now the whole world looks alike. The pressure to be acceptable physically, is amazing. To me it seems no one is worried about their brains as much as their appearance. Television changed the world big time, and now computers and cell phones are connecting us in unhealthy ways no one ever imagined. From my point of view, I did live in the good old days.

# What are your favorite recipes, either to cook or to eat?



**G**rowing up, my mother made simple, nutritious farm food. My favorites were Creamed chip beef or creamed tuna fish on toast. I loved my mother's thick chicken stew with egg noodles. I still find these to be a comfort food for me although Ed can't stand any of it. From my Dad's side of the family came deigo, swedish pancakes, german pancakes, and goulash. These too are favorites of mine but Ed doesn't care for them. Then of course, he came from the Mexican culture where he loves his mother's cooking (even though his father was a better cook!) of Mexican dishes I can't even spell. I do like the Mexican dishes but they make a terrible mess in the kitchen and the house smells like grease for days after. Between the two of us we developed a whole different cuisine that suits us both. My favorite meal to fix, especially on a cold winter day, is the Mexican version of

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chicken soup served with flour tortillas spread with mayonnaise and filled with the chicken. The broth comes from cooking a whole chicken because the bones are what add flavor. I throw in a lot of sliced carrots, green onions, potatoes and celery. It needs quite a bit of salt with not so much pepper, cumin, coriander, and cardamon.

Another favorite we both like is a crockpot stew made from hamburger, onions, potatoes, peas and carrots covered in tomato soup that is seasoned with lots of fresh basil, sage and some rosemary. I make baking powder biscuits to go with it. We put the stew over the biscuits. It's another hearty dish for a cold winter day.

On warmer days when I really hate to cook anything at all, I like a good sandwich with pesto and good cheese, tomatoes, sliced avocados, fresh spinach, and maybe a slice of meat but maybe not. Good bread is an important part of that. I don't require ciabatta even though it is good, but I make it a little healthier with some good whole wheat bread. The only kind of sandwich Ed likes is a BLT or egg salad. We eat a lot of sandwiches in the summer.

As for desserts, I used to enjoy making banana cake and Mountain cherry or blueberry pie for the family on Sundays. Of course chocolate chip cookies have always been favorites. Then I

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got into making Texas Cake for the larger family that comes, or used to come, one Sunday a month. The grandkids especially love that cake. It is a chocolate sheet cake made with vinegar. I always frost it with homemade white butter cream frosting. But now with just the two of us here I never make a dessert at all. We don't need it, and unfortunately I would be the only one who would eat the whole thing. I occasionally make Ed an apple pie or a lemon pie for his birthday. But then he has to find someone to share it with before it goes rotten. So we change with the times. There are good memories of family dinners with all of our children at home but it was such a short time out of the span of our lives that I barely remember what we ate. I do believe good food, prepared with love to please those we love is kind of a spiritual experience. Receiving it or giving it, it is a show of outward love, a spiritual gift from our deepest self.

There is a quote by Guy Fieri that I like:

“Cooking is all about people. Food is maybe the only universal thing that really has the power to bring everyone together. No matter what culture, everywhere around the world, people eat together.”

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# Which fads did you embrace while growing up?



**T**his question has certainly required a trip down memory lane! My memory is not the greatest either. I think I was most driven to embrace fads when I was in the 7th to 10th grades. In junior high school there were all kinds of phrases and words we used that only we really understood or used. I could only remember one: oo-lala. That was said for admiration, exclamation, and sarcasm. We called our friends “kid” when we talked to them. Jantzen sweaters, Joyce shoes, and two or three starched petticoats under a circle skirt were the really “neat” clothes. When we had an assembly in junior high we sat on bleachers in the gym with our big skirts keeping us apart and nearly making it hard to see over them! Joyce shoes were of certain styles that everyone admired. I got a blue Jantzen sweater skirt in 9th grade that made me feel like the best dressed girl in town! I had a pair

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of Joyce shoes, maybe two pair, so I was totally acceptable.

Once I was in high school and found some real interests like Junior Choir and Dance Club, all that stuff about clothes was greatly diminished. I grew my hair out and wore it in a long pony tail held in sections by elastics. This announced to the whole school that I was in Dance Club. That was all I cared about - singing and dancing. My senior year our group danced in every assembly and our a'cappella choir sang all over Salt Lake City. I was so proud of these activities that wearing anything which spoke of my association with them was all I cared about. I do remember that we had our own jargon in high school but the only two things I could specifically remember were "Are you sere!" Sere was short for serious. And "What's the skinny?" which just asked "what is going on?" East High School had a reputation of being kind of snooty because the rich kids all went there. Being well dressed was important but I can't remember any clothes fads. The popular style was "beta" kind of copying students at the Ivy League schools, I think. Clothes were tailored and neatly matched. The boys wore really short hair.



# What is one of your earliest childhood memories?



**M**y very first memory in this life is crouching in an old metal lawn chair in front of our house on Herbert Avenue in Salt Lake, with our little black dog named Buster barking and growling at me like he wanted to eat me up. My mother saved me. They got rid of Buster.

I guess I was three years old then. We lived next door to the Rich family who had five kids, one of whom was my same age and her name was Elaine. I remember lots of kids playing out on our front lawn, the Wallis kids and the Rich kids. A year later we moved down to a bigger house on 15th East and the Rich family moved even farther down on Yale Avenue to a bigger house where I do remember playing with Elaine. Mother would let me walk alone down to her house and I had to pass the house of a

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boy named Eddie Payne (I think). He was older than I and mean as could be. He would come out to the sidewalk and not let me pass. I was scared to death of him and even if I walked on the other side of the street, he would still come over and not let me pass. I don't remember him actually hurting me, just scaring me and shoving me.

At that time George Albert Smith was president of the church and he lived in our ward, the Yale Ward. I remember him sitting on the stand smiling. He was very kind. I loved my Sunday school teacher whose name I cannot remember. She was young and pretty. One of the girls in our class named Helen died of polio which was just horrifying for me. Our teacher talked to us about it in such a loving way that it made me feel much better.

I see these early memories are all about being scared and having troubles. I must have been born with anxiety disorder! Happy memories seem to elude me entirely.

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# How has the country changed during your lifetime?



**T**he most obvious and striking change is technology. When I was a child we had a telephone, a big black thing with a dial and it was hooked to the wall by a cord. Most people had what they called "party lines" which we shared with other people we didn't even know. You would pick up the receiver to make a call and you would hear other people talking to each other. So you waited until they were finished, politely hanging up, before you could make your call. Listening to people on your party line was considered very bad manners. You can imagine how happy we were to get a private line of our own even though we had to pay dearly to make "long distance" calls out of the city. When I was about 7 years old our neighbors got the first television we had ever seen. It was a big console with a 10 inch screen in it. All in black and white, we kids gathered around to watch the few

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shows which were on for about 8 hours a day before they played the Star Spangled Banner and signed off until tomorrow. No one had ever even heard of such a thing as a computer. That came later on when I was in high school.

Our cars were gas guzzlers that broke down frequently. There were no seat belts and only roll down windows. There was no air conditioning in cars or homes either. We just sat in the wind or carried a hand fan. But I never remember being too hot! Contrast that with cars today which hardly ever break down and have every conceivable thing for our comfort and safety. Public buildings had big ceiling fans whirring around to keep us from baking inside. At church someone stood at the entrance passing out paper fans on a little stick to use during the meetings in the summer.

Over the years of everyone's life we see the price of things go up. Hamburger was 25 cents a pound when I was little clear up to 50 cents a pound when Ed and I got married. My mother remembered when bread was a nickel a loaf but we paid 35 cents a loaf. My father drove the biggest, flashiest Oldsmobile you could buy, an Olds '98 which cost less than a new furnace costs today. Ed's and my first new car was a Mercury Montego with air conditioning for which we paid \$3400 in 1969.

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Movies were important in my youth, like the media still is today. But you would never hear a swear word or see any skin or sex scenes. A kiss was as sultry as it ever got. Musicals were very popular with lots of singing and dancing and our favorite stars such as Doris Day, Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye and others. It was wholesome entertainment with strict rules about what was allowed to be seen. There was a lot of smoking by stars in serious movies. I honestly admired it so much, if it hadn't been against my religion, I would have taken it up so I could look as sophisticated as the stars did. (Later they all died of lung cancer but we didn't know about tobacco then.) I have worried a lot about the damage being done by the media today with the bad language, realistic violence and sex, etc. commonly shown. When we were entertained by television or movies, we never had to endure half the time with commercials. There were a few commercials, mostly shampoo and laundry soap or toothpaste between shows but there were no interruptions for advertisements. When cable TV began, the idea was that you paid a monthly fee so there would be no commercials at all.....

We enjoyed dressing up nice when I was growing up. When Mom took me shopping she wore a hat and gloves with her her suit and high heels. She always made me put on a nice dress and all the trimmings. All the people down town were dressed the same way. A woman wore pants if she was scrubbing floors or

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riding horses. My mother always wore "house dresses" which were inexpensive, comfortable, easy to wash-and-iron dresses that all women wore at home or to the grocery store. As a youth I was never allowed to wear pants or shorts to school. I would have been sent home by the principal! Appropriate, clean clothing was a hard and fast rule. I look around me today and I can't tell if people are dressed up nice or not. All clothing seems to be leisure wear or play clothes or just plain farm stuff which is worn to jobs, weddings, and funerals. This all began changing about the same time Adrienne was starting school. I couldn't believe it was okay to send my daughter to school in anything but a dress! Rather than argue with me, she tucked her pants under her skirt and wore them in class. This was a learning curve for me! Also, we dressed for modesty when I was young. No shrink-wrapped dresses or pants, no tight fitting tops with low necks; pregnant women wore loose dresses or tops. No woman would ever have shown off her growing belly!

Then there is music. Music has been evolving since time began. Long ago only the rich could afford to attend an opera or hear a Mozart or Beethoven perform. They couldn't hear music in their homes unless musicians actually came to the house to play. Poor people had their own folk music played by someone lucky enough to own a guitar or some very common instrument. People sang a lot together in order to hear music. With the



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advent of radios and record players we were still listening to the lyrical music styles of the recent past. The more music became available to everyone, the more it changed as folk music turned into jazz and opera turned into musicals. Rock and roll began in my youth but it was very tame compared to the loud, jungle beat and yelling in place of singing that we hear today. When I was young Frank Sinatra wore a suit and tie when he sang ballads and love songs. There were many quartets of men and women who wore their best clothes and harmonized carefully. Today's popular music is very hard for me to listen to or watch. I think it is wrong to even call it "music". It is just noise with a beat. I like the "beat" but sometimes I fear it stirs people up much like native warring tribes revving themselves up with drums for a battle.

This could go on forever, I guess. Suffice it to say that time changes things, and the single most important and amazing change in my lifetime is definitely TECHNOLOGY. In spite of its efforts to make things easier, it has only made things much harder for my generation. A phone you can take with you when you leave the house is a wonderful convenience and even a life saver sometimes. But knowing which button to push or what is required to make something work, is only understood by young people who have grown up with it. In my generation we turned knobs on and off. Simple. Now if you accidentally put your finger

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on the wrong icon, you can destroy or create things you didn't even know you had!

# How did you rebel as a child?



**M**y rebelling changed gradually as I got older. When I was a toddler/preschool I threw at least one tantrum that I vividly remember. It lasted over a time because I sat at the top of our stairs screaming for a while before my mother began vacuuming and moved me over so she could vacuum under me. Maybe I had other tantrums but that one I remember. When I was being "forced" to eat peas or cooked vegetables I simply hid them in the bench of the breakfast nook.

As I got older I would disappear. I would hide or just go outside or later even drive away in the car. I was not an arguer. If the adult was correcting me or disagreeing, I just left the room or house. I never deliberately did something wrong or mean just for spite I don't think. Of course, memories fade. When I read my journals and diaries from years ago, I am amazed at the things I have forgotten. Mostly I am surprised at the GOOD things I did!

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So maybe I wasn't as bad of a kid as I have always thought. I know it just broke my heart to be on the outs with anyone. I couldn't stand it. Feeling like the unacceptable one just killed me. How I was acting on the outside, I can't but wonder. I guess that is why my reaction was cut and run, so the situation wouldn't get any worse.

I never rebelled in terms of doing something forbidden. Like I would never have smoked or used alcohol or done things that I knew were wrong just to bug my parents. In fact, as time went by and my mother's behavior wasn't so good, I suppose I rebelled by making sure I went to church and lived piously. Unfortunately it was the right behavior for the wrong reasons. I still have the urge to "run away" sometimes when I don't want to face something. But now life is not so simple and I really should start acting like a grown up after all.

# How did you experience Neil Armstrong's first steps on the moon?



**T**he moon landing was a very big deal. We were all excited to see what would happen. In our ward in Columbia, Missouri, we were fortunate to know one of the scientists who had actually worked on the project in Houston, Texas. His name was Wes Sherman. He and his wife, Dottie, were friends of ours. They lived out in the country around Columbia on a kind of a farm. They invited us to come watch the moon landing with them! So we took Adrienne and Elizabeth and went. Wes told us all about every technicality involved and what every move they made meant. It was truly a thrill to see that foot go down onto the surface of the moon! It was almost like you could hear a collective shout from the whole world around us. I wish I could remember some of the things Wes told us but I can't. One thing he did tell us was that his own father didn't believe it was even

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true. We were privileged to know the Shermans and to receive of their hospitality that memorable day. I am so sorry that we lost contact with them after we moved to Minnesota.

# Do you believe in love at first sight?



I believe love at first sight is possible but not reliable. Being attracted to a certain person is different from loving that person. I was very attracted to my husband the first time I saw him, as he was to me, he says. When we actually came together in a dating situation we were even more attracted to each other. We have been married for over 57 years and we are still attracted to each other! But love comes gradually. Just because we were attracted "at first sight" doesn't mean we loved each other at that moment. That comes with discovering the actual traits you admire in someone; with learning that you get along well with each other and you feel safe with that person. It means you share the same values and goals for life. How could you know all these things just looking at someone? You are attracted at first sight but love comes when you know that person is someone you can respect and admire. I am afraid young people today mistake physical attraction for love. They think good sex means love. I

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am very sorry for people who believe this. It probably explains why there are so many divorces or people who prefer not to marry each other at all, just live together until they grow tired of each other.





# What is your best relationship advice?



**T**here are many different kinds of relationships. I assume this question is about family or close friend relationships. Even those close relationships are a little different than husband-wife relations. So for family and close friends I say my one word I try to remember is patience. Don't make snap judgements, allow plenty of space for understanding and clarifying. The old adage of looking for the best in people holds true in every relationship there is. I love the advice we were given in general conference years ago: Don't judge others because their sins are different than yours. And let loose. Don't be afraid to love. Even if they end up hating you, you can still love them. Even if they turn away from your values and goals you can still love them. That feeling of genuine love for someone, whether they earned it or not, is such a good feeling that it has to be right.

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As for husband and wife relations, that one is special. I have gone through periods where I really did not like my husband. He is not perfect. But I find that when I hang in there and assure myself that eventually I will remember the reasons I married him, I end up loving him openly again. So far in basically 58 years, that has never failed. I have had to remind myself many times of why I fell in love with him in the beginning and then I see that he is still that good person. Of course you always have to consider your own lovableness. Am I still the same person HE fell in love with? Am I trying to show love to him? Am I making our situations harder or easier? Love is losing yourself in concern for others. If you insist on hanging on to your own desires ( aside from basic ethics) and you can't let go for the sake of a relationship, then I am afraid the relationship is doomed. I always wanted a special house where there were lots of trees and space to wander in. My husband believes that a roof over one's head and food on the table is all anyone should want. It took a few years but I finally realized that he and our family were way more important to me than that house and land of my dreams. I let it go, and I have been much happier! If one of your friends or one of your children go "astray" from what you think they should be, you can make your self overlook it in time. But if your mate, your husband or your wife goes astray from your sense of right and wrong or if you feel in danger from his or her behavior, this relationship is the only one you can end. However, I feel that

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now days people take this all too lightly. Divorce is rampant and I think it is a tragedy. For the sake of children, people need to be willing to try harder, to forgive, to ask forgiveness. To remember the love that brought them together and find it again.

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# Were you well-behaved or badly-behaved as a child?



**S**o this is a funny question. What does a little kid know about what she is like? I know I was scared of getting into trouble but I did get there sometimes. I don't think I was sassy or rude. My mother would never have put up with that. I was always taught to say please and thank you. Being polite was important to me all my life. BUT... I remember deliberately cutting the brim of my mother's hat with some scissors. When confronted by my mother I just didn't know what to say. My big sister was furious with me for doing it. I just sat there not knowing why I did it. On the other hand, my paternal grandmother took me visiting with her one day to her lady friend's house where I sat like a lamb and smiled and never moved. Nannie bragged about me being such a good girl and so did her lady friend. I guess I behaved well when I was scared or shy, but I was capable of real mischief when left on my own in a safe space. I think I always did what I was told as in things like "be quiet" or "sit down" or "clean up that mess" or

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“stay outside”, etc. But I know I could be sneaky if I thought no one was paying attention. I rummaged through my mother’s clothes closet one day and found a little chair which Santa Claus later gave me for Christmas. I used to go sit on that chair in her closet when I felt like it but I never admitted I had found it. I don’t remember if Mother ever knew I had already found it long before Christmas. So I wouldn’t say I behaved badly as a child because, number one, my mother would never have put up with it. She expected her children to behave well. Since I was the only “little” kid in the house, my bad behavior had to be done on the sly. I learned to be sneaky and hope the grown ups wouldn’t notice. Once I even accidentally broke a perfume bottle of Marlene’s. I cleaned it all up and removed all evidence and lived in mortal fear of Marlene going into her room. But she never said a word! It must have been something she never used anyway and she just forgot about it, didn’t even see that it was gone. I breathed a huge sigh of relief on that one! I have some sorry memories of not being very nice to certain friends and I do remember that I was anxious to be baptized so I could be forgiven of all my sins at age 8. I turned a new leaf after that and really did try to be a better person.

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# What would you consider your motto?



**T**his took some deep thinking. I have never thought about a "motto" in words for my life. So I had to analyze what my life has been to see if there is a motto in it. I felt very good, like I was exactly right when I hit on "try to understand".

In my childhood there were some adults who made bad choices that ruined their own lives and could have ruined mine. For a long time I was just angry and hurt. Then as I got older I tried to put myself in their places to see if I could better understand how they had felt. I began to have some compassion for them. I began to see how my own choices could affect others and it made me more forgiving, more understanding.

When I became a wife and mother, I really had to step outside of myself and take some objective looks at those I loved, at situations, at reactions and try to understand the deep

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motivations of my family members. I had to let go of some things that were very important to me. I had to support others to do things I did not want to let them do. This required some praying and thinking on my part to understand their motivations. I had to let them live their own lives the way they wanted to. Understanding their thinking helped me let go and even be supportive! (As long as the situation was not illegal!)

I have always made it a habit to try to understand why someone said what he or she said. I have tried to look objectively at things people did or said in my family, my friends, government, neighbors or even people I just read about in the newspaper. Knowing who someone really is, what desires they have, what past experiences have formed them, makes a big difference in how to react to their choices. I sound like I think I am perfect but that is far from the truth. I do hope others try to understand my behavior because in doing so they might be more likely to forgive my frequent mistakes.

# Do you believe that people can change? Why or why not?



**Y**es I do believe people can change. Obviously there are some basic personality traits that may be inherent but motivations which come from having learned new things or having had a meaningful experience (for good or for ill) or just plain getting older and wiser can result in a person changing. Depending on what was learned or experienced the changes can be for the better or worse.

When I was a child my big brother John, was my idol. He was spiritual and loving and lots of fun with a great sense of humor. He served a mission for the Church and married in the temple. John confirmed Ed when he was baptized. He and his wife Marta were Ed's and my escorts when we went through the temple for the first time to be sealed. John was always my advisor in any big

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decisions I needed to make. We were very close and had many long talks together. Then one summer I went to visit him and Marta in California after about maybe a 4 or 5 year separation while Ed and I lived in Missouri, and John and Marta lived in Los Angeles. I was shocked at the change in my brother! He was still teaching a Sunday School class but apparently it was very controversial. He took nude sunbaths in his back yard and spoke loudly with an opinionated attitude that seemed so unlike him. I immediately felt disconnected from him; he was not the person I had always known. Soon he and Marta took their four children and moved to Argentina. We still corresponded frequently but gradually I could feel a difference in him in his letters. Ed and I moved back to Utah and about 4 years later John showed up from Argentina all alone and stayed with us for a week or so. He was bohemian compared to his former self. He eventually left his family and got a divorce from Marta. He had nothing at all to do with the church and felt he was finally liberated from confinement. He and I could no longer converse on any subject. He was defensive and very sensitive to any comment I might make that sounded like I disapproved of his new life. We gradually grew apart and for the last 30 years have had very little contact with one another. Ed and I visited him and Padma in Hawaii in 2016. I made a comment about tolerance in our nation and he took it wrong and yelled at me in anger. Even Padma tried to calm him down. I was mortified! In the end, he passed away in

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a nursing facility all alone during the pandemic and was cremated so there is even no grave to visit. His children were never close to our side of the family, mainly because Marta threatened anyone who reached out to him or his wives in any way. I never would have imagined that the brother and sister-in-law I idolized so much would ever end up this way.

I will never know what experiences or motivations my brother had to make the changes he made in his character. He always claimed he had become a better person. But his wife told me at the end of his life he expressed deep regret for the mistakes he had made in leaving his family. So was the change in him real? Are big changes solid or temporary? There is much to discuss about this, many possibilities, and I am sure each individual has a whole story of their own. If I could examine a positive change in someone's life, I wonder if it would be any different.

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# Did you have a favorite teacher in middle school? What made them great?



**T**hat's easy: Mr. Riplinger. He was tall with bushy red hair and a receding hair line. He was funny and kind. He is one teacher I was not scared of. I knew he would understand. He was our music teacher in the 8th grade. It wasn't a choir class, it was simply learning to appreciate music of all kinds. He could play the piano like a professional and he would often entertain us with pieces. One day he asked our class if anyone knew how to play "Für Elise" by Beethoven. No one raised a hand so I did! Actually, I had only learned approximately the first page of the piece by watching one of my brother's friends play it on our piano. Somehow I could play it correctly from just watching him play it. So I thought I could play the whole thing.... Mr. Riplinger told me what day he wanted me to play. It was easy, I could play it with my eyes closed. The day came and he called me up to play.

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I went through the part I knew very quickly and stood up. Mr. Riplinger was speechless for a moment and then he praised me and we went on with class. Nothing else was ever said to me, and it was several years before I realized how little of that piece I actually knew. One day at General Conference in the conference center I saw Mr. Riplinger, now white haired but still recognizable after some 50 years. I couldn't resist speaking to him to tell him how much I had loved having him for a teacher. He acted like he remembered me, although he'd have to have been some kind of genius for that to be true. But I reminded him of my debut with "Fur Elise" and he laughed and said he remembered that. His wife, standing at his side, assured me that he did remember all of his students. If he truly did remember all of his students from so many years ago, it was because he honestly did love each one of us, and that's what it seemed like in his class.



# What are some of your pet peeves?



In general I have a hard time with people who are irresponsible with the environment. Specifically, we live in a desert so I get really irritated with people who let water run in their homes or outside as if there were an endless supply. I am appalled at the garbage I see thrown carelessly around on roads or parks or anywhere! I get irritated with people who idle their cars or keep their homes too warm or too cool with no regard for the amount of fossil fuel they are using up. Even all the waste of paper bothers me. I guess junk mail keeps the post office in business (and I know we need the post office) but I feel sick about all the trees that are used up every year for the huge amount of paper we throw in the garbage every day. We have a problem with air pollution here in our valley so idling cars are a big problem, beyond just the matter of too many cars. People who can't sit in a car for a little while with the window down if it is hot or in a warm coat if it is cold should just stay home! Windmills and solar

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panels make such perfect sense that it is hard to believe how big oil businesses fight it. Transportation uses up enough oil to keep them in business. They should get on board with solar and wind power, support it, encourage it, be responsible for our environment.

There are other aspects of the environment that need to be carefully tended like forests, rain forests, our Great Salt Lake, wild life that contributes to the order of things. It is hard for me to understand the people who think environmentalists are weird or crazy. Some probably do get a little carried away, trying to deny human existence being as viable as nature, but we need to listen to them when they say we are melting the polar ice cap and it will cause terrible problems. We need to listen to them when they tell us what damage we are doing to our air and water and nature around us.

On a more mundane level, I am irritated by children who have not been taught manners, or for that matter, adults who seem to have no manners. Manners show that people have respect for others, that they have basic human decency. Satan is abroad in the land making converts wherever there is rudeness or lack of respect between people. People are beginning to spout off their anger in every public place. It causes embarrassment and unease now but it will get worse when they lose complete control of their behavior. What kind of manners am I talking about? Simple

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thoughtfulness, saying excuse me or thank you, a kind smile, a willingness to wait patiently, an offer to help. Road rage would not be a problem if people had respect for others. Some people think they need to be first in all lines, in all traffic, in all needs. They teach their children to be that way simply by their own behavior. Those kids become the bullies at school, disrespectful of the teachers and those who try to help them learn to be successful in life. Respect, learned from being taught good manners, holds you back to observe the situation and make useful choices instead of rushing in with anger or uneducated opinions. Also, good manners simply make other people happy! A kind word, a heartfelt thank you, the acknowledgement of another person's good efforts on your behalf. This behavior makes us all better people, happier, more willing to please, more Christ like. Children are never too young to begin learning it.

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# What is your best advice when it comes to raising children?



I can sum that up in one word: potential. I read this advice in a magazine when I was in the midst of 5 or 6 children. It really struck me like no other advice ever had. When I was disappointed or angry with one of my children I needed to remember here was potential to become a good citizen, a good parent, a good person. It changed my reactions completely. In place of angry words I tried to find something to say to my child that would remind them of their own potential. Choices are so important! As a youth I never gave a single thought to how my choices would affect my future beyond not murdering someone and never robbing a bank. Later on I wished I had been more careful about school and about honoring my parents. Maybe I wouldn't have even listened to my mother's advice but I hope I would have at least been more thoughtful about my own future. So with my own children the

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goal was always THEIR future. Even the snottiest teenager has potential. I tried very hard to remember that.



# Tell me about one of the best days you can remember.



**T**his was a hard question. By the time you've lived a long time there are many memorable days, some good, some bad. I sorted through my mind and came up with a day I have thought of many, many times. It was an ordinary day about 1980 when all my children were seated at the dinner table together. I was dressed up to rush off to a League of Women Voters event after dinner. A wonderful feeling of well being came over me as I looked around at my husband and children, all eating without complaint, just talking together. I suddenly realized how perfect my life was, how much I loved my family, that this was indeed the prime of my life. My heart swelled as I thought how blessed we all were in health, intelligence, abundance, and love. I had a rare feeling of self worth. I was proud of my family and proud of my work with the League. League members had made me feel

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very capable as a moderator and spokeswoman for our various political events. Having an anxious personality, that sense of well being swelling up within me was rare and it almost brought tears to my eyes. So I have remembered that meal with my family to remind myself of that lovely feeling, so fleeting, so quickly gone forever, and yet so lasting a memory to encourage me through life.



# What do you admire most about your mother?



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Perhaps one of her good characteristics was also her downfall. She was not a complainer. If she was sick or tired or worried or sad, she never bothered anyone with it. This may be one reason

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why I was so angry at her for years growing up. I never guessed what she was suffering! From this late point in my life, I understand better her misery. But when she was living it, I never caught a glimpse. I think sometimes her suffering came out in displays of impatience or anger, and I never saw through it to try to understand her or talk to her about anything personal. She was alone on her island, and I was alone on mine. I am so ashamed of the self centered, opinionated child I must have been. I am almost afraid (or embarrassed) to meet her again in the next life but maybe both of us will have grown in understanding by then.

Mother was also very dutiful. She did her work, took care of what was expected of her, no matter how upset she may have been. I have tender memories of her when I was sick. I recall her sitting on the edge of my bed putting her soft hands on my forehead and asking if I felt like eating anything. She would take care to provide just what I wanted, in fact she took good care of the sick wherever they may have been. She was always checking on her niece who lived nearby and was sometimes sick. I suspect she learned that from watching her mother care for the sick in their home where her mother had a room dedicated for birthing babies and tending women who were sick.

I once hurt my wrist in fall from a rope swing and she thought I was being a baby when I complained about it. After a

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while a lump began forming on my wrist and she became alarmed and took me to a doctor who then x-rayed, found it broken, and had to re-break it in order to set it properly. Mother felt sick about it. She was so sorry she had been so thoughtless. But she expected us all to be as stoic as she was. She never complained so neither should we.

It is this quality of bravery or strength that forced her to turn to drink later on when she really could not deal with what life dealt her. Rather than talk and express her feelings, she could privately take a drink and face the day. She didn't even know about addictions. She didn't know that she had become addicted. I think she died thinking she would indeed quit. At one point a few years before she died, she called me to tell me she had just had a physical exam and was given "a clean bill of health". She assured me she was in perfectly good health. I knew her doctor so I called him just to hear his side of the story. He said he had told her she was dying and he had told her exactly what she needed to do to change things. I realized that Mother did not want me lecturing her anymore about her health. She was going to tough it out on her own in her own way.

I had always tried to encourage her to turn to the Lord for help. She gave up on prayer or church attendance, the very things that would have helped her find the particular strength she lacked in dealing with the devastation of being deserted by

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the man she loved. I wish so much she had chosen prayer in place of wine but she didn't ask anyone for help, not even her Father in Heaven. So while I admire her very much for her strength in never complaining or "bothering" other people, in the end it was this quality that shortened her life.

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# Are you more like your father or your mother? In what ways?



I am more like my father. I look like his side of the family. He was emotionally sensitive with a cute sense of humor. He was loving and encouraging. He was vulnerable to his feelings, to his weaknesses. I see those characteristics in myself, some more than others. Mother was not affectionate or loving. She seemed to be insensitive to other people's deep feelings. She was not tempted by her desires. She was always in control of her physical urges until she met up with alcohol. My father gave in to every desire for himself and those he loved. When he had money he spent it immediately to give pleasure to someone. Mother counted her pennies and kept them for rainy days. In some ways they were a good match because her strengths made up for his weakness. However, when you need love and tenderness there is no substitute. Mother came from a strict, religious family of hard

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workers. Dad came from a family of love and fun along with hard work. His mother attended church but his father did not so he was free to choose how he felt about religion. For a long time he had no particular interest in it. Then after he had completely messed up his life along with some other people's lives, he turned to religion for safety and comfort. He was a scripture reciter the last 40 years of his long life. Oddly, Mother never turned to religion for solace or help. In fact, she fell away from it. I think she just gave up the effort when her life began to manage her, instead of the other way around.

I find in myself that I turn to religion for every need I ever encounter and I always have. Love and affection are a great need for me. I am not always strong against my urges. I understand my father's choice to give in. But I have lines I will not cross. I think I have more strength that way than either of my parents, and it boils down to the fact that I have always wanted to be right with my Father in Heaven. Neither of my parents, for most of their lives, turned to religion, and I feel that was their big mistake. Ever since I was very young I felt my prayers have been answered, sometimes in really wonderful ways. I still feel that way and need that assurance at this time of life more than ever.

Like most of us, I have days when I see my mother in me. Sometimes I even see her in my mirror. I understand her better now, and I have a compassion I wish I could have had while she



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was alive! But I am not like her in many ways. She was dutiful; I am dutiful. She was respectful and felt good manners were of primary importance. Sometimes I have to remind myself to be more like that, the way she taught me to be. But I would describe her as being cold, and I dearly hope no one would describe me that way. I know we often know ourselves less than we know those around us. I wonder what I really seem like, what kind of example I really set on the outside. Do we ever really know ourselves the way those around us know us? That is why we all need to give each other the benefit of the doubt. Give each other plenty of room to make mistakes and be forgiven. My father didn't ever intend to break hearts and he was very sorry when he saw what he had done. But he never learned to overlook the weaknesses of others, in spite of it. Mother just doggedly carried on, keeping things in order, being responsible, casting aside any deep emotions. I am not sure what I would have done in my mother's place. I don't think I am as strong as she was on the outside. Obviously she had caved in somewhere deep inside herself where she could not recover and needed drink to get through the day. I used to be disgusted with her for it but now I understand her suffering like I never did before she died. I hope I get a chance to apologize to her.

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# What are your favorite musicians, bands or albums?



**B**oth Ed and I have always loved the music from the 40's which our parents listened to: the big bands, Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw and Les Brown to name a few. Since then the generations have been separated by taste in music being so vastly different from one's parents! Ed and I grew up in the 50's so that is our favorite collection. I loved the Four Lads, the Four Freshmen, and Johnny Mathis, plus lots of songs by Doris Day, Bing Crosby, and Frank Sinatra. Closer into the 60's when I got into college my whole music taste was swept up in the folk singers: Glenn Campbell, The Kingston Trio, the Limelighters, and the Peter, Paul and Mary trio. My all time favorite is John Denver who was basically a folk singer/poet who wrote most of his songs. I still love that genre of popular music the very most with James Taylor being a folk singer of today. I can't forget

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Herb Alpert and the Tia Juana Brass who were very popular for a few years in the late 50's and then disappeared. But I have several of his records I still enjoy, especially when I feel like dancing! "Whipped Cream" was my favorite. Even though the Beatles entered onto the scene while I was in college, I never paid any attention to them for some reason; just as earlier I had never paid much attention to Elvis Presley. I am not sure why.

At the same time, the 50's, my close friend, Annette, had an uncle who was a famous classical pianist. Because of him we started going to the Utah symphony regularly when Maurice Abravanel began concerts in the Tabernacle on Temple Square. We joined the "Symphony Debs", a club in our high school where we got cheaper season tickets and had a few other perks I can't even remember now. I developed a real love for classical music and basically have had season tickets to the symphony my whole life since. The Utah Symphony now has a beautiful symphony hall named Abravanel Hall. Years ago I promised Ed I would go to the football games with him if he would go to the symphony with me, and we did. He has learned to appreciate classical music but I am sorry to admit I never have figured out football.

Today I have a collection of folk music, Tabernacle Choir, Sarah Brightman, Josh Groban, and among others, a special symphony by Robert Schumann No. 3, the Rhenish, which I play all the time around the house. My iPod has mostly folk music on

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it laced with Tabernacle Choir. This particular music can carry me away, turn a dull day into a good one, and fill my heart with joy whenever I need it. I was on a cruise ship once, out in the ocean on a sunny day. I sat on the deck listening to my iPod and felt like I was flying over that ocean! I will never forget that special experience. Music is a wonderful thing. I guess the beat of modern music is what does it for people today because the words are totally uninspired repetitions of one line to a beat. That beat makes me think of natives dancing around a campfire getting psyched up for a battle. The beat does psyche you up. But I prefer to be "carried" up on the wings of beautiful tunes and words or the stories told by the folk singers.

Since this is my last entry in Storyworth, I just want to say this has been a wonderful ride through an otherwise miserable year of isolation in a pandemic. I have loved being carried back to revisit my life and the people in it. Even though I have always kept a journal, most of it is just what was happening and not much about my thoughts or feelings. I think I have gained a greater appreciation for my mother and a clearer understanding of things I hadn't even wanted to think about in my past. I am grateful I had this opportunity. I am grateful to my two daughters who made it possible. If they loved the songs I sang to them as children, it was because of my love for folk music.

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# The pets I have had



**I**n my very first memory of this life I am sitting in a metal lawn chair in the front yard of our home pulling my legs up in fear of a little black dog who was barking and nipping at me. His name was Buster and soon after that my mother got rid of him, how I hate to think, because she was raised on a farm and didn't have a lot of compassion for animals. They were just animals. A few years later my father came home with a beautiful Collie we named Tim. Dad had had a Collie he loved named Tim as a boy. Mother would not even think of having a dog in the house and we had no fences in our large yard so Tim ran free, as dogs should, my mother believed. Tim soon ran out into the street and was killed. It was my first experience with loss and I was devastated! But Mother reminded me we still had two big grey cats that stayed close to home in the wisteria vine and the back yard porch. They were my best friends until the day a neighbor's Great Dane dog came into our yard and picked one of them up in his giant teeth and shook it to death right in front of my eyes! It

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was my first experience with violence and I was devastated.

We moved to a different house and got a cute little black dog named Sam. He made a name for himself the cold morning he went into the garage and found an old discarded velvet pillow, carried it out into the sunshine of the back lawn and sat on it like king Tut. We took him with us to the next house we lived in where he too was promptly run over and killed on our street just as he was running to meet me walking home from school. Again I was devastated.

One day as I was walking home from my piano lesson on Casto Lane, I saw a little brown puppy rummaging in someone's garden. I stopped to pet him and the lady of the house came out to ask me if he were mine. I said no. She said well you can have him then because he's been rummaging around here all day and I am about to throw him out. I carried him home and begged Mother to let me keep him. She was a sucker for dogs and cats even though she insisted they stay outside. So she let me keep him and I named him Seasor (or however I spelled it in those days). Seasor became an expert at chasing cars without getting killed. He followed me wherever I went and waited outside the Holladay Theater on Saturdays for me to watch a movie and a Superman serial. He ran in the horse pasture with me and was kind and considerate of the various cats which joined him over the years. One day he came to meet me at the bus stop after school, bouncing around with noticeable excitement. At home he



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led me straight to a bush where I found our skinny emaciated cat, fondly named Asthma, lying beside one tiny baby kitten. It seemed like he thought he was the proud father. That kitten grew up to have a whole family of kittens with whom Seaser shared food and water dishes. I loved that dog so much, I can't even tell you how much. Then I learned another of life's very hard lessons when our lives fell apart and my mother had to sell our house there in the county and move us into an apartment in the city. True to her disregard for animal care, and also lacking the wonderful future blessing of a Humane Society, we just packed up and drove away and left Seaser there by himself. Mother tried to explain that the new owners had said they would take care of him. But she was not telling the truth. My friends who lived out near us and with whom I remained in contact, told me they eventually found him dead in a field by our old house. It has haunted me all these years and I am hoping God will let me have Seaser in the next life so I can hug him and love him forever.

Many years went by after that before I ever had another pet. It was a little white curly haired dog we named Muffy after all six of my children had been born. Like my mother taught me, I thought dogs should live outside, and Muffy became a scroungy, dirty wild thing whose whole ambition in life was to escape from our fenced in back yard and take a run out in the wide world. On some cold winter nights I would bring him into the house and tie him up( because he was not house broken) near where we were

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watching TV or eating or whatever. He didn't like it. He preferred being outside. The only use he had for coming inside was that occasionally he could escape to the street by running out the front door when someone opened it. He lived a long life with us in this way. We took him camping where he amazingly had the sense to stick close to us. Eventually when he was about 13 years old he became almost blind and deaf. His hobby was still escaping whenever he could. One day when he was out for a freedom run, he ran in front of a car and was killed. John buried him in our back yard, and it was a long time before I ventured to have another dog.

Meanwhile we collected cats of whom only one is really worth mentioning: Whoopee. He was black and white and was totally willing to use a litter box. He was a coward about going outside so he could almost always be found under Ed's and my bed. Paul had found him as a tiny frightened kitten up in a tree. We had him neutered so he was a good old soft rag of a cat. He was with us for many years during which time the kids got me a puppy for a Christmas present in 1996. She was a beautiful brindled Australian mix and we named her Mapache, the Spanish word for racoon. I made up my mind she would be a proper pet. I kept her in the house, she was trained to go out for potty purposes, and she became a beloved family pet for many years, kids and grandkids. There are many stories about her chasing deer at the ranch, herding sheep and cows uninvited, and of

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course the broken arm and finger I got in separate events where she was protecting me from another dog. She was Ed's best buddy for going on walks, and she greeted us at the door every time we left the house. When she got sick and died at the age of 14 Ed and I mourned her for weeks. Her memory is a treasure for us. I hope in heaven she has met up with Seasor and that the two of them will be there waiting to see me when I arrive.

