John Henry Wickham Jr.

December 3, 1926 ~ September 20, 2014

Husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, musician, avid collector, lover of the Gospel, and a friend to all.

After a lengthy decline, John Henry Wickham Jr of West Valley City, died, (age 87 years, 292 days), of natural causes peacefully at the Mt. Olympus Rehabilitation Center in Salt Lake City on September 20th 2014. A number of his family was present.

John was born in Salem, Nebraska on December 3, 1926 to John Henry Wickham Sr. and Emma Eva Peck. John dropped out of school in the 9th grade to support his mother and his 4 younger siblings. At the age of 15 he, his mother, and his siblings all joined LDS church in Nebraska in April of 1941. He moved to Utah in 1944 and married Betty Lou Vavra October 30, 1944.

John joined the Navy and served his country in the Pacific Theater in the Philippines during World War II.

He was married three times. First to Betty Lou Vavra, October, 1944, (later divorced), then to LaPreal Tanner, July, 1968. (later divorced), and Betty Lou Stewart, June,1970. He had a total of 6 children. John Henry Wickham III, Jon Van Allen, Gloria Wickham Olds, Julie Wickham Sawyer, Beverly Wickham Shellabarger, and Jerry Lee Wickham.

He was a collector! He collected coins, musical instruments and many other items, but his biggest collection by far was his collection of recorded music! Over the span of several decades, his incredible love for music, (mainly Country Western and Gospel), helped him collect over 3 thousand LP albums, CD's, cassette and reel-to-reel tapes and single records. But he didn't just listen to it, he played it as well! He learned to play the guitar, the banjo, the ukulele, electric bass, autoharp, and harmonica. It was a common experience during holidays and other events for John to sing and play his guitar. He even wrote several songs which he loved to sing for friends and family. He really enjoyed getting together with friends and have music playing parties. In his later years, he played his guitar at the Kearns Senior Center. His great love for music influenced many of his posterity to pursue music as well.

John had a great love for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He had a strong testimony from the time he was baptized till the day he died. John and his wife Betty Lou Stewart Wickham served a mission together in the Missouri Independence Mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints from December of 1990 till January of 1992. After moving back to West Valley City, he faithfully served as a Temple Worker in the Jordan River Temple for 13 years. He loved the temple deeply and serving in it. He enjoyed serving others and rarely passed an opportunity to lend a helping hand if possible.

John was a hard worker. He spent most of his life as a laborer for his livelihood. He worked at McGee and Hogan's Machine Works for several years. In addition to working at a few gas stations and other jobs, he worked for several years at Kennecott Copper Mine as a sweeper. After moving to Port Neches, Texas in 1985, he became a maintenance man for the Ridgewood Apartments. He did maintenance work till he retired in 1990 in Oceanside

California. After his mission he and his wife Betty moved back to Port Neches, Texas and worked for a few more years at the Ridgewood Apartments. His last job was at Jungle Jim's in Midvale, Utah. He loved working with kids and the kids loved him as well.

John was a shutterbug! He took nearly 3 thousand photos. Whatever the occasion, he was ready with his camera. He was nearly as busy with his video camera. He captured many important family events over the years. His family is eternally grateful for this, as his photos and videos help them remember those events and times with more clarity.

He is preceded in death by his son John Henry Wickham III, a stepdaughter Paula Hemingway, his sisters Margorie Ann Wickham, Mary Ellen, Allura Maude, and Dorothy Jeanne, as well two brothers, Robert Eugene and Joe Niemann. He is survived by his wife Betty Lou Stewart Hemingway Wickham, four brothers: Tom Wickham, Charles Wickhamshire, John Norman Wickham and Joe Eckley, and three sisters: Edna Ruth Wickham, Laura Jane Wickham Rockis and Shirlyn Eckley Richards. He is also survived by sons Jon Van Allen and Jerry Lee Wickham, and daughters Gloria Wickham Olds, Julie Wickham Sawyer and Beverly Wickham Shellabarger. He is also survived by 9 stepchildren; Stepsons: Rulon Vern Hemingway, Robin Stewart Hemingway, and William Marcus Hemingway. Stepdaughters: Colleen Hemingway Sadler, Christine Hemingway Ellis, Jody Hemingway VanValkenburg, Carma Hemingway, Jennis Hemingway, and Dixie Hemingway. He is also survived by numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We'll all miss you!

Services will be heldon Tuesdaythe 30th of September at the Kearns East Stake Building (4731 South 4300 West, Kearns, UT). A viewing will be held from9:45-10:45 AM. The funeral will take place starting 11:00AM-12:00PM.There will be a grave-side service with military honors given at2:00PMat Larkin Sunset Gardens (1950 E 10600 S Sandy, UT 84092). After the Graveside service there will be a memorial service for family members till5:00at the facilities at Larkin Sunset GardensMortuary.

A special thank you for the friendly staff of the Mt. Olympus Rehabilitation Center for the years of kind care given to John during his declining health. Also a special thank you for the tireless effort of the hospice nurses who provided tender care during John's final weeks so he was as comfortable as was possible.