

Kent B Linebaugh

September 22, 1934 ~ April 14, 2019

On April 14, 2019, Kent B Linebaugh passed away in his Salt Lake City home encircled by family. Taken by an unusually swift, aggressive skin cancer, he'd played his weekly tennis matches just over a month earlier. During his final days, he was as gracious, funny and principled as he had been throughout his extraordinary life.

Kent was born on September 22, 1934 in Provo, Utah, to Thora Hawkins and Glade Carleton Linebaugh. He spent his youngest years in Pleasant Grove and Orem where his lifelong love of quarter horses was fostered by his father and beloved grandfather, B. C. Linebaugh. At age ten, he moved to Salt Lake City where he attended Longfellow Elementary, Bryant Junior High (where he was elected student body president) and East High School. While at East, Kent was a state debate champion and student body vice president; more important to him, he formed friendships that enriched his entire life, personally and professionally.

After high school, Kent attended the University of Utah where he majored in Economics, affiliated with Sigma Chi Fraternity where he served as both pledge trainer and president and, again, made lasting friendships. In 1958, he won the national collegiate debate championship; he was also business manager of the Utah Chronicle, a member of the Air Force ROTC and a devoted Ute fan. After his sophomore year at the U, Kent served a two-year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the Northwestern States Mission where he served as assistant to the president and developed a deep faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ as well as a far-reaching knowledge of the scriptures and an abiding commitment to the church he loved.

In 1961, Kent graduated from the University of Utah College of Law where he was Chief Justice of the Student Court and awarded the Tiffany Cup for "supremacy in oral argument." He was also known for wearing cowboy boots on campus.

Six weeks before he was due to take the Utah State BAR exam, he met Sherry Bird on a blind date. Sensing that she might be a "distraction," he didn't call her again until after he'd taken the BAR; two days after receiving news that he'd passed, he asked her to marry him and spent the next fifty-seven years devoted to her and their children. They were married January 12, 1962 in the Salt Lake Temple and honeymooned on their way to McClelland Air Force Base in Sacramento where Kent was commissioned a USAF-JAG captain.

Their first two children, Cass and Mark, were born in California before they moved home to Salt Lake where Kent joined the legal firm, Jones, Waldo, Holbrook and McDonough; he was made the youngest partner in the firm's history within two years. In 1966, Kent and Sherry lost their third child, Kent Jr., after only three days. They welcomed two more little girls, Biff and Sammy, in 1970 and 1972.

Kent enjoyed a distinguished professional career as an attorney,Äîfirst at Jones Waldo, then as general counsel for Terracor which developed the community of Bloomington, Utah; Kent named the streets of Bloomington after great racehorses, including Man O' War Bridge which spans the Virgin River. He went on to found the law firms, Johnson and Linebaugh, and Jardine, Linebaugh, Brown and Dunn before finishing his career with Jones Waldo and devoting himself to pro bono work.

Simultaneously, Kent pursued his passionate interest in breeding and racing quarter horses and played important roles in establishing horseracing in the intermountain region. He was a founding member of the Intermountain Quarter Horse Association, editor of its quarterly journal and also served on the board of the American Quarter Horse Association. Over nearly six decades, he raised and owned outstanding horses and took enormous pleasure and pride in campaigning them. Kent's other great pleasures included playing weekly tennis and basketball with good friends, annual family trips to Bloomington and Newport Beach, world travel with Sherry, new cars, the Days of '47 parade (marching bands made him cry) and sports,Äîall sports,Äîespecially those played by his children and grandchildren. He almost never missed a game,Äîrec league, little league, high school or D-1,Äîthat anybody he cared about had anything to do with.

He was an avid reader, historian, eloquent writer and orator whose gifts served him well as he served others,Äîas the very first returned missionary to work as a guide on Temple Square, as a member of the University and Emigration Stake High Councils, as bishop of the Twelfth Ward Salt Lake Central Stake, and for thirteen years, as Legal Coordinator for the Salt Lake Central City Mission (for which he was awarded the Franklin S. Richards Public Service Award in 2009). His rare intellect and wisdom combined with refined manners and earthy humor made him irresistible to most; he somehow managed to be both a consummate gentleman and inveterate flirt. He loved his life, and if integrity is defined as being what you seem, Kent Linebaugh was its epitome; he was a Christian man,Äîkind, generous, rational, committed to the people and institutions he loved, and rigorous in the practice of his bone-deep principles. His laughter and pride delighted his loved ones and his distress or disappointment was hard for them to bear. His absence will be much, much harder.

Kent is survived by his adored wife, Sherron Evelyn Bird Linebaugh; his children, Catherine McNally (Jeffrey); Mark B Linebaugh; Elizabeth Romney (Matthew); Sarah Linebaugh; ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren; sisters, Linda Nicholls and Maryanne Mauss (Dan). He is preceded in death by his parents; brother, Ronald Glade Linebaugh; sister, Kathleen L. Bradley; son, Kent B Linebaugh, Jr.; grandson, Nash Linebaugh Romney.

Services will be held at noon on Saturday, April 20, at Garden Heights Ward, 2220 Fisher Lane, Salt Lake City. Friends and family may attend a viewing at Larkin Mortuary, 260 East South Temple, on Friday evening from 6:00 until 8:00 p.m. or before the funeral at Garden Heights Ward from 10:30-11:45 a.m.