Keith Turner Thomas

November 27, 1920 ~ November 24, 2014

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Keith Turner Thomas passed away of natural causes on 24 November 2014 in Sandy, Utah, just three days shy of his 94th birthday.

Keith, and his beloved twin brother, Kenneth, were born in Grace, Idaho, to Howard Lafayette and Annie May (Turner) Thomas on 27 November 1920. He attended school at a one-room schoolhouse in Lago, Idaho; Grace Elementary; Davis High School (Kaysville, Utah); and Grace High School. He is a World War II veteran, assigned to the Army's Signal Corps. He credited his signaling skills to learning Morse code as a Boy Scout and his musical training.

After his honorable discharge from the Army during the summer of 1946, Keith met his future wife, Ruth Hembree Dalton, at a dance in Soda Springs, Idaho.He attended one semester at Utah State Agricultural College. There, he and Ruth attended the Military Ball and soon after were married on 15 July 1947 in the Logan Utah Temple.

Keith's greatest love was for his devoted wife Ruth, but his next love was farming. He returned home and continued farming with his family in Grace. Hoping to take advantage of an opportunity for war veterans to draw a farm on a new development of land, he and Ruth rented a farm 10 miles north of Rupert, Idaho. When they didn't draw a farm, they purchased 80 acres in Unity, south of Burley. There he farmed from 1953 until he sold the farm to his son, Neil. He continued to help with many tasks until he was unable to continue.

Keith played in the Thomas family orchestra in Grace. After the war, he played in the Rhythm Pals Orchestra with Kenneth and friends in Grace.As Keith and Ruth raised their children, they encouraged each of them to learn to play a musical instrument.They formed their own Thomas Family Orchestra.It was a joy for Keith and Ruth to play with their children, and they appreciated the opportunity to earn extramoney.They played for as many as 52 dances in one year around the Mini-Cassia area.

He also sold life insurance, did land surveying and land-leveling for many Mini-Cassia farmers, and worked for the Burley Irrigation District where his integrity and concern for his fellow farmers formed many strong friendships and memories with them. In retirement, his favorite pastimes were playing his saxophone, pitching horseshoes, and driving ditches to visit friends. He and Ruth traveled from the West coast to Mississippi to visit old stomping grounds, friends, and see new places. He participated in horseshoe pitching tournaments in Idaho, Utah, and national tournaments in Sturgis, South Dakota; Gillette, Wyoming; and Pocatello, Idaho. He won many of those competitions in his class.

Keith was active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, serving as a young men's leader, counselor in a bishopric, executive secretary, High Priest group leader, and others. His favorite may have been as librarian with Ruth.

Keith is preceded in death by his beloved wife, Ruth; a son, David J. Thomas; his parents; three sisters, Neva Johnson, Aileen Westerburg, and Lillian Peterson; and four brothers, Franklin H. Thomas, Harrison A. Thomas, Donald T. Thomas, and Kenneth T. Thomas.

Keith is survived by his children: R. Craig (Linda) Thomas of Orem, UT; daughter-in-law, Irene Thomas, of North Salt Lake, UT; Margaret (Jim) McMurtrey of Phoenix, AZ; Neil R. (Carla) Thomas of Burley, ID; Anne (David) Merrill of Richland, WA; Steven R. (Karen) Thomas; and Paula (Paul) Seaich of Sandy, UT,; 27 grandchildren; and 36 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held 10:00 AM Saturday, 29 November 2014 at 10885 S Pampas Dr (831 East), Sandy, Utah. Burial will follow at 3:00 PM at the Grace Cemetery in Grace, Idaho. Arrangements are by Larkin Mortuary.

Friends may call from 6:00 to 8:00 PM, Friday, 28 November 2014 at Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 E 10600 S, Sandy, Utah and Saturday one hour prior to services at the church.

Keith's family wishes to extend our sincere thanks to the staff at Alta Ridge Assisted Living and Millcreek Home Health and Hospice for the kind care given to Keith.