John Gadd

May 11, 1938 ~ June 26, 2017

John David Clayton Gadd, loving husband, father, grandfather and friend, passed away on June 26 from complications related to Alzheimer's disease. He was 79 years old.

Born May 11, 1938 in Luton, Bedfordshire, England, John was an only child to Edna Gladys Clayton and William Herbert "Mac" Gadd. He spent his early childhood amid the turmoil of World War II and throughout his life would share stories about gas mask drills at school, time spent in his neighborhood's bomb shelter and the peace he felt when his beloved "Spitfire" fighter plane could be heard in the skies above England during German bombing raids.

At age 9 John, along with his mother and father, left England to pursue a new life in America. They arrived in New York Harbor on July 4, 1947, and made their way to Salt Lake City, Utah. John eventually lost his English accent and quickly developed a passion for the United States of America and the events comprising our nation's history.

John graduated from South High School in Salt Lake City, and received bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Utah.

His passion for U.S. history meshed seamlessly with what many considered to be his playground , the high school classroom. For more than 30 years he taught American History and Advanced Placement American History to thousands of students at Kearns, Taylorsville and Skyline High Schools in the Granite School District. His unique teaching style, along with his ability to inspire the student mind, is considered one of his greatest legacies.

To maintain his dream of being an educator, John took on a variety of outside responsibilities. Some of his most memorable include being the train engineer at Utah's Hogle Zoo, president of the Granite Education Association, several positions at Salt Lake County Recreation and most notably, part-owner of Nielsen's Frozen Custard on Highland Drive and 3900 South.

An active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, John returned to his native England to serve in what was known as the British Mission. In September 1963 he married his sweetheart, Glenell "Nelly" Whatcott, in the Salt Lake Temple for time and all eternity, and throughout his life he held a number of callings, including high councilman in the Salt Lake Winder Stake and bishop of the Winder 16th Singles Ward. He and his sweet Nelly also served a five-year service mission at the Conference Center at Temple Square.

A kid at heart, John never shied away from his childlike obsession with cars, trains and airplanes. Some of his happiest moments came when he'd spot an old car traveling on the road (especially a Pontiac!), or having to stop for several minutes at a railroad crossing. But what he loved more than anything else was airplanes , his favorite activity being to attend air shows at Hill Air Force Base with family and friends to watch the Thunderbirds. To fulfill his passion for airplanes, the last position he held was as a volunteer tour guide at the Hill Aerospace Museum at Hill Air Force Base, which he did until 2014.

John is survived by his wife, Nelly, four children, John David Gadd, Karen Howell (Bryan), Kathy Wilkinson (Jeff), and Paul Clayton Gadd (Nicole), as well as 10 grandchildren, Tanner, Ryan, Bryn, Alli, Megan, Karyna, Cannon, Hailey, Madison and Ashlee.

The family would like to express appreciation for the many doctors, nurses and medical staff who assisted John during his journey over the past four years. Special thanks go to the staff at Legacy Village of Sugarhouse and Legacy Healthcare and Hospice for the loving care they provided dad near the end of his life.

A viewing will be held on Thursday, June 29, 2017 from 6:00 , 8:30 p.m. at Larkin Mortuary, 260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah. Funeral services will be held Friday, June 30, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at the Bountiful 5th Ward meetinghouse, 990 North100 West, Bountiful, Utah (across the street from Viewmont High School). A viewing will be held prior to the funeral services from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to the LDS Perpetual Education Fund. Interment will be at Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park.