Evan Owen Hansen

December 23, 1921 ~ May 3, 2017

Evan Owen Hansen, a true gentleman beloved by family and friends for his unfailing kindness and humility, died at home on May 3, 2017 of causes incident to age. He was 95 years old.

Owen was born on December 23, 1921 in Logan, Utah, one of eight children born to Leo Albert Hansen and Grettle Benson Owen. Leo was a salesman and Grettle was a seamstress. Owen grew up raising pigeons and chickens with his father, and winning blue ribbons at the National Pigeon Show in San Francisco. An expert marble player, Owen won the Utah state championship at age 12, after the City of Logan paid his expenses to travel to Salt Lake City for the tournament. He loved to ride horses and build model airplanes. When Owen was fourteen, the Hansen family moved from Logan to Salt Lake City, where his father continued to raise homing pigeons and nurture a large rose garden. Owen graduated from South High School in Salt Lake City in 1940, and spent his senior year as the student body president. He served as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Northern States Mission from 1942-1944. Thereafter, he was accepted into the Navy V8 program and served in the military from September 1944 , July 1946.

Owen graduated from the University of Utah in 1949 with a degree in Business and Economics. It was during his senior year at the university that he chanced upon Darlene Mae Housley on the ski slopes of Alta. They were married in the Salt Lake Temple on June 11, 1948, in a ceremony performed by Ezra Taft Benson. Work opportunities for Owen and a desire to be close to Darlene's family took the young family to Oklahoma City in 1950, and then to Dallas in 1953, where Owen and Darlene raised their six children and lived for forty-eight years. Along with Darlene's father, Owen owned and operated Housley-Hansen Furniture, the largest fine furniture and interior design store in Dallas at the time. He also carried on his father's tradition of raising homing pigeons, and built his children a pigeon coop and fort in their backyard.

Owen's service as a bishop's counselor and then as a bishop totaled nine years, and he was a sealer in the Dallas LDS temple. He and Darlene served as missionaries in a Laotian ward in Dallas, lending their experience and testimonies to help strengthen the Laotian members of the church. Owen and Darlene were enthusiastic and tireless missionaries, and in 2001 accepted a call to serve as full-time missionaries on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. They extended their service twice and were privileged to serve during the 2002 Winter Olympics. Owen and Darlene remained in Salt Lake City after their mission, where they continued to nurture their grandchildren and great-grandchildren and serve those around them. They were inseparable until Darlene's death on May 17, 2016.

A journal entry from Darlene records, "The objective of every father on earth should be to emulate the example of our Father in Heaven as far as that is possible in mortal life. Owen is that kind of father."

Owen is survived by his children Kathleen Hansen Hinckley (Clark); Lori Lynn Hansen Nelson (Ron); Steven Owen Hansen (Jill); Clark Housley Hansen (Sheila); and Darlene "Dolly" Mae Hansen Close (Calvin); 30 grandchildren and 47 great-grandchildren.

Owen was preceded in death by his parents; his siblings Marian, Leo Jr., Conrad, Richard, Lewis, Karen and Grettle; his sweetheart Darlene, whom he affectionately called Doll; and his son Scott Housley Hansen.

Funeral services will take place Saturday, May 13, 2017, at 11:00 a.m. at the Ensign LDS Stake Center, 135 A St, Salt Lake City, 84103. Viewings will be Friday, May 12, 2017, from 6:00 , 8:00 p.m. at Larkin Mortuary, 260 East South Temple, and Saturday May 13, 2017, from 9:30 , 10:45 a.m. immediately preceding the funeral at the Ensign LDS Stake Center. In lieu of flowers, the family invites you to make a donation to the LDS Church Temple Construction fund, the Temple Patron Assistance fund, or the General Missionary fund.