Wilfred Walker \"Pink\" Ellis

February 14, 1926 ~ May 29, 2015

On Friday morning, May 29, 2015, our husband, father, brother, uncle, grandfather and great-grandfather and all-around smile-maker Wilfred Walker Ellis, passed away peacefully at St. Mark's Hospital with his family by his side, following a fall in his home. He will be remembered for his strength of character and uncanny ability to joke and laugh.

Wilfred was born in Salt Lake City on February 14, 1926 to Jack Wilfred Ellis and Madeline Walker, English immigrants who instilled in him a deep love and loyalty to his country.

Wilfred was known as "Pink" throughout his life. He really never knew how he got that nickname, but it sure stuck. Pink was "an Avenues kid." He liked to joke that he was "born on O Street and had to walk a block to P."

Pink attended West High School. He was in the ROTC, and loved raising and lowering the flag as part of his ROTC duties. He graduated in the West High class of 1943, when World War II was 1 Ω years old.

At that time a representative from Mountain Bell Telephone called West High School looking for a business-minded student to work for them. Pink said he "didn't know anything about Mountain Bell, but it was worth a try." Forty-two years later he retired from Mountain Bell's Accounting and Comptroller divisions in the Denver and Salt Lake City corporate offices.

He enlisted in the Army Air Corp in April 1944. He served in the Pacific Theater in the 20th Air Force as a radio operator on the B-29, flying out of Tinian and Guam.

He returned to Mountain Bell in 1946 and soon met his sweetheart and future wife, Verlene "Vicki" Smart. They were married on April 8, 1948, and were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple.

Pink and Vicki were transferred by Mountain Bell to Denver, Colorado in 1956 and made their home in southeast Denver.

Pink was active in the Boy Scouts of America, serving as Scout Master for 7 years in the Denver area. In 1970, he was thrilled when seven of his troop members were awarded the rank of Eagle Scout on the same day. He received the Silver Beaver award in 1970, one of scouting's highest honors given to adult scouters.

A faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Pink served as Ward Clerk, Bishop of the Denver 3rd Ward, counselor in the Denver, Colorado Stake presidency, High Council, Millcreek Utah Stake Executive Secretary, Salt Lake Temple worker, and was called to the Member and Statistical Records Mission in Salt Lake City.

He was a member of the American Kennel Club and loved to show his champion Bassett Hounds. In 1976 the AKC granted him a license to judge the Hound Group at AKC Dog Shows.

Pink and Vicki enjoyed traveling, going on numerous cruises and spending time in far flung places including the Canary Islands, Thailand, and Morocco.

After retiring from Mountain Bell, Pink and Vicki left Denver, their home of 30 years and moved to Salt Lake City. They opened TLC Pastries and Deli (Traditional Leavening Concepts) in the Brickyard Plaza with their son Tom, which they ran together for 10 years.

Pink liked to stay busy; in 2000 he worked as a U.S. Census taker. In 2010, at the age of 84 he worked for the Census again, this time in a supervisory capacity at the U.S. Census Bureau Office in Sandy.

Ever the accountant, until just over a year ago Pink worked as a fiduciary for the Veterans Administration, helping individual veterans keep their finances in order. He formed lasting friendships with the men he assisted.

He enjoyed following his children's and grandchildren's personal accomplishments all his life.

He is survived by his wife, Vicki; his children, all of Utah: Thomas W. Ellis (Jana), LaVerkin; Lezlee Whiting (Blaine), Roosevelt; and Judy Stevenson (Hank), Bluebell. A sister, Madeline "Midge" Gillespie, Salt Lake City, 12 grandchildren and 17 Ω great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, and a sister, Rosemary Steenblik.

Funeral services will be held Friday, June 5th, 10:30 a.m. at Millcreek Stake Center, 4220 South 420 East, Salt Lake City. A viewing will be held Thursday, June 4th, 6 to 8 p.m. at Larkin Mortuary, 260 East South Temple, and on Friday one hour prior to services. Interment will be at Lake Hills Cemetery1005 S. State St., Sandy, UT 84070, with military honors and a bagpipe band.

Condolences may be made at www.larkinmortuary.com