Ralph Hess Steenblik

May 6, 1928 ~ June 7, 2018

Ralph Hess Steenblik, 90, died peacefully at home on June 7, 2018 surrounded by family. He was born on May 6, 1928 to Roelof Steenblik and Dina Adriana Hess, who were both born in Holland. Ralph's death was caused by congestive heart failure that manifested itself just six weeks before his passing.

Ralph married his high school sweetheart and eternal love, Joyce Beesley, in the Salt Lake Temple on August 30, 1950 in a marriage solemnized by Apostle Spencer W. Kimball. They have six children, Scott Steenblik (Janice), Lloyd Steenblik (Margie), Cynthia Carlisle (Brent), Annette Sheffield (Richard), Marcell Baker (Jeff), and Karl Steenblik (Larisa). Now having 29 grandchildren and 60 great-grandchildren, Ralph often taught and rejoiced about the blessings of posterity.

Except for serving a 30-month LDS mission in his beloved Dutch ancestral home, Ralph lived his entire life in Salt Lake City's Rose Park area, where he became founding chair of the Rose Park Community Council. The Jordan River became a lifelong "good friend" as he walked, swam, boated, gardened and watched birds along its waters. Using his gift for telling stories, Ralph left behind a treasured collection of 21 accounts of his youthful ventures, escapades and friendships surrounding the river that nourished his life.

Ralph also found great joy in sharing his interests and loves with his children and grandchildren. He skied Utah's slopes into his ‚Äò80s with a skilled and elegant glide, and blessed his offspring through the visits, adventures and counseling that occurred on the ski lifts and mountain tops.

Ralph's thriving orchard and gardens fostered 18 fruit trees, nourished glorious flowers (including his much-loved canna lilies), and produced over 60 kinds of vegetables over the years , from beans and brussel sprouts, to kale and kohlrabi, leek and lettuce, and 10 varieties of squash. He and his wife and children spent many days together each year in canning, freezing and otherwise preserving the bounty.

He often shared the harvests with extended family, neighbors and passersby. Because the produce amply supplied all the family's vegetable needs, Ralph observed that he had not purchased a vegetable in a grocery store over decades. He served his mission to the Netherlands just a couple years after the end of World War II. While living and teaching the Gospel there, he heard many stories of how the people survived the war, which led him to repeat to his family, "Someday if you don't grow it, you won't eat it."

Ralph developed his strong work ethic from milking dairy cows with his grandfather, gardening with his mother, and building homes with his father. He graduated from West High School, and after studying civil engineering for a couple years at the University of Utah and being convinced of the value of learning in the field, he "picked up his tools" and jumped into his construction career. Showing the way, Ralph led Steenblik Construction in building hundreds of homes and more than a hundred church, government, commercial and school buildings. He was

honored one year as Utah's General Contractor of the Year.

Ralph was proud of his Dutch heritage and his wife's early pioneer legacy. He was a lifetime and inveterate reader and learner. He lived and relied on his solid faith in Jesus Christ and His Gospel.

Preceded in death by his wife Joyce, daughter Annette, sister Gloria Ellingson, and brother Joseph, he is survived by his other children and his sisters, Viola Stucki, Marion Fullmer and Sheila Roberts.

Funeral Services: Saturday, June 16 at 11:00 a.m., Rose Park Stake Center, 760 North 1200 West, Salt Lake City, with a viewing before from 9:30 , 10:30 a.m. Viewing also: Friday, June 15, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the Stake Center.