Joyce Reeves Stevens

September 4, 1929 ~ September 29, 2015

Joyce Reeves Stevens, beloved daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt and friend, passed away peacefully early morning September 29, 2015. She was born to Ernest and Sylvia Reeves in Smoot, Wyoming, on September 4, 1929. On August 25, 1952, she married her sweetheart, Lloyd J. Stevens in the Salt Lake Temple. Joyce was preceded in death by her parents, husband, son Cloyd and daughter Reeva; brothers Lynn Welch and Stanley Reeves; sisters Janis and Judith Reeves. She is survived by her sisters Polly Erickson and Sally Halls, brother Clayne Reeves; and three children: Renee Murphy (Philip), Rachelle Larsen (Kevin), and Rolana Owen. She is also survived by many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

At heart, Joyce was always a small-town Wyoming girl. When she was born, Smoot was little more than a Wyoming hamlet with less than a hundred people and she loved it. She lovedthe family ranch. She loved picnicking in the hills above. She loved swimming in the Salt River that ran at the bottom of the hill below the family's old ranch house. But life was hard. The family had a dairy ranch with cows that had to be milked every day, holiday or not, school or not. Rain or shine, snow or not, every morning she and her brothers and sister would crawl out of bed long before the sun was up and hand milk the cows. Sometimes they would have to trudge through feet of Star Valley Snow, sometimes through the mud. But that didn't matter a bit: the cows had to be milked. After school it was the same story.

Growing up in the depression in a small farming community was hard. The family scrimped and saved. Her mother labored in the kitchen day in and day out to feed the ranch hands and her family. Her father worked hard managing the herds, the dairy, and the acres of crops. The kids all worked keeping the cows fed, the hay stacked, the crops planted, watered, and harvested, and get their schoolwork done on time. It was tough, but it was good.

Although Joyce loved the sweet-smelling hay fields and walking through acres of alfalfa, she wanted more than cows. She wanted more than farming. To this end she did well in school and then went to the Agricultural College in Logan. There she studied elementary education. It was during her college years she met Lloyd Stevens, another student of education. He was a tall, lanky farm boy from Blanding, Utah, who was attracted to the farm girl from up north and she to the farm boy from Utah. While Lloyd served a three-year mission to Brazil, they corresponded. After he returned they dated, fell in love and then, on a hot August morning, they were married for all time and eternity in the Salt Lake Temple.

Their marriage was soon blessed with five children. Cloyd Reeves Stevens, the only son, married Renae Shorter (later divorced). They had five children: Zackery (Sandra), Heather, Cory, Michelle Anderson (Joshua), and Chaz. To Joyce's great sorrow, Cloyd suddenly passed away in October, 2000.

Renee was the first in a line of daughters: She married Philip Murphy and had five children: Steven, Nathan, Jennifer Christensen (Ryan), Philip Scott (Stephanie), and Peter.

Reeva came next. At age twelve she contracted cancer. This disease and it's terrible consequences afflicted Reeva her entire life. Although she was able to honorably fill a full-time mission in the Baton Rouge Louisiana Mission, she soon became bed-ridden. She passed away in May of 2010.

Rachelle married Kevin Larsen and they had three children: Megan, Katelyn, and Carl Jay (C.J.) The youngest child, Rolana married Steve Owen (later divorced) and had two children: Richard Jay (R.J.) and Jon.

In addition Joyce has nine great-grandchildren. From Zackery: Aspen and Spencer; from Heather: Aliyah and Dylahn; from Cory: Olivia; from Jennifer: Oliver, Liam, and Aiden; from Scott: Avery.

Both Lloyd and Joyce strongly believed their children should receive good, solid educations. They believed in raising their children to be active believers in the Lord's church. They held family home evenings, attended the temple, and loved the scriptures. Lloyd and Joyce gave up many of the comforts of retired life to serve several service missions, the last was a much-extended mission to one of Salt Lake's Brazilian wards. Friendships there were made that Joyce believed would last into the eternities.

Her likes were simple. She had a burning love and testimony of the gospel. She was passionate about her country. She loved America and everything it stood for. She readily discussed history and politics with anyone and everyone. She loved gardening and working in the yard. She was a good cook and enjoyed fixing good, wholesome, nourishing meals for her family. She and Lloyd also enjoyed helping and were in constant service to others. But above all they loved their family.

Today Joyce retires from life with family and children on both sides of the veil. Those here say their final goodbyes in mortality. Those there rejoice in happy reunion. There are brothers and sisters she lost early in life that she is getting acquainted with, as well. Here she leaves fifteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. She leaves behind innumerable nieces and nephews and boatloads of memories: camping at Bear Lake, trips to Star Valley, Blanding, Tucson, the Grand Canyon, and many state parks and forests. There are memories of birthdays, Christmases, and Thanksgivings. There are innumerable wedding, baptismal and funeral memories,especially funerals. Grandma tried to attend the funeral of nearly everyone she ever met. In addition she leaves a treasure trove of game night memories on New Year's Eve and memories of hikes up the family hill in Star Valley. She leaves golden memories of reunions, get-togethers, and family parties of all kinds. Everyone has a few memories of skinned-knees, bedtime stories, and hours of laughing and happy chatter with Joyce around the dinner table. There are fond remembrances of bowls of hot buttered popcorn, warm congo-bars straight from the oven, filled thumb-print cookies, red-hot jelly, peanutbutter rice crispy treats and Grandma's soup loaded with potatoes because grandpa really liked it that way.

But as with everyone, there are a few dark memories as well: Reeva's cancer and the endless long nights pacing outside her hospital ward. Cloyd's completely unexpected passing away came as a total shock to everyone. There were Reeva's last hard days in the care center and Lloyd's passing in 2013. Life was never meant to be easy. But Joyce would be the first to agree with her Savior that it was worth it. Now it's over and Grandma moves on to continue her life with her parents, husband, siblings, and children surrounded by the loving arms of Jesus Christ and the Father of us all.

The family would like to thank Dr. Gregory A. Parkin and his nurse Brooke; Dr. Ronald Brown and all of his partners and staff especially: Esther, Darla, and Ray for their loving care they so freely gave Joyce over the years. She trusted and loved you. A special thanks also goes to the staff at St. Marks Hospital ICU, PCU, and ARC and to CareSource Home and Hospice for the loving care and compassion you showed Joyce the last weeks of her life. We will be forever grateful.

Funeral services will be held Monday at noon, October 5, 2015, at the Winder 2nd Ward chapel at 1361 East 4000 South. Viewings will be at the Winder 2nd Ward building Sunday, October 4, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm and 10:30 to 11:30 am prior to the funeral on Monday.