

Don Edmund Olsen

September 27, 1934 ~ May 23, 2025

Don Edmund Olsen of Sandy, Utah, passed away at home on May 23, 2025. Born September 27, 1934, in Cache Valley, Utah, to Don William Olsen and Rachel Jane Hancey Olsen. He was known variously as “Don,” “Ed,” or “Ted,” depending upon who was addressing him, but he answered genially to all three.

As a young boy growing up during the depression in rural Northern Utah, Ed learned to hunt, fish and trap (often supplementing the family table through his efforts), but above all he learned the value of hard work. When only in the 4th grade, Ed decided he wanted to become an attorney, a decision that would shape the trajectory of his education and professional life.

After graduating from South Cache High School in 1952, Ed attended Utah State University, graduating in 1956 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science with a minor in German. He participated in the Army ROTC program and was an award-winning member of their shooting team. While attending Utah State, Ed also worked in the university book bindery, where he met his future wife, Sandra Lee Edwards.

Upon graduation, Ed began active duty in the United States Army, stationed at Fort Cronkhite, a Nike surface-to-air missile base in the San Francisco Bay area. While stationed there, he represented his unit with continued participation in marksmanship competition up to the All-Army level. In the winter of 1958, he drove home to Cache Valley where he and Sandra were married in the LDS Logan Temple on January 10, 1958. Together, they moved to Mill Valley, California, where they lived as Ed finished his active duty. Ed was honorably discharged at the rank of First Lieutenant. Ed and Sandra then moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, where Ed attended the University of Utah College of Law, graduating in the top ten percent of his class in 1961.

Ed practiced law for decades, retiring from the firm Matheson, Mortensen, Olsen, and Jeppson in 2001. An active member of both the Salt Lake County and Utah State Bar Associations, Ed was widely respected by his fellow attorneys, associates, and the judiciary, for his polite professionalism and unfailing integrity. Those who knew Ed outside of the professional arena would have been quick to add reliability, generosity, and graciousness to the list of his attributes. His insistence on helping others wherever he saw need leaves behind a legacy of mentorship, pro bono legal work, and kindness that touched the lives of many who might have otherwise been without the resources or ability to help themselves.

Ed was an avid outdoorsman who loved to hike explore, camp, cut wood, fish, and above all, hunt. He was a conservationist at heart with a love for the natural beauty of wild places. Ed built a network of cherished hunting buddies and friends across the country, many of whom kept in touch until the end of his life. He was a gifted, self-taught gunsmith who converted military weapons for sporting uses, as well as building rifles of high quality and beauty from scratch.

Among other interests Ed enjoyed sandcasting in brass and was a widely read scholar of modern American military history, particularly of the World War II period. He enjoyed seeing new places and trying new things, and with Sandra was fortunate enough to travel widely, including Austria, Germany, Hungary, Australia, New Zealand and even China.

Ed was preceded in death by his parents, his sister Sherrill Grove, her husband, Ronald Grove, and son-in-law, Douglas Clark. Ed is survived by his wife of 67 years, Sandra; son Stanford (Jennifer) Olsen; daughter Stacey (Richard Murphy) Clark; and daughter Victoria Daniels. He also leaves behind nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

A memorial service celebrating Ed’s life will be held Saturday July 12 at 1:00 PM at Larkin Sunset Gardens, 1950 E Dimple Dell Road (10600 S), Sandy, Utah. The service will be livestreamed via Zoom and can be accessed by clicking the "Watch Services" button above. The family invites friends and loved ones to please take time to post remembrances and stories about Ed on the Larkin Mortuary website at www.LarkinMortuary.com. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to a charity of your choice.

The family wishes to thank Aspire Home Health and Hospice for their kindness, care, and dignity.

In Ed’s words, “I am smiling.”