

Donald Lawrence Semon

May 7, 1934 ~ December 6, 2023

Donald Lawrence Semon was born May 7, 1934 in Aurora, IL to Lawrence Nicholas and Mary Genevieve Miller Semon. The family lived in Wheaton and West Chicago, before settling in Naperville, IL. He attended Saints Peter and Paul Grammar School and Naperville High School. He was actively involved in music in church, school and community playing the organ, piano and drums. He then attended University of Illinois, Champagne-Urbana on a choir scholarship where he met his future wife, Dee. He studied electrical engineering.

Health concerns ended his college work, and he worked for Motorola and as a painter before accepting military service in 1957. His military work involved electronics and working on Nike missiles. While posted to Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, he fell in love with the Colorado mountains. It became his desire to live there.

He and Dolores Ann Uebele were married August 29,1959 in River Forest Ill. They worked in the Chicago area until June 1960. Don accepted work with Ent AFB- NORAD in Colorado Springs CO.

They are the parents of 3 children, Diana Kay, James Brian, and Kevin Scott.

While in Colorado Springs, Don worked at Ent AFB working in conjunction with NORAD on various missile projects. After that, he left civil service and worked with several companies that dealt with traffic control systems. He was able to incorporate his knowledge of electronics and systems to design several traffic control and data systems devices. In the 1980's he became Facilities Manager for El Paso County. While in that position he helped finalize the design and construction of the new Pikes Peak Center Performance Hall in downtown Colorado Springs.

Don and Dee were a great team, serving in a variety of churches as organist and choir director. They collaborated on many projects such as ecumenical concerts, and community activities.

Don also worked with the Denver Chapter of the American Guild of Organists as President several years and as a representative for Allen Organs.

Don and Dee investigated and eventually joined the LDS church in 1974 with their children and were sealed in the Manti, UT Temple in 1975. It was at this time that they became interested in genealogical research. The two of them worked for many years researching and documenting the family lines. They published two volumes of extensive research on Dee's Uebele line and Don's Semon line. All told, they identified and logged in 15,000+ family ancestors.

In 1986, Don and Dee were called to prepare a Stake choir for the dedication of the Denver Temple. It was a rare privilege and Kevin and Diana were also in the choir.

Shortly after, in 1990, Don accepted a job in Carlsbad, California and moved into a beautiful home in Oceanside. The two were selected again in 1993 to serve as Carlsbad Stake Temple Choir director and organist for the dedication of the San Diego Temple. Another wonderful opportunity and privilege for them.

The two worked together on many professional activities- Don supporting and facilitating genealogy training workshops and music teacher activities across the western US.

Don’s final professional position was for The LDS Church Facilities Management in San Diego as Manager. He retired in 2001.

Upon retirement, Don and Dee sold the Oceanside home and moved to the Salt Lake City area. They continued to be active in church and community activities, their children and grandchildren’s lives, and their genealogical work. Dee passed away in 2016, shortly before the arrival of their 1st great grandchild.

Don is survived by all 3 kids, their spouses, 8 grandchildren, and 5 great grandchildren: Diana and Gregg Vandergriff, Sarah (Andrew Sanford), Chrystina (Andrew Rafferty), Jessica (Louis Bonilla,fiance) and Kira (Zach Deardorff) ; Jim and Helen Semon, Lauren and Ethan; Kevin and Michelle Semon, Alex and Emma. Not to be forgotten are Thomas (7), Alexander (Lex) (5), and Cailynn (21 mos) Sanford, and Karter and Jackson Deardorff (2).

Don was beloved by his family and church friends. He passed away December 6, 2023 after an extended illness. We are grateful to have had him as a patriarch in our home. We know he has joyfully joined Dee and other family members on the other side of the veil.

Funeral services will be held at 11AM on Friday, December 29, 2023 at in the chapel at Larkin Sunset Gardens Mortuary, 1950 East Dimple Dell Road (10600 South) in Sandy. A viewing will be held prior to services beginning at 10AM. Interment to follow in the the Larkin Sunset Gardens Cemetery.

Funeral services will be streamed via Zoom for those wishing to attend virtually. To watch the services, please click the “Watch Services” link above.