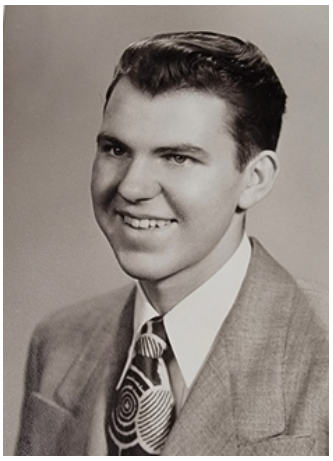

Elden August Erickson

May 3, 1932 ~ September 22, 2023

Elden August Erickson was born on May 3, 1932 in Salt Lake City, Utah to parents Edwin E. Erickson and Millie Workman. He passed on September 22, 2023 in Washington City, Utah.

His first home was at 46th East 8th South, Salt Lake City, Utah. He attended the original 3rd Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

His first school was Jefferson Elementary. He walked 4 blocks to school, Kindergarten through 2nd grade. Grade 3 through 8th; he attended Stewart School on the University of Utah campus, where he rode the bus and streetcar to school. He then transferred to Lincoln Junior High School through 9th grade, which meant he was back to walking to school.

Elden took piano lessons up to the “Thompson 5th grade” level. That was enough to prepare him for his first church calling where he played the Hammond organ for his Priesthood class.

When about age 14, Roy M. Darley (a Tabernacle Choir organist) held an organ course. There were hundreds of children in Salt Lake City that knew how to play piano, so he did not know how his mother managed to get him enrolled in the organ course for one summer. There were only 10 students for six weeks. He taught all of them about the organ; stops, manuals, and foot pedals. As a surprise for the last class, he took them over to the Tabernacle and let them play a hymn using the foot pedals. Elden treasured this experience.

Elden attended South High School for 3 years. While in the A Capella Club, he met his future wife, Joyce Archibald. After High School he was in the University of Utah marching band, where he went to all the football games, sitting on the 50 yard line. He also joined the 96th Infantry Reserve Army band where he received an honorable discharge after 9 years of service.

After Joyce graduated from the University of Utah, Elden and Joyce were married in August of 1953 in the Salt Lake Temple by Harold B Lee. She was then hired to teach school.

They bought their first home, which was at 485 Haven Ave, Salt Lake City, Utah. In 1958, they moved to Burbank, California, where Elden landed a job at Lockheed Martin and they adopted Kathylane, their first child. Later they adopted John and then Jeffrey.

In 1960, he was hired at Litton Industries, in Beverly Hills as a technical writer. Litton sent him on an assignment modifying equipment for the McDonnell Douglas F4 fighter plane being used in the current Vietnam War. He traveled from Nellis Air Force base in Las Vegas, Nevada to Germany, England, Thailand, and then Vietnam. He was a civilian with military officer classification; however he had to step aside when transportation was needed for official military purposes. Several times his life was spared while residing in a war zone.

After two years with Litton, he was hired by Hughes Aircraft Company in the retrofit area. Two years later, Elden and Joyce became entrepreneurs. In January 1970 they bought a Baskin Robbins Ice Cream store in their then hometown of Thousand Oaks, California. After 10 years, they bought a 2nd store in Agoura, California. He loved ice cream and sharing it with others. Many people have great memories of ice cream socials at their stores and of Elden sharing ice cream leftovers with the various families he knew at church.

Elden had a motto “Friends are worth more than money.” He made new friends every chance he had. He was liked by all he worked with. When he retired from Hughes to sell ice cream, his supervisor said “If it doesn’t work out, there are 5 supervisors here that will hire you back as soon as you walk in the door.” This was a testament to his hard working spirit and ingenuity

After 29 years they sold both stores and went on their first mission to Nauvoo, Illinois. Nauvoo was just right for Elden and Joyce. They loved giving tours in the different sites. They took part in various musical productions wearing historical period clothing, while dancing and singing. Elden played the trumpet in the Nauvoo Brass Band. In 2006, Joyce and Elden went on a 2nd mission to San Diego, California, at the Mormon Battalion Visitor’s Center, which included serving as greeters at the San Diego Temple. There were many people who drove through the parking lot curious about the beautiful building and they loved telling people from all over the world about it.

Also, during his life, Elden served as Counselor in the Bishopric for five years, Executive Secretary six times (3 of the times were consecutive with 3 different Bishops, which was rare), Scout Master for the Boy Scouts of America for 16 years, Sunday school teacher for 1 year, and President of Elders Quorum for 2 years.

He was also a diligent Home/Ministering Teacher and made sure his assigned families were watched over. Even in the months prior to his passing he got the strength up to make ice cream because he wanted to share his ice cream with the families he was assigned to visit at least one more time. He even made the point to help one friend learn how to make ice cream like him. This was his joy.

Elden was a bright light in this world. He had a pure heart and so much love for those he got to know. In his last months he had an amazing group of hospice providers who came into his home. They were so great to spend extra time just listening to his stories and helping him to accept that his time was coming to an end. He loved that they would give him hugs. Those visits made such a difference to him. They also helped us to understand the things that were ahead. Our family is so grateful for all who were diligent in checking on him and spending time just talking face to face with him. He soaked each of these moments up.

Elden is survived by his 3 children:
Kathylane Hess with two daughters: Sharleen Hess (Children: Saleen, Justin, Jayden, Jaxtyn and Skye) and Jenny Potocki (Spouse: David, Son: Beckham).
John Erickson (Life partner: Laurie Rose)
Jeffrey Erickson (Spouse: Sonya, Sons: Cody, Jesse, and Samuel).

Elden is preceded in death by his wife Joyce and siblings: Edwin (Louise) Erickson, Julia (Arval) Streadbeck, Delmon (Marilyn) Erickson, and Leland (Thelma) Erickson.

Graveside services for Elden will be held on Friday, October 20th, 2023 at 3:00 pm at Salt Lake City Cemetery (200 "N" Street, Salt Lake City). A visitation will be held prior from 1:30 to 2:30 pm at Larkin Mortuary (260 E South Temple, Salt Lake City).

A dinner will be held at 4:30 pm (location to be announced). PLEASE RSVP by email at: ericksonsonya43@gmail.com so we can can plan for the dinner appropriately.