

Erwin Richard Frank

November 6, 1923 ~ March 12, 2024

A few months after reaching his goal of living to the age of 100, Erwin Richard Frank died on March 12, 2024.

Born November 6, 1923, in Hamburg, Germany. Erwin was the 6th child of Grete Anna Elisabeth Schloss and Richard Carl Wilhelm Frank (Fick). He outlived all his siblings: Elfriede Kuehne, Otto, Willy, Gertrud Menssen, Elsa Muecke, Alfred, and Elisabeth.

In 1941, at the age of 17, Erwin was drafted into the Reich Labour Service, a German work organization. He worked there for six months guarding aircraft hangers in France. After being home for just two weeks, he was drafted into the Signal Intelligence Agency of the German Air Force, working in communications. During World War II, Erwin saw action in Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Elba, of Italy and Wiesbaden, Germany.

While he was serving in the war, Erwin's parents moved to another part of Hamburg. Erwin's sister, Lisa (Elisabeth) became friends with Ruth Drachenberg as they both attended the same 'The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' youth program. Lisa mentioned she had two brothers that would be home on leave soon.

In July 1943, Erwin came home on furlough from Italy for two weeks. While he was home, Ruth asked her mother if she could take some strawberries over to the Frank family since Ruth's brother Waldemar had been good friends with Erwin. Ruth liked Erwin right away and two days later she found Erwin waiting for her at the door when she was leaving work. They were inseparable for the duration of his furlough. Erwin and Ruth wrote letters to each other after Erwin returned to Italy. Ruth said he wrote beautiful love letters.

While home on sick leave in October 1944, Erwin proposed to Ruth. After recovering, he returned to Italy.

When the war ended in May 1945, he returned to Hamburg. Erwin found work at the Barmbecker Hospital which had been taken over by the British.

Erwin and Ruth were married by the Justice of the Peace on August 18, 1945. Later that afternoon they had a ceremony at the Altona Branch after which Erwin had arranged for a horse drawn coach to take them back to her parent's home for a celebration.

Initially, the newlywed couple lived with members of their family until they were able to build their own home with bricks they collected from bombed out houses. They stayed in their home for a summer, later moving in with family again.

Food was scarce. Times were hard. In 1947 when the shortages were at their worst. President Ezra Taft Benson, an apostle for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and church emissary for the reconstruction of Europe, brought needed food and clothing.

Erwin and Ruth welcomed Uwe "Wally" in 1947 and Raimund "Raymond" in 1949.

Erwin's parents had immigrated to America in 1948 to join Erwin's older sister, Elfriede (Erich) Kuehne and Uncle Otto (Rosie) Schloss, Grete's brother, both living in Salt Lake City. Erwin and Ruth desired to join their family in America. Uncle Otto Schloss' bishop, Sterling W. Sill of the Garden Park Ward, agreed to sponsor them. On January 24, 1950 Erwin, Ruth, Uwe "Wally", and Raimund "Raymond" arrived in New York by steam ship, The Washington and then finished their journey to Salt Lake City, Utah.

On September 11, 1950, Erwin, Ruth, and their children were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple. Another important date for them was when they became American Citizens and were sworn in on May 19, 1955.

They lived with Uncle Otto and Rosie Schloss for 3 months until Erwin got a job with Whitmore Oxygen. They were able to pay off their loan from the Credit Union for their passage in one year. Erwin and Ruth rented a home from Dr. Stobbe in Sandy and then moved near the Utah State Fairground area. Later Erwin and Ruth bought a home on the Avenues where they lived for 49 years.

During his lifetime Erwin worked for Pacific Intermountain Express (P.I.E.), Southeast Furniture Co., JC Penney, Meadow Gold Dairy, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Institute of Religion, Granite School District, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He retired in 1988.

After arriving in America, five more children would join their family: Steven (1951), Dennis (1952), Janet (1955), Linda (1958) and Douglas (1963).

Erwin and Ruth were married for nearly 63 years when Ruth passed on July 30, 2008.

Erwin was a life-long member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Erwin was a gardener and planted a large garden every summer. Fitness was important to him. He participated in 5K races until the age of 88. Over fifty-five years ago, he joined a gym, encouraging family members to come as well. He enjoyed the hot tub, sauna, steam room, and walking in the pool. He continued walking in the pool at Sagewood at Daybreak until weeks before his death. He enjoyed music. He was a good dancer and played multiple instruments. He would play his harmonica at family events, birthdays, funerals, and Christmas parties.

For more than thirty years, Erwin enjoyed dining at the Liberty Senior Center. He had a world of friends there.

Erwin was preceded in death by his wife Ruth, daughter-in-law Kristie (Dennis), and great grandchildren: Drake Frank and Jeremy Duce. He is survived by his adopted brothers: Reynold and Tom (Robin), two nephews whom his parents adopted in 1955; seven children: Uwe "Wally" (Nancy), Raimund "Ray" (Shelley), Steven (Judy), Dennis (Ada), Janet (Lorin) Capson, Linda (Jerry) Gross, Douglas (Dwain Hart); thirty-one grandchildren, eighty-three great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild on the way.

A special thank you to the many Canyon Home Care professionals who were dedicated to improving Erwin's health and living his best life for many years. He spent the last two years living at Sagewood at Daybreak where he enjoyed his new friends and remarkable care from the staff. He was blessed to have Canyon Home Care and Hospice's help in making him comfortable during the last weeks of his life.

Dad was well taken care of and loved by many neighbors, friends, and family members. Thank you to the many that called and visited him, wrote him letters, played his favorite game with him, brought over his favorite candy, cooked his favorite meal, his favorite dessert, his favorite brats, his favorite fruit, decorated his walls with holiday decorations, cut his hair and offered prayers on his behalf.

Much appreciation and gratitude to his niece, Birgid, who wrote a letter to Dad every day for more than 3 years.

A "Celebration of Life" with Erwin in attendance, was held last summer with family and friends.

No funeral service.

Interment at the Salt Lake City Cemetery in Utah.