

George Kirkham Jarvis

January 10, 1935 ~ September 15, 2025

George Kirkham Jarvis died peacefully on September 12, 2025, with his wife Kathryn Snow Jarvis by his side. She was the love of his life. In addition to his wife, he is survived by five of his children – G. Eric (Catherine), Suzanne (Andy Munoz), Jonathan (Jodi), David (Micheline), and Kate (Michael Todd) and 18 grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother, Stephen; his sister, Rosemary Ellison and two close family friends, Alan Cruikshank and Lynne Harrison. He was predeceased by his parents, George Young Jarvis and Rose Carol Kirkham; his brother, Michael; and his daughter, Rebecca (Jas Payne).

Born on January 10, 1935, in Washington, D.C., George moved with his family to New York City in 1942 and then to Salt Lake City in 1946, where his father served as comptroller general of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A gifted student, George excelled academically and earned a PhD in Sociology from the University of Michigan in 1972, mentored by O.D. Duncan. His career included positions at what was then The University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, and the University of Alberta in Edmonton, where he taught until 1996. He also worked at the World Health Organization from 1978-79, taught at Brigham Young University from 1985-86, and at the University of Hawaii between 1993 and 2006.

During the Cold War, George volunteered in the American military for 10 years through the 1950s and 1960s. He became a 1st Lieutenant and was recruited into the intelligence career field, where he learned to speak Russian at the Defense language Institute in Monterey, California.

One of the most meaningful aspects of George’s career was his work with Indigenous communities near Edmonton, particularly the Cree and Sioux Nations. He advised on improving access to health services and reducing suicide rates. George loved his Indigenous students, and they loved him too. He was a man without guile whose interactions were marked by a sincerity that endeared him to many.

George was also a man of many talents and a remarkable intellect. He was a skilled pianist and singer, often improvising ragtime and jazz on the piano or singing opera as he accompanied himself from music scores. His mental acuity was legendary—he could instantly convert temperatures from Fahrenheit to Celsius, currencies of one country to another, and fuel costs from American gallons to Canadian dollars per liter—and he committed long lists of telephone numbers, passwords, and scheduled activities to memory. A lifelong baseball enthusiast, he tracked game statistics for decades. He had a unique gift for nicknaming people—his names were clever, affectionate, and unforgettable, and they became part of the family lore.

George was a devoted member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and served as a full-time missionary five times: in Germany as a young man (1955–57), and with his wife in Romania (1999–2002), at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland (2008–09), in Montreal (2012–13), and at the Church History Department in

Salt Lake City (2016–2022). He also considered his time with Jim and Joan Stevens in Geneva and Southern France (1978–79) as missionary service. These experiences were among the most cherished of his life, deepening his

faith and his love for the people he served—from post-war Germans and post-Ceausescu Romanians, to interfaith leaders at the UN, and humble Church members in Montreal.

Above all, George was blessed by his marriage to his one true love, Kathryn. He often spoke of how he felt divinely led to her and considered their union the greatest miracle of his life. He believed that time could never dim their love and that death would not divide them.

We thank our beloved husband, father, and grandfather for his example, his wisdom, and his righteous works. Rest in peace, George, until we meet again.

Family will be meeting for a special interment at the cemetery, we thank everyone who comes and supports at the Memorial Service.