Karen Lynn Davidson

July 11, 1943 ~ October 14, 2019

The world lost a pre-eminent scholar and gifted musician when Karen Lynn Davidson departed this life on October 14, 2019, at her home in Salt Lake City. She was born in Glendale, California, to Gerald Orvel and Mary Callan Lynn on July 11, 1943, and grew up in a loving home in nearby Burbank.

Karen received B.A. and M.A. degrees in English literature from Brigham Young University. Her Ph.D., with an emphasis in medieval English literature, is from the University of Southern California. Karen also held two major postdoctoral fellowships , at Cambridge University in England and at the University of Chicago. At BYU, she was a member of the English faculty (nine years) and Honors Program Director. Karen also taught at USC, Long Beach City College, Pasadena City College, and the Mayfield Academy.

As an accomplished violinist and violist, she was concertmaster of the BYU Philharmonic Orchestra (five years), Pasadena Community Orchestra, and Rio Hondo Symphony in California. She also played with the Orchestra at Temple Square.

Two hymns with texts by Karen are in the hymnbook of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: "Each Life That Touches Ours for Good" and "O, Savior Thou Who Wearest a Crown." Karen served on the General Music Committee and is the author of the popular Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages.

Beyond her musical contributions, Karen authored articles and books, including Thriving on Our Differences. She was co-editor of the Histories Volumes 1 and 2 of The Joseph Smith Papers series, co-authored Eliza: The Life and Faith of Eliza R. Snow, and was co-editor of Eliza R. Snow: The Complete Poetry. Karen served for decades in various Stake and Ward Relief Society callings and recently on the Board of the Mormon Scholars Foundation.

Karen and her late and beloved husband, David A. Davidson, lived a very full life. Residences over the years included Irving, TX; Princeton, NJ; Manhattan, NY; Pasadena, CA; Hilliard, WY; and Salt Lake City, UT.

She is survived by two sisters, Barbara Rencher (Roy) of Farmington, UT, and Diana Roskuski (Ron) of Mesa, AZ; five stepsons, Joseph Davidson (Laura), John Finch (Dierdre), Robert Finch (Lezli), Wesley Davidson, and Eliott Davidson, along with 308 (yes, 308!) dearly loved nieces and nephews (including greats and great-greats), and a host of wonderful friends collected throughout her remarkable life. She had an avid passion for chocolate, Diet Coke, BYU Cougars, PBS, KBYU-FM classical radio, opera, New York Times Friday crossword puzzles, and The New Yorker magazine.

A family burial took place in Dayton, Idaho on Friday, October 18, 2019, according to Karen\s wishes. If you wish to honor Karen, donations may be made to the Church Humanitarian Aid fund or to a charity of your choice.

The family expresses appreciation for the staff of LDS and Western Peaks Hospitals and South Davis Specialty Care, along with Doctors Lisa Kuwahara, Nathan Richards, and Mark Lewis for their kind and compassionate care.

Please share online condolences at www.larkinmortuary.com