

Jack Golden Edwards

June 14, 1937 ~ December 18, 2022

Jack (Jacob) Golden Edwards passed away December 18, 2022, in Salt Lake City, Utah, surrounded by his family. Jack was born June 14, 1937, in Pocatello, Idaho to Junius David Edwards and Elfrida Katherine Klingenberg Fiksted. He served an honorable mission in Norway (1957-1959) – the birthplace of his mother - and relished the opportunity to learn Norwegian. He retained his language ability until the end of his life and loved meeting people with whom he could speak the language. During his mission, he labored with great love to serve the people of Norway and traveled to London to participate in the London Temple dedication with other missionaries.

Jack was truly kind and renowned for his warmth and integrity as well as his devotion to family. He had a testimony of the Savior that shone quietly in all that he did. The father of three independent, strong-willed children, he was an amazing father who strongly believed it was his job to teach them how to make good decisions then make room for them to exercise that ability – even when he vigorously disagreed with their choices. He would often invite a wandering or troubled child to “step into his office” (aka sit on the stairs with him) to talk through a thought process. His engineer’s mind valued logic and he would ask gentle questions until a more workable conclusion was identified. He often said he never met a person he didn’t like, always finding something redeeming about each person who came into his orbit.

Jack was a proud graduate of the University of Utah, earning advanced degrees in Chemical Engineering and Engineering Administration. He began his career with Kennecott, then Blue Cross Blue Shield before joining the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO) and moving to Saudi Arabia with his family. Agreeing to a one-year commitment, they returned to Utah 20 years later upon his retirement. Jack loved his work at ARAMCO and filled a number of leadership roles building and servicing critical petroleum infrastructure projects. For years he joked that his job was “to keep oil flowing cheaply” and he hated paying more than $1/gallon for gasoline. At ARAMCO he worked alongside a multinational team filled with smart and interesting people. He loved getting to know people and had the ability to really, deeply listen that built great bonds with those around him. Jack was proud at the end of his career to have supported career-broadening opportunities for women and underrepresented candidates, years before it became the norm.

Beyond his profession, Jack contributed to the wider ARAMCO expatriate community in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, including as the Committee Chairman for the largest Boy Scouts of America troop in the country (>100 Scouts) and facilitating the annual Asir camping trip which involved both ground and air transportation, tents, camels, food, personnel and, of course, the Scouts. When Iraq invaded Kuwait and the Gulf War broke out, despite the dangers and uncertainty of the war, Jack and Leslie were inspired to remain in Saudi Arabia to serve others, and serve they did, joining with neighbors to host soldiers in their home, and accompanying Task Force Freedom during the

liberation of Kuwait while Leslie served as Bureau Coordinator for NBC News, earning recognition from the US Military for their support. Jack loved music and would send soldiers on their way with a rendition of “God Be with You ‘Till We Meet Again” after every dinner. He supported the Saudi Aramco Employees Association, traveling the community as Father Christmas every year, to the delight of many children. One year he knocked and then burst through a front door with a jolly series of “Ho, Ho, Ho’s” only to find the owner was NOT expecting Father Christmas and had jumped out of the shower to respond to the “intruder.” Thankfully the incident ended in laughter rather than a call to the police.

Jack also contributed to his church community overseas, serving in a number of LDS Branch Presidencies in Dhahran and traveling throughout the Arabian Peninsula Stake (which was then comprised of seven countries) as a member of the High Council. His service came with peril as there were strict limits on Christian worship throughout the region. Jack was respectful of those limitations and served with great joy – while facing potential deportation – as he supported the wider community of Saints. His respect, kindness, courtesy, and ability to listen were instrumental in building enduring trust. Returning to the United States, he found great joy in serving in the Salt Lake Temple for 16 years. Working the front desk was his favorite job as it allowed him to greet Saints from all over the world, inquiring where they were from and being able to say, “I have been there!” or “I would love to go there.”

An avid hunter, aviator, and outdoorsman, Jack found great joy in nature. He often spoke of unplanned trips in the 1970s piloting his plane through Mexico and Central America, and wasn’t above romancing his future wife with sunset flights over the mountains. A passionate golfer, that meant rising before dawn in Saudi (to beat the high temps) for a few rounds of golf on “the finest manicured sands in the world” (the sand was layered with crude oil to create a playing surface and required each player to carry their own piece of fake turf from which to tee-off). He was thrilled years later to learn the course had been converted to grass and relished the chance to play there once again during a return trip in 2015. In retirement, Jack hunted regularly. His favorite hunting buddy was his son, Josh, and the two of them spent many hours “communing with nature.”

Jack married Leslie Hinchcliff in 1975 in the Salt Lake Temple and together they raised three children: Joshua (Palo Alto, CA), Kristen (Daniel Marquardt) McLean, VA, and Susan (John Aagaard) Potomac, MD, traveling the world to over 100 countries and sharing many global adventures together. All three of the children came to see the world as a place of great adventure and went on to serve their country in military or intelligence roles. Jack loved dessert, believed almost everything tasted better with ketchup, trusted in the power of prayer, and maintained a filing system that he described as “a pile for everything and everything in its pile”. He is survived by his wife, children and five grandchildren as well as a strong legacy of faith, kindness, perseverance, and laughter.

Visitation/Viewing will be Tuesday, January 3rd 6-8 PM at Larkin Mortuary (260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City). Funeral services will be on Wednesday, January 4th with visitation starting at 10:30 AM and services at 12 PM at the Federal Heights Ward (1300 East Fairfax Road, Salt Lake City). Graveside services will follow at the Salt Lake City Cemetery. For those unable to attend, services will be streamed via Zoom. Please click on the "Watch Services" link above. A free Zoom account is required and you must be signed in to your Zoom account to view.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations in Jack’s name to the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts www.centerforlatterdaysaintarts.org/donate or the Utah Symphony & Opera at https://my.usuo.org/donate/i/support