



Job Frederick Pingree, Jr.

Dec. 3, 1932 ~ Feb. 21, 2021

Job Frederick Pingree, Jr., known as Toby; respected accountant and financial advisor; devoted fan of the St. Louis Cardinals and Boston Celtics; lifelong lover of ideas, questions, and critical inquiry; fitness and exercise enthusiast; faithful and joyous member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (formerly the Mormon Church); beloved son, brother, husband, father, uncle, grandfather, and great-grandfather; died Sunday morning, February 21, 2021, at the end of a life well lived.

Toby was born on December 3, 1932, in Salt Lake City, Utah, to Job Frederick "Fritz" Pingree and Marjorie Cannon Pingree. Toby adored his siblings: older sister Pat and younger brothers George and John. Toby and George were known to engage in mischief, and Toby's impish spirit never faded, although it took more mature forms as he aged.

Young Toby had a severe stutter and succeeded in overcoming it, although it would emerge on occasion throughout his life, especially when conveying thoughts and ideas about which he was passionate. This struggle underscored the honesty and humanity of his communication and lent a rough eloquence that reached and touched many throughout his life.

Toby skipped a grade in both elementary and middle school, so he entered Salt Lake's West High School unusually young and insecure. Most of his friends attended the more prestigious East High School, but Toby's experience at West changed his life. There he met Marion D. "Duff" Hanks, his seminary teacher and later a General Authority in the Church. Hanks' devotion to honest inquiry, tolerance, and compassion deeply shaped Toby's values and approach to people.

Toby entered the University of Utah at age 16. He became a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, where he made friendships that would endure for life. Institute classes taught by Lowell Bennion deepened his commitments to humanitarian service, truth and compassion, and gave him another lifelong mentor.

At 19, Toby graduated from the University of Utah and was called to serve a mission for the Church in Central America. Before leaving, he became an Eagle Scout, fulfilling a long-delayed promise to his mother. As most of his friends were called to serve in more established missions in Europe, Toby's years in the less developed Central

American Mission echoed his experience at West High.

Toby's mission had a seminal impact on his life. Battling Yellow Fever and struggling to learn Spanish in his first year, he was called by mission president Gordon Romney to serve as his assistant, a role that Toby held for the last 18 months of his 30-month mission. Working without a companion and with many liberties that a "frontier" mission allowed, Toby traveled widely throughout Central America and developed an abiding love for the people there. He relished speaking Spanish throughout his life; he engaged every waiter in Mexican restaurants, tutored Latinx immigrant children and, in his final months, suffering from dementia, he often spoke only in Spanish.

After his mission, Toby joined the Air Force ROTC and was sent to Bitburg, Germany to serve as an officer. More important, in Germany he met Phyllis Lee Burbidge, a Salt Lake native living abroad there.

After their first date, Toby sent Phyllis a copy of Time magazine and asked that she be ready to be quizzed on its contents. Despite this decidedly unromantic gesture, Phyllis continued her courtship with Toby until returning to Salt Lake in late 1957. Toby returned in early 1958, and after both had played the field for a few months, they resumed their courtship and were married in the Salt Lake City Temple on August 20, 1958.

Their honeymoon consisted of a brief visit to Zion's, Bryce, and Grand Canyon National Parks, after which they drove their VW Bug directly to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Toby had been admitted to the Harvard Business School. In Cambridge, Toby became a fan of Bill Russell's dynastic Celtics, a devotion he passed on to his children. Toby and Phyllis welcomed their first child, Tim, in June 1959. The family of three returned to Salt Lake in 1960, where Toby worked for Hogel & Company as a financial analyst. Their second and third children, identical twins Geoff and Greg, were born in September 1960.

In 1962, Toby took a job with Granville Phillips, a vacuum technology company in Boulder, Colorado. There, their fourth child, Allison, was born in December 1962, and their fifth, Matt, in March 1967. Toby loved helping build a new chapel for the Boulder 1st Ward, an endeavor that required the time, money, and effort of the community of members. Later in life he often expressed regret that the building of chapels was no longer undertaken by local members; for Toby, the sacrifice and cooperation involved was what Jesus' church was all about. While in Boulder, Toby struggled with the Church's Temple ban on people of African descent. He was outspoken in his belief that the policy was unjust, leading one member of the high council on which he served to call (unsuccessfully) for Toby's excommunication. Throughout his life, he manifested this concern for equality within the church he loved, first with race, then the role of women, and later, the Church's policies on homosexuality.

The family moved to Ithaca, New York in 1969, where Toby became the chief financial officer of the Ithaca Gun Company. Toby and Phyllis welcomed their sixth and final child, Mark, in April 1971. Toby served as bishop of the Ithaca Ward, comprised of Cornell University students and faculty as well as rural farmers. The Pingrees lived in a house adjacent to the Cornell campus and experienced the 1960s right away, with a co-ed hippy co-op across the street, the armed takeover of the student union building by Black students protesting racial injustice a few blocks away, and the Woodstock music festival three hours to the southeast.

In 1972, Toby took a job as CFO at General Recreation, an outdoor sporting equipment company in Albuquerque, New Mexico. There, Toby served as bishop of the Albuquerque 5th Ward, whose members included some rich and many poor. He decided that involving members in a hands-on experience to earn money for a new chapel would foster greater unity and enthusiasm, so he took up one member's suggestion that the ward gather regularly to assemble silver beaded necklaces for a local jewelry company. The project was successful beyond expectation, bringing needed funds to the ward and, more important, fostering pride and unity among its members.

In 1974, General Recreation experienced financial difficulties, and the CEO asked Toby to meet with certain banks in New York to secure loans for the company's survival. Toby agreed, but when the CEO insisted that Toby

misrepresent the value of the company's assets in those meetings, Toby refused, and he was fired. This was a difficult time, as it was the first real setback in Toby's business career and forced him to deal with the challenge of unemployment. Within a few months he moved the family to Walnut Creek, California, where he joined Billeter, Halversen & Company, a tax preparation and financial advising firm founded by his close cousin and childhood neighbor, Bud Billeter.

The Pingrees lived happily in Walnut Creek from 1974 to 1997. Toby's business flourished, all six children graduated from high school, and everyone made dear friends, both in the Ygnacio Valley Ward and in the broader community. In 1982, Toby and Phyllis were called to preside over the Quito, Ecuador Mission of the Church. Toby was thrilled to return to Latin America to do missionary work, something he had hoped for since his experience there as a young man. Toby and Phyllis exemplified the mission motto to be "anxiously engaged in a good cause" in how they mentored, challenged, inspired and loved the hundreds of missionaries who served with them. Toby quietly created a new role for sister missionaries to serve as Assistants to the President, joining their male counterparts in leading peers.

After returning to Walnut Creek in 1985, Toby resumed work at what was now Billeter, Pingree & Company. He also served as bishop for a third time, presiding over the Walnut Creek Young Single Adults Ward, where he cherished another opportunity to mentor young people at crucial crossroads in their lives. Over the years, the Pingree children left home to pursue educational, professional, and family paths of their own. But 290 Firestone Drive remained an important touchstone and gathering place for family and friends.

In 1997, Toby and Phyllis returned to their family roots in Salt Lake City to help their aging mothers, but Toby's love of things entrepreneurial continued well after he "retired" from what had become Pingree, Wirig, Doll & Company. He worked part-time for Squire & Company, an accounting and financial advisory firm, and partnered with a former missionary to launch Compliance Software.

Though a Utahn through and through, Toby was a citizen of the world. He loved to travel and was proud to have visited every continent, one of the last being Antarctica on a trip aboard the National Geographic Explorer. Known for his willingness to honestly and civilly speak his mind, no matter the occasion, Toby celebrated cultural diversity and was genuinely curious to know people of different religious and political convictions. His many friends came from all walks of life.

Toby's commitment to both honest inquiry and genuine community continued as he provided financial leadership and support to the Sunstone Foundation at a critical time and enthusiastically attended and presented at annual Sunstone Symposia. He cherished such candid explorations of faith and religion; he was an original subscriber to *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, and he and Phyllis participated in Sunday night study groups with fellow ward members wherever they lived. Toby was unflinching in exploring the most difficult questions of belief and discipleship, profoundly inspired by the example of Church General Authority Hugh B. Brown. For Toby, authentic religious commitment required the ongoing questioning of one's own beliefs; as Brown remarked, "the honest investigator must be prepared to follow wherever the search of truth may lead."

In Salt Lake, Toby continued and even increased his lifelong devotion to sports and physical fitness. Once asked why he was so committed to exercise, he unhesitatingly replied, "because I don't want to be under-utilized," a term his children quickly added to their arsenal of affectionate invocations of him. Toby's mother had often proudly repeated words of praise spoken at her husband's funeral that "there never was a lazy Pingree."

As a missionary, Toby and his companions defeated the Guatemalan National Team in basketball, which led the locals to dub him "La Palmera Humana" (the human palm tree). He was part of an All-Church basketball team in Boulder, where, before its time, he developed his signature "baby hook shot." In Boulder he also hiked Pike's Peak and daily rode his bike to work. In Albuquerque he organized and participated in running races with ward members.

In Walnut Creek, after tearing his ACL playing church basketball, he nevertheless completed a triathlon, walking instead of running the final 10 kilometers. He biked Mount Diablo regularly with his pal Vince Wood. He also joined the Walnut Creek Masters, with whom he swam each morning, a beloved ritual that commenced well before dawn during tax season. And in Utah, Toby took up spinning at the Salt Lake City Sports Complex, churning away as elder cyclist in a tight-knit group until he was 87. Over the years he coached many youth basketball teams, and he coached each of his sons multiple times in basketball and baseball.

As Toby's mobility decreased, he doggedly pushed himself to use a walker and train at the gym, supported by his loyal friend and assistant, Denis Thurgood, until just a few months ago. Tragically, Toby's final decline timed exactly with the COVID pandemic, leaving him unable to be hugged, sung to, or comforted in person by his wife and family during his last six months. Toby's final weeks, days and hours were nonetheless eased by the excellent care of the staff at the Auberge at Aspen Park.

Toby was fiercely devoted to his children and showed it through his lifelong generosity and his unconditional support for their choices and beliefs, however difficult that may have been. Regardless of how impractical some of his children's professional choices seemed to him, he nonetheless took great interest in, supported, and valued their decisions and accomplishments. And while his heart yearned for all of his children to embrace the Church as lovingly and completely as he did, he sought to understand and respect their decisions to pursue their own truths.

Toby also adored his children-in-law, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and he and Phyllis traveled countless miles to be with them at important moments. In every visit, he involved them in fixing, building, or completing whatever was needed. And he loved to tell them the stories that had captured his own imagination as a child.

Toby cherished Phyllis, who smoothed his rough edges, kept house and raised children with extraordinary poise and patience through all the family's relocations, supported him in all of his church callings and professional changes, and supplied him with a never-ending banquet of delicious food. Toby knew that with Phyllis, he was "marrying up," and he became a more complete man, emotionally and spiritually, for having acted wisely in making the most important decision of his life.

While no life can be summarized in words alone, Toby's favorite hymn, "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief," and the passage from 1 Corinthians 13 that he and Phyllis memorized during their courtship ("Charity suffereth long, and is kind...") embody the values he held and tried to live by. Through his hard work, generosity, and unconditional support for his wife and children, he made a million wonderful things possible, and we will always be grateful.

Funeral services for Toby will be held Friday, February 26, at 11am.

You may view the recorded services at the link below:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/4xVKdZWE6JsAalconqD1QYjNqCGPU4tf028gymvbXudDA0MGFXDKXwdE_q4Y2Axx

In lieu of flowers, donations in Toby's honor can be made to:

- Doctors Without Borders (<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/>)
- The Sunstone Foundation (<https://sunstonemagazine.com/>)
- The Guatemalan Foundation (guatemalanfoundation.org)