

Joyce Sonnenberg

April 3, 1925 ~ April 28, 2021

Joyce Clair Dalton Sonnenberg, 96, passed away peacefully on April 28, 2021 in Sandy, Utah after a long and fulfilling life. Joyce was born on April 3, 1925 at her family's home in Stockton, Utah to Cloyd Enos Dalton and Mabel Clair Bracken Dalton.

Growing up in Tooele, Utah, Joyce enjoyed dancing, playing with her sister Donna, and camping with her parents in the Oquirrh Mountains. As a little girl, she and her sister would often ride in the family car to watch their father, a volunteer firefighter, as he responded to calls. While attending Tooele High School, she completed seminary, taught junior Sunday School, and worked at both the local soda fountain and the newly opened Tooele Ordnance Depot. Joyce graduated from high school in 1943, and afterwards enrolled at Henager's Business College in Salt Lake City, where she received training as a typist during the World War II era.

In 1946, Joyce was called as a full-time missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to the East Central States Mission, serving in North Carolina, West Virginia, and Kentucky. She loved her mission companions and maintained close relationships with them throughout her life. During her service in the mission office in Louisville, she became acquainted with John Sonnenberg, a dental student at the University of Louisville. John pursued Joyce after she returned to Tooele, and they were sealed by Elder Harold B. Lee in the Salt Lake Temple on November 26, 1947. Joyce was the love of John's life; he was constantly devoted to her and always called her "my lovely wife".

After their marriage, the couple moved to John's hometown, Chicago, Illinois, where Joyce helped John build his dental practice, and together they raised their seven children. On one outing, Joyce helped her family enter a city bus. Counting all the children as they boarded, the driver turned to her and asked, "Lady, are these all your children, or is this a picnic?" Without hesitation Joyce responded with a touch of humor: "They are all my children, and it's no picnic!" — an anecdote which eventually was retold in General Conference.

Joyce helped create memories with the family as they traveled annually to Daytona Beach, Florida, or to nearby water ski lakes in Rhinelander, Wisconsin and Lake Holiday, Illinois. When John was called to serve first in the stake presidency of the Chicago South Stake — and then as the stake president and chair of the Chicago Temple building committee — Joyce supported him and was always adept at keeping the home fires burning. She also served in many callings in the Primary, Young Women, and Relief Society.

In 1984, Joyce and John moved to Germany after John's call to the Quorum of the Seventy and assignment to serve in the Europe West Area presidency. In 1986, they relocated to Sydney, Australia to fulfill John's assignment as Pacific Area president. During their three years in the Pacific, Joyce criss-crossed the ocean to visit many church members, and attend stake conferences and other church meetings. Often, she traveled by sea plane or

small boat to visit far-flung islands, where she was greeted warmly by Polynesian members.

After being released from their General Authority service, Joyce and John returned again to the Pacific in 1990, where Joyce served as matron of the Hamilton New Zealand Temple until 1992. Returning from New Zealand, she and John made their home in Salt Lake City, where they enjoyed living in the lower Avenues, serving in a young single adult ward, and ministering at the LDS Hospital branch. She welcomed her grandchildren and great-grandchildren both at her condominium swimming pool and for frequent lunches at City Creek Center. She and John also made annual trips to Chicago to visit family and enjoy their lake house west of the city.

Joyce had a zest for life, and never thought of herself as getting older. She gracefully endured her loss of hearing and gradual loss of eyesight in later years. Throughout her life, she chronicled her and her family's experiences in extensive journals, scrapbooks, and annotated photo albums. She also expressed her love to family and others with her many cards and letters — never failing to acknowledge a loved one's special occasion with a greeting card or short poem.

Joyce was an "elect lady", living life with grace, love, humility, and a focus on service. She is survived by her seven children: John David (Terry), James (Young Ja), Brent (Janette), Joan Wardell (Les), Dean (Deanna), Scott (Jill), Clair Dickson (Terry); sister Donna Dalton Porter Johnson; 33 grandchildren; 91 great-grandchildren; and a great-great grandchild on the way. She is preceded in death by her husband John, parents Cloyd and Mabel, and great-granddaughter Brittney.

Funeral services will be held at the Salt Lake Ensign Stake Center, 135 A Street, Salt Lake City, Utah on Friday, May 7, 2021 at 11 a.m. A viewing will be held at 10 a.m. at the Salt Lake Ensign Stake Center prior to the funeral. Burial will be in Wasatch Lawn Memorial Park.

For those who wish to watch the recording of the services may do so here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/PL7xlZiyiYCYwPQexRGAfvcspRlJXM1AR0epcgAkxuVtbuEPrtuI7HjDvOvcxmPB.5_teA
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