

Kari Johansen Thacker

December 18, 1936 ~ April 18, 2022

In the early morning hours of Monday, April 18, 2022, Kari Johansen Thacker passed away at home at the age of 85 in Herriman, UT. Kari was an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and was a member of the Butterfield Canyon 11th Ward.

Kari was born in Trondheim, Norway on December 18, 1936, and lived her early childhood during World War II. As a young child, she did not understand the seriousness and dangers of the times she was living. It wasn't until she grew older that she could understand how frightening that time truly was. Kari's birth mother could not care for her needs, so she spent the first five years of her life with her grandmother, Dina D. Johansen. Even though she was only five years old when her grandmother died, she always felt like Dina was her guardian angel. She could feel her presence during the difficult periods of her life. After her grandmother's passing, Kari was taken in by her uncle and aunt, Karl and Aase Johansen. Karl and Aase became like parents to Kari and provided her with a stable home and later the companionship of her younger sister, Turid, who she loved very much. The end of World War II meant the release of Norway from Nazi rule and freedom for the Norwegian people. Of the many freedoms, their family now enjoyed, they consider the return of the Missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints to be the greatest blessing of their lives. Shortly after joining the Church, Karl and Aase decided to move their family to "Zion." So, in 1951 their little family immigrated to the United States of America and settled in Salt Lake City, Utah. After arriving in Salt Lake, Kari started school and had to learn English quickly. She impressed her teachers as she quickly learned a new language and excelled in her school work. She later graduated from West High School in 1955.

Kari met the love of her life, Lee Simmons Thacker, through a mutual friend in 1958. Kari was encouraged to write a letter to a handsome young missionary serving in Norway. That first letter began a friendship for the remaining eleven months of Elder Thacker's mission. Upon Lee's return from Norway, his first stop was to pick up his new "friend," Kari. They met face to face for the first time on the 4th of July in 1959, and Lee immediately took her straight to Heber City, UT, to meet his family. After that, Lee and Kari became the talk of Heber City, "Lee had brought home a beautiful blonde from Norway!" They were sealed for time and all eternity in the Salt Lake City Temple on November 12, 1959. A week after their marriage, Lee was drafted into the Army. In 1961 Kari joined her husband in Germany, and it was there in Frankfurt, their first child was born. After Lee was discharged from the Army, they bought their first home in Sugar House, UT. Kari and Lee met many lifelong friends while living in Sugar House. The women of the Sugar House Relief Society were very special to her. She credits those sisters with teaching her how to be a mother, take care of a home, cook, and sew. While living in Sugar House, they added three more children to their family. When Kari became unexpectedly pregnant with their fifth child it became clear that their tiny home could not comfortably fit their growing family. Their hearts ached as they moved away, but the

move brought them to the Cottonwood area, where they found more neighbors and friends that would enrich their lives for over 45 years. With more room came more children, and their family became complete with six children.

Kari served in many teaching and leadership positions in the Church. She loved every calling, but none compared to her calling of Extraction Specialist. Kari spent many hours extracting historic Norwegian and other European records from microfilm for temple work. More than just a church calling, this was her personal calling. She was never truly released from this calling. Even after the extraction work moved to computers, she was right there learning how to use the program. She never stopped; even up to her death, she was indexing. She had a deep testimony of the Gospel and knew the importance of the Plan of Salvation. Her testimony of our Heavenly Father's plan compelled her to submit hundreds of thousands of names over her lifetime for temple ordinances. She leaves behind a legacy of genealogy work that expands generations of time and reflects her deep love for our Savior.

Kari and Lee created a home filled with love and gospel learning. Together they taught their family by example the words of Jesus, "I am among you as he that serveth" (Luke 22:27). Family vacations were spent camping at Moon Lake, Bear Lake, and along the Washington, Oregon, and California coastlines. Those trips helped form a strong family bond with beautiful memories.

Kari always looked forward to her regular Norwegian knitting club. She treasured these women and considered them her second family. Kari loved crossword puzzles, enjoyed reading LDS authored books and spent time studying the Book of Mormon. She enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She loved to tell them about Norway, her family, and all of the experiences she remembered during the war. She held many dinners, swimming parties, and family gatherings too numerous to count. She always offered food when you came to visit, and every grandchild was given a Keebler Fudge Striped cookie. She was skilled at knitting and crochet and made countless sweaters, mittens, and hats. The happy recipients of her beautiful heirlooms were her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, extended family, and friends.

Kari loved her Norwegian heritage. She remained a perfect Norwegian linguist and took every opportunity to speak in her native tongue. She loved corresponding with her family in Norway, and Facebook made that so much easier. Throughout the years, she often opened her home to family visiting from Norway and loved the time she was able to spend with them. Especially when Beathe, her second cousin, spent her senior year of high school with us.

Lee and Kari recently moved to Herriman City, UT, to live with their daughter Amy and her family. We are forever indebted to Amy and Scott for opening their home.

Kari is survived by her loving husband of 62 years, Lee; their children Anne Lise Caldwell (Gary), Steven Thacker (Dodi), Roy Thacker (Amber), MaryAnn Feuz (Bridger), Heidi Winegar (Josh), and Amy Steen (Scott); 18 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren; and sister Turid Monson (Bill). She is preceded in death by her parents, Karl and Aase Johansen. We would like to recognize all of her extended family; aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and special close friends, but there are too many to mention. Please know she loved you all dearly, and we know you all are mourning with us.

On Monday, April 25, 2022, funeral services will be held at noon at the Cottonwood 11th Ward Chapel, 1830 E 6400 S, Murray, UT. A viewing will be held on Sunday, April 24, 2022, from 6:00-8:00 pm at Larkin Mortuary Riverton, 3688 W 12600 S, Riverton, UT; and Monday, April 25, 2022, prior to the funeral services beginning at 10:30 am at the Cottonwood Chapel.

The family would like to thank the Herriman City Police, Fire Department, and Emergency Medical Responders for their loving care of our Mother after her passing. We would also like to acknowledge the Butterfield Canyon 11th Ward and Bishop Wilson Dansie for their warm welcome and loving care.

Funeral services will be streamed via Zoom for those unable to attend in person or wishing to attend virtually. To view the streamed services, you must have your own personal Zoom account. You may click the “Watch Services” link above to connect to the stream.