

Kenneth Hoskisson

December 7, 1927 ~ July 15, 2022

It is with deep sorrow and much love that we mourn the loss of Kenneth Hoskisson of Logan, Utah, who passed away on July 15th, 2022, at the age of 94. Born at home on Michigan Avenue in Salt Lake City on December 7, 1927, Ken was the last of Arnison and Amelia (Wilson) Hoskisson's nine children. Much of his childhood was spent playing in the neighborhood with his many cousins until he was old enough to begin helping out at the Hoskisson family grocery store. This developed his strong work ethic and interest in food and nutrition. He graduated early from South High School in Salt Lake City at the age of 16 and then started taking courses at the University of Utah while still working at the family store.

His studies were interrupted when he was drafted into the Army. Upon completion of medical technician training, he was deployed as part of the occupying forces in Japan, serving as a dental technician. He returned to Salt Lake City after completing his military service. A lifelong devoted member of the LDS church, he then served his mission across several of the states in the Western States Mission, including on the Pine Ridge Reservation. His mission deepened his faith and he developed a scholarly interest in LDS doctrine. Throughout his life, he studied and wrote about spiritual topics. He always found joy and peace in performing temple ordinances and leading classes at his local ward.

In 1953, after returning from his mission, he graduated with a BS in Botany with an emphasis on elementary education from the University of Utah. He embarked on a teaching career in Salt Lake. During this time, he met his future wife, Virginia Adele Russell, who was also beginning her career as an elementary educator. Serendipitously, they crossed paths while attending a choir retreat at Mirror Lake. She was attracted to his dry, witty, self-deprecating sense of humor that kept anyone who knew him throughout his life laughing. Ken and Virginia discovered they had many common interests and began dating. Shortly thereafter, they were both offered teaching jobs at the same elementary school in Corcoran, California. While living in Corcoran, they became engaged and were married in the Salt Lake Temple on December 28, 1953.

Soon the couple moved to Concord, California, where Ken began working on his M.A. in Education at San Francisco State College. After being awarded his Masters in 1957, the couple then spent ten years teaching for Department of Defense schools in West Germany and France. Ken taught mainly upper elementary students before moving into school administration. The couple spent much of their free time traveling extensively, exploring the European continent and parts of the Middle East. They fondly remembered skiing and hiking the French Alps, visiting museums and cultural landmarks, and experiencing new cultures. An avid photographer who often developed his own film, Ken documented their adventures and accumulated an extensive library of slides and 8mm films.

The couple returned from Europe in 1967 with three young children so that Ken could work on a doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley. He was awarded a PhD. in Education in 1971. The family moved to Blacksburg, Virginia after he accepted a teaching position at Virginia Tech, where he guided student teachers in elementary education and reading strategies for 22 years. An avid gardener throughout his life, he maintained a large garden in his backyard in Blacksburg, and enjoyed canning and preserving vegetables and fruits. In the mid-80s, he published the first edition of what would become one of the most popular textbooks for reading instruction, Language Arts: Content and Teaching Strategies. It was used by universities throughout the United States for training student teachers to teach reading to young students. Ken retired from Virginia Tech as a Professor Emeritus in 1994, before he and Virginia settled in Logan, Utah, later that year.

A loving father, he enjoyed spending time with his wife and children, taking road trips to historical sites, beaches, cultural landmarks, and driving through the beautiful landscapes of the mid-Atlantic states. He took great pride in his grandchildren, especially reading childrens' books to them when they were younger. Although devout in his beliefs, he always listened to the beliefs of others and enjoyed engaging in good-natured debates and discussions. In retirement, he continued to enjoy writing on a variety of topics, including LDS themes, reading strategies, heart healthcare and diets, and a book journal detailing some of his life experiences.

Ken was the last surviving sibling in his family. He is preceded in death by his loving wife of 68 years, Virginia. He is survived by his daughter Heather Weinstein, of St. George, Utah; son Mark Hoskisson, of Lakeside, California; daughter Tam Hoskisson of Bellingham, Washington; six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Services will be held Wednesday, July 27th, at Larkin Sunset Gardens in Sandy, Utah. There will be a viewing from 11-1 in the Sunset Gardens chapel, followed by a graveside service at 1pm. A livestream of the services will be available via Zoom for those unable to attend in person, and can be accessed by clicking on the "Watch Services" link above.