

# Milton Dale Ensign

*May 13, 1927 ~ April 9, 2024*

Milton Dale Ensign passed away peacefully on April 9, 2024, after 97 years of service, leadership, and love. Dale was a loving father, husband, grandfather to his 43 grandchildren, 65 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-granddaughter. While his career was filled with outstanding leadership roles and friendships with world leaders, Dale centered his life on family, service and his faith in Jesus Christ.

Dale's happy childhood in Stockton, California, and subsequent move (at the age of 12) to Salt Lake City taught him that God hears and answers every prayer. Prayer and receiving guidance from God is the likely source of the wisdom and light that caused many to seek him to lead. As early as high school he won the Daughters of the American Revolution contest for a patriotic speech. At age 17 he enlisted in the United States Navy where he was chosen to be company commander of 200 new recruits and then commander of 500 Navy and Marine Air Force cadets. He was accepted into navy pilot school but as the war ended he chose to return home and serve the Lord. He was called to serve in the Stockholm Swedish Mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Church). As a young missionary Dale served as president of the Swedish Mission for several months until a new mission leader could arrive.

Upon his return from Sweden, he attended the University of Utah where he joined the Pi Kappa Alpha and Delta Phi fraternities. He married Joyce Murdock in the Salt Lake Temple; they became parents of a daughter, Erlynn Lansing, and three sons, Eric, Clint and Jonathan Ensign.

He graduated from the University of Utah Law School and was employed by Standard Oil Company in San Francisco. During that time he served in the stake presidency of the San Francisco Stake. He later accepted employment as executive secretary to the president of Husky Oil and moved the family to Cody, Wyoming, where he directed the purchase of the first computer for the Husky Oil company and subsequently served as Husky Oil Vice President. Dale was called to serve the Church as the president of the Big Horn Stake.

Dale was appointed as a trustee for Northwest Community College. In this capacity he played a pivotal role in establishing the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), an educational forum for thousands of community college trustees internationally. For his work in founding ACCT, a trust for a national award was set up in his name; the "M. Dale Ensign Leadership award," has been given to the outstanding community college trustee in the nation annually for over 50 years.

In December 1970 Dale married Elaine Woodbury in the Salt Lake Temple. This joyous marriage brought two loving families together. Dale was blessed to become the step-father to Robert Pusey, Lisa Howe, Lynne Johnston, and Lance Ensign.

In 1972 the family moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where Dale became the president of Husky Industries and served the Church as counselor in the Atlanta Mission Presidency. Heather Gordon, another beloved daughter was born. During the energy crisis of 1974 Dale transferred to Washington, D.C., to work with Congressional and federal entities on energy advocacy. He also served the Church in the Washington, D.C., Mission Presidency with Glenn E. Nielson. In 1975 Celeste Ensign, the fifth daughter, and 10th child (and caboose) was welcomed into the family. Dale served the Church in the bishopric of the Chevy Chase Ward until the family moved to Potomac, Maryland.

During their time in Washington, D.C., Dale and Elaine developed warm friendships with key government and business leaders, including a special relationship with Chai Zemin, the first ambassador from the People's Republic of China to the United States; a friendship that continued for many years. They also bought an historic farm in Mt. Pleasant, Maryland, where they had the opportunity to entertain many of their close friends and families. Many happy days on the farm were spent with family, riding his tractor, growing their garden and canning the abundant fruit.

In 1978 he was called to be the public affairs representative for the East Coast and subsequently as regional representative for the Church in New York and New Jersey, and later in Kearns, Utah. He was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the presidential White House task force on "Keep America Working."

In 1980, Dale began working for Sinclair Oil and was transferred to Salt Lake to become executive vice president of the company. He loved his work with Earl and Carol Holding and their family.

Dale and Elaine served many missions for the Church.

In 1993 they were called to serve as mission leaders for the Hartford, Connecticut Mission. Several hundred young missionaries were added to their already large family.

In 1997, Dale and Elaine were called to serve as Church Directors of VIP Hosting for three and a half years. They hosted international guests, presidents, ambassadors, authors, athletes, Olympians and celebrities from all over the world. They introduced the guests of the Church to the charities, culture, ideals and leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Dale and Elaine as well as the leaders of the Church made many dear friends.

They were called as proselytizing missionaries to the England, Manchester Mission to serve on the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea.

Dale and Elaine were called by the Church to go to China and were directors of China Charities Federation, a humanitarian aid organization.

They were blessed to serve in the temple in Stockholm, Sweden, the land of both of their ancestors.

Next they served in the Johannesburg Temple.

Words cannot describe the deep love they have for the people they served and served with on each mission. It was a joyous time for them as they felt the guiding hand of the Lord Jesus Christ

After their return from their last mission, Dale served on the board of the Church Hospitality Committee.

Their last calling was to teach the 7 year olds in the Foxhill Ward Primary where they were Grandma and Grandpa to precious young children. Elaine and Dale felt truly blessed for the peace, hope, direction, joy and answers to prayers as they experienced service in the Church.

Dale was young at heart and loved having fun with his family. There were family vacations, boats, four wheelers, cabins, tractors, beach trips, fishing, golfing, horseback riding, snowmobiling, swimming, cliff jumping, football, baseball and basketball. He especially loved going to Sun Valley and Yellowstone.

Dale was preceded in death by his parents Milton Wright Ensign and Mona Larson, his sisters Patti Richards and Helene Maw, his son Dale Eric (Lisa) Ensign and his daughter Celeste Ensign.

He is survived by his wife, Elaine Woodbury Ensign, and his children: Erlynn (Chris) Lansing, Robert (Cari) Pusey, Clint (Cindy) Ensign, Lisa Howe, Lynne (Mark) Johnston, Jonathan (Tracy) Ensign, Lance (Lisa) Ensign, and Heather (Corbin) Gordon. Dale's prayer is that his posterity will be blessed with a love for the Savior and the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their lives.

Visitations and funeral will be held at the Foxhill Ward located at 200 Eagle Ridge Drive, North Salt Lake, Utah 84054. Visitation(s): Friday, April 19, 2024 6-8:00 pm and Saturday, April 20, 2024 @ 10-11:30 am Funeral: April

20, 2024 12:00 noon. Interment is at Wasatch Lawn Cemetery following the funeral.

The service will be livestreamed via Zoom and can be accessed by clicking the "Watch Services" button above.