

Peter Quentin Freed

January 8, 1921 ~ August 29, 2020

Peter Quentin Freed, 99, left this earth in many ways better than when he came to it on August 29, 2020. He was born to Jasmine Young and Lester D. Freed on January 8, 1921, the youngest of five brothers. As a young boy, he did not like his given name, James Claude (Jimmy). Peter persuaded his mother to take him to the Salt Lake District Court to change his name to Peter. The process seemed to be going well until the clerk inquired what new middle name he wanted, to which a surprised, unprepared Peter blurted out, “Quentin”. Recently, Peter described this pivotal childhood memory, “Quentin! What was I thinking?”.

Peter lived his life in Salt Lake City, growing up in a home on South Temple, attending Bryant Jr. High, East High, and finally, after serving 4 years in Naval Intelligence during World War II assigned to the Commander of the Fifth Fleet under Admiral Raymond A Spruance, graduated from the University of Utah. Before leaving for the Navy, Peter married a Bountiful farmer’s daughter, Cristie Wicker, whom he had met sharing their love of theater acting in a play at the University. Peter and Cristie had six children that became the focus of their lives.

With their young children, Peter and Cristie were not helicopter parents. However, Peter in particular established a close, best friends style bond with each young child which continued throughout his life. Most of every non-working hour was spent taking the kids to school, lessons, out to dinner, and on family vacations, particularly to the cherished cabin on the Weber River.

Peter was proud of his association with Lagoon Amusement Park, requesting that any telling of his story include some of Lagoon’s history that he was instrumental in creating.

Returning from World War II with no employment prospects, Peter partnered with his brothers in a lease to operate the venerable Farmington amusement facility which, during the War, had been permanently shuttered. Lagoon then was small and in wretched condition, requiring noble commitment and unending hard work to re-open in May 1946. Less than 100 people came to the Park on opening day, but Peter and his older brother, Robert E. Freed (Bob), were thrilled. In late fall 1953, most of Lagoon burned to the ground. Refusing to give up, the Park was re-built to open on time, the next spring. Many, many years of hard work with meager return finally brought Lagoon, in the mid-1960s, to a stage that showed promise. Peter often remarked that the biggest mistake his oldest brother, David, made in acquiring the lease for Lagoon was not including a future option to buy the facility. For more than ten years, Peter, who was dissatisfied with the leasing relationship, drove the effort for the family to purchase Lagoon. The negotiations proved challenging and difficult. At one point, when the park owners offered a significantly improved lease, Peter’s brother, David, in frustration, indicated the family would accept the offer. However, Peter insisted that the only way forward for the family and Lagoon was to reverse course, which, with the counsel of attorney friends Reid Martineau and John Gates, secured the purchase agreement in 1983. The bank

loan to achieve this goal was repaid 25 years later. During this time, Peter was most pleased with his successful effort to bring Pioneer Village to Lagoon in 1976.

Under Peter's leadership, Lagoon rose to be a valued family recreation venue for Utah families, and become the largest family-owned amusement park in the country.

However, during the flowering of Lagoon, with Cristie driving, a horrific accident critically injured Peter and left Cristie in a coma for more than a year. When Cristie regained consciousness, Peter brought her home from the hospital to lovingly care for her until her passing eight years later in May 2006.

As Peter honorably proved his worth in business, he was loved and respected by Lagoon's associates and employees. However, Peter was first and foremost a family man, admired and adored by his children who are David W. (Luella), Howard, Michael, Kristen, Anne (Bob), Jennifer, and six grandchildren.

Peter was a beautiful person, a gentleman, and a source of joy and love to all who knew him. This is the obituary of a wonderful father, brother, businessman, leader and advisor; of a confidante, mentor, nurturer of relationships of family and friends; a kind, gentle, and modest man of integrity; a lifelong friend, loving husband, and family man.

There are no amount of words to sufficiently give summation to his life. We mourn his loss, and with time, will celebrate his life.

Our Family wish to acknowledge and express our profound gratitude to Peter's caregivers, Janina, Laura, Yolanda, Rufina, and Magdalena, one or more of whom was always by his side.

Peter was laid to rest with Cristie, as was his wish, by his immediate family.