

Richard C Skillicorn

December 20, 1931 ~ December 15, 2020

Richard Charles Skillicorn, known by loved ones as Dick, Dad, Pop, Grandpa, Grandpa Great, and Grandpa With The Red Hat died Tuesday, December 15, 2020, at home in Cottonwood Heights with his family around him. He was born December 20, 1931, in Ely, Nevada to Henry Skillicorn and Ada Halverson Skillicorn. Born with foot problems, he had many surgeries to allow him to walk. Doctors told his parents that he would never be able to walk. However, despite great pain, he walked throughout his long life. His family lived at the mine in Ely, Nevada, and then moved to Park City, Utah when he was 12. He later attended Park City High School where he left his mark as a charismatic troublemaker who wanted to one day lead a band of his own. He pursued his love for music at Westlake College of Music in California but was unable to stay as long as he wanted due to the economic difficulties at the time.

He worked in a machine shop in California while attending music school and worked additionally for ten years as a machinist at the Hill Airforce Base working with aircraft parts. He retired after working as a draftsman for the Utah Department of Transportation after 30 years. He is best known for his passion for and time spent playing Dixieland Jazz music. He played in dance bands from his teenage years until Spring of 2020. He played trumpet, cornet, bass guitar, valve trombone, flugelhorn, drums and piano and occasionally sang in a number of Dixieland Jazz Bands and dance bands in the Salt Lake City area for over seven decades. He would try to play any instrument he could get his hands on. (Although he would claim he could not play the piano, but merely played at the piano). He started both the Salt Lake Good Time Jazz Band and the Skillicats Dixieland bands. He was also a member of the Jack Turner Orchestra, the Post Office Band, and the Phoenix Band along with hundreds of small combos who played for weddings, parties, and funerals.

Not even a severe stroke could stop him from continuing to play over the last four years of his life and he continued to play as much as he could up until three weeks before his death. His presence will be missed in the coming years, especially at future 4th of July performances and Wednesday morning dances, but we are grateful for the time we have had with him.

He leaves behind his wife, Merleen Thacker, who he met as a young musician after having danced first with her twin sister Joleen. After dancing with Merleen though, he was smitten and they were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple, September 25, 1957. They were blessed with 63 years of marriage and he is survived by his five children Richard, Diane (Hill), Scott, Jerry, and Jim; 15 grandchildren; and 28 great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his parents, 3 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

He enjoyed camping and fishing with family and focused on developing relationships with those close to him. He was kind and considerate, and although he was not a man of many words, it was clear to those around him that

they were loved and appreciated. He took time to share his love for music with his grandkids and great-grandkids, giving private lessons and making it a priority to attend performances. He also had many dearly loved dogs throughout his life: Cookie, Susie, Spunky, and finally Molly who was a great comfort to him in his last few days.

There will be a public viewing Sunday, Dec. 20th, 6 to 8 pm, and Monday, Dec. 21st, 9 to 10:30 am at Larkin Sunset Mortuary 1950 E 10600 South, Sandy Utah, 84092. Due to Covid19, the funeral will be at 11 am Monday, Dec 21st online only. There will be a link at Larkinmortuary.com.

Meeting Recording:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/m6TlJvXnqP3TKxTS8RMQydxQRdMw4zXf7rUvmzwpDLFr5GQWOW_psGMz7cgV3p