Loran Dean Stephenson

October 22, 1925 ~ November 8, 2019

Loran Dean Stephenson, age 94, passed away November 8, 2019 at the home of his daughter in Georgetown, S. C., of complications incident to old age. His passing was peaceful. Loran was born at home in Riverdale, ID in 1925, the first born of 8 children to Loran Kye Stephenson and Dorthea Virginia Anderson, both of Idaho. Loran spent his early years in the Preston area, attending the two room school where his father taught. He moved with his family to Wendell, ID where his parents bought a farm. In Wendell Loran learned to play the Saxophone and performed in a local dance band. Loran attended Preston High School for his Senior year, living with his Aunt Ada. There he was introduced to playing the violin and ignited a life-long interest in string instruments. Soon after his high school graduation, Loran joined the Navy during World War II. He was assigned to Camp Farragut, ID where he spent most of his enlistment time of 2 years, 7 months, and six days (as he was fond of saying).

While at Camp Farragut, Loran met Joyce Marie Barrett in Spokane, Washington at a weekly church meeting known as the Doctrine and Covenants Club. Joyce was doing a rotation as a part of her nursing training at Idaho Falls hospital. They dated by letter and spent time together when Loran had leave long enough to hitch hike from Farragut to Idaho Falls. They exchanged letters daily. They became engaged in August 1945 on VJ Day in Salt Lake City. They were married, after Loran was discharged from the Navy and Joyce graduated from Nurse's Training, in July 1946. They were married in the Logan Utah Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The couple moved to Provo, Utah where Loran enrolled in Brigham Young University. In October 1946, Loran received and accepted a call to serve as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Central States Mission. Their first child, Loran, Jr., was born in California where Joyce was residing with her parents during the two years Loran served on this mission. When Loran returned from his missionary service, he and Joyce returned to Provo, Utah to continue school at Brigham Young University. There Loran completed a BA and MA in music education. Four more children were born to them during this time (Linda, Mark, Jonathan and Judith). Upon graduation, Loran and Joyce lived with their family in small communities in Utah, Idaho and Oregon where Loran taught Music in the public schools. During this time another child was born (Carl).

The family moved to the Washington D. C. area where Loran taught Music in the public schools. Here three more children were born (Joanna, Sharon, Olan). During this time Loran developed a string method for beginners which he used and published. He was also active in MENC (Music Educators National Conference) and served as assistant director of the D. C. Youth Symphony Orchestra. The children all received instruction on string instruments leading to the organization of The Stephenson Family Strings that performed in the area and at MENC Conventions.

Loran moved his family to Philadelphia, PA in 1965 in order to secure better music instruction for his children. He taught Instrumental Music in the Philadelphia Public Schools and String Methods at the Philadelphia Musical Academy. The Family Orchestra continued to perform in the Philadelphia area, Boston, and the Ted Mack Amateur Hour in New York City. They also cut a record entitled The Stephenson Family Strings. During his time in Philadelphia, Loran served on the High Council of the Philadelphia Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and also as Bishop of the Philadelphia Ward for, pioneering a Spanish speaking branch of the church in North Philadelphia.

Loran and Joyce purchased a farm outside Frederick, MD and retired there where Loran raised Beefalo They both served as workers in the Washington D. C. Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They received a call to serve a full time mission in family history at the Genealogical Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. Here they developed a course of instruction for the missionaries in genealogical research. Loran was a life-long genealogical enthusiast. Upon completing this mission, Loran and Joyce moved to Meridian, ID where they served as workers in the Boise Temple and enjoyed association with extended family members.

In order to be more accessible to visits from children and grandchildren, Loran and Joyce moved to Salt Lake City where they continued to serve in the Church, attend the Temple and do family history research. Their home was a place family and friends could visit and find a loving respite from the world. Joyce passed away in 2013 in Salt Lake City and was buried in the Wendell, ID Cemetery. Loran moved to the Philadelphia area and lived there several years, then in the D C. area and in Georgetown, SC, where he passed away. One of the great highlights of his last years was attending the dedication of the Philadelphia Pennsylvania Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which was a realization of his hopes for many years.

Loran is survived by his children Loran D., Jr. and Yvonne (CO), Mark and Holly (VA), Jonathan and Beverly (PA), Judith and Charles Muldowney(PA), Carl and Susan (AZ), Joanna and Dennis Price (SC), Sharon and Mark Vasicek (IA), Olan and Tamara (KS). Loran and Joyce have 50 grandchildren and 130+ great grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held in his honor at 9:30 AM on Thursday, November 21, 2019 at Larkin Mortuary Chapel, 260 East South Temple, Salt Lake City. A viewing will be held the evening prior to services from 6-8 PM at the same location. Interment at Windell Cemetery in Wendell, Idaho.