John Elvin Whitby

January 16, 1914 ~ August 17, 2014

John Elvin Whitby, age 100, died unexpectedly on the morning of Sunday August 17th, 2014. He was getting ready for the day when he passed away, easily and peacefully.

The family wishes to thank the Utah Veteran's Rest Home for the care and attention they offered John for more than two years. They provided an environment in which he was cared for, respected and stimulated. He went fishing, horseback riding and on numerous other excursions. At the age of 99, John was elected President of the Residents Association, running on the platform "99 years of experience".

John was born January 16, 1914 in Alpine, Utah to Oscar Alfred and Viola Perennial Little Whitby. Shortly after his birth the family moved to Carey, Idaho where he lived until college. He attended Utah State Agricultural College and graduated in 1939.

He taught business classes at Milford High School and then at Coalville High School,Ä¶.but World War II had begun. John enlisted in the Navy and served 3 Ω years, including two years in the South Pacific as a Hospital Corpsman with the 1st Marine Division.

During the War he promised himself he would come home and marry a beautiful wife, have a good family, a good job and a nice home. He achieved all that. John married Arva Holbrook, and they were sealed in the LDS temple. Together, they raised 5 children.

After the war he was employed in Salt Lake City with the Veterans Administration as a Registration Officer for 5 years. He worked as an auditor at Deseret Chemical in Tooele, Utah and then at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City for 10 years. John then worked at Hill Air Force Base, and later at the Salt Lake City Veteran's Administration Hospital as the Administrative Officer for Medical Research. He retired from the VA in 1990 but continued to work from home as an accountant for many local restaurants including Finn's, Finlandia's, The Red Apple, The Winery, and Five Alls. At the age of 93 he fully retired from his accounting profession and was freed up to spend more time in his garden.

Perhaps because he grew up on a farm, John's beautiful vegetable garden was one of his greatest pleasures. It was carefully organized and abundant, to the joy of all the family, and the local deer and birds. Even this past spring, John directed the planting of a garden at the family home. In fact he spent Saturday, his last day here, shopping for materials and seeds, preparing for the square-foot gardening class he was scheduled to teach at the rest home.

John served as a High Priest in the LDS Church, and was in the High Priest Quorum Presidency. He was the ward financial clerk for eighteen years in the Monument Park 8th Ward. He believed that was "the best job in the church."

John is survived by his wife, Arva Holbrook Whitby and their five children: Robert H. (Kathleen Smith) Whitby of Greenwich CT; Paul (Karen Asnin) Whitby of New York, NY; Von H. (Virginia Martin)Whitby of Salt Lake City, UT; John H. (Lene Lind)Whitby of Bend, OR; and Marianne Whitby of Salt Lake City, UT; their 13 grandchildren and nearly 11 great grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother Paul A. Whitby of La Jolla, CA. John was preceded in death by his brother Harold O. Whitby and his sisters Clara Whitby, Thelma Kirkland, Althea Hunsaker, Loretta Rees, and Eva Lamb.

John was hard working and regimented but lived long enough to relax and have fun. He used to enjoy racing around on the 3-wheeled ATVs while up at the family cabin at Aspen Acres. He liked to travel and he and Arva visited England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Russia and Reunion Island.

At the age of 99, on Memorial Day, John flew in a World War II open cockpit bi-plane over the Heber and Salt Lake Valleys. To top that, he had a burning desire to skydive the year he turned 100. He left with just that one goal unmet. He didn't get to skydive. But on August 17th he took his final jump and now he is free to soar with angels.

Friends may call Sunday, August 24th between 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Larkin Sunset Lawn, 2350 East 1300 South, Salt Lake City, Utah. Funeral services will be held Monday, August 25th with visitation at 10:30 am and funeral at 12:00 noon at the Foothill 6th Ward, 2215 East Roosevelt Avenue Salt Lake City, Utah. For condolences, please visit www.larkincares.com.