

Utahna Jones

November 20, 1928 ~ July 2, 2023

Our beautiful and loving mother, Utahna Jones, passed away peacefully July 2, 2023 at Sunrise of Sandy in Sandy, Utah.

Utahna was born on November 20, 1928 in Holden, Utah to Emily Melissa Turner and Fred Stevens Johnson. Utahna was the eleventh of seventeen children (11 daughters, 6 sons).

Utahna had a happy childhood living on the big Johnson farm in Holden. She loved the wide open spaces of the country where she loved to get with her friends, Venez and Beverly and ride horses for hours. On the farm, they raised a large garden, fruit trees and various farm animals. At an early age, she learned the value of hard work.

Utahna attended Millard High where she played the French horn in the marching band. The Millard High band came to Salt Lake often to march in the July 24th parade, an experience she dearly loved! After Utahna graduated from Millard High School, she attended the BAC (now known as SUU), BYU and the University of Utah.

While attending the BAC in 1947 in Cedar City, Utahna met the love of her life, Gary Jones. Utahna was the Harvest Ball Queen, and when Gary saw her, it was love at first sight.

Gary and Utahna were married on December 26, 1948 at the LDS Institute in Cedar City, Utah. They were later sealed in the Salt Lake Temple.

After Gary graduated from BYU in Accounting, Gary and Utahna made their home in Cedar City, Utah for the next twelve years, during which time their three children were born (Valerie, Pamela, David).

When Gary was offered a great job in Salt Lake working as an industrial engineer for Kennecott Corporation, it was a very difficult decision to make since they loved Cedar City and southern Utah so much. Moving to the big city with so many unknowns was a bit terrifying. Nevertheless, they made the move and eventually adapted. However, their hearts remained in Southern Utah, and they visited there often to see Gary's parents, his relatives and their dear friends.

Utahna was a very devoted and loving wife to Gary, and mother to Valerie, Pam and Dave. Utahna's life's focus was her family.

Utahna loved to travel, and was very fortunate to have travelled with Gary to many beautiful places around the world.

Utahna had a love for dancing. She said that "dance lifts my spirits and helps me stay happy and healthy." In her younger years, Utahna danced and performed with her best friend, Venez, in the small town of Holden every chance they could get. When Utahna was in her 60's, she became a member of the "Clogging Grandmothers." She danced with them for 7 years. They would practice for 90 minutes twice a week, and performed for care centers

around the valley, ward functions, reunions, the Dickens Festival and the Festival of Trees. The ultimate experience was when they entertained at the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympics.

Utahna loved to sew, and was an accomplished seamstress. She began sewing clothes for herself and others from her early teens to when her eyesight started failing due to macular degeneration. Utahna often made up her own patterns, and she even designed and sewed her own wedding dress! When Valerie and Pam were young, Utahna made their dresses, and would use any left-over fabric to sew clothes for their dolls. When Valerie and Pam were in high school, Utahna designed and sewed their prom dresses. She sewed costumes for stake roadshows. She sewed Halloween costumes for the grandchildren, as well as dresses, nighties and even coats for the granddaughters when they were young. Utahna designed and sewed many of the Clogging Grandmothers' outfits. She was no doubt, an amazing seamstress with an eye for quality and detail.

Utahna was a life-time member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. She held various church positions over the years, and no matter what calling she had, she took each one very seriously. Her favorite calling was working with the Merry Miss girls. She would have the girls over to her house to teach them different dances, and they seemed to love it. She also loved teaching Primary classes with Gary. They would spend hours preparing the lessons.

Utahna appreciated and loved the visual and performing arts. After moving to Salt Lake, Gary and Utahna would frequently attend the ballet, opera or symphony. It was very important for Gary and Utahna to expose their children to the arts as well, so they often attended ballet, symphony concerts and theatrical performances as a family.

Utahna loved being around people, and was genuinely interested in their lives. She had an incredible memory, and could remember the details of people's lives.

Utahna developed macular degeneration in her later years, and could no longer drive, read or sew. She however, never complained, and just kept living her day to day life making adaptations along the way.

For Gary's last 2 years before his passing, Utahna cared for him in their home. Gary had dementia, and it became increasingly difficult to care for him, but Utahna did the best she could. She was a devoted wife who endured to the end.

Utahna is survived by her children, Valerie Lindley (Scott), Pamela Swenson (Dave), David Jones, 7 grandchildren, 20 great grandchildren, 1 great great grandchild, and many nieces and nephews.

Utahna was preceded in death by her father, mother, 6 brothers and 9 sisters.

Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, July 12 at 12:00 p.m. at the East Millcreek 11th Ward Chapel, 2702 East Evergreen Avenue (about 3400 South). A viewing will be held at the chapel from 10:30 - 11:40 prior to the funeral service. Utahna will be interred in the Cedar City Cemetery on Thursday, July 13 at 1:00 p.m. where a graveside service will be held.

The funeral service will be livestreamed. For those wanted to view the COMPLETED service can click "Watch Services" or follow the link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/8PsVYZo6oLDHa7-UX3g5oCN2H0S2n-fquVqktnetRKk2B7AIqvkzl3qXCvN_lBJ0.WLk

Funeral arrangements are through Larkin Mortuary in Sandy. Condolences can be sent to larkinmortuary.com
In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to your favorite charity.

On behalf of the family, we wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to the staff at Sunrise of Sandy - especially Alexander, Nai, Alivia, Omari and Tabitha and to Solstice Health Hospice – especially Olivia who provided such tender care to our dear mother.