



## Walter Everett Boyden, Jr.

*June 18, 1946 ~ March 9, 2025*

Our kind, beloved Walter “Walt” Everett Boyden, Jr. passed away on March 9, 2025, at the age 78 years following complications from a fall. Walt was a gentle, generous, and good man. He leaves a legacy of compassion, creativity, and Christ-like service that will be missed by many extended family members and dear friends.

Walt was born on June 18, 1946, in Salt Lake City, Utah to incredible parents Frances Marie Nuttall and Walter Everett Boyden, Sr., and a doting older sister Ann Marie “Ditta” Boyden. His childhood home was filled with kindness, music, song, and laughter, which ignited Walt’s passion for the performing arts.

After graduating as an East High Leopard in 1964, Walter spent a year at the University of Utah before serving a two-year mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Quite coincidentally, Elder Boyden was called to the Cumorah Mission in upstate New York where missionaries helped produce and perform the Church’s production of the Hill Cumorah Pageant. Here Walt served as a secretary for the pageant and met his future mentor and dear friend Dr. William I. Hansen, who was the pageant director for over 30 years. Walt completed his mission and resumed studies at the U, graduating with a Bachelor of Science in 1970 and a Master of Fine Arts in 1972.

At the U, Walter was a member of Delta Phi Kappa, a fraternity for returned missionaries; Theta Alpha Phi, an honor society for theatre; and the Beehive Honor Society which recognizes graduating seniors who demonstrate leadership, scholarship, and service. He was president of the A Capella Choir and a founding member of the first musical theater company at Pioneer Memorial Theatre.

Walter continued his studies at Brigham Young University, where he researched the history of the Hill Cumorah Pageant for his thesis and earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Theater. Dr. Boyden was subsequently called as one of the directors for the Hill Cumorah Pageant, where he served each summer for 20 years.

Walter was a member of the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square for over 25 years, traveling to concerts throughout the world and performing as a baritone soloist on many occasions. One of his personal highlights with the Choir was his dramatic (interpretative) reading of the “Parable of the Prodigal Son” for the *Music and the Spoken Word* broadcast.

Walt entertained theatergoers during the 1970s through 1990s at Utah venues large and small, including Pioneer Memorial Theatre, Kingsbury Hall, Abravanel Hall, the Salt Lake Tabernacle, the Assembly Hall, Lagoon Opera House, Pardoe Theatre, and the BYU Harris Fine Arts Center. Combining his superb acting skills and powerful voice, Walter had leading roles in productions such as *Camelot*, *The Apple Tree*, *The Fantasticks*, *Robert and Elizabeth*, *I Do! I Do!*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Carnival*, and numerous others.

Over the years, Walter found great joy in the companionship of animals, especially his poodles and sphinx cats. Walter affectionately recounted how “animals bring such grace to the world.” He loved poetry, in particular Robert

Frost's "Wild Grapes." Walt was humble yet always debonair in his dress, demeanor, and sweet scent of Armani. Walter wore several different hats professionally. He taught at the U and BYU in the theater departments. He served as a music specialist in the elementary school system with the Young Audiences of America program. He was a writer, director, and producer of television and radio advertising for many businesses, and later the marketing director for Utah Transit Authority. Walter blessed many grieving families by singing at funerals at Larkin Mortuary where he later worked as a service director.

A viewing will be held Saturday, March 29 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1925 E. Gundersen Lane, Holladay, Utah. Funeral services will follow at 11:00 a.m. at the same location. Interment will take place at the Salt Lake Cemetery.

*\*The service will be streamed online for those unable to attend, please click on the "Watch Service" button above.*