

Ward H. Barnes

June 25, 1935 ~ March 26, 2026

Ward H. Barnes passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by his wife and children, on Thursday, March 26, 2026.

Ward was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, on June 25, 1935, to Mabel Catherine Hadley and Mark Iri Barnes. He was welcomed into the family by three older brothers—Gordon, Clyde, and Mark—who were 10, 12, and 14 years older. When Ward was seven years old, his brothers enlisted in the military following the attack on Pearl Harbor, and he spent much of his childhood as an only child.

Ward loved being outdoors and playing sports. In elementary school, he earned the nickname “Peg-Leg” because he could kick a ball over the fence at recess. While he enjoyed many sports, his true passion was basketball. After moving to the Monument Park area, he spent countless hours playing in the Edgehill Ward gym and later fulfilled a lifelong goal by playing on the East High School varsity basketball team.

After graduating from high school, Ward attended the University of Utah. He took time away from college to serve a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Great Lakes Mission. Upon returning, he completed another semester before serving six months of active duty with the Army Reserve. He later resumed his studies and began working part-time at the Church Welfare Office, where he met his future wife, Kaye Morris.

Ward and Kaye were married in the Salt Lake Temple on April 20, 1961. After graduating from the University of Utah, Ward began his career with Phillips Petroleum as a marketing representative. His work took the family to Richfield and Ogden, Utah; Shawnee, Oklahoma; Evanston, Wyoming; and eventually back to Salt Lake City, where he retired. Never one to slow down, Ward later worked for Westech Equipment Company until his 75th birthday.

Ward’s warm and friendly personality blessed both his professional life and his Church service. Wherever they lived, he served faithfully in leadership callings, including Bishop’s counselor, Bishop, and counselor in a stake presidency. He was happiest when serving others, especially the youth.

Ward taught his six children the value of hard work, often reminding them: “When you do a job, you do it right—or don’t do it at all.” Each of his children had paper routes at some point, but he also made sure life included fun. Family memories were built through boating and camping trips—often beginning and ending with what he lovingly called “a wing and a prayer.”

He enjoyed golfing with his sons and was a devoted fan of the University of Utah football and the Utah Jazz. Alongside Kaye, he served as a temple worker in the Jordan River Temple and later served an MLS mission in the Sandy, Utah South Stake.

On his 89th birthday, one of his daughters shared these words with him:

“Dad, through the years, you have found joy in the simple things—watching a Ute football game on a Saturday afternoon, fishing at Flaming Gorge, playing golf with your sons, giving priesthood blessings, playing catch in the yard, and gathering for Sunday dinners. You have quietly gone about doing good, and in doing so, you have been richly blessed.”

Ward is survived by his beloved wife, Kaye, and their six children: Bonnie Hilton (Brett), Sherri Harris (Mike), Brad Barnes, Craig Barnes (Kris Minson), Brian Barnes (Angie Mueller), and Mark Barnes (Brittany Johnson); 16 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, his three brothers, and five grandchildren.

His legacy lives on in the lives he shaped, the family he loved, and the quiet example of service he gave every day.

Funeral services will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at the Sandy Utah South Stake building, 220 East 8680 South, Sandy, Utah. A viewing will be held from 10:00 to 11:45 a.m., followed by the funeral at 12:00 noon. Interment will take place at Larkin Sunset Gardens Cemetery, 1950 East 10600 South, Sandy, Utah.

To view Ward's service, please click the blue tab above that says "Watch Services".