

William Orson Whitaker

September 9, 1932 ~ November 20, 2025

William Orson Whitaker was born to Wetzel Orson and Dorothy Youkstetter Whitaker on September 9, 1932 in St. Louis, Missouri. He was the oldest of four children. Bill was raised in North Hollywood, California where he enjoyed riding bikes, running track and competing in gymnastics. In order to buy his own Boy Scout gear, he mowed lawns and delivered newspapers, developing a good work ethic along the way. The summer after high school graduation, he was invited to attend the International Scout Jamboree in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania as a junior leader.

After one term at college he enlisted in the Air Force, figuring that would be better than being drafted into the Army. Bill completed Basic Training in Texas, was trained as a clerk typist in Louisiana, spent some time in Washington, D.C, and was then assigned to the 1973rd AACS Squadron in Korea – the unit responsible for flight control operations in that country. He spent a year there, a year in Oxnard, California, and then returned to Korea for another year before being honorably discharged in 1955.

While living at home (his parents had moved to Provo, Utah while he served his country) and attending Brigham Young University, Bill was called to serve a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; he left in January of 1956 for the Northern Far East Mission headquartered in Japan and served in Sapporo, Osaka and Tokyo over the next three years before returning to BYU and his studies there. During a gathering of missionaries who had served in the Northern Far East Mission, he became reacquainted with Marilyn Hug. They were married August 25, 1959, in the Salt Lake Temple. A year later their first son, Wayne, was born and Bill graduated with a degree in Business Management.

Accepting a job with Bank of America, the small family moved to Vallejo, California, where sons Kevin and Greg were born. They were transferred to Okinawa, Japan, for four years before returning to the San Francisco area. After a year there, it was off to Korea for four years, where daughter Julie was born. While there, Bill developed relationships with government and civic leaders, spoke at a number of seminars in Seoul, and enjoyed being part of the exciting growth of Korea’s economy. He was also heavily involved with the growth of the Church, serving as a counselor to the mission president for many years.

Returning to the United States, the family lived in Houston for a while, then Bill switched employers and in 1974 they moved back to California, where Bill was Vice President and manager of United California Bank’s Far East Division. Later they moved to Bellevue, Washington, where Bill was in charge of the Asia Banking Division of Pacific National Bank of Washington. He was also deeply involved in many international organizations, serving on the boards of the World Affairs Council, Washington State China Relations Council, Washington State International Trade Fair and the Washington District Export Council.

After retiring, Bill and Marilyn served a mission in the Seattle Mission office, and then bought a house in Draper, Utah, to be closer to family. They continued to enjoy traveling, spending a month in Hawaii each winter for many years, and going on various cruises and land tours, until health issues forced them to slow down. They loved living close to their young adult grandchildren who came to Utah for school and appreciated the opportunity to develop close relationships with them.

Bill will be remembered for his friendly personality, quick wit, and great stories, his great love for his family and friends, his willingness to serve others and magnify church callings, and his strong testimony of our Savior.

Bill died peacefully in his sleep on November 20, 2025 in Draper, Utah. He leaves behind his four children: Wayne (Rebecca) of Wellington, Florida; Kevin (Lori) of Draper, Utah; Greg (Vicki) of Olathe, Kansas; and Julie (Jeff) Christensen of Sandy, Utah; 19 grandchildren and 36 great-grandchildren, along with his sister Carol Lloyd Nelson and sister-in-law Eileen Whitaker Hancey.

He was predeceased by his wife, Marilyn Blanche Hug Whitaker; his father, Wetzel Orson Whitaker; his mother, Dorothy Youkstetter Whitaker; his sister, Joan Williamson; and his brother, Michael Whitaker.