

Earl Stanford Maeser

January 16, 1934 ~ July 17, 2020

Earl Stanford Maeser passed into eternity the morning of Friday, July 17, 2020 at the William E. Christofferson Veterans Home in Salt Lake City, Utah. He suffered from the effects of Parkinson's Disease for many years. Due to the pandemic, the Veterans Home became locked down -allowing no visitors- about two weeks after he began life there. Then he contracted Covid-19, and later tested negative for that same disease. The combination of physical difficulties and isolation from family and friends was very difficult. Though Earl was alone at the time of his death, his family was miraculously allowed to visit the day before his passing. He was continually in our hearts and on our minds.

Earl was born in Preston, Idaho January 16, 1934 the youngest son of Earl Maeser and Bessie Taylor Howe. He had one brother, Paul (Laree Nuttall), and one sister, Margaret (John Cannon). He loved his parents and his siblings dearly.

Due to The Great Depression and World War II, the family moved around the United States wherever Earl's father found employment. Consequently, Earl lived in Malad and Montpelier Idaho, Urbana, Illinois, and Kinston, North Carolina as a boy. At the outset of World War II Earl's retired Naval Officer father volunteered for active duty, and Earl, his mother, and siblings moved to Salt Lake City, Utah to be near family. They settled for good on Eighth Avenue. There Earl attended Ensign Elementary, Bryant Jr. High, and his beloved East High School graduating in the class of 1952. He attended the University of Utah on a Naval ROTC scholarship and graduated in 1956. That same day he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps.

In his prime, he stood six feet three inches tall and tilted the scale at 185 pounds.

He married Judith Pugh. A beloved daughter, Amanda, was born to them. They were later divorced.

Following five years of active duty, Earl resigned his commission, returned home to Utah and entered law school at the University of Utah. While in law school, he remained in the Marine Corps Reserve from which he retired in 1981 as a Lieutenant Colonel.

In all these endeavors Earl made lasting friendships that were important to him for the remainder of his life.

Between the second and third year of law school, he married the love of his life, Saundra Zirker. Five children were born to Earl and Saundra.

He worked as corporate counsel for an Insurance company, A Health Spa company, a Tech company, a Financial company. But he finally found his niche working for the State of Utah, first in the Department of Commerce, then as Director of the Securities Division, and finally as counsel for the Department of Community and Economic Development, where he was also appointed Assistant Attorney General for the State of Utah.

Earl belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and served as Bishop of the Grant 8th Ward, then President of the Salt Lake Grant Stake. Later he was Bishop of the Draper Heights Branch at the Genesis Youth

Center adjacent to the Utah State Prison, as well as Director of the Salt Lake Inner City Project, a program focused on helping the poor become self-reliant. Finally, he served as Stake Patriarch of the Salt Lake Grant Stake.
Earl is preceded in death by his parents, his brother and sister, and daughter-in-law Tanya Ellis Maeser.
Earl leaves behind his wife of nearly 57 years, Saundra Zirker, and six children: Amanda (Mark Rasmussen), Earl Stanford Jr. (Lorah Evans), Mark (Ann Hasek), Jon (Anna Lalbeharry), Meredith (Paul Gardner), and Nate (Tanya Ellis, deceased). He was blessed with 23 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.
He was a man of many talents, gifts and interests. He had incredible leadership and organizational skills. He was a wonderful public speaker and had beautiful penmanship. He played basketball at East High, but also loved baseball, football, and occasionally golf. He liked fishing. He enjoyed many different genres of music, but especially loved classical and Frank Sinatra. He loved to sing and had a beautiful baritone voice. He joined in the running craze of the late 70's and ran a few marathons. He was funny. He was a diehard Utah Utes fan. He became fascinated with the journals of Lewis and Clark; he loved to read biographies -especially about the Presidents of the United States and Winston Churchill. Earl was a disciple of the Lord, Jesus Christ. He loved to read and hear the word of the Lord. He was a man of faith and testimony. He was an example of goodness and service. He was a man of integrity.
He loved his home and tweaked it in many ways to make it just how he wanted it. He did the same in his yard. In his later years he loved to sit in the front room and look at the world outside the big picture frame window. He loved his neighborhood and community. He was a 'bloom where you're planted' type of guy. He loved the United States of America and revered the Stars and Stripes.
Earl is a great-grandson of Karl G. Maeser. Of course, he has other progenitors, too, but he was especially proud to have the Maeser name and share a birthday with his Grandpa Maeser. Earl cherished family relationships and did everything he could to strengthen them. After the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, long lost family members became known and beloved to him, and he to them. One of the important projects of his life was erecting a copy of the Karl G. Maeser statue that stands in front of BYU's Maeser Building as a gift to the city where Karl had been baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint –Dresden, Saxony, Germany. Many thanks to cousin and dear friend Wolfgang Schubert and all who joined in getting this mission accomplished. Tears were shed in Leipzig and Dresden upon learning of Earl's passing!
In his final act of service, when it became too difficult to care for him at home any longer, Earl agreed to move to the Veterans Home. This action required him to put the needs of his wife and family above his own desires. We recognize this, and salute him for it. The family wishes to thank Earl's friends and neighbors in the Ridgedale Ward neighborhood for the countless acts of service they provided. Also, we express our appreciation to Dan, Tanya, Lynn and Drew for the care they gave our dad. And finally, we thank Jenny and all the crew at the William E. Christofferson Veterans Home for the care they provided until the very end.
There will be a viewing Friday evening, July 24, 2020 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Ridgedale Ward building, 3400 S. 1100 E., Millcreek UT. Funeral services will be Saturday, July 25, 2020 at 11:00 AM, also at the Ridgedale Ward building, with a viewing from 9:30 AM to 10:45 AM with the family. Masks are required and we will be social distancing. Seating in the building will be limited. The proceedings will be broadcast via Facebook Live here: https://www.facebook.com/events/3087493714671687
Burial with full military honors will take place on Tuesday, July 28, 2020 at 11:00 AM at the Salt Lake City Cemetery, Grand Avenue.