



Merlin Ray Sorensen

December 26, 1927 - November 12, 2016

Merlin Ray Sorensen, 88, passed away on November 12, 2016 in Orem, Utah.

He was born to Leonard Soren Sorensen and Elizabeth Florence Hunter on 26 December 1927 in Ogden, Utah where he was raised and completed his primary and secondary schooling along with his brother Ferrell. Through his mother's encouragement, Merlin fostered a great love for the piano and singing which carried him his entire life, becoming known by many as a great entertainer.

He received a Bachelors and Master's Degree from Brigham Young University in Music and Education. At BYU, Merlin met the love of his life, Phyllis Nielson, whom he married on September 21, 1956. They have 7 children and 21 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren with 2 more on the way.

They spent the majority of their lives together raising their children and serving in the LDS Church in Sacramento, California. Merlin taught school for 32 years, teaching and nurturing the minds and lives of countless children, many of whom have tracked him down years later to thank him for his influence in their lives.

Merlin spent several years in the army, serving in Korea and Japan. Later he served two volunteer missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, one in Germany and one in Missouri. He was the bishop in Sacramento area where he administered aid and relief to those in need.

Merlin spread joy, love and gratitude everywhere he went; especially when he sang, played the piano, or danced through the good and bad days of life. He had the great honor of singing at Carnegie Hall as well as many other stages and churches around the globe. Merlin once wrote in his journal, "I don't like going anywhere without my family....with them it doesn't matter where we go as long as we're together". This love will live in the hearts of all those left behind to continue his legacy of love and service.

Survivors include his seven children: Susan Sorensen Wall; Debbie Sorensen; Shelley Sorensen Rogne; David Sorensen; Connie Sorensen James; Cindy Sorensen Johnson;

and Russell Sorensen and 21 grandchildren and 7 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Leonard and Elizabeth Florence and his brother Ferrell as well as his wives: Phyllis (1956-1994) and Della Phillips (1995-2010). We would like to thank the employees at Highland Cove, Abbington Manor, Beehive Homes, Brighton Hospice and Utah Valley Mortuary for their love and care.

Funeral services will be held Wednesday, November 16 at 11:00 a.m. at the Granite Stake Tabernacle, Richards LDS Ward, 2005 South 900 East, Salt Lake City, where Visitations will be held Tuesday, November 15 from 7 to 9 p.m., and prior to the services on Wednesday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Interment will take place at a later date at Sacramento Memorial Lawn, in Sacramento, CA.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Perpetual Education fund assisting those seeking a college education, First Book charity which helps distribute books to young children around the country or simply volunteer your time at a local school or library to help kids learn.

Cemetery

Events

Sacramento Memorial Lawn
6100 Stockton Boulevard
Sacramento, CA, 95824

NOV 15 **Viewing** 07:00PM - 09:00PM
Richards Ward
2005 South 900 East, Salt Lake City, UT, US, 84106

NOV 16 **Viewing** 09:30AM - 10:30AM
Richards Ward
2005 South 900 East, Salt Lake City, UT, US, 84106

NOV 16 **Funeral Service** 11:00AM - 12:00PM
Richards Ward
2005 South 900 East, Salt Lake City, UT, US, 84106

Comments



“ I have a very clear memory of Uncle Merlin and Aunt Phyllis tied together by the ankles doing a three legged race at one of our many Nielson family reunions and watching them laugh at themselves as we laughed along with them. And of course, both of them shared their musical talents together at each reunion and you could just see the love they shared of music and each other.
My thoughts will be with all of the Merlin and Phyllis Sorensen family members tomorrow as you pay tribute to your dear father.

Julie Sorensen Rogers

Julie Rogers - November 15, 2016 at 05:41 PM



“ I remember not long after Merlin and Phyllis were married that they were visiting us and had plans to hike Mount Timpanogos. Even from that early time I recognized Uncle Merlin's lively, cheerful personality, his love of Phyllis, and his joy at being alive. He has always been so kind with every interaction we have had with him.
Shirley Ricks

Shirley Ricks - November 15, 2016 at 01:54 PM