



Ray Housley Linford

October 31, 1930 - July 24, 2021

Ray Housley Linford died peacefully in his home, Saturday, July 24, 2021, surrounded by his wife and children, due to complications of prostate cancer. Dad loved reading obituaries and had definite opinions about them. We, his children, hope not to disappoint him here with his own obituary.

Ray was born on Halloween, October 31, 1930, to George Louis and Orva Housley Linford in Ogden, Utah. He was the youngest of six children. At age 14, he started working at Topper Bakery in Ogden for the “fantastic pay” of 20 cents an hour. He worked Monday through Saturday, beginning at 4:30 AM. On school days, he worked until school started, then continued work after school until 9:00 PM, at which point he was free to do homework. Saturdays, he worked 4:30 AM to 6:00 PM. He maintained this 50-hour workweek throughout high school, handing over his weekly paycheck to his parents until he graduated—valedictorian of Ogden High School—in 1948.

He left Ogden that summer to attend Northwestern University on scholarship. His parents drove him to the outskirts of town, and he hitchhiked to Chicago. The day after he arrived, he found work at Dinkel Bakery. His children and grandchildren are the grateful beneficiaries of his many years working in bakeries. He decorated our cakes with perfect piping and beautiful cursive lettering, fried us thousands of doughnuts, and fed us an abundance of homemade bread.

In 1950, he left Chicago to fulfill his childhood dream of serving a full-time mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the East German Mission. He became an expert speaker of German and loved the German language and its people for the rest of his life. While there, he had heavy responsibilities as a branch president and district president, working to build the church in Germany after WWII. After hearing him sing at a church service, a famous vocal coach who taught the premier opera stars of Germany offered to give him lessons. His mission president arranged for him to travel into East Berlin weekly for lessons. Ray had a beautiful, booming voice and gave many performances throughout his life. In high school, he sang on a weekly radio show. At the

end of his mission, he gave a recital that was written up in the local paper by a music critic who called him the next Feodor Chaliapin, a famous Russian basso profundo.

After his mission, Ray joined the Army and moved to Washington, DC for translator training with the Army Security Agency. While there, he met the girl of his dreams, Joanne Cowley Austin. She accompanied him singing "Some Enchanted Evening," and the match was made. After one solid week of dating, he proposed. They married on February 18, 1954, in the Salt Lake Temple, beginning a lifetime of love and companionship.

As an officer in Military Intelligence, he returned to Germany with Joanne and their new baby daughter, Elna. While Joanne taught in the Army Education System, Ray ran a spy ring for the ASA in West Berlin. He managed a group of informants living in East Germany who traveled weekly into West Berlin to meet him in restaurants with information on the Soviets. He served as a courier for sensitive information and once had to extract a source when he felt he had been compromised and his life was endangered.

In 1956, they moved to Los Angeles to attend UCLA, and Ray began his 14-year journey to become an ophthalmologist. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Zoology, Phi Beta Kappa (June 7, 1962) and Doctor of Medicine (June 13, 1967), culminating in an ophthalmology residency at the UCLA Jules Stein Eye Institute.

Through those years of medical training, Ray and Joanne had seven more children (Orva, Ray A., John, Ann, Amy, Austin, and David) for a total of eight. Joanne taught school when she could, and Ray worked nights at the Burbank and Van Nuys medical clinics. He made fun for us children by letting us take turns going to work with him at night, giving us popsicles and suckers, and sending us across a very busy street for french fries and milkshakes. At night he sent us up to the conference room, hoping we would behave ourselves.

Summers were spent camping in Yosemite, hiking, swimming in the clear, frigid waters of Wawona, climbing Half Dome, being treated to orange juice popsicles, and of course, many happy hours of singing. We sang hymns and camp songs and learned how to harmonize with each other through our favorites: "A House Becomes a Home," "Edelweiss," "Love Makes the World Go Round," "I Am a Child of God," "I Want to Be a Friend of Yours, Mmm and a Little Bit More." Always, the family singing ends with the Linford family theme song, "Dona Nobis Pacem," (Give Us Peace).

After medical training, they moved to Camarillo, California where Ray practiced ophthalmology until 1996. Every Tuesday, he came home from work with a new crop of

jokes that he had learned during surgery. He was a gifted healer and did not limit his medical care to his patients. He treated many people pro bono, in-and-out of his office, at Boy Scout camps and church outings, doing mission, scout, and athletic physicals, caring for the Ventura missionaries, and even helping strangers on the side of the road.

Ray loved the Camarillo community and reached out to contribute through Rotary Club, the Boy Scouts of America, and by co-founding the Interfaith Council of Camarillo, gathering leaders of many faiths.

In addition to their eight children, Ray and Joanne welcomed many people into their home: Casey Stanley from the Apache reservation, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, friends whose house burnt down, and occasionally those left homeless. Most importantly, they were honored to have the children of Joanne's sister, Elaine Austin Nielsen—Craig, Kimberly, Christine, and Steven—after their parents' tragic deaths.

A true gospel scholar, Ray delighted in sacred texts and turned to them for answers and comfort. Ray was full of faith in Jesus Christ and expressed his faith with a lifetime of church service as a home teacher, bishop, counselor in stake and mission presidencies, Gospel Doctrine teacher, and missionary. After his retirement, he and Joanne served six missions together. They loved this time in their lives, serving in different parts of the world, and making wonderful friends among the missionaries and members.

BYU Jerusalem Center, Physician (1996–98)

Frankfurt, Germany, Area Medical Advisor, Europe West Area (1999–2000)

Tokyo, Japan Area Medical Advisor (2004–2006)

São Paulo Brazil MTC, Missionary Medical Advisor (2007–2008)

Hong Kong, Area Medical Advisor (2009–2010)

Preston England Temple, Service Missionary (2013–2014)

Ray and Joanne prioritized their children and grandchildren above every distraction of life, providing family reunions, dinners, Christmas Sing-alongs, and extensive foreign travel. They left a legacy of language and education by giving each child and grandchild a book for birthdays and Christmases. These treasures were chosen by Joanne and inscribed by Ray with an original poem, written by him—more than 2000 personally inscribed books! He delighted us with long and short poems, ballads, free verse, and limericks. To see Ray read his favorite scriptures and a few of his poems, see video here (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1itfv4KgDQqnirLgG3mLYwL9wG3Tc9SF4/view?usp=sharing>)

With his passing, we have rejoiced in messages of condolence, calling Ray, “a Camarillo icon,” “one of the most influential men of my childhood,” “a true Camarillo hero,” “a

legend,” “a wonderful man who knew how to treat others with respect. . . His kindness, smile, and wonderful voice are never to be forgotten.” “Ray was a class act, start to finish. Hope to be half the man someday. Such an amazing life deserves extraordinary celebration. Always showed my family and me so much love.” “Whether you called him doctor, bishop, father, friend, he was always pointing those he came in contact with to Jesus Christ.”

Ray is survived by his wife of 67 years, Joanne Cowley Austin Linford and children, Elna (Tom) Clark, Orva (Paul) Johnson, Ray (Diane) Linford, John Linford, Ann (Charles) West, Amy (Jim) Hulme, Austin (Jennifer) Linford, and David (Sally) Linford, 45 grandchildren, 76 great-grandchildren, and four more on the way.

He is preceded in death by his parents, George Louis Linford and Orva Greer Housley; his siblings, Leo George Linford, June Linford (Bergland), Verl Louis Linford, James LeRoy Linford, and DonnaMae Linford (Baadsgaard); two grandchildren, Steven Sorensen Linford and Elizabeth Sorensen Linford, and one great-grandson, Hyrum LeGrand Clark.

It’s hard to imagine our lives without Ray’s steady hand guiding and blessing everything he touches. We will miss his booming voice, calling out: “You rang (in his lowest Lurch voice) . . . Howdy, howdy, howdy! . . . POP-corn! . . . Not so fast, Smith! . . . Nacho Cheese . . . It’s a great life if you don’t weaken,” and our favorite, . . . “Joanne, darling!”

Ray lived his life after the manner of happiness and in alignment with this favorite scripture of his: “Press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. . . feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life” (2 Nephi 31:20). We look forward—as he taught us to—with a perfect brightness of hope to a glorious reunion with our dad, grandpa, brother, friend, and husband.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, July 30th at 11:00 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints chapel located at 880 East 600 North, Orem, Utah. There will be no Viewing. Visiting with the family will follow the funeral. To see Ray read his favorite scriptures and a few of his poems, see video here (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1itfv4KgDQqnirLgG3mLYwL9wG3Tc9SF4/view>)

Interment with Military Honors took place in the Orem City Cemetery.

To view the Funeral Service via live stream, please click on the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/99510633491?pwd=aC9nU0FpR1pwTlhJalBiaFhWbE1vZz09>

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church Education System.

Funeral Directors: Utah Valley Mortuary.

Cemetery

Orem City Cemetery

1520 North 800 East

Orem, UT, 84097

Events

JUL **Funeral Service** 11:00AM - 12:00PM

30

Orchard Stake Center

880 East 600 North, Orem, UT, US, 84097

Comments



“ A webcast video has been added.



Utah Valley Mortuary - July 28, 2021 at 02:26 PM



“ I was so sorry to hear about Ray. What a mission he has more! I'm so grateful to have known him. My love and prayers to Joanne and her family. My, how he will be missed.

Joanna Fillmore - July 29, 2021 at 08:06 AM



“ One of the great blessings of my life has been to know Ray and Joanne Linford. In every way they live and model the values of their faith and it had a huge impact on me. When I was a single mom of two, they invited me into their home, sometimes just to take a nap while they watched the girls and gave me some rest. There was so much love in their home...and security, safety, and calm joy. I will never forget Ray's booming voice, deep laugh, and sincere interest in other people. You couldn't be around him without smiling yourself. He and Joanne shared so many life lessons with me, just in their everyday interactions. I too will never forget the impact of those simple words, "Joanne, Darling". I loved that their home in Camarillo was open and welcoming to everyone, at any time. There are few people as genuinely loving as Ray and I will miss him. I send my love to you, dear Joanne, and the entire family. Paulette

Paulette Johnson - July 30, 2021 at 04:59 PM



“ Dr Ray Linford, good memories of you in Camarillo, ca. A Special Person,was dr. RAY LINFORD.....

Donna Autrey - July 31, 2021 at 12:13 PM



“ We were saddened to learn of the death of Elder Linford. We served with Elder and Sister Linford in Tokyo during their mission in Japan. We were impressed by their friendliness, dedication, determination to accomplish all that they were called to do, also by Ray's beautiful voice.

We were also touched by their courage. They visited us once in our home some distance from Tokyo. On impulse, we invited them to go to our local Japanese public bath with us. No hesitation! That is an experience that most people foreign to Japan would turn down.

We are blessed because of the time we associated with them, and continue to be blessed in our contact with them from so far away.

May our Heavenly Father watch over you with His love and care.

Katsuya and Janet Hirano

Katsuya and Janet Hirano - July 31, 2021 at 04:00 AM



“ Before I share a memory, I want to thank you for the wonderful obituary. I've known the Linfords for over thirty years and had no idea about most of Ray's amazing life story. It was so beautifully written.....thank you so very much.

Paulette Johnson

Paulette Johnson - July 30, 2021 at 04:47 PM



“ I served with Ray in a bishopric in Camarillo CA. It was the best experience of my life. I really came to love him. He was a natural leader and great mentor. I consider him one of the dearest friends of my life. My thoughts and prayers to Joanne & the family at his passing.

Dennis Kane - July 29, 2021 at 10:14 PM



“ Sad news ... Our love and prayers go out to Sister Linford and family.. We served in the Preston Temple with our dear Linford's and were grateful recipients of their love, testimonies, Gospel knowledge and valuable advise on healthy eating. A more gentle and faithful couple we could not have wished for as friends and we are grateful to know that our friendship will always be. Wherever they went, they sowed seeds of kindness and concern for the welfare of others. There is no doubt Brother Linford will now resume his duties in the service of our God....
Fondest love and memories... The Win's, Chorley, Lancashire, UK .

Brother and Sister Win - July 29, 2021 at 12:37 PM

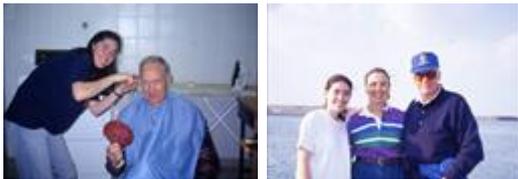


“ Dear Joanne and family. I was very sad to hear that Ray had passed. As a physician he would have known how diseases can affect our bodies and I'm sad that he had to suffer. Rod and I were happy to have served with you in Brazil, if only for a short while, but we found that we had so many things in common. My thoughts will be with you as you honor his life at the services on Saturday. What a wonderful posterity he left behind.
I pray that as a family you will be blessed with peace and happy memories of Ray.
With much love to you Joanne,
Helga Dahl Simonsen, Austin, TX

Helga Dahl Simonsen - July 28, 2021 at 11:50 PM



“ Bishop Linford was my bishop in my youth. He was the greatest cheerleader in the crowd for our Young Women’s softball games. He gave me a challenge to seek out the girls who needed extra loving and I took that challenge to heart. I was SO lucky to be in Israel with him for 6 months. I was super homesick to leave and he and Joanne were a sight for my sore sad eyes when we met at the JFK airport, in a snowstorm, waiting to board a flight to Tel Aviv. I was also standing right by him during a tour of some ruins and he fell backwards off a 3 foot drop. He split his head open and moaned and moaned as the medical team took him away. I remember him saying “doctors make the worst patients”! Haha. He has been a great counselor and friend to me, one of my hero’s. He and Joann have been a great example to Jonathan and I as a couple we want to be like. I love you Linford family.



Kirsten Kent - July 28, 2021 at 10:46 PM



“ I remember Bishop Ray Linford. I was baptized in his pool in Camarillo when I was 8 years old. His swimming pool was cold but after the baptism I felt warm because of the holy spirit. And it was a experience that I loved. God be with your family. And may the lord love you and cherish you and be with you Brother Linford.
- Rusty Campbell

Rusty Campbell - July 28, 2021 at 12:05 PM



“ He was such a wonderful man. He is loved by many Larimer’s from our Camarillo days.

Craig Larimer - July 28, 2021 at 04:02 PM



“ He always acknowledged us and was so kind. He and his sweet wife are great examples to us.. We honor him for his perpetual service. We send our love to Joanne and the family.

Lynn and Kaye Garner

Lynn and Kaye Garner - July 30, 2021 at 04:01 PM