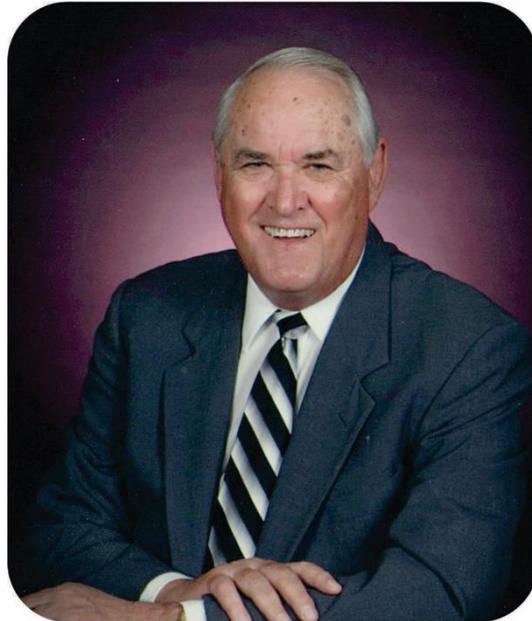


***THE LIFE AND TIMES***

***OF***

***BILLIE J. ALLRED***



***AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY***

***Edited by Stephanie Magleby***

**PERSONAL DATA**

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**TOP TEN LIST**  
**OF**  
**PERSONAL LIFE EXPERIENCES**

*Ranked in order of importance*

- |              |                                       |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>ONE</i>   | <i>Our wedding day</i>                |
| <i>TWO</i>   | <i>Birth of our children</i>          |
| <i>THREE</i> | <i>Ordinations &amp; blessings</i>    |
| <i>FOUR</i>  | <i>Death of John &amp; Elizabeth</i>  |
| <i>FIVE</i>  | <i>An airplane ride</i>               |
| <i>SIX</i>   | <i>Affirmation of my testimony</i>    |
| <i>SEVEN</i> | <i>College graduation</i>             |
| <i>EIGHT</i> | <i>Family reunions &amp; weddings</i> |
| <i>NINE</i>  | <i>Professional work</i>              |
| <i>TEN</i>   | <i>Literature and poetry</i>          |

## **Preface**

*Here is the story of my life. Anyone who undertakes an endeavor like this is faced with the daunting task of looking at the realities of life and braving the introspection to compose something of worth.*

*Especially, we are brought to an awareness of our relationships with other human beings. Some encounters are for a brief moment while others are for a lifetime; but they are all important in the molding of our character.*

*Every effort has been made to be honest in my writing. To not overstate either the accomplishments or the shortcomings. No effort has been made to be funny although I have an appreciation for good humor. Stories that are interesting and inspirational have always been my favorites so some are included here.*

*I have tried to express my feelings about things which, as everyone knows, is difficult to put into words.*

*My hope is that this story will help everyone who reads it know that I was here and that my children, descendants, friends and associates will come to know me better.*

*As we pass through the travails of life together, the poet Etienne de Grellet may have said it best.*

*"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall never pass this way again."*

*Special thanks to our daughter, Stephanie Magleby, who assisted as the editor.*

**THE EARLY YEARS  
(1937-1948)**

MY NAME

Billie J. Allred. They say the most beautiful sound in the world to each of us is the sound of our own name. I believe that is true. I like my name, although there have been times when the unusual spelling has caused some minor problems.

Mother always said she was sure I would be a girl and hence Billie, rather than William or Billy. The J. doesn't stand for anything, just the initial. Everyone in our family has endured the usually good-natured ribbings about being allgreen, allblue or allpurple. Although, I did get into a fight once in grade school when a boy carried the ribbing too far.

Billie fits well for a child but not so well for an adult. So, I have preferred to be referred to as just Bill, which is a perfect adult name.

*The best truism of all is that our name is what we make of it.*

When our kids came along, we tried to give the boys more common given and middle names and the girls distinguished names.

## IN PIMA

I was born February 26, 1937 in Pima, Graham County, Arizona, the second son of Alfred Ford Allred and Maida Preston. My brothers are Dale C. Allred and Dennis Preston Allred. There were no sisters in our family.

We lived on the hill south of town in the home presently owned by Armond Cluff. My father built the home himself, the most outstanding feature of which was a large rock fireplace.



Me and my little red wagon

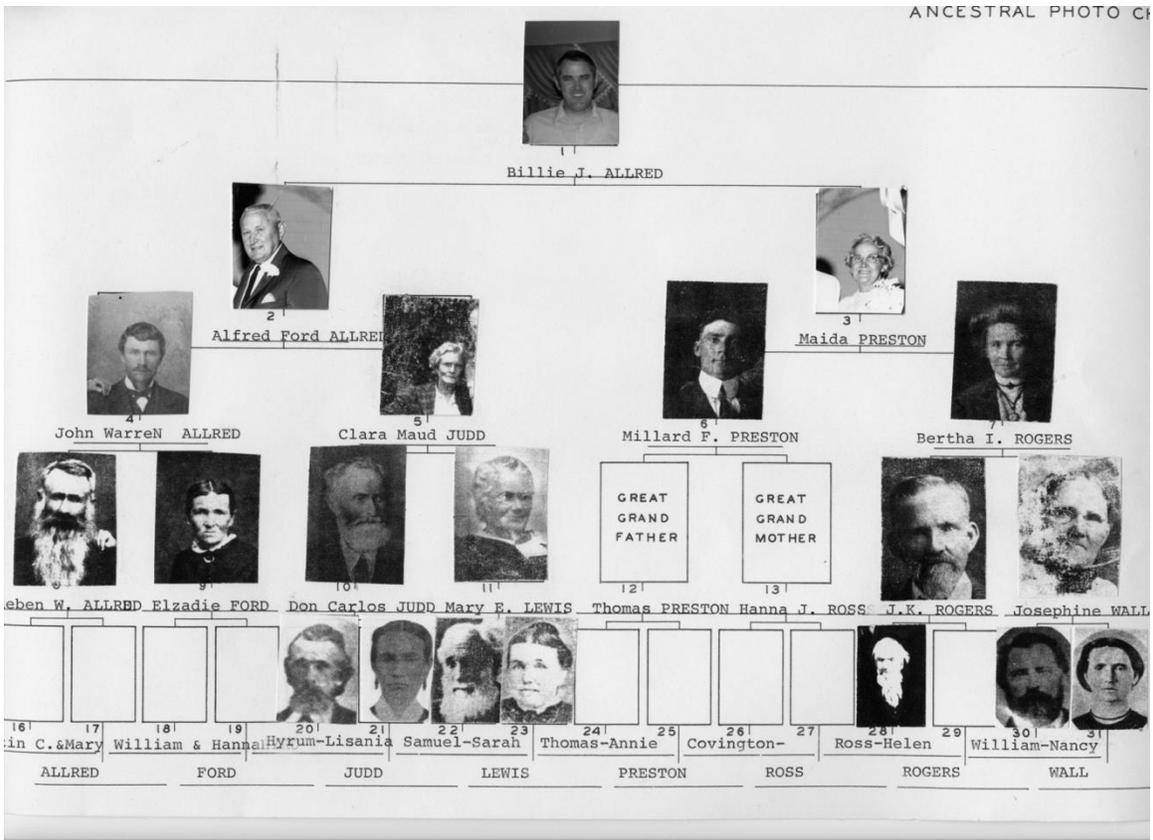
My earliest recollections are of playing with our neighbor kids, especially Farrell Beals who lived up the road from us. Because we lived in a small country town, we did not have close neighbors. However, there was plenty of room to roam and we had a lot of fun kicking rocks, playing in the fields and making up all the games our imaginations could contrive.

I have faint memories of little things, like swinging on the trees down in the wash, mother calling us to dinner, and being with my father helping him with the chores. There were always cows, horses, chickens and pigs around.



Me and Dall Weech (right)  
At my Aunt Clara Larson's home  
About a year before we moved to California

In later years, I came to appreciate being born in Pima. It has a long and storied history of being the home for many outstanding families. I always felt it an honor to be included among them. Pima is primarily a Mormon community. It was settled by Mormon Pioneers as one of Brigham Young's cotton missions. *This is important to me because of my strong belief in the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Those beliefs have been the source of the greatest blessings and happiness in my life.*



A partial family group sheet

## MY FATHER

Alfred Ford Allred was born on October 9, 1900 and was also raised in Pima. His father, John Warren Allred, died at the age of forty-five leaving his mother, Maude Judd Allred, alone to raise a large family of young children.

All the children chipped in to provide for the family. Grandmother owned a forty acre farm. She was very frugal and industrious so the family survived well.

Like many of the people of his time, Dad had little formal education. The work on the farm was so demanding and money so tight, that few were able to go on to higher education. Maybe because of this, he was insistent that my brother Dennis and I get all the education we could. He would always say, "Billie, if you don't want to milk cows all your life, then go to school."

He was a hard worker and, as long as he was working at a regular job, did well. He did not do so well at being self-employed as a farmer or managing his own dairy, during which times our family suffered financially.

Dad was quite strict with us. He also liked his beer and was not active in the Church, which caused me some embarrassment and sad feelings. He smoked, but was not a smoker. He is one of the few men I know who was satisfied with a cigarette just every once in while.

We never doubted his love for us and he had many admirable qualities, which I will always appreciate and try to emulate. A few of the sayings he emphasized, more than once to me, were "If a man tells you he is honest, then hold on to your wallet because honest men practice honesty, not talk about it." .He also counseled me to never turn down a beggar and to never judge the reasons for a poor man being in his sad state of life. In this regard, dad always practiced what he preached.

He had a beautiful tenor voice and was always singing when we milked the cows. The compositions of Stephen Foster were his favorite. It is too bad that Dennis and I and the cows were his only audience.

My father passed away on September 26, 1982 and is buried in Pima. He had a stroke and worked a full day on the day before he died.

## MY MOTHER

My mother, Maida Preston, was born on April 2, 1909 in Frankburg, Alberta, Canada. Her father, Millard Preston, and her mother Bertha Rogers, both from Pima, had gone to homestead in Canada. They lived there for several years but could not make a go of it and returned to Pima.

It seems that Pima has always been the place to return to, not only for them but for me as well.

Mother was also a hard worker. In all our growing up years, she worked in dry cleaning plants as a presser. She always took great pride in her work.

She had a sweet spirit and was always very kind and considerate to us. I was pretty good about doing the dishes and cleaning the house because mother was usually tired after spending a long day in front of a steam press. I never learned how to cook.

Mother did not have good health. She suffered from a bad case of varicose veins in her earlier years and a severe case of rheumatoid arthritis in later years that caused her limbs to become deformed. She lived the last 15 years of her life in a wheelchair and was in constant pain which she endured bravely. My grandfather Preston suffered in the same way from arthritis.

Her mother, Bertha Rodgers, died when my mother was thirteen and, being the only living girl in the family, had the responsibility of trying to be a mother to her younger brothers.

Mother died on March 12, 1985 and is buried in Pima next to my father and her sister, Josephine, and my half-brother Kenneth.

## MY PARENTS COURTING

My father's first marriage was to my mother's sister, Josephine. She died shortly after giving birth to their first son, Kenneth on March 18, 1921. Kenneth died a few weeks later on May 25, 1921.

The couple started courting when my mother went to live with her brother Milton who lived in Los Angeles. Her mother had died in childbirth and she didn't get along with grandpa Preston's new wife. Dad was also living in Los Angeles with his brother Orson and his wife Thelma.

So, my parents were married in California and lived happily there where dad worked for Adhor Dairies as a milkman with a route in downtown Los Angeles. Mother was only fifteen. They moved back to Pima in 1925.



Josie and Maida Preston

The sisters were both married to my dad  
Josie died while giving birth to my half brother, Kenneth.



In Lomita California

My Father, Dale, Mother, Dennis on mother's lap and me  
This is our family. Three boys and no sisters.  
Dale has enlisted in the Navy and will report for duty the next week.

## THE MOVE TO CALIFORNIA

When World War II broke out in 1941, there were, almost overnight, thousands of high paying jobs in the ship yards and airplane factories on the West Coast. So, my parents, along with dozens of other families from the Gila Valley took advantage of the opportunity. Dad sold our home and little farm and loaded up our old Dodge truck with all our worldly possessions. Dad and mom sat in the cab with Dennis, who was just a baby. I curled up in the back as we proceeded to truck across the Arizona and California deserts to Lomita, California. We must have seemed like the characters in "The Grapes of Wrath." We probably were like them.

After traveling across the deserts, arriving on the coast of California and feeling the cool ocean breezes in our faces for the first time, we thought we were in paradise. Southern California in the early 1940's was a wonderful place to live.

## LIFE IN LOMITA

We found a little house on an acre in the middle of an avocado grove. Dad got a job as a ship painter in the navy shipyards at Long Beach.

By now, I was old enough at five to start remembering things vividly and the whole world began opening up to me.

Not only did our family move to Lomita, but my father's brothers, Orson and Heber and their families, lived there as well. My father's sister, Alice and her husband Joe Weshselburger, lived right across the street from us.

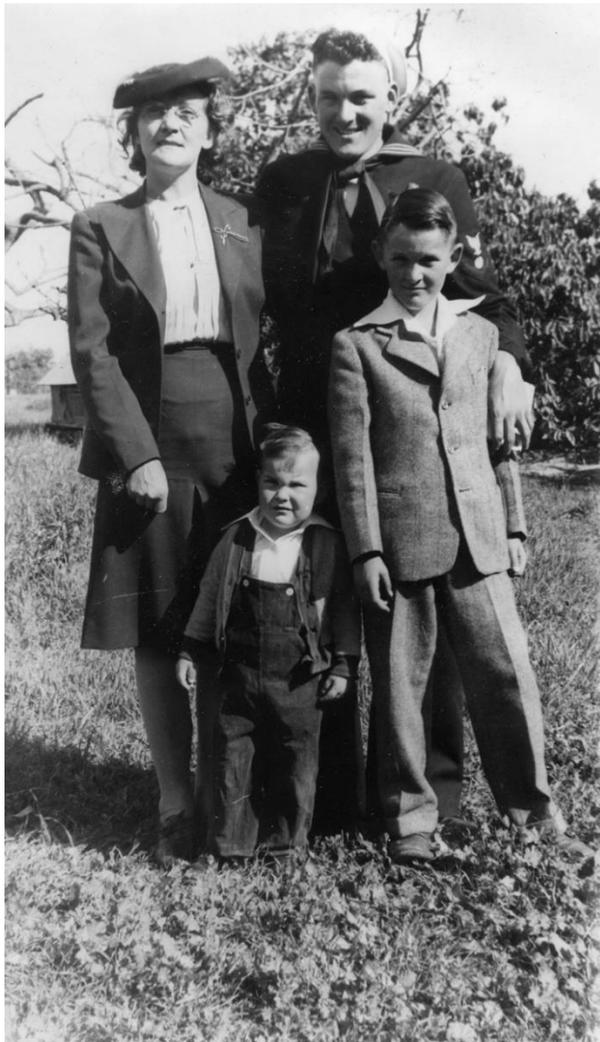
And the neighborhood was filled with dozens of kids to play with. We had a large stand of tall Eucalyptus trees in our front yard that made our little trees in Pima seem like bushes. Tarzan never had it better and our Cowboy and Indian battles were epic. With so many places to hide, our hide-and-seek games would sometimes last for an hour. For a five-year old, this truly was heaven.

During the first year of our moving to Lomita, dad began construction on a new home. For the next seven years, every evening and weekend was spent working on the house. He, with occasional help from his brothers and us kids, did all the work himself.

I did not fully understand the hard effects of the war or appreciate my parent's apprehension for my older brother Dale who, at the age of fifteen, joined the Navy and was fighting life or death battles in the South Pacific. I only knew we had dirigibles protecting the harbors and every now and then, we had an air raid drill with lights out.

That fall, I began kindergarten at Orange Street School. Our school had several hundred students. On the first day of school, I remember tearfully clinging to my mother while the older kids taunted us with “*kindergarten babies, born in a bowl of gravy*”. However, I quickly got over it and settled in for the next six years.

I don’t know if I was really a good student or just because I was taller than the other kids, but in any event, my mother pressed the school administrators to let me skip the second grade. I do remember always being able to read well and the third grade material was not particularly challenging to me. I was always the youngest in my class. Events would later prove that mother’s actions were inspired.



During World War II  
My brother Dale comes home on furlough  
With Mother, Dennis and me

I had an unusual experience in the third grade. One Friday, as we were leaving the last class of the day, I looked at one of our close friends in the class, Mary, and had the strongest feeling that I would never see her again. On Monday morning, during the first class of the day, our teacher, Mr. Owens, told us that he had some sad news for us. Mary had fallen off her bike into a gravel quarry and had been killed. I have often reflected on my premonition and worried that I should have said something and risk the class thinking I was crazy.

My best friend in school was Duke Blakesley. From the third through the sixth grades, we were practically inseparable. Duke was a Catholic boy and on one occasion, he invited me to attend a Catholic Mass with him. I agreed to do that if he would attend Primary with me. We both kept our end of the bargain. When we entered the cathedral, I couldn't help but notice the life size statue of Jesus Christ with blood (colored water) streaming down his face and body. I remember thinking to myself how unusual that was because that wasn't the Jesus Christ I knew. Later, when we were all invited to step forward and take communion, I declined. It just didn't seem right and I was unsure if the invitation applied to me.

*I mention this experience, because I marvel how, at a young age, I must have developed a testimony of the Savior and had some understanding of the truths of the gospel. I have known intuitively, from my earliest memories, that Joseph Smith is a true prophet of God and that he was the instrument in the restoration of the fullness of the gospel in this last dispensation. I bear solemn witness to this great truth and I desire my posterity to know that I know.*

When Duke attended Primary with me, he enjoyed it very much and wanted to keep coming with me. However, his parents discouraged him and nothing more came from it.

Duke and I remained the best of friends. We had several rather long and serious religious discussions which is a little unusual for sixth graders. I liked Duke so much that my experiences with him helped me to develop a tolerance and respect for the religious views of others. I know that God is no respecter of persons and he expects us to do the same. We are at our best when we reach out to all.

We attended our Church meetings in the Harbor City Ward that was several miles from Lomita. I enjoyed all the good things that go with membership in our Church. The two and ½-minute talks, Sunday school and partaking of the Sacrament. Later, as an older kid in Primary, having those wonderful bandalos and patches that we worked so hard for and of which we were so proud.



Me and Duke Blakesley  
At the beach in Long Beach, California

I was baptized in Long Beach, California on May 6, 1945 and confirmed that same day. When looking at my church records some years later, I was disappointed that a different priesthood holder performed my important church ordinations. I promised myself that I would try to keep myself worthy so that I could perform all the baptisms, confirmations and ordinations for our children. I believe it is important that a father assume that righteous responsibility. I feel blessed that I was able to keep that promise.

Long Beach was special to us because our parents took us frequently to both The Plunge, a large indoor swimming pool, and The Pike which was a large amusement park with a huge wooden roller coaster. We also went to the beach often to enjoy body surfing and evening camp outs. I have always loved the ocean. We must have some seamen in our ancestry.

At the age of nine, I started doing yard work for a few of our neighbors. One of the families was particularly fussy about the work and it really challenged me to satisfy them. They wouldn't pay me until they walked around the yard and it passed inspection. I guess it was then that I learned how to do yard work right.

One day, as several of us were playing on the school grounds, we were watching two airplanes fly low overhead. All of a sudden, the tail section of the first plane flew off and it plummeted toward the ground. We saw a person bail out but the parachute did not open. The plane crashed just a block away from school (luckily in an open field) and we all ran to see the excitement.

Duke and I were the first to the crash scene and we were horrified to see that the man who had bailed out had landed on top of the crumpled plane and was dead. He was the first dead person I had ever seen up close. It turned out that the plane was an experimental homemade job and the man's wife was following in the second plane. She arrived on the scene shortly thereafter and of course was distraught at seeing her dead husband. I had nightmares about the crash for weeks afterwards.

Once, during those war years, my brother Dale was able to come home on furlough. Mother fainted when she saw him because he was so thin and looked so rough from the ordeal he was going through. He was seriously wounded twice, patched up and sent back. Dale was a good athlete and an excellent swimmer so his job in the Navy was as a frogman (a modern-day Seal). He didn't like to talk about the war and would only say that he never knew from day to day if it would be his last. As every day, at least one of his buddies did not return.

That experience makes me think today of the clarion call of the Roman Legionnaires three thousand years ago who recited to each other as comrades in arms, *"No one knows the end of this day's battle or from whence it cometh. Sufficeth it to say that the battle will end and then shall the victors be known. And if we meet again, we will smile. If not, then this parting was well made."*

One day, in 1945, as Duke and I were walking home from school we heard bells and whistles loudly break forth. Everyone was in the streets hugging one another and great happiness prevailed. The Germans had surrendered. Several months later, Japan also surrendered and the war was over.

My brother, Dale, survived and was able to return home.

Since ships were no longer needed for the war, Dad was laid off from his job. He and Uncle Heber got jobs at a boatyard where yachts were constructed and kept painting for a few more years.

During the fifth grade, my parents thought it would be good for me to join the town band. The band teacher, seeing that I had long arms, suggested that I play the trombone. My parents immediately went out and bought me an Olds professional model trombone that cost three hundred dollars, a month's salary then. I took my place in the trombone section. They also provided me with private lessons so I became fairly proficient rather quickly. Seventy years later, I still have that trombone and take it out occasionally to play it.

My aunts and uncles were always very good to me. One time, I was admiring my Uncle Heber's watch. It was a Bulova brand that he had owned for thirty years. *He looked at me for a few seconds, then took off the watch and gave it to me and said, "Billie, this watch means a lot to me, but you mean even more. I want you to have it. Just occasionally think of me."* He then gave me some good advice to always buy good stuff and take care of it. Uncle Heber never had children of his own, so I suppose I may have been like a son to him. I kept the watch through college when I finally lost it; much to my sorrow. I have tried to follow his advice and have found it to be sound and worthwhile.

At this stage of my life, I was very thin. I did not have a good appetite and was very fussy about the things I ate. My parents were worried that something was wrong with me, like I had some disease or something. They finally took me to see Dr. Snow who told them "There is nothing wrong with this boy, just wait a few years and he will fill out." How right Dr. Snow was. Finally, at the age of thirty five, I began to fill out more than anyone wanted.

As I was walking down the street one day leading one of our horses, I stopped and turned toward the horse which just kept on walking and stepped on my foot breaking the third toe on my left foot. To this day, the toe is still broken and ugly. I have always blamed the broken toe as the reason for me not being very agile or quick on my feet. (I guess that's as good an excuse as any.)

In the sixth grade, Jeanette Pearson and I were selected to represent Orange Street School in going to Los Angeles and viewing the original Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and other important documents relating to the founding of our country. These documents were on the Freedom Train which was touring the country to give everyone a chance to see them. Jeanette and I were required to give an oral report to our school. It was probably the largest group I have ever spoken before and I was scared to death. But the report seemed to go over well and I was quite pleased with myself.

My mother always liked California because things were so much better financially for us there. Our new home was finally nearing completion and mother was anxiously anticipating moving in. I can only imagine her displeasure when dad informed her that he thought the family should move back to Pima.

Dad told me later that his main reason for the move was that he did not want me to go to Narbonne High School. While Orange Street had been good for us, he was concerned about the gangs that were beginning to form in the local high schools and he did not want me or Dennis to be exposed to them. I will never know if he was completely right, but I do know, looking back, that I was about to embark on one of the hardest but best periods of my life.

## **THE SCHOOL YEARS IN PIMA (1948-1954)**

### **BACK TO SQUARE ONE**

Mother never got to live in the new house and my saying good-bye to Duke and my other friends was hard. Nevertheless, in June 1948, mother put Dennis and me on the Greyhound bus to return to Pima. I was now eleven years old and my brother, Dennis, was seven. We arrived on a hot, dusty day in June, where dad and my grandmother Allred were waiting to greet us. Mother stayed in Lomita for a while to settle up our affairs and then soon joined us.

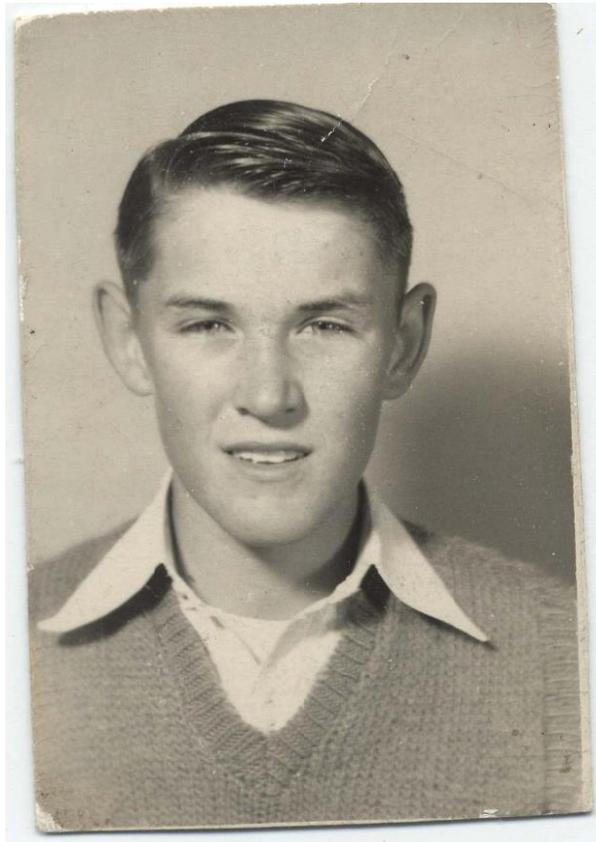
We lived in a little storehouse in my grandmother's back yard for a few months. Dad sold the property in Lomita and used the proceeds to purchase the Sam Larson place (on the corner of 300 South 600 East, Alder Lane). This became our home. The home had two bedrooms and one bathroom. Dennis and I slept together in a double bed.

One thing for sure is that my days of fun and games were gone forever. Rather than playing with the kids in the neighborhood most days and just a little yard work, I now had chores to do. Cows to milk and farm work to do from sunup to sundown. I wasn't sure if I was going to like this country living as I had become a city kid not accustomed to hard manual labor.

My dad rented a small forty-acre farm from my grandmother and immediately started a small dairy with thirty cows. Dad milked twenty five cows and I milked five every night and morning by hand. Later, when we increased the herd to sixty cows, we installed automatic milking machines. Cows have to be milked twice a day come rain, shine, cold or heat. So, our work was very confining and we were not able to go anywhere too far from the cows.

## AT PIMA JUNIOR HIGH

I was glad when school started that fall so that I could leave the farm work during the day. I will never forget the first day of junior high school when I was escorted into Mrs. Ruth Peck's seventh grade class. I felt like I was under a microscope as all the kids gave me the once over wondering who this new kid was. Little did I know that the class was an outstanding group of boys and girls with whom I would enjoy a life long friendship. Also, in the class was the girl who would later become my wife and eternal companion.



My 8th grade picture

When it was time to sign up for the junior high band, our band teacher, Curtis Kimball, saw my fancy trombone and ask me to play something. I could only play the scale but it impressed him enough that he asked me to play in the high school band. After a play off with some other trombonists, I won the first chair position, which I never relinquished for the next six years.

In the eighth grade, during our PE class, we were running laps around the track when I and another boy, Ivan Maner, tripped over each other. I fell and Ivan fell on top of me breaking my right wrist. I had my forearm in a cast for six weeks and had to learn to write with my left hand.

## A STORE CALLED BUSH & SON

I either walked or rode my bike to school which was about one mile from our home. Almost every day on my way home from school, I would stop at Bush & Son, a local hardware store on the old highway. Charlie Bush was the proprietor. He had hundreds of shelves and compartments for keeping his hardware products. The store was clean and well organized. Mr. Bush always wore bib overalls and drove a Diamond T truck. I didn't know anyone else who had a Diamond T truck. He lived alone in a little apartment in the back of the store.

My main reason for stopping was to get a soda pop, for in the southeast corner of the store was a pop machine where the sodas were hung by their caps on a rail. After putting in your dime you slid the bottle to the end of the rail and, *Ker plunk*, pulled it out. I usually got a strawberry soda or Barq's root beer which sure tasted good on a hot day.

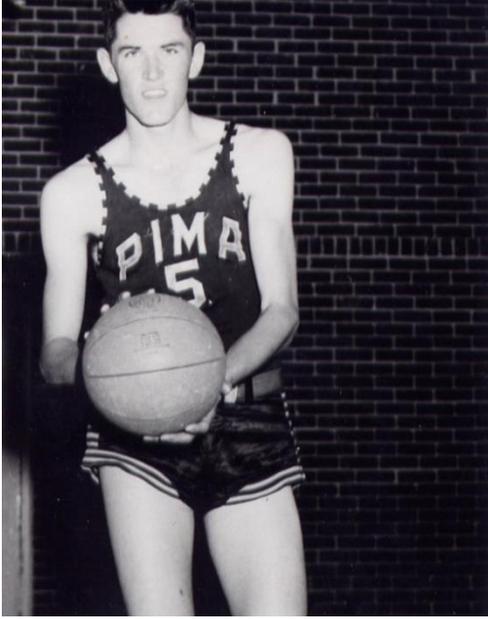
Although I was of no consequence to anyone, Mr. Bush always had a kind word for me and asked how I was doing in school. His kindness to me was appreciated more than he would ever know. I also enjoyed standing by and listening to the farmers, who met at the store every day, to solve the world's problems. The cracker barrel chatter was the absolute best.

## AT PIMA HIGH SCHOOL

For the next six years I played with the Pima High School band in what was surely their glory years. We traveled all over the state for band competitions and usually won "superior" ratings. Mr. Kimball was an accomplished trombonist and took a special interest in me. We played many duet performances that always seemed to please the audience.

*One of life's most embarrassing moments occurred when our band was putting on a concert in St. David. Our large 60 piece band could barely fit on the small, high stage in the auditorium. I always sat on the far-left side of the trombone section nearest the audience. During one of the quiet parts of our rendition, I felt my chair tilt slightly to the left and before I could catch my balance, I fell off the stage with a mighty crash. Mr. Kimball looked down at me barely controlling his laughter. Mr. Glenn Merrill, one the St. David school administrators rushed over to help me up. I was more concerned about my trombone than myself. Fortunately, we both survived, and I got back on the stage and continued playing with the band, which had barely skipped a beat.*

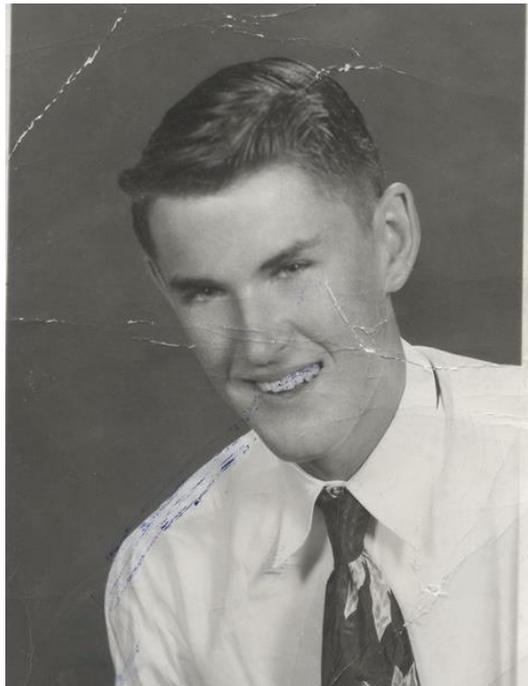
One of the advantages of going to a small school is that you can play competitive sports, even if you are just average. That applied to me, except in basketball and baseball where I was a little better than average. Therefore, all during junior high and high school some of my fondest memories of are of playing ball. We were the Pima Roughriders.



We played six-man football against high schools in Ft. Thomas, St. David, Elfrida, Patagonia and Tombstone. In basketball and baseball, we competed in a league with the bigger schools of Safford, Morenci, Clifton, Thatcher, Globe, Miami and Duncan. We usually dominated in football and competed fairly well in basketball and baseball. As a freshman, I was the starting first baseman on the baseball team and the starting center in basketball my junior and senior years. As a senior, I was six foot four and weighed 165 pounds.

Gary McBride, Max Peck, Dall Weech, Gerald Skinner, Stan Hancock, Wayne Davis, Verdell Crockett and Mac Haynie were some of my teammates.

*Our coach was Gale Mortensen who got as much out of us as possible. Boy, could he yell. If it was directed at me, which it often was, I wanted to go crawl into the nearest hole. I have never taken shouts or criticism well.*



My Junior Class Picture

In high school, I didn't apply myself in scholastics. As long as I got average grades and kept myself eligible for sports, I was content. I was able to do that with minimal study. It was a good thing because no matter how late ball practice was or the little studying I did, there were always the cows waiting to be milked. As a result, I could not just hang out after school and I never developed the close friendships I had enjoyed in California. My school day started at five am and usually ended around ten pm.



We had some teachers who were truly outstanding. Kenneth Beals was our math teacher and I learned so much from him. As much about human relations as math. He would always say, "Let's keep it down to a mild roar in here" and then proceed to teach math in a way that all could understand. We would quiet down just because of our respect for him.

Paul Goodman was an excellent chemistry teacher. Some of our other teachers were LaRoy Saline, Emile Philpott, Bertha Randall and Clifford Dean. I liked some better than others but they were all okay and I thought they all treated me fairly. Our school superintendent was Clyde Davis. (Years later, while serving on the school board I had the privilege of presenting the motion to have the new cafetorium

named in his honor). Lawanna Weech was the school secretary and Albert Haws was the school custodian who kept everything shinning.

Alta Lines and Mac Haynie were two in our class who excelled as students. Mac was also our Student Body President.

*I served as Class President of the Senior Class of 1954. Our class got along well together as classmates and friends. I don't remember any major disagreements or quarrels among us. If my mother had not been insistent about me skipping the second grade, I would have wound up in the Class of 1955 which was not as good.*

The Class of 1954 has celebrated our 60th graduation anniversary from Pima High School and the Class of 1956 has celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> graduation from Eastern Arizona College. Most of my classmates have gone on and excelled in their chosen professions and most of the LDS kids have remained true to the faith. A few of our high school classmates have passed away. Helen Boren, Mary Bussing, Betty McLamarrah, Max Peck and Carrie Jean Williams.

One summer, our family took to trip back to Lomita to see our relatives. While there, I looked up my old friend, Duke Blakesley. We had not written and I had no idea what his life was like. When I knocked unannounced at his home, his mother answered the door and seemed genuinely glad to see me. She said, "Billie, you're in luck, Duke is in the Army but he is home on furlough". Duke came in about that time and we both broke into a laugh. We had both grown up a lot. We visited for a couple of hours about the "good old times" and then I left, realizing more than ever, how choice life's friendships are.

One day, while working on the farm during the summer, I was cranking up our old Case tractor. I had my foot on the front dual tires and forgot that I had left the hand clutch in gear. When the tractor started, it lurched forward, throwing me to the ground. The front tires ran over my chest, but with my great quickness and agility, (laugh) I was able to twist just enough to avoid being run over by the big tires which would have seriously hurt me. The tractor kept going until it hit the dairy barn and stopped. Mother took me to the doctor but there was nothing seriously wrong other than some bruised ribs.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH

*The majority of our class, and school, were members of the Church. We associated closely with one another both in and out of school. Although we were far from perfect, we (the boys) were able to keep ourselves out of major trouble. We advanced through the Priesthood together and worked together in all the Aaronic Priesthood callings. We were diligent in doing our duty and I will always be grateful for the example set by these friends.*

## MY GRANDMOTHER ALLRED

Our next-door neighbor was my grandmother Maude Judd Allred. It was an honor to know and associate with her. Her husband, John Warren Allred, died at a young age and left grandmother a widow. She remained so for the rest of her life, almost 50 years. She was an especially disciplined and virtuous woman. Her daughters and my aunts, Clara and Alice, were just like her, which is probably why I loved them so much.

I always enjoyed going to her home because it was so neat and clean. She was an excellent cook and could make the best meals, even head cheese (ground up hog brains).

*She was always so kind to Dennis and me. She had an expression of speech that has always stuck with me, "We may be poor, but we aren't trashy. So let's go out and clean things up." And, in fact, she would always work along side of us, even when she was older.*

## OUR NEIGHBORS

The Ed and Hilda Taylor family lived across the street from us. They had a large family but, by the time we arrived, there were only two children still at home, their son Kenneth and their daughter, Carlene.

Burt and Lela McBride (including Diane) and their large family lived down the road.

The Charles Luster family lived up the road. Their son, Pat, had a Cushman motor scooter and he would often stop to give me a ride to school. Pat liked to go fast, and I had to hold on for dear life.

My uncles Don, Lloyd and Virgil Preston and their families lived in Morenci and Clifton and we often went to visit them. Our cousin, Shirley Preston, was about my age and Reed and Carol Preston slightly younger. I always thought the Preston family had interesting personalities and it was fun to be around them.

Reed Preston is now a dentist. Carol Preston married Bob Pursley, one of our friends from Safford. Their son, Tom Pursley, has served in the Pima Stake Presidency. Bob and Carol work in the Arizona Temple and Carol is one of the main stays in genealogy work. Rob Pursley has been our Bishop.

## THE FUN TIMES

There could not have been a better place than Pima for us to participate in our activities. The corn roasts at the airfield, the hayrack and horseback rides, picnics at Black Berry Patch, cookouts, scout camps and Tank Hill.

I have always believed that we grew up in the perfect years. I'm sure we were, in many ways, naïve and uninitiated. For sure we were "square". But the music, customs and styles of our generation were as good as any for having wholesome fun.

*We especially enjoyed dances. We had them after every ball game, several major ones during the school year and Church budget dances during the summer.*

The custom then was for the girls to sit on one side of the hall and the boys on the other. Then, at the beginning of each dance, the boys would walk across the floor to select their new partner. At the end of the dance, the boys would escort the girls to their seats, return to their side of the hall and start the process all over again.

You can imagine the apprehension of the girls who were not quite so pretty or who maybe didn't dance as well. I often waited and asked the stragglers. It was worth it to see their eyes light up. And often, these girls were the best dancers and conversationalists. Of course, it worked both ways. Sometimes, the popular girls would refuse to dance with a boy whom they considered a clod.

One of the highlights of our high school years was the All-Church Dance Festival in which we participated. We practiced several months learning intricate group dance routines. In June, we went to Salt Lake City on group buses to join with other LDS kids from all over the country who had learned the same dances. Everything somehow came together and the final show, which was a real spectacle, was presented in the University of Utah football stadium.



Some goofing around on our trip  
to the All Church Dance Festival

*It was during that trip that I saw the living prophet of God for the first time. President David O. McKay. He spoke to the dancers and I remember well the spirit testifying to me that he was indeed a prophet. The concluding song, sang by both the dancers and the spectators, was CARRY ON. To this day, that experience still brings tears to the eyes of Diane.*

## A GIRL NAMED DIANE

During our junior year, the Girl's Western Dance was fast approaching and one day, as I was working in our back yard, two of the girls in our class came walking toward me. They were Mary Bussing and Diane McBride. I suspected that one had come to ask me to the dance. However, I didn't know which one. Mary would have been fine, but I really preferred Diane and I was pleased when she politely asked me. Diane was one of the best dancers and all the boys liked her.

I had known and admired Diane since the seventh grade, but this was the first occasion that we dated. The first, of many, during the ensuing years.



Diane and me on a class trip to Mt. Graham

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

We graduated from Pima High in May 1954. I played a trombone solo at the graduation accompanied by Janet Welker. There were nineteen in our graduating class. More than half a century later, we are still close and keep in touch.

Diane's grandfather, David Felshaw, died on the day of our graduation and we all felt sad for her.

**THE COLLEGE YEARS**  
**(1954-1958)**

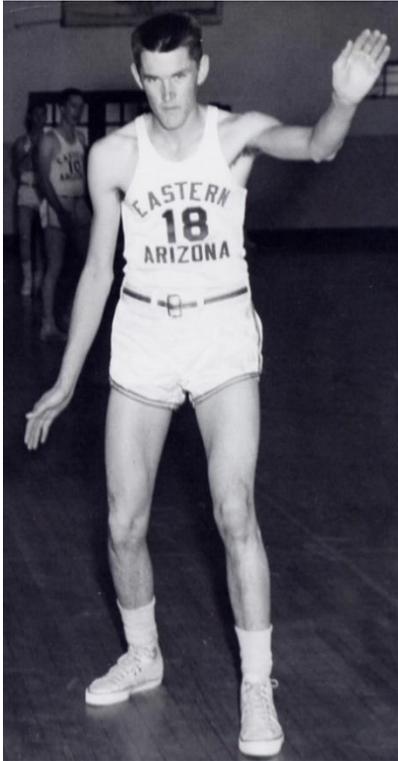
AT EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE

We were fortunate to have Eastern Arizona College just five miles away in Thatcher and most of our class enrolled there in the fall of 1954.

I had decided that summer that I wanted to major in accounting for no special reason other than it seemed to fit my disposition and my research indicated there would be plenty of good jobs in that field upon graduation.

Other students, mostly from the Gila Valley, also attended EA. Those, who had previously been our rivals, were now our classmates and we looked at them with a friendlier perspective. David Udall and Sherald Griffin from Thatcher were in several of my classes and we became good friends.

I knew that in college, it is important to get good grades and that I needed to change my ways so far as my study habits. I really began to apply myself and was able to get mostly A's during my two years at EA. My dad reluctantly agreed to let me cut back some on the farm work and milking, which gave me more time for the books.



Since I still had an interest in sports, I tried out for, and made, the basketball team. We had an excellent team and we traveled not only in Arizona but also to California. I mostly sat on the bench next to David Udall but I did get into a few games and made a minor contribution. Our coach was Bruce Larson who later became the head coach at the University of Arizona. Some of the better players on our team were Wayne McGrath, Larry Brewer and Ronald Jacobsen.

I still liked bands and marching so during my freshman year, I played in the EA band. John Martin was our director. I could not work band into my schedule, without interfering with my core classes and was forced to stop playing in the band my sophomore year. That was the end of my formal music career and I felt badly about it.

*That summer, I received my patriarchal blessing from Patriarch Isaac Blake. I thought the blessing was wonderful and it forcibly brought to my mind how the Lord knows us personally and cares about us. That blessing has become a blueprint for my life and I have tried to live worthily that I might receive the full benefits from it. When Diane and I compared our blessings, there were several unique points in each of them that seemed to match.*

During our sophomore year at EA, Diane was elected President of the Associated Women Students, which was a nice honor for her. She put forth her usual 110% effort into her duties and represented the women student's well. She also played in the EA band where Mr. Martin took a special interest in her. She played a wonderful clarinet solo during one of our concerts.

Diane and I continued dating throughout the EA years.



Fourteen of us, who had graduated from high school together, also graduated from Eastern Arizona College with Associates of Arts degrees, which shows what a dedicated bunch we were.

I graduated second, scholastically, of all the male students. Just a hair behind David Udall.

I was especially happy to get a scholastic scholarship to attend Brigham Young University. This pretty well made my decision for me as I had previously debated whether to attend the University of Arizona or Arizona State College.

This time was a definite parting of the ways for our class.

Several of the boys in the class received mission calls and left for the mission field. I was only eighteen and not yet old enough to receive a call.



Fourteen proud Pima High School Graduates  
Graduating from Eastern Arizona College

## AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

*Leaving home for the first time is traumatic for most. It was for me. Although things were not perfect in our home, I felt close to my parents and brother. It was hard to leave knowing that I would probably not live as part of my parent's family again, at least not in this life.*

I worked at Ft. Grant during that summer which, at the time, was a boy's correctional facility. I stayed there all week coming home only on weekends. I was able to save enough to get through the next year at BYU.

The hardest part of the whole thing was that Diane was to attend Arizona State College and we would be away from each other. She wanted to go to the University of Utah and major in nutrition but her parents advised her to stay closer to home, which she did.

*I suppose there was an unstated understanding that we needed to be apart for a time to see if we were really meant for each other. We were in love and beginning to have conversations about getting married.*

There were a few other students from Pima who would be attending BYU that year (1957). Honk Norton, Reece Jarvis, Jim Alder, Nan Mattice, Janet Welker, Betty McLamarrah and Eloise Ellsworth.

Honk Norton, Reece Jarvis, Jim Alder and I were roommates in an off campus apartment with a couple of boys from California. Honk had returned from the Army and Reece from a mission.

I really enjoyed BYU. Experiencing the fall colors and the coming of winter with real snow, which I had not previously known, was a good feeling. The school had a special spirit about it and there was something exciting about being part of 10,000 predominately LDS students. We attended devotionals every week and listened to General Authorities give outstanding talks which were a real motivation to me.

We had some excellent teachers in the Accounting Department and I was learning the skills necessary for my chosen profession.

That fall turned out to be a real experience. We started out trying to be organized. We set up cooking, dishwashing and cleaning schedules that quickly went out the window. Everyone ended up scrounging for himself. Honk, Reece, and I would often wind up at a mini mart at eleven at night buying cinnamon rolls and milk for supper.

I was the most serious student in the bunch and spent most of my time studying in the library. I was so serious that I usually did not take time to go to football games or to enjoy the other good things around campus.

I missed Diane and wrote her almost every day.

Early in the school year, many of the boys joined social fraternities in which I had no interest. Because of my scholastics, I qualified to apply to join the Blue Key National Honor Society. I felt fortunate to be accepted. The members of Blue Key were most of the real “big deals” on campus, including Monroe McKay, the student body president. I was not a big deal, but I learned a lot about things, including college politics.

At Thanksgiving time, none of us was able to return home so all the kids from Pima got together for Thanksgiving Dinner. The girls cooked for us and it was the only decent meal we had all quarter. It was also good to compare notes on how we were all doing.

*That fall, Honk Norton and Jim Alder introduced me to the game of golf. We went out one afternoon to play at the Timpanogas Golf Club, a public course in Provo. I was hooked. Thus began a life long love affair with the best game in the world. Surely, my eighth great grandfather was the Scottish sheep herder who invented the game by knocking rocks into a hole with a stick.*

Betty McLamarrah was in some of my accounting classes. Betty had been part of our group since the sixth grade in Pima. She was very quiet and shy, so I never got to know her very well. She was also very smart and an excellent student. Even in the big classes of a major university she was always near the top. It was then that I began to realize what a special person she was and that I should have made an effort to know her better.



At the Christmas break, Honk and I drove home together in Honk's little MG convertible. My first stop was at ASC to see Diane. She was working in the college cafeteria. Upon seeing her, there was a confirmation in my heart that she was the girl I wanted to marry. We were engaged two weeks later.

It was Honk's and my intention to go back to school together, but Honk decided, at the Last minute, to enroll at Arizona State. Reece Jarvis decided to go back to Eastern Arizona College.

As a result, I found myself without two roommates whom I had grown fond of and I missed them both.

When school resumed, Jim Alder and I found another place with four boys from Utah who became our new roommates for the remainder of our junior year.

The following summer, I worked again at Ft. Grant and was again able to save enough to get through my final year of school.

*Also, that summer I received an invitation to see Bishop Elbert Alder who asked me about going on a mission. I am not sure of all the reasons, but mostly because of my dad's request that I finish school first, I came back later and told Bishop Alder that I could not accept the call.*

I have always wondered how things would have worked out differently had I accepted the call. For the most part, I regret my decision. I believe that I would have made a good missionary and maybe accomplished something worthwhile.



Our engagement announcement

## OUR ENGAGEMENT

Diane and I thought about getting married between our junior and senior years. However, Diane's parents advised us to wait until we graduated. I'm sure that Burt McBride, being a real pragmatist, wanted to make sure that I could support Diane. The good news was that they agreed to let Diane attend BYU with me.

It was an exciting time as we prepared for school that fall. Especially because we would not be apart and would be able to see each other as much as our time and studies would permit.

When we returned to school, my roommate was Clarence McBride, who was Diane's first cousin. Clarence had just returned from a mission in England. He was also from Pima and three classes ahead of us in high school. I had always looked up to him (although he was a lot shorter than I) because he was such a good athlete and scholar. He was majoring in chemical engineering so we both hit the books hard. We shared a nice basement apartment with the Clarke family and had good eating arrangements with a family across the street. The whole arrangement was much better than those during our junior year.

Diane was a head resident at Elisa R. Snow Hall, one of the Heritage Halls. She shared an apartment with five other girls. She was the only senior. Our granddaughter Clarissa would one day be a freshman in the Elisa R. Snow Hall, one of the last student cohorts to live there before it was demolished to make way for the new Heritage Halls.

Clarence and I had an ongoing series of chess matches. The board was set up and we would make moves as time allowed. Some of our games would last for a week. Of the dozens of games played, I believe that I only beat him once. I don't know if Clarence was that good or I was that bad. Probably both. I do know that Clarence took no pity on me.

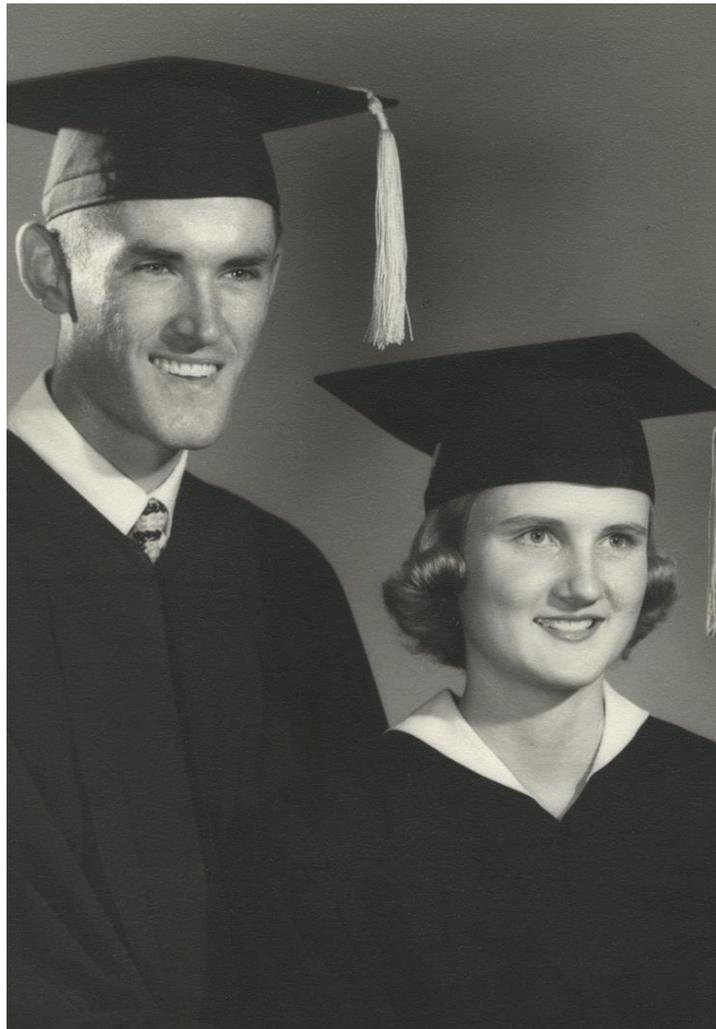
Diane and I were the epitome of "starving students". We weren't really starving, but we didn't have any money except for the essentials. We didn't have a car, so we walked or took the bus wherever we went. Luckily, Clarence had a car and was kind enough to share it many times. Especially when it was cold and snowy, which it often was.

A nice benefit we enjoyed is that the Blue Key members took tickets and ushered at the basketball games after which we had our pick of the front row seats in the Smith Field House. The WAC conference at the time was very strong and the quality of basketball high. We enjoyed the games and became staunch Cougar fans. As corny as it sounds, we were enthralled in the BYU Fight Song, "Rise and Shout the Cougars are out." Diane sang it to our children to get them out of bed in the morning.

A few months before graduation, I had on-campus interviews with all the major accounting firms. I received three offers of employment: Arthur Young & Company, Arthur Andersen & Company, and the California Packing Corporation (Del Monte). I accepted the offer from Arthur Young & Co., Los Angeles Office primarily because most of my close classmates, who were the top students, were also going to Arthur Young.

## OUR GRADUATION

Finally, in May 1958, Diane and I graduated from Brigham Young University with BS degrees in our majors of accounting and home economics. Also graduating with us that night, along with the other 2,000 graduates, were some of our friends from Pima: Clarence McBride, Betty McLamarrah, Janet Welker and Nan Mattice. President Reuben J. Clarke was the graduation speaker and we all had the honor of shaking his hand.



Diane and I graduate from Brigham Young University  
May 1958

## OUR MARRIAGE



*Diane (McBride) and I were married on June 19, 1958 in the Mesa Arizona Temple. My father and mother were sealed in the Temple that same day and we received our endowments at the same time. My brother Dennis and I were also sealed to our parents that day. I know that Temple marriages and sealings are sacred and important, so that was a good day for our family.*

Our reception was a few days later in the Pima Ward Cultural Hall. Clarence McBride was our best man.

*Of all the decisions I have made in my life, my decision to marry Diane was the best. I have never had any doubts or second thoughts that she is the best person I could possibly have married. She is the light and love of my life.*



On the steps of the Mesa, Arizona Temple  
The happiest day of our lives



Our wedding reception in the Pima Ward's Cultural Hall  
Our parents plus Marilyn and Clarence McBride

**OFF TO CALIFORNIA TO SEEK OUR FORTUNE  
(1958-1968)**

**STARTING WORK IN LOS ANGELES**

Our honeymoon was our trip to Los Angeles. Diane's parents gave us a green 1951 Chevrolet sedan, put new tires on it and, with their best wishes, both our parents sent us on our way.

On our trip across the desert, I could not help but think of our trip seventeen years earlier curled up in the back of the old Dodge truck. Now, my wife was at my side.

On arriving in Los Angeles, our first order of business was to find a place to live. As we drove around, we were impressed with the area around the Los Angeles Temple so we rented our first home, an apartment just a block east of the Temple on Eastborne Street in Westwood. We spent many evenings walking around the temple grounds and often attended temple sessions.

We were members of the Westwood First Ward and we were both called to serve in the young men and young women (MIA) organizations.

**ARTHUR YOUNG & CO.**

In our profession, it was considered a real plum to be hired by a "Big 8" accounting firm like Arthur Young & Co. AY had offices all over the world and, included in their client base, were some of the world's largest and most prestigious companies.

We had 200 on the Los Angeles office staff, including several BYU graduates, which was one of the main reasons I selected that firm.

The "real world" training we received was invaluable. I began to learn quickly about the hard nosed, greedy attitudes that prevail in the business world and, at the same time, the importance of business ethics.

I also learned firsthand how others perceive members of the Church. At Company parties, which were frequent, most of the BYU graduates would mingle together, while others would drink and get "silly drunk". We did not enjoy the parties but felt that, for the sake of our careers, we needed to attend.

*At my first of many job evaluations, the administrative counselor, Bob Safford, offered some advice that I will never forget. He said, "The firm likes the work you do. However, we do not like the way you BYU boys always stick together and refuse to associate with the rest of us. We know you don't approve of drinking, so why don't you fill a glass with 7-Up and just circulate among the crowd." I did not like or agree with the advice at first, but after thinking about it for a while, Mr. Safford was probably right. At least, he was giving an honest expression of the firm's feeling and, right, wrong or indifferent I had to grant them that right, especially since they were the boss.*

After that, we all tried to be more sociable. However, it did cause some strain in trying to balance our Church teachings with the pressures of the firm.

The work at the firm was extremely demanding. During the busy season of January through April, we would often work until midnight, go home and get a couple hours sleep and be back to work at 8am. In getting back and forth, everyone had to contend with the Los Angeles freeway traffic, which was the absolute worst in the world.

The upside was that I was learning a tremendous amount about my profession and becoming good at it.

## OUR FIRST APARTMENT ON EASTBORNE

Diane and I settled in our little apartment and she began to weave her magic at making it a real home. Then and now, fifty five years later, I have appreciated her homemaking skills. She has always kept our homes clean and pleasant; doing all the little but important things so well.

I have always said that she is the best everyday cook in the world, a fact that her family, children and our waistlines will attest to. She has mastered the art of seasoning food just right to make it delicious. She can effortlessly cook meals for large groups. (Not really, but it seems so.)

Just the two of us spent our first Thanksgiving together.

After a few weeks of sitting home alone during the daytime, Diane got a job at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). She worked in the veteran's benefits department and enjoyed her job. The added income was nice as well.

Also living in Westwood, just a few blocks from us, were President and Sister Jesse A. Udall. President Udall was serving as President of the California, Los Angeles mission. We were able to visit them a few times. They were as homesick as we were. Diane's father, Burt, served as a counselor to President Udall in the St. Joseph Stake for many years.

Quite often, we visited with Uncle Devar and Aunt Nadine Felshaw and their family in Glendora. We began thinking about buying our own home. We could not afford the Westwood area and so we considered Glendora, a city we had come to like. We thought it would be a good idea to rent an apartment there first to get a better feel for the area.



Mother and me at our apartment on Eastborne, Westwood. California.

## LIFE IN GLENDORA

We were now expecting our first child. Diane was having a terrible case of morning sickness. After living in Westwood for about a year, we moved into an apartment on the corner of Meda and Wabash Street in Glendora.

Glendora was thirty-one miles east of Los Angeles and the drive into the Arthur Young office was a real bear. It took an hour and half in the morning and two hours in the evening to commute between home and the office. I think I learned every inch of the San Bernardino Freeway because at one time or another I was stopped on it. It was a real rat race and I was smack dab in the middle of it. I never learned to like it but just accepted it.

We occasionally had visitors stop by. One was Dall Weech, one of our friends and classmates from Pima. Dall was an aspiring dentist and was checking out the USC Dental School. He decided later to attend Baylor where I had occasion to visit him and his wife, Brenda, in Dallas.

One day, we picked up the mail and found a letter, GREETINGS FROM UNCLE SAM. I had been drafted into the Army. I went for my physical exams and was preparing to report for boot camp, when I either read or someone told us that, if you had children or were expecting children, you could be deferred from the draft. I confirmed that was true. So, we can thank Stephanie for keeping me out of the Army, although I really would not have minded serving. I probably would have wound up as a Captain working in an office somewhere and, who knows, we may have enjoyed it.

## STEPHANIE ALLRED

Our daughter Stephanie was born November 2, 1959 in Sierra Madre, Los Angeles County, California. She was delivered by Dr. Nebeker in the Sierra Madre Hospital. I was secretly wishing our first child would be a daughter because, never having a sister, I was afraid that all our kids would be boys. That seems silly now, but it was real to me then.

Diane had a tough time with the delivery. We went into the hospital in the early evening and she was in hard labor all night. Stephanie was finally delivered early in the morning. Diane was so tired that she could barely hold her head up.

Stephanie was a beautiful baby and we were thrilled to have her. She had a problem with colic as soon as the sun went down and she cried a lot. We took turns walking the floor with her. We found that if we put her in the car and went for a little ride it would help her calm down and sleep better.



With Stephanie at Uncle Devar Felshaw home in Glendora

## THE GLENDORA WARD

We were pleased to find out that our neighbors across the street were Ernest and Marge Griffin. Ernest was from Thatcher and the older brother of Sherald Griffin who was a close friend from our Eastern Arizona College years. (50 years later, Ernest and I served as Bishop in two of the EA College wards).

*A constant in our lives has been that wherever we have lived, we have tried to be active in our Church. Every good thing that has come to me in my life has come because of my membership in it. I testify without equivocation, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord's true church on earth and the doctrines and principles contained therein are the source of life's greatest blessings. The Church's doctrines are based upon the teachings of Jesus Christ, who personally directs the affairs of the Church through his living prophets.*

*No other philosophy or organization can compare with the Church and I pray that my posterity will honor it and adhere to its teachings. I believe that life is too short to waste time on any other religious or philosophical pursuit.*

We felt needed in the Ward and worked hard in our callings. I served as President of the Young Men. Diane was called, at the age of 29, to serve as the Relief Society President. She felt that she was too young and unqualified, but as always, she served with distinction.

The Glendora Ward membership was composed of many young couples and families like ours. We had many things in common and we established some choice, life-long friendships.

I later was called to serve as the Elders Quorum President and selected Bob Fuller to be one of my counselors. We became especially good friends with Bob and his wife Glenell. Bob was an All-American football player from Arizona State and he was as tough as nails outside but like a marshmallow inside. While serving on his mission in Texas he won the Golden Gloves middle-weight boxing championship as a walk-on just for the challenge. Back in those days, many of the missionaries spent the majority of their time promoting the Church and less time actually proselyting.

Not long after being in the Glendora Ward, I was called to serve as a stake missionary. My mission companion was William Raymond (who later served as Stake President of the Glendora Stake). We took our calling seriously and worked several hours each week, mostly proselyting by going door to door. In the two years we served, we (and the spirit of the Lord) were successful in bringing four families into the Church and a total of 16 converts.

Included in the convert baptisms were George and Carolyn Weir. Later, Diane and I were able to attend their sealing in the St. George Temple.

## PASSING THE CPA EXAM

A major ordeal of my profession is taking the examination to become a Certified Public Accountant; a grueling four-day examination on accounting theory, practice, law and auditing. I was able to complete the examination while living in Glendora and received my CPA certificate which I have held honorably for 60 years. While I have worked in several positions within my profession, I have never worked outside of it.

*Like my decision relating to my marriage, I have never regretted choosing my profession because, for the most part, I have enjoyed it and it has served me well.*

## OUR FIRST HOME

The dream of most is to have a home of their own and we were no different. There were some nice housing developments in Glendora and we found a home we liked at 311 Cimmaron Trail. It had 3 bedrooms and 2 baths which was a major upscale in those years. Diane's dad, Burt, gave us the down payment. (Funny, his advice to us was to buy something good and take care of it. The same advice as my Uncle Heber's years before. These older folks sure are smart.)



This is what our first home looks like today.



Our first Christmas in Glendora

We were enthused to start putting in the yard and making it a real home for us and the children which both Diane and I wanted.

Sherald and Joan Griffin, from Thatcher, were our neighbors and lived kiddy corner from us. We very much enjoyed the neighborhood and were soon settled into the suburban Southern California lifestyle.

#### JOHN WARREN ALLRED

Our son John was born January 22, 1961 in the Glendora Hospital. Dr. Leftwich asked me if I would like to witness the birth and I said "sure." He said, "*Fine, but if you faint, you will just have to lay there. We will be too busy to help you.*" I didn't faint and thought the whole birth process was one of the most beautiful events I have ever experienced. It also made me recognize, firsthand, the ordeal that mother's go through in giving birth

John was born with a shock of black hair that stood straight up and he had beautiful pale blue eyes. Just two weeks after birth he developed a staff infection which caused a scar on his face and welts on his body. The doctors had a hard time getting rid of the infection.

Even as a baby and child, John had a kind and calm personality which served him well throughout his life. He has an especially keen sense of fair play and good sportsmanship.

## JENNIFER ALLRED

Our daughter Jennifer was born November 30, 1962 also in the Glendora Hospital. She was delivered by Dr. Donaldson. She was especially pretty with dark, curly hair. As a baby she rarely cried and had a calm and mellow personality.





## OUR CHILDREN COLLECTIVELY

Diane and I have lived long enough to see all our children grow and develop. Four of them have children of their own. We know them as our equals and in many ways they have surpassed us in their abilities and accomplishments. We are very proud of them.

## THE DECISION TO LEAVE CALIFORNIA

*Although we enjoyed our life in California, we had always looked at my professional experience there as one of “paying my dues” and getting the needed experience in a national firm and in private industry and then returning to Arizona when the right opportunity presented itself. I was able to accomplish that.*

We (mostly me) were also becoming disenchanted with the smog and traffic that prevailed anywhere you tried to go in the Los Angeles area. In my mind, the cons outweighed the pros of remaining to live there and we decided to move.



I can understand now the thinking my father went through years earlier in his decision to return to Arizona.

Our home, for which we paid \$19,800, was sold for \$25,000 in a depressed housing market. Thirty years later, the home sold for \$350,000. It is too bad that I didn't have the foresight or money to buy a few homes and hold on to them.

## **RETURN TO ARIZONA (1967-1976)**

### **AN ESSAY ON STAYING PUT**

*I should acknowledge that our family has made moves at my request that, looking back, were not the best for our family. Some were made as the result of accepting a professional position that I thought would be better but turned out not to be. The grass is rarely greener on the other side of the fence.*

*I have gained a conviction that any family move should be made only after careful and prayerful thought and, if in doubt, don't do it. Some of our moves were made as a result of general economic or financial conditions over which we had little control. With a large family to support, you sometimes just do what you have to do. But, in general, I believe that it is better to stay put and be as stable as possible.*

*Diane was always supportive of me in these decisions.*

*I suppose this little essay is given as a word of advice for the few things I would do differently if I had it to do over again.*

### **IN TEMPE**

I accepted a position as an audit manager with Williams & Co., a large local firm in downtown Phoenix.



The partners at Williams & Co. believed that the firm was large enough to merge with a national firm and their first choice was Arthur Young & Co. They asked me to approach the partners at AY as the first introduction to the merger. I must have done a good job because within in few months the merger was formalized and I was again working for my original firm.

After living in a rental house for a year, we were able to purchase a large, five-bedroom home on Geneva Street in Tempe.

*In our children's growing up years they probably remember Tempe the most. And for good reason, for it is a nice town with strong LDS Wards, good schools and good neighborhoods.*

And guess who our neighbors were? Our good friends, Sherald and Joan Griffin, who moved from Glendora to Tempe shortly after us. Ernest and Marge Griffin also moved to Tempe a short time later.

We were members of the Tempe Fourth Ward. Diane served as a Counselor in the Tempe Stake Primary Presidency. I taught the gospel doctrine class and later became the Stake Sports Director, one of my favorite Church jobs of all time.

I also served as a counselor to Rex Lee in the Stake Young Men Presidency. Rex was one of the most qualified men in the Church that I have known personally. He was an attorney in a large law firm whose office was in the same building as ours. He later was appointed to be Solicitor General of the United States and then was called to be the President of Brigham Young University. He died at a young age while in that position. I believe that, had he lived, he would have become an Apostle. While in Tempe, I helped him install a sprinkler system for his, and his wife Janet's, home.

The kids were all active in Primary. Stephanie was baptized there.

Stephanie and Jennifer began playing the piano and taking lessons. Both girls seemed to take to the piano, almost instinctively, and became very proficient. They probably take after their Grandmother McBride who was an accomplished pianist.

My parents were living in Tucson where dad worked as a herdsman at Shamrock Dairies. One day, we received a call from St. Mary's hospital that Dad had been seriously hurt. He was leading a rank Holstein bull between pens and took his eyes off the bull for just a second to open a gate. The bull charged and hit him full force in the chest, knocking him through a steel rod fence.

My father was never the same physically, as the blow took a tremendous toll on him. He could never again take a deep breath and I am sure that it contributed to later health problems.

## PAUL EDWARD ALLRED

Our son, Paul was born October 23, 1968 at the Mesa Lutheran Hospital.

There had been a six-year lapse between Paul and Jennifer. The lapse was not intentional. Diane had one miscarriage during this time and it appeared for awhile that our three oldest children might be all we would have. So, we were very pleased when Paul was born.

## MOVING HOME BY WAY OF SAFFORD

I was presented with an opportunity to join an old, established CPA firm in Safford. The firm name was Bailey & Spalsbury where I became a partner and the firm became Bailey, Spalsbury & Allred.

Years earlier, while attending Eastern Arizona College, I had gone into the office to talk to Stuart Bailey about the accounting profession. He was very courteous and helpful to me. He was an old man and held Arizona CPA Certificate #2. I hold Certificate #975 and there are now over 10,000 CPA's in Arizona.

I don't know what there is about Pima that I like so much. I am sure that it has something to do with the fact that most of our immediate ancestors, on all sides of our families are from this town. I also like the people who live there. In any event, it has always drawn me like a magnet.

My parents gave us a lot on our old farm just a hundred yards from where I grew up. We began to make arrangements to build our own home. We had a house plan that we liked from Bradley Homes in Tempe and adapted it to fit our needs. There is nothing like working on plans to arrange rooms the way you like them. We contracted with Weech & Taylor, a construction firm in Pima, to build the home.

In the meantime, we rented the Porky Bigler home in Safford and lived there for a year.



A sleepy couple in 1968

Many of the businessmen in Safford were private pilots. My partner, Duane Spalsbury, had been a fighter pilot in World War II and he owned a Piper Cub. There was also a group of seven men who owned a Piper Cherokee 235 which was a nice four seat, high powered and reasonably fast passenger plane. When one of the group moved, I bought his interest.

I began training as a student pilot.

## AN AIRPLANE RIDE

January 21, 1969.

The cold day dawned sunny and bright with a few light clouds on the horizon.

I had been looking forward to this day because it was the day of my 500-mile cross country solo flight, one of the last requirements before getting my private pilot's license. I now had about 40 hours of training and had previously soloed.

There was business to take care of in Los Angeles, so my instructor reluctantly agreed to let me fly there on one condition: That if the weather was marginal, I should stop in Blythe, California and check the weather in the Los Angeles basin before proceeding. If the weather was even slightly bad, I was to return home.

We were both concerned about the weather because non-instrument rated pilots can not handle flying when they can not see the horizon. The sense of balance is lost so that the pilot can't tell up from down and disorientation sets in. This condition is called vertigo. The plane eventually goes into a "graveyard spiral".

I promised to follow my instructor's conditions and when I said goodbye to Diane that morning, I gave her a little longer hug and kiss than usual. I also took special note of our four kids, Stephanie, John, Jennifer and Paul and said good-bye to them and told them that I would be home tomorrow.

Then, I took off in my Piper Cherokee 235. As I proceeded west toward Blythe the clouds began to thicken considerably. However, when I climbed to 12,500 feet, I was above the clouds and the flight was smooth and uneventful.

True to my promise, I landed in Blythe and checked the weather in Los Angeles. It was bad. "No problem," I thought. "Just have lunch and return home." I would have the 500 miles I needed to fulfill the cross country requirement.

I then made the first of many pilot errors. I thought I could return home the same way I had come. Just go to 11,500 or 13,500 feet and I would be above the clouds. At 12,000 feet I went into the clouds thinking that I would soon break above them. But, I didn't. At 15,000 feet, I was still in the soup and beginning to feel the lack of oxygen. It became harder to breathe and my fingernails started turning blue.

The air was still fairly smooth and I was following the instruments and had everything in control. I then decided to turn around 180° and fly back toward Blythe and hopefully, out of the clouds. I had performed this procedure several times with my instructor and I was not particularly worried.

After making the turn, I flew for several minutes but was still stuck in the clouds. The longer I flew the darker it got as the clouds became thicker and I began to feel turbulence. I thought I was over the desert so I then determined that I would begin a decent to a lower altitude. As I started down, the turbulence became stronger and when I looked out at my wings, I saw the beginnings of ice accumulation. The prop on the plane was also starting to labor. I was beginning to feel vertigo and to worry that I might be in trouble.

As I continued the decent, the darkness and turbulence quickly increased to the point that I felt like a cork in the ocean in the middle of a raging storm. A couple of times I hit my head violently on the side of the cockpit and was barely able to remain conscious. Everything was spinning, especially the instruments. I now knew that I was in serious trouble.

The wings were completely covered with thick ice and the prop was barely turning. The controls became stiffer and within a few seconds froze solid. I had absolutely no control over the plane and it was spinning toward the ground in a graveyard spiral. There was nothing I could do to stop it. I could barely make out the altimeter that was moving rapidly downward through 9,000 feet.

I took my hands and feet off the controls and just waited for the ground. I had psychologically gone from beginning to worry to a certainty that I would lose my life. I was hoping that I would just hit hard and fast. I didn't want to suffer by burning. While I felt the horror of the situation, I was able to accept it with relative calmness.

My thoughts turned to Diane and the children, especially John, who would be eight years old the following day. He would be of the age to be baptized and I would not be able to be with him. Those thoughts caused me so much sorrow and grief that I cried out to God, "Please help me."

No sooner had I done so than everything stopped. Where just a few seconds before I had been a cork in the ocean, it was now as quiet and calm as a summer's morning. I was in a bright light, suspended in the air as if in a bubble. The scene was surreal and it seemed to me that I was in a different dimension.

My first impressions were that I had been killed and that I was in the spirit world. But after looking at and feeling my hands, I determined that I was still alive.

*I then heard a voice speak to me as assuredly as if a man were sitting next to me, although I saw no one. Things were so quiet that I could not misunderstand the words he spoke, which were: "Billie, your work on earth is not complete. You will be permitted to live." In addition to the consoling words, was a feeling of complete and over whelming love.*

Then the bubble seemed to burst, and I was back in the dark and the turbulence but the plane was not spinning. I didn't know how, but I knew that somehow this terrible ordeal would not end in my death or even a crash. I was about to witness, first hand, the workings of the Lord in rescuing me from this impossible situation.

I looked at the altimeter which now read 6,500 feet. At that instant, I broke from the clouds into a hard rain. The plane was straight and level and ice began to blow off the wings and prop in large chunks. Feeling returned to the controls and I was able to fly the plane.

Technically, the only thing I did right in this whole flight was to leave the carburetor heat on so that the engine never stopped running. When I turned up the throttle, the plane responded. I was so close to the ground that I clipped a few treetops.

I had come down in a valley. A quarter mile in three directions and I would have hit a mountain. After flying around for a few seconds, I saw a large power line just in front up me which I had to quickly decide to either fly over or under. I decided to fly over and made it through. Now I knew that I would survive even if I had to land on a road or plot of land. That wasn't necessary for in just a minute or so I saw several houses below and not too far in the distance was an airport which I recognized as being the Prescott airport, which I had seen before.

I landed and, while sitting in the cockpit, I offered the most fervent prayer of thanksgiving that I had ever uttered.

Two men ran out from the airport offices to ask if I was alright. I told them that I was fine. During this whole ordeal, which lasted for about an hour, I had been blown to the north and for most of the time I was over mountains. I learned later that I was in the middle of a large cold front that had moved in from the south.

I stayed that night with my sister-in-law Marilyn Negrette and her husband Raoul, who lived in Prescott. When Marilyn saw me, she said I looked like a ghost, which I am sure I did. I kind of felt like one too.

The next day, the weather cleared and I reluctantly got back into the plane and flew home. There were a few light clouds in the distance.

What a joy it was to see Diane and the kids. It was John's birthday. He was eight and I was thirty two.

I continued to fly and received my private pilot's license and accumulated 480 hours of flying time, including trips with our kids and friends.

## SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EVENTS OF THAT DAY

*I am not alone in having had such an experience. Many men, women and children of all faiths have received miraculous help from an unseen power. I credit my help to the very real angels who are assigned to look over each of us; often in situations of which we are not even aware. I believe that these angels are under the direction of God the Father and that clairvoyance or the supernatural have nothing to do with their mission. The fact that I heard the voice of a real man, in a concerned and loving way, personalized the whole experience for me.*

Worthiness enters into the measure of help that is given. My situation was so desperate that extraordinary measures were required to communicate with me. I credit my Priesthood for the words of consolation and confirmation that my life was of worth to my Heavenly Father.

Whether we are appointed unto death is a major determining factor of whether we live or die. It was apparently not my time.

What if I had not prayed for help? I believe that the injunction to “knock, and it shall be opened unto you” applies in emergency situations as well as normal ones. I have doubts if help would have been forthcoming if I had not cried out for it.

The man, my guardian angel, who protected and spoke to me? I don't know for sure who he is, but I am sure that I will meet him in the hereafter. I have some thoughts that he might be my half-brother, Kenneth, who died as a baby.

The incomplete work? While I have held several important positions in the Church and in my profession since then, and I have tried to be an influence for good in my everyday affairs, I believe that the most important work accomplished was to become the father of our three additional children. I believe that, for some unknown reason, it was especially important that Diane and I become the parents of Mark, Kathryn and our handicapped daughter, Elizabeth.

In a coming day, I will understand more completely, the reason for it all.

## THE CHURCH IN SAFFORD

We were members of the Safford First Ward. We enjoyed the ward members but because we were not there long, we did not get to know them very well.

Our old band teacher, Curtis Kimball, was a counselor in the bishopric. He reminded me one day of the time I fell off the stage. As a matter of fact, several people in the intervening years have reminded me of that embarrassing experience (as if I could ever forget it). But that's okay; it's all in fun.

*John was baptized in the Safford Stake building. The baptism had special significance because just a few weeks before, I didn't think I would have the great blessing of performing the baptism and confirmation of our first son into the Church.*

## THE MOVE TO PIMA

Our new home in Pima was now under construction, and when school started in the fall of 1969, we thought it would be a good idea to enroll the kids in the Pima schools so they would not have to transfer in the middle of the year. We also wanted to be close to the home to monitor the construction.

We rented a small home from Bulan Weech to live in until our new home was completed. The home was small, having only two bedrooms, and with our four kids it was rather cramped to say the least. Stephanie, Jennifer and John slept in the same bedroom on wall-to-wall beds. Paul slept in the crib in the living room.

The neighborhood of that rental home was outstanding. One of our neighbors, Donald Taylor, liked to tinker with and restore old engines. Our kids, especially John, liked to watch and help Donald with his work. John became close friends with Keith and Donnie Taylor.

Our old friends Reece and Anna Jane Jarvis lived just up the street. They had children close in age to ours and they had a lot of fun playing together. Stephanie and Reecia Jarvis and Jennifer and Karen Jarvis established lifelong friendships.

Since Reece and I were both night owls, we would often visit late at night drinking Cokes. As couples, we got together often for a good game of Rook.



Our home of homes  
On Alder Lane, Pima, Arizona



Visiting our grandparents in Tucson

#### MARK PRESTON ALLRED

Our son, Mark, was born on February 20, 1970. When we brought him home to our little rental home, we found a small spot for him in our bedroom. Mark was a calm and content baby and we were very happy to have another son.

Paul, who was also still just a baby, had difficulties sleeping and we often spent the night walking the floor with him.

#### THE PIMA SECOND WARD

We became members of the Pima Second Ward where we already knew half the members. Many old family members and acquaintances, more stable than us, had lived in the ward for years. This was the ward we had grown up in. It was like a comfortable pair of old shoes.

It was a little different because, in Priesthood Meeting for example, where I had been used to lively discussions, I now accepted the fact that everyone knew how everyone else thought, that disagreements had been resolved years ago, and that everyone should just be quiet and hold their peace. It was reassuring in one sense but at the same time seemed rather dull. All in all, we enjoyed the peace and tranquility that prevailed there.

Our Bishop was Vearl Cluff. His two counselors were Ross Bryce and Solon Beals. I was called to serve as the Ward Financial Clerk and Diane was called as the Spiritual Living teacher in the Relief Society.

During those years, the Clerk's job was onerous and demanding. All of the tithing receipts had to be typed individually on a special typewriter. The month end reports took two days to complete and the yearend reports took at least a week. I think I grumbled about it being the same kind of work I did during the week and that I deserved a break.

It was probably my least favorite job in the Church, but I plugged along and tried to make the most of it. I know that every calling is important and that we should serve to the best of our ability.

## OUR HOME IS COMPLETED

We moved into our new home in June 1970. We had enjoyed watching it go up. Of all the homes we have lived in, it was and is our favorite because Diane and I put so much of ourselves into it.

The home sits on a piece of ground that my parents graciously gave to us. It had been part of a large corral where we kept the cows in the days when we operated the dairy. The old dilapidated fences were replaced by the best block and lumber fences we could build.

It wasn't long after that my parents sold a large lot just north of us to Roger and Sharlene Smith. We could not have asked for better neighbors. The Smith's also built a nice home and we quickly had one of the best-looking neighborhoods in Pima.

Diane's sister Marilyn Negrette and her husband Raoul purchased the lot adjacent on the north to the Smith's and put in a nice manufactured home. Marilyn's children by a previous marriage were Jim and Tom. Marilyn and Raoul had three children of their own; Jacque, Erin and Carol.

Our children enjoyed becoming friends with their cousins. They had many good experiences together during those years.

## A FEW POLITICAL EXPERIENCES

I became active in civil affairs because of my desire to give back something to the community that had been so good to us.

I ran for and was elected to the Pima Town Council where I served for two 2-year terms. As part of the Council, I was appointed as the Chief of Police. I was in charge of law and order and the huge police force of one “town cop.” I received a nice, official looking card that I could have flashed in the event I was ever called upon to solve a major crime or wiggle out of a traffic ticket. I never had a chance to use it and it remained inconspicuous in my wallet for years.

When Dr. Darrel Cluff resigned from the School Board, I was appointed to complete his term. I was elected for two more terms and very much enjoyed my experiences there. I had some strong basic ideas about how a school should be run and I pushed hard to implement them. I believe that those years in the Pima School District were some of the best because of my, and my colleagues, efforts.

Not everyone in town cared for me or my ideas. Some of my major challenges were trying to work with those who would have preferred to have everything remain the same as it had always been. Not that those old ways were bad, but I believed there were some simple changes that could make our town a lot better. Zoning, for example, implemented 40 years ago could have prevented the trashy trailers that now cover the landscape. I tried to get some basic zoning ordinances started but couldn't garner the votes to get the ordinances passed.

My political views could best be described as a moderate conservative.

*My understanding was reinforced that everyone is entitled to their opinions and there should never be hard feelings when those opinions are not always in agreement with your own. I believe it was Voltaire who said. “I do not agree with a word you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.” I have always agreed with that principle and tried to practice it in my life.*



Trip to Mississippi to pick up a school bus for Pima High School

#### CHANGES IN THE ST. JOSEPH STAKE

In June of 1973, there were major changes in the St. Joseph Stake. (The 25<sup>th</sup> Stake of Zion). Seth Mattice, a member of the Pima 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward, was called as the Stake President. His counselors were Arden Palmer (from Thatcher) and Bennie Joe Cecil (from Globe).

The previous Stake President was Jack Daley. Diane's father, Burt McBride, had served as a counselor to President Daley and both had served as counselors to President Jesse A. Udall. Burt served for a total of eighteen years. He and Lela did many good things for Diane and me as a couple, and for me personally. I love them very much.

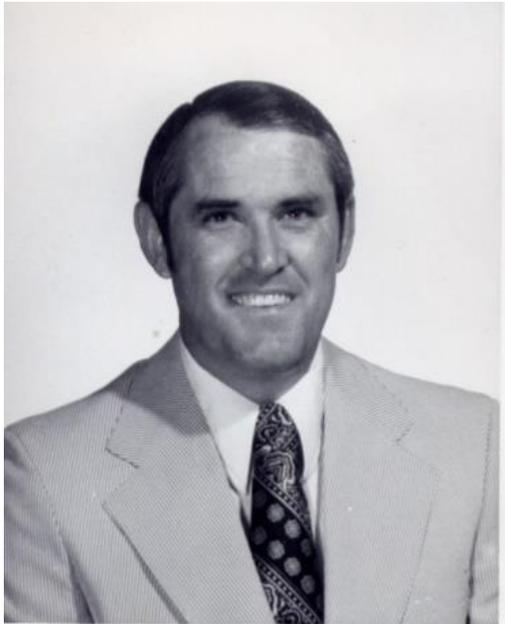
Shortly after President Mattice was called, changes were made in the bishoprics of most of the wards in the Stake.

## THE CALL AS BISHOP

*On June 16, 1973, I was called to serve as Bishop of the Pima Second Ward. I selected as my counselors, Thomas E. McBride and Richard W. Mattice. Roger Smith was called as the Ward Clerk and Bertell Weech as the Ward Executive Secretary. Sister Sandra Judd served as our most capable Relief Society President.*

I was ordained a High Priest and a Bishop, by Elder H. Burke Peterson, assisted by President Seth Mattice.

We went to Mesa for the ordination where Elder Peterson was presiding at a stake conference.



At the same time as my calling, Diane was called to serve as a counselor to President Vera Hunt in the Stake Relief Society Presidency.

Since most of the presidencies of the organizations in our Ward had served long and well under Bishop Cluff, we reorganized them all.

In those days, new Bishops were requested to attend General Conference in Salt Lake City. We flew to conference in a private plane with Bishop James Brooks, an FBI agent and former airline navigator, and his wife. We had a very enjoyable time being with the other new Bishops and their wives. On the way back, we ran into some marginal weather which Bishop Brooks was prepared to keep flying through.

Because of my bad experience, Diane was insistent that we land in Richfield and wait for the weather to clear, which we did. We are sure that Diane did the right thing. I have never questioned her judgment.



Our family in June 1973  
Kathryn and Elizabeth were not yet born.

## THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT SETH MATTICE

President Mattice was an outstanding leader and we were all excited about serving with him. We had several occasions to talk about many things and I came to deeply appreciate his insight into problems. He was a real people person and I learned much from him.

After serving for just three months, Seth was accidentally electrocuted when the boom on a truck, on which he was standing, hit a power line.

At that moment, Diane and I were at the Mesa Lutheran Hospital where she was having surgery on her thyroid. Our brother-in-law, Larue Crockett, called us with the sad news. I had to leave Diane in the hospital, go back to Pima to assist in the funeral arrangements, then return to pick up Diane and bring her home. Her surgery was successful.

*So, the first funeral I conducted was for my good friend and Church leader. During my term as Bishop, I conducted a total of twenty-two funerals.*

## SOME MINOR EVENTS THAT ALWAYS STICK WITH YOU

I completed my pilot training and received my private pilot's license. I would only fly if the weather was perfect. My good friend, Reece Jarvis, enjoyed going with me because he wanted to fly himself and I would often let him take the controls.

One day, we were landing on the seldom used Pima air strip just south of town. It was during the noon hour and as we touched down, at the midpoint of the strip, we noticed a couple on the right who were laying on a blanket and frantically trying to redress. They were obviously out for some "hanky-panky" where they would not be discovered. *I didn't know the couple, but Reece did, and to his credit, would not tell me who they were.*

I also took the kids for airplane rides. Paul and Mark went with me once on a trip to Tucson. On the way back, I let them take over the controls. They both had a real feel for flying, especially Paul who was older. He was not intimidated at all. Not surprisingly, Paul is now an airline Captain.

## THE WORK IN THE WARD

My work as a Bishop was very enjoyable to me. It was hard work but extremely satisfying. I tried to serve the people to the very best of my abilities. I especially enjoyed talking to the people in the Ward in one-on-one conversations. There were many disappointments, but these were more than offset by the good works of the Ward members.

On February 1, 1974, the St. Joseph Stake was reorganized and the name changed to the Thatcher Arizona Stake. The Globe Arizona Stake was organized at the same time. During most of my term I served under President Arden Palmer, whom I came to love and respect.

President Palmer was a stickler on maintaining good attendance in Church meetings, especially Sacrament Meeting. It was a real challenge to keep the attendance figures up

We tried to have good activities in the Ward. For the most part, the Ward was very social minded and enjoyed the potluck suppers, raffles, plays and musicals that were presented.

*One such event was especially memorable. Bertell Weech, who was a good sport and quite rotund, dressed in a tutu and danced to Richard Mattice's perfect impersonation of Tiny Tim's, "Tip Toe through the Tulips". It brought the house down.*

I spent many hours in the Bishop's office so Diane was stretched, even more than usual, in raising our children. No one could have done it better than her.

Melvin Bryce served as the Bishop of our sister Pima First Ward and I enjoyed serving with him. We spent much time together discussing mutual problems.

Stephanie, John and Jennifer were in high school and junior high and faced the daunting task of living up to what people expect from the "Bishop's kids". They were all active in school functions and were good students. Stephanie and Jennifer played the piano well and John was a good athlete. They honored their parents and we were very proud of them.

A memorable trip we took was a week-long excursion where we invited all the eligible young men in our ward on a trip to Newport Beach, California. We rented a large home on the beach owned by the mother of Gene Robert Larson from Safford. Many of the young men had never been out of Arizona and to this day, remind me of what a fun time it was for them.



A trip to Newport Beach, California with  
The Priest Quorum and escorts

*One day, one of the young men in our ward came into my office. He had completed his paperwork and was waiting for his mission call. We were just having a cordial visit when I asked him "Where would you like to serve on your mission?" To my surprise, he said, "I know where I am going to serve." He said it had been revealed to him in a dream that he would serve in the country of Columbia. I suppose it was anticlimactic to him when his official call came in the mail, which was merely a confirmation of what he already knew. Because he shared this revelation with me, we were witnesses together of the workings of the Spirit*

He also told me that he had the necessary funds in savings for the entire cost of his mission. He was running and working out so he would be physically prepared. He would not even drink a soda pop since that would distract him from his capacity to serve. In short, I have never seen or heard of anyone who was better prepared to serve in the mission field. This young man was Mark Smith Bryce, who later served as President of the Pima Stake and President of Eastern Arizona College.

*I learned to rely on the promptings of the Spirit even more than before and I was frequently humbled by the specific instructions which came to my heart and mind concerning the welfare of our Ward members.*

Diane has frequently mentioned that, during this period in our lives, we were blessed as a family more than any other. In the way of spiritual blessings, I agree with her.

#### KATHRYN ALLRED



Our daughter, Kathryn, was born September 14, 1974 in the Mt. Graham Hospital in Safford. She was Diane's easiest birth. Like our other kids, she was robust and beautiful. She was an extremely happy baby and rarely fussed. At bedtime, we just laid her down and she would sing herself to sleep.

Kathryn was 21 inches long and the doctors told us that she would probably be our tallest girl. So much for what doctors know. Kathryn turned out to be our shortest child, which makes her normal, as all of our other children above average height like their dad.

## **SOME DETOURS IN THE ROAD (1976-1977)**

### MOVE TO UTAH

My association with Bailey, Spalsbury & Allred did not work out. After trying to work with other partners and on my own, I was not able to generate the income necessary to support a large family.

I contacted the Church about a professional position at either Brigham Young University or in the Church Auditing Department. I was offered a position to do both. Work in the Church Auditing Department and be the supervising manager on the internal audit of BYU, responsible for a staff of nine.

*It was very difficult to leave Pima. It was especially hard to move with most of our children established and doing well in school. It was also hard to leave my position as Bishop of our Ward. After several long discussions with Diane and the kids and President Palmer, I decided to accept the professional position with the Church Auditing Department.*

The Church paid for our moving expenses and we found a large home in Bountiful to rent.

In the fall, the kids began their studies in their new schools. Paul and Mark were in grade-school, Jennifer in junior high school and John and Stephanie in high school. I'm sure it was difficult for them to be uprooted like they were, but they seemed to make the adjustment okay and they never complained.

Stephanie and John arrived just in time to go on Ward youth camp and they were impressed with their leaders and new friends. However, we all thought the Utah Mormons were a little different.

## THE CHURCH AUDITING DEPARTMENT

The offices of the Church Auditing Department were on the sixteenth floor of the Church Office Building. At that time, the Offices of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve at 50 North Temple were being remodeled so they also had offices on the upper floors of our building. It was very interesting to see these great Church leaders almost daily.

Our task was to audit the missions, temples, schools and area offices of the Church around the world. My primary responsibility was to manage the audit of Brigham Young University.

I reported for work on July 1, 1976 and within just a few weeks received my first assignment to audit designated missions in England, France, Germany, Sweden and Denmark. Doing work in those countries was very interesting.



The Church Auditing Department  
A top professional group

We moved around so fast that I couldn't learn the currencies of the countries. When it came time to pay for small purchases in a restaurant or store it was very difficult to figure out what to pay, so I'm sure I frequently overpaid.

## MEETING PRESIDENT SPENCER W. KIMBALL

One morning while going to the Church offices early and parking in the underground parking lot, I went to the elevator and punched the up button. To my surprise, when the elevator door opened, there stood President Spencer W. Kimball and his two security guards. (He also went to work early every day.)

I had previously seen people interrupt President Kimball on the streets and I had resolved that I would not make any small talk with him if I ever had occasion to do so. After his guards gave me a good inspective look, I simply said, "Good Morning President Kimball". He said, "Good morning. What is your name and where are you from". After answering his questions, he seemed genuinely happy to see me.

*Of course, I knew about his personal history in the Gila Valley. He asked about Diane's parents and my uncle Silas Larson. When we reached the sixteenth floor and I started to get off the elevator, I held out my hand to shake hands with him. He politely ignored my hand and instead gave me a big hug. Being only about five foot two his head came to the middle of my chest. When I got off the elevator, I felt ten feet tall. I had just hugged the Living Prophet of God and I felt truly blessed.*

## IN MEXICO

One of our audit engagements took us to Mexico. I was not prepared for the cultural shock of being in Mexico City. I could not imagine how so many people, 31 million at the time, could live that closely together. Traveling on the subway, the cars came every two minutes. In that two minutes, several hundred people would congregate on the ramp, get on the subway and leave the ramp empty, only to have another several hundred people be ready for the next car. It was like living in an ant colony. But the people were friendly and after a few days, I got used to it. The smells of the city were also something that I had never experienced before. The smells were not necessarily bad, just pungent and different.

My work there brought me into contact with Benjamin Parra, who was the Regional Representative in Mexico City. I don't think I have ever been around a more missionary minded or spiritually in tune person than he. He had a personal goal to get two missionary contacts every day. At lunch the first day he said, "It's time to get my first contact." He simply went out into the plaza and looked over a large crowd of people, then singled out a couple to approach. He came back with an appointment for the missionaries.

I'm sorry that I don't have a knack for languages like my brother Dennis. Everywhere I went, I spoke to the people in English which I knew was not proper etiquette. President Parra spoke broken English, so I didn't feel too badly.

Because of people like President Parra, the work of the Church was going very well. There were already 30 stakes in Mexico City. He prophesized that within 50 years, the majority of the people in Mexico would be members of the Church. He informed me that there were individual missionaries in Mexico that had over 1,000 convert baptisms during their two-year missions, which had not happened since the Early days of the Church when the Brethren proselyted in England.

President Parra and I went into a part of the city where he showed me the site for the first temple in Mexico City. He recommended the site and the First Presidency approved it.

While we were living in Bountiful, John also worked in the Church office building cleaning offices on the night shift. He genuinely seemed to enjoy the work. He used to come home singing "Spider, Spider on the Wall!" which was a game the cleaners sang to feel connected while spread out in the individual offices.

The younger kids, Paul and Mark, were in grade school and doing well. Kathryn was three and at home with her mom.

## THE OFFICE OF THE ARIZONA AUDITOR GENERAL

The work I did in the Church Auditing Department qualified me for a major upgrade in my professional career.

I applied for a position as the Deputy Auditor General for the State of Arizona. After going through a rigorous interview process, I was selected and accepted the position. I was responsible for the final review of the audits of the Arizona University and college system and the personnel functions for a staff of 100

I served honorably in the position for two terms.

## **THE TEMPE YEARS (1977-1997)**

### **BACK IN TEMPE**

We returned to Arizona in February 1977 settling once again in Tempe. We rented a large five-bedroom home on Stephens Street in South Tempe. We were members of the Tempe 10<sup>th</sup> Ward, South Tempe Stake. I think that most of us enjoyed being back in Arizona. Our daughter Stephanie was now a senior in High School and she decided to return to Pima High School where she graduated.

John and Jennifer attended Marcos DeNiza High School. Paul, Mark and Kathryn attended Rover Elementary School.

John was beginning to excel in sports. He could run well and played varsity football as a defensive back. His claim to fame was that he ran down a Chandler High School player on the one-yard line, preventing a touchdown and allowing Marcos to win the game by a score of 6 to 0. He also played the 6<sup>th</sup> man on a very good 5A basketball team. Most importantly, he was a good sport. He always had an exceptional sense of fair play and a willingness to give credit to others. He also did well scholastically.

Jennifer was an accomplished pianist. She was the primary accompanist for the high school choirs. She had good close friends in school. We have always admired her being a good friend. She would never put her friends down and would always stick up for them.

Paul, Mark and Kathryn were also enjoying their experience in grade school where they all did well. Paul and Kathryn were developing good social skills and Mark was becoming an excellent musician.

## THE BIRTH OF OUR BABY, ELIZABETH

February 8, 1978. Diane was 42 years old and we were expecting our seventh child. During the first trimester, Diane contacted an unexplained virus and the pregnancy was difficult for her. When Diane felt like the baby was coming, and when her water broke, we called the doctor who told us to stay home until the birth pains increased. The younger kids were taken to Primary. After dinner we thought we should go to the hospital even though Diane was not experiencing much pain... Together we went to the Good Samaritan Hospital in Phoenix.

As soon as we checked in, we proceeded to the delivery area where an intern performed a preliminary examination. Immediately, a look of concern came over his face. He said he could not hear the baby's heartbeat and asked me to stay put while he took Diane into a side room for an emergency C-section delivery. About thirty minutes later, the intern returned from the delivery with Diane unconscious on a gurney and a baby girl draped on her stomach. I was startled because the baby was dark blue in color. The intern spoke to me briefly and said we had some serious problems. We learned later that Elizabeth had been transverse and the umbilical cord was wrapped around her neck. She had experienced oxygen starvation for a considerable period of time. This was just the first of many challenges Elizabeth would have to face in her life. But what a terrible way to start.

We have felt much remorse for not getting to the hospital sooner. We believe that we could have prevented this ordeal and, had we acted more responsibly, given Elizabeth a normal life.

The birth was also very hard on Diane who took several months to recuperate completely. Although, with her usual spunk, she went about being the best wife and mother possible without complaint.



The entire family in 1980

## JOHN RECEIVES A MISSION CALL

After graduating from high school and working for a few months, our first son, John received a call to serve in the Italy, Catania mission. At the mission training center, President Kimball came to address the missionaries and asked the Italian missionaries to stand. They were told that theirs was a special calling to serve in areas which were the headquarters of the Catholic faith.

In order to help financially with John's mission, Diane, Paul and Mark took on a newspaper route. Every Sunday, our driveway was covered with Arizona Republic newspapers. The boys were faithful in the delivery of the papers and, in those days, they had to go collect the subscriptions for the papers as well.

We looked forward to John's letters from the mission field and rejoiced with him in his missionary experiences. The convert baptisms were far and few between, but the blessings John received were innumerable.

## A NEW SET OF TEETH

### A Story of Personal Service

Every once in awhile you meet someone of such unusual character and personality that makes your life better. Such is the case with a client and friend of mine, Herbert Worsham.

Herbert is an African-American man who moved to Mesa, Arizona from Detroit, Michigan. Herbert owns a successful dental lab where he constructs, with great patience and skill, dentures, bridges and crowns.

He belongs to the Baptist Church and he thoroughly enjoys talking about religion and discussing the Bible. I was somewhat taken back the first few times I talked with him, but I soon began to appreciate his engaging personality and his unabashed expressions of his love for the Lord. I soon realized that he was not "ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ" and, in that respect, I secretly wished that I could be more like him.

On one occasion, he related the following experience that I will always remember with great affection. He told of the experience without any boasting but in his usual "matter of fact" way because it was important to him to be of real service to a fellow human being.

There was a homeless man who would come early in the morning and sit on a bench in front of Herbert's dental lab. The man only left for a short time each day to get something to eat. For most of the time, the man sat with his head bowed and would barely acknowledge people passing by.

Herbert felt compassion for the man, and decided one day that he would make an effort to befriend him. He went and sat by the man on the bench and engaged him in conversation. He learned the man's name was George, that he lived in a group home where he had a bed and a place to sleep at night. He also learned that he had a job two nights a week cleaning an office building a few miles away. He learned something else about George as soon as he opened his mouth to speak. George had just ONE TOOTH in his mouth. The incisor in the very front.

Without hesitation, Herbert invited George to come to his dental lab the next day, where he would make impressions and construct, free of charge, a new set of teeth. George came and Herbert did as he promised, completing the dentures in less than a week. When he put in the new teeth, George's demeanor and face "lit up like a Christmas tree" George wept like a baby as he embraced Herbert expressing his appreciation for this great act of kindness.

George's self-esteem and self-confidence immediately improved for the better. He became, almost overnight, a new man.

Herbert found out that George was occasionally late for his cleaning job. He asked George if it would help if he had a bicycle and would not have to walk to work. George assured him that it would make a big difference. Herbert remembered that he had a good bike at home, which he was not using. So, he gave it to George as a gift.

Finally, Herbert offered to George the greatest gift of all. Herbert said, "George, you need one more thing in your life. You need a "Church Home." I would like to invite you to attend my Church and I will be glad to pick you up each week and bring you. Or, if you prefer to attend another Church, then I will pick you up and take you there." George accepted the invitation to attend the Baptist Church as often as he could.

As Herbert related this experience to me, I could not help but ask myself:

1. Was the Lord pleased with Herbert's compassionate acts of service? Of course, He was. "Inasmuch as you do it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto me".
2. Could anyone have handled the situation any better?  
I don't think so. For one thing, it took Herbert's dental skills to make the dentures.
3. Would I have made any effort to befriend George, if I were put in the same situation?  
I'm not sure, but I doubt it. George would probably still be the same sad, nameless, toothless man sitting on the bench.

I guess the thing that impresses me most about this experience is how many kind, considerate people there are in the world. They come from all races, creeds and colors. It emphasized to me that God is no respecter of persons. He loves us all.

I believe that George is important to the Lord and that He put him on a bench where he would be noticed by Herbert, a man in whom the Lord has great confidence and knew he would act in the manner he did. There was nothing coincidental about the series of events that led to George's new teeth and life.

Lastly, I will forever be grateful to my friend, Herbert. I needed the lesson.

One more thing. I asked Herbert what he did with the single, remaining tooth. Did he pull it or work around it? He said he pulled it. "It was about to fall out anyway."

## ELIZABETH NEARLY DROWNS

Mother's Day 1981. We are advised "To Watch Your Kids around Water". But, I am sorry to admit, we took our eyes off Elizabeth. We thought the younger kids were watching her and they thought we were. In fact, neither of us was watching.

Elizabeth, who was three, was riding her tricycle around our backyard swimming pool at our home on Magdalena in Tempe. She and the trike fell into the pool. It was several minutes before we all realized that Elizabeth was not with us, Diane and I instinctively ran to the pool and, to our horror, saw her lying motionless on the bottom of the pool.

It was Sunday, and I was still dressed in my suit. I jumped into the pool and pulled her seemingly lifeless body to the edge of the pool and handed her to Diane. After saying a quick prayer, I began performing CPR on her body which was about the same color blue as at her birth. After a few minutes, her heart started to beat and she started to breathe again. Color began to return to her body. By now the paramedics had arrived, having been called on 911, and the worst seemed to be over. In a few more minutes, a medical helicopter landed at the intersection outside our home. By now, all the neighbors were in the street wondering what all the commotion was about. Elizabeth was flown to St. Luke's Hospital by air-vac where she spent the night for observation. She seemed to be okay and we brought her home the next day.

We will never know if this event caused or contributed to Elizabeth's mentally challenged condition. She had already shown signs of slow mental development which seemed to be caused by her oxygen starvation at birth or the virus Diane contracted during her pregnancy or maybe none of these events. Maybe it was just a matter of Elizabeth being the way she was and it was intended by the Lord that Diane and I be blessed and challenged by the privilege of being her parents.

## STANDING ON THE CORNER

One day in August 1986, I was driving to see a client. The weather was hot, the car was hot and I was hot. I was disgruntled because I was late for the appointment and was upset when I had to stop at the traffic light at 29th Avenue and Indian School in Phoenix where the Phoenix Indian Hospital sit on the corner.

As I sat at the light, twiddling my fingers on the steering wheel, I noticed on my right an old man standing on the corner waiting to cross the intersection. He had obviously just come from the hospital as he had a medical identification bracelet on his wrist and was walking with a walker. He looked apprehensively, wondering how he was going to make it across the street. I too was wondering how he was going to make it across the street. He then began a labored walk with no one to assist him.

The old man was someone I had never seen in my life and will probably never see again. Our experience together lasted about two minutes and we did not speak a word to each other. And yet, that day I learned two important lessons that have lasted a lifetime.

As he passed in front of me he glanced at me, and from just the expression in his eyes told me, in unmistakable language:

First, he said. "Please be patient with me".

Second, he said. "I am doing the best I can".

I have never been a patient person, but from my experience with the old man, I am a lot better than I used to be. Especially, I now recognize that most people are doing the best they can. We should never judge another person's behavior because we do not know all they are going through in their lives. I have also learned to be less critical of others.

The old man did not make it across the intersection before the lights changed. Luckily, all the cars in all directions saw his predicament and patiently waited for him to cross. It looks like several people learned a good lesson that day.

## OUR HOME AND EVENTS AT 1546 EAST MYRNA

After renting several homes in Tempe, we were able to purchase a house at 1546 East Myrna Drive. This was to become our home for the next 13 years. Our kids probably remember this home more than any, especially Paul who said he had dreams about it during his mission. It was a nice home in a nice neighborhood. We were members of the Tempe 11<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Wards of the Church.

The move involved moving the kids from the Marcos De Niza high school district to the Corona del Sol district. Diane and I have always believed that the move did not turn out the best for our younger children. They probably do not agree with us but we stick by our opinion that some of their friends were not the best examples for them. We do not have a good feeling when we think of Corona del Sol High School. We also know we were not as good of parents as we should have been. We were far too permissive with the other children as we struggled dealing with Elizabeth.

In my profession, I continued to work in public accounting as a part time controller for a few substantial companies who generated a good income for us. My work was primarily in the manufacturing and mining industries. My accounting firm had offices in both Phoenix and Tempe.

We knew many of the people in the Tempe Stake and most became good friends. I played golf with Bob Child, Chuck McCurdy, Dale Carrol, Dave Davenport and others who remain close to me. Diane also had close friendships with many of the women with whom she served in her Church callings.

During these years I served as the Gospel Doctrine instructor in Sunday School and as the Ward Financial Clerk which was a lot easier than the first time as the Church had become more computerized. Diane served for the second time as a Relief Society President.

## OUR OLDER CHILDREN GET MARRIED

Stephanie attended Mesa Community College for two years and then attended Brigham Young University on a scholastic scholarship. While at BYU she met Spencer Magleby from Boise, Idaho and they were married in the Mesa Arizona Temple on August 15, 1980. Spencer was a returned missionary who served in Spain.

Jennifer attended Mesa Community College, BYU and Arizona State University. She met, dated and married Richard Johnson from Phoenix, Arizona. Rick served as a missionary in Central America. They were married in the Mesa, Arizona Temple on May 18, 1984.

After returning from his mission, John dated several nice young women before deciding to marry Heidi Smith; a girl from Central, Arizona just three miles from Pima. Heidi is the daughter of Lot and Portia Smith. Lot and I were called to serve as Bishops at the same time and were set apart on the same day by H. Burke Peterson. John and Heidi were married on June 25, 1985 in the Mesa Arizona Temple. They knew of each other when we lived in Pima, but they were young at the time and did not date until they met later in life.

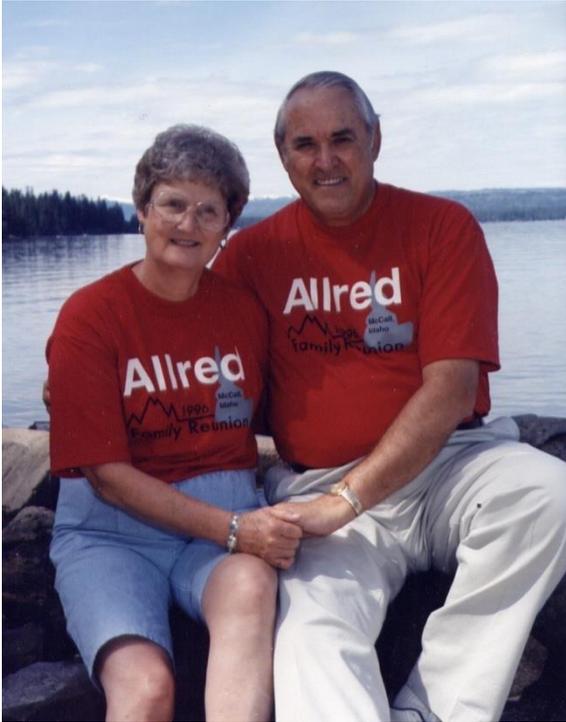
So, the older kids left home to start homes of their own and we were very pleased with each of them. We love Spencer, Rick and Heidi as our own.

## PAUL RECEIVES A MISSION CALL TO NORWAY

Our second son, Paul received his mission call to serve in the Norway, Oslo mission. He had gone through some fairly rough periods in high school but was able to meet the qualifications required to serve. He served honorably and did his best in a tough place to attract converts.

Mark and Kathryn were doing their best in high school. Mark was and is a very talented musician and enjoyed jamming with his friends on his guitar. Kathryn has always had outstanding social skills and enjoyed hanging out with her friends.

## OUR FAMILY REUNIONS



I am not sure which one of our kids suggested it, but we decided that our immediate family would start holding family reunions every other year on the last week of June.

Spencer and Stephanie had a time share condominium in McCall, Idaho. Our first reunion was held there and we really enjoyed it. McCall has a beautiful lake, a golf course and lots of neat things to do.

The idea was that each of the married children would take a turn picking the site and hosting the reunion and for the most part that has happened.

We have been to Camp Nauvoo in Placerville, California, the beach at San Diego, The Point at South Mountain in Phoenix, another turn at McCall, our back yard in Pima and Flagstaff, Arizona.

It was especially good for us to be with our grandchildren and get to know each of them better.

## ANOTHER CLOSE CALL

During one of our family reunions in San Diego, I was enjoying body surfing and swimming in the ocean with the grandchildren when somehow I got separated from them. Before I knew it, I was about a hundred yards from shore. I had a little plastic body surfboard but I was now getting tired and the board was not keeping me up very well. When I tried to swim to shore, I could not make any headway. I was bobbing and weaving in the waves and realized that I was in serious trouble and in danger of drowning.

I raised my arms and yelled for help. Shortly thereafter, I noticed a jeep come tearing over the sand. It stopped on the beach directly in front of me. Then, just like in the movies, out jumped these two muscle-bound, tanned, blond, good looking young lifeguards. They dove into the water and were out to me in a flash. One of the lifeguards called to me and said, "You are in a rip tide. Catch this life preserver and we will pull you sideways until you are out of trouble". Which is what we did.

After going sideways for about twenty yards, they were able to swim to me and helped me to shore. I told the young men that I was never so glad to see anyone in my life. They said they had been watching me and they knew I was in trouble. They were just doing their job but warned me to be more careful next time. It occurred to me that they worked just like the Guardian Angel in my airplane ride.

*Diane and the girls were watching from shore as this whole event unfolded but didn't know that it was me. They said they thought it was just some dumb old man.*

## THE SADDEST DAYS OF OUR LIVES

Our son, John, worked as a machinist and operated his own successful shop. He did small lot precision machining; pieces that were too complex or orders that were too small to be mass produced. His partner was his good friend Jeff McBride, and Paul and Mark would help him occasionally.

In October 1993, John contracted what he thought was a bad case of the flu. As time went by the sickness did not get better and finally his wife Heidi, a registered nurse, insisted that the doctors perform more thorough tests. The tests came back with the devastating news that John had acute myelogenous leukemia. He spent the next two months undergoing chemotherapy and other treatments all of which proved to be unsuccessful. While in the hospital, he contracted Valley Fever, which caused fungus to grow in his lungs. There was also an issue with his Hickman port; it had one less connection site than he needed. This meant that John had IV sites that were susceptible to staph infections which he contracted to his great harm.

*John was getting ready for a bone marrow transplant when he was allowed to come home for a few days after Thanksgiving before going to the Mayo Clinic for the transplant. While at home, he took a sudden turn for the worse and passed away on December 1, 1993. He was thirty-two years old.*

Paul had returned from his mission and was the first to the hospital.

Oh, how we love John and miss him.

He left behind his lovely wife, Heidi and three boys, Chase, Heston and Dallas. At the time of their father's death, the boys were just children.

Now, in the intervening years, Heidi has had the tremendous responsibility of raising her three boys by herself. She has done an awesome job of nurturing them, being their best friend and providing for their temporal needs.

We marvel at her strength and determination. We admire and respect her more than we can say. Her eldest son Chase has also had responsibilities thrust upon him beyond his years. All three boys have grown into fine young men.

We have tried to be the best grandparents that we can be and have tried to help out where we could.

## A SPECIAL BLESSING

At John's funeral President Mark Bryce, a counselor to President Steve John of the Pima, Arizona Stake, was in attendance. He came up to me and gave me a tearful hug. He whispered something in my ear which I thought was "I have a blessing for you."

A couple of weeks later, I had a business occasion to talk to President Bryce and I asked him if I heard him right; that he had a blessing for me. He said, "Yes, and it is important that I give it to you". We made arrangements to meet in the Pima Stake offices two weeks later.

For some reason I was concerned about jurisdiction. I was not, at the time, a member of the Pima Stake. I have come to learn that jurisdiction does not apply in such matters.

At the appointed time we met and, after giving me a private lecture on the principle of faith and discussing our past personal experiences, he proceeded to give me a blessing.

*The blessing was one of the most spiritual experiences of my life. I cannot relate here all that was promised me, although the most memorable part was the language of the blessing that was communicated in the first person and was as if the Savior himself was talking to me. Blessings were mentioned that addressed many of the deepest yearnings and desires of my heart. In the blessing, I was promised that our son, John, was in the bosom of our Savior and that all was well with him.*

*It seemed to me that, during the blessing, we (President Bryce and I) were carried away to another place. I asked Mark if that is the way he felt and he said "yes".*

I felt badly after the blessing that Diane was not present and that she did not personally receive the same assurances that I had received. I have explained to her and prayed that the assurances of the blessing applied to her as well.

Diane had difficulty in understanding why John was taken from us; leaving three little boys without a father. She then began to receive her own assurances through the Spirit whispering to her that "All is well". She questioned this. After some time though, she received her own assurance that the Lord was trying to talk to her, that things really were well, and she was able to reconcile her feelings. Through the years, we can see the Lord's hand in helping Heidi, a widow for 25 years, in raising the boys to adulthood. They have all served honorable missions and are working on starting their own families.

## SERVING IN THE MESA ARIZONA TEMPLE

In June 1993, I was called to serve as an ordinance worker in the Mesa Arizona Temple.

I had some independence in my working hours, so I volunteered to serve on the late shift (3PM to closing) on Thursday and Friday of each week.

There is quite a learning curve for all new Temple workers. There is much memorization required relating to the ordinances, and they have to be word perfect. I spent considerable time in the study room in the basement working with a trainer. When you think you are ready, you can pass a verbal test and proceed to take your place doing the actual ordinance work.

After a few weeks, I was able to do all that was asked of me in the various assignments. The Lord's House is truly a House of Order and I enjoyed very much doing the work there. I believe that the Temple is as close as you can get, in this life, to the Celestial Kingdom and the time that I spent there each week was a welcome reprieve from the cares of the outside world.

For the first two years of service, I went to the Temple each week by myself. For the last two years of service, Diane was able to join with me. We were blessed in being able to make arrangements for a lady to take care of Elizabeth each week.

On almost every shift there were unusual things that would happen. Some were inspiring, some were sad and some were hilariously funny. And it was always good to see old friends and acquaintances come to the Temple and to have a chance to visit with them.

I can not describe the joy of seeing Diane going about performing her Temple duties. All dressed in white and so beautiful. It gave me an even greater resolve to always be worthy of her so that we might enjoy the same association hereafter.

## A COUPLE FROM ALBUQUERQUE

One Saturday in June we were called to work at the Temple because of an extra large number of weddings.

When I arrived at the Temple, I couldn't help but notice a large entourage of people assembled outside in honor of a couple that were being married that day. The couple looked like movie stars and there were three professional photographers taking pictures from every possible angle. I asked one of my fellow temple workers who the couple was and he said that both the bride and groom were from prominent Mesa families.

I also couldn't help but notice another couple who were there that day. They had come from Albuquerque, New Mexico and had come alone with no family or friends. Just the two of them.

The bride and groom were not outwardly attractive. They were a little older, a little chubby and wore clothes that were straight off the thrift store racks.

After the sessions were finished that day, the handsome couple and their entourage had reassembled for additional photos. As these activities were going on in the front of the Temple, I was coming back after escorting older patrons to the parking lot and was approaching the couple from Albuquerque who were standing alone on the north side of the Temple.

The contrast between the celebration in front of the Temple and the quiet on the side of the Temple was underwhelming.

As I came abreast of the couple and nodded "hello" to them, the newly married bride spoke to me and said. "Please excuse me, but would you mind taking a photograph of us?" I said that I would be honored to do so. She then handed me a Kodak disposable camera and took their smiling pose. I took one photograph; the only one they will ever have to commemorate their special day.

After visiting for a few minutes and as I was leaving. The bride pulled her husband close and looking up into his eyes said, "My dear husband, I promise that I will keep the covenants that I have made with you this day."

Of all the couples that were married that day, I believe that this humble couple were special in their understanding of why they were there that day and I believe that they will be especially blessed.

## MY BOUT WITH PROSTATE CANCER

During the year 1996, I felt a decline in my health.

In one of my visits with our doctor, Sin Lee, I was telling him about some of the symptoms I was experiencing after we had concluded a physical exam. He said, "Let's have another look at your prostate." He did and then advised me to have a biopsy taken by a urologist.

The biopsy was taken by Dr. Howard Sommers and a few days later he called with the results. It was Sunday afternoon and we were all setting around the table having dinner when the phone rang. *It was Dr. Sommers who gave me the bad news that I had cancer of the prostate and that it was in an advanced stage.*

*I asked Dr. Sommers what my options were. He said. "You only have one option: you must have surgery to remove the prostate and it must be done as quickly as possible."*

So, we got our affairs together. Luckily, we had medical insurance to pay for the expensive surgery and hospital stay.

One of the saddest parts of getting sick was that it was necessary for me to be released from my Temple work.

Two weeks later we went to Tempe St. Lukes Hospital where Dr. Sommers performed the operation. I remember looking at Diane just before going under from the anesthesia and hoping that it wasn't the last time I would see her.

I had never been in a hospital before as a patient and it was a unique experience which, everything considered, wasn't that bad.

After a few weeks of the nuisance of putting up with a catheter bag, I was back on my feet and doing fine.

It was confirmed to me again that the Lord was looking out for me. I am grateful to have been able to correct in time what could have been a fatal disease.

## OUR DAUGHTER KATHRYN IS MARRIED

While working as a manager at Pacific Sun Wear at the Paradise Valley Mall, Kathryn interviewed and hired a fine young man, Matthew Harter. Six months later, after Matt had left his employment in Kathy's store, they began dating. Thus began a courtship that resulted in their marriage on September 11, 1997. They were married and their reception was at the Wright House in Mesa, Arizona.

Matt is an outstanding young man and has a special talent of a piped piper. He attracts young people and sea lions to him. All of us love and respect him greatly, especially our grandchildren.

Soon after getting married Kathryn and Matt moved to Monterey, California for schooling for a year, then transferred to San Diego, California where Matt graduated from San Diego State University with a degree in Computer Science.

They now have two beautiful daughters, Emily and Kate, who are our 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> grandchildren. At the present, the Harter family live in Olathe, Kansas.



Kathryn, Emily and Kate Harter

## THE WINDING DOWN OF MY PROFESSIONAL CAREER

By 1997, our business affairs had advanced to the point that we began to think about retiring. We were able to make enough from excellent salaries, stock options and other financial benefits to be more financially independent than at any other time in our lives. It wasn't anything extraordinary, but enough to pay off most of our debts.

During one of my final work assignments as the Financial Vice-President of International Platinum Mining Corporation, I had the privilege of working with some outstanding staff assistants. Two that stood out were Tanya (Fanning) Nelson and Kathy Gascon.



In Sydney, Australia

I originally employed Tanya when she was a junior attending Arizona State University. She worked with us for several years and I observed her development in both her professional and personal life.

Kathy Gascon was employed a few years after Tanya and she also became an especially valued employee. Both Tanya and Kathy and their families have remained friends for these many years.

The Mark Bryce family rented our Pima home for eight years. Our last tenants, George and Mary Jones were in ill health and informed us that they would have to leave. After 25 years as landlords, we were able to burn the mortgage.

Since we still had our great love for Pima and the Gila Valley, we decided that it would be a good time to sell our property in Tempe and move back to Pima, an event that has been repeated several times both in our lives and the lives of my parents.

## **THE AUTUMN YEARS (1997- Present)**

### RESTORING OUR HOME

After renting our home for many years, it was necessary for us to fix it up. There was nothing structurally wrong; just normal wear and tear that had taken, its toll. The yards were especially in need of a major redo.

We had most of our kids with us to celebrate Thanksgiving 1997 even though things were still in disarray. By Christmas we had finished the remodeling, spending more than the home had originally cost. But it is now almost like new and we love it.

We also added a separate new carport, storage room and equipment shed.

### A SECOND HOME IN APACHE JUNCTION

Before leaving Tempe, we purchased a mobile home in a nice retirement park at Palmas Del Sol East, 3400 South Ironwood, Space 9, Apache Junction, Arizona.

Our intention was to have a place of our own in the Phoenix area as we knew we would be spending considerable time there. It has worked out that way. In addition to providing temporary living arrangements at various times for Paul, Mark and Heidi and her boys, it has also been a nice place for our kids, traveling from out of state, to be able to stop and rest.

Some of the Pima people working in the Arizona Temple were also able to stay there during their work assignments. This included President Keith Crockett and his wife Kathleen and Bishop Joe Alder and his wife Evelyn. We were glad to assist in a small way in helping them.

Now for the last twenty years it has been a nice place of refuge for our family to enjoy. We go there often just to get away for awhile.

## RESTORING BUSH & SHURTZ

While living in Tempe we also purchased the Bush & Shurtz building. I have mentioned previously the fond memories I have of the place. As an adult, I had several occasions to visit the store when it was operated by Gale Shurtz.

Gale Shurtz was a good proprietor and the daily visits from the farmers and townspeople continued for many years. The same kibitzing and general goodwill remained pretty much the same as it had been when I was a boy. In my memory even more so, because the men coming to the store were all personal friends of mine and I was more in tune with the goings on in town. Gale kept a journal of all the unusual events that happened in the store and they were enough to write a book about.

Charlie Bush died in the little apartment in the back of the store.

It became difficult for Gale to compete with the larger hardware stores in Safford so he decided to close the store and walk away. It sat idle for several years and deteriorated badly.

*I could not let the place die. To me, the building almost had a soul of its own and it deserved better. So, we spent a lot of time, effort and money in fixing it up. DeWayne Battraw, Armond Cluff and I did all the restoration work. It was a source of great pride when it was finished, although it was still just a rather ordinary place. But at least it had a little life. The whole effort did not make economic sense, but we felt good about it. We feel that we have given something back to the community.*

We decided to convert the store to a restaurant and, in honor of Charlie Bush and Gale Shurtz, kept the name Bush & Shurtz.

For 12 years the restaurant was operated by Eddie and Margie Robinson who also put a lot to time and effort into making it a pleasant place to meet and eat. Our slogan, "Good Food and Good Company" is more than idle words. In 2021 we have new restaurant operators, the Valenzuela family, who we are hopeful will be successful.

As part of the store, we built an accounting office where I do part-time accounting and tax work. When I needed a little break during the day, I just went out into the restaurant. There was almost always someone to visit with.

*THE FARMERS CLUB WELCOME  
TO ALL WHO COME WITHIN THESE HALLOWED WALLS*

*Come sit with us and rest an hour or two;  
We'll tell of years gone by the way our old friends do.  
Some will say the stories told are nothing more than lies;  
It isn't so, but what's this stuff that's drawing all the flies?*

*In memory of Charles Bush and Gale Shurtz*

## EVENTS IN THE PIMA SECOND WARD

Lynn Saline was serving as the Bishop upon our return to the Pima Second Ward. His counselors were Dean Phillips and Michael Crockett. In the intervening years since my service the following men had served as Bishop. Jay Carter, Tom McBride, Steve John and Joe Alder. In subsequent years, six additional men have served for a total of fourteen.

In the summer of 1999 I was called by President Steve John to assist President Keith Crockett in organizing the month-long "Faith in Every Footstep" Sesquicentennial Celebration of the Church.

We went all out in producing a pioneer dinner, musical productions, a rodeo and the 24th of July Celebration for the combined stakes in the Gila Valley. I think it is one of the finest celebrations ever.

Our daughter Jennifer was a guest performer during the musical production. She played an arrangement of "Joseph Smith's First Prayer" or "How Lovely was the Morning" that everyone especially enjoyed.

## ELIZABETH MEETS A BAGMAN

Early one Saturday morning, Elizabeth and I had occasion to be in Chandler, Arizona on Arizona Avenue. We were hungry so we decided to stop at McDonalds for breakfast.

As we walked in the front door of the restaurant, we noticed a shopping cart filled to overflowing parked next to the front window. A man on the inside was watching over the cart which must have contained all of his worldly possessions.

Once inside, we noticed that the restaurant was completely empty except for three customers: Elizabeth, the homeless man and me.

After getting our order of two sausage McMuffins, we proceeded to take our seat. There were over two hundred empty seats to choose from. To my surprise, Elizabeth would not sit in any of the empty chairs but insisted that we go and sit down by the other customer.

When I realized that I must go along with Elizabeth, I asked the man if he would mind if we joined him. He looked as surprised as me but then said, "You are very welcome. Please sit down". I was a little taken back that a man whose outward appearance was so dissolute could talk in such a refined and articulate manner.

Elizabeth spoke her own language that few, who did not know her, could understand. Nevertheless, she proceeded to carry on a long and animated conversation with the man. She usually spoke with a smile on her face and conveyed a feeling of love toward the person to whom she was speaking.

After a few minutes, the man, whose name was Howard, began to understand her, almost as if he had the gift of tongues to be able to interpret a foreign language. The conversation then became two sided and, as I listened in, I learned that Howard was a former college professor who had had serious problems in his life. The problems became so overwhelming that he decided to leave his home in the East and hit the road to “get away from it all”. His life had become a long series of homeless shelters and roads to be traveled.

As we left, Howard said to us with tears streaming down his face. “Thank you so much for talking to me. You are the first persons in a week who have shown me any kindness. And thank you especially for Elizabeth”.

*Both Howard and I were blessed that day. On my own, I would have barely acknowledged Howard and would have made no effort to befriend him. It took the special insights of our mentally challenged daughter to recognize Howard as a person of worth. It reconfirmed to me a great lesson.*

I came to understand that Elizabeth looked at people and events spiritually. As a result, she was, in many ways, more in tune with the spirit than us “normal” people.

## A CALL TO SERVE ON THE PIMA STAKE HIGH COUNCIL

I received a call from President Stephen John to serve on the Pima Stake High Council. I sat in the number twelve position next to John Bryce. I knew most the men on the Council, having been associated with them in various church assignments over the years. Bulan Weech, Roger Smith, John Bryce, Kent Hancock were brethren with whom I was especially close.

Our Stake Presidency consisted of President Stephen John and his counselors Ross Bryce and Mark Bryce. All were former members of the Pima Second Ward with whom I had worked closely and have mentioned previously in this biography.

My first ward assignment was to work with Kent Hancock in the Ft. Thomas Ward. We met often with Bishop Norman Saunders and the ward leaders to assist them in any way we could.

I did not serve on the Council long enough to move up from the twelfth chair as the Lord had another position in mind for me.

## THE CALLING OF BISHOP FOR THE SECOND TIME

I had often thought during the past thirty years of the ways in which I could have performed better in my calling as Bishop of the Pima Second Ward. Never did I think that I might have a chance to implement those thoughts.

In December 1999, President Stephen John called Diane and I into his office and informed us that the Lord had selected me to serve as Bishop of the Mt. Graham First Ward, a college ward associated with Eastern Arizona College.

I succeeded my old friend, Reece Jarvis and had visited the ward during my High Council assignments. There were three college wards, two of which were part of the Thatcher, Arizona Stake and one (our ward) which was hosted by the Pima, Arizona Stake.

Another friend, Ernest Griffin, served as Bishop of the Mt. Graham Second Ward and we had been neighbors in Glendora, California forty years earlier. Isn't it funny how the events of life have a way of repeating themselves?

After thinking and praying about it, I selected Brother Marlan (Honk) Norton and Steven Hooper as my counselors. Brother Leroy Smith continued in his position as Ward Clerk and proved to be an invaluable help; not only to us, but to the other wards because of his knowledge of the Church financial system. As was the policy in college wards, the bishopric wives Diane, Roberta Norton, Talana Hooper and Susie Smith were called as shadow leaders of the young women in the ward.

Thus began what I consider three of the best years of my life. The joy of working with young men and women at a really crucial point in their lives was a source of great satisfaction and happiness to me. Brothers Norton and Hooper have told me the same thing. We believe that in an important way, we have influenced these young people for good.

Nothing could be more satisfying than to have a person genuinely thank you for helping them through some soul-searching situations in their lives; it is especially satisfying to help them through the repentance process.

We kidded each other that we might have been the “highest bishopric in the Church”. Brother Norton and I were six feet four inches tall and Brother Hooper six foot three. We also frequently commented that the young people made us feel young again. It was almost like finding the “fountain of youth”.

During the last year of our calling, Brother Hooper left us to become the High Priest Group Leader in the Central Ward. He was replaced by Brent Cluff, another fine man whom I had known for many years. Brother Cluff and his wife Raydene continued the tradition of good service and we enjoyed them very much. Brother Hooper now serves as our Stake Patriarch.

Larry Crockett and his wife Jean also joined us the last year of our assignment. Larry served as our ward membership clerk. Larry became very sick during our tenure. He had serious heart problems and came to see me in my office just a week before he died. He knew that his time was short, and it was a tearful visit as we reminisced about our long association together.

During the last year of our service, our ward became part of the Thatcher, Arizona Stake. I reported to President Jay Layton and learned to love and appreciate him equally as well as the leaders of the Pima Stake. We were released on May 6, 2002 and returned as members of the Pima Second Ward.

## MY BROTHERS PASS AWAY

My older brother Dale and his wife Kay lived in Arp, Texas for a number of years but I was able to see him occasionally. He was active in Alcoholics Anonymous and called himself on a mission to help Apache Indians with drinking problems. He became fluent in the Apache language and would often stay for long periods of time on the San Carlos Reservation with anyone who needed him. I deeply admired the Christ-like service he rendered with no thought of payment in return.

Dale passed away while visiting relatives in Tucson. He was cremated and his ashes have been spread at the base of a favorite oak tree in Arp, Texas.

My younger brother Dennis passed away on April 02, 2005 after a long struggle with cancer. During the last few years of his life he went through a complete stem cell transplant which prolonged his life a couple of years and enabled him to extend his service in the Mesa Arizona Temple. He was in constant, horrific pain but endured it with more courage and optimism than anyone I have ever known. He never complained and always maintained a happy disposition.

I never remember having a cross word with either of my brothers. Other than a clod fight as kids in a freshly plowed field where I accidentally hit Dennis a little harder than I intended, (and he came after me), I can't think of any incident that could be called a fight. We really did love each other and would do nothing to hurt one another.

For some reason, other than my height, Dennis always looked up to me and I tried to live up to his expectations. Dennis and his wife Jana, have ten children who will all attest to the greatness of their father.

Dennis is buried in Pima where he and Jana have a spot next to our parents in the Allred plot.

When Dennis died, I looked around and discovered that I was the last living male member of the Allred family from my generation. My father, brothers, uncles and male cousins were all gone.



Brothers and wives

There are some manly pursuits in life that I have never experienced.

I have never been hunting or fishing. I'm sure that I would have enjoyed them both. Especially, the sociality connected with hunting. But, for some reason, I just never got around to doing either.

My brother Dennis was an accomplished runner. He often ran the fourteen mile round trip from his home in Gilbert to his teaching assignment at Mesa High School. He participated in several marathons and was a member of the Under Three Hours Marathon Club, a designation that separates the real runners from the pretenders.

## SOME GOLFING BUDDIES

Being semi-retired, I had some time to play golf at least once a week at the Mt. Graham Golf Club in Thatcher-Safford. We had a real nice bunch of guys who gathered every Tuesday and Friday morning to throw out their balls to determine partners. We played year-round and braved the heat, cold and wind to play the wonderful game we all enjoyed so much.

Ernie Griffin, Bill Cole, Verle Palmer, Clyde Allred, Charlie Layton, Hack Woods, Donald Sorles and Paul John were some of the men who played regularly. We usually played for dime skins and could win or lose a couple of bucks. I was a good player so I won more than my share of the wagers.



SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Where were you when the terrorists struck?

Some events in life are so momentous that they stick with you forever. Such were the events of September 11, 2001. Early that morning, Kathryn called and was crying. She asked us to turn on the television and watch as horrifying events unfolded. Extremist Muslim terrorists were flying two airliners into the World Trade Center in New York City. Another airliner was flown into the Pentagon and still another crashed in Pennsylvania killing all aboard.

It was unbelievable to us that our country could be attacked in such a manner and that the Trade Center Twin Towers would completely collapse killing 3,000 plus innocent people.

President Gordon B. Hinckley has described the world in which we live as being “a mean and sick old world” and I believe him. Probably at no other time in history have the forces of Satan had such a hold on the hearts and minds of men. I also believe President Hinckley’s counsel that as long as we keep the commandments of God, we have no need to fear and all will be well with us, even if our lives on earth are cut short.

#### THE BURT AND LELA MCBRIDE FAMILY HOME EVENINGS

We have been fortunate to have several of our brothers and sisters living close by to us. Marilyn, Tom and Jan, Reuben and Sondra, Eddie and Ruth. I think there may have been a little inspiration, and for sure Burt and Lela looking down from heaven are pleased, that we met together on the first Monday night of each month in a Family Home Evening. We took turns giving a gospel lesson of our own choosing. We enjoyed each others company and the visits we had together.

## THE LAST FEW YEARS

For the last few years, we have lived comfortably in our home in Pima and we are very content and happy being there.

In August 2006, I was called to serve as the High Priest Group Leader in the Pima Second Ward. My assistants were Dan Bigler, Steven John and our group secretary was Blain Wood. We enjoyed visiting every week with two members of our Group, or widows or prospective elders who were in need of our assistance.

We had a large group of High Priests, many of whom I have known all my life and are mentioned in various parts of this biography.

Elizabeth went to work at the Blake Foundation in Safford. She worked in ceramics and enjoyed the company of her friends there who were also mentally challenged.

Diane attended a quilting class at Eastern Arizona College every week and attended the class for four years. Our children can attest to the quality of her work as they have all been recipients of her beautiful creations. For sure she has earned her PHD in Quilting. She hopes that the quilts will be handed down to future generations so they might "just occasionally think of her". Later, Diane was employed at EAC as the instructor for the quilting class for seven years.

*I believe that in a future day the collection of quilts which she has given to our children will become as a Pearl of Great Price; worth more than any amount of money. They will be a source of both temporal and spiritual warmth and comfort to all who possess them and will be the means whereby testimonies will be strengthened or restored.*

Diane is the light and love of my life and my eternal companion. I am so blessed to have enjoyed her companionship in this life for over sixty years.

## HAZEL THE UBER DRIVER

An essay on the importance of the Scriptures

One evening, after returning from a business trip to Las Vegas, I met up with an Uber ride who was to drive me from the Gateway Airport to our home in Apache Junction.

As I got in her car, the driver politely told me that her name was Hazel and that she was to be my driver that evening.

When I started to get into the back seat of the car, I noticed that it was cramped so, needing room for my long legs, I asked Hazel if it would be okay for me to sit in the front seat. Hazel said, "Sure, you will be welcome to sit up front. Just give me a minute to move my stuff".

Hazel's "stuff" turned out to be her bible and I told her that I was sorry to have troubled her to move it.

I asked her if she had her bible on the front seat because she was attending a special class or study. Her answer to that simple question was one that I will never forget.

*She said: "No I am not attending a bible class. I have this bible on the front seat of my car because I want to read it between each of my rides. I want the Precious Word of God near me at all times. But thanks for asking."*

I thought to myself "wow" and thanked Hazel for the inspiring counsel and for her good example.

I also regard my scriptures as the Precious Word of God but I am much less vocal in expressing my love for them. Maybe I should be.



At Brandon and Chelsea Johnson wedding

Matt Harter, our son-in-law, performed the wedding ceremony like a seasoned professional minister.

## WE LOSE ANOTHER CHILD

On May 15, 2012, our daughter Elizabeth died at the age of 34.

I have described throughout this biography many events in her special life and our feelings of love toward her.

She had the mentality of a three-year old and was a real challenge for us; especially for her mother who tenderly cared for her every day of her life

*Elizabeth was denied many of the blessings of this life. She was not married here on earth and never had children here. But we know, without any doubt, that in the hereafter the shadows will be taken from her mind and then the Lord, “who restoreth all things to their proper order” will make up to her an hundred fold, all the things she has missed in this life.*

*We know that when we see her again, we will see her in the full stature of her being. We will weep tears of joy together.*



Elizabeth's Funeral  
with Stephanie and Spencer Magleby

## THE CENTRAL FIRST WARD

In 2012, there was a major realignment of the wards in the Pima Stake. After being members of the Pima Second Ward for many years, most of the members living east of Alder Lane were assigned to the Central First Ward which was created from the old Central Ward.

Our original Bishop, Rob Pursley, was especially mindful of us so that we did not feel like second-class citizens in Central. We have been in the ward for eight years and it feels like an old shoe to us. Our current Bishop, William Windsor, is equally caring and has continued to look out for our well being.

I think that we have made a contribution and I know that we are appreciated, which always gives us a good feeling. It isn't hard to visualize what the life hereafter will be. It will just be a continuation of the good work we do here serving with those we love.

During this time, I have served as the Sunday School President, High Priest instructor and Gospel Doctrine instructor.

Additionally, Diane and I have served together as Temple ordinance workers in the Gila Valley Arizona Temple. Our friend Keith Crockett was called as the first Temple President. Kathleen Crockett was the first Matron.

We were able to continue the tradition of having a Back-to-School Breakfast in our back yard every August which helped bring our ward together.

My cousin Carole Preston Pursley and her husband Bob and several of their children live in our Ward.

During this period, our brother Tom McBride has passed away, also Diane's sister Ruth Williams, her husband Eddie Williams and Elizabeth. Our Family Home Evening group has grown considerably smaller.

## THE LANGUAGE OF PEACE

An address given in the Central 1<sup>st</sup> Ward (2017)

I have always admired people who can speak well. I am not necessarily referring to public speaking but the speech of the ordinary folks who come into our lives and who we enjoy being around. Although, I appreciate and enjoy the classical writers and poets who have added so much to my life, I also appreciate people who can read well, understand and explain stuff to me in a way that I can understand.

Language is a beautiful thing and one of the great joys of life, is to converse with others in a way that brings about a feeling of friendship and goodwill. It can be the most simple, light-hearted conversation about the most basic of subjects. Or, it can be an exhaustive search into the most complex issues of mankind. In the end, how gratifying it is to leave a conversation feeling good about ourselves. If we have learned something new, strengthened a testimony, resolved a misunderstanding, renewed an old acquaintance, mended a broken heart or just forgotten our troubles for awhile, then we have accomplished much indeed.

From my observations over the years, I believe that there are four principles that can help us develop the ability to speak with others in a way that promotes understanding and good feelings. We can even learn to speak a Language of Peace; which language can be spoken in any native tongue and found among all peoples.

### Principle 1 MIND YOUR SPEAKING MANNERS

We live in a world where harshness, crude expressions, profanity and lack of civility are common place. How much better the world could be if we would “oft speak kind words to each other”. (Joseph L. Townsend) A better world is possible and it begins with us.

We are told to mind our manners. This is good advice and surely applies to the way we conduct ourselves in our conversations. We should make a conscience effort to present ourselves in a cordial manner. A smile and a relaxed demeanor are keys to helping others feel at ease in our presence. Loud and obnoxious language and cursing should be strictly avoided. We should never, under any circumstance, use the name of our Heavenly Father or His Son, Jesus Christ in vain.

The poet Will Carelton reminds us of the importance of the spoken word.

*“Boys flying kites haul in their white winged birds. You can’t do that when you’re flying words. Careful with fire is good advice we know. Careful with words is ten time doubly so. Thoughts unexpressed may sometime fall back dead. But God himself won’t kill them once they’re said.”*

We should never make fun of or belittle another person, even in jest. The risk of wounding another person's self-esteem is just too great. I have personal experience in seeing the hurt in our mentally challenged daughter's eyes when some made smart remarks to her. She couldn't talk back so she just had to bundle and hide her feelings inside. We can never know the deepest feelings of another person. Nor do we know of all the adversities they may have faced and overcome. No less an authority than Forest Gump said "I may not be very smart Jenny, but I know what love is."

Except, maybe in a job interview, any talk of our own accomplishments should be minimized or even eliminated. The desire to be seen of men, or to seek the praise of men, in all its forms, is not a desirable thing. Great men rarely speak about themselves and they become masters of understatement.

*From Luke 18:10-14*

*Two men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes toward heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man sent down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

The art of listening is a priceless quality. Everyone we meet, whether new acquaintances or old friends, has a story to tell and feelings which are uniquely and undisputedly theirs. We can learn something from everyone. In all our conversations, we should strive to listen to others and to respect their feelings. While another person is speaking, we should listen intently and not be thinking of our response. By doing so, we can show a genuine interest in the speaker thereby gaining their trust and confidence

Regardless of any differences in philosophy, religion or basic beliefs, we can usually find common grounds upon which we can develop a friendship.

The use of the common words of courtesy is important. "Please, thank you and "what can I do to help you".

When addressing our Heavenly Father we should always use the pronouns Thee, Thou and Thine in order to show proper respect to Him for he is not as ordinary men. He is our God.

We should strive to use reasonably good grammar. It doesn't have to be perfect but if we slaughter the English language then educated people will not listen to us thinking that we don't have anything worthwhile for them to consider

## Principle 2 RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME

Calling anyone by their name can bring about an immediate positive reaction. Good conversationalists seem to intuitively understand this principle and use it liberally in their speech. This principle applies to most people in most situations of life.

Some say that the most beautiful sound in the world, to each of us, is the sound of our own name. When we hear our name, we respond because another human being has recognized us as an individual. *Recognition, by others, seems to satisfy an innate yearning, deep within our souls, and is most strongly felt when our name is spoken in a kind and respectful manner.*

The Prophet Joseph Smith recorded his experience, as a young boy, during the First Vision: *"I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other "Joseph, This is My Beloved Son, Hear Him." (History of the Church) Thus, the name "Joseph," was the first word spoken to usher in this, the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times.* This affectionate greeting, spoken by God the Father, must have swelled within Joseph's youthful heart a profound appreciation for the love the two Personages had for him. The words also alleviated the fears he experienced just a short time earlier while engulfed in the powers of Satan.

A few years later he was visited by a person who, he said, was *"glorious beyond description, and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light, but not so very bright as immediately around his person. When I first looked upon him, I was afraid but the fear soon left me. He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, of that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people."*

In a practical manner, an understanding of this principle can help us deal with our daily challenges and problems.

When meeting a person for the first time and speaking their name is one of the best ways to start any relationship. Teachers, by referring to the names of their students, make the learning experience better because the students feel the teacher's concern for them. *Or, how do you think the young people in the Pima Stake felt when President Tom Pursley could call most, if not all, of them by name?*

Almost any personal dispute can be diffused by simply calling the other person by name and then calmly discussing the issues to be resolved; keeping in mind there are two sides to every disagreement and that compromise may be necessary.

Few practices can solidify a friendship more than the frequent reference to a friend's name which serves as a constant reminder of the bonds of their close relationship. *This practice is especially true of marriage partners, who should be the best of friends, and who, as they traverse the road of life, need the continual reassurance that they are on the road together. And that together, they can overcome any obstacle in reaching their common goals.*

The Temple work we do is done for each person individually, one name at a time.

As we show respectful recognition to others, we begin to develop the spiritual qualities of which James Montgomery wrote in "A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief". *"The Savior stood before mine eyes, He spake, and my poor name he named, Of me thou hast not been ashamed, These deeds shall thy memorial be, Fear not, thou didst them unto me."*

### Principle 3 SHARE THE JOY OF THE WORDS OF MUSIC

Music plays such a pervasive part in our every day lives. Don't we often go around the house and in the shower sing, hum or whistle a song to ourselves?

Some of the most inspired words ever written have been set to music in our church hymns. The works of Eliza R. Snow are my personal favorites. I get a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye every time I hear the phrases, *"How great the wisdom and the love that fills the courts on high" or "O My Father, Thou that dwellest in a high a glorious place. When shall I regain Thy presence and again behold Thy face"* *President Ezra Taft Benson as said that the thing which will amaze us the most in the hereafter is how well we know our Heavenly Father and how familiar his face is to us.*

The song Rude performed by the group Magic composed by a man by the name of Nasri who said of the song "It's a stressful time out there and people are struggling to find hope in balance. This music is meant to put you in and a good mood. We want to bring people together to have a good time. It is not about us. It is about the music. We want you to be a part of that energy and a positive musical world" I think that is well said and I know that popular music is important to our youth and that they receive much joy from it.

Probably all of us have a favorite song that conjures up good memories. Some of my favorite memories of my father are of him singing in his beautiful tenor voice as we milked our cows. I would be sitting there on the milk stool, half a sleep with my head buried in the cow's haunches when I would hear, from the other side of the barn, the words to the music. *Usually the lyrics were something like "I'll take you home again Kathleen across the ocean wild and blue" or "I dream of Jeanie with the light brown hair" or "O Danny Boy, the pipes, the pipes are calling." Dad especially liked the works of Stephen Foster. It's too bad that my brother Dennis and I, and the cows were the only ones who got to hear him. These are the kind of memories that last forever.*

When we share whatever degree of love we have for the words of music, we can move to a higher spiritual plane and bring about understandings and extraordinary feelings of love and closeness.

#### Principle 4 EXPERIENCE THE WONDERS OF THE MAGICAL WORDS: WE, US AND OUR

Life is a series of experiences and relationships. Speaking the magical words "we, us and our" does wonders in expressing our consideration of others and should replace "I, me and mine" as often as possible so as not to expose another person to the dreaded "iritis" disease.

While we cherish our individuality, we also crave the feelings of belonging and commonality. The use of the words, "we and us" helps fulfill those feelings. We become part of something larger and in the process become larger ourselves. Self-centered and selfish attitudes disappear. The ability to resolve differences, in an amicable manner, is expanded. *As President Gordon B. Hinckley reminded us, "It is possible for us to disagree without being disagreeable."*

The word “our” invokes a special feeling of sharing. It supplements the feeling of being part of a larger group who share common purposes, experiences and ideals. *The consistent use of this word helps bring our actions into harmony with our beliefs. Our relationships as members in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is a perfect example of this principle.*

The commandment to multiply and replenish the earth was given to Adam and Eve mutually as eternal companions and equal partners. I believe that it is appropriate, therefore, to refer to the children in any family as “our children”. *To do so, especially when spoken by the father, shows respectful consideration to the mother. It is our mothers who normally endure the most during the childbearing process and who are primarily responsible for the nurturing and well being of the children.*

*Great blessings come to those who think beyond themselves and recognize the worth of all fellow beings. Our character is enlarged, our sensitivity is magnified, our capacity to serve is increased and our power of discernment is strengthened. The words of our language become part of our very being. In an almost indeterminable way, our lives change for the better.*

*Ultimately, the desire to speak to one another in a Language of Peace is based upon the principles of charity and kindness.*

I hope that we will all think about the way we speak and the language we use. Let's try to make it a Language of Peace befitting the sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father and brothers and sisters of our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace.

## THE COVID19 PANDEMIC

The years 2020 and 2021 were two of the darkest in world history. Every nation on earth was affected by the terrible disease of Covid19. A pale covered the earth.

Unfortunately, the pandemic did not pass our family by.

One afternoon in February 2021, I was sitting at my desk doing some work when I noticed that I could not move my fingers properly over the adding machine keys. When I stood up, I just about fell over and when I answered a telephone call I could not speak without badly slurring my words. I was dizzy and completely disoriented. I had suffered a stroke which was caused by a blood clot to the brain which in turn was caused by Covid19.

Diane also contracted the disease but did not suffer any of the Covid19 symptoms.

## WINTER IS COMING

As I write this chapter, it is December 2021 and I am now an old man at eighty four years old. I have no idea what tomorrow will bring. I am slowly recovering from the affects of the stroke. I go to my office in the Bush & Shurtz building every day and I enjoy meeting with my friends in the Farmers Club where we hold forth almost every day. And, I just enjoy living in our wonderful little town of Pima.

If I live another few years, I may have to write an addendum to this work, but I would prefer to have one of our children write the final chapter.

There are things in my life that I have regrets about and would do differently if I had them to do over again. But I have done my best to make a difference for good and to be honorable in all that I do.

I believe that there is no such thing as an ordinary person. We are all sons and daughters of God and we each have a divine nature and destiny. We can be a positive influence far beyond our circumstances and expectations

*"I conclude this record declaring that I have written according to the best of my knowledge, by saying that the time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away like it were unto us a dream."*

*Jacob 7:26*



## A FINAL THOUGHT

The work of writing this story has been ongoing for the past several years. Here a little and there a little until, with great relief, it is finally finished. In looking at it now, I wonder why it took so long.

*Hopefully, this work will be of value for all those who read it. Especially, it is written for my unknown and unseen descendants who, years from now, will know of me and I will arise and become more than a name on a family group sheet. And there will be talking and laughter and cheers, and all will say, "Was it not good for us to know him?"*



***Our entire family in 1989.***

***Grandfather Burt McBride is on the first row***

**THE POSTERITY OF  
BILLIE J. ALLRED AND DIANE MCBRIDE ALLRED**

*Spencer Magleby  
Stephanie Allred Magleby  
Sterling  
Hans  
Clarissa  
Austin*

*John Warren Allred  
Heidi Smith Allred Jones  
Chase  
Heston  
Dallas*

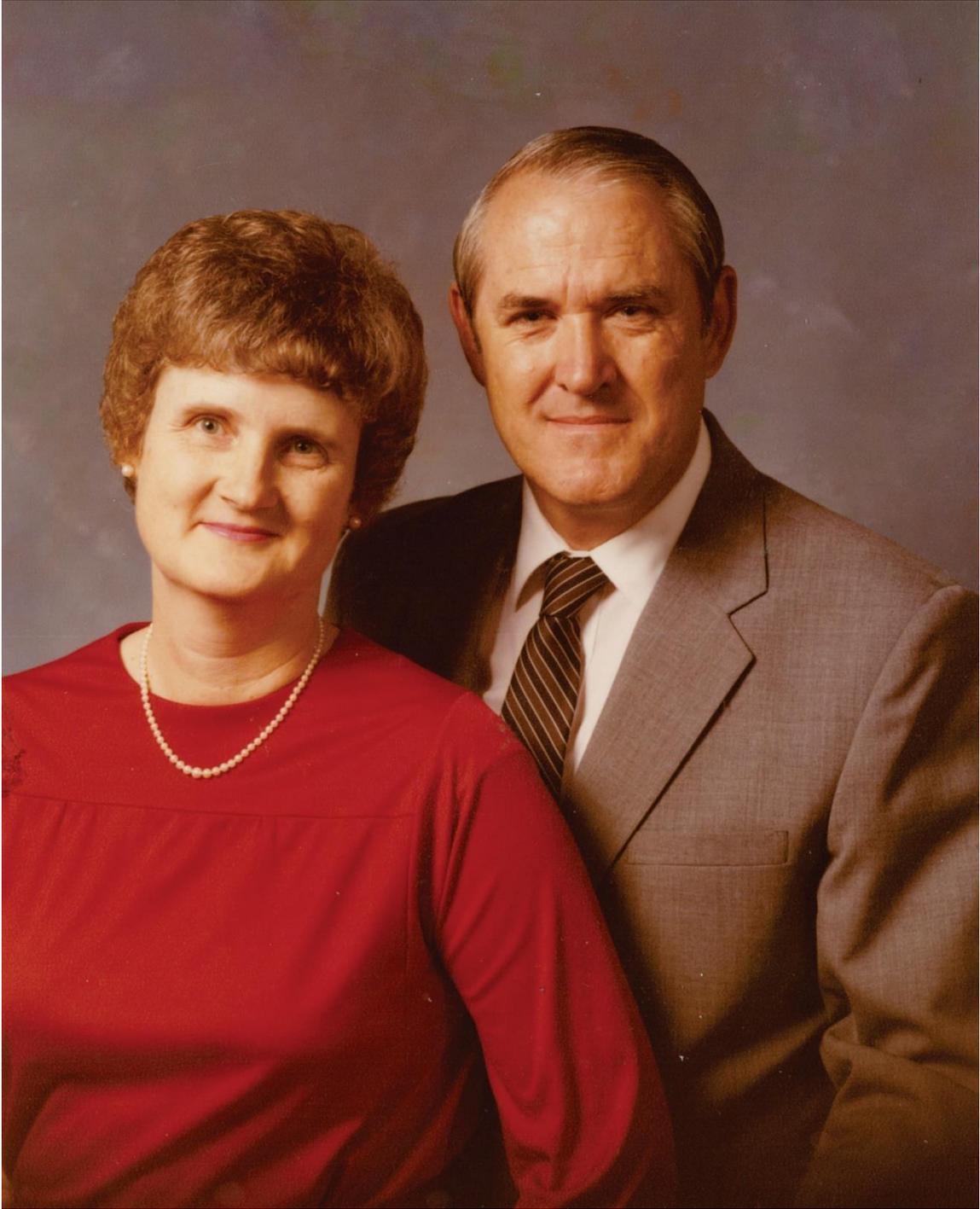
*Richard Johnson  
Jennifer Allred Johnson  
Brandon  
Ashley  
Chelsea  
Nicole*

*Paul Allred  
Tamie Jones Allred  
Tyler  
Tawni*

*Mark Allred*

*Matthew Harter  
Kathryn Allred Harter  
Emily  
Kate*

*Elizabeth Allred*



***Billie J. Allred and Diane McBride Allred***

***Eternal companions on a journey that will last forever***