



Gerald Lawrence Christiansen

June 10, 1925 - June 1, 2015

On Monday June 1, 2015 at home in Provo Utah our beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend Gerald Lawrence Christiansen peacefully passed away.

Gerry was born to Kristian John and Hansine Christiansen, June 10, 1925 in Salt Lake City, Utah. He grew up in a small home behind the Utah State Capitol Building with his four brothers and one sister. Unbeknown to any, all the land from Ensign Peak to City Creek Canyon was his "Red Ruby Ranch" where he ran cattle and horses and sometimes a scooter. It seems that Gerry was born to serve. He served for two and one half years in World War II on a baby carrier as radioman. The little carrier participated in all the major battles in the South Pacific. There, and as always throughout his life, he was the defender and champion of the under-dog.

After the war he served again for two and one half years, this time as a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Denmark, his parents' native land. In 1952 he fell in love with a beautiful little two year old girl named Kerry. Later that year he married her mother, Vella Jean Little and adopted his beloved Kerry. Three sons were born, John Kevan, Kyle Dee and Lars Kip. Later the marriage ended. He soon met, baptized and married Kathleen Dougherty and took on her children Steven and Elaine. Together, he and Kathy founded Youngtown on a ranch in Hanna Utah. They fostered,

loved and taught dozens of children, girls and boys of all ages, some to be reunited with their families and some to stay throughout high school. Later this marriage ended and Youngtown was turned over to Utah Boys Ranch and gradually disbanded. In 1970, Gerry met and married Barbara Baribeau and started a whole new life. They were sealed in the Provo Temple.

He became the Seminary Teacher in Tabiona where he taught for many years. He loved and served and again rescued many young people. They thrived on his bear hugs everyday. He was their beloved "Bro. C". He was then transferred to the Utah State Hospital to teach Seminary to the troubled teens who were housed there in a special program. To him it was an honor and a privilege to be their teacher. These young people too, thrived on his bear hugs everyday.

In 1990 at the age of 65, he retired and almost the same day left with Barb to serve a two year CES mission to South Africa where he served and taught and hugged hundreds of young people as he organized Seminaries and Institutes and became their beloved Elder Christiansen.

In 1998 a great miracle occurred. Gerry and Barb were able to adopt a beautiful little newborn girl. They named her Mary and she has become the light of their lives. In 2013 his precious Kerry passed away and so there is a wonderful reunion now taking place along with two grandchildren, Gerald and Tyler and one great-granddaughter Rachel. And he may soon be saying farewell to his yet unborn great-grandson.

A lover of people, a healer of troubles, a missionary, a fisherman, wood carver and storyteller; a giver of bear hugs, a writer, an outdoors man. He is loved and survived by his wife Barb, his younger brother and sister-in-law Gene and Renee, three sons and their wives, Kevan and Edy, Kyle and Tammy, Kip

and Darvy; grandchildren Ben, Amy, Shirley, Kami, Johnny, Cameron, Kira. Faith, James, Trevor; and great-grandchildren Kaedin, Charlie, Savanna, Adam, Ethan, Eli, Azilee, Una, Kearston, Lux, Kael, and Jack.

Funeral services will be at the Oak Hills 1st ward, 1038 N 1200 E in Provo on Monday, June 8, 2015. There will be a viewing held prior to the funeral from 9:30 am to 10:45 am. Interment at the Utah Veterans Memorial Park at 2:15pm. 17111 S Camp Williams Road, Bluffdale, Utah

Cemetery Details

Utah Veterans Memorial Park - Camp Williams

17111 S. Camp Williams Road
Bluffdale, UT 84065

Previous Events

Viewing

JUN 8. 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM (MT)

Oak Hills 1st Ward
1038 N 1200 E
Provo, UT

Funeral Service

JUN 8. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (MT)

Oak Hills 1st Ward
1038 N 1200 E
Provo, UT

Tribute Wall



“ *Gerald Lawrence Christiansen*

October 05, 2023 at 07:49 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gerald Lawrence Christiansen.*



July 04, 2016 at 03:22 PM

TK

“ Barb called me when Gerry passed. I couldn't fight back the tears.

Days later, I read through Gerry's obituary with tears in my eyes. A little over three sentences mentioning the lives this great man impacted during the "Youngtown" years. I am one of those stories.

I first met Gerry when I was 6 years old. He was the biggest man I'd ever met. His size, his laugh, his kindness, his smile - his presence filled the room. Gerry had come to share dinner with me, at my 2nd foster home in less than a year. I didn't know why he was there but I liked him immediately. We left that night in his car - just me and this great big man that I would come to love.

We drove all night or so it seemed. When we got to what I would later come to know as the "old house" in Hanna, UT Gerry told me we were camping out in the living room. What a great adventure for a little boy, he slept on the couch right next to me - all night. When I woke in the morning, he was still there and he was still smiling.

I don't remember much more about that night, but I remember him being there in the morning and telling me that I could go "out and play" if I wanted to....I asked him where the boundaries were, where could I play and not get in trouble. He walked me outside and pointed at one huge mountain saying, "...see that? Don't go past it." The story continued for all four directions.

Gerry's time at Youngtown was cut short, but the opportunity to continue to learn from him never ended. Even though Youngtown was a small part of Gerry's great contribution in this life; his influence in my life - never faded!

Gerry remained a part of my whole life, attending both my graduation from High School and College, my wedding, and many other major events of my life. As time passed and I came to realize that physically, Gerry wasn't that big of a guy, in fact he once shared his coat with me and commented: "...funny, seems all you boys

grew up pretty big - big enough to fill my coat." Maybe his coat, but never his shoes. As time passed and I had the opportunity for "long discussions on his porch in Hanna" I came to know that he was a BIGGER man than I ever knew.

As our friendship aged, I realized how grateful I am to this man. I realize the debt of service that I will never be able to repay. I understand he gave me a HOME when no one else wanted to - I learned there was always room for another pair of boots at Gerry's table, always another bed under his roof. Always another lesson that he would so patiently and eloquently teach.

He's been gone over a year now. I missed his funeral - I was in a hotel room in Dallas that night and again I cried. It's taken me this long to write this long over due tribute to the single biggest pillar in my life. He taught me to appreciate Marty Robbins and endless gunfighter ballads. He taught me about horses; mean, ornery, Shetland ponies and later, great elegant beasts and the beauty and wonder of both. He taught me about God. He taught me about love and friendship, he taught me the gospel (as I was writing this, I remembered one early Sunday morning he found out that I had to give a talk in Sunday School and the time he took explaining and helping me to write my first talk. Then, some 20+ years later when I'd gone down a different road we discussed the Gospel again and I committed to read the Book of Mormon. Weeks later, despite a real effort I told him I was struggling to understand 2nd Nephi. Days later, I received a letter in the mail. He had handwritten, with verse by verse references nearly 30 pages explaining the significance of those chapters), he taught me about life, he taught me kindness and he gave me unquestioned friendship.

I missed an intended visit with him about a month before he passed, I miss him every day.

God has a plan and I am grateful forever that Gerry was part of mine.

Rest well my dear friend.

You are not forgotten.

Tom Knight - July 04, 2016 at 02:15 PM

SA

“ Gerald Lawrence Christiansen came along in a long line of men that my mother would just hook up with but he was different from the rest. He stayed with it and I would later grow to be thankful he did though at first he was just another man in line that she would tell us was going to be our new daddy. It pains me to say that now because he took a woman that was on one day a perfect mother and the next day was to inebriated to get up and fix us breakfast to waking up and being the meanest woman on the face of the earth. Gerry though was different. He stayed and persisted in being able to turn her life around even though it would only last a few short years but my sister and I were along for the ride. At first because he gave my sister and I self worth that we did not know was possible coming from an adult. The only adults we were associated with were mostly bad people with no moral character at all and this included my uncles, we were very wary and suspicious of all adults. We are of Irish decent and we used to let it go that this was why she could be so tempestuous as it was due to a stereotypical Irish Temper. There is a big difference between Irish temper and pure rage. I found out later in life after Gerry's attempt at fixing this life problem was that it was a mental issue that was not fixable in most cases especially back then. Now we know what it is to be Bi Polar, depressed and even have multi personality's . Gerry gave it a great try but even he was not strong enough to bridle my mothers problems. So we lost the only stability we had known and she went back to being the sometimes demon that we were forced to live with. My only consolation was the brief time I had been blessed to have a great male role model in a time I needed it most. The formative years of my youth. So what ever I learned from him stayed with me and along with meeting my Wife, the girl and love of my life in the small town of Tabiona Utah, gave me an outlet and the knowledge that I could survive this unsure life we were going back to. I have had struggles myself with some anger issues that developed directly because of this but I held to the idea that was ingrained in me by Gerry first and then my Wife, her family and the friends I made in Tabiona. I wish it could have worked out better in a selfish kind of way between my mother and Gerry but I am also aware that for

*Gerry it did work out because he met and married another fine lady that I have the utmost respect and admiration for. she was finally what Gerry needed and deserved. I am glad I was able to be a small part of the Christiansen family and I know that I am still treated as if I still were a member of that family. My mother passed away a while back but before she went she was able to finally come to grips with and lose those anger issues that consumed her for most of our lives together and she was re endowed and came back into the Church and that miracle I attribute directly to her short marriage with the first true life Hero I had to look up to, Gerald Lawrence Christiansen. I could never thank him enough for the valuable things he gave me in life and I look forward to the day I can see this hero again and I believe I will because he told me I will. So with his promise and that of the teachings I have been given and by my faith that there is a God and he also promised me the same thing, I know without a doubt in my mind this will take place. Thanks for everything Gerry. Your eternal friend and ever faithful servant
Steven E. Anderson*

Steven E. Anderson - June 08, 2015 at 08:46 PM

LF

“*Dear Barb and Family, sorry for your loss. Gerry was always willing to take part in a good cause. He had a way of capturing and holding the attention of those to whom he was speaking. He could speak to any age group but most especially the youth. Barb, you and Gerry, made a good team and contributed to the community in a big way. May God bless you with His comforting Spirit and may you be guided and inspired through the rest of life's experiences. So sorry we couldn't be there today...hope to meet up with you some time soon!! Please send me an email.*

Levere and Sue Fabrizio - June 08, 2015 at 11:19 AM

SU

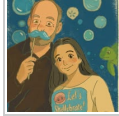
“Gerry and Barb will always hold a special place in my heart!! You can not think about one without the other. At least I can't. We spent so much time together when I was on the Seminar Board. All the trips we took to Salt Lake and Provo. The different kind of food Barb had us cook and eat. Winning the first Scripture Chase Contest against Duchesne and Altamont. Altamont was so mad they put up posters calling us Bible Thumpers. LOL WE. WERE SO PROUD!!! Gerry had us so prepared! Everyday Before class we would Scripture Chase 5-10 min before class began. And the winner who found the scripture the fastest won a Tootsie Roll. He made learning Fun!! He was the first person I thought of when I shot myself and needed a blessing. He came to my ICU Room on crutches to give me a blessing. He had just gotten out of the hospital himself for knee surgery.first thing he did when I strolled into class was hand me a piece of paper so I didn't write on his desk. LoL. When I graduated he gave me a folder with a bunch of my doodles in it!! THAT IS HOW AWSOME HE WAS!!!! I LOVE YOU BOTH WITH ALL MY HEART!!!

suzy - June 07, 2015 at 06:07 PM



“Barb and Gerry were a huge influence during some difficult times in my life as a teenager. I was so blessed to know and be served by them. I cherish the memories of talking in his office and the primary room/seminary classroom of the Tabiona Ward building, working on my poor catching skills with Tootsie Rolls earned by finding scripture mastery references quickly in my well trained triple combination and bible

Sariah Hillam - June 07, 2015 at 12:55 AM



just used for class, the ice cream sundae parties you qualified for by reading scriptures every day for a month where we played spoons and loved the hot fudge topping with its secret ingredient Tootsie Rolls melted in. I was glad to see Bro C again years later at a choir concert My daughter was in with his Mary, and am very sad that I will miss his funeral because I happen to be out of town on a long-promised trip with my oldest. Godspeed Bro C. I'm sure you are heartily laughing at some joke with the Angels now and still supporting us from the other side.

Sariah Hillam - June 07, 2015 at 01:01 AM

BF

“ *Though I was young in Tabiona when Garry was there, I remember this great big man. I remember wanting to be around him and was attracted to his great love for the youth. He made a great impact on my young heart. Rest In Peace Bro. C!*

Brandon Fabrizio - June 06, 2015 at 03:19 PM

LG

“ *I will never forget how Gerry made me feel so incredibly loved as a young confused girl in A world full of Gospel and temptation. He gave me the guidance, hope, and courage that I needed to believe in myself like no one else ever did or could. I told him one day that HE WAS MY FAVORITE PERSON IN THE WHOLE WORLD! He truly had a heart of gold, and a Hug like a Bear! I'll always remember his sincerity when he taught us the scriptures in Seminary. He loved us, he taught us and he helped us grow. I LOVE you Bro C..... I will wait again for that big bear hug, until we meet again....*

Lurinda Giles - June 06, 2015 at 11:11 AM

JN

“ *What an amazing man! Gerry touch the lives of countless people. I loved sitting in his seminary classes. He made learning the scriptures fun! I loved listening to his stories. I loved going to Barb and Gerry's house for ice cream parties. I remember thinking how weird it was that he didn't scoop the ice cream from the carton. He would unfold the entire carton and slice it with a knife. I still think about him when ever I open up a carton of ice cream! I truly love him and Barb so much. They are two of my most favorite people in the world! I am so grateful for the wonderful influence Gerry has had in my life!.*

Jan Jackson Nevarez - June 06, 2015 at 01:19 AM