



John Austin O'Dell

November 16, 1939 - April 13, 2024

On Saturday, April 13, 2024, we lost our beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather, John Austin O'Dell. John sustained several injuries from a fall the previous day and peacefully passed on Saturday evening. Our hearts are broken from his passing but so full of love for him and the wonderful memories we have made with him over the years.

John Austin O'Dell was born on November 16, 1939, in Bakersfield, California, to James Clyde and Mary Maude O'Dell. He was the oldest of the six children in his family and remained in Bakersfield for his youth. His childhood and teenage years were filled with friends, family, adventures, and mischief. Following high school graduation, John hit the road looking for work and to see the world. He ended up enlisting in the US Marine Corps. Not long after his discharge, he met missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. He moved to Utah and was baptized and served a mission for the Church in the Eastern United States.

John loved his mission, especially serving at the 1964-1966 New York World's Fair in New York City and participating in the Hill Cumorah Pageant in Palmyra, New York. His time at the pageant was particularly special because that was where he met Ranelle Thaxton. John and Ranelle were married on October 9, 1964, and have had a beautiful life together for almost 60 years.

John and Ranelle moved to Provo while John went to school at Brigham

Young University where he graduated with a degree in marketing. They bought a home and were able to adopt two children, Erin and Murray. John worked for BYU for a time and then spent his career working for many businesses in the area.

Following his career, John and Ranelle were able to serve two missions for the Church. They served in Muncie, Indiana, and East Lansing, Michigan. The connections and friendships they made from their two missions have enhanced their lives so much, and they treasure the people they have come to love. John's devotion to the Church throughout his life defined a big part of who he was. He served in many callings including teacher, bishopric counselor, quorum leader, stake high counselor, and several service missions for English language learning, the family history center, and the Provo Assisted Living Care center. Those who knew him knew how much he loved to serve and help others and how much he loved the Church he belonged to.

John experienced hardships and tragedies throughout his life but always kept moving forward. He loved to learn; he loved people, especially his grandchildren; and he was so grateful for all the blessings he felt he received throughout his lifetime. His family feels blessed to have known him, to have learned from him, to have loved him, and to follow his incredible example to us.

John is survived by his wife, Ranelle Thaxton, daughter Erin (Dale) Garrard, Meridian, Idaho, daughter-in-law April (Murray) O'Dell, Orem, Utah, five grandchildren, and one great-grandson. He is also survived by his very loving siblings Marilyn (Norman) Tauchen, Daniel O'Dell, Glenn (Liz) O'Dell, David O'Dell, and Phillip O'Dell.

John was preceded in death by his parents, James Clyde and Mary Maude O'Dell, by his son Murray O'Dell, his granddaughters Brittany and Tiffany

O'Dell, by his sister-in-law Diane O'Dell, sister-in-law Arlynn High, and brother-in-law Kenneth High.

Funeral services for John Austin O'Dell will be held on Saturday, April 20th at the LDS Meetinghouse at 1289 East 300 South in Provo, Utah. The viewing will be at 9:00 AM and the funeral at 11:00 AM. Internment will follow the funeral at the Provo City Cemetery. The services can also be viewed via Zoom:

Zoom Meeting link:

<https://zoom.us/j/92718892942?pwd=RDcvRHVRd0M1T3l1dGFRdjB6bnhCZz09> [zoom.us]

Meeting ID: 927 1889 2942

Passcode: 859646

John's family is so profoundly grateful for the overwhelming outpouring of love, condolences, meals, and support. The kindness shown has truly eased our grief. We are also so thankful for the doctors, nurses, and emergency service workers who attended to John for his last few hours on this earth. John will be greatly missed but loved eternally.

Please share memories and condolences at www.serenityfhs.com.

Cemetery Details

Provo City Cemetery

610 South State Street
Provo, UT 84606

Previous Events

Viewing

APR 20. 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (MT)

Bonneville 4th Ward
1289 East 300 South
Provo, UT 84606

Funeral Service

APR 20. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (MT)

Bonneville 4th Ward
1289 East 300 South
Provo, UT 84606

Tribute Wall

TC

“ John and Ranelle O'Dell have been some of our best neighborhood friends for the past 23 years, on and off, that we have lived near them. They attended our family's concerts and recitals, whether in the neighborhood or 45 minutes' drive away. They gave us handshakes and hugs each Sunday at church. They lit up when we saw them and allowed us to love and be loved. We sang in the church choir with Ranelle over many years, and John supported her and all of us faithfully, including by setting up rehearsal space at their house. John helped our boys make their Pinewood Derby cars for Cub Scouts, patiently supervising them while they used his special woodworking tools. I enjoyed working with him on family history.

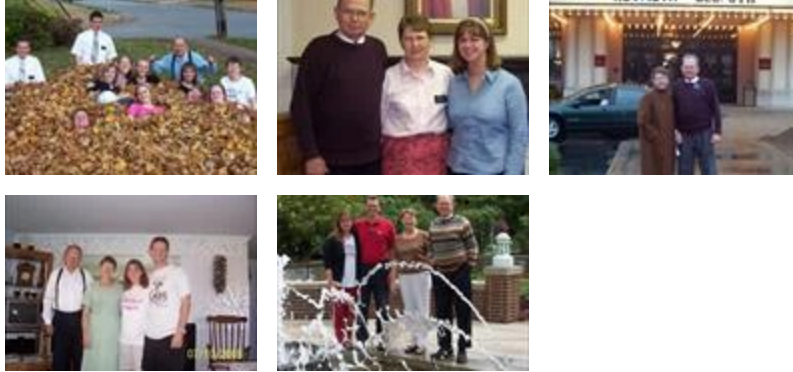
John was one of the most genuinely friendly and loving men I have ever known. He was also one of the most optimistic and sincere. I will never forget his smile and the way he made me and everyone around him feel so loved and wanted and welcome.

When our family left the neighborhood in 2022 to work in Africa for a couple of years, John and Ranelle were worried they might not make it to see our return. I'm glad we were able to visit with them the past two summers. I'm just sorry we're missing John by a few months. His life well lived touched ours for good, and we're grateful for it. Thank you, John! Love you, Ranelle!

Tova C. - April 20, 2024 at 12:24 PM

ST

“ I am blessed to be one of the O'Dells' "mission kids". I don't know if they fully realize the impact they had on my life then and in the years since, but I am forever grateful for them! John is one of the Good Ones!



Stephanie Turner - April 18, 2024 at 09:31 AM

TH

“ John O'Dell was such a happy and grateful man. I first met him at the BYU family history library. He was always so excited when I would show him something about family history. It was such a joy to teach him. I wanted a specific book holder for my heavy book. I order one on Amazon that fell apart before I even used it. So, I asked him to make me one. And within a few weeks I had a beautiful book holder that I will treasure the rest of my life. He was a talented and happy person. The world was a much better place because of him and Heaven is lucky to have him. - Tammy Hardy



Tammy Hardy - April 17, 2024 at 11:20 PM

TH

If John saw this he would just laugh because the picture is upside down. Hopefully whoever looks at this can laugh too.

Tammy Hardy - April 18, 2024 at 03:23 AM

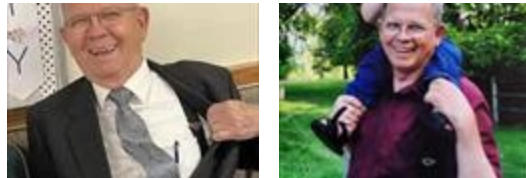
CQ

John and his sweet wife were two wonderful missionaries in Muncie, Indiana. I was fortunate to be there mission leader. He had a wonderful way of working and teaching the youth attending the university in Muncie. He has a lasting positive effect on many youth and my wife and myself. What a great man he is.. Mike and Kaye Quist

Charles M. Quist - April 19, 2024 at 10:25 AM

ER

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Erin - April 17, 2024 at 09:53 PM