



# Melvin B. Ashton

SEP 16, 1940 - FEB 6, 2016



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## Melvin B. Ashton

SEP 16, 1940 - FEB 6, 2016

**M**el B. Ashton  
1940 – 2016

Melvin (Mel) Ballard Ashton, our loving husband, father, grandfather and friend was called home by his Heavenly Father on February 6, 2016, following a valiant battle with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

Mel was born September 16, 1940 in Malad, Idaho to James Lehi (Lee) Ashton and Mary Gertrude Hardman. Mel had an undying love for his family, especially his best friend and wife of 44 years, Taunya Mazzei, whom he adored and who adores him. Mel's eyes would light up every time he spoke of Taunya.

Mel grew up in Salt Lake City where he attended West High School, and later graduated from the University of Utah with a degree in Sociology/Criminology. Mel had his first paying job at 8 years-old and helped support both himself and his mother after his father died in 1948. Mel worked continuously until just 3 months ago when the ALS forced his retirement.

Mel was a dedicated law-enforcement officer who served 9 years on the Salt Lake City Police Force and 20 years as a Federal Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). In 1970 Mel graduated at the top of his class from Quantico following his training with the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (precursor to the DEA), and was given the opportunity of selecting any prestigious BNDD office in the country, however, Mel chose Denver, Colorado in order to be closer to his sons living in Utah. Mel received many commendations for his law enforcement work, including one for saving the life of a wounded fellow agent. Mel was also commissioned "Territorial Marshal of Oklahoma" by the Governor of Oklahoma for his outstanding DEA work in that state.

After retiring from law enforcement Mel was a respected private investigator with his own practice for over 20 years. Mel was also a founding member of the Private Investigators Association of Utah, and served on its board of directors.



## Obituary

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In his younger days Mel was a successful amateur boxer as well as a 3rd Degree Brown Belt in Kempo Karate. He was also a champion expert marksman with both pistol and rifle while at the Salt Lake Police Department. Also at one point, Mel had a small aircraft pilot's license.

Mel was a devoted member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Ashley Park Ward in Sandy, Utah, and served tirelessly in many callings, his fondest of which was in the High Priest Group leadership. Mel loved his church and will be lovingly remembered by ward members, friends and neighbors as always having a kind word, a strong testimony and love of the Lord and the Gospel, and as being the first person to offer service to others.

Mel is preceded in death by his angel mother, his father, his cherished parents-in-law Earl and Francis Mazzei as well as his son Lance, who succumbed to ALS five years ago. Mel is survived by his sweetheart Taunya, sons Layne (Dorothy), Wayne and Adam (Paula) and daughter Amber. Mel is also survived by his 12 grandchildren and many other family members and friends whom he loved and who love him.

Mel will be greatly missed by all who knew him but will always be remembered as a compassionate person who loved life and was always looking for opportunities to serve others.

Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, February 12, 2016 at the Ashley Park Ward, 10312 East Ashley Park Drive, Sandy, Utah 84092. The family will receive visitors at the church one hour before the funeral. Interment will be at the Redwood Memorial Cemetery, 6500 S. Redwood Road, Taylorsville, Utah.




Mel's family would like to thank his many friends, neighbors and ward members for their outpouring of love and service to Mel and Taunya these past few months as the ALS began to take a heavy toll on his health.

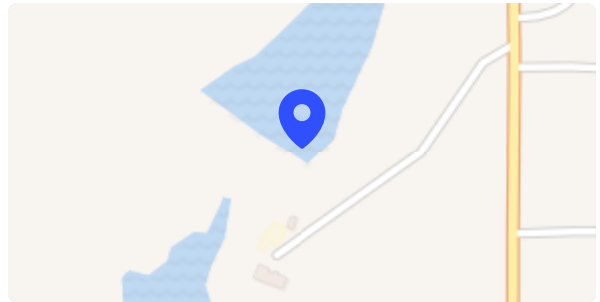


# Events

**Melvin B. Ashton**  
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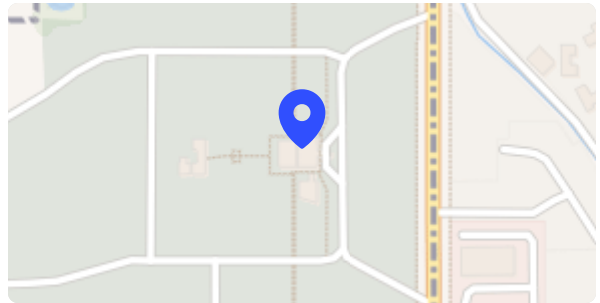
## Funeral Services

-  **Friday**, February 12, 2016
-  11:00 AM CT
-  **Ashley Park Ward**  
10312 East Ashley Park Drive, Sandy AK



## Cemetery Details

-  **Redwood Memorial Park**  
6500 South Redwood Road, Taylorsville UT





# Tribute Wall

**Melvin B. Ashton**  
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**Mikey Tedesco** lit a candle in honor of Melvin.



April 13 at 6:05 AM



**Jill Winter** lit a candle in honor of Melvin.



March 4 at 5:08 PM



**Russ Hartill** posted:

Mel will always be remembered for his selfless service...he is not really gone and certainly will not be forgotten...we have gained a neighborhood and ward guardian ange!!

February 14 at 12:05 PM



**John Tinsley** lit a candle in honor of Melvin.

Mel and I have known and worked together for more than 20 years. He has been a great example to me and someone that I could trust. Together we accomplished much, primarily in the State Legislature. We were friends both inside and outside of work. We could always seem to find a way to solve issues together and worked together well. I will always remember him and consider him a true friend. My sincere condolences to his family during this difficult time. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Warmest Regards, John Tinsley



February 12 at 4:47 AM



**Howard Sant** posted:

Mel was a great friend to our family and even though we were his home teachers, it was he who performed service for us. Some acts of service included replacing a water heater, correcting electrical wiring in our kitchen and shoveling the driveway while my broken ribs were healing. He also called several times after we moved away from his neighborhood to make sure we were doing alright and ask if there was anything we needed. It was an honor to know Mel. We are sure he touched many lives just as he did ours. Howard and Jennifer Sant

February 11 at 4:47 PM



## Tribute Wall

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KS

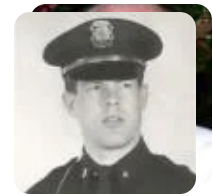
**Kevin Sheetz** posted:

Mel will forever be my friend and I am humbled that I have been befriended by such a great and stalwart individual. His life was service and his love of his family was never far from his mind. Kevin Sheetz

February 10 at 3:31 PM



**Premier Funeral Services** shared an album called **Memories Album**.



February 10 at 1:40 PM

VF

**Vonnie Fisher** posted:

I read the obituary this morning and wished I could have known the family more. Mel and his family sounds like such wonderful people. My father was LaVar Ashton and we never got to know any of you and I don't know why but I am so sorry we didn't. Please accept my condolences and I wish all of you peace and blessings through this difficult time. Love, Vonnie Ashton Fisher.

February 10 at 10:41 AM

PB

**Pam Brunson** posted:

Best wishes to Mel's family - he served as my favorite process server and investigator here at Snow Christensen & Martineau for the last 18 years I've been here. He was a kind man, and always got the job done right! We will miss him coming into the office, and his kind greetings! Pam Brunson

February 10 at 9:53 AM

DP

**Dave Pinkston** posted:

Mel was a wonderful man. He was absolutely professional in everything he did, yet he was extremely personable and warm. I had the opportunity to work with Mel many times over the last 15 years, including some really "interesting" situations, and he was not only a great asset to our team but a great friend. He will be missed. Our sincere condolences to your entire family. Dave Pinkston

February 10 at 9:04 AM



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**Bob Welling** posted:

My sincere condolences to Taunya and family. Mel is truly a "salt of the earth" person. His obituary was well done and describes the qualities that I knew Mel embraced in his life...service, love of family, loyalty to friends and devotion to the Lord and our country. I got to know Mel as a fellow PI and his contributions to the industry were valued and will leave a lasting mark. I treasure our friendship and came to love this good man as my brother. I will miss him. Adios, my dear friend! Bob Welling Beehive Detective Agency, Inc.

February 10 at 6:06 AM



## Media

**Melvin B. Ashton**  
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**Premier Funeral Services** shared 2 photos to the **Memories Album** album.

February 10 at 1:40 PM





## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Melvin by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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