



# Stephen Arden Shepherd

APR 20, 1948 - JAN 24, 2018



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# Stephen Arden Shepherd

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## S tephens Arden Shepherd “Tater”

Stephen Shepherd, was born April 20, 1948 in Salt Lake City, UT, to Arden Warren and Vida Johnson Shepherd. He passed away January 24, 2018, a kind release from the debilitating effects of a stroke. He leaves a sister Merrily Runyan, Clovis, CA, and nieces and nephews.

Stephen Shepherd was a unique individual. Whether known as Stephen Shepherd the author, lecturer, and expert in 19th-Century Woodworking, or as “Tater”, the Mountain Man and adventurer, he influenced many people and sometimes irritated others with his infallible knowledge. Arguing historic technology with Stephen was frustrating and pointless – his knowledge was vast. And he shared that knowledge with anyone genuinely interested.

He was always building, repairing, tinkering and inventing, very often simply to see if he could do it – if it could even be done. Many of his friends are proud owners of a “Tater-made” item, from furniture to walking-sticks to quill pens. He shared his knowledge by writing four authoritative books on woodworking, and re-published two more “rescued” books of great value to historians of 19th-Century crafts.

For the most part he lived a 19th-Century life. Almost all his furniture and re-created items were made and restored using only hand tools. He had no power tools in his shop. His careful craftsmanship, restoration and renown finishing techniques, including gorgeous “painting and graining”, gained him world-wide recognition. His clients over the years included many wealthy collectors and The LDS Church Historic Collections.

He dressed for most of his adult life in 19th-Century-style clothing, including when traveling to other states. In 1976, during the bicentennial re-tracing of the Domingues/Escalante journey to Utah, Stephen and companions met the party in the desert, dressed authentically as fur-traders.



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Their clothing and accoutrement authenticity far outshone that of the re-creators! For decades he attended Mountain Man rendezvous all over the west, and was always welcomed by everyone.

People loved Stephen Shepherd, and were proud to know him. Sometimes they were friends of Stephen, sometimes friends of Tater, some not even knowing they were one and the same! His cheerful demeanor, his willingness to laugh at society's faults, and his dedication to his friends make the memory of Stephen "Tater" Shepherd precious to all of us who were close to him.

Per Stephen's wishes, no services will be held, donations may be made to This Is the Place Heritage Park in his memory.



## Tribute Wall

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MF

**Mabel Fong** posted:

As one of those who were fortunate enough to have gotten to meet Shepherd, I can attest to what a unique individual Stephen Arden Shepherd was, truly one of a kind! I so enjoyed getting to know such a good & kind hearted person and so grateful & happy to call him our friend. I shall hold fond memories always and he will be missed. Our prayers & condolences to All His Families! May Shepherd live forever in our hearts! God bless Shepherd's great soul! xoxo... Love, Hugs & Kisses Always, Mabel Fong, Bruce Saderup & Sandy Wood

January 31 at 7:01 AM

BB

**Banana Barker** posted:

Met him when he came to Conner Prairie in the 70s. He was fascinated to talk with and when I left to come west, he sold me to George. It made some sort of sense at the time. Went to friendship with him and had fun at feast of the hunters moon. Got a box he made and used to have his book on wood but lost it to another woodworker. Had a wonderful quirky mind and sense of humor. Blessings friend...

January 30 at 11:31 PM

BB

**Banana Barker** lit a candle in honor of Stephen.



January 30 at 11:25 PM



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

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



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