



Ellen Ellis Kirkland

NOV 8, 1938 - JUL 8, 2020



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It is with equal parts of sadness and joy that the Kirkland family must announce the death of their mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend, Ellen. We rejoice that she is no longer contained by earthly restraints, and now resides with other loved ones who welcomed her beyond the veil July 8, 2020. We mourn for ourselves, for our loss of her loyalty and keen insights, her energy and, most of all, her renewable spirit.

Born Ellen Melburn Ellis on Nov. 8, 1938, in Pleasant Grove, Utah, she had the opportunity as an adolescent to live in Guatemala, where her father worked as a metallurgical engineer. While there, the family lost Ellen's older sister, Lois, to polio. After the Ellis family returned to Utah and eventually settled down in Bountiful, Ellen first attended Davis High School in Kaysville, as Bountiful was still too small to have its own high school. She rode the Bamburger rail with friends to the popular Lagoon and Saltair resorts, and worked the Bountiful Motor-View drive-in theater snack bar as a teen.

By her senior year, however, Bountiful had finally opened the doors to a high school of its own. Not surprisingly, Ellen and most of her peers were disappointed not to spend that last year of school with their friends in Kaysville. Yet, as she would throughout life, she turned what could have been a setback into a badge of honor by being a member of the school's first graduating class in 1957.

Ellen married John R. Kirkland, and the couple raised four children over 24 years. Working together, they owned and operated a nursery and landscaping business. Ellen later became a cost accountant with Baker Hughes (formerly Eimco).

As the years passed with their wins and losses, Ellen gained a second wind in the marathon of life when she met the love of a lifetime in partner John Coffey. They maintained residences in both West Bountiful and Hanna, UT, while taking pleasure in an active life together that included a lot of fishing, camping, cowboy poetry and



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gardening; whether out in the wild or out on the golf course - another pastime she enjoyed well into her later years - this girl got dirty and appreciated it. Along the way, she endured the loss of her sister Lois Ellis, parents, Martell and Melburn Ellis, John Coffer, and her daughter, Leslie Kirkland. Those of us who will miss Ellen most include her sons, John Scott Kirkland, Kris Kirkland, and Kim Kirkland, her brother Martell Thomas Ellis, and her sister Jane Betts.

Despite the many losses that a long life, so fully lived, can bring, Ellen always believed in moving on with purpose. She knew the happiness of three strong grown sons, loving grandchildren and, just a week ago, greeted her sixth great-grandchild with a smile that said it all. She suffered a parent's greatest heartbreak, and endured the last 20 years of her life having outlived her partner and best friend.

Still, as we write this, her home is full of reminders of her appreciation for life. The artwork she chose to admire adorns the walls. Books of cowboy poetry have space on her shelves. Her kitchen offers continuous reminders of skills and family recipes.

Every photo, birth announcement, church milestone, and news clipping of family accomplishments is carefully and tenderly preserved - tangible reminders of times that really mattered to her, particularly those times that meant so much to us.

Most of all, if there has to be one physical thing that represents Ellen's priorities, it is that her yard is filled with new growth. From the beautiful roses for which she will always be so well known, to this Spring's vegetable garden - planted and lovingly tended this year under her watchful direction - there is the potential for life's renewal that so perfectly reflects how Ellen lived. It is how we will remember her.



Memories only last if you share them

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



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