



# Douglas C Birrell

JUN 17, 1969 - MAR 7, 2021



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## **Douglas C Birrell**

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**D**ouglas C. Birrell, 51, passed away on March 7, 2021 with his wife by his side after bravely battling cancer. Doug was born on June 17, 1969 in Redondo Beach, California. He was a beloved and devoted father, husband, son, brother, uncle and friend.

Doug graduated from Manti High School in 1987. After he graduated, he served a full-time mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Santiago, Chile. He attended Snow College, the University of Utah and graduated at the top of his class from the Utah College of Massage Therapy in 1993. Doug first worked with the Alta Club Fitness Center through Body by Banks and afterward owned his own massage therapy company D. Birrell & Co. After private contracting with Karl Malone, John Stockton and others for 5 years, he was officially hired as the team massage therapist for the Utah Jazz and worked with the team for 21 years. He has loved and cherished the team and staff members he has worked with throughout his career.

Doug's family was his pride and joy. Married in the Manti Temple, Doug and his wife, Melissa, enjoyed 26 years together and raised 3 beautiful daughters. They loved traveling and spending time together. Devoted service in his church brought him great happiness. He was a great man of faith with a powerful belief and testimony of Jesus Christ. He was outgoing, kind, genuine and had a gift for listening to and counseling others. One of Doug's favorite pass times was running, particularly in all the different states and countries where he traveled. Doug will be sorely missed, leaving behind many loving friends and family.

He is survived by his wife Melissa, daughters: Samantha, Haley and Grace, siblings: Jeff, Melissa and Kara and many in-laws, nieces, and nephews. Preceded in death by parents Cliff and Shirley Birrell, and two oldest siblings Dana and Mark Birrell.

Viewing will be held on Friday, March 12, 9:00am-10:45am. The funeral service will follow at 11:00am, both held at LDS meeting house, 3100 E. Craig Dr., SLC, UT, 84109. Face masks and



## Obituary

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social distancing will be observed. Interment will be at Memorial Holladay Cemetery in Holladay, Utah.

To attend funeral service remotely, use live stream link:

<http://mywebcast.churchofjesuschrist.org/saltlakeeastmillcreekstake>

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made at Mountain America Credit Union under Melissa Birrell, the Birrell Family Memorial Fund.



# Tribute Wall

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**Jay Greenburg** lit a candle in honor of Douglas.

Miss you brother and think about you often. I miss my buddy and hope you are well on the other side. Love you man. ~ Jay

March 3 at 5:38 PM



**Emily Waddoups-Long** posted:

Melissa- sending you and your daughters peace and love. From my Family to yours, Ms Emily @ Oakridge

March 15 at 8:30 AM



**Randy Plant** posted:

Doug is one of a kind. I was truly uplifted and better for every interaction I ever had with him. A true friend who will be very missed.Randy Plant

March 13 at 6:18 AM



**Cheryl Richardson** posted:

Doug always treated my husband and me with great respect. We missed Doug's family so much when they moved from our neighborhood. Now Doug has moved to another place—heaven. We are so sorry for those who are hurting. I know from the experience of losing a daughter that our departed loved ones are aware of us and care for us. I pray that all who are hurting will feel Doug's love for them. Melissa, you are a beautiful person and you have a beautiful family. I hope for a very happy future for all of you.

March 12 at 7:01 AM



**Anonymous** sent a sympathy card to the Birrell family.

March 12 at 6:20 AM





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JS

**James Swensen** posted:

I know two things about Doug: first, he could be the sweetest and kindest person I have ever known. Second, he hated being a fuss. Somewhere, close in the Great Beyond he is probably saying "ah, you didn't have to do that." As we honor him the first fact must trump the second and he deserves a lifetime of fuss and praise. Thank you for your example of friendship, kindness, and sacrifice. Thank you for always asking about my family. And, probably most important, thank you always putting things in perspective. You will be sorely missed. Godspeed, James Swensen

March 12 at 6:16 AM

TS

**Tiffany Smith** posted:

I loved seeing Doug when I was out walking (or even driving by him and waving as he was out walking;) He always took time to chat if at all possible. I loved his outgoing nature and willingness to engage in real conversations.

March 11 at 9:16 PM

WB

**Wanda Bravo** posted:

Dougl am so Thankful that I had the opportunity to work with you. You were always so very happy and pleasant to be around. You will always have a special place in my heart and you will be truly missed my friend. Sending my love and prayers to your beautiful family

March 11 at 4:29 PM

WT

**Wes And Becky Thompson** posted:

Doug, You were and still are a light to our neighborhood. When I would see you out running or walking I always enjoyed our brief rests to talk and get updated. You always radiated a light which uplifted everyone you met. You shared an optimism during your challenging times which increased our faith in the Lord and in the purposes of mortality. Thanks for lifting us and making the world a better place. You lived the example of a Christ-like life in all you did. Love, Wes and Becky Thompson

March 11 at 12:39 PM



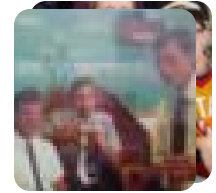
## Tribute Wall

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**Andrew Naylor** shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.



My family moved to Ephraim Utah in 1980. After going to school the first day I was riding my bike down the street and a block away from my house I was stopped by Doug. He started talking to me like we were best friends and to be honest I don't remember much of what he said because I was wondering how I had forgotten meeting him that day in school. The part I do remember is that he had move from California about 3 weeks before my family had moved from Summit County Utah. Finally, after about 20 min of talking, Doug stopped, looked at me and said, "You're not Don are you?" I said no, I am Andy, Don's brother. We both laughed for a few minutes about the mistake and he walked the rest of the way to my house to see my brother Don...We grew up just a few blocks from each other, we were in the same ward and every Sunday Doug, Don, Tyler Nielson and myself got together to play one type of game or another. Basketball, football, hockey (with golf balls and tennis racquets - Not very smart), Dodgeball, flashlight tag, kick the can, board games and the list goes on and on. Don my brother didn't like it much that I was hanging out with them, I mean nobody in high school wants their younger brother hanging with them and their friends. But Doug and Tyler stood up for me and calmed him down which allowed me to spend as much time as I could with them. You grow up with people and have friends but Doug was more than a friend, he was my brother. All of my siblings loved Doug, My parents loved having him around and I know my dad is taking his passing hard and he feels like he has lost one of his own children... Doug made my dad laugh so hard that I honestly believed my dad would kill over and have a heart attack during the conversations. This just didn't happen once, it happened virtually every time you were around him. he was part of our family. Doug had an amazing sense of humor and I don't know anyone who didn't enjoy being around him. Virtually every humorous story I have from my youth, Doug was a part of it in one way or another. Doug has a way of making everyone around him feel like they're his best friend. I could talk for hours about all the funny experiences we had together. Doug, I love you brother and I always will. You have influenced and touched my life in so many ways that I truly feel blessed to have been able to call you my brother. You will be missed. I'll finish with re-stating Kyle Korver's words. Melissa, Samantha, Haley and Grace. Know you have many people here for you however we can be... May heavenly father bless you and your family during this difficult time in your lives...Andy NaylorPS. I forgive you and Tyler for posting, "Party at the Naylor's" posters all over town. It's always fun to come home to a house full of people you didn't know were going to be there.

March 9 at 10:03 AM



**Patrick Carroll** posted:

My greatest compliment is that for a few years Doug was my best friend. We both traveled with the Jazz and as often as we could we would get together to play scrabble or cards or just to talk. He was a great person that made me laugh and smile when I was around him. God bless Melissa and his family. I look forward to seeing him again.

March 11 at 4:04 AM



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NR

**Nick & Liza Romero** posted:

Doug, You were always so fun to be with and kind, generous and uplifting. We will miss you so much!!!! Thank you for sharing your friendship with us!!-Nick & Liza Romero and family

March 10 at 3:05 PM

MN

**Mccall Nelson** posted:

Doug -You are THE best and have blessed our family in countless ways. Coming home includes seeing you on your way home from a run coming down the street, or standing outside to greet everyone as they came and went. Most of all you saw the good in us all and then celebrated it - no one made you feel more important than Doug! You cheered us on when the days were great, but even more, you cried with us when they were hard and helped put the pieces back together. We love you, our kids love you, and we both know the dog loved you!May you know that Melissa and your amazing girls will forever be in our watch care!All my love,McCall Nelson

March 10 at 11:02 AM

AB

**Alex Booth** posted:

Doug had pure love in his soul. Anytime I was fortunate enough to spend time with Doug I left feeling uplifted and grateful for being able to spend time with him. Doug and I both spent time traveling for our jobs and we were lucky enough to end up in the same city a couple of different times and meet for dinner or lunch. Doug was so spiritual and we would have great conversations centered around our life, our families, and our trials. He will always have a special place in my heart. His wonderful wife and daughters brought him so much joy and happiness! You are all in my prayers.Love,Alex Booth

March 10 at 7:17 AM



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KK

**Kyle Korver** posted:

When we're given these lives we aren't told what's going to happen or how long we're going to live them. But as Believers, we know that for however many days we ARE given, we are called to nudge the world forward. To be light. And love. And grace. To whoever comes our way. The NBA is such a unique space. It can be hard to keep your heart right. To stay loyal. Stay humble. To keep perspective and our eyes on a bigger story. But I watched you do it for so many years. You have navigated so many people and personalities over your 20 years with the Jazz. So many people came in and out of the organization at all levels.. but you were a constant. The guy cheering people up and on. Holding therapy sessions while us players lay on your table. You gave treatment to much more than our bodies..... just by being you. You are a good good man, Doug Birrell. You heeded the call and have nudged us all forward... all while staying true to yourself. And that is one WELL LIVED life! One that we can all learn from. I'm gonna miss you. I'll never think of the Jazz and not remember you. I love you. And am grateful that I will see you again one day. Love to Melissa, Samantha, Haley and Grace. Know you have many people here for you however we can be...- Kyle Korver

March 10 at 4:31 AM

TP

**Tim Peterson** posted:

I wish I had gotten to know Doug better. Peggy was so worried about him and hoped and prayed that he would get well. I am so sorry that he lost his battle and you have to plan a life without him. There is great comfort in the hope for an eternal reunion but it losing those we love leaves us with such a loss that at times it is unbearable. I have found that embracing the pain and letting the Saviors love heal is the only true way forward. May God bless you in your journey of love, loss and healing Tim and Peggy Peterson

March 9 at 4:20 PM

CE

**Clark Evans** posted:

Doug was traveling with the Jazz so often that our interactions were often through texts. He always had an inspiration quote, spiritual thought or other uplifting message to share. When he was in town he was the first to volunteer for anything and everything. As far as anyone can tell, everyone he ever met became a friend. The other side just got a major upgrade to its lineup. Love you, Doug and all the rest of the Birrell Family. Clark and Maquel Evans

March 9 at 4:09 PM



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DA

**Debi D'Amico** posted:

Doug was a sweet man that we were lucky to meet through his brother, Jeff. He used to bring his massage table to our home and give the most incredible massages we've ever had. He was kind, funny, giving, and healing with his incredible talent. Love to Melissa and his beautiful family. RIP Doug - we'll see you again!

March 9 at 3:58 PM

KG

**Kim Gardner** posted:

Please know that you are well loved. My students have commented that they are thinking of you and want you to know they care. I loved you, too.

March 9 at 3:56 PM

AW

**Alicia West** posted:

Doug is an angel for our family. A few years ago, he was out running and saw our boys walking to swimming. Doug realized that there was another person near the boys who seemed concerning. Doug proceeded to run circles around our sons, until they were at practice, to make sure they arrived safely. Through the years, Doug's bright smile and friendly ways have always brightened our life. We love Doug and Melissa and his girls so very much. The last time we spoke to Doug was at Harmon's. We were shopping and so was he; we stopped to chat and he proceeded to tell us about his favorite ice cream, Graeter's. It is now our favorite too, he was right, it is totally the best. We always thought of him while we enjoyed it and we will continue to think of him. We will miss seeing him running through the neighborhood and honestly just feel blessed beyond measure to know him. Love, Alicia & Mike West & Family

March 9 at 1:16 PM



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**Jason Hill** posted:

Doug was an amazing person and a dear friend. He was such a great example of love and kindness. He could see the good in all people and was always willing to help in any way he could. He will be missed greatly and never forgotten. We love you, Doug! Our thoughts and prayers go to his sweet wife and their three beautiful daughters. We love you as well!! Love, Jason & Melissa Hill & Family

March 9 at 10:03 AM



**Vinny Aquilino** March 10 at 10:30 AM

Doug and I both worked in the NBA doing what we love. We would bump into each other on the road and were able to spend a little more time in the bubble talking about the challenges and rewards of doing what we do. I know Doug loved his family dearly and was committed to providing only the best to his players and clients. I am deeply saddened by his passing and my heart goes out to his family and friends. I will miss you Doug and promise to carry on the integrity and professional example you set for all NBA Massage Therapist. Vinny Aquilino Miami Heat



**Jess Cheney** March 10 at 7:16 AM

He was one of life's truly good people. He is gone way too soon. So any fun memories. Thoughts and prayers go to Melissa and the kids. Dr. JC Cheney



## Media

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**Andrew Naylor** shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

March 11 at 10:32 AM



Me and my boys at the Jazz game. It was always a blast catching up with you before the games.



Gary, Tyler, Doug and me a lifetime ago



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

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



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