



# Merlyn Johnson Leetham Fox

JUL 19, 1935 - OCT 3, 2021



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# Merlyn Johnson Leetham Fox

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## Merlyn Johnson Leetham Fox

Merlyn Johnson Leetham Fox born on July 19, 1935 in Logan Utah passed away peacefully on Sunday, October 3, 2021 from pancreatic cancer. Merlyn married Joel Edison Leetham on February 20, 1953 in the Mesa, Arizona LDS Temple. Merlyn and Joel had five children: Brian, Suzanne, Ken, Cheryl and Rich. Merlyn was an accomplished musician playing the piano and organ from the time she was a very young girl. She also had a wonderful soprano singing voice and performed hundreds of piano, organ and singing concerts throughout her life. Merlyn joined the Santa Clara Chorale and sang for many years with some of her closest friends and her three oldest children who were also members of the Chorale. She worked hard to spread her talent and love of music by teaching grandchildren and dozens of students the piano and organ. Hundreds of people have been blessed by her talents and love of music.

Merlyn has lived her life to the fullest with her even temperament and sense of humor. Aside from her music, she has enjoyed traveling, painting, reading and watching “Jeopardy!” She has the ability to make people feel like they are her best friends, and, as a result, has so many friends of all ages who are dear to her. She is well known for being incredibly thoughtful, whether it be inviting a new neighbor or others who might need a friend over for an afternoon of lunch and entertainment, making homemade caramels for her Choir members at Christmas, dropping off a bag of her caramel popcorn, taking time to write a kind note when someone would do something special for her, attending special activities and events to support family members or playing a mean game of cards with grandchildren as they confided in her.

Merlyn loved her membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and held many callings including leading both youth and adult choirs and playing the organ for thousands of church meetings. In July, 1986, Merlyn and Joel served for three years in the Philippine Quezon City Mission, where they treated the missionaries as if they were their own children. In 1992, Merlyn and Joel moved to Sandy, Utah where they have been beloved members of the Willow



## Obituary

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Creek 7th and 9th Wards. Merlyn loves her family, friends, neighbors and fellow church members.

Merlyn's family extends its warmest gratitude to the kind and capable professionals who assisted her at the Huntsman Cancer Center. She received amazing care from the best doctors, nurses and assistants in the world and we will always be thankful for their attentive, capable and loving kindness to our mother. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to the many neighbors, friends and fellow church members who brought food, flowers, comfort and joy to mom for so many weeks and months. The family will be making a donation to the Huntsman Cancer Center and requests that in lieu of flowers, those wishing to honor Merlyn also make similar donations.

Merlyn is survived by her loving husband LaMar Fox and four stepsons (Mark, Guy, Christopher, and Scott) and their families; Five children Brian (Kathy), Son-in-law Scott Bonham, Ken (Mindy), Cheryl (Joel) and Rich; sixteen grandchildren and seventeen great grand-children and her brother James Johnson (Lonna). Preceded in death by her parents, her brother Deverl Johnson, her devoted and beloved eternal companion Joel Leetham and her sweet daughter Suzanne Bonham.

Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 9, 2021 at the LDS church building located at 2115 East Creek Road. Due to ongoing concerns about the potential spread of COVID-19, the family has decided to NOT have a viewing for Merlyn. There will be an interment at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, October 11, 2021 at the Holladay Memorial Cemetery at 4900 S. Memory Lane, Holladay, Utah. Funeral services may be viewed online at [www.willowcreekstake.com](http://www.willowcreekstake.com)



# Tribute Wall

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**G Hyatt** posted:

I did not realize Sister Merlyn Leetham Fox passed away. My deepest condolences to the family. I was trying to start early writing Christmas cards but I had forgotten her new married name and I stumbled upon this obituary instead as I was searching my computer. I was a missionary under President Leetham. Sister Leetham was a great example of kindness, generosity, and love. She was always Christ-like in the way she talked and treated us, missionaries. I loved and adored her as did all the missionaries and we all still do. She will be sorely missed.

November 23 at 1:58 PM



**Cheryl Izatt** June 9 at 5:33 PM

Thank you for your kind words. We agree with you and her desires were always to live the way the Savior would have her do. Her missionary service was one of the absolute highlights of her and my dad's lives. Thank you for blessing them, too!



**Phil And Marilyn Dold** sent a virtual gift in honor of Merlyn.

What a wonderful funeral. Everything we felt in our hearts was said about Merlyn. She will live on in our hearts. We will always think of Merlyn and Joel as eternal friends as they helped us in our journey to find the true Church. Our posterity continues to be blessed by their kindness to us. Merlyn and her family will always have a special place in our hearts. Our love and sympathy to all of the family. Phil and Marilyn



October 10 at 2:37 PM



**Cheryl Izatt** June 9 at 5:34 PM

Thank you, Dold family! We sure do appreciate the Gospel that brought our families together. Thank you for the blessing you have all been to our family. We love you all!



**Gary Whatcott** posted:

There was nothing like a robust game of cards with Joel and Merlyn! I have the fondest memories eating good food and playing cards with them. It was always interesting dialog at the table. So much fun! Great people this Leetham's! Love you all and my most heartfelt condolences.

October 9 at 6:47 AM



**Cheryl Izatt** June 9 at 5:35 PM

Truth!!! Thank you for your fun and thoughtful memories here, Gary! We love you and Pam and appreciate your kind words.



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MB

**Mel And Carol Butler** posted:

Oh dear Leetham and Fox family, Carol and I want you to know how very much we love your dear mother and your father. When they moved into the ward they became good friends as we have so many experiences in common--both musically and church service wise. We both served missions in the Pacific as mission presidents within three years of each other, and we would share many of our common mission experiences together. It was a treat to sing in the ward choir under her direction, and we loved to attend the concerts with Delma Saunders in her home. She will be truly missed. We mourn her departing this life, but we also celebrate her life in memories we have. May the Lord be with you at this tender yet spiritual time together. Mel and Carol Butler

October 8 at 7:44 AM

CI

**Cheryl Izatt** June 9 at 5:36 PM

Thank you, JaNae! Mom drew so much strength from her cousins-she loved you so much! I love the memories shared here along with your kind words.

JP

**Janae Penrod** October 19 at 9:54 AM

J love you two so much. You were the ones who got all us cousin back together for great fun games and the most delicious food. I will always remember the laughter and reminiscing we expired those nights. I want to tell you another THANK YOU For everything . I will love you for eternity.

LF

**Llamar M. Fox** October 13 at 4:00 PM

She was beautiful and even more so when we again met seventy years later. I love you, my amazing little girl. LaMar

CI

**Cheryl Leetham Izatt** October 8 at 6:40 PM

Thank you, Butlers! I know how much they loved you and enjoyed sharing those things in common with you. So nice of you to share with us. We love you too! Cheryl



## Tribute Wall

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**Linda Bullough** shared 3 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Little did I know the blessings that would come into my life because I attended a stake organ workshop in the summer of 1989. I went with the idea of learning enough about the organ not to embarrass myself while I tried to fulfill my new calling as ward music chair and ward organist. At the end of the 6-week series of basic classes, Merlyn pulled me aside and said, "Be at my home at 6 a.m. on Tuesday. You have promise. I'm going to teach you how to play the organ. All I ask is that you pay it forward." Over the past 32 years Merlyn has not only coached me musically, but has been a dear friend. We've enjoyed many musical activities together over the past 32 years: attended organ and choir workshops, served on the Draper Temple Open House and Dedication Music Committee, took in musical performances, and played piano duets in her living room. I will miss my friend and mentor, but will continue to honor her memory as I keep my promise to her of "paying it forward."



October 7 at 7:39 AM



**Cheryl Leetham Izatt** October 8 at 6:38 PM

Thank you so much, Linda! You know that you are her organ bestie and dear friend. She loves you so much. These pictures are amazing!!! Thank you so much for sharing them! Cheryl



**Devera Hagen** posted:

I loved Merlyn.. she is my eternal Angell loved sharing music with her in the choir as well as leading the music in sacrament meeting where she played the organ. She is my dear friend. I have enjoyed meals in her home together & being there for her when she needed me. I've enjoyed making food for her & her beautiful soul..Being with her was an honor I miss her something awful , but I am so happy she is with Joel, who I adored too & with her precious daughter. Shared moments that are treasured memories now & always will be forever...All my love, Devera Hagen

October 7 at 1:23 PM



**Cheryl Leetham Izatt** October 8 at 7:44 PM

Thank you for this sweet tribute, Devera, and for your friendship to Mom. I know she treasured and loved you too. Cheryl



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**Romeo A. Policarpio** posted:

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10222676255588799&id=1045666461](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10222676255588799&id=1045666461)

October 7 at 7:39 AM



**Cheryl Izatt** June 9 at 5:39 PM

Thank you for your kindness over the years, and representing so many of the missionaries for my parents, Romi! My parents loved you and all of the missionaries so much-their service over with all of you was one of their greatest highlights of their lives.



Linda Bullough shared 3 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

October 8 at 4:10 AM



Merlyn leading temple dedicatory choir at a rehearsal



Merlyn with one of the dedicatory choirs she directed



**Media**

**Merlyn Johnson Leetham Fox**

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Merlyn & Linda at the 2018 Tab Choir "Messiah" concert



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

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



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