

**To Our Children,  
Grandchildren and  
Great-grandchildren,  
with Love**



In **1991**, we went to British Columbia, Canada, for a vacation and while shopping there we found a cute **teddy bear** Christmas tree ornament. We thought that Gerry might be able to cut out and paint a similar one and we would pay her for her time and supplies. We then would give them to our grandchildren as part of their Christmas gift. Gerry was excited about the project and got right to work to create her own version of the ornament. Since she was living in North Carolina and we were living in Salem, she sent the completed ornaments and called us to see if we liked them. Gerry was so excited to get our approval, but we were leaving to go to the temple and didn't really get a close look. We commented that they weren't really what we had expected. Gerry was crushed. The next day, after getting a less hurried look, we called Gerry to tell her that we loved them and that they were better than we had hoped. The grandchildren were pleased with the ornaments and all agreed that they wanted another one the next year; in fact, why didn't we give them one every year. And then the parents became envious and asked if they could have one as well. The project grew from a few grandchildren, to the parents, and then on to the great-grandchildren. The ornaments became mementoes of our lives and each told a story of the things and events that were important to us.

**From,  
Mom and Dad,  
Grandpa and Grandma,  
and Great-grandpa and Great-grandma**



Gerry created another cute ornament in **1992** for us to give to our grandchildren for the Christmas. It was a **snowman** and this time it would go to our children and their spouses, and to our grandchildren. She painted a snowman and a few years later we decided it represented the times our family had gone to the snow in California, but more importantly, the big snowstorm that greeted us when we arrived in Salem, Oregon, on December 29, 1968. It snowed more than 2 feet and it has not snowed that much since we've been here; 38 years. It started snowing before the moving van got there, which gave cause for much worry. When it arrived, the neighbor had made a huge pot of chili and the ward members helped unload the van. The schools were closed for nearly two weeks so the kids had lots of fun playing with new friends and sledding down our hill and building lots of snowmen. That was a wonderful time for our family.



In **1993** Dad went to the Boy Scout National Jamboree in Virginia, so we visited Gerry's family in North Carolina on that trip. While there, we picked out a **Santa Claus** that we liked for our next ornament. Gerry was doing a lot more painting and so there was more detail on this ornament. The family was also growing with more grandchildren, so there would be more ornaments to paint.

In September of 1993 we left to go on our mission to the London England South Mission. After a month long delay, due to Dad suffering a heart attack in the Provo Utah Missionary Training Center and then recovering at Marian's home in Bountiful, we were able to make the trip to England. Gerry completed the ornaments and mailed them to everyone. It was our way to send our love from across the ocean to our loved ones at home.

The Santa Claus ornament was meant to be another symbol of Christmas, but the family agreed a few years later that it really was meaningful to us because of the many times Dad dressed up in a Santa suit and took gifts and food to needy families. There was a family in California where we left a box of "goodies" on the front porch, and wondered if they were home to find it. Then there was the little old couple on Duane's paper route that got a personal visit from "Santa." Many people were also good to us when we had times of struggle.



In **1994**, we were on our mission and each of our children and their spouses were able to come and visit us. We took them to Broadway shows in the theater district, to various castles, and other places of interest. One of those places was the town of Windsor, where the Queen of England resides when not at Buckingham Palace. It is a quaint little town with the castle being the main attraction. It was fun to visit the little shops and see all the British treasures and to purchase souvenirs.

During one of our trips to Windsor we decided we wanted to give ornaments from our mission. Gerry had a year off from painting, but she still helped with the shopping and wrapping and dispensing of the gifts. Everyone received a little **terra cotta figurine depicting various English people of distinction, such as Beefeaters, Palace Guards, Bobbies, etc.** It was just as well because Gerry's family moved from North Carolina to Salem and there just wasn't time to paint.

We returned home from our mission to England in **1995** and for the ornament that year we commissioned Gerry, once again, to paint them. This was the year that we decided the ornaments should reflect our lives and tell our personal history. Having fallen in love with England, we wanted a painted ornament that would go well with the other painted ones. We could not decide on whether to have an **English Bobbie**, or one of the **Palace Guards** or soldiers. We opted to do both. We looked everywhere for a prototype for them and several of the family offered drawings or pictures that could be copied. Gerry had purchased some magnets while in England and drew her own version of the Bobbie and soldier. They turned out so cute and everyone was delighted to get two ornaments.



In **1996** Gerry was struggling with an idea for an ornament. Now that we had decided that the ornaments should tell our story, it was certain that we should have a Taco Bell ornament. There was no easy way to do it and Gerry was in a stupor. She prayed about how she could do it, but the ideas wouldn't come. That year we went back to England to visit our mission. While shopping at Harrods, a huge store in London where the Queen and all the Royal family shopped we found the little **terra cotta figurine** ornaments that we had purchased at Windsor two years prior, we decided to get more and give them out for the ornament again this year. Gerry had another year off. Once the pressure was off for the ornament, she prayed again for an idea and it came to her quickly as to how to paint the Taco Bell ornament—for next year. She was determined to have them done by April.



The ornament for **1997** was to be the long-awaited **Taco Bell**. Gerry had the design and we approved, down to the gold bell and the green cacti garbage cans. Gerry had set her goal to have them done by April. Her mother-in-law had moved in with them and she reminded Gerry every day that she'd better get them done. She did, but she had to keep them a secret until Christmas. The Taco Bell ornaments turned out so cute. They were a pretty good replica of the first Taco Bell we opened at 3402 S. Commercial Street in Salem, Oregon in March of 1969. Taco Bell is the reason we moved to Salem. Many people warned us that Taco Bell might not make it, but it prospered, and all of our children were able to work there and paid for many of their own expenses including college educations. At the time we retired, we owned 20 franchises.



For **1998** we chose a **Holstein cow** to be the Christmas tree ornament. As children, we both grew up milking cows. The cows had to be milked morning and night, and on the Pope farm there was no one to do it but the five girls and Grandpa Pope. Dad was a Future Farmer of America in high school and then went on to be a dairy farmer until he went into the Merchant Marines, where he was a cook on a ship. When he returned, we were married June 18, 1947. He returned to dairy farming and we eventually ended up living in the big gray house on Highway 99 in Salida, California. There are so many stories that took place while living on the farm. Four of our eight children were born while we lived in the big gray house. Being so close to the highway brought all sorts of “visitors,” including hobos from the nearby railroad, vagabonds, and many men looking for a night’s sleep in the barn in exchange for work at the dairy.



Gerry made two ornaments for **1999**. Since we now had a plan to portray our lives in our ornament gifts, we felt we could not ignore the fact that the honeybee was important to us. She made the cutest **honeybee** with gold wire antennas and a **jar of honey**. Grandpa Nicolaysen had been a beekeeper professionally and Dad had learned the fine art of beekeeping by his side. Once when Dad was out working in the honey house he counted the bee stings he had received. He stopped counting at 100. We enjoyed the “fruits” of his labors for many, many years. We ate honey on our pancakes; honey on our biscuits, honey mixed with peanut butter, honey on our hot cereal. We even gave the kids their aspirin mashed up in a spoonful of honey. The honeybee and the beehive are symbols of our church, promoting industry and hard work. The T. L. Nicolaysen family chose the honeybee to “bee” the symbol representing the family. A banner was made to be hung at family reunions.



It was pretty obvious what the ornament should be for **2000**. It most certainly had to be the **Portland Temple**. Dad had been called a few years earlier to be a sealer in the Portland Temple, but in October of 1998, he was called to be in the Portland Temple presidency, and I was called to be a Temple Matron. We were given the calling for three years. We truly served the Lord with all of our hearts. Literally. It wasn't too long after we were called when Dad had bypass surgery and later, I suffered a heart attack and had quadruple bypass surgery. We were truly blessed and were able to return to serving in the temple after fairly quick recoveries.

Gerry did not have an easy time finding a pattern or a drawing of the temple, so once again, she designed her own. We were so pleased with how she showed the temple amongst the trees.



In **2001**, the Christmas tree ornament was a police car. Not just any police car, but a **California Highway Patrol car**. In 1954, Dad became a California State Highway Patrolman. He spent his necessary time at the academy in Sacramento, and the next ten years driving the roads of Central California. It is amazing how different people treated us when they knew that Dad was a policeman. The children were given rides to school in the police car and the teachers would bend over backwards to see that they were treated well. There were times when they would be on the way to school and ended up getting a call to an accident.

There are so many exciting stories that have been told for years about Dad's experiences. He encountered many drunk drivers, investigated numerous car accidents, and did so many other things while on duty. He looked so dashing in his uniform. It was a bitter-sweet day when he had to leave the Highway Patrol. In 1964, he was called to be the Bishop of the Manteca Ward and was told that he could not work on Sundays. Since he could not control his work hours, he quit the Highway Patrol with the hopes that he would return when his calling as Bishop was through. That never happened, because by that time, Dad was too old.

There is an official seal on the door of the ornament police car and Dad could not believe that Gerry could paint the detail work so small. Actually the picture was off the Internet and was shrunk down to size, cut out, glued on the ornament, and then varnished.



We decided in **2002** we needed an ornament on our tree of the **Nativity scene**, so Gerry found a cute pattern that we loved. It was three-dimensional, with little cut out figures. Since the birth of the Savior is why we celebrate Christmas, it was only fitting that there should be an ornament in His honor. But there is another reason we chose it. We had a family tradition on Christmas Eve, where Dad read the Christmas story from the Bible and the children acted it out with costumes and props. Some of the best memories of putting on the nativity came as the children got older. There were not any little ones left to play the parts of the animals, so many times the “big” kids helped out. It was pretty funny when the donkey would “hee-haw,” or a sheep would “Baaaaaa,” at an inopportune moment.

When the kids were married and the grandchildren started coming we switched the Christmas Eve ritual to the Monday night before Christmas. It was precious to watch the little ones portray the coveted parts of Mary and Joseph.



There was an old woman who lived in a shoe.  
She had so many children she didn't know what to do.  
She gave them some broth, without any bread,  
Then spanked them all soundly, and sent them to bed.

It seemed that everywhere we went, whether walking down the street or riding in the car, people were always counting how many children were in tow. There were always neighborhood kids over to play and whenever Donald Nicolaysen, Dad's brother, came over he would call me the Old Woman in the Shoe. There were days when I felt like the old woman in the shoe, especially since my hair turned white at an early age. When we found a piece of music called “The Woman in the Shoe,” we had to learn it, and it soon became our “Theme Song.” In **2003**, Gerry painted an ornament of the **Old Woman in the Shoe**, complete with 8 little kids, one for each of our children.



The ornament for **2004** was a frosted **gingerbread cookie with a silver rolling pin** hanging from it. Making frosted sugar cookies was another Christmas tradition in our family. Every year we would get out the silver rolling pin with the red handles and make dozens and dozens of cookies in Christmas shapes. We especially enjoyed making gingerbread boys, since those were Dad's favorite. We had lots of fun rolling them out, frosting them, decorating them, but most of all, eating them. Through the years we've collected cookie cutters in hundreds of shapes.

The tradition grew to Halloween and Easter and Valentine's Day. We even make 4<sup>th</sup> of July flags and Thanksgiving turkeys.



The ornament for the year **2005** was designed by Gerry to depict one of the favorite stories our children love to tell. My hair was white at an early age so "Lady Clairol" became an intimate friend of mine. I colored my hair dark brown for many years until Dad told me to let it go natural, as it was so beautiful.

Dad spent many hours working in Taco Bell, doing inventory, paying bills, and even working over the hot food. In the summers it would get so hot inside that he just couldn't bear the thick hair on his head. He told me that he was going to get a crew cut, which was most certainly outdated in the early '70's. I begged him not to do it but he insisted. I retaliated with the threat of coloring my hair red. He didn't believe I would, and he did indeed get a crew cut. I then called Barbara at work and asked her to pick up a bottle of red hair color on the way home. I did indeed color my hair red. That night we had to make a visit to Girl's Camp where Gerry and Elaine were attending. When we arrived at camp, Gerry and Elaine took one look at us and burst into tears. Dad tended to look a bit older and I much younger and people commented on it lots. But the most memorable comment came from our young Bishop, Bill Claussen. When he saw us he exclaimed, "Well if it isn't **Skin Head and Big Red!**" Needless to say, our hair grew out and we neither one returned to crew cut or redhead.





For **2006** we asked Gerry to paint a **Christmas tree** for our ornament. We always had a Christmas tree, no matter how little money we had. Most of the time we purchased it from a Christmas tree lot, and a few times we cut down our own tree. But one Christmas our tree came in a most unexpected way.

In Manteca we had very little money. One afternoon I bundled up the kids and with the last five dollars we had we went to a Christmas tree lot to pick out a tree. We walked around the lot looking for a nice tree but they were overpriced and pretty scroungy-looking. All that I could think about was how many Christmas presents I could buy with the five dollars. I ended up taking the discouraged children home with no tree.

While fixing dinner the phone rang. It was Dick Hoffman. Dad did some work as a relief milk truck driver for Dick and his brother Bud. Dick said that he had gone up to the mountains to get their family a Christmas tree and had brought one back for our family. We could hardly wait till after dinner when we went to pick up the tree. It was the most gorgeous tree we had ever seen. It was so tall we had to cut it before we could bring it in the house. We knew Heavenly Father was looking out for our family.



For several years, Dad kept pressing Gerry to make a ‘pig’ ornament. Not just any pig, it had to be a Berkshire hog. Like those he raised when he was younger. Gerry complained that there was no such thing as a ‘cute’ Berkshire hog. She kept looking.

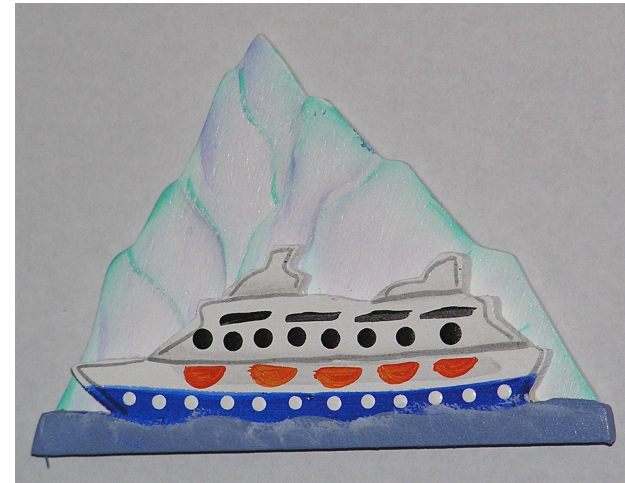
In **2006** Gerry surprised Dad on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, with 80 Berkshire hogs to be distributed however he wished. Note the white feet, white pointed snout and pointed ears. Perfection! You’ll have to ask Dad for details, since this was a pre-Edith experience.



This year we celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. We were married in the Salt Lake temple on June 18, 1947. We wanted to have an anniversary celebration and chose to involve only our eight children and their spouses. Our children planned the event at the Oregon Coast. The highlight was a nice dinner in the Surftides Inn restaurant, and a program in the motel conference room. It was a wonderful evening with jokes, life- sketches, slide shows and music. We were given a scrapbook in which each of our children, grandchildren, spouses and great-grandchildren created their own page. The cover page had our wedding picture on it, along with the following poem written by Karen.

When you packed up your car to head to Salt Lake  
Could you know then you'd have a family so great?  
Eight beautiful children, five girls and three boys  
Thirty-one grandchildren bringing much joy.  
Many great-grandchildren now play on your floor  
Before you know it there will be several more.  
Love and sorrows, laughter and tears  
Have sprinkled your lives for sixty years.  
With this book we honor you today  
And hope you know WE LOVE YOU in every way!

The ornament for this year, **2007**, started out as a surprise memento of our anniversary. Barbara asked Gerry to paint an ornament especially to honor our 60 years together. Gerry designed and painted the Salt Lake temple and presented it to us at the celebration. We thought it would be nice for all of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren to have one as well, so we asked Gerry to paint about 60 more of them. Gerry said it's her favorite ornament so far, but she says that every year.



In June of 1997 we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary by taking our children and their spouses on a cruise to Alaska. (Tim and Sally were in Venezuela so could not attend.) We drove to Vancouver, British Columbia, and spent the night before embarking on our cruise. The ornament this year, **2008**, depicts the cruise ship in front of the Mendenhall Glacier. The ports of call that we visited were the towns of Skagway, Ketchikan, Haines, and Juneau, Alaska. Most of us spent the days in port sightseeing and shopping, but some went on excursions.

Activities on the ship included miniature golf, swimming, hot-tubbing, shows, concerts, and speakers. There was a talent show held on the ship and the girls sang to honor our anniversary. The best activity was eating!! Our waiter from Beijing, China, took such good care of us at every meal. We all fell in love with him. We met the captain of the ship and some of the crew. The midnight buffets were exquisite, with every kind of food and dessert imaginable. Pictures were taken of our family on the stairs in front of the large ornate elevators. We had such a wonderful time celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and being with our children.



We have always been a camping family, whether through Boy Scouts, Girl's Camp, family reunions, or weekend campouts. In fact, it was at a youth outing in Twain Harte, Calif., where we first became interested in each other. Camping has been a part of our history ever since.

We have fond memories of our summers at Pinecrest Campground at Strawberry Lake in the high Sierra Mountains. A group of women and children from the Ward went, including the Beiers, Carters, Cottrells and us. One summer just our family went and Dad camped with us. We swam in the lake, hiked, cooked out over the campfire, and at night sang around the fire and roasted marshmallows.

Before moving to Oregon, we came up to check out Salem. We slept in the car, except for Dad, who slept under the tailgate of the station wagon. He was awakened in the early morning by a rustling sound. It turned out to be a skunk sniffing around a bean can that dad had thrown aside the night before. Dad lay motionless until the skunk got bored and wandered off.

We enjoyed several other camping trips in Oregon, including Breitenbush Lake, Champoeg Park, Camp Morrison, Silver Creek Falls, and the 4-H Center in West Salem. When the kids married and left home, all have kept active in camping through Scouting and Girl's Camp, etc.

Gerry designed and painted the ornament for this year, **2009**, to show our family's love of camping.



During our early years of marriage we had a few opportunities to do some moonlighting to bring in extra money. The ornament this year, **2010**, shows an **egg and chickens**, denoting one of these activities—running a poultry processing plant from 1960-1964. Dad's brother, Donald, had an egg business and when the laying hens got too old and quit laying, they were either forced to molt, (grow new feathers and start laying again,) or were sold. Dad and Donald came up with the idea to sell dressed hens to labor camps where the Mexicans lived who came up every summer to pick tomatoes. Donald provided the chickens and we ran the plant. There were four workers. Mr. and Mrs. Surrat leased the building to us and we called the business Green Acres Poultry. We processed around 500 hens a day. Occasionally we did custom work for the public who would bring geese, pheasants, pigeons, chickens and turkeys. We also sold fryers and turkeys for retail. Mr. Surrat helped with the killing, and Leola, Donald's wife, did the payroll. Dad did the bookkeeping and sales. Our family would sometimes help with the cleanup and when we were lucky, got to go with Dad to deliver the chickens to the labor camps. Once in a while the deliveries were made around the dinner hour when the cooks were making fresh tortillas. Many times they offered samples of delicious tortillas filled with chicken and gravy. What a treat! The business ended when the Mexicans were replaced by tomato-picking machines.



We love Mexican food and we often ate at a favorite restaurant in Stockton, California, called Joe's Mexico City Café. We nicknamed it Mexican Joe's after the owner. The ornament this year, **2011**, was painted to express our family's love of Mexican food.

When we discovered a new Mexican fast-food restaurant, Taco Bell, in Stockton, we took the kids to eat there. We loved it. There was a phone number on the window about how to purchase a franchise. We made a call and went to the headquarters in Torrance and purchased a franchise in Salem, Oregon. It opened for business in March of 1969. All of our children worked there to help pay for their college education. Carl actually started working in the Taco Bell in Manteca before we moved. The little Mexican boy was one of the early logos for Taco Bell, and he is simply called "Taco Bell boy." (We called him Pedro.)

We really missed Mexican Joe's, so we began a quest to find something similar. We "tested" a lot of restaurants between Medford and Portland, but nothing came close. However, not long after moving to Salem, a family opened a Mexican restaurant just a couple of blocks north of our Taco Bell. The restaurant was called Los Baez. It was indeed very close to the taste of Mexican Joe's! It turns out that Angel Baez had actually worked at Mexican Joe's in Stockton! We were some of their first customers and have most likely been their most loyal patrons, regularly seating 4 generations at the big corner table.

As much though, as we love eating at Mexican Joe's, Los Baez, and especially Taco Bell, nothing beats Mom's homemade enchiladas and Dad's homemade tacos and chili.



When we were growing up, reading was the best source of entertainment. If we had a good book we could go anywhere. We worked hard but if we had spare time we read. We were avid readers and when we had children, we found ways to encourage them to become book lovers. We joined book clubs and had an extensive library of church books, children's books, and World Book Encyclopedias which included the Childcraft books. Our children always had library cards and visited there often, bringing home piles of books at a time. I read to the children in the evenings while they were doing the dishes and read to them in the car on trips. We read scriptures together, taking turns reading a verse from our own scriptures.

When we were released from the Portland Temple Presidency, Dad went straight to Wright Elementary School and signed up to volunteer. He spent the next 11 years with the first graders, helping them with their reading. Oh how he loved the children, and they loved him! He was known as "Grandpa Stan" and found such delight when children would run up to him at the grocery store or at church and throw their arms around him and say, "Hi, Grandpa Stan!" At the end of every school year we gave each child their own copy of a classic book. We also gave one to each of our great-grandchildren as they completed first grade. "Grandpa Stan" finished the school year just one month prior to passing away in July, **2012**. I wanted to have an ornament this year that would honor his legacy and our love of reading.



“The Hills Are Alive with the Sound of Music.” This is a song our family has loved since seeing the movie, “The Sound of Music” on a trip to Salt Lake City in 1964. Because of our great love for music, Dad and I had talked about having an ornament that would show that love. The ornament for **2013** shows Maria, a young governess, singing in the Austrian Alps. She brought music back into the home of the von Trapp family after their father banned it when his wife died.

Both the Nicolaysen and Pope families were talented musically. My sisters and I sang at home, school, in productions, church meetings, and in many public venues, even on the radio. At one time I was a regular soloist for a local funeral home. Many of the callings I held in church were directing music, Primary chorister being a favorite. Dad and his siblings all sang and played various musical instruments. He excelled on the violin. “Meditation,” by Jules Massenet, was his signature piece. He also was the drum major in the Ripon High School marching band and sang in the Glee Club. He directed church choirs and taught others to love music.

We were pleased when it was evident that our children also had musical talent. We always had a piano in our home and many of our children took piano lessons. We encouraged our children to take band or choir in school. We had the French horn, cornet, flute, clarinet, violin, and piano represented in our home. We attended all the musical productions we could as a family. All of our children have beautiful singing voices and we spent many hours singing together around the piano and in the car. We hope this ornament will remind our family of the important role music has played in our lives.



Who doesn't love a good storm? Thunder, lightning, power outages, and RAIN! Yes, we love the rain and the ornament this year, **2014**, brings great memories of rainy days in Manteca, California. We loved walking home from school and stopping to play in the huge puddles that accumulated at the intersection of Mylnar and Pine Streets. Carl and Tim had bright yellow rain coats that were passed down to each of us and we all had a pair of rubber rain boots to protect our school shoes. After splashing around in the puddles and walking in the rain we came home to the smell of fresh-baked cookies. It just seemed that life could not be any better than a good rainy day, especially when thunder and lightning was involved. Mom was the Primary Chorister for many years and this is one of the songs she taught us.

“The sky is dark and it's raining outside, so let's whistle a tune.  
To show the sun is shining inside.” (Whistle or hum)

We sang this song every time it rained. We sang it often after we moved to Oregon in late December of 1968. It rained a lot but it never bothered us. Many a day was dark and overcast, then the sky would open up and there would be a light mist or drizzle. Many Northwesterners would tire of this quickly, but not us. We welcomed it, especially when it poured. It is what made Oregon so green and beautiful and so fresh and clean. While others complain and sing, “Rain, rain, go away; come again another day,” our family remembers the cozy feelings of coming in from the puddles to a mother who made cookies and memories on rainy days.



With eight children, schedules were busy and money was tight so our vacations mostly consisted of day trips whenever Dad had a free day. These trips provided a great deal of cherished memories for our family. The ornament for this year, **2015**, depicts a few of these. They usually began with a stop at the gas station where Dad bought gas and a five stick pack of gum. Dad would “guestimate” how much gas we would need to get us back home. We were each given half a stick of gum, to keep our ears from popping in the mountains. Sometimes the gum lasted longer than the gas, (guestimation) and we didn’t make it all the way home. Dad would have to hitchhike to get gas while we “patiently” waited in the car, on the side of the road. We tried to make the trips fun by singing, playing the Alphabet Game, and snacking on Cheezits and raisins but this backfired many times as someone usually got carsick.

Most of the day trips were done in California so the younger kids won’t remember them all, but the trips that were taken in Oregon wouldn’t have included the older children. These are some of the trips we remember: Yosemite National Park; Knight’s Ferry; Mt. Diablo; the Santa Cruz Boardwalk; San Francisco; and many trips to Oakland to watch the progress of the temple construction. We went to Jamestown and Jackson for Gold Rush history; Grass Valley; Calaveras Big Trees; Caswell State Park; Micke Grove Park and Zoo; Pixie Woods; Oakdale Reservoir; and Sacramento

to the Regional Dance Festival, and once to the State Fair. We also visited relatives in Turlock, Ripon, Milpitas, Campbell and Sacramento. A trip home from Fresno to the Regional Quartet Festival is forever embedded in our minds. We followed a drunk driver and to remember his license plate, so Dad could report it, we composed a song. Who will ever forget, “ETK 920; that’s our drunk guy, yeah, yeah, yeah?”

In Oregon there were many trips to the beach, our favorite being Fogarty Creek. On the way home the kids chanted “DQ, DQ,” in the hopes that we would stop for treats at Dairy Queen. We always obliged. We went to Silver Creek Falls, Champoeg State Park, Detroit Lake, Crater Lake, and we visited every Boy Scout Camp in Oregon. Dad never took the quick route to a destination. Scenic routes high above the Columbia River and old logging roads were some especially memorable (terrifying) trips, where I am quite often quoted as saying, “Stanley, don’t get so close to the edge!!” But memories were made and we treasure them.



The ornament this year, **2016**, honors our mother, who was the heart of our home. Our parents left us a wonderful heritage and we miss them. Dad was gone a lot while we were growing up, providing for our family, and faithfully serving the Lord. Mom supported him in all he did while serving faithfully in her own church callings. The greatest work she did was in our home raising eight children. She was a woman with physical, emotional, and spiritual strength. She taught us to work by making it fun. She read to us while we did the dinner dishes, drawing straws for jobs, or racing the clock. We always sang while we worked. Mom had a beautiful singing voice and she taught us to love music. Most of us took piano lessons or played a musical instrument in school. We loved Primary because our mother was the chorister and taught us the Primary songs. Mom's testimony of the church was unwavering. She served in Primary, Young Women's, and Relief Society. We loved Family Home Evening; she made learning the gospel fun. Our mother was wise and she counseled us many times at her knee. She was thrifty and taught us to earn our own money. She cut our hair, sewed our clothes, and she never worked outside the home. We knew that when we came home from school each day that she was there waiting for us. She was a good mom, truly the heart of our home.



Dad was released as Bishop in 1968 and after selling insurance for four years was looking for a new job. While eating at a Taco Bell in Stockton, the owner gave him a number to call to inquire about owning a franchise. Mom and Dad took a trip to Torrance and came home with a franchise in Salem, Oregon. They drove to Oregon and fell in love with the greenery and the people. They bought a house and two days after Christmas, we loaded a U-haul truck and headed up to Oregon. Mom and most of the kids and Grandpa Nicolaysen were in the station wagon. Gerry and Barbara rode in the truck with Dad. Tim was on his mission in Mexico. We were on a deadline to get the house key, so Mom went on ahead of the truck. It rained most of the way, and then snowed when we got to Oregon and the Siskiyou Mountains. The roads were icy and Mom said she lost her dignity, screaming, when the car slid on ice and spun around three times. When they knew they wouldn't make it to the realtor in time, Mom called and said, "We have come through hell to get this far, and I'm getting in that house if I have to break a window to get in." They were there waiting for her. Just as we pulled into the driveway it started snowing. We were relieved when the truck arrived. We slept on the floor that night. Neighbors and Ward members came to help unload, and the kids played in the snow for two weeks with their new friends. We love Oregon! With this ornament for **2017**, we celebrate our move to Oregon.



Our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents were blessed with many talents, especially in music. Mom sang with her sisters when they were children, and sang throughout her life, instilling in each of us a love of singing. A previous ornament depicts their love of music. Mom and Dad are now singing in the heavenly choirs. We still feel of their love and enjoy the ornaments that they have shared with us throughout the years.

Gerry wanted to share another ornament this year, **2018**, about a particular talent of Dad's that he shared with so many, his violin playing. He began playing the violin in Ripon Grammar School and continued on into high school. He kept playing after he graduated. He performed in the Modesto Symphony Orchestra. At Christmas time he played in the orchestra as they accompanied the "Messiah," while mom sang in the choir. He used his talent to bless others throughout his life. He played in Sacrament Meetings and for special choir and Christmas performances. The one piece that will forever be known as Dad's signature piece is "Meditation" by Jules Massenet, from the opera "Thais." Marian accompanied him on the piano and together transfixed the listeners as they performed with such emotion. This piece brings tears to our eyes and joy to our hearts as we feel Dad's presence upon hearing it. A few of his posterity have taken up playing the violin and other instruments, which we are sure, brings great joy to both Mom and Dad.



We are a scouting family, hence, the ornament for **2019**. It started with Dad when he joined the Boy Scouts of America as a youth and rose to the rank of Life Scout. When he was 19, he joined the Merchant Marine and was asked what qualifications he had. He said he had a cooking merit badge in Boy Scouts. They said, "Okay, you're a cook."

After Mom and Dad got married, Dad served as a Scoutmaster and was the Provisional Scoutmaster at Camp McBride in the high Sierras. Mom served as a Den Mother and held weekly meetings in our home. She made it so fun that we all loved the things the scouts were doing and could see the value in the Boy Scouts of America program.

Our entire family has been involved in the scouting or Girl's Camp programs. Some served as Scoutmasters and even those serving as Primary presidents were over the Cub Scout program. Carl has served as the president of the Ore-Ida Council and is currently serving as the National Chairman of the National Camp Accreditation Program and is on the regional Executive Board of Scouting. Elaine is the Stake Eagle Scout Specialist and District Verifier for Eagle Scouts. Bradley Roberts has made scouting his career.

There have been many awards earned by family members. They include: Arrow of Light; Duty to God; On My Honor; Scouter of the Year; Scout Family of the Year; Eagle Scout; Distinguished Eagle Scout; District Award of merit; Hall of Fame Boy Scouts; Woodbadge leaders; Silver Beaver; and Silver Antelope. Dad, Tim, Carl, Bob, and Elaine, and several grandsons have gone to the Boy Scout Jamborees in Virginia and West Virginia, either as participants or on staff. Many have gone to the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, either in leadership or in training capacities.

Dad was the President of the Cascade Area Council in Salem, Oregon. He and Mom gave generously to the BSA. They were instrumental in helping the local council pay off the mortgage on the scout office. They were so honored when the Cascade Pacific Council named the Salem Boy Scout office, the Nicolaysen Service Center.

There are currently 22 Eagle Scouts in the family, with more (male and female) working towards that goal.





This year, **2020**, shows an isolated person at home, wearing a face mask. COVID-19, a quick-spreading virus caused a world-wide pandemic. People panicked and began hoarding toilet paper, bleach, and hand sanitizer. Women were making masks by the thousands to help contain the virus. What does this have to do with our parents? After all, they have been gone for a while. What a blessing that they didn't have to witness the havoc that was wreaked on the world.

Well, our parents "hoarded" toilet paper and many other items long before the world went crazy. It was called Emergency Preparedness, or having a 2-Year's Supply back then. They took it very seriously. Since Dad did the majority of the grocery shopping, he took great care to build up a storage supply. Mom spent many summers teaching her daughters to can and store fruit.

Once, Dad investigated an accident of a grocery truck and he was able to bring home boxes of canned goods that were deemed "unsalable." Mom made delicious cobblers from large cans of boysenberries. There were also several cans of clam chowder, which we ate under duress.

When we opened Taco Bell in Oregon, Dad was able to purchase items for our food storage through Zellerbach's. He ordered a large case of toilet paper, which didn't get used for years. It had the texture of sandpaper. But Mom and Dad were adamant about having a 2-year's supply and a 72-hour kit. Dad was so proud of his very organized storage shelves which he rotated and replenished regularly.

At the height of the Corona virus, most people were hoarding food and supplies, but our family was more prepared than most. We had followed the counsel of our leaders and the example of our parents.



The ornament this year **2021**, is in remembrance of all the fun times we had at the beach with our family. While living both in California and in Oregon we lived within an hour of the beach. We spent many day trips going to the bay area and swam at every opportunity, mostly at Santa Cruz. The water was somewhat warm so it was delightful spending all day in the water or playing in the sand. After moving to Oregon we drove over to Lincoln City as often as we could. The water, however, was bitterly cold, even in the summer. That didn't stop us from getting our toes wet, then our legs, then stomachs, and if a wave crept up on us we were "all in." Brrrr. It was cold. It was pretty normal to see blue-lipped people standing in the foamy waves with heavy winter coats on. If we had the stamina to endure the cold water, our feet became numb and then the coldness became soothing. Our favorite beach was Fogarty Creek. There was a nice parking lot with restrooms and changing rooms, and several picnic tables on one side of the highway. A paved path with a little creek next to it went under the highway and led to a beautiful beach area and a huge rock formation for climbing. We always took a picnic lunch and usually had extra to feed the seagulls. Once while eating lunch, Dad exhibited great patience trying to get the seagulls to eat out of his hand. We gave up waiting and went swimming, not sure if he ever was successful. On the way home we always wanted to stop at Dairy Queen for ice cream. We'd start chanting, "DQ, DQ, DQ." We got louder as we got closer to Dairy Queen. We always stopped. Everyone has their own favorite beach story, but the truth is, we love the ocean and spending time there with our family.



This year, **2022**, marks six years since Grandma Edith Nicolaysen passed away and 10 years since Grandpa Stanley Nicolaysen passed away. Their tradition of telling their life story through yearly Christmas ornaments has been carried on to their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and now their first great-great-grandchild, Charlotte, born this year. This year the ornament depicts memories of the yellow 1950's Ford pickup truck that they purchased from Pat O'Neal, a neighbor and church friend. Although we didn't have the truck very long, the memories have lasted. There was a bulldog hood ornament on the front which would be coveted today. The truck was used for hauling whatever needed hauled— a lot of times children, who loved riding and playing in the back. We remember it mostly being used to haul chickens back and forth to different processing plants. We loved going with Dad when he delivered freshly packed chickens to the Mexican labor camps. If we were lucky enough to arrive at dinnertime, there was usually someone making homemade tortillas and they always offered us one. They were delicious. Tim used to deliver chickens before and after school in that truck. In fact, the day he got his driver's license he had to drive to Stockton alone to make a delivery. We also remember when the pickup was filled with chicken "fertilizer," that we helped spread on the front lawn. We never gave it a second thought that we tirelessly played, wrestled, and turned cartwheels on a lawn covered with chicken manure! Fun times in that yellow Ford pickup.



### Go My Son

Go my son, go and climb the ladder.  
Go my son, go and earn your feather.  
Go my son; make your people proud of you.

Work my son, get an education.  
Work my son, learn a good vocation.  
Climb my son, go and take a lofty view.

From on the ladder of an education,  
You can see to help your Indian nation.  
Reach my son, and lift your people up with you.

These are the words that have forever endeared us to our foster brother, **Matthew Troy Cloud**. Troy came to us from the Indian Reservation in Crow Agency, Montana, in the early 1970's. It was through an inspired program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, called The Indian Placement Program. It was designed to bring the children from the Reservation so they could get a better education. They in turn would take the knowledge they gained back to the Reservation. Mom and Dad wanted to be a part of this great program. It would also be good for Duane to have a "brother" closer to his age, as Tim and Carl were older and out of the house, leaving Duane surrounded by sisters.

The Lamanite children arrived at a Stake Center in Portland by busses and were given showers, haircuts, and a meal before they were introduced to their host families. Troy was almost 11 years old and was a shy chubby, little boy. We fell in love instantly. Each child was given a record of the above song to take with them. We played it over and over, singing the beautiful music along with the soloist.

Troy stayed with us for two school years and he and Duane became the best of friends. They played on a Little League baseball team together, and each of them had a paper route. They had a lot of fun together, and at times got into a little mischief. Troy was a master at flipping his eyelids up and thought it was fun to creep out the girls. He loved sunflower seeds, and, he made some pretty good popcorn.

He was loved by our entire family and was treated the same as the other kids. He didn't know what to call Mom and Dad, so he made up his own names for them. Instead of Mom and Dad, he called them Muma and Duda. They were delighted.

When it was time for Troy to come back for his third year, he opted to stay on the Reservation. He was soon sorry and wanted to come back but the program didn't allow it. We lost touch with him after a while, but we never stopped loving our sweet brother, Troy.

Some of the family connected with him years later and we learned he was a father and grandfather. He even called one of his grandsons, "Squeak" after Duane.

Even though Troy lived with us for a short two years, he made a huge impact on our family. "Go my son. Make your people proud of you."

We love you. We honor you with this Christmas ornament for **2023**.



Troy Cloud and his home, August 1974

