



# OBITUARY

## HEBER COTTAM JONES

August 7, 1934 - August 3, 2021

Heber Cottam Jones, noted Washington County Historian and Educator, lost his courageous battle with cancer August 3rd, 2021 surrounded by family at his home in St. George.

Heber was born on August 7, 1934 in St. George, Utah, the third son of Ellis Wilson and Eva Cottam Jones. His great-grandparents were among the first settlers of Washington County and Heber, like them, was a trailblazer during his lifetime. Heber spent his childhood in Veyo attending a one-room schoolhouse before graduating from Woodward School, Dixie High, Dixie College, the University of Utah (Bachelor's in Composite Social Studies) and Utah State University (Master's in U.S. History). He was the first citizen of Veyo to graduate from college.

Heber met the love of his life, Mary LaRee McAllister, at McArthur Jewelers and married her on October 12, 1956. He was drafted into the Army and served at Fort Lewis, Washington. After his tour of duty he began his professional career as a Social Studies teacher at Delta High School. He returned to St. George in 1961 and taught a generation of students Utah History in classrooms at Woodward, Dixie Junior High, Dixie High School, and Dixie College. During the summers he welcomed eager campers as a host at Pine Valley and dedicated years of service as a wildland firefighter.

A pioneer in his own right, Heber took many Washington County School District children on their first visit to Zion National Park through his "Outdoor Local History" Summer School program. In addition to prized memories visiting Coral Pink Sand Dunes and hiking the world-famous Narrows, Heber is remembered for fearlessly driving a school bus full of children through the Zion tunnel with two-way traffic. After retiring from his career in education, Heber continued to share his love of public lands while managing the Washington County Welcome Center for the Five County Travel Council at the Utah-Arizona State Line. During his time there he introduced more than a million visitors to Southern Utah.

Not one to stay still for long, Heber's second retirement was divided between donating his time and expertise as an archivist at Dixie State University's Special Collections Department and serving the Washington County Historical Society. He authored two books, *The History of Woodward School* and *The History of Veyo*, along with numerous articles and poems. He was

an avid lecturer always willing to prepare and present and help others learn about the land and people he loved.

As a result of Heber and LaRee's legacy and leadership, all five of his sons served missions for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and graduated from college with advanced and professional degrees.

Heber cherished his family and established lasting traditions of hunting, fishing, hiking, and gardening with his children and grandchildren. Heber was an avid University of Utah football fan and enjoyed spending Saturday afternoons in the fall surrounded by family. Heber and LaRee raised a large vegetable garden in Veyo and loved sharing their harvest with family and friends. Amongst many other things, his family will miss taking the water on Wednesday nights together and gathering for Veyo Birthday barbeques with Grandpa's famous Dutch Oven potatoes. He will be deeply missed.

He is survived by his wife LaRee of sixty-four years and their children, Don and Jean Jones, Tom and Suzanne Jones, Walt and Sara Jones, Rob Jones, Will and Kacey Jones, thirteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, sister Vera Seitz, brother Ivins (Thirza) Jones and numerous extended family members. He was preceded in death by his parents, an infant son Edward, grandson Scott Wesley Jones, and brothers Alma and Vernon.

His family wishes to express a deep appreciation and special thanks to Dr. Brian Tudor, nurses, and staff at the IHC Cancer Infusion Center. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Huntsman Cancer Institute in Heber's name.

A celebration of Heber's life will take place on his 87th birthday, Saturday, August 7, 2021, 3:00 pm at Spilsbury Mortuary, 110 S Bluff Street St. George, UT with a viewing from 1:00 – 2:30 pm prior to service. Interment to follow at Veyo Cemetery UT with full military honors.

Friends and family who are unable to attend are invited to view the funeral service online. Please click on the link below:

<http://webcast.funeralvue.com/events/viewer/58091>

Arrangements are made under the direction of Spilsbury Mortuary, 110 S. Bluff Street St. George, Utah. Family and friends are invited to sign Heber's online guest book at [www.spilsburymortuary.com](http://www.spilsburymortuary.com)

Services at:

Spilsbury Mortuary Chapel  
110 S. Bluff  
St. George, UT

Visitation: August 7, 2021, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Celebration of Life: August 7, 2021, 3:00 pm

Cemetery: August 7, 2021

Veyo Cemetery  
334 Ranch Rd, Veyo, UT