

Lois Smith Haight Young Wells

Lois Smith Haight was born 26 October 1918 in Cedar City, Iron, Utah.¹ She was the oldest of three children of Leonard Haight and Kate Irene Smith.² In 1920, the family was living next door to her maternal grandparents in Snake Valley, White Pine, Nevada. Her father was a farm laborer on her grandfather's sheep ranch.³ By 1930, they had moved back to Cedar City, where her father farmed.⁴

Lois earned straight A grades in high school.⁵ Lois began her teaching career in Beaver in 1948, where she taught third grade. She organized a kindergarten and served as principal. She married Abram Owen Young in 1937 in Washington, Utah.⁶ Abe was an auto mechanic, owning his own garage in Cedar City in 1940.⁷ He was killed in a car accident in 1946, leaving Lois a young widow with three children.⁸ He was buried in the Cedar City Cemetery.⁹

Lois returned to school and earned a bachelor's degree in education from Brigham Young University in 1949.¹⁰ She married widower Ernest Pace Wells in 1950 in St George, Washington, Utah. They had one child together; Lois was a stepmother to two of Ernie's older children. Lois taught first through sixth grade in Leeds, Washington, Utah. She began teaching special education in 1964. Ernie died in 1979 in St George and was buried in the city cemetery.¹¹

Lois taught at Santa Clara Elementary School and served as a reading specialist until her retirement in 1987. She was recognized for her 35 years of service in Washington County Schools in 1986 and was named Outstanding Educator by the St George Chamber of Commerce in 1988.¹² She never lost her passion for teaching.¹³ She served two missions for the Mormon Church, one in Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 1989 and one in San Diego in 1991.¹⁴

In 1994, she was chosen as the Orchid Lady of the St George Literary Arts Club.¹⁵ She was a prolific quilter and gave her beautiful quilts to family, friends, and those in need. She had injured her hand and used quilting as physical therapy.¹⁶ She loved shopping sprees with her granddaughters and singing with the church choir.¹⁷ She died 24 November 2001 in St George after a brief illness and was buried in the city cemetery.¹⁸ She had 16 grandchildren, and 33 great-grandchildren.¹⁹

¹ US Social Security Death Index; *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001.

² Utah, County Marriages, 1887-1940.

³ United States Census, 1920.

⁴ United States Census, 1930.

⁵ *Iron County Record*, 16 January 1936, p. 8.

⁶ Utah, County Marriages, 1887-1940; *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001.

⁷ United States Census, 1940.

⁸ *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001.

⁹ *Billiongraves.com*

¹⁰ *Salt Lake Tribune*, 24 April 1949, p. 14.

¹¹ *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001.

¹² *The Daily Spectrum*, 15 January 1986, p. 3; 13 May 1987, p. 13; 7 June 1987, p. 16; 29 January 1988, p. 2.

¹³ *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001.

¹⁴ *The Daily Spectrum*, 21 October 1989, p. 11; 16 November 1991, p. 11.

¹⁵ *The Daily Spectrum*, 24 March 1994, p. 25; *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001.

¹⁶ *The Daily Spectrum*, 18 March 1998, p. 15.

¹⁷ *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001.

¹⁸ Utah Death Certificates, 1904-1964; US Social Security Death Index; *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001; *The Daily Spectrum*, 27 November 2001, p. 5.

¹⁹ *Deseret News*, 25 November 2001



Honored for 35 years of teaching in Washington County, Utah (second from the left; image from *The Daily Spectrum*, 15 January 1986, p. 3).



(*The Daily Spectrum*, 7 June 1987, p. 16; 27 November 2001, p. 5; 17 November 1990, p. 17).



The Orchid Lady of the St George Literary Arts Club, 1994-1995
(*The Daily Spectrum*, 24 March 1994, p. 25).



(Image from *Familysearch.org*)



(Image from *BillionGraves.com*)