



Merrill T. Syphus

September 24, 1932 - January 3, 2021

St. George, UT — Our beloved father, Merrill T. Syphus, passed away peacefully January 3, 2021, in St. George, Utah. He was 88.

Merrill was a devoted son, brother, husband, father, grandfather and physician. He leaves a legacy of lives lifted among his cherished family, dear friends and respected patients. From dedication to his family and church to caring for the sick, his interest was always the welfare of others.

Merrill Syphus was born September 24, 1932, to Fay Beebe Syphus and Elizabeth Tullis Syphus in Huntington, Utah. The third of six children, he was raised in St. George, Utah. From his earliest years he knew he wanted a career in medicine. A seventh-grade school counselor helped him map a course through high school to best be prepared for medicine. After graduating from Dixie High School he attended Dixie College and the University of Utah, graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree. He earned his Doctor of Medicine (MD) at the University of Maryland in 1960.

He intended to practice medicine in St. George, but during his internship in Pasadena, California, he shadowed a surgeon and found his true calling. Consequently, he stayed in Pasadena given the broader surgery opportunities in the area. He would often say, "Surgery is the ultimate cure."

Merrill met and fell in love with his beautiful wife and Southern California girl, Deanne Hulshoff, when they both sung in the Southern California Mormon Choir. They married in the Los Angeles Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1964 and went on to create a wonderful home, eventually raising 10 children and sharing 55 years of marriage.

Merrill balanced his time among a growing family, church responsibilities and a successful family medical practice in Pasadena. He performed surgery and conducted rounds at St. Luke's, Huntington Memorial, Arcadia Methodist, and Santa Teresita Hospitals. He was well respected by his peers and patients for his combination of medical skill and compassion. He faithfully served in his church, including callings as Sunday School President and Bishop. He also contributed to the community as a member and one-time president of the Pasadena East Rotary Club.

More than anything else, Merrill's family was his first priority. He spent countless hours teaching his children solid values and patriotism, and no matter the hour he assisted them with schoolwork and science projects. He loved to attend their concerts and athletic events as much as help them live the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He often quoted Shakespeare, his favorite literary figure, and scripture, to convey life lessons. Any time one of his kids – and sometimes their friends - needed stitches due to the regular bumps of life, the kitchen table literally became an examination table. His motto was, "Whatever it takes."

Merrill always dreamed of practicing medicine in St. George. In 2003 he closed his practice in Pasadena after nearly 40 years and returned to St. George to set up a family practice. He also became Medical Director of the Amara Med Spa, and he was a surgeon for Dr. Diet Health and Wellness Center. He worked at his practice and at Amara until the time of his passing.

Merrill is preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Deanne; brother Beebe Syphus; and sisters Marilyn Syphus, LeNore Syphus, and Betty (Syphus) Jensen. He is survived by his brother Stanley Syphus; children Drew (Stacey) Syphus, Dallin (Martha) Syphus, Taylor (Sara) Syphus, Christian (Candacy) Syphus, Matthew (Rachel) Syphus, Allison (Ted) Ririe, Gary (Emily) Syphus, Shannon (Isaac) Thimmesch, Holly (Jay) Harder, and Eric (Juliet) Syphus; and 36 grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held for both Merrill and Deanne at 1:00 pm Saturday, January 16, 2021, at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 200 W. Brigham Road, Saint George, Utah, 84790. The service will also be broadcast virtually via Zoom – go to <https://serenitystg.com/> and select Merrill Syphus in the Tributes list to connect.

Charitable contributions may be made to the Southern California Latter-day Saint Choir (c/o Steve Bills, 2911 Edgewick Rd, Glendale, CA, 91206).

Merrill Syphus Funeral Service Zoom Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94902658542?pwd=Z01GSll6cDUwVGhJRjVoaW0rVDgwZz09>

Meeting ID: 949 0265 8542

Passcode: 314411

Funeral Service Recording: <https://youtu.be/3OHNfDNm75Q>

Previous Events

Viewing

JAN 16. 12:00 PM - 12:45 PM (MT)

Bloomington Stake Center
200 West Brigham Road
St. George, UT

Funeral

JAN 16. 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM (MT)

Bloomington Stake Center
200 West Brigham Road
St. George, UT

Burial

JAN 16. 2:45 PM - 3:00 PM (MT)

Tonaquint Cemetery
1777 S. Dixie Drive
Saint George, UT 84770

Tribute Wall



“ *Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah created a Tribute Video in memory of Merrill T. Syphus*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - January 16, 2021 at 03:33 PM



“ *Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah created a Zoom Meeting in memory of Merrill T. Syphus*



Serenity Funeral Home of Southern Utah - January 11, 2021 at 06:55 PM

PL

“ Tonight my friend and I were talking about a difficult time in my life. This was 40 years ago. My brother had died in a motorcycle accident. I had already had panic attacks and had no idea what they were and suffered from terrible anxiety. Being only 20 years old I had no real doctor yet and needed help badly. My counselor, Paul Woodward, recommended Dr. Syphus. I totally had forgotten his name until tonight. I'm now 64. I will never forget his absolute kindness to me and prescribing a medicine that helped. I don't know what I would have done without him. I can't remember his face but I remember his kindness. I'm glad he lived a long life. A relative of mine lives in St. George where it looks like Dr. Syphus retired. When I next go to visit I will look for his grave and take flowers for him. Thank you dear doctor, you were one sweet man and there when I really needed someone's help. God bless his memory and your family. Pam LaCuran

Pam LaCuran - July 06, 2023 at 01:27 AM

AF

“ Anderson, Banning, Ambrose, Kennedy, Akers family purchased the Sweet Solace Spray for the family of Merrill T. Syphus.



Anderson, Banning, Ambrose, Kennedy, Akers family -
January 15, 2021 at 05:37 PM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Merrill T. Syphus.



January 14, 2021 at 06:56 PM

XF

“ *xoxox-Suzette, Steve and Family purchased the Serene Reflections Bouquet for the family of Merrill T. Syphus.*



xoxox-Suzette, Steve and Family - January 13, 2021 at 10:29 PM

JW

“ *So many memories with this amazing couple. It's not often that both husbands and wives are best friends. Beginning in 1964 when they were married right up to April Conf. 2019 we have shared a unique bond—it was the Syphuses, the Hills, the Schaap's and the Watkins—a truly special group who shared so many meals, joys, heartaches and miracles during those 55 years. Merrill took care of the medical and John the legal—and Deanne and I took care of the kids—from being in the nursery in the old Pasadena Ward while our husbands served in the Bishopric to being empty nesters and watching General Conf. together in St. George. What a positive and lasting example they were to all of us—how I love them and their family and look forward to being together again for eternity. My love to all of you*

Judi Watkins

Judi Watkins - January 12, 2021 at 11:41 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Merrill T. Syphus.*



January 12, 2021 at 07:22 PM

SN

“ *The Syphus family members had largely dispersed by the time we moved to Pasadena in 2007. The legends persisted, however, and we learned what an amazing legacy the parents and all the kids had created.*

We were fortunate to get to know Merrill and Deanne and Allison and Eric and Holly. We were also fortunate to be able to visit with both Merrill and Deanne at a wedding in St. George a couple of years ago. What warm, lovely people you all had for parents! We know their passing creates huge holes in your hearts, and we pray for your healing.

*We love you and extend our condolences,
Ron and Susan Nelson*

Susan blunt Nelson - January 12, 2021 at 04:24 PM

JA

“ To the Wonderful Syphus Family, what a legacy your parents have left. They gave so very much to so many. The imagine of Merrill stitching kids on the kitchen table or Deanne directing Bye Bye Birdie like a professional, came immediately to mind. But maybe what I most remember is how fun they made everything. They lived their faith fully, and practiced Joseph Smith's creed, that men are that they might have joy. And believe me, Deanne made sure that was men and women. Oh we will miss them, who can forget Merrill armed at Shannon's shot gun temple wedding reception. But it didn't need to be a wedding, any one privileged to have just hung out with the Sy-phy family will never forget the laughter, and the music. Has any family ever been more generous in spreading their love, talent and hard work through music, I doubt it. You, Drew, Dallin, Taylor, Christian, Matthew, Allison, Gary, Shannon, Holly and Eric are the fruits of this dynamic duo, and you have all thrived with your own beautiful families and continue the tradition of giving with joy. I love you all, and send my very best, Janet Arribas Layton

Janet Layton Arribas - January 12, 2021 at 01:16 PM

WE

Merrill's voice stood out with the singing. Loved to hear him. What a special family a special Bishopric with Vern Hill and Bob Schaap! Now he's back with the love of his life. Condolences family! ❤️ Walter n Lani Elwell

Walter Elwell - January 12, 2021 at 09:11 PM

BM

We have missed this family since they moved to St. George! We raised our children together and have very fond memories of our friendship. Our love and condolences to you all!
The McAlister's

Bonnie McAlister - January 16, 2021 at 02:10 PM

KH

Randy and I have so many treasured memories tucked away in our hearts of Merrill and Deanne and you wonderful children.

I remember a number of times calling Merrill with a medical issue, once near midnight. He was always there for us with a cheery attitude and genuine concern. They were both quite remarkable. Hard workers, wise, loyal, and full of faith.

I loved working with Deanne on musicals etc., not only because she was extremely talented, but because she was a lot of fun.

Such choice individuals! All of you are in our prayers. We love you!

Randy and Kay Huff and family

Kay Huff - January 18, 2021 at 07:17 AM

CA

*Thank you for Saving my life @ Arcadia Methodist Hospital 1986.
R.I.P. Dr. Syphus 🙏🙏🙏*

Carlos Alejandro - June 16, 2023 at 06:54 PM