

## ATHENE LOTT JENKINS

Athene Lott Jenkins was born 22 Aug 1908, at Joseph, Sevier, Utah. She was the youngest of 11 children. Her father was Adelbert Franklin Lott, her mother was Susan Jane Farnsworth. Athene had 6 sisters and 4 brothers: Clarissa May, Amelia Jane, Adelbert Peter, Margaret Ann, Docia, Julia, John Taylor, David Alonzo, Lareen, and Franklin LeRoy. Athene's family was so thrilled to have a little sister and her mother had been praying for a little girl. Athene had a vibrant personality, lively, and sort of tom-boyish. The home she was born in and lived in was a log home, with a lean-to on the back. The house had a clay, dirt roof.

When she was 18 months old, her parents decided to sell their home and belongs & bought a team of 3 year old horses and a covered wagon. They started the 3 week trip to Idaho. All they could take was a sewing machine and a metal bed, and homemade carpet.

They stopped in Ucon at Dan Tyler's home and bought some eggs. Athene's sister, Margaret, stayed to work for Mrs. Tyler. The rest of the family went on to Rexburg. Athene's mother, Susan, had an Aunt Annie and Uncle Albert Farnsworth, who lived in Rexburg. Her father rented a farm from a Mr. Thompson, and they lived in the area for about 3 years. When Athene was 5 years old, they moved to the Ucon and St. Leon area.

She would ride to school on the horse with her brothers, Taylor and Lon. Her brother, Roy, would ride behind Taylor, and Athene behind Lon. They would trade off every other day. Athene was very close to her brothers. They took her with them a lot and when she was older, they taught her how to dance and would take her at a young age to the dances. It made her feel important and loved. She loved horses. She would always be looking at the horses as she went places with her mother. She never payed much attention to whom the people were but made frequent comments on the good looking horses.

She and Roy grew up together, being 3 years apart. She tells of going to the field and riding the work horse back one day. Her father told her not to run the horse and to go slow because the horse was not well. She ran him all the way to the house. The next morning, when her father went out to get the horses ready for work, the horse was dead. Her brothers teased her, telling her she killed the horse.

Athene and her mother were very close. There was a great love between them. She called her Mama. If her brothers and sisters wanted to tease her, they would say, "Athene called you Mother." Athene would cry and say, "I never." Athene stated in her history, "I was quite a baby for my mother. I went everywhere with her."

They lived in several places in Ucon. Athene said, "My father bought a house and lot from George Cramer. I loved that home. It was close to the school and the church, and the old dance hall."

Athene was baptized, when she was 8 years old in the Farmer's Friend Canal by Bishop. A. B. Simmons. She was not afraid of the water and walked into the canal befoire the bishop. Bishop Simmons said that was the first time anyone had been in the water waiting for him. It was 2 Sep. 1916. She then walked home with her mother.

Athene talked about how sad their family was when her brother, Dell, died. He had taken some boys on a camping trip and drank some contaminated water. He got Typhoid Fever and then Pneumonia. He died on his 24<sup>th</sup> birthday. He had received a mission call. Athene said, "He was such a good brother."

Her father was such a hard worker. He dug trenches all over Ucon, when they started to

get water piped into the homes in Ucon. Her mother was very conservative. She made all of Athene's clothes, sometimes without a pattern. They always looked lovely. One of Athene's dear childhood friends was Harriet Lords. They have continued that friendship all through their lives.

Athene's father died, when Athene was 13 years old. Her journal states: "Father went up to Island Park with Taylor, Henry Hill, and George Byram to chop wood in November. It was cold and father caught cold and had to come home. He got pneumonia and died 20 Dec. 1921. It was a sad Christmas. We were so poor, and Mother told me she had no money for Christmas. All I wanted was a pair of ice skates, but she said she didn't have the money. Christmas morning, there were ice skates. Lon had gotten them for me, bless his heart. Mother had bought a new record for our record machine, and even though her heart was breaking, she played the record Christmas morning. We had lots of fun skating in front of our house, in Bishop Simmon's field, and on the Farmer Friend Canal.

Athene had a great love for music, and when she was about 10 years old, she took lessons from Deon Seedall. She wanted to play the primary songs after her first lesson. She practiced and practiced. She was asked to be the Primary Organist, when she could only play the top hand of the Primary songs. She continued to practice and was asked to be the Sunday School organist, when she was very young. She said no one knows how hard I practiced. She said in her journal how grateful she was to Deon Seedall for her piano lessons. Athene helped Deon with house work and milked the cow to pay for her lessons.

In her own words: "When I was real young there was a boy in school that I had a case on. It was Bill Jenkins. We couldn't have been more than 8 or 10 years old. He used to take me for a ride on the sleigh behind their dog, Old Brownie. Once he stopped and I kept going and he hit me on the nose. We had lots of fun together." I guess you could say Bill and Athene were childhood sweethearts.

Athene's mother worked very hard to take care of her family. When Athene was 16 years old, she had to quit school and went to work in the Simmons-Woolf store for Joe Ritchie, to help support herself and her mother. Her mother boarded school teachers to help make a living.

Bill Jenkins became an important part of Athene's life. He would come into the store and Athene would feel her face blush and turn red, starting at her neck until her whole face was red. Joe Ritchie would tease her, and Athene said it was so embarrassing, because she wanted so bad to look nice for Bill. (Athene while working here, used to take her lunch and go over to Harvey's to eat it. She always had extra sandwich for the kids to eat, thanks to her mother.)

Their courtship continued and they were married 12 March 1930 in the Logan Temple. Neither of their mothers could go, because it was too far and not enough room in the car.

Bill didn't have a job, so they lived with Athene's mother. Bill thought so much of his mother-in-law that Athene said sometimes he would stay up late playing checkers with her mother and Athene would go to bed alone.

Athene was expecting a baby and before Teena was born, they moved into a house called the Bybee house. Bill started farming and raised 12 acres of potatoes. He made \$19 after expenses. But over the years, things got much better. Teena was tiny and delicate, and they knew she was not well. But the doctor did not tell them she not normal. It was from one doctor to another, and finally a chiropractor helped her to walk at 3 1/1 years. With much faith and love they worked with Teena. She began to grow into better physical health. It was later they learned she had Down Syndrome.

Kent was born 26 March 1935, and was very lively and walked at 9 months. Athene said he seemed to know that he had to be independent early in life. Mother said he was a sweet boy.

Steve was born 1 March 1940, and was described as a beautiful, curly haired boy—a real doll. He was too cute for a boy.

Dean was born 15 Dec. 1945—another sweet, happy, brown-eyed boy. He was so welcomed.

Jerry was born 4 May 1949, and he was a happy and lively baby. Teena and Jerry were 2 special spirits and brought much love and taught patience and charity and compassion to all the family.

Steve wrote a tribute to his mother:

When Steve was 16 years old, Dad Jenkins and Steve had a meeting of the minds. Steve decided to leave home. He went in, packed his belongings, got in his car and was ready to leave. Dad Jenkins came out and told Steve he needed to go in and talk to his Mom. So Steve got out of the car, went and talked to his mother, and sure enough, she talked him into staying home. Steve unpacked his belongings and stayed home. One afternoon, when Steve was about 7 or 8 he came home not knowing that his Mom already knew that he had been sassing the teachers. Mom was out in the yard holding a switch behind her back. She asked Steve to pick a bouquet of flowers. He could place the switch in the middle of the arrangement. Steve caught on to what was going to happen. He started backing up, soon turned to the lane running as fast as he could run. Mom and Steve finally stopped. Mom said “You know Steve, I will always be just this far behind you.” Mom talked Steve into coming and getting his switching. Mom had a great way with words.

The Bishop came to mother and asked her to teach a scout class. It seemed that he had asked other ladies in the ward, and they all refused, when they found out which class it was—Steve, Joe Robison, and Spencer Lott, all cousins, were in this class. Mother took the class and really had a good handle on all 3 boys. Mother really had a way with words, her smile and twinkle in her eyes really won a lot of hearts. She no doubt captured the attention of all 3 boys.

Mother’s words of wisdom were, “You will never be any happier than your saddest child.” I am sure that each of us as parents can run that through our mind and relate to this thought.

Mother once told Maxine that Steve was suppose to be her little girl. Steve had the prettiest, round little face with the most beautiful curly hair. Steve referred to himself as “The only hell my Mom ever raised.” Mom did have love for every one of her children. Mother was Steve’s best friend as well as his best support system, a son could ever have through the years.

Dean’s tribute to his mother. From my earliest recollection I knew that mom knew there was a God that He was a loving Father who cared about each one of us. I remember the first time I barged into her bedroom one day, and caught her on her knees praying. That has had a lasting impression on me. She was never too good, too proud or too self-sufficient to humbly ask Heavenly Father for help or guidance. She constantly reminded me to do the same.

Mom had a great love for the scriptures, particularly the Book of Mormon. She had a set of records and was constantly listening to them as she did her ironing or kitchen chores. I appreciate the encouragement she gave me to spend time getting to know the Book of Mormon developing a love for the Savior because of it. Mom’s testimony of the gospel was evident in the hours and hours of church service she devoted. It seemed she always had a church calling. She

loved the Young Women's program and served for years in different calling within that program. I think Mom was basically a very happy individual. Jerry always referred to her as "Sunshine". She had her trials, sorrows, and heartaches, but she always looked for the positive. Perhaps her love for music helped in this regard. She was always humming or singing a song, it seemed. If music calmed the savage beast, she made sure it was going to be evident in our home. Dad couldn't carry a tune in a bucket, but he adored the music in Mom. He would set for hours listening to her play the organ. He may have had a gruff side to him, but there was also a soft and tender heart, and Mom helped to bring that out through music. Her thoughtfulness, her smiles, and her intense love for him. Not that they didn't have their disagreements, but they had the ability to work things out. She missed him dearly when he died. Being the youngest of 11 children, mom was used to being spoiled. Dad continued that for over 60 years. Now has an eternity to do that. I'm so happy they have been reunited. She's singing again. Can you hear it

Aunt Ann Jenkins Staker's tribute: There are special words of a song that ring in my heart. "Sunrise, Sunset, swiftly fly the years-one season following another...I don't remember getting older, when did they." And here we are, parting for a brief time with another of our dear family.

As I have lingered at her bedside at times with Dorothy, Steve and Maxine, and Lorraine and friends, you knew that she lingered too, and loved those faces that were dear. A precious part of everyone has gone with her too, to that grand reunion. Words cannot express our joy and her happiness as she was embraced by Bill, Kent, and beautiful Teena.

Athene was my gorgeous Sunday School teacher, when I was about 10. How I worried, when Bill sometimes dated others. Athene was always and forever my choice. How delighte and excited we were (my younger brothers and I) when they would take us on one of their dates to the show. We dressed in our best. We were squeaky clean-not as everyone goes now. She liked our Dad and often, when he came into the Simmons-Woolf store, she had a cream-puff stashed away for him for a little treat.

Some of the school teachers stayed at the home of Mother Lott and Athene during the school year. There must surely have been some delightful and interesting "table talk" at supper, as they reviewed the events at days-end from the store and from school.

When she married my brother, Bill, she "married" our whole family and was a part of it-Aunts, Uncles, Cousins and all. They loved her and she loved them. We had so many wonderful times together. We have watched them carry a sorrow and a heartache that could have torn anyone and everything apart. Yet challenges come to all of us, to "hone" and "fine tune" us to the spirit, and seeing more clearly we know we are not alone and are given the courage that passed understanding. Those years have been difficult for her and for each of you. You dear children have borne it valiantly. It is remembered today and forever.

One of my favorite poems follows:

#### THE WATCHER

She always leaned to watch for us, anxious if we were late,  
In winter by the window, in summer by the gate;  
And though we mocked her tenderly, who had such foolish care,  
The long way home would seem more safe because she waited there.  
Her thoughts were all so full of us, She never could forget;  
And so I think that where she is she must be watching yet.

Waiting till we come home to her, Anxious if we are late.  
Watching from Heaven's window, Leaning from Heaven's gate.

From her vantage point now, she will be forever watching & waiting for you.

Bill and Athene lived and farmed in Ucon and on the Jenkins homestead, till Bill retired and they moved to Ucon and bought the Miskin home. They have always been a happy and devoted couple-forever sweethearts. She had a great talent for music and played the organ and sang. Her dream was to play the organ in the temple, which she did for 4 years. Athene and Bill were temple workers for 8 years, and it was a very special calling in their lives.

Athene was close to her brothers and sisters and their families. They worked & played together. Taylor Lott lived just down the road. Her sister, Julia, lived near by. They were always close and enjoyed each other. They would visit on the phone and Dorothy and LaRue took them to visit each other in their later years. Lon and Roy Lott and sisters Margaret and Docia and Harvey and Reta Woolf. All their families were close and there was great love for each other. Julia's, daughter, LaRue, and Teena were close in age and in love and friendship. Jesse, Margaret's daughter, came often to see mother, and they shared a special love for each other.

LaRue Robinson Clark's tribute: (A Niece) It was through Aunt Athene that I identified the fact God loved everyone and all his creations, because Aunt Athene did. As a child I thought her name was Anthe. She was close to all of us. We could talk to her about anything. I never heard her judge, critical or complain. She and her brothers and sisters had a wonderful sense of humor, laughed a lot or said funny things that caused laughter. Their devotion to one another was a positive experience for all of us. God knew who to send the Down Syndrome babies to. Athene received 2 of them. She and Bill were never ashamed of them, and took them everywhere except their continued honeymoons throughout their lives. They taught me that romance is not dead. When Jerry was born, Uncle Bill cried and wept as he told about it. I had never seen a man cry so much. He wept for Athene and himself. His tears from weeping were the healing balm in acceptance of the great task before them to nurture Jerry and raise him as they were doing their precious Teena. They were raising celestial children in this material world with material bodies and material things. Their 3 sons, Kent, Steve and Dean assisted them in doing this. It was a tremendous challenge that God gave this whole family to do. They suffered struggle to do right by one another are beyond our comprehension. Even now they live with those memories of their formative years. I hope they stand them in good stead. I am grateful for their positive example. It is a force for good in my life.

Bill and Athene traveled a lot and enjoyed especially their trips to Hawaii. It was always important to Athene to look nice. She was well dressed and her hair was done to perfection. She had a great love for people and was well liked and respected. Her sense of humor was so wonderful and she had that with her to the very end of her life. Her sweetheart, Bill, passed away 1 April 1991. It was a sad and lonely time for her. They had such a great love for each other. She moved to Lincoln Court in May of 1991. It was hard to give up her home, but she soon made friends and always said she was grateful for such a nice place. She had her organ there and used to play it as different ones would come by and asked her for a song.

As her health failed, she had to be moved again to Golden Pines, East of Rigby, Idaho.

There she could still have her own bedroom set and her beloved organ. She played everyday.

Her health declined in Dec. Of 1996 and on the Sabbath morning she passed away on 28 Jan. 1997. She left a legacy of love, faith, and lessons in patience and perseverance to the very end. Always grateful for anything anyone did for her. We would like to thank all the people at Lioncoln Court, the hospital, Hospise, and Golden Pines for their love and caring.

She is survived by Steve and Maxine; Dean & Maryan, Jerry; daughter-in-law, Dorothy; 22 grandchildren; and 35 great grandchildren. Her daughter, Teena, passed away April 1991 and her son, Kent, 26 Nov 1995.

I would like to pay special tribute to Maryan and her family for letting Dean come on Christmas Eve and Day to spend time with his mother and to Steve and Maxine for their great devotion and love and service to Mother, Steve's whole concern, was his mom. To the grandchildren and all the others. Mother and I shared some special times together, especially this last year. She taught me much of spiritual things. She asked every time I would go see her, "Where is Kent and how is he doing?" She could not remember he had passed away. I always told her he was doing fine and she would see him again soon. What a wonderful reunion she is having with all her loved ones and specially with Dad. I gave her a message for Kent. At last she has had her greatest wish granted-she got to go home. Yes, Mother, you are really home now. Thank you for all the love and great examples you left us all.

If she could say one thing to us. I think it would be some of the Savior's last words. "As I loved you, Love one Another."

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Information by Athene Lott Jenkins, and the different ones, who paid tribute.

Typed into the computer Oct. 2002 Kathleen Jardine Woolf Idaho Falls, Idaho