

MERRILL KAY BRADSHAW and JANET SPILSBURY
(Parents of your mother or father)

Born: 18 June 1929
Lyman, Uinta, Wyoming
Died: 12 July 2000 (71 years)
Bountiful, Utah

23 August, 1935
Preston, Franklin, Idaho
(Still kicking!)

Married: September 20, 1954

Parents: Melvin K. Bradshaw and
Lorene Hamblin

Erwin Roswell Spilsbury
and Josephine Callis

Merrill was so small when he was born, his father could hold the baby's head in his palm and Merrill's feet barely reached the crook of his father's elbow. Merrill was born in his grandmother's home, a little wooden house which later served as a chicken coop. In third grade his teacher noticed his tapping rhythms on his desk and, sensing his musical abilities, sold her piano to his parents. His musicianship was immediately apparent; he took first in piano festivals and earned money playing for a dance band. His childhood memories included raising and butchering pigs on a farm in Helper, spending summers in the High Uintas helping his grandpa haul logs for railroad ties, and causing electrical sparks to fly on the thresher machine belt at haying time in Lyman. His family had a big white collie dog that saved his life by holding onto his diaper when he fell into the canal.



When he graduated from Lyman High, he was given a scholarship to the University of Wyoming, but he knew that would lead to a major in physics; not wishing to have anything to do with discoveries that would be used for killing people (World War II had recently ended), he decided to go to Brigham Young University and major in music. He served two-and-a-half years in the Swiss-Austrian-German-speaking Mission, where he translated for President McKay and was able to tell the people of Bern that a temple would be built in Switzerland.

He met Janet at BYU when she was auditioning for acapella choir. They sat by each other in the choir, became great friends, and then grew to love each other. They were married in the Salt Lake Temple; one year later with Karen only ten days old, they traveled by train to the University of Illinois where Merrill continued his studies, receiving a Doctor of Musical Arts in 1962.

Merrill was hired to teach at BYU the fall of 1957. He remained at the Y for thirty-seven years teaching piano, theory, orchestration, expanded musicianship, and especially composition. He was named Composer-in-Residence, and his music was performed often at BYU and also by many symphonies and choirs nationally and internationally. During that time, the family went on study abroad to Austria three different times. He earned the Karl G. Maeser Teaching Award, was the Distinguished Faculty Lecturer, Utah Composer of the Year, and was given the Distinguished Manhood Award from the Edgemont Stake. He became manager for the Barlow Endowment the last several years of his career, which enabled him to associate with nationally-known music professionals. He served in many church positions including Bishop, High Councilor, Stake Young Men's President, Church Hymnbook Committee, Ward Scoutmaster, and Gospel Doctrine Teacher.

After retirement, he and Janet moved to St. George, where they served in the St. George Temple. He passed away suddenly while visiting Tracy's family in Bountiful.

From the first, Janet was a singer, performing as young as five years old. She had a wonderful childhood in Preston, moved to Boise at age nine, celebrated the end of World War II at the age of ten, moved to Salt Lake and then to Indianapolis where she went to high school. The family moved to a Chicago suburb, from which Janet left to attend BYU. During and after high school, she worked secretarial jobs, including a summer in Detroit where she lived with her Aunt Kathleen.

She first dated Merrill in the spring of her freshman year and they were married just before her sophomore year when she was 19. Her greatest delight was in her seven children, Karen, Tracy, Brian, Keith, Marie, Charles, and Daniel. She loved reading and singing to them and was blessed to be able to stay home to raise them. When her youngest, Dan, was in school, she returned to the Y and earned her bachelor's degree

in English. Good literature and music filled her life and were important in raising her children. She taught piano lessons to the neighborhood children. Church positions included Relief Society President in two wards, Ward and Stake Primary President, music director, and Webelos and Blazer leader.

After Merrill's death, she went on a mission to the Fiji Islands. Here she taught music in the church's "college," tutored in English, and grew to love the people of Suva. As of this date, December 2005, she is living with her daughter Tracy's family and loving the companionship of 30 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Merrill and Janet Bradshaw Family

1974



Karen Keith Brian Tracy

Marie Merrill Janet Charles

Daniel