



The Life History of Floyd "Junior" Edwards

Born June 9, 1935

Written by Floyd Jay Edwards (son)

Floyd Junior Edwards was born in Milford, Utah. It is still unclear if he was born June 9th or June 10th. His mother said June 10th but the Doctor's records show June 9th. Floyd was named after his father and is the oldest of 6 children. He has two brothers, Devaun (Dee), Nephi Jay (Jay) and 3 sisters, Shirley, Mary Jane and Margie.

When Floyd Junior was around 3-4 years old, his family went to a public swimming pool. Floyd was young and could not swim. He went into the pool and sank to the bottom. His cousin Ronald saw him and rescued him and helped him to start breathing again.

Floyd's father worked as a stationary engineer and was in charge of the boilers at the Union Pacific station in Milford. He (Floyd) would take lunch to his father, and then stay in the steam engines as his father would turn them around in the Round house.

Floyd Junior would go hunting with his father in the nearby mountains. One of the favorite deer hunting areas was the Chester mountain range just outside of Milford. One of the things Floyd likes to do with his brothers was to go out in the desert and hunt jackrabbits.

Floyd went by the name Junior when he was growing up to avoid the confusion with his Father (again his Mother insisted that the records were wrong and she named him Junior Floyd Edwards). He loved his dad very much and the two of them were very close.

When World War II broke out, the Edwards family collected scrap metal, iron, and rubber to help provide the military with its needs. Floyd's father was exempt from the military because he worked with the railroad and the government felt it was a vital industry for the War effort.

When Floyd was a young boy his family owned a car that the doors opened from the middle of the car rather than the normal way. As they were traveling one day the door flew open and Floyd flew out of the car. He spent two days in the hospital.

Floyd had a horse named Dolly. It was a mustang that his uncle caught in the flats outside of Milford. During the winter they would put Dolly in a pasture outside of town to graze. One day when Floyd came home he found Dolly outside his house. The horse had jumped the fence and walked six miles to get to Floyd's house.

During the Christmas holidays the Edwards family would travel by train to Salt Lake and do their Christmas shopping. While in town they would attend the movies and visit other sites of interest. The train was the best mode of transportation in those days and because Floyd's father had a pass to ride the railroad.

For entertainment, Junior liked to read books. He also would ride his horse all over the desert. He liked going up to Walla Walla Valley. They also liked to take their dad's 31 Chevy truck and drive it all over the desert. It didn't matter if they had a driver's license or not.

Floyd's dad bought a 3 room house in Martin Grove (southwest part of Milford). Floyd's dad bought a trailer and placed it along side of the house and cut an entry way from the house to the trailer; this is where Floyd and his brothers would sleep.

Some of the duties around the house were to feed the sheep and chickens. During the winter the first boy up would be responsible to clear a path to the outhouse. On Saturday night was bath night for the kids. They would heat a bucket of water on the stove and use that to bathe.

The fashion of the day was to have bell-bottoms. So what they would do is split the seem of their Levi up the side and sew in a red velvet piece of cloth.

In 1950 or 1951 Floyd worked for the Railroad Resort Corporation that managed the Grand Canyon National Park amenities. Floyd also worked on the local farms to help provide money for his family.

In March of 1951, his father died. Clots had developed from having his teeth pulled which caused a heart attack when one of the clots broke loose and went to his heart.

After the death of his father, according to Floyd, the LDS people in Milford treated the family like outcasts since Floyd's family was not LDS.

His mother Helen did not deal with the death very well and packed the family up and moved to Salt Lake City, Utah.

While in Salt Lake City, Floyd finished the eleventh grade and then had to quit because of family finances. After the 11th grade school year was over, Floyd returned to Milford for the summer and work on the local beet farms to provide money for his family.

He would save his money and send it home to help with the family needs. He joined the army in 1953. Floyd did his basic training at Fort ORD in Monterey, California.

The US Army had him go through their cook school. He was transferred to Fort Yuma (Arizona). His duty at Ft. Yuma (1955 -1956) included being a sentry at the gate of the area that was the testing

range for different military vehicles. What they would do at this post is take vehicles like tanks and trucks (even a vehicle that was like a semi truck that carried a cannon on it) and run them in the desert heat until they broke down and then try to figure out why. Floyd was then transferred to Fort Lewis in Washington State. Floyd said he was there for a year and it “Rained every dam day!” His duties at Fort Lewis were to cook for the soldiers going to Korea.

While stationed in Tacoma (Fort Lewis), Washington Floyd met his future wife Wylene Royal Hendrix. Wylene (Jean) was a newly divorced woman with 4 children, but this did not scare off Floyd. They were married February 2, 1957. He was discharged from the army the same year.

After being discharged from the Army, Floyd needed to find work to support his new family of six. He moved his new family to Salt Lake City, Utah. He went to work at the Ambassador Athletic Club first as a cook then as a bartender for 26 years. In August of 1957, Floyd and Jean had a son. They named him Floyd Jay, for his grandfather Floyd Devaun and for his father’s brother Jay. The family now had seven members.

He moved his family to Hunter, Utah just outside of Salt Lake City in 1964. They paid the down payment for the house by saving all of their tips (Floyd as a bartender and Wylene as a waitress) from work and putting them in a jar. When they finally got enough money put aside, they decided to purchase a newly built home for \$13,500.

As the family grew up, Floyd would supplement his income by working bar for some of the wealthiest people in Utah. He helped fix a lot of people’s cars.

Floyd would take his sons Alan and "Little" Floyd deer hunting. They mostly hunted in the Willows Mountains west of Grantsville, Utah. Junior had developed his shooting skills in the army, even earning the marksman award. He could hit a deer at 200 yards through the neck 90% of the time. This was one of the family’s annual outings. The three daughters hated seeing dad kill Bambi, so they mostly stayed home during the hunt.

There were always family trips. Floyd would take his family on fishing trips up on the Snake River area or Jackson Hole. They would spend a week on the river fishing, swimming and just enjoying nature. Floyd’s brothers (Jay and Dee) would often be on these vacations. There were two main vacations: one down to Phoenix Arizona to visit his sister-in-law Kathy; the other was a long driving trip to Columbus Georgia to visit his wife parents. The trip to Georgia was long and sometimes hard on his nerves.

Floyd (Junior) is like his father in a lot of ways. He does not like to attend social functions. He

does like to visit and do things with his brother Jay.

Floyd taught himself to be a mechanic at an early age and enjoyed tinkering with cars. He would get his brother Jay and the two of them would tear an engine out of a car and strip it down. They would repair the broken parts, put the engine back together again, and then place the rebuilt engine in the car. This skill helped his family a lot over the years.

One of the areas that Floyd excels at is his ability to learn. He could simply read a book about a particular skill, and then be able to accomplish that particular skill. His understanding from books was tremendous.

You can catch Floyd in the middle of the night, after coming home from work, reading a science fiction or a western novel. In fact, a book is never far away from him. According to Helen (his mother) Floyd loved to read since he was a small boy.

Floyd's closest friend was his brother Jay. They do things together, and you can tell there is a special bond between them. Floyd is a quiet person and often shows his love through his actions. He is always there to help his five children with any problem. Whenever there is a problem with his brothers and sisters he is the first one they call for help. With his children he is always willing to fix cars and problems with the house they live in. One of the things Floyd Jay tells people is that if his father says 'Hi', that means he likes you (Floyd was not one of the most talkative people in the world). He had a dry humor. If you did not pay attention you would miss his jokes.

Floyd resided in Hunter (Currently West Valley City) and retired as a maintenance person for an apartment complex. He was married to Wylene for over 44 years. He has 12 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

On September 15, 2000 Floyd was diagnosed with Ado-Carcinoma (Cancer of the small bowel). He was operated on October 15, 2000 to remove the cancer tumor from the small intestine. This cancer is extremely rare. They are not sure what caused the cancer, but my father grew up in southern Utah where they were downwind from the nuclear testing in the Nevada desert.

The Utah Heritage Hospice group took care of Floyd the last four months of his life. Jean served him faithfully. Making sure that his needs was met. In talking with Floyd, he did not want to die during the Christmas Holiday and leave the family to remember his death during one of his favorite holidays.

With nothing more than extreme will power Floyd Junior out lived predictions of his doctors and health providers (they thought he would die before Christmas).

At first Floyd Junior was able to move from the bedroom to the living room to watch TV or to read a book. He had a favorite chair he sat in. But as the cancer progressed, Floyd became more and more weak. Finally he was confined to his bed.

Towards the end of his life, I would come and talk with him about different things. My Dad was really concerned about how the family would be after he was gone, especially for his wife Jean.

He has been the rock and foundation of the family. His family reaffirmed to him that the family would be fine and that his children would take care of his wife. One of the last things that he asked me (Floyd Jay) to do for him was to get him a copy of the Book of Mormon. This is really surprising because Floyd Junior was not religiously inclined. I think that this book reminded my father of times when he would go to church with his Grandfather Nephi, It gave him some comfort.

About two weeks before his death Floyd Junior was as active as he could be. He watched the Pro Bowl (Pro Football All-Star game) with his son Floyd Jay. The pain was increasing. He was nauseated more and more but he was alert.

When I went to see him on February 10, 2001, there was a noticeable difference in the way Floyd Junior looked and acted. He was going downhill fast. He was drifting in and out of consciousness.

On February 13, 2001 His wife Jean noticed that Floyd Junior was having difficulty breathing and was sweating a lot. Around 9:00 p.m. she called the Hospice Nurse (Pat Reed) to come out and check on him. Around 10:00 p.m. the nurse told Jean to call the family (Rose, Kay, Alan and Floyd, Eileen was unable to be there) together. She thought that Floyd Junior would pass away soon.

As the family gathered the Nurse instructed the family to talk with Floyd Junior and remember positive things and experiences. Floyd Junior drifted in and out most of the evening. Every once in while he would let the family know that he was having a pain or needed to be moved.

Floyd Junior lasted past the time that the Nurse thought he would go. At 4:50 a.m. on February 14, 2001 (Valentine's Day) Floyd Junior passed away. His children Rose, Kay, Alan and Floyd. His grandchildren Robert, Michelle, Janice, Nathan Edwards, Richard Wekluk, John and Danise Kitchen were there to say their good-byes.

On February 19, 2001 there was a viewing service for Floyd Junior Edwards at the Peel Mortuary in Magna, Utah. The family had a private gathering before the viewing. Those in attendance were Floyd Junior Brother and sisters and their families. Jean (his wife), his children (Eileen, Rose, Kay, Alan and Floyd) and their children. Family friends Jory Walker and Scott Rowley sang a song 'Wind beneath my Wings', a talk by Jodi Ionelli (his Oldest Grandchild) and then remarks by his son

Floyd Jay. The casket was closed and a family prayer was offered by his son Floyd Jay Edwards. There was a graveside service in the Utah Veterans Memorial Park at Camp Williams as the final resting-place for Floyd Junior Edwards. The gravesite was dedicated by his son Floyd Jay Edwards an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Floyd Junior left legacies that touch the lives of his brothers, sisters, wife and children. He was the rock (foundation) in these people lives for 65 years. Floyd Junior was not a prefect man, he made mistakes. But he always owed up to them. He loved his children.

He had a hard time telling his children that he loved them, so instead he showed them his love by the actions that he did.

He was always willing to help those in need. He worked hard all the days of his life. He never asked for assistance and refused to let anyone help him. I don't know of a more fitting tribute than to say, "He was always there for his children".

Thoughts from Floyd Jay Edwards about my father Floyd Junior Edwards

Many men have come into my life; my father is the one that has influenced me the most. As a child he taught me some very important principles for life. As I was growing up we did not have a lot of money. My father taught me to work hard to support the family. I would watch him take different jobs to make ends meet. He taught me not to look for hand outs. My father could have used public assistance to help feed the family, but my father would rather work harder to meet the financial responsibilities. My father thoughts were on making a better life for his family.

I learned sacrifice from my father. I remember once when I was in High School and someone destroyed my trumpet. I was devastated. Music was my life in High School. A couple of days later my father showed up with a brand new trumpet. I know he worked extra jobs to pay for this trumpet. I hope he knew just how much this meant to me. He sacrificed a lot for me.

He always made sure that I had what I needed. I remember on several occasions, I would call my dad at work to have him bring home some treat I would need for a school activity the next day. He would not only bring home what I wanted but also some things that he thought I would like to eat.

I learned to help other without pay from my father. He was always available to help the people around him. My mother had a friend who was a single mom. Her car would break down and my father and I would tow the car to my dad's house and my father would fix it,

Once when I was single, my car broke down just off the freeway. I had to walk home (at 2:00 a.m.). By the time I got home (around 3:00 am) my father had just got home from work. I could tell he was tired. He took me to my car and towed the car home and help me fixed it later that week.

I think the most important thing my father taught me was to never give up. I am not sure how he taught me this, but as I watched my father work all his life, he never gave up on things. He always worked to improve our family life. He could have given in on several occasion when life was tough, but he did not do it.

One of the memories that I have is that on Christmas day, my father would hook up speakers to the outside of his house and then play Christmas music on the stereo to let people feel of the spirit of the Holidays as they came to the house. For some reason, Christmas was my dad favorite holiday. My dad was on he bit sober side (personality wise), but on Christmas, it like looking at kid in the candy store. Especially when his grandkids came around, Forget his kids, his whole attention was on them and playing with them and their toys.