



## **DORIS WEBSTER MONSEN**

### **1921-2011**

Doris Webster was born on the 24 November 1921, the daughter of Mary Anna (Mae) Larsson and Lemuel Webster. She had one older half-brother, Joseph Preston Larsson (1909), an older sister, Ellen Louise Webster (1918), and a younger brother, Charles Lemuel Webster (1924). Doris was born on her mother's birthday, which brought her joy throughout her life to celebrate birthdays with her mother. The family lived across the street from their grandmother, Mary Ellen Geary

Larsson, who was like a second mother to the children. Also, Mae's brother, Edward and his wife Florence, and their children Edward, and Ruth, lived across the street. She loved having family close by. When she and her siblings came home from school, they ran to their grandmother's house for bread and jam.

It was Doris who usually got the childhood diseases, and then brought them home to the rest of the family. When she was five years old, her mother was washing clothes, and as children do, they were playing around the washing machine. Doris got her hand caught in the wringer, which then pulled her arm in up to her elbow. The other children were frightened, but Chuck ran outside to the clothes lines after their mother. Mae ran fast, grabbed a piece of wood from the wood box and hit the wringer on its top, which made it fly open. She laid Doris on the bed and sent one of the other children for their Uncle Edward. He backed his car up to the front porch and Mae carried her out to the car. Edward drove fast, running a red light to get her to the doctor's office. Doris wanted to go to sleep, but her mother wouldn't let her. However, her uncle said to let her sleep. The next thing Doris remembered was waking up on a table in the doctor's office. Her arm was not broken, but she had to wear a sling for some time.

One day Doris was not feeling well, so Mae held her, rocked her, and sent for their neighbor, Alfonzo Taylor. Taylor gave her a blessing. Doris learned from that experience, at an early age, to believe in the blessings of the LDS priesthood.

She started school when she was nearly seven, because of her late November birthday, and attended the Harrisville school located by the church (Highway 89 and West Harrisville Road). She loved school and church activities, and was faithful in attending school, primary, Sunday school, and M.I.A. She loved all of her teachers, who were an inspiration to her. When she was 12 years-old, and in her last year of Primary, the teachers hired a bus to take the children to Salt Lake City. While there, they visited the museum, where the directors gave each child a piece of stone like the ones used to build the temple. They were then taken to the church history building, where they all lined up and shook hands with LDS President Heber J. Grant. They also visited the Utah Hotel, the zoo, and the state capitol building.

When Doris was young, Edward and Florence took her on many of their family vacations. Several times they went to Idaho to see relatives. Her uncle Edward would never let her go

unless she wore long cotton stockings. She was never allowed to wear ankle socks when she went with them. She loved her aunt, uncle, and cousins, and spent as much time with them as with her own family.

In 1935, at the age of 13, Doris went with her mutual class to be baptized for the dead in the Salt Lake LDS Temple. A year later she joined a junior genealogy class in her ward, where she completed four years of study. She was the music leader in the class.

When she was in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, the area schools were so full that school leaders sent the 9<sup>th</sup> graders to Weber County High School. She loved school and graduated from high school and LDS Seminary in 1940. She was chosen to sing in a double quartet for both graduations. Doris loved music. When she was young, her parents gave her both piano lessons and voice lessons. She had many opportunities to sing in duets, choruses, and quartets. She also sang many solos. When she was young, she loved to sing with her sister, Ellen, who would harmonize. They sang while they did the dishes, or worked around the house. Doris and her cousin, Ruth, were asked to sing at a funeral service. It was her first time to sing at a funeral. At one time there were so many Webster cousins taking music lessons at the same time from Douglas Brian, that he arranged a special recital for their grandparents - George and Esther Webster. The grandchildren included, Ellen, Doris, Nada, Carma, Uarda, Gwen, Arlene, Winnona, and Vern. The recital was held in the auditorium of the Utah Power and Light company located on Washington Blvd, on the east side between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Streets. There were vocal solos and piano solos. Doris stated, "That was a night to remember. . . so you see the Webster family has been quite a musical family."

In the summer of 1941, Doris was introduced to Berry Gibbs Monsen Jr. by her life-long friend, Kathryn Owen and her friend Vernon Barney whom Berry had met in the CCC Camp. Kathryn and Vern were married in the fall of 1941, and Berry and Doris were married on 20 December 1941. They were married at the Webster home, with Bishop Alfonso W. Taylor, a friend and neighbor performing the ceremony. Doris's cousin, Ruth was her maid of honor, and Berry's friend, Millard Owens was the best man. Because apartments were hard to find, and they didn't have much money, the couple moved in with her grandmother, Mary Ellen Larsson. They bought groceries and paid the utilities to pay rent. Their first daughter, Linda was born in September, 1942. About four months after their second daughter, Sandi, was born (11 April 1945) Doris and Berry were sealed in the Salt Lake LDS Temple 27 August 1945. Ronald was born in 1949.

The Monsens lived in several different homes. After living the first two years of their married life with Doris's grandmother, they lived on Ogden Avenue for a year between 20th and 21<sup>st</sup> Street, then moved back to Harrisville and lived in the home where Doris was born. After moving a few times, in 1950, the family finally settled in Ogden where they bought a home at 405 Adams, and raised their family. In 1971, the Monsen's moved back to Harrisville. They bought a double wide trailer, and put it on the lot next to her parents.

While they lived on Adams, and were in the 29<sup>th</sup> Ward, Doris sang in the choir and sang many duets and quartets. She was also asked to sing at the dedication of the new Ogden LDS Tabernacle. Only three people from each ward were asked to sing with that choir. When President David O. McKay walked into the building, everyone stood and sang, "We Thank Thee Oh God For a Prophet." After the dedication, she was able to shake hands with President McKay. Also, under the direction of Lester Hinchcliff, the choir sang the Messiah at Christmas time.

Doris loved to be involved in many things. She served as chorister in every ward where she lived. She taught Sunday School for five years, was president of the MIA on two different occasions, and was always in the choir and always singing. She and Norene Page sang at many funerals, DUP events, various ward and stake events, and many other places. She also sang with a group called the Vocal Chords.

In about 1964, Darlene Howell put a group together to sing barbershop music. Doris was part of that group, and they called themselves the "Sweet Adelines." They chartered with the International Sweet Adelines in about 1964. They competed in Nevada, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, and other places. They also sponsored music schools in Ogden. Doris loved this kind of music, and sang with the group for many years, and cherished the friendships she made .

In 1945, Doris worked for Coleman Knitting Mills. The company was started by her neighbor, Lil Coleman, in her basement on West Ray Street, then grew to a larger company. They made school sweaters and chenille emblems. Doris was the supervisor for the chenille department. In 1966, she was asked by Clyde Buhler to work for Utah Tailoring Mills. She started in the cutting room, soon became an inspector in the hand finishing room, and then the head of the finishing room. She was then asked, by Boyd Bingham, to be the factory supervisor. It was a big job, but she loved it. When she retired, they presented her with a gold watch engraved with "In appreciation Utah Tailoring."

After retirement, 4 January 1982, Doris and Berry worked in the Spanish extraction program. She commented that it was only through faith and prayers that they could do this work. They loved this calling, and served for four years.

Traveling was another interest that Doris enjoyed. She and Berry went on many trips with family and friends. They went to Mexico, New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii, the Black Hill, California for the Rose Parade. They also went on a Caribbean Cruise. They had a camp trailer and enjoyed many fishing trips with Doris' sister, Ellen Whetton, and her husband, Jack, and her brother and his wife, Peg and Velda Larsson.

Doris was active in the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, both on the company board and in the Sarah Jane Taylor Camp in Harrisville. She and her sister, Ellen, worked together in this organization. Doris and Ellen were also involved with the senior citizens in Harrisville.

One thing Doris and Berry enjoyed after moving back to Harrisville in 1971 was having room for a garden. They raised enough vegetables for their children to share in the bounty. They canned some of the produce, and put other vegetables in a pit for use in the winter.

Family was the most important blessing in the lives of Doris and Berry. They loved their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and were proud of each one of them. After nearly 60 years together, her beloved husband, Berry, died 11 April 2001. He is buried in the Ogden City Cemetery.

After Berry's death, Doris became good friends with John Hall. They married 1 March 2004. They had a wonderful companionship for just over a year. John died 28 April 2005. Doris returned to her home on West Harrisville Road, where she enjoyed good neighbors, relatives, and friends. She continued to be an example of courage, faith, and love to all. Everyone loved Doris, and even though her eye sight had diminished over the years, she still recognized everyone by their voice as they spoke to her or gave her hugs. She died 25 Jul 2011 and is buried in the South Morgan Cemetery.

**SOURCE:**

Monson, Doris. *Autobiography of Doris Monsen*. Unpublished manuscript.

Obituaries.com. Doris Webster Monson. 2012. Web. 2 Aug 2012.

Barney, Vernon	Monsen, Berry Gibbs Jr.
Bingham, Boyd	Monsen, Doris
Brian, Douglas	Monsen, Linda Watson
Buhler, Clyde	Monsen, Ronald
CCC Camp	Monsen, Sandi Greenwood
Coleman, Lil	Owen, Kathryn
DUP	Owens, Millard
Grant, Heber J.	Page, Norene
Hall, John	Sweet Adelines
Hinchcliff, Lester	Taylor, Alfonzo
Howell, Darlene	Webster, Charles Lemuel
Larsson, Edward	Webster, Doris
Larsson, Edward II	Webster, Ellen Louise
Larsson, Florence	Webster, Esther
Larsson, Joseph Preston	Webster, George
Larsson, Mary Annie Webster	Webster, Lemuel
Larsson, Mary Ellen Geary	Webster, Lemuel
Larsson, Ruth	Webster, Mary Annie (Mae)
Larsson, Velda	Whetton, Ellen Louise Webster
McKay, David O.	Whetton, Jack