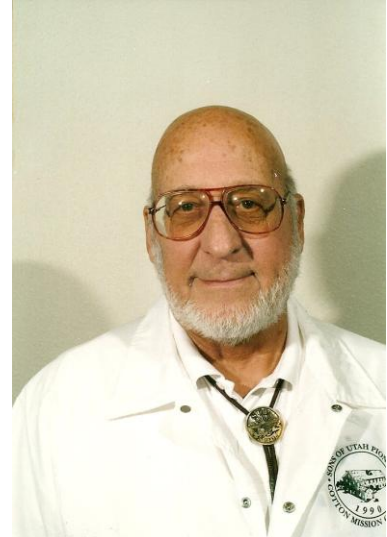


Don E Forshee  
GETTING TO KNOW THE FORSHEES

Sometimes when we live in an area we fail to take the time to see the sights that tourists flock from around the world to see. Since we live here, that is something that we can always do tomorrow, next week, next month, next year... whenever. So it is with visiting friends or honoring those who have meant so much in our lives. We have going-away parties to honor those who are leaving us, but we frequently overlook those who continue to remain behind. Perhaps that is why we have neglected to recognize Don and Dorothy Forshee in the editions of the Egyptian Ensign. They will always be here for the next issue. Well, the next issue has finally arrived.



Don E Forshee (that's his full name) was born in Peru — not the country in South America — but Peru, Indiana, on the 26th of March 1929. His father was a foreman in a metalworking factory. He has one sister who is three years older than he is, which he resented. He hated being the "little brother." He also has two stepbrothers and two stepsisters. At the ripe old age of 16, he was on his own, supporting himself by working in a gas station. At the age of 17, he tried to join the Army, but was turned down because he couldn't pass the eye examination. One year later, however, he succeeded in being accepted into the Army. With the help of another recruit, he memorized the 20/20 1 inc on the eye chart both forwards and backwards, so he was able pass.

Dorothy May Schaefer was born in Chicago, Illinois. At the age of 12, her father bought a farm in Macy, Indiana, and moved his wife and four daughters there. Macy is a small farming community near Peru. It was through Dorothy's younger sister, Shirley, that Don and Dorothy first met. Shirley had invited Don to Thanksgiving Dinner at their home. It was not love at first sight for Don and Dorothy, however. In fact, they hardly paid any attention to each other on that first encounter.

In June 1947, Don went off to Basic Training at Ft. Ord, California. He didn't do much training, though. They found out that he had some experience as a meat cutter, so he spent his entire Basic Training days in the kitchen — except for training on the rifle range and bivouac. He must have done a great job as a meat cutter, however, since he was the only one in his unit who was promoted to PFC at the end of Basic Training. After Basic, he spent the next 8 weeks in Quartermaster School at Ft. Lee, VA. This was the beginning of a long career in supply and inventory management for him.

The next 30 days he was back in Indiana on leave. A friend arranged a date for him with Dorothy during that time. That same friend told Don that someday he and Dorothy would get married. Don said that this didn't mean too much to him at the time, but he never forgot it. So it must have made quite an impression on him.

In December 1947, Don got his first overseas assignment. He spent the next 18 months in Korea in the 514th Quartermaster Battalion. This was just before the Korean War broke out. When Don's unit pulled out of Korea, only Military Assistance Groups were left. His unit was moved to Japan, where he stayed until 1952. He spent this time in three different Japanese cities: Kobe, Osaka and Kyoto. Don loved Kyoto. He says that it's the most beautiful city in Japan. By this time, he had been promoted to Buck Sergeant.

When he finally got back to the good old USA in 1952, he found out that Dorothy was still single — but engaged. He asked her out and she accepted. During the next 30 days, they dated frequently and Don swept Dorothy off her feet. He was on his way to Ft. Hood, Texas, but before

he left, he had proposed and Dorothy had accepted Don reported to Ft. Hood as scheduled. He was assigned as the Chief NCO of Supply for Operation Longhorn. While he was in the field on this assignment, Dorothy and a girl friend drove to Killeen, Texas, in a 1950 Studebaker with all of her belongings. She got a job in Smiths Cleaners in Killeen. After Operation Longhorn was finished, Don got a three—day pass and he and Dorothy got married on April 5th 1952 by a Methodist minister. Don had been raised as a Baptist and Dorothy a Lutheran, but it seems that neither of these ministers were available on that particular day, so they took whoever they could find. Don's Supply Officer and his wife were the witnesses for the wedding. He was a Warrant Officer and one of Don's heroes. It was then that Don decided that he would like to be a Warrant Officer. Don and Dorothy spent the rest of their three—day pass on a honeymoon in San Antonio, Texas, which is still one of their favorite cities. By the way, the 1950 Studebaker, which was part of Dorothy's dowry, was Don's favorite car. The newlyweds spent the next two and one half years in Killeen. It was here that their first child, Cheryl, was born on Don's birthday (March 26th) in 1954. Their next assignment was to Ladd Air Force Base in Fairbanks, Alaska. Here, their second child, Sheila, was born on February 19, 1957.

When Sheila was about six weeks old, they packed their young family and headed back to the Lower 48. They took a train from Fairbanks to Whittier, Alaska; then a boat down the Inner Passage to Seattle. This was a very beautiful trip for them.

Don's new assignment was as a Drill Sergeant in a Basic Training Unit at Ft. Leopardwood, Missouri. By now, he had been promoted to a Platoon Sergeant. Don really enjoyed this assignment, but Dorothy hated it. Don was always gone. He worked icing hours at least six, and sometimes seven, days a week. But if Dorothy hated this, the next assignment was worse. Don was sent unaccompanied to Korea. Dorothy spent the next year with her two young daughters in Warsaw, Indiana near her parents.

Upon his return from Korea, Don's new assignment was back to Ft. Hood and Killeen, Texas. As they were moving into their new home, members of the Welcome Wagon came. They asked what religion they were, and Dorothy told them that Don was a Baptist. During the next two days, they were pestered by six sets of Baptist Missionaries. Then who should show up but a pair of Mormon Missionaries Don had had it with all of this attention, especially since they had not even finished unpacking. But somehow this Mutt and Jeff pair of missionaries were able to convince him that they had a special message for them. Elder Lynne Hollinger (Jeff) was a tall, lanky missionary and Elder Jack Ostler (Mutt) was short and stocky. These two Elders taught and taught and taught and taught them the Gospel. However, persistence paid off and eventually Don and Dorothy were baptised and confirmed members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter—Day Saints in nearby Temple, Texas, in a Seventh—Day Adventist baptismal tank.

An interesting event occurred during the time they were learning about the Church. At the time Don drank coffee and beer and smoked cigarettes. When the missionaries gave them the Word of Wisdom Lesson, Dorothy said that Don just stared at the floor. At the conclusion of the lesson, Don said to Dorothy, "It's easy to see which church you want me to join." The next morning, Dorothy made Don his usual cup of coffee for breakfast and he dumped it down the sink. He never used any of these items again, and amazing as it seems, Don reports that he never had any withdrawal symptoms. He attributes this to the power of faith and prayer.

Don's first assignment in the Killeen Branch was as a counselor in the Sunday School Presidency and Dorothy's was, what else, a Primary Teacher. The Killeen Branch was very small, about 30 people, and made up mostly of people in the military and their families. The Post Chaplain didn't like the Mormons, so he wouldn't let them use the Post Chapel to hold their meetings. Instead, he gave them the upstairs of an old wooden barracks as a place to meet. This did not have any air conditioning, and it got very hot and miserable in the summertime.

In the Fall of 1961, the Cuban Missile Crisis caused a number of Reservists to be activated. Among those sent to Ft. Hood, were a number of National Guardsmen from Utah — referred to as the Mormon Battalion. Many of these were called to be Stake Missionaries and the Church started to grow by leaps and bounds. The Post Chaplain was now forced to let the Mormons use the Post Chapel for their meetings, but he wanted a share of the collections from passing the collection plate. The members had to pay their tithing and make their contributions by mail so as to avoid giving a portion to the Post Chaplain.

When the Mormon Battalion arrived at Ft. Hood, one of their leaders, Arlow Farnsworth, was called to be the Branch President. In 1962, President Farnsworth was transferred by the military to Ft. Chaffee, Arkansas. As luck would have it, so were the Forshees. Shortly after arriving at Ft. Chaffee, Brother Farnsworth was called to be the Branch President of the Fort Smith Branch — Fort Smith is the name of the town closest to Ft. Chaffee — and Don was called to be his Second Counselor. This was a difficult time for the Forshees. The Branch President and his First Counselor traveled frequently, leaving Don in charge of the Branch, which was having a lot of difficulties at the time. Don said that if there was ever a time that he was close to leaving the Church, it was then. But he was, in fact, being purified by "The Refiners' Fire" in preparation for future Church callings.

It was during this time at Ft. Chaffee that their son, Eric, was born on 24 October 1962. It was also during this time, in November 1963, that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Don says that he was the Supply Sergeant of the 65th Medical Hospital and was on duty when he heard the news. He still remembers it vividly as if it happened only yesterday.

In 1964, it was back to Alaska — this time to Ft. Wainwright. This was a different experience for them than the first time they were there, however. This time they were members of the Church. They had just arrived and were attending their first Stake Conference. Elder Gordon B. Hinckley was presiding. As often happens in Stake Conferences, when General Authorities are there, reorganization takes place. This Conference was no exception. The Bishopric of the ward that Don and Dorothy were in was being changed. Elder Hinckley announced that Bishop Abbott had been called to be the Bishop and that Don Forshee was called to be the Second Counselor. Dorothy says that never in her life had she ever seen such a surprised look on Don's face. He had not been interviewed and had no inkling that he had been selected for that calling. He tapped Bishop Abbott, who was sitting in front of him, on the shoulder and said, "This must be a mistake." Bishop Abbott assured him that it wasn't. "But," protested Don, "I'm not even a High Priest," whereupon Bishop Abbott quickly scribbled a note and sent it to Elder Hinckley on the stand. At the end of the meeting, Elder Hinckley stood up and said, "Earlier in the meeting, you sustained Brother Forshee as the Second Counselor of the Ward. Now will you please sustain him to be ordained a High Priest so he can function in that calling." After the meeting, Don was ordained a High Priest by Elder Hinckley.

In this ward, Dorothy was called to be a Sunday School teacher AND a Primary teacher. That was before the Block Meeting Schedule had been implemented in the Church. In addition to that, besides their own three children, Don and Dorothy took in foster children — Indians and Eskimos. In all, they had ten foster children during this stay in Alaska, but not all at once. At times, they had as many as four at once, however. On one vacation, they took six children under six on a two-week camping trip to Mt. McKinley National Park. They said that it rained the whole time. All Dorothy can remember are all the diapers she changed during that trip.

It was at Ft. Wainwright that the Forshees met Spence Cooper. He was a missionary in the area at the time. It was also here that Don was promoted to a Warrant Officer — a life-long goal. Since he was now the Post Supply Officer, he was able to help the missionaries survive the cold weather by letting them borrow some of the Army's cold weather clothing. Elder Cooper would later be a counselor to President Forshee in the Cairo Branch.

In 1967, Don had 20 years in the Army and could have retired. In fact, he seriously considered homesteading in Alaska, but Dorothy put her foot down. She vowed she would never marry a farmer and this was too much like that. It was too primitive to suit her. So Don decided to stay in the military awhile longer. It ended up being ten years longer.

From Alaska, Don was sent on another Unaccompanied Tour; this time to Vietnam. Dorothy and the children went to live in El Paso, Texas, the year while Don was away. Don was in Vietnam in 1968 during the TET Offensive. He was the Duty Officer the night his camp was overrun by the Viet Cong Guerrillas. He had just stepped out of his office when the ammo' dump exploded. The percussion temporarily knocked him unconscious. When he regained consciousness, figures in black pajamas were running through the camp. That night 14 US soldiers were killed. Don doesn't know why they passed him by without so much as a scratch. His duties in Vietnam were to find and account for military heavy equipment. He says he put over 20,000 miles on a jeep in performing his duties during these 13 months. It was a harrowing experience for him. He states that this is the only time in his life that he marked the days on a calendar until he returned home.

After Vietnam, he was assigned to Ft. Bliss, Texas, which is right by El Paso. But he was only there exactly 12 months before he was sent back to Vietnam for another 13 months. This was the worst tour ever. Vietnam had changed. Drugs and marijuana were prevalent. Officers and NCOs were afraid to discipline their men for fear of being blown away by them. These were the dark days of Vietnam that America is still trying to overcome. This time while Don was away, Dorothy lived in San Antonio, Texas, right near the Church so Cheryl could attend early morning Seminary.

It is said that every cloud has a silver lining and this was the case with Don and Dorothy. Don's next assignment was to Schofield Barracks in Wahiawa, Hawaii , near Honolulu. Don was the Ward Executive Secretary. The family was able to enjoy the beautiful scenery, the beaches and the surfing. It was here that Cheryl got married in the Hawaiian Temple. There are many happy memories from this assignment.

The next, and last, military assignment for Don was to Homestead Air Force Base, Florida, The Gateway to the Keys. Here Don was called to the Stake High Council. Since he was the youngest member of the High Council, he was given the Branch the greatest distance away for his assignment. This was the Key West Branch, which was located 140 miles away down the Florida Keys. Being the faithful member that he is, Don visited the Branch at least once a month to perform his duties.

It was during this time that their second daughter, Sheila, got married in the Washington, D.C. Temple, which had just recently been dedicated Dorothy says that she thinks this is one of the most beautiful temples and cherishes that experience of having one of her daughters married there. Elder Dellenbach, whom they had met before, was there by chance and was able to be one of the witnesses at the wedding.

In February 1977, Don retired from the military, after 30 years of service. During his tours of duty he received many medals, among them being: The Bronze Star, the Air Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit. When asked if he had received the Purple Heart, he explained that, although he had served in combat twice, he had never so much as received a scratch. He feels that he was being watched over and protected by his Father in Heaven during these perilous times.

Immediately after retirement, Don and Dorothy and their son, Eric, headed to Massachusetts. Don had accepted a job with Raytheon. Within three months, they were in Kuwait,

where they lived for five years. Don's job was to train Kuwaitis in supply and inventory control — the same kind of work that he had spent 30 years in the military doing.

Dorothy didn't like Kuwait very much. There wasn't much to do. Eric graduated from high school there. Then went to BYU to go to school . He only went one semester, then went to Oklahoma, got a job and married a girl that he had gone to school with in Kuwait. Now that they were alone, Dorothy did a lot of travel ing. Some of the places she toured were India, Turkey, Cyprus, Holland, Germany, and Denmark. Don was called to be the Branch President and served in that calling for three years. During this time, they were able to go to Saudi Arabia twice to Area Conferences, until the Saudis discovered what was going on and put a stop to the conferences.

In 1982, Don and Dorothy returned to Raytheon Headquarters, where they had planned to stay until Don's next job, which was supposed to be in the Emirates. But, luckily for us, that didn't happen. Instead, the person who was assigned here didn't like Egypt and left. So Don, after much protesting, accepted this assignment. In 1983, he and Dorothy moved to Cairo. He had only planned on staying until the Emirates job opened up, but one thing led to another, and here they are still.

In 1984, Don was called to be a counselor to President Hyrum Hall in the Cairo Branch. Then in 1985, he was called to be the Branch President, a calling he held until March 1992. He was set apart as the Cairo Branch President by Elder M. Russell Ballard. Over the eight years that he has served the many members in Cairo, he has seen many people come and leave. He and Dorothy have both spent countless hours helping and counseling hundreds of members, always being there when needed. .