

## **Robert Thornley**

**I was born July 9, 1936 in Aberdeen, Idaho in an old basement house. When I was 4 our family moved to Cornish, Utah for a year then to Logan, Utah for a year then back to Aberdeen, Idaho to a farm south of town where I got to milk cows, hoe beets, pick potatoes and haul hay, etc. In 1948 my Dad finally decided he was a lousy farmer and moved into town and became an excellent mechanic.**



**I enjoyed school there more than I should but did graduate with about a B average and in 1955 I joined the United States Air Force with my buddy Phil Slaw on the Buddy Program where we could go through the Air Force together. After our 12 weeks of basic training I didn't see him again until 3 years later! I was sent to Sheppard Air Force Base Texas to A&P School for a few months.**

**As I was growing up I attended the Catholic, Presbyterian, Church of the Broken Bread, Mennonite and Mormon churches with friends that were of those religions. There at Sheppard I attended Baptist revivals and Church of the Nazarine until an Airman asked to go to an LDS Sacrament Meeting at the Witchita Falls Branch and I was converted and have been eternally grateful for that blessing! They shipped me to McClellan AFB in Sacramento, Calif. Where I was a crew chief with an Early Warning Squadron. I met Mary Lou Heaps there at church and we were married in the Los Angeles Temple. I was discharged in 1959 and we moved back to Aberdeen, Idaho and had 3 sons and I was a mechanic at the Ford Dealer. We were close friends with several couples there including John and Sally Bollwinkel. In 1963 as we were attending the Idaho Falls Temple the Spirit said you need to be in Salt Lake, so we moved our trailer to the Salt Lake area and I worked days and went to school nights.**

**In Salt Lake in 1964 we had another son, Rusty so we now had Noel, Dan, Tracy and Rusty. In 1967 we moved to Granger, Utah and had another son, Aaron and I went to work for the Federal Aviation Administration at the Salt Lake Air Traffic Control Center. In 1969 we had another son, Cody and moved to Ely, Nevada with the FAA. In Ely gospel activity was a problem for a**

lot of people and in the 4 years we were there I only saw one young man go on a mission, so we fasted and prayed and by a small miracle FAA sent us to Mesquite, Nevada in 1973 when there were about 900 people there and 95% were Mormon so the kids my kids ran around with went on missions and my kids went on missions! It was a great place to raise families and enjoy the Gospel. I ended up working in Las Vegas 4 days a week and my wife loved college so she went to UNLV and got her degree and our youngest son Cody went on his mission to Mexico, Sinalowa.

In July, 1990 My wife was killed in an auto accident in Las Vegas and I decided to remain single and work with FAA till I died, since I enjoyed the job a lot. For the next couple of years I went to the Las Vegas Temple on Fridays and the St. George Temple on Saturdays and loved to do sealings after a session. The sealer at the Las Vegas Temple said one day, "we have done a lot of sealings Brother Thornley, I'll bet your wife is wondering where you are", and I said, "no she was killed in an accident a couple of years ago." He said, "Brother Thornley I feel strongly impressed to tell you, you should be married!" I tried to ignore the spirit but about 3 months later I was doing sealings in the St. George Temple and the sealer said, "Brother Thornley, why isn't your wife here doing sealings with you?" I said, "She was killed in an accident a couple of years ago." He said, "Brother Thornley, I need to tell you that you should be married!" So I started dating and would date a woman and go to the temple fasting and ask Father if she was someone I should marry. I got some very powerful answers and as I was coming out of the St. George Temple one day, a woman stopped me and asked if I was Bob Thornley, and she was Sally Bollwinkel! We dated for a while and the spirit said this is the one you should marry so I drove to Palm Springs, Calif. And asked her to marry me and we have been happily married for 13 years, gone on a mission for a year to the St. George Temple visitors center and historic sites.

In 2004 we moved into a little house at 440 E. 100 South in the 6<sup>th</sup> Ward, East Stake and we are now a part of that Ward family! With Sallys' 3 girls and one son and my 6 sons we have 10 children and 49 grand children and 11 great grand children with 3 on the way.