



## Mel Updegrave

March 4, 1929 - August 15, 2008

Melvin Edward Updegrave, 79, longtime Moses Lake resident and business owner, passed away Friday, August 15, 2008 at his home in Moses Lake, surrounded by his loving family, following a courageous battle against cancer.

Mel recently accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior and is now rejoicing with his Heavenly Father. Although family and friends will miss him, we can celebrate that he is with God.

Mel was born in Sandy, Oregon on March 4, 1929, the fourth child born to Charles and Viola Updegrave. He graduated from Sandy High School where he was an accomplished athlete particularly excelling in baseball.

Following high school Mel married Phyllis Hewitt and two daughters were born, Cheryl in 1952 and Melea in 1954. All knew him to be a rugged logger in the woods he loved so much. Later, Mel moved his family to Corvallis, Oregon and attended Oregon State University studying in the engineering program.

In 1964, Mel had an opportunity to join his brother, Arlie, in the irrigation business in Moses Lake, WA and became a partner in Lad Irrigation Company. After nine years, Mel left to form an independent irrigation company, Irrigators, Inc., Moses Lake.

Mel was a pioneer in the early years of the Columbia Basin Reclamation Project and was highly respected for his ingenuity and hard work. He was always willing to tackle difficult projects and he especially enjoyed developing new ground.

In April of 1981, Mel was married to Clara Albert, and has been her devoted partner for the last 27 years. He is survived by his spouse, Clara, his two daughters, Cheryl Sturdefant, of Edmonds, WA and Melea Johnson, Moses Lake, WA; two step-daughters, Rebecca Sexton, Sacramento, CA; and Janet Minnick, Ridgecrest, CA; and one step-son, David Albert, Moses Lake. He has one surviving brother, Arlie Updegrave, Moses Lake, WA and one surviving sister, Rita Hewitt, Gresham, OR. Mel has 14 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Viola Updegrave and by his brother, Clifford Updegrave, Eugene, OR and by his sister, Leona Dayton, Gresham, OR.

Memorial Services will be held at 2:00pm, Wednesday, August 20, 2008 at Lake City Foursquare Church, located at 333 North Central Drive, Moses Lake (765-1010) with Pastor Dave Chandler officiating. A special viewing day for anyone who wishes to spend individual time will take place at Kayser's Chapel of Memories on Tuesday, August 19th, 2008 anytime from 8:00am until 7:00pm. Arrangements are in care of Kayser's Chapel & Crematory, Moses Lake.

You may view Mel's video tribute, sign the guestbook or leave a note for the family at [www.kayserschapel.com](http://www.kayserschapel.com). If desired (in lieu of flowers), donations on Mel's behalf can be made to the Moses Lake Christian Academy, 1475 E. Nelson Rd., Moses Lake, WA 98837.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

AUG **19**. 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Kayser's Chapel of Memories  
831 S. Pioneer Way  
Moses Lake, WA

## Service

AUG **20**. 2:00 PM (PT)

Lake City Foursquare Church  
333 N. Central Dr.  
Moses Lake, WA

# Tribute Wall



“ Kayser's Chapel of Memories created a Tribute Video in memory of Mel Updegrave



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**Kayser's Chapel of Memories** - August 15, 2008 at 12:00 AM



“ trying to get in touch with cheryl or melea from cousin tommy. I have movies of your mom and dad doing things with my parents and grandpa and grandma hewitt. You guys are in some of these movies. If you send me your emails, I could send them to you. Tho mascaddy@gmail.com 5036809627

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**thomas caddy** - May 30, 2023 at 05:02 PM



“ Myself and my family enjoyed our business dealings with Mel and he will be missed. He was a great resource for the Galbreath's throughout the years.

Gary##imported-begin##Gary Galbreath##imported-end##

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August 27, 2008 at 12:20 PM



“ I had the great pleasure of getting to know Mel many years ago. He was the type of man that you certainly didn't soon forget. I enjoyed listening to his stories, and his OPINIONS :) on various people and subjects! I admired his ability to "call it as you see it." He had hard work ethics, and the ability to take on projects and see them to completion. These are qualities that subsequent generations would do well to learn from! I feel honored to have "broken bread" with Mel and gotten to know his softer side. Most of all I'm soo glad that he chose to accept Jesus in his heart. You can bet there is some serious angel celebrations going on! My guess is you are already taking on some "cantankerously" tuff projects with heavenly success!!! Bob###imported-begin##Bob Johnson###imported-end##

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August 21, 2008 at 04:43 PM



“ A poem I gave my to my Dad a few years ago....

*As I've gone thru my life of raising my girls  
I remember my childhood and all your wise pearls.  
Pearls of wisdom that I've used with them  
and memories from which my teachings stem.*

*I learned responsibility when you got me a horse  
which became more evident with the lambs of course.  
The girls don't believe me, but you and I know  
of the mornings carrying water to Spike in the snow.  
And nurturing him when he became sick  
praying he would once again run, fart, and kick.  
We fed and groomed the lambs with care  
in hopes of doing well at the fair.  
Your encouragement kept me from taking a fall  
when Annabelle almost died in her stall.  
"Fred's bull-legged" all the neighbors said,  
but Fred and Annabelle came out ahead.  
You taught me how to take care of something  
to bring out the best with hard work and caring.*

*I learned that to survive takes a lot of hard work,  
that life isn't a given perk after perk.  
Camping trips taught me a lot about this  
with you as our leader, we couldn't miss.  
We had all the luxuries as if we were home  
at a campsite, sand dune, wherever we'd roam.  
High in the mountains with all we could pack  
we wanted for nothing, except a stronger back.  
Living at the dunes was really a treat  
Being thrown off the top trying to land on my feet  
The watermelon plants that grew from our seeds,  
saving the turtle and other good deeds.  
Although we played hard, I remember work too  
and I am much better at making things do.*

*I learned creativity when we lived on the farm  
we were on the go at the sound of the alarm.  
So busy with preparing the magic shows,  
decorating the basement with blankets and bows.  
And George was taught all sorts of tricks  
while you made sure of your audience picks.  
There was no limit to what we could do  
one Halloween, you had everyone scared of a boo.  
You taught me never to limit myself  
it wouldn't be fun to just sit on a shelf.*

*I learned to be prepared while working with you  
and a pride to be good at anything new.  
I remember testing wells in the middle of night  
trying to stay awake with all of my might.  
I remember picking rocks with the big boom truck  
and how flattened I was when I forgot to duck.  
You'd warned me about the pipe off the back  
but me, I forgot in my haste...and then whack!  
Working with you always seemed fun  
I felt such accomplishment when we were done.  
I sometimes wonder if I was a pest  
even though I always gave it my best.  
All I hope is that I never ever whined  
it was always such a wonderful test of my mind.*

*Dad you have helped me in so many ways  
this poem could actually go on for days.  
I want you to know how much I love you  
and thank you for all the things that you do.##imported-  
begin##Cheryl - daughter##imported-end##*

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August 20, 2008 at 08:27 PM



“ My Grandfather, my Father and I have been doing business with Mel for to many years to count. You always wanted to do the job right when he called or you would have heard it from him! We will all miss seeing him here at Moses Lake Steel. A job well Mel.##imported-begin##Steve Rimple (Moses Lake Steel)##imported-end##

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August 20, 2008 at 06:32 PM



“ Mel was an incredible guy. Ron and I worked for him in the early '70's. He was a good teacher and while I was not the best student, I learned a lot from him. I have fond memories of him. I particulary remember his patience in coaching the women's softball team sponsored by Irrigators. We were so bad. I know his blood pressure must have been off the chart. But, he stuck with us through that season. That alone showed great character on his part. Praise our Heavenly Father for Mel's belief in Jesus.1 Timothy 2:5-6 "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men." Clara, may your days ahead be filled with the peace and comfort of our Lord. Vicki Groff##imported-begin##Vicki Groff##imported-end##

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August 20, 2008 at 03:07 PM



“ I didn't get to spend a lot of time with my great grandfather. I really wish that I had. The times that I did spend with him though were great. He is an amazing man. I hope to grow up to be half the person he is. I love him very much and I will miss him.##imported-begin##Kali Nicholas##imported-end##

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August 20, 2008 at 12:51 AM



“ My wife and I would like to express our deepest sorrow for you and your family. Our prayers are with you.##imported-begin##Tom and Diana Alamos##imported-end##

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August 20, 2008 at 12:00 AM



“ Melea, just want you to know my prayers are with you and your family. I can feel the love you and your dad shared. The video presentation was very nice, thank you for sharing. God bless.##imported-begin##Sylvia Hidalgo / Portland##imported-end##

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August 19, 2008 at 09:13 PM



“ Clara and Melea, it was a pleasure to take care of Melvin. I enjoyed meeting all of the family and you are all in my prayers. Take care, God Bless you all.##imported-begin##Jodie Sainsbury##imported-end##

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August 19, 2008 at 09:11 PM



“ My dad is a great man. All things of strength of character, hard work and genuine human spirit, I learned from him. His influence has and will always positively impact my life. He loves me unconditionally. He always makes me smile. My dad. Yesterday's influence; today's memories; tomorrow's reunion. I love you, daddy! To God be the glory.##imported-begin##Melea Johnson##imported-end##

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August 19, 2008 at 08:36 PM



“ Our deepest sympathy  
K & N ELECTRIC MOTORS, Inc##imported-begin##Alan  
Cope##imported-end##

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August 19, 2008 at 07:49 PM



“ When I was taken to meet Mel, I was told he may not respond well to my appearance; specifically, my pony tail and perhaps other characteristics I may possess.  
Well, we met at Chico's and hit it off very well. Everyone was relieved that I was able to survive that initial introduction.  
After several years of Holiday dinners, and visits, I remained acceptable.  
I enjoyed his sense of humor and knowledge of all things of this world. He was clearly rugged, perhaps difficult at times and clearly a man's man.  
He was loved and respected and will be missed.##imported-begin##Brent Blake##imported-end##

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August 19, 2008 at 12:10 AM



“ My name is Joyce Holmes. I was Mel's last secretary at Irrigators Inc. Since I started working there, I can't even tell you how many clients have told me what a "stud" Mel was. (not necessarily their words) No matter how difficult the job, Mel was the guy to figure it out, and get it done! They depended on and respected him very much and so did I. Mel, you are missed!##imported-begin##Joyce Holmes##imported-end##

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August 18, 2008 at 11:16 PM