

My Personal Journal  
James (Kip) Baxter

I, James Clifton Baxter, was born a son to Reuben Emerson Baxter and Julia Mary Strong Baxter on May 2, 1912 in Garland, Utah-healthy, whole and robust. My older brother, Harold Emerson, was also born in Garland on September 20, 1910. I had one other brother named Samuel and he only lived one day. He is buried in the Garland city cemetery.

About 1915 dad (Rueben E. Baxter) was working on a Utah Power and Light Co. high-tension power pole that carried the telephone lines. He was working for the telephone company, when he got connected to a high-tension power line grounding through the telephone circuit. The power was supposed to have been turned off but someone made a mistake and turned it on. He received 2300 volts. For three days they didn't know if he would live or not. He was laid up for about 5 or 6 months. I remember dad buying a little red wagon at this time, and Harold and I pulled him all over town in it.

While in Garland I remember taking out cows down to the pasture each morning and back each night...about a ½ mile. We just had 2 for enough milk for our family. Fifty years later I recognized this same pasture and small home we lived in. There's a picture of this house in our large album. We lived here in Garland about 4 years and then moved to Magna, Utah. Dad had a chance to buy a theatre in Magna and we moved there so he could manage it.

It was here in Magna that we received a gift of a large Collie dog. One time he got up on the table and helped himself to some food and thereafter he was known as "Swipes". Dad made a harness for Swipes and he would pull us around in our red wagon. Our family stayed here about 2 or 3 years. Next, dad bought a theater in American Fork called "The Apollo" and was located in Main Street. Julia, my mother, played the piano for the silent movies. An influenza epidemic struck American Fork and all the schools, churches, and theaters were closed for about a year. Dad was buying the theater on consignment and was not able to make the payments and lost it.

It was about this time that dad started in the electrical contracting business and continued for about 7 or 8 years, wiring many of the homes and businesses in American Fork.

Dad purchased an electrical train and displayed it in his shop window, telling us it was sold and then Christmas morning there it was running around the tree. He had bought it for Harold and I. This was about the time I started to learn about electricity. I was about 9 or 10 years old.

In American Fork I attended grade school at the Forbes School and the Harrington School.

I remember walking about a mile and a half down to Utah Lake where I learned to swim and ice skate. (Sounds fun even now).

We lived in the old Chipman house, one block straight through the block south from the old Interurban station (electric streetcars). I lived here until I was about 12 years old.

It was right after he lost both theaters and the electrical business to the epidemic that Samuel E. Baxter, my grandfather, who was a salesman for Salt Lake Hardware Co. and also sales representative, helped dad get a job selling cutlery on the road. This was when we moved to Salt Lake City in 1924. Our home was located at 921 Dresden Avenue. Here I attended Wellesley grade school at 8<sup>th</sup> East between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> South. It has since been torn down and replaced by the M. Lynn Bennion School. I attended

Welester for two years. While I lived on Dresden I was a news carrier for the Deseret Newspaper. I carried between 70 and 90 papers. I had no bike, so I walked.

I remember Dresden was a good sleighriding hill eventhough it was dangerous when we crossed 9<sup>th</sup> East. Good thing traffic was light then. At this time I was going to Roosevelt Jr. High. I attended L.D.S. High Schoool in 1927-1928 and L.D.S. College in 1929. This school was on the corner of North Temple and Main Street across from the Temple.L.D.S. High School was closed in 1929 and L.D.S. Jr. College closed in 1931. It was here that I took a cooking class from Mrs. Dunford. She and her sons started the Dunford Bakeries. The school sponsored the Golden Eagle "aerio" Club (model airplanes) and I won 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the non-flying class with all working controls. This is the silver cup I won on the bookshelf downstairs (724 Lafayette Dr).

I met my Diego Blonde, Margaret Ingleby,(brown-eyed) at L.D.S. and went steady all through high school until I met Pat.

After graduating from High School, Gerald Jamison nd I traveled down to Zion's, Cedar Breaks, Las Vegas, Boulder Dam and they were just starting to scale the rock walls. Then on to Grand Canyon, trabeled over Mount Carmel highway, which was just a dirt road, Bryce, Fish Lake (dirt roads) and back home to Salt Lake. We started out with \$25 each and pooled the money (450) and on arriving home split what was left...\$19. We traveled in a 4 cylinder "Star" that belonged to Gerald's father.

I went to L.D.S. Jr. College 1928-1929 and then on to the University of Utah for 2 years. I worked during the summer months and was able to pay my own way to school. It was during the second year that I met Pat at a dance held in Belvedere Ward. We were engaged about a year and then married 16 December 1934. Just before we were married we took a trip with aunt Velna and Uncle Earl Devey to see the Grand Canyon. Both of them are now deceased.

As Pat and I were driving home from American Fork Canyon where mother and dad had a cabin in Mutual Dell, we were traveling up State Street when a car crossed the line and took the side of the truck out. The truck was a white three ton flatbed. This rolled us over. We ended up upside-down, motor roaring, dust and glass flying, windows all broken. We crawled out unhurt. I can't say that for the other car or passengers, but our truck was badly damaged.

Right after we were married, Pat and I went on a trip with Rube and Julia to the coast. We visited Louella and Douglas Barnes, Louella is Julia's sister. On the weay home we visited the Federal Parks.

About this time Pat became interested in bowling and softball. I was the official scorekeeper for bowling and later coached 3 different softball teams: American Fur, Shamrocks (Footprinters), and Copperettes. Pat did well in bowling, winning many tournaments in cluding State singles (202 average) and Doubles with Jerry Smith (183 average). I bowled on several bowling teams. No big titles were won but it was a lot of fun and I had many good friends.

While I worked at Deseret News, I played catch on their softball team. We took first place in our division. My batting average was .327

I worked at Deseret News from 1929 to 1939 in various capacities starting at \$.25 an hour and working up to the huge sum of \$.85 an hour at the time I quit. I started as a news carrier, then truck driver, then shipping clerk and route district manager.

I had a good job offer of a job as a painter at the Utah Copper Company-later known as Kennecott Copper- and I worked there from 1939 to 1945.

Brent was born 23 February 1940 while we lived in the Irvin S. Noall home at 421 Wall Street in the Capitol Hill area. Six years later Steven K. was born in the same home. We had an apartment downstairs. We now settled down to the serious business of raising children.

We lived in the Irving S. Noall home for the first 12 years of our married life. When Steven was 2 years old, we moved to our new home in Rose Park at 724 Lafayette Drive. We were the 13<sup>th</sup> family to move in the new Rose Park area. One of the reasons we were so glad to move was the cockroaches on Capitol Hill. One time we killed 52 roaches at our entrance. They were coming from the Capitol Hill Apartments. They were the large black beetle types.

After moving to Rose Park our pleasure turned toward doing things with our boys like fishing and some traveling. I remember one trip on which we took Norma and DeeAnn, Steven and Brent, Pat and myself to the coast and over to Catalina, Hoover Dam Grand Canyon and Zion. It was on this trip that we realized that children are not interested in long traveling trips. They are too restless and get too tired.

These were the years the Pat and I were Ward and Stake Dance Leaders. We spent many hours teaching young people to perform. Our Gold and Green Balls were real productions. For several years we held them at the old University Union Building down on the circle. We always cleared enough money from our ticket sales to pay for the hall rental, orchestra, decorations, prizes and refreshments and all expenses of our Teen Green. We taught many floor shows and participated in several Dance Festivals at the University of Utah Stadium. They were beautiful to see. One year there were 5,400 young girls all dressed in the same shocking pink color dancing in the all girl's dance (Polka in Pink).

Steven, in his early teens, was learning to perform on roller skates at the Normandie Rink. We then decided to skate also. We purchased some good skates and it was not long before we were doing ballroom dancing on skates. We traveled to Tacoma, Washington with our young folks to the Northwest Division Roller Skating Championships. We entered the Esquire Dance and placed 3<sup>rd</sup>. Esquire section required the aggregate age to be 80 years. Ours was 102 years.

During these years I was M.I.A President for 4 years and in the Superintendency of the Sunday School for 11 years. Pat tells me that IU was a really good superintendant.

I really liked sports, fishing and hunting. My first boat was a handmade metal duck boat, a 5 horse-power "Seaking" motor. We made many trips to Paradise Lake to fish. The kids loved it. Some of my old buddies and I went duck and deer hunting (Gale Smith, Clair Wonnosott, Wes Ensign, and Hank Schutte from Young's Sign. Many trips were made to Bear River Refuge for ducks. Most of my deer hunting was done in southern Utah, Beaver, Fillmore, and Monticello. Later we hunted at Chalk Creek near Coalville.

During the summer of 1952 we bought a kit to make our 2<sup>nd</sup> boat. It was a Cris Craft 13 ½' with a mahogany deck. It really was a neat little boat. We spent many hours fixing it up. We varnished the deck and fiberglassed the bottom and made a shade cover. A 35 horse-power Johnson motor was our first waterski motor. We sure had fun. Just imagine, the kit was only \$99. It served us well for 13 years. We waterskied and fished on nearly all the water in the state. I remember the year lake Powell opened-1954-Steven, Pat and I loaded sleeping bags, food and enough gas to get us up to Rainbow Bridge and back (100 miles) into that small boat. It was quite an adventure.

On August 29, 1945, I started working at Young Electric Sign Company as a repaint man. Young's Company was then located on Motor Avenue (Now Social Hall Avenue). I painted many signs around the state including the "Cowboy" at Wendover, many in Las Vegas including the Mint, Stardust, Flamingo, Freemont Hotel, Boulder Click (the first large sign in Vegas), and many others. I was paint foreman for 14 years and had charge of all outgoing signs. I then made a change from painter to salesman and have sold signs all over Utah. I really have enjoyed this profession right up to the present time. Incidentally, I painted the first plexiglas indirectly illuminated sign in the state of Utah. It was the Banquet Better Butter sign. It was located on the northwest corner of Main and North Temple where Mormon Handicraft now stands (1983). While selling I won several trips. They included Acapulco, Carribean Islands, Spain, Virginia and Washington D.C., New York and a fishing trip to Great Slave Lake in Canada.

After travelling all over we were always glad to come back home to Salt Lake City, Utah. What a beautiful place to live...our Utah.

Our third boat was an aluminum 14 ½' Starcraft with a deeper draft. We enjoyed this boat also and it traveled all over the state. About 1978 we bought a Chrysler Hydro V Hull. A good, safe boat for our grandchildren to enjoy. We put a Chrysler 85hp motor on it and it is still just right for us. We still have it. LakePowell hold many memories. We have travelled the whole length of the lake and been in most all of the canyons by boat,

In 1965 we made a mistake of riding on Clarence Robbin's snowmobile and since have owned 17 different machines. We now have a Polaris TXL and Apollo and a Galaxie and Cutlass. We just sold the Apollo and the Galaxie and now have just two. We have traveled many thousands of miles on the snow. Our main snow buddies have been my cousin LaVar Strong and his wife Dixie. It is beautiful at the top of the mountains. Some of our favorite places to go snowmobiling are Kamas (Mirror Lake), Fairview, Strawberry, American Fork Canyon, Snake Creek, Yellowstone and Bear Lake (sinks).

In 1977 I decided to buy 2 Honda Trail 90's (motorcycles) and the whole family have enjoyed taking rides on them. I now have added a Yamaha 100...a smooth little motorcycle. Our favorite place to go on the motorcycles is to Flaming Gorge where we take the old road in Sheep Creek which joins the new road down the canyon. The scenery is spectacular.

One of the fun things to do, in which my interest is grat, is the field of photography. Nearly every trip we go on, I take pictures to bring back as a reminder of the happenings on that particular outing. I have literally shot thousands of slides and prints and many hundred feet of movie film. Each one has its own part of my life.

I semi-retired in 1981, working 2 or 3 day a week.

I have now taken full retirement as of May 2, 1983 (71 years old) my birthday. The Young Electric Sign Company gave me a nice dinner at the Hilton Hotel and I received a leather belt and a silver buckle for square dancing.

We have been square dancing for about a year and a half. We attended 1 square dance class and 1 round dance class each week plus special jamborees.

We just returned from a trip to Hawaii, traveling to 4 different islands.