

Marlon Kent

as interviewed by Judy Hansen
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I was born Oct 26, 1939 to Victor and Emily Kent. I grew up in Star, Idaho about twenty miles west of Boise. I had one older brother, one older sister, and then there were five younger than me; Dean, Marjorie, myself, Arlene, Burton, Warren, JoyAnn, and Joyce. Dad always rented a farm; he never did own a place of his own. Later in life, when his health got so bad mother took the inheritance from her parents' death and bought a place in Meridian, Idaho.

I graduated from Meridian High in 1957. I was also the last graduating class of eighth graders from Star grade school. I went to Eagle Jr. High for one year and then onto Meridian for the last three years. I served a mission for my church in England, Great Britain. Due to the splits I served in three missions during the two years I was there. I was called to the British Mission and got there in December; in March the following year they split the mission so I went to the North British Mission with President Barnard P. Brockbank; then they split the mission again in September and made the Scottish-Irish Mission. I went to Scotland with President Brockbank. I finished my mission in Scotland; served in Ireland as a District Leader for a while, went back to Scotland and served in the office printing the news magazine for three or four months. I finished my mission up traveling with another Elder into all the branches helping them organize and function as they should. There is some beautiful country there and some great people.

I got home and then a while later I got a letter from Uncle Sam saying I'd be serving basic training in Fort Ord, California. I was drafted. That was 1962 and I was 23 years old. I put in my basic training and after graduating I was transferred to Fort Sill, Oklahoma. When I got there I was put in as a heavy equipment operator to operate graders and caterpillars doing road construction with the 593rd Engineer Unit. Most of the men that were in the 593rd had all been back at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri and had graduated as heavy equipment operators. We had heavy equipment operators that were running typewriters in the office. They figured because of my experience on the farm I was qualified to be a heavy equipment operator. I had never been on heavy equipment. I was willing to take the challenge. I was stuck driving a jeep for a 2nd Lieutenant.



Dad had a heart attack and needed help on the farm. I felt pretty useless around on base because I was pretty much stuck in the orderly room most of the time. If the Officer needed to go out I'd drive the jeep for him but any other time I was to polish and take care of the jeep. I put in for a hardship discharge to get out so I could help dad on the farm. We had to have eight letters, four copies each, all notarized, and it all had to go through the Red Cross unit. We had to have letters from neighbors, clergymen, bankers, and his doctor stating his health. It took a long time but we finally got the letters in. When I asked about it the company clerk told me I had to contact my folks because the Red Cross was waiting for instructions from home to get things together. I called mother and they had never been notified of any further direction needed. Finally the letters came. They passed the company, cleared Battalion, and when it got to Brigade they started playing around with it and said they needed more information. I waited a couple more weeks, called mother again, but she had not heard any more about it. I called the Red Cross and they hadn't heard any more either. I finally sit down and wrote my congressman a letter. A short time later I got notice that I would be released no later than April 3rd. Sure enough April 3rd 1963 rolled around and I was released. I only spent 6 or 7 months active duty.

I had to finish my time with the Army Reserve. I was in the reserve for 7 or 8 years. I had been home about a month and got a letter from Fort Lewis, Washington stating there were two units in Boise. The name of one unit was underlined in red and the other unit was underlined in black. The one underlined in red was the 327th Engineer Battalion in Boise. The letter was giving me a choice but said if they didn't hear from me in a short time I'd automatically be assigned to the unit underlined in red. I thought, "Fine, they are going to assign me to the engineer unit and that is where I want to go anyway" and threw the letter in the waste basket. The unit underlined in black was a transportation company. About a month later I got another letter from Fort Lewis saying I had been assigned to the 327th Engineer Battalion; you attend meetings once a month; or we can send you into active duty any time we want if you don't attend. So I attended reserve meetings once a month for the balance of my time.

When I attended the meetings we would go out to the shop and work on equipment, clean up, and make sure things were operational. We always had different projects to do. In summer camp we also had projects to work on. The first summer camp I went to we went down to Fort Irwin, California. This summer camp was just 12 miles from Death Valley so it was HOT! Another summer camp we went to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho where the old Farragut Navel training station was and we were tearing all the old buildings down because they were making a Boy Scout camp there. Summer camps weren't bad. Reserve meeting weren't bad. We'd have to stand in formation and work on projects they had there for us.

After I got out of Fort Sill, I found out that my comrades there were receiving orders to go to Cambodia to start the build-up for Vietnam. They usually put the engineer units at the front to build bridges and make roads so they are first in line for attack. I know the Lord has things to say about who comes home and who doesn't. I feel if I had not got out of active duty I would not be here today. The Lord was preserving my life.

I married a gal from Nampa, Idaho; Carolyn Waltman. She could not bear children so we adopted; Timothy Marlon who now lives in California and Becky Jo. We were married almost ten years and then divorced.

I had some cousins in Utah that I called and with their help I got a job lined up over the phone. I came to Utah and started milking for a man in Vineyard, Utah. It was Dexter Kent that helped me get the job. I started dating quite a bit around here and was attending some special interest dances through my church. I met Sherilyn Jepson and we married October 5, 1974. Sherilyn had three children of her own when we married; Richard, David, and Kimberly.

I farmed most of my life. When I first married Sherilyn we lived in StarCrest apartments in Orem. The church bought Don Allen's place in Vineyard and I got the job running the place. We moved into a house right down by the lake that was owned by the church. I supervised the volunteer labor when they came out to do things. The first year the church wanted a part-time manager and I had to keep track of the hours I worked and how many volunteers came out. The second year they decided to put me in as full-time manager. At one point they budgeted my wages for one year and told me I could look for another job and work part-time for that year then that would be it. The church bought the adjoining place during that year and the man who managed this place used to live by me up in Idaho. When my job came to an end that December I just went to work for the adjoining place which was still owned by the church. I was doing all the feeding on the dairy. We had over 1,000 head of stock on the dairy. They eventually were going to move all the cattle down to Richfield and build a 1,000 cow dairy farm down there. We had some sick cows at the time and the manager took a fecal sample in to find out what we were fighting. They found some salmonella. It was not affecting the milk, the meat, or anything. The Vet we were working with gave us some medicine to give the cows a shot. A month later we were supposed to give a follow-up shot but the State of Utah got involved and told us not to give the follow-up shot. They said all we were doing was covering the disease up. We had cows that were giving over 100 lbs. of milk a day. Sick cows don't milk like that. After the first shot they picked right up and were doing great. The State said we could not sell anything on the place until we could get a clean sample from every animal. This was interesting to me because in my biology lab our professor said, "If you want salmonella all you do is put your animal on the truck, poke him on the side a couple of times, drive around the block, then check him and you'll find salmonella." He said it is in the ground and all over the place. With 1000 head of animals there was no way we were going to get a clean sample on every animal. They finally had to sell the cows to slaughter. Armor Pack up in Nampa, Idaho got the bid on them and we ended up sending cows to slaughter that were giving 100 lbs. of milk a day. In 1989 they closed the dairy down. After it was all said and done the State came back and said, "We're sorry, we handled that the wrong way." It put a bitter taste in my mouth because I was out of a job. I had been there for thirteen years.

I decided I wanted to try something else. I wanted to help people so I went back to school at fifty years of age and got my LPN. Then I went and worked up at the Developmental Center for thirteen years.

In 1998 they came to me and told me I would have to move because the church was going to tear the house down. They gave me a year to build a new home and we built out at Saratoga Springs on 25 East Heron Court. We moved into our home in April 2000. Within two weeks after we moved the old house was torn down and gone. Later, we decided if we sold the house in Saratoga Sherilyn could quit work and we could possibly go on some type of mission. About $\frac{3}{4}$

way through the move I got a severe knee infection in my half-knee. I ended up in the Orem Rehab nursing home for six weeks getting treatment. Everything I made from selling the house went onto medical bills. We moved to Lehi and rented this home where we are now (51 East 400 North).

We are working in the temple every Wednesday in the Baptistry. That is pretty fun. My ex-wife died quite young and so we took Tim and Becky into our home. We had ten children of our own; Alan, Sandra, Emily, Tamara, TrudyLyn, Benjamin, Rosemary, Martin, Suzi, and Angela. With our blended family we have raised fifteen children.