

(Laura Cook, cont. from page 6)

When Mrs. Cook was a teenager, Lagoon was built nearby and she could hear music from the amusement park through her bedroom window. It was a sore temptation, but her father didn't like the idea of her spending time at the park and above all, Mrs. Cook sought to please her doting father.

She recalls the excitement of visits from leaders of the Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter-day Saints, who frequently stayed at her father's home and borrowed his horses and wagons for trips to other parts of the Utah Territory.

One of her fondest memories is attending the dedication of the Salt Lake Temple in 1893 when she was 13 years old. She remembers going into the temple through a southwest door, handing a paper to a man, then climbing a winding stair to a large room filled with people. She recalls the experience as "breathtaking," and also how impressed she was with the beauty of the Temple.

Mrs. Cook has more than just memories to live for. Every year brings new experiences. During the past year, for instance, she attended her second temple dedication.

By special invitation from the First Presidency of the LDS Church, she was an honored guest at the dedication of the Jordan River Temple on November 19, 1982 at 5:00 P.M. being seated on the front row in the Celestial Room of the Temple with her daughter, LaRue Cook Bowen, and her son, LeGrande Clark Silver. President Gordon B. Hinckley conducted and gave the Dedicatory Prayer and also Pres. Marion G. Romney presided giving the Hosanna Shout. They gave inspirational talks along with Elder Howard W. Hunter. Other general authorities were present there too. She reports that she was greatly moved by the experience. 'The building, the Celestial Room itself, the talks, the beautiful music from the large choir and the Spirit present as well as everything about the service was beautiful.' When she left, she was struck too by the splendor of the floodlit exterior, with the golden Angel Moroni statue and the lighted stained glass windows. It was 'a great honor,' she said.

The previous month she and some members of her family went through the temple during the open house. Pres. D. VanDam and his First counselor, Pres. McKean of the Jordan River Temple and others honored her.

Two years ago, on her 100th birthday, she was given a reception in the Lion House in Salt Lake City. It was a stormy winter day but more than 400 people came to wish her well, some waiting more than an hour in line to greet her.

After her 100th birthday, she said, she wondered, 'What am I going to do with my life now?' She said she decided to do things for the many children in her large family. She has 12 grandchildren, 34 great-grand children and five great-great-grand-children.

Her life has not been easy. She was widowed three times and was often alone while she raised her six children, Norma, LaRue, Maurine, Ezra, LeGrande and Joel. (Joel died in 1974 after open heart surgery, but her other children remain.)

Despite adversity, her zest for life and her faith always helped her bounce back, her daughter LaRue, said.

Mrs. Cook now lives with LaRue in a Salt Lake home left her by her last husband. She attends church meetings every week, Daughters of Utah Pioneers meetings, receptions and other places. And she keeps in touch with her family, looking forward to the annual Ezra T. Clark family reunion in June."

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