

# *In Loving Memory*



## *Gordon Harris*

*I will not complain -- for my troubles are my own*

*I will show appreciation -- for less is a poor thank you.*

*I will do my best -- for no one can do more.*

*I will be a good listener -- for untold knowledge could be lost.*

*I will control my tongue -- for it can be as deadly as a snake.*

*I will help others -- for I may need help myself.*

*I will think -- for for my brain needs use to survive.*

*I will trust in the Lord -- for he is with me always.*

*from Dad 7/1/88*

## Gordon Walter Harris

Gordon ("Donny" to his old friends) passed away suddenly of a heart attack Wednesday September 12, 2012, at age 84. A lifelong resident of Reno, he was proud to be a fourth generation Nevadan.

Gordon was born at St. Mary's Hospital on September 2, 1928, to Gordon B. and Audrey C. Harris. An only child, he grew up among friends and cousins on Ralston Street, attending Mt. Rose Elementary, Billinghurst Middle, and Reno High schools. He continued his education at Stanford University before marrying his high school sweetheart, Madeleine Lapeyre, in 1948 and finishing his schooling at the University of Nevada.

A genius with radio equipment and Morse code, he became the youngest licensed Ham radio operator in the state of Nevada at age 12. He was recruited to work at KOH radio station as a technician and announcer as a teenager. Some of his fondest memories were of working the sound system and recording live shows of the biggest entertainers of the day including Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, and Artie Shaw. Gordon worked with and became a friend of Tennessee Ernie Ford. An accomplished pianist and accordionist, he made a point of making friends with professional "squeeze-box" musicians, among them local restaurateur Johnny Cassinari.

Gordon discovered cars at a young age and became an avid collector and restorer of pre-1930 vehicles. He was a founding member of the Horseless Carriage Club of Nevada. He also was involved in early Sports Car Club of America racing, competing in local races in his Jaguar and MG, much to the concern of his parents. This passion for automobiles took a hard turn from horseless carriages to Ford Mustangs in 1965. For the rest of his life, he acquired and restored 1965 Mustangs. He gave a fastback to each of his grandsons and a convertible to each of his granddaughters.

During his career at KOH, he met his second wife, Patricia Fordham. He later partnered in business with his father, running Gordon B. Harris Insurance until 2010.

Gordon collected licenses – he was a real estate agent, long-haul and hazmat truck driver, licensed electrician, satellite and merchant marine radio operator, and FAA hot air balloon inspector and repairman. Ballooning in particular was one of his great loves. This passion was awakened when a hot-air balloon flew over his home one morning in 1982. He quickly acquired a balloon and obtained his commercial balloon pilot license. Within a year he started giving rides to friends and family.

He enjoyed working with his hands. At age 16 he built a cabin at Lake Tahoe, which became the traditional honeymoon and family vacation spot. In addition to building radios and restoring cars, he designed and built his own house.

Gordon is survived by a large family: daughter Katherine Harris Linnell and husband Warren of Spring Creek, NV; daughter Nance Harris White and husband Gary of Rocklin, CA; and son Gordon Robert Harris and wife Kathryn of Reno, NV. He is also survived by seven grandchildren – Destra Amado and husband Jeff, Megan Randolph and husband Andrae, Darcy Gibson, Karensa White, Benjamin Gibson, Patrick Gibson, Adam White and wife Jenna – ten great-grandchildren, and first cousins Richard W. Harris and Yvonne W. Isola.

Gordon touched the lives of many people. He was a dedicated Mason, being a lifelong member of Reno Lodge No. 13 F&AM as well as of York Rite and Scottish Rite. He was a great inspiration to his family, friends, and acquaintances. He leaves behind many who will miss his sense of humor and enthusiasm for life. He was always ready with a joke "so clean you could tell it in church."

A funeral service honoring his life will be held on Sunday, September 23rd at 2:00 PM at Ross Burke & Knobel-Reno, 2155 Kietzke Lane. Interment at Masonic Gardens Cemetery will occur the following day, 9:30 AM Monday the 24th.

Gordon's family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation or the Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation.

"He took the road less traveled."

*In Loving Memory*

# ***Gordon Walter Harris***

***Entered Into Life***

*September 2, 1928*

*Reno, Nevada*

***Entered Into Rest***

*September 12, 2012*

*Reno, Nevada*

## ***Funeral Service***

*Ross, Burke and Knobel Mortuary*

*2155 Kietzke Lane Reno, NV*

*Sunday, September, 23, 2012*

*2:00pm*

## ***Officiating***

*Pastor Dean Ashley*

## ***Reception***

*Following the Funeral Service*

*The family invites you to a Celebration of Life Reception at*

*The National Automobile Museum*

*10 S. Lake Street Reno, NV*

*At 3:30pm*

## ***Interment***

*Masonic Gardens Cemetery*

*Monday, September 24, 2012*

*9:30am*

## *The Road Not Taken*

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black,  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back,*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*

*Robert Frost*

### **Pall Bearers**

<i>Gordon Robert Harris</i>	<i>Adam White</i>
<i>Benjamin Gibson</i>	<i>Jeff Amado</i>
<i>Patrick Gibson</i>	<i>Andrae Randolph</i>