

Lucy Pearl McMills Greenwood

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Lucy Pearl McMills was born on November 24, 1919 in Salt Lake City, Utah to deaf parents, John Wallace McMills and Pearl Ault. They attended Utah School for the Deaf in the early 1900s. They had two daughters, Lucy and Eva Alice (Fowler). Lucy's older brother, John Ault McMills died shortly after birth.

According to Lucy's biography created by the Ogden Branch for the Deaf, she had a very happy childhood assisting her parents who were deaf and playing with her sister, Eva. At an



Lucy, John, Eva and Pearl McMills

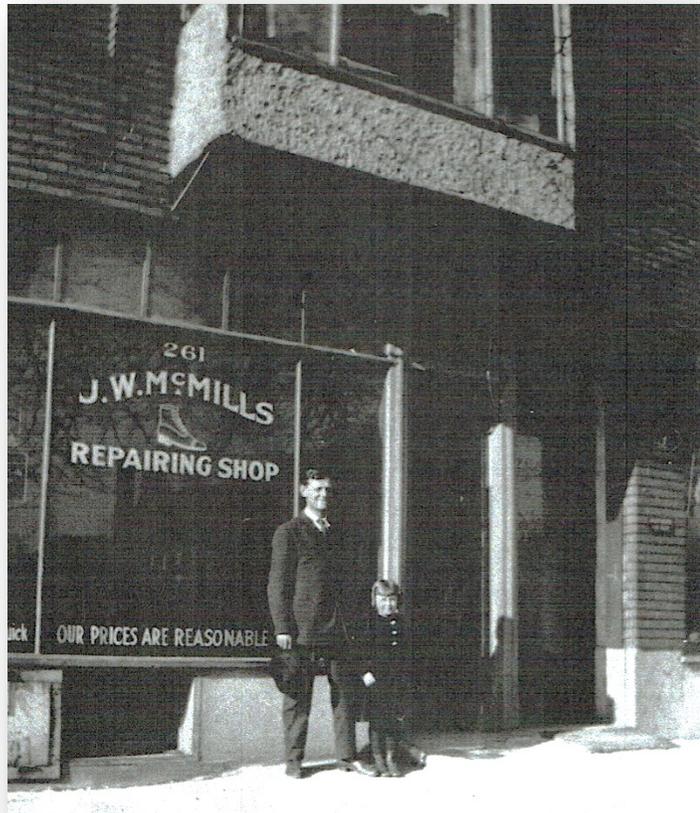
early age, Lucy and Eva were taught the sign language and finger spelling and they became very proficient. When growing up, Lucy received her education in the Salt Lake City District (Biography of LPMG). They were of a great help to their parents in interpreting messages to them and helping out in their father's McMills Shoe Repair Shop (Biography of LPMG).

This shop was on 267 E. 5th South in Salt Lake City and it was exactly across the street from the Utah State Office of Education, about where the driveway is for the Salt Lake City Police Department (Jean Thomas, personal communication, June 11, 2015).

After school, Lucy went to her father's shop daily to dye shoes. Her sister, Eva, did most of the interpreting. The police would come looking for Eva several times and took her from work to interpret for deaf persons (Jean Thomas, personal communication, July 15, 2015).

As John and Pearl's daughters, Lucy and Eva grew older, they became well-known interpreters in the state of Utah (UAD Bulletin, February 1972).

Lucy was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By the time she turned 18, she was asked by the Relief Society to take part in a presentation they were giving and be dressed up as the Bride of 1935. This was a fun experience for her (Biography of LPMG).



**John McMills' J.W. McMills Repairing Shop.
Lucy is standing next to her father, about 1926**

Lucy met her future husband, Virgil at a New Year's Eve dance and had a lovely time chatting and dancing (Biography of LPMG). He was deaf and graduated from Utah School for the Deaf in 1931. Eight months later, on August 14, 1936 Lucy and Virgil were married in the Salt Lake Temple. President George F. Richards, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, performed the ceremony. He told them that they would live busy lives and have a beautiful posterity. His prediction came true when Lucy and Virgil became the parents of nine children, five sons and four daughters (Biography of LPMG). Brothers and sisters in year order: Ruth Ann Greenwood (Felter); John Rogers Greenwood (died at age 9); Virginia Ault Greenwood (Chambers); Virgil McMills

Greenwood; Linda Alice Greenwood (Pepcorn); Jean Pearl Greenwood (Thomas); Charles Daniel Greenwood; Paul Francis Greenwood; and Timothy David Greenwood.

Lucy and Virgil lived in Roy until the early 1940's. When they were first married Virgil was a farmer in Roy. He had a very small farm of his own and turned his chicken coop into their small one room home (the house still stands today) on the corner of 5600 South and 3100 West



Lucy McMills and her husband, Virgil Greenwood

on the North side of the street. They raised chickens and vegetables. Virgil worked for his father, Ruben Percy Greenwood (his mother was Ethel Melissa Rogers) and milked 36 cows by hand twice a day, in addition to other duties on a large 40 + acre farm. He hired out to work for other farmers in Roy. In 1974, Delos W. Holly, a farmer told Jean that every farmer wanted the Greenwoods to work for them; they were hard workers and good farmers (Jean Thomas, personal communication, June 11, 2015).

Virgil was the oldest of five children, born to Ruben P. and Ethel M. Rogers Greenwood. Virgil had three brothers and one sister. Bert was the second child, he was hard of hearing and attended public school in Roy, Utah. Stewart was the third child; he was deaf and attended Utah Schools for the Deaf. Stewart died age 23, he was hit by a car in Roy after coming home from a dance in Ogden. Arden was the fourth child, he could hear, and attended public school in Roy as well. Gloria was the youngest child, she attended Utah School for the Deaf also. However, her mother wanted her to learn to talk, so Ethel sent Gloria to live with her sister, Maud Rogers Taylor, in Provo, Utah, from time to time, to learn to speak from a teacher that lived in Provo. Ethel Rogers Greenwood writes in her diary, that her children all had severe ear

infections from birth and was the cause of her children's deafness (Jean Thomas, personal communication, April 9, 2019).

Later Virgil left the farm to make a living. He was the first deaf person hired to work for the government in Utah. In the beginning he worked as a mechanic on the B-52 bombers at Hill Air Force Base and invented

a device to lower the engines from the plane which would allow a mechanic to work on the engine and rotate the engine as needed for repair. He later transferred to Utah Defense Depot in Ogden (DDO), to be closer to home, at that time they lived on Gwen Street in Ogden around the corner from Frank and Orba Seeley (deaf friends). Virgil walked to



Virgil Greenwood receives his thirty-years service award from Col. A.L.Schalbrack of the Defense Depot Ogden, as his wife, Lucy, interprets UAD Bulletin, June 1972

work every day until they moved to Washington Boulevard in Ogden, and then he rode the bus every day to and from work. He did this so that Lucy had a car and could go and interpret for her friends as needed (Jean Thomas, personal communication, June 11, 2015).

Soon after they married, they made their home in Roy, Utah and attended church services at the Ogden Branch for the Deaf in Ogden, Utah. According to her obituary, her life-long service was intertwined in church service and interpreting for deaf people. Lucy served many years in Ogden Branch for the Deaf, where she was a trusted friend and interpreter for 62 years; Young Women's President for 27 years, instructor and visiting teacher for the Relief Society; and served a full-time mission to the deaf, in Chicago, Illinois. Lucy was asked to assist with many special projects for the LDS church, including the LDS Church's first mission training

center for the deaf, special Temple projects, interpreting for General Conferences, and interpreting many LDS films into American Sign Language (UAD Bulletin, August 2011).

Many times, President Max W. Woodbury of Ogden Branch called upon Lucy to interpret for speakers. In 1946, President Woodbury asked Lucy to be the President of the Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association (YWMIA) in the Ogden Branch for the Deaf. She



Lucy Greenwood, left, translates for Rosie Losee. Lucy is employed at the United Way to provide interpreting service for the deaf in Davis County Utah. Unknown date and publication

served faithfully for 23 years. When the Relief Society at the Ogden Branch was organized on November 5, 1956, Lucy was called to teacher as a theology teacher. She taught this class faithfully for three years despite the demands on her time and energy from outside commitments (Ogden Branch records; Kenneth L. Kinner, personal communication, July 27, 2011).

As time passed by Lucy became more and more in demand as an interpreter, chorister, substitute teacher, substitute secretary, and many other odd jobs that she was so capable of doing. She interpreted for many young couples who were going through the temple to be married. She also interpreted for many deaf people who were doing work in the temple. She also worked as an

interpreter in Weber College (later renamed Weber State University) (Biography of LPMG). G. Leon Curtis, a Weber College student, recalls Lucy serving as a faithful interpreter for his classes from 1969 to 1971 and providing positive counsel as well as support. When he graduated from Weber College, he mentioned to her that she should get a special degree from this college after interpreting and learning along with him during those three years (G. Leon Curtis, personal communication, July 27, 2011).

Lucy had more than forty years of interpreting services to the deaf, especially at the Ogden Branch for the Deaf. She was a well-known interpreter and was among the first certified professional interpreters in the nation. She was a member of Utah Association for the Deaf and the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (Biography of LPMG).

When the Utah Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf was organized on October 5, 1968, she was one of the first interpreters to join this organization (UAD Bulletin, Fall 1968). On November 16, 1975, she was one of thirteen interpreters who passed the tough Utah Registry of Interpreters state certification (UAD Bulletin, April 1975). In the 1970s, Greenwood was recognized as Utah's senior interpreter since the establishment of Utah Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Lucy's daughter, Jean remembers her mother, Lucy preparing for the national RID test back in the 1960's. All of her wardrobes were changed to black, dark brown, navy blue and other dark colors. Lucy and her sister, Eva would talk about taking the RID test and how nervous Lucy was, feeling like she would not pass. Eva would say, "Now Lucy, you will pass, just be calm!" She took interpreting very seriously. She was the Utah State proctor for the RID test until about 1990 when Annette Thorpe Tull, CODA and interpreter, asked her if she could take that role for the state of Utah. Lucy believed strongly in the Interpreter Code of Ethics, she really talked about it and taught Jean about it for many years. Lucy said, "Jeannie, the Deaf need to know that they have their privacy and that they can trust you with the information in their lives, which you have no right to." Lucy was very serious when it came to the Code of Ethics. Lucy literally hauled Jean off to the interpreter training classes in her



Lucy McMills Greenwood
UAD Bulletin, Fall-Winter 1970-71

diapers. Jean attended the classes every Saturday with her mother for many years. Jean can remember sitting in a large circle with many other CODA's, including Dr. Robert G. Sanderson's sons, Gary and Barry. She said, "It was historic when Bob Sanderson was in charge of the training and the training was marvelous." Jean has fond memories when she teamed interpreting with her mother. She began to appreciate her mother's heritage and legacy she had left for interpreters everywhere (Jean Thomas, personal communication, July 15, 2015).

Lucy served as an officer and member of the Utah Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. She assisted in establishing the first sign language interpreter certification in the state of Utah. She also served as a certification evaluator and proctor for three organizations: Utah Registry of

Interpreters for the Deaf, Interpreter Certification Board, and National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (Biography of LPMG).



Lucy McMills Greenwood

Much of Lucy's work as an interpreter was voluntary. It was not until the late 1970s when the state of Utah set a budget to cover interpreting service fees. She often commented on how blessed she was to serve others. There was never a question of whether she should serve, but rather when, where, and how (Biography of LPMG). Lucy's daughter, Jean recalled that her mother, Lucy interpreted from a young age to 2002. She continued to interpret for Utah School for the

Deaf and other community-agencies into her late 80's. Lucy had huge ganglion cysts on the tops of both her hands and would not consider having surgery. When Jean tried to persuade her mother to have her get them taken out because of such great pain. Lucy responded, "NO, I WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO INTERPRET OR TALK TO MY DEAF BROTHERS AND SISTERS AGAIN." She remained a certified registered member of the RID until after 2005. She loved the

Deaf and considered herself DEAF. Jean could clearly see that Lucy had a “Deaf Heart” (Jean Thomas, personal communication, July 15, 2015).

Lucy’s two daughters, Jean Thomas and Ruth Ann Felter, each followed in their mother’s footsteps and became an interpreter (UAD Bulletin, May 1992).

On July 21, 2011, Lucy passed away in Rupert, Idaho at the age of 91 at the home of one of her daughters, Linda. After the funeral in Ogden, she was laid to rest beside her husband, Virgil, who had passed away August 1973, and her parents, John and Pearl McMills in the Salt Lake City Cemetery in Salt Lake City, Utah. Her two sons, John Rogers and Charles Daniel were buried there along with her sister, Eva Alice McMills Prudence Fowler and Eve’s husband, Daniel E. Prudence. Among her children, she is survived by Jean Thomas of Roy, Ruth Ann Felter of Layton, Linda Pepcorn of Rupert, Idaho (UAD Bulletin, August 2011). Lucy’s two other sons, Paul Francis and Timothy David of Utah also survivors (Jean Thomas, personal communication, July 15, 2015).

As can be seen, Lucy was a pioneer in the field of interpreting and was a true advocate for the deaf. There is truly not enough space to include all her volunteer work. With Lucy’s busy schedule raising a large family, she is commended for her continued outstanding dedication to the field of sign language interpreting and her volunteer commitment in giving back to the Utah Deaf community.

Notes

G. Leon Curtis, personal communication, July 27, 2011.

Jean Thomas, personal communication, June 11, 2015.

Jean Thomas, personal communication, July 15, 2015.

Jean Thomas, personal communication, April 9, 2019

Kenneth L. Kinner, personal communication, July 27, 2011.

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