

Mayor Guy Cash-Lehi's 42nd Mayor 1990-93

By Richard Van Wagoner

Although 1989 does not seem that long ago, few of us, aside from the candidates themselves, can likely recall who ran for local political office then. To refresh your memory Guy Cash and Dale Ashton faced off for the mayorship while Douglas Hadfield, Johnny Barnes, Richard Smith and Carolyn Player sought the two vacant council seats.

The campaign was a spirited demonstration of grassroots democracy at work. The usual partisan signs were placed at strategic intersections about town. Considerable flesh was pressed in door-to-door canvassing, debates were held, speeches given, and promises were made by all candidates to devote the next four years of their lives making Lehi a better place to live.

When the November 8 "Free Press" announced that Guy Cash had been elected the town's new mayor along with council members Carolyn Player and Douglas Hadfield, just twenty-three votes separated Player, Hadfield, and Barnes. Hadfield had won his seat by only a single vote margin. Ultimately a recount was held and on November 24th Barnes was declared the victory by a narrow margin of three votes.

Mayor-elect Cash, son of Guy W. Cash and Violet T. Detton, was born Jan. 17, 1930 in Grangeville, Idaho, a small town situated between Boise and Spokane, Washington. This historic Salmon River country is the site where the Lewis and Clark expedition wintered prior to the arrival on the Pacific coast.

Guy recalls with relish his idyllic youth. The family traveled about the west as Guy, Sr., a world class rodeo cowboy, found success winning the North American Bucking Horse Championship at the Pendleton Roundup, and dozens of other bronc riding and bulldogging championships at American rodeos including

the Lehi roundup in the 1930s.

Guy attended school in the Grangeville and White Bird, Idaho area. When he graduated from 8th grade he was half the of two. In his senior year at Grangeville High School, where he was class president, he began dating Mary Ellen Willey. After a four-year, on-and-off-again romance, they were married on Christmas day, 1949. Forty-five years later they are the parents of seven children and twenty-three grandchildren.

After Guy's father retired from rodeoing in the mid-1940s he bought a ranch about forty miles south of White Bird and organized a rodeo stock company. Young Guy assisted in all phases of the business and following his high school graduation became a proficient rodeo announcer which helped finance his college education at the University of Idaho and Northern Idaho College of Education.

While studying at NIC he entered the JC Penney managerial training program, eventually working eight years for that company. On Easter Sunday, April 9, 1950, Guy and Mary Ellen became members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Lewiston, Idaho. Church work has been a major activity throughout their lives with Guy serving on several high councils and bishoprics, including an interval as bishop of the Lehi Sixth Ward.

In 1956, Guy and Mary Ellen bought a small grocery store in Lewiston. Six years later they moved their family to Pocatello where Guy became a founding partner in Sterling Wholesale, an institutional food distributing company. In 1974, the company was sold to Sysco foods at which time, Guy became president and CEO of the local subsidiary which then employed seventy persons and did \$8 million of business annually.

In 1978, Guy and Mary Ellen, who had been living in Lehi since 1972, purchased the local Western Auto store from Wilson and Faye Hayward. For the first three years of operation Cash's remained at 2 West Main. But Guy and Mary Ellen envisioned a more substantial store with greater parking area for their

customers. Recognizing the shared consumer potential of the planned Kohler's Food Town, the couple purchased property immediately west at 286 East Main.

Cash's Western Auto and True Value Hardware opened in their ample two-story building in June 1981. While still carrying automotive and hardware supplies, the business expanded to include large and small appliances, televisions, stereos, camcorders, vacuum cleaners, and furniture. Seasonal items included Snapper lawn mowers, tillers, snowblowers, space heaters, and a complete line of garden and lawn care products.

In 1988, the Cashes took in Parley Hellewell, a plumbing contractor, as a partner. The business was further expanded to include a wide range of do-it-yourself plumbing supplies. Guy and Mary Ellen retired from the business in September 1989 being bought out by their partner.

Prior to his election as Lehi's mayor, Guy had served on the Lehi City Board of Adjustments, the Lehi Library Board, the Tri City Golf Course committee, and a four-year term on the Lehi City Council. During his thirty-three month tenure, Mayor Cash and his administration restored Lehi's streets to a usable conditions after the extensive damage caused by the installation of the new pressurized irrigation system. the two entryway parks on the west and east send of State Street were also completed during this time. And plans for the new Lehi power department sub-station, now under construction, were also initiated during the Cash administration.

A city-wide master plan was adopted and an equitable pay plan for city employees was put into place, an effort that added stability and quality within the various municipal departments. The Lehi Historical Preservation was established by ordinances and an active nuisance abatement committee was empowered to eliminate unsafe, unsightly, and unhealthy situations throughout the city.

The Cash administration will perhaps best be remembered retrospectively for preserving the Lehi Memorial Building, our town's most historic public building

which a small group of citizens, including two city councilmen, wanted to demolish. Negotiations during the Cash years resulted in an agreement between Lehi City Corporation and the Hutchings Museum whereby the museum agreed to relocate to a refurbished Memorial Building.

Shortly after his election Mayor Cash's former business became insolvent, wiping out his retirement plan. So at age sixty, Mayor Cash was forced to reestablish himself in another profession. In 1990, he obtained his Real Estate license.

As a realtor Mayor Cash found himself embroiled in a conflict of interest situation several times. In 1991, the mayor was charged by the Utah County attorney with criminal misconduct when he acted as realtor for the sale of a parcel of property in which the city had an interest. Those of us who know Guy well, however, knew that this kind, ethical and upright man had no criminal intent in his actions. As a result of court action, he ultimately agreed to avoid any such conflicts during the remainder of his term. This condition forced him to abstain at times from council discussions on real estate related matters, an action which caused some disgruntled citizen to pressure him to resign.

The reluctant mayor submitted a letter of resignation of September 29, 1992 citing family commitments and 'the extreme difficulty of serving as mayor and real estate agent without conflict.' Within two weeks the city council appointed Ronald V. Smith to serve the remainder of Mayor Cash's term--from October 6, 1992 until January 1994.

Guy Cash continues his real estate work today and has found success with several Utah Valley firms. His wife Mary Ellen also received her license in 1993 and the two are currently working with Home Source Real Estate which recently opened an office at 166 East Main in Lehi.

Guy is an avid sports fan. He especially enjoys BYU, the Utah Jazz, the Salt Lake Buzz, and the New York Yankees (when they are not on strike). His interest in

rodeo is unabated. If he ever retires with energy to spare, he would like to write a book on the history of rodeo prior to World War II.

Among his historical interests, Guy had read a biography of each U.S. president from George Washington to George Bush. He particularly admires the careers of Nez Perce Indian Chief Joseph, Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Abraham Lincoln, Lou Gehrig, as well as his father, Guy Cash, Sr., who died in Lehi in 1985.

As an avid supporter and admirer of Mayor Cash during his term, I wish to pay tribute to him for his years of public service to our community, particularly his untiring efforts in support of the arts, historical preservation, the Lehi Public Library, and the Hutchings Museum. You are one of a kind Guy, a true gentleman. Thank you for your unselfishness efforts as a Lehi booster.