

Bev's Valentine Tribute to Steve

February 1983

Revised September 2003

As a Valentine tribute to Steve, and because we have never recorded our love story, I am writing it now—my version—this Valentine's Day 1983.

I tried out for Mormon Youth Chorus when auditions were first announced and the choir was just forming, in December 1968. My family still lived in Burbank and I was flying home from BYU for Christmas. I think Judy must have taken me to Salt Lake City where I auditioned for Jay Welch at the Institute Chapel at the University of Utah. Then I went to the airport to fly home for Christmas (and to help at the candy store in Burbank's "Golden Mall"). Jay told me I was a first soprano. I had been singing second soprano in the BYU Womens Chorus, but I didn't make it into Mormon Youth at that time. Steve tried out at that time and he did make it.

I kept thinking about Mormon Youth and thought it sounded like something I'd really like to be in, although I never heard them perform or anything. After my freshman year at BYU my family moved to Provo, in September 1969, and we went to Provo 4th Ward. We lived at 410 N. University Avenue in the basement and had a candy store upstairs. After about a year I started going to the BYU Ward that met at old BY High (5th North and University Avenue in Provo). I taught the Relief Society Social Relations lesson, and then was homemaking counselor in the Relief Society Presidency. I got to know Leslie Petty, who was in Mormon Youth (MYSC). So I auditioned again.

Just a couple weeks or so before the February 1971 performance, MYSC called and said I was accepted. They were performing the "Marshes of Glynn" by Sidney Lanier and Jay Welch. I think that was Jay's project to get his doctorate. It was so beautiful. The day I tried out I went to rehearsal in the Assembly Hall and afterward Jay had me sing 5-note scales, standing by the piano in the Assembly Hall while he played. That's how he auditioned kids at that time—a few kids every week after rehearsal. That day they had been going over "For Unto Us a Child Is Born" from the Messiah which they had just performed at a Christmas concert. It was the first time I had heard it. (Now, in the year 2003 when I am preparing this new copy of this document I am glad to say my children have been familiar with this song most of their lives.) I'm glad to say I really enjoyed it, especially the "wonderful, counselor . . ." part. I can still see Jay directing that.

So I sang in MYSC from then on until just after Ben was born, in 1977, when Steve and I both quit. Steve was past the age and I thought I needed to care for my little family. We really loved MYSC. I especially loved to hear the orchestra at performances. They were excellent and I loved Jay's directing. Later we learned to love Bob Bowden when Jay no longer conducted. Many of us cried when Jay left because we thought no one could ever take his place and we would really miss him. Steve and I got to sing in the Jay Welch Chorale from February 1978 until some time in 1980 when we felt we couldn't spend the time any longer. We loved that too. It was with more experienced and mature voices. The Chorale had a beautiful sound and was very uplifting for us. Steve and I have really enjoyed the performing times we have spent together and look forward, to many, many more—and with our children.

Back to the love story (well, our whole life together is a continuing love story). In those early MYSC years the numbers in the Chorus really dwindled in the summertime. We'd all sit in the choir seats at the Assembly Hall. The rest of the year the basses would be seated at one end of the *balcony*, next to the tenors in the choir seats, and the first sopranos would sit straight across from the basses in the *balcony*, next to the second sopranos in the choir seats. I had heard Lorinda Becker and some of the other girls in our car pool mention Steve Chapman—that he was a real card—and he had been so funny at the annual January MYSC Awards Banquet. I thought, "Well, I'll get to know him and that will help me get to know other guys in MYSC. This would be a great place to find a husband. We'd

have music in common and so on." I was sitting right behind Steve at one summertime Saturday rehearsal and noticed his collar was crooked so I straightened it. He turned and made some funny remark. He's always been a joke teller. In those days he had a well-developed facade as a jokester and never seemed serious from what I saw. I heard him recite some of his poems to some of the girls and talk about "lettuce be off, you're a real cute tomato, do you carrot all?" etc. Then he'd say something about "you're a real fruit salad" or something. I guess I was a prime candidate for his jokes (many were good, some weren't too funny) because I've always enjoyed a good laugh. In high school my friends said, "Tell Bev your jokes; she'll laugh at anything." Well, I never did believe in scoffing at a joke that really was funny and sometimes Steve comes up with real cute ones.

Nothing much happened with Steve and me from that time until Christmas of 1971. I talked to him a little when we performed at the old Promised Valley outdoor theatre east of the Salt Lake Temple (where the Church Office Building plaza fountain is now). We were treated by MYSC I guess it was when we sang for the International Welsh Festival. They gave us Dee's hamburgers and fries, etc., for lunch between rehearsal and performance that day. It was also around this time that I sang in General Conference and Steve probably did too, but I'm not sure, with Crawford Gates conducting. We sang his arrangement of "The Lord Is My Shepherd." It was gorgeous. I remember hearing Steve play the sopranino recorder after MYSC rehearsal a couple of times while I was waiting for the car pool people to be ready to leave. He would play a Vivaldi piece that really sounded neat resounding through the Assembly Hall. He used to carry a recorder or two with him in his pockets.

Mormon Youth had a Christmas party at one of the wards in Salt Lake in 1971. Our car pool of girls came up from Provo on a Friday afternoon I think for a rehearsal. I was supposed to go back home that night for Rita Palmieri's (Elkins now) wedding reception and help serve the tables or something. Rita had been one of my roommates at Young Hall my freshman year at BYU. But I decided to miss her reception so I could go to the MYSC party that night, so I called her and excused myself. I'm glad I did. Then we stayed all night at one of the girls relatives in Salt Lake and were there for rehearsal Saturday morning. At the party we went caroling and Steve wasn't there. I guess I was looking for him. Then we went to a meetinghouse for dancing, chili and hot chocolate. I danced with one short fellow for a while. Then he said he needed to find a phone and make a phone call. As we were walking out here came Steve with a pot of chili he had made. He invited me to taste it. He came late from work.

I was glad to see Steve. I went with the other fellow to make his phone call and when I got back I spent the rest of the evening with Steve. He said something about this piece he had composed. I went with him to find the organ so he could play it. I guess a couple other kids came too. He played his composition "Last Leaves" on the organ. I thought it was truly beautiful. The others didn't seem to care that much and I was amazed at them. The music had a melancholy flavor, but was really beautiful. I was impressed that he could compose such music. Then we danced together. Steve did some pirouettes which I thought were good and I found out about his ballet training. As I got to know him I was real impressed about how many things he could do. He did a lot of kidding around more than actual dancing with me. We sat next to each other for a little floorshow put on by some of the MYSC kids. The way Steve sat really impressed me somehow as manly—a feeling I had never felt before for a fellow. It started getting me a little "twitterpated." Then when it was time to go he helped me with my coat and put his arms around me in so doing—which duly thrilled me. After that we talked to each other each Saturday at rehearsal.

Steve wrote me a letter to invite me to the Mormon Youth Awards Banquet in January (1972). He offered several alternatives of how the transportation could be arranged. I ended up going to MYSC that Saturday morning, spending the day with him at his parents' house during which time we listened to records, talked with his mother and he played his recorders. We were all sitting on the bed in the yellow bedroom in the basement. Then Steve and I went to the banquet in his green

Studebaker. I went home after the banquet with the car pool—which I thought was the pits. That night I got to know Steve a little better and see his other, more serious side. Before we went to the banquet Steve's mom had fixed some weenies and fried potatoes. She said, "Go ahead and eat; they never feed you enough at those things." That's when I especially started enjoying food. She is a good cook and always fed us well.

On Valentine's Day Steve made me a beautiful valentine. He spent hours on it. I took it to work at the Seminaries and Institutes at BYU Stadium and showed it off. George A. Horton, Jr., who years later became my boss, talked about it a lot. I saved the beautiful valentine, but it got dripped on from a leaky roof we didn't know we had at Haven house. We still have it in our attic. We should have framed it or packed it in a glass box or something. Steve has never begrudged spending time to make something beautiful. That is one of his fine qualities. A few years ago he spent 12 hours on a beautiful birthday cake for me. We have pictures of it. That February, 1972, Steve had been asking if I would be at rehearsal next week and so on, so I thought maybe he had something for me. I brought a ½-pound box of candy for him just in case (Don Parker's Fine Candies [my Dad], of course). I was *very* impressed with the beautiful valentine. I had always wanted a lovely, lacy, *real* valentine and this certainly fit the bill. Steve was so cute as I expressed my appreciation. I have learned he gets a great deal of joy from giving and being appreciated—I think more from giving something from his heart than from receiving. He has done many special surprises for me and our family since then. (Now in 2003 I would like to reiterate that Valentine's morning has become a very important tradition in our family, one which the kids have taken with them to college and to their marriages. We get up early and make a special breakfast, with lots of red, white and pink stuff, whatever we invent to be those colors, we set the table real pretty and sprinkle Valentine candies over the table cloth. Then we go get the kids and have a nice, really good and special breakfast.)

Last year we didn't have much money around Valentine's Day but he surprised us with a cake, ice cream, Valentine tablecloth, plates, napkins etc. One Valentine's Day, probably 1973 or 1974, Steve prepared a really elaborate surprise for me. He called me at work and told me to go down to the car where it was parked in the Church Office Building parking plaza. On the doorknob was a pink heart-shaped note saying to turn on the tape recorder inside. I did, and listened to a Valentine wish from him and then a song he had written words to (music by Ketelby)—"When the stars are gleaming . . ." Naturally it filled me with wonderful love thoughts and I came upstairs with tears in my eyes. And there he had put a sign "My Valentine's Office" and streamers in the doorway. He was waiting in my office for me. The girls at work were telling him while he decorated it they hoped they would get a husband like him. It was a very, very special time and we both cried as we met in my office.

One Valentine's Day Steve decorated a cake for me, the first he had ever decorated and put red and white love birds (birds of paradise made with satin ribbon) on top. He wouldn't let me in the house (9th East house) for a long time while he was decorating it for me (the house and the cake).

Back to the love story again. One night after a Mormon Youth performance Steve and I and some other Mormon Youth kids met at Luigi's pizza place (it used to be on the southwest corner of 21st South and 9th East). After we ate, as we were paying the cashier in the front, we all sang Christmas songs we had just performed at the concert. Another night I rode with Steve in his green Studebaker (with the grey hood) to Shakey's on 33rd South and about 2nd East after a performance and met the car pool kids there and then went home with them. I longed to have time to spend with him and wished we could have gone out on regular dates where I would spend all afternoon getting ready, being all excited and looking forward to it, and then be brought back home by him. I guess that's why I was so anxious to get married and not put it off once we had made the decision.

About March 30, 1972 Steve performed a Charleston dance with a partner he had been practicing with at some show at the Highland High School auditorium. I was with him at some of the

practices and also at the Eugene Jelesnick TV show when he performed it. We saw that on TV at Judy's house one night. I went with Steve to the Highland High performance; his parents met us there. That night was the first night he kissed me and I think the first time he told me he loved me.

We had a MYSC performance close to Easter time. As I came into the west gates of Temple Square behind the tabernacle Steve was coming from the direction of the north gates carrying a pink carnation in a tiny bottle of water and a tissue bunny he had made. It was cute—another homemade treasure.

Steve and I would talk every Saturday after Mormon Youth rehearsal and then I'd have to go home with the car pool and think about him all the way and start missing him and then miss him all week.

One week night I was walking home to my apartment (Seville Apts. in Provo, about 2nd East and 3rd North) at night from my BYU history class and across the street someone said, "Is that Bev Parker?" I wondered who it could be. I think it was about 10:00 p.m. It was Steve and his friend Pat Fewell! I was really surprised! I was carrying about three manila folders with school papers, not much to carry. We started walking together and Steve said, "Can I hold something . . ." I said, "Well, all I have is these few papers." He said, "like your hand." I thought that was really cute and was more than happy to oblige.

I was taking a few classes at BYU, working around my schedule of full-time work at the Seminaries and Institutes at the stadium. I think for a while the Seminaries paid for some of the tuition or something. I was working in typing Services for the Seminaries and Institutes of the Church. A few years later they started calling it the Church Educational System (CES). We typed lesson plans in Tongan, Samoan, and Spanish for Church Schools, as well as institute manuals, etc. I took Spanish 101 and some CDFR (Child Development and Family Relationships) classes and History 210. History 210 was a good class but I dropped it because I felt like I had just too much to handle and think about. I was taking a CDFR class that same semester about philosophies of child development. I did really well and got straight As on everything except one ongoing, continuing assignment in the class that I never did once because I couldn't seem to get around to it for some reason, so I ended up getting a D! I thought, Well at least I got engaged this semester and that was most important to me.

Someone took some pictures of me daydreaming at work during this time. That's how it was. I really was scatterbrained and dreamy those months. I would spend the weekend with Steve at his parents' house and then on Sunday he'd take me home and I'd cry to leave him. One Saturday I spent up at University Hospital where Steve had to go to work in the lab early in the morning before Mormon Youth. He had a medical technology job in the lab on a grant that ran out in June I think, so when we got married he didn't have a job. His job in the lab was spinning blood to separate the serum, test for bili rubin and stuff like that. He had someone bring me some peach pie à la mode while I was waiting that day because he knew I'd be hungry. I thought that was thoughtful.

One Saturday in February or March as I was going home from MYSC I realized that I was in love with Steve. I thought, when did like turn to love? I didn't know when it had happened but I knew from then on that I loved him. I loved him so much. Each week I'd really be in love when I saw him on Saturday and then day by day the feeling would lessen a little bit and by Friday I'd wonder, but as soon as I saw him on Saturday I would know I really loved him. It was hard to be away from each other when our love was just starting like that, when we were just getting to know each other. Now our love has grown and increased to so much more than it was then, but I've always loved him.

I started finding rides to Salt Lake on Friday night so I could spend more time with him. It was real hard to be apart all week. I wished we could be like other couples who could see each other

everyday. On Friday night Steve worked at the University Hospital. I'd get to his parents' house and then he'd come home after awhile. Often we would then go for a ride. We went to Cottonwood Mall several times. The stores would be closed but we'd walk around inside. One time he threw pennies in the fountain in the northwest corner of the mall (no longer there, the fountain that is). He said if he could get the penny in the thing around the statues in the fountain we would get engaged. Of course I was all anxious, but I think he missed. I would sit on his lap sometimes and he'd say "Let's get married." I'd say, "When?" I kinda pushed for summer; he kept saying the fall.

Donnie and Nancy had gotten engaged in February and they told me about Albert Grosjean from whom they had bought their rings. Steve and I met him one afternoon at the Atlas Building in Salt Lake (3rd South between Main and 2nd West). I took some time off work to go. We looked at a *lot* of rings and finally chose one. We had also looked at some other stores. We liked one at Leyson-Pearsall that was white gold with leaves on it and some rubies with the diamond. It was real pretty, but we thought we'd get a better deal with Grosjean. I really liked the one we chose; it was very delicate. We got Steve's ring from Grosjean too. Steve gave me my ring the following Friday night in his little Swiss Chalet puzzle box. I was sure that must be what was in it but I thought, "Oh, no! Now how do I open it?" That was frustrating, but he finally showed me how to open it.

Most of my family was at Jenny's house and we went there. I stuck my hand in the door first to show off the ring. So we announced to everyone. We had a nice chicken dinner that same weekend at the home in Orem of one of Yvonne Reimann's friends from Mormon Youth. Several couples of us from Mormon Youth were there. I didn't wear my ring yet so no one would leak out the information before we could.

We got engaged on May 18th. I busily tried to plan everything for the wedding receptions. We had one reception in the backyard of our next door neighbor on 565 North 800 West in Orem on Friday night and one Saturday night at Steve's ward in Salt Lake—Burton Ward on 27th South and Main. After the backyard reception we went over to Mother's house and I sang, "Ich Liebe Dich" (I Love Thee) by Edvard Grieg to Steve. Lyn Gillum accompanied me on the Baldwin piano I had bought when I first started working (the only thing I ever bought for myself). Later I thought I should have recorded it and then I sang it several times the next night at the Salt Lake reception and still didn't record it. Shucks!

For our reception we served strawberry shortcake and delicious raspberry punch that my Daddy had made. Steve's mom got the strawberry topping for the shortcake in a big can. It was sure good. Steve and I helped to make a bunch of cakes at his house ahead of time and we froze them. I thought it was the best refreshments I had had at a wedding. I always thought I would wear Judy's wedding dress which Jenny had also worn, but it just didn't look that neat. Linda, Steve's sister, had gotten married the summer before us so I wore her dress and veil. I sprained my ankle quite badly thirteen days before our wedding at a lunch party at work outdoors at the BYU stadium (our offices were located under the west bleachers), so I couldn't wear the new white sandals with heels that I had bought for the wedding. I had some old flat white sandals and wore those. Steve wore his white dinner jacket and black tuxedo pants. He wore his beautiful Mormon Youth blue and black brocade jacket to the Provo Temple. We were married in the Provo Temple July 12, 1972. All the wedding party went to the Golden Apple restaurant for a wedding buffet lunch after the temple ceremony. I received my endowments in the temple on our wedding day. Steve had received his endowments a few years before in the Salt Lake Temple.

Steve and I were both rather scatterbrained at the time of our marriage and before and it was hard to organize things when we were apart all week, so we didn't have our household prepared before the wedding very much. Steve found a house at 181 W. Haven Ave. (about 2300 South) in Salt Lake that we could rent for \$75.00 a month, which was a good rate. Steve didn't want to rent ever, but that was a place to live until December 1973 when we found a house through the Church

Real Estate Department. The house was at 1457 S. 900 East. We got it for \$10,500. Other brick houses with small yards were available for around \$15,000 or so. We thought we could fix up the 9th East house real nice. The house was very small and in bad shape, but had five nice fruit trees—two apple, two apricot, and one pear—a nice big side front and back yard and a good chain link fence all around. The first thing we did was redo the electrical throughout the small house and install a forced air furnace. A few months or so before, the elders quorum of that ward (Emerson Ward) had reroofed part of the house. Then it was vacant when we looked at it. Clint Empey from the Church Real Estate Department showed it to us. We liked him. We got 8¾% interest and would have the house paid off in five years.