

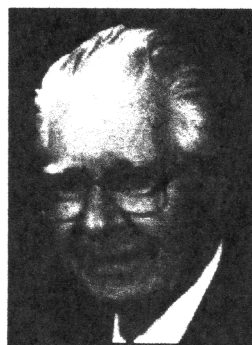
Wednesday December 08, 2004

The dynamo of Idaho Falls

The first thing you were struck by in meeting Delbert Groberg was his humility. He talked to you in his almost hushed, measured words like you were more important.

And the next thing you were struck by would be the discovery that behind this recessed demeanor was a dynamo of the community and the church.

Groberg, who this week died in Idaho Falls in his 98th year, left a distinguished legacy that includes his unusually resourceful business enterprise as a real estate developer and as a civic leader. The Idaho Falls LDS Temple is a lasting monument to the man who was instrumental in seating this impressive edifice and spiritual center on the Snake River.



Groberg

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was an abiding force in his life. But you had to discover that, too, because he worked with and had friends in many religions that he embraced equally.

He lived his religion. He didn't talk it -- except when he was called to serve the church in a leadership role.

With 11 children, Groberg sensitively balanced a demanding family life with his civic and religious obligations. His son, Joseph Groberg, an Idaho Falls City Councilman and a community and business leader in his own right, said: "We never felt neglected but we always had respect for his busy life."

Groberg's business life began in 1929 -- the year of the stock market crash that ushered in the Great Depression -- but it began to flourish in the 1950s and 1960s as the family company expanded to eventually build notable subdivisions on the east side of Idaho Falls. They included Linden Park, Edgemont Gardens, Woodruff Park, the Southwick addition and the Three Fountains development.

And with all this exacting enterprise, he still had time to serve as head of the Bonneville County Centennial Commission, as director and vice president of the Bank of Commerce, and as a director and officer of KID Television and Radio.

He served as president of the Idaho Falls Real Estate Board, head of the Idaho Real Estate Association and vice president of the National Association of Realtors.

He was the first in southern Idaho to receive the professional designation from the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers -- which awarded him a lifetime membership. He loved to appraise land and facilities and it reflected in the professionalism that he brought to the local real estate community.

But that wasn't all. Groberg also was president of the Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce, the Kiwanis Club, the Selective Service Board during World War II and the United Way. For his contributions to his community and his integrity as a real estate leader, the Seventh District Bar Association awarded Groberg the coveted Liberty Bell award.

He moved fast and built much. In the end, even death had a hard time catching up with his flying coattails.

J. Robb Brady