

Summary of Personal Accounts

Description: Student in junior high school gym class in Salt Lake City, UT
Author: Anderson, Allyson
Info Categories: E, N, P

Description: Mother and young son at home in Tooele, UT
Author: Dale, Alice
Info Categories: E, P

Description: Young secretary on fourth floor of Salt Lake City, UT office building
Author: Hickman, Colleen H.
Info Categories: E, P

Description: Man on balcony in Cottonwood Mall, Holladay, UT
Author: Payne, Robert M.
Info Categories: E, N

Description: Husband and wife on farm in Draper, UT
Author: Smith, Barbara C.
Info Categories: E, N, P

Information Categories

A -- Aid:

provide medical services, shelter, donations, loans, advice, encouragement, implement safety measures

B -- Building Damage:

structure itself plus windows and chimneys (typically damage visible from outside the building)

E -- Earthquake

Description:

where, when, duration, direction, sound, motion, number and timing of aftershocks

G -- Geologic Effects:

changes at the Earth's surface, fault scarps, rockfalls, landslides, ground cracks, ground subsidence, sand boils, water spouts; effects on springs, lakes, wells

H -- Humor:

I -- Impact:

changes in daily routine; rumors; influx of reporters, politicians, cost in dollars

L -- Lifelines:

effects on transportation: roads, bridges, railroads, airports

effects on communications: telephone, telegraph

effects on power, gas, water, and sewer lines

effects on dams

N -- Nonstructural Effects:

effects on plaster, furnishings (typically damage or rearrangement of furnishings visible inside a building)

P -- People:

effects on and responses to, during and after; deaths, injuries, near misses

R -- Recovery:

clean up, rebuild

S -- Scientific:

explanation of the day

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Interview paraphrase: Interview of Allyson Anderson of Salt Lake City by a junior high school student fulfilling a classroom assignment

Submitted by: Graham Anderson

student of Ms. Bonnie Nelson

Olympus Junior High School; Granite School District

Salt Lake City, Utah

November 1996

Location at time of earthquake: School gymnasium in Salt Lake City, Utah

On September 5, 1962, I was lying on the floor doing sit-ups in girls' gym class in Irving Junior High School in Salt Lake City when I felt the earthquake. The lights hanging above us began to sway. We all quickly jumped up, but the teacher kept us calm and in the room. We felt scared, excited, and special. It was pretty hard to get back to class business.

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Excerpt from: Letter written in response to newspaper article requesting personal accounts of earthquake experiences in the Intermountain West

Submitted by: Alice Dale

Tooele, Utah

December 1995

Location at time of earthquake: home in Tooele, Utah

It had been a typical morning. I had prepared breakfast, got hubby off to work and had started my household chores.

My son, who was five years old was riding his bicycle on the sidewalk in front of our house and I had opened the side door to keep an eye on him while I worked in the kitchen.

As I stood at the sink washing the dishes, I felt a great movement. It was so intense that I grabbed the kitchen counter to hold on. I had no idea what was happening and was trying in my mind to figure out what could have happened in the house to cause it.

The movement only lasted for a few seconds, but it really shook me up. A quick little thought entered my mind, could it have been an earthquake? No, I told myself, never happens.

Immediately I ran outside to check on my son. In just a matter of seconds I was at his side. Are you OK, I asked him? He looked up at me and said, "Mommie, somebody moved the sidewalk." I told him I didn't know what had happened, but that I had also felt it in the house while I was washing the dishes.

We later learned through the news media that we had had an earthquake in Utah.

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Excerpt from: Letter written in response to newspaper article requesting personal accounts of earthquake experiences in the Intermountain West

Submitted by: Colleen Hansen Hickman

Sandy, Utah

December 1995

Location at time of earthquake: Fourth floor of office building in Salt Lake City, Utah

My memory of the September 5, 1962 earthquake is quite vivid. I do remember after all of these years the reaction of people in my office building.

It was my first job after graduation from High School a stop until college started at the end of September. I was working on the fourth floor of a downtown building (Walker rings a bell, but could be wrong) as a secretary for the Samuel Fletcher Engineering Firm. I didn't have to be to work until 9:00; but the bus dropped me off at 8:30 so I had a half an hour to kill each morning. There was a lounge next to the rest room (couches, chairs and good lights). It became my habit to spend that half an hour in this room in the company of a good novel.

On this particular morning, I was just finishing my reading when the room began to sway quite dramatically. It was obviously an earthquake. I wondered "what do I do now." The logical thing seemed to be just to sit and wait it out. Which I did (forgetting my training about getting under something heavy). When it seemed finished, I walked into the hall and was surprised to find everyone running like mad toward the stairs. Whether any made it out of the building or not, I don't know; I do know that it is rather surprising that no one was hurt in the stampede.

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Interview paraphrase: interview of Robert M. Payne of Salt Lake City by a junior high school student fulfilling a classroom assignment

Submitted by: Jessica English

student of Ms. Bonnie Nelson

Olympus Jr. High; Granite School District

Salt Lake City, Utah

Location at time of earthquake: balcony in Cottonwood Mall; Holladay, Utah

I was headed for my doctor's office on the second floor of Cottonwood Mall. When the earthquake occurred, I was standing at the balcony rail, looking down into the mall. I felt the shaking and watched the windows of ZCMI (department store) shake like cellophane blowing in the wind.

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Excerpt from: Letter written in response to newspaper article requesting personal accounts of earthquake experiences in the Intermountain West

Submitted by: Barbara C. and J. Ralph Smith

Draper, Utah

January 1996

Location at time of earthquake: farm in Draper, Utah

It was September 5th, 1962. We then had a herd of dairy cows and my husband, Ralph, was getting ready to silo our corn. He was up on our 40 ft. silo straddling the top and putting up the blower pipes when he heard a tapping sound and a roar. Then he could see it was the pipes knocking against the silo and it was shaking. He looked out over our hay field and saw the ground heaving like waves. I was in the milkhouse washing the milkers when I heard the noise like a big truck going by in our driveway. The water in the vat was peaking up and down. I thought that strange and rushed outside and called to Ralph on the silo "Did a truck go by?" The ground was peeping and the dust was coming up all around me. He said, "No! We are having an earthquake!" I yelled "Get down from there." and he said "I am trying to stay up here."

When I came in the house to inspect the damage, I expected to find dishes and things broken, but all it did was crack the mortar in the fireplace and moved the hearth stone out a good inch. Some mortar-like sand was on the mantle. I guess we were lucky. Our neighbor was walking down the asphalt road at the time and he never even felt it.

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