



***50 Year History of the
Corvallis Oregon Stake of
the Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints***

By K.D. Taylor

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Dedication

“For all the Saints who from their labors rest...”

PREFACE

This history of the Corvallis Oregon Stake comprises two main parts, designated Part I and Part II.

The first portion, Part I, provides a narrative history of the growth of the Church in the Oregon territory, with record made of various milestone events beginning with the first proselytizing efforts of missionaries in the region, through the establishment of its various congregations and stakes over the years, and ending with the present status of the Corvallis Oregon Stake.

Part II gives a more particular description and greater elucidation of significant organizations, auxiliaries, programs, and events connected with the Corvallis Oregon Stake. The chapters included in this section are self-contained, and are intended to serve as convenient references for members desiring information on specific topics. The chapters in this part of the book, being self-contained, repeat some information that is contained elsewhere in the book, and a certain amount of overlap is to be expected. Much of this section of the book would best be described, in more technically accurate terms, as chronicle, rather than as history proper.

The Appendix mainly provides a list of leaders, both general and local authorities, who were involved in work of significance to the Corvallis Oregon Stake, either in the course of events preceding its official creation or after. Also included is an outline of what have been accepted as the guiding principles, or operating axioms, throughout the work of setting forth this history. With increased attention being devoted to the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, both by those within and by those outside of its membership, and by those favorably disposed toward it as well as by those antagonistic to its aims, it has been regarded as of especially pressing importance that we commit ourselves not only to the statement fact, but also to the candid statement of what may be termed our “philosophy of fact.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No book is ever written in a vacuum. For the information herein presented, numerous writers and compilers have been relied upon. And what adds more to the value of their efforts is that these writers and compilers actually lived to witness, and in many cases participate directly in, the events of which they have provided record.

First, much gratitude is owed to Jean Rampton Nelson, who had initially undertaken the task of writing this history, but was called to serve with her husband, Charles, on a full-time mission in Fort Stewart, Georgia. This immensely thrilling work never would have passed to me had the Nelsons not, in the middle of the writing, been called by the Spirit another way. I thank them for the opportunity, and for the information they provided me.

From the printed personal memoirs of Samuel H. Bailey and Boyd D. Nash, I have mined a wealth of historic gems, which have increased the value of this book beyond estimation. Although Brother Bailey has since passed through the veil to his heavenly reward, I trust he is pleased with our effort. I trust, too, that Brother Nash—who yet lives!—will be likewise pleased. I thank them both.

Thanks are due, as well, to all who have previously published histories, both of this stake, and of others in Oregon. These include Dale Z. Kirby, who wrote a history of the Salem Oregon Stake; and Margaret B. Reese and John F. Bell, who, along with the above-named Samuel H. Bailey, wrote a history, in 1989, of the Corvallis Oregon Stake.

Other authors and record-compilers, to whom I am greatly indebted, are: David Blake, Terri Harper, Jeff Merten, Allen L. Davis, David A. Williams, Doris Bailey, Alice Rampton, Lyn Loutzenhiser, Steven L. Calton, Jared W. Nelson, Tanner Sparks, Todd Dye, Gary Douglas, Lee Ritzman, Gordon Nielson, Averil Seely, Gary Theuson, David Bird, and Richard and Carol Lantz.

Both gratitude and credit are owed to Bonnie Romrell for actually writing the chapter on the “Third Nephi” production, and to Jean Rampton Nelson for writing the one on Single Adults.

I will here attempt to express the inexpressible, and thank my very able and attentive proofreader, Diane Merten, without whose help I would have been even more than usually helpless.

Special thanks are to be extended to Patrick Wills, whose talents and technical savvy transformed our text into a format suitable for printing. I commend him also for his patience in allowing us to advance in the production process “line upon line; here a little, and there a little.”

I also thank Gary Moss who, as a representative of our stake high council, first officially offered to me the assignment of working on this history, and who, with Mark Freeman, set apart and blessed me for the endeavor. President Kevin Nielsen is to be thanked, as well, for helping to review the drafts in his capacity as first counselor of the Corvallis Stake Presidency.

I express gratitude to the many members of the stake with whom I met and conducted recording sessions in order to gather reminiscences from them on all things pertaining to the Corvallis Oregon Stake.

Finally, I would be remiss in the extreme were I to fail to thank my wife, Jill, and our three sons, Elijah, Nathaniel, and Conrad (currently ages 12, 11, and 10, respectively). I thank them for the many and untold sacrifices involved in their permitting me to see this monumental project through to completion. I thank them, also, for their patient forbearance with a husband and father who often becomes so absorbed in thought that he is apt to forget where he is, who he is with, and even, at times, what he is actually meant to be doing there. God bless them all, now and forever.

K. D. Taylor

SPECIAL NOTE ON CHAPTERS 24 AND 26

In writing the original hardcover version of our history of the Corvallis Oregon Stake, a member of the stake who was, and continues to be, very actively involved in numerous stake events offered to write Chapters 24 and 26, and in fact did so. This worthy writer, however, expressed to me the desire not to be identified by name—a desire which I was happy to honor.

This had, though, the somewhat unfortunate result—which, in hindsight, I now realize I ought to have foreseen—of creating the impression that I had myself written those particular chapters, for which I have received a shower of unmerited accolades. Much of this section of the book would best be described, in more technically accurate terms, as chronicle, rather than as history proper.

Let it, therefore, be stated for the understanding of all who will read this e-book version that I, Kevin D. Taylor, did not write any portion of Chapter 24, though I stand without reservation behind all that is written in it. Similarly, none of Chapter 26 was written by me, except the closing paragraph thereof.

I thank readers for their appreciation of those chapters, and for the compliment of their assuming, initially, that I had written them.



Wise Men, painted by J. Leo Fairbanks, an active member of the Church in Corvallis, prior to the creation of the Corvallis Oregon Stake, and head of the Department of Arts and Architecture at Oregon State College (now Oregon State University), in whose honor Fairbanks Hall is named. Upon his death in 1946, his wife, Pauline, donated the painting to the first LDS chapel in Corvallis on 27th Street (now the LDS Institute building). It has since been relocated to Corvallis Stake Center, where it remains on permanent display.

Appearing at the lowermost border of the painting is this statement by Fairbanks:

“To follow divine direction, even the wise men of earth must surrender their human wisdom to God’s will.”

INTRODUCTION

“For the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled.” (Mormon 8:22)

“[T]he Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear; till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.” (Joseph Smith, 1842)

It is the privilege of those studying Church history to see with the advantage of hindsight what God, angels, prophets, and apostles saw with the advantage of foresight. The growth and vitality of this Church which is now filling the world was, in fact, foreseen before it had even succeeded in filling a log cabin. Before the Church had officially been organized in the little log home of Peter Whitmer, before the Book of Mormon had first come off the press, and even before the plates from which it was translated had been unearthed from long centuries of repose, it was announced to the young Joseph Smith by an heavenly angel that his “name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people.” (Joseph Smith—History 1:33) The fulfillment of this prophetic prediction is now too evident to be denied, and the evidence of it abounds throughout the world.

Also evident is the fulfillment of that prophecy wherein the Lord foretells how His “words [contained in the Book of Mormon] shall hiss forth unto the ends of the earth” (2 Nephi 29:2). Through the consecrated labor of untold numbers of missionaries and others in the Church, this, too, now unfolds before the eyes of a witnessing world.

Thus, the prophet Joseph Smith knew whereof he spoke when, during a priesthood meeting at Kirtland, Ohio, in April 1834, he declared to a small group of brethren who had gathered in a log schoolhouse that “this Church will fill North and South America—it will fill the world.” The eternal purposes of the Lord have been, and are being, fulfilled in every continent, clime, and country. This, naturally, includes the northwest part of the North American continent known as Oregon. The blessings have been unprecedented, but not unexpected. Indeed, one of the great lessons of Church history, as well as of true religion in general, is that faith declares its victory before the battle has even begun.

In presenting this history of the Church in the Oregon territory, and of the Corvallis Oregon Stake in particular, we have occasion to see “what great things the Lord hath done for us” (1 Nephi 7:11). And what has been done in this portion of the Lord’s vineyard is but a type of what has been, and is being, done elsewhere. The record of the Lord’s works is as awesome to us as the record of the Lord’s words.

There are three ways of learning history. The first is to read it. The second is to write it. The third is to make it. Those whose pioneering efforts in the great northwest helped establish the Corvallis Oregon Stake made history. But they not only made history; they made a future, not for themselves only, but for their posterity, and for generations yet unborn who, if they are perceptive, will understand that, as noted some 55 years ago by then-Elder Gordon B. Hinckley, “all of us in our various situations are the result, largely, of the lives that touch ours.” Churches are built to build better people.

This history, then, being a record of “the lives that touch ours,” is here presented so that you, the reader, may learn of those whose lives the Lord has so prospered as to bring forth much righteousness in this area often called by Elder LeGrand Richards “the Great Northwest.” And thus “ye may remember them; and when ye remember them ye may remember their works; and when ye remember their works ye may know how that it is said, and also written, that they were good.” (Helaman 5:6) We learn of those who “overcome by faith” (D&C 76:53), and are overcome with awe, as there is nothing more moving than faith so immoveable.

To ignore or to forget the lives of our fellow-saints, whether they be past or present, would be to overlook the very symbol of our faith, since, as President Gordon B. Hinckley made clear:

“[T]he lives of our people must become the most meaningful expression of our faith and, in fact, therefore, the symbol of our worship.”

Hence, the people and the events here written on are not to be written off.

On a brief personal note, I (Kevin Taylor) desire to say that the production of this history of the Corvallis Oregon Stake has been the most singularly rewarding experience in my years as a writer. Prior to this, the only book bearing my name was a little book of poetic satires which, being written in a satirical vein, was the result of my drawing out various absurdities I had seen inherent in certain worldly ideologies. This project has, by contrast, allowed me to see not absurdity, but divinity; and a divinity not needing to be drawn out, but which rather draws in those who encounter it.

Now, this introduction will end where it began, with the affirmation that the Standard of Truth has been erected. And the standard still stands. We who have worked to produce this history nail our colors to the mast, and proclaim anew that this is the work of Almighty God. And although, as Joseph F. Smith said, “there may be many who cannot discern the workings of God’s will in the progress and development of this great latter-day work,...there are those who see in every hour and in every moment of the existence of the Church, from its beginning until now, the overruling, almighty hand of Him who sent His Only Begotten Son to the world to become a sacrifice for the sin of the world.” We will let the tide of popular opinion with regard to this kingdom ebb and flow as it may, but to our standard we remain resolved, and we intend to keep the old flag flying.

INTRODUCTION TO THE E-BOOK EDITION

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” (Daniel 2:44)

“The Lord God Almighty has set up a kingdom that will sway the sceptre of power and authority over all the kingdoms of the world, and will never be destroyed, it is the kingdom that Daniel saw and wrote of. It may be considered treason to say that the kingdom which that Prophet foretold is actually set up; that we cannot help, but we know it is so, and call upon the nations to believe our testimony. The kingdom will continue to increase, to grow, to spread and prosper more and more. Every time its enemies undertake to overthrow it, it will become more extensive and powerful; instead of its decreasing, it will continue to increase, it will spread the more, become more wonderful and conspicuous to the nations, until it fills the whole earth.” (Brigham Young)

The print version of the present book, it is a blessing to note, proved a successful venture, hailed with hearty thanks by many I knew, and, to my multiplied surprise, even by many I didn't. And I would hope that all who so conveyed their thankfulness will know that I am grateful for their very gratitude. It can truly be said that the process of producing that history has a history of its very own, which is, in my judgment, too touching not to at least be touched upon.

The assignment to create a hardcover version of this history was one which the Lord saw fit to lay upon laypeople. I am, for my part, neither a professional historian nor scholar of any stripe. I am, at present, a common laborer at a planer mill, and there could be no plainer vocation, I believe, than this. Nevertheless, it has been remarked more than once that the construction of the Ark of Noah was an amateur undertaking, whereas the Titanic was the product of professionals. And I still look with pleasure upon the fruit of that labor to which God called me, together with Brother Pat Wills and Sister Diane Merten, and want to shout “Hallelujah!” when I think that we were ever entrusted with such an enterprise.

G.K. Chesterton, an English writer as profound as he was prolific, once likened history to “*a hill or high point of vantage from which men see the town in which they live or the age in which they are living.*” That would certainly be a fair description of how one Portland-born “son of Oregon,” Hugh W. Nibley, who carved quite an impressive stature for himself in the scholarly world of Mormon studies, once reflected on Church history, particularly as it pertains to this Northwest region.

When the acclaimed Dr. Nibley returned, on one occasion, from Utah to visit the saints in Oregon, he presented a number of talks. A transcript was made of one of these talks, which was given in Portland, and there is only one transcript of it in existence, to this day. There was no sound or film recording made. It was, however, not until after the publication of this Corvallis stake history in the print format that my own father, S. Ferren Taylor, of the Salem Oregon Stake, obtained a copy of this transcript, which he then hastened to place in my hands.

At the very beginning of the talk, which was really on the Book of Mormon, the typewritten transcript records that Dr. Nibley said:

Brothers and sisters, I am glad to be here in Portland again. I can give you definite proof that the Church has grown in Portland because I can remember when my brother and I and Melvin Ballard's kids and Marion Bower and Rulon Westergaard would sit as little kids on the front row in church, a little white wooden church. We represented all the Latter-day Saint children in Portland. They would pass the sacrament in just one big cup, one big brass cup and everybody would drink it. They soon learned not to begin at the front of the room, because we would take turns to see who could drink the most and when we got through there was no sacrament for anybody else. Now I begin to doubt seriously whether we could really service everybody from one cup in Portland today. This is what I use as a demonstration that the Church has grown here without any doubt. With this deep biographical insight, we proceed to more important subjects.

The growth of that Portland congregation to which Dr. Nibley addressed himself, though, was but a piece of a picture of a growth of global scope. One of several scriptural symbols used to signify Church growth in the latter days is that of a stone cut without hands, rolling to conquer kingdoms, as well as to fill the earth, as recorded in the 2nd chapter of the Book of Daniel. Concerning this symbol of the rolling stone, first seen in the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar, and later interpreted by the prophet Daniel, Henry W. Bigler reported in his journal that the prophet Joseph Smith had delivered a sermon providing the proper interpretation:

I will correct the idea in regard to the little stone rolling forward – that is not so, it is stationary like a grindstone. And like a grindstone it revolves (Joseph made a circular motion with his hands) and...when the Elders went abroad preaching the gospel and people believed and obeyed the gospel and became believers in the Book of Mormon, they were added to the little stone – thus they gathered around it so that it grew larger and larger until it had already began to pinch the toes of the image – and it [the stone] would finally break it [the image] in pieces and be carried away like the chaff of the summer thrashing floor while the stone kep[t] growing until it filled the whole earth.

Now, this idea of a growing stone, particularly when coupled with the vivid imagery of the Church as the living “Body of Christ,” suggests life, and the doubtful will doubtless find nothing but absurdity in the very concept of a living stone. To those of a cynical caste of mind, living stones must sound as inconceivable as living bones. Yet the faithful saints are called to embrace both concepts (1 Peter 2:5, Ezekiel 37:5). And however absurd it sounds to the unbelieving, stones themselves might even sound in their ears (Luke 19:40).

Such thoughts, of course, pertain to the miraculous, and the saints have never found the miraculous absurd. It is, to them, rather absurd not to have found the miraculous. And this is as true in approaching Church history as in approaching anything else. To the believing Latter-day Saint, there is nothing preposterous in the idea of miracles, only in the idea of miracles without a God to oversee and enable them.

However, just as the idea of miracles can make no sense without God, no sense can be made of Church history without miracles, since the Church itself is a miracle. Unfortunately, many are apt to confuse miracles with magic, just as faith is oftentimes mistaken for fantasy. But those taking such a view never truly read Church history. All they have done is *misread* it.

Even so, Church history has been misrepresented in writing as often as in reading, especially in this age of electronic media, which has been repeatedly designated an “era of mass information,” but might just as reasonably be called an era of mass *misinformation*, as well. Professional historians, of course, have contributed much to the digital marketplace of ideas, some of whom are faithful, or at least friendly, to the Church, but others of whom are fiercely opposed to it. While an oft-repeated dictum of academia tells us that “*historians are the guardians of memory*,” the dictum only invites vigilant saints to consider that sober and summoning question long ago posed, though in a different context, by the Roman poetic satirist, Juvenal: “*Who shall guard the guardians themselves?*”

All of this, it must be said, is no less than we should expect, according to what those called to prophetic office in these latter days have said. The Council of the Twelve, for instance, declared in 1845 that: “*As this work progresses in its onward course, and becomes more and more an object of political and religious interest ... no king, ruler, or subject, no community or individual, will stand neutral. All will ... be influenced by one spirit or the other; and will take sides either for or against the kingdom of God.*”

Although there can be no neutrality in regard to the things of God and His kingdom, there can be, and is, always effort exerted by one force to conquer the other, even if it be by the conquest of conversion. This has been so since before the foundation of this world, and the effort goes on, today, at accelerating pace. But God, who, as just noted, caused His servants to foresee these difficulties will also see us through those difficulties.

My drive to bring this book to the so-called “information superhighway” was sparked, in part, by an awareness of the casualties claimed amid the bustle of that busy thoroughfare. News headlines have reflected how the spread of doubt has surged across this sprawling network of global communication. Two examples will here suffice as indicators of the trend: “Some Mormons search the web and find doubt,” one headline for the

New York Times read in 2013, and in 2012 a headline from the Salt Lake Tribune told of “Mormons tackling tough questions in their history.”

Now, in all this talk of doubt, it is quite revealing how little doubt the doubters seem to have in their doubts. Early in 2012, while addressing questions about those “leaving in droves” from the Church, Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy candidly recalled how his own daughter once came to him asking: “Dad, why didn’t you ever tell me that Joseph Smith was a polygamist?”

That question itself invites others in return: Are not all members of the Church, young and old alike, expressly commanded to “search the Scriptures”? And do not the Scriptures plainly tell us that Joseph Smith entered into plural marriages, and that he did so, moreover, at the Lord’s command (D&C 132:52)?

The fact that a historical reality born record of in Scripture should go unnoticed, even by members born in the covenant and raised in the Church, underscores a point raised by Ronald O. Barney, who worked for 33 years as an archivist and historian before retiring from the LDS Church History Department and becoming Executive Director of the Mormon History Association. During a presentation in 2009, he said:

I think we need to look at not only what the Church produces but what others produce about Joseph Smith or any other aspect of Latter-day Saint history in light of the quality and reliability of the product. We owe it to ourselves to go to that kind of trouble to consider how our history and heritage is packaged. You should scrutinize every presentation that is given today in this way...We can’t be lazy about this. This religion is too important and it is very defendable. I have a stronger belief in Joseph Smith and his divine appointment today than ever before. And there’s not much that surprises me anymore. I’ve worked for the Church for 32 years. I’ve been in the belly of the beast that long and I tell you, I feel more strongly about Joseph’s divine appointment and the truthfulness of this religion today than I ever have in my life. We do not have to cut corners. This really is the kingdom, and there are men who really do have keys that were really handed over to them by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and they really were handed down to his successors. I’m banking the rest of my eternal future on it, and I’m very comfortable in doing it. Joseph Smith has won me over in every way.

The Lord Himself declared “he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward.” (D&C 58:26) Thus, rather than put off the study of our history, it is needful that we “put off the natural man,” in order that we may “put *on* the new man, which is renewed in knowledge,” and so reap the promised rewards of diligence.

But if the baseline of facts concerning Church history does not vary, the *approaches* to those facts certainly do. Elder John A. Widtsoe, in addressing the historical occurrence of the flood in the days of Noah, made an observation which is, in truth, applicable to the study of historical occurrences of any kind: “*We set up assumptions, based upon our best knowledge, but can go no further. We should remember that when inspired writers deal with historical incidents they relate that which they have seen or that which may have been told them, unless indeed the past is opened to them by revelation.*” So pervasive and inescapable is this aspect of the human experience in mortality that it applies not to history only but to all of life. As that same Elder Widtsoe stated in another place:

Every normal man desires and seeks an understanding of his relation to all other things, and practically every man has worked out for himself, on the basis of the knowledge he has acquired, some theory which explains, more or less satisfactorily, the mystery of star and earth and man and life. No other quest of man is so vigorous and persistent as that of establishing an intelligible and satisfactory philosophy of earth-life.

The philosophy, or system of thought, adopted to explain man’s place in nature determines largely the joy and manner of a man’s life . . . Every act of a man’s life is influenced by the philosophy of his life. It is the most important product of an individual life, and the most compelling power in life.

There is no such thing as perfect objectivity, and it is vain for any mortal to aspire after its attainment.

Whenever, therefore, anyone undertakes to speak on, or write about, Church history (or any other subject whatever), they must in all good faith consider themselves in duty bound to disclose that set of assumptions they have set up, or what axioms they have taken for granted, as the starting point of inquiry. Just as the prophet Joseph Smith reminded the saints near the end of his mortal days, so it holds true in our time, and always: “*If we start right, it is easy to go right all the time; but if we start wrong we may go wrong, and it will be a hard matter to get right.*”

For this reason, I have personally sought to elucidate, by means of a personal essay, that nexus of guiding axioms which serves for me as a starting point to all historical inquiry, and especially that which pertains to the facts of Church history. I have, in other words, undertaken to clarify my *philosophy* of fact, which, I may just as well say, is a religious philosophy located within a particular theological framework. This essay I have determined to include in the appendix. It is my hope and prayer that I have “started right,” both in reading about and in writing on a small portion of Church history.

The Lord has committed great things to the Church, and even greater things to those committed to it. Knowing the Church to be the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27), those who have devoted their lives to the Church have, indeed, devoted their lives to Him. When we consider the keys delivered to humble servants of God in His holy temple, as recorded in the 110th section of the Doctrine & Covenants, one of the most simultaneously sobering and encouraging lessons in all of Church history is that when we truly believe in Heaven, Heaven believes in us.

Many a Latter-day Saint can quote freely, and from memory, our Savior’s declaration that “unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.” Among those things required of saints is the keeping of records, that a history may be preserved of God’s dealings with them, to the profit of their posterity, and it is a matter of doctrine that the writing of history is as old as Adam, and therefore as old as human history itself (Moses 6:5-6).

Now it only remains to be said that, as the aforementioned Dr. Nibley once pointed out:

...the Mormons have never believed in an infallible book or an infallible anything in which men have had a hand. God allows fallible humans to be co-workers with him on the road to a far-distant perfection, but he expects them to make lots of mistakes along the way.

Fallibility is sure to be evident in this book, as it is in all others (it is certainly so evident as to be conspicuous in its author). But we are, after all, telling one of many stories of God’s love for His people, and of how He by whose hand this great stone was set to rolling will, in love, attend to its ultimate perfection. But we can no more hope, in our present state, to approximate the immensity of that immeasurable love than we could aspire to draw a perfect circle. As the words of a hymn beloved throughout the Christian world reminds us:

*Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.*

And thus it is. To all interested readers, this book is respectfully commended, in the hope that it will preserve in perpetual remembrance those deeds wrought by the Lord through His people, as this great stone of which has been spoken grows, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints expands as far and as long as He has sovereignly decreed it shall: To the ends of the earth, till the end of the world, until such time as “there shall be time no longer” (D&C 88:110).

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Part I

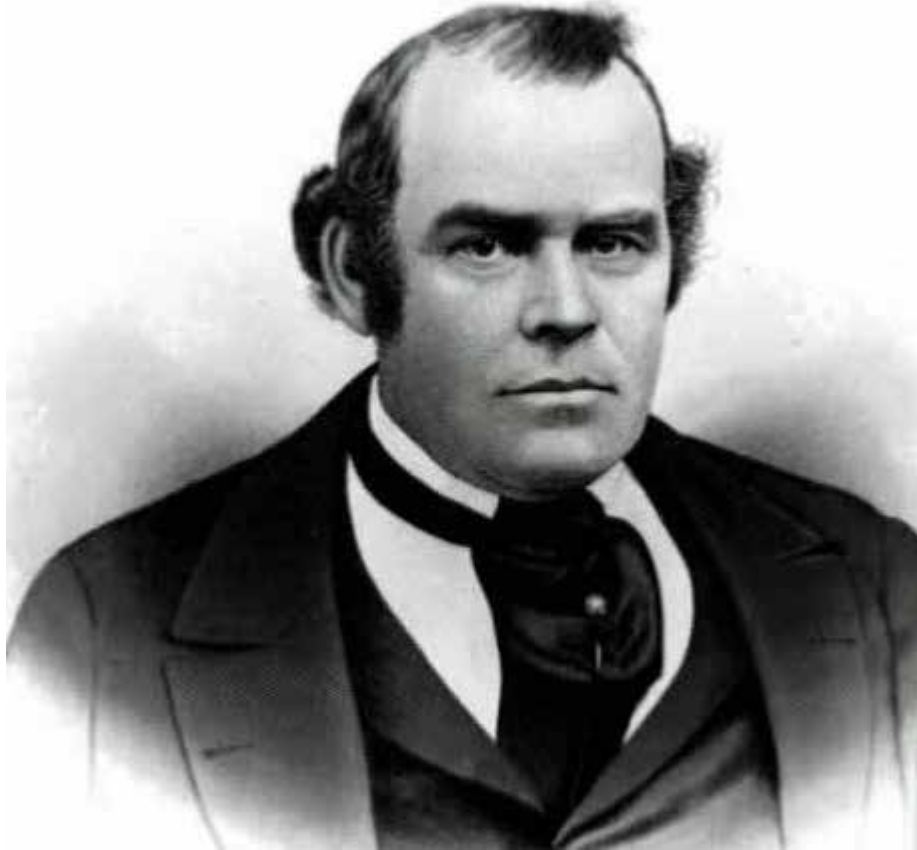
CHAPTER 1

First Missionary and Colonization Efforts of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Oregon Territory (1855-1898)

First Mission to the Oregon Territory

In a letter dated Nov. 23, 1854, Elder Parley P. Pratt wrote to President Brigham Young from Santa Clara, California, stating:

I am generally well, and in good spirits. Missionaries are now laboring in San Francisco, Union City, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sacramento, and in various parts of the mines; and in other towns in the vicinity of the places above named. We have also sent a mission to Oregon and Washington Territories. I also learn that the San Bernardino Conference sent missionaries to the Southern States, to various parts of the lower country, and to Oregon.



Parley P. Pratt

At the San Bernardino Conference, which had been held October 8, 1854, four brethren were called as missionaries to the Oregon and Washington Territories. These were John Hughes, Clark Faben, Alfred Bybee, and Silas Harris.

Although there exists one tertiary account of Elder Hughes preaching before the public in St. Helens, there is otherwise no known record of his accomplishments in the Oregon Territory, and his efforts appear mainly to have been concentrated in the Washington Territory, where he established a branch in Clark County (Vancouver area).

Colonization at Fort Lemhi

Efforts to preach the restored gospel in the Oregon Territory were soon renewed with the first attempted settlement by the Church in what is now Idaho at Fort Lemhi (later spelled Lemhi) on June 15, 1855. Fort Lemhi, named in honor of a Lamanite king from the Book of Mormon, was established in what was then Oregon Territory, near Salmon River, where the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery famously crossed the Continental Divide. President Brigham Young appointed Thomas Sasson Smith to supervise the work of colonization there, with twenty-seven men—eighteen of them missionaries—to serve under him. The settlers were encouraged by Church leaders to establish ties with local Native Americans, conduct missionary work among them, and teach them farming methods.

The fort was built of adobe, with a matching timber stockade sixteen rods square, and twenty-five log cabins were erected within, while on the outside a system of irrigation ditches—representing the first irrigation project in the Northwest—was created to facilitate farming. Eight acres were planted with corn, turnips, peas, beans, and potatoes. Livestock were protected in a clay corral.

With Fort Lemhi functioning as their base of operations, missionaries had access to the Bannock, Flathead, Nez Pearce and Shoshoni tribes. In an October 9, 1855, letter to George A. Smith, William Burgess, Jr. reported:

The Indians here are the noblest race I have seen in the west. They are very friendly. They are not afraid of a white man, as some other tribes are. They say the white men are their friends. I think we shall do good work here. We are learning their language as fast as we can. The Indians are very honest here, or have been so far. When we wash we sometimes let our clothes hang out for days, let our tools lie around any way, and Indians coming and going daily. Not one thing has been stolen yet. They abhor a thief, comparing him to a wolf, and they think a wolf is the meanest animal there is.



Cabin at Fort Lemhi

Good relations were established between the Mormons and the natives as some of the missionaries attained fluency in the Shoshoni language, and commenced trading. Many natives were baptized, including fifty-six on one occasion, and it is recorded that Ezra J. Barnard, Thomas Day, and Richard B. Margetts married native women.

In May of 1857, President Brigham Young, along with a large traveling contingent that included Native American Chief Arapeen, and possibly Chief Kanosh, visited the settlement, complimenting the settlers on their achievements, and advising them as to future prospects. He also warned them that their location left them vulnerable to raids.

Unfortunately, this stern warning from President Young would prove its tragic accuracy soon enough, when subsequent hostilities developed between the settlers and local natives, leading to a number of violent skirmishes. Joseph Parry recounted one such attack on the fort as follows:

On February 25, 1858, a large number of Bannocks and Shoshones made an unprovoked raid on the stock herds of the mission, firing on the herdsmen, badly wounding two (Andrew Quigley, left for dead, with his skull crushed in, and Fountain Welsh, stripped, beaten and also left for dead) and chasing the remaining one, Orson Rose, to the fort. President [Thomas S.] Smith and another man, who were out getting wood, saw the attack, hastened to the fort, procured help and started to head off the fleeing cattle. In this attempt George McBride was shot dead and scalped by the Indians, and President Smith was wounded in the arm. A bullet also passed through his hat and another cut his suspender. In their flight with the cattle down the valley the Indians met James Miller, Haskell V. Shurtliff and Oliver Robinson, coming up from the lower

fort. They fired upon them, killing Miller and wounding the two others, who succeeded in reaching Fort Lemhi. Two hundred head of cattle and thirty head of horses were driven off. At the time of the attack the colony comprised forty men, fifteen women and a number of children. They could not account for the abrupt outbreak. They had given the natives no cause for enmity, had treated them with uniform kindness from the first, and had aided them in every way as far as possible. It was believed that the raid was incited by unfriendly mountaineers and Indian agents.

Fort Lemhi was formally abandoned in late March 1858, and has not since been reoccupied. With no surface remains of the fort being extant, the site is now marked by a stone monument.

Missionary Ventures in Western Oregon

The mission to western Oregon began in 1857, with a delegation of four missionaries called by Elder George Q. Cannon to service there during a May conference held at the Philharmonic Hall in San Francisco. Their names were Silas G. Higgins, Lorenzo F. Harmon, John H. Winslow, and David M. Stuart. The last was appointed as presiding elder. A newspaper published by Elder Cannon, called *The Western Standard*, gave report of their departure aboard the SS Columbia on May 5, 1857, stating that the four young men were:

...sacrificing all hopes of worldly ease and prosperity, forsaking father and mother and...perhaps facing scorn and reproaches, taking...life in hand and going forth without purse or scrip to a strange land among strange people...They may be regarded as the commencement of the work and the opening of the gospel in Oregon...

They arrived at St. Helens four days later, and in his account of May 9, 1857, Elder Stuart records:

St. Helens...was the first town from the mouth of the Columbia River, and we decided to commence our labors here. On landing we retired to the woods, where we prayed the Lord to open our way and bless us on our mission.

At the only hotel in the town, owned by a Mr. Bodwell, whose wife disliked Mormons, the elders took up lodging. Elder Stuart recalled a conversation with Mrs. Bodwell:

After learning that we were "Mormon" preachers she told me that a Mr. Hughes, an Elder of our Church, had remained at her house a couple of years ago and had left some "Mormon" books to pay for his board bill; that he traveled without "purse or scrip," that he tried to preach but the people would not hear him and threatened to mob him out of the country.

Elder Stuart's record thus provides the nearest thing to an account of the missionary labors of Elder John Hughes in the Oregon Territory.

Mrs. Bodwell's antipathy toward them soon became so pronounced, and began to create such conflict between her and the elders, that her husband was moved to intervene and declare that the missionaries would "be respected in his house" as long as they met their payment obligations. Notwithstanding Mr. Bodwell's decision in their favor, the elders grew increasingly concerned over the exigencies of their financial situation. Elder Stuart entered in his journal:

[We were] treated very kindly after this by all in the hotel. We had no money, however, with which to pay our board and after what had occurred, we dared not tell the proprietor; we accordingly went to the woods and laid the matter before the Lord in prayer and implored His assistance in our extremity. We retired from the spot with an assurance that God would help us as long as we sought to do our duty.

PIONEER MISSIONARY

TRUE LIFE STORY
OF
DAVID M. STUART



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That evening, at mealtime, Elder Stuart was asked whether the missionaries were going to preach in St. Helens. When he responded in the affirmative, Mr. Bodwell introduced him to the trustees of the school house, who granted the missionaries use of the building for a Sunday meeting. The elders accordingly notified the townspeople of the meeting, and a crowd of listeners gathered. Elder Stuart recounted:

Marked attention was paid to our remarks, and at the close of the meeting I told the congregation we traveled without purse or scrip, like the apostles of old, but being strangers in the place we had put up at the hotel, and hoped that the liberal-hearted people present would assist us in paying our hotel bill. Sufficient was donated...we were thankful to our Father in Heaven who had answered our prayers in such a striking manner.

After leaving St. Helens, the four elders travelled to the Clark County area in Washington Territory, where they learned that John Hughes and his companions had been successful in organizing a small branch in 1855. However, owing to opposition in the area, branch members had not met in over a year. Elder Stuart called a meeting, and organized the Lewis

River Branch, with Elders Harmon and Winslow assigned to labor there. Some of the members were rebaptized, and Elders Stuart and Higgins returned to Oregon, secure in their knowledge that the congregation in Clark County had been restored to active operation.

Arriving in St. Helens on June 13, 1857, Elders Stuart and Higgins preached to a small congregation, and from thence pursued their journey to Hillsboro. There, they preached before an overflowing crowd in the courthouse hall. All in the meeting went well for the two missionaries, until its conclusion, at which point, as Elder Stuart recorded:

The Reverend Mr. Barton arose and wished to read a letter from Judge Drummond which had been published in the papers. I happened to have Brother Feramorz Little's letter published in the New York Herald of April 15, 1857, denying Drummond's charges, which silenced the reverend disturber...but he became angry and raised a mob, headed by the marshal, who led us out of the city limits...It was a very dark night and the mob left us in the woods with the injunction not to return at the peril of our lives.

The slanderous report of Judge William W. Drummond, alleging the "Mormons" to be in a state of treasonous rebellion against the government of the United States, had been arousing considerable anti-Mormon furor throughout the country, due to its wide circulation through newspapers. Having been sent to Utah as a Presiding Judge, Drummond had experienced an ongoing tension with the Mormons, who challenged his moral authority to sit in judgment of their practice of plural marriage. Upon returning to Washington, Judge Drummond began to have his calumnious accusations published through the Eastern press. It was not long, however, before his report reached the western territories, causing no little trouble for missionaries such as Elder Stuart and his companion.

Finding themselves thus rejected, by dint of mob action, from the city of Hillsboro, and being much perplexed as to how they were to proceed, Elders Stuart and Higgins knelt to prayerfully petition the Lord for divine aid. Their prayer concluded, the elders next heard footsteps behind them. A man of kindly disposition approached, introducing himself as "nothing but a professed gambler," and told them that he disapproved of the conduct of the mob. He further said that he had "many friends in this place who want to hear you preach." The man then presented the grateful missionaries with five dollars, informing them that a Mr. Simmonds, who lived

about a mile down the road, had gone ahead to prepare them a place for lodging, despite his wife's opposition to the idea.

At the Simmonds home, next morning, Elder Stuart was invited to offer a blessing on their breakfast meal. The prayer which he offered brought Mrs. Simmonds, who had lain awake the whole of night previous for fear they were bad men, to tears. For the next few days, the two elders went from house to house, hoping to assuage the fears felt against them.

Elders Stuart and Higgins again preached at the Hillsboro Courthouse on Sunday, June 29, 1857. Elder Stuart reports that:

Many were present at our meeting fully armed to mob, while others were prepared to defend us. We held the congregation by the power of God, for He was with us by His spirit knowing that we had determined to fill our missions or die in trying. Fearing however that we might cause trouble and perhaps bloodshed in the city, we left and went to Portland, Oregon.

Once in Portland, the elders soon found, to their disappointment, that their preaching met with violent resistance, as they were mobbed and egged in one of the city's large halls. When, finally, order was restored, they spoke for two hours, and Elder Stuart reported that they enjoyed the protection of some "law-abiding citizens." However, he and his companion never again got a public hall in Portland in which to preach.

A Branch Established in Oregon City

Directing their efforts next to Oregon City, Elders Stuart and Higgins were happy to be promised use of the courthouse there. Unfortunately, though they had been assured the use of it, the courthouse proved inaccessible to the elders, as the sheriff had absconded with the key. Meanwhile, a crowd had assembled to hear the "Mormons" and threatened to gain entry by force, breaking the door down, if necessary. But this drastic action was averted when the elders were offered use of the music hall, and there they preached to a mostly orderly crowd. The two elders were prospered in their ministerial work, and in time were blessed to meet with many of the city's leading citizens and establish a large branch with Joseph Tracy as its president.

Opposition in Salem

Setting their course to Salem, Elders Stuart and Higgins again encountered mob resistance. Elder Stuart recalled how they were "mobbed and egged in the courthouse and yet we got to speak...and found friends among the more intelligent of the community, to whom I appealed for protection as a law-abiding citizen of the United States."

The plight of the elders elicited the sympathies of influential publisher, banker, and political leader, Asahel Bush. In response to their appeal, Bush, as editor of *The Oregon Statesman*, reported:

Elders Stuart and Higgins of the Mormon Church preached here on Thursday evening; some boys threw rotten eggs at them and broke up the meeting, though some of our citizens put a stop to the egging, resolved that Mormons should have a hearing. They preached again on Saturday without molestation.

Bush then editorialized as follows:

The disturbance was without excuse...the remarks of the speakers were in no way offensive...Freedom of opinion and speech are as much boasted of as are any of our boasted liberties, and they ought to be held as sacred rights. These men have just as much right to preach Mormonism as other men have to preach Universalism, Methodism, Infidelity, etc. If any prefer not to hear them, they have but to remain away.

These published views from a prominent community figure were not, however, sufficient to stem the tide of opposition against the missionaries, as Elder Stuart would report:

Our enemies, however, were unsatisfied. They went as far as to frame a law and had it presented to the legislature to prevent us preaching in Oregon. This law was framed by a Reverend T.H. Pearne, editor of The Salem Christian Advocate.

The elders resolved to pursue their journey out of Salem, and preach, despite the anti-Mormon legislative measure being considered against them, wherever they could find a hearing. The opposition intensified, as Elder Stuart would recount:

[We] preached all the way up the Willamette Valley for a hundred and fifty miles, and were mobbed in every place...on the coast fork of the Willamette river, near Eugene, while we were preaching...a man rushed into the house backed by a mob and, with a large butcher knife in his hand, swore he would cut me open if I did not leave the house...While we were battling away in Oregon for the gospel's sake, our brethren in Washington were having a hot time.

Indeed, an organized mob had run the missionary elders out of Washington at bayonet point, and wrote a resolution that would have consequences for the elders laboring in Oregon when it appeared in the August 8, 1857, edition of *The Oregonian*, reading as follows:

Resolved, that Salt Lake Mormonism is treason; that it authorized murder, robbery, and the breaking open of the United States mails; that every inducement is made to proselyte the less intelligent of our fellow-citizens to its creed.

Resolved, that the confiscation of the individual property for Church purposes as practiced by the leaders of the gigantic conspiracy is a vital denial of the essence of the Declaration of American Independence, and looks to the subversion of the basis of civil liberty.

Resolved, that Brigham Young and his coadjutors in professing to receive [revelation] from God are guilty to the basest blasphemy and the most criminal deception.

Resolved, that we too highly prize the blessings of liberty and too strongly adhere to the laws of our country to be willing that they should be wrested from us who have been reared in the land of the free and the home of the brave by Mormon usurpers and conspirators.

Resolved, that we are opposed to men preaching among us who endorse the outlawry, the tyranny, the blood and cruelty of the Mormon leaders, and we therefore civilly invite the Mormon preachers now among us who have been harboring, thereby giving aid and comfort to the enemy, that a sense of propriety requires them to desist this unpatriotic business.

Resolved, that while we are unwilling to employ coercive measures, or use personal violence in executing our determination we shall fully accomplish our object, trying the virtue of severer means when milder fail.

Resolved, that the oath administered to the members of the "endowment" is treason steeped in blood, and that taken by members entering the Church but little better.

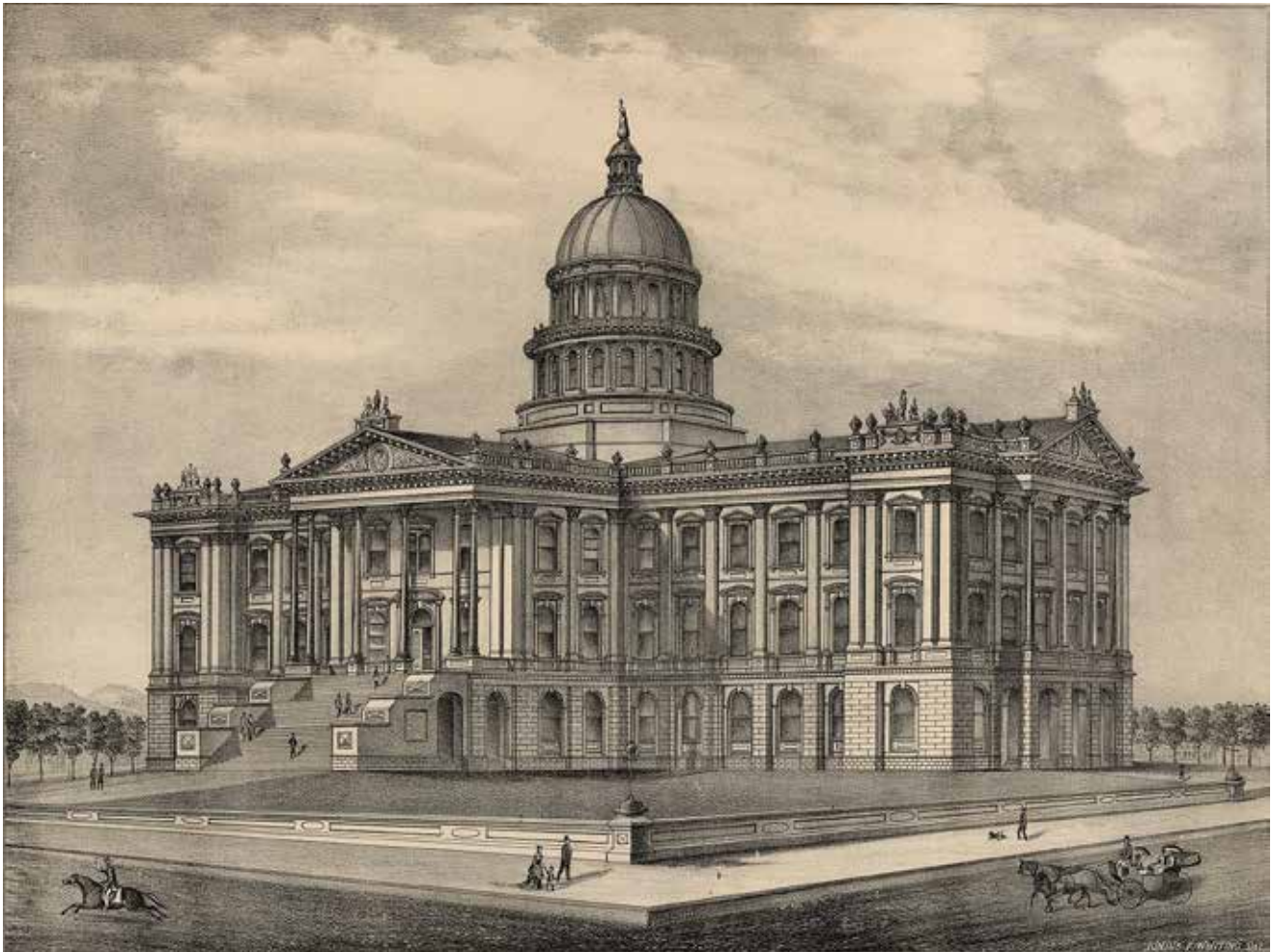
In contradistinction to the favorable view taken of the Mormons' right to preach in *The Oregon Statesman* stand the inflammatory remarks printed in *The Oregonian*, following the above resolution:

Knowing that Salt Lake Mormonism is treason, we are resolved that men shall not sow the seeds among us...Are Oregon and Washington Territories to have the seeds of the treasonable heresy sown upon their souls? Are we the sons of the revolutionary sires to tamely submit to a lawless banditti?...Mormonism is not preached here, it is mere catch-trap deception, which accounts for the new conversions...

My patriot brothers prepare to drive these traitors from our land; maintain the legacy bequeathed to us by our revolutionary Fathers!...Peaceably warn them to leave our country; if they refuse, force them

from it...Remember our patriot brothers who have fallen to Salt Lake...Remember that these Mormons are resolved upon the overthrow of our government. Let our Motto be: Our country first, our country last, our country always. No Mormonism or treason among us.

Mormon preachers leave, or take what comes.



Oregon State Capitol Building

Salem's First Convert to the Church

Elders Stuart and Higgins, nevertheless, persevered in their proselytizing efforts, undeterred by increasing hostility. They reported baptizing no less than sixteen people in the Willamette River, near Eugene, in early October of 1857. Elder Higgins was charged to take leadership of the saints in the area, while Elder Stuart left for Washington with Eugene Branch President Harrison Keyes and Caleb F. Calvin, who were travelling by boat to Portland to sell grain. While journeying thence, Elder Stuart experienced a vivid dream, which so impressed him that he resolved, at the peril of his life, to return and preach in Salem. The details of his vision would be exactly fulfilled, and of these remarkable experiences, Elder Stuart bore record thus:

We camped near Salem on the 9th of October. In the night I had a dream that I preached in the Salem courthouse, and baptized a man. This dream was so impressed upon me that I determined to stop over, and I told the brethren so with whom I traveled in the morning. They tried every way to prevent me from doing this, reminding me that a mob had threatened to kill me if I ever returned to Salem. We parted, they continuing their journey to Portland, while I went to Salem and called on Mr. May, the proprietor of the principal hotel in the city. He had always been friendly to me and on this occasion received me kindly but wondered that I should return to Salem knowing that on my last visit a mob had threatened my life if I ever returned. While we stood conversing the marshal of the city entered the hotel; I asked him for the use of the

courthouse, telling him that I intended preaching there in the evening.

“Yes,” said he, “You shall have it and I shall see that you have an orderly meeting this time.”

It was Sunday. The news spread like wild fire all over town and at the hour appointed the house was crowded to overflowing. The marshal was on hand and escorted me to the stand; he told the congregation that he wanted all to keep order and if there was any person present who did not want to hear me speak he wished him to retire from the building for he was determined that the meeting should not be disrupted.



Marion County Courthouse

I spoke on the first principles of the Gospel for an hour and a half, there being perfect silence in the hall. At the close of the meeting the spell was broken and a thousand and one questions were asked.

It was nearly midnight before the crowd left the hall, but when they did so, I found relief, for my mind had been on a continual strain holding the people in check. Next morning the marshal told me I had better leave the town for he feared an outbreak, as the mob were threatening to tar and feather me. I took his advice and left the town on foot for Oregon City by a road through the woods that was but little traveled. When I found myself alone I began to doubt my dream as it had not been fulfilled. I was leaving Salem and had not baptized anybody. When I was thus thinking, a wagon came up behind me. I hailed the man who drove the team and asked him to let me ride. He told me to jump up into the wagon. I did so, and he at once recognized me as the “Mormon” preacher. He told me he was at the meeting and believed the doctrines I taught to be true. I preached to him until we arrived at his camp on the Pudding River where he was making shingles. He asked me to stop with him over night as he wished to hear more about “Mormonism”. We sat up nearly all night conversing together. When I was about to leave the next morning, he told me that he was convinced of the truth, that he believed me to be a servant of God, and wished to be baptized before I left, “For,” said he, “I may never see you again, and if I lose this opportunity I may be lost forever.” --We, therefore, went down to the river near his camp and I baptized and confirmed him a member of the Church. We partook of the sacrament all alone in silent woods, there being none present to witness the holy ordinances I was performing but God, angels, and ourselves.--His name was Wm. P. Jacobs.

This William P. Jacobs had been born in Greene, Ohio, in 1828, and had married Ann Eliza Nichols on November 17, 1855, in Salem, two year prior to his baptism and confirmation by Elder David Stuart in the Little Pudding River. He and Ann became parents to six children, and Church records indicate that ordinances for



The Little Pudding River

all eight members of the family were performed by proxy in the Portland and Salt Lake City temples; some being performed in 1993, and the remainder in 2006.

Having witnessed the realization of his inspired dream, and the fulfillment of the promises therein contained, Elder Stuart selected Oregon City, where he had previously gone with Elder Higgins, as his next area of activity. There he baptized no less than seven people, and proceeded with his journey along the Willamette, preaching at every opportunity, until he landed at St. Helens.

He would next spend a fortnight with his fellow-saints on the Lewis River, a tributary of the Columbia, in Washington, endeavoring to quell the surge of anti-Mormon sentiment in the area, which had earlier driven Elders Harmon and Winslow out of the town by force of an armed mob, and left the remaining members so fearful at the threat of aggression by their enemies that they dared not meet together. Unable to secure any promise of peaceable relief to tension, Elder Stuart returned to Oregon City.

There he discovered Elders Harmon and Winslow, as well as a letter awaiting him from George Q. Cannon of the First Presidency, releasing them from their missionary service. Their release, however, raised concern as to how

they would manage to bring the new saints of Oregon back with them, over several hundreds of miles, to Salt Lake City. Determination was made that Elders Stuart and Higgins would pass the winter on the coastal fork of the Willamette, there assisting Church members both in their preparations for the journey to Utah and in their protection against the adversarial forces who had there been menacing them, while Elders Harmon and Winslow would remain with the saints in Oregon City. Opposition to the Church, meanwhile, continued unabated in the Eugene area, where Branch President Harrison Keyes had one day had an axe shot from his hands by an unidentified shooter, while he was chopping wood at his home. It was, therefore, with a considerable sense of urgency that a large group of Oregon saints migrating to Utah, being around sixty in number, departed for the security of Zion on October 26, 1858. There, they were warmly welcomed by President Brigham Young and the Apostles, and received blessings from them.

Continued Activity of Saints in Oregon

There remained only a small number of faithful saints in the Oregon Territory. Among them was Louisa Bozarth, who had entered the territory with her husband, John, via the Oregon Trail in 1852, and had joined the Church in 1857, despite John's antagonism toward the elders. She would remain in the territory, and was there when considerable numbers of her fellow-saints began to migrate to Oregon in the late 1880s and early 1900s. Joseph Tracy, who had been called as branch president in Oregon City, was another who chose to remain.

Additionally, according to a small handwritten document located in the Church's Historical Department, and found by Dr. Leonard Arrington while he was serving as Church Historian, a small group of Latter-day Saints met in Salem in the home of Clark Rodgers on September 24, 1871, to organize a branch of the Church, having John F. Adams sustained as president and Clark Rodgers as clerk. President Adams had been baptized, along with his wife, Rebecca, in Salem on August 20, 1871, by Elder J.W. Gillen. No record of the activities of this branch during this time beyond those noted on the handwritten document in the Historical Department is extant.

Latter-day Saint Migrations to Oregon

When Oregon City's Branch President, Joseph Tracy, had gone to visit David Stuart in Ogden, Utah, during the early 1860s, he also made the acquaintance of the William Eccles family from Scotland. The Eccles had recently come to Utah, along with a company of Scottish converts, led by Stuart from their native Scotland. Travelling by ship and covered wagon, they had been told by Stuart of the glories and opportunities lying in the Northwest territories, and were thus anxious, upon meeting Tracy, to learn of what great opportunities were to be had in Oregon. Tracy gave it as his opinion that they could become gainfully employed at the recently established woolen mill in Oregon City.

In a 1977 paper entitled "History of the Church in the Pacific Northwest," Dr. Arrington reported that:

After consulting with Brigham Young, who told them that if they would pray regularly they would not be bothered by the Indians along the route, the [Eccles] family and some cousins, the Moyeses, headed for the Oregon Trail...They were four months along the route, and though they camped at a place where, only two nights before, the Indians had killed an overland party, they were not bothered by Indians...indeed, they did not even see any.

Arriving in 1867, these first Latter-day Saint immigrants to Western Oregon found work, as had been anticipated by Joseph Tracy. David Eccles, for example, first found work as a woodsman, logger, and tracklayer. Nevertheless, after two years, the Eccles decided to return to Utah, while the Moyeses determined to remain in Oregon. Two days into their journey, however, the Eccles were at their campsite when the Moyes boys rode in with news that their mother, who was William Eccles' sister, was dying of typhoid fever. The young men pleaded with William to return and heal their mother with a priesthood blessing. William agreed to do so, on the condition that they promise to return with him, afterward, to Utah. Mrs. Moyes was healed of her typhoid fever, and the Eccles and Moyes families returned to Utah.

There David Eccles found success as a young businessman in the logging industry, providing lumber for the many railroad construction projects spanning from Denver, Colorado, to Portland, Oregon. Eccles and his business partners, John Stoddard and Charles W. Nibley, went on to build a lumber mill in North Powder, Union County, Oregon.

Eccles would amass so great a fortune through these business ventures in Oregon as to become one of the first millionaires in Utah and in the Church. Other entrepreneurial undertakings by Latter-day Saints in Oregon included the formation of the Oregon Lumber Company, headquartered in Baker City, which was surrounded by thousands of acres of virgin timber.



An Oregon Lumber Company train

The Grande Ronde Valley also provided fertile ground, in a sense most literal, for opportunities in the sugar beet industry. The rich soil of the area had been found ideal for the raising of sugar beets, though a refining facility would be needed to process any such crops as would be harvested.

After a proposed deal with other investors to build a refinery in La Grande had failed to reach completion, local promoters persuaded David Eccles and his associates to build one there. And, with local support for the venture duly granted, Eccles, Nibley, and Stoddard officially organized the Oregon Sugar Company on February 2, 1898.

These enterprises in the sugar and lumber industries by Latter-day Saint businessmen achieved outstanding success, which brought an influx of other families from Utah to seek their fortunes in the Grande Ronde Valley.

The refinery owners also formed the Oregon Land Company in order to supply the large volumes of sugar beets that would be required to keep the refinery in active operation. According to its Articles of Incorporation, the objective of the company was “to practice general real estate and to undertake irrigation projects” designed to stimulate beet production. Several thousand acres of land to the east of the Grande Ronde Valley were purchased. Such developments as these brought increased economic opportunity for those Latter-day Saints who would migrate to Oregon.



Franklin D. Richards

As increasing numbers of families in the Church settled in the eastern valleys of Oregon, the General Authorities of the Church in Salt Lake City had priesthood leaders called, and established Church programs among them. Elder Franklin D. Richards was sent by the First Presidency to Baker City, where he organized a branch at a meeting held on July 23, 1893, in the home of Elder John Stoddard. Stoddard was called as branch president, with Jedediah Morgan and Grant Geddes as counselors. During this meeting, Elder Richards prophesied:

This organization is but the nucleus of the great work to be done in the Northwestern States. Missionaries will be sent here and a mission established. There will be towns and cities inhabited by our people through these valleys. There will be stakes of Zion organized in Oregon and a Tabernacle built, and it would not surprise me if a Temple should be erected.

Organization of the Northwestern States Mission

In 1896, Edward Stevenson and Matthias F. Cowley traveled by train, boat, and wagon to assess the situation in the Northwest, and to determine how best to meet the needs of Church members in the area. This resulted in the organization of the Northwest States Mission on July 29, 1897, under the direction of Oneida Stake President, George C. Parkinson. On July 12, 1898, Franklin S. Bramwell was called as mission president, with mission headquarters established in Baker City, Oregon, until 1902.

About one month following Bramwell's appointment as mission president, an item appeared in The Oregonian which arrested the attention of Danish immigrant, Jens Westergaard:

Two Mormon Elders who have been proselyting in the Portland area have decided to return to Salt Lake City and report that the Portland area was not a fertile field for establishment of the Church.

Westergaard and his wife, Petrine, had become converted to Mormonism in Denmark almost 20 years earlier, before they were married, though neither had been baptized. Jens first immigrated to Utah, later to be joined by Petrine, and the two were married in Ogden on October 9, 1887. The two eventually settled in Portland.

At the time he read the announcement in the newspaper, Jens and his wife were at the home of some friends, but they cut their visit short and rushed home. Taking his bicycle, Jens sped off in search of the elders. As he

was leaving, Petrine had urged him, “Now you pump, and don't stop pumping until you find those Elders.”

He searched all night before finding the hotel where the missionaries were lodged, and there left a note, along with his last twenty-five cents, and a request that the elders contact him. Elders Joseph G. Nelson and W. J. Barnes soon responded, and, as Jens recalled, “I became benefactor to them as Frederick the Wise of Saxony did to Martin Luther.” The missionaries stayed at the Westergaard home, since “they were without purse or scrip.”

On August 30, 1898, Jens Westergaard was baptized in the Willamette River. Petrine was baptized the following week.

The first Church meetings in Portland were held at the Westergaard home on Gladstone Avenue, and Jens would later be called as the first Branch President of the Portland area.

Eventually, a meeting hall was rented in the Alisky Building in downtown Portland at a monthly rate of \$18, which often had to be paid out of President Westergaard's own pocket. Jens went on to serve three years as a missionary to his native Denmark, and was, upon his return to Portland, again called as Branch President.

CHAPTER 2

A New Century Begins a New Era of Church Progress

(1898-1939)

Return of Missionary Presence in Salem

With the advent of the twentieth century came an era of sustained growth for the Church in Oregon, including a resurgence of missionary activity (with almost two dozen called to serve), the organization of a new branch, and the establishment of a new stake.

Assistant Church Historian, Andrew Jensen, recorded in a history of the Northwestern States Mission that on December 30, 1900, a priesthood meeting was held at the direction of President Franklin S. Bramwell with elders in the Salem Conference. During that year, five new converts had been baptized as a result of the consecrated labors of twenty-one missionaries. Elder Harold Neely was the presiding elder.

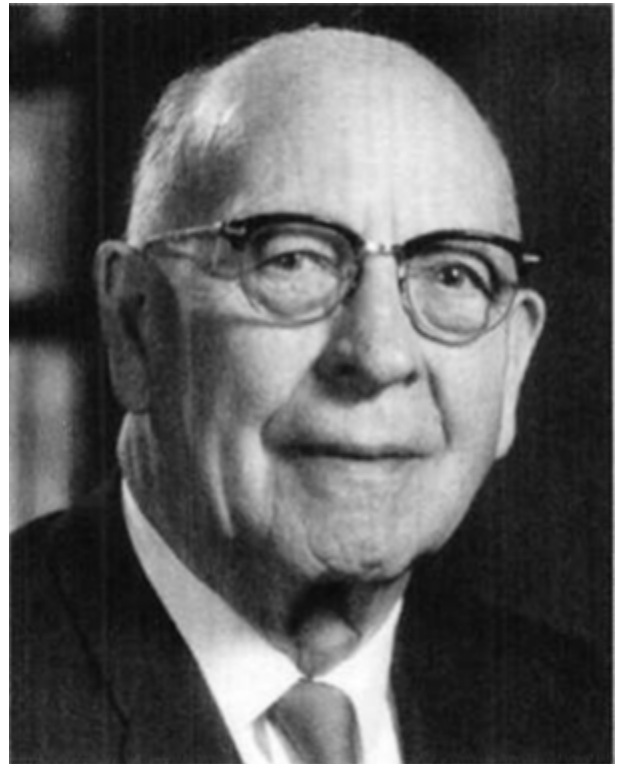
At that time, missionaries kept detailed report books, logging even such things as mileage travelled, and the number of miles covered on foot. Andrew Jensen reported that in the year 1900 alone, the twenty-one missionaries had walked a combined total of 26,722 miles, and had been given rides for 11,326 miles by various modes of transportation. They had visited 5,595 families, 4,609 of which had accepted return appointments with the elders. No less than 13,753 gospel discussions were reported as a result.

Elders proselyting in Salem began in the year 1910 to hold meetings for a few Church members in the area, under the direction of the Northwestern States Mission. And, despite persistent opposition to the Church by anti-Mormon antagonists, gatherings in Salem continued to be held at various times until a more formal organization could be effected in 1923.

LeGrand Richards Serves as Branch President in Portland

Meanwhile, in Portland, Jens Westergaard, whose pioneering efforts and years of valiant service had been a great blessing to Church members, was succeeded in 1909 by LeGrand Richards. A gregarious and popular branch president, Richards lived by the conviction that the greatest and most important duty is to preach the gospel. Whatever else LeGrand Richards became throughout his life, he would always consider himself, first and foremost, a missionary. He was a noted gospel teacher, and his gifts as an exponent of the doctrines of the restored gospel have become widely known since the publication, in 1950, of his classic, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*. The book has since been translated into eighteen different languages, and Lucile C. Tate has noted the fact that “Elder Richards has never accepted a penny of royalty on the book, donating it all to the missionary effort of the Church.”

He went on to serve as the presiding bishop of the Church, and was called to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on April 6, 1952, in which capacity he served until his death in 1983.



LeGrand Richards

In his sermons, he often referred with fondness to his time in “the Great Northwest,” and once said that he knew “all the saints in Oregon except their names.”

The Kerr Controversy

The long-fostered general antipathy held by many in Oregon against Mormonism continued to reveal itself with the appointment of William Jasper Kerr as president of Oregon Agricultural College (now Oregon State University) in 1907. Almost immediately, attacks in the press, springing principally from Eugene, began to be leveled against him, and against his Mormon past in particular. Although Kerr had been raised in, and lived for many years a devout member of, the Church, and had even served as president of what was then Brigham Young College, he had in fact renounced his membership in the Church following the official declaration that the practice of plural marriage was to be ended. The emotional impact of his divorce from the second wife with whom he had entered into plural marriage, Lois Morehead, was felt to be so great that Kerr and both his wives chose to leave the Church and join new denominations. Nevertheless, scandalous attacks on his past affiliation with the Mormon Church persisted until a number of Portland newspapers succeeded in convincing the general population of the state that his connection with both Mormonism and polygamy had long since been severed. He served in his administrative capacity until 1932, and the memory of his legacy has been preserved by Oregon State University with the naming of the Kerr Administration Building in his honor.



William Jasper Kerr

The Church in Corvallis

By the 1920s, the intensity of opposition to Mormonism had relaxed to the point that W.V. Halverson, a bacteriologist and Church member, was able to find employment at the university in Corvallis, which was by then known as Oregon State Agricultural College, without generating anything akin to the uproar which had surrounded the earlier appointment of William Jasper Kerr as university president.

Moreover, in 1928, Dr. Halverson was able to organize a small branch of the Church in Corvallis, with services held in the Knights of Pythias Hall on Second and Monroe Street. The family of John Lamborn, who managed a flour mill in the area, arrived in the early 1930s. When Dr. Halverson left the Corvallis area to move to Moscow, Idaho, the branch ceased to operate, apart from occasional home Sunday Schools held by a few of the remaining members.

A continuous church program in Corvallis began with the arrival, in 1937, of Herman L. and Mauretta Thomas, along with their five children. Brother Thomas was called as presiding elder within the Northwestern States Mission. In that capacity, he was on one occasion presented by the missionaries with a letter from Betty DeSchamps of Corvallis, who had written to the mission president requesting that Sunday School services be held in Corvallis. Sister DeSchamps was in the area with her husband, Ray, who was a graduate student in the Department of Farm Management.

A Sunday School was accordingly organized with Herman L. Thomas himself as superintendent, with Dennis Belnap and Ken Blacker called as assistants. Thomas’s wife, Mauretta, occupied the triple role of secretary, chorister, and class instructor. Brother Thomas received instructions from the Mission to hold Sunday School even in the event that no one other than his own family should be in attendance. During the summer, the group would be smaller, and at one time a few of the young people from Albany had to be transported to Corvallis in order to increase the number.

In July of 1937, when Noel and Mildred Bennion arrived with their sons, Doug and Fred, to Corvallis, there were already the families of Henry and Dorothea Rampton, Herman L. and Mauretta Thomas, Lin Harris,

Rex and Esther Warren, Paul and Ardis Parkinson, and J. Leo and Pauline Fairbanks residing in the area. Many of the individuals here named were respected members not only of the Church, but, in time, of the wider community. Leo Fairbanks, for example, was Professor of Art and Architecture, and would also serve as chair of that department, at what was then Oregon State College. Fairbanks Hall at what is now Oregon State University was named in his honor.



Fairbanks Hall at Oregon State University

Two years later, President Nicholas G. Smith of the Northwestern States Mission, in company with a small group of missionaries, came from Portland to organize the first official branch of the Church in Corvallis. Herman L. Thomas was called as branch president, and he soon thereafter chose Lew Smith and Golden Stoker to be his counselors. Brother Smith was in the grocery business, and Brother Stoker, originally of Logan, Utah, had come to the area to supervise the growing of sugar beet seed in the Willamette Valley. Both men provided great strength and stability to the church in Corvallis.

A Growing Number of Saints in Salem

Meanwhile, the Church had been steadily growing in Salem, which was to become, in due course, a stake of which Corvallis was a part.

Barbara Stumbo first came with her husband, Ray, who was not a member of the Church, to Salem in 1923. A newspaper announcement notified them of the fact that missionary elders were then holding meetings in the upper part of the old Busick building on the corner of Court and Commercial Streets. At that time, five members attended, in addition to the two missionaries.

By 1926 the group was holding meetings in the armory on the corner of Liberty and Ferry Streets, with the families of Alfred Mays from LeGrande and Leland Jones from Jefferson also now attending.

Ray Stumbo, though not a Church member, supported his wife Barbara in her activity, and took an active interest himself in seeing that suitable facilities and music for worship services be provided. As it happened, he was in an excellent position to assist in achieving these objectives. Owning several theaters in town where he showed silent movies, Mr. Stumbo employed a young man to provide musical accompaniment on the piano for these films. He offered \$2.00 each Sunday for the provision of prelude music and accompaniment to the hymns, which the young man accepted. A piano was rented by the Church, also at the rate of \$2.00 a day, until the woman who owned the piano learned that it was being used for Mormon worship services, and ordered a stop to its use.

According to Dorothy Franklin, Tom and Tessa Fryer arrived in the area with their four children on March 4, 1928, and began attending with the other Salem saints, in spite of having to drive approximately sixty miles from their home in Detroit, over what were then the narrow and winding gravel roads that lay between, in order to do so.

A Salem Branch is Organized

With this growth of membership in Salem came the need to organize an official branch. This was done on April 21, 1928, under the direction of President Harding of the Northwestern States Mission, with Henry Downs

being called as branch president. The branch met at that time in a hall above the Good Housekeeping store on the 400 block of Court Street. The hall was naturally a dismal and foul-smelling place, which required thorough cleaning and airing out before service meetings in order to maintain those feelings of reverence and worshipful solemnity which are to characterize observance of the Lord's Day.

Four new missionaries, two elders and two sisters, came to Salem in 1929. During the course of their labors, in addition to baptizing several Salem residents into the Church, the missionaries discovered other members of the Church in the area who had become inactive. A saying became popular among the saints in Oregon at that period: "*You can kick almost any old bush in the Northwest and out will jump a Jack Mormon.*"

During that same year, Grover Greaves, who had briefly served as branch president, moved to Seattle. The Northwestern States Mission by then had William R. Sloan as its president, who came to reorganize the Salem branch, and called William Mitchell to the position of branch president. During the meeting in which this was done, President Sloan also called John Feldstrom to the pulpit and called him as a counselor to the new branch president. Of the setting apart of Brother Feldstrom by President Sloan, Dorothy Franklin recorded:

He [President Sloan] had never seen this brother before. But he was set apart before the congregation, and when he blessed him, he told him he had a chronic disease, but that the disease would be arrested if he were faithful to carrying out his assignment. Brother Feldstrom answered with tears streaming down his face that he suffered from stomach ulcers.

Brother Feldstrom said to President Sloan, "You are a man of God." As counselor in the Salem branch presidency, John Feldstrom offered years of diligent service, and always enjoyed the good health which he had received according to the promise in his blessing.

The new branch grew still more with the arrival of the Cottew family, which included five children. And the skills of the mother, Florence Cottew, as a pianist came as a welcome boon to Sunday gatherings, as did the fine singing voice of her son, Jerry.

Two new members were added to the rolls of the Salem Branch with the baptism of Elmo and Zealand Fryer in the Breitenbush River near Detroit. Elmo was baptized in November of 1930, and Zealand the following winter. It is recorded that, on the occasion of his baptism, the weather being very cold, Zealand first needed his father to chop a hole in the river's icy surface before the ordinance could be performed. Zealand Fryer holds the distinction of having lived in the Salem Stake longer than any other living person.

The addition of such new members as these to the Salem Branch necessitated its relocation to the larger facilities at the Salem Women's Club house on 460 Cottage Street. Meetings were later held in the Unitarian Church on the corner of Chemeketa and Cottage Streets.

Often the Salem Branch was attended by Church members residing in towns and cities sometimes many miles removed from Salem. Records indicate that Zane Norton came from Silverton, Heber C. Pratt from Gates, and the Darley and the Larsen families travelling from Stayton and Corvallis, respectively. Darley and Larsen children were usually baptized in the Breitenbush and Willamette Rivers, though the Y.M.C.A. pool was chosen by some during winter months.

The Portland Stake is Organized

In Portland, meanwhile, factories and industrial jobs supporting U.S. war efforts attracted many Latter-day Saint families. To better meet the spiritual needs of the growing membership body, and to better oversee Church activity in the area lying between Eugene, Oregon, and Kelso, Washington, the Portland Stake was organized with Monte L. Bean serving as president, and Clifford Neilson and Elmer Stoddard as counselors.

President Bean served for only eighteen months, as business interests took him to Seattle, and he and his counselors were officially released on December 3, 1939. However, the donation of the Monte L. Bean Life

Science Museum on the campus of Brigham Young University remains a standing witness to the legacy of his success as a businessman in the Northwest.

President George L. Scott became the next president of the Portland Stake, and went on to serve in that capacity for almost fifteen years. To bring the members, who were so widely scattered throughout the large geographical area of his stake, into better communication, he established the Portland Stake News. In this monthly newspaper, which he personally wrote, published, and took to press, President Scott shared his deep love for the members, for the gospel of Jesus Christ in its restored fullness, and for the joyful service which he had so many opportunities to render.

New Wards in Salem and Eugene Organized

By the beginning of 1938 the Portland Stake included four Portland wards and the Kelso, Longview, Eugene, and Salem branches. On June 26, 1938, the branches in both Eugene and Salem became wards. Ralph B. Lake became bishop of the new Eugene Ward, and Arthur Hawkins bishop of the new Salem Ward. The Salem Ward boundaries then included Detroit, Silverton, Woodburn, Brooks, Corvallis, Independence, and Monmouth. Stake meetings held in Portland were attended by Church members from cities as remote as Roseburg and Lakeview. With freeways not yet constructed, travel to these stake meetings took days for some. Marilyn B. Williams remembered how, during the World War II period, “the maximum speed limit was only forty-five miles per hour in order to conserve the rationed gas. That really made travel to Portland slow.”

On December 3, 1939, the Salem Ward bishopric was changed, with Don C. Wall called as bishop, and Fay W. Lunday and Carl F. Baker as counselors. On this date, also, the towns of Canby, McMinnville, Newburg, and Dayton were added to the Salem Ward boundaries.

CHAPTER 3

Meetinghouses Created for Growing Congregations (1939-1951)

Meetinghouses Sought for Growing Wards

Soon after his appointment as bishop of the Salem Ward, Don C. Wall and his counselors began the search for a building lot on which to construct a meetinghouse suitable to accommodate the needs of a growing congregation. In an area to the north of downtown Salem, they identified a number of lots of sufficient capacity to include a chapel as well as adequate parking space. The lot located on Fifth and Madison Streets, priced at \$1,250, was selected, and would be purchased in 1942.



Don and Mary Wall

Meanwhile, growth in membership numbers for the Corvallis area continued steadily. A census taken by President Herman L. Thomas for the year 1940 listed the family names of Golden Stoker, Jesse Holladay, Noel Bennion, Oscar Hoffman, Isaac Lewis, Augustus Dennis Belnap, Max Robinson, David Moon, Vern Hugie, Vearl Smith, Henry Rampton, Herman Thomas, Winston Fillmore, Alvin Smith, Willis Smith, William Blacker, and Ernest Anderson. Later years of the same decade would see the arrival in Corvallis of members that included Ben and Vera Ballard, Max and Mary Williams, Hugh and Evelyn Webb, Augustus R. and Nettie Belnap Sr., Grant and EmmaDell Blanch, Ray and Lucile Hardman, James and Roberta Johnson, H. Darwin and Margaret Reese, Samuel and Doris Bailey, MaNette Egbert, Bryant and Celia Behrmann, Dale and Mary Olive Maddox, and John and Myrna Bell.

In 1942, the same year that the Salem Ward purchased a lot for the construction of their meetinghouse, branch members in Corvallis began assessing themselves 1.5% of their monthly income to be set aside toward a meetinghouse building fund. By this time, Hugh F. Webb had replaced Herman L. Thomas as branch president, with Ernest O. Anderson and Lynn K. Wood as counselors. The branch, which was about 63 members strong, included some who resided as far away as Florence.

Herman L. Thomas was, for his part, now serving as president of the newly organized Central Oregon District, with Augustus R. Belnap and Henry H. Rampton as counselors. The district extended from central Oregon westward to the coastal cities, southward as far as Coos Bay, eastward to Burns, and northward to what was then the southernmost Portland Stake boundary.

Organization of the Lebanon Branch

Meanwhile, the Lebanon Branch, comprised of only a few members at the time, was organized under the Northwestern States Mission in August of 1942. Dr. Wesley P. Goulding had joined the Church while living in Scio, and had later been ordained an Elder. He was called as Presiding Elder of the new Lebanon Branch, with Glen Osborn and George Shurts as counselors.

The Relief Society of the Lebanon Branch was organized shortly after the establishment of the branch itself, with President Jane Hollingsworth and counselors Josephine Shurts and Euzell Preston. Laura Osborn (Garland) was secretary.

The “pioneer families,” who took up residence in Lebanon after relocating from elsewhere, included Laura and Glen Osborn, W. Henry and Myrtle Shurts, George and Josephine Shurts, May Lundholm, Dorothy Eeneral, Euzell Preston with daughters Dona and Lurlyn, George and Josephine Shurts, and Ben and Bernice Shurts.

In September 1943, Lebanon Branch became the parent branch for the newly created Sweet Home Dependent Branch, requiring members of the Lebanon branch presidency to travel to Sweet Home to support the new congregation until such time as Sweet Home would have an independent branch of its own.

Latter-day Saint Presence and Activity Grows in Sweet Home

Full-time missionaries serving in the Northwestern States Mission in Eugene visited Ivan M. and Leone Burnett just two days after they had moved to Sweet Home in 1943. The missionaries invited the Burnetts to assist in tracting the area in search of members who might be living there. Approximately 35 members were located, some of whom had been away from the Church for as long as 20 years, and were grateful to meet and greet members of the Church, again.

On May 30, 1943, the first home Sunday School in Sweet Home was held at the home of Idella DeLapp. In September 1943, Sweet Home was organized as a dependent branch, with Lebanon as its parent branch. Ivan Burnett was Sweet Home’s Presiding Elder. Evelyn Sullivan was called as the first Relief Society president. Relief Society met in the homes of the sisters, with about eight initially in attendance.

Sacrament meetings were held in the C.I.O. (Congress of Industrial Organizations) Union Hall beginning in 1944. There was an old piano, ten backless benches, and an old pot-bellied stove for heat. A single “common cup” was passed around, and each member took a sip during the sacrament. The saints needed fixed concentration to blot out both the stench of tobacco and the juke box music coming from the tavern next door, but they were grateful to have a meeting place. In 1944, during a district meeting in Eugene, a speaker prophesied that Sweet Home would have their own chapel in a few years and would be part of a stake within 10 years.

Primary was organized in 1944 in the home of Barbara Jackson across from Sankey Park. Then the I.O.O.F. (Independent Order Odd Fellows) Hall, Braden’s store, the Burnett home and also the Community Hall at the federal housing project all housed Primary meetings.

Sweet Home became an independent branch in February of 1945, with Ivan Burnett called as branch president. It was then a part of the Corvallis District of the Northwestern States Mission. The family names of some of those who helped build the Church in those early days were Gourley, Lundholm, Sullivan, Cooper, Orgill, Lewis, Bergevin, Burnett, Harris, Aurich, Scott, Yeager, Sailey, Anderson, Harlow, McArthur, Malone, Sommers, Jeppsen, Stockett, VavRosky, and Niemi.

1947 is remembered as a landmark year for the Sweet Home Branch. On February 2, counselors George A. Cooper and Turner Stockett were called to assist President Ivan Burnett. Sweet Home Branch was able to buy a chapel from Camp Adair for \$900, which the brethren completely dismantled. The branch sisters pulled out the

nails, and it was hauled to their building site on the corner of Holley Road (Highway 228) and Oak Terrace. The project served to unite the membership in an indissoluble bond.



Sweet Home meetinghouse on Holley Road

When the chapel was reconstructed, a cultural hall and stage, kitchen and two classrooms were added, but no baptismal font at the time. Baptisms were usually performed in the Santiam River. On September 4, 1949, the first chapel of the Sweet Home Branch was dedicated by Oscar A. Kirrham, one of the Seven Presidents of Seventies. Also in attendance were Northwestern States Mission President Joel Richards and his wife and Corvallis District president Hugh Webb, his counselors W. Rulon Lee and Ray Hardman, and their wives. Others who visited Sweet Home in the early years were Elder Ezra Taft Benson, Elder Antoine Ivins of the First Council of Seventies, and Elder Clifford E. Young, Assistant to the Twelve Apostles.

In complete fulfillment of the above-mentioned prophecy given in 1944, the Willamette Stake was created on December 2, 1951, and Sweet Home was incorporated into it. Ivan Burnett was called as a high counselor and Sylvin Bergevin was set apart as president of the Sweet Home Branch, with Walter Saily as first counselor and Harry Moffit, second counselor.

Fundraising Work Continues in Corvallis

In addition to contributions from their personal incomes as sources of revenue, Corvallis-area members also participated in fund-raising efforts that included the raising of sweet corn, tomatoes, pickling cucumbers,



Odd Fellows Hall in Corvallis as it is today. (Pictured is a group of swing dancers not affiliated with the Church.)

and squash seed on rented farm land. Sisters in the Relief Society provided dinners, ran rummage sales, held bazaars, and put on bake sales to swell the coffers. But it would not be until the following decade that a meetinghouse for the branch in Corvallis was officially completed.

Members, in the meantime, gathered for Sunday meetings at various establishments throughout the city. The branch having outgrown in size the Knights of Pythias Hall located on the corner of Second and Monroe, members began using the old Seventh-Day Adventist building at the corner of Sixteenth and Jackson. This latter building was remembered for its pot-bellied woodstove, its broken windows, and the related difficulty involved in maintaining a fire suitable for the warmth and comfort of members gathered to meeting in the months of winter. The I.O.O.F. Hall was used for the longest period prior to the construction of a meetinghouse. Prior to 1947, conferences would be held in the Congregational Church building on the corner of Eighth and Madison, and the Relief Society met in the homes of various members.

The actual search for a building site in Corvallis commenced around 1943. Franklin L. West, Commissioner of Education for the Church Department of Education, had visited Oregon State College (as Oregon State University was then known) about this time. Henry H. Rampton, who had recently become branch president, began meeting with Commissioner West to discuss the feasibility of creating a joint branch chapel and Institute of Religion facility for the members in Corvallis. A vigorous search effort was undertaken for building space sufficiently near to the college. Mission President Joel Richards began a two-year correspondence with Branch President Rampton before the final decision was reached, and the means afforded, to purchase land for construction in February of 1949 at a price of \$10,000.

A burgeoning spirit was astir among the student body, and a Deseret Club had since been formed by the members attending Oregon State College, with their initial numbers having nearly doubled by 1949. That same year, a religious preference survey conducted on campus showed no fewer than 70 students approving the LDS faith among students, marking a significant reversal in the climate of opinion from what had prevailed in the days of William Jasper Kerr, when a heightened suspicion of Mormons had fomented opposition to his appointment as president.

While the construction of a meetinghouse in Salem had gotten underway with a groundbreaking ceremony held on May 15, 1948, and the consecrated labor of members there was still seeing the project through, Corvallis members were required to participate in a long series of negotiations with a Salt Lake City architectural firm, Woods & Woods. A modified version of the Hood River chapel was found most desirable, and ultimately adopted, with 6,900 square feet of planned floor space.

Corvallis Meetinghouse Construction Efforts Move to Completion

An article appearing on the front page of the Corvallis *Gazette-Times* for July 9, 1950 reported as follows:

First steps in the erection of a...church were taken here by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon).

Special groundbreaking ceremonies were held at the site on July 7, 1950. The site of the structure is on 27th Street between Jackson and Johnson Streets, on a lot 168 feet wide and 134 feet deep. The building had been in the planning for more than seven years. The one-story structure with partial basement will be about 110 feet by 81 feet in a shallow U shape. It will cover less than 30 percent of the lot and there will be off-street parking available at the rear. The building will have a brick exterior.

The interior will include the chapel, a foyer and a recreation hall. The chapel will be to the left after entering the building and the recreation hall to the right. Folding doors will separate the two units from the foyer and, when open, will make one large room for the seating of more than 500 persons. There will be two wings for Junior Sunday school and the women's Relief Society. Between the wings will be a battery of class rooms and a kitchen. Other facilities will include a baptismal font, office, lavatories, Boy Scout room in the basement, storage space for welfare supplies and a heating plant.

The building will be used primarily as a home for the Corvallis branch of the Church, but it will also serve as headquarters for the entire Corvallis District, which comprises branches at Sweet Home, Lebanon, Albany, Corvallis, Dallas and Newport, and scattered membership between. When first planned there were 63 members recorded here. At present [1950] there are over 250 members on record in Corvallis.

Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony were Henry H. Rampton, President of the local branch presidency, and Dr. Max B. Williams and Samuel H. Bailey, counselors; Dr. [Hugh F.] Webb, W. Rulon Lee and Ray W. Hardman, counselors of the District presidency; Joel Richards, Portland, President of the Northwestern State Mission, and other officers and members of the local branch.



Corvallis Bishopric 1952. Front row (L to R) Max Williams (1st Counselor), Henry H Rampton (Bishop) and Sam Bailey (2nd Counselor). Back row (L to R) Jim Johnson and Paul Parkinson (clerks).

Not mentioned in the article was one of the most tireless workers among the membership in Corvallis, Brother Leonard Jolley. Employed by the Ramsey Construction Company, Brother Jolley started his excavator at 5:00 A.M. on July 7, 1950, and began digging. Brother Jolley also went on to break ground for the stake center located on Harrison Boulevard, as well as for the meetinghouse on Walnut Boulevard in Corvallis.

Work on the new chapel was made difficult by the heavy precipitation which came with the onset of autumn in 1950. Workers had to be mustered from within the ranks of the local membership to assist in part of the construction process. The work was directed by a building superintendent, Ben Cardwell, who had been hired by the Church Building Department. Professionals were hired for the framing, carpentry, rafters, plastering, brick work, and electrical wiring. General church funds supplied 80% of the funding, while the consecrated efforts of local members offset part of the remaining 20% of the original assessment.

The first sacrament service was held in the \$176,000 building on 27th Street on August 19, 1951, just one day after brick work had been completed, and weeks before the flooring had been finished. For the next two years, work on the building continued, while in use.

A few weeks following these first services in Corvallis, a momentous occasion in Salem brought Presiding Bishop LeGrand Richards back to his beloved Oregon from Salt Lake City, Utah, when, on September 9,

1951, the first official meetinghouse of the Church in Salem was dedicated. In attendance were 429 members. According to the minutes kept by the ward clerk, J. Arthur Lee, Bishop John L. Salisbury took the opportunity during this event to speak “briefly on Joseph Smith's restoration,” and also “reported that 8,095 man hours went into the building of the Salem Ward Meetinghouse.”

Following a dedicatory prayer on the new building offered by LeGrand Richards, the Salem choir sang the hymn *This House We Dedicate to Thee* by Henry W. Naisbitt.

Of the Salem meetinghouse, member Dorothy Franklin would later observe that it represented “many, many years of struggle and dedication by the early saints to bring the Church in Oregon to where it is today.”

CHAPTER 4

Church Expansion Through the Willamette Valley (1951-1961)

Dallas Members Serve in New Branch

Malcom C. Nichols and his wife Lorraine moved to Salem in the fall of 1951. Brother Nichols was the District Executive of the Cascade Council of the Boy Scouts of America. After one month in Salem, he received a call to serve as president of the newly organized Dallas Branch, which was attended by members located throughout Polk County. Having, at that time, no official meetinghouse, the members held services in the basement of the local library. President Nichols served with Bob Stever and Leland Jones as counselors.

The Nichols would travel from Salem to Dallas each Sunday for four years as Malcom magnified his calling as branch president, and Lorraine played the piano during sacrament services, with Faye Rogers acting as music director. The Nichols couple also taught Sunday School. Leland Jones was called in 1955 to replace Malcom Nichols as branch president.



The family of Malcom and Lorraine Nichols.

The Willamette Stake is Established

So impressively had the Church flourished in the Willamette Valley that Elders Spencer W. Kimball and Delbert L. Stapley of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles proposed, in a meeting held at the Salem chapel on November 29, 1951, that the Salem Ward become a part of the new Willamette Stake, to be formed by division from the Portland Stake, in the central valley region, with stake headquarters in Eugene. One hundred ninety-two ward members attended the meeting, and a few expressed disfavor at the proposed change, possibly preferring not to undergo the changes involved in joining a different and unfamiliar stake with headquarters seventy-five miles to the south, in Eugene. Whatever the reason for resistance among this small minority, unanimous consent was ultimately given by ward members to the proposal.

And so, on a Monday night, December 3, 1951, the Willamette Stake was officially organized under the apostolic supervision of Elders Kimball and Stapley, who called Ralph B. Lake to serve as its first president. President Lake chose Henry B. Wright and Hugh F. Webb as counselors.

Included in the new stake were congregations in Corvallis, Salem, Eugene, Springfield, Roseburg, Sweet Home, Lebanon, Albany, Junction City, Dexter, Oakridge, and Cottage Grove, all constituting a membership of 2,557 in number. At this time, the Church News reported a statewide membership of 21,792.

An entry from the journal of President Lake's wife, Helen, records some of the personal interactions that the Lakes had with Elder Kimball, which serve as a witness both to the dignity of the apostolic office and to Spencer W. Kimball as a man of sterling character:

At 2:15 A.M., after the long meetings of the day, when the settings apart were completed, President Kimball and President Lake arrived home. I offered Elder Kimball some food. He said that he wanted only bread and milk. He stayed up until 4:15 A.M., when he asked President Lake to take him to the post office to mail his report of the actions of the day. He told President Lake that he had promised the Lord, when he was very ill, that he would never retire before the day's activities were completed and his reports were complete. After President Kimball left, I had found that he also made his bed before he left. Later I talked with him at

General Conference and commented upon the fact that he had made his own bed, and he told me, “Sister Lake, we come to you as servants, not to be waited upon.”

Significantly, also, the Corvallis Branch had just become the Corvallis Ward, on December 2 of this same year, with Henry H. Rampton sustained as bishop, with Max B. Williams and Glen T. Nelson as his counselors, and James W. Johnson and Paul Parkinson as clerks. (Brother Nelson would be replaced as second counselor in the bishopric by Samuel H. Bailey on August 24, 1952.) The ward at this time was about 300 members strong.

Willamette Stake Presidency Provides Loving Service to Large Area

Corvallis, as all other congregations of the Willamette Stake, found in the person of President Ralph B. Lake an example of heartfelt loving devotion to the Church and its gospel to which all were pleased to give heed. His daughter, Carolyn Lake Schultz, later matron of the Portland Temple, recalled the passionate dedication of her father to all living within the boundaries of the 150-mile-long stake:



Spencer W. Kimball

How my dad loved all the people in that large area! I never heard him complain about the need for him to travel all around the stake. But he often remarked on the faithfulness of the saints who routinely made the trip to Eugene for stake meetings and activities. I suppose that members who were part of Willamette Stake were both surprised and pleased that President Lake could call them by name; he was truly a people person as well as a great priesthood leader.

He never stayed home when his presence was required at various stake activities. However, (I guess it's safe to tell now) at many stake dances which were held at various fabulous venues such as the basement in Eugene's 10th and Tyler building, Eugene Veteran's Memorial Building, and the cafeteria at Eugene High School (which were all beautifully decorated for these events), he would greet everyone, dance one dance around the periphery of the dance floor (smiling his big grin), then disappear for the next hour or so to go into another room and listen, by radio, to whatever ball game was being broadcast.

As the Church continued to grow here in the Northwest, he was pleased when Salem was able to sustain its own stake at the northern end...then Roseburg Stake was formed on the southern end. As all these wards and branches were broken off from Willamette Stake, he was grieved to not be so involved with the saints in those areas, but so confident in the abilities of the priesthood and auxiliary leaders as they were selected and sustained. He would never take credit for being the trainer of leaders—but he was.

Lynette Webb Wescott, daughter of Second Counselor Hugh F. Webb of the Willamette Stake Presidency, shares fond recollections of this early period:

One of my memories is that often there were visitors from Salt Lake [City] attending. When a general authority was visiting, the stake presidency provided a hot meal for them at the home of the stake president. Those were very special times. Occasionally, the general authority had a plane to catch.

On a few occasions, the general authority would spend the night at our home. As a child, I felt honored when they stayed with us.

At the time, Junction City had an ice cream store. My father loved ice cream, and it became a regular habit for him to stop at the ice cream store on his way home from his church meetings.

Sister Wescott also remembers some of the special arrangements which had to be made in order to adequately accommodate stake meetings at this time:

The church had no property in Eugene at that time that would hold our stake congregation, so they rented a high school auditorium [at South Eugene High School] for stake meetings until they could build a proper facility.

Of her father, Hugh, Lynette Webb testified to those elements of his life and character which enabled him to magnify his office as a counselor in the stake presidency:

My father cherished his wife and family.

My father loved the gospel.

He had a very strong testimony.

He earned his Eagle Scout Award when a teenager.

He loved to read.

He knew the scriptures.

He loved to teach the gospel.

Willamette Stake Expands in Property and Influence

When construction of the Corvallis Ward meetinghouse on 27th Street was finally completed, the building was dedicated on October 25, 1953, under the supervision of Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, who delivered the dedicatory sermon and prayer. Elder Christiansen prayerfully expressed gratitude on behalf of all in attendance “for those who have preceded us,” as well as “for those who have had the desire to make it beautiful and lovely and fit for a place of worship,” and also “for the means to make it possible.”

It is a standing testament to the active growth of the Corvallis Ward that this building on 27th Street, though sufficient in the beginning to answer the needs of the ward, was quickly outgrown, and space was of necessity added, with approval and assistance from the Church Education System, in the form of a second story addition at the back of the building which was completed in the spring of 1961. The Junior Sunday School and Relief Society wings were extended in the expansion process, as well.



ElRay L. Christiansen

As part of the Willamette Stake, travel to Eugene for leadership meetings, stake conferences, youth events, and other activities became frequent for members of the Corvallis Ward. Often, business was mixed with pleasure, when, as noted above in the recollections of Lynette Webb Wescott, stops were made in Junction City for ice cream cones.

Also in October of 1953, O. Meredith Wilson was appointed president of the University of Oregon in Eugene, and would assume that office on March 1, 1954. Commentary offered on his appointment in a local newspaper in 1953 read:

Sometimes we are prone to believe the human race never improves, but it evidently does. When Dr. Kerr came to Corvallis in 1907 to head the college, there was a tremendous outcry against him in some quarters because he had happened to be a Mormon. Now in 1953 when Dr. Wilson,...a Mormon, is appointed President of the University of Oregon, no one gives his religious affiliation a second thought. And indeed, why should they?

In 1954, N. Stanley Fagg replaced Henry H. Rampton as bishop of the Corvallis Ward, as the latter had been called to the stake high council. Samuel H. Bailey and James W. Johnson served as counselors in the new bishopric, with Benjamin J. Ballard and James Grange called as clerks.



O. Meredith Wilson

A welfare farm in the Corvallis area was purchased for the Willamette Stake in 1955 from Dr. William A. Schoenfeld, dean of agriculture at what was then still known as Oregon State College. Dr. Schoenfeld had purchased the property many years prior as a personal investment, and had refused to sell the over twenty-two acres of farm land to the college, despite its being located in middle of the horticultural research area. He reasoned that he did not want it suspected that he had profited personally from his position at the college. He was quite willing, though, to sell to the Church, and enthusiastically welcomed the prospect of seeing his land put to use as a welfare farm.

Located less than two miles from downtown Corvallis, near where the Trysting Tree golf course now is, the welfare farm proved to be well-suited, with its rich and fertile loam, to the cultivation of a wide range of field, vegetable, and fruit crops. The purchase was \$12,000 for the land, machine shed, and irrigation system.

The first main crop, yielded in 1956, was of sweet corn for processing, and in the years following members would also raise cucumbers, strawberries, raspberries, and alfalfa. Golden delicious squash was at one time raised for seed, under contract with the Northrup-King Seed Company.

Longtime members in Corvallis remember the fruits of honest toil on the welfare farm as being of a more than merely temporal nature. In their published history of the Church in Corvallis, Samuel H. Bailey, John F. Bell, and Margaret B. Reese wrote of the farm:

No other single project in this area was to give the saints the sense of doing God's work...[more] than doing the physical work on the farm. Nowhere else did strawberries taste so sweet or was corn so fresh. The spiritual blessings cannot be separated from the physical rewards of the efforts put forth on the farm.

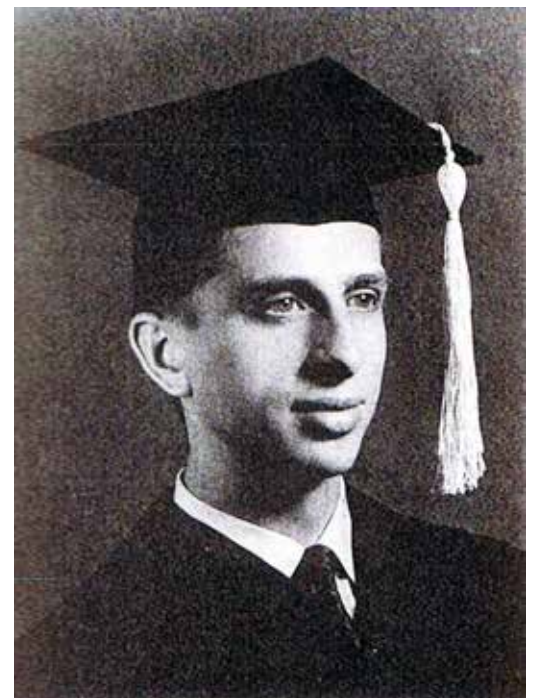
Motivations both temporal and spiritual brought Brother Boyd Nash and his family often to the welfare farm, though one of his daughters, Patty (Nash) Northrup, remembers the lessons that he hoped to inculcate in them not always being appreciated quite so readily:

Strawberry picking was not my favorite reason for getting up before 7 A.M. on Saturday mornings. Brother Nash (my dad) was teaching us about obedience and faithfulness and the law of the harvest, but as kids, we thought he just enjoyed torturing teens. I never did enjoy the feel of dirt in my fingernails. On the other hand, I could never bring myself to use my dad's trick (which works) of scraping soap under the fingernails so that it was easy to clean the nails after coming home. We went, we picked, and in retrospect, we did learn about being obedient, helpful, and serving others.

One Saturday morning I was sure that picking strawberries was going to be the death of me. It was a bit chilly that morning and I secured myself a spot where the berries were sorted and put into flats or baskets. How I thought that was going to keep me warm I'll never know. I was colder there as we handled each berry than I'd ever been actually picking the berries. At least picking you moved from plant to plant. Yes, hands got wet with dew, but moving around kept some warmth going. Standing at the packing station we got our hands wet and they stayed wet.

Still, the joys to be had and shared there were not wholly lost on the youth, as Sister Northrup recalled:

Picking strawberries was always more fun on Mutual nights. The youth and their leaders (and available ward members) would come and those evenings were always more fun (in my mind) than Saturday mornings. I well remember the great throwing arms of Mike Arnold and John & Rich Fryer as they lobbed rotten berries over and around the other kids. They were not wasteful of good



Boyd D. Nash in 1958

berries, but took full advantage of rotten berries to practice their baseball pitching.

The welfare farm was a place from which, as may be seen, members of the stake harvested not only produce, but a heavenly crop of blessed and happy memories.

A Second Ward and New Stake in Salem

Meanwhile, in Salem, Church membership was continuing its steady trend of growth. William T. Geurts became bishop of the Salem Ward on July 17, 1955, and by January of 1960, he was called as bishop of the Salem Second Ward when that congregation came into being.

Bishop Geurts was a blessing to untold numbers of saints in the Salem area, having prospered himself as president of the National Turkey Federation, and as manager of the Norbest Turkey plant in west Salem, and thus being able to assist many facing difficult financial times.

Growth of the Church in these and other units of the Willamette Stake eventually necessitated the creation of a new and separate stake in the Willamette Valley. Thus, on January 22, 1961, Elders Hugh B. Brown and Gordon B. Hinckley officially organized the Salem Stake, with Hugh F. Webb as president, and Ray W. Hardman and N. Stanley Fagg as counselors. William S. Thomas and Benjamin J. Ballard were called as clerks. All five of these newly called brethren were from Corvallis.

Travel to stake functions from Corvallis was now to the north, rather than to the south. Stake conferences at this time were generally held in the auditorium at North Salem High School, while the Salem Ward chapel at 570 Madison Avenue accommodated smaller stake leadership meetings.

Units of the new Salem Stake included the Albany, Lebanon, and Sweet Home Branches; and the Corvallis, Salem First and Salem Second Wards, all taken from the Willamette Stake. From Portland Stake came the McMinnville Ward, with the branches in Molalla, Stayton, and Woodburn coming from what had been the jurisdiction of the Northwestern States Mission.

Seminary Nurtures Corvallis Youth Testimonies

Active members of active mind approached Bishop Fagg in 1958 to express their desire for a seminary program. The approach, made by Veda Williams and Diane Frischknecht, was generously received, and the first seminary class was held beginning in the fall of 1958. Ray Catanni was called to teach the Book of Mormon.

When Corvallis became a part of the Salem Stake in 1961, Ronald S. Jolley taught the early morning seminary class, which began at 7:00 A.M., under the supervision of Institute Director Henry (Bud) Draper, who himself also taught some of the classes. Later, Margaret B. Reese served simultaneously as a seminary teacher and a secretary to the Institute directors. Teaching from 1962 to 1969, Sister Reese was known to students of her seminary class as a dynamic instructor and devoted student of the scriptures.

Members of the first graduating class of the Corvallis seminary in 1961 included Gloria Atwood, Diane Frischknecht, Robert Gunter, Nancy Larsen, Wesley Rampton, Elizabeth Ann Rickenbach, Lynette Webb, and Veda Williams.

CHAPTER 5

Formation of the Corvallis Oregon Stake (1961-1963)

Corvallis Wards Multiply

The vacancy left in the Corvallis Ward bishopric upon the organization of the Salem Stake, and the calling of N. Stanley Fagg to serve as a counselor in the presidency thereof, was filled when Samuel H. Bailey was called as bishop on the same day. Bishop Bailey was joined by counselors Dale L. Maddox and Lloyd M. Frazier, with Leo D. Hall, Paul B. Larsen, and William S. Thomas serving as clerks. Brothers Hall and Larsen were later replaced as clerks by Ben Ballard and James Grange.



Corvallis Bishopric in 1961. Front row (L to R): Dale Maddox (1st Counselor), Sam Bailey (Bishop), Lloyd Frazier (2nd Counselor). Back row (L to R) William Thomas, Ben Ballard and James Grange (clerks).

After serving in that capacity for two years, Bishop Bailey was again called to replace the outgoing N. Stanley Fagg, this time by filling the vacancy left in the Salem Stake presidency when the latter moved, in the spring of 1963, to Fresno, California.

Many of the Salem Stake leadership positions were filled, prior to the formation of the Corvallis Stake, by members living in Corvallis. The number of units in the Salem Stake at that time was eleven. In order to participate in ward conferences throughout the stake, it became necessary for leaders to visit two units per month. A June 1963 statistical report lists 4,059 members in the stake.

By June of 1963, the Corvallis Ward had increased to 900 members. Under the direction of the stake presidency, the ward divided into two, with Max B. Williams called as bishop of the Corvallis First Ward, and W. Peter Nuffer as bishop of the Second. Bishop Williams served with counselors Lloyd M. Frazier and LaVar Sorenson, while Dale L. Maddox and Dean T. Atwood served as counselors to Bishop Nuffer.

During these years, students at what had finally come to be called Oregon State University held separate

Sunday School services. Initially, separate officers from those of the other two Corvallis wards supervised these Sunday meetings. H. Darwin “Dar” Reese served as superintendent with Steve Hansen and Guy Armantrout assisting, while Susan Fox filled the role of secretary. However, a few weeks prior to the organization of the Corvallis Stake, the university group officially became a university ward, with Benjamin J. Ballard named its first bishop on October 13, 1963, under the direction of Salem Stake President, Hugh F. Webb. Bishop Ballard’s counselors were Wallace Allred and Earl Jackson, with Sheldon Keala serving as clerk. The new university ward included all unmarried students, as well as all married students who did not yet have children.

Salmon Bakes Attract Ward Members From Far and Near

Although H. Darwin “Dar” Reese was now no longer superintendent of the university group, he continued to bless and inspire the members in Corvallis during this period through, among other things, his distinguished service under the title of “Salmon Baker Supreme.” Beginning in the year 1960, Brother Reese contributed to the celebration of Pioneer Day on July 24th by serving salmon baked according to the technique traditional among many of the coastal native tribes of Oregon. The annual Salmon Bake increased in popularity over the ensuing decades, attracting nearly a thousand participants during some years, and requiring hundreds of pounds of salmon on more than one occasion. So resounding was the success of these events that they were also turned to profit for stake fundraising initiatives, and also put on for groups not affiliated with the Church, as Sister Joanne Harding recalls:

I was privileged to work on many Salmon Bake committees with Dar Reese. He had amazing organizational skills. Some of the Salmon Bakes were to raise money for the stake budget which was necessary back in the 1980’s. We would serve forestry groups at Peavy Arboretum, for example.

The first year began, humbly enough, with two salmon, which were baked and served to about 75 people. Purchased from coastal fishermen, the salmon cost 35 cents per pound, and were baked according to the native method—cut down the middle, and carefully placed on ash poles before open fires.

Aside from celebrating the entry of Brigham Young and the first Mormon pioneers into the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847, the salmon bakes



H. Darwin “Dar” Reese



Salmon baking on poles.



Dar Reese holding two pieces of salmon.



(L to R): Dar Reese, Henry Herdt, and Henry Rampton.

became de facto reunions for Corvallis members after they had been officially divided into their respective wards. Hundreds would assist in the event, held either on July 24 or the Saturday nearest that date, with Henry Herdt (a.k.a. “Chief Sharp Knife”), Henry Rampton, Max Williams, and Ray Hardman regularly supervising. Dar Reese, for his part, also went beyond the call of duty in overseeing the organization of the salmon bakes, as remembered by Sister Harding:



*Brethren posing at a Salmon bake. (L to R):
Boyd Nash, Dar Reese, John Bell, and Ralph Taylor*

It was not unusual to have the phone ring at 5 A.M.! It would be Dar calling to check on last minute details. He said: ‘I knew I could get in touch with you at this hour.’”

When salmon came to be in short supply, and the associated costs rose, Corvallis members reluctantly ended their observance of the salmon bake tradition. But those were days never to be forgotten, and are remembered among longtime members with fondness to the present day. Although the holding of salmon bakes on an annual basis is, at present, still precluded by the expense that would be incurred, in celebration of their 50th anniversary as a stake, Corvallis members

in the year 2013 held a commemorative salmon bake, which attracted both former and current stake members alike.

The Corvallis Oregon Stake is Officially Organized

On November 3, 1963, at a stake conference in Salem, the Corvallis Oregon Stake, 385th stake in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was organized from the division of the Salem Stake. Under the direction of Elders Howard W. Hunter and Thomas S. Monson, both of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the new Corvallis Stake included the southern portion of the Salem Stake, including the Albany, Lebanon, and Sweet Home wards, along with Newport Branch from the Northwestern States Mission. Hugh F. Webb was called as president of the new stake, with Ray W. Hardman and Samuel H. Bailey as counselors, and Kenneth Hollister, William Thomas, and LaVerne Shimonek as clerks.



Thomas S. Monson



Howard W. Hunter

The formation of the Corvallis Stake came in fulfillment of a prophetic promise given twenty-four years previous, through Branch President Herman L. Thomas. In 1939, at a time when Corvallis branch members were no more than about fifty in number, and had not so much as a meetinghouse to call their own, Branch President Thomas was, in spite of these facts, inspired to foretell that there would come a day when there would not only be wards in Corvallis, but a stake. The promise must have sounded extraordinary at the time, and made even more so by the confidence with which it was uttered, but its fulfillment was the cause of much joy among saints of this area.

Concerning the first years of the new Corvallis stake, the 1989 history of Margaret Reese, Samuel Bailey, and John Bell includes the recollection that:

There was strong priesthood leadership, a high council to support the presidency, our own patriarch, Grant E. Blanch, and a stake mission president, Henry H. Rampton. Each of the auxiliaries was functioning and promoting the approved programs of the Church. There was the blessing of phenomenal growth and the influx of new people and converts reached through missionary efforts.

However, the new Corvallis Stake did, at first, lack a stake center. And the work of providing for one would be carried on by stake members all the way into the following decade.

CHAPTER 6

First Decade of a New Stake (1963-1973)

Increasing Membership Provides Increase of Assistance on Stake Center Construction

In the seven years following the organization of the Corvallis Oregon Stake, membership numbers rose at an impressive rate, so that by 1970 there had been over 1,000 names added to stake membership records. In fact, the year 1970 alone saw the addition of 317 members, which figure was nearly sufficient to constitute a ward in itself.

With the addition of these new members came an added vitality and strength for the ongoing project of providing a stake center in Corvallis. The outpouring of sacrifice in time, talents, and resources offered by the saints during this period can never be told in full, though the Corvallis stake center continues to stand as a monument to the consecrated efforts of this united body of stake members, as well as to the visionary leadership of the building committee that guided the effort to completion. The committee consisted of Samuel H. Bailey, Grant E. Blanch, William E. Boundy, Royal H. Brooks, Ray W. Hardman, Henry Herdt, George B. Kohlert, W. Orvid Lee, Larry W. Moore, Boyd D. Nash, Henry H. Rampton, Sterling A. Russell, Ralph E. Taylor, and Max E. Williams.

At a total cost of \$556,669.69, the Corvallis stake center, even with about 70% of the expenses being covered by the Church Building Department, required the members to create diverse means of generating revenue, among which were the so-called “Chicken Pickin” fundraising activities of which so many longtime stake members can still offer vivid recollections. Though not found by all participants to be the most enjoyable of activities, the Chicken Pickin’ events seem to have been among the most exhilarating experiences for a number of stake members. As the printed reminiscences of Boyd D. Nash tell concerning these memorable occasions:

We had many people who were regulars, and we all seemed to enjoy the event, in which we would walk into a darkened chick coop while the birds were asleep, pick up three or four in one hand, the same in the other, one leg per chicken, walk out with our catch and give them to the loader on the truck, usually Jim Hayes, who loved the work.

Aside from the task of fundraising, manual labor would also be provided, under the direction of appointed work captains, by stake members, in the form of excavation, construction of wooden roof trusses, painting, electrical work, plywood sheathing, drywall installation, landscaping, and concrete curbs and retaining walls. All of this was in addition to the members providing cleanup for the general and sub contractors throughout the construction process.

In spite of the hazards often connected to such projects as these, however, it is to be noted that not a single one among the hundreds of stake members who participated in these undertakings is reported to have suffered injury. As the program for the dedicatory services on the new stake center read:

The Stake Center became a reality because of the devotion and sacrifice of thousands of Church members, past and present, who gave so generously of their time, talents, and means. They will not be forgotten by the Lord or those who use the building in the future.

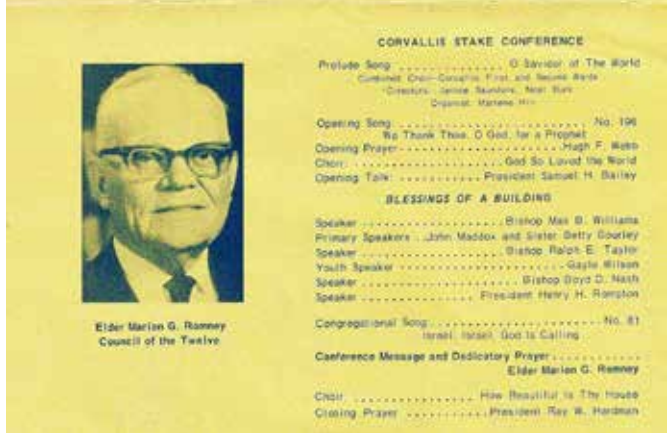
For the combined 156 weeks before, and during, construction on the stake center, the families of Dar Reese and Sam Bailey published a “Building Booster,” issued each Sunday, to inform members of the progress, problems, and plans associated with the building effort. These reports helped to motivate stake members, and to arouse morale as they saw the anticipated outcome of their dedicated service coming to fruition.

Bishop Robert L. Simpson of the Presiding Bishopric of the Church was the visiting general authority at the conference held in the high school auditorium when the “countdown to construction” began, with the stated goal of having a building suitable to accommodate full congregations and all programs of the Church before the 10th conference from the day was held. A few weeks prior to the 10th conference from the date of countdown, the stake, as projected, occupied its new building. On September 28, 1969, the Corvallis First and Second Wards held their first services in the new meetinghouse, located at 4141 NW Harrison Boulevard in Corvallis.

The Corvallis Stake Center was officially dedicated, after all financial obligations and necessary paperwork had been attended to, on Sunday, November 1, 1970. More than half of the 3,200 stake members gathered for the dedicatory services, in addition to many neighbors and friends who were not members of the Church. Elder



Program cover for Corvallis Stake Center dedication.



Inside of program for Corvallis Stake Center dedication, including an image of Elder Marion G. Romney, who at this time in the Council of the Twelve.

Marion G. Romney of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles delivered the prayer of dedication.



Corvallis Stake Center at 4141 NW Harrison Boulevard

The site of the Corvallis Stake Center has been described by Elder David B. Haight of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as “one of the finest in the entire Church,” having a well-maintained community park located next to it, as well as land owned by Oregon State University across the street, to secure against the possibility of future zoning concerns.

In honor of this milestone in stake history, Sister Carol Lantz penned the following verses in a piece entitled, **“Their Story”**:

*Their story is set in concrete.
It is inscribed on drywalls
and plywood sheathings.
It is a true story of Latter-day Saints
who toiled side-by-side
with shovels and hammers,
and just plain grit—a family of Saints
knit together in purpose
who willingly labored
and opened their purses
to wrest from the earth
a place of worship.*

*The edifice stands sturdy as ever,
still pleasing to the eye,
made more so by a steeple
that soars as an epilogue
to their tale of hard work.
Wards continue to be divided,
boundaries continue to be rearranged,
but a monument built with sweat and sacrifice
remains as it was when their story ended—
a story of ordinary people
doing ordinary things
to achieve an extraordinary goal:
a building that touches heaven and earth
to meet the needs of its people.*

In these lines the story is told of which the dedicated stake center stands as a silent witness. And many a building within the boundaries of the stake tells, in its own way, a story quite similar.

Hal Pritchett Willingly Assists Stake Members as a “Friend to the Mormons”

The members of the Corvallis Stake had a good friend in the community named Hal Pritchett. Never a member of the Church, but nonetheless a stalwart companion of those who were, Mr. Hal Pritchett was to Latter-day Saints in Oregon during the mid-20th century what Thomas L. Kane had been to Latter-day Saints in Pennsylvania during the mid-19th century as he willingly provided both the assistance and the means for them to achieve their righteous desires. Hal, being a longtime resident of the area, had graduated from Oregon State College in 1957. He received a Masters in Engineering at OSU in 1961 and went on to receive a Professional Engineering degree from Stanford University in 1965. He taught for forty-five years at Oregon State University and was well known and respected for the vital role he played in creating the Construction Management program at OSU in 1966.

Though not a member of the Church, he and his former wife, Norma, were good friends with Sam and Doris Bailey. Sam had both blessed and baptized Hal and Norma’s two adopted children, Janice and Mark. Norma was an active member of the church and Hal was supportive of her work and activities there. His consulting business, Pritchett Enterprises, sponsored a city basketball team and half of the kids on the team were members of the Church.



Hal Pritchett

When it came time to build the stake center, Hal was an assistant professor of Civil and Construction Engineering. Sam Bailey was looking for someone to represent the local church in engineering decisions with the project contractors who were to be hired by the church headquarters. The name that came to him was Hal Pritchett. Hal was receptive to the idea but needed to get approval from his boss, Fred Burgess, head of the Engineering Department at OSU. Professor Burgess granted his approval, with the proviso that work on the project not interfere with his classroom instruction.

So Hal became the local church representative on the project. He and Norma drove to Idaho and met with the Construction Superintendent, an experienced individual who had built several stake centers for the church. Hal remembers this man as a talented whittler, also. When not working on the project, he was often whittling away at a piece of balsa wood, creating intricate fans and other carved objects.

Hal recalls the early morning meetings. They were usually held on Monday morning at 7:00 A.M.. There, many decisions about the coming week were made regarding the building. Serving with Hal on this committee were a group of men from the stake including Max Williams, the agent bishop who oversaw many details. Hal received a small honorarium for his professional guidance on the committee. Hal remembers that these early meetings always started with a prayer. The other members of the committee thought that Hal would make a great member of the church. They often joked that they were building a font in the new stake center especially for Hal and called it “Hal’s bathtub.” Although Hal did not join the church, he enjoyed working on the project and rubbing shoulders with the members of the local congregation. Professor Burgess was also proud of his work and would often tell others that Hal was involved in the building of the LDS Stake Center.

One of Hal’s fondest memories is of the involvement of the local members. He recalls how people would arrive on Friday night and Saturday morning to clean up the sawdust, sweep the floors, pick up the garbage, and have the place sparkling clean, in readiness for the Monday morning work crew. Those workers remarked that they were impressed how clean and orderly the site was in comparison to other projects, thanks to these volunteers who made sure it was picked up each week.

Camp Alpine Established as a Place of Recreation and Learning for Stake Youth

Stake members involved in the creation of Camp Alpine, or those privy to the developments connected with it, continue to bear witness of the Lord in His superintending providence acting as the prime mover in the undertaking. What began as a search effort, initiated by Stake President Samuel H. Bailey in 1965, to secure property that would be suitable to serve as a site of recreational events for youth and family, progressed to combine the talents and resources of a number of inspired participants in the endeavor. Many thus prompted to contribute to the effort were, of course, members of the Church, though others were not.

The initial search, however, yielded no viable prospects, and little, of itself, in the way of hope, as the business of locating property suited to the proposed uses was one involving years of unfruitful exertion in Benton, Linn, Lane, and Lincoln Counties from 1965 to 1967. But though the effort had seemed fruitless, the members were not faithless, and a lively anticipation of faith rewarded was awakened in them when the tide turned suddenly in their favor. The preliminary stages of the project had not seemed promising, but, as Brother Henry H. Rampton recorded in his history of Camp Alpine:

Then, chains of past and present events linked to encircle a choice parcel of land and draw it to us. Russell Banks had worked as a sawyer and sawmill operator in the mid-1950s for Ira Malcom and C.B. Reader. When Elisabeth Nielson, Stake Young Women's President, and Russell's wife, Ione Banks, were searching for a place for girl's summer camp, Russell remembered the locality where he had worked for Malcom and Reader. The recollection awakened his immediate interest, and one memorable day in 1967,

Russell and Ione led the Nielsons to the rural residence of Ira and Agnes Malcom on Rainbow Creek near the town of Alpine, Oregon [from which the camp derives its name]. They explained the purpose of their visit, and in the ensuing conversation they learned that Ira Malcom had dreamed of devoting his property to the enjoyment and development of young people. He expressed a willingness to sell all, or part, of his property to the Church for the purposes they had discussed.

The dream of Ira Malcom had evidently been a literal one, as he is reported to have said: “I have had a dream that my property was to be used some day as a youth camp.” And Russell Banks knew of no property better suited to that end, as the fond memory of its idyllic surroundings had lingered with him since his time as a sawmill operator there in the decade previous.

All of this transpired as the effort to construct a stake center in Corvallis was also under way, with all the pressing financial demands that that project made of the members being keenly felt. Mr. Malcom stated the price for his 412-acre property at \$300 per acre, though subsequent discussions concluded only the northernmost 127.5 acres to be desirable for the purposes intended. This section of the property featured diverse attractions, including meadow and timber land, a log pond, and two small streams, Rainbow Creek and Rambo Creek. The proposed area was officially appraised by Warren Bolles of the Albany Ward, who pronounced the \$300 price per acre to be reasonable and acceptable, and generously donated his \$300 appraisal fee to the program, thus becoming purchaser of the property's first acre.

The next phase of acquisition involved Elder G. LaMont Richards, Regional Representative, personally inspecting the Malcom property. Upon approving the site, Elder Richards submitted the proposal of acquisition to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. Brother Henry Rampton's history recounts how the apportionment of funds was determined, after these initial measures had been taken, as follows:

Thus prepared, on May 23, 1968, the Corvallis Oregon Stake submitted to the Church Committee for Expenditures our application to acquire real estate, and a request for a loan to purchase 130 acres from Ira Malcom, and to make certain improvements thereon. Both requests were approved on June 8, 1968. The total amount of the loan was \$40,155, of which \$39,000 was for purchase of the property, and \$1,155 for essential improvements. The Church also gave a grant of \$1,000 to be used for other improvements.

A warranty deed for the property was issued by Ira and Agnes Malcom to the Corporation of the Presiding Bishopric of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints officially on July 22, 1968. By the first day of



Camp Alpine pond

October that same year, the money was paid to the Malcoms and the title officially transferred to the Church. As Brother Rampton recalled of this time:

We were then free to proceed with development of the land for our purposes, and acknowledged the hand of the Lord in finding and obtaining this excellent tract of land.

Among the many names appearing throughout the annals of Corvallis stake history, that of Adrian Wilcox from Lebanon is given as the one who first undertook to make improvements on the Camp Alpine property.

Putting to use the heavy earth-moving equipment of his business, Brother Wilcox cleared logs and stumps from the channel of Rambo Creek in the old log pond dam. Stumps and other debris from logging were to be removed from the thick pond mud so that the pond could be used for fishing, swimming, and boating.

One monumental project connected with the improvement effort at Camp Alpine, and the obligation to repay the debt contracted by the stake for its acquisition, was the planting of a 20-acre Christmas tree plot under the expert direction of stake high council member and OSU forestry professor, John F. Bell. Brother Bell had also done some of the surveying work to establish the boundaries of the camp for the Church. Even with the leadership and expertise of Professor Bell to draw upon, as the autobiography of Boyd D. Nash relates:

For 5-6 years we struggled to prepare the trees for sale, and frankly were losing the battle using only untrained, donated church labor. Hoping to salvage something from our years of effort, we offered the trees to a local Christmas tree farmer, Bob Sievers, who could take over the final year or two to prepare them for market.

Despite such apparently bleak prospects as these, however, stake members would once again be pleased to witness and acknowledge the providential guidance of the Lord in prompting even individuals who were not members of the Church to render needed assistance to the project. Brother Nash continues to describe their negotiations with Mr. Sievers:

The camp committee, of which I was a member, met with him in the high council room at the stake center, where President Bailey explained how we attained the property, and what our purposes were for the camp. We hoped he would offer us, and we think he was prepared to offer \$10,000 for the trees as they stood. However, much to our amazement he explained that he had been deeply moved from hearing the story of how Camp Alpine came to be acquired, and the purposes and goals for the camp. "I will give you" —and then he paused for a long time— "\$20,000 for the 20 acres of small Christmas trees." Later that day the committee knelt in gratitude for the goodness of God in helping the stake obtain the funds needed to complete our repayment to the Church.

Brother Dar Reese was another stalwart supporter of Camp Alpine from its very inception, calling it the finest location in all of his Scouting experience. Under his direction, a concrete spillway was constructed by work crews gathered from the various wards throughout the stake.

Individual camp sites on the property were named after prominent Church historical sites such as Cumorah, Harmony, Sharon, Palmyra, Liberty, and Deseret.

Stake members were kept abreast of developments as the work of construction and improvement at Camp Alpine was under way by means of The Camp Alpine Advocate, which was a monthly mimeographed news bulletin issued by the camp committee under the direction of the stake presidency to report on the plans, personnel, progress, and needs of the camp project. The first issue was dated September 1971, and throughout the six years from that time leading up to the official dedication of Camp Alpine, supporters were supplied with the latest information on how work at the site was unfolding. Through this means, also, an increase of support was garnered, as successes continued to be evident.

Calling of a Quorum of Seventy in Corvallis

The 417th Quorum of Seventy was organized in



S. Dilworth Young

Corvallis on November 6, 1965, by Elder S. Dilworth Young. The original seven presidents of the quorum were Ross V. Bulkley, DeVon C. Slack, Roy Ralph Winstead Jr., Gerald Dean Webster, Sylvin John Bergevin, Russell K. Banks, and Royal Harold Dimick. In his capacity as senior president of the quorum, Ross V. Bulkley functioned as the stake mission leader. In following years, DeVon C. Slack and Edwin C. Harris would serve as senior presidents.

Under the direction of the First Quorum of Seventy, which was composed of general authorities, local quorums of seventy such as the one in Corvallis correlated missionary work with the full-time missionaries serving in the area, and also went with the full-time missionaries on teaching visits in which one seventy would be paired with one missionary, thus increasing the number of visits possible and accelerating the proselytizing work. Local seventies also conducted ward baptismal services, and attended to fellowshipping and instructing new members.

The Corvallis Quorum of Seventy continued its work for over twenty years, until President Ezra Taft Benson announced, during the priesthood session of General Conference on October 4, 1986, that stakes were no longer to have seventies as part of the local organization. Individual seventies in the various stakes either returned to the elders quorum or were ordained high priests.

Visits to Young Corvallis Stake by General Authorities

In addition to the above-named local authorities, General Authorities of the Church were also a cherished blessing to members. Some of the fondest recollections of those alive during the early years of the stake involve visits from General Authorities, with whom their associations soon became both cordial and comfortable. Sister Doris Bailey, for example, recalls a visit from the popular Seventy and avid baseball fan, Paul H. Dunn, as follows:

We all looked forward to the visit of Elder Paul Dunn; but our young sons were really keen on him coming.

After the Saturday evening session of Conference, Sam and Elder Dunn stayed to take care of some people who needed to be set apart so that when they arrived at our home son Steve was lying in bed in our third bedroom at the end of the hall reading a Sports Illustrated magazine.

Elder Dunn came in and as he crossed the living room loosened his tie and said, "If anyone sought to be a General Authority, they ought to make him one. It would serve him right!"

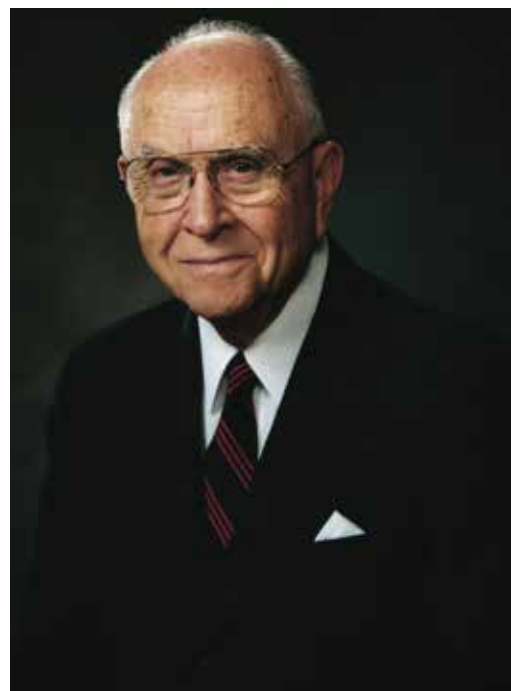
Then he spotted Steve lying in bed reading down the hall so he went down and sat on the foot of Steve's bed and discussed sports and what Steve was reading in Sports Illustrated.

Another incident dear to the memory of Sister Bailey involved Elder David B. Haight, as she reports:

Elder David B. Haight was scheduled to visit the Corvallis Oregon Stake for our regularly scheduled Stake Conference, then to travel to Lebanon to dedicate their new building. So I had dinner ready and expected them maybe forty-five minutes after the



Paul H. Dunn



David B. Haight

close of the Conference session. But there were several people to be set apart and by the time Sam [Bailey] and Elder Haight arrived at our home it was time to start for Lebanon. So we fixed plates of food for Sam and Elder Haight and they ate dinner while I drove the car.

When they came in our front door, Elder Haight said, “Oh, I smell fresh bread.” I had made rolls which were in a basket on the corner of the table. On top was the last bit of dough left rolled into a round ball and baked with the others. Elder Haight spotted that and picked it up saying, “Just right to pop in my mouth— whoops, it hasn’t been blessed.” So he bowed his head, blessed the food and popped that little roll into his mouth.

Both of these men mentioned by Sister Bailey have since passed away, Brother Dunn in 1998, and Elder Haight in 2004.

Albany Ward Builds Its First Meetinghouse

The period during which the first meetinghouse in Albany was in process of building was itself preceded by a period of building a strong and worthy congregation deserving to enter it. And the pace at which it all occurred was a surprise, though of course a pleasant one, even to those who had lived to witness it. Thus, when the building, located at 1615 East 28th Avenue in Albany, was dedicated on April 24, 1966, there were numerous events for the members, then having the advantage of hindsight, to consider as milestones.



Albany Ward Meetinghouse at 1615 East 28th Avenue

The first official meeting of the Church in Albany, like the first of the Church of Jesus Christ in this dispensation, began with six members. The missionaries held Sunday School meetings, beginning in 1942, in the home of Cecil and Mae Resser; and this, despite Cecil not then being a member of the Church. Three years later, missionaries Brother and Sister Vander-Linden supervised the organization of the Albany Branch, which by that time included fifty-three members, on May 20, 1945. Royal Dimick served, at first without the aid of counselors, as president of the fledgling branch, until Earl Fisher and Leland Saxton were called to assist him in the branch presidency. The first Albany primary organization consisted of Janet Dimick and Mae Resser with five children (their own) in attendance.

Through the advancing years, members in Albany met in a variety of structures, and with a variety of storms, both figurative and literal. From the first meetings in the Resser home, members went on to meet in the Veterans Memorial Hall, McDowell Hall, the former Episcopal Church at 6th Avenue and Lyon Street, and even the Grange Hall. The building on 6th and Lyon is no longer present, as it was condemned, and subsequently razed, following damages sustained to it during the Columbus Day storm of October 12, 1962.

So it was with understandable eagerness that the Albany members finally received the welcome word to proceed with the building of what was to be their own meetinghouse, as well as that of generations yet to come. And blessings attended all who would attend to the work of construction, whether directly or by other means of support and encouragement.

The groundbreaking ceremony of June 19, 1964, was attended not only by Stake President Hugh F. Webb and Bishop Robert P. Adams, but also City Manager Bill Bollman. As one history of the Church in Albany, Oregon, published in August of 1992, takes care to note:

Many thanks go to Bishop Adams for his insistence that we have a full-size chapel. The original plans were for a small mission-size building. It took many phone calls and a special trip to Salt Lake City, but

Bishop Adams was determined and eventually convinced the Church Building Committee. He was truly inspired because there was never a need to “grow into the building.”

Herbert Zeigler and his wife, Winnie, came from Smithfield, Utah, along with their three youngest children, to supervise the work of construction, which was largely carried on by special work missionaries, whose responsibilities differed from those of regular proselyting missionaries, and could be relied upon to devote their time and energies to such activities as these. Those working under supervision of Brother Zeigler were: Brough Dorny, Pat Todd, Dwight Wilkins, Ron Hatch, and Harold Womack.

The principle of industriousness, for which the beehive has long stood as a symbol in the Church, was aptly and ably applied by the Albany members, who would frequently supplement the building effort with their own consecrated labors. This included men who would offer what hours of service they could to the project either before or after work at their usual places of employment. Women would make and bring meals to the construction site, and sometimes even participate in the work, where possible. Neither the diligence of these members, nor the blessings providentially attending them, went unnoticed by others. As the above-mentioned history relates:

One day the concrete company was asked by a customer if it would be a good day to pour cement. Their reply was to go ahead and pour. They said it would not rain because the Mormons were pouring that day.

The members themselves often proved to be as inexhaustible as was their faith, and this is shown nowhere more clearly than in the production of the drapery for the building, which has been recounted thus:

It took Joan Lee about one year to hand weave 120 yards of fabric to be used for the drapes in the building. Betty Hinshaw and Alpha Ferguson then made the drapes. It was a labor of love for all three.

The vision of Bishop Adams was, thankfully, inspired so as to see past what were, by many, viewed as grounds for reasonable doubt, and having committed himself with conviction to the course he felt the Spirit had chartered for his ward, he was unswerving in pursuit of the promised blessings:

Bishop Adams kept saying the ward would be meeting in the building by September 1965. He had more faith than others, for he could find few who would agree with him. There were many obstacles to overcome. One obstacle was chasing down the promised pianos, which always seemed to end up elsewhere. But Bishop Adam's faith was justified and the congregation did take up residence that September. The building was officially turned over to the stake by the regional building committee two months later.

Unfortunately, over the months which followed the holding of these first meetings in the new building, the health of Bishop Adams declined to the point that on March 13, 1966, with the dedication of the building set to occur the very next month, he was released with an enthusiastic vote of thanks for his years of inestimable service as an overseer of the Albany congregation. Vernon L. Worthen was called to replace him as bishop.

Finally, having held meetings in the building for about seven months, the Albany ward had their building dedicated on April 24, 1966, at a ceremony over which Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, presided, with the new Bishop Worthen conducting. “The Spirit of God” was sung as the opening song, and Stake President Bailey was the first speaker, followed by the building supervisor, Herbert Zeigler. Former Bishop Adams was then given an opportunity to speak before the choir sang a special musical number: “How Beautiful Upon the Mountains.” Then, following remarks by Bishop Worthen, Elder Taylor spoke and dedicated the building. The closing hymn was “All Creatures of Our God and King.”

Welfare Farm Begins Production of Strawberries for Bishop's Storehouse Jam

Beginning in 1972, the Corvallis stake produced strawberries for jam to be distributed through bishop's storehouses. The strawberries were harvested and cleaned on site, then packed into cans for freezing. During the

middle and latter parts of the summer season, members used the St. Paul Cannery near Salem to make jam from the strawberries. Brother Boyd Nash remembers:

The Corvallis units had our share of trips to assist in the cannery, from unloading fresh produce, preparing it for canning, to putting the cans into the pressure cookers, to labeling the cans and then putting them into the warehouse. The cannery had several paid employees who oversaw the operation and directed the crews that showed up.

As many as 10,000 pounds of jam were produced during some years, and it became a popular item at bishop's storehouses throughout the western states. And of all the stakes in the Church at the time, only Corvallis produced strawberries on welfare assignment.

Corvallis Oregon Stake at 10 Years

Ten years to the day from the official organization of the Corvallis Oregon Stake, a summary of 10 years' activity was published on November 3, 1973, from which the following excerpts are taken:

When the Corvallis Stake was organized, it had just under 1,900 members. Now, the membership exceeds 3,800, double that of 10 years ago.

In 1963, the stake had seven units: three wards in Corvallis, plus wards in Albany, Lebanon, Sweet Home, and Newport, which was brought out of the Northwestern States Mission to become part of the new stake. Now (1973), there are nine units. Albany has two wards now. And there's an independent branch in Lincoln City, formerly part of the Newport ward. [The Lincoln City ward was later transferred to the Salem Stake.] A Sunday School has been organized too in Brownsville--first step toward a branch and then a ward in that area. [Brownsville and the other wards and branches in Linn County now comprise the Lebanon Stake.]

November 1973 finds almost all units of the stake involved in some phases of building. Albany broke ground in October for a big addition to the building there. In a matter of days, bids will be opened for the addition to the Lebanon building [which was to become the Lebanon stake center]. Newport has their site for a new building. In Corvallis, a site selection committee is at work finding the place for another building in the city.

The last building referred to was to be the meetinghouse on Walnut Boulevard, the construction and dedication of which will be a subject to occupy a part of our next chapter.

CHAPTER 7

Sacred Structures Built As Church Activity Builds Momentum (1973-1989)

Genealogical Libraries Opened to All

A letter from Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, first announced to the Corvallis stake presidency that “the Church Genealogical Society approved your stake as a proposed site for a branch genealogical library on April 14, 1975.” Elder Burton was, in addition to being a general authority, also then serving as president of the Church Genealogical Department. A special concern of this department was to see that its operations were expanded through the opening of branch libraries (which later came to be called family history centers) at meetinghouses throughout the world.

Since its opening, the family history center of the Church in Corvallis has assisted many thousands of people, including those not of the faith, trace their ancestry as far back as the records available can afford them the information pertinent to their personal quests. Every family history center is an official unit of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, which remains the largest library of its kind in the world.

A special name extraction program was implemented in Corvallis, beginning in 1981, to gather French names available on microfilm. Brother Boyd Nash records:

As an adjunct to the Family History Center (FHC) in the Corvallis stake, the French extraction program was begun in 1981. Initial director was Boyd Hansen, called in May of 1981. Subsequent directors included Candy Huber (Nov 1983) MaNette Frazier (Mar 1987), Louise Nash (Feb 1992), and Carol Lagerstedt (2001).

In the early to mid 1950s the Church was aware that our temples would have to be closed or have reduced hours because we as members were not producing enough names to process. The Extraction program began in England with volunteers there. Stakes were asked to set up and train church volunteers to read and extract names from copies of these microfilms for temple work. The Corvallis Stake chose French films, as Brother Hansen had served a mission in France. We were instructed that this was a stake calling and those called were expected to spend 4 hours twice a week at the FHC extracting from the French records. The FHC allowed one day a week to use their microfilm readers. Our staff was small as there were only 4 readers at that time. After more microfilm readers were acquired and we were assigned the room next door, the number of hours spent extracting names increased. Several extractors regularly logged in 40 hours a month. To increase accuracy, each film was read twice by the extractors here in Corvallis.

...The French records were a tremendous challenge. The oldest record we received and extracted were from the years 1591 – 1643. Most of the films covered dates between 1700 through the 1800s.



Theodore M. Burton

The French extraction work did not continue uninterrupted, however, as the stake was asked in 1995 to temporarily put aside its work with the French records in order to help more than 600 other stakes in the Church to extract Ellis Island Passenger Lists. It was a seven year project, though the role of the Corvallis stake lasted only through 1997. Around 30,000 names were successfully extracted in Corvallis alone, enabling millions of people to find their immigrant ancestors who entered the Port of New York from 1892 to 1924. This was a partnership involving the Church, the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, and the National Park Service. Approximately 12,000 church volunteers spent more than five million hours transcribing from ships' manifests. Nationwide volunteers, missionaries, and staff extracted and processed 24 million names.

The Church has continued to keep abreast of technological advances which have since made genealogical research a more effective and efficient process. Brother Nash notes how:

As with many church programs, the Extraction program has morphed into the current Indexing program, made possible with the advances and capabilities of the computer age. Members may read photocopies of census and other public records either at the FHC, or on their own computers. The information is then recorded and emailed to Salt Lake . . . This information then becomes available directly to the public for genealogical and family history purposes in identifying family members through the church Family Search program.

Around half the patrons who have, over the years, served at the Corvallis Family History Center have not been members of the Church. A family history center was officially put into operation at the Newport branch of the Corvallis stake in 1988 to better serve residents of, or near, the Oregon coast.

Temple Activity Accelerates with Arrival of Seattle Washington Temple



Corvallis Institute members visiting the Oakland Temple in October of 1964

Also announced in 1975 were the plans to construct a temple in Seattle, Washington. The news was unanimously hailed by Corvallis stake members as a welcome change from the consumption of time and resources involved in attending the Oakland California Temple, of which district the Corvallis stake had become a part when that structure, located over 500 miles to the south, was dedicated in 1964 (prior to this, the Idaho Falls Temple, located almost 800 miles from Corvallis, was the nearest temple, and members were encouraged to visit it when possible).



Oakland California Temple

Being less than half the distance from Corvallis that the Oakland California Temple had been, the temple in Seattle, which was officially dedicated in November of 1980, was well attended by stake members. Several stake members served there as regular temple workers, and most wards tried to have trips to the new temple occur on at least a monthly basis. This redoubled zeal for service in the house of the Lord was well in keeping with the spirit of that portion of the dedicatory prayer in which President Spencer W. Kimball asked God to bless, along with the presidency



Seattle Washington Temple

and the matron, “all the officiators,” and to assist them in creating “a sublime and holy atmosphere so that all ordinances may be performed with love and a sweet, spiritual tone that will cause the members to greatly desire to be here, and to return again and again.”

It would be difficult to overstate the significance of this advance in temple work for and by members of the Corvallis stake. Longtime members still retain the not-altogether-pleasant memory from youthful years of departing Corvallis on Friday, travelling overnight by bus to Oakland, there participating together in the sacred ordinance of vicarious baptism, and returning by bus with enough efficiency to arrive back in Corvallis not only on Sunday, but on time for church. Though the experience of temple service in Oakland was, and remains, dear to the hearts of these stake members, the rigors of travel are not terribly missed.

Some do preserve, however, fond recollections of outings taken to Great America during these same trips, where they would enjoy all of the excitement and attractions to be found at that well-known amusement park.

Brownsville Branch Grows From Simple Sunday School Meetings

Around the year 1970, newly called Sweet Home Ward Bishop Henry B. Wolthius began contacting less active members who lived in the Brownsville area, located about 20 miles from Sweet Home. After a little encouragement, a dependent Sunday School—part of the Sweet Home Ward of the Corvallis Oregon Stake—was organized, and meetings were held first in homes, then on the bleachers of the old recreation center, later in the room above the town fire hall, and even for some time at a school. The first recorded date for the dependent Sunday School is January of 1973. A member of the Sweet Home bishopric attended meetings with the group each week.

On 29 July, 1976, Corvallis Stake President Samuel H. Bailey met with Bishop Henry B. Wolthius and his counselors William O. Lewis and Phillip H. Palkki to establish Brownsville as a dependent branch. Lee Walker was to be the first president of the Brownsville Dependent Branch.

On 14 June, 1977, the Brownsville Branch became an independent branch in the Corvallis Oregon Stake, organized with C. James Cox as the branch president, Michael G. Cavender as first counselor, and Dennish Witherspoon as the second counselor.

The Brownsville Branch would later become a part of the new Lebanon Stake when that organization came into being on February 3, 1980.

Jefferson Branch Organized From Assimilated Albany Ward Members

Longtime active members of the First and Second wards in Albany were included in the Jefferson Branch when it was organized on July 24, 1977. Those families who had helped build up the Church in Albany, and

who had also labored with diligence and vigor to get the Albany meetinghouse constructed, now were embarked on a new venture for the Lord.

Branch president of the newly established Jefferson congregation was William Pippert, with Russell K. Banks, first counselor, and S. Burton Ferguson, executive secretary. Ernest F. Wohleb was ward clerk. Bud M. Cox was Elders Quorum President.

The Relief Society was also organized at that time, with Mellie Harding as president, Lynn Merton as first counselor, Alpha Ferguson as second counselor, and Theresa Karnosh as secretary.

Primary president was Jacquelyne Pippert, with Diane Plagmann and Lelia Wilson as first and second counselors, respectively.

A New Meetinghouse for Sweet Home

Under the successive leadership of Branch Presidents Sylvin Bergevin and Harry Moffit, and Bishops Jack Gourley and Henry Wolthuis, the Sweet Home congregation, which had changed from a branch to a ward in 1962, grew to the point of outgrowing its first chapel, which necessitated the construction of a much larger building. Ground for the new chapel was broken on March 7, 1975, and the new building at 1155 South 22nd Avenue was dedicated on August 21 and 22, 1976. The new meetinghouse cost \$330,000, of which \$110,000 had been raised by ward members during a time of heavy sacrifice for other financial blessings that built the Corvallis Stake Center, Camp Alpine, the Seattle Temple, the Portland Temple, the Lebanon Stake building, chapels in Brownsville and Jefferson, major remodeling of the Albany chapel, annual welfare assessments, and three phases of our Sweet Home building.



Sweet Home meetinghouse at 1155 South 22nd Avenue

Fundraising dinners and bazaars were the specialties of the Sweet Home Relief Society sisters. Other fundraising activities included auctions, firewood sales from the Malone's woodlot, a carnival, airplane rides in Bill Lewis' plane, and counting inventorying stock at Fred Meyer. The whole Sweet Home Ward contributed to raising funds for the chapel. Some regarded as deserving of special mention are Lionel and Ruth Yeaman, Orval and Mary Lewis, the Caines family, Dave and Elizabeth Walker, Lamar and Patia Hansen,

Phillip and Helen Palkki, Lowell and Elva Funk, Clarence and Hazel Huntley, Grandma Mooso, Jack and Betty Gourley, Larry and Patricia Gourley, John Gourley, Guy and Janette Graves, TV Smith, Carlos Larson, Milo Putnam, Ivan and Leone Burnett, and Wes and Doris Sisco.

A New Ward and a New Stake Presidency in Corvallis

The first months of the year 1978 had brought momentous change to the Corvallis stake, first in the form of a new ward, and then with the formation of new stake presidency. It was on January 29, 1978, that a third family ward was organized in Corvallis. The Third Ward, being the 12th unit of the stake as then structured, was formed from the First and Second Wards through the creation of new in-city boundaries. All wards would have over 400 members after this new ward was organized to serve members on the north end of Corvallis. Two new bishops, Kenneth R. Larson and Allen L. Davis, were ordained to preside over the First and Third Wards, respectively.

The Corvallis stake presidency was changed under the direction of Elder Mark E. Petersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on February 5, 1978. Richard J. Arnold, who had served both as Institute director and as bishop of the Second Ward, was called at this time to replace Samuel H. Bailey, who had served as stake president for over twelve years. Called as counselors to the new President Arnold were Vernon L. Worthen of Albany and John F. Bell, former bishop of the University Ward.

Waldport Branch Established

On October 12, 1979, Corvallis Stake President Richard J. Arnold submitted the application to Church headquarters to create the Waldport Branch. Approval was granted on November 15, 1979. The Waldport Branch was, like all branches and wards of the Church, not created ex nihilo. In this case, it was created through the division of the Newport Ward on January 6, 1980. Edgar L. Wight was called as its first branch president.

President Wight had established himself as a man of passionate conviction for the gospel, having an ability to persuade others in the path of duty, before his branch had even been fully organized. As John F. Bell remembers:

Stake President Richard J Arnold and John F Bell, counselor, went to Newport Ward to form the Waldport Branch January 6, 1980. President Arnold carefully outlined the boundaries of the new Branch. He then asked all those who would be in the new Branch to stand. Edgar Wight, who became the Branch President, his wife Elaine and one other sister stood. However, the next Sunday President Wight had encouraged over 20 people to attend Sacrament meeting.

The first Waldport Branch meeting was held January 13, 1980 in a rented hall in Waldport. Minutes from the history submitted to Church headquarters for that year state:

January 13, 1980. Twenty eight persons were present for the historic first meeting of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Waldport Oregon Branch with President Edgar L. Wight presiding. The atmosphere was one of prayerful inspiration and happiness. Since this was our very first meeting, it was Sacrament meeting only, which included songs, prayers, talks and the blessing and passing of the Sacrament.

The building in which we meet is the V.F.W. [Veterans of Foreign Wars] Hall. It is old, run down and sometimes smells of stale tobacco, but we are grateful we can use it for our meetings as it has three rooms, adequate at this time for our needs. We plan to hold the Priesthood meeting in one room, the Primary in another and the Relief Society will share the largest room with the Young Women. It will do for the present until such time in the near future when we can, hopefully, have a new chapel in this area.

By working powerfully together, we hope to build our membership by encouraging the now-inactive members to participate.



Waldport Branch meetinghouse

Stake leaders visiting over the next few months described the almost palpable enthusiasm of the Waldport branch as “contagious,” and all commented on the warmth and friendliness of the members.

Waldport worked in coordination with Newport on a welfare project in 1980. Each member of the branch was assessed \$8.50. Money to pay for this assessment was earned through the selling of beautifully decorated candy Easter eggs. The Waldport branch worked on an independent basis each year after 1980 to fill this assessment.

On April 13, 1980 President Edgar Wight announced that a building lot for Waldport Branch had been located, and found acceptable to the Church, and that a down-payment had been made thereon. This electrifying news delighted all members present, and the lot was paid for and ready to build on by October of 1980. Building a new

chapel could begin when architectural plans were finalized in 1982 because the requirements for raising local funds had been modified by Church headquarters.

Before Waldport's chapel was completed, services were held for a time in the new V.F.W. hall and also at the Seal Rock Community Hall.

Lebanon Oregon Stake Created From Division of Corvallis Oregon Stake

On February 3, 1980, under the direction of Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Lebanon Oregon Stake, 1,102th in the Church, was created by division from the Corvallis Oregon Stake. The Corvallis Stake retained all units in Benton and Lincoln counties, while the new Lebanon Stake was comprised of all Linn county units, these being: Albany, Brownsville, Jefferson, Lebanon, and Sweet Home.

Elder Faust called Henry B. Wolthius, who had been serving as bishop of the Sweet Home Ward, as the

RELIGION

2 Mormon stakes created from Corvallis chapter

By Virginia Rankin
Of The Gazette-Times

There now is a Lebanon Oregon Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Corvallis Oregon Stake has been divided not only because so many members live in Linn County, but because of its growth in membership.

Now the Corvallis stake, which had a membership of 4,199 as of the first of the year, has 1,925 members, while the Lebanon stake has a membership of 2,274.

Jerry Fisher, council member of the Corvallis stake, explained that the Willamette River generally is the dividing line between the two stakes.

The Corvallis stake extends west into Newport and a bit into southwest Linn County in the Peoria-Oakville area. Three wards meet at the stake church at 4141 N.W. Harrison Blvd., and there are the University ward, the Newport ward and Monroe and Waldport branches.

The Lebanon stake includes all of Linn County, a part of Marion County and into the North Albany area. Albany and Lebanon each have two wards, Sweet Home has one ward and there are the Jefferson and Brownsville branches.

A stake is a district in the Mormon church's organizational terms. It is governed by a president and two counselors with an advisory council of 12 members. Membership in a stake can vary from about 2,000 to 10,000.

A ward is a local congregation, governed by a bishop and two counselors. Its membership varies from 500 to 600. Branches have less than 500 members.

Fisher said there has been a membership growth in the worldwide church of 4½ times during the past 21 years. It is estimated that more than 400 church buildings are being constructed each year. And there are some 27,000 youths (between 19 and 21 years old) of the church serving as missionaries.

According to Bishop Sam Bailey of Corvallis, the Mormon church in this area dates back to the early 1930's. The first church building in town was built in 1951 at 100 N. W. 27th St., the University ward, where church educational enrichment courses now are taught under the Institute of Religion.

The Corvallis Oregon Stake was established in November 1963.

President of the new Lebanon stake is Henry B. Wolthius, a dentist in Sweet Home. First counselor is John R. Wittwer, an attorney in Sweet Home, and the second counselor is Larry L. Brewer, a mill worker in Albany.

Richard J. Arnold, director of the Institute of Religion and a resource person for the church, is president of the Corvallis stake. John F. Bell, professor of forest management at Oregon State University, is first counselor, and Paul D. Harding, owner-manager of Wallace Wholesale Foods, is second counselor.

Division of the Corvallis stake officially was instituted by Elder James E. Faust, of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, Salt Lake City, Utah, headquarters for the church. Faust presided over the semi-annual stake conference held this month in Corvallis.

Richard Arnold **James E. Faust** **Henry B. Wolthius**

Article in the Gazette-Times announcing the organization of the Lebanon Oregon Stake

first president of this new stake, with John B. Wittwer of Sweet Home and Larry L. Brewer of Albany serving as counselors. Vernon L. Worthen, who had been a counselor to President Arnold in the Corvallis stake, now became patriarch of the Lebanon stake.

As the Corvallis stake history published in 1989 recounts the history of Corvallis affiliations with stake organizations of the past:

The Corvallis Ward became part of the Willamette Stake when it was organized on December 2, 1951, as Stake Number 191. Then Corvallis became part of the Salem Stake, No. 321, when it was formed out of the Willamette Stake on January 22, 1961. When the Corvallis Stake was formed out of the Salem Stake on November 3, 1963, it was the 385th stake in the Church.

Truly, Mormon mathematics (divide and multiply) has been functioning in this area.

Newport Dedicates a New Meetinghouse

As with nearly all of the wards organized in the Corvallis stake, the Newport Ward began, and for many years continued, without a building to call its own. But through their diligence in the attendance of meetings, and after decades of changing accommodations, the welcome announcement came to members on May 17, 1980, that their application to Church headquarters in Salt Lake City had been reviewed and approved, and their eligibility for a Phase 2 building assured on conditions of continued faithful attendance.

And faithful attendance was, and yet remains, one of the hallmarks of the Newport congregation, whose humble beginnings have, thanks to diligent record-keepers, not been lost to the mists of forgotten time. In a history of the Church in Newport published in 1982, from which a sense of the meager provisions available to the Newport saints for their meetings may be gained, Norma H. Leer and Catherine A. Elmore reported:

We were meeting [in November of 1948] in a lodge hall over the Breakers Cafe in Nye Beach. Someone had to go early each Sunday to sweep up the cigarette stubs and pick up the beer bottles before services...In the fall of 1950 we were able to get the use of the 4-H dormitory on the fair grounds. And this building gave us space for a chapel and several small rooms for classes. We were happy here, but it had many drawbacks. In the summer it was fine, but being only a shell of a building, it was hard to heat in the winter and the class rooms were like ice boxes. Everyone had to keep wraps on all of the time...We had to carry everything home with us each time, and that included the growing library (packed in boxes) and sometimes sewing machines for Relief Society, among other things...It was decided to move across the road to the old CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] barracks, which hadn't been used for years. Many years later in a letter, [Arnott B.] Slough referred to it as a "shack," but it did not deserve even that much respect. It was just a shell of a building, sheathed on the outside with shiplap and covered with tar paper. Time and weather had removed patches of tar paper and daylight could be seen through the cracks...The floor was solid and the roof over the main part only leaked a little, but the two small rooms leaked badly and the whole place was impossible to heat.

Meeting arrangements became, to the gratitude of the Newport members, progressively better over the years, until at last the welcome word was given that a Phase 2 building was in store for them.

Phase 2 buildings generally include such added amenities as a kitchen, separate restrooms for men and women, a baptismal font, Relief Society and Priesthood rooms, and a chapel, in contrast to buildings of the Phase 1 variety which are normally limited to a single restroom and four rooms (one of which is large enough to function



Newport Ward meetinghouse

as a small chapel). These blessings had naturally been longed for by the Newport members through long years of patient waiting. But in waiting for their new building, the members also waited upon the Lord through increasing activity and attendance.

By February of 1983, the faith of the Newport saints, having been tried and found sufficient, was rewarded, and the sought-for blessing granted with the completion of their building and the dedication thereof by the prayer of Elder F. Enzo Busche of the First Quorum of the Seventy. In a document entitled “Newport Ward History As Experienced By Lyn Loutzenhiser” the following entry appears:

Sunday morning — 6 February, 1983: The weather was gray and gloomy but there was joy in our hearts. We had Stake Conference in Corvallis, and our new ward building was being dedicated at 2:00 P.M. in the afternoon.

The same document continues, in referring to the services of the dedication itself:

The flowers were lovely; the church looked great. There were a number of Corvallis friends with us... The dedicatory prayer by Elder Busche was very strong and reverent. When it came time to sing “The Spirit of God Like A Fire Is Burning” I felt as if my heart was soaring...The choir sang the “Amen” Chorus [from Handel’s Messiah] and the congregation sang “The Spirit of God Like A Fire Is Burning”. Their faces were glowing, they were singing with such commitment.

And it may truly be said that that fire is burning still.

A New Meetinghouse on Walnut Boulevard



Vacant lot with a sign announcing the place as the future site of a meetinghouse for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints



Nearly completed Walnut Building

The beginning of 1986 marked the official dedication of another meetinghouse for the service of members in Corvallis. The new building was located on 1205 Northwest Walnut Boulevard in Corvallis (and there remains today). The dedicatory services, which were held on Sunday evening, January 19, included in the program a list of milestones in Corvallis stake history to commemorate their progress. Also remembered in honor were those faithful bishops who had served as shepherds in Israel for the various and multiplying wards in the stake, with their names and years of service also printed in the program.

Elder Ronald S. Jolley presided over the services, while Bishop David J. Blake conducted. After the choirs of 2nd and 3rd Ward joined in the singing of “How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings,” President Richard J. Arnold shared his remarks in observance of the occasion, and the dedicatory prayer was then offered by Ronald S. Jolley, during which he asked that God would “bless all the activities that take place in this building, and there will be many over the many, many years that this building shall stand.” Then, foreseeing the social challenges to

be faced by the members in years to come, he prayed:

And we know that on occasion, because of routine matters and because of the way the world is drifting, on occasion our identity may be slightly altered in the minds of others. We pray, father, that because of our faith, our identity will not be altered, that indeed we will be looked upon by all who know us and look upon our hearts that we are Christians, meaning that we have taken upon ourselves the name of Thy Son and thereby committed ourselves personally to live His gospel.

Later this same year, ground was broken on September 20 by President Gordon B. Hinckley of the First Presidency for what was to become the Portland Oregon Temple.

An Apostolic Blessing Upon the Corvallis Oregon Stake

Many longtime Corvallis stake members are of the opinion that the most memorable meeting in the history of this stake was the conference during which Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles came to reorganize the stake presidency in February of 1987. The apostolic blessing which he invoked upon the stake on that occasion was one never to be forgotten by those so privileged as to have been in attendance.

The reorganization consisted of calling Allen L. Davis, a former bishop of the Corvallis 3rd Ward, as the new stake president, after releasing Richard J. Arnold, who had served in that capacity for nine years. Dale N. Moss and Kay H. Salmon, both of whom had served as bishops of the Corvallis 2nd Ward, were called as first and second counselor, respectively. Steve Harper was called to serve as secretary to the new stake presidency.

After the conference, Brother Arnold described the meeting as having been “the highlight of [his] life.” He recalled the experience with Elder Maxwell as follows:



Neal A. Maxwell

There was a rich outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord during this meeting. Elder Maxwell had suggested that this might be the case because of the nature of the meeting. In his talk, he spoke about the intimate nature of the Savior to His Father. One sensed that there was a very close relationship between Elder Maxwell and the Savior because of the way in which he spoke.

At the conclusion of his talk, he gave an apostolic blessing to the members of the Stake. He blessed them especially in their family relationships and in their love for the scriptures. I remember turning to President [Paul] Harding [of the Corvallis stake presidency], who was sitting beside me, and saying: “This is a special day. I don't expect to have many more like this in my lifetime.”

As Betty and I had the opportunity to drive Elder Maxwell we were able to sense in a special way his

concern for us, for the world generally, and in the process we felt that the feelings expressed by Elder Maxwell were those that would be said by our Savior.

Another member, in later discussing the conference over the telephone with Brother Arnold, described the meeting, and the outpouring of the Spirit there felt, as having been a “pentecostal experience.”

In connection with this visit of Elder Neal A. Maxwell to the Corvallis stake came another experience in which was demonstrated not only the personal concern felt by Elder Maxwell for the youth of the stake, but also the competency of Brother Steve Harper to his new office as secretary. Sister Diane Merten, who was teaching seminary during the year of Elder Maxwell's visit, and who had learned well in advance that he was to visit the stake, undertook to encourage her students to listen to him intently at the approaching stake conference by generating greater interest in him through teaching them all that she could of his life, including stories from his youth. Sister Merten relates the course of events which followed thus:

Then I wrote a letter to Elder Maxwell telling him I had set him up with my seminary students and they were prepared to listen intently to everything he had to say at our Stake Conference. I asked him, too, if he might perhaps have time to write a letter to my students. We never heard from him.

Now Stake Conference was drawing near and I was asked to speak in the Saturday p.m. adult session of Conference. I got to meet Elder Maxwell, and when I was introduced to him, he said: “Sister Merten, are you the seminary teacher?” Yes, I answered, and he said he had something for me. He opened his jacket and handed me a handwritten letter to my seminary students. I was elated and thanked him both from me and from the students who would be excited to hear the letter.

In his letter he told the students that the Lord loved them just as they were, but that He was not satisfied with them because He knows their potential. He expressed his love for them and was grateful they were coming to Conference; he asked them to build strong testimonies and to remain faithful.

That night after I got home and re-read the letter, which was handwritten with a red pen, I realized that the letter did not have a date on it. I took the letter back on Sunday morning with me to Conference intending to ask Elder Maxwell to date it for me.

After Conference was over and I was looking for him, I opened the door to the hall leading to the Stake President's offices. Down the hall Elder Maxwell was speaking with Brother Steve Harper who had been called to be the Executive Secretary to our new Stake President Allen Davis. As I opened the door, Elder Maxwell looked toward me and invited me to come join them. I listened to Elder Maxwell giving instructions to Brother Harper about his new assignment and how he needed to learn about and come to know the Stake President so he, the Executive Secretary, could anticipate the Stake President's every need.

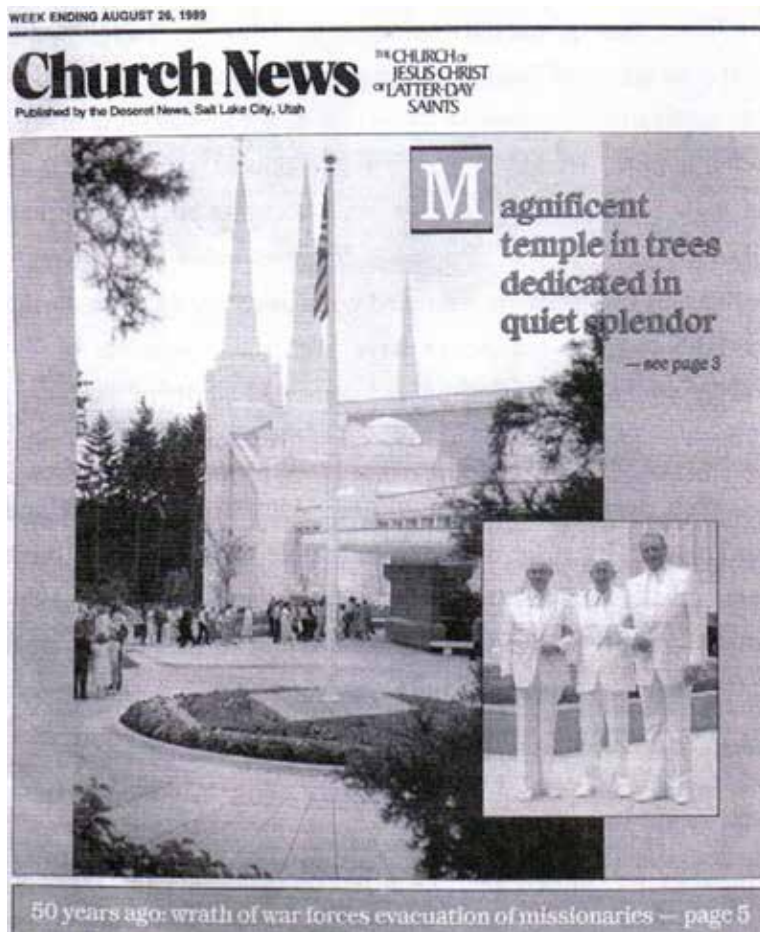
Elder Maxwell shared with Brother Harper the example of President Kimball and the secretary to the First Presidency, Brother [D. Arthur] Haycock. Elder Maxwell said that during their regular weekly temple meetings there is a need for each of the brethren to have a white handkerchief. President Kimball never had one and as the need arose, with a look of panic in his eyes, he turned to Brother Haycock who anticipated this need and took a white handkerchief from his pocket for the President. “That is what I mean,” said Elder Maxwell to Brother Harper. “You have to be able to anticipate what your President will need.”

Then Elder Maxwell turned to me and asked if he could help me. I had his letter in hand and asked if he would date it for me. He opened his coat to get a pen from his pocket and announced that he did not have a red pen---at which time Brother Harper opened his own coat and handed Elder Maxwell a red pen. We laughed and Elder Maxwell said he knew Brother Harper would be successful.

And the outpourings of inspiration continued. Two years later, the saints in Corvallis and throughout Oregon witnessed the commencement of a new era in Church activity with the dedication of the first temple that was to grace their home state.

First Temple in Oregon

The coming of the first temple to Oregon signified many things for members of the Corvallis stake. Among other things, it stood, as it still does, as a monument to the unwavering diligence of those saints, both living and deceased, who had given their all in sacrifice to see this portion of the Lord's vineyard flourish, and whose faith, so freely rendered, had been freely rewarded. Already, interest had been generated in the Portland temple even among those who were not members of the Church, when, on May 11, 1988, the gold-leafed statue of the angel Moroni was set into place atop the 170-foot eastern spire to a captivated audience of television cameras, newspaper photographers, and gathered Church members.



Front page of an August 1989 edition of Church News announcing the dedication of the Portland Oregon Temple.

The website LDSChurchTemples.com (not an official website of the Church) gives of the Portland Oregon Temple the following description:

Rising elegantly among towering Douglas-fir trees, the six spires of the marble-clad Portland Oregon Temple create a beautiful sight for motorists traveling Oregon's I-5, situated about 8 miles south of downtown Portland in Lake Oswego. On the east side of the temple is a serene reflection pool sitting at the base of the main spire. Visitors are welcome to walk among the gorgeous gardens that decorate the temple grounds and to obtain additional information at the public visitors' center that features films, displays, multimedia presentations, and a stunning reproduction of Thorvaldsen's Christus statue.

Nearly 41,000 members came from throughout Oregon and southwestern Washington to attend the dedicatory sessions from August 19 through 21 of 1989. And no fewer than 314,232 visitors toured the Portland Oregon Temple during its public open house. Eleven sessions in all were held, with speakers including all members of the Quorum of the Twelve; three members of the Presidency of the Seventy; five members of the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy; Bishop Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric; and Relief Society general president Barbara W. Winder.

The dedicatory sessions were relayed via closed-circuit television to members in rooms throughout the temple, allowing each session to accommodate nearly 4,000 members.

President Ezra Taft Benson extended to President Gordon B. Hinckley the responsibility of offering the prayer of dedication, which was delivered during the first session. Included in the prayer of President Hinckley were these words:

And now, in the authority of the holy priesthood, which has come from thee, we dedicate and consecrate this the Portland Oregon Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints unto thee, our Father and our God, and to thy Beloved Son, our Redeemer and our Lord.

We dedicate the grounds, beautiful with their design and vegetation. We dedicate these walls of

resplendent marble that glow in the sunlight as thy truth shall shine over the earth. We dedicate the entire structure from the footings to the tallest tower, with the figure of Moroni who came as an angel flying through the midst of heaven with the everlasting gospel...

Sanctify this house, we humbly ask thee, that it may be “a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God” (D&C 109:8).

Protect it by thy power from the storms of nature and the defilement of those of evil intent. May a spirit of solemnity rest upon all who enter herein. Open to their vision a glimpse of thy great and everlasting designs.

In a 1989 *Ensign* article about the dedication of the Portland Oregon Temple, Louise R. Shaw reported:

One non-LDS visitor wrote in the guest register that he was awed by the “holy feeling that came over me.” Another said, “I saw the light of God” in the face of every guide. Commented still another: “Makes you feel like you’re already in heaven!”

The spirit of solemnity, for which President Hinckley had particularly prayed, was keenly felt by the members, as well. Indeed, this dedicatory prayer on the temple turned out to be something in the nature of a gift that kept on giving. As Sister Averil Seely of the Corvallis 3rd Ward relates:

Several years ago I gave a Spiritual Living lesson in Relief Society on the temple. During that lesson, I read a portion of the dedicatory prayer of the Portland temple. I asked sisters to tell me their thoughts, their emotions, their visions of themselves, and their experiences in the temple in short brief phrases, as they had attended the Portland temple for the first time. We covered the chalk board with those phrases. I told the sisters we were going to make a psalm to the Portland Oregon temple. I had prearranged with another sister in the ward, Diane Merten, to write this psalm from the writings on the board. She left the room with the writings as I continued the lesson to return at the end of the class period to present the psalm.

Sister Merten and I had fasted together about this portion of the lesson. She later confided to me that this was the hardest church assignment she had ever been asked to do. As she entered a small unoccupied room in the building, with a prayer in both of our hearts, she related to me that the words flowed together.

The result was the following piece, entitled “Psalm of Gratitude”, wherein the solemn, supernal spirit which attended each of the sisters during their respective first visits to the Portland temple is given voice thus:

*Oh God of my righteousness
Hear Thou my prayer of gratitude —
In Thee do I put my trust.*

*Thy House of Holiness leadeth mine eyes
In upward gaze toward heaven’s gate
Whence cometh my strength.*

*Thy temple breathes in silence as I pondereth
The mysteries of Thy many mansions.*

*Gardens of supreme beauty showeth forth all
Thy marvelous works and declareth the glory of God.*

*Thy temple shieldest me from worldly desires —
It is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer.*

*A haven of order and peace surroundeth
Mine children as we kneel in love.*

*Oh Lord, clothed in Priesthood robes,
Mine heart reacheth to those Thy children
Waiting and longing for unity.*

*Tears of gratitude watereth my pillow
As I rejoice in promised eternal salvation.*

*Oh Most Holy One, let the meditations of my heart
Be acceptable in Thy sight.
Oh Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.*

The first four days following the dedication of the temple in Portland and its opening for ordinance work, youth were baptized vicariously for 8,000 deceased individuals. Thirty marriage sealings took place in the first weekend alone.

Certainly, the dedication of the Portland Oregon Temple was a fitting way to close out the brisk decade of the 1980s, and usher in a new era of temple activity for all the saints who reside in Oregon.

CHAPTER 8

New Programs and Activities Begin as a Millennium Ends

(1989-2000)

Public Affairs Engages the Community

In an effort to promote greater understanding and acceptance of the Church and its members by the community, President Allen Davis called Sister Diane Merten as the first Public Affairs director in October of 1989. One of the first initiatives Sister Merten felt inspired to pursue was one of emergency preparedness in Benton County. Thus prompted, she united her leadership with that of Stake High Councilor Ken Oar to develop and implement improvements in emergency preparedness that would prove so effective as to eventually draw community, county, and national recognition. Among these innovative steps toward preparedness were the inclusion of emergency preparedness guidelines in telephone directories, classes for the community taught by stake members on the fundamentals of emergency preparedness, the implementation of disaster response plans in all wards of the stake, and the certification, in the summer of 1995, of the stake center as an officially sanctioned Red Cross emergency shelter.

The wisdom of this last action by the committee was soon demonstrated when hundreds of flood victims, in February of 1996, received needed aid at the stake center, and this while hundreds of members attended to all aspects of the shelter and its maintenance during the ordeal.

While it is natural for members of a stake to sustain and give thanks to anyone whose efforts prove serviceable to their calling, the magnification of her office as Public Affairs director won Sister Merten invitations to participate in a number of national councils on emergency preparedness, and her meritorious efforts in that capacity are recognized, both in and out of the Church, down to the present. As the *Corvallis Gazette-Times* reported in May of 2003:

Diane Merten of Corvallis is one of five Oregon women to receive the 2003 White Rose Award from the Greater Oregon Chapter of March of Dimes. She will be honored May 21 at the 21st annual White Rose Luncheon, "A Salute to Women of Achievement"...

Merten is an advocate of emergency preparation management. Volunteering her time, Merten founded the Benton County Emergency Management Council, a partnership between private and public entities to help communities prepare for any disaster. She also facilitated "Project Impact: Building Disaster Resistant Communities," which resulted in a \$300,000 grant for emergency management.

The grant here mentioned was one of many that the Corvallis Stake Public Affairs committee succeeded in obtaining. From the Church Public Affairs Department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the committee secured grants for a number of worthy local projects, which included a donation to the St. Mary's Catholic Church for improvements on their soup kitchen, a contribution to the Benton County "Yes for Kids" Commission on Children and Families that helped to fund the publication of their first report, and a donation to the Community Outreach, Inc. shelter that paid for some of the furnishings at their new location on 865 NW Reiman Avenue in Corvallis.

Corvallis Nativity Festival Becomes a Cherished Community Tradition

It was also Sister Merten who, in her capacity as director of Public Affairs, inaugurated the tradition, now long-beloved of Corvallis residents both in and out of the Church, of the Community Crèche Exhibit (or Corvallis Nativity Festival, as it has come to be called). After prayerful consideration, Sister Averil Seely was selected as the first crèche director.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CRÈCHE EXHIBIT



Thursday, December 3 (5-9 p.m.)
Friday, December 4 (2-9 p.m.)
Saturday, December 5 (2-9 p.m.)

Concerts are from 7-7:30 p.m.
Thursday: The Corvallis Chorale
Friday: Heart of the Valley Festival Choir
Saturday: Good Samaritan Handbell Choir

ALL ARE INVITED TO ATTEND
ADMISSION IS FREE

Now in its fourth year, the exhibit includes over 350 crèches (nativity scenes) from around the world.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
4141 NW Harrison Boulevard, Corvallis, Oregon

Announcement from 1998 for the Community Christmas Crèche

and say hello, to enjoy some music—wonderful music!—out at the festival...

It is a spiritual piece...artistic; very professionally done. And at the Christmastime season it's just a great way to connect with your faith, and with the other members of the Corvallis community...

Each of us expresses our faith in different ways, and the Nativity festival allows the community to come together in an expression of faith and spirituality at an important time of year for a number of people in our community. So it is a place and a time for us all to gather together and share a common bond around our faith traditions.

One of the things about the festival that really intrigues me is not only is it a spiritual or a faith event, but it's just a beautiful production. The artistry and the production, the work that goes into it, the love that comes from the people who put it together is absolutely incredible, and I really urge members of the community to come on out to the LDS Church on Harrison Boulevard and experience that joy, that beauty, that artistry that goes into the festival.

Attendance at the festival was an estimated 700 in 1994, which figure should serve as a point of reference when considering the fact that in 2011 the festival was attended by over 2,500. But the event has grown in other ways. For example, though it began as a two-day event, the crèche added a third day in 1995, and has since grown into a five-day event when, in 2011, it began running from Friday through Tuesday. And while, as noted above, about

When the first Community Crèche Exhibit was organized by members of the Corvallis stake in 1994, two hundred Nativity scenes were displayed on the first weekend in December to symbolically mark the beginning of the Christmas season, as well as to offer collective silent testimony of the true spirit of Christmas to the community. Also presented was the musical testimony of cherished hymns, carols, and instrumental pieces commemorating the birth of the Savior.

The event was, from the first, a community one, though coordinated by members of the Church; at first being called the Community Crèche Exhibit, and later the Corvallis Nativity Festival. It is significant that the event has been called neither the Stake Crèche Exhibit nor the Corvallis Stake Nativity Festival, and this significance has not been lost on members of the wider community. In a video uploaded to YouTube on October 26, 2011, (and which may still be viewed at that website) former Corvallis Mayor Charlie Tomlinson offered warm tribute to the festival, saying:

One of the things about the Corvallis Nativity Festival for me, personally, is it gives me a time to come out to the church and have a peaceful time. Maria [Tomlinson] and I enjoy walking around and looking at the crèches. We've even exhibited some of our crèches here, as well. But it's also a time to just get into the spirit of the season, to meet people in the community



Former Corvallis Mayor Charlie Tomlinson

200 crèches graced the first exhibit, that figure peaked at 850 in 2004, and has never since dropped to anywhere approaching the total for the first year.

As of this writing, 17 such community Nativity festivals have been held (no festival was held in 1997 as the building was in process of remodeling).

Stake Relief Society Makes Positive Impact on Local and Global Community

Beginning in 1991, the Corvallis Stake Relief Society initiated the production of quilts for humanitarian purposes both on a local and world-wide scale. The industriousness of the participating sisters was such that in the first project alone no fewer than 239 quilts were donated to local community agencies responsible for seeing to the disbursement of them.

Not restricting their output to quilts alone, the Relief Society, in 1997, undertook the production of burp cloths for donation to “Healthy Start,” which is a community program devoted to the support and strengthening of young children. The effort yielded a staggering total of 1,845 cloths.

Then, in 1999, Relief Society sisters produced and donated 150 quilts to war-ravaged Kosovo and to the Bishop’s Storehouse. Since then, the charitable contribution of quilts and blankets by the sisters of the Relief Society has continued unabated.

President Blake Called as Corvallis Stake President

On February 4, 1996 David J. Blake became President of the Corvallis Stake. His counselors were Kenneth P. Oar and Brent K. Boyter. Elder Spencer J. Condie of the First Quorum of the Seventy, who was our area president, presided over the meeting. President Blake replaced Allen L. Davis, who served as Corvallis Stake President for nine years.

Sesquicentennial Anniversary of Mormon Pioneer Arrival in Salt Lake Valley

The year 1997 marked the 150th year since the first pioneers, led by Brigham Young, arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847. In celebration of this monumental event, the Church organized a “Faith in Every Footstep” program, encouraging members to commemorate the occasion as their respective circumstances would allow.

A commemorative trek for members of the Corvallis stake was planned for Camp Alpine, and, prior to the trek, members participated in a number of service projects. Various public garden spaces around Central Park were weeded, and in front of the Sunflower House homeless shelter on Southwest 9th Street in Corvallis (which was the forerunner of Community Outreach), many flowers were planted after a considerable amount of preliminary weeding and pruning had been completed.

When the day of the trek arrived, each ward was assigned a camp area. On Friday evening, July 25, meals were prepared and enjoyed by all of the wards in attendance, and the adjoining Rambo Lake was opened for swimming or wading. Firesides and other activities were also organized in a manner suited to the occasion and its theme.



Elder Spencer J. Condie

Saturday morning commenced the 1,600 “mile” trek from “Nauvoo” (represented by Camp Alpine’s Helaman Hill), with Brigham Young organizing the saints into various companies for the journey. An “angry mob” was suddenly heard to shout loud menacing threats at the companies, warning them to never dare return!

By 8:30 a.m., groups of 20-30 began leaving the Nauvoo area at 10- to 15-minute intervals, taking water and trail meals with them. They would pass through areas representing, in succession, Winter Quarters, Fort Kearney, Fort Casper, Fort Bridger, the Continental Divide, and various mountain passes and canyons before finally arriving at the area appointed to represent the Salt Lake Valley.

The first arriving groups were the first to participate in games and activities including, for children of Primary age, a “youngsters’ play area,” and football, volleyball, and softball for teenage youth. The final group, representing the sorely vexed Martin Handcart Company, arrived at about 1:00 P.M..

Over 325 members made the trek, and a general assembly was held at the close of the event. Brigham Young was portrayed by Dar Hanning, who welcomed them to the promised valley of which he had been privileged to see visions. Mike Vitkauskas offered a recounting of the day’s many activities, after which President Ken Oar of the stake presidency delivered a message.

Participants in the event then disbursed, mingling amongst themselves, playing at various games of sport, swimming again in Rambo Lake, or simply enjoying the shade. Like so many events held at Camp Alpine, before or since, it was an occasion impossible to forget by any privileged to be involved.

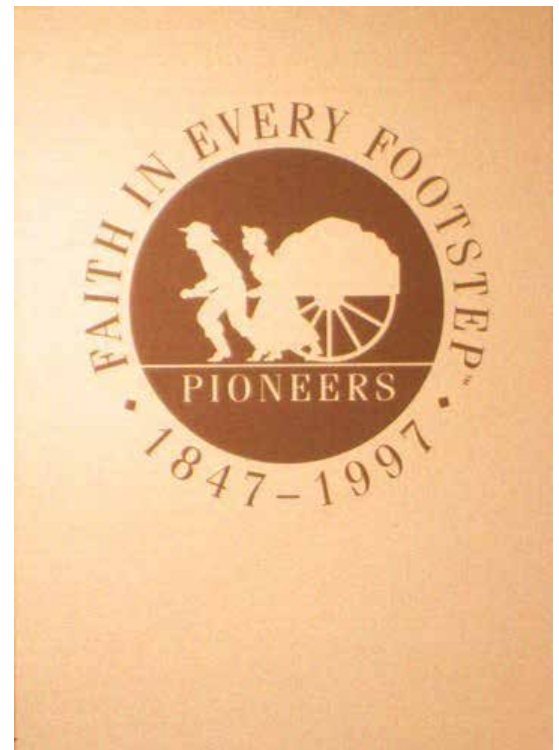
“Faith in Every Footstep” Commemorative Concert

Also in commemoration of the arrival of the early saints to the Salt Lake Valley, a special sesquicentennial concert was held on April 26, 1997, titled “Faith in Every Footstep.” Averil Seely was in charge of the event. Musically rich, both in quality and variety, it is regarded by some as one of the finest concerts ever put on by the stake.

A sesquicentennial choir and a children’s choir sang such celebrated songs of the Mormon pioneers as “Come, Come Ye Saints,” “Pioneer Children Sang As They Walked,” and “The Handcart Song.” The sesquicentennial choir also sang the more recent “Faith in Every Footstep,” from which the program took its name. The children’s choir was directed by Terece Johnson, with accompaniment provided by Sue Clements and Jeri Newton. The Newport choir sang, “Dedication,” with direction by Jerry Smith and accompaniment by Elaine Peterson.

A vocal duet was also featured, with Diane and Joel Nelson singing, “Valley Home,” after which a vocal solo, “Pioneer Lullaby,” was performed by Tara Patton.

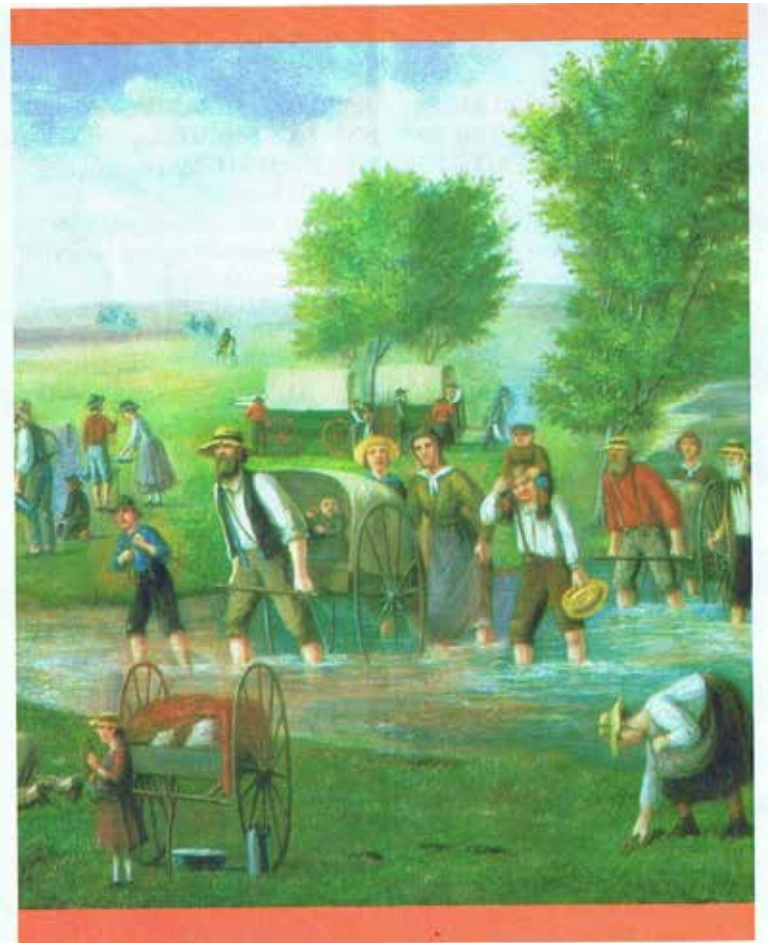
The instrumental pieces ranged in mood from restful to rousing. A saxophone duet rendition of the hymn, “Though Deepening Trials,” was performed by Trevor Cochran and Jason McReynolds, with accompaniment by Cynthia Rivers. Medleys were performed by a brass ensemble, a string quarter with French horn accompaniment, and a folk group featuring a fiddle, guitar, and harmonica. A piano solo by Aaron Hale provided a beautiful instrumental rendition of “Because I Have Been Given Much.”



Official logo for the “Faith in Every Footstep” sesquicentennial

The celebratory performance was narrated by Linda Merten and Craig Battrick, with President Ken Oar of the stake presidency presiding.

Mindful of those who had blazed the well-remembered trails of a bygone century, the Corvallis Oregon Stake was ready to blaze new, exciting, and memorable trails into a century yet unborn. It remained for the following years to prove, in the affirmative, their readiness to do precisely that.



Come, come ye saints, no toil nor labor fear; but with joy
wend your way.

Hymns #30

“FAITH IN EVERY FOOTSTEP”

Front of a program for the “Faith in Every Footstep” concert

CHAPTER 9

A New Era of Spiritual Opportunities (2000-2013)

Sons of Mosiah and Sons of Helaman Activities Promote Church Activity

Two encampments for young men of the Corvallis stake—designated the Sons of Helaman and Sons of Mosiah, respectively—began as events, recurring at set intervals ever since, in the opening years of the new millennium. Although the first Sons of Helaman encampment actually took place, with approval and direction by the stake presidency, from July 24-29 of 2000, its origins are to be traced to the year 1998, when President Boyd K. Packer, acting president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, assembled stake presidents from around the globe to attend a week-long training seminar at the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico.



Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico

Included in this series of meetings were also the General Young Men Presidency, General Primary Presidency (with some general board members), and members of the BSA National Council. Present on behalf of the Corvallis stake presidency was President Brent K. Boyter, who, having found the experience at the Philmont Ranch a great one, began to ask himself how youth in the Corvallis stake could take advantage of such enriching activities, held in a similar setting, but without ignoring the counsel of the Brethren to hold such activities close to home and to reduce spending. Adding to the earnestness of his consideration of the matter, President Boyter was keenly (and painfully) aware that the

Corvallis stake, like others in the Church at that time, was tending to lose young men around the time of their reaching 14 years of age. How could such young men in our stake be retained and their continued activity assured? Could a program patterned after that of the Philmont Ranch help such youth? To such questions as these, President Boyter began to seek realistic answers.

After much pondering and prayer, together with sincere desire to hearken to the counsel of the Brethren, an impression was received by President Boyter. The stake, he felt assured, could do an activity following the general format of the Philmont Ranch, but without entailing exorbitant cost or excessive mileage of travel. The need to “raise the bar” on spiritual experiences in connection with BSA activities had become indispensably critical in the ongoing effort to reach out to those young men prone to wander from the gospel fold and leave the Church. Rather than older non-member rangers, however, the Corvallis stake would appoint Eagle Scouts recently returned from full-time missions as rangers.

President Boyter’s ideas, thus far developed, met with the approval of the rest of the stake presidency, and a group of humble, spiritually-attuned brethren were assigned to nurture the “mustard seed” thereby implanted into the “beautiful garden” of rich and verdant fruitage envisioned by our leaders. This end being in view, devotional materials approved by the Church curriculum were acquired from the Cache and Benson stakes, whose Sons of Helaman activities were studied and adapted for the Corvallis stake.

The first leaders appointed to oversee the Sons of Helaman activities for the stake were Richard Tucker (director), Greg Perry and Aaron Black (assistants), Matt Hillebrand (quartermaster), Mike Castellano (high councilor), and Robert Babbel (stake young men president). Both Mike Castellano and Reed Glasmann have since also served as directors, along with many other brethren of the stake serving in a vast number of connected capacities.

With these preliminary preparations made, the first Sons of Helaman event was held from July 24-29, 2000, in the Bull of the Woods Wilderness just north of Detroit, Oregon. Half a dozen separate camps were arranged in circular pattern, each having a newly-returned missionary holding the rank of Eagle assigned to it as a ranger. Rangers were responsible for, among many other things, seeing that morning devotionals were held around breakfast time. Rangers were also encouraged to share their personal testimonies with the young men during breaks while they hiked from one camp to another. In this way, a spirit of missionary work was cultivated in the young men. But in addition to a spirit of missionary work, there was also cultivated a spirit of work itself, as the young men performed not only the routine tidying of campsites, but also trail maintenance, which effort was greatly appreciated by the forest service.



Bull of the Woods Wilderness

Hiking from campsite to campsite, the groups of young men, usually arriving at their next site in the early afternoon, would be greeted by an adult there stationed. After dinner, and generally before sunset, these adult leaders would provide doctrinal enrichment to the young men by holding a fireside on a gospel topic assigned to them. Dutch oven meals were also prepared and enjoyed.

On the final night of the encampment, the fathers of the young men were invited to attend and participate in a dinner and fireside featuring a member of the stake presidency. They would then camp overnight with their sons. On this occasion, and on the many like it since, fathers would hear testimonies from their sons shared in ways they never before had, and so, likewise, did the sons from their fathers.

The positive response of the young men was as resounding as it was unanimous, which came much to the

delight of the stake presidency. Having gone among the youth and their leaders with President Boyter to gain a sense of how the week had gone, and finding the consensus to be one of united praise, President Blake declared, “We will do this again!”

The first bi-annual Sons of Mosiah encampment for priests in the stake took place from July 30th through August 2nd, 2003. Also in attendance were the priests’ fathers, their young men leaders, and bishops.

Thirty-three young men and fifteen adults (not counting the eight full- and part-time stake leaders) participated in this milestone event, which had, under the direction of the stake presidency, been developed by Bishops David Williams, David Bird, and Tom Sherry, together with Susan Williams. Designed to provide both high adventure and opportunity to experience new spiritual heights, the Sons of Mosiah event aimed to engage the young men in physical activities that were physically and mentally challenging, as well as fun. The spiritually challenging aspects, moreover, provided the young priests with opportunities to learn about recognizing and using the Spirit, and recognizing, above all, their personally acquired testimonies of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Pursuant to these ends, young men were treated to “roaming firesides” in which they, while being transported by motor vehicle, heard a talk by a Church leader or popular speaker played, thus both laying the groundwork for gospel-oriented discussion and opening their hearts and minds to the spiritual impressions there received. At all times, and in all events, the chief aim was a nurturing of testimonies of Jesus Christ and the fullness of His restored gospel.

As it would happen, some spiritual experiences came quite unexpectedly, and without prior planning. Jean R. Nelson reported on one such memorable occurrence as follows:

A potentially tragic situation in 2009 turned into a great faith-promoting experience. Brother Todd Dye was responsible for the activities, such as the water rafting, and his family was close by camping in an adjacent campsite. On the afternoon of the second day, after having completed our bike ride, word came that his young son, Alex, had fallen into the fire pit. Doctors Jared Nelson and Don Pennington rushed to his aid. He was placed in the frigid waters of Trail Bridge Reservoir, given a blessing, and placed in a vehicle to be taken to the hospital. Alex had been playing in the water during the day and was warming himself by the fire when he fell backwards into the fire pit, suffering severe burns on his hands, back, and legs. At the concluding fireside on Saturday, President Michael Castellano asked the young men to fast with him through the following Sunday for Alex. Over the course of the next several weeks, despite pending operations required for skin grafts, Alex’s body healed quickly and wholly to where no skin graft operations were required. It was truly a miraculous recovery, and certainly the faith of these fine Young Men and their leaders played an important role.

The fire of faith, having been enkindled, increased, and scores of young men in the stake can, and do, attest to the power of the Sons of Mosiah experience in developing their testimonies. Many, further, having since served on and returned from full-time missions, testify to the power of that experience in creating a spirit of proselyting zeal which was to remain with them throughout their service in the field.

President Blake Weighs In On Same-Sex Marriage Debate

The city of San Francisco began issuing marriage licenses to couples identifying as gay and lesbian in mid-February of 2004. By March 3, Multnomah County had issued more than 400 marriage licenses to same-sex partners. If ultimately deemed legal, these actions would have extended legal recognition to homosexual partnerships, which were being considered by some as marriages. President Blake took notice of these developments, and later recalled:

I learned from the newspaper that the Benton County commissioners were considering the approval of marriage licenses for gays and lesbians. I received strong promptings of the Spirit to send a letter to each of the Benton County commissioners and to testify as the president of the Corvallis Oregon Stake in a Benton

County commissioner meeting held on March 16, 2004. I prepared a letter, reviewed it with my counselors, Ken Oar and Brent Boyter, and made some revisions. I sent this letter to each of the three Benton County commissioners on March 10.

With these preliminary steps taken, President Blake next made a public appearance. He reports:

I arrived at the Benton County commissioner meeting on March 16 about one hour early in order to sign up to speak. People were allowed to speak based upon the order that they signed in. I was the 6th speaker out of 48. Of these, only eight were opposed to same-sex marriage and 40 were in favor. I was surprised to see representatives of five TV stations present with their cameras and six microphones at the speakers stand. I used quotations from "The Family – A Proclamation to the World" in my statements to the commissioners. The next day I was in a photograph on the front page of the Gazette-Times newspaper and quoted as opposing same-sex marriage.



President David Blake pictured in the Gazette-Times following his appearance at the Benton County commissioner meeting to discuss same-sex marriage.

Although the commissioners ultimately decided in favor of continuing to license, and thus grant legal recognition to homosexual partnerships, this decision was quickly overridden by Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski. President Blake remembers the course of events following the decision by the commissioners thus:

The Benton County commissioners voted 2-1 to direct the county clerk to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples beginning March 24. Later, on March 22, the Benton County commissioners, due to pressure from the governor and the state attorney general, made the decision to grant or issue no

marriage licenses beginning on March 23. By doing this they complied with the governor by not issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples, but also made a strong statement in support of same-sex couples. I called Elder Quentin L. Cook, our Area President, and kept him informed of the developments on the same-sex marriage issue in Benton County.

On November 2, 2004, Oregon voters passed Measure 36, amending the state constitution to state that: “It is the policy of Oregon, and its political subdivisions, that only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or legally recognized as a marriage.” This decision, as its proponents argued, was in keeping with historical precedent. In the 1885 case of *Murphy v. Ramsey*, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court of the United States defined marriage as “the union for life of one man and one woman in the holy estate of matrimony.”

(Although this book covers historical events related to the Church only up to the year 2013, it should be noted, in relation to the 2004 Oregon amendment defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman, that on June 26, 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled by a vote of 5-4 that any marriage shall be legally recognized as a marriage, with no regard as to gender. This, of course, overruled the previous Oregon amendment.)

Church and Community Unite in Response to Brooke Wilberger Abduction

On the 24th of May, 2004, 19-year-old Brooke Wilberger came to Corvallis from the home of her parents, Greg and Cammy Wilberger, in Veneta, Oregon. She had recently returned from Brigham Young University, where she was a student, and was helping her sister and brother-in-law, Stephanie and Zach Hansen, clean the Oak Park Apartments complex which the couple managed, near Oregon State University. While Stephanie ran her children to school, Brooke remained at the complex, cleaning light posts in the parking lot. Upon her return, Stephanie discovered that Brooke was missing, but suspected nothing in the nature of an abduction, as the apartment complex was very large, and Brooke might have been at work in any of the more than 100 apartments there. She grew uneasy when Brooke did not join them for lunch, as normally she would have, and more uneasy still when further searching revealed Brooke’s sandals to be left in the parking lot. Unable to find her sister anywhere at or near the scene, Stephanie called and notified family and friends, who then began searching, as well. Zach placed a call to 9-11.

Notification of Brooke’s disappearance was given to Benton County Search & Rescue, and the home and visiting teachers of the family. First Ward leaders also met with the family to assess needs, and to coordinate search efforts. President Blake being out of town, authorization was obtained from President Oar to utilize a phone tree under priesthood leadership.



Brooke Wilberger

In order to broadcast the news still farther, ham radio operators and news outlets were contacted, and a website created with a picture of Brooke and information about the clothes that she was last seen wearing. Flyers were printed and distributed in the downtown area by family members, and Benton County Emergency Services Coordinator, Peggy Pierson, organized a police search.

Soon, there was a community-wide search effort set on foot, with over 275 volunteers participating in the first search alone, which convened at Reser Stadium, covered areas around OSU campus and Avery Park, and continued (by flashlight toward the end) until 3:00 A.M. Hilton Garden Inn graciously offered food, water, and use of its restroom facilities to the searchers.

This was to be first of many search parties. The searchers--who came in answer to the call for assistance from Corvallis, Albany, Veneta, Eugene, and Lebanon--combed the fields and bramble-

covered areas along the Willamette and Mary's Rivers.

With initial supervision from President Oar, and later, upon his return, from President Blake, proper channels of authority were followed in contacting the various ward bishops, who then contacted members of their respective wards. The Corvallis Stake Center soon became a rallying point of search activity. Tables were set up in the cultural hall for phones, flyer distribution, volunteer sign-up, information, and family child care. 911 service phones were installed by the police but were soon moved to the foyer, and later to the high council room. Relief Society sisters provided food and water, as well as child care, for those participating in the search.

Days passed, and in spite of assiduous searching and coordinated effort, there still was no trace to be found of Brooke Wilberger. But this only called forth greater resolve from members both of the stake and of the community, and thus forged stronger alliances between the Church and its allies in Benton and adjoining counties. As Diane Merten recalls:

On about Day 5 [of the search for Brooke] I went to Mario Pastega at the Pepsi bottling company to see if he would put up a "Find Brooke" billboard on the space near his Pepsi building. He said he would ponder, check into costs, etc., and call me the next morning. The result was that he had made 3 very large vinyl banners done in color and hung one on his building, one across the billboard near the Pepsi plant and the third one on a billboard on the east side of the 99W closer to town. Mario covered the costs of the banners and had some of his staff hang them. He also gave me cases of soda and of water that I delivered to the Stake Center.

This unity of action was complimented by a unity of faith. As an article in the *Gazette-Times* newspaper reported in August of 2005:

The prayers began as soon as the news spread of Brooke Wilberger's disappearance last May.

The Wilberger family belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the local Corvallis Stake immediately sprang into action organizing search efforts and prayer meetings. Many other faith communities also began to pray the 19-year-old college student would be found quickly. Two public prayer vigils were held in the weeks following her disappearance to show community support...

"As the Wilberger family and our community perhaps will finally be able to bring resolution to the disappearance of Brooke, the end result is certainly not one we had hoped or prayed for," said the Rev. Russ Stiverson, pastor of the Corvallis Church of the Nazarene.

The congregation has included the Wilberger family on its weekly prayer list and mentioned them often in services.

"While we often feel frustrated at the lack of ability to do anything but pray, we realize that is the most important ministry we have in situations such as this," Stiverson said.

The Rev. Deanna Self-Price, pastor of First United Methodist Church, said she depends on the constant presence of God in making sense of such tragedies.

"God is still at work, seeking us as much as we are seeking God, grieving right alongside of us, giving us the strength and courage and hope we need to continue on with life's journey. We do not travel that road alone and, perhaps the prayers that we have prayed and shared with one another throughout these many months become the gift that reminds us that this is so," she said.

...Latter-day Saints believe that though a person's physical body dies, the spirit lives on and eventually the body and spirit are reunited in heaven from where the spirit was born in the first place. Families remain together even in death.

"We believe families are eternal and Brooke will be with our family forever," her mother said

Wednesday.

The Wilbergers also believe good can come out of bad.

“No matter what happens, there will be something good out of it because that’s just the way things work,” Greg Wilberger said in June 2004.

The search continued, though participation decreased as work and school obligations beckoned many of the searchers home. Interest in the case, however, did not wane, especially among residents of Corvallis, where the incident had first occurred.

Finally, several months after Brooke had first disappeared, and after a “person of interest” who had been investigated was found to be uninvolved in the disappearance, another man, Joel Patrick Courtney, was officially arrested and charged in connection with her abduction. He pleaded guilty to her abduction, rape, and aggravated murder, and, in accordance with a plea bargain which removed the possibility of his receiving the death penalty, led investigators to Brooke’s remains, which he had deposited in a heavily wooded area of the Oregon Coast Range. He now serves a life sentence in solitary confinement in New Mexico, where his wife and children live.



Greg and Cammy Wilberger at a press conference

In response, the *Gazette-Times* paid moving tribute to Brooke’s mother, Cammy, with these words from an editorial:

Some of the mysteries involved in this case likely never will be unraveled, just as some wounds never will completely heal.

But Cammy Wilberger, Brooke’s mother, offered some balm on Monday for a community’s aching heart, even as her own heart must have been close to bursting.

Her eyes swimming with tears, Cammy Wilberger talked about being grateful for the law enforcement officials and community members who helped investigate the case over the years.

And her gratitude included Courtney himself, for his role in guiding authorities to the remains of her daughter. “It might be hard for you to understand, but at this time we just really feel grateful, even to Mr. Courtney,” she said.

She’s right. It is hard for us to understand. But we understand this: In a bleak hour for this community, Cammy Wilberger reached deep into her heart and offered us a moment of shining grace.



Philomath Ward meetinghouse

Philomath Meetinghouse Dedicated

On August 1, 2004, the newly completed meetinghouse of the Philomath ward was dedicated to the service of the Lord. Seated on the rostrum were President Blake, who presided at the dedicatory service, along with Samuel H. Bailey (former Corvallis stake president), President John Cushing of the Oregon Eugene Mission, and Bishop Gary C. Lear of the Philomath Ward. Also in attendance were two former bishops of the Philomath Ward: Nephi Patton and Wade Haslam, who offered the invocation and the benediction, respectively.

In the dedicatory prayer which he offered, President Blake recounted the years of diligent sacrifice on the part of stake members, saying:

We are grateful for this building, Heavenly Father. For more than twenty years it has been the desire and the goal of the members living in Philomath. And now we have been blessed with it because of the tithing faithfulness of thy saints living in the Corvallis Oregon stake.

He further prayed for the preservation of these saints within the sacred setting and spiritual shelter of the meetinghouse in the coming years of mounting iniquity and widespread turmoil:

We are now living in the last days when Satan is striving for the souls of men. Wilt thou make this building a place of refuge where people can come and find peace and be taught the truths of eternity. May those who come here be preserved against the snares of Satan and not yield to his temptations and enticements. May this building stand and be a place of refuge from the tribulations which will precede the Second Coming of Thy Son.

“The Spirit of God” was sung as the closing hymn.

Waldport Meetinghouse Dedicated

The following year, the Waldport meetinghouse was dedicated, solemnizing the completion of another phase in its progressive construction. The first phase of its building having been completed twenty-two years earlier, the meetinghouse had, by the course of gradual improvement taken by the members, finally reached Phase 3 status (with Phase 4 being confidently anticipated) in 2005.

President Blake presided at the dedicatory meeting on January 30 of that year, and in his prayer held the long years of devotion and sacrifice offered by members of the Waldport Branch in grateful remembrance, saying:

We are grateful for the spread of the gospel throughout the world and especially here in the Waldport area. We are grateful for the leaders and the members who preceded us and were pioneers in establishing this Church.

We are grateful for this building, Heavenly Father. We are grateful for the first phase which was constructed in 1983, for the second phase which was constructed in 1992 and for this beautiful addition that has just been completed. We are grateful for the faithfulness of the saints living in this branch that have made this building necessary and possible.

As to the eventual realization of a Phase 4 meetinghouse, a brief history printed for the Waldport Branch contains this terse and telling line:

4th phase: Will be in future.

Wade Haslam Called As Stake President

On February 5, 2005, Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostle was inspired to call Wade L. Haslam as the new president of the Corvallis Stake. Thomas E. Sherry and Michael A. Castellano were

chosen by President Haslam as his counselors. The three would preside over a now 3250-member stake, and this while President Sherry continued as director of the Institute of Religion for the Church in Corvallis.

Youth Handcart Trek Mixes Tests of Endurance with Times of Enjoyment

The stake handcart trek of 2010 afforded youth another opportunity to test their mettle in the proving ground of the Oregon wilderness. Held July 21-24 in the Oregon Cascade Mountains, it was the first handcart trek sponsored by the Corvallis Oregon Stake. And, as had been the case with the Sons of Mosiah and the Sons of Helaman encampments of the previous decade, rich and memorable spiritual experiences grew out of extended activities of physical endurance and educational instruction. The trek involved 182 youth organized into two companies comprised of ten families each, or twenty families in total.

The trek was led by Brother Greg and Sister Patricia Perry, who had been called to the task in the spring of 2009. They decided, first, to find a trek in which they could personally participate, so that they could get a sense of the organization and programming of a trek, in addition to gathering feedback from youth on what they felt had gone well, and what, if anything, had not.

The Perrys obtained permission to attend a trek with the Keizer Oregon Stake, held on the Church-owned property of Bing Canyon near the tri-cities area in Washington, in June of 2009. Keizer Stake leaders were very obliging in their provision of information to the Perrys regarding the organization, expense, planning, and documents which had been involved in bringing the event about. The Perrys were impressed by, among other things, the quality of the adults called to participate in the Keizer Stake trek, and the quality of the presentations and firesides made for the youth.

Adopting the approach of the Keizer Stake, the Perrys decided to organize a trek for the Corvallis Stake in which youth would receive adequately fortifying, but not extravagant, meals (with the best meal being reserved for the final day); have access to water during the final day for showering or bathing in a lake, participate in a Mormon Battalion experience, give the young women a Women's Pull opportunity, and, on the whole, produce an unforgettable experience of moral enrichment and spiritual growth, accentuated by such things as firesides and short vignettes along the trail.

The Santiam Pass area was determined to provide the best setting for the trek, with its seldom-used roads with public access that could accommodate handcarts, campsites available every six to ten miles, and an ample water source for the end of the journey. The route settled upon by Brother Perry and President Mike Castellano begins near Black Butte Ranch, with travel the first day being to Dugout Lake, the next day from there to the Cache Creek toll station, and on the final day of travel from that point to a campsite near Big Lake.

The planning process occupied the whole of fall 2009. Routes were refined, books on the historical Mormon handcart experiences studied, and individuals who might be able and willing to assist identified. Calls to specialists were issued toward the end of the fall.

All the youth of the stake aged 12 to 18 were, along with their parents, invited to the fireside, together with the "Ma's" and "Pa's" who had been called, and the ward and stake youth leaders. With a written script, and some rehearsal, to go on, a presentation was delivered complete with period costume and props to introduce the trek and to provide an invitation to participate in the trek that was sure to stimulate the interest of the youth.

Under the direction of Brother Harry Reich, seven handcarts were built, with kits coming from the Holmes Wheel Shop in Holmesville, Ohio. Each of the ward young men's groups assembled a handcart in preparation for the event, and were successful in finishing all of their respective projects by May. Additional handcarts were acquired from Albany and Eugene, making twenty in all. To each handcart was added a second bar for added leverage in pulling the handcarts. A medical report from a physician, as well as a letter from parents (to be delivered by "Pony Express" during the actual trek), were collected prior to the event.

With the requirement that all youth participate while dressed in period costume, stipulations included that

all clothes be of cotton, with long-sleeved shirts and hats reminiscent of the pioneer era for the young men, and full skirts (or dresses) and bonnets for the young women. All clothing, too, was to be in soft colors, with small prints. Sister Barbara Burgess worked with the various wards to produce dresses, bonnets, and aprons appropriate to the occasion. Participants all presented an authentic appearance.

The trek involved what was, and to date remains, the largest food-related effort ever undertaken by the Corvallis Stake. Although a delicious assortment was provided, the added precaution was taken of having bread, peanut butter, and jelly on hand for each family, in the event that anyone wasn't fully fed at a meal. Not much peanut butter and jelly was consumed.

Water, needing to be transportable, was carried in a 250-gallon tank, with trips taken twice daily to refill it from the Sisters Fire Station. Each handcart carried with it a 5-gallon container for water.

On their arrival to the trek site, handcarts and portable restrooms awaited the families. Keeping up a steady speed of about two miles per hour, the handcart groups made their way over a challenging trail. At various points along the way, youth enjoyed such treats as homemade pie, and a re-enactment of an incident drawn from a pioneer journal.

At one point on the trek, the companies were met by the Angel of Death (portrayed by Brother Dave Williams), who would not allow them to pass. The youth and adults dropped their handcarts and sat in the shade on the roadside. Fifteen percent of the trek participants, including some of the "Ma's" and "Pa's," were selected to leave their families here, as if they had died. The emotion of losing a family member to "death" powerfully impacted each group.

Later, young men were marshaled for "war" by a mock Mormon Battalion, who carried with them replica rifles and shot bags, and, after travelling about two miles, carried out a successful assault on a cinder cone.



Big Lake Campground at its namesake lake along the Santiam Pass

Sister Bonnie Martin gathered the young women and delivered a mini-fireside for the Women's Pull. Several adults from the cooking group were then called upon to help pull the handcarts. Their pull consisted of 2.6 miles, with 1.8 miles thereof being on a grade in excess of 7%. It was a genuine challenge to the young women, but they rose confidently to the task, pulling along at a rate of one mile per hour.

Upon arriving at Big Lake, most of the youth waded into the lake to wash off the grit and the grime accumulated on the ordeal.

Firesides were presented by Brother Sherry on Joseph Smith, by Brother Pennington on general observations about the trek experience, as well as by President Castellano about the pioneers led by Brigham Young.

The next handcart trek for youth of the Corvallis Oregon Stake is scheduled for the year 2014, giving

stake members another among a myriad of things to anticipate with excitement as they look ahead, with unified vision, to a future bright with promise.

Success of Corvallis Fourth Ward Temple Day

Leaders in the Church often receive impressions from the still, small voice of the Spirit which call for further prayerful consideration and conferral with others before they can take shape. Such was the case when Bishop Don Pennington of the Corvallis Fourth Ward was moved upon to have the families of his ward gathered jointly at the Portland Temple. As Brother Carl Curtis later recounted:

Planning for our ward temple day started out in early 2012 as Bishop [Don] Pennington was inspired that the people of the Corvallis Fourth Ward needed a blessing we could only get by being at the temple together in families. He shared this with our Ward Council, and told us that he didn't know the details of how this should happen, but he knew that a Ward Temple Day was something the Lord wanted our ward to experience during the year.

The Young Women and Young Men program leaders volunteered to be in charge of working out the details. As dates for the event were narrowed down, one of the best possible days to hold the event coincided with a youth temple baptism session that our ward had already scheduled. We took that as a good sign!

And, as is ever the case when members follow the inspired counsel of their leaders, a spiritual treasure trove of blessings awaited those of the 4th Ward whose diligence in hearkening to the counsel of Bishop Pennington was undeviating. Brother Curtis remembered the variety of blessings there partaken of, according to the assurance earlier given to them:

Each family and individual had been promised that if we would pray about how our family could best worship on this day, the Lord would inspire us as to how we should spend our time...Throughout the day, members of our ward smiled at each other as they passed each other in the corridors of the Lord's house and on the temple grounds. Printed ordinance cards with family names on them were handed off from one person to another to get them where they needed to be at the right time. Baptisms for over 100 people were performed! All of the people whose baptisms and confirmations were done were relatives of either our ward members, or were contributed by a member of the Third Ward. Members had the opportunity to do work for deceased ancestors who were near and dear to them. One member was baptized, confirmed, and ordained to the priesthood on behalf of his own father. People who hadn't been to the temple for a long time or who hadn't been involved in baptisms for the dead were actively and happily engaged in temple ordinances throughout the day, and many more were blessed by the spirit on the temple grounds, as they spent time with their family members there. Our ward temple day started out as an undefined impression that was slowly sculpted into the blessing for our ward that the Lord wanted to give us. We are thankful!

Temple work throughout the Corvallis Oregon Stake, meanwhile, continues unabated. This is true both of temple trips organized by the stake and its various wards, and those taken by members on an individual basis.

Sustaining of President Craig Cole and Counselors

As of 2013, the Corvallis Oregon Stake is led by a new stake presidency. At the stake conference held on February 24, Craig Cole was sustained as the new stake president, with Kevin Nielsen, who had been serving as Second Counselor, moved to the position of First Counselor (President Nielsen had been called to serve as Second Counselor when Thomas E. Sherry left to serve a mission with his wife, Ann, in Fiji). Mark Freeman now serves as Second Counselor.

Under this new leadership, the Corvallis Oregon Stake will continue its legacy of serving as the standard-bearer of restored truth to all who live within its boundaries, and in the fullness of gospel light work to carry out its fourfold mission, which is nothing less than the mission of the Church itself: To proclaim the gospel, to

perfect the saints, to redeem the dead, and to care for the poor and needy.

Concerning those who have served the Lord by serving His children in this stake, and who have done so with the unwavering conviction that “whatever [they] do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord’s business” (D&C 64:29), it is certain that “a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people...cannot be contained in this work” (Helaman 3:14). Let it then suffice for our purposes to say that the Lord Jesus Christ has, through His faithful saints, accomplished many a great and glorious thing, though often by small and simple means, “which, if they should be written every one...even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written” (John 21:25).

Spiritually-minded stake members have thus been, and continue to be, conscious of a superintending providence guiding the affairs of those who labor in this portion of the Lord’s vineyard, and under the divine patronage of our Father in Heaven they have been the recipients of heavenly favors too numerous ever to be named in full. But they trust that their faith, with its attendant blessings made so abundantly manifest, will ever prosper those who serve the Lord out of a loving heart, and that their future will be as bright as the faith which they have founded on the sure promise that “all things are [theirs]; Whether...the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are [theirs]; and [they] are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (1 Corinthians 3:21-23).

Part II

CHAPTER 10

Primary

“And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” (3 Nephi 22:13)

Creation and Growth of Primary Association

If, as has been said, the true character of a society is revealed in how it treats its children, this is certainly, if not especially, true of a religious society. The true character of the Church, then, is revealed nowhere more keenly than in its sense of stewardship over the young and in the discharge of its obligation to provide for, protect, and prosper them. This sense of stewardship and obligation is most vividly witnessed in the Primary auxiliary organization. The purpose of Primary is, in the words of Primary General President Rosemary M. Wixom: *“To help each child feel Heavenly Father’s love, learn the gospel of Jesus Christ, feel the Holy Ghost, and prepare to make and keep sacred covenants.”*



Aurelia Spencer Rogers

For this cause, in August of 1878, Aurelia Spencer Rogers, a 44-year-old mother of 12, held the first Primary meeting in Farmington, Utah, after discussion with Relief Society president Eliza R. Snow, and with approval from President John Taylor. Sister Rogers had grown anxious for the welfare of youth running, unchaperoned, through the city streets, with none of the disciplining influences that would be required in order to inculcate in them those spiritual precepts and moral values that would make them worthy ambassadors of the gospel and honorable citizens of their community and country. She had been called to serve as president of the newly organized Primary Association after finally receiving the official call from her bishop. By June of 1880, the Primary system of instruction and youth activity had grown into a Church-wide organization. The policy of holding a weekday religious program in connection with the Primary was a dimension added by the First Presidency in May of 1929.

The first known account of Primary meetings being held in Corvallis was provided by Sister Dorothea Rampton, who told of how, in the summer of 1941, two sister missionaries working in Corvallis desired to see the Primary system established for members of the Church in the area. Permission to do so was granted by Branch President Herman Thomas, and the sisters began to hold meetings of the local Primary in the home of Brother and Sister Blacker on South 17th Street. Two of the Rampton children, Jean and James, who were then of Primary age, attended, along with Douglas and Fred Bennion; and LaVieve, Dayle and Charles Thomas. Rowena Blacker, who was 17 years old at the time, played the piano for their meetings. Sister Rampton recalled pulling her children in a little red wagon all of the fifteen blocks from her home to the meeting place on South 17th Street. Unfortunately, these Primary meetings would not continue following the departure of the sister missionaries from Corvallis in the early fall of that same year.

However, Primary activity resumed in the late fall, when Ernest and Idon Anderson arrived in the area, and Idon was called as president of the branch Primary. Owing to lack of weekday access to the building being rented by the branch for their Sunday meetings, Primary was often required to meet in the Rampton home, or even, during the warmer summer months, in a park or in backyards. Lesson material for the meetings was provided by the Northwestern States Mission.

The Hilding Marlowe family arrived, in 1943, with Primary-age children, and the Corvallis group grew. At the end of that year, 15 children were enrolled in three classes of the Primary. Additionally, the non-member

friends of Primary children would often attend the meetings, thus raising the number of participants further still.

When the Janus Miller family joined the Corvallis Primary in 1944, with their daughter Jeanine and son Robert both enrolled, their older daughter, Donna, helped teach. When the Yearsley family later arrived, adding four daughters to the Primary student body, Sister Yearsley was called to serve in the Primary, as well.

Corvallis's First Sacrament Meeting Primary Program

In a program presented by the Primary children of Corvallis circa 1942, costumes representing various fruits, vegetables, milk, and other wholesome foods were worn to personify the characteristics of healthful substances recommended for bodily nutrition. Among the songs learned and performed by the children were "Come to Healthland," "Tooth Bugs," "Early to Bed and Early to Rise," "Little Brother Vegetable," and the hymn "In Our Lovely Deseret." With an aim of instilling the saintly virtues of honesty, courtesy, reverence, and good health habits, the principles thereunto related had been taught to the children throughout the preceding months of that year.

Now, as then, children and their parents eagerly anticipate the annual Primary program presented during a sacrament meeting falling sometime in the fourth quarter of each year, giving the children opportunity to deliver inspired messages, both sung and spoken, on the basis of their previous months of instruction in the gospel. Ward Primary leaders, under supervision from the bishop, write their own program using songs and scriptures that the children have learned in prior months. The results never fail to be as remarkable as they are memorable, with even the youngest children offering a brief message in their innocent way, and singing with almost palpable enthusiasm.

The Children's Friend, a monthly periodical for children and the Primary published by the Church, reported in August 1943 that there were 144 stakes in the Church, with 106,133 Primary children. Included in that figure were 14,658 children who were in mission Primaries, as was the case with Corvallis children.

Once the Corvallis branch began using the I.O.O.F. Hall that was on 4th Street and Madison Avenue, meeting in this downtown location presented safety concerns when children came to be dropped off and picked up there. For a time in 1951, Primary convened, instead, at the Rampton home, where the safety of the children was better ensured. Two sister missionaries, Sisters Hoffeins and Sampson, assisted with the music there on such occasions, until the building on 27th Street began nearing its completion, and the Corvallis branch began to hold all of its meetings there.

When, in December of 1951, the branch in Corvallis became an official ward, it was a part of the Willamette Stake. Stake Primary officers were then all from Eugene, and along with other ward auxiliaries, the Primary staff was called to travel great distances in order to attend preparation meetings.

A rather detailed report on Primary activity from two years in the mid-1950s was discovered in the Corvallis Stake library, providing a record of the program as it was practiced during that period. The Primary curriculum was arranged so as to correspond with the school year, and the lessons accordingly followed those months. During the summer, special activities involving crafts, dancing, music, games, and picnics were created to keep children earnestly engaged in good works. According to the report, Primary children rendered diverse forms of service to others, both in the Church and in the community, including:

- A donation of \$20 to the Primary Children's Hospital.
- A candy sale.
- Christmas programs—one involving all of the children in skits and songs, and another a program and Santa.
- An annual "Daddy Date" for Homebuilder girls and their fathers, including a potluck dinner by the girls, complete with decorations and favors.

- Summer activities featuring picnics, clay work, and handcrafts.
- A Halloween party, with older and younger groups participating in different games from one another.
- Thanksgiving baskets prepared by the Primary for needy families and delivered by the Scouts.
- A Children's Friend subscription drive to the 44 ward families, which yielded 33 subscribers in all to the magazine.

The collection and contribution of "birthday pennies" (or pennies in number double that of a person's age) from ward families totaled \$149.60.

A party for Homebuilder girls and their mothers, including games and refreshments, and the opportunity for girls to display their completed handiwork.

Primary Class Structure Over the Years

The number, size, and arrangement of Primary classes were all based on the instructions received from the General Board of the Primary in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Between 1942 and 1953, the plan for mission Primaries included a class for younger children, ages 4-6. Ages 7-8 were called Zion's Boys and Girls. Girls age 9-12 were known as Homebuilders, with Larks, Bluebirds, and Seagulls. Boys ages 9-12 were known as Trail Builders with Blazers, Trekkers, and Guides.

By 1956, names for the classes had changed. Children age 4 were called Sunbeams, those 5 in age were Stars, and Rainbows were 6 years of age. The children ages 7 and 8 had their names changed to Co-Pilot and Pilots (for the boys), and by 1964, the girls of the older classes were called the Gaynotes, Firelights, and Merrihands.

Scouting and Primary

It was in December of 1952 that the First Presidency asked Primaries throughout the Church to establish a Cub Scout program of the Boy Scouts of America, for the benefit of boys of the Church having reached an eligible age and desiring to participate. Boys reaching the age of 11 would advance into the Boy Scouts. It was probably around this time that the Corvallis Primary began to incorporate the Scouting program.

The Children's Friend "A True Blessing"

In preparation for, as well as in the presentation of, Primary lessons during the 1950s, the Children's Friend magazine was an indispensable tool. In it, class songs, music and text for special programs, instructions, editorials from the General Board, and faith-filled inspiring messages from the prophets and apostles could be found, and were put by Primary leaders to many a worthy use. It was, in effect, the link by which the Corvallis Primary stayed connected with the Church as a whole. Additionally, as Sister Jean Nelson remembers of the Children's Friend:



Newport Ward Cub Scout painting T-shirts for donation to a local foster care program (1997).

But this magazine was primarily designed for the children and families of the Church. With games, puzzles, cut-outs, coloring pictures, paper dolls, cartoon stories, original writings and drawings, points for parents, lists of good books, features on the Scriptures and on Church leaders, and photographs of other Primary children from all over the world, it was a true blessing for many families.



Early issues of The Children's Friend

The Primary Children's Hospital

The second program adopted by the Corvallis Primary was that of organizing the means to ensure ongoing support for the Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City. The hospital, now known as the Primary Children's Medical Center, is one of the finest children's medical facilities in the western United States. Offering pleasant surroundings and a cheerful atmosphere of care, it was ranked 15th on the 2013 Parents magazine list of Best Children's Hospitals (and 8th for its heart center on the list in the same issue for best heart services).



Primary Children's Hospital in 1951

But its success, as with all other successes, could not have been realized without sacrifice. And so it was that the Corvallis Primary, along with Primaries throughout the Church, provided children the opportunity to

exercise their young and growing faith through the contribution of money. For many years, the Penny Parade was a regular part of Primary opening exercises, in which children, on their birthdays, gave 1 cent for each year of their age. As Brother Boyd Nash recalled of this period in Primary history:

Growing up in the church many years ago, some of us old-timers remember taking our pennies to Primary (1930s-1940s) on our birthday. At the appropriate time those having birthdays during the month could walk up to the front of the Primary to drop our precious birthday pennies into the miniature ambulance with a slot for our coins, one penny per year of our age. The money collected each month was transmitted to the Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City to help finance the aid given to children.

We would all sing the short song as part of this activity, which went something like this:

Five pennies make a nickel, two nickels make a dime;

Ten dimes will make a dollar; Oh, how we'll make it shine.

It's for the crippled children who cannot walk and run

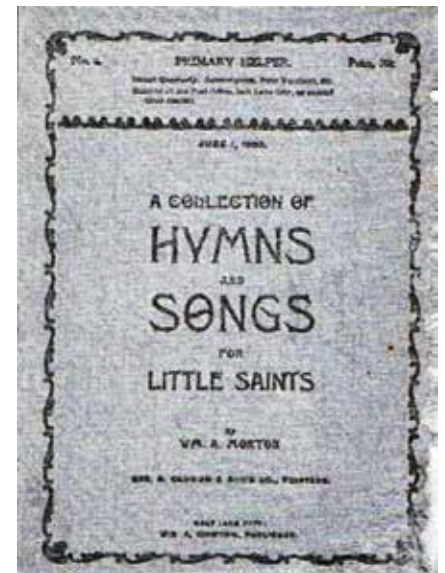
Who have to lie in bed all day and cannot join our fun.

Later, entire families of the ward calculated the sum total of all their combined years in age and contributed accordingly on the same basis. When a new wing was added to the hospital in 1957-58, the Primary children and their families gave 2 cents per each year of their ages. The amount sent in from Corvallis alone for that effort was \$149.60.

Corvallis Primary Through the Decades

With the Church in Corvallis as firmly established as it was, and upon so rich a spiritual seedbed, its Primary program grew and flourished. Weekday Primary meetings were held for many years, and many adults served faithfully in Primary callings, working in its presidencies, as choristers, as teachers, and as leaders in its Scouting programs. Friendships also developed, and testimonies were strengthened as children received instruction in the gospel, memorized Scripture; made the decision for, and received the ordinance of, baptism, set plans for future missionary service, and sang together the sacred hymns of Zion.

As Primary has changed over the course of years, its lessons and programs have continued to ensure the fulfillment of the promise recorded in Scripture that "all thy children shall be taught of the Lord," and yield for its youthful participants those joys to be found in the good news of the gospel. Songs, lessons, and other material have been, and are, specially designed and intended to convey simple, yet surpassingly sacred spiritual truths in a manner adapted to the understanding and abilities of comprehension of the children. Younger children are taught of their special natures as children of God, the offspring of deity, and objects of His eternal, enduring love made manifest in the sending of His Son and the presentation of His gospel plan. Older children are taught of their covenantal obligations, and the importance of seeing to their performance; of the need to prepare for, and appreciate the symbolism and significance of baptism by priesthood authority, and of preparing to receive the priesthood, with all of its attendant blessings and responsibilities, in commitment to a lifetime of diligent and faithful service.



Primary Songbook from the year 1900

Consolidated Schedule Brings Changes to Primary

Upon the inauguration of a consolidated meeting schedule in March of 1980, Primary meetings were moved from weekday afternoons to Sundays. Children ages 3 to 8 meet together for sharing time, with singing and

group lessons. Very young children, ages 18 months to 3 years, are invited to attend nursery while the rest of their family members are attending other classes.

As Sister Nelson reports:

Based on the material provided by Salt Lake, children learn songs and memorize parts for each ward's annual children's sacrament meeting program. In past years, the program was written by leaders at the general or stake level. In more recent years, each ward writes its own program--a culminating event in which children have the opportunity to share their faith and testimonies of basic truths, as well as their musical talents.

Even with proper prior planning, however, sometimes comic mishaps will occur, as in the following incident recounted by Sister Michelle Babel:

The Walnut Building has had a few glitches in it since it was built. We had a funny experience in 1996 when I was Primary President of the 4th Ward. Ours was a large primary and we took up most of the surrounding rooms.

Our little 6 year olds were very energetic and filled their classroom completely. The young sister who was teaching this class had her hands full with this class and she was months pregnant. We had little "STOP" signs printed so if things got out of control for the teachers they could put them on the door handle to signal that help was needed.

It was time for the Junior Primary to come into closing exercises and our 6 year old class had not joined us yet. Looking through the little window on the door, I will never forget the horrified look on this sweet sister's face when we all realized the handle on the door was broken and would not budge.

Several minutes (which seemed like an eternity) went by as the bishopric came along with this sister's husband. I think it was the ingenuity of one of the children who got us out of the fix. Luckily the windows opened very wide so one by one our little ones ending with our pregnant teacher came out. Crisis averted. The next week when it came time to dismiss this class, they all lined up in front of the window with smiles on their faces.

Scouting Among Primary Youth Today

Scout leaders have, with increasing focus on the Scouting program for 11-year-old boys, received more coordinated training, materials, and other resources to aid them in guiding the boys as they transition from Primary into young men's Scouting. Updated ward rosters enable leaders to contact one another and exchange ideas. The Corvallis Stake owns a Pinewood Derby track available for use by the Corvallis wards, and the friendly competition of a derby is enjoyed each year. Additionally, a Stake Scout Day Camp is held in the fall season, providing a day for 11-year-old Scouts to participate in outdoor activities.

Primary Activity Days

On a set weekday, twice each month, Primary girls 8-11 years of age enjoy Activity Day. On this special day, crafts, handiwork, cooking, and a wide array of skills and amusements are introduced to the girls, along with such spiritual elements as are appropriate to a church activity. A day camp is also held for the 11-year-old girls in order to introduce them to young women camping activities of the sort that will await them in future years.



Primary age girl celebrates Pioneer Day in period dress with a miniature replica covered wagon.

Service-oriented activities have also provided opportunity for not only the children, but also their parents and leaders to offer their time and talents to projects ranging from the delivery of cookies to older members of the ward to clearing brush at Camp Alpine.

Primary Adapts to a Changing World

As the Church grows, it welcomes a more culturally diverse membership worldwide, and Primary programs, in consequence, must show greater versatility in their approaches to teaching and to addressing the needs of children. Extra meetings have been eliminated to the greatest practical extent in order to give leaders and teachers more time to spend with their own families. Most of the teaching and activities take place on the ward or branch level, and with seven Primaries in the Corvallis stake, there are, and have been, many great teachers, many great activities, and many great experiences to provide spiritual enrichment to children of the wards and branches.

Beginning in 2011, the Corvallis Stake Primary began sending out a monthly electronic newsletter, called "PRIMAReNEWS," much to the appreciation of ward leaders. These newsletters contain announcements, ideas for Primary and parents, and the names of new ward primary leaders. This last feature was a challenge to keep abreast with the pace of change in 2011, as that year saw no fewer than five new primary presidencies. The publication of a new handbook necessitated the instruction of primary leaders on the stake and ward level to ensure their understanding and adherence to the latest policies.

Two accomplishments of particular note for 2011 were two stake-wide activities put on for 11-year-old boys and girls, respectively. Thirteen 11-year-old girls attended the activity in March, called "Forever Friends," and enjoyed an occasion of singing, crafting, games, and lunch. As Sister Suzanne Woods remembers of this event for the girls:

It was especially gratifying that three less-active girls attended, one of whom has returned with her family to full activity. The invitation to attend the March activity came at the right time and helped that family re-connect with the church, resulting in one baptism.

For the 11-year-old boys, a Scout Day Camp was held at Camp Alpine in September, full of the sharing of spiritual thoughts, games, and opportunities to advance in Scouting. President Kevin Nielsen gave a memorable presentation at this event based on the familiar image of the "armor of God" from Ephesians 6:11-18, complete with sword and shield. Twelve boys attended the camp, which had a "stripling warrior" theme, along with many adult leaders.

Primary Fosters Love of Basic Gospel Principles

Nurturing a testimony of Jesus Christ, His Church, and His restored gospel is the central aim of each Primary sharing time. With gospel-centered objectives, lessons assist Primary children in their development of an interest in the truths of the everlasting gospel as restored in their latter-day fullness through the instrumentality of prophets beginning with Joseph Smith.

Children are counseled to learn in their youth to keep the commandments of God, to search the Scriptures, to seek to build the kingdom of God, and to bear His holy standard throughout the world. With the introduction of the theme, "I Know the Scriptures Are True," Primary children have been encouraged to bring their own personal Scriptures to class and to meeting. Memorization of Scriptural passages by the children is accomplished at the same time their teachers undertake the challenge.

Of course, children can bring their Scriptures to class and learn in the classroom setting only if they attend, and it was for the purposes of ensuring that as many children as possible did so that the Stake Primary Presidency taught a leadership session on September 19, 1998, that was called, "No Empty Chairs." With instruction from President Susan Williams and her two counselors, Phyllis Ross and Robin Malaska, leaders and teachers were encouraged to visit the children in their homes, send personal notes to those who are absent, give

congratulatory notes to those who contribute in meaningful ways, and extend special invitations to children of less active families. Leaders were also counseled to encourage the other children to do some encouragement of their own by inviting their friends to Primary and other Church-related activities. For example, children might invite their non-member or less active friends to a Primary activity, or even their own family home evening.

Always the desire of Primary leaders, as with parents in the Church, is that children will, like Joseph Smith before them, be able to say, and say truly, “I have learned for myself” (Joseph Smith—History 1:20). It was with just this end in view that a Stake Primary Leadership Meeting was held on May 18, 1999, under the theme, “How Will They Know?” According to the vision of President Robin Malaska and her counselors, Kathy Drebin and Susan Fisher, the objective was to establish not only an awareness of, but a method for, effectively teaching the restored gospel to children with prayer and diligence in seeking the Spirit. There were four breakout sessions for the meeting:

1. Achievement day and gospel in action,
2. Getting started on Primary programs,
3. Cub Scout program, and
4. Teaching music for the Primary programs.

In the summer of 2003, the “Faith in God” booklets were introduced and distributed to the children by the ward Primary presidencies. This new program was to replace the Gospel In Action, Achievement Day, and Priesthood Preview programs, as well as the Faith in God program for boys in Cub Scouts. Primary girls of ages 8-11 still meet, normally twice a month, for Activity Day, and bishopric members still meet with 11-year-old Primary boys and their parents to discuss with them the importance of the Priesthood and to encourage them in their preparations to receive it. Boys in Cub Scouts can also earn the Scouting Religious Square Knot patch by completing the activities listed in the boys’ “Faith in God” booklet. This new program has been well received by parents and their children, and the commitment to disciplined effort required of those Primary-age boys and girls who work toward their Faith in God has proven an effective preparation for Priesthood, Young Men, and Young Women responsibilities.

Primary songs also, through the matchless medium of music, instill in the youthful mind those principles of revealed religion calculated to arouse a sense of divine duty in the pursuit of a godly life on earth. These include:

- “Follow the Prophet,” which stresses the role of prophets in delivering the Lord's message of hope and salvation for the guidance of His children.
- “Nephi's Courage,” which calls to remembrance our need to “go and do” those things which the Lord commands, having always the assurance that a way has been providentially prepared for the realization of His will.
- “Sons of Helaman,” which sets to music the doctrine of the Lord's closeness and care for those who love and keep His commandments, and His will to honor those who honor Him.
- “A Child’s Prayer,” which portrays the simple, trusting heart of a child expressing the universal desire to know our Heavenly Father.
- “I Am a Child of God,” which affirms the divine identity of every boy and girl as “the offspring of God” (Acts 17:29).

Thanks to the many hundreds of men and women who have served the Primary children in stake and ward presidencies, as teachers and nursery leaders, as secretaries and coordinators, and as music leaders and accompanists, untold numbers of lives have been, and are being, blessed with a greater measure of the Spirit.

This labor of love, so freely undertaken by so many, represents a sacrifice of inestimable value in their time, talents, and energy, and for this demonstration of faithfulness, they shall not fail of their eternal reward.

CHAPTER 11

Young Women

“Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.” (Proverbs 31:29)

The Young Women theme helps each young woman in the Church affirm an understanding of her identity, purpose, and eternal destiny as a spirit daughter of God. The theme, often recited by young women in their meetings, is as follows:

We are daughters of our Heavenly Father, who loves us, and we love Him. We will “stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places” (Mosiah 18:9) as we strive to live the Young Women values, which are:

- *Faith*
- *Divine Nature*
- *Individual Worth*
- *Knowledge*
- *Choice and Accountability*
- *Good Works*
- *Integrity and*
- *Virtue*

We believe as we come to accept and act upon these values, we will be prepared to strengthen home and family, make and keep sacred covenants, receive the ordinances of the temple, and enjoy the blessings of exaltation.

Also associated with the Young Women program are a motto and official logo, which are used during lessons and activities as reminders for young women to walk in paths of virtue and live according to gospel standards.

The young women motto aphoristically expresses the uncompromising integrity of the young women in their united stand for truth, including moral truth, with the simple words: “Stand for Truth and Righteousness.”

The logo is a lit torch, encircled by the text of the above motto, representing the light of Christ, ablaze and refulgent in the sight of all the world, beckoning to the children of men on earth to “come unto Christ” (Moroni 10:32). This symbolism further enjoins all young women to do as Christ bids: “Therefore, hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up—that which ye have seen me do.” (3 Nephi 18:24) The flame depicted on the logo is in the shape of a young woman’s head, suggestive of the light that should emanate from the very countenances of the young women. That the young women may, both in their youth and upon attaining to the full stature of womanhood, bear aloft the light of gospel verity is the grand object.



Young Women logo

Young Women Standards

The youth of the Church have been, and are, exemplary, and their accomplishments impressive by any standard. The Young Women program is a crucial factor in the maintenance of high moral standards.

To better encourage those of the rising generation to follow the Lord's teachings, the Young Women began, in 1965, to hold an annual parent-and-youth night. This tradition evolved into an annual Standards Night in which parents and their young women are invited to attend and receive encouragement in adhering to proper standards of dress, and to learn how to comport themselves with a dignified bearing as ladies. Honors Nights are held for the recognition of achievements by the Young Women. Special events, such as the 2003 Corvallis Fashion Awards program, have emphasized the spiritual, as well as outer, beauty of modesty, with a showcase of evening gowns and warm-weather apparel, in addition to a video from the Young Women General Board encouraging the young women to dress in a manner pleasing in the Lord's sight.

The year 1965 marked the first Mother-Daughter banquet put on by the stake, and Young Women General Board member Betty J. Killpack was the keynote speaker. The following year, Mrs. Oregon (Mrs. Bryant Alder) was the featured speaker. And Miss Oregon (Sue Pack) spoke in 1967 to mothers and daughters in the stake.

Service To Others

Young Women often render service in ward and stake projects, and examples abound throughout Corvallis Stake history. Community organizations such as the Children's Farm Home and the Jackson Street Youth Shelter have benefited from such service on the part of stake young women who, feeling themselves moved to compassion toward children who had, for their own safety, needed to be removed from their homes, decided to make 200 fabric bags filled with toiletries, candy, books, stuffed animals, toothbrushes, and letters of comfort and consolation to those who found themselves in unfamiliar circumstances.

Service work with The TOUCH (Take One Ukrainian Child's Hand) Project helped children in Ukrainian orphanages. Young Women prepared letters, pictures of themselves, hygiene bags, placemats, and shirts to send with a delegation that traveled to Ukraine to give the orphanages there needed help.

In 2011, young women at camp built two playhouses, one of which remained at Camp Alpine, while the other was sent to a facility in Newport that assists families in trouble.

Stewardship Over the Earth

Laurels in the Corvallis Third Ward have proven themselves faithful to the divine mandate enjoining all descendants of Adam and Eve to "replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). This call to stewardship over the natural environment is a standing rebuke to any practice which would throw the earth into uproar and commotion, as such chaotic conditions leave the earth neither replenished nor subdued, but rather in a state of woeful discomposure. As President Gordon B. Hinckley said with characteristic candor, "What then shall you do with Jesus that is called Christ? This earth is his creation. When we make it ugly, we offend him." The point is well made, since to disfigure the earth is, in fact, to desecrate the very footstool of Deity (see Isaiah 66:1).

The faithful stewardship of these young women attracted the attention of the New Era, in which a report was made of their noble and diligent efforts, in a 1992 article titled, "What It Means to Be Green." The article clarifies that "to be green means to be environmentally conscious—to be doing your part to look after the earth." It was in this sense that the Corvallis Third Ward Laurels were "green," and not surprisingly so, since environmental consciousness has become practically a byword among those who speak of Oregonians. As the article goes on to state:

After all, they [the Corvallis Third Ward Laurels] live in a state that is exceptionally ecology conscious. High school students are paid quite well for picking up trash, and it shows. Everywhere you look, you see lots of green and very little garbage. And recycling programs are prevalent in almost every city.

The Laurels continually proved themselves true to this standard as they would “attend very ecology-oriented high schools where students have managed to save about 344 trees and 158,000 gallons of water this past year by voluntarily recycling their paper.” But they also proved themselves true and faithful in striving to promote the wise and proper care of natural resources at church. At an ecologically-oriented fireside, the Laurels offered instruction on how to exercise dominion in righteousness over the earth. The article continues:

To make their own contribution via the fireside, the Laurels had to start practicing what they were going to preach. The disposal company in Corvallis picks up sorted garbage and ensures that it will be recycled, so those whose families weren’t already sorting their trash into separate bins for paper, cardboard, plastic, aluminum, tin cans, and glass, began to do so. Was it hard to start going that extra mile?

The object was for each Laurel to bring a week’s worth of recyclables to the fireside to use as visual aids. It was surprising to see how much could be recycled. The front of the multipurpose room of the meetinghouse, where the fireside was held, was brimming. “We used to put two big garbage cans out for the trash man each time he came,” Jenni Merten said. “Now we only use one a week. It feels good to know we’re not putting such a strain on the landfills.”

These efforts, overseen by Ann Sherry and Alice Rampton, yielded beneficial results for all involved, as may be surmised from the following lines of the article:

Was the fireside a success? Judge for yourself. The Laurels were asked to repeat it a number of times, and each presentation had quite a few non-LDS people in attendance. Everyone was impressed.



“Stewards of the Earth” fireside presentation (March 1991).



“Stewards of the Earth” collection of recyclable items (April 1991).

While no one has statistics on how many stake members are now recycling, the fireside definitely helped the Laurels on the personal level. Tami [McDaniel], for example, had just recently been baptized when her class started the ecology project. Her family had been recycling for quite some time, and Tami was well versed on how to be green, so she felt she had something to contribute from the start.

In this, the Laurels showed themselves to be what all of us are called in life to be: Agents of positive change. And to act as such toward the environment is to honor life itself, since, as we learn from Moses 7:48, the very earth itself is alive. Surely, too, as President Ezra Taft Benson taught: “If there is no reverence for life itself, there is apt to be little reverence for the resources God has given man. The outward expressions of irreverence for life and for fellowmen often take the form of heedless pollution of both air and water.” At such “heedless pollution” and “irreverence for life” the Laurels could not stand idle, and their heroic efforts were to pay rich dividends, as the article states:

It’s true that no one knows exactly where all this started, and now, no one knows where it will end. The Laurels feel good, about turning green, however, and hope it’s catching.



“Stewards of the Earth” group (June 1991).

Young Women Camp

Before Camp Alpine had become a reality, the Girls’ Camp program (which has since come to be called Young Women’s Camp) demanded considerable ingenuity in the identification of potential sites where basic camping and survival skills could be taught in a safe, secure environment. Earliest camping ventures in the Willamette Stake found the women and girls travelling south to Diamond Lake. They brought all provisions for the week with them. As part of the Salem Stake, Silver Creek Falls was used. In the early and mid-1960s, the Corvallis Stake utilized a variety of sites, including a Church camp located near Falls City, Oregon, Johnny Thompson's private property to the west of Corvallis, and the Rock Creek Scout site on the Waldport road.



Diamond Lake

Fire-building skills, methods of sanitation, ropes and lashings, camp cookery, and other required learning at the early Girls’ Camps enabled the young women to receive Camp Certification awards.



Young women enjoying water activities at Camp Alpine (1990).



The canoe which Diane Mayne won in a photo contest and donated to Camp Alpine. It was soon put to good and frequent use by the young women.



Flag raising at Girls' Camp (1990).

The sisters who were instrumental in acquiring Camp Alpine for the stake were honored ever after by the young women who knew them. It was remembered by them, for instance, how, in 1967, a committee comprised of members of the stake presidency, high council, and the Young Women leaders toured the Ira Malcolm property in Alpine, evaluating the property for possible purchase, and how the Stake Young Women leader at that time was Elizabeth “Libby” Nielson.

After the necessary arrangements were completed for purchase of the property, the Young Women leaders immediately set about making plans for a summer camp for the girls. The leaders wanted to allow the young women to play in the water of Rambo creek. The small earthen dam had, over the decades, been breached, leaving a mud puddle that no one wanted to play in. However, just downstream the creek dropped some 6-8 feet forming a little waterfall with a refreshing pool at the base.

The girls at that first Young Women’s camp claimed the waterfall in the name of their beloved stake Young Women president, “Libby” Nielson, and loved to make their way through the brush to the stream and dare one another to jump off into the pool below. They christened the place “Libby’s Leap,” and for years thereafter it was one of the rites of passage for the young women to make the jump.

There was fun to be had, also, in canoeing, swimming, stargazing and nature hikes. The focus of the camp program during this time was to instruct young women in skills of survival, in the event that there should be a national or local disaster. In addition, however, there was the opportunity for comradery with new friends in the stake, and for the building and sharing of testimonies amid the natural splendor of the surrounding creation, and, as Sister Jean Nelson put it: *“Long after the camp fires died away, the beautiful testimony of our Savior stayed with the young women.”*

Experiences shared with the young women remained likewise emblazoned on the tablets of memory for their leaders. Sister Terri Harper, for example, who was Girls’ Camp Director between 1982 and 1989, wrote:

Singing time at Camp Alpine is also a favorite memory of mine. I loved how we had a theme song every year and we would sing that song every night



Girls' Camp mealtime

and multiple times during the day. I liked how we could sing crazy fun songs and then sing the more quiet songs with a spiritual message. I know many hearts have been touched by the music at camp over the decades. I loved leading the girls with my guitar and listening to their awesome voices and seeing their awesome faces!

The memory of Sister Kathy Parsons is especially dear to the hearts of many who, as young women, would while away the time with her, surrounding the campfire, and singing late into the night. Sister Parsons died young, succumbing to bodily ailments, but her memory remains, alive as is her spirit.

Enjoyable as these activities were, however, the best and most blessed were those in which personal testimonies were expressed most directly. Sister Harper remembered:

Testimony meetings were always the best. Many experiences to share that involved the Holy Ghost. I always liked the testimony meetings that were in the sacred grove; the morning sun filtering through the trees, and the sounds of nature. I don't know about anybody else, but I always thought of Joseph Smith's first vision. I think at some of those meetings the Spirit was very present and there must have been angels sitting next to some of those girls.

Eternal friendships, always best forged where “the Spirit of God like a fire is burning,” solidified among the young women, as well as their leaders, so that the testimonies there borne by them they would continue both to bear, and to be borne up by, in their lives ever after. Again Sister Harper recalled:



Fire building activity (1990).



“Shower time” at Camp Alpine as it was in 1990.

My path has crossed many times with those Young Women that I served while being a leader. It is amazing to see them grow in their testimonies. They go on missions, become Relief Society presidents, return to camp as leaders, serve in the Young Women on Stake and Ward levels, and I could go on and on. I have seen non member girls come to camp and then enter the waters of baptism. Camp was part of their journey to learn about feeling the Spirit in their life. Also not to forget the friendships with other women that will last over the years—and forever!



Smith Reservoir in the Oregon Cascades

that year, it had been the custom for the fourth-year girls to take an overnight backpacking hike on the logging roads which lead out from Camp Alpine. When the logging industry had become very active in the area, with the trucks travelling through in greater numbers and with increased frequency, it no longer would have been safe for the young women to hike their accustomed roads.

Beginning in 2000, therefore, permission was obtained from the stake presidency for the fourth-year young women to create what was called the Fourth-Year Adventure, for which they gathered at the stake center, packed their equipment and gear for the journey, and headed out, bound for the Iron Mountain trail head on the Santiam Pass. After hiking and reaching the top of Iron Mountain, they had a lunch, enjoyed the spectacular, sweeping view of the Cascade Mountain Peaks, and hiked back over the same trail.

From this point, they drove down the McKenzie Highway to Smith Reservoir. Here, several canoes were unloaded by the girls, who then embarked across the lake, paddling for approximately three miles to the overnight campsite awaiting them at the other side. Paddling back the next morning, the young women loaded their canoes and gear, and returned to Camp Alpine.

But still other improvements were made to the program. In 2006, the Fourth-Year Adventure was expanded to include a climbing wall experience. Now, after returning from their overnight stay at the Smith Reservoir campsite, the girls went, instead of directly to Camp Alpine, to a climbing wall in Eugene. Here, the girls enjoyed a fortifying lunch, after which they tried their skills at climbing. During their first experience, the girls and their leaders struggled to reach the top. Some made it, while others did not, though no one, thankfully, was injured, and the challenge and exhilaration of the new experience were felt by all. More than physically strengthening the participants, spiritual strength was, as intended, developed in the young women. The experience itself became an extended metaphor, as along the way the series of physical experiences were compared to reaching the high and holy regions of that Heaven where dwells our Heavenly Father. To return to His presence was, speaking metaphorically, to summit the greatest of all mountains. The return was then made to Camp Alpine.

But in returning, none were ever the same as when they had left. Rather, they were better for having confronted, and conquered, the challenges that they faced in those wild environs, especially when they came to a realization of how their very lives were, in microcosm, represented by the journey which they had taken and completed. As Sister Terri Harper would later recall:

It was always fun to take these girls out hiking and doing the Fourth Year overnight. I saw girls do things they never thought they could do. Many had physical limitations that made these activities way out of their comfort zone. Those girls always made it to the top of Iron Mountain and they received cheers

from their peers as they slowly made their goal. We used to paddle across a lake for an hour to get to our campsite for the night. We also went climbing at a climbing wall before returning to Camp Alpine. At the end of those two days they were very tired but very proud of what they had endured. They also learned they could survive a night in a primitive camp, purifying their own water and cooking their own food. As we sat around the campfire we would talk of our experiences and compare them to spiritual parallels.

On the final day of the week-long experience, young women gather to an assembly at Camp Alpine at which the girls are invited to share their testimonies. At such meetings, the Spirit is strongly felt, and young women freely exchange reminiscences from the week past, and recount those experiences which enabled them to draw closer to God their Heavenly Father and their Elder Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Sister Terri Harper has described it:

Over the years, camp has grown to encourage spiritual growth of the young women who attend. The firesides, programs, speakers, and activities are all related to strengthening testimonies and developing a stronger relationship with Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ. There is nothing as impressive as walking up the path to the amphitheatre and hearing the sweet voices singing together, “Walk tall, you’re a daughter, a child of God; Be strong, please remember who you are...” Good showers, good food, good crafts, happy voices, beautiful singing, testimonies blossoming and the fourth-year army tent. Some things at Young Women camp will always be the same.

Such has, from the first, been the objective, in this, as in all other youth activities of the Church. When a young woman comes to know God, she comes to know herself. In her book, *Saying It Like It Is*, Sheri L. Dew observed:

When we come to understand not only who we are but who we have always been—and therefore who we may become—the choice between following Christ and embracing the world is really no choice at all.

The Mia Maid Mortal Climb

Young women of Mia Maid age who have completed the 9th grade have a grand adventure to anticipate. Known as the Mia Maid Mortal Climb, it is a two-day adventure in which Corvallis Stake young women participate in a hike having various aspects that serve to typify elements of our mortal climb through life on earth. Inspired by a message from Sheri L. Dew, the activity recalls her words:

I have come to understand that the mountain—meaning challenges and obstacles—are designed to help lead us ultimately to the mount—meaning the mount of the Lord—where there awaits more than we can possibly imagine from here below.

The event was first initiated in 2006 under the direction of Michelle Babbel while she was serving as Stake Young Women President, who also chaired the event that year. It has since been observed on an annual basis, except for in 2010. Terri Harper chaired the event for 2007; and Lisa Davis for the years 2008-2009, and then again for 2011-2012. Sister Davis will do so yet again from July 12-13, 2013.

Underpinning the organization of the Mortal Climb are certain viewpoints on mortality and the realization of its purposes, such as:

- That life is hard, but may also be filled with joy—“in the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer” (John 16:33).
- That adventures may be compared with our mortal journey—or “climb”—on earth.
- That to some are given particular and unique talents, while to others different ones are given, and the same principle is true of individual weaknesses. To some, for instance, hiking may come easily, while others may have an inborn dread of heights.

- That when we partake of the Spirit, our weaknesses and misgivings can become strengths.
- That by the strengthening, sanctifying aid of the Spirit, we may pursue the often hard and rugged course of personal righteousness, and in so doing not only overcome the diverse hardships of the world, but in the world to come receive eternal life, and thus truly be “more than conquerors” (Romans 8:37).
- That in learning to rely upon the Spirit, we learn one of life’s greatest lessons.
- The Mia Maid Mortal Climb consists of three parts:
 - The Tree-to-Tree Adventure Park near Portland, which features zip lines, wobbly bridges, tightropes, and other exciting attractions.
 - An overnight campout
 - A hike to the top of Saddle Mountain in Clatsop County.

No special training is required for any of the three parts, and all may be done by even the most inexperienced of young women. The goal is not to generate competitiveness, anyway, but rather to understand that in conquering life's array of obstacles and challenges, we become more capable of withstanding outside temptations, and are brought closer to our Heavenly Father.

Laurel Legacy

The Laurel Legacy tradition was born in response to the question, first put by Stake President David Blake and his counselor Brent Boyter: *“What can the stake leaders do to assist parents, priesthood leaders, and youth leaders to strengthen the youth in this stake?”*

The first Laurel Legacy event was held in 2003 with Lisa Freeman as the Laurel Legacy Director. Its purpose was, and remains, to help young women increase in understanding, preparation, and desire to attend the temple and to look forward to womanhood and eternal family relationships including marriage, motherhood, and family. Laurel Legacy is designed for young women Laurels who are either juniors or seniors in high school.

The “Legacy” of the title refers to the legacy bequeathed to the young women by those who have gone before them in the Church. Many young women have examples in their families of saints who were temple-building, temple-attending people. These forebears in the faith enjoyed greater blessings and opportunities from their diligence in attending to their temple work than they might otherwise have received. Also, and more to the point of the Laurel Legacy program, the young women of today will, in their own time, pass on a legacy to their posterity, with the temple serving as the symbol most central to their membership in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Laurel Legacy affords the young women an opportunity to spend time in nature, looking for deeper meanings of Christ in the activities and creations surrounding them. Laurel Legacy has activities from which symbolic significance may be learned. Using the natural surroundings to illustrate the strength, presence, and love of God and to prepare for the temple, young women are encouraged not to allow these insights simply to enter their minds only to pass again out of them, but rather to keep and write in a journal during the course of the activity. Scripture study is also essential.

Designed so as to be of short enough duration that most Laurels may attend, Laurel Legacy originally was three days in length, but in 2011, a two-day experience was held at a private camp near Salem. The experience included a devotional, fireside, and opportunities for scripture study and journal keeping. Physical activities challenged and engaged the Laurels.

In 2011, Laurel Legacy included a hike whereon, while in the midst of a beautiful forested area, Laurels stopped three times to hear short messages about the temple, and the required preparations for worthy entrance

into it, from their Young Women leaders. They also went for a challenging hike to Ape Caves in Washington. The extreme darkness of the caves demands excellent lights for navigation, and this scenario served to illustrate for the Laurels how vital it is for them to have, and to use, the light of Christ throughout their lives in this world.

Gathering at the evening campfire, the young women also heard from special guest speakers of the Corvallis Stake, who shared testimony, counseled, and instructed them on the blessings and covenants of the temple. The camp concluded with a trip to the temple to perform vicarious baptisms, and then on to a dinner and fireside with parents, Young Women leaders, bishops, and the Corvallis Stake presidency in Corvallis.

Directors and assistants for Laurel Legacy have included Lisa Freeman (2003-2004); Linda Miller, Carrie Roberts, Laurie Wood (2005); Linda Miller, Laurie Wood, and Katie Ross (2006); Linda Miller, Katie Ross, and Lori Haslam (2008), Lori Haslam (2011), and Lori Haslam and Bonnie Martin (2013). For the next two Laurel Legacy events, to occur in 2015 and 2017, Janet Cole and Kim Costa have been called and set apart to begin planning.

Stake Young Women Presidents

There have, as of the year 2013, been 17 presidents of the Stake Young Women auxiliary in Corvallis. Their names are: Florence Webb Goulding, Margaret B. Reese, Elizabeth Nielson, Ione H. Banks, Joanne Thomas, Judy Calder, Ruth Fisher, Sherri Bird, Judy Barker, Alicia Armstrong, Kim Costa, Aileen Willes, Luana Tekulve, Michelle Babbel, Julie Strahl, Bonnie Martin, and JanaLee Romrell (currently serving).

CHAPTER 12

Young Men & Scouting

“But verily, verily, I say unto you, that as many as receive me, to them will I give power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on my name. Amen.” (D&C 11:30)

The Young Men organization of the Church provides opportunity and means for young men in the Aaronic Priesthood to develop into men of character, building lives of noble purpose upon the sure foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus the Young Men auxiliary of the Church encourages deacons, teachers, and priests to fulfill their several responsibilities in the priesthood, and so exercise the powers granted them by divine investiture of authority.

As Elder Adrián Ochoa, Second Counselor in the Young Men General Presidency, said to the young men during General Conference in April, 2012:

Dear young men of the Church, let me ask you a question that I hope you will carry in your heart for the rest of your life. What greater power can you acquire on earth than the priesthood of God? What power could possibly be greater than the capacity to assist our Heavenly Father in changing the lives of your fellowmen, to help them along the pathway of eternal happiness by being cleansed of sin and wrongdoing?



Elder Adrián Ochoa

That they may so assist our Heavenly Father by virtue of this greatest of all powers, young men are taught in the Young Men organization, through its programs, to achieve the following goals:

1. Become converted to the gospel of Jesus Christ and live its teachings.
2. Serve faithfully in priesthood callings and fulfill the responsibilities of priesthood offices
3. Give meaningful service
4. Prepare and live worthily to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood and temple ordinances
5. Prepare to serve an honorable full-time mission

6. Obtain as much education as possible
7. Prepare to become a worthy husband and father
8. Give proper respect to women, girls, and children

With these worthy goals in view, the young men set a course for high achievement, with ambitions raised to celestial heights. They are then able to commence in their pursuit of the way heavenward.

Duty to God

All young men of the Aaronic Priesthood are encouraged by their leaders to participate in the Duty to God program of goal-setting and achievement, and to qualify to receive their Duty to God Award upon satisfactory completion. Aaronic Priesthood candidates for the Duty to God Award must demonstrate their qualification through meritorious conduct in fulfilling priesthood responsibilities, planning wholesome family activities, engaging in quorum activities; achieving worthy personal goals relating to education, spiritual, and physical development, and successfully completing a Duty to God service project. In so doing, bearers of the Aaronic Priesthood pay heed to the inspired message of Alma, which declares: *“I have said these things unto you that I might awaken you to a sense of your duty to God, that ye may walk blameless before him, that ye may walk after the holy order of God.”* (Alma 7:22, italics added.)

In 1963, Corvallis Ward was divided into three parts, each of which constituted a new ward. Before that division, eight young men in Corvallis Ward received Duty to God Awards at one time. It is believed to be one of the largest groups ever thus honored in one ward at one time in the Church. The eight young men were Richard Blanch, Boyd F. Bowles, Lee Goulding, Mark Rampton, Paul Reese, Allen Robinson, Ross Singleton, and Brian Webb.

Boy Scouts of America

Scouting, with its high ideals and acknowledgment of the need for devotion to God, has long served as a faithful companion to the Aaronic Priesthood and the Young Men program. The official founding of the Boy Scouts of America, as part of the international Scout Movement begun by Robert Baden-Powell, took place in 1910. The Church adopted the Scouting program in 1913, and has ever since maintained a special and close relationship with the movement.

Symbolic of this high regard for Scouting is the level of commitment

THOSE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE INDIVIDUAL AARONIC PRIESTHOOD AWARDS FOR 1962		
<u>ALBANY WARD</u> Dennis Meyers Thomas Jones	<u>McMINNVILLE WARD</u> David Blanchard Mark Gallup Fred Wagner Don Blanchard Gary Fergus	<u>SALEM SECOND WARD</u> Marlyn Lewis Eric Brown Richard Huddleston David Snider Ralph McDonald Keith Brown James Grange Steven Laker Rodney Nichols David Strawn
<u>CORVALLIS WARD</u> Alan Bowles Mark Bingham Mickey Cochran Richard Johnson David Lee Kenneth Thomas David Winstead Boyd Bowles Douglas Blanch Dale Frischknecht Paul Reese Mark Rampton Ross Singleton Billy Thomas Carl Taylor Brian Webb Mike Doney Richard Blanch Thomas Emang Lee Goulding Wesley Rampton Allan Robison	<u>MOLALLA BRANCH</u> Albert Babb Leland Hale Leonard Hale David McCally Richard Anderson James E. Churchtown, Jr. Richard Tolleson Charles H. Wilchen, Jr. Larry McCally	<u>SWEET HOME WARD</u> James A. Lewis Rodney L. Hansen William G. Bell Robert F. Bell Mack Albrethsen James R. McArthur Robert Smith Dennis MacKey Dan A. Caines Robert T. Rice Kim Patterson Marvin Bergevin Teddy Bell
<u>LEBANON WARD</u> Alan Plagmann Craig Wilcox Gary Simon Mike Shurts Timothy Winkler Clifford Stuart George Shurts Larry Shurts Pat Tacy	<u>MONMOUTH BRANCH</u> Paul Jones Eric Hanson Donald Lamb Tim Hinshaw	<u>WOODBURN WARD</u> Michael G. Lucas J. Brian Harris Dale S. Wulffenstein Norman D. Fobert Danny J. Dodge James R. Miller, Jr. Michael Gutierrez Kent C. Wiser Richard O. Persons James M. Dodge Allen Wulffenstein
<p>THOSE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE DUTY TO GOD AWARD</p> <p>Boyd Bowles, Corvallis Paul Reese, Corvallis Mark Rampton, Corvallis Ross Singleton, Corvallis Lee Goulding, Corvallis Allan Robison, Corvallis Lynn Workman, Salem First</p>		

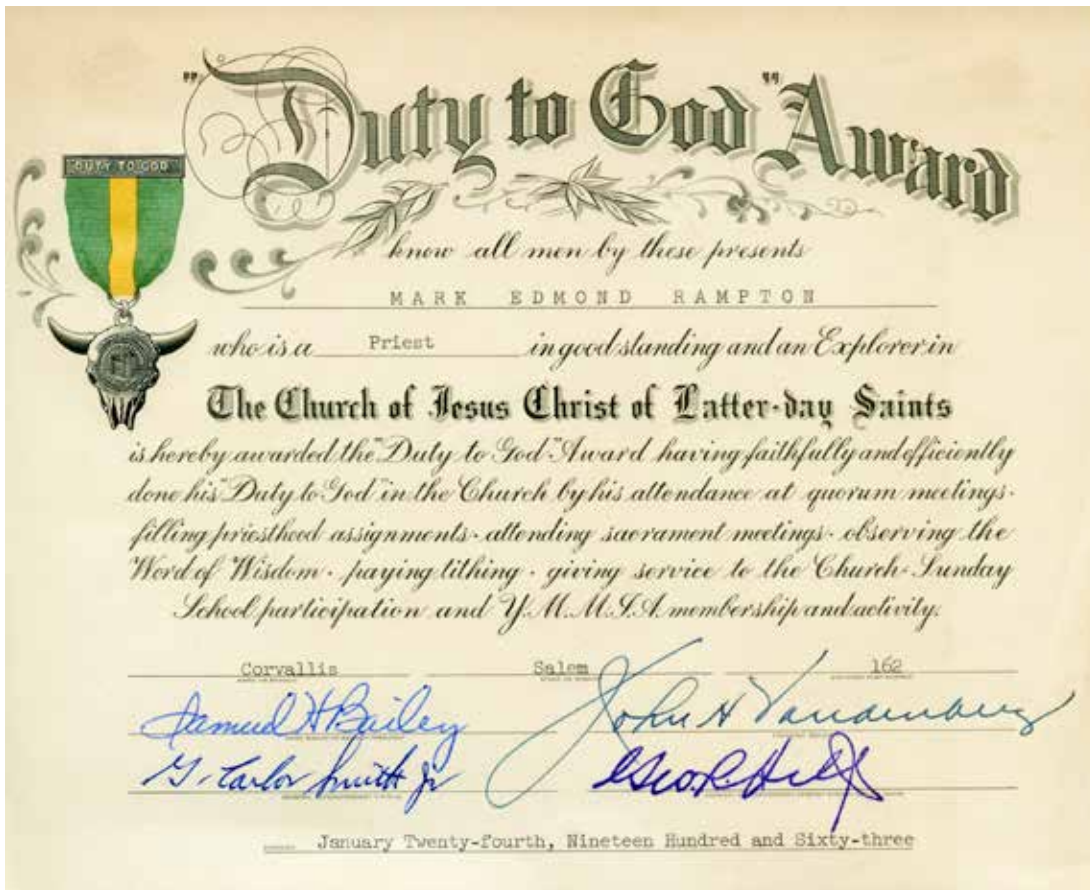
List of brethren in the Salem Stake, including those from Corvallis Ward, eligible to receive individual Aaronic Priesthood awards (January 1963).



Duty to God medallion



Corvallis Stake Duty to God recipients for 1963. Front row (L to R): Mark Rampton, Allen Robison, Paul Reese, and Ross Singleton. Back row (L to R): Lee Goulding, Boyd Bowles, Brian Webb, and Richard Blanch.



Duty to God certificate awarded to Mark E. Rampton (1963).

shown to it not only by young men in the Church, but also by prominent Church leaders. In 1934, for instance, the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America awarded Elder George Albert Smith of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles the prestigious Silver Buffalo Award. At that time, Elder Smith was also serving as general superintendent of the Church's Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association. Prophet and Church President Thomas S. Monson has been the honored recipient of multiple Scouting awards, presented at various times throughout his long years of distinguished service in the Church. These were the Silver Beaver Award (1971), Silver Buffalo Award (1978), and international Scouting's highest award, the Bronze Wolf (1993).



George Albert Smith in full Scout uniform (1932).

Before the purchase and development of Camp Alpine in 1968, Scouts were able to use the existing Scout camps of western Oregon for summer and winter camping excursions. A great deal of the motivation prompting the initial purchase of Camp Alpine arose from the keenly felt need of having appropriate and ample facilities for camping and Scouting activities.

Other encampments took the Scouts of Corvallis Stake beyond Oregon and into Idaho. Brother Boyd Nash has recorded:

In 1966 I served as Scoutmaster for a Corvallis Stake troop and took about 30 boys and leaders to Farragut State Park, Idaho, on Lake Pend Oreille, to camp with 3,500 other boys and men belonging to LDS units from Canada and the Northwestern states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana at what was called a "Canadian/U.S.-L.D.S. Encampment." We made our own tents and had



President Thomas S. Monson giving the Scout salute (2009).

a number of money-raising projects to help the boys finance the trip...We suffered cold showers during the week, the only access to water in spite of the nearby beautiful Pend Oreille Lake. In spite of hardships, it was an enjoyable week, including a Sunday Sacrament meeting in the open air amphitheater, with all 3,500 Scouts and their leaders enjoying the visit with general authorities from Salt Lake City.

Since 1968, Corvallis Stake has, with its Camp Alpine, benefitted greatly from the service projects undertaken by the Scouts, and especially those participating in the service projects which are required of young men pursuing an Eagle Scout Award. Not all service projects done for this purpose, however, have been restricted to Camp Alpine. Service to community, a gospel principle instilled in youth of the Church, has prompted various Scouts in the stake to make improvements to public parks, to cemeteries, to local schools, and to various other facilities located within stake boundaries. The stake has noticed, and in fact documented, a very strong correlation between stake young men earning the rank of Eagle and serving a full-time mission. Of those who earn the Eagle Scout Award, 82% serve full-time missions.



Corvallis Stake troop at Camp Farragut in Idaho (1966).

In 2002, a special Scout Day Camp was held for 11-year-old boys at Camp Alpine on June 8. Jane Brandenburg directed the event, which began at 9:00 A.M. and ended at 4:00 P.M. Opening with a flag ceremony, the activities commenced with patrol yells to identify each of the participating Scout patrols by their distinctive shouts. Knot and lashing games followed, combining recreation with the application of useful skills. Other events for the boys included plant identification, Tote n' Chip training (allowing the boys to become certified for the safe carrying and use of such wood tools as hatchets and knives), dutch oven cooking, and orienteering

(map and compass). At the close of the event, an award ceremony was held, after which all were dismissed.

Two Corvallis Stake members—H. Darwin Reese and Mary Olive Maddox—were recognized for outstanding leadership in Scouting. Each was presented a Silver Beaver Award, in honor of their long years of service with the Boy Scouts of America.

Another who has devoted long years of service to Scouting is Roy Severin. Brother Severin has served as District Sustaining Membership Chairman for many years, and has been a significant player in the success of annual Boy Scout food drives.

Athletic activities for stake young men

The Corvallis Stake sports program is as old as the stake itself. In the beginning years of the stake, teams competed for the privilege of traveling to Salt Lake City, where they would participate in an all-Church competition. Sister Jean Nelson recalls:

Corvallis [University Ward] was represented in the all-Church softball competition in the early 1960s. Lively tournaments in men's basketball found teams excelling to the point of competition in the all-Church finals in Salt Lake City and bringing home the sportsmanship trophy. Albany's Y.M. basketball team in 1968, coached by Don and Gordon Lyon, played in an all-Church competition.



Corvallis University Ward basketball team receives sportsmanship trophy (1967).

During the Fall of 1984 a Corvallis 3rd Ward basketball team coached by Stan Harrison won the Stake,

then the Regional, and finally the Area Championship. Brian Sorensen, son of Maurice and Laurel Sorenson of Corvallis 3rd Ward, was captain of the team.

In more recent years, competition has been confined to stake and regional tournaments. A stake-wide basketball program has successfully been maintained, with regular seasons in which six wards compete. Teams play each other twice, and there is a tournament following, the winner of which goes to the regional competition in Portland. In 2000, the team from Corvallis 4th Ward won both the stake and the regional competition. Sports programs often include non-members, who must first agree to attend church before earning the privilege of playing on the team.

On a few fondly remembered occasions, Corvallis young men have been graced by visits from star athletes known across the nation. These have included the all-star pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Vernon Law; former



Vernon Law, famed pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates, visits Corvallis young men.

world champion middleweight boxer, Gene Fullmer; All-Pro defensive lineman for the Los Angeles Rams, Merlin Olsen (who would later achieve fame as a television actor and sports commentator); and the Olympian and discus champion, L. Jay Silvester.

Priesthood goals: Spirituality, endurance, unity, and service

Camping, river rafting, and other high-adventure activities are regular, and much-sought-after, parts of the Corvallis Stake Young Men program, often (though not exclusively) in connection with Scouting. Opportunities for service also abound, of which the Young Men take frequent advantage.

Merit badge clinics and similar activities have included waterskiing, bicycling, hiking, canoeing, horsemanship, and wilderness survival. Pistol and rifle shooting are popular favorites among the Young Men, many of whom arrange with their leaders to hold shooting activities again, even after having earned the relevant Scouting merit badge.



Corvallis young men meet Los Angeles Rams defensive lineman, Merlin Olsen.

Week-long backpacking trips are another regular, and popular, event in the Stake Young Men program. The young men, accompanied and supervised by their adult leaders, hike 5 to 10 miles daily through the Oregon Cascades, participating along the way in a variety of high-adventure activities, and ending the adventure with a youth testimony meeting.

For the young men, as for all people, the gift of acquired skill is truly the proverbial “gift that keeps on giving.” The Teachers Quorum of the Corvallis 3rd Ward, for example, has learned, under the mentorship of Brother Greg Merten, useful skills in hands-on craftsmanship and the safe, productive operation of tools. Self-reliance, being among the many attributes necessarily developed by saints in these last days, is best learned through direct experience of this kind.

The quorum has made vials for consecrated oil out of aluminum or brass on a metal lathe, through a process that required cutting, drilling, threading, and lathing, and the proper placement of an O-ring seal. In making consecrated oil vials, the Teachers Quorum members are thus “drawn forward” to the eventual time when they receive the Melchizedek Priesthood, and can worthily exercise it in, among other things, the anointing and healing of the sick. In this way, they are encouraged also to prepare for missions. They have also learned how to create a pencil-holder/paperweight through a process in which they are required to perform 11 different operations, including draw filing, machining, lathing, and welding. The young men have learned, additionally, to make Christmas gifts on a wood lathe.

Lifelong skills, as well as lifelong memories, were also acquired when the Scouts of Troop 362 successfully built a pair of cedar-strip canoes over a period of many months in the barn of Dr. Mark Rampton. An article from the *Gazette-Times* for August 27, 2009, reported:

Since November, the Scouts have spent 90 minutes almost every Wednesday—as well as several other sessions—making two cedar-strip canoes in Rampton's barn off Crescent Valley Drive.

“It took us nine months. We're having twins today,” Rampton joked.

“We built them ourselves from two-by-fours,” said Devin Dye, 15, who will be a sophomore at Crescent Valley High School.

The finishing touches on the small, lightweight boats were done Wednesday, and on Thursday the canoes saw direct sunlight for the first time when they were loaded onto a trailer. Some of the Scouts are taking a weekend camping trip to Green Peter Reservoir.

..Scout leader Lorin Davis, 77, said the project gave the teens craft experience. "It taught them they could build something like this," he said. "With a bit of effort ... little by little, they could build something nice."

In all, eight Scouts and (one dad) participated regularly on the project. And eight, apparently, is enough to make narrow boats that look like shining pieces of artwork.

One of the canoes is particularly fancy, with purpleheart wood and a strip of ash on the deck. The canoes also have accents of oak, pine, walnut and eucalyptus.

..Scouts said they researched how much it would cost to buy a cedar strip canoe on the Internet. Instead of paying \$4,000 for a finished canoe, or \$1,800 for a kit, they spent about \$400 on materials for two of the canoes. Of course, there was a lot of free labor involved.

But, free though the labor was, its value was beyond earthly estimation, as the Scouts were, in truth, building not only canoes, but also better character. And, inasmuch as character is destiny, the outlook for these young men is a very bright one, indeed.

Young Men leadership

In each ward, the Aaronic Priesthood is headed by the bishop, who extends callings to other men of the ward to preside over the Young Men program. On Sunday, the Young Men president assists the priests, while his counselors assist the teachers and the deacons. On Mutual night each week, Scouting activities are directed by the Young Men leaders. Once a month, Young Men and Young Women hold a combined activity of service or recreation.

During the early years of the Corvallis Stake, the Young Men president was called as an auxiliary leader. In more recent years, a stake high councilor has been called to lead Young Men programs and activities. Brethren who served as presidents of the Young Men while Corvallis belonged to the Willamette Stake included Harold Gardiner and John F. Bell. Later, Melvin Bowcut served as president of the Young Men while Corvallis was part of the Salem Stake. Since the organization of the Corvallis Oregon Stake, the following brethren have served as Young Men presidents: Sterling A. Russell, Paul H. Krumperman, Weston F. Killpack, Kay H. Salmon, Charles R. Nelson, John B. Limehouse, Wayne H. Glenn, Don E. Hale, David J. Blake, Steven A. Anderson, Robert W. Peterson, Robert W. Babbel, W. Kory Jackson, Richard Hollon, Jr., Donald W. Pennington, Mark L. Freeman, and Brian N. Hanna.

CHAPTER 13

Youth Encampments

“And unto you is given the course for the saints, or the way for the saints of the camp of the Lord, to journey.” (D&C 61:19)

Sons of Helaman

President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles invited stake presidents, in 1998, to gather from around the world to a series of training meetings held at the Boy Scouts of America Philmont Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico. Also present were the Young Men General Presidency, General Primary Presidency, and members of the Boy Scouts of America National Council. President Brent K. Boyter from the Corvallis Stake was assigned to participate in the training that year. (President David J. Blake would attend in 2000).

While thus engaged, President Boyter began pondering how the youth of our stake might take the fullest and most profitable advantage of so great an experience as he had been enjoying while at the Philmont Ranch. With the influence of the place brooding upon him, President Boyter also understood that the planning and coordination of such activities would need to be in accord with the counsel of the Brethren. Therefore, such events would need to be kept as close to the homes of stake members as possible, and be funded agreeable to a policy of reduced spending.



Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico

That such experiences might be enjoyed by youth in the Corvallis Stake became a fixed goal in the mind of President Boyter, as he, along with his fellow members of the stake presidency, had been much concerned over the loss of young men from activity. Data gathered about this time had demonstrated that young men throughout the Church were apt to drift out of activity around the time of their reaching 14 years in age. To retain in activity those young men who would otherwise be prone to wander became a high priority for President Boyter. While at the ranch, he came to a realization that the stake could indeed do an activity on the lines of the Philmont Ranch pattern, while still keeping within reasonably close distance to the homes of the youth, and at reduced cost. Increasing the frequency and intensity of such spiritual experiences as would spark or fan the fire of faith became for him a goal. He also had an insight that recently-returned missionaries ought to be used as rangers, rather than older non-members, such as were used at Philmont Ranch.

President Boyter's idea met with the unanimous approval of his brethren in the stake presidency, who in turn saw that a group of humble and spiritually attuned brethren be appointed to move the project forward to its full realization.

Of great assistance were some Church curriculum materials approved for devotionals gathered from the Cache and Benson Stakes' Sons of Helaman activities. The materials assimilated from these sources provided an organized approach to providing high adventure Scouting experiences, to applying the skills learned by young

men during their deacon years in Scouts toward productive ends, and to seeing that the edification found in pure gospel teachings would make more spiritually-minded young men with a surer degree of commitment to:

- Developing a testimony of Jesus Christ, the Book of Mormon, and the restoration of the true Church.
- Receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood
- Preparing for and serving a full-time mission
- Marrying in the temple and dedicating their lives to the service of God, family, and their fellow men.

These ends, it was determined, could be met through the application of such means as the following:

- Providing each youth with abundant opportunity for feeling the Spirit on a daily basis.
- Challenging them physically, mentally, and emotionally through rigorous Scouting activities
- Building quorum unity and brotherhood through team exercises and other activities involving coordinated group action.
- Providing opportunities to render meaningful service.
- Creating, on the whole, an experience certain to be retained in fond remembrance by all participants throughout their lives (which in turn would inspire them both to return themselves and to encourage others to attend in future years).

The accomplishment of these tasks and aims involved a considerable amount of hiking, generally covering 5 to 10 miles each day, and camping overnight at each leg of the journey. A spiritual regimen of morning devotionals, trailside testimonies, and evening firesides consistently injected a strong spiritual element into a diverse range of enriching experiences with swimming, horsemanship, canoeing, geology, pistol and rifle shooting, and wilderness survival.

The first leaders of the Corvallis Stake Sons of Helaman encampment were Richard Tucker (director), Greg Perry and Aaron Black (assistants), Matt Hildebrand (quartermaster), Mike Castellano (high councilor), and Robert Babel (stake young men president).

There was the initial frustration, however, of having to cancel what would have been the first Sons of Helaman outing, owing to excessive snowfall in the high Cascade Mountains creating adverse conditions. The event was thus rescheduled for the last week in July of 2000.

This effort, happily, met with success. From July 24-29, the Bull of the Woods Wilderness just north of Detroit, Oregon, provided the setting for a truly memorable experience. Indeed, the event is memorialized on a specially designed T-shirt featuring artwork by one of the Stake young men, on which is depicted a modern-day son of Helaman and the words: "Sons of Helaman 2000."



Brent K. Boyter



Bull of the Woods Wilderness

A newly-returned missionary who had attained to the rank of Eagle in the Scouting program was assigned to each camp as its Ranger. Each day began at the campsite with a breakfast and spiritual devotional led by the Ranger, who worked to foster a spirit of missionary zeal in the youth under his care. While hiking from one camp to another, the youth were also favored with a personal testimony shared extemporaneously by their Ranger. Being in such constant close association with newly returned missionaries developed a brotherly bond and sense of esprit de corps between the youth and their Ranger leaders.

Monday morning began with a devotional held at the stake center with President Brent Boyter speaking about the original sons of Helaman whose celebrated heroism is borne record of in the Book of Mormon. After gathering their food supply for the week, everyone travelled to the designated hike-in point. While there, the young participants and their leaders also cleaned up campsites and performed maintenance work on trails, for which the Forest Service expressed great appreciation. By early afternoon of each day, each group should have arrived at their next campsite, and were greeted by an adult who was stationed at that camp and who was a qualified leader for youth activities. Seasoned leaders, with many years of experience to their credit and advantage, taught these activities. After dinner and usually before sunset that camp leader would hold a fireside on a gospel topic that was assigned to that camp location.

During the final evening, which fell upon Friday, all of the individual groups gathered in for a Dutch oven meal prepared at the main base camp by other stake leaders. There were 41 youth present, along with 14 leaders and 6 Rangers. That night, the fathers of the various youth were invited to come up and attend the closing fireside, while also enjoying a hearty supper with their sons. They would also have the opportunity to camp overnight with their sons.

Before this final fireside, Presidents Blake and Boyter went out amongst the youth and their leaders to ascertain the general feeling of the participants as to how the event had gone. By the time the fireside commenced, President Blake said, "*We will do this again!*" The decision was joyfully received by all.

Saturday morning consisted of a filling breakfast followed by a Spirit-filled youth testimony meeting, after which everyone returned to Corvallis. All were anxious to return when the next opportunity came around.

The event was exceptionally well received by the young men. Comments obtained through an exit survey included the following:

"Excellent activity!"

"Very spiritual."

"It was awesome!"

"I learned a lot about the sons of Helaman, church history and how we should live our lives. The messages did touch me."

"Each devotional was really great. My testimony is stronger now than ever before."

The Sons of Helaman experience in 2000 provided, also, a number of learning points for leaders, which would be worth taking into account in future years. Such lessons for leaders included:

- Give information packets and forms for doctor's physical to all youth and adults in wards early.
- Give copy of itinerary to Rangers and adult leaders well in advance.
- Assign Rangers to a ward different from their own.
- Give maps and directions to all participants, including fathers and all stake leaders, prior to the event.
- Hold informational meetings several months in advance.

- Wisely time the event for either the last week of July or the first week of August.
- Account for money by channeling it through the Sons of Helaman director himself, rather than through the ward.
- Reserve base camp 9-12 months in advance through the Forest Service.

The Sons of Helaman activity was held in the Corvallis Stake in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008, giving each teacher-age young man one opportunity for a camping experience with the Sons of Helaman format, and another of a different format during the interval year.

More recent years have been unusual. In 2010, for example, no Sons of Helaman encampment took place at all, owing to the handcart trek occurring that same year. Then, in 2012, a Sons of Helaman encampment was supervised by Brother Mark Freeman, but with the exceptional arrangement that all young men over 14 were included in order to compensate those who did not get to attend in 2010.

Sons of Mosiah

The first bi-annual Sons of Mosiah experience was held July the 30th through August the 2nd, 2003. Although the event was held mainly for priests in the stake, the fathers of the priests were also invited, as were their Young Men leaders and bishops.

Thirty-three young men and an additional fifteen adults (not counting the eight stake leaders) attended this milestone event. At the direction of the stake presidency, Bishop David Williams, assisted by Bishops David Bird and Tom Sherry, as well as Sister Susan Williams, developed the Sons of Mosiah as a way of providing a high-adventure experience mingled with spiritually enriching activities. On the side of physical activities, planners of the event sought out those which would be physically challenging, mentally stimulating, and fun. As to the spiritual dimension, event planners aimed to help each young man learn to recognize and express his testimony of Jesus Christ, recognize the promptings of the Spirit, and understand how to seek and use the gifts of the Spirit in the service of God and man.

In the interest of achieving these objectives, “roaming firesides” were put on, giving young men a unique experience with feeling the Spirit. While being transported in a vehicle, the priests were treated to a talk or fireside recording from a Church leader or well-known speaker, played over the car stereo system. These recorded talks established the spiritual setting necessary to open youthful minds to impressions from the Holy Ghost.

The 2003 agenda for Sons of Mosiah ran thus:

Wednesday, July 30th, young men and their adult leaders gathered at the stake center, from which point they travelled to Trail Bridge Reservoir. Here, they camped for the 3-day duration of the activity at a site set up and awaiting them on their arrival (tents and ground cloths from each of the wards had been collected the preceding Saturday, July 26th, and were set up on Monday in order to reserve the camping sites). That night, before the time of retiring for bed, Tom Sherry held a short fireside.

Thursday morning saw everyone arise to a



Trail Bridge Reservoir

meal prepared by Kory Jackson, after which all supplied their daypacks with sufficient water, snacks, and lunch items, and headed out to Tam McArthur Rim, about 16 miles south of Sisters. There, a moderately difficult hike to the top was completed, and from that lofty vantage point spectacular sweeping views of snowfields were enjoyed. En route to the bottom, a workshop was held on preparing for full-time missionary service. After the workshop, they took a cooling swim in the lake, then returned to camp. The *Other Side of Heaven* (a film based on the missionary adventures of Elder John H. Groberg in Tonga) was viewed in an outdoor theater following dinner.

Friday morning involved another workshop, this one on feeling the Spirit and recognizing the testimonies thereby implanted. At the same time, David Bird held a workshop for adults on “raising the bar” in their lives. That afternoon provided an opportunity for young men and their leaders to bicycle the McKenzie River trail. Although a challenging experience, and one fraught with both the possibility and the actuality of numerous scrapes and bruises, its outcome involved no serious injuries reported. After a fine dinner, there was an assiduous search of necessity undertaken to locate a young man who had gone temporarily missing. Upon locating him, everyone returned for a talk by President David Blake. Later, a beautiful slideshow on the universe and our relationship to its Creator was done by David Williams. Providentially, at this point the clouds parted long enough to make an hour of reverent stargazing possible.

Saturday promised a rafting adventure on the upper rapids of the McKenzie River, which was soon realized, after each young man first took occasion to spend ninety minutes in solitude with his Scriptures and a journal. At the end of the day, a barbecue and a testimony meeting were put on at the Blue River Branch property.

This event was repeated in 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011. The format and leadership established during the first year remained largely the same, although a different chef was assigned to assist with meals each year. In 2007, Bishop Robert French took on the role of chair for Sons of Mosiah, and the exact same format as that of 2003 ensured great success yet again. Drew Lundgreen saw to the kitchen responsibilities that year. Bishop French continued in this capacity in 2009, with Kory Jackson returning as chef.

In 2011, Bishop Mark Freeman was assigned to chair the Sons of Mosiah. Once again, there was no desire to “reinvent the wheel,” and the format remained the same as in previous years, as did the level of success and enjoyment. The only significant difference as that the young men were obliged to take a lower elevation on their hike to Copper Mountain on account of the heavy winter snowfall which had accumulated at an extreme rate and thus left none permitted any access to Tam McArthur Rim.

The wilderness environment in which the rigors of the Sons of Mosiah experience are undergone provides a crucible of development for the young men. And in at least one case, this crucible proved a crucial one, as Bishop Vaughn D. Marchant of Newport personally recounted:

There was a young man in the Newport Ward who wanted to get baptized, but his mother wouldn't sign the necessary papers. However, he was allowed to go to Sons of Mosiah. He had an amazing time, and loved every minute of it. We fasted and prayed that his mother would sign the papers, and a few short months after Sons of Mosiah, she signed the papers and laid them on his dresser. We were all very excited, and he was baptized a couple of weeks later...He is now serving a mission in Provo, Utah, and is a wonderful missionary. The stake and the ward helped this young man choose the right and be a light unto the world.



Tam McArthur Rim

The conquest of this harsh and rugged wilderness terrain typifies the outlook once expressed by President Spencer W. Kimball, and which President Henry B. Eyring recently

quoted in the April 2012 General Conference:

“There are great challenges ahead of us, giant opportunities to be met. I welcome that exciting prospect and feel to say to the Lord, humbly, ‘Give me this mountain,’ give me these challenges.”

The valiancy of spirit evident in that eager plea, “Give me this mountain”—which was first offered by Caleb the Kenezite to the prophet Joshua (see Joshua 14:12)—has been well and truly cultivated in the priests who have so willingly ventured over the years into the mountain wild, and there enjoyed the thrill of partaking in, and, as necessary, taming nature. The rising generation of young men still look forward each year with building anticipation to enjoying a Sons of Mosiah experience of their own. And as for the year 2013, a Sons of Mosiah encampment was enjoyed, under the stewardship of Brian Hanna, by a new group of young men from July 10-13.

CHAPTER 14

Camp Alpine

“Let the mountains shout for joy, and all ye valleys cry aloud; and all ye seas and dry lands tell the wonders of your Eternal King! ...Let the woods and all the trees of the field praise the Lord, and ye solid rocks weep for joy!” (D&C 128:23)

Camp Alpine was often described by H. Darwin “Dar” Reese as being situated in the finest location in his Scouting experience. Brother Reese, himself a seasoned Scouting leader in the Benton District and Oregon Trail Council of the Boy Scouts of America, modestly refrained from emphasizing his crucial role in its establishment, though the fact is, as the 1989 Corvallis Stake History bears record, he was “an ardent advocate of making Camp Alpine into ‘one of the best Scouting facilities in the Northwest.’” Of course, many others—both in and out of the Church—played essential roles in the realization of this vision, and in the providential confluence of events leading up to, and directly involved in, the creation of Camp Alpine, the guiding hand of the Lord will certainly be evident to the spiritually-minded.

Early History of Land Tract

The presence of a Rambo Lane in the Camp Alpine area, and of a Rambo Lake within the camp itself, both pay tribute to the early beginnings of the place. It was with the family of Isaac and Ann Beck Rambo that the documented private ownership of the tract of land now occupied by Camp Alpine first began. The couple, having recently arrived from Indiana, settled upon a land tract 320.46 acres in size on October 1, 1853 (before Oregon had even achieved statehood). They would subsequently file claim to the land, and this claim was registered in the Territory of Oregon Land Office at Oregon City, Oregon, on November 21, 1854.

Oregon Land Office Certificate No. 248, which is dated May 18, 1855, indicates that Mr. Isaac Rambo was in continued residence on the land, and that he had been cultivating it for one year before having paid for it in full, at the rate of \$1.25 per acre. The deed, titled Claim No. 62, shows the 320.46-acre tract to have been purchased for \$400.58.

Extant records afford no further information as to how long the Rambos personally held residence on the land, nor for how long it continued to be cultivated, but an agreement dated August 17, 1855, records the transfer of Claim No. 62 from the Rambos to Polly Belnap. A sworn statement given on September 20, 1879, records that the Rambos eventually relocated to California, where both of them died.

In time, ownership passed from Polly Belnap to Stephen Howell, and later from Howell to William Talley. The line of ownership, at this point, becomes uncertain, and it is not until 1947 that we find sawmill business partners Ira Malcom and C.B. Reader acquiring the property from Mary Wilhelm and Louise Wilhelm East. Within a few years, Malcom and Reader had dissolved their partnership, and in 1951, C.B. and Leora Reader transferred their claim of the property to Ira Malcom. However, in his published history of Camp Alpine, Henry H. Rampton speculates: *“Perhaps the true ownership of the land was clouded, because in 1956, Charles Skinner and Alene Skinner gave Ira Malcom a quitclaim deed to the property.”*

Search for a Youth and Family Camp and Recreation Ground

It was in 1965 that President Samuel H. Bailey of the Corvallis Oregon Stake felt inspired to put a search underway for property that would be suitable for a camp and recreational area for youth and families in the stake. A search was accordingly undertaken, covering Benton, Linn, Lane, and Lincoln Counties, and continued with no apparent avail into the year 1967. This year was to prove a turning point in the search effort, when, as Brother Henry Rampton has so eloquently expressed it: *“Chains of past and present events linked to encircle a choice parcel of land and draw it to us.”*

Indeed, it was the treasured memory of the area, born of his past experience there, that first prompted

Brother Russell Banks to return and investigate. Brother Banks had worked as a sawyer and sawmill operator in the mid-1950s for Ira Malcom and C.B. Reader, and still retained fond recollections of the rural environs and idyllic surroundings he had seen there. Thus, upon learning that his wife, Ione, along with Elisabeth Nielson, who was then president of the Stake Young Women, were searching for a place to hold a girls' summer camp, Brother Banks was reminded of the place that was still so dear to his heart. And so, on a memorable day in 1967, Russell and Ione Banks went, in company with the Nielsons, to the rural residence of Ira and Agnes Malcom on Rainbow Creek, near the quiet little town of Alpine, Oregon.



Russell and Ione Banks

After having the purpose of their visit explained to him, Ira Malcom was moved to share with the group a vision that had once been vouchsafed to him a dream. Mr. Malcom was not a member of the Church, but his favorable response to these members of the Church visiting with him is accounted for by his remarkable disclosure to them, which is remembered as follows: *"I have had a dream that my property was to be used someday as a youth camp. The Church may buy all or any portion of this property for that purpose."* (While these may not be the actual ipsissima verba of Mr. Malcom, those present to hear him agree this to have been the essential purport of his utterance.)

The Nielson and Banks couples, thus assured of Mr. Malcom's readiness to consent, made a quick overview of the area, after which they departed with the mutually understood intention of soon returning to continue the discussion. This, then, for the historical record, marks the actual beginning of the negotiation process which was to lead to the purchase of the property by the Corvallis Oregon Stake.

Malcom Property Inspected and Appraised

The presidency of the Corvallis Stake Young Women, which consisted of Sisters Elisabeth Nielson, Ione Banks, and Myrna Bell, immediately informed President Bailey of their promising discovery, and soon he, with his counselors Ray W. Hardman and Henry H. Rampton, determined to inspect of the property. Also present with them during this preliminary inspection of the Malcom property were John Bell (a professional forestry specialist), Paul Krumperman (representing the Stake Young Men), and Forrest Baker (representing the Elders Quorum). As Brother Rampton recalled of their inspection of the place: "We were convinced that it far excelled, for our purposes, any other properties we had seen. Then, serious negotiations for acquisition began."

Mr. Malcom stated his price at \$300 per acre. But, though 412 acres were available, it was only the northernmost 127.5 acres that the stake representatives deemed most desirable, as this portion of the property included both meadow and timber land, a log pond, and two small streams, named Rainbow Creek and Rambo Creek. To this arrangement, Mr. Malcom gave verbal assent.

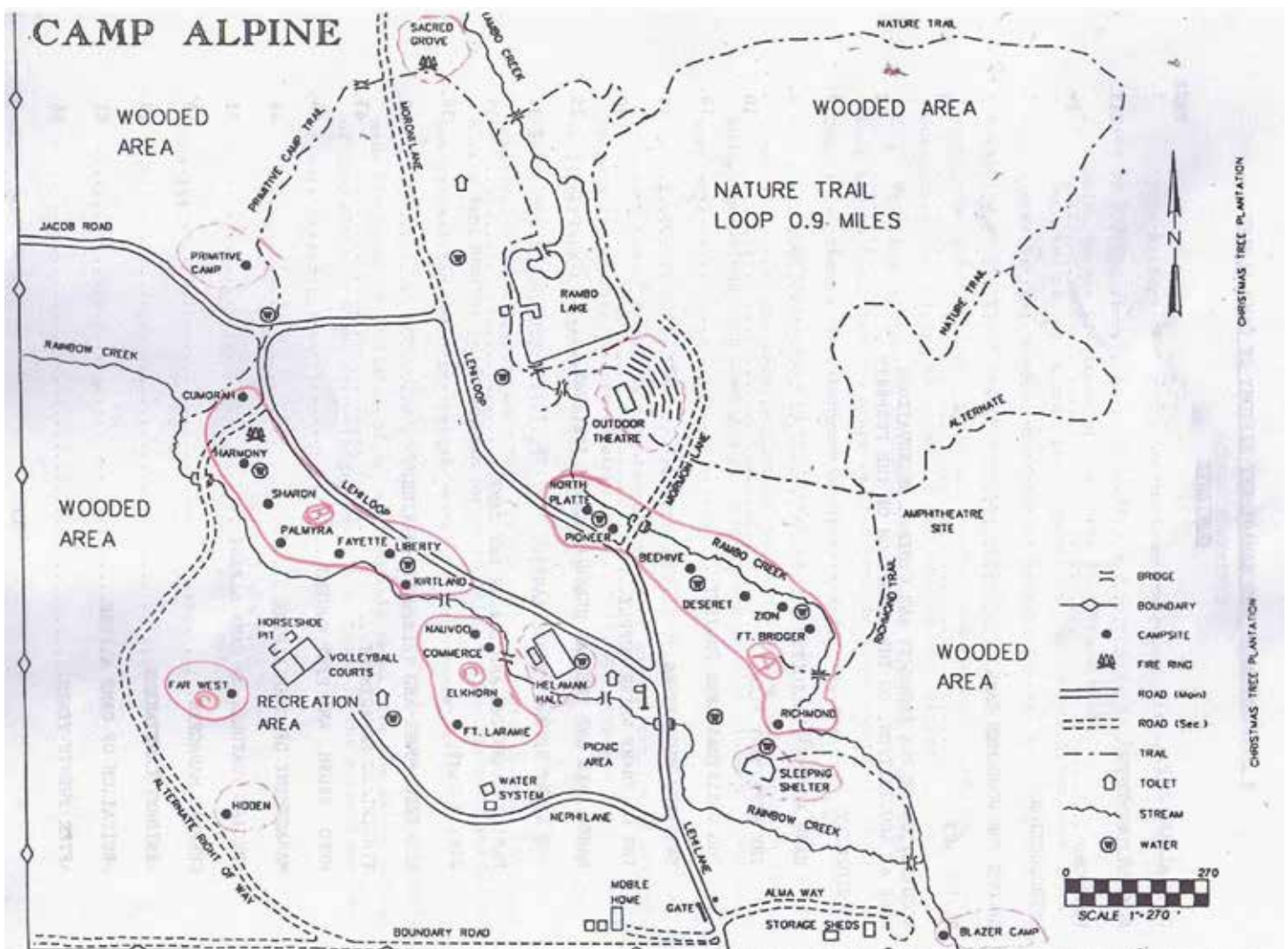
Having now this choice parcel of land in view, President Bailey felt confident that the stake was in a position to proceed with the acquisition, and was encouraged further still by a letter to all stake presidents dated November 10, 1967, which had been sent by the Presiding Bishopric of the Church. This letter called attention to increasing difficulties faced in the effort to obtain suitable Church youth camp facilities, and urged stake presidents to consider purchasing property for that purpose.

Warren Bolles of the Albany Ward appraised the site, pronouncing the \$300 price stated by Ira Malcom to be fair and reasonable. Brother Bolles also graciously donated the \$300 he would have taken as a fee for his appraisal work to the effort, and thus became purchaser of the property's first acre.

The next phase in the acquisition process involved Elder G. LaMont Richards, Regional Representative, personally inspecting the property. Elder Richards delivered his expression of approval for the proposed site to the brethren at Church headquarters in Salt Lake City. Thus assured, the Corvallis Oregon Stake, on May 23, 1968, officially submitted to the Church Committee for Expenditures an application to acquire real estate, and to request a loan covering both the purchase of 130 acres from Ira Malcom and the expenses to be incurred in making necessary improvements thereon. The requests were approved on June 8, 1968, and a total amount of \$40,155 was loaned to the Corvallis Oregon Stake. Of that figure, \$39,000 was for the purchase of the property itself, and the remainder for covering the necessary expenses of ongoing improvement work. Additionally, the Church gave a \$1,000 grant to cover other improvements that would be found necessary.

On July 22, 1968, Ira and Agnes Malcom issued a warranty deed transferring the land now occupied by Camp Alpine to the Corporation of the Presiding Bishopric of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the amount of \$39,000.

When the money was paid to Malcom on October 1, 1968, the title was officially transferred to the Church. It was then that the development of the land for stake youth and family purposes could commence in earnest.



Map included in the 1992 history of Camp Alpine by Henry H. Rampton.

Condition of Property at Time of Acquisition

On the general condition of the land where Camp Alpine now is, 15 notes of observation were made by those of the stake called at the time to inspect it, as follows:

- The area is quiet and secluded, with two small all-year streams, and is 0.7 miles from a surfaced highway, with a rock-based all-weather access road, and permanent right-of-way through the Malcom property.
- A swinging wood gate near the highway controls entrance to the access road. An alternate entrance to the access road branches off from the highway a few yards above the Rainbow Creek culvert, crossing Rainbow Creek on an aged, unsafe bridge. We will avoid using it.
- One can drive a jeep just inside the fence line almost around the property.
- The I.P. Miller Lumber Company owns a right-of-way over our access road and through a most desirable portion of our property, over which they haul logs frequently.
- The access road is very rough and in need of grading.
- No improved drinking water source, or sanitary facilities, exist.
- A rough, metal-roofed, unfinished cabin stands in a grove near Rainbow Creek.
- The creeks contain numerous stumps, fallen trees, and driftwood, and are bordered by fir and deciduous trees, many of which are leaning and appear to be unsafe.
- The hills are generally forested with Douglas-fir.
- Three sizeable open meadows are growing grass and weeds. These appear to have been plowed and cropped in the past. The largest is about 20 acres in size. It is located on a ridge top near the east boundary line, and seems to be well-suited for growing trees. The others are on lowland bordering the creeks, are relatively smooth, and would be good play areas.
- Problem locations contain stands of evergreen and Himalaya blackberry, Canada thistle, nettle, and poison oak. All of these are susceptible to known control methods and should not seriously impede recreational use of the land.
- A log pond, in long disuse, about 1.5 acres in size, exists on Rambo Creek. The dam is breached at the old spillway, and the creek is running through. The opening is filled with stumps, snags, logs, and other debris. The deepest portion of the pond floor is covered with decaying organic muck and mineral soil to a depth of 1 to 2 feet. Stumps of several long-since harvested trees remain rooted in the pond bed.
- A large, heavy, U-shaped concrete donkey engine base, usable as a barbecue pit, remains in a fir grove in Rambo Creek bottom, near our north boundary. Nearby is the remains of a log deck, in disuse for so long a time that the fir grove has developed within the deck area. Large bolts and heavy cable pieces remain in the decaying decking logs.
- A few evidences remain of the sawmill that once operated below the log pond.
- A spring area exists near the cabin, between Rainbow Creek and the northeasterly base of the slope at the south boundary. It appears to have possibilities as a source of camp water.

These points of observation having been noted, it remained for the stake to take whatever actions were found necessary to address problems and improve upon whatever aspects of the site were amenable to productive use. To this end, the stake assembled a development committee for the camp.

Development Committee Supervises Improvement Efforts

The Camp Development Committee was comprised of the following individuals:

- Henry Rampton: Chairman, representing the stake presidency, and camp general manager.
- Bishop Max Williams: Representative of the Bishops Council.
- Paul Krumperman: Representative of the stake Y.M.M.I.A.
- Elisabeth Nielson: Representative of the stake Y.W.M.I.A.
- Betty Gourley: Representative of the stake Primary.
- John F. Bell: Representative of the stake high council and professional forestry specialist.



Henry Rampton

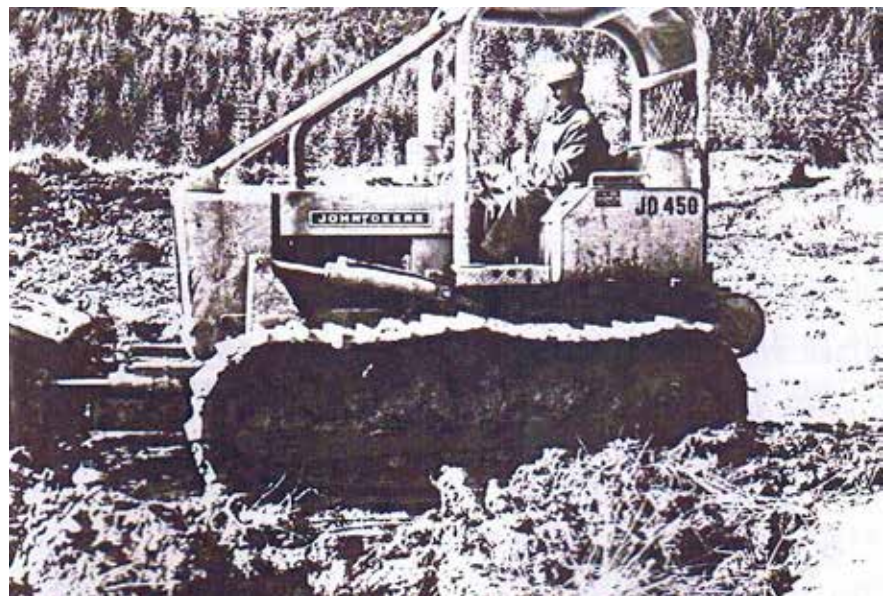
On October 13, 1968, the first Camp Committee meeting was held, and several priorities for camp development were identified. The following priorities were regarded by the committee to be of most critical importance:

- Planning and establishing a Christmas tree plantation as an income project.
- Installing sanitary facilities adequate to meet immediate needs.
- Developing a water supply for drinking and culinary purposes.
- Cleaning out the log pond, restoring the dam to create a lake, and constructing a concrete spillway for controlling the water level in the lake.
- Smoothing the right-of-way access road.



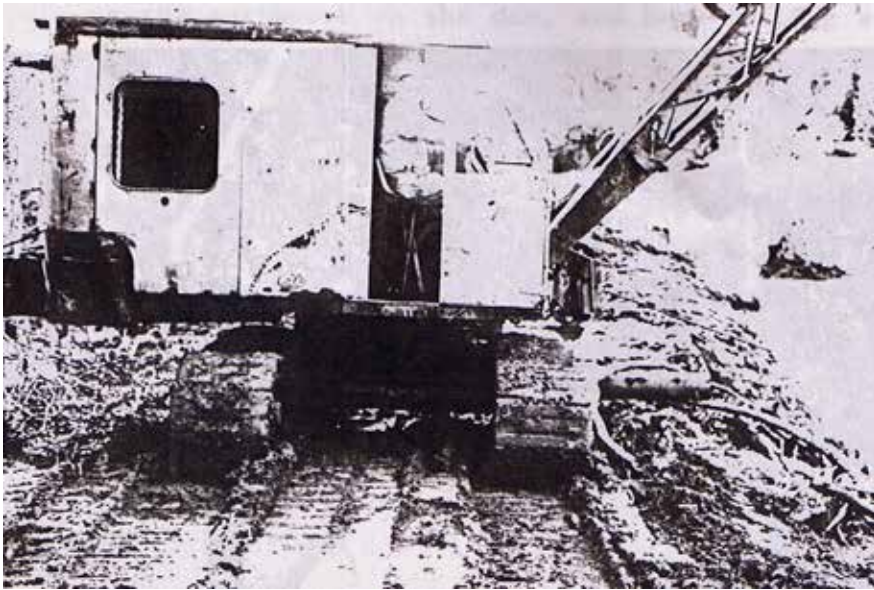
Adrian L. Wilcox

Brother Adrian Wilcox of Lebanon began the first improvement project on the newly acquired property when, in the fall of 1968, he put his backhoe to use clearing out the opening of the log pond dam through which Rambo Creek flowed, in preparation for the future task of installing a spillway and restoring the dam.

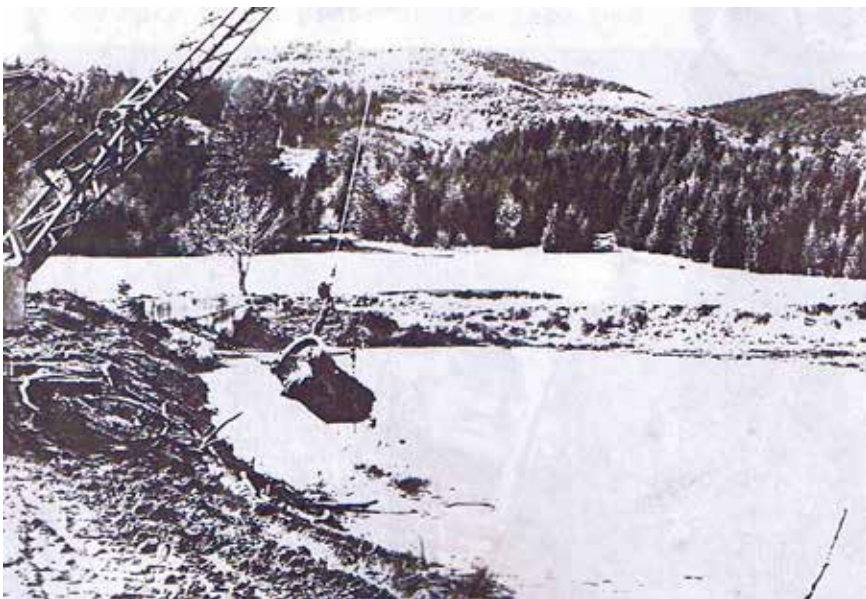


Brother Wilcox at work clearing the Rambo Lake bed.

Another active participant in the preliminary improvement efforts at Camp Alpine was Leonard “Len” Jolley, who had contributed, and would continue to contribute many times over again, his skills in the operation of heavy earthmoving equipment for stake projects.



Len Jolley operating a dragline to clear accumulated sediment out of Rambo Lake.



Brother Jolley lifting a scoop of sediment from the Rambo Lake bed.

encountered some practical problems in following our plan for monthly issues. Consequently, the next issue covered the period of October, November, and December, 1971. The Camp Committee then determined that future issues of the Camp Alpine Advocate would appear bi-monthly.

With a few exceptions, this policy was followed through the October-November 1976 issue, after which The Clarion (another Corvallis Stake news publication) began carrying news of Camp Alpine.

Repayment Plans Proposed and Put Into Action

Keenly aware that the stake was faced with a commitment to repay their \$40,155 debt to the Church at a rate of \$8,400 per year, the stake presidency invited the presidency of the neighboring Willamette Stake in Eugene to come out and inspect Camp Alpine, in the hope of persuading them to become part owners of the property, and thus aid the Corvallis Stake on the way to retiring its debt. Representatives of the Willamette Stake did, indeed, visit and inspect the property, but declined the proposal to become part owners.

The young women and their leaders at the 1969 Girls' Camp recommended that the property be named Camp Alpine. The recommendation was approved by the stake presidency, and the name was officially adopted at the Camp Committee meeting of September 14, 1969.

Camp Alpine Publicity

In preparing Camp Alpine for use, the committee was conscious of a need to highlight the camp, and to keep the stake membership informed as to its progress and development. Thus, in order to ensure that members of the stake would be kept apprised of the latest developmental plans, personnel, needs, and camp operations, the committee decided to issue *The Camp Alpine Advocate*, which was a monthly mimeographed news bulletin for users and supporters of Camp Alpine. News items for the bulletin were prepared by Camp Committee members, after which Sister EmmaDell Blanch prepared the typewritten stencils. The stake presidency then ran the mimeograph machine, and Bishop Ralph Taylor supervised the mailing process.

The first issue was dated September 1971. As Henry Rampton later reported, though:

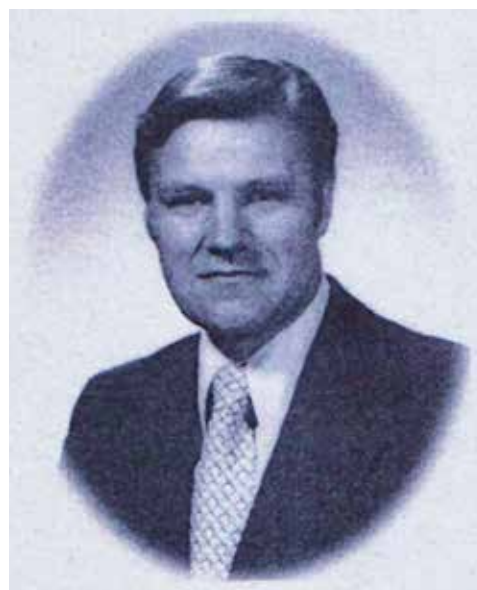
It was well received, but we

The stake presidency and bishoprics gave frequent encouragement to stake families, urging them often to make consistent contributions to the Camp Alpine repayment fund. The previously mentioned news bulletins also encouraged members in this regard, and kept them updated on the progress of the improvement effort. All of this notwithstanding, however, funds came in but slowly, and as of April 1972, almost 3.5 years after acquiring the property, only \$7,533.70 had been received toward the development and repayment expenses. Of this amount, only \$3,415 had been put toward the repayment of the Church Financial Department. This, of course, was drastically deficient of the hoped-for rate of \$8,400 per year in repayment. It became clear that more innovative methods would need to be employed.

With a basic population of 1,058 families in the stake at that time, a proposal was made for a financial plan which, as it was hoped, could be adopted by families, and adapted to their varying financial situations. The plan proposed that each family in the stake make a basic contribution to Camp Alpine of \$8.88 per year, which would amount to \$9,400 a year coming from the stake as a whole. All who could do so were encouraged to accept and follow the plan as proposed. Official word of the proposal was transmitted to the stake membership in a letter from the stake presidency dated July 26, 1972.

The plan proved moderately successful, but the stake continued having to repay its debt at a rate far below that which had been anticipated. By April of 1974, \$14,415 had been repaid on the \$40,155 loan, leaving an outstanding balance of \$25,740. However, the Christmas tree crop in 1976 sold for \$20,000, which ultimately brought the debt total down to about \$12,000.

One man deserving of remembrance in relation to the successful acquisition of Camp Alpine is the late Jeared Lee Mayne. According to former Corvallis Stake President Allen Davis, Lee Mayne (who normally went by his middle name) “saved the camp for us.” He did so by, among other things, deftly handling and addressing any and all objections raised against the various requisite tasks and initiatives involved in establishing Camp Alpine. When some financial objection was brought up, for instance, to an essential project, Brother Mayne would formulate a brilliant and effective solution to it on the spot. As Allen Davis has said of Lee Mayne, “*If it hadn’t been for him, we wouldn’t have Camp Alpine.*”



Jeared Lee Mayne

The Christmas Tree Project

The task of creating and maintaining a Christmas tree plantation for the purpose of acquiring funds to pay down debt for Camp Alpine was undertaken early, and commenced under the expert leadership of forestry specialist John F. Bell. The idea had been generated by the stake presidency, along with Brother Bell, and Brothers Krumperman and Baker upon their initial inspection of the Malcom property in 1967. Viewing the ridge top on the east side of the land tract, all concurred with the suggestion made by Brother Bell that the site would be well suited for Christmas tree growing.

After its formal beginning on October 13, 1968, the project advanced so rapidly that by 1969 Brother Ken Hollister had plowed the area in preparation for planting, and Brother Bell was able to place orders for trees to be planted there. On March 23, 1969, it was reported to the Camp Committee that Brother Dean Barlow had aided with land preparation, and that 4 acres had been planted with 5,000 Shelton Douglas-fir, 1,000 medium elevation Douglas-fir, and 1,000 Scotch pine trees.

Seeing the need to assign a manager to the Christmas tree plantation, the stake presidency called Brother Russell Banks to fill that position in December of 1971. Three assistants were called, at his request, shortly thereafter, and this enabled him to accomplish the majority of the required trimming and shearing of the trees by early March of 1972. Brother Henry Rampton remembers that “*Brother Banks took his calling as tree plantation manager seriously, and pursued it with energy.*”

So anxiously engaged was Brother Banks in this cause that he and his wife, Ione, decided to purchase an adjoining tract of land with a small dwelling on it, thus enabling them to spend many weekends on the job. They also made the acquaintance of a local Alpine-area commercial Christmas tree grower, and from him learned the techniques and skills of the Christmas tree trade.

Still, when repayment on the Camp Alpine debt fell too far behind schedule, Brother Banks determined that the logging of some large trees was needed to raise sufficient funds toward bringing the balance down. Through this means, the final payment on Camp Alpine came in providential fashion. As recounted in the Corvallis Stake History published in 1989:

At a meeting of the Camp Committee in the just-completed stake center high council room, the [Christmas tree] grower, Mr. [Bob] Sievers, seemed ready to offer the \$10,000 the stake had hoped to get from the Christmas tree plantation, though twice that number was needed to fully pay for the property. As the tree grower stood to speak near the end of the meeting, he explained that he had been deeply moved from hearing the story of how Camp Alpine came to be acquired, and the purposes and goals of the camp. "I will give you" —[here he made a long pause]— "\$20,000 for the 20 acres of small Christmas trees."

Later that day, following the bestowal of a blessing so generous, the committee knelt in gratitude before God who, in His goodness, had thus wrought upon the heart of Mr. Sievers on the stake's behalf, so that they might finish the payment of all debts contracted in the acquisition of Camp Alpine. Where such blessings had been poured out, there could be no fitter response than for them to pour out their hearts in thanks.

Camp Alpine Improves Through the Years

The various camping sites at Camp Alpine, once created, were named in honor of such prominent landmarks of Church history as Cumorah, Sharon, Palmyra, Liberty, and Deseret. It has come to be a place hallowed by the very sacredness of the events and places thus memorialized.

Creation calls for sacrifice, however, both in time and in energy. Sister Terri Harper recalls some of the earliest efforts and innovations which, ingenious though they were, may seem rather "crazy" in retrospect:

One of my very first memories is working with the older girls to get Camp Alpine ready for the week (yes, from Monday to Saturday) of camp. We lashed branches together to make shower stalls and then put black plastic around them for privacy. There was this crazy way of heating creek water up. They had 2 metal garbage cans with copper tubing running from one can to the other. The tubing was coiled in the middle and a fire was built to heat the copper coil. We put creek water in both cans and somehow the water transferred from garbage can to garbage can through that copper tubing and soon we had warm water to take into our little shower stall and have a spit bath. It was amazing.

In 1998, timber was obtained at Camp Alpine by means of selective harvesting from its surrounding woods. Proceeds from the timber went to the Church, as the property is Church-owned. In return for the funds thus acquired, however, the office in Salt Lake



Wooded areas on Camp Alpine property.

City authorized some significant projects and expenditures for the long-term benefit of the camp, which were completed over the course of the following three years. A Kubota tractor was purchased, for example, and purchase was also made of a new manufactured home for the caretakers.

On the strength of these authorized expenditures, a myriad of improvements have been made. To list but a few:

Showers along the outside wall of Helaman Hall have been improved since the time water was heated by the running of it through copper tubing, which was meant to create warm water for showering, but in reality only provided warm water for the one so fortunate as to be the first one of the day to use it. With the installation of a hot water tank, the kitchen was also brought up to code so that dishes and utensils can be properly sterilized.



Young women in Helaman Hall (circa 1990).

oven, large refrigerators, and freezers. Prior to these modern amenities, portable coolers were used to store perishable foods. Permanent barbecues are now also in the cooking area.

Sariah Shelter has been constructed on the other end of the meadow from Helaman Hall. This shelter is large enough to contain the entire camp. Open on one of its sides, it is also always cool because it is next to the trees. Also equipped with electricity, the shelter may be used for a variety of activities.



A young woman riding the Camp Alpine zip line.

construction of the zip line: Greg Merten (who is also its designer), Jeff Merten (who now serves as Corvallis

Stake representative for Camp Alpine), and Verne Hoyer of the Lebanon Stake.

Also in 2009, Mel Thompson built a separate building for the First Aid station immediately next to Helaman Hall, with the required AED (Automated External Defibrillator) device and other first aid resources now housed therein, and the nurses attending each Young Women Camp use this as their headquarters.



Portable restroom (circa 1990)

The amphitheater now features permanently constructed benches. A new stage, covered and constructed to amplify sound, is well lit now with bright electrical lamps.



Young women performing a skit on the amphitheater stage (1992).



Temporary bridge constructed to provide egress and access to caretakers.

In the spring of 2011, there was so much rain that the culverts for the combined Rainbow and Rambo creeks became partially clogged with debris, causing the road to wash out within 1/2 mile from the camp entrance gate. A temporary bridge was built over the wash-out, providing egress and access. And once the water had receded to a point sufficient to bring in equipment, the failed culvert was replaced and the road repaired. It was an excellent example of the ingenuity and resourcefulness of all involved, and demonstrated that the Camp had the ability to respond to a significant emergency.

In 2013, excavations were done in order to remove some of the accruing mud in the pond under the zip line course, improving



Excavation of mud from the pond.

the “swimability” of the water, and the canoeing routes.

Culinary Water Supply Established

During the first Camp Committee meeting held October 13, 1968, one of the first five priorities listed was to see that a water supply was developed for drinking and camp use. Brother Paul Krumperman, a microbiologist by profession, was invited to sample the water of Rainbow Creek to ascertain its quality. He reported the water to be unsuitable for camp culinary use without purification because of its bacterial content.

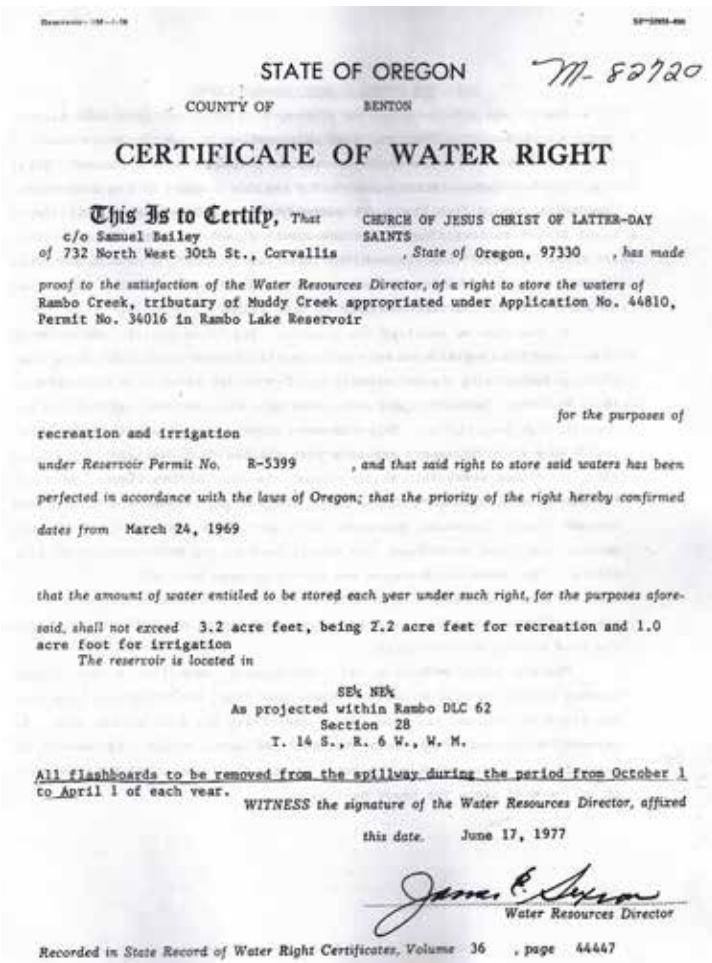
Brother Lyman Nielson undertook the task of developing a potable water supply. Rainbow Creek was considered as a potential source, but this idea was discarded when the practical problems that would have been entailed in the purification process became apparent.

A spring area near the main cabin showed promise as a water source, and Brother Nielson began the development process in early 1969 by excavating a sump in which he installed a concrete filter box filled in with gravel and sand. Upon this, he mounted a pitcher pump to provide a temporary source of culinary water.

In March of 1974, it was suggested by Mr. Ed Dornlas of the Benton County Health Department that the camp water supply could be greatly improved by excavating a pit in the spring area and placing in it a pre-fabricated concrete cistern with holes in the bottom to permit entry of water. This suggestion being accepted by the committee in July of 1974, excavation into the bedrock commenced, and a 1,400-gallon self-filling concrete cistern was installed. A gravity-flow PVC line from the



Concrete filter sump and pitcher pump stand which supplied the first culinary water source to Camp Alpine.



Certificate in proof of water right conferred upon the Church to store the waters of Rambo Creek in Rambo Lake Reservoir “for the purposes of recreation and irrigation” (1969).

cistern to the cabin provided the camp with culinary water.

Requirements of state and county authorities in relation to water quality, together with the demands involved in increasing use of Camp Alpine, called for continual upgrading of the water supply. In 1984, a water storage unit was installed near the cistern and adjacent to the road to the Recreation Area. Consisting of a concrete pad and shed with space for a pair of 1,000-gallon water tanks, an electric water pressure pump with a 100-gallon pressure tank, and an electric heater to prevent the freezing of equipment, the shed was built by Dar Reese, Chuck Cunningham, and Max Williams. A cable was then laid from the master electrical panel to the shed. A chlorination system was installed at the cistern to treat the water before it entered the storage tank. In 1987, a turbidity monitoring and recording apparatus was installed to meet country requirements.

Around the year 2000, a new well was added to Camp Alpine, with the existing water source now established as a backup.

Rambo Lake and the Dar Reese Concrete Spillway

As Brother Henry Rampton recalls of the early Camp Committee: *“We gave the dam and spillway project special status because of our conviction that the resulting small lake would greatly enhance the recreational value and use of the property.”*

The preliminary step in achieving this objective was taken by Brother Adrian Wilcox of Lebanon, who, with his power scoop and backhoe, personally cleared logs, stumps, and other obstructions from the opening in the log pond dam to lower the water level, and to prepare for construction of a spillway that would help control the water level in the lake.

The next step, which was supervised by Brother Lyman Nielson, was placing a deeply set corrugated drainage culvert in the dam opening to eliminate the surface flow of Rambo Creek through the opening during construction of the spillway.

Brother Nielson oversaw the third step, which was to prepare plans for the intended spillway.

Finally, Brother Boyd Nash attended to the fourth step, which involved bringing a work crew from the Corvallis Second Ward out to clear logs, stumps, and brush from the pond bed. Brother Dean Barlow of the Corvallis First Ward also contributed to this effort with his personal tractor.

Work on the concrete spillway itself could now begin, and the effort got underway with Brother Dar Reese agreeing to supervise. The September 1971 issue of the *Camp Alpine Advocate* reported on his efforts thus:

An early rain in August delayed construction for a week, but by Labor Day, September 6, 1971, the weather was again favorable, and Brother Reese began his work alone. Within a couple of days, however, calls to the bishops for manpower resulted in a goodly number of men on the job. By means of working until dark each day, Dar and his crews were ready to pour the first concrete—the sub-walls and slab—on September 9. The east walls of the spillway were poured on September 14. Because the concrete truck could not pour directly into the high forms, a large crew was required to hand-bucket the fresh concrete into forms. Brother Adrian Wilcox then returned with his backhoe for some more digging and general clean-up of stumps. The west walls were poured, also by hand-bucketing, on September 18. This completed the concrete job — an important accomplishment to those who use the camp.

Many brethren assisted in these improvement and construction efforts, leaving only a partial record of their names. But to the countless families, young men, young women, and young adults of university and institute age, who have created fond memories at Camp Alpine that will last throughout eternity, the value of these efforts is beyond measure.

Changes in Caretaking Arrangement

Beginning in 2011, Camp Alpine made a significant change in the way caretakers are provided for the camp. In the past, caretakers received a \$300 per month stipend as they lived in the camp home. We now list the

camp caretaker function with the Church missionary program, and it is now staffed by two missionary couples. The five sets of missionary couples that have so far served at Camp Alpine have brought a wide variety of experience, and have all loved the camp and the youth.



Main office building



Showering facilities



First Aid station

Beginning in 2010, and implemented in 2011, the Church Facilities Department assumed responsibility for the maintenance of all recreational properties in the Church. Camp Alpine thus works now in close association with the area facilities group in Eugene. Church Facilities now provides maintenance and utilities for existing camp facilities and the stakes provide the cost and upkeep of all program items related to the camp. This has reduced cost significantly, resulting in considerable savings to be passed onto stakes by, in turn, reducing their cost for camp use.

As Brother Larry M. Gibson, first counselor in the Young Men general presidency, has said, “A campfire setting can be one of the more effective ways to teach gospel principles.” And Elaine S. Dalton, Young Women general president (recently released in April 2013), counseled that: “It is important to get away from the noise of the world, cell phones, text messages, music, and Internet and to just ‘be still.’ It is when you hear the still, small voice and when you gaze at a star-filled sky that you know that all things testify of Christ.” Myriads of Corvallis Stake youth, past and present, serve as living testaments to the truth of these insights.

CHAPTER 15

The Relief Society

“And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted.” (Jacob 2:19)

The Relief Society, being an auxiliary to the priesthood, assists in accomplishing the work and glory of God, which is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Sister Julie B. Beck, who was Relief Society General President from 2007 to 2012, said that “the purpose of Relief Society, as established by the Lord, is to organize, teach, and inspire His daughters to prepare them for the blessings of eternal life.” Organized in 1842 under the inspired supervision of the prophet Joseph Smith, the Relief Society has grown to become one of the largest and the oldest women’s organizations on the face of the earth. And that the Relief Society should, despite origins so humble, rise to attain, and now continue to maintain, its stupendously impressive status is well in keeping with the 1935 declaration of the First Presidency that the “true spirit of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gives to woman the highest place of honor in human life,” and accords also with the frank recognition of President Heber J. Grant that: *“Without the wonderful work of the women I realize that the Church would have been a failure.”*

Relief Society the First Church Auxiliary in Corvallis

Early in the year 1939, the Corvallis Branch Relief Society was organized with Bessie G. Ballard as president and Betty DeSchamps as a counselor. Along with Sisters Ballard and DeSchamps, five other sisters constituted the whole of the Relief Society in Corvallis at that time. These were: Mildred H. Bennion, Nita Hoffman, Billie Stoker, Mauretta Thomas, and Ella Blacker. Later, in September of that same year, two additional sisters were welcomed into the group, and their names were Edith Hugie and Velda Holliday.

During this period, two Relief Society lessons were presented each month. Sister Ballard taught the theology lesson, and Sister Mildred Bennion would, in her turn, teach the lesson on literature. As Sister Mauretta Thomas would later say: “I can remember sitting there crocheting and listening to ‘Les Miserables’ as Mildred held us spellbound.” Meetings were at that time held in the homes of the sisters. After Sister Ballard returned to Logan, Utah, in late 1939, Sister Bennion became president with Sisters Thomas and Hugie as counselors, and Sister Stoker as secretary. Sister Nita Hoffman served as visiting teacher. When Sister Stoker eventually returned to Logan, Utah, Sister Vera Ballard became secretary in 1941.

Of this early period, Sister Bennion remembered that: *“The beginnings of the Corvallis Relief Society were meager, but had enough sturdy stock to sustain it and provide substantial growth.”*

The year 1942 was observed with much celebration by Relief Society members throughout the Church, as it marked the centennial anniversary of the organization of the Relief Society. To commemorate this milestone in Church progress, the small Corvallis Relief Society group gathered at the Bennion home, and there sang “Till We’re a Hundred Thousand Strong,” as did Relief Society Sisters throughout the Church. They also listened to a record with messages from the General Relief Society President Amy Brown Lyman and from the Prophet Heber J. Grant—culminating in a celebration and special program suited to the occasion.

But these early sisters of the Corvallis Relief Society showed they could work as hard as they could play, and the energetic Sister Mauretta Thomas was a major driving force in mobilizing her fellow sisters to productive action. When Sister Leah G. Schell, Secretary-Treasurer of the Corvallis Second Ward Relief Society, assembled information for a Relief Society history presentation commemorating the organization’s anniversary, March 14, 1972, she recorded how Sister Thomas saw to it that, along with other valuable womanly lessons, the Relief Society sisters were taught “to quilt—and to like it!” And Sister Mildred Bennion later recalled: *“We made two quilts which were sent to Portland Mission headquarters as part of our welfare*

assignment. The mission presidents' wives were helpful in guiding those fledgling days, particularly Sister Florence Smith and Sister Edna Bennion."

As a fresh influx of members entered Corvallis, the Relief Society received new impetus. Sister Bennion was released in December of 1942, and Olena Nettie Belnap replaced her as president. The following year also saw the beginning of a weekly meeting schedule, and one that included four lessons which covered subject matter coming under the general heads of: Social Science, Work and Business, Theology, and Literature.

Construction and Fundraising Efforts Utilize Talents of Sisters

There was, around 1943, a building fund initiated by the branch presidency in which Relief Society sisters were to figure prominently as fundraisers. In one fundraising event, a carnival was put on, with lunches and clothing sold on site, which turned a profit of \$19.95 for the branch. Subsequently, however, these funds were diverted to the assistance of a family whose home had been ravaged by fire. Other opportunities for service included bazaars, bake sales, and rummage sales, which were usually held by the sisters downtown on Saturdays.

Industriousness, which has ever been a hallmark of the Relief Society, proved its virtue once again when construction of the 27th Street meetinghouse began. Sisters were called upon to work along with their husbands in upholstering chairs for the Relief Society room under the direction of Brother Oliver "Ollie" F. Weaver, who owned an upholstery shop, and some of the sisters fashioned beautiful draperies. A good deal of the painting and cleaning done to prepare for the meetinghouse dedication in 1953 was accomplished by these sisters and their husbands.

With the completion of this building came the advantage of being able to hold bazaars in the cultural hall, and throughout the following years a large clientele from around the community attended to take advantage of the quality and pricing of the items for sale. These annual bazaars were held until 1970 when new financing policies came into effect.

During summer months, Relief Society sisters donated countless hours of their service to the welfare farm, gathering in the harvest, and adding to Church funds. These funds helped meet Church welfare needs.

Succession in Branch Relief Society Presidency

Vera E. Ballard became president of the Corvallis Branch Relief Society in January of 1946, and was followed by Verna Goulding, who is remembered as a woman of great musical versatility and talent. As Sister Lucile Hardman once said of her: *"I loved to sit close to the organ and watch her play. Her feet moved almost as fast as her hands."* Mary A. Williams was the next Relief Society president of the branch.

When the Corvallis Branch became the Corvallis Ward on December 2, 1951, and thus became a unit of the Willamette Stake, Hazel Hunter was Relief Society president. For the next ten years, Corvallis Relief Society sisters received instruction and inspiration from the more experienced sisters of the Church in units located up and down the Willamette Valley. Leadership meetings, conferences, and activities were then held in Eugene, necessitating a great deal of travel from the Corvallis sisters.

Relief Society in the Newly Organized Corvallis Oregon Stake

Sister Olive Layton, Secretary-Treasurer of the Corvallis Stake Relief Society in 1967, has recorded:

After we became part of the Corvallis Stake November 1963, we were honored in having General Board President Belle S. Spafford visit the area and we were all invited to the Albany chapel to hear her speak December 9, 1967. The Singing Mothers, representing all the wards in the stake, presented three numbers: 'He That Hath Clean Hands,' 'My Testimony,' and 'God Painted a Picture.'

Sigrid H. Persons was sustained as Stake Relief Society President when the Stake was officially organized

in 1963. She would be assisted in her duties by First Counselor Lucile T. Hardman and Second Counselor Maxine J. Lee, with Olive H. Layton serving as Secretary-Treasurer. These four all served together through 1967, and Jean Nyberg was appointed Secretary-Treasurer in 1968. Sister Nyberg reports that on August 10, 1968, the Stake Relief Society held a rummage sale in order to raise funds for members of the Stake Relief Society Board to attend General Conference together.



Stake Relief Society Presidency in 1963. (L to R: Lucile T. Hardman, Sigrid H. Persons, and Maxine J. Lee.)

The first Stake Homemakers' Day was held on May 6, 1964, with the chosen theme, "Make Your Home A Heaven on Earth," and a fashion show of mix-and-match clothing for women and girls was put on, with live commentary provided by Sister Marva Oden. Special numbers were performed between changes during the fashion show, and an original piano composition by LaVona Gowens was incorporated into the show itself. A reading by Mildred Bennion and a vocal solo by Janet Allen added further enlivening variety to the event. There was also a varied array of instructional demonstrations, including feathery flowers by Edna Burke, a soup kitchen by Utahna McKnight, gold-leaving by Bonnie Armantrout, sewing with knits by Betty Dobbins, and summer sewing help with Carol Lagerstedt.

Stake Visiting Teaching Conventions in these beginning years of the stake were held each year under the direction of the Stake Board. The convention of February 25, 1967, was held in the Corvallis Ward, under the theme "Everyone Remembered," and in a keynote talk, President Sigrid H. Persons encouraged all to work diligently in the service of others. Sister Lois Jensen masterfully addressed the central topic of the convention when she related the success throughout the Church of Relief Society, and of its visiting teaching program in particular, since the time of its first being put into operation during the pioneer era. The Singing Mothers gave a memorable performance of the "Visiting Teacher's Song," and the Sweet Home Ward received high honors for its meritorious achievement of 100% visiting teaching.

In 1969, Sister Lucile Hardman was released, and Maxine J. Lee was called to replace her as first counselor. The vacancy thus left in the second counselor position with the calling of Sister Lee as first counselor was filled by Louise V. Hollister, and Marie R. Ashdown was appointed Secretary-Treasurer, in which capacity she served until November 17, 1969, at which time Elizabeth T. Wilson was called as Secretary-Treasurer. Then on August

16, 1970, Maxine J. Lee was released as Homemaking Counselor, and Farris S. Jolley was called to the position.

Structural and Funding Changes in Church Relief Society

Sister Elizabeth Wilson, secretary to the Corvallis Stake Relief Society, recorded in a Stake Relief Society history compiled for 1970 that:

Changes came to the Relief Society at the close of this year. We anticipate that adjustments will be necessary regarding the new financial policy which states that the organization will no longer be self-supporting, but will receive needed funds from ward and stake budgets.

No more would the customary 50-cent dues be collected, and every sister on the rolls of the Church was henceforth to be regarded as a member of the Relief Society. No more, either, were there to be any of the familiar fund-raising bazaars held, nor would there any longer be the publication of a Relief Society Magazine. Sister Wilson wrote on behalf of the Relief Society sisters at the time that “we sadly bid farewell to the Magazine which has for many years provided inspiration, instruction, guidance, and has brought joy to its subscribers.”

Milestones and Memorable Guests of the 1970s

By 1970, there were 386 Relief Society sisters in the Corvallis Oregon Stake, and this body of sisters was encouraged to embody the Christian attitude of watchful readiness when, at a Regional meeting held in Eugene on December 5, 1970, Elder Thomas Y. Emmett, Regional Representative of the Twelve, delivered a message urging the sisters to follow the brethren, to be alert to the growing wickedness in the world, but to refrain from worry, and to concentrate their efforts upon those areas where individual responsibility lies, letting God attend to the rest of the world beyond their circle of personal influence.

Through the previous winter and the spring, all Relief Society members and their families had been invited to contribute their best creative writing pieces to the Cultural Refinement teachers in their respective wards. Margaret B. Reese assembled, typed and appropriately bound the resulting booklet, which was simply entitled, “Gifts.” The booklet contained thirty-five pages of poetry, essays, and short stories, and provided an outlet for, and a showcase of, many otherwise undiscovered talents. Copies of the booklet were distributed at a rate of one per family, thus providing many with glimpses into the lives, testimonies, faith, gratitude, and love enjoyed by the contributing members. One example of the diverse creative pieces that were included is the short and stirring poem, written by Vera R. Egan of Albany Ward, as follows:

*Oh, oft I dream as through the endless tasks I plod,
Of opportunities long gone by and lost.
And oft, my spirit cries aloud to God:
Oh, please forgive if, in my blindness, Lord,
I've chosen a less worthy way to trod.*

For the 1971-1972 calendar year, the words of President Harold B. Lee, “Gather all the knowledge you can and let it ripen into wisdom,” were chosen as the leadership theme. This was also the year Corvallis Second Ward paid tribute to all Relief Society presidents throughout history, and down to the present, while also exploring the history of the local Relief Society through sketches and poetry. Thus, from the lessons afforded by history, the sisters would truly “gather all the knowledge” that they could, and work to see it “ripen into wisdom.”

When the time for stake conference arrived in February of 1973, the Relief Society Chorus made the occasion memorable when, after weeks of rehearsal, they performed three numbers. With Sister EmmaDell Blanch accompanying, and Sister Lora Wixom conducting, the sisters of the Chorus sang, “My Testimony” by Myriel C. Ashton, “Rain” by Ruth B. Lehenbauer, and “The Bridge Builder” by Hugh W. Dougall. President Samuel H. Bailey was so impressed by the quality of the performance that he asked the Stake Relief Society to

accept a permanent assignment to provide music for February conferences in the stake.

April 28, 1973, marked the date of the first “Feminine Fare,” which was chaired by Homemaking Counselor Farris S. Jolley. Sisters from the various wards and branches of the stake showcased artful displays and demonstrations, and the musical program for the occasion is remembered as being extremely well done. The guest speaker, Mrs. Bryant Alder, who had been awarded the title of Mrs. Oregon in 1966, offered a timely address on the role of women that was well received. The Relief Society Board, being pleased with the outcome of the event, decided to devote one day of each year as a similar occasion of “feminine fare” in order to exemplify the benefits of Relief Society, and to strengthen the stake-wide sisterhood.



President Sigrid Persons

Another milestone was reached in the early 1970s, when Albany had two wards and Stake Relief Society membership topped the one-thousand mark for the first time in its history. Average attendance at Relief Society meetings prior to this had been less than 23%.

Sigrid H. Persons, Stake Relief Society President since November 3, 1963, was released after nearly a decade’s service, on August 19, 1973. Of Sister Persons, it has been written that she was ever faithful, invariably prompt, and always to be found present at meetings. Never was she found unwilling to take members of “the group” on visits, and could be relied upon to “drive” the sisters—in more ways than one—as they undertook to fulfill their responsibilities, many times personally providing transportation over the years to the Relief Society General Conference. Her many talents in the homemaking arts, which include cooking, stitchery, and cake-decorating remain well-known throughout the stake to this day, and many is the wedding cake that she has personally decorated for couples in the stake. She is also expert in the making of hand-dipped chocolates.



Stake Relief Society Presidency in 1973. (L to R: Anita Brooks, Diane Patton, and Gayle Wilkes.)

Sister Diane Patton was called to be the new Stake Relief Society president, replacing Sister Persons, and Anita Brooks and Gayle Wilkes were called as counselors to Sister Patton, with Elizabeth T. Wilson re-sustained as Secretary-Treasurer. President Bailey suggested they consider only four leadership meetings for the year 1974, as opposed to the customary seven. An unexpected gasoline shortage, however, forced a cancellation of the January 1974 leadership meeting, so that, in fact, only three were held that year.

A Stake Relief Society Production in 1974, titled, “She is my Sister,” emphasized the special theme of worldwide sisterhood in the Church which was then being featured in the Cultural Refinement lessons. Displayed items from countries across the globe provided an ideal backdrop for approximately 250 sisters hearing the solo “A Sister For All Seasons” by Judy Morgan beautifully rendered by Belva L. Gilbert with accompaniment by Janice Saunders. A Readers’ Theater production of “One Flock and One Shepherd,” under the direction of Clarice Tetz of Corvallis Second Ward, was also put on.

In fact, 1974 would prove to be an historic year for the sisterhood of the whole Church when Barbara B. Smith was called as the new General Relief Society President, filling the role long held with distinction by Belle S. Spafford. President Spafford had served for over 29 years, from April of 1945 to October of 1974. President Smith would, in her turn, go on to serve for nearly 10 years.

By the end of the 1974-1975 year, a 15% increase in visiting teaching was achieved by the 1,020 sisters of the stake. Visiting teaching activity among stake sisters had risen from the 59% of 1973-74 to 74%, even as the number of Relief Society sisters grew.

Another highlight of 1975, still remembered fondly by Stake Relief Society sisters, was the presentation of a quilt to President Samuel Bailey and his wife, Doris, with the Relief Society emblem prominently displayed in the center. Sister EmmaDell H. Blanch, who had personally designed the quilt, also devoted many hours to its preparation. It was set up on Stake Leadership Day so that sisters gathered from every unit around the stake could participate in the final tying. Sister Blanch also accepted the call to serve as Secretary-Treasurer in September of that year.



Quilt presented to the Baileys in 1975.

The year 1975 also saw eight board members from the Corvallis Stake Relief Society travel to Salt Lake City, there to participate in what was to be the final Relief Society General Conference (in the years to follow, information was conveyed to board members on a regional level). Attending were Sisters Diane B. Patton, Anita L. Brooks, Gayle K. Wilkes, Evelyn C. Jensen, Maxine J. Lee, Georgina M. Lane, Margaret B. Reese, and Hazel J. Hunter.

At this same Conference of October 1, 1975, plans were announced to erect, in Nauvoo, a Monument to Women honoring the founding of the Relief Society in Nauvoo by the Prophet Joseph Smith, and to portray to the world the role of women in the gospel plan. In the pristine serenity of a garden setting, thirteen sculptures were to portray the various aspects of a woman's life, and the circles of her influence. Every Relief Society member had the opportunity to donate towards this monument, and all the names of the contributors were placed in a book that was eventually to be kept at the visitor's center in Nauvoo.

The March Leadership meeting of 1976 represented a two-fold celebration: The celebration of the founding of the United States of America, then being close to 200 years earlier, and the 134th anniversary of Relief Society. In honor of our nation's birthday, Captain Wilbur Watson, assistant professor in the *Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps* at O.S.U. and A.P.M.I.A. president, spoke on patriotism, reminding the sisters that we believe our government to have been set up by divine revelation from our Father in Heaven, and that God Himself "established the Constitution of this land, by the hands of wise men whom [He] raised up" (D&C 101:80). Captain Watson stated also that we must obey the law of the land until such time as we may enjoy immediate revelation from our Heavenly Father.

With the number of working sisters increasing over the years, by 1977 all ward Relief Societies began to hold evening meetings so that work schedules might be better accommodated. These evening meetings in the Corvallis Oregon Stake were initially presided over by Sister Diane B. Patton, and as the 1977-1978 year began in September of 1977, Sister Diane B. Patton was still the Stake Relief Society President, only now her counselors were Georgia M. Lane (Education Counselor) and Diane H. Masker (Homemaking Counselor), with EmmaDell H. Blanch as Secretary-Treasurer.

In 1978, the Relief Society board of the stake included a presidency, a secretary-treasurer, and a chorister, organist, visiting teaching message leader, nursery leader, and recreation leader. Leaders for each of the classes were appointed to cover Spiritual Living (formerly Theology), Social Relations (Social Science), Cultural Refinement (Literature), and Homemaking.

This was all remembered as an exciting decade, reaching its zenith with the visit of Barbara B. Smith, president of the Relief Society General Board, in October of 1978. President Smith offered instruction and counsel to those attending each of the meetings at which she was present, urging sisters to work out solutions to their problems within the framework of the Church, and to use prayer, the scriptures, and the words of the

Prophet as spiritual resources from which to draw for continued growth in personal righteousness. Included in the Visiting Teaching Convention was a presentation entitled “Love is a Gift of the Heart,” with script by Donna Vitkauskas, Diane Patton, Toni Tobey and Betty Wilson, and words to the song by Margaret B. Reese, with music by Kathy K. Larsen. After luncheon for the Stake Boards, Sister Smith was presented with a beautiful quilt and a pillow especially made for the occasion, designed by Diane Masker and made by members of the Corvallis Stake Board.

Aside from the significance of the meeting at which she spoke, the visit of President Barbara B. Smith is also remembered for the arrangements made by sisters in connection with and preparation for her visit. Sister Diane Patton has written:

Sister Smith was to stay at my home. A friend, Donna Vitkauskas, volunteered to help me wash all the china in my china cupboard for the dinner to be held in my home before the evening meeting. Everything was polished, dusted, shined, etc. in preparation for the big event. That is, all but my utility room, which due to time got a quick once over. As the event involved two other stakes, both of those Stake Relief Society Presidents were invited to dinner. It had been a very busy day, and not much time was left at home between meetings. Sister Smith asked to have her evening clothes ironed and we all volunteered. Of course, that meant all of us congregated in the utility room—the most neglected room in the house!

Dinner was ready on time, but where were my two high-school-football-playing boys? They were at practice and late, of course, and I foolishly delayed dinner waiting for them, wanting the whole family to be able to sit down together. Everything became a huge rush. President [Richard J.] Arnold choose to start the meeting exactly on time and to my mortification, we three Stake Relief Society presidents and Sister Smith were all just a bit late and had to parade in front of everybody to sit on the stand.

Well, Sister Smith was a very gracious lady and the whole event a treasured memory for all who participated, despite the glitches.



“Joyful Moment” statue by sculptor Dennis Smith at Monument to Women Garden in Nauvoo, Illinois.

And it was also in 1978 that the Monument to Women Garden was dedicated in Nauvoo. Three sisters from the Corvallis Oregon Stake traveled by bus to Nauvoo for the dedication service, which was held on June 28, 1978. These were: Ardice Hayes, Corvallis Second Ward; Irene Curtiss, Newport Ward, and Leone Burnett, Sweet Home Ward.

“Joyful Moment” statue by sculptor Dennis Smith at Monument to Women Garden in Nauvoo, Illinois.

In October of 1979, the newly organized Branch in Monroe held its first Relief Society meeting, with an enrollment of 23 sisters.

Corvallis Stake Reorganized

At the Corvallis Oregon Stake Conference held on February 3, 1980, Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles divided the stake, creating the new Lebanon Stake out of the wards Lebanon First and Second, Sweet Home, and Albany First and Second, along with the branches of Jefferson and Brownsville. Corvallis Oregon Stake was on this occasion organized to consist of Corvallis First, Second, and Third Wards, Newport Ward, University Ward, Philomath Ward, and the branches in Monroe and Waldport. (Monroe would

belong to the Corvallis Stake only briefly, as it was included in the organization of the Santa Clara Stake in 1983.) As the many changes were made, the Stake Relief Society President Diane Patton and her counselors were also released after serving six and a half years.

The new Stake Relief Society President, Elizabeth T. Wilson, and Secretary-Treasurer, Linda K. Tucker, were sustained at Stake Conference on February 3, 1980. At their first board meeting, Sister Wilson said that she wondered: "Why me?" And then, turning to the Visiting Teaching message for February which was then "Avoid Idleness," she referred to a quote from President Spencer W. Kimball, spoken shortly after his call to be a member of the Council of the Twelve, that: "*I don't know exactly why the Lord has called me, but I do have one talent to offer. My father taught me how to work, and if the Lord can use a worker, I'm available.*" Inspired to emulate the ethic thus modeled by President Kimball, Sister Wilson went on to become "available" both to the Lord and, as many can still attest, to her fellow sisters in the Relief Society.



Stake Relief Society Presidency in 1980. (L to R: Maureen Eburne, Betty Wilson, Lanice Limehouse, and Linda Tucker.)

At the first Leadership Meeting, March 8, 1980, Brother Max B. Williams, High Counselor, set apart sisters Maureen D. Eburne and F. Lanice Limehouse as the Education and the Homemaking Counselors, respectively.

Consolidated Meeting Schedule Begins

In March of 1980, a new consolidated meeting schedule began in all wards throughout the Church, with meetings held over a continuous 3-hour block of time on Sunday, rather than having the various auxiliaries hold meetings on an independent basis throughout the week.

These new block schedules afforded opportunities for families to spend more time together not only during the week, but also on Sunday. Monthly Homemaking meetings, however, were still held on an appointed week day. With these new time constraints on Relief Society meetings came the challenge of presenting effective, well-prepared lessons that would make maximally efficient use of time in the spiritual enrichment of those attending.

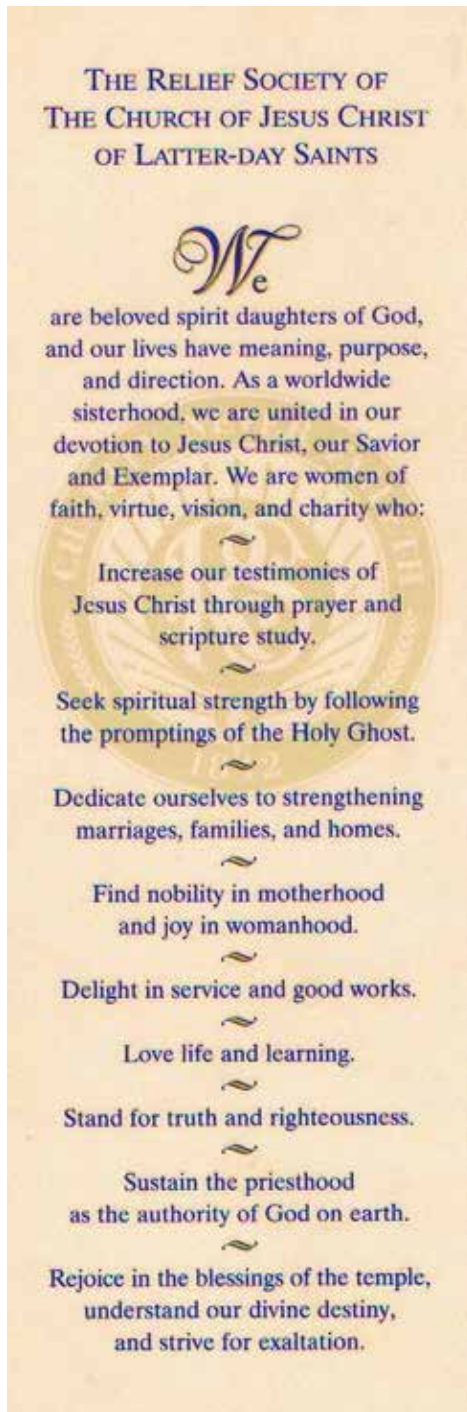
Relief Society Organization Simplified

The Relief Society organization was greatly simplified on January 1, 1987, when the Stake Relief Society Board was eliminated. Four women now would staff the Stake Relief Society: A president, two counselors, and a secretary/treasurer. Additional women could be called, however, with approval from the stake president, to chair special events or to serve certain assignments on an *ad hoc* basis. Also in 1987, *The Ensign* began printing the monthly Visiting Teaching Message that remains a feature in the magazine to this day.

Relief Society Curriculum Evolves

Beginning in 1987, lesson plans were organized with new categories and formats. The lesson curriculum now called for two Spiritual Living lessons each month, and other lessons would include Home and Family Education. Social Relations and Compassionate Service lessons were now combined, and Home Management lessons were taught during monthly Homemaking meeting with an emphasis on personal and family preparedness. This lesson schedule was to be considered flexible, however, in order to accommodate such unique situations as may be present in a given ward or branch.

A new course of study for the year 1990, titled “Learn of Me,” was introduced to the various wards, together with a revised mission statement officially pronounced by the General Relief Society Presidency. A systematic assessment was done to determine the needs of sisters throughout the stake, and the greatest needs identified by the ward and branch presidencies included:



- 1.) How to reduce stress.
- 2.) Overcoming/preventing depression.
- 3.) How to cope as a single parent.
- 4.) Dealing with transitions such as divorce, childbirth, and death.

A broad range of measures were taken to ensure that these needs were addressed, and those in need uplifted and edified accordingly.

In 1998, the Relief Society and priesthood curriculum was again changed in order to base lessons on the writings and recorded utterances of the prophets from this dispensation, beginning with Brigham Young. A two-year course was begun, for which lessons were presented during priesthood and Relief Society meetings on the second and third Sundays in a month. (In 2010, this curriculum of teachings from presidents of the Church was interrupted with a two-year course in Gospel Principles as a marked increase in numbers of new converts warranted the review of fundamental doctrines of the restored gospel.)

From this time onward, the monthly lesson plan has generally been arranged as follows:

The 1st Sunday: Relief Society sisters meet in Spiritual Living and testimony meeting. They may also discuss their duties and plan for compassionate service. The main resources for this meeting are *Relief Society Leader's Instructions and Relief Society Handbook*.

2nd and 3rd Sundays: The Relief Society and Melchizedek Priesthood study *Teachings of Presidents of the Church*. They are to meet separately, but study similar lessons on the same Sundays.

4th Sunday: The Relief Society and Melchizedek priesthood study subjects designated annually by the First Presidency, *Teaching for Our Times*.

New guidelines from the General Relief Society also included having a music period every Sunday during Relief Society, and increased the time allotted for bearing of testimonies during the first Sunday meeting to 20 minutes. Sisters who had previously been designated as teachers for “Spiritual Living” or “Home and Family Education” were now called to be Relief Society teachers, and could be assigned to teach on either the

2nd, 3rd, or 4th Sundays.

On January 1, 2006, new “Guidelines for Relief Society Home, Family, and Personal Enrichment Meetings and Activities” were introduced. Among other guideline revisions, Enrichment meetings were changed so as to be held quarterly rather than monthly. Enrichment activities were now to be held weekly, monthly, or as determined by ward Relief Society leaders. As these guidelines were enacted some of the Enrichment activities throughout the stake came to include a book club, play group, recipe exchange, family history activity, walking group, and a humanitarian aid group.

On the ward level, Relief Society boards continue to operate, although some board positions have been either combined or eliminated. The number of women called to staff a ward Relief Society board is determined according to assessed local needs and resources. This flexibility allows the number of callings to be reduced in smaller wards, while the larger wards may have many more women invited to serve.

Corvallis Stake Relief Society Blesses the Community Through Service and Seminars

Since 1980, the Stake Relief Society has been coordinating community blood drives with the Red Cross. Thousands of gallons of blood have, over the years, been donated at these events, which have been held at the Walnut Chapel, the Stake Center, and the Newport Building.

A semi-annual blood drive was held on February 16, 1987. Previous to this drive, the location had been at the Stake Center, but moving the location to the Walnut Boulevard Building seems to have made a difference in the increase of units of blood donated—70 units was the goal for February of 1987, and 96 were collected.

A personal and family preparedness seminar was held on February 21, 1987, at which breakfast was served, several informative displays viewed, and lecture presentations given under the following subject titles: Emergency Preparedness, Investing for Retirement, Church Development Program, Gardens and Tree Care, The Best Books, Over the Counter Drug Knowledge, How to See Yourself in Interviews, Faith: The Firm Foundation, and Fitness for the Mature Person. An impressive turnout of around 100 people came to this Relief Society-sponsored event.

The Grace Center—a non-profit, non-denominational program providing families in the Corvallis community with an alternative to nursing home or in-home care for the disabled and the elderly—asked for assistance in providing cakes and ice cream for birthday parties, as well as with the presentation of gifts to those enrolled in the program. The Stake Relief Society felt grateful for this opportunity to provide a community service, and believed that it would be a rewarding experience to serve others in the community. This was begun in March of 1987, and continued on a monthly basis, or as birthdays have occurred at the Center.

Relief Society Sisters Enjoy Presentations and Plays

For the special Stake Relief Society production put on May 17, 1975, a trio was assembled, singing a number entitled, “My Home is a Garden.” The trio was composed of Belva Rencher, Kathleen MacDonald, and



Food storage items displayed at the emergency preparedness seminar (1987).



Emergency pack display at preparedness seminar.

Marjean Moore, and was accompanied musically by Sister Deon F. Cole. Laurel Maughn and Jeannine Piehl of the University Ward also presented numbers on their flutes. For a fashion show in which Relief Society sisters had clothing items of their own invention displayed or modeled, Kay Davis and Averil Seely were narrators, providing commentary on the various fashion pieces showcased, and expressing appreciation for the sisters in their skills as seamstresses. Sister Cole concluded the show with the talk emphasizing the vital importance of cultivating an “Inner Beauty.”

The anniversary of the Relief Society was celebrated on March 10, 1990 with a conference entitled “Women of Infinite Worth: Women finding their worth in all seasons of their lives.” One month earlier, Arlene Holyoak had been sustained as the new Stake Relief Society President, with Marjean Moore and Luana Tekulve as counselors and Laura Dalton as secretary-treasurer. Conducting this event, the new Stake Relief Society Presidency recognized the many talents of women in the stake through music, the written word, and other forms of artistic expression. In commemoration of the event, a souvenir cultural arts booklet was also printed with original poetry, music, and essays by various women of the stake. Additionally, a play entitled “The Eternal Circle” was performed.

Annual Stake Women’s Conferences

Each year the Corvallis Stake Relief Society sponsors a conference for women that includes classes, one or more fine meals, guest speakers, and the occasional fashion show. The infinite and inherent worth of each sister is always emphasized, often through music, poetry, art, crafts, and essays by the stake women themselves.

The annual Stake Women’s Conference on March 11, 1989, had “Rainbow of Joy” as its title. The conference included a breakfast, fashion show, displays, testimony meeting, 17 classes, a luncheon, and various guest speakers. Among other speakers featured, Teresa Richardson, a TV commentator with “PM Magazine” and Jenna Huber of Corvallis, Oregon’s Miss T.E.E.N. [Teenagers Exemplifying Excellence Nationally], spoke to the women. The event was attended by over 275 women and organized by the Stake Relief Society Presidency, Starley Smith, President; Averil Seely, Education Counselor; Jan Baumgartner, Homemaking Counselor; and Kathleen Salmon, Secretary.

The annual Relief Society conference held Saturday, May 13, 1993, is remembered for its theme—a slight variation on the words of 2 Nephi 2:25—“Women Are That They Might Have Joy.” At this conference, Bobette Bushnell, Diane Patton, Flora Eisler, and Ane Hornibrook all spoke on the topic of finding joy. Evie Coleman inspired those in attendance with the musical number, “Behold My Joy is Full.”

The theme of the Stake Women’s conference held in 2003 was “Following the Prophet...Standing a Little Taller.” Inspiration for the theme was drawn from the well-known words of President Gordon B. Hinckley to “stand a little taller and work a little harder and value a little greater the marvelous blessing which you have as a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” Kay Graham spoke directly on the theme of the conference, after which workshops were offered on tree grafting (with instruction by Jeff Mitchell), enhancing Visiting Teaching (Bonnie Martin), being optimistic in today’s world (Cherrie Blake), music appreciation (Shari Cowie), and reaching our potential through Mother Eve (President David Blake).

For the year 2006, an informal Friday night event was added to the annual springtime Women’s Conference in the Stake, which was held at the new Philomath Ward building. With supervision by Stake Relief Society President Alice H. Rampton and her counselors, Heidi Neuffer and Karen Taylor (all of whom had been sustained in August of 2005), the Friday night activity included games, socialization, poetry readings, and root beer floats. Over 100 women attended this first event. Sisters from the coast had the opportunity of being hosted overnight in an effort to unify the stake coastal units (Waldport and Newport) with the stake units in the Willamette Valley (Corvallis 1, 2, 3, 4, Philomath, and University 1 and 2). On Saturday, March 4, 2006 over 250 women gathered to attend classes, and to hear Cammy Wilberger give the keynote address on the theme of the conference, “My Soul Delighteth in Righteousness.” Sister Wilberger’s talk on hope and love was tenderly received by all present because her daughter, Brooke, was kidnapped while working in Corvallis

earlier in the summer of 2005, and had been presumed killed (which later proved tragically correct). The ward Relief Societies in the Corvallis Stake had played an integral part in the search for Brooke, and had assisted in staffing the search effort with the Stake Center as their base of operations. Especially involved in organizing the contributions of the Relief Society to the search for Brooke around the time of her disappearance were the members of the Stake Relief Society Presidency, Yvonne Kunz (President), Ada Beth Winder (1st Counselor), and Janell Watson (2nd Counselor).

“Having a Perfect Brightness of Hope” was the theme of the 2007 Stake Women’s Conference. Speakers addressed a wide range of issues including addiction, depression, effective family home evenings, teaching manners to missionaries, and understanding the services offered by LDS Family Services. The Friday night informal activity was continued from that time on, with attendance increasing.

In 2008, the Women’s Conference was formatted as a two-day presentation, with activities, games, entertainment, and refreshments on Friday night, and a Saturday program featuring speakers and classes. Women’s conference in 2011 brought former Corvallis Stake member Evie Coleman back to Corvallis to speak, as well as to sing, on the theme, “More Holiness Give Me” (based on Hymn #131).

Quilts and Burp Cloths Produced for a World in Need

In the fall of 1990, President Arlene Holyoak attended the Relief Society Open House in Salt Lake City where she learned the theme for the upcoming Sesquicentennial celebration would be “Celebrating through Service.” Using the “planning with a purpose” concept to which she had been introduced at the General Relief Society Open House, President Holyoak and her presidency set a goal to have 70-100 quilts made for community agencies in Corvallis, Philomath, Waldport, and Newport. This became the focus of the various ward Relief Societies during 1991, and a special Stake Quilting Committee was formed with a representative from each ward in the stake at the time (Corvallis 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Newport, University 1st and 2nd, and Philomath), and the Waldport Branch. A generous and much-appreciated grant of \$2000 was received from the Meyer Memorial Trust to purchase batting and fabric for the quilt backs.

On March 14, 1992, a Relief Society Sesquicentennial celebration was attended by 150 Relief Society members, primary and young women ages 10 and older, friends, neighbors, and community representatives at the stake center. Those in attendance were in awe of the 239 quilts on display, which, greatly surpassing the initial goal of 100, served to represent the willingness of Relief Society sisters to “be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will” (D&C 58:27). These quilts were donated to 16 different charitable agencies.

In 1942, there were six members in the Corvallis Relief Society, and three of these “pioneer” women were in attendance at this anniversary celebration of Relief Society. These were: Vera Ballard, Dorothea Rampton, and Mary Williams. Fifty years later, in 1992, the Corvallis Stake Relief Society had grown to consist of 896 women. Inspirational talks by Elaine Jack, General Relief Society President, and Thomas S. Monson, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, and



Relief Society Sesquicentennial celebration. (L to R): Diane Patton, Betty Wilson, Sigrid Persons, Starley Smith, and Arlene Holyoak (1992).

five Relief Society sisters throughout the world were shown via satellite broadcast. Past Stake Relief Society Presidents were also honored on the occasion, including Sigrid Persons (1963-1973), Diane Patton (1973-1980), Betty Wilson (1980-1984), and Starley Smith (1984-1990).

Not restricting their output to quilts alone, the Relief Society, in 1997, undertook the production of burp cloths for donation to “*Healthy Start*,” which is a community program devoted to the support and strengthening of young children. The effort yielded a staggering total of 1,845 cloths.

Then, in 1999, Relief Society sisters produced and donated 150 quilts to war-ravaged Kosovo and to the Bishop’s Storehouse. For wounded soldiers returning from overseas duty, the Relief Society tied 5 quilts in 2009.

Blankets for Kenya Project Undertaken by Relief Society

When President Kevin Nielsen, while second counselor in the stake presidency, was to travel in company with Brother Shad Roundy to Kenya on business, he felt inspired to take along receiving blankets for needy Kenyan newborns. President Nielsen requested 100 such blankets, which he would personally deliver by hand to the women’s center at the village he was to visit.

Guidelines established for the blankets stipulated that they should be composed of two 1.25-yard pieces of flannel with right sides together, sewn, turned, and topstitched. No trim, ties, or embellishments were to be added. Bright bold colors, being quite popular in Kenya, and desirable in that culture over the softer pastel hues, made the blankets very attractive to the women receiving them for their newborn children. Each blanket was placed in a Ziploc bag of 1-gallon size, and then put in donation boxes at stake conference on October 23, 2011. The sisters, working both willfully and skillfully, and having their hearts and hands fully engaged in this labor of love, produced no fewer than 250 blankets, thus dramatically surpassing the requested total. As Sister Jean Nelson reported: “*President Nielsen shared the wonderful experience through personal testimony and slides, emphasizing the connection between us and the women of Kenya. A marvelous experience!*”

Loving Service to Our Community and Nation

As ably as the Relief Society sisters of Corvallis have administered to the needs of people living on the opposite side of the globe, they have proven no less serviceable in the humanitarian cause on a local level. Here, they made curtains for a local women’s shelter, donated Christmas presents for the Boys & Girls Club of Corvallis, cleaned Mary’s River Park, donated holiday decorations and household supplies to Samaritan House in Newport, paid personal visits to local nursing homes, and promoted literacy through the S.M.A.R.T. (Start Making A Reader Today) program in local schools. And the Newport sisters alone have made 100 “rainy day bags” for residents of the Samaritan House, a local transitional home.

On September 5, 2005, over 400 church and community members donated cash and other supplies at the stake center for the relief of the victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. Additionally, they helped assemble emergency humanitarian kits for those then suffering in that disaster-stricken area.

Hundreds of hours of community service were given by the sisters at Corvallis Community Outreach, the Grace Center, and the Children’s Farm Home. Windows were washed, flower beds weeded, carpets cleaned, and bulbs planted in service to these appreciative institutions.

Clothing was also sorted for shipment to a sister city in Uzhhorod, Ukraine. Loads of donated clothing filled multiple pickup trucks, which helped transport the items part of the way on the long journey to their destination.

In 2011, Susan Williams was called as president of the Stake Relief Society, with Ileen Barlow and Laurie Wood as counselors. Under their direction, 156 hygiene kits were assembled at Women’s Conference. Quilts and toys were also collected there for purposes of charitable donation.

General Relief Society Meetings

With the advent of satellite technology came the pivotal shift to a broadcasting system throughout the Church which allowed numerous meetinghouses to be equipped with dishes for receiving General Conference transmissions. In the Corvallis Oregon Stake, both the stake center and the Newport Ward meetinghouse are fitted out with the satellite capability required to receive live broadcasts from Salt Lake City.

One of the most memorable of all General Relief Society meetings occurred on September 23, 1995. It was on this occasion that President Gordon B. Hinckley first delivered the now widely-referenced official proclamation on the family, titled, *“The Family: A Proclamation to the World.”* In it, the centrality of the family unit in the Creator’s plan for the destiny of His children is affirmed, as well as the sanctity of marriage, the eternal nature of gender as an immutable part of one’s spiritual identity, and the responsibility of defending the family against all incursions and encroachments of the adversary. The following week at General Conference, President Hinckley again recited the contents of the proclamation. But, from the fact that it was first delivered to the sisters of the Relief Society a week in advance, the eagerness of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles to see the sisters receive this message may be seen.

On September 29, 2012, Relief Society sisters were all invited to the Corvallis Stake Center to watch the General Relief Society Meeting live at 5:00 P.M., followed by dessert and time to mingle with the other sisters of the stake. Providing leadership for and at this special meeting were the members of the newly called Stake Relief Society Presidency, Lisa Freeman (President), Luana Tekulve (1st Counselor), Laurie Wood (2nd Counselor), and Phyllis Ross (Secretary). The broadcast was also shown at the Waldport and Newport buildings, where ward presidencies provided meals for the sisters in attendance. There were about 135 in attendance in Corvallis. Specialty cupcakes from Jill Nagel were served along with punch. Tables were set and decorated for the occasion by Luana Tekulve and Laurie Wood. Sister Lisa Freeman attended the meeting in Salt Lake City. Priesthood members helped to set up the video webcast equipment, provide Spanish viewing with headphones in a separate room, and set up and take down tables and chairs. Messages were heard from the newly called General RS presidency, consisting of Sisters Linda Burton, Carole Stephens and Linda Reeves. President Henry B. Eyring was the concluding speaker.

Inspired messages of faith and love for the Savior and fellow sisters were shared. It is important, the speakers taught, that sisters work to understand and apply the redemptive, ennobling power of the Atonement in their lives. As they serve and pray and keep covenants, the sisters were promised that they would be strengthened, healed, and come to know that God has not forgotten them.

Family Preparedness Encouraged By and Among Sisters

Relief Society sisters have contributed to the storage of an ample emergency food supply with a dry pack canner that was purchased by the Corvallis Oregon Stake. The dry pack canner visits each ward in the stake twice a year for two weeks, and since it is a mobile unit, individual families are able to use it for an allotted time

THE FAMILY

**A PROCLAMATION
TO THE WORLD**

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY AND COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

*W*E, THE FIRST PRESIDENCY and the COUNCIL of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, solemnly proclaim that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children.

ALL HUMAN BEINGS—male and female—are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny. Gender is an essential characteristic of individual personality, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.

IN THE PREMORAL REALM, spirit sons and daughters knew and worshipped God as their Eternal Father and accepted His plan by which His children could obtain a physical body and gain earthly experience to progress toward perfection and ultimately realize his or her divine destiny as an heir of eternal life. The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT that God gave to Adam and Eve pertained to their potential for parenthood as husband and wife. We declare that God’s commandment for His children to multiply and replenish the earth remains in force. We further declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

WE DECLARE the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God’s eternal plan.

HUSBAND AND WIFE have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other and for their children. “Children are an heritage of the Lord” (Psalm 127:3). Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to observe the commandments of God and to be law-abiding citizens wherever they live. Husbands and wives—mothers and fathers—will be held accountable before God for the discharge of these obligations.

THE FAMILY is ordained of God. Marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan. Children are entitled to birth within the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity. Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities. By divine design, fathers are to preside over their families in love and righteousness and are responsible to provide the necessities of life and protection for their families. Mothers are primarily responsible for the nurture of their children. In these sacred responsibilities, fathers and mothers are obligated to help one another as equal partners. Disability, death, or other circumstances may necessitate individual adaptation. Blended families should lend support when needed.

WE URGE that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets.

WE CALL UPON responsible citizens and officers of government everywhere to promote those measures designed to maintain and strengthen the family as the fundamental unit of society.

This proclamation was read by President Gordon B. Hinckley as part of his message at the General Relief Society Meeting held September 23, 1995, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

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at their own homes. The stake has also purchased a reflanger for use by families in recycling their #10 cans. The can reflanger cuts off the ring from the old can and forms a new flange that will accept a new double-seam lid.

Feeding the Lord's Missionaries, Full-Time or Otherwise

Ninety missionaries were served from the Corvallis, Lebanon and Salem areas at an Oregon Eugene Mission Zone Conference Lunch on March 14, 2013. The Corvallis 2nd Ward chaired the event with Relief Society Second Counselor Margaret Johnson in charge. Karin Cochran decorated the tables and others came to help prepare and serve the food. Janalee Romrell, Suzanne Woods, Eldon Olsen, Chris Carlson, and Lisa Freeman also assisted. This event is still remembered as a wonderful opportunity to provide service for our missionaries. The lunch was held at the Lebanon Stake Center in Albany, and the missionaries were very appreciative, and consumed ample amounts of lasagna.

On Friday, September 13, 2013, full-time missionaries were treated to another luncheon, this time hosted by the Corvallis 3rd Ward at the stake center. Pulled-pork sandwiches were prepared by Averil Seely and salads by Nancy Jacobsen, Pamela Byerly, and Diane Merten. Desserts were provided by Debbie Huntsman, Cheri King, Nadine King, Yong Suk Shotton, Ashley Barrett, and Joyce Grose. Sandwich rolls were provided by Jan Baumgartner, who also helped in the gathering of sunflowers from her friend, Kathy Jones, who is not a member of the Church. The sunflowers were used by Lisa Davis as decorations according to the theme of the occasion, which was following the example of sunflowers: As sunflowers follow the light of the sun, so, too, must we follow the Son. Elder Lynn A. Mickelson of the Seventy has described the process thus:

When the shoot of a plant breaks through the surface of the soil, it begins to conduct sunlight all the way down to the tips of the plant's roots. This light tells a plant how high to grow, how many leaves to sprout, when to flower, when to set fruit, and when to age—a process called photomorphogenesis. Without light, the plant dies. As I thought about this process, I was impressed with the parallel between the role of light in a plant's life and in our own lives. Plants always grow toward the light. A sunflower follows the sun across the sky every day until it becomes "stiff-necked"; then it withers and dies. In our spiritual lives, our growth is determined by how we follow the Son—the Son of God—and allow His light to be the controlling force. If we become stiff-necked and cease to look to His light, or if we allow sin to damage our receptors for light, we will die spiritually. But if we obey the commandments, we come closer to God and gain greater light. This increase in light stimulates the 'photomorphogenesis' of our spiritual lives and governs our spiritual progress.

The sunflowers used in the luncheon motif were thus emblematic of the attention all who desire to embrace light must give to the Son of God, who is the light of the world. And this is the central message which full-time missionaries are sent forth to proclaim.

But, as the oft-repeated slogan of David O. McKay states: "Every member a missionary." This is as true of sisters as of brethren in the Church, and it was with a grateful recognition of the Relief Society members as faithful representatives of the Lord that a very special, and long-to-be-remembered, Stake Relief Society Women's Dinner and Fireside was held for the Corvallis Oregon Stake on April 20, 2013.

A committee was organized to plan prepare and present this event to the sisters of the stake. It included Lisa Freeman, Luana Tekulve, Laurie Wood, and Phyllis Ross; with Jan Baumgartner as food chairperson and Alloa Jessee as her assistant. There was also a member from each ward: Georgia Morrill (College Hill Ward), Micah Burmeister (1st Ward), Sarah Zabriskie (2nd Ward), Mindy Dye (3rd Ward), Brittney Fry (4th Ward), Dana Robinson (Philomath), Sherrie Mallen (Waldport), Catherine Hingson (Newport). These industrious and dedicated women are gratefully acknowledged for having contributed immensely to the success of the evening. Attractive bookmark invitations and a display poster were used to advertise for the event.

A stunning visual atmosphere was created, which contributed much to the night's success. Lighting was adjusted such that the appearance of its being held in a gym was minimized. Large soft colored tissue paper flowers hung from the ceiling, and the tables were covered with white cloths and burlap, each having a jar vase

of curly willow and tulips set for decoration. Each of these items were obtained at no cost, as jars were donated by the Waldport branch, the curly willow from Sister Hingson's yard (courtesy of a windstorm), and the 200 tulips being picked from a farm south of town after their harvesting was completed.

Obtaining the flowers for the event was a tender mercy from the Lord: A month ahead of time a source for flowers was chosen, which subsequently proved not to work out. A back-up plan was determined which was not ideal, and there were, in fact, no funds available with which to purchase flowers. Two days before the event, however, Sister Laurie Wood was in conversation with a work associate, and during the course of their dialogue made mention of the event, and of its need for flowers. The woman with whom she was speaking then, quite unexpectedly, offered tulips from her 10-acre farm. With care taken to keep within the allotment of resources, and through the combined talents of those involved, the Relief Society sisters were able to see miracles from the Lord as He assisted in helping things to come together.

The sisters were also treated to a lovely Teriyaki chicken dinner, served to them by the young brethren of College Hill Ward. There were cake tables in each corner with beautifully decorated cakes for the sisters to choose from for dessert. All of the sisters enjoyed the food, and especially the fellowship shared on this occasion. Around 270 meals were enjoyed by the membership of the Stake Relief Society, with additional sisters who only attended the Fireside.

A string quartet played while the sisters entered the chapel, and the meeting was conducted by President Lisa Freeman. The humanitarian effort in which the Stake Relief Society is to be engaged the rest of the year was there introduced, and in connection therewith a flyer, titled "*Oregon Coast Dignity Drive*," was handed out. All of the wards in the Stake will work with Newport and Waldport to assist the local community through Samaritan House, foster care, and the hospital. There are some 500 homeless children in Lincoln County alone, whom the sisters of the Newport Ward and Waldport Branch will assist, alternating every three months. This humanitarian effort, it is felt, will bless the lives not only of the many needy, but of the Relief Society sisters themselves.

Shannon Cordon and Cammy Wilberger accepted the invitation to speak at the Fireside, each addressing the topic of "What Matters Most," with special reference to a talk that had been presented in the October General Conference of 2010 by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf. The conference was very well attended, which has been attributed, in large part, to the presence of these two women. Both spoke of the severe trials through which they were called to pass in their lives, and of how they were made capable of coping with them by anchoring their faith in the Savior. They also spoke of the deliverance and peace to be found in extending forgiveness to others. The sisters present felt a strong spirit astir in the room, and were uplifted through their example and words. It was a successful event, with very positive remarks communicated back from the sisters who had there been so mightily and memorably moved.

This would prove to be the last major event organized by the presidency of Lisa Freeman, Luana Tekulve, and Laurie Wood, as the following month, on May 12th, Karen Hein would be sustained as Stake Relief Society President (Sisters Tekulve, Wood, and Ross retained their positions as first and second counselors, and secretary).

Special Guest Presentations Entertain and Edify Relief Society

A special Stake Adult Fireside was held on June 27, 1987 featuring the celebrated guest Brother Don



Don Aslett



Chieko Okazaki

Aslett, author of best-selling books *Is There Life After Housework?*, *Who Says It's Woman's Job to Clean?*, and *Clutter's Last Stand*. The fireside was advertised “for anyone who does housework, ignores housework, or delegates housework.” Approximately 300 people attended this event.

Sister Averil S. Seely was called as president of the Stake Relief Society in December of 1995, with Laurel Maughan and Jackie Myrold becoming her counselors, and Velda Holseth serving as secretary-treasurer. President Seely had always had a great love of the musical arts, and had herself assisted in organizing a number of performances over the years. And so it was with great excitement that she welcomed Jerold and JoAnn Ottley, retired Mormon Tabernacle Choir director and vocal coach, respectively, as speakers at a fireside sponsored by the Relief Society. Entitled, “Good Friday Fireside,” the evening featured the performance of two solos by Sister Ottley, and the audience was also invited to participate in the singing of certain numbers. It has since been described by more than one participant as “a spiritual feast for all who attended.”

Later, Chieko Okazaki, former counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency and author of the memorable book *Being Enough*, was the keynote speaker for the Corvallis Stake Women's Conference in April of 2008. She also conducted a Q&A session on Friday night, and spoke two nights later at a fireside in Newport.

The Legacy of Relief Society

The Relief Society of the Church, in sum, recognizes women of the Church as occupying a position without possible parallel in the world. Its powers are of heaven, and not of earth; of God, and not of man. At the time of the official organization of the Relief Society in Nauvoo, Illinois, the prophet Joseph Smith said to the sisters: “I now turn the key to you in the name of God and this Society shall rejoice and knowledge and intelligence shall flow down from this time—this is the beginning of better days to this Society.”

And many and great have been the promised “better days” since! As President Spencer W. Kimball said in 1979:

Bear in mind, dear sisters, that the eternal blessings which are yours through membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are far, far greater than any other blessings you could possibly receive. No greater recognition can come to you in this world than to be known as a woman of God...

There is no greater and more glorious set of promises given to women than those which come through the gospel and the Church of Jesus Christ. Where else can you learn who you really are? Where else can you be given the necessary explanations and assurances about the nature of life? From what other source can you learn about your own uniqueness and identity? From whom else could you learn of our Father in Heaven's glorious plan of happiness?

.. Much of the major growth that is coming to the Church in the last days will come because many of the good women of the world (in whom there is often such an inner sense of spirituality) will be drawn to the Church in large numbers. This will happen to the degree that the women of the Church reflect righteousness and articulateness in their lives and to the degree that the women of the Church are seen as distinct and different—in happy ways—from the women of the world...

Thus it will be that female exemplars of the Church will be a significant force in both the numerical and the spiritual growth of the Church in the last days.

Thus the true heroines of humanity are those godly women whose lives, freely spent in loving service, are driven by the recognition of divine identity not only in themselves, but in all the children of our Heavenly Father throughout the world. And whatsoever things they do as they administer relief to their brothers and sisters, they know, as per Matthew 25:40, that they have done them unto the Lord Himself.

CHAPTER 16

Mutual — Young Men & Young Women

“And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters.” (Mosiah 5:7)

As is the privilege of many youth in the Church, the young men and young women of the Corvallis Stake enjoy a regularly scheduled activity night, called Mutual. The term “Mutual” expresses, in this context, the idea of a shared experience in which young men and young women are alike edified, and mutually benefited. The fostering of mutual support and respect, as befits all saints seeking oneness in Christ, is also suggested by the term, and serves to direct the focus of leaders and youth toward that end.

Mutual activities provide opportunities for the youth to gather together in a safe, wholesome setting, free from worldly distractions, where their attention may be better devoted to acquiring those godly attributes toward which their shared standards point them.

Each year, themes are announced to the Mutual program of the Church, giving the youth and their leaders some gospel standard on which to lay emphasis in all their activities. The 2013 Mutual theme for youth is drawn from D&C 87:8: *“Stand Ye in Holy Places.”* David L. Beck, Young Men general president, explained this theme by noting that: *“Jesus Christ is our rock. He is the foundation of our faith, and He supports us as we choose to follow Him. With Christ in their lives, our youth will do more good than they could ever imagine. They can establish ‘holy places’ the world over.”* And Young Women General President Elaine S. Dalton, a short time before her release in April of 2013, explained further:



David L. Beck

Elaine S. Dalton

This year is the time to be worthy to have an individual temple recommend and to use it. It is the time to help make our homes holy places where the Spirit can dwell. It is the time to seek places where the Spirit can be present. Even in the use of technology, it is the time to ‘stand ye in holy places, and be not moved.’

All of this reflects perfectly the spirit of Mutual activity nights, during which young men and young women seek a place where the Spirit can be present. Mutual leaders, moreover, help establish holy places for them.

Beginnings of Mutual Organization in the Church

The first official youth association of the Church was known as the Young Gentlemen and Ladies’ Relief Society of Nauvoo, and arose from a group of young men and women, gathering in January of 1843, at the home of Elder Heber C. Kimball. These gatherings, at first unofficial, were formally organized with direction from the prophet Joseph Smith on March 21, 1843, and the name of them was soon thereafter shortened simply to Young People’s meetings.

Even amid the persecutions which raged following the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, and throughout the struggles of their westward trek, the saints continued to feel the need for such an organization.

Desire that the rising generation might be thus benefited was first particularly expressed by Brigham Young in reference to young women of the Church when, on November 28, 1869, he said:

I have long had it in my mind to organize the young ladies of Zion into an association so that they might assist the older members of the Church, their fathers and mothers, in...teaching and practicing the principles I have been so long teaching. There is a need for the young daughters...to get a living testimony of the truth.



Heber C. Kimball

By June of 1875, the Church began organizing Mutual Improvement Associations for both young men and young women throughout the wards and stakes then in existence. To the leaders of these associations, President Young spoke as follows:

We want you to organize yourselves into associations for mutual improvement. Let the keynote of your work be the establishment in the youth of individual testimony of the truth and magnitude of the great latter-day work; the development of the gifts within them, that have been bestowed upon them by the laying on of hands of the servants of God; cultivating a knowledge and an application of the eternal principles of the great science of life.

There was at this time, however, no general presidency called to oversee these associations for the Church. This would change in June of 1880, when, to commemorate Brigham Young’s birthday, President John Taylor called a sisters’ conference and announced separate general presidencies for the Relief Society, Primary, and young women.

Beginnings of Mutual Improvement Association in Corvallis

Almost continuously since members of the Church first entered this part of Oregon, there have been Gold & Green Ball events put on by the Mutual Improvement Association (M.I.A.). The “Gold & Green” phrase has reference to the official M.I.A. colors, in which the gold represents strength and power; the green, youth and growth. The first Gold & Green Ball was held in the Memorial Union building around 1935, at what is now called Oregon State University. This was, in fact, the only M.I.A. event of which there is now record from the early years of the Church in Corvallis.

Servicemen of the Church stationed at Camp Adair found and offered much strength to the little Corvallis Branch. One of these officers was Major Hilding Marlowe, who, with his wife Mary, had children of ages that would make them eligible to participate in M.I.A. Brother Marlowe, in fact, became the Young Men leader, and Bessie Auger became the Young Women leader around the same time. Other families with children of M.I.A. age during the 1940s were the Blackers, Thomases, Millers, and Belnaps.

When Alta Mortensen (later Alta Hunter) first arrived in Corvallis, she was a student at Oregon State College. There were then but few active Latter-day Saint students on campus, and these included Tess Williams, Marjean Hickman, Ernest and Idon Anderson. These would meet regularly on campus, and were instrumental in organizing a student group for Church members. As Sister Hunter later recalled: *“In the fall of 1945, the Navy ROTC sent a contingent of cadets who lived in Snell Hall. Several LDS young men were in that group; Wally Cook, Sterling Carr, Larry Gillett among them, and they helped to swell the size of the college age group.”* All of the students here named would go on to form the Deseret Club on campus, which was the very seed that would develop, in due course, into the Institute of Religion.

Early Corvallis M.I.A. Boards Work With Limited Resources

In Corvallis, the Young Men’s Mutual Improvement Association (Y.M.M.I.A.) and Young Women’s Mutual Improvement Association (Y.W.M.I.A.) were, from the 1950s through the 1960s, characterized by large boards of adult leaders, abundant activities, and limited budgets. These associations, being strictly auxiliary in nature, received minimal direct support from the priesthood. Departments included athletics, music, dance, drama, and speech.

Two of the Young Women presidents for the Willamette Stake were from Corvallis. Idell B. Lee was the first, and Kathryn S. Frischknecht followed. Sister Frischknecht continued to reside in Corvallis until November 2, 2015, when she passed away, just a few weeks following her 94th birthday, and always held fond memories of the days when Harry Wright, counselor to President Ralph B. Lake, oversaw the M.I.A. programs.

In spite of budget constraints, much inspiration and support was found through the divinely appointed channels in the Church. The general board of M.I.A. in Salt Lake City provided associations functioning here with resources, ideas, and strengths. Detailed manuals were given to every department, and members of the general board would even visit periodically to offer local leaders the encouragement and spiritual insight they would need to effectively operate the various programs. Attending M.I.A. conferences in June at Salt Lake City also provided an annual well of refreshment to which leaders could resort and draw renewing power. Sister Frischknecht would make the trips for conferences in Salt Lake City from Corvallis, and upon returning would meet with local leaders to share what had been learned, as well as what material had been brought back.

Dance, music, speech, and drama productions, for example, would be previewed at these Salt Lake City conferences, and M.I.A. leaders from Corvallis would return therefrom with the scripts and music needed to put on entertaining performances for their ward (and later, stake) friends. Youth would wait excitedly for their leaders to return home bearing these new materials, and were enthusiastic in their participation in the performances. An item that was to be of particular significance was a record of the “Promised Valley” production, brought back by Sister Frischknecht, which was performed shortly before Corvallis Oregon Stake’s official organization, and will again be performed in July of 2013 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the stake.

Dance Festivals Provide Cultural Enrichment and Fun for Youth

The earliest dance festival of which there remains any record was entitled, “Smiles You’ll Remember,” which was put on in 1965. A dance festival called “Magical Moments” came in 1967. In all such festivals, participating dancers were beautifully arrayed in costumes of exquisite workmanship.

For a time, youth were able to travel all the way to the University of Utah for a June dance festival held in the great stadium, which attracted participants from throughout the Church. These festival events provided not

only the planned entertainment, but occasionally afforded memorable episodes of comic mishap. Brother Boyd Nash recalls, for instance, how:

Al Angell took a group to Salt Lake to perform, and the day of their dance he slipped in a shower and broke an ankle. He had been serving as chaperone as well as a dance partner for one of the young women, and the girl ended up dancing with the rest of the group with an invisible dance partner out on that big football field.

Owing to rapid Church membership growth, both the dance festivals and the June M.I.A. conferences were officially discontinued, and now such events are held on a regional basis.

An area dance festival in 1979 was presented in the Portland Coliseum, with the title, "A Family Affair." Approximately 2,500 youth from Washington and Oregon participated in the event, which celebrated the theme of an international family in which all people alike are children of God, and the earthly descendants of Adam and Eve. Participants all accordingly learned dances from a variety of countries and cultures of the world, including Latin-American rhythms and European Fold. Also learned were the popular dances of bygone eras, such as the Charleston and swing. The performances were further enhanced by a youth choir.

In 1986, a stake dance was put on featuring ballroom dance steps that could be performed to contemporary music. Craig Romrell and JanaLee Russell performed an original dance. An Area Dance Festival was held in July of 1989 at the Portland Coliseum with many youth from the Corvallis Stake performing.



Craig Romrell and JanaLee Russell dance (1986).



Dance festival participants in Portland (1989).



Dance festival participants.

Roadshows Develop Talents of Members

The roadshow custom likely began with Brigham Young and his inspired injunction to all the saints crossing the prairies with him to gather at eventide for singing, dancing, and general wholesome merriment. This was in keeping with the spirit of that revelation given by the Lord through President Young which has since become Section 136 in the Doctrine & Covenants. This revelation, addressed in its first verse to “the Camp of Israel in their journeyings to the West,” enjoins the journeying saints in verse 28: “If thou art merry, praise the Lord with singing, with music, with dancing, and with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving.”

According to Pat Davis, one-time cultural arts specialist for the General Activities Committee of the Church:

Roadshows are a unique LDS art form, and an exciting showcase for talents. Every would-be composer, choreographer, director, singer, playwright, and dancer has the opportunity to hone skills and try them before the public.

Roadshows are also good for a person’s self-image. There’s nothing quite like that good feeling you have when you hear the audience applauding after you’ve performed. And roadshows are an ideal way to involve everyone—nonmembers and inactive members—in a fun activity, as well as develop a spirit of unity in a ward.

In Corvallis, when roadshows were a part of the M.I.A. program, practices were held during weekly meetings. Dance festivals and three-act plays were bigger undertakings, and thus entailed a considerable number of hours in rehearsal time, both on weeknights and Saturdays. Wards would come together at the stake center to partake in the talents of their fellow-saints, honed to an impressive degree over the course of weeks in practice.

Throughout these beginning years of Mutual activity in Corvallis, as Sister Jean Nelson summarizes:

The quality and quantity of activities were both demanding and impressive—demanding for those who had to produce a big event each season along with weekly activities and classes, and impressive in learning and growth. The program of M.I.A. is the mechanics of bringing the gospel as a living force into the lives of the young people of the Church; of teaching them the worthwhile values of life; of learning good sportsmanship; of developing talents; of feeling love for classmates who, like themselves, are seeking eternal life by the same methods. These lessons were learned by youth and leaders alike as a result of effort and sacrifice in carrying out the challenging program in a successful way.

Value of Service to Others Fostered By Stake Youth

The young men and young women have engaged in many acts of charitable service. A very special service project done at the 2004 Youth Conference called “The Toy Bomber Service Project,” collected toys and school supplies for children in Iraq. Helicopter pilots with the 82nd Medical Company of the United States Army then “bombed” (dropped) these toys and school supplies over areas where impoverished Iraqi children stood in need of them. One of the objectives of this project was to instill gratitude in our youth for the blessings daily enjoyed by them in this land of freedom and opportunity, to open their eyes to the good one person may do for others, and to teach them through firsthand personal experience “to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35)

On another occasion, both the young men and the young women wrote letters to soldiers who generally received little or no mail. They expressed gratitude to the soldiers for their service and valor in defense of this nation. In this, the youth learned to demonstrate appreciation for those who risk their lives, and who may go largely unrecognized in their doing so, on behalf of their country.

Youth Conferences Provide Occasions of Faith and Fun

Youth conferences focus, above all else, on increasing and strengthening testimony in Jesus Christ. Youth

conferences generally involve overnight stays, with youth often traveling long distances from their home cities to attend. There is always a sacred theme, reinforced by wonderful speakers selected to give talks, teach classes, and guide activities. Dances are held, as well as at least one service project (though oftentimes service project time will involve diverse projects being simultaneously carried on).

One year, a youth conference service project followed the format of a scavenger hunt in which the city of Corvallis was divided into areas, and the youth into groups of around 5 or 6 members. The groups were then directed to their assigned areas, where they would go on a service scavenger hunt. One group, for example, would knock on doors, asking the residents of the homes who answered if there was any work to be done that could be turned over to the care of the youth, such as yard work, dish washing, or babysitting while the parents did something else that they wished to do around the home or yard. After each project had been successfully completed, the youth group would ask if they could share a parting song. One song pre-selected for singing by a group was, "I Am a Child of God." In some cases, before the song began, the family asked for a minute or two to gather everyone together so that they could all hear it. Sometimes they would request that the song be sung again.

In some cases, families declined to have any work done, but would still listen to the youth sing whichever song they had chosen to share.

One memorable occasion that took place during a youth service scavenger hunt is described by Sister Diane Merten:

I remember a very special moment when the youth left a back yard after working and then singing, and when we got to the front side walk, two older women were standing there and asked if they were the ones with the sweet voices that the ladies had heard. When answered that they had been singing, the ladies asked the youth to sing their song again so the ladies could hear it and feel again the special feelings they had had when first hearing the youth sing in a back yard. A very tender moment in a service scavenger hunt.

Youth conferences have often taken young men and young women from Corvallis to areas well outside of their home stake boundaries. Since 2004, youth conferences have seen youth from the Corvallis Oregon Stake in such places as Tillamook and Silver Creek Falls. Other youth conferences, however, have taken place within stake boundaries, as when one was held in Waldport, and another in Corvallis itself.

The first Corvallis Stake youth conference took place in 1978, and youth conferences have since been participated in on a biennial basis.

Temple Trips Bring Youth to the House of the Lord

Each ward of the Corvallis Oregon Stake schedules youth temple trips bi-annually, with youth being always encouraged to qualify for a temple recommend so that they might participate on these sacred occasions, within the hallowed precincts of the house of the Lord, in the ordinances of vicarious baptism and confirmation.

In this great work of providing the means of posthumous salvation for those who died not having received the fullness of the restored gospel, youth are likewise encouraged to attend to the research of their personal genealogy.



Youth temple trip (1990).

Anyone of the age of 12 or over may have his or her own family history account created, enabling them to access, electronically, information concerning their ancestors. In 2012, Corvallis youth leaders personally trained the youth in their charge on how to use FamilySearch.org, which is a genealogical website operated by the Church, and the largest free genealogy organization in the world. Thus trained, youth are able to acquire names for ancestors whose work they are then privileged to do, or have done, during youth temple trips.

The performance of these proxy ordinances has rightly been described by Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles as a defining characteristic of youth in this dispensation, and one that is essential to the realization of their purpose. “We are here to participate in the work of salvation,” said Elder Bednar, addressing the youth of the Church. “That’s who we are, that’s why we’re here on the earth...You were prepared for this day. The time is now.”



David A. Bednar

The Mutual program of the Church, now, as in centuries past, invites young men and young women to rejoice in the shared blessings of the gospel; to have joy, and so fulfill the very purpose for which Adam fell of old. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf recently spoke to youth on this wise:

Get together as young people—in your wards or branches, but also with those in neighboring stakes and districts. Dance together, study the gospel together, work together, serve your fellowmen together—and have fun doing it. It is my earnest prayer that the knowledge of who you are and what you may become will fill your souls with the peaceable love of God and that this will ignite within you a happiness worthy of your true heritage, for in truth you are princes and princesses, kings and queens.

This sage counsel exactly corresponds to the purpose of Mutual. This happiness of which President Uchtdorf spoke is what the prophet Joseph Smith called nothing short of “the object and design of our existence,” and, once ignited within a young man or young woman, the blazing light thereof intensifies as it combines with that found to be aflame in their worthy peers. These youth will then grow and go forth as bearers of light to that benighted world which even now “groaneth under darkness” (D&C 84:49), thus having proven that:

*So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low, ‘Thou must,’
The youth replies, ‘I can.’*



Dieter F. Uchtdorf

In this way, too, Latter-day Saint youth ensure that what are called their formative years will also be informative years, and the march of time—or, rather, the ever-onward march of the Church through time—will show our succeeding generations to be successful generations.

CHAPTER 17

Stake Performances and Presentations

“Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise.” (Psalm 33:2-3)

In contrast to a number of other denominations of Christendom, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has, from its earliest days, encouraged music, dancing, and festivities held in due season. Absence of such wholesome conviviality was, in fact, seen as opposed to the heavenly standard. “There is no music in hell,” taught President Brigham Young, “for all good music belongs to heaven.” President John Taylor also said:

Social enjoyment and amusements are not incompatible with correct conduct and true religion. Instead of forbidding the theatre and placing it under ban, it has been the aim of the Latter-day Saints to control it and keep it free from impure influences, and to preserve it as a place where all could meet for the purpose of healthful enjoyment.

Healthful enjoyment of just this sort has been made available to our stake members throughout the years, with the encouragement and blessing of our leaders. Productions have most often been based on the recent works of contemporary Latter-day Saint composers and playwrights. Some have even been written and composed by Corvallis Stake members, thus giving singers opportunity to truly “sing unto [the Lord] a new song,” as the Psalmist enjoins.

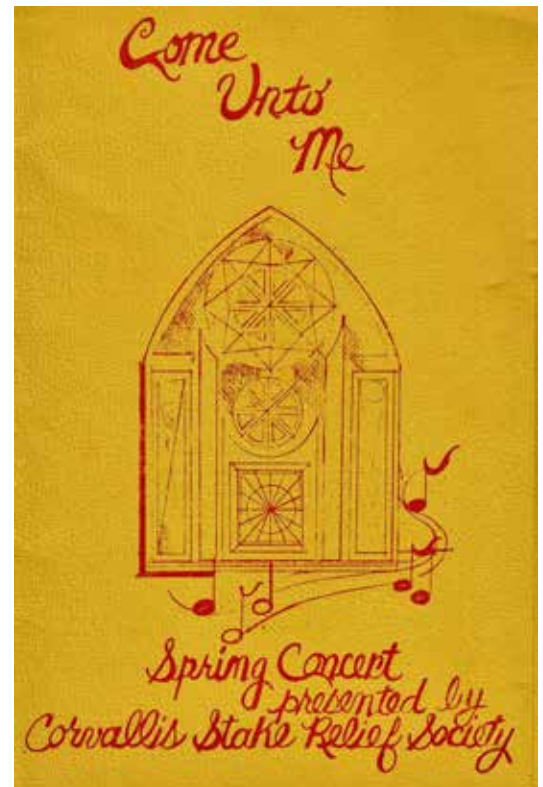
Choral Productions

On April 10, 1970, a Spring Concert titled “Let Music Fill The Earth” was presented, with Margaret B. Reese serving as chairman of the event, and Katherine K. Larsen of the Corvallis Second Ward as its chorister. Marlene Hill was the accompanist, and Don Weathermon, the narrator; with Mildred Bennion speaking as the “Voice of America.” The program is comprised of seven parts, having the following titles: I. “The Magic of Music,” II. “Motherhood is Filled With Music,” III. “All Nature Sings,” IV. “Music is the Voice of Happiness,” V. “Lovers Speak Through Music,” VI. “A Song of Courage and Valor,” and VII. “Brotherhood of the World.” Schubert’s “To Music,” which was featured in Part I, contains these stirring lines:

*O Art divine, how oft when life has dwindled
To one restricted circle bleak and grey,
Hast thou my heart to warmer love enkindle,
And borne my thoughts to better worlds away,
How oft a sigh that from thy harp has drifted,
Some sweet and holy chord, some strain of thine,
My soul to high and heav’nly spheres has lifted,
For this I thank thee, Art Divine*

Another Spring Concert, entitled “Come Unto Me,” was held May 1, 1971, with direction by Jean E. Weathermon, musical accompaniment by EmmaDell H. Blanch, and the narration provided by Howard Hennebry. In addition to the choral performance, creative arts and crafts were displayed in the lounge, including needlework, sketching, painting, and other forms of artistic workmanship.

In 1980, a musical presentation entitled “His Name is Joseph” honored the sesquicentennial anniversary of the official organization of the Church. The narration text was written by Sister Cherie



Cover to the program for the Spring Concert, “Come Unto Me” (1971).

Gullerud of the Corvallis Stake, and familiar hymns and songs relevant to the life of the prophet were performed by various ward choirs and individual singers. Then in 2005, another production of it was put on, this time to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Joseph Smith.

In 1992, the Corvallis Stake Relief Society held another sesquicentennial celebration, this time in observance of the founding of the Relief Society. The performance, directed for the stake by Cherie Gullerud, was called, “Women at the Well,” and presented a musical account of the life of Christ as witnessed through the eyes of the various women mentioned in the gospels. With music and lyrics by Latter-day Saint composer, songwriter, and singer, Kenneth Cope, the production is described as one that “draws upon the realization that women were the catalysts to many of the New Testament’s most spiritually poignant moments.”

Another program was presented on April 24, 1998, with the title, “Come to the House of the Lord.” A stake choir, known as the Corvallis Chorale (directed by Sister Kay Davis), was joined by the Primary choir in performing this inspirational creation of popular Latter-day Saint composer, Steven Kapp Perry, and Church educator, Bradley R. Wilcox. As described on Brother Perry’s website:

When President Howard W. Hunter said, “Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people,” it touched a responsive chord in many Church members. Steven Kapp Perry and Brad Wilcox responded to the prophet’s call by creating this inspiring presentation, which celebrates in a reverent way the joys of temple worship. Ten original and beautiful songs reflect the love and reverence God’s covenant people have for the house of the Lord; and the tender narrative explains why the temples are so precious to the Latter-day Saints.

The performance was put on by the Corvallis Stake Relief Society.

Another musical production based on the work of Steven Kapp Perry and Brad Wilcox was presented in 2001, and entitled, “From Cumorah’s Hill.” The presentation shows the relevance of the prophetic Book of Mormon to our own day.

The Easter season was celebrated on April 18, 2003, with a musical presentation called, “Our Savior’s Love,” consisting of a dozen beautiful songs, complemented with narrations and a multi-media art display. The following year, an Easter cantata by Janice Kapp Perry was presented, entitled, “The Savior of the World: A Sacred Cantata.” Although the Savior’s resurrection is the culminating point of this presentation, the cantata begins with a musical account of His birth, and then proceeds through the major events of His life and ministry until reaching the climactic events of His death, burial, and resurrection.

Christmas of 2005 was celebrated with the performance of Michael McLean’s beloved musical presentation, “The Forgotten Carols.” This production, directed by Sister Cherie Gullerud, relates the story of a nurse whose life is radically transformed by her encounter with a new patient who relates to her the story of Christ’s birth as it was remembered by lesser known figures of the Nativity. Reminder is thus given of what the world has in large measure forgotten about the Christmas spirit, and how we may attune our hearts to the joy of the season.

An Easter cantata by Latter-day Saint composer, Rob Gardner, was put on by the stake in 2006, and again in 2009, entitled, “He Is Jesus Christ.” Gardner’s cantata has been described as “an impressive debut from a composer with a lot of promise,” and features choral and solo numbers that are punctuated by narrations on the life of Jesus Christ. The 2006 production was conducted by Lori Moss, and narration was provided by Sherri Bird and John Strickler.

December of 2010 saw the production of a new Christmas cantata called, “Shine for Me Again, Star of Bethlehem,” written by Brother Dan Carter and Sister Sherri Bird of the Corvallis Stake. Sister Bird also conducted the performance, which was put on Saturday, December 4, 2010.

Musical Stage Productions

In May of 1978, Sister Kay Davis directed a performance of the musical, “My Turn On Earth,” originally written by Carol Lynn Pearson with music by Lex de Azevedo. Outlining the plan of salvation as it proceeds, the plot unfolds with five children coming, after the pre-mortal war in heaven, to experience the joys and tests of mortal life on Earth, after which they are called, sooner than expected, to return to their Heavenly Father.

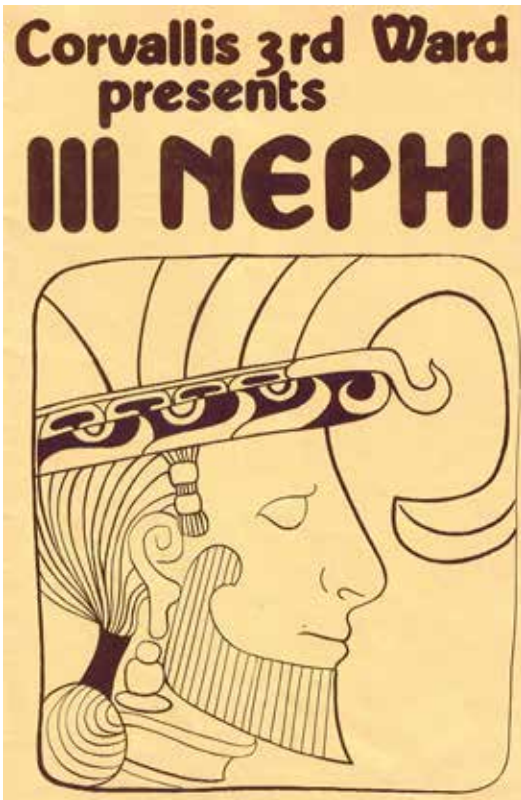
This production called forth the ingenuity of its director and performers, as Sister Patty Northrup recalled with fondness:

“My Turn on Earth” featured Lori (Davis) Moss as a young girlfriend sending her missionary out. The rehearsals had gone well and we were just waiting on the pre-recorded music to start practicing with that. If I remember right, it only arrived about 2 weeks or so before we were to perform. Lori had spent months practicing this long, impassioned speech to her leaving boyfriend and it was full of emotion and quite moving. Then the music arrived and we found she had about 30 seconds to say what had been taking about 2 minutes! So her long involved, touching monologue was reduced by necessity to a shouted, hurried, very funny blurted speech! That was my favorite part of that show.

The beloved musical, “Saturday’s Warrior,” was also directed by Sister Davis for the stake, in August of 1979. Written by Douglas Stewart and Lex de Azevedo, this production also dramatizes the plan of salvation, with the pre-mortal, mortal, and post-mortal stages of spiritual advancement portrayed.

The performance of “Third Nephi” (concerning which Sister Bonnie Romrell has written in a separate chapter) occurred in April of 1980. It was directed by Sister Toni Tobey.

In August of 1984, Sister Vicky Hale directed a two-act musical entitled, “The Order is Love,” with words by Carol Lynn Pearson and music by Lex de Azevedo. Dramatically representing the experience of frontier saints with the United Order during the mid-1880s, the play is set in Orderville, Utah.



“Third Nephi” program (1980).



“The Order is Love” program (1984).

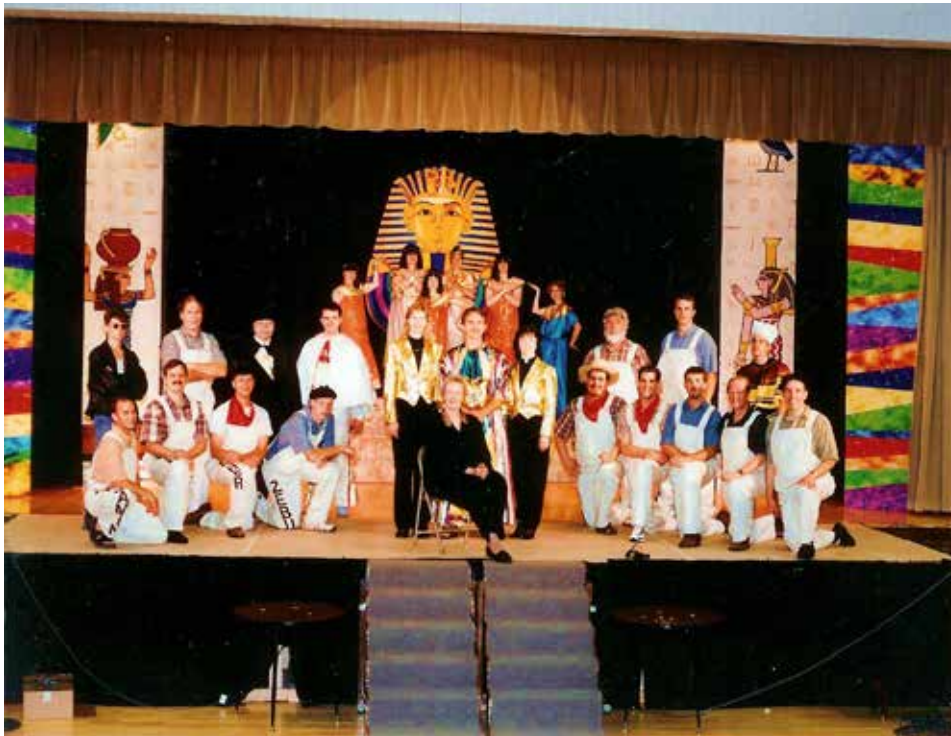
Popular Broadway musicals have also been put on by the Corvallis Stake. These have included such acclaimed productions as “Brigadoon” (directed by Sister Lori Moss in August of 1982), “Fiddler On the Roof” (also directed by Sister Moss, in August of 1987), and “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” (directed in July of 1999 by Sister Kay Davis). This last musical production was not only popular among members of the stake, but community members heard about the outstanding performances and came to watch, also.

In fact, many individuals had to be turned away nightly during the production due to a standing-room-only crowd. Of this production, and its superior quality, Brother Patrick Wills has written:

The list of participants in “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” was the cream of the stake. Lonnie George, an outstanding singer, was the lead Joseph. Sister Lori Moss and Sister Bird were the narrators, Bishop Bird was Potiphar, Sister Robin Hale was Mrs. Potiphar, Brothers Mike Vitkauskas played Simeon, Bill Heyborn played Levi, Joel Nelson played Naphtali, Paul Davis played Issachar, Gary Lear played Asher, Jack Later played Dan, Jeff Cochran played Zebulun, Duane Cochran played Gad, Jim Bartholomeuz played Benjamin, Cody Hoyer played Judah. The Butler was Ryan Emery, Baker Aaron Hale and Pharaoh was played to the hilt by Glade Diviney. Father Jacob was Neal Sanders and his wife was Dianne Nelson.

All three of my kids were stage crew. The music and production were spoken of in the paper and community as the best production of Joseph ever seen, including “better than Broadway” according to some.

..It was the most amazing event I have ever seen produced by any stake.



Principal cast members and director Kay Davis from the production “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,” which ran from July 21st through the 30th in 1999.

On the “Brigadoon” production, and the lengths to which performers went to ensure its quality, Sister Northrup has related:

We had try-outs and rehearsals just as if it was a high school show or a community theater show. We even had a native Scotsman come in to help us learn the accents we needed to perform the show realistically. In the show I got to get “married” and my mother made a white, knee length “wedding” dress. I had fun with that show, especially learning the accent.

There was also a youth play, depicting various prominent events from the life of the prophet Joseph Smith, put on by the stake in 2004. This was entitled, “Fire in Our Hearts.”

A play entitled, “Sarah Plain and Tall,” based on the Newbery Medal-winning children’s book by Patricia



“Brigadoon” marriage scene (1982).



“Brigadoon” finale (1982).

MacLachlan, was directed by Sister Katie Carleski in August of 2007. (More information is available concerning this production in a separate chapter.)

The Corvallis Oregon Stake, in celebration of its 50th anniversary during the summer of 2013, put on a performance of the musical, “Promised Valley,” with direction by Cherie Gullerud.

Know Your Religion

Bi-annual presentations of the Know Your Religion program have been popular stake events for many years, as they have been throughout the Church. According to Church Education System (CES) director, Neil Carlile, “Of all Church Educational System Continuing Education programs, Know Your Religion is the largest program.” Know Your Religion has a larger enrollment, in fact, even than Especially For Youth, BYU’s Education Week and other CES programs.

Recent years have brought change to the scheduling of speakers with the Know Your Religion program, as guest speakers are no longer sent with official sponsorship by CES from Salt Lake City, but rather selected from nearer to Corvallis, and sometimes actually from within Corvallis.

These presentations of late years have included the following:

- October 23, 2009: “Praise to the Man Who Communed with Jehovah,” presented by David Williams, with “Calm as a Summer’s Morn” performed by the Corvallis Stake choir under the direction of Sherri Bird, and a solo rendition of “Praise to the Man” by Kevin Gunnell.
- March 5, 2010: “Joseph Smith and the Law,” presented by Ross Boundy, on the subject of Joseph Smith’s various encounters with the law.
- October 22, 2010: “The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible,” presented by President Tom Sherry.
- January 21, 2011: “The Atonement,” presented by Todd Richardson, who is our newest Institute of Religion director.
- October 14, 2011: “The Divine Constitution,” presented by Duane Grasse, who is Seminary coordinator for the Portland area.
- February 3, 2012: “Because I Have Been Given Much,” presented by President Kevin Nielsen, on the trip to Kenya during which he was able to deliver over 300 flannel receiving blankets made by Corvallis Stake Relief Society sisters to mothers in Kenyan villages. The presentation was enhanced with slide images from the trip.

These presentations have been enthusiastically received as opportunities for stake members to “be instructed more perfectly in theory, in principle, in doctrine, in the law of the gospel, in all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God” (D&C 88:78).

Special Instructional Presentations

On July 24 and 31 of 2009, and later on August 21st and 28th of that year, David Williams and Andrea Gunnell guided a workshop on financial preparedness to instruct members in both personal and family financial planning. It is noteworthy, for the historical record, that these workshops were put on less than a year following the official announcement that the United States was in an economic recession, and thus at a time when financial security had become a subject of particular interest to many.

A biennial Writer’s Conference was sponsored by the stake in 2006, 2008, and 2010 to encourage members and friends to hone their writing skills. The 2010 workshop, held on March 6, was entitled, “The Courage to Write.” Sister Gena Young Mabee was keynote speaker for the occasion.

In all cases, these productions by the Corvallis Oregon Stake, whether theatrical performances upon the stage or instructional presentations delivered over the pulpit, served the purpose of enlightening stake members as to the rewards of virtue and the pitfalls of sin. In this way, members have seen how, as the prophet Brigham Young said: “The stage can be made to aid the pulpit in impressing upon the minds of a community an enlightened sense of a virtuous life, also a proper horror of the enormity of sin and a just dread of its consequences.”

CHAPTER 18

Third Nephi production

“Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.” (3 Nephi 11:10)

By Bonnie Romrell

In May and June 1980, Corvallis Third Ward under the direction of Toni Tobey presented the musical drama, “Third Nephi” which was based on the scriptural account of the Resurrected Jesus Christ’s appearance at the Bountiful Temple in the Book of Mormon. It was written by Ralph G. Rodgers Jr. and adapted in 1978-1979 by him and K. Newell Daley, who wrote the music. It was first presented in the Promised Valley Playhouse in Salt Lake City, Utah.



The “Third Nephi” cast portraying the inhabitants of ancient America who would see Jesus Christ.



Scene of the prophet Nephi preaching.

Vicky Hale was assistant director, with Kathy Larsen as the music director, and Elna Winstead and Janeil Olsen as the accompanists. Jim Russell represented the Prophet Mormon as he quoted from Third Nephi in the Book of Mormon.

The Third Ward production was a family affair; practically the whole ward was involved in some way. The young men and their leaders worked together to build a scrim, work out the stage lighting, spot lighting, scrim lighting and strobe lighting for the destruction scene and the three days of darkness. Other young men and their leaders produced all the sound effects and timed them perfectly. Thunder, lightning, winds and walls crashing made the storm and destruction very real.

The young women and their leaders were involved in makeup, costumes, acting and singing solo parts and in the chorus. Some of the cast were “believers” and with Nephi waited for the signs to appear. Some were “non-believers” who followed Jacob and prepared to destroy the believers if the signs didn’t come.

Ralph Whitesides portrayed Samuel the Lamanite preaching a stern warning on the wall and was followed by “The Lamanite Chant,” a chorus written by Kathy Larsen.

This music was taken from a Christmas Cantata, “Christ the Lord is Come,” which the stake had performed a few years earlier.

Howard Thomas played the contemptuous Jacob, other “unbelievers” were Bill and Faye Fryer, Debbie Larsen, Dalita Romrell and her non-member friend Grey Hayes (who was baptized following the last performances.) Mark Christensen portrayed Nephi as he prayed, then sang a beautiful tenor solo, “I Know in Whom I Trust.”

Don Hale quoted the Lord’s answer, “This Night Shall the Sign be Given; on the morrow come I into the world” and the Chorus sang “I Come Unto My Own” with a solo by Dave Winstead. When years passed after the sign of the Savior’s birth and He hadn’t appeared, the “unbelievers” mocked and scorned the believers to the point of killing Timothy, brother of Nephi. After Nephi blessed him and restored him to life, the Chorus sang, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives.”

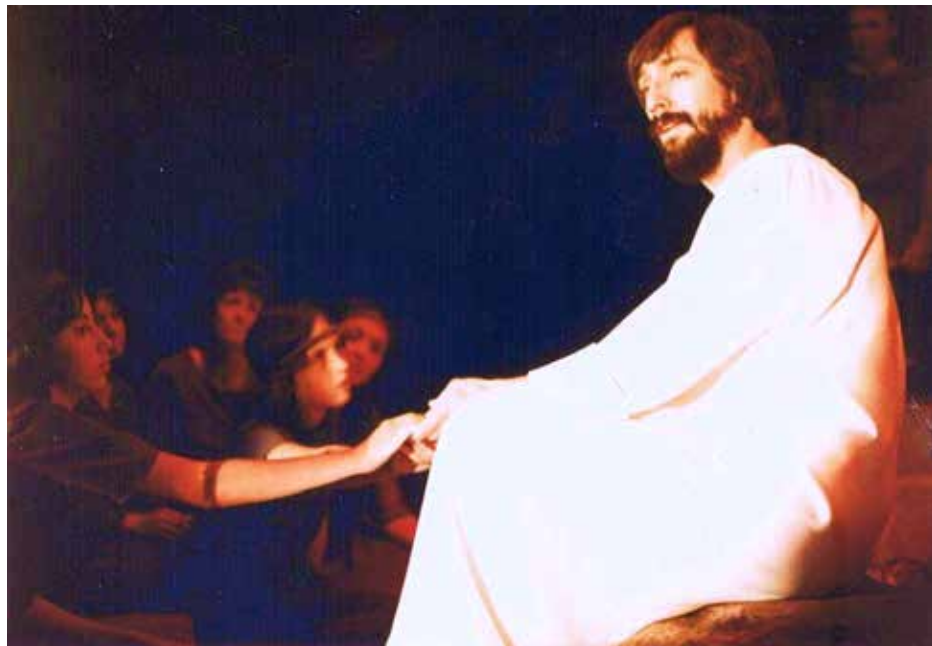
A widowed mother played by Bonnie Romrell sang “Those Who Would Follow” after her faith was questioned by her crippled daughter, played by DeeAnn Smith. After the storms and destruction occurred and the voice of the Savior was heard saying “Wo, Wo, Wo except ye repent”, the chorus sang the plaintive song “How Oft Will I Gather You.”

As the Savior portrayed by Don Hale appeared, a total hush fell over everyone, then shouts of Hosanna rippled through the cast as they fell to their knees and the “Hosanna Anthem” was sung. All were invited to behold the prints in his hands. The emotion of those moments has not been forgotten nor the feelings as the 12 disciples were called and blessed by the Savior. As the Savior gathered the children around him, DeeAnn Smith

the little crippled girl sang in a clear sweet voice, “I Feel My Savior’s Love.”

After the Savior prayed for the disciples and all who will believe on their words, that they might receive the Holy Ghost, he was shown walking out among the people as Mormon concluded, “And tongue cannot speak the words which he prayed...Jesus did expound many great and marvelous things unto the people.” The choir sang, “I Know That My Redeemer Lives” leading into “The Love of God.”

The Narrator, Mormon, concluded with, “Because of the love of God, which did dwell in the hearts of the people, there could not be a



The Savior (portrayed by Don Hale) visiting the Nephites.

happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.”

The production was performed for “standing room only” crowds for two nights at the Corvallis Stake Center, then the cast was asked to perform it again in Salem at a Leaders Regional Conference there. Many have said, “I never read Third Nephi in the Book of Mormon without remembering this production.”

CHAPTER 19

Sarah, Plain and Tall

*“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.”
(Proverbs 31:30)*



Sarah Wheaton (portrayed by Natalie Smathers).

The 2007 Corvallis Oregon Stake production of “Sarah, Plain and Tall” was advertised in the following press release:

Sarah, Plain and Tall

Presented by the Corvallis Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

August 23, 24, & 25. 7:00 P.M.

Corvallis LDS Stake Center

4141 NW Harrison Blvd, Corvallis, OR.

Free Admission

Call 231-2188 for more information

Set in the early 1900s, this play brings to life the charming, heart-warming story of a Kansas farmer, Jacob Witting, a widower with two children—Anna and Caleb, who places an ad in the newspapers seeking a wife.



The Nordstrom family (portrayed by Mark Elton, Laurie Walker, and Camille Walker).

He receives a letter from a Sarah Wheaton of Maine who says she will visit the family for a month to see how things work out: “I will come by train. I will wear a yellow bonnet. I am plain and tall.” Narrated by Anna reminiscing on the eve of her wedding, the story unfolds in a fascinating flashback on that often exciting, sometimes tumultuous month when Sarah and the Wittings came to know one another and learned a few things about themselves as well.

A briefer announcement appeared in the stake bulletin during the weeks preceding the show, as follows:

Coming to a stake center nearest you, the Corvallis Stake presents, Sarah, Plain and Tall. Based on the Newberry Award-winning book by Patricia MacLachlan, this play brings to life the heart-warming story of a Kansas farmer, Jacob Witting, a widower

with two children—Anna and Caleb, who places an ad in the newspapers seeking a wife. He receives a letter from Sarah Wheaton of Maine who says she will visit the family for a month to see how things work out.

Save one of these days on your calendar and come enjoy an evening of uplifting family entertainment.

August 23, 24, & 25. 7:00 P.M.
Corvallis Stake Center
Free Admission

The fine acting of its cast, as well as the skillful direction of Sister Katie Carleski (who was, in fact, also a member of the cast!), made the production the success that it was. A complete list of the cast members is still extant, and is given as follows:

Jacob Witting: *Jon Allen*
Anna Witting: *Anna Haymond*
Caleb Witting: *A.J. Bartholomew*
Mathew Nordstrom: *Mark Elton*
Maggie Nordstrom: *Laurie Walker*
Violet Nordstrom: *Camille Walker*
Rose Nordstrom: *Capri Cox*
William Wheaton: *Todd Walker*
Meg Wheaton: *Joy Patton*
Sarah Wheaton: *Natalie Smathers*
Adult Anna: *Crystal Cox*
Mrs. Titus: *Katie Carleski*
Ephraim (paperboy): *Stephen Haymond*
Hettie (postgirl): *Emery Warr-Patton*
Hazel (postgirl): *Maddison Smathers*
Judson Moffet/ Chester Upshaw: *Nathan Egan*



Director Katie Carleski.



A younger cast member enjoying the spotlight.

The plot explores such themes as abandonment, loss, and love, and ultimately reveals how a happy home can be created when people resolve to set self-interest aside and love one another. It also gives a beautiful portrayal of coming to terms with bereavement at the loss of a parent. Many who are familiar with the story admit to its having brought them to tears. In all respects, it is wholesome entertainment that promotes holy principles.

CHAPTER 20

Seminary, Institute, and University Wards

“And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.” (D&C 88:118)

The Church founded, under God, by the prophet Joseph Smith has ever been distinguished by a zeal for learning, and the systematic development of active, inquiring minds equipped to hunt out, discover, and lay hold upon truth has been a binding obligation for faithful saints since, even before the founding of the Church, the Lord established as His pattern that matters must first be studied out in the mind before prayerful petitions are offered and confirmation obtained (see D&C 9:8). Joseph Smith himself charged the saints on this wise: “We should gather all the good and true principles in the world and treasure them up, or we shall not come out true Mormons.” And he showed himself to live always in the fullest accord with this conviction that to seek learning “by study and also by faith” was a duty incumbent upon all people called by the name of the God of truth in all ages. To this end, he saw to the provision of libraries, universities, and other avenues to learning for members of the newly restored Church.

The record borne of this by Elder Levi Edgar Young of the First Council of the Seventy is instructive:

Joseph Smith himself became a student of Greek and Hebrew, and classes in the ancient languages were organized in the Kirtland Temple, which the Prophet Joseph attended. The Mormon pioneers established schools in Utah at the beginning of their activities here... and in 1851 a library was brought across the plains by ox team. It had been purchased in New York City by Dr. John M. Bernhisel and was the finest collection of historical, philosophical, scientific, and literary works in the history of the American frontier. This collection contained the works of the classical writers of ancient Greece: Homer, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle; the Latin writers, Virgil, Tacitus, and Herodotus; and the modern great writers, Shakespeare, Milton, and Bacon. These are just a few of the authors of the books that were brought in this great collection. The library from the beginning received copies of the New York Herald, New York Evening Post, the Philadelphia Saturday Courier, and the North American Review. Of the scientific works there were Newton's Principia, Herschel's Outlines of Astronomy, and Von Humboldt's Cosmos. The treatises on philosophy included the works of John Stuart Mill, Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Emanuel Swedenborg.

As members of the Church began entering this northwest portion of the Lord's vineyard, they carried with them, as had the pioneers in their long trek to what is now Utah, a zest for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge concerning all things, both temporal and spiritual. In the first 25 years of its history, the Corvallis Oregon Stake had nothing of higher priority, nor anything which prospered to greater levels of success, than its Institute of Religion courses for students at college, and its seminary courses for those in high school.

The status of Corvallis as a “college town” was doubtless a factor in the emphasis thus placed upon education, both in the secular and in the religious spheres. But it was ultimately the vision, enthusiasm, testimony, and continued commitment of local Church leaders and teachers that enabled so promising a seedbed to yield such a rich, enduring harvest of spiritual and scholarly successes.

Seminary

A Corvallis Ward seminary class held its first sessions during the 1958-59 school year, when the ward still belonged to the Willamette Stake. Records indicate that Ray Cattani taught the first seminary class, consisting of 23 students, in the meetinghouse on 27th Street, on early weekday mornings.

Roy Lewis taught during the following school year from 1959-60, and by the next year there were three

teachers called to instruct an increasing number of students. These three were Henry “Bud” Draper (who had arrived that same year to be the first Institute director, and who also served as seminary coordinator for the stake), Dee Stevenson, and Wright Noel.

In 1961, Corvallis became part of the Salem Stake, and Ronald S. Jolley was teacher of the early-morning class, under the direction of Brother Draper. For Sunday School, university students held a class separately from the Corvallis Ward until 1963. Of this Sunday School, H. Darwin Reese was superintendent, with Steve Hansen and Guy Armantrout as assistants, and Susan Fox, secretary.

The longest-serving of all the Corvallis seminary teachers in this early period was Margaret B. Reese. Sister Reese taught from 1962 to 1969, and served simultaneously as secretary to the Institute director (a position she would hold until 1972). She has been described by Sister Jean Nelson as “a dynamic teacher and superb student of the scriptures,” and was certainly known as such by the three directors with whom she worked as secretary: Keith L. Sellers (beginning in 1962), Fred R. Gowans (who was called in 1964), and Richard J. Arnold (who came in 1968).

During the first ten years of seminary in Corvallis, teachers included Kent Kerby, Paul Pack, A. David Allen, Kerry Gee, Peter Nyberg, Duane Wood, Walter Hill, Austin Thatcher, Anita Brooks, Bruce Godfrey, William Jefferies, Alwinn Angell, Carl B. Taylor, and Lloyd Craig. Some students of seminary age could not personally be taught by them, however, owing to geographical and/or scheduling constraints, and thus a program of home study courses was organized for those in Newport, Philomath, and even some in Corvallis itself. Under the home study system, students have one class session per week (typically on Sundays), and daily home student assignments.

Early Institute directors also served as seminary supervisors for the stake, but these assignments began to be separated in 1968. Area seminary supervisors included Arlin Knight, Larry Moore, and Weston Killpack. Beginning with the 1973-74 school year, a realignment of personnel saw Brother Paul Hyde, who had served from 1972 to 1973 as home study supervisor of the district, transferred to Salem Stake, Brother James L. Kimball who had been acting Institute Director 1971-1973 was transferred to Renton, Washington, and Brother Richard Arnold became the Area Director of seminaries and Institute programs in the Corvallis Stake. Eventually the assignments separated again and Wayne Hunsaker, followed by Duane Grasse, held that assignment. Then, with the arrival of Todd E. Richardson as Institute director in 2011, the responsibilities of the area supervisor were transferred back to the Institute director.

Institute

Institute classes officially began at Oregon State College (now Oregon State University) in 1958. Dr. Grant E. Blanch, professor of agricultural economics, taught the first class, “Gospel Teachings from the Doctrine and Covenants,” to an enrolled student body, 22 in number, at the meetinghouse on 27th Street in Corvallis. The class was again held the following year.

When Henry E. “Bud” Draper first came to Corvallis, he began to serve as the first Institute director at Oregon State College. He offered a number of different classes each year, covering the Book of Mormon, the New Testament, and



Institute members who graduated from O.S.U. in 1965.

Teachings of the Living Prophets. Records of these and other details have been carefully maintained over the years by Institute secretaries including Margaret B. Reese, Laurel B. Sorensen, Janeil F. Olsen, Karin Lagerstedt Cochran, and Rachael M. Nelson.

Brother Fred R. Gowans began serving as Institute director during the fall term of 1964, and continued his service in that capacity through the 1967-68 school year. He is remembered for his active program in class work, with special emphasis on Church History and related subjects, and for the robust sports program which flourished under his supervision.



Institute members in spring of 1965 (Fred Gowans is in the front row at far right).

It was while Brother Gowans was serving as director of the Institute that the University Ward-Institute basketball team became the Region #1 Senior runner-up (1964-65), and won Region #1 Senior sportsmanship award the same year. They also became the all-Church basketball college division third place winners in 1967, winners of the Senior sportsmanship award for that same year, and in 1968, placed first in the basketball College ward division.

The Ward-Institute softball team became Stake Senior champions in 1966, and first in slow pitch softball in the all-church league for 1967. These years were also remembered for frequent banquets and full length film viewings put on with the approval and direction of Brother Gowans, and for the continuation of the traditional beach party and other exchanges with the University of Oregon.

To date, the longest serving of all Institute directors has been Dr. Thomas E. Sherry, who joined the Church in 1968 during his sophomore year at Washington State University, and came twenty years later, along with his wife Ann and their seven children, to serve as Institute director at Oregon State University in 1988. In March of



Graduating Institute class of 1966.



Tom Sherry with then-recent convert, Chris Rudd in 1993.

1993, Dr. Sherry took on an added share of Church responsibility when he was called to serve as bishop in the Corvallis Third Ward, which was, and still is, his home ward.

Four primary goals were established for the Institute of Religion soon after the appointment of Dr. Sherry as director, which were:

1. To begin each year having trained and functioning LDS Student Association (LDSSA) Organization in place.
2. To increase the personal contact of active Institute members with non-involved students.
3. To increase involvement and visibility of Institute members on the OSU campus.
4. To increase our level of united commitment towards missionary work.

Procedural and organizational changes were made during the 1990-1991 school year to provide a more manageable division of responsibility, as described in the Institute records thus:

This year the University Ward bishop, stake high counselor over Young Single Adults, and the Institute director met monthly in a meeting which has proved not only very helpful but was

recognized by the regional representative as a model he encouraged all stakes in the region to follow. Because each of these three entities have an almost uniform overlap of constituents, we made a general

agreement that Young Single Adults would provide for the bulk of social activities, University Ward would provide for Sabbath service and ecclesiastical involvement, and the Institute of religion would provide week-day religious instruction and on-campus activities both missionary- and service-oriented.

This new structure enabled the director to know which auxiliary or organization to entrust with a particular task.

The Institute averages about 14 hours of class instruction each week during the regular school year, with one class offered in the summer. Volunteer instructors have helped over the years with the teaching of evening classes. These volunteers have included: Tracy Christensen, Jeri Newton, Evie Coleman, Bobette Bushnell, Tim Reid, Janeil Olsen, David Williams, Sherri Bird, and Lori Moss.

Institute directors have, through the years, included Henry "Bud" Draper (1960), Keith L. Sellers (1962), Fred R. Gowans (1964), Richard J. Arnold (1968), James L. Kimball, Jr. (1971), Richard J. Arnold (1973), Thomas E. Sherry (1988), and Todd E. Richardson (2011).

Campus Outreach

The masthead of The Mormon newspaper, published by John Taylor, bore the declaration: "It is better to represent ourselves than to be represented by others." If there is to be any open discussion pertaining to the Church, it is only proper that its members be present and vocal participants therein. Church members are, after all, the ones directly authorized and commissioned of the Lord to both know and declare His gospel among all people. Members of the stake, and especially those attending OSU, have sought ways to make their presence felt in positive ways on campus through the active engagement of both professors and peers in dialogue, as befits a university. Opportunity for sharing the gospel in a manner appropriate to the academic setting is a thing actively sought by student members. It has been so from the first. Sister Maureen House has recorded:

My favorite remembrance of the stake was the formation of the fraternity Lambda Delta Sigma in the college ward. I would wear my pin everywhere, and when other students would ask for the name, I would say, "It's a Mormon fraternity, would you like to hear about the church?"

The words of Jesus which declare it "more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35) are applicable to treasures of gospel wisdom, as much as to any earthly goods—indeed, more so!—and have certainly been taken to heart by the LDSSA in its creation and use of the Campus Outreach program. The program consists of missionary-oriented presentations delivered on campus each quarter. As explained in an Institute document

**Latter-Day Saints
Student Association**

Enhancing Student Life Through:
Wholesome Social Activities
Seminars/Discussions/Religion Classes
Sunday Worship Services (11:15 a.m.)

COMING ACTIVITIES:

Sept. 23-29th – OPEN HOUSE
 Sept. 24-26th – Registration for Institute classes
 Sept. 27th – First evening class: Book of Mormon
 Sept. 28th – OPENING SOCIAL! "Generic Dance"
 Sept. 30th – Sunday worship, 9:30 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.
 Oct. 1st – Family Home Evening (Hayride, games, goodies)
 Oct. 1-5th – Daytime Institute classes begin

LDS Institute of Religion
 100 NW 27th
 758-1777

**All
Welcome**

Advertisement for L.D.S.S.A. activities which appeared in the O.S.U. Daily Barometer (1990).

titled, "Leadership Roles in 'Campus Outreach' Missionary Programs":

This is a wonderful opportunity for members of the College Hill ward to share the gospel with their non-LDS friends or other members who might benefit. We count it a sacred obligation and opportunity to "hold up" the restored gospel of Jesus Christ on campus and to provide convenient and well-done forums for members to find joy in sharing the gospel.

Outreach programs are sponsored at the Memorial Union building located on the campus of Oregon State University, and are held on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evenings, always at 7:00 P.M. The presentations, which begin and end with prayer, are conducted by LDSSA officers, and feature a selected speaker who addresses some distinctive doctrine of the Church that is unique to its restored gospel, including our illuminated perspective on the person and role of Jesus Christ, the Book of Mormon, eternal marriage and families, the plan of salvation, etc. There was, at the conclusion of the speaker's prepared remarks, a question and answer session, and generally the whole program runs from 60-90 minutes.

Short film screenings have also been held as part of the outreach effort. After the screening of a short Church film, students are given opportunity to share their personal explorations of faith with the group.

Records from the Annual Historical Report for 1989-1990 indicate that the LDSSA, under the joint leadership of Niles Ramage, April Spaulding, and Dianne K. Reese, sponsored three Campus Outreach programs, with one falling in each term.

The program for the fall term, being presented on October 26, 1989, was entitled, "How Latter-day Saints Feel About Jesus Christ." Dr. Thomas E. Sherry addressed those in attendance, among whom were 15 non-members and 2 then-non-active members from the University community.

During the winter term, a presentation entitled, "What Is Real?" was delivered on January 18, 1990, by Dr. Dale N. Moss, OSU Professor of Crop Science and member of the Corvallis Oregon Stake Presidency, to a room of listeners that included 13 identified non-members.

The final program for the year was delivered on April 26, 1990, by Dr. Nephi Patton, OSU Professor of Veterinary Medicine and Corvallis Oregon Stake mission president, and was entitled, "The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ." An estimated 23 non-members attended the presentation.

Each of the above presentations, taking place always on Thursday evenings, were actively promoted in newspaper advertisements, as well as through the direct distribution of fliers on Tuesday, Wednesday, and during the daytime on Thursday. Brother Dave Anderson, then serving as University Ward mission leader, coordinated an effort with LDSSA officers to distribute somewhere between one and two thousand fliers within the three-day period allotted for promotion purposes. Numbers in attendance at the outreach presentations were generally small, but much good seed was planted thereby, through the accurate representation of the Church and its teachings to those who might otherwise have been misled through scandalous reports and the criticisms of antagonists. Exposure given to the LDSSA, as well as an active missionary effort among University Ward members, contributed to the conversion and baptism of no less than 16 students and young single adults that year.

For the 1990-1991 school year, two presentations were given by Dr. Sherry, for the winter and the spring term, respectively. The first, entitled, "Can Love Last Forever?" attracted 60 non-member attendants. The second was entitled, "How Latter-day Saints Feel About Jesus Christ," and was attended by 13 non-members.

In terms of attendance, the success of the Campus Outreach effort reached a new benchmark during the 1991-1992 school year. On February 4, 1992, a winter term presentation entitled, "Joseph Smith and The Beginnings of Mormonism" was made by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry, featuring both a short film and a lecture. Then, for the spring term, a presentation was given on April 23rd by Dr. Brian A. Croft, OSU Professor of Entomology, entitled, "What Is Real?" Featured were a recently aired television special of the same title and a lecture by

Dr. Croft addressing the universal, oft-repeated, and supremely urgent questions of the soul: Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going?

These presentations brought more than 80 non-members into attendance.

The Campus Outreach effort for the 1992-1993 school year was, in its turn, rewarded with more than 60 non-member attendants. The first of the presentations, entitled, "The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ," was held during the fall term on November 12, 1992, and was given by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry. The second presentation, given April 28, 1993, was arranged to be unique in its approach. Being entitled, "Why I'm a Member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," it featured not only the presentation of speakers, but also the performance of songs. The speakers were Mark Davis, Heidi Sanchez, Nina Coombs, and Johnscott Benton, whose remarks were interspersed with musical numbers, which were as follows:

"No Ordinary Man" performed by Chris Scheuermann.

"I Am a Child of God" performed by Dianne Nelson.

"His Image in Your Countenance" performed by Leslie Tate.

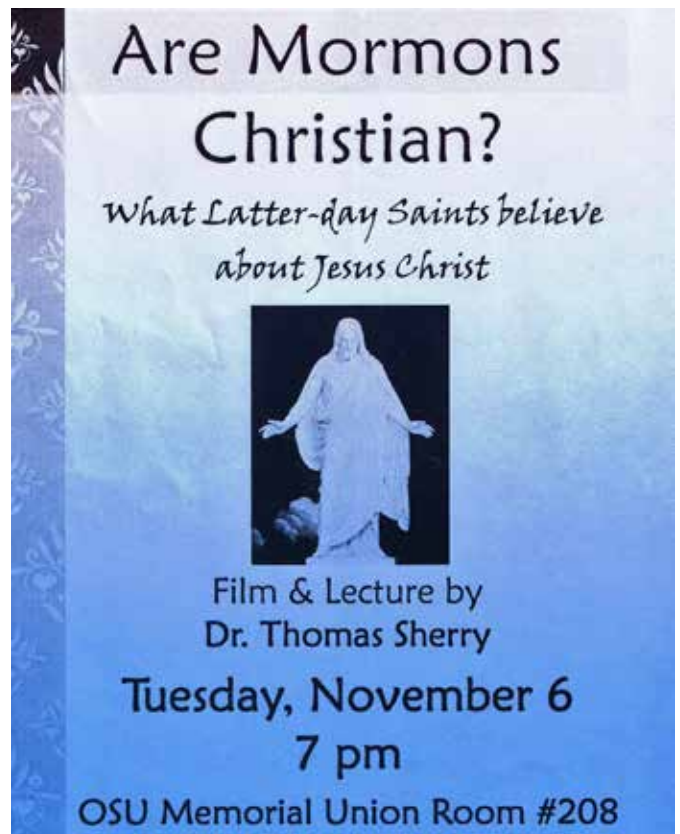
"I Heard Him Come" performed by the University Ward Choir.

Another unique Campus Outreach presentation was made on October 28, 1999, with a program of speakers consisting entirely of converts to the Church. Titled, "What Does It Mean to Be a Latter-day Saint?" the presentation featured, first, Julianne Loftus, who at that time had been a member of the Church for one year, and was a junior at OSU. She delivered an address that was entitled, "By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them." Matt Garzenelli, a convert and senior at OSU, then gave an address entitled, "Coming to Christ." Dr. Chuck Knutson, an instructor of computer science at OSU, then gave his perspective as a convert on the Latter-day Saint way of life in an address entitled, "Lifestyles of Latter-day Saints."

On November 7, 2012, a special Campus Outreach took place at three different places, and at three different times, to better accommodate students and their varying schedules. Larry Roper (Vice Provost for Student Affairs) and Mamta Accapadi (Dean of Student Life) spoke. Their remarks were followed by food and discussion with other students and Institute representatives, with whom thoughts and experiences about spiritual life in college were shared. Food was free. The times and places were as follows: 6:30 P.M. - Market Place West with Monica Weitman, 7:30 P.M. - McNary Central with Janae Heninger, 8:30 - Arnold Dining Center with Trevor Buys.

Other Campus Outreach presentations, concerning which there are no details as to attendance numbers, have included the following:

- November 1, 1994. "What is the Book of Mormon?" (film and lecture) by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry.
- January 30, 1996. "Can Love Last Forever?: God's Divine Plan for Continuation of Marriage and Family Beyond Mortality" by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry.



- April 27, 1997. “Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism” (film and lecture) by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry.
- November 12, 2002. “Joseph Smith & The Beginnings of Mormonism: A Look at the Unique Origins of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” presented by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry.
- April 22, 2003. “Finding Faith in Christ” film screening. Free admission.
- January 27, 2004. “We Testify of Jesus Christ: Latter-day Saint Beliefs” presented by Gregory P. Merten.
- November 6, 2007. “Are Mormons Christian?: What Latter-day Saints Believe About Jesus Christ” presented by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry.
- February 19, 2008. “Light From Heaven: God and the Beginnings of Mormonism” presented by Lori Moss.
- April 22, 2008. “Why I’m A Member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” presented by U-2 Ward Bishop Gene Young, OSU College of Business.



Light From Heaven:
God and the Beginnings of Mormonism

Tuesday, February 19
7 pm
Room 208
OSU Memorial Union



Lori Moss, speaker

Sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Student Association

The Book of Mormon
and the Bible:
Companion Witnesses for Christ



Tuesday, October 21
7-8:00 pm
OSU MU room 213

Presentation by Michael Moore
Director, Salem Institute of Religion
For more information, contact the Corvallis Institute of Religion, 758.1777

“Unto This End
Was I Born”

An Easter
Celebration
of the life, death,
and resurrection
of
Jesus Christ



Internationally acclaimed film!

Showing
Thursday, April 9
4, 5, 6, & 7 pm
Memorial Union 208
OSU Campus
(no charge)

- October 21, 2008. “The Book of Mormon and the Bible: Companion Witnesses for Christ” presented by Michael D. Moore (director of the Salem Institute of Religion).

- April 9, 2009. “Unto This End Was I Born” film screening. Showings at 4:00, 5:00, 6:00, and 7:00 p.m. Free admission.
- February 10, 2010. “The Plan of Happiness: Why Did God Create Us and What is Our Purpose in Life?” by Dr. Bobette Bushnell, O.S.U. College of Liberal Arts.
- May 4, 2010. “Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism: A Look at the Unique Origins of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (film and lecture) by Dr. Thomas E. Sherry.
- November 9, 2012. "Exploring Meaning and Purpose through Art." Presentation by LDS artist Walter Rane, discussing his art, and how he finds purpose and meaning in his life through it, and through his belief in Jesus Christ. Some of his original art pieces were displayed.

Even as the prophet Joseph Smith found himself “induced to write” a history of his personal involvement in the restoration of the gospel and the rise of the Church, “owing to the many reports which [had] been put in circulation by evil-disposed and designing persons,” and did so in order that he might “put all inquirers after truth in possession of the facts,” the Latter-day Saints at OSU have sought to put an inquiring public, as far as possible, and according to the best of their ability, in possession of all such facts as pertain to the Church, its history, and the fullness of the restored gospel by means of such programs as the Campus Outreach.

L.D.S. Student Association Sponsors Other Campus Events

Events sponsored by the LDSSA have not been limited to Campus Outreach programs alone, and other events have been both instructional and entertaining.

For example, a comedy performance was put on during winter term of the 1990-1991 school year, featuring popular LDS speaker, John Bytheway. Held in Milam Auditorium on a Saturday evening, the performance attracted an audience of about 650 members and invited non-members. The following day, he addressed high school students and young single adults in a Sunday gathering. His visit was evenly sponsored, with half of the funds contributed by the LDSSA, and the other half by the Corvallis Oregon Stake.

On Wednesday, March 15, 1995, the LDSSA sponsored an “International Folk Dance Ensemble,” which was presented by Brigham Young University at the LaSells Stewart Center on OSU campus before an audience of close to 900 people. Reserve tickets were \$5.00 each, and enough revenue was generated by the performance to fund the purchase of a new larger screen TV for the Institute lounge.

A time of wholesome recreation was provided by the LDSSA on Saturday, April 13, 1996, with the rental of the Dixon Rec Center at OSU for the night. The recreational activity, which ran from 10:00 p.m. to midnight, was enthusiastically promoted, as in the announcement which read: “This is going to be great fun!!! Bring a



Program cover for International Folk Dance Ensemble (1995).



Flyer announcing International Folk Dance Ensemble from B.Y.U. (1995).

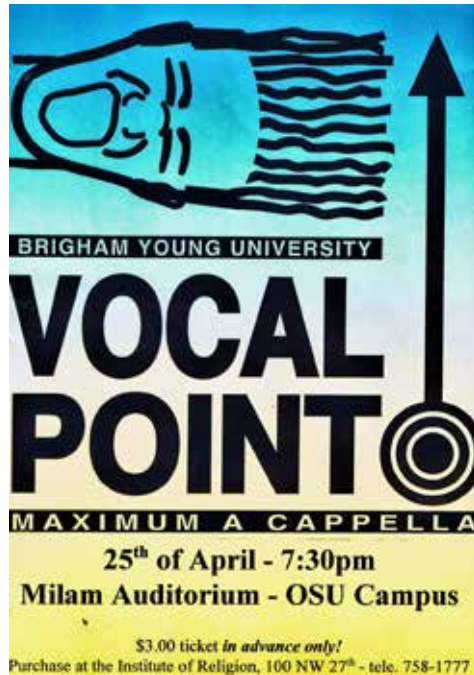
non-member friend.”

An interpretative reading of the life of Christ by professional actor, Bruce Newbold, was presented on Friday, December 6, 1996. The reading, entitled, “In Him Was Life,” took place on OSU campus with sponsorship by the LDSSA. An announcement for the event read: “While Brother Newbold maintains his professional acting career, he also teaches early morning Seminary in Downey, California. His masterful presentation is put together from the four gospels portraying the life of Christ.”

In 1997, the LDS Student Association sponsored two events in connection with the Holocaust Memorial week. Each year at OSU, a memorial week of activities remembering and exploring the Holocaust is observed, and for this year, the LDSSA hosted a

luncheon at the Institute on Tuesday, May 6th, for the six Holocaust survivors who spoke at various area schools. Then on Thursday, May 8th, at 7:30 P.M., Dr. David Kitterman spoke, with sponsorship by the LDSSA, at Withycombe Auditorium on OSU campus. Dr. Kitterman spoke on the topic of German soldiers who refused Nazi orders to kill Jewish prisoners. He, being a returned missionary from Germany, did his graduate work in this area, and now teaches at Northern Arizona University.

During the 2007-2008 school year, the Holocaust Memorial would again benefit from the assistance of the LDSSA, whose participation in the week-long event was directed by



Flyer announcing the Vocal Point concert (2000).



John Canaan performing (1997).

DIVERSIONS

BYU's Vocal Point to perform at Oregon State

The Daily Barometer

Oregon State students and residents of Corvallis don't have to travel far to see the second best college a cappella choir in the nation and the first in the region. Vocal Point, Brigham Young University's nine-man a cappella group, is coming to Oregon State this week.

OSU's Latter Day Saints Student Association is sponsoring the free concert, which will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 25, in Milam Auditorium.

The group's show combines harmony, humor and remarkable voice percussion into an exciting style with unique personality.

The ensemble is continually trying new musical styles, and the nine voices create musical possibilities that are beyond the capabilities of a traditional four-person group.

Vocal Point's repertoire includes rock, pop, country, jazz, classical, R&B and spiritual music. The ensemble is geared to entertain audiences of every age. They regularly perform for various crowds, from corporate executives to school children.

The members of Vocal Point are selected from some of BYU's finest ensembles for their musical ability, creativity and stage experience. The combination of skills adds up to original, skillful and spirited perfor-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Vocal Point, the award-winning a cappella choir from Brigham Young University, will perform a free concert Tuesday in Milam Auditorium. The nine-man group's visit to campus is sponsored by the LDS Student Association.

mances. The group's campus performances are always to sold-out crowds and they're always encored.

Vocal Point has performed for the San Francisco Giants at JCom Stadium, the Park City Art Festival, the Boise River Festival, the Nampa Civic Center and the NBA's Utah Jazz Halftime Show. They also perform at

schools and concerts throughout the region.

The group rehearses daily, and the members arrange most of the ensemble's music themselves. They released their third album, *Mouthing Off*, in August, 1999.

The group was founded in 1991 by two BYU alumni as a private venture. It later became part of the BYU School of Music. Jim

Anglesey of BYU is the artistic director.

Tom Sherry, adviser to the LDS Student Association, hopes that the campus and community will be interested in this unique performance. He added that there will be absolutely no solicitation of the interests of the group or of the LDS Student Association.

Dr. Thomas E. Sherry, who served on the program committee. Brother Sherry also continued his service on the OSU Religious Advisors Association Board of Directors to assist the OSU Vice President of Student Affairs to coordinate the function of 25 religious groups and help foster their access and service to the OSU community.

Dancing became a recurrent activity sponsored by the L.D.S.S.A. for the 1997-1998 school year. A concert and dance was held Saturday, October 11, 1997, at 7:30 P.M. in the OSU Women's Building. The event began with a concert by contemporary Christian recording artist, John Canaan, and ended with a dance featuring styles that ranged from ballroom to contemporary to country western.

Methodist to Muslim to Mormon:
The Spiritual Journey of
Gloria & Winston Wilkinson



Fireside presentation with
The Wilkinsons

He is Director of the Office of Civil Rights for the US Government

7 pm, Friday, January 30
Corvallis Stake Center

Wilkinson will also give a MLK Memorial address entitled
"Social Justice: The State of the Union"
7 pm Thursday, January 29th
Milam Auditorium on the OSU Campus

Flyer announcing the presentation by Winston Wilkinson at the stake center (2009).

beliefs. "I don't think Oregon State was really ready for that," said Riley, a senior in business. "It was good to have that voice."

Additionally, Wilkinson and his wife, Gloria, spoke the very next day at the stake center, in a presentation that was entitled, "Methodist to Muslim to Mormon: The Spiritual Journey of Gloria and Winston Wilkinson."

For the 2009-2010 school year, the LDSSA sponsored two noteworthy events. The first was a ceremony of appreciation held to honor the memory of Brooke Wilberger, as well as to thank all who participated in the search for her following her abduction. Cammy, Brooke's mother, had not been planning to speak, but after hearing all that was said, wanted to comment briefly, saying, "We have grown to love all of you. We have not walked through the valley alone. We have walked with all of you."

The second event sponsored was a presentation by Dr. Mark E. Rampton of Corvallis Family Medicine, who is a member of the stake, and a part of the emergency medical relief team sent to Haiti from January 18 to 28 in the aftermath of the earthquake which struck there in 2010. The presentation was entitled, "Unimaginable: An

Then on Saturday, January 24, 1998, the Brigham Young University Ballroom Dance Company performed at the LaSells Stewart Center. The performance, which began at 7:00 p.m., was followed by a dance at the *ch2m* Hill Alumni Center, beginning at 9:00 P.M.

Oregon State University was treated to the performance of music of a special kind with a concert put on April 25, 2000, in Milam Auditorium, featuring a cappella group, Vocal Point. The musical group, hailing from Brigham Young University in Utah, performed songs from their then most recent album, *Back in Blue: Maximum A Cappella*, in addition to other hits, with LDSSA sponsorship.

With a view to promoting a faithful Latter-day Saint perspective on civil rights issues, the LDSSA was pleased to sponsor a Martin Luther King Memorial address by Winston Wilkinson, civil-rights chief for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, entitled, "Social Justice: The State of the Union." The address, which was given on January 29, 2009, in the Milam Auditorium, drew praise and support from members of other student organizations. As the *Gazette-Times* reported:

Jonathan Riley, president of the Black Student Union at OSU, said Wilkinson broke stereotypes with his

beliefs. "I don't think Oregon State was really ready for that," said Riley, a senior in business. "It was good to have that voice."

Inside View of Medical Disaster Relief in Haiti,” and was delivered on Monday, February 8th, at the stake center. An estimated 700 people were in attendance.

Partnership With Other Charitable Organizations

In the spring of 1991, LDSSA members cooperated with the Benton County Community Services Consortium in helping to organize O.S.U. students in the collection of food for community programs which provide services to the homeless and others in critical need. This was to be the first of many such cooperative efforts.

Again, in the spring term of 1992, the LDSSA coordinated with the Benton County Community Services Consortium to organize the collection of food for community programs, and also helped both with the sale of daffodils for the American Diabetes Association and with the hosting of a party for O.S.U. students who participate in the Big/Little Brother and Sister organization. Local student volunteers with the Big/Little Brother and Sister organization enjoyed another such party in February of 1995.

The value of its charitable efforts and contributions did not go unnoticed by Oregon State University, and in April of 2000, a Third Place Award was presented to the LDSSA in recognition of its outstanding commitment and generosity, as a student organization to Oregon State University’s 18th Annual Food Drive benefitting Linn-Benton Food Share, with 747 total pounds donated. The award was presented by Paul G. Risser, who was then president of OSU.



Award presented by Paul G. Risser to the L.D.S.S.A. in recognition of their generosity in charitable work (2000).

<p>News flash <i>Fathers are human</i></p>	<p>Afternoon of stars <i>Concerto program this Sunday</i></p>	<p>A new era begins <i>Erickson discusses the future</i></p>
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Fog and rain
High 50, Low 45

A Student Publication

The Daily Barometer

Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon FRIDAY February 5, 1999 Vol. CIII No. 71

‘Roots’ shows participants how to research genealogy

■ The free workshop is open to the public and will take place on Fridays over the next six weeks

By KATIE PESZNECKER
The Daily Barometer

Many people think that to effectively research their genealogy, they'd have to travel the United States, search dusty courtroom records in small-town city halls, scour old birth and marriage certificates and analyze archaic property deeds and travel logs. Not true.

"The truth is, most people can discover a terrific amount of information clear back through their beginnings in America right here locally," said Dr. Tom Sherry, the advisor to Oregon State University's Church of Latter Day Saints Student Association.

Beginning today at 3 p.m. in Millam Hall 301, Sherry and his colleagues will lead a free, six-week workshop called "Roots: How to Research Your Family History." The program is open to anyone and will take place from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. each Friday through March 12.

"[The program] is real simple," Sherry insisted. "It's aimed at the beginning genealogist. Anybody who knows nothing but has an interest is going to walk out of there saying this is easy."

At today's session, "We're going to talk about gathering," Sherry said. "You've got to start somewhere so you start with your own family. Make a few calls to a parent or grandparent, and try to get back to at least names or dates for three or four generations."

Sherry said that with this basic information, a world of doors may open. This is thanks to the technology of the Corvallis genealogical library, run by

“ You've got to start somewhere... ”

DR. TOM SHERRY,
OSU LDS ADVISOR

LDS. Sherry explained that the library coordinates genealogical efforts on a global level, and has "about 10 million names of people around the world which have been gathered by genealogists around the world. They've made an effort to share that information so there can be a central jumping-off point" for

See ROOTS, page 5

Daily Barometer advertisement on the LDSSA family history workshops.

In February of 2008, the Association won first place as a student organization at OSU for its collection and donation of 2,123 pounds of food to the Linn-Benton Food Share program, which was 560 pounds more than it had collected the year previous.

Family History Work Among Students

Among the many hallmarks of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is its strong emphasis on genealogical research. In accordance with this worthy standard, the LDSSA sponsored a series of family history workshops toward the end of winter term in 1999, held each Friday, beginning February 5th and ending on March 12th. Mainly intended for non-members and “beginning genealogists,” the instructional courses also qualified all who successfully completed them for 1 academic credit.

Again, in 2000, a course in genealogy was sponsored by the LDSSA as a workshop for beginners, this time with classes falling on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from January 18th – March 3rd. The title of the class was, “Find Your Roots...Find Yourself.”

Student Ward and Organizations

The University Wards have, through the years, served as the organizations under which most student activities and programs for Church members of college age have been conducted. Social activity organizations affiliated with these wards have ranged from the Deseret Club, in the beginning, to the Latter-day Saint Student Association of today.

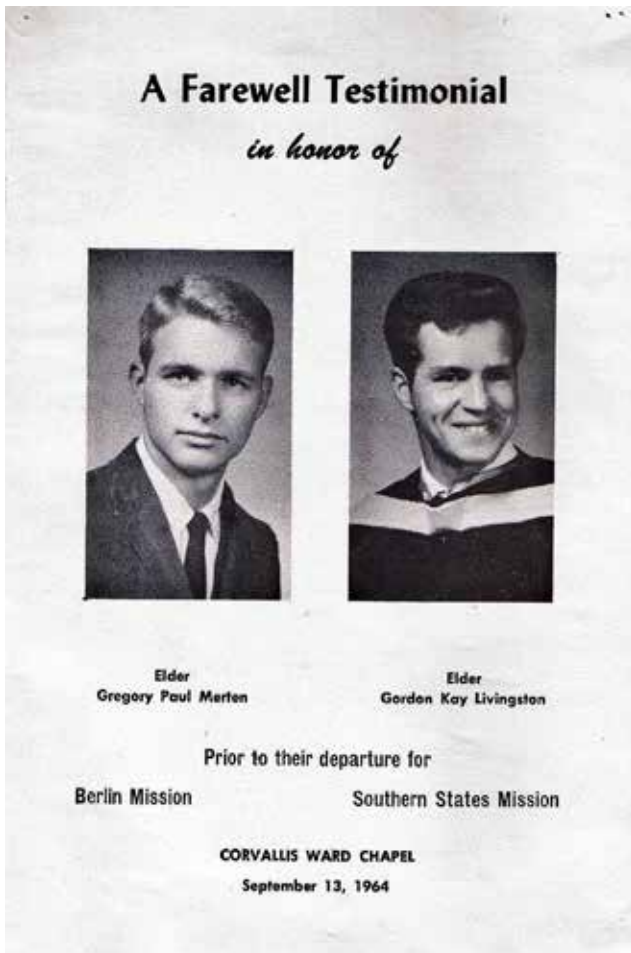
The Deseret Club was organized in 1935, and continued as a campus unit for 25 years until, in 1960, the first Institute director arrived. At this point, a chapter of Lambda Delta Sigma (LDS), the Church fraternity, was organized. This fraternity was discontinued in 1968, however, and replaced by the Institute Council. This, in turn, gave way to the LDSSA, whose leadership includes student officers and priesthood leaders such as the stake president.

The formation of the first University Ward occurred in 1963, when the original Corvallis Ward was divided into three parts. The Corvallis First and Corvallis Second Wards, respectively, constituted two of these parts, with the University Ward being the third. Being intended for young adults ranging in age from 18 to 30, the University Ward included mostly students of OSU. Students living outside the stake sometimes chose to attend this ward, and Corvallis students living at home could also apply for membership. Benjamin J. Ballard was called to serve as its first bishop, with graduate students Wallace E. Allred and Earl K. Jackson as his counselors, and Sheldon K. Keala as clerk. Brother Ballard became affectionately known as “Father of the University Wards,” and he served with distinction in that capacity until 1971. Other bishops of the original University Ward included John F. Bell (1971-1976), Sterling A. Russell (1976-1982), Larry W. Moore (1982-1986), Gregory P. Merten (1986-1988), James E. Jurgens (1988-1992), and Dale J. Romrell (1992-1994).

In 1988, a welcome window inside the front entrance was added to the Institute building, along with additional recreational facilities for students in the cultural hall, and some popular snack vending machines.

Successes of the University Ward were athletic, as well as academic. In 1967, for instance, the University Ward basketball team won the senior tourney sportsmanship trophy, as well as third place in the championship competition. Two University Ward members, Chuck Addicott and Roy Ventura, served as student body presidents at OSU, drawing added attention to the Church while occupying the position in their respective turns. And in 1928, when the college was known officially as Oregon State Agricultural College, Milton Lieshman served as student president.

Always, as in all wards, the need to fulfill the mission of the Church in helping “perfect the saints” is not to be overlooked. Pursuant to this end, the University Ward for many years took an active and organized approach to promoting faithful attendance among all its members by instituting an annual “Day to Shepherd.” On these specially designated days, members of the University Ward and Institute, together with stake leaders, spent the



Program cover for the joint missionary farewell of the newly called Elders Greg Merten and Gordon Livingston, who were the first missionaries called from the University Ward (1964).

Student and non-student Young Single Adults attend the College Hill Ward, which was initially presided over by Bishop Steve L. Harper, who was released in November of 2008. Craig R. Cole was called to replace Brother Harper as bishop, and continued in that office until February, 2013, at which point Michael A. Castellano was called as bishop.

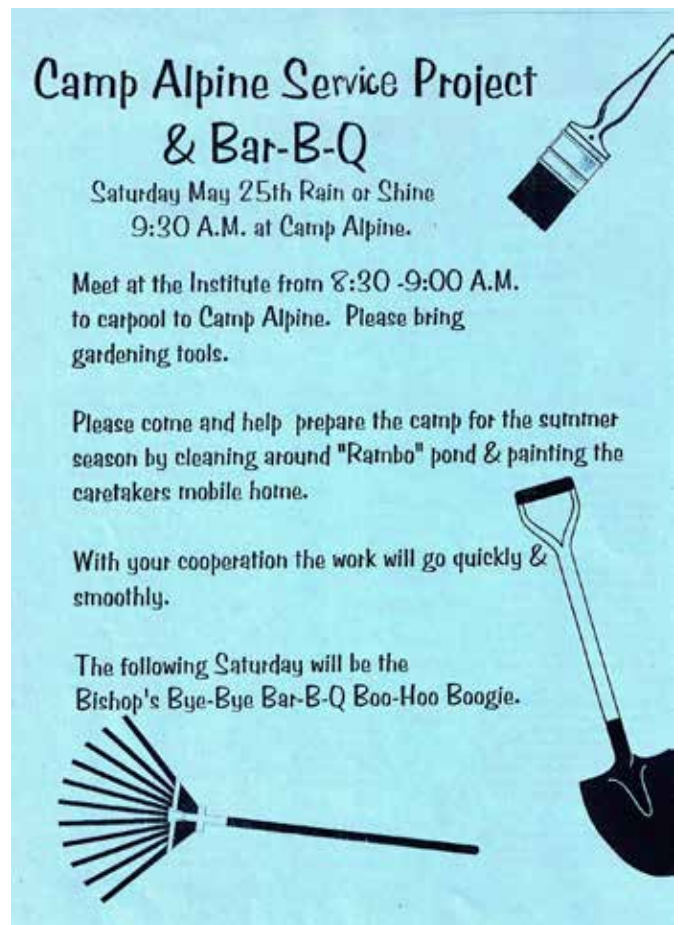
Crucial to the success of the College Hill Ward is the devotion not only of the bishop and his counselors to the congregation, but also the dedication of the bishop's wife. As Sister Jean Nelson has reported:

University Wards began the practice of greeting everyone who walked through the chapel door, and College Hill Ward is continuing that tradition. The Bishop's wife is a very important part of the ward. Each does things a little differently. Some Bishops' wives sit toward the back of the chapel and greet those who come in, watching for those who are alone, introducing them to others so they have a friend before they leave church. Couples from family wards

day searching for every individual of whom they had record, but who had not yet attended church. Generally these efforts yielded satisfactory results. For example, Institute records for the "Day to Shepherd" in October of 1992 contains the terse and telling entry: "A productive day!"

Over the years, OSU and Linn-Benton Community College populations grew, with many marriages among members of the University Ward. When couples had a child, they were asked to move to a family ward, but the numbers in the University Ward kept growing, nonetheless. By 1994, the population had grown so large that the ward required division. From this division came the University First (U-1) and University Second (U-2) Wards. U-3 was added in 2002. U-1 Bishops included Dale J. Romrell (1994-1995), Dale Dewey (1995-1998), David A. Williams (1998-2002), Richard K. Gibbs (2002-2005), and Steve L. Harper (2005-2008). U-2 Bishops were Curt R. Baumgartner (1994-1998), David N. Bird (1998-2001), J. Reed Glasmann (2001-2004), George H. Greenfield (2004-2007), and Gene Young (2007-2008). When U-3 was created in 2002, Robert French presided as bishop.

Then the basic structure of student wards in the stake was reorganized in 2008. University wards were disbanded and replaced with a Young Single Adult (YSA) ward.



Flyer announcing Bye-Bye Bar-B-Q (1996).

have also served as fellowshippers and greeters, doing their best to make sure that no one goes unnoticed and unloved. The goal is to make everyone feel wanted and needed.

Some of the most popular activities among members of the College Hill Ward are:

- The Back To School Bar-B-Q at the beginning of each school year is very successful. Often those who have been “missing” come to this social event. This event is a great way of showing everyone that they are needed.
- The Bye-Bye Bar-B-Q at the end of each school year. Fond goodbyes are said to those leaving the Ward, and graduating high school seniors are welcomed into College Hill Ward.
- An annual Multi-Stake Young Single Adult (MSYSA) water-ski trip to a near by reservoir is another highlight for the year. Usually six or seven boats are kept going all day as people learn to ski, kneeboard, wakeboard or play on the tubes. Swimming and socializing on shore are as enjoyable as being in the boats. Sunburned, YSA’s finish the day at a dance that evening back at the chapel.
- The annual Camp Alpine Table Stacks are always well attended. In the Spring the tables are stacked on a trailer and delivered to the camp sites, in the Fall they are gathered and returned to storage. There is always an effort to see how high the tables can be stacked at each event. This is always followed by a wonderful lunch.
- The annual Ward Talent show is a signature event each year with members showing their talents or displaying them on the “silent” talent area. The talents range from mixed media to traditional song and dance.
- Regular Ward temple trips to the Portland Oregon Temple are a spiritual highlight for those involved, especially for the many new converts in the ward.
- Monthly Bishop’s Firesides give YSA’s a chance to ask questions of their bishop.

The College Hill Ward continues to build upon the legacy of past triumphs. Investigators are found to be in attendance nearly every week, with new convert baptisms occurring on an almost monthly basis. Once baptized, new members are encouraged to prepare for, and attend, the temple, there receiving the ordinances of exaltation. Most of the active members of College Hill Ward marry in the temple. “We are a family” has come to be a motto of the College Hill Ward, and the ward membership continues to show itself a people worthy to be described as having “hearts knit together in unity and in love one towards another.” (Mosiah 18:21)

The school setting is, in truth, a microcosm of mortality, and the university a simulacrum of the world. Elder Neal A. Maxwell said: “One’s life, therefore, is brevity compared to eternity—like being dropped off by a parent for a day at school. But what a day!” And we know that, in this life, our knowledge, as our capacity for perception, is at best fragmentary, representing but a thin slice of what eternity holds in store. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.” (1 Corinthians 13:9) This fact, far from discouraging our efforts, ought to excite our passion to enlarge upon our present understanding and grow from strength to strength, and from lesser to greater light. Over a century ago, it was written in the Church’s Millennial Star:

Anything that is true in theology, philosophy, literature, science or art; in any discovery, invention or project, we accept and it blends into the truths of religion which the Lord has revealed in these latter-days, just as separate drops of water unite in one mass as soon as they coalesce. For ‘Truth is truth where’er ‘tis found, on Christian or on heathen ground.’ There are some great truths in oriental non-Christian religions as well as in the sects that call themselves ‘Christian.’ None of these comes into repulsion with the system now revealed from heaven, and which is commonly dubbed ‘Mormonism.’

The greatest Teacher since time immemorial taught that the truth makes free (see John 8:32). It may truly be said, therefore, that if the Latter-day Saints will but fear to spurn the truth, they need fear nothing else.

CHAPTER 21

Single Adult Committee

“And this shall be our covenant—that we will walk in all the ordinances of the Lord.” (Doctrine & Covenants 136:4)

By Jean Nelson

Since the creation of the Corvallis Stake Single Adult program, single adult representatives in the stake have worked to create a plan that will help everyone feel included. Activities are planned to offer good social experiences that can include everyone.

Representatives have as their goal to make sure that everyone knows about the activity. Direct contacting resulted in 95% attendance of those who committed to come. Representatives try to make everyone feel welcome at all activities. Announcements in bulletins are designed to include, not exclude.

Evening activities are better in the seasons when days are longer. Driving after dark can be challenging, and some single adults would rather be home before dark.

Presently, the single adult program (designed for those 30+) has a large activity every other month. Favorite activities include:

- “Chili Cook-off and Taste Test” Everyone is invited to bring his or her favorite chili recipe with enough to share.
- “Clean the beach at Newport” in coordination with the beach cleanup weekend in March. The single adults follow their work party with a meal at the Newport chapel.
- Visiting the Nativity Festival at the Corvallis Stake Center in December. A dessert at the Philomath chapel follows this activity.
- Theme dinner.
- Farmer’s market tour.
- Picnic and softball.
- Dinner and music.
- A mini conference in 2011 with many gospel related topics was well-attended. This conference was a combined effort with Lebanon Stake.
- Newport Ward does a potluck “Break the fast” on the first Sunday of each month.
- Inter-stake conferences.
- Missionary care packages.
- Activities are designed to attract single adults with children, such as bowling and picnics
- Family home evening events once a month.

Firesides are offered every other month at the Corvallis Stake Center.

- Know Your Religion and dessert

- Fireside with doctrinal theme
- Inter-stake fireside
- Fireside with a cultural theme
- Fireside with self-improvement theme

Single adults in the Corvallis Oregon Stake, like all Church members, are encouraged to understand and appreciate their divine worth as sons and daughters of God who can contribute to His kingdom in countless ways. As President Hinckley once said speaking to single adults of the Church:

Because you do not happen to be married does not make you essentially different from others...

You are just as important as any others in the scheme of our Father in Heaven, and under His mercy no blessing to which you otherwise might be entitled will forever be withheld from you.

You are precious and important to Him. You are precious and important to the Church. You are precious and important to all of us.

Because they are all precious, their time together is precious. And the contributions they all make to the Church are invaluable.

CHAPTER 22

Nativity Festival

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)

The origin of the Christmas Crèche has historically been ascribed to the friar, St. Francis of Assisi, who, while visiting Greccio at Christmastime in the year 1223, realized that the town’s Franciscan hermitage, with its small chapel, would be inadequate to accommodate so large a congregation as would soon be assembling for Midnight Mass. It occurred to him, as an alternative, to hold an outdoor celebration. When he had found a niche located in the rock overlooking the town square, St. Francis there set up an altar suitable for what was to be the first service of its kind in history. St. Bonaventure provided a detailed description, in his Life of St. Francis of Assisi, as to how the event unfolded:

Then he prepared a manger, and brought hay, and an ox and an ass to the place appointed. The brethren were summoned, the people ran together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that venerable night was made glorious by many and brilliant lights and sonorous psalms of praise. The man of God [St. Francis] stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety, bathed in tears and radiant with joy... Then he preached to the people around the nativity of the poor King; and being unable to utter His name for the tenderness of His love, he called Him the Babe of Bethlehem.

And so began the custom, now observed in countries across the world, of reenacting the Nativity scene in a public setting. The event has long been known as the Christmas Crèche (the word “crèche” ultimately deriving from the Old High German kripja, meaning “crib”).

In 1994, the Corvallis Oregon Stake began its tradition of welcoming the yuletide season with a nativity festival open to the public. Held initially during the first weekend in December, the celebration showcased crèches from around the world, as well as many crafted locally. The purpose is twofold: First, foremost, and above all, the festival is held to honor the birth of our Savior, and His entrance thereby into human history. Secondly, it is to witness to our community that we, as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are Christians, and that we are pleased, as such, to celebrate the life of God the Son. Each year, Messianic passages from the Scriptures are chosen as themes for the celebration.

The first year’s event attracted over 700 visitors, with 200 crèche exhibits on display. And while the number of crèches displayed peaked at 850 in the year 2004, the number of visitors in attendance has steadily increased to the point of there being over 4,015 attending the festival in 2012. As current director of the event, Sister Peggy Glasmann, reports: *“For the last several years we have had about 550 nativities displayed. Several years featured a live crèche, one year with children, others with parents costumed as Mary and Joseph holding their own precious baby.”*



Crèche displays in Corvallis Stake Center cultural hall (1998).



Front page image from the Friday, December 3, 2004, edition of the Gazette-Times, showing Nan French helping to set up crèches.



Set of Nativity displays amidst a starry motif (2012).

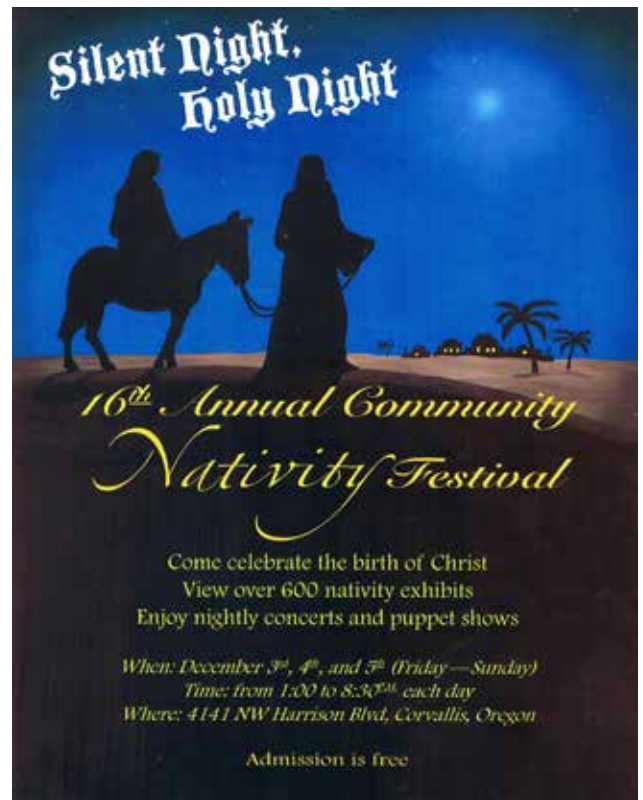
The festival was a two-day event during the first year, but by the very next, 1995, a third was added, and two more in 2011 for a total of 5 days running from Friday through Tuesday. No festival was held in 1997 as the stake center was being remodeled, although a number of stores in downtown Corvallis were kind enough to feature some crèche displays along with notes that the church was in process of remodeling.

One of the many highlights of the event has been, and continues to be, the live musical performances by groups selected from the community. This musical accompaniment to the artistic displays creates an atmosphere of worship befitting a celebration of the birth of our Lord. Being an ecumenical event, most of the groups performing come from outside of the Church. Regularly featured performers include the Corvallis High School Choir, Good Samaritan Episcopal Church Bell Choir, Heart of the Valley Children's Choir, and Carillon of Praise Handbell Choir of the Albany First Assembly of God Church. Only two concerts were put on for the first year of the Crèche. By contrast, Sister Glasmann reported that "2011 featured seven concerts including a first and very successful 'Messiah' Sing-In."

The "Messiah" sing-along event to which Sister Glasmann refers quickly grew in popularity, even to the point that it has, on occasion, filled the chapel to standing-room-only conditions. Attendants are invited to sit either in the choir sits or in the available pews and join in singing selections from Handel's celebrated "Messiah" oratorio.

Other notable successes include the concert held on Saturday, December 4, 2010, during which the Corvallis Stake Choir performed "Shine for Me Again, Star of Bethlehem," conducted by Sherri Bird, who also wrote the score.

As has been true on countless occasions throughout Corvallis Stake history, members have proven themselves



Nativity Festival flyer (2010).



A Nativity scene (2006).

willing to be “anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will” (D&C 58:27) for the continued improvement of the Christmas Crèche Exhibit, which has lately come to be called the Nativity Festival. In 2006, Ileen Barlow, who was then serving as director of the Crèche Exhibit, visited the Palo Alto California Stake’s Nativity festival, and was there impressed by their interactive exhibit. Many features have since gradually come to be added to the Corvallis festival, resulting in a dramatic increase of attendance. In 2006, the guest brunch was implemented by Nancy Oar to bring in local community leaders. A new floor design and vignettes were featured in 2007. The children’s area was also expanded to the Primary room. In 2008, Bob Carleski plied his electrical expertise to design and install a lighting plan for the exhibit hall, which greatly enhanced the beauty of the crèche displays. Beth Castellano shared her talents as artistic director beginning in 2009. Over the next three years she transformed the building into an old world market, a silent night in a Bavarian Forest, and the bustling town of Bethlehem. A puppet show of the nativity story was added in 2009, using a script provided by the Palo Alto California Stake. Kathy Elliott created darling puppets and coordinated young women to perform several shows daily, completing a value project for their Personal Progress. Harry Reich built a puppet theatre for 2010 which was placed in the children’s room. The theatre moved to its own room in 2011 in order to accommodate increasing audience size. Added to this, there are the hundreds

of volunteers who are needed to run the event.

Advertising for the Nativity Festival has kept successful pace with evolving technology, so that there is now a Corvallis Nativity Festival page on Facebook, and a whole website devoted to the event at <http://corvallisnativityfestival.blogspot.com/>. There is currently on YouTube a Corvallis Nativity channel, featuring many excellent videos, not the least of which is one that was uploaded on October 26, 2011, and is still viewable, showing clips from an interview with former Corvallis Mayor Charlie Tomlinson. The former mayor, who is not a member of the LDS Church, can be heard offering tribute to the festival, as follows:

One of the things about the Corvallis Nativity Festival for me, personally, is it gives me a time to come out to the church and have a peaceful time. Maria [Tomlinson] and I enjoy walking around and looking at the crèches. We’ve even exhibited some of our crèches here, as well. But it’s also a time to just get into the spirit of the season, to meet people in the community and say hello, to enjoy some music—wonderful music!—out at the festival...

It is a spiritual piece...artistic; very professionally done. And at the Christmastime season it’s just a great way to connect with your faith, and with the other members of the Corvallis community...

Each of us expresses our faith in different ways, and the Nativity festival allows the community to come

together in an expression of faith and spirituality at an important time of year for a number of people in our community. So it is a place and a time for us all to gather together and share a common bond around our faith traditions.

One of the things about the festival that really intrigues me is not only is it a spiritual or a faith event, but it's just a beautiful production. The artistry and the production, the work that goes into it, the love that comes from the people who put it together is absolutely incredible, and I really urge members of the community to come on out to the LDS Church on Harrison Boulevard and experience that joy, that beauty, that artistry that goes into the festival.

Full-time missionaries serving in Corvallis around Christmastime share pass-along cards advertising the Nativity Festival with those they contact. The same is true of local members, who are encouraged to obtain and give away cards to their friends and associates. Members are also provided with colorful posters to put up (with permission) in their workplaces. Advertisements in the Corvallis Gazette-Times continue to prove effective in promoting attendance by community members. Letters and posters are personally delivered to all Corvallis-area churches, cordially inviting them to take part in our non-denominational, non-proselyting event.



A family participates in a live Nativity scene (2005).

As Sister Glasmann has said, in summation: *“The vision, hard work and faith of our stake transformed the Corvallis Nativity Festival into a beacon within our community, where all are welcome to partake of the Savior’s peace and the joy of the true Spirit of Christmas.”*

All are invited to join in the joy of the Christmas season!



Spanish version of Nativity Festival flyer (2012).



Carven crèche of olive wood (2007).



Wooden Nativity display from Poland.



Several crèches with a miniature replica of Thorvaldsen's Christ statue prominently displayed at center.



Volunteer Lydia Hale setting up Fontanini figurines.

COMMUNITY NATIVITY FESTIVAL HISTORY BY YEAR
(BLANK SPACES INDICATE ABSENCE OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION)

Year	Chairperson	Budget	Displayed	Attendance	Days held
1994	Averil Seely	\$400	200	700	2
1995	Averil Seely	\$400	250	1,000	3, Thu, Fri, Sat
1996	Lorna Christensen	\$850	350	600-800	3, Thu, Fri, Sat
1997	(Building remodeled)				
1998	Jan Baumgartner	\$862.97	440	1,000+	3, Thu, Fri, Sat
1999	Jan Baumgartner	\$538.72	462	1,150	3, Thu, Fri, Sat
2000	Marie Boyter/ Judy Barker		523		3, Thu, Fri, Sat
2001	Marie Boyter/ Judy Barker				3, Thu, Fri, Sat
2002	Bonnie Martin / Susan Williams				3, Thu, Fri, Sat
2003	Bonnie Martin / Susan Williams		800+		3, Thu, Fri, Sat
2004	Mary Jackson / Marie Campbell		850		3, Thu, Fri, Sat
2005	Mary Jackson / Marie Campbell	\$800	750	740 (approx.)	3, Thu, Fri, Sat
2006	Ileen Barlow / Nancy Oar	\$800	625	1,300 (approx.)	2, Fri, Sat
2007	Ileen Barlow / Nancy Oar	\$2500 (\$500 was from Missionary Fund)	665	1,400 (approx.)	2, Fri, Sat
2008	Ileen Barlow / Nancy Oar	\$2200 (\$1400 was for lighting project)	531	2,100	3, Fri, Sat, Sun
2009	Ileen Barlow/ Beth Castellano	\$2500 (spent \$2790)	535	2,460	3, Fri, Sat, Sun
2010	Ileen Barlow/ Beth Castellano, Chris Carlson	\$2500 (+\$400 for updating Children's area)	534	2,359	3, Fri, Sat, Sun
2011	Peggy Glasmann				5, Fri, Sat, Sun, Mon, Tue
2012	Peggy Glasmann		840	4,015	
2013	Peggy Glasmann				

CHAPTER 23

The Brooke Wilberger Case

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” (Psalm 23:4)

The abduction of Brooke Wilberger from the parking lot of an apartment complex in Corvallis rallied the Corvallis Oregon Stake together in a united effort to determine her whereabouts. The whole community of Corvallis, in fact, marshaled its best resources to form and carry out an extended search effort that would involve thousands of volunteers. The case, apart from drawing national attention, drew members of the stake and also of the community together in their resolve to help, in any way possible, the family of Greg and Cammy Wilberger cope with the loss of their beloved daughter, Brooke. No event like it has occurred in the stake, either before or since, and a record of what transpired as the particulars of this case became known deserves a place in our history.

Of the six children of Church members Greg and Cammy Wilberger, Brooke was the fifth. The Wilberger family made their home in Veneta, Oregon, near Eugene, and had raised all of their children there. Brooke, who had had initial difficulty with her speech, and did not in fact speak until she was four years of age, had grown to become both an honor student at Elmira High School, and later a student at Brigham Young University (BYU) in Utah, studying speech pathology. The 19-year-old Brooke had followed her boyfriend, Justin, to BYU, and had returned, following the completion of her freshman year, to Oregon, where she had a summer job in Corvallis cleaning the Oak Park Apartments complex managed by her sister, Stephani, and her brother-in-law, Zach Hansen.

On a typically calm spring morning, Monday, May 24, 2004, Brooke had reported for work at 9:00 a.m., and within an hour had set to work cleaning light posts. Stephani drove her children to school, and upon returning could not see Brooke anywhere. However, as the apartment complex is very large, she initially suspected no foul play, as Brooke might have been at work in any of the more than 100 apartments there. When Brooke did not join Stephani and her children for lunch, though, she began to experience some anxiety, though not to the point of total panic. She and her children began searching for Brooke.



After she had officially been declared missing, this was one of the photographs of Brooke most widely distributed by those searching for her.



The parking lot at the Oak Parks Apartment complex from which Brooke was abducted.

What they found next aroused Stephani's suspicions considerably. Brooke's sandals had been left near a cleaning bucket next to a light post she had been cleaning, and the straps on one of them had been ripped out. Also, there was evidence of a struggle in the muddy toe prints running down the sandals, indicating Brooke had been forcibly separated from them. At around 3:00 p.m., the Hansens decided to put word out that Brooke was missing, and Zach called 9-11 to notify police of her disappearance. Family, and later friends, were also notified. When finally one of Brooke's brothers called to inform Cammy of the disappearance, she remembers, "*Right then I just had this chill go through my whole body.*"

When investigators began to search the scene and make inquiries, they discovered Brooke's purse, cell phone, and car still there. Someone also reported hearing what they described as a "blood-curdling scream" around 10:30 a.m.

Meanwhile, a coordinated search effort had been set on foot, with, at first, dozens, then hundreds, and ultimately thousands involved in seeking to ascertain the whereabouts of Brooke. Most of the searchers were Church members, but the wider community became increasingly involved as time wore on. For instance, the message board located in front of the First Presbyterian Church on the corner of 8th Street and Monroe Avenue in Corvallis bore in large letters the saying: "*Pray for the safe return of Brooke.*" Eventually, even the FBI became involved, though with little prospect of success, it seemed, given the meager evidence, and the absence of any eyewitness at the crime scene.

Moreover, anxiety and suspicion increased when further investigations revealed as many as 2,000 registered sex offenders then living in the Corvallis area. When this figure was disclosed to Cammy, she remembers having to lie down, as she had "become nauseated."

Despite the mounting turmoil, however, the faith of the Wilberger family remained securely anchored, and the light of hope seemed to grow brighter for them when national news reports came in that Elizabeth Smart,



Volunteer searchers help in the coordinated effort to find Brooke.

another abducted Latter-day Saint young woman in Utah, had been found and returned safely to her family.

Investigators discovered what they thought to be a firm lead in a suspect who had been caught with a vast collection of personal items which he had stolen from numerous young women. The suspect seemed an especially likely culprit when, on his personal computer, there was found a voluminous collection of violent pornographic images, as well as a document describing how to assault women. The suspect was ultimately cleared of any involvement with the Brooke Wilberger case, however, when converging lines of evidence established that he could not possibly have been in Corvallis at the time of Brooke's abduction. Among these evidences was a recorded purchase he had made via the internet just after 11:00 a.m. on his personal computer, which was located some 75 miles from Corvallis.

Still, the steady outpouring of prayers continued with a steady output of faith. Newspapers came to report not only on the progress of the investigation, but also on the persistence of that faith shown by the Wilberger family in God, in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the blessings of the restored gospel. As the *Gazette-Times* newspaper wrote in August of 2005:

The prayers began as soon as the news spread of Brooke Wilberger's disappearance last May.

The Wilberger family belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and the local Corvallis Stake immediately sprang into action organizing search efforts and prayer meetings. Many other faith communities also began to pray the 19-year-old college student would be found quickly. Two public prayer vigils were held in the weeks following her disappearance to show community support...

"As the Wilberger family and our community perhaps will finally be able to bring resolution to the disappearance of Brooke, the end result is certainly not one we had hoped or prayed for," said the Rev. Russ Stiverson, pastor of the Corvallis Church of the Nazarene.

The congregation has included the Wilberger family on its weekly prayer list and mentioned them often in services.

"While we often feel frustrated at the lack of ability to do anything but pray, we realize that is the most important ministry we have in situations such as this," Stiverson said.

The Rev. Deanna Self-Price, pastor of First United Methodist Church, said she depends on the constant presence of God in making sense of such tragedies.

"God is still at work, seeking us as much as we are seeking God, grieving right alongside of us, giving us the strength and courage and hope we need to continue on with life's journey. We do not travel that road alone and, perhaps the prayers that we have prayed and shared with one another throughout these many months become the gift that reminds us that this is so," she said.

...Latter-day Saints believe that though a person's physical body dies, the spirit lives on and eventually the body and spirit are reunited in heaven from where the spirit was born in the first place. Families remain together even in death.

"We believe families are eternal and Brooke will be with our family forever," her mother said Wednesday.

The Wilbergers also believe good can come out of bad.

"No matter what happens, there will be something good out of it because that's just the way things work," Greg Wilberger said in June 2004.

God, the Wilbergers firmly believe, permits evil so that a greater good may be brought about thereby, and that no evil, nor any combination of evils, can have power to dissolve the bond of a faithful family sealed in



Some of the Wilberger family at a press conference. From left: Brooke's sister, Jessica, and parents Greg and Cammy.

the eternal covenant of celestial temple marriage. And from this belief, the family never wavered. Cammy's continual prayer was that, aside from having Brooke found, her abductor would also "make a mistake" that would lead to his arrest.

Finally, after months of searching, a break in the case occurred. Some 1,400 miles away in the state of New Mexico, Brooke's true abductor had been imprisoned in December of 2004, charged with kidnapping and sexually assaulting a young college student, who had been fortunate enough to escape and inform the authorities, in Albuquerque. The student was, like Brooke, a blond-haired and blue-eyed young woman of around the same age, and the perpetrator of the attack, then awaiting trial, was Joel Patrick Courtney. He had tied the young woman with her own shoelaces, leaving her in the backseat of his car while he went inside an apartment. But Mr. Courtney had made a mistake. He had not tightened the shoelaces enough to leave the young woman bound, and she succeeded in extricating herself and escaping.

One of the officers in New Mexico who had been involved in the arrest and imprisonment of Joel Courtney performed a background check on him, learning he had lived in various states, including Alaska, New Mexico, and Oregon. Courtney had, in fact, been raised in Beaverton. The officer, though he was under no requirement to do so, telephoned an officer in Lane County, Oregon. Knowing that Joel Courtney had lived in Oregon, he wanted to inform them of the crimes committed by him to see if anything had occurred in Oregon with which he could have been involved. Immediately, the Lane County officer remembered the Brooke Wilberger case.

Courtney's sister, who lives in the Portland area, was eventually questioned by officers. She told them, among other things, that her brother had been working in Oregon for a business requiring him to travel around the state in a green Dodge Caravan with Minnesota license plates. Two separate tips, it so happened, had earlier been given to police, reporting a white male in a green van with Minnesota plates near Oregon State University.

The vehicle in question was eventually obtained by the FBI, and proved to contain traces of Joel Patrick Courtney's DNA. It also proved to contain traces from the DNA of Brooke Wilberger. And despite the absence of Brooke, or her body, in view of such forensic evidence as this, charges could be, and were, brought against Courtney, with the death penalty proposed for his crimes. By now, it was naturally a foregone conclusion that Brooke had been killed. Nevertheless, the mission of her family remained the same, and could be summed up in the two words which had for years been seen on flyers, posters, internet websites, and even a banner overhanging Harrison Boulevard in Corvallis: Find Brooke.

The trial proceedings in New Mexico, however, were delayed for some time, and it would not be until 4 years later that Joel Courtney appeared in an Oregon courtroom on extradition to stand trial for the abduction, assault, and murder of Brooke Wilberger. Even then, events progressed but slowly, as the obdurate defendant, Mr. Courtney, employed every conceivable means to delay proceedings and frustrate the justice process.

Ultimately, the sought-for breakthrough came by appealing to what the Benton County district attorney who was prosecuting the case called Joel Courtney's "narcissism." A deal was reached wherein Courtney would, if convicted, serve his life sentence in New Mexico, near his wife and three children, in return for his revealing the location of Brooke's remains. Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski signed his approval of the plea deal almost immediately, but the New Mexico Governor was uncertain of whether or not he should do likewise. A telephone call from Cammy Wilberger, pleading with him to approve the deal, finally persuaded the governor in New Mexico to give his signature of approval to the arrangement.

At last, Joel Patrick Courtney confessed that, while high on cocaine, he had driven up to Brooke, pretended to need help with directions to deliver a package, and abducted her once she had leaned in closely enough. Though she had fought back valiantly during the assault, he eventually killed her, even as she resisted, and deposited her body in a heavily wooded area of the Oregon Coast Range. He drew a rough sketch of a map to the area, and investigators were, with the help of specially trained dogs, able to recover what remained of Brooke Wilberger's body.

Joel Patrick Courtney now serves a life sentence of solitary confinement in New Mexico, agreeable to the

terms of his arrangement with the prosecutors, without the possibility of parole. His earthly destiny will be to die incarcerated.

Throughout so tremendous and trying an ordeal, the Wilberger family was sustained by a supreme unflappability of faith founded upon the promises of God made sure through the Spirit, and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Sister Cammy Wilberger inspired every attentive listener who was present at the two Stake Relief Society Women's Conferences held in 2006 and 2013.

At the conference in 2013, she made reference to a saying that appears on a refrigerator magnet in her home, which reads: *"Peace—It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart."* She also recalled how her praying had consumed the whole of the night following the disappearance of Brooke. As time wore on, her grief became, at times, unbearable, she said, and she recalled the day when her body simply "shut down," being overcome by spiritual agony. While thus collapsed, and lying on the couch, she realized she had become unable even to lift her own arm, and that nothing short of the Savior's power could suffice to heal her. The idea came to her that she should arise, thenceforth, a full hour's time earlier than she had been in order to pray. This meant arising at 4:30 a.m., rather than the customary 5:30 a.m. waking time she had followed to prepare, dress, and drive to the elementary school where she taught. During that "sweet hour of prayer," she would gain a deepened awareness of our Savior's love. She observes the custom to this day, and has called it the best hour of her day.



Cammy Wilberger in one of her many public appearances.

Throughout the conference, various sayings from Sister Wilberger struck her attentive listeners as too valuable to be left unrecorded, and these were written down as follows:

"We can be more than the adversities we face."

"Sometimes we need a 'rough patch' to help us prioritize."

"Prayer is a passport to spiritual strength."

"The Savior already paid the price. We just have to utilize his enabling power."

"Most of us have had or will have trials. It's important to pray always."

"Recognize the power of the Holy Ghost and then trust that witness."

But one of her most stirring thoughts was in the form, not of a saying, but of a question, reminding her fellow sisters that they should, in their prayers, not expect answers without the requisite worthiness and effort:

"Do we pay the price to get answers to our prayers?"

She concluded with yet another question, posed to invite introspection among the sisters on their own lives. She asked how we will look back on the trials we have personally experienced in mortality. It may be, she said,

that we will realize what had seemed “the worst of times” (in the familiar Dickensian phrase) may actually be viewed, from the infinitely broader perspective of eternity, as some of “the best of times” in our mortal existence.

She further remarked that, during what we are apt to term “the best of times,” our spiritual progression is, if anything, slower than in the midst of mounting turmoil. It is, she said, in fact during times of tribulation and trial that we grow and learn most. It may well be that, for what we classify, in this life, among “the worst of times,” we will one day be thankful, recognizing the positive impact that they had in our lives.

Perhaps the fittest conclusion to this brief account is expressed by these words from an editorial that appeared in the Gazette-Times:

Some of the mysteries involved in this case likely never will be unraveled, just as some wounds never will completely heal.

But Cammy Wilberger, Brooke's mother, offered some balm on Monday for a community's aching heart, even as her own heart must have been close to bursting.

Her eyes swimming with tears, Cammy Wilberger talked about being grateful for the law enforcement officials and community members who helped investigate the case over the years.

And her gratitude included Courtney himself, for his role in guiding authorities to the remains of her daughter. "It might be hard for you to understand, but at this time we just really feel grateful, even to Mr. Courtney," she said.

She's right. It is hard for us to understand. But we understand this: In a bleak hour for this community, Cammy Wilberger reached deep into her heart and offered us a moment of shining grace.

To these thoughts, there can be no other word to add, except: Amen.

CHAPTER 24

Humanitarian Service (At Home and Abroad)

“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (Matthew 25:40)

Service has been a hallmark for members in the Corvallis Stake. The admonition in Doctrine and Covenants 64:33 says: “Wherefore, be not weary in well doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great.” Indeed, from small things have come great works in the stake during the last fifty years. No book is large enough to cover all the small acts and great works that have come from the hearts and hands of stake members. This will simply be a sampling of a few examples.

The early years of service in the stake focused on building up the church and its members in the area. The welfare farm, fundraising for new buildings, and the construction of the ward and stake buildings was organized and carried out by the local members. These were faith-building experiences and took hours of time and dedication. And when ample generosity in the giving of tithes and offerings by Church members throughout the world permitted it, the church leaders in Salt Lake City began to redirect these types of efforts to professionals and eliminate the demand for local fundraising efforts. Thus, members found, on the local level, opportunity and time to serve within their own communities.

Most professors at Oregon State University were male in the 1940-1970s and quite a few on staff were members of the church. Many of the professors’ wives volunteered at the OSU Thrift Shop, a second hand store in downtown Corvallis, operated 100% by volunteers. Proceeds benefitted scholarships for youth and other community needs. Other members could be found coaching athletic teams, leading Cub Scout and Blue Bird troops, serving on local PTAs, volunteering at the library, or in some capacity in their neighborhoods and communities. For example, Oregon State University chemistry professor, Dar Reese, was well known for volunteering to teach entertaining classes on the wonders of chemistry at local science fairs.

Dar and Mary Olive Maddox were both recipients of the Silver Beaver Award in Scouting. This award demonstrated the hours of service they provided to the local scouting programs.

Elder Hans B. Ringer said: “We need to look around us, and if we cannot see poverty, illness, and despair in our own neighborhood or ward, then we have to look harder. And remember, we cannot be afraid to go beyond our own social and cultural circles. We have to rid ourselves of religious, racial, or social prejudices and expand the boundaries of our service. Service should never discriminate and is hardly ever easy.”

Allen Davis exemplified this message and often spoke at Stake Conferences during his tenure as stake president (1987-1996), encouraging members to serve in their local communities. He decided upon this emphasis after seeking advice from the Lord on what he should focus on during his service as a stake president. His first inclination was to emphasize missionary work, but he felt that missionary efforts would be more successful if misconceptions about Mormons were diminished. By encouraging members to become active in their communities and to rub shoulders with those who were not members of the church, he anticipated that increased missionary work, stronger community relations, and benefits for local communities would be the result. Thus, he urged members to look beyond the walls of their own homes and chapels and to seek out service opportunities in schools, non-profits, service clubs, and other organizations.

President Davis practiced what he preached and became involved in the Y.E.S. (Youth Entering Sobriety) House, a facility to help those with chemical dependencies. Other members of the stake heeded the words of President Davis and reached out for opportunities to serve in their communities. The list below is a sampling of those members of the stake who were impacted by President Davis’ encouragement and the action they took to become more involved:

David Miller – served on Newport City Council

Van Hunsaker – served as Mayor of Philomath

Michelle Babel – joined Assistance League Member and later served as president.

Paula Davis – served on YES House Board

Susan Williams – served as a Safety Town Director

Tom Sherry – ran for School Board and served on OSU Holocaust Memorial Committee

Annie Sherry and Bonnie Martin – served as Hospice volunteers

Evie Coleman – assisted in decorating a bedroom for a youth shelter

Joanne Harding – volunteered at the Grace Center

Paul Harding and Eldon Olsen – volunteered as drivers for Dial-A-Bus

Robin Costa – served on the Dial-A-Bus Board of Directors

John and Myrna Bell – served as precinct committee members

Kay Davis – directed the Corvallis Chorale, a local choir

Sabra Killen – joined the Corvallis-Uzhhorod Sister Cities Board, volunteered at school

Diane Merten – initiated emergency preparedness efforts in Benton County

Charles Nelson – served on the Corvallis City Council

Jean Nelson and John Bell – served as Chair of Benton County Republicans

Diane Patton – volunteered to teach English as a second language to OSU students

Charles Nelson, Jared Nelson, and Patrick Wills – served in the Honor Guard of the Corvallis Post of the American Legion

Reed Glasmann and Patrick Wills – served on the Philomath Fire Department Board of Directors

Patrick Wills – served as a firefighter on the Philomath Fire Department and a leader in the USCG Auxiliary

David Blake – joined Rotary Club and served as a Boy Scout District Chairman

Cheryl Blake – volunteered at Wilson Elementary and with Cub Scout District Training

Greg Merten – served on a legislative committee and as Boy Scout District Chairman

Craig McFarlane – CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)

Randy Killen – ran for County Commissioner

David Bird – mentoring works

Dale Romrell and Alice Rampton – Boys & Girls Club of Corvallis Board of Directors

In the fall of 1990, Arlene Holyoak, Stake Relief Society President, attended the Relief Society Open

House in Salt Lake City where she learned the theme for the upcoming Sesquicentennial celebration would be “Celebrating through Service.” Using the “planning with a purpose” concept that she was introduced to at the General Relief Society Open House, President Holyoak and her presidency (Luana Tekulve, Marjean Moore, Ann Kerlee) developed a goal of completing 70-100 quilts for local community agencies in Corvallis, Philomath, Waldport, and Newport. This became the focus of the various ward Relief Societies during 1991, and a Stake Quilting Committee was formed with a representative from each ward or branch. A grant of \$2,000 was received from Meyer Memorial Trust to purchase batting and fabric for the quilt backs.

On March 14, 1992, 150 individuals including Relief Society sisters, children, young women, friends, neighbors, and community representatives gathered at the Stake Center for the celebration of the Sesquicentennial. Those in attendance were in awe of the 239 quilts on display which greatly surpassed the goal of 100. These quilts were donated to sixteen agencies including the Philomath Baby Bank, Community Outreach Inc., Philomath Family Support Outlet, Foster Parents Association, Benton County Child Abuse, Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence, Children’s Farm Home, Developmental Disabilities of Benton County, ENTOS, Fish of Benton County, IRIS Project, and Newport and Waldport Agencies: Children Services Division, Red Cross, Ronald McDonald Home, Shelter Home, and Yaquina View Care Center.

President Spencer W. Kimball said, *“God does notice us and he watches over us. But it is usually through another person that he meets our needs. Great women and men are always more anxious to serve than to have dominion.”*

Giving blood is one way that one person is able to meet another’s needs. Beginning in 1980, the Corvallis Stake partnered with the Red Cross to host a blood drive at the stake center, and in 1987 moved the drive to the Walnut Boulevard meetinghouse. Thousands of pints of blood were given freely by members and non-members alike to benefit strangers in need through the years.

The women of Relief Society set the pace for humanitarian efforts in the stake. As an example, in 1999, under the direction of the Stake Relief Society presidency (Averil Seely, Laurel Maughan, Jackie Myrold, & Donna Vitkasukas), women in the stake assembled 535 hygiene kits, made 70 leprosy bandages, and sewed 150 quilts for victims of the war in Kosovo and for the Bishop’s Storehouse. In addition, the women in the various units of the stake made school bags and wooden toys for the Church Humanitarian Center, sewed curtains for a local Women’s Shelter, donated Christmas presents for the Boys & Girls Club, cleaned up Mary’s River Park, donated holiday decorations and household supplies to Samaritan House in Newport, visited nursing homes, promoted literacy through the S.M.A.R.T. (Start Making A Reader Today) program in local schools, sorted clothing for a sister-city shipment to Ukraine, and organized a “giving tree” for local foster children.

Heidi Neuffer shared a poignant story regarding the gathering of quilts for Kosovo:

I had been discussing the project with someone and I realized that I’d missed the deadline to turn in a quilt. My young son, Matthew (about 6 or 7 years) over-heard me. He became concerned that we didn't have quilt to give someone, and he knew I felt sad about not getting a quilt to Sister Seely who would take them to these poor, poor people.

We talked about it, and I told him I hadn't made a quilt and that it was too late. He then had the idea to give away a quilt that he loved with all his heart. It was the one my former beloved home teacher had made for me when I was a teenager, and I had kept and treasured it all these years. It went with me to college; it was waiting for me after my mission, and then went back to college with me again. When I married, I took it with me, intending to pass it to my children. Matthew received it when he was a toddler. He in turn, used it as his main blanket on his bed, loved it and would wrap up in it on cold mornings in Idaho and now in Oregon. But he decided he wanted the people to have it to “keep them warm.”

I was concerned about this. This was a “keepsake” and something I treasured. It reminded me of the love of Brother and Sister Burch who made it for me, my incredible home teachers. And I wanted my son to keep this blanket because of that. He clearly loved it, used it and knew its story. But he reminded me that it was warm,

soft and "just right" for someone to wrap around them.

We decided right then and there to get that quilt to President Averil Seely. Although it was late, I was able to reach her by phone, and we decided to meet later that night after her meetings. We barely had time to wash the quilt, complete the extensive mending it needed, and attach a note with its story. Matthew helped me, and we finished just in time for me to hop in the car and run it across town to the Crescent Valley High School parking lot where I met Sister Seely. She was very happy to receive the quilt and was able to add it to her car load of quilts which were going to be sent off in the morning. I learned a lot that evening from Averil Seely. I also learned a great deal from my son who felt the love and charity that Relief Society exemplifies! I'm sure, somewhere in the world, this beloved quilt is warming some sweet child of God.



Members of the stake make an impact with their involvement in community efforts. Gifts For A Better World, a holiday season store in Corvallis, sells international items and supports fair trade in the world. Items from local non-profits are also sold at the store and proceeds from all sales go back to help non-profits locally and internationally. It began as a collaboration of local churches, including the Corvallis Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Many members have volunteered at this organization throughout the years. Kip Worley, a member of the stake, has served for over 18 years with the organization. Besides benefiting those in need, Kip has enjoyed the friendships which developed with other members of the community through this association.

Balancing family, church, and employment with a desire to give back to one's community has been a challenge for Latter-day Saints throughout the years. In 1917, Emma Vernon, a nursing superintendent in West Virginia, quoted an inscription over a doorway of a hospital in India, "Service is the rent we pay for a room on earth." Jan Williams Baumgartner is a good example of going the extra mile and paying that rent while juggling many other responsibilities. For almost 40 years, she has served locally in school PTAs, Red Cross Blood Drives, Crossroads International, Boy Scouts of America, Corvallis Safety Town, Camp Fire Girls, Gifts For A Better World, Meals On Wheels, Grace Center, OSU Extension Home Arts Festival, Assistance League of Corvallis, and a state coalition for the Smoke Free Class of 2000.

The youth of Zion in the Corvallis Stake were active in serving in their communities. Each high school in the stake was strongly represented with LDS youth as student body officers and participants in school plays, sports, and other teams. Eagle Scout and Young Women Achievement awards throughout the various wards and branches also demonstrated great contributions to the various communities. Bridges were built, playgrounds repaired, food drives organized, middle school tutoring projects offered, Christmas food baskets prepared and delivered, park benches installed, Camp Alpine facilities improved, baseball cages replaced, grave markers repaired and cleaned, Habitat for Humanity supplies gathered, quilts and baby clothes delivered to non-profits, flowers and trees planted, supplies gathered for orphanages abroad, trails repaired and managed, to just mention a few. The list of good deeds provided by the youth is long, impressive, and still growing.

In August 2005, one of the strongest and deadliest hurricanes in U.S. history pounded the shorelines of Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. At least 1,833 individuals lost their lives, and total property damage was estimated at \$81 billion. The residents of the region were left without homes, electricity, food, clean water, and other basic necessities. Terece Romrell Johnson, a member of the Philomath Ward, felt a need to help as she watched the devastation on the TV news. She called the newly set-apart Stake Relief Society Presidency (Alice Rampton, Heidi Neuffer, Karen Taylor) and suggested that hygiene kits be put together for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. With approval from the Stake Presidency, a press release was sent to the Gazette-Times newspaper, encouraging donations of time and items to put together hygiene kits at the Stake Center the following Saturday. In addition, emails flew from the computers of Relief Society presidents and priesthood

leaders to all units in the stake. Stake members and other individuals throughout the community were looking for a way to provide service for the citizens of the Gulf Coast, and this project answered that desire for many.

The cultural hall of the Stake Center became a mini assembly line for hygiene kits. People throughout the community dropped by to leave items for the kits or to help assemble them into plastic bags.

At the end of the effort, 1,200 hygiene kits had been assembled on that day. They were sent to Salt Lake City for further distribution. This was an example of how one person like Terece Johnson can be inspired to make a big difference. Terece sent this article to the Gazette-Times at the conclusion of the project:

*For "Good Words"
Corvallis Gazette Times*

Volunteers from Corvallis, Philomath, Newport, and Waldport recently assembled 1,200 hygiene kits for the

survivors of Hurricane Katrina. Each kit contained 4 toothbrushes, 2 hand towels, 2 bars of soap, 2 combs, and toothpaste. 4,800 new toothbrushes were donated along with thousands of other items! Over 400 community volunteers donated cash, supplies and helped assemble kits at the LDS Stake Center on Labor Day. The kits were picked up on September 8 for delivery to those in need. A big thank you is extended to each volunteer and donor. I also want to thank the many local dentists who contributed hundreds of toothbrushes and tubes of toothpaste to the project. Several local merchants gave a 10% discount to those gathering supplies and Big Lots in Albany donated soap and toothbrushes as well. Thank you for this wonderful display of community giving to those in the Gulf Coast region.

*Terece Johnson,
Hurricane Katrina Project Coordinator
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

Groups of individuals working together can make a big difference, also. The members of the Newport Ward set a great example of helping to serve the underserved. They did an excellent job of working with community organizations to provide needed materials and services. This is a sampling of their service provided in 2010 to a variety of organizations:

- 3 cases of food to Lincoln County Food Share
- 31 hats, 16 puppets, 17 new toys, and many clothing items to Lincoln County Foster Children's Program



Group assembling hygiene kits at Stake Center for victims of Hurricane Katrina.



More hygiene kits being assembled for Hurricane Katrina victims.

- 8 boxes of school supplies, 10 boxes of clothing/shoes, 2 book bags to Lincoln County schools
- Several boxes of clothing to Newport Rehabilitation Center
- Several boxes of sheets, towels, blankets, quilts, dishes, hygiene kits plus furniture to Pelican House
- Several boxes of blankets, diapers, clothing, toys, and hygiene items to Samaritan House (a shelter for women and families)
- 4 newborn kits to the newborn nursery at Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital
- Several boxes of clothing, costumes, fabric, backpacks, cameras, and shoes to Deseret Industries
- 50 hygiene kits, 57 newborn kits, 80 knitted hats, 19 quilts/blankets, 11 pillows, 11 pairs of booties, 15 bibs, and several boxes of medical supplies for LDS Humanitarian Services
- Several boxes of infant supplies, clothing, blankets, toys, bibs, and shoes to Child Advocacy Center
- 21 hats and various items of men's clothing to the Homeless Warming Center in Newport
- 200 bars of soap, 50 pairs of shoes, 22 blouses, 24 men's slacks, 109 T-shirts, and several boxes of other clothing and bedding items to Lincoln County Outreach Families in Crisis

Much of this service was done anonymously by members of all ages, with no fanfare, and without any expectations for recognition or gratitude. A quote from Kent M. Keith exemplifies the attitude that these saints in Newport had: "The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow: Do good anyway. Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough: Give the world the best you've got anyway."

At a unique ward Christmas party held in the meetinghouse on Walnut Boulevard in Corvallis, 310 pairs of socks were donated at the Christmas party for Community Outreach. The event was chaired by Sister Lindsey Switzler Merten. When asked what Community Outreach had need for, their director had asked for socks, so he came to the Walnut building Christmas party to pick up the pairs of socks, donated by the ward members, led by the youth and Sister Merten.

The Savior often spoke of helping those who found themselves in difficult circumstances. As one of His chosen prophets in ancient America declared: "*And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted.*" (Jacob 2:19) Jeff Merten took this scripture to heart when, in 2007, he began to work with a homeless men's shelter project in Corvallis. The shelter provided a place to sleep for an average of 35 homeless men per night during the winter months. Eleven other local churches were providing volunteers to take shifts, spending the night at the shelter. Jeff volunteered to find LDS men who would take nightly shifts at the shelter, which he has successfully done over the years. Before her death, his wife, Linda Merten, was actively coordinating warm soup to be served for the evening meal on these shifts, and in her memory Jeff continued coordinating soup for those homeless men.

As homelessness increased locally due to social and economic problems, there was also an increase globally. Natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods occurred with alarming frequency. With these catastrophes, came great loss of lives and belongings. Members of the Corvallis Stake continued to look for ways to serve when these situations arose.

Mark Rampton, former Bishop of Corvallis 4th Ward and a Corvallis family practice physician, was hosting a neighborhood emergency preparedness evening with his wife at their home on January 12, 2010. Speaker, Peggy Peirson, Benton County's emergency preparedness specialist, arrived at the meeting and shared that she had just heard there was an earthquake in Haiti. Due to total loss of electrical power in the area of the earthquake, no images were forthcoming until the next day. As Mark viewed the devastation on the nightly



One of many areas devastated by the Haitian earthquake of 2010.

news, he felt inspired to send an email to the Church Humanitarian office, sharing that he would be willing to serve if the church decided to send a medical team.

The next morning, he received word that a team was going to be sent, and was asked to be on a plane that afternoon. Hurriedly, flight reservations were made, a suitcase packed, and he was on his way to Salt Lake City. There he met up with other members of this first emergency medical team sent by the Church to a disaster-related event. The team arrived in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and immediately set up emergency centers in four LDS buildings in

the vicinity. They were one of the early international teams to arrive, and were able to offer medical aid to thousands of individuals in dire need of help.

Haitian adults and children with multiple broken bones, life-threatening burns, infected wounds, and head injuries were common occurrences. Amputations and other surgeries were needed by many. The stench of death prevailed throughout the city. At the same time, life continued on, and Mark was able to also deliver a newborn baby.



Team sent by the Church to provide medical aid to Haitian earthquake victims.

After two weeks of service and many faith-promoting experiences, Mark and the other team members returned to their respective communities. The local Gazette-Times newspaper had printed emails which Mark sent home during his trip to Haiti, and this generated an interest with community members. Upon return, Mark made a presentation at the Stake Center for anyone interested. Over 700 people attended, with at least half of those visitors being from the community.

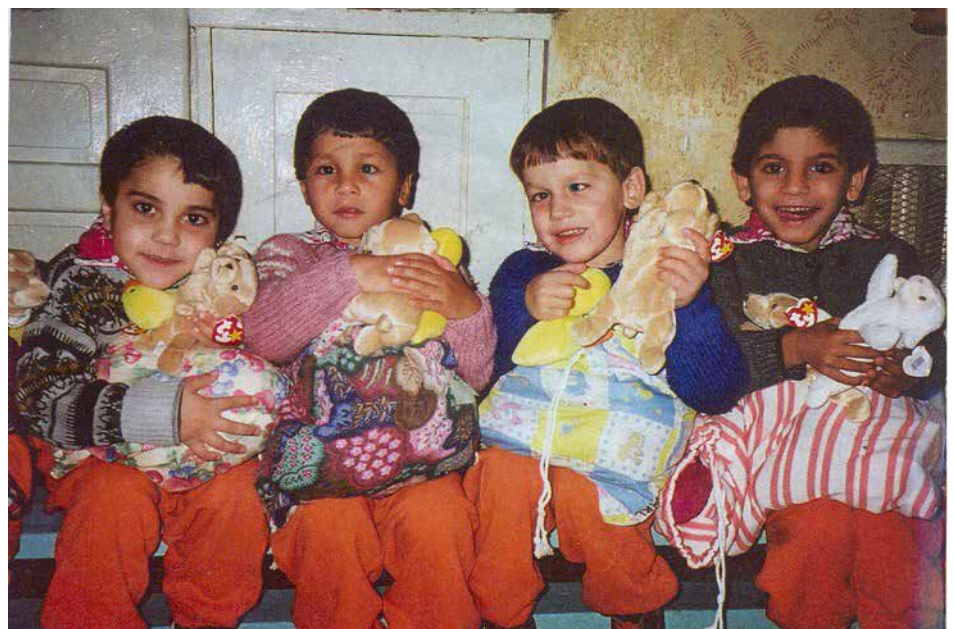


Dr. Mark Rampton treats the head wounds of a Haitian boy.

Several opportunities for future service stemmed from this fireside, including the support of a local orphanage, letters written to Haitian children, and financial aid for Haitians to attend the temple in the Dominican Republic. One community member was so touched by what she saw and heard that she and her husband traveled to Haiti to adopt children and establish a non-profit for children there.

Other opportunities to serve internationally came to members of the Corvallis Stake. Curt Baumgartner, a Corvallis dentist, and his wife, Jan, traveled to Korea and offered dental service at an orphanage. Bonnie and Dale Romrell worked to help develop a small business initiative in Africa. David and Cheryl Blake traveled to China under the BYU China Teachers Program and taught English for ten months at Ocean University of China in Qingdao and returned a year later and taught for ten months at Peking University in Beijing. Gary Templeman journeyed to Nuevo Casas Grandes, Mexico, twice to work at a clinic and share his dentistry skills. He also assisted locally with Medical Teams International's Mobile Dental Program for low-income children and adults, the homeless, and migrant workers without insurance or funds. Brent Bunker of the Newport Ward volunteered three times to travel to the Philippines with Medical Missions of Mercy, where he provided anesthesia services in rural areas for individuals who could not afford the surgery expenses. His daughter, Cherilyn, often accompanied him. Brent's wife, Pam, and daughter, Christiana, volunteered to work with children in Xian, China, at the Starfish Foster Home.

Alice Rampton and Sabra Killen traveled to Ukraine on a Sister City project in 1999 to distribute aid from one of six shipments sent to Uzhhorod, Ukraine, from the citizens of Corvallis, Oregon. One



Four young Ukrainian orphans with donated stuffed toys.



Ukrainian orphans and their grandmothers (babushkas) visited by TOUCH delegation members.

site they visited was an orphanage with three feet of sewage in the basement, due to a broken septic system. They returned home and decided to not only raise funds to repair the septic system, but to also start a non-profit organization called the TOUCH Project (Take One Ukrainian Child's Hand) under the direction of the Corvallis-Uzhhorod Sister Cities Association. This sponsorship program has provided basic food and clothing needs, installed classrooms, laundry facilities, and playgrounds; purchased a wheelchair-accessible bus, and provided educational opportunities for over 300 children in that country. Many ward Relief Society, Young Men, and Young Women organizations in the stake gathered



TOUCH Project delegation members.

socks, school supplies, quilts, hygiene items, clothing, and other items for these youth with special needs.

From 2000-2013, over thirty current or former members of the stake traveled to Ukraine at their own expense, with hundreds of other members of communities, to help the children in the TOUCH Project. Besides Sabra and Alice, these individuals included Crystal Cox, David Cox, Devon Templeman, Evie Coleman, Ellie Coleman, Terri Harper, Cathy Leishman, Bonnie Martin, J.C. Martin, Michelle Babbel, Dani Babbel, Kory Jackson, Molly Jackson, Allison Jackson, Elaine Forrest, Lisa Freeman, Janelle Freeman, Kathy Herdt-Bergevin, Mark Rampton, Sara Rampton Egbert, Marcus Rampton, Lisa Rampton Halverson, Brandon Killen, Randy Killen, Hannah Killen, Alyssa Killen, Nandan Rao, Sarika Rao, Ryan Fisher, and Nancy Fisher.

Kevin Nielsen traveled to Kenya, Africa, to assist a small village with agricultural and domestic water needs as part of a humanitarian effort. While preparing for this trip, he became aware of the need for baby blankets for newborn infants in the village. To assist with this need, he decided to fill his suitcases with baby blankets to hand deliver to the women's center in the village. He shared this vision with members of the Corvallis Stake and sewing machines and willing hands began to do their magic. Heather Reich and Becky Nielsen helped spearhead the effort, which resulted in over 300 blankets being taken to Kenya on his trip. Kevin shared the experience in his own words:

I traveled to Kenya Africa in late October and early November 2011. Just before I left on this trip, numerous attacks from Somalia terrorist broke out all over Kenya. Warnings from the State Department discouraged any travel to the country of Kenya. This raised several safety concerns regarding my trip. I finally concluded that because I would be spending most of my time in remote villages in the bush of Africa, the main risks were limited to travel through Nairobi.

Therefore, I decided to proceed with the trip. From the news, it appeared the country was filled with hate, anger, and war. However, after arriving and spending time with the Kenyans, I realized the country was filled with love, compassion, and kindness. These people live in small huts generally made of sticks and mud that consist of just a few small rooms with dirt floors; a bedroom where the entire family would sleep; a small kitchen with an open fire on the ground for cooking which filled the house with smoke; and often times another room used to house chickens. There were usually no windows and the doors were generally a piece of cloth hung over the opening. Water was gathered at small muddy and polluted ponds into 5 gallon buckets and carried on their heads for several miles to their homes. I watched a little girl about 7 or 8 years old fill two 5 gallon buckets from a muddy pond, take a drink, and then have her mom place one of the buckets on her little head to carry home.

The women would walk for miles to the dispensary to give birth without any medications then walk home a few hours later carrying their new born babies. I was told of a mother who needed a C-section. She was asked if she wanted pain medicine. She said yes so they gave her two Advil. School children would walk to school carrying firewood and buckets of water on their heads to be used at the school. I watched little boys filling small bowls of corn with water at a muddy pond to take to school for lunch. They have no books for school but



BABY BLANKETS FOR KENYA

Donate a baby blanket to help increase the survival rate of newborns in rural Kenya.

President Kevin Nielsen of the Corvallis Oregon Stake is going to Kenya to assist a small village with agricultural and domestic water needs. He would like to fill his suitcase with baby blankets to hand-deliver to the women's center in the village.

WHAT:
Two 1 1/4-yard flannel pieces, sewn together, turned, and top stitched, or serged around the edges, with no trim, ties, or embellishments. The Kenyans love bright bold colors (over pastel pink or blue). Please place each blanket in a one-gallon zip-lock bag.

WHEN:
Bring the blankets to stake conference on Sunday, October 23.

MORE INFO:
Call Heather Reich, 541-231-7977, if you have any questions about this blanket project. For additional information regarding this non-profit organization go to <http://www.koainstorkenya.org/index.php>



Flyer inviting blanket donations for Kenyan newborns.

must learn almost everything by rote. Some of the students had desks but many did not. They would sit on the dirt floor or on a board placed on two rocks.

I collected over 300 baby blankets from family members and the sisters in the Corvallis Oregon Stake to deliver to the women's center. Becky and I could clearly feel the love of the Savior in each and every blanket we put into the (four) suitcases. It was actually a bit emotional to take each one, place it in the suitcase, and feel the love of the sisters being packaged to wrap around the little Kenyan babies.

While at the center I was talking with one of the nurses regarding her experience in the village. She explained how after gaining her nursing degree, she was assigned to this small village of Mnyenzi. She said at first she did not want to come to the bush and was not happy with her assignment. However, she said as she worked with the people, she realized how kind and loving they were. She then said: "They have clean hearts!"

Her statement "They have clean hearts!" sunk deep into my heart! I could not get this declaration out of my mind as I observed a people who live in mud huts, sleep on dirt floors, walk on littered and muddy roads, drink water from a polluted mud hole, and wear torn and tatter clothes. Yes, everything around them was dirty and polluted but it was said of them, "They have clean hearts!" It made me wonder if it could be said of us, who live in beautiful homes, sleep on soft beds, walk on clean and paved streets, drink crystal clear water from a faucet, and have a closet full of many clothes, that we have clean hearts!"

Jesus Christ is no respecter of persons. He gave and loved freely throughout His ministry and set the pattern of loving our neighbor as ourselves. The members of the Corvallis Oregon Stake have sought after this pattern through the decades.



Kevin Nielsen and Corvallis Stake sisters with donated baby blankets for Kenya.



Kevin Nielsen in Kenya with mothers and their newborns who have received donated blankets.



A Kenyan family outside of their mud hut.

CHAPTER 25

Public Affairs

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of this people...” (3 Nephi 12:14)

It is neither the disposition nor the practice of saints to estrange themselves from social involvement. “We are not here to be recluses,” Elder James E. Talmage once wrote, “nor to hold ourselves aloof from public service, but to live in a state of mutual helpfulness and effective cooperation.” The motive in extending such help and cooperative action is, or ought to be, love. As Joseph Smith said, “A man filled with the love of God, is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race.” To see humanity so blessed is the foremost concern of those seeking to “increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men” (1 Thessalonians 3:12).

Emergency Preparedness

Brother Jerry Fisher, in his service as director of Stake Public Communications, worked with the Oregon state legislature, particularly in his professional capacity as a representative of Hewlett-Packard. Sam Bailey, in his turn, magnified the same calling, after having served as director of the O.S.U. News Bureau. Brother Bailey assisted with, among other things, the open house of the Portland Temple in August of 1989.

Both the title and the responsibilities of this calling were changed about this time, and when Diane Merten was called by President Allen Davis to be the first Public Affairs director in 1989, she focused her efforts on creating bridges of understanding between the Church and the community. And these bridges were, like most bridges, to allow movement in both directions. The Church, in other words, was to seek to understand as much as to be understood.

Among the first initiatives launched by Public Affairs involved a focus on Benton County Emergency Preparedness. Leadership by Public Affairs in this initiative resulted in the honorable recognition of it by the community, the county, and even, ultimately, the nation. With direction and supervision from both Ken Oar of the stake high council and Sister Merten, improvements in local emergency preparedness were made on a scale so impressive as to elicit the recognition of Benton County as one of the nation’s most progressive counties in emergency preparedness. Some of these innovative steps included the following:

- The inclusion of emergency preparedness guidelines in local phone directories.
- Classes open to the community, for which members of the stake would serve as instructors, on the basics of emergency preparedness, including food storage, emergency preparedness kits and earthquake response preparation.
- The implementation of Corvallis Stake emergency response plans in all wards in the stake.



Peggy Peirson, Emergency Services Coordinator for Benton County, teaches a class on preparedness at a Stake Relief Society Women’s Conference (2006).

- Certification, after extensive training, of the Corvallis Stake Center as a Red Cross emergency shelter during the summer of 1995 (the stake center did, in fact, serve precisely this function during February 1996, helping hundreds of flood victims, with the aid of hundreds of Corvallis Stake members, who were involved in taking care of all aspects of the shelter during this disaster).

Owing to the success of these efforts in emergency preparedness, Sister Merten was invited to attend, and to participate in, national councils on emergency preparedness.

Community Service Projects

Corvallis Stake Public Affairs succeeded, also, in securing grants from the Church for the following community projects:

- A donation to St. Mary's Catholic Church to help upgrade their Stone Soup Kitchen.
- A contribution to Benton County's "Yes for Kids," which funded the publication of their first report.
- A donation for Community Outreach, which paid for some of the furnishings at their new location on 865 Northwest Reiman Avenue in Corvallis.

The significant role played by the Church in each of these projects, as well as the public service and leadership given by it during times of disaster, helped to establish a spirit of mutual good will between the stake and the community.

Of great significance to the community has been the Community Crèche (now known as the Nativity Festival) held in Corvallis, beginning in 1994. Averil Seeley, as the first Crèche Exhibit Director, learned to create a festive, yet reverent, setting for the Christmas holiday season, and each succeeding director has done likewise with her own distinctive touch. The Nativity Festival remains, to this day, one of the most popular and effective avenues to communicating the glad message of Christmas, and to affirm the Church's status as an organization of Christians devoted to loving and serving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. In 2012 alone, over 840 crèches were displayed, many by those who are not members of the Church, and the festival attracted about 4,015 visitors.

Religious Activities

Other initiatives by the Stake Public Affairs Council have enabled others in the community to partake in a measure of the spirit and joy of Church membership. These have included:

- A Community Day of Fasting and Sharing for Corvallis associated with the Thanksgiving season, which was held for several years. For this event, community members were invited to fast the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving, and then donate the money thus saved either to Stone Soup at the Catholic Church or to the Community Services Consortium, which played a significant role in community holiday food drives. Often, meetings of the Corvallis City Council would be attended near the end of October, or in early November, with a view to requesting that the mayor declare the Sunday before Thanksgiving a Community Day of Fasting and Sharing. For a number of years, Mayor Helen Berg made the official proclamation, even paying the Gazette-Times newspaper to publish the proclamation. Several city officials offered personal checks in token of their intention to participate. Thousands of dollars were raised in this fashion over the years that this remained a practice of Public Affairs.
- Several Da Vinci Days Festivals that included exhibits on Family History, food storage and emergency preparedness sponsored by the stake. The very first year during which the stake participated in Da Vinci Days, members serving as volunteers were at the beck and call of the Da Vinci Days staff, even to the point of being required to clean up Central Park each evening after the festivities. For the next few years following, participation by the stake was around genealogy and family history, with computers and

stations set up in the O.S.U. Memorial Union one year, in one of the chemistry auditoriums another year, and probably the biggest and best of the family history displays, featuring interactive participation, set up for use in the downtown library.

- The Benton County Fair providing venue for a Family History exhibit for a couple of years.
- Several Genealogy Workshops being open to the community, with abundant non-member participation.
- The Community Memorial Day Celebration held for many years at Crystal Lake Cemetery, where Sister Merten would place a wreath representing the Stake, along with many other organizations in the community, at the foot of the statue marking the end of the Civil War and the recognition of fallen American soldiers. This celebration continues to be observed, though Public Affairs is no longer involved as before.

Teacher Appreciation Night

One of the most successful community outreach activities has been the Teacher Appreciation Night, originally conceived and chaired by Tom Sherry, who is himself a teacher by profession, during his time on the Public Affairs Council. This occasion provides opportunity for Church members to nominate and publicly recognize the teachers who have touched their lives for good. Recognition was given, depending on the year, either to elementary school teachers or to teachers of middle or high school.

The first four of these events were personally organized, and the logistics of them handled, by Brother Sherry. The Corvallis and Philomath wards held a Teacher Appreciation Night in the Stake Center while Newport and Waldport organized the same event to recognize teachers for the coastal communities. All participants in these programs were stake youth, whose nominations and comments were published for all to read. The teacher to receive the most nominations was invited to give a talk on behalf of the teachers being honored that year. The first year, more than 30 teachers were recognized from the Corvallis and Philomath school districts.

Refreshments were always available at the end of the event to allow teachers and their families to interact in the cultural hall. Comments from teachers were universally positive in tone, with many expressing how touched they were by the experience, and saying that they had not previously been recognized in such a positive manner during their career.

The event was so well received that it has become a tradition within the stake. In following years, Eldon Olsen organized one Teacher Appreciation Night, and Courtney Campbell organized two. One year more than 50 teachers were recognized in Corvallis/Philomath school districts. Newport and Waldport also had similarly successful impact on their communities.

Stake Day of Service

On September 14, 2013, a special Stake Day of Service was devoted to worthy projects of benefit to the several communities in which members of the stake reside. Under supervision of the Stake Public Affairs Council, 300 people from Corvallis, Philomath, and the College Hill Wards set about filling various work assignments at Avery Park, beginning at 8:00 a.m. The park's rose garden, for example, was weeded, and over 200 rose bushes deadheaded. Deadheading work was also successfully carried out in the Rhododendron garden at the south end of the park, and the pathways there cleared of debris. An entirely new path was created for the horseshoe area, entailing, among other tasks, the removal of the ivy and blackberry bushes from the vicinity. Trees in Maple Grove, along Mary's River, were pruned. Over several play areas, 30 cubic yards of "hog fuel" (wood shavings) was spread. College Hill Ward members attended to the refinishing of park benches.

In Waldport, branch members participated in a beach cleanup in range extending from the Waldport Bridge to the Sea Wall. The State Park staff were appreciative of the work accomplished, and local residents walking

along the beach at the time also voiced appreciation.

And in Newport, the Day of Service was devoted to supporting local teachers. Throughout the five preceding weeks, priesthood brethren collected school supplies specifically for area teachers. As schools in Newport had been cutting back on expenditures for supplies, resulting in many teachers having to purchase their own to provide for their classes, the intent of the Newport Ward was to assist in the meeting of those needs, which would, in turn, contribute to the education of local youth and children, thus proving a boon to the entire community.

Among the numerous items collected in Newport were 76 reams of paper, 155 notebooks, 50 packages of filler paper, 105 folders, 27 binders, 38 pencil boxes, 48 bottles of glue, 66 markers, 424 pens, 264 pencils, 700 index cards, and 10 backpacks.

Public Presence of Stake Members Increases

Public Affairs has created awareness of opportunities for church members to serve the public in various capacities, including public office. It has been partly because of this influence that Corvallis Stake presidents have encouraged members to serve in public office by reducing their church responsibilities.

The stake was very much in the community spotlight just after the tragedy of the Brooke Wilberger kidnapping struck. Many sensitive interviews with church leaders and family members helped our community cooperate in the massive rescue searches, and then the months of tedious and agonizing follow-up activities. Church members were among the first to begin searching for Brooke. For the duration of the active search, they prepared meals for the extended Wilberger family and those who were on organized searches, staffed phone banks, and made posters, buttons and ribbons to publicize that Brooke was missing.

The utilization of media has significantly enhanced the approach of Public Affairs to building relationships with people of prominence and influence in our communities. New ways of working with social media are even now being explored, and the television and print news media formats are used as often as possible to inform the public of the work of our stake. There have been many outstanding news articles on Latter-day Saint service projects, our family history library, and such cultural events as our plays and the Handcart Trek.

Another project involving the local media came about when Public Affairs met with Reverend John Dennis of the First Presbyterian Church, who then joined Public Affairs in meeting with the City Editor of the Gazette-Times to ask that reports on Easter in the newspaper include greater and more substantive content than news about Easter egg-rolling activities and evocations of the Springtime. Both Public Affairs and the Reverend contested what was then the view of City Editor, Barbara Curtin, who had said that the Gazette-Times was giving some serious thought to doing away with any religious coverage, due to a perceived lack of community interest.

A decision was reached that, for a few days following the meeting, the newspaper would include, on its front page, a general invitation for community members to submit their own written feelings about the significance of Easter, and what it means to them. The editors were surprised at the sheer volume of responses submitted, which, when reproduced in print, filled two and a half pages of the newspaper. The Gazette-Times continues to maintain its Religion section, and each week gives some coverage to religious events and holidays.

Members of Good Report

In addition to the coordinated public activities officially undertaken by stakes and wards, it is well that members of the Church, without compromising God's holy standard, come to "have a good report of them which are without; lest [they] fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (1 Timothy 3:7). And many a member of the Corvallis Stake has obtained such a good report. Space will not permit a full account of the rich and varied output of so rich and varied a membership as is found in the stake, but a few examples are here given:

Sister Ileen Barlow passed through much affliction in her life, and the refining fire of adversity, for her, included the loss of a daughter to spinal meningitis, her own battle with cancer, and the loss of a husband who himself became stricken with cancer. Added to this, a most literal fire proved a trial in her life when a conflagration broke out in, and ultimately consumed, the Barlow house. And yet, through each of these trials in succession, Ileen, like so many men and women in the Corvallis Stake, pressed dauntlessly forward, forgetting herself in the service of others. Finally, in 2007, she was named the Oregon Mother of the Year, and later that same year was named the American Mother of the Year.

A saintly woman can, and ought to be, as it is written: “Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.” (1 Timothy 5:10)

In this, none who know her will doubt that Ileen Barlow has excelled.

Former Corvallis Stake President Allen Davis is another who has truly “*obtained a good report.*” (Hebrews 11:2) He, in fact, obtained a good news report for his innovative contributions to the science of hydraulics, as printed in the April 14, 2008, edition of the *Gazette-Times* as follows:

Allen Davis, a 36-year employee of CH2M Hill, has been selected by the Environmental Water Resources Institute (EWRI) to receive the 2008 Hydraulic Structures Medal. The award is one of the top two awards granted to hydraulic engineers annually, worldwide.

Davis was recognized by EWRI for being an industry leader in hydraulics and the focal point of hydraulic analysis at CH2M Hill. The award committee particularly noted his development of computer programs for the design, operation and analysis of water distribution systems, wastewater collection systems, water and wastewater treatment, and hydraulic transients. Davis will be presented the award May 14 at the EWRI Annual Congress.

Davis is a senior hydraulic engineer and principal technologist with CH2M Hill's Water Business Group in Corvallis.

In 2007 Dr. Davis received CH2M Hill's Lifetime Achievement Award for “outstanding leadership in developing and applying innovative hydraulics engineering solutions to projects worldwide.”

Finally, Brother Greg Merten merits recognition and inclusion in this all-too-brief list, as one who was named Business Person of the Year in 2000 by the Corvallis Benton County Chamber of Commerce for his exceptional leadership skills. He has also been recognized by O.S.U. as an Alumni Fellow, a member of the College of Engineering Academy of Distinguished Engineers, and a member of the university's Engineering Hall of Fame.

These and many others in the Corvallis Stake on whom such honors have been bestowed each provide an example of one whose “*name shall be had in sacred remembrance from generation to generation*” (D&C 117:12).

But as the pace of progress quickens, it remains the settled conviction of the Corvallis Stake Public Affairs Council that only “*righteousness exalteth a nation*” (Proverbs 14:34), and that to promote righteousness through inspired action and goodly conduct within our respective spheres of the community is to provide nothing less than an invitation to exaltation.

CHAPTER 26

50th Anniversary Celebration

“And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.” (Leviticus 25:10)

Much time and thought was put into planning the events for the Corvallis Stake’s 50th Year Reunion Celebration. Events like this don’t just happen. Hundreds of individuals took on responsibilities such as singing or acting in the “Promised Valley” musical production, writing a section of the Stake History, working with the City of Corvallis to arrange the use of Avery Park, splitting and trimming the wooden stakes for the salmon bake, creating a Facebook page on the celebration, sending out invitations to community members, coordinating the thousands of emails from individuals around the U.S. who said they were coming, creating a 50th Anniversary logo, and so on. Many hands worked together to create a celebration worthy of the 50 years that had transpired in the Corvallis Stake.



Promised Valley cast gathered at Avery Park

It was decided early on that it would be a great idea to hold a traditional salmon bake at Avery Park. This event was in honor of the many annual salmon bakes put on in the past, over the course of 20 consecutive years, at the park. Cooking on wooden stakes in the style of the Native Americans was a memory for many members of the Corvallis Stake.



Salmon bake chefs Steve and Terri Harper



Brother Scott Reese addresses the salmon bake crowd at Avery Park



Servers at the 50th Anniversary salmon bake

The gathering proved a great success, and the August 10, 2013, edition of the Gazette-Times newspaper gave a report of it which read, in part, as follows:

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the stake, more than 1,500 people gathered July 27 at Avery Park for a traditional Native American salmon bake chaired by John and Myrna Bell. The salmon was baked on sticks, a technique used in remembrance of several events held in the '60s, '70s and '80s by members of the local LDS congregation.

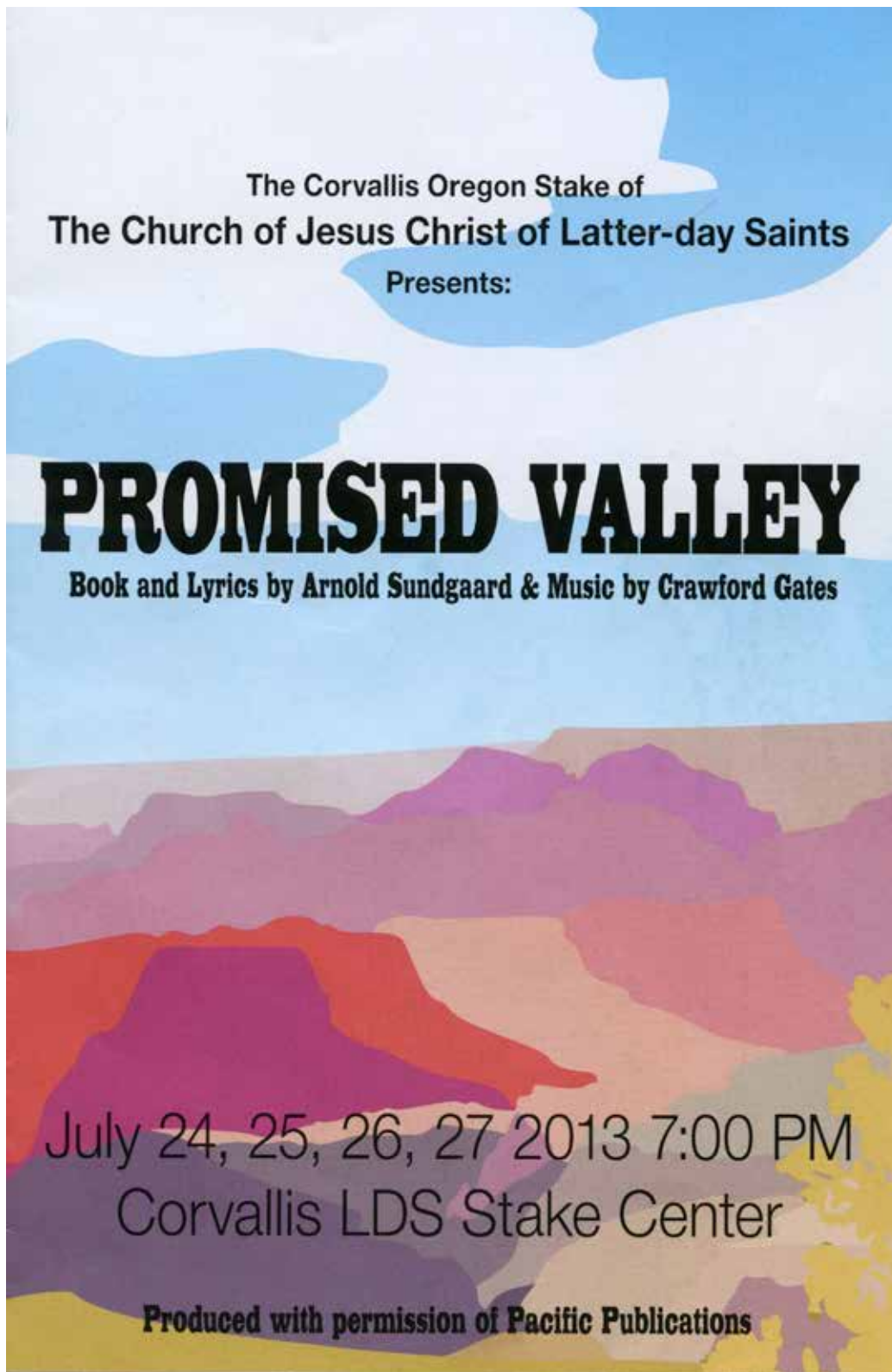
The event featured a picnic atmosphere, and members of the cast of "Promised Valley" performed musical numbers from show. Stake members gave performances of the musical last month as another anniversary event. The play portrays the history of Mormon settlers arriving in Utah.

Several former Corvallis residents traveled from other states to attend the celebration. All nine children of Dale and Mary Olive Maddox attended, although their parents are deceased and the children live outside Oregon...

Today, the approximately 3,200 members of the Corvallis Stake worship in eight congregations in Corvallis, Philomath, Newport and Waldport. Craig Cole is president of the Corvallis Stake.

The "Promised Valley" musical had been produced in the stake decades ago. It was fitting that this beloved musical and its characters take the stage once again in Corvallis. One of the main adult leads in the 2013 version of the musical, Duane Cochran, had actually played the role of a young boy in the earlier production.

Since the organization of the church, the Prophet and other church leaders have always encouraged the writing of histories. Even in the days of the Romans, the importance of recording history was valued. Cicero



Cover of the program for the 2013 production of Promised Valley

(106 BC-47 BC), a Roman statesman, stated: "History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illuminates reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life, and brings us tidings of antiquity." Thus, it was decided that a history of the Corvallis Stake would be written and published into a book, as well as be offered in an online format.

With the publication of that book came a record of recognition listing just a few of the many who contributed to this 50th celebration of the creation of the Corvallis Oregon Stake.

Corvallis Stake 50th Year Reunion Committee

John Bell, Chair

Myrna Bell

Bob Babbel

Michelle Babbel

David Bird

Sherri Bird

Diane Frischknecht Merten

Lee Ritzman

Sterling Russell

Lori Davis Moss

Wendy Larsen Frome

David Tingey

Doris V. Bailey

Boyd Nash

Stake Public Relations Committee

Ken Oar, Chair

Alice Henderson Rampton

Gary Moss

Kevin Nielsen

Jason Young

Peggy Harward Glasmann

Stake History Book Committee

Kevin Taylor

Diane Frischknecht Merten

Jean Rampton Nelson

Promised Valley Musical Production Staff

Production Supervisor: Marie Campbell

Director: Cherie Gullerud

Stage Manager/Tech Director:	Abri Lochner
Assistant Stage Manager:	Rachael Nelson
Costume Lead:	Laura Nash
Costume Mistress:	Kathleen Hinds
Vocal Director:	Christina Clark
Music Director:	Cody Buscher
Choreographer:	Janet Reinholt
Set and Publicity Design:	Emily Lacy-Nichols
Publicity:	Devon Parmenter
Set Builders:	Rachael Nelson and Harry Reich
Props:	Leilani Wills
Sound:	Eric Gullerud
Pianist:	Mickey Herrin

Promised Valley Musical Cast

Principals:

Jed Cutler	Mathew Rodgers
Celia Faraday Cutler	Jordan Uhlman
Fennelly Parsons	Duane Cochran
Sister Parsons	Kathleen Hinds
Major John Broderick	Neal Sanders
Emma Faraday	Barbara Burgess
Jamie Logan	Chad Mann
Quimby Leighton	Theron Burgess
Emmaline Willis	Julie Packard
Caleb Faraday	Larry Knight

Parsons Children:

Phillip	J.T. Rust
Sophonra	Meredith McCullough
Lizzie	Cassidy Lewis

Bella	Camille McCullough
Emmaline	Taylor Young
Dahlia	Rilee Young
Amos	Mason Hogg
Max	Alston Young

Male Chorus:

Zebediah Tate	Bill Nielson
Zarabel Noble	Reed Glasmann
Henry Totter	Brandon Burmeister
Robert Hyde	Leeven Taunisila
Ivan Jensen	Andrew Woods
Julius Totter	Parker Appah
Hyrum Willis	Adam Gibbs
Nathaniel Rawson	MacInlay Ross

Battalion:

Major John Broderick	Neal Sanders
Jed Cutler	Mathew Rodgers
Jamie Logan	Chad Mann
Ivan Jensen	Andrew Woods
Hyrum Willis	Adam Gibbs
Phillip Parsons	J.T. Rust
Henry Totter	Brandon Burmeister
Nathaniel Rawson	MacInlay Ross

Children's Chorus:

Wendy Cutler	Hazel Case
Charlotte Tate	Katelyn Merten
Caroline Rawson	Maia Hale
Rufus Rawson	Ender Hale
Melissa March	Elise Jones

Joseph March	Mason Jones
Willy March	Sammy Jones
Sophonria Parsons	Meredith McCullough
Lizzie Parsons	Cassidy Lewis
Bella Parsons	Camille McCullough
Emmaline Parsons	Taylor Young
Dahlia Parsons	Rilee Young
Amos Parsons	Mason Hogg
Max Parsons	Alston Young

Female Chorus:

Violet Austen	Hattie Woods
Angela Cutler	Heather Case
Delphinia Tate	Chris Beeton
Miriam Hyde	Christina Clark
Jerusha Logan	Shann Mann
Arabella Rawson	Suzanne Woods
Meg Totter	Micah Burmeister
Marianna March	Lori Gibbs
Rachel Kimball	Cathy Leishman
Barta Englebrook	Kimberly Fausett
Annie Lichfield	LaNor Wilhelm
Alice Roberts	Brittany Morford
Cynthia Willis	Bethany Nielson
Matilda Till	Lizzie Gullerud

Dancers:

Anika Fuller	Brittany Shreeve
Ivan Jensen	Andrew Woods

The decision was made, also, to have copies of this Corvallis Oregon Stake history sent to the following places:

Oregon State University Archives

Benton County Historical Museum

Corvallis - Benton County Public Library

Philomath Public Library

Newport Library

City of Corvallis

Church History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Lord has wrought a great work upon this northwest portion of His vineyard since the arrival of His first missionaries to the region over 150 years ago, and in approaching every occasion of anniversary we look forward to looking back. The history here published, being in large part a collection of recollections from “members who remember,” nevertheless represents but a minute fraction of the many and various acts performed by the myriad of saints, living and dead, who have served in this area both before and after the establishment of the Corvallis Oregon Stake, so that it must be admitted that “this book cannot contain even a hundredth part of what was done among so many people” (3 Nephi 5:8). And in all of our anniversary celebrations, the unspoken, yet unmistakable, message is that “the LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.” (Psalms 126:3)

Postscript

This book needs a postscript in order to bring into sharper focus what will serve, for the spiritually-minded, as a type not only of how the operations of the Holy Spirit guide souls into the Corvallis Oregon Stake, but also of how that selfsame influence brings to the continued remembrance of such souls those sweet and sacred experiences enjoyed here in the stake. The case here under consideration actually began about 800 miles from Corvallis, in Salt Lake City.

Speaking at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City during the Fall General Conference of 1989, President Gordon B. Hinckley referred to:

...the building of the [Salt Lake] temple, which today stands a few feet east of here, in fulfillment of the words of Isaiah:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” (Isaiah 2:2-3.)

Here the principle of prophetic dualism of necessity claims our attention. It was by this principle that, for instance, the passage in Isaiah 6:9-10, which had immediate and original application to those “people” unto whom the prophet Isaiah personally ministered, could nonetheless be applied centuries later by the Savior Himself to the multitude gathered on a sea shore to hear Him (Matthew 13:14-15), and later still be applied by the apostle Paul to certain unbelievers at Rome (Acts 28:25-27). And it is according to this same principle that the prophecy recorded in Isaiah 2:2-3 has been applied by the Lord’s inspired servants to the great Salt Lake Temple.

It was at this very “house of the God of Jacob” in Salt Lake City that an experience of pivotal significance occurred for a young man which would ultimately lead him into the Church, and particularly into the Corvallis Oregon Stake. This young man, Eric Hyun Sung by name, recounts his own experience thus:

I got to know about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day-Saints on a family trip. We visited Salt Lake City on our way to Grand Canyon, by chance. As my family looked around the Temple Square, I had a good feeling about the people and the mood there, but nothing specific. Then, since I left my address in the visitors’ book at the end of tour there, I was able to meet missionaries in Corvallis when I came back home; Elder Mackey and Elder Peart.

As David O. McKay once wrote, “Some men would call it chance. We call it Providence.” Being thus led to Temple Square, and having partaken of the good feeling and mood there, Eric found that the interest enkindled in him by the experience grew to an enlivening glow as he further pursued his investigations in meeting with both full-time missionaries and other Church members:

The thing that attracted me to the Church the most was the love and kindness that I felt from the members of the Church. Through their love and kindness, I became sure that the LDS Church members are not people who are just lip-servers (like some churches I’ve been to), but people who act the gospel and the commandments out. The more I went to the church, the more I was sure about that thought. So I decided to join the Church, because I wanted to live as a good Christian like them.

Nevertheless, Joseph Fielding McConkie has rightly observed how “as the night follows the day, so opposition follows truth.” It was ever thus. And so it proved to be for the young Eric, as he recalls:

However, I faced some difficulties as I was willing to go to church every week, to get baptized, to take

seminary classes, etc. Since my parents are Catholic, they were against my will sometimes. Nevertheless, with help from brothers and sisters in the Church, and sincere, constant prayers, I was able to fulfill my will.

And when he had thus, through the importunate application of enduring Christian faith, procured the favor of Heaven, he continued to rejoice in the fellowship of the saints which he found in the Corvallis 3rd Ward, as well as in the Corvallis Oregon Stake as a whole. Time has not diminished the impact felt from the experiences he enjoyed when first he had become a member:

I often remind myself of the gospel that I learned, when I was in Corvallis 3rd Ward. I pray about how grateful I am for 3rd ward members who changed my life, taught me the gospel, and taught me why I live, and what I should do in my life, 3rd ward will always be my spiritual hometown.

The Corvallis Oregon Stake is comprised of seven wards and one branch, and as President Boyd K. Packer has said:

Actually the Church is no bigger than a ward...

No matter if the Church grows to be a hundred million (as it surely will!), it will still be no bigger than a ward. Everything needed for our redemption, save for the temple, is centered there—and temples now come ever closer to all of us.

Each ward may thus be truly called, in the words of Eric Sung, a “spiritual hometown.” In the stake are many meetinghouses, to which the saints are called to gather for diverse purposes, but which, in any event, stand always as monuments to the living God and His Son Jesus Christ, and “how beautiful are they to the eyes of them who there came to the knowledge of their Redeemer” (Mosiah 18:30). It is our united, fervent, and continual prayer that thousands more may likewise come to find their home here.



Eric Hyun Sung is seated in the chair. The rest are as follows: Upper left is Alexae Merten, upper right is Christian Stevens, lower left is Cassandra Hollon, lower center is Johnny Ballantyne, and lower right is Aspen Cotterell.

APPENDIX I

Lists of Stake Officers: 1963-Present

Stake Presidencies

November 3, 1963: Corvallis Oregon Stake organized under the direction of Elders Thomas S. Monson and Howard W. Hunter of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

1963-1965 Hugh F. Webb, President

Ray W. Hardman, counselor

Samuel H. Bailey, counselor

Kenneth Hollister, William Thomas, and LaVerne Shimonek,
clerks

1965-1978 Samuel H. Bailey, President

Ray W. Hardman, counselor

Henry H. Rampton, counselor, and then Bryant C. Behrmann,
counselor

1978-1987 Richard J. Arnold, President

Vernon L. Worthen, counselor, then Paul D. Harding, counselor

John F. Bell, counselor

1987-1996 Allen L. Davis, President

Dale N. Moss, counselor

Kay H. Salmon, counselor, then Grant A. Worth, counselor

1996-2005 David J. Blake, President

Kenneth P. Oar, counselor

Brent K. Boyter, counselor

2005-2013 Wade L. Haslam, President

Thomas E. Sherry, counselor, then Kevin D. Nielsen, counselor

Michael A. Castellano, counselor

2013-present Craig R. Cole, President

Kevin D. Nielsen, counselor

Mark L. Freeman, counselor

Stake Relief Society Presidencies

1963-1973 Sigrid H. Persons, President

Lucile T. Hardman, counselor, then Farris Jolley, counselor

Maxine J. Lee, counselor, then Louise V. Hollister, counselor

Olive H. Layton, secretary/treasurer, then Marie R. Ashdown,
followed by Elizabeth T. Wilson

1973-1980 Diane B. Patton, President

Anita Brooks, counselor, then Georgia M. Lane, counselor

Gayle Wilkes, counselor, then Diane H. Masker, counselor

Elizabeth T. Wilson, secretary/treasurer, then EmmaDell
Blanch, secretary/treasurer

1980-1984 Elizabeth “Betty” T. Wilson, President

Maureen Eburne, counselor

F. Lanice Limehouse, counselor

Linda Tucker, secretary/treasurer

1984-1990 Starley Smith, President

Averil S. Seely, counselor

Jan W. Baumgartner, counselor

Kathleen Salmon, secretary/treasurer

1990-1995 Arlene Holyoak, President

Marjean Moore, counselor, then Susan Williams, counselor

Luana Tekulve, counselor

Laura Dalton, secretary/treasurer, then Velda Holseth,

secretary/treasurer

1995-2000 Averil S. Seely, President

Laurel Maughan, counselor

Jackie Myrold, counselor, then Connie Roat (1998), counselor,
followed by Joanne Harding (2000), counselor

Velda Holseth, secretary/treasurer, then Donna Vitkauskas
(1998), secretary/treasurer

2000-2005 Yvonne Kunz, President

Joanne Harding, counselor, then Ada Beth Winder, counselor

Kay Graham, counselor, then Janell Watson, counselor

RaeNee Russell, secretary/treasurer

2005-2011 Alice H. Rampton, President

Heidi Neuffer, counselor

Karen Taylor, counselor

No secretary called (e-mail used)

2011-2012 Susan Williams, President

Ileen Barlow, counselor

Laurie R. Wood, counselor

2012-2013 Lisa Freeman, President

Luana Tekulve, counselor

Laurie R. Wood, counselor

Phyllis Ross, secretary

2013-present Karen Hein –President

Luana Tekulve, counselor

Laurie Wood, counselor

Phyllis Ross, secretary

Stake Young Men Presidents

Sterling A. Russell

Paul H. Krumperman

Weston F. Killpack

Kay H. Salmon

Charles R. Nelson

John B. Limehouse

Wayne H. Glenn

Don E. Hale

David J. Blake

Steven A. Anderson

Robert W. Peterson

Robert W. Babbel

W. Kory Jackson

Richard Hollon, Jr.

Donald W. Pennington

Mark L. Freeman

Brian N. Hanna (current)

Stake Young Women Presidents

Florence Webb Goulding

Margaret B. Reese

Elizabeth “Libby” Nielson

Ione H. Banks

Joanne Thomas

Judy Calder

Ruth Fisher

Sherri Bird

Judy Barker

Alicia Armstrong

Kim Costa

Aileen Willes

Luana Tekulve

Michelle Babbel

Julie Strahl

Bonnie Martin

JanaLee Russell Romrell

Stake Primary Presidents

Utahna McKnight

Marjean D. Moore

Willie Elder

Wyona Nesbitt

Janeil F. Olsen

Dawnell H. Tingey

Tena Cornelius

Jackie K. Calton

Susan Williams

Robin Malaska

Connie Ehninger

Angela R. Crystal

Gina Marchant

Suzanne Woods (current)

Corvallis Oregon Stake Patriarchs

1963-1999 Grant E. Blanch

1978-2009 Samuel H. Bailey

2007-current Kenneth R. Larson

Corvallis Oregon Stake High Councilors (in alphabetical order)

Robert P. Adams

Steven A. Anderson

Richard J. Arnold

Paul S. Ashdown

Benjamin J. Ballard

Jerry R. Barker

Reed E. Barker

Elwood H. Barlow

Curt R. Baumgartner

Bryant C. Behrmann

John F. Bell

David N. Bird

David J. Blake

Grant E. Blanch

Ivan M. Burnett

Rex C. Bush

Dwight J. Bushnell

Clarence A. Calder

Gregory F. Carlson

Michael A. Castellano
Lowell R. Chandler
J. Mark Christensen
Craig R. Cole
Timothy W. Cornelius
Robin J. Costa
Brian A. Croft
Robert F. Crow
Jeremy B. Crystal
Tom Darnall
Allen L. Davis
Lorin R. Davis
Paul A. Davis
Dale S. Dewey
Ronald F. DeYoung
Robert L. Dudley
Richard L. Elliott
Mark P. Elton
David L. Erickson
Jerry D. Fisher
Arthur L. Flower
Daren L. Forrest
Lloyd M. Frazier
Mark L. Freeman
William D. Fryer
Richard K. Gibbs
Terry Gillies
Lonny K. George
Joseph Reed Glasmann
Wayne H. Glenn
Manrique Gonzalez

Wesley P. Goulding
Jack E. Gourley
Fred R. Gowans
George H. Greenfield
Kevin D. Gunnell
Don E. Hale
Walter J. Hales
Brian N. Hanna
Michael S. Harmon
Loyal G. Harper
Steven L. Harper
John A. Hart
William S. Hartsell IV
Wade L. Haslam
S. Craig Heninger
Virgil C. Hodges
Kenneth W. Hollister
Richard Hollon, Jr.
Mark W. Hornibrook
Rosel H. Hunter
Edwin R. Ivey
Larry A. Jackson
W. Kory Jackson
Paul L. Jennison
Varon Jensen
J. Van Johnson
James E. Jurgens
Randy T. Killen
Weston F. Killpack
Reed L. King
Gene E. Klingler

Paul H. Krumperman
Richard L. Lantz
Gary C. Lear
W. Orvid Lee
W. Rulon Lee
Steven C. Leishman
John B. Limehouse
Jeffrey M. Lewis
William O. Lewis
Dale L. Maddox
W. Terry Malaska
Vaughn D. Marchant
Richard B. Marston
J. Lee Mayne
Dylan A. McEntee
J. Craig McFarlane
H. Neil McKnight
Gregory P. Merten
Jeffory M. Merten
David J. Miller
S. LeRoy Mitton
Larry W. Moore
Weston H. Morrill
Dale N. Moss
Gary D. Moss
Lyman Moyle
Boyd D. Nash
Caleb Nelson
Charles R. Nelson
Jared W. Nelson
Don O. Nesbitt

Lyman J. Nielson
Michael S. Neuffer
W. Peter Nuffer
Warren M. Nunn, Jr.
Blain L. Nyberg
Peter A. Nyberg
Kenneth P. Oar
Eldon D. Olsen
Elbert R. Palmer
James R. Parker
Paul C. Parkinson
James F. Patton
Nephi M. Patton
Donald W. Pennington
Gregory M. Perry
Robert O. Persons
Henry H. Rampton
Mark E. Rampton
Cecil V. Reeser
Guy B. Rencher II
Lee R. Ritzman
L. Keith Robison
Craig N. Romrell
Lindsay C. Ross
Dale J. Romrell
Sterling A. Russell
Kay H. Salmon
Keith L. Sellers
Thomas E. Sherry
Bill A. Smathers
John R. Smith

Wayne L. Suggs
Charles P. Swan
Rudolph G. Tapia
Ralph E. Taylor
Gary R. Templeman
Gary L. Thueson
David T. Tingey
Marvin R. Vernon
Michael R. Vitkauskas
Dale A. Weber
Gary S. Weder
Thomas A. Welter
Adrian L. Wilcox
David A. Williams
Max B. Williams
Clark S. Willes
Ray Winn
Henry B. Wolthuis
Christopher K. Wood
J. Charles Woods
Paul R. Woods
Vernon L. Worthen
Eugene Young
Jason Young
Chris E. Zahlmann
Matthew Zollinger
William A. Zollinger

APPENDIX II

Lists of Ward and Branch Officers

Oregon City Branch (organized 1857)

Joseph Tracy, Branch President

Eugene Branch (organized 1857)

Harrison Keyes, Branch President

Salem Branch (organized September 24, 1871)

John F. Adams, Branch President

Clark Rodgers, clerk

Baker City Branch (organized July 23, 1893)

(Organized by Elder Franklin D. Richards)

John Stoddard, Branch President

Jedediah Morgan, counselor

Grant Geddes, counselor

Northwestern States Mission (organized July 29, 1897)

1897 Oneida (Idaho) Stake President, George C. Parkinson, First Mission President

July 12, 1898 Franklin S. Bramwell, Mission President, headquartered in Baker City until 1902.

(July 9, 1901 Union Stake, the first stake in the Northwestern States Mission, organized.)

1902-1909 Nephi Pratt, Mission President, now headquartered in Portland.

1909-1919 Melvin J. Ballard

1919-1923 Heber Iverson

1923-1927 Brigham S. Young

1927-1934 William R. Slone

1934-1937 Joseph Quincey

1937-1940 Preston Nibley

1940-1942 Nicholas G. Smith

1942-1944 Delsa S. Bennion

1944-1947 Samuel E. Bringhurst

1947-1950 Joel Richards

1950-1955 James A. McMurrin

(1951, Corvallis becomes a ward, and also part of the new Willamette Stake.)

1955-1960 Douglas H. Driggs

1960 Franklin D. Richards

1960-1964 Don C. Wood

(November 3, 1963 Corvallis Stake officially organized out of the Salem Stake, which had been organized in 1961.)

Salem

(December 30, 1900 Salem Conference organized within Northwestern States Mission.)

Harold Neely, Presiding Elder

(April 21, 1928 Salem Branch organized under direction of President Harding of Northwestern States Mission.)

Henry Downs, Branch President

1929 Grover Greaves, Branch President (moved)

1929 William Mitchel, Branch President

John Feldstrom, counselor

1934 A. O. Larsen, Branch President

1937 Francis Wilhelm, Branch President

1938 Arthur C. Hawkins, Branch President

Salem Ward (organized 1938)

(June 26, 1938 Salem Ward organized, including Detroit, Silverton, Woodburn, Brooks, Corvallis, Independence, and Monmouth.)

Arthur C. Hawkins, Bishop

Don C. Wall, Bishop

Fay W. Lunday, counselor

Carl F. Baker, counselor

(September 9, 1951 Salem building dedicated under direction of Presiding Bishop LeGrand Richards, and ward moved to Willamette Stake.)

John L. Salisbury, Bishop

J. Arthur Lee, clerk

1955-1960 William T. Guerts, Bishop

Salem First Ward (organized 1960)

1960-1964 Keith Harris, Bishop

Salem Second Ward (organized 1960)

1960-1961 William T. Geurts, Bishop

1961-1962 Charles K. Foulger, Bishop

1962-1963 George Mitton, Bishop

(1963 Corvallis becomes a separate stake from Salem.)

Dallas Branch (organized 1951)

1951-1955 Malcolm C. Nichols, Branch President

Bob Stever, counselor

Leland Jones, counselor

1955-1961

Leland Jones, Branch President

Corvallis (belonging to Northwestern States Mission)

1928 H.V. Halverson, Presiding Elder

(Disbanded)

Corvallis (again belonging to Northwestern States Mission)

1937 Herman L. Thomas, Presiding Elder

Sunday School

Herman L. Thomas, superintendent

Denis Belnap, assistant

Ken Blacker, assistant

Mauretta Thomas, Secretary, chorister, and class instructor

Relief Society

February-June 1939 Bessie G. Ballard, Relief Society President

1939-1942 Mildred Bennion, Relief Society President

Corvallis Branch (organized 1941)

(1941 Corvallis Branch organized under the direction of Northwestern States Mission President Nicholas G. Smith.)

1941 Herman L. Thomas, Branch President

Lew Smith, counselor

Golden Stoker, counselor

1942 Hugh F. Webb, Branch President

Ernest O. Anderson, counselor

Lynn K. Wood, counselor

Nettie Belnap, Relief Society President (1942-1945)

1943 Henry H. Rampton, Branch President

Max B. Williams, counselor

Samuel H. Bailey, counselor

Nettie Belnap, Relief Society President (1942-1945)

Vera Ballard, Relief Society President (1946-1947)

Verna Goulding, Relief Society President (1947-1949)

Mary Williams, Relief Society President (1949-1950)

Hazel Hunter, Relief Society President (1950-1952)

Corvallis Ward (organized 1951)

(December 3, 1951 Corvallis Ward part of the newly organized Willamette Stake under direction of Elder ElRay L. Christiansen.)

1951-1954 Henry H. Rampton, Bishop

Max B. Williams, counselor

Glen T. Nelson, counselor, then Samuel H. Bailey, counselor (August 1952)

Hazel Hunter, Relief Society President (1950-1952)

EmmaDell H. Blanch, Relief Society President (1952-1953)

Lucile Hardman, Relief Society President (1953-1956)

1954-1961 N. Stanley Fagg, Bishop

Samuel H. Bailey, counselor

James W. Johnson, counselor

Benjamin J. Ballard and James Grange, clerks

Lucile Hardman, Relief Society President (1953-1956)

Vera Ballard, Relief Society President (1956-1957)

Marie Hayes, Relief Society President (1957-1959)

Velma Grange, Relief Society President (May-Aug 1961)

(1961 Corvallis Ward joins newly organized Salem Oregon Stake.)

1961-1963 Samuel H. Bailey, Bishop

Dale L. Maddox, counselor

Lloyd M. Frazier, counselor

Leo D. Hall, Paul B. Larsen, and William S. Thomas, clerks; Brothers Hall and Larsen were later replaced by Benjamin J. Ballard and James Grange

Roberta Johnson, Relief Society President (1961-1963)

Corvallis First Ward (organized 1963)

1963-1971 Max B. Williams, Bishop

Lloyd M. Frazier, counselor

LaVar Sorenson, counselor

1971-1978 Paul H. Krumperman, Bishop

1978-1982 Kenneth L. Larson, Bishop

1982-1987 Charles R. Nelson, Bishop

1987-1993 Lorin R. Davis, Bishop

1993-1997 Jerry D. Fisher, Bishop

1997-2002 David T. Tingey, Bishop

2002-2007 Robin J. Costa, Bishop

2007-2011 Kevin D. Nielsen, Bishop

2011-present Michael D. Moore, Bishop

Corvallis Second Ward (organized 1963)

1963-1965 W. Peter Nuffer, Bishop

Dale L. Maddox, counselor

Dean T. Atwood, counselor

1965-1970 Ralph E. Taylor, Bishop

1970-1975 Boyd D. Nash, Bishop

1975-1978 Richard J. Arnold, Bishop

1978-1984 Kay H. Salmon, Bishop

1984-1986 Dale N. Moss, Bishop

1986-1988 Garth V. Hall, Bishop

1988-1991 Paul D. Harding, Bishop

1991-1997 Michael A. Castellano, Bishop

1997-2001 Chris E. Zahlmann, Bishop

2001-2003 Brad Folsom, Bishop

2003-2009 Gary D. Moss, Bishop

2009-present Gregory F. Carlson, Bishop

University Ward (organized 1963)

1963-1971 Benjamin J. Ballard, Bishop

Wallace Allred, counselor

Earl Jackson, counselor

Sheldon Keala, clerk

1971-1976 John F. Bell, Bishop

1976-1982 Sterling A. Russell, Bishop

1982-1986 Larry W. Moore, Bishop

1986-1988 Gregory P. Merten, Bishop

1988-1992 James E. Jurgens, Bishop

1992-1994 Dale E. Romrell, Bishop

University First Ward (organized 1994)

1994-1995 Dale Romrell, Bishop

1995-1998 Dale Dewey, Bishop

1998-2002 David A. Williams, Bishop

2002-2005 Richard K. Gibbs, Bishop

2005-2008 Steven L. Harper, Bishop

(**2008** College Hill Ward organized.)

University Second Ward (organized 1994)

1994-1998 Curt R. Baumgartner, Bishop

1998-2001 David N. Bird, Bishop

2001-2004 J. Reed Glasmann, Bishop

2004-2007 George H. Greenfield, Bishop

2007-2008 Eugene Young

University Third Ward (organized 2002)

2002-2005 Robert French, Bishop

(**2005** Lebanon Oregon Stake organized a Young Single Adult Ward, so University Third Ward disbanded.)

Corvallis Third Ward (organized 1978)

1978-1984 Allen L. Davis, Bishop

1984-1989 David J. Blake, Bishop

1989-1993 Don E. Hale, Bishop

1993-1998 Thomas E. Sherry, Bishop

1998-2004 Craig R. Cole, Bishop

2004-2009 Mark L. Freeman, Bishop

2009-present Richard Hollon, Jr., Bishop

Philomath Ward (organized 1982)

1982-1987 J. Craig McFarlane, Bishop

1987-1993 Clarence A. Calder, Bishop

1993-1998 Nephi M. Patton, Bishop

1998-2004 Wade L. Haslam, Bishop

2004-2008 Gary C. Lear, Bishop

2008-2013 Tim R. Brandenburg, Bishop

2013-present Richard K. Gibbs, Bishop

Corvallis Fourth Ward (organized 1991)

1991-1995 Mark E. Rampton, Bishop

1995-1996 Mark W. Hornibrook, Bishop

1996-2001 Reed E. Barker, Bishop

2001-2006 Clark S. Willes, Bishop

2006-2011 Daren L. Forrest, Bishop

2011-present Donald W. Pennington, Bishop

College Hill Ward (organized 2008)

2008 Steven L. Harper, Bishop

2008-2013 Craig R. Cole, Bishop

2013-present Michael A. Castellano, Bishop

Newport Branch (organized 1948)

1948-1952 Murray Leeper, Branch President

Joseph Baer, counselor

James Martin, counselor

Anna C. Leeper, Relief Society President (1948-1952)

Ada Martin, counselor

Mary B. Baer, counselor

1952-1954 Perry D. Sargeant, Branch President

James Martin, counselor

Larry B. Sargeant, counselor

Christine Sargeant, Relief Society President (1952-1953)

Ada Martin, counselor

Norma H. Leer, counselor

Norma Leer, Relief Society President (1953-1954)

Nellie Mae Hocken, counselor

1954-1956 Arnott B. Slough, Branch President

James K. Martin, counselor

Leonard P. Avery, counselor then Rodney E. Steen, counselor

Florence Slough, Relief Society President (1954-1955)

E. Beulah Michel, counselor, then Delcie Avery, then Nellie M. Hocken

Anona L. Fosbeck, counselor then Nellie M. Hocken then Delcie Avery

1956-1960 Rodney Ellis Steen, Branch President

Perry D. Sargeant, counselor, then Cleve Veteto, counselor, followed by Lawrence Rasmussen, counselor, and finally Gary B. Allen, counselor.

Leonard Avery, counselor, then William R. Smith, counselor, followed by Burt C. Mitchell, counselor, and finally Robert K. Wettlaufer, counselor.

Donald Higby, clerk

Frances David, Relief Society President (1955-1956)

Delcie E. Avery, counselor then Ida Bodine, counselor

Grace Smith, counselor

Norma Leer, Relief Society President (1956-1958)

Gloria S. Steen, counselor

Mary S. Wettlaufer, Relief Society President (1958-1959)

Gloria S. Steen, counselor

Berna Dee Rasmussen, counselor

Berna Dee Rasmussen, Relief Society President (1959-1960)

Mary S. Wettlaufer, counselor

Ida Bodine, counselor

1960-1961 Elder Israel Abbott, Branch President

Rodney E. Steen, counselor

Robert K. Wettlaufer, counselor, then James D. Adams, counselor

Mary S. Wettlaufer, Relief Society President (1960)

Gloria Steen, counselor

Ida Bodine, counselor

1961-1963 Wendell Burk, Branch President

James D. Adams, counselor

Kenneth Bell, counselor

Lyman Bruce, clerk

Ornetta McKay, Relief Society President (1960-1961)

Ida Bodine, counselor then Beulah Michel

Beulah Michel, counselor, then Marilyn Williams, counselor

Louise Bell, Relief Society President (1962-1963)

Nadine Adams, counselor, then Roberta Phillips, counselor, followed by Lorraine Choas, counselor.

1963 G. Kenneth Bell, Branch President

Rodney Steen, counselor

Charles Woods, counselor

Newport Ward (organized 1963)

(**November 3, 1963** Newport becomes a ward and joins the Corvallis Stake, organized under the direction of Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles.)

1963-1964 G. Kenneth Bell, Bishop

J. Charles Woods, counselor

Leonard J. Rowett, counselor

1964-1965 Merlyn R. Bodily, Bishop

George T. Elmore, counselor

J. Charles Woods, counselor

1965-1975 J. Charles Woods, Bishop

Wendell A. Burk, counselor, then Britton O. Price, counselor, followed by Arthur L. Flower, counselor, and finally Robert R. Eisler, counselor.

Leonard J. Rowett, counselor, then Gary Adair, counselor, followed by Arthur L. Flower, counselor, then Berlin Jensen, counselor, and finally George T. Elmore, counselor.

1975-1978 Edwin R. Rogers, Bishop

Robert R. Eisler, counselor

J. James Palmer, counselor, then Edgar L. Wight, counselor

1978-1983 P. Gary Matthews, Bishop

Andrew J. LaTomme, counselor, then Gary R. Stenzel, counselor, followed by Robert L. Smith, counselor, then Keith Rebo, counselor, and finally Dwight Jones, counselor.

1983-1988 Marvin R. Vernon, Bishop

1988-1989 Kristian D. Nielsen, Bishop

1989-1995 Dale A. Weber, Bishop

1995-2000 David J. Miller, Bishop

2001-2005 M. Pieter Bergshoeff, Bishop

2005-2010 Brian N. Hanna, Bishop

2010-present Vaughn D. Marchant, Bishop

Waldport Branch (organized 1980)

1980-1983 Edgar L. Wight, Branch President

Wayne P. Taysom, counselor

Henry Greenhalgh, counselor

Herman Ulbrich and Lewis J. Wyatt, clerks

Allen Guy Orchard, Elders' Quorum President

Dorothy Daniels, Relief Society President

Elaine Wight, counselor

Florence Oakland, counselor

Cheryl Orchard, secretary

Robert Taylor, Young Men President

Sharon Taylor, Young Women President

Audrey Yakes, Primary President

Loran Wyatt, counselor

Carmen Taysom, meetinghouse librarian

1983 Gary Rickards, Branch President

1983-1986 Wayne P. Taysom, Branch President

1986-1988 Edgar L. Wight, Branch President

1988-1989 William R. Wilburn, Branch President

1989-1993 John N. Velluti

1993-1998 Gary L. Thueson, Branch President

1998-1999 O. Fred Burlison, Branch President

1999-2005 Charles Dean Poff, Branch President

2005-2010 Clarence M. Douglas, Jr.

2010-2013 David J. Miller, Branch President

2013-present Shawn W. Stephensen, Branch President

From Willamette Stake to Corvallis Oregon Stake to Lebanon Oregon Stake

Lebanon (organized 1942)

Wesley P. Goulding, Presiding Elder

Glen Osborn counselor

George Shurts counselor

Jane Hollingsworth, Relief Society President

Josephine Shurts, counselor

Euzell Preston, counselor

Laura Osborn (Garland), secretary

(**December 2, 1951**, Lebanon becomes a branch and joins newly organized Willamette Stake.)

Lebanon Branch (organized 1951)

1951 Sterling Blaine Platt, Branch President

W. Henry Shurts, counselor

1956 Albert Billings, Branch President

Lebanon Ward (organized 1961)

(**1961** Lebanon organized as a ward under the direction of Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Quorum of the Twelve.)

Wayne Widman, Bishop

(**1963** Lebanon Ward joins the newly organized Corvallis Oregon Stake.)

1964-1968 Adrian Cox, Bishop

1968-1978 Henry Shurts, Bishop

Lebanon First Ward (organized 1978)

1978-1980 Kenneth F. Hildebrandt, Bishop

Lebanon Second Ward (organized 1978)

1978-1980 Virgil Hodges, Bishop

(February 3, 1980 Lebanon Oregon Stake organized under the direction of Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve.)

Sweet Home Dependent Branch (organized 1943 under Lebanon Branch)

1943 Ivan Burnett, Presiding Elder

Evelyn Sullivan, Relief Society President

Sweet Home Branch (organized in 1945)

1945 Ivan Burnett, Branch President

1947 George A. Cooper, counselor

Turner Stockett, counselor

(1951 Sweet Home Branch joins new Willamette Stake.)

1951-1957 Sylvin Bergevin, Branch President

Walter Saily, counselor

Harry Moffit, counselor

1957-1958 Harry Moffit, Branch President

1958-1962 Jack Gourley, Branch President

(1961 Joins newly organized Salem Stake.)

Sweet Home Ward (organized 1962)

1962-1969 Jack Gourley, Bishop

(1963 Sweet Home Ward joins newly organized Corvallis Oregon Stake.)

1969-1978 Henry Wolthuis, Bishop

William O. Lewis, counselor

Phillip H. Palkki, counselor

1978-1980 James A. Lewis, Bishop

(1980 Joins newly organized Lebanon Stake.)

Albany Branch (organized 1945)

1945-1951 Royal Dimick, Branch President

1951-1956 Charles B. Braun, Branch President

1956-1960 Bryant C. Behrmann, Branch President

1960-1962 Richard K. Sellers, Branch President

Albany Ward (organized 1962)

1962-1966 Robert P. Adams, Bishop

1966-1973 Vernon L. Worthen, Bishop

Albany First Ward (organized 1973)

1973-1980 J. Van Johnson, Bishop

Albany Second Ward (organized 1973)

1973-1980 Clarence Heath, Bishop

(1980 Lebanon Oregon Stake created under the direction of Elder James E. Faust of the Quorum of the Twelve.)

Brownsville Dependent Branch (organized 1976)

1976 Lee Walker, president

Brownsville Branch (organized 1977)

1977-1980 C. James Cox, Branch President

Michael G. Cavender, counselor

Dennis Witherspoon, counselor

(1980 Joins newly organized Lebanon stake.)

Jefferson Branch (organized 1977)

1977 William Pippert, Branch President

Russell K. Banks, counselor

S. Burton Ferguson, executive secretary

Ernest F. Wohleb, ward clerk

Bud. M. Cox, Elders Quorum President

Mellie Harding, Relief Society President

Lynn Merton, counselor

Alpha Ferguson, counselor

Theresa Karnosh, secretary

Jacquelyne Pippert, Primary President

Diane Plagmann, counselor

Lelia Wilson, counselor

(1980 Joins newly organized Lebanon Stake.)

APPENDIX III

Chronological List of Visiting General Authorities

- 1963:** Howard W. Hunter, Thomas S. Monson¹
- 1964:** Sterling W. Sill, S. Dilworth Young
- 1965:** Thomas S. Monson², ElRay L. Christiansen, and S. Dilworth Young³
- 1966:** Henry D. Taylor, A. Theodore Tuttle, and Betty J. Killpack, General M.I.A. board
- 1967:** Milton R. Hunter, Robert L. Simpson; LaVern W. Parmley, General Primary President, and Belle S. Spafford, General Relief Society President
- 1968:** James A. Cullimore, John Longden
- 1969:** Hartman Rector, Jr., Theodore M. Burton
- 1970:** Marion G. Romney⁴, Loren C. Dunn
- 1971:** Franklin D. Richards, Bernard P. Brockbank
- 1972:** Victor L. Brown, Henry D. Taylor
- 1973:** Paul H. Dunn
- 1974:** Mark E. Petersen, ElRay L. Christiansen
- 1975:** Bruce R. McConkie, Hartman Rector, Jr.
- 1976:** David B. Haight, O. Leslie Stone
- 1977:** O. Leslie Stone, Ted E. Brewerton

1 Presided over the creation of the Corvallis Oregon Stake.
2 Called a new stake presidency (President Samuel H. Bailey).
3 Organized stake quorum of seventy.
4 Dedicated new stake center.

- 1978:** Mark E. Petersen¹; Barbara B. Smith, General Relief Society President
- 1979:** Hugh W. Pinnock
- 1980:** James E. Faust²
- 1981:** Ronald E. Poelman
- 1982:** Ted E. Brewerton
- 1983:** F. Enzo Busche
- 1984:** Victor L. Brown
- 1985:** Loren C. Dunn
- 1986:** Howard W. Hunter³, Dallin H. Oaks, and Rex C. Reeve
- 1987:** Neal A. Maxwell⁴
- 1988:** Rex C. Reeve
- 1989:** Lionel Kendrick
- 1990:** Vaughn J. Featherstone
- 1991:** (No visiting authority)
- 1992:** Robert L. Backman
- 1993:** Robert E. Wells
- 1994:** Ted E. Brewerton
- 1995:** Richard G. Scott⁵
- 1996:** Spencer J. Condie⁶, Steven H. Pond
- 1997:** Lowell C. Barber
- 1998:** Glenn L. Pace
- 1999:** L. Aldin Porter, Gordon G. Conger, and Steven H. Pond (Salem Regional Conference)
- 2000:** David A. Bednar
- 2001:** Melvin F. Hammond
- 2002:** William R. Bradford
- 2003:** James E. Faust, Russell M. Nelson, and Stephan A. West (Salem Regional Conference)
- 2004:** Lowell C. Barber

1 Called a new stake presidency (President Richard J. Arnold).
 2 Lebanon Stake formed out of Corvallis Stake.
 3 Regional meeting in Gill Coliseum
 4 Called a new stake presidency (President Allen Davis).
 5 Regional conference in Gill Coliseum.
 6 Called a new stake presidency (President David J. Blake).

2005: Henry B. Eyring⁷, James C. Perry

2006: (No visiting authority.)

2007: Robert C. Oaks, Melvin R. Perkins

2008: (No visiting authority.)

2009: Marvin J. Brinkerhoff

2010: Per G. Malm

2011: Paul Christensen

2012: Linda Reeves, General Relief Society Presidency; Rosemary M Wixom, General Primary President; Ann M. Dibb, General Young Women Presidency, and Richard K. Hansen.

2013: Richard K Hansen, Paul B. Pieper

7

Called a new stake presidency (President Wade L. Haslam).

APPENDIX IV

The Plan and the Plot:

One Latter-day Saint's Philosophy of History

By K. D. Taylor

“Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.” (Deuteronomy 32:7)

“Wherefore, the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God and unto those who are not of the world.” (1 Nephi 6:5)

Two months prior to his assassination, the Prophet Joseph Smith told a gathering of saints: “If we start right, it is easy to go right all the time; but if we start wrong we may go wrong, and it will be a hard matter to get right.” Too often, a person’s starting point becomes a sticking point. By contrast, a life well lived, in a great many cases, results from having followed the trajectory of a life well launched. The acclaimed Latter-day Saint educator, businessman, speaker, and author, Dr. Stephen R. Covey, observed that “we must look at the lens through which we see the world, as well as the world we see,” and noted, moreover, how we must come to recognize “that the lens itself shapes how we interpret the world.” So fundamental is this fact of the human experience that Dr. Covey made the epigrammatic declaration that: “We see the world, not as it is, but as we are — or, as we are conditioned to see it.” In order to start right in any undertaking, as Joseph Smith desired the saints to do, we must start with the right lens in place.

Broadly speaking, our view of the world may be called our philosophy of earth-life, and this was precisely the phrase used by Elder John A. Widtsoe in the first chapter of his *Rational Theology* when he emphasized that: “No other quest of man is so vigorous and persistent as that of establishing an intelligible and satisfactory philosophy of earth-life.” Elder Widtsoe also brought home the fundamentally crucial point that: “Every act of a man’s life is influenced by the philosophy of his life. It is the most important product of an individual life, and is the most compelling power in life.” Our philosophy of life constitutes the lens through which we interpret our perceptions of the world around us. And inasmuch as spiritual-mindedness, enjoined by Paul in the New Testament and Jacob in the Book of Mormon, is a hallmark of authentic Latter-day Saint philosophy, it behooves us to concur with Elder Dallin H. Oaks in his averment that: “To the faithful, spirituality is a lens through which we view life and a gauge by which we evaluate it.” Elder Oaks has, in fact, very ably addressed the inseparable connection between reason and revelation, so essential to the enterprise of advancing in knowledge, in the chapter on “Reason and Revelation” found in his book *The Lord’s Way*, which chapter may be accessed and studied in its entirety online, at no fee.

More than a mere encounter with the data of sense, then, is required for us to reach whatever conclusions we may, since what we may derive from any experience is dependent upon what manner of philosophy we bring to that experience. Thus, before confronting the facts, it behooves us first to confront our philosophies. Dr. Hugh W. Nibley reminded his readers that: “The scribes and Pharisees of old constantly asked Jesus for *proof* and when it was set before them in overwhelming abundance they continued to disbelieve.” When the unbelieving failed to conceive of the truths He preached, the Savior explained to His disciples that “this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” (Matthew 13:15) For this reason, Scripture tells us frequently, and in diverse ways, of the sad paradox of those unbelievers who “seeing see not; and hearing they hear not” (Matthew 13:13). These things being so, Dr. Nibley reasoned that: “You cannot prove the genuineness of any document [or, it may as well be

added, the genuineness of anything at all] to one who has decided not to accept it.” Facts alone do not determine the acceptance of truth for a person determined not to accept, and it was G.K. Chesterton who reminded us that when it comes to the acceptance of ideas, “it is not really so much a question of access to the facts, as of attitude to the facts.” If, as is proverbially said, “attitude determines altitude,” this will prove true just as much when it comes to our altitude in relation to the heights of enlightenment we reach.

It is in this regard instructive that we find the Book of Mormon telling of how Ammon, according to the operations of the Spirit which attended him in his ministry to the Lamanites, did not commence to recount for King Lamoni those salient points of revealed history pertaining to the gospel until *after* he had inquired concerning the king’s theological orientation. It was only *following* these essential preliminaries, we read, that Ammon “began at the creation of the world, and also the creation of Adam, and told [King Lamoni] all the things concerning the fall of man, and rehearsed and laid before him the records and the holy scriptures of the people, which had been spoken by the prophets, even down to the time that their father, Lehi, left Jerusalem,” in addition to other matters of relevant historical interest. (Alma 18:36)

Although the saints may find these truths brought into maximal focus by the light of the restored gospel, it was wisdom in God that even some men who lived and died before the fullness of the restoration were blessed with a conception of them. And so we discover the poet Blake concluding that “as a man is, so he sees,” and Fichte, the German philosopher, maintaining that: “Men do not so much will according to their reason, as reason according to their will.” The inherent, eternal agency of man being such as it is, this is no less than we should expect to find in a world where all are constantly beset with influences from opposing forces, ever to be “enticed by the one or the other.” (2 Nephi 2:16) This state of affairs is to persist even until the end of time.

These general principles having thus been established, it is needful now that I not only subject my own philosophy of fact, and in particular my philosophy of history, to the best and most incisive evaluation of which I am capable, but also present that philosophy to all who may be interested in the relevant guiding axioms which I choose to embrace. As ought to be evident, by now, mine is a religious philosophy, and thus, by definition, a faith in and worship of God is so integral to it as to in fact be indispensable. And as may also be evident, I am by profession neither a philosopher nor a scholar of any stripe, and no attempt has here been made to craft the structure of my labored lucubrations agreeable to the formalities of academia, nor to employ the jargon of its journals, though I will cite, at times, certain doctors who have dutifully done so. If, therefore, I make use of any phrases present in the parlance of professionals, their occurrence is to be regarded as incidental, rather than intentional. But, in any event, as God has promised enlightenment only according to that measure of humility and contrition which a person in fact possesses, I take the acquisition of wisdom to be not so much a matter of position as of disposition (see D&C 136:32-33). Therefore, I would commend sober reflection to all upon the words of Dr. J. Leo Fairbanks, who was professor of art and architecture at what is now Oregon State University, chairing its art department from 1923 to 1946, and in whose perpetual memory Fairbanks Hall is named: “To follow divine direction, even the wise men of earth must surrender their human wisdom to God’s will.”

Now, in examining the basic elements of my outlook on history, and in the setting forth of them, I make no presumption of representing anyone other than myself. It is for this reason I have elected to call this “*one* Latter-day Saint’s philosophy of history,” not imagining that I speak but for myself only. If the faithful Latter-day Saints will study out such things as I here present, prayerfully appraising the whole of it to see whether or not it succeeds in harmonizing with the revelations contained in the Standard Works of the Church, if my thoughts should then be found in unity with the canon of Scripture, I will be glad of it. But if I should rather, upon any point, be shown to have set forth views directly at variance with this revealed Word, all Latter-day Saints will be in duty bound to reject those views. And, finally, if any ideas expressed herein neither clash with nor find express confirmation from the plain teaching of holy writ, Latter-day Saints may accept or reject them, as they may deem wise, so long as they never lose sight of the fact that whatever is not expressly in accord with the revelations contained in the Standard Works is, if received at all, not to be received as doctrine. But however that may be, even in taking full responsibility for the content of my personal philosophy, I both believe it to be, and offer it as an amalgam of, knowledge drawn from a multitude of worthy predecessors, all of whom will in

due course be identified by name. Suffice it to say, for now, that in the organization of my thoughts hereon, I have simply sought to do as Joseph Smith exhorted, and “gather all the good and true principles in the world and treasure them up,” so that while I do strive for accuracy, I make no pretension toward originality. Should it ever come to a choice between novelty and veracity, I am of the persuasion that the latter ought to be preferred.

But as philosophy of religion is more basic to our thinking than is philosophy of history, it is necessary, in the first place, to offer an overview of my religious philosophy, since my philosophy of history, like that of anyone else, does not exist in a conceptual vacuum, but is rather located within a far broader nexus of ideas. It is only in light of these more general ideas that the particular points of my ideas on history can be rightly understood.

It would be of great benefit to everyone concerned if all who write or speak on areas of historical interest, professional and amateur alike, would be so forthcoming as to give out in direct terms those basic assumptions about life and reality which guide their activities in these, as in all other, spheres. Otherwise, writers and speakers on these subjects will only persist in talking past each other.

Once, in a written correspondence to a colleague, dated August 23, 1967, the aforementioned Dr. Hugh Nibley gave what I have long regarded as the most beautifully succinct encapsulation of an inspired religious philosophy I have ever found. Longtime Brigham Young University scholar, Dr. Daniel C. Peterson, has referred to this missive in particular as a “wonderful letter,” and this I wholeheartedly echo. After receiving a request from Dr. Sterling McMurrin to write and share his philosophy of religion, Dr. Nibley embodied the basic structure of that philosophy using three fundamental propositions. The first of these he expressed as follows:

Proposition No. 1. We are participating in a vivid little drama being enacted in empty space. If blind chance can set this stage, put the characters on it, and set the plot in motion, then there is nothing that blind chance cannot do, including the staging of innumerable other plays on other worlds; and blind chance may very well have arranged to have this particular world quarantined to provide a testing situation in which we find ourselves—strained and awkward, but just the test for those particular qualities which are going to be needed in the really long run.

Now, as it happens, “drama” is precisely the correct term, deriving as it does from the Greek “*dran*,” meaning “to act” or “to do.” We live in this world partly as a consequence of the first man and woman in it “placing themselves in a state to act, or being placed in a state to act according to their wills and pleasures, whether to do evil or to do good.” (Alma 12:31) This being the case, all who inhabit the earth are “free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day” (2 Nephi 2:26). Upon this stage of mortality, then, we are actors and not “actees.” But while we are not to be “acted upon,” we may indeed be “added upon,” if God should judge that our activities be of such character as to merit the favor of His approbation, rather than to warrant the incurrance of His displeasure (Abraham 3:26).

And as Dr. Nibley mentions, in this particular world of mortal life, we are provided with a “testing situation,” which is in fact “just the test” we will find to be requisite for the attainment of those special qualities needed of us in the long run. Absent such a testing element, it would be difficult to conceive of a genuine drama being enacted at all, for a drama is defined as “a composition in verse or prose intended to portray life or character or to tell a story usually involving *conflicts* and emotions through action and dialogue.” The world which we inhabit has precisely the properties we should expect if God intended, as surely He did, for the mortal lives of His children to serve as a probationary time in which their respective characters might be tested and made susceptible to development.

Viewed in the light of the restored gospel, and having embraced a knowledge of our premortal existence, the familiar and oft-repeated lines of Shakespeare become especially significant and meaningful to Latter-day Saints:

*All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts.*

Although a man or a woman may be anything from a doctor to a candlestick maker upon this stage of existence we call mortal life on earth, they were not in fact such prior to their habitation of this terrestrial sphere, nor shall they be in that eternal world of endless light and life in which there is to be no death nor any manner of disease. The man or the woman who acts in the role of doctor or candlestick maker is in truth doing precisely that — *acting in a role*, or as might be said in other words, *playing a part*. And their entrances are made after having been cast by God, to Whom they must all return, as Ecclesiastes 12:7 states, upon making their exits.

But just as the experience of acting in a theatrical play, or in a motion picture film, makes an impact that is perfectly real upon those participating as the actors therein, so the experience of performing our various roles upon this world stage makes an impact on all who take a part in the unfolding drama set here. Rightly inspired physicians, for instance, may, over a course of time in practicing their special skill, become so acquainted with the physiology of the human constitution as to reach a deepened understanding of it that will prepare them to commence upward to a perfect possession of that knowledge and wisdom which will be required of them, when and if they are granted to sit with Christ in His throne, just as He is set down with His Father in His throne (see Revelation 3:21). It is in this world, therefore, as it is in a staged drama, the role performed by anyone is merely indicative of, but never identical with, a greater reality existing outside the narrows of the narrative.

Finally, in the first of his listed propositions, Dr. Nibley alludes to the practical omnipotence attributed to so-called “blind chance” by those impressively credentialed sophisticates who propound philosophical views in the name of science. Although a number of eminent intellectuals have since insisted there are certain limits to the pervasiveness of “blind chance,” the powers once assigned by prevailing intellectuals to chaotic, fortuitous, and absolutely mindless processes were beyond the capacity of human minds to fathom. Jacques Monod once gave voice to this perspective, he being a top-flight chemist of his day and a winner of the Nobel Prize. “Chance alone,” he declared, “is at the source of every innovation, of all creation in the biosphere. Pure chance, absolutely free but blind, is at the very root of the stupendous edifice of creation.”

Such a view, it need scarcely be added, allows for no intrusion of the supernatural onto the scene. Chance, after all, is explicitly referred to by Dr. Monod as being “alone.” Yet if, on this conception, chance is not strictly a *supernatural* power, it is certainly a *superhuman* one, so dramatically surpassing humanity in its range, extent, and degree of potency as to qualify for identification as a superhuman controlling power, both determining and dominating the destinies of every living creature, not even excepting man.

Thus, as Dr. Nibley here observes in his letter, if such a conception of chance be taken as unchallenged orthodoxy, and we ascribe to chance alone both the unfolding of life’s drama and the whole construction of the stage on which it is set, then we may safely conclude that such a state of affairs permits essentially any combination of features to arise in reality. In other words, the logical consequence of such a doctrine of chance is to profess, in effect, that “with chance nothing shall be impossible,” and to establish for chance the impossibility of impossibility. However, it is just here that we must pause to consider one curious aspect of this worldview in which stochastic phenomena dominate reality, and that is how near the proponents of such a view draw with their lips to the possibility of anything, and yet their hearts are far from it. Although their view of reality leads to all things being possible, they demand emphatically that not all beings are possible. Divine beings must be, and remain, verboten by edict of such experts as these. Nor can it be insisted that this posture is the product of rigid adherence to the scientific method. As Dr. Richard Lewontin, the award-winning evolutionary biologist, had the candor to confess:

It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.

“The eminent Kant scholar Lewis Beck used to say that anyone who could believe in God could believe in anything. To appeal to an omnipotent deity is to allow that at any moment the regularities of nature may be ruptured, that Miracles may happen.

Against this admirably candid admission, Dr. Nibley offers a provocative insight. Whereas both Richard Lewontin and Lewis Beck held that anyone who could believe in God could believe in anything, Hugh Nibley was of the opinion that anyone capable of believing in so limitless and lofty a conception of chance as the likes of Jacques Monod embraced could believe in anything, even if in actuality they did not. But to further explore the thinking of Nibley in the matter of blind chance, and to more accurately reflect his views thereon, it is needful now to move on to the second of his propositions, which he gave to Dr. McMurrin thus:

Proposition No. 2, etc. Blind chance isn't a force at all, but a term denoting an unknown X. Just as Newton could never bring himself to believe that gravity could be a force operating across a completely empty gap, so I can't believe in a directing force which is itself completely without any sense of direction or an organizing force which itself has no concept of organization. That idea stopped even Darwin, you may recall.

The view, then, of Dr. Nibley was that it is not chance that is blind, but humans! That is, the unaided human mind cannot by dint of its own native powers perceive the operations of Providence throughout the immensity of created space. True it is that, as once declared by the estimable and enlightened preacher of Ecclesiastes, “time and chance happeneth” to all, even in those events which seem governed by chance alone, “the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.” (Proverbs 16:33) And this disposition of things is exactly what is to be expected on the understanding that, as Brigham Young explained: “There is Life in all matter throughout the vast extent of all the eternities. It is in the rock, the sand, the dust, in water, air, the gases, and in short, in every description and organization of matter whether it be solid, liquid, or gaseous, particle operating with particle.” Hence, God can say “let the earth bring forth,” and obediently it does as it is bid. It is not, however, to be supposed that any embrace of the magical is made within Latter-day Saint theology. The very word “magical” the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines as an adjective describing what is “so extraordinary or abnormal as to suggest powers which violate the laws of nature,” and no such violations are to be regarded as conceivable, since, as Elder James E. Talmage emphasized, “the laws of nature are inviolable” and in truth “the entire constitution of nature is founded on system and order.” Assuming “miraculous” to mean just the same thing as “magical” is therefore an error. Miracles never transgress the laws of nature. All they can do is transcend our understanding of the laws of nature.

Every object, whether before, behind, above, below, or around us, pulsates with animating vitality. And it is vital that we recognize it, for the doctrine taught by Brigham Young that “there is not a particle of element which is not filled with Life” fills life with a fullness of meaning that is critically important to deciphering the drama.

The casting of human individuals into this universe is not like the casting of dice, but rather like the casting of actors, each of whom, whether they recollect the fact or not, were cast after having auditioned for the role. And their audition occurred at a place and time beyond this stage we call the world.

All told, “chance” is simply the name many are apt to give to those events in which, between one fact and another, there exists an epistemic lacuna. In other words, when we do not know precisely how a thing happened, we ascribe its occurrence to chance. The outcome, for instance, of a roll of cubic dice is conventionally attributed to chance because we are unable to predict every motion made by the rolling dice, and therefore do not know with certainty in advance what the result of the roll will be.

But if we do not know something, at present, it is well to reflect on the insightful reminder once given by G.K. Chesterton that “we do not know enough about the unknown to know that it is unknowable.” Moreover, we must know that we don’t know all the ways of knowing! It is well enough to acknowledge limits to our present understanding. And if we once confess that our understanding is limited, then we must, for consistency, allow that there may be ways of coming to new understanding which we have not yet come to understand. Then it is but a step for us to concede that others long ago may have come to understand that which we have not yet understood, even if we cannot currently fathom how it was that they did so. And by all means we must avoid the hubristic pretension of declaring that which originates from an earlier time (e.g. the Bronze Age) to be intrinsically inferior, and realize that to make such titanically arrogant declarations as this is to be guilty of what has rightly been dubbed “chronological snobbery.”

Lamentably, however, there are many who, not being content to proclaim the limits of their own understanding, have the presumption to pronounce limits on the understanding of others. A book enticingly titled *The Atheist’s Bible* establishes the dictum in its opening pages that “the reason there are so many opinions is that no one knows the Truth.” How such a conclusion was drawn by the author is not directly stated. But it must be observed, in any case, that from the fact that there does exist a broad and varied range of opinions, it does not at all follow from this that “no one knows the Truth.” The poet Pope penned the memorable lines reminding us that —

‘Tis with our judgments as our watches, none

Go just alike, yet each believes his own.

But if scores of thousands, or even scores of millions, of watches fail to match one with another, this would not in the least degree establish that no single watch among the whole multitude of them succeeds in keeping accurate time. That opinions differ proves only that opinions differ. It proves nothing else at all. An opinion is, by very definition, “a view, judgment, or appraisal formed in the mind about a particular matter.” Nothing more or less. There is nothing in the nature of opinion, thus defined, to prevent its ever being accurate.

Even if, however, all the many billions of earth’s inhabitants did not know the truth, they would never get any nearer to it until they at least had the boldness to venture the question whether or not the truth may actually know them. If Jesus Christ is the truth, as proclaimed in John 14:6, then the ever-living, omniscient Truth does in fact know everyone, even if it is true that no one knows it. And any who possess courage enough to entertain the possibility that the Truth knows them may yet prove intrepid enough to wonder, and even to seek to learn, what it is that the Truth knows of them.

As to opinions, it is noteworthy that Dr. Nibley should cite Darwin, and in particular the opinion of that most eminent and influential naturalist that it is impossible to conceive of our universe, with its rich and vastly variegated contents, as being the product either of blind chance or of necessity. Indeed, there is no iron law of necessity to which any could point, even at present, mandating that our universe ought even to exist at all! Certainly, the universe is necessary for the accomplishment of God’s purposes for His children, otherwise there would be no object to our sojourn in it. But it is not a universe that is necessary by its own inherent nature. The whole of it is sustained in its continued existence, according to Joseph Smith, because, and only because, God “upholds all worlds and all things by His power.” The universe, then, is a gift from God to us, and a gift that keeps on giving, so that the fact of its existence we would do well to regard with “awesome wonder,” as Stuart K. Hine famously phrased it.

Now, considering the views of Darwin, and without overlooking his agnostic attitude toward things divine, it is worth recalling the very words of Darwin himself, which he addressed with paternal intimacy to his family, in a letter not intended for publication during his lifetime:

[A] source of conviction in the existence of God ... follows from the extreme difficulty or rather impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man with his capability

of looking far backwards and far into futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity. When thus reflecting...I deserve to be called a theist.

The attitude of Darwin being so described, and in no less than his very own words, it is strange that to this day we should find his theories wielded as weaponry by the foes of religion in their long-continued assaults and volleys against the citadels of theistic faith. So zealous have been these enemies of faith in God, in fact, that they have presumed to enlist not only the theories of Darwin, but the whole modern scientific method itself. And here, too, we may regard the curiously misguided nature of their ways, remembering that Sir Francis Bacon, who continues to be recognized as no less than “the father of modern scientific method,” had, as his essay “Of Atheism” plainly bears out, nothing but contempt for atheism, as he regarded the atheistic view of the universe as even less acceptable than the crassest mythologies, and considered the duty of all mankind to acknowledge the providences of God, and to attend to religious observance, as being of the first importance.

Yet these misappropriations of both Darwinian and Baconian thought persist, and continue to be brandished even within the realm of historical inquiry. The idea of God’s action in the course of human history is, it would appear, every bit as hateful to the opponents of religious faith as is the idea of God’s interaction with humans.

But for Joseph Smith—as well, I believe, as for those espousing the religion revealed through his instrumentality—the action of God in the unfolding drama is nothing less than the sine qua non of any true account thereof. With this fact in mind, I now turn to the final proposition set down by Dr. Nibley as characteristic of his religious philosophy:

3. From the tiny segment of the play I have studied, I like to think that things have been following the script recommended by Joseph Smith more closely than the other scripts written by scientists and scholars and altered from time to time. I really believe that the unfolding of the human comedy has shown a consistent tendency to adhere to the ancient script, and at present gives every indication of following it out to the bitter and glorious end.

So rich with revelation is that colossal corpus of writ which came through Joseph Smith that any attempt at exhaustively examining all the points upon which it has thrown light concerning the course of human history must fail. Only in brief overview is there space to consider the fresh perspective provided with regard to that history by the extant revelations thus far made known to the Church in this dispensation.

Nevertheless, to do so is so important as to be indispensable. Conventional wisdom has it that a person must “never judge a book by its cover.” This may often hold true. But it is especially unwise to judge a book by its middle! Supposing, for instance, that a person took up the Holy Bible, opening it to the 13th chapter of the 2nd Book of Samuel, and read that chapter through, but nothing further, the unfortunate impression might be made upon the reader that the Bible is a very sordid volume, indeed. Or, were someone to open the New Testament, and there read nothing beyond the passage in Titus 1:12-13, they might conclude the book of which that passage is a part to not only not be “politically correct,” but not even correct at all. Such impressions would, of course, be wholly mistaken, and that is just the point. No proper sense can be made of a particular portion without the help of the whole.

Of the first importance to the unfolding plot in what Dr. Nibley calls “the script recommended by Joseph Smith” is that God is “the father of spirits” (Hebrews 12:9). Whether Jew or Gentile, whether saint or sinner, “we are the offspring of God” (Acts 17:29). The prodigal son of Jesus’ much-beloved parable did not, after all, *become* the son of his father only upon his repentance — he was his son before, during, and after his years of waste and revelry, even on those occasions when he declared himself no longer worthy to be called the son of his father, and aspired to servitude rather than sonship.

These declarations of mankind’s kinship with divinity Joseph Smith proclaimed before the world to be strictly and literally true, and the unified testimonies of all his lawful successors down to today proclaim the same. But as in the days of Joseph Smith, so in our own, this plainspoken pronouncement of the New Testament is not only not received with the full embrace of many self-identified Christians, but is all but abjured by the

most prominent of Christian professors. Evangelical theologian, J.I. Packer, for example expressly avers: “The idea that all are children of God is not found in the Bible anywhere.”

At the utmost of their generosity, some among the adherents to mainline Christianity are willing to concede all members of the human race are “the offspring of God” in the sense that God created all members of the human races, thus making God the father of the spirits of all mankind only in the same sense that Eli Whitney is the father of the cotton gin. But “offspring,” as ought to be clear enough to anyone, is not a term having reference to mere creation, but to procreation, and the difference between creation and procreation is as vast as is the difference between a builder’s building and a builder’s child.

Against such stout denials of the literal Fatherhood of God as are often made and held by conventional Christians, the revelation vouchsafed to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, and now recorded in the 76th section of the Doctrine & Covenants, attests in unmistakable language concerning all the worlds created under God by His Son Jesus Christ, that “the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.” (D&C 76:24)

And inasmuch as no wise father ever begets children to no purpose, and as no purpose ever is fulfilled without a plan calculated to its eventual attainment, it follows that our Heavenly Father had both a plan and a purpose in procreating His progeny of spirit offspring, many of whom are among those who have inhabited, now inhabit, or will yet come to inhabit this world in the continued peopling of the earth.

Whenever, therefore, God has revealed anything concerning what Dr. Nibley describes as “the human comedy,” it has been with the express intention of throwing light upon that plan. And not just any light, but *the* Light, who is, and can be, no other than Jesus Christ Himself. Often, though, our Father in Heaven has designed to accomplish this dispensing of light through the medium of allegory and other types of symbolism, that His discerning children might perceive thereby His unfolding purposes relative to the plan of their lives, while those not pure enough of heart to ascertain the meaning thereof will remain as much in the dark as they were before. The Allegory of the Olive Tree, for example, quoted in the 5th chapter of Jacob in the Book of Mormon, sets forth in symbolic outline a significant element in the plot of human history, viz. God’s dealings with the house of Israel and with the Gentiles. So accurate a history does that chapter in the Book of Mormon present, in fact, that Joseph Fielding Smith was moved to say of it: “When you read that chapter through if you cannot say in your soul, ‘this is absolutely a revelation from God,’ then there is something wrong with you.”

This, of course, is but one of many examples. An inspired reading of the Book of Revelation also discloses much concerning human history — including much that has yet to be accomplished! — and does so by means of the rich symbolism for which that great book has long been famous. Doctrine & Covenants section 77 is of great benefit to establishing the manner in which John’s Revelation presents a history pertinent to the human race, and the segmentation of that history into distinct successive millennial divisions. Not surprisingly, secular philosophers have undertaken to outline their own versions of a gradual unfolding paradigm for the course of humanity’s history, and some attention will be drawn to at least a couple instances of this in due course. Suffice it to say, for the present, there is something innate to the human mind which prompts us to see even the dim and distant past in terms of a discernible pattern.

And this sense of pattern prompts a consideration of the plot to what Dr. Nibley dubbed “the ancient script.” In the light of certain prophetic pronouncements made by President Ezra Taft Benson regarding the Book of Mormon, these remarks about the human comedy’s observable adherence to the ancient script are entirely fitting. President Benson indeed taught regarding the volume of scripture just named that:

..in the Book of Mormon we find a pattern for preparing for the Second Coming. A major portion of the book centers on the few decades just prior to Christ’s coming to America. By careful study of that time period, we can determine why some were destroyed in the terrible judgments that preceded His coming and what brought others to stand at the temple in the land of Bountiful and thrust their hands into the wounds of His hands and feet.

From the Book of Mormon we learn how disciples of Christ live in times of war. From the Book of

Mormon we see the evils of secret combinations portrayed in graphic and chilling reality. In the Book of Mormon we find lessons for dealing with persecution and apostasy. We learn much about how to do missionary work. And more than anywhere else, we see in the Book of Mormon the dangers of materialism and setting our hearts on the things of the world. Can anyone doubt that this book was meant for us and that in it we find great power, great comfort, and great protection?

Perhaps the most startling discovery to be made by those who peer far enough into the world of the past is not how foreign it is, but how familiar. It is often to our surprise that we learn the figures of the past were not so unlike us, but rather far more like us than we had ever figured. True it is that these personages and societies of history lived in times far distant from our own, chronologically speaking, but they did so only after having lived both nearly and dearly with us in a premortal world before “time...[was] measured unto men.” (Alma 40:8) Elder Boyd K. Packer summed up this sublime truth by saying: “However many generations in your mortal ancestry, no matter what race or people you represent, the pedigree of your spirit can be written on a single line. You are a child of God!” These truths being thus attested and accepted among the Latter-day Saints, it is with no surprise that we find all people in all ages to behave, and to be, like us. And they are like us because, like us, they are in the likeness of God! So it is in a fraternal spirit entirely fitting that Moroni—who is among those who assisted in revealing “the ancient script”—wrote to those of this last dispensation, saying: “Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing.” (Moroni 8:35)

Yet, often we are apt, in our initial tentative investigations, to regard those myriads of the murky past, like the millions presently inhabiting far-flung places, as so alien to our experience as to be practically extraterrestrial. Indeed, our language, at times, reflects this, as when we say in sweeping summary of the perished people of some vanished era: “That was *another world!*” In truth, of course, those belonging to these bygone civilizations did not inhabit a different world, but the same world in a different stage of development. Nevertheless, we may say without impropriety that they once *did* belong to another world, if only we take care to add *that we also* belonged to it, and this was none other than the premortal world, of which mention has been made already. There is a common spiritual ancestry behind the commonalities shared by each and every human being, and history has a unique way of throwing light upon this to those perceptive enough to read with “eyes to see,” as the language of Scripture puts it. Of history, Dr. Daniel N. Robinson, who has also written extensively on the nature of human identity, stated:

The lamp of history illuminates the very commonalities that constitute human nature itself. History teaches that wherever you find human beings, certain lessons are worth learning. There is a root humanity that is reached by certain events and that allows us to predict how we are likely to behave under certain conditions and how those conditions, therefore, should either be promoted or shunned.

Philosophical debates over “nature versus nurture” continue even up to the present, with the stated intent of seeking out the extent to which nature molds a person, or a people, in their development, and the extent to which the nurturing influence of a social group has a role in this. It is presupposed, of course, and accurately enough, that human beings are changeable beings, and it only remains to discern *how*, and to what extent, they change. But whatever else may be the case in such debates, of a surety no ground can possibly be gained unless it is both declared and agreed upon just what such terms as “nature” and “nurture” refer to.

Joseph F. Smith taught concerning the nature of all mankind:

We are called mortal beings because in us are seeds of death, but in reality we are immortal beings, because there is also within us the germ of eternal life. Man is a dual being, composed of the spirit which gives life, force, intelligence and capacity to man, and the body which is the tenement of the spirit and is suited to its form, adapted to its necessities, and acts in harmony with it, and to its utmost capacity yields obedience to the will of the spirit. The two combined constitute the soul. The body is dependent upon the spirit, and the spirit during its natural occupancy of the body is subject to the laws which apply to and govern it in the mortal state.

On similar lines, David O. McKay affirmed that:

Man has a dual nature; one, related to the earthly or animal life; the other, akin to the divine. Whether a man remains satisfied within what we designate the animal world, . . . yielding without effort to the whim of his appetites and passions and slipping farther and farther into the realm of indulgence, or whether, through self-mastery, he rises toward intellectual, moral, and spiritual enjoyments depends upon the kind of choice he makes every day, nay, every hour of his life.

These two statements on the two sides of human nature express a truth which no study of any human society, past or present, can safely neglect. There is a duality to human nature, and thus to attend upon the aspect of the “animal life” element in man, to the exclusion of the spiritual, is to doom all attempts at gaining deep insight into human life, including human history, to failure. (In fact, as there exists not only a spirit of man, but “also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created,” according to D&C 77:2, it is both prudent and proper that we profess there is a duality to reality!) The position that intelligence can be reduced to the combined interaction of unintelligent matter itself reduces to absurdity. Indeed, intelligence, as D&C 93:29 establishes, cannot be reduced to anything at all. And not only can it not be reduced, it cannot even be produced!

While intelligence is not to be conceived of as reducible to unintelligent physical constituents of the universe, though, it is true that the uses made by intelligence of its various capacities may be reduced, or increased, according to the exercise of individual will. To nurture a person, or a people, then, is simply to enhance all their capacities toward full optimization, and to do this in the light of the restored gospel is to do it on the understanding that, as Joseph Smith taught, “all the spirits that God ever sent into this world are susceptible of enlargement.”

These things being so, if, by inquiring into historical matters, we aim to account for the events of the past in light of as many relevant factors as may be discoverable to us, we must not fail to factor in the light that is in us by virtue of our inherent identity as spirit children of an Eternal Father, and be spiritually minded, knowing that as Elder Dallin H. Oaks described it: “To be spiritually minded is to view and evaluate our experiences in terms of the enlarged perspective of eternity.” Every thought and act of the Latter-day Saint life, therefore, must be in the truest, deepest, and most consistent sense, *sub specie aeternitatis* (or “under the aspect of eternity”).

Upon the recognition of mankind’s dual nature, and upon our commitment to unhesitating acceptance of eternal spiritual realities, hinges our ability to embrace the most pivotal occurrence in the whole history of man’s career on earth: The atoning work of Jesus Christ. Elder Neal A. Maxwell left no room for doubt as to the cruciality of Christ’s atonement when he proclaimed: “Jesus’ glorious atonement is the central act in all of human history!” This matchless act was and is the turning point of all history, turning the tide against the powers of death and turning the repentant from sin, thus providing the way of redemption for the bodily, as well as for the spiritual, side of our dual nature.

The appearance of Jesus Christ upon the world stage was a revelation of the truth—bearing it in mind that He is the truth!—and the manifestations which He made of Himself were “as one having authority” (Matthew 7:29), and not as matters of uncertain or hesitating speculation. And this revelation of Jesus Christ is properly regarded as a revelation of God the Father, since, as Elder B.H. Roberts reminded his readers in *The Mormon Doctrine of Deity*, the true gospel contains, of necessity, the proclamation “that Jesus Christ is the complete and perfect revelation of God—that such as Jesus Christ is, God is.” To comprehend the character of God requires that we comprehend the character of Christ. And Joseph Smith revealed that “if men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves.” But if men do not comprehend themselves, they do not comprehend their history, to say nothing of their present or future. Christ, therefore, is central and foundational to reading history aright. And from such reading comes an enlarged comprehension that carries a seal of certitude only the Spirit can give.

And this brings me, at last, to the concluding thoughts of Dr. Nibley’s letter, which were not actually included by him in his list of explicitly designated “propositions,” but rather as personal declarations of testimony:

For me religion to be convincing must be nonspeculative. If it were the sort of thing we could figure out for ourselves, I would strongly suspect that we had invented it (C.S. Lewis). Mormonism has the great virtue of being, along with Judaism, early Christianity, and Islam, a nonspeculative religion. It accepts the moral law within and also the starry heavens above, the latter being something we do NOT make up ourselves and yet somehow part of the religious picture.

It should be noted that, on this view, what is “within” must be accepted just as what is “without” must be (e.g. “the starry heavens above”). And unless there is that which may with consistency and intelligibility be called “the moral law” urging us toward acceptance of what is true, then we cannot so much as feel we should accept what is true at all, since without such an objective moral law, the very word “should” would hold no meaning deeper than a declaration of taste, and likewise with the equivalent word “ought.” Such a state of affairs would, of course, preclude even the possibility of receiving a testimony of the gospel, since a testimony is nothing if not a profession of truth accepted. Concerning this vital component of the religious life, Dr. Nibley continued writing in his letter that:

A testimony is a gift and a talent (I Cor 12:7)..It functions like any of the senses, e.g., like hearing, it is an ‘absolute’ thing. You either have it or you don’t; but like hearing, it may be strong at one time and weak at another; it is never in ailing mortals in perfect operating condition (Heraclitus), and may vanish altogether at times, be nonoperative at times, and at times return with astonishing force and vigor. But it does NOT produce the things it hears. It would be hard to explain to one devoid of those senses that seeing and hearing are not functions of the imagination and are only in part self-induced--that there would be no seeing and hearing at all if some sort of stimulus did not come from the outside (Kantish). All this is commonplace enough, but I am trying to say that when I ‘bear my testimony’ I am really talking about something, whether you get it or not.

Those who have had the experience of perceiving the various colors on the visible spectrum would be more than just a little hard put to describe the experience, to say nothing of describing the spectrum itself, to those who are congenitally blind. And it was Elder Boyd K. Packer who compared the experience of receiving a testimony to that of tasting salt, neither of which can be described by means of language alone to those who have had no such experience.

Dr. Nibley continued:

We are here to use our brains, but the most important impressions that come to us do so directly and without any conscious cerebration. We may work over the data of such experiences in our minds, but we do not produce the impressions in the first place. An interview with John the Baptist led Oliver Cowdery to declare that whatever the doings of men may be, ‘one ray of glory from the upper world, or one word from the mouth of the Savior, from the bosom of eternity, strikes it all to insignificance, and blots it forever from the mind!’ I have not had Oliver Cowdery’s experience, but I have had some like it, and this puts any discussion of my religious ‘philosophy’ on a difficult plane. For if I were to tell you that on a particular day I had such and such an experience, you would write me down as a mental case, and rightly so, in case you had not had the same experience or one like it. I see no reason why I should prejudice and offend you by telling you stories you can’t believe and have no means of testing. But such experiences as I refer to are bound to affect one’s behavior if only in subtle ways, and I find for one thing that there are some things that I simply cannot take seriously, and other things which I must take seriously even at the risk of giving offense to my more rational colleagues.

We are, to be sure, here upon this earth to use our brains, and to use them well. But to suppose that the cerebral faculties collectively constitute the sole instrument by which all things whatsoever are to be gauged is to adopt an ill-conceived, myopic paradigm which brings to mind the so-called “law of the instrument” -- a form of cognitive bias distinguished by over-reliance on a familiar, and therefore convenient, tool. “I suppose it is tempting,” Dr. Abraham Maslow once said, “if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail.”

It was, in fact, against just such a fundamental error that Elder Packer gave solemn caution with his warning about the tendency among researchers who come, by inordinate zeal for their favored methodology, “to judge the Church, its doctrine, organization, and leadership, present and past, by the principles of their own profession.”

But, as it happens, this excessive reliance upon an exclusively rationalistic standard, still championed in our own time by proponents of hyper-rationality, need not be overturned by any opposing standard. It is overturned by itself. For if a person ever argues that the one and only standard by which to prove all things is the rationalistic standard, they are presented with two possibilities for defending that argument, both of which are doomed.

If they use, on the one hand, the rationalistic standard itself in order to prove that the rationalistic standard is the only standard by which to prove anything, they are assuming as true from the outset the very thing which they are supposed to be proving true, and thus are guilty of circular reasoning, or the fallacy of begging the question.

But if, on the other hand, they use some other standard besides the rationalistic one to prove that standard true, then they are in the very act nullifying the proposition that their rationalistic standard is the *only* standard by which to prove *anything* true, and thus their whole position is self-negating.

None of this, however, is to be interpreted as impugning the honor inherent in the proper exercise of intellect. I am in the fullest accord with Galileo Galilei, when he says: “I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use.” One of the guiding principles in my personal credo is that the intellect is a factor in our worship, but not the focus of our worship. The intellect surely has a place in worship. But that place is not in a shrine. There are many truths which surpass the reach of reason, and can thus be known only by other means. Knowledge of ultimate truths must ultimately come by revelation, and in no other way. But no knowledge ever is obtained by anyone, neither can be, except by the exercise of faith of a particular kind. (It is no good for anyone to assert that they have no faith of any kind whatever, for that is an impossibility. Faith is, by definition, “complete trust or confidence in someone or something.” Therefore, ironically, even those people who insist that they have no faith are by that very insistence revealing that they do, in fact, have complete trust in something, namely in the idea that they have no faith. And thus they do have, by literal definition, faith.) Only through the diligent exercise of confidence in certain permanent principles can anyone ever lay hold upon actual knowledge.

But to turn from the setting forth of those general principles which belong to my religious philosophy, and to set my focus now upon my philosophy of history, it is essential in the first place that there be a shared understanding not only of what the term “history” means, but of the sense in which that term is used here. History is not to be understood, for present purposes, as having reference to the history of the universe, which is the special study of cosmologists, nor as referring to the science of natural history, which is the province of geologists, paleontologists, and other like specialists. As Dr. William H. Walsh wrote in his *Philosophy of History*: “History begins to be interested in the past when human beings first appear in it. Its essential concern is with human experiences and actions.” History may thus be defined as the course of human events already past, while the keeping of history refers to the record of those events and to the study of their proper explanation. To adopt the same metaphor as Dr. Nibley, history is that part of the human comedy which has already been performed, and the true record of history is that portion of the script which has already been enacted. It was by virtue of His omniscience that God, the peerless Playwright, was able to write out the story before it began to be played out.

It is interesting, in this connection, to consider the history of the very word “history” itself. Hegel, who was among the earliest to undertake the fleshing out of a full-scale philosophy of history, noted that the term “history” is unique in that it “unites the objective with the subjective side...It comprehends not less what has *happened* than the *narration* of what has happened.” He then draws the conclusion that “this union of the two meanings we must regard as of a higher order than mere outward accident; we must suppose historical

narrations to have appeared contemporaneously with historical deeds and events.” Indeed, provided what is told us in Moses 6:5-6, a Latter-day Saint perspective would appear to be in very close, if not complete, agreement with the idea that historical narrations appeared at the same time as did historical events and deeds.

Our word “history” comes from the Greek *historia*, meaning “finding out” or “learning by inquiry,” which itself is derived from *histor*, which means “one who knows or sees.” This was the sense that Herodotus, who has long been hailed as “the father of history,” had in mind in producing his monumental work, titled *The Histories*. In certain cases, Herodotus wrote of events about which Homer before him had already written, and explored many of the same themes, notably the ancient antipathy between the Trojans and the Greeks. But what set Herodotus apart from the poet Homer was his willingness to include, and to appraise the value of, conflicting accounts of the same events. Such is not the poet’s task, and thus it was not to be expected that the great Homeric poems would be based on such an approach. Historians are, among other things, diligent investigators.

As it happens, the sacred canon of revealed Scripture, as surely as it often records much concerning evil, in order that it might emphasize the virtues of the good, also takes care to record many of the errors and outright deceptions uttered by the wicked, in order that the brightness of truth might shine forth so much the better. Thus, the ideas of numerous Anti-Christ figures, far from being ignored or concealed, are carefully recorded in the Book of Mormon, as, of course, are the truths triumphantly proclaimed against them by disciples of the Lord. We are presented, moreover, in the Book of Mormon, with the very words wicked Gadianton leaders wrote to the followers of Christ (see 3 Nephi 3). As it was in the time of Mormon and Moroni, so it is now, that “by proving contraries, truth is made manifest,” as Joseph Smith taught, and by “proving” he meant “testing” or “examining.” Scripture not only invites, but requires, that we do so. Mormon himself, after all, was willing to look at the account given by the Lamanites concerning the history of Lehi’s colony, and by his very recording of their account that great prophet-historian invites us to take their “take” on history into consideration and to studiously contrast it with that offered by others (see Mosiah 10:12-17).

And in responding to this invitation, we must invoke the Spirit to illuminate us in the undertaking. This calls to mind one of the vital axioms established by Elder Boyd K. Packer, that: “There is no such thing as an accurate, objective history of the Church without consideration of the spiritual powers that attend this work... there is no such thing as an accurate or objective history of the Church which ignores the Spirit.” Church history is replete with instances of all the gifts of the Spirit in action. But no divinely inspired event, whether it be miraculous healing, the exercise of the gift of tongues, the raising of the dead, prophecies, visitation from angels, or sojourns in the Spirit World, can ever be understood, much less appreciated, if the Spirit is ignored.

It is sometimes objected that we are doomed to remain in uncertainty concerning numerous events of past centuries in Church history, since all who were present to participate in and witness them are dead, and can no longer speak to us. But the Spirit Himself was indeed very much present, both to participate in and to witness, the great events of Church history, and He can speak to whomsoever He will!

The Holy Ghost has been called, in Latter-day Saint circles, “the Ultimate Teacher.” And this is a truth of which my philosophy of history makes a ready embrace. Sartre, the French existentialist philosopher, once said that “no finite point has meaning without an infinite reference point.” Nothing we can pick out from a history book, from the present world surrounding us, or from anything else, has any meaning without an infinite point of reference to provide it. Sartre himself put no faith in any such infinite reference point. But for those who turn in good faith to the Holy Ghost as the Ultimate Teacher, there does exist a reference point, and He is most literally infinite.

Here, it is worth noting a few of the observations made by the influential Austrian-British philosopher, Dr. Ludwig Wittgenstein, who, despite having no religious faith in God, offered an intriguing perspective on what belief in God means. As he wrote:

To believe in God means to understand the question about the meaning of life.

To believe in God means to see that the facts of the world are not the end of the matter.

To believe in God means to see that life has a meaning.

Many have despaired of ever finding any ultimate meaning to life, including but not limited to human history, pointing out that the very words we use to tell the meaning of things in life, whether by writing or by speaking, can only be given meaning by reference to other words. Even the casual reading of any dictionary seems to confirm their suspicions. The meaning of any given word is provided by lexicographers using other words, and those words are themselves provided with meaning by use of still other words, and so on *ad infinitum*. This being the case, it is reasoned, our words can only have meaning, if at all, by reference to something other than other words.

And here, once more, the Spirit saves us, if we will but know Him. Elder Boyd K. Packer made the crucially important observation that when the Spirit communicates with any of us, “it is a voice that one *feels*, more than one *hears*.” Words themselves, whether spoken or written, do *not* give meaning to themselves, nor in fact can they. The *felt* words communicated to us by the Spirit cannot be found in any dictionary, nor will they ever be. But by studying out the words we hear or read, we can know the meaning thereof by the power of the Holy Ghost. Even the word of God in Scripture requires the Spirit to give meaning. And in studying even those events of sacred history which lie as far back in mankind’s history on earth as it is possible to go, we find that, as the Spirit attends us—

The groves of Eden, vanish’d now so long,

Live in description, and look green in song.

Thus, observant Latter-day Saints have from the earliest days of the restoration, and acting as the Spirit bid, been vigorous to a peculiar degree in both producing and studying history, as well as in cultivating a distinctive “historical consciousness.” The late Brigham Young University philosopher, Dr. Truman G. Madsen, once listed five “obvious manifestations” of what he called “Mormonism’s ‘historical sense,’” as follows:

Its vast historical archives are among the most conscientiously preserved, collated, and studied in the world.

Its genealogical fervor, not just an identity but a family quest, is unequalled.

The admonition to ‘keep a journal’ is to every member almost as binding an observance as the Ten Commandments. (‘Your journals will be sought after as history and scripture...That is the way the New Testament came -- what we have of it,’ said Joseph Smith.)

Its systematized and even ritualized remembering engenders historical groups and study classes. Its curriculum focus and its legacy of commemoration and celebration are second only to Judaism.

Its main expositors have been historians as well as scripturalists.

We are to involve ourselves in historical inquiry, and to be enthusiastic in our so doing. We can, and should, come before the world with a ready willingness to participate in open and civil dialogue regarding history, including our own. Dr. Paul L. Maier, the Christian historian, has said:

If all the evidence is weighed carefully and fairly, it is indeed justifiable, according to the canons of historical research, to conclude that the sepulcher of Joseph of Arimathea, in which Jesus was buried, was actually empty on the morning of the first Easter. And no shred of evidence has yet been discovered in literary sources, epigraphy, or archaeology that would disprove this statement.

I endorse this statement from Dr. Maier, and would affirm, moreover, that it has reference to what is no less than the very bedrock of Latter-day Saint religion, namely the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, of

which His triumph over the tomb is a glorious sign. And as surely as that is the bedrock of our religion, just as surely is the Book of Mormon the keystone of it. And in language similar to that of Dr. Maier, I have no reservation in maintaining that it is entirely justifiable to conclude, even with adherence to the strictures of historical inquiry, that metallic plates were actually in the possession of Joseph Smith for a time, and further, that eleven other men, in addition to at least one woman (Mary Whitmer), saw not only the plates, but also the engravings thereon. The facticity of these plates, I say, is beyond any reasonable doubt. The only question for honest inquirers concerns not the *existence*, but rather the *origin*, of the plates. Anyone who is unacquainted with these things should read, in the first place, the Testimonies of the Witnesses recorded in every copy of the Book of Mormon, and then proceed to study, if available, what many regard as the definitive work on the subject, Dr. Richard Lloyd Anderson's *Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses*. The meticulous, inspired historians who etched their record on the Book of Mormon plates anticipated such inquisitiveness. A person who is not yet ready to follow Jesus as would a disciple may, at least, in the meantime follow Him as would a private investigator, learning of Him what they may through persistent analysis and due humility in the face of fact. And it is the unified conviction of God's people that in more than just one sense truth has sprung out of the earth, as Psalm 85:11 expresses it. Jesus Christ, who is the truth (John 14:6), has sprung from His earthen tomb, and the truth in the Book of Mormon has sprung from the earth which for so long had held it; Jesus being the Word of God in person (Revelation 19:13), the Book of Mormon being the word of God in plates (Articles of Faith 1:8). And as Christian disciples anciently beheld an open tomb which contained grave-clothes witnessing to the divinity of Christ, similarly with the witnesses of the Book of Mormon plates did Christian disciples in this dispensation behold an open tome which contained engravings witnessing to the divinity of Christ.

But in studying any aspect of Church history, I have no expectation of finding perfection, either in the record or in the people whose deeds have been recorded. As Dr. Nibley wrote: "Mormons have never believed in an infallible book or an infallible anything in which men have had a hand. God allows fallible humans to be co-workers with Him on the road to a far-distant perfection, but he expects them to make lots of mistakes along the way."

I, too, expect God's fallible human co-workers to make lots of mistakes, and I further expect such of them as have passed into the next world to be found to have made lots of mistakes during their probationary time on earth. It was ever so, and so it is sure to remain until the end of time. And it is nothing but recklessly unwise to throw out the baby of divine truth with the bathwater of human error. The noblest and most celebrated prophets from Adam down to our own century have committed glaring errors, but none so glaring as to outshine the glory manifest in them to all who are ready to discern it.

The 18th chapter of Exodus records the fact that the great prophet Moses had enacted, and had been following, certain administrative policies that were "not good" (Exodus 18:17). And only after receiving instruction from his father-in-law, Jethro, did he begin to implement changes. Clearly, Moses was a man subject to frailty and error, no different in this regard than anyone else. There was, after all, a reason Moses did not conduct the congregation of Israel into the land of promise, and Numbers 20:12 records it. Moses and his brother had failed, on that occasion, both to believe in the Lord and to sanctify Him before the people of Israel. This is a strong charge, indeed. But if we choose to dispense with Moses and all that was wrought by God through him, or would have the insolence to brand him a false prophet on account of his failings here, then we miss the majesty of that law revealed by him, which even Jesus Christ Himself was pleased to observe. And we also miss the grandeur of that superlative scene in which Moses, together with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and numerous others, saw God (Exodus 24:9-11).

But Moses is far from being an isolated case. Chosen men of God before, as well as after, him displayed weaknesses for which it would be all too easy to condemn them. Isaac was fooled by the cunning disguise of his son Jacob (Genesis 27:5-30), and Jacob, in his turn, was fooled by certain of his scheming sons, to the point of believing, erroneously, that his son Joseph had been killed, and was so troubled by the supposed passing of his beloved son that he declared he would go down to the grave mourning Joseph's death, though in fact he did not (Genesis 37:31-35). Even after Moses, Joshua, his successor, was fooled by the wily Gibeonites (Joshua 9:3-22).

Numerous other instances could be multiplied with perfect ease, even incorporating several from the New Testament, including the very apostles of Christ, but the point, by now, should be well established that God calls imperfect servants. We should not be surprised when they serve imperfectly.

I have been dwelling, here, upon an aspect of human nature, and it is needful that such be done, as the historian's task requires that certain foundational assumption be made regarding human nature. As Dr. Walsh's *Philosophy of History* also notes:

...it is in light of his conception of human nature that the historian must finally decide both what to accept as fact and how to understand what he does accept. What he takes to be credible depends on what he conceives to be humanly possible, and it is with this that the judgments here in question are concerned. The science of human nature is thus the discipline which is basic for every branch of history.

As many see it, it is not according to human nature for imperfect, failing, and sinful men in this mortal world to receive and communicate reliable revelation regarding things divine. And those who suppose this are naturally hindered from advancing in knowledge of revealed history, such as that which is to be found outlined in the Book of Revelation. But in all approaches to history, it is needful that we seek the illumination of the Spirit, not supposing ourselves to be left to work such matters out on the strength of unaided human faculty.

It is interesting to observe past attempts made, without direct divine revelation, at outlining the course of human history on a pattern of successive stages. All such endeavors testify to a universal, deep-set longing to ascertain objective meaning in the unfoldment of history's record. Although his name may not be much remembered, much less closely associated with history, nowadays, Hegel wrote what he called *The Philosophy of History*, in the hope of presenting a comprehensive vision of the history of humankind. Like others, Hegel divided his history into four stages. On his view of it, humanity's advancement occurred progressively through the Oriental, the Greek, the Roman, and the German world, which he saw as an increase in "the consciousness of Freedom" toward the development of Spirit, as manifested in the State. These various "grades" in the consciousness of Freedom through time, he wrote, "supply us with the natural division of universal History." The Orientals, he believed, had not attained to an awareness "that Spirit—Man *as such*—is free," whereas the Greeks first became conscious of the fact of human freedom, the Romans after them coming to an awareness that *some* men are free, while the Germans, at long last, Hegel believed, "under the influence of Christianity, were the first to attain consciousness that man, as man, is free."

Interestingly, Augustine, over a thousand years before Hegel, also divided history into four great stages:

1. Paradise, prior to the Fall,
2. The world following man's expulsion from Eden and before the Promise to Abraham and the Law of Moses were given to the Jews,
3. Under the Law of Moses and leading up to the time of Christ, and
4. Between the first and second coming of Christ, under the dispensation of grace.

But if the name of Hegel is now largely forgotten in connection with philosophy of history, the name of Marx arouses the passions of nearly all who hear it, even today. And Marx, too, in his turn sought to divide human history into exactly the same number of progressive stages as had Augustine and Hegel, believing the human race to have advanced through economic systems of slave labor, feudal serfdom, industrial capitalism, and the and on toward the classless communistic society which he supposed to be the stage of ultimate perfection.

Against all such attempts at presenting an outline of human history stands the remarkable Revelation of John, in which God Himself divides that history into seven stages, each marked by a seal, from which imagery "we are to understand that the first seal contains the things of the first thousand years, and the second also of

the second thousand years, and so on until the seventh,” as taught by Joseph Smith (D&C 77:7). And the course of that history is toward the fulfillment of God’s plan of happiness, which is the very plan that drives the plot of our human story. Every author has a plan for which his or her book is written, and as the writing proceeds toward the fulfillment thereof, so the plot develops. Even in those places where the plot seems confusing, and the story seems bound for the saddest of endings, the plan remains. It will be of particular importance to saints in these latter times to keep this plan in view, and to mark well the fulfillment of those long-prophesied events portending the consummation of His work, in order that their confidence may grow stronger, alike in the dependability of ancient inspired writ and in the certainty that the return of Christ will transpire in due course, as they live to witness the multiplicity of signs foretokening His advent.

Of all the symbols in Scripture by which God represents His people, one of the most beautiful is that of a woman preparing to be received as the bride of Christ. This image is an intimately familiar one to all who have studied the Book of Revelation in earnest. The woman struggles, and finds herself in many a desperate strait. She knows she is not perfect, but she intends to prepare herself, that she may be ready when her Bridegroom returns. And that woman is the Church. Christ has not yet returned to receive her, but that is because she is not yet ready. But as surely as God lives and loves His Church, she shall be. And the story of her preparation stands out as among the most beautiful in all of history.