

# United Kingdom & Ireland Local Pages

## A Month of Miracles

By Elder Stephen C. Kerr, Area Seventy

**B**efore his mission, my mission president, Ben E. Lewis, was the executive vice president of Brigham Young University. I had an opportunity to meet with him at the end of his mission. As we sat in his office, I asked him what he would do when he returned home. He answered that he knew exactly what he would be doing. He pushed a letter across his desk for me to read. President Lewis had been assigned by the First Presidency to raise a considerable amount of money for Brigham Young University. I asked President Lewis the obvious question: “How are you going to raise so much money?”

He answered simply, “I will ask people for their money.”

That simple answer taught me so much. President Lewis would invite people to act. He knew his invitation would make a difference, and it did.

This month is one of invitation. Our Area Presidency has said: “We invite every member within our sphere of influence to prayerfully select someone to invite to attend sacrament meeting with them in June.”<sup>1</sup>

Agency is an eternal governing principle of the plan of happiness. The Lord Omnipotent Himself acts by extending invitations to His children.<sup>2</sup>

Man is created to act.

“Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

“All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as

all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence.”<sup>3</sup>

There is something very special about the word *invitation*: it is kind, it is thoughtful, it is inclusive, and it is generous. Who is not thrilled to receive an invitation?

In my experience, people rarely—if ever—are offended by receiving an invitation; people are much more likely to be offended when they are *not* invited.

Let’s speak plainly. When we have experienced the love of God in our own lives, it’s not so difficult to summon up the

courage to invite someone else to receive the blessings of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup>

Of course, they may either accept or decline our invitation. But truth be told, while I am not accountable for the choices others make, I am accountable for helping others by inviting them to do that which is good.

“But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, everything which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.”<sup>5</sup>

So, how will we “invite” others in this month of invitation?



**Elder  
Stephen C. Kerr**

First, ponder. Make a list of those you would like to invite to come to sacrament meeting with you. Remember, the Holy Ghost loves lists! Names and faces will come into your mind. Your feelings of love for the people on your list will deepen. It is an act of faith on your part to make such a list. And such faith does not go unrecognised or unrewarded by heaven.

Next, pray often about the people whose names are on your list. Ask Heavenly Father to soften their hearts to receive an invitation. Consider fasting for help.

Then, make the visit. Do not let fear quench your faith.<sup>6</sup> Open your mouth.<sup>7</sup> The Lord will give you the words.<sup>8</sup> “I’d like to invite you to come to church with me. Will you come?”

“When you have done your very best, you may still experience disappointments, but you will not be disappointed in yourself. You can feel certain that the Lord is pleased when you feel the Spirit working through you.”<sup>9</sup>

As we follow these simple steps and exercise faith in the Lord, I humbly and sincerely promise to everyone who reads this message that June 2012 will become a month of miracles. Our faith will be strengthened and the Church of Jesus Christ will increase in numbers and in spirit. ■

#### NOTES

1. Letter from the Europe Area Presidency to Area Seventies, stake presidents, district presidents and mission presidents in the Europe Area, 31 January 2012.
2. See “Know This, That Every Soul Is Free,” *Hymns*, no. 240.
3. Doctrine and Covenants 93:29–30; see also 2 Nephi 2:11–16.
4. “Love is one of the chief characteristics of Deity, and ought to be manifested by those who aspire to be the sons of God. 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.” (*Teachings of the Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 330–31.
5. Moroni 7:13.
6. See 2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18; Doctrine and Covenants 67:3; *Preach My Gospel*, 116: “Doubt and fear are opposed to faith.”
7. See Doctrine and Covenants 30:5, 11.
8. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:85; see also 100:6.
9. *Preach My Gospel*, 11.

## New and Improved UK Newsroom Launched

By Francesco Di Lillo

On Tuesday, March 27, 2012, the Church launched the new and improved online Newsroom for the United Kingdom, the Church’s website for news media, opinion leaders, and the public. At the same time, similar websites were launched in France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland, and Spain. These websites are the first in Europe to follow the design of the standardised international Newsroom website of the Church.

Here are a few features:

- The design is significantly changed from the previous site and has a much stronger news feel to it.
- The search engine and navigation is improved to make it easier for news media to find content on the site.
- A new multimedia section and search engine make it easier to find photos, video, and audio that are available for use by news media, bloggers, and others.
- Much more content is brought to the front page, including the Newsroom blog and the *World Report* video program.
- A Newsroom blog design has been introduced and incorporated into the site.
- A topic index has been added to the site to aggregate information by topic. The number of topics on this page will grow extensively over the life of the site.

Beyond those improvements, significant technical enhancements have been made that will provide information to the news media, bloggers, and the public much faster and more comprehensively than before.

To access the Newsroom, go to [www.mormonnewsroom.org.uk](http://www.mormonnewsroom.org.uk) ■

# New and Improved UK LDS.org Launched

**T**he Internet has changed since the launch of the country websites, and the launch on March 27 of LDS.org for the UK provides a new and enhanced web experience.

The new country website emphasises the teachings of living prophets, facilitates online gospel study, provides ways to share the gospel, makes materials easier to find and provides additional tools. Most important, it allows the publication of local stories and events, along with global content—including messages from local and European Church leadership. To find local stories, go to **Menu** and select **News and Events**.

## Teachings of Living Prophets

With so many voices on the Internet competing for attention, the new country website focuses on bringing one voice to the forefront—the prophetic voice.

The site aims to give the teachings of modern prophets and apostles prominence by focussing on their ministry and what they are teaching today.

The Prophets and Apostles Speak Today section of the site features recent messages and provides personal insights into the lives and ministries of the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

## Tools for Online Gospel Study

The new country website provides access to the scriptures and other

Church materials, as well as tools for online study. Users are able to highlight and underline passages, take notes, keep a study journal, and organise materials into files for later use.

These features are available in the Study area of the site, which includes the scriptures, general conference, lesson manuals, Church magazines and more.

## Sharing the Gospel

Content on the new site is media rich, using video, audio, photography, gospel art, and other graphics to communicate the gospel message. But the content isn't there to benefit only members of the Church. It, like the gospel, is to be shared. Most of the site's content will be integrated with popular social networking sites and e-mail so users will be able to easily share content and direct their friends to learn more about the gospel.

## New Search Capability

Another important function that is improved is the site's search capabilities. The search bar available at the top of nearly every page on the site provides a list of suggested search terms to help form more precise searches. The search leads to a results page that includes recommended results, hand-selected for many frequently searched topics.

To access the website go to **[www.lds.org.uk](http://www.lds.org.uk)** ■

# Youth from Four Missions Attend EFY During 2011

By Carol Rigby

**D**uring August 2011 more than 1,450 youth from the Manchester, London, Leeds and Scotland–Ireland missions attended Especially for Youth sessions held at the East Midlands Conference Centre at the Nottingham University campus. With the preparation work completed, approximately 200 EFY staff members were ready, and greeted participants with typical EFY dance routines and a great amount of enthusiasm.

This year's EFY theme was "Believe, Hope and Endure". These multistake youth conferences certainly provided many opportunities for everyone to build and strengthen their personal testimonies whilst providing service to others.

The young men and women who attended were enthusiastic in providing feedback.

Candy said, "As the week went on you could really feel the enthusiasm and reverence that we all had for the gospel and learning. EFY truly changes lives. Now that I am home I still wake up early and have my own devotional."

Early morning devotionals were held each morning along with group gospel study sessions.

"It was absolutely amazing!" said Alisha. "It really changed my perspective on life, and it spiritually uplifted me. Since getting back from EFY I have continued studying my scriptures and praying, and have not missed a day."

Youth were able to participate in various activities designed to invite them to share in the "Climate of Revelation" that can be found at EFY. These included music programmes, classes, *For the Strength of Youth*



activities, service projects, dances, a variety show, testimony meetings and much, much more.

One young participant shared the following comments on how EFY had changed her life: "[It was] super—I really enjoyed myself! I had been at the point of leaving the Church,

***Hundreds of young men and young women enjoyed uplifting experiences at EFY at Nottingham in August 2011.***



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROL RIGBY

but after EFY I discovered that one can have so much fun in such good company and with such high standards that it has changed my outlook with regard to the Church.”

Ciarrai said, “My experience at EFY has strengthened my testimony, because now I can recognise how to feel the Holy Ghost. EFY has helped me realise that there are hundreds of people the same age as me keeping the standards. The counsellors were really nice and helped me build my testimony that this Church is the true and living Church of Christ. The spirit at EFY helped me realise that Christ loves me very much.”

“EFY was the best experience and best week that I’ve ever had in my life. It has strengthened my testimony to a point where I want to share it and help other people to gain one also,” said Harrison. “It has filled a hole in my life which I was missing. I have been in the Church all my life. I have known what’s it’s about and always just followed it, as it was a normal thing to do. But in the testimony meeting I had it confirmed to me. When I stood up I felt amazing—like I could accomplish any challenge in my life, that I could overcome any obstacle. I wish I could share with everyone that I know the Church is true and that it strengthens every one of us.”

The thirteenth article of faith provides a special insight into how we should conduct our lives and present ourselves before the people of the earth. This year’s EFY sessions have provided everyone attending with the opportunity to learn more of this great responsibility which each of us has, to conduct our lives in such a way that all we come into contact with will see that we are different, that we have a real belief and hope in a glorious future and are prepared to endure to the end. ■

## I Am My Brother’s Keeper

By Christine Reid

Last year the Primary children of the Bristol Second Ward did a service project collecting toiletries for the less privileged people of our society. The children were encouraged to use their pocket money or do extra chores to earn the extra money themselves, and purchase the items which we were collecting each month.

They were very excited to do this and each month proudly brought in their items which they had worked for. They called their project “I Am My Brother’s Keeper,” and with the help of the Primary workers, they were able to

pack 30 gift-wrapped bags of toiletries.

When the children saw what they had accomplished they said that they had a very special feeling, “a warm and fuzzy feeling”. They felt the Holy Ghost whispering to them that they were choosing the right. They also expressed gratitude for little things which they took so much for granted, like a toothbrush, toothpaste and soap.

The bags of toiletries were delivered to a homeless shelter in the centre of Bristol on Christmas Eve and were distributed to the people there. ■



*Children and leaders of the Bristol Second Ward Primary collected toiletries for those in need at Christmastime last year.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW HILLIER

## Isle of Man Relief Society Supports Women's Refuge

By Rosie Scott

On Thursday, 17 July 2011, the Douglas Ward Relief Society welcomed a guest speaker from the Women's Refuge on the island.

The guest introduced herself as Thelma and said she is the fundraiser for the island's refuge. Having seen a programme on the television about women's refuges and finding out that there was no such thing on the island, a woman offered to buy a property for that purpose if a group of women would agree to run it.

The authorities were approached to see if they would help with the funding, but they told the organizers that there was no such thing as domestic abuse on the island. Undaunted, the women started to raise funds in any way they could and, in spite of the official denial of need, the home became a haven for women and children from all walks of life who were suffering abuse in the home. No one is ever turned away.

The women are helped in practical ways to sort out their lives, be it to find work or another place to live, or to place their children in another school. These unfortunate families often rush from their homes on short

notice, leaving behind clothes and items necessary for daily use.

When Thelma left, after giving a most interesting talk and answering questions, the sisters of the Relief Society helped her load her car to the brim with items that had been donated as a contribution to this cause. They included such things as babies' nappies and toys, colouring books, feminine needs, toiletries and anything a family might need for a stay away from home. She was also presented with flowers and a thank you card for being the guest speaker for the evening.

The following day, Thelma said that she and the volunteer staff were overwhelmed with all the gifts, each one of which would be used to help the needy families return to some sort of normality while they rebuilt their shattered lives.

As women we are truly blessed with the capacity to show compassion to those in need. May we all remember the words of the Saviour, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40). ■

## She Continued the Work He Began

By Steve Cook

When Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) became President of the Church in March 1995, the First Presidency held their customary press conference. This one was brief. President Hinckley's message to the Church was a simple one: "Carry on!"

Sister Doris Cook of the Oldham Ward, Ashton England Stake, was in effect given that same two-word commission 40 years earlier by her husband, John Francis Cook, who was something of a legend in Britain as a gospel speaker and genealogist. A generation older than Doris, he urged her, before his passing in November 1955, to "carry on" the work of genealogical research.

Doris protested, saying she was not clever enough for such meticulous and demanding work. John calmed her fears on this score, confident in the understanding that "genny", as they both called it, was less the work of scholarship than a love affair with the work of the Lord for His children, sparked and enlivened by the Spirit of Elijah. Millions can testify of the truth of that assessment.

Doris grew into the work after John's passing. With four sons to raise, the young widow began the work out of necessity. She soon developed an instinct for it, emboldened by the Spirit of the Lord helping her. An article in the *Millennial Star* in 1956 about John quotes her as saying, "I picked the work up—*never easily at any time.*"

John had many spiritual experiences over the years. He began "genny" work in 1929 at the urging of a young missionary from Utah by the name of Richard L. Evans (1906–1971, member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles from 1953) serving in John's home town, Lowestoft,

Suffolk. Doris cited several of them for the *Star* article. These many experiences were a fulfilment of John's patriarchal blessing in which he was told the Lord would open up success in his work, "in the silent watches of the night" and as the needs arose. There were even times when he found information he needed carved into old tabletops.

On one occasion John was searching in a country vestry. The fee was five shillings an hour; he gave the verger a pound note. He could hear the verger's footsteps outside, coming to call a halt to the search

after four hours. He hurried to finish. A woman of the parish came up to the verger just as he was about to open the vestry door. She kept him talking for several minutes, just enough time for John to finish his search. He said he had "never been more grateful for a garrulous woman."

Doris had less spectacular occurrences, but experienced an ongoing, quiet, practical series of helpful interventions. As she searched the transcripts she chided herself for not being in the temple to complete her own ancestral work. And when she was in the temple she felt anxious to be out searching the registers for new names for other people.

Those registers had become so readily available by the Acts of Parliament in 1837 mandating the recording of all births, marriages, and deaths in England and Wales (Scotland and Ireland came later, in the 1850s). This was just one year after the appearance of Elijah with the



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF MARTIN COOK

sealing keys on Passover Day (3 April) 1836 in the Kirtland temple (see Doctrine and Covenants section 110). John and Doris were both keenly aware of this event, and of "the Spirit of Elijah" that accompanied their life work.

This year we celebrate the 175th anniversary of the beginning of the restored Church in Britain—and the Acts of Parliament that make this consummating work for our dead possible.

On 14 December 2011, 56 years after she was first commissioned to "carry on" the work of genealogy, Sister Cook joined her husband for their first Christmas together in a long, long time. They are together now, on the other side of the veil. All of their many family and friends in the kingdom have been blessed by the legacy of Doris and John and their lifelong commitment to the work of salvation now continued by their posterity. To each of them they say, "Carry on!" ■

**John and  
Doris Cook**

# Mair Elsbeth Burns (1938–2002)— A Tribute to Her and Others Like Her

By Peter Lee

**W**hen I served as a bishop in Oldham and Chester Wards, it was always a special delight to sit on the stand, look at the congregation, and see the faithful members anxious to partake of the sacrament and be edified by the Spirit as hymns were sung and speakers gave their messages. The combined faith, humility and prayers of all those present created the appropriate climate in which the Holy Ghost touched people's hearts.

As a bishop I was always grateful for the excellent support of other dedicated priesthood leaders, and also energetic, loving, devoted sisters who provided leadership to the Primary children, young women, and Relief Society sisters.

Additionally, I have long felt a very high regard for faithful widows and widowers, active part-member brothers and sisters who continue faithfully often on their own, those who continue active in the Church when other family members do not, and those who suffer with poor physical or mental health but hold fast to their covenants with the Lord. I have often been deeply touched by their faithfulness and reliance on the Lord

for the strength to carry on.

One such person was Mair Elsbeth Burns. In 1988 I was asked by the missionary elders to visit her, with them, prior to her baptism. She lived alone in her rented home as her husband, Peter, had tragically died from a brain tumour at age 48, about five years before. They had had four children with whom Mair remained in regular contact. During this first home visit I privately wondered whether she would have the strength to remain active, and in particular, keep the Word of Wisdom. I should not have worried! Despite having been a very heavy smoker, she succeeded in giving it up, was baptised, and became an active, temple-attending, much-loved and contributing member of the ward. Mair had always been a keen reader, so she also read her scriptures, *Ensign* magazines, etc., expanding her gospel knowledge as she did so.

Mair was a good listener and was known for this in her neighbourhood. People would discuss their troubles with her, and she would listen and help where she could. Her son, Gavin, recalls that many years ago, after his marriage broke up, he sought her

wise counsel, and this proved very helpful to him, as it was to others.

For many years I was Mair's home teacher. She had a deep and simple faith in the Lord. As her health was not good, plus the added stress of family worries, she would often ask for a priesthood blessing, which I and others were pleased to give her. Because of her great faith in the Saviour and her righteous life, the Spirit was always strong, and the blessings were a great comfort to her. What a privilege it was to use my priesthood in this way!

Mair died at home alone, suddenly and unexpectedly, in 2002. We were all saddened by this, but happy that she had gone to join her beloved husband, Peter (to whom she had been sealed in the temple) and other relatives and friends in the spirit world. She was now freed from the burdens of physical pain and emotional distress inherent in this earthly life. ■



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF PETER LEE

**Mair Elsbeth  
Burns  
(1938–2002)**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

**T**o submit all stories to the editors, Paul & Beryl Oliver, as Word files and photographs as 'jpg' files please use the email address [ukiensign@ldschurch.org](mailto:ukiensign@ldschurch.org). ■