

United Kingdom & Ireland

The Temple Provides the Blessings of Heaven

By **Elder Matti Jouttenus, Finland**

Area Seventy

The “Europe Area Plan for 2012” states: “Our ultimate goal is to increase the active membership of the Church in the Europe Area and to prepare members to go to the temple where they can make and receive the covenants that are necessary for their exaltation and for the exaltation of their families.” The essential and primary purpose for temples is to help both the living and the dead receive sacred ordinances, without which they cannot inherit the celestial kingdom that is governed by our Father in Heaven and His Son Jesus Christ. In addition to this central purpose, temples bless our lives in other ways.

Temple attendance helps both new converts and long-time members resist worldly temptations and enticements and endure to the end. “Every foundation stone that is laid for a Temple, and every Temple completed according to the order the Lord has revealed for his holy Priesthood, lessens the power of Satan on

the earth, and increases the power of God and Godliness, moves the heavens in mighty power in our behalf, invokes and calls down upon us the blessings of the Eternal Gods, and those who reside in their presence.”¹

The temple is a source of inspiration and strength to all who engage in missionary work, both young and old: “That their hearts may be softened when thy servants shall go out from thy house, O Jehovah, to bear testimony of thy name; that their prejudices may give way before the truth, and thy people may obtain favour in the sight of all;

“That all the ends of the earth may know that we, thy servants, have heard thy voice, and that thou hast sent us.”²

Going to the temple helps all leaders in the Church, both brothers and sisters, learn their



Elder Matti Jouttenus

duties and receive strength to act in them. This also applies to ward councils: “. . . that there may be a house built unto me for the salvation of Zion—

“For a place of thanksgiving for all saints, and for a place of instruction for all those who are called to the work of the ministry in all their several callings and offices;

“That they may be perfected in the understanding of their ministry, in theory, in principle, and in doctrine, in all things pertaining to the kingdom of God on the earth, the keys of which kingdom have been conferred upon you.”³

I have had many personal experiences with the temple and its power. When the Stockholm Sweden Temple was dedicated in 1985, through the power of the Holy Ghost I felt peace and joy to such an extent that I never imagined possible. When the bus left the temple to go to the Stockholm centre and others left to see the city, I stayed in the bus with my wife. I knew that when I left the bus to enter the

world that precious and holy peace would disappear, and I wanted to enjoy it as long as possible.

When my first wife died in 1987, knowing that we had been sealed together in the temple and we would be an eternal family was a priceless source of strength for me and my children.

I stayed in the Helsinki Finland Temple celestial room during a tour before the temple dedication, and I did not want to leave that peaceful place. Then I felt this gentle invitation in my heart: “Matti, now off to work, but if you are faithful you will someday return to the celestial kingdom and then you won’t ever need to leave.”

I testify that temples are houses of the Lord and those who officiate in them have real authority from God. Because of the temples and that authority, families can be eternal. I testify that in the temple every humble and sincere seeker will find peace again and again. I testify that the temple gives strength to cope with the worries, challenges, and sorrows of everyday life. I testify that in the temple the pure in heart shall see God.⁴ In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

NOTES

1. George Q. Cannon, “The Logan Temple”, *Millennial Star*, Nov. 12, 1877, 743.
2. D&C 109:56–57.
3. D&C 97:12–14.
4. See D&C 97:16.

Artist Fulfils Assignment after 60 Years

By Alan Duncan

Each Sunday during priesthood meeting the question is asked, “Has anyone had the opportunity to place a Book of Mormon or given out any pass-along cards this week?” Without exception John Wilkinson, a local artist in the Alloa Ward in the Edinburgh Scotland Stake, will relate his missionary experiences over the week. Without a doubt John would say his missionary opportunities have come through his love of painting.

One such experience occurred just recently. John’s love of painting began when he was young lad. Whilst living in Cyprus he used to watch his father drawing cartoons. One day he picked up a pencil and began to draw. A friend of the family noticed his talent and began

giving him lessons. When he was eight years of age the family moved to Turkey, where John attended the Mithat Pasah School in Iskenderun. One of his teachers noticed his talent as an artist and asked him to draw a portrait of Kemal Ataturk, the founding father of the Turkish Republic who is very much revered by the people of Turkey, so it could be placed on the school wall. John declined the invitation.

As the years rolled by, John often thought about that decision with some regret. Then a unique opportunity presented itself to return to the land he once called home. John set about completing the painting. Arriving in Iskenderun, John met up with three of his boyhood friends and returned to his school where he received a very

John Wilkinson presents his painting to be hung on the school wall in Turkey.



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JOHN WILKINSON

warm welcome. Overwhelmed with emotion John presented the painting to the teachers of the school, fulfilling a request made all those years ago. During his stay in Iskenderun John managed to place six copies

of the Book of Mormon and to present one of his paintings of the birth of the Saviour to the local Catholic Church where he was a friend of the parish priest.

John is so grateful for the gospel in his life. "I know that

Jesus is the Christ, my friend, the Saviour of the world, our Redeemer," he said. "I need to be closer to Him; I strive to do that. I'm thankful and in debt to Him for His sacrifice and the love that He has for us all." ■

Friendship and the Power of the Book of Mormon

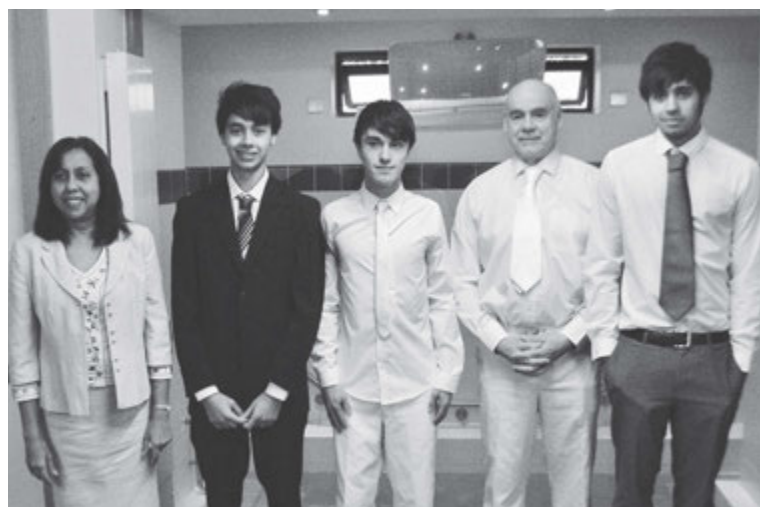
By Don Carpenter

You never know what will happen when you give a copy of the Book of Mormon to a friend," said John Gaule, a member of East Grinstead Ward, Crawley England Stake. His sons Danny and Joe had been friends with Sam King since Sam was a seven-year-old attending St. Catherine's Primary School. When the Gaule family moved to the village of Bletchingley, Sam lived just around the corner and began spending a lot of time at the Gaule home.

"We often spoke to him about the Church, but he was not interested," John said. "He was like a son to us, so I went to his home and presented his parents with a copy of the Book of Mormon. I hardly knew his parents, but I didn't want to go behind their backs. They took the book, and several weeks later I asked Sam if anyone had read it. He said he didn't know, but he didn't think so. I thought, 'that's the end of that, they will probably throw it in the bin.'"

That was five years ago. Sam was baptised a member of the Church on 24 March 2012 by John Gaule. Sam talks about his friendship with the Gaule family, the power of the Book of Mormon, and his conversion in glowing terms.

"The Book of Mormon came into my household when I was only 13," he said. "My parents handed me the book but I never really touched it. To me it was just another book on the shelf. My parents



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF DON CARPENTER

had asked me to throw it away many times, but for some reason I just couldn't do it. If it had been any other book, I think I would have happily binned it, without a care in the world. But this was a book given to us by the father of Danny and Joe.

"In July of 2008 I was taken on holiday by the Gaule family to Sri Lanka. This trip really strengthened our friendship and was my first trip abroad. The first time I attended the LDS Church was in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka. I met some missionaries there from California and Ohio, and was intrigued to learn more about the beliefs of the Church. I felt the openness of the members. It was testimony day and I felt the eagerness and happiness of the people who shared their feelings.

Sam King with the Gaule family at his baptism.

“Last August, after receiving my college exam results, I went to a party to celebrate my successes. Later I began to ponder life and its purposes, the values and standards I had observed from the Gaule family, the love I had felt from them, and my thoughts about the Church. What happened next was quite unexpected. I felt an incredible sensation fill my chest and my heart. I had never felt so warm and happy in my life, and did not know at the time that this was the Holy Spirit urging me to learn more about the LDS Church. I decided to begin reading the Book of Mormon, and I began to pray. After I had read only a small section of First Nephi, I knew that this book was true and was another witness of Jesus Christ.

“About a month later I started talking to the Gaule family more about the Church. I am sure they were pretty shocked. I remember talking to my friends’ mum, Felicia, and saying, ‘I want what Joe and Danny have.’ I knew that I didn’t have what they did, and this was the gospel and their membership in the LDS Church. I first met the missionaries—Sister Casasola, Sister Burrows and Sister Allred—on 19 September. Being with them has been the most amazing half year of my life. We met at the Gaule home and at the London Temple Visitors’ Centre, where they served. I strongly recommend anyone who is not in the Church to meet the missionaries. They are incredible people and we have become fantastic friends.”

“I was raised by a loving and caring mum and dad, and I am grateful that they raised me correctly. But I need the Church in my life. I now know that there is a God, why we came to earth, and where we are going. I have learned to know about Jesus Christ from reading the Book of Mormon. I already have a loving family, but another family also loves me. I cannot contemplate what life would be like today without the Gaules and the Book of Mormon. Their love and friendship kept me from throwing it in the bin, and I am so thankful.” ■

Liverpool Stake Celebrates 170th Anniversary of Relief Society

By Yvonne Runcie McMahon

Saturday, 17 March 2012, marked 170 years since Relief Society was first organised. Emma Smith, the first president, said, “We are going to do something extraordinary” (Relief Society, Minutebook, 1842 Mar.–1844 Mar., entry made 17 March 1842, LDS Church Archives).

Relief Society is now one of the oldest women’s organisations in the world.

To mark this important landmark the Liverpool Stake Relief Society presidency wanted to do something different for the sisters. Four different workshops were available for the sisters to choose from.

Some sisters made quilts for a Women’s Refuge. Eleven simple tied quilts were completed on the day and were presented to the refuge later by Liverpool Ward Relief Society president Jackie Smith.

Others were taught family history indexing. This workshop was hosted by Susan Worley, currently serving as a family history support missionary, who commented, “Indexing is our gift to the world”. Those attending this workshop learned just how easy it is to get started on the programme.

The work of the Southport Soup Kitchen was presented with ideas on how sisters can support their local community.



Sisters of Liverpool England Stake gather to celebrate 170 years of Relief Society.

Christine Bradford, Royal British Legion Community Fundraiser, gave a presentation on the work of the RBL as Liverpool stake continues to support their appeal each year. Over 36 million poppies are distributed each year but we do not always know how the monies raised are spent. Sisters gained an insight into the ongoing work of the RBL and the 200 000 home and hospital visits that are made each year. Individuals were invited to volunteer to become a home visitor and make a difference to their local community. This scheme aims to visit those from the ex-service community who are housebound or in hospital by offering the hand of friendship and companionship.

The afternoon began with an introduction of a video clip from *Daughters in My Kingdom* to show how each sister can make a difference to other sisters' lives.

Stake Relief Society president Susan McKenna commented, "Each workshop was chosen to celebrate service given by Relief Society throughout 170 years and to provide a link with local communities which would be ongoing and make a difference".

Refreshments were enjoyed at the close of the workshops and a huge cake commemorating the 170th anniversary was made by Pam Harrison of St. Helens Ward. ■

Happily and Cheerfully Given to the Taxman

By June Shearing

The HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) office in Bournemouth is no stranger to Church members at their Learning at Work day. Previously those coming to ask questions about family history research would learn about the Church family history resources.

However, this year the budget had been withdrawn and

those volunteers in the office who run the Learning at Work day were convincing themselves that the event would need to be cancelled. After all, what person would give of their time and talents for free?

One of the great strengths of the Church is the talented members, and where budgets may fail, our members would not. This year saw five Church members offering their time and talents to provide opportunities to teach new skills to the "taxman".

PHOTOGRAPH BY JUNE SHEARING



Civil servants in Bournemouth learn new skills at work.



Talented members of Poole Ward came to the rescue to make this an exciting day enjoyed by all. Great-grandmother Marie Giles was busy encouraging staff to make cards. Melsia Kraftner, fresh from completion of her PhD, qualified as a yoga instructor and held a free yoga session. Stake YSA centre president Beth Shearing popped in during her lunch break and got both men and women making origami fish and shirts. Heidi Northbrooke found time in her busy teaching schedule to add another Zumba session, which went overtime as the men and women in the office were enjoying burning off calories. Meanwhile others were signing up to do indexing and tracing their family trees with staff member June Shearing.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) urged Latter-day Saints to engage in simple acts of service and promised that it would bless the lives of others. This event was an example of this principle. Members had fun sharing their talents, and the staff at HMRC have expressed gratitude for the service given. Some have started to join Zumba classes, desks are full of paper fish, and people can be seen indexing during their lunch break. ■

Top That for Children's Cancer Ward

By Sue Bleach

After growing it all her life, Milla T. had waist-length hair, and it was her pride and joy. But the generous 10-year-old had her luscious locks chopped back to a neat bob, all in the name of charity.

Milla got the idea from her father, who was working with sick children as a student nurse for Birmingham Children's Hospital. Her dad, Daniel T., showed Milla a short clip about what children go through when being treated for cancer. She wanted to make a difference by helping a child suffering from cancer and suggested the children's hospital should benefit, especially as her dad had completed placements at the hospital.

The dramatic sponsored haircut, staged at Toni & Guys in Coventry city centre, has raised more than £300 for Birmingham Children's Hospital cancer ward. Milla also sent her 50-centimetre-long plaited ponytail to the Prince's Trust in Birmingham for a wig to be made for a child with cancer. Birmingham Children's hospital ensured that the funds would be allocated to the oncology ward.

The morning before having her haircut, Milla attended the funeral of a family friend who died of cancer, which she said brought home the importance of combating the disease.

Milla, who was born into the Church, enjoyed a free haircut and was featured in the local newspaper.

We can all follow her example by finding a way to help those children of our Heavenly Father who are less fortunate than we are. ■



Milla before . . .

. . . and after the haircut that provided much-needed funds for a children's cancer ward.



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DANIEL T.

A String of Firsts for a Long-Standing Manx Couple

By Rosie Scott

The Douglas Ward in the Isle of Man is a close-knit ward on an island that enjoys a special sense of community. The Isle of Man is a small island with a great heart, and a great heart is what makes the Douglas Ward so special. Playing an enormous part in making it so special have been Brother and Sister Ronald and Eileen Clarke who, over the years, have been the “father and mother” of the ward.

Sister Clarke was born in Peel, Isle of Man, the birthplace of Leonora Cannon, the wife of Church President John Taylor (1808–87), and Brother Clarke was born in nearby Greeba. They were married in their late teens. Their marriage was “made in heaven”—a perfect example of a celestial marriage. Ron was a farmer and later went on to become a Senior Driving Test and Vehicle Examiner for the Isle of Man Government, but he never lost his love of farming and all things rural. Eileen studied and graduated in Domestic Science, which stood her in good stead when she opened a guesthouse in Douglas. Later she became the warden/cook/house-keeper for a Manx Government



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RON CLARKE

Ron and Eileen Clarke

sheltered housing complex where she was much loved by the residents for 32 years, until her retirement.

They first came into contact with the Church when missionaries boarded with them in Peel for a year, but it was during the five years that missionaries stayed in their guesthouse in Douglas that they began to listen to their message. Eileen was baptised in the sea in 1968 and her husband followed in 1969. Since that time they have been pillars of Douglas Ward, serving and loving the

members, always willing to listen, help, guide or contribute in any way they could. To the members of the ward, they have always been there.

Due to emigration to America in the 19th century the Church lay dormant on the island until a branch was reestablished in 1962. When Ron and Eileen joined the Church there were approximately 10 members on the island, and they met in a small room above business premises in Douglas. The branch was run by missionaries until 1970 when Ron became the first Manx president of the growing branch. Later he and Eileen helped the other ward members build a chapel under the supervision of Church building supervisor Dave Lambert.

Ever the Relief Society sister, Eileen also helped provide food for the workers. The Isle of Man branch was part of the Irish Mission, but in 1976 the branch joined the newly created Liverpool Stake and became a ward. Ron became the first bishop. Eileen served faithfully alongside him, giving invaluable support to him and service to the members.

Apart from his callings as branch president and twice as bishop, Brother Clarke has served as ward mission leader and high priests group leader

on more than one occasion. Sister Clarke was called twice as Relief Society president and was the first to teach early-morning seminary in the island, as well as serving in a number of other callings. Both she and Brother Clarke were the first family history specialists in the newly opened ward family history library, and they also served as ward missionaries and as temple workers in the Preston Temple. Sister Clarke was Chairwoman, for a term, of the Joint Women's Council on the island, an organisation in which she had a great interest.

Brother and Sister Clarke's influence extended well beyond the ward. Visitors from Liverpool Stake could always rely on a warm welcome and a cosy bed in their house. They kept in touch with missionaries and missionary couples from as far away as America, and even visited many of them when possible. They are both loved and respected throughout the island and beyond by members and non-members alike.

We suspect that Sister Clarke has carried on caring in the eternities, while Ron ensures that her legacy lives on as he encourages members to love and serve one another as they have always served them. ■

And She Went About Doing Good . . .

By Doris Rudd

Joyce Robson was a convert to the Church while in her teens. She was baptised by Elder Jansen and Elder Draffen.

In her early years Joyce liked to travel, going to Ireland, Canada and Italy. She worked for a photographer colouring black and white photographs. She loved children and left home to work in children's homes, returning home to care for her father when he became ill. After her father's death she stayed at home to care for her mother, who had developed Alzheimer's disease.

During this sad time Joyce found time to learn to play the piano and organ and was in demand for playing at sacrament meetings and other Church functions, even with her mother sitting beside her on the piano stool.

Joyce served as Primary president and held the meetings in her home. The children loved her and the meetings were always happy times.

As the energy of youth began to wane she wanted somewhere quieter and not so busy! She decided to move from Middlesbrough to the small town of Brotton, just along the northeast coast. Opportunities will always follow those who are willing to serve, and so it was with Joyce—life in her quiet bungalow was just as busy as ever.



Joyce Robson spent her life doing good.

ADRIAN MCTERNAN

Still in demand as a pianist and organist, she played at sacrament services at the nearest LDS meetinghouse in the seaside town of Redcar and for anyone else who needed her.

Joyce had a beautiful soprano voice which she used whenever she could. She loved to sing, and so she joined a ladies choir, the White Rose Singers. Free to sing and not play the piano for a change, she enjoyed the company and the friendships she made.

She was kind and caring and loved visiting teaching; she was my companion for years.

Joyce would have loved to serve a mission, but at the time circumstances did not allow. Her life was her mission—all 87 years—and she spent it doing good. ■

To 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.