

UK & IRELAND LOCAL PAGES

AREA LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Church History Is the Story of People

By Elder Kent F. Richards, USA

Second Counselor in the Europe Area Presidency

“Nourished by testimony and watered with faith, the lessons of the past can take root in your hearts and become a vibrant part of who you are.”¹ Elder M. Russell Ballard taught us in these few words the real purpose of keeping and studying Church history—to learn faith and willing commitment from our ancestors. Through their experiences and examples our own testimonies are strengthened and our hearts are more firmly fitted for our personal journeys through mortality. Rather than just cataloguing events, studying Church history is the understanding of how those events connected to the very people who lived them. We learn very quickly that while the immediate surroundings and circumstances of the past may vary from our setting, the challenges, opportunities, and principles of faith apply exactly the same.

Each of us can look to our first-generation ancestor who joined the Church (and it may be you!) and rejoice in their humble faith and willingness to change their life and carefully pursue the gospel path—often at great personal and family sacrifice. The lessons of the past are actually strengthened in each succeeding generation as the traditions of faithful obedience and service are learned and lived. We can all learn from the sweet examples of many early Saints,

but we receive the most power in the example of our own ancestors—our own personal Church/family history. In reality we can’t separate Church and family history. As we study the names, places, events, and lives of our family ancestors, we are indeed studying Church history in its finest form. Even if they were not yet members of the Church, they were faithfully preparing the generations to follow for the acceptance of the gospel truth when the light finally shone for them.

As I have studied the lives of my direct ancestors, I have been enriched and strengthened in my own faith through their faith and steadiness. Their humble service involved many great sacrifices of comforts and conveniences. They left families and children in the hands of the Lord and departed to serve—only to have some of those very family members die, never to be embraced again in mortality.

Perhaps one of the most poignant expressions of an ancestor was made by my great-great-grandfather Willard Richards as he conversed with the Prophet Joseph Smith in the Carthage jail just minutes before the mob took the life of the prophet. The prophet had asked him a question that tested his heart and his resolve. From Willard’s own journal in his own handwriting (note that he refers to himself as “Dr. Richards”):



Elder Kent F. Richards

“Joseph said after supper we will go in [to the jail cell for safety]. Joseph said to Dr. Richards. If we go in the jail will you go in with us. Dr. answered—Br. Joseph you did not ask me to cross the river with you, you did not ask me to come to Carthage. You did not ask me to come to jail with you—and do you think I would forsake you now. But I will tell you what I will do—if you are condemned to be hung for treason, I will be hung in your stead and you shall go free. Joseph [said] you cannot. Dr. said I will.”²

“I will.” “I will.” No matter the cost, even my own life if necessary, “I will.”

The question may come to us in a different form, though in reality we all face it—“will you?” Will you give your heart, forsake comforts, and live to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and His children? Will you give your all? May our answer be: “I will.” May our lives be “Church history” for those who follow after us. ■

NOTES

1. M. Russell Ballard, “Learning the Lessons of the Past” *Ensign*, May 2009.
2. Willard Richards personal journal, copy in possession of author.

Olympia Welcomes FamilySearch

By Shawna Windom

Over the weekend of February 22 to 26, Olympia in London hosted the “Who Do You Think You Are Exhibition,” and the FamilySearch stand was the first to greet visitors as they entered the exhibition. Visitors were able to get help from experts on how to start their own history, use FamilySearch or get guidance on how to find a long-lost relative.

The stand was manned by 40 consultants, 12 of which were from the Family History Department in Salt Lake City, and the waiting list for help at times reached over three hours, and such was the interest in the exhibit. The staff from the London Regional Family History Library, temporarily located in the National Archives in Kew, were on hand to assist on the stand.

David Retcher, the Chief Genealogical Officer for the Church, gave individual interviews to six leading family history publications and outlined the future of FamilySearch. There is currently a major project to digitalise all the millions of names that are recorded on microfilm, and there was a continuous demonstration inviting helpers to enrol on the project. Part of this project is

the digitising records of all First World War soldiers with the aim of having them available next year for the 100th anniversary of the war. There are currently 120 family history centres in the United Kingdom and Ireland where help is available for the beginner to the experienced genealogist. Some run beginners courses and have access to subscription sites. These services are free of charge.

See: <https://familysearch.org>

On the site you can trace

your family, research the Wiki site which is a free collection of family history articles provided by family history enthusiasts from around the world or join a free online class to help you discover your family tree. Whether you are just beginning your family history research or are an experienced genealogist, you can learn something new. These classes are taught by genealogy research consultants at the Family History Library. ■

The FamilySearch stand at Olympia Exhibition Centre in London.



One Million Names Indexed by Northampton Members

By Stephen Hough

David and Carol Cottrell, area family history advisers for the London Temple district, visited the Northampton Stake in March to give a presentation on temple and family history work. The evening was organised by Peter and Moira Dodkins, directors of the stake family history centre, who had also invited former stake FHC directors to attend, making it a really special event. The presentation was entitled “The Joy of Family History—Inspiring Members and Leaders”.

The evening commenced with a presentation by Peter Slattery of the stake presidency of a “cheque” to the value of 1,000,000 names, which have been indexed to date within the Northampton Stake, under the direction and inspiration of Maud Jamieson, stake indexing director. The Cottrells commented about this feat by stating, “A million names indexed in one stake! When we started we were thinking of a target of four million for the whole temple district!”

Brother Stephen Hough, who, with his wife, Jan, is a former stake FHC director, is a recent recruit to the indexing team. Stephen says: “It has been sobering, humbling, fascinating and often quite emotional to participate in indexing the records of those souls who served their country in what was known then as the Great War (‘the war to end all wars’), but which we now know sadly as the First World War. When I had completed the records for 100 soldiers I saw that as a

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW FREISS



From L to R: Maud Jamieson, Katrina Freiss, Peter Slattery, Moira and Peter Dodkins and the Cottrells with the “cheque” for one million names indexed.

Company of Tommies who could be searched for and found, so my next goal is to index the records for a whole battalion”.

Attendees on the night included Peter Skinner, who served as a team leader on the original FamilySearch project to microfilm First World War records, adding to the depth of knowledge and level of commitment present, making attendance at the evening presentation a very informative and inspirational experience.

Brother and Sister Cottrell led discussions on encouraging participation in family history work, and were impressed by the knowledge and testimony of those attending the evening. David Cottrell shared his joyful experience of investigating the Church in the mid-1960s when he first learnt of the vicarious work that leads to not one soul being excluded from potential gospel blessings. He has been a “convert” to temple and family history work ever since. ■

“I’m a Mormon” Campaign Comes to London

By Debbie Twigger, Assistant Editor

Commuters and tourists travelling around London in the month of April were invited to “ask a Mormon” through a series of advertisements in mainline and tube stations, including Oxford Circus and Piccadilly Circus and on 250 red double-decker buses. “There is a great amount of interest in Mormons right now in the UK and Ireland,” said Area Seventy Elder Clifford Herbertson. “People are asking the question, ‘Who are the Mormons?’ and when people are asking questions, we want to be here to provide them with the answers of how and why we follow Jesus Christ. These adverts are in no way a tacit endorsement of the play (*The Book of Mormon* musical), but we want those who have questions to know where they can find real answers,” said Elder Herbertson. “We hope this campaign opens the door for many more people to learn about us and understand that we are people of faith who seek to follow Jesus Christ.”

For those who want to learn more, the adverts refer viewers to Mormon.org.uk, a version of the Church’s Mormon.org website specifically for the UK and Ireland. In the last year, the Mormon.org website has had over 20 million visitors globally including the UK and Ireland.

The advertisements in the UK invite viewers to “ask a Mormon,” and include statements of faith by Mormons such as “Jesus Christ is my compass” and “When I lost my way, God helped me find it.” The Church invites anyone with questions to “ask a Mormon” via mormon.org.uk or Twitter at twitter.com/AskAMormon.

The musical has generated questions and interest by the public and provided the Church with an opportunity to better inform the public about who Mormons truly are and how their Christ-centred faith enriches their lives. Church social media

has been busy with comments about the campaign including:

“Kudos to @ldschurchuk for some witty ad placement in Leicester Sq. and Piccadilly Circus tubes. Was enveloped in it post-Book of Mormon”

“Testimony that advertising works. I’m considering becoming a Mormon?” ldschurchUK twitter

“It’s fantastic seeing each of these pictures, on every one-smiling faces!” and “I am a Mormon. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints holds the true gospel.” <http://www.facebook.com/LDSUK>.

Members have been sending in photographs of themselves pictured with the advertisements to a photo competition on the UK Church Facebook page, “Snap the ad”, which has united members and helped them feel good about pronouncing their faith and living the gospel.

The youth from the Watford Stake wore specially designed t-shirts with the slogan, “I’m a Mormon” at Charing Cross station in London, where many



Youth and leaders from the Watford stake in specially designed t-shirts at Charing Cross mainline station in London, ready to answer questions from the public about being a Mormon.

PHOTO BY LING SEAH



The winning entry by Gemma Godivala in the “Snap the Ad” competition on the Church UK Facebook page shows her family pictured in front of one of the “I’m a Mormon” ads in London wearing specially designed t-shirts.

of the advertisements were placed, and were ready to answer questions from members of the public.

Visitors to the UK Church websites, <http://www.mormonnewsroom.org.uk> and <http://www.lds.org.uk> have trebled for the month of April, and the number of Book of Mormon copies being requested has increased by 96%. David J. Jordan, London Mission president, recalls this experience:

“Last week a wonderful family from France walked into the Visitors’ Centre. They were in London on holiday. As they toured the city, they saw the “I’m a Mormon” advertisements in the tube stations. The father was impressed and asked a stranger if the Mormons had a church in the area. He was directed to the chapel on Exhibition Road. He travelled with his wife and seven-year-old daughter to the South Kensington station and wandered up the road until they found the Hyde Park building. With broken English, they explained to one of the visitors’ centre couples

that they wanted to learn more about the Church. Fortunately, another couple working in the office had previously served a mission in France and was called to help translate. After a tour of the centre, including an introduction to Book of Mormon, the family requested that missionaries visit

them at their home back in France.”

At the Hyde Park Chapel Visitors’ Centre in London the highest number of visitors came through the doors in April since the centre opened last May. Elder Arthur J. Brooks, director of the centre, commented, “We have seen more people coming and asking for a free copy of the Book of Mormon and each day we are getting visitors who have seen the musical and want to find out more.”

John Snell, from the Cheltenham Ward, describes his feelings at seeing the “I’m a Mormon” advertisements: “Whilst in London on business I was able to see at first hand the new advertising—both on bus sides and indeed in Charing Cross station. On previous visits as I travelled on the underground and emerged on escalators there was row after row of *Book of Mormon* musical advertising. So seeing the Church’s response gave me a ‘buzz’ and I’ll tell you why.

“When I joined the Church in

Hyde Park back in 1967, I was a junior account executive working in a London advertising agency. In those early days of Church membership, I first met James Moss, who along with Joe Christensen had been sent over from SLC to set up the seminary programme in the UK. We became good friends with him and his wife, Lavelle. He, knowing of my profession, said that ‘one day I would see advertising by the Church in London’. At the time, back in those days, it seemed a far remote possibility. But in a street in London, his ‘prophecy’ to me came true.”

The “I’m a Mormon” advertisements will continue online until the end of 2013, and in addition the Church is running adverts in theatre playbills for *The Book of Mormon* musical. They read, “You’ve seen the play, now read the book” or “The book is always better.” ■



Second place winner Jessica Spires in front of her “I’m a Mormon” campaign poster.

Civic leaders visit Bracknell Ward Conference

By Nicholas Read

PHOTOGRAPH BY BEV HESLIN



From L-R: Stake president Alistair Aitchison, Bracknell town mayor Cllr Mrs Shelagh Pile, deputy mayor of Sandhurst Cllr Mr. Michael Brossard, and Bracknell bishop Neil Loffhagen.

Bracknell town's mayor and Sandhurst deputy mayor attended the local annual ward conference of the Bracknell Ward, Reading Stake. Around 200 guests attended the event in March which was themed "Never suppress a generous thought".

Madam mayor of Bracknell town, Councillor Shelagh Pile, and deputy mayor of Sandhurst, Councillor Michael Brossard, listened as Bishop Neil Loffhagen addressed a packed congregation. He said: "Find no fault in anyone because of differences in race, religion, social status, gender or sexual orientation. We are all children of the same Father. The Lord expects us to stand up against discrimination in all its forms, love thy neighbour as thyself,

and be a force for good in our families and communities."

Also addressing the congregation was Alistair Aitchison, president of the Reading England Stake. He shared how faith and prayer can serve as a compass for direction, and offered encouragement to seek the Lord as a co-pilot when meeting life's challenges.

Cllr Shelagh Pile said: "The talks were enjoyable. I like visiting different churches and seeing common threads in their beliefs. There's always something you can take away."

Cllr Michael Brossard added: "I felt very welcome and was especially impressed with the messages and how the children were so well behaved." ■

50 Years of Mothering Sunday Flowers

By Sophie Rayton

On Mothering Sunday every woman in the Cheltenham Ward receives a floral tribute, celebrating women and motherhood. In 1962 Maureen Harris was serving as the Primary president. As the Primary "Mother" she gave some posies of flowers for each of her Primary children to give to their mother on Mothering Sunday. For more than 50 years this tradition has continued.

This year the young women were able to help Sister Harris decorate the flower pots in gift-wrapping paper. Whilst they were involved in wrapping she told them the story of how it all began and how it has lasted for all these years.

Maureen was baptised in 1957 with her husband, John, who was called as the first bishop of Cheltenham Ward. Sister Harris is one of the longest-standing members of the Church in the UK and has served in many callings. Now a grandmother and great-grandmother to her own family, she is also the



Maureen Harris with the young women of the Cheltenham Ward.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SOPHIE RAYTON

adopted grandmother of the ward, who knows and loves everybody.

The thoughtfulness shown by Sister Harris in providing flowers over the past five decades has created a legacy of kindness that will live on in the Cheltenham Ward for many years to come. ■

Nottingham Celebrates Stake 40th Anniversary

By Michael Rigby

The Nottingham stake celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the organisation of the stake by Elder Boyd K. Packer back on 4 February 1973.



President Jonathan T. Gray, Nottingham stake president, welcomes Rushcliffe deputy mayor Brian Buschman to the 40th Anniversary Celebrations.

This was a wonderful opportunity to gather together on 2 March and celebrate the service and sacrifices given by so many in establishing the Church in the area whilst being able to look forward to future growth.

The event was opened by Brian Buschman, deputy mayor of the Rushcliffe Borough Council. In his remarks Councillor Buschman said: "We would like to thank everyone attending today to share in celebrating the organisation of the Nottingham stake along with the 40 years of faith and service given by so many. The Church has a rich history in this area and today is an opportunity to recognise this and also look forward to future years. May I take this opportunity to officially open this event and express our appreciation at being invited to your special day."

Cllr Buschman was then able to tour the exhibits prepared by the auxiliaries and members of the stake. He was keen to ensure that he would be

invited back to carry out further research on his family tree and also attend the stake carol concert.

Councillor Gordon Wheeler also attended from the Nottinghamshire County Council and showed a keen interest in the Church employment, Helping Hands and Young Men and Young Women displays.

During the day over 300 people attended the open house, and more than 120 were at the talent show, which was held in the evening. Many questions were asked and new friends made as those attending toured the exhibits prepared. One nonmember who attended committed to baptism whilst meeting with the missionaries of the day.

Members were also invited to write down their personal thoughts on their time in the Church and their testimony, which will be placed in a book celebrating the Nottingham Stake which can be shared at future events in years to come. ■

Editor's Note

Please submit all stories and photographs to the editors, Jason Watling and Debbie Twigger at ukiensign@ldschurch.org. Stories should be in Microsoft Word format. Photographs should be in jpg format. It would assist the editors in processing photos if the pictures did not require a large amount of memory.

We need the signed permission of all participants in the photograph, as well as the photographer, for the Church to use the article and photograph. A form will be sent out upon receipt of the article or it can be obtained from us in advance or from your stake media specialist/stake director of public affairs.

More stories can be found online at <http://www.lds.org.uk> by clicking on United Kingdom & Ireland Church News and Events and at <http://www.mormonnewsroom.org.uk> for media and the public. There is also a UK Church Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/LDSUK>. ■

Brian and Jane Gough—Saving Lives in Peru

By Melanie Holmes

Brian and Jane Gough, of the Witham Ward in the Ipswich Stake, recently returned from a medical mission in Peru and were responsible for the medical welfare of about 3,000 missionaries in Peru and Bolivia. After attending the Provo Missionary Training Centre in February 2011, Brother and Sister Gough left to serve a full-time medical mission based in Lima, Peru, where there is a population of nine million. They said, “We really enjoyed being part of the 2,000 strong missionaries in the MTC at that time. It was amazing to see how well organised everything was, like a well-oiled machine.” Brother Gough was to be area medical advisor for the South America Northwest Area, covering Peru and Bolivia, and liaising with the assistant area medical advisor who had responsibility for the other three countries of the area, namely Ecuador, Columbia and Venezuela. Duties included checking submitted medical forms from prospective missionaries and teaching health principles to a new intake of elders and sisters every three weeks.

As a GP by profession for 30 years, Brother Gough was not able to treat missionaries’ ailments but could advise on how to cope or deal with any of many varied health problems they were experiencing. If unwell, they reported to their zone leaders, and if necessary, the wife of the mission president, the “Mission Mum” who then decided if Brother Gough needed to be involved.

One of Brother Gough’s missionary patients turned out to be the son of a man he had treated while serving in the Air Force in the 1970s. Despite the circumstances, it was a happy reunion over the telephone as Brother Gough

reported the missionary’s injuries, which included fractures to his spine and collar bone, to his father and soon recognised who he was talking to. The elder had surgery in Lima and after two weeks was sufficiently stable to fly to Utah for rehabilitation. Brother Gough was so impressed and said: “The Lima doctors did as good a job as they would have in Salt Lake.”



PHOTOGRAPH BY THE GOUGHS

Sister Gough always worked alongside her missionary companion and was very much involved in accurately translating from or to Spanish on forms or applications and when presenting workshops in health principles. She also got involved with service projects, once working with sisters from La Molina to make and present 150 baby blankets to young mothers in a hospital. ■

Brian and Jane Gough recently returned from a full-time mission in Peru.