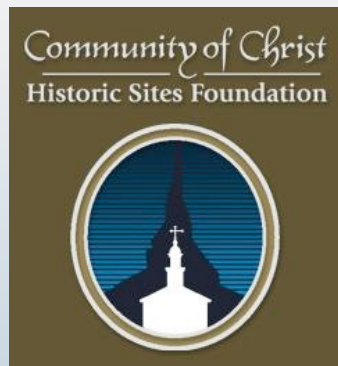


THE FORUM

England-bound
Foundation
plans new tour
for 2017. p. 5.



Community of Christ
Historic Sites Foundation

*Preserving & Sharing
Church Heritage*

To Make a Donation

Preserving and sharing church heritage and telling the sacred story is both a privilege and a responsibility.

To give to the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, call (217) 453-2246.

An alternative is to send donations to P.O. Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354. You also can give at www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org.

On the Web

To stay up to date with foundation events, view striking photos, and learn contact information, visit www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org.

Electronic Forum

If you want The Forum electronically, visit www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org.

Visit Us on Facebook and Instagram

The social network is a big hit with many historic-site fans. Visit www.facebook.com and www.instagram.com to learn more.

Embracing New Call in Nauvoo

By Greg Clark

The slogan on the city website for Nauvoo, Illinois, is “Your Gateway to Something Wonderful.”

Had Laura and David Bolton, a young married couple from Independence, Missouri, felt otherwise, you would have understood. After all, they had been among the 2.34 million people who live in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

Nauvoo has 1,149 residents.

Kansas City has convenient shopping, concerts, professional sports, and so much more that a small town can't offer. But the Boltons will testify that Nauvoo offers perks of its own: beauty, new opportunities, and an entryway to a deepening appreciation of faith and Community of Christ history.

See Boltons on page 6



By Greg Clark

Many called it one of the best World Conferences in memory. And the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation was right in the middle of it.

The foundation's presence was seen throughout the church's Conference, which ran June 4-11 at the Temple and Auditorium in Independence, Missouri.

Opening day set the tone. Several foundation supporters helped set up a display in Celebration Village, which grouped church affiliates and like-minded organizations under a large tent on the Temple's World Plaza.

See Conference on page 4

*History
a Big Hit
at World
Conference*

Deepening Faith as a Tour Guide

Nauvoo Proves Pivotal

By Barb Heath

A few years ago my friend, Julie Ashby, called and asked if I would join her in Nauvoo, Illinois, as a tour guide. What an adventure to consider!

We contacted Lachlan Mackay, historic sites coordinator. He accepted our offer. He sent us a book, *Kingdom on the Mississippi*, and a 10-page script to memorize. This was a lot of memorization for someone who had not done that in quite a while. I was way out of my comfort zone.

But when we arrived the Joseph Smith Historic Site grounds were beautiful, and a deep peace surrounded me. The sounds of many birds were like listening to music.

We reported to work on a Monday. Our training began, not only to give tours but to run the cash register—again out of my comfort zone. But the staff and volunteers all were nice and helpful.

Please Say Yes to Volunteering

Serving as a volunteer at properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation is rewarding, essential, and uplifting.

It can change your life and help others.

For more information, contact Lachlan Mackay at lmackay@CofChrist.org or (217) 453-2246.

Every tour I gave moved me closer to relaxing while better telling the story of Nauvoo. My admiration for our people, who helped establish this place, grew. I could see all of the tremendous progress and sacrifices

they made during the short time in Nauvoo. I could almost feel their excitement and hope for the future.

From 1839 to 1844 they built houses and established a town with a bakery, print shop, sawmill, blacksmith shop, and grocery store. The population grew from 1,500 to 13,000 in two years. The people—everyone from small children to old adults—worked together to make things happen.

During our stay, Lachlan helped all of us learn about the people of Nauvoo. I have returned several times. Because of the sacrifices our people have made from



Joseph Smith Jr.'s time to today, our church has helped us all come closer to being about God's business.

The five Mission Initiatives are in place. We just need to embrace our passion and act in our communities and the rest of the world.

Because of my time in Nauvoo, my faith has grown deeper, helping me understand our church and what I should be doing with my life. I invite you to come to Nauvoo to visit your past and feel the land's peace and beauty. Give us your talents as a tour guide, a carpenter, a landscaper. And then enjoy the day!

Alma Blair Donates to Liberty Hall Collection

By Greg Clark

In an age when society measures information in pixels, megabytes, and baud rates, it's reassuring to know the printed word still carries great value.

The folks from Liberty Hall, a historic site in Lamoni, Iowa, where Joseph Smith III once lived, understand and appreciate that. For several years they've been chipping away at cataloging every stick of furniture, every book, every artifact in the home.

It's daunting work, requiring attention to detail. And the chore recently became much larger. That's because Alma Blair, a former board member with the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, recently donated boxes of books, magazines, and journals to the site.

This isn't just a collection of light reading. As befitting a professor who taught history for 39 years at Graceland College, these resources include multiple guides, articles, and stories related to Restoration history.

This has been more than a life's work for Alma; it's been a life's passion. For more than 30 years he trained guides at the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois. After retiring from Graceland, he worked as site director at Liberty Hall for eight

years. He's volunteered there since that time.

Cindi Wilson, the current site director, knows just what to do with Alma's collection.

"We're going to turn the guest room into the Alma Blair Library. We'll have Alma's books and other ones, too. We're hoping people would want to come and sit in the library. We'd be willing to open it to college students for study."

The other books Cindi mentioned focus on more than history.

"We have probably one of the best collections of late Victorian books that you could find in most libraries," Alma explained, noting there were hundreds of books from 1860 to 1905. "We're a resource for history, geography, gardening, medicine—all kinds of books for the late Victorian period."

The books, however, don't include any by Joseph III. "Those were taken to Independence, Missouri, and put into the archives," Alma said. "But we have a few books of F.M. Smith." So Alma's books and magazines will join other resources and artifacts in the cataloging process, with each piece being described and entered into a computer. In recent times, Alma said Diane Shelton and Martha Harper (a



former site director) have done much of the work. Anne Morain also has helped.

Cindi describes why the work is so important. "It will help us keep track of everything we have in the building—any item that anybody donates."

She said many of the materials, including photos, are precious. She said they include shots of Joseph III, leaders of his time, and pictures of families that have lived in the house.

"We were looking through pictures the other day, and it was, 'Wow, I didn't know we had that!'" she said.

"It helps with the history, and in that sense it's really important. It's remembering the history of the Restoration."



You Can Help

Donating or working as a volunteer at properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation can prove to be enriching.

For more information, call (217) 453-2246, visit www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org, or send mail to P.O. Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354.



Conference

Continued from Page 1

The outdoor gathering was the village's first in recent memory. During other Conferences, the groups usually gathered in the lower level of the Auditorium.

"We've gotten a wonderful response from visitors," foundation President Karen Graham Wade said. "We've been able to concentrate and focus on what matters most. We were really fortunate with the weather."

That doesn't mean the weather wasn't a factor. An occasional breeze would scatter some papers. But the delightful weather also drew more guests to Celebration Village, which was open late the first three nights of the Conference.

"It's kind of fun out here with the breeze and so close together," said Barb Walden, the foundation's executive director. "It feels like a community."

The foundation display included numerous informational materials and the "giants." The giants were life-size cutouts of church pioneers such as Gomer Griffith, J.J. Cornish, Mark Forscutt, and Marietta Walker.

Most were pictured in formal clothing from their era. That presented some incongruities for the hundreds of pictures taken as casually dressed guests—many wearing shorts or jeans—posed with the giants.

"But as the song says, Walden pointed out, "All are welcome, all

See Conference on page 5

How to Help Preserve and Share Heritage

People give to the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation for many reasons.

Some give because they're impressed with the properties the foundation supports. Others give because the sites have been a key to their religious development.

Still others give for many other reasons.

Your donations are appreciated. To give to the Foundation, call (217) 453-2246, visit www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354.



Mark Dixon, J.J. Cornish, and Peter Smith

Conference

Continued from Page 4

are welcome, all are welcome here.”

Celebration Village wasn't the only place where the foundation's touch could be seen and felt. It also was evident in appreciation meals for volunteers and workers, in a history display inside the Temple, and in the foundation's blue-shirted representatives serving as ushers during an evening hymn festival.

And, of course, World Conference attendees also took advantage of Heritage Plaza, a site supported by the foundation that sits virtually across the street from the Temple and Auditorium.

The new site directors, Jim and Cheryl Craft, showed foundation members and Conference guests around the grounds, which include the F.M. Smith study, the Flournoy Home, and the Luff House.

In addition, Restoration-heritage seekers set up a tent at Heritage Plaza to answer questions and offer information.

2017 Tour to Visit England and Wales

By Greg Clark

For former Apostle Andrew Bolton, next May's trip to England and Wales won't be just a tour; it will be a pilgrimage.

For Barbara Walden, executive director of the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, it will be a chance to “walk the paths once journeyed by the first missionaries to Great Britain 180 years ago and learn the stories behind the people they encountered.”

For Karen Graham Wade, board president, it's a chance to honor the foundation's goal of preserving and sharing church heritage. “By visiting sites in Great Britain that are interwoven with our rich history, we are fulfilling that mission to understand and share with others the stories of our British forebears.”

No matter your viewpoint, the foundation-sponsored trip is certain to broaden your appreciation for church heritage while providing an opportunity to see some of the most renowned history locations in the British Isles.

Participants will have three expert guides. Bolton grew up in the British Isles, as did Peter Judd, a former member of the First Presidency. Peter Fagg has a superb knowledge of the early Latter Day Saint sites and the stories that go with them.

Bolton points out that in addition to enjoying and learning about the sites, participants will benefit spiritually.

“If a person just travels to see the sites, they go as tourists. A pilgrim is different. A pilgrim goes on two journeys. One is geographical/historical, seeing places and hearing stories. The other journey is an inner journey, a spiritual journey.”

Tour at a Glance

What: Trip to England and Wales will highlight places in missionary history, Dunfield House, Stonehenge, Windsor Castle, Roman Baths, London, and more.

When: May 2–11, 2017.

Cost: \$4,448 per person double occupancy; price includes lodging, most meals, airfare from New York and back, transportation while on the tour.

For More Information: Please contact Bill Pennington at (443) 807-0160 or aloha4travel@gmail.com.

Boltons

Continued from Page 1

So May 1, when the Boltons began work as the new directors for the Joseph Smith Historic Site, their attitude was more of excitement than skepticism.

"There was some apprehension about moving," said Laura, who had visited the community a couple of times when younger. "But I was very excited about the idea of learning the history because it was an area I wasn't super familiar with."

She and David are getting familiar...fast. Their preparation included a week of instruction from Lachlan Mackay, the previous site director who left the post when he was ordained as an apostle. They also took a class on church history that ran throughout June, four nights a week, three hours a night.

Mackay called the Boltons "a great fit. As a team, they have the gifts and talents needed to effectively manage the site, the passion and energy to keep up with the

demanding schedule, and the intellect to recognize what it is they don't yet know."

"David is a wonderfully talented musician and is gifted when it comes to technology. He also has amazing staying power. He sticks with a project until it is completed. Laura's strengths include her enthusiasm for learning, love of people, and gift of hospitality."

Those gifts played roles in their previous jobs at the church's International Headquarters. David was part of the team that launched the hymnal, *Community of Christ Sings*. Laura had worked in disciple formation, writing Sunday school materials.

Now they find themselves in charge of nearly everything on the site. That means learning the computer system, worrying about maintenance, forming relationships with volunteers, and occasionally guiding tours.

David had some experience in that because several years ago he had spent a couple of stints at the Kirtland Temple in Ohio. Still, he was a bit nervous the first time he led a group in Nauvoo.

"It's a different section of church history," he explained.

As for Laura, she's a people person and is growing increasingly comfortable with guiding. "I like to think I have energy and spunk," she said. "I'm not always able to answer every question. I'm still learning."

She's also using skills from her previous job. Barbara Walden, executive director of the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, has asked her "to help write some lessons for youth that are based in history."



David, meanwhile is focusing on all sorts of technology. Both would like to use it to broaden Nauvoo's availability to people who can't physically visit.

And they're enjoying their immersion in history.

"I thought it would be a head thing," Laura said, "but it's more of a heart thing with an emotional attachment to our history. I've found that I don't just enjoy learning about history...I love learning about it."

She also loves the gorgeous setting of her workplace, right on the Mississippi River.

"We've been here [a few] months, and still in the morning on the way to work I find myself looking out the window. Every time, I'm just amazed at how beautiful it is here."

David also "was surprised" at the beauty. But he has one more observation to living and working so close to the river.

"Lots and lots of bugs."

Oh well, the city slogan called Nauvoo "something wonderful." It didn't say it was perfect.

You Can Contribute to Don Albro Benches

The late Don Albro spent years helping present, preserve, and promote properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

A fund to help honor his memory has raised more than \$1,500 to provide benches along the Mississippi River at the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois.

If you'd like to contribute to future benches, please contact foundation Executive Director Barbara Walden at bwalden@HistoricSitesFoundation.org. You also may mail donations to P.O. Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354.

Unexpected Events Enrich Experiences, Lives

By Greg Clark

Sometimes the expected leads to the unexpected—and they both turn out to be a joy.

Just ask Bill and Lela Ayers, two priesthood members who split residency between Palmer, Alaska, and Mesa, Arizona. When they signed up for a bus tour sponsored by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation in 2012, they expected to have a great time. And they did.

But that trip also led to experiences and opportunities that they never had imagined. It deepened their convictions that the historic sites hold great importance for church members, young and old.

It started when Lela, who leads a winter reunion in Arizona each year, met Barbara Walden, executive director of the foundation. She was appearing at the reunion. From there, the Ayers decided to go on a foundation-sponsored bus tour, which visited numerous historic sites as well as several scenic locales.

“We’d never traveled in the east part of the country that much or been to the historic sites like Kirtland (Ohio) and Palmyra (New York),” said Bill, an elder.

He especially liked the storytelling of Barbara, who leads the tours. “A lot of it you have read over the years, but when somebody like Barbara makes history come to life, it’s an interesting portrayal of what happened.”

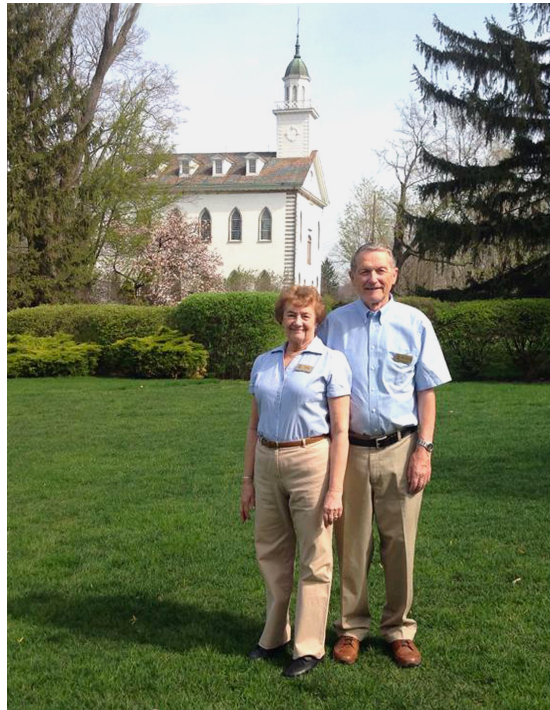
Bill and Lela, both retired, found special delight in visiting the Kirtland Temple.

“There’s a spirituality in the Kirtland Temple, and I think all of us felt that at one time or another,” said Lela, an evangelist.

“On the bus tour, we had an evening Communion service there, and we definitely felt the Holy Spirit.

“As you connect with the Holy Spirit yourself, hopefully that becomes part of your ministry.”

The tour offered delights in other ways. Bill especially liked the behind-the-scenes tour. “It looked at the way the building was constructed and how problems were repaired.”



Because the bus tour was such a hit, the Ayers did something they hadn’t anticipated. They volunteered—at Kirtland, of course.

Lela said she expected to work in the bookstore, and Bill thought he would help mow the grounds.

“We both went in thinking we didn’t want to be guides,” Lela said. But Site Director Ron Romig thought they could handle it just fine. He was right.

“They trained us, and we found out we could do it,” Lela

said. “It wasn’t as scary as we thought. It became not only easy, but fun.”

In a sense, it was natural for the Ayers to enjoy the historic sites so much. You see, Bill’s family church heritage goes back five generations, and his great-grandparents lived in Lamoni, Iowa, next to Joseph Smith III, a former church president.

Lela’s strongest family connections date back to when the church was centered in Nauvoo, Illinois. “I had a great-great grandfather. They left after Joseph Smith was killed and went to the Sioux City, Iowa, area and later joined the Reorganization.”

While in Nauvoo, she was thrilled to see a wood-framed home. Her great-great-grandparents had built it.

Through it all, the Ayers have cultivated a powerful resolve to support the foundation financially. They deeply believe that understanding where we have been as a movement will guide us as we move into the future. They also would like to see more young adults experience the blessing the sites offer.

“We send an annual amount,” Bill said. “Once you see the necessity of maintaining those sites, we try to help a little bit. After getting to know the Kirtland Temple and maintenance required to preserve the building, I understand why there is such a need.”

In all, the benefits that stemmed from the first bus tour have continued to bless their lives. That’s why they quickly signed up for more experiences—expected and unexpected—on a new expanded tour last fall.

Make a Donation, Aid Preservation

Preserving and sharing church heritage and telling the sacred story of our journey is a privilege and a responsibility.

To help the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation fulfill that mission, call (217) 453-2246 to make a donation.

Another alternative is to send donations to P.O. Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354.

You also can donate at www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org.

Volunteers Needed

To volunteer at a historic site supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, call Lachlan Mackay at (217) 453-2246 or e-mail him at lmackay@CofChrist.org.

Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation

P.O. Box 338
Nauvoo, IL 62354

Surprise Guest Highlights Storytellers Event



The lineup for a Storytellers event in April at the Walnut Gardens Congregation in Independence, Missouri, was stellar with Barbara Walden, Lach Mackay, Gary Logan, and Richard Howard. But a guest appearance made it even better.

Grant McMurray, former president of Community of Christ, filled the audience with laughter as he related tales of Richard Howard, his close friend.

The evening raised more than \$3,000 for the Alma Blair Internship Program, which aids summer interns at sites supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.