

# THE FORUM



Nauvoo fellows and interns

Community of Christ  
Historic Sites Foundation



Preserving & Sharing  
Church Heritage

November 2011

### 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](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org).

The website also features frequent updates on news and historic sites.

### On the Web

To stay up to date with foundation events, view striking photographs, and learn contact information, visit [www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org).

### Electronic Forum

If you want The Forum electronically, visit [www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org).

### Visit Us on Facebook

The popular social network also is a big hit with many historic-site fans. Visit [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

## Liberty Hall Post to Smith

By Greg Clark

When Lach Mackay talks about Steve Smith, the new site director at Joseph Smith III's Liberty Hall in Lamoni, Iowa, he says this:

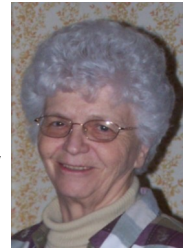
"Because of Steve's genetics and the location he was raised—nature and nur-

ture—he can't help but be interested in history and heritage. He's not just interested in the past, but in how the past can inform the present and take us into the future."

See Smith on Page 3

### McKain Retires

Martha McKain, longtime Liberty Hall site director, recently retired. See Page 2.



Steve Veazey's sermon at the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kirtland Temple was among many he made at historic sites. Stories pages 4-6.

## Whirlwind!

By Greg Clark

Twenty-two days and three stops at properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

Can there be any doubt Community of Christ President Steve Veazey savors the church's historical roots?

It started March 27 when the church observed the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in Ohio. President Steve Veazey gave a sermon that highlighted a weekend of activities.

A week later, April 3, he was in Lamoni, Iowa, where he helped celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Joseph Smith III becoming president of the church.

Capping it off was an April 17 service at the Plano Stone Church in Illinois. There, President Veazey plugged a gap in history. With his sermon, every president in church history now has spoken from the famed pulpit.

# Caribbean Connection

*Church Reunion on Island Changes Life of McKain, Fate of Liberty Hall*

By Greg Clark

Grand Cayman is a Caribbean island famous for its scuba diving, sea turtles, and white-sand beaches.

Though far from Liberty Hall in Lamoni, Iowa, it played a pivotal role in the lives of the historic site and an Arizona woman.

Today, that Arizona woman, Martha McKain, calls Lamoni home. She recently stepped into retirement there after spending nearly a decade caring for Liberty Hall as its site director.

To understand the link between Grand Cayman and Martha, one must start with a church reunion years ago. It was on the island, and it brought Martha, then a widow, together with Glenna Van-Buskirk and a man who was an acquaintance from her youth.

Not long after the reunion, Glenna talked to Lach Mackay, team lead of Visitor and Heritage Services for Community of Christ. She told him she knew somebody who might be interested in the Liberty Hall position.

The rest, as they say, is history. Martha accepted the volunteer position and began her stewardship of Liberty Hall.

But back to that old acquaintance. It was Hal McKain, whom she had known "from when we were kids and went to the Council Bluffs reunion," Martha said. They got along well in Grand Cayman, and it be-

came easy for the relationship to blossom after she moved to Lamoni, where Hal lived. Making it even sweeter, she has a daughter who lives in Lamoni.

"Most people think I came back to get married," said Martha, 76, "but I made the decision to come back before we decided to get married."

That decision was a natural extension of her life. She and her first husband always had been involved deeply with the church, serving in numerous places.

"When I first came, I didn't know what to expect," Martha said, "...It was an old building, and there have always been things to do through the years. The RV Association has been doing a lot of upgrades."

Though she has given way to the new site director, Steve Smith, Martha plans to continue to volunteer, though she might trim the hours.

"You just can't close the door and walk away," she said. "But I won't be here every day, and I can even be late if I want to."

That pleases Barb Walden, executive director of the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

"Martha began as site director at Liberty Hall about the same time I began at the Kirtland Temple," Barb said. "We grew together and supported one another. I feel like we've shared much."

"I'm excited to know that though she may be stepping down as a site director, she's not walking away from the site. Nobody can tell the story of Liberty



Hall like Martha."

Lach also expressed admiration. "Martha...invested her heart and soul in the site, and the site and the church are better for it," he said. "We talk about people living their discipleship. I don't know many who have lived it out as Martha has."

## Donations Help Preserve, Share Heritage

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## How to volunteer

The Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation needs volunteers for the properties it supports. The experience can be greatly rewarding.

For more information about volunteering, contact Lachlan Mackay. Call him at (217) 453-2246 or send e-mail to [lmackay@CofChrist.org](mailto:lmackay@CofChrist.org).



# Smith

*Continued from Page 1*

Wow! That's high praise. But it doesn't come from Mackay, alone. Barb Walden, executive director of the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, said this:

"He has the perspective that sites are not islands, but part of a larger community. Liberty Hall is not part of just Community of Christ history, but also of Lamoni's. He has a genuine love for people. He also has a sincere passion for history, and those two talents will make him an excellent site director."

Added Martha McKain, who recently retired, creating the volunteer position Smith filled on August 1:

"He brings initiatives and ideas of how to encourage people to come and see. He's a motivator. He has some ideas for programs he'd like to try and get more interest in Liberty Hall. He's also got a good personality in meeting with people, and that's important. He has people skills."

So what did Smith's journey to Liberty Hall involve? First there was a childhood spent growing up in Nauvoo, Illinois, home to the Joseph Smith Historic Site, where his family has been involved more than 90 years. (Smith said Mackay now lives in the home where he grew up.) Then there was a law degree and time spent teaching on a Navajo reservation in Arizona.

Over the years he spent time volunteering at Nauvoo and the Kirtland Temple in Ohio, but he'd never been to Liberty Hall. So last year he and his wife, Joanie, came to Lamoni for four months.

"We concluded that it was a good fit for us," said Smith, 69. "They needed the additional help, so we came back this year, and we offered to serve."

He sees Liberty Hall as underutilized and underappreciated.

"My goal as director is to increase activities and the use of Liberty Hall."

He actually reported to Lamoni early, in January, and was instrumental in planning a Joseph Smith III event last



*Joseph Smith III is a hero to Steve Smith, who wants to renovate the Liberty Hall barn.*

interest in photography.

- Reinstating the W. Wallace Smith Fishing Derby.

You have the feeling that he could list all his ideas on a Monday, and by Tuesday the number would have doubled.

But he can't do it all alone, so he's determined to grow the volunteer base, increase ties with Graceland, and develop an advisory board. Voluntarism is important to all properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

Through it all, Smith feels blessed to be in a position with such strong ties to Joseph Smith III.

"There is a huge hunger in the church for renewing our knowledge of and re-identification of church history," Smith said. "It's a rich history that can make our church much more meaningful."

"I think Joseph Smith III is the person our church reflects the most. He's one of my heroes."

spring. "I was expecting 30 people, and there must have been 200," Mackay said.

Other ideas include:

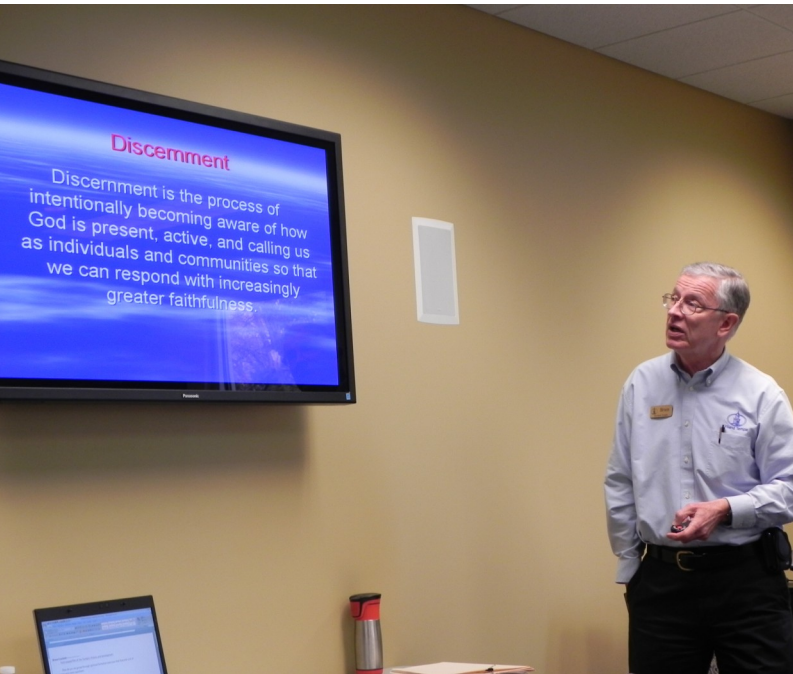
- Renovating an unused barn on the property and using it for community events.
- Honoring Joseph Smith III's passion for checkers and chess by starting a club affiliated with nearby Graceland University.
- Emphasizing the Victorian lifestyle with numerous activities and perhaps tying in with a Lamoni quilting club.
- Beginning a photography group in honor of Frederick Madison Smith's



## We'll Sing and We'll S

The 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kirtland Temple was celebrated with an eclectic mix of sights and sounds. Cathy Lovin (left) offered her portrayal of Emma Smith; the storm cleared over a bright morning (above); Bruce Crockett led discernment classes (above, right); teenager Timmy created the cover for the worship program (far right); members of the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour (near right); and, of course, the congregation celebrated with a rousing performance of "The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning" (below).





# Shout!

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# Anniversary Brings Hope for Future

By Greg Clark

It was about history. It was about heritage. And most of all it was about hope.

The 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kirtland Temple's dedication lured more than 300 worshipers to celebrate the dedication of a faith movement's iconic building. But more than that, it brought renewed inspiration and purpose as Community of Christ moves into its future.

Church President Stephen M. Veazey highlighted a weekend of observances by delivering a stirring address in the Sunday worship, March 27. His message was clear:

"In today's increasingly skeptical secular societies, the story, the place, and the space call us to deeper communion with the Spirit for which our souls desperately hunger...If we can just help ourselves and others to pause long enough in places like this to listen, to see, to begin to experience the

## For More Information

To hear President Steve Veazey's address and view photos, visit [www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org/page.do?act=lo&page=Kirtland\\_Temple](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org/page.do?act=lo&page=Kirtland_Temple).

sacred, our souls will be stirred to seek deeper spiritual connection with God."

The message was heard in other ways, as well. People heard it in classes led by Bruce Crockett and David Howlett. They heard it in music led by Richard Clothier, the Vesper service led by David Ettinger, and tours given by Lach Mackay and Barbara Walden.

Now the Temple moves into its future. It does so with people who respect their heritage and volunteers and staff members dedicated to helping people grasp Christ's hope.



**Steve Veazey,  
president  
of the church**

• "A sacred story that reaches beyond time and place to bless lives in many generations is truly a powerful story and a blessing

of God's grace!"

• "The Kirtland Temple story continues to care for us by telling us we need to pay more attention to our spiritual lives individually and as a faith community. Genuine discipleship and effective ministry are always rooted in and sustained by spiritual formation and renewal."

• "We are aware the church's historic sites have an impact much greater than members and friends of this church. Up to 45,000 people from different Latter Day Saints traditions and the public-at-large visit the Kirtland Temple each year and are enriched by what they learn and experience."

• "Did you know the Kirtland Temple is the place from which the international vision of church mission was launched? In June of 1837, Joseph Smith Jr. turned to Heber C. Kimball in the Temple and called him to go on the first 'overseas' mission for the church."

## They Said It

*In celebrating the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kirtland Temple's dedication, numerous high-profile church leaders came together, offering wisdom and inspiration that will transcend one weekend in Ohio. Among their comments:*

**Steve Jones,  
presiding bishop**



• "I think we do a disservice by calling Kirtland, Nauvoo, and Plano 'historic sites.' I think that narrows our understanding and vision of these places. They seem, when identified only as historic sites, more distant and for just visiting as a tourist site rather than how they can or should inform us about who we are today and about the journey ahead."

• "This Kirtland Temple site is telling us about a people living out God's mission then and how their vision of God's mission calls us today and leads us into the future."

• "These mission sites, which share with us our rich history, are calling us into the future and shaping who we will become."

**Barbara Walden,  
Historic Sites  
Foundation  
executive director**



• "For many of us, the Kirtland experience has been a dream come true. We have witnessed how the Kirtland story has inspired tens of thousands of people, coming for quiet reflection, spiritual growth and discipline, and leave feeling refreshed, renewed, and rejuvenated."

• "The Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation has been inspired by what is happening in Kirtland and is committed to working with Community of Christ to preserve the historic sites—so their powerful stories can be shared with the world—and to look for ways to make their impact be felt as important ensigns in today's mission of the church."

• "As we sit in this place, you can't help but long for, and feel empowered to explore the meaningful elements of our shared church heritage...Our Enduring Principles are made real every day at the historic sites, where we embrace unity through diversity, worth of all persons, grace and generosity, and the divine blessings of community."

# Lamoni Honors Joseph Smith III

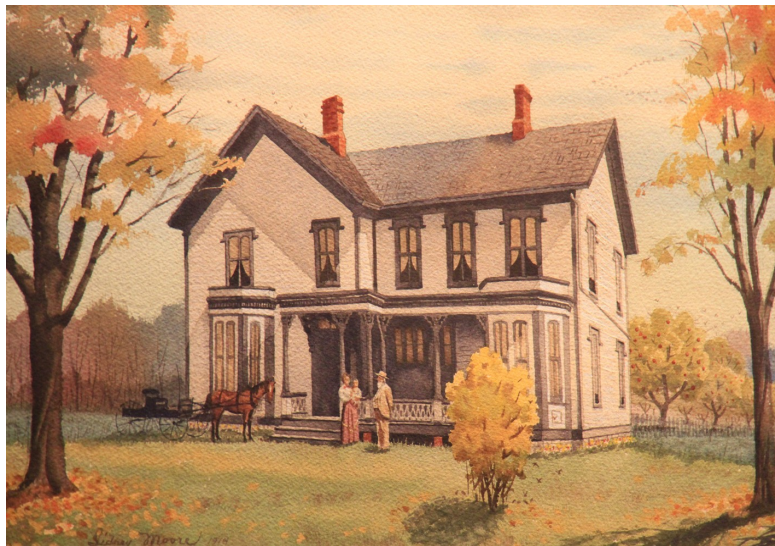
By Greg Clark

It helps to know your family history. And make no mistake, Lach Mackay knows his. That was especially apparent April 3 in Lamoni, Iowa.

Mackay, the team lead for Visitor and Heritage Services for Community of Christ, talked about his great-grandfather. Specifically, he talked about Joseph Smith III, first church president of the Reorganization.

The event celebrated the anniversary of the church's organization (April 6, 1830) and Reorganization (April 6, 1860), which marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Smith becoming president. Mackay's address, "Joseph Smith III in His Own Words," drew an estimated 240 people, about 100 more than organizers expected.

Liberty Hall, where Smith's family lived, and several others sponsored the event at the Shaw Center on Graceland



Donation Of a painting key to the Smith family history was among the highlights of the April 3 celebration in Lamoni, Iowa, that honored Joseph Smith III.

University's campus. They included Graceland, the Lamoni-Heartland USA Mission Center, and two Restoration congregations.

But Mackay's address wasn't the afternoon's only highlight.

Wallace B. Smith also attended. He presented a painting of Liberty Hall that depicted Joseph Smith III; his wife, Ada;

and W. Wallace Smith as a baby in front of their home. W. Wallace Smith and Wallace B. Smith also served terms as church president.

Also, Richard Clothier and Jack Ergo led a short service of hymns by Joseph Smith III. And, of course, Steve Veazey, current Community of Christ president, attended.

## *This Time It Counts: President Veazey Speaks from Plano Pulpit*

By Greg Clark

Now it's official. When Steve Veazey spoke from the famed Plano Stone Church pulpit last year at World Conference, he filled a hole in history.

Until then, every Community of Christ president since the 1860 Reorganization—except Steve—had spoken

from the pulpit.

However, somewhat tongue in cheek, some people claimed the World Conference appearance didn't count because the pulpit had been gently transported to Independence, Missouri. They said the president needed to speak behind it in *Plano, Illinois*.

Well, after Sunday, April 17, there

was no doubt.

President Veazey stood behind the famed pulpit, this time in Plano. He was part of the sesquicentennial celebration for the 1861 organization of the Plano, Illinois, branch.

Festivities also included a tour given by Donna Vicars, worship, and a luncheon.

## **A Heartfelt Thank You for Dedication of RV Association**

By Greg Clark

They come from many places, and they bring one incredible benefit to properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

"They" are the members of the Community of Christ RV Association.

Just how valuable are their volunteer services? Measured in manpower, they surpassed a thousand hours of donated labor this year at historic properties.

But their work can't be measured by numbers alone. Because of their efforts, each site offers enriched services to the public. The association's work enables the sites to tell the church's sacred story, help the staff members follow the mission initiative of Develop Disciples to Serve, and preserve the church's heritage while educating both young and old visitors.

Early this year they quickly put in more than 900 hours of volunteer

work, upgrading and renovating properties at the Temple site in Kirtland, Ohio, and the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois.

And they weren't done. In September they made repairs at the Liberty Hall grounds in Lamoni, Iowa.

That work easily pushed the association past the 1,000-hour mark.

The foundation deeply appreciates the sacrifice of RV Association members in providing this important ministry.

## **Make a Donation, Aid Preservation**

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## **Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation**

P.O. Box 338

Nauvoo, IL 62354

# **For Moving Experience, Sign up for Spring Bus Tour**

By Greg Clark

**T**his spring's bus tour, sponsored by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, promises to be a moving experience in more ways than one.

The event, scheduled April 16-25 will treat riders to numerous historic sites; popular attractions such as Niagara Falls; the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York; many spring flowers; and much more.

The experience will cover 10 days and eight states, giving riders memories to last for years. But the trip also will prove moving in another way. Barbara Walden, the foundation's executive director, will teach classes while the bus is in transit.

If you know Barbara, then you know those classes will be informative, touching, and entertaining. They're certain to

move every person who participates, linking the past and present while offering hope for the future.

Among the historic sites will be the Kirtland Temple in Ohio; the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois; Joseph Smith III's Liberty Hall in Lamoni, Iowa; a visit to the Stone Church in Plano, Illinois; and more.

The foundation set up the spring event after a fall tour sold out with incredible speed. Now seats for the spring tour are going fast, too.

The trip will offer moving worship services, a hymn festival, special tours, and classes. For more information, visit [www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org](http://www.HistoricSitesFoundation.org) or contact Barbara Walden at (440) 477-9562 or [bwalden@cchsf.org](mailto:bwalden@cchsf.org).

## **Nauvoo Site Happy To Get Soggy Area**

By Greg Clark

**T**he land might not look like much. In fact, it might not even look like land. That's because much of it sits under the Mississippi River at Nauvoo, Illinois.

However, the Joseph Smith Historic Site recently acquired the property. Though some might see it as worthless, it's valuable to folks who treasure the view from the historic buildings in Nauvoo.

That's because the area is silting in, largely because of dam at Keokuk, Iowa. By gaining control of the waterlogged land, the historic site will be able to control and stop any development that might diminish the historic properties.