

THE FORUM



Mansion House in winter.

Community of Christ
Historic Sites Foundation



*Preserving & Sharing
Church Heritage*

March 2010

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

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

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

You also can give by visiting www.cchsf.org.

The website also features frequent updates on news from the foundation and its historic sites.

On the Web

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

Have a Story Idea?

If you do, we'd love to hear it. Send ideas (or even photos) to Greg Clark at clarks41@comcast.net.

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Financial Support Lauded

By Jeff Naylor

Thank you for your interest and passion in supporting CCHSF and its mission to preserve and share Community of Christ historic sites with present and future generations.

During our November 2009 board meeting, the

World Conference Plans

The CCHSF is ready for World Conference and the church's 150th-anniversary celebration. See story on Page 7.

foundation made a significant commitment to help raise the profile of church

heritage—expressed through historic sites—by passing its largest budget in well over a decade.

The budget, approximately \$177,000, focuses on four major areas:

- Providing historic sites

See Support on Page 8



Ruth and Bob Potter of Independence, Missouri, have spent years volunteering at historic sites. Bob even makes wagon miniatures sold at the Red Brick Store in Nauvoo, Illinois.

Ruth, Bob Potter Find Joy as Volunteers

By Greg Clark

A friend talked Bob and Ruth Potter into volunteering at one of the properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

That was 15 years ago. Now, only admittedly shaky health could stop them from going.

Volunteering quickly became a way of life for Bob, 80, and Ruth, 81. They wouldn't have it any other way.

They spent most of those years at the Joseph Smith

How to volunteer

The Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation needs volunteers for the properties it supports. For more information about volunteering, contact Lach Mackay at (217) 453-2246 or lmackay@CofC.org.

Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois, but they also gave time to Kirtland Temple in Ohio. In both places, they felt right at home.

"I think anybody who goes...would learn to love it,"

Ruth said.

"It gets in your blood," Bob explained. "It's a big family group up there."

Lach Mackay, Community of Christ team leader for Visitor and Heritage Services, appreciates the contributions of folks like the Potters. The hard part, he said, is getting the word out so that volunteers will come for the first time.

"With few exceptions, they have a wonderful experience and come back. We can't tell the story without volunteers."

See Potters on Page 5

Plano Is Right 'Material' for Edwards

Site's History Inspires Leader

By Greg Clark

Terri Edwards graduated from Kansas State University after majoring in textile conservancy.

So how is it that shortly after becoming the site coordinator for the Plano Stone Church she found herself enmeshed in roofing, painting, drainage tiles, asbestos removal, and more?

Such work seemingly has little in common with cloth and fabric.

Yet all those tasks were important in moving the church, a property supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, closer to museum standards.

"The first thing was to stabilize the building itself," said Edwards, noting that the work began shortly before she accepted the site coordinator's job about four years ago. "The next step is to...make sure the artifacts are safe and to improve the program."

That's a lot to do for a parent with two teenagers, a job as a teacher's assistant in a middle school, and a home that's about a 45-minute drive from the church in Plano.

But there's more. Edwards, 46, occasionally helps with other historic sites. She even gets to call on her textile expertise.

"She brings preservation experience and knowledge with her," said Lach Mackay, Community of Christ



Terri Edwards, at the famed pulpit in the Plano Stone Church, would love to see more youth groups tour the site.

team leader for Visitor and Heritage Services and team leader of the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois. "She has helped not only in Plano, but has offered advice in Nauvoo, as well. If we have a piece of fabric—shirt, dress, quilt—she is wonderfully helpful on care and preservation."

Barb Walden, the foundation's executive director, also praised Edwards. "She knows how to take care of and preserve artifacts. When we started working

on the design and needs (for the Visitor and Spiritual Formation Center) in Kirtland, Lach strongly recommended that I contact her."

None of this comes as a surprise. Her history includes museum work in Massachusetts and Chicago.

A Community of Christ member since she was 21, she previously served about four years on the foundation board. She understands the importance of the historic sites' legacy.

"There's a lot to learn from history," she said. "A lot of the things from early Plano aren't things we do today. I'm amazed somebody would walk several miles a day to be a pastor."

One of her key responsibilities is working with the church congregation in Plano.

"It's still used on a weekly basis for today's congregational life," foundation President Jeff Naylor said.

"The Saints in Plano are excellent caretakers of that space. Many of them consider it a distinct privilege and honor to worship in a place so important to the life of today's church. They recognize they have a unique opportunity and stewardship to maintain the Plano Stone Church."

Edwards also sees the congregation playing a bigger role in education about Plano's place in the Reorganization. She'd love to see more youth groups visit on their way to or from the historic site in Nauvoo.

"The congregation is open and willing to support those activities," she said, lamenting that more groups don't now include Plano on their routes.

Also, Edwards' appreciation of historical artifacts fuels her dreams of developing a display in the church basement.

"We would like to have interactive programs and kid-friendly programs."

"Maybe something involved with Illinois history. All fourth-graders have to learn about Illinois. It would be nice to tie that in with Plano."

Donors Deserve Our Thanks

In Kirtland, Ohio, an elderly couple visits the Temple, linking their faith to the past.

In Plano, Illinois, a guest to the Stone Church marvels at the historic pulpit.

In Nauvoo, Illinois, students walk the same paths that early church figures strolled on.

Other visitors find inspiration at Liberty Hall in Lamoni, Iowa, and Heritage Plaza in Independence, Missouri.

All of these sites function because of the generosity of donors. The 2009 donors listed below deserve our gratitude.

If you'd like to help in 2010, visit the website at www.cchsf.org.

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Among the many places supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation with the help of donors is Heritage Plaza in Independence, Missouri. Among its attractions are the Frederick Madison Smith Study above, and the Flour-noy House (left).

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Volunteers Find Chance of a Lifetime

By Greg Clark

At first glance, it looks harsh: weeks of work, no pay, and lodging in aged buildings—some of them more than 150 years old.

Why would anybody volunteer for such a task? Quite simply because helping properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation also is incredibly rewarding.

It puts volunteers in touch with wonderful people, supports links to church heritage, and draws workers deeper into their own spiritual journeys. And make no mistake, the volunteers fill a crucial need.

“Our sites won’t survive without our volunteers,” foundation Executive Director Barb Walden said. “They improve landscapes, gardens, and interpretive programs. They boost the morale of the interpretive staff and enhance the experience for visitors.

“They’re the backbone of historic sites.”

And they’re in great need at all key sites supported by the foundation: Heritage Plaza in Independence, Missouri; the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois; the Kirtland Temple in Kirtland, Ohio; the Stone Church in Plano, Illinois; and Liberty Hall in Lamoni, Iowa.

Lach Mackay, Community of Christ team leader for Visitor and Heritage Services and team leader of the site in Nauvoo, said more than 60 volunteers supported the properties in 2009. Each person contributed 16 to 1,600 hours. In addition, the Community of Christ RV Association helped with vari-



At every time of the year, volunteers enjoy the Kirtland Temple’s beautiful surroundings.

ous projects.

But please, don’t get the idea the sites need volunteers only during the busy summer season.

“Volunteers actually are more acutely needed in the fall and spring at most sites,” foundation President Jeff Naylor said. “The sites are open, but they don’t benefit from having the summer interns present to help.”

Mackay agrees. “Right now there’s an extremely significant need—an urgent need—especially in Kirtland.”

Not only are the hours

flexible, but so is the age of volunteers (teenagers to octogenarians) and the work. Most volunteers work two weeks to two months or longer, and they usually stay in historic homes. That adds a special aura to the experience.

“Reading Sidney Rigdon’s biography while staying in his home was one of my joys in Kirtland,” Walden said. “It’s the power of place.”

Volunteers also fill a variety of roles.

“You don’t have to be just up front giving the tour,” Naylor said. “There are so many support things at each of our sites in terms of maintenance and beautification.

“There is a connection from working in the visitors’ center or walking people to the third floor of the Kirtland Temple and telling stories of

education in the 1830s or sharing the old Stone Church and showing people the pulpit from which the church was reorganized.

“Those stories become personal because of the experience of place.”

Maybe, Mackay said, that’s why so many volunteers end up returning again and again.

“They’ll get to meet interesting people from around the world, especially if they’re volunteering in the summer. The most important opportunity is that they get to experience the site and make the stories of that place their own.

“The stories have meaning because the volunteer has had an opportunity to engage and allow the story to work into their soul.”

How to volunteer

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

Potters

Continued from Page 1

We don't have the staff to do it."

Volunteer spots are available for all sorts of work. Some lead tours. Others work in gardens, mow grass, do maintenance, help in the visitor centers, or do other things.

"Bob is a wonderful storyteller," Mackay said. "He's kind of folksy and can tell a great story. He has wonderful people skills."

Bob emphasized that most tours are wonderful, with friendly and interesting people. But he tells his secret to handling the rare person with an attitude problem.

"I always try to pick out the person with the biggest chip on his shoulder and make him a friend. Then you have the rest of them in the palm of your hand. There are so many stories to tell."

Ruth, meanwhile, holds special fondness for the Red Brick Store, site of a huge amount of church history in Nauvoo. "You are closer to people there," she explained.

Bob chips in by making souvenir wagons and other items sold at the store.

The Potters, who make their permanent home in Independence, Missouri, have met people from all over the world. And they're especially fond of many interns they've worked with.

Like most volunteers, the Potters live in famous buildings while helping at the historic sites. In both Nauvoo and Kirtland, they spent time in homes once owned by Sidney Rigdon, a key figure in early church history.

"I tell people I feel a relation with him since we've lived in his houses," Bob



The Red Brick Store in Nauvoo, Illinois, quickly became a favorite site of volunteers Ruth and Bob Potter.

joked.

But Ruth especially likes the brick home of William Marks, the first stake president in Nauvoo.

"There's the history of it and the view of the Mississippi River," she said. "The

closest neighbor is a half-block away. It's just a great little place to live."

They spent two full years in Marks' home. But generally they make two volunteer trips a year, each lasting a couple of months.

Schedules are flexible, and virtually everyone from their mid-teens on up is welcome to work. They don't have to stay for months at a time, though they're certainly welcome.

If you'd like to volunteer, but were never much of a history bookworm, don't worry about it. Training is available. And don't be surprised if you come to appreciate the church heritage.

"I think there's a sense of history there, even though the places have changed inside some," Ruth said of the homes.

"I just feel like it's so much a part of who we were. You think about the people who lived there. You sit on front porch of the Rigdon house and look out on the trees, and it's nostalgic."

Bob agrees. "You just kind of feel the history all over Nauvoo, every step of the way. You can imagine Joseph Smith Jr. there discussing church matters.

"You...feel their presence."



No matter the season, Ruth Potter loved the view of the Mississippi River from the William Marks house.

Walden Sinks Teeth into Foundation Job

Baseball's Hall of Fame Began Career

By Greg Clark

It was Barb Walden's first day of a collections-manager internship at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

Cherished memorabilia, such as Roger Maris' 61st home-run ball and Shoeless Joe Jackson's cleats, surrounded her. As a longtime baseball fan, it was heaven.

But she found herself able to focus on only one thing: a set of dentures on her desk.

"They were timing me to see how long it would be before I'd ask," Walden said of the museum's staff. "They laughed and said that we had just accepted them. They were Ty Cobb's dentures."

Because of that artifact from one of the game's greatest players, "history came alive in that moment," Walden said.

It's still alive for Walden, hired late last year as the new executive director for the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation. But now she no longer focuses on baseballs and dentures. She focuses on the Restoration story told at places key to the movement's history.

It's an important position in a career that she didn't envision until after her freshman year at Graceland

in Lamoni, Iowa.

"I saw a flyer on campus that was offering internships at Nauvoo," she said of the Joseph Smith Historic Site. "At the time, history wasn't even on my radar. It was the thought of a summer on the Mississippi River that attracted me.

"But something happened in Nauvoo with Alma Blair and Don Albro, who was executive director at the time. Reading a biography of Emma Smith and looking out the window to see a home she lived in was quite powerful. Then the following summer I learned there was an opportunity to do the same thing in Kirtland. That's when I was sold on a career in history."

The foundation's board and other leaders are sold on her.

- Martha McKain, site team leader from Liberty Hall in Lamoni: "She's very capable. She has lots of initiative. She's very knowledgeable. She's going to be dealing with lots of different people, different ideas, approaches, and feelings. And she can adjust to people and their attitudes."



Barb Walden

- Mary Lou Piepergerdes, board member: "She has been a sparkplug. She just rubs off on you. Her enthusiasm for the sites makes you want to go see them. Her biggest challenge will be finding the funds to implement the programs."

- Lach Mackay, team leader for Community of Christ Visitor and Heritage Services: "It takes special skills to succeed in this position. She brought skills with her, but she also acquired more in her time (as the team leader) at Kirtland."

"She has an intimate knowledge of what it takes to be a volunteer and tell

the sacred story with passion. People like her and want to help her."

- Kirk Cross, board member: "She's a good fit because of her passion and her personality. She makes comfortable connections."

Perhaps the biggest tribute came from Albro during a board meeting in Plano, Illinois. During an update on the Kirtland Temple, a slide with a picture of Walden flashed on the screen. His reflexive response: "The queen of the Temple."

That's a tough reputation to live up to, and Walden, 32, knows the job will be difficult. Her biggest challenge, she said, "will be finding time to sleep."

That's because so many key responsibilities and events loom: raising funds, World Conference, and a sesquicentennial reunion.

Though Walden seems a good fit, the foundation nearly lost her.

She had put in seven years at Kirtland, growing a deep love for the people and place. Throughout that time husband Jody, whom she had met at Cooperstown, supported her efforts.

But last year he accepted the job as director of education for the Kentucky Historical Society. Walden figured it was time to move and to support his dreams.

Then board President Jeff Naylor called her. The rest, as they say, is history. From her new home in Kentucky, Walden will commute to the various sites as needed.

Besides, she's not leaving Kirtland bereft of talent.

Mormon Group Nominates Walden

Barb Walden has been nominated for a board position with the Mormon History Association.

Walden, the new executive director for the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, won't know until May whether she'll be selected to serve.

Lach Mackay, Community of Christ team leader for Visitor and Heritage Services, says the position would be "quite helpful" to the foundation. Walden agrees. She sees it as a road to increasing the foundation's influence.

"I think it will expand our opportunities....This will give me an opportunity to go to people and make connections. In many ways people don't know about the opportunities of our foundation."

See Walden on Page 7

Sing!

The beauty of Liberty Hall met the glory of the holiday season for an annual Christmas Tea that has become a tradition in Lamoni, Iowa.

The December 13 event featured musical attractions, an invitation to the community, and the Christmas spirit.

Musical entertainment included the Middle School Orchestra, Ceaseless Praise, guitar music and singing from Ron and Di Smith, and piano students of Linda Phillips and Jeri Gail Ramsey. Also, children were treated to activities and crafts.



From left, Carita Juhnke, Lynda Farnham, Judy Harrop, Bobbi Ellis, Sandy Ranney, Pat Magle, Cindy Pitt, Marsha Jackel, Katrina Neeley, and Marji Foster performed as Ceaseless Praise, spicing Liberty Hall's Christmas Tea.

Foundation to Join Conference Celebration of Reorganization's 150th Anniversary

By Greg Clark

Community of Christ's World Conference this year in Independence, Missouri, won't just *make* history. It will *celebrate* it.

The event, scheduled April 10-17, will salute the 150th anniversary of the Reorganization.

Recognition will come in several forms, and the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation will stand right in the middle of it. The importance isn't lost on Barb Walden, the foundation's executive director.

"Sesquicentennial events throughout the year will remind us that our heritage is just as much about the future as it is about the past—whether on the banks of the Mississippi River or the rolling hills of Lamoni, Iowa," said Barb Walden, executive director of the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation.

"Our historic sites are becoming significant places...where church members are continuing to find a connection between the past and implications for the present. Such is the power of history!"

The Conference will display that power with reenactors posing as people such as Emma Smith. Banners and life-size cutouts of other Reorganization heroes will help put a face to church history while educating delegates and guests.

The foundation will capitalize on that with a scavenger hunt. "We will develop a series of questions that pertain to each of those images and their narratives," board President Jeff Naylor said, adding that narratives would be done in three languages.

Visit the group's booth in the World Peace Village to learn more about the hunt—and the special prize. The

booth also will have lapel pins, nametags, bookmarks, and a coloring contest for children. As a result, the foundation's logo and presence will be highly visible throughout the week.

And Conference won't mark the end of the 150th-anniversary celebrations. Other events will include a Sesquicentennial Reunion, planned June 12-18 at the Brush Creek USA Mission Center in Xenia, Illinois.

"I can't think of a more exciting time to be a member of our church," Walden said. "Our sesquicentennial Conference is a time to celebrate the extraordinary lives of those who have gone before us.

"The life lessons and spiritual journeys of people like Joseph Smith III, Marietta Walker, and Jason Briggs helped establish our church as a place for open and honest debate."

Walden

Continued from Page 6

Ron Romig, longtime archivist at Community of Christ International Headquarters, recently replaced Walden at the Temple site. He'll receive help from a couple of key volunteers who came aboard under Walden's tenure: her parents, Jim and Marietta.

Her dad also deserves some credit for Walden's passion for history. It was his bedtime stories.

"They were Bible stories, Book of Mormon stories, and Restoration stories," she said. "I grew up with the Oliver Cowdery and Emma Smith stories."

Now she's funneling that church heritage, her love of history, and her professional background into a new challenge. And she's excited.

"I'm driven. I'm ambitious," she said. "As I warned Jeff, I swing for the fences."

It's that baseball thing again.

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 give by visiting the group's online site at www.historicsitesfoundation.org.

Fellowships Aid Two Sites

By Greg Clark

The Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation recently awarded two fellowships for winter and spring.

One went to Wendy Eaton for the Kirtland Temple site, and the other went to Kevin Bryant at the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois. Each fellowship will last at least 13 weeks.

"They'll be helping the site directors in Nauvoo and Kirtland, leading tours, and supervising worship services and congregational gatherings," said Barb Walden, the foundation's executive director.

"They're also creating educational resources that we can provide through the website."

Their help will be greatly appreciated. Even more is needed.

"We desperately need volunteers willing to offer three to four days a week in order to adequately staff the sites," said Lach Mackay, Community of Christ team leader for Visitor and Heritage Services.

Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation

P.O. Box 338

Nauvoo, IL 62354

Support

Continued from Page 1

with annual maintenance support such as painting, repairs, landscaping, and other watch-care activities.

- Supporting a new full-time executive director, whose focus is to boost the foundation's activities in fundraising, education, preservation, and advocacy for the historic sites.

Barbara Walden brings exceptional leadership, education, and enthusiasm to this role.

- Developing educational resources to help Community of Christ congregations engage with the church's sacred story. This aligns with guidance given by Community of Christ President Stephen M. Veazey,



Board President Jeff Naylor

entitled "Perspectives on Church History," on October 1, 2008.

- Playing a special role in celebration of the church's

On the Web

For more information about the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation and ways to support it, visit www.cchsf.org.

sesquicentennial at the 2010 World Conference, the official Sesquicentennial Reunion celebration (June 12-18) at Brush Creek in Xenia, Illinois, and other reunions and gatherings throughout the North American church.

We invite you to join us in supporting the foundation's efforts in these areas and others.

We're always looking for advocates to serve as field representatives for the foundation, for volunteers willing to give two weeks or more in service, and for generous donors to help fund the mission of supporting the historic sites and church heritage.

They're all great ways to express your interest and passion in supporting the church's historic sites.