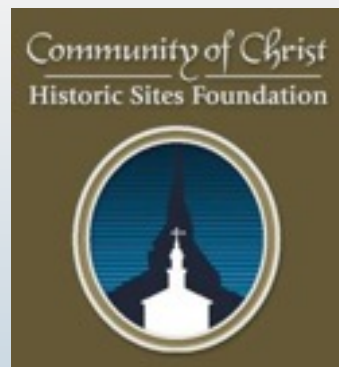
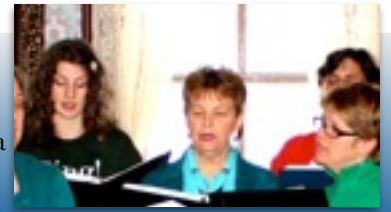


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## New Faces Ease Board's Loss

By Greg Clark

Change is hard. It's especially difficult when a group loses five valued contributors with a combined total of decades of service.

That's the position the Community of Christ

Historic Sites Foundation board encountered at year's end.

The pain was eased quickly, however, when five people—Andrea Read, Kent Brooner, Cameron Argotsinger, Donna Steele Wendling,

and Scott Britton-Mehlisch—received approval as new board members.

They're helping fill the void created by three term expirations and two

*See Leaders on Page 8*



*On the fall bus tour, men learned Shaker dancing. (Norma Elgan photo; see story on Page 6)*

## Harmon-McLaughlin Finds Joy, Opportunity in Post at Kirtland

By Greg Clark

Katie Harmon-McLaughlin says she and her husband, Zac, have "kind of a cliché love story." The church has played a key role in that story since the start. It's still involved, with Katie now serving as spiritual-formation director at the Kirtland Temple complex in Ohio.

For her, the assignment seems natural because it

*See Kirtland on Page 5*

## Learn of Interns, Fellows, Volunteers

To learn about internships, fellowships, or volunteering at a Community of Christ historic site, contact Lachlan Mackay at (217) 453-2246 or [LMackay@CofChrist.org](mailto:LMackay@CofChrist.org).

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# Former Intern Gets “Nudge from God”

By Greg Clark

Heather Frey from Community of Christ Human Resource Ministries was on the other end of the phone, but Dawn Pagat knew who the call was really from.

“I think I just got a big nudge from God,” she later told her husband.

That was in January 2013. Several months later the former summer intern at the Joseph Smith Historic Site in Nauvoo, Illinois, was happily working as a bookkeeper and administrative assistant at International Headquarters in Independence, Missouri.

Dawn, 43, is among many interns at properties supported by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation who have landed in roles with the church. They all cite their volunteer stints as important in their development.

“I increased my knowledge of church history from that summer, said Dawn, who attended Graceland College and received degrees in history and theater. “I got my patriarchal (now evangelist) blessing at Nauvoo. Internships tend to increase involvement with the church.

“The Lord calls us to do different things, and part of how an organization runs is through the different people who contribute. Volunteering provides opportunities to spread our faith.”



*When Dawn Pagat (upper left) interned at the Joseph Smith Historic Site, the attire was a bit more relaxed than in the 1940s, when several other future church leaders spent time as interns.*



That faith helped carry her after she was downsized from her job in Kansas City.

“I spent the next six months looking for a job, and I always felt I needed to look on the church website for positions.”

She even applied for one, but she didn’t get it. However, she did make a big impression. So...

“I had just gotten done with a workout at the gym. My phone was in my locker. It was ringing.” Seconds later she heard Heather, herself a Nauvoo intern in 1997, ask if she wanted to apply for a different position.

People of any age can volunteer at the historic sites. But Dawn, who interned in 1990, sees special value in young adults volunteering.

“You’re still developing at that point,” she said. “You’ve not totally figured out who you are. When you have volunteer experiences, you not only expand your knowledge of other people and other cultures, it helps you figure out” things about yourself.

Dawn’s internship also helped her make enduring friendships. She remains close with two other interns from that summer: Apostle Art Smith and his wife, Laura Horning.

Dawn also sees another benefit to volunteering at a historic site.

“This is the historian coming out in me. We have to know where we’ve come from. When you volunteer you learn our history, its significance, and how it influences us. Convey that knowledge to others, and that’s an outreach opportunity.”

# Kirtland

*Continued from Page 1*

blends spirituality with history.

“I think that spiritual depth has always been a really important part of this movement,” she said. “In some ways it’s at the heart of the Enduring Principle of Continuing Revelation and being open to how God’s Spirit is revealing things to us.

“That’s been passed on from generation to generation and has become a core part of who we are.”

Making her position at the Visitor and Spiritual Formation Center even sweeter is that it’s almost like coming home. Katie said her grandparents live in the nearby Cleveland area, where her parents grew up.

“[Kirtland’s like] a second home for me because I always returned there as a child,” said Katie, now 26. I have memories of going to the Temple with my grandparents. It was always kind of a special place for me.”

After Graceland and marriage, Katie and Zac moved to California, where they both served in full-time ministry. They were happy and comfy there, but then came the call for Katie to go to Kirtland.

She started in September and already sees opportunities.



*Katie Harmon-McLaughlin feels Kirtland is like a second home.*

“I want to create opportunities for people to experience the Spirit in planned retreats at Kirtland,” Katie said. “I want to offer them several times a year.

She also understands the importance of making the connection between young people and spirituality.

“It’s critical. In spiritual tradition, storytelling is so important, so finding ways to tell of where we’ve been can give us great courage as we move into the future.”

She’s quickly making positive impressions.

“It is immediately apparent that Katie is a blessing to the Kirt-

land Temple Visitor and Spiritual Formation Center and the Kirtland Congregation,” said Ron Romig, the Temple’s site director. “Katie embodies what is best in our tradition and who we hope to become.”

The key, she says, is a connection between spirituality and the church’s development.

“I think that spiritual depth has always been a really important part of this movement. In some ways it’s at the heart of the Enduring Principle of Continuing Revelation and being open to how God’s Spirit is revealing things to us. ... The early Kirtland era...gave Saints courage and vision.”

Besides her church upbringing, education, and experience, she carries another attribute.

“When I went on a caravan trip with my youth group, we visited the Kirtland site, and we had a worship service in the Temple one night. The feeling you get when in that space [is inspirational].”

## **Kirtland Visitor and Spiritual Formation Center**

We set this land and building apart to help shape our identity as Community of Christ. May this be a place where we share our faith story openly, honestly, and graciously; a place where we offer lessons from our historical journey to guide our feet toward tomorrow.

—Presiding Evangelist David Brock’s  
dedicatory prayer, June 9, 2007

# Bus Tour Hits All the High Notes

By Greg Clark

A woman from Texas answered an invitation. A man from Florida sought a path to church connections. And a couple from Alabama saw a road to knowledge.

Though they had different motivations, they shared a similar view of last October's bus tour of historic church sites and other attractions:

Fantastic!

For those who missed the bus last fall, the 2013 riders strongly recommend that folks plan now for this year's tour. The "Sing the Sacred Story Bus Tour" in October will stop at historic sites in Nauvoo, Illinois; Kirtland, Ohio; Lamoni, Iowa; Palmyra, New York; and many more. Other attractions will include Niagara Falls, the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York; Shaker villages; and vivid fall foliage.

Different personalities form each tour. But riders from every trip share something in common: an appreciation for the presentation, stories, and people who become a family for 10 days.

## The Texan

Elsie Kornman just couldn't say no. At a retreat in 2012, the 81-year-old woman from Longview met Glenna Van Buskirk and Barbara Walden. Van Buskirk volunteers at Community of Christ historic sites, and Walden is executive director of the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation. She's also the driving force (though not the driver) of the bus trips that have brought joy and knowledge to hundreds.

Elsie and Glenna hit it off. Soon, Elsie found herself saying yes to Glenna's invitation.



*The Maid of the Mist provided a spectacular view of Niagara Falls for members of last fall's bus tour.*

"It didn't take a lot of talking. I had never done a bus tour and thought it would be fun to do."

She liked several parts of the trip. But she especially enjoyed the way it tied church history into national events.

"I think the most interesting for me was to see the origins of my faith movement in a context of other beginnings. ...I guess you'd say it made it relevant and alive for me.

"When you walk in the footsteps of people you've read about for years and then walk the paths and sit in the same seats, it has an emotional impact that reading about it doesn't carry. Those stories you've read and accepted for years are almost a visceral part of you now."

## The Floridian

Peter Smith had been an avid fan of church history since he

joined Community of Christ at 19. But the Odessa resident had started to drift from that history.

Then he began to realize how much he missed it and "how little I knew about these sites." So he signed up for the bus tour. Even more, he served as the bus pastor, leading devotionals and a service at the Kirtland Temple, his favorite stop.

There's a depth to the Spirit there. I've been there twice, and both times I've connected to history and God. It's an amazing place."

Peter, 42, said the trip "grounded me in our church's sacred story. It brought back this sense of belonging to a movement that started in some extraordinary circumstances. It connected me in a way that made me appreciate who we are."

"It reconfirmed an excitement I

*See Bus Tour on Page 7*

## 2014 Bus Tour to Offer Highlights, Music, More

Add another stanza to the “Sing the Sacred Story” bus tour.

Last year’s event was such a hit that another tour led by the Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation is scheduled this year from October 6–15.

Tour guests will enjoy singing new and old songs on the bus while traveling from one destination to another. They’ll also hear stories, learn about the sites, and deepen their appreciation for church heritage.

Highlights will include evening worship in the Kirtland Temple, a vespers service at the Plano Stone Church, a hymn festival at Nauvoo’s Red Brick Store, a stroll in the Sacred Grove, and more.

The itinerary also will include stops at Niagara Falls, the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Feni-

more Art Museum, Hancock Shaker Village, and Oneida Community Mansion House.

David Bolton, music and worship support specialist at Community of Christ International Headquarters, will join the bus tour as a guest minister. He was part of the team that helped to develop the hymnal, *Community of Christ Sings*.

He is a musician, author of several hymns, and co-founder of the Emma Hale Smith hymn festival held at the Kirtland Temple every July.

The cost is \$1,375 per person (double occupancy) and \$1,875 per person (single occupancy). The tour will start and end in Independence, Missouri. For more information or to reserve your seat, contact Barbara Walden by e-mail, [bwalden@HistoricSitesFoundation.org](mailto:bwalden@HistoricSitesFoundation.org); by phone, (440) 477-9562; or by postal mail at Community of Christ Historic Sites Foundation, P.O. Box 338, Nauvoo, IL 62354.

## Bus Tour

*Continued from Page 6*

had when I first learned about the church, what it stood for, and where it came from. It strengthened my foundation.”

Peter sees value in individuals making pilgrimages to the historic sites, but he especially recommends going with a group. The bus tour offered the best of both, Peter said, because Peter said individuals received time on their own to explore, too.

“For me the group experience added such a wonderful dynamic. Sometimes when in a group you experience things much differently than by yourself.”

### The Alabamans

Gregory Wendling said he and his wife, Donna, signed up for the tour “to learn more about the church, a little more about the history, and actually go to the places the history was.”

Gregory, 55, carried the perspective of being a new member.

Though he had attended a Community of Christ congregation for about a decade, he was baptized and confirmed April 7, 2013. In the following days the Brewton couple attended World Conference and then hopped on the bus.

“My wife had always wanted to go, so, ‘Hey let’s do it!’ I considered myself kind of like a newbie on the trip. But this is part of me now. It added to my conviction.

Gregory easily identified his favorite part of the trip.

“I really felt in touch with the Spirit at the Sacred Grove in New York. It was a spiritual thing that I wasn’t expecting. It seemed that as I got into it the Spirit was leading me.

“Throughout my journey in the grove I was touched by

things. When we got back on the bus my pastor, his wife, and my wife...just knew from the inside of me that I was glowing.”



*Volunteers Dolores Vest of Pensacola, Florida, and Karel Denkmann of Elk Grove, Illinois, greeted bus tour guests in Kirtland.*

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

## **Volunteers Needed**

*To volunteer at a historic site, contact Lachlan Mackay at (217) 453-2246 or at [lmackav@CofChrist.org](mailto:lmackav@CofChrist.org).*

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

P.O. Box 338  
Nauvoo, IL 623354

## **Leaders**

*Continued from Page 1*

resignations, all effective at the end of 2013. The departures mean stalwarts Pat Spillman, Kirk Cross, Bob Dimmitt, David Byrn, and George Lund no longer will be routinely available as the board pursues its mission of preserving and sharing church heritage.

They leave, showered with gratitude for jobs well done. Most have served as board officers. All have offered expertise in their fields that has blessed the foundation and its properties.

At November's board meeting, President Jeff Naylor commented on what the changes mean.

"We have a tremendous opportunity before us to build on the many contributions of these gentlemen, and there also comes a great responsibility to make sure we move forward in a way that honors their contributions and positions us as a board for new things that come along."

The board bid farewell in February with a dinner that honored those departing because of health, age, family, or work reasons.

"The five board members who have concluded their service provided tremendous leadership and direction," Naylor said in February. "We are grateful for their contributions in architectural design, legal counsel, professional business management, finance, and real estate management. Those skills have been quite valuable to the board and the historic sites themselves. We wish them well in their future endeavors of service and ministry."

Though board service generally is low profile in public eyes, Naylor noted how important the work is.

"Board members serve as the best ambassadors to bring to life the foundation's message of preserving and sharing church heritage. It is through the board's vision and passion that we are able to creatively expand support for historic sites as places where to-

day's church members can better understand their ties to the Restoration movement, and where seekers and visitors can learn more about Community of Christ and our Enduring Principles of Christian discipleship."

That's why it was crucial for the board move quickly to replace the departing veterans with energetic, engaging, and enthusiastic people who bring special expertise. Many of them hold skills similar to those of the outgoing members.

"I'm especially thrilled that a number of our new board members are young adults and will help us more effectively communicate our mission to younger generations," Naylor said.

"I look forward to sharing the institutional knowledge of the foundation with our new members, but, more importantly, I'm eager to see the perspectives and new directions these new members can share with the board incumbents. It's an exciting time!"