



IN THIS ISSUE.....

December 2017

Directors Corner.....Elder and Sister Erickson
On Death - "If a Man Die".....Emil O. Hanson
The Family History Guide..... Bob Taylor
Subscriber Experiences and Benefits.....Family Search
2018 Activities.....Stephen Felt

Directors Corner:

If you do family history work, you bless the human race

--Elder and Sister Erickson

The Ogden FamilySearch Library staff enjoyed a wonderful evening on November 12, 2017 with Brent Belnap, the attorney over international matters for FamilySearch. He was recently serving in Moscow as Area Legal Counsel over about 16 countries.

Brent, who spoke in the chapel at the Mound Fort Stake Center to the Library staff and their spouses and friends, said he felt like he had come full circle by now meeting with the Ogden FamilySearch Library staff.

When he was little his mother used to take him to the Ogden Branch of the Utah Genealogical Society, which was then housed in the Ogden Pioneer Tabernacle. He would also go to the Special Collections Department of the Weber County Library. When our west building opened, he would then ask his mother to take him to the Ogden Family History Library. He spent many Saturdays there. He told the staff he was blessed by people like them helping him. He asked them to think of him when they are helping young people.

He noted that family history documents tend to find you if you are interested. For example, he has been in Accra, Ghana lately looking for living quarters, where he and his family will be moving next year for his next Church assignment. While in Africa a cousin sent him some old letters written by his grandfather who was on a German mission in 1913-1914. The last letter was dated just days before the First World War broke out, and detailed the events going on, and why he needed to get out of Germany. Brent is very grateful to have received those pieces of his family history.

By doing family history we become better connected with a great number of the human family. Just going back a few generations shows how close we are to being related to a great number of the human family. He gave an example by holding up two hands and counting back the generations. Going back just 10 generations equals 512 ancestors. Twenty generations (two hands worth) takes it back 800 years and equals roughly half a million ancestors. By thirty generations (three hands) you are at half a billion ancestors, but by then you are doubly related to many people throughout your tree. By 34 generations you are at 8.5 billion ancestors, which is close to the population of the earth today.

Brent read a quote from the prophet Joseph Smith stating that, "A man filled with the love of God is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race." He'll want to serve more than just his own family. He likened that to our work at the Library, where we help others connect with their

ancestors. He said it is as if we are traveling through time and place to help people.

Working for FamilySearch has given him a front row seat to see the work of the Lord unfolding. The flood of records now available is extraordinary. And there are billions of records yet to be discovered. He said that most of the records from the British Isles have now been digitized, as have good portions of the Scandinavian records. Eighty percent of the records in Mexico have now been digitized.

Not all the world is so fortunate. For example, they do not possess many written records in Africa. Information on ancestors frequently exists only in people's memories. Village leaders have amazing memories, and some have memorized up to 6000 names in family trees. The LDS Church is sending people with digital recorders and transcribers to Africa to record these oral histories before the tribal leaders pass away.

The church has the capability of storing enormous amounts of digital records. Brent shared a story of the one time he was permitted to tour the granite vaults of the Church. He spoke of the huge capacity for preservation of digitized records that is available there. The entire Library of Congress could fit in there, many times over. For some people, these vaults contain the only record that they lived on the earth. When he visited the vaults he said he had the feeling that he was standing in a sacred space, like an underground temple.

Brent concluded by saying "I know family history work is ultimately a spiritual work." While it can sometimes seem tedious, there are strong connections to those on the other side. He noted that we often have spiritual experiences while doing family history work. These experiences that we have are very real.

In conclusion, Brent shared three quotes about the benefits of doing family history work.

President Thomas S. Monson has asked us to search out our heritage, and has said we discover something about ourselves as we learn about our ancestors.

President Russell M. Nelson has said that "When we our hearts turn to our ancestors, something changes inside us. We feel part of something greater than ourselves."

And **Elder Bednar** has promised the youth "protection against the intensifying influence of the adversary" as they engage in family history work.

Brent added that as we help to redeem our ancestors, they redeem us.

On Death - "If a Man Die"

– Emil Hanson

I remember reading a book years ago written by Gordon T. Allred a Professor of Literature and a fellow educator at the university I spent thirty years serving. Elder Allred has since passed away. The name of his book was "If a Man Die". It was a very thought provoking book and it, for the first time in my life, made me think more seriously about death and dying. Death is actually a process that begins when we are born; it is not something we look forward to or even anticipate as something around the corner. Our brains are not programed to anticipate death as we do a birthday or other celebrations. Rather our brains are designed to think of death as something that happens to others, to old people, and when we are old, it is something that happens to other old people. When we come to that point in our lives that we can see that our bodies and our minds are deteriorating we may know in our hearts that our very own death is pending. At that point, we may finally resign ourselves to believing that at last it is now 'my' turn.

The key to accepting that time is not to see death as a punctuation period, the end, but that it is rather more like a comma, meaning that there is more to come. Job, of Old Testament fame, asked the question, "If a man die will he live again?" There is no other question to which the human soul more eagerly seeks an answer than that one. It seemed to Job, that the grave could not be the end. If life were just a tangled web of injustices, such as he had suffered, why would God have given us a moral code if our only reward for following it were death? Job wanted to be assured; he wanted to believe that there was 'a beyond'. All men want to be assured of that. Otherwise, why not, 'Eat drink and be merry for tomorrow we die!'

What is it that stands in the way of a man's belief in immortality? It is the cold, real and universal fact of death. All men die and every day we read a brief description of their lives in the obituaries. As far as we can see there is no more than a casket and a grave. So where is the evidence of the beyond? Science will say there is no evidence of the 'beyond' because the body lies there for all to see. Science, however, knows nothing, or very little, about spiritual evidence. But, Job's great faith allowed him an audience with God. And from that audience his assurance was such that he cried with

joy saying, "And though after my skin hath been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh shall I see God". (*Job 19:26*) Luke tells us that; "He is not a God of the dead, but of the living for all live unto Him." (*Luke 20:38*) Men's lives, apparently, have many forms, not unlike the transitional life of a butterfly that changes from a larva to a caterpillar and then to a butterfly. The butterfly begins much as we. A caterpillar emerges from their egg much like a small child emerges from its mother's womb. After a short life, such as ours, the caterpillar prepares itself for its next stage by wrapping itself in a cocoon or pupa much like a man is laid away in a coffin. Eventually a beautiful butterfly emerges, possibly comparable to the spirit of man leaving the cold body and ascending into the spirit world. The spirit world being his next phase of existence on his way to eternity.

It has always been reassuring to me to know that when Heavenly father wants us to know something he sends a messenger down to reveal the thing He wants us to know. The messenger comes, he delivers the message and leaves. He goes to report back to the Father that he has completed his assignment. Heavenly messengers have never stopped to linger nor to discuss the weather or how things are going on earth. The messenger has been given a specific assignment and that is the only information he will give us. They have never told anyone, to our knowledge about where they live and what it is like there. They don't fill us in on what they do all day or who they do it with, or if they even have days. Obviously Heavenly Father does not want us to know very much about what lies on the other side of the veil.

Some early Christian leaders somehow got the idea that people who have passed on are living on beautiful white clouds and all they do is play harps and sing Hosannas all day. They had a lot of funny ideas about the hereafter. But we know different. This much has been revealed to us, we know that there is a place that we will be going that is usually referred to as the spirit world, or paradise. We also know, that we will have more important things to do than play harps. Missionary work will be one of them. Those who had been aware of and embraced the Gospel while in this life will be missionaries to the millions, maybe billions who hadn't had that opportunity while in life. We also know that we can communicate with one another and that those who were valiant will be with many of their ancestral relatives. That is a happy thought!

We have to, "Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God;" (*D&C 18:10*) He will save as many of us as He can; some will suffer punishment for their indiscretions and the repentant, He will eventually forgive. There are, however, some sins that cannot be forgiven. The Psalmist said: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him?...For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." (*Psalms 8:3-5*) We have to know that this life is not the end and that there is much, much more in our eternal quest.

What will we look like in the spirit world where we will await the day of Resurrection? The Book of Mormon describes the time during which the people built the tower of Babel. The Jaradites were leaving the place of the Tower of Babel, and the brother of Jared requested that Lord stretch forth His finger and touch 16 stones in order to provide light for them in the two ships they built to cross the sea. The Brother of Jared's faith was so strong that he saw the finger of the Lord. Because of his great faith the Lord elected to show Himself to the brother of Jared. He said, "And never have I showed myself unto man whom I have created, for never has man believed in me as thou hast. Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? Yea, even all men were created in the beginning after mine own image. Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh." (*Ether 3:15.16*)

When we think of moving from this life to the spirit world we should be comforted to know that our spirits look just as we do here only we will not have our bodies until after the Resurrection. May God bless us to know and have faith in His great love for us and His great Plan of Salvation for all mankind

This Christmas Season may we be reminded that we are celebrating the birth of He who made that great event possible.

The Family History Guide

— Bob Taylor

Here is a summary of the new features from The Family History Guide Blog. By Bob Taylor
The free [Online Tracker](#) for The Family History Guide has been up and running for about 7 months, and it now has over 1,100 registered users. (It's the only part of The Family History Guide that requires a username and password; the rest of the site does not.) With the Online Tracker, or "OLT" as we sometimes call it, you can keep track of your notes and progress in The Family History Guide in a secure online database.

Today we updated the OLT in a number of ways to help your user experience be even better. Here's a list of the new enhancements, going from top to bottom of the screen:

- **Menu updates.** Now the OLT has the same double-menu system as was recently introduced to the rest of the site.
- **Green bar update.** The green menu bar now lets you go back to the Home page of the OLT or change your account settings.
- **Learning paths.** There are now Project sections for FamilySearch, Ancestry, MyHeritage, and Findmypast.
- **Country Research.** Regions and countries are now represented in the OLT. The North America region is finished, and other regions will be added in the next few weeks.
- **Footer updates.** The OLT now uses the same new footer as the rest of the site.

Take a look at the new Learning Paths and Country Research sections. Active links in the OLT are green. And “coming soon” really does mean coming soon!

Subscriber Experiences and Benefits

— *Family Search*

FamilySearch Free Sign-in Offers Greater Subscriber Experiences and Benefits



Beginning December 13, 2017, patrons visiting [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) will see a prompt to register for a free FamilySearch account or to sign in to their existing account to continue enjoying all the free expanded benefits FamilySearch has to offer. Since its launch in 1999, FamilySearch has added millions of users, billions of various historical records, and many fun, new features like [Family Tree](#), [Memories](#), [mobile apps](#), [digital books](#), and [dynamic help](#). In order to accommodate continued growth of these and future free services, FamilySearch must assure all its partners that its content is offered in a safe and secure online environment. Patrons creating a free account and signing in fulfills that need.

Patron sign in will also enable FamilySearch to satisfy the ongoing need for user authentication. This authentication can deliver rich, personalized discovery, collaboration, and help experiences. Simply put, signed-in visitors can access more searchable content and enjoy more personalized services.

“A large percentage of our current site visitors are not benefiting from much of what FamilySearch has to offer because they don’t realize the need to simply sign in with their free account to do so,” said Steve Rockwood, FamilySearch CEO. “They are basically arriving in the parking lot but not coming inside for the main event,” he said about website visitors

who do not sign in.

FamilySearch is committed to patron privacy and does not share personal account information with any third party without a patron's consent.

See [Registering to Use FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) for information about creating a free account.

Ogden FamilySearch Library 2018 ACTIVITIES

The following are family history activities you may want to place on your **2018 calendar**. You may also want to pass this information on to interested groups.

Why? "And I promise you will be protected against the intensifying influence of the adversary as you participate and love this holy work (Family History). You will be safe guarded in your youth and throughout your lives. (*Elder David A. Bednar*)

2018 CALENDAR ITEMS:

- **Ogden FamilySearch Library OPEN HOUSE - July 10, 11, and 12.**
- **Ogden Family History CONFERENCE - September 8 at Weber State University**

PRIMARY Children: Summer Primary Activities will be offered June 4 through August 11. Children ages 8 - 11 years old learn how to become Family History Detectives in a fun, 2 hour interactive activity.

YOUTH, YOUNG SINGLE ADULTS & ADULTS: Groups and individuals (ages 12 - 108) may register to use Library computers to learn Web Indexing, Family Tree, Genealogy Merit Badge, research, adding photos and stories, finding temple names, or design their own activity. Some Wards and even Stakes have held part of their youth conference and Discovery Day at the Library.

The Library has a staff of over 200 helpers who are ready to assist you with this important work. We look forward to seeing you at the Library.

Merry Christmas!

From the Directors and Staff at the Ogden FamilySearch Library