

SCHOLARS SHARE DIVERGING INTERPRETATIONS OF NAUVOO

DURING THE FIRST weekend this May, the Mormon History Association held its 1989 annual meeting at Quincy, Illinois, where LDS and RLDS scholars presented varied perspectives and interpretations on the turbulent and controversial Nauvoo years in Church history. The meeting, attended by over 400 scholars and interested friends, was a time of academic consideration, personal reflection, and friendly camaraderie in the city that 150 years earlier welcomed the fleeing, persecuted Missouri Saints.

The Thursday night opening panel on "Many Nauvoos" featured four different perspectives. Ronald Esplin, director of BYU's Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, presented the LDS interpretation where the temple is the focal point of the LDS Nauvoo heritage.

Richard Howard, RLDS church historian, discussed how the RLDS experience has been, to a large degree, a response by Nauvoo dissenters to the pain of the Nauvoo experience and leadership, including authoritarian government and polygamy. He discussed how the RLDS physical restoration of Nauvoo, particularly the Red Brick Store where temple ordinances were performed, helped force his church to confront its painful denials and come to terms with its history.

Non-Mormon John Hallwas, director of regional collections for Western Illinois University Libraries, placed theocratic Mormon Nauvoo within the larger context of democratic Jacksonian America and said the two views were on an unavoidable collision course. Neither side had overcome the challenges peculiar to its

ideology: Mormonism in restraining abuse of power in a religious theocracy; Democracy in avoiding the tyranny of the majority.

Glen Leonard, director of the LDS Museum of Church History and Art, explored four different ways Nauvoo has been remembered: (1) by the historical resident—LDS, RLDS, and neighbors; (2) by visitors—journalists and pilgrims; (3) celebrants—tourists memorializing the city for the future; and (4) frameworks for interpretation—history, novels, poetry. He concluded that we are engaged in a "meaningful and continuing process of remembering" and recognized "validity in the many perspectives of the cities beautiful that were, are, and will yet be called Nauvoo."

On Friday the conference took a day-long field trip to the rebuilt Nauvoo with historical papers presented at selected sites. At Car-

thage Jail, LDS Logan Institute Director Kenneth Godfrey discussed the martyrdoms. Jill Mulvay Derr, with the Smith Institute, discussed the Hiram and Sarah Kimball family at their restored home. BYU Professor of History James Allen outlined the building and use of the Masonic Lodge (now euphemistically titled "Cultural Hall" by the LDS church). At Pratt's Landing on the Mississippi, Richard Bennett, with the University of Manitoba Archives, revised the myths concerning the winter exodus across the river. Glen Leonard shared the history of the Seventies Hall. Mark McKiernan related his first-hand story in getting the RLDS church to reconstruct the Red Brick Store. Paul Anderson, with the LDS church museum, concluded with a moving slide show and essay on the impact of current and historical visual images of Nauvoo.

That evening back at Quincy, MHA Awards Committee Chair David Whittaker presided over the awards banquet. Special citations were given to David Hewett and the *Main Antique Digest* for "careful and thorough reporting to a national audience the details relating to the Mark Hofmann

Forgery and Murder Case."

A special citation was also awarded to Kenneth E. Stobaugh, long time director of the RLDS Joseph Smith Historic Center in Nauvoo, for "a lifetime of dedication to preserving and interpreting the physical heritage of the Restoration Movement."

The William Grover and Winnifred Foster Reese History Award for the best doctoral dissertation was awarded to Philip Barlow for his work on the Bible in Mormonism at Harvard Divinity School. It will be published by Oxford University Press.

The Grace Fort Arrington Award for Historical Excellence was awarded to RLDS Church Historian Richard Howard.

BYU Professor of Church History Paul Peterson was awarded the Best Manuscript/Article submitted to the association's *Journal of Mormon History* for "The Mormon Reformation: The Rhetoric and the Reality."

Four T. Edgar Lyon Article Awards were given. Best biography: Ronald Walker, with the Smith Institute, for "Heber J. Grant's European Mission 1903-1906" (*Journal of Mormon History*); Historical theology: Gary



"Take your pick: angry about Elder Packer, delighted about Hugh Nibley, or concerned about the LDS encyclopedia."

Smith for "The Office of Presiding Patriarch: The Primacy Problem" (*Journal of Mormon History*); History-19th Century: Frederick Buchanan, "The Ebb and Flow of Mormonism in Scotland: 1840-1900" (*BYU Studies*); History-20th Century: Kahlile Mehr, "The Trial of the French Mission" (*Dialogue*).

The Francis M. and Emily S. Chipman award for the best first book was awarded to Larry Logue for *A Sermon in the Desert* (University of Illinois Press).

The Stephen F. Christensen Best Documentary/Bibliography Book Award went to Frederick Buchanan for *A Good Time Com-*

ing: Mormon Letters to Scotland (BYU Religious Studies Center).

The MHA 1989 Best Book Award was given to Levi S. Peterson for *Juanita Brooks: Mormon Woman Historian* (University of Utah Press).

Finally, the John C. Bennett "Award" for the worst book to be published on a Mormon topic in 1988 went to Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith for *The Mormon Murders, The True Story of Greed, Forgery, Deceit and Death*. "We dishonor this book for its disregard for truth, its poor research, and its incredible misunderstanding of Mormon history and culture," read Whit-

taker. "The volume manages to distort the past only slightly less than the supposed object of their study, Mark Hofmann. Their inability to gather or honestly use historical truth has led the awards committee to seriously wonder if the authors cut class at Harvard Law School the semester the course on evidence was taught."

On Saturday, R. Laurence Moore, Cornell University professor of religion, presented the annual Tanner Lecture on "Learning to Play: The Mormon Way and the Way of Other Americans."

Other papers included: "The Shape of the Past: Mormon Theology of History" by Davis Bit-

ton; "What Has Become of Our Fathers?": The Practice of Baptism for the Dead at Mormon Nauvoo," Guy Bishop; "I Would Not Value Going Through the Temple a Dollar's Worth": Baptism for the Dead and the Reorganized Church Experience," Roger Launius; "Hero or Traitor?" Charles Wesley Wandell's Australian Mission and his Spiritual Journey from Nauvoo to the Plano," Marjorie Newton; "History of the Catholic Community in Nauvoo," Sister Mary Osborne; "The Reed Smoot Hearings" by Harvard Heath; "'All Alone and None to Cheer Me': Excerpts from the Southern States Mission Diaries of J. Golden Kim-

SUNSTONE CALENDAR

BYU NAUVOO SESQUICENTENNIAL HISTORY SYMPOSIUM will be held on 21 September 1989 and will be based on the general theme "Nauvoo and the Kingdom: Seven Years that Made a Difference." Proposals for papers are now being accepted. Papers should be 20-30 typed pages that offer new insights and new information about the Nauvoo experience. Contact BYU Nauvoo Symposium, c/o Bill Hartley, 307 KMB, BYU, Provo, UT 84602 (801/378-7520).

DAYBREAK: A NEWSLETTER FOR LDS SINGLE ADULTS bi-monthly lists upcoming single-adult activities and organizations throughout the United States. One-year, first-class mail subscriptions (six issues) are \$5. Contact: Daybreak, P.O. Box 705, Belmont, CA 94002 (415/342-8260).

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS LECTURE SERIES. The 13 June lecture will feature BYU Professor of English Eugene England on "Radical Mormon Revelations: Women and War and Atonement in the Doctrine and Covenants." On 11 July Anthony Hutchinson will speak on "The Joseph Smith First Vision Narratives: The Nature of Early LDS Visionary Experiences." All lectures are held in room 101 of James Fletcher Building at the University of Utah and begin at 7:30 P. M., a \$2.00 donation is appreciated.

THE LATTER-DAY SENTINEL launched the *Latter-day Sentinel Singles' Magazine* in May 1989. Edited by Richard Wernitz, the new magazine includes columns on cooking, dating, and social activities, lists of telephone dating services, news coverage of singles' conferences, and a personals section. A one-year subscription is free until 1 October when subscriptions will cost \$5.00 a year. Contact: *Latter-day Sentinel Singles' Magazine*, PO Box 2440, Phoenix, AZ 85002 (1-800-LDS-NEWS outside Arizona, 602/257-0220 in-state).

THE MORMON HISTORY ASSOCIATION's 1990 annual meeting on 12-17 June in Laie, Hawaii, will include visits to the Polynesian Cultural Center among other beautiful and exotic locations. The conference will deal with the Church in the Pacific, the international Church, and other aspects of the history and culture of Mormonism. Proposals for papers or complete sessions are desired and should include the title or topic, historical methods, significance of the study, and a one-page vita of each participant and should be submitted by 1 September 1989 to Program Chair, Martha Sonntag

Bradley, 4611 Belmour Way, Salt Lake City, UT 84117.

Five round-trip airfares and two separate one-way airfares will be available through Morris Travel to assist students and scholars without institutional funding to present papers at the 1990 annual meeting. Send a proposal clearly marked "In Competition for MHA Grant-in-Aid," along with a short vita to Mary Stovall, History Dept., 323 KMB, BYU, Provo, UT 84602 (801/378-6138). Proposals are due 1 August 1989 and must include a title, brief abstract, historical methods, and the topic's significance. For accepted proposals, completed papers are due 1 February 1990 and winners will be announced in March 1990.

THE MORMON PACIFIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY will hold its annual conference 28-29 July 1989 on the Hawaiian island of Maui. It will feature tours of Mormon historical sites, scholarly papers, and a pageant depicting the missionary work of George Q. Cannon and the translation of the Book of Mormon into Hawaiian. Cost is approximately \$140 which includes inter-island airfare and accommodations. For more details, contact Ken Baldrige or Lance Chase at BYU-Hawaii (808/293-3211).

MORMON WOMEN'S FORUM 12 July meeting at 7:00 P.M. at the University of Utah's Fine Arts Auditorium will feature a readers' theater from LDS women's writings. For further information call 801/295-2736.

SEATTLE SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM will be held 10-11 November 1989. Send proposals, offers to help, and requests for details to Molly Bennion, 1150 22nd Avenue East, Seattle, WA 98112 (206/325-6868).

SUNSTONE SYMPOSIUM XI will be held 23-26 August 1989 on the University of Utah campus. Volunteers to help in the pre-conference organization and to staff the event are needed (passes to sessions are given for volunteer help). To be added to Sunstone's mailing list to receive a copy of the advance program contact Sunstone, 331 South Rio Grande Street, Suite 30, Salt Lake City, UT 84101-1136 (801/355-5926).

The Sunstone Calendar reports events and notices of Mormon-related organizations. Submissions are requested.

ball," David Buice; "Bathsheba W. Smith: Her Nauvoo Years," Heidi Swinton; "Women, Sexuality, and New Religious Movements: The Mormon Experience in Its Nineteenth Century Context," Lawrence Foster.

Mormon trails expert Stanley Kimball gave his farewell presidential address on "The Power of Place and the Spirit of Locale: Finding God on Western Trails." He shared his "personal, private, spiritual experiences" while exploring the pioneer trails. He said the old trails are linear temples that provide peace and are schools which provide knowledge about others and self.

This year's president Carol Cornwall Madsen, with the Smith Institute, will preside over the MHA 25th-anniversary annual meeting which will be held in Hawaii in June 1990. The association elected Richard Howard as its president-elect and Paul Anderson and Mario Depillis as new council members.

After the banquet, a member of a Quincy masonic lodge displayed and discussed the jewels of his lodge which purportedly originally belonged to the Nauvoo Lodge of which Joseph Smith was the grand master. The jewels—notecard size ceremonial medallions of office hung on a rope around a Mason's neck—included Masonic symbols found on the Nauvoo temple, including the compass and the square (on the weather vane), a sun and crescent moon with a face (the capstone and pedestal), and a cornucopia which possibly are the two heretofore unidentifiable objects held above the face on the sunstone.

The Masonic jewels prompted informal conversations and reminiscences of the 1974 MHA Nauvoo meeting where LDS Institute Director Reed Durham's controversial presidential address detailed the temple/Masonic connections, punctuated by a violent thunder and lightning storm. Reportedly, under Church pressure, Durham afterwards withdrew his address and membership

in the organization and has never attended since. In contrast to recent years where few Church Education System employees have attended, this conference included a noticeable increase in CES instructors who both attended and participated.

Sunday Morning began with a panel discussion on the impact of Robert Flanders's 24-year-old book, *Nauvoo: Kingdom on the Mississippi*. Alma Blair, professor of history at Graceland College, said that while he views Nauvoo more as a refuge than a kingdom, he valued the secular emphasis of Flanders's book, showing how religion models and molds the world of economic decisions and social customs. Blair also discussed the initial negative RLDS reaction to the book and said it took a generation to come to terms with its revelations.

Richard Poll praised the book for taking Nauvoo out of the polemic and into academic scrutiny. He hoped for a new author to create a work that synthesizes subsequent research in biographies, demographics, women's studies, religious life of ordinary members surrounding Mormon communities, the gentile perspective, and the human dimensions void of "cardboard villains."

BYU Professor of History Marvin Hill said that Flanders was correct that Joseph Smith's views on building a political kingdom brought about his death and was also correct that Joseph addressed economic concerns above religious. He noted that the distinction between the sacred and the profane is "ours not theirs." He said we need to tell the story from the perspective of "perfection—making everything religious." Hill said historians still haven't reconciled the two Josephs: the one of our faith and the one of history.

Concluding, Flanders talked about history and religion. He said professional history is limited and limiting; it is a "secular enterprise" but not necessarily profane; "it is

a modern enterprise that separates me in how I think about the sources of knowledge and truth." He said, "Becoming a historian has not destroyed my faith, but it has changed my epistemology—how I believe."

Flanders compared his study of a religious community to a Mississippi river boat: he is interested not in the seven-story hotel where the people live but in the inaccessible pilot house and engine room that move the boat-community. He said he studies the corporation over the commonwealth. He reviewed new historical approaches—economic, social, place, landscape history—and concluded that history must be an imaginative narrative but not imaginary. Speaking of Nauvoo, he concluded, "One of the most fruitful ways is to look at the place itself as a stage—there is more to do on a stage than a historical pageant."

The conference concluded

with a devotional in Quincy's Washington Park. The "reconstituted" Nauvoo choir of historians directed by Susan Kenney performed songs that Nauvoo Saints sang. Paul Tinker, JoAn Bitton, and Alma Blair shared their reflections on the spiritual meaning of Nauvoo, so did others in a brief testimony meeting.

The conference ended with everyone singing the Shaker hymn "Tis the Gift to Be Simple" accompanied by Paul Anderson on the flute. (The hymn is of the time period but there is no evidence it was sung by the Saints in Nauvoo.) After three days of contrasting historical interpretations, the hymn's words "Tis the gift to be free, 'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be" aptly described the historian's craft of freely sifting facts. And with all the versions and revisions, the concluding phrase, "by turning, turning we come out right," expressed their faith.

BENNION BOYS RANCH REOPENS

By Hand Carré

THE BENNION Teton Boys Ranch in Teton Valley, Idaho, which closed in 1985, reopened in June 1989 for its twenty-sixth summer. Nearly 2,000 boys have attended the camp, which Lowell Bennion owned and operated from 1961 until his failing health necessitated its closure four years ago. A group of alumni and former counsellors at the ranch have found a benefactor to purchase the land and donate it for the purpose of allowing the summer camp to continue to function.

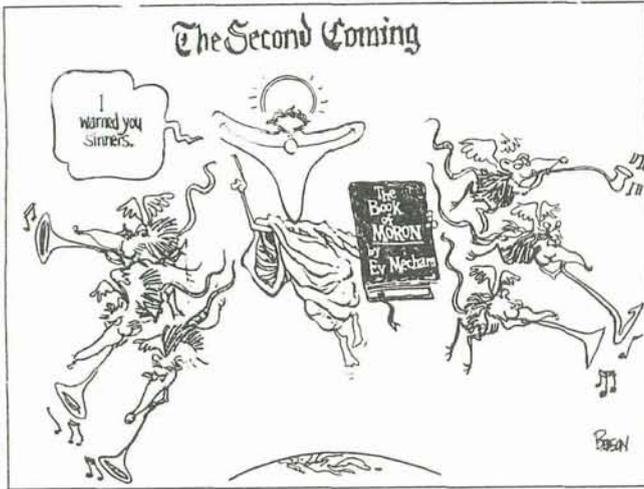
The camp will be open from 19 June to 12 August, with a break between 15 and 17 July. A boy may stay for four weeks starting either June 19 or July 17, or attend for all eight weeks. Cost for attendance is \$625 for each four-week term. Eligibility, according to a camp brochure, requires boys to

be "of good character and in good health," to "love the out-of-doors, [and] want to learn to work, improve their sports skills, and have real adventure." Financial aid based on need is available.

Work at the camp includes logging, fencing, gardening, painting, haying, and giving service to neighbors. For recreation, boys ride horses, swim, fish, play sports, and hike and camp in neighboring Teton National Park. LDS boys will be able to attend church in Victor, Idaho.

In the past, most of the boys who have attended the ranch have been LDS, but the camp itself is non-sectarian and not affiliated with the Mormon church.

Applications and further information are available from camp director Steve Peterson, 123 N 460 E, Ephraim, Utah 84627.



CLIPPING THE PHOENIX

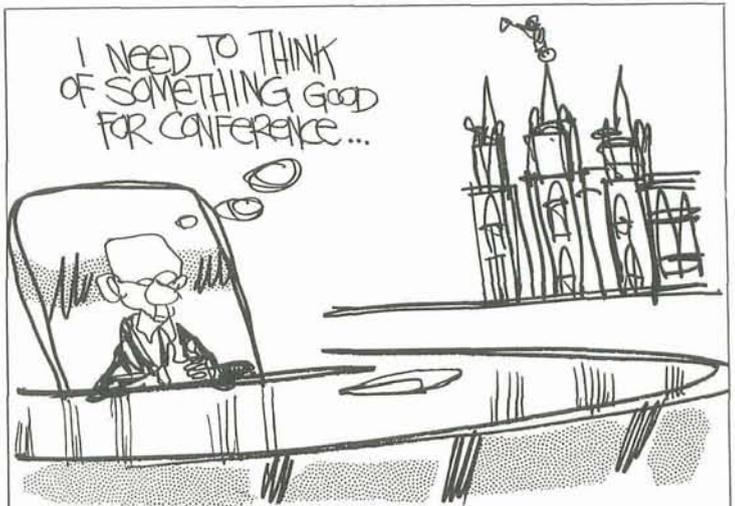
WHEN FORMER Arizona Governor Evan Mecham announced that he was again seeking election to the office he was ousted from after last year's impeachment trial, it was inevitable that *Arizona Republic* editorial cartoonist Steve Benson would again lampoon the man he calls the "Ayatollah of Mormonism." However, Benson's opening javelin—titled "The Second Coming," depicting a descending, heavenly Mecham, carrying "The Book of Moron" and being proclaimed by trumpet blowing, rat-faced angels—stirred up as much controversy as the arch-conservative's political resurrection.

Offended LDS Mecham supporters fired off letters to the newspaper, Mormon church headquarters (which kept out of the debate), and Benson's stake president, Kent Christiansen. In the ensuing deluge, Christiansen took Benson up on his sacrificial offer to be released from his high council church calling. In addition,

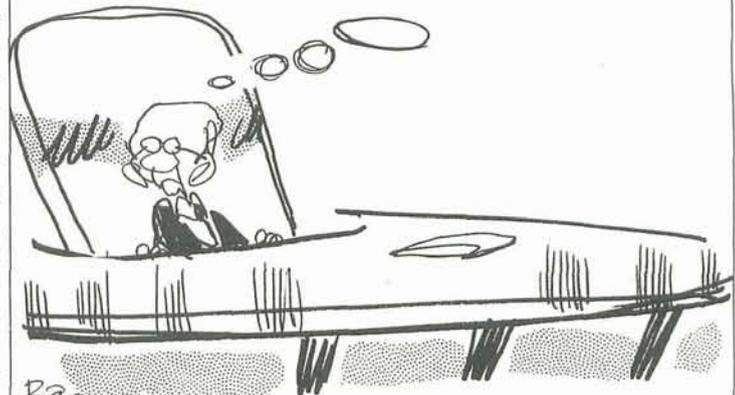
twelve of metropolitan Phoenix's highest ranking non-LDS religious leaders signed a letter condemning the "insensitive" cartoon for "mockery of sacred symbols. . . [which] plays into the desire of those who promote prejudice and bigotry."

"I am a devout Mormon," responded Benson, the eldest grandson of Church President Ezra Taft Benson. "My cartoon wasn't attacking the Church. I was attacking Mecham's misuse of the Church to further his political agenda." While he supports Christiansen's decision to release him, Benson fears that "the Mecham camp undeniably will see this move as a political and theological victory. . . [and will] use the Church as their club and go after other members of the Church who do not support Mecham."

It doesn't require a prophet to predict that Mecham's long-anticipated return will usher in an Armageddon whose length may seem like a millennium.



SOMETHING THAT TEACHES LOYALTY AND OBEDIENCE WHILE IT TUGS AT THE OLD HEART STRINGS...



SISTER FINCHLY, GET ME SOME PLOT SUMMARIES FROM OLD "LASSIE" EPISODES.

