

GO BUY THE BOOK



By Elbert Eugene Peck

IN THIS ISSUE, on page 6, Sunstone inaugurates another venture in its "I know! let's put on a show!" saga of money-raising schemes. Over the years, these projects have expanded Sunstone's editorial scope in ways unanticipated in the impulse to just do what God commanded Joseph Smith: "Pay the debt thou hast contracted to the printer. Release thyself from bondage" (D&C 19:35). Here are some of the lows and high-lights.

The first publication of The Sunstone Foundation was *not* issue 1 of the magazine but the 1975 *Mormon History Calendar*, the first of eight, annual, high-quality calendars designed to underwrite SUNSTONE magazine. The first one came out a little late (surprised?), and so there were plenty remaining halfway through the year. Peggy Fletcher cut out the oversize,



historical photographs and, wearing sandwich boards, canvassed Salt Lake's Main Street during the Days of '47 parade, hawking "Utah History Prints" for fifty cents each.

Utah History Prints 50¢

The ever-present need for money regularly motivated similar enterprises. It's fortunate that most were worthy undertakings in their own right since so many of them were money losers. Such was the ill-fated, outdoor showing of the film *The Producers* in Lindsey Gardens. Sunstone hired a police officer to control the expected crowd, but only six people showed

up. Years later, we brought in author Chaim Potok. I'm still not sure why a packed Kingsbury Hall didn't cover the hall rental, Potok's travel and honorarium, and publicity.

Some other lectures and banquets had the same great-event/no-profit outcome. Many forget that the late, great *Sunstone Review* was created to subsidize its sister periodical. The plan was to attract lucrative advertisements from national publishers by reviewing their books in a giveaway, newsprint, Mormon book review/news magazine. Well, its expenses nearly sank the entire Sunstone adventure, but its content forever defined SUNSTONE's news section. Sadly, Sunstone stationery, with a cartoon on each sheet, never caught on.

Fortunately, some schemes not only had inherent worth but also made money. The publishing of Calvin Grondahl's first three cartoon books, the peddling of cassette recordings of symposium sessions, and the auctioning of original Mormon art at the Salt Lake symposium have helped keep SUNSTONE's presses running.

And thus we see how the craving for money can be a catalyst for creativity. Imagine Sunstone without its news, cartoons, lectures, and connection to the larger world of published religious ideas—all of which were launched or greatly expanded by greed.

No one ever expected the symposiums to make money, so it was a major achievement

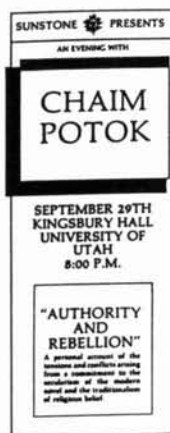
when it started to break even.

Now Sunstone is selling books. In every issue, and at symposiums, we will offer books for sale. Good books. Worthy books. Books proven by their popularity, such as Robert Kirby's and Pat Bagley's *Sunday of the Living Dead*; unknown gems that deserve wider readership, such as Esther Peterson's memoirs; and ones destined to be classics, such as Mary Bradford's biography of Lowell Bennion. We won't be a full-service bookstore and carry every Mormon title, but over time we hope to acquire a discriminating inventory that will include important, non-Mormon religious books, too. (We will need volunteers to fill the orders.)



In a way, this endeavor is one more expansion of Sunstone's role of connecting audiences with ideas. It also (1) identifies important books to own, and (2) conveniently delivers them to readers. In spite of the altruistic points, we're doing this for the money; please patronize our service when you can.

Yet, if past is prologue, who knows where this project will take us and how it will enrich our other deliberations and activities? "Way leads on to way," said Robert Frost as he contemplated the road he took in that yellow wood. Former Sunstone publisher Daniel Rector dreamed of opening a Sunstone bookstore/cafe where authors would read, and readers would browse, and all could talk of God's truths at night over Brigham Tea. That's *not* in our plans, but, hey, who knows? x



Oh, there now is a convert named Brian
Whose home teaching is upsetting Zion.
Instead of the message,
He's giving a massage.
And how all the ward's tongues are a-flyin'!
—BRAD MITCHELL