

NEWS

CHURCH AND STATE TUSSLE OVER THE PAPERS OF LEONARD J. ARRINGTON

ON 11 OCTOBER 2001, amid great fanfare, the Merrill Library at Utah State University officially opened the Leonard J. Arrington Historical Archive, an extensive collection of notes, papers, diaries, books, and documents donated by the late LDS Church Historian. The collection, consisting of 658 archival boxes and valued at over \$100,000, documented every aspect of Arrington's life, career, and research. (For the archive's scope and list of contents, see <www.usu.edu/specol/manuscript/Arrington/LJAHAI/scope./html>.)

The celebratory mood did not linger long, however. On 15 October, four days after the opening, eight LDS Church Archives' workers began a four-day examination of the collection. And on 24 October, Church and university officials released a joint statement declaring the Church "has learned that the Arrington collection includes some private and confidential materials which the church believes are owned by the church or its affiliated entities, and not owned by Leonard Arrington or subject to his disposition." At this same time, USU officials said they had agreed to "temporarily sequester" some of the material until ownership issues could be resolved.

USU provost Stan Albrecht indicated to the *Salt Lake Tribune* that the Church was concerned primarily with three categories of material: "papers it says Arrington had access to but was never given permission to copy; material sent to Arrington in his official capacity as church historian; and material created or generated by Arrington in that capacity."

The first indication that the ownership disputes might become acrimonious came the next day as Church attorneys disclosed to the press that Arrington had signed an agreement to the effect that, after his retirement, he would return to the Church any copies or transcripts of journals or diaries he had acquired or commissioned as Church Historian. The 26 October *Deseret News* reported the timing of this announcement was very upsetting to USU legal counsel Craig Simper: "This is exactly the

Bitton, and Brigham Madsen, quickly rushed to Arrington's defense. In a *Tribune* op-ed column, May wrote: "Let no one be mistaken. Leonard J. Arrington was a humane, generous, careful scholar, thoroughly honest both in his use of and handling of historical documents and in his research and writing. . . . In my judgment [the Church's] concerns could have been handled in a way that did not impugn the integrity of the former Church Historian."

"This is exactly the kind of documentation that I asked the attorney for . . . days ago, and I got no response whatsoever. Now they leak it to the press, and we have to play it all out in public. . . ."

—CRAIG SIMPER, USU attorney

kind of documentation that I asked the attorney for the church to produce some days ago, and I got no response whatsoever. Now they leak it to the press, and we have to play it all out in public. All I can say is this merely starts the discussions. It certainly doesn't end them."

Upon examining the document, Simper acknowledged that Arrington did indeed sign an agreement on 8 July 1980, but Simper didn't concur with Church attorneys and historians whether the agreement covered the disputed material.

The disagreement between the Church and USU seemed to many Arrington friends to unfairly question the historian's integrity by raising the question, did Arrington actually do what he promised? Historians, including Dean May, Will Bagley, Davis

THE DISPUTED DOCUMENTS

THE day after the story broke, USU provided a list of materials the Church had asked them to sequester. The list involved documents from 148 of the collection's 658 boxes, including minutes from meetings of the Council of the Twelve, minutes from the School of the Prophets, letters, journals, and diaries of past Church Presidents Brigham Young, Lorenzo Snow, Wilford Woodruff, and Joseph F. Smith, and similar papers of other Church leaders, including Hyrum Smith, Samuel Smith, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, and Edward Partridge.

A subset of the larger dispute concerned an extensive set of transcripts created by Edyth Romney. Romney was a long-time volunteer in the Church's



Leonard J. Arrington

Nearly three years after his death, the late LDS Church Historian is still at the center of the debate about open access to historical documents.

historical department and later—after Arrington's retirement—a transcriptionist paid by the Mormon History Trust Fund, an account created and maintained by Arrington's and other historians' royalties. Church representatives had presented to USU officials a separate agreement signed by Arrington in 1989 regarding the Romney transcripts that had led the university to turn over forty-five bound copies of the Romney transcripts two years earlier. However, this new search of the collection turned up another copy of the Romney transcripts. According to Ronald Esplin, current managing director of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History at Brigham Young University, no one knows how this extra copy of the Romney materials came into the collection that went on public display, whether it was USU archivists or Arrington himself who authorized the additional copy.

RAMPANT SPECULATION

AFTER the initial flurry of announcements, little else emerged from official channels for the next ten days or so. But the lack of new disclosures did not stop

people from continuing to debate and speculate about issues raised by the conflict. Immediately after the story broke, several themes dominated occasional news stories and very active email and electronic bulletin board discussions.

Many contended this dispute was not really about "who rightfully owns what," but about the Church's trying to "suppress" material that might damage its reputation or complicate the way it has presented its history. In an interview with the *Tribune*, Lavina Fielding Anderson, a friend and collaborator of

rogant and legalistic attitude by Church representatives.

A STEP FORWARD

ON 9 November, university and Church officials announced they would try to avoid a court battle by appointing a board of eight members—four representatives from each side—to study each questionable document and make recommendations to USU President Kermit L. Hall and Church President Gordon B. Hinckley. The presidents would then make final decisions on the disputed materials.

"Who owns a people's history? What happens to a history-based faith if the primary message about its history is that it's scary and dangerous and has to be so carefully controlled?"

—LAVINA FIELDING ANDERSON, historian

Arrington's, spoke to this larger issue: "Who owns a people's history? What happens to a history-based faith if the primary message about its history is that it's scary and dangerous and has to be so carefully controlled? Where's the line between preserving documents and suppressing the information they contain?"

Others defended Church interests, arguing that certain information should rightfully remain closed to research. In a 11 November *Tribune* op-ed, director of Church Archives Steven R. Sorenson suggested that those "who cry most shrilly about 'censorship' . . . would do well to examine themselves and ask if they would be willing to sign a document allowing the public full access to all information about themselves: medical records, school records . . . salary data, bank records . . . religious confessions—you get the picture."

Sarcastic as it was, Sorenson's editorial itself became a sore issue, seeming to illustrate an ar-

USU and the Arrington family were represented on the board by USU provost Albrecht, historian F. Ross Peterson, USU attorney Simper, and Arrington family attorney N. George Daines.

Church interests were forwarded by Elders W. Rolfe Kerr and Quentin L. Cook of the Seventy, managing director of the Family and Church History Department Richard Turley, and Church attorney Berne S. Broadbent.

The board eventually met four times, three in person and once by phone, but because of an agreement not to discuss their deliberations, very little is known of them.

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION was announced at a Saturday, 24 November press conference. Daines said the Arrington family had asked the university to return several documents mistakenly included among the donated items. The specific items to be turned over to the Church were: a copy of the

Book of Anointings and a small portion of Heber C. Kimball's diary, both of which contained information about LDS temple rituals, and what Daines referred to as a "smattering" of minutes of meetings of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "We concluded that these documents were never part of Dr. Arrington's collection," Daines said, adding that the family "regrets this error." He also stressed that none of the heirs knew these items were in the collection.

After the conference, Arrington's daughter Susan Arrington Madsen summed up the family's feelings about the resolution: "We're very, very pleased. It's a great day for the Arrington collection and the Arrington family. This is what my father wanted—to have his collection intact."

Offering the university's point of view, Hall said "this matter is now closed," adding that the



KERMIT L. HALL

THE USU president was upset by the "bluff, bluster, and threats" of some Church representatives, yet had high praise for the leadership of President Hinckley and two other general authorities.

way some LDS representatives handled the negotiations, whose behavior he described as 'bluff, bluster, threats and near total disdain for the academic mission of the university.' He was upset by

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—STEVEN R. SORENSEN, director, LDS Church Archives

agreement achieves USU's goals going into the negotiations of preserving the university's scholarly integrity and public trust and to upholding its contract with the Arrington family.

Through spokesperson, Michael Otterson, the Church issued a statement: "We are satisfied that the principal issues have been resolved fairly and amicably. We appreciate the good will displayed on all sides."

POST RESOLUTION COMMENTARY

IN candid comments to the *Tribune* shortly before the final announcement, Hall recounted events. The *Tribune* reported, Hall "expressed dismay at the

the "very aggressive" actions of officials in going public with the 1980 Arrington agreement and touting in the press that they had an "almost ironclad case."

Ultimately, however, Hall praised the efforts of President Hinckley, who, as tensions escalated, called Hall to ask if there wasn't some way to settle without going to court. The two then agreed to create the eight-member board. Of negotiations with President Hinckley and Elders Kerr and Cooke, Hall added: "Once we sat down with them, we were able to negotiate in good faith." Then, singling out President Hinckley, Hall commented: "I cannot say enough about the hand of moderation he extended."

U P D A T E

LDS LEADERS GIVE REASSURANCE, TEACH DOCTRINE OF INCLUSION

HELD LESS THAN one month after the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history, the October 2001 General Conference of the LDS church focused on messages of reassurance, tolerance, and inclusion. On Sunday morning, 7 October, President Gordon B. Hinckley referred to current war events shortly after an NBC news flash had interrupted the conference's broadcast on Church-owned KSL Channel 5 TV to announce the first U.S. attack in Afghanistan.

President Hinckley said, "I have just been handed a note that says that a U.S. missile attack is underway." Then he closed the meeting in a Conference Center filled to capacity. "I need not remind you that we live in perilous times. I desire to speak concerning these times and our circumstances as members of this Church."

President Hinckley compared terrorists to the Gadianton robbers spoken of in the Book of Mormon. "In their day, they did all in their power, by whatever means available, to bring down the Church, to woo the people with sophistry, and to take control of the society. We see the same thing in the present situation."

On Sunday afternoon, President Hinckley referred again to the current conflict with terrorism. "We have been a very quarrelsome and difficult people in our conflicts one with another," he said referring to past wars. "We so need to turn to the Lord and look to Him." In an unusual move, President Hinckley closed his remarks with a prayer and asked a blessing upon "those who are engaged actively in carrying forth the things of battle."

On Saturday morning, President Hinckley had reassured members that the Church is not changing direction. "Those who observe us say that we are moving into the mainstream of religion," said President Hinckley. "We are not changing. The world's perception of us is changing." His comments seemed a direct response to a recent *Newsweek* cover story on Mormonism (10 Sept. 2001). According to *Newsweek* religion editor Kenneth L. Woodward, LDS leaders are placing a new emphasis on Jesus Christ. (See also SUNSTONE, Nov. 2001, 74-75.)

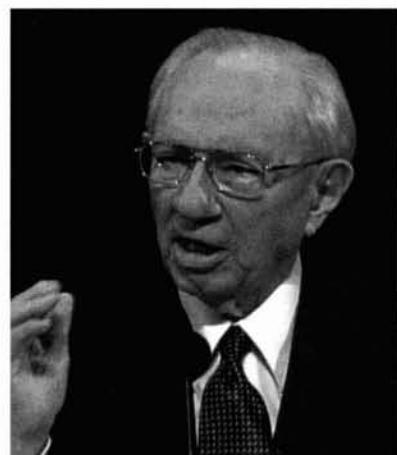
During the priesthood session, President Hinckley reported on the Perpetual Education Fund, a Church program established to grant low-interest education loans to returned missionaries, both male and female, who live in developing countries. He announced that the program is already up and running in a number of countries, including Peru, Chile, Mexico, and Bolivia. By the end of 2001, the fund was expected to help twelve hundred people.

ELDER BALLARD TEACHES "DOCTRINE OF INCLUSION"

ELDER Russell M. Ballard, of the Quorum of the Twelve, taught what he called "the doctrine of inclusion" as he counseled members to eliminate the words *nonmember* and *non-Mormon* from their language. "Such phrases can be demeaning and even belittling," he said. "Personally, I don't consider myself to be a 'non-Catholic' or a 'non-Jew.' I am a Christian. I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That is how I prefer to be identified—for who and what I am, as opposed to being identified for what I am not. Let

us extend that same courtesy to those who live among us." Elder Ballard advised members to use the term "neighbors" instead.

Elder Ballard counseled members to get to know their neighbors "without being pushy and without any ulterior motives." He also asked Utah members to never ask their neighbors to move out of the state. "If neighbors become testy or frustrated because of some disagreement with [t]he Church . . . or with some law we support for moral reasons, please don't suggest to them—even in a humorous way—that they consider moving someplace else. . . . If our history teaches us nothing else, it should teach us to respect the rights of all people to peacefully coexist with one another."



President Gordon B. Hinckley tells Saints that the Church is not "moving into the mainstream of religion. . . . [Rather] the world's perception of us is changing."

THE MORMON ALLIANCE PRESENTS REVIEW

ON 8 October, the Monday following General Conference, the Mormon Alliance met in the Salt Lake City Public Library for its regular conference review. The Mormon Alliance is a Utah-based organization dedicated to countering spiritual and ecclesiastical abuse and to protecting the LDS church against defamatory actions. The General Conference reviews are regular public forums where members can exchange impressions, put the conference in perspective, and analyze the meaning of the messages.

Several participants praised a talk by Elder Wayne S. Peterson of the Seventy. Elder Peterson exhorted members to refrain from responding angrily to real or imagined affronts, and he quoted Jesus' commandment to love our enemies. Other participants commended President Boyd K. Packer's address on the Book of Mormon and President James E. Faust's talk on the Atonement.

The participants also noticed the new regulations on Mormon language. In addition to Elder Ballard's instruction against the words *nonmember* and *non-Mormon*, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Twelve discouraged members from talking about *missionary tools* and suggested that the expression "sharing the gospel" might be better than *missionary work*. According to Mormon Alliance trustee Lavina Fielding Anderson, "These terms thus join 'free agency' (now moral agency), 'plan of salvation' (now plan of happiness), and 'inactive' (now less active) on the scrap heap of obsolete terminology."

Some participants were puzzled by the nationalism expressed in a conference that is intended for members around the world. Others were troubled by the polarized thinking that seemed to underlie statements about rooting out evil. "How do you define evil?" queried

Mormon Alliance trustee Janice Allred. "History shows that when you create a category of people who are called evil, a lot of innocent people suffer. I'd wish that those sustained as prophets of Jesus Christ could talk about loving your enemies, not creating new ones."

GENESIS GROUP STAGES *I AM JANE*



Cast members Marvin Perkins (Elijah Abel), Tamu Smith (Jane Manning James), and author Margaret Blair Young (Emma Smith) bring to life the story of a Black pioneer.

THE GENESIS GROUP, consisting of Latter-day Saints of African descent, performed the award-winning play *I Am Jane* at the Union Fort Stake in Midvale, Utah, 4–5 October 2001. The play, presented in celebration of the group's thirtieth anniversary, depicts the life of Jane Manning James, a Black pioneer who traveled barefoot from Connecticut to Illinois to join the Saints in Nauvoo.

Jane Manning was also in one of the first companies to reach the Salt Lake Valley. After the death of Brigham Young, she repeatedly asked for her temple blessings from presidents John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff. Even though she was not granted her wish, she was allowed to be baptized for her dead kindred and to be sealed "as a servant" to the prophet Joseph Smith.

I Am Jane was written by author and BYU professor Margaret Blair Young. "It's time for us to actually address some of the difficult issues," says Young. "It has been the belief of many Mormons, and sadly still is the belief of some Mormons, that Blacks are cursed as the lineage of Cain. We address [racism in the play] straight up front. Racial inequality was a fact of life during those years, and sadly it was no different in Utah."

The Genesis Group was established in October 1971 under the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve to support LDS members of African descent. The group, which meets every first Sunday of the month in south Salt Lake Valley, includes Africans, African-Americans, African-Caribbeans, Polynesians, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, and the adoptive parents of children of color. "All are welcome," says group president Darius Gray. Commenting on the thrill he experiences seeing such a racially mixed LDS group, he added, "When you're up on that podium and you look out, you see the world as it is, and you see the gospel as it is."

Margaret Blair Young and Darius Gray have recently co-authored *One More River to Cross*, a historical novel depicting the lives of Elijah Abel, Jane Manning, and other Black pioneers. *One More River to Cross* is the first in a trilogy covering the Black Mormon experience to

1978—the year when members of African descent were finally allowed to receive the priesthood and enter the temple.

ANIMAL-RIGHTS GROUP ASKS PRESIDENT HINCKLEY TO STOP SPONSORING HUNTS

AN ANIMAL-RIGHTS group has sent a letter to President Gordon B. Hinckley asking the Church to stop sponsoring hunts at Church-owned ranches. The letter was prepared by the Fund for Animals, a New York-based group opposed to sport hunting, commercial trapping, and other practices which they regard as egregious acts of cruelty to animals. The Church owns one hunting preserve in Florida and two in Utah, which generate hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in revenue.

The existence of the preserves was spotlighted last year when the *Deseret News* published a story on the Westlake preserve, located on the southwest shores of Utah Lake (8 July 2000, B1, 3). Some readers were troubled to find out the preserve was operated by a missionary couple. The hunters, who can access Westlake by private aircraft, pay as much as \$1,500 for a permit. Near Woodruff, Utah, hunters pay up to \$11,000 for permits to kill elk and moose at the Deseret Land and Livestock Ranch.

Some Mormons have been expressing discontent with the ranches for years. For example, former Weber State University professor Mac Madsen spoke on this issue at the 2001 Salt Lake Sunstone Symposium, and on 30 September 2001 he published an op-ed column in the *Salt Lake Tribune* detailing the Church's involvement in such enterprises. (For more information, see symposium tape SL01-223.)

Latter-day Saint Jim Catano, who is a vegetarian, has recently posted online an article questioning the Church's current promotion of sport hunting (www.vegsource.com/articles/catano_hunting.html). "If you are LDS," writes Catano, "ask your bishop, stake president and other authorities to find out how the Church can operate such facilities in light of strong anti-sport hunting statements of past leaders."

Several prophets, including Joseph Smith, have condemned the gratuitous destruction of animal life. In October 1978, President Spencer W. Kimball spoke vehemently against killing birds and animals. "It is not only wicked to destroy [birds], it is a shame, in my opinion," he said. "I think that this principle should extend not only to the bird life but to the life of all animals" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 43).

LDS CHURCH MAKES PREPARATIONS OF OLYMPIC PROPORTIONS

"IF YE ARE prepared, ye shall not fear." LDS officials are taking this scripture seriously as they prepare for the hundreds of thousands of tourists and reporters who will visit Temple Square in February 2002. Preparations include training some five thousand volunteers,



The Deseret Land and Livestock Ranch is one of three Church-owned hunting preserves.

installing metal detectors, and rehearsing for *Light of the World*, a theatrical extravaganza that will be seen by as many as two hundred thousand people.

In anticipation of the Olympics, the Church has already launched a new website (www.mormon.org) and completed renovations of the two visitors centers at Temple Square (see related story below). Also, President Gordon B. Hinckley has taped an interview with news anchor Tom Brokaw that will be aired in February as part of NBC's coverage of the Winter Games.



Cast members rehearse a dance scene for the Church-sponsored Olympic spectacle, Light of the World

that was sold out months before the Olympics are to begin, will be performed ten times at the Conference Center. The seventy-five-minute show, which has been in the making for more than three years, will combine music, LDS pioneer history, international costumes, and inspirational stories from past Olympics. A cast of fifteen hundred performers will dance, sing, and fly over a 130-foot-wide domed stage shaped like the world. The spectacle will feature the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the Orchestra at Temple Square, a children's choir, BYU's Young Ambassadors, and representatives from more than one hundred ethnic groups. According to LDS spokesman Dale Bills, "The intent is to have a message that will appeal to any faith."

Metal detectors will be installed for the first time ever in Temple Square and adjacent Church-owned buildings, and handbags and closed containers will be searched. According to Presiding Bishop H. David Burton, the metal detectors have been leased and will be removed after the games. The Church is also exploring ways to make the Conference Center rooftop gardens safer. The gardens have been closed since June 2001, when a four-year-old boy climbed the railing and fell twenty-one feet.

HIGH-TECH VISITORS CENTERS REOPEN, FOCUS ON JESUS AND FAMILIES

AFTER UNDERGOING EXTENSIVE renovations, the Temple Square visitors centers reopened on 5 October 2001 with self-guided tours, high-tech features, and a renewed emphasis on Jesus Christ and families. New emphasis was also placed on President Gordon B. Hinckley, whose portrait and teachings are now prominently displayed in both buildings.

Visitors can browse through dioramas, sit to watch "Homefront"

President Hinckley has denied that the LDS church sees the Olympics only as a proselyting opportunity. Temple Square volunteers are being trained with a workshop focused on the acronym FRIEND, which stands for Flexible, Respectful, Informed, Enthusiastic, Non-Judgmental, and Dedicated. The workshop curriculum is based on a chapter on civility from President Hinckley's book, *Standing for Something*.

Light of the World, a multimedia theatrical and musical spectacle

TV spots, and participate in interactive displays. By pushing buttons, visitors can select presentations and watch clips from Church-produced movies or General Conference addresses.

South visitors center exhibits focus on the importance of families and describe the construction process of the Salt Lake Temple.



In the south visitors center, play houses show video clips emphasizing the importance of families.

on scriptures and living prophets includes scenes from the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and early LDS church history. A second display there showcases the Church's involvement in community service and humanitarian aid.

Temple Square has two hundred missionary guides and receives five million visitors per year. During the Olympics, the number of visitors could rise to seventy thousand per day.

NEW MOVIES DEPICT MISSIONARY EXPERIENCES, SINGLES WARD LIFE

TWO NEW MORMON-RELATED movies are ready for release in Utah and other parts of the country.

The Other Side of Heaven, based on the missionary memoirs of Elder John H. Groberg of the First Quorum of the Seventy, opened along the Wasatch Front on 14 December 2001. Filmed in New Zealand and the Cook Islands, the movie was co-produced by Gerald R. Molen, who also produced *Schindler's List* and *Jurassic Park*. Writer and director Mitch Davis said he got the idea for the film after watching *Chariots of Fire*.

In a press conference, Elder Groberg said Church officials seemed pleased with the project and have made efforts to see private screenings of the film. In the 1950s, Elder Groberg traveled to Tonga as an LDS missionary. His memoirs, entitled *In the Eye of the Storm*, were published by Bookcraft in 1993 and are now being re-issued with a new title, the same as the movie's. The movie trailer can be viewed at <www.othersideofheaven.com>.

Producer David Hunter will soon release *The Singles Ward*, a PG-rated comedy about a congregation of single Latter-day Saints. "We really went out of our way to make this good clean fun," said film director Kurt Hale in an interview with SUNSTONE. "We're reverently examining the peculiarities of our own culture."

The Singles Ward focuses on a newly divorced young man who tries to adjust to his



Actor Christopher Gorham plays a young Elder Groberg in The Other Side of Heaven.

new life amidst the never-marrieds who attend the same ward. The film, made for only \$500,000, includes cameo appearances by Mormon celebrities Steve Young, Shawn Bradley, Marie Osmond, and Lavell Edwards, as well as auteur Richard Dutcher and MTV *Real World's* Julie Stoffer.

The movie is expected to arrive in Utah in late January 2002. Later, it will be released in Idaho, Arizona, and other LDS markets. For more information, visit <www.singleswardthemovie.com>.

MORMON FEMINISTS FIND THE MARGINS A CREATIVE SPOT



Rebecca Chandler shares insights on the challenges of raising a blended family.

"HOW DO WE work from the margins toward a better community?" This question was at the core of the recent Counterpoint Conference, an annual event co-sponsored by the Mormon Women's Forum and the University of Utah's Women's Resource Center. In the two-day conference held 2–3 November 2001, approximately sixty Mormon and non-Mormon feminists explored issues such as racism, women's leadership, personal development, and cultural diversity.

One of the sessions discussed

the challenges associated with "diversified" families. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* co-editor Rebecca Chandler knows some of these challenges firsthand, as she and husband Neal blended a family of four children when they married in 1975. "While other 'Families can be together forever / Through Heavenly Father's plan,' the fate of families like ours hangs in limbo," she observed. "Many faithful Latter-day Saints are reassured that matters will be taken care of in time, but constant reminders that your household (that is, your paperwork) is not in order—that, in fact, your situation may be un-orderable—can be very difficult for children and adults alike."

The Eve Award was delivered this year to Mormon author and speaker Carol Lynn Pearson. This award has been presented at the Counterpoint Conference since 1997 to a woman of courage and vision who has made a significant contribution to Mormon women. Past years' Eve Awards have been presented to feminist Margaret Toscano, lawyer Nadine Hansen, writer Lavina Fielding Anderson, and activist Shirley Paxman.

The Mormon Women's Forum was started in 1988 as a space to discuss gender issues, especially in the context of LDS women's experience. Despite being marginalized within the LDS community, the forum has striven through the years to include a diversity of voices. "Our theme for this year, 'Working from the Margins: Mormon Feminism and Community Diversity,' plays off the marginalized place that Mormon feminists have occupied in their community," said board member Margaret Toscano. "We want to take the negative label and make it positive. We are starting from the notion that the margin is the creative spot."

SOLAR FLARES

BYU Student "Ministers" Punished for Dancing. Two BYU students recently became ministers in order to throw a party. Corbin Clawson and John Hash applied over the internet to become ministers of the Universal Life Church so that they could loophole Provo's strict dance hall ordinance that loosens requirements for religion-sponsored events. The party was a huge success with more than six hundred people in attendance, but the two students were still cited by police for organizing an illegal dance. BYU's Honor Code office is also now recommending they be placed on standards probation.

Rare Book's Value Soars. A rare copy of the *Book of Commandments* (antecedent to the Doctrine and Covenants) sold recently for a whopping \$391,000 at a New York auction. The *Book of Commandments* is the most pricey of all LDS books with fewer than twenty known copies extant.

Boring Chapels Lamented. "Cookie-cutter" chapels are leading Highland, Utah, councilwoman Jan Bunce to boredom. As she voted for site approval in two recent LDS church proposals, she complained that all LDS church buildings look the same. According to Church officials, by using standardized plans, construction budgets are significantly reduced.

BYU's Israel Program Suspended. With the situation in the Middle East becoming more volatile, the BYU study abroad program in Israel has been canceled until further notice. The fourteen-year-old program was last canceled during the Persian Gulf War.

BYU Announces No Tuition Increase. For the 2002–03 school year, BYU will not raise tuition for either undergraduate or graduate programs. Not since 1973–74 has the school held the line on such increases. President Merrill J. Bateman said, "We are sensitive to the current economic condition and the impact it is having on families whose children attend the university . . . Many of these families are also supporting missionaries." Also, no new tuition increases will occur at BYU-Idaho for the upcoming academic year.

"Confessions" Applauded. Steven Fales played to packed houses and received positive reviews for his one-man show, *Confessions of a Mormon Boy*, recently staged at Salt Lake City's Rose Wagner Theater. The autobiographical story, which candidly describes Steve's "turn on earth" as a gay Mormon, was first previewed at the Sunstone Symposium in August 2001. Those interested in contacting Steve about staging the play for their group can do so at <NeverFales2@aol.com>.

GAY-RELATED GROUPS LAUNCH MORMON NETWORK

REPRESENTATIVES FROM SIX gay-related organizations met in Salt Lake City on 1 December 2001 to launch the Mormon Network for GLBTI Interests. An organization active mostly in cyberspace, the net-

work will facilitate communication between some of the groups serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, and intersex Mormon community.

At present, the network includes Affirmation (Gay and Lesbian Mormons), Family Fellowship (Mormon parents of gay and lesbian children), Gamofites (Gay Mormon Fathers), Gay LDS Youth, Reconciliation (a scripture study group), and the Restoration Church of Jesus Christ. The group will meet twice a year, share information through the Internet, and launch a website with an activity calendar. The site will soon be available at <www.mormonnetwork.org>.

Gay and straight allies launch a network in support of the gay Mormon community.

"We want to develop a centralized resource in support of GLBTI Mormons and their families," said Affirmation executive director Scott MacKay. "Those looking for support will have a place where they can find the activities of those organizations which best serve their needs."

SEA TREK 2001 RE-ENACTS TRIUMPHS, HARDSHIPS



University of Utah professor Dean May stands on the top sail of the Christian Radich, one of three ships employed in Sea Trek 2001.

COMING TO ZION was not only about crossing the plains but also about crossing the ocean. That is what Dean L. May reminded his audience as he spoke about his experiences onboard the *Christian Radich*, one of three ships which recently crossed the Atlantic re-enacting the 1852 voyage to Zion by the first Danish Saints. May's pre-

sentation was the first in a new series of Mormon studies "brown bag" lectures taking place at the University of Utah.

May, professor of history at the University of Utah and president of the Mormon History Association, joined Sea Trek as a history instructor and as the "branch president" of the LDS group temporarily organized onboard. Almost all passengers spent the five-week journey working eight hours a day as ship's crew, sharing communal meals, and learning more about the original sea trek undertaken by their pioneer ancestors 150 years ago.

"There were times when I longed for my own bed and to be with my family," confessed May in an interview with SUNSTONE, "but this was such a fascinating experience. It took me into the world of wind ships, into the world of my Mormon ancestors, and into the world of immigration to America generally. Moving into all three of those worlds, and trying to understand them, was a very powerful, and oftentimes a very emotional, experience."

Despite daily email communications and relatively comfortable quarters, the sea voyage also re-enacted some of the hardships faced by the early Saints. On the waters of the North Sea, 70 percent of the Sea Trek participants experienced seasickness. As group members arrived at the Canary Islands, they were told that since the two Norwegian ships had not been paid for in accordance with the contract, people would have to return to the U.S. by plane. But urgent negotiations and a \$50,000 contribution by a Utah donor made it possible to complete the voyage. Since the New York harbor had been closed in the wake of the 11 September attacks, reportedly only the intervention of Vice President Dick Cheney allowed the ships to dock there.

STUDENTS USE BYU NETWORK TO PROTEST FIRINGS

A GROUP OF upset students used BYU's own news network to protest the firing of two popular staff members. An anonymous message delivered 14 December 2001 alerted the BYU community to the firing of Newsnet managing director John Gholdston and advertising director John Kent. "Threaten to revoke your donations," the message read in part. "Email around and get the word out. A class-act guy just got kicked in the teeth."

The message included a link to a web address where Tiffany Lewis, the wife of the *BYU Daily Universe*'s editor-in-chief, posted a tribute to Gholdston. "From the response we've had today, the phone calls from alumni, the outcry from current students, it's obvious that Brother Gholdston's influence has not been a scratch," wrote Lewis. "He dug a trench of influence." The full text of Lewis's tribute, which was not allowed to run in the *Daily Universe*, is available at <www.geocities.com/livetarget2>.



Newsnet managing director John Gholdston was fired on 13 December 2001.

Three hours after the first message, BYU department of communications chair Michael Perkins sent an apology to all Newsnet users. "The note you received was a misuse of the Newsnet computer network," wrote Perkins. "Changes are made from time to time at [BYU]," he explained regarding the firings, "but they are always made in the name of progress."