

***Late News From The Meadows***  
**The Mountain Meadows Association Newsletter**  
**Honoring the Dead, Historic Preservation, Fellowship, & Reconciliation**  
**Volume 12 • Number 3 • July 2009**

**SALT LAKE CITY**

**Temple Tour**

As a gesture of friendship, Elder Marlin K. Jensen, LDS Church Historian, extended an invitation to members of the Mountain Meadows Association, the Mountain Meadows Descendants, and the Mountain Meadows Foundation to attend an open house at the Oquirrh Mountain Utah Temple. Several members accepted this invitation and viewed the new edifice.

**Lunch**

Elder Jensen also hosted lunch for us on the top floor of the Joseph Smith Memorial Building. After a delightful meal, we enjoyed listening to three speakers – Elder Jensen, Assistant Church Historian Richard E. Turley Jr., and Elder Dallin H. Oakes, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. They all expressed regret for the tragic massacre that occurred in 1857 and extended their hand of fellowship to all who had been effected by this event.

Barbara Jones Brown also



displayed a friendship quilt and explained that it was intended to help heal the hard feeling that the Massacre produced.

**Documents**

After lunch, we went to the

new Church History Library and viewed some of the sources Ronald Walker, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Glen M. Leonard used in writing *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*. Librarians arranged these documents on tables. In researching this book, Turley said they not only had complete access to all the sources the LDS Church owns, but they searched every collection



across the nation that contained information on the massacre.

After introducing the group of researchers and archivists, Turley described each collection and explained its value in understanding the massacre. For example, he said they discovered Pitman shorthand transcriptions of the John D. Lee trials and found an expert who could read this shorthand and transcribe them. These documents, which reveal new important details, will be published and made available to the public.

After describing the sources, Turley invited us to walk around



the tables and read these manuscripts. In the future, he added, we may return to the library, use the computer terminals, access these and other documents, and study these primary sources on the Massacre.

**MOUNTAIN MEADOWS Northern Graves**

Some members visited the sixteen-acre plot the LDS Church bought from Clive Burgess in 2007. Somewhere in this location, scholars believe most of the men were buried. It is also possibly the site where Brevet Major James H. Carleton re-buried some of the scattered remains in 1859.

Several members from all three Mountain Meadows Associations visited the Cottam



property where it is believed the women and children were buried. This site is located 1.5 miles north of the Massacre Monument and across the highway from the Burgess property. During the visit, guides pointed out mounds of rocks with large rock headstones that may be the location of these graves.

**Commemoration**

On May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, a large congregation met in a tent to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Major Carleton's reburial of the bones in May 1859. Conducting the services, President Terry Fancher welcomed the group and thanked Elder Marlin K. Jensen and Richard E. Turley Jr. for providing the tent, the sound equipment, and other facilities.

The opening prayer by Tom Lamb prepared the group for services that followed. The



services contained several emotional features that stressed honor and respect for the dead as well as friendship, forgiveness, and reconciliation for the living. Barbara Brown displayed a friendship quilt that will be located in Arkansas. She explained the blocks were made by individuals from both sides of this tragic event and contain heart felt messages of forgiveness. She added another quilt will be made and placed in Cedar City.

Appropriate music touched the hearts of the congregation. The hymns included *Nearer My God to Thee*, *A Might Fortress Is Our God*, and *Abide with Me*. Norman Fawson, Rachel Kuhlmann, and Bradley Fawson played the violin-viola trio, How Great Thou Art. The Southwest Symphony Strings provided the prelude and postlude music.

Three presentations focused on respect for the dead and healing the bitter feelings. Patty Norris represented the Mountain Meadows Descendants Association. She expressed her gratitude for the people who were responsible for preserving the sacred ground where her ancestors had died. Terry Fancher spoke for the Mountain Meadows Association. He shared excerpts from letters that Juanita Brooks

exchanged with his family. He stressed how influential this correspondence was in starting the healing process between the Mormons and the people living in Northwest Arkansas. Phil Boller spoke on behalf of the Mountain Meadows Foundation. He thanked the LDS Church for



their efforts. After the names of those who died and survive were read, members of these three organizations wore military uniforms and gave a twenty-one gun salute. This activity concluded the formal service, but people visited the memorial and shared their feeling with each other as a form of healing.

## ST. GEORGE

### Annual Meeting

Terry Fancher welcomed members of all three associations to the annual dinner meeting of the Mountain Meadows Association. After the meal, he introduced Will Bagley as author and editor of numerous articles and books including *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows* and



*Innocent Blood*.

Bagley then spoke on the life of Felix Marion Jones, a descendant of the massacre. Bagley made it clear that it was difficult to identify

the surviving children and link them to their relatives in Arkansas. Even examining various photographs, Bagley explained it was difficult to connect Jones with his relatives. From various sources, Bagley narrated details about Jones. Concluding his talk, Bagley said relatively few items [including the recent discover of a skull] that have been found outside the massacre site have proven to be authentic relics. After showing a picture of a two piece hand stitched clothing outfit, he declared this outfit is authentic. Felix Marion Jones wore these clothes from Utah back to Arkansas in 1859.

After giving an award to Will Bagley, Terry introduced Barbara Brown who displayed the friendship quilt. She explained the quilt metaphor of green hills for Arkansas and red hills for Utah. When these colors come together, they represent friendship. Members from both sides of this tragic created the forty-eight quilt blocks that fill the center of the quilt.

Then, Terry introduced Richard Turley Jr., who is Assistant Church



Historian and author of several books including *Massacre at Mountain Meadows*. Turley made three points. First, he reported on the progress of the National Landmark Status. He said the filing of a briefing statement has been accomplished which moved us to the nomination phase. We hired some consultants to help

navigate the request until National Landmark Status is achieved.

Next, Turley spoke about publishing the papers that Juanita Brooks was unable to see as well as Andrew Jensen's interviews in 1892 with those from Utah who were involved in the massacre. Finally, Turley spoke of his experience with death and violence when he managed the Family History Library. A man came into the library and shot several people before he was subdued. He told this story to illustrate what we can learn. Let us honor the dead and remember them. He then paid his respect for all the people who came together this weekend to honor those who died at Mountain Meadows.

After giving an award to



Turley, Terry introduced Elder Marlin K. Jensen who has made many contributions toward helping the three associations achieve their goals. Elder Jensen praised those who founded the Mountain Meadows Association. He expressed his gratitude to President Terry for his efforts in fostering understanding and forgiveness. At the dedication service for the monument on Dan Sill Hill, Elder Jensen recalled Judge Logan saying that great strides have been made in reconciliation; but until full disclosure of the LDS Church's involvement in the massacre has been made, it will not be complete.

Elder Jensen said Church leaders gave complete freedom to Walker, Turley, and Leonard to research and write a book on the massacre. They adopted the practice of following the evidence wherever it took them and reporting it honestly. Elder Jensen invited anyone to examine the sources they have collected on this topic. "Come and see us," he said, and the staff will make copies of the documents for them. As a result of these sources, Elder Henry B. Eyring was able to say with confidence that the massacre was carried out by local leaders and a few Indians in Southern Utah. He expressed profound regret for the suffering this tragedy caused.

This action was not the responsibility of the entire church, Elder Jensen noted. Elder Eyring's statement of profound regret expresses the anguish we feel for pain that people have felt over more than a century and one half.

As a result of Elder Eyring's comments, Elder Jensen said, a master plan has been formulated for Mountain Meadows that we will submit to the three organizations; and we ask their response. We will not proceed without your approval. The highlights of the plan include the future of the site; preserving the location as sacred burial ground; gaining National Landmark Status; and acquiring additional land to buffer the grave sites in the Meadows.

The guiding principles of the master plan include honoring the victims, preserving and protecting the site, providing reasonable public access, and properly interpreting

#### **Annual Dues Form**

the event. Elder Jensen concluded by saying the Church plans to improve the Burgess property where we believe the men were buried and acquire land from the Cottam family where it is believed the women and children were buried. If we can verify these grave sites on the Cottam property, Elder Jensen added, we will buy the land. We also plan to buy additional property to act as a buffer zone to the graves. We want to make sure the interpretive information is accurate. The Church leaders have given their full support for future happenings at Mountain Meadows. Finally, we want to foster friendly relations with all people who have an interest in the Mountain Meadows Massacre.

"We are one hundred fifty years removed" from the Massacre, Elder Jensen said, we hope to follow what a famous poet said, "History cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage it need not be lived again." We have laid bare all we know about the massacre. We have tried to heal the wounds of this tragic event. We are dedicated to preserving the Massacre site. No one can possibly preserve it as well.

#### **DVD Copies**

For excellent DVD copies of the MMA annual meeting that commemorated the 150<sup>th</sup> Carleton reburial of the bones, fill out the form and please send it to Tel Stewart productions.

President Fancher also took some excellent photos of possible burial sites at the Meadows. For copies, please send the enclosed for him.

Renewal of membership in the Association is due each January (rather than September 11, the date of the Massacre).

Please fill out all of the details on these forms at the end of this newsletter and e-mail Terry Fancher at [tnf49@aol.com](mailto:tnf49@aol.com) or mail to the Mountain Meadows Association at 12703 Whisper Spring Cove, Draper, Utah 84020. You also now pay your dues online at [http://www.mtn-meadows-assoc.com/dues\\_form.htm](http://www.mtn-meadows-assoc.com/dues_form.htm) or make a donation at <http://www.mtn-meadows-assoc.com/donations.htm>

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### Mountain Meadows Association Mail-in Forms

#### Membership

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues are \$20.00 per year. Check the following categories:**

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_

For DVD of 150<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the Carleton Reburial, call 1-435-773-1250 or write to Tel Stewart Productions at 242 N 2040 E in St. George, Ut 84790. One DVD costs \$15.00.

Contact President Terry Fancher for DVD with copies of possible burial sites either by e-mail [tnf49@aol.com](mailto:tnf49@aol.com) or by phone 1-617-774-9041. The cost is \$20.00.