

# Emma's fond wish nears fulfilling

NAUVOO, ILL.

**D**escendants of Joseph and Hyrum Smith are joining in a project to renovate and landscape the Smith family cemetery in Nauvoo where the Prophet and his brother and 25 of their family members are buried.

The burial site, overlooking the Mississippi River, is next to the old log Homestead where Joseph and Emma lived prior to their move kitty-cornered across the street into the Mansion House. Among those buried at the site, in addition to Joseph and Hyrum, are Joseph Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith, Emma Smith, and Samuel and Don Carlos Smith,

## Descendants of Joseph, Hyrum unite to improve Nauvoo burial ground

brothers of the Prophet.

Project chairmen said that two of the driving forces behind upgrading the hallowed grounds are the limited access to the Smith family grave site area, and particularly a plea of Emma Smith, made to her son Joseph III in 1867:

"I have always felt sad about the neglected condition of that place, and as I do not expect ever to be able to build me a house to live in, I would like to fix a place to be put away when I have done

all my work on the earth. . . .

"I have got twenty-five dollars that no one has any right to but myself. . . . I feel anxious to apply that money on the graveyard. After I have done that I think we can ask our Smith relations to help mark Father's and Mother's graves, if no more."

The "Smith relations" mentioned by Emma Smith — the descendants of Joseph and Hyrum — last year formed the Joseph & Hyrum Smith Family Foundation. The foundation is currently raising funds to landscape, beautify and provide for open public access and ongoing maintenance of this historic cemetery.

In the project, new monuments will be placed on the graves of Joseph, Emma and Hyrum Smith. A patio and a lighted brick walkway leading to Water Street and a new sprinkler system will be installed. Additional trees and flower beds will dot the grounds.

A dedication ceremony for the completed project is planned for Aug. 4 at 4 p.m. in the cemetery. President Wallace B. Smith of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, a great-grandson of Joseph Smith, will participate.

Also taking part will be Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Council of the Twelve, a great-great-grandson of Hyrum Smith, and other family members.

As part of the dedication, a time capsule will be encased in the new monuments with the names of those who

helped or contributed to the project in any way.

The project leaders said, "A new-found spirit of unity is developing through this project in the spirit of Joseph and Hyrum, of whom it was said, 'In life they were not divided, and in death they were not separated!'"

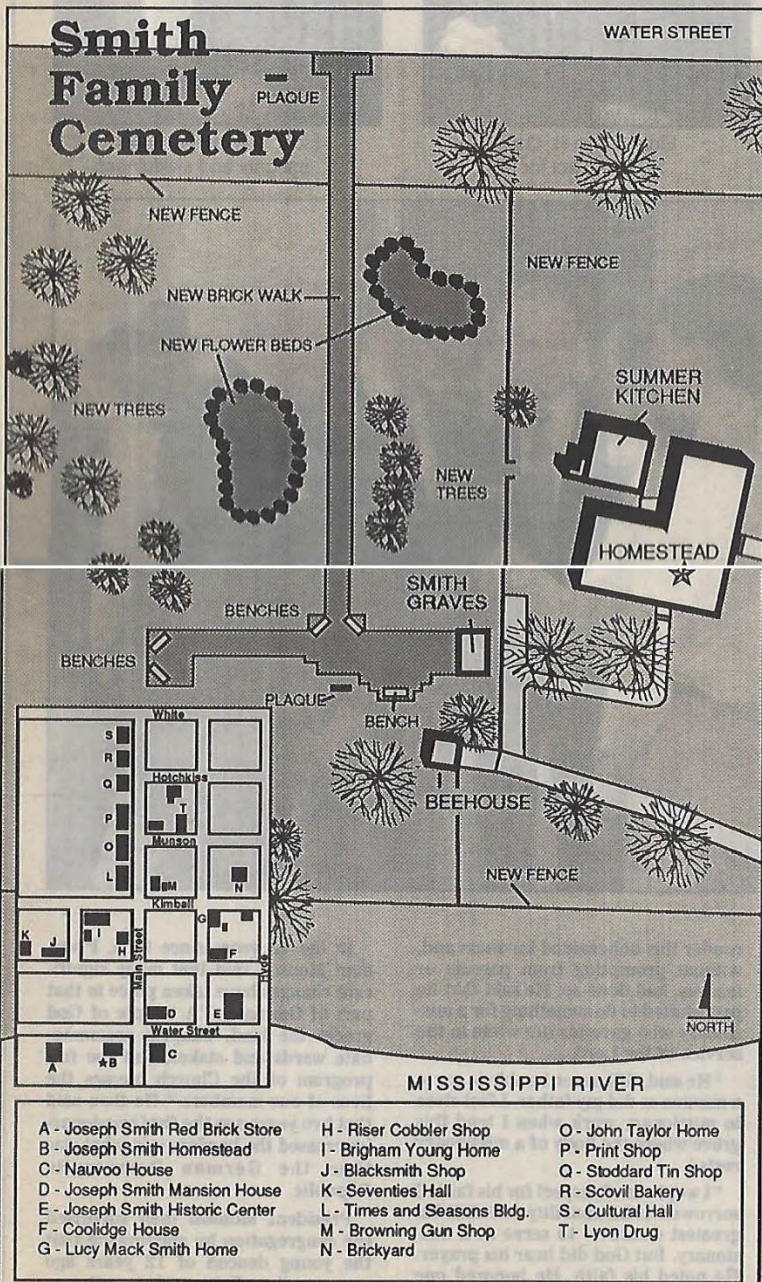
"These brothers set the example to their descendants through their love which was expressed by Hyrum near the time of the martyrdom when, given the opportunity to escape, he told his brother, 'Joseph, I can't leave you.'"

Eldred G. Smith, a great-great-grandson of Hyrum Smith and project co-chairman, said, "The RLDS Church has been very cooperative and gracious in working with us and allowing the Joseph and Hyrum Smith Family Foundation to undertake this project."

Dan M. Larsen, a descendant of Joseph Smith and executive director of the project, declared, "I truly believe this can be a beginning of an extraordinary relationship between the Smith family members and the RLDS and LDS churches and an opportunity to once more work together in old Nauvoo."

Elder Ballard referred to Joseph Smith's expressed desire: "The place where man is buried is sacred to me. . . . In the morning of the resurrection let me strike hands with my father."

Elder Ballard added, "I am sure there will be personal joy and satisfaction for each one of us knowing that we helped provide a pleasing resting place from which these great ancestors of ours can rise on the morning of the resurrection and 'strike hands.'"



Graphic by Heather Tuttle

Greenery, plaques and walkway will beautify Smith family cemetery when project is completed. Inset, lower left, locates Homestead in Nauvoo.



From left, Karl B. Anderson; President Wallace B. Smith of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints; Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Council of the Twelve; and Dan M. Larsen inspect cemetery landscaping plans.

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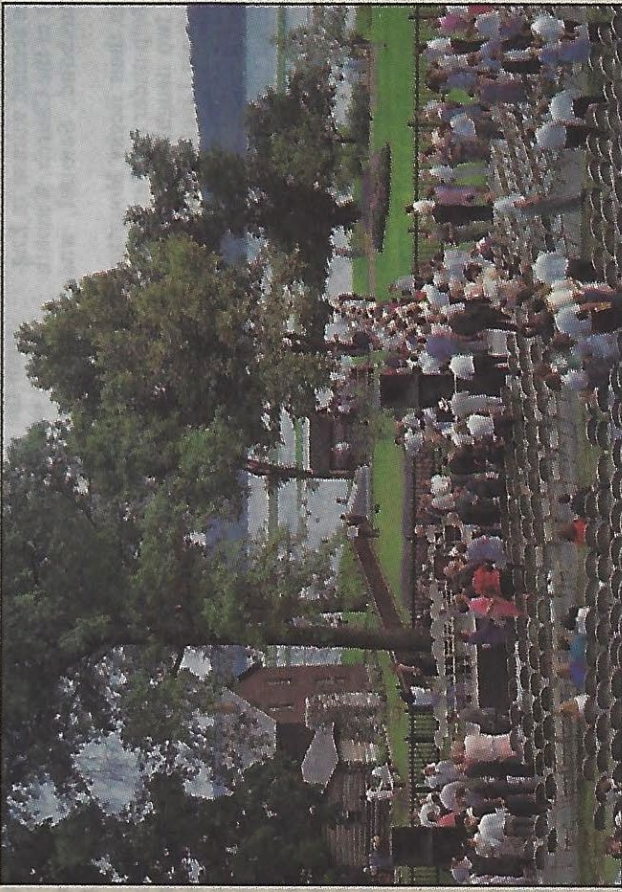
## **B**eautified burial site a crowning achievement



— pages 3, 6-7

Handcart pioneer knew 'the cost of fidelity to a cause' — see page 3

# Cemetery dedication a fulfillment of dreams



*Photo by Sheridan R. Sheffield*  
Following the dedication of the Smith Family Cemetery, a throng of people wait to view the headstone and plaques placed in the newly renovated and landscaped cemetery next to the Joseph and Emma Smith homestead.

BY SHERIDAN R. SHEFFIELD Church News staff writer  
NAUVOO, ILL.

**T**he newly dedicated Smith Family Cemetery, which has been turned into a garden spot here, is "the crowning accomplishment" for members of the Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith family in the beautifying of the resting place of their forefathers.

This was the essence of the remarks of Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Council of the Twelve at the dedication of the renovated cemetery Aug. 4.

Elder Ballard, a great-great-grandson of Hyrum Smith, said: "It's a great privilege for family members to honor their forefathers and to prepare a garden spot for them to rise in the resurrection. That is the crowning accomplishment."

"I have a feeling, brothers and sisters, that our Heavenly Father and His beloved Son, our Savior and Redeemer the Lord Jesus Christ, are smiling upon us at this moment."

More than 1,000 people, including about 200 descendants of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, met at the services to

commemorate the completion of the renovation and landscaping project, which began last year. The prophet Joseph Smith; his wife, Emma; and his parents and three brothers, including Hyrum, are buried in the cemetery. (See related story on page 6.)

Pres. Wallace B. Smith, president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints dedicated the cemetery, which is located on RLDS property. He is a great-grandson of Joseph Smith.

The project was inspired by a letter written by Emma to her son, Joseph III, on Dec. 2, 1867, in which she expresses her concern for the condition of the family cemetery.

"I have always felt sad about the neglected condition of that place. . . ." she wrote. "I have got twenty-five dollars that no one has any right to but myself. . . . I feel anxious to apply that money on the graveyard. After I have done that I think we can ask our Smith relations to help mark Father's and Mother's graves, if no more."

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# Renovated cemetery provides garden spot and fulfills dreams

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Limited accessibility to the gravesite area was another reason that spurred family members to form the Joseph and Hyrum Smith Family Foundation. The foundation was formed to raise money to pay for the project and ongoing maintenance of the cemetery.

A large granite headstone marks the graves of Hyrum, Joseph and Emma, located near the old log Homestead where Joseph and Emma lived prior to their move across the street to the Mansion House.

Trees, grass and flowers were planted, brick walkways, teak wood benches and a lighting system were installed, and a new fence was built around the Homestead and graveyard area, which sits at the edge of the Mississippi River.

Three bronze plaques pay tribute to those who are buried in the cemetery. One plaque notes the contributions of Joseph, Emma and Hyrum; a second identifies, for the first time, all who are buried in the cemetery; and a third pays tribute to Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith.

A time capsule will be placed on the south side of the granite headstone with the names of all known Smith descendants. The time capsule will also include those who have made contributions for the renovation and the names of those who helped in the burials of Joseph, Emma and Hyrum Smith in the 1800s. A video tape of the dedication service will also be included in the time capsule.

"This is a great moment in history," Elder Ballard remarked. "The fact that Hyrum's family, Joseph's family, Samuel's family, Catherine's, Don Carlos' and others of the family can all be here together in a combined effort must be so pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

"I feel to pay tribute, particularly to

Joseph Smith Sr. and to his sweetheart and companion Lucy Mack Smith, the parents of these great men, this great family whom we honor today."

The writings of the prophet Joseph show the deep love he had for his family and his hope to rise with them in the resurrection, he added.

"I will tell you what I want," Elder Ballard quoted, reading from Joseph's writings. "If tomorrow I shall be called to lie in yonder tomb, in the morning of the resurrection, let me strike hands with my father, and cry, 'My father,' and he will say, 'My son, my son,' as soon as the rock rends and before we come out of our graves. . . . And when the voice calls for the dead to arise, suppose I am laid by the side of my father, what would be the first joy of my heart? To meet my father, my mother, my brother, my sister; and when they are by my side, I embrace them and they me."

Elder Ballard asked: "Aren't you just thrilled, brothers and sisters, family members, that they will embrace one another on that great day in this beautiful garden spot?"

"I am grateful that on the day of the resurrection they will rise up and have no question as to whether or not their posterity loved them. I think we have demonstrated by our combined efforts our deep love and affection for those whom we honor by the improvement of this cemetery.

"I hope that as we conclude the services here by dedicating the improved cemetery that this will be the beginning of wonderful times together as the Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith family.

"I for one pledge to Pres. Smith that I will do all that I can do to see that we are always standing by, both as family and as the LDS Church, to be supportive and



Photo by Sheridan R. Sheffield

Elder M. Russell Ballard and Pres. Wallace B. Smith hold a pair of scissors as they cut dedication ribbon. Eldred G. Smith stands between them.

helpful and loving neighbors, friends and relatives."

In his remarks, Elder Ballard offered an apostolic blessing to family members of love and peace.

In his comments, Pres. Wallace B. Smith, co-chairman and trustee of the foundation, said: "It is felt that this [cemetery] will perhaps finally constitute a fitting memorial to those principal figures of the Restoration and provide an appropriate setting for their repose.

"As we gather here today to pay tribute to the courage of these early saints and to dedicate this cemetery to their memory, may we gain strength from their example. . . . And most of all, may we affirm, by our own faith and actions, that they did not die in vain, that this may ever be true is my prayer."

In his dedicatory prayer, Pres. Smith asked that those who enter the cemetery "may be touched by the beauty and the serenity of these surroundings in such a way that they will be made to know once more and assured of the promises of the resurrection.

"May all that we do here today be prologue to the activities of the future in

such ways that we may always make proud those who have gone before us. May we be aware of the fact that we are standing on the shoulders of the giants of the past who have gone before and showed us the way."

Elder H. Burke Peterson of the Seventy, president of the North America Central Area; and Elder Eldred G. Smith, an emeritus General Authority and a great-great-grandson of Hyrum, also attended the service. Elder Smith is co-chairman and trustee of the Joseph and Hyrum Smith Foundation.

Also speaking at the dedicatory services were Elder Smith; Daniel M. Larsen, executive director and trustee of the foundation and a great-great-grandson of Joseph Smith, Jr.; and Karl R. Anderson, secretary of the foundation and a former regional representative in the Columbus and Cleveland, Ohio, regions.

Donna Lee Frogley, a great-great-great-granddaughter of Hyrum, and Lois Smith Larsen, a great-granddaughter of Joseph, placed a wreath on the grave headstone at the conclusion of the service.

## Cemetery project increases fellowship, unity

BY SHERIDAN R. SHEFFIELD  
Church News staff writer

NAUVOO, ILL.

Past visitors to this historic town on a bend of the Mississippi River may have never known the significance of the plot of land, located just north of the Joseph Smith Homestead, as they passed by.

But thanks to the efforts of the descendants of Joseph and Hyrum Smith, visitors to this small western Illinois town will now find easier access to the newly renovated Smith Family Cemetery.

The Prophet Joseph Smith; his wife, Emma; his parents, Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith; and his brothers Hyrum, Don Carlos and Samuel, are but a few of the 24 family members and friends buried at the cemetery. The cemetery served as the family burial grounds from 1840 to 1891.

Of those buried in the cemetery, 11 were children

under the age of 2 and one was 7 years old.

"Literally thousands have gone by there in the past without knowing it was a cemetery," said RLDS Pres. Wallace B. Smith, in an interview with the *Church News*. The cemetery is owned by the RLDS Church.

The Joseph and Hyrum Smith families joined together to form the Joseph and Hyrum Smith Family Foundation and raise funds to renovate the cemetery as a family project.

The foundation has raised about \$90,000, enough to pay for costs to beautify and upgrade the cemetery. Foundation members, however, must still raise another \$30,000 to reach their total goal of \$120,000. The \$30,000 will provide an endowment fund for the perpetual maintenance of the cemetery, so that it is not a burden on the Joseph Smith Historic Sites.

The project, which began in 1990, started from an idea that Daniel M. Larsen, a great-great-grandson of Joseph Smith Jr., had a few years ago when he came to visit the cemetery and found the gates locked.

"I wanted to see it opened to the public as much as it could be, and I started thinking of ways to make that

happen," he said.

Larsen, now the executive director and trustee of the Joseph and Hyrum Smith Family Foundation, spoke with several family members and with a friend of the Smith family, Karl R. Anderson, a former regional representative in the Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio, regions.

They agreed that the renovation would be a worthwhile project for the Smith family, particularly the Joseph and Hyrum lines because of the close relationship the two men had. Larsen and Anderson met with the RLDS president and received his direction to form an organization.

The foundation was set up in 1990. Construction began in March 1991, and the cemetery was dedicated Aug. 4, 1991. (Please see story beginning on page 3.)

"This project is something that has been in our minds for a long time," Pres. Smith remarked. "We have come up here various times and have wished that the old cemetery area was in better condition. But we just didn't have the right combination of factors to make it a reality until now.

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# Project brings about spirit of cooperation

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"I think it is very gratifying to see that which started out as a dream and a vision to gradually become a reality," he said. "I am certainly pleased to see it turn out as well as it has. It is a very pleasing area, one which will do a great deal, not only to enhance the Joseph Smith Historic properties, but to give people a much better idea of some of the heritage of the Smith family, as well as some of the other folks that are buried there."

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Council of the Twelve and a great-great-grandson of Hyrum, said: "It will be wonderful for members of the RLDS Church and the LDS Church, as well as non-members, to be able to come to this beautiful property and contemplate the life and mission of Joseph and Hyrum and other family members and experience the sense of their greatness in what they accomplished in restoring the gospel to the earth."

"It's not that we've taken this ground and planted grass and flowers, but it's what we've done in preparing this beautiful resting place as a place for the resurrection of our forefathers who deserve the very best the family has to offer them."

Pres. Smith added: "It already has had an affect to bring about an increased feeling of unity and fellowship between the branches of the family, some that I was not aware of prior to the project. There has been a certain amount of fellowship up until now, but I think this certainly brought about a greater degree of love."

"I think we found out that we can work together cooperatively on a project, not only on a family level, but between the two churches involved in the families. We've appreciated that cooperation and increased fel-

lowship that we have had between the two churches as well."

Elder Ballard remarked, "It's been a wonderful thing to get acquainted with cousins who have willingly given of their time and means to help bring this project to fruition. In the process of giving, the giver always comes away the one who is the most blessed. In the case of family giving, we've drawn together. There has been a bonding develop because of this common effort."

The project will be complete when a time capsule is placed inside the south side of the headstone of the graves of Joseph, Emma and Hyrum. The foundation plans to insert the capsule in October.

Before that time, foundation members are hoping to identify all Smith family descendants so their names may be inserted in the capsule.

"We haven't identified even a tenth of the Smith family descendants," Brother Anderson said. "Anyone who has not been contacted by the foundation could write to Elder Ballard to have their name put on the family list or contribute funds to the project. Names of donors will also be placed inside the time capsule."

More than 200 members of the Joseph Smith Sr. Family organization, one from as far away as Australia, traveled to Nauvoo for the dedication of the cemetery and a reunion. Many came to the reunion as part of an 18-day family bus tour that had taken them to significant family sites such as Sharon, Vt.; Palmyra, N.Y.; Kirtland, Ohio; and Nauvoo.

During the weekend activities, family members met for a banquet, attended a special musical presentation in the LDS Visitors Center and attended the Church historical musical, "City of Joseph." Family members also attended worship and memorial services on Aug. 4.



Photo by Sheridan R. Sheffield

Donna Lee Frogley, Lois Smith Larsen and Daniel M. Larsen, from left, descendants of Hyrum and Joseph, prepare to lay a wreath on headstone.