

# Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith Family Reunion

## Sunday, August 7, 2011

By Frances Orton



Young Priests from the family had a once in a lifetime opportunity to prepare and bless the sacrament inside the Kirtland Temple

Sunday morning some of the family gathered for a 30 minute Sacrament Meeting in the Kirtland Temple. The family met at 8:30 for the quick condensed meeting. Bishop Stephen Quinn was asked by local leaders to preside at the Sacrament Meeting. This was a wonderful opportunity for the family to reflect on the love of the Savior. Bishop Matthew Maddox gave a talk reminding all in attendance about the blessings we share because of Jesus Christ. Bishop Maddox said, "All I know about God, I learned from the prophet Joseph Smith." The spirit was so strong and the family was strengthened.

The family walked across the street and met at the cemetery at 9:00.

# Graveside Wreath Memorial at the Kirtland Cemetery



Margaret Penfield led the family in a musical number as everyone began to gather for the Graveside Wreath Memorial

## Family Members Memorialized in Kirtland Cemetery

- Mary Duty Smith (1743-1836)
- Jerusha Barden Smith, Hyrum's wife (1805-1837)
- Mary Smith, Hyrum and Jerusha's daughter (1829-1832)
- Infant twins of Joseph and Emma (Born and died 1831)





Anson, Austin, and Daniel C. Patrick prepare for the memorial at the cemetery. Daniel and Kris Patrick provided the flowers.



Daniel C. Patrick talk:

*“My Father, Joseph Fielding Patrick and my Grandmother, Edith Eleanor Smith Patrick (Teedie) brought my Sister Frances and I to the first reunion in 1972. We traveled across the country by bus. The trip was comfortable enough although if the air-conditioning went then people complained a bit. Teedie lived to be 94 years old. Keep in mind that today the average life expectancy is 78.3 years. What does that have to do with Mary Duty Smith?”*

*Mary Duty was born on October 11, 1743, in Rowley, Essex County, Massachusetts, to Moses and Mary Palmer Duty. She married Asael Smith on February 12, 1767 and they were the parents of eleven children included Joseph Smith Sr.*

*Soon after her husband’s death, 92 year old Mary Duty Smith moved to Kirtland, Ohio, 500 miles from eastern Massachusetts. She wanted to be with some of her children and meet grandchildren and great grandchildren. For our reunions we travel in comfort, but Mary Duty Smith did not have any of those comforts. She traveled by water whenever possible to make the trip as comfortable as possible. Family was very important to Mary. So important that she was willing to brave the rough travel to be with them.*

*She arrived at Fairport, Ohio on May 16, 1836 at about 5 p.m.. Joseph Smith Sr. and his sons heard that she was coming and went to meet her. The weather was rainy and forbidding so the family made arrangements for Mary to stay in Fairport until the following day when her “boys” returned to take her to Kirtland.*

*Mary wanted to be with her family and be baptized by her grandson, Joseph Smith Jr. Unfortunately,*



Austin Patrick placing the wreath



Daniel C Patrick delivering his message to the family



*after a short 11 days with her family she became ill and passed away.*

*If being with family was so important to Mary when travel was rough then how much more important should it be for us. We can build and maintain relationships in relative comfort.*

*I testify that this family is special and blessed. If we will keep making the effort, we will be able to establish the kind of forever family that Mary Duty Smith wanted for her family.”*



David Adams read the lilac sign and placed it in the ground by the family marker



Wayne & Annette Pierce, Mary Quinn, Jessica and Alyssa Burke



The family as they begin to gather at the cemetery



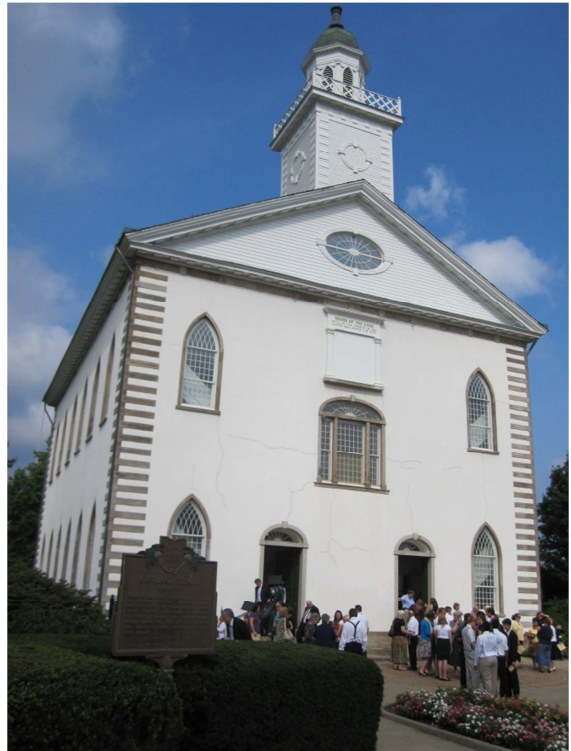




Don Lee after the memorial and as the group began walking back to the Kirtland Temple for the closing meeting



The family files back inside the Kirtland Temple



## Closing Family Meeting in the Kirtland Temple

Wonderful choir music was provided by the Kirtland, Cleveland, Akron, and Youngstown Stakes under the direction of Camille Cameron and Brian Ebie. The tone set by the melodies and harmonious voices enlightened all in attendance.

The meeting opened with prayer by Renee Park. After the welcome by Steve Orton he turned some time over to Gracia Jones.

Talk given by Gracia Jones at the Joseph Smith Sr., and Lucy Mack Smith family reunion in the Kirtland Temple August 7, 2011.

### **In Family Unity there is Power and the Promise of Eternal Joy**

It is a great privilege to be here in this wonderful old building—the Kirtland Temple—to meet as descendants of Joseph Smith Sr., and Lucy Mack Smith.

It seems appropriate on this occasion to share a poem written by David Hyrum Smith, youngest son of the Prophet Joseph Smith. During his lifetime David did not have the opportunity to know his prophet father, or worship or preach in this place. David had a passion for nature—in his poem he compares the beauty of nature’s creations and compares it to “The House of the Lord”; note how he expresses his feeling of the temple and its importance in connection with his family.

Here, I quote an excerpt of David’s poem, The House of the Lord:

*You may sing of the beauty of mountain and dale,  
Of the silvery stream-let and flow’rs of the vale;  
But the place most delightful this earth can afford  
Is the place of devotion—the house of the Lord.*

*You may talk of your prospects of fame or of wealth,  
And the hopes that oft flatter the fav’rites of health;  
But the hope of bright glory—of heavenly bliss,  
Take away every other, and give me but this.*

*Ever hail, blessed temple, abode of my Lord!  
I will turn to thee often, to hear from thy word,  
I will walk to the altar with those that I love,  
And delight in the prospect revealed from above.*

Hesperis, Saint’s Herald, Lamoni, IA., (1911 edition compiled by Elbert A. Smith) p. 221

I think all of us here feel very special about being in the Kirtland Temple—the first “House of the Lord” which was built at great sacrifice and devotion by our ancestors and their friends.

We appreciate those who have allowed us to be here to enjoy this day together. Being together at this reunion brings many reflections to my mind—this is the twenty-first such gathering of the descendants of Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith.

The first reunion was held in August 1972, in Nauvoo, Illinois. The theme for that reunion was “The Joy of Being Together”. Since I am one of the few left who has attended every reunion, from the start, I am often asked “How did these reunions begin?”

There are as many perceptions regarding that question as there are people who participated. My own experience began when Buddy Youngreen, not a Smith by blood, but one who, after he had joined the LDS Church, began researching the Smith family history in order to write and produce a play on the life of Joseph Smith. In his search for Smith family members, from whom he hoped to learn about the Smith family history, Buddy discovered that the posterity of Father and Mother Smith was scattered far and wide across the world; and many of the descendants he found often knew little or nothing of their own heritage and actually knew little or nothing about each other.

I received a telephone call from him in early in 1972. I had never met him or heard of him. He told me he had learned about me from someone in the genealogy department of the Church, who told him I was a descendant, and a member of the LDS Church, living in Montana.

He explained that he had traveled far and wide to meet Smith family members. He confided to a friend, Clinton Larson, a professor at Brigham Young University, his concern that the Smith family was so scattered and lost from each other. Clinton Larson made the comment that it might be good to have a reunion for the descendants of Joseph’s parents—thus bringing together the far flung family. It seemed like a good idea; but how did one begin?

Buddy had also met Joseph Byron Smith, a great grandson of Samuel H. Smith. As they talked about the family being so scattered, the idea of such a

reunion took root. Plans began to formulate in earnest. Joseph Byron made a phone call to W. Wallace Smith, great grandson of the Prophet Joseph Smith, then president of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) with headquarters in Independence. Arrangements were made, for a visit. Joseph Byron and Buddy drove to Independence to discuss possibilities. Wallace was intrigued with the idea, skeptical, but not unwilling to participate. The location was not so easily settled on—but finally Nauvoo was chosen—and the date set for mid-August. August became the traditional month for these reunions because some of the people involved were school teachers and needed it to be between school sessions.

After explaining things to me, Buddy asked if I would be willing to assist in organizing a reunion for the Smith descendants. I said I would love to; but I was expecting a baby in August, so the chances of my attending were slim. Still, I could help in the gathering of names and addresses and contacting people. I worked steadily at it from February on through April, May, and June. We had marvelous, I would say, miraculous success in gathering names and addresses for all branches of the family with living posterity.

Many of the family who were at the first reunion have passed on—I really do feel them here, in Spirit, today: We always called the elderly cousins “Aunt,” and “Uncle”, regardless of the distance of cousin-relationship. There were about 250 people in attendance; I can only name a few here--

Uncle Jay Winters Smith, Uncle David Winters Smith, Aunt sue Beatie, from Samuel’s line. From Hyrum through Joseph F. Smith, there were Willard and Florence Smith, Aunt Edith Smith Patrick, (Frances Orton’s grandmother); from Hyrum’s son John, Eldred and Jean Smith, his brother, Hyrum, and others.

No list would be complete without the great Smith family genealogist, Elaine Nichols!

From Katharine’s line: Warren Van Dyne, and Dorothy Dean, who were great-great grandchildren of Joseph Sr., and Lucy; also Kenny Duke and his family, the Grooms, and others.

From Joseph Smith Jr., W. Wallace Smith, Lynn and Lorene Smith, their son Eric Smith and his family, Dan Larsen and his family, Anina Larsen MacKay and her family. Some of their children are now grownups who are here today.

There was no one at that time from William’s posterity; now we have Gilda and David Sundeen, Gilda’s daughter, Laura and her daughters! No one was found from Don Carlos, we are not sure if there are any living posterity from his line. There were none from Sophronia, as she has no living posterity. We had one from little Lucy at that time, but have since lost touch with the Milliken descendants. Yes, I was there!

As the time drew near, I didn’t know if I could go. But Buddy called me on the phone and urged me to attend. He said, “There will never be another FIRST Joseph Smith Sr., family reunion.” In spite of being within three weeks of my delivery date, I traveled, from Montana, with my son Paul, to Salt Lake City, boarded the family reunion bus which drove through the night, then all day, with one stop over, to Nauvoo. The Joy of that first reunion can hardly be expressed in words. It was wonderful. Lynn E. Smith, a grandson of David Hyrum Smith welcomed everyone and invited us to sing “Come, Come, Ye Saints.” In his opening remarks, he asked, with tears in his eyes, “What took you so long?” A spirit of love and unity enveloped the entire congregation.

If I were to characterize what made that reunion happen and succeed, I would use the word SACRIFICE. I cannot relate these things without acknowledging the great sacrifices made by Joseph Byron Smith, whose enthusiasm and devotion to this work played such a great part in it happening at all. I love him for it and remember him and his sweet wife with great affection. He gave his all to help make these things begin. Likewise, Buddy Youngreen, who literally dedicated years of his life, and much of his own finances, for years, to see it happen. These two more than anyone gave heart and soul to see this work go forward. We miss them today and appreciate their great sacrifices in our behalf.

I was very pregnant during that first reunion. On the way home, at Cheyenne, Wyoming I tripped on the bus step and hopped down two steps. I went into labor, so when we arrived in Salt Lake City, I was taken to LDS Hospital where I delivered my son, David Joseph Denning, on August 23rd. He is very proud to have been born in Salt Lake City. David is turning 39 this year. I spoke with him last night on the phone and he expressed his wish that he could be here.

David is in the Air Force, preparing to be deployed for his sixth deployment, his 5th to the Middle-East. He shared a poem which he wrote for his children to help them cope with his absence when he would be

gone for many months across the world from them. I think we can all sort of relate to this poem, since we have loved being together, and we will be far from one another when we leave here.

The Distance of a Moonbeam by David Denning

Distances I have traveled  
Distances I have roamed  
My life is measured in  
Distances and time  
'til both doth bring me home.

Under the sun I do labor  
in exhaustion  
Yet, under the stars I do stare in awe--  
'Tis the moon though, that always  
Takes my tho'ts home.

For, upon every moonbeam I am reminded,  
This world, though large, is the same;  
For it be the same moonbeam  
That loved ones gaze upon  
To bring our hearts close to home.

For far too many generations a great distance had divided our Smith family. Not only a distance of miles, but a distance made almost impassible by hostility and prejudice, dividing not just the Smith family, but all parties whose origins had roots in the restoration message delivered through Joseph Smith.

In 2007, Michael Kennedy determined it was time to face some of the issues straight on; he approached the Brigham Young Family Association asking them to send someone from their organization to our family reunion and "bring a letter of apology." Of course those he approached were astounded and asked, "What for?" After discussion and consideration it seemed that what was being asked was that they help us build a bridge for this generation and future generations to cross over the gulf of misunderstanding which had separated them for so long.

Mary Ellen Elggren, president elect for the Brigham Young Association was handed the challenge. After much research, pondering and prayer she came to the moment when suddenly words began to flow into her mind and she says of that experience, "I took dictation." The letter she wrote under that influence has become known as "the Healing Letter".

This letter was accepted by Joseph and Emma's family who had gathered at Nauvoo in 2007; and has since been published far and wide throughout several

publications. I will read this document here for your benefit:

June 9, 2007

"For a century and a half we have grieved over the loss of the fellowship of our dear Emma Hale Smith, her children and her descendants. We feel in our hearts an abiding longing to join once again those two families in a common celebration of their ancestors, two men who loved each other and gave their lives together in the service of the Lord, Jesus Christ. The Prophet Joseph Smith, who stands at the head of this dispensation, is second only in our affections to the Lord Himself, and we hold in the highest esteem our progenitor, Brigham Young, whose dying words in this world were the repeated name of his greatest friend and mentor, Joseph.

If there are any misunderstandings that continue to exist in the lexicon of traditions in our family concerning the Prophet's beloved wife whom we revere as a truly great and saintly lady, we would commit ourselves to do whatever is needed to publish to the world our deep regard for her noble life. It would be our earnest desire to rebuild that bridge of friendship between our two families that existed not so long ago."

The Healing Letter is signed by the entire board of the Brigham Young Family Association and by the leaders of the Brigham Young Granddaughters Association as well. There is a p.s. which we can share in the family that is not found in the published version of this letter: "Please accept our regrets for things past and things lost, and our hand in love and fellowship for the future where all is to be gained."

The Smith family members present voted to accept this offering; since then it has been mailed to every family for whom we had an address. No dissenting notes have been forthcoming.

As in the beginning, the Smith Family is leading out as an example to others. The healing spirit extended through this letter seems to be permeating not only the Smith and Young families; it has become evident that there is a healing spirit moving among many families, even those who have never heard of these things, and hearts are being softened and long time differences are being healed in our time.

In the spirit of Mother Smith, who didn't ever like to let a teaching moment go by, I cannot resist sharing the words she spoke in a Relief Society meeting in Nauvoo, "We must cherish one another; watch over



one another, and gain instruction that we may all sit down in heaven together.”

I believe one of the main things we are to teach and learn through the reunions is to try to mend the rifts of the past, set them aside, and go forward. We have seen untold miracles in this aspect of the work. At a time when I was preparing to give a talk for the reunion in Kirtland in 1977, I was feeling very anxious. A very good friend, whom some of you know by name, Truman Madsen, gave me a priesthood blessing in which I was comforted by these words, which I feel strongly impressed to share with you in this sacred place—thirty-four years after they were given—for in large measure they have been fulfilled after much effort and persistence.

The blessing stated, “I feel inspired of the Lord to say to you that whatever may have occurred to split and fraction and break the bonds of love in the Joseph Smith Senior family will, in due time, be healed, overmastered, and reunited. The price in human effort is great. . . . You need have no over anxiety as you anticipate your role [in the organization of these family reunions] that your relationships with any who are now involved or become yet involved in this movement of identify and drawing closer together the [Smith] posterity . . . . that the Lord would prevent . . . any serious mistakes . . . . That all eventually will work together for good.”

The key to achieving this long hoped for reuniting was also defined within the blessing, in words that I share with an uncommon urgency for us to grasp hold of and take them to heart—

“Here I am impressed to say to you that there is a fullness of the Lord’s gifts, both of the Spirit and of the priesthood, which fullness is reserved unto those who come up through affliction, who love where others would hate, who respond where others would withdraw, who endure where others would give up, who forgive and embrace when others would retaliate, and who in sum, emulate through the most profound trials the forgiving and redeeming power of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

These principles will bring family unity—a blessing that is not tied to any time or place—it is eternal, if we choose to do the things that make it so. Such unity is most grand when it is enjoyed in our own families—either close or extended. Such unity will imbue us with power to overcome every difficulty or trial that may be strewn in our future path.

During this reunion we have learned much of our Smith Family Heritage. As we go from this gathering, we will depart to many far flung places. May we remember the joy of being here together in this beautiful old building; and perhaps, on nights to come, we may look up at the sky and observe that the moonbeams glowing in our sky are coming from the same moon that once shown upon our ancestors, those who labored to build what we enjoy. Realize also the same moon is seen by loved ones far off, and it will be seen by our posterity when we are gone.

For, upon every moonbeam I am reminded,  
This world, though large, is the same;  
For it be the same moonbeam  
That loved ones gaze upon  
To bring our hearts close to home.

May we always remember to honor and cherish our heritage. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.”

---

A hymn that was sung at Emma Smith’s funeral “Asleep in Jesus” was performed by some sister missionaries.

The closing message given in the Kirtland Temple was by Frances Orton.

### **By Our Roots We Know Each Other**

I have heard it said, “We may think there is of little interest or importance in what we personally say or do—but it is remarkable how many of our families, as we pass on down the line, are interested in all that we do and all that we say. Each of us is important to those who are near and dear to us—and as our posterity read of our life’s experiences, they, too, will come to know and love us. And in that glorious day when our families are together in the eternities, we will already be acquainted.” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 5; or Ensign, Nov. 1979, 5). That is one reason these reunions are so important. We become acquainted with our family. We are a family of diversity. I have been attending these reunions since I was 10 years old.

When I was a little girl I was very proud of my thick blond hair. I would go to Anson Call Family Reunions from my mom’s side and everyone would say how pretty my hair was and that the blond color comes from the Calls. Then as I grew it turned into what I thought was a weird color brown. I didn’t like it too much. Then one year I attended a family reunion in this very place – Kirtland, Ohio. During this reunion my Aunt Eleanor brought a simple pieced fabric pouch belonging to Mary Duty Smith,

the grandmother of Joseph, Hyrum, Katherine, William, Samuel, and Lucy Smith. This pocket pouch was removed and hung on the bedpost when she passed away in her early nineties, May 27, 1836. At that same reunion was a lock of Hyrum's hair that Mary Fielding clipped off after the Martyrdom. When I looked at Hyrum's hair it was the exact color of mine. I felt my hair had become special again. I could see myself in one of my ancestors and I wanted to become strong.

Speaking of color of hair, when I was young, I told my family and friends I was not going to marry a red head. This created an interesting situation when I met Steve. After we had been dating quite a while Steve heard this and gave me a different perspective on this subject. He said, "My hair is not red – it is orange." I guess that made the difference.

As we learn of our ancestors life's experiences we understand we can do hard things. When Steve and I got married we moved some distance from any family while we were in school. Steve let me finish college before he started school. In the middle of my senior year I went into labor early because I can't carry the weight of the baby. Our first child only lived for one hour. We held him until the mortician picked up our son and took him from us. I remember this as a hard and lonely time. I didn't feel I had anywhere to go and no one could change anything.

Then I reflected on things I had learned in my studies and from attending these family reunions. Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith lost two children as babies. This doesn't count those who died in maturity before Lucy passed away. I did find comfort in what Joseph Jr. saw in this very temple as stated in Section 137 of the Doctrine and Covenants 21 January 1836, Joseph saw,

*1. The heavens were opened upon us, and I beheld the celestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, whether in the body or out I cannot tell.*

*2. I saw the transcendent beauty of the gate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter, which was like unto circling flames of fire;*

*3. Also the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son.*

*4. I saw the beautiful streets of that kingdom, which had the appearance of being paved with gold.*

*5. I saw Father Adam and Abraham; and my father and my mother; my brother Alvin, that has long since slept;*

*6. And marveled how it was that he had obtained an inheritance in that kingdom, seeing that he had departed this life before the Lord had set his hand to gather Israel the second time, and had not been baptized for the remission of sins.*

*7. Thus came the voice of the Lord unto me, saying: All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God;*

*8. Also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom;*

*9. For I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts.*

*10. And I also beheld that all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven.*

I knew what I was feeling had been experienced by so many who came before me and by many of you. Knowing family has shared hard times and moved forward to make a difference in this world is a blessed thing. Joseph Smith once said, "I have a father, brothers, children, and friends who have gone to a world of spirits. They are only absent for a moment. They are in the spirit, and we shall soon meet again. The time will soon arrive when the trumpet shall sound. When we depart, we shall hail our mothers, fathers, friends, and all whom we love, who have fallen asleep in Jesus. There will be no fear of mobs, persecutions, or malicious lawsuits and arrests; but it will be an eternity of felicity." (History of the Church, 6:302-3, 310-11, 315-16; from a discourse given by Joseph Smith on April 7, 1844, in Nauvoo, Illinois; reported by Wilford Woodruff, Willard Richard, Thomas Bullock, and William Clayton; see also appendix, page 562, item 3.)

A couple years ago as we began planning this reunion I had a desire to honor little Joseph (Murdock) Smith with some type of memorial. He doesn't have any marker. Little Joseph and Julia were born on May 1, 1831. Shortly after that Joseph and Emma lost their twins and adopted the Joseph and Julia on May 10, 1831 after their Murdock mother had died in childbirth. Later, Little Joseph who had been sick died from exposure 5 days after the mob tarred and



feathered Joseph Smith Jr. Little Joseph is buried somewhere in Hiram in an unmarked grave. Our hope is our family will someday find where he is buried so we can do a proper memorial.

Our desire for a memorial and the inability to place one without knowledge of where little Joseph is buried led to this year's lilac bush project. The Lilac bush has always been a special plant to Joseph Smith Sr. The journal of Samuel H Smith's daughter, Mary Bailey Norman, gives an account of Father Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith's grave being buried at the lilac bush. It was also mentioned that Samuel and Mary Bailey Smith are at the two smaller ones. Mary Bailey Norman said, "Joseph, Hyrum, and Samuel put the lilac bush that Father Smith loved so well at the head of his grave."

We remodeled our home which left an old lilac bush right where we were putting our driveway. The contractors arrived with large equipment to put in a new sewer line. The lilac was right in the way. They were just going to dig out the bush and discard it, but I asked if they could just move it to the side of our house. They gladly consented. We were able to save this lilac bush which blooms around Mothers' Day with a beautiful fragrance. The bush is in the right place for our home. It's beautiful. Sometimes we all wonder if we're in the wrong place. During the close of this reunion, let me assure you that we are where we should be. Ask the Master Gardner where he wants you planted. Ask him where your heart should be.

This year Gilda Sundeen suggested we honor of all our loved ones who have gone before us by planting a lilac. We have planted several lilac bushes in their memory. One bush cutting was planted in Winter Quarters with the help of Omaha Bob Smith "that descends from a lilac bush that grew at Jerusha and Hyrum Smith's home in Kirtland, Ohio. As Hyrum's family moved first to Missouri, then to Nauvoo, cuttings from the bush went with them. Finally Mary Fielding Smith brought cuttings with her to the Salt Lake Valley, and they have been nurtured for more than 150 years by descendants. This start was taken from her bush that is now at "This is the Place Heritage Park."

In the Pioneer Trail Campground we planted two bushes. One bush has been cared for by Joseph and Emma's family that originates from the family cemetery in Nauvoo. The other bush came from the bush cared for from Hyrum's family. A history of these lilacs will be put together and posted at a later time.

We were also given permission to plant a lilac by the grave memorial of Mary Duty Smith, little Mary Smith, and Joseph and Emma's twins. This has given us a chance to appreciate the faith of our ancestors. Our cousin M. Russell Ballard has said, "*We are all bound together— Our journey is different, but the trail we must follow is the same. It is the trail of faith, and if we keep our feet firmly planted on that trail, we will be just as successful in facing our challenges and trials in conquering the wilderness of worldly things as our ... ancestors were in facing theirs.*"

*"We are the inheritors of a tremendous heritage. Now it is our privilege and responsibility to be part of the Restoration's continuing drama, and there are great and heroic stories of faith to be written in our day. It will require every bit of our strength, wisdom, and energy to overcome the obstacles that will confront us. But even that will not be enough. We will learn, as did our ..ancestors, that it is only in faith— real faith, whole-souled, tested, and tried—that we will find safety and confidence as we walk our own perilous pathways through life."*

*"Real faith, our anchor in the storm, born of the Spirit, affects our actions and our attitudes. When we truly believe, we ask not "What do I have to do?" but rather "What more can I do?" When we truly believe, and when that belief is confirmed upon our souls by the Holy Spirit, faith becomes a causative force in our lives, driving every thought, word, and deed heavenward. That's what it means to walk with "faith in every footstep." It was so for our... ancestors, and it must be so for us today." - Elder M. Russell Ballard, When Thou Art Converted.*

Like the lilacs our roots are deep and strong. Like the lilacs whose shoots have been taken and planted elsewhere we have been planted in various locations across the world. But we stem from the same great root of Joseph Smith Sr. and Lucy Mack Smith, the host family of the restoration. Let us all examine why these ancestors are of such importance to us. Why do we feel such a draw to them? Our hearts are turned to them. I am certain that their hearts are turned to us and I am certain they would like our hearts turned towards each other.

We are part of a wonderful family. I am sure our family on the other side of the veil is with us today and they are happy we are gathered together. Their examples show us that the reasons behind our choices matter. And each of us individually is in charge of determining what those reasons are. We each have a great potential that we were born with. Every one of us was given by our Heavenly Father wonderful

capacity to do good in the world. May we all have the courage to allow the love of God to govern the thoughts and desires of our hearts. By doing this we honor those who have gone before us and given so much.

I want to thank my family and all of you for making this reunion happen. We can participate in family history by sharing stories about our lives and the lives of our ancestors. This will give us a desire to be better. I would like to end by reminding each of us, “The measure of a man is not what he gets from his ancestors – it’s what he leaves his posterity.”

---

The meeting closed with the traditional song, “*God Be With You ‘Til We Meet Again,*” and the closing prayer was offered by John Huefner.



The family gathered outside the temple for pictures before separating for home



Gracia & Ivor Jones standing with Roma & Elwin Jones in back. In front Austin Hodges kneels for the photo.



From Left to Right: Vivian Adams, Chalice Maddox, Julie and Matthew Maddox, AnnaLisa Maddox, and Danielle Maddox. In front is Sam Maddox.



Sherry Osbourne and Bob Smith



Joyce Anderson, Michael Kennedy, Rosemarie and Dan Larsen in front of the Kirtland Temple





Stan Rasmussen, Rebecca Adams, Daniel Adams, Vivian Adams, and Sherry Osbourne



Gwen and John W. Smith after the meeting



