

BYU Jerusalem Center

Local boy from Farmington, key to building the BYU Jerusalem Center in Israel

Little did we know as we were boarding the Delta 767 at the Salt Lake International Airport April 24 of this year, that 7 days and some 9,000 miles later we would be standing in front of a memorial in Haifa, Israel honoring John Alexander Clark, of Farmington, Utah. John was an integral part in bringing the BYU Jerusalem Center into existence.

As Paul Harvey would say, now the rest of the story.

In an effort to strengthen the relationship between the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the State of Israel, in the late 1960's and 70's, the Church sought a parcel of land suitable for building a center for a BYU Educational program. Where students could come and experience for themselves the Near East, Israel, the Holy Land. Leaders of the Church and of BYU had spent years looking for property but none was available. One of the problems was that the State of Israel made it virtually impossible for outsiders to purchase any part of their land.

In 1979, President Spencer W. Kimball was in Jerusalem to dedicate the Orson Hyde Memorial Garden located on the hillside across from the Old City of Jerusalem, near the Garden of Gethsemane. He had asked Jeffrey Holland, then Commissioner of the Church Education System, to show him some of the sites that he was considering for the center. At each proposed site, President Kimball would say, no. As the group surveyed one site which was on the opposite side of the hill where the center was eventually build, President Kimball and a few others walked over to the other side where the Old City of Jerusalem came into full view. He paused, then said, "This is the place where the Center should be build. All in favor raise your right hand."

Easier said than done. In fact, it would take a miracle, not just one but many to bring about the actual building of the center. There were obstacles at every turn.

This particular parcel of land was acquired by Israel as part of the 6 Day War in 1967, it was previously part of Jordan. As such it was kind of in a "no mans land" location. And there were already two Israeli groups that had their first dubs on the property but nothing was progressing to be able to build anything anyway.

Teddy Kollek, the Mayor of Jerusalem, who was a major support for building the center, was receiving insurmountable pressure form all sides to not allow the "Mormons" to build on the property. But he supported it because in his words, "I was fighting intolerance and obscurantism and I won."

In construction, if anyone discovered a tomb or even one bone of a skeleton, the project would stop. What was the possibility of this not happening, in Jerusalem, a city that has been built then destroyed, then rebuilt again some 20 times, what are the odds. There

again behold their dutiful and affectionate son he may be wearing a martyr's crown.

Resolved further, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the Deseret News and also one placed on record in the Young Men's Association.

W.W. Richards
Davie Thomas
E.F. Richards

In behalf of the Young Men's Association.

Elders Hess, James T. Smith, Abraham H. Cannon, Franklin D. Richards and James E. Talmage were the speakers, and in their respective remarks they offered the greatest comfort and condolence to the parents of the young man, and each paid a glowing tribute to the merits of the departed one, as he had always been a young man of the highest morals and strictest integrity, and his loss will be deeply felt by those who had the pleasure of his acquaintance during his short but well spent life.

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Letters and copy compiled by Anne Clark Heiner
Cover designed by Lanetta Maxfield
Addendum added by Antone Clark

xvi. John Alexander, b. 28 Feb. 1871; d. in Haifa, Palestine, 8 Feb. 1896. He was teaching school in Minersville, Utah when he was called on a mission to Turkey. He landed at Liverpool in February, met his coworkers in Leipzig, Germany, and in the summer started to work among the German population of Beirut, Syria while starting to study Arabic. In August he went to Haifa where he started to work among the Arabs. He contracted smallpox and was buried in a cemetery at the foot of Mt. Carmel, Palestine.

Davis County people played key roles in BYU Jerusalem center

Little did we know as we were boarding a Delta flight from Salt Lake City en route to Israel last month that seven days and some 9,000 miles later we'd discover that we hadn't quite left Davis County behind.

We found ourselves standing in front of a memorial in Haifa, Israel, honoring John Alexander Clark of Farmington, Clark — who lived in the 1890s — had no idea that he would play an integral part in bringing the BYU Jerusalem Center into existence nearly a century later.

As Paul Harvey would say, now the rest of the story.

In an effort to strengthen the relationship between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the State of Israel, in the late 1960s and 1970s the church sought a parcel of land suitable for building a center for a BYU educational program. The goal was to build a place where students could experience life in the Near East and the Holy Land. BYU and church leaders had spent years looking for property, but Israel made it virtually impossible for outsiders to purchase any part of their land.

In 1979, President Spencer K. Kimball was in Jerusalem to dedicate the Orson Hyde Memorial Garden located on



Commentary

By John Buist, Clipper CFO

the hillside across from the Old City of Jerusalem, near the Garden of Gethsemane. He had asked Elder Jeffrey Holland (then Commissioner of the Church Education System), to show him some of the sites being considered for the center.

Kimball turned down one

after another — until the group inspected one location on the opposite side of the hill from where the center would eventually be built. As Kimball and a few others walked to the other side, the Old City of

Jerusalem came into full view. He paused, then said this was definitely the place.

It would still take a miracle — not just one but many — to bring about the actual construction of the center, however. There were obstacles at every turn.

The land in question was acquired by Israel as part of the Six-Day War in 1967. Because it was previously part of Jordan, it was in a type of “no man’s land.” There were even two Israeli groups that had first dibs on the property, but nothing was progressing to be able to build anything anyway.

Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem, who was a major proponent of the center, was receiving insurmountable pressure from all sides to prohibit the “Mormons” from building. But he supported it because, “I was fighting intolerance and obscurantism, and I won.”

Another hurdle was Israeli law that required any construction project to stop if workers discovered a tomb or even one bone of a skeleton.

In Jerusalem, a city that has been built, destroyed, then rebuilt again some 20 times, this was nearly impossible. Yet even though 400 pilings were driven down to bedrock to support the BYU structure, not one bone was found.

In addition, if any of the building permits or activities related to construction were found to be illegal, the project would be halted. Israeli authorities meticulously reviewed all the documents, after which the Attorney General announced, “everything the Mormons did pertaining to the legalities of the Jerusalem Center are valid.”

In still another challenge, students and faculty were totally forbidden to proselyte their religion in Israel.

Meanwhile, if there had been a moratorium declared (which was requested by numerous groups), if there had been a change in government, if there had been a serious accident, or if Holland had succumbed to outside pressures to sell the property, the project could have died. And the pressure on Holland had been enormous because he was given a blank check, with the instructions to fill in any amount in return for abandoning the project.

These, and many many

more obstacles, dragged the approval process on for nearly four years. But all of it would have been in vain if it hadn't been for Elder Alexander Clark, the LDS missionary from Farmington.

One of the final requirements was that the church must find a physical presence in Israel prior to 1948, the date when Israel was given its independence by the United Nations.

Although it seemed highly improbable, somehow someone came up with — John Alexander Clark. Little did Clark know as he was studying the Arabic language as a missionary in the small Palestine town of Haifa, now Israel, that he would one day play a great role, even amid personal tragedy.

In 1895, he contracted smallpox, died and was buried on what would become Israeli soil. He, along with another missionary, Adolf Haag, who had died in Israel two-and-a-half years earlier, became the local “presence” the church needed.

Due to these many circumstances, the BYU center was eventually built — with the pivotal help of Davis County residents: Alexander Clark of Farmington and Jeffrey Holland of Bountiful.



On the Move

Free program offered at CrossFit

WOODS CROSS — Ferocity CrossFit is a new exercise facility now open at 544 W. 750 S. in Woods Cross. In honor of its grand opening, there's still time for new customers to try the program free until the end of May.

Customers new to CrossFit will need to schedule a primary fitness session with one of the Ferocity trainers. From there, the trainer will recommend an eight week Boot Camp, a four week CrossFit Essentials program, or more one on one sessions.

CrossFit is categorized by constantly varied, high intensity movements requiring precision execution. It is designed for people of all fitness levels with a goal to give everyone athletic capabilities.

Workouts focus on maximum effort for small periods to increase strength, power, and speed. New members will emphasize technique, flexibility, and proper skill execution.

For more information about Ferocity CrossFit workouts or to sign up, visit www.ferocitycrossfit.com.

WTC seeks award nominations

DAVIS COUNTY — The Women Tech Council is opening nominations for the third annual Women Tech Awards.

The WTC puts the focus on women breaking barriers in business and technology.

Founded in 2007, the WTC provides guidance, resources, and information for women already involved in technology as well as those who will take that path in the future.

The WTC has cultivated a relationship with the business community and gives recognition to top women leaders and entrepreneurs.

Cyndi Tetro, WTC director, feels "honored to recognize the women in Utah who lead the way in the technology field and giving back to their communi-

Sahara celebrates 25th anniversary

BY JETTA HARRIS

Clipper Intern

BOUNTIFUL — Sahara Inc., a local construction company, is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Throughout a quarter-century of doing business, Sahara has had the opportunity to establish many relations and buildings in the western United States.

Sahara is responsible

for the construction of such noted facilities as the Larry Miller Motorsports Park, Cottonwood Corporate Center Buildings, several Megaplex theaters, 75 automobile dealerships, and the EnergySolutions Arena. Sahara has also constructed several buildings outside of Utah.

As well as business, Sahara officials note the company is also dedicat-

ed to community service. The SaharaCares Foundation was developed in 2002 and has since devoted its efforts to aiding children and families who experience autism.

The foundation was awarded the "Angels for Autism" award by Autism Speaks in 2009 and was named the "Outstanding Company of the Year" by the Autism Council of Utah

in 2008.

Sahara officials credit innovations and a client first approach to its ability to provide construction management services for two-and-a-half decades.

The company is looking "forward to a bright future and the opportunity to team with more great clients," said CEO Tom Mabey.

Edward Jones Ranks No. 1 by SmartMoney

BOUNTIFUL — Edward Jones has been named No. 1 Full-Service Broker by SmartMoney Magazine, according to Erik Knutsen at the Bountiful office.

The ranking was received for "high marks for client satisfaction, client statement and stock-picking."

The firm was also ranked No. 2 on Fortune Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" in 2010.

Sunrise Therapy opens new office

AUCTION

930 WEST ANTELOPE DR.
LAYTON, UT 84111

SATURDAY,
MAY 29, 2010

PREVIEW: 12:00 PM / AUCTION: 12:30 PM

LISTED ITEMS FOR AUCTION

FINE JEWELRY COLLECTION: that would surpass most jewelry stores from European and Asian Estates well over 100 certified and appraised pieces

