

FamilySearch Indexing: Anyone Can Help with Family History Anytime, Anywhere

By Eric Eames, Church Magazines

As they pore over digitized census records and church ledgers, Church members participating in FamilySearch indexing are reminded that with every click of the mouse a person comes closer to being found and closer to receiving temple ordinances.

The vision of volunteer-based FamilySearch indexing projects is spreading worldwide from Latin America to Asia and from the old to the young. Members with access to the Internet are taking advantage of FamilySearch's user-friendly Web site and taking time to index between classes, during work breaks, or in place of watching television.

For some people like Austin Corry, a university student in the United States and a member of the Logan University 15th Ward, Logan Utah University Fifth Stake, indexing has become a fun, relaxing experience.

"I found time to index 15 minutes here, an hour there," said Brother Corry, who has indexed more than 17,000 names in his spare time. "It really isn't an inconvenience, but a great opportunity to bring the Spirit into your everyday life."

Global Indexing Fits a Busy Life

One of the reasons FamilySearch users worldwide love the indexing

program is because the software is designed to fit a busy lifestyle. Previously known as extraction, indexing was once a time-consuming process of shuffling through paper copies, taking weeks to do a single batch.

With the help of digitization and the Internet, each batch of names now takes some 30 minutes to complete. Volunteers are given a week to complete a batch, and they can save their work at any time and start again later where they left off.

"What I really like about indexing is that you can do it on your time, one batch at a time," said Patricia Mollemans of Germany. "It is not overwhelming; it can be done in half an hour or so. I do

a batch, I upload it, and it's done. I think this is great for a lot of people who would not find the time with the old extraction model."

Indexing creates data files from digitized records, which allows the information to become searchable through a free electronic database on FamilySearch.org. There is no minimum or maximum limit to how many names an individual can do. Every name indexed makes a difference in helping people locate their ancestors.

FamilySearch has a variety of indexing projects available in Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Indexing projects in Czech and Russian are forthcoming. Area FamilySearch managers

are helping recruit index volunteers in many countries to become a part of the global effort.

"Now that records for more countries are available, more members are enthusiastic about participating," said Francisco Javier Gómez, FamilySearch support manager for the South America North Area. "They feel that this is one more proof that the Church is really engaged in helping the whole world to get to know their ancestors."

Indexing Strengthens Testimonies, Unity

In 2007, students in the Logan Utah University Fifth Stake not only met their goal of indexing 100,000 names, but exceeded it by 3,000. They surpassed that total after the first two months in 2008 while on the way to shattering their new goal of 200,000 names.

But results can't always be quantified. Blessings have come to many in the form of strengthened testimonies because of their efforts with the program. Elaine Mander, a FamilySearch representative in West Midlands, United Kingdom, said indexing has brought her closer to heaven more than any other form of service.

The effort put forth in the Logan stake has unified wards. Individually, students have turned their eyes to the temple, gaining a greater appreciation for its significance by committing themselves to maintain their covenants and live temple standards.

"The Spirit is present,"



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN ANDERSEN

Now anyone with a computer and an Internet connection can help with family history.

said Kay Baker, stake high councilor over the indexing work. "As young people get on the computer and start entering names and doing family history work, they find it fun and exhilarating."

Activity has also increased among less-active members as bishops have given them assignments to do indexing.

"[Through indexing] they can serve and feel like they are contributing, and it has helped some of them come back into activity and to correct what was wrong in their lives," said Bruce M. Cook, recently released president of the student stake.

Students Redefining Stereotypes

While family history work is generally regarded as the domain of older members, the students contradict that stereotype. Some ward socials and family home evenings in the stake have turned into indexing "extravaganzas." Between completing index batches, students snack on treats, socialize, or play a game of volleyball. Some of these socials have lasted into the wee hours of the morning, with students signed up to come in at various times of the night. One ward started an indexing marathon at 6:00 p.m. and ended at 8:00 a.m. the next day.

"It was fun to see members of the bishopric and high council stay up through the night with students to [help us] reach our goals," Belinda Olsen, a member of the stake, said.

The indexing has motivated some to begin working



PHOTOGRAPH BY WELDEN ANDERSEN

Members around the world are spending a little time each week to help prepare indexes.

on their own family roots and to do temple work. In 2007 students in the stake researched and cleared some 2,500 family names for temple ordinances.

"I think that it is really

important for all members to become involved with indexing and family history work," Sister Olsen said. "If we always leave the responsibility up to someone else, it will never get done." ■

New Technology Sparks Youth Interest in Family History

FamilySearch public affairs manager Paul Nauta said the Church-owned family history service is thrilled to see the increasing volume of teenagers and college students who are motivated to do indexing work or search for their own ancestors. He also hopes continued enhancements to the FamilySearch Web site will attract more technology-minded youth.

"As opportunities to do family history or volunteer online grow, youth seem naturally primed to get involved," Brother Nauta said.

Anyone interested in family history work can become an indexer by going to the Web site, FamilySearchIndexing.org, clicking on the **Volunteer** link, and following the step-by-step download instructions. ■

New Temple Presidents Now Serving

By assignment from the First Presidency, 39 new temple presidents are now serving with their spouses. The presidents of the Panama City Panama, Rexburg Idaho, and Twin Falls Idaho Temples began serving earlier in 2008 after the temples were dedicated. The president of the Draper Utah Temple will begin serving after the temple is dedicated on March 20, 2009.

Temple	New President
Adelaide Australia	Philip F. Howes
Apia Samoa	John P. Hanks
Asunción Paraguay	David K Udall
Baton Rouge Louisiana	Max P. Brough
Bern Switzerland	Raimondo Castellani
Billings Montana	Ronald M. Morrison
Bismarck North Dakota	John R. Reese
Bogotá Colombia	Jorge J. Escobar
Boise Idaho	Wenden W. Waite
Columbia South Carolina	Brent H. Koyle
Curitiba Brazil	Jason G. Sousa
Draper Utah	Donald L. Staheli
Freiberg Germany	Frank H. Apel
Guayaquil Ecuador	Jorge A. Rojas
Idaho Falls Idaho	Larry G. Stoddard
Jordan River Utah	F. Wayne Chamberlain
Kona Hawaii	Opurainonarii Mo'o
Logan Utah	W. Rolfe Kerr
Los Angeles California	Grant R. Brimhall
Louisville Kentucky	Dale R. Hettfingher
Lubbock Texas	E. Dale Cluff
Madrid Spain	Garry K. Moore
Mount Timpanogos Utah	L. Edward Brown



The Guayaquil Ecuador Temple is 1 of 39 temples with new temple presidents.

Newport Beach California

D. Thomas Borgquist

Oakland California

Richard A. Hunter

Ogden Utah

Robert R. Steuer

Panama City Panama

Ronald D. Jamison

Rexburg Idaho

Val R. Christensen

Salt Lake

Sheldon F. Child

San Antonio Texas

Marion D. Woods

San Diego California

Bruce L. Olsen

Snowflake Arizona

Lewis Tenney

Suva Fiji

LaRon P. Woolley

Sydney Australia

W. John Bailey

The Hague Netherlands

Jacob J. Van Ry

Toronto Ontario

Stephen M. Hadley

Twin Falls Idaho

Donald R. Gerratt

Vernal Utah

Mac W. Holmes

Washington D.C.

Earl C. Tingey ■

Church Helps DR Congo Reduce Preventable Deaths

With help from Church Humanitarian Services, vaccination campaigns are spreading from the main cities to the most remote villages in Africa to prevent contagious diseases.

With one out of five children dying there each year from preventable diseases, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has received promotional assistance from the Church to attempt to reverse the trend.

“The childhood death rate in the Congo is very high, because people are unable to afford health care and often delay seeking help until it is too late,” said Sister Marilyn Barlow, a humanitarian services missionary serving in the DR Congo with her husband, Farrell. “Even among Church members it is hard to find a

family that has not lost at least one child, and some have lost many.”

But the real tragedy is that a simple, inexpensive vaccine could have saved many lives. In 2007 Church humanitarian volunteers helped publicize the country’s measles vaccination program. As a result, more than 670,000 children received measles vaccinations.

DR Congo health officials were so impressed by how the Church handled its part of the measles campaign, which included radio and television advertising, they asked for help with another project.

In 2008 the Church paid for the production of updated materials—posters and flip charts—so the government could train health specialists and educate mothers about the importance of

primary vaccinations such as measles, polio, tetanus, and tuberculosis.

“[The Church’s] gift will help us educate families and make them healthier,” said Dr. Charlotte Ngokaba, National Director of Vaccinations in the DR Congo.

Since 2003, nearly 60,000 Church volunteers have teamed with the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, the American Red Cross, and local Ministries of Health to decrease the measles death rate.

According to a WHO report, these efforts are paying off. Measles deaths in Africa have dropped 93 percent since 1999. Worldwide measles deaths have fallen 73 percent, from nearly 900,000 in 1999 to an estimated 242,000 in 2006. ■

Church Aids Victims of Hurricanes

Many people were affected by the 2008 hurricane season. Power outages, flooding, and other physical damages to homes left many without shelter. During Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in August and September, more than 20 Church buildings throughout the Caribbean and the United States were used as shelters. Approximately 35 member homes were destroyed, and more than 250 were seriously damaged.

In an effort to help storm-stricken areas, the Church responded quickly, sending much-needed help and supplies. Priesthood leaders worked with other organizations to distribute supplies.

Hurricane Gustav

Hurricane Gustav, the second major hurricane of 2008, formed on August 25, 2008, about 260 miles (420 km) southeast of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and eventually caused serious damage in the Dominican Republic; Haiti; Jamaica; the Cayman Islands; Cuba; and Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas in the United States.

Torrential rain and strong winds blew through Haiti on August 26 as Hurricane Gustav left people homeless and without many necessities. At least four major storms hit the area during



David Dickamore, wearing a Mormon Helping Hands shirt, cuts limbs from a tree blown down by Hurricane Ike in Texas.

the 2008 hurricane season (Fay, Gustav, Hanna, and Ike).

The Church sent three planeloads of supplies to Port-au-Prince, and priesthood leaders worked with multiple organizations to help distribute the aid. Included in the supplies were hygiene kits, hand soap, cleaning kits, tents, generators, plastic sheeting, hammers, and nails. The Church also sent additional funds to purchase food and other necessary relief supplies.

Many Church members in Haiti assisted in putting together and organizing relief supplies that were then distributed to areas of need.

In addition to the relief efforts in Haiti, aid was sent to help victims in the southern United States, also hard hit by the storms. The Church donated more than 20 truckloads of supplies, including more than 7 truckloads of hygiene kits (103,600) and 11 truckloads of cleaning kits (22,176). Food boxes intended to feed a family of four were distributed to some 1,200 families. Each food box included rice, vegetable oil, peanut butter, fruit drink mix, and assorted canned goods.

Additional assistance from the bishops' storehouse in Slidell, Louisiana, provided food, water, generators, tools, sleeping bags, chain saws, tarps, and other smaller items.

Hurricane Ike

The third major hurricane of 2008, Hurricane Ike, stormed through Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and the United States, leaving a trail of destruction in early September 2008. States in the U.S. affected included Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

In preparation for Hurricane Ike, the Church sent supplies to Slidell, Louisiana, and to Houston, Carrollton, Lufkin, and San Antonio, Texas. More than 9,000 cleaning kits were distributed to the various areas before the storm hit.

Other supplies sent as part of the prepositioning strategy included a supply of food and hygiene products along with assorted emergency supplies. Included were blankets, sleeping bags, work gloves, chain saws, wheelbarrows, first aid kits, cots, tents, and water.

In response to the

destruction, approximately 18,500 member volunteer hours were given over a two-day period by approximately

1,300 cleanup workers. During the two-day period about 2,500 projects were completed. ■

ON THE WEB

Church Gives Mormon.org New Look, More Content

To improve Mormon.org, the Church has made navigation and visual changes to the site and added more multimedia content, including testimonies from General Authorities and members around the world and a new video entitled *Finding Happiness*. The updated site launched in September 2008 in English and is expected to be available in Spanish by early 2009. Later in 2009 the site will be made available in an additional 21 languages.

Meetinghouse Locator Updated on LDS.org

The Church upgraded its online meetinghouse locator in August 2008, providing users with more precise directions to meetinghouses throughout the world, access for mobile devices, and lists of different types of congregations nearby, including language-specific wards or branches and young single adult units. The meetinghouse locator can be accessed at maps.lds.org or through LDS.org (click on **About the Church**, then **Find a Meetinghouse**) and Mormon.org (click on **Worship with Us**).

Joseph Smith Manual PDFs Available in 11 Languages

The Church Curriculum Department has expanded the online availability of the manual *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* to 11 languages.

PDF files and MP3 audio files of the manual are available in Cantonese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Files for American Sign Language are also available.

Access the manual and other Church publications at www.lds.org/gospel-library/pdfindex.

Country Web Sites Continue to Grow

New Church country Web sites in English for the countries of the Pacific Area and in Tahitian for Tahiti launched in August 2008. There are now 64 country sites with others (Belgium, Croatia, Hungary, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, and Uruguay) under construction. A link to the different country sites can be found on LDS.org under "About the Church." The country sites get nearly 150,000 visitors per month with about a million pages viewed. ■

SERVING IN THE COMMUNITY

Church Assists Victims in Eastern Europe Flood

The Church sent funds in August 2008 to purchase emergency supplies after at least 65 people died and nearly 90,000 homes were damaged by the worst flooding in 200 years in parts of Ukraine, Moldova, and Romania. Members and

missionaries assembled hygiene and cleaning kits, cleaned up, and helped repair damaged homes, which in some cases were made primarily of mud and straw. The flooding also damaged more than 200,000 acres (90,000 ha) of farmland. ■



This home was one of 90,000 damaged by historic flooding in Eastern Europe.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GERALD D. JACOBS



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSE MORAS SANDOVAL

Members of the Chilpancingo Mexico Stake plant more than 5,000 trees as part of a service project.

Members in Mexico Plant Thousands of Trees

About 120 members of the Chilpancingo Mexico Stake planted more than 5,000 trees in Petaquillas, a community in Chilpancingo, capital of the state of Guerrero. Members from the stake's eight wards

and four branches helped with the project. Wearing white Mormon Helping Hands vests, members of all ages spread out over the specified area with shovels and spent the day digging holes and planting the trees. ■

TEMPLE NEWS

Draper Utah Temple Dates Announced

The First Presidency has announced open house and dedication dates for the Draper Utah Temple. This will be the 12th operating temple in Utah and the 129th worldwide.

"We, with you, look forward to the dedication of this house of the Lord and the blessing it will be to the Saints," the First Presidency said in a letter to members

dated September 15, 2008.

The open house is set to begin on Thursday, January 15, 2009, and is scheduled to continue until Saturday, March 14, 2009, excluding Sundays. The dedication will be held from Friday, March 20, through Sunday, March 22, 2009, with four dedicatory sessions held on each of the three days.

The Draper temple

was first announced on October 2, 2004, and the groundbreaking occurred on August 5, 2006. The temple will officially open on Monday, March 23, 2009. ■

Temple Open in Twin Falls

The Twin Falls Idaho Temple is open and operating after its dedication on August 24, 2008, by President Thomas S. Monson. This marks the

128th operating temple in the world and the fourth in Idaho.

"We are grateful for this long-awaited day of dedication, when this, Thy holy house, has been completed," said President Monson in the dedicatory prayer. "Bless, we pray Thee, those faithful members here and throughout the world who have contributed their tithes, which have made possible this magnificent edifice for Thy name's honor and glory and for the blessing of all who enter herein."

The new temple district includes 14 stakes serving



Members of the San Francisco California Stake cleaned up Pratt Place, a street named after Mormon emigrants who settled there in 1846.

San Francisco Stake Remembers the Past

For the San Francisco California Stake's 80th anniversary, members cleaned three inner-city streets—two named after Mormon pioneers and one after a New York ship that carried hundreds of Saints to the Bay Area before the Gold Rush. Residents on

Joice Street, Pratt Place, and Brooklyn Place appreciated members removing trash and weeds in July 2008. Some 250 Saints first arrived at Yerba Buena on the ship *Brooklyn* in 1846. They helped build the tiny village into a town, which was renamed San Francisco six months later. ■

Service by Nigerian Saints Affects Community

On July 19, 2008, Church members from the Ile-Ife Nigeria District removed garbage and sludge from a plugged drainage system that was overflowing and disrupting many businesses. Distinguished by

their yellow Mormon Helping Hands vests, the members spent 10 hours clearing a trench that runs alongside a road in the town's commercial quarter. People from other faiths joined in as they could. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY FAMILUYIWA OLUWASEJIN

Members of the Ile-Ife Nigeria District clear a clogged drainage trench.



The Twin Falls Idaho Temple was dedicated in August 2008.

approximately 42,000 members in the south-central Idaho area. Temple visitors can see the beautiful Idaho scenery of waterfalls and the syringa flower (Idaho state flower) represented within the 31,500-square-foot (2,900-square-meter) temple's walls, stained glass, and landscaping.

More than 150,000 visitors toured the temple during an open house held the month before the dedication. The temple was first announced in October 2004, and ground was broken in April 2006. ■

Laie Hawaii Temple Closes for Renovations

To return the temple to its original beauty and bring it up to date with current temple standards, the Laie Hawaii Temple will close on Monday, December 29, 2008, for renovations to begin early next year. The renovation is expected to be finished in approximately 18 months, and the temple will be rededicated after the project is complete.

Members in the Laie

Hawaii Temple district will have access to the Kona Hawaii Temple, giving all members the opportunity to attend the temple, including those receiving their own ordinances.

The Laie Hawaii Temple was first dedicated by President Heber J. Grant in 1919 and was later rededicated after renovation and expansion in 1978. ■

New Era Special Issue Still Available

A special issue of the *New Era* published in October 2008 was written to encourage youth to be firm in their faith and make good decisions. The issue includes counsel from Church leaders and others on everyday challenges such as integrity, mental and physical health, entertainment and media, relationships, and personal testimony. A section on the 18 topics in *For the Strength of Youth* features stories, explanations, and examples of living the principles taught in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Two wallet-sized *For the Strength of Youth* booklets are included, along with “standards” cards, a resource to help answer questions about dating, the Word of Wisdom, and whether Mormons are Christian.

The *New Era* is available in distribution centers and online at LDSCatalog.org.

Scripture Stories Available Online and on DVD

The illustrated *Scripture Stories* series is now available online and on DVD. The storybooks have been a great resource for many years, helping young children understand the scriptures through easy-to-understand text and pictures. The books also include maps, glossaries, and timelines for additional information.

The series includes stories from the Old Testament, New Testament, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants and can now be downloaded

from LDS.org in multiple media formats including text, audio, and video versions. The new DVD set is available through distribution centers.

Triple Released in Chinese (Simplified Characters)

A new edition of the triple combination in Chinese (simplified characters) was made available through Church distribution centers in October 2008. The edition includes the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and a study aid titled Guide to the Scriptures. The Book of Mormon in Chinese (simplified characters) was published in 2001. The Book of Mormon in Chinese (traditional characters) was published in 1965, and the triple in 2007.

Book of Mormon Printed in Sinhala

Translation and production of the Book of Mormon in Sinhala, one of Sri Lanka’s official languages, was finished in August 2008. Distribution of the Sinhala version of the Book of Mormon began in September. Since 1983 Sinhala-speaking members have had only portions of the Book of Mormon. There are more than 16 million Sinhala speakers.

Sri Lanka, located just off the southeast coast of India, is home to more than 20 million people and is part of the Singapore Mission. The Church was officially recognized in Sri Lanka on March 2, 1979. The other official language in Sri Lanka is Tamil. ■

Power of the Word

Thank you for “Finding Comfort in King Benjamin’s Counsel” (*Ensign*, Aug. 2008, 25). I was reminded again of the power of the word of God. As a mother, I try to relate the experiences my children are having to the scriptures, but I don’t always take the time to actually read the specific scripture. I was inspired to do that more often. I also felt the confirmation of the Spirit as I read this experience. The scriptures really can make such a difference in how we understand our purposes here and the love our Heavenly Father has for us. Thanks!

*Johanna Wood
Colorado, USA*

No Travel Necessary

I was very excited to see that the September Latter-day Saint Voices stories (p. 68) focused on family history. I was disappointed, however, that two of the four stories discussed expensive family history-related trips. Many people do not get involved with family history because it can seem very daunting to get started. I worry that after seeing these stories people who are hesitant to get started will now also think that they need to become world travelers if they want to begin their own family history. Opportunities for powerful personal experiences involving family history rarely require any travel at all.

*Sherry Lindsay
New Zealand*

Editor’s note: The Web

site www.familysearch.org provides numerous resources for those wishing to start or continue family history work, including a locator for local family history centers.

Touching the Heart

During my husband’s stay in the cardiac care unit, I sat reading the August 2008 *Ensign*. It gave me comfort, strength, and hope. I highlighted many phrases. The magazine spoke to my heart.

I continued to read, and realized upon turning one last page that I had read the whole magazine. I had such a feeling of anxiousness, of needing to read more, of being sorry it was over.

I have a week until the September issue comes. I’m excited to get my hands on it. Thank you for all the time, wisdom, and love that go into these publications.

*Cathy Gage
Washington State, USA*

Healing from Abuse

Thank you so much for the article “Hope and Healing in Recovering from Abuse” (*Ensign*, Sept. 2008, 36). It is what I went through. I loved the choice of words and the understanding. I felt that the author really knew what she was talking about, like she was right there with me.

I have a testimony of the Atonement of our Savior Jesus Christ. I know He knows me and what I have been through. Thanks so much for reminding me. I know it will be OK!

Name Withheld