

GIVING THE PAST

THE NEW CHURCH HISTORY LIBRARY



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Church Magazines

The new Church History Library allows patrons to connect with their past by providing updated facilities and advanced resources.

“A people can be no greater than its stories,” said Elder Marlin K. Jensen of the Seventy, Church Historian and Recorder. The Church now has a brand-new resource to help tell its story better than ever before. The Church History Library, dedicated in June, is a significant upgrade from the previous Church History

Library, which was located in the east wing of the Church Office Building in downtown Salt Lake City.

“Our previous facility wasn’t designed as an archival storage space,” said Brent Thompson, director of records preservation for the Church History Department. “It didn’t have fire protection; it didn’t have seismic protection; and it didn’t have adequate temperature, humidity, and air quality control. We had outgrown the space, both from a staff perspective and, more importantly, from a records perspective. This new building provides solutions to these problems.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD R. ANGLE; ARTIFACTS COURTESY OF CHURCH HISTORY ARCHIVES

A FUTURE



The Church History Library preserves many precious artifacts. Shown here is President Wilford Woodruff's diary, which he personalized with hand-drawn art and by recording the baptisms of his family members.



Above: Every item in the library was given a bar code and scanned as it was transported to the new building. This process will help with maintenance and facilitates research.

Right: A page from Martha Spence Heywood's Autograph book with autographs and paintings of Joseph and Hyrum Smith.



With almost 230,000 square feet of operating space, the library houses expanded research facilities, temperature- and humidity-controlled storage spaces, and state-of-the-art preservation systems. It is also home to nearly 25 miles of shelves containing books, journals, documents, photographs, microfilm, and other preserved media.

Ample space inside the library also allows its 125 employees and nearly 200 full-time and Church-service missionaries to work effectively. These staff members provide valuable research, preservation, development, and administrative services in managing the library's collections and assisting patrons who visit the facility.

The building provides more than just extra space and updated preservation technology. "Our new library is designed to provide an open and welcoming atmosphere for all to interact with Church history," said Patrick Dunshee, manager of marketing and communications for the Church History Department. "Our desire is to help patrons increase their faith as they connect to their past."



Above: More than 3.5 million patriarchal blessings are preserved in the library's vaults. Right: A banknote from the Kirtland Safety Society, signed by Joseph Smith.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOID R. ANGIE



Under the right conditions, including low temperatures and humidity controls, artifacts can be preserved safely for many, many years. Some records are stored at 55 degrees F (13 degrees C). The most sensitive materials (shown at left) are stored in a vault at -4 degrees F (-20 degrees C), cooled by the equipment shown above.



The building was designed to visually complement the Conference Center, which is across the street to the west. Together the two buildings present a reminder of the great strength of the members of the Church; while hundreds of thousands fill the Conference Center each year to participate in general conference and other events, the Church History Library houses the records of great faith and service from Saints all over the world.

The library is a short walk from the Church's other historical and research facilities on Temple Square. Its

close proximity to the Family History Library and Church History Museum allows patrons convenient access to many of the Church's historical treasures.

Elder Jensen said, "The primary purpose of Church history is to help Church members build faith in Jesus Christ and keep their sacred covenants." The new Church History Library, with updated resources and advanced facilities, will help collect, record, and preserve the stories of the Church and its members better than ever before, protecting sacred resources for many generations to come. ■



Opposite page: President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) as a young man; the library's lobby. Top: The building's inner reading room. Above: In the early 1900s, Emmeline B. Wells, fifth general president of the Relief Society, is assisted by her counselors, followed by the general board.



Left: Daguerreotype of early Church Historian George A. Smith, about 1850. Above: A carved Maori ceremonial house with members and missionaries, about 1886. At the time, the LDS population of New Zealand was 90 percent Maori.



COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CHURCH HISTORY LIBRARY

1. How can I access the information in the library? Patrons can walk in or fax, phone, or e-mail service requests to the library. Contact information and an “Ask a Librarian” feature can be found at www.churchhistorylibrary.org.

2. Is there open access to all records? Patrons will have access to thousands of titles, including books, periodicals, manuscripts, photographs, audiovisual materials, and diaries and journals. As in all library and collecting institutions, access to records that contain private or confidential information is limited. The library also adheres to all copyright laws.

3. What are the hours of operation? The Church History Library will be open Monday–Wednesday and Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. MDT.

4. What technology is available for patrons? Patrons can search library catalogs and indexes on our library computer terminals. Terminals also offer access to more than 2,000 photographic images housed in the library, as well as information from the Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel Database. Patrons will be able to access library materials wirelessly as well.

5. How do volunteers help? Volunteers help patrons in various ways, including training, orientation, general guidance, and service requests.

6. Where are patrons allowed to work? Patrons have access to the lobby, main library area, and reading room.





Opposite page: Patrons have access to a wide selection of books in the open stacks. Bottom left and above right: Employees in the Conservation Lab expend great effort to repair damaged documents. Tape—one of the more destructive home remedies for repair—must be removed to ensure longevity. Center: Wilford Woodruff's copy of the Book of Commandments. Left: LDS University, 1908. The Relief Society Building and the Church Office Building and plaza now occupy the same location.