



William G. Hartley

February 10, 1942 - April 10, 2018

LDS historian William G. Hartley died on April 10th after a two-year battle with cancer. He was 76. Bill was best known for his groundbreaking books on Mormon history, articles in LDS church magazines and scholarly publications, and his appearances in the popular KSL television documentary series *History of the Saints*, for which he served as Consulting Historian.

Bill had been part of the LDS Church Historical Department and the research-based Church History Division during their tenure under Leonard J. Arrington. As part of the Church Historical Department, he and his co-workers began a large-scale oral history program and Bill was its director for four years. After the church transferred its History Division to Brigham Young University, he served as an associate professor of history and was director of the Family History and Genealogy Research Services Center for five years. He taught Utah History as well as *Writing Family Biography*, which resulted in more than 800 family histories being written by his students.

A past president of the Mormon History Association, Bill was also the founding president of the Mormon Trails Association. He was a member of the editorial boards for the *Journal of Mormon History* and *Mormon Historical Studies*. In 2012 he received the Mormon History Association's highest honor, the Leonard J. Arrington Award for a lifetime of distinguished contributions to Mormon history. Two annual research prizes are named in his honor.

Bill was a prolific writer who authored fifteen books and more than 120 articles dealing with LDS history and family histories. He received five best book awards and four best article awards from professional associations. In recent years, he was co-editor of three volumes in the Joseph Smith Papers project. Following his diagnosis of cancer 20 months ago, his urgent desire was to finish two books he had in progress; he not only reached that goal but managed to write three new articles as well before his death. The body of his work made significant contributions to studies of the Mormon resistance to persecution in Missouri, the evolution of LDS priesthood offices and leadership structures, the Mormon

Battalion, the Pony Express, and especially to an understanding of multiple western U.S. migrations and pioneer trails over land and sea. One of his favorite experiences was participating on the Sea Trek journey of eight tall ships that sailed from Denmark to New York City in 2001 as part of a reenactment of the Mormon emigration from Scandinavia to Utah.

Bill was raised in Butte, Montana and the San Francisco Bay Area, where he was student body president of Arroyo High School. He served an LDS mission to the Eastern States and Cumorah missions, received his B.A. and Masters Degrees from Brigham Young University, and did his doctoral work at Washington State University. He was bishop of the Sandy Willow Canyon 2nd Ward from 1985-1990. He served in many ward and stake callings and had a profound belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

He married Linda Lee Perry in the Oakland LDS Temple in 1965. He is survived by Linda and their six children: Julie (Ted Moore) of Grantsville, UT; Jeffrey (Jodi Piner) of Alpine, UT; Scott (Sheree Lewis) of Riverton, UT; Cindy (Matthew Harris) of Castle Rock, CO; Christie (Johnathon Knapton) of Colorado Springs, CO; and Gregory (soon to be married to Sandy Reno) of Salt Lake City; by 15 grandchildren; and by his brothers Charles in Montana and Richard and James in Utah. He was preceded in death by his parents, Norma Miner Hartley Haymond and Charles Alton Hartley; his sisters, Raylene and Mary; and his brother Bryan.

Of his own eventual passing, Bill quipped: "On the other side I'll find out how accurate or inaccurate the histories I wrote really are."

Funeral Services will be held Monday, April 16, at 12:00 Noon at the Saratoga Springs 3rd Ward, 49 East Centennial Blvd., Saratoga Springs, Utah, where Viewings will be held Sunday, April 15th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm and prior to Services on Monday from 10:45 to 11:45 am. Interment in Springville Evergreen Cemetery, 1997 South 400 East, Springville, Utah.

Special thanks to Dr. Neeraj Agarwal, MD, at Clinic 2B, Huntsman Cancer Institute and FirstChoice Home Health and Hospice for their excellent care of Bill.

Funeral Directors: Utah Valley Mortuary.

Cemetery

Springville Evergreen Cemetery

1997 South 400 East
Springville, UT,

Events

APR **Viewing** 06:00PM - 08:00PM

15

Saratoga Springs 3rd Ward
49 East Centennial Boulevard, Saratoga Springs, UT,
US, 84045

APR **Viewing** 10:45AM - 11:45AM

16

Saratoga Springs 3rd Ward
49 East Centennial Boulevard, Saratoga Springs, UT,
US, 84045

APR **Funeral Service** 12:00PM - 01:00PM

16

Saratoga Springs 3rd Ward
49 East Centennial Boulevard, Saratoga Springs, UT,
US, 84045

Comments



“ In behalf of the large Butler family, I wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to the Hartley family at Bills passing. A bright light has gone out in this world. My father commissioned Bill to write "My Best for the Kingdom" about our ancestor John Lowe Butler I and "Another Kind of Gold" about our ancestor Albert King Thurber. After my father's passing, I worked closely with Bill for many years on the Thurber book and grew to love him and his amazing mind. As the attached photos show, we were both excited about the publishing of the Thurber book and I wore out his writing hand having him sign family copies. Bill was a delight to visit with and a walking encyclopedia of Mormon history. My husband and I were serving missions in Mesa, Arizona when he passed and did not hear until six weeks later. I am so sorry to have missed his funeral. My husband knew him from early days at BYU when he served with him in Blue Key, a BYU honor society. Definitely a man who will be missed by many.



MaryAnne Butler Ashton - June 09, 2018 at 11:57 AM



“ What a contribution to the restored gospel!

Dr. Mark Bezzant - May 11, 2018 at 08:12 AM



“ Many condolences to Bill's family. As a non-Mormon doing Mormon history, Bill would patiently explain to me how teachers or the Aaronic Priesthood worked in the 19th century or any other question I had. I was on the 5-day trip he led during the 1997 MHA conference that went from Omaha to Nauvoo and back again, one way following the Pioneer Company, the other the handcart companies. What a treat. I still treasure the handout he gave us. Very sad to lose him.

Polly Aird - May 04, 2018 at 02:15 PM



“ The family of Ephraim Peter Ellison sends memories of years Bill spent researching and writing the book about our great grandfather. We are thankful to have that lovely book, and express our sympathy to the family at Bill’s death. We appreciate years of friendship and association with him.

catherine smith - April 22, 2018 at 11:32 PM



“ You have my most sincere condolences at the passing of Bill. I, too, will miss him greatly. I knew and admired him as a student, friend, and colleague. He was my student at BYU when he wrote a paper that later became his first publication. After I became Assistant Church Historian Bill came to work in the Historical Department of the Church and I thoroughly loved being his colleague there. One of the things I admired about him as a scholar was his ability to see things that needed to be written about and his tenacity in setting about to do it. He was also someone who regularly went far beyond the call of duty in order to help others. He was a wonderful person, a remarkable historian, and a good friend.

James B. Allen

James B. Allen - April 17, 2018 at 12:13 PM



“ Please accept my sincere condolences for your loss.
Doug Sagers

Doug Sagers - April 16, 2018 at 02:14 PM



“ Christie and family we are so sorry for your loss. Our thoughts, prayers and love are with you at this time. Please let us know if there is anything we can do for you. With much love Mary sue and the entire Applegate family



Mary Applegate - April 16, 2018 at 12:37 PM



“ I'm a member of the Joseph Knight family and have loved Bro. Hartley's lectures and his book, "These Are My Friends." My thanks to him for his great work. God bless your family.

Kathleen E. Faerber - April 16, 2018 at 11:28 AM



“ Dear Hartley Family,
Please accept my sincere condolences. Mr. Hartly was a tremendous help to me to find my father and his family. I spent a long time trying to find them. My father's family did not want to know my sister or I . We don't know why. But like Mr. Hartly told me there are other members and the Knight history is a bigger family. Faye Knight Massachusetts.

Faye Knight - April 15, 2018 at 11:27 PM



“ Dear Hartley Family,
I'm a Knight relation from Arizona and first met Brother Hartley at a Knight Reunion in Utah many years ago when I purchased "For They Are My Friends." This gave me an understanding and a great appreciation for my Knight heritage that continues to grow. I am so grateful for what he did for the Knight family, of which I am a part. God bless you through your loss and know there are so many who are grateful for his life and contributions.
-Lana Dalton

Lana Dalton - April 16, 2018 at 01:22 PM



“ Dear Hartley Family, I love Church history and I love Bill! He was so kind to meet me and my cousin back where the Mormon Battalion mustered, and show us around a bit and tell us things that went on in the early Church. He was and still is and always will be a treasure! Sincerely, Elaine Carr Brewster

Elaine Carr Brewster - April 15, 2018 at 10:32 PM



“ Dear Hartley Family, so sorry to hear about my surrogate dad growing up passing away. I have nothing but good memories with this awesome family...ski trips with Jeff...picking on Scott...countless night overs, meals, trips to Provo with Jeff to visit Bill while working...

This family is so amazing and my heart is so heavy with you guys as you go through this transition in life.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you guys!

Darren, Janet, Rylan and Jonah

Darren Shanks - April 15, 2018 at 06:52 PM



“ 3 files added to the album New Album Name



Jeff Wanlass - April 15, 2018 at 03:04 PM



“ Linda, and family.

Narda and I send our condolences at Bill's passing. Even though I agree with President Ezra Taft Benson "that the death of a righteous man is never untimely because our Father sets the time," we are saddened that one who has contributed so much to our lives is gone so soon.

I was not trained as an historian, and so when Grant Underwood, Bill, and I began the work on those three volumes of The Joseph Smith Papers, Bill became my mentor, and patiently guided me through the process. For years we rode from our homes together to BYU to meet with Grant. Our discussions were far-ranging, but always interesting. I was asked by our Ward Relief Society President to give a talk on Emma Smith, and I asked Bill during one of our commutes what his perspective was on Emma. He set me straight and I have never had any ambivalence about her since then.

Of all Bill has written, there is one article that I have used many times in teaching the D&C, Teachings of the Living Prophets, and Gospel Doctrine classes. "How Shall I Gather" (Ensign, October 1997, 5) is an absolute classic. It is not only historically interesting, but inspiring in nature. I used it to help motivate students to take a more active role in assisting the unfortunate.

My own health issues (ALS, known as Lou Gehrig's disease) prevents me from coming to the viewing and the funeral, but please know that we are thinking of you during this time of parting, albeit temporarily, from Bill. We know the Lord will bless and comfort you as you look forward to the future reuniting of the family.

With all our love,

Robert & Narda Woodford

Robert Woodford - April 15, 2018 at 12:18 PM



“ Hartley family, I first met Bill when my mom, my sister and I went to san lorenzo to visit. It was during my sixteenth birthday, and Bill and Bryan were always coming and going, but I stayed with Richard and Jim. It was a most fun time, Bill is about 4 years older than me. Later, both he and Bryan came to BYU and my Mom would have them over for Sunday dinners. It was sometimes my job to go over and get them, and their dates, to come to dinner. and return. The Hartleys have always been an important part of our life, you see Norma was my Dad's sister, and they had a special relationship, and it carried on down to us. When Julie came along, Mom and I and my sister would go over sometimes to visit, but Julie would only look at me and cry. Thank goodness, she outgrew that. When I was in the service in Alameda, Bonnie and I stayed with Norma and Charlie. Norma and Charlie would stay with us when they came to Utah to see their kids at BYU. He will be remembered as a great and humble man. He will be missed.

rex P. Miner - April 15, 2018 at 02:13 AM



“ So many people come into your life..but few like Bill Hartley. He was my home teacher for many years. What a great man and example! He always came with a wonderful teaching message and game to play with my young son...pick up sticks was a favorite. I still remember his story about the boy who could sleep when the wind blew. During a difficult time in my life he was "Christ like". Bobbi Roberts

Bobbi Roberts - April 14, 2018 at 06:18 PM



“ April 14, 2018

Hartley Family: Our deepest condolences upon the passing of the family patriarch. His numerous contributions to history are appreciated, as are his good spirit and generosity. We shall miss his mortal presence. Thank you for sharing him with so many over the years. May you all be comforted with gospel principles.

Drs. Terry and Jan Clemmer
Salt Lake City, Utah

JW Clemmer - April 14, 2018 at 11:38 AM



“ Dear Linda and family—I just learned of Bill’s passing. He was a friend to more of us than many people realized and certainly touched my life with his wonderful friendship and support thru the years. I am so grateful for the lovely lunch we all shared together last time I was there.

Now thoughts and prayers are sent to you and your wonderful family during this tender time. I pray that you will find peace and comfort in knowing that he is just out of sight of mortal eyes, and will feel him close until you are together forever.

My love to you and your family. Bill spoke of your kids so often (and so proudly) that I feel I should know them all. There is love coming your way from all those of us who called you and Bill our friends.

Debbie Lilenquist Biggs

Debbie Lilenquist Biggs - April 14, 2018 at 12:33 AM



“ I was a family history major years ago at BYU. I took classes from him and have always remembered how he taught us to truly focus on the person and their life when writing about them or interviewing them.

Stephanie Casto - April 13, 2018 at 10:53 PM



“ I'm glad I got to talk with Bill just a couple of months ago, when we chatted about the biographies he was hoping to complete before he graduates. I hope he did. I have many fond memories of associations with Bill in oral history---he in the Church Historical Department, and I in the Genealogical Department. On one such occasion we were together at the OHA Colloquium in Austin, Texas, in 1972, when we met Alex Haley, who later became a great oral history friend of the Church.

I'm so sad to learn of Bill's passing, but my thoughts and prayers go out to his family. What a great legacy he has left in his wake.

John C. Laing
Salt Lake City

John C. Laing - April 13, 2018 at 01:15 PM



“ I wish that I knew Bro. Hartley personally, but I don't. That said, I must express appreciation to his family for an article, published in the Ensign during 1982.

The article, entitled: The Confederate Officer and "That Mormon Girl" talks about the baptism of David Peery, at the hand of Absalom Young, my great great grandfather. I have recently visited this land in Virginia and as I did so, Bro. Hartley's article was one of the backdrops I used to view and understand the land of my fathers and grandfathers.

Thank you Bro. Hartley for touching many hearts and lifting many souls with such thoughtful research and excellent writing. I pray that his family feels the gratitude of those of us that have no way to personally express these thoughts today, or in the future, as unborn generations read and learn from his research.

Paul Young
Sandy, UT.

Paul Young - April 13, 2018 at 10:13 AM



“ As a newly hired faculty member in the Church History and Doctrine Department at BYU, I approached Bill in 2010 and asked if he would author a chapter about Mormon emigration to Utah during the Civil War to include in the 2012 anthology "Civil War Saints" that I edited. Bill could not have been more gracious, and the chapter he authored was a typical "Bill Hartley publication" -- thoroughly-researched, well-written, interesting, and a meaningful contribution to Church history. It was an absolute pleasure being able to work with him -- then and in the years that have followed. We were scheduled to speak together next month during the Sons of Utah Pioneers National Symposium, and he will be deeply missed. I consider it an honor to call him my friend.

Ken Alford - April 13, 2018 at 09:44 AM



“ Bill was a Founding member of the Early Saints Research Group and a good friend of mine. His Mother Norma was my mentor she taught me to do Family History research taking me to the Oakland library every Wednesday i did not have school. What a wonderful lady. So Bill and I go way back! Bill went off to college when I was 6 or 7
Fast forward in about 2011 I was serving as a missionary at the Church History Library and had been called down to discuss Mormon Grove with a patron. The patron and I were talking and this man came over and said to me kind of incredulously "who are you and why do you know so much about Mormon Grove? I looked at him and said "Brother Hartley:. He looked even more confused and and said "how did you know my name"? I replied "does San Lorenzo ring a bell"? He looked a little harder and said are you one of the Weber girls? I said "guilty as charged". We then had a good time catching up. Our families moved into the ward the same month.
Since that day Bill has been a valued mentor to me and has encouraged me in the historical work I have been engaged in. He told me about an untapped source at the National Archives on the Mormon Battalion. I along with others have taken it upon ourselves to change that and digitize the Bounty Land Applications. We are almost finished with that project and will be putting it on line soon. What a fitting tribute to this great historian.

Laura K Weber Anderson

Laura Anderson - April 13, 2018 at 03:20 PM



“ It has been a pleasure to work with Bill on an article on ward teaching that will appear in the Journal of Mormon History in October. He was always so cheerful and great to work with. What a remarkable historian!

Jessie Embry, editor, Journal of Mormon History

Jessie L. Embry - April 13, 2018 at 04:59 PM



“ Dear Hartley family, what a great loss for us on this side of the veil but such a gain on the other! Loved Bill. He was a great story teller, truth teller, filled with the spirit of joy and life! I happily got him involved in some excellent projects; superb articles by him. I also fondly recall times together on SeaTrek in England. I wish all the Hartley's our Heavenly Father's great blessings of inner peace, of confidence in the future, of a joyful reunion, and many happy reflections on a dear and rare soul. Sincerely, Jay Todd

Jay Todd - April 13, 2018 at 09:23 PM



“ I SAILED with Bill to ports in the North Sea, part of SeaTrek, a reenactment of the migration of early Mormon converts from Europe to New York in the summer of 2001. Bill led "fellow saints and sailors" aboard one of eight tall-masted ships, reminding all of the faith and effort needed to undertake the journey.

Thank you, Bill, for your time and talents to promote understanding within Mormon History.

Steven Parkin, Millcreek, SL, UT

Steven Parkin - April 13, 2018 at 09:30 PM



“ How difficult it is to express to Bill's family the extraordinary experience it was to know and to work with Bill for twenty-odd years on the historical research staff headed by Leonard Arrington. We were a family there, either at the LDS Church Historical Department or at the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute at Brigham Young University. We knew each other as colleagues in the cause of Mormon history, mutually helpful and consistently supportive. Not just colleagues; we were family, loving each other and each other's families. Linda, we share with you your sadness at Bill's death, and send heartfelt condolences to you and your children. Mormon history has lost yet another fine scholar, but you have lost an exemplary husband, father, and grandfather. May you find a rich treasure of memories that will keep him near you all.

Maureen Beecher - April 13, 2018 at 10:08 PM



“ I am the cousin that Bill took under his wing as the big brother I never had. He drug me along with his friends and dates. I had a great time. Over the years he has been an inspiration to all of us as he shared his historical knowledge, stood as a champion for those who went before us, and taught us how to stay close to those who matter. May I express my condolences to all of you, his family, for sharing him with the rest of us. He was the best!

Janice Sorenson Clegg

Janice Clegg - April 14, 2018 at 09:35 PM



“ Dear Linda and family,
Bill, my wife's cousin and my friend, became my cancer buddy in the last year as we were suffering from the same disease. I will miss him. He had a positive attitude all the while. We also had some excellent discussions about Church History. I had so much to learn from him but he liked my stories of the Honeymoon Trail. He visited us in our home in Batavia, New York, and also in our home in Scottsdale, Arizona. He as a good man. All of you can be proud of him and look forward to seeing him again.

LaVar Clegg

LaVar Clegg - April 14, 2018 at 11:30 PM



“ Dear Hartley family, I just read today that Bill had died and that his funeral was today. I enjoyed the book "Stand by my Servant Joseph". My line comes down through Milan Knight. My grandmother was Ilean Knight Brunner. I will have to share this information with my cousins. I don't think they know.

Linda Brunner Irons

Linda Irons - April 16, 2018 at 04:57 PM



“ Dear Hartleys - This past week I learned of the death of my cousin Bill, one of the most terrific guys I've known. He was Mormon History to me - a prolific writer of biographies of not only the top leaders, but the lesser known families. He was The Man - he knew ALL about the Mormon Trail. He knew where the bodies were buried...

Bill allowed me to work under his guidance and do several years as a research assistant for a number of his books as I commuted from California to SLC. We traveled many miles together to Mormon History Association conferences - he was always a speaker; I was the videographer. I accompanied him on several Miner Family tours and MHA tours of the Mormon Trail.

Your family adopted me and cared for me. I considered Linda my beloved friend. I will miss him.

Beth Pany

Beth Pany - April 21, 2018 at 11:03 AM



“ Dear Linda, I just read of Bill's passing in the MHA online newsletter that I received today. I loved Bill as a friend and as a fellow passenger on the Europa. We shared Dr. Pepper's together. The two of us were among the eight that completed the journey from start to finish. He was our spiritual leader on the ship and a fine one at that. He taught me a lot about trying to be a family historian. I will miss just knowing he was always available to teach me. My sincerest condolences to you and your family. Julie Molen

Julie Molen - May 04, 2018 at 10:49 PM