

The New York LDS Historian

Remembering September 11

By Joanna Legerski, Raquel Cook and Sara Anderson

A year has passed since the devastating terrorist attacks against New York City and our country, and the question remains as to how our community has changed in those twelve months. Many of us said we'd never be the same—that the city would never be the same. How then are we different? Surely one year is not enough to analyze the dramatic potential for change. But are we, as a community and as individuals, better or worse for the experience?

The New York Stake History Committee is particularly interested in the physical and spiritual affects the attack had on the LDS community in New York because, well, it's history. And history is about people. It's about us. And even though we can offer no definitive answers, we feel it important to document the event and some of the reactions of our Church members.

To this end, we have gathered some feelings from a cross-section of Mormon New Yorkers. Some were first hand witnesses to the horror. Some only saw it on television. There are as many stories and feelings as there are people. Background information on those who have contributed to this issue can be found on the last page. We offer to you portions of their interviews, e-mails and personal essays to encourage you—if you haven't already—to look back on the past year of

your life to see how you have changed. Don't just record where you were on September 11, 2001; though that is important. We encourage you to take the time to evaluate where you are *now*.

Even if you feel you weren't affected by the attacks, use the date as a benchmark to evaluate the last year of your life. Do as Church President Spencer W. Kimball urged us: grab a notebook and be diligent in recording your personal history.

Just as we cling to stories of the trials and faith of our pioneer ancestors, our descendents will look to us for inspiration in troubling times.

If you feel inclined, the Committee would love to hear from you. We are collecting such stories and testimonials for the New York New York Stake Archives. Contact Raquel Cook at raquelly@att.net or Joanna Legerski at joannalegerski@yahoo.com if you'd like to contribute.

The Day

Jonathan Hill

I exited the subway below the World Trade Center just after a plane hit the first tower. And I was on the street when the second plane struck minutes later. The explosion etched an image in my mind that I will never forget. Almost immediately after the blast, I saw pieces of glass, metal, and other debris, some the size of a car, raining down on the street.¹

Kristopher Woolley

I work on a trading floor, and it's very open; there are no cubicles, its loud, phones are ringing. And I was turning around to mention something to a colleague, but I noticed that behind him in the window there was paper fluttering, and I thought it was a ticker tape parade. It looked like really small pieces of paper but it turns out they were 8.5 by 11 office paper, floating. [We] walked over to the window and then the view of the whole building kind of opens up as you get closer to the window. And sure enough, there was that dark, black smoke coming out from Tower One.

I walked to the window to watch when out of the left side of the window, just off our building, came flying in this plane really low. I had dual vision; I was watching the TV, but then out of the corner of my eye there is a plane; and then it came on the TV. It was a surreal experience witnessing both live and on TV the second plane. We watched it plunge right into that side of the building that we faced.

I saw Patti, and she was crying. Tears were already coming down, and she said, "Oh, my goodness. So many people are dying right now." At that point, we all knew how serious it was; just so many people were literally dying, right then. Then it turned chaotic. It was Go time. Everyone knew it was time to evacuate the building. Not that at that point we even suspected that the two buildings would fall; but it was like, "Gotta get out. Gotta get off the island." Manhattan was

like the *Titanic*. We didn't know what was going to happen. And it felt like the whole ship was sinking.²

Susan Robison

Resident of Battery Park City, across the street from the World Trade Center

I went downstairs, out into the street, and looked up; and I could see the north tower where the plane had hit the building. [I] watched that for a couple of minutes then came back up to tell Ron. And we of course turned on CNN to see what they were picking up. Then all of a sudden, we just heard this huge roar, and it was the second plane coming right over our building. And then we heard a huge explosion. So we knew that the first plane, was, I mean, that something was wrong. Then

"Manhattan was like the Titanic. We didn't know what was going to happen. And it felt like the whole ship was sinking."

a couple of minutes later, our son, who works in the Financial Center, came running into the apartment in tears, "Where's Dad? Where's Dad?" And fortunately, his dad was standing right there. So we all hugged for a few minutes and then decided we'd go up on the roof to see what we could see from there.

The three of us went up on the roof and you could see both of the towers. You could see the towers, and planes burning, and all the smoke, and everything that was happening. But the most difficult thing was that we saw bodies falling. And these were people whose lives were ending. It was like being a witness to a murder. You can just imagine these people and the choices that they had. A wall of fire, or leaping from a building. What choice really is there? That was the time that it really hit, in terms of what an immense and horrific event this really was. While we were on the roof we saw the first tower fall.³

The New York LDS Historian

Published by the New York New York Stake LDS History Committee of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

New York New York Stake President

Brent J. Belnap

Committee Chairs

Richard Bushman
Claudia Bushman

Editor

Scott Tiffany

Publisher

Kent Larsen

Committee members:

Sara Anderson
Matthew Archer-Beck
Sarah Archer-Beck
Darrell Babidge
Jennifer Welch Babidge
Mark Butler
Raquel Cook
Delia Johnson
Anne Knight
Joanna Legerski
James Lucas
Glen Nelson
Joanne Rowland

For further information contact Kent Larsen at (212) 927-7932.

Heather Taylor

I was blow drying my hair and had the news on and heard them interrupt for a special news bulletin; and I remember my thought at that time being, “Ugh, you know, what in New York has gone on? They are always interrupting for these little incidences.” I came into the TV and saw that a plane had crashed and at that time no one knew what was going on. This was the first plane that had hit. They were giving eye-witness accounts, which were calling in saying, “It looked like a rather large plane.” Just from my history of being a flight attendant, I thought, “Oh, these people don’t really know. It’s gotta be a single engine plane somebody just mistakenly hit into the building.” But then as things started to unfold, I realized this was . . . terrorists.

It’s so strange in New York how major things can go on but we still function. That’s a great thing about this city. We have picked up and gone on. And I had the same attitude that day of, “This is horrible, but I need to go to work. I need to continue on with my life.” So I called David and said, “I know the subways are going to be closed but I ‘m gonna try and get to work.” I was stuck on the bus for 50 minutes, and in that time one tower had fallen. When I got off the bus at 59th Street right in front of the GM building, all the TVs were on, crowds of people were standing around, and I stood there with everyone as we watched in horror what was unfolding right down the street. I got to my office and watched the second tower fall. [I] called David [who] told me they hijacked airliners and one of them was a United plane. That’s when I broke down because that hit home to me. I knew exactly what the crew must have been feeling.⁴

Chrysula Winegar

I came out of the subway at 59th Street, by Columbus Circle, and I got a call on my cell. Warren was [home] because he starts work later than I do, and he had seen it. First he heard it on the radio, and then our radio station, NPR, lost its antenna. Then it took a few minutes for the television news to catch up—and then he saw it on

the television. So he called me and just said, “A plane went into the World Trade Center.” Like everybody else, we just assumed a light plane had gone off course, and it was one of those freaks of nature. I walked across Central Park South, not really getting it; and then I got to my office building, which is where CBS 2 broadcasts their morning show. They have big screens outside, and that’s when the first real impact of it hit me. I saw the screen – saw how much flame there was, and realized that this was a much bigger deal. And then as I was watching, the reporter spoke about a second plane hitting and I saw that explosion on the screen and went upstairs to my office building and watched the towers from my floor.⁵

Greg Stone

[When] the second plane hit, senior management evacuated everybody off the trading floor. Everybody crowded out in the streets and kind of went their own way. I didn’t know that the towers were going to come down obviously, so I weaved my way down as close as I could get. I ended up 4 to 5 blocks directly north of the World Trade Center, and I stood there for probably 40 minutes until the towers came down. I was standing next to someone that had a blackberry pager. His friend was in Washington that day on business. He sent a message saying that the Pentagon was hit and there’s more to come. So I was scared because I didn’t know where to go for safety. I didn’t know if they were going to hit the subways and the Empire State Building. There was a huge state of panic on the ground. So the first tower comes down, and we were going to get hit by the rubble if we didn’t move. So everybody turned around, and there was a stampede uptown – women’s shoes flying off – people got knocked off their bikes.⁶

Susan Robinson

Once the first building fell, all the clouds of dust and smoke and ash started coming towards us, so we went back inside our lobby. Clouds of smoke and ash came by,

See next page

The New York LDS Historian

is the quarterly newsletter of the New York New York Stake LDS History Committee. This newsletter contains articles about and notices of the research of the Committee.

More detailed research results will be published in our monograph series. Monographs will be announced in future issues of this newsletter.

Current research projects:

Mormon Visual Artists
Mormon Life in New York City
Overview of LDS History in Brooklyn
Hispanic Latter-day Saints in New York City
New York Mormons in
• Business
• School

If you are interested in volunteering for research, writing, archiving, translating or historical activity planning, please contact Kent Larsen at (212) 927-7932.

The Day

(continued from previous page)

and people were coming in off the street through the door. Our doorman was pulling people in and then closing the door quickly, but the air became increasingly more difficult to breathe. And that was the only one time I thought, *“Well maybe we aren’t going to make it through this.”* That was the only time. I didn’t even feel that the buildings were going to fall. But the fact that we couldn’t breathe. While we were there in the lobby, one of the people that was pulled in was a young policeman. He was very young, and he was covered in ash and soot. And he could barely breathe. He was lying on the floor and so people immediately ran for water for him to drink, as well as to clean his face off. He had been in when the building started falling, [and] he just started running, himself, just started running. And he just said, “I didn’t think I was going to make it. I didn’t think I was going to make it.”

Kristopher Woolley

So Larry and I went over to Battery Park where we figured if there were any more situations like that we would be at least in the open. There wouldn’t be any buildings



Heather & Kris Woolley

or shrapnel or things blowing on us. [I still had] a sense of security when [he] started speculating, “Those buildings are going to fall from the weight.” Sure enough, that first tower just crumbled right in front of us, and we all watched it. And then . . . everyone took off, and that black pile of smoke came in. It was far enough away that there weren’t pieces of things falling on us. But the smoke—I had no idea that the smoke would get us that quick and turn what was blue-sky into almost no visibility. It was so thick, and there was stuff floating in it. And it looked kind of like what volcanic ash would be like. It’s in your hair, in your sleeves. I had my sleeves rolled up and it was in my shoes and pants and shirt. And my contact lenses were so irritated. People were running; some people were walking fast. Some people were trying to calm the crowd down because people were

panicking. There were shoes, women’s high heels, left. I saw a lap top brief case – I’m assuming it was just full of stuff – just ditched right there. They just left it. This young girl, we were coming up approaching her. It was really crowded, too. A lot of bodies. And she tripped and was falling down, and I was helping her up. She’s like, “Are we going to die?” Her hair was all in her face. She’s like, “Are we going to die?” I’m like, “No, of course not. Come on, keep going.”

As we got onto the FDR highway, it literally looked like there was a marathon. There were thousands of people from Wall Street and different spots down there just evacuating lower Manhattan. And it was hot. It was going to be a hot day that day. I remember men had taken off their shirts and tied them around their heads; and women were breaking the heels off their shoes and walking bare foot, or they put their walking shoes back on that they had taken to work. It was just a site to see—like refugees walking and walking. Everyone was all dirty from the smoke. And now we’re sweaty because we’d been running and it’s getting warmer.

And as we got up to the Brooklyn Bridge, we heard the sound again. The sound was probably the most frightening part of the whole experience for me. Because it wasn’t screechy, it was – it gathered momentum. It got louder and louder like clapping thunder with a bowling ball hitting bowling pins. Things just started clapping and snapping and breaking. It was really, just a really, really distinct sound. So we kept walking and just as we were getting to the Brooklyn Bridge we heard the sound again, and Tower One fell. We all looked over our shoulders and they were gone.

Chrysula Winegar

By half past nine the decision was made to evacuate our building, and I’d been trying to find my staff and make sure that they were OK. All of the main bosses were in Europe, so then I spent 20 minutes trying to get lines out to tell them that we were evacuating. So when I finally got through to my boss, he asked me to do something for him, which to this

day, I can't believe he asked me to do. But we still – nobody really understood. It was 10:00 before I left the building, and that was when I got nervous. At that point, Warren had been trying to call me. He was freaking out because he was watching everything happen. He knew about the Pentagon. He [said], "Get out of the building. Get out of the building." But I thought, "I'm just going to try my parents." I called my dad, and said, I just went into this very child-like persona – and I'm like, "Daddy, they're attacking us;" and that's when it really hit me. I just burst into tears, and said, "I'm OK. I'm leaving the building, going home." And from then on in, it really became an event that hit my consciousness.

Rachel Butler

Student at Styvesant High School, across the street from the World Trade Center

Teachers were running around the hallway telling everyone to go to their homeroom. I guess they wanted to take attendance to make sure everyone was there and OK. Anyway, they announced that they had turned off the bells and that everyone should stay in homeroom until further notice. People were really upset. This one girl who lives like two blocks from school was hysterical. People were crying and were like, "I don't want to die." So a few minutes later, there was another announcement, saying that we were going to evacuate the building. Everyone headed downstairs to exit out the north exit of our building. While we were going down, the lights flickered again, and there was another loud crash ... the second tower falling.

I was with Dana, and we were both crying 'cause we were really scared. So we go down the steps outside; and there were gunshots, so we got even more scared and ran back up the stairs into the building, but the teachers said we had to get out of there. So there we are, with our entire school, running, literally, up the West Side Highway, and as we look back, the smoke and ash and debris from the explosion is coming closer, and we can barely see our bridge at all cause it was so thick ... Dana and I found some others of our friends, and we walked to Tommy's house

on CPW and 90th Street. No one's cell phones were working, and all the pay-phones all the way up to about 60th Street had lines of people at least ten people long, waiting to call people they knew. The subways were shut down until a little later. I got home at about 7:30 p.m. to find my neighborhood smelling like smoke. Papers had come all the way over here in the smoke. A business card from the 22nd floor of 1 WTC landed in my back yard. I couldn't open my window last night because it smelled so badly of smoke.⁸

Susan Robison

The boats that came to evacuate people evacuated them right below our apartment building, in Battery

Park City. The barges and police boats came in and took the people that had come down to the Battery, and took us over into New Jersey.

There were many, many police cars there, and many, many ambulances because of course they were thinking there would be a lot of injured people and the New York hospitals would not be able to handle everyone, and so New Jersey and the surrounding communities were prepared and ready. But the very eerie thing is that there were no injured. The bodies never came.

Brent Belnap

New York New York Stake President

On Gold Street, at NYU's downtown medical center, a team of doctors waited anxiously out front for ambulances to drive up and unload the injured. From across the street I paused to watch the doctors unload the sole ambulance to arrive, which carried only one person, presumably a man, his arm stained with blood. For some odd reason, the depth of the tragedy around me didn't hit until

Dark as is this hour. There is a shining through the heavy overcast of fear and anger—the solemn and wonderful image of the Son of God. It is to Him that we look in these circumstances.

*President Gordon B. Hinckley
14 September 2001, Memorial Service*

See next page

The Day

(continued from previous page)

the moment I saw the man's hand move ever so slightly. My heart cheered, and I shouted to myself: "He's alive! Thank heavens, he's alive! Someone's alive!"

• • •

Of all the poignant and outright depressing scenes from that particularly horrific event and the dark days that have followed since, perhaps the image most indelibly seared into my mind is the scene that unfolded next. Emerging from the heavy dust and smoke, I was struck by the intensely beautiful shade of sky ahead. It had, after all, been one of those long-awaited, non-humid days of late summer, when the sky over New York is deep blue and the air is clear.

A few yards in front of me was a cameraman adjusting his equipment. I looked to see what he was capturing on film. Behind me, here and there, were several others walking slowly forward, heads bowed, shoulders drooped, bodies covered head to toe in flour-white dust, emerging into a patch of sunlight from a backdrop of solid black smoke. The thick smoke and dust rising up behind me filtered the sunlight that shone down on a steady, solid stream of people—thousands of people—walking silently along the footpath on the Brooklyn Bridge's north side toward Brooklyn, away from Manhattan and "Ground Zero."⁷

A Conversation about the Day

with Greg and Kristy Stone and Sara Anderson
Manhattan 1st Ward

Interview with Sara Anderson, 10 February 2002

Kristy: For the first week after, his biggest reaction, instead of [being] traumatized, like, "I can't believe I saw that," it was more like, "We've gotta bomb 'em — we just we gotta bomb 'em."

Greg: I don't know if it's because I'm a male or because that's my personality, but it was just instant retaliation. They killed thousands of people, and it was just an attack on everything we believe in. My gut reaction was retaliation . . . And I knew, the first thing you think is, you hear it's the Arabs. There's tons of Arabs in New York. You don't know if they're in on the plot. You know, they all called each other this morning and decided to blow up America or New York.

Sara: We had to go to this grocery store right out here that's run by two Middle Eastern guys. But I was really resentful of having to go to their store; and I was mad because I wanted to chew them out.

Greg: I really didn't feel resentful.

Kristy: But you were. You didn't want to get in taxi cabs.

Greg: To be honest with you. I don't think it's ignorance. I don't think it's stereotyping. Well maybe it is, but . . . when you have thousands of people involved in terrorist activities; they all happen to be from the same country, the same religion, you're going to start to fear that, those people. And yeah, for a while, I was scared. Taxi cabs, you know — is this guy part of the clan?

Sara: Or I would see American flags on taxi cabs and I'd be like, "They just have that on there so that they . . ."

Kristy: Because they are scared.

Sara: They're scared. So that people won't beat them up! They don't care.

Greg: It made me upset that they flew American flags, to tell you the truth. That all the taxi cab drivers, and all the Arabs on their stores. I'm like, you don't like America. You guys just blew up America.

Sara: It was hard. Seriously, I was surprised by how much it bothered me to go to that little store.



Greg & Christy Stone

Reflections on the Day

Susan Robison

Interview, 7 April 2002

Manhattan 5th Ward, resident of Battery Park City

Our apartment faces southwest, so we...look right out on the Hudson River and can see the Statue of Liberty; and the contrast of looking at the Statue on such a bright, beautiful, sunny September day and knowing what going on was the dichotomy that didn't compute emotionally. I mean, our apartment seemed fine and I wanted to stay there, even though the building didn't have any water and the lights were out.

Before we were actually evacuated, we looked out our window and could see the barges coming in to evacuate the people; and you could see all these strollers that were left along the promenade. You couldn't take the strollers because there wasn't enough room. All they could do was to carry the children onto the boats. So all these strollers were abandoned.

That night, I fell apart. We were in a hotel in New Jersey and I was just so grateful that Ron was safe. The reality hit me of what might have been and how fortunate and blessed we were. The next morning when Ron went to his office, I literally could not move. I mean, it sounds weird but you know, you tell yourself, "This is silly, Susan. Get up and get with it;" and yet my body was just not willing to move. I pretty much laid there for most of the day watching the news.

I thought [I could] donate blood. Of course, they had been receiving a lot of offers; but the woman at the desk was nice and took my name and asked for a phone number. I didn't have a number to give since I had been evacuated, so I gave her my cell number. Later that night I got a phone call from her while I was at the hotel. She just said, "I realize this has been a traumatic experience for you and I wanted to make sure you're doing all right." That touched me a lot, that a stranger, somebody I didn't know, would take the time to call.

Another similar incident occurred while we were staying at the motel. A very nice woman came to clean the rooms, and we tried to communicate in both broken Spanish and English. She expressed to me that she knew through her faith that everything was going to be all right. We put our arms around each other and hugged and that was a strengthening time for me.

A few weeks later we were able to get back into our apartment, and the building staff were wonderful.

They went through people's apartments and cleaned out their refrigerators—which is a small thing, but it was very helpful because without electricity, everything had spoiled. The staff was very thoughtful and did a great deal to try and make it as comfortable as possible for the residents when they were able to come back....

Rachel Butler

Park Slope Ward, Brooklyn Stake,

Personal Essay

Student at Stuyvesant High School

I knew at the start of the year that being (team) captain would be a challenge, but I could not have foreseen the obstacles I would face leading a cross-country running team. When Stuyvesant's Athletics Chair announced that all fall sports would be canceled because of September 11, I was crushed. I immediately wrote a letter to my principal and expressed the impact this decision would have on my team and me. I was told that he needed forms,

*Now, I do not wish to be an alarmist.
I do not wish to be a prophet of doom.
I am optimistic. I do not believe the
time is here when an all-calamity
will overtake us. I earnestly pray that
it may not. There is so much of the
lord's work yet to be done. We, and
our children after us, must do it.*

President Gordon B. Hinckley

Sunday Conference Session, October 7, 2001

"The Times in Which We Live"

See next page

Reflections about the Day

(continued from page 7)

which had been left at school. I decided to go back to get them.

My stomach turned as I looked down Greenwich Street toward the piles of debris that once was the World Trade Center and now was Ground Zero. It was my first trip back to school since we had been evacuated at 10:25am on September 11, just as One World Trade Center collapsed. The image was still vivid in my mind.

I had done a lot of thinking in the previous two weeks. I spent a lot of time trying to replace the hope that had been shattered on September 11. After that devastating day, I had a hard time believing that anything really mattered. For all I or anyone else knew, our world would be turned upside down again tomorrow, and nothing we had done up to that point would make a difference. After all, people from every walk of life, from high school dropouts to men and women with Ph.D's, died side by side in the World Trade Center.

I distanced myself from everything. I turned off the radio and the TV. I wanted to close my eyes and open them to a world where no one knew what Ground Zero was, where there were no national guardsmen, FBI agents, firemen, and policemen eating, sleeping, and showering in my school. I wanted my sense of security back; the assurance that I could wake up each morning knowing that nothing of significance had happened during the peaceful hours of the night. I wanted to know how our world would be different five or ten years down the road as a result of the disastrous attacks. I wanted to be able to read it in a history textbook and find out the ending.

As the weeks passed, I had time to realize that I would not be able to move on if I continued to believe the theory that "if I don't look, it's not there." I could not live waiting for the ending to come. I would help decide what the ending was going to be.

That is why I returned to downtown Manhattan. My team and I were going to have a normal cross-country season, no matter what it took. It was my small way of proving that the hatred of the terrorists would not prevail. I was trying my hardest to "return to normalcy," as our Mayor and our President had told us to, and to pro-

vide the comforting routine of cross-country running for the girls on my team.

The next day, as I was finishing my first race of the season, I felt an amazing sense of accomplishment. I was running with girls from all over the city and we were doing what we did every fall, except this time we were united in a common resolve. Our lives would go on.

Kristy Stone

Manhattan 1st Ward

Interview, 10 February 2002

[As a social worker] I see so much bad that maybe I thought I'd seen the worst. But also as a social worker you have the ideals that people are basically good and you are helping them find who they really are. You devote your life to it because you actually believe that they are good at their core. And so to see something so blatantly evil threw me for a loop.

I worked for a few months down [at] the Family Assistance Center. [Family members would] come and check the hospital lists so that if they found a body they could identify it, to see if maybe they were just missing in a hospital somewhere. Or just for counseling. And there were people coming in a month after it happened still looking for their loved ones. And that would just blow me away. We'd go with them to Ground Zero to see the site and kind of say goodbye, and it was just amazing how some people were still in denial after a month. Still hanging on. "I just have to find him. I just have to find him." It was just – it was so sad. You knew that they just could not cope with reality because it was so horrible for them.

I saw one girl. She lost her fiance. She first came in and was checking the hospital list, so I looked it up for her. There was a guy with the same last name but a totally different first name, and she's like, "Maybe that was him. Maybe they wrote his name wrong." And then she said, "Or maybe he's still buried, but I'm sure if he is buried he was by a store, and he's just having a sub somewhere waiting to be found." And I was thinking, "Oh this poor lady. He is so dead and she's not



Stuyvesant High School

See page 10

Memorial Quilt Commissioned

By Sara Anderson

Like thousands of people across the country, many members of the New York New York Stake felt helpless after September 11. Many felt that there was no way to “comfort those who [most stood] in need of comfort” during the devastating events of that day and in the months that followed. Audrey Weitzman (Manhattan 2nd Ward) watched the smoke rising in the distance from her office window every day and wanted to do something, but didn’t know what. In a small but concrete way, however, she and twenty-three other women in the stake found that they could contribute by participating in the creation of a memorial to the fallen firefighters from the World Trade Center. As they worked, they found healing, peace and comfort for themselves.



When Sister Weitzman learned that fireman John Eccleson (Ladder 79/Engine 22/Staten Island) was seeking an expression of art to commemorate the losses of the FDNY, she proposed making a memorial quilt. Although he had originally been thinking of a religious painting, Eccleson accepted her offer and stipulated that the quilt would have the names of all the firefighters who lost their lives. Sister Weitzman divided the names into almost 50 squares of 7 names each. Lynda Gunther (Manhattan 2nd Ward) coordinated sisters from the stake to embroider the names and personally completed many herself.⁹ After Sister Gunther collected the completed squares, Sister Weitzman pieced the top together, adding four stanzas of the Fireman’s Prayer and emblems of the FDNY.

Most of the women from our stake who volunteered did so because they wanted to do something to show support after the disaster. A doctor, Diane Johnson (Manhattan 1st Ward) was very frustrated because there weren’t enough survivors to treat. She and others wanted to do something physically to contribute, rather than just give money or do nothing. Some expressed a desire to support those more affected by the tragedy and to comfort the families and friends left behind. And almost all the women participated because they wanted to do something to commemorate the bravery and selflessness of the firemen who made the ultimate sacrifice.

A few sisters volunteered because they enjoyed embroidering. Mariza Bezerra, for example, regularly works on needle-

Memorial Quilt Commissioned

(continued from previous page)

work projects at home and embroidered three squares in just three days. But several women learned to embroider specifically for the project. The distinctive style of each woman's contribution made the composite effect very personal. After laying out the squares to arrange the quilt top, Lynda Gunther was especially pleased to see the touches of individuality from each woman and was proud that so many had contributed.

"It's easy to think of an idea. What made this come together like this was a group of sisters willing to set aside time to do it," she said.¹⁰

As they stitched, many of the women used the time to think about the firefighters and to wonder who they were and how their families were doing. Julia Gunther described praying as she worked, asking for comfort to be sent to those that were in pain. Claudia Bushman decided to ration out her names "usually spending parts of two days on each, so that

I could keep them in mind."¹¹ Referring to one of "my firefighters" (as many of the women did), Sister Bushman told about Frank Fontana, whose story she saw several times in the press. An empty coffin was buried for him soon after the tragedy; but

after his body was discovered, another funeral was held. Margaret Grover also noticed the names of her firemen in the media, but found that she couldn't remember their individual stories because there were simply too many.

For Shauna Wanamaker, one of the most emotional moments since the tragedy came while watching a program called *New York's Bravest*. "It had been taped before September 11th, and the show followed firemen on the job. A number of firemen that had been interviewed were killed in the World Trade Center; and as they scrolled through the names, I realized that two of those men's names were

on the block that I was working on. It was much harder to work on the embroidery once I was able to put faces with the names."¹²

In the end, the quilt project probably did more for the women who made it than it did for the firemen or their families. Many of the women felt like Shauna Wanamaker, for whom the gain was simply doing something. "The months right after it happened were hard to get through, and I know I felt helpless. Even though this quilt wouldn't have a direct effect, wouldn't save anyone's life, it was a way to contribute and to commemorate the people that had tried to help."¹³ Joanne Rowland described her feelings this way: "We did it for us, so that we would feel bonded together as LDS sisters doing what it is we know how to do—to give comfort."¹⁴

Beyond giving an outlet for the impulse to serve, this "tangible act of mourning"¹⁵ helped those who participated find healing for themselves. Time spent stitching was therapeutic for Janelle Gunther, since before she had tried to shut out most of those thoughts. Jana Greer reflected on the good that happened, especially the outpouring of love and service. As she stitched, she was able to focus on something other than the horror shown repeatedly on TV. After months of feeling afraid and angry, she was able to find peace.

After nearly nine months, firemen at the Staten Island firehouse, including John Eccleson, gratefully accepted the quilt in a lunchtime ceremony on June 15. Audrey Weitzman, Lynda Gunther, and Linda Showers attended the ceremony with their husbands; and on behalf of all the women who participated; each accepted a plaque from the firefighters. Captain Frank Hudec expressed special appreciation for their handmade gift, which he noted had required so much loving work and attention. The quilt will be kept at the fire station in Staten Island. Sister Weitzman hopes that the quilt and the record of its creation will continue to serve as a healing memorial and that "posterity will appreciate some day—and understand the huge loss of life we suffered here."¹⁶

*Notwithstanding the afflictions about us,
notwithstanding the sordid things we see
almost everywhere, notwithstanding the
conflict that sweeps across the world, we
can be better.*

President Gordon B. Hinckley
Saturday Conference Session, October 6, 2001
"Living in the Fullness of Times"

Reflections about the Day

(continued from page 8)

accepting it.” And then I saw her again when it was time to go to Ground Zero a couple weeks later. She’d accepted it, and she was being strong. And she was like, “Well I know I’ll see him again; I have to be strong for our son. I just feel so bad for what he went through. I’m not going to give up.”

She was so excited that I was there with her. She held my hand the whole time. She kept telling her family, “I found my friend” (because I’d worked with her before at the pier). For some reason, it just helped her to have a familiar person holding her hand through the whole thing because it was so traumatic. So it could have been anybody, and I don’t feel like I did that much. But I felt like it helped them. A lot of people just needed to know people were there that cared that were willing to be with them through it.

But after a while, I’d had too much. It was too emotionally draining. One day I went to the pier and I just felt sick, like I can’t be here any more. Like, I’ve taken in too much, and I just can’t do it. I needed a vacation. All day you just deal with people that are missing their husband or wife. It was so sad. Or their son, and you’re listening to their stories – story after story, and you’re holding their hand, and you’re trying to be strong for them. And after a while, I just had my limit. Like I don’t have anything to give right now. It’s just too sad.

D Fletcher

*Manhattan 1st Ward
Interview, July 2002*

Since Sept 11 I have felt lonely, I have felt old, I have felt unloved and I have felt hermetic. The first thing I wanted to do after September, unlike many people who started going back to Church, was the desire to not go. I thought the Church really didn’t “get it.” I was really annoyed that the Church said that there were no casualties, which turned out to be not true, and that it’s because God watches out for us. I was angered by the notion that our support groups’ idea of support was to say, “We are better because we were not hurt.”

The story about the missionaries having a zone meeting in the WTC that was all over

the Internet was a total myth. I was angered that some Mormon typed it up and sent it to all his Mormon friends all over the internet and it was re-told in every sacrament meeting all over the country.

I admit I didn’t want to go to fireworks (on the Fourth of July) because I didn’t want to be in a big crowd celebrating America on some big important day. A few weeks ago there was a bomb scare on my street and the police cordoned off over three blocks. I’ve lived in this building and we’ve never had a bomb scare – ever.

Coming home from church today, I realized that it’s the first time I’ve taken the bus since the recent spate of bus suicide bombings in Israel. Here it is, a nice Sunday afternoon and I started looking around at the people and wondering what they were carrying.

I think a lot of stress comes from being indirectly related to September 11, in that our economy is bad right now. A lot of people are out of work and looking to find work even though apparently real estate has done very well. I’m convinced that if there is one more event on a scale like Sept 11, that would be the end of New York. As soon as people get the impression that New York is not safe, there is no reason to have a business here, and no one is going to come here. It will be the end of the history of New York as we know it and a lot of people will move and the ones who don’t are the ones who can’t. This is a real fear, and fear creates a daily tension.



D Fletcher

Heather Taylor

*Manhattan 1st Ward
Interview, 18 February 2002*

Two weeks after September 11 James was born, so our whole focus became him; and just taking care of him was survival in a different sense. We were just trying to get enough sleep and meet his needs. But definitely I remember getting into a cab and these women saying, “Oh, there is some powdery substance here. I don’t

See next page

Through centuries of time, men and women, so very, very many, have lived and died. Some may die in the conflict that lies ahead. To us, and we bear solemn testimony of this, death will not be the end. There is life beyond this as surely as there is life here. Through the great plan which became the very essence of the War in Heaven, men shall go on living.

*Gordon B. Hinckley
Sunday Conference Session, October 7,
2002
"The Times in Which We Live"*

Reflections about the Day

(continued from page 11)

think you want to get in here with your baby!" And I'm thinking, "I don't have a car seat for my baby and you think that this sticker which has been ripped off and left a little bit of powder is anthrax? I think the absence of car seat is more of a danger for him." So I think it threw everyone out of proportion.

Our holidays were different. There was a different tone to our Thanksgiving where we just really bonded as a family. There wasn't a separation where the men go off and watch football and the women work in the kitchen. We really clung to each other. And we felt it to some degree also at Christmas. We were just so grateful to all be together. But it was hard for us to relate to people outside of NY because we didn't feel they had the same understanding.

President Hinckley's talk during General Conference of, you know, "this isn't the end of the world yet, don't get ready for that and we still have a lot of work to do" was a big help to me. That was great to hear, and just being able to come together as Saints and knowing that there is a whole plan here and understanding the Plan of Salvation even more. Understanding that this is going to get ugly and we're going to have to get through it. But in the end Christ will come and reign here upon the earth again. Just having the Gospel is such a blessing.

9/11 changed my husband and me in so many ways. It brought us closer as a couple in a religious sense as we really started to study our scriptures. We started praying more intently. We were already preparing for a huge change in our lives to bring this child into the world, but now we were bringing a child into a world we had never known before and we wanted to be prepared.

After the attack I thought, "I don't want to bring an innocent child into this evil world." I thought of the world as a different place. I thought of it as being very evil and that we as a people are not in control, even in this free land that we live. Someone can come in and do such a terrible act and kill thousands of people in seconds. I didn't want to inflict a child into that. But those feelings all disappeared when I gave birth and saw him and felt a love like I had never felt before. Putting it into the

Lord's hands is definitely faith, and our religion has helped me through this. I think just knowing that my husband and I will try and be the best parents we can, and try to make our baby's home safe. You know, that is what we can do.

Joanna Legerski

*Manhattan 3rd Ward
Personal Essay*

10:15am, 11 September 2001

"I just called to tell you I'm OK."

"Yeah, we know. We're listening to the news on the radio," my 24 year old brother says.

"Um, well...does anyone want to talk to me?" I ask, aching for some comfort.

He pulls away from the ear piece. "Does anyone want to talk to Joanna?" he hollers over the breakfast din in far off California. I take a deep breath and slowly exhale as I listen for Dad or Julie to come to the phone. "Nope," he says. "No one wants to talk to you."

I pause. "Well, I love you...tell them all I love them."

"OK. Bye."

Click.

Jim Lucas

*Manhattan 1st Ward
Personal Essay*

"On Believing in Nothing or Something"

The events of September 11, 2001, present sharply the challenge of evil and suffering to a belief in a benevolent, all-powerful God who designed this universe, for the terrorists claimed to be acting on his behalf, and almost certainly died with his name on their lips. A common answer to this dilemma is to appeal to free will. God wished to create truly free beings. It follows that such beings could freely will to make evil choices. [Nobel laureate physicist Steven] Weinberg's reaction to this view was to note that it seemed "a bit unfair" that his relatives died in the Holocaust "in order to provide an opportunity

See page 14

for free will for Germans,” a light comment which could only have been made half a century after the events. Could one imagine explaining *now* to the widows and widowers, to the children deprived of a mother or father, to the friends, relatives, countrymen, that thousands died in the World Trade Center so that Mohammed Atta would have an opportunity for free will?

Kristopher Louis Woolley

Manhattan 5th Ward

Interview, 27 January 2002

Changes, there have been some profound ones and there have been some small, silly ones. And there's been everything in between. One of the small silly ones is that we have to get carded now at work, and . . . we have to put all of our stuff through the x-ray machine. And another small silly one is every time now I hear a plane outside in my building, or a helicopter, I stop the conversation and look out the window to see where it is and where it's headed. Some more profound changes in my life, I think I have felt an increased sense of gratitude for the small things in life. Gratitude that I'm here still. That I have my freedom. And I have my agency, and I have my life. Every day is my own and I can make of it what I want.

I've thought of quitting it all and going to work for the CIA. My feelings were so intense the days and weeks after, I was like, what's it all worth? Why be here? I thought a lot of people would move from lower Manhattan or from New York City. I thought people would just mass exodus to other cities and states. But I find myself calmed down now. Days have turned into weeks and weeks have turned into months. And I'm not going to go learn Arabic or go join the CIA and try to be a counter-intelligence agent, and try to put an end to this evil in the world. I don't know. Maybe I should think about that still. I haven't made any life/career altering changes because of this; but I think it's obviously changed everything. Everything changed on that day. And although it's affected me and changed me forever, I don't have to deal with on a daily basis the loss of a loved one or a spouse or a child like so many people did. I wonder

if I had lost an uncle or a dear friend or a bishop or someone that I knew intimately if I would still feel the same, and I don't know.

There are going to be more events. There are going to be some dreadful events. Even worse than this probably. But, you know, it all goes back to the gospel and the Restoration and the Plan of Salvation and where we stand in the whole history of the events of the world. And I feel calm. Come what may, I feel calm. And I

In Memorium: Ivhan Carpio

Ivhan Luis Carpio Bautista, 24, of the Richmond Hill Third Branch in Queens, was working at Windows on the World last September 11 when the Trade Center was struck by terrorists. He had planned to take the day off, as it was his birthday, but agreed to cover a co-worker's shift instead.

Ivhan had lived in New York only two years and since his arrival from Peru had become nearly fluent in English, found a job that he loved, moved into his own apartment, and been accepted to the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. He worked as hard and as often as he could, always willing to cover others' shifts, so that he could pay for a niece's schooling in Peru.

Ivhan was the only member of the Church in his family, having converted shortly after his arrival in New York City; and although he was a recent convert, he held two callings in the Richmond Hill Branch: Young Single Adult Representative and Second Counselor in the Young Men's presidency. Ivhan thoroughly loved serving the members in his branch in any capacity. In fact, he showed up to nearly every church activity, if at the very least, just to help out with the smaller details like setting up chairs. He regularly went on splits with the missionaries, and was saving for his own full-time mission.

Blair Garff, District President of Richmond Hill, arranged to fly Ivhan's family in from Peru for a memorial service which was held on October 3.

feel like this has been a blow to everyone, and me personally; but it hasn't shaken me and I'm not afraid. I'm not moving. I'm not leaving New York. My testimony's not shaken. In fact it's solidified my resolve. It solidified my resolve to be here right now, at this point in my life, to be doing what I'm doing. Solidified my testimony. It solidified my belief in the goodness of people. Without that knowledge, I'm certain I would have reacted so differently in a lot of ways. But that's been my grounding. And that's been what has kept me together.

e-mail, 21 July 2002

Reflections about the Day

A year ago right now, we still had not had September 11, no war in Afghanistan, no “axis of evil,” no escalation of Mid-East violence, no Enron, no Worldcom, no “crisis in investor confidence,” no rampant accounting fraud, no Catholic Priest sex-abuse scandal, no massive

And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression for thou shalt not fear, and from terror for it shall not come near thee.

3 Nephi 22:13-14

layoffs and bankruptcies, none of that. Our “trust” in many things has been shaken: our trust in our safety/liberties, trust in business/the markets, accountants, CEOs, Priests for goodness sake! Nevertheless, the church rolls forward! It’s amazing to me: from General Conference in October 2001 and April 2002, to the re-dedication of the Nauvoo temple, to President Hinckley’s visit to NYC, and even the Olympics in SLC. The church is a beacon of light in this otherwise bleak and uncertain world in which we live, and those members who “look to the light” will not be forgotten by the Lord.

On a personal note, I have rebounded in a most incredible way from the horror of September 11. I am getting married on August 17, and my fiancé Heather and I will be living only a few blocks from ground zero. We recognize the uncertainty in the world, but we know in whom we trust.

Raquel Cook

Manhattan 3rd Ward

Personal Essay, 12 July 2002

It’s obvious how my life has changed over the past year. But aside from the bulging belly, I am more me today than I ever have been. Over the last few months, I have had the energy and the urge to be the best me I can—mentally, spiritually, creatively, physically, etc. I’ve been looking back into graduate programs; prayer and scripture study have intensified. I’ve taken a ceramics class and worked on creative projects at home. It’s as if I want everything to count. I don’t want to live in the past anymore. Don’t want to live in the future. I want to live in the now—for the

now and for the future. I don’t think all of this is a direct result of September 11 *per se*; but it is all definitely related. It’s more a direct result of the pregnancy, which is, in so many ways, a result of September 11.

As far as that day goes, I saw some pretty gruesome stuff. But my mind kicked into rational-survival mode. I didn’t panic. I just did what needed to be done. Almost like I was numb. But in the days following, I remember thinking back—writing in my journal a bit—and being so horrified with myself. I remembered that I ran right past a blind man without even thinking to stop and help. I remembered that in the chaos of running I never once thought to pray; and that it was that horrible woman that I worked with—the rude one that I had such a hard time with—that started reciting the Lord’s Prayer for us to join. And I remember screaming the Lord’s Prayer as loud as I could to block out the noise—that terrible noise—of the first tower falling. And I remembered that someone had to remind me to call my own mother. I remembered that the night before, the night of September 10, I was running after work and felt the distinct impression not to go to work the next day—that I should stay home—but I couldn’t think of a rational excuse. I didn’t want to use a vacation day and couldn’t lie for a sick day; so instead of heeding the prompting I landed in the chaos.

I remembered horrible things like this. And so in those weeks following I mulled not over the fact that I had watched 3,000 people get murdered, but over what a horrible person I was. It’s not that I thought I was this evil child of perdition, but I certainly wasn’t the consummate god-fearing Christian that I pretended to be. So it’s as if the experience that day confirmed the worst in me—that I was not spiritual. That I didn’t know how to rely on God. That I had no faith or compassion.

But then everyone at work started coming to me for “spiritual healing” because I was the Mormon girl with all the answers. And everyone at church talked about how the Spirit prompted them to stay home and read their scriptures instead of going into work early, or how the Spirit told

them to take a different train or to go out for breakfast to get out of the buildings. They spoke about how their testimonies of the Atonement were strengthened that day and that the Plan of Salvation, the Plan of Happiness or whatever, that this was all part of God's plan. And they started all of those horrible rumors on the web about how no Mormons were injured or killed because "we are a chosen people." And that just made me mad because, well, first of all it was a lie. Half a dozen Mormons died at least. But the "chosen" bit made me mad because every person is chosen. The Jews are a chosen people. The Pilgrims were a chosen people. Our forefathers were chosen. The Nephites were chosen. Every person in every dispensation has been "chosen" for something. And as Mormons in this dispensation, we weren't "chosen" to be saved from terrorist attacks or disease or whatever. We were "chosen" to do a work. To spread the gospel. To share the gospel and the work with our associates and our ancestors. Are we doing that? We weren't "chosen" at the expense of the Muslims or Jews or Catholics that perished that day. We were chosen *for* them, just like they were chosen for us. So anyway, all of those rumors really made me mad because they created this false sense of spiritual superiority, like for some reason God loves Mormons more than He loves everyone else.

And so I felt this incredible disconnect with the Church. I felt incredibly connected with my community, with my neighborhood and with New York. Like we all survived—those of us who survived—this horrible attack and together we'd overcome. And more than ever I felt like I belonged here and would never leave. But at church—on that so-called "spiritual" level—I didn't relate to anyone. I was this freak. This pariah. And it was just as bad with my family. I mean, I wouldn't expect them to understand because they were 2,000 miles away; but they kept saying "smile" and "bounce back." They kept telling me to get over it, basically. Like if I became depressed or started to cry I must be one of the wicked. Like I should be singing my faith from the rooftops. Dancing in the streets to the tune of the

Plan of Salvation. So here I had watched these 3,000 people get murdered, watched people burn as they fell from 90 stories and land, their bodies splitting in two as they hit the pavement in front of me. I had watched innocent people, coworkers and friends die. And my culture, my religion wouldn't let me mourn.

The baby, though, she came as a gift. That's why I'm naming her Isabel, which means "precious gift from God." After months of "Amazing Grace" it was like Heavenly Father was saying, "This. This is life. This is what it's about. This is joy." But I had to ask myself, seriously ask myself, if I was ready to be a mother. Who am I to teach this child? What could I possibly give her? I had so much self-doubt. But the answers came. You are a daughter of God. You teach her what your mother taught you. You teach her the gospel and share with her your testimony. You teach her by example and sacrifice and love. And in this process of analyzing myself, this process of determining my worthiness for motherhood, I realized all that I have to offer.

Now all I can do is pray that I *can* teach her. Pray that I can raise her with the knowledge of her divinity. Of how beautiful her spirit is. Of how unique and wonderful, because for the first time I'm coming to recognize my own potential. And I want her to recognize hers. You know, I can't change the world. And I won't be able to protect her from all the evil. But I can teach her to make wise choices and to rely on and trust her Heavenly Father. I can open the scriptures to her and teach her the Plan of Happiness. Teach her goodness and virtue and love. And I'm really looking forward to that.

We have become as a great army. We are now a people of consequence. Our voice is heard when we speak up. We have demonstrated our strength in meeting adversity. Our strength is our faith in the Almighty. No cause under the heavens can stop the work of God. Adversity may raise its ugly head. The world may be troubled with wars and rumors of wars, but this cause will go forward.

*President Gordon B. Hinckley
Saturday Conference Session, October 6, 2002
"Living in the Fullness of Times"*

See next page

Reflections about the Day

(continued from page 15)

Delia Johnson

Manhattan 1st Ward

Personal Essay, 22 June 2002

One of my favorite views of New York City [was on] the southwest corner of 12th and Fifth Avenue. As I check the traffic to the north - the Empire State Building catches my eye. The top floors always aglow with lights. Then I look to the south - and there is the World Trade Center.

It's one of those views that make you realize you are really here - living in New York City. And every time I see it I am reminded of my senior year in High School, a week from graduation, walking to class and over-hearing two of my classmates.

"Boy, I can hardly wait until I graduate! I am so sick and tired of this tiny little one horse town."

"No kidding! I'm ready to get out of here too."

"You know, I'd really love to move to some big city - like New York - or something."

At least, that's the way I remember their conversation went. I more clearly remember my feelings of: what's wrong with my home town? At that point in my life, I didn't feel ready to move four hours away to attend college. But I did. It took me longer to be able to move this far away, but somehow I did. The girl I remember saying she wanted to move to New York eventually married her high school sweetheart and they're living in Salt Lake City.

So, I look at the Empire State Building and the World Trade Center and I am always amazed that I am really here.

Then they came down.

Four weeks later it was time for my walk to the first sign language class of the fall. I hadn't been downtown in months and I wasn't sure I was ready for my favorite view without the towers. I walked by and there was a hole in my heart.

The next week I looked north for comfort and then looked south. Some lights lower down caught my eye. Lights highlighting

an arch. A block later I realized it was Washington's Arch. The beginning of Fifth Avenue. The commemorating of our nation's first president. For some reason, the arch filled that hole in my heart. It had always been there. I knew it was there all along. I just never noticed it because the World Trade Center outshone it. It was there years before the towers were built. Somehow, I knew I and New York City would be fine.

Chrysula Winegar

Inwood 1st Ward

Interview, February 2002

I don't think [September 11] was life changing for me personally. It impacted me, certainly. But once you stop to think, okay, what's the worst that could happen? The worst thing that could happen to me is I could die. How bad is that? And in the context of what I believe, it's not a bad thing. Of course I have all the big hopes and dreams for my life here on earth, but if I put my money where my mouth is, do I really believe what I say I believe? And I believe in the after life. And I believe I have the personal connection with God. And so, at the end of the day, if I believe all of those things I have to keep this in perspective. So, in that sense, no, not life-changing. It's very much reaffirming of the path that my husband and I are on as a family.

A question most people asked is, "Do I want to be in New York?" And we're both like, "Absolutely." There was just no question of leaving. We both felt really clearly that we were in the right place at the right time. That this is where we'll start our family and that we're doing the things that we need to do to make our dreams happen. And that the Lord is supportive of that. I've never been more certain that I belonged in New York and that I'm a New Yorker and felt very bound to the city. But I also thought that it was a very powerful time for the church here and that itself was affirming to see how the church community pulled together. How wards just got through their home teaching and visiting teaching lists and accounted for everyone with lightening speed. And just

*Are these perilous times?
They are. But there is no need
to fear. We can have peace
in our hearts and peace in
our homes. We can be an
influence for the good in this
world, every one of us.*

Gordon B. Hinckley

Sunday Conference Session, October 7, 2002

"The Times in Which We Live"

knowing that I'm a part of that community was beautiful.

Certainly as a (church) community we tried to gather around the youth. And one of the things that I thought was phenomenal was that we had previously scheduled a stake activity to take the kids to the beach on the Saturday after the 11th. We decided to go ahead with that, and we took a big bunch of kids out; and a lot of leaders, whose own families could have done with them that day, sacrificed their time and took our youth out to the beach, which was very powerful. It was a beautiful, sunny day. And as we're driving out on the highway we could still see the smoke plumes in the sky. And then finally, an hour and a half later, we could be completely far away and the kids could run around in the sand. But they were just kids who needed to play. I was very impressed by the stake's efforts to go ahead with that sacrifice of time.

The greatest thing has just been reaffirming my love for my husband, being posed the question of an eternal marriage, and, what does that really mean. The other question is, we're at a point where we're preparing to have a family. What kind of a world is this to bring a child into? And the conclusion we came to is that now more than ever is the time to bring new spirits into the world and give them the opportunity to make a difference.

e-mail, 22 July 2002

I discovered a few days [after my initial interview] that I was pregnant with our first child. The baby's due date is September 11, 2002. When I initially saw the calculation, my reaction was a peaceful one – I thought of how beautiful it would be to have a symbol of new life to look forward to on that date. At least in our immediate circle, that date could now have a different meaning. What came so clearly to mind was the experience of a dear friend, last September 11. Debra Bingham is the Director of Maternal Nursing at Roosevelt/St Luke's and she, of course, spent that day prepping the hospital to deal with such a major medical crisis. They expected thousands of casualties, but only received hundreds. She told me that what

sustained her though those days was that the babies kept coming. That through all the pain, the death, the destruction, you could not stop the force of new life.

Throughout my pregnancy, the due date has remained unchanged. What has interested me the most are other people's reactions – some laugh, some look horrified, some just incredulous. Look, the chances of her being born on her due date are slender at best. But the 11th is the date, and I feel we need to remember that other things happened on that day, and will continue to, throughout our lifetimes and throughout history. That's not to diminish in any way how difficult this first anniversary, and all subsequent anniversaries will be. But I do find some meaning in this being the day we expect our child to arrive in the world.

I have no concerns about bringing a child into the world – the thought has never even crossed my mind. My parents were both born during World War II, which I believe was a much darker time than we are currently experiencing. I don't know how my grandmothers felt having their babies then, but I am hopeful, optimistic. All my children will face a different world than the one I faced, but that's the progression of social and political history. The generations are not meant to have identical experiences. All I can do is train her and her future siblings, in love, in commitment to gospel principles. They have to figure out the rest for themselves. Regardless of the surrounding adversity, they have a right to experience this world for themselves and make of it what they will.

All of this ultimately makes me long for the Savior's intervention. Only a system of social and political processes run under His guidelines can ever solve our planet's problems. I have thought more seriously in recent months about the magnitude of a theocracy and what the Lord will be able to implement when He returns. In the



Chrysula Winegar

See next page

Reflections about the Day

(continued from page 17)

meantime, you live the principles in your own pathetic way and try to at least live a semblance of a good life in your home. My daughter will help me do that. She's kicking as I type, perhaps in agreement.

Bishop John Warner

Manhattan 1st Ward

Sacrament Meeting Talk, 17 September 2001

Shortly after tragedy struck on Tuesday morning we began calling members of the ward to make sure they were all right and to see if anyone needed assistance. After seeing what had happened you can imagine my relief as I hung up each call. In a day of despair one bright light shone through. Each person I spoke with asked me what he or she could do to help others, how they could relieve someone else's suffering.

This kind of response is in line with the legacy that we as Americans and more importantly we as New Yorkers have in rising up in the face of tragedy. The Lord has guided us through wars, depressions, terrorist attacks and will be there tomorrow to support us in maintaining our freedom. We will go forward as "one nation under God, indivisible." For there are those who have fought before us and have suffered greatly that we might be free, that we might worship our Lord. And "How firm a foundation" they have laid, upon which if we stand and if we are righteous we will not fall.

That does not mean our lives may not be hard. Our Lord requires much, and to be able to accomplish all that He has in store for us, we must be ready. We may go through what the Lord has called his furnace of affliction, that we might be like Isaiah when the Lord said unto him, "Behold I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah 48:10) but as he told Joseph Smith, "Be patient in thine afflictions, for thou shalt have many; but endure them, for lo, I am with thee, even

unto the end of they days" (D&C 24:8).

At times like these we need to remember the counsel of Jacob to the Nephites: "I would speak unto you that are pure in heart. Look unto God with firmness of mind, and pray unto him with exceeding faith and he will console you in your afflictions, and he will plead your cause and send down justice upon those who seek your destruction. O all ye that are pure in heart, lift up your heads and receive the pleasing word of God, and feast upon his love; for ye may if your minds are firm forever" (Jacob 3:1-2).

Many of us may have a grand plan, a road map that details what we would like to accomplish, acquire and perform here in this life. I assure you that it is most likely that the Lord's plan is quite different from the one that you may have mapped out. Brothers and Sisters as the hymn from our hymnbook reads, "the time is far spent there is little remaining." Our lives are too short, and too fragile. There is too little time for being angry with your spouse, your brother, your sister, your mother, your father, your children, and members of the Ward Family. It is time to give up holding grudges one with another. It is time to stop harboring bad feelings. It is time to stop speaking ill of each other. It is time to stop blaming one another. "To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). Brothers and Sisters, now is that season, to seek out and fill the needs of others, to look where love is needed and give it, to ask for forgiveness and grant it, to offer compassion and receive it, to, as the Lord said, "love one another as I have loved you."

Sara Anderson

Manhattan 1st Ward

e-mail, 20 July 2002

This morning I met an old roommate for lunch. I left New York two months ago and moved to Utah for the summer, and we have been trying to get together since then. So we finally got our babies' schedules coordinated and decided to go grab a bite to eat. She introduced me to her



Bishop John Warner & Family

mother-in-law and said, “Sara was living in New York last year when . . .” and she let the sentence hang off there unfinished. I was surprised and embarrassed that she had chosen to introduce me that way, and I couldn’t make eye contact as I responded that we had been fine – just frightened. I certainly didn’t feel like I deserved to be called a survivor.

Interviewing people for the September 11th project of the Stake History Committee took me into the personal world of people I didn’t know. I didn’t do anything to earn the personal stories they told me; and in some ways, I felt honored to be allowed to tiptoe into their private thoughts and memories. Not because it was some big glory for me, but because it helped me see things that, given my stage of life and my “participation” in the events, I wasn’t really justified in seeing. I started to realize how horrific the sights, sounds, and smells of terror were on September 11. I started to understand how deeply people were affected by the attack – the fear, the denial, the loneliness, the questions, the vulnerability, the gratitude to God, the anger at God, the anger at evil, the realization that it had just not been time to die, the sorrow for those who had died and for their families.

Brent J. Belnap

New York New York Stake President

The past year for the New York New York Stake has been extraordinarily eventful—from the horror and aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11th, to a visit from the Prophet, to the recent public announcement of a new temple to be built in our stake center. Each of these significant events has changed the lives of our stake members in indelible, even eternal, ways. None of us can ever really be quite the same.

Even with all that occurred last September, many within the stake worked diligently to ensure that life’s rhythms proceeded as normally as possible.

On September 15, the Saturday immediately following the disaster, the stake

youth held their annual fall opening social event at the beach—away from the still-steaming wreckage of what was once the World Trade Center. The following day, declared by the First Presidency to be a solemn day of observance in every sacrament meeting around the world, the Manhattan 1st Ward held its ward conference leadership meetings as previously scheduled in the stake directory. Bishop Glade Holman and others of the Manhattan 5th Ward, which had been created less than a year before and included the bulk of Church members residing closest to Ground Zero, worked overtime locating every possible known member and housing those who were permanently displaced. One of the biggest worries of displaced endowed members was obtaining clean temple garments. Within a few days, the Boston Temple presidency generously donated and delivered a load of various sizes and styles of fresh, clean garments. Interesting how such a “small” thing as having a sufficient number of clean temple garments could boost someone’s spirits.

Once the telephone trees in each ward and branch confirmed that no one in our stake had been killed in the disaster, and the flood of offers of assistance from members of the Church in literally every state and a dozen or more foreign countries began tapering off, I found myself waiting for the proverbial “other shoe” to drop—for people working throughout the City, but particularly in and near the WTC, to be laid off and to begin moving away in droves. While the after-effects of 9/11, mostly in increased unemployment and the resulting relocation, have been real, I count it as no small miracle that this has not occurred in any large degree anywhere in our stake. Quite the opposite, in fact: While there has been no noticeable statistical drop in attendance in any unit or auxiliary program, there are a number of reports of “September 11th members”—those who began attending and participating again following the attack. If anything, we are more united as a local body of church members than ever before. I sense more than before in many



Sara Anderson

See next page

Reflections about the Day

(continued from page 19)

of the talks given and testimonies borne in the meetings that I visit, that we are more prone to acknowledge God's protective hand in our lives, to speak of the gift of the resurrection and eternal life, and to give thanks for the blessings of health and life and family.

The events of 9/11 had no bearing on the First Presidency's decision to build a temple in Manhattan. Still, I strongly feel that the events of 9/11 have prepared us more than we may yet realize for the blessings of a House of the Lord in this City. I believe we all walk a little more humbly, a little more gratefully, a little more prayerfully, because of what we as members of the Church living in Manhattan personally saw and felt in connection with the terrorist attacks. May we never, ever forget what we have learned.

About the Contributors

Sara Anderson is a member of the New York New York Stake History Committee and conducted a number of interviews for this issue. She and her husband have temporarily relocated to Las Vegas.

Joanna Legerski is a member of the New York New York Stake History Committee and is contributing editor for this issue.

Kristopher Woolley works on the Goldman Sachs trading floor directly overlooking the World Trade Center site.

Susan Robison's husband, Ron, worked in the World Trade Center, but stayed home the morning of the attacks to recoup from a business trip. They live in Battery Park City, across the street from the trade center.

Heather Taylor worked as a United Airlines flight attendant, but quit to birth and raise her son, James, born two weeks after the attacks.

Chrysula Winegar is a Marketing Manager for Auden Co. Her first child is due September 11, 2002.

Greg Stone is an analyst at Solomon Smith Barney downtown. His wife, Kristy, is a social worker who spent countless hours counseling at the Family Assistance Center after the attacks.

Rachel Butler was a senior at Stuyvesant High School, located across the street and north of the World Trade Center. Students were dislocated while Stuyvesant served as a triage and recovery center for months during the recovery effort.

Brent Belnap, President of the New York New York Stake, works for Citigroup, 10 blocks east of the trade center on Wall Street.

Raquel Cook worked south of the trade center for the Industrial Bank of Japan, which has since folded as a result of the economic downturn. She serves as contributing editor for this issue of the LDS Historian.

Delia Johnson's husband was a graduate student at Columbia University. She initially felt she was not affected by September's events.

Notes

1 *BYU Magazine*, Winter 2001

2 Interview with Joanna Legerski, 1/27/02

3 Interview with Sara Anderson, 4/7/02

4 Interview with Joanna Legerski, 2/18/02

5 Interview with Joanna Legerski,

6 Interview with Sara Anderson, 2/10/02

7 Email 9/12/01

8 *BYU Magazine*, Winter 2001

9 Amy Bentley, Nicole Berry, Mariza Bezera, Jodi Boggess, Claudia Bushman, Gabrielle Donah, Sharon Fennimore, Cori Fugel, Jana Greer, Margaret Grover, Janelle Gunther, Jenessa Gunther, Jillenne Gunther, Julia Gunther, Lynda Gunther, Diane Johnson, Anne Klarer,

Joanne Rowland, Gwen Smith, Mary Tarbett, Megumi Vogelmann, Shauna Wanamaker, Audrey Weitzman and Kay Welch.

10 Lynda Gunther, phone conversation, 5/3/02.

11 Claudia Bushman, email correspondence 6/5/02.

12 Shauna Wanamaker, email correspondence, 6/17/02.

13 Wanamaker

14 Joanne Rowland, email correspondence 6/20/02.

15 Bushman

16 Weitzman

17 Jim Lucas. "On Believing or Something" in *Silent Notes Taken*. Ed. Glen Nelson, 2002.