

A History of the St. George Cannery 1981-2011



History Committee Members:

Karen Doty
Sonja Dodenbier
Dale Hicken
Brian Passey
Russell Wood

Table of Contents

A History of the St. George Cannery

Historic Narrative	1
Statistics	
Storehouse Commodity Canning Production 1996-2010	24
St. George Family Canning 1990-2011	25
Experiences and Memories of the St. George Cannery	
Elder Jim Andrus	28
Herbert K. Basso	29
Gerald and Ann Black	30
Paul and Judith Ann Sorensen Bonny	31
Robert W. Coulter	34
Emma A. Crist	36
JK and Bonnie Deem	37
Sonja Dodenbier	39
Bruce E. Doty	41
Karen Johnson Doty	43
Don and Ireta Ellis	44
Carol Eves	45
Dorothy S. Frazier	46
George L. Fridell	49
Brother and Sister Garbe	53
Bob Goetsch	54
Cesar Gonzalez	55
Ron and Mary Halterman	57
Bill Haslem	58
Dale Hicken – If I Were Writing the Book	59
Dale Hicken – My Tenure at the St. George Cannery	62
Charles Wm. Hurt	65
Jerry Jamriska	68
Suzanne Jennings	69
Tom and Wilma Jewkes	77
Roger Lloyd	79
Merlin C and Margaret M Moyes	80
Herb and Linda Mulnix	81
Bert and Shirley Nixon	84
Brother and Sister Oliver	87
Dennis Patten	88
Veva Lu Snyder	90
John and Carol Stewart	91
JB Sullivan	93

Michael G. Trumbull	94
Randy Wilkinson	96
Russell Wood	97
Kathy R. Young	98

Appendix

Church History Information	99
<u>Newspaper Articles About the Cannery</u>	
Welfare Cannery Dedicated for Lord's Service	106
Church Opens Cannery Doors to Help Ease Pangs of Hunger	111
LDS Cannery Burns	118
Preserving History	120
<u>Construction Documents</u>	124

Historic Narrative

The basic principles of any cannery and/or bishops' storehouse is to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, take in the stranger, clothe the naked, and visit the sick and those in prison (Matthew 25:35-36). The St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse has been doing just that for many years.

"The first canneries were established in the Great Depression, the premise being that food is fundamental to self-reliance" ... and is a way for the LDS people to "express... their faith."¹ Today there are thousands of full-time missionaries called to serve welfare missions and many of them serve in canneries like the St. George Cannery. Their labor is a labor of love. Many stricken by disaster or economic hard-times benefit from the church's welfare system. The St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse has contributed to the relief of suffering throughout its history.

Prior to the building of the current cannery, a bishops' storehouse was constructed on 300 East and 200 South Streets, two blocks north of the St. George Temple and was constructed to "house a stake storehouse, canning center and women's sewing center." It was to be used for the "canning of surplus fruits" from crops that were expected to be bounteous (The Deseret News, May 20, 1939). Documents obtained from the Church History Library track the progress and use of the building through June 30, 1941 (see attached appendix).

The property for the current cannery and bishops' storehouse was acquired in 1978.² The conceptual blueprint drawings of the project confirm the plan for the St. George Cannery building was complete by February 1978.

A pre-bid meeting for the Bishops' Storehouse and the St. George Cannery was held April 18, 1979. On May 8, 1979, bids were accepted for the project. Five construction companies submitted bids for the project. Bids ranged from \$418,000 to \$353,364. As low bidder, Magic City Construction was awarded the job. An official notification to commence work on the St. George Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints was received on July 27, 1979.³

Ledgers provided by Mr. Robert Coulter of Magic City Construction show that the building permit for the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse was purchased on June 19, 1979, for a total of \$58,150. Correspondence, inspections, change orders and other construction documentation are provided in

¹ Janet I. Tu, (November 5, 2008), "Mormon canneries preserve the Spirit of Self-Reliance," The Seattle Times. Retrieved from http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2008352212_canning05m.html

² Information provided by Joseph Love.

³ See appendix for construction documents.

the appendix. The following rough timeline of construction was also provided by Mr. Coulter.

Work Schedule Bishops' Storehouse			
Description		Start Date	Completion Date
1	Clear Site	6/15/79	7/11/79
2	Rebar	6/20/79	7/1/79
3	Footings formed and poured	6/25/79	7/1/79
4	Foundations	7/1/79	7/7/79
5	Backfill	7/10/79	7/12/79
6	Under Slab, Plumbing & Heating	7/11/79	7/15/79
7	Under Slab, Electrical	7/11/79	7/15/79
8	Concrete Floors	7/15/79	7/20/79
9	Hollow Metal Frames	7/15/79	7/20/79
10	Masonry	7/20/79	8/7/79
11	Truss-Joist	8/1/79	8/7/79
12	Structural Steel	8/1/79	8/7/79
13	Framing Labor	8/1/79	10/15/79
14	Plywood	8/7/79	8/8/79
15	Roofing	8/10/79	8/15/79
16	Sheet Metal	8/10/79	8/15/79
17	Insulation	8/15/79	8/17/79
18	Dry Wall	9/1/79	9/15/79
19	Hardware	9/1/79	10/15/79
20	Aluminum Soffitts	9/15/79	9/17/79
21	Hollow Metal Doors	10/1/79	10/6/79
22	Painting	9/15/79	11/1/79
23	Toilet Partitions and Acc.	11/1/79	11/5/79
24	Millwork	9/1/79	9/10/79
25	Carpet	12/10/79	12/10/79
26	Retaining Wall & Exterior Walks, Curb & Gutters	10/15/79	11/1/79
27	Heating & Cooling	7/1/79	12/1/79
28	Plumbing	7/1/79	12/1/79
29	Electrical	7/1/79	12/1/79
30	Temperature Control	11/1/79	11/15/79
31	Chain Link	9/15/79	10/1/79
32	Complete		12/1/79
33	Final Turn Over		12/15/79

An addition to the warehouse and the grain silos were installed almost immediately after the construction of the storehouse and cannery was complete.¹ According to Dennis Patten, Architect:

The standard plan prepared by the Church was “T” shaped. Bishop Storehouse area and the cannery took up the front of the building and the bottom of the T at the back was the boiler for the cannery. Very early in the project the local Church leaders realized there was not enough storage and tried to get the back two boxes of the “T” filled in and covered. The Church did not want to have this change to the standard plan so the building was completed as originally designed.

As soon as the building was completed the local [church] leaders involved local subcontractors to fill in the back part of the T, cover it and make the building rectangular. This helped tremendously to provide storage for the Bishops’ Storehouse and covered area for fruit coming from the orchards prior to it being canned.

One interesting story regarding the grain bins at the back of the site. The Contractor constructing the foundation system set an old wheel axel at the center and used it to make the circumference around the grain bins exactly round. When the metal components came to make the silos the concrete poured below matched the metal exactly.

From the construction documents provided by Mr. Coulter, it appears the project was delayed by approximately two months. A pre-final inspection was performed February 14, 1980, however, it appears that the project was not finalized until after October 15, 1980.

Donald Fawson provided the following information regarding training prior to the cannery’s completion:

When the St. George Cannery was being built and preparing to open, there were four individuals from the St. George area who were sent to Denver to become certified cannery operators: Jay Eitner, Otto Stewart, one other brother and me. Upon returning [from Denver], Jay became the director of cannery operations and we each took a weekly shift at the cannery. I had to take mine in the evenings because of my work schedule. I believe that Jay was a member of one of the St. George Stakes, Otto the Santa Clara Stake and I was a member of the Washington Utah Stake. I was called to my position at the cannery by President Daryl Whitney. At that time we had four cylindrical retorts and used a water bath (tank) to cool the product.

Preparations before the completion of the cannery included Quality Assurance (QA) training. Sister Carol Stewart explains where individuals went to learn about QA:

¹ See appendix for silo construction documents.

I went to Quality Assurance (QA) school at University of California – Davis with about two hundred others from various canneries, including Nestles, Del Monte, Hunts, S & W and many other commercial canneries. Also, many FDA and USDA personal were there.

Today “appropriate training and supervision are provided by Welfare Services personnel. The projects are conducted under strict quality control conditions that meet all guidelines for handling food and result in first-class products.”¹ Product produced in the church owned canneries are on par with commercial produced products.

The St. George Cannery was officially dedicated by Elder F. Burton Howard on Saturday, March 5, 1983. The event was recorded in the Church Life insert of the Spectrum newspaper on Friday, March 11, 1983. According to the Spectrum the cannery had “actually been in operation and production for nearly two years” when the dedication occurred.

Prior to the dedication Elder Howard exclaimed that he was “sure that if the Lord were in St. George or Southern Utah today, He would be here among us ... [and that] the reason why I know the Savior would be here is because the people this facility serves are those He was most concerned with; the sick, the needy, the poor, the old, and the handicapped.” Elder Howard’s dedication included a plea to the Lord to “accept the building as His own, for the use of the Saints and the building up of the Kingdom.”

Also participating in the dedication program were Jay D. Rigby, area storehouse manager; Ramon Darton, storehouse manager of the new facility; and Regional Representatives Erval L. Bindrup and Andrew O. McArthur. Elder McArthur recounted the history of the Tithing Office (or T.O.), the tithing office script that was used, the “big fires” that were put under cauldrons to can goods for the poor and finally the building of the bishops’ storehouse located two blocks from the temple. The new cannery will aid in the production of “more than 65,000 cans of goods for the Church’s Welfare System during 1983.”

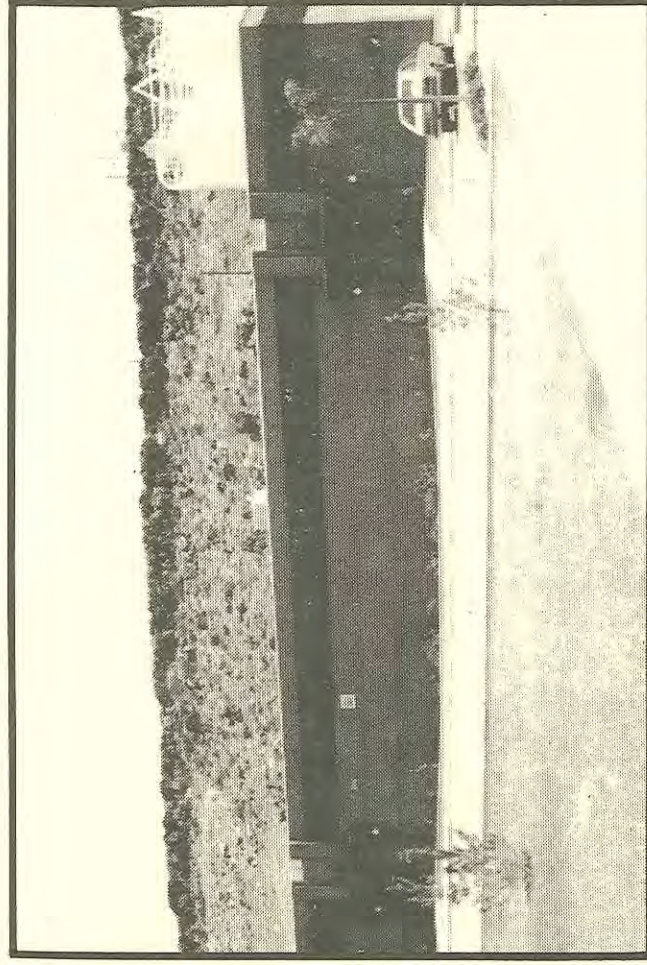
Elder Rudd was an unscheduled speaker who explained that the new cannery contained state-of-the-art machinery and that canneries are “sacred buildings.” He also told the audience that the church had grown in the past nine years and went from having fewer than 50 canneries to 130 “in operation, planned or under construction in the United States and Canada.”

¹ The Church News, November 5, 1994.

ST. GEORGE BISHOPS' STOREHOUSE AND CANNERY

Dedicatory Services

March 5, 1983 - 10:00 A.M.



**ST. GEORGE BISHOPS' STOREHOUSE
AND CANNERY**
1400 East 516 North
St. George, Utah 84770

HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION

1. How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus, you who unto Jesus,
You who unto Jesus, for refuge have fled?
2. In every condition, in sickness, in health
In poverty's vale or abounding in wealth,
At home or abroad, on the land or the sea,
As thy days may demand, as thy days may demand,
As thy days may demand, so thy succor shall be.
3. Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, upheld by my righteous,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

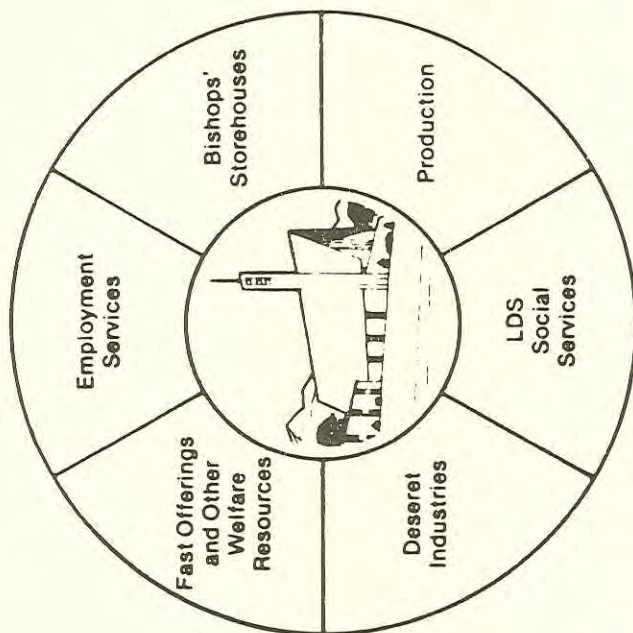
NOW LET US REJOICE

1. Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation.
No longer as strangers on earth need we roam.
Good tidings are sounding to us and each nation,
And shortly the hour of redemption will come.
When all that was promised, the Saints will be given,
And none will molest them from morn until ev'n,
And earth will appear as the Garden of Eden,
And Jesus will say to all Israel, "Come home."
2. We'll love one another and never dissemble,
But cease to do evil and ever be one.
We'll watch for the day when the Savior will come,
When all that was promised, the Saints will be given,
And none will molest them from morn until ev'n,
And earth will appear as the Garden of Eden,
And Jesus will say to all Israel, "Come Home."
3. In faith we'll rely on the arm of Jehovah
To guide through these last days of trouble and gloom;
And after the scourges and harvest are over,
We'll rise with the just when the Savior doth come.
Then all that was promised, the Saints will be given,
And they will be crowned with the angels of heav'n
And earth will appear as the Garden of Eden,
And Christ and his people will ever be one."

DEDICATORY SERVICE

Presiding	Elder F. Burton Howard Executive Administrator
Conducting	Garth M. Colton Welfare Service Region Agent
Opening Hymn	"How Firm A Foundation"
Invocation	Carroll Heaton Welfare Services Region Agent
Overview of Storehouse	Jay D. Rigby Area Storehouse Manager
Remarks	Ramon V. Darton Storehouse Manager
Speaker	Elder Erval L. Bindrup Regional Representative
Speaker	Elder Andrew O. McArthur Regional Representative
Musical Number	"Bless This House" Sherrie Gubler, Ramona Hafen, Gwendolyn Frei - Accomp. Olive Moss
Remarks & Dedicatory Prayer	Elder F. Burton Howard Executive Administrator
Closing Hymn	"Now Let Us Rejoice"
Benediction	Howard Knight Welfare Services Multi Region Agent

Refreshments will be served after the Dedicatory Service.
We invite each of you to tour the Bishops' Storehouse, Cannery and Grain Storage facilities.



And the Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one heart and mind and dwelt in righteousness, and there was no poor among them." Moses 7:18.

Our deepest appreciation is expressed for the personal sacrifices and services which have been so freely given by individual members, ward and stake leaders throughout the Multi Region. We are eternally grateful for all that has been given. THANK YOU!



St. George - Sales Floor



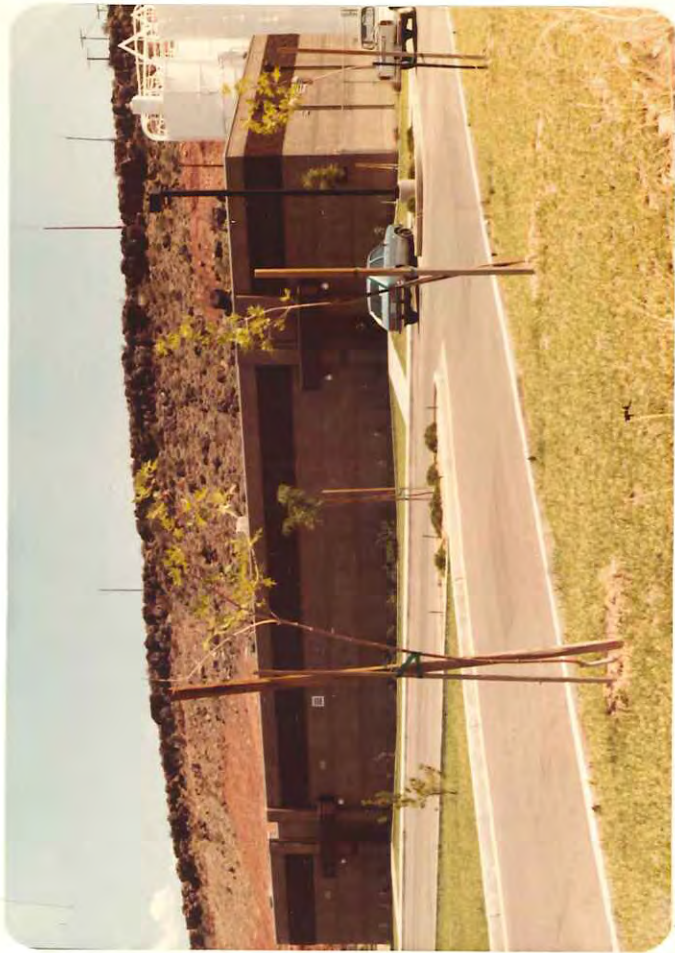
Ray Darton, P-D Manager St. George



St. George - Northwest End



St. George - Cannery Retorts

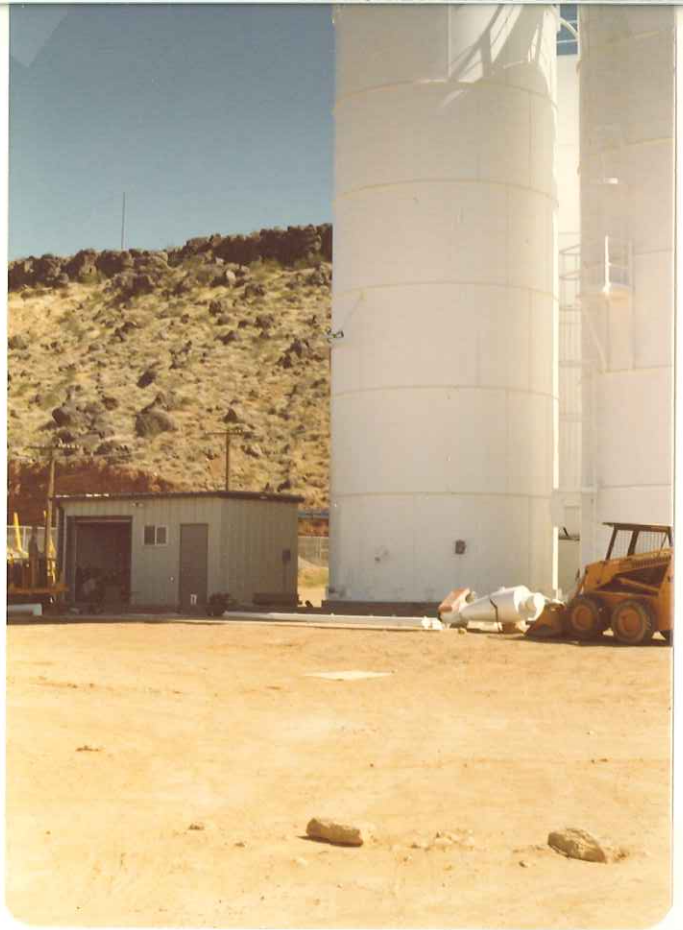


St. George Bishops Storehouse





St. George Storehouse



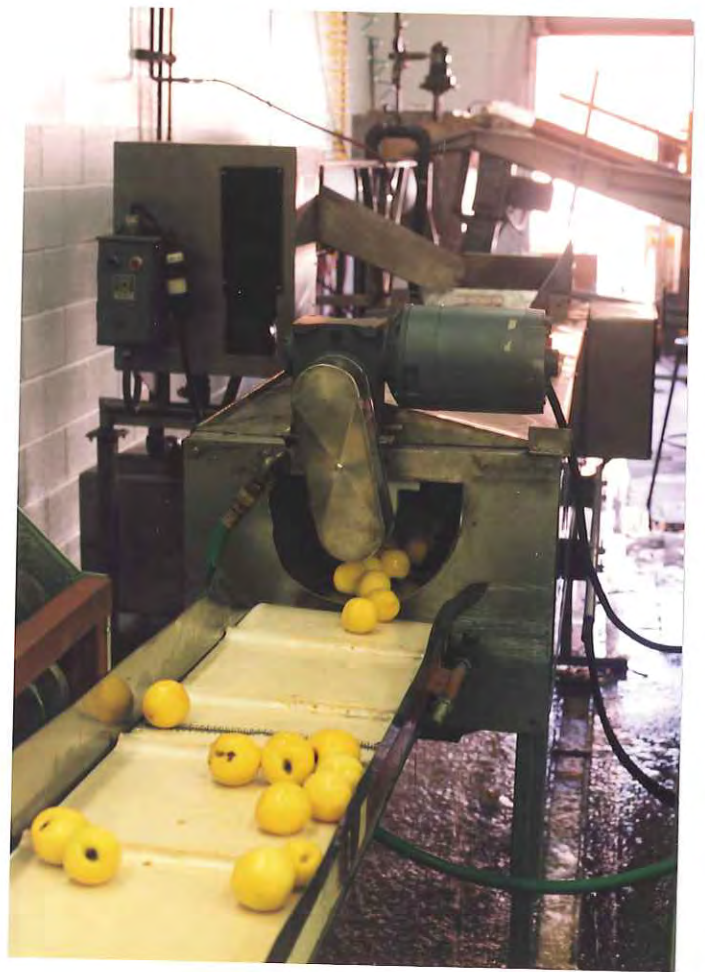
St. George - Grain Silo



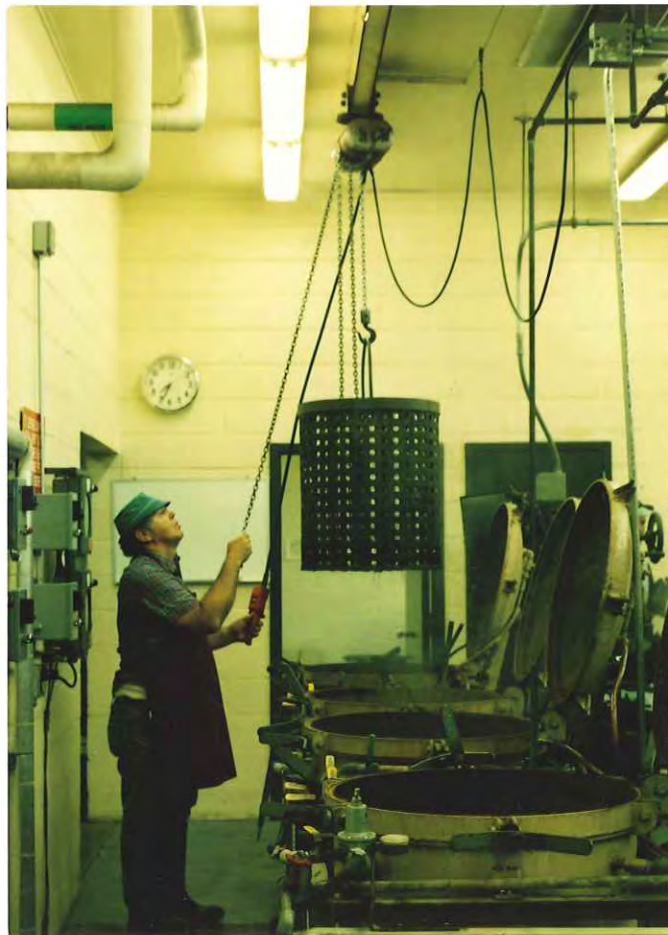
St. George Storehouse under construction



St. George - Grain Elevators



Miscellaneous canning pictures provided by Joseph Love









Ramon Darton became the first storehouse manager in 1981. Steven Adams succeeded him and worked through May 1985. Roger Lloyd was the third storehouse manager and worked from May 1985 through 1995. The fourth storehouse manager was Bruce Smith who worked from 1995 through March 31, 1996, when Dale Hicken took over as manager. Dale Hicken is the current storehouse manager and has served since April 1, 1996. The grain silos and the old warehouse addition were added during Ramon Darton's tenure.

Every storehouse manager needs a good cannery foreman. Throughout the years many excellent men have served in this capacity. Unfortunately, no information on who the earliest foremen were is available, however, George Fridell became foreman in 1996 and worked through 2002. Caesar Gonzales replaced George Fridell in 2002 and worked as the foreman in the cannery until 2008 when the current foreman, Mike Trumbull, began his tenure.

During the 10-year tenure of Roger Lloyd (1985-1995) the only SCP (storehouse commodity production) assignments were apricots and peaches. He writes that the Hurricane and LaVerkin stakes were assigned to pick the fruit at the farm while the St. George stakes were assigned to do the canning. In 1996 there were 16 stakes assigned to the St. George Cannery. Eight stakes picked fruit and the other eight canned. This division of labor continued until well after 1996 when it was decided that the stakes and wards would participate in picking and canning.

According to Roger Lloyd, the fruit was picked and delivered to the cannery in the morning where the fruit would be held for a day "to let the fruit mellow some so the skins would separate from the fruit." Canning would begin at 5:00 p.m. and end about 12:00 a.m. The cleaning would last until approximately 2:00 a.m.

In December 1987 the church began a pilot program for calling couples to serve as missionaries to bishops' storehouses and canneries. Brother and Sister Emma Crist were called to the St. George Cannery while another couple was called to Tucson, Arizona. Since this date, missionaries have been an integral part of the success of the cannery.

One of the tender mercies recorded by Roger Lloyd reads as follows:

There was an earthquake in the early 1990's it measured 5.8 I think. After things settled down at home I turned on the television and saw that the cans in the grocery store shelves were all over the floor. We had just completed peach canning and at that time we "bright stacked" all the cans and labeled them later so there were hundreds and thousands of cans stacked in the warehouse. They were not boxed and they were stacked as high as I could stack them all over the warehouse. So I got dressed and went to the cannery knowing that I would have cans all over the place. When I got there I went straight to the warehouse and there was not a single can that was damaged from the earthquake.



In June 1991 Bob Goetsch began working at the orchard. He was the only one certified for pesticide use at the farm. He hauled the fruit from the Hurricane farm to the St. George Cannery for 16 years. In the winter months he pruned trees (1991-1996). The growth in the area necessitated the enlargement of the Hurricane farm in 1996.

Since about 1994 a total of three (3) stakes have been designated as the agent stakes responsible for the cannery. The first agent stake was the St. George Stake and the Stake President was President Taylor. The second was the St. George East Stake and the Stake President was Randy W. Wilkinson. The last agent stake was the Pineview Stake and President Bruce Doty was the Stake President.

In 1996 Dale Hicken brought with him a rotary can cooker and cooler which was installed and made operational for the apricot canning season. The following year elevators and conveyors were installed which eliminated the need to follow baskets. New peach and apricot splitters were acquired.



As the number of stakes and wards has increased, so has the demand for the product produced by the cannery. After 1996 when the division of labor was merged, many patrons would come into the cannery to can the apricots or peaches and ask "Are these the apricots and/or peaches that I picked yesterday?" The support and enthusiasm for canning grew exponentially because of this one small change. When the volunteers hear that it is indeed the fruit that was picked the previous day, they feel a sense of accomplishment, and they take ownership in the fruit and canning process.

In July 1996 the cannery finally got a secretary, Suzanne Jennings. She notes: The facility was divided into four basic areas: the front door on the south end of the east-facing building opened into the bishops' storehouse, with Brother Hicken's office on the right wall. From there one could go into the storage area at the back of the building, which had a loading dock. On the north side of the storehouse area was a door to the dry-pack area, which was in the middle of the building. From the dry-pack area one could proceed to the wet-pack area, which consisted of boilers and a large assembly-line belt for processing the fruit. The wet-pack area also had a

small reception room with an outside door on the east side. There were two freestanding grain silos at the south side of the building.

Suzanne Jennings brought her organizational skills to the job and soon had new sign-up sheets for family canning and had created an efficient work environment conducive to the demands of a busy cannery and bishops' storehouse. She was succeeded by Lynette Taylor in June 1998. Since Lynette Taylor there have been five secretaries: Nellie Rae McIntosh, Margaret Empey, Diane Moore, Lynnette Kinsel and Kathy Fernandez. Lynnette Kinsel and Kathy Fernandez are presently sharing the secretarial responsibilities

As is the case with most LDS-operated canneries, when the apricot and peach harvest is complete at the St. George Cannery, the cannery opens up to family canning projects, humanitarian projects and community projects. Typically during the off-season at the St. George Cannery, "members of the community, regardless of religious affiliation, are able to help can turkey, beef, chili, tomato sauce and more to purchase for their own use."¹

Many individuals who contributed their memories and stories emphasized the importance of having the young people come and learn the importance of work. Several individuals mentioned the importance of having service work hours for troubled youth groups. The common thread is that the kids learn to help someone else and to think of someone else. They gain self-esteem and respect for others. Merlin and Margaret Moyes explained it this way:

Kids from group homes come here to work as a team. [Here they can] sing and work together... Our grandchildren have learned how important the work and the cannery is in the lives of some people.

Learning to work in a group, learning to respect others, learning to serve is what the cannery has taught those who have participated.

Paul and Judith Bonny give us a small glimpse into what the cannery has done for the community.

A lot of people in this area have benefited by having [the cannery] here. The occasional rancher will no longer be able to use the cannery facility to can their beef for their families. The Care and Share people will miss the opportunity they had several times a year to bring their people to can pork and beans for the needy town people.

The St. George Cannery has taken care of the community and the community has rallied when help was needed to complete storehouse commodity quotas. The community has united its efforts to "be faithful... [to] succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees" (D&C81:5). That unity and love make all things possible. According to Dale Hicken, people have

¹ The Spectrum, June 19, 2011.

come in droves through the years to donate their time to produce thousands of cases of fruit.

On November 26, 2002, the Budget and Appropriations Committee approved the cannery expansion and remodel. The expansion was a great blessing as “the cannery was in a small crowded building and was busy in all three areas of operation” (Paul and Judith Bonny). Dennis Patten, Architect recounts that the “addition provided storage, a dry-pack area and large industrial type refrigerators and freezers. This addition more than doubled the size of the cannery.”

In April 2003 the cannery erupted into flames. One-fifth of the roof collapsed, some canned goods were damaged and the fire was confined to the older portion of the cannery. The cause of the fire was determined to be accidental. The new section was filled with smoke but very little damage.¹

Although the work of the cannery is specific to canning fruit and creating a product to help the poor, the cannery also provides other less tangible blessings. Jim Andrus said that “the cannery brought a closeness to our ward and the feelings of service seemed to never leave.” Herbert Basso exclaimed, “Whether I was sorting fruit, loading cans or cutting fruit, I always felt good about serving there. I knew I was preparing a meal for the Lord and His children.” Paul and Judith Bonny “learned during our time there to become more patient and less judgmental of others.”

Again from the Bonnys: “The cannery was also blessed to have handicapped individuals who were able to help at both the St. George Cannery and Bishops’ Storehouse. These people were blessed to be able to go on a mission to help build their own lives, as well as provide a valuable service. We were able to watch these special missionaries learn things such as self worth, skills, work ethic, patience, love, and obedience.”

Emma Crist remains self-reliant at age 91. The Deems and Dorothy Frazier have learned to listen for the promptings of the Holy Spirit and then to act. Many have commented on learning to speak and do good deeds, finding that the extra mile is always the better mile.

The intangible gifts, the tender mercies, the miracles that occur daily are difficult to explain and more complex to quantify.

On December 2, 2010, the cannery and the Interfaith Council joined together to complete a humanitarian canning project for Dixie Care and Share food pantry. Pastor Jerry Jamriska provided the following in the Community of Christ newsletter:

¹ The Spectrum, April 30, 2003.

On December 2 Jan and Jerry Jamriska, Sandy and Jim Hetrick and James Bradley Hetrick participated in the St. George's Interfaith Council project of canning 1,290 cans of potatoes to benefit the Dixie Care and Share food pantry. "We were five out of twenty volunteers which represented six area churches" (<http://www.swimc.org/news1012.pdf>).



Sandy, Jim, and James Hetrick and Jerry and Jan Jamriska of the Community of Christ Church participate in the interfaith humanitarian canning project.



The Reverend Alex Wilkie, left, a local Baptist pastor, helps with an interfaith canning project at the St. George Cannery.



A group of Southern Utahns from a variety of religious backgrounds gathered for an interfaith canning project.



Pastors and congregants from various Southern Utah churches gathered for an interfaith canning project.



Women from various Southern Utah churches help with an interfaith canning project.

Pastor Jimi Kestin of Solomon's Porch Foursquare Fellowship, a volunteer from the Dixie Care & Share food bank, The Rev. Ralph Klingen of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, another Care & Share volunteer and Tim Martin of the LDS Church Southern Utah Public Affairs Council gather for an interfaith canning project.

“While specifics of humanitarian canning projects vary from place to place, depending upon the types of available commodities and community resources, they all share some common ingredients. All include approval and supervision from local Welfare Services personnel and church leaders, and combined labor involving members and non-members working together. They also involve distribution of goods through local food banks, homeless shelters or similar agencies, and gratitude from the organizations involved and individual recipients of the food items. In most instances, increased goodwill toward the Church and its membership has been an added positive result.”¹

In 2011 there are 24 stakes which are given cannery welfare opportunities to serve at the St. George Cannery and Bishops’ Storehouse. With centralization and consolidation of operations, the canning duties will be transferred to the cannery in Lindon, Utah. St. George will be without a cannery for the first time in nearly a century. What will this mean to this community? It is unclear. Suzanne Jennings does give us a look into what it might be like not having a cannery in our community.

As a Relief Society President in Bakersfield, I had filled out bishops’ storehouse order forms for mailing to Los Angeles. I had met the storehouse truck in the church parking lot every two weeks to receive my orders for the families in our ward and then delivered the goods to their homes...

President Bruce Doty, Agent Stake President is ever optimistic that the opportunities to serve will not be diminished at the closing of the St. George Cannery. He said “It was a fun place to go ... but we can still serve in other ways.”²

The committee has tried to create a historical record that documents some of the contributions the cannery has made to the people in this community. The St. George Cannery is truly “a hallmark of people who give everything they can” (Bruce Doty). The St. George Cannery has been true to its mission to care for the sick, the needy, the poor, the old and the handicapped. It has blessed the lives of the community. Through service in that “sacred” building, characters have been edified, integrity has grown and love has flourished. Those who “come and see” leave better people; they become less judgmental and more accepting of others. Love for God and neighbor has increased and patience and tolerance has been learned.

The era of the cannery is fast coming to a close, but the St. George Cannery will forever remain in our hearts.

¹ The Church News, November 5, 1994.

² The Spectrum, June 19, 2011.

Statistics

Statistics

Storehouse Commodity Canning Production 1996-2010

Apricots		
Year	Cans Assigned	Cans Completed
1996	70,080	24,984
1997	98,880	85,320
1998	98,880	89,892
1999	Apricots Froze	
2000	105,840	140,304
2001	89,280	149,592
2002	67,200	55,788
2003	90,480	164,160
2004	93,120	206,820
2005	Apricots Froze	
2006	70,080	143,640
2007	138,240	152,685
2008	138,240	289,293
2009	133,608	134,888
2010	195,420	272,065

Peaches		
Year	Cans Assigned	Cans Completed
1996	73,920	65,736
1997	73,920	75,365
1998	96,960	102,828
1999	69,120	103,824
2000	110,160	122,496
2001	86,400	90,540
2002	84,480	145,920
2003	90,240	147,903
2004	90,240	203,940
2005	90,240	191,088
2006	120,000	257,760
2007	120,000	207,253
2008	264,000	200,560
2009	132,156	130,260
2010	213,456	259,957

St. George Family Canning 1990-2011

Product	Number of Cans
Applesauce	66,000
Beans (in brine)	47,522
Beef Chunks	86,909
Ground Beef	63,643
Beef Stew	62,285
Chicken Chunks	55,244 (Produced only 3 years)
Chicken Noodle Soup	47,640
Chili	41,111
Cream of Chicken Soup	12,672 (Produced only 3 years)
Ham and Beans	20,930
Jams – (Strawberry, Marionberry, and Raspberry)	146,116
Juices – (Apple and Grape)	44,151
Pears	155,511
Pork and Beans	75,646
Pork Chunks	10,848
Potatoes	58,773
Salsa	110,818
Sloppy Joe Meat	11,060
Spaghetti Sauce	59,982
Taco Meat	10,821
Tomatoes	2,636
Catsup	12,822
Tomato Juice	1,110
Tomato Sauce	31,616
Tomato Soup	32,364
Turkey Chunks	173,563
Turkey Vegetable Soup	34,948
Vegetable Soup	40,002

Project Name: ST. GEORGE CAN/STH
Project # SGC/S00
Property # 518-2972

27 Dec 96
Last Update: 8/12/96

Location: 516 N. 1400 E.
St. George, UT 84770

Stewardship: Cannery - St. George UT Stake
Storehouse - St. George UT East Stake

Acquisition: October 1, 1978

Size: 2.5 acres

Commodities: Cannery and Storehouse

Long Term Plan:

St. George Cannery

Crew Size: 8 to 40 persons
FTE: 2 (manager, operator)

SCP Products:	Peaches	3100 cs
	Apricots	4100 cs
	Vegetable Soup	3600 cs

Family Canning:	<u>Low Acid</u>	<u>High Acid</u>
	Beans and Ham	Apricots
	Beans in Brine	Apple Juice
	Beef Chunks	Apple Sauce
	Beef Stew	Jam
	Ground Beef	Grape Juice
	Pork and Beans	Peaches
	Potatoes	Pears
	Turkey	Salsa
	Turkey Veg. Soup	Spaghetti Sauce
	Vegetable Soup	Tomatoes
		Tomato Catsup
		Tomato Juice
		Tomato Sauce
		Tomato Soup

Process Lines:	<u>Peach/Apricot</u>	<u>Applesauce Line</u>
	Bin Dumper	Moyno Pump
	Sort Belt	Steam Injection Heater
	Washer	Finisher
	Splitters	
	Pit Eliminator/Shaker	
	Conveyors	
	Caustic Applicator	
	Prep. Belt	

<u>Formulated Low Acid Products</u>	<u>Formulated Acid Products</u>
Peeler	Tables
Dicer	Piston Filler
Ribbon Blender	
Bean Soak Tank	
Bean Ripple Washer	

<u>Fixed Location Processing Equipment</u>	
Steam Jacketed Kettles	Valve Filler
Diaphragm Pumps	Exhaust Box
Lightening Mixers	Can Washer
Hand Pack Filler	Retorts/Cooling Tank
Filled Can Conveyor	Can Elevator
Tube in Shell Heat Exchanger	Continuous Cooker/Cooler
	Labeler

Experiences and Memories

Elder Jim Andrus – West Indies Mission

When I served as Bishop in Mesquite, Nevada, serving at the cannery brought a closeness to our ward and the feelings of service seemed to never leave. As 15 years later this year we had some beans that were donated and the cannery said they could use them but did not have the manpower to do the job, as it would take 3 days. I knew whom I could ask and we had the same people come that I saw serving 15 years ago from Mesquite as I called President Hal Anderson and President Theron Jensen from Bloomington and Mesquite. Some of those people were well up in years but they were there. Maybe it is something to be said about enduring to the end. It always brought a special satisfaction to all who served.

Herbert K. Basso

When I heard the news that the wet-pack portion of the cannery was going to close, I asked my wife if we could go to the cannery with our last child so he could share the same memories that his older siblings have. We hope to participate in one last canning of apricots.

When I first moved from Hawaii, we were asked to serve in the cannery by Bishop Ed Rogers Sr. of the St. George 18th ward. He said to make sure I did not forget the most important material when I went go to the cannery – Cream! Being a boy from Hawaii I grew up eating mangoes and papayas. I never knew about apricot or peaches and cream. Whenever I serve there, I have that fond memory of Bishop Rogers.

My favorite job in the cannery was to mix and cook the sugar that was used for canning syrup. I liked cooking so it was fascinating to me. Stacking cans on the pallets was also rewarding because it had to be lined up exactly. Whether I was sorting fruit, loading cans or cutting fruit, I always felt good about serving there. I knew I was preparing a meal for the Lord and His children.

Our family will look for other opportunities to serve the Lord.

Gerald and Ann Black

Back when the family canning program started, I came with my daughter Kelly Johnson, who had been coming to do wet and dry-pack canning. Her sons Jeffrey (11 years) and Cory (10 years) came with her and worked like little troopers. They did things like blowing cans and any other jobs minors could do. They were allowed to come even though they were not 16 years old because they worked and did not run around and get into things.

The phone was ringing off the hook with so many people interested in getting food storage. Roger Lloyd was the director of both the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse at that time. I volunteered to answer the phones for him and eventually ended up being there 4 or 5 hour per day while my children were in school. I made up the original forms used for wet and dry-pack reservations and any other forms Roger needed. I loved working there. Roger had wanted to see if he could hire me part-time to keep the continuity going with the few missionaries as they changed. But the church was starting to call more missionaries so that was not possible.

My children Jim, Lonie and Cezanne used to come after school and vacation and stock shelves in the storehouse and they would do any work that they could at the cannery.

I got a part-time job after several months and there were others helping in the office, so I ended that part of service. At this time I began sending the bishops' order forms back when they had been filled. My husband Gerald made up the forms for the Stakes with all the bishops' addresses and phone numbers. He also made up mailing labels. I would pick up all the order forms and stuff and address all the envelopes. When I stopped doing that service there were approximately 400 units counting wards and stakes if letters needed to be mailed to everyone. We did the areas covered by the Cedar City Storehouse also for a while.

I worked under Brother Smith who followed Roger and worked under Dale Hicken. Many missionaries came and went. We had only a few couples at first. At the last Christmas party I attended the cannery area was packed.

In June of 2009 I had eye surgery and had to quit. I had been working at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse for 19 years. My eyes got better but eventually the forms were sent back to the bishops from Lindon. Gerald passed away December 2010.

I have never worked in a place I loved as much as the cannery and storehouse. I loved the people and especially the directors. They were awesome.

Paul and Judith Ann Sorensen Bonny

Our St. George Cannery Experience

Shortly after moving to St. George from Southern California, there came a time when I was approached by Dale Hicken, who was the high councilor assigned to the Bloomington Hills 1st Ward. One day, as I was sitting in the chapel prior to Priesthood, he introduced himself and we talked. This happened several more times at our ward meetings.

A short time later, my wife, Judy, mentioned to me that we needed more church involvement. We went to see our Bishop, Rocky Schmaltz, regarding our availability. Shortly thereafter, we were approached, and ended up accepting a mission call to the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse and home storage. My friend, Dale Hicken, was the manager.

We learned a lot about the church welfare program and about the joys in helping others. I found the calling very enjoyable. I especially tried to learn about the workings of the cannery area, and Judy became proficient in working at scheduling and helping in the Home Storage area, along with helping to can the summer fruit.

Our mission time was originally from October 1999 until October 2000. At that time the cannery was in a small crowded building and was busy in all three areas of operation. There were many opportunities there to be helpful.

When our 1-year mission was completed, we extended our mission call for a second year. It was a wonderful and gratifying time doing the Lord's work. We made many friends – both workers and patrons, grew in the spirit of the Gospel, and helped the patrons follow the church direction to become self-reliant in regards to their food storage.

I always enjoyed watching Dale Hicken, our manager, go out of his way to maintain a good atmosphere in the cannery. He always tried to be kind and fair as he worked to help others in all possible ways to build their food supply. Sometimes folks were able to purchase food items in stores in town at a low reasonable price and would bring it to the cannery. They were welcomed there by Dale. He allowed them to can the products at the facility. The patrons were able to purchase the cans, lids, and the other necessary supplies to get the job done.

Dale was very adaptable and proficient and could repair whatever happened to breakdown. Due to his repair knowledge, many a time canning lines were able to keep running with very few minutes lost. Those of us who worked with him

learned many of his repair procedures and eventually were able to troubleshoot and fix machinery malfunctions ourselves quite easily.

Our mission was completed in October 2001. Judy enjoyed the cannery, but decided a change might be good. At that time Judy left the cannery and went on to help at the Church Distribution Center near the temple. She enjoyed this volunteer work for several years.

In the meantime, the cannery had gotten into my blood and I stayed there helping for a total of 12 years by the time the cannery closed in 2011.

A lot of my time was spent supervising the drying and boxing area of the cannery. I enjoyed the work and had the opportunity to meet many, many people who were pleased to be able to help can the summer fruit for the church. It was a blessing for them to help others in areas where there would be a special need. I also had the opportunity to help many people from St. George and surrounding areas that had a strong testimony of the value of personal food storage. They would return time and time again often as an extended family group. We heard testimonies of members who basically lived on the items that they canned at the cannery. The cannery and dry-pack group was essentially their lifeline to healthy eating. They listened to the counsel of our church leaders and were acting accordingly.

Sometimes, as in all places, an occasional person would take advantage of such a wonderful place of service and appear to behave inappropriately. I tried to visit with these folks and point out behavior that might have been better. Most of the time these faithful saints listened and followed the procedures. Occasionally this did not happen. We learned during our time there to become more patient and less judgmental of others. We cannot put ourselves in other's shoes. We just need to work to be the best we can ourselves. There is something good each of us can learn every day.

It will be sad to see the cannery close. A lot of people in this area have benefited by having it here. The occasional rancher will no longer be able to use the cannery facility to can their beef for their families.

The Care and Share people will miss the opportunity they had several times a year to bring their people to can pork and beans, etc. for the needy town people.

I will miss the association of the volunteers and missionaries who have given their time to do the Lord's work.

The cannery was also blessed to have handicapped individuals who were able to help at both the cannery and the bishops' storehouse. These people were blessed to be able to go on a mission to help build their own lives, as well as

provide a valuable service. We were able to watch these special missionaries learn things such as self worth, skills, work ethic, patience, love, and obedience.

I will say I have a lot of fond memories of working at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse and the Home Storage. I truly enjoyed working with everyone there and learned many things. I know that my service to others and the blessings and opportunities that have come to me there will continue.

I am looking forward to the next challenge that the Lord will send my way. As a plaque on my wall tells me: "Be patient. God is not finished with me yet."

<i>Robert W. Coulter</i>

**General Contractor of the
St. George Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery**

On June 8, 1979 the bid opening was held for the St. George Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery. There were five bidders, two of whom were from the Salt Lake area. The bidders were:

MGM Construction
Broderick & Howell
Carter Brothers (from Cedar City)
Hall Brothers (from Cedar City)
Magic City Construction (my company from Ivins)

At that time I was also doing a remodel of the Ivins LDS Chapel. As the bids were opened, the high bidder was Hall Brothers (their bid for \$495,190.00). Needless to say, I about died right there. I had left \$41,836.00 on the table – better than 10% less than the next bidder who was Carter Brothers of Cedar City. I knew something was wrong. After going over all the sub contractor bids, I asked to have my bid withdrawn. Everything was reviewed and I attended several meetings. We came to an agreement and we proceeded with the contract amount as bid. Several changes were made thanks to the Architect, Leslie Stoker and a church representative.

A pre-construction meeting took place on June 13th with Ross Schaugaard, director of building for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I informed all of my subcontractors of the meeting. The time to complete the project was 200 calendar days, beginning June 29, 1979.

Everything went along well. All of the subcontractors did a good job and the schedule went along on track as planned. The list of suppliers and subcontractors were as listed below.

1. Site and Excavation – Richard Rogers of St. George
2. Masonry – Larry Larsen of Ivins
3. Plumbing and Mechanical – Ace Plumbing, Scott Hirschi of St. George
4. Structural Steel & Miscellaneous Iron – Century Steel Specialties, St. George
5. Roofing – Dockery-Akins Roofing of Ivins (retired-no longer in business)
6. Insulation – Cater Insulation (retired)
7. Painting – Dennis Hancey Painting of Ivins
8. Finish Hardware – Architectural Building Supply of Salt Lake City
9. Drywall- Christiansen Dry Wall of Ivins

10. Mill Work – Perry's Mill & Cabinet of Cedar City
11. Carpet – Elmer's Carpet of St. George
12. Electrical – Wilkinsons Electric of St. George
13. Concrete Supplies – J & J Lumber & Hardware of St. George (now owned by SunRoc)
14. Glass & Glazing – Jones Paint & Glass of St. George

As you can see, almost everything was done by local contractors, who did an excellent job on schedule. It was a fun job to do. About six months after I finished, I was called to be Bishop of the Ivins Ward and had many opportunities to work at the cannery and helping members of the ward get food on occasion. All in all, this construction project became more than just a job. It became a very special place to me, as I know it was for others who had worked on it.

**LDS Bishop's Storehouse
516 No. 1400 E.
St. George, Utah 84790
1979-1980**

**Contract Price
\$367,648**

Picture taken in 1999

Picture taken in 1980



Emma A. Crist

We moved to St. George from Chicago in April of 1985. In October 1985, after General Conference, Bishop Floyd Hunt came to our home and told us we had been called on a mission. We were to stay in St. George and work at the bishops' storehouse. We were one of two pilot couples, the other in Tucson Arizona, called to see if calling couples as missionaries to storehouses was feasible. The cannery was part of the storehouse calling.

We had our physicals and our interview with the Stake President Thales Derrick. On December 5 we received our official call from Salt Lake. On December 17 we were set apart by President Derrick and his first counselor Ross Taylor.

My husband Earl had long time experience as a forklift operator, which no one knew but Heavenly Father, so he immediately was an asset.

We enjoyed our mission and felt honored to serve under Brother Lloyd.

Earl passed away December, 2003. I continue to live in our home and with the help of my ward family I remain self-reliant at age 91.

JK and Bonnie Deem

Cans need labels – well, most of them. One day in 1997, Brother Hicken was having way too much trouble with the label machine. Very frustrated he turned to me and said “Well then, J, you make it work.” He left and I studied it out and made several adjustments. For a little while, it purred like a kitten. Suddenly, however, it was one mess-up after another again. Brother Hicken said to me “J, master that machine.” As I started over, this time with a prayer in my mind, I was guided to the little things that mattered. Soon the labeler was working in an acceptable manner.

The following year I showed up to check it out and was told – do not touch the machine. Barbara, the wife of our non-member but forever-volunteering Bob, had looked into the thing and had it working like new. She kept it going all season.

Another memory I have entitled – SHORT HANDED AT CANNERY.

We were canning apricots and we were going heavy and strong. It came time for the shift change. Many went home and only a few came to replace them. We ended up being 10-12 people short. That meant there was not enough people to keep the canning line open. Brother Hicken decided to shut the line down and clean up. Sister Deem spoke up and said, “Brother Hicken, just give me 10 minutes.” She left the canning area in a hurry and jumped in her van. After a few minutes, she came back with enough people to keep things going.

Upon inquiring, we found out that she had gone up the street to RMC (food store) and recruited all of the customers to come and help. None of these recruits were LDS. Then she got on the phone and called members of the St. George Fourth Ward to come help. Because of her quick and inspired thinking, we had more than enough people to help finish the day and then clean up the area.

The long and short of the matter is this – you just have to ask and the Lord will provide.

And let us not forget the photographer who came in to sell Brother Hicken an aerial photograph of the cannery. He had taken the picture from a helicopter. When Sister Deem saw him in the building, she had him in gloves, a cap and an apron before he knew what was going on. Then he was on his way to the canning line. At the end of the day he had been a good help and had enjoyed the chance to be part of the canning process. He ended up donating the photograph to the cannery.



And our last memory – from the year 1998. Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house, OOP's wrong story.

Twas the night before canning beans which were soaking in the cannery steam cookers. J K and Bonnie Deem were passing by the cannery and were returning home from a party. They just felt the need to check on the beans.

As we entered the cannery we could smell cold wet beans. As we approached we could see beans overflowing all three cookers. We grabbed a rollaway bin and proceeded to load it with beans until we had the beans in all the cookers below the rim. We then added hot water to all the containers and went home.

The next morning, upon arriving at the cannery, Brother Hicken asked us why we had put out so many beans? Brother George told him that he had put out just the right amount of beans for the order – the cookers had always held the amount he put out. We canned all of the beans and had many cans left over. We all wondered why the beans had swollen up so much. The long and the short of the findings is this: If you put beans in hot water they swell much more than if you put hot water into beans. That may sound silly, but it is the truth, so put the hot water in the pot and then add the beans and let them soak.

Sonja Dodenbier

The St. George Cannery – Where the Impossible Becomes Possible

The steam, the aroma, the clanking of the machines, the scales, the water, the cans, THE PEOPLE and the conveyor belts running for miles all bring a sense of peace to my soul.

The fruit is sliced and the conveyor belts bring fruit towards the canning area. People surround the belts as they pick up the halves which still contain the pit. The pit goes on another belt which takes the pits away and the fruit is placed back on the original belt heading towards the canning area. The cans run along the conveyor belt maze at a quick pace towards the sealing stations and then the cookers.

Everything and everyone is working together to accomplish the impossible. Backs ache but the work of sorting out fruit and pits continues. Suddenly the fruit is gone and the conveyor belt of cans dwindles. It is time for the huge cookers to do their job and the volunteers can rest and mingle for a few moments. The atmosphere becomes steamier, more sultry, more filled with the intangible feeling of joy and accomplishment.

The cans come out of the cooker and into the cooling tanks and then ... the work begins anew. Drying cans, labeling cans, stacking and boxing cans. And then, unexpectedly, the canning work is done. Next the cannery is cleaned and made ready for the next wave of volunteers which will come, as they always do, on the next day.

The feelings the cannery evokes in my heart comes as close to the pure love of Christ as I can imagine. EVERYONE works together, EVERYONE works for a common goal, EVERYONE helps his or her neighbor, EVERYONE serves to help another, and EVERYONE comes because of love. All things are common – plastic aprons, hairnets, earplugs and a willingness to do the work. It is truly an amazing transformation that takes place in your heart when you understand where you are and what you are doing and why you are doing it. It is incredible to think of all the hours involved in the process. Fruit pickers and canners – one is not above the other and together the impossible becomes the possible. Quotas are met and exceeded, the hungry and needy are fed, and the pure love of Christ radiates from the cannery to all who serve and to all who receive.

I have also had the privilege of going to the cannery when the product being canned was not fruit. I attended a cannery assignment at a time when the project was pork and beef chunks and ground beef. The meat for the chunks were uniform in size and there was not a spec of fat to be seen. I marvel at the

hours it must have taken to prepare the meat for that assignment. I am amazed at the ability of individuals who come without any prior experience yet accomplish great things. The workers are all volunteers yet the process is smooth. No one here is an expert yet we learn our jobs instantly and we become one. We are unified in our goal and in our jobs. We fall into a rhythm with each other and with the machinery.

The scales are calibrated, and the work begins. A can, a salt tablet and in the process of canning meat, the weight of the filled can needs to be pretty exact. The cans then move along the conveyor belt. Water is added and the cans are sealed and they go into the cookers.

Any cannery that can be this efficient and filled with so much love, hope and joy is a blessing to the individuals who partake of the opportunity and the experience. It is a blessing to those in need, it is a blessing to the community, it is a blessing to those who serve, it is a blessing to those suffering through a disaster, and it is the work of the Lord. Your testimony and your love of Jesus Christ is strengthened, it fills your soul with charity and love for each other, for those who will receive and for all mankind. It opens your hearts and mind to experience the grand vistas of service, beauty, harmony and love.

The cannery is more than a place, it is a moment, a feeling, and an experience. Until you have experienced it, you cannot feel it or understand its power. Until you breathe it, feel it and live it, the grand vistas of charity, compassion and love are hidden from your heart.

What a blessing to have been given the opportunity to serve, to feel, to love in a way that is pure and selfless. I am grateful to have had the privilege to feel the Savior's love for all His children while serving on a canning line at the cannery.

Bruce E. Doty

My experiences related to the St. George Utah Welfare Cannery have come from two view points: One as a volunteer who has often enjoyed serving in the cannery, especially with my family and with members of our ward and stake, and the other as a priesthood leader who has been blessed to associate with the cannery as a bishop and currently as the agent stake president.

As a volunteer, my heart has been touched and my testimony strengthened through many aspects of the cannery. The resource itself – the building, the management, the fruit and commodities that are canned there – all speak to the love the Savior has for all people.

When I served in the cannery, I liked to think about those who would benefit from the service that was rendered, those who would receive and enjoy a bowl of fruit, as well as those who would be enriched from having served. I enjoyed taking my children or serving with my wife, although we often served on different shifts. As a parent, I appreciated having this avenue through which I could teach my children, by deed as well as by word, the joys of selfless service.

I always enjoyed meeting other people, and I have often reflected on the last opportunity I took to serve at the cannery, in which I came to know a man in my stake much better as we worked across the machinery from each other. This was always a great place to meet very good people and to come to know them better.

As a priesthood leader who has been blessed for a time to associate with the cannery, I have enjoyed seeing those I cared for, ward and stake members, go and serve at the cannery. In gratitude I have acknowledged that men and women came away from their service in the cannery better for having been there. I have stood among these good people at the cannery and felt their love for others – usually people they would never meet – as well as those with whom they worked, side by side.

As the agent stake president for the cannery, an assignment I have enjoyed for the past few years, I have come to better appreciate the impact this facility has had for good among the people who have been served by it. I have experienced the gratitude expressed by many organizations and groups, and the people they represent, who have used the facility to can goods to be used in blessing the lives of those in need. I have enjoyed serving with the management of the cannery, currently brother Dale Hicken, and those who have served with him, including many high councilors from our Pine View stake, who have been of great support and assistance through their assignments related to the cannery.

Opportunities to serve others will always be present at every turn; such blessings and such service will not end with the closing of the cannery. However, I will miss this fine facility and the Spirit of the work that has been done there.

I believe I am better, my family is better, and we, as a people, have been made better by our service in this cannery. I am grateful to the Lord for providing it to us and for any opportunity I ever took to serve in it. I look forward to continuing the legacy of service to others that has been nurtured in my heart in part by my association with the St. George Cannery.

Karen Johnson Doty

My husband and I moved, with our 3 children, to St. George in 1992. It was at this time that I was introduced to “Family Canning” at the St. George Cannery. I was a young wife and mother working toward following the Prophet’s council to obtain and maintain a supply of food. I have always had a testimony of this principle. Throughout my life I have watched my parents’ example of following the prophet and I have learned, and continue to learn, about being self reliant. Because of this desire, I sought out the St. George Cannery and what it had to offer.

I also enjoyed my service as I worked on the stake assignments of canning peaches and apricots from the stake farm. I was amazed at the dedicated patrons as they fulfilled their duty. They were young and old but both groups happily finished their assignment. The shifts were typically 4 hours long and I remember my back aching and feeling sore and tired afterward. I would come home in awe as I replayed in my mind the older folk’s stamina at standing or sitting for that long. I would look around the room and wonder how it was that they could work so hard and so long and seem to be fine while I was standing there with a backache and sore shoulders. I witnessed this miracle time and time again. Because of their example, every time I went to the cannery, I was determined to either not be sore and achy or, at the very least, not feel sorry for myself. Since I could not control the aches I was left with the choice of not feel sorry for myself and to work with willing hands and a thankful heart. This example has stood out in my mind for many years and has benefited me on many occasions.

I have enjoyed my experience and association with the missionaries, Brother Hicken and Brother Gonzales as they assisted me in my goals. I am thankful for the inspiration and voice of the Prophets as they warn us to be prepared. I feel gratitude for the organization of this church that helps us in our preparation of the principle of self reliance.

My testimony of the Savior and the love He has for me through His atoning sacrifice has been strengthened as I listen to and follow our living prophet. I love the gospel of Jesus Christ. I am grateful to be an instrument in His hands.

Don and Ireta Ellis

We were checking out the missions in the St. George area and stopped at the Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery. We talked with Brother Dale Hicken and told him that we had been Ririe Idaho Stake canning chairmen and Donald had been to a training session in Salt Lake City and that he had received a certificate from that training course. Brother Hicken asked us if we could find the certificate. We drove home and found the certificate. Brother Hicken told us that he wanted us to put in a request for a service mission at the cannery.

Our service mission call came from the Lord on November 14, 2001, with a starting date of November 26, 2001 (Donald's Birthday). This was a great day for a new beginning.

Our six month mission began while we were members of the 6th Branch of the Washington Utah Stake. We were given instructions on how, where, and what to do and then we set to work. We loved being of service and to do whatever we could to help. We both worked in the quality control lab. We learned to love the other missionaries that were there. We also felt the special bond that Brother Hicken had for all who worked with him. Brother George Fridell and Brother Bob Goetsch were favorites. It seemed they were everywhere doing whatever needed to be done. The Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery is a special place because you are able to give service to many and help get your own two year supplies together. It is a place to show love to all who come and go from walk-ins to stake and ward members and some visiting family and friends.

We loved the time we served at the cannery. When it came time to be released, Sister Ellis' hip was in bad shape and she could not continue working at the cannery. Our official release date May 26, 2002. However, Brother Ellis continued in service until June 16, 2011.

We now reside in the same home but are members of the 10th Branch, in the Washington East Stake. Brother Ellis faithfully full-filled his Branch callings and has been of service to Brother Hicken during the canning of the fruit each season. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to be of service to our Father in Heaven and our fellowmen.

Oh! Brother Hicken loves Sister Ellis's Cookies!

Carol Eves

My service at the St. George Cannery began 7 years ago (2004), when Dale Hicken, a member of our ward, requested help. I volunteered and was asked to be a church service missionary. I signed up for 6 months and 7 ½ years later, the cannery is being closed.

There are amazing people who work there – volunteers, paid employees and missionaries. I see that it is a huge blessing for all to come and give service – especially for those in the twilight of their lives.

Dale is an amazing leader. He only speaks kind encouraging words to all who come. Many times, there are causes for discouragement, such as when there are not enough people from the wards to even begin the process of canning fruit, or having a major mechanical breakdown. Dale says the Lord always helps out so the work will be done. He is a master at repairing whatever is in need of fixing – especially the old machinery. His ability to uplift all who come to work is a lesson to me. He always teaches in a positive way.

When I first came to the cannery, Cesar Gonzales was in charge of the processing. He had such a good attitude and was always cheerful. He willingly helped me many times. Michael Trumbull replaced him and Michael is very spiritual. He always tells us he loves us and appreciates our service. He is a very humble person.

Many of the people I have worked with have made a positive impression on me. They were helpful and friendly and I will miss working with them. I have learned a great deal from them. Not only in my responsibility as the Quality Assurance person, but as good people I was privileged to associate with.

I have had the opportunity to bring my grandchildren many times to work at the cannery. They have learned very early in their lives to be of service and to see the welfare program work.

I am very sorry to see the cannery close down as it has provided a great way to help people in our area, provide economical good food for their families. I am going to miss stocking my cupboards with the good things I loved.

Dorothy S. Frazier

Jay and I were called on a mission to the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse in October 2006 to serve for a year. Whenever our year was up, however, we extended for another year. When that was up we extended for another six months and from then until now, we have been volunteers. We feel so sad that the wet-pack is closing down because it has been such a wonderful blessing for everyone from near and far and for all those who could and could not can. Those who were not able to do it alone would come and help so they could help build their storage with what they could buy that day as well as buy extra cases of food that had been left over from the last canning day.

It was special to meet people and get to know all of them and of course we had Brother and Sister Allen from Leeds, Utah that came and even though Brother Allen was blind in one eye and could not see very well out of the other one he still wanted to and did work to do his share and he never let his eyes hold him back.

Another couple, a father and daughter, drove up from California at least once a month to can in wet-pack as well as in dry-pack and they were good workers even though the father was in his late 80's.

I asked them one time why they traveled so long and so far to come to our cannery and their answer was "Because we get better quality here for better prices plus people care about us." They did this for over a year so they could have their supply for them as well as for their families in need. One time when they came, the father came into our meeting room to rest and I asked him if he was okay. He said he just needed to rest for a little while. I kept watching him while I did my paper work and he started to look a little interesting and I felt prompted to go check on him right then. He looked like his sugar was dropping too low so I got a banana and gave it to him. I went and got his daughter, Diane. When I phoned them that night I was told that I had saved his life. I am glad I was prompted to help him and that I listened to the promptings.

Each day at the cannery was an experience to remember. It was nice to make some kind of treat to take to share with the people so they would have ideas on how to use the newly canned products. Others would also share their ideas and recipes and I think that helped all of us. It was great to learn new skills to work towards achieving our goals of getting our storage full plus being of service to others.

As we canned apricots and peaches most of the time we exceeded our quota and we were always so happy to know we had all worked together to help someone, somewhere have food on their table so they would not have to go hungry.

Sisters Indra Madson, Sharon Cole and Beverly Bundy can never be replaced because they were so unselfish with their time to help with checking people in, answering questions and take their money as they paid for their product. We have made a good team in working together. Caesar and Michael worked hard and worked well with people and we all liked them and appreciated what they did.

Brother Dale Hicken is one of a kind. He is always going the extra mile helping everyone that needed his help. He knows all there is to know and runs all three departments of the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. He can also fix all the equipment to keep our cannery going. Brother Hicken, you are the best and always will be.

I think of Bob and Barbara Goetsch, what a great example of unselfish service to wet-pack and to people for around 20 years. They are not Mormons but that did not hold them back one little bit.

Brother Tom Jewkes and Brother Paul Bonny are two more great men who went the extra mile to be of service. Sister Carol Eves trained a lot of men and women including, my husband, Jay Frazier to be good Quality Assurance workers for the betterment of wet-pack.

We had sisters from Moapa, Nevada come up to work in wet-pack to get their storage built up and they brought with them love, treats, recipes and friendship to share with all of us.

Another sister from Las Vegas made and brought us lap quilts because she said she wanted to show her appreciation to us for all we had done to help her and all the others who came to can.

Every year we had people from Salt Lake City, Utah area come down to can our good pears.

How thankful I am that Jay and I were called to serve our Mission at the St. George Cannery, it is the Best!

The other Missionaries and volunteers we have worked with and became friends with are so special and they too are so unselfish in sharing their time and talents at the cannery.

The cannery has brought a lot of joy into our lives and again, I sure wish that wet-pack were not closing. It has helped so many people in so many ways. Even helping those that needed to do Service Work Hours and teaching kids from girl and boy's homes what it means to give of themselves to help someone else besides themselves. Wet-pack is a good teaching tool and it will be missed.

I cannot say enough good about wet-pack and what it has done for everyone and been a blessing to everyone it has come in contact with, it has touched many lives for good. Can you just imagine what good stories these old walls could tell if they could only talk!

George L. Fridell**My Experiences as an Employee of the Church Welfare Services**

On September 1, 1979 I started employment as an Assistant Manager of a new cattle feeding operation that was being constructed in a rural area of southwest Utah County near the community of Elberta, Utah. Ronald Dyer was the operation manager. He and I worked closely together with a great group of workers. Some years later most of the construction was completed with a capacity for around 4,000 head of feeder cattle. Ron, along with his wife, were called to serve as a Mission President. At that time I was given charge to continue to manage the cattle operation.

In November of 1995, because of the heavy workload with a greatly reduced number of employees, I mentioned to my friend who worked in church employment that I would like to consider taking an early retirement. My plan was to move to the St. George area in September 1996.

My friend called me on January 15, 1996 and asked if I would be willing to fill-in as a temporary manager of the St. George Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery beginning February 1, 1996. I would replace Brother Bruce Smith who was being transferred to another assignment. Our family made some quick arrangements for housing and made the move to our new home in Leeds during the last part of February. In-between the first and last of February, I would drive back to Elberta on the weekends to be with the family and to continue serving as the Bishop of the Elberta Ward until my release in March, 1996.

On April 1, 1996, Brother Dale Hicken was transferred from the Salt Lake area to the St. George Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery from the Salt Lake area to take over as manager. I was relieved to continue on as the St. George Cannery Supervisory.

As Dale and I met together, we concluded that making preparations for the processing of the fruit for the coming season was our major priority. Dale had arranged to have a large rotary can cooker and rotary can cooler shipped to the cannery to help process the canned fruit. When the two units arrived we agreed to set them outside on the East side of the storehouse/cannery building. Because we ran out of time, we ended up setting them on wooden ties. With help and assistance from Brother Duane Roundy and other volunteers who had served previous years at the cannery, we were able to get all of the "new" equipment lined up and ready for processing the apricots, peaches and pears.

We started processing the fruit by transporting the cans from the sealers out to the rotary cooker, we then had to hand-feed the cans into the cooker. For some

reason, about one in every dozen or so cans would get caught going into the cooker and we would have to stop and pry it out in order to continue. After about a week of trying to make various adjustments, Dale said we needed to figure out what was not right with the machine. That night, as I went home rather late and definitely very tired, I told the Lord that we needed His help to correct the problem so we could continue to produce a quality product for those in need. That night I was shown a certain can guide that needed to be moved to correct the problem. The next morning, I showed Dale the guide that needed to be moved less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch. We made the change, and a miracle happened ... we very seldom had to face the problem of a can getting caught while feeding it into the cooker.

As we were making ready for the next fruit season, it was decided to put the cooker up on a heaving I-beam framework. Dale ordered in the length of I-beam channel that was needed. I accepted the challenge of cutting and welding the two main channels with several cross channels to form a very ridged framework. When I was almost finished with the project, a safety inspector came by and asked to see my "welding certificate." I explained that I did not have one, but asked if he saw a problem with my welds. He said that that was not the issue, we needed to use a certified welder. So a certified welder was hired to finish what little needed to be done.

The following summer we had the cooker sitting on the I-beam framework with a conveyor running from the can sealers to the cooker which functioned very efficiently for the next several years until the church made the decision to enlarge the area for additional storage and make a large room to be specifically used for dry-pack products. Prior to this time, those wanting to do dry-pack would have to schedule in-between the wet-pack schedule or in the evenings as a group. I would stay and assist them in putting together their orders. We also had available several portable can sealers we would check-out for them to use at home.

I celebrated 20 years of employment with Welfare Services in September 1999

In April 2003, the construction to add the additional area to the building had to be going along for several months. One evening at about 11:00 p.m. I received a phone call from Brother Hicken informing me that a fire had erupted in the roof structure covering where we had stored much of our storehouse items. I quickly dressed and went down to help Dale and others to try and salvage what items we could. We worked into the early morning hours and then returned early the next morning to continue the process.

With the completed new additions, and with the addition of some newer equipment the whole operation became more "user friendly."

I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to work with so many dedicated service missionaries, patrons, and volunteers over the course of many years at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. I officially retired for Welfare Services on December 2002. I would probably still be there if not for the fact that the only way the "Brethren" could get rid of me was to offer me a retirement benefit package that I was too greedy to refuse. You might say, "They paid me to leave!" Anyway, I always sneak back to remind and reacquaint myself with those still serving whenever the opportunity arises. I wonder if the "Brethren" thought the only way they could get rid of me for good was to close the cannery?



From left to right: George Fridell (1st cannery operator); Bruce Smith (cannery managers 1994-1995); Michael Trumbull (3rd cannery operator); Cesar Gonzales (2nd cannery operator); Dale Hicken (cannery manager 1996-2011).

At the St. George Cannery
To be sung to the tune of “On Top of Old Smokey”

The peaches came in –and- were dumped from their bins,
 They were sorted, then scald-ed to remove all their skins.

They were placed on the pit-ters with a thump and a snap,
 In the hopes they would ne-ver end up in a lap.

With quick, nimble fing-ers, and infinite care,
 The workers remove-ed all the pits lurking there.

Then onward and for-ward, to the table they went,
 With a bit of sweet added, on their way they were sent.

On to the seal-er, where each can was sealed tight,
 Rolled out to the cook-er to be processed just right.

Up and out to the cool-er, as quick as a flash,
 Canned peaches were rea-dy for a few cents in cash.

That’s how canning went, and so it’s been said,
 With everything prof-it, and nothing in the “red.”

That’s just half the sto-ry, there’s much more to say,
 For more than the can-ning, was done that day.

The men were perspire-ing and the women were warm,
 But the sorting and prep-ing, was doing no harm.

Now, more than all th-at, in each worker’s heart,
 Was the keen satisfac-tion of doing one’s part.

A feeling of brother-hood thrilled most everyone,
 Of sharing toge-ther the toil and the fun.

It’s hoped that the work-ers have learned each day,
 Whatever the fu-ture, let come what may.

The members are un-ified; hand, heart, and soul,
 With each one now work-ing for the good of the whole.

So hail to the can-ners, wo worked mighty hard,
 Here in St. George, from surrounding wards!

Brother and Sister Garbe

We were pleased when we were called as Church Service Missionaries to serve part-time. We were assigned to the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse and cannery to serve from June 24, 2003 to December 24, 2003.

At the time of our calling, we were hopeful that we would be assigned to the bishops' storehouse, but as with all assignments, we serve where we are assigned. So we were assigned to the cannery due to the need at that particular time.

We received training for the dry-pack portion of the cannery from Brother and Sister Larsen. We appreciated their friendship and kindness. We really enjoyed the time we were able to spend with them. Our training in the wet-pack portion of the cannery was under the direction of Brother Hicken and others. I do not know where you would find a more caring and friendly man than Brother Hicken.

The time in the dry-pack part of the cannery was very enjoyable and we could meet and become friends and work with those who came to the cannery. The time spent in the wet-pack portion of the cannery, while enjoyable and very fulfilling, was a bit harder for my wife, because of the amount of time spent on her feet, however, she was willing and able to continue.

We both enjoyed the people we worked with (when we had a chance to visit) and truly enjoyed the idea of helping the hundreds of people who benefit from the labor performed in the cannery. We really appreciated the instructional and safety awareness meetings first thing in the morning along with a prayer for our safety on the work lines. While we served, we never witnessed any accidents during our shifts.

As we neared the end of our mission, we discussed asking for an extension as many do; however, because of the time spent on her feet, we questioned whether or not this would be advisable for my wife. We finally decided not to extend our mission. I have, however, continued to take every opportunity to serve in the cannery when our ward has assignments to fill.

We truly believe in this work and we are sorry to see the wet-pack cannery close after being able to see first hand how much is produced each year for the needy throughout the world. It looks like people will need this help more than every before. This opportunity to serve helped strengthen our testimonies of the church welfare plan.

Bob Goetsch

Bob moved to Utah in September 1990. He started hauling the fruit from Hurricane farm to the St. George Cannery June 1991, and he hauled fruit for 16 years. In the winter of 1991, he started pruning the trees each year for 5 years and also helped Rod with the irrigation. On April 14, 1996, he went to work at the St. George Cannery full time as a forklift driver, and/or whatever else was needed. He averaged 35 to 40 hours a week approximately 8 and ½ months of the year. During the other 3 and ½ months, he averaged approximately 65 to 70 hours a week (6 days a week).

I do not even know how many actual hours he worked or the cost of fuel for him to be there. If a truck was late or a patron needed a later time to pick up an order, Bob would stay so Dale did not have to. Sunday rotation of pears, Bob would always do this. He tried to help Dale and anyone who needed extra help.

Dale and people at the cannery are like family. He worked there because he loved being with the people.

Cesar Gonzalez

I came to the St. George Cannery about ten years ago. I transferred from the Los Angeles Cannery to St George to replace Brother George Fridell who was retiring. I worked in the cannery, the Home Storage Center and the Bishops' Storehouse with Brother Dale Hicken and with the finest missionaries and volunteers.

I came to serve and learn other principles that I had not previously recognized in my life. I came to receive personal guidance that I did not find anywhere else. I came to see the other side of service provided by elderly men and women who's dedication was beyond any expression I can give. I simply came to learn.

Working at the St. George Cannery left in my life a profound sense of knowledge and respect for the welfare service of the church. Every aspect of my day at the cannery was touched by many people that I still cherish in my life. They gave me wonderful teachings without ever knowing what they taught me or how much they influenced my life.

I was rejected by some people and some said I was a slave driver and that I did not meet the requirements of a production assistant manager. However, I came to serve and there were more people who accepted me and respected my experience than those who did not. You can tell a lot about a person by the spirit in their heart.

I cherish the following memory with all my might. A young man was watching me intently while I was training one of the crews. I did not pay much attention to him. He went about the business he was asked to do and at the end of the shift he came to me and said: "I need to speak to you. I need to tell you that we are from the same land and that I need to learn something from you." I looked at him and asked, "Are you Guatemalan too?" and he replied "yes." I met his grandmother and continued with a conversation that only took us to a few words and after that they were gone.

I paint and occasionally I display my paintings in different galleries and places around the city of St. George. I was at the opera house one day explaining a large painting I call – The City of Zarahemla. My painting is based on the description in The Book of Mormon. I was explaining some of the Mayan symbols and the similarities between this book and the ancient Maya society. As I was thus engaged, I saw the same young man standing in the crowd, looking at me once again. It was not until that very moment that I realized why I needed to talk to him.

After the people left and I had some time I went to look for him. I said, "Ben, do you remember me?" and he said, "yes I do. We still need to talk." I took him and showed him my paintings and explained to him the motive of my art and the history behind it.

Ben began to tell me his story. He told me that when he was about 4 or 5 years of age, his family was gone and that he was the only one left due to the cruelties of war between the army and the guerrillas. He said that eventually he was adopted by this family from the St. George area, and that he moved up here and had an education and a lifestyle completely different from the one he once had.

It was only at that time when I felt inclined to say to him that it must have been necessary for all that to happen. I told him straight that he was going to bless his people with the gospel in the near future, in their own language. I told him that sometimes we do not understand what the purposes of the Lord are and that His ways are not ours. I explained to him that I was just like him except that my parents were married and that I grew up in another country with another language and learned the gospel. I told him someday I was going to go back to Guatemala and preach the gospel to my people. I told him that maybe this was the process of the gathering Israel. I told him that Heavenly Father wanted him to prepare himself to serve a mission, and that he needed to know for sure his own purpose of why he was adopted and brought to St. George. I told him he needed to prepare himself.

Ben understood right there that he had a purpose in life. He knew the importance of preparing himself and most important of all he learn to accept and hear the whispers of the spirit of the Lord.

Two years later I was asked to attend his farewell. He was going to the Mexico South mission to serve as a full time missionary.

When he came back we met once more and realized that we had so much in common. I believe I came to St. George in order to meet him and to help him understand that we have a purpose as new pioneers in the restored gospel.

I bear my testimony to all of you that I know there was a purpose for me to be here. That only My Father in Heaven knows how much it was necessary for me to be here for my own sake. Now I look back and see that serving in the high council, as a bishop, and as a ward missionary was meant to be for me, because my Father in Heaven wanted me here. I bear this testimony to you in the sacred name of my Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen.

Thank you so much for the memories and for having me to be part of the welfare system that created a strong testimony in my life.

Ron and Mary Halterman

We have spent time at the cannery since 1992, helping to can the apricots and peaches. It wasn't until 1994 that we found out about the family canning. Since that time we have used the cannery extensively. We are going to miss all the good things such as salsa, all the meats, beans, potatoes, spaghetti sauce, soups and especially the applesauce. We cannot buy applesauce of that quality anywhere. It is so sad our cannery is leaving us.

May our Father in Heaven bless all the volunteers who have worked to make a good thing happen. We wish Dale and Mike, and their families the best of everything.

Bill Haslem

Working in the St. George Cannery has extended my life. Four hours there seemed like forty. A bonus was that working on a production line increased my appreciation of my own career.

But seriously, it was rewarding working around such a nice group of people, helping those in need to eat well, and performing a valuable church service.

Dale Hicken – If I Were Writing the Book

I am totally convinced, contrary to what some may believe, that the church canneries produce product on par with any commercial organization.

The St. George Cannery is in the same building as the storehouse. I must say at the outset that 1999, the year of Y2K (2000) preparation, was a very busy year for all connected with this storehouse.

One of my greatest good impressions was the fact that even though product was going out the door at almost double the usual amount, we were kept supplied even after church-produced products ran out. This is most commendable as it was a very demanding time, and I have seen less busy times when we have gone longer than a month waiting for product.

I paid attention to the products that came in, peaches, pears, tomatoes, tomato juice and pastas. I observed the packaging and labeling. Some of the things I observed were:

- they were shrink-wrapped making them hard to pick up;
- the cans had some of the same seam dents that we get from rolling into the cookers; and
- the labels were no better applied than any I see from all the church canneries.

The pallets of pears generally had at least one can that had exploded making the rest of the case hard to use. I did not see this in any of the church products. We may find cases with less than 12 and less than 24 cans, but we do have good product in what is received.

Just a quick aside: a speaker I was listening to (Hyrum Smith) said, "If you don't write it down, it didn't happen." You may immediately become defensive and say, that is not so, the proof is in the pudding: perhaps, but if you do not write it down, you will be the only one who knows how to make the pudding.

I am very thankful for Pure Religion by Elder Rudd – every page is exciting.

As I pondered the experiences at St. George Cannery, I think of George Fridell. The April Fool's day I walked into the St. George Cannery as the new manager. George was busily working behind the desk. He stood up, shook hands, moved around to the opposite side of the desk and invited me to sit where he had been sitting. Every day working with him was just as uplifting.

When the Los Angeles cannery was closed, I received many calls asking if St. George needed anything that would not be used there. I asked for the peach splitter, the apricot splitter, and Cesar Gonzales. I got the peach splitter, Garden City received the apricot splitter (which they immediately sent to St. George) and I was asked to write a letter as to why Cesar was needed. I replied, while still on the phone, that George was retiring in two weeks and that we needed an operator. In 15 minutes the call came that, Cesar would be glad to come. Cesar is from Guatemala and is a walking book of experiences both good and bad.

One time Cesar was observing the people doing peaches at the inspection belt. He asked a brother to check the pit cavities closer to which the brother replied, "You're lucky I'm even here. I didn't have to come you know." At the conclusion of the shift, the brother sought out Cesar, apologized and said he couldn't wait for the opportunity to make things right as he had been repenting ever since his statement. He promised to keep coming for stake assignments.

Mike Trumbull came to St. George after Cesar was forced to leave due to lung problems. I had interviewed people and had three candidates. Mike was number one. Salt Lake said to hire him. Unexpectedly, Mike walked into the cannery and announced to me that he had the job. I asked what made him so sure. He replied that he had come directly from the Temple and that the spirit had told him so. It was great to inform him that he was correct.

Again, on a peach processing day, Mike assigned six sisters to work at the fill table. As he walked by, one sister had tears she was wiping away. On inquiry, she said she had a recent operation and prayed to be put on the "filler" as she felt that was the only place she could work.

Shortly after that, Mike assigned a man to put lids on the reamer. At the end of the session, the man reported he had recently had open-heart surgery and felt he was assigned by inspiration.

I want to introduce you to Barbara and Bob Goetsch. Bob has been a part of welfare operations since September of 1991, long before I came to St. George in 1996. He worked at the orchard and was the only one certified for pesticide use at the farm. He loved working there, but when a new agent stake was assigned, he was told they did not need non-members working there. Bob came to the cannery with a broken heart, which only lasted a short time because he started at the cannery the next day. He comes to work five days a week, six days a week all during the summer, and seven days a week if anything must be done on Sunday.

Bob hauled all the apricots and peaches from the farm to the cannery until he lost his driver's license due to diabetes and diminished eyesight. Immediately, his wife Barbara started to bring him to work and stayed each day herself.

Bob has been the appointed forklift driver for years (pretty good for not seeing where you're going) and Barbara is in charge of all casing and labeling both family and S.C.P. No one at this facility is any more dedicated to helping people than they are.

These experiences make the hours worthwhile. Stakes have their own personalities. A particular stake, Morningside, responded immediately when I first came to the cannery.

A retired Ricks College (now BYU Idaho) purchasing agent (Brother Maxwell) from Morningside, worked daily to help find a volunteer secretary for the facility.

We got our first secretary, Sister Suzanne Jennings. She said she came to work the first day thinking, "can't these people do anything themselves?" She then reported that after the first week she would have gladly told the welfare-managing director how necessary it was to have a secretary. Sister Jennings created a "secretary book" for all future secretaries to use. This made their responsibilities so much lighter.

The Morningside Stake President, President Keith Reber, called and said he was sending five men to be cannery supervisors for the summer SCP (storehouse commodity production) assignments. They came faithfully and were a tremendous help. However, one teasingly commented, "Heck, we're not supervisors, we're slaves." They really lightened our load.

Another time, President Reber called to say he was sending us two men. He explained that one had great management abilities, and the other was a dedicated worker. This gave us introduction to J.B. (James) Maxwell and Tom Jewkes.

J.B. worked in the storehouse inputting bishops' orders. He understood computers perfectly. He would always come in the door and announce for all to hear, "Everything is okay, J.B. is here." He probably did not realize how true his statement was.

Tom Jewkes went straight to the cannery. Tom is a muscular man of few words. We quickly learned that if "it" would not budge, or if "it" was next to impossible, just call on Tom. The word "can't" is not part of his language. Tom is very helpful in any endeavor.

Dale Hicken – My Tenure at the St. George Cannery

My first time visiting the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse was the summer of 1994. I was managing the cannery at Welfare Square and, knowing that it would be later summer before we started processing tomatoes and pears, I decided to take a foreman with me and go help Roger Lloyd with his apricot harvest.

One cannot imagine my surprise at finding how crowded the cannery was with equipment to handle apricots. The apricots were all in tubs weighing approximately 35 lbs each as they were sent from the orchard. Volunteers at the cannery would dump the bins while other volunteers split the apricots for canning. I did not; at that time observe the process for processing peaches.

Roger progressed to using mechanical apricot and peach splitters. He states:

It sped up the canning process dramatically.

Roger left the St. George Cannery to accept a position at the Church Office Building. Presently he is the manager of the Lindon cannery. Roger said, as he reflected on these experiences:

Those were good years. It is interesting how thinking about these things brings me back to some very good memories.

Bruce Smith followed Roger as the cannery Manager. I became the cannery manager on April fools day 1996. I always wondered on that first day if it were really all just a joke. The heat was truly sickening and the surroundings brand new.

My first efforts were to get ready for the 1996 apricot and peach canning season. I brought a rotary can cooker and cooler with me when I transferred from Welfare Square cannery. I really had no thought of using the cooker for the 1996 season, but the good missionaries and George Fridell, cannery foreman, all said to give it a try. Everyone quickened their pace and the cooker was placed in a temporary location on the East side of the cannery. Water, power, conveyors, steam etc. all had to be rapidly supplied.

When that first season started, the sealed cans were placed in retort baskets as if they were going to the boiler as usual. However, the full baskets were wheeled outside and hand unloaded into the cooker. The cans went through the cooker; into the cooler, and then onto a six foot long trough where the cans were removed by hand and stacked on a pallet for future labeling.

Volunteers were constantly warned to stack the cans as soon as they rolled inside the building, or they would back up and get crushed by the cooler. There were too many times when problems arose and it was later discovered that the “can stackers” had just walked away.

The next year elevators and conveyors were made and installed at the cannery to eliminate following the baskets. This worked fairly well with constant improvements being made.

By 2008, it was determined to move the cooker to the North side of the building where it was the original intention of locating it. Large conveyors and crowded receiving areas for the finished product were eliminated.

The warehouse area was expanded in 2002-2003, which aided ease of production. All SCP (Church Production) apricots and peaches have been done by assigned Stakes.

In 1996, there were 16 stakes assigned to the St. George farm and cannery. This included Logandale and Mesquite Nevada. Eight stakes were assigned to the farms and eight stakes were assigned to the cannery. This, of course, led to almost weekly welfare assignments.

It was suggested that all of the sixteen stakes be assigned to both the farm and the cannery so they could better appreciate the fruit canning process from start to finish. The consensus was, do not upset what has been working. That same suggestion was made often and yearly. Finally, one with the authority said – “That’s a great idea, let’s do it.” The change was wonderful. People would come to the cannery and ask, “Are these the apricots and/or peaches that I picked yesterday?” They were thrilled when we told them that they were.

Stake support for the whole operation grew as, fortunately, the number of Stakes also increased. At the closing of the cannery in 2011, there are 24 stakes, which are given welfare opportunities from November through September each year. The stakes still have almost weekly assignments due to the enlargement of the farm in 1996.

Although there are different stakes coming to the cannery each day, there are people who return just to volunteer without a stake assignment.

When the apricot and peach harvest is completed, family canning begins. St. George Cannery has always done family canning (wet-pack home storage) on an individual basis. A canning schedule is developed to cover October through May. Patrons sign up, come and help make the product, pay for it and take it home. Family canning is enjoyable because we are working with patrons who want to be here.

Agent stakes have been responsible for the cannery since about 1994. We have had St. George, St. George East and Pineview as our agent stakes. The welfare assigned high councilor has worked very closely with the cannery. Responsibility has been taken by the stake to provide all the needed help during the SCP season. It has been necessary to call on the agent stake to supply help for some humanitarian projects. Having an agent stake to work with the other stakes in the regions is wonderful. It puts priesthood working with priesthood.

We have witnessed our own miracles at the St. George Cannery. We have had machinery break down while canning and have been able to complete the session anyway because of good people and inspiration. We have seen people join the LDS Church while working at the cannery. Lives have been blessed as efforts to eliminate the dole, be prepared with food storage, and associate with people who want to be obedient have taken place.

Charles Wm. Hurt

THE MAGNIFICENT ST. GEORGE CANNERY

Bishop Charles Bess of the Ivins, Utah third ward arranged for me to visit Family Service Counselors in St. George, Utah and suggested that I also volunteer some time to Church Service. I signed on for a Service Mission at the St. George Welfare Center at 516 N. 1400 East Street. As it turned out, the Center Supervisor, Dale Hicken is the Uncle of our “old” Bishop during the mid-nineties in Cypress, California – Craig Hicken. Both are good men! Dale was, and still is, an excellent, dedicated worker.



Dale Hicken



Cesar Gonzalez

His canning production manager, Cesar Gonzalez, was also a very talented intelligent man. Cesar, born in Guatemala, spoke five languages, and was an artist in as many media. Cesar had worked at the Los Angeles, California cannery on De Soto Street before it closed down around the turn of the century (Y2K-2000). I had also done volunteer work at that cannery during that time, but did not know him back then. He helped transfer some of the Los Angeles machinery to St. George – the machines were more like relics, but they still worked very well.

It was a big joy for me to work with such a great humanitarian effort and to feel the satisfaction of helping, and of working with hundreds of other missionaries and volunteers, some of whom were not even church members. It was incredible to have everyone focused on doing their part to provide welfare services for everyone. It felt like I was in a beehive of activity! Some of the dedicated workers I remember, in addition to the only two salaried workers, already mentioned, are Tom Jewkes, Bob Goetsch, Paul Bonney, Barry Short, Doug and many more whose names I never learned. I helped octogenarian Barnes install several electrical systems throughout the buildings. Frequent changes, improvements, projects, and operations kept the center in a constant state of flux.



Oil on Canvas entitled "Zarahemla 33 a.d." by Cesar Gonzalez

I did many of the various tasks in the major areas of the Welfare Center. In addition to the wet-pack cannery, we had a dry-pack cannery section, a warehouse, and the bishops' storehouse, maintenance, and shipping. Even though it was a lot of physical work, it was all important, and fun. Driving the floor-cleaning machine was fun. A little less fun was stocking the big walk-in freezers (some were kept at zero degrees Fahrenheit and some at a mind-boggling minus 23 degrees)! But it was all good experiences. I took time off to get heart by-pass surgery in early 2007, but soon they welcomed me back to resume the good work.

Cesar Gonzales and I became quite good friends (he was so easy to get-along with). After my mission, he eventually took another job outside the cannery, and Mike became the Production Manager.

It is nostalgic to see our cannery close, but we will remember and cherish our experiences. We recognize that this as another important step in the ever-evolving process, not only of our own development, but also of the huge, over-all welfare system. It has been a wonderful asset to the inhabitants of Washington County and to The Church Of Jesus Christ Of Latter-day Saints.



Dale Hicken and Charles Hurt



Apricot processing line. Picture provided by Charles Wm. Hurt

Jerry Jamriska

Pastor of the St. George Community of Christ Church
Member of the St. George Interfaith Council

The St. George Interfaith Council, consisting of representatives from the majority of churches in the St. George area, was approached by LDS representatives Tom Lamb and Tim Martin to participate on a project to help Dixie Care and Share. As Pastor of the Community of Christ Church in St. George, UT, we had the great privilege of assisting in this necessary project. Volunteering from our congregation to can 1,200-one pound cans of potatoes for Dixie Care and Share were James Bradley Hetrick, Jim and Sandy Hetrick and Jan and Jerry Jamriska.

We worked for several hours and all of us were very impressed with the physical facilities of the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. We all laughed at ourselves in our funny hats and gloves made necessary by the required sanitary procedures in place. The friendship and the conversations with all the various churches made the hours of canning go by very quickly as well as satisfying.

Without the physical facilities of the LDS cannery many individuals would have gone without needed food. The St. George Community of Christ Church is very appreciative of its members, physical facilities to assist those that are in need, and the representatives of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and all they have contributed to the welfare of the citizens of St. George. We thank you for that effort.

***Suzanne Jennings* – Part-time Missionary as Secretary**
July 30, 1996-June 11, 1998

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

July 1, 1996

My family and I moved from Bakersfield, California to St. George. Our newly built house was unfinished, so we stayed at Grandma Jennings' home until the Fourth. By then, it was mostly livable. My four oldest children were grown up now, so Caroline, our thirteen year old, was our only child who moved here with John and me. She was to start Pine View Middle School 9th grade in August. We moved into the St. James Ward of the Morningside Stake.

FIRST SECRETARY FOR THE ST. GEORGE CANNERY EXPERIENCES AND TESTIMONY



Having an LDS cannery in town was a new experience for me when I moved to St. George in July 1996. Although my husband, John M. Jennings, D.D.S. was born and raised here in St. George – and has many pioneer ancestors who were among the first settlers here – I was raised in Bakersfield, California where the closest bishops' storehouse was one hundred miles away in Los Angeles. I do not think there was a cannery there. Consequently, I had no experience with serving in or utilizing a church cannery.

Approximately two weeks after moving into our new home, I was called by President Dan Cox, counselor in the St. George Morningside Stake, on July 23, 1996, to serve a "calling" as a part-time secretary for the LDS cannery located across town. It would be a stake calling, even though it was for the regional cannery. He informed me that the cannery had never had a secretary, but badly needed one to do filing and such, and that he had been given my name from the Bishop in the St. James Ward. I was dumbfounded! If there was anything I knew I had never wanted to be, it was a secretary. Filing sounded like being consigned to the biggest drudgery I could imagine. And they wanted sixteen hours a week! I said I would have to think about it.

I have never had to "think about" a calling before – I just accepted and felt the Lord would give me what I needed to fulfill it. I had served in many positions by 1996 when I was fifty-two years old: Sacrament meeting chorister, ward choir

director; Primary teacher, music leader, pianist, cub leader, blazer leader, and president; MIA teacher and counselor; Relief society teacher, president, and stake board member. I guess I was feeling quite confident that I had never been asked to do that mundane secretarial stuff.

Although I had spent 30 years of married life bottling fruit from our back yard – peaches, apricots, plums – and tomatoes that were brought to me by a friend who owned a huge commercial truck-farm in Kern county, I didn't know anything about commercial canning. And what was "dry-pack?"

As a Relief Society President in Bakersfield, I had filled out bishops' storehouse order forms for mailing to Los Angeles. I had met the storehouse truck in the church parking lot every two weeks to receive my orders for the families in our ward and then delivered the goods to their homes, but I had never been inside a bishops' storehouse.

After a week of agonizing, I called President Cox and said I would accept the calling. He said that Tuesdays and Thursdays would be good. So two days later, on Tuesday, I dressed in a jean skirt, red tee shirt, and flats and drove to the cannery. I had no idea what to expect, but "filing" kept going through my brain. I opened the door and inside was a small grocery store. A storehouse missionary came to greet me and then escorted me to the side of the store where I saw the small office of Brother Dale Hicken, the site manager for both the bishops' storehouse and the cannery. I could see him talking to a man through a big picture window in the office wall. As soon as he saw me, he stopped and ran out to greet me. He ushered me into his office that was filled with one desk/one chair and two filing cabinets.

After being escorted around the building to meet all the storehouse and cannery missionaries, he took me back to his office and said to sit down. In his chair? Surely not! But yes, I was to sit in his chair at his desk when I was working. He would do other jobs around the building, he said – and he always did – he never, in almost two years, pushed me out of his desk so he could do what he needed to do. Next he showed me a huge stack of papers that had been piling up for months that needed to be put away in the filing cabinets. I was discouraged before I got started. He explained the system, said to ask if I had questions, and left on his rounds.

It was all new to me: old canning schedules, etc. I cannot even remember what it all was now, but by lunchtime I was ready to get out of that hole of an office. The storehouse missionaries, the Bagleys, began to befriend me at that first sack lunch meal together. Some of the cannery missionaries wandered over from their department on the other side of the building and were friendly, too. Things went pretty well that first day, and everyone was very happy to answer any of my questions – of which there were quite a few. Brother and Sister Bagley were wonderful in every way.

I was also expected to answer Brother Hicken's desk phone. I was faking pretty well until the second day when a male voice on the other line was obviously a voice of authority. He gave me his name, but I did not have a clue who he was. I felt pretty stupid. I tried to cover and ran to get Brother Hicken. After the call, I said to him, "I think you need to write me a list of VIP's so I will know them when they call and I can handle their requests better." "Oh," he replied, "the only VIP is my wife. If she calls, be sure to come and get me. The rest - not to worry." It was funny, but not very comforting to a "greenie," because I had suddenly realized that one day I might answer the phone and it could be a General Authority.

Another assignment was soon added to my list of duties. I was expected to do a huge financial report every month that required counting all the volunteer work hours on countless signup sheets and then compile all the figures.

It did not take very many weeks, however, to fall in love with my new calling. I came to respect Brother Hicken as one of the most patient and kind men I have ever met. No matter how many missionaries or clients were clamoring for his immediate attention, I never saw him lose his patience, not even once. He always had a twinkle in his eye, a happy greeting for everyone, and a kind word of praise for all accomplishments. He could climb the 20 foot ladder into the attic like a billy-goat, was willing to work on the cannery belt when things were backing up, and knew how to fix every piece of old machinery in the place. Yes, the cannery was filled with old equipment that was forever breaking down. The brother cannery missionaries were all great mechanics and engineers, and they loved the challenge of jerry rigging something until the work was done on the line, and then they would fix it more permanently. They all did everything with a grin, no matter the pressure. When I first arrived, they were canning exclusively for the Church Welfare Program: apricots and then peaches later in the summer. The sister cannery missionaries did not come over to my area too often, but they were in every way equal to their men-folk. For both the men and the women, it was a long, hard working day. Over time I became quite well acquainted with several of them.

The facility was divided into four basic areas: the front door on the south end of the east-facing building opened into the bishops' storehouse, with Brother Hicken's office on the right wall. From there one could go into the storage area at the back of the building, which had a loading dock. On the north side of the storehouse area was a door to the dry-pack area, which was in the middle of the building. From the dry-pack area one could proceed to the wet-pack area, which consisted of boilers and a large assembly-line belt for processing the fruit. The wet-pack area also had a small reception room with an outside door on the east side. There were two freestanding grain silos at the south side of the building.

During summer welfare canning, local stakes were assigned time to work in the cannery on the line. Each ward would sign up for a specific four-hour shift throughout the summer. They would arrive at the cannery door, sign in, put on disposable hair covers and aprons and proceed to the working floor where the sister missionaries would show them what to do and then supervise their work. The brother missionaries brought in the fruit and showed the brothers how to put it through the pitting machine and start the fruit rolling onto the belt. On the line, the members culled and sorted, cut and packed the fruit into cans and then carried them to the machine that sealed a lid on. The brother missionaries operated the lid- machine and put the cans of fruit into the boilers to cook. Most of the members came with a happy attitude and seemed to have a good time. For some, standing for four hours straight was a little difficult.

I soon learned that “wet-pack” for the Church Welfare System was done in the summer, and only during the winter months could private wet-pack canning be done. There was a page full of items that individuals could sign up to can: meat, tomatoes, chili sauce, jams, etc. “Dry-pack” meant dry goods such as pinto beans, wheat, oats, rice, flour, sugar, jell-o, dried apples, etc. There was an entire page of the list of dry goods, too.

Dry-pack was available year-round. I answered the phone when members called to schedule their appointment, and then I put in a request for the goods they wanted to buy and can. This information was given to the cannery missionaries, so they could be prepared with the right amount of dry goods and supplies (cans, lids, etc.) when the members arrived.

By the time wet-pack for the Welfare system was completed that August, I had a good handle on my job. Then it all changed: patron wet-pack season was to begin.

Brother Hicken showed me how it was to be done. Sign-up sheets for each day needed to be made from September to May, five days a week. The item to be canned, date, and price had to be listed at the top of each page. When I had them all done, they were to go on a clipboard, so that when patrons called, either the Bagleys or I could sign them up. I said, “we should use a computer to make all these lists.” Brother Hicken said, “The church won’t let us have a computer, and beside, most of the missionaries are elderly and don’t know how to use one. But Brother Bagley uses his computer at home to make the storehouse orders, so maybe you could talk to him.” So I went to Brother Bagley and asked him to show me what he was doing for the storehouse. He showed me an old DOS program! Yikes, I had not had to use such a user-unfriendly program for several years.

So I offered to use my computer at home, which had *Word Perfect*, to make the lists. I served my 16 hours a week, and then I stayed up late for several weeks making all the schedules in *Word Perfect*. I tried to be creative and make

efficient formats, and I taught myself how to use the table functions. I felt quite satisfied with my contribution to the work, because next year, someone would only have to change the date and the price and the “new” lists would be ready to use. Brother Hicken was delighted with my contribution, and all the missionaries seemed to appreciate a more business-like method of handling their workload.

About a month ago (2011) I went to the cannery to do some dry-pack canning for myself. As soon as Brother Hicken saw me, he ran over, gave me a squeeze, and announced to everyone there that the cannery is still using the forms I created in 1996. I have to admit I was quite amazed, but it sure was a wonderful feeling to think I had served the Lord above and beyond my call to “do filing.”

Oh, there was always plenty of filing to be done, but the creative and organizational skills I was able to bring to my mission made all the difference for me. I hope my gift for organization was a significant contribution to the Lord’s Work in this part of His vineyard.

When I began, the secretary position was a stake calling, but in March 1997, Brother Hicken approached me about becoming a part-time service missionary. He explained that I was the only one working in the facility who was not a part-time missionary. I was delighted, filled out the necessary paperwork and finished the last fifteen months as a service missionary. I completed my cannery mission on June 11, 1998.

Lynette Taylor was my replacement, so I prepared a secretary training manual and trained her to take over after me. Eventually the cannery got a computer, and has always had a secretary since I was called. It is my guess that the Director and Secretary are still sharing a desk.

A LITTLE BLESSING ON THE SIDE

I signed up to do wet-pack jam on a day other than when I was the secretary. Brother Hicken saw my name on the list, and said that I did not need to do the canning, that because I worked there, I could sign up and pay the cost, and the patrons would can enough for me, too. Wow, I was not expecting that. I tried not to take advantage of it, but I was able to build my own wet and dry goods supply for home storage during my tenure there.

THE ONE-ARMED MAN

I had been out of the office for a while because I was running the cash register in the cannery reception room, ringing up the patron wet-pack items for the day and also doing the daily totals. When I returned to Brother Hicken’s office, I hesitated outside because I could see through the office window that he was talking to a one-armed man, and I supposed it was about needing food. I was trying to be respectful of Brother Hicken’s need to use his own office, but he motioned me to

come inside. After making introductions, the man said, "Are you related to Leon Jennings?" I replied, "Yes, he is my father-in-law." Then he proceeded to tell us this story, which I had never heard: Years ago Leon was my home teacher. I owned a small printing shop up the street from his house on 500 East. Times got bad, and I had to go into bankruptcy, so the bank was holding an auction to sell off all my printing equipment to help cover my debts. I was feeling desperate; I did not know what I was going to do to make a living if they sold away my livelihood. But, do you know what happened? Leon Jennings came to the auction and bought every single piece of equipment. When the auction was over, he gave it all back to me, and said, "Now you can get back to business!"

As I was new in town and feeling pretty uprooted, to say nothing of feeling like an outsider, that little story made me proud to be here and to be part of the Jennings clan. I wish I could remember the man's name. I do not think he was there at the cannery that day because he was needy, I think he was there to be helpful in some way. We cannot always repay those who help us along the way, but we can pass it on to others. I would like to think that was what he was doing.

THE WORST PSORIASIS I HAVE EVER SEEN

From the big glass window above Brother Hicken's desk, I could see straight into the bishops' storehouse. One day my attention was captured by a large woman who had come in to fill an order. It was very hot outside, but she had on long sleeves, a collar buttoned to the throat, long pants, and a large scarf tied around her head that totally covered her scalp. From then on, I noticed her from time to time. One day I was helping stock cans in the storehouse when she came in, so I was introduced to her. She seemed very willing to chat, so we had a nice conversation. I found her to be a very lovely person. After she felt comfortable with me, she told me she had Psoriasis all over her body, which was so debilitating that she could not work. As I have a daughter who has had mild Psoriasis since she was a baby, I knew enough to know it was terribly itchy, and I said so. Then she took off her headscarf and showed me the huge red lesions all over her scalp. Then she lifted her tee shirt enough for me to see a wide, solid band of raised, bright red welts totally encasing her trunk. Next she raised her sleeves and pant legs to show me the continuous welts covering all her limbs. I was astonished! How could she bear the pain and itching? I knew there was very little effective medication for it, but asked anyway. She said she could not work, so she had no money or insurance to buy expensive medicine. Frankly, I did not know how she even stood to wear clothes. I thought of the Lepers in the time of Jesus, and I was so grateful for a Heavenly Father who cared, and who provided for the needs of "one of the least of these."

A CALLING BY MISTAKE?

About six months after I began serving in the cannery, I happened to be in the office of my Bishop, Ray Richards. He inquired how it was doing, and I told him a little about it, since I was blazing the trail, so to speak. Then, with a puzzled look on his face, he told me that when he had made the list of possible candidates to send to the Stake President, my name was not on the list. He never found out how my name got on the list, but when the stake presidency reviewed the list, my name was there.

LOOKING BACK

Eleven years have passed since my cannery mission came to an end, but I still look back on that time with fond feelings. I learned many lessons and gained a deeper appreciation of the Lord's love for His children. To the poor, food and supplies were freely given. To the patrons – members and non-members – goods were available to put away against a time of need for much less than the cost in retail grocery stores. I saw many tender mercies. I saw many kindnesses extended in both the storehouse and on the production line. I saw both missionaries and patrons making a concerted effort to be a little better than their every-day self by treating others as they would be treated. Since then, I have served with my husband as an ordinance worker in the St. George Temple and also with my husband as a full-time missionary in Frankfurt, Germany as executive secretaries to the presidency of the Central European Area. Each of the three was uniquely different, and I feel that I have grown from having each opportunity.

JOURNAL ENTRIES: July 1996-June 1998

Tuesday night, July 23, 1996

I was called to serve a Stake calling as the Regional Welfare Secretary for the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. I was stunned; they wanted 16 hours per week and I was not really even unpacked. Besides, "filing" was on the top of the job description list and it sounded tedious and boring. This is the first time I have very been called to a secretarial position in the church. I think it was the only time I have been upset at a church calling. I was upset! I went home to think about it for a week. Jared was home at the time and asked me the next day what I was upset about. So I told him. He sweetly said, well just accept and try it for a while. Whenever I had angry feelings about the unfairness of the call, I felt really bad inside. But when I thought that I should accept it, I felt good. This went on for a week. When President Dan Cox called back to see if I would accept, I did, and I started a week later.

Friday, March 21, 1997

Brother Dale Hicken, the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse manager approached me about changing my secretary calling to a formal, part-time mission. I am the only one there that is not a missionary. I asked if I would have to do anything different, and he said, "No," so I said that I would like to, and I would be able to work for a year. I figured that would be about 18 months of service. I had to fill out another set of papers and I asked if the calling could be retroactive to when I began last August. My husband is building a new dental office and I will need to work there, as a dental hygienist, with him when it is ready.

Sunday, May 25, 1997

My paperwork finally came through for my part-time Service Mission at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. I will serve until June 9, 1998. I now have an official badge – otherwise everything is the same.

Sunday, August 10, 1998

I was called to be the St. James Ward Relief Society Secretary. Now I have two callings, as I am also the Secretary at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. I have never been a secretary in the church until these two callings, and simultaneously, too! A secretary is something I never wanted to be, so I guess the Lord must be trying to teach me something.

Tuesday, October 14, 1998

Tonight at a parent meeting at the high school, I agreed to be the President of P.O.S.S.ABILITIES, the Pine View High School Choirs' parent support group. I am probably crazy to take this on too, but I feel I need to get involved in what Caroline is active in. Right now, the group is non-functional, so it will take a lot of work to get it organized and raise the several thousand dollars needed to pay for choir trips to perform, etc.

Saturday, October 18, 1997

I have been asked to help plan and prepare for the Stake Women's Conference in November. I feel like I am so busy, I'm about to burst, but I know I'll get it all done somehow: cannery mission, Ward Relief Society Secretary, Pine View High School "Reflections" Contest Chairman and "POSSABILITIES" President, ceramics, and now this assignment.

Thursday, June 11, 1998

Today was my last day to serve as the secretary at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. I was released officially a few days later by President Keith Reber, and was given a nice letter of completion. I have trained Sister Lynette Taylor to be my replacement.

Tom and Wilma Jewkes

President Keith Reber called us on an 18-month mission to begin April 1, 2002 at the St. George Cannery. We went to see Brother Dale Hicken and he said that we could start in two or three days. They were doing some tomato products that night so we went to see what it would be like. They asked us to help with the retorts that night. We have been at the cannery ever since that night. Tom ran Turkey chunks most of the time. Then came the apricots and peaches. We were at the cannery 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

We have worked at times in the dry-pack and in the bishops' storehouse. There have been many missionaries come and go but Tom is still there. Dale Hicken was the best person to work for. Also, Ceaser Gonzales for several years then Mike Trumbull came. Paul Bonny and Bob Goetsch were on hand if we needed them as was George Fridell. They were all the best to work with.

Tom Jewkes, was called on a mission to the cannery in April 2002. I could not go there at that time because I was taking care of my mother who was 93 years young. President Reber said that that was my mission at that time.

In November 2002, I went up and asked Brother Dale Hicken where he needed me. He said would I please work in the storehouse three afternoons a week. I worked there for over seven years and then I went down to one afternoon a week for over a year.

We have had some wonderful missionaries and volunteers during those years. Here are a few experiences I have had:

A lady and little girl were getting a food order. The little girl looked up to her mother and said, "Mom, who is paying for all this food?" I am sure the little girl had been told that there was not any money. I offered that I thought the Bishop was paying today.

Another time a lady was getting some bananas. She also had a little girl with her. She looked at the bananas and said they are dirty – meaning the bananas had dark spots on them. She said we do not want any of them. It is unfortunate that gratitude occasionally wanes in some individuals.

We had a special needs elder that helped us for nearly 3 years. He was the best.

Each week on Thursday, I would take a few dark bananas home and make banana bread to feed to the people who were at the cannery. I made hundreds

of loaves over the years. People wanted my recipe but none turned out like mine for some reason.

We had some patrons come every two weeks; I became very attached to them. I loved helping them. Sometimes I even gave money to them because I knew they were doing what they needed to be doing. Several had cancer or heart problems.

I loved working there. We had the best leaders, Dale Hicken, Caesar Gonzales, Mike Trumbull etc.

Roger Lloyd

I came from Mesa in May 1985 where I was the manager of the cannery. I became the manager of the St. George Cannery in May 1985. I replaced Steve Adams. When I moved to Salt Lake in 1995, Bruce Smith took over as manager of the cannery.

When I became the manager, there were not any agent Stakes. I worked with two Regional Welfare Agents. In those days we paid the bills with local checks and they needed a second signature so I would prepare the checks and then take them to one of the region agents for the second signature. One lived in Santa Clara, Garth Colton was his name. There was one from Hurricane but I do not remember his name.

The first Agent Stake President was President Taylor I think. He was from the St. George Stake.

During my tenure as manager, the only SCP assignment we had was apricots and peaches. No additions were made to the building while I was there. Jay Rigby may know more about that than me. I know that the old warehouse portion was added the year after the building was first completed and I do not know if it was rededicated.

There was an earthquake in the early 1990's it measured 5.8 I think. After things settled down at home I turned on the television and saw that the cans in the grocery store shelves were all over the floor. We had just completed peach canning and at that time we "bright stacked" all the cans and labeled them later so there were hundreds and thousands of cans stacked in the warehouse. They were not boxed and they were stacked as high as I could stack them all over the warehouse. So I got dressed and went to the cannery knowing that I would have cans all over the place. When I got there I went straight to the warehouse and there was not a single can that was damaged from the earthquake.

When I first came to the cannery there were a couple of men that helped operate the cannery, one was Orin Vanvalkenburg and a Brother Allred I cannot remember his first name. They spent many hours helping at the cannery and were very good support.

During the peach and apricot season, they would bring the fruit in the morning in tote boxes and we would hold the fruit for a day to let the fruit mellow some so the skins would separate from the fruit and we would begin canning at 5:00 pm, go until 12:00 am, and clean the cannery until 2:00 am. The stakes were very faithful. The Hurricane and La Verkin stakes would pick the fruit and the St. George stakes would do the canning.

Merlin C and Margaret M Moyes

This is a letter about how we feel about the St. George Cannery. It is more than just a cannery. It is a place where people come together for one thing – to do Heavenly Father's work. Not all of them that work at the cannery are L.D.S., but it does not matter. Every time there is a disaster in the world, we know the product we have canned will be sent and our love and prayers will be with every can.

Dale and Mike just make each one of us feel really special and like we are doing a very special job, and we are so very important. Going to work at the St. George Cannery is like going to work with family from Nevada, Arizona and all the surrounding areas of Utah. We might not know everyone's name but their faces we look forward to seeing.

What are we going to do when we do not see these faces anymore?

Our grandchildren have learned how to work and how important the work and the cannery is in lives of some people. ... Other people bring their children and grandchildren to teach them to work together. Kids from group homes come here to work as a team. When these kids are singing and working together with everyone you never would know they were troubled teens.

Family canning was also very special. Everyone was working together to can the project. We did a lot of talking and then we could buy what was canned. This year because of the cost of gas, the price of groceries and so many people losing their jobs and/or their homes, many have needed more help. Unfortunately, because money is so tight, some have not been able to buy as much as in years past. I know last year we bought a lot more than we did this year. We were happy to be able to buy what we did. We thank Heavenly Father for this. Everything is so good it is very hard not to share with everyone.

Even though our cannery is old, Dale and Mike and lots of prayers help keep all the equipment running. We will remember the St. George Cannery, Dale, Mike and all our cannery family for the rest of our lives. We thank our Heavenly Father for letting us serve at the St. George Cannery and with our cannery family. August is going to be a very very sad day in everyone's life.

Herb and Linda Mulnix

It was January 2003 when we moved to St. George from south Texas and Missouri. We wanted something to do to help serve the people. About March 2003, we were told about checking out the St. George Cannery. We met with Dale Hicken, and he took us in with open arms. This was before Herb was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We met with President Doty and got the paper work started.

We first started in the storehouse. We helped people get their food orders. That was a wonderful time. We met people and we were serving the needy. We met wonderful missionaries from all over who were serving work missions. Dale was a wonderful person to work for. At that time he was in charge of all three departments – the Bishops' Storehouse, the dry-pack, and the wet-pack. He was a hard worker and so delightful to work for.

One day Dale came to us and said "I would like you to learn it all." So we helped in wet-pack and dry-pack and learned it all so we could help wherever we were needed. What wonderful missionaries and volunteers were there to serve the people. There was always a sweet spirit there.

In wet-pack the people would can fruit from the welfare farms in Hurricane. What a wonderful feeling to see people come together to work and have a good time. In the fall and winter there was family canning. People came in from all over (i.e., Nevada, Arizona, Utah, etc.) and they could can whatever was scheduled. They had to sign up ahead of time so Dale could order the produce. This was a blessing for a lot of people because it helped families get there food storage. They were so dedicated.

It was surprising how many people were not aware that there was a cannery in St. George. We were asked by Dale if we could go to emergency preparedness classes and tell people about the cannery. What a wonderful experience that was. We both liked to share things with other people that would help them be prepared. We especially enjoyed talking about the cannery. This helped people especially when it came to food storage and being prepared and more people started using the cannery.

When we left we gave the job to Brother and Sister Cromer and they did a wonderful job informing people about the cannery. We both loved it and enjoyed helping. Linda would manage the cash register at times and Herb did manual labor. What was so neat was there was a job for everyone. If you could not stand very long, you could have a sit down job. The managers would place you wherever you were needed. We all worked together and had a good time.

Cesar Gonzalez was one of the managers in wet-pack when we started. He was a wonderful man. He and Dale managed to keep every mechanical thing going. It was always a good spirit there. Later Cesar had to leave because of health reasons. Another came to fill his shoes. He was a wonderful person too. Very caring and loved the people that came to help. All three men were hard workers and dedicated. We learned to work hard. In addition, we met and worked with all kinds of good people. Some were fun loving and some were not but in the end it worked out.

After the first two years passed by they were having a hard time getting work missionaries, so we stayed on for another two years. We just loved it. We would go to Missouri in the summertime and in the fall we could not wait to get back to St. George to go to the cannery.

In May of 2007 Linda was having back troubles and thought she was going to have to give it up. The thought of us not going to the cannery saddened us. We worked very hard to get Linda's back problem taken care of and in the fall we came back to the cannery as a volunteer. Getting to see everyone again was a wonderful feeling.

There was a couple, Bob and Barbara, who were volunteers for over 17 years that we grew to love dearly. Bob passed away in 2010 and his wife Barbara was still a faithful volunteer. There were a lot of changes that came that we did not understand. A big change was when all the departments were separated and divided. The storehouse had their manager and the dry-pack had theirs. Rather than everyone working together, it seemed there was contention between the departments.

So many missionaries and volunteers came and went but the love was still there.

A day came when we could no longer can meats. What a disappointment. Dale worked hard on trying to get it back. He did everything he could. He had a love for working hard and he wanted to get everything the people needed. Next we could no longer reuse our jars. We lost a lot of people with big families because of this rule because recycling was important to them – mainly because of the cost of buying new jars. Then the last thing was we could no longer can potatoes. That was one of the big things canned at the cannery. Then we heard that they were removing trees from the orchard in Hurricane. We could not understand that either. In today's world we need all the food we can get.

Our saying along the way that we shared with a lot of people was "if we don't use it, we will lose it." The cannery was a blessing to a lot of people that used it. We saw a lot of changes that pointed to the closing of the cannery. We will miss the cannery a lot but we will continue to help with the storehouse and the dry-pack if we are needed.

Just a little experience we had when we came back from Missouri. We are in a branch and a lady came up to us and said we looked like we should know each other. We got to talking and we asked her where she was from. Enterprise Utah. Yes, she had been to the cannery many times. What a small world.

A lot of memories we can take with us.

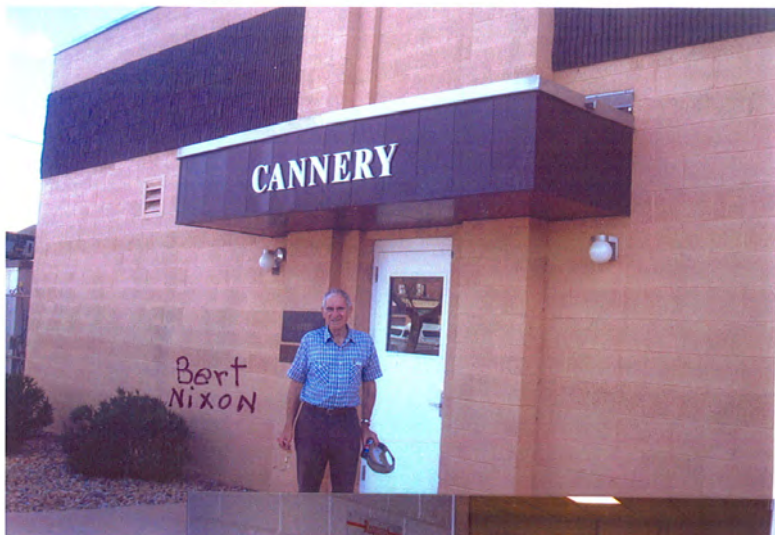


Bert and Shirley Nixon

President Richard Judd called Bert Nixon to work at the cannery during the summer of 2006, with duties of checking people in and out for each of the three shifts 8:00, 12:00 and 4:00; distributing hair nets, aprons, gloves, and calling Bishops and Stake Presidents when there were insufficient numbers for the shifts.

In addition, assisting volunteers who had injured themselves, mopping the floors and keeping the bathrooms clean. Sometimes when there was a shortage of workers he would assist as needed.

Brother Nixon had previously accepted an assignment to work at the Peter Whitmore Farm in Fayette, New York during the time of the Hill Cumorah Pageant, which necessitated someone to substitute for two days to finish canning the Apricots. He returned the day before the canning of Peaches began and continued on in the assignment until it was finished in September. He was grateful for the opportunity to serve there. During the summer there were 11,600 cases of Apricots and 23,000 cases of Peaches canned. Each case contains 12 #2 cans of fruit. The church truly is a wonderful organization for helping to feed the hungry of the world.



The Cannery Man
Summer 2006
June to September



Mop the
floors
sign people
'in' + 'out'
Put on plastic
Aprons →
hair nets
&
gloves



Work with the Cans
and
other stations

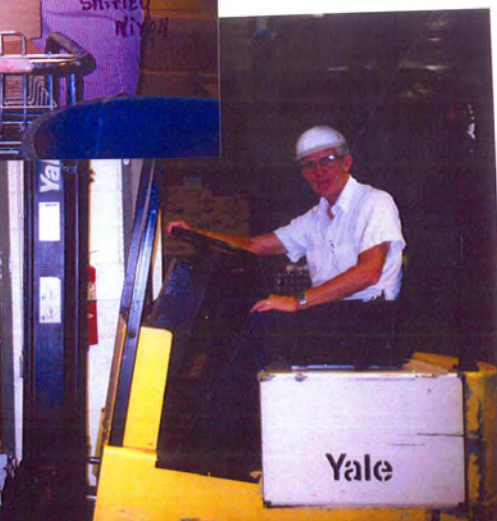




Fold the boxes
staple and stack

There's a job for everyone

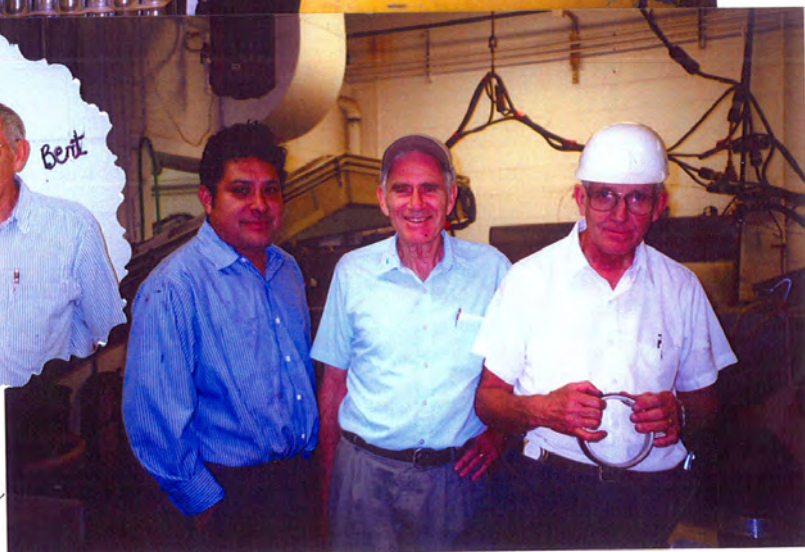
Bring in
the Cans



Dale
Hicken



Cesar
Long hours
6 days a week
Bert
Dale



Brother and Sister Oliver

My husband and I have been working at the cannery as service missionaries. We worked in the department of Quality Assurance (QA). We test the fruit and weigh the cans. It has been a good experience. We have met and worked with a lot of nice people.

We are sad the cannery has to shut down. We live in a small city where a lot of people from all the surrounding areas come and help at the cannery each year. It will be a great loss to St. George to lose the cannery since a lot of the fruit was grown here. We canned apricots in June and peaches in July and August and pears in September

The winter we had family canning we canned potatoes, tomato sauce, spaghetti sauce, beans, jams, catsup and soups.

The cannery is a good testimony for young people to learn service and to learn to help others. We are sorry to see the cannery have to shut down and we will miss working there.

Dennis Patten

As I reflect back, the St. George Cannery has been part of my entire professional life. This facility was one of the first projects I worked on even before I became a licensed Architect and was working with Les Stoker, Architect. It was one of the first projects on which I prepared drawings, oversaw the bidding, and then was on-site observing the construction. Then, through the years I have been involved in minor interior changes, major remodels, large additions, boiler changes, reroofing, and etc. It seems as though there have been few years that we have not been involved in doing some work at this facility and on this site.

During the latter part of the 1970's and the first part of the 1980's the local Church leaders along with the Church realized the need for a local cannery to take care of the Stake Farm and Orchards. The Church Welfare Department was just in the process of developing a new standard plan cannery and the decision was made to proceed with this facility. Les Stoker, Architect, prepared the standard plan and site drawings and the project was put out to bid with several General Contractors. Bob Coulter was the low bidder and subsequently built the facility. This construction took place in 1981.

The standard plan prepared by the Church was "T" shaped. Bishop Storehouse area and the cannery took up the front of the building and the bottom of the T at the back was the boiler for the cannery. Very early in the project the local Church leaders realized there was not enough storage and tried to get the back two boxes of the T filled in and covered. The Church did not want to have this change to the standard plan so the building was completed as originally designed. As soon as the building was completed the local leaders involved local subcontractors to fill in the back part of the T, cover it and make the building rectangular. This helped tremendously to provide storage for the Bishops' Storehouse and covered area for fruit coming from the orchards prior to it being canned.

One interesting story regarding the grain bins at the back of the site. The Contractor constructing the foundation system set an old wheel axel at the center and used it to make the circumference around the grain bins exactly round. It was ingenuity at its finest – creating a compass out of an old wheel axel. When the metal components came to make the silos the concrete poured below matched the metal exactly.

As mentioned, there seemed to continually be changes, additions and remodels taking place on this building through the years. The boiler was a continual upgrade process to make sure it adequately handled the load of the cannery and also met local and state codes. Adequate access around the building was always

being modified because of the length of trucks and other equipment delivering and using the facility.

In 2002 I was the Architect on a very large addition to the back of the building. This addition provided storage, a dry pack area and large industrial type refrigerators and freezers. This addition more than doubled the size of the cannery. The dry pack area became a very heavily used area. Local families could schedule time to come to the cannery and put together their own home food storage. The addition also allowed for much more produce to be received, stored and canned.

Any stories of the cannery could not be complete without the mention of Dale Hicken. Dale was assigned to the cannery in early 1996 and has remained there since. His unique personality and managing ability has caused this facility to function well along with everyone enjoying the experience of being there. Dale has been involved in every aspect of the facility, the site, all the canning, the dry pack, and the storage through all the years. There is no doubt in my mind that the function and success of this facility could not have occurred as it did without Dale Hicken's involvement.

Decisions have now been made to close the cannery and move the canning function to Lindon, Utah. While this brings the canning experience in St. George to an end there is no doubt this facility will continue to function in other ways for many years. It has been a wonderful experience to be involved with this wonderful facility for so long.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Veva Lu Snyder

I moved to this area in 1992. Since that time I have worked in the orchards and cannery. I loved every minute of it. A few years ago I was diagnosed with cancer. It was during the peach canning season. I stayed as busy as I could at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. I would leave the cannery, go in and have a radiation treatment, then go back to the cannery and work. I did the same thing while going through chemotherapy. I feel that the cannery has literally saved my life. It gave me something to do rather than sit at home and think about my health.

My teenage grandson loved to come up from Las Vegas, Nevada and work at the St George cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. We are so sorry to see the cannery go. The products we canned at family canning have been a blessing to me and my family. I will cherish the memories and will miss the experiences.

John and Carol Stewart

One Sunday morning in 1998 the bishop of our ward announced in Priesthood meeting that someone was needed at the bishops' storehouse to stock shelves. He stated that if someone was not willing to do it then he (the bishop) was going to have to do it. When we got home from church that day, John said to me that he guessed we had time and could do it.

So the next day we arrived at the storehouse. Dale Hicken, who manages the storehouse, dry-pack and cannery, was in his office. As soon as we arrived and he looked us over and saw two fairly healthy retirees, out came the missionary papers. We said "Oh no. We are just here to help stock the shelves in the bishops' storehouse." Then he started telling us what blessings would come to us and how our family would be blessed etc. The upshot of it is that we filled out the missionary papers and soon were missionaries working in the cannery, mostly because Dale is real motivated and is not the kind of person one can say no to.

John worked doing various jobs and during the peach and pear season and was assigned to do most of the caustic. Hot caustic is required to break up the skins on peaches and pears to make the job of the peelers easier. I went to Quality Assurance (QA) school at University of California – Davis with about two hundred others from various canneries, including Nestles, Del Monte, Hunts, S & W and many other commercial canneries. Also, many FDA and USDA personnel were there. But before I went to QA School I had been taught to do the Quality Assurance by Max Seegmiller and Cal Baker, both whom had been to QA School. I believe I was the last one the church sent to QA School. We then just trained those others who would eventually do the QA.

The one thing that I was so impressed with was Dale's management of the whole operation. We always called it the cannery, but it was actually the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse and Home Storage (or dry-pack). There was nothing that he did not know nor that he could not do or fix. Our equipment in the cannery was old and we had breakdowns but I do not remember ever having to send the volunteers home. Dale always managed to get it fixed and we were back canning. But the whole scope of the operation of those three entities involved much planning, overseeing, a tremendous amount of paperwork, planning, ordering, dealing with those that worked there, mostly missionaries, and many, many volunteers. But with his leadership and patience and the workings of the Lord, it was amazing to me how well things worked. I always think of how many skilled people it takes to run a large corporation. Running the three entities of the cannery with volunteers only is on a completely different level. I have only the greatest admiration for Dale.

The others that I will always be grateful for were George Fridell, Caesar Gonzales and Mike Trumbull. These were three very dedicated and hardworking individuals. Also Bob and Barbara Geotsch. How we depended on both of them! There are many others, including Paul Bonny, Tom Jewkes and more than I can mention here, but I know the cannery was watched over by Heavenly Father. We always put out an outstanding product. In the years I worked there I never saw anything but the best go out the door. I never understood why we could no longer can meat products, as they were some of our most popular products for family canning.

It is hard to see an era come to an end with the closing of the cannery in August. John and I wish Dale the best in his retirement.

JB Sullivan

From December 2007 to December 2008, I got to serve my mission at the St. George Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse. The wet-pack was one of my favorite parts. I will always remember, stacking the boxes, wiping the wet cans off and the people I got to work with. It was such a wonderful blessing to be able to help out there and I will never forget it.

Michael G. Trumbull

I started working in the St. George Cannery on May 5, 2008. My supervisor, Dale Hicken, introduced me to my job as cannery foreman.

I knew that facilities such as the cannery are dedicated but everything that I know about personal dedication has been taught to me in the examples of Dale Hicken, Tom Jewkes, Paul Bonny and Bob and Barbara Goetche. These brothers and sister came to work at the cannery each day with great attitudes of service and love for those whom they served. Being that each of them were older than me, I marveled at how they could work those long 12 hour days, 6 days a week during Apricot and Peach canning season. I knew that if I was exhausted, that they must have been even more exhausted. But here they would come, day after day with a smile on their faces, ready to serve.

Every morning I would awaken and it would seem as though every single bone and muscle in my body ached. How must Bob have felt with diabetes and bad kidneys or Tom, who had to get shots in his spine because of his back condition, or Paul with a shoulder that constantly gives him grief, and then Dale who has bodily pain but would never admit it? How could I ever complain in the company of these saints? The answer is that I could not.

I always tried to come early and leave late, but as late as it may have been, Dale always stayed later. Not because of any constraints, he only stayed because he loved his Savior and he loved the people he served. I cannot remember a time when any request (reasonable or unreasonable), was turned down by Dale, even when he was so tired that he could hardly stand. I have asked myself a thousand times why would he go out of his way so much when he did not have to? I can tell you now, it is because of love. That is the way he has always expressed his love. By doing, by serving, by going out of his way for the people he loved so much.

The St. George Cannery would always have been a good place to be, but because of Dale and people like him, it was a better place to be. Only God can know the lives that have been made better for this cannery having existed. I saw brothers and sisters come in with oxygen tanks wanting to help. I know of a brother who was having a devastating time in his personal and financial life. He would volunteer every day for months. I did not see him for a while and then he showed up one day to tell me how the Lord had blessed him financially and personally and he knew it was working in the St. George Cannery that had helped him through that trying time.

I saw how God inspired Dale to fix a machine or remedy a problem. I personally had more than one occasion when the Holy Ghost gave me the answer to a

problem. The Holy Ghost would inspire me to open a door on a machine and see a problem, thus allowing Dale or myself to fix it.

I know that the brothers and sisters who came to the St. George Cannery with a mind and a willing heart were and are living a celestial law. Giving of time, talents and love, "Whatsoever ye have done unto the least of these thy brethren, Ye have done it unto me." I saw the hands of God at work in the St. George Cannery. I saw the image of the Savior in the faces of those who participated in serving people they will never meet.

I felt the love of my Savior as I performed every day routines. I felt his love in my dealings with the missionaries, volunteers and patrons at the St. George Cannery. I testify that God is smiling on those who served here and that these principles of service and love are eternal. I will forever cherish the friendships, associations, and memories of the St. George Cannery. May God bless all of those who supported it!

Randy Wilkinson

A DIVINE SIGNATURE

I had the wonderful privilege to serve as President of the St. George, Utah East Stake from January 1993 to January 2000. During most of these seven years the St. George, East Stake served as the agent stake to the St. George Cannery. This was truly a blessing for our stake. It was always a pleasure to meet with Dale Hicken because of his never-tiring positive attitude. I thoroughly appreciated the opportunity to take my turn, with our stake, to help can apricots and peaches. B. Don Taylor served as my first counselor with Dale H. Larkin as my second. We enjoyed serving side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder with the saints.

While serving at the cannery on the apricot line I had a revelatory experience that I cherish. As a Stake Presidency we had, for two or three weeks, been searching the will of the Lord for who should be called to serve as bishop to one of the Lord's wards. Through discussion, prayer, and pondering, both together and individually, we had arrived at three possibilities from a list of ten. We had determined to pray individually at our own homes and return in two days to express our feelings. The next day I was at the cannery at the end of the apricot line. I was reviewing in my mind these three wonderful brethren who could serve as bishop. As I looked up I saw one of these brethren as he worked at the head of the line and the voice of the Lord came into my mind, "This man is to be called to be the bishop." It was powerful. When I met with my counselors they had the same feeling. I was so grateful I was at the cannery where the Lord, with his Divine Signature, gave to me this profound revelatory experience.

I express my heartfelt love to all who have labored at this dedicated house of God.

Russell Wood

My name is Russell Wood and I am the last agent stake high councilor with responsibilities over the wet-pack canning of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) St. George Cannery. It is my responsibility to help coordinate the work of the 26 stakes in Southern Utah that help in the canning of the peaches and apricots from the Hurricane, Utah LDS orchard. I would like to thank all the stakes that put in their time and effort into the service of this facility and its work of humanitarian aid. The stakes scheduled to be involved in the canning efforts for 2011 before the closure notification are:

Bloomington	LaVerkin	St. George North
Bloomington Hills	Little Valley	St. George Washington Fields
Enterprise	Morningside	Sunset
Green Valley	Pine View	Washington
Hurricane	Red Cliffs	Washington Buena Vista
Hurricane West	Santa Clara	Washington East
Ivins	Snow Canyon	Young Single Adult 1 st
Kanab	St. George	Young Single Adult 2 nd
Kaibab	St. George East	

Of all the responsibilities of each stake the first and foremost was to ensure there were 40 people assigned to each shift of the day. Generally speaking there were two shifts on Mondays and Saturdays (8-12 & 12-4), and three shifts on Tuesday through Friday (8-12, 12-4, & 4-8). Each shift requires forty people to operate at maximum efficiency.

Once at the cannery you suit up into a plastic apron, a mesh hairnet (and beard net if appropriate), gloves, and earplugs (if desired). After that, the staff instructs you as to what to do and where you will be working for the shift and then the fun starts.

After your shift of either peach or apricot processing, your feet are sticky and your clothes moist with perspiration, juice, or water from the clean up. No matter how tired you feel you have an underlying sense of accomplishment and that you have helped provide food for those in need.

I love watching members and nonmembers of the LDS faith working side by side talking and laughing all while putting their efforts and strength into serving their fellow children of God. These will be the times I miss and will always cherish with the loss of the wet-pack cannery.

Kathy R. Young

The cannery has been a great way to feel like I was doing something worthwhile, when I was going through a depression. It gave me purpose, and led me to working in the bishops' storehouse for a long time. It was not a mission, just something to do for the Lord that I could feel right about. After a few years I became a Missionary. I always enjoyed the work.

I found I still love the cannery more, and I hate to see it going away! The storehouse is only open three short days. I found the longer hours, and the extra days feel more fulfilling, than the shorter ones in the storehouse. For some reason, the longer hours actually are more enjoyable. Guess that was from the need to escape other problems at first, but that changed and I still want, and enjoy the longer hours! Also, there are a lot of people I enjoy working with in the cannery. People who have become friends. I will miss the cannery greatly, just for the friendships that will become parted!

It has been a spiritual help as well, for we can talk freely of the Lord, and his gospel, and even the people who are not members, do not mind! I know of at least three non-members who would come often to help!

Our leading team – Dale and Mike – have always looked after each of us, and are greatly loved by the people who come here to work. I enjoy working with them!

This is a great way to serve others too. Even helping in family canning seems a good way to help others! I can rarely afford the products, but will also miss being able to get those things on occasion. This cannery WILL BE MISSED!

Appendix

CHURCH HISTORY LIBRARY
PROJECT

Project Number: CH2675
Requester: Bruce Doty
Consultant: Ron Read
Researcher: Sister Jensen
Completion Date: 24 June 2011
Subject: St. George Cannery History

Sources:

- 1- Journal History Index: 1939: 20 May p. 10 – Found an article in Des. News telling about the ground breaking of the Bishop's Storehouse
- 2- St. George Stake Manuscript History, LR 7836 2: On the March 31st Stake report-“We are contemplating the building of a Temple home and Bishops Storehouse which we feel sure will soon be under way.” See the additional 5 pages copied from the Stake History.
- 3- Church News: I did an extensive search for anything on the St. George Cannery. I copied several general articles on canneries. One mentioned a school for canning class in 1948 at St. George.

Findings:

I am attaching the copy from the Journal History and the 5 pages from the St. George Manuscript History.

I had a hard time finding anything that specifically related to the cannery in St. George in the Church News.

I also called Welfare Services to see if they had anything, and I was told they were also doing research for them.

Time Spent: 6 hours

Thanks for the opportunity to be of help. If you need additional assistance, don't hesitate to e-mail us.

Sister Eleanor C. Jensen
Church History Library

"ST. GEORGE -- SITE OVERLOOKS TEMPLE; PRIESTHOOD UNDERTAKES PROJECT."

WORK was commenced a week ago on the new Bishop's Storehouse and work center for the St. George Stake, being sponsored under the stake Welfare committee.

Ground breaking ceremonies followed the holding of a barbeque on the site of the building, which is located at Third East and Second South Streets, two blocks north of the St. George Temple.

The building will be a one story structure with a full basement. The foundation will be of concrete and the walls of adobe, being made also as a stake work project. The exterior will be of stucco, similiar to the exterior of the near-by temple.

Above taken from The Deseret News of May 20, 1939.

Grover Shakespeare, stake work director, is in charge of erection of the building. Ground breaking ceremonies included the plowing of the first furrow with the stake presidency and ward bishops pulling the plow which was guided by Roscoe W. Eardley, supervisor of storehouse for the general committee who also attended the barbeque.

A generous response followed the call for laborers during the first day's work and the project has been well under way since. It is to house a stake storehouse, canning center and women's sewing center. The building will be completed in the next sixty days to permit canning of surplus fruits from this season's crops, expected to be bounteous.

①

St. George Manuscript. History, LR 7836 2
Box 2

St. George

STAKE

History of Stake and Wards for the three months ending December 31, 1939

The Following brethern were ordained Seventy, December 3, 1939

Neils Ivor Barnhurst Clove--by Elder George F. Richards.

Byron Hegsted Taylor--by Elder Reed Smoot.

Carl Lenzi Moss--by Elder George F. Richards.

* STAKE BISHOP'S STOREHOUSE *

The St. George Stake Bishop's Storehouse which was begun last spring is progressing well notwithstanding some delays and setbacks because of lack of funds and labor. The basement has been dug with necessary sewer lines, the frames for basement windows made, forms prepared and the basement cement poured as have also been poured partition walls in the basement. The ground story floor joice are in place and preparation with steel is nearly complete to pour that part of this floor which shall be the canning center with cement. Electrical as well as plumbing supplies needed for the building are largely purchased and paid for. There is had also and paid for enough rough lumber to put on the roof. The Priesthood Quorums of St. George wards have proffered to furnish the adobes for and raise the outside walls while the Seventies Quorum will be responsible for placing the roof. At the close of the year there has been spent \$1940.00 cash on the building which includes \$600.00 for the lot on which it is being built. It is felt that with continued effort the building will be made usable for our coming canning season this year--1940.

TABERNACLE REPAIRS

The repairs to the Tabernacle, which have been in progress for some time, are progressing well. The tower has been braced and strengthened; old plaster and lath taken from the ceiling; ceiling joists leveled and evened up preparatory to putting new lath and plaster on. The frame work supporting the roof and ceiling has also been strengthened; window sash and frames have been inspected for termite damage and repaired and replaced where necessary. All loose and broken glass has been replaced and the sash re-puttied where needed. Provision is being made to make more convenient and safe the electrical system in the building. It is contemplated that shortly after the first of the year lathing and plastering of the ceiling will commence.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

This vicinity has had an extremely warm and pleasant fall and winter. Little or no rain has fallen until the turn of the year since when we have had two quite general storms.

WELFARE PLAN

The Welfare Plan seems to have been somewhat successful this year though some projects have not materialized. The Bishop's Storehouse has a fair inventory on hand, lacking only in those items which are not as yet produced by the program. Some surplus is on hand in peaches, pinenuts, potatoes and molasses. Flour and sugar are called for a great deal and of these we have none. Suggestions have been made the wards relative to the 1940 program as to commodities needed and facilities in each ward for producing them. Favorable results are had already as some wards

History of Stake and Wards for the three months ending

March 31, 1940

Tabernacle Repairs Continue

The Tabernacle repairs continue in good order. The plastering of the ceiling has been completed and of the entrance halls and balcony stairways. The electrical system has been thoroughly inspected and changes made where safety and convenience directed. The above work was largely completed by February 1st and plans are now being furthered for painting of the interior and exterior as well as to provide convenient rest and office rooms. It is hoped also that provision can be made for covering the isles and stand with carpet, providing new seats, and air conditioning and a new pipe organ. However, as these items are not in the present budget means will have to be forthcoming to furnish the necessary finances for these improvements. Plans are now being completed to provide these funds.

★ Stake Storehouse Progresses Well--Apr 1st, 1940 ★

The stake storehouse is progressing well---though for some few months there has been no active work done on the building activity has now begun in earnest. A supervisor of work has been chosen, brother Hyrum S. Thompson, and estimates of total hours of work and materials needed to complete the building have been made. Preparation is complete for pouring the cement floor of the canning department and cement basement partitions have already been poured. The Elders' Quorums of St. George have begun making the adobes for the building. Santa Clara ward has begun hauling the needed sand and gravel. It is planned to have everything in shape for the summer canning and fall harvesting seasons.

Weather Conditions This Year

There has not been a great deal of moisture fall during the first quarter of 1940. Except for a somewhat general storm just after the first of the year we have had no rain.

Ward Activity in the Welfare Plan Increases

Renewed activity is seen in all departments in all wards and in the Stake in the Welfare Plan. Ward Welfare Committees are being properly organized and their functions are becoming more thoroughly understood. The Bishops' Executive Council has taken active hold in the work and are directing activities on the storehouse completion. Definite project assignments have been suggested and accepted by the wards and Quorums and considerable activity is expected this season.

Work at the St. George Temple

Work at the St. George Temple, compared with last year, has decreased some though it is yet an increase over any other year except last. The grounds around the temple are beautiful, the results of the recent landscaping and replanting under the direction of brother Irving T. Nelson, Church Landscape Architect, are now beginning to show. The Rose Garden in the southwest corner of the temple block is especially beautiful.

Temple Cottages Further Completed

History of Stake and Wards for the three months ending June 30, 1940

Missionary leaves for field of labor--

April 3rd, Brother Maxwell Bentley has been called from the West Ward to a mission in the Spanish American field to leave in September of this year. He is the son of William O. Bentley and Hettie Sullivan Bentley.

Tabernacle Renovation

April 10th. It was decided by the Stake Presidency to call a meeting of representative business men in the city and see what could be worked out with regard collecting funds for further renovation of and furniture for the tabernacle. It is desired to get new pews for the building as well as carpets for the isles and on the stand and to do some landscaping on the grounds. As a result of this proposed meeting brother Arthur F. Miles was chosen chairman of the group.

Relief Society Welfare Shirt Making Project

April 10th. The Relief Societies of the stake have had and are now carrying through shirt making projects in each ward. Quiet a number of shirts have been turned in to the storehouse as a result.

Missionary Called from Leeds Ward

April 10th, Sister Ruth Savage of the Leeds ward has been called to fill a mission in the Southern States.

* Welfare Building Progresses *

April 25th, Cement floors in the canning department of the Bishops' Storehouse were run today.

Welfare Molasses Project Investigated

April 25th, The Stake Agricultural Committee in the Welfare Plan, with brother Grover C. Shakespeare, Stake Work Director, has been asked to prepare plans for a molasses making plant as well as plans for planting of enough sorgum cane in the stake to insure a good run of molasses making.

New Bishop Chosen for Mt. Trumbull Ward

May 1st, Brother Chester M. Bundy has been chosen and approved as the bishop of Mt. Trumbull ward. Bishop Roy Bundy is to be released due to health conditions. Bishop Chester M. Bundy has chosen Peter M. Iverson and James G. Bundy as counselors. On May 5th President Harold S. Snow visited Mt. Trumbull and the new Bishopric was sustained by the members of the ward present at the meeting.

Division of the Three St. George Wards

History of Stake and Wards for the three months ending June 30, 1941

Missionary Released

Apr. 7,

A letter was received from the president of the Central States Mission indicating that Elder Barnard H. Seegmiller has been released from his labors to return home.

✱ Much Sorghum Cane Being Planted ✱

Apr. 7,

It is noted that considerable sorghum cane is being planted this year. Brother Anson B. Call, County Agent, has been appointed to take care of the field operations again this year.

Welfare Workers Present

Apr. 21,

Brother Roscoe W. Eardly, Ira Jackson and a brother Schmitt were present to meet with Bishoprics and Welfare workers in the stake. Brother Eardley took up storehouse management, brother Jackson bookkeeping procedure in the storehouse and brother Schmitt canning operations.

Gardening Plan Given Members of Stake

July 1st, The Stake Agricultural Committee together with the Relief Society have provided for each family in the stake lists of suitable foods to store and of plants and vegetables grown in this locality readily with the planting seasons thereof. Winter gardening was suggested.

* Carnival Held in the Bishops' Storehouse *

July 12th, The Bishops' Storehouse is completed so far now that a carnival was held on the above date at which nearly \$1,000.00 was raised to help pay for the building. A dance was held in the upstairs where ice cream and pop were sold. The canning center became a busy dry goods store. The east store room a cafe where the Relief Society served a hot lunch. The basement housed the M. I. A. fun house while around the building a dozen or so concessions were set up. A County Store in front of the building sold every conceivable object. Commodities for the occasion were contributed by the wards and collected by the Aaronic Priesthood.

Enterprise Ward Historical Report

On June 13, 1940 a meeting was called by President Harold S. Snow for the purpose of seeing how the people felt in regards to dividing the stake and the organizing of a new stake. After some discussion it was decided to do as the authorities asked as all were willing to leave it to them. The new stake would include Enterprise and the northern wards of the Moapa stake.

* Equipment Placed in Bishops' Storehouse *

On August 7th, a boiler and a number of vats and cooling tanks were received from Salt Lake City to be installed in the Storehouse to prepare for the canning season which is now upon us. On the 8th and 9th of August the boiler was lowered into the basement and set in place preparatory to connection the steam lines and stoker to it. This plumbing work was completed some ten days later when peach canning proceeded at full capacity.

Elders Quorum Reorganized in East Ward

August 15th brother David M. Schmutz was appointed president of the fifth Quorum of Elders in the St. George East Ward with Charles F. Seegmiller and Vivian Milne counselors and Merrill Stucki as secretary.

* Bishops' Storehouse Manager Chosen *

August 15th brother Jed R. Fawcett was chosen by the Bishops' Executive Council to be storehouse manager and to supervise canning operations this season.

Newspaper Articles

Welfare Cannery Dedicated for Lord's Service

By Gail Thueson, Staff Writer

Originally published Friday, The Spectrum Church Life, March 11, 1983

ST. GEORGE - The LDS Regional Welfare Cannery and Bishops' Storehouse was dedicated Saturday by F. Burton Howard of the First Quorum of the Seventy. The facility is located in the St. George Industrial Park.

"I'm sure that if the Lord were In St. George or southern Utah today, He would, be here among us," said Elder Howard during his remarks. "The reason why I know the Savior would be here is because the people this facility serves are those He was most concerned with; the sick, the needy, the poor, the old, and the handicapped."

Garth M, Colton, Welfare Services Region Agent, conducted the service that more than 200 local church leaders and members attended. The group, sitting amid cases of cans in the warehouse, heard a variety of speakers that included Jay D. Rigby, area storehouse manager; Ramon Darton, storehouse manager of the new facility; and Regional Representatives Eral L. Bindrup and Andrew O. McArthur.

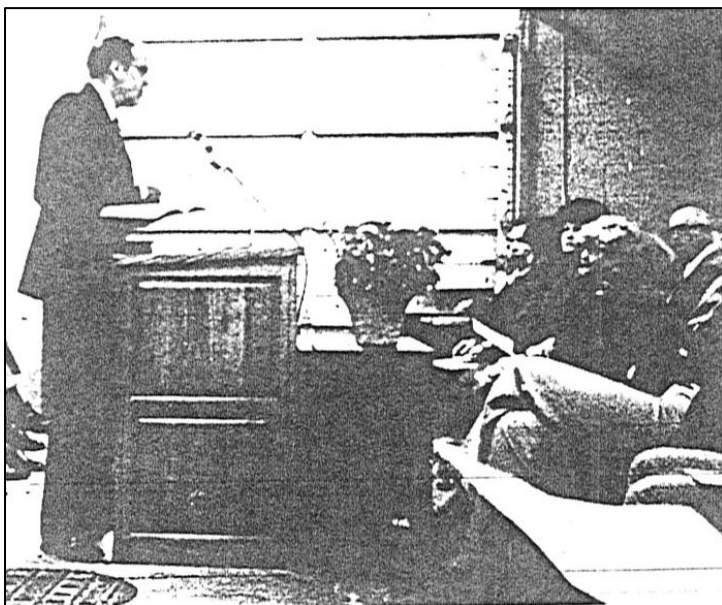
Elder McArthur intrigued listeners with his account of the welfare system that functioned in the area in the late 1920's and 30's.

T.O.

"My father was the agent bishop during the time I was growing up," related Elder McArthur. "At that time, the old tithing office was located at 21 North Main, and was referred to by everyone in town as the T.O."



ST. GEORGE – Following the dedicatory service for the new welfare cannery and storehouse, those attending sampled some of the products of the cannery and storehouse, and toured the facility. Dixie College Stake President James Eardley and Fourth Ward Bishop Eugene Scott sample welfare products.



ST. GEORGE – Elder F. Burton Howard; a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, address 200 local stake and ward leaders at the dedication of the St. George Bishops' Storehouse and Cannery.

"Inside were shelves stocked with just about everything that could be produced by the local Saints, who gave a tenth of all they produced as tithing. Out behind the T.O. were the tithing hay barn, as well as the corral, pigpens, chicken coop, commodity bins and tithing yard," he continued. "Of course this was before the welfare system was really in existence, but those who were in need were assisted from the shelves, of the old T.O."

"There wasn't much money in the area at that time, so

most of the business done in the community was transacted with Tithing Office script," he related. Then, holding up one such piece of currency, he disclosed, "...this is an old five-cent tithing office script bill, and I recently paid fifty dollars for it. Even local merchants would accept tithing office script, and an awful lot of it was in circulation in the area."

Big fires

Later, when the present Welfare System was instituted throughout the Church in 1936, the Tithing Office system was discontinued, as church members used currency to pay their tithing instead of produce. Elder McArthur related how the first welfare cannery was built in the area shortly thereafter, about where Arrow Audio now stands on Tabernacle Street. Behind the cannery itself, big fires were built in the open under the cauldrons and goods were canned for distribution among the poor. Other area projects included the production of sorghum and molasses, some egg projects and the old welfare broom factory that operated in what is now Bloomington.

"I recall that they used to pay a bounty of five cents for old broom handles, which were re-used. Then in about 1938 or '39, they built the first Bishops' Storehouse on the corner of 200 South and 300 West, just west of the old city water works. I was one of those brethren hooked to a plow who made the first furrow for the ground break. At that time," recounted Elder McArthur, "folks around here were so poor they had to watch the rainbow in black and white."

Dignity

"This new building," said McArthur in reference to the new cannery "is a great tribute to those who have worked and given of themselves, their time and their talents that our more unfortunate brothers and sisters might receive the things they needed without losing their dignity to the dole. The ability to give service is being lost today, and I hope that through this cannery and other projects we will be able to instill that desire to serve in our children."

Following Elder McArthur's remarks, the group had a chance to listen for a few minutes to Glen L. Rudd, an unscheduled speaker who currently serves as the Welfare Services Zone Director, as he told those leaders gathered for the dedication that the canneries are sacred buildings and excellent state-of-the-art facilities. He emphasized that in the past nine years, the Church has grown from having under 50 of the regional canneries to the point where today, more than 130 are in operation, planned or under construction in the United States and Canada.

Three-fold Purpose

"In the past several years, we have taken canneries such as this one, into most of the major of America, and there use is spreading abroad to other lands as well. The Brethren are pleased with what has been accomplished," said Rudd. Elder Rudd, and other speakers, noted that the cannery and bishops' warehouse systems have a three-fold purpose; to serve those in need of help, to help individuals and families to care for themselves, and to obtain the necessary resources and combine and preserve them for those who need assistance. As Colton had noted, while the Bishops' Storehouse portion of the new facilities serve only about one-and-one-half to two percent of the membership of the Church, everyone in the Church benefits from having the opportunity to render voluntary service to others.

The new facility includes a cannery (which will produce more than 65,000 cans of goods for the Church's Welfare system during 1983), the Bishops' Storehouse, (which fills about 195 bishops' orders for food and necessities per month to area needy), and the grain storage silos, in which is stored wheat against times of need and natural disaster.

Disparity

After his own remarks, Elder Howard offered the dedicatory prayer, and asked the Lord to accept the building as His own, for the use of the Saints and the building up of the Kingdom.

Following the dedicatory prayer tours were conducted through the new facility and those attending had a chance to sample some of the fine products produced by the cannery. Displays also pointed out the great disparity of cost between store bought commodities and those produced by the cannery.

In every instance, the canneries can produce canned goods and perishables for much less than they can be purchased for in retail outlets, while the quality of merchandise remains the same.

The cannery, which has actually been in operation and production for nearly two years, will serve members of the Church in the St. George, Hurricane, Enterprise and Kanab areas, as well as those in the communities of Washington, Santa Clara, Pioche, and Caliente, as well as some areas of northern Arizona.

Welfare cannery dedicated for Lord's service

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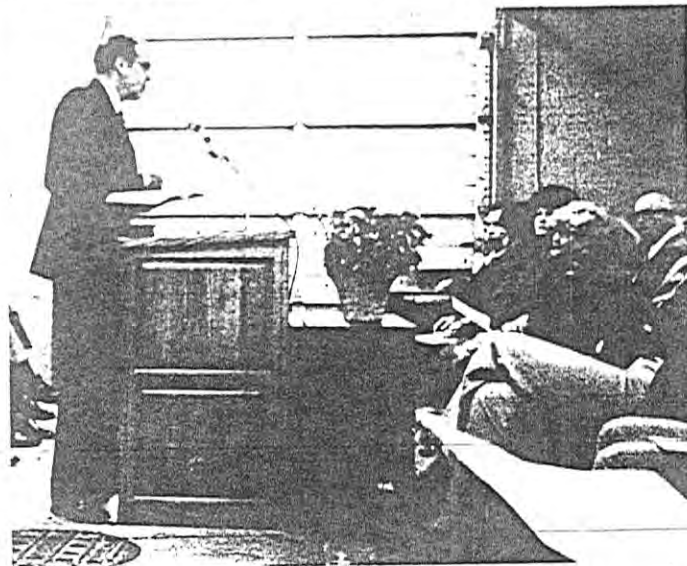
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Church Opens Cannery Doors to Help Ease Pangs of Hunger

Mike Cannon, Church News Staff Writer

The Church News, November 5, 1994

Retrieved from <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/24024/Church-opens-cannery-doors-to-help-ease-pangs-of-hunger.html>

"And thus, in their prosperous circumstances, they did not send away any who were naked, or that were hungry, or that had not been nourished; and they did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young, both bond and free, both male and female, whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect to persons as to those who stood in need." - Alma 1:30

As the plight and pangs of the hungry have attracted increasing attention, the Church has opened up its welfare facilities and joined forces with community and interfaith groups to maximize effectiveness in combating the problem.

"Many individuals and groups - including farmers with excess production, companies with excess food and others - are willing to donate their resources to help the hungry," said Dennis R. Lifferth, director of production distribution for Church Welfare Services. "What's lacking in many instances is the ability to pull all of this together. Opening up Church canneries provides the facilities to unite these groups and harness this energy.

"All of these humanitarian canning efforts are coordinated under the direction of agent stake presidents and cannery managers, and appropriate training and supervision are provided by Welfare Services personnel. The projects are conducted under strict quality control conditions that meet all guidelines for handling food and result in first-class products. The humanitarian projects result in much goodwill for the Church as they involve our members alongside people of other faiths in providing service."

While specifics of humanitarian canning projects vary from place to place, depending upon the types of available commodities and community resources, they all share some common ingredients. All include approval and supervision from local Welfare Services personnel and Church leaders, and combined labor involving members and non-members working together. They also involve distribution of goods through local food banks, homeless shelters or similar agencies, and gratitude from the organizations involved and individual recipients of the food items. In most instances, increased goodwill toward the Church and its membership has been an added positive result.

Here are several examples of the types of humanitarian canning projects being undertaken:

DENVER, COLO.

Humanitarian efforts utilizing the cannery at the Denver Bishops' Storehouse have been under way for nearly five years, according to Delmar Anderson, Welfare Services storehouse manager for the North America Central Area.

The initial project involved canning of kokanee salmon, taken to the cannery under the direction of Food Bank of the Rockies. Annually, the fish would spawn and die in a nearby river. The organization had requested that governmental agencies involved allow harvesting of the dying fish so their meat could be put to good use. To facilitate the project, the Church opened its cannery and provided cans and lids and some volunteer labor.

Since that time, similar projects have occurred with regularity. Brother Anderson said in 1993, 75,000 cans of food were produced through humanitarian efforts, mostly in cooperation with Denver Metro CareRing, a coalition of about 25 civic and religious agencies concerned with battling hunger. In addition to the salmon, canned commodities have included potatoes, tomatoes, applesauce, corn, carrots and "whatever is available and donated from a variety of sources," according to Brother Anderson.

At times, the cannery is also used to re-package goods for humanitarian efforts. Recently, thirty 50-gallon barrels of maple syrup were re-packaged into smaller containers. And youth from the area helped re-package dry-pack hot cocoa mix from 1,000-pound bins into 15,000 one-gallon cans.

Brother Anderson explained that during the Metro CareRing projects, stakes are requested to provide about half the workers for each shift, with the other half provided through Metro CareRing.

He estimated that by the end of this year, 100,000 canned items will have been produced for humanitarian projects. Next year that will double, he said, as groups from cities in Wyoming and other parts of Colorado will come into the cannery with their own volunteers, work alongside local Church members and take the goods produced back to their local communities for distribution.

Along with the obvious good that results from the humanitarian efforts is the resultant goodwill. Brother Anderson told of one incident where a minister was set to show his congregation a film unfavorable to the Church. When the chairman of the Council of Churches for Colorado heard of it, he asked the minister not to show the film, telling him the allegations contained therein were false.

"That has resulted from his involvement at the cannery," said Brother Anderson. "That's the kind of thing that is happening as a result of this."

COLUMBUS, OHIO

A mutual interest in feeding needy families in central Ohio produced a unique co-operative effort between Ohio Prison inmates, members of the Columbus Ohio Region of the Church and the Mid-Ohio FoodBank.

The Mid-Ohio FoodBank distribution system reaches the hungry in 51 Ohio counties, supplying food pantries, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters with meals.

For several years, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections has had an excess of fresh produce grown on prison farms that could not be used within the corrections system and has donated many thousands of pounds of various vegetables to the food bank. These donations unknowingly set the stage for the unique government/charity/Church partnership.

For the past three years, two acres of green beans have been grown on the prison farm in Chillicothe, Ohio, specifically for the cannery. These beans were picked by the inmates and delivered to the cannery, where Church members took over. In about eight hours they washed, snipped, sorted, filled, cooked, and sealed more than a ton of beans. The final step was to label each can (4,000 in 1993) with the Deseret label and a special sticker giving credit to ODRC, the LDS Church and the food bank.

In a recent letter, ODRC Director Reginald Wilinon said he was "most pleased with the results of the garden project partnership" and pledged continuing support.

Kenneth G. Petersen, former president of the Columbus Ohio East Stake, and Evelyn Behm, associate director of the Mid-Ohio FoodBank, were convinced they could continue and expand their partnership. The time quickly came to work together again. The Ohio Fruit Growers Marketing Association contacted Ms. Behm, wanting to know if she could use 19,200 pounds of last season's apples.

She was able to distribute about half of the apples fresh, and then contacted the Church for help in preserving the remainder. Local Church leaders and members mobilized immediately, and within a week the apples were being processed into 5,760 cans of applesauce.

"We are blessed to have this unique cannery in this location with willing and committed Church volunteers who will respond at almost a moment's notice," remarked Ms. Behm, who had never heard of the Church before the canning partnership. "We can renew this partnership over and over as produce becomes available." - Pauline Morello

CALGARY, ALBERTA

The well-known counting rhyme "One potato, two potato, three potato, four. . ." took on new significance when more than 450 Calgary residents participated in a 42-hour humanitarian canning marathon recently.

For the first time in this area, Christian youth groups, community service clubs and members of the Church came together to peel, slice and chop more than 19,000 pounds of potatoes.

"I doubt I will be able to face a potato again," laughed Calgary Alberta East Stake Pres. Jeff Grunewald. "I don't think I have ever seen so many potatoes at one time."

The mammoth project came about when Robert Wood of the Calgary Interfaith Food Bank offered to share surplus potatoes with the Calgary Bishops' Storehouse. He was surprised when, instead of merely accepting his generosity, local Church leaders offered to can the potatoes and donate the finished product back to the food bank.

"It is wonderful that we had the opportunity to work with your people," Mr. Wood commented to members. "It's good to see such cooperation between agencies."

Working in four-hour shifts, volunteers included participants from Teen Challenge, Youth With A Mission, Cremona High School, and from every ward in the Calgary region.

"We were thrilled by the response, and we were pleased to be able to use our facilities to share welfare principles in this manner," explained Pres. Grunewald. At the close of the two-day marathon, over 9,000 cans of potatoes awaited quality assurance testing before being handed over to the food bank.

"I think this whole project has been great," said Interfaith volunteer Ken Short. "We may not agree on all points of religion, but we can agree to put aside our differences and work together to feed the hungry in our community. Isn't that what Jesus Christ would want us to do?" - Denise Walsh Norton

FARMINGTON HILLS, MICH.

"Prisoners grow it, Mormons can it," is how the annual report of the Food Bank Council of Michigan summarized its cooperative effort with the Michigan State Industries, Jackson State Correctional Facility and the Church's Detroit cannery.

In the summer of 1993, an open house at the Bishops' Storehouse and cannery was held to acquaint civic leaders and charitable organizations with the Church Welfare Services facilities. The option for non-profit groups to use the cannery

was explained. Following a tour, the visitors were served a meal prepared by the Farmington Hills Ward Relief Society, using food from the storehouse.

As a result of that introduction, the Church agreed to can 400 cases of tomatoes grown by the inmates at the Jackson State Correctional Facility. The Church provided the facility, labor, cans, lids and boxes. The food bank, which provided the tomato seeds, would deliver the tomatoes to the cannery and transport the canned goods to 90 food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens. Before the harvest season ended, donated peaches and apples had also been canned for the food banks.

This past April, the Church was one of eight groups honored by the Food Bank of Oakland County for its significant help in supplying 2.5 million pounds of donated food. Executive director Jim Macy commented: "In 1993 we developed a wonderful relationship with the bishops' cannery, a project of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Using their facility, equipment, materials, management and their volunteers as well as our own, we have been able to can hundreds of cases of tomatoes, peaches and applesauce."

Similar humanitarian canning efforts have continued this year. Encouraged by the success of the first project, Warden Frank Elo and the prisoners agreed to supply vegetables for 2,000 cases of tomatoes and 1,000 cases of carrots in 1994.

According to Betty Hall, resident unit manager at the Jackson facility, "The inmates are excited to be kept busy and have an opportunity to give something back to society."

Several months ago Second Harvest, a national organization that deals with donations larger than local food banks can handle, contacted Church leaders in Detroit requesting help. It had received fifty-two 55-gallon drums of crushed pineapple from McDonalds. All 27,000 pounds of the pineapple needed to be canned. The project was referred to the cannery. After testing to confirm that the pineapple could be processed in a safe and cost-effective manner, the project began. About 520 cases of 29-ounce cans were produced for distribution to those in need. Other projects also have occurred.

The series of events which followed the cannery open house certainly brings to mind the counsel, "Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great." (D&C 64:33) - Bonnie Nielson

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

Various humanitarian canning projects have been undertaken at the Welfare Square cannery, including the processing of 30,000 pounds of donated apples into applesauce earlier this year.

Cannery manager Dale Hicken noted other humanitarian efforts involving a mixture of LDS and non-member volunteers, including the canning of 350 cases of tomatoes.

In September, an ecumenical group from Park City, Utah, provided manpower at the cannery in return for food products to help stock community food pantry shelves. "They help us get a certain product produced," explained Brother Hicken, "but they don't necessarily get that specific product in return. They may have other particular needs that we can help with.

"These humanitarian efforts are wonderful tools that build love and friendship. We asked several members of this Park City group if their hard work was worth it. One of them had his arm around an LDS volunteer he had met and said, 'If we hadn't done it, I never would have met my good friend.' Volunteers of all faiths are happy to be here, and there is a good feeling as they participate."

LINDON, UTAH

The Church and the United Way of Utah County are pooling their resources in an ongoing effort to help LDS and non-LDS individuals and families in Utah County become self-sufficient.

"We are making a conscious effort to alleviate poverty conditions by providing products and financial assistance and in this case sharing with local agencies trying to meet the different needs of those struggling," said Pres. Richard Eddy of the Orem Park Utah Stake, agent stake for the Lindon cannery.

Through the United Way, various humanitarian canning projects have been undertaken using a combination of LDS and non-member volunteer labor, similar to what is being done in other areas.

"There is a high level of excitement in these new projects," said Kelsey Ruse, Lindon cannery manager. "Many of the people working on the lines

during humanitarian canning projects are recipients of the food through the United Way agencies."

As those receiving food are able to work for what they receive, they experience the satisfaction and dignity of maintaining feelings of self-reliance, according to

those involved with such projects. And others who aren't recipients of food nevertheless find great joy in serving on behalf of those less fortunate.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

During a visit to Los Angeles following the 1992 riots, Elder Robert D. Hales of the Council of the Twelve, then serving as Presiding Bishop, invited ministers to bring their congregations to the cannery to help them with emergency food needs. The offer was well-received and has led to a variety of continuing humanitarian projects.

According to Pres. Howard B. Anderson of the Los Angeles California Stake, agent stake for the cannery, stakes in the Los Angeles area have been encouraged to team up with a local food bank, church or civic group for participation in humanitarian projects. Each stake invites a group to form a partnership, and they work shoulder to shoulder on various canning projects, with the partner from the community receiving goods for their needs based on the time they donate.

"This helps us reach out into the community, show we are here to help and teach correct welfare principles," explained Pres. Anderson. "We feel the effort is building as we help people understand what the principles are. To those who understand it, the results have been wonderful."

LDS Cannery Burns

Damage estimated at \$100,000;
no one injured in what officials suspect is accidental blaze

By JANE ZHANG jzhang@thespectrum.com

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ST. GEORGE – A fire erupted Tuesday night at the Bishops' Storehouse and Welfare Center near Highland Drive, causing one-fifth of the roof to collapse into some canned goods in a storage house, fire officials said.

Nobody was inside the building at 516 N. 1400 East when the fire was first reported about 8:12 p.m., said Kevin Taylor, deputy chief of the St. George Fire Department. But the structural damage is estimated at \$100,000, St. George Fire Chief Robert Stoker said.

The cause of the fire hadn't been determined by 10:15 p.m. Tuesday, but Taylor said it appeared to be accidental.



Cannery director Dale Hicken, a state inspector and a contractor assess damage to the cannery on April 30, 2003, following a fire on April 29th.

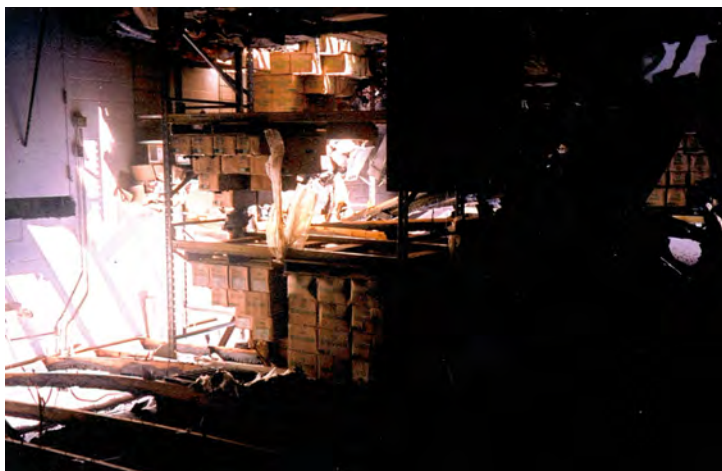


Cannery director Dale Hicken looks over damage caused by a roof fire at the cannery on April 29, 2003.

The 20,000-square-foot cannery, which is owned by the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter-day Saints, is built with block walls and lightweight, wood-frame truss roof, Taylor said. The 25-year-old building is under construction to add new storage houses, he said.

Smoke filled both the cannery's new section and the old section, Stoker said. As most stocked food was moved to the new section, however, the fire

originated from the old section only damaging one storage house with some canned goods, he added.



Light shines through the cannery's fire-damaged roof on April 30, 2003, following a fire the previous day.

The St. George Fire Department sent six engines, two squads and one ladder truck to the scene. The first unit arrived at about 8:15, three minutes after the fire was reported. About 30 minutes later, Taylor said, the fire was under control.

Patrick Sappington, 20, a Middleton resident who first reported the fire, said the fire first looked like a campfire. He and his mother

tried to extinguish the fire with a water hose, but soon decided to call the police.



The cannery is filled with debris following a fire on April 29, 2003.

Preserving History

Committee Seeks Information on the St. George Cannery

By Lisa Larson larson@thespectrum.com

Photos by Samantha Clemens/The Spectrum & Daily News

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On Aug. 1, the St. George Utah Welfare Cannery will close the wet-pack canning portion of its operation, leaving in its wake a host of memories, experiences and testimonies resulting from the countless hours of service rendered there.

It's those memories that Bruce and Karen Doty, president and historian respectively of the Pine View LDS Stake, would like people to share.

"They are centralizing and consolidating operations," Bruce Doty said of the LDS Church's decision to close the wet-pack canning arm of the St. George Cannery.

Those operations will now be handled by the cannery in Lindon, however the dry-pack canning operation and the bishops' storehouse and the cannery building itself will remain in its current location in St. George. "We're not losing our opportunity to serve," said Bruce, who serves as the agent stake president over the cannery. "It was a fun place to go ... but we can still serve in other ways."

Charged with the responsibility of compiling a history on the seemingly as-yet undocumented facility, Bruce Doty set out to assemble a committee of four community members in addition to he and his wife to solicit information and memories from the public, then compile, write and present the history to the presiding bishopric, one of the governing bodies of the LDS Church responsible for welfare services.

“A historical record notes that the cannery existed. It’s a testament of its contribution,” Bruce said. “For 28 years the cannery has contributed to the people of this area and such a contribution should be remembered.”



Dale Hicken explains the machinery in the St. George Utah Welfare Cannery building on Wednesday. The wet-pack portion of the cannery will cease operation as a way to consolidate and move to Lindon.

Yet even knowing the importance of having a historical record of the cannery didn’t make the project less daunting.

“Lots of faith and lots of prayers,” Karen said of the committee’s response to the project. “That’s all we can have at this point.”

In addition to exercising faith, each member of the committee is reaching out to people in their circle of influence to see if anyone has any hard data on when the cannery was built, as well as stories from the earlier years.

Finally on Tuesday, Bruce Doty received an important piece of news.

The cannery was dedicated on March 5, 1983, he said.

Beyond that, there are still a lot of question marks.

"I pray (people) will sit down and take 15 or 20 minutes and write an email or a letter ..." Bruce said.

The St. George Cannery is one of seven small LDS welfare canneries in the United States.



Gloves in the cannery building are shown Wednesday. The wet back portion of the cannery will cease operation as a way to consolidate.

In addition there are six large canneries across the nation, including the one in Lindon. Together these facilities preserve food that is then made available to those in need around the world.

The St. George Cannery's main function is to can the apricots and peaches grown at the LDS Church welfare orchard in the area. In the off-season, members of the community, regardless of religious affiliation, are able to help can turkey, beef, chili, tomato sauce and more to purchase for their own use.

"That will be a loss," Dale Hicken, cannery manager, said of the impact the cannery closure will have.

Hicken has worked at the St. George Cannery since 1996. Although he is supportive of the church's decision to consolidate the cannery functions, there are definitely things he will miss.

"It isn't the apricots or the peaches ... the greatest thing about the cannery is the people you have the opportunity to associate with," he said.

Over the years he's seen people "come in droves" to donate their time to produce thousands of cases of fruit.

People come with oxygen tanks and recovering from surgery, Bruce said of the dedication of the volunteers. "The cannery is a hallmark of people who give everything they can."

In the last several years, the St. George Cannery has been tasked with producing approximately 12,000 to 16,000 cases of apricots per year and 18,000 cases of peaches. Generally, actual production exceeded the requirement with close to 20,000 cases of apricots and more than 21,000 cases of peaches last year.

"We very much over produced what they asked for," Hicken said.

The cannery will continue to function through the end of the apricot canning season, closing on Aug. 1 or shortly thereafter. In the meantime, Hicken said they still need volunteers to help when the apricot crop comes in.

As for the cannery's history, the committee has received several stories and memories from people who served in the cannery, but they are still hoping for more.

"Records are crucial to not forgetting our past and learning for our future," Karen said.

Anyone with either hard facts or anecdotal information to share regarding the St. George Cannery may send the information via email to sgcannery@gmail.com or by mail to St. George Cannery, 2339 E 130 N, St. George, UT 84790. Submissions are due by July 1.

By Lisa Larson

larson@thespectrum.com

Photos by Samantha Clemens/The Spectrum & Daily News
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