

Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Karin Peter 00:34

Welcome to "Cuppa Joe" where we explore Restoration history. I'm your host, Karin Peter. Now, here at "Cuppa Joe" we partner with the Historic Sites Foundation to interview the presenters from their lecture series, and right now we're interviewing folks from the spring 2022 lecture series, and our guest today is Sherry Mesle-Morain, and she has been with us before and we're so happy to have her back. I think it was last year where we talked about her lecture on Carl Mesle, who happened to be her father, and Sherry, along with lecturing in Historic Sites Foundation, you have spent most of your life in higher education. We talked about some of your service as Director of Financial Aid Services at Graceland University where you live now. You've served on the city council there. You conduct intake interviews with the Food Pantry Emergency Relief Fund, so you're still active in civic affairs in your community, and you've served as president of the John Whitmer Historical Association and were executive director of that for three years. Before the pandemic, can any of us really remember before the pandemic, it's unbelievable, but before the pandemic, every Thursday morning, you were quilting with the Lamoni Mite Society, which is the longest continuously running quilting society in the state of Iowa. So, the Lamoni Mite Society is the topic of your 2022 Historic Sites Foundation, entitled "What Were the Women to do?" So, I'm excited about this. Welcome, Sherry.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 02:18

Thank you, it's good to be with you again, Karin.

Karin Peter 02:21

So, I want to share with our listeners the little blurb about, that comes as the description of your lecture presentation, and it says that it will, you, "...will explore the history of the Lamoni Mite Society and its place in the church from which it emerged, and how it serves in its own way." What interests me though is the next line, and I talked to you about this briefly before we started, and it says this, "The men of the priesthood had the leadership role in any of the women's efforts to organize themselves, but quilting was assumed to be a quiet, innocent activity among dedicated housewives, serving the dual role of raising some money for the activities of the church, as well as providing a social outlet for the women." So, before we start with our questions, I have to say that caught my attention, because it sounds a little intriguing, and a little, maybe, tongue in cheek in the way that that was phrased. So, I'm hoping we will address some of that, as we get into our conversation today about the assumption made about quiet, innocent activities for dedicated housewives. So first, Sherry, tell us why this story of the Lamoni Mite Society was important to you to share.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 03:48

I think for two reasons that come to my mind. One is what women choose to do when they are not told what to do, and this is certainly what the women did. The second reason, I think, is because, as you

alluded to, it exemplifies the relationships, the struggles, sometimes the collaboration with the men in their society, if you will. And those are just two very brief reasons which I will expound on.

Karin Peter 04:32

Excellent, excellent. So, tell us a little bit about the society, maybe a little bit of the history of it and what's important for us to know about it, pieces that you're going to offer in your lecture.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 04:46

Okay. Our listeners know that Joseph Smith III had the group come over and buy land over here that was cheap, and in the late '70s, they started coming over to live. The leadership of, the main group of leadership of the church came over in the early 1880s, and the women came over in 1882. Now, the casual histories that I've read of the Mite Society tell me that the Mite Society started in Plano, and they called themselves the Mite Society. I did not go to Plano to check that out. It was tempting, but I didn't get in my car to go do that. But it was clear that when they came over, they knew each other, and they immediately, in April of 1883, organized themselves into what they originally called, the Ladies Union Mite Society. That was their first name. So that was how and why they got started. They knew, they'd already apparently been doing it and they knew what they wanted to do. More about the, well, as our listeners are aware, the mite was the smallest coin in the Roman realm at the time of Jesus' life, and in, the scriptures tell us that Jesus valued the widow giving of her mite to the work of Christ more than he valued all the wealth of the rich men. So thus, they called themselves the Mite Society, which is probably suggestive of women's, not self-denigration, but minimization of their work and their efforts that, oh, we can do a little bit. The Mites did a whole lot more than a little bit. Yeah, and this may be where, where do I start with all of this? Let's go on to the next question, and I'll explain.

Karin Peter 07:11

Okay. Well, what I had asked you was when you started to prepare, when you started to research and prepare for this lecture, what were the most important things about the society that you wanted to make sure you included in your lecture?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 07:26

Okay, first of all, I really didn't know anything about the Mite Society except that they were here in Lamoni. They quilted every Thursday. I had gone to a quilt show, and had shown what I had done in a quilt that I started to Natalie Anderson, and when I retired she invited me to quilt with the Mites. So, I knew they existed. I knew they had been around for a long time. I, and then, in March of 2015, Lach Mackay was staying with us when he was recruiting students to intern in the summertime at the historic sites, and he wanted to know about a quilt that he was pretty sure the Mites had done, and he had bought it at, kind of, a tag sale that Lynn and Lorene Smith had done and so he thought maybe it probably belonged to Elbert A. Smith, and Lach is in the Smith family, and he thought the Mites had it and he wondered where it was and could I find it for him? Well, it was an interesting adventure. So, I went over to Alma Blair at the, at Liberty Hall, and I don't remember all the details 'cause I'm getting old, but I do remember that we finally, after looking everywhere in the Mites' cupboard, in the ascension boxes at Liberty Hall, we finally found it sitting over in the corner of Alma's desk with other things on top, which was just hilarious if you know Alma Blair. So, we found it. And in fact, Alma had written up a little bit about it and said that they didn't have a gift document and it didn't have an ascension box or

anything, so, we took care of that. But it was interesting. I saw two dates. One was '92 and one was 1903, quilted by the Mites. It had 49 names on it of people in Lamoni, in square blocks, and the names were just embroidered in a spiral fashion to get all those names in the quilt. It's old. It was well worn and really beyond repair but, so that was what, and then, so, when I found this quilt for Lach said, "You know, I think you should do a history of the Mites, Sherry." Just as...

Karin Peter 09:57

Lach is good about offering those kinds of pieces of advice, isn't he?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 10:03

What good ideas and he rounds up his staff to do it for him. And I had just barely enough time to put together a proposal on something I knew not, I knew nothing about the Mites' history. So, that is to say, I knew nothing about them so, I really didn't know what it was I was looking for, or what I wanted to share. I was excited that this, that the story unfolded in the minutes of the Mites. They kept minutes from the very beginning, every single meeting, every single weekly meeting, and they have been doing that for 139 years.

Karin Peter 10:57

Oh my gosh.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 10:59

Next week, yes, 139 years next week. So, I learned about the Mites as I read their minutes and went on and begin to see it in church history, in Lamoni history, and I didn't know much about Lamoni history. So, it's, that was an adventure. And for someone who is not an historian, not a trained historian, I have to say it was very exciting to have primary materials.

Karin Peter 11:34

Absolutely.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 11:36

That is to use. That wasn't all of my paper, but it was certainly 85% of my paper. Yeah.

Karin Peter 11:48

So, what kind of things did they put in their minutes?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 11:52

Okay. The organizational meeting, and there were really two of them, the first one they got together to organize and the second one, everybody came. So, we talked about how men always had to be present when women were doing something, so at that organizational meet-, the second organizational meeting on April 12, 1883, there were 59 women and one husband who signed in at that meeting. So, there was a man present when they were getting organized to do this. The women had beautiful flowing handwriting. They knew Robert's Rules. They knew how to spell. They knew how to punctuate. They knew how to write good sentences. They were educated. They were very well educated. That was such a pleasant surprise. But you know, as I think about it, maybe that's not such a surprise, because after

all, the original leadership from the, of the church came from New England and upstate New York, where education was important, and so, that was a part of the culture in the church, and of course carried out through church history. There are some things that just don't go away as one generation generates the next generation. They kept the minutes. Every decision they made, they moved resolved to do something, seconded. They voted on it, everything they did. They, let me think, they kept detailed records of their finances, money that came in, and how they spent that money, and one of their rules was that no money would be spent, except that the entire group knew who was spending it and what it was being spent on. So, they had very careful rules which are in my paper. I didn't put them in front of me, because that's not what this is all about. And they also later, when they started doing quilts exclusively and photography came, they had pictures of the quilts that they did, but not early on. So that was what I immediately began to learn about the Mites, was their business was, and they had officers and they had originally, they were going to have election of officers every three months. Well, that changed after a couple of years.

Karin Peter 14:48

That's pretty soon to be elected officers, every three months. Yeah.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 14:54

Yeah. One of the other things that I learned that I really didn't get to include in my paper, they would talk about the weather sometimes. Now remember, this is at the turn of the century, 1800s, early 1900s. That, and the streets weren't paved. They were muddy. We had severe storms here. And how they managed to get to quilt, wherever it was they were quilting, because that's a whole 'nother story here, their long dresses would get muddy, and they would have to plow up and down. This is a hilly area. This is southern Iowa. It's very hilly. They would have to walk to get here. They would have to, sometimes they couldn't get together because of storms, and maybe three women would make it or maybe six women would make it. When they started, there were, on my index cards, when I would make notes, I would write a number and I remembered when I was looking at, oh, yeah, that was the number of Mites present at that given meeting. So, there might be 20. There might be 14. There might be eight. There might be 17. You know, it was really interesting, but there were a lot of women who got together originally. And one of the interesting stories about this is that they started in the basement of the church. That didn't last. Well, they organized in a member's home, but then the church gave them space, and then they couldn't be there anymore, and so, they went to member's home, and they just, kind of, kept moving around. One of the really best early stories, in 1895, so they'd been working for 12 years, in 1895, in February, they resolved officially to build their own building where they...

Karin Peter 17:10

Really.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 17:12

Yes, they moved into that building in June, four months.

Karin Peter 17:19

These were some determined women.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 17:21

They were. They were. They got a lot done. Okay, they originally started this for two reasons. One was to help the poor in the community, those who had need. They made things like rag rugs, sometimes quilts, sometimes they pieced quilts and so on, to sell, to make money to buy some things they couldn't do for people themselves. But they also made things for people who need them; quilts, clothes, and, and so on. But they also, at one of their early meetings resolved that whatever was left over from their fundraising, and I'll talk about fundraising, they would use for the benefit of the church. When the brick church was built, they bought the bell for the belfry, paid to have it put into the belfry. They bought several hundred chairs for the sanctuary, as well as a carpet for the sanctuary, the Bible for upfront and a couple of other items up front. So, they used their funds for the church as well as for the community. Part of this I found interesting was, these are the things that women see. Women see the day to day needs of people, their families, attending church. You gotta sit. You gotta have a bell to announce things for the community as well as the church. Another thing they did, and remember we talked about the muddy streets, they paid to build a wooden plank from the church to the depot, which was used for years. Now, how did they raise their funds?

Karin Peter 19:29

Yes, that's a lot of money that they're contributing here.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 19:33

It really is. It really is. They didn't just make things to sell. Most of that, kind of, went into helping the poor. They started doing fundraisers like putting on dinners, Thanksgiving dinner for 25 cents apiece, birthday parties. You had to pay to come to the birthday party and they would invite the men, maybe, to come to the birthday party. They put on ice cream socials. They put on concerts. They did all kinds of things to raise money and used it for the community. And they had great pride in what they did. When Lamoni was all about, okay, if we pave the street in front of your house, you are responsible, in part, for paying for that street. And that's been here for, I don't think that's the case anymore, but it was when my brother lived here and raising his children here in the '50s, '60s, '70s. So, they paid their share of paving North Linden, which is where their building was. Oh, their building. Okay, so they're, when they built their building, they had it on the church property, with the understanding from the leadership, that when the leadership needed it, then they would move it over, they would move it. So, in 1913, the leadership came to them and said, "We think you should buy the plot of land that sits at the corner of North Linden and Eighth Street, the southwest corner of North Linden and Eighth Street. We think you should buy that land from Sister Dancer, Katie Dancer, \$300. So, they did, and then they moved their building over on to that land.

Karin Peter 21:37

This is really interesting. As I listen to this and the interaction between the church leaders, males, and what they were allowed to do and how they lived that out, and how they navigated doing things that they thought were important, but still under the supervision, if you will, of the male church leadership. This must have been interesting, Sherry, as I think about some of the personalities of some of the women in Lamoni at the time. We've done some podcasts on these and I encourage our listeners to go and listen to some, including Marietta Walker, who had an interesting relationship with church leadership. I don't know if she was part of the Mites but she's...

Sherry Mesle-Morain 22:27

Yes, she was a part.

Karin Peter 22:27

...she's a really interesting voice of women at the time. Joseph Smith III's spouses, he had three different spouses consecutively, not all at the same time, for our listeners. There were some really determined women in Lamoni.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 22:47

Yeah, yes, there were, there were. I learned about some of them. Yes.

Karin Peter 22:54

So, as you were talking about making the rag rugs to sell, the quilts to sell, and even when you talked about there had to be a man, a priesthood member there when they organized, for many people in the mainstream LDS tradition, that's still an aspect of their culture, is there needs to be a male priesthood member there to oversee what's going on. And so, it's interesting to see it, how it was expressed in our tradition, our branch of the Restoration. But also, when I've gone to the Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, the polygamous groups come and, you know, they, some of them still wear the prairie dresses, and they bring their rag rugs to sell, and they bring their home canned jams and jellies to sell, and they bring their aprons to sell there. And, so I'm watching that and then listening to you talk about it, I'm thinking, oh, my goodness, this is a part of that, that they've still have in their tradition, that we had in our own, so.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 24:01

Interesting.

Karin Peter 24:02

Yeah, making some connections there, and not always comfortable connections, because it's easy to put "them", "they do this", in "their" category, but "we", you know, we're more progressive and yet it's part of our tradition, as well.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 24:16

It is.

Karin Peter 24:17

Okay, so you talked about some of the challenges of telling the story. One is that you weren't familiar with the history of it, that's a challenge right there, but you were blessed with 139 years of weekly minutes. I just find that amazing that they kept minutes for that long. What were some other challenges to, kind of, figuring out how to share this?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 24:41

Well, in the 1970-, in 1980s, 1986, I think, the Mites chose to assemble all of their minutes, financial records, photographs, and so on, and give them to the Temple, not to the Temple at the time, give them

to the church archives. Madeline Brunson was the archivist at the time. So, all of those records were down in the Temple archives when I was doing this research. So, one of the challenges was driving down to the Temple, a two-hour trip, and two hours back.

Karin Peter 25:19

Yeah.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 25:19

I love it. I just loved it, but I put a lot of miles on my car. So, that certainly was a challenge, but it was fun. It was really fun, and I loved being in the archives and working with Rachel and Barbara Bernauer and so on. So that was one of the, that was an easy challenge. There was so much information, I mean, weekly, for years and years and years. And what was there was up until, their records, up until 1970, and then the rest were in the cupboard at the Mites Room where they quilt. My paper was to be 25 minutes long, so I couldn't do everything. So, I kind of stopped at 1930, for the most part, not exclusively. There are some late stories that I tell but, for the most part, 1930s, which was when the bishopric, the general church bishopric took over the major responsibility for helping the poor. And, of course, this is during the depression and so the Mites, then, it wasn't that they reverted, it was they decided to do quilting exclusively. They had done that all along but not exclusively by any means. It was just one of many things they did. But, in 1930, when the bishop took over, so that was when they were doing quilting from then on. Yeah, so much information. And there were so many, you talked about when you were doing your research, setting a book aside that you wanted to explore, and putting another one aside, and pretty soon you've got a whole stack of books you want to read. That was much the case as I was reading this. There were threads I wanted to explore, if you will, on, for instance, Callie Stebbins, who, perhaps was one of the women that you have had on a podca-, or history of whom you've had on a podcast, if not, you need to.

Karin Peter 27:32

Okay.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 27:34

She was one that I was fascinated by, and I would get off on a tangent and start reading about her and reading what she wrote. She was the intellectual of this group. In 1931, which of course was when they were just quilting, there were a number of periodicals that went around, some were women's, some were church and so on. Some woman in one article, in one periodical said, "So why did they get together and quilt? It just promotes idle gossip. Somebody should read to them so that they have their minds improved while they're got their hands busy."

Karin Peter 28:17

Oh, my!

Sherry Mesle-Morain 28:21

That, I realized that she may not have written it that way, but that's the way it came across. So, Callie Stebbins started reading to the group on Thursdays, instead of quilting. She read some church documents. She read from the *Christian Century*, which was in existence clear back then. She read

from newspapers. So, they had a wide variety of information at their meetings. Now, it wasn't, she didn't read to them for four hours every afternoon, but, yeah, so that was, kind of, one of the interesting things.

Karin Peter 29:02

Yeah, included education in that experience as well.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 29:08

Yes.

Karin Peter 29:08

That's really interesting, because if I'm part of that society, the Mite Society, and were on the receiving end of that kind of a comment, "...they ought to do something to improve their minds", I'm not sure it would have been current events, like newspapers, and that kind of thing, would have been really what was expected, but out of this Mite Society it's what I would expect of them because it seems like from the beginning, they did the unexpected.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 29:37

They certainly did, yes. And Callie Stebbins is just a fascinating woman. The house she lived in is directly across the street from the Lamoni congregation, Community of Christ Church. And it was, a lot of history of the Mites, sometimes they met there, sometimes they'd go someplace else, and they were always moving around until they, even aft-, yeah, when they got their own building, and even then, there was some moving around, but more, much more stability. So, she's an interesting lady.

Karin Peter 30:12

Alright, she's on my list now, Sherry. She's on my list of future topics, absolutely. You talked about the fact that you had to start, basically, from scratch with your research here about the Mite Society. And so, one of the things I usually ask all the folks from Historic Sites Foundation who do lectures is, was there something new you learned for this topic? Almost everything was new to you as you researched this, but was there anything, like, surprising that you learned, or that really, really stood out to you?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 30:49

It wasn't just the poor in Lamoni. It wasn't just the church in Lamoni, and of course, the general church was in Lamoni at the time, but they raised money for the *Evanelia* which was the ship that sailed the, what, Tahitian Islands. They raised money for the Independence Sanitarium when it was going. They raised money for Lake Doniphan. So, all along as they were doing this, you could see the church history as it developed. You know, Lake Doniphan was really, really important in my growing up, and they actually provided funding for that.

Karin Peter 31:36

So, for our listeners, the *Evanelia* was a missionary ship that was sent to the Pacific Islands and the Sanitarium was a hospital in Independence that served the community as well as the church. And Lake Doniphan is still the campground that the Community of Christ folks use for family and kids camps...

Sherry Mesle-Morain 31:59

That's right.

Karin Peter 31:60

...and other activities in the Independence area. So yeah, it affected mission. It affected community well-being, and it affected the importance and, of the camping program in the life of Community of Christ, which is huge.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 32:17

Yes, yes, it is.

Karin Peter 32:19

All from this group of women in Lamoni who quilted.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 32:21

Yeah, yeah. Yeah. They contributed. They've contributed to Graceland from the get go. Of course, Mariana Walker did the land in 18- in the 1890s, and it was organized in 1895, and they provided funding to that. And they, in 1931, Graceland almost went under.

Karin Peter 32:47

So, during the Depression.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 32:48

Yeah. Graceland almost went under. The church decided that it needed to no longer exist and the Mites had already given some money, but they gave some more money, and then, and Bishop Kelly managed to keep it going too until there was more funding available. But so, it was local. It was the college. It was Independence. And I have to tell you that my mother grew up across the street from the Independence Sanitarium.

Karin Peter 33:17

Oh, okay.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 33:22

My brother...

Karin Peter 33:22

Wonderful.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 33:23

... brother and sister were born there, so yeah, so, yeah, it just was really, really cool.

Karin Peter 33:33

Yes, yes, to see how it affected so many different aspects of the life of the church. So, Sherry, before we started recording, you and I talked a little bit about church history and how it's usually through the

lens of the male actors in history, women are usually the side characters, the "...and he was married to..." characters in our historical stories. So, what do you think about learning more, how a more in depth understanding of the history, particularly of women's groups like this in the church, helped shape, can help shape and form us going forward as disciples. We don't learn about women's groups like this in general, as when we talk about church history. So, what would be helpful to us as we go forward?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 34:26

You know, I have not been an active member, but I have been an active observer. And so, I have watched as the church began to incorporate the service of women. In fact, the men have relied on the service of women. When I was talking about this, when I when I was giving this paper at the John Whitmer meeting, during the Q &A, one of the women who is an active member of John Whitmer, and an active member in her congregation raised her hand and she said, you know, we still have this problem in our congregation. The women put on dinners, and raise funds and the church leadership, the men, the bishop says that they get to decide how those funds are spent.

Karin Peter 35:29

Ouch.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 35:30

Ouch. And that was just 2015. I don't know if things have changed there. I should get in touch with her and see. But so, you know, make progress and then not as much as we think maybe.

Karin Peter 35:45

Yeah.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 35:46

The men and women seem, you know, women entered the priesthood, and that was all good. And women take powerful roles in the leadership, and that is all good. It, it's not that the women, that the Mites did all of this by themselves. When they wanted to put the bell in the belfry, they did utilize the knowledge of the businessmen to, where can we get this bell? Who's gonna get it? How do we get it here? How much is it going to cost? So, they collaborated. They went to the men to use what the men knew, to make these things happen. So, you know, I used, in the beginning, the relationships, the struggles, sometimes the conflicts, and also the collaboration, the, yeah, of the men and the women. And so, that's something that probably, we will always be learning how to do, learn more about, and I learn this all the time, you would think I would know. I learn this all the time. People that I meet with on a regular basis in my political party, I meet with them once a month, I don't know them very well, and all of a sudden, we have a meeting where I get to know them. We need to get to know each other. We need to get to know each other. You know, what's important?

Karin Peter 37:20

I think groups like this, like the Mite Society, can serve that illustration for us when we delve into that and explore it. I think the model that you talked about, the collaboration with the men when they wanted to put the bell in the church, is an excellent model for our current way of being when we're such a

politically and culturally divided nation, that need to collaborate, need to get to know each other. We need to deal with each other in authentic relationships. So, yeah.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 37:52

Another thing that the Mites did very late, in the late '80s, they begin fundraising for the Temple. They had quilts, they made quilts specifically, and they don't usually make their own quilts, but they made quilts specifically to take down to the general conference, World Conference, to sell, and raised \$5,000 toward the Temple. And then, and, yeah, and then, for the Temple opening, they designed, the art professor designed and they constructed a two-sided quilt which is very unusual, a two-sided quilt, the one side with the face of Jesus, and quilted that. They worked overtime. They worked overtime. And it was there in the Temple, in the big Temple area, on exhibit at the...

Karin Peter 38:57

Yeah, on the big foyer area when you go in.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 38:60

Yeah.

Karin Peter 30:00

Oh, beautiful.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 39:01

It contributed to the Temple. So, and yeah, and the men had to, the men accepted this. They put it in a prominent place. You know, it's collaboration, get to know each other and, yeah.

Karin Peter 39:19

Yeah. So, you said you wrote the paper and shared it. Was it John Whitmer?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 39:25

Yes.

Karin Peter 39:27

In 2015. So, it's been a few years since you did the research and wrote the paper. How has that research, as well as your own participation in the Lamoni Mite Society, shaped you and your discipleship and in the ministry that you offer?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 39:44

Yeah, that was a good one to think about. Back then, the women knew people who had need. In fact, at one meeting, they designated a woman whose responsibility it was to visit families and find out what their needs were. And sometimes a house would burn down and they would all know and so on. But, and so that's how they assessed need, and then they did what they could to meet those needs. Life has changed and now we have the food pantry which, of course, is a state organization, but they're all over the country. And Lamoni has a food pantry and we have the Emergency Relief Fund as a subsidiary of the food pantry. We are still concerned about people's individual needs. And, only now, they come to us

to ask us for assistance. And then I am one of, now, of a number of people, given COVID and extraordinary need during that time, then I interview them. I listen to their stories. I like listening to their stories. And that is, I think, important in knowing how to minister to people. You don't just say, "Here's what you need." and throw it at them.

Karin Peter 41:10

Right.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 41:11

Listen to their stories, because we not only hope, usually provide them with some financial assistance for whatever is needed, and here is a little aside; we do not give it directly to the person who's requesting. We give it to the vendor, if you will; the landlord, the utilities, the pharmacy for meds, or whatever. So, in listening to their stories, I hear other things. And since I am a trained social worker, I'm aware of other things they can do to help meet some of their more basic issues. And so do the other interviewers, but only because we listen to their stories do we know of other needs and how they can address those that are not financial, necessarily, yeah.

Karin Peter 42:07

Good advice for all of us; listen to other people's stories. It's how we get to know them.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 42:15

Absolutely.

Karin Peter 42:15

Any closing thoughts about this that come to mind? Our time is coming towards an end and I want to make sure that we've covered the pieces that you want to share with us about Lamon Mite Society.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 42:28

Well, I'm gonna go back to my history. I love church history [inaudible] third grade Sunday school. And then I took Alma Blair's class at Graceland, on LDS, on Latter-day Saint history, and I would sometimes tell the story of the diaspora, if people would ask me, "What's the difference between RLDS and LDS?" and I would give them the Cliffs Notes version. But I've never been a historian, so, and I read Flanders' book back then, when I was very young. I accepted it from my aunt and I never gave it back. It was a powerful influence on me.

Karin Peter 43:04

Yes.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 43:05

So, I always liked church history. I never dreamed that I would write, that I would get involved in history. So, thank you, Lach Mackay. Thank you to the Mites for giving me a piece that I could do. I couldn't do a whole lot of things, but I could do that, and that was a gift the Mites gave me.

Karin Peter 43:29

Well, Sherry, I want to thank you for joining us today for your second time here at *Project Zion Podcast* because you are a listener to other people's stories, but you are also a wonderful teller of stories. And so, yes, church history is definitely a good fit for you. We hope to learn more about the different things that you discover as you continue to participate with the Historic Sites Foundation. For our listeners, you can watch Sherry's lecture. It's June 2nd, at 12 p.m. Central time is what I have down. Is that correct?

Sherry Mesle-Morain 44:10

Correct.

Karin Peter 44:11

Okay, on historicsitesfoundation.org is where you can find that. If you can't tune in at that time on June 2nd, you can go and catch her lecture. It will be in the archives on historicsitesfoundation.org after, usually after the end of that month. So be sure and check that out. I love this because I'm always interested in women's history in the Restoration tradition and this has been a terrific introduction to the group history of women, especially the women of Lamoni which was such a central part of the leadership of the organization. So, for "Cuppa Joe", I want to thank our listeners. This is part of *Project Zion Podcast*. We've been chatting with Sherry Mesle-Morain and we hope to do that again. Thanks so much for listening.

Sherry Mesle-Morain 45:07

Thank you.

Josh Mangelson 45:16

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