

Open Topics | Wally B Smith: Stories from the Field

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SPEAKERS

Blake Smith, Teppy Dimmitt, Julie Smith

Blake Smith 00:27

Hello, and welcome to Project Zion Podcast. I'm your host, Blake Smith. And I am excited today because I'm here with special guests. I'm here with Julie Smith and Teppy Dimmitt, daughter and granddaughter of President Wallace B. Smith, President Emeritus Wally B. to many of us. This is the fourth part of our series honoring President Smith's memory. And, from the stories that we received over the last couple of weeks, it's just really clear how much he was loved. First of all, welcome Julie and Teppy. (Thank you.)

Julie Smith 01:00

Good to be here Blake.

Blake Smith 01:02

Really good to have you guys. And I just say on behalf of the church, and I think one of our stories that we'll finish with will add to that, but just thank you. I can't imagine being the daughter or granddaughter of the President of the church and what kind of pressures that might have been, but we'll maybe hear some of those stories as well. Teppy, you have not been on a podcast before. Maybe before we go any further, I should just let you say a little bit about yourself so people know who you are. And Julie we'll give you that chance to recap in case people haven't heard her episode.

Teppy Dimmitt 01:39

Okay, I'm Teppy Dimmitt. I live in the Chicagoland area in Hoffman estates Illinois, for those in that know the area. I don't know a whole lot, but I can say one of my kind of passions as far as like the church goes is youth ministries. I participate in senior high camp, staff senior high camps, and I attend SPEC every year as delegation staff. So that's kind of my lane and things that I most enjoy doing. As far as you know, church related stuff goes so that's me.

Blake Smith 02:14

So Teppy without, real quickly, without giving up your age, because I never asked a woman her age, because we're gonna be talking about your grandpa. Were you alive while he was still President of the church?

02:26

Oh, yeah. Yeah, um, I was born in 85. So I was like, 10, when he retired? Just because I was born in December. So yeah, so I have, I'm probably the only one that of the grandkids that probably remembers that part of this life. My sister is three years younger than me, and her memory is not very good. So she would have only been, you know, six, seven, at the very end of it. And then yeah, my other cousins are quite a bit younger. So I remember it. I don't know, like, specifically like one thing I just like, the thing is that everywhere we go, because we moved around a lot. So anytime we would go to a new place, or I go to a new camp or something like that, as a kid. It's kind of weird, everyone, knowing who your family is without you knowing that person is. So they're like, Oh, your grandpa's this and like, you know, kind of Yeah, and I'm like, I didn't think he's a big deal other than he just my grandpa, you know, you know, like, (Just grandpa.) Yeah, exactly. So that's was always just a little bit weird. But other than that, like, that's kind of the gist. I remember it being as part of my life because we didn't live here or anything like that during that time. So it wasn't like we were doing a bunch of, you know, ceremonial stuff with him or anything like that. So it's just everyone kind of knowing who he was.

Blake Smith 03:07

I'm guessing from from the stories that I've been hearing and some of that I've read that he probably would have wanted you to feel that, Yeah, he's just grandpa.

04:18

Right. Yeah, exactly. Yeah, he was pretty humble. When it came and stuff like that. So because we were talking about when I saw him last the because they have that Wally B. Scholarship at SPEC. And they were talking about kind of changing it or whatever, kind of combining it with some other scholarship. And we're just saying like, Is that okay with you? Like you, we knew we wouldn't care anybody wanted to give, you know, his thoughts. He's like, my name doesn't even really need to be on it. Like, you know, that kind of thing. So, you know, he didn't really, he wasn't into any kind of recognition or praise or anything like that. So

Blake Smith 05:01

So Julie, how about you?

Julie Smith 05:03

Um, well, I'm the middle daughter of I have two sisters. And we did grow up in Independence. And I was involved in a lot of church things, but I was 14 when dad became the President Designate. So I was already, you know, a lot of way through my childhood. And it didn't make a lot of difference in, you know, like going to school. I mean, I heard stuff like Prophet's Daughter and stuff like that, which, you know, kids can just be me no matter what, they'll always find something. But we, you know, kept pretty normal childhood. So it wasn't a big huge change for us, except that dad was going to be gone a lot more, because he went on, of course, a lot of trips, long trips too, you know, lots of different countries. I remember, one Christmas, they both mom and dad went to Australia, and during the Christmas time, in Australia, they have their reunion. So they were going to Australia to go to the reunion there. And so we were without them during Christmas. And I remember that was not a great Christmas that year. But other you know, other than that, they tried to just keep it as normal as possible, and, you know, not

disrupt our lives all that much. And then I, you know, went to Graceland, and I, you know, there was some people that were, you know, I maybe acted differently towards me than they might other people just because of that. But it it didn't ever bother me a lot. And then I got married and moved away from, you know, the center place. So it like Teppy said, we started kind of our trek moving to a whole bunch of different places. But the good thing was, whenever we did move to a new place, we immediately got hooked into whatever local congregation there was, and it was immediate, family, immediate community. So that the kids got, you know, they went to the camps and got into whatever youth thing was happening. And so it made all of our moves, I think a little bit easier. Just knowing that that ready made community was was there. I now work for the church, I work in Human Resources at headquarters in Independence. And I really enjoy that. I get to meet lots of different people and get to, you know, kind of help out our employment in the, you know, in hiring new people and things like that, and I really enjoy it. And I'm the Secretary of the High Priest Quorum. And everyone involved in my local congregation, Good Shepherd, and Independence. So I keep pretty involved in church things. So that's me, in a nutshell.

Blake Smith 08:35

That's great. So you say you were 14 When your dad became the President Designate? (Yes.) And you're the middle child, did you or your did your sisters feel any pressure, I mean, in church or otherwise.

Julie Smith 08:50

So my older sister was five years older than me. So she really had already gone on to college. And I didn't really know what she was experiencing. She was in the Graceland nursing program, and she was doing her nursing thing and with five years difference, and, you know, when you're a kid, that's a lot. So we didn't hang out in the same circles. But I think she, you know, she found her way and she became just her own person. And she kind of also moved away from this, the Independence area and so it just made her way, you know, as as a nurse and did her own thing, but we've always been really close as a family. So we would get together at holidays and everything and like you're saying he was just dad at any family thing or grandpa he just, you know, we didn't just sit around talking about church, I can tell you that (That's good.) Like, you know, what are normal families?

Blake Smith 10:05

That's great. That's great. I just was wondering because my daughters have set some boundaries. And, and I'm just the Mission Center President, but like, I was not allowed to go to their camps. You know, they didn't want to be they didn't want to be the president's daughter. They wanted to just be themselves. And I understood that so I did not attend their camps.

Teppy Dimmitt 10:26

That was an option. No, I was gonna say mom went to all my youth camps. Yeah, it was fine. I didn't care.

Blake Smith 10:37

So we're just going to take some time to tell some stories. We had some come in through our email. And I'm sure there are just millions more stories, maybe some that you heard over this last weekend. I

want to start off by just reading a comment that was included in Wally B's obituary, and it's a statement by President Veazey. So Stephen Veazey, who is the current Prophet-President of the church, described President Smith in 2009 when presenting him with the seminary vision award, "I believe that future historians of the church will conclude that President Smith not only capably fulfilled the responsibilities of prophet and president, he courageously provided leadership that transformed the church. Such transformational leadership is the essence of what it means to be a visionary. Because it not only involves seeing the preferred future, but also setting in motion the strategies that create that future." I know that's a common thread through the stories that came in and just conversations that I've had with people, and then listening to some of the previous podcasts that has been done about the different eras and the church. So it seems to me like while he said, W Wallace Smith, began to make some of those changes in the 60s when he began engaging at St. Paul School of Theology, but certainly, your dad and grandpa just really opened the doors for the church to begin to move in the direction God is calling us so and it has transformed lives all over. And, transformed the church, specifically with the calling of women to the priesthood, and, and the fact that we now have 50%, about almost 50%, I guess, of our World Church Leadership, who are women, and that's wonderful. And I know my family was personally positively affected by the opening of communion. So just some really huge things for the church. My memories, starting with, Julie with your grandfather and Teppy with your great grandfather, just going to conference and the the incredible dignity and posture with which both he and your dad carried themselves and we're just so deeply respected. And this is not about about Wally B, but about your grandfather, Julie. But one of my one of my memories from going to conference was going to Stevenson's Apple Orchard for lunch during conference, and there was a wait list as usual. And we had signed in as the Smiths. And so then at one point, the hostess called The Smiths and my parents had started to get up from where we were sitting and coming across the lobby was your grandfather and grandmother and my mother just quietly sat down. So and I think, for me that carried through certainly with with your dad as well, just such a deep respect. So I really appreciated that.

13:56

Well. Sorry, when we went to the service. I mentioned Stephenson's in it.

Blake Smith 14:03

Oh, do you? Oh my goodness, lots and lots and lots of memories. Well, speaking of memories, let's get into a couple of the stories that we received. And then something that sparks something for you just feel free to break in. The first one we got was from Ted Tinsman in Springfield, Missouri. And this is what Ted writes. While attending law school at the University of Missouri Columbia School of Law. I was involved in leadership in the Liahona student group. Our group invited guests ministers from the church to offer ministry in small group settings and retreats. We even had President Veazey join us before his call to an apostle. I arranged for President Smith to join us for one of our evening fellowships in Columbia, Missouri. He must have been coming for another reason because our small group would not have justified his ministry with us by itself. However, I do not remember other events that he was attending. I was so impressed that when I called headquarters to arrange the meeting, I spoke directly to him. This was amazing. I was able to speak directly with the President of the church. I was not expecting that. As a young student, I was so impressed by his level of service and the gentle nature in which he attended to our ministry. I have never forgotten this incident. And I imagine that with a life legacy of his gentle ministry, he will be missed by many. I hope the story is meaningful to someone. I

don't know. But I'm guessing. I certainly there's a possibility that he had other reasons. But everything that I've ever heard about Wally B. would be that he might have made that trip over to Colombia to just be with that little group, don't you think? Yeah. So though, and that's a recurring theme through the stories as well, just the personality of Wally B and just you guys have talked about he was just that he was just grandpa, but he tried seem to try to be that everywhere he was, which is really neat. There's another one from Christopher Clark out of Apple Valley, Minnesota, and he writes, To whom it may concern I have grown up in the church. My father, Elder Clinton, Clark was pastor of our local congregation for most of my young life. We attended the DeKalb, Illinois church, and in 1976, we built a new building. I was excited, as myself and a friend Matt Gabrielson, were to be the first baptisms in the new font. Then imagine the news that the newly designated president and prophet of the church is coming to bless our building. As an eight year old, it didn't get any better than that, except when you learn that he was also going to be staying at our home. Wait, what?! Chris writes, I still remember to this day sitting at our dinner table, the good one, with Wallace B. Smith, president and prophet of our church, holding my hand as we said, a blessing on our food. He was incredibly kind, gracious, funny, and had an aura about him that drew you in and kept you there. He graced us with stories of his life and travel, sharing funny moments during worship services and camps alike. He offered advice about how to talk with God, and the kind of life choices I should consider if I truly wanted to be a priesthood member like my dad one day, as I noted, even nearly 50 years later, I recall with vivid detail, Wally in our home, laughing, sharing, eating great food, my mom prepared and sleeping in our guest room right next to my room. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend my baptism. Trust me, I asked. But again, even in having to deny my request, he was the kindest, most gracious man I can imagine. And thanked me for asking him to be the lucky person who had the honor of baptizing me. I believe he did mention my dad would be a pretty good replacement. So that was great for me. He was a true pioneer of our church, leading with honor, grace, a deep bond with the Divine and a genuine care for each and every member and friend of our beloved Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. I am truly a blessed man for having known him having talked with him and having him be the inspired by the Divine leader. He was he is and will continue to be missed greatly. So I'm wondering, did you guys have a special dining room table the good one that you ate at when he was home?

14:04

Yeah.

19:01

We didn't ever eat it the good one unless we had other guests. We just ate in the kitchen of but we broke out the China and stuff for you know for family like Thanksgiving dinners and stuff like that we would sit at the good table.

Blake Smith 19:21

That's neat. You know, I that's another thing about my dad was a district president for a number of years and your dad never came and stayed at our house but other members like of the Council of 12 did and I remember I can sense that feeling that Christopher had just the honor of having him in your house and sitting at your table and that kind of thing. And my mom probably would have pulled out the China and the crystal and had the very best. So Teppy, you want to tell one of the stories.

Teppy Dimmitt 19:57

Sure, which and I have one from Dan, think it's Whitmore so sorry if I'm not saying that right. One personal encounter with President Smith that raises to the top for me is the humbling experience of being ordained Bishop by President Elect Smith and Bishop Francis Hanson 1977 Denver Stake Reunion at Palmer Lake Colorado, this moment invigorated me to be active with the task of strengthening the financial future of the church, using my legal financial and ministerial skills. I believed it to be a calling that I could make a positive that can make a positive difference whilst we Smith presence was powerful and inspiring.

Blake Smith 20:51

That's a good one. I'm sure that he got to be at a lot of those types of events through the years. And probably I'm guessing also. Well, he probably knew how meaningful it was to people. But there's, there's just an undercurrent of, again, that deep respect that that seems to be really, really meaningful, just with that ministry of presence. Really neat. Well, I have a I have a favorite one. I want to read this one. This one came in and as soon as I read it, I just, I fell in love with it. Not that I don't appreciate all the stories. I really appreciate everybody sending in the stories, but there was something about this one that really captured me. This comes from Kris Hall noble of Lancaster, Wisconsin. Kris writes, My six year old son, John Noble, had just sat down after going through the evening dinner line. Before Lauren Lee looked at me and said, Mom, I can't eat this grilled cheese sandwich. It's burned. Of course, as I glanced at the food line, it was rather long. I didn't know if there was enough sandwiches for everyone if I returned his burned one. All of a sudden, I heard a kind voice say to John, "I really like burned sandwiches. They're my favorite. Would you like to trade your sandwich with me? Please?" I couldn't believe it. President Wally B. Smith, the guest minister for the week, was offering his perfectly done grilled cheese sandwich for John's not so appetizing one. The switch was quietly made. Thanks were expressed. And both John and I were forever touched by President Smith's gentle loving smile and compassion. There are so many stories of how President Smith's ministry and leadership was an impact in my life. This perhaps is one of my favorites. I know. It's one of mine.

Teppy Dimmitt 22:51

That's a good one.

Blake Smith 22:55

Yeah,

Julie Smith 22:57

guys eat the burned one. Just kidding.

Blake Smith 23:03

Did he like burned sandwiches? Really? Or was he just

Julie Smith 23:08

He never expressed that to me, but he would definitely do something like that. And he kind of was a peacemaker, too. You know, he, he didn't particularly like conflict.

Blake Smith 23:21

Yeah, yeah. Wow. And so that says even more for him. Not liking conflict. And yet there was so much conflict in those last couple of years of his presidency. And he, and he handled that with such grace as well.

Julie Smith 23:38

That was really, really hard on him.

Blake Smith 23:43

So Julie, there's a story from over at Dunfield House that I think you were present for. Do you want to share that story?

Julie Smith 23:50

Sure. Before I read it, I just want to say that we went over there in 1976, to for dads, when he became President Designate, just for you know, the church over there to get to know Him. And, you know, for him to get to know the people over there. So we went to a lot of different places on that tour. But I particularly remembered Dunfield House and we joined the reunion that was there for a few days. So I think this story is about that. It's from Myra Elliot, who lives in Peoria, Illinois. My husband and two children and I were transferred to Geneva, Switzerland in November of 1976. There was no RLDS group close to us. So we decided to go to reunion in the summer of 1977. We were blessed to be at that reunion with Wally B, Anne, and their two daughters, Julie and Laurie. Carolyn was in nursing school and was not able to make the trip. At the end of reunion, the group was asked if anyone was able to take the Smith family to the train station a few hours away from Dunfield House. I thought it was unusual that the directors had not made those arrangements beforehand. Fred and I looked at each other and we raised our hand that we could do it. How did we manage to add four more people and their luggage to the tour the four who are already in our car. This is the miracle part. We had driven our own car from Switzerland through France to the English Channel and taking a ferry to England. In London, we left our car to be worked on with people at the Caterpillar dealership that my husband had gotten to know in his work. One of the men longest his VW Bus to us while we toured and went to reunion, what a blessing it was, while he be sat in the front with my husband, and one of the daughters set in the short middle seat, and our two young children and the other daughter set in the third long seat. I sat on the floor next to the sliding door on the side. It was a fun trip. We stopped for lunch and had fish and chips wrapped in newspaper, of course. My second encounter, in a round about way, was at the International Women's Conference. First gathering to be held in the newly finished temple. We were divided into small groups, I ended up in a group led by Carolyn. One of the first thing she said was that her dad, Wally B, was home babysitting for her so that she and her mom and could attend the whole conference. That simple statement told me that while they be had a high calling and leaving the church, but he was just like the rest of us. And then she says prayers and blessings to all of the Smith family.

Blake Smith 27:06

Do you remember that trip? I mean, you're probably had lots of those kinds of things. Do you remember that one particularly.

Julie Smith 27:13

I don't I'm so sorry. That sounds significant. I feel like I should remember that. I do remember going to Dunfield House. But I don't I don't even know how we got back to the train station. Luckily, they were there to take us otherwise I would just sit on the curb. I don't know. But yeah, that was really nice to their family. I've you know, I'm glad that that's a memory for her.

Blake Smith 27:41

Yeah, and by the way, Myra if you're listening, I agree with you. I'm not sure why the directors hadn't made those arrangements yet. But I have made similar faux pas, in just a little detail that gets off the radar.

Teppy Dimmitt 27:55

Maybe they had made the arrangements and then it fell over or something. You know how that happens. Yeah,

Blake Smith 28:00

There you go.

Julie Smith 28:02

Benefit of the doubt.

Blake Smith 28:04

There's always things happening. And so thank you, my refer for being willing to be there and take care of that. Maybe that was meant to be so happy. Do you have any other stories?

Teppy Dimmitt 28:17

OK, we got one from Adrienne Lucey didn't say where they were from. President Wallace B. Smith was the guest minister at reunion one year at Lewis River Campgrounds. I have forgotten what year it was. People were excited about him being there, but also in awe of his presence. I remember one lady asked me if I thought she could ask him for a picture. My mother had only known Wally B as a teenager while he was living in Portland, Oregon, with his family in the 1940s. She told me my grandfather had been friends with W Wallace during that time, kind of thought Well, it'd be as bad as a family friend, though I didn't know him personally. So as much as I respected him, I didn't think that he was unapproachable. About the middle of the week his wife needed to do some laundry. The washing machine flooded and the water poured out all over the floor. Wally B. found the mop and mopped up all the water. Many people were amazed. Can you imagine the president of the church mopping the floor? It seemed to change the atmosphere around and people would sit with him and meals. There was much talking and laughter around them he was just like everyone else even though he provided ministry.

Blake Smith 29:41

I loved when I read that story. I don't know if it was just the president of the church that's not expected to mop floors, but I don't find anybody having a problem with me mopping floors. I don't find that surprising at all. That's expected. Definitely a different level just being the President of a mission center

but yeah, I, I come from the same school as your father. So he probably didn't think that was so unusual himself, I'm guessing.

Teppy Dimmitt 30:15

Nope. Just pitch right in. Whatever's needed.

Blake Smith 30:21

By the way, I think Adrienne Lucey is from Salem, Oregon. So thank you, Adrienne for that story. There's also one that came in without a name. So we just have an anonymous short story here. You want to share that one Teppy?

Teppy Dimmitt 30:37

Yes. I remember him visiting a reunion in Colorado that I attended. A group of us young persons were together near the front of the line of the kitchen. It was lunchtime. When he walked past, he said, "in any other church, they would roll out the red carpet for me and I would go first look at this long line." We offered him a place in front of us he declined and said, "the first shall be last and the last shall be first in God's kingdom will be first. I remember his servant attitude. I'm sure, when you said that would have been sarcastic Oh. (What was that?) I'm sure when he said, "any other place, they'd roll out the red carpet for me.

Blake Smith 31:27

Yeah, I don't I don't hear that being a regular, Now. I have heard other World Church Leadership Council members say things like that. And I think they said it in all seriousness, but I would not have expected that from your grandpa.

Julie Smith 31:41

Yeah, he would have been given them the business maybe? Yeah, yeah.

Teppy Dimmitt 31:48

He had a dry wit. So yeah.

Blake Smith 31:53

All right. Well, we've got a story from from Wendy Eaton with Historic Sites Foundation and the Historic Joseph Smith Historic Sites. You want to share that one, Julie?

Julie Smith 32:04

Yeah, yeah, Wendy works currently is in for historic sites. I grew up during Wallace B's Presidency and wasn't even two years old when he began to lead the church through the changes of Doctrine and Covenants 156. I remember lining pennies on a strip of tape as my congregation challenged the kids to give a mile of pennies for the temple construction. I remember the groundbreaking of the temple, though I was too young to pay attention to our President Smith said. Through his leadership I only know of priesthood which included women. I always had the opportunity to receive ministry from women and men. I do have one memory of meeting Wallace. I was around nine years old when he came to my congregation to share a sermon before lunch and Stake Conference. For weeks my Sunday School

teacher drilled into us kiddos to be on our best behavior and keep our clothes tidy because the President was visiting. When the big day arrived, our Sunday school class was introduced to Wallace and he took each of our hands. The biggest part of that memory is that he had Linda Booth traveling with him, and I was thoroughly captivated by her radiant smile. Though my memories of Wallace are vague, I do have memories of the people he called into church leadership like Linda and the impact they they and the Temple have had on my life. I'd brought up sharing stories of Wally B. Smith with the volunteers of Joseph Smith Historic Sites. I hope they send in memories because I never had the chance to go back and record them. The ladies all spoke of how kind Wally was and what it was like to watch his calm, steady leadership through that difficult decade after 1846. One of the women was ordained early in that period and was married to a church leader and other was ordained in the late 90s and knew the Smith family in the 70s. The third joined the Church recently and mostly knew Wally through her seminary classes. It was fascinating to hear three sides of Wally's life.

Blake Smith 34:19

Well thanks for that Wendy. I will say I don't believe that we receive those stories from your volunteers. They're at the historic sites, but we would welcome them to still come in. We probably won't be sharing them on a podcast, but we will share them with the family and I really enjoy reading these stories. So thank you for sharing a bit of their stories as well. So let's see. What do we have Teppy, how about the story from Jared?

Teppy Dimmitt 34:47

Okay. I saw him only one time in person. It was a regional meeting in Des Moines, Iowa. He sat alone and listen to what was being shared by the instructors and participants speaking only once and it was it was spoke as a statesman in that it was profound. But with the dignity. He acted as a caring, thoughtful person humble in speech and action. If you do not know who he was, you would have thought he was just a member.

Blake Smith 35:24

But itself says a lot. That

Teppy Dimmitt 35:27

Seems like that's somewhat of a theme where, and if you didn't know, or you just kind of was a regular guy, you know, people, he wasn't, you know, larger than life. I think that's people made him out to be that way. But, you know, once people saw, he was just like everybody else, like, you know, he seemed either approachable, or, you know, he didn't seem above anybody else. So,

Blake Smith 35:56

I mean, I think he, for me, is just the perfect example of a priesthood member. In his role as President, you could, like you said to me through the stories, and just for me, watching from a distance in those very formational years of my life, in my teens and early 20s, he just seemed to be so authentic and real, and, and down to earth and humble and, you know, so I think that we can learn so much from his example. And when I think about priesthood and, and leadership in the church, the characteristics that he carried, are just top top of the heap for me, so I, I can't say that enough. There was there's just something special about and, you know, it's funny, because I was looking at his picture too. And, and I

think about my grandparents and I think about grandparents are different today in this generation than, than they were when my grand, you know, and my grandparents were around, and they, there's just a calming Spirit and a loving, gentle way. And I could certainly see Wally B being a great grandfather. So before I read the last story that came in, do you guys have any? I mean, maybe, I know you've had just a big weekend. And I'm really sorry to say that circumstances did not allow me to even be able to watch the memorial yesterday in the Temple, but I do understand that it will be or is already posted online and is available to watch. So I would encourage those who did not get an opportunity to do that to to be able to go online and watch that. I know that I am looking forward to doing that. But did you guys, maybe in your conversations with folks this weekend, as people were gathering Did you hear other stories that that stuck out for you, or maybe even just your own story that you would share?

Julie Smith 38:02

Um, well, we had a reception line, you know, after the memorial service, but it's not a really good time to hear stories. People are just kind of shuffling by.

Teppy Dimmitt 38:16

Yeah, it was, but there was a lot of people, they're like, Oh, I knew him from this and this, or I know him from this. And this, you know, like, like, I didn't even know, you know, like, you have a rotary club or whatever it is. And I was like, you know, obviously, I've never met those people before. But you know, he had affected a lot of different people in a lot of different walks of life.

Julie Smith 38:17

Right, not just the church.

Blake Smith 38:22

Yeah. The, the information shared in his obituary that your aunt wrote, virtually your sister wrote, I mean, really shows how deeply he was involved in and your mom as well, and world anger and read for the world and all those, all of those things just really, really stayed completely active. Rotary Club, and of course, and our listeners may or may not know, I mean, you mentioned Julie that he was a doctor, he was an ophthalmologist. Right. And before that he was in the Navy. (Yes.) So. So he did. He touched people across the span of the world in lots of different ways. Yeah, but any anything else that I didn't mean to interrupt, but anything else that came from yesterday or?

Julie Smith 39:29

No, I don't think so. I just shared in my talk, that, you know, what we've been talking about that he was just my dad. And so I told some stories about when we were kids and, you know, stories like most people have about their dad. So that I think not everyone realized, you know, or don't think about him that way. A but he, you know, we went on family vacations and you know did the little things that that families do. And he was always present mean he was always there for us. And I felt like I, I had a great dad. So I am happy to share that part of him. And we had a display of his life, basically. And I hope people got to go through that it was up the Worshiper's Path at the Temple. And we uncovered so many things, putting that together. He was in the marching band and his high school, he played the drums and you know, just thing you know, lots of different things that came to light through just going through lots of memorabilia. We have his jacket, his flight jacket from his Navy days, and you know,

those kinds of things. So it was really fun putting that together, and I hope people got a chance to kind of get a little bit more of a flavor of his life, because a lot of people were, you know, knew that church part, and not so much the other part.

Teppy Dimmitt 41:30

Yeah, and all his paintings, too. We had a painting up there. And I was like, why is this up there? They're like, he painted that too. I'm like, I've seen that painting in their house. And now it's in your house my whole life. I did not know he painted that for like I was today years old when I learned that he's the one that painted that I thought just out of some random painting, but it was he who painted it.

Julie Smith 41:52

Yeah, he was a very good artist. He was very artistic and creative. He could draw like crazy. I'll admit that sometimes during church services when we were little he would draw on the bulletin and make little pictures and stuff for us. So he was really creative.

Blake Smith 42:17

Wow. So drummer and artist on top of all the other things. Any other anything else you learn that we might want to know about him just fascinating what he covered.

Teppy Dimmitt 42:29

I wish that the YouTube would have gone through the Worshiper's Path because I don't think they did to show all that stuff that was on display, because we had six tables worth of memorabilia and all that stuff from all throughout his life, including the Wally B Bowl display.

Julie Smith 42:47

Right, we had a trivia game all based on my dad's life or his 94th birthday. And we had teams and we used the Quizbowl buzzer thing, you know, right, from Spectacular. And we had, you know, teams and little trophies up. So we had sample questions from that. And so

Blake Smith 43:11

Was that a family gathering or was that beyond the family?

Julie Smith 43:15

It was mostly family and a few friends?

Teppy Dimmitt 43:17

Right? Yeah, we had it at the village where they lived?

Blake Smith 43:22

Who won? Who won?

Julie Smith 43:23

My team!

Teppy Dimmitt 43:24

Well, you had Grandma on your team.

Blake Smith 43:27

Oh, that's a bit of a cheat.

Julie Smith 43:31

Fair. Yeah, fair. And I showed the little the trophies were this big. But I wrote it in, in the servers yesterday again. But we had a lot of fun. I mean, laughter was a huge part of any family gathering. Everyone has a really good sense of humor. And we laughed a lot during any type of family gathering.

Blake Smith 43:56

That's, that's great. That's great. Teppy any favorite Grandpa story that you can share? Favorite memory?

Teppy Dimmitt 44:05

One that doesn't require a lot of backstory. But I just remember, I'm still in because like my cousin said this too, during our service, but like, we played a lot of games, we had a lot of cards. And so that was the only time where we got a little bit cut throat is when we would play cards. But more Grandma and Grandpa, as far as you know, being a little bit cutthroat and you know, sneaky.

Blake Smith 44:27

So I have to know what card games did you play?

Teppy Dimmitt 44:46

We mostly played 500, which is I don't know if that's a game that everybody knows, but it's kind of the same like along the lines of maybe Spades or Euchre kind of you play with a partner. I mean, you know, trumps, win tricks, that kind of thing. Um, so that's a game that's been passed, like you played with your grandparents and stuff.

Julie Smith 45:11

Kind of a family game that a lot of our gatherings, there was some game of 500 going on at some point.

Blake Smith 45:19

That's great. That's great. Well, so I want to share our last story. And this came in from Alycia Smith in Fort Wayne, Indiana. And she writes, it is with great love and respect to that I remember President Emeritus Wallace B. Smith over the past 50 years or so. I became a member of the church in 1973, and had the privilege of meeting then President W. Wallace Smith in Peoria, Illinois, where our congregation was celebrating 100 years. Then came the news that President Smith had designated his son as the next president of the church. It was early in my spiritual journey with the church. So we did not at that time attend World Conferences. I remember hearing about Wallace B Smith's ordination as President in 1978. And then in 1984, his revelation to the church now Doctrine and Covenants 156, when I heard about the opening of the priesthood to women, I remember thinking, it's about time. Then I read about the construction of the temple and felt a level of excitement even then, shortly after section 156 was

given to the church, we moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 1994. We decided as a family to attend World Conference for the first time. By that time, the Temple in independence had been constructed. The tunnel between the Temple and the Auditorium was going to be used for General Conference access for one of the first times our son Chris was old enough to join the Youth Service Corps. After his first assignment, he enjoyed being an integral part of the conference and being with youth his own age that he took any other assignment they offered him. The Youth Service Corps supervisor, Kevin, had impressed upon all of the youth staff members that traffic in the tunnel must be kept moving to avoid congestion and possible increased risks. One day, Chris was stationed at the Temple end of the tunnel to keep people moving a job he took very seriously. At one point, Wallace B. Smith started to enter the tunnel and then decided to stop and chat with Chris. Chris was well aware that Wally B was the President of the church, so he enjoyed chatting with him and temporarily suspended his duties. Kevin was further along in the tunnel and notice that someone wasn't moving along as expected. So he signaled Chris to move the person along. Chris signaled to Kevin that all was well. But Kevin decided to move towards that end of the tunnel to see what the problem was, and probably add some adult encouragement to move the person along. As Kevin got closer, he realized that Wally B had stopped to chat with Chris, and it became clear why Chris hadn't encouraged Wally to move on. It was an amazing experience for our son, one that he enjoyed sharing with us that evening. I think it speaks so much to all his personal touch with everyone, that he took the time to chat with Chris, an impressionable young man serving the church in the Youth Service Corps, someone who would not normally have contact with Wally or others in the leading councils of the church. It's a memory that has lingered with our family through the years, along with many others of a less personal nature. We remember Wally's life of service to the church and our worldwide community. We thank his family for sharing him with all of us and offer our condolences, love, and prayers as they journey through the grief of his passing. It's a great way to finish this out. Thanks to you, first of all, Teppy and Julie, thank you for being here with me today to help share some of these stories. Special thanks also to those of you from around the church who shared your stories with us. It wouldn't have been the same without you. And we really appreciate you taking the time to do so. I know there are lots and lots and lots more stories out there. I encourage our listeners to share those stories with each other as we keep alive the legacy of Wallace v. Smith, affectionately known to many of us as Wally be and thank you, Julie, especially having grown up in the teenage years and sharing your dad we, and Teppy for your sharing your grandpa. We know that it wasn't your choice but if it benefited so many people and he was beloved as we have heard in some of these stories. Want to remind our listeners as I said at the beginning of the episode that this is the fourth in a mini-series where we reposted some previous episodes. So if you haven't heard those and would like to go back and listen to them, they're pretty close up in the queue. Go to ProjectZionpodcast.org. The first one is episode 629 now and that is an episode that is actually with Wally B himself. And then episode 630 is with Julie as she tells a little bit about herself and some of her own stories growing up in the church. And then 632 is a repost of the Cuppa Joe series where Lachlan Mackay, and Tony Chvala-Smith, talk with Karin Peter about the Wallace B. Smith era of the church. We are certainly blessed as a people to have had Wally B as a part of the church. And his legacy, I know will continue to live on through these stories and the ways that he touched many lives. So blessings to all. If you do have stories that you would like to share, feel free to continue to share them and projectzionpodcast@gmail.com. Like I said earlier, we may or may not have an additional episode to share stories, but we will definitely share those stories with the family. So thanks for being with us and have a great day.

Julie Smith 51:15

Thank you, Blake.

Teppy Dimmitt 51:16

Thank you.