

Sociology of Utah School for the Deaf in the Utah Deaf Community

1890-1960

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Note

Much of the information in the following section is based on Elaine Roberts' 1994 master's thesis, "The Early History of the Utah School for the Deaf and Its Influence in the Development of a Cohesive Deaf Society in Utah, c. 1884–1905."

Anne Leahy and Doug Stringham, long-time and well-known Deaf LDS History researchers, have done extensive research on the history of Deaf LDS Church and early history of the Utah School for the Deaf. Some of their recent research can be found in the "Sociology of the Utah School for the Deaf in the Utah Deaf Community" document.

The development of the Utah Deaf community began at Utah School for the Deaf (USD) in 1884. Eventually, Deaf communities were developed in Ogden and Salt Lake City where the students became future leaders for their community. In 1960s, Utah's trend toward mainstreaming grew steadily which eventually impacted USD and Utah Deaf community.

The Population of Deaf People

In Utah, population of Deaf people began to increase in 1849. According to the United States census of 1860, 14 Deaf people were reported living in Salt Lake, Davis, Utah and Iron counties. In 1900, 343 Deaf people lived in Salt Lake, Davis and Weber counties. Ten years later in 1910, the number of Deaf population dropped. 236 Deaf people lived in these counties (Stringham & Leahy, 2013). At the time, there was no school for the Deaf and the Deaf individuals had not developed a sense of community yet.

Deaf Utahns Educated or Tutored At Home

Before the founding of the Utah School for the Deaf in Salt Lake City, Utah in 1884, Deaf Utahns were educated or tutored at home.

Anne Leahy and Doug Stringham, long-time and well-known Deaf LDS history researchers, discovered that several Deaf children were homeschooled during the Utah territorial period. In Utah Territory, state educational agencies did not exist until 1877, and the Salt Lake City Board of Education was not established until 1890. Utah children, including Deaf children, did not have a public education (Anne Leahy, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

In Utah between 1850 and 1880, most early Deaf children were educated or tutored at home by their parents. For instance, Laron Pratt, a son of Apostle Orson Pratt, became Deaf at the age of 3 and was educated at home. Sarah Eckersley, who became Deaf at eighteen months, was nine years old when her family immigrated to Utah. She

was tutored at home by her mother. Mary Irene Foote, born in Fort Union in 1855 who had two other Deaf sisters, was taught at home by her father, who was a schoolteacher (Doug Stringham, personal communication, June 2, 2011). Doug Stringham believes that Deaf adults who immigrated west might have attended schools for the Deaf in the east (e.g. Henry C. White), but Deaf children had very few options during the Utah territorial period (Doug Stringham, personal communication, June 2, 2011).

Founding of Utah School for the Deaf

After Utah School for the Deaf was founded in 1884 in Salt Lake City, the school made a significant change in the lives of its students. During this early period, the students who attended USD developed a sense of community (Roberts, 1994).

As USD grew, the majority of younger students made up the student body on school campus. According to Roberts (1994), the dynamics of their social interaction changed and the opportunities for individual growth and independence dramatically



**Utah School for the Deaf opens August 26, 1884 at the University of Deseret in Salt Lake City, Utah
First Home of the School in 1886
Photo courtesy of the American School for the Deaf, 1817-1893**

improved over the years. Education and social skills were provided where the students learned to develop the skills to work together, obtain employment and contribute to society. Marriage patterns of the Deaf as well as vocational training changed over the years.

Under the influence of USD, changes in the nature of the Utah Deaf community occurred. Straightaway, USD trained the students to become future leaders in Salt Lake City and Ogden. Additionally, the school assisted in establishing the social organizations

of the Deaf within as well as outside the state. The students were given an opportunity to develop their leadership skills in order to serve in various social, educational, religious, and vocational organizations (Roberts, 1994).

Before USD was founded, the individuals from congenital deaf hereditary backgrounds had more experience interacting with other Deaf people compared to those individuals with hearing backgrounds who later became Deaf. Congenitally deaf individuals usually had Deaf siblings, parents, or other relatives. For this reason, they developed relationships with other Deaf individuals early. Conversely, Deaf individuals with hearing backgrounds experienced greater isolation. After the founding of USD, unlike the congenitally Deaf, individuals with hearing backgrounds had an advantage because often they could speak before becoming Deaf. Learning sign language allowed them to communicate with both Deaf and hearing communities easier than those congenitally Deaf individuals who had difficulty learning to speak (Roberts, 1994).



Laron Pratt
Photo courtesy of God Made Me Deaf
Accounts from Deaf Latter-day Saints,
1836-1916

When the Utah School for the Deaf was formed in 1884, Laron Pratt, who was 37 years old at the time and an early Deaf leader, published “Deaf Mutes: A Good Word in Behalf of the Unfortunates” essay to the editor of the Deseret News. It applauded the legislature’s provision for education of Deaf children in Utah Territory and giving an insider’s view of the culture for a hearing audience (Anne Leahy, personal communication, June 3, 2011). He stated:

Deaf Mutes

A Good Word in Behalf of the Unfortunates

Salt Lake City, April 16, 1884,

Editor Deseret News:

It is with a degree of pleasure that I note the fact that the Legislature at its last session, made provision for the instruction and education of the unfortunate deaf and dumb of the Territory, in its primary branches, a much needed and long desired measure which cannot but be of benefit to them. Though the number of deaf mutes in our Territory are but few, it is a step in the right direction to aid them to become useful and self supporting citizens, that they may not be a charge thrown up the community.

I have had a varied experience of some thirty years among these unfortunate beings, and I will say that though this faculty—the faculty of hearing—has been denied them, it is nevertheless true that most if not all are capable of being educated to a better standard of excellence in intellectual and moral culture.

Doubtless it would be interesting to many who do not understand these beings, to give a short sketch upon their mode of life and peculiar way of making themselves understood by those with whom they come in contact.

These are different grades of deafness and dumbness, which may be classified as follows: Those who have been born deaf and dumb are naturally the hardest to bring to an understanding of even the most simple, every-day things. As they grow up and their faculties begin to expand, a vast amount of patience and perseverance will be required of those under whose charge they are placed to bring them to a comprehension of the plainest affair, that is in their uneducated state. Their brain possesses almost the same functions as that of other beings, but are very dormant and of slow growth, aptness not being a characteristic, and rather conspicuous for its absence. They are capable of being educated, but only by object lessons—always have an object to point to when trying to make them comprehend, such as a picture, etc.—they can learn most of the words in common use. Then you bring them to

understand the meaning of words by persistently pointing at the object of the sentence; they will thus know what is meant, but they will not know the sound of the word, even of dog, cat, etc. When educating this class many difficulties are to be met with. It would be requisite not only to have a large share of patience, but a good facial expression, with the power to denote love, hate, sorrow, humor, etc., thereon. Deaf and dumb are able to understand facial expression and are quick to comprehend every variety and expression of the human countenance; it amounts to an intuition; nothing escapes their notice. Another thing required will be an expressive gesture, not only of the arms, fingers and shrug of the shoulders, but a peculiar movement of the whole body, in imitation and illustration of the subject you may be speaking of. They have a peculiar gesture to denote father, mother, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, etc., and for all the numerous objects that surround them, and whole sentences can be brought to their understanding by a simple gesture of the arm and face. When made familiar with words and objects they will be soon able to connect sentences and learn to put them in proper shape. I have met many deaf mates of eastern cities who considered themselves as having a good education, still in their conversation, which they usually write on small slates carried about in the pocket for that purpose—they seem to have the greatest difficulty in joining sentences together, and they have a rather peculiar way of doing it. Their general mode of conversing among themselves is not only by gestures, but also by means of the deaf and dumb alphabet—single or double; with one hand or with both. In many cases they can spell the object but do not know the meaning, which is explained to them by gesture.

Another class are those who have lost their hearing and in some cases their speech by disease, such as scarlet fever or some great sickness. Some are made totally deaf through the auditory nerve of the ear being destroyed, and some through catarrh and various other diseases. The mental and intellectual faculties of this class are of a superior organization to those of the other, and may, by cultivation, be brought up to a much higher plain. In fact this class may be educated to any degree on a par with the most intelligent being—their reasoning powers and mental capacity to grasp at ideas being the same—with the exception of hearing, and may be taught the sciences, different

languages, etc., but is it doubtful whether they can ever attain to a higher degree of perfection or even excellence. They are naturally very sensitive as well as suspicious and generally get very much embarrassed when trying to pronounce a word that they cannot accentuate properly. This grade also have a peculiar way of their won in speaking, being generally through the medium of signs, but more particularly by the formation of words shaped by the mouth. It must be understood that those who are of this latter class, namely—deaf through disease—will be able to talk aloud in most instances like any other person, if brought up to it. And while being able to express themselves understandingly are still in a measure mute—the loss of the hearing more or less affecting the glands of the throat, which are in sympathy with the auditory nerve of the ear, rendering the voice thick, and it cannot be made to harmonize with the variety of sounds produced in speaking. Still they are able to get along in that way without the aid of many signs. If you will converse with an intelligent person who is thus afflicted by writing on a piece of paper or a slate, he will be found to be equal in ideas, expression and refinement to the most intelligent beings, but it is difficult for a person not well acquainted with their habit of understanding the lips by the forming of words thereon without sound to converse really intelligently by that mode. These unfortunates, according to the degree of education they may secure, and according to their intellectual capacity, are able to obtain a fair share of pleasure therefrom. They can more or less enjoy sounds. Even music has its charms. They may all hear different sounds, by this mode:

When a piano or instrument is being played they either put their feet against it or their hand on it, and thus what a mute may say he “heard” is conveyed by the jar of the sound on the nervous system, which vibrates along the member touching the instrument and communicates through the whole body, producing a most delightful music and sensation, and giving a tolerable idea of what music is. A piece of elastic rubber, with one end in the mouth between the teeth and stretched, and with one finger striking it in the middle makes it vibrate. This will give a tolerably fair idea of the sensation of sound.

I would by all means encourage the parents and guardians of these unfortunates to send them to the Deseret

University, for by not doing so they know not the pleasure they are depriving them of—the capacity to enjoy what few pleasures fall to them. If they are too poor to send them to the institution, then, in the name of common humanity, let those who profess to be their friends show by their actions and not words—by subscribing means to that end—their appreciation of the condition of their unfortunate fellow-creatures.

Respectfully,
Laron Pratt (Deseret News, Apr. 1884)

Anne Leahy, a long-time and well-known Deaf LDS History researcher, noted that Laron was a classic post-lingually Deaf person of higher social status who recognized his advantage and chose to parlay his dual citizenship (in the Deaf and hearing worlds) into a kind of insider/advocate bridge role. He was decidedly not grassroots, but also did not reject those who were (Anne Leahy, personal communication, June 3, 2011).

Marriage of Deaf Students



Students of the Utah School for the Deaf in Ogden, 1896

National Deaf history has roots back to deafness as commonplace on Martha's Vineyard, off the coast of Massachusetts, for 250 years, beginning with a Deaf resident named Jonathan Lambert in 1694. The gene for deafness was spread through generations of his descendants through intermarriage among the isolated islanders (Shapiro, 1994). Similar to Martha's Vineyard, a pattern of genetic congenital deafness often came from families by inbreeding and intermarriage in rural areas, especially in isolated

areas of southern Utah. Additionally, many families with Deaf children intermarried, which tended to continue genetic deafness (Roberts, 1994).

In effect, several families probably carrying deaf genes joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints early in the West Virginia area. Eventually, they migrated to southern Utah together. President Brigham Young of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sent these families to Utah with other members of their families. They continued to intermarry with one or two Deaf family members arriving in each generation. Since the founding of Utah School for the Deaf, several of these Deaf children attended the school. A few Deaf individuals got married. Most of them stayed at home and helped their family members (Roberts, 1994).

Similarly, genetic deafness passed down through polygamous intermarriage in Utah. While the Martha's Vineyard intermarriage declined, intermarriage among the Utah families drastically diminished after the students attended Utah School for the Deaf where they were given the opportunity to meet other Deaf individuals from other areas of the state. As a result, socialization at school became a shift in deaf marriage patterns (Roberts, 1994).

Over the years, the dynamics of deaf marriage changed dramatically with the growth of USD. Before the founding of USD, marriage patterns of Deaf students differed from that of the hearing population. For instance, they married at an older age than the public at large. Most of them were not married and not very many Deaf individuals lived independently.

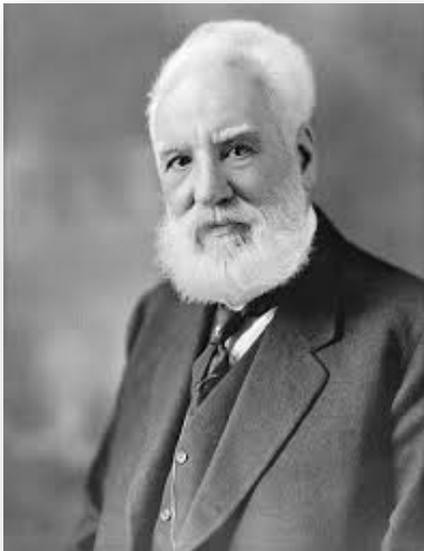


Students of the Utah School for the Deaf, May 20, 1927
An old truck with piles of USD students behind the Annex Building and
fire escape cylinder

They remained at home as maiden aunts and uncles to help out with their family home or married someone from their local area. Interestingly enough, most Deaf educators and advocates did not support marriage between Deaf individuals at the time. They often married a hearing spouse who would compensate for their Deafness (Roberts, 1994).

According to Roberts (1994), over one-third of Deaf individuals were never married before 1890 (p. 33). Three possible explanations for the absence of marriage by early students were as follows:

- The isolated nature of the rural areas where many of these students grew up made socialization difficult for the deaf,
- The atmosphere had not grown conducive for the deaf to marry, and
- Often, family members accepted the prevailing opinion of many educators and advocates of the deaf that marriage should not be an option for the deaf individuals (Roberts, 1994, p. 33-34).



Alexander Graham Bell
Source: Wikipedia

One of the most influential oral advocates and eugenicist was Alexander Graham Bell. He was alarmed that sign language and residential schools were creating a Deaf community. During the eugenics campaign, he aimed at discouraging the socialization, intermarriage and reproduction among the Deaf community (Lane, 1984; Lane, 1999). Furthermore, he attempted to get a law enacted to prohibit intermarriage among Deaf people because he was

terrified of the idea that the deaf race would spread (Behan, 1989e).

In 1883, Dr. Bell wrote an infamous paper entitled, “Memoirs Upon the Formation of the Deaf Variety of the Human Race” and presented a position against Deaf

community and Deaf intermarriage to the National Academy of Science in New Haven, Connecticut. In this paper, Dr. Bell claimed that a “defective deaf race” was emerging and growing strong through the intermarriage of Deaf individuals which would result in more Deaf births. His concern was expressed that the Deaf children who attend deaf residential schools were growing in size and thus spread the “defective race.” In addition, he felt at residential schools, a Deaf person would be likely to marry another Deaf person and somewhere along the line, as generation after generation of Deaf families intermarried, there would gradually come to be a pure deaf breed of people, or in other words: a Deaf Race (Lane, 1984). Dr. Bell therefore proposed that if the intermarriage of the Deaf could be banned, then Deaf births would be unlikely to occur. He came up with two solutions:

1. Preventative method: Close all residential schools and place deaf kids in public schools with hearing kids and
2. Repressive method: Legally forbid congenitally deaf people from marrying each other when in fact, statistics indicated only 10% of deaf people have deaf parents, while 90% of Deaf people have hearing parents (Lane, 1984; Lane, Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996).

Furthermore, Bell’s memoir recommended ending the employment of Deaf teachers and belittled the combined system of education, incorporating both sign and speech. The “pure” oralism was insisted upon. Because he shared his misleading scientific statistics of Deaf intermarriages, the law that prohibited intermarriage of the Deaf did not pass (Lane, 1984; Lane, 1999).



Edward Allen Fay
Photo courtesy of the International
Rasmus Malling-Hansen Society

Edward Allen Fay, a prominent teacher, editor, and researcher of Deaf people and Deafness, questioned Dr. Bell's 1883 memoir and carefully studied the patterns of Deaf marriages as well as heredity. Ten years later in 1893, his research was completed. With the support of his research, he corrected Dr. Bell's misconceptions concerning Deaf marriage and heredity (Roberts, 1994).

In the early years of the school, several marriages occurred between staff members and students or the children of other staff members. For instance, Elizabeth DeLong, a Deaf teacher, eventually married her former student, Thomas Loran Savage. The nature of the residential school allowed the students and staff members to become acquainted as well as become a major place for Deaf individuals to associate with other

Deaf people. The result of was that many marriages among Deaf people occurred (Roberts, 1994).



Elizabeth DeLong and Thomas Loran Savage
Photo courtesy of the DeLong Family Saga

As years went by, more Deaf individuals got married. At USD, students were provided the social opportunity to meet other Deaf individuals. As the school grew, many Deaf students found their spouses while attending the school (Roberts, 1994).

Back then, it was common for students to become Deaf from various illnesses and be enrolled at USD. Students who became Deaf later tended to marry Deaf individuals with hearing backgrounds while congenitally Deaf persons married each other (Roberts, 1994).

During the first twenty years after its founding, nearly two-thirds of students were married. Later, the majority of students married other students who attended USD. They had the chance to learn vocational skills which gave them the opportunity for the first time to afford to marry, live independently and support a family (Roberts, 1994, p. 37).

Furthermore, USD allowed the opportunity for students to meet individuals from outside the geographic areas where they resided. As a result, the school eventually broke down the intermarriage patterns which developed in isolated rural Utah. The following examples of breaking down the intermarriage patterns from the early students at school were:



John McMills, 1921

- Joseph Olorenshaw came to Utah from England. His family settled in Salt Lake City, but he married Helmar Michelson, a fellow student from Largo, Idaho.
- John McMills was born in Summit County, but he married Pearl Ault whose family lived in Cedar Fort, Utah.
 - Ole Pettit grew up in Salt Lake but his wife Jenine Jensen was originally from Salina (Robert, 1994, p. 38).



Ole Pettit, 1921

Since the establishment of the school, the structure of the Utah Deaf community changed significantly as a result of social opportunity.

Through skills they learned from USD, the students eventually made contributions to their families, their education, their vocations, communities and churches (Roberts, 1994).

Students from Same Families

According to Roberts (1994), during the first twenty-five years since the founding of Utah School for the Deaf in 1884, students who came from the same families often enrolled at the school their relatives attended. After attending USD, nieces and a cousin of the first couple got married and later attended the school at the same time. Although their children never attended the school, relatives in both families later enrolled (Roberts, 1994).

Additionally, numerous members of the same family attended USD at the same time. For instance, the USD families sent cousins, like Elizabeth DeLong and John H. Clark, to school at the same time. Not only that, several sets of siblings, like Beck, Bernard, and Thompson siblings also attended the school at the same time (First Reunion of the Utah School for the Deaf Alumni, 1976; Roberts, 1994).

While the students attended USD, the teachers encouraged students and their families to keep in touch. Most families were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and most parents of the out-of-the state students did not belong to the church. At the time, Utah parents wanted a closer school for their children while parents of the out-of-state moved their children to closer institutions when available. Despite the location of the school, families often visited the campus and participated in the activities of the school (Roberts, 1994).



John H. Clark

With the social opportunities they had at the school, Deaf communities were eventually developed in Ogden and Salt Lake City as the students left school and entered the larger society (Roberts, 1994).

Social Development within the Utah Deaf Community

For years, Deaf individuals made contributions to their families but seldom became involved within the Utah Deaf community. Upon the founding of the Utah School for the Deaf in 1884, social opportunities were provided within the Utah Deaf community



Students of the Utah School for the Deaf standing in front of the Annex Building, late 1920s

(Roberts, 1994).

During the early history of USD, this school played a large role in the development of a sense of community among Deaf individuals. At

the school campus, social opportunities were offered to students. Because they lived on campus, they were taught to learn to get along with teachers and other students as well. It was challenging for some students to adjust to living away from home and sharing the dorm with other students. With this direction, staff members created social activities designed to develop the students' social skills. With their social ability skills, they were able to work with people, live and work independently, and contribute to society at large (Roberts, 1994).

In the same fashion, the school provided many activities for students, their families and Deaf community within the state of Utah. The purpose of social opportunities was to offer growth and interaction with others. Furthermore, social

activities allowed the students to interact with other students, develop the social skills, and provide chances to meet new people. The social events allowed them to be become capable people and be able to meet the challenges of living in a larger society (Roberts, 1994).

First Deaf Student from Deaf Parents

A former student of Utah School for the Deaf, Joseph Beck, Jr., enrolled his six years old son, Hyrum Hatch Beck, who was also Deaf, at this school in the fall of 1906. Hyrum was the first Deaf student of Deaf parents to enter USD (The Utah Eagle, June 6, 1906). Joseph Beck, Jr. was a son of one of the co-founders of the Utah School for the Deaf, Joseph Beck, back in 1884.

Social Interests Among Boys and Girls

In 1921, there were one hundred and twenty-six boys and girls at Utah School for the Deaf. Forty-two students were enrolled at Primary Hall while eighty-four students attended classes in the Main Building (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).



Arthur Wenger

At the time, the boys were attracted to war. The school had veterans who served in wars and some of them had scars. The boys were fascinated with many interesting stories from veterans. While playing a pretend war, the young boys were divided into groups and were always at war with each other (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).

Arthur Wenger, 1913 USD alumnus, shared that while visiting USD, he often

encountered a boy who was ‘slumped over depression about something and would act “violent” when disturbed.’ It was discovered that the boy was a “defeated general” and he either ‘lost the war or was concerned about the safety of his troops when victory was doubtful’ (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).

The boys played several Indian wars as well. One scene of the “world war” was located at the Ogden River where the boys utilized trenches, machine guns, cudgels, swords, and helmets of padded kitchen utensils while at war with each other. The air was thick with bursts of dirt, corks, and all kind of projectiles. There were bold encounters and even the dead

were trampled on. One of the “dead” kicked a passing enemy and they both “died” together, kidding each other (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).



Students of the Utah School for the Deaf, 1917-1918

While the older boys played baseball, the young boys were “drafted” by the “generals” and baseball suffered. The older boys attempted to appeal to the generals in a brotherly manner for the release of the “drafted” baseball players. When the appeal was rejected, the “big guys” threatened to bring an end to the war. As a result, the armies were discharged and the young boys dropped the rocks to support baseball (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).

The girls, on the other hand, were always playing out of doors and dancing in circles. There were storytellers such as “Peter Pan” and he was always the center of a merry whirl. “Princess” was also a great storyteller. A girl was given complimentary name for her leadership in some of the activities (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).

Swimming Pool Fun

A swimming pool at Utah School for the Deaf was filled with fresh water every week and was opened to all groups at scheduled times. The swimmers were allowed to raise their voice as loud as they wanted. There were excitement and enthusiasm from the boys and girls. Arthur Wenger observed that this would allow them to vent which could help control tempers and fights later on (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).

Utah School for the Deaf Extracurricular Activities

As mentioned in the 1976 and 1984 Alumni Reunion booklets, Utah School for the Deaf students had the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities after school. The activities they participated in were Park Literary Society, Arthur Wenger Athletic Association, Drama Club, Spur Club, Ski Club, Student Body Government, Junior NAD, Student Council, athletic programs, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Most of



Students of the Utah School for the Deaf, between 1933 - 1936

the students were Latter-day Saints and went to the Ogden Branch for the Deaf on Sundays and participated in its church services on Tuesday nights. Non-LDS students attended the Protestant chapel services (First Reunion of the Utah School for the Deaf Alumni Booklet, 1976; A

Century of Memories: Utah School for the Deaf 100th Year Anniversary Alumni Reunion Booklet, 1984).

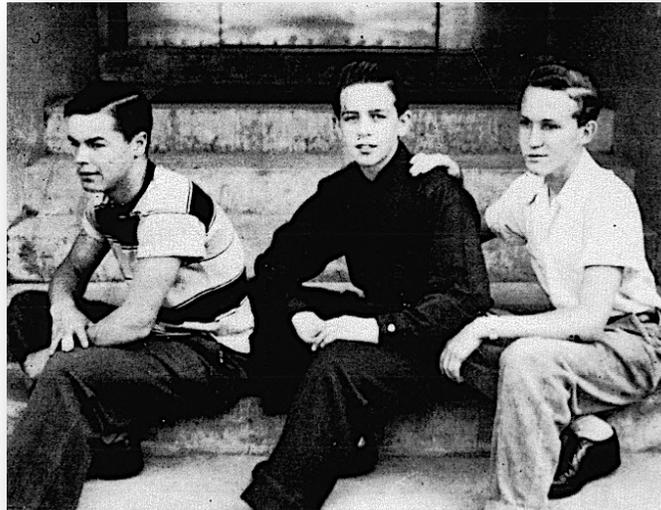
The three main clubs on the campus were Park Literary Society, Arthur Wenger Athletic Association, and Spur Club.

The Park Literary Society

One year after the relocation of Utah School for the Deaf to Ogden in 1896, the teachers organized the Park Literacy Society. This organization was named in honor of Dr. John R. Park, president of the University of Deseret (later renamed University of Utah). In Salt Lake City, USD was housed at the university in Salt Lake City and apparently Dr. Park was well liked by Deaf students. The Park Literary Society was the oldest club on campus (Robert, 1994).

This society was composed of boys and girls over fourteen years old of age. Throughout the school year, the literary meetings were held every two weeks. The purpose of the society was to encourage students to develop creative dramatic/writing skills and to deepen their appreciation of literature (Roberts, 1994).

Likewise, students were given opportunity to develop their debating skills in various subjects. They had to prepare their talks, stories, plays and debates without help of their teachers (Roberts, 1994).



Reading from left to right: Secretary Peter Green, Vice-President, Jerry Westburg, President David Mortensen, 1949

Interestingly enough, several questions for debate found in the Utah School for the Deaf “Eaglets” magazines were debated: “That Lincoln was a greater man than Washington,” “That the United States should recognize the independence of Cuba,” “That boys have more pleasure than girls.” “Our boys and girls of today are missing out on a great experience like that.” Teachers and members of the Utah Deaf community were appointed as debate judges and decided who would win the debate (Roberts, 1994;

First Reunion of the Utah School for the Deaf Alumni Booklet, 1976; A Century of Memories: Utah School for the Deaf 100th Year Anniversary Alumni Reunion Booklet, 1984). As can be seen, debate helped students develop better communication skills, public speaking skills, teamwork, and organization skills as well as build world knowledge through reading.

On a positive note, the Park Literary Society presented the most ambitious and successful theatrical production ever attempted by Deaf students. The play, “The House of Rimmon,” was based on a Biblical theme. Two Deaf individuals, Arthur Wenger, director and Elsie Christiansen, assistant, managed the play. It was given once in the



“The House of Rimmon” Play in 1920
The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1964

school chapel and repeated at East High School in Salt Lake City on request. No admission was charged. The performance won great applause from the audience. The play gave the public

a better understanding of

Deaf people’s capabilities (White, *The Silent Worker*, June 1920; Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921; UAD Bulletin, Summer 1964).

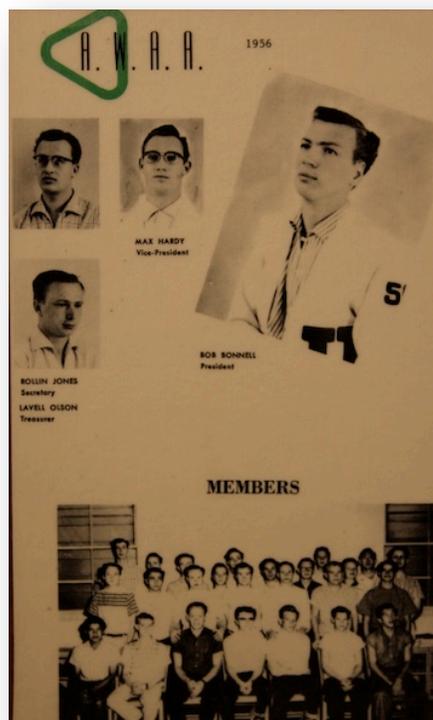
On September 5, 1956, representatives of the Utah Association of the Deaf and the Utah School for the Deaf gathered for a meeting and decided to close Park Literary Society (Sanderson, *The Utah Eagle*, October 1956). It is unknown as to why it was decided to close the society.

The Arthur Wenger Athletic Association

The Arthur Wenger Athletic Association (AWAA) was a club for older boys. It was founded by and named for an outstanding USD graduate, Arthur Wenger, a member of the class of 1913. It was in existence from 1919 to 1956 (Roberts, 1994).

The purpose of AWAA was to promote social development and good fellowship among boys through participation in athletic activities (Robert, 1994). Under AWAA, the students raised funds entirely by selling candy on school campus (Sanderson, *The Utah Eagle*, October 1956).

AWAA continued to operate until September 5, 1956 when representatives of the Utah Association of the Deaf and the Utah School for the Deaf gathered for a meeting and decided to dissolve the Arthur Wenger Athletic Association. It was agreed that the entire sum of \$1,000.00 belonging to AWAA be used as a scholarship fund for the Utah Association for the Deaf Scholarship Fund (after UAD, it became Utah Scholarship Foundation for the Deaf, then Ned C. Wheeler Scholarship Foundation for the Deaf. The name changes are explained in the scholarship history) (Sanderson, *The Utah Eagle*, October 1956).



The Spur Club

The Spur Club was an organization for older girls, active in sponsoring school activities. In addition to the clubs, a formal banquet was held annually to honor students who did exceptional service to the Utah School for the Deaf.

Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops were active in their respective program and activities (Roberts, 1994).

Roberts (1994) said the extracurricular activities basically taught students' necessary social skills and built lasting friendships. This, in turn, became the basis of later organization of the Deaf groups in Utah and Idaho. It was probably for the first time that the USD provided a sense of community for these Deaf students that later grew into Deaf organizations providing support and social activities for these people.



The Spur Club, 1955-56

Did You Know?

Dr. John R. Park was one of the greatest benefactors of the Deaf of Utah. In 1884, when the Legislature of the then Territory of Utah was solicited by two parents of Deaf children, John Beck and William Wood to establish a state school for the Deaf, the Legislature complied with their request. They placed the work in the hands of Dr. Park, then president of the Territorial University. Dr. Park made arrangements for starting a class for Deaf students in connection with the University and employed a Deaf individual, Henry C. White of Boston, to take charge of such a class. Since then, Dr. Park always showed his great interest in this work.



John R. Park Source: Wikipedia

Dr. Park was the head of the Utah School for the Deaf for eight years. He early realized that the school should be independent of the University. He used his influence to accomplish the greatest measure of that direction. When the school became a separate institution and was located in Ogden, no one rejoiced more than he.

When Dr. Park visited the USD in Ogden, he was a guest. He was remembered by pupils on that occasion. Shortly before his death, USD staff visited him in his office in Salt Lake City; he still showed the same lively interest in the welfare of the school.

Dr. Park was president of the University of the Territory and State for nearly 25 years. He was born in 1835 and passed away on September 30, 1900 (Metcalf, The Utah Eagle, October 15, 1900; The Utah Eagle, October 15, 1900).

The Annual May Festival

In 1909, the May Festival hosted by Utah School for the Deaf was first held and held annually until 1936 (Pace, 1946).



**Edna Wright in the role of "The Maiden."
Silent Worker, January 1921**

During the festival, USD students presented a beautiful dance recital where it captured the attention of a large crowd. One time, five thousand people watched the performance (Pace, 1946).

The most successful pageant was the Ninth Annual May Festival, "The Story of the Deaf." In May 1920, this pageant was held at the Utah School for the Deaf campus and again on the lawn of Liberty Park in Salt Lake City. Students dressed themselves in costumes characteristic of various nationalities and portrayed the struggle of the Deaf,

against intolerance and neglect to a position of happiness and achievement through the blessings of education (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).

The solo dancers were Mona Leckliter, Vida Crawford, Elsie Lamb, Gladys Jones, and Corline Wood. Arthur Wenger, said that these dancers were beautifully acted, portraying-five senses: Sight, Taste, Touch, Smell, and Hearing. While the Senses danced, several girls entered

seeking the blessing of the five senses which were presented as a gift upon them. The girls and the Senses danced together with joy and gratitude. Hearing strayed away from her companions and was lost.

Edna Wright, in the role of the “Maiden,” represented as “Deaf,” came to beg eagerly for the blessing of the five senses. Only four of the Senses were able to honor the “Maiden” with their blessings. When the “Maiden” noticed that she lacked

hearing, she was sad, but the Knowledge came to her assistance and called upon nature in the form of butterflies, birds and flowers to aid her. The Deaf girl was happy. The pageant represented the long story of the struggle and appeal of the Deaf for recognition of their rights (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921).



Dressed in flowing chiffon gowns for their role in one of the USD's famous May Festivals in 1920 are, left to right, front, Corline Wood, Ellen Lusk, Gladys Jones; center, Verda Williams, Vida Crawford, Catherine Crawford, Eda Wright, Irene Linderman; back, Mary Erying, Lona Thompson, Mona Leckliter, Florence Funk, and Violet Taylor
The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963

Arthur Wenger then shared that shortly before the end of the pageant, the dancers took turns showing examples of the different nations, each a disappointment until finally in the American example, the “Maiden,” rose from the folds of the Stars and Stripes. Mr. Wenger noted that “She gave freedom, equity and prosperity upon all. Her graceful dancing and genuine expression touched the viewers who were enthusiastic over her and all the children who supported her” (Wenger, *The Silent Worker*, January 1921, p. 113).

Helen Keller's Visit to the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

On March 14, 1941, Helen Keller, the famous Deaf and blind woman visited the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB). She was accompanied by Polly Thompson, her companion and interpreter, as well as Ida Hirst-Gifford, her business manager. Before visiting the school, she came to Utah under the auspices of the American Foundation for the Blind where she appeared before the legislature in the interest of blind adults. She addressed an audience of 5,000 interested people in the Mormon Tabernacle.

At USDB, Helen Keller spoke in the chapel of the Main Building where the students surrounded to listen to her comments while Frank Driggs, USDB superintendent,



Helen Keller
Photo courtesy of Bio.com

assisted with interpreting. Helen's interpreter, Polly Thompson, used two means of communication with her, speech and the manual alphabet. One student asked a question spelled into

Helen's hand, "What is the most outstanding thing you have found in your visit to Utah?" Her immediate reply was, "The good will toward the adult blind" (The Utah Eagle, March 1941, p. 11).

One of the students, Kleda Barker Quigley, remembers at the age of 10 seeing Helen Keller come with Polly Thompson to the assembly chapel and give a talk with her own voice to all Deaf and blind students. Superintendent Driggs assisted in interpreting

for Deaf students. Kleda was impressed how smart Helen was and was also amazed how fast she signed with her interpreter, Polly. Kleda said, “It was amazing that she [Helen] had achieved, to the best of her ability in her life time, to overcome her double handicaps (Deaf and blind).” Years later in 2014, Kleda talked with some USD alumni, Fred Richins, G. Leon Curtis, Jay A. Barker (her brother), Winona Anderson, Gerry Shepard, and others on videophone about Helen Keller. Through videophone, Kleda’s classmate, Leon shared a memory of asking Helen whether she preferred to be Deaf or blind. She replied, “blind.” Kleda said in her interview that she knows most Deaf people would rather be Deaf than blind. Overall, she enjoyed having Helen’s visit (Kleda Quigley, personal communication, April 15, 2015).

The Burdett’s Picnic and Boating Party

Kay Kinner, class of 1954, published an article entitled “The Burdett’s Picnic and Boating Party” in the Utah Eagle magazine. Kenneth C. Burdett, a Deaf teacher at USD and an inspirational youth leader, invited the Utah School for the Deaf high school students to a picnic and boating party during the summer of 1953. They had a blast.

Kay Kinner wrote:

“During the summer of 1953, it was so hot that the Utah School for the deaf high school students always drank lemonades or cold drinks. The lawns and plants were dry because they had so few showers. However, sometimes there was a little rain at night, but not during the day. They surely had a hard time watering the plants, lawns, and flowers so they would grow beautifully. Those that had jobs came home and watered in the evening. They went swimming often to get cool.

They received an invitation from the Burdetts to go boating and picnicking on the 2nd of August. They were so excited and even some girls and boys who lived far away from Ogden, were invited. Some of them came to Ogden so they might go to Pine View Lake together the Sunday after Peter and Sally’s wedding.

The day began cold and rainy and they thought that they might not be able to go there. While they stayed at the Burdett home, they waited and waited for the rain to stop. Suddenly, the rain stopped, and the sun shone very brightly about noon. They thought the weather was queer.

When the sun shone through the window onto the floor, they were ready, and started for Pine View Lake.

Some of them went water-skiing and surf boarding. Some of the girls and boys went riding in the boat with Kenneth Burdett. Kenneth Kinner held onto the rope and went water skiing. They were nonplussed that Max Hardy could water ski and ride a surfboard. He just held onto the rope and rode the waves, then went water skiing at once. He was successful although that was his first time. Von Jones, Dona Mae Dekker, Lawana Simmons, and Bruce Harvey tried to learn how to control themselves while water skiing. Some fell down all the time, but some were successful. Dixie Lee Larsen and Kay Kinner water-skied well because they had done this before at Bear Lake. They had fun going water skiing and surf riding.



Students went boating with Kenneth and Afton Burdett, Deaf teachers at Pineview Reservoir, 1953. Standing L-R: Kay Kinner, Marion Brown, Bruce Harvey, Dixie Lee Larsen, Afton Burdett, Kenneth Burdett, Max Hardy, Donna Mae Dekker, Leon Curtis, Von Jones, Lawana Simmons. Sitting L-R: Kenneth Kinner and Ronald Burdett

At the beach, they rested and the Burdetts treated them to cold drinks. They took sunbaths for a while. They had fun going water skiing and surf riding. They fell and tried to manage themselves.

In the evening, the students went to the Burdetts' for a barbecue in their yard. It was delicious and they did enjoy going to the picnic and boating party. It was all very interesting for them. Marion Brown and her boyfriend were with them" – Kay Kinner (Kinner, *The Utah Eagle*, October 1953).

Throughout Kenneth Burdett's lifetime and remarkable career, he gave unselfish service to USD. Not only did he serve the school as a professional for four decades from 1934 to 1974, he spent fifty-two years, all together, directly involved at USD in his many roles: as a student, boy's supervisor, head basketball coach, athletic director, teacher, printing instructor, and curriculum coordinator. In addition, he was an active member of the Utah Association for the Deaf, the National Fraternal Society for the Deaf and the



Kenneth C. Burdett, 1958

Golden Spike Athletic Club for the Deaf (The Ogden Standard-Examiner, May 23, 1974). Mr. Burdett is remembered for his endless assistance given to student athletics, his deep love for his students (Ogden Standard-Examiner, May 23, 1974), and as an inspirational leader who believed in the growth potential of each individual student (Kenneth L. Kinner, personal communication, 2006). In essence, he was a consummate teacher and coach who inspired youth and all those with whom he came into contact (Dr. Robert Sanderson & Valerie Kinney, personal communication, July 8, 2011).

Holiday Celebrations at the Utah School for the Deaf

During the early history of the Utah School for the Deaf, holidays played a large part in social activities at the school. The students remained at school during Thanksgiving where dinner and festivities were provided. They usually went home only for the Christmas holidays (Roberts, 1994; Evans, 1999). In 1913, the school allowed students who lived close by to go home during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend (Evans, 1999).

Other holiday events such Arbor Day, Valentine, Easter and more were also celebrated at school. The teachers planned Arbor Day activities, Valentine socials, and other holiday events (Roberts, 1994).

The social events took place during the school year in Salt Lake City. USD Superintendent Frank Metcalf and teachers sponsored a masquerade dance and other events. Often in the spring and fall, Mr. Metcalf hosted social events where teachers and adult students socialized together. Several marriages resulted between individuals who attended these social functions (Roberts, 1994).

Since most students lived at the school, birthday celebrations became very important. Birthday parties were provided for both teachers and students. On several occasions, the Metcalf children invited many students to their birthday parties (Roberts, 1994).

Years later, most of the Deaf students went home for Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter (Roberts, 1994).



Students of the Utah School for the Deaf, spring 1945
They were going on the annual spring hike

School Events and Trips

The Utah School for the Deaf in Salt Lake City provided variety of events and trips for students. As an example, students took a trip to the circus and again after the USD relocated in Ogden (Roberts, 1994).

Students participated in winter activities of sledding and ice-skating. While students lived in Salt Lake City, they often went sledding on the hills between the school and the area referred to as Capitol Hill, where the Utah Capitol was eventually located. After USD was moved to Ogden, the gardener maintained an ice rink on the school campus most years when the students could enjoy ice-skating (Roberts, 1994).

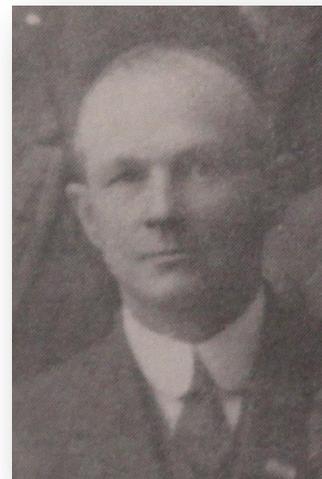
John Beck, a co-founder of the Utah School for the Deaf, owned Beck's Hot Springs, north of the school in Salt Lake City. His three sons, Joseph, John A., and Jacob, and other older boys often went to that location before the school was moved to Ogden (Roberts, 1994).



Beck's Hot Springs, 1908
Photo courtesy of Seven Canyon Trust

opportunities as well as gave a change of surroundings for students and staff (Roberts, 1994).

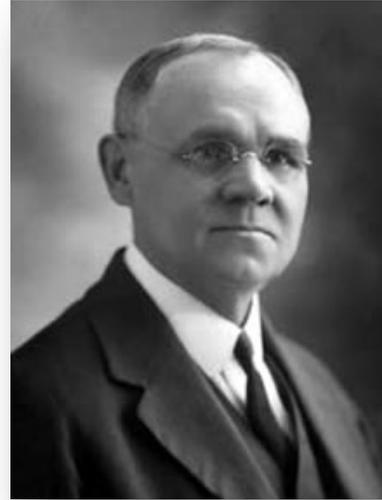
On other occasions, staff members and students went on nature walks and shopping trips. These trips provided teaching



Jacob Beck, 1921

On a trip close by, the students met Dr. James Talmage, a professor at the University of Utah. Dr. Talmage had a blind brother, Albert, who attended Utah School for the Blind. Dr. Talmage knew some of the students because of his association with the school while it was affiliated with the University of Utah. As recorded in the Utah Eagle, 1900-1901, the trip took place at the Ogden Canyon.

“Some of the large boys went up to the mouth of Ogden Canyon with Mr. Crandall the other day. They wanted to look at the bridge which was recently destroyed by a rock falling from the immense cliff at the mouth of the canyon. They met Dr. Talmage, formerly president of the University of Utah. He was to examine the tunnel, the cliff, the fissure and the water pipe and report to the electric Power Plant Company regarding the cause of the break and the proper course to pursue to repair the damage done. Dr. Talmage is a learned geologist and a very prominent scientist (p. 70).”



Dr. James Talmage
Photo courtesy of Special
Collections, J. Willard Marriott
Library,
University of Utah



David Oman McKay
Photo Courtesy of the Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Several other influential people also visited Utah School for the Deaf and befriended the students. One of the influential people was David Oman McKay. He visited the school while teaching at Weber Stake Academy and serving in the state legislature. Later he became the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Roberts, 1994).

Maud May Babcock, the first female member of the University of Utah's faculty and founder of the Department of Speech,

Department of Physical Education and University Theater at the University of Utah, served as a member of the school’s board of trustee for twenty-two years. (The University Theatre was the first college dramatic club in the United States and was renamed Babcock Theatre (Robert, 1994; Maud Babcock – Wikipedia). In 1904, she made a trip to the east to study communication methods at other schools. Eventually, Dr. Babcock lobbied for more funding for new programs at the school. She frequently visited the school and shared her experiences with the students (Roberts, 1994).



Maud May Babcock
Photo courtesy of the National
Communication Association

Edwin A. Stratford served as the chairman of the board of trustees of Utah School for the Deaf for several years. He was appointed to continue serving on the board after the school was separated from the University of Utah and relocated to Ogden. He also served as a superintendent of the students’ Sunday School for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1896 at the school in Ogden (Roberts, 1994).



Edwin A. Stratford
Photo courtesy of Black’s Family History

Ultimately, these four individuals as well as others greatly influenced the USD students and promoted their interest in the school among their friends and in the Utah State Legislature (Roberts, 1994).

Legislative Leadership Opportunity

During Utah’s territorial period, Utah School for the Deaf provided a legislative leadership opportunity for students. They were taught how to lobby legislators and how

to ask for funding support for school. After Utah became a state in 1896, the students continued to work with legislators to get funds for school and its programs (Robert, 1994).

At the school campus, teachers organized a yearly ‘exhibition’ program to demonstrate the students’ accomplishments and invited the legislators to observe the skills of the students. This program allowed the students to interact with hearing individuals and to demonstrate their accomplishments as well. They also had the opportunity show the legislators the value of the school program. Ultimately, the benefit of this program was to build students’ self-confidence (Roberts, 1994).

In January 1896, an exhibition was given for the state legislature where students demonstrated their educational skills, gave songs and recited readings as well as poetry.

In addition to the exhibition, students took a tour at the Utah State Capitol building to learn how the legislative process worked. They even met many of the governmental leaders. Students learned the functions



1954 Senior trip to the Utah State Capitol
Top: Kenneth Kinner. L-R: Shanna Christiansen, Donna Me Dekker, Kay Kinner, Clara Bosshardt and Carol MacTee

of government such as the Legislative (House & Senate), Executive (Governor), and Judicial (Courts) branches of government. The tour exposed the students to many experiences that their parents may never have experienced (Roberts, 1994).

With the legislative leadership skills, they learned at school, many became leaders within the state. They contributed their leadership skills to the Utah Association of the Deaf to cover the areas of advocacy, including auto insurance, traffic safety, anti-

peddlers, education, early intervention, employment, rehabilitation, interpreting service, health care, technology, telecommunications, youth leadership, and much more.

When Utah Association of the Deaf was founded in 1909, it was initially called Utah Association of the Deaf. In 1964, it was changed to Utah Association for the Deaf, then in 2012 changed back to Utah Association of the Deaf. In this article, we will give it as Utah Association of the Deaf.

From the time when the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) was founded in 1880, the affiliated state chapter associations were establishing across the country. Elizabeth DeLong, an alumni and Deaf faculty of the Utah School for the Deaf, proposed the formation of the Utah Association of the Deaf (UAD) for social purposes and welfare needs among USD alumni. On June 10, 1909, the UAD was established at the Utah School for the Deaf (Evans, 1999). During the voting process on the next day, Libbie won the presidential election by 39 votes by beating two Deaf male candidates, Paul Mark (2 votes) and Melville J. Matheis (2 votes). She made history in becoming the first Deaf female NAD state chapter association president in the entire nation – this is notable, as women were not granted the right to vote for decade until the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920 and Deaf women members were not allowed to vote in the NAD election until 1964 (The UAD Bulletin, Summer 1963; NAD History). Libbie served as president of the Utah Association of the Deaf from 1909 to 1915.



Elizabeth DeLong, Courtesy of FamilySearch

After all, UAD is one of the oldest state associations in the United States and is credited with carrying the torch by meeting the civil rights of the Utah Deaf community, as explained in the “History of the Utah Association of the Deaf.” As of today, UAD

continues to carry the torch by advocating, protecting and securing the Utah Deaf community's civil rights.

Accreditation Visiting Team Report of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

Under the administration of Steven Noyce, superintendent of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB), the Accreditation Visiting Team visited the USDB in 2010 to evaluate the services. According to the Accreditation Visiting Team Report, it reported the “historical accounts of the school confirm that living in the dormitory/cottage facilities was a very lonely time for many students.” The report stated, “Even though the school staff worked hard to create a homelike atmosphere, students felt strongly the loss of their home and family experiences. After a time, the students and families of this state preferred not to receive services in a residential setting. During the years of special education reform in the 1970s, USDB services changed to reflect new national attitudes. With the passage of Public Law 94-142, opportunities for educational services closer to home became a reality for many families” (The Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Accreditation Visiting Team Report, May 10-11, 2010, p. 4).



Steven W. Noyce

The Utah School for the Deaf alumni may not see eye to eye with the Accreditation Visiting Team Report. They shared in the 1976 and 1984 Alumni Reunion Booklets that most of them who stayed at the USD seemed to be happy, well-adjusted and learned how to use time, and participated in many activities during weekends. They also stated that they had fond memories of their school (First Reunion of the Utah School for the Deaf Alumni Booklet, 1976; A Century of

Memories: Utah School for the Deaf 100th Year Anniversary Alumni Reunion Booklet, 1984). Historically speaking, the authors of “A Journey Into the Deaf-World” book supported USD students’ positive experience living on school campus. They observed that the Deaf child who graduated from a residential school had healthy self-esteem with



Students of the Utah School for the Deaf, 1954

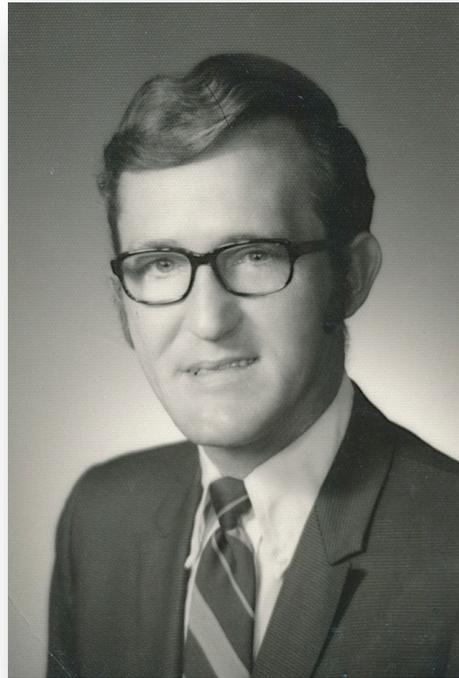
the help of exposure of Deaf role models, Deaf staff, older Deaf students and alumni as well on school campus (Lane, Hoffmeister, & Bahan, 1996).

Throughout the accreditation process, it is possible Mr. Noyce, as a former

student of the Oral Training Program at the University of Utah during the early 1970s under the guidance of Dr. Grant B. Bitter, influenced the Accreditation Visiting Team into thinking that it was better to mainstream a Deaf or hard of hearing student in general education classes than to send him or her to a specialty school for Deaf. Apparently, USD failed to consult with the alumni for input before meeting with the accreditation team.

In 1989, a 16 mm film called “A History of the Utah School for the Deaf: 1940-1965” was displayed at the 33rd Biennial Convention of the Utah Association for the Deaf. While employed at the Utah School for the Deaf as a teacher, Kenneth C. Burdett, 1929 alumnus, filmed Deaf students on the school campus over the decades and produced a movie showing class trips, graduations, and memorable campus activities.

David (Dave) Mortensen, UAD President and 1949 alumnus, commented, “It [the film] shows that it [the school experience] never harmed a Deaf boy or girl to be sent away from home to a school that exclusively served their needs. Education, socialization, leadership training, discipline, dramatics, dance, public speaking, sports, entertainment, etc., you name it, it was there. Those were very, very happy times.” President Mortensen however said, “Times have changed.” and he questioned, “Have they changed for the better or worse?” “Is mainstreaming the answer?” He again responded, “No, I would say not. Some say it is a trend, that this is a modern age. Shucks, I say, however, you be the judge. You talk to any one of those who spent at school away from home and see if any feel it was a mistake” (Mortensen, *UAD Bulletin*, June 1990, p. 1). Dave Mortensen’s response is a good example as to why Utah School for the Deaf is encouraged to consult with the alumni for input concerning school placement before meeting with the accreditation team for evaluation.



W. David Mortensen

The Impact of Utah School for the Deaf

The nature of the Utah School for the Deaf began to change under the leadership of Dr. Grant B. Bitter, an ardent advocate for oral and mainstream education for Deaf and hard of hearing students. After he came into the picture, Utah's trend toward mainstreaming grew steadily in the 1960s, before the term became popular with the passing in 1975 of Public Law 94-142, now known as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Over the years, Dr. Bitter was a teacher and curriculum coordinator of the

Extension Division School for the Deaf in Salt Lake City, a director and professor of the Oral Teacher Training Program under the Department of Special Education at the University of Utah, and coordinator of the Seminary Program of the Deaf under the



Dr. Grant B. Bitter
The Utah Eagle, 1961

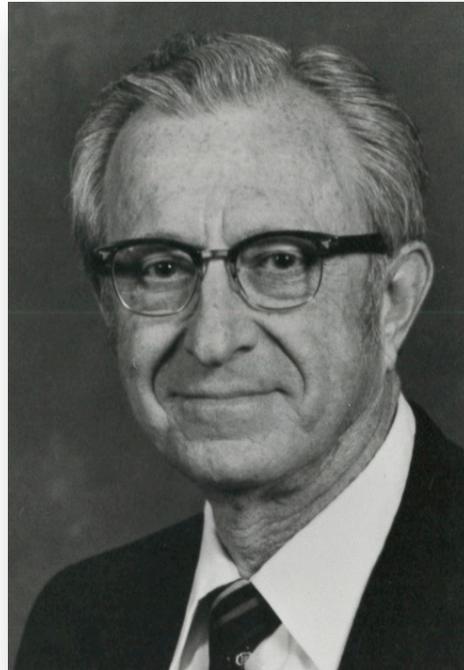
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day in the State of Utah. He was also the father of a Deaf daughter, Colleen and became a strong proponent for the oral teaching method (Bitter, *A Summary Report for Tenure*, March 15, 1985).

With Dr. Bitter's effort in 1962, a new policy of USD embraced the Dual Division, known as the "Y" system. Through this system all Deaf and hard of hearing children had to begin their education in the Oral Division and were not allowed to enter the Simultaneous

Communication Division until age 11 or 6th grade (First Reunion of the Utah School for the Deaf Alumni Booklet, 1976).

Under the Dual Division, each had separate classrooms, dormitory facilities, recess, and extracurricular activities, except for athletic programs (The Utah Eagle, February 1968; Wright, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, October 19, 1970). Even though the Utah State Board of Education approved the Dual Track Program that was instituted at USD on June 14, 1962, the students were unaware of the reform until the first day of school in September (The Ogden Standard-Examiner, June 14, 1962; Diane Williams, personal communication, 2007). High school students were unhappy with the Dual Division and held a strike in 1962 and again in 1969 on the USD-Ogden campus. No one listened.

In the wake of the 1962 protest, the oral advocates suspected that the Utah Association of the Deaf was behind the plan for the 1962 student strike. The Utah State Board of Education investigated but failed to see the connection between the students and the UAD (Sanderson, *UAD Bulletin*, Summer 1963). Robert G. Sanderson, UAD president (1960-63), denied having anything to do with it. He stated that the strike was spontaneous – a reaction of the students against conditions, restrictions, and personalities which they felt had become intolerable (7). UAD noted, in the Fall-Winter 1962 UAD Bulletin issue, that they supported a fair test of the two-track or dual program at the Utah School for the Deaf as a classroom matter. However, they had a strong disapproval of the attempt at complete social segregation, interference with religious activities, crippling of the sports program, and the severe pressure on the



Dr. Robert G. Sanderson
Photo courtesy of the Gallaudet University Achieves

children in the oral department to enforce the “no signing” rule (The UAD Bulletin, Fall-Winter 1962, p. 2-3). The implementation of dual tracking constituted the darkest chapter in the education of the Deaf in Utah. Since that time, UAD had a long-standing battle with Dr. Bitter.



Wallace Bruce, oral teacher with two students, Ronald Burdett (right) and Tom Osmond (left) listening to the music, 1959

UAD and parents who supported sign language battled for 10 years against the “Y” system. During the 1971-72 school year, the “Y” System was then replaced by the “Two-Track” education system at the Utah School for the Deaf. This was authorized by the USDB Governor’s Advisory Council and Utah State Board of Education (The Ogden Standard-Examiner, December 29, 1970). The new system was designed to provide options for parents to choose between oralism and total communication for a child from 2 ½ to 21 years old of age (Note: Simultaneous Communication had been replaced with Total Communication) (Deseret News, December 29, 1970). Despite the new program, Dr. Bitter continued to strongly promote oralism and mainstreaming.



About 1945. L-R: Kirk Allred, Steve Masich, Bruce Eyre, Pete Koukoutsakis, Mike Patterson, Paul Loveland, and Tony Jalaco

Due to mainstreaming growth and decline of enrollment, Utah State Board of



Class of 1946

Top Row L-R: Paulino Garahana, Rosalee Caraveau, Ruby Anderson, Beverlee Hansen, Lee Shepherd. Bottom Row (L-R): Lorraine Whitesides, Vynola Kernel, Josie Feichko. Ruby Anderson left for Gallaudet College before her graduation

Education sold the old Utah School for the Deaf campus to the Ogden School District in 1993. During the same year, both Utah School for the Deaf and Utah School for the Blind were consolidated and the new main Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind campus was built at 742 Harrison Blvd (UAD Bulletin, May 1993).

With a large number of Deaf children being mainstreamed, the USD alumni sadly watched the school and its evolution of Deaf education slowly change over the years. They had fond memories of the school. For years, USD provided them a full and accessible environment that supported their language, communication, literacy, academic, social, and emotional development. In addition, the school provided them with support services they need to become educated, successful, and contributing adults. They were heartbroken to see future generations of Deaf children would not share the same opportunity and experience they had at the school.

Conclusion

Due to unsatisfactory academic performances and education system at the Utah School for the Deaf, Jean Massieu School of the Deaf, an ASL/English bilingual program, was established in 1999 as a public charter school in Salt Lake City. The new charter school was named Jean Massieu School of the Deaf (JMS) in honor of Jean Massieu, a French Deaf teacher. JMS provides full cultural, social and linguistic environment on campus. In 2005, JMS was merged with Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind where it now serves around 100 Deaf students. Since then, JMS, as a day



Christmas party in the old gym, 1940s

school, has slowly expanded its extracurricular activities such as athletic programs, drama club, student body government, Junior National Association of the Deaf and others. JMS provides the

extracurricular activities that were lost due to mainstreaming. Participating in school activities allow the students to improve leadership as well as social skills and use these skills to contribute to the Utah Deaf community.

However, with the growth of listening spoken language, cochlear implants and mainstreaming, the dynamics of the Utah Deaf community may change in the future. Only time will tell.

Notes

Anne Leahy, personal communication, June 3, 2011.

Anne Leahy, personal communication, June 7, 2011.

Diane Williams, personal communication, 2007.

Doug Stringham, personal communication, June 2, 2011.

Kenneth L. Kinner, personal communication, 2006.

Kleda Quigley, personal communication, April 15, 2015.

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