Introduction

The Jerusalem Study Abroad program had its initial introduction and establishment through the Division of Continuing Education and its Department of Travel Study. The first seed was planted in 1966. While it had both board and university administrative approval, it did not have strong academic support and was initially required to be financially independent of appropriated funds. The administrative challenges are not reviewed in detail in this chapter, but this program struggled to balance the different interests and perspectives of the Church, the university, and the Division of Continuing Education. While all of these areas are noted from time to time in the following pages, the intent of this chapter is to record the primary role of the Division of Continuing Education in the development of this major project which resulted in the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies building in Jerusalem and the creation of a separate university administrative unit supported by appropriated funds. Other historical reports will cover both Church and university roles and involvement, but this chapter will specify a primary and important role for this program as established through the Department of Travel Study and the Division of Continuing Education.

Initial Endeavors

The first Study Abroad program in the Holy Land sponsored by the Department of Travel Study was conducted during the 1968 year. It involved 20 students, and Daniel H. Ludlow was the director. This area became one of prime importance to this department, both for regular travel tours and for student semester abroad programs, and as an impetus leading to the construction of the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies. Because of its importance, it is now covered in some detail. (More extensive histories and studies about the Jerusalem Center are in the process of being written by David B. Galbraith and Robert C. Taylor. Since Robert C. Taylor passed away in 1995, his research is being edited and prepared by his widow, Kathy Taylor, and Dann W. Hone.)

Approval

On February 2, 1966, a proposal was made to the board of trustees concerning a Study Abroad program centered in Jerusalem to commence in January 1968. The board did not act on this proposal, but instead referred it to the First Presidency. President David O. McKay approved the program in June 1966 with a provision that half of the program be in Arab territory and half in Israeli territory.¹
FIRST PROGRAMS

In the fall of 1966, Robert C. Taylor went to the Middle East and made arrangements for half of the program to be conducted at the Ritz Hotel in Jerusalem. The balance of the program was to be conducted in Israel on kibbutzim and in youth hostels. The advent of the 1967 war between Israel and the Arabs disrupted all arrangements which had been made. New arrangements were made, and in January 1968 a significant semester program began in Jerusalem. Even though the section occupied by the Ritz Hotel was now under Israeli control, it was populated by Arabs, and the hotel was owned and operated by Arabs. This program followed the proviso of President McKay with half being conducted among the Arabs and half among the Israelis. There were 20 students, 9 men and 11 women, in this first group.

Subsequent facilities included the City Hotel and the Vienna Hotel in Arab sections of the city and the kibbutz, Ramat Rachel, in an Israeli section. Field trips had the students staying in various other facilities throughout the country. Ramat Rachel was the facility used for the longest period of time. It was located in the southeastern city limits of Jerusalem on the road leading to Bethlehem.

Another part of the proviso aforementioned was that training should be provided for teachers of religion at BYU. Consequently, in the summer of 1968, Dr. Ludlow conducted the first Lands of the Scriptures Workshop for teachers of religion courses at BYU. This and subsequent programs for teachers throughout the Church Educational System not only provided such teachers with important insights into the events of the Holy Land, but also prepared future teachers for the center itself.

THE ALLENBY BRIDGE CROSSING

In 1969 the second group of 33 students visited Paris, Rome, Athens, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, and Jordan before entering Israel. This group was led by Professors LaMar C. Berrett and Keith H. Meservy, and it made history by being the first group since the 1967 war to cross the Allenby Bridge over the Jordan River, which separated Jordan from the West Bank. Much publicity was accorded this move, including television coverage in the United States.2 (See picture on the next page.)

ENTERTAINMENT AND ASSOCIATIONS

During the first study period in 1973, the January to June group prepared some choral and other entertainment programs which they provided to various audiences. The students performed for Israeli troops in the Sinai area and were presented with the highest award given by the Sinai Military Command for entertaining of the troops in the Sinai area. They met with David Ben Gurion and Yigael Yadin during this period. Also, during these early years, a number of student groups prepared entertainment programs and performed in a number of locations.

YOM KIPPUR WAR

During the second study period, Israel was attacked on the Yom Kippur sacred day by hostile Arab states. This was October 6, 1973. One week later, October 12, the BYU Study Abroad group was evacuated to Salzburg, Austria, to complete their program.

KIBBUTZ RAMAT RACHEL

The kibbutz at Ramat Rachel served the Study Abroad Center for ten years, providing living accommodations, classroom space, meals, and recreational facilities. In December 1979 agreements were reached to remodel this facility to better fit the needs of the center. One large classroom was particularly needed. This was constructed on the third floor over the dining room and would seat 150 persons, providing a small stage and film projection facilities. Laundry machines were also supplied. To accomplish this, BYU had to advance (or loan) the kibbutz some $50,000. This sum would be later deducted from money due from the next Study Abroad program in January 1981.3
Curriculum—Jerusalem Study Abroad

The curriculum for the initial study abroad program in the Holy Land was primarily determined by the appropriate university catalog courses to be offered and the faculty selected as the directors. There was a problem in that the curricular outlines were generally those created for the classes as taught on campus and not correlated with the culture, field trips, and community in the Holy Land. The design varied according to the individual faculty member and his focus and desires.
After some review by university visitors—the president, various deans, and Continuing Education leaders—it was determined that a strong curricular design needed to be made for the Jerusalem Study Abroad Program. While some preliminary reviews had been done earlier, the major work was started in about 1978. The first “revised curriculum for the Study Abroad Program in Jerusalem” was sent to Church Commissioner Jeffrey R. Holland on February 7, 1980.4

The initial review and design recommendation, along with support materials for this project, were handled by Richard H. Henstrom, Keith R. Oakes, David B. Galbraith, and Dann W. Hone. The actual curriculum design was produced by George A. Horton and D. Kelly Ogden. This was a major endeavor by the Division of Continuing Education, which provided financial support. The mission statement for this curriculum said it was “to provide students with opportunities for special spiritual and academic development focused in the Near East, which will help prepare them for more effective service in the Kingdom of God; and to provide the peoples of other nations and cultures a positive exposure to exemplary Latter-day Saints in an educational setting.”5

The design of the curriculum was noteworthy in that it interrelated a number of courses and disciplines.

With the study of the Old and New Testaments as the major focus, it is possible to correlate, in a chronological manner, several of the supporting courses so that related information in history, geography, archaeology, anthropology and sociology is considered concurrently with the content in the scripture courses . . . to effect a correlated approach, content is organized by weekly modules . . . 6

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**Chart R**

**Jerusalem Study Abroad Curriculum Overview—1980**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Introduction (0)</td>
<td>FT (day)—Gal./Jer. lect. (5)</td>
<td>1 Arch. (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Old Testament (5)</td>
<td>History (2)</td>
<td>FT #3 (day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>Old Testament (5)</td>
<td>History (1½)</td>
<td>FT #4 (day) Lec. (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>Old Testament (7)</td>
<td>History (3)</td>
<td>FT #7 (2 days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>Old Testament (6)</td>
<td>History (4)</td>
<td>FT #8 (½ day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>New Testament (24)</td>
<td>FT #9 (1 day)</td>
<td>(Kibbutz experience while in Galilee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>New Testament (16)</td>
<td>History (1)</td>
<td>FT #10 (1 day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>New Testament (5)</td>
<td>FT #12 (1 day)</td>
<td>Current Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>New Testament (5)</td>
<td>History (3)</td>
<td>FT #13 (1 day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>Church History (8)</td>
<td>Archeo. Dig (4 mornings)</td>
<td>Pol. Sci. (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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258 Brigham Young University
The original page outlining the models and the related curriculum is included in this history. (See Chart R on the previous page.) The curriculum has been reviewed and many adjustments made over the years. This was the first major effort to create a stable and consistent curricular design involving study and field trips with departmental interrelationships. While the spirit of the earlier work persists, the current curricular design has been modified and now has a different structure.

The Jerusalem Study Abroad program changed from a six-month format to a semester-based schedule effective January 1985. This change had been authorized by the Kennedy Center Dean’s Council on September 21, 1984.

Faculty

The clearance and availability of faculty to teach at the Jerusalem Center was a problem at first due primarily to the method of funding the program and still keeping it appropriately academic. Continuing Education had to provide for honoraria, air and land transportation, field trips, accommodations, food allowances, and related items. The university through the colleges provided faculty and covered their primary salaries and time for preparation. Additional expenses for faculty, particularly those with large families, were often a financial challenge. A number of misunderstandings with respect to families and finances arose from time to time. In 1987 a Jerusalem Center policy on faculty support was finalized and distributed. (See later section of this chapter on general faculty clearance procedures.)

Personnel

In addition to the many faculty who have directed Jerusalem Study Abroad programs and are noted elsewhere in this history, a number of administrative and staff employees of the Department of Travel Study have served faithfully in Israel at the various center locations. These people included David B. Galbraith, D. Kelly Ogden, Dann W. Hone, Kenneth H. Patey, John A. Tvedt, Haws A. Marble, Shirley Rockwood, Leora M. Thurman, and Norma Horton. Former BYU professors Ivan J. Barrett and Keith R. Oakes also spent time in Israel on special Church assignments, assisting the Study Abroad programs during their callings. Mention is also made in this history of the special assignments of Fred A. Schwendiman and Robert J. Smith. Of course, there was the continual guidance from Continuing Education division administrators and Travel Study department personnel over the years.

Administration in Israel

For many years programs in the Near East were managed and operated from the BYU Provo campus. Key personnel in this management were Robert C. Taylor, Glenna Hansen, Dann W. Hone, and Keith R. Oakes in the Department of Travel Study, and Stanley A. Peterson and Richard H. Henstrom of the Dean’s Office. As both the Travel Study and the Study Abroad programs increased in numbers and complexity, it was determined that a representative for both of these operations was needed in Jerusalem. Effective January 1, 1973, David B. Galbraith was hired as a part-time employee in Jerusalem while he was working on his doctorate degree at Hebrew University. He was hired as a full-time employee effective July 1, 1976. His official titles varied over the years and included administrator, coordinator, and resident director of Jerusalem programs. In order to better understand the nature of his assignment, one official position description as “Resident Administrator, BYU Jerusalem Center” included the following mission and responsibilities:

**Job Mission**

This position is accountable for representing BYU in all its operations in Israel and for providing an in-depth student learning experience in the Old and New Testaments and in the language, history, and culture of the Middle Eastern peoples.
Major Responsibilities (Accountabilities)

1. Seeks to ensure that high academic standards are maintained in the classes by conducting faculty meetings, by maintaining personal relationships with students, and by utilizing available foreign, educational, and cultural opportunities.

2. Accounts for budgeted expenditures by submitting monthly reports with the necessary supporting documents to the Financial Division of the Department of Travel Study.

3. Guarantees that tours (BYU and non-BYU) run smoothly to ensure participant satisfaction by working with travel agents and by personally arranging the logistical details (e.g., accommodations, transportation, guides, fees, etc.) for some tours.

4. Maintains the University's Israeli scholarship program by working with the academic secretaries of five Israeli universities, by promoting the program through the placement of advertisements in the mass media, and by personally interviewing candidates for possible recommendation.

5. Assists successful Israeli scholarship candidates by working with them to complete travel arrangements, by helping them receive visas from the American Embassy and passports from the Israeli government, and by thoroughly explaining the scholarship conditions.

6. Assists the Church and the University by serving on the committee to search for land in Israel that meets their requirements, and serving as liaison to coordinate all planning and development processes for designing and constructing the multi-million dollar Jerusalem Center facility.

7. Oversees translation services (i.e., arranging translators as well as by personally reading and translating various documents) for the Church and BYU by knowing and using both Hebrew and English.

8. Assists General Authorities and other important Church or University leaders during their visits to Israel by completing all logistics (e.g., itinerary, accommodations, and transportation), by conducting their tours, and by introducing them to Israeli officials.

9. Serves as liaison between tour groups (BYU and non-BYU) and hotel management and staffs by meeting directly with the managers and by resolving problems as they arise.

10. Promotes tours to the Holy Land by speaking to and corresponding with interested groups in Europe, the United States, and Canada.

This position description was used from 1973 to 1979, but it changed significantly for the 1979 to 1989 period with the planning and construction of the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies building. The resident administrator for the period was David B. Galbraith.

In 1972 President Harold B. Lee organized the first branch of the Church in Jerusalem in this dispensation, and David B. Galbraith was called as the first president of this branch. This meant that he was also able to coordinate the spiritual programs for the various travel and study abroad programs. Brother Galbraith served as president of the Jerusalem Branch and, subsequently, as president of the Israel District of the International Mission of the Church for 17 years.

He received his PhD from Hebrew University in 1984 and in that same year he became the “Director of the Jerusalem Center.” From both an administrative and service point of view, it is difficult to measure the great contribution that David B. Galbraith made to the university’s Travel Study and Study Abroad programs in the Near East. His contributions also included major assistance with the building of the Jerusalem Center for Near
Eastern Studies facility. He is currently an associate professor of political science at BYU's Provo campus. Other histories will cover his contributions in more detail.

Jerusalem Center Accreditation

As a part of the 1986 accreditation review of Brigham Young University, the Jerusalem Center was visited by Dr. William O. Rieke and a report was made by him to the Review Committee. The review focused on financial support, library facilities, student expectation, faculty, community support, the obtaining of land for a center facility, and some religious and cultural controversies. The final sentences of the report said,

It occurs to this visitor that slowly such acceptance will occur. In the meantime, the objectives of the Travel Study Program in Jerusalem are being met and will be even more so when the new center opens, provided adequate financial support for operations of the new center's expanded programs is provided. The matter of provision of such annual operating expense from the Provo campus should be the subject of serious concern and planning by central administrators in Provo.8

Special Visitors

In 1971, and again in early 1972, Robert C. Taylor accompanied President N. Eldon Tanner, counselor in the First Presidency of the Church, on a tour of Israel. Earlier, President Hugh B. Brown of the First Presidency had also toured the country.

On September 20, 1972, President Harold B. Lee and Elder Gordon B. Hinckley organized the first branch of the Church in Jerusalem since New Testament times. David B. Galbraith was made the branch president. More than half of the branch membership was from the BYU student population, meaning that many of the ecclesiastical positions were filled by such faculty and students.9

During the 1972 Christmas/New Year holiday season, the Jerusalem program was visited by Elder Howard W. Hunter, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees; Neal A. Maxwell, commissioner of Church Education; Dallin H. Oaks, president of BYU; and Stanley A. Peterson, dean of Continuing Education.10

After the visits by all three members of the Church Presidency, a dramatic rise in interest in the Holy Land was evidenced by LDS Church members. In the fall of 1972, the first of many chartered air flights to Israel was instituted.

BYU President Visits Jerusalem Study Abroad

As a part of the university centennial celebration, Brigham Young University President Dallin H. Oaks visited the university’s study abroad centers in Europe and Israel. His visit to Israel was during the early part of January 1976, and he was accompanied by Dean Stanley A. Peterson of the Division of Continuing Education. During this visit they met with students, government leaders, educational leaders of both Israeli and Palestinian universities, faculty, and administrators. A few of the specific guests he met included Minister Moshe Kol, a government cabinet minister; Teddy Kollek, mayor of Jerusalem; Yigael Yadin, world-renowned archaeologist; Dr. Walter Eytan, chairman of the Israel Broadcasting Authority; Haim Ben-Schachar, president of Tel Aviv University; Professor Czapski, rector of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Father Joseph of Bethlehem University; and Acting President B. A. Baramki of Birzeit University. This was the first visit to the center by a BYU president,
but President Jeffrey R. Holland subsequently visited the center on a number of occasions, beginning in 1977 when he was commissioner of Church Education, and later as president of BYU.

**Orson Hyde Gardens**

The BYU Travel Study and Study Abroad programs in Israel were the primary sources of contact and stimulation for a project entitled the Orson Hyde Memorial Garden. Robert Taylor and David Galbraith were the initial contacts with Teddy Kollek, mayor of Jerusalem and chairman of the Jerusalem Foundation. This became a fund-raising project and endeavor associated with the Church under the direction of Elder LeGrand Richards. It eventually involved Travel Study with a Mediterranean Cruise associated with the formal dedication ceremony held on October 24, 1979. A total of 629 patrons were a part of this cruise. The following General Authorities were involved with the dedication: Spencer W. Kimball, Nathan Eldon Tanner, Howard W. Hunter, Ezra Taft Benson, LeGrand Richards, Marvin J. Ashton, and Eldred G. Smith. This garden was built on the Mount of Olives above and to the north of the Garden of Gethsemane on a spot that honored Orson Hyde’s dedication of the Holy Land in 1841.

The construction and dedication of this Orson Hyde Memorial Garden on the Mount of Olives by LDS Church President Spencer W. Kimball contributed to the increased awareness of the Holy Land among Church members. While President Kimball and other authorities of the Church were in Israel, encouragement was given for a possible site for a Jerusalem study center.

**DRY BONES CARTOON**

After the dedication of the Orson Hyde Garden, The Jerusalem Post included a Dry Bones cartoon in their newspaper. It is included here for both its humor and its message.

**Jerusalem Center Facility and Construction**

The initial movement for a center building in Jerusalem was linked to other university foreign center operations owning their own facilities. Such a structure in Jerusalem would add control and consistency and stabilize costs to a greater degree. The division had financed other Study Abroad buildings, and it was felt that the division could assist in obtaining
a facility in Jerusalem, but that there would also be funds available from donors who had been a part of the Jerusalem travel program.

The first steps were modest; however, the Church became desirous of pursuing the possibility of also building a facility to meet branch and district needs. The combining of these two objectives was the next option for review. This became the major focus resulting in the present Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies.

Local governmental and political realities indicated that the facility in Jerusalem must be an academic branch of Brigham Young University. It was upon this premise that the land would be made available—that the authorities of the city would support the project—that the various segments of the society would welcome BYU.

Early efforts for the establishment of the center facility by the Department of Travel Study and the Division of Continuing Education are now reviewed. This will be a simple examination, since several extensive histories and reports are being prepared on this project.

A long period of site acquisition and plan approvals ended with a land-lease agreement in July 1984. On August 21, 1984, ground was broken at the site location on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem. The building plans, bidding, and construction start had many delays because of “additional” clearances. During this year the University Committee on Jerusalem Curriculum was operational. The university announced the appointment of Fred Schwendiman and Robert Smith, both retiring vice presidents, to supervise the construction of this
facility, and they moved to Jerusalem. Then came a period of local opposition, sometimes intense, by the ultraorthodox (Haredim) Jews lasting through 1987. Construction continued uninterrupted with occupancy of the resident facilities in March 1987.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND THE JERUSALEM CENTER
There were many years of planning, coordinating, and concern for spiritual direction of what became known as the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies. Any history needs to note the dreams and dedication of Robert C. Taylor in its creation and completion. This was initially a Department of Travel Study Jerusalem Study Abroad program project. Since this department was a part of the Division of Continuing Education, initial guidance and support was rendered by this division with coordination through the appropriate university administration offices. Robert C. Taylor worked through Richard H. Henstrom of the Dean’s Office, with the division dean then coordinating with the academic vice president and the president.

FINANCES
During these early years much financial support came from division funds. A number of reviews and visits to analyze pieces of available land were done by Continuing Education leaders since the initial objective was to build a center for the Study Abroad program only.

After the official approval of the center by the Church, there was a commitment that Brigham Young University would “be expected to raise 2.5 million dollars of this total.” These same minutes later noted that the university would have to raise $3 million by July 1983, and then a total of $6 million by July 1985 “for our share of the construction and the necessary endowment to operate the project appropriately.” The Church would provide the remainder of the funds needed for the construction of this facility to serve both university and Church purposes. It was also agreed that the Division of Continuing Education would receive reimbursement for its direct costs and appropriate time of Robert C. Taylor and David B. Galbraith as they proceeded with this project, as distinguished from their regular assignments and services for the division.11

THE CHURCH AND UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE
The First Presidency had appointed Elder Howard W. Hunter, assisted by Elder James E. Faust, to represent the Church in this building project. For documentary purposes, this history notes three dates of First Presidency meetings where the purposes and approval of the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies were an agenda item:

April 6, 1979  First Presidency Meeting, including Elders Howard W. Hunter and James E. Faust and Commissioner Jeffrey R. Holland.

April 22, 1979  First Presidency Meeting, including Elder Howard W. Hunter, Commissioner Jeffrey R. Holland, President Dallin H. Oaks, Fred A. Schwendiman, Robert C. Taylor, and David B. Galbraith.

August 1, 1980  First Presidency Meeting, including Elder James E. Faust, Commissioner Jeffrey R. Holland, Fred A. Schwendiman, and Robert C. Taylor.12

It was later noted that the First Presidency presented and discussed “the whole project in the Salt Lake Temple with the Quorum of the Twelve on May 14, 1981.”13

The president of Brigham Young University had delegated much of the university responsibility to Jae R. Ballif at first, assisted by Fred A. Schwendiman, university ad hoc committees, and the Travel Study Department in the Division of Continuing Education. The Continuing Education line of responsibility was under the dean, William R. Siddoway, with Richard H. Henstrom, Robert C. Taylor, and David B. Galbraith as the major links working with the Study Abroad Advisory Committee chaired by Keith R. Oakes.

Robert C. Taylor and Fred A. Schwendiman worked directly with the Brethren in Salt Lake City while David B. Galbraith was the initial local linkage in Israel. Administrative processes changed, and the university
president, Jeffrey R. Holland, became more directly involved. The initial budgets were handled by Travel Study. Some administrative and structural changes were made with respect to the Jerusalem Center and financial changes were affected during the 1986 summer period, resulting in a special construction budget for the center independent of Continuing Education and the university. Beginning September 1, 1986, the Jerusalem Center program began reporting directly to President Jeffrey R. Holland. Robert C. Taylor was appointed as a special assistant to the president for the Jerusalem Center. He continued both duties as the assistant to the president and as director of the Travel Study program. While Travel Study personnel continued with registration and other administrative aspects for the Jerusalem program, the responsibility and line of authority was through Robert C. Taylor and the president. Later an executive committee was organized, chaired by President Jeffrey R. Holland and including Administrative Vice President Dee F. Andersen, Associate Academic Vice President William E. Evenson, and Special Assistant to the President Robert C. Taylor. In 1988 upon the release of President Holland, the committee was reorganized with the appointment of President Rex E. Lee and Provost Bruce C. Hafen, with James R. Kearl, Dee F. Andersen, and Robert C. Taylor continuing. The Jerusalem Center director reported directly to the committee and no longer through any other administrative unit of the university. The first center director was David B. Galbraith who had been directing the program for many previous years. In the spring of 1988 he was granted a one-year (1988–89) leave of absence with a faculty assignment following in the Department of Political Science at BYU. His replacement was Martin B. Hickman. Upon Hickman’s release and retirement, George A. Horton was appointed director in July 1989 for a two-year term. Truman G. Madsen followed Horton for a two-year assignment, with S. Kent Brown following Madsen for the next two-year assignment.

**REPORT TO COMMISSIONER**

In a letter to Commissioner Henry B. Eyring dated January 5, 1982, William R. Siddoway, dean of Continuing Education, made an extensive review of the current Study Abroad program in Israel as it related to the projected center. In the first paragraph he said:

I am pleased to respond to your request for information relative to the Jerusalem Center. Conceptually, we see this facility as an academic branch of BYU. The central focus of the entire operation will be an academic program for university students. We anticipate that visitors from world-wide locations will come to the center. . . . As with all university facilities, these facilities at the center will also be used for religious worship meetings both by the student groups and by local Latter-day Saints.

(The rest of the letter introduced the eight attachments: 1 and 2, committee documents under President Jae R. Ballif on the philosophy; 3, outline of current faculty selection and approval process; 4, the curriculum; 5, academic calendar for the winter semester 1982 group; 6, Near Eastern Studies faculty statement; 7, a grid on possible expansion; and 8, a current report from David B. Galbraith dated December 23, 1982.)

The final paragraph of the letter summarized Continuing Education support:

We are pleased to be a part of the planning for this important educational project. Because of the high visibility for the Church we know that there will be an involvement from many units of the Church and the university. We pledge our cooperation to all who will participate in developing this unique educational facility.

A brief review of the various elements associated with the building of the Jerusalem Center will now be covered in the following subject headings:

- Building Sites
- Formal Announcement
- Articles of Association
- Public Status
BUILDING SITES
Continuing Education and Travel Study administrators considered a number of building sites in Israel for the
building of a Study Abroad center. Various pieces of correspondence described some of these sites:

1976
A site on Bethlehem Road within pre-1967 Israeli territory, about a ten-minute walk from the Old City, situ-
ated on an elevated site overlooking Mount Zion and the Old City. The Dome of the Rock, the Mount of
Olives, and much of Jerusalem could be viewed from the upper floors.16

1977
Peter Mourik of the Church Building Department in Europe was sent to Israel to consider Church land pur-
chases, and he reviewed possible options with BYU on Church purposes for land and a building.17

1978
A house of three stories, located in an area known as Mount Scopus No. 1, with a view looking over
Jerusalem. (Land was 682 square meters surrounded by a cement wall; asking price, $275,000.)18

1978
A building foundation for a hotel not completed, near Ramat Rachel kibbutz. Original construction started by
individuals in Canada.19

1978
Mayor Teddy Kollek had recommended a building site in a new area on the planning boards which was a
subdivision outside Jerusalem proper. It still needed plans for streets, utilities, hospitals, schools, etc.20

1979
A list summarized a number of properties that had been “observed, studied and discussed” as possible cen-
ter sites. These are all included in the following summaries:

A. Afifi Area: Mount Scopus location, south from Shepherds Hotel.

B. Abu Tor Site: Property owned by the Greek Orthodox Church, unimproved, on a hill south
of and overlooking the walled city—10-minute walk.

C. Solomon Palace Property: South of Abu Tor toward Diplomat Hotel.

D. Gilo Property: West of Bethlehem Road on a hill overlooking west of Jerusalem by present
dumping ground.

E. Caspi Site: Located between Abu Tor and Solomon Palace areas, limited dunams, looks back
toward Bethany.

F. Marelies Area: On road to Bethlehem.
G. Tan Tur: Next to Greenbelt, west of Catholic school, south of Tan Tur Road.

H. Bethlehem Hill Site.

I. King David Hotel: Lot to the south.

J. Terra Sancta: Near Catholic administration building.

K. Augusta Victoria: Mount Scopus by Hebrew University, owned by the Lutheran Church, houses a hospital on a small portion of the land.

L. Mount Scopus “L” Site: This was an “L”-shaped piece of land located south of the above Lutheran land, housing Bedouins on the property.

M. Omar Kader Hill.

N. Observatory Hill: Just below Abu Tor where monks are located.

O. Mandelbaum Gate: Expropriated land by the Garden Tomb.

P. Nawas Property: East of the Shepherds Hotel on Mount Scopus.

Q. The U.N. Property: A site beyond the U.N. compound having a spectacular view of all of the Jerusalem area.21

The most interest during these years seemed to focus on the Abu Tor property and then the sites on Mount Scopus: “L”-shaped property on Mount Scopus, the U.N. area site, the Lutheran Church property, and the Nawas property, owned by an Arab family scattered all over.

**FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

The official formal announcement that a center would be built was made by Elder Howard W. Hunter to 632 participants on a Travel Study Eastern Mediterranean Cruise, October 20, 1979, on a ship (the Stella Solaris) sailing between Alexandria, Egypt, and Haifa, Israel. President Spencer W. Kimball, who was also present, said, “Creation of the BYU Jerusalem Center has the full-hearted support of the university’s Board of Trustees. . . . The Jerusalem Center will stand as further evidence of how seriously the university believes its long held assertion that the ‘World Is Our Campus.’” Public announcements which followed indicated that “the Center will be administered by the BYU Department of Travel Studies as a division of continuing education. Church funds and tuition fees paid by the participants will cover much of the cost with additional support from . . . major contributions.”22

The Church News stated that

The new center would not only function as an educational facility for the BYU programs but also would provide facilities for meetings of the Jerusalem LDS Branch and a Church visitors center. In addition, dormitories for students and offices for administrators and faculty would be provided, Elder Hunter said. . . . The new facility would make it possible to add continuing education courses for adults, professional development programs for Church Education System teachers, expanded Near Eastern studies program, scriptural studies program for researchers and graduates and archaeological research in cooperation with other institutions. Exact location of the center has not yet been determined.23

While General Authorities were attending the Orson Hyde Memorial Garden dedication, “they visited a number of proposed sites.” When the visiting party of authorities viewed the site of the present center in 1979, President Nathan Eldon Tanner said, “This is where the Jerusalem Center should be built.” He called for a vote of the Brethren present, including President Spencer W. Kimball, and all of the hands were raised in support.24 The vote was unanimous. The next step with respect to property was a difficult and long process. Permission was granted in 1980 to obtain the services of Robert P. Thorn, a businessman, who went to Israel and began
the delicate process of examining and then obtaining the land for the center. Other histories dealing with the purchase of this property will cover in more detail the unusual circumstances involved with the obtaining of this land and the building of the center. Robert P. Thorn played a key role in this process.

**ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION**

In 1977 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints submitted “Articles of Association” in order to become a “non-profit, non-commercial organization under the laws of Israel.” Its objective was to become recognized as “a religious, educational, and charitable organization established with the purpose of carrying out in accordance with Israeli law all of the purposes and ends of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints . . .”

In November 1980 the university officially signed and had notarized Articles of Association which were necessary for the establishment of the Jerusalem Center. There were ten separate articles with subheadings, but article #2 stated the objectives of the association and these are now included in this history:

2.1 To establish and maintain an educational-cultural community in Israel.

2.2 To build and maintain in the community an educational institution with dormitory facilities.

2.3 To erect and maintain in the community a center whose aims include the participation of Israelis and visitors from abroad in programs of education and culture aimed at cultivating concern for the quality of life in Israel and throughout the world.

2.4 To promote education and culture in Israel and abroad through a variety of programs and projects.

2.5 The association is established and shall conduct its activities exclusively for charitable purposes; and it shall not be conducted or operated for profit and no part of its net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any member, trustee, director, or officer or any private individual (except that reasonable compensation may be paid for services rendered to or for the association pursuant to one or more of its purposes); nor shall any net earnings, property or assets of the association be used other than for charitable purposes.

2.6 The association, as a public institution, will appoint an accountant who will provide its authoritative bodies with an annual certified balance sheet.

The original name of this association was simply Brigham Young University on this document. In 1984 a “Resolution of Brigham Young University” changed the name in Article 1 to The Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, Brigham Young University. Such articles of association and resolutions have been officially registered with the Israeli corporate organization called AMUTAH.

**PUBLIC STATUS**

On March 8, 1985, official status was given to the university “association” by the Ministry of Finance for tax purposes. This action provided identity similar to Hebrew University, Hebrew Union College, hospitals, and some welfare activities, for example. This provided legal public institution identity.

**LAND ACQUISITION**

Robert P. Thorn was provided with an official document signed by President Dallin H. Oaks which stated that Mr. Thorn has been retained and is authorized by Brigham Young University to engage in negotiations for suitable property acquisitions. He will make recommendations to the administration of Brigham Young University of those properties that may be suitable for a future Educational Center and related facilities for Brigham Young University, as authorized by the Government of Israel and the City of Jerusalem.
The official approval for the land and the building was noted in a document written in Hebrew which was translated and then reviewed by Advocate Joseph Kokia, Israel Kimhi, and David B. Galbraith on March 12, 1981. It was a notification of approval for planning:

We hereby inform you that in its meeting on 1 March 1981, Israel Land Administration (henceforth, the Administration), discussed your proposal to approve the planning of the property known as block 30521, parcels 9 and 10, of an area of 18,914 square meters in Jerusalem (henceforth the property), for the purpose of a university institution of the Mormons (henceforth the purpose) . . .

There were innumerable delays and innumerable procedures that needed to be followed. A model of the center had to be prepared and approved. The architects on the project were Frank Ferguson of Salt Lake City and David Resnik of Jerusalem. Robert Thorn was the official university "negotiator" through this process, working with Israeli and Palestinian legal entities. The negotiation process, legal requirements, and final approval were a miracle. This program was called the "Mormon Threat" and the "Mormon Issue" in the Knesset and with Prime Minister Peres and his cabinet. It was a national political issue.

Ultraorthodox Jewish groups opposed the building of the center, focusing on the Church’s missionary efforts in the world. This was covered through local and international media sources, which also resulted in governmental concerns. Demonstrations and pickets were organized at the construction site. The university student population was accused of being “missionaries in disguise.” On August 1, 1985, university President Jeffrey R. Holland issued a document that was entitled “Undertaking.” The first page of this document under the heading of “Preamble” explains the university and the operation of its Study Abroad programs with special focus on this one in the Holy Land. The second page then makes some specific declarations to the community which are quoted below:

Now, out of an acute awareness of the public sensitivity surrounding the construction of this BYU annex and at the request of the Interior Committee of the Knesset, this undertaking is hereby given to reaffirm that the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies (hereinafter referred to as the Institution), an extension program of Brigham Young University (USA), is being constructed and will be used for the academic programs and other activities commonly associated with universities, including religious services, as provided in the following declaration and undertaking.

We Declare and Undertake That:

1. In harmony with the law and consistent with our own past policy and practice, students, faculty, and staff connected with the Institution will not be permitted to engage in proselytizing activities in Israel.

2. To assist in enforcing this policy the Institution will continue, as it has in the past, to require all students, faculty, and staff involved in the study programs of the Institution to sign an undertaking not to engage in proselytizing activity in Israel. Violators will be subject to dismissal from the program and returned home.

3. The academic programs of the Institution are especially designed for participants from the worldwide Latter-day Saints (Mormon) community coming through Brigham Young University (USA). As long as required by the Israel Council of Higher Education, students from Israel shall not be, in any way, enrolled by the Institution for academic course work (i.e., classes for which university credit is available or any student program leading to a degree).
4. Some educational and cultural programs and exhibits may be open to the general public in keeping with a university's public role but will not be designed nor used for proselytizing.

Signed:
Jeffrey R. Holland, President
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah, U.S.A.

During this difficult period, Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek was a strong advocate for the university and the Church. In a letter he gives his views on this matter:

... As you know, I have watched with great interest the addition of the Center from its inception and in the same way that the Orson Hyde Gardens have contributed to the beauty and inspirational quality of Jerusalem, so then will the magnificent new BYU Center add to Jerusalem's intellectual and cultural life... It is my understanding that in addition to very comprehensive educational facilities, the Center will be equipped with and serve as a focal point for thousands of Mormon tourists visiting the Holy Land.

We are not unmindful of the fact that no other religious group is held in higher esteem by our Arab brethren than the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Your codes of morality and temperance are admired and respected by Moslems who share these same values. It has likewise not escaped the attention of thoughtful people that many of the highest executives in those Mormon companies that do business with the Arab countries are of the Mormon faith.

As you know, as Mayor of Jerusalem, I have always strived to create a mosaic of religious and cultural mores, preserving the individual differences while integrating each group within a cohesive whole, yet much misunderstanding and distrust still exist. A large amount of this is politically motivated and does not represent the real feelings of ordinary people who simply want to live in peace and harmony with their neighbors, with freedom to pursue their own individual life goals.

I feel that the Mormon Church's presence in Jerusalem can do a great deal towards providing the bridge of understanding between Arabs and Jews throughout the Middle East and that its members, looking with sympathy and understanding at both sides, can be a force to bring about a just and lasting peace in our troubled area...

In another letter Mayor Teddy Kollek made some comments concerning his association with "the Mormons" in Jerusalem. He then added two paragraphs of poignant interest with respect to Christian churches and Israel:

... I take the liberty once again to mention a central and vital point which is guiding the Jewish community's relationship with Christian Churches. At this point in our history, having lost six million Jews in the holocaust, it is inconceivable that the Jewish nation tolerates any religious missionary activity. We are aware that the idea of mission is embedded in the faith of all Christians. However, all churches in Jerusalem have been sensitive to this particular situation and have refrained from carrying out mission work among the Jews.

Everybody interested in the welfare of Jerusalem will of course endeavor to do his best to help keep the quiet and pleasant atmosphere prevailing in the city. During the talks we had, I have noted with satisfaction that you and the other Mormon representatives understood our position and agreed to help us preserve the peace of Jerusalem, and that in establishing your center you would refrain from mission activities here.
After much searching for the proper piece of land for the center, the university began its many legal requests. There were many diverse negotiations for the property desired. This initial official letter indicates how the allocation of the property was moving forward by 1980. It also has a number of descriptive paragraphs of importance:

(English translation of the Hebrew letter of endorsement written by Jerusalem City Engineer, Amnon Niv, translated by Kelly Ogden, reviewed by David Galbraith.)

May 28, 1980

Mr. Moshe Einmor
Jerusalem District
Israel Land Administration
King George V Street
Jerusalem

Dear Sir:

Reason: Allocation of property for educational institution for the Mormons

Brigham Young University of the Mormons has operated in Jerusalem for several years; with its expansion they are searching for a permanent location for their activities after functioning in temporary places.

University personnel have examined along with city planners a number of alternatives in the city and have chosen a site which upon examination suits their functional needs since it is near the (Hebrew) University on Mt. Scopus. According to their program they are seeking about 15 dunam.

A project model which they have shown us proves their sensitivity to Jerusalem’s landscape and the compatibility of their project to the urban planning.

The property referred to is situated in Block 30521, Parcels 9 and 10. According to the zoning ordinance, page 9, the property is designated for public institutions and in part public open-space which can be used as part of the garden or open-spaces which accompany the project.

We recommend this site as suitable for the proposed designation both from functional aspects and from statutory aspects. We are certain that the quality of planning will contribute to said area and will complement Jerusalem’s designated function as a capital city of culture and education.

Sincerely,

Amnon Niv
City Engineer

cc: Teddy Kollek

GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATIONS

The issue of the center reached the highest Israeli government circles. The key question had to do with possible missionary activity. Correspondence from David Galbraith noted that Minister Shahal

... has a great track record for bringing the religious and the secular together on urgent issues and as a result he has the full confidence of the Prime Minister. Shahal asked us today to consider whether or not we are prepared to sign another legal document to be attached to an existing agreement such as the one with the Lands Authority, binding us:

1. Not to engage in missionary activity through the center.
2. To use the building for academic purposes only which shall be open only to those students coming through the BYU...
3. That a “supervisory committee” be established consisting of one from Hebrew University, one from Bar Ilan University, one from the Jerusalem municipality, one from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and one from the Council of Higher Education.

4. In the case of a disagreement, the matter be turned over to an arbitrator to be selected by the Israel Bar Association.

The university attempted to comply with every legal detail and negotiated on the purpose of the center and the composition of the governmental review committee.

As a matter of history and interest, the following points were some discussion options for the center. It was Minister Burg who felt there were six points that represented “the demands of the various religious factions.” The six points were:

1. Withdraw from the site and transfer the project to another less sensitive location.
2. Stop construction for a period while negotiations take place.
3. Curtail, limit or restrict the use of certain parts of the building (the public areas).
4. Close the public areas for a period of two years to allow a feeling of trust and confidence to take place in the center.
5. Agree to seek a “permit” to allow certain types of programs to take place in the center.
6. Agree to supervision of the activities of the center to ensure that commitments are being kept.

The prime minister’s committee to review the center and the university and Church’s presence in Israel consisted of eight government ministers—this was a high-level committee. The purpose of the committee was to “examine the scope of the Mormon University’s activities.” In the meeting of January 29, 1986, Minister Rubenstein (an ardent supporter of the Jerusalem Center) asked to make a statement at the outset of the meeting. He stressed the sensitivity to missionary activity was the primary focus and concern of the committee and not the building itself.

Minister Burg asked if both the Church and the university would be willing to enter a contractual agreement not to engage in missionary activity as long as it was forbidden by the government of Israel. He also was eager for some kind of statement to ensure that each successive church or university administration would not renounce the commitments entered into by its predecessors.

Two documents were signed and notarized on May 18, 1988, regarding the Church and the university on the proselytizing questions. These documents were addressed and submitted to The Government of Israel. The first document was signed on behalf of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Elder Howard W. Hunter. It stated:

We, the undersigned, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, hereinafter “the Church,” undertake that the Church will not engage in any missionary activity within the borders of Israel, as long as such activity is not allowed by the government of Israel. For this purpose, “missionary activity” means organized activity to induce or persuade a person not a member of the community of the Church to become a member of the community of that Church, by preaching or teaching the tenets of the Church or otherwise. This obligation applies to our Church and each of its branches and departments and to every institution under its control.

Brigham Young University submitted a similar document under the signature of President Jeffrey R. Holland. This official commitment regarding missionary activity involved not only study abroad students at the center, but also participants in programs sponsored by the Department of Travel Study in Continuing Education and
to faculty members and other university personnel on assignment or leave in Israel. This document is included on page 275 in its entirety.

**LAND LEASE AGREEMENTS**

The commitment on “missionary activity” was the final hurdle which allowed for the land lease agreement to be formally signed. This was a 19-page document written in Hebrew and later translated into English. It was “made and signed this 18th day of May 1988.” The agreement was between the “Israel Land Administration, which administers the lands of the state of Israel/the Development Authority/the Jewish National Fund, and the Jerusalem Centre for Near Eastern Studies.” A “development agreement” had been issued on May 9, 1984, between these same parties which allowed the initial construction of “an educational and cultural campus and dormitory facilities [sic]...with the object of serving as the Jerusalem Centre for Near Eastern Studies for educational and cultural purposes that are not contrary to the educational and cultural values of Israel.”

It was then noted that the Lessee “has constructed the buildings in accordance with the conditions of the Development Agreement as aforesaid and has complied with the other conditions thereof, and it requests the Lessor to lease the site and fixtures thereto.”

The term of the lease was for 49 years commencing on March 4, 1984, and to be terminated on March 4, 2033. A statement on renewal of the lease indicated that “not prior to one year before the end of the term of the lease, the Lessee shall be entitled to request the Lessor by registered letter to renew the lease for an additional period of 49 years.”

A few other items of note included:

11. The rents on the lease were to be paid annually, and the basic rents would be increased every seven years, beginning first on March 3, 1991.

12. Any additional construction or changes in the building would require advance approval.

13. Taxes, insurance, consent fees and other obligations regarding possible transfer of the Agreement Rights were also noted.

14. The “Observance of the Sabbath and Jewish Festivals” specified that “the Lessee and persons entitled thereunder shall be under a duty to refrain from any building and trade works in the leased premises on Sabbaths and Jewish festivals.”

15. The final page of the Lease Agreement noted that the place was Jerusalem, the registered block number 30521, with an area of approximately 17,000 square meters, with 9–10 parcels (in parts).

The above material provides only a brief review of some of the issues and the legal entanglements and challenges faced in establishing the center in Jerusalem. The agreement resulted in several actions by the university, including: (1) students and related personnel were requested not to be involved in any proselytizing activity; (2) the faculty received special notification on their roles and the need for other private tour clearances for their travel activity in Israel; and (3) the careful use of the center itself was directed to related religious activities, university classes, local cultural concerts, adult education programs, and a limited facility for visitors.

**PRESS REPORTS ON THE CENTER**

During the planning and building stages of the Jerusalem Center, there were considerable press reports describing both Jewish and Palestinian reactions to its presence. Some of the Palestinian objections dealt with the “confiscated land” which was used for the project and with the “historical support of the Jewish presence in Palestine.”

Another U.S.-based religious group is planning to establish permanent quarters in Jerusalem. The Mormon Church, based in Utah, is in the process of building on confiscated Palestinian land on the Mount of Olives... Al Fajr learned that a seven-dunam site...has already been acquired. The Palestinian property was leased on a 99-year plan to the Mormons by the Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property. After intensive investigation Al Fajr learned that the site of the Mormon project is owned...
TO:  
THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL  
JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

Dear Sirs:

The obligations on our part hereinafter set out are supplementary to our obligation dated 1st August 1983, a photcopy of which is attached. Brigham Young University (hereafter called "BYU") hereby declares that the Lease Agreement intended to be entered into between the Israel Lands Administration and the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, Amuta No. 53006666-6, a department of BYU (hereafter called "the Center"), is made for the purpose only of operating and maintaining an educational and cultural center with residential and housing quarters and of running the same for students from abroad to the intent that the same shall serve as a center for educational and cultural requirements not in conflict with Jewish educational and cultural values.

BYU undertakes on its own behalf and on behalf of its teachers, students and employees, as well as on behalf of its departments and sections, not to engage in any missionary activity in whatsoever form in Israel. "Missionary activity" means organized activity to induce or persuade any person not being a member of the community of the Mormon Church to become a member of the community of such Church, by way of preaching or teaching the tenets of the Church or otherwise.

Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, BYU declares and undertakes that the Center will not be used for missionary activity, and its teachers, students and employees shall sign an undertaking not to engage in missionary activity in Israel. Any person in breach of such undertaking shall be liable to be dismissed from the Center and/or study program and shall be liable to be sent back home.

Dated this ___ day of May 1983.

[Signature]

Jeff R. Holland, President
by the Hidmi and Khalidi Palestinian families. . . . Khalidi’s lawyer, Elias Khoury, told Al Fajr that by using the land, the authorities prevent a possible return of the land to its original owners: “According to existing laws and precedents, if a plot of land has been confiscated for over 10 years and not used, then its owners have a good chance of getting the land back.” Khoury criticized the Islamic waqf, trustees of the land, for blocking his attempts to go to court three years ago. Khoury said that because the waqf differed with the Khalidi family, nothing has been done.\textsuperscript{49}

A small insert in this same article had a picture of the stone at the Orson Hyde Garden with the following comments:

Memorial stone in the Orson Hyde Park, the first Mormon construction on confiscated Palestinian land in East Jerusalem. Hyde was “divinely inspired” to pray for the return of the Jewish people to the Holy City. Since then Mormons have developed a profitable relationship with the Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property, at Palestinian expense.\textsuperscript{50}

Most responses in the Jewish press reflected negative views, but there were also some positive statements in support of the center:

The Mormons from the very beginning felt a kinship with the Jews because of the persecution of both peoples. In their publications the Mormons cited the Jews as an example of courage in overcoming persecution. They reported on the plight of Jews abroad and other matters of Jewish interest at a time when few non-Jewish publications did so.

Although their writing and speaking in favour of the Jewish return, and their two missions to Palestine, had little effect on the efforts which led to the achievement of Zionist aims, the attitude of the Mormons as a religious sect has been in strong contrast to the official viewpoint of most Christian denominations.\textsuperscript{51}

Another article written in an “Opinion and Commentary” section of a local paper noted that a Baptist Church on Narkis Street in Jerusalem had recently been burned by radicals. It then stated that

The extremists are leading a crusade against Brigham Young University’s extension program in Israel. . . . The Jewish newspapers, even in this country, are filled with letters to the editor protesting this Mormon “invasion” of Zion. The Jerusalem Post has carried many letters and a number of articles, most of them critical. Most of the published items reveal a startling ignorance of the theological position of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints toward Israel and Jewish survival, which is far more affirmative than that of the Roman Catholic Church and also of most Protestants. And, even if the Mormons were committed to missionizing the Jews, which they are not, is Jewish Israel so spiritually weak that it must resort to the old methods of Christendom to meet the challenge?\textsuperscript{52}

A news service explained several views on this project in some of their news releases during the early part of 1986:

1. A university extension center being built on Mount Scopus by American Mormons has triggered a religious controversy that threatens to turn violent. Jewish religious militants, with support from some secular groups, oppose the Brigham Young University extension on two grounds. They maintain that Mormons, despite denials from university officials, will try to convert Jews to the Mormon faith. They also say Mormons should not be allowed to build a study center on a site that has deep religious significance for Jews.\textsuperscript{53}

2. Hebrew University spokesman reportedly wrote back as follows (free translation): We recognize Brigham Young University as a developed institution, outstanding in certain academic areas (who have been) in Jerusalem many years.
In the past we have had joint scientific projects between our university and theirs. Similarly, their students, on occasion, have attended our university.

The administration of Hebrew University indeed had held conversations with BYU leadership in America in connection with the continuation of joint academic projects, through their local branch. Hebrew University will allow them usage of its library and give their students the opportunity of attending courses under certain conditions. We have similar arrangements with other universities throughout the world.54

3. Nathan Perimutter, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, has indicated his support for the controversial Brigham Young University study center of the Mormon Church under construction in Jerusalem.55

The commitment not to proselytize in Israel, which was a part of the agreement with the Israeli government, received some local press comments. One article expressed both the difficulty and the commitment by center faculty and students:

On the plane to Israel, Kent Jackson, who heads Brigham Young University’s Near Eastern Studies department, met a young Israeli woman who had purchased a book on Mormon theology and wanted to discuss the religion with him. “I evaded her questions,” Jackson said. “It’s frustrating for me, as someone who thrives on intellectual interaction, not to talk about certain ideas or concepts. But that’s what we’ve promised. Our students are instructed to say, ‘I’m sorry but I’ve been instructed not to talk about this.’”

The students emphasized that they take seriously their commitment not to do missionary work here. They say they are reluctant even to discuss their views for fear that this might be viewed as missionary work. . . .

“We love being here, and don’t want to jeopardize the experience we’re having,” said Cornell Porter. . . . As Porter and his fellow students see it, Brigham Young’s program here is purely academic. . . . “Being here gives us exposure to the land and the culture,” said Bob Cloward. . . . “I suspect we’re just a part of a much greater social controversy,” said Jackson, “We may be more of a symptom than a problem.” 56

The opposition was rather intense at times during the construction period, with pickets carrying placards and signs marching at the entrances to the property. This action received worldwide media attention. The construction continued, and there was no violence or physical destruction. After the completion of the center, one news release explained the action as follows:

The theory that the ultra-orthodox are winning every battle they wage in Jerusalem does not stand up to the test of reality—take the Mormons, for instance. On the western slopes of the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, the final stages are being completed on one of the most beautiful buildings in the city. This building, full of terraces and arches, is a monument to one of the biggest defeats of the ultra-orthodox lobby. The Jerusalem Center for Near East Studies, or the Mormon University as the press likes to describe it, is open and regular studies are in progress. . . . The authorities are still bothering the place with all sorts of petty demands . . . but despite all this, there can be no mistake: the Mormons have won. . . . The building, which combines stone, marble and teak, is perched on the side of the mountain and looks as if it has always been there, as beautiful as the mountain itself. 57

HARASSMENT AND THREATS TO PERSONNEL
During the most difficult period of opposition, David B. Galbraith reported on some of the problems faced by the Brigham Young University personnel associated with the center. This was kept confidential at the time, but it is felt appropriate to summarize some of the problems faced by the personnel.
Over the last few months, the BYU administrators of the Jerusalem Center have been subjected to all kinds of harassment, some of which has been growing, both in terms of its intensity and its grotesque nature. It started with public demonstrations at the site and in the last six weeks includes such demonstrations before our homes. Although these demonstrations are generally “peaceful,” involving ultra-religious Jews with placards, who chant their prayers in an attempt to invoke some terrible form of divine retribution upon us, they are nevertheless disruptive and unnerving. They stay just long enough to make their presence felt, but short enough to be on their way before the police arrive.

More personally disconcerting than the demonstrations are the threatening phone calls we have been receiving, day and night. The threats range from death threats, to the burning or bombing of our homes, cars, etc., to the more insidious threats of acts against our wives and children, including kidnapping and ransom. Such threats are preceded by warnings to stop construction and/or missionary activities or face the consequences.

In spite of all the efforts of the opposition, we are neither frightened nor intimidated. We have had to make certain adjustments in our life styles and to take certain precautions, but other than that life goes on as normal. . . . The greatest challenge to those of us living in Israel is not the threats of harm to our person or damage to our property, but rather, what effect such threats have on our feelings towards these peoples. If we allow ourselves to be eaten up internally with strong feelings of resentment or even hatred for those who would seek our hurt, what will we have gained?

**Administrative Changes**

This Division of Continuing Education’s annual report noted some additional changes in the administrative structure for this program. During 1983–84, this report noted:

The Jerusalem Center for BYU and the University’s involvement in this First Presidency project continued. The official clearance and signature for the Israel government on lease agreement approval was received on May 22, 1984. The building plans, bidding, and construction start was pending additional clearances. During this year the University Committee on Jerusalem Curriculum was operational. The university announced the appointment of Fred Schwendiman and Robert J. Smith, both retiring vice presidents, to supervise the construction of this facility.

These various administrative units continued with selected involvement with the Jerusalem Study Abroad program and the center faculty under the direction of the First Presidency and the BYU President’s Office. A more refined definition of change took place in 1986:

The Jerusalem Study Abroad Program has been administered since its creation in 1968 by the Continuing Education Department of Travel Study. A number of years ago the First Presidency approved a project under their direction for the building of a Jerusalem Center which would house the Near East Study program. In a memo dated February 10, 1987, President Holland formalized an organizational and budget program for Jerusalem Study programs. In effect, the University part of this study program became a separate administrative entity under the direct supervision of President Holland. Robert Taylor had been previously appointed as a special assistant to the President for the Jerusalem Center. The Department of Travel Study, in effect, became a contracting agency to provide services to this separate operation. The actual date for this change was September 1, 1986.

President Jeffrey R. Holland’s memorandum in 1987 to selected BYU administrators regarding the “Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, Memo of Understanding,” covered several items:

**Director:** President Howard W. Hunter had appointed Dr. David Galbraith to be the first director of the center. This was done under the auspices of the Board of Trustees and the First Presidency.
Operational Organization: The director would answer directly to the president of the university. An organizational chart was attached.

Construction Finance: The role of the Church budget officer would continue, working directly with the First Presidency, President Hunter, Elder Faust, and the BYU administration.

Construction Supervision: Brothers Fred Schwendiman and Robert Smith would continue with their on-site duties through the construction phase. As this was concluded they were to work with Brother Galbraith and his operational staff “to educate them for the full management responsibilities of the Center.”

Personnel: Clarification was made in the budgetary support and the clearance processes for assistants, faculty, and Robert Taylor’s continued role as the president’s special assistant for the center.

Coordination Groups: There was to be a steering committee for a period of time, but President Holland would “continue to work directly with President Howard W. Hunter and Elder James E. Faust, agents for the officers of the Board (First Presidency) on this project.” An academic coordination committee would continue “to review, coordinate and correlate all academically related matters.” The creation of an art committee for the center was also reviewed.

The memorandum concluded with a paragraph on the “residential faculty” and the need for “consistency and coordination in our communications to and from Jerusalem: In all of this we are simply attempting to facilitate what will become the ongoing operational function of a very large, very visible, and very important educational center.”

Continuing Education was no longer a direct link in the management of this center, although its initial support and work laid the groundwork for the establishment of the center.

Jerusalem Center Financial Transfer and Audit
Transfer of the operation of the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies to a separately funded operation on September 1, 1986, prompted a management report audit. This was requested by Dee F. Andersen, administrative vice president, and given to a task force consisting of M. DeVerl Cutler, C. Joseph Rowberry, Randall L. Morgan, and George J. Talbot. In addition to being appropriate for a transfer, procedures needed to be developed since the Department of Travel Study in Continuing Education would continue to collect tuition and fees, register the students, and advertise and promote the program. Changes needed to be made in the accounting system for the entire program, with Travel Study being paid an annual fee for its work. New principles were recommended along with procedures for receiving and depositing funds, disbursement procedures, journal entries, and other financial matters. In the report’s conclusion the current administrative staff was commended for its “effectiveness and efficiency.” The report concluded by saying:

We have discussed the contents of this report with them, have reached agreement on the concepts and accounting principles to be implemented, and we feel that they will do their best to implement the controls and accounting systems as presented. Again, our big concern is the absence of a technically strong accounting person to administer the system and the accounting needs of the Center. As described in our report this person is key to the ultimate success of the implementation process.

While budget, academic, and policy responsibility lines for this program continued with the President’s Office, the Department of Travel Study continued with the promotion, registration, travel, and related administrative details for the program. However, the Division of Continuing Education was relieved of its administrative responsibility on August 31, 1993, when all budget, administration, and personnel lines were officially transferred to a special office chaired by James R. Kearl. Travel Study continued “to assist and support the program and be reimbursed financially.” The Jerusalem Study Abroad offices continued to be housed in Continuing Education facilities.
This program had now obtained an academic base at the university with appropriated budget funds to assist in its operation. This was in addition to student fees and tuition collected for its operation.

**Jerusalem Center Dedication**

The Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies was dedicated in a private service held on May 16, 1989. President Thomas S. Monson of the First Presidency, who conducted the services, said in his introduction that this “is a very important date, a date which will live in the history of the Church, a date which is dear to the hearts of all who have labored so earnestly, bringing to fulfillment this precious day.” He also quoted a passage in John 12:20–21 where certain Greeks came to Philip seeking Jesus. President Monson indicated that many would come to the center with “that same thought . . . swelling up in their bosoms” and that the center will need to assist them in “seeking Jesus.” Later in the services he said, “This day is a miracle in more ways than one. It is a miracle that this building stands complete with every facet attended to with tender, loving care . . . Everyone who comes to this center will leave a better person for having been here.”

The invocation was given by David B. Galbraith and the benediction by Daniel H. Ludlow. The speakers in sequence of their talks included Robert C. Taylor, Fred A. Schwendiman, and Elder Jeffrey R. Holland. Elder Boyd K. Packer in his address touched upon the commitment not to proselytize in Israel and gave justification for this decision from scripture and inspiration. In his concluding remarks about the building he noted, “I have always had the feeling that it should be done, that nothing should be spared in doing it, that no resource should be withheld that would cause it to be because this was Jerusalem and that the Lord had in His mind things which we do not yet know, and as the generations unfold His purposes will be made known.”

Howard W. Hunter, President of the Quorum of the Twelve, and so instrumental in representing the First Presidency on this project, gave the concluding address. After President Hunter made his remarks and commended a number of people for their service and devotion in seeing that the center was built, he gave the dedicatory prayer, which is being included now in this history.

Our beloved Heavenly Father, humbly we come into Thy presence with bowed heads on this solemn occasion of thanksgiving. We express appreciation to Thee our Father for the many good things we receive at thy hands, for life itself, for being born in the dispensation of the fulness of times. We thank Thee for the gift of Thy Son and for His atoning sacrifice by which we will have life everlasting, and we thank Thee for being permitted to enter into the waters of baptism and receive the Holy Ghost and be confirmed members of the Church of Thy Son. Father, we express gratitude for the restoration of the gospel in these latter days and that we have been endowed with an understanding and a knowledge of its truthfulness. We thank Thee, Father, for the privilege of being Thy children, and for the sacred privilege which is ours of conversing with Thee in prayer and of having our petitions heard and answered. We are thankful that we can call Thee Father. We thank Thee for a prophet, his counselors, the Council of the Twelve Apostles, and other Church officers who give us leadership. We thank Thee, Father, for the establishment of the Brigham Young University as a subsidiary institution of the Church of Thy Son where many of thy sons and daughters may receive learning coupled with spirituality and a knowledge of Thee. Bless, we pray Thee, its officers, its faculty, and the students who attend with a knowledge of Thy ways and a desire to follow. This building wherein we are seated has been constructed for the housing of those who would love Thee and seek to learn of Thee and follow in the footsteps of Thy Son, our Savior and Redeemer. It is beautiful in every respect, complying with all of the beauty which it represents. Oh, Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of building this house to those who will come here and be here for the benefit and learning of Thy sons and daughters. We pray, Father, that Thou wilt bless this house in every way. Bless the land on which it rests and the beautiful grounds. Bless its foundations. Bless the walls and roof and all its details. We pray that it will be kept from damage or destruction from the hands of man or from the ravages of nature and will remain beautiful and representative of that which is sacred and that which pertains to Thee. We, Thy children, therefore
dedicate to Thee, Father, that which has been built by our hands in love, this beautiful building, the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, and all of its appurtenances, praying that it will be acceptable in every respect to Thee. May all who enter herein
to teach, to learn, or for whatever purpose be blessed of Thee and feel Thy spirit. This is our prayer and our dedication to Thee in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

General Items

WEST BANK SCHOLARSHIP
The Department of Travel Study worked hard to establish a special scholarship program for students from the West Bank—namely, Palestinian students to come to Brigham Young University. Three annual scholarships were initially funded from donations and were very helpful in enabling these students to receive degrees from Brigham Young University. The number of scholarships has increased to ten with all of the funding now coming from Church donated resources. The original funding for this increase in scholarships was for $100,000, and it has been increased with the usual annual increases.

LECTURE SERIES IN JERUSALEM
In their meeting on October 4, 1978, the board of trustees approved a proposal for a lecture series in Jerusalem. However, in a letter from Carlos E. Asay, executive director of the Missionary Department, dated November 17, 1978, it was stated that “we feel that the program should not be conducted at the present time. It is felt that the Church’s visibility is presently adequate and well balanced. We would, therefore, not want to overload the situation or do anything which might affect adversely our standing with government officials. We trust that you will understand our position and appreciate our feelings.”

President Asay later wrote that the International Affairs Committee had given approval to proceed with the lecture series, but that “the selected speakers must be ‘chosen carefully and instructed to be extremely judicious in what they say.’” The division was to work through President Oaks on this matter. This continuing education program was never formalized even though names and clearances of speakers were processed. The center, however, did initiate a series of concerts and musical programs that were open to the public.

Conclusion
Simply stated, the Department of Travel Study and the Division of Continuing Education were the initial and supportive enterprise for the Jerusalem Travel Study program that prepared and planned the Jerusalem Center with subsequent leadership, counsel, and support from the First Presidency of the Church. Since 1986 the center’s operation and the academic programs have focused on a unique objective, and the administrative and financial structure has changed with direction coming from the Church and the University President’s Office, using the Travel Study Department as a support system with respect to promotion and student registration.
Endnotes


2. Newspaper photograph with description, no source available.


6. Ibid.


10. Ibid.

11. Minutes of the Jerusalem Center meeting, July 9, 1981, with Jae R. Ballif, Robert J. Smith, Fred A. Schwendiman, William R. Siddoway, and Robert C. Taylor. Hal Visick was excused. (Ballif provided the minutes.)

12. Jerusalem Center Approval, Attachment #4, Division of Continuing Education files, no date.


15. Ibid.


18. George I. Khoury, letter to Albert Stirling of the Church Building Division, received March 6, 1978, 1 page letter of description.


20. Ibid.


29. District of Jerusalem, Department of Urban Affairs, to Brigham Young University Association, “Notification of Approval for Planning,” March 5, 1981.


35. Ibid.


37. Ibid.


Endnotes

40. Ibid.

41. Jeffrey R. Holland, President, Brigham Young University, letter to The Government of Israel, Jerusalem, Israel, May 18, 1988.

42. Ibid., 2.

43. Ibid., 6.

44. Ibid., 4.

45. Ibid., 6.

46. Ibid., 10–14.

47. Ibid., 14.

48. Ibid., 19.


50. Ibid., 9.


62. Ibid.


65. Dedicatory Services for the Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, transcribed from original tape recording of the services, May 16, 1989.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

