



Max Wheelwright

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Student, Teacher, Chairman of the Board

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Max Wheelwright". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

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Max Wheelwright Life Chronology

December 10, 1915	Born in Ogden, Weber County, Utah
1921-1932	Attended Ogden schools Quincy, Lorin Farr, Madison grade schools Central Jr. High School Ogden High School
1932	Graduated from Ogden High School
1934	Graduated from Weber College
October 1934- April 1937	Served in the French Mission
April 1937- September 1937	Attended classes at University of Neuchâtel (Switzerland) and toured Europe
September 1937	Returned to Utah and enrolled in Brigham Young University
1938	Graduated from Brigham Young University (mathematics & French)
September 26, 1938- December 2, 1938	Attended lithography course at New York Trade School sponsored by Lithographic Technical Foundation (LTF)
1939-1942	Employed by Schwabacher-Frey in San Francisco, California, as industrial engineer
May 29, 1939	Married Ann Coulam in the Salt Lake Temple
December 7, 1941	Japanese attack Pearl Harbor
April 19, 1942	Birth of first child, Margaret Ann (Peggy) in San Francisco, CA
May/June 1942	Moved to Salt Lake City, Utah 1469 South 1000 East (rental)
1942-Fall 1943	Employed by Remington Arms (ammunition factory) as industrial engineer
Spring 1943	Bought house at 608 South 1200 East in Salt Lake City, Utah
September 13, 1943	Birth of second child, Steven Charles (Steve)
Fall 1943- February 1944	Employed by building contractor in Pasco, Washington (building government housing project)
February 1944- 1946	Served in the U.S. Navy as commissioned officer (Ensign); promoted to Lieutenant Junior Grade; retired as Lieutenant
April 8, 1947	Birth of third child, James Craig (Jim)
1947	Established Wheelwright Lithographing Company
1950	Purchased home at 1785 Michigan Avenue, SLC
September 12, 1951	Birth of fourth child, Catherine (Cathy)
April 22, 1954	Birth of fifth child, Scott Matthew
October 26, 1957	Birth of sixth child, Thomas Max (Tom)
1958	Purchased home at 1751 Yalecrest Avenue, SLC
1976	Built new home at 1836 Sunnyside Avenue, SLC

July 1978- July 1981	Served as President of France Toulouse Mission
1983-1984	Built cabin at Bear Lake, Idaho
November 1984- May 1986	Served mission (as District President) to Mascarene Islands
June 4, 2001	Death of wife, Ann, age 80

Chapter XI

Third Mission: Mascarene Islands 1984-1986

Ann and I were called to serve a mission to the Mascarene Islands from November 1984 to May 1986. I was called as District President with responsibility for the members and missionaries on the islands of La Reunion and Mauritius, which at that time were part of the International Mission of the Church.

I wrote the following history of the Church in the Mascarene Islands on 6 May 1986.

Prior to 1 January 1984 the only missionaries here were two couples on Mauritius and two couples on Reunion. In that month (Jan '84) the first four young elders arrived under the direction of District President Jack T. Fuller (former president of the France Paris Mission). On 15 July, two additional elders arrived, and at the end of January 1985 four more elders arrived, making a total of ten elders and four couples on the two islands. In May '85 two elders started proselyting activities in St. Paul, leaving four in St. Pierre and four in St. Denis.

In October '85 the prefecture of La Reunion forced us to change our transfer policy. Thereafter we were allowed only two couples to stay on Reunion for their missionary terms. The other young missionaries who were not French citizens (notably U.S. and British) were allowed to stay no longer than three months at any one time (in status of tourist—no visa and no carte

de sejour required). There is no objection otherwise to our proselyting. This change has necessitated transferring non-French elders to Mauritius within three months of their arrival on Reunion. On Mauritius the two couples have finally been granted permission to stay the length of time that remains on their missions. We have not succeeded in obtaining permission for any elders to stay. We send the elders dressed as tourists and with return tickets and reservations. Sometimes they have asked for up to 3-4 months stay and it has been allowed, often not. We are still “feeling our way.”

Some Significant Historical Events— December 1984 to May 1986

13-16 December 1985—Visit of President Derek Cuthbert of Europe-Africa Area Presidency to Mauritius and La Reunion islands. Meetings with members and missionaries on both islands.

6 January 1985—The first local members to be given the Melchizedek Priesthood on Mauritius were ordained and called as counselors to the Branch President (Sommy Narraidoo and Charles Maguitte).

1985—The first branch conferences were held in each branch (Mauritius, St. Denis and St. Pierre).

8, 9 June 1985—First district conference was held, in St. Pierre.

May 1985—Missionary work started in St. Paul and Le Port.

25 June 1985—Mauritius Parliament passed an act recognizing the Church as a legal entity. Credit goes to all couples who worked on its passage, but it was the aggressive persistence of Evan Perkins that gave the final push to the bill that was enacted.

30 July 1985—The first full time missionary to be called from the district left to serve in the France Paris Mission (Nelly Lycargue).

4 August 1985—The first local members to be called as counselors to a branch president on Reunion, A.P. Rifosta and E. Morel, were set apart in St. Pierre.

20-22 August 1985—Visit of President and Sister Joseph B. Wirthlin to both islands, holding both public and missionary meetings. On Mauritius discussed our legal status with lawyer Marc Hein.

15 August 1985—Rented building in Mauritius for meeting hall (previous meetings were held in garage attached to residence rented by President Perkins in Quatre Bornes which became too small and very inadequate.)

29 September 1985—The first complete local branch presidency in the district (president and two counselors) was set apart in Mauritius.

September 1985—The first church meetings held in St. Paul

24 October 1985—First young missionaries (elders) were sent to Mauritius.

November 1985—Regularly scheduled activity days for Primary in all three branches.

24 November 1985—First local elders ordained on Reunion (St. Pierre—A.P. Rifosta and Emmanuel Morel).

1 December 1985—Counselors to the district president and district auxiliary officers were sustained in a district conference, in St. Denis.

5 December 1985—The first building to be purchased in the district was found in St. Pierre (final papers signed April 9, 1986, possession by 9 June 1986).

3-5 December 1985—First patriarchal blessings given on the islands to 29 members on Reunion by Peter Mourik of Frankfurt, Germany.

29 December 1985—Group of St. Paul organized with Pierre Potier, 2nd counselor of St. Denis Branch as group leader.

1986—The first Young Women programs started in all three branches.

January 1986—The first Aaronic Priesthood youth class started in St. Denis (Mauritius had started in 1984). The first Relief Society homemaking meetings in St. Denis on a continuing basis (a sewing course). Regularly scheduled firesides in all three branches.

22-23 April 1986—First patriarchal blessings given on Mauritius (23) plus 7 on Reunion, making a total of 59 blessings given on the two islands by Peter Mourik.

24 April 1986—Peter Mourik approved purchase of beautiful villa in the Patel sub-division for the St. Denis Branch.

26-27 April 1986—At district conference, 115 people attended the Saturday evening talent show; Sunday morning C. Steven Hatch was sustained as new district president with Glen Barlow as 1st counselor and William Ashby as 2nd counselor.

Following is the report I sent to the Presidency of the International Mission upon our return, dated May 30, 1986.

Dear Brethren,

Thank you for granting us the privilege of serving in your mission on the Mascarene Islands of the Indian Ocean. It has been a rewarding experience, and we hope it has been good for the Church and for the people of those islands.

We are impressed with the caliber of young missionaries who are serving there at the present time. They are more devoted and committed than ever before. The couples, in spite of physical handicaps are also doing a great work; each person has his own special needed talents and is making good use of them in furthering the work of the Lord. The great progress being

made there is due to the fine efforts of these devoted missionaries in partnership with the members.

We are impressed with the caliber of the members, their devotion and commitment regardless of their station in life or their previous background, and the love that they demonstrate for one another. We saw great progress in many areas during our time there. Some of this progress is reflected in the attached report, statistical and historical.

It was a joy to see the growth in numbers of members and in the members' faith and devotion. We found it to be a time of training; of training missionaries, of training local leaders, of training members, of training investigators, of training in the ways of the church (organization), preparation of the youth to go on missions, training everyone for additional responsibility, growth and spirituality. We have stressed the use of basic manuals and simplified programs, adding thereto only as required to better serve the needs of the members and their families.

I would like to make some comments on the functioning of the district. On some of these items President Hatch needs clarification and guidance:

1. Buildings. How do we pay for needed alterations and for additional equipment needed such as chairs, blackboards, sound system, draperies, etc? Who is responsible for these? I had understood from Peter Mourik that on building alterations he would send someone from Europe to supervise them if we get a 2nd building (St. Denis). But if we don't get the St. Denis building, how should the necessary alterations be handled on the St. Pierre building? (Minor items, like making all the doors on the ground floor swing out instead of in, to meet fire code, and outside lighting, draperies, etc.).

2. The building we have been using in St. Denis was very adequate in 1984, but with the rapid growth of membership and attendance it became unbearable in 1985. Hence in September '85, we started holding meetings in St. Paul for that part of the branch that lives in the area of St. Paul and Le Port (about 25-30

kilometers from downtown St. Denis); then in December we set up a group organization there. (The present chapel in St. Denis will hold a maximum of 61 chairs; our average attendance for the two groups together, as shown on our reports, is 63 at sacrament meetings. About 25 of these are in the St. Paul-Le Port group.) I had intended to make St. Paul a separate branch but we did not find satisfactory housing there so they are meeting temporarily in the elders' apartment. If we can get the new building in St. Denis we can put the St. Paul group back with the St. Denis group in the new building for a year or so. As the St. Paul group grows we can then find better housing for them (perhaps in Le Port, where we seem to be finding more investigators than in St. Paul).

3. Tithing funds. When we arrived the tithing funds were being used by the branches for all branch expenses. This bothered us considerably and we were glad when Pres. Wirthlin suggested keeping them separate (and confirmed by you), not to be used by branches at all, but turned in to the district, and put into a savings account to be used for building purposes when we need them. The question now arises: how should we actually use these funds? Use them for alterations? Transfer them to building account at Torcy? Hold them for future use?

4. Branch budgets. We asked each branch to submit a proposed budget for 1985, which they did. (These were sent to you and approved.) Because of the missionary couples still serving as branch presidents and not recording all their branch expenses on the branch financial reports, we were not able to accumulate adequate records of all branch expenses for 1985, and not for St. Pierre for 1986. The idea did work, however in St. Denis, where we worked closely with the Branch President (Chion-Hock) and where the missionary couple did not mix up branch expenses with personal expenses on their personal reports to the mission office. Consequently, I recommend that in the orientation of new missionary couples to Reunion and Mauritius, that they be taught to not pay for any branch or district expenses out of their own pockets, that such expenses be paid for by the

branch, or by the district directly (just like they would be at home). This doesn't mean that they cannot contribute whatever they want to the branch or district, but if we don't measure our expenses in the branches and district, we won't know how much they are, and when missionaries are no longer there, the local leaders will be unprepared to meet the expenses they are used to.

We taught the members on several occasions about how finances are handled in the church, i.e. budgets, building funds, missionary funds, tithing, fast offerings, etc. and indicated that the time will come when they will be responsible for their own branch budgets. I did not indicate when that day will arrive, only that it will.

5. We would also like to suggest that a copy of the latest recommended clothing list be given to every couple called to serve on these two islands. (The Ashbys did not remember having seen such a list.) Some of the former couples were very informal, wore sport shirts all the time, did not wear suit coats to church and bap-

tismal services. President Fuller and I have tried to change this image. And it is even more important now that we have young elders on both islands. (Some of them would be happy to wear Levis all the time.)

When we arrived in the islands we set several objectives for ourselves. Let me share them with you:

1. Serve well and help the Kingdom to grow.
2. Teach basic principles so the members can govern themselves.
3. Put the three branches under local leadership.
4. Find adequate housing for the three branches.
5. Open one new city to proselyting.
6. Give guidance to the elders so the above goals can happen.

I don't know how well we've succeeded with #1 and #2, but we feel good about the others, as you will see in the attached report. We were most grateful for the visits and guidance given by President Cuthbert in December '84 and President Wirthlin in August '85, and your con-

Statistical and Historical Review of Mascarene District 1 Jan 85 to 6 May 86 mw

STATISTICS:

Branches:	ST-DENIS		ST-PIERRE		MAURITIUS		District TOTAL	
	1Jan85	6May86	1Jan85	6May86	1Jan85	6May86	1Jan85	6May86
1. Number of Members	34	66	22	51	28	47	84	164
2. Sac. Mtg attendance	26	63	26	39	23	41	75	143
3. Melch Phd. holders	4	6	2	3	Ø	6	6	15
4. Aaronic Phd. holders	2	8	4	15	12	15	18	38
5. Members w/ callings	4	25	1	15	6	21	11	61
6. Primary enrolled	3	21	3	13	3	6	9	40
7. Relief Soc. enrolled	7	17	4	13	8	17	19	47
8. Young Women	1	7	7	4	6	2	14	13
9. Seminary enrolled	2	6	Ø	6	Ø	13	2	25
10. Missionaries w/ branch callings	3	Ø	2	1	2	1	7	2

stant readiness and support all the time. Ted Cannon and Jennifer Reidhead have been invaluable. These islands are a long way away from Salt Lake City and it helps to know that you are there and always ready and willing to lend whatever support and guidance you can.

Thanks for everything.

Sincerely yours,

Max and Ann Wheelwright

Homecoming Report given to Yalecrest 1st Ward, Sunday 8 June 1986

Thanks for your Yalecrester news and your faith and prayers. The Mascarene Islands are far away and news arrives slowly, if at all. The Mascarene Islands are tropical volcanic islands similar in climate to Hawaii. French is the universal language on both islands, La Reunion (a department of France) and Mauritius (an independent third world country), about 500 miles east of Madagascar and 2500 miles west of Australia.

I was blessed to serve with my eternal companion, the finest, most supportive companion a person could ever want. The people loved her, respected her, followed her example, and the children discovered in her another grandmother. Plus, she's a good accountant, a skill much needed in that developing area of the Church.

My calling was as District President, with responsibility for the members and the missionaries. Arriving November 1984 we found one couple (Mont and Norine Robins) and six elders on Reunion Island, and two couples (Ed and Louise Schmidt and Evan and Venice Perkins) on Mauritius Island (an independent country 130 air miles east of Reunion). Mont Robins was my first missionary companion in 1934 in the French Mission, and at Ogden High School I had dated Norine. Mont Robins was branch president, and Sister Robins had organized a Primary in St. Pierre. Evan Perkins was branch president in Mauritius, and the Schmidts were a proselyting couple on Mauritius. Alain Chion-Hock, a local elder, was branch president in St. Denis on Reunion. There were three branches

on the two islands, with three missionary couples and six elders.

During the one and a half years we were there we saw phenomenal growth, both in numbers and in the spiritual development of the members and investigators. Membership grew from 79 to 164, Sacrament Meeting attendance from 75 to 143, Melchizedek Priesthood holders from 6 to 15, Aaronic Priesthood holders from 18 to 38, members with callings from 11 to 61, Primary enrollment from 9 to 40, Relief Society from 19 to 47, and Seminary from 2 to 25. This fine growth is due to the fine caliber of missionaries and the strong desire of the members to share the blessings of the gospel with others. The four couples and ten elders were select, choice people, chosen of the Lord to work in those islands at this time.

Let me tell you about some of the spiritual growth that we saw in the lives of the people. Veronique Ferrier, who was excommunicated in France, moved back to Reunion. She met and married Felix Ferrier, and she never lost her testimony that this is the true Church of Jesus Christ, and the Gospel is His gospel. She converted her husband, Felix, then his sister, Yasmine, and his two brothers Luciano and Jacques. Of course the missionaries did the actual teaching of the lessons to them, but it was her own enthusiasm for the gospel that fired them up to learn the truthfulness of it.

When we arrived, Felix and Veronique had been steadily attending church for about 18 months. I asked the missionaries to teach Felix the discussions, and he was baptized in February 1985. Meantime the elders in St. Pierre were teaching Jacques and the others, and they were being fellowshipped by the Robins. Jacques was a school dropout at 14, at 17 a convert to the church, now an avid scripture scholar and working hard to save money for his mission next February.

Philippe Rifosta, at 50 years old, met the missionaries through an investigator friend and received the discussions, but had serious concerns. Mont and I helped him resolve them, the Robins fellowshipped him and others that he brought to church with him. He had studied

many religions, Hindu, Catholic, Moslem, Adventist, Jehovah Witnesses, etc. He had no success with converting either his own children or his estranged wife; his was in effect a bachelor life. Baptized, he grew in spiritual strength, set his life in order, divorced his estranged wife and received the Melchizedek Priesthood. He is now president of the St. Pierre Branch, with two local brethren as counselors. And he has run a local weekly radio program for the Church for over a year now.

Marc Colin met the missionaries near the University in St. Denis. He was converted and baptized in March 1985, contrary to the wishes of his parents who live on Mauritius. An honor student, he was baptized during finals last year and finishes his studies at Reunion this month



St. Denis on Reunion 1985

(June '86). He is presently an elder, serving as first counselor in the branch presidency, anxious to go on a mission, and works with the missionaries in the meantime. He will go to university in France starting September 1986. [Marc later served a mission in New Caledonia and eventually married a young lady from Los Angeles at Christmas 2002, whom he met in Mauritius.]

Peter Mourik made two trips from Frankfurt, Germany to see properties for the Church to purchase on the islands. He was a patriarch, the first to ever visit the islands, so he gave 59 blessings to members during these two trips.

Some other firsts that took place while we were there were the first branch conferences and first district conferences ever held on those islands.

Missionary couples are sorely needed throughout the world. Don't hesitate to plan for it. It's a most rewarding experience. The Lord calls people where their talents are most needed to do a special work. Have faith. This is the work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He lives, he loves us, our Father in Heaven lives, and He loves us. The Gospel is true and this is His true church. May the lord bless us all that we may have strength and courage to do His will and live in accordance with His commandments so that we may have eternal life with our loved ones.



Missionaries on Reunion



Members and missionaries on Reunion



A baptism on Reunion