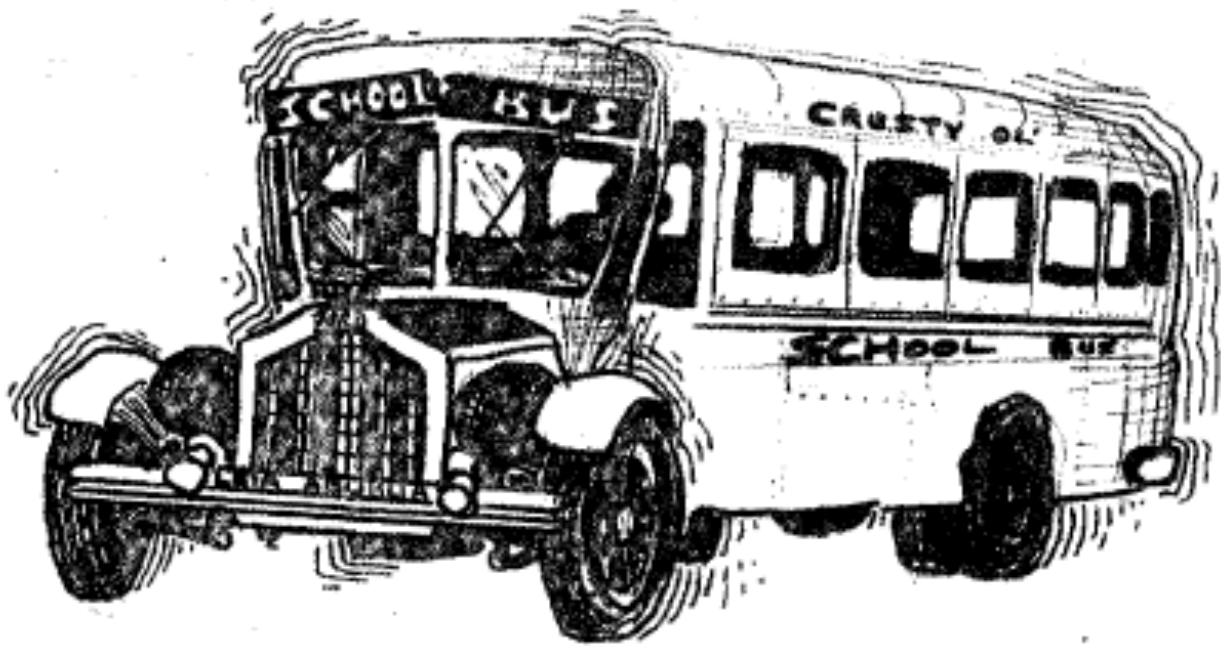


George & Jeannette Oakes
Brazil North Mission
1971-1974



Remembering
George A. Oakes

1937-2015





Oh, how sad. I am sooo sorry to hear about Pres. Oakes health set back. Miracles do happen, we will keep praying for his recovery.

Kind regards,

Maria A. (Andrade) Roper



We will pray for him. Please express my love and that of all his Sisters and Elders.

Nathan E Broadbent Sr



I spent the afternoon with George on Wednesday and he was not doing well then. Can you pass my cell phone number to Janette? I tried calling the hospital a couple of times and no one answered the phone for room 336.

Thanks,

Ned Warner



Please give my love to the President & Sister Oakes.

Bill Underwood



Our prayers are with our leader.

Paul Gustavson



President Oakes,

Annette and I so appreciate the influence you and Sister Oakes have had in our lives. Though I have been able to attend many of the reunions my thoughts were there along with many “remembrances”. Thank you.

Mike and Annette Wheeler



Give him our Love and Godspeed.

He loves the Savior and the Savior knows him and is waiting for him to return and begin his work there with Him.

Frank Milner



Sad news. Our prayers will join many more for Pres. Oakes and the family.

Michael Wheeler



Renda and I love the Oakes and think of them often.

Gary Crismon



Please let President and Sister Oakes know of my love for them and the gratitude I have for them because of the influence they had in my life. In my present calling in a Young Single Adult Ward on the ASU campus, I regularly talk about the experience I had as a missionary and the example of President and Sister Oakes. I have told many times the story about the decisions they made early in their lives to follow the wise counsel from their Leaders to serve the Lord first. I have explained that their willingness to do this, "opened the windows of heaven" to blessings and opportunities that never would have come to them. President Oakes told me one time that how sad he would have been had not decided to serve a mission - how he would have missed out on all of these experiences and opportunities to serve the Lord and others.

I pray for his recovery.

Rex Shumway



I spent two hours with President on December 30. It was unforgettable.

Doug Holt



I have flown in a number of times and always have had inspiring conversations. In my December meeting his wish before he moved on to the other side (which he was at peace with if that was the will of Heavenly Father) that he could visit with each & everyone of his missionaries & tell them how much he loved them & to have them share with him what they were doing with their life. He wanted the next reunion to be an all day meet & greet & eat at his place so that he could visit informally with everyone throughout the day. President Oakes is my "hero" for who's teaching of D&C 82:10 forever blessed my life.

My prayers continue to be with him & his family.

Elder Paul Gustavson



Pres. & Sis. Oakes,

I have shed many tears over the last hours. I love you so much! You have had one of the greatest impacts on my life. Being a missionary in the Brazil North mission changed my life forever. I remember the lessons learned there, especially that of being crusty. I have had to be pretty crusty my whole life!!! The things I learned from you have remained with me throughout my life and have been a guide for me to follow. What great examples you are of serving the Lord and going/serving where he has called you. Huge portions of your lives have been serving the Brazilian people. What a blessing you have been and are!!

At the last reunion we had in October Pres. Oakes, I felt of your humbleness and of your willingness to do the will of our Heavenly Father. I had to laugh about the working in the temple and the golfing experience. But isn't that just like you? Willing to do what the Father asks of you. I saw a refined, humble man of God.

We are praying and have a constant prayer in our hearts for both of you. We pray that the Lord will carry you through these difficult times. We pray the Holy Ghost to comfort you. We pray for miracles. But because you have taught us well, we also accept the Lord's will.

Lynn and I love you beyond words can express. Always remember that. Know what a blessing you have been in our lives and what an example. How I treasure the times the sisters have been able to meet with you for lunch. There is so much more I could express. How grateful for the Gospel of Jesus Christ we are that gives us the knowledge of eternal life and the opportunity that we will all be together someday. We will never lose you!

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face to shine upon you
To shine upon you and be gracious
And be gracious unto you

The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord lift His countenance upon you,
The Lord lift His countenance upon you
And give you peace, and give you peace;
And give you peace, and give you peace

Com grande amor,
Elder Lynn and Sister Julie Briggs Sorensen



Dear President and Sister Oakes,

Your testimonies, devotion to the Lord's work, and examples in all things good, were what I needed to continue in my growth in the gospel. When I arrived in Brazil at the age of 21, I had just been a member of the Church for 13 months. I couldn't have been placed in a better place and in better hands. I will never forget those great memories of my mission and the footing I was given to move forward as a member of the Church. I am mindful of your difficult trials of the moment, and pray for your strength, care, and comfort.

I am retiring at the end of this school year as a teacher. I have been in contact with the Church missionary department, and my wife and I are planning to serve a mission in Brazil next year. We have been blessed with four sons and two daughters, one of them died at the age of two from a sudden illness. Currently, we have 10 grandchildren with three more on the way. Two of the three are twins and they will be born in Italy. All but one of our children served a mission and all of the marriages have been in the temple.

I'm grateful for the closeness of your family and friends. May you somehow feel the deep appreciation and love I have for you.

My sincerest regards,

Steve Robeck



We love President and Sister Oakes so much and they hold a special place in our hearts and history. We wish him (them) all the best.

Kind regards,

Mike and Cindy Speed



President And Sister Oakes have been in my thoughts and prayers for weeks. Please send my love and condolences to Sister Oakes and family.

Please keep in touch.

Brent Fairclough



If I weren't 10 hours away, I would have been at his bedside whenever I would've been allowed to do so. I am so grateful to have attended our last reunion with him and I was able to visit him a few days before Christmas when he was sitting upright and able to spend a wonderful time with me. Gratitude and love fills my heart for him and his dear sweet companion. How blessed we are to be

associated with such dedicated, remarkable disciples of Christ. I look forward to the funeral and will see you there.

Best regards,

Kris Sorensen Prestwich Gehret



I wish him (and his family) the very best and certainly a continued improvement.

Harold C Kreitlein (Brazil North Mission 71-73)



Hi, I visited Elder and Sister Oakes this morning. He could not speak, but I told him my name, and recounted a story about President Magalhães, whom I baptised when in Brazil with Eric Robinson. He livened up and opened his eyes, because I only spoke to him in Portuguese; I recounted how many times this young 18 year old Jose Magahlães, had been Stake President various times as he and his family had moved around Brazil; taking various jobs. I keep in contact with Jose Magalhães via Facebook, he has a son studying in Paris. I then recounted the progress on the Paris Temple; it's foundation done, and how much that temple open house will influence Parisians, in 2016, who literally have no direction, or belief in the after life. Sister Oakes is coping well, I offered to give her a blessing, but she said she had received one. A beautiful spirit was in that room of family and friends much like the Temple. What a great missionary experience we all had in Brazil; even today I try to seek out those who are ready to know the Savior and His church. Ate le prochain,

Barry Rishton



Please convey to President and Sister Oakes our love for them both. President Oakes is a truly a great man, and his life has been an inspiration to me in ways that I cannot overstate.

Thanks again,

John Andelin



Please send our love and eternal gratitude to president and Sister Oakes. Their influence on our lives is positively unmistakable and recorded in heaven for all to see.

Love,

Stan and Brenda Benedict and our posterity of 44



Dear Friends, Last night when my wife, Tania, and I stopped by the hospital so many visitors were there that we decided to only stay briefly. It was great to spend a moment with Sister Oakes, Annette, Grant, Viviane and others. As my wife was stepping away from President Oakes bedside he open his eyes and got a big smile on his face. He threw his hands up and waved her to come back. We visited briefly and he motioned each of us to come close enough that he could whisper. We shared several touching thoughts.

Dear President, know that our prayers are with you, Sister Oakes and your family.

Tania & Wayne Jolley



Brothers and Sisters, I just wanted to give you a quick update on how things went with the Oakes tonight.

My wife and I spent almost 5 hours at the hospital with the Oakes and some family members. People came and went during the entire evening. Sister Oakes's twin sister, Annette stayed the entire time. Grant was there the whole time, along with his wife Viviane. Jeff is on his way from South Dakota and should arrive Saturday morning. His daughter, Quincy, and husband Joseph were there. Scott, who lives in Utah, is on a business trip in Argentina and will get back as soon as he can. His wife, Jessica, and their children were present. As far as BNM missionaries, Pete Grimm, Greg Taggart, Bill Hansen, and Larry Metcalf and his wife Janice were able to stop by. Many close family friends were also there as we left around 9pm. Before the Metcalfs arrived, Elders Hansen, Grimm, Taggart and I sang in harmony all four verses of Praise To The Man for the President.

President Oakes is in a very weakened condition and goes in and out of consciousness. He has fluid in his lungs and has trouble speaking. He did manage to softly speak a little during the evening. He is in good spirits and expressed his joy at the many people he loves and who love him. He actually took a turn for the better later in the evening and was more lucid than he was earlier. When the time is right I and others will share pictures and videos and some of things that were expressed.

A highlight of the evening was when Elder Mervyn B. Arnold and his wife came in. Elder Arnold was in the Area presidency under Elder Neil L. Andersen when the Oakes were serving there years ago. After some private communications with President Oakes, Elder Arnold spoke to the group about the wonderful example that the Oakes have been and are. He then kissed him on the forehead and bore a powerful, sweet testimony of the Savior. After Elder Arnold left, Jeannette asked the President if he knew who it was that just visited him. He replied, in a labored whisper, J. Edgar Hoover. He was just kidding! He then said the full name

of his visitor: Mervyn B. Arnold :-).

Without saying too much for now, I'm sure President Oakes would want you to know, and this will come as no surprise, that he is ready to meet his Lord if that is His will. He expressed the joy he has had in the many people he has crossed paths and worked with throughout his life. He spoke in Portuguese as well as English, and some Brazilians were there visiting.

What a joy it was for me to be present and feel the love and hope there, and to be able to express to President Oakes my love and gratitude for the part he has played in my life and in the lives of so many.

Chuck Allison

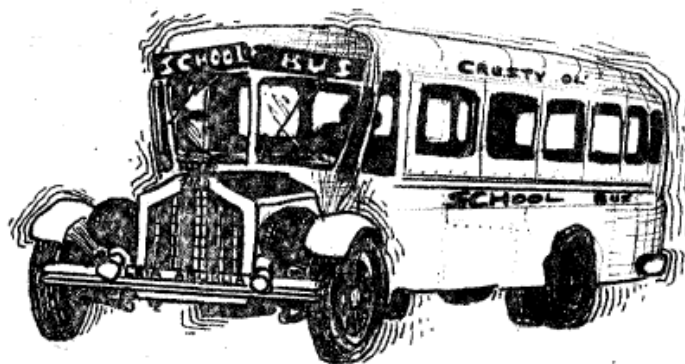


Prayers are being sent from here!!!

Mark Shepherd. Apr 1973-75



Dear President Oakes, I love you. This is Stephen Ehat. I'm in Italy doing my Italian family history research, trying to be crusty. You and Sister Oakes are blessed, obedient servants of the Most High God. Your service to and love of the Brazilian people has pleased God ever since March of 1959 when you first arrived in São Paulo, now over 55 years ago. When you arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1971 as our mission president, we all took note that we were witnessing the arrival of a powerful man and woman of God. Through your years of service to the Brazil Area Presidency and your years presiding over the House of the Lord in Campinas, constantly until the present moment, the Lord has guided you as you have served and loved him. Your service to the missionaries over whom you presided has blessed their lives forever. I am one of them. Thank you. Your obedience to the Lord is an example for all. Que o Nosso Pai Celestial continue a abençoá-los para sempre. Fique firme; remain crusty.



Captured from my computer at home. Sorry. I don't know who drew the picture.

Elder Ehat



I would like to express my sympathy and love to Sister Oakes and family. President Oakes influenced my life more than anyone outside of my family.

I called President Oakes to get permission for Elder McIntire and Elder Carver to teach the lessons to the Helvício Martins family. He asked me to teach them the first two discussions and the last lesson on the Priesthood policy in one meeting and depending on how they accepted it, then to proceed forward.

I didn't know it at the time, but President Oakes was setting me up for one of the best experiences of my life.

We taught them the three lessons in one sitting and then I asked each family member over 8 years old if they could accept the Priesthood policy.

Brother Martins, who would later become the first black general authority, humbly and firmly said he accepted the policy. His son, Marcus, who would become one of the first black missionaries and who currently is over the religion department at BYU Hawaii and my son's former Bishop, said he accepted the policy. Sister Martins, who currently attends the same ward as my son and daughter in Hawaii, said she accepted the policy. I have never seen so much faith and testimony in all my life.

I met with Sister Martins a few weeks ago, and she and I have the greatest appreciation for President Oakes' wisdom and inspired leadership regarding this elect family.

Love to all,

Mike Speed



I first knew of Pres. and Sister Oakes when meeting my husband, James Thatcher. He spoke of his fellow missionaries and President as if he had just returned, that large enthusiasm still intact. What a surprise to find he'd been home a year!

We came to CA before our marriage and made the trek (first of many) to visit these two wonderful people. Joyful, smiling, and welcoming, I felt their love immediately.

Coleen R. Thatcher.



I have nothing but the fondest memories of my experiences as a missionary in the Brazil North Mission under the leadership of President and Sister Oakes. The times I interacted with them were memorable and a long-lasting guide for my life.

As I have done service for the church in many capacities from YM President, counselor in EQ, EQ President, HP Group Leader, Member of the HC, Bishop counselor, bishop twice, and a counselor in the Stake Presidency, the legacy of President and Sister Oakes lives on.

I especially am appreciative of the foundation that was laid by president Oakes on my exit interview. He counseled me, as I'm sure he did all his missionaries, to pray on the way home on whom I should marry and make a list of those qualities in a spouse to look for. I followed that counsel and as a result the Lord showed me whom to ask and marry. We will now celebrate our 40th year of marriage in two months, 4 children and 7 grandchildren are our legacy. All faithful in the gospel.

May the Lord bless you for your service. Although you may not have known of ALL the good and strong influence that you had on all of us, please know that it has been successful for me and family.

Fred Biehl (October 71 to November 73)



The thing that I remember most were the fantastic zone conferences that Pres. Oakes always prepared for us. His talks were always the perfect blend of humor and spirituality. Everyone loved them because we were laughing our heads off one minute and spiritually motivated the next. He had leadership qualities and an ability to motivate that I have never seen in any other individual. Then the icing on the cake was to be able to go out and play fútbol de salon with him in his wing tips.

McClaren Giblette



Dear Sister Oakes, I am so sad for the loss of our great President. I am sure you'll miss him a lot as we all will. I wish I had been able to go to our last reunion. You and President Oakes were two of the most influential people in my life. There are no words to express how grateful I am to you and the President for your love and help. It was my greatest privilege to have served with you two at our beloved Brazil North Mission. Having been a missionary there has made me who I am today. I'll not be able to attend the funeral, but I hope to see you sometime this year when we go to Utah, perhaps for the October general conference. All my love to you and your family.

Neli Rogers (Sister Silva)



Dearest Sister Oakes, I am so sorry to hear of the passing of President Oakes. President Oakes probably had more positive influence on my life than any other single person, with the exception of my own parents. I will always think of President Oakes as a role model and exemplar. I am a better person for having served under his tutelage.

I am sorry that I live so far away. Living in Cincinnati, and given that this is my busiest time of the year (employment-wise), it is quite impossible for me to make it to the funeral. I love you, Sister Oakes. You will always be dear to me. I will remember you in my prayers, both for the Holy Ghost to comfort you and to thank my Heavenly Father for the blessing of serving with you.

Love,

Chris Svedin



Dear Sister Oakes, There are no words to convey how sad I feel about the passing of President Oakes.

I will always remember his example and his contagious, signature smile.

I do remember the story you and him told us in one of the missionaries conference in Rio about you been engaged with a set date to get married and he gets a call to go and serve a mission in Brazil, and that the wedding plan went on with your twin sister and her fiance taking your place.

That was a hard decision to make, to postpone for 2 years to be together with the person you love the most.

Needless to say that this decision, you both made, has set the pace for a great exemplary life, as well as the opportunity for missionaries such as myself had to be under the guidance of such a great people, President Oakes and you. Both way too young to be the father and mother figure for hundreds of missionaries but you did so with such grace.

I know he is in a much better place and I hope to meet him again someday.

With love and respect.

Maria Adilia Andrade Roper



Such a sad time for all! But Pres. Oakes sure left an example for all that know him.

I have been out of town this past week, and have been distraught that I can't personally show my support for his great family. Even more that I won't be present at the funeral. Please give my heart felt feelings to all.

Um grande abraço to Pres. Oakes.

Mark Shepherd



Sister Oakes, I am grateful for the wonderful opportunity given me to serve with your husband and you in the land of Brazil. President Oakes will be greatly missed. His greatness touched many lives for good while in this mortal probation. President Oakes touched my life in a most profound way. I learned to raise my vision of my potential while in his presence. Several years ago the church implemented several policies to “raise the bar” for missionary work. We as missionaries of the BNM felt that same shift and increase in intensity under president Oakes. The results for me were lift changing. Even to this day I find myself reflecting back to those “crusty” days in Brazil as I learned to love and serve by faith the people of Brazil.

Sister Oakes, thank you for the gift of your husband.

Jim & LuWain Proctor



Please pass along our sincere condolences to Sister Oakes. Tell her our thoughts and prayers are with her and her family.

Love,

Dave & Lurlynn Potter



I wrote on my mission papers I did not want to go specifically to Brazil... and was terribly disappointed when I got that particular call. Similarly, I can only thank my Father in Heaven who ignored my foolishness and sent me to serve under Pres. George Oakes. Unfortunately, years of military service have kept me far away from SLC and any of the reunions, but I have always kept Pres. and Sis. Oakes within a fond spot in my heart. Please pass on to her my condolences, but also my affirmation that she has spent her life with a truly great man.

Elder Harold Chris Kreitlein



He was a great man and an incredible Mission President. When I submitted my mission papers I suggested that South America was the last place I would want to serve.

I am so glad that Heavenly Father is much wiser than I. I am so grateful that I had the blessing of serving with all of you under the watchful eye of President and Sister Oakes. He was a wonderful man and will be missed greatly.

Eric R. Robinson



His work continues without earthly limitations....

Pass my condolences to my family.

Neale Wooters



Dear Sister Oakes, Like Enoch of ancient times, my heart swells to all eternity for you, and only the fire of the Spirit makes it tolerable to bear. How strange that the very same Spirit which brings a fullness of joy, also brings the fire that both intensifies and comforts grief, while enlightening the mind with visions of understanding, revealing the truth of the state of our loved ones, both on this side and beyond the veil that separates us from them.

It is universally acknowledged what a great man your husband was and is, and how he impacted the lives of so many in such a profound and positive way. I was one of them. You are his equal in every way. I love you dearly, just as I loved him. I wish that circumstances had allowed me to have more association with you both throughout our lives. I treasure the sisters' reunions; we were always spiritually nourished there. I pray that the Comforter will remain with you during the coming weeks and months, and ease the loneliness that surely lies in the path ahead of you. I pray you will be surrounded by those who love you, and are loved by you, and who still need you, and that your unseen Guide and Comforter will bear you up as on eagles' wings as you press forward in life. I pray also that you may be blessed with health and strength to accomplish those things which you have yet to do.

God be with you, my dear lovely Mission Mom, and sister in the Gospel, forever. You are always in my prayers.

Love always,

Marsha Foster Jay



Dear Sister Oakes and Family, I am responding for my husband Roger Glassett. Please accept our condolences for the passing of Pres. Oakes. Roger must have served under him in Brazil. I cannot get much information from him these days as he has early onset Alzheimer's disease. He was diagnosed 5 years ago and though he still is mobile, he no longer has much in the way of communication skills. I have been married to him for 22 years and we were sealed in the Oakland Temple and have had a good life together. But challenges face us all.

We are sorry for your loss, and even though you have the gospel to give you support and strength for the long term, in the short term, the loss is hard to bear. May you feel comfort from the Holy Ghost and the many people who show their support and love.

Sincerely,

Denise and Roger Glassett



My Memories of President George Oakes

By Elder Jan Davis

President Oakes arrived in Brazil in July of 1971. I was in Fortaleza at the time. I was just beginning to decide that I wanted to be a good missionary and work hard. I had a difficult time the first 6 months in Brazil. Every day was spent tracking and I had taught a total of 3 lessons. No chance what so ever of a baptism. The mission wasn't doing much better. Mission wide there were few lessons taught and few people baptized. President Johnson had taught us to be spiritual but I was ready for more.

I heard stories about the new president from other elders and the APs. He was young and energetic and there seemed to be excitement when they talked about him. Little did I know how he would change our mission and my life. I was a shy and insecure farm boy from Spanish Fork. I had no lofty goals except to learn the scriptures better, try to be a better missionary, and somehow survive the next year-and-a-half in that relentlessly hot and humid country while knocking on doors all day every day. But President Oakes changed that. He made me feel important and needed. He made me feel like he, the people of Brazil and the Lord needed me to start using my priesthood to bless the people in that wonderful country. He taught me and all the other missionaries how much he loved God and Jesus Christ and how much they loved us. He also taught us about how great a man Joseph Smith was and our love for the first Prophet grew.

In August I was transferred to the Cascadura Zone in Rio. It was there that I really started to get to know him. He taught us what we were supposed to do and how to do it. He taught us how to pray and receive revelation and guidance. He taught us how to have faith and to work hard. It was here that I finally started to understand the power that was in the Priesthood and how to use it. But he also taught us to do those things while having fun. He was notorious for having soccer games after meetings and picking the teams so he always had the best players on his team. I don't think he ever lost a game. But no one on the losing teams ever got angry with him for doing that. For some reason it just made us love him more.

He taught us to get out in the heat and work long hours without glamor, polish or praise. Then along came the Crusty Bus and we all jumped on. My companions and I worked 110 hours per week proselyting, skipped P-days, taught so many lessons we couldn't count them, had street meetings, cast out devils, healed the sick, spoke to many people about the restoration and built our testimonies on truth and love and converted and baptized many, many people into the Church. As missionaries we came to love each other deeply but especially love our president who taught us so much and his wonderful wife who was always there for us.

We loved and respected President Oakes a lot, feared him a little, and wanted to please him greatly. While I was in Belo Horizonte I wanted to do something fun with the other elders to maybe break up the routine and bring some energy back into the zone. So we scheduled some basketball games with a couple of local semi-pro teams. I had planned on doing that without seeking approval from Pres. Oakes and thought we could pull it off without him ever knowing about it. About one week before the games he came to Belo for a conference. While interviewing me he said, "I have heard that you have some basketball games scheduled". I knew then that I was in trouble. He was going to get after me for taking time away from missionary work and distracting the elders. I was preparing myself to be chastised when he said "You are going to get killed. Who do you have here who are good players. I know, I will have a couple of the assistants who are good athletes come for a visit next week and I am sure they can help you out." I was totally surprised and was instructed to make sure we won those games. Unfortunately the teams we played were surprisingly good and we lost both games by a sizable margin.

He also brought humor into our lives. I remember a time when Elder Bruce R. McConkie was speaking at a conference in Rio and President Oakes was translating for him. Elder McConkie said something in about 5 words in English. When President Oakes went to translate it he couldn't find the right words to translate it directly so he used several sentences to explain what had been said. When he finished Elder McConkie turned and looked at Pres Oakes for a moment then turned back to the congregation and said "I am sure President Oakes said that much better than I did." That made the crowd laugh and left Pres Oakes with a huge embarrassed grin that I will never forget.

His stories were legendary. We never had the ability to get sleepy or lose attention when he spoke. We learned a lot about the history of the Church, our gospel, how missionaries of the early days did their work as well as stories that really caught our attention about his time spent in courtrooms and stories about his marriage that I am sure embarrassed Sister Oakes and made her want to wring his neck but were highly entertaining for us young people. Those things brought him down to our level and made us love him even more. Once while traveling from

Belo to Rio by car with Pres. Oakes and a couple of elders he asked me when the last time was that I had driven. I explained that I had never driven in Brazil so he told me to get behind the wheel. The mission car was actually closer to being a Sherman tank than a car and driving the curvy roads between those two cities on a dark night without having driven a car in a long time was scary. But Pres. Oakes kept me distracted and all of us entertained as he told us stories for hours about his time as an attorney in Los Angeles but it seemed like minutes.

President Oakes is the single greatest influence for good in my life and I know in the lives of all the missionaries who served with him as well. The greatest example he has set for us is his desire to do anything that the Lord asked of him. And to do it to the very best of his ability. The last time I heard him speak was just before he and Sister Oakes left to work at the Campinas Temple. He told us about how Jesus had no place to rest His head while on earth but that he was going to make the Campinas Temple the Savior's favorite place to rest on earth. I thought that was the most wonderful goal that anyone could have. I know he is now in Jesus' residence and resting for the first time in a long time. But only for a moment, since the Lord still has many great and wonderful things for him to do. I love and miss President Oakes and thank Heavenly Father for allowing me to know him here on earth.



President Oakes and I were riding together in Rio, he driving and me riding. I was looking forward to the one on one time and hoping he would teach me something profound as I knew he could. Our vehicle broke down on a busy street and we pulled over and opened the hood. There was a lot of traffic but no pedestrians around except an unkempt lone man walking by. He looked under the hood but knew nothing about engines and just sat down on the curb. He was rude and obviously had been drinking. An old vehicle pulled over and a pleasant man asked if he could help. He obviously knew what he was doing and had the engine running in no time. President Oakes opened up his wallet and offered him a goodly amount of money for his services. He refused but to no avail, the president could be very determined and he drove away with the money. We closed the hood and the unkempt man observing what had happened walked up to President Oakes and ask for some money too seeing as he looked under the hood also. President Oakes opened up his wallet and gave him the same amount of money. As we drove away I asked him why he gave him any money at all because I certainly didn't think he deserved anything at all. President Oakes said that we cannot judge and should give of our bounties freely. That was not the type of lesson that I was expecting but his example was something that I cherish to this day.

I will miss him,

Keith Fackrell



Dear Sister Oakes,

My deepest thoughts for the loss of Presidente Oakes. I honor both of you for your service to the church, the Brasileiros, and me as a missionary. He was man of great honor and integrity that has been an influence to me throughout my life. My missionary experience has given me great strength and reflection through the years.

May God bless you and your family.

Sincerely,

Michael & Renee Shegrud



Hi, **Mark Olsen** here. The person I am has much to do with President and Sister Oakes. Several others and myself came down on the plane with them to the mission. We all helped tend and care for their children on the flight. President Oakes had me take his boys fishing once when we had a conference near a lake, and then again after we were all home.

I will always remember a talk he gave about repentance. He said, "we all fall way short of what we want to be, and let our sins and weaknesses get us down, and then we say "Oh, I am just no good. I can't do it." Then he said to the effect, "Stop groveling in the dust of self-pity and self-centeredness. Get up, dust yourself off, get totally involved in the work, and forget yourself. Before you know it, by depending on the Lord and doing his work, his atoning grace will heal your wounds, remove your doubts, and raise you up to conquer the challenges you face." Oh how I love that man!



I'll never forget my first meeting with President Oakes, when he told us that Elder McConkie instructed that we use the following door approach: "We are representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we have an important message for you!" Why ever a ruse? The field was so ready and white, he didn't want us to use up precious time on fruit that wasn't ripe, when all around us there were souls so prepared, they needed only to hear up front why we were at their door.

Com saudades,

Marsha Foster Jay



I want to say I feel enormously blessed for having served under President and Sister Oakes.

I will never forget an unusual assignment I received from President Oakes, which led to a most exhilarating experience in a church meeting.

A regional representative had scheduled a training meeting for stake missionaries, which President Oakes was unable to attend. Somehow he seemed to know that the authority would probably be suggesting a teaching approach that involved a kind of ruse or deception.

He asked my companion and me to attend the meeting, and specifically told me: “Elder Dixon, if President XXX tells the missionaries to lie to their investigators, I want you to get up afterwards and tell everybody, in my name, that we don’t do that kind of thing in this mission -- that I always want our missionaries to tell the truth!”

And the training session went just as President Oakes had suspected. So as his proxy, I had the opportunity to stand and publicly contradict what the regional representative had just said!

I will always admire President Oakes’ feisty style, and his absolute commitment to behaving with integrity in every way.

Gratefully,
Paul Dixon



I arrived in Brasil on January 4th, 1971 as a nervous, timid Idaho farm boy with a glimmer of a testimony but with no clue as to what I was about to experience. I left in November, 1972 with a strong and unwavering testimony of the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ and a boatload of spiritual experiences that have sustained and supported me since that day. I attribute this monumental spiritual transformation to the loving and powerful leadership of our beloved mission president, President George Oakes. Having grown up in a home with an inactive father, I had never had the example of righteous leadership and Priesthood service – President Oakes filled that void and showed me what it means to be a Priesthood man of God. With his loving guidance and example, I realized it was really “cool” to be a missionary for the Savior and was able to step out of my comfort zone and proudly and forcefully proclaim the truthfulness of the Gospel to the beloved people of Brasil.

Having lived far from Utah during most of my life, I have had few opportunities to attend reunions and renew associations with President and Sister

Oakes as many of our former missionary companions have, and I have missed that. But very few days go by without me reflecting on and drawing upon the experiences I had as a Brasil North missionary with President Oakes. Not only have I directly benefitted from this but also my wife, seven children and twelve grandchildren, as well as the many good saints I have been able to serve through years of service in the Church.

President Oakes, I express my gratitude to you for the profound and eternal impact you have had on my life. I love you and will miss you greatly.

Robert Hammond



Dear Pres. and Sister Oakes and Family,
I'd like to share just a few thoughts that come to mind when I reflect on how your father George Oakes (and all of you) has touched my life.

I remember the first night of my mission in Brazil, I flew in alone ahead of my LTM group. I was sure tired. I spent the night in the mission home, sleeping. During that first night, someone came in and pulled the covers up over me. I don't know who—I presume it was sister Oakes. Right then I knew everything was going to be all right. I was part of the family.

While I was serving in Juiz de Fora, we had a mission conference in Belo Horizonte. During a break we had a game of basketball. My long time boyhood friend Doug Stewart was also at that conference. Pres. Oakes put us in the same zone for a bit. That was a treat. (Doug died almost nine years ago this month, I'm sure he'll have the privilege to work with Pres. Oakes again before a lot of the rest of us.) Back to Belo, we had a game of basketball. What stands out is Pres. Oakes played with us and he was out to win, he did not stoop down to give any of the other team a break, just plowed down for the goal. Everything he did he did 100%. There was a lesson in everything he did with us.

This next one is from memory. I don't have my journal with me to check the facts. Our district attended a Stake Conference, again in Belo Horizonte. We took a bus there with the Branch of Juiz de Fora. Sometime during that day Pres. Oakes had me take Scott out to get ice cream or something. Scott was pretty young, still. That is the kind of trust Pres. and Sis. Oakes had for their elders, to put the care of one of their own children in our hands. I felt pretty important for a while after that. I love to attend the mission reunions! I'm sooo sad I missed the last one. I was looking forward to seeing Pres. and Sis. Oakes for the first time since their return from serving in the Campinas Temple. I simply put the wrong date on my calendar. I'll be kicking myself a long time for that one.

During one of the last reunions before they went back to Brazil, Pres. Oakes took me aside alone and we discussed a few things that were going on in my life at that time. I cherish that moment. After all these years, he still cares for the one.

My heart goes out to Sis. Oakes your family at this time, such a sad day. I'm sure Pres. Oakes is having quite a grand reception on the other side. It makes me want to try a little harder, be better in my own life.

Um Grande Abraco,

Mark Shepherd

Brazil North Mission, April 1973-75



I have appreciated and enjoyed all of the reports of Pres. Oakes life. He was a great example to me by always trying to follow the spirit. Once he called me in to help with a member disciplinary action and he diligently sought the spirit for direction. I also remember how fun he was. When we had the missionary retreat up at the old monastery and had played a football game in the mud, I had just gotten cleaned up and he said he wanted to play again. He said, "Come on Echols, you'll play". So I put my wet, muddy clothes back on and we played again. Then we all jumped in the pool to clean off! His strength will always be remembered. **Don Echols**



I feel that I was called to the Brazil North Mission as much to preach the gospel there but also for my spirit to be taught by a great leader, George Oakes. What we all learned from him is priceless and too great to include here. Let it suffice to say that he has had as much influence in my life and testimony as any other person who I have been acquainted with on the earth, or through the scriptures. He was valiant till the end as a leader. He never let us down. Let's all strive to live so that we may greet and sing with him again.

Godspeed, President Oakes

Love, **Frank Milner**



I will be forever grateful for the profound influence that President Oakes has had on my life. He was a man of great faith and eternal optimism. His humble demeanor during the final days of his life exemplifies the values that he taught us who served as missionaries. Whenever I think of him I feel like smiling. He taught me the virtue of hard work, and that it could be enjoyed. I have frequently thought over the years of the mission conferences that we had, and how exhilarated I felt listening to his powerful testimony. He referenced many of his talks directly from the Doctrine and Covenants, and his teachings continue to resonate whenever I read those scriptures. As a missionary, I always felt a great love that President and Sister Oakes had for each and every missionary.

John Andelin



I will always appreciate the wisdom laced with good humor of President Oakes. I had the privilege of working in the mission office shortly after he arrived. We had a good time developing the original, Crusty Bus concept to publish in O Desafio. He and Sister Oakes were great examples to me. I still refer to much of what I learned from them so many years ago.

James A. Johnson



Of all the resources available to me, “growing up”, it was Pres. Oakes who defined for me the Prophet Joseph, and welded that understanding, testimony, feeling, and absolute assurance that he is the Prophet of the Restoration. It cannot be expressed with greater clarity nor accuracy than as expressed by John Taylor, D&C: 135. It is in consequence of Pres. Oakes that, to this day, I know and feel what Pres. Taylor expresses. And I have come to learn that we will be able to return Home, only if Joseph Smith is our friend, and we are his friend. At that time, I expect Pres. Oakes will certainly be standing nearby. Yesterday morning, while in Sacrament Meeting, I was pondering reunions in Heaven, abraços, tears of joy, gladness. Powerful, powerful feelings. Dad passed away last year. He and Pres. Oakes know each other, and I imagined conversations. Probably not lengthy ones – both have demanding assignments in Spirit Prison. But yesterday morning I was able to feel powerful feelings. That’s another blessing learned from the President. Be men and women of Power. Do whatever it takes. God has blessed Pres. and Sister Oakes. May He bless us in ways that will assist us to honor our covenants, to the end that we too may enjoy those wonderful reunions.

H. Von Packard



My interesting memory of Pres. Oakes was of the day that I landed in Rio in September 1973. As we were being driven from the airport to the mission home by a Varig employee on the Avenida do Brasil, the driver was driving somewhat erratically and Pres. Oakes told us to not pay attention to the calm way that the man was driving, because he was driving in that manner due to the heavy rainfall. I thought that the driver was crazy for driving the way that he was, I later learned that he was driving in the usual fashion. Pres. Oakes had a dry sense of humor that day. He was a great man and Sister Oakes was a great mission mother.

Jeff Barneck



I have read all the emails from the beginning and appreciate all you have been doing. This morning (here in Italy my time, late Monday night your time) is my longstanding appointment to photograph an entire parish of records where my Italian ancestors came from and I should be at this all week. I will therefore not be back in time for the funeral. I send my condolences and will visit with Sister Oakes at an appropriate time after my arrival back home (I contacted her and President Oakes prior to my departure to try to set up a visit but received no response, I suspect because it was right when President Oakes was in decline). President Oakes was -- and is -- a great servant of God.

Steve Ehat



I believe I was serving on the Ilha do Governador outside of Rio. It was a late Sunday night and my companion called in to report our work (or lack of work). As usual, we weren't having too much such success. While visiting with Pres. Oakes, he indicated that he had been praying about us and the Lord told him that there were two people that were ready to be taught the gospel and baptized this week. He challenged us to go out and find and baptize them and to report back next Sunday. The next day on our P-day we fasted and prayed about this. We then headed out to visit all the people that we were teaching and had taught. With no success, we had some referral cards we started going through. One card had an address up on the hillside in the favelas. We really didn't want to go up there but finally felt impressed to do so. As we approached the location we noticed that it was a corner bar. As we came closer, a big 300+ man with a torn tee shirt came barreling out of the bar straight for us. His arms were wide open ... and he shouted "Elder, elder ... we have been waiting for you!!" We were very startled at first to say the least. He took us around back to meet his wife. They then said that they had finished reading the Book of Mormon and were in the D&C and had a question about the Word of Wisdom and in selling alcohol and cigarettes. They told us they had never been taught the lessons but his brother held a leadership position in Rio and he had got them to start reading. We started giving the lessons and a few days later committed them down for baptism on Sunday. Boy did we feel good. When Sunday arrived, we held the baptism behind the house where the church was located. I was blessed to do the baptism ... yes ... just one baptism. At the last minute the wife said she didn't feel like she was quite ready and wanted to wait. So we just baptized the husband. After the baptism we held a sacrament meeting. It just happened that I was to give my first talk in Portuguese. I had been practicing all week to get the verbs down right. As I began to speak, the spirit stopped me and began to tell me what to say. I then related our experience for the past week ...

and the challenge that Pres. Oakes had given us. I then said that we thought we knew who the two baptisms were but we only had baptized one person. As such ... (my companion was now sinking down in his chair) ... the Spirit told me to tell the congregation that there was someone else out there that was supposed to be baptized today! Without knowing what I was saying next ... I said that right after Sacrament meeting we would be holding another baptism service and that we would appreciate it if whoever is supposed to be baptized would get their interview and their clothes on ... and that I would put on my wet clothes and would be out there waiting for them. The congregation was very quiet. The brother who gave the closing prayer pleaded with the Lord that the heart of this individual would be touched. There were several investigators there that Sunday with the other elders. After church, I got on my wet clothes and went out to the font. After about 15 minutes I was getting worried. Then a little old gentleman came out and in tears said that the spirit told him he was to be baptized but not today. He would be baptized next week. Another five minutes went by and the wife of the husband we baptized came out. With tears in her eyes and a big smile on her face ... and dressed in white clothes ... she asked to be baptized. She said that she was initially unsure but now felt the spirit and knew she was to be baptized. We held a glorious baptism! Later that night we called Pres. Oakes and reported back that we had found and baptized the two people ... and were wondering if he had had any additional inspirations for us. Thank God that Pres. Oakes was receptive to promptings of the Spirit and in directing the Lord's work with his missionaries.

Pres. Oakes always challenged us to be courageous! I will never forget the time with Elder Thomas. I believe that month we were teaching 5-6 families and thought we were to have 20-25 baptisms. Near the end of the month, within just a few days, every single investigator decided they didn't want to hear any more about the church. That Sunday after church we were both very disheartened. Elder Thomas told me to 'buck up' and let's go out and find some more investigators. As normal, we weren't allowed into any houses and it was getting late. Then we heard some music in the distance. Elder Thomas said we should check it out. When we got there we found a little old church with people singing inside. We went in ... there were several hundred black people singing and praising God. There was a band playing away with trumpets and a drum set. Elder Thomas sat me down between two large men and said that was going up and testify too ... and that I would be okay. He asked the preacher if he could share his testimony ... he said yes ... it only took a couple of minutes before they realized who we were ... then two enormous men grabbed Elder Thomas by the arms and started escorting him out of the church. I followed in close pursuit. On the way out I heard a lady crying out to us ... I didn't understand her and I didn't want to stop to figure it out either. Once outside the church, this lady came running up to us in tears. She kept saying that she was one of the lost sheep ... she then said that she had been baptized 3

years earlier but had gone inactive. So for the past 2 years she hadn't been in church. Her maid knew she was struggling so she invited her out to her church ... and who should be there on her first visit to a church ... the elders of Israel. We gave her the address of the church and she said she would be forgive grateful.

Last but not least, I will never forget a time in Goiania, which was hundreds of miles away from the mission home. One day it was very hot and after tracting all morning we decided it might feel good to go back to the apartment and take a little nap. We hadn't ever done that before. As I feel asleep I was feeling a little guilty. Then suddenly I felt someone trying to nudge me and saying "Elder Potter ... Elder Potter ... time to wake up". I turned over in my bunk and there, not more than 12 inches from my face, was the smiling and laughing Pres. Oakes. Needless to say that was the last nap I ever took on my mission.

I will miss Pres. Oakes and his sage wisdom and his sense of humor.

Salon soccer or field soccer, basketball or football. President always decided the teams, and, of course, the outcome was certain. He was always yelling at me or someone else for kicking him in the back with the soccer ball. Being on a missionary budget, I could not afford penance. So, I continued. He was feisty on the court or in the field. Did not like losing. Said he wasn't used to it, and never did want to get used to it. As Pres. Packer teaches, The Brethren, good leaders are always teaching. President, to a "T". V Packard

The story I heard was that the pass was semi-deliberately thrown over the water, and one of the elders "accidentally" got immersed while catching it, whereupon several other elders felt compelled to "save" him.

John Andelin



Elder Paul Gustavson (BNM 1969-1971)

This is Elder Gustavson from San Jose, California - please tell President & Sister Oakes that Kris Anne, Jason (Maceió Missionary who in the MTC 2004 President Oakes was in his Branch Presidency) & my thoughts & Prayers are with them. President Oakes is my "hero" & his teaching me D&C 82:10 has blessed my life forever. Obrigado & Un Grande Abraco - I am coming to Utah Monday & will come see him.



I have had three men in my life who have had an incredible impact on me. The first is my own father, the next is my dear friend, Jack, who past away 11 years ago and the third is President George A. Oakes. Others have blessed my life and helped me change course when needed but those three stand supreme. They have all followed the example of the Savior and were willing to do anything necessary to lift me or encourage me. Thank you for being President

Oakes support team so that he could do the work of our Heavenly Father.
David V. Thomas (Dec. 1970 - Dec. 1972)



I spoke with Pres. Oakes about a week ago. I owe him more than words can express. He has been my lifeline to the Gospel. I am in the French West Indies and hope to get back the end of this week. **James Thatcher**



Like many others, I am one of his 450+ missionary children who will attend the funeral this Saturday in Spirit, but not in body.

Please convey to them my deepest and most heart-felt gratitude for the motivating force for good that both President and Sister Oakes have been for me (and probably all of us). I was sitting on the stand of our chapel for a ward conference last Sunday morning when I looked down and saw an email notifying me of his passing. All I could think of was how much I was going to miss him. He was truly one of the best and most influential men in my life. Our next reunion with him on the other side of the veil is one I am looking forward to. What a time that will be. My prayers continue for Sister Oakes, their children and their grandchildren, that they may be comforted and that their faith may increase with the peaceful assurances of the Holy Spirit.

With all my love and regard,
Pete Baumgarten



Sister Oakes,

Thank you for helping to mold the man we all loved. He would quietly tell us he owed everything to you. It would be appropriate to say of you both "to rule and reign in the house of Israel forever."

Affectionately,
Elder Douglas Warcup



I would be remiss to not include our memories of Brazil and the Brazil North Mission under President Oakes because our family interfaced with the missionaries and the wonderful Oakes' family very much during our years there from 1968-1976. I appreciate all the wonderful stories of the mission under

President and Sister Oakes. The BNM really blossomed and grew under President Oakes and it was thru all your diligent efforts and the wonderful leadership of this inspired President. We also came to appreciate the Oakes family, as we too, the Anderson Family, were in Rio during these years and interacted with them. President and Sister Oakes and their children were a fun family, and I remember President Oakes was very positive and uplifting in his interactions with other, always believing the best in all people; and from all the lembranças thus far recorded, this bears out. Dear Sister Oakes and family; may you find strength in Spirit at this time, knowing that you and President Oakes influenced many, helped each of us to grow and become better people, and strengthened our testimonies. That is the unintentional legacy you have left with us. President Oakes will be missed by very many. Um Grande Abraço.

da **Irmã Lisa Anderson**



President Oakes inspired us all. He gave us all more hope and faith to be bold. Keith Fackrell will remember we decided as a district to 'preach from the mountain tops' and conducted a street meeting on Corcovado. I'm sure people thought we were crazy, but how much easier it was for us to teach in a home after that. Similarly, we increased our boldness through street meetings in downtown Belo when I served there. I have often thought that the Lord planned to have the Oakes preside over the mission at just the right time. It was ready for an explosion of growth and we saw that. I, like many of you, had an individual interview with Elder McConkie early in my mission (well before the first stake was organized). It was memorable, but particularly for one statement he made in the interview - that the mission was poised for significant growth. I had not had much success up to that point and as I recall the mission was just starting to increase in baptisms. Success eventually came in some pretty dramatic ways (not always measured by baptisms, but that was certainly part of it); and I have often thought how inspired President Oakes was and how he inspired us. It was a wonderful time to be a missionary in BNM.

And who can forget going 'without purse or script' on power days in Rio when it reached 40 degrees Celsius.

Thanks,

Neale Wooters



Please pass on to Sister Oakes my sincere condolences. Our *Presidente* was a true representative of Jesus Christ and of his church in these latter-days. When I think back to my missionary days, I know that President Oakes' example and influence was exactly what I needed at that time - and it continues

through to today.

I will not be able to attend the service on Saturday (*Fiquei triste*), but will be there in spirit.

Milt Maughan



Among the many gifts President and Sister Oakes have that I greatly cherish is their gift of love and their ability to make one feel special. In 1972, when we served as missionaries, being a sister missionary was not as "popular" as it is today. I was apprehensive about the way I was going to be received by the Elders and the mission president. That fear was very quickly dispelled. I was received as a special addition to the mission. President Oakes always told us sisters we were the "heart" of the mission and wherever we were serving, that zone was blessed for having us there. His attitude set the tone for the Elders and created a wonderful environment in which to serve.

Once he set up a sisters' conference. We all got to stay at a hotel na Praça do Machado and for a few days we were treated as queens. I'll never forget that.

One time when I received bad news from home I met with President Oakes and after our conversation "all was well" again.

My sister and I were the only members of the Church, so President and Sister Oakes became my church family. When I came to BYU after my mission, they invited me to spend my first Christmas with them in California. I really felt at home with them. While there, I told the President that I didn't like the food here (now, the food I am talking about was cafeteria food from the Cannon Center). That evening for dinner he bought the best steak ever to help me enjoy good food in the United States!! That time Sister Oakes even went to the trouble to find me a date to attend the "Rose Bowl Parade" in Pasadena. (I didn't get to go because my ride back to BYU was leaving before then). All these gestures of love and care for me always made me feel special.

After I was married, we were visiting President Oakes at their home in La Canada. President Oakes was hosting us as Sister Oakes was out. The phone rang and he didn't answer. He said he was not going to interrupt our visit. He said whoever was calling could leave a message. Now he was a very important man, but at that time he was showing us that we counted, that his attention was given to us at that moment. That experience really touched me.

I can go on and on relating their kindness and love but I better close. Dear President and Sister Oakes, you have given me so much. A great part of who I am today I owe it to you! I'll miss you dear President Oakes. Sister Oakes I send you all my love and condolences at this time of loss.

Neli Rogers/Sister Silva



Can I just echo what Neli wrote. One of the most lasting impressions of my mission in Brazil is how the Oakes treated the Sister missionaries. In the Oakes' eyes, they were the equal to the Elders in every way. I really appreciated that. When I returned home, I encouraged young women to serve a mission largely because of the way I saw the Oakes treat our Sister missionaries.

Gregory Taggart



Fellow Brazil North missionaries,

What a reflective and emotional week it has been for me as I've relived those missionary years through your memories. Thank you all for your emails.

I too have special memories of my interactions with President Oakes. I recall many times him counseling us to finish our missions strong. For some reason my memory goes back to those valiant sister missionaries in particular that I served with and were always such an inspiration to me. Watching them work hard right up till the day they departed is one of my special memories.

Then came my time to depart. I was serving in Niteroi, across the bay from Rio de Janeiro, with Elder Phelps at the time, when the President gave me a personal challenge to work a 100 hour week my last full week with the promise that I would baptize again before leaving Brazil. We accepted the challenge with the intent to claim the promise. Early every morning found us down at the ferry landing and again late into the evening doing street contacting. Early in that week, while knocking doors in an apartment building, we tracked out a single young man coming home late at night from work. We gave him the 1st discussion and he seemed to be a golden contact. The next evening we taught him again in the late evening and challenged him to baptism. He accepted the challenge for baptism the coming Sunday but then surprised us with the news he would be out of town for a few days visiting his family. I recall the many doubts that swirled through my head during those days while he was gone. How would we get him ready in time? Would his family talk him out of baptism? There was not enough time to find and prepare someone else before I was to leave. Our faith was being tested but we were determined to keep our commitment and claim the promise.

When we met with the young man upon his return he was grinning from ear to ear as he greeted us for that evening's discussion. He had read the Book of Mormon on his bus trip and had received a strong witness. His parents presented no concerns and he was committed to go forward. We held the baptism service after church that Sunday and as I recall, we used an outside baptism font that had been constructed behind the house being used for church services. As I would be

leaving Niteroi early the next morning, I said my goodbyes and never saw the young man again. Later I was to find out he was serving as the elder's quorum president. Being young and not too bright I failed to write down his name and address so today I have no way to correspond and keep track of him, but am hopeful he married well and became part of the strength of the church in Brazil.

I am forever grateful for the influence and example of our beloved mission president and his good wife.

Love to all,

Jim & LuWain Proctor



The spirit is so strong with all of us this week. I was just talking this morning to some co-workers about mission memories. While serving on the Ilha do Governador, I went to President Oakes and asked if we could build a baptismal font behind the house we had rented for a Church. He agreed and Elder Petersen and I completed the project. Subsequently we were asked to build another font but I can't remember where it was. It was behind another house that was being used for a church. I wonder if this is where your baptism occurred. Need to dig out my Diary.

In any event President Oakes was inspired to let us do this. What wonderful memories. Looking forward to seeing many of you tomorrow.

Love to you all,

Elder Frank Milner



I had the opportunity to be one of the transition missionaries having been in the mission for six months prior to the arrival of President and Sister Oakes. I was pulled into the office within the first month of their arrival. The mission was struggling when they arrived with few discussions, fewer baptisms and a lot of discouragement.

President Oakes struggled with what to do for only a short time. He sent two assistants to the São Paulo mission to see how they were baptizing in the 100s each month while we were down to double digits. He did not agree with those methods so he taught us a new way to work. He instructed us to put away our study materials, get out to our work areas by 8:00 a.m. and stay out until bed time. There were no P days for that period. Following a few months, each zone had a super, three day P day attended by Elder Oakes. We played, ate and then got down to the task. He said now that we knew how to work we needed to add back in the study component and improve our spiritual selves. I heard a lot of complaining from the more seasoned missionaries but watched as the baptisms

went from double digits to hundreds within the first months of his program. He also insisted that we work for quality baptisms, families, rather than teenagers etc. The result was the creation of a stake in Rio the week after I was released.

He righted the ship even while breaking his toes several times playing futeból on the beach with us.

James A. Johnson



To all of the Crusty Elders and Sisters that served in the Brasil North Mission,

I remember my first day in the mission field. We had been in the LTM for 4 months and were the first group to get to Brasil with the new discussions that would officially come out to all missionaries in December of 1973, so we learned the old flannel board discussions and a month before going to Brasil we had to start learning the new ones with the flip charts. Upon arriving at the Tijuca chapel on Rua Maxwell there had been a zone conference that day and all of the Elders along with President Oakes were across the street playing futeból. Not too long after they finished, and I received my companion assignment, Elder Kim Dyches, and he helped me carry one of my large suit cases to the little house that we to stay in during our companionship. After getting settled in a little bit, we got a taxi and went downtown somewhere for a street-preach. As I had only been in Rio for maybe 2 hours at the most, I was standing at the back of the crowd and looking around and taking in all that was new to me and where I would be for the next 2 years. At that point in time Sister Oakes was in front of the crowd and I heard her say "we will now have Elder Gledhill come up front and tell you all the Joseph Smith story."

After picking myself up off of the concrete, I walked up to the front and I think that I told then the Joseph Smith story, as it was all a blur to me, but it all got better from there.

I also remember when I was in Belo and we had been teaching a sister of a recent convert, Irmã Alda, and she was living in Belo but her husband was living in Niteroi and we had to get permission from her husband for her to be baptized. We did not have access to a phone to call him nor did he have a phone by which he could be contacted and went through the mission office for the Elders to contact him. She was scheduled to be baptized on Saturday afternoon and we had not heard anything back as of yet, but proceeded to fill the font knowing that it would happen. So we went forward planning the baptism and about 30 minutes before the meeting was to start, we got word that the Elders had contacted him and the he said yes, so we went through with the baptism.

We were always taught to go forth with faith and doing the work and that all would work out.

Lindsay M. Gledhill



The day has just started. A simple observation. President had the ability to inspire and lift. He kept himself in a condition of worthiness so that, whenever needed, he was able to open his mouth, and provide correct, inspired direction. He exuded that feeling. He was a man of “power”. Remember? Faith – obedience – power. And we could feel it. He was a young man’s man. There was no question as to whether or not we could turn to him for guidance. Consider the time you had with him – a few months, a year, two years. If “things” weren’t going quite right, for you or for The Mission, did you ever wonder about his counsel? For me? Only once – Belo – without purse or scrip. But it turns out E. Taft and I exaggerated President’s vision. Wasn’t his fault. I always looked forward, in great anticipation, to Zone Conferences, interviews, any time I would be able to listen. That is the big picture I remember, and am grateful for. A specific – After only a few months in his calling, The Work had begun to make immense progress. The Spirit of the Lord was moving across The Mission, both amongst the people as well as the missionaries. In consequence, The Mission was experiencing a great deal of success in the area of baptisms. This momentum built to a crescendo after about 1 year (faith – obedience – power) and then, we hit The Wall. Lessons being taught dropped dramatically, throughout the mission. Number of tracting hours was still high, but we were unable to get into homes. Not even able to get into homes. I am not aware of the conversations between the President and the Assistants, but after a month of this nose-dive, with the wheels starting to come off of the bus, President called all of the leaders in the Rio area to the mission home. There was discussion and contemplation. President then extended an invitation – go back to our areas, and, each day, for a week, we were not to come back to our apartment / pensão until we had entered a home, and, taught a discussion. I know how I felt about that invitation. But, I also knew he had never before asked us to do anything that would not be right. For the following seven days, it wasn’t until 11:30 – 11:50 pm each night, before someone let us in, and, we taught a discussion. I will never forget the lessons learned from that invitation. “Things” shortly turned around, again. There was no question in my mind as to Who was in charge of The Work. Inspired, young-man’s man. Praise to the man, who communed with Jehovah.

H. Von Packard



I am so sorry that I won't be able to attend the funeral of our President. I have enjoyed everyone's stories. I had studied Spanish (3 Years) German (2 Years) and prayed to be called to a Spanish speaking South American mission. It was interesting to see how many have had the same wish, but THANKFULLY, the Lord was running the show! I have been around a few Mission Presidents. Our President was and is special. I loved his testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith. To me, he not only testified of The Prophet, but also modeled him. I remember his teaching us how to sing "The Seer". I remember him teaching us to sing Up Awake Ye Defenders of Zion. My kids all know the original words to that song. After one mission conference where the President bore such a strong testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Steve Richards and I commented that it wouldn't surprise us to find out the Prophet had appeared to him...he knew him so well. I mentioned this in a reunion and Pres. Oakes just laughed and looked at me like I was [crazy]. I stand by my earlier thought, he loved The Prophet, and bore strong testimony of him. I think when we meet the Prophet we will recognize a lot of the character of our President. I remember his smile, his good sense of humor. Just like the Prophet Joseph, who liked to challenge the boys to stick pulls, President Oakes like to have fun, work hard and loved being involved the work of the restoration. I will miss him. I love President and Sister Oakes. I hope that we will continue to stay together as a group. I have enjoyed the reunions that I have been able to attend.

Love to all of you.

Bill Underwood



I only had President Oakes for the last 7 or so months of his service and did not get to know him as much as so many of you. I do have one memory where he taught me a valuable lesson. I was serving up in Vilha Velha and my companion and I went in to the city of Vitória to participate in a District Conference. President Oakes interviewed each of us. I felt like he came down on me and encouraged me to work harder and to get more done. Afterwards, I asked my companion how his interview went and he said it was great. I wondered how come I was being "picked on." I was the junior companion, after all. Nevertheless, we went out that very day and really worked hard. I was really going to show the President. I remember that we found some new investigators. The next day was Sunday and we had some good meetings with the members of the District. After the meeting, I was walking through a room and President Oakes walked in the other side. We were the only two in the room for a moment. I still had a bit of a chip on my shoulder and he was not the person I wanted to talk to at the time. He put his arm around my shoulder and told me how much he loved me. My stubbornness melted away. I immediately

thought of Doctrine and Covenants 121 where it says that we should show an increase of love after reproofing someone. That scripture came alive for me. I knew at that time, what an inspired man he was.

Bob Chesworth



My first experience with President Oakes came even before he arrived as mission president. In April or early May of 1971, after the new mission presidents had been announced, we were visiting a strong member family in Niteroi and mentioned President Oakes' new calling. Their eyes lit up and the Irmão went to a bookshelf and pulled down a book with a message of encouragement written inside the front cover that was signed, "Elder George A. Oakes." President Oakes had taught and baptized the family during his mission. I think I realized at that time we were in for something special.

I also remember shortly after President and Sister Oakes arrived in Brazil, Sister Oakes was called upon to give a talk in a conference – I don't remember the particulars. She did her best to convert her Spanish into Portuguese, and although the accent was a little different, she did a great job. I think everyone, members and missionaries alike, loved her immediately for making the effort.

I spent much of my mission far away from the mission home, so I didn't have daily contact with President and Sister Oakes. However, I do remember them making an effort to spend one-on-one time with each of us when they were able to visit. On one occasion when I was in the Nordeste, President Oakes showed up unexpectedly on some other mission business, but he grabbed our whole district and treated us to churrascaria – a rare experience on my missionary budget.

The memories most ingrained into me, though, are the principles President Oakes instilled in us through our missionary service. Central among these was learning to rely on the Lord when we are in His service – be it through "going without purse or scrip," preaching in other churches, or providing priesthood blessings. I was a relatively new convert when I arrived in Brazil, and from President Oakes I learned that the Melchizedek priesthood that I had received represented real power when exercised in faith and righteousness. Those are lessons that have blessed me and my family throughout my life.

If the measure of success for a mission president and his wife is how effectively they prepared the young people in their charge for future service in the Church and to their fellow beings, President and Sister Oakes were remarkably successful. Their faithful service and patient teaching made being in the Lord's service fun and enlightening, however "hard" the work itself might be. I offer both President and Sister Oakes my heartfelt thanks for their lifelong sacrifices on behalf of myself and so many others.

Greg Wing



I worked as the mission financial secretary for 9 of the last 11 months of my mission. As I mentioned in a previous e-mail, the mission staff got to eat lunch in the mission home virtually every day. What I didn't mention was that President Oakes liked to work off the meal after lunch, so we'd play a few rounds of horse shoes in the back yard—I started out as President Oakes's teammate because, I suppose, he thought someone from Wyoming probably played horseshoes quite well. I'm afraid I may have disappointed him.

If we didn't play horseshoes, we played futeból de salon—in that big conference room in the mission offices. We'd move out the furniture and go at it. As I remember, about the only thing Sister Oakes could say was, "Oh George!"

Then there were the days in the office that seemed to drag on and on for everybody, including the President. More than once, he would peek into my and Elder Alan Andersen's office and say, "hey, let's go play some football!" We'd all pile into the Suburban and head to the Barra. As we drove, he'd teach the gospel.

I've mentioned Elders Anderson and Thiriot. I should also mention all the other Elders and Sisters I worked with in the mission home. They were all great: Merrill Higginson (a great pianist as well), Maria Elena Curdy (it was always fun to watch her face as we ate lunch with President Oakes. I got the impression that she'd never eaten lunch/dinner at a table chaired by the likes of George Oakes. He could be so, well, so unpresident-like at times. ;), Ned Warner, Robin Henrie, Zuleika Ennes, Bill Hansen, Gary Carver, Jim Thatcher, John Andean, Merle Keller, Mike Dunn, Pete Grimm, Chuck Tresnak, and probably others, but my mind has gone blank. What a treat to work with such fine people.

I was also in the mission home when the Oakes adopted Debra. If I recall correctly, Clark Thiriot and I were babysitting the boys over the weekend while President and Sister Oakes took a short vacation in the mountains. I recall the door swinging open and the two of them rushing in, Debra in their arms, announcing the new arrival. It was all commotion.

Of course, for a while after that Debra struggled mightily to survive. I can't remember exactly what the problem was, but her tiny body seemed to get smaller and smaller, and her skin seemed to grow so tight around her body that I was concerned she wouldn't be able to close her eyes. I got to spend the night with her in the hospital a number of times. Once I was standing out in the driveway. We had all just returned from the Barra da Tijuca where we had played football with the President, when President Oakes came out of the mission home and asked me to come inside. I did. I'll let my mission journal tell the rest:

"President called me downstairs [into the living quarters] and said that the baby had turned for the worse. He told me to sit down next to her and then he anointed her. We then placed our hands on her head and the president blessed her. It was an inspired blessing — he blessed every bone in her body [he had earned his

Doctor of Chiropractic degree, so he knew bones]. Then I left. The next morning when we [the mission staff] came to the office, Sister Oakes was smiling — Debra's been perfectly well ever since the blessing."

I think I spent nine months in the mission home because I knew how to change a diaper. And I changed a lot of them. When I finally married and we had our first child, there were no surprises. No, whenever the Oakes would travel on mission business, Clark Thiriot and I took care of the children. After Debra arrived, the division of labor was Clark took the boys and I had Debra. I'm not sure who had the most difficult job, but I do remember I seemed to have spent the entire time—three days I think—going between the Oakes's bed, where I slept, and Debra's crib, where she didn't sleep too much. It was all feed and change, then fall into bed exhausted and try to sleep, then rinse and repeat. By the time the Oakes returned, I was more tired than I think I had ever been on my mission.

Finally, there was the conference where President told the story of when his crusty companion was doing the door approach on the dona de casa and her young son peeked from behind her and "hocked up the biggest loogie and spit it on" his companion's beautiful tie. We all laughed.

The next weekend, Elder Scott Farnsworth and I were pregando na praça in Vitoria—a very busy praça mind you, right at a bus stop downtown. The other elders in our zone were milling around the crowd doing contacts. Elder Farnsworth was holding the flannel board, and I was preaching the Restoration. A somewhat noisy crowd had gathered around us, when all of a sudden, SPLAT! A large, icky goober was running down my left arm. Elder Farnsworth saw it. The crowd saw it. They went silent. Everybody seemed to be wondering what I would do.

I looked over at Farnsworth and smiled. He looked at me and smiled. We were both thinking of President Oakes's loogie story. I turned back to the crowd and began preaching again, full of power of and authority—a crusty Elder in Israel.

I love President Oakes. He will be missed.

Gregory Taggart



When I flew in Monday I went up and saw Jeanette and the family and had another touching visit. She appreciates all that you and others are doing. I did have an opportunity to tell her kids and grandkids my story, which I will briefly share which could go in the remembrances area that you are putting together.

When President & Sister Oakes arrived in Brazil, I was serving in Goiania and had an important decision to make. I played football at Ricks College before my mission on scholarship (1968). I left for Brazil in late August of 1969. In the summer of 1971 I received a letter which said if I wanted to retain my scholarship and play at Ricks I needed to come back in share and ready to play. This would require me to leave my mission early to be ready for the fall 1971 season. I

counseled with President Oakes and he taught me D&C 82:10, being crusty and the Power Proselyting Program (60 hours, 65 hours, 70 hours & 75 hours etc.) I of course decided to give up football and stay the 24 months that the Lord had called me to serve. I communicated this to the Head Coach at Ricks. My last month (August of 1971) my companion and I averaged 96 hours proselyting and we baptized 20 wonderful individuals most all of them in complete families. It was incredible. We had a family of seven baptismal age walk into the Church saying that they have been looking for the Church for years and they found a convite in the Street Market on the road telling them where the Church was. We got on a bus and the spirit told us to go to a particular street and we found and taught another family and on and on we were guided. This was the first month in the history of the Mission that over 100 baptisms occurred. The story continues. I return home and enroll at BYU and on my floor was a non member Keith (Mad Dog) Rivera who I become friends with and he later joins the Church and he encourages me to walk on the BYU football team. In the January of 1972 LaVell Edwards is named the new Head Coach at BYU and I walk on the team that spring and become the first returned mission to walk on and letter under LaVell. There was only one return missionary on the team back then. Many years later my son Jason is called to Maceió and goes to the São Paulo Mission where President Oakes is in his Branch Presidency and President Oakes recounts this same story that Jason had heard for years from me. Later when President Oakes returned from serving in the Area Presidency in Brazil, we have an opportunity to visit at their home in North Salt Lake and President Oakes recounts how in my final interview before going home he blessed me that if it were my desire to play football again one day because I had given it up for the Lord and because of D&C 82:10 and my faithfulness that a way would be made that I could play again. President Oakes is my Hero, he is one of the four most influential men in my life. I am indebted to him forever for what he taught me because it has blessed my life, my family and all that I have served in the Church.

Paul Gustavson



Sister Oaks:

I have many fond memories of you and your husband; I had been in Brazil for six months when we had the opportunity of going to the airport to greet you; there was an energy and an excitement that I will always remember. Your husband taught me (a new concept for me at the time) that it was cool to be righteous; he was the first righteous man that I looked up to and wanted to emulate.

Zone conferences were always inspiring and I believe that all of the missionaries would have done anything for you and your husband. He had the gift

of making people feel special. We all thought that we were his favorite missionary. I learned how to be a priesthood leader from your husband; I learned what was important in a wife from you. I think that we all gained a greater appreciation for Joseph Smith from President Oake's testimony.

My favorite memory of your husband came when we were in the mission home and Elder Fails and I needed the keys to the car as we were going out to the interior on assignment—we went to your bedroom door and it was closed; we were in a quandary about whether we should knock on the door or not—we knew President Oakes was in the bedroom and we surmised that he would be on his knees praying so we were reluctant to bother him. Nevertheless, we needed those keys so we gingerly knocked and he said: “come in”—we found him sitting on the bed (in his sports clothes) reading a Sports Illustrated magazine.

Sitting front and center with missionary discipline, I was able to learn from your husband; he taught me about how to handle the sinner and help a wayward missionary and I have used what I learned from him with hundreds of young missionaries during my time as a bishop, stake president, mission president and especially the six years thus far at the missionary training center.

I will be forever in your debt for your love, kindness, example (all those years of service in Brazil), and your demonstration of a heavenly couple; a saved couple that I could follow with full confidence of obtaining an eternal reward. I am ever so grateful that we got to see one another and visit briefly in October. I had envisioned seeing my mission parents at an upcoming mission conference at the MTC (sitting on the front row) as two of their sons spoke and taught—I knew that George would be proud and that made me happy. Undoubtedly, I will now have the privilege of feeling his presence on occasion as I seek help with missionary issues.

To give you some sense of your influence and the widening circle of what you have done for the church—President Bertasso and I will speak to and teach over 50,000 missionaries in the next two years.

We love you; our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.

Your friends

Philip and Janet Trost



I am a convert to the Church. I joined when I was 18. I took 4 years of German and had thoughts of serving a mission in Germany, or in an English speaking area of the world. I had premonitions that I would go to South America. I prayed that I would not need to learn how to speak Spanish, thinking that this would exclude South America. The Spirit told me I would not need to learn Spanish. Then I received my call, to Brasil in South America where they do

not speak Spanish, but the beautiful language of Portuguese. This shows you that the Lord has a sense of humor.

I remember President and Sister Oakes as a dynamic couple who spoke to us always in an uplifting manner. I was normally very far from the mission home and had less personal interactions with the two of them; so not so much of a one on one experience to share.

But I remember the teachings: the firm testimony of Joseph Smith – which I share; the counsel to always follow the living prophet; the work ethic; the teachings to develop power in the priesthood; and the counsel to serve with love. Following my mission, I married a young woman who was also a convert to the Church. We married in the Cardston Temple and have had 6 children and 17 grandchildren. We have served in many callings in the Church in Germany and throughout the United States. The Lord has blessed us.

In closing, I share my testimony. I bear testimony that Jesus is the Christ and that He answers prayers, because He has answered mine. I testify that Joseph Smith was the prophet to open this dispensation, that he saw the Father and the Son and that he continues to lead this dispensation. I bear testimony to the fact that this, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, is the only true and living church upon the earth, that we are led by the Lord Jesus Christ through a living prophet and 12 living apostles. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

B. Terry Simon



Irmã Oakes,

I continue to be impressed by the love and support that you both gave us missionaries during our time in the Brazil North Mission. In his interviews President Oakes would see us as we are and encourage us to become what he saw in us, what we could become. Your example as a family of service then, and your continued service later on, to Brazil is inspiring. Your dedication to each other as eternal companions is exemplary.

One discourse of President Oakes I still remember was his instruction to follow priesthood leaders. He said that if your bishop asked you to do something that was wrong, to do it. He wouldn't ask you to do something wrong, but if he did and you followed his direction, you would be blessed for your obedience. So you should always do what your priesthood leader asks, and you will be blessed by the Lord for your obedience to your priesthood leaders.

Don Fry Aug 73-Apr 75



As our mission president and mission mother, Pres. & Sister Oakes gave us a foundation in gospel truths and principles upon which we have built our lives. Many times when making decisions we would remember what they taught us about sacrifice and obedience and that would guide our thoughts.

As a newly married couple with a new baby and living in Southern California, we felt so blessed to visit them in La Cañada and feel their love and approbation for us and our family. We always knew that they loved us and felt that we were special.

The best memory we have of Pres. Oakes is his positive, joyful, optimistic outlook no matter what happened, together with his commitment to always choose the right. And, Sister Oakes was always equally positive and accepting!

Thank you, Sister Oakes, for being a loving example of support to your husband throughout your life together! We love you both so much!

Tom and Ruth Nielsen Rich



Sister Oakes,

I hope you enjoy these messages and memories from your missionary “children.” Mere words cannot express the gratitude we all feel for the privilege of being led and influenced by you and President Oakes for our crucial years of missionary service. As I told you in the hospital, when I learned of the President’s condition, I was moved more than even at the death of my parents (you understand why). I went home and got Sandy and we spent five hours with you and your family. I was hoping to visit the President on Monday because I had heard that he had improved on Saturday, and I wanted him lucid so I could tell him how much he meant to me. But I think he already knew. I felt empty at his sudden loss, but that soon gave way to gratitude and joy that my life had been touched by the two of you when I needed it most. I consistently recall teachings I received from both of you (“if you go through the motions, you’ll feel the emotions”). In addition to the Lord and His Latter-day Prophet, I owe the joy I have to key mortals I can count on one hand; George and Jeannette Oakes are two prominent digits thereon.

Eternally grateful for you,

Chuck Allison

