



## The Face of Fillmore

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The Face of Fillmore honors the passing of a great man – President Gordon B. Hinckley.

President Hinckley visited the Fillmore area on more than one occasion during his presidency.

On June 24, 1996, President Hinckley visited Cove Fort, a historic site 25 miles south of Fillmore that his grandfather built in 1867, to speak to more than 15,000 people who were attending a family home evening fireside. Not far from the fort grounds, he and his wife climbed into a horse drawn buggy and rode to Cove Fort, leading a mile-long 75-wagon centennial wagon train, which was traveling across Utah to celebrate the state's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. He remarked to the crowd, "I don't know of anything else that compares with the coming of our people to the valleys of the mountains. The boldness of bringing thousands of people to this mountain country when they had never seen it, except in vision, was an act of tremendous courage." He also shared several pioneer stories of faith and hardship and told of his grandfather being sent by Brigham Young to build a fort. He told how he carried a love in his heart for pioneers like his grandfather. "How much I want to live worthy of the inheritance that has been handed to us without cost or price of any kind on our part. Let us never forget the cost of our faith."

One quality we have all admired in President Hinckley was his amazing stamina. It is interesting to note that in the two weeks prior to his visit to Cove Fort, he had been to Spain to break ground for the temple there, to Brussels, Belgium for a regional conference, to the Hague, Holland for meetings with missionaries and members, to Copenhagen, Denmark for large gatherings, to Berlin, Germany for another regional conference, then had spent a week in the Holy Lands where he spoke at a fireside in Jerusalem, returning to Salt Lake City for two speaking engagements on his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday before the trip the next day to Cove Fort.



September 8, 2001 saw the celebration of Fillmore's sesquicentennial ending a three-day event, which President Hinckley attended. As his motorcade entered the Territorial Statehouse Park, several hundred people rose and sang, "We Thank Thee, Oh God, For A Prophet." There was not a dry eye in the audience.

President Hinckley began his remarks by comparing the lengthy excursion in 1851, of Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and their associates with his 23-minute trip from Salt Lake City on a private jet.

He told of Fillmore's beginnings as the territorial capital. This ended soon after it began as the town was too far distant from the populated areas to be the center of state government. He told the group, "But, Fillmore was launched, and it has not taken a backward step since. It has grown and flourished."

“I am grateful for this city,” he said. “I never lived here, but from this place I trace my roots.” He told of his grandfather, Ira Nathaniel Hinckley and how he helped build Cove Fort and was also an LDS stake president in Millard County for 25 years. His father, Bryant, grew up in the area. The audience enjoyed tales of his father’s boyhood in Cove Fort.

President Hinckley said the best product of Fillmore over the years has been its families, who have given service to the ends of the earth, in business, education, government and defense of the nation in war.

“It is well that on this 150<sup>th</sup> year, you celebrate remembering those who walked here long ago. This has been home to generations of men and women whose strong character, high values, significant accomplishments and great faith were virtues planted within their hearts by wonderful parents who were pioneers of Fillmore and Millard County. May future generations who come from this community be as strong as their noble forebears.”

President Hinckley loved his Fillmore roots and the people of Fillmore loved him. We will miss his spiritual example, his boundless energy, his charming wit and his loving smile.