



Guatemalan workers pound mix of materials into molds to produce building blocks.

Rebuilding After

Many Recall the Terror

Workmen mix materials while pumice building blocks lie in long rows to cure in Central American sun.

PATZICIA, GUATEMALA

It has been over five months since that terrible morning Feb. 4 when a rumbling earthquake shook this small Indian town high in the mountains.

Many vividly recall the terrorizing sensation, including Elder Steven Schmollniger of Stockton, Calif., who was sleeping in the cultural hall of the Patzicia Branch. "It felt like a giant hand had picked up the chapel and was shaking it in every direction at once. It was the most violent thing I can remember."

But today, the earthquake is just a memory fading fast for many as they look forward to a future dotted with such terms as reconstruction, rehabilitation, a better life.

"I was interested in reconstruction from the very beginning," commented Robert B. Arnold, who at the

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time of the earthquake was president of the Guatemala Guatemala City Mission.

"The government and other agencies made promises of aid, but it seemed like those who needed it most got it last. After we had taken care of the members' immediate needs, such as temporary shelter and food, we had to look ahead.

"We decided if we were going to fulfill the needs of these people, we were going to need the help of the Church. It didn't make sense to throw up just anything in the way of shelter, but it must be something that would be a credit to the community and improve the standard of living of the members," Pres. Arnold continued.

With the counsel of Dave Judd of the Church

Building Committee in Central America, a home — built of cinder blocks, concrete floor and preformed concrete roofs, with a door and two windows — was designed.

The one-room house measures 12 by 16 feet with concrete columns and reinforcing bars throughout to protect against future earthquakes. It will be the first time many members have had anything but an earthen floor in their homes.

Pres. Arnold and Brother Judd took the model home around to wards and branches of the area that were hit hardest and needed help the most.

The priesthood in the wards and branches supported the program and it was decided to construct 381 of the homes in Guatemala. Love of the gospel and

10 Y. Students Help Guatemalans Rebuild Homes

PROVO, UTAH

Ten volunteers from Brigham Young University, recently returned from a reconstruction project in Guatemala, testify that their experience there revitalized their own faith and spirits as well as those of the natives.

The nine students from the BYU College of Engineering Science Technology and their adviser Lon J. Wallace, spent two months in the earthquake-torn country helping Church members there to rebuild their homes.

Aided by the skills and knowledge of the 10 young Americans and cheered by their youth and enthusiasm, Guatemalan Mormons

have rallied and are well under way to restoring their crippled cities into better places than they were before.

Brother Wallace, BYU instructor of building construction technology, was program supervisor over the nine students: Robert Nielson, Springville, Utah; Kim Carlston, Midvale, Utah; Scott N. Michael, Fairbanks, Alaska; Lee S. Peterson, Running Springs, Calif.; Lee Fugal, Pleasant Grove, Utah; Ivan C. Brown, Fredonia, Ariz.; Mark Packer, Billings, Mont.; Gary Carlson and Jim Arbuckle, both Bountiful, Utah.

The BYU group left April 26 for Guatemala and most of them returned home June 14. Kim Carlston

and Mark Packer stayed to continue the reconstruction effort in Patzicia, Guatemala. They will return home at the end of the summer.

All the volunteers took time off from work and school to travel to Guatemala and work without pay with the Guatemalans to build new, earthquake-resistant homes.

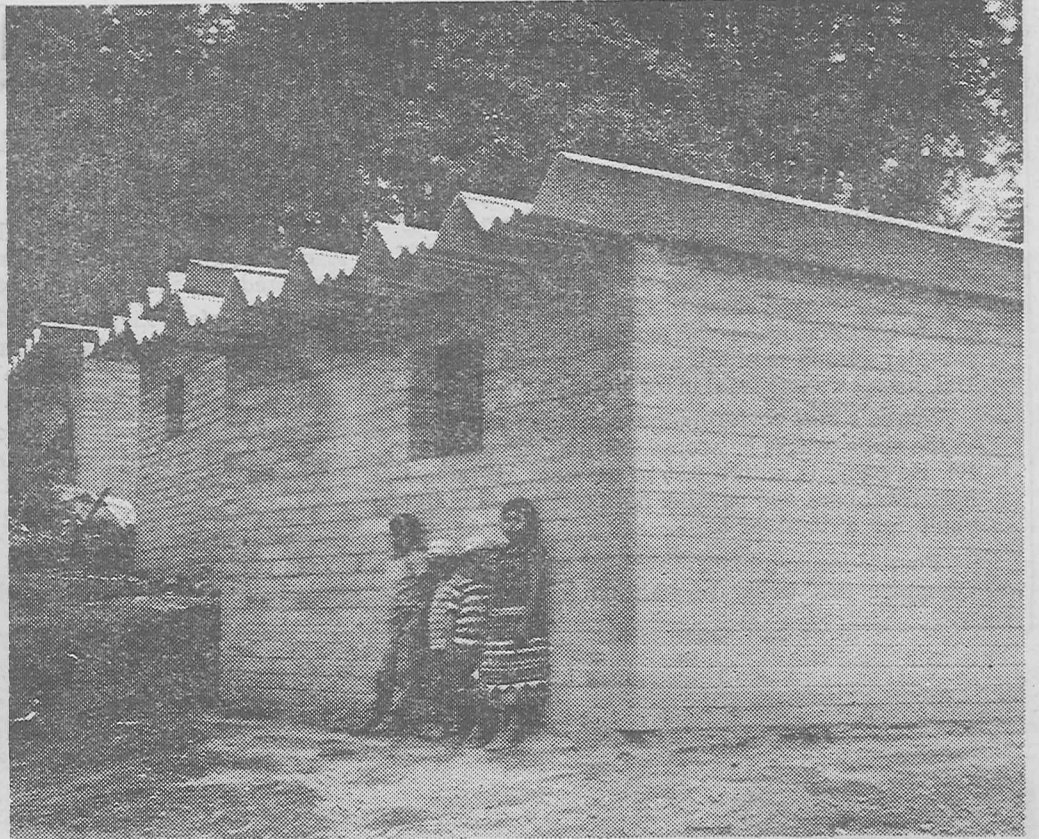
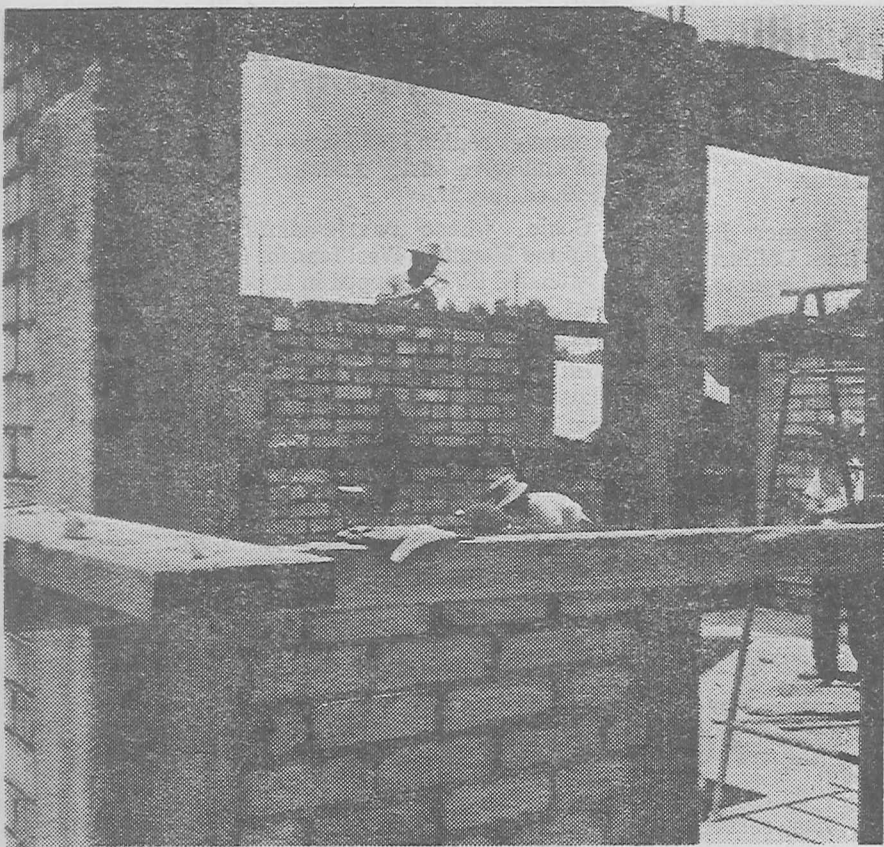
"It wasn't so much a sacrifice for us as a pleasure," said Jim Arbuckle. A former missionary in Bolivia, he said he loved the Latin American people. "We gathered a group of BYU students in the departments (some of us were returned missionaries from Latin America) and got several speakers to orient us on what the project was about.

Within two weeks, we were ready to go."

Arriving in Guatemala, the group was divided in two. Half stayed in Guatemala City, and half went to help the Church members in Patzicia. About 70 young men ages 15-19 from Guatemala and El Salvador were called on work missions.

David Judd, building construction supervisor for the Church in Guatemala, was contacted by the Church officials after the Feb. 3 earthquake and asked if he would like to have the BYU group come down. He said he would welcome the crew.

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Workman with hammer builds frame for house, above left, and shy children lean against finished home.

Guatemala Quake

the principle of service radiated through the program.

Thirty-four young, strong labor missionaries were called to assist in the rebuilding program in Patzicia. Most of the young men were from El Salvador, with the others from Guatemala, but outside the quake zone.

All of the young men have a desire to be future full-time missionaries and all had searching interviews by their branch and district presidents and Pres. Arnold.

The labor missionaries are up at 5:30 a.m. and participate in calisthenics with the full-time missionaries. They have breakfast by 6 a.m. and are on the job shortly thereafter.

Some of the work crews spend the day making concrete blocks, which in actuality are more of a pumice block; others are pouring foundations; some are laying the block for walls.

Following a full day at work, the labor missionaries spend their evenings studying the missionary discussions and other gospel principles. "There is no doubt that these young men will be fully prepared to start full-time missionary work when the building program is completed in August," added Pres. Arnold.

"The Lord has truly blessed the rebuilding program," the mission president continued. "The members here contribute every little bit they can. One bishop just recently brought in a check for \$130, and that is a lot of money for these people.

"We found a pumice pit several miles from Patzicia, which saved us several hundred dollars. We needed a special type of river sand, and we went to a farmer and he agreed to let us have it for \$1 a load.

"The government has allowed us to bring our trucks and heavy equipment into the country to work on the project tax free for one year. Everything has gone right to make it possible," said Pres. Arnold.

Under the stress of this type of emergency and rebuilding situation, one could understand a sudden clamoring by victims of the earthquake for baptism and membership in the Church so they also would have a new home built for them.

But according to the former mission president and other local Church officials, there has not been any peer pressure among the townspeople toward the members and their receiving new homes. "Some

people inquired just after the quake," explained Pres. Arnold, "and we told them we would possibly give them some help later if they needed it, but our immediate program was for the families who were members prior to the damage."

On the local level, many villagers who have watched the homes go up around them have inquired about the Church and been favorably impressed that fellow members of the Church would give of their time, money and talents to help others.

One full-time missionary described the Cakchiquel Indians of the area as not being a jealous-type people, so the home construction did not seem to bother them.

"But there have been more inquiries since the quake and there is at least one baptism each Saturday night in this area. A lot of the success since the quake to bring members into the Church is the work by the local members in spreading the gospel," the missionary said.



Indian woman weaves as building activities occur around her.

Y. Students Help After Earthquake

Continued from page 4

"It has been a great joy to have them here working with us and helping us," Brother Judd reported. "They fit right into the program and with their knowledge of modern construction, we reoriented a lot of people in better methods of rebuilding."

He said the modern methods of building, block laying, floor finishing, cement and concrete work taught to the natives "will help them a great deal in the future." He added, "The testimony and example that they (the Guatemalans) have seen in this group from BYU is really going to be a help in their lives."

Brother Wallace explained that in the Guatemala City Guatemala Stake area there were 142 Mormon families without homes, among which about 60 were home owners. The BYU program was mainly to help owners rebuild their homes.

The BYU crew also taught the members who were renting to locate land for a new home and how to lay out a building on the square.

They laid out several of these the first week, and local members dug footings for them. Then, with the work missionaries, the students made blocks with hand block molds and poured foundations for the houses, laid blocks and put up walls.

The BYU group and the work missionaries kept a rigid work schedule that began at

5:30 a.m. with prayer, a song and a spiritual talk, then breakfast and a morning of hard work. After a lunch break, construction work continued into the evening.

After returning to their sleeping quarters at night, the BYU students sometimes taught English to native boys, and often both Americans and Guatemalans went out tracting with full-time missionaries.

The reconstruction effort, though smooth-running and effective, was not without challenges and difficulties for the young Americans.

Three of the BYU volunteers didn't speak any Spanish when they went down. "It was difficult at first to get ideas across," said Brother Peterson. "But there seemed to be a relationship between the local Guatemalans and myself. We were able to communicate and get the job done. We overcame many problems and developed a respect for one another."

The workers also faced shortages of building materials and water, and often had to travel many miles from their construction sites to a river or a well to get water to make concrete.

Another difficulty was helping the natives of a more casual culture adjust to the rigorous work schedule. "It got to be quite tiresome for those kids," said Brother Arbuckle. "To take a bucket full of gravel, pour it into a cement mixer about the height of their shoulders was quite a job."



Local Church leaders, missionaries and members, happy to receive the BYU crew, all praised their efforts, high spirits and progress made with their hard work.

Pres. Robert B. Arnold of the Guatemala Guatemala City Mission said he was grateful for the students' work for two reasons. "One of them is the fact that it is proof to the local people of the real interest members of the Church have in their wellbeing. The other reason is the technical skills they provided.

"Such contributions will long outlive the actual period of construction."

Hyrum Fromm of Billings, Mont., who is serving a full-time mission in Guatemala with his wife, noted that the BYU crew showed the Guatemalans a lot of new, modern ways of great help in the country.

"The natives are used to building out of adobe and laying blocks up in a crude fashion," he said. "This method lasted for centuries. But now they've changed their ways."