

Steve Irwin, “The Crocodile Hunter”, has been posthumously baptized by Mormons

Mormons continue to baptize non-relatives, despite claims of a secure system

By Helen Radkey

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Stephen Robert Irwin (1962-2006), usually known as **Steve Irwin**, and nicknamed “**The Crocodile Hunter**”, was posthumously baptized and confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) by proxy in the Mesa Arizona (LDS) Temple, on September 1, 2010, four years after his death.

Steve Irwin was a hugely popular Australian television personality and wildlife expert. He achieved worldwide fame from the television program, *The Crocodile Hunter*, an internationally broadcast wildlife documentary series. A passionate conservationist, Irwin was widely recognized for his enthusiasm for wildlife and his Aussie slang, expression of astonishment, catchword “Crikey!” in *The Crocodile Hunter* television series.

Irwin, who made a trademark of hovering close to untethered crocodiles and leaping on their backs, spoke in rapid-fire bursts with a thick Australian accent, and was almost never seen without his signature uniform of khaki shorts and shirt and heavy boots.

On September 4, 2006, Irwin was fatally pierced in the chest by a stingray spine while filming at Batt Reef in the Great Barrier Reef, off the coast of northern Queensland. He left behind a grieving widow, Terri, and their two young children, Bindi and “Bob”.

As news of Steve Irwin’s sudden and freakish death began to send immediate shock waves around Australia, I was vacationing with members of my Australian family in the Hunter Valley wine region, north of Sydney, New South Wales.

“Steve Irwin is dead. He was killed by a stingray in Queensland,” declared the bungalow proprietor, as she gave my brother, Danny, the keys to two rental North Lodge Cottages at Pokolbin, near mountain ranges and vineyards, in the heart of Hunter wine country.

News of Steve Irwin’s death prompted widespread worldwide shock. Australia mourned the loss of one of its most colorful sons. It is estimated that over 300 million viewers watched the public memorial service for Irwin, broadcast live around the world on September 20, 2006, from Irwin’s wildlife park, Australia Zoo, in Beerwah, Queensland.

It is likely that Steve Irwin was baptized by Mormons without the permission of his next of kin. Not only would that action have occurred behind the backs of Irwin’s living family, details of ongoing LDS temple rituals are concealed from public viewing in the New FamilySearch database of the LDS Church that contains updated details of proxy rites for dead people—online at: <https://new.familysearch.org/en/action/unsec/welcome> . Only an accredited Mormon with a special user log-in can currently access this website.

LDS officials have publicly and repeatedly stated that the New FamilySearch is a technological deterrent to improper temple submissions. This relatively new computer program is supposed to reduce the submission of incorrect, inappropriate or dubious information that is being fed into the LDS temple system by “overzealous” Mormons. LDS Church members are asked to certify that their submissions meet church policy, and church staff are supposed to search records on a regular basis to identify wrongful entries.

Locating inappropriate submissions would be like looking for proverbial needles in an ever-increasing haystack because “overzealous” Mormons continue to inundate their temple system with names of non-relatives—including celebrities. All too often, church “file ferrets” find improper submissions after proxy baptisms have already occurred.

In addition to the New FamilySearch listing that describes the baptism and confirmation for Steve Irwin on September 1, 2010, there is a combined record for him in the same database. The combined record consists of numerous submissions for Irwin that are now merged—and lists the names of multiple Mormons who submitted his name for proxy rites. LDS ordinance details attached to the merged record are tagged as “*Not available.*” Since his death, Irwin has probably been baptized by proxy more than once by Mormons.

Examples of other deceased celebrities—with no known family ties to living Mormons—who were posthumously baptized in LDS temples during 2010, and whose entries are still visible in New FamilySearch, as of September 25, 2010, are the famous French names:

Claude Berri (1934-2009), born **Claude Berel Langmann**, great Jewish all-rounder of French cinema: an actor turned director, producer, and screenwriter.

Guillaume Depardieu (1971-2008), film actor and son of one of France’s most brilliant actors, Gérard Depardieu, and actress Élisabeth Depardieu.

Thierry Gilardi (1958-2008), popular soccer and rugby commentator who presented, edited, and led many sports programs on French television.

Yves Saint Laurent (1936-2008), Algerian-born French fashion designer who was considered one of the greatest names in French fashion in the 20th century.

Because of the peculiar LDS notion that all non-Mormons need post-mortem assimilation into Mormonism—some Mormons submit the names of any dead person for LDS rites.

With the details of his September 1, 2010 posthumous baptism still online in New FamilySearch, nearly a month later, Australian wildlife icon, Steve “Crikey” Irwin, is one of the many names that have slipped through the safeguards of a new submissions system that doesn’t seem to be anywhere near as secure as LDS officials claim.

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