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   Wendell Lyle Wilcox, age 84, formerly of Wellington Place of Greeneville, TN passed away early Saturday morning, March 31, 2012, at Durham-Hensley Health and Rehabilitation, Chuckey, TN.

   He was born in Hong Kong, China, the youngest of three children born to Lyle and Hazel Wilcox who were serving as missionaries. As a teenager he spent three years under Japanese house arrest and prison camp. Wendell was a retired Seventh-day Adventist minister.

   He had served as president of the Indonesia Union, Korean Union, Southeast Asia Union, Sabah Mission, and Thailand Mission. As a missionary himself, he traveled extensively throughout different countries.

   He was a member of the Greeneville Seventh-day Adventist Church, and his life was invested in the Lord's work. Wendell also loved nature.

   Survivors include his wife, Audrey Fuller Wilcox; and children Wendy Barlow of Greeneville, Paul Wilcox of Los Angeles, CA, Daniel Wilcox of Ithaca, NY and Debbie Urquhart of Idaho, and also five grandchildren and 2 great-granddaughters, plus several nieces and nephews.

   In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two sisters: Lois Weir and Bonny Neufeld.

   Memorial services will be held at 3 pm Saturday, April 7, at the Greeneville Seventh-day Adventist Church. Chaplain Greg Barlow will officiate. -- Obituary from the local Tennessee newspaper.

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II. Remembering Dr. Galen Coffin

   1. Arlind Hackett <arlind.hackett@yahoo.com> March 26:

      I really enjoyed reading the three-part life sketch of Dr. Galen Coffin.

      When I was a boy living in Singapore, Dr. Coffin removed my dad's gall bladder at Youngberg Hospital. One time when our families were at the Singapore Swimming Club, my dad playfully picked up little Kathy Coffin (who was only four or five years old at the time) and dunked her in the pool.

      Unfortunately, she was wearing her sun-suit, not her swimming suit, and was pretty upset. My dad was very embarrassed, and apologized profusely! My brother Willard and I had the privilege of skiing behind the little ski boat that was mentioned in the last newsletter. Also, my wife and I occasionally visited the Coffins in their home in Clackamas when we were living nearby in Boring, Oregon. My brother and I visited Galen last summer when Willard was in Oregon for our 50th wedding anniversary celebration. When we heard of Galen's death we were so glad we had gone to see him last summer. He was truly a "Prince in Israel."

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   2. Philip Goh <gohphilip@yahoo.com> April 4:

      I have known Dr. Coffin since my high school days at our SDA School in Singapore. In August, 1965 I was working at the Ministry of Finance. One day I fell off my Honda 50 motorcycle after scraping the hand of a boy who ran across my path all of a sudden. The ambulance took me to the Government General Hospital. I was checked and released the same day. When I arrived home I still felt some pain on my left arm. I decided to go to Youngberg Hospital to see Dr. Coffin. He examined me and sent me to Abbey Lucas at the X-Ray Dept. After looking at the X-ray of my arm, he immobilized it on a sling and wrote a letter of reprimand to the doctor at the General Hospital.
A good friend of mine, Mary, who worked for the Coffins and whose mother was admitted to Youngberg Hospital at the brink of death. Dr. Coffin gave her some injection that prolong her life for many more months. A week or two before he went to sleep I went to see him about a growth at the back of my head that was bothering me. He took a look and said that it was just a mole and that if this has been in Singapore he would have just snipped it off.

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III. George Babcock Revisits Mission Field

George Babcock <gpbabcock@gmail.com> March 29:
I just returned from the Philippines last night (March 28). I gave both the Baccalaureate sermon and the Commencement address at Naga View Adventist College last weekend. I also had meetings with the administrators of the North Philippine Union Conference, the Adventist University of the Philippines, and AIIAS. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to visit with students at AIIAS from Pakistan and Bangladesh and I had lunch with the son of our president of Spicer. Sure sorry that I missed seeing Don Bankhead. I was truly impressed with the advancement of our educational work! God is, indeed, blessing.

George P. Babcock
Retired but still working

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IV. Al Deininger Retires from White Memorial Medical Center

WMMC STAT, March, 2012
"Al Deininger, vice president of Construction and Facilities, likes to paraphrase a quote from Theodore Roosevelt: 'I don't care too much about what others think of what I do, but I care very much about what I think of what I do. And more importantly, what God thinks. That's character.'

"After 25 years of 'doing' at WMMC, and a nearly 43-year career working with Adventist hospitals, Al is retiring effective September 1, 2012. But we won't be saying goodbye completely; Al will continue as a consultant with WMMC through December 2013, overseeing the hospital's Centennial celebration and the construction of the new Medical Office Building, Plaza III.

"Al compares his retirement to a rocket in which various fuel stages fall off but the rocket keeps going. 'The hospital might miss me as a person but there are other very talented people who will pick up where I leave off and do great things,' he said.

"It's the people of WMMC that Al will miss most - and remember best.

'It's a family,' he said simply. 'We go through happy times together, we go through sad times together, we celebrate. And through it all, we all make it. I don't worry about health care reform. We're going to be okay. It goes back to the Ellen White quote: "We have thing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us in the past.'"

"Al knows because he's lived it. He arrived at WMMC in 1987, just as the hospital was experiencing a financial crisis so severe there was talk of closing or selling the hospital. He was part of the team, which also included President and CEO Beth Zachary, that helped pull WMMC through the several tough years that followed. Today he looks at the hospital's stellar physicians, employees and building facilities and smiles. 'We did our best, and God did the rest.'

"And he did it more than once. Al remembers when he worried and prayed all through a day and a night because WMMC did not have the approved plans from OSHPD (the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development) needed to continue building the Specialty Care Tower. 'When I got on the Metrolink train to come to work I sat down and prayed some more,' Al said. 'When I opened my eyes, down the aisle and across from me was one of the officers from OSHPD, sleeping. I said a prayer of thanks to God. When the train arrived at Union Station the OSHPD officer woke up and I walked with him. He agreed to meet later that day and when we did he approved enough plans to keep our project going.'

"In addition to overseeing our hospital's massive 10-year campus rebuilding project, Al has achieved many notable accomplishments while at WMMC. Through the years he re-established the cancer center, setting the stage for its success today; established the Cleft Palate Program; consolidated laboratory services among WMMC, Glendale Adventist and Simi Valley Hospital, saving millions; and directed construction of the Medical Plaza I and II medical office buildings and our state-of-the-art imaging center, ambulatory surgery center and arrhythmia center, among many other accomplishments.

"I have told Al many times that God brought him to White Memorial,'
said Beth Zachary, president & CEO. 'His dedication, his expertise and his attention to detail have helped make our hospital what it is today. We will miss him!'  
"Al doesn't have any concrete plans for his retirement other than spending more time with his family, which includes three grandchildren.  
'I'll think and pray about what I can contribute,' he said. 'I love working with groups of people. I love to mentor, coach and cheerlead. So I wouldn't be surprised if I end up working with teams on projects of some sort.'"

V. "Steps to Christ" for Chuuk  
Amy & Roger <randakrum@yahoo.com> April 10:  
Praise the Lord for His goodness in providing $6,050.00 so far, for the publication of "Steps to Christ" in the Chuukese language. That leaves only $16,950 yet to raise to publish! If you would like to support this project, please send your donations directly to Guam Micronesia Mission, 290 Chalan Palasyo Agana Heights, Guam 96910, USA.  
IN THE MEMO AREA PLEASE WRITE: Paata SDA Mission-publication. Thank you so much. God bless you each.

VI. SULADS' Fred Webb Visits Southern Mindanao Mission  
I arrived at the airport in General Santos in Southern Mindanao two hours late due to heavy air traffic in Manila. I was warmly welcomed by all seven of the Gospel Outreach workers as well as Pastor Sagabay who is their immediate supervisor in the mission. They escorted me to the mission office. I was given a little time to arrange my things and get a little rest before we had our evening meal. After the meal, I had a little more time to rest and about 7 pm we left for the port.  
The seven GO workers and I boarded a ferry boat, perhaps 100 ft long where there were bunks for us to sleep on. These bunks had a plywood bottom on which we were to lie and hopefully sleep. When it was time to leave the port, the tide had gone out and the prow of the boat had settled into the mud in the bottom of the port. The operators tried for some time to free the boat from the mud. It took perhaps an hour to accomplish that purpose. We finally put out to sea about 11 pm headed for Balut Island.  
Balut Island is the southernmost point of land that belongs to the Philippines. Another 60 miles south from there is the first island of Indonesia. The trip from General Santos to Balut Island takes about 7.5 hours. The water became quite rough about half way there. I lay on my bunk holding on to keep from sliding around with my eyes closed and praying that I would not become sea sick as I am prone to do. God answered my prayer. I did not sleep much and had several quite sore spots from the hard "bed".

We arrived on Balut Island about 7 am March 9-my 71st birthday. Just a very short walk up from the dock is the Seventh-day Adventist church in Mavias on Balut Island. This is the assigned area for Brother Edgar Itable, our GO worker there. He lives in a very humble home near the church with his wife and three children. After a very delicious breakfast, I was escorted to the police station to register my presence as a foreigner on the island.  
We then met with some of the 100 members of the church for a worship service. Most of the audience were children so GO workers Elias Bitoon and Terry Dolotalles led out in many children's songs. Prayer was offered and several short devotional talks were given. The program ended with a cultural dance of the B'laan tribe that are the main ethnic group on the island. We had plans to visit the other GO site where Brother Edgar also works but due to the rough water in the morning, the trip was postponed to the afternoon.  
After an early lunch, we set out to the waster's edge where Brother Edgar had arranged for 3 small "Bangka" boats were waiting. A Bangka is a canoe with outriggers and an engine. It is sometimes called a pump boat.  
Brother Rey Dolotalles and I were assigned to the smallest of the three boats. By maneuvering it close to shore we were able to step from rocks directly into the boat without getting our feet wet. We pushed off using a paddle to get out into deeper water where the seaweed would not wrap around the propeller.  
Starting out across the water to the destination of Patilwaso, it was discovered that we had too much weight on the front of the boat. I am bigger than most Filipinos and that was causing an imbalance in the boat. We kept nosing into the waves causing the water to splash over us. I had a water resistant cloth over the front of my body to protect me, my cell phone, and camera from the water. Because of the imbalance, the driver stopped the boat and tried to shift some of the
weight. We went on but it was no better. He stopped again and waved the other boats to come as he wanted to transfer one passenger to another boat.

As we were sitting dead in the water, a wave came along that set the Bangka on edge and Brother Dolotalles and I were pitched into the water. Rey was able to grab a small rope attached to the boat and I caught hold of the outrigger. That water resistant cloth had somehow gotten wound around my right hand as I plunged into the water and made it difficult to try to swim. Rey had been sitting on the paddle for the boat and it was floating in the water. I felt that I must retrieve that paddle as it might become a very important item in the future if we were not quickly rescued. I finally was able to reach it and toss it back into the boat.

By that time, the other boats had reached us and I was told to transfer to the other boat. Being waterlogged with all my clothes including shoes, I could not pull myself up on the boat. Brother Manny, a former auditor, tried to pull me in but still, my legs could not get up on the deck. Someone, and I do not know who, jumped in and pushed my leg up and finally I was able to drag my sodden body up onto the deck of the large Bangka. I drug myself into the bottom of the canoe and sat down as low as possible. We then headed back to Mavias. Again, this boat was now unbalanced and waves were regularly splashing over the sides of the boat keeping me soaked.

Upon arrival back at Mavias, I was able to scramble out of the boat and begin to assess the damage. My cell phone and camera appeared to be severely damaged. I had placed my eye glasses in my shirt pocket upon setting out to prevent them from getting wet from the spray. Fortunately, they were still in my pocket. Unfortunately, when I dragged up on to the rescue boat, I had badly bent the frames. I was able to straighten them enough to wear but no perfectly fitting. I will leave them that way until I am back home. My wallet was still in my pocket but of all the papers and money was soaked.

I had brought with me only a change of shirt as we intended to return to General Santos that same night. My clothes were obviously all soaking wet.

Brother Sammy Tambunan, one of our GO workers had trousers that were large enough in the waste for me. The legs were a bit short but that was OK. Someone was dispatched to the local store where they purchased the largest briefs, tee shirt, and socks they could find. They were all too small for my large frame but were better than nothing. Sammy also loaned me some sandals to wear. I took a dipper bath and dried off. It felt good to be clean and dry. In fact it felt good to be alive! I praise the Lord for protecting us from tragedy in the sea.

We rested a while and I asked questions about Patilwaso where we were unable to visit. That is another church with about 100 members. Both of these had been churches at an earlier time but both had basically died when they were abandoned by church workers. Brother Itable had been able to recover many of the former members. Our rescue at sea was a symbol of the rescue of the souls in these areas who were adrift in their spiritual experience.

Brother Itable has been on the island for seven years as a Gospel Outreach worker first in Patilwaso for 3.5 years and later in Mavias for another 3.5 years. Now that these churches are revived, Brother Itable intends to reach out to another area of the island to establish another church. It is the long range plan to develop at least 8 churches on the island and the neighboring island of Saragani so that the mission can station a district pastor there to supervise the churches.

I find the work in Southern Mindanao Mission to be going very well. According to the reports of the GO workers and substantiated by the Mission officers, our seven GO workers here have been responsible for about 1,000 baptism in the past 12 months. I praise the Lord for their endeavor. One worker, Brother Berting Ulaw, holds the record of 323 baptisms as a result of his work in the past 12 months. God is surely blessing the work of these dedicated GO workers.

The mission supports the workers through training, fellowship, guidance, and direction. There is a good relationship between the workers and the mission. Brother Virgilio Sagabay, the mission evangelist, is assigned to be their direct overseer and does a very good job. The workers say that they receive their full stipend regularly and are never shorted in any way.

I praise the Lord for the progress of the work here in Southern Mindanao Mission. There is still much to do but it is moving quickly. Jesus said that when the gospel goes to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, He will come to claim His own. The work is being done here in SMM. GO workers in SMM won 1,000 souls in 2011!

The experience here in SMM will stand out in my thoughts as a birthday to remember!

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