I. Adventist Mission Pilot Bob Roberts Dies in Plane Accident in Indonesia

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Long time Missionary to Africa and Southeast Asia flew thousands of relief flights. An Adventist Aviation-Indonesia (AAI) mission plane piloted by veteran pilot Bob Roberts crashed upon take off at the AAI headquarters in Papua, claiming his life as well as those of several passengers on board.

Witnesses said that the plane, a Quest Kodiak, appeared to have trouble lifting off just before it slammed into a bridge at the end of the runway.

An official cause has yet to be determined by crash site investigators.

Robert's work included delivering food, medicine and urgently needed supplies as well as transporting sick and needy passengers to and from the many isolated mountain villages of Papua. He was well known throughout the islands and has flown more than a thousand relief flights.

Roberts and his wife Jan, originally from the United States, have served AAI for more than 20 years in Papua. The couple previously served as missionaries in the African countries of Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zaire (now Congo) from 1976 to 1992. They have three grown children.

"He died doing what he loved best," Jan said.

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Jonathan Kuntaraf, director of the Adventist world church's Sabbath School and Personal Ministries department, said he was saddened by the death of Roberts, who was serving in his home country. "He and his wife are very dedicated people. Together we worked to raise money for the education of underprivileged children in Papua. Please pray for the family during this challenging and difficult time." -- ANN

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The Indonesian state of Papua is home to 2 million people and 20 language groups. It is also home to the East Indonesia Union Conference, which has 763 churches and more than 101,000 church members. -- ANN ~~~~~~~~~~ II. SSD President, Pastor Albert Gulfan, in Washington Hospital

Jack Perera <mahatmayaa@gmail.com> April 19:

The President of the Southern Asia Pacific Division, Elder Albert Gulfan was admitted to the Washington Adventist Hospital on Wednesday last, with a very serious medical condition. He was enroute to the GC Spring Council from the Philippines, when the symptoms began to appear. He attended the council, but was rushed to the hospital when he began to show signs of illness while in the session. my wife, his cousin, informs me that they suspect cancer as the
cause, based on early medical test results. Please keep him in your prayers and conduct seasons of prayer in his behalf where possible. It will be much appreciated.

Thank you and God bless you all.

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III. Tim Standish Teaching in the Philippines

GRI Newsletter

In March, GRI's Tim Standish taught a course in science and faith, offered every second year, at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in the Philippines (AIIAS). Dr. Standish has also spoken at the Adventist University of the Philippines graduation exercises, guest lectured in the School of Education and led out in multiple church programs ~~~~~~~~~ IV. Center for Chinese Adventist Heritage Opening in Hong Kong

Edward Allen <sprallen@aol.com> April 21:

The Association of Seventh-day Adventist Historians and Adventism in China (AIC), www.adventisminchina.org, are sponsoring a conference at Hong Kong Adventist College, Hong Kong, China, October 30-31, 2014. You are cordially invited to submit papers for presentation at the conference. Click here to find out more:


Delegate may also be interested in participating in these two co-events:

1. Official Opening of the Center for Chinese Adventist Heritage (CCAH): CCAH, an open research center that house historical records and heritage artifacts relating to the history of Adventist movement in China will be officially opened on October 31, 2014 at Hong Kong Adventist College.


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V. Death of Dr. Alex Bokovoy

Alex Bokovoy, MD, medical missionary for twenty years, 18 years in Ethiopia and 2 years in Singapore, passed away peacefully March 1 in Kauai, Hawaii. He died two days before his 94th birthday.

--Sandra Bokovoy sbokovoy@aol.com

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VI. Death of Roger T. Nelson, M.D.

Laurel Damsteegt <laurelalatlast@mac.com> May 1:

Dr. Roger T. Nelson of Dunlap, TN, died on April 2, 2014, at the age of 93. On July 7, 2011 Dr. Nelson was to see patients and had a surgery scheduled to perform, but unfortunately he himself suffered a debilitating stroke. Since then he has been unable to walk or talk but still understood everything and enjoyed seeing friends and loved ones.

Roger Theodore Nelson was born on October 7, 1920 to missionary parents in Lucknow India. He and his five siblings grew up in India.

Roger graduated top of his class from College of Medical Evangelists (Loma Linda University) in 1944. After medical school in his first year of surgical residency Roger met Ethel Read, a third year medical student. They married November 7, 1946 and in turn became physician missionaries to exotic Bangkok Thailand in 1951. There both of these excellent physicians had wide experience. There was no kind of medicine Dr. Roger couldn't handle. Trained as a general and thoracic surgeon he did the first heart surgery in Thailand in the large modern mission hospital. Dr. Ethel was a pathologist and opened a Medical Technology School. The Nelsons formed an excellent medical team.

During their first term of mission service the Nelsons had three children, Laurel, Orlyn, and Theodore. Dr. Roger, nature lover that he was, spent many hours with the family hiking and birding, and then doing clinics in remote areas of Thailand.

The Nelsons returned to the United States in 1968 and moved to the Boston area where Drs. Roger and Ethel practiced at New England Memorial Hospital while their children finished college. Then Drs. Roger and Ethel returned to Bangkok in 1978 for another four years further medical service.

When they eventually left Thailand permanently in 1983 they had spent 26 years there all together. Returning to the United States, they chose the sunny South.

Dr. Roger practiced general surgery and family practice in Chattanooga, Wildwood, GA and Dunlap. Loved by all, he was known as the praying doctor because he always offered to pray with his patients before doing surgery.
Neighbors and friends all knew him as fully accessible, perpetually cheerful, and always helpful. At any time of day or night he would rush to help in an emergency and because of his wide experience, he could always offer excellent medical advice.

Dr. Nelson was an avid birder. He always enjoyed the challenge of seeing and identifying new birds, but loved the common drab birds as well. He loved shooting pictures and making PowerPoint presentations for the local bird club in Chattanooga. He could always find something fascinating to share about even the most common birds.

He enjoyed helping people stop smoking. Because he saw firsthand the affects of smoking doing lung cancer surgery or dealing with patients' emphysema, he loved to encourage his patients to quit and often teamed with other health professionals to offer smoking cessation clinics and seminars.

A member of the Dunlap Seventh-day Adventist Church, he faithfully enjoyed each Sabbath service and was rarely too busy to enjoy Wednesday night prayer meeting as well. He loved to preach from time to time, teach Sabbath Schools, and even tell children’s stories, often showing some special nature object that even small children enjoyed.

His garden and orchard produced profusely. Often Dr. Nelson would take a trunk full of apples or vegetables to share with whomever could use some of his produce. He loved being outside working hard in his huge gardens, hearing the birds, and playing classical music loudly from his old red pickup, with the dogs lying nearby in the shade.

After Dr. Nelson's death his family conducted a private burial but will have a public memorial service for their precious husband and father on June 7 at 4 p.m. (Central Time) at the Dunlap Seventh-day Adventist Church. All are welcome to attend.

Survivors include wife, Dr. Ethel Nelson of Dunlap, TN; children, Laurel Damsteegt, Orlyn Nelson and Dr. Theodore Nelson; and six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Dr. Nelson sleeps awaiting the call of the Great Life Giver.

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VII. SULADS Story--Gaining in Loosing

By Seth Gaskin

Esperanza SULADS Academy for the Lumad Tribes

As a SULADS volunteer, I was assigned to one of the SULADS academies here in Mindanao. I was assigned to Esperanza SULADS Academy for the Lumads Tribe. This academy is located at Salug, Esperanza, Agusan del Sur.

I have many experiences during my stay here. Some were funny, some were sad but I think the story I can tell best is of me. As an American, I had to adjust to a different environment; an environment opposite to what I was used to when I was in Nebraska.

I am an American who grew up in Nebraska. As an American, by worldly standards, you could say I lived a pretty, easy going life. By American standards, I was by no means wealthy, but we were doing fine. I grew up in an Adventist home and starting in the sixth grade all the way to my third year in college, where I am now, I have been getting a Seventh-day Adventist education. I went to church every week and generally respected my parents and other people.

I have been involved in some outreach and mission work along the way. Judging from my outer personality, people could see and know me as a good person and a good Christian as well. Unfortunately, things were not always, as they seemed to be. God could see what is inside of me; who and what kind of person I am.

In the Bible, when it talks about the Laodicean church, being neither hot nor cold, that was me. It was not that I did not have a love for God or a want to serve Him I was just too controlled by my own selfish desires and most of the time, I did not have the urge to get up and work for God.

Thankfully, God never gave up on me. He has deemed me worthy to work for Him. Through Divine guidance, I was led to the mission field to give one year for God. I know without a doubt, God specially picked the SULADS program for me not only because I know He led me here but I can also see this place working to help change me in areas I needed the most. I feel almost as if this place here has been tailor-made for me; all the way from the students, to the faculty, to the geographical area, everything was there to mold me.

I wished I could say that even though I came here, things were still going to be the same as it was, that things are going to be perfect and I could see God's plan for me and for this campus so clearly, but that's not quite how things worked so far.

Since I am an American and I have never been here before nor do I know their language yet, things have been difficult to get used to. When I was dropped off at the school, I had to adjust to my new life. Foods were different from our house. I could only eat rice and vegetables everyday.
Different language were being spoken, no electricity, no cell phone signal, no latest technologies available, my mind and body took some time to get used to everything. Luckily, the Lord promised not to give anything more than we can handle. This made me feel better and eased. I could tell within just a few weeks that I was beginning to change though. I felt God working with me in this place and I was confident of it. Although it would be nice and extremely useful to have electricity, the isolation from the distractions of this world was such a blessing. I came here hoping to teach what I knew but it seemed that I was the one being taught. From the time I was able to spend with Him in meditation and personal devotion, God was bringing me closer to Him. My love for God and the desire to speak for Him grew exponentially because of this place. If I chose to stay home, nothing like this would happen to me, not even in my dreams. Getting used to this new environment was not easy and this made me trust Him more.

One time, the school faculty and the students agreed to have a survival camping for the Pathfinders for one night. I really did not want to go because for me, living this kind of life was survival enough already. All the other teachers were going however and I had to go. Up until this point, I had a feeling that everything was just going wrong. My phone broke, my food was eaten by ants, schedules had changed and on and on. I had felt His presence so strong before and now all I was feeling was loneliness and worry. Then the camping came and that one night in the elements was torture. Apart from being hungry and dirty, the bugs were just having a feast on me.

Although exhausted and desiring to sleep so badly, I could not get one wink because of the insects biting me. About three in the morning, I got up, frustrated at the situation and God. I pleaded with Him to show me why I had to be here and part of me wanted to just throw in the towel and go home.

Right that moment, a song spoke to me reminding me of the suffering that Jesus went through for me. If He could go through all that for me, surely I could last this one-year term. It did not change any of the circumstances, but my attitude and heart was changed. I came from that camping, a worker for God, wanting to serve.

We still go through difficult times here. New obstacles are always ready to get in our way and Satan never gives up an opportunity to discourage us. That only tells me that the devil really does not want this place to remain because he knows that the power of God is in this place. I could not speak for others but for myself, God is using the SULADS program to bring me closer to His mighty plan. Without this program, I do not know where I would be spiritually. I will be forever grateful to this place for how it has changed my life so far. It is touching and reaching more people than I think any of us will realize here on Earth.

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