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Adventist Heritage Center

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I. Ralph Watts & Arlind Hackett Visit Vietnam

(6th of several installments!)

Arlind Hackett <arlind.hackett@yahoo.com> June 27:

Travel Report No. 6 (in 3 parts)

Dear All:

Well, here I am at the Hanoi Hilton! I don’t know what John McCain was complaining about. Next to the Caravelle Hotel this is the nicest hotel I’ve ever stayed in!..Just kidding, John. I was quite pleased with myself. I went to bed just after 10 PM and slept straight through until 5:30 this morning.

That was over seven hours of uninterrupted sleep. I feel pretty good, and my brain is working better, too. It is now a little after 6 AM, and since we aren’t getting together until 9:00 I have time to fill you in on what has happened since I last wrote.

On Sabbath afternoon, after completing report no. 5, I went for a walk.

Out of my hotel window I could see that the Saigon River was only a few blocks away. It was nicer walking in the day time, as I didn’t get accosted at every street corner. The street running along the river was six lanes wide, and lots of traffic. I didn’t see any traffic signals close by, so decided to take my life in my hands and cross at the nearest crosswalk. Unfortunately, in Vietnam vehicles don’t stop for pedestrians. I waited for a slight break in the traffic and sprinted to the middle of the road. After a short wait I was able to complete the crossing. Even though they don’t stop for pedestrians they are used to people in the road, so are pretty good at dodging. At that point there is a park along the river with paved sidewalks, so I had quite a pleasant stroll. I estimated the river to be at least a mile wide, and it was flowing right along. It was easy to understand why there is a delta here, because the soil of Vietnam is flowing down the river.

Not long after returning to the hotel I received a call from Khoi. It was after six and he had just returned from his Sabbath afternoon jaunt with the media guys. He needed to do some things before our trip to Hanoi, so said he wouldn’t be able to pick me up for badminton. I was a little disappointed, but my calf muscles were still pretty sore from our Friday hikes, and it gave me some more down time to rest and read my book.

I went to bed early, as I had to get up at 5:30 to be ready to go to the Cu Chi Tunnels. For some reason my alarm on my tablet hadn’t gone off for the past two mornings, so I set my watch and the alarm clock in the room.

The clock was a couple of hours fast, so I set it for 7:30. It didn’t seem like I had been asleep long when the thing blasted off. When I finally got it shut off and looked at my watch it was 1:30 AM. I reset it for 5:30 and went back to bed. I woke up again at 3:30 and since I wasn’t sure I could rely on any of my alarms I just got up and prepared for the day. It gave me a chance to pack my suitcase, and try to figure out how to download the pictures on my camera to my laptop. I plugged my cord into my computer, and it showed that I was connected, but needed to download a program to transfer the pictures. I went on line and downloaded the program, but it gave me a message that my computer was not compatible with it. After a half hour or more of experimentation I was about to give up when I got a message that my pictures were downloading. I still don’t know what I did, but to quote Eric B. Hare, "I serve a powerful God, . . . and when I pray to Him He hears me and answers my prayers!" After a few minutes of cranking away it stopped.
downloading. I unplugged and checked my hard drive, and sure enough all my pictures were on my computer. Praise the Lord!

By then it was about 5:45, and since they didn't start serving breakfast until 6 AM I went to the reception desk to ask if they would extend my check-out time until one PM. We didn't expect to get back from the tunnels until around noon, and since check out was at 12:00 I needed time to shower and change before leaving for the airport at 1:30. They graciously extended my checkout time to 2:00 PM.

By then it was 5:55, and they let me go in to breakfast. I was the first one there, so had the buffet tables all to myself. Had a great selection of fruit, they fixed me an omelet, and I had hash browns, French toast, and a couple of Danish. I felt well-fortified for the day.

Khoi at the media guys picked me up in a van, and we headed for Cu Chi Tunnels. We got there a little before 8:00 AM, and we were the only vehicle in the parking lot. Khoi paid the entrance fee (about $2.50 each), and we entered the grounds. The first part of the tour was a scratchy black and white video giving an overview of the fighting in Cu Chi Provence. It showed the bombs falling, the Viet Cong burying ordinance to blow up tanks, and the activities that went on in the tunnels. Then we started walking through the trees to see the various activities. The first stop was at a hole in the ground where a single person could hide when their position was about to be overrun. Gregg, the guy from Quite Hour got down inside, and we covered the lid with leaves. Then Cole began filming, and at the proper time popped out of the hole, and made an introduction to their video on their trip to Vietnam. It took several takes to get it right, and I was wondering what the guide, who was a soldier, was thinking. Next the guide showed us the various booby traps where the enemy would fall through trap doors and be impaled on sharp objects. Then we went to various exhibits partially underground where life was maintained. There was place where they made weapons, a place to sleep, a hospital, a kitchen, a board room where they could plan their strategy, etc. I was happy these exhibits were not in the tunnels, as they were easier to get to. From the exhibits the guide took us to the "tourist trap" and gift shop, where you could buy all kinds of artifacts to take home with you to remember your visit.

(1st of 3 parts of # 6)

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II. Rawlings Family's Leading to the Light

Rawlings <rawlings@leadingtothelight.org> August 18:

We were blessed with a visit from our Thai friend Mim. She had come to Chiang Mai to finish the last form the Thai government would need so I can get a work visa. Mim is part of our medical missionary team working in the villages near our Karen Bible Training Center. She hoped to return to the border with some much needed bandages, gauze, and medical supplies.

This month, because of YOUR prayers and support -- I was able to say yes and took her to the hospital supply store and purchased the things she required. Shortly after Mim left... Moolah's motorcycle broke down. He was returning from his weekend evangelistic assignment in a mountain village two hours from the foundation.

Moolah has been rotating through five different villages every weekend for over a year now. He works with me Monday through Thursday then spends the weekend with the few church members who live in remote mountain villages within a few hours of our mission headquarters. Because of YOUR prayers and support--I was able to pay for the motorcycle repairs. Moolah's Bible work in the villages is vital to the new believers. Because of his commitment and reliability, we would like to find a newer, more reliable motorcycle for him.

There are many missionaries coming and going through Chiang Mai who just need a place to adjust before heading to their projects. We are very blessed and thankful to have vehicles to send and receive those who need help. Because of YOUR prayers and support -- we are able to fill a much needed gap for missionary hospitality and support.

Last week we had the pleasure of having our friends, MC, Abigail and their two adorable sons, stay with us for a few days. MC works as a pastor and Abigail is a music teacher and orchestra conductor at our Adventist University in Seoul, Korea. It was inspiring to listen to her vision.
Abigail is planning to bring a team of twelve to fifteen student musicians to hold a music workshop for around fifty of our Karen academy students. We can't wait to see what God will do.

This is just a short glimpse of everyday life here, and it is all made possible by your contributions to the "Thailand Projects" fund.

Standing on His promises,
The Rawlings Family: Steve, Lynette, Elyssa and Micah ~~~~~~~~~~~ III. Walla Walla University & John Sipkens from WWU's "Westwind" magazine:

"John Sipkens '59 and his wife Ruth live in Yuma, Ariz. They have two sons, John and Gordon [both of whom attended WWU]. John taught 34 years in Adventist education as an elementary school teacher, an academy principal, a professor at Loma Linda University, an academic dean at Hong Kong [Adventist] College, and a country director and division director for ADRA in the Philippines and Far East Division. He also worked as the secretary/treasurer of the Ceylon Union. John's favorite college memories are for working for Stanley Sargent in maintenance and construction, and working for Art Spoo in finance and administration."

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IV. Durian Again!

"The King of All Fruit"

Sally Lam-Phoon's August 23rd morning devotional in "Breathe"

"A family reunion brought brothers and sisters from all over the world back to our home town in Penang, Malaysia. On our way to pick up my sister from the airport, we had stopped at a local haunt for breakfast, and our noses told us that the 'king of all fruit' was around. We could smell the aroma from a distance. To durian lovers this aroma is unparalleled, especially the Malaysian durian. The best fruit can be detected a mile away. Authentic Malaysian durian has to be ripened on the tree and eaten within a limited time frame. Its sweetness perks and then is gradually lost until its incomparable aroma turns into a stench that resembles a sewer.

"Thinking of all my overseas sisters who were returning home with their hunger for fresh durians, I bought the best ones. Back in the car, my daughter was aghast when she smelled the durians. We had borrowed the car from my brother-in-law, and my daughter informed me that he did not appreciate the smell of durian in his car. In fact, she had just met someone who had had to sell his Mercedes-Benz because of the awful stench of stale durians.

"To add to my discomfort, my sister's flight was delayed. I was beside myself with worry about having the durian in the car, with an ominous feeling of destroying borrowed property. Of course, we could have thrown the durian out, but they were so expensive we couldn't even consider that--the cost, that is, and my desire to enjoy them. The other option was prayer, and pray I did.

"Later, as we savored the creamy fruit, I thought of the sweet aroma of success that could easily turn the stench of arrogance, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel's influence led the king to praise God, recognizing Him as the one who blessed his kingdom and gave him success. However, it was not long before he again displayed his pride and arrogance, declaring that HE built his kingdom all by himself. Immediately, we are told, he lost his senses and was driven out to live like a wild beast for seven years, until his reason returned.

"Stinking durians can't turn back and become the delicious fruit that has beguiled many a connoisseur, but human beings are given the power of choice and the opportunity to repent and recant of their self-importance. As we know God and behold him, we will acknowledge our sinfulness and extol His goodness and mercy to the human race."

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V. Loma Linda Introduces Dental Hygiene To China

--from the August ADVENTIST WORLD

"China's first dental hygiene program, a joint venture of Loma Linda University School of Dentistry and Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital hopes to change the way people view dental care in the country.

"Although not officially recognized by the Chinese government, two classes of dental hygiene students have graduated from the groundbreaking program, the most current May 4.

"Graduate Lily Hong Li Li said she hoped dental hygiene would take root, not only in Hangzhou, where the hospital is located, but also throughout China.

"I am very proud to be one of the first dental hygienists in China," she said. "We will continue to grow and help others learn about the program.'

"Ninety percent of the Chinese population has gum disease, and that figure does not include children, or people who only have cavities, said Claudine Stevenson who taught dental hygiene classes at Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital.
"In China dentists are visited only to have teeth extracted, when people are in pain,' Stevenson said, 
"The 23 graduates, who have been employed at the hospital's dental clinic, can apply for nine months of studies at 
Loma Linda University School of Dentistry starting in September, 2015, said Shirley Lee, a School of Dentistry teacher 
who mentored the recent graduating class. 
"She said two people would be invited to study in California and afterward returned to the Chinese hospital to work as 
instructors and program directors. 
"'It is through this full circle of mutual collaboration that we see the hand of God at work,' she said."

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