Adventist Heritage

From: charles tidwell <charles.h.tidwell@gte.net>
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I. Life Sketch of Arno Kutzner
II. Remembering O. Israel
III. Growth of SUD Population in Maryland ~~~~~~~~~ I. Life Sketch of Arno Kutzner

Elsworth Hette <eahetke@comcast.net> December 2:

Written and presented Sabbath evening, Nov. 26 at his memorial service in the Loma Linda University Church:

Arno Kutzner, who died November 17, 2011, was born August 10, 1929, in Dabrowa, Poland, to Adolf Adam and Martha Hulda Stefan Kutzner. He was named after the son of the American Pastor who came to Poland to foster the Church in the family's town and near-by villages. Arno was joined by two brothers, Waldemar who also was named after the Pastor's other son and also born in Poland, and Eric who was born in Canada. These three boys struggled through a significant deficiency in that they never had any sisters to live with and knock off some of the rough edges that a boys-only family develops.

One time I asked Arno how he came by his name and he told me it was a variation from the name Aaron, I took it for granted that he knew what he was talking about even though I found no one who could verify his assertions.

When Arno was seven, the family immigrated to Canada via Ellis Island arriving in early June, 1936. Another Kutzner family was on the same boat that docked in New York. The father developed a severe case of appendicitis and he was detained for a surgery and recovery and the whole family was kept from travelling together with Arno's family on the train to the Province of Alberta. While their father was recovering, some kind-hearted persons gave the children quite a few toys and when the cousins finally made it to Alberta and Arno saw all the new toys he was quite jealous suggesting that his family go back to Ellis Island so he could get some toys of his own.

The family settled eventually near the town of Millet and soon Arno began his first day of classes at Telford School. Arno knew only two English words, yes and no. He knew what they meant. On his first day of school he walked carrying a lunch pail. A car drove up beside him and a young lady, the new schoolteacher who had recently graduated from Normal School, stopped after she saw the lunch pail and asked, "Are you going to school?" Arno thought for a while not knowing what she said and replied, "Yes." She motioned him to come and ride. Then she asked him, "What's your name?" He used the only other word he knew and he said, "No." He was 50% correct. He just didn't put the AR before NO.

Telford was a one-room school teaching grades 1 through 9. Teachers came and went with regularity. The teacher for his 9th grade was not a very good one and for some reason, Arno threw a snowball at her. He was expelled from school. Arno had to change school districts to continue his educational career. Michigan Center school was where he took grades 9 and 10. The walk to school from the farm was not pleasant. The road was not well developed and the snow-drifts were difficult to traverse. Arno did a lot of thinking on those solitary treks and finally made a decision. He was quitting school!

He talked things over with his father and informed him of the decision to quit. His father said, "Good! I've been waiting for that. You can stay home and help me farm."

The next morning the work his father assigned was to take the horses and hitch them to the sleigh and load the manure that had accumulated from the cows and horses having been confined to the barn during the bitterly cold and snowy winter weather, and haul it to the fields to scatter it as fertilizer. Arno worked all day and the next too then made another decision.

He informed his father, "I think school was not so bad after all. Can I go back to school?"

Arno completed grades 9 and 10 at Michigan Center, then went to Canadian Junior College for grades 11 and 12. He broke a barrier of sorts when, after high school, he went the next year to the University of Alberta for training to be a teacher at their Normal School and becoming only the second person from the whole district to go beyond high school level in education. As the years elapsed thereafter, he also received his bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees. It is
still probable that he is the only person from the Millet district to have that distinction. His brother and a cousin did become medical doctors.

Arno's first teaching job after Normal School was at Conjuring Lake. He taught grades 1-9 in a one-room school. As seemed to be the custom he transferred to a school in Leduc for his second year of teaching. Leduc was Alberta's first oil-boom town. At this school a parent came to Arno one day and said, "Do you know what my son says is going on at this school?" Arno replied, "No, but do you know what he says is going on at home?" It was the abrupt end of what may have been the shortest parent-teacher visit on record. It was to Leduc that Arno brought his new bride. Arno and Agnes were married August 14, 1951.

The next year, 1952, began a new educational career. Arno left the public school system and started his Seventh-day Adventist denominational service that continued for the next 41 years ending in 1993. His term in Edmonton, a one-room school, teaching grades 1-9, was for two years, followed by 3 years in Calgary at a two-room school.

Summer classes in Walla Walla College studying chemistry finally earned him his B.Sc in the summer of 1959. After the term of work in Calgary, the "Brethren" indicated that he had a "Call from the Lord" to go to Canadian Union College to teach chemistry and then become principal of the high school. Arno was quite proud of the fact that throughout his denominational career he never asked for a job or position but the brethren always saw to it that he had a call from the Lord!

Arno and Agnes had a call to be missionaries to India and set sail on a freighter belonging to the President Lines. They landed in Madras in September 1962. Studying the Tamil language was their first assignment but that didn't last long. A riot and strike by the students at Lowry School frightened the principal into a disappearing mode, so the brethren (or the Lord?) asked Arno to salvage the situation. No doubt some of you, or your parents, were party to that tamasha.

Lowry Memorial Higher Secondary School at Dooravaninagar, across from the Krishnarajapuram railway station on the eastern edge of Bangalore was home for the next five years. These were times of hard work, shortage of money, great growth in student enrollment and adding more campus buildings.

He even bought a Russian tractor so that plowing the fields would not need bullocks to do the hard work. But, alas, the tractor proved to be unreliable and Arno used to say, "If this is the best the Russians can make, America has nothing to be afraid of!" It was also a time when the bonds of friendship were formed with many of their Indian friends-some of you present here can attest to the love, care, and devotion that were reciprocated to Arno and Agnes. I cannot list all the people that are special to this family. I'm afraid the omission of a name or two would lead to some possible resentment, but his friends know their special relationships and can tell us about that in a few minutes. However, a special mention needs to be made of one individual. Agnes started a store at Lowry School and needed a student to help her. Chandra Thomas was her student helper. One day, word came that Chandra's mother had passed away. While grieving Chandra came to Agnes and said, "I don't have a mommy, will you be my mommy?" By extension, Arno became her daddy and Chandra, and her family, are considered as being a part of the family and always will be. Others of you affectionately called him "Doc". Many of you refer to him as Pastor Kutzner. He was ordained to the Gospel Ministry since he was also Lowry School's chief spiritual advisor.

Some of you here tonight may have referred to him as something else when troublesome times arose back in Lowry. Over the years since those days, I have been present when some of you have confessed your role in the trouble making, but you and I know that Arno only carried a grudge against certain politicians, especially those of the Republican persuasion. You all were his friends.

I have already alluded to the fact that early life had one significant handicap—he had no sisters, so Arno went about remedying that situation— he married my sister and theirs truly was a vow "until death do us part."

That was sixty years ago! But that was not enough of a remedy. The first child was a daughter, Shirley. I'm not certain, but I think that maybe he thought it was God's will for them to only have one child. But lo and behold, after 17 years elapsed, Wendy was born. Then you should have heard him crow! Arno mastered quite well the inflections and language of the English of the bilingual Tamil population. In my mind I can hear him say, "I can do anything yany one else can do it just takes me a little longer!"

Before Wend's birth, Arno would make remarks about his youthful looking wife and their quickly growing daughter walking together. He would say, "Do you know what people are saying? There goes old man Kutzner and his two daughters!" I'm sure he just made that one up.

By the way, Arno could not be considered a linguist, but that didn't mean he didn't try. He could speak English, he knew enough Tamil to get into trouble but not enough to get out of trouble. He had a good colloquial usage of German and fancied himself to be somewhat proficient in Polish too. He had just enough knowledge of Hindi to be dangerous,
but that never stopped him from trying, oftimes, much to the chagrin of my sister. My sister Flo tells of being with him once when he cased the crowd to find someone with whom he could converse in German. He spied an individual he deemed was of German descent, went up to him and started a conversation in that language.

The man looked him up and down then got up and walked away.

The Kutzners returned from India in 1967, Arno enrolled at La Sierra to begin his studies for a master's degree in Chemistry. He graduated in 1969; his next phase of studies was for a doctorate in education at Arizona State. He taught at Thunderbird Academy while pursuing his higher degree studies and graduated in 1971.

The family moved to Southern Missionary College where Arno assumed the position of Director of Admissions and Records and in 1976 returned to Loma Linda to do similar work for La Sierra and Loma Linda. Arno's claim to fame at both Southern and La Sierra/Loma Linda was his vision to computerize his department. Although he was not proficient in the use of computers for in those times an IBM Selectric II typewriter was considered high technology, he surrounded himself with people, who could do the work.

In summary I want to list some things that made Arno uniquely-well, Arno. As a student at Canadian Union College, Arno stayed for the summers to earn financial credit to pay off his school fees. One summer he felt he wasn't earning enough so he went to the president H. T. Johnson to ask him for a raise in his hourly rate. H. T. said he would look into the matter.

After some time Arno was called to the President's office for a chat. H. T. told Arno that he checked the records and commended him for the many hours he worked. Then H. T. said that there would be no raise since Arno made more money than the president received. The only problem was that Arno ran up a huge bill at the cafeteria. Arno always seemed to be hungry!

Arno loved to eat. Not ordinary food but stuff no human should eat-like rotten cabbage, only he called it sauer kraut. He even claimed that he enjoyed kimchi! His favorites were foods that he ate as a boy. Pirogies was one such food. On a trip to Poland with his brother Wally to visit the old home place, the two brothers were searching for a restaurant that served pirogies. Arno decided to ask someone where they could find this desired are. They were told, "Pirogies were poor peoples food and now that Poland is free at last, you can't find them anywhere else except in the University area where the poor students can afford the cost. They found their beloved pirogies and had a poor man's feast.

At Lowry School Arno organized a choir. The kids loved it. Even here at the Asian Fellowship Church in Redlands he was the inspiration behind organizing a choir. This group sang at the last General Conference session in Atlanta.

Arno loved antiques. Possibly the urge to acquire antiques had to do with a rather impoverished childhood. Arno's antique treasures were down-graded to "junk" status by Agnes. If you want to buy antiques, Agnes can now make you a real deal. On one visit to the Millet Area, he spied an old hand pump that had at one time been on the farm. He wanted that treasure! Sister Flo and her husband Merle were riding with the Kutzners to California and she questioned that if Arno bought the pump, where, and how can it be fitted into the vehicle? Arno and Merle worked well into the night unbolting and cutting the pump into 3 pieces, but take it along-they did!

The saying goes,"you can take the boy out of the farm but you can't take the farm out of the boy." Arno loved to grow plants; He grafted varieties of related fruit plants to the rootstalk. At one time he counted 71 different kinds of fruit on his rather small city lot. Arno was instrumental in establishing the Inland Rare Fruit Growers Association and for many years he served as the Association's president.

Arno is survived by Agnes, his wife of 60 years; daughters Shirley and husband Bruce, Chandra and husband Raj, Wendy and husband Eric; five grandchildren; two brothers, Wally and Eric, and many friends.

When the final alarm clock sounds, the golden trumpet of the archangel, Arno will not be able to sleep through that glorious sound! He will rise again! Then I can just hear him throw some Yiddish words into the exclamation as he says, "Oy vey, that was a good nap!"

II. Remembering O. Israel

Michael Osuri <drosuri@aol.com> December 1:

TODAY December 1, 2011 my (our) father would have been a hundred years old! As we reflect on his life we want to honor the memory of his "Life of Love and Service." To those who did not know of his death last year, the following is his Life Sketch

Life Sketch of Osuri Israel: December 1, 1911 - June 29, 2010

Pastor Osuri Israel hails from Andhra Pradesh, the son of Mr. and Mrs.
Osuri Joshua. He was the younger of two children. Not much is known about his early years as he hardly talked about it, quite understandably so, as his father died when he was about 10 years of age. His mother, Sampathamma was a brave, energetic and an industrious lady who raised well her children; bright, strong-willed and diligent, full of integrity and goodness.

He studied in Narsapur SDA High school, where he met his loving future wife, Krupavathy Penumaka David. After completing his college studies at South India Training School, Bangalore (now Spicer Memorial College, Pune) he married Krupavathy on August 1, 1933. To this union were born four children: Joan, Gentry, Michael and Leela.

He started his mission work in Narsapur Adventist Hospital. Thus began his journey of service in the SDA denomination for over 42 years in various capacities, including being a passionate pastor and a vibrant evangelist, raising several churches in Andhra Pradesh.

In 1942 he was appointed as the first national president of the North Andhra Section. He thus made history as the first indigenous leader appointed in Southern Asia Division at the local level. In 1950 he moved to the Division headquarters in Pune when he was appointed as the Book Depot manager of the Oriental Watchman Publishing House. Later he was given the honor of being the first national director of the Voice of Prophecy in 1966. He continued in this position of leadership until his retirement in 1975.

Since then he has enjoyed his retired life in Pune, making the best of "his world" in India and America. He loved his travels and spent quality time with his children and grandchildren in the US. Wherever he went he never missed an opportunity to attend church. Church and his family were central to his being.

In his later years as a widower he was married in 1994 to a caring companion, Mary John, until her death in 2006.

As a father he was a loving leader; committed and caring; tough and tender. He gave his children the best possible education and made sure that they served the Lord as they pursued their professional challenges. All his children have made their mark in their respective fields: Joan served as a physician in Family Practice and was Health Commissioner for Pike County, in Ohio; Gentry works as director of Federal Audit Services at BlueCross BlueShield in Washington, D. C.; Michael served as an assistant pastor and later as a psychologist in clinical practice; and Leela served as a teacher and completed a degree in nursing.

As a member of God’s church he was regular and faithful. He was prompt in coming for all church services and was committed to the growth and development of the church. He would often share his concerns and dialogue to make a difference in the life of the church. He defended passionately church doctrines when he thought they were being eroded. He put out a booklet on Faith and Works when he thought God's Grace was being cheapened.

As a leader of the Adventist church he played a vital role in shaping the work culture of his time. He raised churches and developed faithful workers and laity. He was a dynamic and effective administrator and a good communicator. He was systematic and meticulous in his planning. He was a visionary and mission centered leader. This was his uniqueness.

The last two and half years of his life he spent in Pune in his newly rebuilt home that he was very proud of. During this time he was thrilled to hear of his three great grandchildren born in the US. His joy overflowed to see his first great grandchild Isaac Osuri, when the family (grandson Sameel and Laura, son Michael and Swinitha) visited him in India in 2009. Four generations spending time together was truly memorable. Visits by Leela, Gentry and Moses brought much joy and comfort to him.

In the passing away of Pr. O. Israel we have lost a loving brother, a loyal husband, a caring father, an affectionate grandfather and a kind great grandfather. Above all, he was a respected church leader, and a faithful servant of the Lord. He leaves behind his children/children-in-law: Gentry/Penny; Michael/Swinitha; Leela/Fredrick Moses; /Moses Dass; and their respective families: including seven grandchildren, three great grandchildren, (now five great grandchildren) and many loved ones here and abroad.

III. Growth of SUD Population in Maryland

Johnson S. Christian <JSCFRUIT@aol.com> November 30:

On November 26, 2011 Pastor Franklin David honored some of the early pioneers who came to Maryland from India. He is the senior pastor of the Southern Asian Church at Silver Spring, Maryland. We have over 800 judgment-bound souls in the church, with two other ordained ministers and one youth leader.

I was the first one whom he asked to speak, since I came to Washington area in early 1960. I left India December 1959 by ship which took me around

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20 days to reach New York. It was a very interesting experience and sometimes very unpleasant. Dr. Winton Beavon, who was the president of Columbia Union College then, helped me to come to the college. When he had visited India he became very sick and I helped him in Madras when I was the principal of our high school and he always appreciated my concern and care for him. He was a wonderful worker for God for many years.

I was enrolled at our seminary in Takoma Park and when it moved to Michigan, they called it Andrews University. I moved to Michigan to attend Andrews University. In 1961 Mr. Russell Isaac and I were the first ones from the Southern Asia Division to get our Masters degree from Andrews.

I was called to be the principal in our school in Bangalore and then I was the principal of our school in Madras. After five years of work I came to Canada with my family. I have worked in the North American Division in three unions, Canadian, Pacific, and Colombia. I worked as teacher and principal in our academies. After forty years of service in educational work I retired from the North American Division. After that for the past 15 years I have been going to India working as a volunteer in our schools and churches. My wife and I will be leaving for India soon to serve the Lord for few months to help in our schools and churches. Kindly pray for us.

The others who were honored who came early from India, were Thomas Prasada Rao, I. R. Thomas, Rajan Wessel, Rajan Thomas, and from the young ones, Richard Christian. Before I arrived in 1961 at Takoma Park there were already six people from the Southern Asia Division. They were Mr. Samuel and Margaret Koilpillai, Dr. Moses and Pamela, Mr. M. K. George and Grace. We were the only seven at that time and we were the first unofficial Southern Asian Club. God was good to us and blessed us.

God has been very good to me all these 81 years of my life and 55 years of marriage with my good wife, Hannah Jessie. God blessed us with two good children: daughter Dr. Margaret Peterson who is married to Dr. Kenneth Peterson, and our son Richard Christian, married to Miriam Tlau.

We will be celebrating our 50th anniversary of Southern Asian Association on December 3, 2011. The speaker will be Dr. Ted C. Wilson, General Conference president. I am sure they will honor those who came early to this country. Rajan Thomas is the present president of the Association.

May the Lord bless all those who are here in United States, Canada and elsewhere who have come from India. May our love for the Lord and His work in whatever we do be really blessed by the Almighty. "The Golden Morning is Fast Approaching"; let's be prepared to meet our Lord.

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