I. Remembering Them

II. Letters
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III. Celebrating 25 Years of Ministry 1988---2013 IV. Burma Vignettes-- Early Missionaries: # 34

V. Spicer Celebrates 98th Annual Graduation Exercises

I. Remembering Them

1. Boxter Kharbteng <khar_btg@yahoo.com>
   The news about the passing away of Mrs. Dorothy Willmott hangs heavily on my heart and mind. I guess it will be with me for a long time. As I write this note, several recollections of Mrs. Willmott waft along the corridors of my memory. I remember her as a soft-spoken, gentle, motherly, friendly and warm, and most unassuming. She always wore a smile, and carried herself with great dignity as a pastor's wife and shepherdess.
   What a loss! I don't know how the family members are dealing with this, especially Pastor Willmott. Nevertheless, because of their total commitment to God and to his leading, I am confident that they will go through this hard journey of pain and sorrow with divine strength and encouragement. How fortunate we are as Christians. We have the blessed hope, the hope of the resurrection, the hope of heaven - where "God will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." (Rev. 21: 4).

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The sudden passing away of Pastor Gnanaraj Kore came to me a rude shock.
I can't believe this happened to him. My heart goes out to the family members of the beloved and respected pastor, servant of God, husband, father, brother, uncle, and perhaps grandfather. May God continue to sustain those he leaves behind, especially Mrs. Kore.

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2. Gordon Buhler <gbuhler@comcast.net>
   With the passing of Pastor Gnanaraj Kore the Adventist community in India has lost one of its finest. I have worked with him and his wife, Hepzibah, in the women's literacy program for the last ten years and have come to respect and appreciate him for his commitment to God's work and gentle honesty. Our prayers are for Hepzi and her remaining family. We grieve with you. --Gordon and Judy Buhler

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3. Johnson S. Christian <jscfruit@aol.com>
   The sudden death of Pastor Kore was a real shock to my wife Jessie and myself. A very close relative of my wife. We have known him as a Godly and dedicated worker as his father and grandfather. A very quiet and humble person. I have greatly appreciated his leadership as president of South India Union and his leadership in the Division in various departments. The sudden death of Mrs. Willmott and now Pastor Kore tells us that is this life of ours is very short, we know not when our end will come. We have to be ready when the call does come, to be faithful to God in everything we do on this earth. My brother, Dr. Moses Christian, who ran the recent marathon in Boston, could have been killed but God spared his life, thanks to the Almighty. My deepest sympathy to his good wife Hepzi and all the relatives and friends who mourn the loss of this fine man of God and leader. --Writing from India.

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II. Letters
   1. Brooke Sadler <cabins@usit.net>
Pat and I just returned from a trip to Sri Lanka. I was asked by the mission to study the needs of the estate and industries at Lakpahana where I was principal most of the 1970’s. Currently the estate and industries are in a deplorable condition and a huge financial drain on the school. With proper leadership and wise investments we believe the situation can be reversed in a relatively short time. Pat and I are planning to spend the time necessary in Sri Lanka to help make this happen. If you are interested in helping in any way or want more information please call me at 423 329-9631 or email me at cabins@usit.net. Thanks you.

T. Brooke & Pat Sadler
Pam Sadler
Nolichuckey Bluffs Bed & Breakfast
295 Kinser Park Lane
Greeneville, TN 37743
www.tennessee-cabins.com
Tel | 800.842.4690

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2. Raghuthaman Opeh <docopeh@gmail.com> April 17:
   This is to announce that I got baptised at the ripe young age of 71 at the Bethel Chapel, Sri Lanka. I was baptised by Chris Ederesinghe who stayed in the room opposite mine on the ground floor at Spicer College Men's Hostel in Pune.
   I wanted to be baptised by N. Jacob first. But it did not work out. Then I asked Pastor Hutton on one of my trips to Spicer to meet many daughter studying high school. Sadly he died before I could get baptised.
   I am glad to be baptised by one of the best human beings I have met in life: Chris Ederesinghe. My thanks to the pastor of Bethel Chapel for his kindness, and Mr. Costa for showing me many parts of Ceylon south of Colombo.
   I was planning baptism since the early sixties.

III. Celebrating 25 Years of Ministry 1988—2013

   Free Gospel Concert by Vijay Benedict, India’s former popular play back singer now popular international gospel singer.
   Southern Asian Adventist Church
   2001 East Randolph Road
   Silver Spring, MD 20904
   (301) 879-7222;
   <www.sasda.org>
   Saturday, May 11, 2013
   at 4:00 p.m.
   [sent by Patrick Jacob <JIneedride@aol.com>] ~~~~~~~~ IV. Burma Vignettes—Early Missionaries # 34
   Mervin Myat Kyaw <mervinmk@yahoo.com.au> and his wife Nan are Karen Adventists who worked many years in Burma and Thailand and now live and work in Australia. He has written a manuscript covering Adventism in Burma from its very beginning to the present and of his work in Thailand.

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# 34. G. W. Petit (1928 - 32)
   G. W. Petit started taking care of the Yangon English Church in 1928.
   They were dedicated and hardworking missionaries. The Lord blessed their work. The Myanmar Union Mission Headquarters was completed in 1929.
   The Petits were the first to serve in the new Yangon English Church building and to live in the comfortable apartment assigned them in the new headquarters building. They cared for the Yangon English Church from 1928 till 1932.

V. Spicer Celebrates 98th Annual Graduation Exercises
   Rajendra Prasad <rajendraprasad2000@yahoo.com> April 15:
   Throughout the annals of Spicer College history the kaleidoscopic annual graduation exercises have been the highlight of the academic year.
   Especially in the recent decades, they would grab one's attention from the last week of January itself each year when the Comprehensive examinations are normally conducted. The day the comps results are declared, generally on the
twentieth of February, the same night the senior class is formed and the class officers, sponsor and pianist elected. The class in turn chooses the aim, motto, flower and colour and this information is immediately relayed to the prospective speakers chosen for the graduation weekend. Then the Senior class along with a few administrators go for the Class Retreat at Janjira, a sea-side resort during the first weekend of March, and take up the weekend services in the College church the following week, with the class president speaking during the vespers and the pastor during the divine service. The final exams are conducted during the next 10 days and the graduation celebrations start immediately with the Class Sponsor hosting a dinner party for the class. The College president throws another dinner party to the class along with the college and school faculty in his lawn the Wednesday of the graduation weekend. The College Day is celebrated the next night on the college main lawn which bears festive air with coloured lights streaming from all the trees around. The programme starts with a welcome and prayer followed by the introduction of the Class Sponsor who then invites the whole Class to march on to the huge and well-decorated open-air stage to present the College Song. The College President then honours and introduces the Chief Guest and Guests of Honour who make their customary speeches. This is followed by the releasing of the college pictorial annual, the OREODOXA, and presenting the copies to the one to whom it is dedicated that particular year as well to those who are honoured in it. Then the students who excel in academics, citizenship, spiritual life, sports, and work education are called onto the stage and awarded plaques and certificates. Then the Class President makes his well-rehearsed speech followed by the Class Treasurer presenting to the College VPFA the class gift. The event usually closes with singing the national anthem. The weekend services begin the next day with various academic committees approving the final list of the graduates in the morning and all the triumphant graduates marching into the church donning their black graduation gowns, caps and hoods (where applicable) for the vespers Consecration service while their parents, relatives, friends, sponsors and well-wishers watch with delight clicking their pictures standing across the isles. The same procedure is followed during the Baccalaureate service on the Sabbath morning and Commencement service on Sunday morning when even the faculty wearing their colourful regalia join them and the event comes to the grand finale with the awarding of certificates or a semblance of it by the college president and the congratulatory bouquets, cards, handshakes and hugs extended to the graduates by their friends, faculty and beloved ones as they march out and stand on the church plaza posing for pictures regardless of the inclement sun's heat.

The ninety-eighth Graduation Exercises of 2013 was no exception. The class officers elected were John Mwaniki Njue (President), BTh, from Kenya; Ramnakui Kashung (Vice President), BMus, from Manipur; Ryan Wilson Davy (Treasurer), BBA, from Spicer itself; Naw Sonia (Secretary), MA in Education, from Myanmar; Jebeet Mahiadas (Pastor)-and President of Class of 2012, MA in Religion, from Tamil Nadu; and Graceton Ramarar and Sangeet Kumar (Representatives from Pune University programme). Mr. Awungashi Samshokwo Varekan was the Class Sponsor and Mrs. Glynn N. Lalkaka, the Class Pianist. The Class Aim was "Shape People's Lives for Christ"; the motto,"Sealing God's Promises in Our Hearts"; flower, Rose; and colour, sky blue. On the College Day, OREODOXA 2013, entitles "Fragrant Petals" dedicated to Pastor Rathinaraj John, Spicer's illustrious alumnus and President of Southern Asia Division, for his dedicated leadership and service to the Sudan for 40 long years. The persons honoured by OREODOXA were Pastor Vasant D. Ohal, Spicer's former VPFA, Drs. Ian Philip Chand and Shirani de Alwis-Chand, alumni and weekend guest speakers, Pastor I. R. Thomas, Mr. T. Aruldhas, Pastor and Mrs. C. C. Nathaniel, and Spicer's own faculty and staff, Mr. Robby C. Abraham, Mr. Genu Roney Varghese, Mrs. Rathna Noah, Mr. Barun Halder, Mr. Nagaraj, Mr. Moses Nowrangri, and Mr. Adam John. The Consecration Speaker on Friday was Dr. Ian Philip Chand, who completed BTh from Spicer, MA (Rel) from Andrews University, MS (Sociology) and PhD (Sociology) both from Pennsylvania State University, Post Doctoral training programme in marriage and family Therapy is a counselor and therapist, presently working at Loma Linda University and a clinic CARE. Spicer sort of made history by inviting for the first time a woman Baccalaureate Speaker in its 98 years' history and this honour rightly accrues to Dr Shirani de Alwis-Chand, BEd from Spicer, MA (Edu) and EdD, both from Andrews University was an alumnus and former faculty of Spicer and Andrews, with a brief stint of studies at Harvard University in Reading Disabilities, is presently working as the Director of "Above The Bar" a centre empowering educational excellence, and they both spoke on the Class Aim and Motto respectively. As per their request all the participants on the stage too wore the graduation regalia during the two services adding more colour to the service. Dr. Shirani, who is a strong proponent of gender equality, must have also been delighted to see half the ministers on the stage that Sabbath were women like her-Dr.

Susan Thomas (Dean of Science), Prof. Mary Davy (Head, Music Dept), Prof. Esther Justus (Head, Ele Edu Dept), Dr. Sheela Chacko (Principal of erstwhile B Ed College), Dr. Nanibala Paul (Dean, School of Education & Women’s Hostel) and Dr. Chawngdinpuii Chawngthu (Director, E. G. White
Centre) who offered the prayer for the offerings, a task till then sealed in men's domain. The women on the stage the previous night were Dr. Mary Christiana Tadiparthi (Attendance Officer), Dr. Esther Deepati (Research Director), and Prof. Linda Sigamany (Head, English Dept). Even the Commencement Speaker the next day was a woman, Dr. Sampada Joshi, Controller of Examinations, Pune University. Truly Spicer has started giving the women their due.

The Commencement Programme on Sunday morning started with the graduates marching into the House of Prayer followed by the faculty and the President’s party which included the Chief Guest, Dr. Sampada Joshi. After a brief welcome by the VPAA, invocation by Prof. Noble Pilli, Executive VP, class song announced by Prof. A S Varekan, Class Sponsor, and introduction of the Chief Guest, Dr. Joshi, by the College President, she addressed the graduates briefly exhorting them to face the changing and challenging world bravely. Then the VPAA Prof. S. Rajendra Prasad, presented 235 candidates for graduation, representing 5 major world religions, 22 countries, 18 Indian states, 56 languages, and 4 different programmes at Spicer: 59 candidates from Spicer Autonomous programmes (2 two-year diploma and 15 BEEd candidates in Elementary Education, 2 BMus candidates in Western Music and 40 BTh candidates); 28 candidates from Griggs University programme (18 BBA and 10 MBA); 42 candidates from Andrews University Programme (19 MA in Education, one MEd, and 22 in MA in Religion); and 105 candidates from Pune University Programme (32 BA, 64 BCom, and 9 MA in English). The College President Dr. Justus Devadas then assisted by the Academic Dean Dr. Roy Jemison Injety, and Deans Pastor Noble Pilli (Arts), Dr. Noah A. Balraj (Business), Prof. Rathnasamy Jeyam (Commerce), Dr. Nanibala I Paul (Education), and Dr. Mohanraj W. Israel (Religion) who in turn assisted by the Registrar/Vice Principal of the respective programmes, Prof. Simon Yesu (SMC Autonomous), Prof. Shiny Prashanth (Griggs Univ), Prof. A. S. Varekan (Andrews Univ) and Prof. Reginald A. Chavan (Pune Univ), presented the scrolls informing the details of their certificates to the candidates as they marched on to the stage one by one as they were briefly introduced.

Then Dr. Devadas gave the President’s Charge to the Graduates with the closing remarks "to always remember that your identity is in eternity and your homeland is heaven. Learn to be quick to follow that flow of love God puts in your heart. What lies before you is the untrodden path, the unopened door, the mountain peak, and the broad blue heavens. I challenge you to walk that path, open the closed door, and climb the mountain heights. The sky is the limit. Be sensitive and obedient to do what God wants you to do... Be wise to choose God's directions and ways, and choose excellence.. God bless you, my dear graduates!" Then Drs. Ian and Shirani Chand once again greeted the graduates with a combined message after which the college song announced by Prof Prabhu Sigamany, VPSA, was sung, closing prayer offered by Prof. Sam Charles, VPCD, and benediction pronounced by Pastor Noble Prasad Pilli, Executive VP and Senior Church Pastor. Then the graduates marched out to the church plaza with their hearts brimming with joy and elation that is shared by family and friends as they congratulated them, greeted them with cards and bouquets and cheered them on with hugs and handshakes while the shutterbugs were busy clicking away these memories to eternity.

The climax of the graduation weekend seemed actually the next day, April 1, 2013, when the faculty hosted a surprise party to Dr. Justus Devadas and family in the local Green Park Hotel for his having completed successfully ten full years as President of the College, in spite of several personal and official challenges, though tributes have been paid unofficially during the earlier functions of the week too. May the Good Lord continue to bless Dr. Devadas as he shoulders this great responsibility as the President of this premier institution in Southern Asia Division especially as it inches towards its centennial year in 2015 with a prayer to the Almighty that by then it would be granted a private university charter by the central government, so that it can serve the world church in an enhanced capacity and prepare many more souls for His kingdom! Amen!

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END-ANTISPAM-VOTING-LINKS