



Donald Robinson

May 4, 1940 - September 5, 2019

Donald Robinson faithfully served the Adventist Church in various countries. Former Undertreasurer for the Seventh-day Adventist World Church passes to his rest.

Donald Robinson, former Undertreasurer of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, passed to his rest Friday evening, September 6, 2019. He was 79.

“On behalf of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the worldwide church family, we offer our sincere sympathy and Christian condolences to Elaine Robinson and the entire Robinson family,” stated Ted N.C. Wilson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in an email.

“Don was a very diligent, astute, and sincere servant of the Lord,” continued Wilson. “We thank Elaine and Don for their committed service for so many years to this precious worldwide Advent movement. Soon the Lord will return to call Don and others who have died in Him back to life to live with Him forever. Please join me in praying for Elaine Robinson and the Robinson family.”

Donald Eugene Robinson was born at the Malamulo Mission Hospital, Makwasa, on Sabbath, May 4, 1940, in what is now the country of Malawi.

Donald's parents, Virgil Eugene and Alta Ruby Robinson, were American missionaries serving in Africa at the time.

The family left in 1945 on furlough to the US and returned to Africa on March 26, 1947, this time to Kenya. At the age of 7, Donald became the twelfth boarding student at the Nairobi Primary School where he completed the KEPE—Kenya Preliminary Examinations. One of his subjects was Swahili.

Donald then made the four-day journey by car, DC-3 airplane, and train to Helderberg College, South Africa, where he attended High School.

Donald enjoyed Helderberg College, completing High School and then a four-year diploma in business with a minor in education in 1961. He had planned to become a teacher, but the Southern Africa Division headquartered in Salisbury, Rhodesia (today's Zimbabwe), called him to serve as an accountant.

In 1959, Elaine Coetzee, a music major, caught his eye and Donald clearly thought this friendship should be pursued. A week after his graduation, Donald and Elaine were married in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Mowbray. After saying goodbye to his parents, brother, and sister, who were returning to the United States, Donald and Elaine pointed their 850 c.c. Renault Dauphine north.

In addition to his education at Helderberg, Donald also studied accounting, economics, and business economics from the University of South Africa, graduating with a degree in Commerce in 1968. In August of that year, Donald accepted a call to serve as Secretary-Treasurer, Auditor, and Director of Education of the Zambia Field. Interestingly, Donald's grandfather, Dores Eugene Robinson had served as mission director there in the 1920s, and Donald's father, Virgil, had grown up there as a child.

Another move came in January 1970 when Don was called to serve as Assistant Treasurer of the Southern Africa Division. At the yearend meetings in 1972, Donald accepted another call, this time to serve as Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditor for the Zambesi Union Mission. Donald was ordained to the Gospel Ministry on Sabbath, November 29, 1975. Officiating was Merle Mills, President of the division, assisted by Virgil Robinson and Mellett Coetzee father and father-in-law, both ordained ministers.

In January 1978 Donald accepted a call to serve as Controller of the Southern Asia Division, based in Washington, DC at the time. He was then elected on December 23, 1983 as an Associate Treasurer at the Seventh-day Adventist Church's world headquarters in the U.S. state of Maryland, where he would serve world divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the next twenty-two years, seventeen as Associate Treasurer and five as Undertreasurer.

Donald and Elaine retired at the 58th General Conference Session in St Louis, Missouri in 2005. In anticipation of retirement, they purchased 40 acres of land next door to their daughter, Lisa in Pennsylvania. With Gayle's family (their other daughter) just an hour away, there were many opportunities to enjoy time with children and grandchildren. Donald and Elaine enjoyed attending the Needmore Seventh-day Adventist Church in Pennsylvania.

Donald and Elaine both enjoyed gardening, including bountiful vegetable crops and beautiful flowers.

On February 13, 2015 Donald was diagnosed with Stage 4 prostate cancer which had metastasized to the bones. For a year, things changed imperceptibly, but in 2016, a move was necessary to Spring Mills, West Virginia in order to ease the effects of travel for medical care.

Donald had excellent physicians, therapists, and nurses. He appreciated visits from friends and neighbors.

On Friday evening, September 6, at 7:50 p.m., Don gently sighed and took his last breath. The next time he takes a breath, he will be looking at his dearest Friend.