

LINK

LINKING former Wesleyan missionaries to each other and to Global Partners

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Well Done Good & Faithful Servants

Virginia F. Wright went to meet her Lord from her home in Colonial Oaks Retirement Facility in Marion, IN, on July 21, 2015. Wayne W. Wright joined Virginia on August 28, 2015. They were married September 1, 1949, after meeting at Frankfort Pilgrim College, Frankfort, IN, where they were both teaching on staff.



From 1951 to 1970, Wayne and Virginia worked in the Philippines as teachers and administrators. Wayne was College President and Field Director during the formative years of the national church. Their three children, David, Mary Beth, and Daniel, were born there.

Returning to the USA, Wayne served in the World Missions office for fourteen years and from 1984 to 1992 as General Secretary. A major achievement of those years was the "2000 By 2000" program which grew overseas Wesleyan churches to over 2000 by the year 2000. Virginia served nine years as office manager for The Wesleyan Church radio program, *The Wesleyan Hour*. She assisted Wayne in preaching and teaching on many international trips. In 1992, Wayne and Virginia served as co-coordinators of the ministry of The Wesleyan Church in Russia, during the formative years. After returning from Russia, they pastored the Mt. Etna (IN) Wesleyan Church before retiring to Brooksville, Florida, where they were active members of Brooksville Wesleyan Church.

A Tribute to Wayne and Virginia

Virginia was a faithful sister in Christ to whom many of us looked for living proof of the possibility of living a truly holy life. The clarity of her testimony, the constancy of her character, the wisdom of her counsel, the focus of her leadership, the joy of her always pleasant humor, the blessing of her frequent personal encouragement, the backing she gave for our church's vision and the power of her prayer support will be voids others cannot fill.

Wayne, thank you for all the ways that you and Virginia have positively influenced and impacted our entire Wesleyan fellowship. Your godly leadership and service, along with your shared commitment to reaching the lost and your many examples of loving our neighbors, are an enduring legacy. Thank you for serving our Church as missionary, pastor, and administrator.

On behalf of all your brothers and sisters in Christ here in Florida, may His peace be with you. With all Christian sympathy and love,

**--- Pastor Dr. Jerry Pence, Brooksville Wesleyan Church,
written a few days after the death of Virginia.**

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Condolences. . . Virginia Fern (Meeks) Wright was born of missionary parents in Babatpur, India February 6, 1925. Returning from India, the family served churches in Missouri, finally settling in Lawrenceville, IL. Early in her teen years she received a clear call to serve Christ and His church in overseas mission work. She earned college degrees in theology, music, and graduate studies in library science. Upon retirement in Brooksville, FL, Virginia enjoyed leading the Wesleyan Women's group. She passed away July 21, 2015.

Wayne Wible Wright was born October 22, 1926 in Terre Haute, IN. He first sought the Lord as an eight-year-old and was baptized at twelve. He studied at Ohio Wesleyan University while serving in the US Navy. He also completed a Bachelor's degree at Asbury College, Master's degrees from both Butler University and Indiana Wesleyan University, and received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Houghton College. He passed away August 29, 2015, at Marion General Hospital, Marion, IN.

Virginia and Wayne are survived by their three children, Mary Beth (Jeffrey) Fussner, David (Helen) Wright, and Daniel (Karen) Wright; seven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren; Virginia's brother, Paul Meeks; and Wayne's sister, Faith Linton.

Dallas Stephen Saunders of Asheboro, NC, died July 7, 2015. Steve was born October 25, 1951, in Alamance County, NC, a son of Dallas Roy and Vivian Taylor Saunders. He married Carolyn R. Downey on June 22, 1973.

Steve was an ordained minister of The Wesleyan Church and pastored Wesleyan churches for more than 28 years, most recently at Albemarle, NC.

Appointed to missionary service by Global Partners in The Wesleyan Church, he and his family went to Suriname, South America, from 1981 to 1985 and again from 1990 to 1992. He exhibited the love of Christ everywhere he went.

Steve was preceded in death by his parents and a daughter. He is survived by his wife Carolyn; a son, Benjamin Stephen, a daughter, Carla Noelle; four grandchildren; two brothers, a sister, a stepsister and stepmother.



John Franklin Heer of Hastings, MI, was called to heaven March 25, 2015. Born October 30, 1927, in Green, KS, to John and Lena (Rudiger) Heer, he married Sallie Doris Maples on June 15, 1951, in Portland, OR.

The Heers were missionaries to Colombia, South America, from 1958-1968. In 1971, they served at Brainerd Indian School near Hot Springs, SD, where Franklin became principal and president. Later they taught in the academy at Hobe Sound Bible College in Florida.

A second missionary term took the Heers again to the Philippines from 1986 to 1987 at Villasis Bible College. Their last teaching was done in Brownsville, TX, in the public school system.

Rev. Heer was preceded in death by two brothers and two sisters. Surviving are his wife, Sallie; three children, nine grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

Lois Baumgardner Downey Traugh, 84, of Asheboro, NC, went to heaven July 27, 2015. Born Feb, 11, 1931, in Hamilton, OH, to Walter and Grace Baumgardner, she married Paul R. Downey in 1951. They enjoyed 50 years together.

With their 4 children, they fulfilled their missionary call to Curacao, Brazil, Guyana and Suriname, along with years of pastoral ministry in Ohio and Michigan. They served as Missionaries in Residence at Southern Wesleyan University, then retired in Central, SC.

Lois loved the Word of God and read the Bible through many times. She was active in the Stephen Ministry and faithfully visited shut-in friends. After her husband, Paul, passed away, she married Hubert Traugh who died in 2011.

She is survived by daughters Carolyn R. Saunders, Barbara Heyd (Clive), sons David Downey (Helen), Edward Downey (Jessica), stepdaughters Shelley Wheeler (Mike), Kathy Traugh, 14 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and sister Naomi Koch.



Margaret Ross, 77, died Aug. 1, 2015, in Brooksville, FL. Born Nov. 15, 1937, in Hiddenite, NC, to James and Rosemary (Bumgarner) Tysinger, she was converted at age 6, and married Barry L. Ross when they met at Houghton College.

They were Wesleyan missionaries in Japan from 1967-71. From 1972-79, while Barry taught at United Wesleyan College, Margaret taught in local public schools, managed the dining hall at the college, and finished a master's in education. In California from 1979-83, she taught middle school home economics while Barry taught at Azusa Pacific University.

From 1983-97, they traveled to several Asian Pacific countries, preparing ministers and their wives. They again taught at Union Biblical Seminary in India from 1997-99. From 1999-2011, they lived in Anderson, Indiana, where Margaret remained active in women's ministries, and Barry taught at Anderson School of Theology. In retirement, they lived in Wesleyan Village in Brooksville, FL.

Survivors include her husband, their three children, Barri Lynne Kirkham (Tom), John N. Ross (Audrey), and Elizabeth Bailey (Paul); seven grandchildren, one great-grandchild; three sisters and two brothers.



Florida Regional WMAF Meeting



The Florida area members attended our annual meeting in May at the Wesleyan Village in Brooksville, FL. Dr. Jim Vermilya, chair of the WMAF Executive Committee, and his wife, Jeanette, were present. We honored Mrs. Norva Crosby, who served with her late husband, Bob, in Colombia, Puerto Rico and Mexico and celebrated her 100th birthday. Her daughter, Pricilla, and husband, Bernie, gave a slide presentation of their lives and ministry.

Rev. Orai and Linda Lehman were our special guests. They served in Africa 1968-2014. Orai told how his grandmother went to Africa in 1897 as a missionary. In 1898 his grandfather was sent to Africa as well. Following their wedding, they served for many years in South Africa. Orai was born in South Africa. Both his grandfather and father did extensive work in evangelizing the gold miners in South Africa. The grandson of one of the first converts is now the National Superintendent of The Wesleyan Church in Mozambique, Pastor Natahlo. In recent years they have come in contact with a group worshipping as Wesleyans that they knew nothing about before.

Wesleyan churches exist today in all eleven provinces of Mozambique, with a Bible college and national headquarters located in the southernmost province. The JESUS Film Partnership has contributed much to the growth of the church, with 15 teams.

-- by Rev. Robert Smith, Global Partners Alumnus

Tribute to Wayne W. Wright

In August 1960 Wayne was the interim pastor in the Manila church. Julia and I arrived in Manila for our first term in the Philippines and met Wayne for the first time. On the way from the airport, I addressed him as "Rev. Wright." He promptly told me, "Bob, my name is Wayne!" This kind of humility marked his life and ministry. His spiritual life was sincere and governed all he did. He was honest to a fault and a perfectionist in English grammar. Often I took copy to him to proofread. "Better change this word, Bob." He wanted the best words used correctly.

The most distinct part of his life was his firm belief in prayer. In our meetings he wanted to end with prayer for difficult situations in the Bible school or church, and for us missionaries facing challenges in our work or in our families. We often prayed until we had the assurance of God's answer.

We served together on boards and committees, traveled together, stayed together in the same house or on the same campus. It was a pleasure to work with Wayne.

Lately we lived across the street from Wayne and Virginia in Brooksville, FL. Fellowship around the table or just visiting and sharing brought his wise counsel and guidance. We will miss them.

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please send us your email address.

For full obituaries go to:

<http://wmafonline.org>

WMAF Executive Committee Meets

The Executive Committee met in Indianapolis on August 4 for the biannual reporting and planning session. Dr. Dennis Jackson, Executive Director of Global Partners, gave the opening devotional and spoke of the growth and progress of GP ministries in more than 96 countries of the world with over 3000 churches outside North America. Tim Hibsichman, Director of Missionary Wellness, and the GP officer with WMAF, participated and helped clarify the branding process for GP. A new WMAF logo (lower right) was approved during the meeting and keeps us relevant with other ministries of GP. The updated WMAF website now appears in the GP site and provides information about our officers, regions and their directors, and correspondents. Our constitution describes how WMAF functions to link our alumni with GP missionaries and field ministries. Back issues of the LINK newsletter are available to download. Go to <http://wmafonline.org> to see our features.



Pictured left to right, Tim Hibsichman, Jim Vermilya, Jeanette Vermilya, Paul Turner, Phil Myers, Janet Turner, Chuck Paine, William Peed, Elsie Myers, and Rod Guptil.

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