

Novak, Henry Albert (1919–1997)

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Marilou Manatad Tornalejo graduated in 1991 from Mountain View College with a Bachelor of Secondary Education, major in English. She finished her M. A. in Education from the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in 2013. She is currently working as a teacher and librarian at the AIAS Academy. She is also pursuing a doctoral degree in Educational Specialist. She is married to Remwil R. Tornalejo and they have four children.

Henry Albert Novak was a missionary medical doctor, hospital director, and World War II veteran.

Early Life

Henry Albert Novak was born January 9, 1919 in Lonesome Butte, Saskatchewan, Canada¹ to George E. Novak and Anna F. Moseanko both from Russia but of U.S. citizenship.² Henry had a younger sibling named George, Jr.³ Raised in an Adventist home of a colporteur,⁴ Henry Novak spent his early years in Hayden Lake and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and College Place, Washington. He was baptized in 1935 in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho by Elder Schnepfer.⁵

Education and Marriage

Henry Albert Novak graduated in 1936 from Coeur d'Alene High School. He attended Walla Walla College from 1939 to 1944 to begin his bachelor's degree. He transferred to Pacific Union College for his pre-medical course from 1945 to 1947. He attended the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) from 1947 to 1952, earning a degree in medicine. Henry married Phyllis Clarene Meir on August 21, 1947, in Farmington, Washington. The marriage was officiated by Elder Leon Robbins. The Novaks settled in California while Henry pursued his medical course.⁶ Phyllis Clarene was born October 10, 1922 in Farmington, Washington to John Meier, an Adventist minister, and Ida Schlehber. Phyllis was baptized in 1934 by her own father.

Phyllis Clarene graduated from Farmington High School in 1940. She then went to Walla Walla College and earned a degree in Secretarial, with a Home Economics minor, in 1944. After graduating she started working as secretary to the treasurer of the Voice of Prophecy, until 1947. She also attended Pacific Union College in 1946. From 1947 to 1950 she worked as secretary to the Director of Nurses at Loma Linda University. From 1961 to 1962 she was a Home Economics teacher at Lake City Jr. Academy.⁷

During the Novaks' missionary service in the Far Eastern Division, Phyllis Novak served the Vietnam Mission as a news correspondent of the *Southeast Asia Union Messenger*.⁸ The Novaks had three children: Clarene and Cynthia, born in Spokane Washington, and Leland, born in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho.⁹

Ministry

Henry Novak started his medical career as an intern at St. Luke's Hospital in Spokane, Washington. He then had a general practice as a physician in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.¹⁰ He served for 15 years in private practice in Idaho and California before serving overseas as a medical missionary doctor.¹¹ He is also considered a World War II veteran, given a rank of staff sergeant, having served in the U.S. Air Force for 50 months.¹² "During his early years of practice, he served as president of the Kootenai County Medical Association and was chosen as medical consultant to the County National Polio Foundation."¹³

Towards the end of 1967, Novak received a call to serve as staff physician of the Bandung Sanitarium and Hospital in Indonesia.¹⁴ Before his visa arrived for Indonesia, Dr. Novak served for a time in the same capacity at the Haadjai Hospital in southern Thailand.¹⁵

From 1968 to 1970 he served as medical director in Rumah Sakit Advent, Bandung, Java, Indonesia.¹⁶ After their term in Indonesia, the Novaks returned to the States to be with their daughters, Cynthia and Renee, for their college education.¹⁷

Upon his return to the United States Dr. Novak became a member of the American College of Emergency Physicians.¹⁸ In 1973, after both daughters were married, the Novaks volunteered for mission service once more. They were quickly assigned to Vietnam at Saigon Adventist Hospital, where Henry served as staff physician.¹⁹

After serving Saigon Adventist Hospital, the Novaks returned to the United States and continued his medical practice in California. In 1975 Dr. Novak joined the St. Helena Hospital and Health Center, in California in the outpatient, emergency, and Health Center programs.^{20 21}

Later Life

Novak retired in 1982 yet remained active both the community and church work. Until 1996 he was active in temperance programs with an emphasis on youth.²² Henry A. Novak died February 24, 1997 at the age of 78, and was buried in Healdsburg, California.²³

Legacy

Henry Albert Novak should be remembered as a medical missionary doctor and hospital director. He was instrumental in developing the standards and quality of health care offered by Adventist health institutions in

the Far Eastern Division (now the Northern Asia-Pacific Division and Southern Asia-Pacific Division). He served his country, his community, and the world church.

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