

Peñola, Felicissimo "Felmo" Peñaflor

(1920–2011)

SHAOMAE DALE P. VILLARUBEN

Shaomae Dale P. Villaruben is the secretary to the president and to the education department at Central Visayan Conference in Bulacao, Talisay City, Cebu. She is married to Evin M. Villaruben and has two children.

Felicissimo "Felmo" Peñaflor Peñola was a hospital business manager, pastor, church administrator, and author.

Early Life

Felicissimo Peñaflor Peñola was born on August 15, 1920, in Ozamis City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines. He was the son of Gonzalo Peñola and Felisa Peñaflor Peñola. His early years were spent at the family's ranch in Kolambugan, Lanao del Norte, and the family later moved to the City of Iligan. The family converted from the Catholic faith to the Adventist faith in April 1933. At age 12, Felicissimo was baptized into the faith through his father's influence and guidance. At age 28, while attending Philippine Union College, he asked and was rebaptized. When he joined the Philippine military, his drill sergeant gave him the nickname Felmo.¹

Education and Marriage

Felmo P. Peñola received a bachelor of science in business with an emphasis in accounting at Philippine Union College in Baesa, Caloocan City (now Adventist University of the Philippines in Putingkahoy, Cavite). He also studied English, *Pilipino*, and Spanish. His training and experience were in accounting, secondary teaching, and institutional management. At age 34, on May 31, 1954, he married Fortunita Colegado Manatad, who was born on October 14, 1920. They were blessed with two boys: Felmo M. Peñola, Jr., who was born on March 9, 1955, in Mountain View College, Valencia City, Bukidnon; and Lemuel M. Peñola, who was born on September 15, 1957, at Mindanao Sanitarium and Hospital, Iligan City.²

Career and Ministry

Before working for the church, Peñola worked as a foreman with the Bureau of Public Works in Lanao, an army officer in the Philippine Army (becoming a Bataan Death March survivor), a collections clerk in municipal government, and, during his college days at Philippine Union College, a bookkeeper. Peñola started

denominational work in March 1952 at age 31. He began his professional career as an accountant and cashier at Lakeside Clinic, serving from March 1952 to April 1953.³ He was a business manager at Mindanao Sanitarium and Hospital from April to December 1959 and later accepted a call to be secretary/treasurer of Northern Mindanao Mission, serving from January 1960 to February 1963.⁴

Adventist denominational work involves transferring from one institution to another when there is a need or calling. This did not worry Peñola as his family willingly moved to where he was called to serve. In March 1963, he received a call to serve as secretary/treasurer at Central Luzon Mission, and he did so until December 1964. In January 1965, Peñola became the auditor of the North Philippine Union Mission in Luzon. Peñola remained in the position until December 1967, when he was called to the Central Philippine Union Mission in Visayas as union auditor.⁵ He served as union auditor from January 1968 to November 1973.⁶ On December 9, 1972, at age 53, he was ordained as a pastor. This led to his calling as president of Central Visayan Mission from December 1973 to November 1975.⁷ Pastor Peñola was the 6th president of Central Visayan Mission. From there, he was called to West Visayan Mission as president and served from December 1975 to December 1977.⁸ He returned to Central Philippine Union Mission to serve as stewardship director, home and family service director, and trust services director from January 1978 to October 1982.⁹

With God's leading and guidance, Pastor Peñola overcame all the challenges he faced and became successful in his leadership. During his presidency at Central Visayan Mission, Pastor Peñola began writing and published articles about the things he learned and experienced doing the Lord's work.¹⁰

Later Life

Felicissimo Peñaflor Peñola remained employed in Central Philippine Union Mission as a stewardship director before retiring at age 62 on November 1, 1982. After his retirement, he and his wife moved to the United States to be near their children. Felmo and Fortunita remained active in church work, helping in evangelism for their home church, Central Filipino SDA Church. He served the SDA Church for 30 years and six months.¹¹ Felicissimo Peñaflor Peñola died in Los Angeles, California, at age 91 on May 29, 2011.¹²

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. Felmo M. Peñola, Jr., interview by author, through Facebook Messenger, August 1, 2017.
2. Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, CPUC Secretariat, *Worker's Record of Felmo Peñaflor Peñola* (Gorordo Avenue, Cebu City, Philippines: Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists).
3. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1953), 292, 294.
4. M. M. Claveria, "Our Fourth Biennial Session," *Far Eastern Division Outlook*, February 1, 1960, 12-13.
5. Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, CPUC Secretariat, *Worker's Record of Felmo Peñaflor Peñola* (Gorordo Avenue, Cebu City, Philippines: Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists).
6. Florencio M. Arrogante, "New Academy Faculty Line Up in Central Philippines," *Far Eastern Division Outlook*, June 1968, 8.; and Juanito R. Obregon, "Parent-Home Seminars Convene in Central Visayas," *Far Eastern Division Outlook*, April 1, 1971, 7.
7. Felmo P. Peñola, "Remodeled Church Dedicated Again," *Far Eastern Division Outlook*, April 1, 1975, 8-9.; and Felmo P. Peñola, "Churches Are Dedicated," *ARH*, June 26, 1975, 20.
8. Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, CPUC Secretariat, *Worker's Record of Felmo Peñaflor Peñola* (Gorordo Avenue, Cebu City, Philippines: Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists).
9. *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1983), 126.
10. See Peñola's two articles in the list of sources.

11. Felmo M. Peñola, Jr., interview by author, through Facebook Messenger, August 1, 2017.

12. Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, CPUC Secretariat, Far Eastern Division Retirement Confirmation (Gorordo Avenue, Cebu City, Philippines: Central Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists).

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