

# Patrick, Arthur Nelson (1934–2013)

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LYNDEN J. ROGERS

Lynden J. Rogers, Ph.D. (University of Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia), is a physicist and currently the head of Science/Maths at Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, Australia, where he has served for 38 years. His principal research interest concerns the interaction between the Adventist/Christian faith and science. He is married to Julie and has three adult children and five grandchildren.

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## Early Life

Born in Cooranbong, NSW, Arthur was the youngest child of Bertha Emma (née Pocock), who as a girl had known Ellen White in Cooranbong, and William

Nelson Patrick. His siblings were Joe (eldest), Ivy, and Alice. He later acquired a younger half-sibling, John Patrick. At the age of four Arthur, with his mother and the older children, relocated to the Wauchope district, NSW. Accordingly, most of his childhood and adolescent years were spent in a bush setting, where he attended a small district school for four years and assisted with the family dairy herd. He also worked with Joe in the big timber (for which that district is known), becoming adept with his “Kelly” axe and the peg-and-rake crosscut saw. Quiet moments would find the young Patrick catching snakes or riding his horse, Donny, a .22 rifle over his back and lost in bush poetry, much of which he learned in the saddle between his home and the timber<sup>1</sup>

## Education and Qualifications

At the age of 15, while he was cutting up a huge log, Patrick registered the distinct conviction that he should go back to Cooranbong, to the Australasian Missionary College (AMC, now Avondale University College) and take up formal secondary school study.<sup>2</sup> Alternately working at his books and at various jobs to support his education, the years 1950–1953 saw him lay the academic foundations that would later serve him well. His Leaving Certificate results would have taken him to Sydney University, but in 1954 he enrolled instead in tertiary studies at AMC. He graduated from primary teaching in 1956 and the following year from the BA (Theology) degree,



Arthur Nelson Patrick

Photo courtesy of Milton Hook.

which had been newly offered under the auspices of Pacific Union College.<sup>3</sup>

In 1970 he undertook postgraduate study at the seminary at Berrien Springs. By August 1972, after receiving special permission to overload, Patrick had completed a four-quarter MA in systematic theology and a nine-quarter MDiv. Unfortunately, the doctoral program in which he wanted to enroll was not yet accredited, so following the suggestion of the seminary dean, W.G.C. Murdoch, Patrick undertook his DMin at the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. He later completed an Australian M.Lit. and Ph.D. Patrick's qualifications are listed below.<sup>4</sup>

Diploma of Teaching, Avondale College, NSW, 1956

B.A. (Theology), Avondale College, NSW, 1957

M.A. (Systematic Theology—cum laude), Andrews University, U.S.A., 1972

M.Div., "A Study of Methods Used to Secure and Maintain an Audience  
in Seventh-day Adventist Evangelism," Andrews University, U.S.A., 1972

D.Min. (Biblical Studies), Christian Theological Seminary, U.S.A., 1973

M.Lit., "Ellen Gould White and the Australian Woman, 1891–1900,  
University of New England, NSW, 1984

Ph.D., "Christianity and Culture in Colonial Australia: Selected Catholic,  
Anglican, Wesleyan and Adventist Perspectives, 1891–1900,"  
University of Newcastle, 1992

## Marriage and Family

Just a little more than a year after leaving Avondale, on January 14, 1959, Patrick married college friend Joan Merle Howse in the Papanui church, New Zealand. It was a union that would not only produce three additional New Zealanders (Zanita Faye, Adrielle Joy, and Leighton Ward), but enrich the lives of countless associates, students, and church members. Toward the end of his life Arthur affirmed that this was "the best thing he ever did."<sup>5</sup>

## Employment and Service

Following his ministerial graduation in 1957 Patrick was appointed to Christchurch, SNZ, as pastor evangelist.<sup>6</sup> In 1961 his employment was suspended by the conference executive committee as a result of his willingness to readmit a church member who had earlier been disfellowshipped because of "an alleged connection with (Robert) Brinsmead."<sup>7</sup> During this time he became a "rabbiter," supporting the family by shooting rabbits for the Rabbit Board of South Otago, SNZ, an occupation in which he was well practiced and highly proficient.<sup>8</sup> He was accepted back into ministry nine months later, partly because of the support of Desmond Ford.<sup>9</sup>

In 1966 the family moved to ministry in North New Zealand, and two years later to ministry in the USA. Following his American studies Patrick returned, toward the end of 1973, to Avondale College, as a lecturer in theology. A few years later, following the establishment of the new Ellen G. White Research Center, Patrick was appointed as its first curator, a position from which he was removed in 1983, following questions concerning his orthodoxy.<sup>10</sup>

At the invitation of James J. C. Cox, then Avondale's principal, Patrick then became Avondale's academic registrar,<sup>11</sup> a position that was interrupted twice: by a year as senior pastor at Avondale College church, and another year's study leave. He then relocated to Sydney as senior chaplain at the Sydney Adventist Hospital. His last full-time employment, which extended past his official retirement, was back in the USA, at La Sierra University. His official employment history is shown below.<sup>12</sup>

1958 (January)–1961 (September) minister, S. New Zealand Conference

1961 (October)–1962 (June) leave of absence

1962 (July)–1966 (January) minister, S. New Zealand Conference

1966 (February)–1967 (December) minister, N. New Zealand Conference

1968 (February)–1970 (May) district minister, Illinois Conference, USA

1970 (July)–1973 (August) study leave

1973 (September)–1975 (December) lecturer in theology and church history, Avondale College, NSW

1976 (January)–1983 (December) lecturer/senior lecturer, Avondale College, and first curator, E. G. White/SDA Research Center, South Pacific Division of SDAs, Avondale College, NSW

1984 (January)–1988 (January) registrar, Avondale College

1988 (February)–1989 (January) senior pastor, Avondale College church

1989 (February)–1989 (December) study leave

1990 (January)–1991 (December) registrar, Avondale College

1992 (January)–1996 (October) senior chaplain, Sydney Adventist Hospital; formal retirement in June 1997

1996 (November)–1998 (December) visiting associate professor in church history and pastoral ministry, La Sierra University, USA

1999–2013 adjunct lecturer in church history; and, since 2008, honorary senior research fellow, Avondale College Advanced Education; occasional visiting fellow, La Sierra University

## Retirement and Later Life

After ceasing full-time employment, Patrick delivered many guest lectures at Avondale College of Higher Education, where he was an honorary senior research fellow, and at La Sierra University. He also presented papers at various conferences and Adventist forums. In addition, he was involved with the supervision of PhD students.

He fought a successful battle against cancer for some 12 years, only to be eventually diagnosed with an aggressive and untreatable abdominal malignancy. He had sat at too many such bedsides not to know what lay ahead, yet his calm acceptance, his faith, and his courage inspired all. Arthur is buried at the Avondale Cemetery.

## Contribution

Patrick's winsome way with both the spoken and written word was first noted during his Avondale student days, and his word craft became legendary. During his years as a lecturer at Avondale he performed many student weddings. These were always fresh and personal. His engagement with the wider community was demonstrated by a large number of weddings and funerals conducted in this wider context.

He began writing for publication at Avondale in the 1950s and this continued for six decades. Patrick's family forebears had enjoyed close and beneficial association with Ellen White in Cooranbong during her Australian years. He credited this circumstance, along with his appointment as the first curator of the new E. G. White/SDA Research Center at Avondale College in 1976, as providing much of the impetus that directed his research interests into Adventist historical studies, particularly with respect to the role of Ellen White.<sup>13</sup> Certainly Patrick's main contribution was in this field.

The SDA Periodical Indexes list many titles from his prolific pen. Many of his scholarly articles may also be found listed on <https://research.avondale.edu.au/> and his own website, <https://adventiststudies.com/>, which was commenced late in 2011. His last article was posted with characteristic determination just days before his death. He referred to it as his "last post." His book chapters and a number of his most significant articles are listed below.

Patrick received a number of honors during his life, and just in the last few days before his death he was advised that he had been awarded the prestigious Charles E. Weniger medallion.

Patrick was quick to recognize unfairness or lack of charity in the way certain individuals and groups were treated, particularly by the church he loved. This led him to expend himself on unpopular issues of social justice, such as the equality of women in the SDA organization, protection against abuse and exploitation of all kinds, and the better understanding of homosexuality. Although irenic by nature, he could at times, when he judged it necessary, present his view with some force.

Looking further ahead than most, he also possessed keen insight into more academic issues facing Adventism, such as developing an adequate understanding of the ministry of Ellen White, correctly contextualizing the theological positions of our denominational past and exploring the interface between Christianity and science. Patrick was totally unafraid of evidence. He was the ability to analyze the data calmly and perceptively and masterfully synthesize a response. Always his quest was to help his church grow in understanding.

## Publications and Papers by Arthur Patrick

### Books and Book Chapters

"Doctrine and Deed: Adventism's Encounter With Its Society in Nineteenth-Century Australia." In *Symposium on Adventist History in the South Pacific 1885-1918*, ed. A. Ferch. Warburton, VIC: Signs Publishing Company, 1986, 19–29.

*Christianity and Culture in Colonial Australia*. Sydney: Fast Books, 1993.

*The San: 100 Years of Christian Caring*. Wahroonga, NSW: Sydney Adventist Hospital, 2003.

"Why Should Christians Practice Environmental Stewardship If This World Will Be Destroyed?" In *Entrusted: Christians and Environmental Care*, ed. S. Dunbar, L. J. Gibson, and H. M. Rasi. Argentina: Adventus International University Publishers, 2013, 45–52.

"Sydney Sanitarium." In *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, ed. D. Fortin and J. Moon. Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald, 2013, 1206, 1207.

"Learning From Ellen White's Perception and Use of Scripture: Toward an Adventist Hermeneutic for the Twenty-first Century." In *Hermeneutics, Intertextuality and the Contemporary Meaning of Scripture*, ed. Ross Cole and Paul Peterson. Cooranbong, NSW: Avondale Academic Press, 2014, 117–139.

"Author." In *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet*, ed. Terrie D. Aamodt, Gary Land, and Ronald Numbers. New York: Oxford, 2014, 91–109.

"Ellen White's Ministry." In *The Future of Adventism: Theology, Society and Experience*, ed. Gary Chartier. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Griffin and Lash, 2015, 185–222.

### Articles in Refereed Journals

#### SDA Journals

"Is Preaching in Trouble?" *Ministry* 46, no. 8 (August 1973): 4–6.

"A Fourth Book of Chronicles: Review of the Australian Years." *Adventist Heritage: Journal of Adventist History* 10, no. 2 (Fall 1985): 62–64.

"Women and the Adventist Work in the South Pacific Division." *Adventist Heritage* 11, no. 2 (Fall 1986): 3–15.

"Founding Mothers: Women and the Adventist Work in the South Pacific Division." *Adventist Heritage: Journal of Adventist History* 11, no. 2 (Fall 1986): 3–15.

"The Adventist Pastor and the Ordination of Women." *Ministry* 62, no. 4 (April 1989): 9–12.

"Does Our Past Embarrass Us?" *Ministry* 64, no. 4 (April 1991): 7–10.

"Church Beginnings." *Adventist Heritage: Journal of Adventist History* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1993): 30–40.

"Ellen White: Mother of the Church in the South Pacific." *Adventist Heritage: Journal of Adventist History* 16, no. 1 (1993): 30–40.

"Are Adventists Evangelical?" *Ministry* 68, no. 2 (February 1995): 14–17.

"William Miller: A Focused Life." *Adventist Heritage: Journal of Adventist History* 17, no. 2 (1997): 22, 45, 46.

"History for a New Generation." *Adventist Heritage: Journal of Adventist History* 17, no. 2 (1997): 22, 45, 46.

"Therapeutic Choice or Religious Liberty: Christian Science and American Culture." *Spectrum: The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums* 32, no. 1 (Winter 2004): 74–76.

"Prophets Are Human: Are Humans Prophets?" *Spectrum: The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums* 33, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 73, 74.

"Glacier View and the Australasian Ministers." *Spectrum* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 66–71. (This was a summary of the paper presented to Sydney Adventist Forum on October 22, 2005.)

"Moore's Light on an Adventist Trouble." *Adventist Today* 14, no. 3 (May/June 2006): 20, 22, 23.

"Exploring Adventist Identity: 'Who is the Seventh-day Adventist?' Report on Bible Congress 2006: a Conference in the South Pacific Division." *Adventist Today* 14, no. 3 (May/June 2006): 6, 8, 9.

"Christianity and a 'Good Society' in Australia: A First Response to Stuart Piggin's Murdoch Lecture." *Teach: Journal of Christian Education* 1, no. 1 (2007): 45–49.

"Ellet J. Waggoner: Beyond the Myth, the Man." [spectrummagazine.org](http://spectrummagazine.org), January 11, 2009.

"Equipping the School Chaplain: A Reflection." *Teach: Journal of Christian Education* 4, no. 1 (2010): 58, 59.

## Other Journals

"Seventh-day Adventist History in the South Pacific: A Review of Sources." *Journal of Religious History* 14, no. 3 (1987): 307–326.

"An Adventist and an Evangelical in Australia? The Case of Ellen White in the 1890s." *Lucas: An Evangelical History Review* 12 (1991): 42–53.

"Contextualising Recent Tensions in Seventh-day Adventism: 'A Constant Process of Struggle and Rebirth?'" *Journal of Religious History* 34, no. 3 (September 2010): 272–288.

Coauthored with D. Reynaud: "Idealisation, Conflict and Maturation: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Historiography." *Lucas: An Evangelical History Review* 2, no 3 (2011): 5–18.

## Popular Articles (a selection)

"God Is My Captain." *Review and Herald* 135, no. 25 (June 19, 1958): 5.

"New Zealand." *Liberty* 58, no. 6 (November-December 1963): 18, 19.

"All That Her Writings Claimed Her to Be." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 70, no. 35 (August 29, 1966): 10, 11.

"Onward and Upward." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 71, no. 9 (February 27, 1967): 12, 13.

"Profile of an Opponent." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 75, no. 14 (April 5, 1971): 10, 11.

"There Are Two Ways for Travelers." *The Inter-American Messenger* 48, no. 3 (July-September 1971): 3, 4.

"Three Key Issues in the Relationship Between Parents and Youth." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 78, no. 28 (July 15, 1974): 10, 11.

"Prophetic Guidance Workshop." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 87, no. 26 (June 28, 1982): 13 (written by ANP and cosigned by Arthur Duffy).

"After Seven Years: Ellen White and Adventist Heritage." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 88, no. 28 (July 23, 1983): 12.

"Landmarks and Landscape." *Adventist Review* 160, no. 43 (October 27, 1983): 4.

"Worship at Avondale College." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 89, no. 24 (June 30, 1984): 9.

"Early Adventists and Sabbath Reform." *Australasian Record and Advent World Survey* 90, no. 21 (June 1, 1985): 6, 7.

"The Ordination of Deaconesses." *Adventist Review* 163, no. 3 (January 16, 1986): 18.

"An Australian Picture of Jesus." *South Pacific Record and Advent World Survey* 92, no. 14 (April 18, 1987): 5.

"SDAs and the World: Help With Decisions." *Record* 92, no. 39 (October 10, 1987): 4, 5.

"Adventists and the Ordination of Women." *Record* 93, no. 42 (October 29, 1988): 4, 5.

"Adventism—Shaped by the Laity." *Adventist Professional* 1 (1988): 20–22.

"The Desire of Ages: Under the Microscope." *Record* 94, no. 14 (April 15, 1989): 6, 7.

"Putting Peter Together." *Adventist Review* 166, no. 19 (May 11, 1989): 12–14.

"What It Means to Be an Adventist." *Record* 95, no. 39 (October 6, 1990): 7.

"Ellen White: Disturber of the Peace?" *Signs of the Times* 106, no. 11 (November 1991): 17–19.

"Ellen White in Australia: Why Adventists are Celebrating the Centenary of Her Arrival." *Adventist Review* 168, no. 50 (December 12, 1991): 16–18.

"Science, Medicine and Faith." *Record* 98, no. 26 (July 10, 1993): 10, 11.

"Revisiting Millerism." *Record* 99, no. 15 (April 23, 1994): 8, 9.

"Stocks and Sunday Laws." *Record* 99, no. 23 (June 18, 1994): 6, 7.

"Forgotten Foremothers." *Record* 100, no. 1 (January 14, 1995): 12.

"Early Adventists and the Holy Spirit." *Record* 104, no. 47 (December 4, 1999): 5, 6.

"Peril and Promise." *Record* 104, no. 47 (December 4, 1999): 7, 8.

"Ellen White's Legacy." *Record* 105, no. 33 (August 26, 2000): 4, 5.

"Doctrinal Development Studied." *Record* 108, no. 10 (March 15, 2003): 10.

"Mt. Exmouth and Adventist Teaching." *Good News for Adventists* (March 2006): 7–10.

"Adventist Landmarks and the Message of the Third Angel." *Good News for Adventists* (June 2006): 5–9.

"Perennial Crisis: The Aftermath of 1888." *Good News for Adventists* (September 2006): 8–11.

"Interpreting 1888, 1950–1988: Thirty Years of Adventist War." *Good News for Adventists* (December 2006): 13, 20–23.

Coauthored with Nathan Brown, "Lectures Share Research on 1919 Conference." *Record* (January 24, 2009): 7.

"'Radical' Baptists: Thank God for What They Teach Us!" *Signs of the Times* (Australia) (March 2009): 26–31.

"The Story of the Baptists." *Signs of the Times* (USA) (March 2009): 17–21.

"Revisiting Waggoner and 1888." *Record* (February 7, 2009): 10.

"Revisiting Hook's Biography of Ford: A Lantern on the Bow." *Good News for Adventists* (March 2009): 12, 13.

"Review of *Who Watches? Who Cares? Misadventures in Stewardship*, by Douglass Hackleman." *Good News for Adventists* (March 2009): 20, 21.



"John and Charles Wesley." *Signs of the Times* (Australia) (June 2009): 12–15; "John and Charles Wesley." *Signs of the Times* (USA) (June 2009): 20–23.

"Charles Fitch: Herald of Christ's Return." *Signs of the Times* (Australia) (July 2009): 58–61; "Charles Fitch: Herald of Christ's Return." *Signs of the Times* (USA) (July 2009): 38–41.

"Desire of Ages." *Signs of the Times* (Australia) (August 2009): 24–28; "Desire of Ages." *Signs of the Times* (USA) (August 2009): 20–24.

"William Miller and 800 Letters." *Record* (May 15, 2010): 18.

"Birth of Avondale." *Record* (July 3, 2010): 18.

"Birth of the Division." *Record* (July 31, 2010): 20.

"Advent Movement Gathers Momentum." *Record* 116, no. 4 (March 5, 2011): 20.

"Fresh Light on William Miller." *Record* 118, no. 2 (February 2, 2013): 14, 15; record.net.au.

"Contrasting Perceptions, Their Impact and Potential." *Good News for Adventists* (March 2013): 10–22.

"Australian Seventh-day Adventists and 1980: Toward an Historical Perspective and Normalisation of Relationships." *Good News for Adventists* (December 2013): 2–12.

## Conference Presentations

"Visioning and Re-Visioning Seventh-day Adventist Tertiary Education in Australia: A Centennial Assessment of Avondale College." Inaugural Murdoch lecture, Avondale College, August 1997.<sup>14</sup>

"Re-Visioning the Role of Ellen White for Seventh-day Adventists Beyond 2000." Paper presented in San Francisco at the annual meeting of the Adventist Society for Religious Studies in November 1997.<sup>15</sup> This presentation was repeated for the San Diego Adventist Forum in January 1998.<sup>16</sup> "Continuity and Change in Seventh-day Adventist Doctrine and Practice." Paper presented at the San Diego Adventist Forum, July 2003.<sup>17</sup>

"Glacier View and the Australasian Ministers." Paper presented to Sydney Adventist Forum Seminar marking 25 years since Glacier View on October 22, 2005, held at Epping Boys High, Sydney).<sup>18</sup>

"The *Questions on Doctrine* Event: Contrasting Perceptions, Their Impact and Potential." Paper presented at the *Questions on Doctrine* 50th Anniversary Conference, Andrews University, October 25, 2007.<sup>19</sup>

"The Sanctuary/Investigative Judgement, 1844–2008: A Short, Documented History of an Adventist Teaching." Paper presented to Sydney Adventist Forum, November 1, 2008.<sup>20</sup>

"The Life and Times of Ellen White: Fact and Faith in the First Scholarly Introduction to the Adventist prophet." Paper presented at the San Diego Adventist Forum, November 14, 2009.<sup>21</sup> An alternative title for this

presentation of “The Reparenting of Seventh-day Adventists? Reflections on the Historical Development, Substance, and Potential of Ellen White Studies” is cited at [research.avonlea.edu.au](http://research.avonlea.edu.au).<sup>22</sup> “The Ordination of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church: Towards an Historical Overview.” Presented at Avondale College of Higher Education to Sydney Adventist Forum, August 14, 2010.<sup>23</sup>

## Resource Documents

“A Brief, Annotated Introduction to the Field of Adventist Studies for Higher Degree Students.” Avondale College (June 2009); a printed pamphlet and web document updating “Adventist Studies: An Annotated Introduction for Higher Degree Students” (May 2006).<sup>24</sup>

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## NOTES

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2. "God Is My Captain," *ARH* 135, no. 25 (June 19, 1958): 5.
3. Patrick family documents, personal collection of the author.
4. Curriculum Vitae: Arthur N. Patrick (2011), personal collection of the author.
5. Rogers, Life Sketch of Arthur Nelson Patrick, 2013.
6. South Pacific Division Personnel Report: Arthur Nelson Patrick (1995), personal collection of the author.
7. Arthur N. Patrick, "Encircling Gloom, Kindly Light: Seeing Glacier View With the Lantern of History," Post 22 (posted November 10, 2011), Adventist Studies, accessed May 22, 2019, <https://adventiststudies.com/page/11/>.
8. Joan Patrick, private correspondence with author, May 20, 2019.
9. Rogers, Life Sketch of Arthur Nelson Patrick, March 12, 2013; from personal communication from both D. Ford and ANP.
10. Arthur N. Patrick, personal communication to author, March 1, 2013. Also see Arthur N. Patrick to K. S. Parmenter, November 14, 1983, Avondale College Adventist Heritage Centre, in Articles by Arthur Patrick, Box 2096.
11. Arthur N. Patrick, personal communication to author, March 1, 2013. Also see Arthur N. Patrick to James J. C. Cox, November 14, 1983, and Avondale College Adventist Heritage Centre, in Articles by Arthur Patrick, Box 2096.
12. South Pacific Division Personnel Report: Arthur Nelson Patrick (1995); also Patrick family documents held in the personal collection of the author; also John Chermiside to Tom Ludowici, May 18, 1995, official SPD letter, personal collection of the author.
13. Arthur N. Patrick, "How I Drifted Into Adventist Studies/Ellen White Studies," Post 19 (posted November 7, 2011), Adventist Studies, accessed May 22, 2019. Also Arthur N. Patrick, "Andrews University After 36 Years," Post 95 (posted January 25, 2013), Adventist Studies, accessed May 22, 2019, <https://adventiststudies.com/page/11/>.
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16. San Diego Adventist Forum, accessed May 20, 2019, <https://Sandiegoadventistforum.org/node/39>.
17. Ibid.; Also see *Adventist Today*, September-October, 2003, 16, 17.
18. Avondale College Adventist Heritage Centre, Box 2338, DVD 470; also at PUC and in the personal collection of the author.
19. Published on SDA Net, accessed on May 20, 2019, [www.sdanet.org/atissue](http://www.sdanet.org/atissue) and on [www.qod.andrews.edu](http://www.qod.andrews.edu).
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