



Elwyn and Narelle Currow

Photo courtesy of Steve Currow.

Currow, Elwin George (1926–2016)

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Stephen Currow, D.Min. (Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, the United States), is the vice president (academic) at Avondale College of Higher Education, Cooranbong, NSW, Australia. Trained as a pastor, he has worked in various ministry positions including pastor, lecturer, and administrator in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the United Kingdom. His research interests and publications have been in the areas of congregational life, youth ministry and Adventist mission history. He is married to Narisa and has two adult daughters.

Elwin George Currow was a doctor of medicine who not only had a distinguished medical career as a hospital administrator but also served the Seventh-day Adventist Church on significant boards and committees in the South Pacific Division.

Early Years

Elwin George Currow was born in Auckland, New Zealand, on September 16, 1926¹ while his parents, George and Dulce Currow, were teaching at the church school.² He had one sister, Elaine June Burns (1929-2019).³ After just eighteen months in New Zealand (Auckland and Gisborne), Elwin's father returned to Australia. Most of Elwin's childhood and youth were spent in Cooranbong or Sydney.⁴

Employment

In 1948 Elwin graduated from the University of Sydney with a MBBS⁵ and was appointed to Maitland Hospital where he served for a year, followed by locum appointments at Bundaberg Hospital and Greta Migrant Camp.⁶ On May 4, 1950, Elwin and Rachel Narelle Cox were married by Dr. W. G. Murdoch in the Concord SDA Church.⁷ For the next four and a half years, Elwin was a senior registered medical officer and surgical registrar at Royal Newcastle Hospital.⁸ Elwin spent two years in London and was awarded the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) in 1956.⁹ During their time in England, their first child, Helen, was born. He returned to Australia and spent a year at Concord Repatriation Hospital, during which time their second child, Kathryn, was born. In 1958 Elwin was appointed as the superintendent and surgical specialist of Maitland Hospital.¹⁰ Their last two children, Stephen and David, were born while in Maitland.

Most of Elwin's working life was at the nearby Royal Newcastle Hospital where he served as the chief executive officer (CEO) for 21 years, retiring at the end of 1986.¹¹ To assist him in this role, Elwin became a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Medical Administrators (FRACMA) in 1968.¹² He also was appointed a surveyor for the Australian Council of Hospital Surveyors (ACHS) in 1978 and served until 1997.¹³ During this time Elwin was involved in the development of the Outpatients Building and the establishment of the medical school at the University of Newcastle and associated hospital services in the David Madison Clinical Services Building.¹⁴

Coinciding with the transition of nursing education from hospital-based training to a tertiary program, Elwin served for around ten years on the Council of Newcastle College of Advanced Education as it morphed into the Hunter Institute of Higher Education to become part of the University of Newcastle.¹⁵ From 1985 Elwin served as vice president of the council¹⁶ to become the president of the Council of the Hunter Institute of Higher Education in 1989¹⁷ and subsequently a member of the interim Council for the University of Newcastle from November 1989.¹⁸

Elwin was also a member of the Hunter District Water Board for eight years¹⁹ and a member of the Newcastle Rotary Club for twenty years.²⁰

Contribution

As an active church member all his life, Elwin served the corporate church in a number of significant roles including being a member of a number of executive committees at conference,²¹ union²² and division levels. Having served on the Executive Committee of the Australasian Division for the quinquennium, Elwin was elected to be a delegate at the 1980 General Conference Session in Dallas.²³ He also served on a Site Development Subcommittee of Avondale College Board in the early 1970s,²⁴ as a board trustee of Sydney Adventist Hospital for ten years in the 1990s²⁵ and on the NNSW Conference Retirement Villages Management Committee.²⁶

In his retirement Elwin relieved the medical officer at Sopas Adventist Hospital in Enga Province of Papua New Guinea for six months.²⁷ He also worked for eighteen months as the acting CEO of the Adventist Warburton Health Care Centre and Hospital.²⁸ Elwin also spent hours researching scholarly perspectives on the prophetic book, The Revelation of Jesus Christ and published his findings as *Your Revelation Study Companion* in 2007.²⁹ Since 2008 an award for the best performing student in New Testament Apocalyptic Studies at Avondale University College was sponsored by Elwin, until his death, and continues in his honor.³⁰

Final Years

For almost fifty years, Elwin and Narelle were members of Hamilton (NSW) Church --a church founded during Ellen White's time in Australia.³¹ He died on October 19, 2016, and Narelle died on October 21, 2016. Their memorial service was held on October 24, 2016, in the Hamilton church.³²

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