

Henry, Martin (1958–2019)

DYHANN BUDDOO-FLETCHER

Dyhann Buddoo-Fletcher, B.A. (Northern Caribbean University, Mandeville, Jamaica), is the administrative assistant to the president of the East Jamaica Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. She is actively involved in the communication department of the church in Jamaica and has written news stories published in local newspapers as well as various Adventist websites and periodicals.

Martin Emmerson Dwight Henry was an evangelist, teacher, researcher, and author from Jamaica.

Early Life, Education and Family

Martin Emmerson Dwight Henry, the last of 12 children of Rhoda and Alexander Henry, was born January 24, 1958, in the farming village of Somerset, nestled in the eastern St. Andrew hills in Jamaica, West Indies. His mother Rhoda (nee Morgan), born October 18, 1910, was a housewife. His father, Alexander, born September 27, 1903, was a farmer.¹

In 1970 Martin, at the age of 12, sat for his Common Entrance Examination at the Somerset Primary School. He received high marks that landed him a full scholarship at the Morant Bay High School (MBHS) located in the parish of St. Thomas. There he distinguished himself as a scholar with 20 prizes for first place in various subject areas.

While at MBHS he met several Peace Corp volunteers. A program run by the United States government that reached Jamaica in 1962, it introduced Martin to classical music, the arts, and the concept of voluntary service to which he committed himself throughout his life. In 1975 he graduated from MBHS, receiving the Best Academic Performance Award.

Thereafter, he attended the EXED Community College (now called Excelsior Community College) in Kingston. In 1977 he received distinctions in the General Certificate Education (GCE) exam in the following subjects: physics, development of civilization, Caribbean history, and the use of the English language. He also represented EXED on the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation's (JBC) annual Schools' Challenge Quiz for two years in a row. From there, he earned a government scholarship to study at the University of the West Indies (UWI) where he read for a B.Sc. in natural sciences with a double major in chemistry and zoology. Subsequently, he pursued a Diploma in Teaching Education in the area of biology from UWI in 1984, followed by a Diploma in Journalism and Short Story Writing from the International Correspondence School in the United States. Additionally, his insatiable appetite for education led him to pursue graduate studies in which he earned an M.A. degree in communication studies with distinction from the Caribbean School of Media and Communication (CARIMAC) at UWI in 1997.²

Martin met Jacqueline (nee Garvey), a nurse, in 1981 when he was 23 years old. They got married in 1984 at the Hagley Park Seventh-day Adventist Church. Their union of 34 years produced Lawrie and Theodore. In addition, the couple legally adopted his wife's cousin, Joanique; fostered his grand-niece, Tamara, and his nephews-in-law, Samuel and Matthew, for a period of time. Jacqueline, his wife, is a nurse practitioner and lectures at the UWI School of Nursing in Kingston.³

His Service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Jamaica

R. U. Daughma baptized Martin into the Somerset Seventh-day Adventist Church at the age of 11, and the boy immediately became involved in church activities. Throughout his lifetime he held membership in or affiliations with the following Seventh-day Adventist congregations in Jamaica: Somerset, Morant Bay, Greenwich Town, Washington Gardens, Brown's Town, Meadowvale, Everton Park, and Guava Gap churches. His church leadership roles included youth congress delegate at the young age of 14 and Sabbath School teacher at the age of 16 at the Morant Bay church.⁴

Martin was ordained as an elder in the 1980's at the Meadowvale Adventist Church. His services continued as Adventist Youth leader and elder at Brown's Town, and first elder at Guava Gap for a total of 15 years. During this period he was involved in a church building project.

Beginning in the 1960s, he also actively participated in numerous evangelistic programs with veteran ministers such as Pastor Levi Davidson at Somerset; Pastor Roy Gordon at Ramble; Pastor Roy Ashmeade at Morant Bay; Pastor K. G. Vaz at Meadowvale; and Pastor H. G. Rainey (from the United States of America) at Hagley Park Road, among others.

Loving evangelism, Martin personally presented several series, such as in 1978 at Greenwich Town/Union Gardens Adventist Church. However, Guava Gap Church was where he conducted the most in 1993, 2015, 2017, and in 2000, the Millennium Prophecy Series. In 2018 he was part of a live-streamed prophetic series.

His role in church building included the Somerset, Meadowvale, and Guava Gap churches. In addition, he helped research and write the histories for those congregations.

Because of his extensive knowledge and expertise, Henry served on several boards and committees in the Jamaica Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. They were:

The Kingsway High School Board of Management from September 1995 to August 1997

Initiator and chair of the East Jamaica Conference \$100 Million Development project, circa 2005

The Good Samaritan Inn Management Committee from 2010 to 2014

East Jamaica Conference Communication Committee from 2010 to 2014

East Jamaica Conference Executive Committee from 2002 to 2006 and 2014 to May 21, 2019.

Member of the Northern Caribbean University Media Board, 2016-2019

Chairman, East Jamaica Conference-wide Development Management Council April 2019 to May 2019⁵

Church Publications and Initiatives

Initiator and editor of the Spiritual War Series of five booklets extracted from *The Great Controversy*, circa 2005.

Initiative of Jamaican Church Music.

Columnist for the *Jamaica Gleaner*, writing extensively on moral and ethical issues and current affairs from a Seventh-day Adventist perspective.

Researching and writing church histories: Somerset, Meadowvale, and Guava Gap⁶

Teaching Career

His work life began as a Jamaica Movement for Advancement Literacy (JAMAL) Level IV teacher at Greenwich Town SDA church in 1977. Next, he was a biology and chemistry teacher at the Seventh-day Adventist owned and operated Kingsway High School in 1979; then a Biology teacher at Ardenne High School in 1984. Later he also taught at the following institutions of learning: Charlie Smith Comprehensive High School; Brown's Town Community College; St Hilda's, Westwood, and York Castle High Schools; HEART Trust NTA Evening School; Priory High School; Mico Teachers' College; University of Technology; CARIMAC; part-time faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences at UWI; the Mona School of Business Masters in business administration and Executive Masters in business administration programs; and as director for the Priory Adult College of Education (PACE).

He was the co-author of "Study for Results;" Editor/producer of "Readings for Fundamentals of Communication;" and contributor to the "Manual for Fundamentals of Communication" at UTech. An active member of the Association of Science Teachers in Jamaica and founding president of the Northern Association of Science Teachers branch, he served as an assistant examiner for Biology CXC Exams 1987-1990. A consultant to Jamaica Teachers Association on the JTA/Grace Kennedy Foundation, he developed CXC Science syllabi and edited science textbooks for grades 7-9.

Career in Science and Technology

Martin travelled to London in 1985 to receive an award for "Excellence in STEM Education" from the Commonwealth Association of Science, Technology, and Math Educators. His work in STEM included: technical information officer at the Scientific Research Council; annual reviews, initiated by him, of science and technology in Jamaica for *The Jamaica Gleaner Year in Review*; scriptwriter and co-broadcaster with media veteran Alma Mockyen for "Science Serving Us," a radio program for the popularization of science and technology from 1993-2006. In addition, he participated in program design for the BSc in science and education degree program at the University of Technology and served as an advisor to the Jamaican prime minister on science and technology.

Research

Beginning at the age of 29 when the Jamaica Gleaner Company recruited him, he wrote literature reviews for his weekly *Sunday Gleaner* columns for 30 years. Beyond that, he also wrote numerous editorials and op-eds for other print media.⁷

His other research activities included a paper on "Science and technology in liberal studies and general education" at UTech; several published reports on research and innovation management; papers published by the School of Graduate Studies Research and Entrepreneurship (SGSRE) project at UTech from 2007 until his death; and service as editor-in-chief for the *Journal of Arts Science and Technology* at UTech from 2011 until his death. Professor Stephen Vasciannie, president of UTech announced that in Henry's honor the journal will establish an annual "Martin Henry Award for Best Publication."⁸

Project Management and Consultancy

Martin served for four years as national project manager for the United Nations Development Project (UNDP) for the government of Jamaica. The goal of the project was to strengthen science and technology in the country. He served in numerous other capacities, including project manager for international grant projects at UTech and project manager for the University of Technology, Jamaica Press. He was the initiator of, and technical consultant to, the Jamaica Information Service (JIS) for the television series "Science and Technology at Work"; consultant advisor on science journalism on the faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences for CARIMAC; advisor on communication strategy for the Jamaica Constabulary Force; and consultant for Citizen's Charter, a program initiated with Prime Minister P. J. Patterson in 1994.⁹

Career in Media

In addition to his work with the Gleaner company and Alma Mockyen, he also provided political analysis along with Carl Wint for *The Gleaner* during the 1997 general elections; election commentary on RJR for the general and local government elections in 2007; edited numerous papers, theses, reports, and books; was guest

commentator and analyst on radio and TV talk shows; served as judge for The Gleaner Silver Pen Award to letter writers; was the Breakfast Club Member on News Talk 93 FM; a panelist on ‘That’s a Rap’ on RJR 94 FM; a guest for “Direct” on CVM TV and “All Angles” on TVJ; and made numerous guest appearances on other radio talk shows.¹⁰

His Service to the Country & Community

Martin’s introduction during his teen-aged years to community service through the Peace Corp came full circle when he himself happily became a workshop presenter for Jamaican recruits to the U.S. Peace Corps when he was 42 years old. His service to community and country spanned his lifetime and included active memberships in numerous other service organizations such as: the Institute of Biology; Jamaican Society of Scientists and Technologists; Farquharson Institute of Public Affairs; International Communications Forum; Jamaican Historical Society; Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (PSOJ) Education Committee; Public Education Committee of the Scientific Research Council; Brown’s Town Citizens’ Action Committee Against Drug Abuse; Parish Councilor’s Inter-Denominational Committee for Youth Employment in the Dry Harbour Division of the St. Ann Parish Council; and active board member for the National Integrity Action (NIA) from 2011 up until his death, including serving as chairman 2015-2018.¹¹

Martin Henry’s death

In Kingston, Jamaica, on May 28, 2019, immediately after his appearance on Television Jamaica’s Prime Time News—on which Henry gave a special tribute to the former prime minister of Jamaica, Edward Seaga, who had died earlier that same day, Martin Henry, while exiting the studio, collapsed. He was rushed to the Medical Associates Hospital where he was pronounced dead at age 61. His memorial service took place June 30, 2019 at the Kencot Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kingston. Interment followed at Ramble in St. Thomas.¹²

SOURCES

Beckford, Michelle. “Utech Jamaica Community Pays Tribute to Martin Henry in Cathartic Memorial Service.” *Jamaica Gleaner*, June 26, 2019.

Buddoo-Fletcher, Dyhann. “Martin Henry: A Great SDA Leader.” *Jamaica Gleaner*, June 26, 2019.

Compilation from Martin Henry’s unpublished autobiography and written testimonials for his eulogy, June 30, 2019. In the Henry family private collection.

“Gleaner Columnist Martin Henry Collapses; Dies Shortly After live TV Appearances.” *Jamaica Gleaner*, May 28, 2019.

“Martin Henry Remembered as a Man of Faith and Substance.” Published July 1, 2019. <http://rjrnewsonline.com/>.

O'Brian Chang, Kevin. "Martin Henry Formed the Conscience of His Country." *Jamaica Gleaner* dated June 8, 2019.

Stories by Martin Henry. *Jamaica Gleaner*, November 25, 2019.

NOTES

1. Compilation from Martin Henry's unpublished autobiography and written testimonials for his eulogy from sister-in-law, Dr. Maxine Garvey; input from his wife Jacqueline Garvey-Henry; his daughter Lawrie Henry; his brother Dr. Eric L. Henry and his sister Aneita Hamilton, June 30, 2019.
2. Ibid.
3. Testimonial from wife Jacqueline Garvey-Henry for Martin Henry's eulogy, June 30, 2019.
4. Dyhann Buddoo-Fletcher, "Martin Henry: A Great SDA Leader," *Jamaica Gleaner*, June 26, 2019.
5. Ibid.
6. Compilation from Martin Henry's unpublished autobiography.
7. Stories by Martin Henry published by the *Jamaica Gleaner*, November 25, 2019.
8. Michelle Beckford, "Utech Jamaica Community Pays Tribute to Martin Henry in Cathartic Memorial Service," *Jamaica Gleaner*, June 26, 2019.
9. "Martin Henry Formed the Conscience of His Country," written by Kevin O'Brian Chang, political analyst, published in *Jamaica Gleaner* dated June 8, 2019.
10. "Martin Henry Remembered as a Man of Faith and Substance," rjrnews.com, published July 1, 2019.
11. Compilation from Martin Henry's unpublished autobiography.
12. "Gleaner Columnist Martin Henry Collapses; Dies Shortly After live TV Appearances," *Jamaica Gleaner*, May 28, 2019.

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