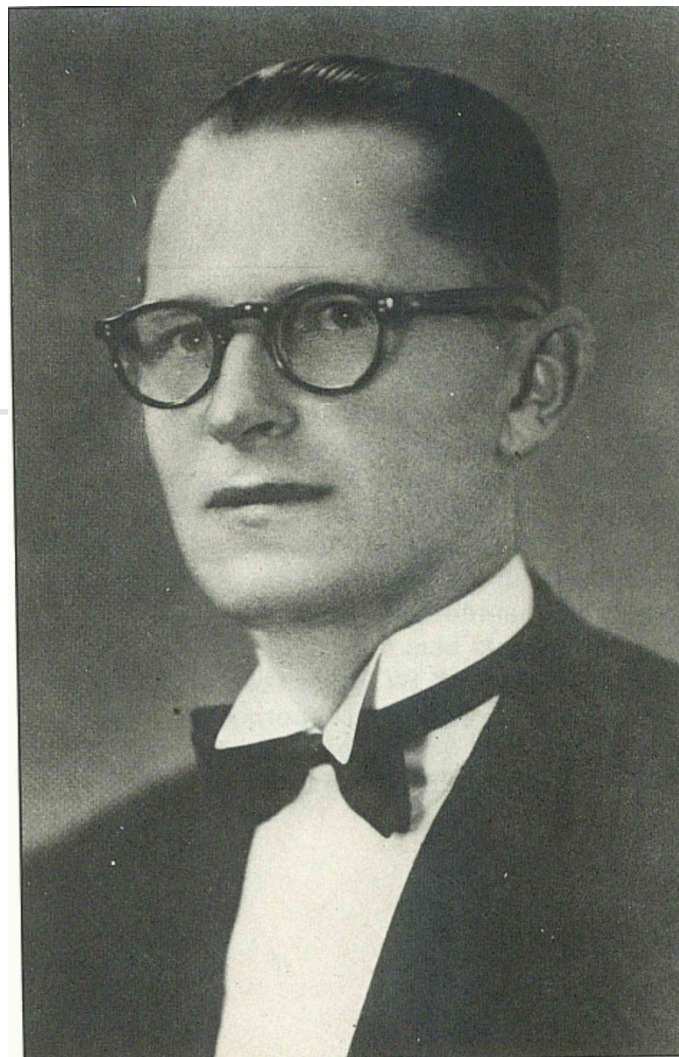


Storch, Gustavo Schroeder (1896–1993)

THE BRAZILIAN WHITE CENTER – UNASP

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Gustavo Storch

Photo courtesy of Brazilian White Center - UNASP.

Gustavo Schroeder Storch left a legacy of 60 years of dedicated service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, serving as a canvasser, district pastor, department leader, evangelist, and administrator in Brazil.

Gustavo Schroeder Storch was born in February 1896 in Santa Maria do Jetibá, Espírito Santo state, Brazil! The son of Guilherme and Emília Storch, Gustavo's birth took place only two months after his parents' baptism in the local SDA Church on December 14, 1895. They were two of the first members of the Santa Maria do Jetibá's Church, which was organized in that same date by Pastor Huldreich Graf. The region, predominantly Lutheran,

was introduced to the Adventist message by Albert Stauffer's canvassing work. One of the main books he sold was the *Conflict of the Ages* by Ellen G. White, which led many people to start keeping the Sabbath.² Later, the Storch's children were baptized in that same church. Gustavo was baptized in 1912 in a ceremony officiated by pastors Spies and Meyer.³

Storch grew up in his hometown where he had his primary studies.⁴ In 1914, at eighteen years of age, he received a visit from Pastor F. Kümpel, who encouraged him to enter the canvassing work. A few days later, he arrived at Minas Gerais's state to start his new journey. After a six month's successful experience in the canvassing work, he went to the city of São Paulo in order to start the Theology course at the recently inaugurated Brazilian Seminary (today UNASP-SP).⁵ Along with 12 other students from different regions of the country, Storch worked five hours per day in order to finance his studies. He was part of the college's first group of students, finishing his studies in 1918 and participating in the Seminary's first graduation ceremony in 1922.⁶

In the meantime, he met Águeda Cupperi (1900-1963),⁷ who he married in 1920. She was the oldest daughter of an Italian immigrant family that arrived in Brazil at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. After moving to São Paulo at nine years of age, she became known by the name of Agatina. The family was part of the old Waldense Church, but after establishing their residency in the country, they got to know the Adventist Church through an evangelistic series held by Pastor John Lipke. All the family was baptized except the father and the youngest children. Her mother desired for her to receive an education based on Christian principles, so in 1916, she sent her to Brazil College when she was sixteen years old, and there she met Gustavo.⁸ From their union were born Lyndon, Ebenezer, and Olga.⁹

Storch entered the SDA ministry in 1919 after finishing his studies, although he had not graduated yet. Storch was sent to the state of Minas Gerais, where he served for one and a half years.¹⁰ At the end of 1921, he accepted the call to work with the Halliwell couple in the state of Bahia. Pastor Leo Halliwell, from the United States, arrived in Rio de Janeiro on October 30 to serve as the superintendent of the Bahia Mission. Two days later, he traveled to Salvador, the capital of Bahia, where he and Storch organized the Bahia Mission's headquarters. Due to pastor Halliwell's lack of familiarity with the Portuguese language, most of the responsibilities were assigned to Storch, who served as the Mission's secretary. Together they traveled on a muleback throughout the state, visiting the few Adventist families and churches in the territory.¹¹

For five years, he worked especially in the states of Bahia and Sergipe, but also in Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro. In 1925, Storch was ordained to the pastoral ministry in the first ordination ceremony officiated at Brazil College.¹² Around this time, the Bahia Mission received the news that a person in Aracaju, the capital of the state of Sergipe, was interested in the Adventist message. After visiting him, Storch was introduced to other families who were also interested in his ideas about Sabbath keeping. For this reason, the Mission assigned Storch to move to Aracaju and start an evangelistic effort there. It's important to note the fact that he was the pioneer who first entered the state of Sergipe.¹³

In 1929, he accepted the call to move from Sergipe to the state of Rio Grande do Sul, where he served for one year. After that, in 1930, he accepted the invitation to lead the Pernambuco Mission, where he worked until 1931.¹⁴ Gustavo Storch was the first Brazilian native to lead a Mission.¹⁵ In 1932, the Bahia and Pernambuco missions were united in one – the Northeast Mission, which Storch led from 1932 to 1935.¹⁶ During that period, he traveled throughout the states of Pernambuco, Alagoas, Rio Grande do Norte, and Paraíba, preaching the Adventist message.¹⁷ Afterwards, from 1936 to 1939, he served as president of the Rio-Minas Mission at its headquarters in Rio de Janeiro.¹⁸

In 1940, Storch was invited to be the evangelist of the North Brazil Union, where he held evangelistic efforts in the territories of Pará, Ceará, Amazonas, and others. After accepting the call, he traveled to the city of Belém in the state of Pará, where he held a successful series of conferences. At that time, his youngest daughter Olga was married to Walter Streithorst in Belém. After their wedding, they went to the state of Maranhão to help in Storch's next evangelistic efforts.¹⁹

In 1944, he held evangelistic conferences in the city of Fortaleza in the state of Ceará state, after which he was sent by the South American Division to study at the Washington Missionary College (today Andrews University) in order to improve his theological knowledge. After finishing his studies, he accompanied T. L. Schuler to a series of conferences in Houston, Texas.²⁰ On returning to Brazil, he held an evangelistic series in Manaus in the state of Amazonas.²¹ Following that, he led the North Coast Mission from 1947 to 1955.²² During that time, he was a pioneer in preaching the Adventist message in Teresina city in the state of Piauí.²³

In 1956, he accepted the call to lead the Lower Amazon Mission, serving there until 1957.²⁴ In 1959, Storch retired due to health complications and moved to Capão Redondo, a district of the city of São Paulo.²⁵ In the midst of many trials and gladness, in 1961, Pr. Storch lost his wife Agatina, who had been a strong supporter to him for 43 years. After living alone for two years, on December 17, 1963, Pr. Storch married Olinda Werlich, his second wife.²⁶

Gustavo Storch died on August 31, 1993, at the age of 97 in the city of Florianópolis in the state of Santa Catarina. He left a legacy of 60 years of dedicated service to the SDA Church, serving as a canvasser, district pastor, department leader, evangelist, and administrator. During his ministry, he conducted 33 evangelistic series and organized dozens of churches, contributing to the advancement of Adventism in many Brazilian states.

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