

Stoehr, Henrique G. (1897–1986)

THE BRAZILIAN WHITE CENTER – UNASP

The Brazilian White Center – UNASP is a team of teachers and students at the Brazilian Ellen G. White Research Center – UNASP at the Brazilian Adventist University, Campus Engenheiro, Coelho, SP. The team was supervised by Drs. Adolfo Semo Suárez, Renato Stencil, and Carlos Flávio Teixeira. Bruno Sales Gomes Ferreira provided technical support. The following names are of team members: Adriane Ferrari Silva, Álan Gracioto Alexandre, Allen Jair Urcia Santa Cruz, Camila Chede Amaral Lucena, Camilla Rodrigues Seixas, Daniel Fernandes Teodoro, Danillo Alfredo Rios Junior, Danilo Fauster de Souza, Débora Arana Mayer, Elvis Eli Martins Filho, Felipe Cardoso do Nascimento, Fernanda Nascimento Oliveira, Gabriel Pilon Galvani, Giovana de Castro Vaz, Guilherme Cardoso Ricardo Martins, Gustavo Costa Vieira Novaes, Ingrid Sthéfane Santos Andrade, Isabela Pimenta Gravina, Ivo Ribeiro de Carvalho, Jhoseyr Davison Voos dos Santos, João Lucas Moraes Pereira, Kalline Meira Rocha Santos, Larissa Menegazzo Nunes, Letícia Miola Figueiredo, Luan Alves Cota Mól, Lucas Almeida dos Santos, Lucas Arteaga Aquino, Lucas Dias de Melo, Matheus Brabo Peres, Mayla Magaieski Graepp, Milena Guimarães Silva, Natália Padilha Corrêa, Rafaela Lima Gouvêa, Rogel Maio Nogueira Tavares Filho, Ryan Matheus do Ouro Medeiros, Samara Souza Santos, Sergio Henrique Micael Santos, Suelen Alves de Almeida, Talita Paim Veloso de Castro, Thais Cristina Benedetti, Thais Caroline de Almeida Lima, Vanessa Stehling Belgd, Victor Alves Pereira, Vinícios Fernandes Alencar, Vinícios Pereira Nascimento, Vitória Regina Boita da Silva, William Edward Timm, Julio Cesar Ribeiro, Ellen Deó Bortolotte, Maria Júlia dos Santos Galvani, Giovana Souto Pereira, Victor Hugo Vaz Storch, and Dinely Luana Pereira.



Henrique G. Stoehr

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Henrique G. Stoehr, administrator, pastor, and teacher, was born October 7, 1897, in the Elberfeld district of the city of Wuppertal, in the Rhineland region of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. There are few records about the early years of his life. However, it is known that three of his siblings are: Martha (Staub), Waldemar, and Conrad. The latter two also made significant contributions to the denomination.¹ He married Helena Klein de Araújo on January 20, 1919, in the neighborhood of Santo Amaro, in the city of São Paulo, state of São Paulo.² From this union were born four children: Paul,³ C. Don, Jerry, and Edith (Burden) Stoehr.⁴

The year he was married he became a teacher at the Adventist school in the district of Serra Pelada, Afonso Claudio, state of Espírito Santo.⁵ Also in 1919, he assisted in a series of conferences held by Pastor John Boehm at the same location,⁶ and he held evangelistic meetings in the villages of Manteiga and Laranjinha, both in Espírito Santo.⁷ He served as a licensed pastor from 1920 to 1922,⁸ and as secretary/treasurer in 1923 and 1924.

⁹ In 1925 he was ordained to the pastoral ministry and accepted the invitation to work as a pastor in the Rio de Janeiro Mission.¹⁰

While serving this mission he was involved in establishing the first Adventist church in the city of Niterói, located in the metropolitan region of the state of Rio de Janeiro, in October 1928.¹¹ Beginning in 1928 he was president of the Rio-Espírito Santo Mission.¹² He worked there until 1930.¹³

In 1931 he was transferred to southern Brazil to serve as president of the Santa Catarina-Paraná Mission.¹⁴ While there he also worked as director of the Education and Youth Departments (1932-1933)¹⁵ and of the Evangelism (1934) Department.¹⁶ He also held a series of meetings in the city of Rio Negro (1932).¹⁷ In 1935 he was elected president of the Central Argentine Conference,¹⁸ and simultaneously worked as director of the Evangelism Department in 1936.¹⁹ The following year he returned to Brazil as president of the East Brazil Union Conference (now Southeast Brazil Union Conference).²⁰ As part of his administrative functions he was also the director of Petrópolis Adventist Academy in the city of Petrópolis, state of Rio de Janeiro.²¹

In 1941 he went to the United States to serve as pastor of the German church in Brooklyn, New York.²² During that time the Brazilian version of the program Voice of Prophecy, still in its beginning, was getting a good reception in the United States. Therefore, the General Conference decided to invest more in radio evangelism.²³ In 1942 he was invited by Pastor W. P. Bradley, secretary of the General Conference, to visit the main office of the Voice of Prophecy, in Glendale, California, with Pastors João Linhares and Roberto Rabello. After their voices were tested, Rabello was chosen to be the host of the Portuguese programs²⁴ and João Linhares to be an auxiliary in the recordings.²⁵ Henrique, who fluently spoke several languages and had spent two decades in missionary and evangelistic service in South America, was chosen to be the director of the Foreign Language Department.²⁶ This department was responsible for preparing recordings in Portuguese and Spanish to be transmitted to Latin America.²⁷ The department also handled Bible lesson correspondence in Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, German, and Chinese.²⁸ He also contributed to the Portuguese programs with vocal solo musical presentations,²⁹ and he helped with recording programs for Brazil.³⁰ At the time recordings in Spanish and Portuguese were done at the Voice of Prophecy studios in Glendale, California, because there were no branch offices in South America.³¹ He stayed with the VOP until 1947.³²

In 1948 he accepted an invitation to be a professor at Walla Walla College, College Place, Washington.³³ There he taught courses such as Modern Languages and Literature. At the same time, he continued his own studies and earned a doctoral degree in 1952, in Paris, France.³⁴ He worked until his retirement in 1966.³⁵

Henrique G. Stoehr died on February 26, 1986, at the age of 88, in the city of Casa Grande, Arizona, United States.³⁶ His 47 years of service to the denomination contributed to the advancement of the Church in Brazil. He was one of the first missionaries to evangelize the Germans in the state of Espírito Santo³⁷ and he participated in the first team of the Voice of Prophecy in the Portuguese language.³⁸

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