

Life Sketch

As far back as he remembers, Bert Beverly Beach knew that he would serve God and His church in one capacity or another. Born June 15, 1928 in Gland, Switzerland to Seventh-day Adventist missionary parents, he moved from Switzerland to Belgium then to France. He attended school in French and at age eight he went back to Bern where he enrolled in the prestigious high school, Freies Gymnasium, and completed the rest of his schooling in German, despite having to miss one day a week due to the Sabbath. He always said how fortunate he was to grow up in a home where his parents were “100 percent Adventist but not fanatical or closed minded” and where he benefited from moving around to eventually master five languages in which he could speak, write, and even preach: German, French, Swiss German, Italian, and English.

At age 17 he attended Pacific Union College in California. In 1948 at the age of 19, he graduated with a BA and spent the next year at Stanford University and some time at Berkeley. At 21, he was principal of a northern California Junior High school, where he was often seen honing his preaching skills. He moved back to Europe and completed his doctorate in French at the Sorbonne in Paris, Magna Cum Laude. While working on his doctorate, he was appointed principal at the Italian Adventist high school and junior college at Villa Aurora in Florence for six years. It was during this time that he fell in love with, and in April 1954, married the beautiful Belgian, Eliane Palange. In 1955, while they were living in Italy, their first child, Danielle, was born. In 1958, Beverly, as he was called in Europe, took his family to Maryland to be chairman of the history department at Columbia Union College (now Washington Adventist University).

In 1960 he accepted a call to be the Education Secretary of the Northern European and West African Division. Bert and his family lived at the headquarters in St. Albans, England for the next 20 years. It was during this time, in 1961 that their second daughter, Michèle, was born. It is here that he began cultivating relationships with heads of state and leaders of diverse religions. He was asked to observe the Second Vatican Council as a journalist 1962-1965. In 1973 he was elected Secretary of the Division and from 1970 to 2002 he remained Secretary General of the Conference of Secretaries Christian World Communions representing over 2 billion Christians. In 1980 he returned to the US as Director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, until his official retirement in 1995. But his work did not stop there. He was General Secretary for the Council on Inter-Church Relations, 1980—2005; Secretary General International Religious Liberty Association, 1980-1995, and President, 1996, 2000. He served as Vice-president and President of the International Commission for Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, and Editorial director and panelist for the American Religious Town Hall Meeting nationwide Telecast, from 1995 until 2018.

His awards and honors are too numerous to list but include Honorary Igbo chief, Nigeria; Honorary ThD from the Warsaw Theological Academy; a knighthood from the President of Poland; alumnus of the year (PUC); Human Rights Leadership award *Freedom Magazine*; and Honorary Doctorate Andrews University,

A life-long educator and writer, Bert authored seven books and hundreds of articles in several languages. But he was not just a brilliant intellectual, historian, and linguist. His athletic skills were beyond reproach. He taught his daughters and his sisters to swim, play tennis, ice-skate, and ski. He especially loved to play ice hockey and soccer.

His loyalty to his God, his family and his friends never left him, and his insightful sense of humor was evident right to the end.

M.B.

Celebrating the life of Bert Beverly Beach

1928-2022



**Spencerville Church
16325 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland**

Sunday, January 29, 2023

**Bert Beach is survived by his widow,
Eliane Beach; children, Danielle Beach and
Michèle Beach; sister, Colette Witt; grandchildren,
Philippe Beach Evers, Adriane Rapp, Emma Izzo
and Alyssa Izzo; niece Alexandra Witt; nephews
David Cotton and Walter Witt; and
great-grandchildren Lawson and Oliver Rapp.**

**“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
demands my soul, my life, my all.”**

Isaac Watts

**Interment at Union Cemetery, Burtonsville,
December 20, 2022**

**Pallbearers
Philippe Beach Evers**

**Michael Izzo
Alyssa Izzo
Adam Winer**

**Jerome Baldwin
Adriane Rapp
Jeremiah Newman**

Emma Izzo

Immediately following the service, please join the family
for light refreshments and slides in the Fellowship Hall

Welcome.....Pastor Chad Stuart
Senior Pastor of the Spencerville Seventh-day Adventist Church

Hymn “A Mighty Fortress is our God” No.506

Life sketch.....Danielle Beach
Daughter

Reading.....Emma Izzo
Granddaughter

Homily..... Jerry Lutz
President Chesapeake Conference

Tributes

Dr. Andrea Luxton
President, Andrews University

Rajmund Dabrowski
Communication Director, Rocky Mountain Conf., CO

Dr. Peter Landless
Director Adventist Health Ministries,
Director International Commission for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency

Dr. Ganoune Diop
Director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty

Dr. Bill Knott
Director, Government Affairs, Seventh-day Adventist Church

Alexandra Witt
Niece, MSNBC anchor, for Colette Witt, sister

Michèle Beach
Daughter

Closing Hymn “We Have this Hope” No. 214

Prayer.....Pastor Chad Stuart

Organist: Michael Patterson