

The logo for the Ellen G. White-SDA Research Centre, featuring the letters 'E', 'S', and 'W' in a stylized, red, cursive font. The letters are set against a yellow and orange oval background with a gradient effect.

WEST-CENTRAL AFRICA DIVISION
ELLEN G. WHITE-SDA RESEARCH CENTRE
Sabcock University

PIONEER OF THE MONTH

As one of our publications, Pioneer of the Month brings to you from time to time brief accounts of some of our Pioneers who had laboured in God's Vineyard. For the month of October, we present a servant of God,



Elder Philip Ola Ogunsanya

(June 28, 1932 to January 2016)

EARLY LIFE: The boy Philip Ola Ogunsanya was born in June 28, 1932 to the family of Pa. Albert Osilelu Ogunsanya Odofofin and Madam Onayemi Ogunsanya Odofofin at Ijebu-Ife, Ogun State. His Father lived a fulfilled life as he was the head of the community (Baale of Ibelu, Ijebu-ife) till he passed on in the year 1979 at his 80 years, while the Mother died 1952 at her 50 years. Philip was born a Baptist as his father was converted from being the leader of Idol worshippers in Ibelu, Ijebu-ife to Baptist Church. His father brought Baptist Church to Ibelu, Ijebu-ife. It was during his father's tenure that Egugu (Masquerade) and Oro festival were abolished in that community till date. Philip Ogunsanya as a boy loved playing Football, and Draft. These games introduced him to a group of friends such as; Omoniyi Badejo and Otunba of Itako just to mention but a few. According to his interactions with his children, he confessed that his childhood friends were just God fearing ones.

Siblings

Late Madam Maria Kujero
Late Elder Phillip Ola Ogunsanya
Mr. Gbolade Ogunsanya
Mr. Omotoye Ogunsanya
Madam Margret Olatunji

Step Mother Children

Madam Bosede Onatunga
Madam Mobowale Muritala
Madam Wuraola Sumonla
Mr. James Adetola Ogunsanya
Mr. Ayodele Ogunsanya
Mr. Olaide Ogunsanya

Father Occupation: Farmer

Mother Occupation: Trader in Palm Oil and other commodities

Early Child Life: He lived in his home town, Ibelu, Ijebu-ife

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND: The boy, Philip Ola Ogunsanya started his formal step in education at Baptist Primary School, oke-Ife in 1942 which he completed in the year 1946. He furthered his education, by joining a Commercial School at Ibadan in 1951. As an ambitious fellow, he enrolled in a correspondence course of the School of Journalism where he obtained a certificate in Journalism (London) between 1967 and 1968.

FAMILY LIFE: Philip Ola Ogunsaya first noticed his wife, Mrs Beatrice Ayinke Ogunsanya (Nee Ogunlana) from the secretariat office of Western Nigeria Development Corporation, Ibadan in 1960. They got married in the year 1961 and the marrie was blessed with five children, namely;

1. Mrs. Bamidele O. Ogunjimi
2. Mr Oluwafemi J. Ogunsanya
3. Pastor Sunday O. Ogunsanya
4. Mr. Olaniyi S. Ogunsanya
5. Mr. Abiodun Ogunsanya;

who are successful men and women in different areas of life, and also this young Philip was whom the Lord produced the very first President of Ogun Conference of SDA Church Pastor Sunday O. Ogunsanya. He was blessed with many children and grand children.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

After the certificate program, Philip Ogunsaya had the desire to live a quality life, as a result, he picked a job as a cook with Mr. Garba and Mr. Awopeju, who were teachers at Adeola Odutola College, in the year 1952 and worked there till 1953. In the same year, he got a better job offer with the West Nigeria Development Corporation, Ibadan Secretariat, his wealth of knowledge in Typing, Shorthand, and English, helped him to perform excellently in the clerical office throughout the time, and he worked with them for seven years. However, he later secured a secretariat job with Garrick Nylander (a Ghanian) and Awopeju Solicitors Chambers at Marina, Lagos. At this point, hic family

challenges became heavier, and then he returned to Ibadan where he was employed at Children Home School, Molete, Ibadan, under the proprietorship of Mrs. Ogunlesi. Within his five months of working in the establishment, he became the first commander of Boys Brigade of Nigeria for the school (Sixteenth B Team) between 1966 and 1967. However, he spent only seven years in the school. At this juncture, Elder Philip Ola Ogunsanya left his job at Ibadan for greener pasture as well as service to God Almighty at Adventist College of West Africa (ASWA which is now Babcock University) in 1967. He worked as a secretary of the institution and was the second person who worked in that capacity for the institution. While still in service, he served under eleven different presidents of the institution for a period of twenty-five years, (of which nine out of the eleven presidents were Whitemen). They include;

❖ L. G. Welch	President
❖ Jan Paulsen	Ag. President
❖ Donald R. Pierson	Ag. President
❖ S. P. Berkeley	President
❖ K. F. Mueller	Ag. President
❖ C. Adeogun	Ag. President
❖ Percy Paul	President
❖ S. Gustavsson	Ag. President
❖ J. Korgan	President
❖ R. McKenzie	President
❖ A. A. Alalade	President .

His Contemporaries in ASWA are

Pastor (Prof) J. D. Awoniyi
Pastor D.T. Agboola (Late)
Pastor C. Adeogun
Pastor C. N. Anolugo
Elder Amukele
Elder Ibezin

CONVERSION STORY: As a child, Philip saw himself into a Baptist family where his parents belonged. So, by birth he was a Baptist. He served God with all his strength took part in the choir, and participated in some spiritual activities which him exposed to the commitment and also drew him closer to God in his early years at Ijebu-ife, and Ijebu-ode. By the time he went to Ibadan to source for means livelihood, he joined a church called Ijo Enia Kristi and later attended Ijo Alaadura, and later became an Adventist in January 20, 1968, of which he was introduced to by Pastor Bauman. From that time till date, he was only Adventist member in his immediate family before he had children and his nuclear family remains the only members of Adventist Church in his extended family till today. Mr. Philip Ogunsanya was introduced to ASWA for his outstanding knowledge of clerical work. He was employed in ASWA as a the second secretary for the institution. and from there, he discovered the Lord of Host and the Sabbath truth, at this

point he joined SDA church immediately. As a convinced convert, Ola Philip got baptized by Pastor Baumann into the church and had his name recorded as a member of the then Adventist College Church, the present (Pioneer SDA Church, Babcock University). Baba Dele or Baba Ilisan

One of his favorite SDA hymns is in SDAH 524, “Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus.”

SPECIAL ROLES PLAYED: His contribution towards the existence of ACWA/Babcock University cannot be underestimated. During Jan Paulsen’s tenure as the President, a national crisis occurred which involved the migration of Easterners from the West to the East. This brought about a decrease in the students and staff population of the school. Only about 15 people were left, some from Ghana and the west remained which prompted a decision to close the college by General Conference of SDA Church. He took a personal decision to review the situation with the President. Papa suggested that a request be sent to Oba Sonuga of Ilisan to send people of the town to fill the school with students, while all staff members also were allowed to register their spouses as students. This eventually increased the students’ number to 75 which saved the situation. In 1961, Pastor Adebawo the then Evangelist to Sagamu Sabbath school branch organized an outreach program. That made it clearer the branch needed an extrahand to support Pastor Adebawojo, the ACWA appointed Elder Philip Ola Ogunsanya to help out in the work at sagamu and to join in organizing the branch into a church. Along with some members of the college church, they began visiting the Sagamu Prison. His opinion to have a place of worship for winning souls in Sagamu made him to devote his time for the establishment of Sagamu Church, which started in a small shop at Ijagba. At one time, he was involved in an accident on a motorbike with one of his sons, but was miraculously rescued by God.

RETIREMENT DAYS: Since his return home in February 1998, he joined the SDA church, Ijebu-Ife to fellowship with them till his last breath.

He retired in 1992. He left Ilisan with his wife for his home town, Ijebu-Ife in February 1998. With his tremendous efforts in his community, he was sent to Community Development Training School, Shasha Iperu-Remo. After the training, he served as the chairman of Community Development Council Committee in Ijebu-Ife for two years. He, with his wife (Iya Dele) have been testified to be hardworking people.

Source: Extract from Abiodun Ayodeji Adesegun (2009), Babalola, D. O. *The Compass*, Ikenne-Remo, G. Olatotayo Press, 2001. Interview with Pastor S. O. Adebawojo, at his residence at New Koregun Street, along Ikenne-Remo Road, Ilishan-Remo, *SDA Yearbook 2007*. Hagerstown, M.D. Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2007, Live interview with Pastor S. O. Adebawo by Akintunde Oyewale and Chinanu-Akpuh Chinwe Comfort; Edited by (Chinanu- Akpuh, Chinwe Comfort, Research Assistant, Ellen G. White-SDA Research Centre, Babcock University), (September 2015)

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PHOTO ALBUM

























