

DONALD RUTHERFORD ALVES



*October 24, 1931-July 15, 2021*

*Born again May 7, 1944*

## *In Memory of Donald Rutherford Alves*

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Donald Rutherford Alves was born on October 24, 1931 to Hector and Eunice Alves in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He was their only boy. His three older sisters also tried to keep him in line. One time he reluctantly attended a social function with his family, but promptly found a way of escape by climbing over a yard wall in order to play with his friends.

Canada suffered from the Great Depression during the 1930s. Donald's father encouraged him to work hard from an early age. At 9 he started delivering bread and milk. Later he was given a bicycle for newspaper delivery, which he did until he finished High School.

At age 12 he trusted Christ as his personal Saviour on May 7, 1944 while attending a special series of gospel meetings by evangelist Herb Harris in the South Main Gospel Hall in Vancouver. The Bible text in John 5:24 helped him understand God's way of salvation. For 77 years he enjoyed to the fullest his spiritual relationship with God.

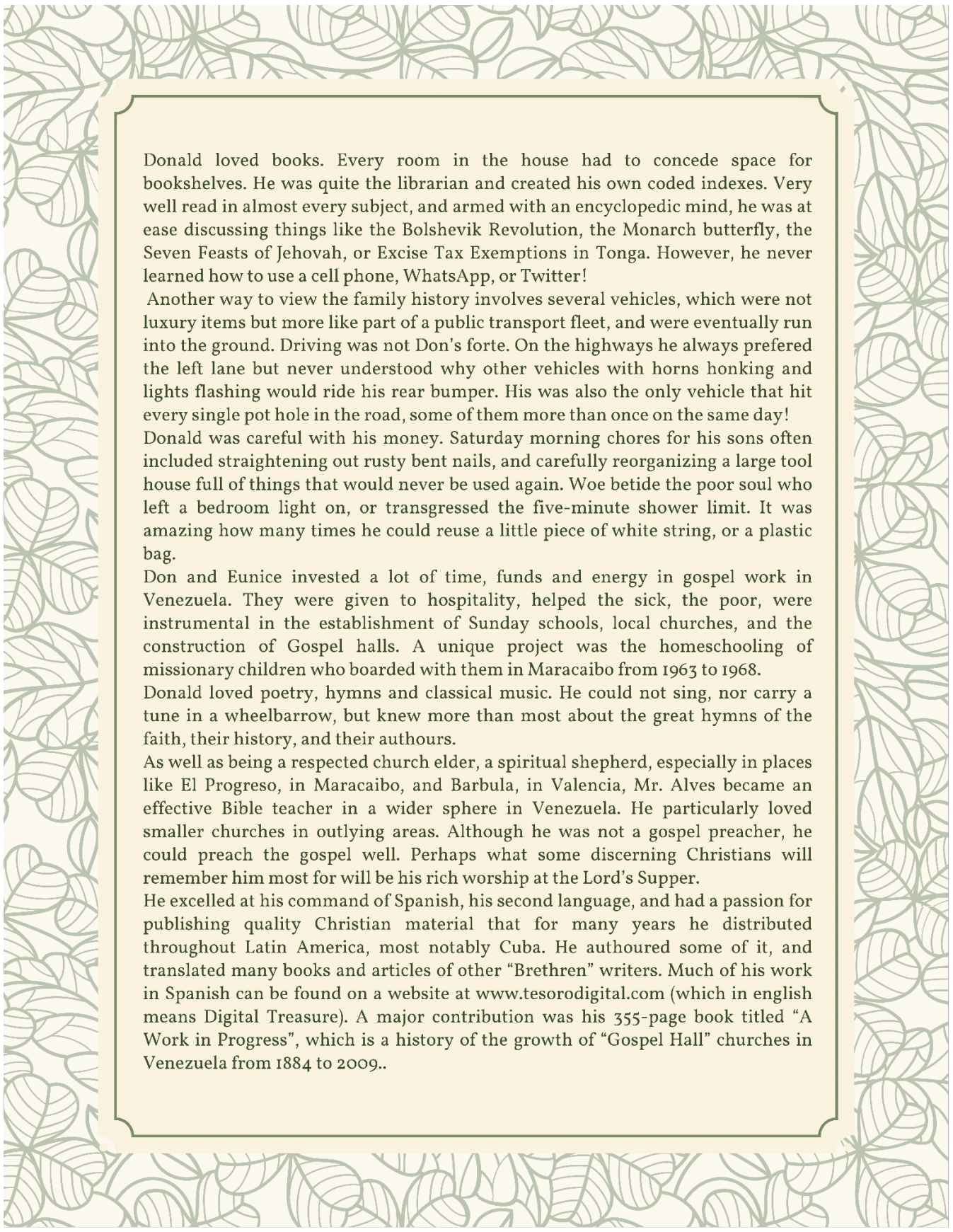
Donald completed his studies at Lord Selkirk Elementary School and John Oliver High School. He went on to graduate as a Chartered Accountant from the University of British Columbia.

During the 1940s and early 50s he fellowshipped at the Cedar Cottage Gospel Hall, where his parents, sisters, and future wife attended as well. He also helped in gospel work in the Carleton area of Vancouver.

He was employed by Price Waterhouse and accepted an invitation from the New York headquarters to transfer to Venezuela in 1956, where he worked until his retirement, and beyond!. He became a Director in 1968, and authored articles and books in his field. The principal partner in what today is Price Waterhouse Cooper - Venezuela, wrote a few days ago: "To all of us he was a teacher in the broadest and most generous sense of the word. We owe much of our culture and prestige as a Firm to him. Thanks to professionals like him, today we are the leading Firm in the Venezuelan market...he is part of the economic history of the country."

Donald married Eunice Mary Saword in Vancouver on June 20, 1953. They had seven children: Lillian and Edith were born in Canada, whereas Marian, Daniel, David, Donald, and Douglas were born in Venezuela. The family history is linked to homes in Vancouver-Burnaby (3 years), Caracas (1 year), Maracaibo (11 years), and Valencia (almost 50 years).





Donald loved books. Every room in the house had to concede space for bookshelves. He was quite the librarian and created his own coded indexes. Very well read in almost every subject, and armed with an encyclopedic mind, he was at ease discussing things like the Bolshevik Revolution, the Monarch butterfly, the Seven Feasts of Jehovah, or Excise Tax Exemptions in Tonga. However, he never learned how to use a cell phone, WhatsApp, or Twitter!

Another way to view the family history involves several vehicles, which were not luxury items but more like part of a public transport fleet, and were eventually run into the ground. Driving was not Don's forte. On the highways he always preferred the left lane but never understood why other vehicles with horns honking and lights flashing would ride his rear bumper. His was also the only vehicle that hit every single pot hole in the road, some of them more than once on the same day!

Donald was careful with his money. Saturday morning chores for his sons often included straightening out rusty bent nails, and carefully reorganizing a large tool house full of things that would never be used again. Woe betide the poor soul who left a bedroom light on, or transgressed the five-minute shower limit. It was amazing how many times he could reuse a little piece of white string, or a plastic bag.

Don and Eunice invested a lot of time, funds and energy in gospel work in Venezuela. They were given to hospitality, helped the sick, the poor, were instrumental in the establishment of Sunday schools, local churches, and the construction of Gospel halls. A unique project was the homeschooling of missionary children who boarded with them in Maracaibo from 1963 to 1968.

Donald loved poetry, hymns and classical music. He could not sing, nor carry a tune in a wheelbarrow, but knew more than most about the great hymns of the faith, their history, and their authors.

As well as being a respected church elder, a spiritual shepherd, especially in places like El Progreso, in Maracaibo, and Barbula, in Valencia, Mr. Alves became an effective Bible teacher in a wider sphere in Venezuela. He particularly loved smaller churches in outlying areas. Although he was not a gospel preacher, he could preach the gospel well. Perhaps what some discerning Christians will remember him most for will be his rich worship at the Lord's Supper.

He excelled at his command of Spanish, his second language, and had a passion for publishing quality Christian material that for many years he distributed throughout Latin America, most notably Cuba. He authored some of it, and translated many books and articles of other "Brethren" writers. Much of his work in Spanish can be found on a website at [www.tesorodigital.com](http://www.tesorodigital.com) (which in English means Digital Treasure). A major contribution was his 355-page book titled "A Work in Progress", which is a history of the growth of "Gospel Hall" churches in Venezuela from 1884 to 2009..

Unconventional in some things, inflexible in others, his intense, forthright, impatient personality was misunderstood at times, even by his own children. However, it usually became evident that he sincerely had one's best interest at heart. He was a compassionate man, aware of his own weaknesses and failings. He loved to see people recover from their mistakes and get on in life. Messages received from young and old that mourn his passing testify to this.

Donald was deeply interested in Christian missionary work around the globe. One could hardly point to somewhere on a World Map without him being able to recount the hardships of those who first went there to preach the gospel, as well as the triumphs and tragedies of Christian testimony in these places up to the present day. He was also very anecdotal and had a good sense of humour. He loved stories and could tell them well, and often! A young man in Venezuela summed it up best: "Mr. Alves took me out for dinner. We had a wonderful time. He talked so much that he hardly ate; I ate too much as I had no need to talk!"

Donald is survived by six children: Edith Mosquera (husband Romer), Marian Edge (husband Phillip), Daniel, David (wife Lois); Donald (wife Marisol), and Douglas; ten grandchildren: Raquel, Eleonor, and Miguel Mosquera; Brian and David Edge; David, Diego, and Rebeca Alves; and Marian and Charlotte Alves; two sisters: Mrs. Eunice Gorman and Mrs. Rhoda Cumming; as well as fifteen great grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his dearly beloved and beautiful wife, Eunice, in November of 2015, whom he sorely missed until the end of his life; his eldest daughter, Lillian, in March of 2004, whom he was so fond of; a great grandson, Damian, in February of 2015; his sister Mrs. Marjorie Thompson, in December of 2015; his father, Mr. Hector Alves, in January of 1978; and his mother, Mrs. Eunice Alves, in April of 1980. When his daughter Edith was no longer able to care for him in Venezuela, Don's sister, Mrs. Eunice Gorman, along with Ron and Jenifer Gorman, put in motion a much appreciated initiative to move "Uncle Don" back to Canada in 2017. He settled in The Heritage Retirement Residence in West Kelowna, which he enjoyed immensely and where he was very well taken care of. During the remaining years of his life he fellowshiped at the Highway Road Gospel Hall. The burden of his affairs during his final years fell upon his other daughter, Marian.

Donald's rapid decline in health required one more trip by ambulance to the Kelowna General Hospital and there, two days later, he passed away on Thursday, July 15, 2021. For several years he had suffered from cardiac related issues. He was 89 years old. He left his tired body behind, which awaits the resurrection at the soon coming of the Lord, but his inner man took its flight into eternity. DRA, as he autographed his writings, is now in Heaven with Christ, face to face.