



Tributes to Dale Rhoton

“While George Verwer was a bugle call, boot-up-the-backside to a sleeping Church, Dale Rhoton was on the ground leading teams, getting the job done. He was unassuming and modest, not interested in getting the glory.

During the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, Dale said, ‘I feel really at home at night, distributing literature secretly.’ All of us were scared stiff.

Dale was the philosopher of OM – a thinking man, who wrote lots of interesting articles. He could make the wild ideas happen, being both visionary and realistic. He developed links with many missions and had a winsome way that helped to get funding.”

John Hymus

Greater Europe ministry.

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“‘Steady as she goes’ – that was Dale Rhoton. He and George Verwer were, in many ways, like counterbalances; Dale so phlegmatic and George emotionally super-charged. They complemented each other perfectly.

When he was a young believer, George looked to Dale as an older brother discipling him. George depended on Dale, and yet Dale was inspired by George.

Even in his later years, Dale was so key in OM’s Ship Ministry – keeping in touch with partners, phoning and thanking people and letting people know they were appreciated. He believed the best about people. I’ll miss having a champion like Dale.”

Myles Toews

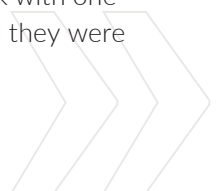
OM’s Ship Ministry 1978–current.

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“If there is anyone on planet earth who came close to resembling Christ, for me, Dale came across as that person. He was a role model, a mentor and a teacher who showed us Christlike character.

He was gentle yet strong, humble yet influential, deeply spiritual yet remarkably practical. He brought credibility, integrity, wisdom and grace to every conversation and every decision. Many of us learnt as much from watching his life as from listening to his words.

The friendship modelled by George Verwer and Dale Rhoton is a lesson we must hold on to. Their bond lasted more than six decades, starting off as students and carrying on to senior leaders in mission. Through thick and thin they stuck with one another, they believed in one another and they were committed to one another.



God in His wisdom brought them together to start OM, and hundreds of thousands of people have been impacted. Only eternity can measure the contribution of these two men in world mission, and we want to make sure that legacy continues.”

Lawrence Tong

OM’s International Director Emeritus.

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“One of my abiding memories of Dale Rhoton came at a leaders’ gathering just a few years ago. We’d had a wonderful evening praying for various nations around the world. At the end, most people dispersed but a few remained to pray longer; among them George Verwer and Dale Rhoton. Both were in their late seventies at least, and both were kneeling on a giant world map. Together they were imploring the Father to intervene and change lives and nations around the world. Watching them, I realised again what a gift these two men were to our generation as they changed the shape of mission with their passion to see the gospel go to the least reached through anyone and everyone, and their pioneering use of ships in ministry for the kingdom.

At that same conference, I caught a glimpse of them sitting side by side in a quiet corner, laughing uproariously at some mischievous memory. Theirs was an enduring friendship that literally changed the world.

I also had the privilege of serving with Dale on a mobilising team in South Korea in the mid-90s. He was an inspiration: godly, kind, funny, passionate and deeply committed to the kingdom of God. He spent much time persuading me that (my now husband of 29 years) would be a wonderful choice of life partner. In that, as in so much else, he was right, you know.”

Katherine Porter

OM’s Associate International Director.

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“It’s not easy to be a pioneer. It means a huge test of faith and trusting the Lord. Dale was a person who would take his decisions before God. He was so genuine, so authentic. You could see he lived his life before you; it wasn’t any sham. He was a great Bible teacher, too.

With Elaine and their children, the way they lived influenced our attitude and way of life. There was a sense of fellowship and sharing together. The camaraderie was really marked and meaningful.

Dale felt it was pleasing to the Lord to be generous. It’s not our money and our ministry. In OM, I look at generosity as a key foundational element. I’ve also seen the huge value of networking with other likeminded ministries and groups. Dale really lived that out.”

Dave Babcock

Greater Europe ministry.

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“I’ve always appreciated this humble man. Despite all he had done in God’s kingdom, he never came across as superior or proud; instead, he expressed a sincere interest in his counterpart. If we look at the early years in OM, Dale was key in mobilising a generation of students who wanted to serve the Lord.

Through his book *The Logic of Faith*, which was translated at least into German, French, Spanish and Swedish, he gave young Christians foundational help through reasoning for the Christian faith.”

Rev Dr Frank Hinkelmann

Church historian, OM board associate.

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“When *Logos* was shipwrecked in early 1988, with the loss of three-quarters of a million pounds’ worth of cargo and ship (uninsured), Dale Rhoton wrote that the valuables were safe – the 141 people on board were the valuables. Dale wrote to supporters: ‘*Logos* is people, it is only a tool that has been lost, not a ministry.’

Dale’s focus on what the Lord was saying – even in such difficult times as the shipwreck of *Logos* – was always such a great support to the team. His experience, insight and Bible teaching stood out and encouraged us all to move forward in our own spiritual walk and service.”

Mark Dimond

OM’s Ship Ministry 1978–2020.

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“At Wheaton, Dale was big on the Navigators and their commitment to discipling one-on-one. Dawson Trotman, the founder of Navigators, wrote a booklet, *Born to Reproduce*. It fit in a shirt pocket and Dale was known to wear a thin shirt with that visible through the pocket. We used to joke with him about what girls would think on first sight! I think he turned the book around so the title wasn’t so obvious.

Dale was committed to memorising Scripture and challenged me to join him in learning complete chapters. That made a lasting impression on me.”

Roger Malstead

Fellow student at Wheaton College, started OM’s work in Türkiye with Dale.

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“While George Verwer had a strong mobilisation emphasis, Dale had a passion for seeing longer-term ministries established in local contexts and was deeply committed to the ministry of OM’s ships.

OM wouldn’t exist without both George and Dale. Their lives were a beautiful example of mutual commitment to God, to each other, to OM and to the kingdom.”

Iain Pickett

OM’s International Director.

“I remember Dale as a true man of God. It was a blessing to simply listen to him pray. At one tense field leaders’ meeting George Verwer was deeply moved, and with concern as to what to do in the situation, he shouted out: ‘Dale, please pray!’ Dale prayed. We all sensed that God heard. We saw Him answer. Attitudes began to change and God’s presence was very real. At the end of Dale’s prayer, peace had re-entered the room and George was now shouting out, ‘Hallelujah! Don’t stop!’ Dale was often the person to whom George turned in such situations.

We often saw Dale take special time for prayer and fasting. Several times, as team members were in the eastern countries and they did not return as planned, Dale would fast and pray for them until they were released and could return. He would also fast and pray about major decisions regarding the ministry. One such time was when all of the monthly support for the ministry was suddenly stopped and the team had no resources to continue. Within a few weeks, God had specifically answered and the ministry could continue, however, during those few weeks, some of Dale’s hair began to turn silver-grey.

I remember his story of when he, helping a Scandinavian mission, travelled to Romania to establish contact with Richard Wurmbrand, who had just been released after 14 years of imprisonment under the Communist regime. As they walked down the street together, Richard and Dale met many other believers who greeted Wurmbrand. Richard responded warmly and introduced Dale to each one, then, as they continued walking, Richard would explain to Dale who they had just met and how he knew them. But one connection wasn’t elaborated on, so Dale asked Richard who the man was. Richard replied, ‘Oh, he’s the brother who betrayed me to the authorities – but you know, Dale, we all make mistakes, don’t we?’ Dale always told that as an example of true forgiveness.”

Dennis Wright

Served with OM for 37 years, including in Eastern Europe and on OM’s Global Board.

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