

Anders Roel Bergsma

JUNE 29, 2023

It is with sorrow we announce the passing of Anders Roel Bergsma. Our comfort is, that in His mercy, our Lord guided Anders to his Eternal Destination.

Anders was born in Wartena, The Netherlands on April 14th, 1935, the 6th child after 5 sisters and then followed by 1 brother and 2 sisters.

It was a great family, raised by parents Andries Bergsma and Hiltse Elgersma, whose lives were guided by God's word and conscientiously passed on to their thankful children. It was not an easy life for the family, especially during the war years, the German Occupation, and the slow economic recovery afterwards.

He is survived by his loving wife Florence, blessed with 39 years of marriage, children, and their spouses: Roland (Caryn), Anders (Loretta), Barbara Helga (Brent), Stella (Todd), and grandchildren: Ashley, Courtney, Sophia, Leif, Eric and Anna and his two sisters Greetje and Gusta in The Netherlands and extended family on the Wagler and Dotinga side. Anders was predeceased by his first wife Baukje (Babs) Dotinga, 5 sisters and 1 brother plus many brothers and sisters in law.

From early on in his life Anders wished to go and see the world and succeeded in this by completing Marine Engineer program, then going to sea joining the Dutch



Merchant Navy and travelling the 7 seas and many seas besides. Here he observed many wonders of creation. (Psalm 107: 23, 24) and the truth of the Preacher's saying: "The eye never has enough of seeing". These great and thankful experiences were reinforced in many ways by living in The Netherlands, South Africa, and Canada.

Anders and Babs (nee Dotinga) were married in 1960. A few years after the birth of their son Roland, he decided to say farewell to the sea and go 'ashore' permanently. Anders found work as a Plant Engineer with Philips in Leeuwarden, Holland where their second son Anders Wilco was born. The desire to leave Holland was always there and realized by emigrating to South Africa. There he worked as a Construction Supervisor at Power Stations and at a steel plant. The family grew further in South Africa with the births and joyful additions to the family of daughters Barbara Helga and Stella.

Anders and Babs enjoyed their family and life in South Africa, yet the long time wish to live in Canada was finally fulfilled in 1976. Here Babs was reunited with several of her siblings who had emigrated years earlier in the 1950's. Succumbing to a lengthy illness, his beloved wife Babs passed away in 1982 at the young age of 41, a very painful and tragic loss to him, the children, family, and friends.

Yet, Anders was blessed again by meeting Florence (nee Wagler) and when marrying her, received again a wonderful wife and friend from the Lord. Florence became Mom to an instant family and together with Anders took care of the family. There were many up and downs in Vernon and after a failed business partnership, they decided to move to the Fraser Valley.

After a varied career in Engineering, Anders made a career change to accounting, and this provided him with many years of great employment at Central Valley Farm Equipment and later with the new owners of Caliber Equipment.

In his free time Anders loved gardening, reading, woodwork or just sitting in the sun marvelling at the Lord's Creation. His wife and children were regarded as gifts from the Lord and were the joys of his life. Church and church life were very important to him. To love Jesus Christ and to trust in Him as his Saviour was his comfort in life and now in his death. Always being aware that 'we can be saved by Grace alone'.

In his own thankful words: I have been given a wonderful life, while living with the promise of an infinite greater future.

The funeral service will be held July 14th at 1 p.m. Pacific Time at Cornerstone Christian Reformed Church at 9800 McNaught Rd, Chilliwack, BC

The service will also be live streamed online: https://youtube.com/live/ND2_hJifSUY

Messages of Condolence

Dear Aunt Flo,

So sorry for the loss of your beloved husband! He had an interesting life. Praying that God will comfort you. Love always!

— **Bonita**

Dear Florence, I will say what you always wrote to grandma "May the Lord bless and keep you."

The pain of losing your beloved spouse is so difficult. My heart goes out to you.

— **Marie Struthers**

Anders was a great member of our extended family. His strong faith sustained him through joys and sorrows. We are so grateful that he and Florence had a long and loving relationship. Our hearts go out to Florence and to Anders' family at this time of loss.

— **Joanne and John Bender**

Love and prayers and our deepest sympathy.

— **Verna Jantzi**

Our Deepest condolences to the Family. What a loss! So difficult to say that final goodbye. So Thankful he is with his Heavenly Father. God will be your strength in during this time. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

A lovely write up about your Dad!

Flory

— **Flory Boer**

Our thoughts and prayers are with you Aunt Florence at this difficult time

— **Don & Laurie Ropp**

Dear family,

I would like to express my condolences to all of you on the loss of your husband, father (heit) (in law) and grandfather (pake).

The last time I spoke to him was when he was visiting his sister (my mother) Hilde in the nursing home she was then living in. Thankfully she did recognise him and was happy to see him. As he was happy to see her too.

Life will never be the same again after losing a loved one so I wish all of you the strength you will need, all in your own specific way. Much love, Barbara

— **Barbara Quik**

Condolences to you and your loved ones at this time of grief.

May God grant you peace in your pain.

Stephen and Rosemary Ropp

— **Stephen and Rosemary Ropp**

My thoughts and prayers are with you Flo, Stella and family, Helga and family, Anders Jr and family, Roland and family as miss Anders Sr. What a remarkable life! What changes he would have seen and lived through! His unwavering Christian faith and sense of humour are my memories of him. May God bless you and comfort you through this time.

— **Mary Bender**

I am Gusta, I was born in 1946 and I came as the youngest daughter in the Bergsma family. And as Anders' sister, I will put some words on paper of my/our experiences with my brother. We are 11 years apart in age. I've always been his little sister. He taught me strange tricks such as pulling up my ears, moving nostrils and making funny faces until Mem put a stop to that because I started to like it and that was just not the intention!! After his period as an engineer of shipping on the deep sea, Baukje came into the picture. After Roland and Anders Wilco were born, they left for Africa where Jens and I visited them in 1974. We were received very hospitably and had a great time there. In 1976 Baukje became ill and I spent 6 weeks in their family as a sister and helper.

I had nice conversations with Anders during this sad time when the children were still very young.

At the end of 1976 they left for Canada. We have often visited them here. Also later when Anders married Florence we visited them many times.

Anders was a very sincere and religious person in church and society and that was not always easy for him and those around him. Often early in the morning he would sit in the kitchen reading the Bible. I once asked him why do you read the bible so alone? The answer was that he was trying to understand what the Bible was telling him and then he was talking to his Father in Heaven. He made himself meritorious in Church life many times.

Anders was driven, involved and full of passion, well-read and broadly interested and always and everywhere willing to help others.

As brother and sisters from the Netherlands and Canada, we got together a number of times at Anders and Florence and had fantastic family weekends. After that, everyone went their separate ways on vacation in Canada. Those were such good times.

Together we have visited them many times and parties were organized with friends and acquaintances. Even once with a pig on a spit. Anders really enjoyed that. In

advance he had made signposts on paper with arrows to rubbish bins etc. because everything had to be cleaned up neatly !!

In September 2016, Anders and son Anders visited the Netherlands to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary on a large pleasure boat on the Frisian waters. This was the last time we were able to meet in person.

Almost every week we called each other to hear each other's voice and discuss each other's experiences and later about health and hospital visits and the concerns this entailed. Those were not easy years for Anders, but not for Florence either.

That has now come to an end for him and Anders may now be with his Lord, who was so important to him in his life.

And he told Jens that he was happy to know him as a brother-in-law as a very engaging person with whom he could have nice conversations and a listening ear. For example, a few days before his death we said goodbye to each other with these words, bye dear sister and bye dear brother-in-law. I love you, and we love you too. That is a very fond memory.

In love we are connected to Florence, children and grandchildren and wish them comfort and strength for the loss of Anders and Heit and Pake for now and the period that comes after to continue in their lives.

A sweet greeting from Gusta and Jens Abma

— **Jens and Gusta Abma**

This is a memoriam about my beloved brother Anders. My name is Greet/ Geartsje, Anders' 2 years younger sister. Because I can't be present at the funeral service, I put my memories on paper.

Anders was born as the 6th child of our Heit & Mem. (FYI: Heit & Mem is Frisian for father and mother) Place of birth was 'Wartena', a small village near to Leeuwarden in Friesland, the Netherlands. He was preceded by 5 sisters namely WYP, HILDE, ANKE, IKE and NELL. 2 years after Anders his birth, I was born in 1937, then our younger brother ONNO in 1941 and in 1946 GUSTA as the last one in row. In total, we were with nine children.

The years during the second world war were obviously not easy for our large family but for Heit and Mem, a lot of things were possible. Also based upon their creed or religion, they were there to support their close ones. Like, for example persons in hiding or others, in need of urgent help.

Frankly, Anders and I didn't have any objectives to this: sometimes the people in hiding were really bored and eventually took up little household jobs Anders and I were supposed to do like peeling potatoes or cutting vegetables. So, we were nicely relieved from these jobs and for us, the additional boarders could stay!

As the children, we've lived a nice, warm, loving and Christian upbringing. It goes without saying that there was praying before- and after the meals, the daily Bible reading, every Sunday going twice to church and Sunday evening singing together with Heit, playing on our house organ. Quite often friends were joining, all was okay. A cozy atmosphere was important and highly valued.

In 1947, Heit was appointed to a school in Overijssel, another province in the Netherlands and we moved to a city called Vriezenveen. In this city, younger brother Onno and I went to the Oosterschool and Anders to the MULO. At that time, Anders was not always that motivated, far from it. He lived as a loungeur but managed, beyond expectations, to get his diploma. After that, he travelled on a daily-basis to Hengelo for his Maritime Education and was from that moment on very motivated.

With a big smile I think back on those years; during weekends and when we're enjoying free time, we were gathering together as a big group of friends and Anders and I were during those years also very close.

He earned with great results his Maritime Education degree and I still remember clearly the day, in 1954, that he left for a period of 2,5 years sailing the seas on the ship named "Tjitjalengka".

I thought it was terrible, my fine brother away for such a long time..

In 1956, Heit and Mem moved, with the remaining children who're living at home, back to Friesland. They moved to Terzool, a small village close to Sneek with within its county, villages like Sybrandaburen and Gauw which are well-known names for the Dotinga's.

Regularly, Anders came back on leave from sea and was popular among the girls but was not an easy catch. 'Try all things but hold on to what is good' was his rule but as his 'wild hairs became smoother' he fell in love with Baukje Dotinga. This love resulted in their marriage on September the 14th, 1960, the same year I married with Henk Kuiper on 11th of May.

Through our marriages and through our work and families, our bond persisted,

close and familiar but also different as everyone had his/hers own concerns and activities. Anders came finally from sea to shore when Roland and Anders Wilco were born in Friesland and Anders and Baukje came to life in Leeuwarden.

Regularly we stayed together: Henk and me with Jildou and Saco in Leeuwarden, Anders and Baukje with Roland and Anders Wilco with us at the bakery in Sneek. In those days, my Henk became very close to Anders. They called each other quite often 'brother' ; that says it all.

However, Anders could not find his way at the VSF (translated as 'United Vacuum cleaner factories') in Leeuwarden and they decided to emigrate to South-Africa. In South-Africa, Helga and Stella were born. In the meantime, the 2 youngest children of Henk and me were born: Mettelina and Anders Onno (who is named after our Heit and my 2 brothers) so both of us had a family with 4 children. Years moved on with mainly contact via letters and now and then a trip from South-Africa: that was great! Life was good; for them and for us.

But in 1976, Baukje got cancer and this news shook our world to its foundations; so young, such a young family. This was terrible, what a worry, tension and sadness and then living so far away from each other, oh how difficult that was. Gusta and Jens can tell more about this difficult time in South Africa as they have been there several times.

Due to Apartheid, Anders considered South Africa as becoming too tense and they emigrated to British Columbia in Ccanada.

It was here, that Baukje passed away in 1982: what a tremendous loss for Anders, for the children and for the family.

What have I/ what have we admired our brother during the time of Baukjes illness and after she passed away. Besides his job, he tried to be Heit and Mamma for

Roland, AndersWilco, Helga and Stella. The household must continue, children needed to be on time at school. What a perseverance, love and dedication for the children he showed while putting himself aside. And the great sorrow, the great loss had to be processed. What a challenge.

In 1983 we received the wonderful and happy news about the marriage of Anders and Florence. Oh, how we wished him this great new happiness! And what many years they have been together: this 16th of July they would be married for 40 years!

Anders and Florence, a happy and blessed couple. They completed each other, were helpful and supportive to each other. Luckily, several times during the last couple of decades, I was able to visit Anders and Florence; several times with Henk but also several times during the so-called 'Bergsma weekends'. In 2019, I visited Anders and Florence for the last time together with my son Anders Onno.

Quite often, Anders mentioned the happiness during the many calls he made. Indeed many calls: Anders called almost every weekend and after my husband Henk passed away in 2017, the contact with my big brother became even more intense and more warmly.

What conversations we had: light-hearted and humorous conversations, but also topics to what we call in Dutch 'church-state and society' were often addressed. In the last couple of year, Anders, deep-religious as he was, could not fit in the modern church meetings and the disappointment and even sadness was said and expressed, also because of the choices related to the church music.

But also he and I, of course in the Frisian language, had many stories to tell each other about our upbringing, our mutual memories, about our youth, about our children and grandchildren, about the family, about.. you name it.

What shall I miss those weekly conversations, picking-up the phone and then hear the well-known deep-dark voice, saying in Frisian: GEARTSJE...

We inherited from our upbringing: 'how beautiful life can be here, but the best is yet to come. This was Anders his conviction and he is now Home with his Lord. This is our belief and this is what we rely on. Wholeheartedly, I wish and pray for comfort and strength for you Florence and for all of you, children and grandchildren and to deal with the grief and loss.
may our Lord bless you all

Geertje Kuiper Bergsma/Sneek

— **Geertje Kuiper Bergsma**

The song which were sung and scriptures that were read at Anders Memorial Service today were a blessing and comfort. May His Word continue to uphold, uplift, and guide you through this time of grief and loss. With loving sympathy for you and yours, Aunt Florence. Sincerely, Simeon and Louise Hege

— **Louise Hege**

Dear Florence, please accept our deepest condolences at the loss of Heit. He was a great man, and we are very thankful for all of the years you had together.

— **Roland (and Caryn)**

Dear aunt Florence and family. Sending my heart felt condolences for your loss. I wish you much comfort and strength in the days ahead.

— **Jildou Keith (Van Manen)**

Dear Florence and children Anders-Wilco, Roland, Helga and Stella (and respective spouses): Our Deepest condolences to you with the passing of husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, brother and uncle. Oom Anders (uncle) will be greatly missed by many whose lives he has touched in his own special way. May God give you strength that you will need in your time of sorrow. Thoughts and prayers to you all.....Much Love Alice Rodreque and family.

— **Alice Rodreque**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/bergsma-anders-roel>

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