

Harro Walter Van Brummelen

JANUARY 15, 2014

Harro Van Brummelen was born in the Hague, the Netherlands, emigrating with his family to Calgary, Alberta, in 1953. Graduating from Calgary's Central High School in 1959, he completed a degree in mathematics and science from McGill University. Further studies resulted in an Ontario Specialist Teaching Certificate in mathematics, and a master's degree in



curriculum studies from the University of Toronto. Harro was a mathematics teacher in the Toronto area from 1963 to 1969; teacher, principal and curriculum coordinator in Edmonton from 1969 to 1977, and Coordinator of the Society of Christian Schools in British Columbia from 1977 to 1986. In 1984, Harro completed his doctorate in curriculum studies at the University of British Columbia. From 1986 to 2010 he held a number of positions at Trinity Western University, including Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Dean of the School of Education. He spoke and wrote widely about Christian approaches to education, with one of his book being available in ten languages. Harro was also active in the broader educational scene in British Columbia, being a founder and first President of the Association of British Columbia Deans of Education, and a member of the B.C. Degree Quality Assessment Board as well as of the B.C. Council of Admissions and Transfer. After his formal retirement, Harro continued to teach, speak, write, and be involved in various Ministry of Advanced Education activities in Canada's three westernmost provinces. Harro also served as Executive Director of Christian

Studies International, an organization placing Christian professors in overseas universities where there is little Christian influence.

Harro will be deeply missed by his wife of more than 49 years. Harro and Wilma had a close and loving relationship. Their three children, spouses and grandchildren gave them much joy: Glen & Heide (Ariel, Matthew, and Andrew); Timothy & Melanie (Elise, Jessica, and Vanessa); and Yolanda and Bruce Apperloo (Megan, Taylor, Jayden, and Leah). They also valued their relationships with their siblings: Louise and Mac Vandenbrink, Annemieke Stewart, Jos and Tjits De Moor, Tineke Bosman, Doris Vandenberg, Henry and Ina De Moor, Robert and Margo De Moor, Ary and Sharon De Moor, and Joanne and Dirk Booy. Harro was predeceased by his in-laws Ross Stewart, Jan Bosman, Lawrence Vandenberg, and Dick and Trudy De Moor, as well as by his niece Brenda De Moor.

Both Harro and Wilma served God during their lives: developing a marriage based on a partnership of mutual love and respect; bringing up their children in a context of love and care; exploring what it meant to work out their faith commitment and worldview in education; serving in many church activities; supporting Christians in the arts and in academia; and enjoying walking, camping and hiking. Despite their shortcomings and the “bumps” along the road, God abundantly blessed Harro and Wilma’s lives. Before Harro’s death, they discussed how the Bible teaches that death leads to a period of God’s rest and peace. That will then be followed by Jesus returning to establish the new earth, giving us a new body, enabling us to serve God in new and transforming ways. So today and for all eternity, Harro rests in God’s eternal grace and peace.

Thank you to our loving families!! God has so blessed us through you all!

Thanks to our communities, for their love shown through so many gifts of love, emails and visits.

Special thanks go out to the many people who joined with us in prayer.

Dr. Steve Hansen and his office staff who showed God's concern and love for us as we walked our journey through valleys and hills.

The medical staff at the Abbotsford Cancer Clinic, Dr. Bruce Keith and especially the amazing nurses in the chemo room who supported us through their extensive knowledge, concern, kindness and humour that never ended. It was a joy to visit each time.

The Fraser Health Authorities for their nursing care and love, especially Deanna Horlings, the Maple Hill Centre Staff and Dr. Adamson

Above all, thanks be to our God for His unfailing love during these difficult times.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing to the Harro and Wilma Van Brummelen Education Award at Trinity Western University awarded to an education student each year with financial needs. www.impact.twu.ca Under Featured Projects.

You are invited to leave a personal message of condolence for the family.

Messages of Condolence

I first met Harro and Wilma when I was four years old. When I moved here twenty years ago, they took me under their wings and treated me like another one of their kids. Thank you so much, I will never forget your loving and kind ways. Harro, you blessed so many people's lives.

— Dawn Tuininga Rajala

Harro was a great man that I am proud to call my Uncle! He will be missed on this earth by many, but what a blessing to know he is now at peace and with other loved ones in Heaven. Keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers, and sending you lots of love! ♥ ~Sabrina

— **Sabrina DeMoor**

Dear Wilma and family,

Wish to extend our sympathy to you all with the passing of Harro. We remember as a kind and caring person. God give you strength as you go on without him.

Harriette and August.

— **Harriette and August Guillaume**

A dear friend and brother who was always a great encourager to me and to many others all around the world, a philosopher of education who thought deeply and taught clearly in all his writings and in the classroom and conference hall. I will miss him and I know I will be one of so many. May you, Wilma, and all the family know God's comforting presence at this sad time and especially this afternoon. I thank the Lord for Harro and all his friendship has meant to me through the past twenty or so years and not least those regular emails of encouragement.

— **John Shortt**

We will all miss Uncle Harro! Thanks so much to him and to Aunt Wilma for being examples to all of us of a Godly couple living out their faith in many practical ways. Love to all of you, especially to Aunt Wilma. Praying for you, and thinking of you today.

— **Joanna DeMoor-Tannor**

Our sincere condolences to you all as you grieve the loss of a man who was so many things to so many people. May the love, the words and the prayers you shared together, especially over the past year, bring you comfort and hope in your sorrow.

— **Christina/Steven Benty**

Dear Wilma & Family,

Please accept our deepest sympathy for the loss of your dear husband, father and grandfather, Harro.

I already knew by the kindness that you and Harro have always shown to my Dad, Dorin, your old neighbour, what kind and caring people both Harro and Wilma are. I have always been so grateful for that kindness. You are special.

The service for Harro was beautiful. It was a real tribute to the loved and respected man that Harro was.

With heartfelt sympathy,
Linda and Ray Riopel

— **Linda & Ray Riopel**

Our condolences to you, Wilma & your family. May you feel the comforting hands of God carrying you through these difficult days. Your heartfelt thoughts and prayers. Your dear husband, father, grandfather, will be deeply missed. He certainly left his mark in the field of Christian education and as a Christian witness. I personally deeply valued Harro's influence in my life as a teacher & Christian educator.

In Christ's Love,

Bill & Clare Tinsley (Abbotsford)

— **Bill Tinsley**

I met dear Harro several times over the years, including at TWU. I devoured his books as they appeared and he was certainly a major influence on my own work in Christian education. I thank God for his life and ministry and for all his family.

— **Dr Arthur Jones**

Harro is a giant of Christian Education. It was a joy to read his work and a privilege to meet him, both through the Stapleford Centre in Nottingham (UK) where I worked and most recently in Vancouver in April 2012 at the American Educational Research Association to hear the report of his work with CARDUS. He will be sorely missed by those of us working with students in the field of Christian Education but his legacy will be a continuing source of inspiration.

Trevor Cooling

Professor of Christian Education

Canterbury Christ Church University

— **Professor Trevor Cooling**

As chairperson of EurECA (European Educators Christian Association) I would like to tell you that we mourn with you. Harro will remain unforgettable to those who heard him and met him at our conferences. His book "Walking with God in the Classroom" has become a great inspiration to many who strive to implement a Christian pedagogy. His approach was both visionary and down-to-earth, inspiring and applicable.

And I personally will never forget the illustrations he used from Wilma's elementary school classes - showing not only the way of applying the theory, but also Harro's connectedness with his wife and the classroom reality!

— **Matt Kaegi**

Harro and I served as members of the BC Degree Quality Assessment Board for a number of years and, as a newcomer to the Board, I shall always be grateful for his warm welcome and the collegial manner in which helped shape our decisions. He set a fine example for all of us and was always thoughtful and sensitive about the issues we addressed and the decisions we made.

I remain particularly appreciative of the work he contributed, after retiring from the Board, to a major report on streamlining and improving the degree approval process. It was very pleasing to be able to let Harro know over this past year that his work on this project was actually leading to positive change.

He will be much missed by many colleagues in higher education. To know him and learn from him was a great privilege.

— **John Stubbs**

We were so encouraged and blessed by the service yesterday. It was so honouring and a wonderful celebration of the faithfulness of God in your lives. We are so blessed to have been a part of Harro's and Wilma's lives. Thank-you for the glimpse into your family and faith walk. We will continue to pray and hope to connect over the next months.

— **Jack and Alice VanDyke**

Dear Wilma and family,

I'd like to add my condolences to you and all your family with the sad occasion of Harro's passing to the rest of our eternity. Only on Friday I learned of his death and I was away on Saturday, meaning that I could not attend the funeral service that day.

And now I waited deliberately to respond for I know you have no doubt been overwhelmed with responses, which is of course wonderful. However, knowing the acute pain of losing a most beloved I personally have found that following all the many demanding events leading up to the service there is little chance for personal reflection. In that light I want to commend you to a new future that you must now face and it is and will be a painful journey even though we know that in your case Harro is now rejoicing and we could wish nothing better for him. This leaves a gaping and empty chasm in your life and it is in that light that I want to wish you my very best and to commend you to our faithful covenant God Who leads so that we may (painfully) follow. I want to wish you my very best and trust that you are being surrounded by your many loved ones. sincerely, Henry

— **Henry Numan**

Dear Wilma and family: We just learned today about the passing away of Harro. We wish to send you our condolences and to share with you our grieving for his passing but also join with you in the assurance that he is with His Lord. We remember especially his pioneering work in setting up Christian school curriculum. We also remember his total commitment and his tireless working toward the furtherance and enrichment of Christian education in B.C. His lectures and writings were so helpful to me in my teaching task in a Christian school. His insight was able to influence Christian education throughout many areas of Canada and even the world.

— **Chris and Henrietta Hamming**

I was incredibly blessed and honoured to work in Harro and Wilma's home and be part of their delightful family, having lunch, coffee and tea with them. Harro has touched so many lives. He will not be forgotten! I was so disappointed that I could not attend the memorial service. Wilma--Art and I want to send you and the children and grandchildren our deepest sympathy. We feel so sad! Be assured that we will continue to pray for strength for you all in this great loss. Good memories will give you comfort, and knowing he is with the Lord is truly wonderful--all the same, it's very, very painful for all of you. With our love, Liz and Art Boersma

— **Liz boersma**

Wilma, we wanted you to know how very sad we were to learn of Harro's passing. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family at this very tender time. Hugs from us all.

— **The Girls from the Chemo Room**

Wilma and family; I would like to give my condolences with the passing of Harro. He will be greatly missed. I remember you coming over when Renee passed away with an ice cream pail full of delicious soup. I wish you God's peace and comfort in the days ahead. Talking to Yolanda on Sunday she gave me the biggest hug which I really appreciated.

— **Margaret De Boer**

Dear Wilma and Van Brummelen family,

I want to thank you for giving those of us in distant places the opportunity to participate in the memorial service for Harro, and especially for the honoring and very moving private thoughts that each of you shared so well about him. Harro was well respected and admired around the world including here in the former USSR for the insightful, wise and graceful man of peace that he was. But your words confirmed what we could only suspect about the rest of his life -- Harro was the real thing, a genuine child of God. Our Lord has so obviously blessed your entire family in an unusual way. Through you He has blessed so many others -- your "neighbors" in far away places. On behalf of the Christian teachers of our region of the world, I want to thank you for the sacrifices you made over the years to allow your loving husband and father to bless so many others through his writing, teaching and consultation.

With deepest gratitude and prayers for the Lord's comfort in your great loss and for the only kind of peace, hope and joy that that can remove the sting of such sorrow.

Love in Jesus Christ,

Raymond Le Clair, ACSI, Kyiv, Ukraine

— **Raymond Le Clair**

I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to you Wilma, and all the family. Sadly I was out of town and therefore unable to attend the memorial service. I first met Harro when he started his studies at McGill. Alternate Sundays were spent at our house and my family and I treasured those times together. At that time he already led a younger group studying the Bible book of 1 Peter. In education Harro's books have had a deep impact on me as a teacher, and his legacy will be immeasurable. May the Lord give you much strength now and in the days to come.

— **Marianne Klein**

Dear Wilma and family - I am very thankful to God for the opportunity to meet Wilma and Harro van Brummelen like the main speakers to our ACSI Conference, back on 1996. I hosted that conference in Bucharest, Romania, and it was a real success! Your ministry for our Romanian Christian schools was inspirational and brought a tremendous blessing! We will never forget that experience! May the Lord comfort and bless you! Ema and Liviu Caprar.

— **Liviu Caprar**

What a tribute to a wonderful man!

— **loretta hoelzley**

No tuve el privilegio de conocer a este gran siervo de Dios, el Dr. Van Brummelen pero sí de leer su precioso libro de "andando con Dios en el aula, y fuí impactada maravillosamente por todo su material, y deseo de todo corazón que la gracia de Dios fortalezca a toda la familia con la esperanza gloriosa que los creyentes en el Cristo de la Resurrección da para el futuro de su pronta venida, y en lo personal me mayor deseo es poder darle homenaje a este gran hombre de Dios socializando y enseñando en muchos colegios de Colombia esta doctrina y enseñanza profunda, digna y solemne, gracias por dar ciudadanos tan brillantes a las naciones en Cristo Jesús

— **Blanca Fabiola Ortiz de Orozco**

I have just now learned the sad news of Harro's passing. We were buddies from Grade IX through high school. We had adjacent paper routes that first year and would meet at the end for a chocolate éclair. He was by far the brightest student in our Grade IX class at Connaught and maintained his brilliance, especially in math and physics, at Central High. As our academic paths diverged we to my regret drifted apart. We did have a wonderful lunch date in Vancouver once, just before I left Emily Carr. I was delighted that he had moved out of his youthful shyness and become such a positive, creative force in pedagogy and administration. My warmest condolences to his family, whose loss everyone who knew Harro shares. He was a man of remarkable intelligence, warmth, principle and courage.

— **maurice yacowar**



<https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/van-brummelen-harro-walter>

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