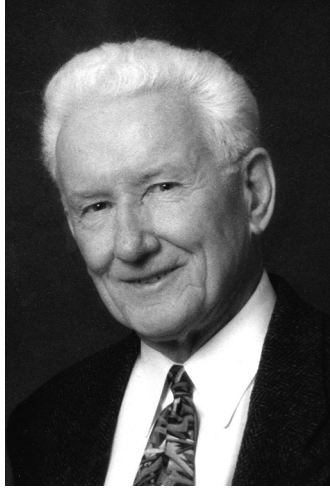


H. William Haberl, 1928–2017

VANCOUVER NON-PROFITS, including the Alcuin Society, lost a selfless director on January 25, 2017, with the death of H. William Haberl. Generous with his time and diligent in his responsibilities even through his battle with cancer, he contributed his professional skills quietly but decisively in support of many groups. An accountant by training, Bill (as he preferred to be called) spent significant periods of his career at the firms of Ernst & Ernst (now EY, formerly Ernst & Young) as well as the Vancouver firm Loewen Stronach & Co. Outside of work, he gave generously of his time to groups including the Gyro Club of Vancouver, the Boys and Girls Clubs of South Coast BC, as well as Little League BC, which made him a life member in 1989. A strong believer in the importance of reading and learning to both instruct and delight, Bill also worked with the Friends of the Vancouver Public Library. When that involvement came to an end in 2010, the Alcuin Society welcomed him to its ranks.

“When he joined the Friends, succeeding a formidably thorough bookkeeper with her several page reports, his report was very short,” recalled Alcuin Society chair Howard Greaves, who approached Bill to consider the Alcuin Society. “He explained that, unlike some accountants, he kept the clients’ needs firmly in mind.”

This approach served the Society well, improving the condition of its books and enabling it to focus on its mandate. In short, the Society’s management was stronger for Bill’s expertise, which allowed the Society to be a stronger voice for the book arts in Canada.



Bill’s own interest in the book arts is another question. By all accounts, it was an abiding interest rather than one that developed into a full-fledged case of bibliomania.

Books were key to people being informed, contributing and even interesting members of society, rather than items to be collected. Cultivating reading interests translated into a cultivated self who could, in turn, cultivate others.

“Dad often spoke of a dream of his—that I would open a bookstore. He loved bookstores,” said Bill’s daughter, Susan Pendakur. “We always had plenty of reading material around—growing

up we were surrounded by books, magazines, newspapers. That has continued in my own life.”

Those who gathered at the Point Grey Golf & Country Club to remember Bill following his funeral at Vancouver’s St. John the Apostle church on February 2 spoke at length of Bill’s generosity of spirit.

Born in East Orange, New Jersey, late in 1928, Bill was the oldest of eight siblings. Raised in Montreal, he worked in the woods north of the city prior to graduating from Loyola College (now Concordia University) in 1953. He married his wife Margaret in 1954, and the couple had six children. The family moved to Vancouver in 1963 and flourished through friendships, connections and memories that will endure with all they met.

~ Peter Mitham