



Winfield "Harry" Harrison Farthing

June 21, 1934 - July 2, 2016

Winfield Harrison (Harry) Farthing, 82, of Clarksville, MD died early on July 2, 2016. He was born in Sugar Grove, NC, the son of Maude Lee and Carter Joseph Farthing. Harry graduated in 1957 with a degree in Electrical Engineering from North Carolina State, where he was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi, and was also a member of Tau Beta Phi and Eta Kappa Nu. Harry won the 1956 Phi Kappa Phi award for the Junior with the highest Sophomore GPA in the School of Engineering. Following graduation, Harry went directly to work in Washington, D.C., first for the National Security Agency and then for the newly created National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), which sponsored his Masters' Degree and also his Doctorate in Electrical Engineering from Catholic University. Harry met Margaret Duncan Alexander on a date set up by friends, and six months later on February 27, 1960 they married in Charlotte, NC. Harry was a pioneer member of the NASA staff, where he served as part of the Geostationary Satellite Server (GOES) team at Goddard Space Flight Center. During his tenure, he assisted NASA in making many scientific advances, including the patent for a device to determine the relative position between a spacecraft and a radiation emitting celestial body. Harry served as a Principal Investigator and Section Head, leading many projects including the development of Alkali Vapor Scalar Magnetometers for precise measurement of the earth's magnetic field. The GOES satellite program now provides billions of people across the world with accurate weather forecasts. Harry was the first person ever to use the term "space

weather” to describe conditions in space affecting the Earth. After retirement from NASA in 1989, Harry immediately began work at Swales Aerospace where he worked for 15 years. In one of his proudest moments while at Swales, Harry served on the mission control team for the launch of a GOES satellite from Cape Canaveral, Florida, and he was the person tasked with verbally confirming his portion of the mission was ready for launch. At the time of his death, Harry was employed by Orbital/ATK.

Harry’s passion beyond space was his love of family, church, and community. He loved traveling extensively with his wife and family. He sang throughout his life, first in the Glee Club at NC State, and later at First Baptist Church of Washington, D.C, and then with the First Presbyterian Church of Howard County. Harry is survived by his beloved and supportive wife of 56 years, Margaret Alexander Farthing, his son, Winfield Harrison Farthing, Jr. of Clarksville, MD, son, Carter Alexander Farthing of Bowie, MD, daughter, Laura Vaught Farthing Berthiaume, Esq., of Swan Point, MD, and son-in-law David A. Berthiaume, Esq. He is also survived by three grandchildren, Alexandra Paule Berthiaume, Leanora Caroline Berthiaume and Daniel John Berthiaume, and by two surviving sisters, Betty Jean Hughes of Weaverville, NC and Carrie Lee Greer of Tucson, AZ as well as many nieces and nephews.

A funeral service will be held at Christ Episcopal Church Wayside, Newburg, MD, at 10:00 am on Wednesday, July 6, 2016. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Department of Electrical Engineering at North Carolina State University in Raleigh, NC for the benefit of students from Watauga County, NC.

Cemetery Details

Christ Episcopal Church Cemetery (Wayside)

13050 Rock Point Road
Wayside, MD 20664

Previous Events

Service

JUL 6. 10:00 AM (ET)

Christ Church ~ Wayside
13050 Rock Point Road
Newburg, MD 20664

Interment

JUL 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

Christ Church ~ Wayside
13050 Rock Point Road
Newburg, MD 20664

Tribute Wall



“ Winfield "Harry" Harrison Farthing

October 08, 2023 at 10:45 PM



“ Winfield "Harry" Harrison Farthing

October 04, 2023 at 03:12 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Winfield "Harry" Harrison Farthing.



July 06, 2016 at 07:41 AM

HS

“ *My sincere condolences to Harry’s family and friends.*

Harry was a good colleague and friend. We spent a lot of time together during the GOES 8 to 15 eras, especially during the ground-based stray field testing on nearly every one of those satellites. Those were long nights, from dusk to dawn, almost always preceded by dinner and good conversation. We talked about work, we talked about families, and we talked about travels and good meals. During all phases of the mission, from setting requirements to following instrument development and testing, to launch, instrument checkout, and data processing; I couldn’t have asked to work with anyone nicer and more competent. When it came to making magnetic field measurements in space, Harry’s expertise was unparalleled. We owe him much gratitude for the success of the GOES magnetometers and their contributions to both space weather operations and space science. I am privileged to have worked beside him.

*Howard Singer, Chief Scientist
NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center*

Howard J. Singer - July 06, 2016 at 12:00 AM

WB

“ I am very sorry to hear the news of the passing of my friend and colleague, Harry Farthing. We first worked together on the GOES-D/H program where he was the SEM subsystem engineer and I was the Mission Operations Manager. He came over to the GOES-I/M Project office as a Imager/Sounder/SEM specialist and we worked closely together drafting the requirements and RFP, evaluating the proposals, reviewing the Ford/Loral build and test, and finally postlaunch testing to for GOES-I and J. I could always depend on Harry for good advice and counsel, whether at NASA or Swales. He was one of the reasons the GOES program had been so successful. Condolences to Margaret.

Bill Bryant

GOES, 1979-1998

William C Bryant - July 05, 2016 at 02:03 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Winfield "Harry" Harrison Farthing.



July 05, 2016 at 12:22 PM

RM

“ Margaret,

I am so sorry for your loss, and extend my deepest sympathies. Harry was a pleasure to be around. I hope you are comforted by many wonderful memories of your husband and best friend.

Rick Monfred

Rick Monfred - July 05, 2016 at 07:20 AM



“ 2 files added to the album Memories Album



Raymond Funeral Service, PA - July 02, 2016 at 03:33 PM