



IN THE CARE OF

Sugarman Sinai Memorial Chapel

OBITUARY

H. Jack Feibelman

NOVEMBER 25, 1920 - JUNE 19, 2020



H. Jack Feibelman, 99, passed away at Miriam Hospital on June 19, 2020. He was predeceased by his wife of seventy one years, Hannah, and son Jeffrey and survived by Jeffrey's widow Jaine Feibelman, daughter Barbara (Kenneth Orenstein), daughter-in-law Caryl Feibelman, grandchildren Andrew Feibelman (Elaine), Marcy Feibelman, Matthew Orenstein (fiancée Kim Starbuck), Clare Feiner (Jake) and great-grandchildren, Harlyn Feibelman and Graham Feiner.

Born Hans-Joachim Feibelman in Berlin Germany in 1920, he was the only child of Siegfried and Clare (Arnholz) Feibelman. Jack enjoyed an idyllic childhood in Berlin

spending weekends boating on the River Spree. Aunts, uncles, and cousins spoiled him on frequent holiday visits to his mother's hometown of Arnswalde and to his father's hometown of Ruelzheim, in a region where the Feibelman family has documented roots back to 1360. For the proud German-Jewish Feibelmans, the rise of the Third Reich was

unfathomable. Jack attended public school where, in 1934, a guest Nazi Party instructor described perfect Aryan characteristics and selected three students who personified Aryan traits, including Jack. His classmates giggled, but this encounter foretold dangers ahead. Shortly thereafter, Jack enrolled in a makeshift school organized by several Jewish congregations in Berlin.

A textiles manufacturers' representative, Jack's father, Siegfried had business connections across Europe. As the political climate changed, some vendors refused to interact with a Jewish merchant, others warned Clare and Siegfried of the dire risks for Jews in Germany. Clare possessed enough political acumen and strength of spirit to decide that Jack should flee the Nazi regime and immigrate to the United States. With perseverance, bravery and luck, fifteen-year old Jack fled to the States in August of 1936 on the SS Normandy. The timing coincided with the 1936 Berlin Olympics. The related commotion eased his departure. Jack went by train from New York to his Uncle Adolf and Aunt Adeline Feibelman in small-town Camden, Arkansas. The childless couple doted on Jack and carefully orchestrated his rapid cultural assimilation. By June of 1937, at 16, Jack graduated from high school and enrolled at the Chillicothe Business School in Missouri. Jack was anxious to become self-supporting and able to guarantee affidavits for his parents' immigration. Towards that goal, he accelerated his studies, graduated within six months, and moved to New York City.

Finding work during the Depression was difficult. Jack secured odd jobs and typed menus in exchange for food. By 1938, with his affidavit and those of American cousins, his parents immigrated. Jack secured a job as a clerk at Coro Jewelry, a company that would become the largest costume jewelry manufacturer in the United States. He advanced to bookkeeper and was reassigned to their factory in Providence where he moved with his parents. Throughout this time, Jack and his parents received pleas for emigration assistance from German-Jewish family members and friends. They wrote endless letters, filed documents and secured affidavits from others to support their efforts. In spite of advocating for dozens of applicants, they succeeded in only helping one couple, cousins Margaret and Arthur Zander who eventually settled in Providence.

While working days at Coro, Jack enrolled in an evening program at Northeastern University in 1939 and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration six years later. During the war, Coro engaged in wartime manufacturing and Jack expedited the production of rifle ammunition caps. He met Hannah Davis at Narragansett Beach in 1942. Hannah's sister, Carlie Zimmerman arranged the blind date, and Hannah and Jack quickly became a couple. Jack was drafted into the Army in 1942 and was

assigned to Air Force training at Fort Collins, Colorado. He became ill with rheumatic fever; and, while in the infirmary, he contracted measles and scarlet fever. Doctors assumed that, having been raised in Germany, he had not developed immunity to these illnesses. With great embarrassment, he was granted an Honorable Medical Discharge which he disputed to no avail.

Hannah and Jack were married in 1946. Hannah's family (Davis/ Kotler/ Zimmerman clan) embraced Jack. He cherished his new siblings and found warmth to help him cope with the loss of more than eighteen family members in the Holocaust. He continued to support and help his parents adjust to their life in America, assisting his father with the creation of a small import business. Meanwhile, he progressed at Coro to Credit Manager, Assistant Comptroller and finally to Director of Product Development. He always credited his successes to the generosity of his many mentors and lived his motto of helping colleagues and employees throughout his long career. In fact, he never retired.

In 1966, Jack formed Feibelman & Krack, which represented select jewelry manufacturers to the wholesale market. By researching fashion trends and engaging his own designers, Jack successfully molded each manufacturer's jewelry collections to suit the fashion moment. He recalled that his father and Uncle Alfonse had succeeded in their respective businesses by counseling manufacturers in the development of marketable soft goods. Jack served his profession as a long-time member and officer of MJSA (Manufacturing Jewelers and Silversmiths Association) and belonged to the Fashion Jewelry and Accessories Trade Association.

Separately, in 1967, Jack formed A&H Manufacturing Company to manufacture and market his revolutionary concept of hanging display cards for earrings. He started with five employees--Hannah managed the bookkeeping at home. A&H expanded into other packaging and display products, and in 1974, his son Jeffrey joined the company. Together, they stressed core concepts of customer service and innovation and expanded the business to a high point of more than six locations worldwide and 1,000 employees.

Jack loved to travel, and, with Hannah by his side, embarked on numerous international trips across six continents. He skied into his seventies, sharing his childhood love of the sport with children and grandchildren. Hannah taught Jack to play bridge, and he enjoyed playing with friends and family. Surprisingly, this serious man turned into a practical jokester each April First, when he devised elaborate ruses to 'get' his children and then his grandchildren. He cherished family relationships and, with Hannah, created fond memories for the next generation with annual vacations and celebrations of Jewish and

American holidays. He was a long time member of Temple Beth-El and Temple Sinai and volunteered on the Endowment Committee of the Jewish Alliance. He served on Miriam Hospital's board of governors, its finance committee, and the Miriam Foundation Board of Trustees. In 2014, he was honored as Miriam Hospital Person of the Year.

Jack had a complicated relationship with his German heritage. The Nazi regime slaughtered family members leaving only memories of his once vibrant Jewish community. Yet his German-Jewish ancestors had lived in what would become Germany for more than 600 years. He was proud of their successes. As an immigrant to the United States, he focused his education on developing employable skills to support his family. Without the rise of Nazism, his educational pursuits might have taken a different direction. Remarkably, in 2001, at the age of 80, Jack received a Master of Arts degree in English from Brown University. With that accomplishment, Jack claimed his heritage; his thesis was titled "Feibelmaenner, A Chronicle." He was a remarkable son, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, cousin. H. Jack Feibelman was a remarkable man.

The family is deeply grateful for the kindness, professionalism and grace of Jack's devoted caregivers: Yolanda Benitez, Sharon Davis, and Christine Reid.

Due to the current restrictions, the funeral will be private. In lieu of flowers, contributions in his memory may be made to The Miriam Hospital Foundation, Development Office, PO Box H, Providence, RI 02901.

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Memories

H. Jack Feibelman

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Penney Stein

June 23, 2020

It was a great privilege to work with Jack when I was Head of School at Alperin Schechter and he volunteered at Federation. He was a remarkable person – kind, thoughtful, intelligent, curious, and sensitive. His courtesy and humor made every encounter interesting and engaging, and his sincere commitment to children, education and the community was evident in everything he said and did. My condolences to the entire family.

Susan Scott

June 22, 2020

I didn't know Jack, but well aware of his impact on the State of Rhode Island. Beautiful obituary. His story is to be shared lest we forget what the world may have lost.

Ron Verri

June 22, 2020

I have an enormous amount of respect for Jack, and a wonderful friendship with him. My father, Gene Verri, the chief designer at Coro for over thirty years worked closely with Jack. I have a wonderful photo of Jack and my father at the Coro outing in Crescent park in 1938. My father was 27, and Jack was 19. Jack, my father, and I, had many wonderful lunches together in which they shared stories about Coro. At my father's one hundredth birthday party, in 2011, Jack took the initiative to get the ball rolling for a scholarship at RISD in my father's name. When Jack saw me, he would always say I reminded him of happy times. I will miss him greatly.

Ron Verri, Gem-craft.

Beverly Belin

June 21, 2020

Barbara, so sorry for your loss. I read the obituary and realized what a remarkable man he was. You and your family were fortunate to have him so long but at the same time it is never long enough. My hope is that your memories and your pride comfort you in this loss. Thinking of you all. Bev and Norm

CHERYL TEVEROW

June 21, 2020

Barbara, Ken, Caryl and family,

It was a pleasure to have known and volunteered with your Dad on the Jewish Federation Foundation Board. He was quite a special man! I hope that all of your wonderful memories help you through this difficult time.

Warm Regards,

Cheryl Greenfeld Teverow

FROM THE FAMILY



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