



*In Memory  
of*

**Allan  
Doobov**



## ALLAN DOOBOV ל"ט

I have known Allan all my life. He was born exactly seven months before me and our respective parents often used to bring us together to play.

He was my cousin. He was also my best friend.

We grew up together and were often in each other's company, and inseparable. Some people thought we must be twins. We had similar likes and dislikes then, though he outgrew many in later years. Our times together, in those bygone years, were often as simple as being in each other's close proximity. His mother, my Aunty Dora, often despaired when she found us in the same room, reading separately. She would say that it was a sunny day outside; why didn't we go out and do something. Needless to say, we ignored her suggestion.

We paced each other through those early years, although our small age difference translated into one year, at school. We both attended Brisbane State High School, and studied the same subjects. We both proceeded to the University of Queensland and emerged with degrees in physics. While at UofQ, Allan was awarded a half-blue for weightlifting.

We were in the Boy Scouts together and helped and challenged each other, being both awarded the Queen's Scout badge at the same ceremony.

Our lives diverged after graduation, Allan moving to Adelaide to work at the Salisbury defence laboratory of the then Department of Supply, and I marrying and moving to Canberra to work in the Australian Public Service.

After I began the course that led to an M.Sc. in physics at the ANU, Allan was similarly inspired to move back to Brisbane to work for the same degree at the U. of Q. While there he became involved in Abschol and became its Education Officer. Abschol was originally an organisation working to improve educational opportunities for Aborigines, but was also involved in wider advocacy for Aboriginal rights. Allan was also involved in a more practical hands-on activity involving coaching individuals and groups.

During this work, he met Ruth Griffith, whom he later married. They often worked together in Abschol and had significant achievements leading, for example, to changes in teaching in Queensland schools about Aborigines.

After graduating again, Allan and Ruth moved to Canberra, where he worked initially at the Patent Office, but later moved to the Department of Health. Their two children, Sarah and Benjamin were born there and still live there.

This brought Allan back into my close orbit and our friendship continued, though I never shared his passion for cricket (Sarah seems to have taken on that role). My family celebrated *chagim* with the other Doobov family in Canberra.

My relationship with Allan remained close all our lives. He was best man at my wedding to Sue, in 1964. To my delight he travelled to Israel to attend my second wedding, to Elana, in 2017 – no need for a best man then. I was able to talk with him about anything. Our discussions in later years were able to resume as if no time or geographical separation had intervened. We didn't always agree but there was never any rancour or hurt.

Just three months ago, when Elana and I came for her first visit to Australia, Allan graciously hosted us and catered to our every need. He was by then living alone but he looked after us well. Most importantly, we had much time to reminisce and disagree about politics and climate change. It turns out that that will be my last memory of him – a warm and happy memory. I am glad that it happened that way.

There will be many mourners for Allan, above all, his beloved children and grandchildren, his sister, Sonya, and other close friends. And, I suppose, Jason.

But I shall be among them. He was an important part of my life and there will always be an Allan-sized hole left there.

He was my best friend — and always will be.

— יהי זכרו ברוך —

May his memory be blessed.

**Mervyn Doobov**

11 December 2019