



*In Memory
of*

**Sam
Fein**

IN MEMORY OF SAM FEIN



Sam at the Grumps R Us birthday party in January 2018

Sam Fein died on 3 February 2018 aged 94 years. He was the much loved husband of Pam (z"l), father to Dan, Ben and Mollie and stepfather to Jeremy, Penny, Katrina and Nick.

Sam's death was a shock to the ACT Jewish Community as he was such an institution in our community. We had only just celebrated his birthday at a special 94th birthday Kiddush on 20 January sponsored by his family. The Kiddush was attended by many people from the community and Sam really enjoyed the occasion, contributing his usual wry comments and his reflections on a life well lived.

Sam was a long-standing member of the ACTJC's men's group Grumps R Us.

Members of the ACT Jewish Community, with family and friends, attended the graveside service for Sam at the Woden Cemetery on Tuesday 6 February at 3.30pm.

Sam's family invited members and friends to join them at 5pm at the National Jewish Memorial Centre for the first minyan and a light supper to honour Sam.

Sam's life story was the subject of *Sam Fein - A Biography* by Katrina Molina, daughter of Pam Fein.

The book is available at <http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/invited/2454128/055db0d4fc1728c59a56697af68eceb720c5c51>.

IN MEMORY OF SAM FEIN

READ BY DR ALAN SHROOT

The following tribute from Sam's daughter Mollie Fein was read by Dr Alan Shroot at Sam's 92th birthday Kiddush on 20 January. The Kiddush was sponsored by Sam's family and attended by many people from the community. Sam really enjoyed the occasion, contributing his usual wry comments and his reflections on a life well-lived.

"Almost 30 years ago, a 65 year old, wandering Jew named Sam, met a beautiful, spunky, Australian named Pam, while volunteering in Israel. For Sam, my Dad, it was one of the luckiest events of his life. You see, Dad fell head over heels in love with Pam, and in return she shared her life with him. For the next 25 years they created a life together. At the center of their life was family and the kind, open, eclectic, gracious, Canberra Jewish Community. Tragically, when Pam passed away my Dad struggled to make a meaningful life. Yet again, he was lucky, because COMMUNITY was there to help and support him. And now, as Dad turns 94 there is a TEAM of friends - yes, of course, I mean the GRUMPS- who are also there for him in so many many ways The lunches, the cakes, the taxi service, the Pickles walkers, the listeners ... always there ...

From Baltimore, Cleveland and Philadelphia an appreciative Fein Family celebrates YOU as you celebrate, 'Lucky Sam Fein's' 94th birthday."

Happy Birthday Dad!

Love, Mollie - from Baltimore, Maryland

REMINISCING ABOUT MY DAD

MOLLIE FEIN

He was a funny guy.

Eccentric... without trying.

He never understood why someone wouldn't want to spend 3 hours in a hardware store. When he visited me in the States his joy was perusing big Dollar Store type places. His pockets were always FULL of knives, scissors, tape, magnifying glasses, batteries, cookies...for starters. He couldn't buy anything at full price.

He was the original recycler of all things. Nothing need be thrown away. He understood machines and electrical systems. He loved to take things apart and put them together.

As a kid we lived in a house with an intercom system linking all rooms. Listening into each other's conversations or frightening sales people at the front door was a hobby. He put electric outlets everywhere. You never know when you might want to listen to the radio in the closet.

Fashion was not a word he recognized. I remember Dad in his Space Invader suspenders for years (ask Dan about them!). My favorite Space Invader suspender memory is of Pam Fein trying to explain to him WHY Space Invader suspenders are not a good choice for a wedding reception. It was a hopeless task.

He was stubborn
He loved his dog Pickles
He lived to be 94.
He was LUCKY

And .. no.. he did not take care of himself..... eat healthy.....or exercise.

Another Memory

Sam putting up a hand built 8' Chanukah Menorah on our roof, that would be there every December for years and years and was visible for miles...this in coal country Pennsylvania. Yup. As mom said. " If I am going to be a token Jew I am going to be a visible Jew". Dad didn't philosophize. He built.

He was a tinkerer, a gadgeteer, a fixer, a teller of tales, and an original maker spacer.

SAM FEIN—A BIOGRAPHY

KATRINA MOLINA

Katrina Molina, daughter of Pam Fein, has recorded the biography of her step-father, Sam Fein. Sam Fein is a member of the ACT Jewish Community and has an amazing story to tell. This important work can be viewed at the following website:

<http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/invited/2454128/055db0d4fc1728c59a56697af68ecebb720c5c51>

Katrina Molina has provided an explanation of the process of recording Sam's story in the following account. First published July 2012 in HaMerkaz.

I became involved in writing people's biography in 2009 in a voluntary capacity with a Palliative Care facility in Melbourne. People of any age, with a terminal illness can opt to have 'their story' recorded, hopefully before they pass away. These oral histories are recorded in the first-person and then transcribed and edited.

From this experience, I decided to work on a project with my step-father so that his family in the States could benefit from this process. Initially I did not provide any guidelines or direction, as it was an opportunity for Sam to reflect, reminisce and record aspects of his life and many achievements. He was an excellent oral historian and he needed little encouragement to talk about his life. As the recordings progressed, I would give him a little direction where there were noticeable gaps in history or when he repeated what had already been covered. I would highlight inconsistencies and problems with the chronological order when necessary. As it was his story, I did not ask other family members to confirm dates or events.

Sam was responsible for the initial editing and this became a lengthy process with further visits, phone calls, faxes and emails. When the final recording was completed, I then began my editing of his work to ensure the information flowed into a coherent story. Uppermost in my mind was the need to edit lightly so that a reader could inherently hear his voice as they were reading it.

My visits to Canberra spanned 16 months however the whole project took about 2 years. For me, many benefits flowed from this project, including visiting the family on a more regular basis and gaining a much better understanding of my stepfather and his approach to life. I think the process for Sam was rewarding yet challenging. It was a reminder of what he had achieved and it provided him with an opportunity to pass on his ideas and philosophies. Part of the challenge was going over unfinished business and revisiting sensitive times in his life. However the biography also provided a forum for healing and of personal reflection.



Sam Fein as a small boy.

SOME EARLY RECOLLECTIONS:

BY SAM FEIN AS TOLD TO KATRINA MOLINA

My Father: William Wolf

My father was born on 02 August in 1888 and was from Ananiev, Gubernya, approximately 160 kilometres north of Odessa in the Ukraine, Russia. Originally the family were from Germany where they were a family of veterinarians or caretakers of large animals, namely horses. I am not sure how they originally spelt their surname but it was something like Feinhersh, which I understand, means 'a little deer' or something similar. I think they may have been in charge of deer welfare for the Kaiser in Germany. The story goes that when the Kaiser gave horses to his cousin the Tsar, the family went with the horses. This is why the family moved to Russia. When the family got to Russia, the Russians could not pronounce the second part of their surname 'hersh' so their name became 'Feingersh'. (We changed our surname again in the 40's when we were living in the States for clarity of understanding. My mother was upset about changing our name, so I waited until I married to change it to Fein).



William Feingersh

Naturally, my grandparents wanted their children to follow in their footsteps however my father didn't want to take care of horses and he rebelled against his father's wishes. So his father sold him into the army. As I understand it, there was a requirement to supply manpower for the army from every family. Out of interest, a family could buy a son from another family to be a replacement for their son.

My Dad had a marvellous ability with numbers and he could remember numbers of great length as well as the order of cards in a deck. His ability to remember the sequence in the previous 'deal' of cards, gave him a tremendous advantage in gambling games. In a fairly short period of time, he had won enough money playing poker and other card games to buy his way out of the Russian Army.

He wasted no time leaving Russia and travelled to Canada via England. In Canada he learned English while working as an orderly or medical aid assisting patients and nurses in a hospital. He also learned to drive cars. He worked at the hospital for a year or two and eventually crossed the border into the United States in 1911 at the age of twenty-three.

Somewhere along the way he became a Jitney driver, taking people places for a fixed price. (A jitney was a small bus or automobile, which carried passengers. Originally the driver charged a fare of five cents). During World War Two he specialised in taking soldiers from Fort Dix in New Jersey to New York or the reverse trip.

My First Jobs

Rolling Cigarettes

After my brother started to smoke, I began to earn money rolling cigarettes for him and his friends. I bought a machine where you could put the cigarette paper and the tobacco in, pull the handle and it would roll the cigarette. I would wet it with my finger and cut off the ends. Cigarettes were selling for something like eight or ten cents for a pack of twenty. I supplied the tobacco, paper and the labour and I ended up making a profit of a penny a pack, selling twenty cigarettes in a bundle for five cents.

Work in the Fruit Markets

When I was about eleven, I started work in the fruit markets. This job was done after school and eventually I worked six days a week, from 3 to 6pm Monday to Fridays and from 7am to 6pm on Saturdays. I earned about ten cents an hour. I could eat damaged fruit and occasionally I could take home damaged produce.

Milk Delivery

I started delivering milk before school in the morning, when I was around twelve. Hauling the glass bottle cases of milk built up my strength. Each case contained about twelve bottles and they weighed around twenty five pounds. I could take between four to six bottles in a little carrier and run up and down stairs in the five storey buildings delivering milk. I had a pushcart to assist me. The bakery was the source of milk I delivered. It was a little side business for them in addition to selling bread. I got paid a small amount per bottle and I received free milk and a roll with butter for my breakfast, which I ate en route to school.

The regular milk company had delivery people with horses and wagons. The horses were trained to stop in front of the house or apartment complex. The milk delivery men could carry two trays with as many as fifteen to twenty bottles of milk. They would run up the steps delivering milk, then go over the roof top to the next building. The horse knew the route and would be waiting for the milk delivery person two buildings further along.



Since most of the shops were in the same area, shopkeepers would talk to one another. As I had established a sense of integrity and reliability among them, I had endless jobs. In the evenings if I had spare time, I delivered pharmaceutical goods and also dry cleaning for a local tailor. Payment was five cents per delivery.

Sam Fein