

SAM SHEAR



Sam Shear, beloved husband of 72 years to the late Belle Shear; father of Barbara (David) Gershon, Shelly (Mike) Andreas, Howard (Jackie) Shear; brother of the late Leon and Henna; and oldest son of the late Hersh Leib and Blima Szejer. He was Pupup to six grandchildren: Andrew (Siejhi) Gershon, Lauren (Eric) Morales, Evan (Kristin) Andreas, Benjamin (Nicolle D'Onofrio) Andreas, Margo (Justin) Fischgrund, and Brad (Thi Vu) Shear; and six great-grandchildren: Teddy and Quincy Morales, Parker and Cooper Andreas, Madden Fischgrund, and Baxter Andreas.

A Holocaust survivor, Sam passed away on December 15, just before his 99th birthday. Born in Będzin, Poland, Sam was taken in 1939 by the Nazis before his 13th birthday while in line for bread. Against all odds, he survived five years in five concentration camps, including Buchenwald and Gross-Rosen, along with enduring typhus fever and malnourishment. He was liberated at long last by U.S. soldiers after four months of walking on the Death March. After losing his mother, father, and younger sister to the gas chambers in Auschwitz, Sam had a miraculous reunion with his younger brother, Leon, with whom he remained close until Leon's death in 2021.

Upon arriving in the United States, he met his wife, Belle, without knowing a word of English, while attending a wedding. The couple married shortly after and built a life together in Pittsburgh's Stanton Heights neighborhood, where they lived with their three children and Belle's mother, Libby. Sam has said many times that Libby was much like the mother he lost so young, and the two famously never had an argument.

Sam went on to have a long, successful career in the financial services business - forming a family business in 1952, now run by his son, Howard, and grandson, Brad. The three-generation family business still has many original clients of Sam's. Sam's career garnered him awards such as Prudential's Man of the Year in the early 1960s.

From hardly being able to walk upon his liberation, Sam built himself back up physically throughout his long life. Sam shared stories of playing professional soccer in Europe and skiing in Germany's Garmisch-Partenkirchen after his liberation. His adult years included the routine of jogs around the Highland Park Reservoir every morning, no matter rain, snow, or sleet - running alongside famed Pittsburgh Pirate player, Manny Sanguillen. He spent many days playing ping-pong at the Pittsburgh JCC and stayed active while in his winter home in South Florida. Up until his death, he prided himself of doing some type of exercise every day.

Later in his adult life, Sam reached thousands of people around the world through the retelling of his Holocaust experience, speaking in schools, churches, and community organizations - even with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Along with storytelling, Sam had a passion for music - singing, listening to live performances, and playing the harmonica for his great-grandchildren.

Interment will be held on Wednesday, December 18, at 10 a.m., at Shaare Torah Cemetery. Donations can be made to the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh.

Professional services trusted to **D'ALESSANDRO FUNERAL HOME & CREMATORY, LTD.**, Lawrenceville.

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