



## Brian Tobias

October 17, 1943 - March 13, 2025

Dr. Brian Tobias, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and brother, died in his sleep in Carmel, Indiana, at 81 years old. Born in Cape Town, South Africa, he was the eldest child of Ralph and Helene (nee Herman) Tobias. He grew up in the neighborhood of Sea Point with his brother Raymond, sister Berenice, and brother Ashley. The white sandy beach served as a touchstone, a place where he found thrills, peace, and friendship. But it was only one of many stomping grounds. He surfed at Muizenberg Beach with friends and took Ashley for rides on his motorbike along Avenue St. Charles. At Christian Brothers College, he was charismatic and a tough rugby player - once breaking his collarbone. When asked recently about being the best rugby player at his school, Brian said, "That was a very long time ago." Indeed, it was. Brian always knew this was only the beginning of his lifelong pursuit of exploring more that life had to offer.

One Saturday night at a party, he met Jean Reznek. During their courtship, Brian visited Jean's family home, where her younger brother Rodney told jokes and delighted in Brian's laughter. On April 2, 1967, Brian married Jean. To many, Brian and Jean were "one" thereafter. They had their first child, Jonathan, in 1970 and Deborah in 1972.

Brian received a medical degree from the University of Cape Town and immersed himself in cases that involved research and long nights. Then, he joined his father-in-law's medical practice, making house calls. In 1977, Brian moved with his family to Cincinnati, Ohio, where he trained in anesthesiology

at the University of Cincinnati. Soon after, Jean's close friend Lesley Loon relocated with her husband, Martin, who trained and worked with Brian. They were part of a network of South African Jewish expatriates, many of whom chose Cincinnati as their new home. All friends through their early or teen years, their connections survived time, distance, and life's challenges, but what mattered above all else was connection.

Brian maintained that connection with his siblings, who emigrated to other cities. He always admired Ashley and Berenice for striking out in their youth and making their way in Israel - creating large families with their spouses, Leah and Gadi, respectively. He visited them and his father as often as he could for landmark

events. He also traveled to Birmingham, Alabama, to be with Raymond and his wife, Cynthia, and their children. He sought out vacations regularly with their families and those of Jean's siblings, Rodney, Frank, and Steven.

In Cincinnati, Brian was an anesthesiologist at the University of Cincinnati and later went into private practice servicing Jewish Hospital. He liked being a doctor. He took the hard cases and developed a good reputation among the surgeons and the nurses. Often around town, people asked about him and talked about how they admired his skills as a doctor. He was devoted to his wife, children, and grandchildren - always wanting the proper thing to be done. He spoke with perfect elocution and used his knife and fork with a precision not often seen in the United States. He liked to dress well and once traded in his surfboard for a leather jacket. On weekends, he preferred a dress shirt, belt, and slacks. He also liked to work out at the gym, swim, kayak, and bike until it hurt. During one vacation in Snowmass, Colorado, Brian gamely went mountain biking with Jonathan and promptly fell into a ditch. All scraped up, he came home and bought a mountain bike and continued with impressive determination. He bore the character traits of someone who was comfortable exploring their outer limits and working through it - just for the experience. Brian had a dry sense of humor and a gruff exterior, but underneath it all, he was a warm, loving family man. Perhaps he was most unvarnished around

dogs. Throughout his life, Misty, Sasha, Max, Joey, and Lucy accompanied him - until Chloe, Debbie's goldendoodle, claimed him. No matter how many times that rambunctious dog dragged him down or across an active golf course, he never wavered. You can see a pattern here — he was a caretaker who would not quit. As years went by, he developed a deep emotional understanding of those around him and could be counted on to support them. For many years, he worked early and long hours to support his family until he retired in 2015 to take care of Jean. What more can be said about a very private man of many facets at the end of his life? We all have our cherished, unique memories of him. For his children and grandchildren, one could think of him like the giving tree in Shel Silverstein's children's book. Resolute, with a generosity that was borne of duty, commitment, and a boundless love. Brian, husband to the late Jean, is survived by Dr. Jonathan Tobias, Deborah Tobias Paul, and his grandchildren Sidney, Jacqueline, Isabella, and Zachary. Also survived by his siblings Raymond Tobias, a retired gastroenterologist, and his wife Cynthia; Berenice Yakov and her husband Gadi; and Ashley, a retired theater professor, and his wife Leah.

A funeral service will be held on Sunday, March 16 at 1:30PM at Weil Kahn Funeral Home, 8350 Cornell Rd. Cincinnati, OH. 45249. Visitation will take place from 1PM to the time of service. Service will be LIVESTRESMED at [https://webcast.funeralvue.com/events/embed\\_viewer/110755](https://webcast.funeralvue.com/events/embed_viewer/110755).

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his memory to Cure Alzheimer's Fund <https://curealz.org>

# Cemetery Details

## United Jewish Cemetery Walnut Hills

3400 Montgomery Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45207

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 16. 1:00 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Weil Kahn Funeral Home  
8350 Cornell Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45249

## Funeral Service

MAR 16. 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM (ET)

Weil Kahn Funeral Home  
8350 Cornell Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45249  
513-469-WEIL (9345)  
info@weilkahnfuneralhome.com  
<http://www.weilkahnfuneralhome.com>

## Graveside Service

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MAR **16**. 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

United Jewish Cemetery Walnut Hills  
3400 Montgomery Road  
Cincinnati, OH 45207

# Tribute Wall



“ Weil Kahn Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Brian Tobias



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**Weil Kahn Funeral Home** - March 14, 2025 at 11:17 AM

AT

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Ashley Tobias** - March 16, 2025 at 02:29 PM

AT

“ Just some thoughts and memories from my beloved eldest brother:

*Brian was a warm loving family man. As years went by, he developed a deep emotional understanding. He was empathetic and supportive . He was also modest and ironically self-effacing.*

*It is difficult to write about Brian and not relate to Gigi - for me, Leah and our family- Brian and Gigi were “one”*

*He made every effort not to miss an event of the family in Israel - happy or sad. He and Gigi attended our eldest daughter Tama's wedding in Cologne, Germany. Also, Roni and Noam's weddings in Israel (Jon accompanied him to the latter). He came to the wedding of Steve's daughter Hadar. He came to sit Shiva with Berry, when her son Avihu was killed in action. He and Raymond visited our father when he was hospitalized in a coma, just before passing away.*

*I remember idolizing Brian when he was a young charismatic teenager.*

*I remember when he broke his collarbone playing rugby for CBC (Christian Brothers College) - tough sportsman, great hero.*

*I remember the pride and thrill I felt when he took me - I must have been 6-8 - for a ride on his motorbike along Avenue St Charles, where we lived in Sea Point, CT (Brian must have been about 16).*

*He had a surfboard and used to go surfing at Muizenberg with friends. I remember how disappointed I was when he sold the surfboard years later to buy a leather jacket. To me a leather jacket seemed to be “less cool” than a surfboard but Brian always like to dress well.*

*I remember when he was a student at Medical School UCT,I used to sit next to him in his room at home watching him dissect frogs and*

*Guinea pigs. I remember his concentration and the delicate precision of his fingers as he operated. He was 18-19 I was 8-9.*

*I remember, when I was an undergraduate student in Jerusalem he came to visit and joined me on a hike through a particularly challenging gorge in the Judean desert- Nahal Daragot. I remember how thrilled and excited he was by the experience.*

*Leah, myself and our kids were always overjoyed when he came for visits to Israel - sometimes with Jean, Debbie and Jon, sometimes on his own. We would always plan special things together. For example, several days at Club Med in the North of Israel. These were fun times together.*

*I remember "cracking up with hysterical laughter" in his presence both when I was a young kid and years later when we had both grown older - he had a great sense of humor.*

*Despite the physical distance - USA / Israel- we all loved Brian and Gigi - and were very very close. We shall miss him terribly.*

*Ashley, Leah and Family*

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**Ashley Tobias** - March 16, 2025 at 02:23 PM

LF

“ Brian and I grew up in Sea Point, Cape Town and were good friends being part of a teenage group there. We went to UCT medical school at the same time and thereafter moved off in different directions. I also knew Jean from those days. The last time we saw each other was at the 50th anniversary of our medical school class in Los Angeles, where my wife Brenda and I now live. We were very fond of Brian and Jean who were good company and were modest individuals. We were aware, through friends and colleagues, of Brian's deteriorated medical condition and were saddened by his condition. Our class mates are all octogenarians now. My deepest sympathies to all in the family. We miss Brian and Jean very much.  
Love, Leon Fine

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**Leon Fine** - March 14, 2025 at 10:26 PM

DS

“ I've known Brian since medical school in 1961.  
Brian was a kind gentle self-effacing person. He took great care in his appearance was well dressed and always folded his jacket when he took it off.  
Brian was kind attentive to other people indeed he flew across country to our children's bar mitzvah.  
One of his attributes was he couldn't decide what specialty he wanted to do so he did three and ended up being an anesthesiologist. One of my memories of his investment life was that due to an unforeseen circumstance, he became the proud owner of a massive pantechnicon transport truck, which was parked outside his house for quite a while and memory of his business decision.  
The world was off with Brian around and he will be missed  
Love Des and Margaret

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**Des Shapiro** - March 14, 2025 at 01:52 PM

M.

“ *Our deepest sympathy on your sad loss. Brian will truly be missed by our family. He was fun to be with and was a wonderful husband, father and dedicated grandfather. We wish you all Long Life.*

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**M.Zieper** - March 14, 2025 at 01:34 PM