



Hershel Samuels

July 13, 1929 - June 22, 2018

Hershel Samuels passed away peacefully in Cincinnati, Ohio on June 22 as a result of complications from Alzheimer's disease. He was 88 years old at the time of his death, a man deeply admired for his gentleness and generosity by all who knew him. The eldest member of a large and international family, Hershel will be profoundly missed but will live on in the ideals of mentorship, love, and exploration of personal experience and expression that he transmitted to all whose lives he touched.

A naturalized U.S. citizen as an adult, Hershel was born in Edmonton, Alberta. The third and youngest son of Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, Dr. Samuels grew up in Edmonton and attended Westglen High School. He achieved the highest science scores in the province of Alberta and graduated as class valedictorian in 1946. He then attended college and medical school at the University of Alberta. After a brief flirtation with obstetrics and gynecology, he chose to specialize in orthopedics. Following his residency at the Hospital for Joint Diseases in Manhattan, Dr. Samuels established his practice in Brooklyn. He had a long and successful career in private practice, and was Associate Chief of Orthopedics at Maimonides Hospital.

On a trip to New York to visit his brother in the 1950s, Hershel met Edith Schlusberg, a Vassar student from Brooklyn, through a mutual friend who set them up on a blind date. They married in 1954 after a long, letter-writing

romance, and remained married for 64 years until his passing. They raised five children in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, occupying a large Victorian home in the Prospect Park South neighborhood. In retirement Hershel and Edith relocated to Cincinnati.

Hershel taught himself how to drive as an adolescent by sneaking into his parents' car when they weren't home and moving it up and down the driveway. Eventually he gained the courage to drive around the block. He was blessed with an uncanny sense of direction and a love of travel ever since. Even as his memory failed, he knew and could direct people on shortcuts unheard of by any other driver in town, even if he couldn't tell them the names of the streets.

Hershel was the personification of the polymath and Renaissance man. He was an accomplished photographer, a basement woodcarver who expressed his skill by making two four-poster beds. He was an admirer of civil engineering, a lover of bridges, roads, buildings, and parks. He studied astronomy and planned family trips around total solar eclipses. He needlepointed elaborate seat covers for a dining room set, patiently needlepointing a black background for what seemed like two years. Each new hobby consumed him. When he got interested in wine, he drove from New York to Washington, DC and back in a blizzard to purchase a case of a particular vintage of limited supply. When photography caught his imagination, he set up a darkroom in the attic of the house. He loved music, and was especially fond of the violin, which he played briefly as a child, and he loved opera. When they lived in Brooklyn, Hershel and Edith were members of numerous museums, subscribers to the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera, and the 92nd Street Y, and attended every Broadway show they could.

He lived with great serenity, curiosity, and compassion. He would often travel miles out of his way to help a friend in need, or to consult with someone who

needed medical advice. He was always available in an emergency. He was happiest entertaining, pleasing large groups of friends and family. For many years he orchestrated a Thanksgiving dinner in his home for 30 or more people, for which he would bake pies for days beforehand. He was a proto-foodie. An inveterate cheese-o-phile, Hershel discovered Cheese of All Nations on Chambers Street in the 1960s and shopped there whenever his travels took him across the Brooklyn Bridge. He once performed a hip replacement on a woman whose family ran a wholesale deli in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and he shopped at their store every Sunday for years afterward.

Hershel leaves behind his wife Edith; two daughters, Karen and Judie; three sons, David, Paul, and Alex; four grandchildren, Avery, Jack, Natalie, and Will; and many nieces and nephews in the United States, Canada, and Israel.

Hershel was preceded in death by his parents, Joseph and Fannie Samuels; his two brothers, Norman and Victor; and a daughter, Barbara.