



Jack Prins

March 24, 1933 - October 8, 2019

Jack Prins passed away peacefully on October 8, 2019 in Austin, Texas. Born in Amsterdam, Holland on March 24, 1933, Jack spent his formative years hiding and being hidden from the Nazis. At the age of 8, he and his brother, Hans were hidden by the Dutch Resistance until the end of World War II. Through a stroke of what he called luck, Jack, showing tremendous fortitude and maturity beyond his years, was hidden at tremendous risk to his protectors, in a dozen different places during the war. Tempering his natural born instinct to speak his mind, he had to quickly learn to get along with a never-ending series of strangers in order to stay alive. In that way, Jack honed his life long skills of resourcefulness and fitting in anywhere, while always seeking an exit route in case the worst happened.

After the war, he and his brother were reunited and taken to live in a Dutch orphanage, under the belief that their parents had perished in the concentration camps. Shortly thereafter, he discovered his father had survived the Holocaust. Abraham, “Baby Bay” was a world class jazz musician, whose expertise as a trumpeter kept him alive by being required to perform for the Nazis while his fellow Jews were slaughtered in the gas chambers. Jack then met a group of friends and class mates as he finished high school, who became his second family throughout the rest of his life. He excelled in his classes, especially in math and languages. He loved soccer, chess, puzzles, and boxing.

He emigrated to Israel in 1951, a young man in search of a new start in the nascent State of Israel. There, Jack lived on a kibbutz and joined the Israeli army with a core group of friends from Holland. As a member of the Israeli Defense Forces, Jack was almost killed by the friendly fire of his best friend, but managed to tap into another stroke of luck to escape unscathed.

In 1955, he emigrated to New York, where his father had remarried another Holocaust survivor. Thus began his American chapter. After a stint as a very amateur boxer, Jack’s full intellect was now being engaged. He worked himself through under-graduate and graduate degrees and landed a coveted position at IBM in 1962.

While working full-time at IBM's world headquarters in Poughkeepsie, NY, Jack and his first wife, Yael raised a family of three children. Jack also taught and directed computer centers at Vassar College and the State University of New York at New Paltz during this period.

Jack juggled responsibilities as a father, a world-class statistician and programmer, and a full-time PhD student. In 1978, he received his PhD in Statistics from New York University, having attained his masters at Rutgers University. He spent much time in the downstairs bathroom, the only quiet room in the house, balancing work, studies and family to become the first member of his family to gain a doctorate.

Jack went on to develop ground-breaking multivariate analysis methods implemented by the US government, and the world over, forecasting trends of data series across a lattice of variables, and collaborated with some of the greatest mathematical minds in history. After taking his family back to Israel, for a sabbatical at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, he retired from IBM in 1989. But, because, as he later wrote, he "couldn't sit still", he went on to work at Motorola in Chicago, to teach at the University of Northern Colorado, and eventually, became a consultant for Sematech in Austin, Texas.

In 2001, Jack met the love of his life and soul mate, Marguerite Ponder in Austin. In a reflection of the patterns of time and geography series that he analyzed throughout his life, he and Marguerite shared the same birthday, and she even had the same name as his mother. But what struck Jack from the minute she walked into Gilligan's for their first date, was her uncanny resemblance to the tall, blonde women from the Dutch resistance, that saved him during the war. He was instantly smitten. The two married and moved to Ajijic, Mexico in 2004 where they became part of a thriving community of multi-national expats and locals. Jack was always full of energy, fearless, and fun to be around.

At the age of 82, Jack, working with Barbara Harwood, published his memoirs of the war years he spent in hiding, 'ONE STEP AHEAD'. And he always was ONE STEP AHEAD. He was invited by the mayor of Rotterdam to speak about his experiences in 2017. Marguerite passed away in May, 2019. Jack carried on as long as he could afterwards, before succumbing to cancer himself.

Jack is loved and survived by his three children, Nomi, Michael, and Tami Prins, and three grandchildren, Ethan, Jordan and Zachary. Memorial Services will be held at Congregation Agudas Achim synagogue, 7300 Hart Lane, Austin, Texas 78731 on November 7, 2019 at 11:30 AM. The family requests that any donations be made to Jack's

favorite charity, Doctors without Borders, in his honor.

Events

NOV **Memorial Service** 11:30AM

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Congregation Agudas Achim
7300 Hart Lane, Austin, TX, US, 78731

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Jack Prins: One Step Ahead



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