



Zoltan Engel

April 20, 1925 - June 15, 2020

Zoltan "Zoli" Engel passed away in Houston on June 15, 2020. He died peacefully at home in his sleep, surrounded by family. He was born April 20, 1925 in Miskolc, Hungary. With the occupation of Hungary by the Nazis in 1944, Zoli was arrested by the SS and incarcerated at several concentration camps. While at the Buchenwald camp, he was in what later became a well-known Red Cross photo of several prisoners in their bunkhouse, which included Elie Wiesel, the writer, educator and subsequent Nobel Laureate. After being part of a group of inmates released through the intervention of a Romanian government official, Zoli returned to Hungary, where he joined the underground, participating in the smuggling of Jewish residents to Palestine. During part of his underground activities, he worked under the direct command of future Israel Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

After the war, Zoli left Europe with his mother and younger sister. Unable to gain entry into the United States by virtue of immigration quotas, Zoli and his family lived in Cuba for two years before relocating to Mexico City. There Zoli met and married his wife of 69 years, Fruma. The family moved to Houston in 1965, where Zoli was president of Camcor, which manufactured paper, packaging and plastics. Retiring from Camcor in 1985 at the age of 60, Zoli devoted the rest of his life to his growing family. He actively participated in the lives of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren through the last day of his life.

Zoli was predeceased by his father and younger brother in the Holocaust, and his mother in 1997. He is survived by his loving wife Fruma; children, Adriana and Dr. Steve Rosenbaum, and Jorge and Kathy Engel; grandchildren, Dr. Sean and Juli Rosenbaum, Alec and Sara Rosenbaum, Nicholas Engel and Remington Engel; great-grandchildren, Morgan Rosenbaum, Anna Rosenbaum and Hettie Rosenbaum. He is also survived by his sister Erika Jacoby, and special friends Maria, Roberto, Robert, Diana and Jorge Martinez.

The family extends special thanks to caregivers Alejandra Navarro and Adela Martinez. Due to Covid-19, a private family funeral was held. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to Holocaust Museum Houston or the charity of your choice.