



Ronald Robina

December 29, 2013

Ronald Robina, age 88, of Teaneck, passed away peacefully after a brief illness, surrounded by his family, on Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013 at Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck, NJ. A dapper dresser with impeccable style, he was a salesman for several clothing manufacturers, including H. Oritsky & Co of Reading, PA and worked in his beloved New York from 1950-1999.

Born Nov. 9, 1925 in Newark, NJ and raised in Union, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and fought in World War II from 1944-1946. On his return, he finished his B.S. degree at Seton Hall (Class of 1950), and met and married Janet Mae (nee VonMinden, of Englewood, NJ), in 1951. The couple moved to Teaneck, where they raised their two daughters, Diane Robina and Lynn Robina Belz, and made their home for 57 years.

“He was a quiet, intelligent man who pared life down to the essentials,” according to his daughter, Lynn Belz. He loved spending time with his family, which included his brother, Frank Robina and sister, Lenore, as well as his grandchildren, Jacqueline and Victoria Silberbush, of Mamaroneck, NY.

Other passions included cars, going for long drives, and golf on Sunday mornings; his other love was New York. “He loved everything about it,” Ms. Belz said, “the architecture, the style, the energy.” His daughter recalled how during the 1960’s and 70’s he piled his family into the car and brought them

into the city, always pointing out different buildings or neighborhoods, things about the city that they could share with him.

Ronald's work in the clothing industry spanned many decades and styles, and he had many stories. One of his favorite memories took place at the start of his career, when he was working for the Haspel company, one of whose clients was the actor, Cary Grant. While Grant was in New York making a movie the young clothing assistant was chosen to take him around to fittings for several days.

Over the past 11 years, on Memorial Day, Ronald, who was member of the V.F.W. Post 2433, had started speaking about his war experiences to children in his grandchildren's schools in Mamaroneck, NY. Like many in his generation, Ronald did not speak much about his part in World War II, for which he earned a Bronze medal. He was in the 89th Infantry Division – the "Rolling W," serving in the European Theatre.

"He never glorified war; he was a pacifist war hero," Diane Robina said. But he shared his experiences with students to give them a more personal view of the Second World War. In addition to his own photos, maps, and newspaper articles from the period, Mr. Robina brought in original helmets – both German and American – as well as his own military jacket from World War II, and his father's from World War I, all of which he let the children try on.

During the war, 19-year-old Private Robina took part in the Western Allied invasion of Germany in the final months of the European Theatre in World War II. In March-April 1945, he advanced with the Third Army eastward into Germany, across the Moselle River and a few days later, across the Rhine, where the division came under intense enemy fire, before continuing their assault on Germany. On April 4, the Third Army invaded Ohrdruf, a subcamp of the Buchenwald concentration camp, and the first Nazi work camp in

Germany to be liberated by U.S. troops. On May 8, Germany surrendered and victory was declared in Europe.

In a letter to his father on April 18, 1945, shortly after the Ohrdruf liberation, Private Robina wrote, "For the past week we have been freeing many of the slaves held by the Germans. I wish you could see some of them - I wish some of our American people who do not put their every effort into this war could see them. They are broken people --humans who have been beaten, overworked, and underfed. Young men and girls who look twenty years older than they really are."

Later in the letter, he talked of the 172 freed American and British prisoners of war soldiers: "One of the released men was from Newark, New Jersey. He asked me for my shoulder patch. He said he was going to wear it under his own patch. That was quite a compliment to pay me and my outfit."

Ronald is survived by his wife and daughters, Diane (Mitchel Silberbush), of Mamaroneck, NY and Block Island, RI; and Lynn Robina Belz (Walter Belz), of Tulsa, OK. He also leaves his grandchildren, Jacqueline and Victoria Silberbush; brother Frank and sister, Lenore Robina, as well as many nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the Robina family has asked donations to be made to the Alzheimer's Association. Donate online, or by mail: Alzheimer's Association, P.O. Box 96011, Washington, DC 20090-6011. A memorial service will be announced at a later date.

Tribute Wall



“ *Ronald Robina*

October 08, 2023 at 09:59 PM



“ *Ronald Robina*

October 08, 2023 at 06:27 PM



“ *Ronald Robina*

August 30, 2022 at 02:48 PM