

## REMEMBERING JDA MEMBER HAROLD FALLMAN

**Our lifelong friend Harold Fallman passed away on 17 December 2023. His devoted nephew, Barry David, gave this eulogy at his funeral.**

Thank you all for coming to join me in giving my uncle Harold a good send-off.

I grew up spending most of my time with my dear late mum and my Uncle Harold, as communication was never a problem, with us being Deaf and using BSL.

Uncle Harold always told me stories and shared information about his large family, my dear late mum Doris and brother David, his sisters Rita and Evelyn and their children (my cousins), and also his great nieces and nephews. He loved them all dearly.

He went to the Residential School for Jewish Deaf Children in Balham with my mum, until she left school. He had an excellent memory of his school life and, again, shared many stories of his friends and events at school with great fondness.

Harold was a loyal employer as a carpenter and made many things for his home with his late wife, Aunt Ruth, after they met in Washington DC and married in 1967. They knew each other at school in England but he didn't see her for 15 years after she left school and returned to the USA.

▼ *Barry's favourite photo of his Uncle Harold celebrating his 80th birthday*



Throughout his life, until his peaceful death, Harold was a faithful, passionate and staunch member of the Jewish Deaf Association, attending all their social and festive events since it was first established in 1951. He had so many friends at JDA and felt at home there. He loved a laugh and a natter with friends.

He also loved playing — and winning — any card games, indoor games and chess! My own passion for chess came from Uncle Harold, who influenced me, teaching me to play when I was 11 years old. And, thanks to him, I have been a Champion of the English Deaf Chess Association three times, and travelled abroad many times to participate in international Deaf Chess tournaments.

Harold loved travelling to various countries in Europe for holidays with Aunt Ruth and a group of friends.

Harold was also a staunch supporter of Arsenal! He was influenced by his late brother, David. He really enjoyed his latest 55-inch TV bought so that he could see the Arsenal games clearly!

He was also a lover of photography and old videos — it was so lovely to look through his many, many photo albums and video clips on VHS!

Because of his valuable archives, Ann Clements and I set up a great team of a few Deaf people to create and develop a website on the history of Jewish Deaf People in the UK. This website has been up and running since last year. It wouldn't have happened without Harold's financial support.

He was always a true gentleman, even when his dementia took over. He retained his calm nature and loved being sociable. He was always happiest amongst family and friends.

During the last few years before he died, he always asked after his late wife Ruth and my late mum, Doris.



▲ *Harold and his wife Ruth on their honeymoon in 1967.*

Lastly, but most importantly, no words can show my deep appreciation of all the hard work and constant support behind the scenes Uncle Harold was given by the wonderful and caring team at the JDA. They enabled Uncle Harold to live as independently as possible.

When he was no longer able to live alone, JDA found a wonderful live-in carer, Sonia, who lived with him for three years and was there for him till the end of his life. Sonia attended BSL classes at JDA so that communication would become easier and meaningful at home! Roma and Gavin were his two regular carers at weekends and they also attended BSL classes at JDA.

I want to wish my aunts Rita and Evelyn a long life, and we all know that Harold is now reunited with his dear Ruth, family and friends. He is probably playing cards "up there"!