



Sumner Joseph Paul Germain

February 13, 2016

Sumner Joseph Paul Germain, 83, formerly of Lancaster, died at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore on Saturday, February 13, 2016. Born in Lynn, Massachusetts, he was the son of the late Nathan and Molly Osattin Germain. At the time of his death, he and his wife, Rita Schorr Germain, had been married for 56 years.

Sumner received Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English from Harvard University, where he met his wife, Rita. He went on to teach English at Grinnell College, Iowa, from 1961-63, Franklin & Marshall College from 1964-1969, and Millersville University, where he was Associate Professor for 40 years. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict.

Sumner's greatest loves were his family, teaching, poetry, and literature.

In addition to his wife, Sumner is survived by two daughters, Emily Lucy Germain-Lee, M.D., wife of Dr. Se-Jin Lee, of Pikesville, Maryland; and Mirah Becker, M.S., wife of Dr. Murray Becker, of East Brunswick, N.J.; and three grandchildren, Benjamin, Emma, and Rachel. Also surviving is a sister, Marion G.Y. Garfinkel, wife of the late Robert Garfinkel, of Swampscott, Mass.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend a funeral service TODAY (Feb. 15, 2016) at 11:00 a.m. at Fred F. Groff Funeral Home, 234 West Orange St.,

Lancaster, Pa., with Rabbi Shaya Sackett officiating. The family will receive friends at the funeral home from 10:30 – 11:00 a.m. Interment will be at Beth El Cemetery, Newport Road, Lititz, Pa.

Please omit flowers. Memorials in Sumner's name may be made to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, Washington, D.C. 20024.

Cemetery Details

Beth El Cemetery

Newport Road
Lititz, PA

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 15. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Historic Fred F. Groff
234 West Orange Street
Lancaster, PA 17603
(717) 394-5300
<http://thegroffs.com/>

Service

FEB 15. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Historic Fred F. Groff
234 West Orange Street
Lancaster, PA 17603
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Tribute Wall

AF

“ I was a student of Dr. Germain's in 2001 at Millersville University. It was a delightful semester. We lived in the same neighborhood (Grandview Heights) so I also had the pleasure of driving him to school. Those conversations were some of the best in my life. I will treasure our memories. I knew he had passed away years ago, but I am writing today since I was sharing our memories with coworkers. He has not been forgotten.

Adriane Freeman - August 29, 2025 at 10:09 AM



“ Sumner Joseph Paul Germain

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM

EG

“ UNVEILING CEREMONY:

The unveiling ceremony of Professor Sumner Germain's tombstone will be on Tuesday, July 5th, 2016, which marks what would have been the 57th wedding anniversary of Professor Germain's marriage to Rita Schorr Germain. The ceremony will be at 11 AM at Temple Beth El Cemetery in Lititz, Pennsylvania, and it will be officiated by Rabbi Shaya Sackett. We would be honored if you could attend (guests of yours as well). The cemetery address is Newport Road in Lititz, Pennsylvania (no street number). If you use "google maps" to find the cemetery, you will see where it is located (you can take Route 501 towards Lititz and then turn right on Newport Road.) Thank you very much to all those who have posted comments. They mean a great deal to our family.

Emily Germain-Lee - July 04, 2016 at 06:14 PM

EG

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Thank you very much to all those who have posted comments. They mean a great deal to our family.

Emily Germain-Lee - July 03, 2016 at 12:41 AM

PH

“ *I was also a student of Sumner's at Franklin and Marshall and his influence has stayed with me since the 60's. He was a fine professor whose example was one of those that turned me to teaching as well. I took every course of his I could and even found myself marching with him outside the Russian Embassy in Washington protesting the treatment of the Jewish community in the Soviet Union. It was a new experience for a Protestant from New England! I am grateful for his life and inspiration. He and Bradley Dewey during those years made a great professorial team. I miss them both very much.*

*Philip Hart, Franklin and Marshall '67
Newport NH*

Philip Hart - March 22, 2016 at 11:24 PM

EG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Emily Germain-Lee - March 13, 2016 at 01:19 PM

BA

“ To my very special uncle you will be deeply missed and were the best uncle ever!

We miss you and love you.

Love Beth, Dave, Alecandra and Jacob Xoxoxoxo

Beth Adams - March 07, 2016 at 09:21 AM

AC

“ I do not know Mr. Germain, but he raised a really fantastic, intelligent, caring, hardworking, creative daughter so he must have been a great man. Thinking of you and your family, Emily.

Anne Comi
Kennedy Krieger Institute

anne comi - February 19, 2016 at 09:35 AM

AK

“ Carla and I were sorry to learn of Sumner's death. He was always very kind to us both, and we remember him as a bright, insightful, and warm colleague and friend. We will make a contribution to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in his memory.

Alan and Carla Kelly

Alan Kelly - February 18, 2016 at 12:10 PM

DH

“ Although I didn't have the opportunity to meet Mr. Sumner Germain, I do work with his daughter Dr. Emily Germain-Lee, who is a sweet person, so I'm sure he was indeed a very nice man. My sincere condolences to the family during this difficult time.

*Dionna Hicks
Kennedy Krieger Institute*

Dionna Hicks - February 18, 2016 at 07:44 AM

JS

“ I took Professor Germain's "American Novel" class in the fall of '67 as a senior at F&M. What a great class that influenced me then and influences me today. Professor Germain really made the books come alive and the depth with which we looked at the writings of the great American writers had a profound impact on me.

My deepest sympathy to the entire Germain family.

*Jim Shultz
F&M '67*

Jim Shultz - February 16, 2016 at 09:13 PM

LC

“ I was privileged to know Sumner. He was a very wise man and no one deserved the title of Professor more than him.

Lauren Cohen

Lauren Cohen - February 16, 2016 at 11:33 AM

VS

“ Thank you for being such a caring person and teacher. Shalom Vicki Swayne

Vicki Swayne - February 15, 2016 at 08:53 PM

LM

“ My deepest sympathy to Sumner Germain's family. I had the pleasure to meet with him and Rita once a year. I loved the poetry he sometimes brought with him. I will cherish the whale paper weight he gave me.
Lucy Meissner

Lucy Meissner - February 15, 2016 at 06:09 PM

DS

“ My deepest sympathy to Mrs. Sumner Germain and their daughters. I was shocked and deeply saddened to read of Sumner's death just now. I had been riding on the #16 bus to Millersville past the Groff Funeral establishment at exactly the time that Sumner's service was in progress. Little did I know until now. Sumner was a very valuable colleague; I was sorry to see him retire from Millersville University. He added such dignity and quality to the place.

Dr. M.P.A. Sheaffer

Dr. M.P.A. Sheaffer - February 15, 2016 at 02:52 PM

ML

“ My deepest sympathy to the Family and Friends of Mr. Germain. I had him as an English teacher, while a student nurse at Lancaster General Hospital School of Nursing and he was at F&M. He was a kind man. *Mary*

Mary Lapp - February 15, 2016 at 01:07 PM

MK

“ My greatest teacher. My daughter was born when I had a class on Emily Dickinson and I named her "Emily." I will never forget his smile. Another graduate class with Sumner was over at 10 pm but often half the class would stay until around 11 to continue to discuss and we enjoyed every minute. I retired from Penn Manor High School 3 years ago but I always mention Sumner as the person who influenced me the most. My admiration for scholarship begins with Sumner Germain.

There was a tear falling in an Amherst graveyard Saturday night.

*Gathered into the Earth,
And out of story-
Gathered to that strange Fame-
That lonesome Glory
That hath no omen here- but Awe-
#1370 Emily Dickinson*

Mike Kaufhold Millersville, PA

Mike Kaufhold - February 15, 2016 at 11:02 AM

HS

“ Sumner was one of my favorite people. I took every class I was able to while at Millersville. I named my son, Sumner Siebels, after him. I send my warmest regards to all of his family.

Heidi Siebels - February 15, 2016 at 10:14 AM

MM

“ Our sincere condolences on the loss of you father. He was a wonderful man and has been truly missed. May his name always be a blessing.

The Residents and Staff at Milford Manor

Milford Manor - February 15, 2016 at 10:08 AM

JC

“ *Sumner was such a wonderful presence in our English Department at Millersville. He has left such a marvelous legacy through his love of literature and poetry. He will be remembered lovingly by so many students and faculty, whose days were made better by his warm welcoming smile each time he greeted us.*

Jill Craven - February 15, 2016 at 08:20 AM

 Bill
Boyd

“ *A fine man and professor of English when I attended F&M in the late 1960's. Condolences to his family.*

Bill Boyd - February 15, 2016 at 07:41 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



The Groffs Family Funeral and Cremation Services Inc - February 14, 2016 at 11:07 AM

TM

To Mirah and Family. My sincere condolences on the passing of your father. Our prayers and warm regards to you and your family for God's peace and strength; and, know that he is always with you. Tony Gambilonghi

Tony Gambilonghi, friend of Mirah - February 16, 2016 at 04:32 PM

NB

I extend my sympathy to you Mirah and to your family at your time of loss. Prayers that many wonderful memories will fill your thoughts and thankfulness and peace in our hearts.

Nicole (Szymanski)Belfiore

Nicole (Szymanski) Belfiore - February 17, 2016 at 09:06 AM

MG

I am deeply touched by all the comments regarding my beloved brother, Sumner. I have suffered a tremendous loss. Sumner was the kindest ,fun loving brother, and I was the luckiest girl in the world to have him as my brother!! My heart swelled with great pride reading all the comments All have written. It is very touching. I am sure there will never be another Sumner in the world. He was God's gift to ALL. I was truly blessed to have him as my brother. I am extending my personal thanks to everyone who has responded. I am overwhelmed at the impact on everyone's lives that my dear brother has made. Thank you for sharing, and G-d bless.

Marion G.Y. Garfinkel

Marion G.Y. Garfinkel - February 17, 2016 at 09:33 PM

PM

*Hello Dr Germain-Lee,
I never got to meet your dad but I know you, my heart goes out for you and your family.*

My prayers are with you at this time of bereavement, keep the good memories close and you will always have your dad close.

Blessings and well wishes.

*Pamela Melvin,
KKI*

Pamela Melvin - February 18, 2016 at 09:33 AM