

Walter Roland Finnas

March 10, 1929 ~ March 28, 2024

Walter Roland Finnas, the “Godfather” 03/10/1929 – 03/28/2024

Walter prepared the following Autobiography to be shared upon his death:

“The future extent of my being began in Finland. Both my maternal and paternal grandparents were born in Finland and my paternal grandparents never left. My mother’s parents both immigrated to the United States and although they came separately, they met, married, and had my mother Mildred Johanna Liljestrom and one aunt.

My Father, Frank August Finnas, was born in Finland but had to leave with his brother Sam due to poverty and challenging times in the country. Frank ended up in Telluride, CO where there were many jobs in silver and gold mining.

Frank and Mildred met and married in Telluride in 1925 and had two children. Ailene Lorraine Finnas in 1926, and myself, Walter Roland Finnas on March 10, 1929. Shortly after my birth Frank left Telluride to work in the Bingham Canyon mines. Bingham Canyon was much like Telluride, both in box canyons with only one road in and one road out. Frank moved the family to Markham Gulch in 1929. In 1937 we moved a few minutes away to Copperton where we lived in a company owned town. I attended grade school and high school in Copperton and at that time, there was only one high school which housed grades 7-12. World War II began in 1941 and ended in 1945 when I was in 9th grade. I graduated from Bingham High School in 1948.

I began working while I was in school at age 14 as a Janitor’s Assistant at Bingham High School. At age 16 I began working part-time while in school, and full-time in the summer, at the Kennecott Copper Mine as an Electric Shovel Engineer. I attended one semester of college at Mesa College in Grand Junction Colorado then transferred to Utah State University for Winter Quarter, 1948-1950.

In June of 1950, the Korean War started, and I was drafted into the Army on November 14, 1950. I was in the Army for two years and spend my time in Germany from 1950 – 1953. When I returned from serving my Country during the Korean Conflict, I returned to work at Kennecott Copper. For those of us who were drafted, Kennecott saved our positions with no loss of seniority. I retired from Kennecott in 1985 with 40 years of service.

During my time at Kennecott, I took the next steps in life to date and eventually become married. On February 12, 1954, I married Coralee Madsen, and she had two daughters, Chris (3) and Marsha (2). On December 19, 1954, our son J Randall (Randy) Finnas was born. We divorced in 1962 and Randy came to live with me in 1967.

I married Betty V. Bowman on April 3, 1965, and she had two children Karen (3), and Tony (2). We were married for 53 years until Betty passed away on August 23,2018.

In 1990 Randy opened the Barbary Coast Saloon in Murray, UT. I became the CEO, and we ran the business side by side for the next 27 years. Although this was a 24/7 commitment, all was good! We sold the bar on August 29,

2017.

From my recollection, beginning at age 14 and ending at 88, I spent 74 years of my life working. I have lived in the same home for 64 years and have traveled the world with my son Randy and Grandson Eric. I have spent time with my grandchildren and great grandchildren and have lived a life worth writing about. “

Walter was loved by everyone who knew him, he was our Dad, Pop, Gramps, Great Grandpa, The Godfather, and our best friend. Walter was ready to move on from this existence and on to the next. He often told us not to cry for him and to be happy for him when he moves on. We will miss you always and your memory will live on forever. You are our legend, the last Viking, and the best guy we ever could have had in our lives. See you in Valhalla.

Survived by son J. Randall Finnas (Syn), daughters Karen Pickard, and Chris Madsen. Grandchildren TJ Rees (Amber), Eric Finnas (Adie), Dustin Bowman, Jacob Trimble (Nikole), Jesse Pickard, Kelly Pickard (Kari), Whitney Spens, Danielle Bowman (Bryan), Anthony Spens. Great grandchildren Rowdy (Brielle), Chloe, Emily, Jaden, Kalina, Draven, Brody, Athena, Camryn, Stella, Charly, Jaqueline, Elle, Lauren, Ryder, and Brysaiah.

Preceded in death by mother Mildred Finnas, Father Frank Finnas, sister Lorraine Finnas, wife Betty Finnas, son Tony Bowman, daughter Marsha Madsen and many other friends and family members.

A private burial will be held for the immediate family.

Per Walter’s request there will not be a funeral or viewing. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.