

Deaths

Leonard Florence

By **Bostonherald.com staff**

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Leonard Florence of Chestnut Hill, formerly of Chelsea, founder of the Leonard Silver Co., died yesterday at his home. He was 74.

Born and raised in Chelsea, he moved to Brookline in 1973.

Mr. Florence was a graduate of Chelsea High School and Boston University's School of Business Administration.

He started his career working for Raymond Silver of Malden in 1956. He founded Leonard Silver Co. in 1963. He later purchased Raymond Silver Company and Towle Manufacturing Co. of Newburyport and East Boston, working with the company until 1985. In 1986, he started the silver company Syratech, which was sold to Thomas H. Lee Co. in 1997. He remained chairman of the board until October 2003, then started the Leonard Florence Group.

In 1993 Mr. Florence received, by appointment of Pope John Paul II Supreme Pontiff, the order of St. Gregory the Great. This award recognizes individuals who distinguish themselves for notable accomplishments on behalf of society, regardless of their religious beliefs. In 2000, His Holiness Pope John Paul II elevated him to a commander of the Knights of St. Gregory, the highest honor given by the Catholic Church.

He was a member of the Orange St. Synagogue of Chelsea, Congregation Mishkan Tefila of Newton and the Temple Emmanuel of Chelsea. He was a board member of the Soldiers Home of Chelsea and the Cardinal Cushing Training Center of Hanover. He was a member of the foundation board of the Chelsea Jewish Nursing Home. He served on the board of overseers of Tufts Dental School; Suffolk University; Florence-Chafetz Hillel at Boston University; ADL; Weitzman Institute of Israel; Cohen-Florence-Levine Estates for Assisted Living in Chelsea; Florence-Chavez Special Care Building in Chelsea; Fashion Institute of Design in New York; and the Char Hadash for Girls in Israel.

Mr. Florence is survived by his wife, Charlotte (Cohen); two daughters, Faye of Chestnut Hill and Susan Smith of Boston; a son, Mark of Newton; two sisters, Gertrude Bial of Delray Beach, Fla., and Rosalie Cohen of Boston; two brothers, Dr. Lewis of Houston and David of Boynton Beach, Fla.; and two grandsons.

A funeral service will be held at noon tomorrow at the Congregation Mishkan Tefila, Chestnut Hill.

Burial will be at Chevra Thilim of Boston Cemetery, Everett.

Arrangements by the Stanetsky Memorial Chapels, Brookline.