



Leo D. Arons

September 28, 1931 - October 31, 2019

Leo D. Arons, the proud owner of the Gilded Lion, an antiques and fine art gallery in Princeton, passed away October 31, 2019. Born September 28, 1931, he was the son of Alexander Arons and Rosalind Arons (Goldberg), brother of Simone Iris Oliver (Arons), grandson of Simon and Henrietta Arons, cousin of Millicent Fidler, and nephew of Peter Z. Fidler and Marian Fidler (Arons).

Leo Dore grew up at 79 East 18th Street in Brooklyn, NY, in a vibrant and loving Jewish community. Through the generosity of his uncle, he earned two engineering degrees at Cornell University. Staunchly individualistic and determined to embrace life only on his own terms, he took refuge at the Cornell libraries and the Johnson Museum, where he developed a passion for illuminated manuscripts and rare books of Persia, India, and Europe. His keen interest ultimately led to his avocation as a respected art historian, appraiser, and entrepreneur. His imagination, brilliant intellect, photographic memory, and lifelong commitment to scholarship helped him identify, secure, and sell many historical and culturally significant artifacts. His expertise extended from furniture, paintings, silver, and jewelry to orientalia, medieval art, and textiles.

As a resident of Princeton he was actively engaged in civic affairs, including the Borough Merchants for Princeton, and is fondly remembered by the Princeton Macintosh Users Group. He led the Princeton Folk Dance Group

and the Princeton Ethnic Dancers, a folk dance troupe that performed in authentic ethnic costumes across New Jersey and on the main stage of the Philadelphia Folk Festival.

A loyal group of friends will remember Leo for his endearing characteristics: playfulness, humor, love of Hungarian food, Balkan music, and the Oxford English Dictionary. Many friends experienced poignant moments with Leo while they pored over old French letters, Paul Revere silver, Hudson River Paintings, or Chinese silk. He had a generosity of spirit and an unflinching commitment to supporting his inner circle of friends through thick and thin.

Leo died mourning the loss of his most beloved friend and colleague, artist Lesley J. Mitchell, formerly of Princeton. With her husband Kelly Ray, Lesley ran a popular Argentine Tango dance studio in Philadelphia and organized many successful art exhibitions, much to Leo's delight. Both Leo and Lesley lived light-years ahead of their time, actively supporting marginalized people with courageous words and deeds.

Friends and associates wishing to write condolences may visit the website of the B. L. Bush and Sons Funeral Home, 10 W. Genesee St., Camillus, NY, at www.BLBUSH.com.

Due to unforeseen circumstances services for Leo have been postponed.

Below you will also find links to charities chosen to honor Mr. Arons.

For his commitment to higher education: Questbridge; <https://www.questbridge.org>

For his love of music and dance: Hochstein School of Music and Dance; <https://hochstein.org>

For his love of art and history: The American Historical Association; <https://www.historians.org>

Leo D. Arons, patron of the arts, friend, boyfriend, scholar, brother, son, nephew, cousin, rest in peace.

Tribute Wall

JM

“ I first met Leo in the early 2000s when he needed legal assistance. I continued in my professional relationship with him almost until his end. I found him to be a very intelligent client and I have always thought fondly of him. He was a resource to many in the Princeton community.

*James Manahan
Lawrenceville NJ*

James P Manahan - September 18, 2020 at 12:45 PM

CH

Thank you.

Cynthia Hill - June 18, 2021 at 07:23 PM

LH

“ I knew Leo was a multidimensional man from our 25 + years of interaction, starting with dealing with estate antiques but broadened into local politics and many discussions on the national politics. Up until about a year ago I gave him rides to medical appointments. I want very much to attend his memorial service in Princeton.

Lincoln Hollister linc@princeton.edu

Lincoln Hollister - February 05, 2020 at 05:52 PM

WS

My daughter and I often share many fond memories about our frequent visits to the Gilded Lion . Mr. Aron was a New Jersey treasure he shared his knowledge and love of Art & Antiques with such joy and wisdom . We always felt welcomed and spent many hours in the Gilded Lion , building our various collections and learning ! Leo inspire us , his kindness and wit will always be special to us. Our family business was located in the same building , what a wonderful excuse to drop in whenever we saw the lights on! Leo was genuine, a truly precious kind soul ,a gift from God ! My life has been “ Gilded” by Mr. Leo !!! Wanda Webster Stansbury

Wanda Webster Stansbury - October 09, 2020 at 07:06 PM

JB

“ Ms. Hill,

My condolences for your loss, and what a beautiful obituary to remember him by.

*You will be in my thoughts,
Jeffrey*



Jeffrey Bush - February 03, 2020 at 12:37 PM