



## Seymour Irving Lemel

August 4, 1928 - February 10, 2026

Seymour Irving Lemel, affectionately known as “Seybo,” was born on August 4, 1928, in Brooklyn, New York, and passed away peacefully on February 10, 2026, at the age of 97.

Seymour’s early childhood in Brooklyn was shaped by simpler times and a close-knit neighborhood community which embodied New York’s melting pot of immigrants escaping turmoil in Europe. He fondly recalled summers spent at Coney Island and long days playing stickball in the streets with neighborhood friends. He spent much of his youth at the Jewish Community House in Brooklyn, where his strong sense of community and lifelong friendships took root. As a young man, he fully embraced the fun of his generation, traveling with friends to the lively Catskills Borscht Belt resorts. Those trips were filled with laughter, late nights, and harmless mischief, as he and his friends met girls, made memories, and stirred up just enough trouble to keep the families talking—stories Seymour loved to share throughout his life.

After graduating from Brooklyn College and serving his country in the United States Army during the Korean War, Seymour moved to Miami, Florida. Before settling down, Seymour lived life to the fullest in Nassau, Bahamas, diving for conch and partying Bahamian-style. While in Miami, he met and fell in love with Anita Duncan, whom he married in 1960. Together, they started a

family and later moved to Texas, where Seymour would spend most of his life building a strong family foundation and deep community ties in Houston. Seymour spent much of his work life with Lerner Shops of New York, utilizing his mind for business and his natural affection for people from all walks of life and backgrounds. He concluded his career working with his family at Texas Tropical Plants, Inc.

An avid exercise enthusiast throughout his adult life, Seymour was a familiar and beloved presence at the Houston Jewish Community Center, where he was a devoted member for nearly 60 years. The JCC was a part of his daily routine, and he rarely missed a workout. His commitment to health, movement, and vitality was remarkable and enduring. Healthy and completely independent for most of his 97 years, Seymour amazed friends, doctors, and acquaintances alike with his energy and strength well into advanced age. Everyone asked him his secret to health and longevity. Attitude, diet, and exercise was always his answer.

Seymour lived with an unmistakable zest for life and adventure. In addition to fishing trips that took him on many memorable journeys, he had a passion for flying private planes, despite his mother's objection because it caused him unnecessary risks. He found joy at the controls of his favorite aircraft, the Piper J-3 Cub, which provided him with countless hours of exhilaration and freedom in the skies as a young pilot.

He cherished weekly Sunday brunches with friends at Kenny & Ziggy's Deli, where conversation and laughter were always plentiful, along with classic Jewish deli food which always brought him comfort. His inclusive and jovial attitude was extended to everyone he encountered, sometimes to the embarrassment of his family. He didn't know a stranger.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Max and Sophie Lemel, and his

brothers, Benjamin Lemel and Abraham Lemel.

He is survived by his four children: Susan Lemel, Lisa Lemel Keilman, Robin Lemel Franks (and her husband, Billy), and Stuart David Lemel (and his wife, Allison). Seymour was a devoted and loving grandfather who adored his seven grandchildren—Farrah Khalil, Zach Adair, Rachel Reyes, Dylan Franks, Marisa Franks, Adam Lemel, and Claire Lemel—and was further blessed to enjoy time with his six great-grandchildren, all of whom brought him immense joy.

The family extends heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Roberto Lufschanowski, Dr. Nikolas Diakos, and the dedicated team of doctors at the Baylor Texas Heart Institute for the exceptional care and compassion they provided.

Seymour will be remembered for his warmth, thoughtful advice, sense of humor, adventurous spirit, and the deep love he had for his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. His legacy of vitality, joy, and family will live on through all who knew and loved him.

A graveside service took place on Sunday, February 15, 2026, at 1:00 pm at Emanu El Memorial Park, 8341 Bissonnet Street, Houston, Texas 77074.

In lieu of flowers, Seymour would appreciate donations be sent to the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston, [www.houstonjewish.org](http://www.houstonjewish.org), and the American Heart Association, [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).

# Cemetery Details

## Emanu El Memorial Park

8341 Bissonnet St  
Houston, TX 77074

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

FEB 15. 1:00 PM (CT)

Emanu El Memorial Park  
8341 Bissonnet St  
Houston, TX 77074