4-29-02 JVH

Lester Kessler, restaurateur

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Lester Kessler, 82, of Wellington Boulevard, a former Providence restaurateur, died April 29 at home.



He was the husband of Lillian (Seltzer) Kessler; they had been married for 59 years. Born in Providence, a son of the late William and Rebecca (Peck) Kessler, he had lived in Warwick for many years before moving to Florida.



He was a 1940 graduate of Bryant College.

For 40 years, Mr. Kessler owned and operated the former Les Kessler's Restaurant in Providence. Many of his customers said they frequented the establishment as much for his personality as for his corned beef.

An Army veteran of World War II, he served as a sergeant in the Pacific, earning several decorations. He was a member for more than 50 years of the Jewish War Veterans Post 533, in Rhode Island, and was also a member of the American Legion Airport Post and JWV Post 520, in Florida.

He was a member of the Overseas Lodge of Masons, the Knights of Pythias, and the Square Club.

Mr. Kessler was a former member of Temple Am-David in Warwick, and the former Congregation Anshe Kovna in Providence. He was a member of the Touro Fraternal Association.

Besides his wife, Mr. Kessler leaves a son, William Kessler, of Pawtucket; three daughters, Margie Busby and Debra Holt, both of Warwick; and Bonnie Kates, of Cranston; a brother, Harold Kessler, of Cranston; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was the father of the late Cindy Kessler and the brother of the late Dorothy Karten and Anita and Carl Kessler.

The funeral was held at Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Contributions may be made to Hospice Care of R.I., 169 George St., Pawtucket, 02860.