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WEINTRAUB, FLORENCE

Violinist Florence Weintraub; member of Philharmonic with sister for 50 years

BY THOM CAHIR
JOURNAL OBITUARY WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Florence Weintraub, of 40 Brookway Rd., a concert violinist and part of a 50-year sister act at the Rhode Island Philharmonic, died yesterday at home.



As an assistant concertmaster, she played violin while her sister, Sylvia Rosenthal of Providence, played cello in the Philharmonic for 50 years.

She had accompianied such classical artists as Issac Stern and Itzhak Perlman.

Both women left the orchestra when Mrs. Weintraub decided to retire after the 1998 season finale. When asked about going it solo, her sister replied, "So what was I supposed to do? With Florence gone, there'd be no one to giggle with."

Philharmonic conductor Larry Rachleff said of their departure, "They are inspiring women. They are a remarkable example of what this world sorely needs: committment and dedication."

The two sisters shared one of three dressing rooms at the Philharmonic's former home, Veterans Memorial Auditorium, the other rooms being reserved for conductor Rachleff and visiting soloists.

She grew up in Fall River. An uncle who performed in vaudeville got his nieces started in music at an early age. Both sisters then attended Julliard School of Music, in New York City.

During World War II, they admittedly made pests of themselves at the USO office in New York City, and ended up touring the Pacific for seven months entertaining the troops.

After the war, the sisters joined the Rhode Island Philharmonic, after it had been in existence for only three seasons, and, as both of them recalled, it was a rag-tag outfit, about half its present size and consisting of all Italian men.

Over the years, Mrs. Weintraub survived many music directors, managers and conductors, hired a lawyer at one point when threatened with demotion by former conductor Andrew Massey, and even phoned the Journal-Bulletin on more than one occasion to express her opinions on a conductor or a management decision.

She was the wife of Morris Weintraub. Born in Boston, a daughter of the late Max and Harriet (Shoob) Nadien, she had lived in Fall River before moving to Providence 56 years ago.

A member of the Rhode Island State Council of the Arts, she had also served on its a board of directors.

She had played in various orchestras throughout the region, including the Hope String Quartet, which had played at area schools for many years.

She was a member of Temple Beth-El.

Mrs. Weintraub graduated from BMC Durfee High School, Fall River.

Besides her husband and sister, she leaves a son, Stuart Weintraub of Taos, N.M.; a daughter, Michael W. Fink of Providence; two brothers, David Nadien of Fall River and Lew Nadien of Wantaugh, N.Y.; and three grandchildren.

The funeral service will be held today at 1 p.m. in Sugarman-Sinai Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St. Burial will be in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

WEINTRAUB, Florence (Nadien)

December 16, 2004. Beloved wife of Morris Weintraub. Residence: 40 Brookway Road, Providence. Dear mother of Stuart Weintraub, Taos, New Mexico and Michael W. Fink, Providence. Loving sister of Sylvia Rosenthal, Providence; David Nadien, Fall River, MA and Lew Nadien, Wantaugh, NY. Devoted grandmother of Emily, Lily and Reuben. Funeral service 1:00pm Friday at SUGARMAN-SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL, 458 Hope St., Providence. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to your favorite charity. Shiva will be observed at her late residence Saturday 7-9, Sunday and Monday 2-4 and 7-9pm.