

J.A. Bamberger, 94; Patchogue, Engineer

Joseph A. Bamberger, a retired cryogenics engineer at Brookhaven National Laboratory and a longtime resident of Patchogue, died on Jan. 20 in New York City. He was 94.

Joe Bamberger and his wife, Dorothy, lived for more than 50 years in Patchogue, where they raised their two children, David and Michael. Mr. Bamberger spent most of his career at Brookhaven, where he was a member of the scientific staff, and enjoyed many close friendships with his colleagues there.

Mr. Bamberger was born in 1927 and emigrated from Hamburg, Germany, to New York in 1940 as a 12-year-old with his parents and sister amid the terror of the Nazi regime.

Dorothy Bamberger's father, Edgar Frank, knew the Bamberger family in Hamburg. The Franks left Germany in 1938, as many Jewish families in Germany sought to do, and helped the Bamberger family secure non-quota visas to the United States.

In New York, the Bamberger family lived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Mr. Bamberger attended New York City's public schools, City College and New York University, from which he received a master's degree in engineering.

Joseph Bamberger and Dorothy Frank, who knew each other as children in Hamburg, were married in 1950 in New York. In 1959 they bought a home on Lakewood Street in Patchogue, across the street from The Cove, where Mr. Bamberger would skate in the cold of winter. Mrs. Bamberger, a longtime English teacher in the Patchogue-Medford School District, died in 2020.

Mr. Bamberger, often accompanied by his wife and sons, enjoyed

breaking 80-inch Hydrogen Bubble Chamber, the ISABELLE colliding beam accelerator and other particle physics research projects. With a lab colleague, he was issued a U.S. patent for a cooling innovation.

He also taught engineering for 10 years at Suffolk County Community College.

In 1994, while keeping their home in Patchogue, Mr. and Mrs. Bamberger bought an apartment in New York City and Mr. Bamberger became a volunteer researcher in the Conservation Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Through his late 80s, he made the short ride from their apartment to the museum by bike, with his museum ID tag around his neck. While working at The Met, he co-authored several published papers about long-term artwork preservation.

In 1988, Mr. Bamberger wrote a piece for the New York Times sharing his memories of Kristallnacht, a night of lethal Nazi looting in 1938. On that night, his father, a chemist from a line of rabbis, saved a Torah scroll from their Hamburg synagogue before the synagogue was destroyed. That Torah was read at Temple Beth-El in Patchogue for many years and is on display at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City, as is one of Mr. Bamberger's report cards.

Mr. Bamberger was dedicated to the birds that visited his backyard and had a longstanding interest in music, including his own harmonica playing, hiking, travel, Jewish tradition and the mysteries of the cosmos.

He also had a good sense of humor. When his son David rented a ruffled shirt and a tuxedo with giant lapels for his 1975 PMHS prom, Joe Bamberger, an

swimming in the Patchogue Pool, playing tennis at Four Sisters Park on Rider Avenue, taking the ferry to Watch Hill, skiing at the Bald Hill Ski Bowl and sailing small sailboats in the Great South Bay.

He shopped regularly at Gutte's Hardware on Main Street, the Great Outdoors in South Ocean Avenue and Swezey's on the Four Corners. As suburban shopping malls began to sprout in the 1970s, the Bambergers remained loyal to Patchogue's downtown.

Mr. Bamberger was an active member of Temple Beth-El on Oak Street and was the chairman of its architectural committee, which planned the synagogue's expansion in the late 1960s.

At Brookhaven Lab, Mr. Bamberger worked on the ground-

avid photographer, took a front-yard photo of him. The next day, the father, a half-foot shorter than his six-foot son, posed in the same spot wearing the same clothes, but now with the pant legs practically trampling the grass. His wife put both photos in a photo album.

A funeral service for Mr. Bamberger was held at the Patchogue Hebrew Cemetery on Jan 23. Old friends gathered there on a cold, still morning, as did David Bamberger and his wife, Debra, and their children, Cayla and Lara, and Michael Bamberger and his wife, Christine, and their children, Ian and Alina.

The family suggests those inspired by Mr. Bamberger's life to make a contribution, financial or otherwise, in the name of science education.