

9-5-95

OBITUARIES

Dr. Earle F. Cohen dies at age 75; pediatrician and R.I. entrepreneur

NEWPORT — Dr. Earle F. Cohen, 75, of 111 Harrison Ave., owner of the Hotel Viking for the past 19 years, and one of Rhode Island's most uproarious entrepreneurs in the 1960s and 1970s, died yesterday at Newport Hospital. He was the husband of Renee (Ehrick) Cohen.



Born in Providence, a son of the late Dr. Leo Cohen, and Etta Cohen, he lived in Newport since 1986. A pediatrician by training, Dr. Cohen led four other lives as well — as an opera impresario, real estate developer, taxpayer advocate and hotelier/restaurateur.

He was also quick to take his grievances to the public, and often to court. He once sued the Rhode Island Turnpike & Bridge Authority when it tried to stop him from offering half-price shrimp dinners in exchange for Newport Bridge tokens.

Dr. Cohen was also once arrested by the Cranston police for tying up their switchboard for 20 minutes in a fury over their not responding fast enough to his complaint about a burglary. He was later acquitted.

He once sued the Rhode Island Builders Association for allegedly denying him membership, and he took the Rhode Island Council on the Arts to court for the lack of funding for Artists Internationale, the non-profit organization he headed to produce opera and ballet.

A graduate of Brown University in 1941, and Tufts Medical School in 1944, he served in the Army during World War II as a medical doctor. He practiced medicine in Providence

and Cranston until 1980.

He served on the staffs of Rhode Island Hospital, Miriam Hospital, Roger Williams Hospital and the Boston Children's Hospital for many years. He was a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society and the Rhode Island Medical Society. He was the pediatric medical director at the Warwick Neighborhood Health Center for many years.

Dr. Cohen was president of the Rhode Island Taxpayers Action Committee. He was a member of Temple Beth-El and its Brotherhood. He was a member of the Ledgemont County Club in Seekonk, and a founding member of the Alpine Country Club in Providence.

He had been practicing medicine for about 10 years in the 1950s when he began moving into the real estate field as a builder of homes and apartment houses. He was the founder and president of Custom Builders. He owned the former Millstone Village Inn in North Attleboro, Mass. In 1976, he purchased the Viking Hotel in Newport, which is currently operated by his sons, Jon E. and Douglas D. Cohen, both of Newport.

Besides his wife and sons he leaves a third son, Dr. Eric R. Cohen of Canton, Mass., a gastroenterologist in Quincy, Mass.; a daughter, Wendy Handler of Chestnut Hill, Mass.; a sister, Eunice Levine of Little Compton, and four grandchildren.

The funeral will be held tomorrow at 2 p.m. at Temple Beth El, Orchard Avenue, Providence. Burial will be in Congregation Sons of Israel and David Cemetery in Cranston. ✓

COHEN,
Dr. Earle

COHEN, Dr. Earle F.

September 4, 1995. Beloved husband of Renee (Ehrick) Cohen. Residence: 111 Harrison Ave., Newport; formerly of Providence. Dear father of Wendy Handler, Chestnut Hill, Ma.; Dr. Eric R. Cohen, Canton, Ma.; Jon E. and Douglas D. Cohen, Newport. Dear brother of Eunice Levine, Little Compton. Devoted grandfather of Michael, Joshua, Jeffrey and Danielle. Funeral service 2 p.m. Wednesday at TEMPLE BETH-EL, Orchard at Butler Aves., Providence. Relatives and friends are invited. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Tufts Medical School, 750 Washington St., Boston, 02111. Memorial observance at his late residence Thursday 2-4 and 7-9 p.m., Friday 2-4 p.m., and Sunday 2-4 and 6-8 p.m. Arrangements by MOUNT SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL.