

Obituaries

Joseph Cohen, 85; aided India Point Park project

PROVIDENCE — Joseph Cohen, 85, of 33 Brookway Road, president for more than 40 years of the Promet Corporation, the former General Scrap Iron & Metals Processing Co., died yesterday at the Jane Brown unit of Rhode Island Hospital after a three-month illness. He was the husband of Edith Lottie (Cohen) Cohen.



Mr. Cohen was a principal figure in the development of India Point Park. Before April, 1968, his company owned a 2.7-acre tract there on which it operated a scrap metal yard, one of several owned by the firm in New England.

When a park was proposed in the 1960s as a replacement for the scrapyard, Mr. Cohen agreed to a swap for a parcel at Fields Point.

A 1967 editorial in the *Journal-Bulletin* said: "Nothing impelled Mr. Cohen to accept the arrangement except his sense of obligation to his state and city, and his readiness to move a major business in cooperation with both governments."

Later, when public funds were being solicited to match government dollars for construction of the park, Mr. Cohen added his personal contribution of \$1,000.

Under his direction, the company grew from "a small junkyard" to one of the largest exporters of scrap metal on the East Coast. He said he really began in the business when he worked as boy with his father, who collected scrap with a pushcart in Fall River.

In 1968, he estimated that more than one-third of the cargo shipped out of Providence was scrap from his yard, and that he employed more than a third of all the longshoremen here.

He once said that scrap metal yards, unsightly though they may be, are essential to the existence of any metropolitan area. He speculated that if only his New England operations were closed for a single day, the result would be a chaotic buildup of scrap in many New England communities.

He served in the Navy during World War I. He was a 1919 graduate of Brown University and his fraternity was Phi Epsilon Pi. He had also attended the U.S. Naval Academy.

A charter member of Temple Beth El, he also was a member of Congregation Agudath Achim in Taunton. Mr. Cohen was a past national president of the American Institute of Scrap Iron & Steel, a member of Providence Rotary and the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island.

He was a retired member of the advisory board of the Industrial National Bank.

Born in Fall River, he was a son of the late Louis L. and Fannie Cohen. He had lived in Providence since 1934.

Besides his wife, he leaves a son, Avram N. Cohen of Providence; a brother, Robert J. Cohen of Fall River; a sister, Mrs. Sarah Norman of Brookline, Mass., and a grandchild.

A funeral service was to be held today at 2 p.m. at the Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St. Burial was to be in Mt. Nebo Cemetery, Taunton.

COHEN, JOSEPH