SMALL, BERTHA

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OBITUARIES

SMALL, Bertha (Fischer)

August 1, 1999. Residence; 20 Randall St., Apt 2H, Providence. Beloved wife of the late Edward Small. Devoted mother of Sanford Small, Easton, CT; Martin Small, Hamden, CT. Dear sister of Ann Fischer, Israel and the late Martin Fischer. Adored grandmother of Lawrence and Jeffrey. Funeral Services Thursday at 1:00 p.m. at the MAX SUGARMAN MEMORIAL CHAPEL, 458 Hope St., (Corner Doyle Ave) Providence. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to: Miriam Hospital, Women's Association, 164 Summit Ave., Providence, RI, 02906. Calling hours following Interment at her late residence at 3:00 p.m..

Bertha Small, 93, entrepreneur, long-time volunteer at Miriam

Bertha Small, 93, of 20 Randall St., a businesswoman and active volunteer whose association with volunteering dated back to World War II when she served as a Gray Lady for the Red Cross, died Sunday at Oak Hill Nursing Center, Pawtucket. She was the wife of the late Edward Small.



Born in Hungary, a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Pincus Fischer, she came to the United States in 1923, settling in New York City. She moved to Providence as a young woman and lived in the city for the rest of her life.

During her colorful life, she was a supervisor in a women's underwear factory in Fall River from its opening until she left in 1931 when she was overseeing the work of 300 people, and owned two gas stations, the first of which she bought in 1944.

In 1946, she sold the first and bought a larger station, located on North Main Street where the Charlesgate Nursing Home is currently located. During this period, Mrs. Small got involved in stock car racing. Her own racing was confined to a few "powder puff derbies" but she also hired men to drive her cars, many of whom brought home trophies.

She sold the second station in 1957 and decided to get into something new. After seeing college students hauling bags of laundry on Thayer Street, she decided to open a laundry. She looked around for an empty store, found one on Fones Alley, just off Thayer, and opened the Campus Launderette. She ran it for six years before deciding that she could retire.

She told a reporter the best thing that people can do when they retire is volunteer and do something constructive with their lives, so they won't be bored.

She was the longest-serving volunteer at Miriam Hospital and last October was honored at the Mayor's Own Volunteer Luncheon at Roger Williams Park Casino. Mrs. Small's association with Miriam began in 1963 and continued even though she lost much of her sight 12 years ago and was legally blind.

Prior to that, Mrs. Small typically put in three days a week as a volunteer in such areas as Intensive Care and the Family Support Unit.

Mrs. Small was a member of Congregation Beth Sholom and Hadassah.

She leaves two sons, Sanford Small of Easton, Conn., and Martin Small of Hamden, Conn.; a sister, Ann Fischer in Israel; and two grandchildren. She was a sister of the late Martin Fischer. Mrs. Small also had three sisters and a brother who died in Hitler's concentration camps, as were her mother and father.

The service will be held tomorrow at 1 p.m. from the Max Sugarman Memorial Chapel, 458 Hope St. Interment will be at Lincoln Park Cemetery, Post Road, Warwick.