

The Lady

The Leader

The Legend



Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
A Civil Rights Icon

**“A civil rights leader that has not been to jail for the cause
of freedom, is no civil rights leader at all!”**

Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

Here's a vote for Irene Hill-Smith, arguably the county's fiercest civil rights activist in history, a woman who knew Martin Luther King personally, a woman who was arrested four times for her staunch beliefs and served the NAACP at three levels.

*Bob Shryock, Gloucester County Times
bshryock@sjnewsco.com 2008*



"She was courageous, a freedom fighter with the courage of a thousand men."

Loretta Winters, President, Gloucester County NAACP



She'd already been labeled a firebrand who had no fear to go to jail in Gloucester County to support her views. In fact, she was behind bars when Bobby Kennedy was assassinated.

"I was there so often the jail could have been named after me."



She's a world renowned civil rights leader, activist and humanitarian," Wilson said.

"She is also an esteemed person in her field and she has graced many halls of justices, dignified the tables of Kings and Queens and provided counsel to several presidents on sensitive civil rights issues."

*Lillie Wilson, President National Coalition 100 Black Women ,
Southern Nj Chapter*



"My only regret is we didn't think of advancing her name for consideration at a time when she would have been around to enjoy it."

John Burzichelli , Mayor Paulsboro, NJ



"But with all the pain I was in I don't remember the name of the policeman who dragged me," Hill-Smith says, "I was never angry or bitter."

Irene Hill-Smith 1969



"Police seem to think if they cut off the head the body will die", she said. "Not so with us, if you cut

off our head, the body goes into action",

Irene Hill-Smith 1969

I had complete respect and unswerving admiration for her. We had more than a reporter-source relationship. We were friends. At my request, she gently "roasted" me at a fund-raising dinner. At another fund-raiser, she made a generous contribution to keep me in a makeshift jail, laughingly telling me to "go see what jail is like."

***Bob Shryock, Gloucester County Times
bshryock@sjnewsco.com 2011***

"She contributed nationally, but she never lost focus of her friends and neighbors. She was engaged from the top of the state to the bottom of the state."

Activist. Icon. Pioneer. Advocate. Courageous. Trailblazer. Leader.

These are some of the terms I have heard and read used to describe civil rights leader Irene Hill-Smith

Councilman Wayne Love , Deptford, NJ

She is important to civil rights in this area, no doubt about it," said Gary Hunter, a history professor at Rowan College who is writing a book about the history of African Americans in South Jersey. "She took the (NAACP) through its most critical years. She's argued with the Klan, she's held counter-demonstrations. She was all over the place."

Gary Hunter, a history professor at Rowan College

And her activism crossed racial lines.

All children involved are white," she said, but "the safety of children transcends racial lines and should involve all people."

Dr. Irene Hill-Scott, 1969

A pioneer in the fight for civil rights, Mrs. Hill-Smith experienced unjust cruelty during her early years when her children were growing up; her home was threatened many times with fire bombs and similar atrocities

***Herman James – Former President of Glassboro State College,
now Rowan University***

*Why Should Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
Be In The New Jersey Hall of Fame?*

We, the Gloucester County Branch of the National Association of Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Branch 2345, strongly believe that Dr. Irene Hill-Smith should be in the New Jersey Hall of Fame for the many reasons that we will highlight in this application.

For more than seven decades, this courageous woman effortlessly gave of her time, strength, and untiring effort to advocate for social change. She played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's having served and marched with the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King. Additionally, she endured blatant physical and verbal abuse, was put in jail, and was literally dragged by policemen where she sustained a permanent disability. Although this injury caused her to have a limp for the remainder of her life, it never diminished her ability or dedication to serve her community. She served as the County, State and National President of the NAACP, representing all ethnicities, black or white, rich or poor, to bring about social change to all in this great State of New Jersey. New Jersey residents benefited directly from this outstanding woman's efforts as she was appointed to serve on state committees by three different New Jersey Governors, Republican and Democrat.

Dr. Irene Hill-Smith's legacy of social change cannot be overstated and her impact was not only felt statewide, but nationally and internationally as well. She was invited by President Lyndon Johnson to serve as a delegate to the 1966 White House Conference on Civil Rights. Dr. Irene Hill-Smith also represented the NAACP'S National Housing Corporation as a delegate to London, Paris, Milan, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam. In addition, she served as a delegate to the first African-American Summit on the Development of Sub-Saharan Africa in 1991.

Like previous New Jersey Hall of Fame inductee Paul Robeson, she was able

to successfully use her civil activism to improve the working conditions of people who felt they didn't have a voice in their place of employment. There are countless stories to be told of people she was able to help through her deeds.

As a lifelong New Jersey resident, Dr. Irene Hill-Smith never forgot where she came from. Although she was able to travel the world, New Jersey remained her permanent home until her passing. She was not only born and raised in the Garden State, but also raised her family here. She loved New Jersey, and New Jersey loved her back.

This application serves to highlight a few of the many significant contributions that Dr. Irene Hill-Smith has made to promote equality, not only in New Jersey, but globally.

It would be a great honor and tribute to her legacy for Dr. Irene Hill-Smith to be inducted into the New Jersey Hall of Fame.



Table Of Contents

The Committee	11
The Lady.....	15
Article, Clippings, Photographs	
The Leader	35
Article, Clippings, Photographs	
Accomplishments:.....	55
Awards, Citations, Degrees Elections, Nominations	
The Legend (<i>The loss of an Icon</i>)	65
Articles, Clippings, Photographs	
NAACP Mourns and Honors Dr. Irene Hill-Smith.....	79
National, State and County	
Obituary	85
Endorsements	91
Dr. Irene Hill-Smith Foundation	99

The Committee

Packet Submitted By:

Gloucester County NAACP, Branch 2345

PO Box 545
Williamstown, NJ 08094

The Committee:

Mr. Calvin D. McNeil, Sr.

Committee Chair; Chairman of Cheyney University National Alumni Hall of Fame

Ms. Loretta Winters

President Gloucester County NAACP, Branch 2345

Bishop Terri Smith, PHD,

Daughter of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

Dr. Rev. William King

Pastor Living Word Bible Fellowship Church, Blackwood, NJ and
Personal Physician of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

Dr. Rev. A.B. Frazier

Pastor, Second Baptist Church, Paulsboro, NJ

Councilman Wayne Love

Deptford, NJ

Ms. Karen Hill

Process Safety Management Coordinator: Niece to Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

Mr. George V. Hill, III

Realtor Associate; Great Nephew to Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

Assemblyman John Burzichelli,

NJ 3rd District State House, Trenton, NJ

Ms. Danielle (Hill) Scott

Program Analyst for N.J.J.J.C.; Great Niece to Dr. Irene Hill -Smith

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is one of the oldest and most influential civil rights organizations in the United States. Its mission is "to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination".

Gloucester County NAACP launches campaign to nominate late civil rights leader Irene Hill-Smith for New Jersey Hall of Fame

Tuesday, April 05, 2011
By Rob Scott
rscott@sjnewsco.com

Just one week after her passing, those familiar with civil rights icon Irene Hill-Smith's impact on the state have taken steps toward ensuring her legacy is never forgotten.

The Gloucester County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is in the process of forming a committee to gather information on Hill-Smith's life to submit her name to the New Jersey Hall of Fame.

Hill-Smith died on March 27 at Thomas Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia after suffering a stroke. She was 85.

According to Gloucester County NAACP President Loretta Winters, cobbling together the "biography" of Hill-Smith's life for consideration for the Hall of Fame is no small feat not for a woman who at various times served as a Gloucester County NAACP president, state NAACP president and national NAACP president, a woman who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who took up the cause of civil rights "during a very difficult time," Winters said, "when you were having hoses and dogs turned on you."

But convincing the Hall of Fame committee to enshrine Hill-Smith should be the easy part. Her resume speaks for itself.

"She has all the right ingredients for the New Jersey Hall of Fame ... She was just someone who was dedicated and loyal to the cause of putting other people before herself," said Winters. "If anyone deserves to be there, she does."

For all her activism and notoriety on the national stage, Hill-Smith, a Mullica Hill native and longtime South Jersey resident, never forgot where she came from, according to Assemblyman John Burzichelli.

"She was a Jersey girl before that term was popular," he said. "She contributed nationally, but she never lost focus of her friends and neighbors. She was engaged from the top of the state to the bottom of the state."

Burzichelli said he became aware of Hill-Smith during the civil rights years and later, as he became involved in public service, he had multiple opportunities to meet and speak with her.

"I know I took more from my conversations with her than she took from me," he said, adding he would lend his support to Hill-Smith's Hall of Fame candidacy.

Winters said the process of compiling historical data on Hill-Smith and getting her application to the Hall ready may take a few months and could prevent the committee from inducting her this year. But once it's done, Winters said, their chances of getting her in are very good.

Burzichelli's confidence equaled Winters', though he added, "My only regret is we didn't think of advancing her name for consideration at a time when she would have been around to enjoy it."

The Lady

Stories about Dr.. Irene Hill-Smith

Activist, Irene Hill-Smith, is elated to see Barack Obama in the White House

By Bob Shryock

bshryock@sjnewsco.com 2008

So who was the happiest person in Gloucester County when Barack Obama became president-elect two weeks ago?

Here's a vote for Irene Hill-Smith, arguably the county's fiercest civil rights activist in history, a woman who knew Martin Luther King personally, a woman who was arrested four times for her staunch beliefs and served the NAACP at three levels.

"I never thought I'd live to see this happen," says Hill-Smith, 83, a Deptford resident. "I'd never heard of him. But I knew when he was first announced as a candidate, God sent him. I'm a Christian, I believe in God, and I knew God sent him to straighten out the world.

"I knew where he was going when he spoke at the national convention and came out against the war. He's got the knowledge and he cares about people -- all the people. He's energized the world unbelievably."

It also helps slightly, of course, that Hill-Smith, like Obama, is a Democrat.

"When I lived in Jericho, I was a Republican for an hour and a half," she laughs. But she became a confirmed Democrat during John F. Kennedy's administration, and hasn't wavered.

She visited the White House three times under Democratic presidents -- Jimmy Carter twice, Lyndon Johnson once when he signed the voters' rights act.

No Ronald Reagan or Bush White House visits?

"I wasn't looking for any Republicans ... and they didn't invite me."

Hill-Smith, former president of both the county and New Jersey NAACP and national board member, is confident she'll one day have an opportunity to meet Obama face-to-face, but isn't in a hurry. "I'll get to see him; he'll come to this area."

The inauguration?

"Family members have asked me to get seven tickets. I'm still a state official who was re-appointed to the Casino Reinvestment Commission. But I'm not going to the inauguration. I'm going to be in my bed with snacks all around me. I'm going to enjoy it here, watching on TV."

Hill-Smith likens Obama's oratorical skills to those of King, a man she admired tremendously and spoke to often at NAACP meetings.

The day King was assassinated, April 4, 1968, Hill-Smith was speaking to group of students at Kean College.

"It was in his last speech he'd said, 'I've been to the mountain top and I'll see you there,'" says Hill-Smith. "They'd just introduced me at Kean when I was tapped on the shoulder and told Dr. King had been killed. They stopped the program. I stayed there to help calm the students. And that night, I went into Newark with board members to help keep the town quiet."

She'd already been labeled a firebrand who had no fear to go to jail in Gloucester County to support her views. In fact, she was behind bars when Bobby Kennedy was assassinated. "I was there so often the jail could have been named after me."

Although no longer officially active in NAACP matters, Hill-Smith still fields requests for assistance and redirects the queries.

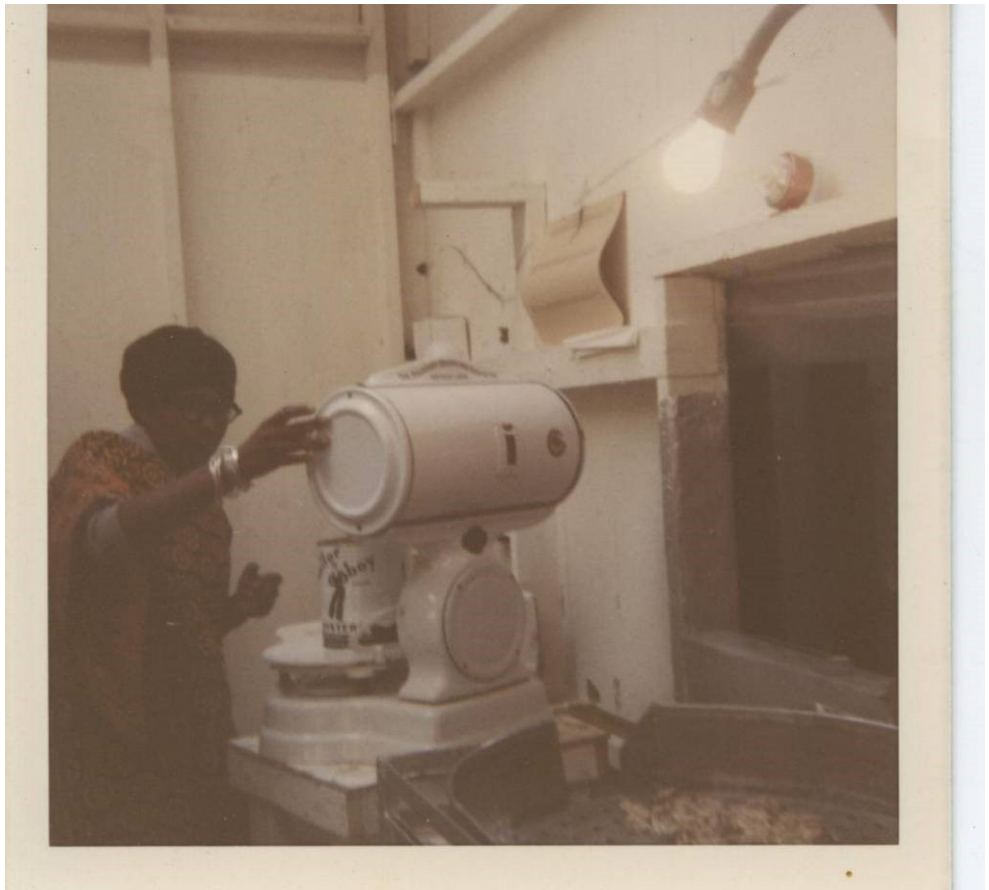
"People need to know where to get help," she says. "I'm glad I was there when we were really active."

As elegantly dressed as ever, Hill-Smith has had physical problems and uses a walker but remains committed to her life-long cause.

"There's no 'retirement' in the Bible," she says. "A lot have tried, but I'm going to live forever."

Or at least until she meets the next president.





IRENE GOOD NIGHT

BACK IN THE EARLY 60'S WHEN I WAS IN
• HIGH SCHOOL I SERVED AS THE V.P. OF THE
GLOUCESTER COUNTY NAACP YOUTH
GROUP UNDER CHRISTINE GRAVES. MRS.
SMITH, WAS OUR ICON. SHE WAS OUR
FEARLESS LEADER, FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND
THERE WE WERE RIGHT BEHIND HER
MARCHING, DEMONSTRATION AND
PROTESTING, FOR FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND
EQUALITY FOR OUR PEOPLE FOR
EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND HOUSING.



UNLIKE TODAY WE ALL CAME UP OUT OF THE CHURCHES. MRS. SMITH
WOULD FORM AN ALLIANCE FOR SUPPORT, WITH THE CHURCHES, MASONS,
TRADE UNIONS, (LOCAL 222) TO REACH OUR GOALS.
THIS WAS WAY BEFORE CARMICHAEL, RAP BROWN, HUEY NEWTON, ANGELA
DAVIS ,DR. YOUNG'S (YOUNG BLACKS), THE BPUM.

MS. HILL-SMITH AND I RECONNECTED, AND SHE AGREED TO BE OUR
HONORED GUEST AT OUR TABLE FOR AT THE N.A.A.C.P. FREEDOM AWARDS.
(SHE LIKED RIDING UP HIGH, IN MY H-2) I SAW HER A FEW TIMES AFTER
THAT, BUT THEN GOT ALL CAUGHT UP IN LIFE. I WOULD ALWAYS ASK HER TO
CALL IF SHE NEEDED A RIDE OR ANY THING. SHE NEVER DID. A ND NOW SHE
IS GONE.

IN CLOSING, I REMEMBER ONE FROM OF MANY TIMES SHE WAS ARRESTED
AND IN JAIL AGAIN. WE ALL RALLIED, TO HER SUPPORT PROTESTING AND
MARCHING AT THE COUNTY SEAT ON DELAWARE AVE IN WOODBURY WITH
THE POLICE LINES BETWEEN US AND HER THE JAIL. AT END OF THE NIGHT
THE LAST SONG THAT WE SUNG WAS **"IRENE GOOD NIGHT" SO GOOD NIGHT
IRENE, GOOD NIGHT IRENE, WE'LL SEE YOU IN OUR DREAMS.**

Morris Corsey , Sicklerville, NJ

How I Found Out About My Aunt

When I was younger, I only knew Aunt Irene as an aunt. Not as a famous civil rights leader. She was very humble and didn't talk much about the different endeavors, events, or marches she participated and/or initiated. I did not learn about her legendary history until 2001. During that time, Aunty (which I always called her), asked me to accompany her to a banquet at the Woodbury Golf Club. Once we arrived at the banquet, I soon learned it was in honor of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, the civil rights leader. Then, and only then, did I learn about a fraction of her accomplishments and achievements.



Aunty was infamous for inviting me to a monthly honorary dinner or banquet under the guise of a ladies night out. Because of her, I have been to banquets and honorary dinners as far north as Essex County. I am convinced that if I put every banquet program together, I still will not have a full picture of all that she has done. To this day I am still learning new things about her.

I remember one time Aunty called me and asked me if I could pick up her Louis Vuitton brief case from the state house. I asked her why she attended a meeting at the state house. She responded to me, nonchalantly, that she was there for a meeting with the governor.

Aunty left us with a legacy of advocacy to fight for justice and freedom. Following in her footsteps, I consider myself to be a change agent. I am PROUD to be her niece and to call myself one of her descendants.

Danielle (Hill) Scott (great niece)



My Reflections of a Great Lady...

As my Aunt Irene lay in state on that last day of March, 2011, I let my mind wonder to all the things she had done in her life, unselfish thing, always doing for others and still having time to raise 3 phenomenal children.

When our mother died, several years after the sudden death of our father, Aunt Irene stepped up. She was with us through the entire process, choosing an appropriate Funeral Director (our Uncle Bill (Waples' Funeral Home) had already passed on, so there was no fear of him seeing Mom naked), choosing a casket, making sure that Mom's wish for a graveside service was honored. At the Memorial Services later, Aunt Irene took over with a flourish to ensure everything was done the way Mom would have wanted it. I'll never forget her saying that no fruit bowl was complete without a few nuts. We were the nuts.

I remember her trips to Africa. She would return with a renewed spirit and commitment for the Civil Rights of others. And the clothes and jewelry! I remember telling her one day that when I die I wanted to be buried in her closet! She has been many places that I probably won't see in my lifetime. These were not vacations for her. In Africa she was instrumental in re-establishing relations between the African people and the Africans that had been kidnapped and brought to America as slaves. There were other countries that had African slaves, but America was (is) the biggest offender. Wherever people were being oppressed, trod upon, treated like less than animals, my Aunt was there. She started her tenure with the NAACP to help protect the rights of African Americans and finished by helping to protect the rights of all people. From Civil Rights to Human Rights!

I thought about the March on Washington in 1963. As President of the local NAACP chapter, Aunt Irene felt compelled to be there. How thrilled she was to meet and converse with the great Dr. Martin Luther King.

I thought about our many trips to Atlantic City and how Aunt Irene had a story for just about every exit. I remember one toll plaza named for a politician who got elected from the "graveyard." Her words, not mine. Then onto the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority where she was treated like royalty. I snuck a peek at her in action one day and I was touched at how much power she wielded in those meetings. My Aunt was never lukewarm. Her perception of people was impeccable. Many others agreed with her assessments, but lacked the conviction to speak up. Not my Aunt. If she didn't like you, she told you to your face and under no uncertain terms. There were several lawyers that I felt sorry for that day, but at the same time I knew never to get on her bad side

As people of all races, classes, religions, and colors arrive to pay their respects to Aunt Irene, amongst all the flowers and plants that seemed to keep on coming, some weeping silently, some praying, some taking pictures with their cell phones, all wanting something, anything to remember this Great Lady by; I realized as never before how much she was loved. Each person had their own story of how Dr. Irene Hill-Smith had touched their lives. Through the tears, they spoke of how powerful she was, how strong she was, how tireless she was and even with the injuries sustained during the "struggle" they spoke of how relentless she was in the pursuit of Civil Rights, in the pursuit of Human Rights, in the pursuit of Their Rights and the Rights of all People.

I used to tease Aunt Irene by telling her that I wanted to be just like her when I grew up. I truly believe that Aunt Irene and I shared a very special bond because I bear a likeness to her daughter, who went home to be with the Lord at an early age and because of that Aunt Irene blessed me and several others by being our Mentor. My Aunt was the original Diva long before the term became popular and we were her Divas-in-training. She taught us to shoot from the hip, but with love and grace. She taught us how to command respect when entering a room without saying a word. She taught us to always, always, always, be stylish, but never to follow the trends. She taught us to wear bright colors and never shy away from the camera. She taught us that our brains are the only true sex organ and to use it at every opportunity. Even though her favorite Scripture was: *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me, Philippians 4:13* ; our motto was: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, (divas-in-training) be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1st Corinthians 15:58.*

Divas-in-training our Graduation Day has come. It is now our time to carry on the legacy of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith!

Caprice Hill-Black (niece)



Speech from the funeral April 1, 2011:

AS I SAT HERE YESTERDAY AND WATCHED THE PARADE OF PEOPLE OF ALL COLORS GO BY I REALIZED HOW MUCH SHE WAS LOVED BY ALL. EACH PERSON HAD THEIR OWN STORY OF HOW DR. IRENE HILL SMITH HAD TOUCHED THEIR HEARTS AND THEIR LIVES. THEY SPOKE OF HOW POWERFUL SHE WAS, HOW STRONG SHE WAS, HOW TIRELESS SHE WAS, HOW RELENTLESS SHE WAS IN THE PURSUIT OF CIVIL RIGHTS, IN THE PURSUIT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, IN THE PURSUIT OF THEIR RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLE. I WAS SO PROUD LISTENING TO THOSE STORIES, BUT I'M HERE TO TALK ABOUT MY AUNTIE. AUNTIE WAS THE ORIGINAL DIVA LONG BEFORE THE TERM WAS POPULAR AND SHE BLESSED A FEW OF US BY BEING OUR MENTOR. SHE TAUGHT US TO "SHOOT FROM THE HIP", BUT WITH LOVE AND GRACE. SHE TAUGHT US HOW TO COMMAND RESPECT WHEN WE ENTERED A ROOM WITHOUT SAYING A WORD; SHE TAUGHT US TO ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS BE STYLISH, TO WEAR BRIGHT COLORS AND NEVER SHY AWAY FROM THE CAMERA. SHE TAUGHT US FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:58: **THEREFORE, MY BELOVED BRETHREN, (DIVAS-IN-TRAINING) BE YE STEADFAST, UNMOVABLE, ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD, FORASMUCH AS YE KNOW THAT YOUR LABOR IS NOT IN VAIN IN THE LORD.** DIVAS-IN-TRAINING OUR GRADUATION DAY HAD COME. IT IS NOW OUR TIME TO CARRY ON THE LEGACY OF DR. IRENE HILL SMITH.

Caprice Hill-Black (niece)

Mom-Mom

My name is Kristen Pullen and I am the youngest of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith's 7 grandchildren. Typically I am not one to publicize intimate memories of my loved ones but today I am writing to share a few of my most precious memories of the most inspirational woman I have ever known. Many of you knew my grandmother as one of this country's fiercest and most admirable civil rights activists, but to me, she was just Mom-Mom, and a very cool Mom-Mom at that. My Mom-Mom was not your average Grandmother. At 10 PM, when most grandparents are asleep, my Mom-Mom was wide-awake, watching late night TV shows or conversing with friends. One of my Mom-Moms favorite late night TV shows was The David Letterman Show. So today, in honor of one of my Mom-Moms favorite TV shows, I would like to share with you the top 10 reasons why my Mom-Mom was the coolest Mom-Mom on the planet. As David Letterman says, starting with number 10.

NUMBER 10: My Mom-Mom never gave me a bedtime. When most other children and grandparents were asleep, Mom-Mom and I would stay up and watch Jay Leno. Truthfully, I didn't learn that she preferred Letterman, until about 5 years ago. Mom-Mom always accommodated our desires over her own. **SELFLESS, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 9: When I was 5, I once ran through Mom-Mom's house as my Uncle Michael chased me and I mistakenly ran directly into her ivory cane, which she had just bought in Africa. Mom-Mom did not get mad or raise her voice. As I looked up at her with tears in my eyes, afraid of getting in trouble, she just hugged me tight and said "its ok baby girl, Jesus will get me a new one." **LOVING, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 8: Mom-Mom not only fought for many of the freedoms that you and I enjoy today, but she was also a fierce advocate for her children & grandchildren, making it to everyone's graduation. And even if you were just graduating from Kindergarten, by the time Mom-Mom was done bragging about you, she would have everyone believing that at the age of 5, you were a Harvard graduate. **PROUD of her family, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 7: Mom-Mom was the only grandma that was cool enough to carry a bag that said, " All These Years & Still A Fox." **CONFIDENT, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 6: Mom-Mom made taking pictures a funny and joyous experience for everyone and when everyone else looked at the camera and said, "Cheese" she politely said, "Sex." **FUNNY, that's just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 5: When I was in the 3rd grade, Mom-Mom came to my school for Grandparent's Day and she was the only grandmother cool enough to convince my third grade class that women did not get any older than the age sixty-five. She explained that once a woman reached sixty-five, she could not get any older and for this reason once a woman became sixty-five years old, she would then begin to go down in age. Last year we happily celebrated Mom-Mom's twenty-fifth Birthday and she reminded us that she was now younger than all of her grandchildren. **YOUNG AT HEART, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 4: Mom-Moms style was unmatched. When I was in High School, she would come to my games and watch me cheer for my school. When she walked in, all eyes were on her and no one was watching the game anymore. At the end of the game, my friends would say, “Wow your grandma wears bangles up her arm, a sequined beret, and high heels! My grandma doesn’t dress that cool.” **STYLISH, that is just the type of woman she was.**

NUMBER 3: Mom-Mom is the only grandma that made walking with a cane & getting arrested seem admirable. When she told my class that she went to jail 4 times and was sprayed with water hoses so that my multiracial class filled with Latinos, Indians, Asians, Blacks, and Whites, could all go to school together, an Asian friend of mine stood up and told her “Thank You”. **FREEDOM FIGHTER, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 2: Within Mom-Moms will it states, “my daughter, Sandra Theresa Smith, will preach my eulogy at a grand Baptist church in New Jersey.” Without any doubt, my Mom-Mom, like my Aunt Shelly, had a unique sense of humor and I am sure they were both laughing and smiling as my mother prepared to enter the pulpit and preach her mothers eulogy at a grand Baptist church in New Jersey. **VISIONARY, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

NUMBER 1: And the number one reason why my Mom-Mom was the coolest Mom-Mom on the planet was the fact that she lived by example. She set the standard for people and had more patience and integrity than most. Her love for people caused her to always see the very best in everyone. She did not see color, race, religion, gender, or ethnicity as a barrier rather she saw it as a blessing forcing us to see the best in our community and ourselves. She was always the example and never the exception. **A LEADER, that is just the kind of woman she was.**

I hope you learned some of the great reasons why my Mom-Mom was the very best Mom-Mom in the world. To me she was just an amazing Grandmother. She didn’t have to do anything spectacular and she still would have been the coolest Mom-Mom on the planet. But the fact is, she did do something spectacular. She undoubtedly left a legacy not only in New Jersey but around the world. To me and a few others, she is the coolest Mom-Mom in the world, but to us all, she is and will always be The Lady, The Leader, The Legend.





A Friend

My name is Hannah Ephraim, and my best friend, Shelbi Pullen, is Irene Hill-Smith's granddaughter. Shelbi and I are very close, so much so that I feel that her family is my family and vice versa. Since we're all family I call Dr. Smith "Grandmamma Smith." I don't think this letter will truly express my admiration for Grandmamma Smith but I hope it conveys a glimpse of what she meant to me.

From the moment I met Dr. Smith I loved her. She was an awesome woman whose presence could be sensed even when she wasn't saying a word. If I had to describe her in one word it would be "rich." Dr. Smith was rich in love, rich in wisdom, rich in her knowledge of historical events, rich in compassion, rich in entertainment and if you ever saw her attire or jewelry you would know she was rich in fashion! And the most beautiful part of her riches was how she so freely shared them with everyone she came in contact with.

I loved so many things about her but I'd like to briefly speak on two points. Grandmamma Smith made everyone feel special. I remember it was December of 2003 and Shelbi was graduating from college. A group of our friends, about five of us, came to Shelbi's house to wish her well on her achievement and of course Dr. Smith was there. Keep in mind that we are young college grads roughly 22 years-old so you would think we'd want to go hang-out or talk among ourselves but instead all five of us spent three hours talking with Grandmamma Smith, holding on to her every word wishing that the conversation would never end. I remember that as we left Shelbi's house that night all of us felt like our lives had been enriched by spending time with Dr. Smith.

The other reason I love Grandmamma Smith was because of the love we both share for Africa. My parents were both born in Ghana and I have had the privilege of going home to Ghana on several occasions, which is an experience most Americans can't relate to but Dr. Smith is not your average person. Not only did she make the journey to Africa but she went multiple times to various countries and would share her experiences of her time there. It's a sad reality that many Ghanaians who live in Ghana have never seen the slave castles or the other historical landmarks there but Dr. Smith who was born in America has been and she won't let anyone forget what happened on the shores of Ghana. It touched my heart because I consider Ghana my country and the way she loved my country made me admire and love her even more.

I could go on for hours recanting my memories of Dr. Smith but I'll suffice it to say my life has been changed by knowing Dr. Irene Hill-Smith.

S. Jerseyans remember days of segregation

Thursday, May 29, 2003

By BARBARA S. ROTHSCHILD

Courier-Post Staff

CHERRY HILL

Henry Payne, 77, of Swedesboro, recently remembered his first day at the Richardson Avenue School in his hometown. He was a member of the first class to enter the impressive Masonic Lodge building leased to the Swedesboro school board in 1931.

"I arrived in a shiny 1927 Buick with a Fisher landmark emblem on the side and plush seats inside. I was a frightened, excited little kid thinking about something new. The school had three rooms, all with diagrams of the Palmer method of penmanship along the tops of the walls," he said.

"There was a long ruler the teacher had for touching you to get your attention. Occasionally, every child had to have that kind of attention," Payne told a rapt audience of students at Cherry Hill High School West.

Most notable about the Richardson Avenue School was that it was segregated. Payne was the son of a black sharecropper who was a leader in Swedesboro's black community at the time. Payne's father was a deacon of the Masonic Lodge that housed the school and is now on the state's registry of historic sites.

Payne and other South Jerseyans who attended segregated schools spoke to CHHSW students who stayed after school to hear of their experiences. The segregated schools were legalized when the Supreme Court upheld *Plessy vs. Ferguson* in 1896, the year Payne's father was born. The decision embraced the doctrine of "separate but equal accommodations," giving rise to Jim Crow laws in the South.

The doctrine was overturned on May 17, 1954, when the Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education*, involving a case in Topeka, Kan. In that decision, the court stated that by definition, separate is not equal.

The panel discussion at CHHSW was held in conjunction with other yearlong observations of the landmark decision, to culminate on its 50th anniversary next May.

Cherry Hill, then Delaware Township, had its own segregated school, the Still School, until 1941. Its students then transferred to Hinchman School, which remained integrated until it closed in 1982.

But many northern communities did not have segregated schools immediately following the *Plessy* ruling. Payne's older brothers attended an integrated school in Swedesboro.

"But they were segregated within the walls," said Payne, a former Swedesboro council president who grew up in an integrated area of the town and attended Swedesboro High School, which was integrated.

It was because of that de facto segregation that blacks often decided to establish their own schools.



RON KARAFIN/Courier-Post
Shirley Davis (from left), Harry Harris, Dr. Irene Hill-Smith and Henry Payne share their experiences of attending segregated schools with Cherry Hill West students recently

"Our school wasn't segregated because the powers that be wanted it that way. Our parents requested it," said 81-year-old Henry Harris Sr. of Mullica Hill.

"Our parents requested it. They wanted to employ black teachers. Our teacher was very competent and prepared us so we could compete when we moved on to an integrated school," said Harris, the grandson of a former slave whose Virginia-born parents were among the first blacks to settle in Mullica Hill.

Harris lived in an integrated community but attended the all-black one-room High Street School through eighth grade before moving on to the integrated Glassboro High School.

Mullica Hill returned to an integrated system in 1953, shortly before the Brown decision.

Irene Hill-Smith, 77, of Mantua, also attended the High Street School.

"Our parents knew the white school system was not going to hire a black teacher. They built the (segregated) schools so we could hire our own. When we went to Glassboro High School, we didn't need any special tutoring," Hill-Smith said.

Added Payne, "We were up to the mark and in some cases beyond the mark."

He recalled that because there was not much money to pay the black teachers, they often depended on the local families for their meals.

Things were a little different for Shirley Davis, 51, a Mount Laurel resident and Cherry Hill fifth-grade teacher who grew up in the Deep South near New Orleans. There, communities as well as schools were segregated, and schools weren't fully integrated until 1969.

Davis, who comes from a long line of teachers, attended all-black schools through college but earned a graduate degree at an integrated university.

"I could have gone to the (elementary) school that was only five to six blocks from my house, but I didn't want to. There were still problems with racial prejudice, and black children were not being graded fairly," Davis said.

Still, she added, her school was never equal to the white ones.

"We didn't have the same facilities or the same supplies. We would get used books from the white school," she said.

Noted Hill-Smith, " 'Separate but equal' was all that and a bag of chips, we used to say. I'm just glad we were part of the revolution that changed it."

Payne added that his books were "raggedy" at the Richardson Avenue School, but his self-esteem was not.

"I've always been somebody. We knew that because we were taught that. We didn't need Jesse Jackson," he said.

CHHSW students said they learned a lot from the panel.

"I was impressed that they came from all-black schools and they had a positive experience, because I've been to integrated schools in Cherry Hill and never had that experience," said April Blandford, 17, a junior who belongs to the high school's African-American Culture Club.

Said freshman Elaine Pang, 14, "I wanted to know what it was like back then and was surprised to learn that even in New Jersey there was segregation."

Hill-Smith told the students why it was important for the adults to be there.

"If we don't prepare you to live in a diversified community, we haven't done our job," she said.

Reach Barbara S. Rothschild at (856) 486-2416 or brothschild@courierpostonline.com

I Remember

We are here today to honor the passing of a great woman and a great leader, but to me she was my godmother, my Aunt Irene. My father, the late John Hill was Aunt Irene's baby brother and it was fitting that she became godmother to his baby girl. I had the unique pleasure of growing up next door to Aunt Irene. She was my neighbor. We were like one big happy family.

I remember the many times when she would come over and sit at our dining room table and talk to my mom and dad about current events.

I remember the annual NAACP BBQs that she would have at her house. Hundreds of people would attend. Cars would be lined up and down Woodbury Glassboro Road. And of course, my beloved father, Chef John, did all the cooking so you know the food was good!!!

I remember her LOVE of all things girly girl. Aunt Irene loved fashion. She loved jewelry. She loved to shop. She was always sharp from the top of her head to the tip of her toes. Her canes were even sharp. Whenever she went out, even if it was just to go to Bernie's to buy a gallon of milk, she looked good.

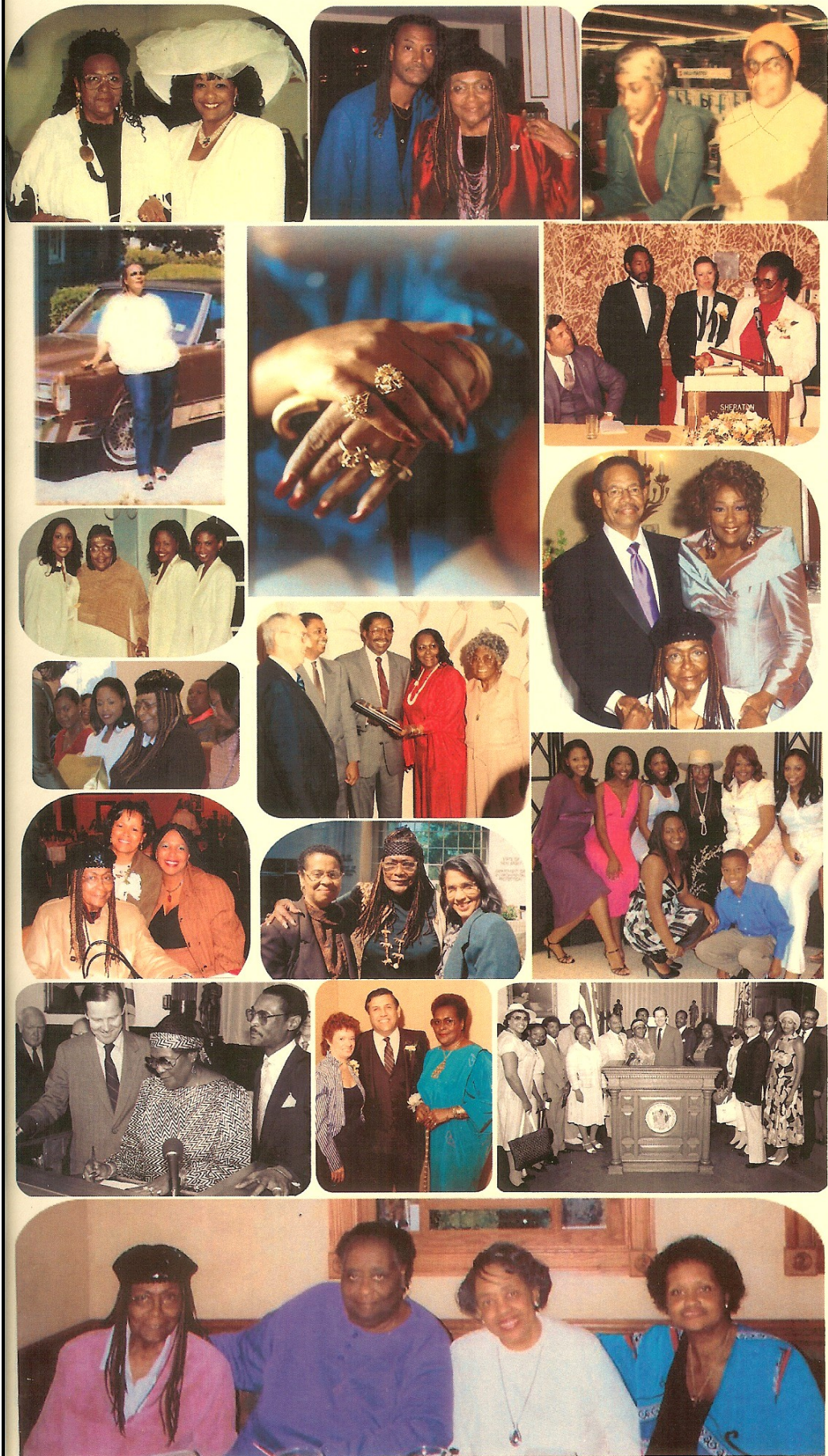
On the occasion of Aunt Irene's 80th birthday celebration I was asked to pay tribute to her with a rendition of Maya Angelou's Phenomenal Women. I want to end my reflections with the last verse of this poem:

Now you understand
Just why my head is not bowed.
I don't shout or jump about
Or have to talk real loud.
When you see me passing
It ought to make you proud.
I say,
It's in the click of my heels,
The bend of my hair,
the palm of my hand,
The need of my care,
'Cause I'm a woman
Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.

I love you Aunt Irene
Adrienne Hill



Irene Hill Smith with Family & Friends



A Moment of Reflection of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith (There Are Endless More to Be Told)

During the sixties, I recall her standing tall in the middle of Market & Broad St in Camden, quelling what we then called militants who were taking to the Streets protesting neglect of the poor folks living in Camden. Irene was not afraid to approach the protesters and was skillfully able to get them to calm down and relay their complaints. Surely her presence avoided what would have been a different outcome had she been not present. I attempted to have a conversation with her that day but she was clearly focusing on keeping the peace, viewing every angle around her. As a then Camden resident I was so proud to see her in action, knowing she was at that time

living in Deptford (Jericho) where I also came from. Leaders like James Farmer (Core) and I believe Martin Luther King, jr were also there. She was clearly in charge as folks begin to disperse that warm spring day. Watching her in action was truly amazing, a skill she often used over the years as a quiet dignified leader in her own right.

Also in the sixties, a Deptford resident relayed to me recently, that had it not been for Mrs. Hill-Smith, he would had remained a mechanic at his place of employment at Pep Boys-Woodbury. She approached him and asked if he wanted another position at the Store. He was reluctant but said yes to her not thinking a Black would ever become a salesman in the Store. She approached the Management and shortly after he became the first person of color to serve as a Salesman in the Woodbury Store. Within 2 years he became the Assistant Store Supervisor. He has long retired from the Store after spending almost 35 years there. He will tell anyone without hesitation without Irene Hill-Smith intervention he would not have been elevated in the Pep Boys Store. He does not know what she said but he knows he was able to earn a better living for his family because of her efforts.

In the 1987, due to a kitchen fire in my home I went to Woodbury Appliance to have a new stove delivered to my home. I wanted the new stove ASAP. I asked the Store Owner when would my selection be delivered and installed. The Owner responded there was someone more important who had to have their delivery first. I was upset with this response and asked him who this important person was, thinking "here we go again." He said when Irene Smith calls, we do not let any delivery supersede her request. I laughed and understood I had to wait until Irene's needs were addressed. Her history of tending to others finally was beginning to attempt to repay her for her generous gifts to humanity. There are countless stories to be told but one I am most proud of is to say I was there along with many others the day her Honorary Doctorate was bestowed at then Glassboro State College. It was such a heavenly day, one I will never forget. We were able to see the fruits of her labor materialized in a Title she wore so eloquently over the years. In closing because of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith there are many folks like myself who reaped many benefits in government and non-governmental entities. The lineage when traced will show even greater detail. I am truly thankful her family shared her with us.

**God Bless.
Jacquelyn Love
Former Councilwoman and
Former Deputy Mayor of Deptford Township, NJ**

A Granddaughter's Love

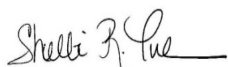
Greetings,

I am Shelbi Pullen, grand-daughter of Dr. Irene Hill Smith. Even as I type those words "I am the granddaughter of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith" a sense of pride overtakes me. To be in the lineage of a woman who was so influential, loving, and strong makes me feel like I won the genetic lottery!

My grandmother was an AMAZING woman who taught me numerous lessons that will stay with me for the rest of my life; so many that I can't list them all but the one that has shaped and molded me the most is to always trust in the Lord and in His Word. It was that trust that carried me through as we buried my grandmother. And in staying with that lesson I quote Proverbs 18:21 which is; the power of life and death lies in the tongue. And since I so believe that His Word is true I choose to call myself blessed and here's why:

- * I call myself blessed because I am the granddaughter of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
- * I call myself blessed because my grandmother changed the way we view this world
- * I call myself blessed because I have so many precious memories of time spent with my grandmother
- * I call myself blessed because my grandmother taught me that true beauty comes from within
- * I call myself blessed because my grandmother birthed the remarkable woman I get to call Mommy
- * I call myself blessed because my grandmother taught me to always stand up for what I believe in
- * I call myself blessed because my grandmother gave me the strength and confidence to accomplish my dreams
- * I call myself blessed because my grandmother's boldness runs all through my veins and if you ever had the opportunity to meet my grandmother then you should call yourself blessed too.

Sincerely,



DR. IRENE HILL-SMITH



A LEGEND IN HER OWN TIME

The Leader

Dr. Irene Hill-Smith Creating History

Marcher's Mark Anniversary

of Dr. King's Death

By Wm B. Long & Mary T. Wiser

Woodbury Times – April 4, 1969

City Police today blocked an attempt by several scores of King mourners from marching north on south Broad Street in Woodbury.

The marchers, carrying a large black and white photograph of the slain Civil Rights Leader, moved as far as the beginning of S. Broad Street when a phalanx of police blocked their path.

The marchers, who were lined up four or five abreast, were walking in the curb lane alongside of parked cars when police intercepted them. They had been given permission to march on the sidewalk, but not in the street.

Shortly after the procession was halted, the marchers agreed to walk on the sidewalk, instead of in the street, and the trek resumed.

Chief F. dean Kimmel confronted the marchers at 11:20 am, one-half block from the church as they stood in the right hand lane of Broad St.

He said, "You are not going to march in the street. No request was made, and you do not have a permit from the state".

Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith, State President and County NAACP President, lined up alongside the marchers. "You are attempting to disrupt an orderly march", she said. Kimmel said, "It seems you don't want a peaceful march". After a few moments, Mrs. Hill-Smith said, "You can call off your Gestapo, Hitler; we'll march on the sidewalk". The group preceded quietly up Broad St. to the Gloucester County Courthouse steps. Police allowed them to cross the street against the traffic light. Tonti, speaking to the gathering below, said, "I have a dream, as Dr. Martin Luther King had a dream. I have pledged a recommitment to the dream".

The march was scheduled to start at 10:30 am from the Bethlehem Baptist Church and proceed on Broad St. to the county courthouse where a memorial service was scheduled.

Mayor Robert E. Brumund withheld permission to conduct the march because, he said, "the time requested was not conducive to promoting the general welfare and safety of our community". Mrs. Hill-smith said, "the group would march with or without the Mayor's blessings". She invited William T. Cahill and Louis Tonti, opposing gubernatorial candidates to speak at the service. Tonti is chairman of the Garden State Parkway Authority.

City officials also were invited to take part "as they did last year at a memorial service following Dr. King's assassination". All Woodbury's regular and reserve policemen were on duty. The march is a culmination of a "Black Easter" boycott by the Glouces-

ter County NAACP to protest a junkyard and motor vehicle inspection station, both located in the black community of South Woodbury. The junkyard, owned by Conrad (Ted) Bundy was cleaned up Thursday, and the state has promised the relocation of the inspection station by 1971.

Mrs. Hill-Smith said, "1971 will not be soon enough", adding "South Woodbury is not going to spend another summer being polluted". Last Saturday's march to protest the two conditions ended in the arrest of Mrs. Hill-smith and her husband Howard, on charges of "interfering with the public". They were freed on bail for a hearing on Wednesday.

About 50 persons started last Saturday's march into Woodbury's business district. They carried signs saying "We Shall Overcome", and "Gloucester County NAACP". They marched single file up Broad St.

Contention arose when the police said the marchers were hampering traffic. An attempt was made by police to break the line so traffic congestion could be eased. Mrs. Hill-Smith stood in the street, "to protect the young marchers," and confronted police when they tried to move the marchers out of the way. At the corner of Broad St. and Barber Ave., she and her husband were arrested and taken to Gloucester County jail. The marchers followed the police van up Broad St. as tensions ran high. The smith's were jailed for two and one-half hours as demonstrators gathered on the courthouse steps. They were urged by Charles Lee, NACP education chairman, to be peaceful, be quiet. At 3pm the Smith's were taken to Woodbury police headquarters. Mrs. Hill-smith was charged with resisting arrest and loud and abusive language. They posted \$250.00 bail and were released.

Today, about 60 persons gathered at the Bethlehem Baptist Church. Black armbands in commemoration of Dr. King's death were passed out. The marchers were quiet, talking in subdued tones. Mrs. Hill-Smith was using a cane as she walked around greeting people. Two Woodbury policemen were stationed at the corner of Mantua Ave., and Carpenter St. Kimmel and Brumund sat in a patrol car on the corner. Occasionally, Kimmel would walk over to the two policemen and converse quietly. The officers were not wearing helmets. A number of white persons joined the group. David Frisbey, head of the community Action Council was present, as were a number of county NAACP officers. Fifteen minutes after the scheduled start of the march, the group had permission to use the courthouse for the memorial service, but added it would not be allowed to march in the street. He said, "The marchers could use the sidewalks".

When Mrs. Hill-Smith was informed of this she smiled and said, "Do what the spirit says do." The center of town was quiet and several merchants said business had returned to normal following last week's march.

*





My Aunt

Although it seemed 100 years ago, I can remember when I was naive enough to believe that a man's word was his bond, and a hand shake meant something, When words spoken were true, and without hidden meanings, or just outright lies. Often times my Aunt Irene needed a ride to a meeting and since I still believe that she got me my first well paying job, in the field of Engineering, it was an obligation I looked forward to. We had conversations that illuminated some of the dark and miserable thoughts that permeated throughout South Jersey and beyond. Some of these rides I would not take during daylight but she feared no-one and traveled at will through and into areas beneath the Mason-Dixon Line where it was obvious that if the car broke down there would be no welcome mat to give shelter or call for help, (pre cell phone days). She would not permit me to attend these meetings and promptly sent me back to safety against my will, but you did not argue with Auntie, for she had a way to let you know when to obey, and end a discussion. As it turned out most of those meeting were pivotal and timely to schedule and arrange for sit-ins and marches that took place a short time afterward. I got an up close and personal view of a strong woman who believed with all her being that we are all equal and should be treated as such, that if going to jail meant that anyone could sit at a restaurant and be served, politely, that anyone could drive through the city of Woodbury without being profiled by the unfortunately all white organization whose idealistic mantra was to protect and serve.

I had a firsthand view of inequality and its eventual decline due mainly to the efforts of my Aunt. We had conversations that changed my life and thought processes regarding my fellow man. Even though I was born and raised in a town with 4 Black families I learned and held the fact that "Black is beautiful" and to be appreciated and celebrated by my equals as well as my adversaries. Thanks to the teachings of my Aunt my children, as well as other members of our family, have learned to take on responsibilities rather than shy away, or pass the buck. Because of her, there is a generation ready willing and able to take the baton and run the good race, truly the Lady, the Leader, the Legend.

George V. Hill, Jr (nephew)

A CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER WHO HAS NOT BEEN TO JAIL, IS NO CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER

Bob Shyrock-Woodbury Daily News

April 8, 1969 p.4

Thirty-five years after she sat in a cell in Gloucester County Jail while Bobby Kennedy was being assassinated, the phone still rings non-stop in Dr. Irene Hill-Smith's Mantua Township condo. "The Hungry, Jobless and poor have no color in 2003, says Hill-Smith. "People call me who need to access the system – at least 20 percent of them white. They want somebody to feel their pain. "And I help them sometimes by just listening".

Gloucester County's highest-profile civil rights activist and firebrand is in her 40th year as president of the NAACP chapter here. She is 78 and still waling gingerly with the help of a cane. She says her limp results from being dragged by a policeman during a 1960's march in Woodbury to protest the state's car inspection station being placed in the heart of the south Woodbury black community.

"But with all the pain I was in I don't remember the name of the policeman who dragged me," Hill-Smith says, "I was never angry or bitter."

With her trademark spectacular wardrobe, jewelry. Stylist coiffure and long nails, Hill-Smith remains recognizable in the county, as well as Freeholder Director-State Senator Steven Sweeney. Despite continued work in civil rights matters and a position on the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority – she's the only remaining charter appointee- she is more in the background today, which is her preference.

"Have I mellowed? Some think so. But I haven't lost the fight. I'm still committed, and I am not crazy." Hill-Smith grew up in Mullica Hill, one of eight children of Charles Hill Sr. and Sarah. She was the only girl so her seven brothers protected her. "I was the princess", she laughs. Hill-Smith had three children –Bishop S. Terri Smith, ordained in Sugerland, Texas; Last November, Micheal who lives at home; and Michelle who died five years ago. She also has seven grandchildren and three great greats and admits "I spoil them".

Growing up in Mullica Hill I didn't know any segregation in High Street School – eight grades in one room – before busing to Glassboro where she was a member of the GHS Class of 1942, and played six-girl basketball. She attended Virginia State College, wanting to teach, but married Howard Smith in 1944. Hill-Smith received an honorary doctoral degree from Glassboro State College in 1968 and says of that "I've never come down off the mountain."

The first time I was aware of prejudice came when I was 14 or 15, and people who lived across the street from my aunt and uncle burned a cross," Hill-Smith says. While attending Virginia State in Petersburg, she attended her first county NAACP meeting and left that night as secretary, a role she held until 1960. The county organization elected her president in 1963, and 40 years later she still holds the title. But that only scrapes the surface of her work with NAACP. Hill-Smith served 22 years as state president (1965-1987) and also went on the national board in 65. She was re-elected 17 times.

Hill-Smith earned her reputation of being a tough civil rights leader. In 1968, she led an NAACP protest after a teacher was accused of calling a black student a name at Paulsboro High School. With black students encamped in the auditorium, Hill-Smith when to a fast food restaurant to buy them lunch but failed to sign-in when she returned, a mistake she admits. She was arrested and spent three days in jail. "A civil rights leader who hasn't been to jail is no civil rights leader," she says. Go tell it on the mountain, Irene Smith's in jail. She signed herself out because she was afraid things would get out of hand.



Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
&
Eunice Kennedy



Boycott in Woodbury

Woodbury Times-March 3, 1969

Woodbury Times-March 28, 1969

In March, of 1969, Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith, president of the state and county NAACP sparked a boycott in the city of Woodbury, N.J. in reference to a junkyard and inspection station that was located in the heart of the black community. The protest was initiated by local residents who complained to the branch of the NAACP, which was led by Irene Hill-Smith. Both businesses were considered to be eyesores and health hazard to the community. Smith, along with sixteen others went to the city council and met with the mayor and council. At the time, the mayor was Robert E. Brumund. Statements made by Smith that were directed at local officials, Board of education, County Courts, the Woodbury Times and then City Solicitor, Robert E. Boakes sparked a controversy. The mayor, Brumund and other members of city council attempted to defend the statements made by Smith and the two issues of the salvage yard and inspection station. The mayor insisted that the distasteful conditions were held up by Appeals pending in Appellate Court. At the meeting with City Council and various other leaders, Smith delivered an ultimatum, due to the Mayor and City Council sitting in silence.

During he meeting, Smith advised them that if the salvage yard and inspection station weren't removed in fourteen days, a boycott would take place in Woodbury. The text of the telegram to Mayor Brumund read: In light of the fact that you as Mayor and members of City Council of Woodbury have been unable and unwilling to rectify the deplorable conditions of the Bundny's junkyard in the heart of the Black Community, the Gloucester County Branch of NAACP will ask that all Black citizens and White citizens who believe in our cause not to shop or buy in the city of Woodbury. Smith also threatened a "Black Easter", unless the demands were met. Black Easter meant massive picketing in the streets of Woodbury during the Easter shopping time. Smith also criticized the city council for only having one black city employee. Smith 's ultimatum sparked the following reply from the mayor: "I must point out that you and the Mayor and the Council are all subject to the jurisdiction of the courts and we must await their decision. I put the NAACP and you as President on notice to desist in your plans to boycott and picket in the city of Woodbury. I do this for the welfare and protection of all the citizens of the city of Woodbury.



BOYCOTTING PEACEFULLY

to draw attention to
problems in
South Woodbury .

Residents in front of
Woodbury's businesses.
1969



NAACP PRESIDENT TO SPEAK HERE

Newark Evening News

February 7, 1968 p.35

Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith, New Jersey president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, will speak tomorrow before the Newark NAACP in the Continental Ballroom, 982 Broad Street, Newark. Mrs. Smith will discuss plans for the NAACP's national convention in Atlantic City June 24 to 29, 1968. She will also report effort on efforts to obtain openings for nonwhites in the building trades.



WOMAN SEEK NAACP STATE PRESIDENT

Newark Evening News

May 7, 1965 p.33

Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith, president of the Gloucester County Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, today announced her candidacy for the president of the State Conference of NAACP Branches.

Mrs. Smith, who lives in Wenonah, made the announcement at a press conference in the Newark NAACP's new membership headquarters, 929 Broad Street Newark. The state organization represents 18,250 members in 41 branches.

Mrs. Smith who was on the NAACP's state board of directors, has charged the organization with not given the kind of dynamic leadership that is so terribly required during these critical times. She has also presented an eight point platform calling for statewide campaign against discrimination in education, housing and employment. And for increased emphasis on youth work, membership recruitment and publicity. The state NAACP should have at least 50,000 members, she said.

Mrs. Smith also urged the NAACP to take a more active role in the antipoverty program, because in many areas there is evidence that the poverty program is used for political purposes.



Demonstrations In The Schools

DEMONSTRATIONS AT DELSEA BRING CHANGES

Woodbury Times

Gloucester County Times Article

May 15, 1969

Many demonstrations and protests were conducted in Gloucester County along with Irene Hill-Smith, the NAACP and others. In May 1969, Smith was involved in another demonstration at Delsea Regional High School, Franklin Township, in reference to alleged racial discrimination at the school. Mrs. Smith announced that she had previously asked the Board of Education's Department of Equal Opportunity to investigate charges of "racism" and "acts of discrimination" at the school. Forty-five marchers, including students marched to the front door of Delsea High School. Superintendent of Schools, Robert J. Gerardi, informed the students that they faced a three day suspension if they attempted to enter the building to attend classes. Charles Lee, NAACP county chairman from Deptford Township confronted the board seeking student admission. The administrator informed them that students had violated school policy on demonstrations. Forty-five students were suspended for forming the demonstration. Students wanted more participation in sports, various scholarship programs, black role models within the school, such as a black guidance counselor and teachers. Students also requested the lists to be put in writing from Mrs. Delores Copeland, Chairman of the Franklin Township Community Action Committee, and the Black Cultural Committee, Which consists of Delsea Students. As a result of the demands, Black History will be taught along with U.S. History and a separate elective course, "the study of Minority Cultures". The Issue of the lack of minority educators in the school system had already been addressed. School officials have attempted to recruit black teachers, but due to the lack of qualified minorities, only one application was received.



ARRESTED PLANNED – MRS. SMITH’S

**Woodbury Daily Times
Monday, March 31, 1969**

Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith, state president and county president of the National Association of the Advancement of Colored People, Sunday charged that her arrest on Saturday, and that of her husband were “planned and staged”.

“Why did they (police) arrest only us, when there were others in the street”, she asked. Mrs. Smith was talking about a demonstration on Woodbury’s Broad Street, part of Saturday. “It was planned” she declared. “On the corner- and not just by chance – were Freeholder James Turner, Martin Herman, attorney for the Police Benevolence Association, and Woodbury Councilman Paul Budd”. “And waiting around the corner was the paddy wagon,” she said.

Explains Actions

“Police seem to think if they cut off the head the body will die”, she said. “Not so with us, if you cut off our head, the body goes into action”, she added. Explaining her actions on Saturday when police made the arrest, Mrs. Smith said. “We were only flanking the young people as they crossed the intersections because we felt responsible for their safety. Earlier several drivers had tried to run some of them down in the street”, she said. The young marchers, about 50 of them, had paraded single file up and down Broad Street in support of a boycott of Woodbury business. The demonstration and boycott were waged because of dissatisfaction over a junkyard and motor vehicle inspection station located in South Woodbury.

Mrs. Smith said that when she was arrested she was “dragged” into the police wagon. She claimed her shoes were torn and her heel scraped.

Had Back Surgery

“Several persons, including my husband and brother in-law told the police not to drag me because of my bad back, and I was not wearing my back brace”, she said. Mrs. Smith had several operations in her back, Stemming from an injury suffered in an automobile accident. Mrs. Smith’s doctor was called to the jail.

The arraignment later, the NAACP president said, “was a mockery”. “Woodbury certainly is the Mississippi of the north”, she added. Mrs. Smith said she was referring to the lack of a judge bail being set by the court clerk, the police chief leading the arraignment proceedings, and the insistence of a cash bail. “Not having served as judge before”, Mrs. Smith said, “Chief Kimmel didn’t ask if I wanted to plead guilty to the charges”.

Mrs. Smith denied a rumor that she had planned to retire because of her back injury, but was asked to stay on as president by the black community. “I’m not ready to retire,” She added. “I don’t quit in the middle of a war, and this is a war”.

Boys and Girls Club opens doors

By Theresa Katalinas

tkatalinas@njnewsco.com

PAULSBORO — After wiping windows, scrubbing floors and cleaning grimy bathrooms, Dana Sizemore seemed glad to shelve her soiled clothes and slash through the last barrier to a new youth club.

The Paulsboro High School senior joined a handful of community members Wednesday morning with shears in hand for the ribbon-cutting of the new Paulsboro Boys and Girls Club.

Sizemore said it felt good to walk into the freshly painted center on Penn Line Road and see its potential for area third- through 12th-graders.

"I think the kids in this community really don't have a lot to do," Sizemore said after the brief ceremony. "This is a safe, clean, healthy environment."

Bob Fredrick, club executive director, said the facility is one of 3,000 Boys and Girls Clubs throughout the country and added that it filled a community void.

"You need a place for young people to go in a positive environment," Fredrick said. "We hope that (children) understand that this is their club."

Mayor John Burzichelli said the 5,000-square-foot building — which was once home to a Mobil Credit Union and Pegasus Club — is a per-



Staff photo by Chris Rossi

Trene Hill-Smith, (left), retired Superior Court assignment judge, Samuel DeSimone, Assemblyman John Burzichelli, U.S. Sen. Jon Corzine and State Sen. Stephen Sweeney help cut the ribbon to the Boys and Girls Club in Paulsboro.

fect location because of its history.

While Burzichelli said the borough initially lacked funding to renovate the structure, he said hard work and contributions of \$140,000 from the private and public sectors enabled its restoration and the addition of a handicapped-accessible entrance.

"This project is going to pay dividends for generations," Burzichelli said to several dozen spectators. "You can imagine the benefit."

He said basement repairs will cost an additional

\$60,000 and will begin soon. The basement will house dance classes and martial arts, while the main area will feature a computer lab, arts and crafts area, television, video games and a variety of games.

Judy MacKenzie, first vice president of the board of directors for the Paulsboro Boys and Girls Club, said later construction plans include a multi-lane swimming pool and gymnasium. She said work cannot begin until funding is secured and added that youths may not be

Joining the Paulsboro Boys and Girls Club

- Annual membership is available for youth in third- through 12-grade.
- Third- and fourth-graders can sign up Monday from 5 to 7 p.m.; fifth and sixth-graders can sign up Dec. 30 from 5 to 7 p.m.
- Membership fees are \$10 per year or \$5 for the first 300 youth who join.
- The club will be open Tuesdays and Thursdays in January from 3 to 6 p.m. for children in third- through sixth-grade.
- For more information call the Paulsboro Boys and Girls Club at 423-9322.

able to take the plunge for three years.

U.S. Sen. Jon Corzine, D-N.J., also attended the ribbon-cutting and said the Boys and Girls Club represents the "soul of America."

"What a glorious place for kids to come together," Corzine said. "We have a great nation because we are one ... when we do work together great things can happen."

Gloucester County Freeholder Director Stephen Sweeney said he was glad the county was able to play a role in the club.

"There is hope in Paulsboro," Sweeney said. "They're kids and if you give them a chance ... watch what they can do."

Boys & Girls Club opens in Paulsboro

By STEVE LEVINE
Courier-Post Staff

PAULSBORO

With the snip of colorful children's safety scissors, officials opened a world of opportunity to future generations during a special ribbon-cutting ceremony Wednesday morning.

Gathering at 916 Pennline Road, dozens of officials and guests celebrated the dedication of the Boys & Girls Club of Paulsboro. It is a project made possible through the resources of federal and county agencies, corporate donations and sweat equity.

Planned as an alternative after-school resource for borough children, the club was designed to be a safe zone where kids are not threatened by drugs or violence, a place to do homework, play games or surf the Web.

"This is a healthy, safe environment for kids to come after school," said Devon Sizemore, 14, a freshman at Paulsboro High School.

She and her sister, Dana, helped clean the building —

Where to call

■ The club will hold a membership sign-up from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday and Dec. 30. Membership dues are \$10 per year, but Comcast cable will pay half the fee for the first 300 members. For information, call (856) 423-9322 or visit <http://bgclubpaulsboro.org>

a former banquet hall and, later, credit union — before it could be opened to the public.

The club is one of more than 3,000 affiliated but individually run Boys & Girls Clubs nationwide.

The club will open on a trial basis two days a week starting in January for children in grades three, four, five and six. Its hours will expand after an initial run and, eventually, to students in grades three to 12, officials said.

Attending Wednesday's ribbon cutting were numerous dignitaries, including Sen. Jon Corzine, D-N.J.,



Steve Granados of Paulsboro, wearing a 'Paulsboro: Home of the Real Jersey Girl' T-shirt, talks to Sen. Jon Corzine, D-N.J., during a special ribbon-cutting ceremony Wednesday morning for the new Boys & Girls Club in Paulsboro.

AL SCHELL
Courier Post

state Sen. Stephen Sweeney, Mayor John Burzichelli and Councilman Joe Kidd.

Sweeney, who is also director of the Gloucester County freeholder board, said a county contribution of \$66,000 in April to the club was money well spent.

"Paulsboro is a good community, a hard-working community," he said. "Give these kids a chance and watch what they can do."

Robert Fredrick, a long-time wrestling coach and athletic director at Paulsboro High School who is

now the club's executive director, said as funds become available there are plans to build an indoor swimming pool and basketball court.

"The facility is still a work in progress," he said.

The large game room has polished hardwood floors, leather sofas and chairs, football and air hockey tables.

There is a computer room with 10 terminals, a large multi-purpose room, a kitchen, and tables and chairs for homework and

See OPENING, Page 7



Coretta Scott-King and Irene Hill-Scott

Marcher's Mark Anniversary of Dr. King's Death

By Wm B. Long & Mary T. Wiser

Woodbury Times – April 4, 1969

City Police today blocked an attempt by several scores of King mourners from marching north on south Broad Street in Woodbury.

The marchers, carrying a large black and white photograph of the slain Civil Rights Leader, moved as far as the beginning of S. Broad Street when a phalanx of police blocked their path.

The marchers, who were lined up four or five abreast, were walking in the curb lane alongside of parked cars when police intercepted them. They had been given permission to march on the sidewalk, but not in the street.

Shortly after the procession was halted, the marchers agreed to walk on the sidewalk, instead of in the street, and the trek resumed.

Chief F. dean Kimmel confronted the marchers at 11:20 am, one-half block from the church as they stood in the right hand lane of Broad St.

He said, "You are not going to march in the street. No request was made, and you do not have a permit from the state".

Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith, State President and County NAACP President, lined up alongside the marchers. "You are attempting to disrupt an orderly march", she said. Kimmel said, "It seems you don't want a peaceful march". After a few moments, Mrs. Hill-Smith said, "You can call off your Gestapo, Hitler; we'll march on the sidewalk". The group preceded quietly up Broad St. to the Gloucester County Courthouse steps. Police allowed them to cross the street against the traffic light. Tonti, speaking to the gathering below, said, "I have a dream, as Dr. Martin Luther King had a dream. I have pledged a recommitment to the dream".

The march was scheduled to start at 10:30 am from the Bethlehem Baptist Church and proceed on Broad St. to the county courthouse where a memorial service was scheduled.

Mayor Robert E. Brumund withheld permission to conduct the march because, he said, "the time requested was not conducive to promoting the general welfare and safety of our community". Mrs. Hill-smith said, "the group would march with or without the Mayor's blessings". She invited William T. Cahill and Louis Tonti, opposing gubernatorial candidates to speak at the service. Tonti is chairman of the Garden State Parkway Authority.

City officials also were invited to take part "as they did last year at a memorial service following Dr. King's assassination". All Woodbury's regular and reserve policemen were on duty. The march is a culmination of a "Black Easter" boycott by the Gloucester County NAACP to protest a junkyard and motor vehicle inspection station, both located in the black community of South Woodbury. The junkyard, owned by Conrad (Ted) Bundy was cleaned up Thursday, and the state has promised the relocation of

the inspection station by 1971.

Mrs. Hill-Smith said, "1971 will not be soon enough", adding "South Woodbury is not going to spend another summer being polluted". Last Saturday's march to protest the two conditions ended in the arrest of Mrs. Hill-Smith and her husband Howard, on charges of "interfering with the public". They were freed on bail for a hearing on Wednesday.

About 50 persons started last Saturday's march into Woodbury's business district. They carried signs saying "We Shall Overcome", and "Gloucester County NAACP". They marched single file up Broad St.

Contention arose when the police said the marchers were hampering traffic. An attempt was made by police to break the line so traffic congestion could be eased. Mrs. Hill-Smith stood in the street, "to protect the young marchers," and confronted police when they tried to move the marchers out of the way. At the corner of Broad St. and Barber Ave., she and her husband were arrested and taken to Gloucester County jail. The marchers followed the police van up Broad St. as tensions ran high. The Smith's were jailed for two and one-half hours as demonstrators gathered on the courthouse steps. They were urged by Charles Lee, NAACP education chairman, to be peaceful, be quiet. At 3pm the Smith's were taken to Woodbury police headquarters. Mrs. Hill-Smith was charged with resisting arrest and loud and abusive language. They posted \$250.00 bail and were released.

Today, about 60 persons gathered at the Bethlehem Baptist Church. Black armbands in commemoration of Dr. King's death were passed out. The marchers were quiet, talking in subdued tones. Mrs. Hill-Smith was using a cane as she walked around greeting people. Two Woodbury policemen were stationed at the corner of Mantua Ave., and Carpenter St. Kimmel and Brumund sat in a patrol car on the corner. Occasionally, Kimmel would walk over to the two policemen and converse quietly. The officers were not wearing helmets. A number of white persons joined the group. David Frisbey, head of the community Action Council was present, as were a number of county NAACP officers. Fifteen minutes after the scheduled start of the march, the group had permission to use the courthouse for the memorial service, but added it would not be allowed to march in the street. He said, "The marchers could use the sidewalks".

When Mrs. Hill-Smith was informed of this she smiled and said, "Do what the spirit says do." The center of town was quiet and several merchants said business had returned to normal following last week's march.

*





Dr. Irene Hill Smith and Governor Corzine

Amazing Woman

On Wednesday, March 23, 2011, I googled the name Dr. Irene Hill-Smith for the very first time. Hundreds of search results appeared. The first article described her as fierce. The second hailed her a pioneer. Every article spoke of her activism, with writer after writer heaping honors upon Dr. Hill-Smith for her service to the community. They seemed to be fascinated, mesmerized by the woman they called a trailblazer. After 34 years of calling her Mom-Mom, I can tell you first hand that their adoration was well placed and richly deserved.

When I was a little girl, I was fascinated with anything involving my Mom-Mom. I loved everything about her and I do mean everything. The rhythm of her voice when she told me stories about her trips to Africa, the bangles that clanged together with every flip of the wrist as they shimmied up and down her beautiful brown arms, the big golden rings that sparkled in the light as she waved her hands, using them to help narrate her adventures. Mom-Mom was amazing to me. As a child, she was the closest thing to legendary I knew.

As I became an adult, my Mom-Mom shared different types of stories with me. Stories of her struggles during times of segregation, lessons of her compassion for people – all people, regardless of race, color or religion, trials she faced as she fought for equality. And as she spoke, this time I listened with a different sort of amazement. An humble amazement that comes from knowing that my grandmother joined hands with trailblazers known and unknown and paved the way for her grandchildren to be college graduates, business owners and community leaders. An amazement that comes with seeing how those same qualities that captivated me in my youth still captivate me today. The same voice that told me stories of Africa taught me to speak my mind even when my voice is shaking. Those same strong brown arms taught me to embrace life and all the obstacles and opportunities she has to offer. With the same hands my grandmother used to describe her journeys through life, she pointed to me and said that I should never be afraid to take a chance on what I believe in. This was the grandmother I knew. The woman so many others respected. The legacy I'm proud to bear.

Two months later, on the evening of Monday, May 23, 2011, I googled the name Dr. Irene Hill-Smith for only the second time. Over 460,000 search results appeared, each one paying tribute to a legendary woman whose strength of character knew no limits and whose legacy will outlive us all. Read just one article and you'll know for yourself what I told you from the start, that my Mom-Mom, Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, was an amazing woman upon whom honor is well placed and richly deserved.

T'Nil Pullen (Granddaughter)



Awards, Doctrine & Honors

**Dr. Irene Hill-Smith commitment to the community and
Civil Rights includes but not limited to
appointments/elections to the following boards**

- President of the Gloucester County NAACP 1963
- President of the New Jersey State Conference NAACP 1966-1984
- National Vice President of the NAACP 1967-1979
- National Board of Directors of the NAACP 1966-1984
- NAACP National Housing Corporation Board Member
- Commissioner of the New Jersey State Advisory Committee. United States Commission on Civil Rights
- Board of Trustees– New Jersey Academy Aquatic
- Director of Cooper Ferry Development Association
- Member of the State of New Jersey Governor’s Academy
- Member of the Gloucester County Department of Social Services Allocations Committee
- Member of the Gloucester County Work Force Investment Board
- Chairperson-Gloucester County Disabled Persons Advisory Committee
- Board Member—The Boys and Girls Club of Gloucester County
- Served as member of the Steering committee for former United States Senator Jon Corzine
- Founding Board Member of the Casino Reinvestment Authority, appointed by Governor Tom Kean reappointed by Governors Florio, Whitman and James McGreevey.
- Member of the Advisory Committee, Cable Television in Gloucester County
- Founding member of SCOP (now Tri-County) anti-poverty organization serving Gloucester, Cumberland and Salem Counties.
- Member of the Woodbury Choral Society-giving scholarships to deserving minority students

Irene Hill-Smith Doctor of Humanities

Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith, a native of Mullica Hill, New Jersey and a lifetime resident of South Jersey, recently complete her term as president of the New Jersey State Conference of the NAACP.

Completed her term as president of the New Jersey State Conference of the NAACP. She also served as president of the Gloucester County Branch of the NAACP. Mrs. Hill-Smith achievements have been recognized by meritorious awards and citations from a number of professional, fraternal and citations from a number of professional, fraternal and civic organizations, including WHO'S WHO IN BLACK AMERICA.

For 18 years, Mrs. Hill-Smith served as a member of the National Board of Directors of the NAACP. For 12 years, she was one of six national vice presidents of the NAACP; and since 1972, she has been a member of the board of directors of the National Housing Corporation. Mrs. Hill-Smith was appointed by Governor Thomas Kean as a commissioner with the Casino Reinvestment Development authority, a commissioner of the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Commission, and a member of the citizens Advisory Committee of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities.

A pioneer in the fight for civil rights, Mrs. Hill-Smith experienced unjust cruelty during her early years when her children were growing up; her home was threatened many times with fire bombs and similar atrocities.

Times were not easy for Mrs. Irene Hill-Smith when, in her own words, she chose "to continue to carry the banner of racial justice and equality...."She was always willing to give up her personal freedom on short notice, to protect the freedom of others. She strongly believes in the dignity of all mankind. She has always been influenced by her strong spiritual faith in forces which are far greater than mankind can possible fathom.

***Dr. Herman James – President of Glassboro State Teachers College,
now Rowan University***

First Black Woman Is Appointed To Key Civil Rights Post For N.J. She's A Longtime Naacp Leader and Community Activist. Her Agenda Has Been One Of Action.

June 02, 1994 | By Annette John-Hall, INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

She has been dragged, threatened, arrested and jailed. She says she has enough civil rights in her head to fill a book.

And so Irene Hill-Smith's recent appointment to head the New Jersey Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights came as no great surprise to the people who know the NAACP leader and community activist.

What's surprising is that Hill-Smith is the first African American woman ever appointed to the post.

"She is important to civil rights in this area, no doubt about it," said Gary Hunter, a history professor at Rowan College who is writing a book about the history of African Americans in South Jersey. "She took the (NAACP) through its most critical years. She's argued with the Klan, she's held counter-demonstrations. She was all over the place."



Honored for their service to community

Published: Tuesday, **March 04, 2008, 8:00 AM Updated: Tuesday, March 04, 2008, 8:11 AM**

By **Carly Q. Romalino/Gloucester County Times** Gloucester County Times
Follow

^ **By Senitra Horbrook shorbrook@sjnewsco.com**

The awards, honors and recognition come often for Dr. Irene Hill-Smith and Theresa Jones, two women who have spent much of their lives serving the community.

"Every (award) is important if people care enough," Hill-Smith said. "Until I moved I didn't really realize how many there were. Where I live you can't hang them on the wall, but I thank God that somebody cares."

Hill-Smith, of Deptford, is a well-known civil rights activist whose advocacy has taken her from the "jailhouse to the White House." Jones, also of Deptford, has spent the past 15 years feeding the homeless and poor in Camden as coordinator of the Cathedral Kitchen meal program along with her husband Clyde who is the Cathedral Kitchen cook.



Staff photo by Jillian Bauer
Theresa Jones (Left) and Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
are recipients of the Sixth Annual Candace
Women of Achievement Award.

While the two ladies had previously never met or heard of each other, they are both recipients of the Sixth Annual Candace Women of Achievement Award, presented by the Southern New Jersey Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women. Named after the ancient Ethiopian title for queens, the Candace (pronounced can DAY cee) awards are given to distinguished minority women who have made a major contribution to the African American community through their achievement, character and service.

"The significance is to give recognition to the women, especially in the month of March ... because it's women's history month," said Lillie Wilson, chapter president. "It's our responsibility to recognize women who are helping sustain communities and rebuilding them."

Eighteen women were nominated for seven Candace different awards. The seven recipients, who were chosen by a selection committee, will be presented awards during a ceremony and luncheon open to the public at Adelphia Restaurant in Deptford on March 29. Hill-Smith is receiving the award for community service while Jones will receive the religious leader award.

"I was amazed by it all because the things I do is a daily way of life," said Jones, 69. "You never think about who's looking or who's watching or what kind of impact you're making on somebody else's life."

The importance of serving the community is something that was instilled in Jones at an early age.

"I came up in a home where my parents and grandparents were always taking in people, like my brothers' friends in the service. It was just something you did, like breathing. It just became so natural to you," she said. "I just kept thinking about the power of one voice. You say 'Well what can one person do?' I found out the power of one voice is very powerful. You just do what you're called to do."

After her husband passed away in the 1980s, Jones decided to open up her home to foster children. She has fostered dozens of children over the years and has adopted three of them and raised them to adulthood, in addition to her five natural children.

"My first husband died in 1986. It was just me and my youngest son at home. I had a big house. He had friends that were adopted and they would be at the house with my son," she said. "It was always that extra plate at the table. I said I think I'd like to be a foster parent."

Wilson said she had not yet met Jones, but after speaking to the members of the community she knew that Jones was worthy of a Candace award.

"We talked to other folks in the community and she has given an abundance of service in that area. She has worked tirelessly for many years helping folks in that community," Wilson said. "She prays and listens to the folks and listens to their troubles. She has mentored many folks from drug and alcohol addictions and helped them be more productive members of the community."

Wilson was familiar with the work of Hill-Smith and has met her at a few community events.

"She's a world renowned civil rights leader, activist and humanitarian," Wilson said. "She is also an esteemed person in her field and she has graced many halls of justices, dignified the tables of Kings and Queens and provided counsel to several presidents on sensitive civil rights issues."

Hill-Smith was elected president of the county's NAACP branch in 1963, was state president from 1966-84, and national vice president from 1967-79. She also was invited to the White House Conference on Civil Rights by President Johnson in 1966. She has traveled around the world and met the heads of government in many African and European countries.

Hill-Smith, 82, currently keeps busy as Chairman of the Gloucester County Office for the Disabled and board member of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority in Atlantic City.

"Everything I have been blessed to do is very important because it has made a difference in somebody's life," she said.



2008 Excellence in Housing Award

On September 24, 2008, three of the member organizations of the New Jersey Advocacy Network to End Homelessness, earned accolades at the 2008 Governor's Conference on Housing and Community Development. The winners were Bob Guarasci, Founder and President of [New Jersey Community Development Cor-](#)



The winner of the award for Outstanding Integration of Supportive Housing with Community Revitalization went to the [Center For Family Services](#), Inc. for [Camden Dreams](#). Camden Dreams is a supportive housing project that provides housing for youth aging out of foster care and homeless youth. The project included the renovation of three abandoned buildings in the historic Cooper Plaza Neighborhood of Camden and incorporated green features, including solar electric heating and air conditioning system. The Center provides the structure needed to assist the residents with their basic needs while providing supportive counseling as well as vocational training.

The Special Achievement Award was presented to Robert Guarasci, Founder and President of [New Jersey Community Development Corporation](#). Guarasci was honored for his tireless dedication to providing affordable housing to those who need it the most.

This year alone, New Jersey CDC has completed a 15-unit project for the mentally ill and homeless, 12 units of supportive housing with counseling and life-skill services, a six-unit home for youth aging out of foster care, and a student community charter school.

In addition, receiving the second honor for Best Innovative Housing Partnership was presented to the Reformed Church of Highland Park Affordable Housing Corporation and [Making It Possible To End Homelessness](#) (MIPH) for their partnership in the development of Irayna Court. Located in Highland Park, Irayna Court is a permanent housing project for young women aging out of foster care that would otherwise be homeless. Before Irayna Court, there was no project located in Middlesex County to serve this population. Andrea

Global Outreach

Delegate to the first African-American Summit on the development of Sub-Saharan African

Dr Hill-Smith was a delegate to the first African-American Summit on the development of Sub-Saharan African and the support for the Region. The purpose of the Summit, convened in Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire in 1991, historic and unprecedented with other friends of Africa, was to reestablish the bond of togetherness that has not existed since Africans were uprooted and relocated as slaves to America and the rest of the world several centuries ago. Also, to find ways to accelerate the development process of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Dr. Hill-Smith attended the summits in Libreville, Gabon, South Africa/Zimbabwe, Dakar, Senegal and Accra, Ghana, Nigeria, Monrovia, Liberia, and Loma, T

The Chairman, Founder and Conveyer for the African-American Summit was the Late Rev. Leon Sullivan. The last Summit in July 2002 was held in Abuja, Nigeria. The work of the Summit is continuing under the leadership of Hope Sullivan, daughter of the late Dr. Sullivan, as Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

Also serving on the Board at the time with Dr. Hill-Smith was noted Attorney Johnny Cochran (deceased) and President William Jefferson Clinton. The Executive Director is Ambassador Andrew Young.





Press Release

Media Announcement

The Gloucester County NAACP Branch 2345
Freedom Fund Image Award in the Category of Civil Rights
will be named in the Honor of
Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

The Legend
The Loss of an Icon



Civil rights icon Irene Hill-Smith dies at 85

Published: Tuesday, March 29, 2011, 6:30 AM Updated: Tuesday, March 29, 2011, 6:43 AM
by **Jim Six/South Jersey Newspaper**

Irene Hill-Smith, one of Gloucester County's most prominent civil rights activists of the 20th century, has died. Her niece, Karen Hill, said Hill-Smith suffered a stroke Wednesday and never regained consciousness before dying Sunday in Thomas Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia.

Hill-Smith, a Mullica Hill native and longtime resident of Deptford Township and Wenonah, was 85.

She joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1957 and was elected president of the Gloucester County branch in 1963. She served as state NAACP president from 1966 to 1984 and national vice president from 1967 to 1979 — positions that afforded her an opportunity to regularly converse with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

During that time, she was arrested during a demonstration in Paulsboro, stood toe-to-toe with police during a civil rights protest in Woodbury and went undercover in a migrant workers' camp to expose the living conditions of laborers.

"We've lost an icon in our community," said current Gloucester County NAACP President Loretta Winters.

"She was courageous, a freedom fighter with the courage of a thousand men, and well-respected and loved," Winters said. "She always made you feel at home, but honored to be in her presence," she said.

The firebrand was behind bars the night Bobby Kennedy was assassinated in Los Angeles.

"I was there so often the jail could have been named after me," she mused in a 2008 article.

She also went to the Lyndon B. Johnson White House in 1966 to participate in a conference on Civil Rights and twice visited the White House during the administration of Jimmy Carter.

"Everything I have been blessed to do is very important because it has made a difference in somebody's life," Hill-Smith offered in a Gloucester County Times interview.

"The first time I met her was in 1969," said former Wenonah mayor Dale Taylor. At 22, he'd just been elected to serve on the Deptford Township council.

"She would come to all the meetings ... I was a conservative Republican and she was a liberal Democrat and we got along wonderfully," said Taylor. "She was a strong advocate for civil rights, when pretenders to the throne weren't lifting a finger. I always felt she was someone you could sit down and speak with," he recalled. Hill-Smith was "very fair and very firm and an enjoyable, delightful person," Taylor said.

In 1999, Hill-Smith got the opportunity to visit Ghana as part of the African-American Summit and had to raise money for the trip on her own. Taylor was one of those who contributed.

"I admired and respected her," said Taylor. Her death "is a real loss to Gloucester County."

Another former Wenonah mayor from across the political aisle had similar thoughts.

"I had a great relationship with her all the time she lived in Wenonah," Jack Sheppard offered.

"She was an excellent force in Gloucester County and she did a good job," said Sheppard. "Gloucester County will be worse off for not having her. She was a force for good," he said.

Hill-Smith also served as chair of the Gloucester County Office for the Disabled and was a former commissioner on the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority in Atlantic City.

Before her illness, Hill-Smith had been staying with her son, Michael, in Paulsboro.

"There's no 'retirement' in the Bible," she offered in a 2008 Times interview. Although no longer active in NAACP affairs, she continued to field requests for assistance and redirect such queries.

Her death "is the passing of an icon," said state Assemblyman and Paulsboro Mayor John Burzichelli.

"She fought all her battles when there were real risks," he said.

According to Edwards & Son Funeral Home in Bridgeton, there will be a viewing for Hill-Smith at the Second Baptist Church, 1540 Swedesboro Ave., Paulsboro, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday.

Services will be 10 a.m. Friday at the church. Burial will be in Gates of Heaven Cemetery, East Greenwich Township.



County loses a civil rights icon

Wednesday, March 30, 2011

Three remarkable women who blazed trails left us in the past week. Two achieved world-wide fame. One was best known in Gloucester County, but was no less committed to her community and her causes.

Last Wednesday, the world learned that Elizabeth Taylor had died. The famous actress was also the first high-profile celebrity to give her time and name to the fight against AIDS, which, in the mid-1980s, was claiming the lives of scores of Hollywood performers and creative people. Until "Liz" raised awareness, it had done so mostly in silence.

Then, on Saturday, Geraldine Ferraro passed away. In 1984, she went from the obscurity of a Queens, N.Y., congressional seat to become the first female vice-presidential candidate on a major party ticket, running with Democrat Walter Mondale. Ferraro's journey obviously paved the way for the likes of Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin.

The next day, Sunday, South Jersey lost Irene Hill-Smith, one of its most famous citizens and a symbol of civil rights and human rights struggles for decades.

Hill-Smith was an activist in the best sense of the word. Her world of equality battles as county, and later, state, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was a largely male-dominated one.

She was a longtime resident of Deptford Township and Wenonah, in a Gloucester County which, into the 1970s, sometimes had more in common with the Deep South than New Jersey. She recalled seeing a cross burned on an aunt's lawn at age 12. She was famously arrested after a Paulsboro protest. She exposed bad living conditions in area migrant labor camps.

Hill-Smith's efforts did win her national fame, even if it did not approach that of an international movie star or someone in the small club of presidential-ticket candidates. She was national NAACP vice president from 1967 to 1979.

In her 85 years, Hill-Smith achieved respect as someone who could disarm anyone with passionate but logical discourse and peaceful demonstration, not to mention her long, braided hair and colorful dresses.

As someone who can be spoken of locally in the same breath as the Rev. Martin Luther King, Irene Hill-Smith was in a very small club, indeed, and one that has had few other women as her stature as members.





Everything Jersey

Irene-Hill Smith was a pillar of community

Published: Sunday, April 03, 2011, 3:01 AM

By **Letters to the Editor/Gloucester County Times** Gloucester County Times

To the Editor:

Activist. Icon. Pioneer. Advocate. Courageous. Trailblazer. Leader.

These are some of the terms I have heard and read used to describe civil rights leader Irene Hill-Smith, who passed away this past Sunday. She was all of these and more. As a longtime Deptford resident, Hill-Smith was definitely a pillar of the community. She had a reputation that preceded her.

Although I did not know her as well as many of her colleagues and friends, on the few chances I had the opportunity of meeting her, she was as warm and gracious as anyone I have ever met. She definitely had a motherly feel to her.

It wasn't until recently, when I read about all the accolades this great woman achieved in her life, that I gained an even more profound respect for this great leader. It is no doubt that the life she led and the important work she put in touched the lives of many people from all walks of life, and helped paved the way for many people like myself.

I would like to thank Irene Hill-Smith for all her hard work to make this world a better place than when she found it. She epitomized what it is to be a great citizen.

I, on behalf of all my colleagues, would like to extend my deepest condolences to her family in their time of bereavement. She was a great woman who will be sorely missed.

Wayne Love
Councilman
Deptford Township

© 2011 NJ.com. All rights reserved.



Irene Hill-Smith, founding member of Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, dies at 85



Staff photo by Dale Gerhard Casino Reinvestment Development Authority South Jersey project committee chairperson Irene Hill-Smith sits at a public hearing in 2005. Hill-Smith, a 25-year CRDA board member, died Wednesday.

Posted: Friday, April 1, 2011 7:40 pm | Updated: 7:50 am, Wed Apr 6, 2011.

By STEVEN LEMONGELLO, Staff Writer |

Irene Hill-Smith, a founding member of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, or CRDA, died Wednesday at the age of 85.

A resident of Paulsboro, Gloucester County, Hill-Smith served on the CRDA board for 25 years before stepping down in 2010. "During her years here at the CRDA, she was a valued contributor who embraced passionately her role to help others and guide the CRDA's investments," said Susan Ney Thompson, the CRDA's interim executive director.

Former CRDA executive director Noel Eisenstat, who served with Hill-Smith from 1987 to 1991, said that during his tenure, "She had the ability to play center, to bring people back to the center and stay fair."

Hill-Smith, Eisenstat said, "understood the community and understood that everyone had a different perspective. She helped keep people focused and have common understanding." Eisenstat, who was in his twenties when he was director, said Hill-Smith "had stories and insights of great value."

Hill-Smith was a member of the Gloucester County NAACP, serving as president from 1957 to 1963. She also served as the President of the New Jersey State Conference of the NAACP from 1966 to 1984 and as the NAACP National Vice President from 1967 to 1979. "Hill-Smith actively participated in the Civil Rights Movement, often facing ridicule and arduous events," the NAACP said in a statement. "She participated in demonstrations and spent many nights in jail as a result."

"Dr. Hill-Smith will be remembered for her bravery and dedication to the civil rights campaign in New Jersey and around the country," stated NAACP Chairman Roslyn Brock. "She was never one to shy away from a demonstration, as long as she believed that she was standing up for righteousness."

Hill-Smith was buried Friday at the Gates of Heaven Cemetery, in East Greenwich Township, Gloucester County.

Contact Steven Lemongello: 609-272-7275



Irene Hill-Smith, 85; held national, N.J. NAACP posts

April 03, 2011 | By Walter F. Naedele, Inquirer Staff Writer



The year 1965 was remarkable for Irene Hill-Smith.

She spent 50 days in a South Jersey hospital after a car hit her as she was getting into a parked car.

Her first hospital stint ended March 31, but she was hospitalized for complications from the injury Aug. 17.

Despite all that, The Inquirer reported at the time, it was a year of accomplishments. She was elected president of the New Jersey NAACP, one of the first women so elected across the nation. And at the 1965 national NAACP convention, she was named president of the organization's Northeastern region, covering Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and all of New England.

Ms. Hill-Smith, 85, a national vice president of the NAACP from 1967 to 1979, died Sunday, March 27.

Benjamin Todd Jealous, president and chief executive officer of the NAACP, issued a statement saying she "was on the front lines during the civil rights movement."

"She believed in making a difference in people's lives, and through her work she helped entire generations of African Americans. Her legacy will live on, and her efforts will be remembered."

Ms. Hill-Smith was president of the Gloucester County NAACP from 1957 to 1963 and president of its New Jersey State Conference from 1965 to 1984.

A spokesman for Rowan University said its predecessor, Glassboro State College, had awarded her an honorary doctorate in humanities in 1988.

In 1969, the New York Times reported how she had put her activism into her day job. Besides leading the state NAACP, the story reported, "she is also office manager of the New Jersey Tongers Cooperative Association, a black-owned and operated organization now harvesting and processing some of the Delaware Bay oysters that once made" Port Norris, N.J., famous.

(A tonger is a person who uses tongs to gather oysters.)

"Asserting that the cooperative was the only black operation of its kind on the Eastern Seaboard, Mrs. Smith declared: 'This is what I call black power in action. It's building an

economic base for the people, and it's building hope for the people.' "

From its founding in 1965 to the 1969 story, the tongers association had received grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the New Jersey Department of Conservation and Economic Development, and the state Department of Community Affairs.

"For the first time in my 43 years," Ms. Hill-Smith told the reporter, "I have seen government for the people, by the people, and of the people in action."

And her activism crossed racial lines.

In 1968, The Inquirer reported that the New Jersey NAACP, under her leadership, "went to the aid of a group of white parents picketing the Whitehall Elementary School to protest the Monroe Township school board's refusal to bus their children."

Urging state officials to withhold subsidies to the school board, Mrs. Smith said it was unsafe for the children to walk to school along Black Horse Pike.

"All children involved are white," she said, but "the safety of children transcends racial lines and should involve all people."

More than a few of the 1960s Inquirer stories reported about the state NAACP's investigation of living conditions of migrant farmworkers in New Jersey.

And Ms. Hill-Smith was not reluctant to be arrested.

In 1968, the Philadelphia Daily News reported, she was arrested "on disorderly-person charges growing out of a camp-in she allegedly staged in the office of the vice principal of the Paulsboro High School."

She and other protesters had "demanded the reinstatement of a teacher who had been fired."

There were no other stories about how the arrest and the protest were resolved.

Even at an advanced age, Ms. Hill-Smith had not lost influence.

The national NAACP statement noted that "later in life, Hill-Smith served as chair of the Gloucester County Office for the Disabled."

A 2002 Inquirer report about the New Jersey Casino Reinvestment Development Authority stated that she was chairwoman of its South Jersey project committee.

She appeared to be wearing down.

A January 2010 report stated that she had missed 17 of 34 monthly meetings, but "several board members said she had been ill."

Born in Mullica Hill, she graduated from Glassboro High School and attended Virginia State College in Petersburg, Va.

The Edwards & Son Funeral Home stated that she is survived by a son, H. Michael; daughters S. Terri Smith-Little and Michelle Newton; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; and a great-great grandchild.

The 1965 Inquirer story stated that she was married to Howard Smith, a special-equipment operator for Texaco Oil Co.



Bob Shryock: Reflections on the passing of a grand lady

Published: Thursday, April 07, 2011, 3:00 AM



By **Bob Shryock/Gloucester County Times** Gloucester County Times

The Sunday night cellphone message from *Times* editor John Barna interrupted the upbeat nature of day one of a South Carolina vacation.

"Irene Hill-Smith died today." And my heart sunk.

If I had been home in Gloucester County, chances are I'd have tried assembling a story for Monday's edition. When a county luminary passes, I often draw the obituary or eulogy assignment because my time here dates to 1964. So, sadly, I missed the chance to write the story or at least contribute to the one Jim Six so skillfully prepared for Tuesday's paper.

This column, 11 days after her death, becomes my tribute to a grand lady who, in terms of impact in Gloucester County, is easily top five during my tenure here.

A Mullica Hill native whose early education was in a one-room segregated schoolhouse, Hill-Smith became the county's foremost civil rights activist of the 20th Century but had lofty stature as well at the state (18 years as president) and national (12 years as vice president) NAACP levels. Known for her fearlessness during the most tumultuous of times in the civil rights struggle, Hill-Smith spent repeated jail time in Gloucester County, most significantly for incidents in Woodbury and Paulsboro. In fact, the night Bobby Kennedy was killed she was jailed in Woodbury for leading a march on Broad Street. But she often made light of her time spent in prison, saying she was there so often the jail could have been named for her.

But she could be a voice of reason, too. On the day her friend Martin Luther King was assassinated, Hill-Smith was in North Jersey on a college civil rights speech-making mission. After the seminar was abruptly dismissed, she led a massive march through the streets of Newark, into the night, to help quell potential riots.

Loretta Winters, who holds the same county NAACP president's post Hill-Smith held for years, had this succinct view of Irene's life in Six's story: "She was courageous, a freedom fighter with the courage of a thousand men." Amen to that. A liberal Democrat, Hill-Smith was reluctant to admit she mellowed over the years but she befriended leaders on both sides of the political fence (Republicans and Democrats alike have eulogized her) and hailed the county's civil rights progress.

Although inactive in recent years in county NAACP matters, Irene's telephone was never inactive. She is known to have helped countless hundreds, black or white, who have needed guidance on myriad matters or, simply, kind words. On my cable TV show, she once said she operated a 24-hour hotline, and would never refuse assistance to a single soul.

I had complete respect and unswerving admiration for her. We had more than a reporter-source relationship. We were friends. At my request, she gently "roasted" me at a fund-raising dinner. At another fund-raiser, she made a generous contribution to keep me in a makeshift jail, laughingly telling me to "go see what jail is like."

Irene was a guest at least a dozen times on my cable program, always dressed impeccably and colorfully, sometimes struggling with her cane, but always ready and to tackle any knotty subject. I must have written 25 stories about her.

One time I called her with a problem. She listened for 10 or 15 minutes and offered some sage direction.

That was Irene, always willing to help. The color of one's skin was never relevant.

'I Conquered Bias' — As a Woman

Mrs. Smith Fights Race, Personal Handicaps

By RENDE WINKLER
SEP 16 1968

Courier-Post Staff

ELEVEN YEARS AGO, Mrs. Irene H. Smith was unknown among civil rights leaders.

She was a housewife, with three school-age children, living in the Jericho section of Deptford Township. She had the normal dreams for a wife and mother, although as a black woman she knew it would be harder for the Smith family than for others.

One night in 1957, Mrs. Smith "just happened to go" to an NAACP meeting in Mount Royal. She went home to Jericho that night as the new secretary of the Gloucester County Branch.

Today, at 42, Mrs. Smith is chief of NAACP operations throughout the state, and Gloucester County chapter president.

FOR TWO years, she was on the national board of directors and last January was named one of six national vice presidents.

"My specific responsibility is church work and community affairs . . . which includes trials," she said.

Mrs. Smith admits her rise in NAACP ranks has been quick — and she points out two battles that have been fought each step of the way.

"I WAS discriminated against. I had to run against my sex because everyone said this is no job for a woman," she said.

The second handicap is medication and rest.

"It was my back that kept me home from the national political conventions," she said. "I really should have been

you until after 5 p.m.," she said.

Mrs. Smith, her husband Howard, son Michael and daughter Michelle live in a ranch-type house on Glassboro Road in Wenonah. It's across the street from the Jericho section of Deptford, but because of municipal boundaries, her children go to Gateway Regional High School in Woodbury Heights.

"Last year there were five black pupils in Gateway — and two of them were Smiths. It hurts them a little bit socially, and I suppose it bothers Michelle since she's the only black junior in the school and doesn't date boys from school," Mrs. Smith said.

black sophomore but he was elected class president in his freshman year under the campaign slogan: 'Put a little color



" . . . When I get angry, I fight harder."



" . . . Law and order without justice is meaningless."



" . . . until every black man is free, I'm still a starve

"there was never any doubt in their minds about my going to college. They thought it was the only way to get ahead."

Prior to her marriage, she worked a sa laboratory technician at the E. J. DuFont de Nemours plant in Deepwater, Salem County.

Today, Mrs. Smith feels strongly about integrating teaching staffs in all school systems.

"EVEN IF no black people live in a community, they should have a black teacher so that the children can see that black people aren't all domestics," she said.

She thinks it is always intentional when a school district has no black teachers, and that school boards, like any industry which depends on federal funds, "had better go out and beat the bushes and find

somebody, and stop saying no one applies."
"That's their problem. When we applied for a mortgage for this house, there were things we had to comply with. That's what guidelines are for," she said.

"WHITE RACISM is creating a superman of the black man and woman — we have to be superqualified to get a job that any ignorant white person can get," she said.

Mrs. Smith said she is discontented with the Republican party's emphasis on law and order in the current presidential campaign.

"Law and order without justice is meaningless," she said, "especially when it only applies to those with enough money to get away with things."

"I know what they mean by law and order — repression of the black man, keeping him in his place. If there WERE law and order I wouldn't be in business. I wouldn't have to go out to plants to see if they had black employees."

"WHAT KIND of law and order is there when a farmer cheats his laborers? How can it be possible that migrant children are here until November and the State Board of Education doesn't do a thing about them. It's a law that every child six years old has to go to school," she said.

Mrs. Smith said she resents a statement from G O P presidential candidate Richard M. Nixon that he and his strategists are debating whether to seek the black vote. "He's banking on the fact that only 40 per cent of the black people in this country voted in the 1964 election, and



STATE NAACP President Mrs. Irene Smith of Wenonah is arrested at Paulsboro High School on disorderly conduct charges. From left are Assistant Paulsboro Police Chief Alex Wyndowski, Leon Brooks of Camden, a demonstrator, Mrs. Smith, and John Love, a demonstrator from Paulsboro.

—UPI-Courier-Post Telex

Black Holiday Today At Paulsboro High

By JAMES SMITH
Courier-Post Staff

PAULSBORO — A student "black holiday" was scheduled at Paulsboro High School today, according to Philip H. Savage, tri-state director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

He said Negro high school students would stay away from school following yesterday's protest rally which resulted in the arrest of state NAACP president Mrs. Irene H. Smith of Wenonah on a disorderly person charge. She was placed in the Gloucester County Jail.

Last night, nearly 100 Negroes marched from the police station through the town chanting "We Want Irene" while about 40 more demonstrated outside the county jail in Woodbury.

The demonstrations were led by Savage, who vowed not to cease until all charges were dropped against Mrs. Smith. David Frisby, president of the Community Action Committee (CAC) joined in the march.

Police from almost every municipality in the county observed the activities, but there was no report of trouble. During the day, plain-clothes officers were on duty inside the school.

Hearing Set June 17

Mrs. Smith led two dozen demonstrators at the school who presented a list of 22 demands to the school administration.

She was arrested on a disorderly person complaint signed

Continued on Page 2—Col. 3

Paulsboro Negroes To Skip School

Continued from Page One

by John Stouffer, superintendent of schools. Paulsboro police took her from the school to the police station where she was arraigned before Municipal Judge Sammie D. Pote.

Pote said he set bail at \$200 but Mrs. Smith preferred to go to jail. Since she did not post bail, she was taken to the county jail. Her hearing was scheduled for June 17.

Her husband, Howard, said she does not plan to leave jail until all charges have been dropped. He also stated that her back was injured when the police removed her from the school. She was examined by Dr. William King, he said.

The demonstrations were triggered by the refusal of the Board of Education to fire a teacher who admitted to swearing at a Negro girl during a home economics class.

Teacher Censured

Superintendent Stouffer said "A letter of censure was placed in her file, which becomes a matter of record." The teacher is Mrs. Carole Brown.

Since that incident occurred in April, the girl's mother, Mr. Clara Cooper, and Mrs. Smith and Savage have met at various times with the board and demanded Mrs. Brown's ouster.

Following a meeting last Wednesday night with the board, Mrs. Smith and Savage warned there would be demonstration at the school.

NAACP icon Irene Hill-Smith dead at 85

Posted on [April 1, 2011](#) by [John Schoonejongen](#)

We're a little late in posting this blog, and for that we hope that Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, surely in a better place than us, will grant her forgiveness.

Hill-Smith, an iconic figure in both the national and state NAACP, passed away on Sunday after suffering a stroke. Hill-Smith was 85.



Irene Hill-Smith in a 2006 Courier-Post photo.

Her legacy is too long to fully recount here. The lives she touched, the people she inspired would fill a phone book. But a few of her accomplishments are needed for perspective:

- Head of the Gloucester County NAACP.
- Head of the state NAACP.
- Vice president of the national NAACP.
- Attendee at a White House conference on civil rights in the 1960s.
- Chairwoman of the Gloucester County Office for the Disabled.
- Casino Reinvestment Development Authority commissioner.

When I was an editor in South Jersey, I had the pleasure of meeting and speaking with Hill-Smith more than once. She was always a wonderful interview. Thoughtful, gracious and patient, she answered questions with wisdom and passion. Even if you didn't know her history — the leadership, the protests, the arrests — you would come away with the belief that you had just spoken with someone of tremendous depth and importance.

“Dr. Hill-Smith was on the front lines during the Civil Rights Movement,” NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous said in a prepared statement. “She believed in making a difference in people’s lives, and through her work she helped entire generations of African-Americans. Her legacy will live on, and her efforts will be remembered.”

Even as she aged, Hill-Smith stayed active, telling the [Gloucester County Times](#) in 2008, “There’s no ‘retirement’ in the Bible.”

So today we wish her Godspeed on her last journey to a place where the ills she fought with unflagging zeal no longer exist, where age is no barrier to service and where this magnificent lady will be greeted with a long awaited and much deserved “well done.”





*Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
Helped change the world.*

*Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
was instrumental in the passage
of the
Civil Rights Legislation,
Thank You!*

NAACP

Mourns and Honors

Dr. Irene Hill-Smith



Gloucester County NAACP
Branch 2345 * PO Box 545
Williamstown, NJ 08094

Loretta Winters
President

Tiffany Grandison
Secretary

Resolution of Respect and Honor
For
Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

March 31, 2011

WHEREAS, God, in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved Dr. Irene Hill-Smith on March 27, 2011 in Philadelphia, Pa; and

WHEREAS, the Gloucester County NAACP Executive Committee and its members wish to express our deepest respect and sympathy to the family of New Jersey's iconic civil rights activist Dr. Irene Hill-Smith; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, was a member of the Gloucester County NAACP and served as president from 1957 to 1963 with diligence and faithfulness; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, served as the President of the New Jersey State Conference for 18 years from 1966 to 1984 and also served as the NAACP National Vice President for 12 years from 1967 to 1979. Her many years of dedicated service, guidance and counsel earned her the respect and honor of her peers; and

WHEREAS, through God's vision and grace she dedicated many years of service as a civil rights activist. Through these years she was ridiculed, suffered abuses and even jailed for her belief of equality and human rights; and

WHEREAS, she served as a confidant to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the height of the Civil Rights' movement and served as a frequent consultant to President Lyndon B. Johnson in his quest to craft the Civil Rights Act of 1965; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Irene Hill-Smith has made a significant and lasting contribution to the growth, stability, and success of the NAACP and the civil rights of all; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT KNOWN, that the benefit of her God inspired perception and leadership in the conduct of the affairs of civil rights will be missed; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that The Gloucester County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Branch 2345 of Gloucester County, through its members and Executive Committee do hereby extend its deepest sympathy to the Hill-Smith family and acknowledges to them our immeasurable gratitude and deepest admiration for her many years of faithful service and numerous contributions to the National, State and local Civil Rights movement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that as a just and lasting tribute to the memory of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, and as a reminder of the high esteem in which she will be held by those associated with her, this resolution be entered in the permanent records of this church, Second Baptist Church of Paulsboro and copies furnished to her family..

ADOPTED THIS 31st DAY OF MARCH 2011, at a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Gloucester County National Association of the Advancement of Colored People Branch 2345.

Signed before me this 31st day of March
in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven

Loretta Winters, President

Tiffany Grandison, Secretary

LaTanya Nelson



WWW.NAACP.ORG

NAACP



Press Release

April 1, 2011

[NAACP MOURNS THE LOSS OF Dr. Irene Hill-Smith](#)

THE CRISIS MAGAZINE



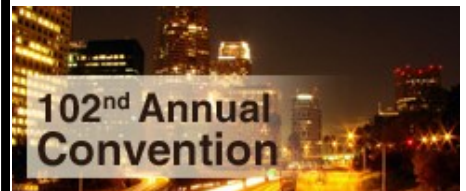
Timely information and opinion on issues affecting people of color.

[LEARN MORE](#)

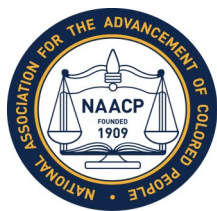
The National NAACP Mourn the loss of
Dr. Irene Hill-Smith.

The following Press Release can be
seen on their National website under:

**NAACP.org
Press Release**



April 1, 2011



WWW.NAACP.ORG

NAACP

(Paulsboro, New Jersey) –The NAACP mourns the loss of iconic civil rights activist Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, who transitioned on Wednesday at the age of 85.

Hill-Smith was a member of the Gloucester County NAACP and served as president from 1957 to 1963. She then served as the President of the New Jersey State Conference for 18 years from 1966 to 1984 and also served as the NAACP National Vice President for 12 years from 1967 to 1979.

Hill-Smith actively participated in the Civil Rights Movement, often facing ridicule and arduous events. According to the Gloucester County Times, Hill-Smith went undercover in a migrant workers' camp to draw attention to laborers' living conditions. She participated in demonstrations and spent many nights in jail as a result. Hill-Smith also served as a confidant to Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the height of the Civil Rights' movement and as a frequent consultant to President Lyndon B. Johnson in his quest to craft the 1965 Civil Rights Act. She visited the White House during the Johnson administration and twice during the Carter Administration.

"Dr. Hill-Smith will be remembered for her bravery and dedication to the civil rights campaign in New Jersey and around the country," stated NAACP Chairman Roslyn Brock. "She was never one to shy away from a demonstration, as long as she believed that she was standing up for righteousness."

"Dr. Hill Smith was on the front lines during the Civil Rights Movement," stated NAACP President and CEO Benjamin Todd Jealous. "She believed in making a difference in people's lives, and through her work she helped entire generations of African Americans. Her legacy will live on, and her efforts will be remembered."

Later in life Hill-Smith served as chair of the Gloucester County Office for the Disabled, and she was a former commissioner on the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority in Atlantic City. She had been living with her son, Michael, in Paulsboro.

On March 30, the Executive Committee of the Gloucester County National Association of the Advancement of Colored People Branch 2345 honored Ms. Hill-Smith with a resolution acknowledging her dedication to the NAACP and that the members "extend its deepest sympathy to the Hill-Smith family and acknowledges to them our immeasurable gratitude and deepest admiration for her many years of faithful service and numerous contributions to the National, State and local Civil Rights movement."

Services will be 10 a.m. Friday, April 1 at Second Baptist Church. Burial will be in Gates of Heaven Cemetery, in East Greenwich Township.

Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors.



New Jersey NAACP State Conference sends Condolences to the Family and Friends of Irene Hill-Smith March 31, 2011



The Officers and Members of the Executive Committee of the New Jersey State Conference of the NAACP are deeply saddened by the passing of Irene Hill-Smith. From 1966 to 1984, Ms. Hill-Smith served as President of the New Jersey State Conference of the NAACP (New Jersey NAACP). Joining the NAACP in 1957, Irene Hill-Smith was elected President of the Gloucester County Branch in 1963. She served as NAACP National Vice President from 1967 to 1979. She was one of New Jersey's most highly esteemed 20th Century civil rights activists, as she served in the movement with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other prominent leaders.

Irene Hill-Smith died on Sunday, March 27, 2011 at Thomas Jefferson Hospital in Philadelphia. She was 85. Born on October 14, 1925, in Mullica Hill, New Jersey as the only daughter of the late Charles and Sarah Hill, she was predeceased by her parents, seven brothers, and her daughter, Michelle Newton. Irene Hill-Smith was a South Jersey trailblazer who obtained her elementary education in a one room, segregated schoolhouse in Mullica Hill and later graduated from Glassboro High School in Glassboro, New Jersey. She continued her studies at Virginia State College (University) in Petersburg, Virginia. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Humanities from Rowan University of Glassboro, New Jersey. Dr. Hill-Smith was an unstinting community organizer whose service to others spanned nearly fifty-years.

In 1966, the leadership of Irene Hill-Smith was recognized by President Lyndon Baines Johnson who invited her to participate in a White House Conference on Civil Rights. She was twice invited to President Jimmy Carter's White House. Irene Hill-Smith also served as chair of the Gloucester County Office for the Disabled and was a former Commissioner on the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority in Atlantic City. In 1983, NAACP State Conference President Hill-Smith led our unit of America's oldest and largest civil rights organization to become one of the Founding member-organizations of the New Jersey Black Issues Convention (NJ BIC). In 1994, Dr. Mary Frances Berry, then Chairperson of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, appointed Irene Hill-Smith to head the New Jersey Advisory Committee to the Commission.

Irene Hill-Smith's legendary community-strengthening leadership was often not comfortable or laudatory. This South Jersey born and bred leader, a longtime resident of Deptford Township and Wenonah, has been dragged by the Klan, threatened by law enforcement, tossed in jail, and she has been undercover in a migrant workers' camp to expose the living conditions of laborers. She led the New Jersey NAACP through some of its most challenging civil rights ordeals.

Myrtle Smith Counts, long time President of the Roselle NAACP Branch, served as Vice President of the New Jersey NAACP with Irene Hill-Smith. The two women also represented the NAACP on the New Jersey Black Issues Convention Board of Directors. Ms. Counts remembers how Irene Hill-Smith led the New Jersey NAACP through the Mount Laurel decision and the New Jersey NAACP Fair Share Employment agreement with major corporations in the state. Ms. Counts reminisced about the terror New Jersey NAACP officials faced in those days as they were often threatened by the South Jersey Ku Klux Klan.

The Officers and Members of the Executive Committee of the New Jersey State Conference send prayers of comfort and share memories that celebrate the great humanitarian life of Irene Hill-Smith with her children -- Bishop S. Terri Smith-Little (Charles) of Sugar Land, Texas, and H. Michael Smith (Toni) of Paulsboro, New Jersey; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Members, friends and supporters of the New Jersey NAACP are encouraged to join the family of Irene Hill-Smith at a viewing which will be held at Second Baptist Church, 1540 Swedesboro Avenue, Paulsboro, New Jersey, from 10am to 6pm on Thursday, March 31, 2011. Services will be Friday, April 1 at 11am at Second Baptist Church with the burial at Gates of Heaven Cemetery, East Greenwich Township.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to a scholarship fund established through D.I.V.A International in Dr. Hill-Smith's honor. (www.diva1.org) Written condolences can be sent to the family through the funeral home website www.edwardsandsonfuneralhome.com. Services are entrusted to **EDWARDS AND SON FUNERAL HOME INC., Bridgeton and Salem, N.J.**

The Obituary

PALLBEARERS

Mr. James Black Sr. Mr. Eddie Hill
Mr. John Hill II Mr. John Hill III
Mr. Michael Hill Mr. Terrance Jones
Mr. Christian Roger Mr. Walter Wilcox



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The family of the late Dr. Irene Hill-Smith wishes to express their thanks for the kindness shown to them. Maybe you sent a card or a floral tribute, perhaps a phone call. Whatever you did, it was deeply appreciated.
Thank you and may God bless you all.

Obituary

I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me, Philippians 4:13

Doctor Irene Hill-Smith was a world renowned Civil Right Leader, Activist and Humanitarian. Her rich legacy of dedication, commitment and relentlessness had garnered the respect and admiration of Local, State, National and International Communities. Her passionate advocacy had taken her from "the Jailhouse to the White House." She had graced the corridors of Justice Halls; dignified the tables of Kings and Queens and provided counsel to several United States Presidents on sensitive Civil Rights issues. Dr. Hill-Smith provided active leadership and direction to several corporate and non-profit Boards and Commissions.

Dr. Hill-Smith began her journey in Mullica Hill, NJ, as the only daughter of the late Charles and Sarah Hill. She survived seven brothers: Immanuel T. Hill, Charles E. Hill, Jr., William H. Hill, George V. Hill, Robert M. Hill Lawrence A. Hill and John T. Hill. She was the proud parent of three children: Bishop S. Terri Little, Founder and Senior Pastor of the Love Ministry Family Church, Houston, TX and H. Michael Smith of Paulsboro. Her daughter Michelle Newton predeceased her. Dr. Hill-Smith was the Grandmother of seven: Joy, Ottawa, III; Shelby, Tenille, Kristen; Aaron Kahlil and Andrea; the Great-Grandmother of 9 and the Great-Great-Grandmother of 1.

Dr. Hill-Smith obtained her elementary education in a one room, segregated schoolhouse in Mullica Hill, graduated from Glassboro High School in Glassboro and matriculated at Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia. She received her Doctorate in Humanities from Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ.

A redeemed believer in Jesus Christ, Dr. Hill-Smith was a member of Living Word Bible Fellowship, Somerdale, NJ, under the Pastorate of Reverend Doctor William King. In her later years, she became a member of 2nd Baptist Church, Paulsboro, NJ, under the leadership of Reverend A.B. Frazier.

Dr. Hill-Smith was a member of the Woodbury Choral Society, founded by the late S. Edward Davis. The purpose of the organization was to fund scholarships for deserving minority students. Dr. Hill Smith, a recipient of this scholarship, served as President of this organization. The officers and members unanimously voted to give the remaining funds to the United Negro College Fund.

A lifelong Advocate and Civil Rights Activist, Dr. Hill-Smith was elected President of the Gloucester County Branch of the NAACP in 1963. During her tenure she was arrested twice and sustained a permanent spinal injury. This did not deter her commitment to Civil and Equal Rights. One of her more famous quotes was "A Civil Rights Leader that has not been to jail for the cause of freedom, is no Civil Rights Leader at all!"

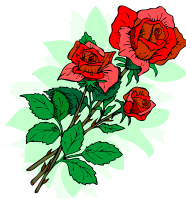
Dr. Hill-Smith's legacy spanned more than four decades. She served as a member of the NAACP's National Board of Directors and as Nation Vice President from 1967 to 1979. As a Commissioner of the New Jersey Advisory Committee of the United States Commission on Civil Rights, Dr. Hill-Smith received widespread attention during her tenure as the NAACP State President when she infiltrated a Migrant Workers Camp to focus public attention on the living conditions of the Laborers and their families. Her efforts led to legislation improving conditions for them.

As a member of the NAACP's Board of Directors, National Housing Corporation, Dr. Hill-Smith was a delegate member to London, Paris, Milan, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Sweden to see how the United States rebuilt those countries, under the Marshall Plan, after World War II. The delegation included professionals in all areas of the building and construction industry nationwide.

In 1966, Dr. Hill-Smith was invited to the White House by then President Lyndon Baines Johnson as a Delegate to the White House Conference on Civil Rights.

Governor Thomas Kean appointed Dr. Hill-Smith as founding Board member of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority in 1985. Until her retirement, she served on the Authority as Chairperson of the South Jersey Project Review Committee. She also served on the Atlantic City Development Committee and on the Administrative, Personnel and Finance Committee. She was re-appointed by Governors Florio, Whitman and McGreevey. For her efforts, a plaque was placed in the new Atlantic City Convention Center.

Dr. Hill-Smith was a delegate to the first African-American Summit on the development of Sub-Saharan Africa and the support for the Region. The purpose of the Summit, convened in Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire in 1991, historic and unprecedented with other friends of Africa, was to reestablish the bond of togetherness that had not existed since Africans were uprooted and relocated as slaves to America and the rest of the world several centuries ago. Additionally, to find ways to accelerate the development process of Sub-Saharan African. Dr. Hill-Smith attended the Summits in Libreville, Gabon, Zimbabwe, Dakar, Senegal Accra, Ghana and Nigeria.



Dr. Irene Hill-Smith's Legacy included:

President of the New Jersey State Conference NAACP Branch, 1965-1987

NAACP National Board of Directors, 1966-1984

NAACP Nation Vice President, 1967-1979

NAACP National Housing Corporation

Commissioner, New Jersey State Advisory Committee, United States Commission on Civil Rights

Board of Trustees, New Jersey Academy of Aquatic Sciences

Director, Cooper Ferry Development Association

Director, Delaware River Port Authority

State of New Jersey Governor's Academy

Commissioner, Gloucester County Disabled Persons Advisory Commission

Allocation Committee, Gloucester County Department of Social Services

Gloucester County Workforce

Advisory Committee, Cable Television in Gloucester County

Board Member, Boys and Girls Club of Paulsboro

Steering Committee for former United States Senator and former New Jersey Governor, John Corzine

Board, Casino Reinvestment Development Authority

Keynote Speaker, Minority Workers Convention, St. Louis, MO

Candace Award Winner, National Coalition of 100 Black Women

Endorsements



NEW JERSEY SENATE & GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STEPHEN M. SWEENEY
Senate President, District 3
sensweeney@njleg.org

JOHN J. BURZICHELLI
Assembly Deputy Speaker, District 3
asmburzichelli@njleg.org

CELESTE M. RILEY
Assemblywoman, District 3
aswriley@njleg.org

May 20, 2011

Gloucester County NAACP - Chapter 2345
Attn: Dr. Irene Hill-Smith NJ Hall of Fame Committee
P.O. Box 545
Williamstown, New Jersey 08094

Dear NAACP Chapter 2345:

We are writing to you regarding the late Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, whose nomination we endorse for induction into the New Jersey Hall of Fame.

Dr. Irene Hill-Smith was born in Mullica Hill, and was a lifelong resident of Gloucester County. Dr. Hill-Smith was elected President of the Gloucester County Chapter of the NAACP in 1963.

In 1966, Dr. Hill-Smith was asked to participate in a conference on civil rights by the administration of President Lyndon Johnson. Additionally, she served as a national Vice President of the NAACP from 1967 to 1979. Dr. Hill-Smith's activism and tireless work for civil rights mark a legacy that will endure for generations to come. As elected representatives of Gloucester County in the Third Legislative District, we understand the significant and profound nature of the impact that Dr. Hill-Smith has had, not only on our community, but on the entire State of New Jersey. Induction into the New Jersey Hall of Fame is a proper and fitting tribute to a woman who dedicated her life to the pursuit of civil rights for all people.

Once again, we would like to endorse the nomination of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith for induction into the New Jersey Hall of Fame, and we would greatly appreciate any consideration that can be granted to Dr. Hill-Smith in this request. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Handwritten signature of Stephen M. Sweeney

Stephen M. Sweeney
Senate President

SBR/has

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John J. Burzichelli

John J. Burzichelli
Deputy Speaker

Handwritten signature of Celeste M. Riley

Celeste M. Riley
Assemblywoman

Please reply to: Kingsway Commons, Suite 400
935 Kings Highway
West Deptford, NJ 08086
Tel: (856) 251-9801
Fax: (856) 251-9752

14 E. Commerce Street
Bridgeton, NJ 08302
Tel: (856) 455-1011
Fax: (856) 455-2853

199 East Broadway, Suite G
Salem, NJ 08079
Tel: (856) 339-0808
Fax: (856) 339-9626





ALICE PAUL INSTITUTE

Preserving Her Legacy to Develop Future Leaders

May 20, 2011

George V. Hill, III
RE/MAX Preferred - Sewell
415 Egg Harbor Road
Suite 9
Sewell, NJ 08080

Dear Mr. Hill,

It is with great pleasure that I endorse your nomination of Irene Hill-Smith to the New Jersey Hall of Fame. Ms. Hill-Smith shared many similarities to Alice Paul; she believed in social justice for all and made many sacrifices during her life-long dedication to the civil rights movement. Also like Alice, her moral and ethical beliefs were rooted in her faith and in her community in South Jersey.

Ms. Hill-Smith's legacy continues, in part, through the work of the Alice Paul Institute (API). She played a significant role in the restoration of *Paulsdale*, Alice Paul's birthplace and childhood home that is now a National Historic Landmark. The restoration has allowed API to honor the work of Alice Paul and other significant women in the struggle for equal rights through programs that prepare young women for leadership roles in their communities. API is able to serve students and young women throughout the state and many of the girls impacted by our programs are from underserved populations. Without the restoration that Ms. Hill-Smith helped make possible, many of the girls would not have access to the programs that provide them with critical skills needed to thrive in competitive academic and economic environments in the future.

Alice's fierce commitment to equality, rooted in her South Jersey Quaker upbringing, and her impact on the lives of women in the state and the nation earned her the honor of being inducted into the 2010 New Jersey Hall of Fame. Likewise, Irene Hill-Smith's dedication to social justice and the impact that her years of activism have had on minorities should, indeed, earn her a place in the 2012 class of inductees.

Sincerely,

Valerie K. Buickerood
Executive Director

PO Box 1376 (mailing) 128 Hooton Road (street) Mount Laurel, NJ 08054
856-231-1885 (phone) 856-231-4223 (fax) info@alicepaul.org www.alicepaul.org

Brendan T. Byrne

May 18, 2011

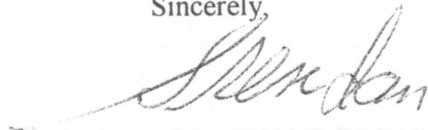
Don Jay Smith
Executive Director
New Jersey Hall of Fame
4 Ridge Road
Lebanon, NJ 08833-4625

Re: Irene Hill Smith

Dear Mr. Smith:

Irene Hill Smith should qualify for the New Jersey Hall of Fame based on her many years of civil rights leadership in the state. I remember her being active since the 50's, continuously involved in tough cases and getting results. She is certainly deserving.

Sincerely,



BRENDAN T. BYRNE



James E. Harris, President , New Jersey State Conference

NAACP

May 21, 2011

Don Jay Smith
Executive Director
New Jersey Hall of Fame
4 Ridge Road
Lebanon, NJ 08833

RE: Dr. Irene Hill-Smith

Dear Mr. Smith:

It is with great honor that I endorse the Gloucester County NAACP Branch #2345 nomination of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith for induction to the New Jersey Hall of Fame. Dr. Irene Hill-Smith was a pioneer of the New Jersey Civil Rights movement during tumultuous times. She took her passion and leadership from the county to the state and then nationally....she was indeed a "Freedom Fighter" for all.

As a Freedom Fighter she put her own freedom at risk and was incarcerated many times so that others would enjoy what her parents and siblings could not because of Jim Crow Laws. I approve what this NAACP Branch is doing and I am grateful to the Hill-Smith family for giving us Dr. Irene Hill-Smith. What a treasure for civil rights. What a treasure for the state of New Jersey. It is befitting that someone as courageous as Ms. Hill-Smith be remembered and honored for her sacrifice by her inclusion to such an esteemed group, "The New Jersey Hall of Fame".

Sincerely,

James E. Harris

James E. Harris
President, New Jersey State Conference of the NAACP

lw/

c: Gloucester County NAACP #2345

jharrisnaacp@yahoo.com
973-518-2990 Cell

harrisj@mail.montclair.edu
973-665-7543 Work

973-746-0085 Home Office

May 19, 2011

George V. Hill, III
RE/MAX Preferred – Sewell
415 Egg Harbor Road Suite 9
Sewell, NJ 08080

Dear Mr. Hill:

I was delighted to learn that you and others in Gloucester County are preparing a nomination for Dr. Irene Hill-Smith to be submitted to the New Jersey Hall of Fame. Irene's decades of work for civil rights and social justice make her the perfect candidate for such statewide recognition. I wholeheartedly endorse your nomination of Irene and want to briefly share with you my thoughts about her contributions to New Jersey and the nation.

Irene was a visionary who believed that **all** persons deserved the opportunity to reach their own potential and pursue their own dreams and, by doing so, the world would become a better place. She was a person of deep religious faith, strong convictions about justice and great courage in the face of overwhelming odds. Irene risked her reputation and her life to stand up for the rights of African-Americans and other minorities to have the same opportunities as whites at a time when the United States and the State of New Jersey wanted to maintain the status quo. Irene was a "warrior for freedom and justice" in New Jersey and beyond. Up to this point, she has been little recognized for her work and influence in bringing about social change that continues to positively impact the lives of thousands of New Jersey residents every day.

I first met Irene in the 1990's after much of her civil rights work had been completed, but she was still strongly committed to helping those in society who continued to struggle to realize their potential and dreams. When I met her, I was leading an organization that was working to save and restore Paulsdale, the birthplace and home of 20th century women's rights leader Alice Paul. Paul played a pivotal role in gaining the right to vote for women and continued for the rest of her life to work for women's rights in this country and around the world. I think Irene recognized the importance of Alice Paul's contributions to the advancement of women in society and perhaps identified with the many challenges Paul faced during her life. From our first meeting, Irene became a staunch supporter of our effort to save Paulsdale in Mt. Laurel, NJ and create a leadership center for girls and women at the site. Ultimately, just as Alice played a key role in gaining voting rights for women, Irene played a key role in saving Paulsdale and enabling the Alice Paul Institute to fulfill its dream of saving the home and creating the leadership center. Without Irene's inspiration and assistance in securing the final funding needed to restore Paul's home, Paulsdale would not be the lively historic site and active leadership center it is today. It would not be open, as it is now, to educate the public about Alice Paul and other women in history whose lives made a difference to all who came after them. In many ways, Paulsdale's current existence and mission is a tribute to Irene, a woman who believed that if you help others realize their dreams, you will realize your own.

Dr. Irene Hill-Smith most certainly deserves to be inducted into the New Jersey Hall of Fame. I applaud your efforts to gain the long awaited recognition she earned during her life time of advocacy for others. Please let me know if there is anything else I can do to assist your efforts.

With best regards,

Barbara Irvine



WWW.NAACP.ORG

NAACP

Gloucester County NAACP Branch 2345
P.O. Box 545
Williamstown, NJ 08094

2011 OFFICERS

- Loretta Winters
President
- Rachel Green
1st Vice President
- LaRae Carter
2nd Vice President
- Tiffany Grandison
Secretary
- Assistant Secretary
Pat Alston
- LaTanya Nelson
Treasurer
- Marjorie Glick
Assistant Treasurer

**Dr. IRENE HILL-SMITH
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- Mr. Calvin D. McNeil, Sr.
Chairman
- Ms. Loretta Winters
- Bishop Terri Smith, PHD,
- Dr. Rev. William King
- Dr. Rev. A.B. Frazier
- Councilman Wayne Love
- Ms. Karen Hill
- Mr. George V. Hill, III
- Asmblymn John Burzichelli
- Ms. Danielle (Hill) Scott

As long as you keep a person down, some part of you has to be down there to hold him down, so it means you cannot soar as you otherwise might." -

Marian Anderson

May 24, 2011

Robert Damminger
Freeholder Director
PO Box 337 -Courthouse
Woodbury, NJ 08096

RE: Irene Hill-Smith Memorial

Dear Mr. Damminger:

In one of the earlier meetings of the Dr. Irene Hill-Smith Committee we discussed the possibility of having a memorial and/or a street name dedication in honor of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith in the Woodbury Area. This was suggestion by Assemblyman John Burzichelli.

It would be our pleasure to meet with you in the near future to discuss the possibilities of erecting such a memorial and/or street dedication . This would be an awesome way to memorialize a National Civil-Rights Icon who helped change the world and who lived and died in our great County of Gloucester.

Please feel free to contact me to arrange a place and time to meet with several of the committee members.

We appreciate your unwavering support of our organization and look forward to meeting with you.

Loretta Winters
609-221-1307
hwin10@verizon.net



Thomas H. Kean

May 26, 2011

Loretta H. Winters
President
Gloucester County NAACP
GCNAACP Branch #2345
PO Box 545
Williamstown, NJ 08094

Dear Ms. Winters,

I am happy to join those supporting Irene Hill-Smith for our NJ Hall of Fame.

Irene was a leader in the civil rights movement. She was active in the movement at a time when her participation meant time in jail. I knew her when she was a President of the New Jersey Chapter of the NAACP and served a term as the National Vice President of the organization.

She was dedicated to the cause and improved numerous lives with her work. I am proud to have known her as a friend and a supporter.

Best regards,

TKean

Dr. Irene Hill-Smith
Foundation
&
Scholarship Fund

In honor of the life and legacy of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, a foundation and scholarship is being established. In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that financial contributions be made towards this worthy cause. Thank you for your prayers and support during this time.

Dr. Terri Smith and Family



To read more about the life and legacy of Dr. Irene Hill Smith or to make a donation please go to:

www.lmfc.org/hillsmith

www/diva1.org



Dr. Irene Hill-Smith Foundation & Scholarship Fund

Grace and Peace,

It is with a heavy heart that we inform you of the passing of Dr. Irene Hill-Smith, mother of Bishop S. Terri Smith, who went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, March 27th. Dr. Hill-Smith had a massive stroke on Wednesday evening and transitioned to life eternal just four days later. While her passing may have been sudden to us, we know that nothing takes the Lord by surprise and she is presently rejoicing in heaven with her Father. Dr. Hill-Smith was a strong Christian woman, a fearless leader, and a wonderful servant to her community. We are grateful for the eighty-five years that she lived, and all those who knew her are honored that she shared a part of her life with us.

Dr. Hill-Smith will lie in state on Thursday, March 31st, with the homegoing service being held on Friday, April 1st. Our beloved Bishop Smith, at her mother's request, will deliver the eulogy during the homegoing service. Arrangements are in the hands of Edwards & Son Funeral Home of Bridgeton, New Jersey.

Gloucester County NAACP Branch 2345

2011 OFFICERS

Loretta Winters
President

Rachel Green
1st Vice President

LaRae Carter
2nd Vice President

Tiffany Grandison
Secretary

Assistant Secretary
Pat Alston

LaTanya Nelson
Treasurer

Marjorie Glick
Assistant Treasurer

