



*Celebrating the Journey
of Hardy Williams*

April 14, 1931 – January 7, 2010

A Tribute to the Honorable Hardy Williams: The Man & The Movement

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2010

Bibleway Baptist Church
1323 North 52nd Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19131
Rev. Damone B. Jones, Sr., Pastor

12 noon – 5:30 pm Viewing

6:00 pm Service

Omega Psi Phi Service

Mistress of Ceremonies

Thera Martin Connelly, Program Director
WURD 900 AM Radio

Program

Musical Prelude

Closing of the Bier

Opening Prayer

Rev. Damone B. Jones, Sr.

Hymn

His Eye is on the Sparrow
Alicia Beatty

Scripture Reading

Rev. Damone B. Jones, Sr.

Tributes

Honorable Michael A. Nutter, Mayor
Honorable W. Wilson Goode, Former Mayor
Honorable Dwight Evans, State Representative, 203rd District
Honorable Kenyatta Johnson, State Representative, 186th District
Hardy Williams Academy Charter School

Solo

He Looked Beyond My Faults
Dawn Chavous

Family & Friends

Tiffany Chavous & Jordan Coleman
Stephen Cohen, C. P. A.
Wanda Bailey Green & Kya Robinson
Scott Hendler, Political Activist
Elmer Smith, Columnist, The Philadelphia Daily News
Honorable Gregory Smith, Judge, Court of Common Pleas

Acknowledgements

Lanna Minor

Solo

Going Up Yonder
Deseree Williams

Closing Prayer

Rev. Damone B. Jones, Sr.

Celebrating the Journey of Hardy Williams

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2010

Sharon Baptist Church
3955 Conshohocken Avenue
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19131

Bishop Keith Wayne Reid, Sr., Pastor
Officiating

8:00 am Viewing 10:00 am Service

Order of Service

The Organ Prelude

Bryant Pugh, Minister of Music

The Procession

The Closing of the Bier

The Hymn of Comfort

Charlene Holloway

The Scripture Reading

Rev. Dr. Joseph D. Patterson, Sr.
Old Testament: Psalms 23
New Testament: II Timothy 4: 13 -18

The Prayer of Comfort

Rev. Albert F. Campbell, Pastor
Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

The Solo

Amazin' Grace
Vicky Blackshear

The Acknowledgement of Condolences

Tiffany Chavous and Jonathan Williams

The Tributes

Hon. Edward G. Rendell, Governor
Hon. Michael A. Nutter, Mayor
Hon. Arlen Specter, US Senator (Invited)
Hon. Shirley M. Kitchen, State Senator, 3rd Dist.
Sonia Sanchez, Author/Poet
Alan Fastman, Political Activist
Dr. L. Tom Reid, Political Activist
Hon. Ida K. Chen, Judge, Court of Common Pleas
William H. Brown III, Esq., Sr. Counselor-Schnader & Harrison
James I. Williams, Brother
Hon. Anthony Hardy Williams, Son & State Senator, 8th Dist.

The Expression of Comfort

Bishop Keith Wayne Reid, Sr.

The Selection

The Lord's Prayer
Carol Riddick

The Reading of the Obituary

Silent Reading

The Solo

His Eye is on The Sparrow
Stacie Greenwell

The Eulogy

Rev. Damone B. Jones, Sr.
Bibleway Baptist Church

The Closing Prayer

Bishop Keith Wayne Reid, Sr.

The Recession

Interment-Private

Family only

Pall Bearers

HONORARY PALL BEARERS

James I. Williams	Ali Robinson
Frederick Williams	Carl Lacey
Theodore Williams	

PALL BEARERS

Paul Bennett	Michael Lomax
Alan Castor	Rodney Oglesby, Esq.
Alan Fastman	Dr. L. Tom Reid
Scott Hendler	Lee Tolbert
Hon. Kenyatta Johnson	Hon. Ronald A. Waters
Clarence Jones	Bill Williams
Mark Lomax	

Hardy Williams

April 14, 1931 – January 7, 2010

In the 78 years between his birth on April 14, 1931, and his death on January 7, 2010, Hardy Williams assumed many roles, as a scholar, athlete, attorney, parent, soldier, activist, legislator and mentor.

Yet one description remained consistent: leader.

That singular title summed up the lifelong, burning passion that fueled his intellect and unmitigated willingness to advocate vociferously for the rights of all people.

He was Hardy, the dramatic, straight-talking dean of the independent political movement in Philadelphia. He was Hardy, the fearless intellectual willing to challenge the status quo, daring to break racial, ethnic, and political barriers to stand for what he thought was just. He was Hardy, a Philadelphia icon.

But well before any of that, he was the son of James and Frances “Mom” Williams, the pupil at Wilson Elementary School whose intellectual prowess was apparent early. From Wilson, he attended both Shaw Junior High and then West Philadelphia High schools, where his athletic presence also gained acclaim.

His academic skills paved roads and opened doors throughout his career, first at the State Normal School at Cheyney (now Cheyney University) and then at Pennsylvania State University. At Penn State, Hardy showed what his presence could mean, not just for himself but also for those coming behind him, serving as the first African-American basketball player in the university’s history. He eventually led the team as its captain and took Penn State to its first tournament championship in 32 years. A true scholar-athlete, he served as president of the Pre-Legal Society and secretary-treasurer of the Athletic Association. And he was a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.

Hardy continued his education at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. As an elected member of the honor society, he earned his degree – and won the heart of Carole Chew, whom he married on Jan. 31, 1953.

Heeding his country’s call, Hardy served in the U.S. Army from 1952 to 1954, earning the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Service Medal, the Republic of Korea Presidential Merit Citation, and the United Nations Service Ribbon and the rank of second lieutenant.

After returning stateside from Korea, the newly minted attorney took an appointment to the Philadelphia City Solicitor’s office. Memories from a childhood filled with dreams but no means inspired him to seek new ways to impact the lives of those who shared those experiences.

Resigning in 1965, Hardy first ran for ward leader as an independent Democratic candidate in the Third Ward, and was later elected to the Pennsylvania State Legislature, again as an independent Democrat.

In 1971, his candidacy for mayor of Philadelphia – amid the rapidly shifting tectonic plates of racial and gender politics of the era – was the first credible one by an African American. A viable alternative to candidates selected in backroom deals rather than by the people’s will, the campaign drew widespread public support and national attention.

While he lost the Democratic nomination battle, Hardy followed the dictates of Bishop Robert South, the 17th century theologian and philosopher who asserted that “defeat should never be a source of discouragement, but rather a fresh stimulus.”

So stimulated was Hardy after the 1971 race, he looked his sights onto Harrisburg and what change he could bring to the halls of power there. By 1972, he had organized the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus, established as a permanent brain trust and lobby for a once near-powerless constituency.

His efforts led to the election of other independent Democrats throughout the city, from committee people to the mayor’s office. W. Wilson Goode Sr., the first African-American mayor of Philadelphia, acquired his initial political experience as co-campaign manager for Hardy’s 1971 bid.

Hardy served five House terms until 1982, when he ran successfully as an independent Democrat for state senator. In the Senate, he served as minority chair of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee and chaired a taskforce on violence as a public health concern, among other accomplishments.

As a member of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, Hardy advanced a host of legislative measures geared toward improving quality of life. One such effort was pushing to

eliminate usage of “illegitimate” on birth certificates, school records, and other legal documents, a term that impacted inheritances, birth rights, and other legal matters.

He advocated an end to police brutality, rallying others to the cause after incidents such as the Window-Washing Charlie shooting, a notorious case where police were accused of unloading nearly two dozen rounds into a West Philadelphia man, including 11 in the back. Hardy stayed on the forefront of meaningful issues like combating black-on-black crime and promoting employment and business opportunities for African Americans and other overlooked people. His support of the arts and creative economies were ahead of his time.

After some three decades in public office, Hardy retired from the Pennsylvania Senate in 1998, replaced by his son, Anthony Hardy Williams, a rising political star in his own right.

His retirement did not dim his movement or sense of service. After all, Hardy had founded the Organized Anti-Crime Community Network (OACCN) and Black Family Services; worked with Blacks Networking for Progress, the Delaware Valley Ecumenical Council, and the African-American Delaware Valley Port Corporation; and was instrumental in the creation of the highly successful youth violence intervention program, Crisis Intervention Network. These are but a sampling of his numerous affiliations and contributions.

His lifelong commitment to the people in the city of his birth – children, seniors, working men and women striving to do better – have not gone unrecognized.

Countless political figures knew him as a catalytic strategist that aided their own careers. He is the namesake and first recipient of the Hardy Williams Award for Excellence presented by the Black Law School Association of the University of Pennsylvania. In 2009, Renaissance Advantage Charter School in Southwest Philadelphia was renamed the Hardy Williams Academy Charter School. The Hardy Williams Education Fund was established to further opportunities in higher education. These efforts continue his inspiration of creating a pipeline of bright minds to seek their own dreams and enrich Philadelphia in the process, despite their starting point.

Just like him.

“We need to respond, in a comprehensive way, to the growing plight of the underprivileged in our society,” Hardy once said. “I’m only concerned about trying to do everything

necessary to get people to function and work together for the future of our children.”

In a life that touched people with high profiles as well as the barely visible, Hardy left many to mourn his passing. They were the people in the grocery stores, community centers, barbershops, and El stops that recalled the man who cheerfully greeted them through the years with colorful turns of phrase, the one they knew as “Superman Jack,” “Freedom Jones,” or just “Chief.”

But those who feel that loss most profoundly are those who loved and knew him best. That includes his surviving children Lisa Dawn Smith and her husband, the Hon. Gregory Smith; the Hon. Anthony Hardy Williams and his wife, Shari; Clifford Kelly Williams; and Lanna Minor and her husband, Jerrie. It also encompasses his siblings, James I. Williams and his wife, Gloria; Frederick Williams and his wife, Ernestine; Theodore Williams; Ali Robinson; and Barbara Williams. The grandchildren who will miss him are Asia Veale, Jonaustin Smith, Miles Smith, and Autumn Veale.

A void is left for his cousin, Carl Lacey, who loved Hardy like a brother while his other cousin, Dorothy S. Hankerson, doted on him as she would her own son. Beyond blood, Hardy helped to rear Lynette Brown-Sow as would an uncle, as well as his godchildren, Traci and Robert Reid.

Hardy joins his son, Jon-Austin, and his parents Frances and James Williams, who were waiting for him. Together again, they smile.



Politics

Politics



Williams Wins Black Support

the government... the people... where it belongs... politics affects everything in our lives, and once people realize this they will work... and they will be rich in people... That's the Williams campaign... Poor in money, but rich in people... and we need you... Williams said people who want to work can contact any of the neighborhood campaign headquarters... (See page 2.)

THE ALLIANCE BULLETIN

GENERAL PUBLICATION OF THE PHILADELPHIA METROPOLITAN BRANCH, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF POLICE BUREAUS

EEO Complaint Filed with Regional Office Investigation Requested for Mail Handler As Personnel Policy in Medical Unit Challenged



PHILADELPHIA New Observer

"INNOVATORS OF THE POSITIVE NEWS FORMAT"

SENATOR WILLIAMS LEADS FIGHT AGAINST CRIME

1952-1971: He's Still Tough!



Hardy Williams: Still A Winner

HEADQUARTERS FOR THE RE-ELECTION OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE ANTHONY WILLIAMS

15900 SPRING GARDEN AVE. PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19126-3500

From day one
HARDY WILLIAMS
for continued rapport with the Community!

The Hardy Williams Campaigner

WILLIAMS 'CRUSADE' DRAWS THOUSANDS

"For the Sake of Our Children We Must Act Now To Make Government Productive. Together, We Can Do It."

You Can Help Elect The Next Mayor - See Page Four

MAKE IT HAPPEN IN PHILLY

Top Boosters: Williams' Family

Williams' family... stand for the next generation. We don't have time to just sit around and talk about how awful everything is. My most formidable opponent is apathy, indifference and the inability of people...

Lynette Brown-Sow Speaking About Hardy Williams & the Movement at his 75th Birthday Celebration

I've been asked to speak for the political family, but as most of you know there is no difference between the political family and the biological family, when it comes to Hardy Williams.

I could be here all day mentioning people who have been a part of this movement – and that is what it is – a movement. It was not a campaign or a series of campaigns for an office. Nor was it about an issue or two facing our community. It was a way of life – a way of thinking – a way of making change.

It was not only about politics, but it was about human rights and justice. It was not just for African Americans, but for all people of every color, race and language.

My life in this movement started when I was a little girl. From a little girl's eyes, this man, whom I called Uncle Hardy, had a profound impact on my life, but not only on my life, but on the lives of thousands of other people, both young and old.

Hardy Williams always found time to help people, especially young people. He taught us to listen, not only with our ears, but with our hearts. He exposed us to a different way of thinking and taught us what commitment was all about.

He put me and other young people in positions that no one else would have, and he inspired us to believe we could do anything. We watched him and developed the skills and strengths we needed to make a commitment to our community and make a difference.

Those of us like John White, Jr., Eric Ward, Joanne Doddy, Orien Reid, Paul Bennet and later, young folks like Stacey and Scott Handler, Diane Nordenhoemer, Big Mac, then Dawn and Tiffany Chavous, Kya Robinson and the list goes on and on.

I remember the day - when I was a little girl - my mother telling me I wouldn't be able to call him Uncle Hardy anymore because he was going to be a judge. And I was very upset.

But that never happened because he didn't accept that judgeship because it would have stopped the movement and taken him from his commitment and his vision for change.

What I and others learned at a young age was that we had choices, and we had to make personal sacrifices to help others and our communities, and that the most important thing for a person was to have character and values, and to stand up for them no matter what people dangle in front of you.

I and many others had the opportunity to sit in rooms with people who were not only committed, but brilliant at strategizing and planning political change.

These people were the foundation of independent politics in the City and beyond. Names like Matlin Russell, Paul Vance, Wilson Goode, Bob Sugarman, Michael Churchill, Carol Ann Wisenfield and Ned Wolf.

These were some of the main people who led and followed Hardy Williams and his movement.

These are the people who paved the way and worked to put in office David Richardson, John White Jr., Dwight Evans, and Chaka Fattah. And who can forget all the work that went into making Wilson Goode the first African-American Mayor of the city of Philadelphia.

Yes, those were the strategies that were developed by Bob & Nancy Soblovitz, Harriet Erlich, Mary Golden, John White Sr. at the Clifford's house, where we met all day and night planning with Shelly Yanoff, Fairly Gamble, Bill Epstein and George French.

They were exciting times. But the most exciting thing was not only being a part of the strategizing, but watching those strategies come alive. Hardy Williams made them come alive in the streets of Philadelphia.

Early on Saturday morning and late on Friday nights, Barbara Moore, Carolyn Stridron, Kathy Williams, Gwen Hill and Carolyn Drake made posters and prepared, while Ali and Bill Williams, and later Alan Fastman, plotted our route and street strategy for the week.

Those streets came alive when Wanda Bailey Green got on the loudspeaker and Mr. Irv with Joe Harvey brought out that flatbed truck. And who can forget how Alicia Samuels took over for Wanda on the mike.

We were bad.

And if you didn't think so, or had the nerve to pull down one of our posters, you had to deal with Tommie Reid, Paul Bennett and Len Bostic.

And by morning, the posters were back up thanks to the midnight poster crew of Tommie Rod, Clarence Jones and others.

We turned the streets on and we turned young folks on. We had our little posse from the beginning with Howard, George Watkins and Wilson Alexander. There were hundreds more like them who canvassed everyday to make a difference.

And, talk about canvassing, how could I forget Mao. That dog was the best canvasser of them all.

[You see Hardy Williams turned everybody into believers.](#)

It didn't matter how many people we had - 10 or 100. On any given Saturday or Sunday, we'd start in West Philadelphia. Go to South, North and up to Gtown. And since we had to come back to West Philadelphia, we might as well get Roxborough and a little more of North and West Philadelphia.

Then, we had to go by Mom's, where she, Ms. Nita, Vi Cojulun and others were cooking chicken dinners, and help Isis, deliver the dinners, so we would have the money to buy literature.

We had everyone involved across this city – Mamie Nicholas, Amelia Barnett, Louise Hanible and Jean Thomas, all of whom had their own way of lighting up the street, the Governor's lawn and anywhere else they so decided.

We had whole families involved – David Henry, his daughters and his first and second wives – Dowdy

Dow, her husband and girls and baby son; the Shoatz' and Fernandez'.

And on Saturday night, the local establishments – became political with the Hardy Girls – Karen Pendergrass, Karen Gier, Loretta, Barbara Anderson and Jannerret's girls.

I could go on and on and I know I've missed a lot of names – because I'm not a little girl anymore and my memory is not what it used to be.

There were also lots of organizations Hardy Williams started because if there was a problem, Hardy Williams would start an organization to deal with the problem.

So, as an older person, now – as Senator Anthony always reminds me when he introduces me as his baby sister –

I'm going to attempt to remember our organizations and campaigns in order.

All those who were involved please stand when I mention the group you were involved in and remain standing.

The Ward Leadership
Independent Democratic of West Philadelphia
Black Political Forum
Peoples Institute
The First Legislative Race
City Council
Black Women's Political Alliance
Ethel Allen
David Richardson
John White Jr.
The First Congressional Race – and the second
The First Fattah race
Charlie Durham
Charlie Duncan
Charlie Bowser
The Black Family Reunion
Crisis Intervention
SEEDS

In more recent years:

The BNP
Ali Robinson's campaign
Judge Fitzgerald
Judge Younge
Judge Bright
Judge Tucker
And several other judges
Eldercare
OCAAN

Each one of the people in these groups can tell a story and has fond memories. Each one can tell a story of how Hardy Williams touched their lives. And I'm privileged to have been asked to speak on their behalf.

Thank you for you, Hardy Williams. For the lessons we all learned being involved in your movement and for the thousands of other people who don't even know how you've changed their lives.

Thank you Hardy for your commitment, your values, and for you the man: A person of character and dignity. We love you.

Transition and Honor

The bittersweet aspect of celebrating a new year is that if you live long enough, you realize it also will be filled with transitions, for some you are prepared, and others that still stop you cold. Since we've entered 2010 days ago, prominent and impactful men and women all over the world have joined the ancestors.

But as a Philadelphian, I would be remiss not to honor the memory of Hardy Williams, the former state legislator, political activist, and dean of independent politics that inspired a fresh take on power and possibility in this city and beyond.

His death saddened me both professionally and personally. As a student of and commentator on politics, it was more than evident that his influence can be seen in the current crop of political leadership and in anyone who values equality and justice for all.

Trained as a soldier and an attorney, Hardy plowed his charisma and intellect into a movement that had been brewing among African Americans, Latinos, Asians, women and the disaffected young of every color and community (sound familiar?). He is credited with making it all happen, but as history and reality often note, there is always an organization that helps create and sustain any transformational leader, be it King or Obama. The same is true here, and Hardy was secure enough to say such. In fact, one of his greatest gifts was to not only show a new generation that things could be different, but to take the time to offer him a few tricks he picked up along the way. His challenge was simple: “What are you going to do? Not talk about. Do?”

Those lessons did not come without cost. Tuition was sweat equity, because there was always a project underway, calls to be made, doors to be knocked on, papers to be filed. It was legwork needing fresh – and often free – energy. In short, there were dues to be paid. But what most will tell you is that the price of admission was well worth the show, whether it threw light on how best to operate or what to avoid.

There are literally dozens of political figures around town today that owe some measure of their success to his efforts, either directly where he served as a strategist for their campaigns or indirectly in that he took on the major slings and arrows years before, making their road easier. They range from Philadelphia's current mayor, Michael A. Nutter, to the newly sworn-in district attorney, R. Seth Williams.

Hardy's impact wasn't just about grooming “leaders,” but also ripening the climate for those new voices, making the establishment understand that there were consequences for ignoring the will of the people, and emboldening residents so that they understood they deserved their desires to be heard and manifested.

He was among that last crop of Civil Rights Era trailblazers and hell-raisers that are passing on. At 78, it seems like it was far too early for him to leave. Like too many of them, in communities across the nation, what exists in the modern record about him and them is largely unsatisfying. Their legacies are tied mostly to crumbling newsprint and grainy film footage stowed in archives, records about alien in this go-go, phone-app-digital-download-driven place we find ourselves.

We are grateful that Hardy's ambition didn't end with integrating Penn State University's basketball team – funny to consider today a college team of worth without a black player – or graduating from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He didn't peak with the 1971 mayor's race that he lost, but won more as the first credible black candidate for the city's top post, or even with his seat in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives or the Pennsylvania Senate. If he saw talent, he wanted to find a way to support and advance it. If he saw an opportunity, he was off to capture it. He had a street hustler's quickness with a social worker's compassion and a pol's savvy. The combo was off the charts if your cause was his, politically lethal if not.

His mind stayed popping, even as this illness crippled its key functions. He followed the 2008 presidential campaign with ferocity, and there was little doubt that he would. Breaking barriers and uniting people seeking to speak in their own voice for their own vision of democracy – it was all too Hardy.

I did not have the benefit of knowing him in his fiery era; my relationship with him arose during this lion's winter. But even age-mellowed, Hardy was always ablaze with ideas, with the simple concept that empowerment means people could exercise their options as they saw fit – not relegated to being puppets in a show directed by shadowy figures behind the curtain. There's more than I can record here in what I learned from and about him. But I will continue to strive to take the best of it and pay it forward.

– Nia Ngina Meeks



Acknowledgement

The family takes this opportunity to extend thanks to all who have shown kindness and have expressed sympathy during this time of bereavement. May God forever bless and keep each of you in His tender, loving care.



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