

Charleston Club Tattler

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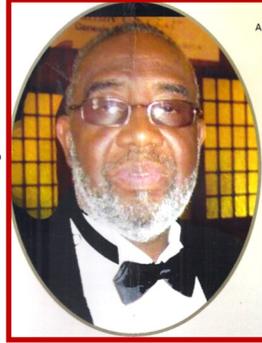
May 1, 2017



George Johnson Dies at 83

George E. Johnson, Sr. Dead at Age 83

George Edward Johnson, Sr. the Charleston Club's Parliamentarian died peacefully on April 6th at his home in Ft. Washington; he was 83 years old. George was the "Go-to guy" in the Charleston Club. If something was wrong or needed to be corrected, George Johnson was "the man with a plan!" When the Charleston Club's meetings got too large to be hosted in members' rec-rooms, George found an acceptable solution to the problem; the basement of *his church*, Ebenezer A.M.E. Church.



George Johnson was the only child born to the late James and George Ellen Johnson in February 1934 of the Liberty Hills area in North Charleston. He attended Four-Mile Elementary School and Bonds-Wilson H.S. After high school, he joined the United States Air Force and did his basic training in Denver, CO. His military service years were 1952~1955, serving with distinction during the Korean War. George received the Korean Service medal, Good Conduct Medal, United Nations Service Medal and the National Defense Service Medal.

George returned to Charleston and married the love of his life, his high school sweetheart, Bernice Brightman on June 16, 1957. The newlyweds lived in the Daniel Jenkins Housing in Union Heights before moving to the Washington in 1958, and starting their family. They had four children; Linder D. Stover, Gwendolyn D. Williams (Gary), George, Jr., and Sabrina L. Davis (Nathaniel, Sr.). They raised their four children and Bernice's two younger sisters, Carolyn and Elisa to love their church, family and community.

Like his father before him, George dearly wanted to be a Mason, and on June 18, 1965 he joined the Masons in Washington-Doric Lodge No. 19. At an early age George was attracted to the Masonic fraternity because of his father, James and like Prince Hall (1735-1807) he believed in freemasonry's ideals of liberty, equality and peace. George was a Mason for 51 years, he became Worship Master of Doric Lodge No. 19, and Grand Marshal of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Lodge of DC for 10 years becoming Grand Marshal Emeritus. Until April 2016, Past Master George E. Johnson, Sr. enjoyed teaching and fellowshiping with his mason brothers.

Few people knew it, but in the 1970s, George started riding a motorcycle. He liked the *Honda motorcycle look*, and its suspension system. It was while riding his motorcycle, that he reverted back to a nickname his friends in

Liberty Hill gave him years ago. His CB handle was, "The Bogator" (i.e. black person, quail, cup, anything can be a bogator when you are from the Bible belt). George and his ole CB handle "The Bogator" was the subject of many (tall) tales with ole friends and relatives the night before the funeral services.

George became a beloved member of Ebenezer A.M.E. Church family in the 1980s, he was known as Bro. George, Bro. Johnson or simply, as Granddad. He and his grandson, Nathaniel "Lil Nat" Davis, Jr. loved performing security duty at Ebenezer functions. He became "family" to his Pastors, Rev. Dr. Grainger Browning, Jr. and his wife, Rev. Dr. Jo Ann Browning. They took numerous trips together up and down the East Coast. As a member of *his* Ebenezer Church family, George sang in the King's Men Choir, served on the Usher Board, the Security Ministry and the Count Team.

George and Bernice joined the Charleston Club in mid-1980s and became faithful members of the Club for years. Club meetings at the Johnsons meant "A Good Time!" As they hosted numerous club meetings in their rec-room, invariable George would bring out his latest catch-of-the-day...fish he recently caught. George loved fishing, and there was nothing better than *his catch-of-the day!* It was in his rec-room that he thoroughly enjoyed watching "all things" Redskins...win or lose; he was a diehard fan of the Washington Redskins! Go Skins!

George and Bernice celebrated their 59th wedding anniversary this past June 16th, they were looking forward to celebrating their 60th this coming June. Over the years they enjoyed traveling; a few years ago they set sail on a cruise vacation to Bermuda. For Bernice, the most memorable trip was the 11-Day "Train Trip Across America." The trip was an unforgettable train vacation!

The day before his beloved grandson "Lil Nat's" funeral at Ebenezer, George Edward Johnson, Sr. died peacefully at home. Celebration of Life Services were held at *his* Ebenezer A.M.E. Church on Thursday, April 13th with hundreds of church members and friends in attendance. The King's Men Choir sang some of George's favorite selections, Charleston Club President, Rose C. Randall and club member Ben Randall gave tributes to George. Both Senior Pastor and Co-Pastor Browning had admirable and personal remarks/messages of comfort to the family. There were many members of the Charleston Club in attendance. Interment at Cheltenham Veterans Cemetery was Tuesday April 18th in Maryland.

Edisto Island Family Visit DC Area

Members of Charleston's (Edisto Island) Meggett/Lucas family came to Washington to visit the new African Amer-



ican Museum. Some family members stayed with Charleston Club member Ben Randall and his wife, Rose (Charleston Club president). The family visit was at the request of the

Smithsonian museum.

"It had a porch." That was one of 87-year-old Isabell Meggett Lucas's first observations Monday morning (April 10th) upon coming face-to-face with her childhood home ~ the tiny, two-room, wood-framed cabin originally situated in an open field on Edisto Island that's now a prized centerpiece at the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The cabin that housed enslaved people starting in 1853 was dismantled and reassembled inside the new Smithsonian museum, accommodations had to be made. A new brick fireplace was built where originally there had been a large, potbellied wood fire stove. In the dimly-lit gallery, the house is now illuminated by overhead spotlights and a glow seems to emanate from the interior so viewers can get a better look inside. Originally, the house would have been lit only by kerosene lamps since there was no electricity.

But for Lucas, and the multiple generations of Meggett descendants who were invited to the Smithsonian, the experience of seeing their family house as a museum exhibition was only underscored by the fact that it's now being billed as a slave cabin.

Some of Lucas's relatives weren't made aware the house was once inhabited by slaves until three years ago, when the Smithsonian Institution first expressed an interest in the Point of Pines Plantation cabin. "No one ever called it a 'slave cabin,'" recalled Lavern Meggett, a great niece of Lucas. "It was just a place we called 'home.'" The oldest of 10 children to Catherine and Gussie Meggett, Lucas lived with her parents, brothers and sisters in the cabin from the time of her birth in 1930 to the age of 19. Lucas's brother, Jesse Meggett, lived there in his childhood years too before marrying Emily Hutchinson Meggett.

The last family member moved out in 1981. In the intervening years, children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews came to play at "Mama's house" ~ their term of endearment for Grandma Catherine. Lavern and two of her sisters, Marvette Meggett and Elizabeth Jones, recalled fond memories of playing on the long-gone porch during "baseball" games, which were carried out in the field with a can and a stick. "We'd stand on the porch and wait for whoever to strike out and then we'd get in the game," Marvette Meggett said. Jones boasted she was the only one brave enough to swim in the creek with their father; her job was to hunt and catch crabs.

Denise Randall-Ravenell (cousin of Charleston Club member, Ben Randall), a niece of the three sisters, said she

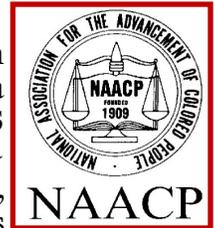
couldn't shake the memory of "learning to drink coffee in that house." For 83-year-old Emily Hutchinson Meggett ~ sister-in-law of Lucas and mother of Marvette and Lavern Meggett and Elizabeth Jones ~ the memories go back farther. Known by family and friends as "MP," short for "Military Police," relatives joked, Emily Hutchinson Meggett's family line also has roots on Edisto Island and the Point of Pines Plantation. A talkative woman who gestures with her cane, she pulled the more subdued Lucas into reminiscing about old times of being frightened of the spirits in the woods and visiting the husband and wife responsible for interpreting their dreams. The two women were also among the first to be baptized at the new pool in the nearby church, which has since been covered up.

During their family visit to the Smithsonian, the family members had a chance to record their oral histories with the museum curators. Laverne Meggett told *The Post and Courier* the message she wanted to leave behind is that her house was not just a slave cabin, stamped only as a reminder of human pain and suffering. "That cabin represents a lot of strength and courage," she said. "I never heard my grandmother complain. She was always happy to see us when she came, and they were happy with the very little that they had. We didn't know it was a little. We thought it was a lot. To us, it was a lot."

Charleston's NAACP turns 100

The first NAACP Branches in South Carolina were organized in Columbia and Charleston in April 1917 with 75 members. One of the founding members in Charleston was famous artist, Edwin Harleston. Septima P. Clark was one of the activists early in the life of the Charleston Branch. This was nearly a decade after W.E.B. DuBois founded the national organization in New York in 1909. By late 1917, just over 1,400 people subscribed to the NAACP's national journal, *The Crisis*. Two years later, the state membership was just over 1,100, though about eighty percent of the membership was in Charleston. Their greatest single success in this early formative period was in 1920, when the Charleston Branch used a petition signed by three-fourths of the blacks in the city to persuade white leaders to hire black teachers to teach in black public schools. Previously only white teachers were hired. Other local branches included units in Georgetown, Sumter, Florence, Greenville, and Aiken.

One of the most important legal battles fought by the S.C. Conference of the NAACP was *Briggs v. Elliott*, which concerned the desegregation of schools. This case was grouped together with the *Brown v. Board of Education* case by the Supreme Court in May 1954. Many local people played important roles in this case, and many lost their jobs or were even driven from the state with death threats. In the middle 1940's, Ossie McKaine, after reorganizing the Sumter branch, persuad-



ed the state NAACP Conference to make equal pay for teachers their number one priority. With the money the group raised for legal challenges, teachers in Columbia and Charleston won equal salaries in 1944 and 1945.

The S.C. NAACP helped raise money for the Supreme Court case that originated in Texas that outlawed the "white primary." After this victory, white political leaders did not relent and allow blacks to vote in the state primary. Rather, they rescinded all primary laws and turned the Democratic Party into a kind of private club that could then refuse membership to blacks. The state NAACP responded with a test case, which began with George Elmore trying to vote in the 1946 primary. In July of 1947, Federal Judge Waites Waring, who was a member of a prominent Charleston family, ruled that the state must allow all people of all races to vote in its primaries. Enough blacks did overcome the registration process so that white politicians began to pay them a little attention. For example, African-American voters in the 1950 Democratic primary were the key in helping Senator Olin Johnston survive a challenge from Governor Strom Thurmond. The late Attorney Matthew Perry, who retired as a Federal Judge, was the lead counsel in most of the cases fought by the NAACP in the Civil Rights era of the mid-twentieth century.

During the tenure of Ms. Dot S. Scott, who became the Charleston Branch President in 2001, the Charleston Branch has been faithful to the work of those who laid the foundation, while working to see that the NAACP is a relevant and active voice in the present day with a diverse membership. The Charleston Branch now has the only staffed Branch Office in South Carolina and has grown to be the second largest Branch in the South Carolina Conference of Branches. The Charleston Branch has been instrumental in advocating for progress in the Charleston County School District. The Charleston Branch is the only Branch in SC with an active outreach and collaborative effort with the Latino community. The Charleston Branch has again become a strong and respected voice in the Low-country, and has collaborated with other organizations like the YWCA of Greater Charleston, ACLU of South Carolina and the League of Women Voters.

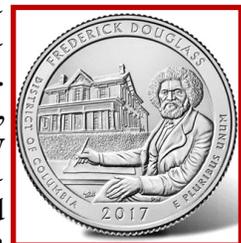
The Charleston NAACP celebrates the victories of the past, are committed to meet the needs of the present, and will equip ourselves and our posterity to stand tall and fight for a bright future. There is still a need for the NAACP as it strives to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to pursue the American Dream, said a local civil rights leader on Friday, April 14th. "The current political climate and the recent surge in hate crimes makes it plain that we do not live in a 'post-racial' America or 'post-racial' Charleston," said Dot Scott, president of the NAACP Charleston branch. Scott spoke Friday on the 100th anniversary of the founding of the local chapter of the national civil rights organization. She delivered her remarks outside the Charleston Branch NAACP headquarters on Columbus Street.

Scott said, "We've come a long way, but we still have a long way to go—even in a time when some question

whether there's still a need for the NAACP." Disparities in school funding based on race and class are a continuing concern, she said. "As long as minority students are herded into 'special classes' and suspended more often than their white peers, there'll still be a need for the NAACP." Racial profiling also remains an issue, "As long as race and class hinder equal justice under the law, there'll be a need for the NAACP." Charleston Mayor John Tecklenburg congratulated Scott and the NAACP, and he recognized the organization's "tireless effort to make the city of Charleston a better place for all citizens."

Frederick Douglass Quarters Available Now

Famed abolitionist and activist **Frederick Douglass** is the latest historic icon to land on U.S. currency. Douglass is now on the U.S. quarter, released by the **U.S. Mint** on Tuesday April 4th. 400 million Douglass quarters are currently in circulation and are also available to order online, in 40-coin rolls and 100-coin bags. The design ~ which features Douglass writing in the front of his Southeast, Washington, DC home where he lived from 1877 until his death in 1895 ~ was selected by the Treasury as part of the **America the Beautiful Quarters Program**. The program issues quarters that honor national park sites, and the place of Douglass' former home on W Street SE in Anacostia, was named the **Frederick Douglass National Historic Site**.



Charleston's First Black-owned Pharmacy In 30 Years



When Krisalyn Gleaton held the grand opening for her new drug store March 25th in the Harrell Square Shopping Center West Ashley at on Sam Rittenburg Blvd., she not only marked a milestone in her personal career, she also made a mark in local history by opening the first Black owned pharmacy in the Charleston metropolitan area since Wilson's Drug Store on Spring Street closed its doors 30 years ago. She also became the first black female to own a pharmacy in Charleston.

The 1998 St. Andrews Parish H.S. graduate discovered a love and passion for chemistry while in high school. Gleaton thinks she inherited some of it from her mother, a high school physics teacher. As a high school student she considered a career in medicine and thought about a career that would combine medicine with her love for chemistry. And although she toyed with the idea of becoming a lawyer – she worked for Charleston attorney Renee Gators while in high school - it was a part time job at a pharmacy while in college that got her focused.

Gleaton's 4.0 GPA at St. Andrews Parish High made her class valedictorian and those study habits sustained her through her 2004 graduation from Hampton University School of Pharmacy as Magna Cum Laude. Since graduating, Gleaton gained vast experiences through internships

and work at hospitals in Virginia. She worked on the staffs at several major chain pharmacies that included CVS, Safeway Food & Drug, Target, and Kmart. Two months ago she opened Focus: Meds Pharmacy and Wellness.

She made the decision because she wants to help people, she says. "I enjoy being a pharmacist, but the scope of the profession has changed from patient care to profit. My passion is chemistry and helping people, but pharmacy is becoming more about pushing pills and pharmacists play more of a dispensing role than caregivers. In the past your pharmacist also was a counselor and confidant. You could ask your pharmacist questions and get advice. I want to be a part of my patient's life. Owning my own pharmacy allows me to do that, to get to know my patients and their needs," she said. "I'm proud and humbled to be the first African American owned pharmacy in the area in some three decades, but there's definitely a need here as more people realize and want one-on-one relationships with their pharmacist," Gleaton said.

Easter Visit to Charlotte Hall

Charleston Club member Ben Randall took to the road again, this time to the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home in St. Mary's County to visit Charleston Club member, (Rev.) Kenneth Devine. Along the way, Ben picked up Kenneth's son, Justine Devine to make the half-hour drive down to the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. Charlotte Hall is a beautiful 125 acre Veterans Home in Charlotte Hall, Md. Club members have visited Charlotte Hall many times before. The guys spent a couple of hours catching up with what's going on and the upcoming 2018 Charleston Club's 70th Reunion (July 2018), here in the Washington area.



40 Colleges and \$900K in Scholarship Money

Twin high school seniors are making their family proud after the two have been accepted to 40 colleges between them, earning over \$900,000 in scholarship offers. Akhya C. and Akhea S. Mitchell both attend Troup County Comprehensive H.S. in LaGrange, GA, earning a 4.5 GPA and a 3.9 GPA respectively. Due to their stellar grades and involvement in various student organizations, the two were able to afford to apply to 42 colleges in total for about \$200, their mother, Kalitha Reynolds said.

Along with using the Common Application~which allows students to apply to up to 700 colleges and universities for a flat rate that ranges from \$25 to \$90. The Mitchell twins also took advantage of college fairs. "We started out by attending college fairs and taking advantage of free applications on site." The twins say that attending college

is important to them. "As long as we could remember, our parents have instilled in us the importance of education," Akhea said. Although the seniors have been accepted into 40 schools between them, they've narrowed it down to two schools -- N.C. A&T University and Howard University.

Charleston Club Tattler ~ One liners ...

- The next Charleston Club meeting will be **Saturday, May 13th 2:00 p.m.** at the **Original Ebenezer AME Church**, on Allentown Rd in Ft. Washington. Your hosts for this meeting are: **Dolores Abrams, Kevin Hamilton, Patrice Hamilton, Bernice Johnson, and Brenda Owens.**



Nathaniel "Lil Nat" Davis, Jr., the grandson of Charleston Club members **George & Bernice Johnson** entered into eternal rest on March 25th; he was 24. "Lil Nat" was the son of the Johnson's youngest daughter, Sabrina and her husband Nathaniel Davis, Sr. "Lil Nat" was a member of Ebenezer where he became well-known as the happy-go-lucky "security" kid who assisted his grandfather, Bro. George Johnson, during Sunday services and Bible Studies. Celebration of Life Services for Lil Nat were Friday, April 7th at Ebenezer A.M.E. Church. Interment services were at Ft. Lincoln Cemetery, on Bladensburg Road in Brentwood.



May Birthdays:

Michael McKinney ~ May 2nd ~ **Angela Martin** ~ May 7th ~ **John Jackson** ~ May 5th ~ **Bernice Brooks** ~ May 7th ~ **Vera Bradford** ~ May 13th ~ **Lanard Geddings** ~ May 18th ~ **Terrence Edwards** ~ May 26th ~ **Leroy J. Bennett** ~ May 27th ~ **Georgia Chisolm** ~ May 28th ~ **Gilbert Knowles** ~ May 30th.

June Birthdays:

Leroy "Bobby" Palmer ~ June 2nd ~ **Marguerite Greene** ~ June 3rd ~ **Marva White** ~ June 6th ~ **Reginald "Reggie" Russell** ~ June 10th ~ **Yolanda Greene** ~ June 21st ~ **Charles Hawkins** ~ June 27th ~ **Bennie Louder** ~ June 27th ~ **Leila Potts Campbell** ~ June 29th ~ **Herman Perry** ~ June 29th ~ **Allen Coley** ~ June 30th.

July Birthdays:

Mary S. Gourdine ~ July 5th ~ **Estelle Perry** ~ July 8th ~ **John McNeil** ~ July 20th ~ **Catherine Briggs** ~ July 24th ~ **Paula Edwards** ~ July 30th.

August Birthdays:

Irene Green ~ August 10th ~ **Carl Greene** ~ August 10th ~ **Thomasina Smith-Cook** ~ August 14th ~ **Norma McKayhan** ~ August 17th ~ **Violet Morton-Dixon** ~ August 18th ~ **Mildred McDow** ~ August 23rd ~ **Julia M. Harris** ~ August 24th ~ **Cynthia Coulter** ~ August 28th ~ **William Heyward** ~ August 29th ~ **Pharas L. Davis** ~ August 30th ~ **Irma Louise Palmer** ~ August 30th. *- The Fly on The Wall !*

