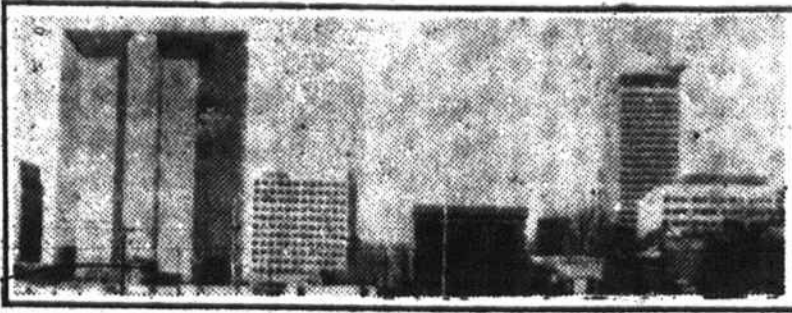


Community News B1



The Hills set the record straight

Local couple separates fact from fiction during visit

By RUDY ANDERSON
Chronicle Managing Editor

The Christmas and New Year holiday season is traditionally a time when people make their way back home to visit with relatives and friends. That was the case for George and Susan Hill.

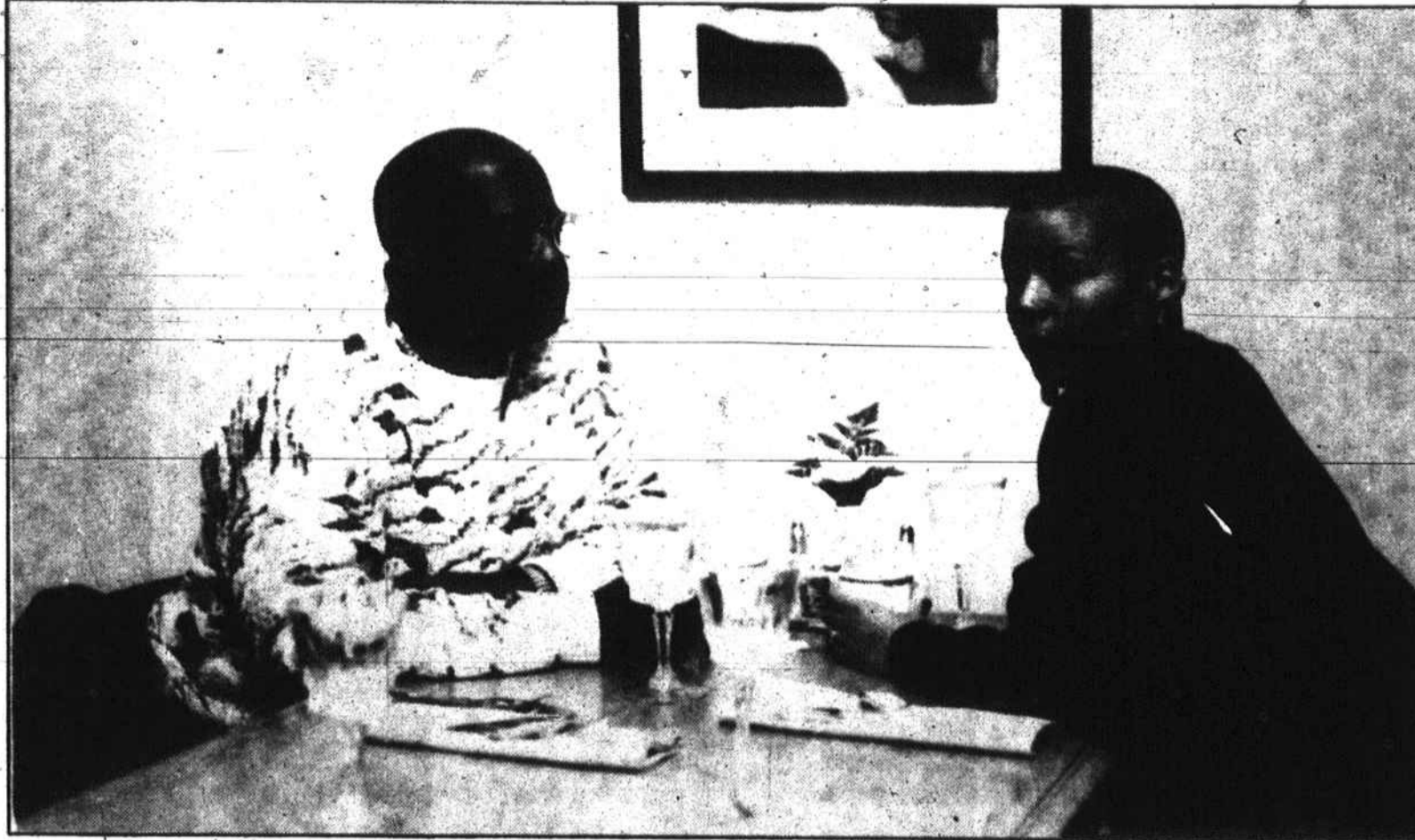
Although the couple left Winston-Salem for other career pursuits in Los Angeles nearly five years ago, they still are subjects of inquiry by people who ask that proverbial "what ever happened to" question. For those who want to know, the couple gave a candid interview during their recent holiday visit.

At 51, George Hill is a senior vice president for the Golden State Mutual Insurance Company in Los Angeles. Most here remember the Winston-Salem native as president and chief executive officer of Winston Mutual Insurance Company from 1971 to 1985 before the company merged with Golden State.

People remember the strikingly-attractive Susan Bruce (as she was known then) who was a reporter and anchor for WXII-TV in the early 1980s. The Baltimore, Maryland native left in 1986 also bound for Los Angeles where she became a corporate executive head hunter for Brentwood International. She manages the search activity of the company for corporate executives for Fortune 100 companies across the country looking to fill positions. Of her age, she said with a smile, "that is not information I'm going to disclose."

George and Susan Cole Hill wanted to make it clear that, contrary to what some may have thought, they were not married secretly before leaving Winston-Salem. "When I left, I wasn't divorced, I was separated. We were married Nov. 26, 1987," Hill said.

"We're boring," Mrs. Hill said in describing their three year marriage. "We do the things married people



George and Susan Hill both candidly discuss their lives together during a recent interview at a local restaurant while visiting relatives and friends in Winston-Salem.

Photo by Elizabeth Martin

do. We don't live the wild lifestyle that some might think," she said.

In response to some of the rumors she said she has heard about them, she said it was an unfortunate state of affairs when people have a need to create stories because of a lack of information. "I think in my case and in George's, it's a situation of 'if I don't know it, I'm going to make it up, pass it along, and see how fast it

gets around. It's like a relay race," she said. "If I had done half of what people said I did while I was here, how could I have functioned and worked everyday?" she asked.

The couple said the rumor they liked the best was that they had a child. "A lady actually walked up to me and asked, 'How's the baby? We heard you had a son.' I have no child," she said. And Hill quickly added, "And

there are no children planned or contemplated."

The Hills said they have no intention of returning to Winston-Salem someday to live but may resettle somewhere in the southeast if George Hill's company permits the move. For now the Hills are trying to make the best of their opportunities in Los Angeles.

"I make a living," Mrs. Hill said of her current position. "My being a workaholic has not changed," she said.

Of her career in broadcasting, she said she missed some aspects of it like crime reporting and issue-oriented stories. "But I don't miss standing in the snow in the middle of the night or working late Saturday and Sunday nights," she said.

"My job is basically the same," George Hill said. "Of course I don't make all the decisions like I used to, but I enjoy it." He said one of the things he has learned living in an area where African-Americans are not the major minority is that the phrase "all people are created equal" is really true. "Besides the cultural differences, everybody wants the same things for themselves and their families," he said.

Both say one of their ultimate objectives is to own and operate a business in the Los Angeles area. "We're not really sure," Hill said. "But I tell you, it would be something geared toward Susan's interests. I tell you that." And what are her business interests? "It will be something in the service industry. That is where the country is headed. We just haven't decided what that service will be yet," Mrs. Hill said.

She pointed out that one of the things about living in Los Angeles is that it builds individual strength. "You have to go get what you want. The competition is really tough. You have to execute your plans if you want to succeed. And so far, we have executed our game plan as well as can be expected."

Local actress to appear on America's Most Wanted

By PATRICIA SMITH-DEERING
Community News Editor

One of the next faces you'll see on the popular crimestopper program, *America's Most Wanted*, will be that of Willette R. Thompson, a Winston-Salem native who is both an actress and model. She will appear in a segment of the program to be aired Friday, Jan. 11, at 8 p.m.



Photo by Elizabeth Martin

Making her debut on national television, Willette R. Thompson is looking forward to seeing the finished product.

on the Fox Television Network (locally on WNRW, Fox 45).

In the crime reenacted, Ms. Thompson plays the role of the murder victim's best friend, Doreen, who was a witness to some of the events leading up to the slaying. The victim was killed and her body dismembered by a boyfriend who is suspected of committing a similar crime in at least one other instance.

Although Ms. Thompson has had a wide range of acting experience, the episode is the first time she has appeared on nationwide television. She found the filming a very different kind of experience from stage performances she has done. "It was interesting to get to talk to the actual Doreen," she said.

She found that most of the people used in the reenactments are professional actors. "The actual people are usually too close to it (the incident) to be effective," she speculated. She added that she learned a lot about the industry that she had not known.

The crime actually occurred during a summer, but the filming took place this winter. "My most vivid memory was sitting in my car in a trailer park, shivering in the cold. It was not very glamorous... Filming is very, very tedious work," she said. But, the tedium had its advantages. "The stage teaches you more about your craft, but film gives you exposure," she said with obvious enthusiasm. "I've been auditioning for various things, but I was the right one at the right time. It's already gotten me an audition for a film... (and) gotten the casting director to know me by name," she added.

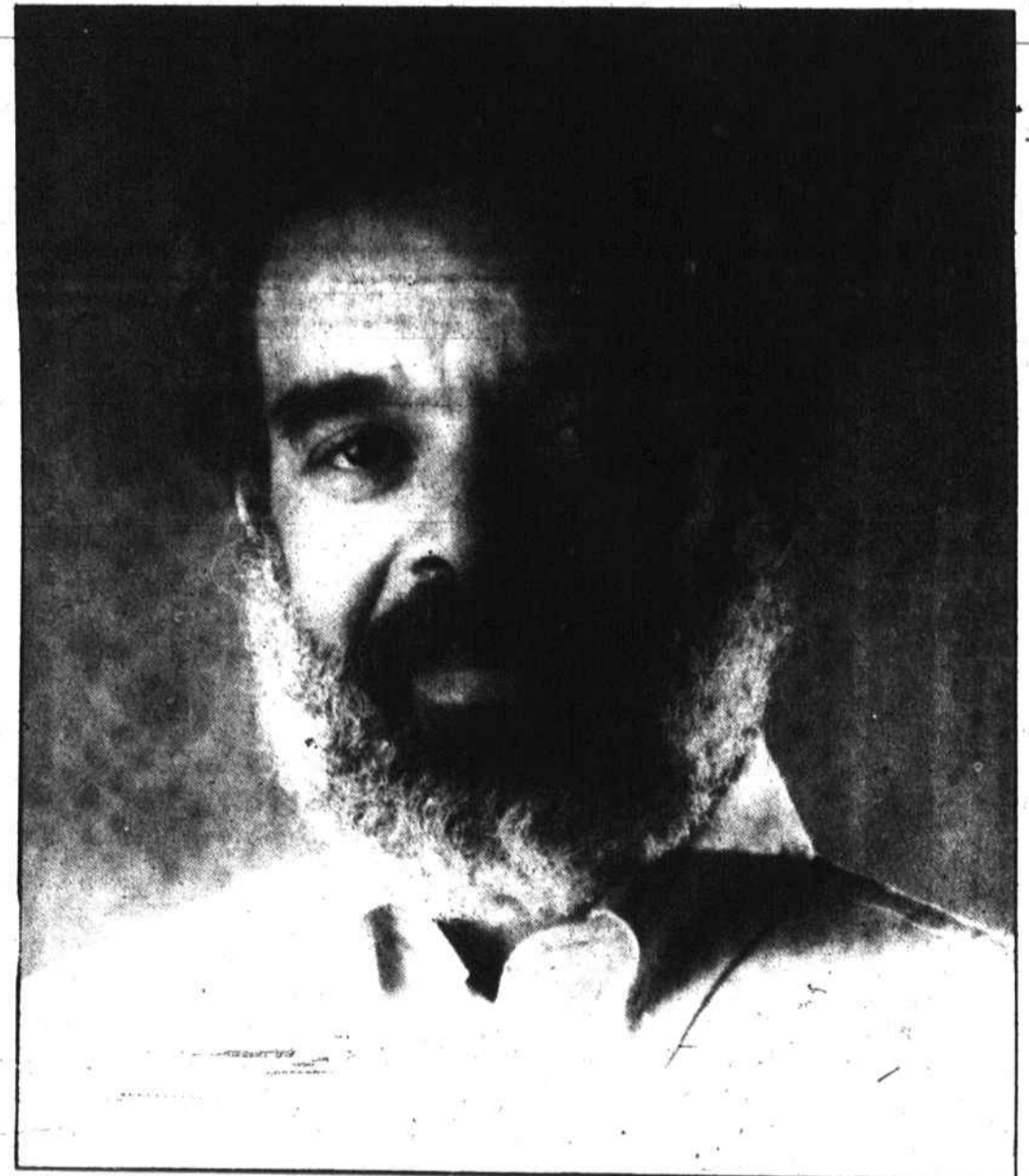
Daughter of Annette and Willie Thompson, who live on New Walkertown Road, Ms. Thompson attended Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools. She first appeared on the stage in *Anne of Green Gables* at the age of 15 at the Mt.

Tabor summer enrichment program. From then on, her love of acting grew. She majored in Theatre Arts at Ferrum College, where she received both an Associate Degree in Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre. While at Ferrum, she toured with the Jack Tale Players, the college's Children's Theatre Troupe.

Ms. Thompson recently appeared in *Celebration: An African Odyssey*, performed by The North Carolina Black Repertory Company. As an actress, she has performed with the Nathan Ross Freeman Playwright's Showcase Ensemble, and serves as their senior resident actress.

A charter member of the Theatre Alliance, Ms. Thompson has also appeared in many local television and radio commercials, as well as industrial films. She has also toured with the USO where she visited veterans' hospitals throughout the United States.

Asked how her parents reacted to her upcoming national television appearance, Ms. Thompson flashed her characteristic broad smile and laughed saying, "Mom's ecstatic; she's telling everybody." Ms. Thompson will see the completed episode for the first time Friday. "I will watch it with the world," she said, adding that she will probably view it alone. She commented, "It's scary to see yourself... you pick out all the imperfections and think about how you could have done some things better or differently."



Actor Fred Morsell

WSSU soon to feature 'Presenting Mr. Douglass'

"Presenting Mr. Douglass," a dramatic theatrical portrayal of the life of the 19th-century abolitionist and statesman Frederick Douglas, will be presented at Winston-Salem State University at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 16, at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative and Candlelight Service in the Kenneth R. Williams Auditorium. Admission is free.

Actor Fred Morsell portrays Douglass, who escaped from the bondage of slavery in the late 1830s and went on to achieve prominence as an antislavery and human rights advocate. Douglass later became an American diplomat, an advisor to

Abraham Lincoln, and a vigorous proponent of women's suffrage. He was also a prolific writer and a distinguished orator but is probably best remembered for his classic autobiographies.

Morsell's acting career spans 22 years. He has performed to critical acclaim in theater productions of "Othello," "Macbeth" and "A Raisin in the Sun."

Besides appearing on Broadway and in regional theater, he has performed on such television shows as "L.A. Law" and "Hill Street Blues." Morsell also has sung the baritone lead in more than 20 operas.

Associated Artists to give Winner's Circle Show

Associated Artists of Winston-Salem will hold an opening reception for its Winner's Circle Show on Friday, Jan. 11, from 7:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.

The show will consist of work by award winners from AAW's three major juried shows of 1990: the Henley Southeastern Spectrum, National Exposures, and Dimensions.

The opening reception will coincide with the opening of Common Ground, a national

ceramics competition sponsored by the Sawtooth Center for Visual Art.

The Winner's Circle will hang in the Associated Artists Gallery of the Sawtooth Building from Thursday, Jan. 10 until Thursday, Feb. 14.

The reception and show are free and open to the public. Shows such as the Winner's Circle are made possible in part by the United Arts Fund Drive of The Arts Council Inc. in downtown Winston-Salem.

Belview Community Club holds first meeting of '91

The Belview Community Club held its first meeting of 1991 at the home of Mrs. Dorothy Williams. Mrs. Ruby Charles, president, called the meeting to order with a song "What A Fellowship," led by Dorothy Williams. Hilton Scott followed with another selection entitled "Come By Here."

Mabel Walker recited the Scripture which was the 100th Psalms. Myrtle Wall read the minutes from the last meeting which were approved. Ruby Charles thanked and praised each member for their service and cooperation given to the club.

The election of officers for 1991 was next on the agenda. It was the common consent that all officers retain their same position except Myrtle Wall requested that Clara Caldwell assist her with the financial secretary position. Officers for 1991 are Ruby Charles, president; Ethel Tard, vice-president; Myrtle Wall, recording/financial secretary; Clara Caldwell, assistant recording/financial secretary; Mabel Walker, chaplain/condolence chairperson; Hilton Scott, assistant chaplain; and Dorothy Williams, reporter.

Attending the meeting was Bro. Frank Brenard. The club regrets that

his wife, Evelyn, and Claudette Lindsay were not at the meeting due to illnesses. Also, Mary Randolph is a shut-in member. Other members absent from the meeting included: Beechie Charles, Melvin Caldwell, Gaddy Thompson, Barbara Scott, and Leroy Wall. Other members attending the meeting were: Geneva Charles, Mr. and Mrs. Penn, and Ella Mae Williams.

It was announced that the club's goal for 1991 is to keep closer contact with the sick and shut-in club members and one another. The club will celebrate its anniversary on the second Sunday in February by attending Grace-St. Andrews Methodist Church. The next meeting will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Wall.