

Sheriff Glendell Hill

Sheriff Glendell Hill was born and raised in New Bern, North Carolina. Hill joined the U.S. Army after high school and was stationed at Vint Hill Farms Station in Prince William County. He resided in Manassas during his time at Vint Hill beginning in December 1967. Following his honorable discharge from the Army on June 30th, 1969, he joined the Manassas Police Department, becoming the first Black police officer in Manassas as well as the first Black employee of Manassas. In 1974, he became a detective in the department. He joined the Prince William-Manassas Adult Detention Center, a new facility, in 1982, and went on to spend the next two decades of his career here, eventually serving as the Superintendent beginning in 1993.

In November 2003, Sheriff Hill was elected as the Sheriff of Prince William County, becoming the first Black sheriff in Prince William County as well as the first Black person elected to a County position. At the time of the interview (May 2023), Sheriff Hill was running for reelection. If he is reelected, he will be the longest serving sheriff in Prince William County's history.

**Interview with Sheriff Glendell Hill (SH), Prince William County
May 2, 2023**

Interviewer: Lauren Maloy (**LM**), Prince William County Office of Historic Preservation
Also present: Terry Fearnley, Chief Deputy

(Introduction/Test Recording/Sheriff Hill Recording 1)

SH: This is for your records, right?

LM: Yes, we will absolutely share all of this, obviously, however y'all want to document this. Could you just tell me your name and how long you've worked here?

SH: My name is Glendell Hill, also known as Glenn Hill, because that's what everybody called me, and I'm the Sheriff of Prince William County, and I took office on January the 1st, 2004.

[END OF SHERIFF HILL RECORDING 1]

LM: Again, this is just a casual conversation, and we're hoping to record a little bit of your history since you've been so influential in Prince William County, and my first question is really about what brought you here to Prince William County? So, how did you start - why did you move here?

SH: Well, I was stationed in Vint Hill, I got out of the military in Vint Hill on June the 30th, 1969. So that's what really brought me to Prince William County. But I started living in Manassas...on December of 1968, I started living in Manassas. Actually, December of 1967, sorry, sorry, 1967. So I was living in Manassas and stationed in Vint Hill Farms, that's what really brought me to the area.

LM: And what made you decide to stay here? Because you're not, you're originally from North Carolina, is that right?

SH: Originally from New Bern, North Carolina, yes. Umm, I liked the community, I liked the area. Of course, at the time, you know, I was looking at going to college on a football scholarship, I actually went to the college and got accepted, and that was one of the things that I always wanted to do. But I also had this, really, concern, and looking at law enforcement, also. And to go back, I got interested in law enforcement when I was in high school, because the first black police officer in my hometown was a family friend, and we used to talk regularly and a couple times I rode in the car with him, so I kind of got interested in law enforcement. And when I decided that...well, I met a couple police officers at the cleaners a couple times, of course, you know I was dressed in my military fatigues and they knew I was in the military, and we began to talk, you know in a small town you kind of run into people every once in a while. So, one of those times I was talking with one of the officers, he said, "When are you going to get out of the military?" I said, "Well, I'll be getting out on June 30th, the end of June," he said, "Why don't you apply for a job on the police department?" He said, "We would probably love to have you, just based on our conversations." And, and I thought about it, I thought about it...so now here we are with a definitive decision, should I continue on to go to school? Should I apply for a job with the police department? So, looking at the area, I began to check on, there were no minorities at all working for the Town of Manassas at the time, and certainly no minorities on the police department. So you know, I thought about it, I said, let me think about it, let me think about it, so you know, we talked about it as a family, and of

course ultimately it was going to be up to me about what I was going to do. And I talked to my friend in my hometown about what do you think? What do you think I should do? And we had some lengthy conversations a couple times about what I should do, and some expectations to go along with that. And that's really what I was interested from him, expectations, what can I expect to happen? Because he'd been through all of that, and it's always good to talk to someone who has experienced some things already. So...but to answer your question, I kind of liked the town. I'm a small town guy, uh, certainly grew up in the South, and I was not interested in moving to a big city, because I'm not a big city type [of] person. So that was one of the things that interested me was, the people here, I had met some people that were very friendly, and living where I lived, certainly Manassas was still segregated, so I lived in the community with people that came from basically the same economic background that I came from, there were some military people there too, so I have people that I felt very comfortable at being around. So leaving the military, and going back somewhere else, was really something that I was not interested in, I just liked the community here. So I decided to apply for a job on the police department.

LM: Well, that's great. Well, so you've answered a little bit about this, but what was the county like when you first moved here?

SH: Well, when I first moved here, certainly, you know, as a newcomer, and being, at the time I was what, 21 years old? 20 years old? You know, I'm just like another 20 year old, pretty much just interested in what I was doing, and didn't really care that much about my surroundings and everything that's going on...certainly not politics, certainly not politics. I was married at the time and we had a young child. So I was pretty much interested in, um, basically, day to day activities, go to work, come home, you meet a couple people, you socialize with some people. And, you know, up until the last year of my military, when I really started thinking about, what am I going to do? One of my options was to stay in the military, so I figured, no I don't want to do that. But, uh, you know, it just, really thinking about what I was going to do, I was really undecided. I liked the people that I met here, I liked the small town atmosphere, and even talking to the police officers here, saying, you know, I kind of like this. So I guess I...even though things were segregated at the time, but that changed too while I was here. Some of the black military people that were in the same situation that I was in, we could only live in a certain place when we got to Manassas, that changed, that changed, about 6 months after we were here. So, there was, some of my buddies that moved out from Manassas, I used to visit them. So, I saw things changing, and I thought that was for the good. And of course, the schools in Manassas, I think they integrated probably, what, about a year and a half, two years before I got here. And I lived in an apartment building with some teachers that were recruited to come to Manassas from other places because the schools had integrated. So you meet people that basically come from the same background that you come from, and you got a chance to talk with them, and of course, we kind of looked out for each other, we all babysitted for each other, you know, we had some activities that we did together. So, I kind of liked the people that I met, and of course, I liked the community.

LM: That's a great answer. Well, part of my job too is to not just talk about your career, but to maybe capture what it was like here when you were first here, when you first started in your career. So, one of my colleagues had a question that I thought was interesting...do you remember any restaurants or watering holes that were local favorites when you first moved here that maybe are no longer around in Manassas. We'd like to kind of paint a picture of what Manassas was like in the 60s or 70s.

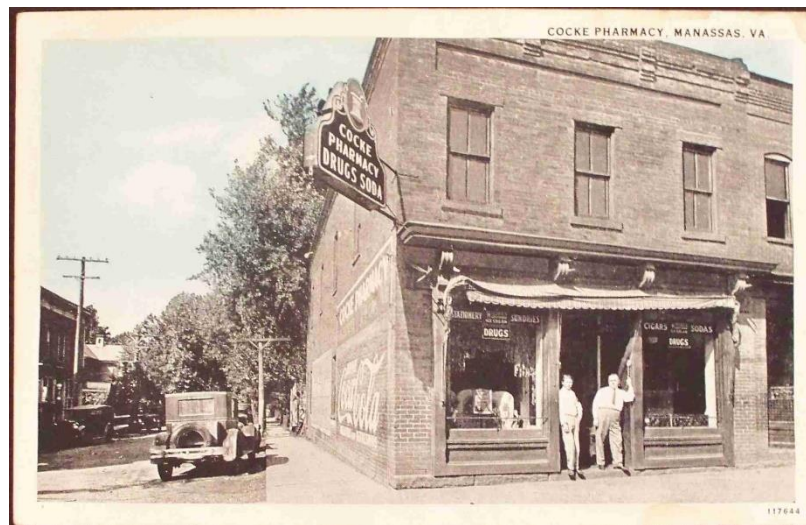
SH: When I got here?

LM: Yeah...

SH: Um...

LM: If you don't remember, that's fine. Cause I know...

SH: I remember when I got on the police department, it was a couple places I would like to go while I was working. One was Coker's Drugstore, because they had a nice hot dog, and a milkshake. Right. And one of the gentlemen that used to work there I see once in a while, and he remembers, he always says – "I remember, I remember you! I remember you when you used to come into the drugstore. And when you walked in I knew exactly what you wanted." So, that was one of my favorite stops. And then again we had Kline's Drive In on Rt 28, and that was another place that sold a nice hot dog and a nice strawberry milkshake.¹ So those were a couple places that I can remember that I used to always like to visit. Right.



Coker's Pharmacy in Manassas, VA

LM: Good to know. And I know it's a little off the topic, but I thought it was interesting question. So, you've already talked a little bit about this, and I just want to clarify for the record, the steps in your career prior to becoming Sheriff here in Prince William County. So, you started off as a police officer, um, after you of course were discharged from the army. How long were you a police officer and what was after that?

SH: Oh okay, I started as a police officer the day after I got out of the military. So, I got out of the military on June the 30th, but I already had been accepted on the police department, in fact, I had

¹ "Kline's Drive-In now just a memory." *InsideNova*, July 3, 2019. https://www.insidenova.com/headlines/klines-drive-in-now-just-a-memory/article_c951aaec-9dc4-11e9-8160-a3f430574bd9.html#:~:text=The%20Kline's%20Drive%2Din%20location,cake%20sundaes%20and%20Boston%20milkshakes.

been in a few times and actually had ridden with a couple officers just to see what I was getting myself into. And certainly that benefitted me as well. But I didn't officially start until July 1, 1969. Very, very interesting, very interesting. You know, going into something like that, certainly you're kind of nervous, and you also don't know what to expect. So, it was pretty much a day by day experience and even looking back. Even today. When you come to work in this business, every day is different. Every day is different. Even when I look back, the first day I started, and the second day, the third day, they were all different. Because it's a learning experience. And you're learning something different, learning something different. I will say this, everyone on the police department, at the time, I think we had twelve people at the time on the police department, they were all, all very helpful, very helpful in introducing me to people in the community, showing me what the ropes are, some of the expectations, that they thought I would experience. So I will always be grateful to the people that were on the department, you know, when I first got there. Certainly I was a patrol officer, and, so, it was, like I said, it was a learning experience, some of the things you will never forget and some of the people that I met during that time that were so helpful, not only on the department but also in the community. Pretty much, when you're a new employee like that it's almost like they welcome you to the community even though I had been living here for about 18 months I didn't know a lot of people outside of where I lived. So, it was good to meet people in the community. You know as a patrol officer, you see a lot, you see a lot, you see what's going on, you get a chance to meet people, ask questions. So I took advantage of all those things every time I had the opportunity.

LM: And so what was after being a patrol officer?

SH: After being a patrol officer, I think around 1974, I had an opportunity to be one of the first investigators or detectives. I talked to the chief, and the chief and I, he told me that he was going to appoint me to be one of the first investigators in the town of Manassas, or city of Manassas at the time, and so that means that now I'm going to have to start learning something else about law enforcement. Even though you learn some of the basic things while you're a patrol officer, I had to go to a couple schools to learn how to be a detective. That was very interesting. At first, I really didn't really like it because, it's a different type of police work, you kind of get away from the exciting things that happen when you're a patrol officer, and now you have to do more administrative work, things kind of slow down a little bit for you. Now, I'm looking to do a job I'm seeking results to getting some things done. So I adjusted to that, I enjoyed it, had a great time, had some success in doing that. And, at the time I still didn't know if I wanted to make this a career, I wasn't sure because, I'm still, you know at the time, I'm still, still young, and uh, decided that this is what I wanted to do. But there's one thing that I did find out about law enforcement early, you can't change a lot of things, you know, I couldn't change a lot of things, but certainly I had the opportunity to make a difference and to help people. Right, I liked that part of it. Meeting people, talking to people, and helping people. Right.

LM: That's great. And then eventually in your career you became the Prince William County Jail Superintendent, so what was the transition, from working...

SH: I had an opportunity, uh, because I was approached by a couple people, because the City and the County had formed a Regional Jail. And of course regional jails started in Virginia I believe around 1978 is when the General Assembly I guess passed legislation for localities to come together and form the regional jail. And at the time the old jail that was in Manassas, had been, a class action suit had been filed because of the conditions of that jail. And of course the city and the county were,

wanted to, they came together, they built the regional jail. I was approached by a couple of people about, “why don’t you look at working at the regional jail? Thinking about, this could be a good career change for you?” And, I thought about it, talked it over with my family, and decided, okay. So, I asked them, “what do you want me to do?” Well, when we start out with the Regional Jail we’re going to have to hire people, and we’d like to appoint you to be a lieutenant in charge of human resources, to be able to recruit, and interview, and hire people for the Regional Jail. And I looked at the salary, and the salary was, you know, we agreed on the salary. And it was a slight increase in pay. So I decided to accept the position as the lieutenant in charge of HR before the Regional Jail opened. And of course, once the Jail opened, I stayed in that position for a couple years, and I got promoted to Captain, and as a Captain I was in charge of a shift, and of course I had to go to training again to learn how to be a corrections officer, and I had a couple schools in there about how to be a supervisor, supervisor school, so and after accepting that job, I moved up in rank as a Major in charge of administration of the Jail. But interesting part about the jail is, still in criminal justice and law enforcement, but as I mentioned earlier about helping people, now you really have an opportunity when you work in corrections to help people. And of course, being at the local jail where I had worked as a police officer and detective, I saw people that I dealt with when I was a police officer and a detective. And I knew some of their families. So, it wasn’t like being in an environment where you didn’t know people, I knew about some of the people that were there. That’s why I always made it a practice of knowing as much as you can about the people that were incarcerated, and not only that, knowing as much about the people that work there. So that was always part of my management style, was to learn about people, know what you have. So then I moved up to be the Assistant Superintendent, which is the best job in the world, because when you’re assistant, you don’t get blamed for everything that happened. You know, you’re sort of doing what the Superintendent wanted me to do as an assistant, just like he’s my Chief Deputy...

Terry Fearnley: I agree. Good place to be...

SH: (Laughing) Good place to be. But, I enjoyed it, I enjoyed being the Assistant Superintendent, I learned a lot about management, and how to run a facility. You learn about budgets, you learn about capital projects, there are so many things that you have to learn when you get in certain positions and I took advantage of those opportunities to learn about not only the operation of the facility but how to run a facility, how to run a system. There was a lot going on during that period of time between the City and the County. Because all the jails and prisons, a lot of them were overcrowded, and the City and the County were looking to expand their facility in Manassas where it is now, and there were some disagreements about the magnitude of that facility in Manassas. And so when the Superintendent’s position became available, certainly I applied for it, and I was appointed Superintendent, and the night that I accepted the position, I think I told the Board, “you know, I don’t know what I’m thinking about, because I had the perfect job as the Assistant Superintendent and now I’m taking a job, I have no job security at all.”

LM: (Laughing)

SH: But I felt very comfortable in that position, like I said, there were a lot of disagreements between the City and the County, and certainly, as Superintendent, they both knew me, it wasn’t like bringing somebody from the outside that had to learn what was going on. I knew where the problems were, I knew who to talk to about some of those problems, and I was able to work through a lot of that, and get the city and the county to come together to expand the facility. And a lot of that was trust, a lot of things that I talked about, about facility, and how it was run, and about

what we were going to do, I think the, not only did the Jail Board that I worked for trust me, but also the citizens in Manassas. Of course I went on to have a great career running the Adult Detention Center, um, I was recognized nationally for the programs that I implemented because I always felt that, well, you know, you have a captive audience, you need to do things to help people prepare to be better citizens for their return to the community. So I was very successful in doing this. Some of the programs I started as Jail Superintendent for men and women, they still have those programs today. So I feel real good about every time I go to Jail and hear them talk about some of the programs that I started, I feel real good about it also. Security and safety certainly is paramount to make sure everybody is safe that's not only incarcerated there but also worked there, was also something that I stayed focused on, as I mentioned I always liked to know as much about inmates as I could, everybody that was there, and also the people that worked there and their families too. I always made that part of my management style, okay?

LM: Yeah, that's great. Umm, so moving back a little bit, I guess, or at any point in your career as you were the first Black police officer in Manassas -

SH: Yes.

LM: And the first Black employee in the Town as well, did you personally experience any bias when you were starting out, or at any other point in your career?

SH: Yeah, I did, I did, I did, but you know, I'm the kind of person, I don't linger on stuff like that. Umm, I guess, early in life with my military career, you can't change people. I believe that only God can change people. So I think, if, I always felt that if I do what I'm supposed to do it will always work out, and it has. Sometimes you look at people that are biased at things out there, I always look at it as their problem, not mine. I always approached it that way, and it's always worked out for me. Umm, I don't care what color you are or where you come from, you're always going to encounter people that are not going to support you and biased, and sometimes people are jealous at your progress, so, I guess it never bothered me. And, I know sometimes even recruiting people in law enforcement now, a lot of them are worried about how their friends feel about them, how their family feels about them about being a law enforcement officer, and I tell them, I say, well, if you get into this business you're going to have to overcome that, because some people are going to criticize you because of what you do. And if you do get in this business and start to move up in ranks, expect criticism, it's going to happen, it's going to happen. Which you have to learn how to deal with it. And one of the things you deal with is certainly, you go to people that have been through what you're going through, and that's what I did, too, I talked to people that, as I mentioned from my hometown, and I also talked to people that had experienced certain things with dealing with people as being the first. When I was in the military I was the first Black to work in that section. Of course when I got on the police department I was the first Black to work for the Town and on the police department. So, and, I had some people that didn't like me and didn't like that, but I was able to get through that. I'm the kind of person, I'm not going to let too many things bother me, especially when I'm trying to do something very positive.

(23:01)

LM: So, umm, I guess moving forward, what went into your decision to run for Sheriff?

SH: Well, you know, at the time, you know I kept watching, reading what was going on with the current Sheriff, and, and something hit me one day, I said, you know, people to me act like they were afraid to get involved, and of course the Sheriff at that time, he had a lot of money, there was a lot of controversy going on between the Sheriff, the County Board of Supervisors, the police departments. And of course, being in the position I was in, with running the Jail, I knew all the players, I knew all the players, and one day I thought, you know what? I think I might challenge him. I think I might do this. And I talked about it with my wife, and family, and then I talked to some people that were already in office. As I mentioned earlier, you know you learn a lot about what you're getting into by talking to people that are already in it, just like police work when I started out. So, I'm not going to change my approach to what I want to do now, so, I did the same thing. I talked to people – I had a list of 20 people that I talked to and got their opinion about: what do you think I should do? I said, knowing me, I had my little script, I said knowing me, what do you think about me running for Sheriff? Out of the twenty, nineteen told me that I think it's a good idea. They were so excited, and I'm trying to keep them quiet about this, I said look no, I'm just thinking about it. Well one person told me, I'm going to suggest that you do not do this because they're going to beat you up. They're going to come after you with everything they got because you're a formidable candidate. Just knowing you and your name, everything, you have a chance to win and they're going to come after you. And, he said, well, I'm just going to tell you, you're too nice a guy, I know you, don't do it. Don't do it. Don't do it. He said, but if you do it, I'm going to support you. Yeah.

LM: So that one person was still a supporter?

SH: Yes, they were supporters. They were a supporter.

LM: Okay.

SH: That was, that had a lot to do – and I, you know, I just thought that, I can fix this. I can fix this, because I care a lot about law enforcement, but I knew nothing about politics. Right, and believe me, even when you get involved in politics, you don't really know it all. I mean, there's always something. And like I say, sometimes in this business, the next day is always different from today. I mean, it changes fast, changes fast. But, that was my main reason for getting into it, because I thought I could be a better sheriff.

LM: Okay. And during your time as Sheriff, can you talk about any pivotal events or moments that stand out? That you had to deal with? Or in your entire career, actually, in County history?

SH: I think the biggest decision I had to make when I got elected Sheriff was, I need to make sure I had the right people around me. Experience with running the Jail, I knew the benefits of having a good staff, so that certainly was a big challenge. That was a big challenge. And coming to an organization like this where people had pretty much established a culture of the office. One of the things I knew I had to do was change the culture of the office, and then changing culture sometimes you have to change people. Like I said you can't change people but I have to change the current people that were here to make sure that we get off to a good start. That was important, that was important. And I did, I did. And thinking back, were there any moments that I could remember? You know, I've enjoyed being in service so much I can't think of anything that really jumps out that happened since I've been here other except I enjoy working with staff, I enjoy working with people. We've had some turnover and changes, which is always good, but I can't think of anything. The political part of the job, that is probably the most difficult and challenging part of the whole job. Because I know how to

be a Sheriff, I'm a lawman, I know what to do and how to do it. The challenges really come from the political part of the job. Yes. Because in politics you can do everything right but there's always somebody that say you did it wrong. I mean, that's just the nature of the job. I have to be, you can't be thin skinned about that. You just have to take those criticisms and move on and, and... I always think about the people that supported me. That really means a lot. I don't want to do anything to disappoint them. Because when you run for office, you know, people put their reputation on the line for you because they're out talking to people about me and what I do, and what my potentials are. So, I never want to do anything to embarrass those folk, because they're my biggest supporters. They are, they are. So as long as I continue to do the right thing and do those things that I promise voters I would do, I think that has been very successful for me.

LM: Well, you touched on this, and this is actually one of my later questions, more about the politics of it. So, what was your working relationship like with Paul Ebert?² Or can you talk about maybe any other elected officials in the County, what your working relationship has been throughout your tenure as Sheriff?

SH: Alright, when I mentioned 20 people?

LM: Right, yeah.

SH: He was on the list.

LM: Okay! That's good to know. All right.

SH: Yeah, he was on the list. He was one of the people on my list. Because I looked at people in the community that I felt that were doing a good job and they were already elected people, right. You know, Harry Parrish – I mean, he was the Mayor of Manassas at one time. He was the Mayor of Manassas when I started on the police department.³ So he was also at that time he was also a delegate. So, he was on the list. So, and I looked at Senator Colgan.⁴ I talked to him, he was on the list, he was on the list. So I looked at people that were, I thought were very respected in the community, and I looked at how they conducted themselves, and I said, you know, the pattern is already there. All you have to do is look at it and follow it. And that's what I did. They worked very well with other elected leaders to get things done for the community. And the party that they were affiliated with to me had nothing to do with that, they worked for the people. And that's what I wanted to do. I had an excellent opportunity now to get a job and work for the people, not a party. And they all pretty much kind of explained that to me about, if you get elected, always focus on the people. Keep your promises to the people that you made them before you got there.

LM: Okay, that's great to know, I didn't know he was one of your examples. So...

² "Paul Ebert, Virginia's longest-serving top prosecutor, won't seek re-election" *Prince William Times*, February 6, 2019. https://www.princewilliamtimes.com/news/paul-ebert-virginias-longest-serving-top-prosecutor-wont-seek-re-election/article_f2c7dfd2-2a0a-11e9-8862-cb15aa6e896c.html

³ Parrish served as the Mayor of Manassas from 1963-1975. "Harry J. Parrish," Historical Marker Database: <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=702>

⁴ Charles J. Colgan: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_J._Colgan

SH: Yes. Right.

LM: Okay.

SH: If you look at my brochure I have now, Paul Ebert is the only endorsement that I have.

LM: Okay.

SH: He's a good person. He was a good person, I thought the way he – of course, I met him when I was a police officer, he was Commonwealth Attorney. So he knew me from the time I was a detective, I had to bring my cases to him. So, we kind of, he knew me. He knew me, he knew me...so the relationship wasn't something that he had to learn, he knew me, from the very beginning. Right. I think he started Commonwealth Attorney in 1968 and I started on the police department in 1969.

LM: Oh wow, so around the same time.

SH: Well, you know, he was a little before me.

LM: A little? Just a little bit. Okay (laughing). All right, well I'm going to pause this for one second and save it and then start again, if you don't mind. I just want to make sure ---

[END OF SHERIFF HILL RECORDING TWO]

LM: So we were talking a little bit about Paul Ebert, umm, and I – one of my other questions, again, we were talking about changes that you've seen since you've been here and working in Prince William County for quite a bit of time. What were some of the biggest changes that you've seen in the community other than the obvious growth? So it's change from a more rural community to what it is today? What are some of the biggest changes that you -

SH: I think the biggest change that I've seen is the unprecedented growth in the community. Right, of course being in public safety one of the biggest changes that I've seen is better leadership in law enforcement. It's a lot better now than it was then, hopefully I'm part of that leadership. Supervision is a lot better in law enforcement now. We have better facilities now for training. I'm looking at elite shooting range that they built. I mean, that's certainly an upgrade from where they were. So, that's part of facility training – training, training, certainly is a big part of it and I've seen a big, big improvement in training. We've our training now is called CIT training, we have CIT training. So, there's, and equipment that we have now. We have body cameras that we have now. So we have a lot of equipment that enhances our ability to do a better job in the community than what we were doing when I first started. But those are the big changes.

LM: Okay.

SH: Unprecedented growth, leadership, change, supervision, and one of the things that I certainly saw, and hopefully it will get better, is community support. Community support of law enforcement, of what we do. There's some things that have happened around the country that certainly law enforcement has been criticized for, and rightfully so, because there are certain areas that we need to improve in, to continue to improve in to gain and keep community support.

LM: If you don't mind, I might go back a second, this is at the very beginning of your career when you weren't working as Sheriff yet, but when the Prince William County police department was created in 1970, can you talk a little bit, if you have any anecdotes, or about when that happened, what shift that was for the Sheriff and Prince William County Police Department, and maybe impacts it has on you today, even?⁵

SH: Well, unfortunately the politics behind it, I had no idea, I mean, that was in... I think they probably started talking about that around 1969 or something like that. I happened to be on duty in Manassas on the police department the night that they started. I think it's one of the best police departments in the country. I've watched them grow the entire time of my career. We have a great working relationship. We did not have that before I started. I know a lot of people that worked on the police department, some of them came to work for me when I started here, they continue to come to work for me sometime, we have a couple of people here that go to work for the police department. So, the working relationship is good. They serve our community very well, very well, very well respected department and I enjoy working with them.

LM: Okay. That's a good answer. So, I've noticed in some of your interviews, and that, even in this one, that you are very gracious with giving credit to other people. But you have course have achieved quite a bit of milestone achievements, as you know, so – first black police officer in Manassas, as we talked about, first black Sheriff in Prince William County, first black person elected to a County position. What are your thoughts about these milestone achievements? What would you say and how do you feel about those today?

SH: First of all blessed, very blessed. And I go back and give credit to my grandparents, parents who raised me. They raised me a certain way. I learned early in life how to treat people. I had a, I think I had a good basis when I started. I told someone, when the military got me, they got a deal. I was already trained. I knew how to say, "yes sir, no ma'am", I knew what curfew was all about, I knew how to dress, I always kept a nice haircut, shoes shined. So when the military got me, it was just another – they didn't have to – I knew what the rules were, and I didn't have to adjust to those rules, because I was already trained to do those things. And of course when I got into law enforcement, I did the same thing, you know it's about how you treat people. Treat people with decency and respect. That's one of the things that we have to continue to tell ourselves, tell our people that work for us, don't forget we have to treat people, everybody with decency and respect. Because sometime when you want something from someone you also have to exhibit those things to those people to make sure that they give it back to you. Same thing. In our business we know that everyone does not treat us with dignity and respect but that's what we have to do. And ultimately the goal is that we can change people. Since I've been in this business I think looking back I have helped some people. But, far as my career goes, like I said, I've been blessed, and I've been blessed to being able to recruit and retain some good people, and one of the things that I look from my staff is to give me ideas, tell me what you think we should be doing. So a lot of the things that I have done, and a lot of the things that we do today, is not my idea. It comes from people that work here and work for me. Because they do it every day. It's a team effort. It's a team effort. This is not about Glen Hill. This is about us putting together the best plan and putting that plan in action to give our community the best service that we can.

⁵ Sheriff's Office History: <https://www.pwcva.gov/department/sheriffs-office/history#:~:text=In%201970%2C%20the%20Board%20of,assumed%20the%20duties%20of%20jailers.>

LM: If you had to identify some of the challenges that you had, what would you, during the course of your career, what would you say some of those are, or what is the biggest one that you've overcome?

SH: I think my biggest challenges come from critics. I mean, people are going to criticize you. And you have to find a way sometimes to overcome that. The way I do it, sometimes I just look at those criticisms and – what can I do to change some things? Change some people, change some ideas? And I do that by sometimes getting by myself, and think about it, but also, talk to my staff. I talk with them about what do you think about this? What do you think about that? What do you think we should do? But there are always going to be – in our business – it's always going to be challenges. And of course, I'll tell you what, we have critics, and one of the things we have to overcome is certainly criticism. And some of the criticism that we've probably had in the past are legitimate and probably some of them are not. But most of my criticism comes from politics, the politics of the job. You know it's a shame to be in this business and you see people that are elected that will criticize you about something that they know what they're doing is not right. I also have to accept that too, that people are going to criticize you about some things that they really don't mean it, but I guess the politics of the job you're going to receive criticism. And one of the big changes I've seen today that I saw when I first started, people even of the opposite party would give you credit for doing something that's right. But today, they give you the silent treatment, they won't say anything that you're doing that's correct. But they're quick to try to come up with something that you're not doing. But that's one of the biggest differences that I've seen in the political part of the job.

LM: Okay. And so, we're recording this interview in 2023, this is May 2, 2023, and if you win the next election you'll be the longest serving Sheriff in Prince William County, which is another milestone.⁶ Can you talk a little bit maybe about your unfinished business that you might have and what your hopes are for Prince William County.

SH: Well, one of the reasons that I want to continue to be Sheriff is I look at my staff. I mean, they have helped me to get to where I am. And when I talk with them about running again, I mean, they almost all said the same thing. I mean, can you stay with us at least four more years? We take it four years at a time, four years at a time. And I thought about it, and I said yes. And one of the things they promised me is that we'll work with you, we'll make sure to continue to do the right thing. So we have this unwritten agreement between staff and I that they will continue to do the right thing and help us promote a good image of the Sheriff's office which certainly I have to agree with them that this is what they have done in the past. Like I said, there's always challenges that we have but I – one of the things that we have to do, and we don't hear people that running for office say this: we have to make sure that we stay focused on the mandated responsibilities of the office. Sometimes people want to do all these programs and their feel-good programs but the mandated responsibilities which falls under public safety, this is what we have to do. And we also, we have to always look at what we're doing to make sure that we're doing the right thing for the people every day. Do we need some training in this area? Do we need some equipment in this area? There are always things that we have to come together as a staff to look at. And, as I continue to stay in office, we always have to look at ourselves too, look at ourselves, and we also have to look at ourselves and, what do other people, when they look at us,

⁶ "Glen Hill seeking sixth term as Prince William sheriff." *InsideNova*, January 29, 2023.

https://www.insidenova.com/headlines/glen-hill-seeking-sixth-term-as-prince-william-sheriff/article_47c81fae-a079-11ed-8143-7fba4f6e0ffb.html

what are they seeing? We have to look at it that way too. So we have to look out but we also have to look in to make sure that we're delivering the type of service that our community expects us to do. But as far as the way I manage the office? I will continue to manage the office the same way. Our biggest challenge that I have now, that we have now, is recruiting young people to get into the business. At the same time, we have a challenge retaining the people that we have. I never thought that I would see the day that that would happen, but that's where we are today. A lot of business, a lot of agencies, schools, restaurants, other businesses in our community, some of the agencies in the county – they're having the same challenges that we're having, recruiting people and retaining people that we have. So that's a challenge. So one of my goals is to continue to recruit qualified people, because – if you look at law enforcement, the background checks and everything it takes to be a police officer is a lot different from being a school teacher, a doctor, a judge, and all these other professions out there, they don't go through polygraph examinations, psychological evaluations, all these things that we go through to get a person certified to be a law enforcement officer is a lot different from other professions. That's why when we get someone, we want to be able to make sure we train them properly and retain them because we put a lot into it. Right. So that's one of the challenges that I will continue to do.

LM: Okay. Umm, I'm coming to the end of my organized questions, but I know you've mentioned your family quite a bit.

SH: Yes.

LM: So can you talk a little bit I guess about the impact that your family has had on your career –

SH: (some overtalk, laughing) Ah, you know...

LM: I know you've referenced talking to them a lot.

SH: You know, that's a great question. And I think I'm going to go back to when I first started. Family was very supportive for me getting into law enforcement, first of all, and they continue to be very supportive. I can remember, my daughter, my oldest one. She said, "ah, Daddy," she said – "you know, kids always remind me of who my Daddy is." She said, "you know, it's hard for me to even get a date to the prom because no guy don't want to date me, and they all know you." And I remember one night after a football game they were at the Pizza Hut having, you know, pizza, and I walked in, and everybody looked at me, and she said "that was Daddy walking in, that was Daddy." You know, and (laughing), so it has a little bit of an impact on the kids because everybody knows who their father was. It really takes a special wife to be married to a law enforcement officer. Because, as you move up – you know, I'm not the kind of person that comes home with everything that happens, but I have to answer questions – "what happened today, what happened today?" So, we have some great conversations because my wife is a schoolteacher. So, we talk a lot about it, but when the phone rings at 1 o'clock in the morning, at 2 o'clock in the morning, at 3 o'clock in the morning, and finally everybody's got to get up at 5 or 6 o'clock, you have got to have special people to understand what I have to do. Even though they are not in law enforcement, she understands what I have to do and is very supportive, and it takes a special person to be married to...and the kids make adjustments as well after a while. They understand, that we just have to adjust to what Dad does. And of course, you know, I'm a known figure in the community, and I expect them to conduct themselves a certain way, and I let them know that we don't let them do certain things, and even when you go out to dinner.

You know, I don't go to bars, I don't sit at bars, there are certain things that you just don't do because you have to manage perception. And, so that's part of being in this job, is also [that].

LM: Okay, and how many kids do you have, if you don't mind me asking?

SH: I have three.

LM: Three kids.

SH: Three kids, ten grandkids, and four great grandkids.

LM: My goodness, okay, all right.

SH: They were all involved in campaigns, they loved it, some of them loved to do that. I mean, it's exciting for them. They always want to help Granddaddy out do certain things, and Pops do certain things, so we have fun doing it too. It's fun, it's fun, it's family fun, right. And of course during campaign times I met a lady in Wegmans last week and her father is a sheriff in Maine and she said, "no, I understand what you go through with families, because we've been through those battle scars with elections, she said, "I know you and your family have gone through the same thing." I said, "yes we do." But, that's just part of the job, and of course you can't complain about things when you ask for it.

(16:23)

LM: Well, I just, I respect that you brought them up quite a bit – [overtalk]

SH: Oh, they're -

LM: And you saying that you talked to them, and consulted them...

SH: Yes, family is part of my career. And my job, right.

LM: Especially this job.

SH: Yes.

LM: Okay. Is there anything else you'd like to talk about? Kind of, what you remember most from your career here – not that you're at the end of it – but, what are some notable things that you'd like to close this out with, that you talked about?

SH: You know, I think about the people that I have met over my career that certainly have made a difference, people that have given you some good advice, certainly I think about them. And of course, you know, when you go through an election, like - well, I'll go back ---- . When I started on the police department, there are certain people that I will always remember their support or what they did and of course --- that when I got the job as the Jail superintendent, worked at the Jail, there were certain people that I could always call on, that I could rely on, to give me some good advice about what to do. Of course when you run for office, there are always people, always people, that you will never forget. I can remember, and I've told people this, I remember the first campaign

contribution you gave me, where we were, and how much it was. Because, it was just, certain things are things you don't forget, and one of the things that I think I've always done, and that's part of my management style, is to know something about everybody, it has been very beneficial to me. Because sometimes as a manager, when you talk to people, I think it's, you know, you don't have to talk about work all the time, sometimes I like to talk about things that interest them, like their family and their kids. I think as a manager we should always do that.

LM: Well, I know that's a broad question.

SH: It is a broad question but it's a good question too because, it's the people you meet along this journey, because it is a journey. There's no question about it. It is a journey. And, it's just the people you meet that's very supportive. And I also remember some people that were very negative too. I remember who they were. People that had their biases and all that. But I don't let that bother me, but I certainly I would never forget and will always remember those people that were very supportive to help me get to where I am. The only thing I would like to know more of, you get people that will help you in ways that you don't know who they are. And it would be nice to know who some of those people were that has helped me along the way that I've never met, and never spoken to.

LM: Okay, well, that's it unless you can think of something I'm missing.

Terry Fearnley: Very good.

LM: Okay, I'll go ahead and pause this.

[END OF SHERIFF HILL RECORDING 3]

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]