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### Mary Potts

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# Bridges That Carried Us Over Project

## Interview Summary

**Interviewee:**

Mary Potts

**Interviewer:**

Balalia Mubashir

**Interview Date:**

October 2, 2014

**Interview Location:**

San Bernardino, CA

**Length:**

00:04:59

**Interview Summary completed by:**

M. Camacho Nuno, 2024

**Description:**

Balalia Mubashir interviews Mary Potts in New Hope Missionary Baptist Church. This is for the Archiving Black History in the Inland Empire Project. Potts speaks of Jack Hill, a San Bernardino businessman with a positive and long-lasting impact on her and the community. Potts herself worked with him for the past 12 years. She speaks about how he was a man who loved his wife and family. He deeply cared for his church and community and loved to help through cooking and being a role model for others. This is especially for the young layman in his community. The interview ends with Potts congratulating Hill for being an amazing person and thanking him for all that he had done.

**Subject Topic:**

- Archiving Black History in the Inland Empire Project
- Jack Hill
- Homecoming Picnic
- Fundraising
- Businesses
- Real Estate
- Cook
- Loving Husband and Family Man
- Devotion to Faith

**Spatial Coverage:**

Name of Site (if relevant)	General Location/Address
New Hope Missionary Baptist Church	1575 W 17th St, San Bernardino, CA 92411

**Temporal Coverage:**

2014

**Key Events:**

- Interviewing Marry Potts for Archiving Black History in the Inland Empire Project.
- Working with Jack Hill for the past 12 years.
- Potts hears of Hill and other famous businessmen from her uncle.
- Hill was a loving husband and family man.
- A man devoted to his faith and his community.
- Potts says that Hill would be an excellent role model for young men as he is caring and guides young men in cooking, cleaning, and how to work with other people overall.
- Potts thanked Hill for the kind of person he was.

**Key Organizations:**

- Homecoming Picnic

**Interview Index:**

Media Format	Time (hh:mm:ss)	Topic Discussed
Digital Video	00:00:36 - 00:02:29	The Homecoming Picnic and how Potts have heard of Jack Hill.
Digital Video	00:02:31 - 00:04:33	The kind of man Jack Hill was and the impact he had on other people.

**Related Materials**

Additional oral history interviews are available from the Bridges That Carried Us Over Project at CSUSB, <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/bridges/>

**Full interview transcript can be found below.**

## Interview Transcript

### Start of Interview:

[00:00:00]

BALALIA MUBASHIR: Today's date is October 2, 2014. My name is [Balalia Mubashir?], and I am interviewing Mary Potts for the Archiving Black History in the Inland Empire Project. Her name is spelled -- first name, Mary: M-A-R-Y. Last name, Potts: P-O-T-T-S. We're interviewing here at New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in San Bernardino, California. Thank you, Mary, for taking the time out to conduct this interview with us.

MARY POTTS: Thank you.

BALALIA MUBASHIR: So tell us a little bit about your relationship with Jack Hill.

MARY POTTS: Well, I have worked closely with Mr. Hill for the past 12 years. I was a chairperson of our annual Homecoming Picnic, and I needed some assistance with business commercials on how to do things, how to set it up. Had no idea on a lot of the things that I needed to do. [00:01:00] I went to Mr. Hill and Jenny, and he sat down, and he explained to me what I needed to do, how to get the job done. And I asked him would he be my advisor for that year. He did, and the picnic has been excellent every since. I could not have done it without him. He is professional all the way around, and I just appreciate all the things that he's done so very, very much to make our picnic a success. He uses his -- he let use his facility to store the food and do the cooking, his commercial kitchen. And he is just always there, whatever we need; very, very quiet. No questions asked that -- "Yes, you can have this. Yes, I'll do this, and I'll help you any way I can." And to me, that's a true person.

BALALIA MUBASHIR: Now, you heard of Mr. Hill before you met him. Did he live up to what you heard?

MARY POTTS: Everything that I have heard about Mr. Hill -- I came to California 54 years ago, [00:02:00] and my uncle -- we'd hear the names Jack Hill and other famous businessmen here, Black men, in San Bernardino and how they helped out, and how they either -- he was in real estate or cooking or whatever he was in. Everything that I heard about Jack Hill, he has lived up to it. He's a man of integrity, and he's always been there. And I have nothing -- have not heard or seen anything negative in his life that would cause me to think different.

BALALIA MUBASHIR: Is there a moment in the past 12 years that you've known him that really stands out about Mr. Hill?

MARY POTTS: I think the moment that really stands out and brings it home -- we've traveled throughout together, and we were in Greece. And we've gone to the Holy Land and different places together. He's truly a family man and a great -- he was a great husband from all the things I could see. And one of the [00:03:00] things that stood out for me was whenever we were away, and we were going on our tours and sightseeing, he always carried Jenny's purse. He always -- he never wanted her to be loaded down with anything. He always was right by her side and carried her purse, and to me, that was just so loving and so caring. No matter what, he always was right there for her, and that's the same with his family. They are just close knit; very, very quiet, but a very loving family, and that stood out with -- for me.

BALALIA MUBASHIR: How would you describe Mr. Hill to someone who never met him?

MARY POTTS: I would say he is a man who has demonstrated a Christian character because he attends church on a regular basis, and from all I've seen, he loves the Lord. He loves kids, he loves his family, and I guess the other thing that I would say about him -- he is a great community leader and a humanitarian.

BALALIA MUBASHIR: Do you feel like he's someone [00:04:00] that young men could look up to?

MARY POTTS: Oh, beyond a shadow of a doubt. He is excellent. He is a great role model, not only for his family, but for other young men. Another thing that he does also -- when he was doing a lot of catering and cooking, and they would have special events, especially here at the church, a lot of times, he would use young men from the laymans and teach them how to serve, how to dress, and how to work with other people. And to me, that's outstanding.

BALALIA MUBASHIR: Is there anything else you would like to say for this video?

MARY POTTS: You know what? I would just like to wish him well, congratulate him for being the outstanding individual that he is, and I just hope that we have other role models like him come up in the future. Excellent.

BALALIA MUBASHIR: Well, thank you, Mary, so much for the interview.

MARY POTTS: And thank you. It's been a pleasure.

**End of Interview:**

[00:04:59]