

Obituaries

Mrs. Mary C. Ellis, Woman of Achievement

Mrs. Mary Campbell Ellis of 934 Todt Hill Rd., Dongan Hills, cited in 1965 by the Advance as a Woman of Achievement, died yesterday in Doctors Hospital. She was 61.

Though active in a variety of community endeavors, Mrs. Ellis, the wife of Civil Court Judge Jerome O. Ellis, concentrated most of her efforts on behalf of retarded children. She was one of the founders of Staten Island Aid for Retarded Children and had been treasurer of the group from its inception 18 years ago until her death.

Mrs. Ellis, a Notre Dame Academy alumna and third-generation Islander, did much to familiarize people with the needs of the retarded. Seven years ago she was suggesting — as specialists in the field of retardation are still now suggesting — that "pre-school orientation" is of critical importance.

"Children have been lost, whose mental capacities allowed formal education, because of their anti-social and undisciplined behavior," she said.

The early efforts of Mrs. Ellis paid off, and after an intensive fund-raising drive, the Staten Island Aid for Mentally Retarded Children was started.

Chairman in 1958 of the South Shore division of the Community Chest and Council, and chairman of the division of Ladies of Charity for the mentally retarded, Mrs. Ellis served as a member of the Board of Visitors for Willowbrook.

But her involvement with the institution extended beyond being a board member and brought her into direct contact with employees, volunteers and patients.

Mrs. Ellis called her volunteer work at Willowbrook "exhausting, physically and emotionally, but extremely rewarding."

"It's giving a thirsty child a drink of water," she explained.

Offered the presidency of several organizations at various times, Mrs. Ellis' reason for turning down high posts might well be called her personal philosophy of life.

"I don't want to get lost in the paper work and other administrative chores," she said in 1965, "I want to work."

Surviving, in addition to her husband, are a son, Jerome O. Jr., of Haddonfield, N.J.; a daughter, Mrs. Mary Lynne Schnorbus of Princeton Ave., New Dorp; a brother, Frederick T. Campbell of University Pl. West Brighton; a sister, Mrs. Doris E. Sullivan of Metropolitan Ave., West Brighton, and four grandchildren.

The funeral will be tomorrow from the Hanley Funeral Home, New Dorp, with a mass at 10 a.m. in St. Christopher's R.C. Church, Grant City. Burial will be in Moravian Cemetery.



Mrs. Mary C. Ellis