

Tribute to Lady Glasspole



INA Josephine, Lady Glasspole, in her own quiet and dignified manner, was one of the most remarkable women of 20th-century Jamaica. She was equally at home ministering to the humble folks in her husband's East Kingston constituency, as she was entertaining royalty and heads of state in the splendid environs of Kings House. Her work in social welfare in East Kingston where her husband was a Member of Parliament for 29 years, and in the wider nation, is testimony of her dedication to her fellow Jamaicans.

Born Ina Josephine Kinlocke in Victoria Park, Fyffes Pen, St Elizabeth, on January 16, 1909, she was the daughter of property owner, Charles Kinlocke, and his wife, Marie Louise, a housewife. She was educated at the Little London Elementary School by private tutoring. The family moved to Kingston when she was a young girl and became members of the Coke Methodist Church where young Florizel Glasspole was also a member. However, they did not become fully acquainted until they met on a train to Annotto Bay, and discovered that their respective sisters worked in the same post office in St Mary. A courtship ensued and they were married on July 7, 1934.

Lady Glasspole became wholeheartedly

involved in her husband's union, as well as political and social activities, while developing her own talents as a clothing designer, which supplemented the family's income in the leaner years.

She founded the East Kingston Crèche in the early 1960s, which was later rededicated as the Josephine Glasspole Basic School. She insisted that the young children at the crèche should not only be cared for, but should be educated while their parents were at work. Throughout her retirement, she continued to place the highest priority on the needs of the school.

In 1973, the Glasspoles became the first family of Jamaica, when Sir Florizel was appointed governor general. They took up residence at King's House with their lovely daughter, Sara Lou.

Lady Glasspole threw herself wholeheartedly into the daily round of activities, ever gracious, always elegant, but maintaining her practical outlook on life: she continued to sew her own clothes.

Hundreds flocked annually to Lady Glasspole's May Day Extravaganza which raised considerable sums of money to assist the many charitable organisations of which she was patron. These included the National Children's Home, homes run by Nurse Garrick and Nurse Benjamin, the Coke Methodist Church, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, the YWCA's Basic School in Port Royal and its School Leavers' Institute in Spanish Town.

Less fortunate children and the elderly looked forward to her annual Christmas treats at Kings House.

Lady Glasspole was also patron and strongly supportive of the Inner Wheel Club, the Soroptimists' Club, and Women's Club.

In 1978 she founded the Josephine Glasspole Convalescent Centre which is now being run by the Hyacinth Lightbourne Nursing Service at Lady Musgrave Road.

Her visits to various institutions, including hospitals, were not mere social appearances, as she would actively seek to fill any urgent need which she observed.

Her retirement years were filled with happiness as she enjoyed the company of her beautiful grandchildren, Kristina and Alexander. Indeed, she spent the day before she passed away, playing games and interacting with her teenage granddaughter and the evening watching cartoons with eight-year-old Alex.

Lady Glasspole departed this life while preparing for Sunday service. Up to the very end of her life she worshipped at the Coke Methodist Church, displaying an unshakeable faith in God. She inspired family, friends and all Jamaica with her deep love for God, family and country.

May her soul rest in peace.

— Jean Lowrie-Chip

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF JAMAICA

THE DAILY OBSERVER Monday, January 11, 1999 Page 7