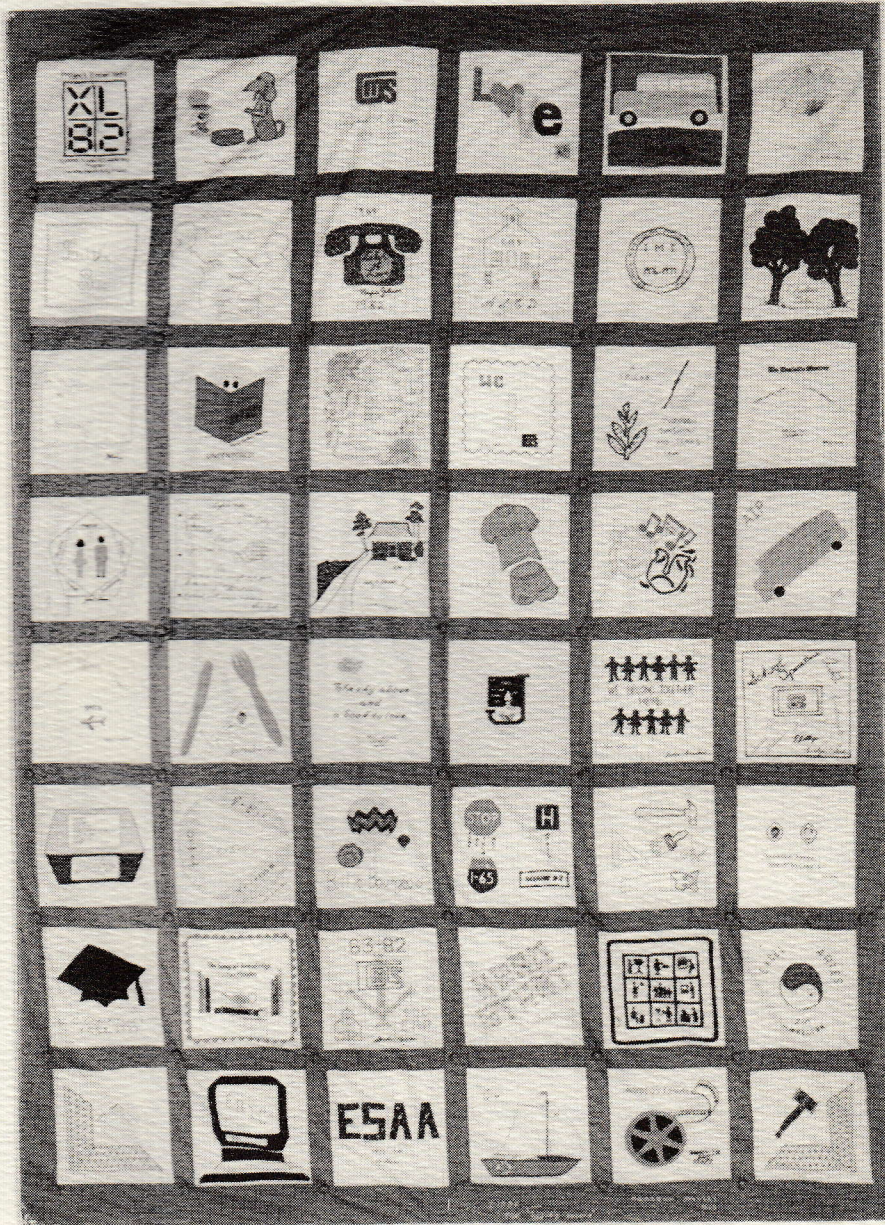


*Memorial Service For  
Mrs. Elizabeth Schmoke Randolph*



*Saturday, December 18, 2004*

*12:00 Noon*

*First Baptist Church - West*

*1801 Oaklawn Avenue, Charlotte, North Carolina 28216*

*Dr. Ricky A. Woods, Pastor, Officiating*

## Obituary

The reason firm, the temperate will  
Endurance, foresight, strength and skill,  
A perfect woman nobly planned  
To warm, comfort and command.

-- Wordsworth

MRS. ELIZABETH SCHMOKE RANDOLPH, born in Pitt County to the late John Hagan Schmoke and the late Pearl Johnson Schmoke, and reared in Raleigh, North Carolina, once stated that she never wanted to be anything but a teacher. She said, "My mother was a teacher, and I was her oldest child. She told me she wanted me to be a teacher too."

Elizabeth, affectionately called "Libby," received a bachelor's degree with honors from Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, a master's degree from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, and in 1958, was one of the first blacks to enter the School of Education at UNC Chapel Hill, where she received the Advanced Certificate in School Administration.

From the beginning of her teaching career, Libby exemplified the highest professional integrity and the greatest concern for the motivation of children. She had the ability to inspire students and win the support of adults. Such skills coupled with a vivacious personality identified this young woman as extraordinary. She taught in the public schools in Rutherford County, Wake Forest and Burlington before coming to Charlotte.

In 1944, Dr. Garinger hired Elizabeth Schmoke to teach English at West Charlotte Senior High School. She was such a favorite with students that in 1958, when University Park Elementary School was built, parents in the area asked that Mrs. Randolph (the former Miss Schmoke) be named its principal.

Nine years later, she was brought to the Education Center to oversee programs financed under the Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. She planned and helped implement the local kindergarten program.

Libby moved through the ranks as principal, director of Title I program, administrative assistant for school operations, and zone assistant superintendent to Associate Superintendent. In 1976-1977, she served as a member of a four-person interim management team that operated the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

In 1978, Libby was installed as president of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), a national organization of over 30,000 members, interested in the teaching and learning process for the improvement of education. Her praiseworthy leadership brought honor to the school system, the city, the state and the nation. She was the first black woman to hold this office.

Elizabeth Randolph achieved eminence as a Woman Educator. Her generous giving of time and energy to serve youth and adults is perhaps, the dominant factor which enabled her to advance step-by-step in her career of service.

In Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, she served with wholehearted devotion on all levels of the organization, as a dynamic chapter President of Alpha Lambda Omega, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director, Chairperson of the Standards and Constitution Committees, and Supreme Parliamentarian. She received the distinguished Founders Graduate Service Award for her dedication and service.

During the forty-six years of Libby's professional career, she was active in the civic, religious and social life of Charlotte. Her affiliations included First Baptist Church West (member, Board of Christian Education, and chairperson of church library), YWCA (Board of Directors), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee, United Community Services (Board of Directors), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Hospital Authority, The Charlotte Chapter of Links Incorporated, Les Savantes Social Club, and The Monday Nighters Bridge Club.

Following her retirement in 1982, Libby was just as busy as she was while she was employed. Often she remarked that her life revolved around her date book in which she kept listings of meetings for various organizations. She was the first woman chairperson of the Board of Trustees at North Carolina A&T University, a Trustee and Board Member at Shaw University, Queen's College, Davidson College, the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, and The Friends of Johnson C. Smith (Co-Chair).

Among the numerous honors and awards received by Libby were the Doctor of Humane Letters from Shaw University, the Whitney M. Young Award by the Charlotte Urban League, the WBT Woman of the Year Award, the Southern Area of Links Incorporated Award, Honorary Doctorate from UNC Charlotte, and the Margaret B. Moss Award from Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

The honors mentioned here only partially reveal the scope of service that Libby rendered to individuals in day-to-day contacts through the years. Her acts of kindness and good will influenced many persons whose lives she touched. "To whom much hath been given, much is required." Elizabeth Schmoke Randolph exceeded her requirements in service.

Mrs. Randolph, the widow of John Randolph, was also predeceased by her siblings: Harold, Alice, Julian and Hermia. Surviving are her brother, Murray A. Schmoke (Verdeen) of Baltimore, Maryland, and many nieces and nephews. A host of friends will hold precious memories of Libby.

## Mecklenburg



### Elizabeth Schmoke Randolph

Mrs. Randolph, 87, of Charlotte, NC departed this life on Saturday, December 4, 2004 at Asbury Care Center. Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, December 18, 2004, 12 Noon at First Baptist Church-West, Dr. Ricky A. Woods, pastor, officiating.

Organizational Memorial Services will begin at 11:15 AM and are open to the public.

Mrs. Randolph had a distinguished career in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Known for her integrity and visionary leadership, she achieved eminence as an educator who raised the level of student achievement and staff development. She came to Charlotte in 1944 as a public school teacher and retired almost forty years later, in 1982, as Associate Superintendent for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System.

She endeared herself to a generation of students and fellow teachers who came under "The Elizabeth Randolph Influence" at West Charlotte Senior High School where she taught English for fourteen years. For nine years, she was principal at University Park Elementary School.

Dedicated to her church-First Baptist Church-West, she chaired a number of boards and committees. She and her husband, the late John Randolph were devoted members. Mr. Randolph predeceased her in 1963.

## ELIZABETH RANDOLPH

# CMS educator steered desegregation efforts

*Former English teacher put herself, 3 siblings through college*

BY HEATHER VOGELL  
Staff Writer

Murray Schmoke tells a story about his sister Elizabeth Randolph that shouldn't surprise her former students and colleagues.

When her brother Harold wrote a letter demanding money for college, Randolph at first was irritated. But she agreed on one condition: Harold would make dean's list or lose the cash.

"He made dean's list every semester," Schmoke says.

The story illustrates the high standards Randolph set for herself, her family and her school system during nearly four decades as a Charlotte-Mecklenburg educator, supporters say.

Randolph, 87, died Dec. 4 after suffering complications from Alzheimer's disease, her brother said Tuesday. A memorial service will be at noon Saturday at First Baptist Church-West.

Randolph retired in 1982 as an associate superintendent for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

She was the first black woman to rise to that level in the system, former associate superintendent Chris Folk said.

She carried an air of authority that was tempered by a caring, courteous approach to the stickiest of school matters, former colleagues say.

Retired Principal Mary Martin

said Randolph was a role model who helped steer the system through desegregation.

"She provided a lot of leadership in some very difficult times," Martin said.

Randolph once served on a team that covered the superintendent's duties while the school board searched for a new leader.

She'd arrive at work with pages of notes on ideas that occurred to her overnight. "We used to call her our midnight muse," Folk said.

Randolph grew up in Raleigh, the daughter of a contractor, and graduated from Shaw University in 1936. She helped three siblings pay for college.

"She literally sent herself to school, and then she proceeded to send the rest of us to college," Schmoke said.

She began teaching in Rutherford County before coming to Charlotte in 1944, working for 14 years as an English teacher at West Charlotte High School.

She became principal of University Park Elementary and kept moving up.

"She had a pleasing personality," said Sarah Stevenson, a former school board member. "That was one of the things, I think, that encouraged the board to look at promoting her."

Randolph served on many boards, including the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County, and earned a list of honors that included WBT's Woman of the Year. She was active at First Baptist Church-West.

Randolph's husband, John Randolph, died in 1963. She traveled often after retiring.

— STAFF WRITER PETER SMOLOWITZ AND RESEARCH LIBRARIAN SARA KLEMMER CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT



Randolph