HOCHBERG gertrude Prov. Journal

Gertrude Meth Hochberg, 90; publicist, first female vice president of Bryant

BRADENTON, Fla. — Gertrude Meth Hochberg, 90, the first female vice president of Bryant College, and one of Rhode Island's most highly successful college publicists and working women, known for her enormous energy and generous spirit, died Wednesday at Shores Rehabilitation Center.

She was the wife of the late Robert Hochberg, a retired business man. Born in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., a daughter of the late Louis and Rose (Lieberman) Meth, she had lived in Providence for more than 60 years before moving to Florida in 1978.

Appointed director of public relations at Bryant in 1949, Mrs. Hochberg gained national recognition for the 114-year-old college, which led to its rapid growth, expansion and relocation on the 220-acre Tupper Campus in Smithfield.

In 1973, the publicity for the dedication of the new campus won her the American College Public Relations Association's Award for Excellence in News Information. She was a district director and national trustee of the association.

She organized the first symposium on the "Status of the American Woman" as a major event of the Bryant College Centennial Celebration in 1963. As a result, she was invited by then-Gov. John H. Chafee to become a member of the Rhode Island Commission on the Status of Women. She was named the first chairwoman of the commission by Gov. Frank Licht in 1971, and was elected national editor of the U.S. Women's Commissions.

In a lasting tribute to her, Bryant established the Gertrude Meth Hochberg Scholarship Fund more than a decade ago.

Educated as a journalist with a bachelor of arts from the University of Pennsylvania in 1930, she began her career on the Wilkes-Barre Times-Leader, her hometown newspaper.

She spent the next 15 years as a retail advertising executive in Pennsylvania, New York City and Providence, and was named Outstanding Advertising Woman of the Year in 1964.

Her memberships were so multifaceted that it would be impossible to put down in a short space even half her activities. An officer and founder of the Women's Intergroup Committee of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, she was active in the "Good Neighbor" campaign that helped ensure passage of the state's Fair Housing Law in the early 1970s. Just a few of her dozens of involvements included the United Way, United Jewish Appeal, the Rhode Island Council of Community Services, and at Temple Beth-El in Providence, where she was a member, an officer and on the board of directors.



In 1977, Mrs. Hochberg became the first woman inducted into the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame. In 1999, at age 87, she became the first recipient of the Rhode Island Historical Society's Goff Women's Achievement Award.

A dynamo, she was what Superior Court Judge Florence K. Murray called a "pioneeer" in the field of women's rights, doing what other feminists were only "talking about."

"When do you sleep?" someone once asked Mrs. Hochberg, "I don't much," she said. "I usually don't sleep more than four or five hours a night."

Carol J. Young, the Providence Journal's deputy executive editor, said yesterday, "I encountered few women in positions of responsibility during my years as an education writer. Gertrude was a model for what a professional working woman should be. I'm glad she was there for me."

James V. Wyman, retired executive editor of The Providence Journal, yesterday called Mrs. Hochberg "one of the leading lights in the beginning of the women's movement in Rhode Island."

As Bryant's public relations director, "she performed extraordinarily," said Wyman, and was "the ultimate" public relations person. "She had an uncanny sensitivity to what made news. She was honest and straightforward; she had tremendous integrity and tremendous respect among editors and newspeople in Rhode Island who dealt with her on a day-to-day basis."

Mrs. Hochberg was accorded the Eleanor Collier Award of the American College Public Relations Association in 1975. She retired from Bryant's vice presidency on July 31, 1977. After she left the college, she was still on the board of 11 different agencies.

She had lived at 346 Rochambeau Ave. in Providence for 25 years.

Upon moving to Florida in 1978, she did not retire. Volunteer public relations work at Blake Hospital, in Bradenton, led to full-time direction of public relations at Sun City Hospital. She was a member of Temple Beth Israel in Longboat Key, Fla., serving as president of the Sisterhood and a member of its board of directors. Of course, she handled publicity for the temple, and helped about a dozen organizations at the time of her death.

"I don't see myself as a pioneer," she once said. "I see myself as an involved person. All the pioneering was done by the suffragettes." But no matter how hard Mrs. Hochberg worked, she never neglected her family. "I loved my work and my life," she said.

She leaves a son, Dr. Mark S. Hochberg of Short Hills, N.J.; a daughter, Erica H. Stern of Newton Highlands, Mass.; a brother, Irwin Meth of Stratford, Conn.; a sister, Charlotte Kaufman of Boca Raton, Fla.; and four grandchildren.

The funeral will be held Sunday at 2 p.m. in Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Burial will be in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick, after which friends and family are invited to gather at Temple Beth-El.

HOCHBERG, Gertrude (Meth)

March 20, 2002. Beloved wife of the late Robert Hochberg. Residence: The Shores, Bradenton, FL; formerly of Providence. Dear mother of Dr. Mark S. and his wife Faith Hochberg, Short Hills, NJ and Erica H. and her husband Donald Stern, Newton Highlands, MA. Loving sister of Irwin Meth, Stratford, CT and Charlotte Kaufman, Boca Raton, FL. Devoted grandmother of Benjamin and Laura Stern, Alyssa and Asher Hochberg. Funeral service 2 p.m. Sunday at Temple Beth-El, 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Relatives and friends are invited. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Gertrude Meth Hochberg Scholarship Fund at Bryant College, Smithfield, RI 02917-1284. Shiva immediately following interment at Temple Beth-El. The family was assisted with the arrangements by the SUGARMAN-SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Gertrude Hochberg, woman behind Bryant College's image, Heritage Hall of Fame member

BRADENTON, Fla. — Gertrude Hochberg, 90, the first female vice president of Bryant College and the first woman ever inducted into the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame, died March 20 at the Shores Rehabilitation Center. She was the wife of the late Robert Hochberg.

Educated as a journalist at the University of Pennsylvania, Mrs. Hochberg began her career at her hometown newspaper in Wilkes-Barre , Pa., and then spent 15 years as a retail advertising executive in her home state, New York City and Providence.

Gregarious and a wellspring of energy, she brought national recognition to Bryant after becoming its director of public relations in 1949.

The publicity she generated for the college in 1973, when it opened its new campus in Smithfield, won her the American College of Public Relations Association Award for Excellence in News Information.

Ten years earlier, she had organized the first symposium on the Status of the American Woman, and because of that was appointed by then-Gov. John H. Chafee as a member of the Rhode Island Commission on the Status of Women. Gov. Frank Licht named her commission chairwoman in 1971, the year she retired from her Bryant vice presidency.

In recognition of her contributions to the college, Bryant more than a decade ago created the Gertrude Meth Hochberg Scholarship Fund.

Mrs. Hochberg was inducted into the Heritage Hall of Fame in 1977, and in 1999 — at age 87 — was the first recipient of the Rhode Island Historical Society's Goff Women's Achievement Award.



Mrs. Hochberg, who lived on Rochambeau Avenue in Providence for 25 years before moving to Florida in 1978, remained active in a multitude of organizations after her retirement from Bryant.

In Florida, she did volunteer work for Blake Hospital in Bradenton, which led to her become the full-time public relations director at Sun City Hospital.

A member of Temple Beth Israel in Longboat Key, Fla., she was president of its Sisterhood and a member of the board of directors.

She was a daughter of the late Louis and Rose (Lieberman) Meth.

She leaves a son, Dr. Mark S. Hochberg, of Short Hills, N.J.; a daughter, Erica H. Stern, of Newton Highlands, Mass.; a brother, Irwin Meth, of Stratford, Conn.; a sister, Charlotte Kaufman, of Boca Raton, Fla.; and four grandchildren.

The funeral was held at Temple Beth-El, Providence. Burial was in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

Gertrude Hochberg

One of Rhode Island's fine role models, particularly for women, but for everyone else, too, was Gertrude Meth Hochberg, who died recently at 90.

Mrs. Hochberg was a pioneer in women's rights in her jobs at Bryant College (for which she helped gain national recognition as its public-relations chief and for which she was the first female vice president) and in many other activities. At Bryant, in 1963, she organized what was among the first symposia on the status of women in America. As a result, she became a member of the Rhode Island Permanent Advisory Commission on Women, and, later, chairwoman of that panel. She was also elected national editor of the U.S. Women's Commissions and was an officer and founder of the Women's Intergroup Committee of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The dynamo known as Gertrude Hochberg participated with great effectiveness in so many simultaneous charitable activities over the years that people would ask her in wonder: "Do you sleep?" She answered, "Not much."

No wonder that, in 1977, Mrs. Hochberg became the first woman inducted into the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame.

And she brought her huge enthusiasm, honesty and intelligence to public relations and charitable work in Florida during her "retirement."

Gertrude Hochberg helped make society more open and humane wherever she lived, and, in particular, helped smooth the way for generations of women to participate more richly in society.

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