

JIM HILL  
NAA President 1969

Remembrances by Rolf Valtin  
September 2009

The Academy's great wit. Repeatedly had us in stitches at Academy meetings but slaved over what he was going to say in long night hours in the bathroom (so that his wife could sleep) of their hotel room.

In large part, Jim had great success in making us laugh because his timing with his punchlines was superb. Let me try to resurrect one of the occasions on which the laughter was loud and prolonged. The occasion was a lunch in a huge ballroom at an Academy meeting. Jim was the MC; being honored was Will Davis, the former Chairman of the War Labor Board; and the head table was filled with former WLB luminaries (George Taylor, Ben Aaron, Lew Gill, and others aside from Davis). Jim effusively introduced each of them, crediting them at length for their war-time accomplishments, and he then turned to the audience and said: "And the rest of you were able-bodied and went off to war."

Devoted alumnus of the economics department of Swarthmore College. The southerner with a northern accent. Jim and his wife, Reenie (who came to many of our meetings), settled on Long Island, but Jim was a descendant of Confederate General Ambrose Powell Hill, for whom Army camp A. P. Hill, near Fredericksburg, Virginia, is named.

Avid sailor in his later years (and stern captain for those sailing with him). A person of great warmth and empathy, but he couldn't stand people who sounded their own horns.