

## **GEORGE D. ROOKS**

Class of 1947

Inducted 2003

George D. Rooks, Class of 1947, was the first African-American captain on the White Plains Police Department and a mentor and role model to the city's youth for decades. He died on April 15, 1984. Born in Newberry, South Carolina, Captain Rooks was 13 months old when his family moved to White Plains. He grew into a 6'3" 212 pound fullback and was named to the All-County team in 1946. His three children, Yvonne, Yvette, and Duffie all later graduated from White Plains High School. Captain Rooks continued his stellar grid-iron career at Morgan State University in Baltimore where, nicknamed "Choo Choo", he averaged 9.2 yards on 99 runs in his junior year and was the team MVP in his senior season. He was an all-league and Black College All-American selection for three years and is in the Morgan State Hall of Fame. It was at Morgan State that Captain Rooks met and later married the Beauty Queen of Hampton Institute, Vivian Evans. He later played professional football with the Green Bay Packers and the Baltimore Colts.

Joining the White Plains Police Department as a patrolman in 1954, he was the first African-American to be promoted to Detective, Sergeant, Detective Sergeant and Lieutenant and, in March, 1975, to Captain. Throughout his career Captain Rooks served as a role model for the youth of White Plains. He was a co-founder of the White Plains Boys and Girls Police Club and worked with the Youth Tackle League. His help and advice was often sought and always received by young people and adults who were having problems with family, school or jobs. During the unrest that effected the whole country and White Plains in the late 60's, Captain Rooks served as a mediator defusing many tense situations. Respected by his peers and the community, Captain Rooks devoted himself to the youth of White Plains, counseling them to stay in school, study hard, and treat everyone with fairness and kindness.