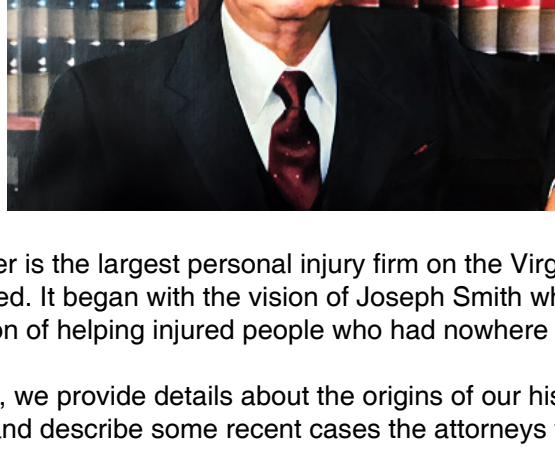




In This Issue...

- Welcome to the Smith Law Center's June Newsletter
- Help Us Find a New Occupant for The Smith Law Center Building
- Meet Chief Negotiator Roland White
- Five Fast Facts About Fort Monroe
- Smith Law Center Attorneys Win \$10.45 Million in Three Recent Cases

Welcome to the Smith Law Center's June Newsletter



The Smith Law Center is the largest personal injury firm on the Virginia Peninsula and the longest established. It began with the vision of Joseph Smith who founded the firm in 1949 with the intention of helping injured people who had nowhere else to turn.

In our first newsletter, we provide details about the origins of our historic firm, introduce our chief negotiator and describe some recent cases the attorneys tried.

When Joseph Smith was born in 1918, the First World War was in its final year. Smith was a native of Newport News who graduated from the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. He was president of William and Mary Interfraternity Council and of the Phi Alpha fraternity.

Smith forged a reputation for being diligent and tenaciously pursuing justice and standing up for the 'little guy.' He became known for his philanthropy and his keen sense of humor.

While Smith supported many local and national charities, he seldom touted his donations, preferring to quietly help the less fortunate.

Smith also endowed the Ernest Goodrich Professor Chair for at Marshall-Wythe School of Law. He was a 33rd Mason, a member of the Peninsula Shrine Club, and a member of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks.

Smith died in 1994. His legacy is carried on by his sons Stephen M. Smith and Howard P. Smith, and attorneys David Holt, and Stewart Gill.

Joseph Smith's ideals of putting the welfare of clients first, protecting their rights through caring and aggressive representation and taking cases all the way to trial to secure a better result, lives on.

"The attorneys are supported by a diverse staff of 28 who collectively bring over 300 years of experience to the firm" says Stephen Smith.

Staff members actively participate in a variety of professional associations that enable them to stay abreast of current developments in the legal field.

The firm has won over a billion dollars in awards for their clients. It won a \$60 million verdict for a man from Williamsburg who suffered brain damage when a Norfolk Southern train derailed and hit the gas station he managed. This verdict is the largest mild traumatic brain injury verdict in the world and the largest personal injury verdict in Virginia history.

Help Us Find a New Occupant for The Smith Law Center Building



The Smith Law Center offices at 2100 Kecoughtan Road in Hampton and the early days of the Smith Law Center building (black and white).

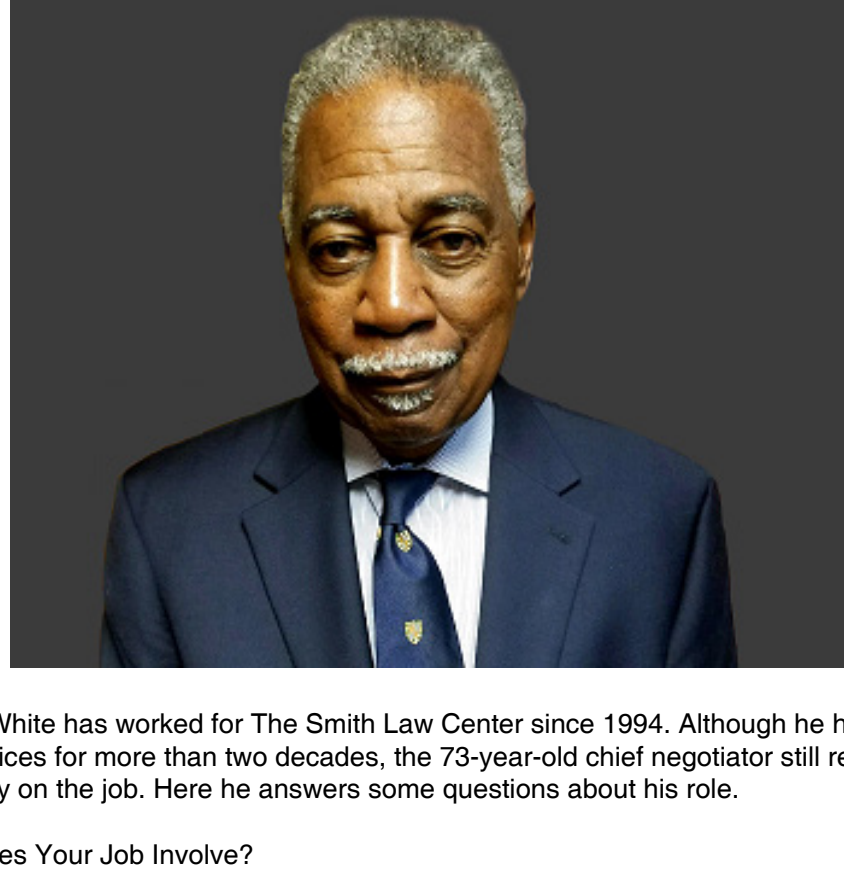
The Smith Law Center has occupied a building at 2100 Kecoughtan Road in Hampton since the late 1960s. The building is a former gas station and is deceptively large at 7,800 square feet.

The firm has its roots firmly in the City of Hampton and that won't change. However, it is selling or renting its offices on Kecoughtan Road where the firm has practiced continuously since 1967 and is moving to new offices in downtown Hampton.

"We are searching for a new location in downtown Hampton. We would like to move within the next year when we have found a new location. We want to be more accessible to our clients in downtown," said attorney David Holt.

To make an appointment to view 2100 Kecoughtan Road call Teresa Nettles at (757) 873-2900.

Meet Chief Negotiator Roland White



Roland White has worked for The Smith Law Center since 1994. Although he has been in the offices for more than two decades, the 73-year-old chief negotiator still relishes every day on the job. Here he answers some questions about his role.

What Does Your Job Involve?

My job involves reviewing cases. I help the case managers prepare their cases for demands or presentation to the insurance companies for consideration for offers or for settlement. Those are cases that are not in suit. I usually do a periodic review of all cases.

What do you like about the Smith Law Center?

I like the attorneys and our staff. These guys are trial attorneys. They show a genuine interest in our clients and they show a genuine interest in the staff here. It's a professional environment but it's not a stiff environment. It's a relaxed environment as well. Most of our clients come to the firm through prior clients. You have family members that refer other family members.

What Did You Do Before You Worked for the Smith Law Center?

I was in the Army for 21 years. I did a couple of Vietnam tours and was in Central America. I was later with Aetna Casualty. I did commercial casualty work. That's how I came into this.

Where Do You live?

In the Wythe community. I'm two blocks away from here. I have been in this community since 1987.

Describe Your Family

I have two sons. They are grown now. I have been married for 52-years to Rita.

Where Were You Educated?

Morgan State College in Maryland. It's now Morgan State University.

What are your Favorite Hobbies and Sports Teams?

I do a lot of golfing. I follow the Baltimore Ravens and the Wizards because I'm originally from Baltimore.

What Do You Like Most About Your Work?

The Smith family are some really great guys. They are great legal minds not just in this field but overall. I enjoy getting up every morning and coming in here. It's just a good environment. I think the people who work here feel that way.

Five Fast Facts About Fort Monroe



Fort Monroe is one of Hampton Roads' most popular tourist attractions. But not everyone who lies on the beaches, walks the stone walls or eats at [The Deadrise](#) is aware of its historical significance. Here are five facts about Fort Monroe.

1 A young engineer called Robert E. Lee was stationed at Fort Monroe from 1831-1834. He directed the final phase of the building of the largest stone fort ever constructed in the United States. Lee later became famous as the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia in the American Civil War from 1862 until his surrender in 1865.

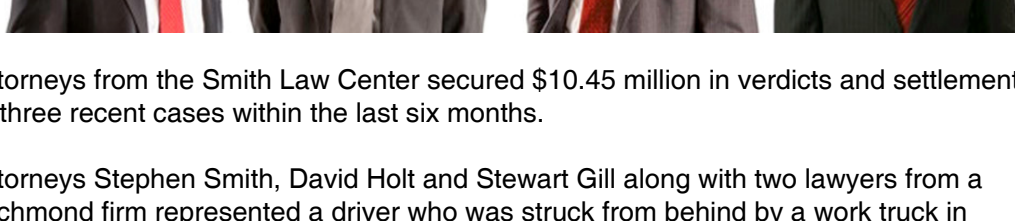
2 During the Civil War, three slaves escaped the Confederate Army at Sewells Point and fled to Fort Monroe. Union commander General Benjamin Butler refused to return them. He kept them as "contraband of war." It was a pivotal move that led to the Emancipation Proclamation and earned Fort Monroe the nickname "Freedom's Fortress" or the "Freedom Fort."

3 Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy, was imprisoned in Fort Monroe in 1865 after the surrender of the south. His cell became the centerpiece of the Casemate Museum at the fortress. Davis was only shackled for a matter of days. When news broke of the nature of his confinement it created an outcry and the shackles were removed.

4 Although wars raged around Fort Monroe, its worst tragedy occurred at a time of peace in 1910 when 11 members of a gun crew were either killed instantly or fatally injured at Battery DeRussy's gun pit when a big gun exploded.

5 Old Port Comfort close to Fort Monroe was a thriving holiday resort in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century. Numerous hotels such as the Hygeia and Chamberlin were built for tourists who arrived on steamers. The original Chamberlin Hotel was destroyed by fire. A replacement was built in the 1928 and the building still stands.

Smith Law Center Attorneys Win \$10.45 Million in Three Recent Cases



Attorneys from the Smith Law Center secured \$10.45 million in verdicts and settlements in three recent cases within the last six months.

Attorneys Stephen Smith, David Holt and Stewart Gill along with two lawyers from a Richmond firm represented a driver who was struck from behind by a work truck in Newport News. The case was settled for \$8 million after the fifth day of a trial in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia in Newport News.

A report in *Virginia Lawyers Weekly* noted the driver was rear-ended at a high speed by a work truck as she slowed down at a red light on J. Clyde Morris Boulevard in Newport News. The force of the impact was so great the car was pushed through the intersection and hit another vehicle.

The driver suffered a mild traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and soft tissue injuries to her neck and back.

The driver who hit the woman was from out of state. On the evening of the collision, he drank alcohol at a hotel where he was staying. After becoming intoxicated, he asked for the key to the truck from the hotel's front desk. Employees of the company the driver was working for gave the truck's key to the clerk at the front desk of the hotel with an instruction to provide the key to any employee of the firm who asked for it.

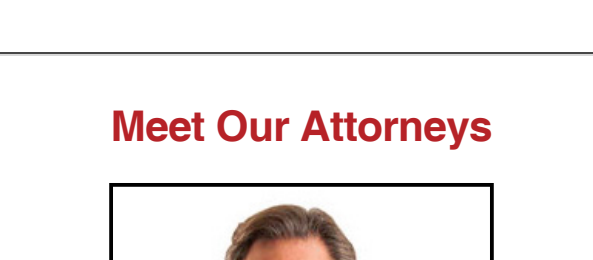
That instruction formed the basis of a negligent entrustment claim that the company that hired the driver. The truck driver later pled guilty to a DUI charge.

The case proceeded to a trial after an unsuccessful attempt at mediation. After the fifth day of the trial, the parties agreed to settle the case for \$8 million.

Three months later, Smith and Holt tried a case that resulted in a \$1.6 million verdict in Oklahoma City, OK. The case involved a tractor trailer at high speed crashing into the client on a bridge, causing a mild traumatic brain injury and significant post-traumatic stress disorder. "We try cases all over the country and are successful in bringing justice for our clients," Stephen Smith said. "We were very pleased with the outcome of this case and our client will be well taken care of for years to come."

Five weeks later, Smith and Holt tried another mild traumatic brain injury case, this time in Harrisonburg, VA. After 5 days of trial, a jury awarded a 21 year old college student \$850,000 in a hotly contested damages case involving a tractor trailer crash on Interstate 81.

To find out more about [The Smith Law Center](#), please visit our website and like us on [Facebook](#)



Meet Our Attorneys



Stephen M. Smith



Howard Smith



David Holt



Stewart Gill

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