

The Oxford Family Newsletter

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"LOOK HOW FAR THE LORD HAS BROUGHT US"

Monroe and Pam Fordham, Editors
December 2008 Number 78



L'OVERTURE CARTER CELEBRATES 80th BIRTHDAY

L'Overture Carter turned 80 on August 14, 2008. He celebrated his birthday by hosting a dinner/party with a few family members and friends

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

I was born in New York City on August 14, 1928 at Lincoln Hospital. My parents were Ozie B. Oxford Carter and M. Wade Carter. My mother was raised on the farm of my maternal grand parents, Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford in Parrott, Georgia. My mother had been a student in Miss Reddick's School and then the Helen Gurr "Colored" school in Parrott. The Helen Gurr School was located behind Macedonia Baptist Church. When my mother was 18 or 19 years old, she married Wade Carter.

My father had been raised on a farm in Americus, Georgia (a few miles north of Parrott). He lived with his mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Brantly Carter. After my father and mother got married, they moved to New York City. They went there in search of opportunities to make a better future for themselves. There was no future for blacks in Parrott outside of farming and sharecropping. I remember going to school in the North. My brother Reggie was born in 1931 in Jersey City, New Jersey. My mother went there for his birth because my father had family there. When my mother was pregnant with my youngest brother Robert, she became ill. Robert was born in 1933. We lived on the 6th floor of a New York City apartment building and my mother hated walking up and down the stairs. My mother was a very religious woman and never really liked the secular/urban life of the big city. Eventually, in 1936, she and my father separated and she took her three boys back to Georgia.

For about 6 months we lived with my paternal grand parents in Americus, Georgia. After that we moved back to Parrott with my maternal grand parents, Mance and Sarah Oxford. My

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

grandparents in Parrott were not sharecroppers; they owned a large farm with many animals. During the Depression, grandfather Mance had difficulty getting the loans that farmers need to get them through a planting and harvest season and he had to sell his farm and most of his livestock. He bought a smaller farm. My grand parents lived on the second farm for the remainder of their farming years. I left the farm in 1945, when I was 17 years old and went to live with my aunt and uncle in Orlando, Florida. I didn't want to spend my life working on a farm. There didn't seem to be much of a future there for me. My mother and brothers moved to Atlanta shortly after I left the farm. (My Aunt Nan lived in Atlanta). My middle brother, Reggie, joined the Army in 1948.

In Orlando, I first lived with my aunt and uncle, Arie Oxford Fordham and her husband Uncle James. I lived with them for 3 months. I then moved in with my Uncle Otis Oxford who also lived in Orlando. My first job in Florida was with Sears and Roebuck. After that I worked for a bakery. From there I went to work for Thomas and Howard Grocery Company. In addition to his regular job, my Uncle Otis was involved with the "numbers racket." I played the numbers occasionally. I remember that once I hit the jackpot for a lot of money. I sent some large denomination bills to my mother and told her that I had "hit" the number. Several days later she sent the money back to me and informed me that she didn't want any money from gambling. That was my mother; a strict, straight laced and religious person. After waiting a while, I changed the denomination of the bills and sent the money back to her and didn't tell her that it was money from playing the numbers.

In 1947 I left Florida and returned to my grandparent's farm in Parrott, Georgia. I only stayed there for one week. Still searching for a job with a future, I went to Philadelphia to live with my Uncle Johnny L. Oxford and his wife Aunt Lucy. I got a job with Campbell's Soup Company for about 9 months. From there I got a job working on the docks. I still hadn't found a job with a future. After a while I decided to leave Philadelphia and go to Hartford, Connecticut to live with my Uncle Velma Oxford and his wife Aunt Dolly.

In Hartford I got a job with the Union Manufacturing Company. I stayed with that job for a little over a year. In September of 1950, a man by the name of James Butler recommended me for a job with the Hartford Dispatch and Warehouse Company. The job involved driving a truck and making deliveries. I even joined the Teamster Union local. It was a job that I truly loved. I worked for that company for the next 41 years. I retired in 1991. In 41 years I only missed 15 days from work, and that includes time that I took off for funerals of relatives and friends.

I met my wife, Fleta James Carter, through a friend, Willie Gardner. She was the sixth child of Rufus and Eliza James of Plains, Georgia. Ironically, while Plains is only a few miles from Parrott, we had never met. She had moved to Hartford in the early 1940s. She and I joined Bethel A.M.E. Church in Hartford. She was a stewardess and a member of the church choir. She was a graduate of the Connecticut Institute of Hairdressing. We were married in July 1950. We had one daughter, Renee. We were married for more than 41 years. Fleta died in October 1992.

During my retirement years I have remained active in numerous civic activities. I am a member of the local NAACP and Urban League, and I am active in my church. I am also a Shriner, and I like to travel.

My advice to the younger generation: Work hard. Save your money. Get as much education as you can. Respect yourself and treat others fairly. Do those things and you will prosper.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES



Arcolia "Teck" Myers

Arcolia "Teck" Myers was born on May 9, 1924 in Sumter County, Georgia. Her father's name was Jess Oxford and her mother was Johnnie Mae Darns. She had five siblings—Thelma "Tip" (deceased), Jessie Mae "Sister", Mary Ann, Sam (deceased), and John L. "Jay" (deceased). "Teck" attended the Terrell County Colored school. On her paternal side, she was the granddaughter of Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford. Her maternal grandmother was Mrs. Molly Darns. Mrs. Darns was one of the area's most well known mid-wives.

Her mother died of pneumonia after giving birth to her younger sister, Mary Ann. After her mother died, her father married Essie Mae Gadsen. Her sisters, Jessie Mae and Mary Ann were raised by their grandmother, Molly Darns. The other children were raised by Jess and Essie Mae Gadsen Oxford. The Jess Oxford family were sharecroppers in Parrott, GA. (After the death of his second wife, Jess moved to Altamont Springs FL. He died in 1971 at age 74). For most of her life, "Teck" worked as a farmer's wife. She is a member of Macedonia Baptist Church. Her first child, whose father was Napoleon Gadsen, was born prior to her marriage to Love Myers II. "Teck" is the mother of 9 children, 31 grandchildren, and 37 great-grandchildren. Today she is in poor health and for the past seven years has lived with her daughter and son-in-law, Essie and Mckinley Bradley, in Sasser, Georgia.

William "Boon" Oxford

William "Boon" Oxford was the younger brother Of Mance Oxford. "Boon" was born in 1890. He was the next to youngest of seven children born to Berry (1832) and Jane (Mets?) Oxford (1849). The Berry Oxford family were residents of Terrell County Georgia. Their children were Mance (1872), Ada (1884), Beulah "Hun" (1887), Ophelia "Field" (1888), Wilkes "Bud" (1889), William "Boon"(1890), and "Scold" (1894).

"Boon" married Miss Willie Weaver and the couple farmed for a while in Terrell County. They were the parents of three children. During the 1920s the "Boon" family moved to Philadelphia, PA in search of economic opportunities. "Boon" lived in Philadelphia until his death in 1955. His wife died in 1970. Two of their children, Dave and Raymond, died in 1965 (Dave), and 1972 (Raymond). A third child, Mercedes Oxford Hudley, still lives in Philadelphia. Mrs.

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

Hudley had three children, Cynthia Hudley Thurston, John Hudley (died 1989), and Annette Cannady. Numerous descendants of the family still live in the Philadelphia area.

**WELCOME GIVEN BY MCKINLEY BRADLEY AT THE FAMILY THANKSGIVING
DINNER, 2008 IN PARROTT, GEORGIA**

I would personally like to thank each and everyone of you for coming and participating in this gathering today. Today is special for many reasons. When you look at the times that we are living in we all know that it is hard just to survive from day to day and make ends meet. Some people get so absorbed with their own way of living and never take the time to look at the bigger picture or sometimes just take a step back. Well this is a Step Back!! Reflect if you will on how you got here. I believe all of us could answer that pretty easily. But, for a brief moment take a look around you. One connection I want you all to know is the relationship by blood that you have. The majority of the people in this room at this moment are descendants of Mance and Sarah Ann Shepherd Oxford and their siblings. This is part of the bigger picture; Ada Oxford (Mance's sister) was married to Jim Williams. They had 4 children, one of whom was Jessie Bell ("Cousin Sis"). Aunt Emmaline Shepherd was Sarah Ann Shepherd Oxford's only sister. Sarah Ann raised Aunt Emmaline. Aunt Emmaline married Bonnie Moon. They had 10 children, some of whom were Charley Will, Carrie Mae, Vera and Ethel. If it's not too much to ask, Please take time to fellowship and get to know some of your relatives. This world is full of negative thoughts, some people thinking only of themselves and not showing love to their fellow man. I Thank all of you that chose to sacrifice some of your time to attend this occasion; you are more than just your fellow man, you are family.... you are brothers by blood!! The Bible encourages us to let God's Holy Spirit work in us, producing qualities (The Fruitage of the Spirit) such as Love, Joy, Peace and Faith.

God's **Love** created your ancestors; You are the product of your ancestors. **Faith** sustained them through tough times. As a family it can also help us through the times we face today. Once again I welcome all of you. May you have **Joy** and let **Peace** be with you for just these few precious moments that you break bread, dressing, turkey or chicken together.

McKinley ("Brad") Bradley

**SAVE THESE DATES
FAMILY REUNION, 2009**

Date: July 31st, August 1st and 2nd, 2009

Place: Parrott, and Albany, Georgia.

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

The scheduled dates for the next Oxford Family Reunion are as follows: July 31st, August 1st & 2nd of 2009. Please call me (Brad or Essie) 229-995-5875 before February 28, 2009 and confirm your intention to attend. I will need that information in planning with the caterer. It will also be helpful to have a contact person in the various regions where we have large numbers of relatives (Georgia, Florida, Conn., etc). If you are willing to be a contact person to call and communicate with persons in your region, let us know. That way we can share information between newsletters. We also have a folder for the reunion on our family WEB site (www.oxford9.com). We will get T- Shirt info., prices and other specific information out in the March newsletter.

McKinley and Essie Bradley (229-995-5875)

**TANISHA S. FORDHAM;
MISS NBCA HALL OF FAME, 2008-2009**

On Saturday, September 27, 2008 TaNisha Fordham participated in the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame, Queens' Competition. She represented her school as Miss North Carolina A & T University. The competition took place in Atlanta, Georgia where twenty-eight queens from historically black colleges and universities from around the country competed for the coveted title. At the end of the four day competition, TaNisha, a native of Western New York, was crowned "Miss NBCA Hall of Fame." The competition was grueling at times, and each contestant was cheered on by hundreds of supporters from her respective school. Some of the participating schools included Morgan State University, the University of the District of Columbia, Tennessee A & I University, South Carolina State University, Alabama State University and Clark Atlanta University. The event was also attended by dignitaries such as Susan Taylor, former editor of *Essence Magazine*; Kristine White, Miss Black USA 2008; and the honorable Glenda Hatchett, who was the Mistress of Ceremonies.

Each of the queens was judged in four categories. The participants had to recite an original oratory that addressed the theme "HBCUs: Bringing Dreams into Reality," and each participant had to display the talent of her choice. TaNisha performed a monologue from the play *Pretty Fire* by Charlayne Woodard. Each participant also had to answer an impromptu question and was judged on her articulation, personality and deportment. The judges also evaluated each queen's level of confidence, ability to be spontaneous and her intelligence – all within a sixty second time limit. When asked what quality our nation's leaders should possess, TaNisha replied, "love." She elaborated on her response flawlessly, citing biblical passages to support her opinion. In the final category the participants were judged on their presentation of an evening gown of her choice. The queens displayed poise and grace as they modeled their gowns in a manner that reflected their natural sense of elegance, grace and charm.

TaNisha is currently a senior at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Her victory represents the second time North Carolina A&T has claimed the title, since the first NBCA Hall of Fame., Competition of Black Queens in 1986. TaNisha is majoring in Journalism and Mass Communications, with a focus on electronic media. She hopes to someday be an actress and to own her own production company. TaNisha is a graduate of the Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart high school and is a member of the First Shiloh Baptist Church of

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Buffalo. Her mother is Ms. Pamela Fordham and her grandparents are Dr. and Mrs. Monroe Fordham. Tanisha is the great-great granddaughter of the late Arie D. Oxford Fordham Jackson.

FAMILY TRIBUTE TO TANISHA

*“Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise, I rise, I rise.”*

from “Still I Rise” by Maya Angelou

Dear TaNisha,

You are truly a gift from God. For the past twenty-one years you have been a gift to your family, your community, your friends and anyone that has had the privilege of being part of the village in which you have grown and lived. It is impossible to fully express the pride we all feel as we collectively pause to celebrate this glorious day in your life.

If your great, great grandparents – Mance and Sarah Oxford were alive, they might simply say, “Look how far we’ve come in the Lord.” Even as they struggled through the hardships of poverty and life in rural Parrott, Georgia, they understood that their prayers would make their way down through the generations and continue to bless and bless and bless. The lessons they passed on were rooted in Scriptures. Your life is a testament to their faith. They would surely tell you to keep your hand in God’s hand.

If your great grandparents – the Fordham’s and the Harris’s were alive, they would remind you that all things are possible. Great Grandmother Harris somehow found strength while sharecropping in those cotton fields, and Great Granddaddy Harris found his rhythm on the railroads. Times weren’t usually easy, but they knew how to keep on keeping on, and they never lost sight of their dream for better days. Great Grandmother Fordham was the original mold for the likeness of the strong black woman. She knew the value of education, so she never stopped pushing forward, even after she received her high school diploma at age sixty-one. Can you see their pointed fingers straining to direct you? Can you hear their voices crying out, “Baby – keep your eyes on the prize”?

Grandma and Grandpa can’t be here with you, but their presence has never been stronger in your life. Every tear Grandma cries flows from the sweetest part of her memory that begins the day you were born. She called out your name, as if to announce to the world that it would forever be changed by your very existence. Grandpa’s impact on your life is too big for words. This day is a reflection of his genuine belief in your ability to do anything and to be anything. Your confidence is deeply rooted in the love they have shown toward you, even before you breathed your first breath. Today they are reminding you that your dreams must always be for tomorrow.

You were God’s perfect gift to your mother. You made her believe that God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask. She could never have imagined the wonderful blessing she received in you. You are so much more than a daughter. You have made your mother “Queen Mama,” and every day of your life, you honor her. Today she is proclaiming, “You are my best thing.”

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The village celebrates with you today. Aunts, uncles, cousins, teachers and friends, thank you for allowing them to leave their handprints on your life and for the many ways you have impacted theirs. Congratulations – you rise, you rise, you rise.

The Fordham Family

DREAMZ

(Editor's Note: This essay was written by Cortesia Aria Louthenia Oxford. Cortesia is the daughter of Lorenzo and Audrey Oxford, and granddaughter of Rose and the late Otis Oxford. It was submitted by her mother who wanted to share it with the family).

I, _____ pledge allegiance to my dreamz; I will make a reality by any means necessary. Putting God first who directs my path, and my passion for success. I CAN'T AND WILL NOT FALL TO THE TRAPS OF MY HATERS aka everyone that does not see my success and my dreams within my reach can STEP! If I do not accomplish my dreamz, I have started a cycle of failure that can only be passed down. My dreamz are important to me and everyone that is around me because they believe in me and will support me in any positive decision to uplift myself to greater possibilities. I am not intended to fail; I am not intended to be average; I am not intended to be like everyone else, my dreamz set me apart from my sexuality, race and past. I am no longer living in what happened but what can happen and what is within my reach. If I believe in my own dreamz therefore anyone that surrounds me will respect and believe the same. I will not settle no matter the circumstance, if I have a baby, A family member dies, fail a class, homeless, loose all your friends, and dead broke. I will not give up on my dreamz. My dreamz are my plan for not just financial gain and fulfillment, but for complete and centered happiness so that I can look out on my accomplishments and smile. From this point foreword, I am a dreamer and I have dreamz that will not allow me want what my neighbor has but I want my own. I want to work hard for my dreamz so that they will not be taken from me. Being a dreamer with possibilities and S.M.A.R.T goals has my life set up to succeed. I am destined for greatness so my dreamz are destined to succeed. I don't have anything to prove to anyone else but myself. Self we are going to handle our business so that we can not live in regret.

Signature of Dreamer _____

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**CHARLES ELIASH KERR “400,”SR.
1938-2008**

(Editor's Note: Charles Kerr was the husband of the late Louise Walton “Pelo” Kerr.)

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Charles Eliash Kerr, Sr., 70 of Hartford, CT departed this life Thursday, October 2, 2008 at Hartford Hospital. He was born September 5, 1938 the tenth of twelve children to the late William and Bina Kerr. "400" as he was affectionately known moved to Hartford, CT in 1955. He served in the United States Armed Services. His last employment was with the City of Hartford, Department of Public Works. He joined Phillips Metropolitan C.M.E. Church on October 21, 2007.

He leaves cherished memories to six daughters: Valarie and Jackie Kerr, Janice, Kim and Charlene Walton and Sheila Fredrick; all of Hartford; four sons: Charles Kerr, Jr., Robert Walton, Sr. both of Hartford. Arron Gomes of Boston and Terrance Gomes of Texas; six sisters: Bloneva (Herman) Reid, Wilhelmina McKnight, Vemell (Hedley) Rashford, Mary Parris, Elizabeth Kerr-Richardson (James) all of FL., Baby Jane Weatherspoon of CT; one brother: Ernest (Francis) Kerr of NY; 18 Grandchildren and 17 Great Grandchildren. He also leaves treasured memories to first wife and devoted friend Joyce Kerr, a Goddaughter Gwendolyn Shannon and a host of nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Charles was predeceased by his wife Louise Walton-Kerr, two sons, James "Petie" Walton and Anthony "Toni" Kerr, a sister, Naomi Shirley and two brothers, Robert and William Kerr. "

**THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT:
THROUGH THE EYES OF LUCIUS HOLLOWAY SR.
By Charlene Holloway Bishop and Lucius Holloway Sr.**

(Editor's Note: Lucius Holloway is the husband of the granddaughter of Emmaline Shepherd Moon (Sarah Ann Oxford's sister). Charlene Bishop is his daughter

Lucius Holloway learned at a very young age that the color of one's skin can affect how a person is treated. Armed with his strong faith, determination, and endurance, Lucius fought for the civil rights of African Americans, specifically the rights to vote and hold public office. With the help of the Students Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he held voter registration meetings and spread awareness of civil rights through the black community in Terrell County, Georgia. After the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act were signed into law, Lucius filed a lawsuit against the city and county so that African Americans could serve as elected members of the local government. In spite of dangers and threats to himself and his family, Lucius persevered in the hope that one day all would live in freedom and with equality.

The Civil Rights Movement through the Eyes of Lucius Holloway Sr., which tells the inspiring story of one man who sought and won the rights of African Americans, is a tribute to all those who suffered discrimination and segregation during the 1950s, 60s, and 70s.

About the Authors

Lucius Holloway Sr. lives in Dawson, Georgia, where he has worked for civil rights and the good of the community since the 1950s. He is a graduate of Terrell County public high school, and he received certification for auto body and frame construction from the Albany Vocational Technical College and for county commissioner training from the University of Georgia. He is a retired member of the US National Guard and a licensed funeral director in the state of Georgia. In 1955 Lucius became the first vice president of the Terrell County branch of the NAACP, a post

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that he still holds today. In his community, he is also a member of the Sardis Missionary Baptist Church. Lucius and his wife, Emma Kate, have four children.

The daughter of Lucius Holloway, Charlene Holloway Bishop is a graduate of Terrell High School. She attended Andrew College and received instructional hours in child development at Valdosta Technical Institute. She has worked as a child development program assistant and a Red Cross volunteer at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan. She is a member of the Sardis Missionary Baptist Church. She and her husband, Ret. US Air Force Msgt. Robbye A. Bishop, have two children.

(Editor's Note: The book was published by Dorrance Publishing Co., 701 Smithfield St., Pittsburg, PA 15222, (ISBN: 978-0-8059-7597-0), \$15 + tax and shipping), phone # 1-800-788-7654).

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY ON THE BARACK OBAMA PHENOMENON.

Monroe Fordham

I was born in rural southwest Georgia in 1939. I spent my first 17 years in the South. The South was totally segregated in those days. Rural Georgia was especially bad. Most of the people that I knew in Georgia were sharecroppers. In the 1940s and 1950s, black men who “got out of line,” or were seen as threatening, could be brutally beaten or killed by whites without any questions being asked. (I remember seeing my cousin David Telefare, who had been beaten to near death with a “billy club” by a part time sheriff one Saturday night in Parrott in the 1940s. I was about 6 years old, and seeing him covered with bandages and unconscious in his bed is a sight that I will never forget. We were walking past Cousin Sis’ house (his wife) on our way to school, and Cousin Sis called all of us kids into her house to witness, first hand, what had been done to her husband.)

Likewise, black women could be raped or insulted by white men with impunity. Moreover, there was no legal recourse for blacks who were taken advantage of by whites in many ways.

Those conditions began to change in the 1960s with the advent of the Civil Rights Movement. The political empowerment of southern blacks ushered in revolutionary changes in most areas of the South. By the turn of the century the “old” South had virtually disappeared from view. Most of the changes were not voluntary and didn’t come easy. I was an eye witness to that transformation. However, in spite of all the changes, new freedoms and opportunities, that I had witnessed, I was not prepared for what happened in regards to Barack Obama.

Although numerous black presidential candidates had run in presidential primaries in the post-civil rights era; they were always “symbolic” or “protest” candidates. They served primarily to energize and “get out” the black vote. No one expected them to be serious contenders. When Barack began to win caucuses and state primaries in the early stages of the 2008 Democratic Primary, I could hardly believe that white people would support a black man for President. I fully expected the “bubble” to burst eventually. But Barack kept winning and it became clear that even southern whites were voting for him. Expecting “reality” to eventually set in, I watched as some conservative white columnists and politicians played the old reliable “race card”; but that didn’t

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seem to work anymore. And in the final week of August 2008, the National Democratic Party Convention nominated Barack Obama as its nominee for President of the United States.

Something was happening in America and I couldn't put my finger on just what was going on. Some theorists held that a young generation of Americans were coming of age; a generation that had never experienced segregation. According to those theorists, that generation simply saw Barack as the best candidate. Another theory held that Americans were just fed up with the Bush policies and were ready for a change. Some people at church argued that God was simply answering prayers that black Americans had been praying for almost 400 years. They maintained that Barack was further evidence that God always answers prayer in His own way and in His own time. My Sunday school teacher said that Barack had been sent by God to lead a movement to "make real the promise of America." Whatever the causative reason, the Obama phenomenon was a welcomed development; a development that I never expected to occur in my lifetime.

Monroe Fordham,
August 31, 2008

REV. & MRS. DAVID THOMAS CELEBRATE 23RD ANNIVERSARY AS PASTOR & FIRST LADY OF MT. OLIVE BAPT. CHURCH, FORTSON, GA

(Editor's Note: Rev. Thomas is a first cousin of the late Annie Lee Oxford.)

In April 2008 Rev. & Mrs. David Thomas celebrated 23 years as pastor and first lady of Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Fortson, GA. The anniversary service was held on April 27, 2008. Special guests included Pastor Noble Williams, and the Greater Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Phoenix City, Alabama.

MANCE & SARAH ANN OXFORD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

This is to announce that the Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship for 2009 is now open for applications. The scholarship awards, in the amount of \$500 each will be made in June, 2009. The purpose of the award is to encourage and assist high school graduates who are descendants of Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicant must be a descendant of Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford.
2. Applicant must be a high school senior who plans to attend college or a trade school following high school graduation.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING

(!!!! IMPORTANT, PLEASE DO ALL OF THE FOLLOWING !!!!)

(Letter of application **MUST** include the following)

1. Applicant's name, **applicant's address**, phone number, etc.
2. Statement explaining applicant's relationship to the Oxford clan.

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Statement explaining applicant's vocational or professional goals in life, and listing the college or trade school that you plan to attend.

4. A copy of applicant's high school transcript.
5. The application deadline is May 1, 2009.

APPLICATIONS THAT DO NOT INCLUDE ALL OF THE ABOVE WILL BE INELIGIBLE

Send all of the above to:

Mance & Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship
49 Calvert Blvd.
Tonawanda, NY 14150

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

Oxford descendants who have been accepted, or are enrolled, in a graduate school are eligible for a one time graduate student award of \$500.

Deadlines for applications are the same as the above. Applicants should submit a copy of their letter of acceptance to graduate school, or a copy of their most recent grades for graduate courses. Applicants should also explain their education goals and list their major course of study.

BE A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE *OXFORD FAMILY NEWSLETTER*

Write your own historical sketch or the history of your family and we will edit and publish it in a future issue of the *Oxford Family Newsletter*. If you are a senior, don't rely on others to write your obituary. Write your own story; you are the authority on your life. If you are self conscious about writing, don't worry, we will polish it up for you. We welcome poetry as well as prose. Send your articles to: pfordham@roadrunner.com, or the *Oxford Family Newsletter*, 49 Calvert Blvd., Tonawanda 14150.

Don't forget to call "Brad" about the family reunion next July and August. 229-995-5875.

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MACEDONIA MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH CELEBRATES IT'S 140TH ANNIVERSARY

(The following history was taken from the Anniversary Program)



In July 2008 Macedonia Baptist Church, of Parrott, Georgia, celebrated its 140th anniversary. The church was organized in 1868 by a Rev. Whitfield. The second Pastor was Rev. B.W. Davis who served for twenty years. Under Rev. Davis' leadership the following officers served as Deacons: Dea. Med Billings; Dea. George Jackson; and Dea. Hassan Battle.

The third Pastor was Rev. Lee Marshall who served for eight years. During his tenure Dea. Fletter and Dea. Gus Watson were ordained as Deacons. Rev Allen Down served as Pastor for four years. Rev. Ben Vicks served four years. Rev. Ben Gilford served three years. Rev. Kelly served four years. Under Rev. Kelly, the following were ordained as Deacons: Dea. Bonnie Moon; Dea. Mance Oxford; Dea. Whuster Williams; Dea. Earle Moses; and Dea. Andrew Jones. Rev. Sheppard served as Pastor for four years. Under Rev. Sheppard's leadership, a public school (Helen Gurr School) was built at Macedonia for educating black students.

Rev. J.E. Brown arrived in 1934 and served as Pastor for 37 years (until his death in 1971). Under the leadership of Rev. Brown a new church was built. Times were hard for black people working on farms. They had little or no money, but they believed that nothing was impossible for God. With the help of gospel artists such as The Blind Boys, Edna Cook (the sister of Sam Cook), The Swanee Quartet, and others; they held gospel singing programs to raise money to build a new church. Under Rev. Brown's leadership, there were changes and additions to both the operational functioning and the physical structure of the church. Under his leadership the following were ordained as Deacons: Dea. Henry Gunn; Dea. Adolphus Oxford, Sr.; Dea. Walter L. Stallworth; Dea. Otis Kimbrough; Dea. Julius Pollard; Dea. Willie Hall; Dea. Charlie Will Moon; and Dea. Emmitt Chapman. Rev. Brown served well until his death. He was very dear to us and we shall never forget him.

Rev. L. C. Mines served as Pastor for Five years. Under his leadership the following were ordained for Deacons: Dea. Lucious Mitchell; Dea. Adolphus Oxford, Jr.; Dea, Alonza Lewis; Dea. Charlie Marcus; Dea. Ernest Small; and Dea. John Thomas, Jr. Rev. J.O. Carter served as Pastor for four years. During his leadership the Church also progressed. Rev. Carter brought his vision of adding an annex to the Church. The vision became a reality. We also purchased a piano, a carpet, and the Christian and American Flags.

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

Rev. Melvin McCluster arrived from Preston, Georgia and began his as Pastor in 1984. Under his leadership, there were many changes and additions to both the operational functioning and to the physical structure of the Church. A significant change and growth, both in the organization of the financial system and in the financial status. The number of tithes substantially increased. Under his leadership two were ordained as Deacons: Dea. Otis Oxford, and Dea. Michael Grier. There were a number of additional accomplishment within the "12 " years such as: new windows, doors, carpet, porch, pews, communion table, roof and a finance room. We also renovated the ladies and mens rooms, installed wheelchair ramp, painted the exterior of the church, purchased an intercom system and a copy machine. Spiritually, the church experienced tremendous growth, under the leadership of Rev. McCluster. Three Deacons were ordained as Ministers; Rev. Lucious Mitchell; Rev. John Thomas; and Rev. Charlie Marcus. In November 1995, Rev. McCluster tendered his resignation as pastor to accept a calling in Americus, Georgia.

Following Rev. McCluster, Rev. Lucious Mitchell was called to pastor Macedonia. Rev. Mitchell preached his first sermon as our newly called pastor the first Sunday in April 1996. We continue to thank God for the visionary leadership and obedience, which our Pastor exemplifies. With the leadership of Reverend Mitchell, we now have Bible Studies every Tuesday. A telephone has been installed; we renovated the choir stand and added matching pews; men and women restrooms were renovated; a face lift was given to the yard and cemetery, we also purchased dinning room furniture and a freezer. We were financially able to host the I26th session of the Southwest Georgia Missionary Baptist Association in 1996. The Church exterior was beautified with new siding; windows replaced with stain glass; new exterior & interior doors were added. We added a new roof; a new intercom system; the church was church rewired; we acquired new carpet and a new electric piano. One Brother, Walter "Ronnie Lewis" Jackson was called to preach God's word. Under the divine leadership of Rev. Mitchell, twenty have been baptized and four by Christian Experience were added to our membership, both white and black. Rev. Mitchell's Vision is unfolding as we heighten our knowledge in the Word. We celebrate and praise God for the ever-growing ministry of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

Today, there stands a lighthouse on a hillside overlooking Parrott and Terrell County. "Sinners far and near are invited to come, for salvation was purchased for all mankind and can be found on the hill of Macedonia. The beaming light shines brightly for the believer, as well, to guide and direct in the ways of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Over the years, burdens have been lifted; blessings have been received; the way has been made plain; the truth has been proclaimed; faith has been strengthened; and hope has been deepened at Macedonia. The Pastor, Officers and Members are profoundly grateful to God for His boundless blessings, manifold mercies, saving grace and keeping power.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH AND THE MANCE & SARAH ANN OXFORD FAMILY

Monroe Fordham

Mance Oxford was born in 1872. We are not certain about the locality of his birth. (**Note:** The U.S. Census tracts of 1920 simply reported "Georgia" as his place of birth. The U.S. Census tracts of 1900 reported that Mance's father's name was Berry and his mother's name was Jane. The father's and mother's respective dates of birth were listed as 1832 and 1849. The U.S.

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

Census of 1900 listed the entire Berry Oxford family, except for Mance, who had gotten married and had left home in the 1890s. The family's place of residence was Terrell County GA, and the names and ages of Mance's siblings were listed as follows; Ada-15, Huna-13, Field-12, Bud-11, Boon-10, and Scold-5). One of Mance's sisters, Ada, married Jim Williams, and raised their family in Parrott. Some descendants of the Williams family remained in southwest Georgia and were/are longtime members of Macedonia Baptist Church. (**Note:** The 1920 U.S. Census showed that Mance's brothers, Bud [Wilkes] and Boon [Boone] were also residents of Terrell County. Bud was married to Hattie Oxford and the couple had three children, Jollie Mae, Edith, and J.B. Boon was married to Millie Oxford and that family had one child, David).

Sarah Ann Shepherd Oxford, Mance's wife, was born in 1877. We think that her family was from Terrell County. (**Note:** One of her brothers' [Alfred Shepherd] obituary, listed Terrell County as his place of birth. In addition, the U.S. Census of 1900 listed "Emaline," Sarah's sister, as being born in Terrell County). Sarah's father's name was Abe Shepherd. A family story holds that Abe Shepherd was burned to death in a field fire. Sarah had one sister (Emmaline Shepherd Moon) and two brothers (Dennis and Alfred Shepherd). Another family story stated that Sarah raised her sister Emmaline. (**Note:** The U.S. Census of 1900 showed that "Emaline Shepherd" was living in the household with Mance, Sarah and their two sons. At that time, Mance and Sarah only had two children. Their third child, Nannie Mae, was born in 1902. In the U.S. Census of 1900, "Emaline" was listed as being 8 years old). Emmaline, eventually married Bonnie Moon. Many members and/or descendants of the Moon family remained in southwest Georgia and have been prominent in the history of Macedonia.

Mance and Sarah were probably married in the mid 1890s. Their first child (Jethro "Jess" Oxford) was born in 1897. Their nine children were born between 1897 and 1919: ("Jess" 1897-1971, "Dock" 1899-1978, Nannie Mae 1902-1994, John L. 1903-1958, Ozie 1906-1971, Otis 1908-1983, Velma 1910-1979, Martha 1917-1998, and Arie D. 1919-1987). (**Note:** The U.S. Census of 1920 indicated that "Jess," "Dock," and Nannie Mae had left the household by that year. Only Mance, Sarah, and the couple's six other children occupied the homestead. The U.S. Census of 1920 listed Mance as being 48 years old and Sarah's age was listed as 43. Their youngest and final child, Arie D., was listed as being 11 months old). In the first half of the 20th century, the Oxfords were stalwart members of Macedonia. Mance was a Deacon and Sarah was at one time "Mother" of the Church. Moreover, numerous members of the Oxford and extended family were prominent in Macedonia's history

Unlike most blacks in Parrott, Mance was not a sharecropper. Sometime before the "Great Depression," Mance purchased a large farm and had many farm animals. (**Note:** Loretta Carter, his mother and two brothers, actually lived with his grandparents on that farm). However, during the "Depression," Mance was unable to get the loans that farmers need to sustain them between planting and harvest, and he had to sell the farm. He bought a smaller farm. He worked the smaller farm until around 1950, when health conditions and age forced him to give up farming and move into town in Parrott. Sarah Ann Oxford died in 1952, and Mance died in 1955. The remains of both were buried in the Macedonia Church Cemetery.

Prior to, and during the era of WWII, some of the children, grand children, and siblings (and their descendants) of Mance and Sarah left Parrott in search of economic opportunities and relocated to cities in Florida and the "North." We know for certain that some went to Orlando, Florida; Philadelphia, PA; Hartford, Conn; and some went to New York, and New Jersey. Others moved to Atlanta. As they moved, family members reached back and helped other family members to leave Parrott and move to areas with more economic opportunities. However, some

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

family members and their descendants remained in southwest Georgia and continued to farm, and some eventually moved to cities like Albany and Dawson where they found work.

I along with my Aunt Ozie B. Oxford Carter and her three boys (Loverture, Reggie, and Robert Carter) lived with my grandparents, Mance and Sarah, during most of the 1940s. I have vivid and fond memories of life at Macedonia during those years. I remember that Macedonia's membership was made up of four or five extended families. In many ways Macedonia was like one big family. The church was central to our lives.

Most of the black farmers in Parrott came to town on Saturdays. Most of the children spent the day walking from one end of the town's short main street to the other end, and sitting on the edge of the big loading platform by the highway counting cars. Sometimes the young men would play baseball games in nearby cow pastures against teams from other towns.

Most of the adults spent some time at the church, which was located about a ten minute walk from Parrott's one street business district. Women worked on the inside of the church—cleaning, dusting, and getting things ready for Sunday. Men did maintenance jobs around the church, and did landscaping projects in the church cemetery. Everyone helped to keep the church and grounds clean and in good repair. The church was our collective and most prized possession.

On Sundays, everyone either walked to church or rode in wagons pulled by a team of mules. During the church services, the mules would be unhitched and tied up to the side of the wagons. I remember that sometimes, my grandmother Sarah baked the bread for the First Sunday Communion Sacrament. Some Sundays, when we had a minister, we spent the entire day at church. We only had a minister one or two Sundays per month. The Deacons conducted services on the other Sundays. I remember that my Uncle Willie Whaley, and Cousin "Flick" Oxford could set the church "on fire" with their prayers. Mr. Sapp and Uncle Henry Gunn could "sing the church happy." Our pastor was Rev. J.E. Brown, he was a legendary figure. I was less than seven years old and I still remember several of his sermons. I remember that he always called me "Samson," after the Biblical figure.

On Sunday, we began the day with Sunday school, which was followed by devotion and, on the Sundays when we had a minister, the main church service. When we spent all-day at church, families brought box lunches and in the afternoon they would spread the food out on tables for a pot luck picnic. After the meal we would have a final church service. In the late afternoon and early evening, we would make the long wagon-ride home, arriving home after dark.

Macedonia has been "an anchor in a time of storm" in the history of African Americans in Parrott, Georgia. The Church provided and nourished the hope and faith that propelled Mance and Sarah Oxford, their relatives and descendants, as well as hundreds of other members, through the segregation era, and the ups and downs of the twentieth century. Memories of the Church's transforming power have even sustained and inspired many that have long since left southwest Georgia. And, what is most remarkable, after almost 1½ centuries, Macedonia continues to offer the same values and life benefits to all who are willing to plug into its sustaining spiritual power.

Monroe Fordham

ADD YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY STORY TO THE OXFORD/SHEPHERD FAMILY TREE STORY

We don't know the histories of all of the various branches of the Oxford family that evolved from Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford (and their siblings). We will depend on our readers to add

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their stories of what happened to the various descendents that branched out from Parrott, Georgia during the last 60 years of the 20th century. Send us your stories and we will publish them. What happened to the families of Ada, Field "Ophelia," Scold, Hun, Bud, and Boon Oxford? We know that the descendants of Emmaline Shepherd Moon, and Dennis and Alfred Shepherd have done work on their family histories. We invite them to use the *Oxford Family Newsletter* to publish their stories. We also encourage descendants of Mance & Sarah's children to write down the stories of what happened to them. Contact us, even if you just want to talk, we'll help you put your stories in writing. Look for more family histories in future issues of the *Oxford Family Newsletter*. Send us the names and addresses of anyone who wants to receive the newsletter. Send to: Oxford Family, 49 Calvert Blvd., Tonawanda NY 14150. 716-633-7058 or Fordham@roadrunner.com.

OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS, 2008

There are five Oxford Scholarship recipients for 2008, they are Kevin Brown, Lajuan Brunson, Tameka Nicole Hall, Amanzie Jenkins II, and Shaquaveanika "Nika" Ware. Each scholarship recipient will receive a \$500 stipend and a certificate. Best wishes to all of them as they pursue their post-high school goals. We ask the family to keep them in their prayers. Below are the essays submitted by the students, to introduce themselves.

Kevin Brown

My name is Kevin Brown and I am the son of Steven and Sandra Brown of Bloomfield, Connecticut. My grandparents are the late Robert Carter and Mrs. Winifred Carter. I am in the senior class of Bloomfield High School in Bloomfield, CT. My favorite class in high school is the automotive class. Since becoming a freshman in high school, I have taken all three automotive courses, Auto 1 as a freshman, Auto II as a sophomore, and Auto III as a junior. Since I could not repeat the classes for my senior year, I have volunteered to help with other automotive students. Since my junior year at the high school, I have been participating in sports by playing volleyball. Even though I was a junior and a first year player at the time, I found myself subbing in for varsity players after four games in the season, which helped build my teamwork skills and sped up both my thinking and reaction time. During my senior year, I found myself starting for the varsity team and realized that my competitiveness had grown with my skills. I maintained a positive attitude and encouraged my teammates to do better. When I was not playing on the court, I was volunteering my time to help manage the girls' volleyball team during their season, which has helped me become more responsible.

Through two of my summer vacations of my four years of high school, I volunteered to be in a program at Social Youth Services called C.I.T. (Counselors In Training). This program was about helping to look after kids in different camps younger than myself and others in the C.I.T. program. These camps included "Kiddie Kamp" (children ranging from ages 5 to 7 years old), "789 Camp" (ages 7 to 9 years old), and "Total Rec" (ages 10 to 12 years old). Working with these kids has taught me a lot about patience. Also, during the summer before my senior year, I performed community service for my school along with one of my friends. Together, we worked in Bloomfield High School's library. We shelved books, cleaned up tables, counters, and shelves, and assisted the librarians with paperwork. At the end of the summer, my friend and I had completed over 40 hours of community service. During my junior and senior I helped create a

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program which involved building an electric car to compete in an actual race on a track in Limerock Park, located in Connecticut. While being involved with this project, I was one of the supervisors to make sure all of the right adjustments were made, and I also assisted in welding the car together.

I plan to go to a technical school called UTI (Universal Technical Institute). I want to study both auto mechanics and electronics, which are my passions. After graduation, I plan to work with a major car company to expand my knowledge of both cars and electronics with the company's vast technology. I plan on becoming a great automotive engineer and help others with their problems.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for this scholarship.

Lajuan Brunson

My name is Lajuan Brunson. I am the daughter of Evelyn Perry, grand daughter of Vera Mae Fordham, and great-grand daughter of the late Arie D. Fordham Jackson. I am a high school graduate in the class of 2008. I graduated from Jacksonville Job Corp, and I am working to complete my trade so that I can become a successful certified electrician. I plan to be very successful, and I'm not stopping there!!! You will be seeing my name in lights.

Tameka Nicole Hall

My name is Tameka Nicole Hall. I am the daughter of Gloria Jean Oxford Hall and the late Johnny Albert Hall; the granddaughter of Ethel Mae Oxford and the late John L. "Jaybird" Oxford; and the great-grand daughter of the late Jess Oxford. I will graduate from Terrell Middle High School in May 2008.

I am a member of Macedonia Baptist Church of Parrott Ga. I serve as a junior usher and am a member of the junior Choir. After graduating from high school in May 2008 I will attend Fort Valley State College in Fort Valley Georgia this falls. My major will be Early Childhood Education. I am the youngest of 2 brothers and 1 sister. I have 2 nieces Damiya and Nevaeh Hall. I enjoyed watching TV, dancing, talking on the phone, and hanging out with friends. I play 1st base for the Terrell County Green Waves softball team.

Amanzie Jenkins II

My name is Amanzie Jenkins II. I am the son of Gwen Carter-Jenkins, grandson of Naomi Carter and the late Reggie Carter, Sr. of Butler, GA., and the great grandson of the late Ozie B. Carter. I graduated from Taylor County High School on May 31, 2008. My plans are to attend South Georgia Technical College in Americus, Georgia and pursue a degree in Aircraft Structural Technology. My professional goal in life is to become an Aircraft Specialist. My granddaddy has been an inspiration in my life and he always stressed how important it is to get an education, put GOD first, enjoy what you do with your life and never forget where you came from. Keep me and my entire family in your prayers.

Shaquaveanika "Nika" Ware

I am a graduate of Terrell Middle High School, in Dawson Georgia. I plan to attend Albany Technical College this fall. I plan to major in nursing. My future goal is to become a pediatric nurse.

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I am the daughter of Phyllis Oxford, the grand daughter of Mr. Adolphus Oxford, Jr., and Louise Harden Oxford, and the great-grand daughter of the late Adolphus Oxford, Sr., and the late Annie Lee

Oxford. Presently, I am working with Girls Incorporated of Terrell County. The girls range in age from 6 to 16 years. I have worked with the group for several years.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for this scholarship.

The Oxford Family Newsletter

www.oxford9.com

"LOOK HOW FAR THE LORD HAS BROUGHT US"

Monroe and Pam Fordham, Editors

May 2008 Number 76

REGINALD CARTER, Sr., 1931-2008



Mr. Reginald Carter, Sr. was born January 17, 1931 in Jersey City, New Jersey to the parentage of Mr. Major Wade Carter and Ozie B. Oxford Carter. Reginald was the second of three sons born to this union. He was an active, dedicated leader, and Chairman of the Deacon Board of the New Providence Baptist Church, Reynolds, Georgia.

He spent his early years in Parrot, Georgia where he attended the public school. During his teenage years, he returned to Atlanta, where he graduated from Booker T. Washington High School. He served his country by enlisting in the United States Army in 1948. In over twenty years of service, he served in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, earning one Silver and two Bronze Stars. Having traveled the world, he retired in Fort Sill, Oklahoma with the rank of Master Sergeant. Upon retirement, he taught high school for over eight years in the Fulton County School System. In 1979, he earned a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from The Fort Valley State College, Fort Valley, Georgia. For several years, he was a sales associate with United Family Life

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

Insurance. He furthered his educational endeavors completing coursework and becoming a correctional officer. Reginald was the owner of R&N Bail Bonding Company of Butler, Georgia.

His civic and community involvement included: Previous Member and Chairman of the Taylor County Board of Education; Commander American Legion Post 196; member of the Flint River Technical College Literacy Council; Taylor County NAACP; the Taylor County Tax Assessor Board; the Fort Valley State University National Alumni Association, Inc.; and Trustee of Second Flint River Missionary Baptist Association Center. His demise came on Tuesday, February 26, 2008, at the Veterans Administration Hospital, Augusta, GA.

His home going services were held on March 2, 2008, at the Taylor County High School Auditorium. Rev. Weaver L. Smith officiated. At his home going services reflections on his life were given by the Honorable Sanford Bishop, U.S. Congressman; Mr. Jeff Watson, Sheriff of Taylor County; Mr. Wayne Smith Superintendent, Taylor County Schools; Mr. Charles Robinson, Ft. Valley State College Alumni Assoc.; and Commander McKinney American Legion Post District #3.

Reginald Carter, Sr. leaves a legacy of memories. Those who cherish his memory are: a devoted and loving wife of 57 years, Naomi Carter, Butler, GA; Five children: Charlene Carter, Kathleen, GA; Cynthia Y. Carter, Montezuma, GA; Reginald Carter, Jr. (Jessie) Butler, GA; Gwen C. Jenkins, Butler, GA; and Calvin (Avondale) Carter, Centerville, GA; eight grandchildren; Demetrius M. (Shannon) Smith, Katrina N. Carter, L. Larone (Shakeerah) Wonnum, Kayla N. Carter, Corlin Carter, Reginald Carter, III, Amanzie Jenkins, Jr., and Kayce Roach. Six great-grandchildren; brothers and sisters, Loveture (Tina) Carter, Hartford, CT; Robert (Winfred) Carter, who preceded him in death, Bloomfield, CT, Walyne Gamble, Bronx, NY; Jacqueline Pollitt, Bronx, NY; Leonard Davis, Bronx, NY; Toussaint Carter, Miami, FL; Nannette (Charles) Lewis, Richmond, VA; Kenyatta (Bernadette) Carter, Los Lunas, NM; Marjora (James) Chase, Bronx, NY; Two sisters-in-law, Rozena (Wilbert) Beagles and Pearline Carter of Butler, GA. One brother-in-law, Charles B. (Mildred) Carter, Detroit, MI; one aunt, Marie Carter of Jacksonville, FL and a host of nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Mr. Carter was buried in the West End Cemetery, Butler, Georgia with full military honors.

TANISHA FORDHAM, MISS NORTH CAROLINA A & T UNIVERSITY, 2008-2009

Editor's Note: Tanisha Fordham is the daughter of Pam Fordham, the grand-daughter of Monroe and Freddie Mae Fordham, and the great-grand-daughter of the late Arie D. Fordham Jackson. She is a senior major in Broadcast Journalism and Theater.

"NOT YOUR AVERAGE MISS A&T"

AshleyWithers

(from *A&T Register* Wednesday, April 2, 2008)

An artist, an actress, a singer, an athlete, what hasn't she done? Tanisha Fordham is a modern day "Renaissance Woman," she is now our next Miss North Carolina A&T State University 2008-2009. Fordham won the election by over 300 votes. "I believe staying true to who I have been since the beginning of the campaign is why I won," says Fordham. Coming from Tonawanda, 10

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

minutes outside of Buffalo, N.Y. this small-town girl is not new to the adrenaline rush of campaigning.

Being elected as class president her freshmen year at A&T, elected as Vice President of her Sophomore class, ran for Miss Junior the following year and now standing with the winning votes of Miss A&T, Fordham has come a long way. Her ad campaign consisted of posters, promise rings that promised her loyalty and individuality and one on one conversations with A&T students. She also had a helpful group of close friends who would greet people from door-to-door in support of her campaign. "People could appreciate people who are personable," says Fordham.

When asked what her first thoughts and feelings about winning Miss A&T, she responds with a sincere smile. "I'm shocked. I'm just still in shock." With the stress of elections, campaigning and still maintaining a full class load, Fordham made a unique decision. "Everyday since February 29 I have watched Rocky 6. Why? Because Rocky was the underdog, yet he continued to persevere. I believe perseverance led me to this day." Less than 24 hours crowned Miss A&T, Fordham is already busy with meetings, photo-shoots and work. Looking at her photos she explains how she represents the university. "I like to try to be the face of every facet of A&T whether it be faculty, students, or alumni," she said.

As you know Fordham is not your common Miss A&T compared to the last girls that have reigned these past years. She is one who wears her golden fro proudly and would strut in a dashiki or a plain t-shirt, it makes no difference to her. The Journalism and Mass Communication major, Fordham is ready for change this upcoming year. "One thing I really want to do is cut down the cost of coronation as much as possible and use that money for scholarships and effective programs." Bringing back block parties, dorm storms and cafe nights are other events that Fordham wants to see happen more on campus.

Fordham was class president her freshman year at A&T and ran for class president junior year, but lost by 12 votes. She believes communicating with Aggie students is the best way to inform them about events and programs around campus. "Where students are at, that is where we need to be. Obviously students are not sitting in the student government association office, and we don't need to be either." Fordham is also the director and founder of Enlightened Visions, a corporation that enhances the positive aspects of media instead of negative ones. Enlightened Visions sponsors a radio talk show, a TV show and a magazine.

Fordham tries to live by the words of Ghandi and "be the change." While others now know her as Miss North Carolina A&T, Fordham remains humble through it all. "Honestly, I'm just Tanisha."

"IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NICE TO SAY"

Tanisha Fordham

(The *A&T Register* Wednesday, April 9, 2008)

"Anything you want done baby, I do it naturally." Now of course I adapted that from the song, "I'm Every Woman," by Whitney Houston that so many of us know and love so much, but the basic understanding and the fundamental principles found in the song remain the same. I am Miss North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University for the 2008-2009 academic school year, and the theory behind that is that I am supposed to represent every face of this wonderful university, remembering that I was elected exactly as I am. Last Monday when they announced my name as the winning candidate, there is no word to capture the feeling I had in

that moment. I felt a sense of responsibility, joy, pride, relief, but more than anything, a sense of love for the university that I had never imagined possible prior to that moment. I knew immediately that I would be swamped with work, jobs, expectations and duties. However, none of that seemed overwhelming because my love for all the Aggies overshadowed any sense of burden I could possibly feel. Then, just as swiftly as I was put in the position, I was reminded that in many people's eyes, I am just not good enough.

On Tuesday morning I was greeted after class by a phone call from a good friend. She expressed in tears over the phone that a teacher stood in front of class earlier that morning and said, "What were you all thinking? She doesn't look like a Miss A&T. Look at her hair, and her stature, in what ways does she represent this university?" The teacher couldn't fathom a student being elected with an eyebrow ring, a full figured body and "God forbid" the natural hair. In that moment, over the phone, I expressed understanding. I could see that my friend was genuinely upset. The sound of her whimpers in my ear brought to mind the years of slavery, Jim Crow laws, and discrimination, and the self hate that African Americans have dealt with for centuries. I felt obligated, especially as the new Miss A&T, to be beautiful, strong and understanding for my friend. After comforting her for a moment, I hung up the phone and cried a mighty cry that I had hidden deep down inside myself. Throughout the entire process of running to be a queen I was told, "But your hair isn't going to fit a crown." "Are you going to get a perm?" "You need to lose some weight." "Um, you need to take that eyebrow ring out." "Is your entire court going to be these eccentric, natural haired girls?" "I'm going to vote for the light skinned pretty one." "You're cool, but I look at you more as the president type, you don't look like...a queen." "You're not pretty, smart or nice enough." That's what I heard repetitively from my peers and teachers.

I shed tears in the moment for all the words I had tried throughout the process to gracefully hear, tears that I had hidden deep within. I shed tears for every black woman who has lost the Miss America pageant because she refuses to conform because her beauty, her "queendom" is untitled. I shed tears for every slave whipped because their skin was so "black" and they, therefore, "couldn't be human." I shed tears for every student on the campus of A&T walking around anorexic, because they don't realize that their beauty lies within the natural lines of their curves. I shed tears for my mother who had a daughter whom she taught well, raised right, nurtured and cared for and yet, in the year 2008, is still being judged based on the color of her skin and her appearance, as opposed to the content of her character, I shed tears for the many BLACK people who died so that a dream could be realized by anyone who wakes up and decides to run full speed towards their destinies. After I cried for all those people and images, I cried for the teacher who, in all her assumed wisdom, would open up her mouth and degrade another person in that manner.

The reality is that as she stood there in front of that class talking about who is or isn't fit to be Miss A&T, she wasn't talking about me, she was expressing her own believed short comings. She for years hasn't chased her dreams, or has conformed to chase them, because she thought that her dreams had a face, one that didn't look like her innate own. She, as Nelson Mandela said, "believed she wasn't smart enough, beautiful enough, great enough," but I, through God, am a living example of the fact that the dreams don't have a face until you pose for the picture. I believe that I am perfect as I am, and my face is one that represents every student, faculty, staff and alumni because mine is the face of a person who chooses to BE.

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS TO OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP

Recently, L'Overture Carter contributed \$500 to the Mance & Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship Fund. Since 1990 the scholarship fund has awarded over \$25,000 to family members to assist with post high school education. "This scholarship affords members of our family an opportunity to give back and show appreciation for the many ways that our family has been blessed over the years," stated Carter in presenting his gift. "By giving to the scholarship, even small amounts, we set examples for the young generation to help each other. By helping each other, we help our family to move ahead," he concluded.

MANCE & SARAH ANN OXFORD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

This is to announce that the Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship for 2008 is open for applications. The scholarship awards, in the amount of \$500 each will be made in July, 2008. The purpose of the award is to encourage and assist high school graduates who are descendants of Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicant must be a descendant of Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford.
2. Applicant must be a high school senior who plans to attend college or a trade school following high school graduation.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING

(!!!! IMPORTANT, PLEASE DO ALL OF THE FOLLOWING !!!!)

(Letter of application **MUST** include the following)

1. Applicant's name, **applicant's address**, phone number, etc.
2. Statement explaining applicant's relationship to the Oxford clan.
3. Statement explaining applicant's vocational or professional goals in life, and listing the college or trade school that you plan to attend.
4. A copy of applicant's high school transcript.
5. The application deadline is June 30, 2008.

APPLICATIONS THAT DO NOT INCLUDE ALL OF THE ABOVE WILL BE INELIGIBLE

Send all of the above to:

Mance & Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship
49 Calvert Blvd.
Tonawanda, NY 14150

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

Oxford descendants who have been accepted, or are enrolled, in a graduate school are eligible for a one time graduate student award of \$500.

Deadlines for applications are the same as the above. Applicants should submit a copy of their letter of acceptance to graduate school, or a copy of their most recent grades for graduate courses. Applicants should also explain their education goals and list their major course of study.

HOLD THAT DATE: THANKSGIVING, 2008

We have been informed that some of our Georgia based relatives are planning a “Family Thanksgiving Gathering” (Thursday, November 27, 2008) to be held in Parrott, Georgia at Macedonia Baptist Church. We will have a special mailing of plans and details as soon as they become available.

THE OXFORD CLAN

Excerpt from

We Remember: Growing Up Black in Orlando Florida, 1940-1957

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The Wells Built Museum

I was part of a close-knit extended family in Orlando, Florida. Most of my local relatives had migrated from Parrott, Georgia, a small farm community in southwest Georgia. Actually, some of our close friends (and non-relatives) had also come from the Parrott environs. They had all experienced the grinding poverty and exploitation of sharecropping. They had come to Orlando in search of work and opportunities to better themselves. In a sense, whether related or not, the Parrott emigrants were all like family. They helped each other find jobs. When someone “caught the number,” or experienced some other form of prosperity, they would share the fruits of their good fortune with others. Sometimes they reached back into Georgia and helped other relatives and friends to relocate to Orlando. My Uncle Otis had helped my mother, my mother, in turn, reached back several times to help two of her other brothers and a sister, and two of her cousins. They all lived with us for a short time until they found jobs and were able to make their own way.

Orlando was just one of the destinations of our southwest Georgia clan. My mother was the youngest of nine children. Some of the Oxford 9 and their descendants relocated to Jacksonville, Florida; Hartford, Connecticut; New York; New Jersey; Philadelphia; and others went to Atlanta. Some eventually moved to urban areas in southwest Georgia. In the first half of the 20th century, life for my extended family was hard, but they had faith in God and a quiet hope in the promise of America. They were driven by the belief that a better day was coming.

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

By Monroe Fordham

SUBMIT MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT OXFORD FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Readers are invited to submit book reviews, essays, biographical sketches, family histories, religious articles, family news, or any other articles to the *Oxford Family Newsletter*. Actually, readers can submit anything that they think will be useful for relatives to know. If you feel self-conscious about writing, don't worry. We will edit, if necessary, for typos, grammar, spelling, etc. Send material to pfordham@roadrunner.com or to 49 Calvert, Blvd., Tonawanda, NY 14150.

The Oxford Family Newsletter

www.oxford9.com

"LOOK HOW FAR THE LORD HAS BROUGHT US"

Monroe and Pam Fordham, Editors

January 2008 Number 75

Save Your Life (And Only You Can)

By Pam Fordham

A recent trip to the dentist revealed that the older I get, the lower my threshold for pain is becoming. The nerve-grating sound of the drill inspired me to take a more preventative approach toward my personal healthcare. I know fully well that as we get older, there are certain aspects of the deterioration of our bodies about which we can do very little. Nevertheless, there are many, many things that we can do to slow the aging process and enhance our ability to enjoy the experiences we have while here on earth.

I have recently been reading Food Cures by Joy Bauer - well I haven't really been *reading* it, but I have *browsed* through it a little - well, actually I checked it out of the library and it has been sitting on my bookshelf for two or three weeks. I have been *intending* to read it so that I could learn about the thousands of foods that "treat common health concerns" and help us "look younger and live longer." But like so many people who make and break New Year's Resolutions, checking the book out of the library was just one limping step toward my already failed intentions to "lose weight in 2008."

The morning after my visit to the dentist, the lingering pain in my jaw forced me into a tearful intervention with myself. There is a problem - I don't feel well; I don't like how I look or feel; I probably look like I feel; I definitely feel like I look - and worst of all, I have

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no excuses. I know we are supposed to love ourselves unconditionally and embrace the fact that we were made in the likeness of God – and I fundamentally do accept these ideals; however, I had to stop believing the hype that all these “breastesses,” booty, hips, rolls and dips (not to mention the hypertension and headaches that want in on the action) are a part of God’s perfect plan for me. I can be better, feel better and live better if I can really get into my spirit that my body is God’s temple – but I’ll come back to that point.

While I was browsing in the bookstore, I read an interesting passage in a book about living better. A passage about wealth stuck in my mind. The author was essentially saying that true wealth isn’t just about having a lot of money. He said that he knew lots of people with an excessive amount of material possessions who just simply were not happy. At the same token, he said that he had encountered lots of emotionally wealthy people, very spiritual people, who were always physically sick and/or broke. Again, some of life’s situations are ones over which we have no control, yet in many cases, God gives us the all the tools we need to live our best lives – and many of these tools are free: no gym memberships, expensive diet plans, fitness equipment or counseling can beat the simplicity of choosing the carrot over the cookie and taking a short brisk walk around the block. The January issue of Essence features a story about women who are “Ageless Beauties.” The women physically defy the expectations of age – they look years younger than their natural ages. I read their profiles, eagerly, almost voraciously, expecting to find the oh-so-elusive “secret.” And although each woman had her own unique approach toward maintaining health and beauty, most of them included advice about things that anyone can do that don’t cost anything: give unconditionally, keep a positive attitude, smile, feel beautiful, celebrate yourself and surround yourself with those who will celebrate you, forgive, talk to God, give up worry, and spend time with the ones you love.

Finally, true wellness isn’t just about how I look. I was never good in math, but I’m starting to get the idea about the parts in relation to the whole. My identity is the *sum* of many parts – body, mind and spirit being three key parts. When one of those is out of whack, then the whole really isn’t the whole, and the other parts will inevitably suffer. Earlier I made reference to the scripture in I Corinthians that reminds us that our bodies are God’s temple. The second part of the scripture states that our bodies are not our own. It occurred to me that we are put on earth for a short time, for a very specific purpose. We don’t know how much time we have, and our purposes are not always clear. However, what is certain is that if we don’t take care of ourselves, our time and purpose will be greatly jeopardized. The suffering that our unhealthiness creates will not only affect us, but it will affect those we love and those who love us, as well. Anyone who knows or has recently seen me can confirm that these words reveal my own need to “walk the talk,” and I prayerfully hope I can do so. I know for sure that no one else can do it for me.

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FAMILY NEWS FOR JULY, 2008

Send family news stories for our next issue of the family newsletter to 49 Calvert Blvd., Tonawanda, New York 14150 or email them to pfordham@roadrunner.com. Share news about your family with everyone.

REMEMBERING LOVED ONES

THELMA ODESSA "TIP" WALTON 1920-2007

Thelma (Oxford) Walton passed away Saturday evening, December 9, 2007 after a long illness. Sister Walton was born in (Parrott, GA on May 23, 1920 to the late Jesse and Johnie (Darns) Oxford. She joined the Macedonia Baptist Church in Parrott, Georgia at an early age. She moved to Hartford, CT in 1953. She then joined the Faith Seventh-Day Adventist Church in 1957 under the leadership of Pastor Frank Fletcher. Sister Walton was very involved in church activities and served her church faithfully until her health declined. Sister Walton was a woman full of love. She shared her heart, her wisdom and her home. Her Bright smile could melt the coldest heart. She shared her love in so many ways and each of us has our own personal memories. As a foster mother for DCYS for 40 years, many men and women experienced the love of God through her and are better off for having known her.

We were given a precious gift on loan from God. She showered us with the love she was, and the love she knew-Jesus. Though we are temporarily separated, her love is planted in our hearts forever. Memories, loving words and hugs will sustain us. Let us strengthen our relationship with the god she loved so that our family reunion on that "great getting up morning" will be complete.

Sister Walton is survived by four sons; Aaron "Bebo" (Mary) Walton of Bloomfield, CT; Amos "Red" Walton of East Hartford, Ct; Stanley Walton of Hartford, CT; and David Redden of Brockton MA; three daughters, Carol Coleman of Hartford, CT; Jody Pines of Manchester, CT; One Brother, James (Ruby) godson of Altamonte Springs, FL; Three sisters, Jessie Iverson of Bloomfield, CT; Orcolia Myers and Mary Ann Clay of Sasser, GA; Eighteen grand Children, Fifty-six great grand Children and Eleven great-great grand Children; One god-daughter Michelle Cook of Conyers, GA; One god-son Walter (Nancy) James of Jacksonville, FL; and a host of nieces, nephews, and friends.. She also leaves to mourn three angels, Margaret Milton, Betty Jennings, and Dorothy Bowen.

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Sister Walton was predeceased by her husband, Amos Walton, Sr. of 48 years, one son Mance Oxford, one daughter, J. Louise "Pelo" Walton Kerr, two grandsons, James Walton, and Derrick Huntley, two brothers and two step brothers.

BROOKS A. BENFORD, SR.

1934-2007

"Mr. Brooks" was the brother of Tina Mac-Donald, "lady friend" of L'Overture Carter. He died on December 11, 2007 at St. Francis Hospital surrounded by his family. He was born November 12, 1934 in Bristol, Conn to the late Olivia Williams Benford and Dave Benford. He grew up in Hartford. At a young age he joined the U.S. Air Force where he served for 22 years. After retiring he worked for Pratt & Whitney for 17 years. Mr. Benford was a life member, and a past-treasurer, of the Greater Hartford NAACP. He was a member, and past-financial officer and Commander, of the American Legion McKinney King Post 142.

He was pre-deceased by his wife Christine Strong Benford, a son Michael, a brother David, and a sister Bette Stellmacher. He leaves to mourn a son Benford, Jr., of Russell, MA., a daughter Mika Benford of Hartford, a grandson Brooks III of Middleton, CT., best friend Bernard Benford of San Diego, CA., and a sister Tina MacDonald of Bloomfield, CT.

The funeral was held at Amistad UCC (Elmwood Community Church). Burial was in Hampton, VA



WE WANT YOU!

The Top 5 Reasons You Should Write Something for the Family Newsletter.

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

1. No one else can tell your story!
2. You will be able to say that you've been published.
3. It is a great way to stay connected to your loved ones that you don't get to see that often.
4. Sharing your stories is a powerful way to honor your family members – past and present.
5. The family will love you – no matter what!

SUBMIT A BOOK REVIEW!

Knowledge is Power!

An unfortunate, but widespread saying about African Americans is that if you want to hide something from them, all you have to do is put it in a book. In the spirit of proving that statement is absolutely untrue, please send in reviews of anything interesting that you have recently read. The review can be as long or as short as you like. The review can be about a newspaper article, book, magazine, or even a comic strip that you think would be interesting to the family.

MANCE & SARAH ANN OXFORD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



AWARD

The Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship for 2008 is now open for applications. The scholarship awards, in the amount of \$500 each will be made in June, 2008. The purpose of the award is to encourage and assist high school graduates and graduate students who are descendants of Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford.

All scholarship information is available online at the following web address:

http://www.oxford9.com/oxford_scholarships.htm

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Description: Family Tributes, Miss NBCA Hall of Fame, the Obama Phenomenon,

PREVIOUS OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Demetrius M. Smith

(1991-high school graduate award)

Demetrius is the son of Cynthia Y. Carter and the oldest grandson of Reginald & Naomi Carter. He is in his 10th year as a Student Affairs Practitioner. Presently, he is the General Manager or Director of Housing and Residence Life at the Fort Valley State University, Fort Valley, GA. Demetrius holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in Political Science and History, which were awarded in December 1994 and June 1995 respectively from Valdosta State University. He continued his educational endeavors at The University of Georgia, where he earned his Masters of Education in Student Personnel in Higher Education in June 1997. Over the past decade, he has worked at several institutions of higher learning, namely The Florida State University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Kennesaw State University, Wichita State University and presently Fort Valley State University. He is a very active member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. along with several other philanthropic organizations in the middle Georgia area. Demetrius is married to his high school sweetheart, Shannon and they are the proud parents of two sons, Tyler, 10 and Colby, 8. Demetrius lives by a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands in TIMES of challenge and controversy."

Kimettrice Oxford celebrated her 30th birthday on January 19, 2008. Kim is the daughter of Marylyn Oxford Elliott, and granddaughter of the later Adolphus Sr. and Annie Lee Oxford.