

**Description:**

The Reginald Carter, Sr. Fund, Wedding Bells, Scholarship Recipients Thrive!

## **The Oxford Family Newsletter**

*www.oxford9.com*

**"LOOK HOW FAR THE LORD HAS BROUGHT US"**

*Monroe and Pam Fordham, Editors*

*January 2007    Number 72*

### **Family Reunion 2007 Postponed**

The Oxford Family Reunion which was scheduled for the summer of 2007 has been postponed until further notice. McKinley "Brad" Bradley, our principal organizer, underwent major surgery in the fall and experienced complications. There is a possibility that he will need to undergo more surgery. Given those circumstances, we have decided to postpone the reunion until further notice. Keep "Brad" and his family in your prayers.

### **WRITE BIOGRAPHICAL OR AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE SENIORS IN YOUR FAMILY**

Some of the senior members of our family will no doubt reach the end of their lives during the next few years. In all probability, some of them will not even leave thoughtful obituaries, which chronicle the basic highpoints of their lives. That is symptomatic of the reason why so much of the history of African Americans has been lost. Many of our people do not leave much information about their lives or their forbearers. They just don't see the need to leave a written record for their descendants. Too often, we fail to see a connection between knowledge of self and achievement. Trust me, there is a connection. Too many of our youth do not have the confidence or the drive to move beyond the circumstance of their origins because they have an inadequate knowledge of their personal spiritual heritage and the obstacles that their family had to overcome. Many members of each new generation will get bogged down in the same historic ruts because they don't understand the history of struggle and perseverance that has been the bedrock of our family's spiritual heritage. In

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short, many of our youth are not driven by the inspiration that knowledge of their history could provide. We again offer the pages of our newsletter and our family WEB site to publish and publicize the histories of our family members. You can either write your own stories, or give me a call and I will arrange to interview you on the phone and write your narrative for you (716-633-7058). We will also put your biographical sketch on our WEB site for all of our family to read. No life is too insignificant to document with a written narrative. Give me a call today!!

Monroe Fordham

**FAMILY UPDATES**

**REGGIE CARTER INJURED**

Following an accidental injury, Reggie Carter was hospitalized in the Shepard Spinal Center, 2020 Peachtree Road, Atlanta GA 30309-1465. His address in the Center is ICU bed #4. For more information, you may contact his daughter Gwen at (cell phone 478-954-7950), or his daughter Cynthia (cell phone 478-952-3741). We should keep Reggie and the Carter family in our prayers.

**JOSEPHINE AND THE BEE**

In May of 2006 Josephine Woods, daughter of Cynthia and Charles Wood of Lansing, Michigan, won her class spelling bee. Josephine went on to compete in the regional PAC-MAC All-City Spelling Bee for students in the Lansing area. She placed second out of approximately six competitors. Josephine received a trophy and a certificate from the mayor.

Josephine is the granddaughter of Monroe and Freddie Mae Fordham. She is currently a second grader at Willow Elementary. God bless you Josephine. We are proud of you.

**FAMILY NEWS FOR JULY, 2007**

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The Reginald Carter, Sr. Fund, Wedding Bells, Scholarship Recipients Thrive!

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@adelphia.net](mailto:pfordham@adelphia.net). Share news about your family with everyone.

**REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES**

Katherine Lancaster Hodges

**1899-2007**

(Katherine Hodges was the sister of the late Lucy Oxford. Lucy was the wife of the late John L. Oxford and the mother of Mrs. Lois Hall). Katherine Lancaster Hodges was born on March 9, 1899 at 808 Real Street in Orlando, Florida. She was the eleventh child of fifteen born to the late William and Lucy Lancaster who later moved the family to 326 N. Westmorland Dr., which is the current family home. At age 12, she accepted Christ as her personal savior at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Orlando with the late Reverend H.K. Hill, Pastor.

On October 23, 1927 Katherine Lancaster and Otis Hodges were united in Holy matrimony. Otis worked as a chef for the railroad and Katherine assisted him as they traveled and worked in Sanford, Tampa, Jacksonville, Miami, and New York.

Never forgetting their commitment to God, they united with Shiloh Baptist Church in Orlando with the late Reverend T.C. Collier, Pastor. Otis was ordained as a Deacon and Katherine became a Deaconess. She also served the church as an usher on Board #1.

After the death of Otis in 1952, Katherine and her sister Della worked in New York. When their sons Billy Lancaster and Babe Lancaster, returned to Orlando with physical conditions caused by their boxing professions, the sisters returned to Orlando to care for their sons.

After returning to Orlando, Katherine joined Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of the late Reverend Joseph Hargrett. Both sisters were active in church organizations and clubs. Some of the auxiliaries that Katherine was a member of included the choir, the Missionary Circle, and the

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Deaconess Board. She and her sister were instrumental in organizing the Busy Bee Club of the church.

In 1963 Katherine saw a great need in a girl called "Little Catherine" who was her brother Ezekiel's granddaughter. Katherine adopted her and became the mother of a 13 year old in her mid-sixties.

Katherine spent life as a devoted caregiver for her family including her late son Billy Lancaster, her late sister Della Lancaster, her late brother William Lancaster, and her sister Bessie Cobbs who she cared for until June 2006. Katherine Lancaster Hodges departed this world on Tuesday, January 2, 2007, at the Court Yard of Orlando Nursing Home. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

The home going services were held at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Orlando FL, where the Rev. O'Hara C. Black is pastor. The body was interred in Greenwood Cemetery

**CHRISTMAS IN THE PROJECTS:  
ORLANDO, FLORIDA, EARLY 1950s**

By Monroe Fordham

In the early 1950s, roller skates seemed like the gift of choice at Christmas time. It seemed like most black kids in Orlando got roller skates for Christmas. Moreover, it seemed like most of them came to skate on the miles and miles of sidewalk and concrete in the housing project where we lived (Griffin Park). There were always long lines of skaters hogging our sidewalks. Like caravans of truckers, sometimes the lines were as long as the length of a football field. They roared up and down the sidewalk, their skates making a deafening noise as they went by. The very good skaters wore "rocket" skates; they made a special noise. There were always skaters dropping out of the line, kneeling on one knee in the grass to tighten or re-attach a skate.

The "playground" in Griffin Park had a large concrete area on which water sprinklers were sometimes set up during the summer. At Christmas time

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the concrete area was the private domain of the skaters. It was entertaining to watch the large number of very good skaters go around and around on the oval shaped concrete area. The skaters always drew a large crowd of spectators. They performed daredevil stunts, had skating races, skated backwards, and generally showed off. The kids that received bicycles, cowboy pistols or dolls for Christmas had to ride in the street and play on their porches.

Excerpt from *We Remember: School Days and Growing up Black in Orlando, Florida, 1940-1957*, ed. Monroe Fordham. Copyright by the Well's Built Museum, Orlando, FL., 407-245-7535, [www.pastinc.org](http://www.pastinc.org).

**MANCE & SARAH ANN OXFORDMEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

The Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship for 2007 is now open for applications. The scholarship awards, in the amount of \$500 each will be made in June, 2007. 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](http://www.oxford9.com/oxford_scholarships.htm)

**WHAT WILL IT TAKE FOR US TO LISTEN?**

By Pam Fordham

First things first - I am, **hands down**, one of the biggest fans of the play *Dream Girls*. Because I wasn't fortunate enough to be among those who were mesmerized by the original stage production, I probably anticipated the Christmas Day release of the movie more than the average fan. In fact, my first opportunity to see the play didn't come until about a month before the release of the movie. I journeyed all the way from Buffalo, New York to Greensboro, North Carolina to see the Greensboro Community Theatre's production. The play was well done and the lead's dramatic performance of

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Holliday's classic song moved me and many others to shed the "ugly cry" tears. I didn't really even know that much about the play – just the song that so many call "the black woman's anthem."

Seeing the play and even getting to meet some of the cast only heightened my anticipation of the Christmas Day release of the movie even more. When I found out that the soundtrack was going to be released before the movie, I took note of the date and called in sick to work so I could be among the first to purchase my copy. On the day the disc was released, I had my copy in hand within fifteen minutes of the opening of *Circuit City's* doors. Believe me - if I could have gotten it earlier, I would have. It was just that serious!

Like many other fans of the original, Jennifer Holliday, rendition of "And I Am Telling You," I anxiously anticipated the release of the soundtrack just to see if American Idol contestant, Jennifer Hudson would do her thing – and I knew she would. She didn't disappoint. And just when I thought life couldn't be any more blissful, I listened to track number seventeen. "Listen" is a new song that was added to the play because, according to singer and actress, Beyonce Knowles, the musical producer felt the second half of the play needed another song, and thank God he did. Perhaps when Knowles wrote the lyrics to the song, she envisioned the "Dream Girls" of 2006 and measured them against the all too frequent portrayal of African American women in the media: settling and sacrificing; begging and angry; ready to grease up and throw down for a man who just doesn't want them. Maybe she had watched one too many episodes of Jerry Springer and had seen one too many casualties: sistas clawing at each other over a man who isn't willing to give up either for the sake of his dignity or theirs. Maybe she decided that it was time for African American woman and girls to "Listen." Like Effie's character who sings "And I Am Telling You," Deena (Knowles' character) is at a crossroad in her life, but she doesn't evaluate her worth according to her perception of the man in her life. Instead she dares to imagine all that she can be as she strives to complete the melody in her own heart. Like Effie's, her song is filled with passion and desperation. Deena wants the man in her life to *listen*, understand and support the new path she intends to follow; however, she ultimately concludes, "I don't know where I belong/ but I'll be moving on/ If you don't...If you won't...Listen." I've got nothing but love

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for Jennifer Hudson, but Beyonce's song introduced a sentiment of empowerment to the play that just took it to a whole new level.

I'm telling you – it was just that serious to me! Fortunately, having the CD gave me something to focus on until the Christmas Day release of the movie. About a week before Christmas I started calling the movie theater to find out when I could get my tickets. After about three attempts, I think the lady working in the ticket booth knew my voice and started to get a little irritated. Oh well... she would just have to get over it. When the tickets were finally available for sale, I sent my daughter to purchase the tickets, admonishing her to be there when the theater opened!

Christmas day was beautiful, and knowing that at 10:50 PM I would finally get to see the movie made the day even sweeter. I purposely planned to see the last show so that the majority of my day would be focused on the true meaning of Christmas: celebrating the birth of Christ, spending time with family, laughing, eating and watching old movies. But I never for a second forgot that at 10:50 PM, I would be fully engulfed by the sparkle, lights and glamour of the *Dream Girls*.

The first sign of trouble occurred when I arrived at the theater; the parking lot was jammed packed – more so than usual. The theater lobby was even worse, but what really got my attention was the tense mood that seemed to literally reach out and grab at me. I had purposely selected a theater that was in a “way out” area where mostly white folks live because the theater in the black part of town was notoriously known for folks acting up. In fact, earlier that day the entire theater in the black part of town had been shut down because of the fighting. So when I walked through the doors, I was shocked to see nothing but wall to wall black folks: mostly young and in there teens and twenties. I didn't have the same feeling that I get at church functions, or at the Juneteenth celebration, or at any other social event where lots of us gather and it feels like a family reunion. This was different. There was a lot of shifting from leg to leg; folks were giving each other dirty looks; and every few minutes you could hear different female voices “loud talking” somebody who had moved too close or looked too long in their direction.

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When we took our seats in the theater, it didn't get any better. No one was settling down and getting ready for the movie. No one was watching the previews. Cell phones were going off right and left, people were tensely walking in and out of the theater, and the loud talking just got louder and more abrasive. Even the ushers (mostly teenagers themselves and all white) seemed to be preparing for the unexpected. But I had *Godly* faith that when the lights went down and the music started, we would all be taken in.

Not even 30 seconds after the lights went down, a loud "pop" was heard and a fight broke out. Those of us who weren't involved in the fight did one of three things: ran away from the fighting and out of the theater, ran toward the fighting, or sat still hoping not to get trampled or shot. I was among those who kept my seat.

I would like to say that the police came, and broke up the fight and we were able to finish watching the movie, but that's not completely accurate. The police did *eventually* come, and the movie continued with the lights on the entire time, but unfortunately so did the disruption. Not even five minutes went by without some major commotion. I just wanted to see the movie so badly, and I had anticipated it for so long that I sat there for the duration of the movie just praying that the film would grab those who were disrupting and help them to see - themselves, but it never happened. There were other hardcore fans like myself who tried to "take back the theater" by cheering when Jennifer Hudson sang "the song." Some of us even quietly sang along or closed our eyes and did the "church rock" as the words "And I am telling you, AHHHHHH'm not going!" took on new meaning. But in the end, the "disrupters" won. They harassed other people in the audience who had the audacity to be bothered by their noise, they laughed at all the singing in the movie (I guess no one had explained the meaning of the word "musical") and they ran in and out of the theater as their cell phones beckoned. The few policemen that did arrive were ill-equipped to deal with such an unruly crowd.

I cried off and on for two days after that, and I wasn't alone. I spoke to other people who were there and expressed the same disappointment. I can't make any sense out of it. Every aspect of the film was inspiring: from the history, to the stars, to the personal stories of people like Jennifer Hudson, to the music,



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to the dancing, to the costumes... That experience left me wondering, what will it take for *us* to "get it"?

A few days later, I heard an excerpt from the speech by Dr. King where he dreams of a day when we will not be judged by the color of our skin, but by the content of our character. He assumed that the *character* of African Americans would continue to grow and be strong and worthy of admiration. I wonder what he would say to the "disrupters" at the theater. Nothing about the movie or the theater justified their behavior. No one had pre-judged us because we were black. If anything the showing of the movie itself was a testament to King's dream: the movie, shown in a theater an all white neighborhood, included an award-winning, predominately black cast performing in a movie adaptation of a historic play, and it opened on Christmas day all across the country.

If we can't sit and listen for a couple hours to be entertained (and maybe even educated a little) in that setting, what else are we missing because we simply won't *listen*? What opportunities and inspiration are we missing because we aren't listening? What decisions are being made that affect our lives while we aren't listening? What will it take for us to listen?

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*July 2007    Number 73*

### FAMILY UPDATES

REGGIE CARTER IN VA HOSPITAL

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We have been informed that Reggie Carter has been moved from the Shepherd Spinal Center, in Atlanta GA to a VA hospital in Augusta GA. He is still paralyzed but is making good progress. His new address is as follows. Cards and letters are welcomed.

Mr. Reginald Carter, Sr.  
Ward 1 GE  
VA Medical Center  
950 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Augusta, GA 30904

*The Reginald Carter, Sr. Fund*  
**has been established.**

**Donations may be made at the  
Citizens State Bank of Taylor County  
P. O. Box 277  
Reynolds, Georgia 31076**

**(478) 847-3465**

The Carter Family continues to acknowledge a wonderful extended family throughout Taylor County and across the country for their prayers, calls, visits, cards, and other acts of kindness.

**JOSEPHINE AND THE BEE: Part II**

For a second time, Josephine Woods, daughter of Cynthia and Charles Wood of Lansing, Michigan, competed in the regional PAC-MAC All-City Spelling Bee for students in the Lansing area. She placed second out of approximately eight competitors. Josephine received a trophy and a certificate from the mayor.

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Josephine is the granddaughter of Monroe and Freddie Mae Fordham. In the fall she will be a third grader at Willow Elementary. May God continue to bless you, Josephine.



**WEDDING BLISS!**

Shandra "Vonne" Bradley Thomas exchanged vows to Jerry Thomas, Jr. on April 14, 2007 in Dawson, Ga. Vonne is the daughter of Mckinley "Brad" and Essie "Sister" Bradley. She is the granddaughter of the late Love Myers and Arcolia "Teck" Oxford Myers. The newlyweds have two children JeMar "11" and Jasmyn "2." They reside in Sasser, Ga. where they recently purchased a home. Vonne is employed with the Randolph County School System. Jerry is the owner/operator of Jerry Thomas Trucking. Vonne will begin at Troy University in August majoring in Psychology.

On July 7, 2007, Andrea Fordham married her sweetheart, Derek Teasley. The couple will make their home in Winter Park, Florida after spending their honeymoon in Jamaica. Andrea is the daughter of Lawrence Fordham and the late Jean Fordham, and the granddaughter of Arie D. Fordham Jackson.

**FAMILY NEWS FOR OCTOBER, 2007**

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.

**"The White Minstrel Show"**

By TaNisha Fordham

*The White Rapper Show*, a show about white rappers, which airs on VH1 is one of the most ridiculous excuses for media that I have ever seen. At first sight,

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viewers would probably think of some type of “white” minstrel show. However, taking a closer look, it could be considered a minstrel show of black people, in white face. There are ten original contestants who are put into a house located in the Bronx, New York, and they are sent on various missions and told to prove their rap skills, and hip-hop filled hearts. The show is in many ways degrading to the original hip-hop community, as well as African Americans in today’s society. Throughout the show they speak about what it is to truly be a hip-hop artist, and yet in watching the show, it is made clear that the show’s participants as well as the producers have misconstrued the idea themselves. The host of the show speaks about how hip-hop is about being poor, hated, and expressive; it is so clear, however, that the most important element, self-respect, is lost.

African Americans make up the bulk of the rap and hip-hop community. The White Rapper Show is dedicated to proving that “white rappers” are equally as valuable to this community, and also just as used to the circumstances that often prelude the typical hip-hop life, seen by society through the media. *The White Rapper Show* degrades legendary hip-hop artist by insinuating that they were poor, ignorant, and “ghetto” prior to their success in the media (these images are shown throughout each episode). Moreover, the show degrades African Americans because statistically African Americans make up the majority of the hip-hop community that the individuals on the show say they are representing. This is the type of media that needs to be prevented in order to reduce the prevalent stereotypes often seen in society and the media.

*This article originally appeared in the A&T College Register, which is the student newspaper of North Carolina A&T University.*

**MANCE & SARAH ANN OXFORD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

**AWARD RECIPIENTS 2007**

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The Winners of the Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship for 2007 are Calvin Corlin Carter, Kayla Nicole Carter (graduate scholarship), Reginald Carter III, Cortesia A.L. Oxford, and Winter J. Oxford. The following are excerpts from their letters of application:

**Calvin Corlin Carter**

I am the son of Calvin and Avondale Carter. My grandparents are Reginald and Naomi Carter of Butler, Georgia. I'm scheduled to graduate from Northside High School in Warner Robins, Georgia on June 2, 2007. As a high school student, my extra curricula activities included, ROTC and the Swim team.

I also attended schools in Germany where my father was a member of the United States Army. I've traveled to 15 countries. I'm planning to enroll in Middle Georgia Junior College located in Cochran, Georgia in the fall, 2007. My major will be Computer Science.

**Kayla N. Carter**

My name is Kayla Nicole Carter. I am the granddaughter of Reginald and Naomi Carter. I am the daughter of Calvin and Avondale Carter. In 2002, I began my undergrad studies at Valdosta State University and was awarded the Mance and Sarah Oxford Scholarship. The monetary funds that I received were greatly needed and appreciated. In July 2006, I graduated with a Bachelors Degree in English with a German minor. Currently, I am pursuing a Masters of Education in School Counseling at Valdosta State University. I will be enrolled in this program from spring 2007 to spring 2009. I would be truly grateful if I was awarded the Mance and Sarah Oxford Scholarship again for my graduate studies.

**Reginald Carter III**

I am the son of Reginald Carter Jr. and the grandson of Reggie Carter Sr. and Naomi Carter of Butler, Georgia. My plans are to attend Fort Valley State University and pursue a degree in Biology. My professional goal in life is to become a Crime Scene Investigator. Watching the weekly show CSI has really

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had a great impact on my life dreams, because I believe in helping others and doing what is right.

**Cortesia A.L. Oxford**

I am Cortesia Oxford, my parents are Lorenzo Oxford and Audrey Mitchell-Oxford, who are presently divorced. My father's parents are Rosetta and the late Otis Oxford.

Currently I am a senior at Forest Park High School in Forest Park Georgia. I'm in the top fourteen percent of my class with a B plus average. In school, I have been involved in sports, chorus and even a participant in Homecoming. I am a well-respected member of my class through my individuality, drive and concern for my fellow peers. I am the first one of my father or my mother's children to graduate from high school and continue on to a post-secondary institution.

I have recently been accepted to the University of West Georgia. As an undergraduate student, I am going to major in my favorite subject, Spanish, and minor in International Studies. After completing my undergraduate studies, I plan to go on to Medical School to become a hematologist, then eventually a Pediatric Neurological Surgeon. I have wanted to be a doctor since I was two years old.

I have remained on a steady path to my dream; for instance, in 2004 I went to Los Angeles, California to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine to determine if this dream is what I really want to do, and "YES!" was my answer. The Mance and Sarah Oxford Scholarship would be of great assistance to me in the pursuit of my dream of becoming a doctor.

**Winter J. Oxford**

My name is Winter Jasmine Oxford. I am currently a senior attending Everett Alvarez High School in Salinas, CA. I am seventeen years old and I have a fourteen-year-old sister named Jenna. She is a freshman this year attending the same school. Our mom, Tina, has raised us. Our father is Willie James Oxford. He currently lives in Dawson, Georgia. My dad, Willie, is the youngest son of the late Annie Lee (Gammage) and Adolphus Oxford, Sr. My

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mom always thought it was important to keep connected to our family back in Georgia. So my sister and I have visited with my dad and his side of the family during our summers whenever it was financially possible.

I enjoy sports and have played basketball for 4 years; the last three years I was the captain of the varsity team. I also played both varsity volleyball, and track and field. I've held the level of corporal in the Monterey County Sheriff's Explorers for over 4 years. I am currently involved in my school's Spanish Club and Black Student Union. Through my participation in team sports I've learned self-discipline, respect and an appreciation for other people's gifts and talents. I've found I am a leader and an example to my team, my friends and my family. Team sports have taught me responsibility and commitment in regards to both my family and my community.

My mom has always stressed the importance of a higher education. It has always been a given that I would continue my education to a university level. That opportunity is here. I have been accepted and am planning on attending the California State University of Sacramento. Although I am going into my school undeclared, I will most likely major in business and minor in marketing. Should the opportunity arise, I would like to continue playing both volleyball and basketball in college.

Before I close this letter, I would like to say that I am truly proud to be in a family that has been able to trace their family roots back as far as we have. When I have mentioned to others that my family has a website (not to mention a scholarship program), they have expressed how fortunate I am. Thank you for this opportunity to apply for the scholarship and for the generosity that you extend to the family.

**THE OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP, 1990-2007**

During the past 17 years the Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship has dispensed some \$25,000 in scholarship awards. In future newsletters we will publish stories about what some of the past recipients are doing today. If you are a former recipient, drop us a line and let the family know what you are doing. Your testimony will encourage the younger generation to "hang in there."

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All scholarship information is available online at the following web address

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### **REMEMBERING LOVED ONES**

#### **JOHNNIE "DUKE" OXFORD 1923-2007**

Johnnie "Duke" Oxford was born on August 25, 1923 to Dock and Annie Mae Oxford in Parrot, Georgia. He departed this life on October 6, 2007 in Brooklyn, New York. He lived in Brooklyn, New York for approximately sixty years. He attended Helen Gull High School in Parrot, Georgia. He married Wavie Oxford in 1945 and to this union three children were born: Betty, Shirley and Carol. He was employed by the Longshoremen of Red Hook for forty years. He retired in 1992. He was a member of Christ Fellowship Baptist Church.

He is survived by: his half-sister, Essie Bell Blackshear of New York; his daughters, Betty Oxford of New York, Shirley Monroe of New Jersey, Carol Oxford-Yard of Florida, Paris McMillan of New York, Shaquana McMillian of New York and Samatha Oxford of New York; his son, John L. Oxford of New York; grandchildren, Daryl Lewis, Oliver Yard II, Johnny Watson, Alien Monroe, Terelle White, Kiana Jackson, Kayla Cordon and Jahmeek Oxford; and great-grandchildren, Janai Yard, Elijah Watson and Darlyn Lewis.



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**ROBERT CARTER 1933-2007**

Bob Carter, 74, of Bloomfield, CT, departed this life on Friday, (September 14, 2007) at Saint Francis Hospital after a brief illness. Born May 26, 1933 in New York City to the late Ozie B. (Oxford) Carter and Major W. Carter, he grew up in Parrot (Dawson County) Georgia under the guidance of his grandparents, the late Mance and Sarah (Shepherd) Oxford and was baptized at the Macedonia Baptist Church. Later, he settled in Hartford, CT., where he became a member of the Shiloh Baptist Church, worked, married and raised his family.

He was a member of the International Association of Machinists and retired in 1991 from Pratt and Whitney Aircraft, East Hartford after more than 31 years of service. He was a member of the Esquire Club of Hartford, Inc., for 45 years. Dad was a beloved father and grandfather; an avid fisherman and good friend.

He leaves to mourn his passing his wife, Winifred Carter of Bloomfield; his children: John and Callye (Burks) Holmes of Douglasville, GA, Reginald and Helena (Dempsey) Carter of Marion, MA, Anthony Carter and Eugenia (McGrier) Carter of Detroit, MI., Sandra Carter Brown, Robert Michael Carter and Steven Brown of Bloomfield; brothers and sister-in-law Loretta Carter of Bloomfield and Reginald Sr. and Naomi Carter of Butler, GA., eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He also leaves a large extended family of relatives and friends who will miss him and cherish his memory forever. We thank Rev. Charles E. Turner, the First Shiloh Church family and the staff of Saint Frances Hospital and Medical Center for the compassionate care provided to dad and our family during his illness.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Robert Carter may be sent to the Mance and Sarah Ann Oxford Scholarship Fund, 49 Calvert Blvd., Tonawanda, NY 14150.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MANCE & SARAH ANN OXFORD  
SCHOLARSHIP**

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Robert Carter's newspaper death notice and his funeral program asked persons to contribute, in Robert's memory, to the Oxford Scholarship in lieu of flowers. To date, the Scholarship fund has received contributions from Mr. and Mrs. Edward Gray, Jr., (\$10), Mrs. Frances Sarnecki (\$20), Industrial Aircraft Lodge 1746 (\$25), Mr. & Mrs. William Wright (\$250), The Esquire Club of Hartford (\$100), Mr. & Mrs. Percy Nelson (\$50)

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

### *PREVIOUS OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS*

**Pamela Fordham** (2000- graduate student award)

Pam is in her 12th year as an English teacher at Amherst (NY) High School. Pam has a Masters Degree in English Education, and a second Masters Degree in Library Science (Computer Applications). Pam is also a part-time Librarian with the North Tonawanda Public Library System. Pam is the daughter of Monroe and Freddie Mae Fordham, and the mother of Tanisha Fordham.

**Kimmetrice Oxford** (1996, and 2000 - grad. student award)

Kim is in her 6<sup>th</sup> year as an employee of the Boston, Mass. Public Schools. She is an interventionist for math and reading at the Lucy Stone School. She is currently pursuing a certificate in Special Education at Wheelock College.

Kim just returned from a vacation trip, which took her to Panama City, Fla.; Tuskegee and Montgomery, Ala.; Hattiesburg, Miss.; and Dawson, Ga. During her travels she met some of her family on her father's side. She reports that she was "blessed" by the fellowship. Kim's advice to the youth of the Oxford clan, "Pursue your dreams and carry *Jeremiah 29:11* in your heart." [*Jeremiah 29:11* - "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."] Kim is the daughter of Marylyn Oxford Elliottt, and granddaughter of the late Adolphus and Annie Lee Oxford.

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## THE FAMILY TREE KEEPS BRANCHING OUT...

### Ryann Stewart

Ryann Stewart is the granddaughter of James Lloyd II. James Lloyd II is a descendant of Johnny Grammasson (Jordan) Bryant and Evaline Chaney. In time the Bryant family intersects with the Oxfords when Annie Lee Gammage (a descendant of Jordan Bryant) marries Adolphus Oxford, Sr., and Razzie Lee Smith (also a descendant of Jordan Bryant) marries Edith Oxford. Although Ryann is a relative to the Oxford family by marriage, she is still a member of the family.

“When she graduated from high school, Ryann Stewart had a general interest in education and a desire to help others.” Ryann began preparing for her life’s mission by enrolling in Bethune Cookman College. She received her bachelor’s degree in 2001. (Her grandfather graduated from Bethune in 1951). Ryann earned a masters degree in 2005. Today she is an elementary school teacher in Atlanta, Georgia.

**Correction:** In the last edition of the newsletter, the name of Andrea Fordham’s new husband was incorrectly written. Andrea’s husband’s name is Derek Teasley. Congratulations again to the new couple!

## BOOK REVIEWS

What I Know For Sure by Tavis Smiley is one of the best books I’ve read in a long time. Putting aside my desire to someday marry Tavis Smiley, the book was inspiring and created a vivid picture of the experiences that contributed to the man Smiley ultimately became. I have read the book twice, which is something I rarely have the time or inclination to do.

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My first reading of the book started in the book store where I was just browsing. I opened up to a chapter of the book in which Smiley was retelling the events that led up to the worst beating he ever received. During Sunday school one morning, Tavis and his sister enthusiastically competed to answer questions about the bible. Their enthusiasm was so overwhelming to their teacher that she suffered an emotional breakdown and had to leave the class. Smiley doesn't explain what else she must have been going through that led her to over react so, but she went on to tell the pastor of the church that the Smiley children had been acting up. He in turn, made them the subject of his sermon. He admonished them in front of the entire congregation, and he said that their parents had failed to discipline them. The culminating and most hurtful statement was, SHAME ON THE SMILEYS!" When the family got home from church, Tavis and his sister were severely beaten by his father. Shortly after the beating, his teachers discovered his injuries and he and his sister were subsequently removed from the home. This was the first of many powerful stories included in the book. Tavis Smiley doesn't bite his tongue or try to "pretty up" his childhood experiences. Instead he honestly depicts his struggles, his family's strength and his faith in God that ultimately helped him heal and grow. In another one of the most inspiring parts of his memoir, Smiley talks about his deep desire to go to college, in spite of the lack of support he received from home. His parents refused to offer him any real assistance in helping him pursue his college dream - so when he left home, he did so without any money and without any encouragement. He recalls the miraculous support he received from the black community when he arrived on campus - penniless and homeless.

The chapters in the book can be read individually or in sequence. The first time I read the book I browsed through and selected certain chapters. I read it a second time to see how all the stories fit together. Tavis Smiley's story is one of perseverance, forgiveness and most of all, hope.

### **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

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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.

**“White People are Smarter than Black People**

By TaNisha Fordham

At least they are according to what many have made of Dr. James Dewey Watson’s recent genetic studies. Although we are not certain exactly what was found, who would have thought that in the year 2007 someone would even think to conduct such a racist study, right? Are Watson’s studies inherently racist? I for one cannot, certainly, say. Anyone who knows me well knows that in most circumstances I am all to ready to jump on the “racism” bandwagon if need be. I believe that African Americans and black people worldwide face more “skin color motivated” adversities than any other people around the globe. This is why I for one will fight the fight if I feel it needs to be fought. In this situation, however, I decided to step back before tackling Dr. Watson’s findings head on.

In talking about anything, having a point of reference is a good idea. James Dewey Watson, among many other accomplishments, received a Noble Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1962 for his research on the structure of nucleic acids. This means Watson has been studying genetics since before many college aged students were born. That is the basis of his career.

"We do not yet adequately understand the way in which the different environments in the world have selected over time the genes which determine our capacity to do different things," he is quoted as saying. "The overwhelming desire of society today is to assume that equal powers of reason are a universal heritage of humanity. It may well be. But simply wanting this to be the case is not enough. This is not science. To question this is not to give in to racism. This is not a discussion about superiority or inferiority, it is about seeking to understand differences, about why some of us are great musicians and others great engineers."

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While I will not even for one moment support the notion that there are no great black engineers, I am equally as fervent in my belief that all things are not a matter of racism. Had Watson been a black man, then, would his research still be racist? On most every document that I looked at where Watson was quoted, I saw a man who genuinely wanted to help, the world at large, through genetic research and conclusions.

Science is color blind. This is my belief. Science tells us that the sun rises and falls everyday without fail, there is a scientific explanation as to why. The science that supports the sun's functions do not stand for a certain race of folk, it stands for all. In the same way, perhaps Watson conducted a study to find what race of people perform better in academic settings. In science there must be a concentrated group, an independent variable, and a dependent variable. With these aspects of his study all lined up Watson took years, I'm sure, and did genetic tests over and over and over again. Can we be mad at whatever his findings were? Regardless of whether we like the facts or not, sometimes, they are facts.

In my opinion, instead of dwelling on his findings, we ought to thank our maker that there are no absolute truths. While the debate about what Watson actually said rages on, perhaps we the targeted people, ought to pick up a few books and continue to prove just how smart we are. I for one was not offended; I know that I can stand toe to toe, on any given day, with any given subject in front of me, with someone of any race, and if it's my destiny, come out swinging, victoriously. So don't just fight ignorance. Fight smart!

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