



David M. Moore, far left, prepares food during Sunday's picnic at Tanglewood Park.

Moore

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But, after more than 100 years, Dawson Moore's stories of a legislator father were eventually proven true. And this year, for the first time, six generations of the family heard the true story of Alfred Moore.
"It's shocking," said Juanilla Moore Gwyn, a Winston-Salem native and a great-granddaughter of Alfred Moore. "I had never heard all of this before. And if I had, I probably wouldn't have believed it. Who would have thought a black man could do anything in South Carolina back then?"

A secret history

According to the stories told to Reed by her father, Alfred Moore was elected to the S.C. General Assembly in 1872 and served until 1876. Dawson Moore told his daughter that her grandfather was a farmer and the first black man to serve as a senator in the S.C. General Assembly. Dawson Moore said his father was not elected but appointed to serve in the General Assembly because his fair skin allowed him to "pass" for white.
Over time, Reed forgot about the stories of her fabled grandfather. As a youth, she was taught nothing about African American history in school, and living in a South scarred with hundreds of restrooms and water fountains clearly marked black or white, that a black man could have once been in control seemed unfathomable.

"At that time I didn't understand what it meant," she said. "I looked around me and I didn't see anything like that. If you told somebody, they would laugh at you and ask how you could have a black senator back then."

It wasn't until the Civil Rights Movement began to build steam in the 1950s that the childhood stories began to take on new meaning. As she began to learn more about black people's struggles, she began to think more about her family's past.

"A cousin of mine told me what it meant to have a grandfather that served in the General Assembly," she said. "Then I got together with some of my other cousins, most of all have gone on to glory, and they gave me all the information. And I decided that I wanted to share it with my family and let them pass it on to their children."

Reed began to jot down the stories, but she still had no proof. Hobbled by a stroke that forces her to use a walker, she had a difficult time traveling from her home in Chester to the state Capitol in Columbia to look up information.

But she still tried to piece together a family tree. She told the stories to whomever would listen and would jot down notes. Several times, she's told her story to reporters, hoping someone would find defini-

tive proof. While several stories appeared, none gave Reed the proof she so desperately wanted.

"I wanted to know what happened, but I didn't know how to find it," she said. "Before I died, I just wanted to know what really happened."

Family members across the nation joined in the search. After a story that appeared in The (Chester) News & Reporter was sent to relatives across the country, several family members began to search in earnest for information.

"That was the first I heard of it," Gwyn said. "I tried to find information about it on the Internet. But I couldn't find anything at all about him. It was just frustrating."

The real story of Alfred Moore was hidden deep within South Carolina's countless historical documents and is a shade different from family lore.

According to militia and census records, Alfred Moore was born a slave in 1834. His race is listed as mulatto. He was literate. In 1870, he had a personal fortune of \$165 - no small amount for a former slave.

And though he wasn't the state's first black senator, Alfred Moore did serve as a member of the House of Representatives during a special legislative session from 1870-1872.

Moore was part of South Carolina's buried history. From 1868 to 1872, the majority of South Carolina's representatives in both houses were black men. Blacks would reach their peak in 1872, the year Moore left the House. Of the General Assembly's 155 representatives, 96 were black. It was the first and last time in American history that blacks held the majority of any state legislature.

After his tenure at the state Capitol, Moore bought property and became a minister.

Though the records point out inconsistencies in the family's oral history, Reed's son Cleveland, part of a large delegation of Moores who call Winston-Salem home, says he's still proud of his great-grandfather.

"This doesn't change a thing," he said. "I'm still proud of him. I'm just glad we finally know what actually happened."

The Lost Years

The family's frustration at finding information is understandable, says Sherman Pyatt, archivist at the College of Charleston's Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture.

Almost every day, historians and archivists make new discoveries about the early years of Reconstruction.

"It was difficult to find information about the period 15 or 20 years ago," Pyatt said. "But now historians are writing more about it. It's almost a lost period for a lot of people. They simply don't realize what

happened during that period and the tremendous strides made by blacks. In our history this marks the only point where blacks had that sort of power."

Reconstruction is the name given to the years immediately following the Civil War. During that time, the South found itself knee deep in debt and nursing wounds - both mental and physical - from the war.

Economically, the South was decimated as well. Gone was the institution of slavery, and many planters had lost their land to Northerners.

Aided by Northern white Republicans, blacks, who made up the vast majority of the state's population, began to make strides. Schools were set up to teach the newly freed slaves to read. And for the first time blacks made up the voting majority. Whites were not allowed to vote unless they took an oath of allegiance, which most refused to do, Pyatt said.

It wasn't a simple task to be a black elected official.

Black politicians were highly scrutinized. They faced death threats and harassment by organized groups of whites set on running them out of office.

Local papers, run by Southern Democrats, painted them as ignorant, illiterate former slaves, which was untrue. The vast majority of black elected officials were literate. Many owned property or were tradesmen. And many of them were actually born free. South Carolina boasted a large population of free blacks who earned livings in various trades.

"Southern whites had a real hatred of blacks," Pyatt said. "From day one, whites were bent on being deconstructive. Newspapers were used to perpetuate a host of myths about blacks."

Pyatt said a large number of the elected officials, like Moore, would have been of mixed heritage.

"That put him in a position to move into power," he said. "Sometimes mulattos would have been able to obtain their freedom a little more easily than other slaves. They were also more likely to be taught to read and write and have access to the white power structure than other slaves."

For men like Moore, power would be fleeting.

By 1890, the North had all but pulled out of the South and white Southerners had instituted codes that limited blacks' freedom and movement. Groups like the Ku Klux Klan had come to power and used intimidation and public lynchings to further undermine any steps made by blacks.

Pyatt said it's not surprising that most of the family didn't know about their ancestor's accomplishments. For men like Moore, talking about their past accomplishments

would have been dangerous.

"Whites fought tooth and nail to destroy blacks' inroads," Pyatt said. "They literally took them to court in efforts to steal their land. And after serving, many of the black legislators would have had a tough time moving back into society as they knew it. Most would have been stripped of their land and pride. That's a hard thing for a man to talk about. Most would have simply tried hard to forget about their years in the Assembly. It was the wisest thing they could probably do."

And relatives believe that's what Alfred Moore did.

Quietly, he lived out the years until his death in 1913, hesitant to talk about his years in the House.

But relatives vow to break the silence. At each reunion they will share more of the family's history and Alfred Moore's legacy.

Cleveland Reed says though his children may not understand the significance of Moore's achievements, they will someday.

"We're going to talk about it," he said. "Our children will know what really happened back then."

"You know, it does give us hope," said Krystal McCullough, 18, a great-great-granddaughter of Alfred Moore. "If he was strong enough to do it back all those years ago, then we should be able to do it now."

The Chronicle's e-mail address is: wschron@netunlimited.net

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NOTICE MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED FIRMS

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is seeking minority and women-owned firms (M/WBE) to bid on upcoming highway projects throughout the State. The Locations of the projects are:

Project No.	County/Route	Division No.	Type	Location	Metric/English		
5.4411210	Cumberland	6	Milling, Resurfacing, Thermoplastic PVMT Markings & PVMT Markers	From SR-2283 to Rockfish Creek bridge South of Fayetteville	English	5%	5%
6.349003T	Wilson	4	Grading, Clearing and Grabbing, Mowing, Ripping, Dicing & Drainage	89 acre Wiggins Mill Wetland Mitigation site located between Wiggins Mill Road to the North and Proposed US-264 Wilson bypass to the South	English	Not estab.	
6.498004B	Guilford	7	Grading, Drainage, Paving, Long-life PVMT Markings, Pavement Markers, Signaling, Signals & Structures	I-85 (Greensboro Bypass) from North of SR 3314 (Wiley-Lewis) to South of SR 3000 (McCormell Road) East of Greensboro	Metric	10%	5%
6.349004T	Wilson	4	Grading, Drainage, Paving, Signaling, Signals, Long-life PVMT MRK, Culvert, Structure & Pavement Markers	US-264 Wilson bypass from East of US 301 to existing US 264 East of NC 58 South of Wilson	Metric	10%	5%
6.939004T	Graham	14	Grading & Draining	Tumalo Creek Wetland Mitigation site, North of US 29, North of Topton, East of SR 1201	English	Not estab.	
7.9411101	Haywood	14	Resurfacing shoulder construction and Thermoplastic Pavement Markings	1 section of primary road	English	5%	5%
7.9811100	Polk	14	Milling, Resurfacing & Thermoplastic PVMT Markings	6 sections of primary road	English	4%	4%
8.1051903	Dare	1	Safety Guardrail Improvements	US 264 from SR 1100 (Stumpy Point Road) to US 64 intersection North of Englehart	English	10%	
8.1241802	Bladen	6	Grading, Dicing and Drainage	Dowd Dairy Farm Wetland Mitigation site of White Oak	English	0%	
8.1251201	New Hanover	3	Grading, Drainage, Paving, Thermoplastic PVMT MRKS, Pavement Markings & Signals	Intersection of US 74 & US 76 in the vicinity of Plaza East Shopping Center in Wilmington	English	10%	
8.1321701	Nash	4	Grading, Drainage, Paving, Thermoplastic PVMT MRKS & Pavement Markers & Traffic Signals	NC 97 from US 301 to SR-1714 in Rocky-Mount	English	10%	
8.1360701	Franklin	5	Widening, Grading, Drainage, Paving, Thermoplastic PVMT MRKS, Pavement Markers, Signaling, Signals & Culvert	US-401 From SR-1700 (Fox Park Road) to NC-39 in Lenoir	Metric	10%	
8.1530401	Hoke	8	Widening, Grading, Resurfacing, Paving, Drainage, Thermoplastic PVMT MRKS & Pavement Markings	On NC 211 from SR 1318 (Old NC 211) to SR 1203 (Banyoke Road) North of Raeford, 7-Sections and 1-Section of Urban roads & intersections	English	10%	
8.1870210	McDowell/Burke	13	Grading, Drainage, Pavement Rehabilitation, Signaling, Long-life PVMT MRKS, Pavement Markers & Structures	2 Sections of Primary Roads	English	10%	
8.2461201	Robeson	6	Paving, Grading, Drainage, Pavement Markers & Structures	Bridge over Lumber River and Approaches on SR 2202 in Lumberton	English	6%	
8.2741101	Surry	11	Widening, Grading, Drainage, Paving, Signaling, Thermoplastic PVMT MRKS & Pavement Markings	SR 1138 (CC Camp Road) from US 21 Bypass to I-77 Northeast of Elkin	Metric	10%	
8.2791601	Catawba	12	Grading, Drainage, Paving, Pavement Markers & Structures	Bridge over McIn Creek and approaches on SR 1722 West of Catawba	English	10%	
8.2843401	Buncombe	13	Grading, Draining, Paving & Culvert	Culvert on Beavenslam Creek and approaches on SR 1674 in Asheville	English	10%	
9.8100352	Union/Mecklenburg	10	Grading, Draining, Paving, Signaling, Thermoplastic PVMT MRKS, Pavement Markers, Culvert & Structure	Rea Road extension from NC 16 in Union County to North of Ballantyne Commons Parkway in Mecklenburg County South of Charlotte	Metric	10%	5%

LETTING DATE: Tuesday, July 20, 1999

*** MONDAY, July 19, 1999 6 P.M. - MIDNIGHT ***

North Raleigh Hilton - 3415 Wake Forest Road - Raleigh, N.C.

Prime contractors will be available on Monday July, 19, 1999 to receive quotes for trucking, sub-contracting and materials. M/WBE's needing more information and/or technical assistance may come to Room 522 to meet with representatives from the Bennington Corp., NCDOT's Supportive Provider. (919)832-6027

NCDOT Office of Civil Rights & Business Development 1-800-522-0453
Certification of highway contracting firms: Richard Chrisawn
Certification of supply/service/engineering firms: Robert Mathes
Comments or concerns: Delano Rackard: Director



CORRECTION

In last week's issue of The Chronicle there was an error in the editorial "Most black children still not passing." One sentence stated that projected figures for the 1998-99 school year show that 54.5 percent of fifth graders and 50.8 percent of seventh graders were not proficient on the end-of-grade test. The sentence should have stated that projected figures will show that the students "were" proficient on the tests.