

ABOLISHED



THE UNTOLD LEGACY OF
B.L. MOORE HIGH SCHOOL
1960 - 2015

REFLECTIONS

CLASS OF 1972

BY: JOSEPH JONES

As a student, "I will never stop loving the time spent at B.L. Moor as a very young child, then growing up as a young teenager. Remembering all those special days, times spent with classmates and friends, it was like being on an island of nothing but pure happiness, over a short span of eleven years.

Making true friends for life is something that I will always cherish, even to this day, over some sixty-two years later. It seems as if it was just yesterday. We had some of the best loving Principles, Teachers, Janitors, Cooks, Bus Drivers and many more community and supporting staff members, who cared for us as if we were all one big happy family.

Another instance, I remember doing not only some good things, but I also learned and did very well at B.L. Moor High School.

A few I will never forget, was also somewhat a bit much off, according to rule of books. "Association brings about simulation, if it maintains its flavor long enough." I think, when I was 10th or maybe 11th grade, on the football team, with a very close school friend, we both got caught after hours, and was inside the closed cafeteria, while at evening football practice after school was closed. Yes, I paid dearly! No reason whatsoever for doing it, but we were young fools who thought it was just fun to do. I think I was about fifteen or sixteen.

Thank you, B.L. Moor High School, for setting me on fire, Mr. Wicks! I won't even break into my own piggy bank now unless I am with the Banker and a key!

I received the best education, from the best. That overall teaching has never left my fiber. It is etched in my heart.

Thank you B.L. Moor High and family, I will always remember and love you. You made me the person I am today.

"Our History..."

The 55-year legacy of B.L. Moor High School, known as the Pleasant Grove Project, began in 1960 and ended in 2015. This institution graduated forty-two classes until 2002, and thirteen classes from East Oktibbeha County High school. The former Oktibbeha County's reorganization and consolidation resulted in two high schools: one on the east and the west side of Oktibbeha County. Moor High and Alexander High School merged to become East Oktibbeha County High School Titans. Prior consolidations from community church schools created B.L. Moor High School to equalize school resources for African Americans in the county in the mid-fifties. Community schools in Oktibbeha County were abolished by state legislature: Austin, Bethel, Chapel Hill, McGee, Pine Grove, Pleasant Grove, St. Matthews, Truevine, and Turnpike at Zion Franklin,

The Oktibbeha County school district was abolished in 2013 by Mississippi State legislature Act 716 that required the Starkville Municipal School District consolidate with the Oktibbeha County School District to merge the staffs and students. Unfortunately, the local consolidation committee opted to close the doors of two high schools in May 2015 and joined the new Starkville-Oktibbeha County Consolidated School District that was effective July 1, 2015.

The community and alumni were unsuccessful in acquiring the former B.L. Moor High property for multipurpose. The dream of sq officially faded June 31, 2021, when the campus was sold to a private family for industrial purposes. The former high school is fortunate to have an alumni group dedicated and loyal to advocacy for the preservation and archiving of its history. As a symbol of the former technically segregated high school, a historic marker is erected near the former campus in recognition of its historic presence in the Pleasant Grove Community near Crawford, Mississippi on June 19, 2023, at 11 a.m. The property currently serves as a community events and conference center, an eighteen-room hotel on site, and site of manufacturing technology.

The former high school educated many noticeable graduates from an array of professions, crafts, and trades among which are the all time great Jerry Rice Hall of Fame.

In Loving Memory

DR. JAMES HAROLD SMITH



1942 2014



College, Jackson State University, Mississippi State University, and a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Mississippi.

Dr. James Harold Smith was born and raised in Starkville, Mississippi to Ms. Lula Roberson and Mr. L.D. "Hog Eye" Smith. James was an active member of Greater Ebenezer M.B. Church, where served in several capacities, including deacon and church clerk, until his health no longer allowed him to do so. After graduating from Henderson High School, he went on to receive degrees from Mary Holmes

A lifelong learner and advocate for children's literacy, he devoted much of his life to being an educator. He worked as a teacher, coach, and counselor for several years at B.L. Moor before becoming Assistant Superintendent of the Oktibbeha County School District in 1980. In 1984, he moved to the Starkville School District as principal of the Armstrong Middle School, and, in 1986, became the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Federal Programs, and then Interim Superintendent where he worked until he retired in 2004.

He was active in many professional, social, and civic organizations including being the past Worshipful Master of the Rising Star Lodge #31, as well as a lifetime member of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity, Inc. He and his wife Helen were married for 45 years and had 3 children. When asked how they thought their husband/father should best be remembered, his family had several thoughts, including the following: "He told us that service was a part of his upbringing, and so he insisted it become a part of ours. He taught us that the world had a lot of problems, and that black people had an extra lot of problems, but we were STILL able and obligated to struggle to change the world around us. 'The world owes you nothing- you owe the world for being here- so give back. Being poor is not an excuse for not achieving'. He also taught us that "if you make a mistake, there is still a chance, failure is not falling down, but staying there. Learn from mistakes and be strong enough to turn from them and correct them".

Recognitions / Sponsors

Ada Shine Purnell 70
Andre Stevenson 76
Angela Stewart 83
Betty J. Thomas 74
Billy Ellis Moody 81
Brandy Malone
Brandy Malone
Brenda Dean
Carl Mitchell 77
Clarence Beckum 72
Collin J. Dunn 65
Curtis Ervin 71
Curtis Randle 79
Curtis Snell 76
Debra Stevenson Miller 69
Dora Kennard Jackson 69
Dorothy R. Johnson 71
Dorothy Ellis 71
Dr. Derick Edwards
Dr. Ervin Fox, MD
Dr. Kenneth Edwards 86
Dr. Kennie Stalling
Dr. Walter Conley 64
Dwight King 74
Elizabeth Kennard 73
Ethen Gillespie 75
Rev. Willie E. Thomas 73
Rita Akins 75
Robert Lawrence 67
Rosella Austin 70
Roy Reese 76

Sarah Mobley 71
Sylvester Davis 65
Tamilka Wilson
Tom Bash Johnson 76
Ulis Young 60
Wesley Davis Staff
Willette Duvall 78
Willie Poster 70
Yvonne Ellis 75
Faye Tate 78
Frank Fulton 73
George W. Ellis 82
Greta Taylor Family (3) 74
Greta Taylor 74 (2)
Helen Smith 65
Helen Stevenson 74
Herman Bush 62
Jacqueline Ellis 74
Jimmy Blair 64
Joe Maurice Robinson 74
Joe N. Rice 75
Jolean Tate 72
Jossie Redmond
Jossie Redmond 64
Lashonda Wilson 94
Linda Wilson 82
Linda Young William 70
Lodean Evans 71
Loistean Rice Baker
Margie Davis Staff
Marilyn E. Davis 66
Martha Wilson 76
Marvin Tate 74 (3)
Mary Reese 74
Maury Adams 81
Melvin McCarter 77
Phyllis Curry Tate 74
Pinkie Edwards 88
Queen Malone 77
Regina Sykes 86
Rev Tyrone Stalling 71
Rev. Willie E. Thomas 73