

April 20, 2013



Dred Scott's descendant, Lynne Jackson and Southampton County Circuit Clerk of Court Rick Francis unveil the Dred Scott historical marker Tuesday, located on Route 58 and Buckhorn Quarter Road. -- MERLE MONAHAN | Tidewater News

Dred Scott, Blow family marker unveiled

Published 10:08am Friday, April 19, 2013

[Email Comments](#)

BY MERLE MONAHAN/CONTRIBUTING WRITER
merlemonah@aol.com

CAPRON—Dred Scott, a Southampton County slave during the early 1800s, who sued the government for his and his family's freedom, was recognized Tuesday when a State Historical Highway Marker was placed at the intersection of Route 58 and Buckhorn Quarter Road near the Blow Plantation where he grew up

Scott was owned by the Peter Blow family of Southampton County and born into slavery, but later sold to an army officer, Dr. John Emerson, who traveled and lived in various territories where slavery was illegal. Scott sued the government for his freedom for this reason in 1846.

In 1857, however, the Supreme Court ruled against Scott, stating that he was “property, not a citizen,” and therefore had no legal standing to file a suit.

Scott’s freedom was ultimately purchased by two of Blow’s sons in 1857; Scott died in 1858.

More than 50 people, government officials, relatives of Scott and the Blow family, and friends and residents of the community, gathered at the site for the dedication of the “Dred Scott and the Blow Family” Highway marker.

Local historian Jeff Hines who pursued the need for a Dred Scott marker in Southampton County, introduced Lynda Updike, president of the Southampton County Historical Society, which sponsored the event.

In welcoming the guests, Updike said Dred Scott was one of four slaves from Southampton County who had made an impact on Southampton County history and the abolition of slavery.

“Nat Turner tried to end slavery through violence, while Dred Scott tried to make a difference through the court system.

“Two others were Anthony Gardnir, who left the county to settle in Liberia, where he became its president and John Brown, who made his home in England, where he wrote a book on slavery.”

“These were notable events that did make a difference,” she said.

Lynne Jackson, great, great granddaughter of Scott and president of the Dred Scott Heritage Foundation of St. Louis, was one of several others who spoke, including Grindly Johnson from the Virginia Department of Transportation, John Le Bourgeois of the Peter Blow family and Peter Luebvke, historian for the Highway Marker Program, Department of Historic Resources.

All praised the historical society for erecting the marker, which was unveiled by Jackson and Southampton County Circuit Court Clerk Richard Francis.

Hines, a descendant of the Blow family, has worked many hours researching the lineage of the Blows and especially the events surrounding Dred Scott.

Despite the research, it has not been definitely confirmed that Scott was born in Southampton County.

No records, such as a birth certificate, have been found.

“But we know his mother was living in Southampton County the year that Dred was born,” said Updike. “There’s no doubt in my mind that he was born here.”