

Jack Cobb & Son Barbecue Mural

Hello, I am Alma Cobb Hobbs, the niece of Jack Cobb, who is the founder of the Jack Cobb and Son Barbecue business. The mural on his building marks the legacy of an authentic barbecue business that spanned over 60 years.

Let me share how it all started. Jack Cobb, a contractor for A.C. Monk Tobacco Company, originally learned the art of cooking barbecue while growing up on his family's farm. He was taught to roast hogs in a dug-out pit, lined with tin and kindled corncobs. Once he mastered the art and skills needed to make delicious and succulent barbecue, it was time to take the barbecue to the marketplace, however, in this case it was his car.

Although Jack Cobb knew that owning a black business in the 1940s would create challenges, nonetheless, he quickly turned obstacles into opportunities. He initially sold the barbecue from his car to works at A.C. Monk Tobacco Company in Farmville, North Carolina. Experiencing much success, this expanded to Jack Cobb driving all over town with his son, Rudy, who would run plates from the car to the customers. This was truly "food delivery" before its time.

Now, as you would expect, demand exceeded supply. Therefore, during the 1960's, Jack Cobb opened a small storefront on South Walnut Street for a few years before building a larger place on Main Street which provided more visibility, exposure and space.

The new barbecue restaurant officially opened with the name Jack Cobb and Son Barbecue, marking the partnership between father and son. The business was credited for being the first family business to welcome integration in the Farmville community.

After the passing of my uncle, Jack Cobb, in 1989, his son Rudy maintained the authenticity of the business, making very little changes other than code requirements.

Jack Cobb and Son Barbecue was recognized on the North Carolina Barbecue Trail, inducted into the North Carolina Hall of Fame for Barbecue, and featured in many magazines and on local TV stations. Rudy Cobb, the son and sole owner, worked diligently to build a strong customer base while operating the business he loved over 60 years before closing its doors in 2019 upon his retirement. Jack Cobb and Son Barbecue has its rightful place in the annals of authentic barbecue folklore of the Carolinas.