

# SILVER CIRCLE PROFILE: BILL MOORE

By Kevin Wing

When **Bill Moore** became a news cameraman at KTVU in 1968 – starting on the same day that future Channel 2 anchor **Dennis Richmond** began his career there as a clerk-typist – he was making history. Moore was the first African-American cameraman in the Bay Area.

He didn't realize it then, but Moore was also the first black television news photographer in California.

It was the beginning of a 28-year association with the Oakland station. It would be Moore's first – and only – television job.

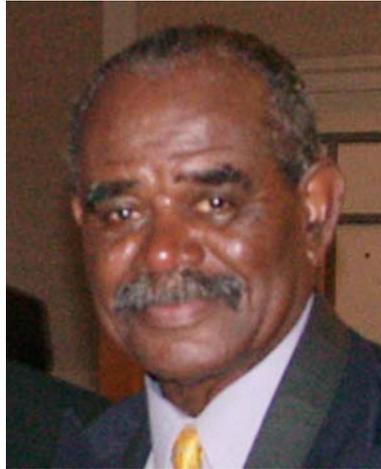
Back then, Moore was attending Laney College in Oakland. His friend and classmate, the late **Will Sobey**, was already working at Channel 2 as a cameraman. Sobey called his friend to let him know the station was hiring photographers. Moore jumped at the chance and was hired on the spot.

Being the Bay Area's only African-American television cameraman nearly 40 years ago posed

many unwanted challenges for the always good-natured Moore. Unlike then and today, when most news photographers wore more casual clothing out in the field, Moore would dress himself to the nines, wearing a nice shirt and slacks, a nice tie to go with it and a sports jacket to complete the ensemble.

"When I would dress that way, it would help me do my job out in the field," Moore recalled. "Because I was black, I would sometimes have trouble with the cops at crime scenes. So, I started to wear a jacket and tie to gain acceptance."

During his 28 years at KTVU, Moore covered a lot of "biggie" stories, as he calls them. In 1974, he was one of the first shooters on the scene in Berke-



ley, where newspaper heiress **Patty Hearst** was kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army. Later, Moore would cover the Hearst's family news conferences in Hillsborough.

In late 1978 – a tragic period of time for the Bay Area – Moore covered two major events back-to-back: the Jonestown massacre, and the City Hall assassinations of San Francisco Mayor **George Moscone** and Supervisor **Harvey Milk**.

"The Jonestown massacre was a very personal thing for me," Moore said. "A woman who worked for us in our home later died in Jonestown."

On that November day in 1978 when Moscone and Milk were assassinated by fired Supervisor **Dan White**, Moore was working in San Francisco with then-Channel 2 reporter **Ysabel Duron**.

Moore raced to City Hall after getting word that a shooting had occurred there, not knowing that the victims were **Moscone** and **Milk**. Moore says he



wasn't the one who shot the shocking news conference by Board of Supervisors President **Dianne Feinstein** who announced that both men had been shot and killed. But, Moore says he was the only photographer inside City Hall to shoot Moscone's covered body as it was wheeled out a side exit from the basement of the building. While other

photographers were outside waiting for the bodies to be brought out, Moore got the only shots from inside.

"It was a screwed up day," he says. "It really got to me, emotionally, that I covered this tragic event."

Another "biggie" news event would happen 11 years later: the Loma Prieta earthquake of Oct. 17,

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# PHOTOGRAPHER: BILL MOORE

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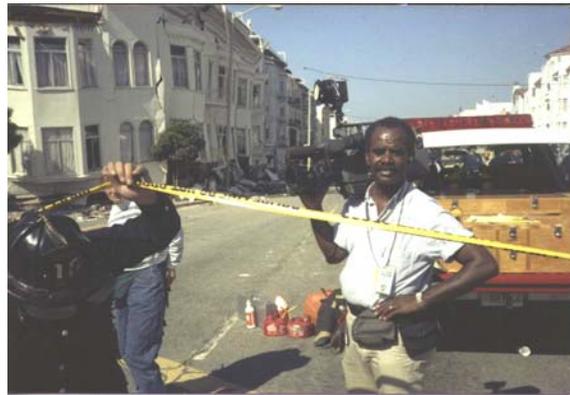
1989 “I was at 8<sup>th</sup> and Market when the quake hit,” Moore recalls. “(Channel 2 reporter) **Gary (Kauf)** and I were the only ones in San Francisco at that time. When I was on Market, I really didn’t feel the quake. But then, I started noticing building tiles falling off buildings. And then I saw Japanese tourists hit the ground. Japan has been through so many earthquakes that Japanese residents know what to do when a quake hits – hit the ground.”

Moore was also with Channel 2 assignment editor **Mark Richardson**. Before the quake hit, Moore had agreed to pick up Richardson at BART and take him to Candlestick Park, where the A’s and the Giants were playing in the World Series.

“After the quake hit, I saw smoke coming from the direction of the Marina District, and I knew that’s where I needed to go,” Moore says. “It took 30 minutes to get there. The Marina was so devastated by the quake.”

In his 28 years at KTVU, Moore worked for many news directors, people like **Ted “Mad Dog” Kavanau** in the 1970s, and, of course, the legendary **Fred Zehnder**, Channel 2’s news director from 1978 to 1999.

During all of those years, Moore was recognized as one of the best photojournalists in the Bay Area when the San Francisco chapter of



NATAS awarded him with a special Emmy® Award.

He added his Emmy® to the vast collection of Emmy® statues and other awards



earned by his wife, **Belva Davis**, a former anchor and reporter for KPIX, KRON and KQED. Both are inductees in the Silver Circle. They once owned a beautiful home in San Francisco’s Pacific Heights neighborhood. They now own a Nob Hill condominium and a home in Petaluma that is on nearly three acres.

What’s Moore doing these days? For the last several years, he has been teaching TV photojournalism classes at Ohlone College in Fremont. He was hired by friend and former KTVU colleague Gary Kauf, who left KTVU and is currently the head of the television broadcasting department at Ohlone.

Moore works Mondays and Wednesdays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, he and Belva spend time watching their 7-month-old granddaughter, **Sterling**, who was adopted recently by their daughter, **Darolyn**.