

THE

"Building Communicative Bridges  
in A Tri-Racial Setting"

# Carolina Indian Voice

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## A Carolina Indian Voice Front Page Editorial-

### RETURN OF CLYBURN PINES, COUNTRY CLUB AREAS SIMPLY A PARTIAL PAYMENT OF A LONG STANDING DEBT BY LUMBERTON CITY SCHOOLS

By Bruce Barton

I've read a lot of media wringing of the hands lately about the travails of the residents of the Clyburn Pines, Country Club areas who have been returned to the Robeson County School System from which they were unlawfully taken approximately 12 years ago. There have been administrative problems, inconveniences caused by all parties concerned. It has sometimes been unpleasant but always necessary.

As I see it, the return of Clyburn Pines and Country Club areas to the county system from which they were unlawfully taken is simply just a case of a partial payment of a long standing debt. It is sort of like if a man owed you a dollar and decided to pay you 45 cents on that debt. Would you not take the 45 cents and still hold the debtor responsible for the 55 cents still left unpaid?  
Now there is talk of merger in the county. Maybe. But a lot would depend on how the minorities were treated in the

transitional period. Who would be the superintendent of a system encompassing the whole county? That would be an important question that would need to be answered beforehand. History shows that Indians have always been short changed educationally in the past. Ideally, total merger is the answer to the educational woes of the county. No doubt about it. But who would run such a system? How could Indians and Blacks and Whites be assured of equal representation? Who could make that kind of decision? Could our provincial and racial notions be put aside long enough to do what is right for all the children of the county? History shouts "NO!" and "Be wary, Indians!"  
The fact is that no one that I know of has excused Barker Ten Miles and Lakewood Estates from being returned to the county system. The educational chickens are coming home to roost in Ol' Robeson. Their turn is coming, make no mistake about it. But let's remember what happened and why. No one can reasonably know where he is going if he does not know where he has been.  
The fact is that the Lumberton City Schools was found guilty as charged for unlawfully annexing three areas, Barker Ten Miles, Lakewood Estates, and Clyburn Pines and Country Club into the city system more than a decade ago. The illegal annexations were effected in order to escape the implementation of the 1970 desegregation plan imposed by HEW, and to buttress up misconceived notions of racial superiority.  
Lumberton, when called on the carpet recently by the justice department, and found guilty of breaking the 1965 Voting Rights Act, decided to return Clyburn Pines and Country Club area to the county. Their hope is that they will be allowed to keep Barker Ten Mile and Lakewood Estates for having done so. As I see it, they will not be allowed to do so. The county board of education's position was to accept the partial payment of a long standing debt. They said, in essence, "Yes, we will take Clyburn Pines and Country Club area back into the system from which they were unlawfully taken but you (the Lumberton City Schools) still owe us Barker Ten Mile and Lakewood Estates." There the matter stands.  
That is why some folks now are lamenting and wringing their hands about merger. The legal hand writing is on the wall.  
So, of course, total merger of the duplicitous five school systems in Robeson is the answer but not by the educational rape of the Robeson County School System, the aggrieved party in this matter.  
The Robesonian and I almost agree on the need for merger--almost. The Robesonian seems to want to forget (or pretend it never happened) the past. The Carolina Indian Voice wants the illegal annexations remembered so that it never happens again.

### Vernon Bellecourt Reports on Travels To South America

by Bruce Barton

Vernon Bellecourt, one of the founders of the American Indian Movement, was recently in the area to present his findings of a recent tour to Central America, as a guest of the Nicaraguan government. Bellecourt appeared at Lumbee Regional Development Association (LRDA) and showed slides taken in the troubled region and shared what he found there.

A Chippewa, or Ojibwe, from the White Earth Reservation in Minnesota, Bellecourt was appalled at what he found while in Central America. He accuses the American government of "a continuing holocaust," "the longest holocaust" because of their involvement in the abuse, relocation and killing of Miskito, Sumu, Creole and Rama Indians of Nicaragua and the rest of Central America. He saw evidence of the CIA there and laments that the mistreatment continues "at this very moment, at an alarming rate, in these countries."

Bellecourt, now 51, is an articulate spokesman for oppressed people generally and Indian people specifically. He still considers the American Indian Movement a "viable movement" although their strategy has changed somewhat over the years. The movement is more spiritual and mobile now. They go where they are needed and, in many ways, have become a national advocacy group for Indians.

While in the area he stayed with Kever Locklear, a leader of the Tuscarora movement in Robeson County. He bridges many ideological camps in the Indian world, refusing to "play the game" of those who fight over names like Lumbee and Tuscarora and non federal versus federal Indian recognition. He likes to go where he is needed and is comfortable in any camp. He is a great admirer of Kever Locklear and respects his "unswerving commitment." Bellecourt, who was involved in the Prospect School dispute in the early '70s, considers that a turning point in Indian affairs in Robeson County.

Still, he made the seconding motion a couple of years ago when Lumbee Regional Development Association was accepted into NCAI (National Congress of American Indians) after earlier being rejected. He remembers that "I took some heat for it but I believe they had a right to join..."

Contrary to media reports in America, Bellecourt found that the Sandinistan Revolutionary government that ousted the hated Somoza regime was instituting progressive reform among the Indian populace and was attempting to respect the sovereignty of the Miskito, Summa, Rama and the other indigenous Indian people within the Nicaraguan borders. Bellecourt declares, "the U.S. Government has declared economic war against Indians and they need to be challenged. We have a very difficult time ahead of us."  
And Vernon Bellecourt is going about the country attempting to rouse the Indian people wherever he finds them because "I have a moral obligation to tell the story of the plight of Central American Indians." And he never forgets to remind America of her moral obligation to treat the American Indian with respect and dignity too.

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Vernon Bellecourt (left) is shown with Bruce Barton, editor, during a recent visit to the area.



Guss Warren's Pembroke State University column of September 16.

CORRECTION: Vernon Bellecourt is not "a member of the White Earth Band of South Dakota" as reported in

the Robesonian.

### named to Indian Board

Dr. James B. Chavis of Pembroke State University has been elected to the Board of Directors of the Society for the Preservation of American Indian Culture. Dr. Chavis was chosen for his outstanding educational leadership and service to Indian people. He has been active in the national Indian programs of SPAIC.  
SPAIC is dedicated to preserving Indian culture through Economic Development, self-sufficiency and public awareness.  
Dr. Chavis will serve as an educational and economic consultant for SPAIC. He will also serve on the program committee for conventions, workshops and arts and crafts fairs and will represent the society in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

## DIAL TENURE AS COMMISSIONER REMEMBERED

### Appreciation Banquet Sat. Night at Old Foundry Restaurant



- Herman Dial

Looking through the eyes of experience, there are those who believe that the recent defeat of Herman Dial as County Commissioner was in a sense the end of an era. That era spanned 16 years and is considered one of the most progressive periods in the annals of Robeson Indian history. In 1966 Herman Dial was elected for his first term as County Commissioner for the Pembroke-Smiths-Maxton District. Dial defeated incumbent Tracy Sampson, who was the first Indian to be elected commissioner.

John Willie Owendine of the Saddle-tree area is one of those who look through the eyes of experience. He recalls those troubled times prior to and immediately after the election of Dial.

**OXENDINE'S STORY**  
"As a race of people, the Indians of Robeson County have made some tremendous strides. Granted, progress for us has always been relatively slow. There are many reasons for that. I'm sure we don't have to rehash those. We are all aware of the oppression of our people. Suffice it to say that the most significant changes for the better for us have really developed over the past two decades.

We have always been an industrious people. We've always been interested and involved in things happening around us. In 1965 many of us Indians supported Dan K. Moore for Governor. Following that election an organization was formed. Although we did not formally name the organization, we met regularly to discuss and evaluate the plight of our people. There were seven of us who met often. Among us was represented each area of Robeson County-South, North, East and West.

Evolving from these meetings was the decision to run Herman Dial as a candidate for Commissioner. This deci-

sion was made by these men whom I still believe to be, men of vision. We felt that after analyzing the condition and lack of growth among Indians, that progress could be made through political channels. The office of commissioner was decided upon because of the age-old adage that "He who controls the finances of a people, controls their destiny."

During those early years of the 1960s, Tracy Sampson was the only elected official among the Indians. Dial was chosen as a candidate because he was considered the most electable person we had at the time. We felt that he would do whatever was in the best interests of Indians in particular and the county in general. We felt that we couldn't go wrong with a candidate who was personable and always willing and eager to learn whatever skills were required to bring about significant change in the county.

After sixteen years, I still feel that strongly about Herman Dial's potential, ability and intentions. That is not to say, of course, that I've always agreed with everything he has done, but I've never doubted his motives.

During the early years of Dial's service, the commissioners met in a small room in the Robeson County Court House. These meetings were held in such a small area that people were usually discouraged from attending.

There were many times during Dial's first years as commissioner that he could not get a second to a motion, let alone get a motion carried. Those were really distressing times for all of us. Dial was an aggressive commissioner. He did not hesitate to bring attention to those things he felt were morally wrong. Because he was never hesitant to speak, he was sort of looked upon by the other commissioners as totally different from the way they had visualized Indians. Herman Dial certainly broke out of the stereotype of passiveness. These feelings, I believe, contributed greatly to his inability to garner support for anything from the other commissioners.

Eventually, however, things began to change slowly but surely. In 1968 the voters of Robeson County changed two of the county commissioners. In 1970 they voted for one new person. In 1972 the voters in the Red Springs District elected Bobby Dean Locklear and in 1974 J.W. Hunt was elected to represent the Rowland District. As new faces began to be elected, Dial became more and more sure of himself- experience and determination on his part produced confidence and friendship on the part of the other commissioners. And slowly things began to happen. In a matter of months, Dial found himself changed from a member of a board who couldn't receive a second to a motion, to a viable force on the Robeson County Board of Commissioners.

With the combined talents of Dial, Locklear and Hunt, things began to improve politically for Indians. Their efforts, along with other members, resulted in Dial becoming the first Indian to serve as Chairman of the Robeson County Board of Commissioners in July 1978. He held that position until December 1981.

Under his capable leadership, Robeson County has undergone some tremendous changes in areas where Indians before had little or no input. For instance, during several years of his service, an Indian served as Chairman of the Robeson County Department of Social Services; another served as Chairman of the Robeson County Department of Health; the Robeson County Board of Commissioners had an Indian Chairman; as did the Robeson County Board of Education; and the Chairman of the Robeson County Board of Elections is Indian.

During his years of service we have experienced radical changes in the employment situation also.

I recall that in 1969 I visited the Department of Social Services, along with Herman Dial. During this visit, Dial asked for a racial breakdown of the employees in that department. We learned that two Indians, one Black and

45 Whites were employed there. It was an unbelievable comparison. Since that time, Dial has attempted to and has accomplished through his efforts an equitable racial breakdown-not only in that department but also in all county wide employment. When I think about his accomplishments, I am always reminded of the racial breakdown of employees in the Robeson County Court House, then and now. I consider myself fortunate to have lived long enough to see fair and equal employment opportunities for all races in Robeson County. The department of social services today employs 158 people and racially all three races are equally represented.

You know of course that Herman Dial served as chairman of the Social Services Board of Directors for six years. During his tenure in that position, the employment situation became racially equal. He was the first Indian to serve as chairman of that board.

You will notice as I relate this story that most major accomplishments for Indians has been directly or indirectly attributed to Herman Dial. I tell our story on this theme because I know these facts to be true. Without telling my age, let me say that I have lived longer than some and not as long as others. But I've lived long enough to know where we came from as a people. And I know for a certainty that Herman Dial has been the catalyst around which we have begun to climb politically, educationally, socially and in many other ways. Did I forget to say economically? We've progressed during his tenure economically also. The loss of Herman Dial as a representative in county government is the greatest loss we've experienced in my life time. It was a great loss to his District and the County, but an even greater loss to the Indian cause of reaching our potential as citizens in our county. I can't help but add that it is probably a gain to his family who have been neglected in a way because so much of his time has been demanded by our needs. He is the most unselfish person I've known. We've accomplished goals and realized potentials as a people at great personal sacrifice to Herman Dial. And I am

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### New policy on military funerals from Pembroke VFW Post 2843

The Pembroke VFW Post 2843 has taken the following action relative to military service for funerals, according to Bobby D. Locklear, Post Commander.

The Post will no longer perform military rites at funerals for non-members. This action was agreed upon by a vote of the general membership recently.

Commander Locklear explained, "Because the majority of our members have obligations to jobs, it has become almost impossible to find enough members who can take time off from their employment to attend all the funerals we are requested to serve on."

Commander Locklear continued, "We do sincerely regret that we will no longer be able to accommodate those military persons who are not members of the Pembroke VFW Post 2843."

The Pembroke VFW has in excess of 300 members and are now accepting memberships. Membership is open to all persons who have served in any branch of military service on active overseas duty during a War.

Information on memberships may be obtained by calling Post Commander Locklear at 521-2502 or the Membership Chairman Lee Anell Maynor at 521-3022.

### Marcus & Elizabeth Dial Descendants Gather....



Part of the descendants of the late Herman Dial gathered at a banquet at the Old Foundry Restaurant for the appreciation of Herman Dial's tenure as Chairman of the Robeson County Board of Commissioners.