

FOR THE PAST WE ARE GRATEFUL...FOR THE FUTURE WE ARE DETERMINED

ROBESON COUNTY INDIAN YOUTH RESEARCH A PROUD AND UNIQUE INDIAN HERITAGE

Many theories and histories have been written about the Indians of Robeson County—some by Indian historians; others by non-Indian historians and anthropologists. However, regardless of the many and varied theories and histories, the Indian youth of Robeson County are no longer content to accept what has been printed without further searching into a proud and unique past—a past which without question is founded in Indian heritage.

The legacy of the Robeson County Indians is one of pride, strong identity, self-reliance and strong determination. This legacy is being instilled and continued among the young Indian students who are participating in historical research projects sponsored by the Title IV Part A Indian Education Project of the Robeson County Schools. In addition to self-growth and development, the students have undertaken activities and projects which will build upon sound documentation and historical records for future research for many generations.

The Historical Research Project began in the fall of 1980 under the leadership of Lew Barton, local Robeson County Indian author and historian. Classes were conducted for high school students from Pembroke, Fairgrove and Magnolia High Schools. Students had an opportunity to develop a renewed interest and appreciation in their Indian heritage based on Mr. Barton's extensive research and writings.

In the fall of 1981, Glenn Burnett, Jr., Coordinator of Youth Development, supervised the program and activities during which time students began individual research and group projects. In addition to increasing their knowledge and awareness of their rich and proud past, students also gained additional skills in research, map skills, writing and data collection. A Robeson County map was used to locate all Indian cemeteries in Robeson County. In small groups, and later as individual projects, students surveyed each of these Indian cemeteries and compiled a comprehensive listing of all visible burials and markers within each cemetery. This project has been considered as 90% complete due to the fact that there still exists many small family cemeteries which have not been surveyed and listed. Projected plans for the 1982-1983 school year include a completion of these cemetery listings for the publication of a comprehensive listing of Indian burials in Robeson County.

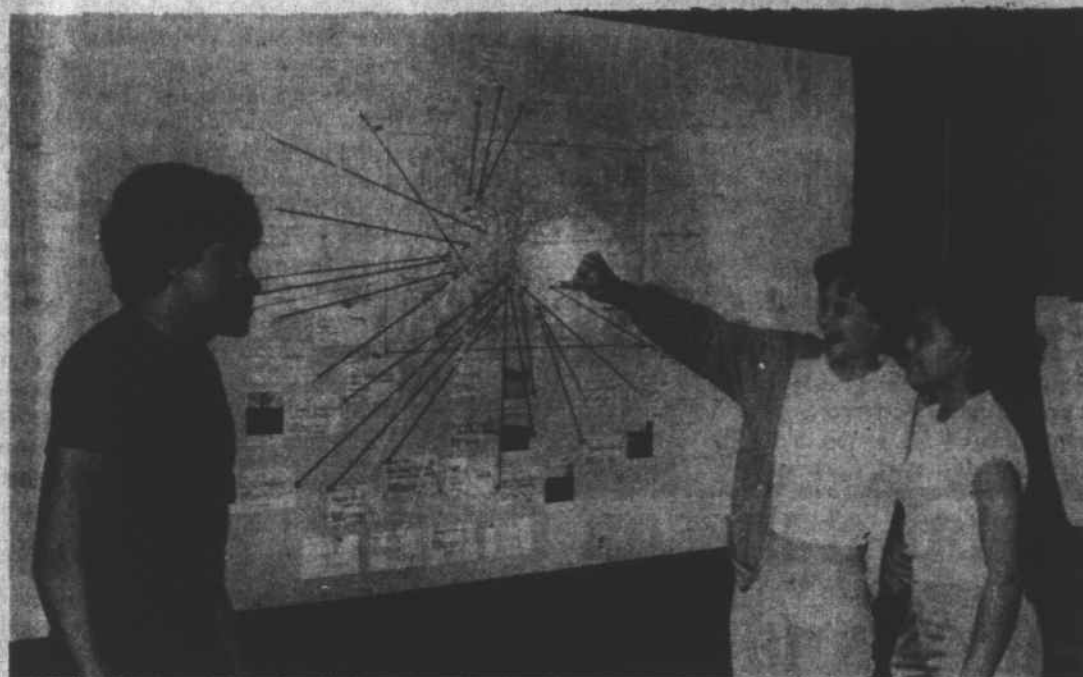
In addition to cemetery research, students participating in the Historical Research Project began to develop family geneologies using information secured from their immediate families, their relatives, the census information and other historical documents made available to the students. Research activities have included viewing microfilm at the Robeson County Public Library, records at the Department of Archives in Raleigh, and research trips during Easter vacation to the U.S. Department of Archives and History in Washington, D.C. As a result of these activities, a collection of historical records, reports and other relevant materials are being housed in special collections.

Since a great deal of the history of Robeson County Indians has depended upon oral histories provided by Indian families, students began interviewing the oldest members of the various Indian communities in Robeson County. Outlines for individual interviews were developed and students identified elders in their respective communities for taping oral interviews about events, activities, lifestyles and other pertinent information relative to Robeson County Indian history. These taped interviews are also being housed as part of the special collection on Robeson County Indian history.

In the summer of 1982, selected students enrolled in a six week program at Pembroke State University where they learned to polish their interviewing techniques, were introduced to video-taping, and spent three weeks in field experiences under supervision for both recording and video-taping oral history interviews with elders in various communities across the County.

Beginning with the 1982-83 school year, students will continue to participate in the Historical Research Project and will begin to develop written reports, creative stories, and transcription of the oral histories, all of which will culminate in printed copies of these materials.

The benefits of these programs and activities will extend beyond the students who have gained new knowledge and basic skills in research, writing and data collection to the larger Indian community. Armed with documentation, these youngsters will have made a great contribution to recording in print, the history, heritage and legacy of ROBESON COUNTY INDIANS.



WILLIAM P. LOCKLEAR of South Robeson High School looks on while ILENE OXENDINE of South Robeson High School and ANITA GALE SANDERSON of South Robeson High School locate their community Indian cemeteries on the pictorial county map and locator cards developed by the Historical Research Class.



MERRILL HASKINS of Magnolia High School and ANGELA BLANKS of Magnolia High School interview MS. RUTH GODWIN of the Saddletree Community relative to lifestyles, economic conditions, education, housing, land ownership and values and customs during her early years growing up in Robeson County.

In Commemoration
and Observance of
**NORTH CAROLINA
INDIAN HERITAGE
WEEK**

September 19-25



JIMMY M. HUNT, JR. of South Robeson School and LORIE ANN LOCKLEAR of Magnolia School search for genealogical information on their ancestors by using the card file of burials in Indian cemeteries throughout Robeson County.



BECKY LOWERY of Magnolia High School and WILLIE VON BROOKS of South Robeson High School locate burial grounds and cemeteries on state map for canvassing of Indian cemeteries.

Title IV Part A Indian Education Project
ROBESON COUNTY SCHOOLS