

EDITORIAL & OPINION PAGE

AS I SEE IT

by Bruce Barron



STRIKE AT THE WIND IN THE NEWS OR HOW I WAS SCOOPED BY THE ROBESONIAN

Said Kenneth Maynor, "Would you have gone if we had called you?" And I replied "That's sort of like asking a girl if she would have danced after the band has gone home." But I'll reply, belatedly, "yes, I would have gone."

The query was in reply to my complaint that I had not been asked to go and take a picture of a check presenting ceremony in Hector McLean's Southern National Bank office in Lumberton. I was not invited or asked or even notified. Yet, the Robesonian was there. I was scooped.

I can live with being scooped. But when the Robesonian gets inside information I must complain publicly.

What would Henry Berry Lowrie say? What would he do? God knows...

Anyway a check from the North Carolina Theatre Arts section of the Department of Arts and Culture was presented to "Strike at the Wind!" officials. That's good. I'm glad.

Kenneth Ray Maynor is executive director of Lumbee Regional Development Association. He is also president of the board of directors of The Robeson Historical Drama, Inc., the sponsoring agency for "Strike at the Wind!", an exciting outdoor drama centered around the exploits of Henry Berry Lowrie and the courageous Indians of Robeson County during the Civil War period in Robeson County. It's an exciting story and one that need telling, but it needs to be told without condescension and disrespect to the folks that the drama is purportedly about - the Indian people themselves.

I say let Hector McLean come to the "Strike at the Wind!" offices in Pembroke. Or at least let him come over here every other time.

Too, after four years the leadership of "Strike at the Wind!" ought to have developed local general mgrs., directors and assorted creative folk to carry on whenever one of the honchos like Rock Kershaw and Lane Hudson (previous general managers) resign. But we are right back where we were when we

started. You can not know where you are going if you do not know where you have been ... Right?

So, I got scooped on the picture taking in Hector McLean's office. Jimmy Autry, who used to work for "Strike at the Wind!", now writes sports for the Robesonian. Maybe he got wind of the story.

That happened Tuesday. I called Maynor and Adolph Dial, the chairman of the board of the Robeson Historical Drama, Inc. Both listened to my complaints but offered no suitable solution to my being scooped by the Robesonian. They did not promise that it would not happen again.

Anyway, "Strike at the Wind!" held a press conference Wednesday morning (to begin at 11 a.m.) to announce that they had hired a new general manager. (We seem to do that every year.) His name is Bill Thompson, a handsome and personable non-Indian. So far so good.

I know enough about the newspaper business to know that the Robesonian must cut off their news gathering somewhere around 10 a.m. this day to get a paper out the next day.

I thought to myself, "Well, at least I won't get scooped on this." Be darned if I didn't. They had to have inside information.

Sure enough there is a picture and story (pretty as you please) sitting on Wednesday's front page of the Robesonian. Darn! Scooped again.

Anyway, Adolph Dial called me. Seems they let Ms. Lynnette B. Lynn get the story at Tuesday's meeting in Hector McLean's office in Lumberton with the understanding that she would nor run the story before Thursday.

The Robesonian ran it on Wednesday. Adolph Dial said, "They breeched a confidence." I say, "I got scooped."

Now, mind you: I don't mind getting scooped fairly. But when the Robesonian gets inside information, well ...

Now, if I can just get me a source inside the Lumberton Jaycees or the Gathering of the Clan in Red Springs or in the mayor's chambers in Lumberton Etc. Etc. Etc. ?

Lost Landmark

A Robeson County landmark has been destroyed by fire. The old Philadelphus school building stood for years after its practical usefulness was ended, a reminder of the way education was valued by earlier generations.

An imposing structure in its time, the Philadelphus school building stood out beside the old Lumberton-to-Red Springs road long before it became a paved highway. In the early days of automobiles, Philadelphus often was the turn-around point for Lumberton motorists on a Sunday afternoon drive. It was particularly memorable if the round trip was accomplished with no mechanical trouble at all, not even a flat tire.

Loss of the building is most distressing to people who have recollections of early schooling or community activities there. To others, the building was mostly an interesting landmark, a part of the Robeson County scene. A marker on the spot where it stood would be appropriate - perhaps one made of brick from the original building. That way, a long-absent visitor could confirm that this was the site, if so longer the structure, remembered from earlier times when the home, the church and the school were the institutions which stabilized and inspired community life.

The above editorial appeared in the January 3 edition of The Robesonian.

AN ALTERNATE VIEW

Lost landmark? Ah, that's the rub. Actually, the Philadelphus School was the last vestige of segregation in Robeson County.

All the Philadelphus School means to many of us is that it was an "All White" school operated on our tax monies which actually served as sort of a feeder school for Red Springs High School, even though it was in the county school system.

In 1970 the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) put in effect the 1970 Desegregation Plan in order to bust up freedom of choice and segregation that was both demeaning and condescending to most Indians and Blacks in Robeson County.

Rather than mingle with folk from Prospect, Rex Rennert, Shannon, etc. the mostly non-Indian Robeson County Board of Education closed Philadelphus School and gave it back to Philadelphus Presbyterian Church. That seemed appropriate to most of us.

We abhor arson under any guise but we do editorially speak out against honoring a structure that symbolically pointed out our inability to live and work and church and school together.

Rather, let us use the memory of Philadelphus School as a reminder that we must love one another or perish. That is marker enough for an edifice that spoke to our baser instincts.

I have experienced the greatest Christmas gift one could desire, this gift other inmates and countless others in society experienced with me, this gift was being able to share and care to help Mrs. Shirlene Chavis and family. I now realize it was a gift that only God could have provided.

Yet the issue is still open. What will guarantee Mrs. Chavis and citizens of the United States of America that this organization (FmHA) will not abuse our rights?

It is time people got together and let the Carter Administration as well as the administration of FmHA know we have rights to protest and protest cruel harassment from FmHA.

It was a shame and a scandal the way FmHA abused Mrs. Chavis' rights, regardless of the delinquency of payment. I find it unbecoming of the FHA and its administration to use such Gestapo Tactics. The FHA has no place in a free society. I say this with all boldness, with the guaranteed right of the Constitution which guarantees me by law the Freedom of Speech.

(1) Let's demand the return of Mrs. Chavis and family to their home.

(2) Let's demand reimbursement of personal damage caused by FHA's cruel act.

(3) Let's demand reimbursement of property damage caused by FHA's cruel act.

(4) Let's demand a personal apology from Mr. Batten.

(5) Let's demand abolishment of FHA's Gestapo Tactics.

Mr. Editor, if the Farmers' Home Administration is giving Mr. Batten a promotion for his terrorizing act to the people of Robeson County, I would hate to hear reports of Mr. Mean Guy Jerry Batten in the future. What does an employee of FHA do to be demoted? I say abolish the FHA.

Sincerely,

Timothy Curran
Lumberton Prison Unit
Lumberton, NC 28358

Letters to the Editor...

A Poem About The D & L Gospel Singers

The D. & L. singers are from Pembroke
And singing the gospel is no joke
They are singing for the Glory of the Lord
By putting the words and music on one accord.

They are Indians from the Lumbee Tribe
And they will never, never take a bribe
They are serving their Lord in song
And they can sing all night long.

They sing under the anointing power
As Jesus pours out the blessings in a shower
Your eyes will be filled with tears
As their message touches your ears.

Let me tell you about the ladies first
For in your heart, they will plant a thirst
For that full and free salvation
At their very next s'ing-spiration.

Now Sandra is the smaller of the two
And you will never see her blue
Smiling and singing is her thing
As she keeps on serving her King.

Virginia sings a beautiful alto
And the Holy Spirit keeps her on the go
When you see her Light begin to glow
You will know for sure she is washing in the Crimson Flow.

The lead is sung by Rayburn
As he directs the gospel of the Lord
He is inviting everyone
To come and meet God's only Son.

Now Harvey sings the bass
And he can hardly stand in one place
As the Lord begins to fill his cup
You will know he has sat down with Him to sup.

Jerry D. is the drummer boy
And he is so full of Joy
It is a real, real treat
To hear him touch the drums with a beat.

Now Orland is a guitar playing man
And his salvation is not built on the sand
He is firmly planted on the solid Rock
And he is going to be in that Heavenly Flock.

Harold is the Bass guitar man
He would make a fine addition to any band
But he prefers to play for his King
For He is the one that lifted him out of sin.

Jerry L. plays the rhythm guitar
And you can hear him from afar
He's always happy to play for his Saviour
For saving him was a great big favor.

This group of singers will bless your heart
As each one plays and sings their part
You can tell they are acquainted with the Holy Ghost
And they are going to sing with the Heavenly Host.

Herman Wilkins
Route 1
Four Oaks, N.C. 27524
Phone 919-934-7469

A Note From Local Authoress-Ms. Harvelene Bullard
Dear Mr. Barton:

Thank you for the nice article about my book. It started a few people asking about it.

May I add one correction, my teacher assistant is Mrs. Grady Dial not Mrs. Sim Dial as was stated. Thanks again.

Yours truly
Harvelene Bullard



Christmas Programs Are Big Success For Lumbee Learning Centers

by Ben Jacobs

The Lumbee Longhouse Learning Centers exhibited some of the best Christmas programs that were presented over the holidays, according to Janie Maynor Locklear, director of the Lumbee Indian Education Project of Lumbee Regional Development Association of Pembroke.

Mrs. Locklear noted that the Center at Fairgrove had possibly the largest crowd to ever attend a program at that center. She added that the Pembroke and Magnolia centers had great attendance also.

"The children performed well and seemed most proud of their achievements in the program," said Mrs. Locklear. She noted that for the three, four and five year old children in the centers, the programs was quite sophisticated.

Locklear said a high light and a common part in the programs was the performance of "The Christmas Band," a composition created by Miriam Ozendine, music director for the L.L.C.s. The children played various simple musical instruments, such as drums, bells and wood blocks in the performance.

"The participation of the parents in the centers' programs shows that the centers are doing great work in their communities," said Mrs. Locklear. She noted that the parents seemed delighted with their children's performances. She said that a petition calling for continued support of the centers through special Indian education monies of the federal governments was circulated and signed by the parents.

The director of the Lumbee Indian Education project of LRDA noted that all of the programs were quite unique. She explained that the Fairgrove Center used candle lights and Christmas greenery to create a lovely stage in the Reedy Branch Baptist Church. "The Magnolia Center was fortunate to have the lovely setting of the Saddletree



Fairgrove students stop at Christmas exhibit on trip to Fayetteville.



Pembroke L.L.C. students perform the "Christmas Band" song.



Magnolia L.L.C. students perform "Look At Me, I'm An Indian" in Christmas program.

Church as its stage," she continued. She noted that a special recording of the children's performances was made at the Magnolia Center.

The Pembroke Center also had a fine program, said Mrs. Locklear. She said the children performed exceptionally well. A highlight of the Pembroke Center's program was a drawing for a pig, which was won by Mrs. Ruth Woods, she said.

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Letters to the Editor...

About Ms. Shirlene Chavis' Ejection

Dear Editor:

I'm a prisoner of the Robeson County Prison Unit, Lumberton, NC.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal opinion concerning Mrs. Shirlene Chavis and Farmers' Home Administration.

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