

## Lew Barton comments on Maryland Indians Film Strip

June 12, Baltimore, Md.—I attended the premier showing of Dr. Frank W. Porter's film strip on Maryland Indians here tonight and liked it immensely. (See re-print of story right.) Afterward I had the opportunity to become better acquainted as I sat with him, his wife, and with my friend Earl Brooks and his wife as we all devoured huge quantities of Chinese food in a nearby Chinese restaurant. Dr. Porter is executive director of the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs. My friend Earl Brookshad done an impressive job of narration on the film strip which is entitled, "The Odyssey of Maryland Indians."

The film strip is not only interesting, as most things

about Indians are, at least to some. It is thorough, penetrating and bears the unmistakable stamp of a scholar.

I understand that funding was provided by the Maryland Committee for the Humanities.

I want to thank Mrs. Brooks for sharing her duck with me. I'd never eaten any anywhere much less in a Chinese restaurant, and so stuck to chicken chow mein.

Being among the very first Lumbees to work in Baltimore (1941), Dr. Porter's film strip held unusual interest for me as he traced the history of our people there. I understand that the documentary is available to groups for showing in North Carolina, too. It is a film strip no Lumbee should miss seeing, if he possibly can.

# PERFORMANCE

## Filmstrip on Md. Indians to awaken sense of past

By Fred Rasmussen

For Frank W. Porter, III, director of the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, the Saturday premiere of his filmstrip, "The Odyssey of Maryland's Indians," will be the culmination of years of struggle and study. Screened at the Museum and Library of Maryland History, the Maryland Historical Society, the filmstrip is intended to awaken Marylanders to the state's rich and valuable Indian heritage.

"Most people in Maryland tend to think that the state's history began with the Colonial period and the Tidewater baronies," Dr. Porter laments. "Actually, Indians, or Native Americans, have been in Maryland for 14,000 years."

An Ohio native who completed his academic work at the University of Maryland, College Park, Dr. Porter became interested in Indian studies when he realized that very little work had been done on Maryland's native American heritage.

He first worked with the Nanticoke Indians in Delaware and helped establish the Nanticoke Indian Heritage Project. The Nanticokes were attempting to document their heritage when Dr. Porter provided

guidance in the compilation of their folklore, superstitions and medicinal cures. The Nanticoke work is continuing.

Finding grant money hard to come by, and faced with a general apathy toward the subject matter, Dr. Porter resorted to such extraordinary means as driving a truck to help finance his work. Currently, he has several books in the works and several more which will be published soon.

However, his long-cherished dream was a film which would document the history of Maryland Indians from about 10,000 B.C. to the present. It came as a pleasant surprise when the Maryland Committee for the Humanities, through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, offered him \$8,000 in matching funds to get his film underway. With the Museum and Library of Maryland History as sponsor, Dr. Porter was able to raise another \$12,000 for the film.

In July, 1981, he began work on the filmstrip, combing through collections of material in such repositories as the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, the Museum of the American Indian in New York, the Museum of Natural History in Washington, and extensive private collections.

"The Indian communities such as the Piscataway in Southern Maryland, the Lumbees in Baltimore and the Nanticokes in Delaware were very excited about the filmstrip," says Dr. Porter. "They made a great deal of tribal material available to me that was most useful."

With the help of volunteers, Dr. Porter wrote, produced and photographed the filmstrip. "I didn't know a whole lot about photography," says Dr. Porter. "But I quickly learned the technique of using a camera."

"A film challenges or taxes you to utilize every bit of information you have about the subject," he said. "The visual material has to be an expression of the written material. There are limitations to what you can do. And this is where the tool of photography comes into play. Maps and graphs help fill in what is not available photographically."

Designed to appeal to primary students as well as adults, the story of Maryland In-



A Nanticoke woman performs in a tribal dance held at an annual powwow held last year.

dians is presented in over 125 slides, including maps, graphs. Many depict the location of Indian tribes, villages, trails, artifacts, structures and physical environment.

Nanticoke drummers provide background music for the filmstrip, and there is an original composition by Charles Coursey, a Nanticoke Indian, who set a number of Nanticoke phrases to music.

"Native American Indians are an integral part of American Society," Dr. Porter says in the introduction to the filmstrip. "A sophisticated and comprehensive understanding of our society cannot be realized unless the separate ethnic communities that have helped to develop American society are analyzed and viewed from a multicultural perspective. To neglect the significant contributions of Native American Indians or to fail to recognize the many social and economic problems they have faced, would be a gross misinterpretation of the nature of American life."

The filmstrip begins by tracing the more ancient history of Maryland Indians from a time coinciding with the Ice Age. It follows the development of more sophisticated hunting methods, the introduction of agricultural techniques and the use of pottery, as well as confronting more complex social issues such as religion.

"Indians in Maryland acknowledged the existence of many spirits," says Dr. Porter. "Believing that corn, the sun, thunder, lightning, water, fire, animals, stone and many other animate and inanimate objects possessed a spirit, they would make sacrifices of food and tobacco. To Manito, the giver of all good things, the Indians sacrificed the first of their crops and the first game from their hunting and fishing. The smoking of tobacco in elaborate pipes was an important part of many religious ceremonies. They often blew the smoke over their bodies, believing that it purified them."

The first known contact with Maryland's Indians came in 1524 when Giovanni de Verrazano explored the Eastern Shore of Maryland. When Verrazano encountered several Indians while attempting to kidnap an Indian boy, his party opened fire and shot their guns over the heads of the terrified Indians. In 1572, Spanish Jesuit priests attempted to establish a mission but were murdered by the Indians.

"The Odyssey of Maryland's Indians" will be shown at the Museum and Library of Maryland History, the Maryland Historical Society, 201 West Monument street, Saturday at 1 P.M. Admission is free. For further information, call 685-3750, extension 54.

## -Cont'd from Page One- SOME CHOICES AND THOUGHTS ON THE JUNE 29 PRIMARY

the incumbent, Herman Dial, is being challenged by Larry T. Brooks and Wyvis Oxendine. All three have staunch support. So, forget it, we'll sit this one out. Vote for who you think will best serve your interests.

The same in the County Board of Education from District 4 (Raft Swamp, Burnt Swamp, Pembroke and Union). Six candidates, including incumbents Laymon Locklear and Lillian Faye Locklear are running for two seats. Challenging are Dr. Dalton P. Brooks, Bill Oxendine, Walter Oxendine and William Lloyd Hunt. All Indians. We're not foolish enough to make four Indians mad to support two.

The same in District 2 where incumbent Ronald Hammonds, an Indian, is

being challenged by Ronald Revels and Terry Smith. Besides, in the district plan whereby county board of education members are elected, the people who live in their district are a better choice of the matter than we are. It's a fair way to elect county board of education members.

And of course, we are supporters of Charlie Rose in the U.S. House of Representatives. He's a good and competent congressman. We need to keep him.

The other races are important, of course, but we either do not know enough about them to state an editorial preference or will not allow ourselves the effrontery of doing so.

But vote! That's the most important message we have to impart to our

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readership. It's our responsibility to vote and, more than this, it's our right and privilege. We are proud to be Americans (even First Americans) and we will celebrate that fact on June 29 when we go to the polls to cast the vote for the candidates of our choice. Hope to see you there.



Can't get ketchup out of a new bottle? Insert a drinking straw, push to bottom and then remove. Enough air will be admitted to start the ketchup flowing.

# Vote Experience - VOTE HERMAN DIAL! COUNTY COMMISSIONER Maxton - Pembroke - Smiths

HIS RECORD OF PROVEN SERVICE SPEAKS FOR ITSELF...

FACT: Strongly supported the County-wide \$16,000,000 School Bond Referendum which was approved by the voters in 1979.

FACT: The Maxton, Pembroke, Smiths districts received better than \$6,000,000 from the \$16,000,000 School Bond Referendum.

FACT: Strongly supported the approval of funds in the amount of \$987,000 in order that Phase I and Phase II of Pembroke Elementary School could be completed.

FACT: Very instrumental in establishing Bryan Day Care Center which is currently under the jurisdiction of the Robeson County Board of Education.

FACT: Made the motion to approve the merger of the Robeson County and Maxton School Systems.

FACT: Served as a member of the Commission to Study the Public School System of Robeson County.

FACT: Strongly supported the acquisition of funds for an In-School Youth Services Program for the County.

FACT: Strongly supported a County-wide Water Bond Referendum in the amount of \$7,000,000. Water lines now cover one hundred and twelve miles.

FACT: Very instrumental in bringing the Campbell Soup Company which is located in the Maxton, Pembroke, and Smiths districts to Robeson County.

FACT: Strongly supported the move for the County to become a prime sponsor for the Manpower Program.

FACT: Made the motion to purchase voting machines for the County.

FACT: Made the motion for the Town of Pembroke to exercise its territorial jurisdiction.

FACT: Was instrumental in having delinquent tax notices placed in all the papers in the County rather than just one paper.

FACT: Made the motion that the Lumberton Commissioners' district be divided into two districts in order that each Commissioner district would have equal representation.

FACT: Made the motion to authorize the Robeson County Board of Elections to conduct a census of the areas affected by the redistricting of Commissioner districts in Robeson County in an effort to bring each Commissioner's district in balance as near as possible.

FACT: Made the motion to purchase a County Van to transport patients with acute or serious kidney problems to the Kidney Center in Fayetteville to be placed on the dialysis machine.

## The Citizens of Maxton Pembroke and Smiths Districts Need his Experience and Effective Leadership in County Government



His Record  
of Proven  
Service Speaks

VOTE



Let's  
Keep  
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and  
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Leadership  
in County  
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-There's  
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Substitute