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Outlaw or "Robin Hood", coloring book tells tale

by Tom Davis

"The Spirit of Henry Berry Lowry", a unique coloring book and a story book about a fabled character in Lumbee Indian folklore, has been produced by Garry Lewis Barton, an employee of the Marlboro Herald-Advocate.

Complete with artwork by Dee Gunsalus, of Clio, Barton's coloring book relates the exploits of a Robeson County Indian who was rejected by the Confederates when he sought to volunteer during the Civil War.

Instead, Lowry was hunted down by the Home Guard and sent to Wilmington to work on Fort Fisher with other conscript labor.

Legends written by Barton beneath Dee Gunsalus' sketches relate Lowry's life in swamps of Robeson County after his return from Fort Fisher.

From that beginning sprang the Lowry Gang, which in time became a legend of national repute. After the Civil War, federal forces viewed the Lowry Gang as outlaws and sought to arrest them.

A variety of events in the Suffletown area are depicted and described as Lowry's fame grew as a "Robin Hood" of the Lumbees.

Lowry disappeared from North Carolina never to be heard from again after the Lumberton Bank and the Sheriff's Office were robbed February 16, 1871.

Garry Barton's account of Lowry's life ends in this manner:

"What we do know for certain is that Henry Berry Lowry was an extraordinary man. He lived during extraordinary times. And he left behind an extraordinary legacy."

"Did Henry Berry Lowry plan the Lumberton robberies in order to get money to leave the area?"

"No one will probably ever know for certain. But evidence strongly suggests that he did."

Garry Barton's coloring book, which the newspaperman made up and printed himself, already has caught the eye of school officials of Robeson County, who have purchased 2,500 copies of the book.

"I was almost grown before I learned very much about Henry Berry Lowry, who is a part of our heritage," Barton observed.

"I wanted to help teach children about our Indian heritage and felt a

coloring book would help accomplish that," he said.



Garry Barton setting type on a VDT



James C. Ozendine, a '38 graduate of what is now Pembroke State University, displays a German flag his outfit captured during World War II. Members of Co. B of the 650th Tank Destroyer Battalion signed their names on the flag. The Nazi flag was captured at Colmar in France Feb. 3, 1945. Ozendine was a communications sergeant. His outfit

plans its 15th biannual reunion June 22-24 at Cordele, Ga., south of Atlanta. A staff sergeant, Ozendine was expert at firing the rifle and both the 30-calibre and 50-calibre Thompson machine gun. He was also marksman with the pistol. He took part in five major battles in Europe during World War II. Ozendine lives at Mint Hill, near Charlotte.

Robeson County Indians and the "Trail of Tears"

BY ELISHA LOCKLEAR

Many years ago, as a child, I remember hearing the Elders talk about the old folks. My first knowledge of "Granny Rhody" as she was called, came as I listened to my grandmother's sister Rosette Brooks Meurer and her brother Colon Brooks talk about what they had learned about her. As near as we can tell, Rhoda was born about 1780 or about the high point in the American Revolution. She was the daughter of Samuel Locklear. She supposedly married a James (Cricket) Locklear, although on every Federal Census Rhoda is listed, which would lead one to believe that she was "Head of Household."

Rhoda's son Aaron Locklear was listed as being born in 1800 and married a woman named Sabra Ann Manuel, who was born in Sampson County in 1803. Rhoda also had other children; Peggy was the mother of Elizabeth Locklear whose father was John Brooks. Elizabeth was born in 1845 and later was to marry a man named Neal Jones.

Aaron and Sabra Ann had several children: Josiah, Silvanus, Beady, and Patsy. Stories were told to us as children about our people going up to the mountains, or up north, and it aroused great wonder in me. I have had the opportunity to peruse the 1850 Federal Census of Robeson County and observe that it listed Burke County, NC as the birthplace of Josiah or "Big Joe" as he came to be known. Sometimes we question what we see for one reason or another, and I admit that I did have several questions that just wouldn't go away.

After the Creek Indian Wars ended, the Creeks were scattered in many different directions; those who were not driven west or those Muskogee Creek who did not go down into Florida and become Seminole were in many cases absorbed into other populations throughout the U.S. where ever they were welcomed. One such wanderer was a man named Nathan Waldrin.

Nathan Waldrin, a Creek Indian, fathered a child to Lovedy Brooks, daughter of John Brooks (who served in the American Revolution) in 1820. Lovedy died three days after the child was born. The child was named John Jr. (Jack) Brooks in honor of his grandfather. In the late 1820's and early 1830's the U.S. Government under Jackson (Jacksa Chula Harjo as the Creek called him, said to mean "The Devil") and others began what was to become the "Indian Removal Policy." This statement may be mixed with some speculation, but I am of the opinion that when Jackson's forces came South and East down the road that would later be corrupted with his name, I believe that glowing stories were told about the land, money and horses that the U.S. Government was giving to those Indians who voluntarily resettled in the West. It seems that maybe Nathan Waldrin was still around and invited the family of his future daughter-in-law to go west with him and see if the stories were true. Whatever the motive or the speculation, we know that according to family history "Big Joe" was born in a rail pen, a pen used to gather Indians together into a large group before the march was to begin. They were being held prior to moving out on the march west which would be named the "Trail of Tears." But destiny was not to allow the Locklear family to be among the five thousand that would die along that bloody trail. Aaron, Sabra Ann, Rhoda and their family would be able to slip away and return to Drowning Creek and take up abode again in the swamps that

had for so long shielded them from numerous dangers. They built a small log house just to the west of Bear Swamp beside which in a few short years the Wilmington and Rutherfordton Railroad would build a track from East to West (1854). The questions of Cherokee ancestry might arise because of this excursion, but Aaron's family trace their genealogy Northeast to Roanoke River. Sabra Ann was born in Sampson County, NC, crossed the Cape Fear at Indian Wells and came into Robeson County.

According to family tradition, this branch of the family can also be traced to the Roanoke area. Included in this article I have inserted a photo of Elizabeth Locklear, a first cousin of "Big Joe." She is the daughter of Peggy Locklear and John Brooks. I also have endeavored to insert a picture of Patsy Locklear, who is seen with her husband Levi Locklear. Patsy is a sister of "Big Joe" Locklear. I feel at this point that I need to say that Josiah married a woman named Polly Ann Strickland who was one year younger than Joe. They lived just East of Bear Swamp and reared a large family. It is highly unlikely that many families in the Robeson County area Indian community are not related to this family in some way, either near or far.

One point I felt worth making was the fact that Robeson County Indians had been affected by the Indian Removal Policy of the U.S. Government. They were intimidated. They saw Indian women shot with .50 caliber musket balls while trying to act as a shield to save the lives of their children. They could relate to the Creek Indians whose skins furnished harness leather for Jackson's Cavalry. They could remember the snow, ice and wind that made Granny Rhoda's bones hurt and long for the lowlands and pleasant winters along Drowning Creek.

Finally, there has been much speculation regarding the Indian community in Robeson County, its origin, etc. I was privileged to hear a beautiful person make the following statement: "We in the Indian community are fully capable of writing our own history." When we have respect for our Elders and accept their oral history, I believe that there are ways in which we can verify and even in some instances add to the beauty of the lives of those whose voices might come to us in the whisper of the wind or in the voice of the whipporwill as he laments the loss of his mate.



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KRISTY WOODS, MISS PSU

Miss PSU to Receive Special Send Off to Miss North Carolina

by Gene Warren

As the first reigning "Miss Pembroke State University" to be officially entered in the "Miss North Carolina" pageant as PSU's representative, 21-year-old Kristy Ann Woods will receive a special sendoff at PSU Friday, June 22, for the state event whose finals will be held at Raleigh's Memorial Auditorium on Saturday, June 30. Everyone is welcome.

The send off will begin at 5 p.m. in PSU's Chavis Center where Miss Woods will display her wardrobe for state competition and perform the musical number which will be her talent entry in the state pageant.

Miss Woods is the 5-foot-5, 125-pound daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Woods of Route 3, Maxton. She is a rising senior majoring in computer science at PSU.

She will be singing a "country" musical selection entitled "Girl's Night Out," written by the Judds. It was choreographed by Karen Jenkins, a former "Miss PSU," the sound track was purchased by Riley Oxendine of Pembroke.

For the state pageant, Miss Woods will be wearing a white swimsuit rather than the royal blue one she wore in winning the "Miss PSU" pageant last November. She was advised to do this by those preparing her for the pageant. However, for the evening gown competition she will be wearing the same one with which she won "Miss PSU." It is a straight turquoise bugle beaded evening gown with an open back.

The "Miss North Carolina" pageant includes talent, swimsuit and evening gown competition plus an interview. Winner of the pageant wins a \$7,500 scholarship and an opportunity to compete for "Miss America" in September at Atlantic City, NJ.

Only former "Miss PSU" to win "Miss North Carolina" was Francesea Adler of Fayetteville in 1984. However, she was entered not as "Miss PSU" which she won in 1981, but as "Miss Fayetteville." Miss Woods is

the first official "Miss PSU" to wear that banner in entering the state pageant because PSU purchased a franchise in the state pageant last fall.

Dr. Diane Jones, PSU director of student activities who was involved in PSU's acquiring this state franchise, will be Miss Woods' official chaperone in the state pageant. Among those advising Miss Woods are Florence Ransom, who was "Chaperone-director of every 'Miss Lumbee' for 20 years," says Miss Woods; Brigitte Cummings, another former "Miss PSU"; Mrs. Jenkins; and Dr. Jones.

In preparing herself for the pageant, Miss Woods has been running three miles a day around the PSU outdoor track. She has also been on a special program in PSU's weight lifting room. In addition to these, she has been going to a suntan salon and a toning establishment. I've lost a few pounds since winning "Miss PSU," she says.

Miss Woods is delighted about the sendoff she is receiving from PSU. "I think it is a wonderful idea because it will provide a lot of people an opportunity to see what I'll be doing in the pageant, my talent, and my wardrobe there," she said. "Many of these people may not be able to go up for the pageant."

Miss Woods says she is "excited" about the opportunity to compete. "It would be wonderful to be among the 10 finalists or win - but either way, it is going to be fun to participate and to learn," she said, adding that next year she can help advise the next "Miss PSU" for the pageant.

The past eight months since winning Miss PSU have been busy ones for Miss Woods. She has attended 15 pageants and performed at events like the Indian Unity Conference in Greensboro and the Women's State Democratic Convention in Raleigh.

Now the PSU coed who was PSU's Miss Homecoming in 1988, Miss PSU in 1989, and Little Miss Lumbee as a five-year-old is on the countdown to her biggest beauty pageant ever.