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Haliwa-Saponi Elder Honored at Mt. Bethel Church for 50 Years of Ministry

by John R. Brayboy

Special to Carolina Indian Voice

Rev. C. H. Richardson was honored on the occasion of his 50th anniversary as a pastor, now serving Mt. Bethel Indian Baptist Church near Hollister, North Carolina recently. Approximately 450 people filled the church sanctuary for the service where Rev. Richardson was given recognition for his years of service as pastor.

Seven local community ministers spoke in behalf of three other congregations among the Haliwa-Saponi people, expressing their appreciation for Rev. Richardson. Mt. Bethel Church of which he is founding pastor and builder, was constantly referred to as the mother Indian church of the Haliwa-Saponi people in the remarks of these men. Rev. Richardson is regarded by them as their spiritual father, having baptized almost the entire congregation who came to show their affection. Dozens stood to recognize that Rev. Richardson had performed their marriage ceremonies.

The church presented him with several gifts, including a 25-inch color T.V., VCR and a check for \$1000. One choir presented him with an elegant pulpit robe. Other groups and organizations in the church offered gifts as well as endearing compliments.

Recently I interviewed the pastor of Mt. Bethel Church in the Bethlehem community near Hollister, NC. Affectionately known by his members and friends as "Rev. Horace," he was born Charlie Horace Richardson, the son of Charley Henney Richardson and Louisiana Silver Richardson of Hollister, NC. Rev. Horace's father died in 1956 at the age of 92. Rev. Horace was born in November 1900 in the Bethlehem community. He has been a building contractor, historian

and a humanitarian, as well as a farmer during his 94 years on this earth.

Rev. Horace began school in 1907. At that time school began in October and the year was over in March. When he began school, only two percent of the students were Indian. During that period, a student could finish the eighth grade and begin college. With the completion of one year of college study, the student could then teach first grade. With the completion of two years of college study, the student could teach grade two through four.

I asked Rev. Horace if he encountered any prejudice between whites and Indians when he was growing up. He said he saw no difference. "They all got along fine."

Rev. Horace was saved in 1915 at the age of 15. He married Hattie in 1919. She passed away in 1984 after sixty-five years of marriage. To their union were born seven children, three of whom are deceased.

In Rev. Horace's early years he was a farmer. Part of his farming years were spent in nearby Nash County, about ten miles from Rocky Mount, NC. He gave up farming in 1944 and began a construction company. He contracted houses and church until 1988. At the time of his wife's death, they were living in the fourth house that he had constructed for them. During his tenure as a contractor, he built ten new churches and takes a great deal of pride in that fact.

Rev. Horace is also a historian and prides himself on his knowledge of the history of his tribe, Haliwa-Saponi. He has copies of the Halifax and Warren County Census from 1850 which bears the names of many of his ancestors. With reverence and pride he traces his ancestry back into the 1660's in Halifax County. The

Richardson name is and has been a prominent name in Halifax County for centuries. He recalls that the Haliwa-Saponi Tribe comes from four tribes that historical documents show were in the Halifax and Warren County area. Those tribes are: the Meherrin, the Tuscarora, the Croatan, and the Saponi.

He recounts with fondness his forebear, William Richardson, of Halifax County. He was a Congressman in 1798 and a very influential man in the Congress.

The preacher recalled the 200th Founder's Day Celebration Halifax County in 1958. At that time he was invited to share in the celebration as a descendant of the late Congressman. Then Governor of the State of North Carolina, Luther Hodges, was the guest speaker. During that celebration, Gov. Hodges told Rev. Richardson that the Constitution for the State of North Carolina was drawn up in the home of William Richardson in Halifax. It is with a gleam in his eye that he says he is a descendant of William Richardson.

The State of North Carolina recognized the Haliwa-Saponi Tribe in 1965. In searching written documentation of Indian tribes, there is no record of the Saponi Tribe any place in the United States other than Halifax and Warren Counties, according to Rev. Richardson. The 1850 Census shows many Indians owning land in Halifax County.

According to Rev. Richardson, the Haliwa-Saponi operated their own Indian school until 1967. They received very little, if any, help from the county. The tribe built Haliwa High at Bethlehem in 1957 and recruited teachers and principals from Robeson County. The first principal was the late Charlie Brewington from

Pembroke.

Rev. Richardson said he was called into the ministry in 1943 and ironically he was 43 years of age. He served as an evangelist for a number of years. He was preaching at a church called the Free America Church in 1957 when some of the members decided they wanted to build their own Indian church. Rev. Richardson recalls that some of the members of the Free America Church wished to remain an independent church. Those who desired to build their own Indian church wanted Rev. Richardson to be the pastor. They built Mt. Bethel Church in 1958. Rev. Richardson said that he knew most of the members when they were children together. Rev. Richardson has been preaching the gospel for fifty one years with thirty-seven of them being in service at Mt. Bethel. The Church is associated with the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association.

When asked how much longer he was going to serve as pastor, Rev. Richardson said, "I don't know." He is very active at 94, preaching the gospel, pastoring Mt. Bethel, visiting the sick, and ministering to the needs of his congregation. Rev. Richardson lives alone but has a son who is 72 years of age who lives next door. The son and his family see that Rev. Richardson does not lack for anything. Rev. Richardson said he was humbled by the honor bestowed upon him by his beloved congregation and looks forward to serving them until the Creator calls him to his heavenly reward.

Rev. Mike Cummings, Director of Missions of the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association in Pembroke, contributed to this article. Rev. Cummings attended the celebration at Mt. Bethel Church and reported on the events of the day.



Rev. C.H. Richardson

Sunrise Service to be held at Friendship

Sunrise service will be held at Friendship Baptist Church at 5:00 a.m. on Easter Sunday. Rev. Timmy Chavis, pastor of Rock of Ages Church, will bring the sunrise message. The pastor of Friendship is Rev. Coolidge Cummings and the congregation extends a cordial invitation to the public.

Personnel Changes at Lumbee Guaranty Bank Announced

Lumbee Guaranty bank announces personnel changes within the corporation.

Janice Graham was promoted to Assistant Operations Officer in the Pembroke Branch. She joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in 1989.

Graham graduated from Robeson Community College with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Secretarial. She is married to Ronald Graham. They have one son, Kevin. They reside in Lumberton. Graham is an active member of Burnt Swamp Baptist Church.

Kenneth Freeman was promoted to Branch Manager/Assistant Vice President in the Pembroke office. He joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in January 1989. He graduated from Pembroke State University with a B.S. Degree in Business Management. He is a graduate of the Rural Economic Development Institute. He is also a Kale Carniger Graduate, two years as a graduate assistant.

Freeman is married to Jennifer Oxvending Freeman. They have two children, Jenna and Kristen. They reside in Pembroke. Freeman is an active member of many civic organizations. He is chairman of the Robeson County Human Relations Commission, President of the Pembroke Chamber of Commerce; a member of the Robeson County Chamber of Commerce Coalition; and a director with the N.C. Indian Business Association. He also serves on the Board of Directors with United Way, Self Help Venture Fund of Durham, and NC Housing Finance Agency Trust Fund.

Judith Hunt was promoted to Loan Officer at the Lumberton Branch. She joined Lumbee Guaranty bank in January 1989. She graduated from Robeson Community College with an Association Degree of Applied Science in Secretarial.

She is married to Kermit Hunt and they have two daughters, Prentice Ann and Schannel. They reside at Route 1, Fairmont. Hunt attends Reedy Branch Baptist church where she serves as a teacher in the preschool department.

John Armstrong was promoted to Credit Administration Manager. He joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in October 1993 at the Lumberton Branch as City Executive/Vice President.

He is a graduate of Belmont Abbey College with a B.A. Degree. He is also a graduate of the UNC Chapel Hill School of Banking. He is married to the former Cynthia Kinlaw and they reside in Lumberton. They are members of the Long Branch Baptist Church. Armstrong has two daughters, Amelia Watts and Elizabeth Armstrong.

Thomas Beatty is Branch Manager/Loan Officer at the Hope Mills Office. He joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in January 1992.

He and his wife, Hanni, reside in Cumberland County. He has three children, Eric, Angelia and Fonda and four grandchildren.

Mary J. Poorboy has been promoted to Assistant Operations Officer/Bookkeeping and Data Processing Supervisor. She joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in December 1977.

She attended Pembroke State University and resides in the Deep Branch Community, Lumberton. She has five children: Valerie Bell, Dr. Joseph Roberts, Sherri Schuman, Theresa Poorboy and Jamie Poorboy. She attends Willard's Chapel Baptist Church.

Theresa B. Locklear, Vice President/Operations Officer, has been promoted to Service Center and Branch Operations Coordinator. She joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in May 1978.

She graduated from Robeson Technical College in 1974 with an Associate Degree of Applied Science in Accounting.

She is married to Donald Ray Locklear. They have three children, Chad, Joshua and Lindsey. They reside at Pine Lake Estates in Pembroke. She is a member of Elrod Baptist Church.

Linda West joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in October 1993 as Mortgage Loan Officer. She has been promoted to Branch Manager for the St. Pauls Branch. She will continue in her capacity as Mortgage Loan Officer for Lumbee Guaranty bank.

West is an honor graduate from Worth College. She is currently pursuing a degree at Robeson Community College. She is married to O.J. West and is the mother of two, Janna and Gary and the grandmother of one, Everett.

She is a lifelong member of First Baptist Church in St. Pauls, former teacher and assistant teacher. She is a 25 year member of Eastern Star, having served as its presiding officer four times.

Manuel Salazar III joined Lumbee Guaranty Bank in February 1993 as Collection Officer for Lumbee Guaranty Bank. He is currently responsible for all Credit Compliance Review.

He graduated from West Valley College in California with an Associate of Arts Degree in Business Administration. Salazar is a graduate of Pembroke State University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. He is currently working on a Master's Degree at Campbell University.

He is married to the former Lisa Marie Schoffler. They have three children, Ashley, Jonathan and Brittany. They are members of Stoney Point Baptist Church in Fayetteville. Salazar and his family reside in Raeford NC.

Jacobs becomes Tribal Manager for Mashantucket Pequot Tribe

The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation announced the appointment of G. Leon Jacobs as Tribal Manager, effective April 10.

Jacobs, 56, succeeds former Tribal Manager Phyllis Monroe Waite. Waite, a Mashantucket Pequot tribal member, had served as tribal manager since September 1993. She had previously served as the Tribe's director of health and human services and will continue to serve as chairperson of PRxN, the Tribe's pharmacology enterprise. A newlywed, Waite decided to retire after many years of service to the Tribe to pursue personal interests and spend more time with her family.

Jacobs, a member of the Lumbee Band of Cheraw Indians in North Carolina, has previously served as director of the Tribe's Housing Authority since October 1994. Previously, Jacobs served as director of the Office of Indian Programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Region V, a position he had held since 1980. He was responsible for managing HUD programs and services in a 28-state region, and oversaw the construction

of about 5,000 new home units for Native people during that time.

Jacobs assumed his new post as the Tribe's Housing Authority Director at the same time the Tribe completed three new phases of on-reservation housing, including 15 single-family homes designed specifically for tribal elders and disabled people. In his position with HUD, Jacobs had overseen the allocation of federal funds to assist with construction of those three phases of housing.

In his new post as tribal manager, Jacobs will manage the day-to-day administration of tribal programs and services. He will be responsible to tribal membership, giving direction as needed to program directors and other support staff.

"I will continue to work closely with housing," Jacobs said, "because that is one of my first loves, to assist tribal members in finding decent, affordable housing."

"I'm very honored, flattered and more importantly, humbled by this show of support and confidence," Jacobs said of his new post. "I accept this new challenge and will give it my very best."

Jacobs served as tribal manager of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California from 1978-70. While there, he oversaw creation of a tribal police department, judicial system, and health care facility. He helped the tribe expand and irrigate its ranch holdings, and developed a land use and housing needs plan.

From 1975-1978 Jacobs was administrator of the Jackson County Youth Court in Mississippi. He also served as senior resources officer with the City Department of Community Development in Birmingham, AL from 1973-75.

His professional honors include distinguished service awards from tribes in Alabama, Wisconsin and North Carolina. In 1990, Jacobs was nominated Professional Employee of the Year for all government employees.

Jacobs is a member of the National Congress of American Indians in Washington, D.C. He and his wife, Marie, have two sons: Ryan and Christopher.

He is a graduate of Southeastern College in Lakeland, FL.

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On Monday, April 3, 1995 the Trainable Students at Prospect School went to the Cosmetology Department of Robeson Community College for a pre-Easter hair-do. For a finishing touch, the Cosmetology students took time out to pose behind their clients from Prospect School. Cosmetology Directors are Queen Esther Locklear and Evelyn Hunt, Kathy Penney and Eileen Jones.

Shown from left to right: Antoinette Odum and Stacy Wright; Mark Murray and Marie Seals; Jennifer Scott and Tammy Collins; Jamie Locklear and Sally Moore; Orson Locklear and April Cox; Marcus Locklear and Angela Parker; Larry Wayne Hunt and Barbara Barler; Kim Brewington and Nicole Robinson.



Students at Pembroke Elementary enjoyed a cool treat donated by Food Folks of Pembroke. Students who had perfect attendance were served ice cream by the third grade assistants and volunteers. The delightful treats were made possible by Food Folks of Pembroke.