

AS I SEE IT Bruce Barton Berna Locklear Barton ...

was a mother who loved her children, all 9 of us. And most of us are quirky, malcontents of various kind, and railers against the night. Mama still loved us, all 9 of us, unconditionally.

And I was and am the worst of the lot, a sad and dysfunctional child and now an old man of 60. And she loved me even when I did not love myself. Before death claimed her on March 25 (She would have been 80 this month), she had helped bury two of her children, Ernie Lee and Mary Ruth. She never got over that deadly duo of spiritual calamity and she cried a lot inwardly after that. And she did not fight as hard as she once did. It was then that she began to fade away from us. Sundry ailments began to bedevil her.

Some time after this she took sick and eventually moved to my sister's (Connee Barton Brayboy) home on Hwy 710. It was about this time that I quit the church because I was disenchanted with those I worshiped with, at least some of them.

I returned to Deep Branch Baptist Church, last Sunday, shortly after we buried our mother at New Prospect Holiness Methodist Church, her home church. I went back to my Bethel, the altar I built there many years ago. Before that, I had been staying with my mother on Sundays on a rotation system with my brother Ricky so that Connee and her family could attend church away from the constant stress of taking care of the chronically ill.

... I'm wondering about and not sure what I want to say about mama

I know that I loved her unconditionally too. It was an honor to help take care of her. I know that!

I remember bare Christmases, and wonderful times in the cotton and tobacco fields as she taught us how to work. I wish I could go back to that place when it was simpler and we worked because we had to.

And my spiritual heart was troubled recently when a former friend came to view my mother's body while she lay in state at Revels Funeral Home. I wanted reconciliation, a word of comfort, not an empty gesture. Oh well, let me hush and hurt to myself. Death sometimes brings out the best and the worst in all of us. Amen!

Indian basketball Book's publication date in sight ...

As many of you know, Tim Brayboy and I have been working on a book about Indian basketball in Robeson & adjoining counties for some time. And the end is in sight.

We expect to present the book at the second annual meeting of the Indian Basketball Alumni Association, Inc. at the Indian Education Resource Center (located in the old "Indian" Pembroke High School building), next door to the UNC-Pembroke chancellor's residence, some time in December. There's our goal anyway! We can say with absolute certainty that the second banquet will be held when we have completed the book. At the meeting we will also disclose our long range plans, and present our non-profit corporate status to Indian basketball adherents. More information will be forthcoming in the next few days and weeks. The name of the book is:

PLAYING BEFORE AN OVERFLOW CROWD.

The story of Indian basketball in Robeson & adjoining counties between 1939-1967.

The book, now about 90% complete, is a history of "Indian" basketball in Robeson as we remember it. Information is scant, but it was a time of rank segregation although positive currents emanated from the unique social incubator and experiment. The book explores what happened, where it happened, when, how, who, and, most importantly, WHY?

Also, what valuable lessons can be learned from this special moment in time?

TO RESERVE A COPY, fill in the blanks and send it to Indian Basketball Book, c/o Bruce Barton, Post Office Box 362, Pembroke, N.C. 28372. Or call 910-521-2054 for more information. We also welcome old "Indian" basketball photographs and memories.

Name _____

Address _____

A Call for Poems

Write a poem and win the \$1,000 grand prize! Hollywood's Famous Poets Society is sponsoring a new poetry contest, open to everyone. There is no entry fee.

To enter send on poem of 21 lines or less: Free Poetry Contest, 1626 N. Wilcox Ave. # 126, Hollywood, CA 90028. Or enter online at www.famouspoets.com. A winner's list will be sent to all entrants.

"This is our big contest of the year," says Executive Director Mark Schramm. "We trust our prizes will encourage new poets to share their talent." The deadline for entering is May 11, 2002.



SRMC Patient Bed Tower: Question and Answer Update

In about another year, the six-story Patient Bed Tower now under construction on the main campus of Southeastern Regional Medical Center is scheduled for completion. Almost daily, the staff and board members of SRMC get questions and comments from the community about the scope, size and benefits of this endeavor, the largest building project since the original hospital building was opened in 1953. The frequently asked questions and their answers below are offered to inform local citizens about how and why SRMC is building this centerpiece of a better health care system:

Q: Who made the decision to build the new Patient Bed Tower and why was it needed?

A: In 1998, the SRMC Board of Trustees approved a five-year Master Facility Plan to update the facilities of the Medical Center's main campus in order to meet the growing needs of Robeson County citizens and neighboring communities. In addition to the Patient Bed Tower, the board also approved expansion and renovation of Emergency Service and additions to the Southeastern Cancer Center to handle the growing number of patients served there. The new Patient Bed Tower will feature a Two-story lobby and reception area, physician conference area, medical records department and a hospital pharmacy on the first two floors. The remaining four floors will house nursing units with a total of 136 large, private patient rooms and adjoining baths. In addition to protecting the patient's right to privacy and confidentiality of care, the new larger rooms will allow for convenient and comfortable overnight stays by family members of patients.

Q: How can SRMC staff an additional 136 beds?

The 136 beds in the Patient Bed Tower are not additional beds; they will replace beds in the existing facility's semi-private and small private rooms. SRMC's total number of licensed, acute care beds will remain at 314 beds. Also, the design of the new nursing units is expected to enhance the productivity and efficiency of staff members caring for patients because of the nearness of patient rooms to nursing stations.

Q: How much will this project cost and how will SRMC pay for it?

The cost of the Patient Bed Tower-- including construction, equipment and furnishings-- is expected to reach \$34 million. SRMC will

Pianist Stephen Hunter Performs at UNCP



PEMBROKE, N.C. - pianist Stephen Hunter performed Wednesday, in the Moore Hall Auditorium.

Mr. Hunter, who is a native of Pilot Mountain, N.C., performed an all-Chopin program. He currently lives in Fayetteville and is the music director of St. James Lutheran Church and teaches privately.

He studied at UNC Greensboro where he received both his Bachelor's of Music and Master's of Music degrees in piano performance. He was in the visiting artist program in North Carolina and is a Rotary International Fellow.

He has developed an interest in computer program and is currently training graduate courses at UNC Pembroke and teaching at the Computer Technology Department at Fayetteville Technical Community College.

Young Writer's Conference at UNCP

PEMBROKE, N.C. - On April 13th, Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., UNCP will host a Young author's Celebration sponsored by the North Carolina Reading Association. Between 800-1,000 students (K-12), parents, and relatives are expected on campus in the Givens Performing Arts Center.

The young authors will meet writes/authors on-campus, including English professor and Pembroke Magazine editor Shelby Stephenson, John Chapel of The Pilot newspaper in Southern Pines, N.C., and Thad Mumau, a columnist for the Fayetteville Observer.

The celebration is sponsored by the N.C. Reading Association, UNCP and its School of Education.

Along The Robeson Trail

by Dr. Stan Kulek, Director, UNCP Native American Resource Center

For the past three weeks, we have begun working our way through the writings of John Lawson (in his book, *A New Voyage to Carolina*). Lawson journeyed among the Native Americans of the Carolinas early in the 1700s. The Lords Proprietors of Carolina hired him to survey the interior of the colony, but we remember him better for his "Account of the Indians of North Carolina."

Last week we saw that Native Americans in the Carolinas often used a red pigment (a "Scarlet Root," mixed with bear oil) to adorn themselves for ceremonial occasions, and that they had to obtain the pigment from somewhere deep in the Piedmont. Lawson continued:

"They have this Scarlet Root in great Esteem, and sell it for a very great Price, one to another. The Reason of its Value is, because they not only go a long way for it, but are in great Danger of the Sinnagars or Iroquois, who are mortal enemies to all our Indians, and very often take them Captives, or kill them, before they return from this voyage. The Tuskeruros...have often brought this Seed with them from the Mountains; but it would never grow in our Land. With this and the Bears Grease they anoint their Heads and Temples, which is esteem'd as ornamental.... Besides, this Root has the Virtue of killing Lice, and suffers none to abide or breed in their Heads."

This passage from Lawson illustrates several things. First, we can see (not surprisingly) that

Native people already had a well developed trading system established before the arrival of permanent colonial settlements. We do not have enough information to estimate what the exchange rate would have been for the Scarlet Root. However, it must have been in high demand among coastal and Piedmont Native people if they were willing to go "a long way" to get it, and if their trading for it came at "a very great Price." Apparently their trading system functioned not only within their tribes and nations, but also between tribal groups as well.

Second, we can see that in addition to examples of inter-tribal trade and cooperation, there were also cases of conflict and competition between tribal groups. Lawson mentions (here and elsewhere) that the "Sinnagars" (his way of spelling the tribal name we now refer to as "Seneca") were considered very dangerous by many of Carolina's Native people. It is well known that the Seneca of the early eighteenth century were a powerful nation, members of the Iroquois League who raided at will into the South from their northern homeland. In his "Journal," Lawson recorded that the Seneca were feared even as far south as the Catawba, and that the infrequent capture of a Seneca warrior was an occasion for great celebration among the southern tribes (and also, for some very indelicate treatment of the doomed captive).

Third, in this passage we get a glimpse of the importance of the Tuscarora ("Tuskeruros") in early

eighteenth century Carolina. The fact that the Tuscarora were able to travel from their central Inner Coastal Plain homeland (traditionally between the drainages of the Roanoke and Neuse Rivers) all the way across the Piedmont to the edge of the mountains to collect the seeds of the Scarlet Root indicates that they (like their distant relations, the Seneca) could move far and wide among the other Indian Nations whenever they wished to do so. The Tuscarora controlled trade between Native people living on the central Outer Coastal Plain and those living in the central Piedmont until the Tuscarora War (1711 - 1715), and in fact Lawson was visiting among the Tuscarora trying to reach a trade agreement with them when he was killed.

Finally, in this passage we see an example of the intersection of the ceremonial and secular in traditional Native life. The Scarlet Root was highly valued as a ceremonial adornment, but it also worked as a preventative for head lice. This very practical combination, no doubt worked out over centuries of Native culture, shows us that the sacred and the commonplace were completely entwined in the Old Ways.

In the next segment of *Along The Robeson Trail*, we will look further into the writings of John Lawson as we seek more lessons about Native Americans. For more information, visit the Native American Resource Center in historic Old Main Building, on the campus of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke (our Internet address is www.uncp.edu/nativemuseum).

Letters to the Editor

Readers says American Indian Mothers Group Fund-raisers Need to be "defined"

To the Editor,

I would like for someone from the American Indian Mothers group to explain exactly what is going on with them. Are they incorporated in a non-profit status 501 (c) ? Is there a national chapter of American Indian Mothers or is this just the brainchild of a group of people? I have heard of an American Indian Mothers Hall of Fame before. Is this associated with that? Like many readers, I am confused and if it doesn't make sense to me then I know that others feel the same.

I have read nothing about them since the group appeared in the Robesonian led by Beverly Collins-Hall before her removal from the position at the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center. The newspaper stated that the group began the same night that the drama closed. I thought that this group was created under the umbrella of the NCICC. However, now it appears that they have also gone their own way.

Their first event was an American Indian Mother's Pageant that has an entry fee that is more than any Miss Lumbee competition. It was also stated in the article that each person had to have ten sponsors. Neither did they say just who this queen would represent. Will this lady represent all of the tribes and who gave them permission for this person to do so? Would it be like those pageants where everyone paid an entry fee and got a trophy and a crown?

Their second event now is a Fund-raiser Memorial Scholarship Banquet. This has really raised some eyebrows and parents want to know "where do you get the applications?" They intend to honor only three women who are no longer with us like many of our female Lumbee leaders of years gone by. This would be great if it this money was being placed in the hands of the children and grandchildren of these fine ladies. Someone needs to tell us to who and where the money will be going. It is stated that there will be an art print and I know that the public would like to know "by who?" Is there a screening process and who are the qualified people to make the decision in regard to who gets the

scholarship? With the high unemployment rate in this county parents can use all of the help that they can get sending their children to college. With all of the plants, businesses around here closing and there is an increased need for services. Just who besides a drug dealer has \$2,000 to \$10,000 to spend of a corporate sponsorship table? I might give \$10 for a plate and possibly buy a print if I knew where the money was going.

If this American Indian Mothers group wants these kinds of sponsors they need to have someone (other than the aforementioned person) explain what is going on. Only someone who had his head buried in the sand would invest in something like these ideas without justified explanations.

Many of those who were barred from the North Carolina Indian Cultural Center during the reign of Collins-Hall "wonder if they will be turned around at the gate?" There is a big issue of "trust" here as we all know and saw what happened at the NCICC. Once you burn a bridge with the Native American people it is almost impossible to go back. People around here will not be fooled a second time around. After everyone began moving events to the Southeastern Agriculture Farmers Market the other year because of the management of Collins-Hall at the NCICC? And now the Farmers Market opens its arms to Collins-Hall?

Harold Collins is beginning his Robeson Cultural Festival this week at the Farmer's Market. We still do not know how this activity is helping the Native Americans or Robeson County. It is clear that people do not know that the only time that there is any good money in this county to be collected is on the first, fifteenth and thirty-first of each month. It just goes to show that for up to \$1,000 per day a person can rent the Farmers Market for just about anything.

Vinita Maynor Clark

Editorial And Opinion Page



fund the cost of this project plus the other Master Facility Plan expansions and renovations through a variety of sources, including the issuance of debt (bonds), financial reserves and income from current and future revenues. The SRMC Foundation has launched the *Take it to the Top!* capital campaign to raise \$3 million dollars to help fund these projects. Dr. Bob Andrews, chairman of the campaign, has announced the \$1.9 million of the amount has been pledged.

If you have other questions about the Patient Bed Tower or if you would like to schedule a presentation for your club or church group, please contact Ann Stephens at 671-5018 for more information. If you would like to make a donation to the SRMC Foundation to help fund either the Patient Bed Tower, Emergency Services or the Southeastern Cancer Center, please call Sissy Grantham at 671-5583.

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