



AS I SEE IT

by Bruce Barton

More thoughts on Lumbee provincial madness and dislike for ourselves

I heard a preacher say, in a recent sermon, that when he is in the pulpit, and pointing his finger at troublemakers in the congregation, that he is, in turn, pointing four fingers back at him. And that is the way I feel about what I see in the Lumbee camp. **I chastise myself more than all of you.** I have been involved, in one way or another, in "Indian business" for thirty years, and have earned the civic right to say what I want to say. I'll also be 61 years old in October and am exercising my moral privilege as an Indian elder. So, listen! Our public "face" is at an all time low, and Lumbee people, many times these days, look like losers in a public relations test of wills with the conservative right. We have relinquished the moral high ground to the real enemies in the public domain. **WE NEED TO STOP SOME OF THE FOOLISHNESS IN OUR CAMP.** The Bible calls it sin. **I call it provincial madness and dislike for ourselves.**

Indian people, and Lumbee in particular, do not like ourselves and have a narrow vision of who we are as a people and where we need to go. We psychically like to rip each other to shreds, most often in the Robesonian Newspaper. And I DO NOT LIKE IT!

Our common enemies are syphilis and dropouts in the local schools. Indians head both lists. This fact is deplorable and we ought to coalesce as Indian people and correct these two societal maladies. There are many other problems confronting Indian people. Look about you ... not just in the public schools, but also in the boardrooms of UNC-Pembroke, Robeson Community College and elsewhere. We are too busy slamming ourselves to take the corrective actions that are necessary to save us. Let me just cite one example. Think about this. UNC-Pembroke has a Black Cultural Center and the Indians at the traditional "Indian" school are bundled with "others" in a Multi-Cultural Center. Ummm! Would Black leaders at nearby Fayetteville State University, a "Black" traditional school, allow an Indian Cultural Center there with the Black students buried in a Mutlri Cultural Center? Tell

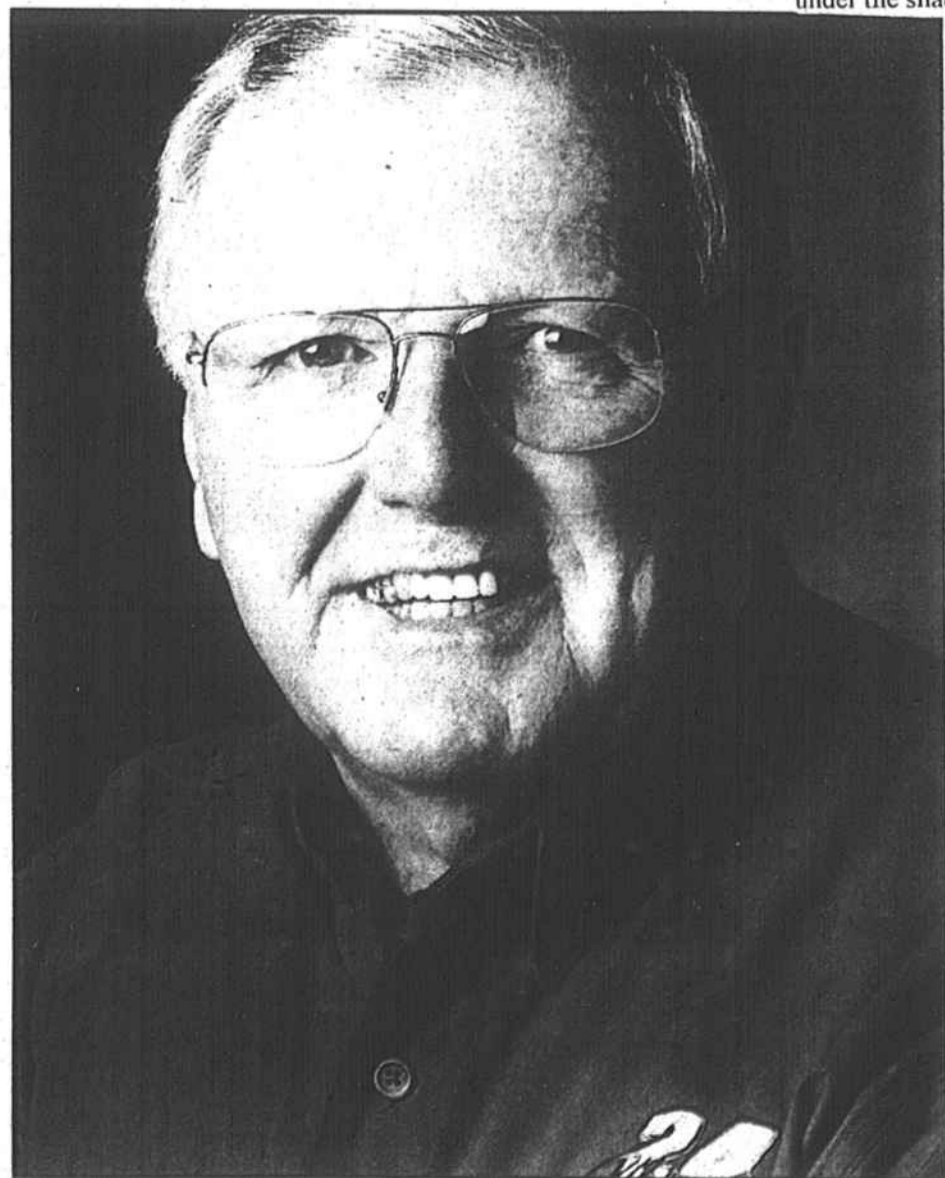
the truth now. Would they? YOU KNOW THAT THEY WOULD NOT! And they shouldn't. But Indians do!!!! This reality is a sad commentary about Indian people and the condition of our collective heart and spirit.

The tribal council, and all Indian elected officials, has been less than statesmanlike in conducting our "Indian" business and addressing some of the problems outlined in this column. For instance, few Indian leaders have shown any "bigness of the heart and spirit in rallying to the side of Dr. Barry Harding, the outgoing Indian school superintendent, as he has been pilloried in the local press in a particularly vicious and mean way, as I see it. Nor have Indians generally condemned the firing of shotgun blasts into the home of Patrick Bullard, the Indian schools board chairman. We should condemn violence against Mr. Bullard, or any Robesonian, conducting private or public business in Robeson County. It seems to me that "bigness" of spirit and heart, and one's "Indian ness" would and should be reason enough to stand up for what is right, whether we like Dr. Harding or Mr. Bullard. Neither should be publicly humiliated nor have to confront violence against their person. This is how I see it, and you can agree or disagree. But I have unburdened my heart in a small way. I feel better about myself. I am just sick and tired of Indian leaders being battered in the local white press with the duplicity of our other so-called Indian leaders. I remember reading a statement once that said, in essence, "Evil flourishes when good men (and women) remain quiet in the midst of evil doing.

I condemn meanness in every camp, and particularly in the Indian camp where I live. And I condemn mean spirited people, whether they are White, Black or INDIAN! Amen!

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When A Heart Condition Caused Jack's Life To Come To A Screaming Halt, Scotland Memorial Got Him Back In The Race.

As an avid NASCAR fan, Jack Cousins of Laurinburg knows what it takes to go the distance. So when a serious heart condition threatened his life, he relied on Scotland Memorial's technology, medical staff and rehabilitation services to get him back in action.

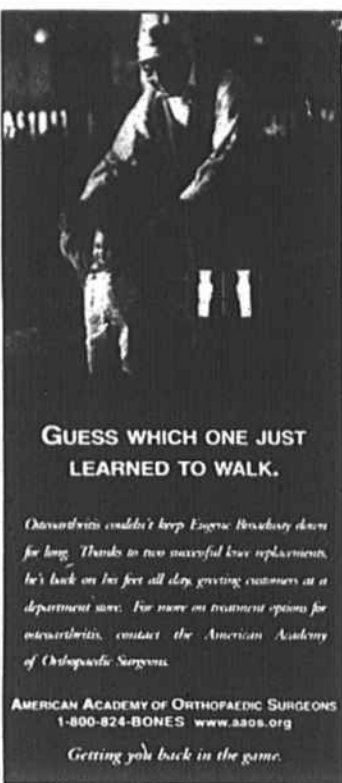
In December 2001, Jack was alone when he felt pain in his chest. With no prior history of heart problems, he became more concerned when he began to perspire and have difficulty breathing. That's when he called his wife, Ginger, who assessed the situation and took Jack to the Emergency Department at Scotland Memorial where a team went to work to save Jack's life. One of the hospital's cardiologists performed diagnostic tests that revealed a leaky heart valve and an aneurysm on his aorta.

"There's something special about the staff at Scotland Memorial," says Jack. "They treat you like family and show a genuine concern for your health and comfort. Everyone from the Emergency Department and my cardiologist to the cardiac rehab staff worked together to help me regain my health. I wouldn't go anywhere else."

Today, Jack says he is feeling much better and credits his doctor and Scotland Memorial for going the distance to help him recover. For more information on cardiac services, call 910-291-7550.



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 Tribal office 619 Pine Cone Road
 Albany Georgia 31705 - 6909 (229) 787-5122



Along The Robeson Trail

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

In recent weeks, we have been searching through the writings of John Lawson for lessons, about the Native Americans of the Carolinas early in the 1700s (in his book, *A New Voyage to Carolina*). Last week we saw Lawson's description of the types of materials used in construction of Native American housing, and a bit about their cultural practice of residing in extended families. This week we take a look at Lawson's descriptions of their foods and how they shared them.

"As to the Indians Food, it is of several sorts.... Venison... Fish of all sorts... Bear and Bever [beaver]; Panther; Pole-cat; Wild-cat; Possum; Raccoon; Hares and Squirrels.... All wild Fruits that are palatable, some of which they dry and keep against Winter, as all sorts of Fruits and Peaches, which they dry and make Quiddonies and Cakes that are very pleasant and a little tartish.... All sorts of Tortois and Terebins [turtles]; Shell-Fish and Stingray or Skate.... Gourds; Melons; Cucumbers; Squashes... Rockahomine Meal, which is their Maiz, parch'd and pounded into Powder; Fowl of all sorts, that are eatable; Ground-Nuts, or wild Potato's; Acorn and Acorn Oil.... Indian Corn, or Maiz, made into several sorts of Bread; Ears of Corn roasted in the Summer, or preserved against the Winter.

"The Victuals is common,

throughout the whole Kindred Relations, and often to the whole Town, especially when they are in Hunting-Quarters; then they all fare alike, whichever of them kills the Game. They are very kind, and charitable to one another... for if any one of them has suffer'd any Loss, by Fire or otherwise, they order the griev'd Person to make a Feast, and invite them all thereto, which, on the day appointed, they come to, and after every Man's Mess of Victuals is dealt to him, one of their Speakers, or grave old Men, makes an Harangue and acquaints the Company that the Man's House has been burnt, wherein all his Goods were destroy'd; that he and his Family very narrowly escaped; that he is every Man's Friend in that Company, and that it is all their Duties to help him, as he would do to any of them, had the like Misfortune befallen them. After this Oration is over, every Man according to his Quality, throws him down upon the Ground some Present... which very often amounts to treble the Loss he has suffer'd."

Two things immediately jump out of this passage. The first is that the Ancestors in the early 1700s ate an enormous variety of foods. This is consistent with the description we have from Thomas Harriot in the late 1500s, when he traveled among Carolina's Coastal Algonkian Indians and observed an extremely varied diet. Nutritionists tell us

today what these Ancestors apparently knew already: a diverse diet is generally a healthy diet. It is also worth noting here that their diet contained no refined sugars, and that diabetes was not present among them.

The second thing is the way their foods were shared. When Lawson wrote "The Victuals is common, throughout the whole Kindred Relations, and often to the whole Town..." he meant that everyone got a share of everything that was eaten. The way Native American people today share the products of their gardens with family and friends has obviously been going on for a very long time. And Lawson's description of their kindness and charity to others, especially to those in critical need, is reminiscent of what we so often see today in local Native American communities when some crisis in a family brings out this same spirit of abundant sharing.

The lesson is from this passage clear. While some things have changed, some remain the same. In the next segment of *Along The Robeson Trail*, we will continue our travels with John Lawson. 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).

Readers says "It is time to quit messing with the bottom of the totem pole and go straight to HUD!"

To the Editor,

Locklear, a 94 year old elderly Lumbee lady sits in her home in the Rennett Community. Her disabled daughter is taking care of her. Every time her children come to see her, they are bringing her jugs of water. Maggie, her daughter is on the LRDA Rehab List ahead of her mother. The list was passed to the Lumbee Tribal Government. "I went to the Lumbee Tribal Government and asked them "to let my mother's name take my place and fix her house because the shingles are even coming off of the roof. I was told that "there was nothing that they could do for either of us" states Maggie. (Maggie's mother lives in the Rennett District and she lives in the Saddle tree district.) On the outskirts of Maxton sits Mr. Joseph West who has cardiac heart failure. He is confined to a electric wheel chair. All that his wife Viola who is 80 years old only wants from Lumbee Tribal Government Lumbee Housing Funds is to build a porch and a wheelchair ramp. She does not know how much longer he will live, only our Creator knows that. She loves her husband and wants him to enjoy what ever time that he has left. It is her desire for him to be able to go out in the yard by himself when he is not in the hospital and sit under the shade tree. "Two men came out from the LTG and tested the dirt and we have not heard a word from them since" his loving wife states. I am not sure about the age of Mr. Joseph, who can sits in the house put together the puzzles containing several thousand pieces to make beautiful art work. They have a small ramp at the back door, but everyone thinks that the wheelchair is going to flip over using it.

Gina, who has a college degree, works and has a disabled husband with six children that have to live in the project when she can actually afford a monthly payment on a new home. "I was told that they lost my application" she states. "Don't feel bad, they lost my on purpose too" I replied. (Pembroke & Union district)

These are only some of the stories that people have contacted me and I have went to see for myself. However, while the North Carolina Indian Housing Authority had the funds I saw a new home built for a family with about five children with the father on disability. I also saw a young man that was confined to his home get the freedom of going out into his yard in his electric wheelchair.

Now, what is wrong with this picture? Why have these people not been helped? Even Mr. Joseph deserves to go out in the yard and sit under the shade tree. Is there not someone out there that can build at

least the ramp? There are many out there like these and they have been treated the same way. I was told the other day "if they would have put Jesus in the LTG office, it still would not have been fast enough to clean up this mess." To which I reply "yea, but at least Jesus would have been helping the people and not just sitting there getting paid for doing nothing but paperwork. Jesus would never turn his back on his children and we all know it."

I now fully believe the contractors that have told me "when it is time for bids, we have to travel to all of the districts and each tribal council member goes with us and shows us the house that is to receive services." We were told that the elderly and disabled would be the first ones to be served under the new government. The aforementioned people have been waiting for years.

Don't you think that there should be a letter writing campaign to HUD? I mean since a majority of the money is being used to pay salaries. We need to see the Lumbee Housing money FROZEN since it is not doing the people any good Then let's see how many people "volunteer their services to the Lumbee people." The three head people in that office are very conservative and upper class. They already have money and do not need a salary for they have more money than they can ever spend.

If Billy Brooks was still the head of Lumbee Housing. The LTG would have something on their hands. I have always respected Brooks and I know that he would tell them that "what they are doing is wrong." When Brooks was over the NCIHA program he even used temporary worker so that the money that would be paid in benefits to permanent workers could go to repair homes. Back then, the money was managed in a manner to help the people. Brooks and the staff received many letters and cards thanking them for all that they had done. I know this because I not only rode with them and talked to the people. I saw the cards and read the letters.

So, here is the information that everyone needs to contact HUD. It is a toll-free number and will not cost you anything to just call. The number is 1-800-735-3239. If you want to write a letter and send proof that the waiting list from the LRDA was sent to the LTG ask them for the address.

It is time that the LUMBEEES STAND UP FOR THEMSELVES!
 Vinita "Cookie" Maynor-Clark
 Pembroke, NC

