

# CAROLINA INDIAN VOICE

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## Order of the Medicine Wheel Award recipient, Velma Lowry Maynor: her story

by Dr. Ruth Dial Woods

American Indian Mothers, Inc. recently presented the Order of the Medicine Wheel Award to outstanding medical professionals. Velma Mae Lowry Maynor was one of those recognized. This is her story.

### VELMA MAE LOWRY MAYNOR 1907 - 1997

Velma Mae Lowry Maynor was born on September 25, 1907, to the parents of Sallie Hatcher and Edmund Lowry. She was the second child of a family of six girls and two boys: Zenobia (Cummings), Velma (Maynor), Auzout, Lystra (Oxendine), Vivian (Lowry), Helen Neal (Miller), Varcer, and Latha Dale Lowry (Clay). The family resided in the Elrod Community, currently known as the Hopewell Community.

The children were reared in a home with moral and spiritual concepts guiding their daily lives. From the very beginning, they were taught God's word, the moral interpretation of the Word, and the need for education. The Hopewell School where they received their basic education was a stone's throw from their home, and Hopewell Church was the community church where they studied God's word.

The children were also taught by example. Edmund Lowry was a hard worker who taught school, farmed, and was also a minister of the gospel. His double first cousin, Dr. Earl Lowry (whose mother was a sister to Sallie Hatcher and wife of Dr. Fuller Lowry, a brother to Edmund) described his Aunt Sally stating as "one of the greatest persons he ever knew."

From her learning and understanding that education and the knowledge of God were essential, Velma Lowry emerged from this environment of educational and spiritual awareness, and stepped forward in life with this essential knowledge and a great foundation upon which she built her life. She often reminisced of the earlier teachings of her childhood and their importance to her life. When she completed the tenth grade she decided to pursue a career in teaching. She taught at Piney Grove School for two (2) years and at Hopewell School for one (1) year. This experience spurred a yearning for additional education so she resigned from teaching and attended school for an additional year to complete the eleventh grade and graduate from high school. After graduation, she again taught school for another one and a half years at Ashpole Center School located in the Ashpole Community. Her teaching experience created a yearning for a better life. During her teenage years, Sally Helen Hatcher, Velma's mother, fell ill to terminal cancer. Velma spent a great deal of time caring for her sick mother. She developed an interest in nursing and often discussed her interest with the doctor as he made regular home visits.

In February 1931, she again resigned from teaching, and with the assistance of the doctor who attended her mother, she enrolled in the School of Nursing at Philadelphia General Hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She quickly learned that it was not easy to obtain the

goal that she had set for herself as she had to become accustomed to a new faster pace in life and the study of material to which she had not previously been exposed. Upon graduation in 1934, she was offered a position within the training hospital as the Supervisory Registered Nurse in charge of the sixth floor. She held this position for five (5) years resigning in 1939.

In 1939, Velma Lowry was contacted by the Office of the Governor of North Carolina and offered a position to work with the Farm Security Administration. She accepted this position, and in August 1939, she returned to Pembroke, North Carolina to work as a Project Nurse with the Farm Security Administration Program located in Rockingham, North Carolina in the same location as the current Richmond County Office Building downtown Rockingham. She worked with a Dr. Green who helped with the administration of the program. The position required working with rural families in designated areas of Richmond, Scotland, and Robeson Counties providing in-home individual and group health education advice including healthy nutrition, inoculations, general health education services and helping with delivery of newborns. Through this program she helped numerous families who still today remember the program and her services in the Evans Crossing, Beulah Baptist Church, and the Red Bank communities. The program helped willing people purchase farmland and housing for their families. There are some well-known families in Robeson County who today continue to prosper from the efforts of this program.

On March 14, 1941, Velma Lowry married Jimmy Maynor and began a family in 1943. She resigned her position as a nurse and became a homemaker. To this marriage were born three children: Roxanna Kay, James Robert, and John Timothy Maynor. She held the same moral values and respect for education as those she experienced from her own family. She desired that her children know the word of God and obtain a sound education. She prepared daily for the activities of family life. She would prepare the food, help with homework, sew, knit, crochet, and attend to Bible reading and church activities. She remained at home for approximately 9 years. However, neighbors, acquaintances, and family members would often come and request that she visit their home and help with homebound individuals or maybe they only had a "What would you do?" question. She readily gave assistance with bandaged dressings, home IV's, and other home nursing care activities.

In 1952 another job offer came and she was offered a position at the North Carolina Cancer Institute located on Hwy 711 Lumberton, North Carolina. She became elated with the idea of practicing again, and with much thought returned to work on the eleven to seven shift in order to continue with her responsibilities at home and church. She became the nurse in charge for the midnight shift and maintained this position for fourteen and one half years. The midnight shift allowed her to sleep while the children were in school, to be available during

the day for appointments and school activities, and to participate in Sunday and weeknight church activities. She maintained this scheduled missing very few church activities and never missed Sunday morning church service for the fourteen and one half years.

In 1960, Velma Lowry Maynor resigned from the N.C. Cancer Institute and accepted a position with the Robeson County Board of Education as a school nurse. She was one of three new nurses hired to work within the schools of Robeson County. This position was a welcomed opportunity to work during the day and rest at night. She enjoyed this position until her retirement in 1973 at the age of sixty-five.

After her short retirement of little more than a year, the North Carolina Department of Corrections began employing nurses to assist the assigned doctors and to dispense medications based on the doctor's orders. Again she answered the call and took a position at the Robeson County Correctional Institute. She was the first nurse hired at the Robeson County Prison Unit on Hwy 711 under the North Carolina Department of Corrections. She returned to work in 1976 and thoroughly enjoyed her work with Dr. Arthur A. Robinson, the medical doctor for the Robeson County Prison Unit. After ten years, she again resigned in June 1985 and retired at the age of 78.

After this retirement, Velma Lowry Maynor visited the sick, read, knitted, sewed, crocheted, made jewelry and worked in her yard. She loved to knit or crochet and teach others the craft. At one point she served as an instructor for a knitting class through continuing education classes of Robeson Community College. Ladies would gather in her home and she would help them solve their knitting problems or instruct them in starting new patterns. She was known to knit and crochet entire outfits and would always create a layette for a new baby in the community or church.

In all of her work, chores and service, Velma Lowry Maynor's love for the Lord was ever present. When riding along in the car and playing the Bible on the tape player, she could quote the scripture word for word along with the tape. It didn't matter which Bible book was playing. She was an intelligent and compassionate woman. She loved to read, talk with everyone, discuss the Bible, learn about his or her descendants, and discuss the history of Robeson County and her family. She was proud of the Henry Berry Lowrie history and the fact that he was her great uncle. She loved the Lowrie names. She insisted that her youngest great grandson be named James Allen.

On November 18, 1997, much knowledge of history, compassion, families and talents departed this earthly life and a great servant who loved God was called to claim her heavenly home.

(This is the third of five life stories that will be published in honor of the recipients of the Order of the Medicine Wheel Award as part of the Millennium Warrior Honoring Ceremony sponsored by the American Indian Mothers, Inc.)



Shown left to right are Beverly Collins-Hall, Director of American Indian Mothers, Inc., Dr. Ruth Dial Woods and Roxanna Kay Maynor Bailey accepting the Medicine Wheel Award on behalf of her mother, Velma Mae Lowry Maynor.



Mrs. Vela Mae Lowry Maynor in her nursing uniform



Mrs. Maynor in later years

### Public Info Office moved to tribal offices

The Lumbee Tribe Public Information Office has moved to the main tribal offices located at 707 Union Chapel Road in Pembroke North Carolina. You can reach any of the Public Information staff at 910.521.7861. Please direct all your inquiries to this office. The Public Information Office is at the service of the Tribal Membership to help inform you of the day-to-day procedures of our tribal government as well as the programs and services that we offer to our tribal members. Please do not hesitate to call our offices with your questions and concerns. Our main motivation is to ensure that our tribal members are given accurate and vital information about issues that directly affect the Lumbee Tribe. We welcome all inquiries.

Wanda Locklear - ext 223--wlocklear@lumbeetribe.com  
Patrick Strickland - ext 247--pstrickland@lumbeetribe.com  
Rebekah Revels - ext 246--rrevels@lumbeetribe.com

### LTG assumes management of NC Housing apts.

The Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina has officially assumed responsibility for the management of the following housing units which have been under the management of the North Carolina Housing Authority: Red Hill Apartments in Maxton, Hawkeye Sands Apartments in Raeford, and Heritage Haven in Fairmont. The Lumbee Tribe is excited and hopeful about this new endeavor. Please direct all inquiries to the Public Information Office at 910.521.7861 or visit our website at www.lumbeetribe.com (This article submitted by LTG's Public Information Office)

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### BPW Week celebrated by Pembroke BPW

The Pembroke Business and Professional Women's Organization celebrated BPW week in October as they promoted equity for women across the nation. BPW member Sherry Lynn Odom was selected as "Woman of the Year" for her devotion and dedication to the organization.

Other events for the celebration included: honoring Clerk of Court, Rene Oxendine Hunt during her candidacy at the home of Dr. Ruth Dial Woods and Noah Woods, visiting Pembroke First United Methodist Church in Sunday, and providing cake and ice cream for senior citizens. Yvonne Barnes Dial, District V director, spoke at the monthly meeting.

Attorney Dale Deese from Legal Services was the guest speaker for the month of September.

Anyone interested in learning more about the organization may contact Marie Moore at 521-4421 or 521-9731

### SRMC adds full time emergency room physicians

The Emergency Services department at Southeastern Regional Medical Center has added several full-time physicians over the past few months. Jim R. Cleary, M.D., and A. Michael Skinner, D.O., are among the new medical staff additions.

Dr. Cleary is a 1962 graduate of Wake Forest University School of Medicine, formerly known as Bowman Gray, in Winston-Salem. He had further training at the University of Washington in Seattle and completed his residency at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. He is certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine.

Dr. Skinner earned his medical degree in 2000 from the University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine in Kansas City, Mo. He completed an emergency medicine residency at the Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital Medical Center in Pontiac, Mi., in 2004.

### New phone numbers for Carolina Indian Voice

Please make a note of the new phone numbers for the Carolina Indian Voice.

910-521-0796

910-521-0992

910-521-9154

And the new fax number:

910-521-7670