

BALTIMORE YEARLY MEETING INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT - AUGUST 2022

OUR HISTORY:

For over 50 years, the Indian Committee wished it had a written history and several people in the past started to write one. Former member Martha Catlin (Alexandria Meeting) had compiled an enormous amount of research. So at the committee's request she began writing a book to analyze epochs and describe episodes in the first century of this committee's existence. The Foreword to the book by Pat Powers, discusses the motivations for Quaker involvement. Martha explains the split between Hicksite and Orthodox Friends, that lasted 140 years, and led to TWO separate Indian Committees in BYM during that time. She emphasizes the Hicksite faction since it was dominant in BYM. Orthodox Friends created missions in western states while the Hicksites often focused on influencing federal policy.

The origins of the committee are compelling and the descriptions of members' treks through the wilderness on horseback to meet with tribes at their request and the volunteers who went to Nebraska and elsewhere to serve as government Indian agents are intriguing. Martha's print book (filled with photographs and illustrations) was released in 2021, receiving wonderful comments and a favorable review in Friends Journal in March 2022. Her book: **As they were led: Quakerly Steps and Missteps Toward Native Justice, 1795-1940** is available from Pendle Hill and Friends General Conference. The beginning of the book can be read on or ordered from Amazon as well.

The post-1940 history by Pat Powers (Sandy Spring) draws from contemporary Friends and Native Americans and current events. It provides examples of actions and community education that can be

replicated throughout the U.S. A central reason for publishing this book **Respect & Justice for Indigenous Peoples: a Quaker Advocacy Group's Experience Recounted** was to engage members of the public in self-education and then advocacy. Pat discusses the ticklish situation of trying to be an "ally" and the wonderful rewards of interacting with people from a different culture. It can be purchased from Amazon at a very reasonable price. You do NOT have to own a Kindle but can access it directly to your computer by purchasing. Here is an excerpt from her book:



"Yes, readers will learn about horrendous injustices...wrongs that Quakers have called out and sadly sometimes caused. Indian Boarding schools are but a single aspect of that story as one learns about hard-won successes by Indigenous peoples and the supporting role that some non-Natives have sought to play....the book's depiction of these struggles is deepened and enriched by a celebration of Indigenous leadership, vitality and invincibility."

There will not be a print version. Links in an ebook allow readers to have immediate access to outside sources such as Native experts, newspapers, speeches, books, videos, etc. We are indebted to these two women for their

diligence, research and hard work in compiling these records into a fascinating narrative with lots of foot-notes for the scholars among us.

An Indigenous leader, Laura Harris (Comanche) and an Indigenous artist, Anna Tsouhlarakis (Dine) contributed to this book. The picture below is by the artist.

QUAKER BOARDING SCHOOLS

With the selection of Deb Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) as the Secretary of the Interior (the first Native to be elected to a cabinet position) and the recent discovery of unmarked graves in Canadian boarding schools, a renewed interest in our own history of American boarding schools has arisen. There are many resources available on this subject: Paula Palmer of Boulder Meeting is Co-Director of Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples under the Friends Peace Team umbrella, and has done research on Quaker involvement in Boarding schools and is a good resource: www.friendspeachteams.org/trr.

There is a National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS) with additional information. Several other Yearly Meetings are also investigating this issue and we all support the TRUTH AND HEALING COMMISSION ON INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL POLICIES ACT – House Bill HR 5444 which asks Congress to do research on intergenerational trauma, establish how many children attended and where, the number of children who did not return home, abuses and loss of cultural history and provide culturally appropriate public hearings on the impacts of this Federal policy.



Our Minute

Our committee prepared a Minute proposal with background information on the bill which was approved at Interim Meeting on March 19, 2022. For those who asked about the role Quakers played in the forced assimilation of Indigenous children, there is much work yet to be done on providing the records we have in our minutes. We have both Orthodox and Hicksite records to be reviewed. Paula Palmer has done research on some of this and has forwarded a model minute for consideration by Yearly Meetings that will be considered in the future. This is work that falls to everyone involved with BYM, not the exclusive work of the Indian committee. Perhaps a working group could be appointed at Annual Session. The actual minute and our background information will be attached to this report as an addendum.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

has become a popular trend and BYM has adopted this practice for our Interim and Yearly Meeting annual sessions. Speaking of the respect and gratitude we hold the original inhabitants of our area in, is a positive thing to do, realizing that words alone are not enough to show appreciation. For East Coast inhabitants of today, there are very few written records kept of the tribes that lived in the Chesapeake Bay area (other than John Smith's interaction which was recorded). We encourage all Monthly Meetings to see if the stories of their area reveal any history of tribes that may have, or still are, there and to reach out to them. Some Natives have been fortunate enough to have non-Natives and some governmental agencies return land to their stewardship. It is a heartwarming story when this happens. The Rappahannock Tribe in

Virginia has just had 465 acres returned to them by the partnership of the Wilderness Society, the Chesapeake Conservancy, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and Charlottesville benefactor Dr. Carole Remmer Angie and the Dept. of the Interior. The tribe finally won Federal Recognition in 2018 after being driven from their homeland by English settlers who arrived in Virginia in 1608.

NATIVE LEGISLATION

The BYM Indian Affairs Committee has championed support for a Truth and Healing Commission about the original and continuing traumas brought on by Canadian residential schools. BYM adopted a Minute supporting the Truth and Healing Commission after the IAC lifted the concern. BYM's support for the Minute is a beginning, not an end, of our need to investigate our past, acknowledge it, and determine what restitution or reparations are appropriate. The Committee welcomes the participation of our BYM community as we travel this path together and thanks those Monthly Meetings that have already discussed and in some cases approved of the concept at the Monthly Meeting level. House bill H.R. 5444, for forming the Commission, may come to a House vote this summer. The IAC urges Friends to contact their Representative to press for a vote and pass this important bill.

The Committee has followed the progress of the Violence Against Women Act (WAVA). Some members have lobbied for it to assure specific inclusion of separate funds for tribal implementation of this Act. We were pleased that the reauthorization of this legislation included these funds when it was signed into law in March 2022. Rates for murder and other criminal actions are significantly higher for Native women than for non-Native women. Most are perpetrated by non-Native men, often on tribal lands where jurisdictions may be unclear, and crimes go uninvestigated and unpublished. The IAC members stay informed and lobby to support the rights and protection of Native women.

WORK OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

We have a lot of dedicated members who do advocacy work on their own time. Some advising us of things going on in Indian Country and the news by email, others by their association with Native peoples. Here are a few examples:

Sue Marcus reports "I was moved by my participation again in the Memorial Weekend remembrance ceremony for the children who died at the former Carlisle Industrial School (aka Carlisle Indian School). I definitely felt led to participate. I'll attach a poignant photo that I believe would be okay to use. I also helped decorate the graves of Native Americans and their supporters in the Congressional Cemetery. The American Indian Society presented me with a plaque "for their personification of Wēlānkunēwān (Peace and Friendship), along with an honor song. I'm also still actively engaged with the Society of American Indian Government Employees and helped with our training conference this month (June 2022).

Frances Schutz, Abbey Compton and Sue Marcus wrote multiple letters to State and Federal agencies, as well as attending meetings to stop the James River Water Authority from flooding Ancestral Monacan lands, including a cemetery at Rassawek. Their efforts and those of local Meetings forced the company to move their pumping station to a new location. A welcome outcome. This group was unable to convince the VA General Assembly to pass SB 482 providing consultation with Federally recognized Tribal Nations for permits and reviews with potential impacts on environmental, cultural and historic resources to assure cooperation of some state agencies with Native peoples before construction projects though.

Sharon Stout, volunteered to serve on the ad hoc 350th BYM Anniversary Committee and worked with the Quaker History/Quaker Witness subcommittee.

Dellie James continues to be on the Board of the Baltimore American Indian Center and to volunteer at the small Museum they have. The Center hopes to hold their 46th Annual Pow Wow on Saturday, November 19 at the Maryland State Fairground in Timonium this year after a 2 year hiatus.

Several of our members held two zoom calls with members of the Friends Meeting of Washington's Peace and Social Action committee when they reached out to us with concerns about colonization and the Boarding schools.

Members of the Committee this year were: **Dan Cole co-clerk, Frederick Mtg., Sue Marcus, Alexandria Mtg., Dellie James, co-clerk, Stony Run Mtg., Frances Schutz, Charlottesville Mtg., Abbey Compton, Herndon Mtg., Norm Ash, Alexandria Mtg., Pat Powers, Sandy Spring Mtg., Sharon Stout, Adelphi Mtg., Kimberly Benson, Patapsco Mtg., Jana McIntyre, (Apache) Sandy Spring Mtg.**