



IAQ : Indigenous Affairs Quarterly

An Update from the Baltimore Yearly Meeting IA Committee

Winter, 2024-2025

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In the News



Friends present a reparations check to the Pawnee nation.

Three Friends travelled to the Pawnee nation in Oklahoma to deliver a \$10,000 check from Baltimore Yearly Meeting. The check was the first of two offered in reparation for a school run for several years in the late 1800s by BYM Quakers that was disrespectful and disruptive of native culture. Check the winter *Interchange* for an article on our visit. A more complete report will be placed on our committee's website.

At the time of this writing, the Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies Act (H.R. 7227, S.1723), which passed the U.S. Senate on December 20, is awaiting a vote in the crowded agenda of the U.S. House of

Representatives. Thanks to all who have worked for this bill and made calls on its behalf. Stay tuned to news from the Friends Committee on Legislation's coordinator for Native American legislative issues, Rachel Overstreet, a member of the Choctaw Nation. You can sign up to receive FCNL's Native American legislative update at this address:

<https://www.fcnl.org/issues/native-americans>

What We're Learning

A Friend recently asked, "Why are Quakers considered a driving force behind the boarding schools that separated Native American children from their families and culture? They ran relatively few of them."

While the most recent data indicate that of 115 church-run boarding schools Quakers ran only 16, they were enthusiastic crafters and supporters of President Ulysses S. Grant's "Peace Policy." A Congressional committee had found rampant corruption in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Following the Civil War, an increasing number of settlers were moving west, and they were attacked by Native Americans defending their lands. In 1870, a horrific massacre of Piegan Blackfeet by the U.S. military cost 200 native lives. The situation was dire, and many European

settlers wanted to kill all the Native Americans to have unfettered access to their lands – and the gold recently found in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

The Peace Policy was a win for “assimilationists” – Quakers among them – who believed that conflict could best be managed if Indians were integrated into the settler society. Under Grant’s Peace Policy (sometimes referred to as the Quaker Peace Policy), western reservations were placed under the control of religious denominations. Of the 73 agencies assigned to faith groups by the U.S. Congress, Orthodox Friends managed 10 and Hicksite Friends managed 6 – the largest number of any religious group. Boarding schools for native children were one of the ways that some of the new agents, in partnership with the U.S. government, sought to advance assimilation on the reservations.

There are numerous sources that offer more background on this complex history. Examples include an article by [the National Park Service](#) on Grant’s Indian policy, a comprehensive article in [Wikipedia](#) with many links, and [Decolonizing Quakers](#).

Resources

How do you find authentic Native American art? Many businesses claim to sell it, but in fact their products are often produced by non-natives. The Indian Arts and Crafts Board of the U.S. Department of the Interior enforces the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 by prosecuting such violations. It also supports indigenous art by publishing a list of artisans, their craft, and their websites. You can find the list here: [List of Artisans | U.S. Department of the Interior](#)

Are you interested in visiting Native American cultural sites? Check out the useful guides offered by powwows.com, which also highlights powwows and other cultural events.

<https://www.powwows.com/explore-native/>

Special Events

If you can travel to Washington, D.C. on January 25, your family can participate in a day of indigenous people’s games (“from the Arctic to Argentina”) at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of the American Indian. Find information here: [DC | Winter Blast: A Family Day of Native Games, January 25, 2025, 10 AM - 5 PM - Calendar of Events | National Museum of the American Indian](#)

Opportunities to Partner

The Indigenous-led organization, NDN Collective, offers a variety of ways that allies can supportive native efforts toward the self-determination of native people:

<https://ndncollective.org/take-action/>