

Land Acknowledgement for Chapel Hill Friends Meeting

The Chapel Hill Friends Meeting sits on unceded Indigenous land where Occaneechi, Sissipahaw, Shakori, and Eno peoples lived. As Quakers, we acknowledge the genocide and continued displacement of Indigenous peoples during the colonial period and beyond.

In 1672, George Fox visited Carolina and publicly preached that Indigenous community members shared the Light within as, we believe, all humans do. We affirm Fox's teaching, and we recognize that injustices done to the Indigenous population continue in the present.

Site Heritage:

Artifacts found at Morgan Farm indicate that this area was inhabited almost continuously for the past 10,000 years. A 2004 archaeological exploration in Chapel Hill revealed spear points and potsherds, evidence that hunters as well as settlers lived along Franklin Street from 500 BC to 500 AD.

Archaeological digs on Finley Golf Course showed similar proof that these communities hunted, built houses, and grew crops. The Indigenous peoples survived until their rapid decline due to the ravishes incurred by contact with white man's civilization. The earliest recorded presence in our area of Indigenous peoples dates to 1701 when explorer John Lawson wrote "by the time the first settlers arrived, there were no more Indians left in the region." (Vickers, p. 7-8). Other historians assert that a greatly reduced number of Indigenous remained. Most had migrated north towards Hillsborough and the more active trading paths.

John Lord Carteret, the first Earl of Granville, received his land charter from King Charles II. By the 1730's colonial settlers began trickling into Granville's district, including Orange County. They came down the Great Wagon Road connecting modern Petersburg, Virginia and Mobile, Alabama. Mark Morgan was one who settled on the Finley Golf Course land. In 1747, Morgan's children bought surrounding land to encompass most of Chapel Hill plus territory in present day Durham County and south across Morgan Creek. About 1790, his descendant Hardy Morgan gave 205 acres, including areas now occupied by Carmichael Auditorium, grounds to the east, the cemetery, and Gimghoul Road, to help establish the University of North Carolina. This is the land where Chapel Hill Friends Meeting is located. The University retained ownership until Chapel Hill Friends Meeting bought the land in the 1950's.

We recognize that the original University buildings were built by enslaved craftsmen as well as white and freed Black workers; after the University opened in 1795, enslaved women and men were forced to prepare food, clean buildings, and otherwise support university life. We understand that as a Quaker Meeting we have benefited from their labor. We are committed to seeking reparations for the injustices these people suffered and continue to experience in the present.

This is a living document, and we will continue to revise and strengthen it in collaboration with community members and as new research evolves.

References consulted:

Hinshaw, Seth B., The Carolina Quaker Experience, 1984.

Lowery, Malinda Maynor, The Lumbee Indians: An American Struggle, 2018.

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"See that we exist": AIC fights for more funding," The Daily Tar Heel, March 17, 2021.

Rights, Douglas L., The American Indian in North Carolina, 1957.

Davis, R. P. Stephen, "A Brief Overview of Prehistoric Lifeways in the Morgan Creek Valley," 2004.

Vickers, James, Chapel Hill an Illustrated History, 1895.

<https://www.museum.unc.edu/intro>

<http://www.ncpedia.org>

Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina

Light on the Hill

Orange County Land Registry

Mark Chilton's article on pre-1790's UNC property

NC State Archives, call number SSLG 96-J