



Want to reach local decision makers?
Want to advertise here?



Burlington County Times

[Login](#) | [Standard Edition](#) | [Edit](#)

Sat, Apr/10/2004 • PARTLY SUNNY 61° | [Forecast](#)

[News](#) [Sports](#) [Money](#) [Entertainment](#) [Channels](#) [Interact](#) [Search](#) ?

[Shopping/Services](#)

NEWS

Local

[Bucks County Courier Times](#)

[Burlington County Times](#)

[The Intelligencer](#)

[Hometown Pennsylvania](#)
[New Jersey](#)
[National](#)
[World](#)

[Health](#)
[Washington](#)
[Elections](#)

[Columnists](#)
[Obituaries](#)
[Opinion](#)
[Lotteries](#)
[Weather](#)

[Home](#) / [Pennsylvania News](#)

Century later, "Indian slayer" memorial again sparks controversy

By JOANN LOVI GLIO
The Associated Press

MILFORD, Pa. - In this picturesque town of 1,100 people in northeastern Pennsylvania, an unlikely memorial exists to a man who was, by even conservative accounts, a multiple murderer.

But though you'd be hard pressed to find anyone willing to defend 18th century American Indian slayer Tom Quick as a good guy, it's not hard to find people who want the monument bearing his name back where it stood for 108 years.

The 9-foot-tall zinc obelisk was vandalized with a sledgehammer in 1997, and installation plans were halted in 1999 after 200 American Indians and others protested in front of the county courthouse.

The monument was repaired, however, and Milford officials decided last fall to return it to its longtime spot on a quiet street in this town near the New York and New Jersey borders.

"This is Mayberry," town council president Matthew Osterberg said. "In no way have we ever intended to offend anyone. That's the last thing we want."

The obelisk features a spire adorned with a crossed tomahawk and peace pipe, a plowshare and wreath, and a furled flag. Accounts from the 1889 dedication state that Quick's remains were unearthed, his bones placed in a jar and buried under the monument bearing his name.

Supporters of re-erecting the marker contend that it is part of the town's and the nation's past, and that erasing history for the sake of political correctness is irresponsible.

"We're being portrayed as Indian haters, which is completely wrong," said Lori Strelecki, curator of The Pike County Historical Society's The Columns Museum. "As a historian, I don't want someone's sanitized version of history. I want to decide for myself."

Opponents call the obelisk a glorification of a man who, according to legend, slaughtered 99 American Indian men, women and children - and lamented on his death bed in 1796 that he didn't get to make it an even hundred. In one gruesome story in which Quick supposedly killed an unarmed Indian family, he remarked that the children "squawked like young crows" as he buried a hatchet in their heads, and he defended killing a baby by saying that "nits make lice."

"Lynchings in the South were part of history, too, so are we going to start

[phillyBurbs Marketplace](#)

AdSearch

> [Newspaper Ads](#)
> [Classifieds](#)

CarSearch

> [Search Cars](#)
> [Dealers](#)
> [Buying Guide](#)

JobSearch

> [Search Jobs](#)
> [Post a Resume](#)
> [Schedule Agents](#)

HomeSearch

> [Search Homes](#)
> [Financing](#)
> [Resources](#)

[Browser's Mall](#)
[Dining Out Guide](#)
[Grocery Coupons](#)
[Featured Web Sites](#)
[Local Coupons](#)
[Yellow Pages](#)
[Personals](#)

Subscriptions

[Advertise online or in print](#)



putting up monuments to the grand wizards of the KKK?" said Chuck Gentle Moon Demund, interim chief of the Lenape Nation, the region's native people. "This is a monument to a serial killer, a guy who wanted to wipe out a whole race of people."

Demund said he and other Lenape leaders spoke with Milford officials in 2001 about their opposition to restoring the monument. They also contend that they were not invited to a 2003 symposium, where a local father and son with Cree heritage spoke in favor of reinstalling it. Plans then moved forward to do so.

Lenape leaders believe they were excluded from the debate once Milford found Indians who would agree with them, and they bristle that Cree - a tribe based in Canada - had a say at all. The town says that the Lenape, until only recently, seemed uninterested in the discussion.



"We felt good about the efforts we made to ensure everyone was heard," Osterberg said. "There's nothing going on behind closed doors."

The murkiness of the Tom Quick legend adds to the problem.

According to most reports, Quick swore revenge on the entire Indian nation after he saw Indians kill and scalp his

father in 1756.

Accounts over the years alternately draw him as a psychopath who bragged about his sadistic exploits, a vigilante frontiersman who spent his life avenging his dead father, or a nasty drunk who exaggerated his crimes to impress people.

Newspaper accounts from the 1930s refer to Quick as the 6-foot-9 "Avenger of the Delaware" and call his story a "thrilling epic." A newspaper article from 1964 proclaims him the "Number-one Son of Milford," and includes an artist's rendition of Quick as a coonskin-capped, fringe-jacketed Davy Crockett type.

"It is possible he killed maybe six Indians, which of course is bad enough," said Pike County's official historian, George Fluhr. "But there's no proof that he killed anywhere near 99. It's ridiculous."

Fluhr said that nothing was written about Quick's life until more than 50 years after he died, making embellishment likely.

"Whether he killed one person, a dozen, 99, or more, he was honored with this memorial because of those deeds," said Perry Gower of the Tri-State Unity Coalition, a local human rights group that with Lenape leaders has formed a group to fight the monument called Lenape Voices.

Newspapers from 1889 chronicle unease about Quick's memorial even

phillyBurbs Highlights

[Looking to lose weight?](#)
Atkins, South Beach, other options, plus resources & information

Free Sample:
Jelly Belly
Candies!

3 silk ties for \$9
Look great,
save money
New ties added

Get your diet
back on track

FREE digital
home theater
system
Just check out
AdSearch for your
chance to win

phillyburbs nav

then - with one editorial asking why a "monster of a man" should be so honored. However, historians and town officials point out that it also was a time when the United States and the Indians were engaged in bitter conflict and Manifest Destiny was in full force for 50 years.

One year after Milford's fanfare-filled monument dedication, soldiers massacred some 300 Lakota Sioux, including women and children, at Wounded Knee, S.D., ending the last of the country's Indian wars.

The town council met with Lenape leaders on Monday night and planned to have one more meeting with them before announcing its decision. However, concerns for the monument have already been raised.

"That's been the question over the last five years: Will it be vandalized again if we put it back up?" Osterberg said. "I'd hate to see that. It's a part of our town."

On the Net:

Pike County Historical Society: <http://www.pikehistory.org>

Lenape Voices: <http://lenapevoices.org>

Tom Quick: <http://www.jrbooksonline.com/HTML-docs/tom-quick-complete.htm>

April 6, 2004 11:23 AM

Story Options: [Print this story](#) [Email a friend](#)

©2004 Copyright Calkins Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

[back to top](#)

[Home](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Change Town](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Syndication](#)

SHOPPING QUICKLINKS

- ▶ [Shop Online](#)
- ▶ [Find Deals](#)
- ▶ [Buy a Car](#)
- ▶ [Find a Job](#)
- ▶ [Buy a House](#)
- ▶ [Plan a Trip](#)
- ▶ [Go Out to Eat](#)