

# TAKE HEART

## A Conversation in Poetry

*Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair,  
Maine Poet Laureate*

Carol Willette Bachofner is Rockland's new poet laureate. She reveals in today's poem that injustices toward Native Americans, a longstanding feature of our national history, continue in the present day. Carol writes: "As an Abenaki poet, I heal the hurt and honor my culture by writing."

### Unknown Algonquin Females, Circa 1800s

*by Carol Willette Bachofner*

Pasture, stone wall, and steeple,  
They dug up my grandmother, moved her  
to the museum. No one stopped them.  
I had no say. De-recognized by government,  
filed at the BIA under "I" (*Indian, former*),  
she's been reduced to anthropology, curated  
by bureaucrats, her bones on display  
with the bones of a woman from an enemy tribe:  
(*Unknown Algonquin Females, Circa 1800s*)  
No one sang a travel song for her to ease her bones  
along the way; no giveaway, no mourning strings  
to soften the sorrow. I have watched their grandmas  
prayed and cried into the ground, names cut  
into marble, bodies preserved under stones safe  
behind iron gates. The governor's announcement claims  
today: *There are no Abenaki Indians left in Vermont.*

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