

HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF THE NOTTAWASEPPI HURON BAND OF POTAWATOMI

It is difficult to choose a starting point for the history of the Potawatomi people since prior to European contact in the 1640's, most of their history was preserved through an oral tradition. We do know that the Tribe was closely associated with the Odawa and Chippewa, all of whom occupied portions of the upper Great Lakes for thousands of years.

Prior to 1640's – The Potawatomis occupy the lower third of what is now the State of Michigan.

About 1641- The Potawatomis move to Northern Wisconsin

About 1687 – The Potawatomis migrate south and resettle between Chicago and Detroit. Their territory includes portions of Northern Indiana, Illinois and as far north as Milwaukee.

Approximately 1687 to 1821 – The ancestors of what is now the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi are centered in the Huron River Valley and the southeastern part of Wayne County

1821 – 1833 Treaties – There are major land cessions by Indian tribes in Southwest Michigan and the formation of Nottawaseppi Reservation in St Joseph County. In 1833 articles supplementary to the Treaty of Chicago ceded the Nottawaseppi reserve to the U.S. government. However, The Chief of the Huron Band, John Moguago, did not sign the treaty; instead his signature on it was forged.

1840 – Forced removal of Tribal members to Kansas. During the westward trek several members escape and return to the Athens area. In the spring of 1841 other tribal members return. These members are considered the founders of what became the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi.

1845 – The Tribe acquires a deed for the Pine Creek Reservation. The property is held in passive trust by the State of Michigan.

1863 – Chief John Moguago, the leading founder of the Tribe as we know it today, dies on the Pine Creek Reservation. He is laid to rest in the Indian Mission Cemetery on the Reservation.

1889 – A group of Tribal members purchase individually held properties in Section 23 of Athens Township. These properties become known collectively as “East Indiantown.”

1924 – On June 24, Indians finally become official citizens of the United States. More than 8,000 Indians served in the armed service during World War I even before they were citizens.

1934 – Chief Samuel Mandoka dies. He was the Tribe’s last chief. Tribal Leadership is passed to a committee associated with the Methodist Church.

1953 - Through a change in federal law, Indians are finally allowed to own firearms and purchase alcoholic beverages. Before this year they were not allowed to do either of these activities.

1970 – The Tribe is incorporated in the state of Michigan. Government by an elected Tribal Council is established.

1995 – After years of documentation and several failed attempts, the United States government restores federal recognition to the tribe on December 19.

1998 – The Tribe purchases the 155 acre property on Q Drive in present-day Fulton, Michigan.

2000 – The administration building is constructed.

2003 – A multi-use trail system is constructed.

2004 – Road reconstruction begins. On August 7, the Athens Arch is dedicated by the Athens Superintendent of Schools at Athens High School. The arch commemorates the history of the Huron Potawatomi and the cordial relations between the tribe and the town of Athens.

2005 – The first group of single family, energy-efficient homes is constructed on the Reservation.

2006 – A Tribal court is established.

2007 – The Community Center and Health Center are constructed. The 79 acre parcel of property in Emmett Township is placed into Federal trust on behalf of the Tribe. The Tribe places 75 acres of the Q Drive property into the USDA wetland reserve program.