

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Indian Hill Roads Bring to Mind Native American Tribes

When European settlers arrived in North America in the 1400s, the continent was populated with indigenous people. These Native Americans were organized as tribes, and each had its own distinct culture. They lived in harmony with Nature but were displaced as other people moved into their lands. As the United States grew, native communities were moved, combined, dispersed, or sometimes destroyed. Some Indian Hill roads are names for tribes which once wandered the wilderness of this nation.

The Mohicans were originally from the Hudson River Valley, including New York, southern Vermont, western Massachusetts, and northwestern Connecticut. Their name translates as “people of the waters that are never still.” Hunters and farmers, they were a highly organized tribe and resided in fortified villages composed of longhouses, unless it was hunting season when they sheltered in wigwams. The Mohicans traded furs with the Dutch in the early 1600s, and in 1633 allied with the British, creating a partnership that lasted almost 100 years. They raised beans, corn, and squash (the three sisters) and supplemented them with fish, meat, and foraged fruits and nuts. Their lightweight canoes were made from birch bark. Over time, trade with Europeans increased. Many natives succumbed to diseases from abroad – smallpox and measles. The Mohicans sided with Great Britain in the French and Indian War and the American Revolutionary War. In the 1782 census, only 138 Mohicans were counted. That small band moved to Wisconsin. James Fennimore Cooper depicted the tribe’s destruction in his 1826 novel The Last of the Mohicans.



The Pamlico Tribe lived beside the Pamlico River in Beaufort County, in eastern North Carolina along the Atlantic seacoast. European colonists refer to them as early as the late 1500s. They used dugout canoes and traveled extensively; remnants of their culture have been discovered all along the Atlantic coastline. Associated with the Algonquian tribe, they spoke that language. Their diet consisted of what they hunted and planted, and they relied on fish and shellfish a great deal. The European presence brought exposure to new products (iron, tools, guns) but also liquor and disease. In 1696 “a great Mortality” (smallpox) vastly dissipated their population, and only one small village of 75 remained in 1710. Currently there are no known descendants of this tribe.

One of the original Five Nations of the League of the Iroquois, the Cayuga had their homeland in northern New York. Their name means “people of the pipe,” though they were also known as “people of the great swamp.” They spoke the Cayuga and Iroquois languages.

Active trading partners with the French, for whom they provided beaver furs, they had early contact with Jesuit missionaries. Their dwellings were villages of longhouses, structures of wood up to 100 feet long. After France ceded its land in North America (1763), the Cayuga were caught in the middle during the Revolutionary War. Some sided with the British; some sided with the colonists; and some abstained. When the Americans won, the Cayuga were forced from their land after the Treaty of Canandaigua (1794), and though some remained in New York, most relocated to Canada and Oklahoma. The Cayuga have sought restitution for the ancestral lands taken from them. There are more than 3500 Cayuga descendants in the 21st century.

