

Sappony Historic Time Line

1607

First Sappony Identification by Europeans

The first mention of the Sappony in European history came from Algonquian speaking Indians when they told explorer John Smith about five Siouan villages along the western Powhatan (now the James) River.



The town of Monassukapanough was identified and believed to be the ancestral village of the Sappony.

1669 - 1671

Explorers Visit Sappony Villages



Explorers visited the ancestral Sappony towns of "Sapon" and "Nahisan", as well as the island town of Akenatzy (Occaneechi). The Sappony were believed to be living on the Sappony (currently Staunton) River northwest of Occaneechi Island the junction of the Staunton and Dan Rivers, near present-day Clarksville, Virginia. Most trade, both Indian and later colonial, went through these river settlements.

1677

First Treaty Signed

Following the disruption associated with Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, the colonial government of Virginia sought to renew alliances with tribes friendly to the English. The Sappony signed the Treaty of Middle Plantation, which recognized the Sappony as a "tributary tribe," meaning these Indians agreed to maintain peace with the colonists and pay a yearly tribute in furs and skins. For this they were guaranteed a homeland and protection by the Colonial government.



1714

Fort Christanna Established

The Sappony, still uneasy from Bacon's Rebellion, left the colony of Virginia to live on the Upper Yadkin River near the Catawba. By 1708, the Sappony returned to Virginia, in part to take advantage of new trade opportunities. In 1714, the Virginia colonial government set aside land on the south side of the Meherrin River in what is today Brunswick County. Alongside this land Governor Spotswood constructed "Fort Christ Anna."

1714 – 1718

Fort Christanna

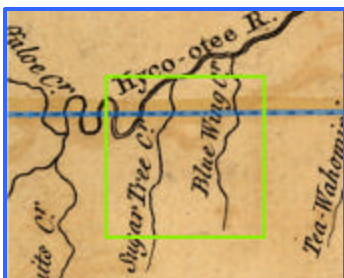


Fort Christanna was established by the Virginia Trading Company to monopolize trade in Virginia. It also represented a dramatic shift in Indian policy led by Lt. Governor Spotswood. The imposing fort served as more than a place for trade. The Sappony could also send their children to the Indian school established near the fort.

The five-sided structure was very impressive in size and function. Each of the five sides was 100 feet long made with split logs. For protection, a canon was placed in each bastion house that occupied each of the five corners of the fort. Besides buildings for storing trade goods and supplies, there were two blacksmiths' forges and barracks for the 12 militia and their captain. Archaeologists tell us that livestock was kept at the fort, including cattle, pigs, chickens, and possibly turkeys. Certainly crops were grown at the fort as well.

1728

The Dividing Line



William Byrd, and his surveying party set out to draw the border or the "Dividing Line" between North Carolina and Virginia. He used a Sappony, Ned Bearskin, as a guide and as a skilled hunter to feed the surveyors. The same border the Sappony helped to create runs through what is now the High Plains Indian Settlement - the home of the Sappony.

1776

The Revolutionary War

Sappony served in the Revolutionary War on the side of the colonists against the British.



Although Sappony have been identified in High Plains as early as 1755, it wasn't until tribal members served in the war that they were able to purchase land in the High Plains Settlement. This was not the first time the Sappony fought for the colony. The Sappony fought for the colony in the Yamansee War in 1711 and the French & Indian War in 1755. They later fought for the United States in the War of 1812 and every major war that followed proving themselves an invaluable part of our country's heritage and history.

1830

High Plains Indian Church Formed

Faith has been the important keystone that has kept the High Plains Indian Community together and close-knit. The first independent Indian church was formed in High Plains in 1830. By 1878, the Indian community had built a new church called Christ Church at Mayo Chapel. Calvary Baptist, which still serves our community today replaced Mayo around 1945.



1878 & 1888

High Plains Indian School Formed



The first Indian school in High Plains was formed in 1878 and was part of the Indian church. The school and church were built on land donated by a prominent community member with the provision that a church be built with a room to educate the Indians living in High Plains.

It wasn't until 1888 that the High Plains Indian Community received its first formal Indian school and sent representatives to the local school board on behalf of our Indian children.

1911 - 1913

Recognition Received in North Carolina & Virginia

Legislative recognition was received from the state of North Carolina in 1911. This legislation enabled the Indian community to receive state funding for education. As a result, the High Plains Indian School was established. The High Plains community donated land and built the school and the state funded the teachers and supported the school. In 1913, Virginia followed suit and agreed recognize and provide funding to allow those Indian students living on the Virginia side of the community to attend the High Plains Indian School.



1962

Indian School Closed



The The High Plains Indian School was closed when the federal policies and funding shifted toward assimilation. Indian students attended white schools in neighboring North Carolina

and Virginia schools. This was a very significant time for the Sappony since having an Indian church, an Indian school and tobacco for economic development allowed the community to remain self-sufficient. Our Indian children were separated and sent for the first time in our history to learn and mix with non-Indians. Those children in Virginia went to Allensville School and those in North Carolina went to Bethel Hill.

1997

Representation on the Indian Commission



The Sappony gained a seat on the North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs, the state agency charged with representing Indians throughout North Carolina.

Today



Today, the Sappony of the High Plains Indian Settlement are pursuing many programs and initiatives to help tribal members in the areas of education, historic and cultural preservation, and economic development.

A museum project commemorating the Sappony history has been completed and is housed in the Person County Museum of History. An annual homecoming event is held in the fall, which allows the community to come together to celebrate who they are and where they come from.

The Sappony host an annual youth camp to pass on our culture to the next generation. The children are taught their tribal history, community values and what it means to be a part of a tribal family (among other fun things).