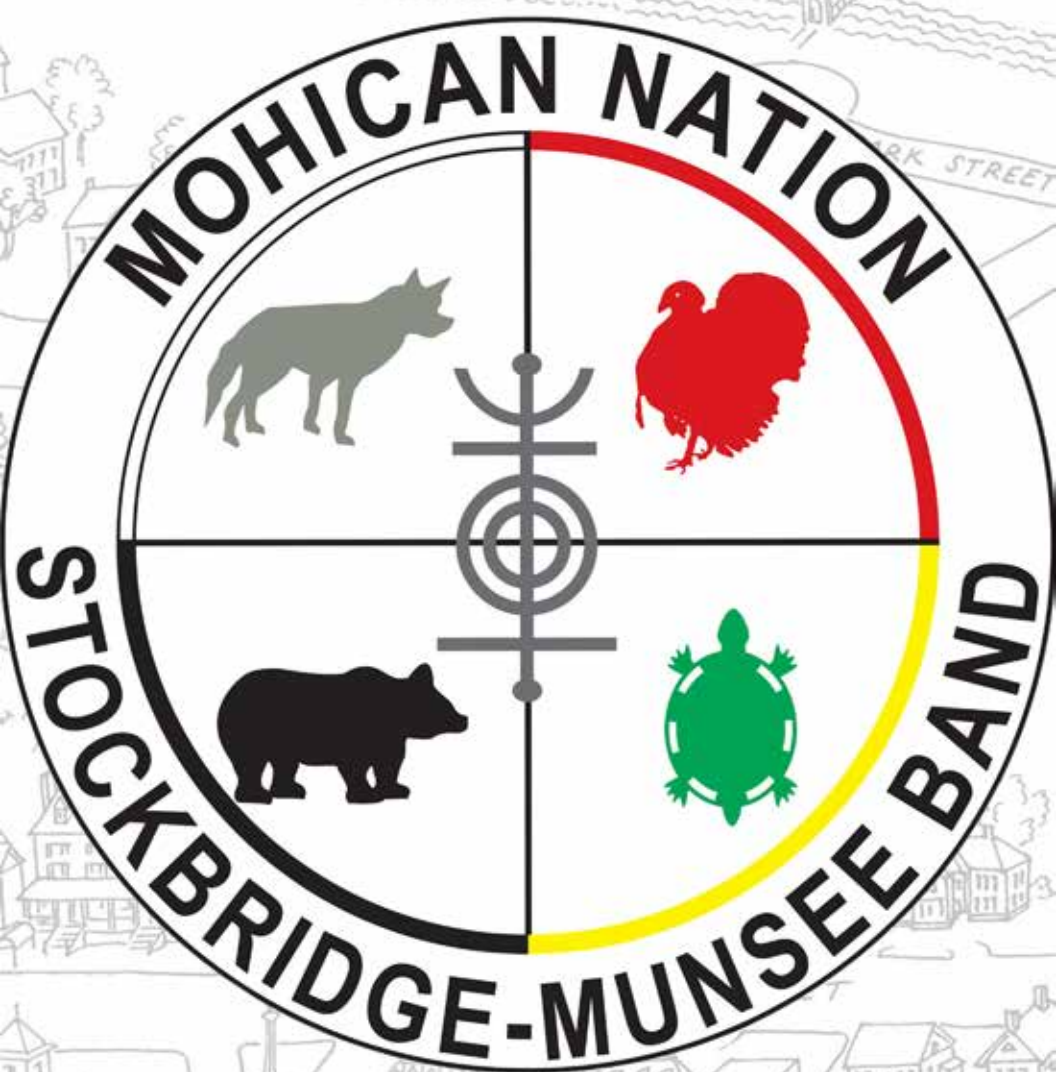


Footprints of our Ancestors

Mohican History Walking
Tour of Stockbridge



Welcome to Footprints of Our Ancestors: “Revisiting Indiantown” Mohican History Seminar Walking Tour

The Stockbridge Indians are primarily Mohican people, who existed in the region since time immemorial. Mohican territory once encompassed the Hudson River /Muhheacannituck valley in New York and Housatonic River valley in Massachusetts, extending through to Westfield River. Stockbridge, then, was already within the traditional territory of the Mohican people before it became formed as a colonial town.

Stockbridge was first called “Indian Town.” The stated purpose of Indian Town was to be a Christianized settlement, an experiment in assimilation to “help” the tribe, similar to the 14 other Puritan praying towns that had been established in New England (1651-1678) for other Algonquin-speaking tribes and which had mostly ended following King Philip’s War.

Indian Town was formed through a gathering of Mohican sachems (chiefs) in 1734 who grappled with deciding to approve accepting a missionary, John Sergeant. They took four days by council fire, debating if this was best mode of survival. Eventually, they exchanged a wampum belt and agreed that the Mohican Nation would now be centered in Indian Town rather than the principal homelands of the Hudson Valley.

On March 17th, 1735 the Massachusetts legislature granted a township, six miles square, to be laid out on the Housatonic River, immediately north of Monument Mountain. In 1737 a royal charter creating Indiantown gave 1/60th of the territory each to Reverend Sergeant, a Schoolmaster, and four English families for a total of 2,304 of 23,040 acres. Mohican people were expected to “model” themselves after the English families. The initial Mohican population in Indian Town was about 125 people.

Today, the tribe continues as a federally-recognized Indian Nation called the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, now based on a reservation in northern Wisconsin. The reservation is about the same size as the original 23,000 acres of Indian Town/Stockbridge. There are roughly 1,500 enrolled members.

We have always returned.

The Stockbridge-Munsee Community places great significance in visiting, teaching and preserving our heritage in Stockbridge

We hope you enjoy this walking tour of Stockbridge Main Street and learn about our history as you walk in the footprints of our ancestors.

1. 50 Main Street: Town Offices

Look above the entrance doors to the Town Hall and note the bust honoring Mohican sachem Konkapot.

Originally, the land upon which the Town Office now stands was described as “Plowing Land” owned by a Mohican named Aaron Sausockhock, who sold it to William Goodrich in 1773 as he entered Revolutionary War.

Within the Town Hall are many vital documents to Stockbridge Mohican history, which have remained here since they were originally filed when the town was founded for the tribe: You will find in the Clerk’s office the original Stockbridge Indian proprietor book, records of the tribe’s recorded births, deaths, and marriages, as well as other early town records (1737-1825) which show numerous facets of the tribe’s participation in the local government.

Laurel Hill, the hill behind Town Hall, was the site of a great Ox Roast sponsored by George Washington during Revolutionary War as thank you to Tribe for service in war (1783), as the tribe was forced to leave.

2. 47 Main Street: Chief Konkapot’s Property

This is the property of Chief John Konkapot, a highly regarded community leader. The property spanned today’s 43-47 Main Street lots. He had the largest plot of land on Main Street, which speaks to his status. He also owned other plots of land in town. He was a major land deed signatory throughout Berkshires including the 1724 deed, the first Berkshire County land the tribe signed. He was also present in the 1734 meeting with Umpachenee to accept Christianity. His son is Robert Nungkauwaut.

Chief John Konkapot is believed to have been born in 1690 and his Mohican name was Pophnehonnuhwoh. The name “Konkapot” was believed to come from Dutch traders. He was a captain in an English militia in King George’s War, and led 18 Stockbridge Mohicans.

Konkapot exemplifies a Mohican quality of diplomacy. The tribe has long been known as peacemakers; as early as the 1600’s the tribe helped negotiate land treaties and helped keep peace between tribes during war times. Today this tradition still plays a key role within the tribe. Both the Tribal Court and Tribal Policies use Peace Makers within the judicial system.

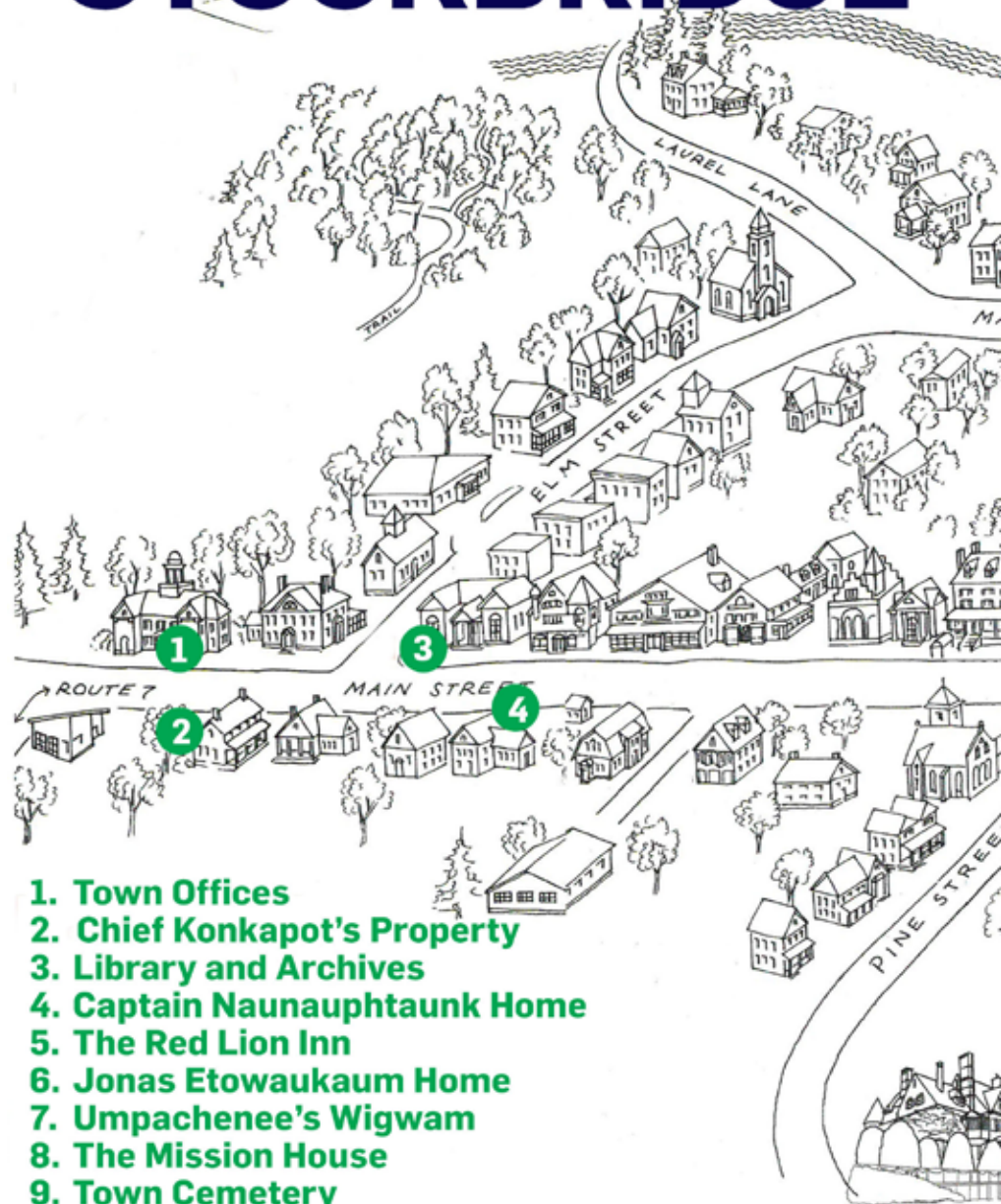
Direct descendants are within the Stockbridge-Munsee Community today, in Wisconsin, and “Konkapot Lodge” hotel is on the reservation.

3. 46 Main Street: Library and Archives

The Library is on Stockbridge Indian land originally. A 1750 survey granted the land to Johannes Mhuttawampee and it was passed down to his wife Hannah Mhuttawampee and daughter Elizabeth Soutosquoeth. This included the land for the library and the Old Corner House.

Today, Stockbridge Library’s Museum & Archive has a multitude of rare historical documents that complement the tour: One is an original copy of the June 1750 Proprietorship document is housed here; a larger version is in the Proprietor Book itself in the Town Office. This is the document that lists the land allotments for each Indian male “proprietor,” 42 men in total, which was the important step in moving from communal to individual land that was more easily taken. Rev. Sergeant had passed a year prior to this taking place, in 1749, and had complained of the stealing of Indian land..

The Town of **STOCKBRIDGE**



1. Town Offices
2. Chief Konkapot's Property
3. Library and Archives
4. Captain Naunaughtaunk Home
5. The Red Lion Inn
6. Jonas Etowaukaum Home
7. Umpachenee's Wigwam
8. The Mission House
9. Town Cemetery
10. Meeting House
11. Burying Ground and Wnahktukook



4. 39 Main Street: Captain Naunauphtaunk Home

You are standing at the former farm of Jacob Naunauphtaunk, a community leader and celebrated veteran of the French & Indian Wars. He held various positions including serving as Selectman (1746), constable (1749-50), Surveyor of Highways (1753) and again as Selectman (1754). He had four sons.

He became a principal hero during the French & Indian Wars, forming an all-Mohican company of Rogers' Rangers, which would scout and scour the woods. The partnership with Rogers' Rangers soon became a popular guerilla force, creating the basis for characters later romanticized by James Fenimore Cooper.

47 Stockbridge Mohicans served in French & Indian Wars and 59 in the Revolutionary War. The first two patriot Native American deaths in Revolutionary War are Stockbridge Indians. The Stockbridge-Munsee Community continues to have a strong record of military valor. Members of the tribe have served in every American war from the Revolutionary War to the present day. American Indians constitute the highest number of service personnel per capita. For the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, the Mohican Veterans is an active community association that honors this legacy.

5. 30 Main Street: The Red Lion Inn

This land was originally owned Moshenamauk and then by a Mohican woman, Rhoda Quanpaunwos, who may have been his daughter. It was uncommon at the time for a woman to own land although traditionally the tribe was matrilineal. In adopting the English methods in Stockbridge, though, these cultural practices changed and Mohican women were unable to serve in leadership positions. Rhoda Quanpaunwos sold this land to Phineas Morgan in 1768 and eventually it was owned by another woman, Anna Bingham, a widow.

Today, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community again has women in all levels of leadership, including as Tribal Council President.

Anna Bingham herself is notable for being the first woman to have a case heard in the U.S. Supreme Court, which was regarding a debt case. Bingham also purchased property from famed Mohican sachem Hendrick Aupaumut who later became a lawyer and diplomat, assisting the U.S. Government with treaty issues involving the western Tribes in the 1800s.

It has been reported that meetings were held at Red Lion Inn during the Revolutionary War including the Mohican men serving in the war. Stockbridge Mohicans were still here when the Inn was being built, and likely participated in building it.

6. 23 Main Street: Jonas Etowaukaum Home

You are standing at the home of Jonas Etowaukaum. In 1734 as a boy he traveled to Yale to assist Sergeant with learning Mohican, along with Konkapot's son Robert. The property was first the land and home of Rev. John Sergeant until around 1743. After Sergeant's move to Prospect Hill Road, Umpachenee's two sons Jonas Etowaukaum and James Chanequin took over the property.

The second missionary to the Stockbridge Indians, Rev. Jonathan Edwards, then purchased the property from Jonas Etowaukaum and James Chanequin in 1751. Jonas went on to become a noted scout during the French and Indian Wars, serving Naunauphtaunk's (whose home is also on the Walking Tour) company at Ticonderoga. He also is recorded as leading hunting parties to feed the community. However, like nearly every Stockbridge Indian by the 1760's, was sued for debt.

He was jailed in Albany in 1763 and bailed out by "Coffee" Van Schaack for 40 pounds. Jonas in turn granted him 58 acres of land. Jonas' house later burnt down and Town Meeting voters granted him 12 pounds to rebuild. This document is found in the Town Office. His father is Umpachenee (across the street on the tour) and his grandfather and namesake is Etowaukaum, one of the famous "4 kings" who had traveled in 1710 on a diplomatic mission to Queen Anne

7. 18 Main Street: Umpachenee's Wigwam

This is the site of the home of a Mohican leader named Umpachenee. You may recognize his name from nearby sites Umpachenee Falls & Umpachenee River. His name is also found as Aaron Sonkenewenaukheek.

Umpachenee is described as having a wigwam; the town was at first comprised of Mohican-style wigwams and English-style houses side by side (as of 1746), with today's Main Street visible but cows using it as pasture.

Umpachenee was often called upon to speak for the tribe due to his eloquence: In speaking for the tribe, Umpachenee was known to have questioned the colonial rule and Christianization, feeling free in openly critiquing English colonists like Ephraim Williams and Reverend Sergeant himself. Perhaps this is the "haughtiness" Sergeant described.

8. 19 Main Street: The Mission House

The house was built 1740-1741, home of John Sergeant and his family. It is the original Mission House but has been moved from its original location.

Sergeant was the first missionary to the Stockbridge Mohican Indians, funded by the Society for Propagating the Gospel to serve as the religious leader of the community after graduating from Yale. The house has a small office room where Sergeant and the Mohican tribal leaders regularly met.

The Mohican collection is significant. It contains a conch shell horn used to call worshippers to services and meetings. It was first used by Metocksin who had been hired at 20 shillings a year to blow the horn. Also on display are wooden bowls, corn grinders and baskets made by the Mohicans.

John Sergeant died at the age of 39, in 1749. The red building next to the Mission House is where the Indian School stood.

9. Across from 4 Main Street: Town Cemetery

Mohican tribal member Naunauneeconnuck's property is the eastern half of what is now the Town Cemetery. Mohicans traditionally had one name rather than first and last name. After baptism in the Stockbridge mission, his name Naunauneeconnuck became a last name, with the first name given as David. Eventually, the first name David became a last name in the Stockbridge Munsee tribe, "Davids." The Davids family in the tribe today are therefore direct descendants of David Naunauneeconnuck and have a direct cultural connection to this land.

Please walk over to the southwest corner of the cemetery to view a memorial to Chief Konkapot, as well as two Stockbridge Indian women, Roxy Seebuck and Sarah Towsey, the widow of Revolutionary War veteran. The cemetery also contains the grave of Reverend Sergeant and his wife.

The Stockbridge-Munsee Community through its Tribal Historic Preservation office actively worked to ensure the grave markers for the two Stockbridge Indian women were put in place, and tribal members continue to visit to pay respects at the cemetery, placing tobacco at the graves as an offering.

10 4 - 6 Main Street: Meeting House

The Chime Tower before you is the site of the first Stockbridge Meeting House, which served as both the church and town hall in Indiantown.

In 1763, a meeting was held here that served to dispossess tribal members of their leadership roles. Elijah Brown, who had no official authority, notified an Indian constable that a town meeting would be held on March 21. The English were notified 11 days earlier, whereas the tribe was notified the night before. Most were working in their maple sugar houses several miles away from the town and only a few were able to attend.

Elijah Williams was chosen a selectman and none of Indian candidates would be heard; the Indians walked out of the town house and they refused to serve in town offices. After that, the Indians and white supporters tried to call a second meeting, but the selectmen chosen in the first meeting refused to be overturned.

Mohicans appealed to The General Court in Boston, but nothing came of it.

11 West of Congregational Church, Main St. Burying Ground & Wnahktukook

Though the burial area indicates an era of 1730s, it is highly likely that tribal members were buried here long before the colonial period, and that this burial ground was in fact a continuation.

Look past the burying ground to the Stockbridge Golf Course, referred to as Wnahktukook, which is said to mean "Great Meadow" or "bend in the river." In 1739 a survey of the town laid out thirty-two intervals (meadow lots) to the Indians, considered the most desirable land, each two to ten acres. Wnahktukook was already cleared and cultivated to some extent, where some of the tribe then lived, and where they might easily raise corn and supply themselves with fish from the river.

Though most all the Stockbridge Indians were dispossessed of their land by the 1780s and forced to remove to western New York to "New Stockbridge" among the Oneidas, and eventually to Wisconsin, they tribe has never forgotten its home here in the Berkshires. An 1809 Town Meeting record, for example, shows that five sachems in New Stockbridge NY were concerned because they heard a road was being built on one of their remaining tracts of land in Stockbridge that would impact the burying ground.

One, Metoxen, returned in 1808 to petition the Town to stop a road that was being cut from disturbing the Burying Ground. Hendrick Aupaumut, tribal attorney and diplomat was part of the 1809 Burying Ground Deed which placed the land for safekeeping with Dr. Oliver Partridge. Aupaumut is buried in a cemetery in Kaukauna Wisconsin, a link in one lifetime the many trails of the Mohican people from their eastern homelands.

Rev. Jeremiah Slingerland, tribal member, travelled from Wisconsin to Stockbridge, Mass. in August of 1879, attending and speaking at the annual Laurel Hill Day festivities and visiting the Indian Burying Grounds to commemorate the monument now before you.