

QUAPAW TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA

Tribal Headquarters: Quapaw, OK



A brief history

The Quapaw are named for the word in their own language, “O-Gah-Pah,” meaning “down-stream people.” They share the same Siouan linguistic family as the Osage, Kansa, Ponca and Omaha. As early as the 16th century the tribe migrated south from the Ohio River valley along the Mississippi to what is today Arkansas. According to the diaries of 17th century French explorers, Arkansas gets its name from the Illinois Indian word for the Quapaw, Arkanssea meaning “People of the south Wind.”

The Quapaw befriended and traded heartedly with the French traders and explorers in the 1700s and eventually sided with them during the French and Indian War against the British and their allying tribes. Their location on the Arkansas River provided the tribe with a vital trade route. The Quapaw eventually ceded their lands to the U.S. in 1824 and moved to Indian Territory in 1833. Their present government was formed in 1956 and serves approximately 2,500 tribal members.

About the flag

The seal of the Quapaw, featured on their flag, represents an Indian shield with an American bison standing upon a green base before a light blue sky. The Quapaw followed the lifestyle of the Plains Indians in the past, and the bison was the essential creature in their world. Ringing the bison is a dark red and white rough edging representing the rawhide material

from which the shield was made. Hanging from the four principal corners of the shield are eagle feathers. The four feathers, as with many Native American tribes, recall the four directions.

Recently the flag was redesigned to feature the tribe's name in its native tongue "O-Gah-Pah."

Educational Activity

This flag honors the bison in the history of the Quapaw tribe. Design your own flag using animal features that best describe your history personality and strengths.