

Cambridge CSD Mascot Consideration

Original Files from 2001 Decision to keep the Indian Mascot

Item	Page Numbers in Packet	Notes:
Our History – Found on the Stockbridge Munsee website	<a href="https://www.mohican.com/our-history/">https://www.mohican.com/our-history/</a>	
From Homeland to New Land: A History of the Mahican Indians, 1600-1830	<a href="https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/From-Homeland-to-New-Land%3A-A-History-of-the-Mahican-Starna/8b4337e6d6270ee454e2dd2bdfacc62057dfd86c">https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/From-Homeland-to-New-Land%3A-A-History-of-the-Mahican-Starna/8b4337e6d6270ee454e2dd2bdfacc62057dfd86c</a>	Scholarly Work by William A. Starna – This is a comprehensive history of the Mohican (now Stockbridge-Munsee)
Indians and the Early Beginnings of the Cambridge Valley (1540-1760)	1-3	Printed in the Eagle, written by Ken Gottry
Facebook Post	4-5	Copied into an email sent to me. I asked for the original source but did not receive it.
Email Correspondence between Kate & Beth regarding the Yearbooks	6	
Cooper’s Last of the Mohicans – Was Not!	7-8	Short online article about the “Last of the Mohicans”

Key Points:

- The original tribe of reference here is the Mahicans
- I just received the PDF of the Homeland to New Land and have not yet read it.
- The first link is a quick read and general summary

## ***Indians and the Early Beginnings of the Cambridge Valley (1540-1760)***

(note: I use the term "Indian" throughout this article because that's the way the history books that I reference were written. I do not intend the term to cause offense to the reader)

The Cambridge Patent was signed on 23-Jul-1761, granting 100 acres to each of 30 families who would settle in our valley. But over 200 years before that, the Mohicans lived in our valley. This article describes the history of Indians in Cambridge Valley.

Much of my knowledge of the early Cambridge Valley comes from a book entitled Old Cambridge District. Amos Moscrip of Center White Creek wrote this book in 1941. Amos was a retired chief editor of the Albany Knickerbocker News and a former Assistant Attorney General of New York State.

I'll set the stage with a quote from Amos' book. It talks about the Owl, a Mohican sachem who lived at Tiashoke

*"(in 1710) thus passed on at the age of 110 a true hero, a man of actual and phenomenal greatness, who loved our Cambridge District as his earthly Paradise and who seems even considering the limitation of the seventeenth century red man, never to have done willfully aught that could mar his memory. It is pleasant to recall that in an age when many white men elsewhere in America were guilty of wanton outrages against the Indians too often retaliated with deed of fearful savagery, there was no instance of broken faith or lack of mutual respect and confidence between the Owl and either Dutch or English in these parts."*

Now for background.

It is challenging to research Indian history for two main reasons. First, they didn't write things down. History was passed down from generation to generation via stories. Second, Indians didn't conceive of boundaries.

For example, we hear of the Mohicans who lived at Tiashoke, but it is unclear exactly where that was. One story leads me to believe it was where the Owl Kill empties into the Hoosick River, just south of the Eagle Bridge. Other stories lead me to picture Tiashoke anywhere from North Hoosick to Schaghticoke. In modern day, we rely on precise boundaries, so the US Geological Society has assigned the name Tiashoke to East Buskirk.

The Indians hereabouts were Hoosicks, of the Mohican tribe. Throughout northeastern US from Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean you could also find Algonquin, Iroquois, and numerous New England Indians such as Pennacooks, Pequots, Wampanoags, Nipmucs, Narragansetts, the Abenakis of Maine and so on.

The leader of the Mohicans was called the Great Sachem. He was followed by 3 grand councilors: the Runner, the Hero, and the Owl. The Runner or secretary guarded the pipes of peace. The Hero (Maquon) was the chief warrior. The Owl (Suquon) or orator offered wisdom and recited the tribal history.

The Owl lived at Tiashoke. Owl sounds such as "hoo" were combined with "ic" "ac, "ick" which mean "place of". Thus, Hoosick literally means "place of the Owl"

As early as 1540 (80 years before the landing at Plymouth Rock), grand councilors Soquon (Owl) and Maquon (Hero) hosted a gathering of French traders at Hoosick. The feast included crystal water from the Owl Kill.

The Owl Kill is a river that starts at southern end of Lake Lauderdale and flows southward through the middle of Cambridge Village and empties into the Hoosick River just south of the Eagle Bridge. "Kill" is Dutch for river. The Dutch owned this area until 1664 when they turned it over to the English.

When a grand councilor died, a new one was selected. One well-known Owl (Suquon) was born around 1600. He died in 1710 on a ship bound for London to meet with Queen Anne

He was a polished gentleman who exhibited great courtesy, manners, and dignity He had broad shoulders, a small waist, pitch-black hair, brown eyes, and snow-white teeth.

He wore an elaborate girdle of wampum around his waist with a square leather apron hanging before and behind. He usually wore a vividly dyed robe

He wore shoes made of elk hide until the Hollanders arrived when he switched to Dutch shoes and stockings

In the summer he stayed at a house at the mouth of the Owl Kill near Eagle Bridge. In the winter, he moved into the woods along the Vermont border.

In the 1500s and 1600s the Mohicans were always at war with the Mohawks. One important battle (c.1660) was fought around Lake Lauderdale and Hedges Lake. In 1669 the Owl beat the Mohawks, driving them out of the Cambridge and Hoosick Valley.

Around 1640 one Mohican faction was led by Uncas, the brother-in-law of Chingachgook of Falls Quequik (Hoosick Falls). He was immortalized in James Fenimore Cooper's "The Last of the Mohicans"

King Philip's War (1675-1676) drove Indians out of Massachusetts. Chingachgook, Chief Greylock of the Wampanoags, and the young, fiery Pequot sachem named Mahwee came to Tiashoke to seek the wisdom of the Owl.

The Owl, who commanded a tribe of over 1000 men, worked with Edmond Andros, governor of New York, to set up these displaced New England Indians around Schaghticoke. The area became a refuge for all Indians being driven out of New England by the British.

The Pequot sachem Mahwee loved the Cambridge Valley. He didn't want to move to Schaghticoke. Instead he settled in Pompanuck, an area in Ash Grove that many of us call Pumpkin Hook

For the next 100 years (1660-1760) the English and French were constantly fighting in this part of North America. The Mohicans, the Mohawks, and the Iroquois were always involved in these battles. They included King William's War (1689-1697), Queen Anne's War (1702-1713), King George's War (1744-1748) and French and Indian war (1754-1763).

In 1707, at over 100 years of age, the Owl sold the deed to Knickerbocker and Schuyler for tracts in Schaghticoke. The Owl received 2 blanks, 12 duffel cloth coats, 20 shirts, 2 guns, 12 pounds of powder, 36 pounds of lead, 8 gallons of rum, 2 casks of beer, 2 rolls of tobacco, 10 gallons of Maderia wine, and a number of pipes.

In 1710, at the age of 110 the Owl boarded a ship to head to England to visit his fellow ruler, "Mother Anne". He died en route and was buried at sea.

**Re: To Whom It May Concern;**

1 message

Stardust17135 &lt;esotericenergy@gmail.com&gt;

Sat, Dec 5, 2020 at 8:31 AM

To: Douglas Silvermeil &lt;douglas.silvermeil@cambridgecad.org&gt;

Cc: Neil Gifford &lt;ngifford@cambridgecad.org&gt;, Beth O'Grady &lt;bogrady@cambridgecad.org&gt;, Caleb Brasuit &lt;caleb.brasuit@gmail.com&gt;, Jessica Roosevelt &lt;jrooseval@cambridgecad.org&gt;, Jessica Ziehm &lt;jziehm@cambridgecad.org&gt;, Kate Emerson &lt;kate.emerson@cambridgecad.org&gt;

8:27



Rae Love

Nov 18 · 👤



Edited to add: the first newspaper article to mention Cambridge Indians is attached below. It was published in 1954.

Here is some information regarding the origins of the Cambridge Indian mascot. A newspaper nicknamed us the Indians in the 1920's in reference to our basketball team. The newspaper gave us the nickname "Indians" because the village basketball team mascot was the Mohicans. Fun fact, even with this development the nickname didn't stick. Somewhere between the late 30's-50's we were the Cambridge Bengals. That was the ACTUAL mascot at CCS. We were the Bengals, a domesticated orange and black cat.

In the mid-late 50's a MALE sports team had some successes, minimal, but more than in the past and the newspapers started using the nickname Indians again. That is around the time the school adopted the nickname as a mascot. This is all important information to have when discussing the "history" of the mascot. As I find more information I will share.



Like



Comment



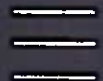
Send



Nagem Nicole and 28 others



Write a comment...



A friend of mine claims to have discovered the information about the Bengals but I'm not quite sure where she got it from.

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 3, 2020, at 2:01 PM, Douglas Silvemell <douglas.silvemell@cambridgesd.org> wrote:

Ms. Bauscher,  
Thank you for your input in this important matter. We are continuing to solicit input from our community.

I do have a brief question for you though because I feel like I am missing something. You refer to having the "Bengals make a comeback." Is this a specific reference to something in Cambridge that was in the past? Could you point me to any reference to that if you know where I might find it?

Sincerely,  
Dr. Silvemell

[#wearecambridge](#)

"Courage doesn't always roar, sometimes it's the quiet voice at the end of the day whispering 'I will try again tomorrow.'"  
Mary Anne Radmacher

On Mon, Nov 30, 2020 at 2:46 PM Stardust7835 <esotericenergy@gmail.com> wrote:

5

**Re: old yearbooks**

1 message

Beth O'Grady &lt;bogrady@cambridgecsd.org&gt;

Thu, Nov 19, 2020 at 9:56 AM

To: Kate Canini &lt;kate.canini@cambridgecsd.org&gt;

Cc: Douglas Silvernell &lt;douglas.silvernell@cambridgecsd.org&gt;, Neil Gifford &lt;ngifford@cambridgecsd.org&gt;

Thanks Kate. I researched the New York State Historical newspapers. I could find no reference to Cambridge High School Indians until 1955. The name "Indians" was first used for the school's football team. So, the timing of the 1956 yearbook with the Indian on the cover makes sense.

In the early 1950s there was a Cambridge Indians men's basketball team that was part of a Tri County Semi Pro league. The teams involved seemed to be town rather than school teams, but I am not certain. Each team had its own, unique name. Some names seemed to stick (Greenwich Witches) while others are now obsolete. My guess is that the name for the town's basketball league (Indians) was adopted by the school as the mascot. Again, I am not certain.

I found no reference to Cambridge Bengals, so I am not certain where Dave Thornton found that information. Being an historian and local author, he is adept at digging up obscure information.

All very interesting.

Thanks, Beth

On Thursday, November 19, 2020, Kate Canini <kate.canini@cambridgecsd.org> wrote:

If you go to the CCS Alumni page on our website you can see all the yearbook covers and then if you click on the link it brings you to the class members. Interestingly, you do not see an Indian until 1956 on the cover then thereafter the yearbook is known as the Chieftain Yearbook. The Chieftain part disappears after 2013.

I think the HS Library has every yearbook. I have some and Randi has some, but the IIS Library has the majority of them.

Kate

On Wed, Nov 18, 2020 at 5:43 PM Beth O'Grady <bogrady@cambridgecsd.org> wrote:

Sorry to bother you all during this busy time, but I have a quick question. Are old Cambridge yearbooks archived anywhere? As posts go up on FB about the history of the mascot, it occurred to me that the adoption date of the mascot may lie in a yearbook. Dave Thorton, previous town historian, has provided some community members with information from his books regarding the mascot, but the dates are inconclusive. There is a notion that at one time the Cambridge mascot was a bengal (makes sense with the colors- orange and black).

beth

-  
Kate Canini  
Cambridge Central School  
District Clerk/Administrative Assistant to Superintendent  
(518)677-2653 ext.1010  
Fax (518)677-3889

*It is what it is...But it will become what you make it.*

## Cooper's Last of the Mohicans—Was Not!

In his celebrated 1826 novel *The Last of the Mohicans*, American writer James Fenimore Cooper's Indian character Chingachgook says of his son Uncas: "my boy is the last of the Mohicans."

The novel, a recognized American classic, is still read today—and numerous television and Hollywood movies have been based on Cooper's tale.

There's just one problem with all this—two, actually: Uncas was *not* the last one. And there never were any Mohicans in the first place!

Cooper set his story in northern New York in 1757 during the French and Indian War. The Indians living in that area during that time were the Mahicans. But Cooper made one of his main characters Uncas—a famous 17th century chief of a Connecticut tribe, the Mohegans. Whether by design or mistake, he combined the two tribes' names into Mohicans.

There were Mahicans, yes. And there were Mohegans as well. In fact, both tribes still exist today. But there were no Mohicans.

And that bit about Uncas dying in 1757 the last of his tribe? He wasn't even the last of the Uncas line!

In 1842, the last descendant of the great Mohegan Chief Uncas finally died: John Uncas, aged 89. His death notice was printed by the *New Hampshire Sentinel* (Keene, New Hampshire), 28 December 1842, page 3:

Now, granted, James Fenimore Cooper *was* writing fiction. But in his historical novel *The Last of the Mohicans* he really stretched the truth!

There is an interesting postscript to this story, perhaps an example of life imitating art. The Mahican people (their ancestral name was "Muh-he-con-neok," or "People of the waters that are never still") were forced out of the Hudson River Valley into western Massachusetts, around Stockbridge, and called the Stockbridge Indians. Later, they were forced to move again, this time relocated all the way to the



<https://www.genealogybank.com/newsletter-archives/201203/coopers-last-mohicans%E2%80%94was-not>

Northwest Territory (present-day Wisconsin). There they were joined by some Munsee Indians—and their descendants, living in Wisconsin still, are now a federally recognized tribe called the "Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians." That's right—they have adopted the more familiar "Mohican" as part of their formal tribal name! James Fenimore Cooper would no doubt be proud.

8