



OCCANEECHI BAND OF THE SAPONI NATION

sourced from the OBSN website

The Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation—OBSN for short—is a small Indian community located primarily in the old settlement of Little Texas, Pleasant Grove Township, Alamance County, North Carolina.

Mission Statement

"The OBSN is continuously committed to the preservation, protection and promotion of our history, culture and traditions; while providing social, economic and educational resources, opportunities and services that will contribute to the well being of the tribal community."

Tribal Vision

"OBSN will be a unified and self-reliant tribe."



**Visit their
website here:**





HISTORY

sourced from the OBSN website

Until the middle part of the 20th century, the community was largely occupied in agricultural pursuits, sometimes supplemented by day wage labor jobs or jobs in nearby factories. In recent decades the numbers of people engaged full or part time in agriculture has declined significantly, and most working adults in the community now work in offices, or as skilled workers and craftsmen, or in the few remaining factories in the area.

The OBSN community is a lineal descendant of the Saponi and related Indians who occupied the Piedmont of North Carolina and Virginia in pre-contact times, and specifically of those Saponi and related Indians who formally became tributary to Virginia under the Treaties of Middle Plantation in 1677 and 1680, and, who under the subsequent treaty of 1713 with the Colony of Virginia agreed to join together as a single community. This confederation formed a settlement at Fort Christianna along the Virginia/North Carolina border in what is now Brunswick County, Virginia. The confederation included the Saponi proper, the Occaneechi, the Eno, the Tutelo, and elements of other related communities such as the Cheraw. All of these communities were remnants of much larger Siouan communities that had lived in North Carolina and Virginia in prehistoric times.

The Saponi confederation was closely allied with the Catawba confederation, and occupied several forts and settlements located in what are now Greensville County and Brunswick Counties, Virginia from about 1680 until the mid-18th century, when the last Virginia fort, Christianna, fell into disuse. They also continued to occupy fortified villages and other settlements in North Carolina into the mid-1700s during this period.

While maintaining distinctions among themselves (sometimes exaggerated by non-Indian contemporaries and by later historians), the various elements within the Saponi confederation had a common origin and were closely related, linguistically and culturally. Their final treaty with Virginia included an agreement among the four signatory groups to formally incorporate as one tribe under the name "Sapony." In January, 1715, Virginia's Governor Spotswood wrote a letter to the Bishop of London describing how he had "engaged the Saponie, Oconechee,

continued on next page





HISTORY

sourced from the OBSN website

Stuckanox [Eno] and Tottero Indians (being a people speaking much the same language, and therefore confederated together, tho' preserving their different Rules) immediately to remove to y't place, which I have named Christ-Anna." In June of that year, Spotswood wrote to the Commissioners of Trade in London that he had "...been for a good part of last Spring, employ'd in finishing the fortifications of Christanna, and in settling there a Body of our Tributary Indians to ye number of 300 men, women and children, who go under the general name of Saponies..."

Acculturated members of the confederation and their descendants gradually formed a settled community that, over time, became geographically and culturally distinct from the traditional community. Formal marriages and common-law relationships between Indians of the community and their European neighbors contributed to divisions between the settled community and more conservative community members. Documentary evidence of the existence of the acculturated community begins to appear in local records as early as the 1720s. As these records involve adults, it is likely the acculturated community dates back into the 17th century. A great majority of the tribe's members can trace their ancestry back to the individual Indians identified in such records.

The acculturated community occupied a small tri-border area in what are now Greensville County, Virginia, Brunswick County, Virginia, and Northampton County, North Carolina. Their settlement was also midway between two forts built for the Indians by Virginia, and about 10 miles south of a third fort, near modern-day Purdy, Virginia, that was apparently built by the Indians themselves, probably for defense against Iroquois raiders from the north. More precisely, the community's land was located south of modern Emporia, Virginia (Greensville County), west into Brunswick County, and extending across the State line into the northwestern corner of Northampton County, North Carolina and to the Roanoke River. Researchers for the OBSN have documented the development of this community from the late 17th through the early 19th centuries, by which time emigration to the Midwest and other parts of the South had reduced it to a handful of families.





PRESENT

sourced from the OBSN website

The OBSN is very much still present and active!

Here is what they are doing and are planning on doing:

- Has an **established tribal council**
 - Holds regular tribal council meetings
- Publishes a **regular newsletter** with plenty of news and updates
- **Successfully created legislation** to ask for fair and equitable support for COVID-19 pandemic aid from the State of North Carolina
 - State-recognized Indian tribes were not supported by state or federal recovery efforts
- Hosting the **37th Annual Occaneechi-Saponi Pow-Wow** in October 2022
 - With food, dancing, music, crafts, and more
- Attending the **1st Annual Yesanechi Intertribal Language Conference** in 2022 at the Brafferton Indian School at the College of William and Mary
- Participating in **survey engagement**
 - Tutelo-Saponi-Monacan Community Language Survey
- Hosting an **Occaneechi Series Talks**
 - Occaneechi colonial history, present activities, and Orange County communities
- Implementing a **Forest Stewards Program**
 - Volunteers who hike around Duke Forest and report conditions
- Participation in **research studies**
 - Advancing Native Students in Aging Research
- Providing **community education**
 - Language skills
 - Nervine herbs

And so much more!





HOW TO SUPPORT

sourced from the OBSN website

DONATE FUNDS

Donate funds here:



PURCHASE OBSN-MADE GOODS

OBSN store:



OBSN artists:



USE OBSN-OWNED-AND-OPERATED CATERING

Big Boyz Catering:





ELON AND OBSN

sourced from the Elon Project Pericles website

Note: The following statement is offered as an alternative to a land acknowledgment. The Project Pericles program at Elon University asserts that land acknowledgments, by themselves, are insufficient instruments to honor and recognize Indigenous sovereignty. Additionally, land acknowledgments do not typically provide a defined plan that outlines a substantial institutional commitment to meaningful restoration.

The Project Pericles program at Elon University recognizes the importance of critically examining our collective history and how the institution came to occupy the land where Elon's campus is presently situated. This exercise is vital for understanding our current reality and also functions as an initial step in the process of healing the deep wounds of our shared history. This includes, but is not limited to, the dispossession and theft of land from Indigenous peoples by white colonists, the trauma resulting from the genocide and violent displacement of Indigenous communities, as well as over 400 years of the enslavement, torture, and systematic mistreatment of Indigenous and African peoples and their descendants.

However, this recognition of past injustices is not enough. Therefore, the Project Pericles program calls upon Elon University to open and sustain a dialogue with local Indigenous peoples, most notably the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, and to commit to the long-term pursuit of equity. This process must follow Indigenous protocols and result in more than a statement acknowledging who first owned the land currently occupied by Elon University. The University as a whole (and not just individual units) must find a way to recognize and honor Indigenous sovereignty, and local Indigenous communities must have the agency to determine effective restoration strategies that will provide sustained compensation for Elon's ongoing participation in settler colonialism. It is imperative that the University:

- **Consider**, in good faith, the recommendations of any Elon working group that may be tasked with initiating and sustaining this ongoing dialogue.
- **Create**, and be held publically accountable for, an outward-facing plan containing specific actionable items that begin to address Elon's role in perpetuating systemic injustice.
- **Identify, steward, and commit** substantial financial and non-financial resources to this reconciliation effort.

The Project Pericles Program at Elon University deeply values our organizational partnership with members of the Oglala Lakota Nation in South Dakota. We recognize that the work of reconciliation and restoration is ever-evolving and will never be complete. As an academic unit, we approach this process with humility, an ongoing critical examination of our own positionality, and an understanding that we will continue to learn how to be more effective allies and partners with Indigenous peoples. We will revisit and revise this statement over time as the nature of the relationship between the University and local Indigenous communities continues to evolve.

