



Chickasaw
Historical
Society



CHICKASHA NIN APISA ABOA
CHICKASAW, CARBOL

CONSTRUCTION BEGAN APRIL 1884 ON THE CHICKASAW
CAPTAIN BUILDING A SPITEL AT THE CORNER OVERLOOKING
THE TOWN OF THE BOWLING. IT WAS BUILT OF RED
GRANITE FROM THE PENNACUIC QUARRIES
BY GOV. A. M. HARRIS. GRANITE BLOCKS WEIGHING
75 LBS. PER SQ. FOOT WERE COLLECTED THE
CITY'S GROUNDS BY HORSES AND MULES
COMPLETED IN SEVEN MONTHS FOR A TOTAL COST
OF \$100,000. THE VICTORIAN GOTHIC STYLE BUILDING
IS OVER 1000 SQ. FT. IT WAS DEDICATED ON
NOVEMBER 1, 1884, AND SERVED AS THE
CHICKASAW NATION CAPITAL UNTIL 1906.
THE CHICKASAW CAPTAIN WAS SOLD TO BRANTON
LOOKING IN 1906 FOR \$7,500. NEGOTIATIONS FOR
REDEMPTION OF THE BUILDING WERE FIRST STARTED
BY GOV. JAMES H. HAYNES IN THE 1920S. THE
CAPTAIN WAS RECLAIMED BY GOV. BILL
ANDERSON IN 1992 FOR THE SUM OF \$750,000.
TODAY THE CAPITAL IS A REMINDER THAT THE
CHICKASAW PEOPLE'S DEDICATION TO
THEIR NATURAL BEAUTY AND INDEPENDENCE
THE BREATHER COURAGE AND INDEPENDENCE
CHICKASAW ARE HOME.

THE CHICKASAW NATION TODAY

by Jeannie Barbour



*The future of the Chickasaw Nation is based on
the preservation of its sovereign status as an independent government.*

*Tribal sovereignty is defined as the right of Indian tribes
to determine their own futures.*



The Chickasaw Nation today is economically strong, culturally vibrant, and possessed of energetic people still dedicated to the preservation of family, community, sovereignty, and heritage. Since the 1980s tribal government has focused most of its efforts on building an economically diverse base to generate funds that will supplement programs and services to Indian people. Businesses have flourished, programs and services have grown, and the quality of life for all Chickasaws has been greatly enhanced.

The future of the Chickasaw Nation is based on the preservation of its sovereign status as an independent government. Tribal sovereignty is defined as the right of Indian tribes to determine their own futures. Through their elected tribal governments, they operate as self-governing nations. As the United States government signed treaties with Indian nations down through history, they acknowledged the inherent sovereignty of tribes. Attributes of sovereignty include the power to determine a form

◀◀ NATIONAL CAPITOL BUILDING TODAY
IN TISHOMINGO, OKLAHOMA.

▲ THE CHICKASAW NATION HONOR GUARD
IN FRONT OF GOVERNMENT HEADQUARTERS IN
ADA, OKLAHOMA. PICTURED FROM LEFT TO
RIGHT ARE BERNIE SEELEY, JIM PERRY, WILL
JOHNSON, BILL FRAZIER, BOB ROSS, WARREN
REED, SIM GREENWOOD, BILL QUINCY, AND
SOLOMON GANTT.



▼ CHICKASAW BOOK OF LAWS CONTAINS THE CONSTITUTION WRITTEN IN THE CHICKASAW LANGUAGE.

▲ GOOD SPRING, SITE OF 1856 CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION IN TISHOMINGO, OKLAHOMA.



of government, to define conditions for citizenship, to administer justice and law, to tax, to adjust domestic relations of its members, and to regulate property tax.

The right to maintain its own government has been upheld for the Chickasaw Nation since the 1830s. At that time, federal courts affirmed a trust responsibility toward the tribe. This trust includes the protection of tribal interests and rights, especially with regard to tribal lands and resources. It is important to understand that although Congress exercises plenary power over Indian affairs, all sovereign powers are held by Indian nations, not the U.S. government. The only power the United States has over tribes in America is the power that tribes allowed them to have. This power was given in treaties, agreements, or the occasional act of Congress.

Throughout history, attempts have been made to wear away tribal sovereignty. Trade and allotment acts constructed by the federal government were successful in gaining Indian lands for the national purpose. Assimilation policies were designed to destroy tribal cultures and incorporate Indian people into mainstream society. All had detrimental effects on the Chickasaw people, but the Chickasaws persevered. At every step in Chickasaw history, tribal leaders have wisely negotiated for the protection of sovereignty.

The Chickasaw Nation's current three-branch system of government was established with the ratification of the 1983 Chickasaw Nation Constitution. All of the elected officials provided for in the Constitution share in a commitment that



government policy serves the common good of all Chickasaw citizens. This common good extends to future generations as well as to today's citizens. Chickasaw Nation government seeks to protect individuals as well as provide a platform for a smooth-running administrative structure.

More and more Chickasaws are taking the opportunity to participate in tribal government, service to their community, and the electoral process. They know the values and policies they support and they are in constant contact with their legislative, judicial, and executive representatives. Those who choose to serve Chickasaws as elected officials are most successful when they demonstrate political savvy, openness to different political perspectives, and an advanced level of spiritual maturity.

▲▲ JOHN HERRINGTON, FIRST NATIVE AMERICAN ASTRONAUT TO FLY IN SPACE, AND PEARL CARTER SCOTT, TAUGHT TO FLY BY WILEY POST AND MEMBER OF AVIATION HALL OF FAME.

▲ CHICKASAW TRIBAL DAY FEAST UNDER ARBOR, CA. NINETEENTH CENTURY. COURTESY OF THE CHICKASAW COUNCIL HOUSE MUSEUM, TISHOMINGO, OKLAHOMA