

# The First People



Archeological evidence of some of Quincy's First People was unearthed by state archeologists at nearby Caddy Park in 1999. The fishing and whaling artifacts found date back 3,500 years. The First People who settled here, fished here, and had planting fields here did so for thousands of years. The descendants of the First People are known as the Massachusett.

When the English first arrived here, this site was part of a larger area known then as Passanageset. Passanageset was a seasonal home to the Massachusett. At that time, Chickataubut was the principal sac'hem of the Massachusett. The plague of 1616-1619 decimated the Massachusett.

Every culture has its own beliefs about the origin of the world and people. Each generation of Native people tells the next its stories of the beginnings of the world. In addition to these oral traditions, archeologists offer this:

In a time before now, during the last Ice Age 18,000 years ago, the land you are now visiting was covered by a mile-high glacier, which stretched from the Arctic to Cape Cod covering one third of the earth. Continents were bridged by the ice. That last glacier eventually retreated to the North opening up a corridor that allowed animals, then humans, to explore then settle in this area, the area now known as Quincy.

Artwork created by Joshua Winer



*“Before the plague, Chickataubut had a seat here at Passanageset Knoll, a piece of high ground here in Broad Meadows salt marsh near Merrymount. It was generally back of the present Our Lady of Good Counsel Church on Sea Street.”*

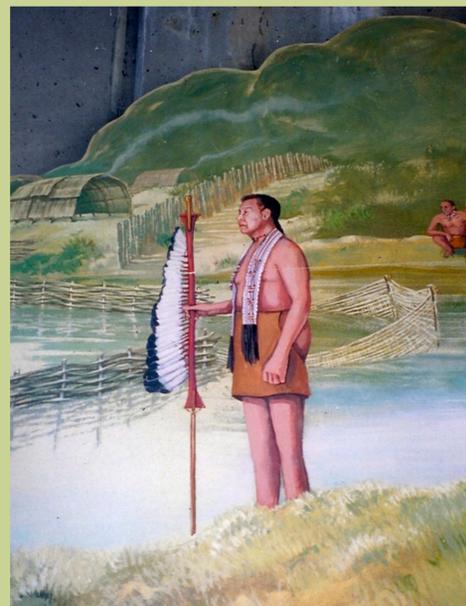
JAMES CAMERON, FROM QUINCY'S LEGACY:  
TOPICS FROM FOUR CENTURIES OF MASSACHUSETTS HISTORY



# The Massachusett



Photo of original mural depicting Massachusett daily life pre-Europeans. *Strong Medicine and Nanaweeta* posed for the painter of the mural.



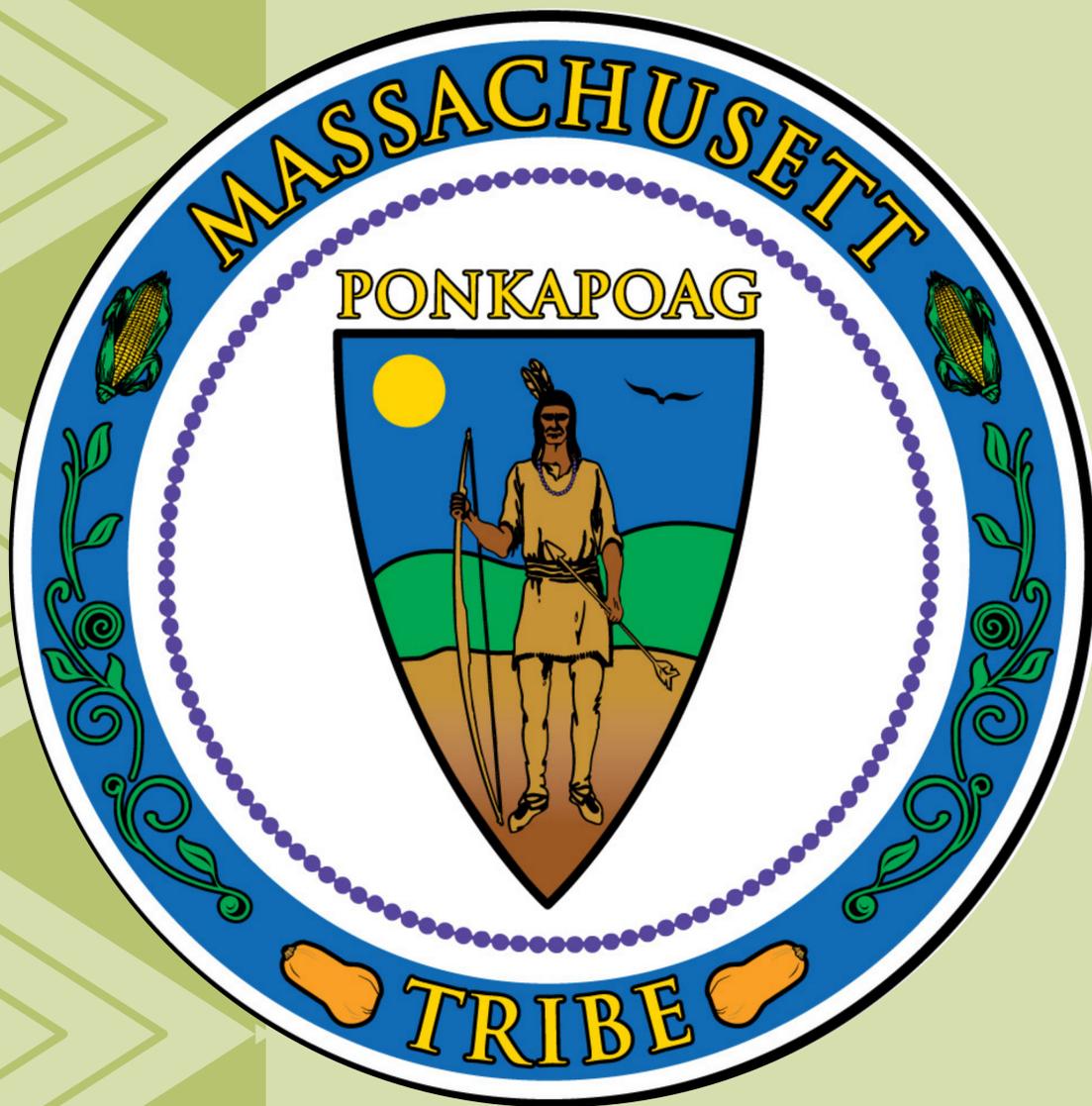
Before the arrival of European traders or English settlers to the coast of Massachusetts, indigenous Massachusett Villages spanned from Salem to Cape Cod along the coast, and inland as far west as Worcester. The Massachusett People, led by their Sac'hems, lived, worked, practiced their religion, built their homes, raised their families, and enjoyed prosperity.

One of the Massachusett tribes was the Neponset, and their Sac'hem was Chickataubut, Principal Chief of the Massachusett when the English came into his territory to settle. Sac'hem Chickataubut had many residences throughout his territory, but his principal seat was at Passanageset. He buried his mother at Passanageset, which suggests that it was his mother's village and perhaps the birthplace of Chickataubut.



In a Neponset village, women trapped small game, gathered shellfish, made pots and baskets, gathered wood, maintained fires, and tended vast planting fields of corn, squash, and beans ("the Three Sisters"). They collected wild grains, greens, and herbs, for food and medicine. Women also owned and built wetus (summer huts) and winter long houses that tribal members lived in. Men of the tribe were responsible for mining the quarries, whaling, fishing, hunting, and for protecting the tribe and its territory against encroachment by other indigenous tribes. Both women and men took active roles in decision making.

# We Are Still Here



Strong Medicine's original graphic of the Massachusetts logo



From 1616 to 1619, a plague killed about 90% of the Native Americans living between Saco, Maine and Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island. The cause was believed to have been a European disease to which the native people had no immunity, probably small pox.

Near the time of the plague, Chickataubut moved with the uninfected from Passanageset to Moswetuset Hummock, at the northern end of Quincy Bay, seeking to save the survivors from certain death. Chickataubut lived with his people at Moswetuset Hummock until 1633, when he was struck down by small pox. No further written accounts describe the Massachusetts at the Hummock after 1633.

Before his death, Chickataubut reserved Ponkapoag, a part of the Neponset territory, for his people. His son and grandson honored this set-aside territory and never gave Ponkapoag over to the English, and that is why the Massachusetts are still here:

*“Ritual dance, drum, rattle, song, and rites of passage all enable the present day Massachusetts Tribe to transfer the knowledge of our ancestors to succeeding generations. We have an oral tradition of storytelling, just as our ancestors did, that passes on the Massachusetts view of how the world works, our relationship with all of nature, and why things are the way they are. We thank our ancestors for keeping the traditions, for their foresight, and for the gifts they left to us. Tabutne.”*

\*by Ren Green, Medicine Sac'hem, with contributions from Gil Solomon, Lead Sac'hem of the Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag 2015

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# Passanageset Park

## *at Broad Meadows Marsh*

Passanageset Park is part of a tidal salt marsh that has been significantly disturbed several times in the past century, especially by gravel excavation and by the dumping of Fore River dredging. The Broad Meadows Marsh Restoration Project, conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers between 2010-2013, returned portions of this area back to a working marsh and a site for passive recreation.

Salt marshes are among the most productive ecosystems on earth, and they are as valuable to us today as they were to the people who lived here thousands of years ago. They provide essential food, refuge, or nursery habitat for more than 75 percent of the fisheries we depend on. Numerous birds, mammals, and invertebrates also depend on this unique habitat, which helps buffer stormy seas, slow shoreline erosion, and absorb excess nutrients before they reach our oceans.



Restoration work or marsh plants/wildlife