

NATIVE AMERICANS

Although some tribes removed to Indian Territory eventually returned to their homelands, most stayed and adopted the new country as their own. Some came in hopes of maintaining the old ways. They were forced to move by a society that had tried to **abolish** those old ways. The nineteenth **century** came to a close with many Native Americans still struggling with the adjustments of their uprooting.

Now into the 21st century, Oklahoma still has the highest Indian population per capita in the nation. Not only have Native Americans succeeded in preserving a rich heritage, but they have seen that heritage popularized in American culture.

Indian art graces homes and adorns offices and waiting rooms all over America. Indian-made jewelry sells for high prices at shows and in stores. Books are read and movies are viewed that praise the virtues of the naturalness of original Indian life. No longer do Indians in war bonnets ride bareback on paint horses across the theater screen, chased by the cavalry because of some savage act for which they need to be punished.

America knows misunderstandings occurred. America knows mistakes were made. America understands that those things existed on both sides. Few pure-bloods are around to enjoy that understanding.

Before World War II, artist Charles Banks Wilson of Miami, began a search for all pure-bloods. He wanted to preserve tribal likenesses on canvas for the world to remember. He had problems finding pure-bloods to represent many Indian nations. Today, even fewer pure-bloods are registered on tribal rolls.

No tribal members live completely by the old ways. Nevertheless, culture is preserved.

Some Indian families speak their Indian languages at home. They eat Native American dishes made from traditional recipes cooked in outdoor clay ovens. Others have hung onto the culture by adopting it as a “hobby,” furnishing their homes with **artifacts**, studying little-known Indian histories, and passing legends and beliefs on to their children. Others are content to remember a few family stories and attend an occasional pow-wow, living mostly in a modern world but hanging onto some small thread of the past.



Carrie's Dad.
Charles Banks Wilson
self-portrait

Most modern Indians are acculturated. They are modern people living in a modern society, making large contributions to a modern world. In Oklahoma, Indian people play a great part in maintaining the economy, keeping the world safe and making this a better place in which to live. Some also feel that heritage is important and that being Indian is different from being anything else.

HARVEY PRATT. The first full-time police artist in Oklahoma, Harvey Pratt was one of only about 120 full-time police artists nationwide. This Cheyenne-Arapaho-Sioux was hailed by law **enforcement** agencies in thirty-five states. They had been assisted by Pratt in solving crimes, identifying victims, and finding missing persons.

Pratt, who has a degree in police science from Oklahoma State University, had no formal training in art. The son of an Arapaho Indian artist, he said his talent came naturally.

As a forensic artist, Pratt executed composite sketches of suspects from witnesses' descriptions. This talent led to the arrest of Gene Leroy Hart for the 1977 girl scout murders. It was also a major **factor** in the arrests of Verna and Roger Dale Stafford. Hart was not convicted, but the Staffords were convicted of the 1978 Sirloin Stockade **massacre** in which six people were killed in an Oklahoma City restaurant. It was estimated that about 70 percent of Pratt's drawings resulted in arrests.

As the Deputy Chief Inspector for the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI), Pratt did skull reconstructions to aid in the identification of bodies. Similarly, he retouched photos of missing children, projecting how they might look as they grew older. Through his work, several children were reunited with their parents.

Nationally acclaimed for his work, Harvey Pratt served as the 1987 chairman of the Southeast Regional Organized Crime Information Center. The center served 50,000 officers and 300 member agencies in the Southeast U.S., tracking traveling criminals and sharing information among law enforcement departments. The center served 14 states. Pratt retired in 1992 from the OSBI.

In addition to his police work, Pratt is an accomplished Indian painter and sculptor. His art won honors in 1983 and 1984 at the Inter-Tribal Ceremonial in Gallup, New Mexico.



HARVEY PRATT
FORENSIC ARTIST,
PAINTER AND SCULPTOR



ANN SHADLOW
ACTIVIST AND EDUCATOR

CHARLES PRATT. Harvey Pratt's brother, is also a nationally recognized Indian artist. He is acclaimed as a "wizard" and a "genius" by his peers. Working mostly in bronze, stone, or silver, Charles enhances his sculptured pieces with semi-precious stones. Although a full-time artist, Charles, like his brother Harvey, received no formal training in art. He said his interest in art was aroused when his grandfather taught him how to make animal figures from river clay.

Listed in *Who's Who in American Art*, Pratt is highly regarded by Indian traditionalists and contemporary art collectors.

ANN SHADLOW. The mother of Harvey and Charles Pratt has found her own niche in the modern world. Named the 1987 National American Indian Woman of the Year, Ann Shadlow was recognized for her civic and tribal contributions and for "improving the overall image of Indian women." Ms. Shadlow was also honored as the 1978 Most Useful Senior Citizen of Oklahoma.

One of Ms. Shadlow's most important contributions was her work at the Oklahoma City Native American Educational Center. She taught urban Indian children the arts, crafts, and traditions of their forebears. Through Ms. Shadlow, many non-Indians as well have a greater understanding of Indian culture.

BERT SEABOURN. An Oklahoma artist whose works portray the dignity of Native American culture is Bert Seabourn. Seabourn's works have increased in popularity over the past decade. The mysterious, often sad faces of Native Americans dominate his paintings. Often the spirit of the people is captured by the artist's including a bird within the composition of the painting.

SAHMAUNT FAMILY. Members of the Kiowa tribe and great-grandsons of Chief Kickingbird, Daniel, Ace, and Bud Sahmaunt have impacted the lives of Oklahoma's citizens, both Indian and non-Indian. All three are respected by their peers as champions of public education.

Daniel Sahmaunt served as superintendent of Chilocco Indian School. Dr. Joseph "Bud" Sahmaunt, a former public school teacher and coach, is the director of athletics at Oklahoma City University.

Herschel "Ace" Sahmaunt served two terms as Chairman of the Kiowa tribe. His first election ended in dispute when a



JEROME TIGER (LEFT) and Arthur Silberman in 1965
Arthur & Shifra Silberman Native American Art Collection
Box 114/Folder 16 National Cowboy Museum

dissident (disagreeing) faction of the tribe opposed his taking office. Re-elected, he assumed his role as Chairman in 1988. He declined to run in 1990, but ran again in 1992 and won. He became Chairman in June 1992, shortly after his retirement from public school teaching. He previously served as Tribal Relations Officer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Ace Sahmaunt believes that the future for Indian youth lies in education. He encourages his fellow tribesmen to value their heritage, but to live in and reap the advantages of the modern world, to start by getting a good education.

OTHER INDIAN ARTISTS. Probably best known among Indian artists, the Kiowa Five (actually six) are recognized by the Oklahoma Historical Society as being responsible for a worldwide renaissance (rebirth) of Southern Plains Indian art. Spencer Asah, Jack Hokeah, Monroe Tsatoke, Stephen Mopope, and Lois Smoky had their first showing in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1928. Later, Lois Smoky, the only woman of the group, left and was replaced by James Auchiah. Works by the group are displayed today in museums all over the world.

The late Jerome Tiger, a Creek, was a popular artist into the 1980s, as was Kiowa artist Robert Redbird. Other well-known Oklahoma Indian artists of the 20th century include Cherokee artist-sculptor Willard Stone and Apache artist-sculptor Allen C. Houser. Bronson Edwards, an Ottawa artist, was a favorite of the late Robert Kennedy. C. Terry Saul, of Choctaw-Chickasaw

heritage, perfected a painting technique using dentists' tools for etching oils on canvas. He won many awards for his work. He was also the Director of the Art Department at Bacone College. Doc Tate Nevaquaya was an accomplished painter and also made Indian flutes.

LaDONNA HARRIS. Wife of former U.S. Senator Fred Harris, LaDonna Harris was active in the fight against poverty and the struggle for minority rights. She also worked to improve care and treatment of the mentally ill.

The founder of Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity and Americans for Indian Opportunity, this Comanche woman was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson as a member of the National Indian Opportunity Council.

MILITARY SUCCESSES. A Choctaw, Hal Muldrow formed his insurance business in 1932, but his greatest success was in the military. A member of the 45th Division Artillery, Muldrow retired from the Army in 1960 as a major general. He served as commanding general of his division longer than anyone else in the history of the 45th. He was the youngest person ever to receive the Distinguished Service Citation from the University of Oklahoma. For his military service, he also received the Silver Star for gallantry in action, the Bronze Star for meritorious service in combat, and the Legion of Merit for his service in the Korean War. Serving in both World War II and the Korean War, Muldrow was decorated with ten medals.

Lt. Colonel Ernest Childers, a Creek, received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service in World War II. He was decorated "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity (fearlessness) at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty in action on September 22, 1943, at Oliveto, Italy." Despite his own injuries, including a broken foot, Childers eliminated two German machine gun nests and captured an enemy mortar observer. He received a total of six medals.

A Choctaw, Joseph Oklahombi, was the nation's most decorated soldier of World War I.

N. SCOTT MOMADAY. A native of Lawton, this Kiowa author and university professor won the Pulitzer Prize in 1969. *House Made of Dawn* is the story of an Indian soldier's tragic efforts to readjust to civilian life after World War II.

Scott Momaday's father, Al Momaday, was an educator and a distinguished artist. He won several awards, including one in 1956 as the Outstanding Western Indian Artist.

ENOCH KELLEY HANEY. A Seminole, Kelley Haney has made his mark in two areas — art and government. Serving as a member of the Oklahoma State Senate, he is also an accomplished artist. Senator Haney sponsored legislation that named the official state wildflower, the Indian blanket. His sculpture has been selected for the Capitol dome as well.

MURIEL WRIGHT. The late Muriel H. Wright, a Choctaw and the daughter of Chief Allen Wright, was a noted historian. Long-time editor of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Ms. Wright's developed works that are standard reference material in the study of Oklahoma history.

NAPOLEON B. JOHNSON. A Cherokee, Johnson traveled a distinguished path from Maysville, Oklahoma, to the seat of Supreme Court Justice in the state's highest court. Prior to assuming his place on the bench of the State Supreme Court, he served as a city attorney, as county attorney, and as district judge of the 12th Judicial District of Oklahoma.

In his tribal work, he served as the first president of the National Congress of American Indians. He was president of the National Hall of Fame for Famous Indians. He represented the Cherokee Nation on the Inter-Tribal Council of Five Civilized Tribes, and he was Oklahoma's representative on the Governor's Interstate Indian Council.

BILL WILLIS. Although he enjoyed a twenty-eight-year legislative **tenure** from Cherokee County, W.P. “Bill” Willis was a Kiowa. District 4 representative in the Oklahoma House of Representatives from 1958 to 1986, Bill Willis served as Speaker of the House from 1978 to his retirement.

As an educator and a merchant, Willis got his first taste of politics as mayor of Locust Grove in 1938. His early political career was cut short by the war and military service. He was urged back into government by his desire to bring natural gas to the people of Tahlequah in 1958.

During Willis’s legislative service, Oklahoma’s corrections system was modernized, and the merit system was refined. Government employees were given an insurance program, and state parks and lake access roads were built. Willis was proudest of his work in the areas of legislation to improve services to the mental health and mental retardation fields. In appreciation of his many efforts in those fields, a community mental health center in Tahlequah was named in his honor.

JOSEPH JAMES CLARK. U.S. Navy Admiral Joseph James “Jocko” Clark, born in Chelsea, Oklahoma, of Cherokee descent, on November 12, 1893, was the first Native American to graduate from Annapolis (1918). He commanded the aircraft carrier Yorktown, which became Admiral Pownall’s flagship during the World War II carrier raids in 1943.

Lt. Commander R. Paul Jolley of Edmond served aboard the ship under Clark’s command. He described Clark as “a sailor’s skipper. He had genuine feelings for his men.”

Jolley revealed that on a particularly exhausting day, the men of the Yorktown sought to rest on the hangar deck when the planes were gone from the ship. Clark appeared on the deck and the first sailor who saw him jumped to his feet and yelled, “Attention!”

“As you were!” responded Clark before any of the

men could stand. “These men need their rest,” he explained, as he went about his business. The men of the Yorktown were his first concern.

In January 1944, Clark was promoted to Rear Admiral. He became Vice-Admiral and Commander of the 7th Fleet during the Korean War. He later retired as a Full Admiral. For outstanding service and heroism, he received the Navy Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Navy Commendation Medal, and the Korean Order of Military Merit.

Clark died on July 13, 1971, and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

ALLIE P. REYNOLDS. From Bethany, this Creek Indian pitched for the Cleveland Indians and the New York Yankees, retiring in 1954 after twelve years in major league baseball. In 1951, he pitched the first no-hitter in the history of the American League. He led the league in strikeouts in 1943 and 1952, and he had the best earned run average in 1952. The recipient of many awards, this OSU Hall-of-Famer was respected among his peers and revered among his fans.

Upon his retirement, he returned to Oklahoma to become an executive in the oil patch. He died in December 1994.