



## Chappaquiddick Wampanoag – Selected Events

The Chappaquiddick Wampanoag Tribe is a historical Massachusetts tribe. Its ancestral homelands are Chappaquiddick Island, Cape Poge, and Muskeget. The Chappaquiddick Wampanoag were a tribe at the time of first contact, when the United States became a country in 1776, and when Massachusetts became part of the Federal Union in 1789. The tribe had two reservation areas on Chappaquiddick until the late 1800s. Today, Chappaquiddicks live in Martha's Vineyard, the larger island next to Chappaquiddick, on the mainland in Massachusetts and Rhode Island (ancestral homelands of the Wampanoag Nation), and throughout the United States. The tribe filed several petitions to the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the State of Massachusetts over a period of years prior to 1869. Tribal citizens visit and use the traditional lands at Chappaquiddick Island, and many of them are or were parties to petitions to register land by non-Indians within the last 20 years.

**Pakeponesso was born circa 1595;** Sachem of Chappaquiddick, Cape Poge and Muskeget

**1611 - Epenow Kidnapped-** Epenow was kidnapped from Cape Poge and taken to England. In 1614 Epenow convinced the English there was GOLD back in his country and upon their arrival he escaped back onto the island.

**1621 – Epenow signed Treaty with Pilgrims –** Epenow, representing Capawock, was one of the Sachems that signed the treaty at Plymouth with Massasoit

**1642 - Thomas Mayhew, Sr.** purchased overlapping claims to the land that is now Dukes County from two people in 1641, appointed himself governor of Martha's Vineyard in 1642, and started purchasing land from various Indian individuals. At that time Pakeponessoo was sachem of Chappaquiddick. Pakeponessoo and his successor Seeknout wouldn't sell land to the colonist. They balanced the needs of both the natives and colonist thru arrangements that allowed the roughly 140 Wampanoag of Chappaquiddick and the 200 or so colonists of Edgartown to exist together.

**Sachem Pakeponesso –** berated Hiacoomes for associating with Christians

**1651 – Christian assembly** at Chappaquiddick run by Hiacoomes; 1651, church established for 'meeting members'

**1663 – Pakeponesso grants land to Thomas Mayhew – Natick**

**Circa 1681 – Seeknout,** the younger son of Pakeponesso becomes sachem after his father's death

**1691 – Joshua Seeknout –** grandson of Pakepanesso is sachem from 1692 until his death in 1716; he sells Muskeget Island to Mayhew in 1692.

**1726 to 1788 petitions** were submitted by our people to the Governor and General Council citing trespass of land, illegal land sales, and improper behavior on the part of the guardians.

**1772/1773 Chappaquiddick Wampanoag Petition to England –** A petition was hand delivered by Simon Porrage (a Wampanoag representative) to King George III of Great Britain. He ordered grievances be addressed but Boston would not listen.

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**1788 Land Division** - In 1788, the portion of the Island that had not been sold prior to that date was divided by the colony between the settlers and the Chappaquiddicks. They got the “bleak sandy soil” and retained only 1/5 of the island. They had two reservations, the Cleared lands Reservation on North Neck and the Wood Lands reservation.

**1828 Set Off** – In 1828, the tribal lands were divided again by the guardians (under the tribal reservation system in MA) between our families. This division follows a request by Chappaquiddicks that the lands be divided according to family unity. The common lands remained and certain locations, like the cranberry bogs remained of for the use of the tribe.

**Life during 1800s** - Throughout the 1800s, Chappaquiddicks endured hardships under the guardian system. The Earle report paints a picture of a people struggling to survive. They find it difficult to live on the land alone, and are divided over whether they wanted the right to become a part of the larger society and no longer be wards of the state.

### LEGISLATIVE Activity for several years – Massachusetts Acts and Resolves from 1692 to 1859

**1849 Briggs Report** – Chappaquiddick Wampanoag are listed

**1859 John Milton Earle Report** - Chappaquiddick Wampanoag are listed

**Massachusetts Act to Enfranchise Indians of 1869** – When the lands were allotted per the 1869 Massachusetts Act, the **Chappaquiddick lands became part of Edgartown** instead of becoming a separate town. The Mashpee and Aquinnah lands became separate towns. The Mashpee and Aquinnah people held leadership positions within the newly established towns.

**1890s, Mistreatment of Chappaquiddicks by Town Officials** - Chappaquiddick Wampanoag woman and her family living on Cottage City (Oak Bluffs) were dragged from their home and sent to the Tewksbury. She later took town officials to court and wins a suit for damages.

**Early 1900s** – annual Gatherings on North Neck in Chappaquiddick at the location of the sliver lots.

**1940s – Several sites on Chappaquiddick Island — including South Beach and Cape Pogue — used extensively for dive bomb training and other munitions operations during World War II by military planes out of the Quonset Point Naval Air Station in Quonset, R.I.** - See more at: <http://vineyardgazette.com/news/2008/05/23/bombs-beach-trustees-warn-public-avoid-ordnance?k=vg5473840d62547#sthash.IHJtvXrV.dpuf>

**1950s though 1980s – Individual Indians started receiving checks for Chappaquiddick Indian land lots.** People were clearing titles using the Massachusetts land court procedures.

### Selected Land Claims:

**1977 – Epps Case** - <http://openjurist.org/611/f2d/915/epps-v-andrus>

**1981 – “A coalition of six Wampanoag Tribes file suit against the Federal Government** - in an effort to regain land .... the Chappaquiddicks, Christiantowners, Herring Ponders, Mashpees, Troys and Gay Headers. Robert C. Hahn, a lawyer for the Indians, said the suit maintained that sovereignty over Indian land was passed from the state to the Federal Government after 1789, meaning that the tribal property could not be surrendered or taken without Federal consent.” New York Times, December 19, 1981.

**1995 – Chappaquiddick Tribe of the Wampanoag Indian Nation Corp** is set up by tribal leaders; a nonprofit community corporation that sits under the Chappaquiddick Tribe of Wampanoag Nation.

**1995 through 2015 – annual July Gatherings on Chappaquiddick Island**

## Chappaquiddick Wampanoag – Selected Events (continued)

**2015 – Chappaquiddick Indian Burial Ground Plaque** - dedicated at annual Chappaquiddick Wampanoag Gathering; the plaque was erected by the Edgartown Cemetery Commission.