

## **SOUTHEASTERN MVSKOKE NATION, INC.**

Preserving Our Native American Heritage through Education and Cultural Experience

People of One Fire: Alabama's Creek Indians

The Creeks were the largest, most important Indian group living in Alabama. They called themselves "People of One Fire". The English traders call them "Creeks" because their villages were built primarily along creeks and rivers. In the early days most of the Creek villages were in Georgia. However with the arrival of the English colonist in 1730, the majority of the Creek nation was forced to join their relatives who had taken residence in the "western wilderness" which would eventually become known as "Alabama". The name "Alabama" was taken from the "Alibamos" Indians, the first Creek tribe to populate the region.

The scattered Creek villages were united in a loose "Confederacy". Each village was independent and made its own decisions. However, in times of war many villages united to defeat a common enemy. Those who chose to fight were called "Red Villages", and those who decided not to engage in war were known as "White Villages".

The "Micco" or Chief was the most important person in the village. While many villages classified all of their Tribal Council as "Lower Chiefs", the "Micco" was known as "The Greatly Honored Man". He vowed to fight only for a just cause, and looked after the daily needs of his people. Indian society took care of the widows, orphans and needy. The villages Elders were held in a place of honor, and advised the Council on all important Tribal matters. Village Chiefs would meet together in council at least once a year. These annual meetings were held in Elmore County, Alabama.

### **The Southeastern Mvskoke Nation, Inc.: A Modern Day Tribe with Traditional Values.**

Formerly known as the Lower Creek Muscogee Tribe East, Star Clan, Inc., and Yufala "Star" Clan of Lower Muscogee Creek Indians. At the annual meeting in June, 2014, the Tribal citizens elected to change the name to "Southeastern Mvskoke Nation, Inc."

In the early 1970's, the Tribe chose to relocate its headquarters in the western sphere of their traditional area of influence. Under of the leadership of Chief Larry Johnson, the Tribe moved to Pike County, Alabama.

In 1978, Larry Johnson retired from the office of Chief, and returned to his hometown of Panama City, Florida. In October of 1978, Tommy Davenport was appointed Chief. During his time in office, he was instrumental in helping to create the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission. He also served on the Commission from its inception. He was Chairman of the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission at the time of his death in 1991. At that time, his wife, Erma Lois Davenport, was elected as Chief and continued the pioneering work that her husband began almost 30 year ago. Mrs. Davenport served as Chief until the year 2000, at which time Christopher Scott Sanders was elected Chief. Chief Sanders served until October, 2014, at which time he resigned. Vice Chief Ronnie F. Williams assumed the position of Chief.

The Tribal home is in Pike County, Alabama, on almost 25 acres of land. The citizenship consists of families in the states of Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Indiana, Tennessee, and Georgia, as well as Alabama.

The Tribe is dedicated to the education of our people in their culture and heritage. In the words of our fathers: "You must be able to see where you have been, before you can possibly know where you want to go."

### **Today's Southeastern Mvskoke Nation, Inc.**

Today the Southeastern Mvskoke Nation, Inc., continues to promote the traditions of our ancestors by promoting peace and understanding of the Native American lifestyle through continuing education.

In addition to the largest Indian Education program in the State of Alabama, we have several "on-going" projects, which serve to preserve our Native American heritage, and provide a positive influence in our surrounding communities. Our

citizens volunteer their time and talents to provide demonstrations of the Native American lifestyle at schools and other events.

The acquisition of the almost 25 acres of Tribal lands will enable us to expand its educational base, providing areas for an authentic "Living" Creek Indian village, a museum, and a dedicated wildlife preservation area. Long-range goals include the construction of an "Outdoor Classroom" and on-site camping facilities.

We have regular monthly meetings at our Tribal office in Pike County, Alabama (Troy), designed to provide cultural and educational opportunities for all of our people. Cultural activities are highlighted each year with the celebration of our Native American activities: Green Corn, Little Green Corn, Harvest Busk, and Berry Busk. Our meetings are open to everyone.

We are a non-profit organization, and one of the nine State recognized Indian Tribes. For additional information, please feel free to contact us at the following address:

**Southeastern Mvskoke Nation, Inc.**

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