

# *The Indians for Indians Radio Show*

LINA ORTEGA

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA  
LIBRARIES





# The *Indians for Indians* Radio Show







The  
*Indians for Indians*  
Radio Show



LINA ORTEGA

To the many Native American individuals  
and groups who gave of their time to be on the  
*Indians for Indians* radio show and to help build  
an intertribal community in Oklahoma



# Contents

Author's Note vii

Introduction 3

**ONE** Don Whistler, the Whistler Family,  
and a Native American Connection to Campus Corner 9

**TWO** The Sequoyah Club 14

**THREE** Community Life 18

**FOUR** Military Service 30

**FIVE** Religious Life 38

**SIX** Schools and Education 46

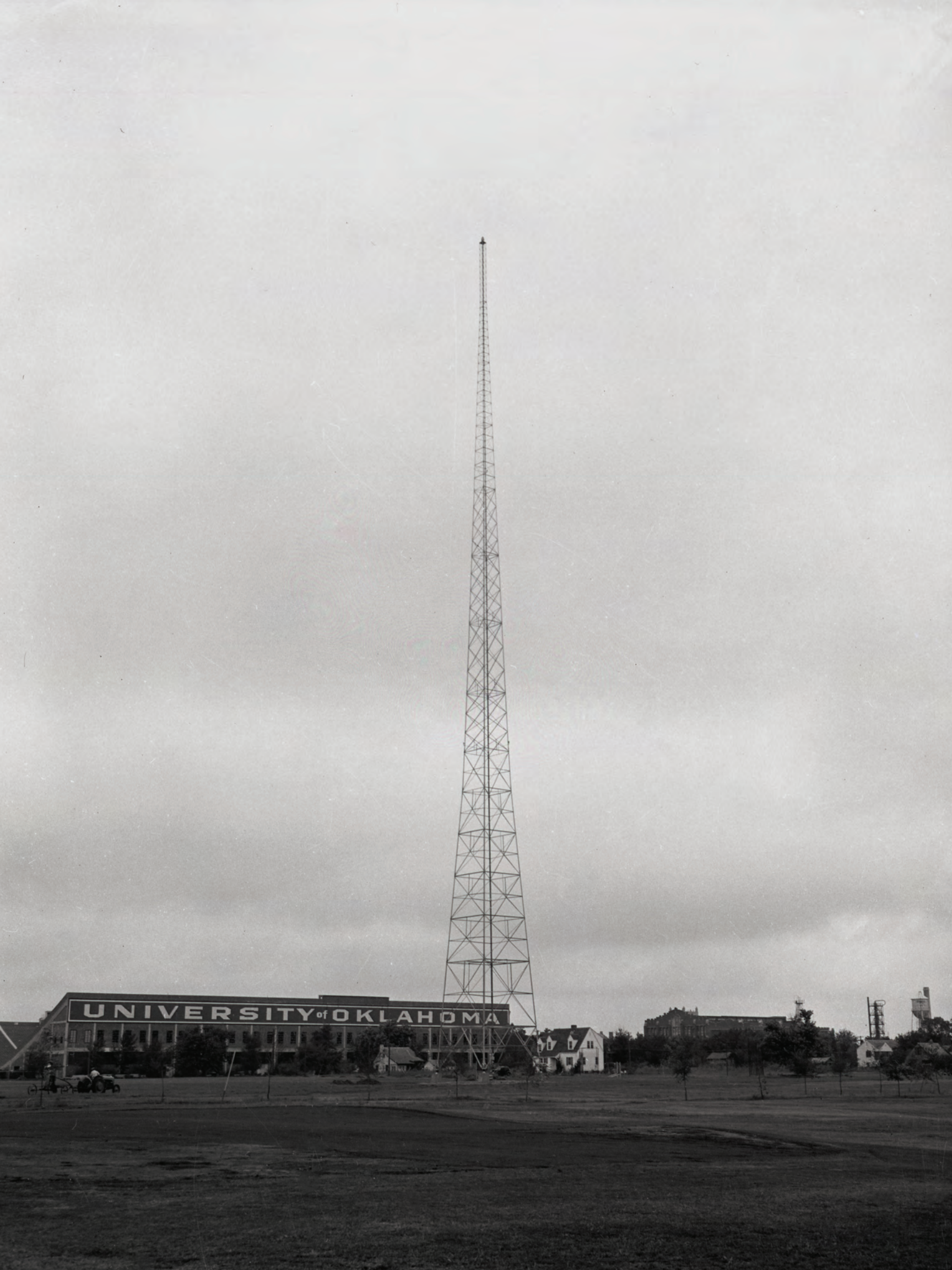
**SEVEN** Tribal Rights and Tribal Government 51

**EIGHT** Native Languages 57

**NINE** The *Indians for Indians* Legacy:  
Our Voices Then Continue to Our Voices Now 60

**TEN** The Preservation of the Broadcast Recordings 63

Conclusion 67



UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA



## Author's Note

This book grew out of a 2019–2020 exhibition, *Native Voices over the Airwaves: The Indians for Indians Hour Radio Show*, in Bizzell Memorial Library on the campus of the University of Oklahoma.

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of student assistants and interns in the Western History Collections who helped with exhibition research and preparing images: Shelby Koch, Jennifer Johnson, Gabriel Pelayo, and Rebecca Yacyszyn. The author also

gratefully acknowledges the support of the Sac and Fox Nation, including Business Committee members Principal Chief Justin Wood, Second Chief Audrey Lee, Secretary Jacklyn King, Treasurer Jared King, and Committee Member Robert Williamson, as well as the Council on Library and Information Resources and the University of Oklahoma Libraries, for their generous support of the *Indians for Indians* projects, including this book.



**Pawnee Indian School students in WNAD studio.**  
Indian Radio Program—*Newsweek* feature.  
OU Photographic Service Collection, no. 16344.

**WNAD tower.** OU Photographic Service Collection, no. 12398.





# The *Indians for Indians* Radio Show





# Introduction

Your programs and announcements on the Indian activities, over [the] WNAD radio program, is something for the Indian to be proud of.

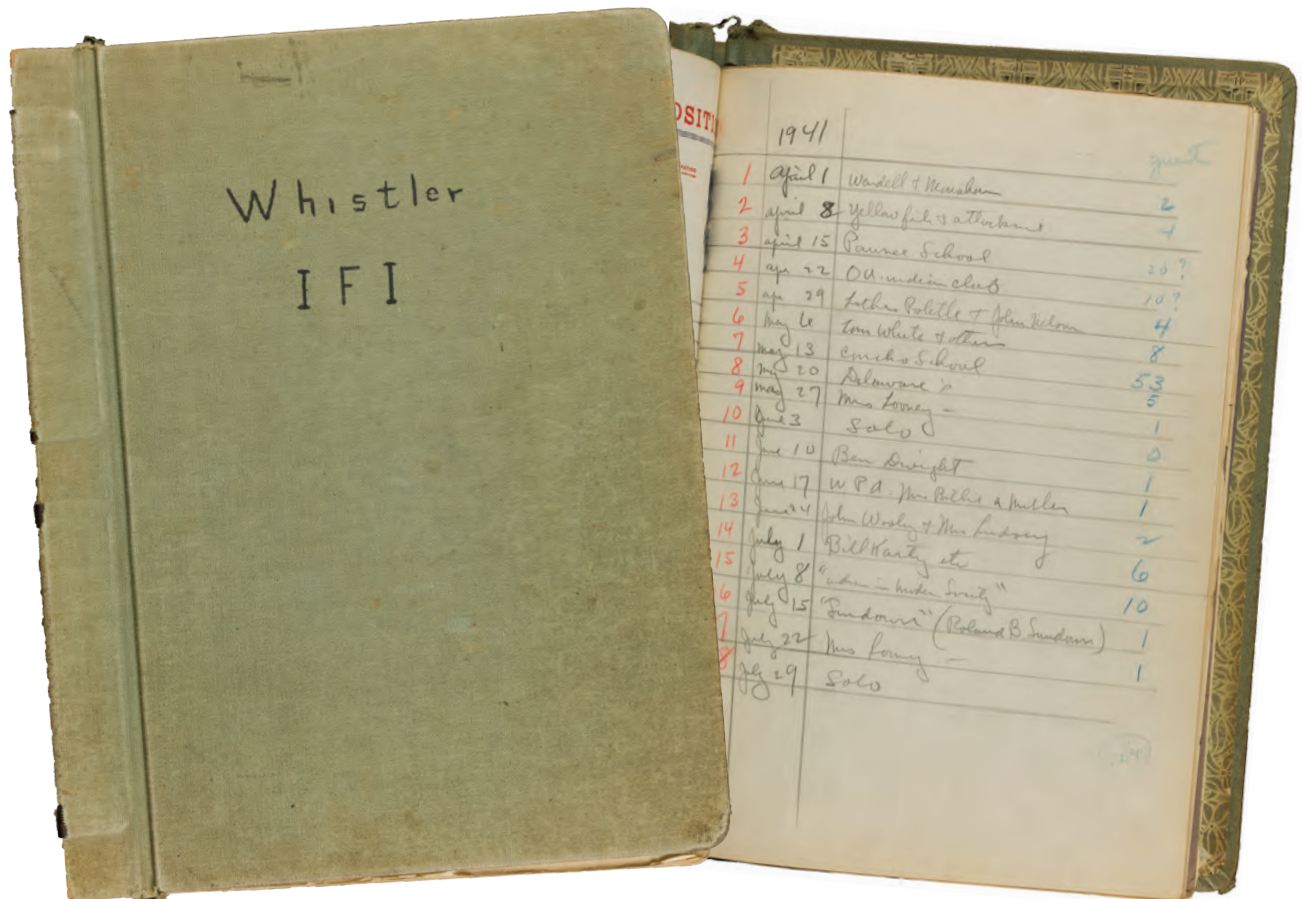
—FRED HOFFMAN, STATE NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH SECRETARY, OCTOBER 17, 1960



For more than three decades in the mid-twentieth century, something remarkable took place on the University of Oklahoma campus that brought together Native American peoples from across the state and beyond every single week. From 1941 through the mid-1970s, the *Indians for Indians* radio program broadcast from OU's WNAD radio station. Sac and Fox chief Don Whistler (1894–1951) created the show and invited members of Native American tribes across Oklahoma to participate on the program as guests,

encouraging them to sing or to speak on topics of their own choosing. According to national news at the time, the program was the *only* Native language broadcast regularly on the air in the United States.

Whistler was explicit that the show was *by Indians, for Indians*, so there was no need for participants to make a self-conscious effort to perform for a non-Native audience. The show followed a similar format every week, with Whistler beginning with a greeting in the Sauk language: “Åho nikân! Keshkekosh a nina!” (which meant, “Hello

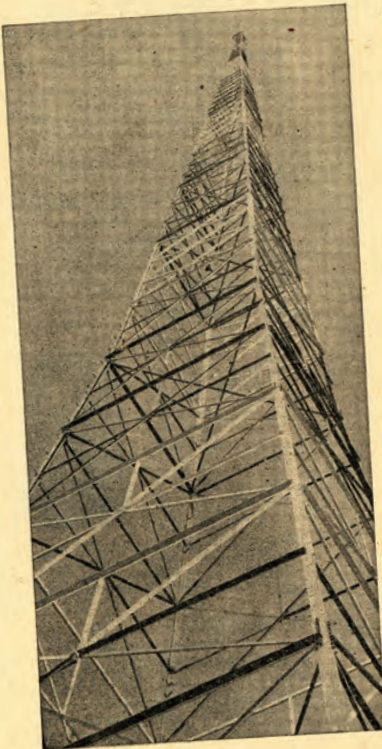


Cover and page for April 1–July 29, 1941, in *Whistler LogBook, 1941–1951*. University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division/Radio Station WNAD, box 8, folder 1.

Don Whistler in WNAD studio. OU Photographic Service, no. 16339.



# UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA BULLETIN



W  
N  
A  
D  
A  
N  
D  
W  
N  
A  
D  
-F  
M

ISSUE  
For  
MARCH  
★  
MARCH 1  
1950

WNAD BULLETIN •

terest involved, staged by students in the O.U. law school and narrated by Dale Vliet, associate professor of law. The programs will be studio productions of WNAD and WNAD-FM under the direction of Hugh Mix, program director.  
Mar. 1—Buyer Beware.  
Mar. 8—More Than You Bargained For.  
Mar. 15—Gentlemen of the Jury.  
Mar. 22—Children in Court.  
Mar. 29—You Don't Always Sue.

## FROM OU TO YOU

### People You Should Know

Tuesdays, 2:30-2:45

Time to get acquainted with campus personalities, through interviews by radio students. The program is supervised by Don Clark, professor of radio.

### University Needs

Wednesdays, 6:00-6:15

A series devoted to essential needs in research, equipment, and student aids at the University which may be met only through private gifts. Moderators of the panel discussions are Boyd Gunning, executive secretary of The Oklahoma Foundation and Guy Brown, field director of the Alumni Development Fund.  
Mar. 1—The University of Oklahoma Foundation, Gunning.  
Mar. 8—Research, Dean Laurence Snyder, Dr. Harold Hinman, Dean Horace Brown.  
Mar. 15—Student Aids, Dean Paul MacMinn, Dean Glenn Couch, Dr. Stephen Scatori.  
Mar. 22—Research, Dr. Percy Buchanan, Dr. H. V. Thornton.  
Mar. 29—Service and Equipment, Dr. Thurman White, Leonard Haug.

## PATTERNS IN THE ARTS

### Behind the Footlights

Fridays, 9:30-9:45

A summary of opinions on new Broadway productions by Lazelle Dunn, who keeps you in touch with the theater nationally and locally.

### Mythology and the Arts

Mondays, 3:15-3:30

A study of the influence of classical myths, by Dr. William R. Tongue, associate professor of classical languages and literature.  
Mar. 6—The Tale of Troy, Tongue.  
Mar. 13—The Iphigenia of Goethe, Dr. W. A. Willibrand.  
Mar. 20—The Iphigenia of Gluck, Tongue.  
Mar. 27—Milton's Minor Poems, John E. Hardy.

### Drama Time

Tuesdays, 5:00-5:15

Radio school productions directed by Rod McDonald, graduate assistant in radio, from scripts written under the supervision of Dr. Sherman Lawton, co-ordinator of radio instruction.

## The Opera Glass

Wednesdays, 3:45-4:00

Outstanding musical moments from famous operas combined with stories of the productions by Hugh Maguire, assistant WNAD music director.

## The Theater Today

Saturdays, 11:00-11:15

Helpful ideas for non-professional theater groups in such problems as adapting available floor space for a satisfactory stage, or selection of suitable plays, discussed by Charles Suggs, assistant professor of drama.

## OKLAHOMA PROGRAMS

### Around Oklahoma

Tuesdays, 3:30-4:00

Take a tour of your home state by listening to civic leaders from Oklahoma towns as they tell about resources and opportunities in their own communities. Kenneth Harris, senior public relations assistant, is in charge of the program.  
Mar. 7—Hollis.  
Mar. 14—Wynnewood.  
Mar. 21—Davis.  
Mar. 28—Checotah.

## Indians for Indians

Tuesdays, 1:00-1:30

Don Whistler



Close your eyes during this program exclusively for Indians and you'll find yourself a spectator at one of the many tribal celebrations, as Don Whistler and his guests sing and dance the ancient tribal ritual.

## Oklahoma Editors Speak

Fridays, 4:30-4:45

Comment selected from Oklahoma newspapers, compiled by Mima Smethers, WNAD staff member.

## This Is Oklahoma

Thursdays, 5:00-5:15

Dramas based on Oklahoma history, presented by students in the radio school.

## Report to the People

First Saturday, 5:15-5:30

From the state capitol, Governor Roy J. Turner gives a monthly report on activities in state administration.

Page 3

Cover of the *WNAD Bulletin* and the *Indians for Indians* program listing inside it, March 1950. University Archives Record Group 15: Media Services and Public Affairs, box 74, folder 37.



Sequoyah Club, 1962.

OU Collection, no. 1839.





**Boyce Timmons.** OU Photographic Service, no. 27978.

1952  
WNAD RADIO PROGRAMS

JAN	1 Joe Attochnie Oklahoma City	8 Ruben Wilson Rt. 2, Caney, Kans. Delaware Indians	15 War Mothers Carnegie, Oklahoma	22 Robert Buck Oklahoma City	29 Joe Hicks Dustin, Oklahoma Rt. 1
FEB	5 Joe Attochnie Oklahoma City	12 Records	17 Sam Dicke El Reno, Oklahoma	26 Walter Keys Rt. 3, Pawnee, Pawnee Indians	
MAR	4 Morris Medicine Carton, Oklahoma Cheyenne, 3 men, 3 women	11 Joe Attochnie Oklahoma City	18 Ralph Murrow Binger, Oklahoma Caddo Indians	25 Joe Hicks Rt. 2, Box 43 Okmulgee, Oklahoma	
APR	1 Anniversary Albert Attochnie	8 Jake Ahtone Anadarko and group	15 Mrs. Leonard Keahone Lawton & Carnegie Jimmie Angue	22 Thunder Bird Club of Okmulgee A & M Tech. Paul White Bear, Secretary	29 Inter Tribal Club - Oklahoma City Pat Warner, president
MAY	6 American Indian Vets. Assoc. Lawton, Oklahoma Stacy Pahdapony	13 Phillip Jim Pawnee, Oklahoma	20 Oklahoma City Service Club Wilbur Jones	27 Carnegie Victory Club Bill Koonsa	
JUNE	3 Protestant Indian Church of Oklahoma Anadarko, Jake Ahtone	10 Yale Spotted Bird Lawton, Okla.	17 National Congress of American Indians	24 Moses Yellow Horse Lassen Hotel, Ponca City, Pawnee singers	

**Schedule for January–June 1952.** University Archives  
Record Group 44: Extension Division/Radio Station WNAD,  
box 8, folder 2.

friends, I am Keshkekosh,” which was his Sauk name). “This is the 281st program of the Indians for Indians Hour. Keshkekosh speaking.” He would continue with a short commentary and then introduce the guests. A few announcements were read at the beginning of the show, but most took place in the middle of the program to allow time for a recording disk to be flipped over. At the end of the broadcast, Whistler often previewed the next week’s guests before closing, again in the Sauk language, by proclaiming, “Inêy! Nâkachihêy!” (essentially saying, “The end, until next time!”).

Whistler hosted the show for its first ten years. Upon his untimely death in 1951, the Sequoyah Club—the Native American student organization on campus—kept the show going for another twenty-five years, with the able coordination of staff sponsor Boyce Timmons.

The university provided WNAD with studio space for the broadcast. Perhaps in recognition of that support, OU president George Lynn Cross was made an honorary chief of the Comanche tribe on April 2, 1946, during the fifth anniversary celebration of the *Indians for Indians* broadcast. Comanche chief Albert Attochnie conferred this honor upon President Cross.



**Photo of Chief Albert Attochnie and President Cross.**  
*Sooner Magazine*, October 1946, p. 10.





If you don't recognize Chief Arrowpoint (right) autographing the Indian war drum, it is President Cross. Chief Albert Attockie (center) of the Comanche tribe conferred the honorary chieftainship on Cross at the recent observance of the fifth anniversary of WNAD's Indians for Indians program.

Photo of "Chief Arrowpoint" on front page of the *Oklahoma Daily*, April 26, 1946. Western History Collections.

Sequoyah Club members and students from the Pawnee Industrial School also participated. The event was filmed by OU student Della Brunsteter Owl; the film is viewable at the OU Western History Collections.

A generous intertribal community contributed to the success of the show over the decades it was in production. A few individuals and families were particularly active on the program, with the top honor for the most participation going to the related Attocknie and Yellowfish families. Chief Attocknie took part on the show's second broadcast on April 8, 1941, along with other family members, including his father-in-law, Chief Yellowfish. The Attocknies faithfully participated on every April anniversary program of *Indians for Indians* into the 1970s. Chief Albert's son, Joe, the most frequent participant of all, could be heard over the air the entire life of the show with the exception of when he served during World War II. At least three generations of the Attocknie family helped make *Indians for Indians* a success, marking the program as truly a family tradition.

The radio show, often referred to as the "Indians for Indians Hour" (IFIH), was extremely popular. Around 75,000 listeners tuned in every week for the half-hour program. The broadcast became a much-loved gathering



Chief Albert Attocknie (left) and Don Whistler in the WNAD studio, April 1942. OU Photographic Service, no. 16345.



Chief Albert Attocknie as a young man. Division of Manuscripts, Southwest Oklahoma Collection, no. 1005.



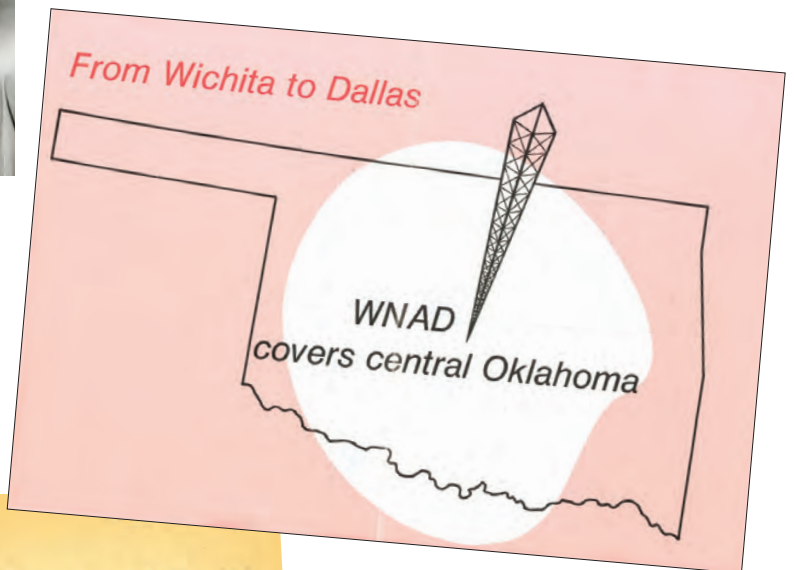


**Ida Attocknie Asah and Joe Attocknie.**

University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division/Radio Station WNAD, box 8, folder 2.

place over the airwaves for not only the members of many of the tribes in Oklahoma, but for listeners in Kansas and northern Texas, as well.

Chief Whistler was an engaging host. His greatest quality was his ability to bring people together and to foster a sense of community. Although he was an outgoing, talkative person, the show was never about him. Instead, he encouraged Native Americans from across the state, young and old, to participate, and to talk or sing about whatever they wanted. The resulting show was a blend of music, history, education, religion, tributes, and advocacy, all with Native languages and Native humor woven throughout.



WNAD PROGRAM BULLETIN  
Member, National Association of Educational Broadcasters

## WNAD PROGRAM SCHEDULE

1000 Watts "Your Best Bet for All Day Good Listening" 640 Kilocycles

February 1st Through February 29th

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAURDAY	TIME
7:45	Musical Merry-Go-Round	Musical Merry-Go-Round	Musical Merry-Go-Round	Musical Merry-Go-Round	Musical Merry-Go-Round	Musical Merry-Go-Round	7:45
8:00	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	8:00
8:02	Today's Good Listening	Today's Good Listening	Today's Good Listening	Today's Good Listening	Today's Good Listening	Today's Good Listening	8:02
8:05	WNAD Almanac	WNAD Almanac	WNAD Almanac	WNAD Almanac	WNAD Almanac	WNAD Almanac	8:05
8:15	Chapel Time	Chapel Time	Chapel Time	Chapel Time	Chapel Time	Chapel Time	8:15
8:30	Hymns of Faith	Hymns of Faith	Hymns of Faith	Hymns of Faith	Hymns of Faith	Hymns of Faith	8:30
8:45	NEWS ROUND-UP (AP)	NEWS ROUND-UP (AP)	NEWS ROUND-UP (AP)	NEWS ROUND-UP (AP)	NEWS ROUND-UP (AP)	NEWS ROUND-UP (AP)	8:45
9:00	Morning Concert	Morning Concert	Morning Concert	Morning Concert	Morning Concert	Morning Concert	9:00
9:15	"	"	"	"	"	"	9:15
9:30	101 Great Books	Great Figures Amer. History	Richard the Footlights	The Tenth Man	Building A World Community	Understanding Our Children	9:30
9:45	SOONER NEWS	SOONER NEWS	SOONER NEWS	SOONER NEWS	SOONER NEWS	SOONER NEWS	9:45
10:00	Melodic Moments	Melodic Moments	Melodic Moments	Melodic Moments	Melodic Moments	Melodic Moments	10:00
10:15	Beginning Spanish	Elementary German	Beginning Spanish	Elementary German	Elementary Russian	Off the Records	10:15
10:30	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	10:30
10:45	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	WORLD NEWS (AP)	10:45
11:00	Women's Daily	Women's Daily	Women's Daily	Women's Daily	Women's Daily	Women's Daily	11:00
11:15	Songs to Remember	Songs to Remember	Songs to Remember	Songs to Remember	Songs to Remember	Songs to Remember	11:15
11:30	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	11:30
11:45	Folklore, USA	Folklore, USA	Folklore, USA	Folklore, USA	Folklore, USA	Folklore, USA	11:45
12:00	Noon-Day Concert	Noon-Day Concert	Noon-Day Concert	Noon-Day Concert	Noon-Day Concert	Noon-Day Concert	12:00
12:15	"	"	"	"	"	"	12:15
12:30	"	"	"	"	"	"	12:30
12:45	CONSUMER-FARM NEWS	CONSUMER-FARM NEWS	CONSUMER-FARM NEWS	CONSUMER-FARM NEWS	CONSUMER-FARM NEWS	CONSUMER-FARM NEWS	12:45
1:00	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	Weather Report	1:00
1:15	State Garden Clubs	State Garden Clubs	State Garden Clubs	State Garden Clubs	State Garden Clubs	State Garden Clubs	1:15
1:30	Design for Living	Design for Living	Design for Living	Design for Living	Design for Living	Design for Living	1:30
1:45	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	Okla. School of the Air	1:45
2:00	Music You Want	Music You Want	Music You Want	Music You Want	Music You Want	Music You Want	2:00
2:15	"	"	"	"	"	"	2:15
2:30	"	"	"	"	"	"	2:30
2:45	"	"	"	"	"	"	2:45
3:00	"	"	"	"	"	"	3:00
3:15	"	"	"	"	"	"	3:15
3:30	"	"	"	"	"	"	3:30
3:45	"	"	"	"	"	"	3:45
4:00	"	"	"	"	"	"	4:00
4:15	"	"	"	"	"	"	4:15
4:30	"	"	"	"	"	"	4:30
4:45	"	"	"	"	"	"	4:45
5:00	"	"	"	"	"	"	5:00
5:15	"	"	"	"	"	"	5:15
5:30	"	"	"	"	"	"	5:30
5:45	"	"	"	"	"	"	5:45
6:00	"	"	"	"	"	"	6:00
6:15	"	"	"	"	"	"	6:15

\* Under Symphony on Feb. 25, April 28, May 12 from 3:15-4:00 p. m.

Page 9

Until the mid-1960s, the show aired at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays. It was then broadcast at 11:30 a.m. on Saturdays for about ten years before moving to a 9:30 a.m. Sunday morning slot in 1973. (above) From Wichita to Dallas, WNAD covers central Oklahoma. WNAD brochure. University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division/Radio Station WNAD, box 4, folder 5. (left) Schedule in WNAD Bulletin. University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division/Radio Station WNAD, box 14, folder 4.





Many Native Americans in Oklahoma remember the show fondly, or know that their relatives participated in broadcasts. Indian Radio Program—*Newsweek* feature. OU Photographic Service Collection, no. 16342.

Today, anyone can listen in on the historic broadcasts of *Indians for Indians* by visiting the University of Oklahoma Libraries' Western History Collections in Norman, where the recordings are housed. The content of the show can be explored in five major themes, which are outlined in this book:

COMMUNITY

MILITARY SERVICE

RELIGION

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

TRIBAL RIGHTS AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

Because of this incredible range of content, the recordings of the broadcasts serve as a remarkable cultural archive, offering listeners a chance to explore both U.S. history and local histories through Native voices. The recordings also provide an opportunity for Native communities represented on the show to recover their histories and songs that might not have been heard for decades. In fact, many of the researchers who have accessed the recordings

at the Western History Collections in recent years are from tribal language or historic preservation departments.

The unique nature of the *Indians for Indians* radio show recordings was recognized by the Council on Library and Information Resources, a national nonprofit organization that awarded a "Recordings at Risk" grant to the University of Oklahoma Libraries in 2018. This preservation grant enabled the Western History Collections unit of the OU Libraries to contract with the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Andover, Massachusetts, to professionally digitize the remarkable audio collection. The OU Libraries are pleased to make the digital files freely available online at repository.ou.edu, so the *Indians for Indians* broadcasts will be accessible to an even wider audience for years to come.

**NOTE**

*Epigraph.* Fred Hoffman, state Native American Church secretary, in letter dated October 17, 1960. University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division/Radio Station WNAD, box 8, folder 2.

## Don Whistler, the Whistler Family, and a Native American Connection to Campus Corner



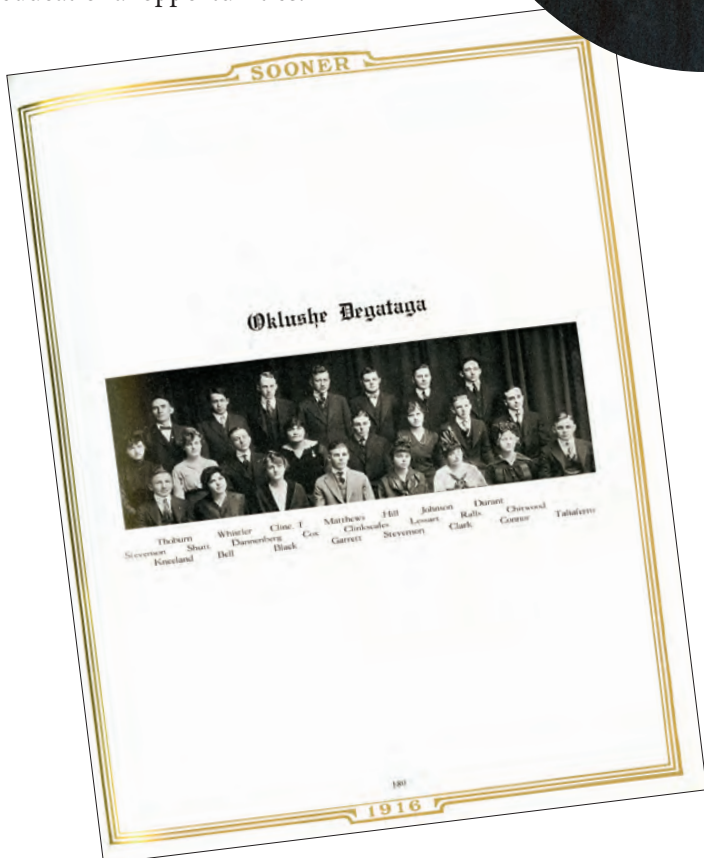
Don Whistler was the creator and original host of the *Indians for Indians* radio show. Born in 1894, he grew up with two brothers and a sister on the Sac and Fox Agency south of Stroud. His father, Leo Whistler, was Sac and Fox, and his mother, Maude Mayes Whistler, was white.

In 1915, Maude moved to Norman with her four children so that they would have better educational opportunities.



Don was the oldest, and he started school at OU. He joined the university's Oklushe Degataga Indian Club, and in 1916, he held the club's office of "Medicine Man," a position his youngest brother, Rex, held in 1926. His siblings—Leo Whistler, Ramona Whistler (Seibold), and Rex Whistler—all attended OU during the 1920s and were active

**Don Whistler.** Jerry Whistler Snow Collection, no. 213.



**Don Whistler in "Oklushe Degataga."** *Sooner*, 1916, p. 189.



**Leo Whistler in "Cadet Majors."** *Sooner*, 1922, p. 293.





**Ramona Whistler Seibold.** Jerry Whistler Snow Collection, no. 180.



**Rex Whistler in Pershing Rifles uniform, ca. 1924–1926.** Jerry Whistler Snow Collection, no. 165.



**Blue and green Whistler nameplate tiles.** Photo courtesy of Rachael Lester.

in campus life. Both Leo and Rex participated in Oklushe Degataga, as well as in ROTC, and were members of the honorary military fraternity Scabbard and Blade. Rex also played football.

In 1917, Maude, now Maude Rogers, built the beginnings of “Campus Corner,” a shopping district on the north side of campus, to serve students and staff at the university. The district started at the corner of Boyd Street and Asp Avenue, then extended northwest across several blocks along Boyd and Asp to Buchanan Avenue and University Boulevard to the west and White Street to the north (Carolyn Seibold Simmons, “Corner History

**Whistler tiles over the doorway.** Photo courtesy of Rachael Lester.





**New Tea and Club House Is Planned For Students**  
**Building To Be Finished In Fall Will Combine Banquet and Dance Hall; Built For 250.**

By next fall university students will have access to a new \$27,000 Teepee Tea house now under construction north of the old Y. M. C. A. house on the university Boulevard, Mrs. Maude Rogers, owner and proprietor, said yesterday. Work on the new modern tea and club house is already well advanced and the building should be open to business by the first of September, contractors estimate.

The shop has been planned as a meeting place for students and will contain a cafe, luncheonette, and soda fountain to be joined in one room with a fire place and chairs. On the second floor will be a dance hall, with all improvements, and a banquet hall to accommodate 250.

An Indian sitting by his teepee, a design painted by Harold Gimeno will be the trade-mark of the establishment and will appear on stationery and menus.

**“New Tea and Club House Is Planned for Students,”** *Oklahoma Daily*, April 1, 1919.

*The Whirlwind*

---

**“Soonerland’s Most Popular Spot”**

The best way to spend a few vacant moments on a hot day is to cool off by trying some of our complete line of soda fountain drinks.

The best way to spend that Sunday night date is to drop around the Boulevard and meet your friends at The Teepee.

The best place to buy cigars, cigarettes, pipe tobacco, assorted candy, cold drinks, toilet articles and light lunches—is at The Teepee. We specialize in breakfasts and Sunday dinners.



**THE TEEPEE**  
 WHISTLER BROTHERS,  
 PROPRIETORS

**“THE LOAFERS’ PARADISE”**

Page Eight

**“Soonerland’s Most Popular Spot,”** *Whirlwind*, May 1921.

Corrected,” *Sooner Magazine*, Summer 2006, p. 3). The Las Doñas Apartments, a small two-story complex on University, were part of this construction boom.

In the early years, Whistler’s family lived upstairs over one of the businesses in Campus Corner. Tiles over the doorway mark the entrance to the stairs that led to their home, which was located over what is now Louie’s Grill and Bar at 301 W. Boyd.

Not far from the apartment, on University Boulevard, Maude established a popular gathering place for students. “The Teepee,” or Teepee Tea House as it was sometimes called, opened in 1919. Maude ran the establishment with her two oldest sons, Don and Leo. Sometime in the 1930s, a Spanish facade was added to the front of the building, which now houses Blackbird Gastropub at 575 S. University.

**Balcony of The Teepee, 1935.** Roy E. Heffner (V) Collection, no. 2943.



**The Teepee, 1928.** Roy E. Heffner (P) Photo Collection, no. 1216.





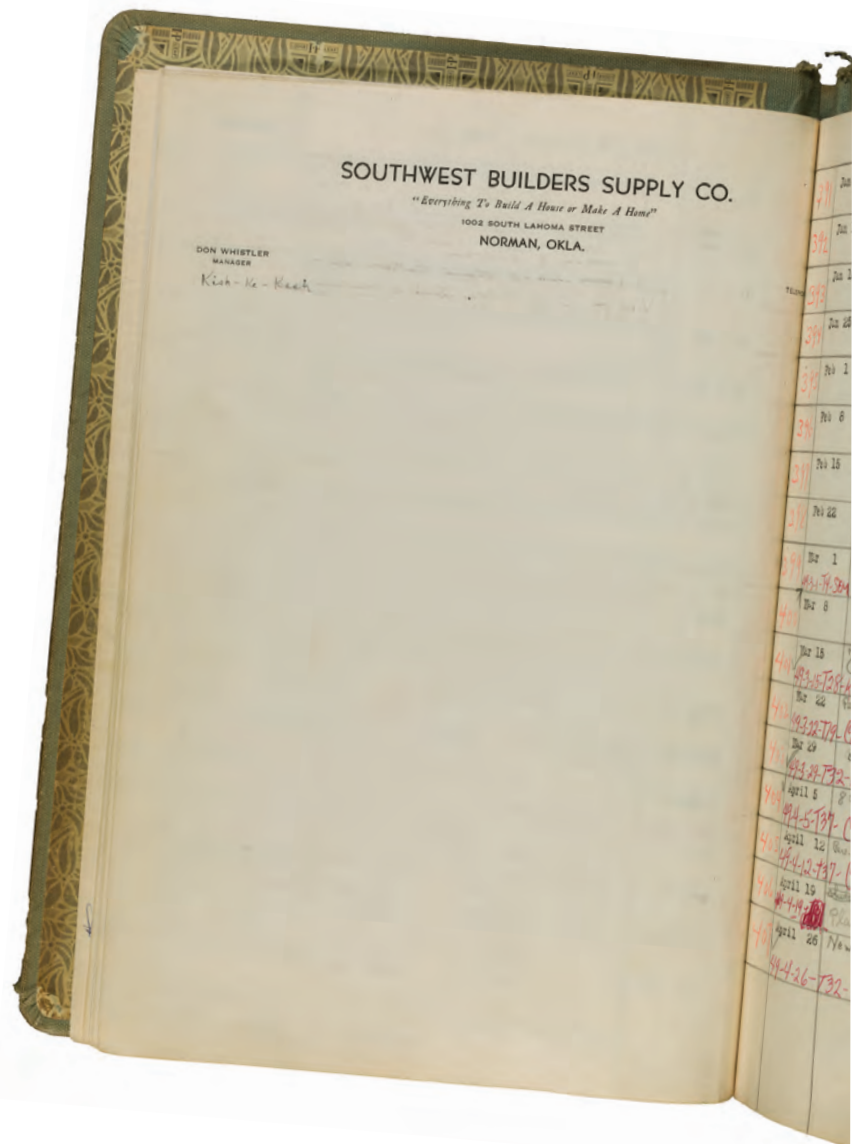


**Teepee Student Shop, 1936.** Roy E. Heffner (V) Collection, no. 3490.

Don Whistler would go on to spend his adult life in Norman, attending the university, raising his five children with wife Alice York (Choctaw), and managing construction and real estate businesses. He was also engaged in the affairs of the Sac and Fox tribe and served as principal chief from 1939 to 1951. Then, on top of all this, in 1941 Whistler started a long-running radio show! It is obvious from listening to him on the recordings of *Indians for Indians* that he loved people, loved good music, and loved to dance. He often talks on the show about having “put on his feathers and moccasins” at a recent dance. During the July 11, 1950, broadcast, Whistler was clearly energized by the singing of an Otoe group from Red Rock, remarking, “That’s the kind of singing that makes moccasins want to get up and dance by themselves—you have to lock them up in the trunk to keep them from running off!”

As Whistler’s sons, Donn Jr., Bill, and Joe, grew up, they filled in from time to time as the host of the show. Students in the Sequoyah Club, the American Indian club

**Close-up of Don Whistler’s business stationery from page 16 of the Whistler *Indians for Indians* LogBook.** University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, Radio Station WNAD, box 8, file 1.





**Don Whistler with sons Bill, Joe, and Donn Jr. in 1934.**

Jerry Whistler Snow Collection, no. 1051.

on campus at the time, also filled in when the Whistler family took its yearly vacation to Colorado.

Don Whistler's life was tragically cut short at age fifty-six when he died in 1951, presumably of a heart attack. His death was announced statewide in a June 23, 1951, article, "Chief of Sac, Fox Indian Tribes Dies," published in the *Daily Oklahoman* (page 18). There had been warning signs a year earlier: for several weeks in 1950 Whistler had not been able to host the show, explaining on the June 6, 1950, broadcast that he had "had a bad heart attack." A Sac and Fox group conducted a memorial service for the chief a couple of weeks after his death on the July 3, 1951, broadcast. Surely this was a moving tribute; unfortunately, there is no recording of that program. After Whistler passed away in 1951, the students of the Sequoyah Club took over running the radio show.



**A Whistler family vacation in Colorado. Don Whistler is in the middle. His mother-in-law, wife, children, nephew, mother, and sister are all in the canoe.**

Jerry Whistler Snow Collection, no. 1161.





# The Sequoyah Club

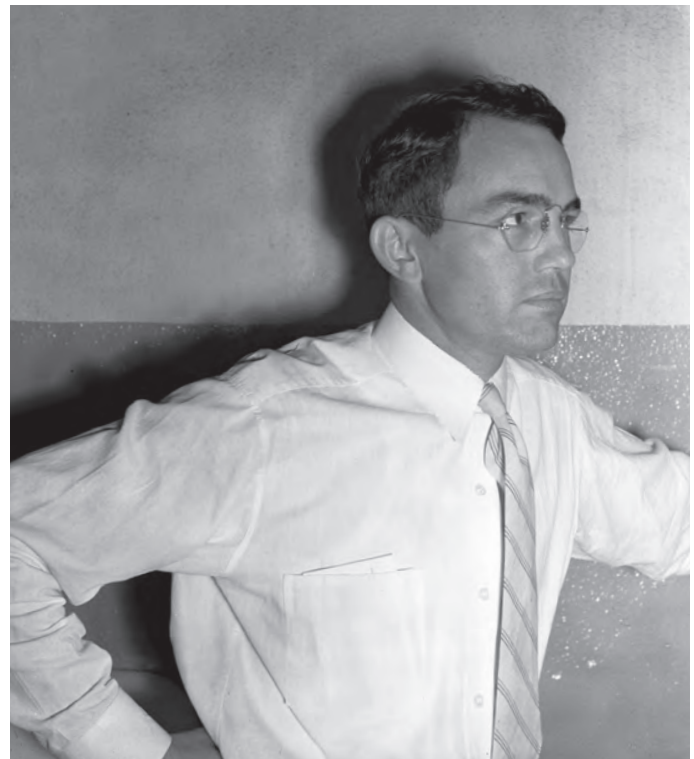
Sequoyah Club was founded to encourage education among Indians, perpetuate Indian customs and traditions, and provide social activities.

—SOONER YEARBOOK, 1965

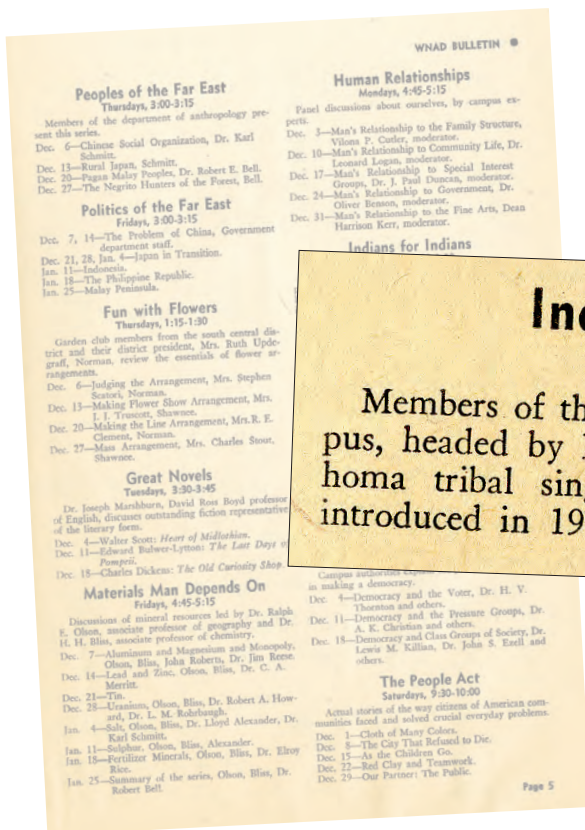


The Native American student group on campus in the 1950s, the Sequoyah Club, became the sponsor of the *Indians for Indians* radio program upon Don Whistler's death in 1951. The students were guided by longtime OU staff member Boyce Timmons, and together they sponsored and hosted the show for more than twenty years.

The Sequoyah Club is sometimes described as one of the oldest of the OU student organizations. A club photo first appears in the *Sooner* yearbook in 1936, but the group may have organized even earlier. Indian clubs that preceded it on campus were, in the 1910s and 1920s, the Oklushe Degataga (the club in which Don Whistler and his youngest brother each served as "Medicine Man"), and, also in the 1920s, the Med-e-win.

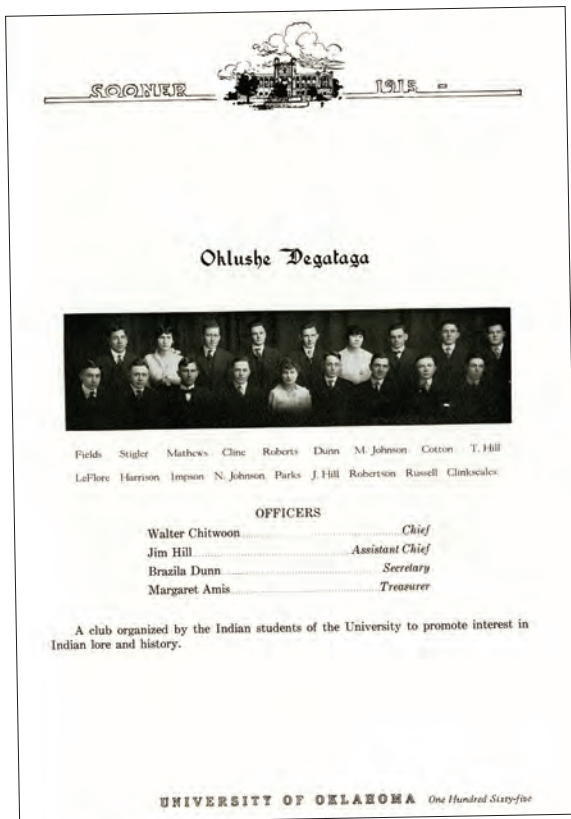


Boyce Timmons. OU Photographic Service, no. 10936.

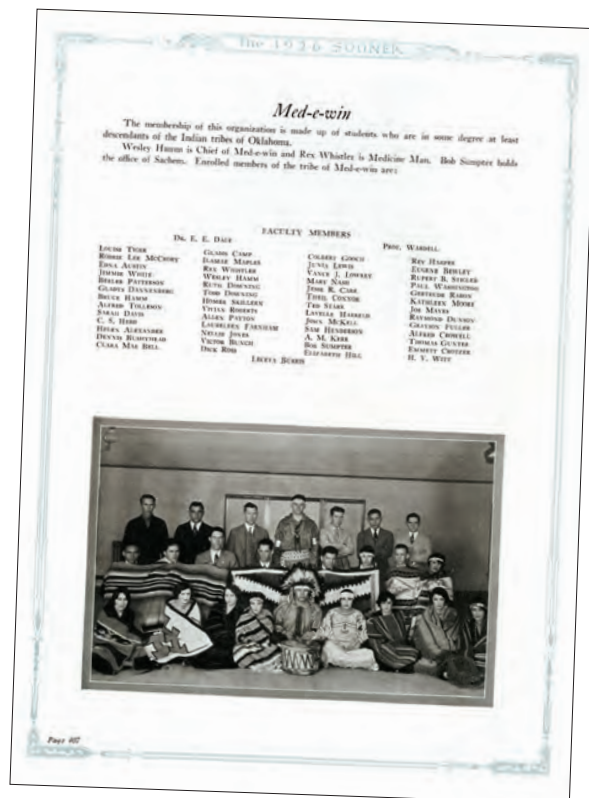


Close-up of *Indians for Indians* listing in *WNAD Bulletin*, December 1951. University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division/WNAD Radio Station, box 14, folder 7.





Oklushe Degataga. *Sooner*, 1915, p. 165.

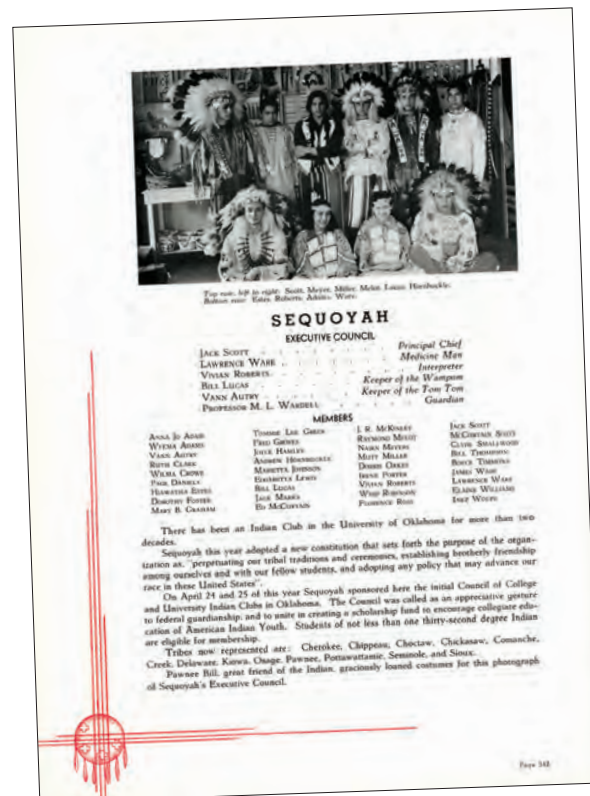


Med-e-win. *Sooner*, 1926, p. 407.

Some of the students in the Sequoyah Club who served as hosts of *Indians for Indians* were:

- DON ASHAPANEK
- LAFOLLETTE BUTLER
- GEORGE CROSSLAND
- FRANK OBERLY
- BRYCE POOLAW
- JUDSON TONEMAH
- STUART TONEMAH
- CLYDE WARRIOR
- ELTON YELLOWFISH

Staff sponsor Boyce Timmons was well-known throughout Indian Country in Oklahoma. He was of Cherokee descent but had grown up in Osage country in northeastern Oklahoma. His wife, Alice Timmons, who was well-regarded in her own right, was Osage. When Timmons retired, he had worked at OU for thirty years. He served as the director of registration at the university before being named the first director of the American Indian Institute, based on the OU campus, when it was founded in 1951. Through Timmons's leadership, the American Indian Institute established or contributed to the development of many initiatives whose purpose



The Sequoyah Club's yearbook page. *Sooner*, 1936, p. 342.



**Sequoyah Club, group around table, 1940s.** OU Photographic Service, no. 11519.



**Sequoyah Club at homecoming game, 1940s.** Pictured are university president Joseph Brandt, Vivian Saunkeah, Scott Tonemah in headdress, and Dorothea Kerr. OU Photographic Service, no. 11509.



**Sequoyah Club, 1962.** OU Collection, no. 1839.





**BOTTOM ROW:** Christine Reynolds, Gella Phipps, Wynona...  
**TOP ROW:** Paula Chappell, Clark Warren, Alan...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** George...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** George...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** George...

### Sequoyah Indian Club Maintains Oldest Homecoming Rites

One of the main activities for the Sequoyah Indian Club was the Homecoming Pow-Wow, the oldest homecoming tradition on campus. Other activities and projects included high school and Indian school visitations to encourage Indians to finish high school and plan post-high school work, if qualified or needed. Stuart Tommons served as president for the 1963-64 term. Other officers were Alice Edsforth, vice-presi-

dent; Norma Reynolds, secretary; George Crowland, treasurer, and Mr. and Mrs. E. D. Timmons, faculty sponsors. To encourage education among Indians, prepare Indian customs and traditions, and provide social activities for Indians are the principal aims of the club. To become a member, one must be of Indian descent.

### Sigma Delta Chi Advances Standards Of Press Ethics

To advance the standards of the press by instilling a higher ethical code and to raise the prestige of the journalism in the community are the principal goals of Sigma Delta Chi. Any male student who holds a 2.0 overall grade average and has completed at least one course in journalism is eligible to become a member. The 1963-64 officers included Jim May, president; Joe May, vice-president; John Coates, secretary, and

Pat Edelson, treasurer. Faculty sponsor is Dr. C. Joe Holland, director of the journalism school.

A trip to the national convention at Norfolk, Virginia, and a Christmas party with Theta Sigma Phi, SDS's female counterpart, highlighted the year. The club's annual activity is sponsoring the Sowergram of students' greetings to the OU football team before the Texas game.

**PHOTOGRAPHED:** John...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** John...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** John...



**BOTTOM ROW:** Tony...  
**MIDDLE ROW:** Tony...  
**TOP ROW:** Tony...



**BOTTOM ROW:** Lawrence...  
**TOP ROW:** Lawrence...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** Lawrence...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** Lawrence...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** Lawrence...

### Sequoyah Club Beats Out Traditional Powwow

Sequoyah Indian Club members displayed their club aim of furthering Indian interests by making high school visitations to the Riverside Indian School this year. The group also held its traditional Indian powwow during Homecoming festivities. The club's social

events included a Christmas party. To be a member of the Sequoyah Indian Club a student must be at least one-eighth Indian. The organization was founded at OU in 1914. The club's president this year was Bryce Poolaw. Boyce Timmons was faculty sponsor.

### Student Lobby Backs December Bond Issue

An extensive campaign in favor of the state bond issue in December was a major activity of the Student Lobby for Higher Education. Members of the organization distributed 10,000 pamphlets encouraging a cigarette tax to increase education funds. The Lobby work-

ed with the Oklahoma State Lobby to encourage legislation dealing with benefits to higher education, taking a stand on junior college re-evaluation, the Regents' reorganization plan, and lowering the voting age to 18. Ken Sala coordinated the OU Student Lobby.

**PHOTOGRAPHED:** Ken...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** Ken...  
**PHOTOGRAPHED:** Ken...



**BOTTOM ROW:** Ken...  
**MIDDLE ROW:** Ken...  
**TOP ROW:** Ken...

“Sequoyah Indian Club Maintains Oldest Homecoming Rites,” *Sooner*, 1964, p. 410.

“Sequoyah Club Beats Out Traditional Powwow,” *Sooner*, 1969, p. 267.

was to improve Native American educational and job opportunities. Timmons’s career was devoted to advocating for Native Americans.

During a time of increased advocacy and activism for Native rights in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Native American students on campus began to separate into two groups—those who were more interested in their club serving as a social organization, and those who wanted more of an activist organization, along the lines of the National Indian Youth Council. The Sequoyah Club remained a social outlet, and for those interested in more of an activist group, the American Indian Student Association (AISA) formed. Eventually, the Sequoyah Club phased out, and AISA, which is still active at the University of Oklahoma today, became more dominant.

The *Indians for Indians* radio show changed somewhat after the Sequoyah Club took over sponsorship. For one thing, the coordination of participants and the hosting of each broadcast became more of a team effort. The hosts changed from time to time, as would be expected of a

student-led effort, though Boyce Timmons ensured that the show ran smoothly; he was a constant presence on the broadcasts. The format changed a little, too. More time was spent on announcements, so that hosts often started the broadcasts with listing events and giving dedications for several minutes before turning the program over to the guests. The tenor changed somewhat, as well—at least in the surviving recordings, there seems to be less banter between the hosts and the participants. Regardless, the show continued to be popular with its Native audience, and correspondence regarding *Indians for Indians* poured in to WNAD from across the state, as well as from outside the state, through the 1960s.

In spite of changes—in leadership and hosts—over the course of the *Indians for Indians* Hour broadcasts, certain emphases remain constant throughout: a focus on community life, recognition of military service, a celebration of religious diversity, a championing of education, a call to participation in tribal rights and government, and the use of Native languages.

## Community Life

Everyone's invited—you all come down—we'll be looking for you!

—CADDO POW WOW CLUB, *INDIANS FOR INDIANS* BROADCAST,  
UNDATED, TAPE 54



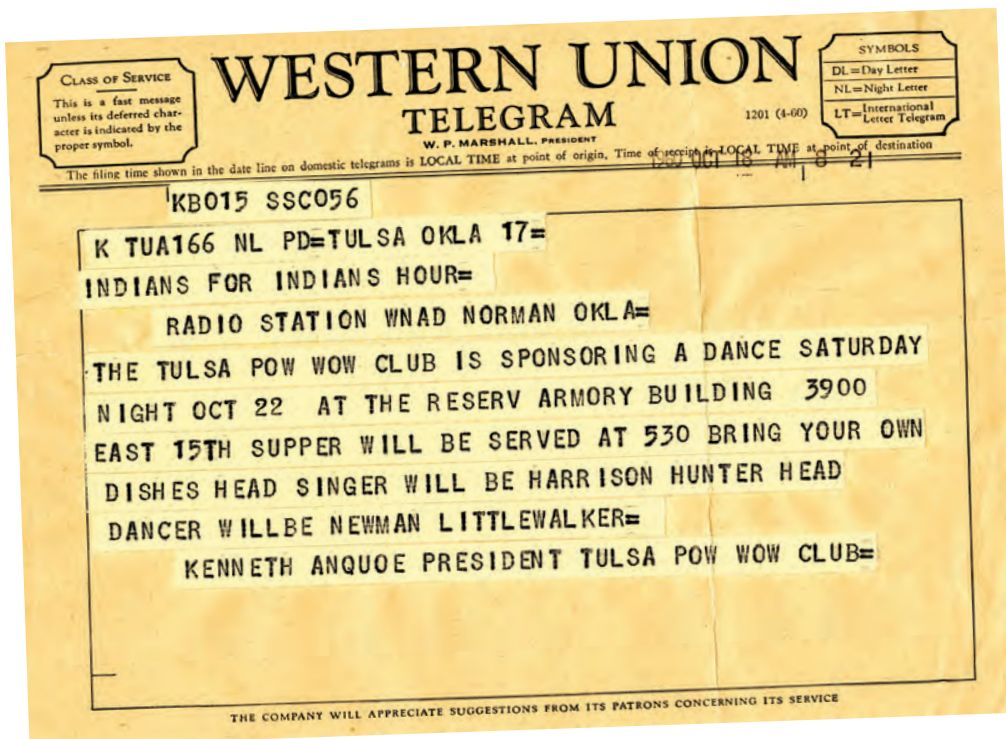
From inception to final show, a sense of community is woven throughout the *Indians for Indians* broadcasts. The program's creator, Don Whistler, laid the foundation for this by welcoming participants from across the state with his friendly manner and genuine rapport with guests. He was emphatic that the show was "by Indians, for Indians," so there were no constraints on participants that they conform to a non-Native aesthetic. The Sequoyah Club and its staff sponsor, Boyce Timmons, continued this approach when they ran the broadcasts.

Many levels of community are evident throughout the show's airings in the people who participated: members of small local communities within a tribe; groups that were specific to a tribe, but with representation from across that tribe; intertribal social,

religious, or political organizations; state organizations such as the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission; and national organizations such as the National Congress of American Indians.

Much of the show's airtime was spent on making announcements. Early on, Don Whistler and the other hosts recognized that they were creating an intertribal space for announcing the events of life, from birthdays to military service, religious services, tribal government meetings, and even deaths.

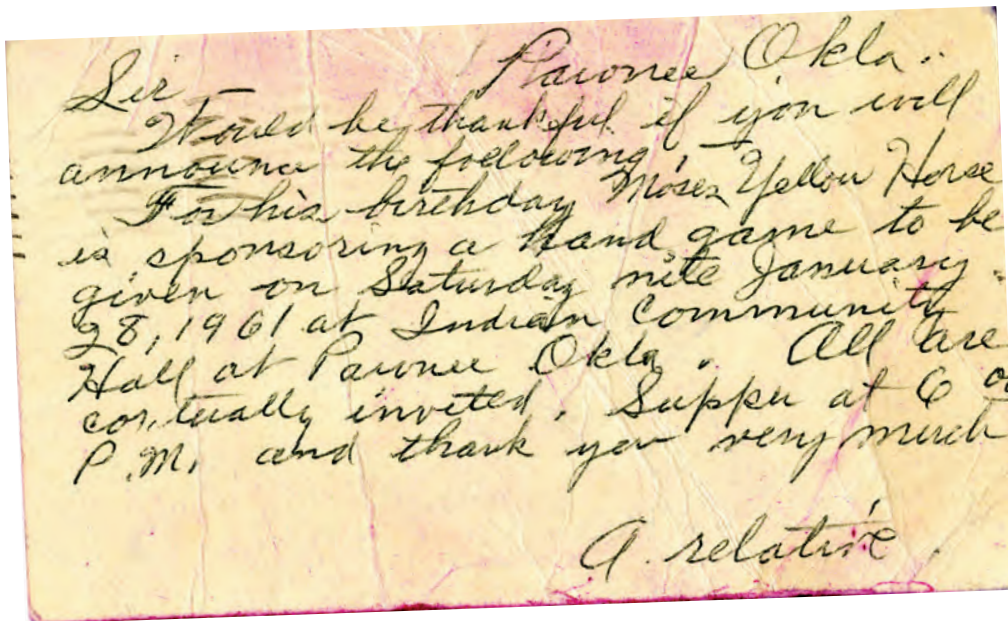
In the birthday celebrations that were often announced over the airwaves, the love of parents and grandparents for children, as well as the esteem for older relatives, is abundantly expressed. With Native cultures often having kinship systems that widen the net of who is considered family, gatherings tend to be inclusive and



**Correspondence to WNAD about the *Indians for Indians* show came in from across Oklahoma. Listeners also wrote in from other states, and even from other countries.**

University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, Radio Station WNAD, box 8, folder 2.





**Postcard announcing a birthday party for Moses Yellow Horse (Pawnee), who had played major-league baseball.**

University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, Radio Station WNAD, box 8, folder 3.

large. Announcing a family celebration event to a radio audience made sense. After all, what's a party without a hundred or so of your closest relatives?

A tribal nation is not a single homogeneous entity but includes distinct communities that maintained their identities over time and built their own gathering places. Participants on the Indians for Indians Hour often represented these local communities within a tribe. For example, singers from the Cheyenne Fonda community participated on the July 1, 1947, broadcast. In addition, there were often announcements on the show of Sac and

Fox events at the South Community Building, which was a gathering place for tribal members who lived around Shawnee and Prague.

Community members within a tribe often maintained their traditional warrior societies, and created new organizations to support veterans and active military personnel. These support clubs hosted honor dances, organized war bond donation drives, and often preserved histories about the veterans. All of this activity required funds, so they also hosted fundraising events, which were announced on the radio show.

**Sac and Fox women at South Community Building off Moccasin Trail, north of Shawnee. This community house was often mentioned in announcements on the air as the location for a Sac and Fox gathering such as a dinner, bingo game, or handgame.** Photo from private collection of Nancy Walker and Curtis Wakolee (Sac and Fox).

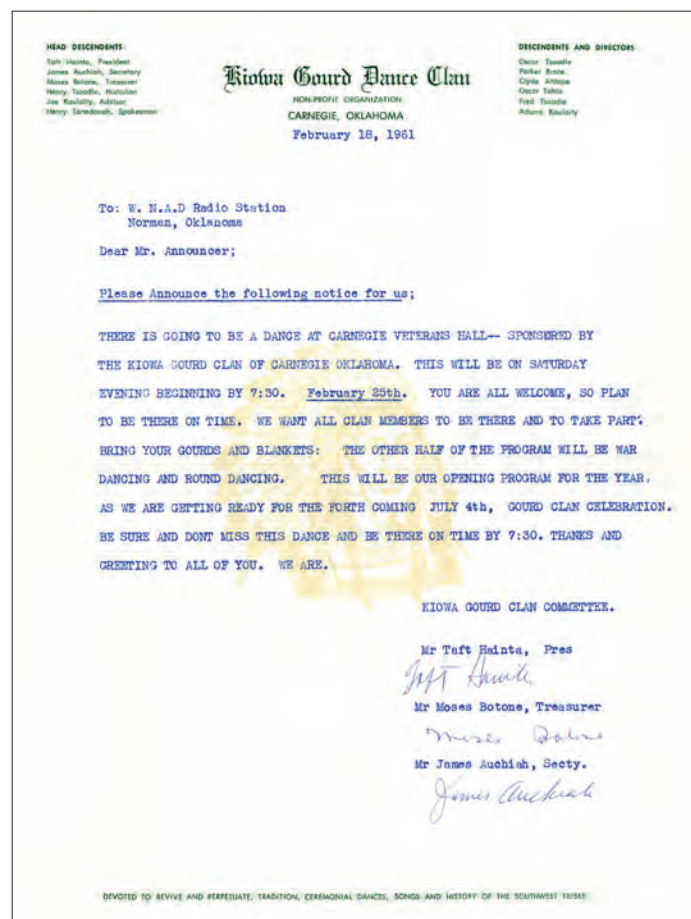


The Hominy War Mothers will sponsora Veteran's Day Celebration at Hominy November 10 and 11th. Dinner will be served at noon on November 11, at the Hominy Indian Village for all veterans and their families. All service organizations are ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ cordially invited to this event. Everyone is asked to please bring their own dishes and chairs.

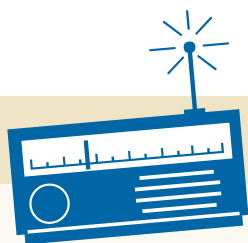
**Hominy War Mothers announcement for a Veterans Day celebration.** University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, Radio Station WNAD, box 8, folder 3.

Intertribal community bonds are also evident in the broadcasts. The American Indian Exposition, an Oklahoma intertribal event established in 1931, relied on these kinds of connections to be successful. Organizers of the exposition, especially longtime chairman Robert Goombi, participated on the Indians for Indians Hour to promote the gathering, the largest intertribal (and tourist) event in Oklahoma for decades. Each year the weeklong American Indian Exposition featured a popular parade through Anadarko; a fair in which Native participants could enter their artwork, traditional crafts, and agricultural products; horse races; athletic events; and a historical drama. As Don Whistler remarked on air, "Everyone should see it at least once before they go to the Happy Hunting Grounds!"

In some years, the Indians for Indians Hour show was broadcast remotely, live from the exposition. There are IFIH/expo recordings for the years 1943, 1946, 1947, and 1964.



**The Kiowa Gourd Dance Clan’s February 18, 1961, letter announcing the February 25, 1961, opening dance.** University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, Radio Station WNAD, box 8, folder 3.



## Listen in!

Hear the Flag Song sung by Kiowa guests promoting the upcoming 1946

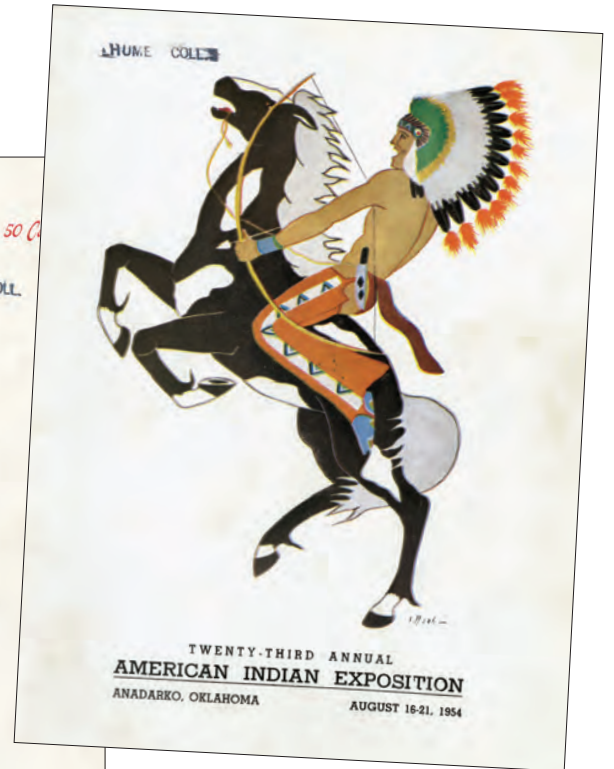
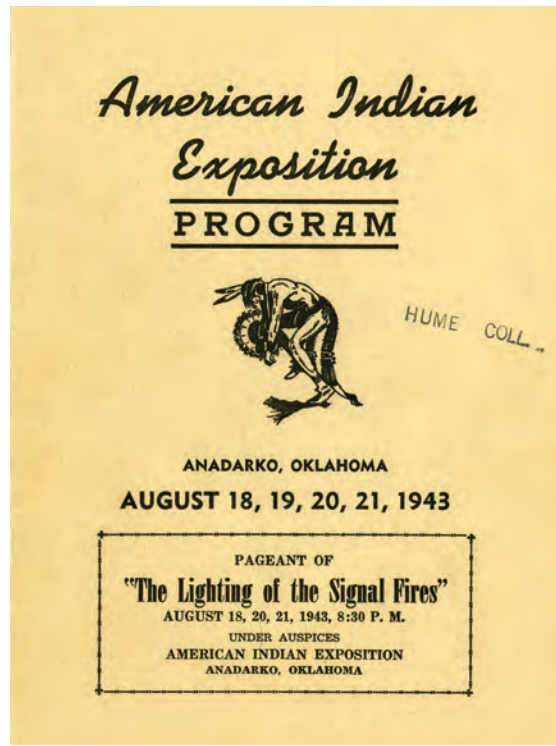
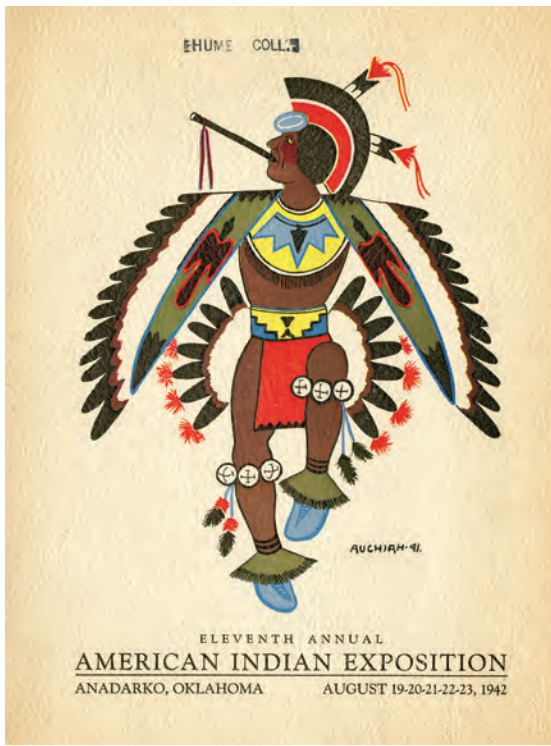
American Indian Exposition. They performed on IFIH in the WNAD studio during the June 11, 1946, broadcast. **Listen to tape 8, filename IMT-T8\_01, clip 6:46–10:18.**





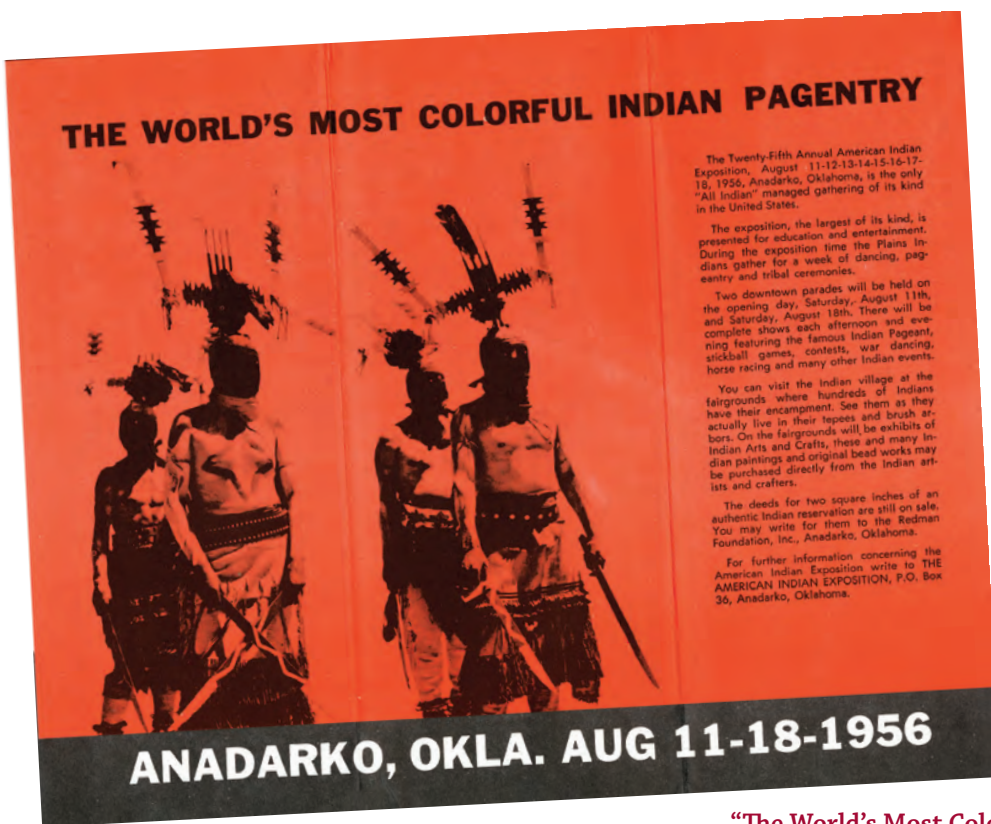
Covers of American Indian Exposition programs for 1946 and 1947. Artwork by Stephen Mopope. Alice Marriott Collection, box 32, folder 3.



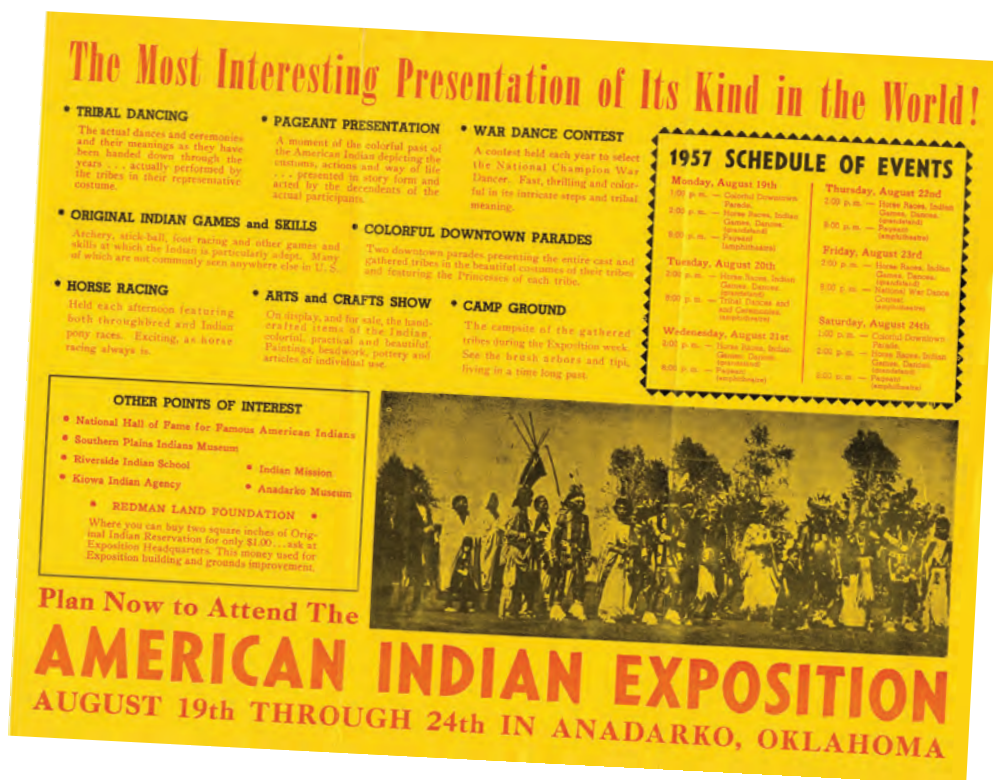


Covers of American Indian Exposition programs for 1942, 1943, 1948, 1950, and 1954. Kiowa Six members James Auchiah, Stephen Mopope, and Spencer Asah did the artwork for the 1942, 1948, and 1954 covers, respectively. C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 20.

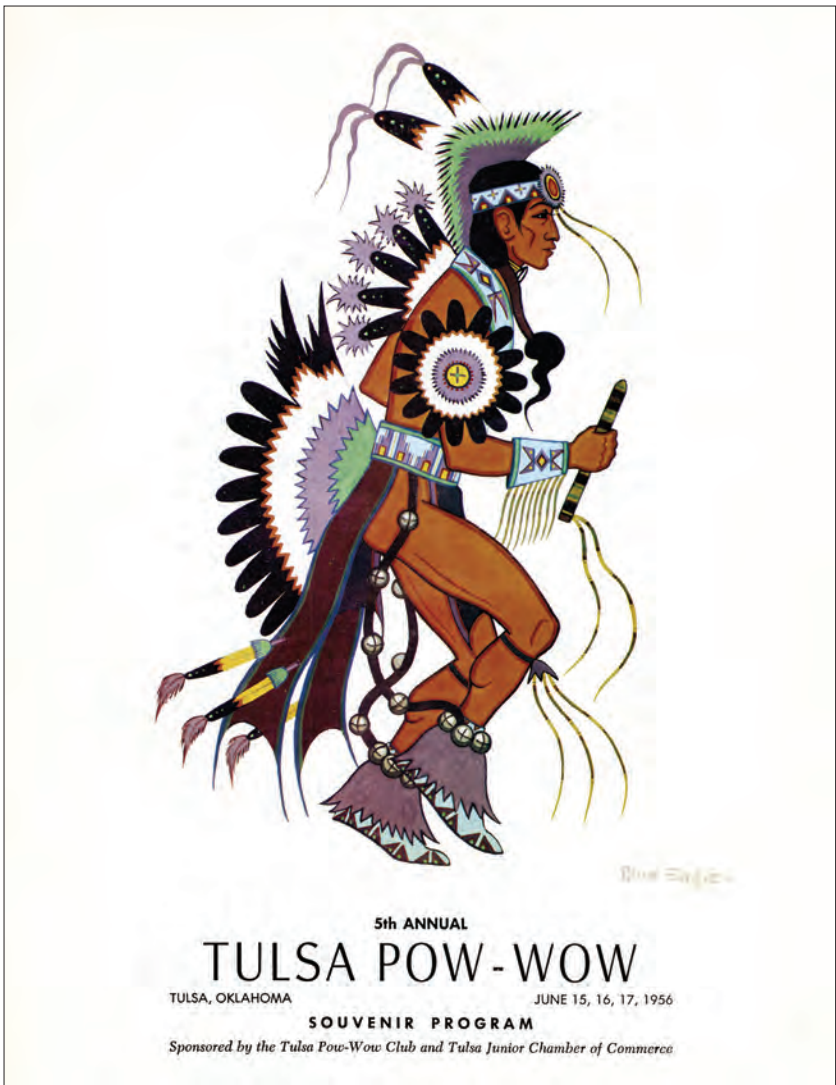




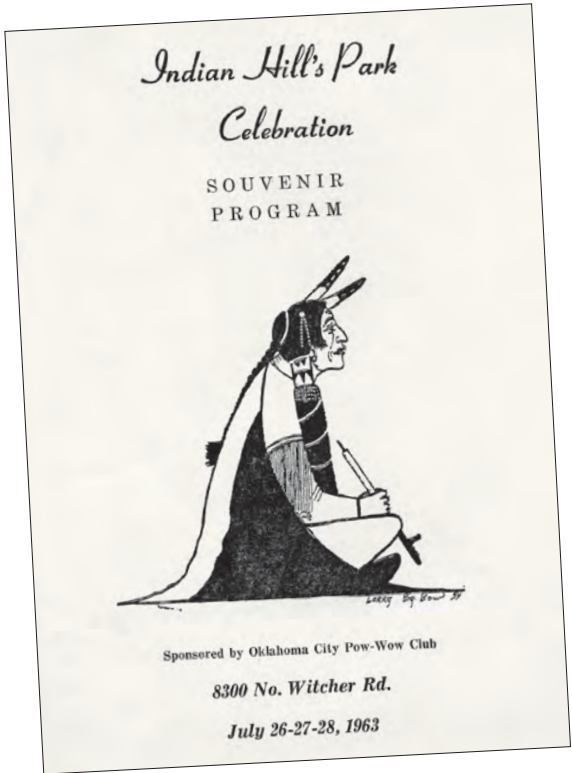
“The World’s Most Colorful Indian Pageentry” was promoted by the 1956 American Indian Exposition poster and brochure. C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 20.



“The Most Interesting Presentation of Its Kind in the World!” announced the 1957 American Indian Exposition brochure. C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 20.



Fifth annual Tulsa Pow-Wow souvenir program. Artwork by Acee Blue Eagle. Sponsored by the Tulsa Pow-Wow Club and Tulsa Junior Chamber of Commerce, June 15-17, 1956. Pow-Wow Programs Collection, box P-41, folder 1.



Souvenir program for Indian Hill's Park Celebration, 1963. Alice Marriott Collection, box 76, folder 37.



Cover of program for Indian Hill's Park Celebration, July 24-26, 1964. Head staff and club members Lucien Rice and Amos Toahy were on IFIH frequently (Rice at least six times and Toahy at least four times). Alice Marriott Collection, box 71, folder 21.



OKLAHOMA ACTIVELY SUPPORTS THE INDIAN EXPOSITION



HON. LEON C. PHILLIPS  
Governor of Oklahoma

OKLAHOMA PLANNING AND RESOURCES BOARD

T. E. HARBOUR, Acting Chairman  
R. R. OWENS, Secretary-Treasurer

FRANK RABB, Member  
RAYMOND BRANNAN, Member

The state appropriation for the promotion of the American Indian Exposition is administered by the Planning and Resources Board. This board has extended wholehearted cooperation in order to make Oklahoma better known over the nation as a tourist center.

The American Indian Exposition is considered as one of the state's best attractions for tourists.

**An Oklahoma Planning and Resources Board page indicated “Oklahoma Actively Supports the Indian Exposition” in the 1942 American Indian Exposition program.** C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 20.

Widespread use of cars in the 1940s enabled the mobility that made it possible for local tribal dances to grow into larger intertribal gatherings. This growth inspired intertribal clubs to organize for the purpose of hosting annual pow-wows, many of which continue to be held today and are part of the fabric of family life. The Tulsa Pow-Wow Club, the Air Capitol Indian Club of Wichita, Kansas, and the Intertribal Pow-Wow Club of Oklahoma City all promoted their fundraisers and dances on the show. Don Whistler and the Sequoyah Club hosts would remind listeners “to bring a drum to sing a few songs to promote their dance on the radio” (quotation from undated 1951 broadcast, tape 50, 1:50).

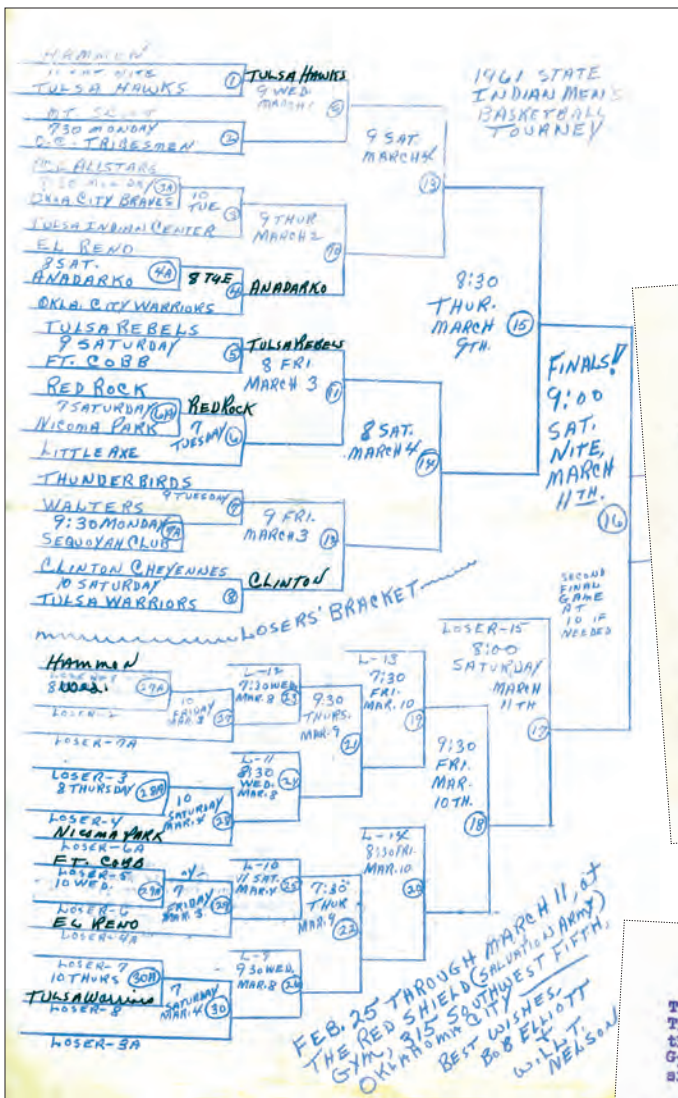
As can be seen in the sponsorship listings and advertisements in the full programs for these pow-wows and the American Indian Exposition, local businesses, city governments, and the state of Oklahoma often contributed support for the events. There was a vested

interest in the activities because they drew in tourist dollars and boosted local economies.

The Indians for Indians Hour broadcasts also appealed to an intertribal athletic community. The All-Indian State Baseball Tournament was sometimes held in conjunction with a large annual summer pow-wow. Announcements on the radio show indicate the state tournament rotated its location among the pow-wows. These baseball tournaments are just one example of the many sports events announced on *Indians for Indians*; there are notifications of basketball tournaments, softball tournaments, stickball games, and rodeos, too. In the April 8, 1947, broadcast, rodeo organizers from Canton, Oklahoma, announced their rodeo and Indian celebration for July 4–5, with plans “to make it the biggest celebration of the Indian country!”

Handgames, requiring dexterity and focus, were played mostly within local communities but became widespread as intertribal social events during the mid-twentieth century. In the December 31, 1946, and January 7, 1947, broadcasts, Caddo and Comanche groups sing handgame songs. And in an undated 1960s broadcast, the entire program is devoted to handgame songs, in order to promote a gathering at Billy Goat Hill organized by Apache tribal members (tape 116).

Handgame teams demonstrated their competitiveness at tournaments. To rev up for the 1963 state handgame tournament at the Oklahoma City fairgrounds, the Carnegie Jackrabbits challenged an Oklahoma City team with “trash talk” on the February 1, 1963, *Indians for Indians* broadcast. OU’s Sequoyah Club sometimes



*Will T. Nelson*  
Submitted by Will T. Nelson  
1801 South Lindsay  
Oklahoma City 9, Okla.

To: Station WNAD

Saturday night scores in the State Indian Basketball Tourney at the Salvation Army Gym, 315 Southwest Fifth, Oklahoma City.

Red Rock 43, Nicoma Park 39  
Anadarko 65, El Reno 56  
Tulsa Rebels 56, Ft. Cobb Cowboys 49  
Clinton Cheyennes 62, Tulsa Warriors 58. in a double overtime. Doug Scott starred for the Tulsan's, hitting 35 points.  
Defending state Indian champion, Tulsa Hawks 86, Hammon Warriors 66.

**1961 STATE INDIAN BASKETBALL TOURNEYS for Men and Girls**

The State Indian Men's Tourney will begin Saturday night, February 25. The finals will be Saturday night, March 11. All games will be at night. There will not be any Sunday games. The first game will begin at 7:00 and the last game at 10:00. All games will be at the Red Shield (Salvation Army) Gym, 315 Southwest Fifth, Oklahoma City. The Gym entrance is on the east side of the building, in the playground. Team entry fee is ten dollars.

There is no player limit--use all you need. New players may be picked up any time during the tourney if they have not played on another team in the tourney. All new players must be introduced to one of the tourney managers and approved before they are eligible to play. To be eligible, a player must be one-half or more Indian. If a team has any doubtful players, a player must time to contact the Indian Department and get a certificate on them. If a player appears doubtful, it is the responsibility of the team manager to be able to produce acceptable evidence to the tourney managers that he or she is Indian. Please, let us all work together and keep it honest!

Team managers are specifically requested to bring all players who are less than three-fourths Indian to one of the tourney managers and get them approved BEFORE THEY GET THEM SUITED UP TO PLAY BALL. This applies to the Okla. City Indian League teams, all new teams, and all old teams.

This is a double elimination tourney. Registered Basketball Association referees will be used. Trophies will be presented to the first four place teams. THE FIRST PLACE TEAM WILL BE THE STATE INDIAN CHAMPION. Individual trophies will go to players selected to the State Indian Allstar Team.

Every team manager is asked to please submit a list of players of his choice for the Allstar Team. This list needs to be turned in not later than the day before the finals. Referees, scorekeepers, and a few other interested people will be asked to submit recommendations. We will appreciate it if the team managers who lose out before the finals will turn in their allstar list, of about ten players, before they leave. Managers can choose players from their own team and all other teams. Managers can choose players on accredited college basketball teams for their allstar list. Players on accredited college basketball teams are not eligible; we have been informed some of these college players would be risking their college eligibility if they did play. This does not apply to intramural teams or to trade schools such as OSU Tech at Okmulgee. There is no rule against high-school eligibility of players will not be endangered. It will probably be safe for most seniors to play. There is no age limit.

Players and managers are asked to not leave valuables in the dressing rooms because there is always the danger of theft.

THE STATE INDIAN GIRLS' BASKETBALL TOURNEY will be March 17 through the 25th. Highschool rules will be used. (AAU rules will not be followed.) Entry fee, game times, trophies, allstar selections, and other rules are the same as for men. All games will be at night. Over \$500 worth of trophies are on order for these two tourneys.

You may send your entry to Will T. Nelson, 1801 South Lindsay, Oklahoma City 9, phone ME1906 4-3737; or to Bob Elliott at the Gym, 315 Southwest Fifth, phone Central 5-7541, residence, Central 2-9445. Please send your entry in early. The bracket will be drawn a few days before each tourney starts so teams can be notified of the first round pairings and game times.

"Mayor" Sonny Asbury's TULSA HAWKS are defending their 1960 State Indian Men's Championship. Phoebe Jones' BRISTOW BIG RED team is defending the State Indian Girls' title.

*Beat Wishers to you from,  
Bob & Will T*

The schedule and rules for the 1961 State Indian Basketball Tournament are preserved in OU's University Archives. Tourney organizers also sent a notice to be read over the air with Saturday night scores. Even if fans couldn't attend the tournament, they could find out how their local team was doing. (top) 1961 State Indian Men's Basketball Tourney (legal-size sheet of tournament brackets). (top right) Saturday night scores in the State Indian Basketball Tourney (1961), Oklahoma City. (right) Rules for the 1961 State Indian Basketball Tourneys for Men and Girls. All three items are from University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, WNAD Radio Station, box 8, folder 3.





**Morning handgame at a Caddo dance, July 11, 1948.**  
Karl and Iva Schmitt Collection, no. 2.



**Caddos and Wichitas playing a handgame at Murrow's Dance Ground in Binger, Oklahoma, ca. 1955. Horace Poolaw, photographer.** Horace Poolaw Collection, no. 45POWS.  
Courtesy of the Horace Poolaw Family and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.



**Front and back of November 7, 1960, postcard from Lela Tahdoanippah announcing November 13, 1960, handgame near Cache, Oklahoma, sent to radio show.** University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, box 8, folder 3.



Cover of vinyl record album for Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, and Comanche handgame, Carnegie Roadrunners vs. Billy Goat Hill, recorded live at Carnegie, Oklahoma, on November 24, 1968. Sound Recordings Collection, no. 2402.

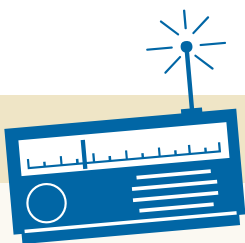
sponsored the statewide tournament at OU. Listeners to a February 1968 recording of the radio show can clearly hear the fast pace of the competition and the crowd's exuberance.

With so much going on, what's the use of staying home? Not me!

—DON WHISTLER, *INDIANS FOR INDIANS*,  
JUNE 11, 1946, BROADCAST, TAPE 8

The *Indians for Indians* radio show played an important role in the development of intertribal community life in Oklahoma and neighboring states during the twentieth century. One of Don Whistler and the broadcast's legacies

was the creation of an extensive calendar of all the pow-wows taking place across the state. With announcements pouring in every week for different events, often held on the same date, Whistler advocated for creating a calendar that would help activity planners avoid choosing dates that conflicted with other scheduled events. After Whistler's death, the Sequoyah Club, through Boyce Timmons's coordination, continued publishing a summer pow-wow calendar so that everyone knew where to go for good singing and dancing. Oklahoma's state tourism magazine, *Oklahoma Today*, would eventually draw from the pow-wow schedule when it created its own condensed calendar of events.



## Listen in!

Chuckle over Don Whistler's amusing remarks about the need for a pow-wow calendar during the July 29, 1947, broadcast. **Listen to tape 14, filename IMT-T14\_02, clip 1:10–1:35.**



CALENDAR OF INDIAN EVENTS FOR SUMMER, 1955  
 Sequoyah Indian Club, University of Oklahoma  
 B. D. Timmons, Sponsor

EVENT	DATE	PLACE	SPONSOR
Ponca City Pow-Wow	June 23, 24, 25, 26	2 miles east from junction on Hi-way 60 East and West, Hi-way 40 South, and Hi-way 77 from North	Ponca City Inter-Tribal Club
<i>Crateville Park June 29, 10, 11, 12</i>			
<i>John P. ... June 19, 11, 12</i>			
Dog Patch Pow-Wow	June 24, 25, 26	1 1/2 miles East of Clinton	Pete Birdchief, President
Comanche Pow-Wow	July 1, 2, 3, 4	Same place north of Lawton	Comanche Pow-Wow Club
All Indian Softball Tournament--Boys	July 8, 9, 10	Wheeler Park, O. C.	Indian Athletic Club
Walters Pow-Wow (5th Annual)	July 7, 8, 9, 10		
Sac & Fox Pow-Wow	July 15, 16, 17	E. Dooley Ranch Cushing	Earnest Dooley and Cushing Chamber of Commerce
Colony Pow-Wow	July 22, 23, 24	Colony, Oklahoma	Colony Pow-Wow Club
All Indian Softball Tournament--Girls	July 23, 24	Wheeler Park, O. C.	Indian Athletic Club
Otoe Pow-Wow	July 28, 29, 30, 31	Red Rock, Oklahoma	
Stroud, Oklahoma Pow-Wow	August 5, 6, 7	Stroud, Oklahoma	Oklahoma War Dancers
American Indian Exposition	August 15 - 20	Anadarko, Oklahoma	
Canton Pow-Wow	August 26, 27, 28	Barefoot Park - near Carleton, Oklahoma	Arapahoe Pow-Wow Club

*Le-na-po-club of Henry Okla - June 11 - Football Stadium Henry Okla.*  
*June 12 - meeting in ...*  
*June 12 - meeting in ...*

Calendars of Indian events for summer 1955 and summer 1968. American Indian Institute Collection, box 5, folder 14.

SUMMER, 1968

Prepared by the American Indian Institute of the University of Oklahoma. To have events listed or secure additional copies of this calendar, write to: B. D. Timmons, The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma 73069.

Date	Event	Place
May 24, 25, 26	4th Annual All Indian Pow Wow	Nevada, Missouri
June 6, 7, 8	Osage	Grayhorse-Fairfax, Okla.
June 2nd through 8th	National Aboriginal Traditional Convention	Hi-way 40 near Okemah, Oklahoma
June 2, 3, 4	Delaware Pow Wow	Copan, Oklahoma
June 7, 8, 9	Talking Leaves Festival	Arkansas City, Kansas
June 13, 14, 15, 16	Osage	Pawhuska, Oklahoma
June 21, 22, 23	Hub City Pow Wow	Clinton, Oklahoma
June 20, 21, 22, 23	Osage	Hominy, Oklahoma
June 21, 22, 23	Dog Patch Pow Wow	Clinton, Oklahoma
June 21, 22, 23	Annual Caddo Dance	Grace Aiken's Dance Grounds, Gracemont, Oklahoma
June 28, 29, 30	Kickapoo Pow Wow	Horton, Kansas
July 4, 5, 6, 7	Pawnee Homecoming	Pawnee, Oklahoma
July 4, 5, 6	Annual Caddo Tribal Dance	Binger "Y"-Binger, Okla.
July 2, 3, 4	Kiowa Gourd Clan	Carnegie, Oklahoma
July 1, 2, 3, 4	Quapaw Pow Wow	3 miles East, Quapaw, Okla.
July 12, 13, 14	Sac and Fox Tribal Dance	Reservation Grounds, Stroud, Oklahoma
July 18, 19, 20, 21	Potawatomi Pow Wow	Mayetta, Kansas
July 19, 20, 21	Comanche Pow Wow	Walters, Oklahoma
July 26, 27, 28	Oklahoma City Pow Wow Club	Indian Hills - Witcher Rd., NE of Oklahoma City
August 8, 9, 10	Texas Indian Hobbyist	Lampassas, Texas
August 9, 10, 11	Ceremonials of the Drum	Wichita, Kansas
August 2, 3, 4	Sac and Fox Veterans	Ed Mack Farm, N. of Shawnee, Oklahoma
August 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17	American Indian Exposition	Anadarko, Oklahoma
August 16, 17, 18	Tulsa Pow Wow	Mohawk Park, Tulsa, Okla.
August 30, 31, Sept. 1, 2	Barefoot Pow Wow	Canton, Oklahoma
<i>August 2 Last of August</i>	Ponca Pow Wow	White Eagle, S. of Ponca City, Oklahoma
August 8, 9, 10	Caddo Veterans	Binger "Y"-Binger, Okla.
Sept. 14	Annual Pow Wow	Grand Prairie, Texas
August 31, Sept. 1, 2	Colony Oklahoma Pow Wow	Colony, Oklahoma
Sept. 25, 26, 27	Wichita Conference-Governors' Interstate Indian Council	Wichita, Kansas
Sept. 28	American Indian Day	Mayetta, Kansas
October 26	Arlington Indian Fun Festival Pow Wow	Arlington, Texas

## Military Service

Good wishes and prayers for our boys, who have shown their ability to uphold our country, so that we may all live in peace.

—JAMES AUCHIAH, *INDIANS FOR INDIANS* BROADCAST, SEPTEMBER 7, 1963, TAPE 94



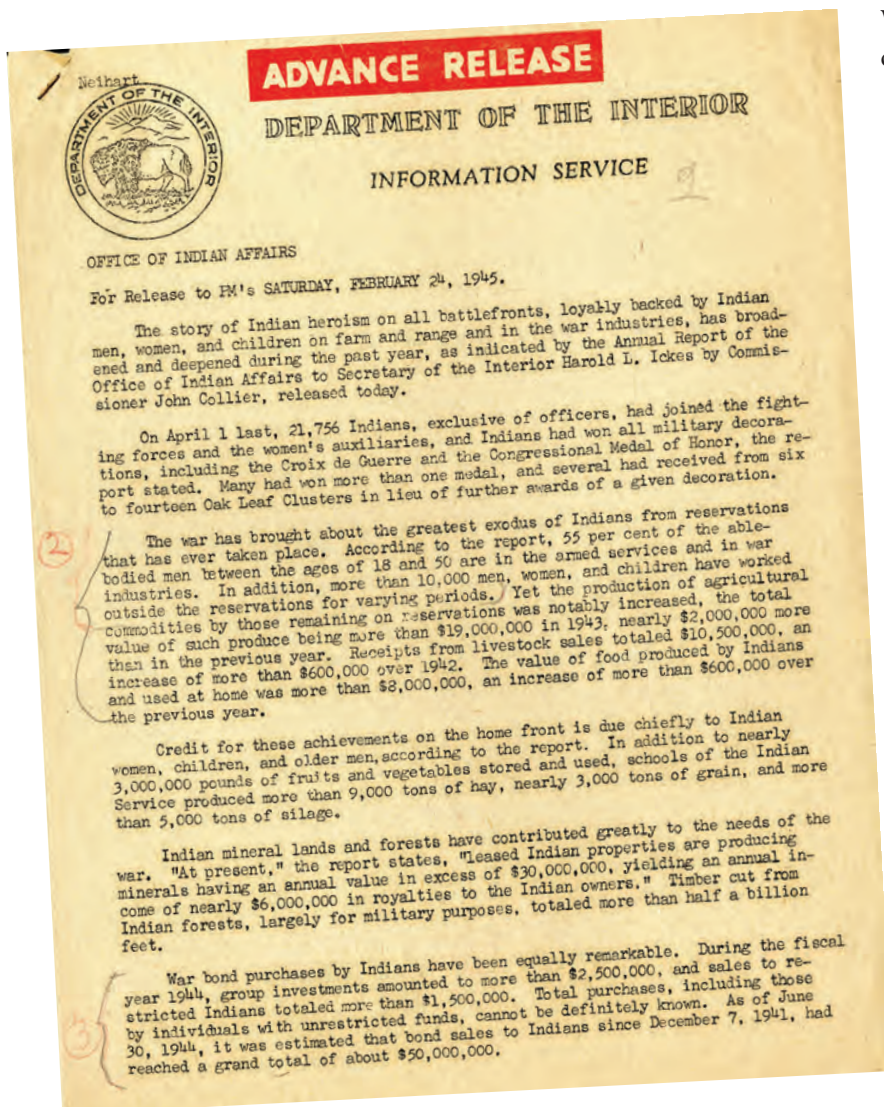
Native American communities honor with unconditional respect the men and women who have served in the U.S. armed forces. This high regard for servicemen and servicewomen stems from a warrior tradition in all tribes, which valued the role of warrior as protector.

The *Indians for Indians* radio show's airtime spanned World War II, the Korean War, and war in Vietnam. Among the listeners to and participants on the *Indians for*

*Indians Hour* were numerous members of the military, veterans, and their family members. It is difficult to find a broadcast of the program that does not feature songs, stories, dedications, or announcements that have to do with military service.

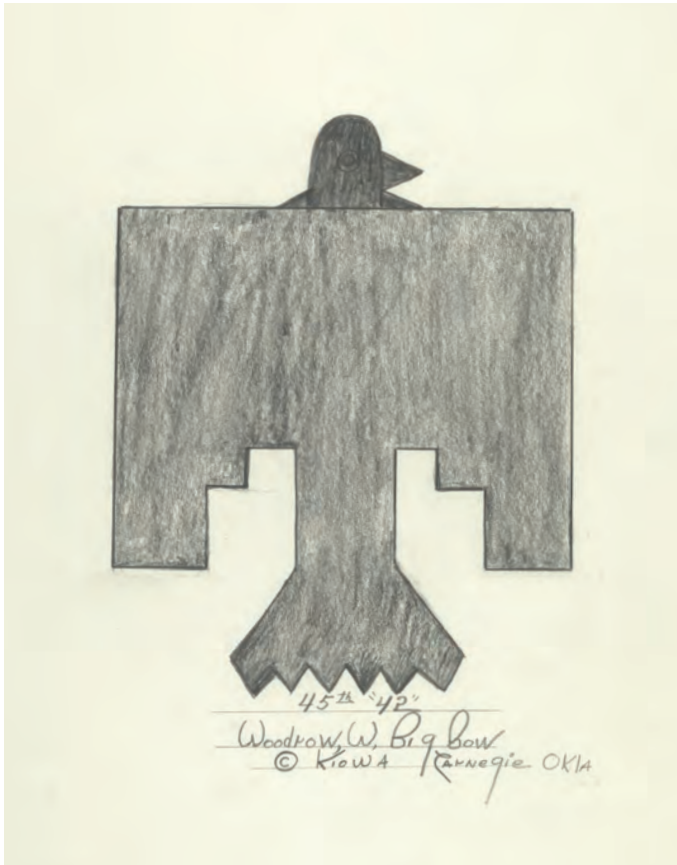
### New and Old Songs

An important way American Indian peoples both historically and in contemporary times have honored those who serve as warriors or in the military is by creating and singing songs for them. Many new songs were composed during wartime periods in the twentieth century. Songs honoring the 45th Infantry Division, or "Thunderbirds," are examples; these songs were composed during World War II to show respect for the



Advance release, Department of the Interior Information Service, Office of Indian Affairs, February 24, 1945, p. 1. Edward Everett Dale Collection, box 236, folder 38.





Kiowa artist Woody Big Bow created the Thunderbird insignia for the 45th Infantry Division of the National Guard, one of four National Guard units that was “federalized” during World War II. The 45th’s insignia had previously been a swastika, a symbol that had been in common use to stand for good fortune. Since the swastika came to be associated with the Nazis, the 45th instead adopted Big Bow’s design of a bright yellow thunderbird on a red background as its insignia in 1939. (left) Pencil drawing of the Thunderbird insignia of the Oklahoma 45th Infantry Division, by Woodrow Big Bow (Kiowa), 1942. Western History Collections Art Collection. (right) Cover of American Indian Exposition program book, August 13–18, 1951. Artwork by William Vann Flores. Boyce and Alice Timmons Collection, box 9, folder 16.



members of the 45th, which is based in Oklahoma City. An important part of the *Indians for Indians* broadcasts is the airing of songs like those created to honor the Thunderbirds.

Older songs, preserved through generations, continue to be used to inspire contemporary warriors and to recognize their exploits, as well as their sacrifices. An example in the *Indians for Indians* broadcasts is the Purple Heart song, performed by Willie Wiles (Sac and Fox) in the March 28, 1950, program. Wiles explains in the segment that the song originated as a song for wounded warriors.

**A Purple Heart medal from World War II.**

Courtesy patries71/flickr, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

## Nineteenth-Century Battles and Conflicts

Listeners to the *Indians for Indians* show heard not only songs honoring individuals serving in the military, but also participated in an understanding of wartime from a Native perspective. During the first decade of the broadcast in particular, the show offered Native perspectives on nineteenth-century conflicts, as well as recordings of old songs and information about historic individuals. Some of the older participants in the broadcasts at that time had actually fought in battles that took place during the 1800s. These were either conflicts between tribes, or more commonly, between tribes and the U.S. military in pursuit of the federal government's long-standing policy to distribute Native lands to non-Native settlers and confine Native peoples to reservations.



**Chief Yellowfish, third from left. Comanche/Kiowa/Apache in Washington, D.C.** Division of Southwest Manuscripts Collection, no. 1218.

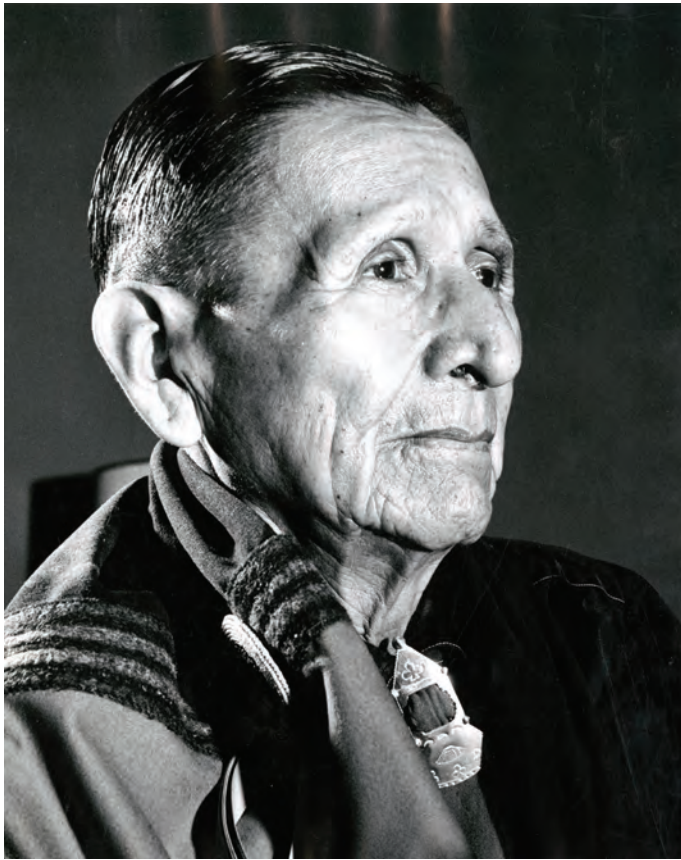
Several broadcasts describe a historical event from a Native perspective or offer historic songs or accounts of historic people. For example, topics covered in the *Indians for Indians* broadcasts include:

- ▶ the Second Battle of Adobe Walls, 1874: As a teenager, Chief Yellowfish (Comanche) fought at Adobe Walls in the Texas panhandle along with other Comanche, Cheyenne, and Kiowa warriors led by Quanah Parker and Lone Wolf. Chief Yellowfish speaks in Comanche about this event during the April 8, 1941, broadcast; unfortunately, there is no recording of the show. However, that speech is later referred to in the October 26, 1943, and April 6, 1948, broadcasts.
- ▶ a fight between Comanche and Sac and Fox: In the September 11, 1945, broadcast, Chief Albert Attocknie tells of a skirmish between his tribe and that of Don Whistler (Sac and Fox); the fight occurred northeast of present-day Tulsa.
- ▶ a Pawnee war song: In the April 16, 1963, broadcast, Garland Blaine sings several old songs, including one about “staying behind to fight to give others a chance to escape.”
- ▶ the last living Pawnee scout: In the December 2, 1947, broadcast, Whistler acknowledged receiving a letter from the granddaughter of the last living Pawnee scout, requesting a dedication for his eighty-eighth birthday. The last Pawnee scout would have been Rush Roberts, who participated in the August 31, 1948, broadcast.



**Rush Roberts, back row, second from right.** Cunningham Indian Photographs Collection (NPI), no. 35.





**Charles Apekaum (Kiowa), Navy veteran of World War I, participated in the March 29, 1949, broadcast.** General Personalities Collection, no. 103.

### World War I, 1914–1918

World War I was the first major conflict in which large numbers of Native Americans fought as part of the U.S. armed forces. Native service in WWI is remembered in Reverend White Parker’s speech in a National Congress of American Indians meeting that was broadcast remotely by *Indians for Indians* from Ponca City on June 4, 1946. Several veterans of World War I also participated in other broadcasts.

### World War II, 1939–1945

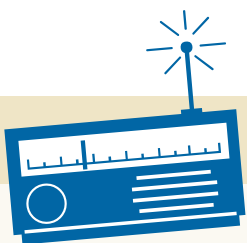
The *Indians for Indians Hour* started airing in April 1941. Not surprisingly, there are frequent references to World War II in its early broadcasts. During times of war, the show nearly constantly featured announcements for honor dances for servicemen, as well as dedications of songs to relatives serving in the military.

The toll the war took on Native—and non-Native—communities is felt in a poignant tribute in the December 5, 1944, broadcast. In the show, host Don Whistler somberly reads a letter dedicated to army sergeant Virgil Don Beaver, who had been killed in action at Anzio, Italy, on October 27. His wife sent the letter to the show; perhaps her most heartbreaking line was one stating she and their one-year-old daughter would make their home with her parents.

A half-year later, relief and hope can be heard in an announcement aired during the June 5, 1945, broadcast. Frank Bushy (Cheyenne) sent in a notice that the Cheyennes were hosting a war victory pow-wow in Kingfisher “to celebrate victory over Germany and hope for victory over Japan soon.”

During the March 25, 1947, broadcast, which featured the Kiowa War Mothers Club of Carnegie Chapter, David Apekaum speaks eloquently about the group, whose members all had at least one son in the service. Apekaum reported on their success in raising money for the American Red Cross, adding “they have proven themselves 100 percent American” (*Indians for Indians*, tape 7, filename IMT-7\_02). The War Mothers Club, Carnegie Chapter, dedicated three songs in this broadcast to Gold Star Mothers, who are mothers who have lost a son or daughter in active service in the U.S. armed forces.

Another notable tribute is the Brave Dance song composed by Ben Walker (Sac and Fox) and sung on the August 2, 1949, broadcast. Walker composed this song to honor all combat veterans. His son, Marvin Walker, served



## Listen in!

Hear the Kiowa War Mothers Club of Carnegie sing one of their songs dedicated to Gold Star Mothers on the March 25, 1947, *Indians for Indians* broadcast. **Listen to tape 7, filename IMT-7\_02, clip 2:45–4:26.**

**Marvin Walker helps a comrade strap on his gear. Scene from film of General MacArthur on New Guinea, 1943, with paratroopers preparing for a combat jump. Filmmaker unknown.** Film in private collection of Elmer Walker (Sac and Fox).



in Company H of the U.S. Army's 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment in the Pacific Theater, where he made three combat jumps: Nadzab, New Guinea; Noemfoor, Dutch New Guinea; and Corregidor ("The Rock"), Philippines.

In the May 28, 1946, broadcast, the war again is referenced. Guest Sam Osborne talks about how the women of the Pawnee tribe organized three groups in 1942 to support and honor veterans. These organizations were the Pawnee Indian Victory Club, Pawnee War Mothers Club, and the Pawnee Service Club.

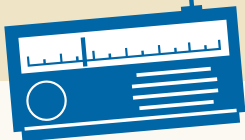
The clubs were formed to honor and support military personnel, to pray for them, and to entertain them while they were home on furlough.

### **Korean War, 1950–1953**

On-air dedications and tributes to military personnel continue throughout the *Indians for Indians* broadcasts during the Korean War. During a 1952 program, a Cheyenne group sings a war journey song dedicated to Corporal Johnny Fletcher, "now serving with the Marines in Korea."

In another broadcast in 1951 or 1952 (date unknown), concern about the safe return of a serviceman is expressed in an announcement for an April 11 prayer meeting for Archie Blackowl Jr., who had not yet returned from Korea. The prayers for safe return would have echoed the same prayers and hopes shared by families across the United States who had relatives serving in the military during wartime.

As with during World War II, casualties of the Korean War were sometimes announced on the air. The superintendent of the Indian Service in Anadarko called WNAD to have the show announce on the May 22, 1951, broadcast that "people are having a memorial service for one of the boys killed in action, also to honor those boys who served in Korea and are now returning home." The service was to be held on June 3, 1951. The Anadarko Native community came together to plan this memorial service, with all the local Indian clubs involved. The serviceman's name was not mentioned in the announcement, but it is likely that he was Sergeant Luke Tainpeah. Tainpeah was killed in action in Korea on March 28, 1951, while serving with the 187th Airborne



## **Listen in!**

**Learn about the**

**Pawnee service groups women of the tribe organized in 1942. Guest Sam Osborne talks about the groups, which were established to honor and support military personnel. Listen to tape 8, filename IMT-T8\_03, clip 2:35–4:06.**



Infantry Regimental Combat Team. He had served during World War II and reenlisted for Korea. A talented athlete, he had been a state Golden Gloves boxing champion in 1942 and 1947.

In 1952, another memorial service was held for Tainpeah, this time on the one-year anniversary of his death. The service is announced in the March 25, 1952, *Indians for Indians* broadcast. The host notes that the Oklahoma City Service Club and the Carnegie War Mothers were cohosting the service at the Anadarko Civic Park, where Sergeant Tainpeah's war song would be sung.



**Shoulder patch for the 187th Airborne Infantry Regimental Combat Team.** Courtesy Wikipedia.

### Vietnam War, 1955–1975

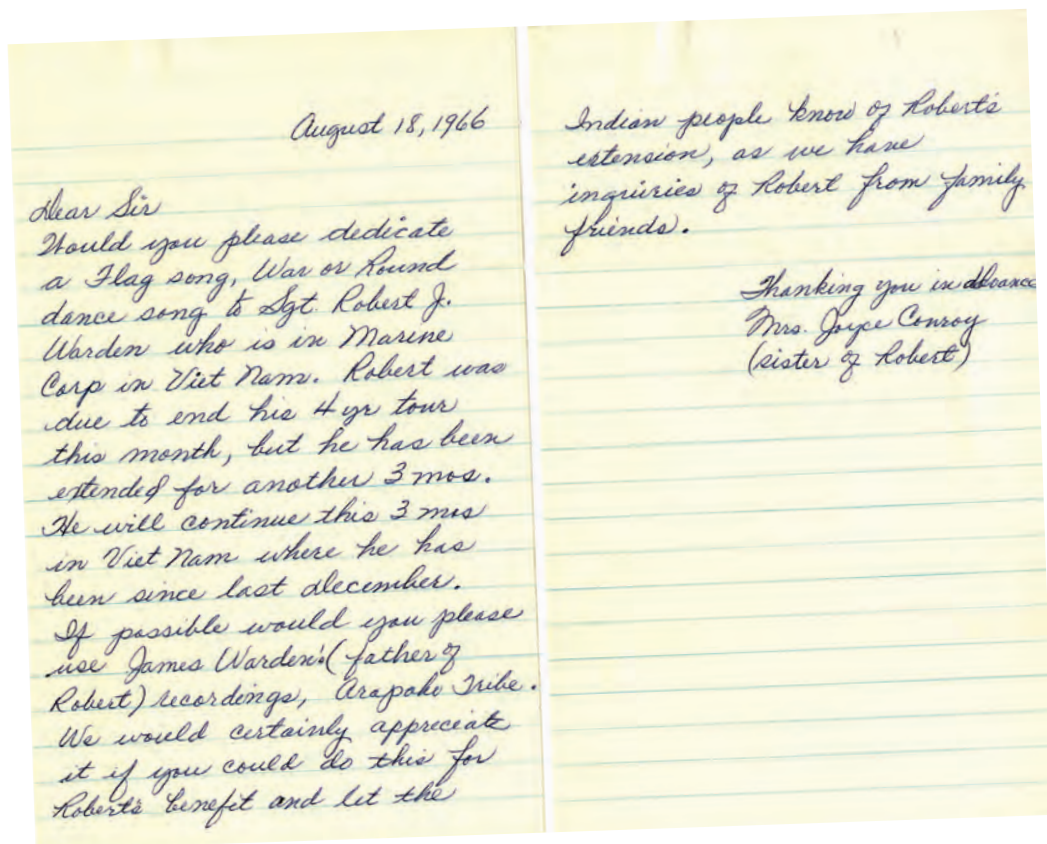
Native communities were supportive of their men and women who served during wartime, even when participation in those conflicts was not always supported nationwide. Native communities sent their men and

women to serve in the military during the Vietnam conflict. Those supportive communities then welcomed them back.

By the time of the Vietnam War, layers of dedications and songs for servicepeople had aired on *Indians for Indians*. Requests for dedications might now ask for recordings of songs or dedications to be played that had broadcast earlier, during World War II or Korea. In August 1966, Joyce Conroy wrote in to the show to ask for an earlier recording of her father, James Warden (Arapaho), singing to be dedicated to her brother, Robert J. Warden, whose four-year tour in Vietnam with the Marines had been extended for at least three months. Unfortunately, there is no recording of the broadcast when the dedication to Robert J. Warden aired (recordings do not exist for every broadcast), but the letter documenting this important request is preserved in OU's Western History Collections archives.

Broadcasts from the time of the Vietnam War offer insight into different perspectives on the conflict. Recorded live on November 11, 1968, a speaker at the Kiowa Veterans Celebration commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice of World War I expressed one perspective on serving in the military during Vietnam.

The guest of honor, Major Raymond E. Largent, who had served in both Korea and Vietnam and was now at Fort Sill, forcefully states that “young people are criticized



**Letter from Mrs. Joyce Conroy (sister of Robert), August 18, 1966.** University of Oklahoma Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, WNAD Radio Station, box 8, folder 3.

as not being what they used to be and not having physical abilities, but eighteen- and nineteen-year-old soldiers are the backbone of what's going on in Vietnam, and they are performing tremendously" (*Indians for Indians*, tape 104, filename IMT-T104\_01). The broadcast recognizes local Vietnam veterans individually, including Sergeant Ralph Werny, who served in the 101st Airborne.

A few years later, during the May 8, 1971, broadcast, Commander Gus Palmer Sr. announces an upcoming Kiowa Veterans and Auxiliary Armed Services Day powwow. Palmer states that "men and women still in uniform are especially invited," adding that they were "asked to wear their uniforms to the dance" (*Indians for Indians*, tape 110, filename IMT-T110).

This supportive and honoring atmosphere for servicepeople participating in Vietnam was unusual outside of Native communities. There would not have been many instances in which military personnel who had served during Vietnam would have been comfortable wearing their uniforms in public, but a safe space was created for them at Native gatherings.

### Postscript: Two Veterans, Two Boxing Champions

Brief announcements on *Indians for Indians* Hour provide tantalizing clues about people or events. Two veterans, Virgil Franklin and Luke Tainpeah (mentioned earlier), pop up in broadcasts in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Both men were champion boxers.

Virgil Franklin, Arapaho and Kiowa, was a state and national Golden Gloves champion in 1945. During the August 19, 1947, *Indians for Indians* broadcast, he is recognized as having served in the U.S. Navy and as a Golden Gloves champ.

**"Previous State Gloves Champs,"** *Daily Oklahoman*, February 11, 1951, p. 102.

Previous State Gloves Champs	
115—Jerry Flanagan	117—David Himes
118—Junior Franklin	140—Guy Luker
126—Ben Vauchan	175—Bill Frwick
125—D. Blumenthal	Hvy.—Cliff Bradley
1919	
115—Gary Ward	141—Herschel Acton
118—Jack McCann	140—Guy Luker
126—B. Blumenthal	125—Tom Lockwood
125—Jerry Brownrig	Hvy.—Cliff Bradley
1948	
115—Albert Moses	141—Eddie Washburn
118—Lindy Burgess	140—Guy Luker
126—Sammy James	125—Earl Keel
125—Herschel Acton	Hvy.—Leon Taunah
1947	
115—Lindy Burgess	141—Eddie Lara
118—Washle Stacey	140—Alvin Williams
126—Sammy James	125—Luke Tainpeah
125—Eddie Colbert	Hvy.—Ralph Koeniger
1946	
115—Lindy Burgess	141—Eddie Washburn
118—Charley Peabody	140—Virgil Goodin
126—James Emma	125—Tony Colvi
125—Herschel Acton	Hvy.—Glossy Zolich
1945	
115—Kenneth Wiles	141—Jack Bruza
118—Bobby Murray	140—Dick Smith
126—Virgil Franklin	125—Aa Howlingwolf
125—Gilbert Howell	Hvy.—Jack Bates
1944	
115—Haxler Horne	141—Alvin Williams
118—Adam Koutabo	140—Charles Cullera
126—Eudy Pasznappe	125—Ray Williams
125—Gilbert Howell	Hvy.—Harland Hill
1943	
115—Harry Darby	141—Ben Evans
118—Jepp O'Neal	140—Bruce Williams
126—Proctor Heindol	125—Floyd Aldredge
125—Billy Tiger	Hvy.—Gene Gosmer
1942	
115—Jepp O'Neal	141—Luke Tainpeah
118—Frank Peabody	140—Jack Eason
126—Proctor Heindol	125—Nanders Cox
125—Jack Bruza	Hvy.—Dodie Parton
1941	
115—Ernest Marrow	141—Jake Strubben
118—Nerlin Hanson	140—Vincent Myers
126—Cris Stanford	125—Aa Howlingwolf
125—Billy Tiger	Hvy.—Tom Proctor
1940	
115—Gene Evans	141—Leo Wolfe
118—Huel Davis	140—Vincent Myers
126—Bill Looker	125—Dodie Parton
125—Billy Tiger	Hvy.—Herbert Triplett
1939	
115—Homer Tipps	141—Eugene Chapman
118—Don Livingston	140—George Drex
126—Billy Tiger	125—Gordon Casey
125—Ealcomb Smith	Hvy.—Austin O'Jibway
1938	
115—Dean Welton	141—Marvin Liddell
118—Nogwah Bowring	140—Ollie Hedmon
126—Donald Sharp	125—Gordon Casey
125—Howard Eldridge	Hvy.—I. Shouderblade
1937	
115—Tommy Hand	141—Marvin Liddell
118—Junior O'Neal	140—Ollie Hedmon
126—Harold McCollum	125—Gordon Casey
125—W. V. Liddell	Hvy.—Austin O'Jibway
1936	
115—Tommy Hand	141—Norman Miller
118—Junior O'Neal	140—Ollie Hedmon
126—Red Imbys	125—Buddy Scott
125—Howard Eldridge	Hvy.—Tyus Smith

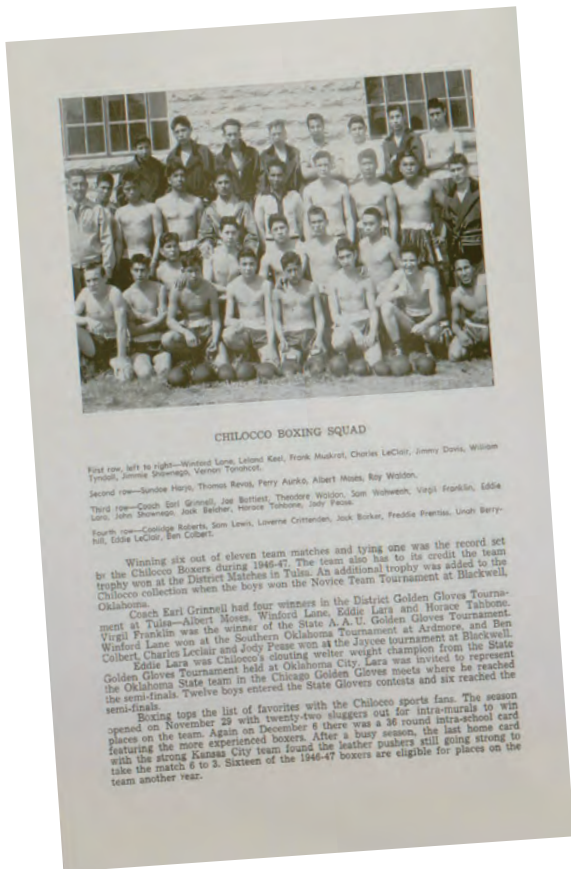


Cover of the 1947 Chilocco Indian Agricultural School Senior Yearbook. Courtesy National Archives, Record Group 75, School Annuals.



Virgil Franklin in "Veteran Seniors" section, Chilocco Indian Agricultural School Senior Yearbook, 1947, p. 23. Courtesy National Archives, Record Group 75, School Annuals. Accessible at [https://catalog.archives.gov/OpaAPI/media/2745626/content/nrf/chilocco/the\\_chilocco\\_annual\\_1947.pdf](https://catalog.archives.gov/OpaAPI/media/2745626/content/nrf/chilocco/the_chilocco_annual_1947.pdf).





“Boxing Squad” in the school’s Chilocco Senior Yearbook, 1947, p. 55. Courtesy National Archives, Record Group 75, School Annuals.



Virgil Franklin, 1985 inductee into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame.



Article on Luke Tainpeah enlisting in the U.S. Army. *Daily Oklahoman*, February 15, 1948, p. 27.

Franklin graduated from Chilocco Indian School in 1947, after his military service.

Luke Tainpeah, Kiowa, was a state Golden Gloves champion in 1942 and 1947. As mentioned earlier, he served during the Korean War but tragically was killed in action in Korea.

Tainpeah’s boxing career was frequently covered in local newspapers, including the *Daily Oklahoman*.

In the many announcements, songs, and dedications that aired on *Indians for Indians*, the program offers an important glimpse into Native family and community life during times of war and conflict in the twentieth century. At the same time the program indicated support and respect for Native military personnel over the years, it also showcased a rich and diverse religious life in Native communities.



## Religious Life



The *Indians for Indians* radio program showcased the diversity of Native Americans in Oklahoma. This diversity shines through in the multitude of religions represented and demonstrated by participants on the show. There are ancient religions specific to individual tribes, intertribal religions that took root in the nineteenth century, and many ways of practicing Christianity, including the Native American Church. It is common for Native American individuals to practice more than one religion, simultaneously holding on to a tribal religion, while also adhering to

the tenets of the Christian faith or the Native American Church. All this is evident in the *Indians for Indians* broadcasts, which aired stomp dance songs, Christian hymns sung in Native languages, and peyote songs of the Native American Church over the decades.

Stomp dances are part of the ceremonial life of tribes who were originally from the southeastern United States. Muscogee Creek, Seminole, Shawnee, and Caddo groups



“Old time” stomp dance, Arbeka ceremonial ground.

William D. Grisso Collection, no. 1.

355  
June 17, 1949, Arbeka Green Corn Dance.

The evening that we went to Ralph Morrow's (Caddo) we talked about going to the Arbeka dance. As a result they decided to go also ---- Hank Weller had a post card from Joe Hicks (Arbeka Creek) asking them to come over and bring some war dancers. I went and saw Hank the morning of the 17th and he said that he and Ralph and others were going to come on Saturday. So, we went into Anadarko (I already had Dwight Beaver and tried to pick up Bobby Lee Thomas (another teen-age Caddo war dancer). He was in bible school so we went off without him.

We arrived at Arbeka about 6:15 pm. The women "Ribbon Dance" was still going on. They were dancing and sat down on the benches which had been placed again just north of the west arbor in the square ground. There were relatively few dancers this year ---perhaps 15 women and girls. When they sat down a man brought them water ---not Joe Hicks this time, but I think his ass't. What I saw of the Ribbon Dance seemed the same as I saw last year.

When the Ribbon Dance was over ---there was a short lull. This was followed by the "Old Dance" led by a man named Nichi Gray from the town of New Tulsa (I found out who he was later.) I think some of the women got in the Old Dance, but my memory is poor here. After the old dance two men went to the east and cut oak branches and swept the square ground where the dancing had been going on (around the fire). Both started in front of the west arbor ---one going north and the other south ---they met in front of the east arbor and threw their branches on top of that arbor. Each man swept half of the dance circle.

I had seen Don Whistler under an arbor to the east and went to say hello ---turned out to be the arbor of Joe and Amy Kinnard. After the Old Dance, Joe Hicks came out of the east arbor and recognized me ---called me Smitty. He went around telling visitors to eat under certain arbors ----this was to distribute the crowd so that one family wouldn't get all. Most of the visitors were Indians. Iva, Dwight, myself and twine and Don Whistler and his son were assigned by Hicks to the Kinnards. Supper was primarily wessies and kraut, peaches --- not too special.

After supper the men went back to the arbors ---sat around and talked. As it got dark they sang a few songs ----I was told that they were "ball game" songs. During the evening a few cars were coming in until a small crowd had arrived. Finally about 9 or 9:30 a stomp dance started. This was nearly the same as we saw last year. Joe Hicks and his ass't walked around with the feathered sticks. Joe talked at great length in Creek ---picking out the leader for the next dance. Iva and I danced a number of times and nothing was said. This year they unwound the spiral a number times and rewound it to the north but still well within the square. In the unwinding everyone held hands and the long line was led along in front of the west arbor on the way to rewinding. When the rewound spiral was complete, the leaders and crowd would really sing ---as the end of the song approached the leader would greatly speed up the time (gradually) and end up with a high-pitched yell.

Anthropological notes of Karl Schmitt on the Arbeka Green Corn Dance, June 17, 1949. Karl and Iva Schmitt Collection, box 1, folder 33.





**Stomp dance, possibly Caddo.**  
Phillips Collection, no. 3390.

performed stomp dance songs on the show, sometimes complete with rattles and shell shakers. Singers from the Arbeka Stomp Ground, near Wetumka, Oklahoma, were on the show at least twice (August 24, 1948, and April 11, 1950), and they performed a variety of stomp dance songs, ball game songs, and social dance songs.

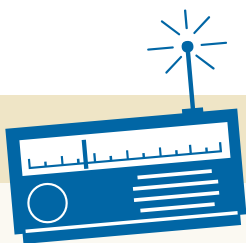
In the nineteenth century, missionaries introduced Christianity to most tribes. Some tribes were more accepting of these overtures, or had been exposed to them longer, and considered themselves Christians even before removal to Indian Territory. This was the case for the Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw nations. The Muscogee Creek and Seminole nations absorbed Christianity more after removal to Indian Territory. Missionaries did most of their work with the tribes in the southwestern part of what is now Oklahoma around the turn of the twentieth century. Converts were made and several churches were established in that area.

Native congregations of Christian churches from across the state sang hymns in Native languages or offered prayers and scripture readings on Indians for Indians

Hour broadcasts. The Salt Creek Methodist Church (predominantly Muscogee Creek) and the Seminole Missionary Baptist Church of Konawa participated, as did church communities from western and southwestern Oklahoma. The Otoe Community Church and Pawnee Baptist Church came in to the studio from the north-central part of Oklahoma.



**Choska United Methodist Church.** Photo courtesy of Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference. Permission granted from lay missionary of Choska United Methodist Church.



## Listen in!

Enjoy a Creek hymn sung by singers from Choska Church in Bristow, led by Reverend John Berryhill, on a December 1952 IFIH broadcast. **Listen to tape 48, filename IMT-T48, clip 12:17–14:14.**

**Rainy Mountain Kiowa Indian Baptist Church in Mountain View, Oklahoma. Members of the church participated in the November 20, 1945, December 24, 1946 (special Christmas program), and October 7, 1947, broadcasts.** Western Oklahoma American Baptist Indian Association Collection, no. 52.



**Ioleta Hunt McElhaney (left), part of the December 24, 1946, Rainy Mountain Baptist Church Christmas program.** Western Oklahoma American Baptist Indian Association Collection, no. 63.

**Red Stone Baptist Church, west of Anadarko. In the December 28, 1948, broadcast, guest Garfield Littlechief talks about the work of building churches. Littlechief says that Red Stone's name alludes not only to its surrounding landscape, but also, and more importantly, to the blood of Christ.** Western Oklahoma American Baptist Indian Association Collection, no. 15.







**Sign for Saddle Mountain Indian Baptist Church.** Western Oklahoma American Baptist Indian Association Collection, no. 58.



**Saddle Mountain Baptist Church.** Western Oklahoma American Baptist Indian Association Collection, no. 37.



**Wichita Baptist Church, north of Anadarko.** Western Oklahoma American Baptist Indian Association Collection, no. 10.



Post Oak (Comanche) Mission, Indianoma, Oklahoma. Members participated in the February 10 and June 8, 1948, broadcasts. Western Oklahoma American Baptist Indian Association Collection, no. 24.



*Re-written narrative not typed*

ROCK SPRINGS CHURCH

Location:

NW 1/4, sec. 34, T. 8 N. R. 10 W., on the east side of State Highway No. 8, about one mile west of Sugar Creek, 2 1/2 miles north of the Washita River and about three miles north of Amandarko, in Caddo County, Oklahoma. 1.

This, the first church erected for the Indians north of the Washita River, was finished in 1880. In this same year, Black Beaver, who helped build the church, died.

Rev. John McIntosh, a Creek, was its first minister. He commuted on horseback from the Creek Nation to hold services. Jimmie Edwards, a Delaware-Shawnee, was the first minister in this local community.

The first full blood Wichita to preach at this church was Uts-ah-aux.

The first white man to preach here was Rev. Hicks who was sent by the Baptist Home Mission Board, New York.

An entire 40 acres was allotted for the church's domain. The building, itself, is surrounded by trees and other natural beautifications, including a spring issuing from the rocks. (1936).

---

1. Information by Chester Lamb, fieldworker, *note*  
 2. Ibid.

Draft of text for historical landmark sign for Rock Springs Wichita Baptist Church. Reverend R. K. Smith recounted the church's history on the November 8, 1949, broadcast. Works Progress Administration Historic Sites and Federal Writers Project Collection, box 14, folder 6-R.

Front and back covers of the sleeve and label of the vinyl record *Kiowa Church Songs*, volume 1, Indian House Records. Sound Recordings Collection, no. 2406.





**“The ‘Father Peyote’ and Helper”**  
 artwork from *The Peyote Ritual: Visions  
 and Descriptions of Monroe Tsa Toke*  
 (San Francisco: Grabhorn Press, 1957), n.p.

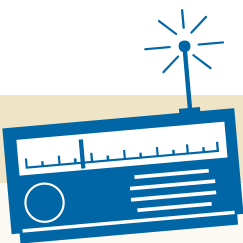
Baptists who grew up in Oklahoma are familiar with youth church camp at Falls Creek. The Indian Baptist Assembly at Falls Creek started in 1947. The March 30, 1948, *Indians for Indians* broadcast explains how the Indian Assembly was formed and promotes “Indian Falls Creek” for the coming summer.

The peyote religion spread throughout tribes in the American southwest and southern plains through the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is a uniquely Native

American take on the Christian faith, and one of its central tenets is the use of peyote as a sacrament. Perpetually threatened by missionaries and government officials alike, practitioners formally organized and chartered the Native American Church in Oklahoma in 1918. The Oklahoma state Native American Church, headquartered in El Reno, still operates in partnership with local tribal chapters. Individuals from the Caddo, Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa, and Pawnee tribes sang peyote songs on several *Indians for Indians* broadcasts.

In the March 29, 1949, broadcast, Charles Apekaum eloquently and at length defends the Native American Church, explaining its history and what it means to practitioners. He asserts that “ceremonies are conducted with reverence and decorum, so there is no basis for saying it contributes to violent expressions of emotion and is practiced by the most backward of tribes,” arguments no doubt made by critics at the time.

As with all of the subjects that hosts and participants touched on, when it came to religious life, the *Indians for Indians* broadcast provided a forum for American Indians to articulate their diverse perspectives—and to be *heard*.



## Listen in!

Hear Charles Apekaum’s

**impressive speech “In Defense of the  
 Native American Church” in the March 29,  
 1949, IFIH broadcast. Listen to tape 32,  
 filename IMT-T32\_03, clip 3:32–7:30.**



“The Yellow Hammers” artwork from *The Peyote Ritual: Visions and Descriptions of Monroe Tsa Toke* (San Francisco: Grabhorn Press, 1957), n.p.



State of Oklahoma Certificate of Incorporation for Native American Church, October 10, 1918. Karl and Iva Schmitt Collection, box 9, folder 1.



EHUME COLL. 1

STATE OF OKLAHOMA.  
Department (Great Seal) OF State.  
CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION.  
To All Whom these Presents shall Come, Greeting:

It is hereby certified: That Mack Haag of Calumet, Okla., Sidney White Crane, Kingfisher, Okla., Charles W. Dailey, Red Rock, Geo. Pipestem and Charles E. Moore of Red Rock, Frank Eagle of Ponca City, Wilbur Peawa of Fletcher, Mam Sookwat of Baird, Kiowa Charley of Ft. Cobb and Apache Ben of Apache, Oklahoma, have filed Articles of Incorporation in this office containing the required statement of facts necessary to form a corporation under the laws of the State of Oklahoma, to be known as

NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH  
with a capital stock of No Capital Stock and principal place of business at El Reno, Oklahoma.

This certificate is issued subject to the following Constitutional requirements: That the corporation to which it is issued will submit to any differences it may have with employes with reference to labor, to arbitration as shall be provided by law.

WHEREFORE, The above named persons, their associates and successors are hereby created a body politic and corporate by the name of NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH.

In witness Whereof, These presents have been attested with the Great Seal, and signed by the Secretary of the State of Oklahoma, at Oklahoma City, the tenth day of October, in the year One Thousand Nine Hundred Eighteen.

J.L. Lyon  
Secretary of the State of Oklahoma.

ATTESTED TRUE COPY OF ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH, filed in the Office of the Secretary of State of Oklahoma, October 10th, 1918.

Certified Nov. 9th, 1918 by J.L. Lyon  
Secretary of State

Seal

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

That we, ~~Mack Haag, Sidney White Crane, Charles W. Dailey, Charles E. Moore, Frank Eagle, Wilbur Peawa, Fletcher, Mam Sookwat, Apache Ben, Homer Buffalo, of Kiowa Tribe, Wiley Yellowfish of the Comanche Tribe, and Andrew Dunlap, of the Caddo Tribe of Indians,~~ do hereby associate ourselves together to form a religious and benevolent association, under the laws of the State of Oklahoma, and do hereby certify:

ARTICLE I.  
The name of this corporation shall be and is "NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH OF THE KIOWA INDIAN AGENCY IN OKLAHOMA."

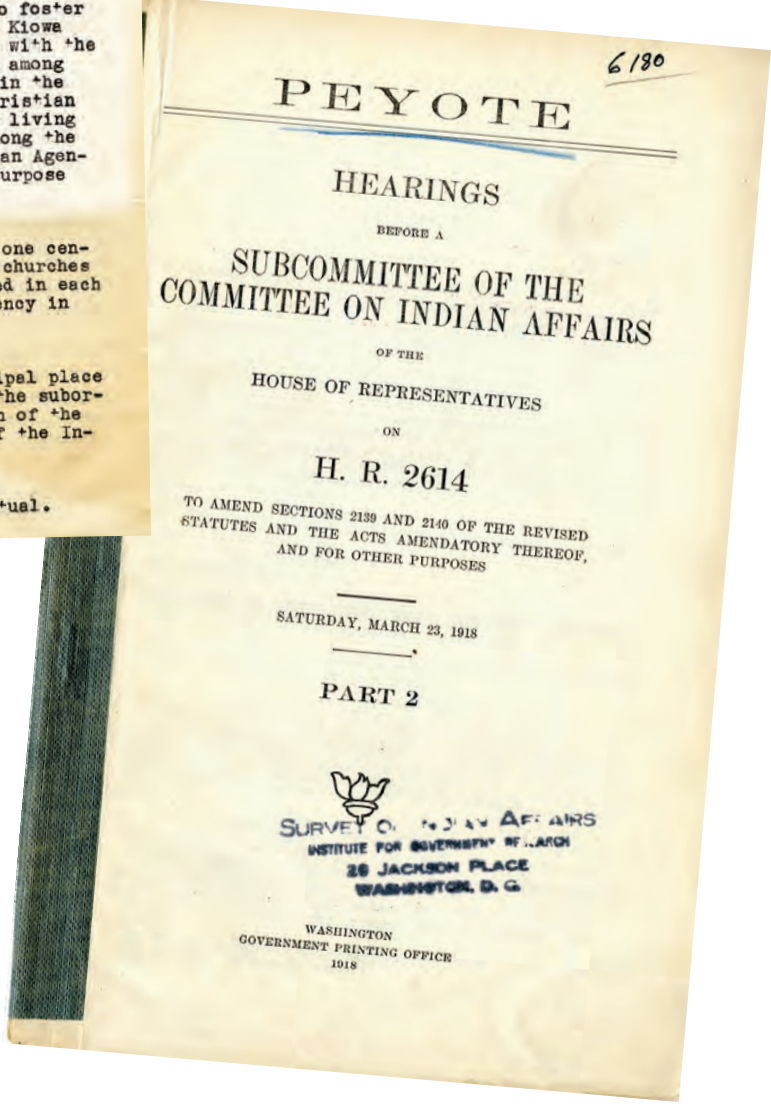
ARTICLE II.  
The purpose for which this corporation is formed is to foster and promote the religious belief of the several tribes under the Kiowa Indian Agency in the State of Oklahoma, in the Christian religion with the practice of the Payote Sacrament as commonly understood and used among the adherents of this religion in the several tribes of Indians in the Kiowa Indian Agency in the State of Oklahoma, and to teach the Christian religion and morality, sobriety, industry, kindly charity and right living and to cultivate a spirit of self-respect and brotherly union among the members of the Native Race of Indians included in the Kiowa Indian Agency in Oklahoma; with the right to own and hold property for the purpose of conducting its business or services.

ARTICLE III.  
It is the purpose of this organization to establish one central church to be known as "NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH", with branch churches subject to the jurisdiction of the General Church to be organized in each of the Indian Tribes in the jurisdiction of the Kiowa Indian Agency in the State of Oklahoma.

ARTICLE IV.  
The principal church with its seat of government and principal place of business is hereby established at Anadarko, Oklahoma; each of the subordinate churches to establish by vote of the members the location of the various churches and branch churches in the territory of each of the Indian tribes under the jurisdiction of the Kiowa Indian Agency.

ARTICLE V.  
The term for which this corporation shall exist is perpetual.

Cover of Peyote Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Indian Affairs of the House of Representatives on H.R. 2614, March 23, 1918, Part 2. Phillips Pamphlet Collection, no. 6180.



## Schools and Education

Many people in Oklahoma are not aware that Indians can retain their heritage of legends, songs, dances, arts, crafts, and many old-time customs and yet accept and participate in various phases of the white culture.

—CONCHO INDIAN SCHOOL STUDENT, *INDIANS FOR INDIANS* BROADCAST, APRIL 20, 1948, TAPE 22



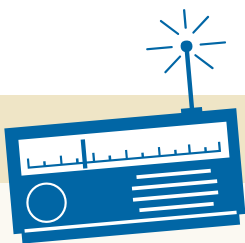
School groups, ranging from middle school to university students, regularly participated on the *Indians for Indians* show. Their lively performances reflected not only contemporary popular music and Native music, but also contemporary American ideas about education.

Students from the Pawnee Indian School were the first school group to perform on the show; they participated on the third broadcast on April 15, 1941, and returned several times. *Indians for Indians* host Don Whistler remarked that fan mail indicated they were a perennial favorite. On April 13, 1948, thirteen Pawnee, Ponca, Kaw, Osage, Sac and Fox, and Potawatomi middle school students from the school read essays they had written for class on the topic of “Advancement Made through Education.” The students thoughtfully explored this theme through their individual pieces on “How to Make Democracy Live,” “Citizenship,” and “Changing Conditions and Adjustment by Education.” One of these students, Thomas Roughface,

went on to become an influential leader and Methodist minister. He participated again on the *Indians for Indians* Hour fifteen years later on April 9, 1963, with a group from Angie Smith Memorial United Methodist Church in Oklahoma City.



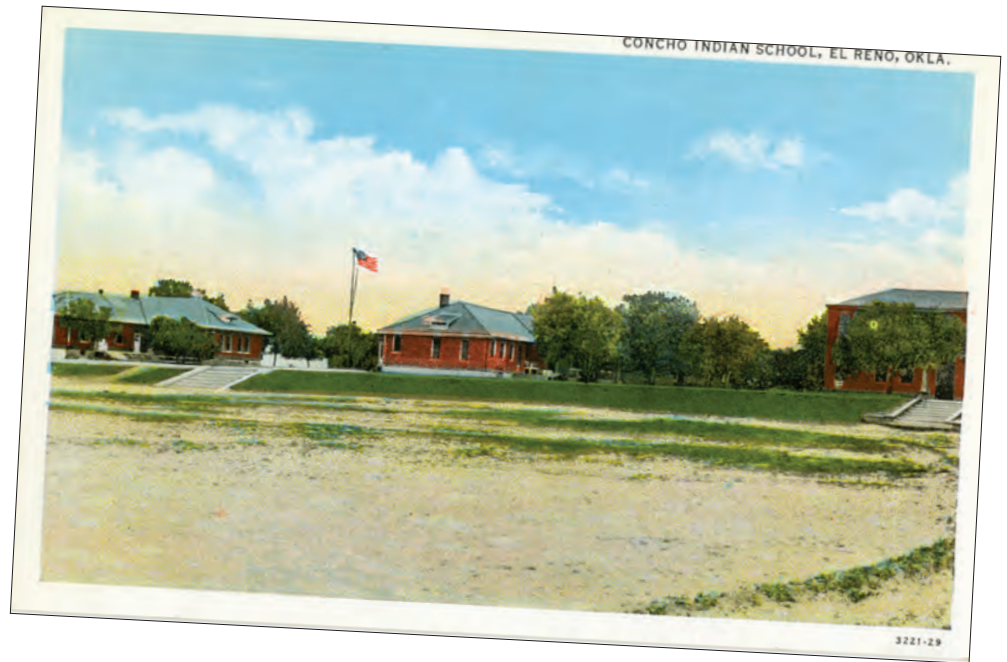
**Rev. Dr. Thomas Roughface Sr. with his sister Diana Genevieve Roughface Kauahquo at Pawnee Industrial School. The school was often referred to as “Gravy U” by the students who attended.** Photo courtesy of the Roughface family.



### Listen in!

Hear Thomas Roughface read his essay “Changing Conditions” in the IFIH recordings. **Listen to tape 23, filename IMT T23\_02, clip 20:16–23:19.**





**Concho Indian School, El Reno, Oklahoma.** John B. Fink Postcard Collection, no. 40.

High school students from Concho Indian School in El Reno also participated on *Indians for Indians* multiple times. In the only surviving broadcast of their participation, which aired on April 20, 1948, the students acted out an imaginary television show segment (in color no less, they said) about their school. How exciting the new medium of color television would have been at the time!



## Listen in!

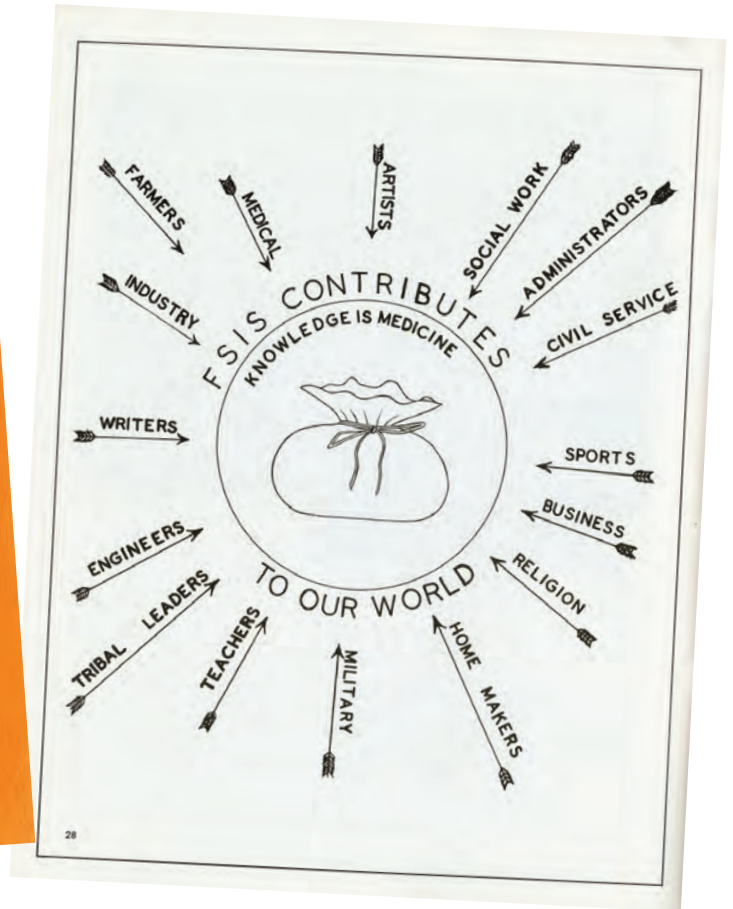
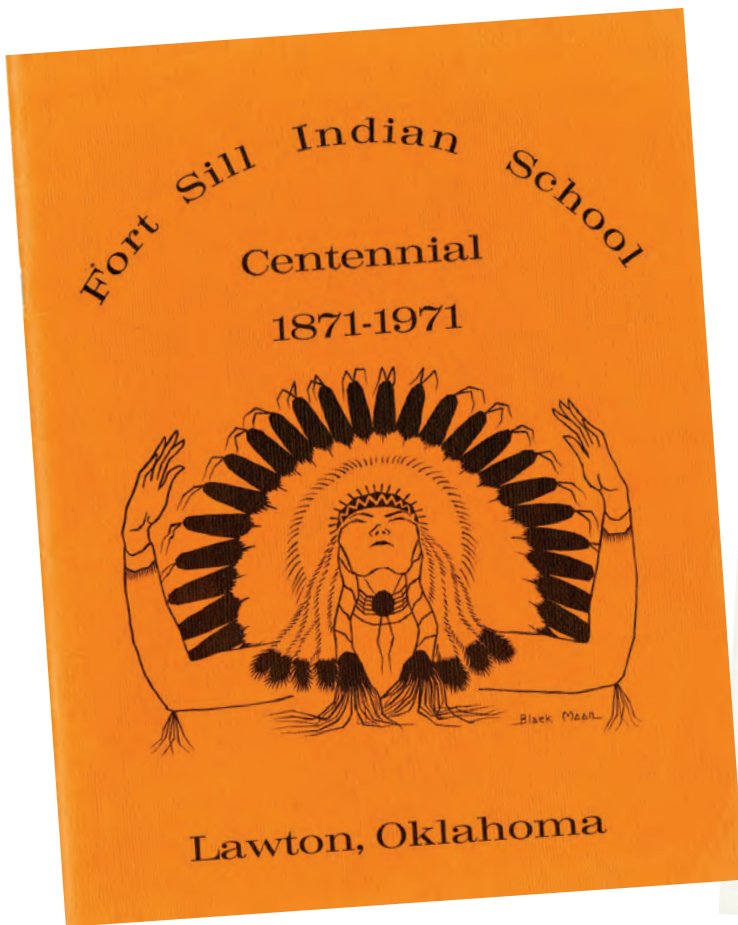
Catch the Concho Indian School skit, “Tour of School,” during the students’ broadcast of an imaginary color television show on April 20, 1948. **Listen to tape 22, filename IMT T22\_01, clip 3:37 to end.**



**Concho Indian School building, July 15, 1937.** John B. Fink Photograph Collection, no. 377.



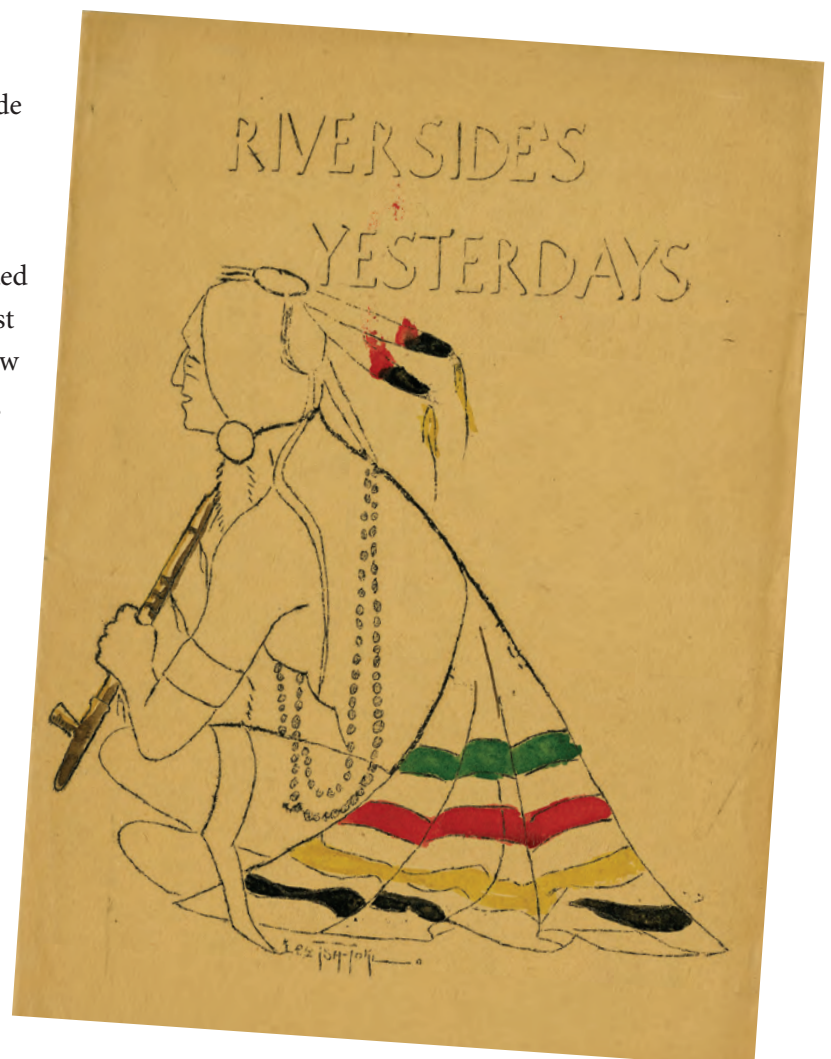
**Sign for Concho U.S. Indian Agency, including the school, 1938.** John B. Fink Photograph Collection, no. 387.



**Cover and page 28 of commemorative book for Fort Sill Indian School Centennial, 1871-1971.**  
Lawton, Oklahoma. Western History Collections Library.

The Fort Sill Indian School (Lawton) and Riverside Indian School (Anadarko) sent groups to perform on the radio show, too. Most of the songs and stories that went over the airwaves from tribes outside of Oklahoma—such as the Navajo (Diné)—were provided by Riverside Indian School participants. Original host Don Whistler booked Riverside to appear on the show annually, but only three recordings, from 1948, 1949, and 1963, exist.

Student groups from local colleges and universities often participated on the show, too, including the Estegotti (Indian) Club from Oklahoma Baptist University, the Singing Redmen Glee Club from Bacone College, and of course, OU's own Sequoyah Club.



**Cover of Riverside Indian School's "Yesterdays" program, April 27, 1945.** Edward Everett Dale Collection, box 236, folder 47.



**RIVERSIDE INDIAN SCHOOL**  
**Anadarko, Oklahoma**  
**1960-61**



Changing Classes

The Riverside School is a fully accredited Junior-Senior high school located one mile north of Anadarko, Oklahoma. The enriched curriculum is planned for students enrolled from eight states representing twenty-five tribes.

*Learning For Living*

**Riverside  
School**

**Anadarko,  
Oklahoma**



*Time for School*

The Riverside School is located one and one-half miles north of Anadarko, Oklahoma

The mission of the Riverside School is to provide an education for Indian Youth, which will enable them to continue their training beyond graduation if desired, and to give training to enable students to become useful citizens in the communities in which they will work and live.

**A HISTORY OF  
RIVERSIDE INDIAN SCHOOL  
ANADARKO, OKLAHOMA**



**1871 - 1971**

Cover of "A History of Riverside Indian School, Anadarko, Oklahoma, 1871-1971." American Indian Institute Collection, box 40, folder 4.

Cover of Riverside Indian School bulletin, 1960-61, and Riverside "Time for School" bulletin, date unknown. Edward Everett Dale Collection, box 236, folder 53.

Oklahoma Baptist University music students performed contemporary songs, as well as Native hymns, in at least four broadcasts that aired between 1947 and 1949. Bacone's Singing Redmen choir, under the direction of Harrell Biard, performed on the show in 1950.

The University of Oklahoma's Sequoyah Indian Club, one of the longest-running student organizations on campus, announced its activities on the show, including its sponsorship of events such as the State Handgame Tournament and the annual Ittanaha Statewide

Conference. The Ittanaha Conference coincided with the club's annual pow-wow, but its main purpose was to educate prospective Native American students about what it was like to go to college.

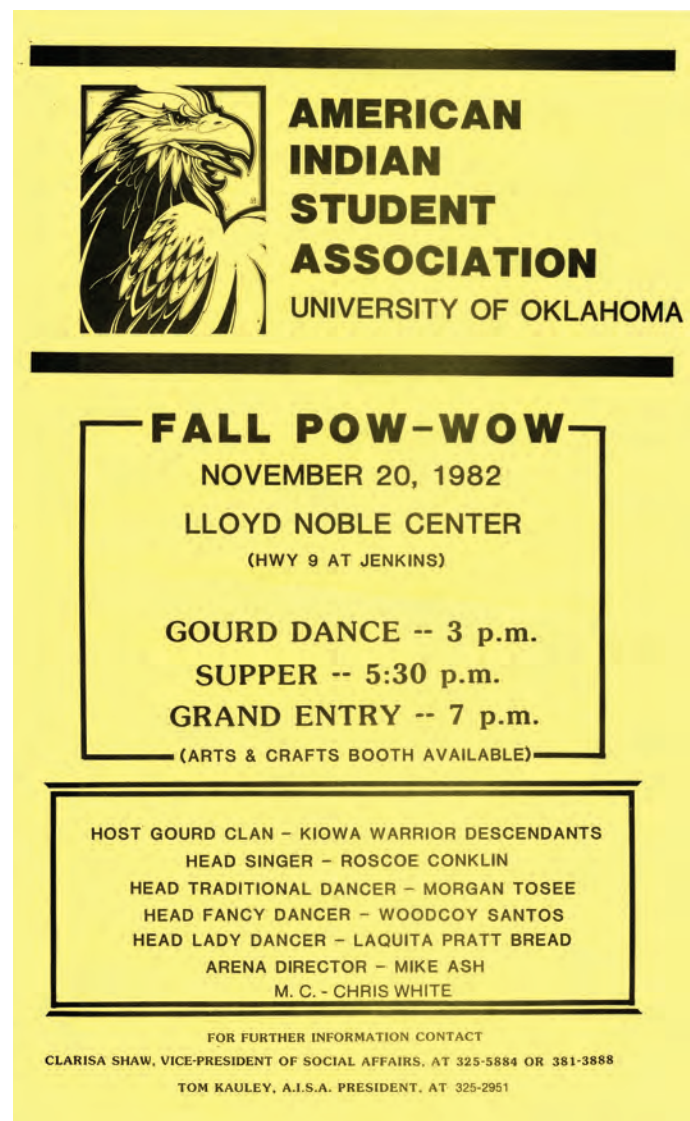
The Sequoyah Club phased out in the early 1970s and gave way to the American Indian Student Association. AISA continues to host an annual pow-wow at OU. A pow-wow flyer from 1982 includes mention of at least one of the Indians for Indians Hour's former participants, Roscoe Conklin; he was the head singer that year for the annual pow-wow.

The *Indians for Indians* broadcasts were not meant to be educational per se—but by welcoming student participants from across the state who shared their culture and activities with listeners, the show *was* educational. Just as the program became a forum for championing the voices of students and their educational communities, it too served as a forum for advocating the rights of tribal nations.



Choir concert poster: “Bacone College Presents the Singing Maidens and the Singing Redmen in Concert.” Poster Collection, no. 724. Please note that the terms “Redmen” and “Maidens” would no longer be acceptable.

Flyer for “American Indian Student Association, University of Oklahoma, Fall Pow-Wow.” University Archives Record Group 62/10: Student Organizations, box 1, folder 2.





## Tribal Rights and Tribal Government

Run, don't walk, to telegram your representatives!

—DON WHISTLER, *INDIANS FOR INDIANS* BROADCAST, APRIL 20, 1948, TAPE 22



*Indians for Indians* was not inherently political. The show was emphatically not a forum for speaking about tribal politics or campaigning for tribal office. However, it was an active forum for advocating for the intrinsic rights of tribal nations. Don Whistler was the elected principal chief of the Sac and Fox tribe while he hosted the show, thus he was well-versed in contemporary political affairs. Some of the show's guests were chiefs, too, including Albert Attocknie (Comanche), Solomon Kent (Iowa), and Garland Blaine (Pawnee). Other elected tribal officials participated on the show, as well.

On November 16, 1944, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was organized. Its first president, N. B. Johnson, a district judge for Oklahoma's Twelfth Judicial District, read the NCAI's constitution



**Chief Don Whistler, Sac and Fox.** OU Photographic Service, no. 16339.



**Chief Solomon Kent, Iowa.** Linda Big Soldier Collection, no. 2.



**Chief Albert Attocknie, Comanche.** Division of Manuscripts Southwest Oklahoma Collection, no. 21.



into the record of the Sub-Committee on Indian Affairs of the state house of representatives at the capitol building in Oklahoma City on November 21, 1944. This move effectively put the state legislature on notice that Native Americans were organizing nationally to advocate for themselves.

The NCAI issued notices to tribal officials about federal and state legislation being proposed that

*Nap Johnson*  
HUME COLL.

Statement by N. B. Johnson, President, National Congress of American Indians, Made to the Sub-Committee on Indian Affairs of the House, at Oklahoma City November 21, 1944

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is N. B. Johnson. At present, I am the District Judge of the Twelfth Judicial District of Oklahoma. I am one-fourth Cherokee Indian and have recently been elected President of the National Congress of American Indians at a convention in Denver, Colorado.

With the permission of the Committee, I should like to read into the record a copy of the Constitution that was ratified at the Convention. It is as follows:

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Indian Tribes of the United States of America in convention assembled on the 16th day of November, 1944, at Denver, Colorado, in order to secure to ourselves and our descendants the rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws of the United States, the several states thereof, and the Territory of Alaska; to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian race; to preserve Indian cultural values; to seek an equitable adjustment of tribal affairs, to secure and to preserve rights under Indian treaties with the United States; and otherwise to promote the common welfare of the American Indians--do establish this organization and adopt the following Constitution and By-Laws.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this organization shall be the National Congress of American Indians.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1.** Any person of Indian ancestry may become a member of the National Congress; Provided, That member organizations shall certify to the eligibility of their members for national membership and that such members be accepted by the National Congress.

**Section 2.** Any Indian tribe, band, or community of Indians may become member organizations as such, under terms prescribed by the Executive Council.

**Section 3.** The Executive Council shall have the power to grant individual membership of Indians in accordance with rules it may prescribe.

ARTICLE III - GOVERNING BODY

**Section 1.** The governing body of the National Congress for the period between November 16, 1944, and the next National Convention in November, 1945, shall be an Executive Council consisting of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and eight councilmen, duly elected by the National Convention.

**Section 2.** In the National Convention held in November, 1945, there shall be elected an Executive Council with representation based upon the then existing membership, under rules determined by the National Convention.

**Section 3.** The Executive Council shall appoint an Executive Secretary from the membership of the National Congress and provide for the proper compensation for his services.

First page of "Statement of N. B. Johnson, President, NCAI. Made to the Sub-Committee on Indian Affairs of the House, at Oklahoma City, November 21, 1944." C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 18.

NCAI ad in American Indian Exposition program, 1946. Alice Marriott Collection, box 32, folder 3.

HUME COLL.  
**NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS**  
Convention Call — November 6-9, 1946  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

TO THE CHIEFS, GOVERNORS, HEADMEN, OFFICERS, COUNCILMEN, AND MEMBERS OF THE INDIAN TRIBES OF THE UNITED STATES AND ALASKA:

By virtue of the authority of the Executive Council of the National Congress of American Indians, I do hereby call the Third Annual Convention to convene at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on November 6-9, 1946.

Registration of delegates will begin at 9:30 a.m. and the Convention will convene at 1:30 p.m. on November 6.

During the past year, this organization has made considerable and worthwhile progress in carrying out the program heretofore established. Legislation before the Congress and various movements have been influenced by the Executive Council in keeping with authorization granted to it.

It is important that as many tribes as possible send one or more representatives to this Convention—or that individual Indians be in attendance—and help to guide the future course of Indians in the United States.

A cordial invitation is hereby extended to all those of recognized Indian ancestry to attend this Convention and to participate in the proceedings thereof.

The business sessions of the Convention will be held in the Legislative Chambers, Fourth Floor, Capitol Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Information concerning hotel reservations and other details about the Convention may be had by addressing Ben Dwight, Acting Executive Secretary of the NCAI, c/o Governor's Office, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

It is important that the Acting Executive Secretary be advised as soon as possible by those who expect to attend the Convention.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and seal this 5th day of October, 1946.

N. B. JOHNSON,  
President of the National Congress of American Indians.

**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**  
N. B. JOHNSON  
Claremore, Oklahoma

Many people, particularly those of Indian ancestry, are naturally interested in any Indian organization, its aims, purposes and program. The question is often asked — What is the National Congress of American Indians, and what is it doing?


The NCAI is an unincorporated association consisting entirely of American Indians, representing approximately fifty Tribes located in at least twenty-seven different states. It was established through the untiring efforts of progressive, representative Indians, who have given much of their time and expended considerable money toward its development—because they were inspired by an earnest desire to better the status of their people. It has no connection with any agency or branch of the Federal Government, being independent in thought and action. The purpose of the organization is to promote the general welfare of the Indian people of North America.

( )


NCAI Convention Call—November 6–9, 1946, Oklahoma City. C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 18.

DAILY PROGRAM—AMERICAN INDIAN EXPOSITION      FRIDAY, AUGUST 23, 1946


*National Congress of American Indians*



EDWARD L. ROGERS  
Chippewa Indian  
Walker, Minnesota  
Vice President



JUDGE N. B. JOHNSON  
Cherokee Indian  
Claremore, Oklahoma  
President





GEORGE G. LAMOTTE  
Chippewa Indian  
San Diego, California  
Member Exec. Council, Former Treasurer

PRESIDENT—JUDGE N. B. JOHNSON, Cherokee, Claremore, Oklahoma  
VICE PRESIDENT—EDWARD L. ROGERS, Chippewa, Walker, Minnesota  
SECRETARY—DAN M. MADRANO, Caddo, Tulsa, Oklahoma  
ACTG. TREASURER—N. B. JOHNSON, Cherokee, Claremore, Oklahoma  
ACTG. EXEC. SECRETARY—BEN DWIGHT, Choctaw, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

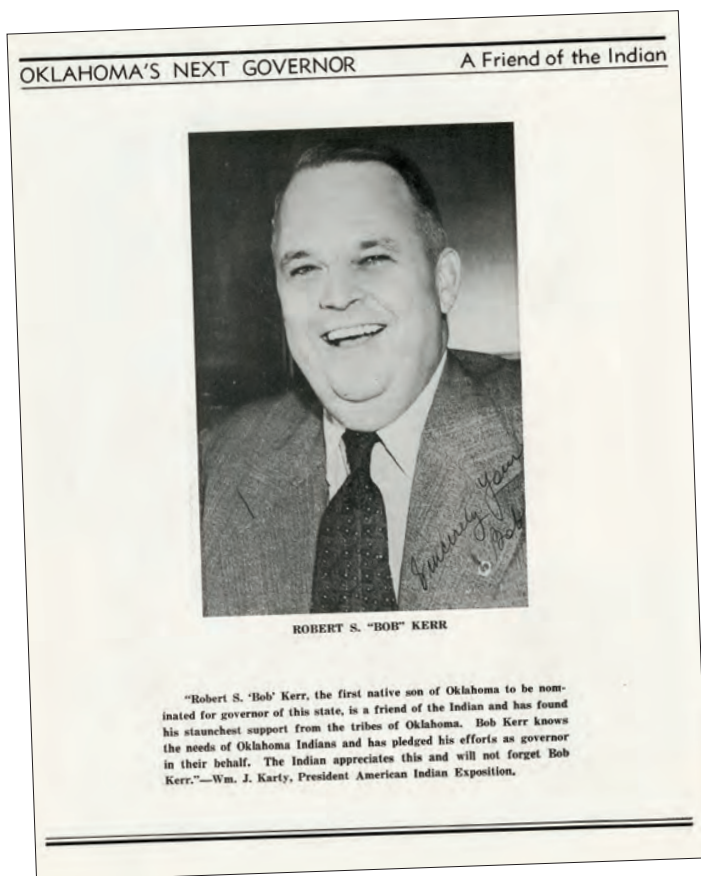
**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS**

ROBERT YELLOWTAIL, Lodge Grass, Montana Crow Tribe	LUKE GILBERT, Sioux, Cheyenne Agency, South Dakota
GEORGE G. LAMOTTE, Chippewa, San Diego, California	WILLIAM FIRETHUNDER, Sioux, Allen, South Dakota
DEWEY SAMPSON, Reno, Nevada	LEO KENNERLY, Blackfoot, Browning Montana
HENRY THROSSELL, Sells, Arizona	LORENA BURGESS, Paradise, Montana

**TYPICAL SCENE AT THE EXPOSITION      SHIELD DANCE AND EAGLE DANCE**





**"Robert S. Kerr, Oklahoma's Next Governor, A Friend of the Indian." American Indian Exposition program, 1942.**

C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 20.



## Listen in!

Tune in to the April 20, 1948, broadcast to hear Don Whistler urge IFIH listeners to contact their legislators in response to a bill that would repeal the Indian Claims Commission. Listen to tape 22, filename IMT-T22\_01, clip 0:30–1:48.

impacted Native Americans. Chief Whistler often read these notices on the *Indians for Indians* show. He was particularly alarmed on April 20, 1948, when he announced on the broadcast that a bill had been proposed to repeal the Indian Claims Commission. He listed the members of the Senate judiciary committee and urged listeners to “Run, don’t walk, to telegram your representatives!” (*Indians for Indians*, tape 22, filename IMT-T22\_01, clip 0:30–1:48).

The Indian Claims Commission had been created by Congress just two years earlier as a mechanism for tribes to seek compensation from the federal government for ceded lands. The Intertribal Indian Council of Oklahoma, organized in 1946, was one intertribal organization that had advocated for the creation of the Indian Claims Commission. The June 4, 1946, radio show had been broadcast remotely from the council’s three-day meeting near Ponca City. Council members speaking during that broadcast provide a historical snapshot of issues in Indian Country, many of which still persist. This same intertribal council encouraged listeners to vote and offered rides to the polls on a broadcast shortly before the November 1964 elections.

Tribal officials often worked closely with federal and state legislators. U.S. Senator Elmer Thomas was particularly friendly to Native issues, so he was frequently invited to events, including the Pawnee Homecoming in 1948, as announced on the June 22, 1948, broadcast.

**"Josh Lee, United States Senator, Salutes Oklahoma Indians." American Indian Exposition program, 1942.**

C. Ross Hume Collection, box 5, folder 20.



Article, “State and National Representatives Assist the American Indian Exposition,” on page 15 of the 1947 American Indian Exposition program. Alice Marriott Collection, box 32, folder 3.

Announcements about tribal government on the radio show give hints about the conditions under which tribal governments operated, reflecting the dizzying array of federal Indian policy during the show’s duration. The broadcast spanned the Indian reorganization era of the 1930s through 1945, the termination and relocation era from 1945 through the 1950s, and the era of reconstituting tribal governments in the 1960s and 1970s.

During the termination era, most tribes still had elected leaders, but they were generally not paid, and they had no offices or staff to assist them. This was still typical during the 1960s, when tribal governments were in the process of being reconstituted. Announcements on *Indians for Indians* were free and provided a way to reach widely dispersed tribal members with notices about council meetings and other events. Examples of these notices abound on the show, including announcements for:

#### TRIBAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- ▶ April 20, 1950, Potawatomi special council, sent by Chief Frank Williams
- ▶ July 14, 1962, Caddo council to vote for two amendments to Caddo Constitution
- ▶ August 25, 1962, Sac and Fox annual business meeting
- ▶ Several regional meeting dates in 1962 and 1963 when the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache tribes were ratifying a new joint constitution
- ▶ March 30, 1963, Kiowa, Comanche, Apache council to discuss many issues including the constitution, individual lands, and low-income housing

#### CLAIMS COMMISSION MEETINGS

- ▶ 1952 Caddo meeting about prosecution of claims against the United States
- ▶ October, 31, 1964, Ioway Council for approval to pay their claims attorney

#### TRIBAL MEMBERSHIP AND ENROLLMENT DATES

- ▶ March 5, 1955, Comanche meeting to discuss new membership regulations
- ▶ June 30, 1962, deadline for Sac and Fox annual enrollment

An announcement for an October 19, 1964, Kickapoo bingo game and carnival illustrates that there were often no tribal funds available to carry out governmental functions at the time: the event was to raise money for outside lights at the community house *and to replenish government operating funds*.

While there is only one known discussion of the federal government’s relocation policy that aired on the show, it is a striking advertisement for the program; the broadcast fully explains how the policy worked in Oklahoma. During the 1952 broadcast, the program is explained in detail. Under the policy, “unemployed Indians” who signed up and qualified would be relocated to Los Angeles for jobs in the aircraft industry or to Chicago for steel-working jobs. This initiative is the genesis of large Native populations in urban centers.

Native Americans lobbied for years to have a commissioner of Indian Affairs who was Native. In another 1952 broadcast, an appeal was made for listeners



an Gets  
in Offer  
e Reins

# Indians to Repeat Anadarko Show

## Hefner's Next For Big Drink

*Daily Oklahoman*  
July 13, 1966  
74

By the State Staff

Lanier  
It looked for  
y night as if  
orman might  
d, most like-  
-be handed  
ty for Lake  
state recrea-  
situation arose  
nen from the  
development  
partment ap-  
ss an agree-  
nsibility be-  
y and state  
Thunderbird,  
ared on the  
enda in the  
sion on sales  
n the area.  
e might be  
ant attorney  
y Coty re-  
city have a  
t the park  
Wednesday  
at the city  
park) de-  
te Lake  
ave it to  
an hesi-  
ere are  
nt who

ANADARKO — The second performance of a pageant depicting Indian life from pioneer days to modern times will be presented Wednesday night at the week-long American Indian Exposition at Anadarko. The exposition, which opened Monday, featured tribal dances Tuesday night with tribes competing as units. Individual dance competition is set for Thursday and Friday nights with the war dance championship finals highlighting the Friday contests.

The pageant, written by Mrs. Libby Littlechief, a Kiowa of Anadarko, will be presented again Saturday night.

The exposition's biggest

event comes on closing day Saturday when Robert L. Bennett, new commissioner of Indian affairs, will be honored as "Indian of the Year." He is the first Indian to head the bureau in 97 years.

Bennett also will speak in Oklahoma City Sunday. He is scheduled for a 7:30 p.m. address at the YWCA auditorium. He is a member of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin and was appointed to head the Indian bureau last March.

### Accent Ban Set

DUBLIN (Reuters) — Irish television plans to ban English accents from commercials in favor of the soft Irish brogue.

Water from the Canton Dam release will be turned into Lake Hefner Wednesday after filling of Lake Overholser is completed, Frank S. Taylor, city water department director, said Tuesday.

With water consumption apparently headed for an all-time record in Oklahoma City, water department engineers are anxious to have the two lakes supplied by the North Canadian River filled to capacity.

Consumption of water reached 76,376,000 gallons Monday, the highest of any day this year, and only slightly below the all-time record of 77,800,000 gallons set in July, 1964.

Water flowing down the river is coming from Canton Dam.



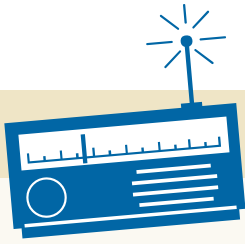
**Commissioner of Indian Affairs Robert L. Bennett honored as "Indian of the Year" at the American Indian Exposition in 1966.** From "Indians to Repeat Anadarko Show," *Daily Oklahoman*. July 13, 1966. Grace Ernestine Ray Collection, box 11, folder 2.

to support a campaign for Harry J. W. Belvin, chief of the Choctaw tribe, to be appointed as commissioner. This effort failed, but in 1966, a Native American was appointed to this crucial post: Robert L. Bennett (Oneida from Wisconsin). In a 1966 recording included in the *Indians for Indians* collection, but perhaps not broadcast on the show, Cheyenne chief Ralph Goodman speaks (in English and Cheyenne) about the need to support Commissioner Bennett and to strive for improved educational opportunities for Native people.

OU students in the Sequoyah Club were often hosts of the show. One of them, Clyde Warrior, became a noted activist and cofounded the National Indian Youth Council, a well-known activist organization. In the surviving recordings of *Indians for Indians*, there are four



**Clyde Warrior, 1961.** Photo 2012.201.B1396.0200, courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society, <https://gateway.okhistory.org/ark:/67531/metadc762290>.



# Listen in!

Hear student host Clyde Warrior remind IFIH guests on the April 30, 1963, broadcast not to submit “unassigned” political messages for announcement on the air. **Listen to tape 89, filename IMT-T89, clip 6:40–8:10.**



**Ponca activist Clyde Warrior, cofounder of the National Indian Youth Council, was a member of OU’s Sequoyah Indian Club.** From “Sequoyah Indian Club Maintains Oldest Homecoming Rites,” *Sooner*, 1964.

broadcasts in 1962 and 1963 of Warrior hosting the show. The April 30, 1963, broadcast features one of Warrior’s more memorable commentaries, in which he responds to having unwittingly read an announcement on a previous broadcast that reflected a certain tribal faction’s opinion. Warrior rather sternly reminded show participants not

**Iola Hayden (Comanche) and LaDonna Harris (Comanche), seated center from left to right, brought their leadership skills to Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity (OIO). Around them are several prominent members of tribes from across the state who served on OIO’s board of directors. Also pictured are (standing from left to right) Robert Whitebird (Quapaw), Overton James (Chickasha), Frank Henry (Caddo); (seated from left to right) Art Thomas (Delaware), and Paul Pitts (Osage).** Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity Collection, no. 7.



to bring in factional politics on the show, stating, “It is not the policy of WNAD to misrepresent facts and foster misunderstanding among different tribal factions.” Warrior goes on to explain that people should not send in “unassigned” political messages that do not clearly indicate they are representing a tribal faction.

In the 1960s, two advocacy organizations figured prominently at OU that had common goals of improving educational and job opportunities for Native Americans. The American Indian Institute was one, headed by Boyce Timmons. In 1965, Oklahomans for Indian Opportunity was organized by Comanche activist LaDonna Harris and her husband, Senator Fred Harris. The Indians for Indians Hour and Sequoyah Club operated in this campus environment of advocacy and activism.

The *Indians for Indians* broadcasts served over the years as a forum for Native voices to champion tribal rights and to encourage political participation. From articulate speeches to words honoring tribal members, songs, and prayers, these statements are particularly meaningful when they were expressed in the hosts’ and guests’ own Native languages.



## Native Languages

I sure do like those songs that are Indian words and Indian music!

—DON WHISTLER, *INDIANS FOR INDIANS* BROADCAST, DECEMBER 2, 1947, TAPE 20

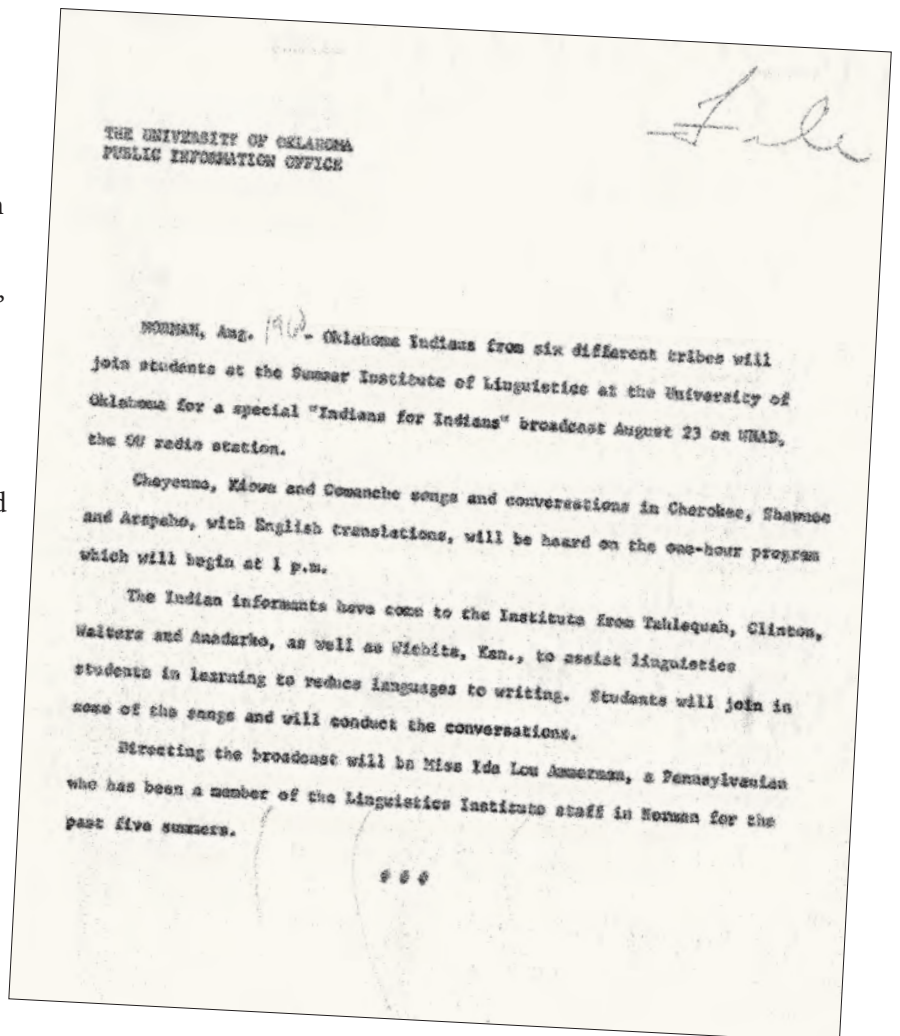


The speaking of Native languages weaves throughout the *Indians for Indians*

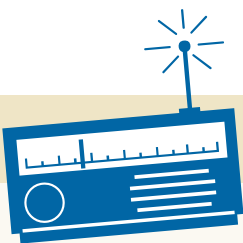
broadcasts. Because the time span of the show, from the early 1940s to the early 1970s, was before many Native languages in Oklahoma became endangered, most of the participants are first-language speakers representing a Native perspective. The most frequently heard Native languages on the show are those of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Creek or Seminole tribes, but other languages are represented too, including those of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Iowa, Otoe, Pawnee, Sac and Fox, Shawnee, and Wichita tribes.

Don Whistler signed on to each broadcast with his characteristic greeting in the Sauk language, in which he used his Sauk name: “Âho nikân! Keshkekosh anina!” (“Hello friends! It is I, Keshkekosh”). He ended each of his broadcasts with the language as well: “Inêy! Nâkachihêy!” (essentially saying, “That’s it for now, until I’m with you again!”). Having grown up around the Sac and Fox Agency, Chief Whistler and his siblings were fluent Sauk speakers.

When people speak or sing in Native languages on the show, they are usually praying or singing hymns. As with the spread of any religious belief, the group who absorbs

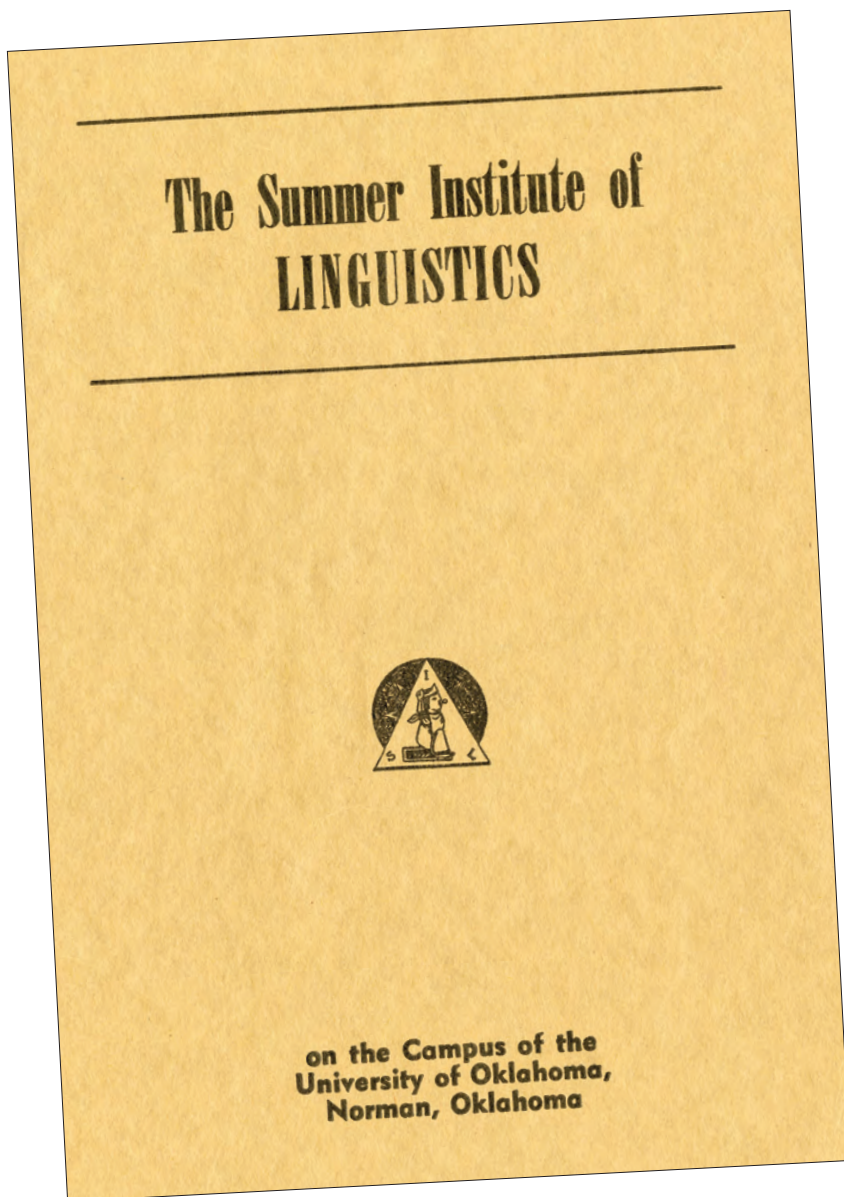


**Announcement that “Oklahoma Indians from six different tribes will join students at the Summer Institute.”** University of Oklahoma Public Information Office, August 1960. University Archives Record Group 15: Media Services, box 74, folder 37.



### Listen in!

Joe Young leads the singing of a church song by the Otoe Community Church on the May 4, 1948, IFIH broadcast. **Listen to tape 22, filename IMT-T22\_02, clip 1:08–2:20.**



**Cover of the Summer Institute of Linguistics bulletin, 1951.** University Archives Record Group 40/17: College of Arts and Sciences, box 1, folder 28.

it puts their own stamp on it, so the hymns in Native languages are a beautiful Native stamp on Christianity.

The radio show also offered a convenient forum for the students of OU's annual Summer Institute of Linguistics to present their language skills developed with the help of Native language speakers from the Kiowa, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Comanche, Cherokee, Shawnee, and Choctaw tribes.

The Summer Institute was affiliated with the Wycliffe Bible Translators. Students who aspired to be missionaries attended the institute to learn a variety of languages, and the different sounds of those languages, so that it would be easier for them to learn the languages of the indigenous communities to which they would be missionaries. Students and their "informants," or language instructors, participated on *Indians for Indians* several times. Mose Poolaw (Kiowa) usually hosted these broadcasts. In a broadcast from the early 1950s, he explains the purpose

of the Summer Institute in helping students to learn other languages, though he does not talk about the missionary aspect of the program (*Indians for Indians* tape 67).

For more than thirty years, *Indians for Indians* aired to an eager and engaged audience. The show provided a forum for Native peoples to reach out to their communities and beyond to invite others to events, to celebrate birthdays and other milestones of life, to recognize and honor veterans, to showcase faith through singing and praying, to champion education and students, and to encourage political participation—and it did this all not only in English, but crucially, in the many living languages of its hosts and guests. The very broadcasts of the show in participants' own languages testify to the vibrancy and rich diversity of the community it served.



## Audio Examples from the Show

The following Native languages can be heard in recordings of the Indians for Indians Hour:

**Cheyenne:** March 11, 1947 (tape 17). Group from Canton recorded in studio. Timestamp: 23:40–25:18. Topic: They explain the meaning of their club song in English and Cheyenne—“May the Great Spirit make sunrise in your heart for many moons to come. May God bless you.”

**Cheyenne:** August 1956 (tape 56). Summer Institute. Timestamp: 5:11–7:14. Topic: Cheyenne story about the Fox and the Bear.

**Choctaw:** December 13, 1949 (tape 34). Oklahoma Baptist University student Delores Jenny, a Mississippi Choctaw, and Estegotti (Indian) Club sponsor Victor Kanubbe sing a Choctaw song. Timestamp: 7:02–7:59.

**Comanche:** October 26, 1943 (tape 47). Albert Attocknie speaks and sings in Comanche. Timestamp: 28:40–31:26.

**Comanche:** June 4, 1946 (tape 17). Rev. White Parker, recorded at Oklahoma Intertribal Council meeting at Chilocco. Timestamp: 21:00–21:56. Topic: military service during WWI and WWII.

**Comanche:** June 8, 1948 (tape 24). Group from Post Oak Mission. Timestamp: 4:20–10:55. Katie Kowena prays in Comanche, then the group sings their theme song in their language. They do not explain what the theme song means, but it must have been a hymn of particular importance to the mission. The next two songs, also in Comanche, are led by Isaac Poafybitty. The first was composed by the first convert at the mission, Sam Mowat; the second was composed by Isaac’s father, David Poafybitty. Both songs are beautiful.

**Creek:** April 26, 1949 (tape 32). Salt Creek Methodist Church, Holdenville. Timestamp: 15:10–18:16. Topic: speaking and singing hymns in Creek.

**Creek/Seminole:** February 21, 1950 (tape 37). Several hymns and prayers are performed in Seminole/Creek. Rev. Bud Little and the group represent the Seminole/Creek Methodist churches Arbeka, Hicite, and Caney Chapel. In an endearing performance from 3:41 to 5:43, young girls sing.

**Ioway:** May 25, 1948 (tape 22). Iowa tribal singers are led by Solomon Kent for almost the entire broadcast.

**Kiowa:** December 24, 1946 (tape 26). Rainy Mountain Baptist Church. Timestamp: 8:26–12:12. Topic: Christmas story in Kiowa recited by Deacon Wind Goomda, followed by literal translation rendered by Mrs. Ioleta Hunt McElhaney.

**Kiowa:** March 29, 1949 (tape 32). Timestamp: 19:12–20:30. Topic: Etta Apekaum sings children’s lullaby.

**Kiowa:** October 30, 1962 (tape 82). Kiowa Veterans Organization. Timestamp: 8:00–13:05. Topic: Henry Tenandoah (described as one of the patriarchs of the tribe) speaks.

**Pawnee:** August 31, 1948 (tape 36). Rush Roberts speaks and sings in Pawnee during the entire broadcast.

**Seminole:** March 1, 1949 (tapes 4 and 5). Rev. Walter Burgess from Konawa Seminole Missionary Baptist Church. Topic: Great example of sing-song preaching style interspersed with hymns throughout the entire broadcast.

**Shawnee:** Date unknown (tape 67). Summer Institute. Timestamp: 00:28–00:58. Topic: Sue Albright recites a scripture passage in Shawnee.

**Wichita:** November 8, 1949 (tape 32). Rock Springs Indian Baptist Church. Timestamp: 2:20–5:36. Topic: Rev. Joe Standing prays in Wichita, followed by a hymn in the language.

## The Indians for Indians Legacy Our Voices Then Continue to Our Voices Now



It was innovative for Native Americans to have their own radio show in the 1940s. According to an article that appeared in *Time* on May 31, 1943, *Indians for Indians* was “the only regular Indian language broadcast in the U.S.” This novelty attracted the notice of popular, nationally known magazines such as *Time*, as well as *Newsweek* and *Variety*, which also published articles on the program. Although the writers of the magazine articles at times used terms for Native peoples that are no longer acceptable, the stories they published demonstrate the uniqueness of the program and national attention that *Indians for Indians* garnered.

In contrast to the stereotypical language used in the magazine articles, the radio show gave Native Americans a way to present themselves in their own words. Their diverse modes of expression offer current-day listeners a remarkable way of learning about U.S. history, Oklahoma history, and Native American history, all through Native voices and perspectives.

As a testament to its popularity and value, the *Indians for Indians* radio show weathered changes in sponsorship and hosts for decades, as well as changes in the administration of the WNAD radio station. It is remarkable that the show continued for more than twenty years

after Don Whistler’s death. He had been innovative in creating the program, and during its first ten years he laid a strong foundation for the Sequoyah Club to keep it going.

In the early 1960s, WNAD became a CBS affiliate. Previously, the university had supported the station as



Redskin radiomen: Chief Albert Attocknie (left) and Kesh-ke-Kosh

“Radio Warpath,” *Newsweek*,  
April 20, 1942, p. 60.



28 RADIO

**Lone Indian-Language Program Going Into 4th Yr. on Oklahoma Station**

Norman, Okla., May 18. The world's only Indian language program, broadcast entirely by Indians exclusively for Indian listeners, is now in its fourth year over station WNAD, operated by Oklahoma University, at Norman. The show also is unique in that it combines one of the oldest and most primitive means of communication, the tom-tom, with the newest and fastest, radio.

Under the prosaic title, 'The Indians for Indians Program,' the series is heard 1-1:30 p. m. Tuesdays. It varies in content, at times offering music, narrative, tribal news, interviews and native chit-chat. It's conducted by Chief Kesh-Ke-Kosh, of the Sac tribe, probably the leading sachem among the Indians of the territory. His English name is Don Whistler.

There is never a script for the show. It's all extemporaneous, though Kesh-Ke-Kosh usually works from sketchy notes. Nearly all the confabbing is done in the primitive Indian language, but occasional English words are used when there is no Indian equivalent. Music is entirely native, mostly chants, with an Indian flute and tom-toms and drums the only instruments. Casts vary from occasional shows in which Kesh-Ke-Kosh is alone, to as many as 15 or 18, when there are group chants and dancing in the studio. The Indians always wear native costume, sometimes bringing their children to the studio with them.

**Group Listening**

Since there are few radio sets among the Indians in the territory, much of the listening is done in groups. Every Tuesday, as the time for the broadcast approaches, the Indians throughout the area gather at stores, lunchrooms, gas stations, schools, etc., to hear the show. It is the only program permitted to be heard in the local Shawnee hospital.

In addition, afternoon classes are never started in the Indian schools until after the broadcast, although the Indian children gather in the classrooms to hear it. As WNAD is university-owned, it is non-commercial, so the program is a sustainer.

Besides drawing considerable mail, almost all of it from Indians, the series has stirred interest among educators and students of native music and folklore. One of the old Indian men who appears regularly on the program has an enormous repertoire of tribal songs and chants and legendary stories.

Virginia Hawks, director of station WNAD, hopes to interest the Library of Congress, the Rockefeller Foundation or some other research or educational institution to pay for recordings of many of these old Indian chants and narratives before the old man dies and they become lost forever. Miss Hawks, a native of Oklahoma, but not of Indian blood, took over the directorship of WNAD about a year ago, after being with NBC in Washington and then working for the Office of War Information.

28 RADIO

**Lone Indian-Language Program Going Into 4th Yr. on Oklahoma Station**

Norman, Okla., May 18. The world's only Indian language program, broadcast entirely by Indians exclusively for Indian listeners, is now in its fourth year over station WNAD, operated by Oklahoma University, at Norman. The show also is unique in that it combines one of the oldest and most primitive means of communication, the tom-tom, with the newest and fastest, radio.

**Good Reasons**  
Washington, May 18. WOGB, Cape Cod, Mass., recently went off the air. It wired the Federal Communications Commission, 'No power, no light, no funds.'

**WRVA, Richmond, Limits Mailorder Acts; 1 at A Time, 2-Wk. Maximum**  
Richmond, May 18. WRVA, Richmond, has introduced the policy of limiting the availability of its sponsored schedule to a single mailorder account at a time. The move is to preserve the station's listeners from the criss-cross fire of direct sales appeals.

Under the policy of limitation, mail orders will be limited to a minimum of one week and a maximum of two weeks. The station reserves the right after the first two weeks to refuse the renewal or accept it on a basis of from week to week.

The mail order singleton must accept some 18 five-minute periods for the week, spread through different time periods of the day and night. For this service the client is billed a flat sum, with no discounts other than customary agency commission. Availabilities will not be quoted and the station reserves the right to switch the number of broadcasts with the understanding the gross value will remain the same.

The client will be required (1) to refund money promptly upon receipt of a listener complaint and (2) to furnish the station with the mail count resulting from the schedule.

**RAY SHANNON NOW KMBC PROGRAM DIR.**  
Kansas City, May 18. Ray Shannon, whose specialty for 20 years has been music, is the new program director of KMBC. He was formerly with WTAM, Cleveland, and KQV, Pittsburgh.

Another newcomer to the KMBC staff is Jack Fitzpatrick. His assignment is the news department. Fitzpatrick was formerly with WJJD, Chicago, and KLZ, Denver.

**Steel Company Putting One-Shotter on MBS**  
Jones & McLaughlin Steel Corporation, Pittsburgh, has signed for a one-shot show titled 'The March of Fighting Steel' via Mutual Saturday (22), 7:7-30 p. m. Betty Ellen Morris, soprano, and Howard Price, tenor, will be featured with the Jones & Laughlin 'Little Symphony Orchestra,' conducted by Victor Saudek. The concert will be interspersed with facts about steel in war, 'Factograms.'

Broadcast to be sponsored on

**Vainable Franchises**  
Respectful of how their business may be affected by advertising, the radio station that carries advertising spots is not to be taken for granted. It is the advertiser's responsibility to see that the station is not taken for granted. It is the advertiser's responsibility to see that the station is not taken for granted. It is the advertiser's responsibility to see that the station is not taken for granted.

**From the Production Centres**

a public service, but the station's changed status as an affiliate of CBS is documented in the University Archives and can also be heard in the broadcast sign-ons and sign-offs. In the late 1960s, the show evidently had to earn its keep, because advertisements are part of the broadcasts. Major change occurred again in 1973, when the university sold WNAD to a private firm, which moved the Indians for Indians Hour to an unpopular Sunday morning time slot. There are only eight surviving recordings from the 1970s; based on those recordings it is hard to determine when the show stopped being broadcast from OU. There are a couple of anniversary broadcasts (aired around April 1 each year, when the Attocknie family faithfully participated) dated 1975 and 1976, and those mark the end of the *Indians for Indians* collection at OU. Remarkably, the show has continued to be broadcast to the current day by tribal entities or individuals in southwestern Oklahoma, thus serving the Comanche, Kiowa, Apache, Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes.

Although the *Indians for Indians Hour* ceased to be broadcast from the OU campus in the 1970s, the show's legacy endures today in several ways:

- ▶ The existing recordings continue to be popular, especially among relatives of the participants, who have an opportunity to hear the voices of their family members, and among Native nations, which can draw on the recordings for language and cultural revitalization efforts.
- ▶ The existing recordings are a unique source for scholarly research.
- ▶ The success of the radio show inspired the creation of a television show, also called *Indians for Indians*, which aired in the late 1960s through the mid-1970s on public television in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.
- ▶ Partly through the encouragement of Don Whistler, the Reverend and Mrs. Lynn Pauahy created the American Indian Soundchiefs record label in 1948. Many performers on the radio show made records with the label; the records are still reissued as a popular source of Native American music.
- ▶ The comprehensive summer pow-wow calendar created by the show was drawn on by *Oklahoma Today*, the state tourism magazine, for its condensed events calendar.
- ▶ In 2012, the March 25, 1947, broadcast was added to the Library of Congress's National Recording Registry.

"Lone Indian-Language Program Going into 4th Yr. on Oklahoma Station," *Variety*, May 19, 1943, p. 23.

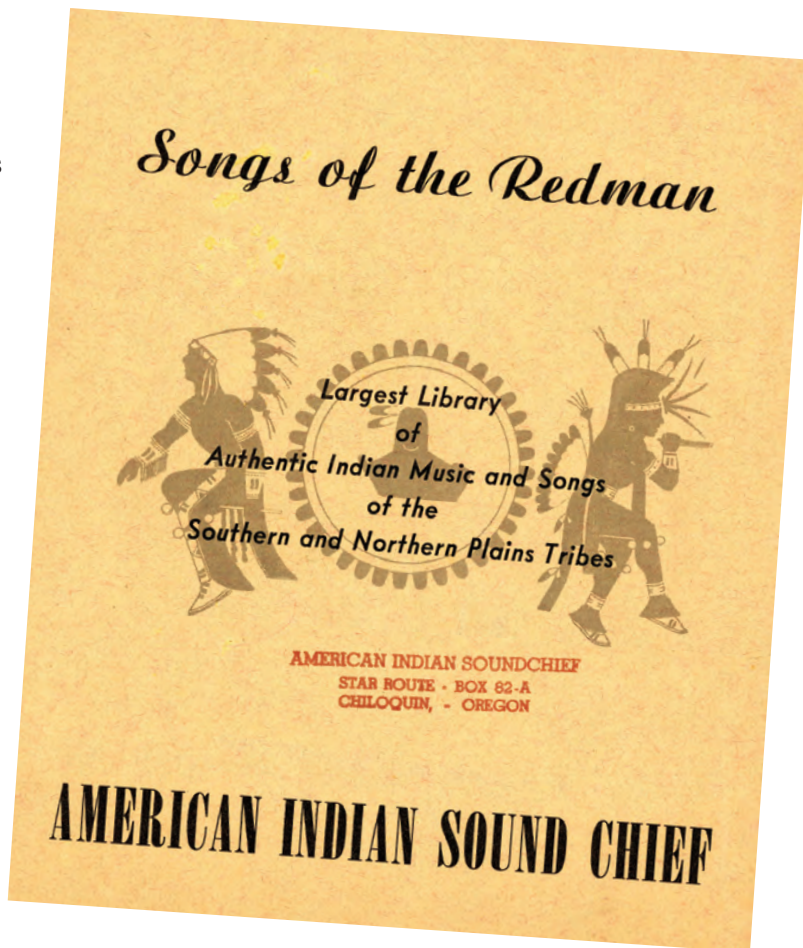


The American War Mothers, Carnegie Chapter (also known as the Kiowa War Mothers), participated on this program, and it is an exceptional example of an *Indians for Indians* broadcast. This broadcast includes several beautiful songs dedicated to military service, and is also a moving tribute to how a community comes together to support individuals serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, along with their families. This broadcast contains Charles Apekaum's impressive speech about how the Kiowa War Mothers had raised money for the American Red Cross and had proven themselves to be "100 percent American."

Although the *Indians for Indians* show is no longer broadcast from the University of Oklahoma, it has

been on the air continuously since its inception in 1941. Since leaving campus, the show has broadcast from a variety of radio stations over the years, and currently can be heard from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays on KACO 98.5, based in Apache, Oklahoma, where it is hosted by Edmond Mahseet (Comanche). In 2016, what Don Whistler started decades ago had been on the air for seventy-five years. Although the show does not reach as wide of an audience or represent as many tribes statewide as

it did when it originally aired from the University of Oklahoma, the program continues to offer a place for Native perspectives, languages, and culture to be shared.



Cover of *Songs of the Redman*, American Indian Sound Chief catalog. University Archives Record Group 44: Extension Division, box 8, folder 4.

## '47 'INDIANS HOUR' TO BE PRESERVED

### OU radio program will join registry

BY CHRIS CASTEEL  
Washington Bureau  
ccasteel@oupubco.com

WASHINGTON — A 65-year-old episode of a radio show about American Indians that aired out of Norman was announced Wednesday as an entry into the Library of Congress' National Recording Registry, an exclusive selection of sound recordings.

The March 25, 1947, edition of "The Indians for Indians Hour" is one of 25 new entries into the registry. The show aired weekly on the University of Oklahoma's WNAD from 1941 until 1985.

Other registry selections announced on Wednesday include an 1888 recording made for a talking doll at a Thomas Edison company, songs by Dolly Parton, Donna Summer and Prince, and interviews with former African-American slaves.

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington said, "America's sound heritage is an important part of the nation's history and culture and this year's selections reflect the diversity and creativity of the American experience. These songs, words and natural sounds must be preserved for future generations."

Rep. Tom Cole, R-Moore, whose district includes Norman, praised the selection of "The Indians for Indians Hour."

SEE SHOW, PAGE 10A



America's sound heritage is an important part of the nation's history and culture."

JAMES H. BILLINGTON  
LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

## Show: Tribal heritage is recognized

FROM PAGE 9A

Cole, a Chickasaw, said, "This is a remarkable honor for OU and for our state. The Library of Congress chooses only a very limited number of recordings for their collection, and the selection of 'The Indians for Indians Hour' radio program recognizes the significance of Oklahoma's unique tribal heritage and culture."

"The Indians for Indians Hour" was a special program that helped Oklahoma's Native Americans celebrate and preserve our rich traditions. It's fitting that the program will now be preserved for future generations as an essential part of American history."

The show's originator and host was Don Whistler, a Sac and Fox known as Chief Kesh-Ke-Kesh. According to the Library of Congress, the show featured American Indian music and cultural exchange featuring guests and music from 18 tribes reached by the station's signal. Whistler would on-play Indian music, and the only non-Indian guests allowed on the show worked for Indian Services.

Whistler hosted the

show until his death in 1951; later hosts included Boyce Timmons, Elton Yellowfish, David Timmons and Sammy "Tonkel" White, the Library of Congress said.

The program selected

### AT A GLANCE

#### LIBRARY OF CONGRESS' NATIONAL RECORDING REGISTRY

Here is a list of the recordings announced Wednesday.

1. Edison Talking Doll cylinder (1888)
2. "Come Down Ma Evenin' Star," Lillian Russell (1912)
3. "Ten Cents a Dance," Ruth Etting (1930)
4. "Voices from the Days of Slavery," Various speakers (1932-1941) Interviews; 2002 compilation
5. "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart," Patsy Montana (1935)
6. "Fascinating Rhythm," Sol Hoopii and his Novelty Five (1938)
7. "Artistry in Rhythm," Stan Kenton & his Orchestra (1943)
8. Debut performance with the New York Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein (Nov. 14, 1943)
9. International Sweethearts of Rhythm: Hottest Women's Band of the 1940s (1944-1946)
10. "The Indians for Indians Hour" (March 25, 1947)
11. "Hula Medley," Gabby Pahinui (1947)
12. "I Can Hear It Now," Fred W. Friendly and Edward R. Murrow (1948)
13. "Let's Go Out to the Programs," The Dixie Hummingbirds (1953)
14. "Also Sprach Zarathustra," Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (1954, 1958)
15. "Bo Diddley" and "I'm a Man," Bo Diddley (1955)
16. "Green Onions," Booker T. & the M.G.'s (1962)
17. "Forever Changes," Love (1967)
18. "The Continental Harmony" Music of William Billings," Gregg Smith Singers (1969)
19. "A Charlie Brown Christmas," Vince Guaraldi Trio (1970)
20. "Coat of Many Colors," Dolly Parton (1971)
21. "Motherhip Connection," Parliament (1975)
22. Barton Hall concert by the Grateful Dead (May 8, 1977)
23. "I Feel Love," Donna Summer (1977)
24. "Rapper's Delight," Sugarhill Gang (1979)
25. "Purple Rain," Prince and the New Power Generation (1984)

for the registry is one of 320 known to be in existence and features news of a recent powwow and songs praising Indian war veterans sung by a group of Kiowa war mothers, according to the Library of

Congress. Each year, 25 recordings that are "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant" are selected for the registry. There are now 350 recordings in the registry.



# The Preservation of the Broadcast Recordings

Indian tribal music is being recorded for posterity.

—DON WHISTLER, QUOTED IN *SOONER MAGAZINE*, JANUARY 1945



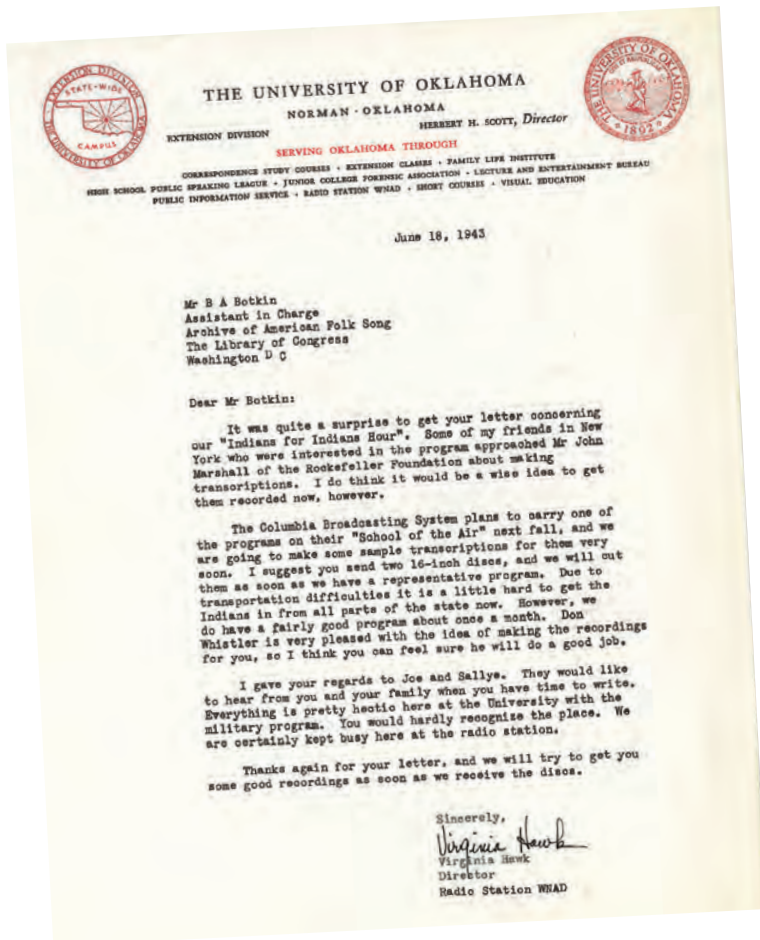
Recordings of the *Indians for Indians* radio show broadcasts from the University of Oklahoma have survived to this time through the efforts of many people over the years.

Early airings of the *Indians for Indians Hour* were not recorded. Correspondence in the University Archives indicates there was simply no money to put toward purchasing blank recording disks.

In 1943, WNAD station director Virginia Hawk attempted to get the Library of Congress or the Rockefeller

Foundation to pay for the supplies needed to record the show. The two institutions agreed that the “Indian language program” was worth recording, and the Library of Congress referred the matter to Benjamin Botkin, who was in charge of the Archive of American Folk Song.

Botkin was very interested in the project and sent a couple of sixteen-inch disks to WNAD so *Indians for Indians* could make sample recordings. It took a few months to get recordings made of just the right programs to best represent the show, but Botkin was pleased to receive them in January 1944. Presumably the



**June 18, 1943, letter from Virginia Hawk to B. A. Botkin.** *Indians for Indians Recordings*, 1943 (AFC 1944/008). American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.



**January 14, 1944, letter from B. A. Botkin to Virginia Hawk.** *Indians for Indians Recordings*, 1943 (AFC 1944/008). American Folklife Center, Library of Congress.



According to a *Sooner Magazine* story, “Indian tribal music is being recorded for posterity through the efforts of WNAD.” “Tribal Music Recorded,” *Sooner Magazine*, January 1945, p. 6.

Archive of American Folk Song continued to provide blank disks.

In 1971, through the efforts of Boyce Timmons, the Phillips Foundation in Oklahoma provided funding to “identify and inventory the *Indians for Indians* music.” OU alumnus and former Sequoyah Club president Scott Tonemah was appointed as the director of this project. The tape descriptions that researchers have used for decades are due to his efforts. Also at that time, the original acetate disks were copied onto magnetic (reel-to-reel) tape.

In 1983, Boyce Timmons, along with former Western History Collections associate curator Jack Haley, negotiated an agreement for the Library of Congress to archive 121 disk recordings from 1943 through 1950. These recordings are not of every broadcast, but they form the core of the *Indians for Indians* Hour collection.

Scott Tonemah. OU Photographic Service, no. 11508.

Unfortunately, the number of surviving recordings substantially declines for the years from the mid-1950s through the mid-1970s. In 1988, the Library of Congress sent copies of the disks on new reel-to-reel tapes back to the Western History Collections but retained the original disks. Orin Hatton, project archivist for the *Indians for Indians* collection at the Library of Congress, prepared transcriptions of some of the broadcasts.

In 2018, the University of Oklahoma Libraries, through principal investigator Lina Ortega, received a Recordings at Risk preservation grant from the Council on Library and Information Sources to outsource the digitization of the recordings. The Northeast Document Conservation Center, known for its preservation work, professionally digitized the collection of reel-to-reel tapes and engineered the resulting files to improve their audio quality. The new digital files will be made freely accessible online, with the exception of portions that contain sensitive cultural content.

The preservation grant will enable greater access to the broadcasts and help to ensure that these recordings continue to exist for future generations. This improved





"INDIANS FOR INDIANS HOUR" ADDED TO ARCHIVE COLLECTIONS



Don Whistler Kesh-Ke-Kosh, Sac and Fox Indian. Photo courtesy of the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

by Orin T. Hatton

In February the Archives of Folk Culture received the "Indians for Indians Hour" Collection of 121 disc recordings containing Oklahoma Indian music and commentary. The recordings preserve radio broadcasts made between 1943 and 1950 on station WOND at the University of Oklahoma in Norman. Through a preservation exchange agreement initiated in 1983 by Jack Haley, Boyce Timmons, and Alan Jabbour, the collection was moved to the Archive by Don

DeWitt, the present curator of the Western History Collections at the University of Oklahoma, and Edwin Schupman, former staff ethnomusicologist with the Federal Cylinder Project. The University of Oklahoma donated funds enabling the Archive to predate the discs for duplication onto preservation tapes and to provide documentation of the recordings. An exchange copy of the tapes will be sent to the Western History Collections early in 1989.

The first "Indians for Indians Hour" program aired from one until one-thirty in the afternoon, on the first Tuesday in April 1941. Although the show was popularly known as the "Indians for Indians Hour," the regular weekly broadcast was limited to thirty minutes until about 1951. Each half-hour program presented Oklahoma Indian music, the latest Indian news, and a current powwow calendar. It was estimated in 1946 that about seventy-five thousand Indians listened to the program each week throughout the state of Oklahoma.

The program was conceived by Don Whistler, the first chief of the Sac and Fox elected under the reorganized Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936. Whistler served as master of ceremonies from 1941 until his death in 1951. He was instantly recognized by his audience each week as he opened his program with the greeting, "Aho nikan, Keshkekosh anena" ("Hello friends, this is Keshkekosh speaking"). Details of the arrangement between Whistler and the University of Oklahoma that facilitated broadcast of the "Indians for Indians" program are unavailable, but Whistler's niece, Mrs. Jerri Whistler Snow, suggests that the program may have been inspired to a certain extent by Whistler's relationship with a non-Indian aunt who promoted herself as a Chippewa maiden and performed Sac and Fox mythology and folklore on the Chautauqua circuit in Oklahoma.

The "Indians for Indians" collection reflects Don Whistler's commitment to preserve Oklahoma Indian music, both for its intrinsic aesthetic value and for the enjoyment of future generations. Whistler found beauty in the diversity of Indian songs and was convinced that, although young Indians perhaps were not singing old songs, they enjoyed listening to them. He insisted that only real Indian music be permitted on the program and turned down requests for violin solos and other non-Indian music. His

respect for Indian ways went further: commenting in 1947 that it was "strictly against the rules for this Indians for Indians Hour to ever let a white person talk on it unless they belong to the Indian Service," he pointed out that there had been no more than two exceptions to the rule in six-and-a-half years.

Whistler's extensive contacts in central and western Oklahoma enabled him to present live programs regularly. More than sixteen hundred Indians appeared on the show during its first five-and-a-half years, and the collection preserves the performances of at least five hundred people from eighteen tribes: Apache, Arapaho, Caddo, Cheyenne, Choctaw, Comanche, Creek, Iowa, Kaw, Kiowa, Osage, Oto, Pawnee, Ponca, Sac and Fox, Seminole, Shawnee, and Wichita.

Whistler's concern for preserving additional music dictated the format of the "Indians for Indians" programs. Announcements were placed sparsely at the beginning and end of ten-minute segments so that as much music as possible could be ordered on either side of sixteen-inch late discs. While on the air Whistler encouraged performers to punctuate their songs, and he made little effort to interpret or explain the lyrics for the sake of uninformed listeners.

The variety of songs represented in the collection reflects Whistler's interest for diversity in Indian music. There are, for example, forty-three songs from Kiowa singers and twenty-seven by Cheyenne performers. Whistler often prompted to vary their program, and he invited the offers of Frank Bushyhead and Lucien Rice to present prearranged songs of a single genre to welcome innovation. The collection captures the music of such ceremonies as the Sun Dance, Powwow, and Native American songs as well as Christian testimony songs. Whistler had a particular



At-tock-wie, Comanche Indian. Photo courtesy of the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Library

Whistler's commitment to traditional music may not have been popular with the entire radio audience, however. While Whistler vacationed in Colorado in 1946, a woman sent a letter congratulating Scott Tomemah on the fine program he emceed—the best she had ever heard. Some listeners at least may have wanted more commentary and announcements of live music.

David Apokauam emphasized during a 1947 broadcast that Indians honor their music in song more than in dance. This respect for tradition is evident in the dedicated individual songs and dances for "Indians" programs

FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

long time has been realized as the collection joins the wealth of American Indian materials in the Archive of Folk Culture at the Library of Congress.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank the following persons for their assistance in documenting the "Indians for Indians" project: Don DeWitt, Jerri Whistler Snow, and Boyce Timmons, Norman, Oklahoma; Rev. Reshen Abshaity, Adam Kaulity, and Rev. George Sawmpty, Carnegie, Oklahoma; Frank McClellan, Shawnee, Oklahoma; Ida Williams, Canton, Oklahoma; and Marvina Maguire, Edwin Schupman, and Dr. Everett R. Rhoades, Washington, D.C. Special thanks to Cliff Reeder and the Oklahoma City Pow-wow Club for their hospitality during a visit to the 38th Annual Indian Hills Pow-wow.

Orin T. Hatton, an ethnomusicologist specializing in Plains Indian music, is project archivist of the "Indians for Indians Hour" Collection.



On the cover of this year's Folklife Annual: Dancer at the Crow Fair in Montana, August 1979. (MT9-MC27-1) Photo by Michael S. Crummett

Folklife Annual was begun in 1985 by the American Folklife Center to present a yearly collection of illustrated articles on American traditional life and culture. Edited by Alan Jabbour and James Hardin, the collection reflects current work and thinking in folklore and folklife studies. The articles are written by specialists but the annual is intended for a wide audience. Individual volumes do not present a single subject—the series is intended to demonstrate a diverse range of cultural expression—but in each there are related groups of articles and themes.

"Strategies for survival in a hostile world," a phrase from Roger Abraham's article on Afro-American folktales, provides the unifying theme for the 1987 Folklife Annual, which includes discussions of the American Indian powwow, private rituals, black sermons and folktales, and ethnic schools. The 162-page clothbound volume contains 108 illustrations in all—36 in full color—drawn from the collections of the Library of Congress and many other sources.

Please order your copy of Folklife Annual 1987 from the SUPERINTEN-



FOLKLIFE

For timely information in the field of folklore and folklife, including training and professional opportunities and news items of national interest, a taped clock, except during the hours of 9 A.M. until noon (eastern time) each Monday, when it is updated. Folkline is a joint project of the American Folklife Center and the American Folklore Society. Dial:

202 707-2000

"Indians for Indians Hour' Added to Archive Collections." Folklife Center News, Fall 1988, pp. 6-8.



access is of greatest value for many reasons to the Native nations represented on the show. Tribal members will be able to recover old songs, use the broadcasts in language revitalization efforts, and hear firsthand histories, as well as simply be able to hear the voice of a loved one or ancestor long gone. The improved access is also of value for academic research. The recordings offer a rich resource for scholars, including Native researchers

wanting to write their own histories. The recordings represent a source of diverse media content, not only because of their audio format, but also because of the many Native cultures and cultural expressions that they represent.

The University of Oklahoma Libraries is pleased to extend the life of this important cultural archive of American history.



**Reels and their boxes of *Indians for Indians* recordings.** *Indians for Indians* Collection. Photo courtesy of Rick Schultz.



## Conclusion



Native Americans have always used the technology at their disposal for the benefit of their communities. It is not surprising, then, that not long after radio technology became more widely available in the 1920s and 1930s, a Native radio show developed in Oklahoma to make full use of the communication capabilities that the medium afforded for reaching Native communities. A sense of that larger community comes across vividly in each broadcast of the *Indians for Indians* radio show. Groups from Native communities traveled to Norman at their own expense, often from considerable distances and throughout all seasons, to share their songs, their beliefs, and aspects of their daily lives with listeners.

Don Whistler was instrumental in bringing the show's participants and listeners together from the onset with his wide net of acquaintances and his genuine rapport with the show's guests. Chief Whistler, in partnership with many of the early participants, firmly established the popularity of the show during its first ten years. Even during times when it might have been difficult for participants to come to Norman to go on air—during World War II, for example, due

to gasoline rationing—Chief Whistler kept the show going. The solid foundation he built allowed the show to continue after his death through the commitment and sponsorship of OU's Sequoyah Indian Club and Boyce Timmons. Whistler's and the club members' contributions all played a role in furthering intertribal community life during the twentieth century.

In the twenty-first century, who carries on the efforts of Whistler and the Sequoyah Club? How are Native Americans using media technology available today to bring people together, to provide an outlet for expression, or to preserve knowledge? The *Indians for Indians* radio show continues to be broadcast today, airing out of Apache on Saturday mornings, but listeners also have a bevy of other Native-led programs available to them, such as the broadcasts of *National Native News*, which can be heard on NPR, and *Native America Calling*, which are part of the line-up offered by Native Voice One. These programs carry on and expand on the efforts Whistler established nearly eighty years ago at the University of Oklahoma—the crucial and valuable work of Indians speaking in their own voices, for themselves, and to the world.

## Publication Notes

Published by University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma.

This book has been published in conjunction with the exhibition *Native Voices over the Airwaves: The Indians for Indians Hour Radio Show* at the Bizzell Memorial Library, University of Oklahoma, 401 W. Brooks St., Norman, OK 73019, from November 14, 2019 to August 3, 2020.

© 2019 Lina Ortega

Unless otherwise noted, this work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial (CC BY-NC) International 4.0 license, available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/legalcode>.



This work was produced, in part, through a donation from the Sac and Fox Nation, and from a Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) Recordings at Risk Grant.

*Designed by* Julie Rushing

*Copyedited by* Emily Jerman Schuster

## Additional Image Credits

*Cover images:* (front) Don Whistler in WNAD studio and (back) WNAD tower.

*Frontispiece image:* (detail) Pawnee Indian School students in WNAD studio.

All images, unless otherwise credited, are courtesy of the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries.

This publication was printed by the University of Oklahoma Printing Services and is issued by the University of Oklahoma. 450 copies have been printed and distributed at no cost to the taxpayers of Oklahoma.

The University of Oklahoma, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, age, religion, disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes, but is not limited to: admissions, employment, financial aid, housing, services in educational programs or activities, or health care services that the University operates or provides.

Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to: Bobby J. Mason, University Equal Opportunity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, 405-325-3546, [bjm@ou.edu](mailto:bjm@ou.edu), or visit <http://www.ou.edu/eoo.html>.







UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES  
*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA*

