THE SHASTA HISTORY

BY

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AND

BETTY HALL

2000
The Shasta Nation’s Enrollment Clerk is Betty Hall. As of this printing, there are approximately 1500 people enrolled in the Tribe. The enrollment is still open and there is no blood degree requirement. The only requirement is that you can trace back to an ancestor who lived in our aboriginal lands on June 2, 1852. This is a requirement from the Federal Government. For enrollment forms, call Betty Hall or write to:

Shasta Nation
P. O. Box 1054
Yreka, CA 96097

If you want to contact the Shasta Nation, Shasta Tribe, Inc., you can do so at the following numbers:

Roy V. Hall, Jr., Chairman: 530/468-2314
Donald E. Boat, Vice Chairman: 514/479-6328
Mary Carpelan, Secretary: 530/842-5654 - email: mjcarpelan@snowcrest.net
Betty Hall, Enrollment Clerk: 530/4688-2387 Fax number is the same

The meetings are monthly, always the second Saturday of each month at:

10736 Quartz Valley Road; Fort Jones California.

If you need directions, call Betty Hall. The Annual Meeting is the second Saturday in June. This is when the elections are held. The Annual Gathering is the last Saturday in June, call beforehand to find out the location. In the past years, it has been held at Indian Scotty Campground on the Scott River.
ABORIGINAL LANDS

The Shasta People’s aboriginal homeland at one time consisted of an area from Jump Off Joe Creek in Oregon, north of Grants Pass, then south through the Illinois Valley in southern Oregon, between Clear Creek and happy Camp in California, through the Marble Mountains, south to the New River near the Trinity River in California, turning northeast towards the Trinity Alps, east towards Trinity Lake, southeast towards the ridge between Anderson and Cottonwood, California, south east towards Eagle Lake, then north towards the Warner Mountains, west below Tule Lake area, and north again to the Crater Lake, and back west to Jump Off Joe Creek. The crest of the Siskiyou Mountains in southern Oregon is the line between the Rogue River Shasta and the Shasta living in present day California. The area south and east of the Shasta Nation presently is separated by the Achomawi and Atsugewi, which have their own political governments. The Tolowa People have a story about chasing the Shasta people away from the coast. The names for the areas are Kahosadi in Oregon, the Kamatwa along the Klamath River in California, the Iruai in Scott Valley, the Konomihu in Salmon River, the New River Shasta along the New River, the Okwanuchu in Sacramento and McCloud river drainage, the Ahotirei of Shasta Valley and Idakariwakaha of the Upper Klamath River. These are geographical names, not names of “Bands” or “Tribes”. For example, Idakariwakaha means “like Coyote’s country far away” and Okwanuchu means “looking back at the secret place.”
CULTURE

The Shasta people had a marriage wheel, which took eight generations to complete. The people from the area called Kahosadi marrying into the Kamatwa, the Kamatwa marrying into the Iruai, the Iruai marrying into the Konomihu, the Konomihu marrying into the New River Shasta people, the New River Shasta people marrying into the Okwanuchu people, the Okwanuchu people marrying into the Ahitirai, the Ahotirai marrying into the Idakariwakaha, the Idakariwakaha marrying into the Kahosadi. They kept track of their marriages on wooden canes in which they carved the family glyphs on. One family still has their marriage cane, and it has 14 generations of family marriage glyphs carved on it.

Much of the Shasta Culture was carved on wooden canes. We had a form of writing that was similar to the Chinese or Japanese in which a glyph was used. My family still has our creation story cane in which the sun, animals, and vines are carved on.

The Shasta had a head chief and his village was near the present day town of Gazelle, California. The head chief could place his sons in areas where he felt he needed to have total loyalty. During the wars at contact time, Chief Big Sky placed his sons at different areas. “Joe” at Jump Off Joe Creek just north of Grants Pass, Oregon, “Sam” at Sam’s Valley near present day Rogue River, Oregon, “John” at Applegate Valley, Oregon, and Big Ike along the Upper Klamath River.

Women could be chief. This was not a common practice, but at times, when the chief of the village died and his wife was a good speaker and she could resolve differences, she could be chief. Her son’s would help her do this. At other times, a
women could be chief in their own right, not taking over after their husband died, they were chosen to be chief by the villagers.

The women were the medicine people. If there was a woman in the family that was a medicine person, the man in the family could not be a medicine person. Shasta's had dream doctors, herbal doctors, sucking doctors, and talking doctors. Each knew about each other's work, they knew how to do each other's work, but they would specialize in one type, they would know what to do through their dreams when they were young.

The children were the treasures of the Nation. They were taught by the grandmothers and they were taught by the grandfathers. If anyone was caught abusing children, they were severely punished. If they were caught sexually abusing a child, they were killed on the spot, no questions asked. Boys were given to their fathers at the age of five. It was the father's responsibility to make sure that his son was educated by himself and his elders. The mother was responsible for the girls.

Our villages were along waterways, near springs and on ridges above steep canyons. Our houses were made of split cedar walls with cedar bark roofs; either a pit house or a shallow dish floor house. The pit houses had a pit dug in the middle of them, this is where the family lived and worked during the day. On the shelf above the pit is where they slept. The walls were double walls and in this space is where they stored their food.

It is incorrect when anthropologists and archaeologists call our villages "camps" or "summer camps" or "temporary". This is not true. Someone lived in the village year around. The majority of the people went into the mountains in the summer gathering
what was needed for the next year, but the elders and small children could not go, it was too hard on them. They stayed home and took care of the villages. When people went gathering, they gathered a lot of food. They would not be able to bring back what they gathered all at one time so they would make frequent trips back to the village. This gave the elders and the small children the responsibility of the preparation of the food for storage. This gave the ones who could more time to do the gathering.

Food was stored several ways, one was in granaries, which are poles stuck in the ground with a platform well above the level of the ground with cedar boughs woven around the poles. The base of the granary was covered with cedar because insects did not like cedar. Food was also stored in baskets in-between the walls of the house. Here they would use Bay Laurel because it is a good insect repellant.

The acorns were a staple food crop and if the acorns failed, other crops would be harvested in place of the acorns such as tar weed seeds, ipos, camas, grains, wild rice, and the Shastas traded for a lot of their food.

Salmon was a very important food, every year when the runs would start there would be a three-day ceremony called the Salmon Calling Ceremony in which no one on the rivers fished. This ensured that there would be fish for the next year runs. During this time, the three days, people would gather at the mouths of the major rivers and streams and perform the Salmon Calling Ceremony. Ipos would be fed to the fish as part of the ceremony.

Fishing was done with dip net poles, nets made out of iris fiber rope attached to long poles. These nets were dipped into the base of a rapid where the fish were resting after coming up the river and before they went up the rapids. They would dig ditches that
were attached to smaller rivers, divert the water into the ditch, close off the upper end of the ditch and when the ditch was full of fish, they would let the water flow back down the creek and pick up the fish. They also speared fish.

We had black tail deer, mule deer, elk and antelope to hunt. In the fall, people would herd deer into areas where they would run off a cliff or they would be trapped in an enclosure to be killed. The meat was dried or smoked for storage.

In the winter, waterfowl would be hunted. As the flocks would come over the Siskiyou Mountains, people would be on the southern slope where the birds couldn’t see them and they would throw clubs up to hit the birds as they flew over the low passes, this is one way that they would hunt the migrating birds. Hunting blinds were built near wintering areas for the geese and ducks. When birds such as quail was hunted, they used basket traps and since quail do not fly unless startled this was easily done. Children would hunt small birds and they would be made into soups. Small rodents such as squirrels were hunted and used in soups.

The Shasta did not have taboos for women hunting and fishing. Women would hunt and fish when they were young, after they had children, most of them would not go hunting and fishing, it can be dangerous. Their responsibilities would change, which was to take care of the children.

We had salt. Having salt made the Shasta people very rich. They could trade for almost anything that they wanted with salt. Also another trade item was obsidian. The large ceremonial blades were another item that was traded for what the Shasta people wanted. The blades were completed at home, then traded to other tribes.
When you look at the environment that the Shasta people lived in, it was quite varied, high mountains, deserts river valleys, and lush valleys. It looks a lot different than it did before the first miners arrived. They destroyed much of the river ecosystems. For example, there used to be huge snakes, Grandma said they looked like pine trees laying on the river bank. Those snakes are all gone. My Grandfather talked about huge birds that used to live in this area, he called them flamingos. They are gone. The salmon runs are not what they used to be when it was just Indians living in the area, they have been over fished, the farming has added to much pollution to the water and they do not have the numbers they used to have. No one lets the salmon go for three days to insure the run anymore.

One of the ways that the Indians used to maintain their environment was with fire. In order to maintain their oak groves, they used fire to keep the conifers out of the oak groves. If you look at old oak groves, you will see that there are very few very large conifers amongst the oak. This is because as seedlings, they are very susceptible to fire. This also kept the oak trees a certain distance from each other. The production of acorns was higher if the trees were not crowded together.

Fire was used for collecting tarweed. Tarweed has a substance on it that is like tar, hence the name. After burning, it is easier to collect the seed, the seed will not stick to the sticky substance, and it can be gathered.

During their gathering, they maintained the environment the way they wanted to make it easier for them to obtain what they needed. Gathering willows not only maintained the patches of good willows for making baskets, it also kept the plants from being overgrown and becoming thickets along the river, therefore inaccessible to them.
Gathering fruits and vegetables made it possible to have better and better crops. For example, when gathering ipos, they would pick a tuber, take a step, and then pick another tuber. This insured that there would be crop the next year and that it would not be so thick so the plants would die out.

When the Shasta went to war with neighboring tribes it was more of a ritualized affair rather than an all out battle. The war was over when one side lost a warrior. Some of the Shasta women were the first line in battle. No man who considered himself a man would kill a woman. This didn’t mean that they could not be captured and taken by the opposing tribe. The women would go up and try to cut the lines on the bows of their enemies.

**FIRST CONTACT**

The first contact with the white man in was with Spanish; it was in the 1500’s when Shasta people went south to get horses for trading with other tribes to the north. The Shasta people traveled extensively, they sent runners to the East Coast every ten years. A piece of flint, which geologically did not form in this area, was found near Hornbrook, and it was sourced to a small section of the Ohio River.

The first contact with the fur trappers was in the 1820’s and 1830’s. This contact was not devastating to the Shasta people, the fur trappers main goal was to trap out all the beaver to create a buffer with the Spanish.

In 1848. gold was discovered near Scott Bar and within a year, thousands of miners came into the area and pushed the Shasta people off of their land into smaller and smaller areas where there was not so much gold. The Head Chief, Big Sky, was killed soon after the arrival of the miners. As the Shasta people were pushed into smaller and
smaller areas, local chiefs took care of the social and political problems that they faced within their own communities. Also during this time ten thousand Chinese miners were brought in to do the heavy work. Many of the places that gold was found were village sites, and the lives of the Shasta People were changed forever.

My great, great, great, grandmother, Old Bless, was killed in a battle against the white man. She was from the area now called Hamburg along the Klamath River. The Shasta people fought to keep their homeland but in the end, they lost.

TREATY

On November 4, 1851, a peace treaty was signed with the government. The Chiefs and HeadMen of the Shasta people met to decide if they wanted to sign a peace treaty with the United States government.

I-shack, E-eh-ne-qua, Pi-o-kuk and Sa-na-a-ka signed the treaty for the Upper Klamath River. I-shack had a village near the present day Trees of Heaven Campground. His area was from the mouth of Humbug Creek to the mouth of the Shasta River.

E-eh-ne-qua signed for the area north of Happy Camp to Hamburg. Pi-o-kuke’s area was from Hamburg to the mouth of the Scott River. He was a young chief and wasn’t responsible for a large area when the treaty was signed. The Chief responsible for that area had recently died. Later Chief Pi-o-kuke took care of the area up to Humbug Creek.

Chief Sa-nak-a-ha shared the area from the mouth of the Shasta River on up the Klamath River with Chief Ida-kar-I-wak-a-ha. Chief Ida-kar-I-wak-a-ha at one time had been responsible for Butte Valley and south to Dunsmuir and Salt Creek.
Between the Four Chiefs from the Upper Klamath, Sa-nak-a-ha was the strongest. Sa-nak-a-ha took care of the river. He saw that each did their part to take care of the river. He sang for the salmon to come up the river at the mouth of the Shasta so the fish would go up each arm of the rivers.

Chief An-na-nik-a-hok also known as Captain John was a signer of the treaty. He sang for the salmon to come up the Scott River. His area included the Scott River Canyon to Graveyard Gulch.

Sunrise joined Captain John where the valley opened up and his area went towards the Marble Mountains and Scott Valley. Captain John had raised Sunrise and had been his teacher.

Chief Ar-rats-a-cho-ica’s area was back towards Fort Jones up to Moffett Creek. Sunrise filled the area between Ar-rats-a-cho-ica and Captain John.

Shasta Valley chiefs were divided into three groups on the Treaty. They didn’t divide themselves up that way. Some of them had come from Butte Valley, from Weed, Mt. Shasta and south of Dunsmuir as well as the Forks of Salmon.

Chief Tso-hor-git-sko came from Yreka and was associated with the “Pines” area. He did not like to leave his area. It was hard for him to go to Fort Jones. He had a feeling that he would die. He prayed before he left and as he made his journey over. He asked for things not to get intertwined in his mind and that he would have a good heart. He knew that he was to get the deerskin with the Treaty on it. He asked that it be placed beneath his head so the Old Ones could sort it out. It broke his heart.

Chief Che-le-na-tuk, the grandson of Waw-nah-tuk, signed for and represented the area from Hornbook to the Siskiyous. He was with the Shasta Valley signers because
you could see Mount Shasta when you prayed from the higher mountains. Within his area there were lot of spirits present. He came into Shasta Valley with his family so they would be more comfortable.

Chief Ada-war-how-ik was in charge of Stewart Springs. He and Ida-kar-I-wak-a-ha were first cousins.

Chief Quap-so-a-ha-a, brother to Ada-qar-how-is signed for the Shasta from Forks of Salmon and the New River Shastas.

Chief A-lat-se-wak-a-na, a brother to Ida-kar-I-wak-a-ha, also signed for the Shasta Valley.

At the barbecue that followed, the bread and meat was laced with strychnine, tens of thousands of Shasta People died that day. The local volunteer militia went and slaughtered the old men, women and children left in the villages and burned all the villages. For five years, people were held in concentration camps in Fort Jones. During the Fall, they would be released from the Concentration Camps so they could gather their food for the winter. This was allowed until they were taken to Siletz Indian Reservation in Oregon. Thirty women, five couples and 175 warriors who escaped into the mountains were allowed to stay.

Many Shasta People fled into the mountains surrounding Scott Valley. This was winter time and many did not survive. Chief Sunrise survived in the Scott Bar Mountains for two years before he felt it safe to come back to Scott Valley. Chief Ike (Ida-kar-I-wak-a-ha) went back to the Upper Klamath and Bogus area with his family and villagers. Later there were small communities where Shasta People were allowed to live. In these
areas, the Shasta People were not very visible, and the farming and gold mining was not very prosperous.

Many of the Shasta women were taken by white men and forced to raise their families. Many of the children made the choice not to tell their children about the poisoning. My family is one that kept the traditions and told about the poisoning. When my mother met one elder, the first question she asked when Mom walked in the door was: “What happened?” Her family was one that did not tell their children what happened. The elder said that her grandfather would sit and cry. they would ask him what was wrong. he would tell them that it was too horrible.

Today it is still hard to talk about what happened to the Shasta people. When I was at the Siletz Reservation visiting, my friend’s cousin came in and sat next to me. He was about my age. and he had tears in his eyes. He looked at me and said: “You got to stay!” I did not know what to say to him. I could see the pain in his eyes. he felt what his ancestors must have felt when they were removed from their homeland. I was not aware of how painful it was till I looked into his eyes.

HISTORY

The first law the new State of California passed in 1851 was the California Indenture Act. This took all rights and privileges away from the Indian people of California. It was against the law for an Indian person to testify against a white person, and they could not defend themselves in any manner. This law was on the books until 1937, when it was finally repealed.

In 1853, Chief Bill of the Shastas and his village came to the Big Bend on the Shasta River, about two miles from Yreka, California to do their annual fishing for
salmon. The white community was suspicious of any Indian gathering. When the people arrived at the river, they started the Salmon Calling Ceremony, in which the white community interpreted as 'a war dance'. The white community attacked the Shasta people and the Shasta people were able to escape from their attackers.

In 1873, Shasta people from Shasta Valley, Klamath River, and Scott Valley met in Scott Valley for ceremony and dancing. Tyee Jim, Chief of the area would many times host these dances. They had three camps set up, held dances at night. This was stopped by the local white community by threatening the Shasta people’s lives.

In 1874, the Shasta people who remained were meeting to discuss the reservation that the government was attempting to establish for them. Representatives came from Hamburg, Gottsville, Quartz Valley, Scott Valley, Shasta Valley, Upper Klamath, Bogus, Shovel Creek, Mount Shasta, New River and Salmon River to discuss what was going to happen to them. The representatives would report back to their communities.

The Shasta people would have communal gardens. They would grow crops and the ‘settlers’ would destroy their gardens. The Shasta people would gather every year along the Upper Klamath River near Bogus and Shovel Creeks to plant their gardens. The Indians were starving and the ‘settlers’ felt that this was a viable way of exterminating the Shasta people. In June 1874, $500.00 was appropriated by the Senate for the Shasta Indian farming.

Shasta people far away as present day Grants Pass would come for a few weeks in the summer to visit family and friends. When people would go visiting their relatives in other areas, the settlers would take over their lands and they would have no home to go
back to. This happened all over the Shasta people’s aboriginal lands. The Shasta people would then go and live with their local Chief.

When the Shasta people would gather in the fall for the hunting ceremonies, the local ‘law enforcement’ would come and tell them that they could not continue or they would be placed in jail. If the Shasta people would gather for any reason, the white community would put a stop to it for fear it would be the start of an ‘Indian Uprising.’

In the 1880’s, if a Shasta person committed a ‘crime’ according to the white man’s laws, many innocent people were killed. During the Humbug Wars, old men, women and children were killed because the miners could not find the people who were responsible for the ‘crime’. These ‘wars’ would go on for months, expanding to other areas as well. Many times the miners would just kill the Shasta people outright, they did not have time to try the Indians because they were too busy mining.

In the early 1890’s, it was not permitted that a white woman marry an Indian. A marriage license was not given, but if the couple insisted, a judge could draw up a contract that they would be man and wife.

In the late 1890’s and early 1900’s, the Ghost Dance came through the area. The Paiute Tribal leaders brought the dance into the area. The Chiefs and Head Men took the Ghost Dance to other parts of the Shasta’s aboriginal lands. Charlie and Margaret Wicks took it to the Upper Klamath, Bogus, and Shovel Creek areas. Others took the Ghost Dance to the different reservations in Oregon. There are still about twenty one Ghost Dance trees standing in the village of Coyote’s Paw.
GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

The General Allotment Act of February 8, 1887 (24 Stat. 389), enabled the Shasta and Upper Klamath Indian families to apply for the land their homes were on. The allotments were issued to the members of the Shasta and Upper Klamath Indian families living in communities such as Etna (Ruffy Reservation), Salmon River, Upper Klamath River (Shovel Creek, Bogus, and Copco), Scott Bar, Hamburg, Gottsville, Moffett Creek, Yreka (Bender Allotments), and the north end of Scott Valley and Quartz Valley. There were sixty-five allotments in Siskiyou County in July 9, 1941.

In 1924, meetings started about the Land Claims with the United States Government. John Carmony from the Upper Klamath, Shovel Creek area, was elected as a representative of the Shasta people by the different representatives from the different Shasta Indian communities. Representatives were sent to the meetings with John Carmony and they would report back to their communities.

Shasta people maintained informal and formal meetings by the appointment of a spokesperson to meet with the various officials and other spokespersons as necessary. This method was used by many of the Shasta families, and the spokesperson would report back to their communities.

RESERVATION

In 1934, efforts to establish the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation were started by Fred Wicks and Harry Burcell, Shasta Indians. It was to be established for the Shasta Tribe and the Upper Klamath Indians. Quartz Valley Indian Reservation was established in the northern part of Quartz Valley.
Quartz Valley Reservation was formed in 1937 when 364 acres were bought under the provisions of the Wheeler-Howard Act. In 1939, 240 additional acres were purchased to for the 604 acres of the Reservation. The group of Shasta and Upper Klamath Indians whose ancestors traditionally lived in this part of California organized as the Quartz Valley Indian Community on June 15, 1939, and were granted a Charter on March 12, 1940.

There were 40 Indians enrolled when the Quartz Valley Community was formed. A roll completed in 1955 lists 88 names, but only about half of the membership are living in Quartz Valley today. Five of the people living on the reservation are over 65 years of age and there are the same number of school children. Most of the workers cultivate their assignments since the land is productive and they are able to make a living from agriculture.

The above numbers are of the enrolled members who had received land allotments on the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation. The reminder of the Shasta and Upper Klamath Indians are what makes up the Shasta Nation today.

In 1956, the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation started proceedings to terminate their lands. In 1957, the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation was illegally terminated.

The Tilly Hardwick Case was filed for the illegal termination of the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation and other reservations and rancherias in California. Through the Tilly Hardwick ruling, on July 19, 1983, the Quartz Valley Indian Reservation was reinstated as it was prior to termination, a Shasta Tribe and Upper Klamath Reservation.

In 1969, the Siskiyou County Indian Association was formed to promote the local Indian culture, furthering Indian education and heritage. The membership was for any
Indian living in Siskiyou County. Later the Siskiyou County Indian Association added public assistance programs for the local Indians. The Siskiyou County Indian Association was also a member of the Inter Tribal Council of California. This Intertribal Council of California consisted of tribes from all over California.

**FEDERAL RECOGNITION PROCESS**

On August 28, 1982, the Shasta Nation consisting of the Shasta and Upper Klamath Indians filed for Federal Recognition with the Federal Government. In 1984, the Petition was submitted to the Federal Acknowledgement Committee in Washington, D. C. Two deficiency letters have been received. Each response to the letters only brings more questions. On September 15, 1992, Bud Shepard, retired Bureau of Indian Affairs employee, former Chief of the Branch of Acknowledgement, retired private consultant to petitioning groups wrote in regards to H.R. 3430; “To continue to operate under the present regulations or any legislative approximation will not resolve the question of unrecognized Indian Tribes in this country.

“The present regulations cannot be revised, fixed, patched, dabbled with, redefined, clarified or administered differently to make them work.”

The majority of the Shasta and Upper Klamath Indians still live in their aboriginal communities, such as Forks of Salmon, Happy Camp, Etna, Fort Jones, Greenview, Dunsmuir, Mount Shasta, Hornbrook and Yreka as reflected in the Kelsey Census as taken in 1904.

The Federal Recognition process still continues today.