

# Tribes, officials take a look back and a look forward

By Michele Cunningham  
The Patriot Ledger

BOSTON — Representatives of Native American tribes met Friday with Boston city officials to jointly acknowledge the tribes' loss of their liberty at the hands of white settlers 321 years ago.

On Proclamation Day — Aug. 30, 1675 — the Council at Boston suspended the civil liberties of all Indians in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and ordered them interned at camps.

The two groups gathered Friday on Long Island in Boston Harbor.

Sam Sapiel, acting director of political affairs for the revived Muhheconnew National Confederacy, said he has been working to unite the groups to address the issue for three years.

Native Americans are hoping land on the islands will be dedicated to their tribes in honor of their ancestors.

Members said they would take responsibility for the upkeep of the grounds.

Sapiel, who addressed the gathering of about 50 people, said, "It has been a long hard fight for this, but through perseverance and being cooperative, we're starting today."

Brian MacDonald attended the event as a representative of the Boston Harbor Island Alliance, a nonprofit organization created to support the proposed Boston Harbor Islands National Park. He said the alliance is working to have all 31 of the harbor islands designated as parkland.

"If these become a national park, then this story can be told here," he said. "It's a story that is almost forgotten. Right now it's just a small part in the back of history books."

Boston Mayor Thomas Menino issued a statement acknowledging the suffering and loss of life caused by Proclamation Day.





Environmental Services  
CITY OF BOSTON

THOMAS M. MENINO  
Mayor

CATHLEEN DOUGLAS STONE  
Chief of Environmental Services

August 23, 1996

Chief Leroy Dolson and Council  
Munsee Delaware Nation  
R.R. # 1, Muncey, Ontario  
NOL IYO CANADA

Dear Chief Dolson and Council:

On behalf of Thomas M. Menino, Mayor of the City of Boston, I am writing to invite you to attend a public acknowledgment and commemoration of Proclamation Day, August 30, 1675, when the Council at Boston suspended the civil liberties of all Native Americans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and ordered all Native Americans to be interned in camps. This event is being organized by the City of Boston, by Sam Sapiel, Acting Director of Political Affairs for the revived Muhheconnew National Confederacy and by the Island Alliance, the non-profit organization created to support the proposed Boston Harbor Islands National Park. We extend a special invitation to your Tribe's/First Nation's Government and members to send an official delegation to attend the first non-Native public acknowledgment of this anniversary. **At 10:30 a.m., Friday, August 30, 1996, on Long Island in Boston Harbor**, the City of Boston will present a proclamation respectfully acknowledging the suffering and loss of life caused by the suspension of civil liberties and subsequent internment, and the hurt and pain that this anniversary means to Native Americans of the Massachuset, Abenaki, Wampanoag, Nipmuck, Narragansett, Penobscot, Sokoki, Mohican, Delaware, Paugusset/Paugeesukq, Mohegan, Pequot, Unkechaug, Montaukett, Shinnecock, Brothertown and Schaghticoke Tribes/First Nations.

Please join the City of Boston, the Muhheconnew National Confederacy and the Island Alliance for this public acknowledgment and commemoration by responding to my assistant, Donna Spinazola at (617) 635-3425, who will send you directions to the location on Long Island where we will gather. There will be a reception following the public acknowledgment from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the New England Aquarium Education Building (call Michelle Clements (617) 973-5220).

I hope you can join us for this important commemoration.

Sincerely,

Cathleen Douglas Stone

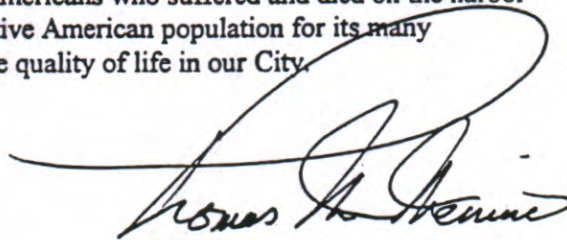
# Boston

## *Proclamation*

- Whereas:** On August 30, 1675, Proclamation Day, the Council at Boston ordered all Native Americans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony interned in camps on various harbor islands; and
- Whereas:** Many Native Americans perished on the harbor islands during this time; and
- Whereas:** This anniversary causes extreme sorrow for Massachusetts, Abenaki, Wampanoag, Nipmuck, Narragansett, Penobscot, Sokoki, Mohican, Delaware, Paugusset/Paugesukq, Mohegan, Pequot, Unkechaug, Montaukett, Shinnecock, Brothertown and Schaghticoke Tribes/First Nations; and
- Whereas:** The descendants of these Tribes continue the great traditions and cultural celebrations of their ancestors; and
- Whereas:** The Native American population of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts plays a vital role in promoting communication and understanding among the diverse populations of our City; NOW
- Therefore:** I, THOMAS M. MENINO, Mayor of the City of Boston, do hereby proclaim, on this 321st anniversary, Friday, August 30, 1996 to be

### COMMEMORATION OF PROCLAMATION DAY, AUGUST 30, 1675

in the City of Boston, and I urge all of my fellow Bostonians to join me in remembering those Native Americans who suffered and died on the harbor islands, and to thank the Native American population for its many contributions in adding to the quality of life in our City.



Mayor of Boston



**REPRESENTATIVES AT THE CITY  
OF BOSTON'S  
PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
OF THE 321<sup>ST</sup> ANIVERSARY OF  
PROCLAMATION DAY,  
AUGUST 30, 1996  
HELD ON LONG ISLAND,  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**



**Top: Bruce Miller,  
Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican,  
Confederacy Representative**

**Bottom left: Mark Peters,  
Munsee-Delaware Nation,  
Band Historian**

**Bottom right: Heather Mars,  
Narragansett Indian Tribe,  
Councilor**

