

# Town of Apex

## Indigenous Peoples' History

*Much of indigenous peoples' history and, specifically, American Indian history, is untold. This record of history serves as a reminder that the American Indian people and their stories are "silent no more."*



### AMERICAN INDIANS INHABITED WAKE COUNTY

Up until the 1700s, the Tuscarora tribe lived in Wake County and along the rivers and waterways of eastern North Carolina.

### AFTER THE TUSCARORA WAR

The Tuscarora War, which is considered the bloodiest colonial war in North Carolina, took place from 1711 to 1715. Following the war, the Tuscarora people were forced out of their North Carolina villages. Fleeing for their lives, many of the tribe's people were displaced throughout the eastern United States, with larger groups forming in West Virginia and New York.



### TUSCARORA TRIBESMEN RETURN TO WAKE COUNTY

In the 1840s, Tuscarora tribesmen returned to North Carolina and lived in the New Hill area.

### TUSCARORA TRIBESMAN STARTS A BUSINESS

In the 1840s, Thomas Stewart, a Tuscarora tribesman, owned land and built a Saloon on what is now Old US Highway 1 and Smithfield Road. At that time, he was able to both own the land and operate the business because community members assumed he was white, based on his appearance.



### THE FORMATION OF FRIENDSHIP

In the late 1840s, four groups gathered as pioneers of peace to create a community of kindness and common understanding. Those four groups included American Indians, previously enslaved people of color, free people of color, and white (Quaker) community members. The formation of the Friendship community was facilitated by Thomas Stewart, a Tuscarora tribesman. His peace pipe was the ceremonial symbol of their unity.

### ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRST AMERICAN INDIAN CHURCH

In 1865, Mount Zion Baptist Church was established as the first American Indian church in the Apex area to meet in a permanent structure. The church, located at 2617 Mt Zion Church Road, also served as a school and educated local youth. Reverend Thomas Morrison (pictured to the right) was one of the early Pastors of the church.



### FIRST RECOGNIZED AMERICAN INDIAN BUSINESS

In 1918, AF (Force) Stewart became the first recognized American Indian to own and operate a business in the Apex area. He owned two small businesses, Stewart Blacksmith Shop and Stewart Grocery on Route 1, Old Fayetteville Road, which is now New Hill Holleman Road.

