

Mi'kmaq Sante' Mawio'mi — Traditional Mi'kmaw Leadership

MI'KMAQ HISTORY MONTH OCTOBER 2006

The Mi'kmaq Grand Council is the traditional political structure of the peoples living in Mi'kma'ki. Each of the seven Districts of Mi'kma'ki has a District Chief who was elected from the tribal Chiefs from that District. One of the District Chiefs was appointed Grand Chief.



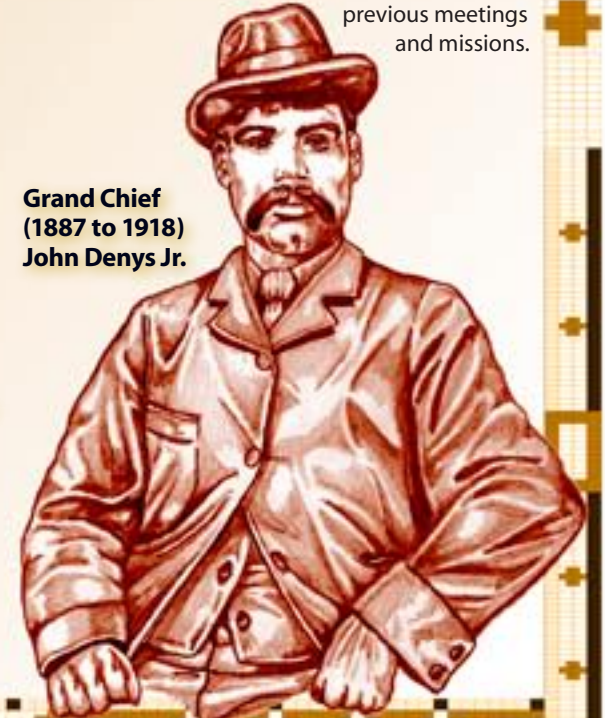
Grand Chief (1918 to 1964)
Gabriel Sylliboy



Grand Chief (1991 to present)
Benjamin Sylliboy



Grand Chief (1964 to 1991)
Donald Marshall Sr.



Grand Chief (1887 to 1918)
John Denys Jr.

Wampum Belts were used for protocol purposes of the Grand Council. It was the duty of a Grand Council member known as the Pu'tus—or Keeper of the Belt—to use the Belts as a journal of the discussions of previous meetings and missions.



Grand Chief (first recorded to 1611)
Henri Membertou

Kespek

Siknikt

Epekwtik aq
Piktuk

Unama'kik

Eskikewa'kik

Sipekni'katik

Kespukwtik



The Eight Pointed Star is an adaptation of the original Seven Pointed Star which was the historical emblem of the Seven Districts of the Mi'kmaq nation. The Eighth point was added to represent the Crown after the signing of treaties with Britain.

The Grand Council Medals were instated in 1842 by Joseph Howe included in the "Act for the Instruction and Permanent Settlement of Indians" where, amongst other agreements, it states that the Chief and Keptins (captains) are to receive one medal each, every 3 years.

The Sante' Mawio'mi Flag or Grand Council Flag, is commonly referred to as the Mi'kmaw Nation Flag. It has a White background, Red Cross, Sun, and Moon.
Wape'k (White) - Denotes the purity of Creation.
Mekwe'k Klujjiewey (Red Cross) - Mankind and Infinity (four directions)
Na'ku'set (Sun) - Forces of the day
Tepknuset (Moon) - Forces of the night



Recorded Grand Chief appointments

recorded history to 1611	Grand Chief Henri Membertou
1611 to 1792	unknown
1792 to 1818	Grand Chief Francis Peck
1818 to 1842	Grand Chief Michael Tooma
1842 to 1869	Grand Chief Frank Tooma Jr.
1869 to 1887	Grand Chief John Denys
1887 to 1918	Grand Chief John Denys Jr.
1918 to 1964	Grand Chief Gabriel Sylliboy
1964 to 1991	Grand Chief Donald Marshall Sr.
1991 to present	Grand Chief Benjamin Sylliboy