

OUR INDIAN HERITAGE

Good day, everyone--it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

There are more than 10,000 names of places in Pennsylvania, not including the names of streams. If you'll scan the maps, you'll find that nearly five hundred of these place names are Indian names, as well they should be. Matter of fact all of them should be, for the Indians have been in Pennsylvania forever. At a recent-year meeting of many tribes at Hershey, the Sioux and the Chippewa came from the West to listen to the drum-beats in Hershey Stadium, and they were literally coming home, for Sioux and Chippewa and many other tribes, now indigenous to the West, roamed the forests of Pennsylvania three hundred and more years ago. Pennsylvania is hallowed Indian country; the land providing so much in good fortune for those who lived in it before the white man came; providing much more than the arid wasteland in which the Western Indians lived. The heritage they left us in names however interests me as I said...those names of our counties of Pennsylvania---Allegheny, Erie, Juniata, Indiana, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Lycoming, Susquehanna, Tioga and Venango. I was always of the impression that Montour was a French name, but research shows it is Indian, too. Beaver, our western county is an English translation of an Indian name; want the real name for beaver, then go to the city of Tamaqua--for Tamaqua means Beaver. Of the 67 counties of Pennsylvania there are only 13 which do not include one or more townships whose names are of Indian origin. And, of course, the name Delaware, the county and the river, is a

distinguished Indian name. In William Penn's time, the Delawares were one of the great tribes--if not the greatest--of the Algonquin nation. In that time, the Delawares--or the Lenapes as they were known--shared the whole east with the famed Iroquois. And William Penn concluded his treaty with them at the council fire--their Capitol--down at Shackamaxon, in East Central Philadelphia, along the Delaware River. Another Algonquin tribe, the Shawnee, settled here along the Susquehanna and made a treaty with William Penn in 1701, thus enabling John Harris to go west and trade along the Susquehanna--the beginnings of the history of Harrisburg. The Seneca--Chief Cornplanter--their history--add much to the lore and history of Pennsylvania, and one must hold that story for another edition. And there are others which have given us Pennsylvania names---the Munsees, the Conestogas, the Tuscaroras and the Eries. The Indian names on our waters---Delaware, Susquehanna, Allegheny, Monongahela, Juniata, Ohio--these cannot be ignored either. Indians gave names to our mountains, streams, creeks, valleys--all reminding us daily that although there is a Columbus Chapel in Pennsylvania, long before Columbus, Pennsylvania's heritage springs from the redmen who roamed the forests and ravines of Pennsylvania. It was--and still is--this Pennsylvania--a happy hunting ground--for happiness which all men seek.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.