

Myles Stephenson Sr.

Myles was born at the Old Indian Hospital located in Lawton, Oklahoma on January 14, 1929. He was born to Ella Stephenson and Nuss Stephenson. His grandparents were Whit Lee and Mis-se-nah and Chief Stephenson and A-day-uck. Chief Stephenson was one of the last hereditary chief of the Wichita Tribe.

Myles grew up on his grandmother's allotment just south of the old water tower on the east edge of Gracemont, Oklahoma. He went to school at Riverside Indian School in 1936 and graduated from Riverside in 1948. Myles then spent three years in the Navy during the Korean War. Myles was one of the best all-around athletes in the late 1940's. He lettered in four sports which included football, basketball, boxing and baseball. Myles received a scholarship from Murray State Junior College for football and basketball.

Myles worked 27 years with the American Indian Exposition. He served 8 years as the President. Myles was instrumental in getting the following "Outstanding Celebrities" such as Crystal Gale, Claude Akins, Willie Nelson, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans.

Myles served his Tribe well as President of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes for 8 years from and Vice President for 4 years. He also served as a Committee Member for 8 years.

During his time he served in various capacities. He chose the present site of the Wichita Tribal Headquarters which included the first building now called the Dance Building.

The following people went with him to look at the land for the Tribal Headquarters: Myles Stephenson Sr. Ella Stephenson, Bonnie Stephenson and Nathan and Mary Tseele. They chose the present location and submitted it to the Tribe for approval and the Tribe accepted.

He was instrumental in getting the first per-capita payments for the Wichita people. Myles along with Frank Miller he went to visit Omer Lewelyn and the Tribe signed a contract with him. They in turn won the claim for 14 million dollars in a land claim settlement for the Tribe.

Myles spent 12 years at Riverside Indian Scholl from 1936-1948 and graduated with honors. He worked at the dairy at Riverside. He had \$1,000 in the bank, 2 cows & a calf, 3 hogs, 1 sow and a litter of pigs. This was what he had earned by the time he graduated.

After serving 3 years in the Navy, he started to work at Fort Sill Post. He was then hired at Fort Sill Indian School and spent 5 years there. He was then transferred to Riverside Indian School in 1969. He worked 19 years there and retired with 34 years of Federal Service. He was in charge of Dormitory Operations for boys.

Last but not least, Myles played 15 years of Sandlot Baseball with the Cache Indian Baseball Team the Comanche Boys. He played in the church league with Central Baptist Church on Tuesdays. He also played in the Softball Commercial League with Bianco's of Lawton. The team members were Bill Kooma Jr., Joe Wetselline, Lee Tsatoke, Myles Stephenson Sr., Dale Osborn, Jr. Wolfe, Jr. Tsoodle and Pinken Tsatoke.

Myles is very proud of his children and grandchildren. His children are Myles Stephenson Jr., Dana Smith and Vicki Eaglenest. His grandsons Jacob and Keigan Stephenson are sons of Myles Stephenson, Jr. His granddaughters, Casey Smith and Shalain Lauer, are the daughters of Dana Smith. His grandchildren Missy and Donnie Eaglenest, Mike, Mark, Anthony, Gina and Nikki Zeno are the children of his daughter Vicki Eaglenest.