



## Indigenous Americans in New Hampshire

New Hampshire has a rich history dating back 11,000 years. There were several prominent Indigenous American tribes throughout the state including the Algonquians and the Iroquoians. Generally Native Americans living in New Hampshire and Maine are known as Abenaki (alt. spelling Abnaki), Penobscot and several smaller bands: Kennebec, Norridgewock, Androscoggin, Pequawket, Wawencok, Sokokis, Cowas, Missisquois, and the Pennacook<sup>1</sup>. Major cities and towns throughout the state are in fact historic Native American tribe villages:

One historian explored the fact the Southern New Hampshire towns, cities, lakes, rivers and streams are still named for the indigenous tribes that lived there: Nashua, Penacook, Lake Massabesic, Lake Sunapee, and the Piscataquog River while “The White Hills”/the White Mountains are mostly without Indian names i.e. Mount Washington. Though there are great legends associated with the mountain ranges<sup>2</sup>.

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### *The Ossipee Tribe & Ancient Sites<sup>3</sup>*

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Ossipee Village, on the shores of Ossipee Lake, is built on the site of a substantial Native village. It was a good source for fishing and hunting. The Ossipee Village is considered to be particularly helpful to archaeologists since the village was so important that English settlers sent carpenters to build a fort around the village to help protect the Indigenous people so that they could trade with them.

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### *White Mountain Legends<sup>4</sup>*

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Passaconaway was a tribe chief who championed peace and harmony between the tribes and the European settlers. It’s believed that “he was received into heaven” after being transported “to the summit of Mount Washington in a sledge drawn by wolves”. Today there is a village and mountain in the Sandwich mountain range named for him.

Passaconaway was succeeded by his son, Wonalancet who continued his father’s pursuit of peace during King Philip’s War. He retired from being chief when his population rebelled. There is also a mountain and town named for him in the Waterville Valley region.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.native-languages.org/abna.htm>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.livingplaces.com/NH/New\\_Hampshire\\_Indians.html](https://www.livingplaces.com/NH/New_Hampshire_Indians.html)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nhmagazine.com/paths-to-new-hampshires-native-past/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.livingplaces.com/NH/New\\_Hampshire\\_Indians.html](https://www.livingplaces.com/NH/New_Hampshire_Indians.html)



Kancamagus was nephew to Wonalancet – he led an attack on Dover in the late 1600s. He, too, has a mountain and highway named after him.

One of the most celebrated of New Hampshire legends is Chief Chocorua supposedly launching an [ineffective] curse against European settlers from the summit of Mount Chocorua. This is illustrated in Thomas Cole's *The Death of Chocorua*.

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After reading a bit of the history and the legends – think about what legend you want to be recounted about you and your life.