

NOTABLE MINORITIES WHO CHANGED HISTORY

September 19, 2008

Featuring Sequoyah

" I don' t think the measure of a civilization is how tall its buildings of concrete are, but rather how well its people have learned to related to their environment and fellow man."

Quote by: Sun Bear of the Chippewa Tribe

Cherokee Prayer Blessing

May the Warm Winds of Heaven

Blow softly upon your house.

May the Great Spirit

Bless all those who enter there.

May your Moccasins

Make happy tracks

in many snows,

and may the Rainbow

Always touch you shoulder.

Source: <http://www.saphyr.net>

September Dates to Remember:

- 1— Healthy Aging Month (thru September 30)
- 1 - Ramadan
- 9 - Grandparents Day
- 11 - Patriot Day (United States)
- 15 - Hispanic Heritage Month (thru October 15)
- 16- Mexico's Independence Day
- 19- San Gennaro Day (Italian -American)
- 21-27 - Deaf Awareness Week
- 23 - Autumnal Equinox (Japan)
- 26 - Lailat-UI-Quadr (Islamic, Muslim)
- 28 - Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)

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Sequoyah

Sequoyah (ca. 1770-1843) Inventor of the Cherokee Alphabet

It is believed that Sequoyah was born in the village of Taskigi located in Tennessee. It is also believed that his father was an English trader named Nathaniel Gist, and his mother was part Cherokee. Before Sequoyah was born his father abandoned them. Many of these facts are disputed or based strictly in speculation. What is known is that after a childhood accident and long years spent as a silversmith dealing with whites, Sequoyah became convinced that the white man's knowledge of letter is what gave them their power. Therefore he took up the task of creating a written alphabet for the Cherokee nation. He began by compiling a table of eighty-five

characters. He took some from an English spelling book and by different methods of creativity he adopted the symbols of the Cherokee sounds. Many historians argue as to whether or not the syllabary was completed or not. Even the time frame for which the alphabet was put into use is up for debate. Many historians believe it was completed about 1821 but Cherokee tradition holds that it was created earlier and was used in the late 18th century. But, as stated before, nothing is proven or unproven. At any rate no matter what the issues or mysteries surrounding the details of Sequoyah's life we do know that he was the creator of the Cherokee syllabary that would unite the Cherokee nation.

Before the syllabary became widely accepted by all it first came under opposition. When Sequoyah tried to present his invention to a group of medicine men they denounced him as being a evil sprit. The only way to gain acceptance for his invention was to teach his daughter to read and write with it and then demonstrate its power to the general public. It is said that in 1825 the Cherokee nation finally announced that Sequoyah's alphabet was the official written language. Soon after the alphabet was adopted Sequoyah traveled west and began teaching other Cherokee tribes to use his alphabet. Sequoyah then became a delegate for the Nation in Washington D.C. for a while and then her returned to the west. Little is known about Sequoyah's later years just as doubt is on his early year. It is believed that her died somewhere in Mexico between the years of 1843 and 1845.



This is an example of the Alphabet Sequayah created.

Source: "Sequoyah Biography". Retrieved September 9, 2008 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.answers.com>