

There was a time when *Neesh* (moon) led the Caddo people from a dark cave to a world of light. From that place of creation, the Caddo people spread out and made their homes in the states known today as Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

It was more than 1,200 years ago when a group of Caddo people known as the Hasinai settled on the land that is now Caddo Mounds SHS and constructed what archeologists describe as the southwestern most Caddo ceremonial center. Despite the actions of those who came after and the forces of nature (most recently the devastation of an EF3 tornado on April 13, 2019), the three earthen mounds the Caddo built (two ceremonial mounds and a burial mound) still rise in the Mound Prairie.





Surrounded by pineywoods, natural springs, and rivers, the Caddo people had all they needed to become the first farmers of Texas, renowned traders, and artists, and the resources to settle in this place for more than 500 years and the surrounding area for more than 1,000 years.





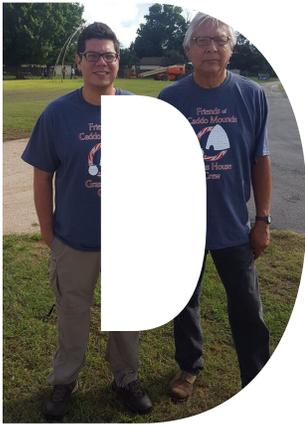
It is unknown why the Caddo people abandoned this ceremonial center for surrounding areas around 1250 AD, but the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century and the French in the 17th century (bringing foreign diseases and a desire to conquer and convert) began a process of unraveling within the extended Caddo homelands. In an age known to the Caddo as a time of homelessness (beginning in the 1840's) they moved west to escape the dangers of American expansion. In 1855, they settled on the US government managed Brazos River Reservation and set about adapting their skills to make this new place home. In less than ten years, the remaining Caddo people (only about 1,000 less than 95% of their original population) were removed to Indian Territory in Oklahoma, a trip known as the Caddo Trail of Tears.



THE REMOVAL OF THE INDIANS FROM TEXAS



Today, the Caddo Nation headquarters is located in Binger, Oklahoma. There are more than 5,000 Caddo people contributing their talents and expertise to contemporary society, many working to practice and preserve Caddo language and traditional ways.



The staff and volunteers at Caddo Mounds are more than managers, educators, and maintenance workers; we are caretakers of this sacred space and facilitators of the relationship between the living descendents of those ancient people and this site. Visitors to Caddo Mounds SHS are invited to spend time learning about the history and traditions of the Caddo people, wander trails through the past and learn about the historic El Camino Real de Los Tejas, imagine Caddo farmers in Snake Woman's Garden, enjoy cycles of change in our restored Mound Prairie, and forge connections to land and people.

