

CHIEF SASHABAW

Historic Leader, Enduring Name

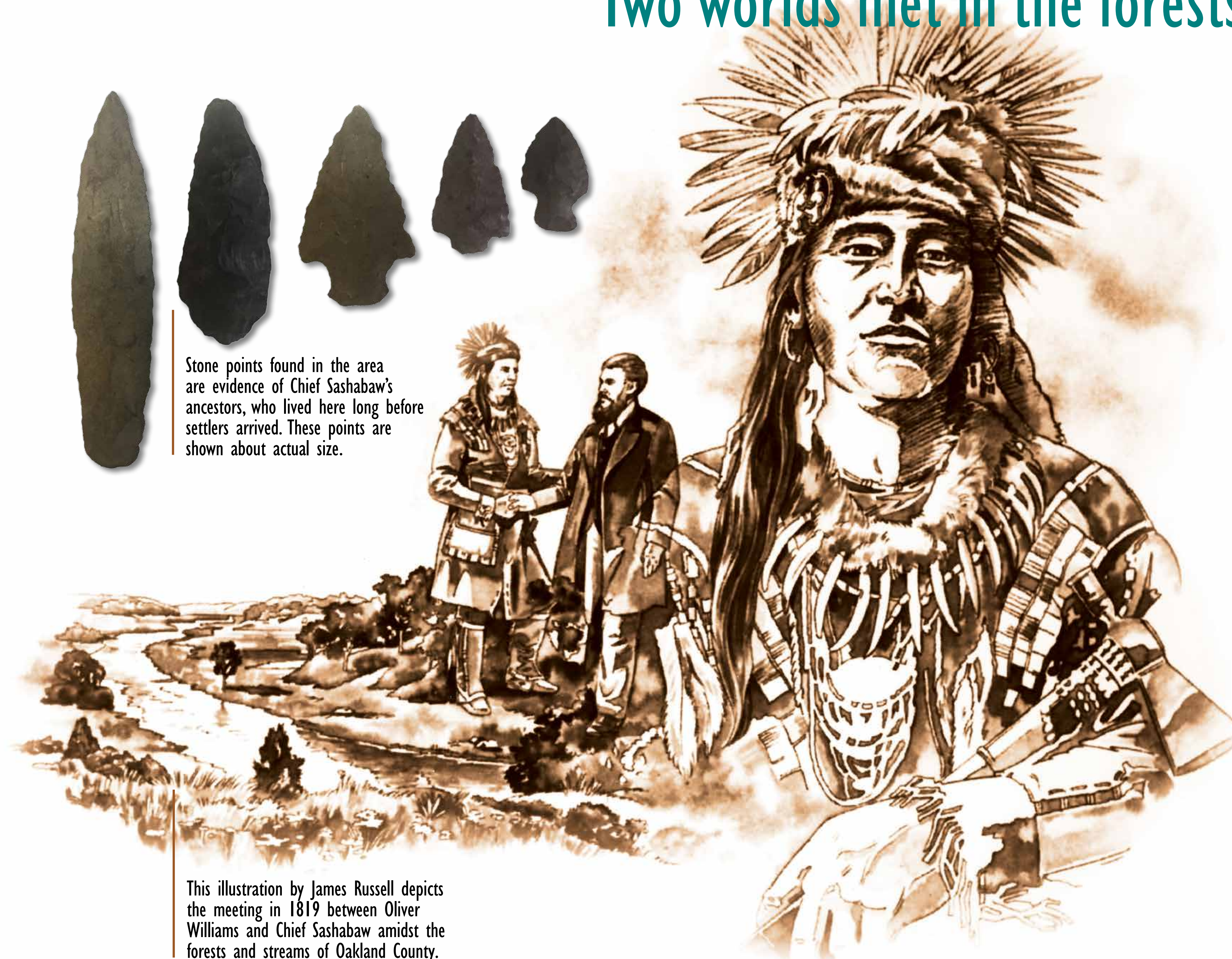
Exhibit sponsored by



Two worlds met in the forests of Independence Township.

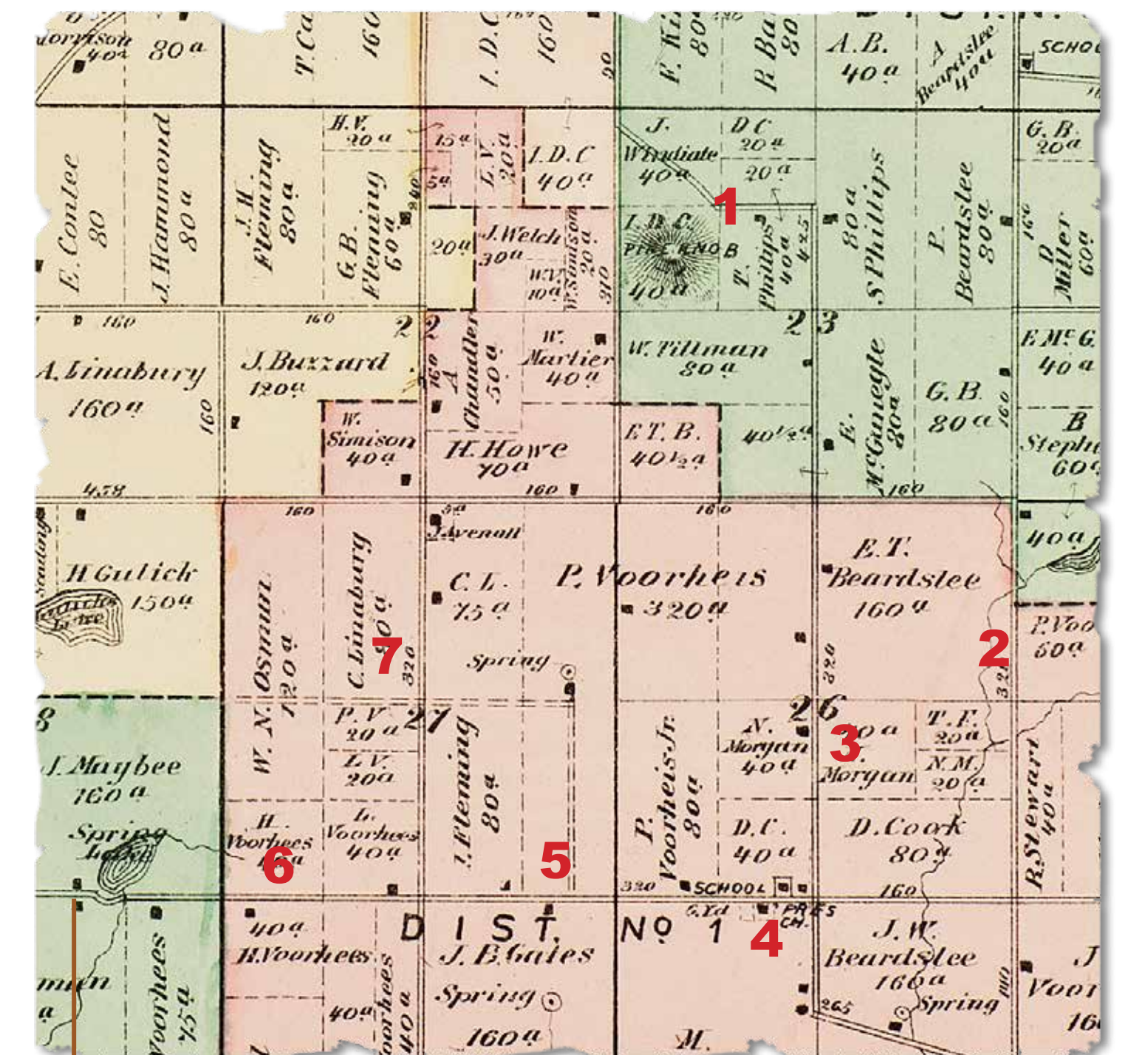


Stone points found in the area are evidence of Chief Sashabaw's ancestors, who lived here long before settlers arrived. These points are shown about actual size.



This illustration by James Russell depicts the meeting in 1819 between Oliver Williams and Chief Sashabaw amidst the forests and streams of Oakland County.

In 1819, Oakland County pioneer Oliver Williams and his family made a home along the Saginaw Trail (today's Dixie Highway). They encountered Chief Sashabaw, the leader of a tribe of Native Americans whose ancestors had long been living there. A friendship developed, and they exchanged gifts, medicines and supplies until Chief Sashabaw's death in 1823. A wooded, flat area in the southeast portion of the township was Chief Sashabaw's favorite hunting grounds. Settlers chose this flat land for the first farms in the region, and it came to be called the Plains of Sashabaw. Today, a township road, park, stream, school and church bear Chief Sashabaw's name.



A portion of this 1872 Independence Township map shows the heart of the Plains of Sashabaw, the flat Native American hunting ground that was desirable to settlers for farming. #1 is Pine Knob, #2 is now Clintonville Road, #3 is Pine Knob Road, #4 is the Sashabaw Church, #5 is the present site of the Sashabaw Plains Park, #6 is Maybee Road, and #7 is Sashabaw Road.



Sashabaw Plains Park, on Maybee Road east of Sashabaw Road, is in the middle of the flat land south of Pine Knob that has been called the Plains of Sashabaw. All images courtesy of the Clarkston Community Historical Society.



Sashabaw Road is a north-south route that has become a commercial corridor on the east side of Independence Township.



The Sashabaw Presbyterian Church, 1901. Built in 1855, it remains at its site along Maybee Road east of Sashabaw Road, across from the current active church.

Your Pathway
To Independence