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Purcell R. Powless was born on Christmas Day in 1925, the son of Mark and Margaret (Stevens) Powless. Purcell attended St. Joseph's School in Oneida and Pipestone Indian School, and graduated from Flandreau Indian School, South Dakota. Purcell married Angeline Skenandore in 1946 and they have 8 children, 5 sons, Richard, Greg, Ralph, James, and Joseph, and 3 daughters, Kathy, Bobbi, and Monica. Purcell worked as an Iron Worker for over twenty years before he became involved in Tribal Politics. In 1967 Purcell was elected Tribal Chairman and served 13 consecutive years. During his administration the tribe grew from having no Tribal Programs in 1967 to currently over 30 programs and Enterprises, Tobacco, Bingo, and the Industrial Park, Purcell credits the growth of the Oneida Nation to the cooperative efforts of several boards, committees, and commissions throughout the years, for without these people working together with the elected councils of the tribe there would not be the development in the tribe we have today, such as, the Oneida Nursing Home, Health Center, Bingo Building, Tobacco Enterprises, and other programs that service the Tribe. No one person can accomplish these tasks, it takes a whole nation of people working together to keep a nation strong and growing. Purcell successfully completed 14 years as Tribal Chairman.



PURCELL R. POWLESS  
TERM SERVED JULY 1967 - AUGUST 1981  
NOVEMBER 1982 - PRESENT

