



TOWN WHERE A U.S. FLAG WAS FIRST  
RAISED OVER A PUBLIC SCHOOL. MAY, 1812

**Town of Colrain  
55 Main Road  
Colrain, MA 01340  
(413) 624-3454**

## **The Town of Colrain Proclaims May 21<sup>st</sup>**

### **William Apess Day**

Whereas William Apess was a published author, public speaker, Methodist minister, and civil rights activist who was born in Colrain, Massachusetts in 1798, and returned to Colrain as an adult twenty years later to raise his family and begin his ministry, and who is believed to have delivered his first sermon at the schoolhouse on Catamount Hill, in 1819, and;

Whereas William Apess, of Pequot descent, with Blind Joe Amos, a Mashpee Wampanoag, co-authored the Mashpee Declaration of Independence on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1833, asserting the sovereign rights of the Mashpee to land and to self-governance, and ;

Whereas we wish to honor this history, and the legacy of William Apess, who exhorted Americans to reconsider the long line of cultural productions that served to disenfranchise Native people across the continent, and;

Whereas the Griswold Memorial Library at 12 Main Road serves as a site where William Apess is remembered with an historical marker, and whereas the Library will host an event called “William Apess Day” on Friday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. and;

Whereas we, the members of the Select Board share in responsibilities to act as stewards of our land, water, and resources, and to improve our relationships to the Tribal Nations in Massachusetts;

Now, therefore, the Select Board of the Town of Colrain, Massachusetts, does hereby proclaim May 21<sup>st</sup> William Apess Day. We urge the residents of Colrain and surrounding towns to read works both written by and about Apess, and to consider how they, too, can honor Apess’ brilliant legacy.

Adopted 5/18/21