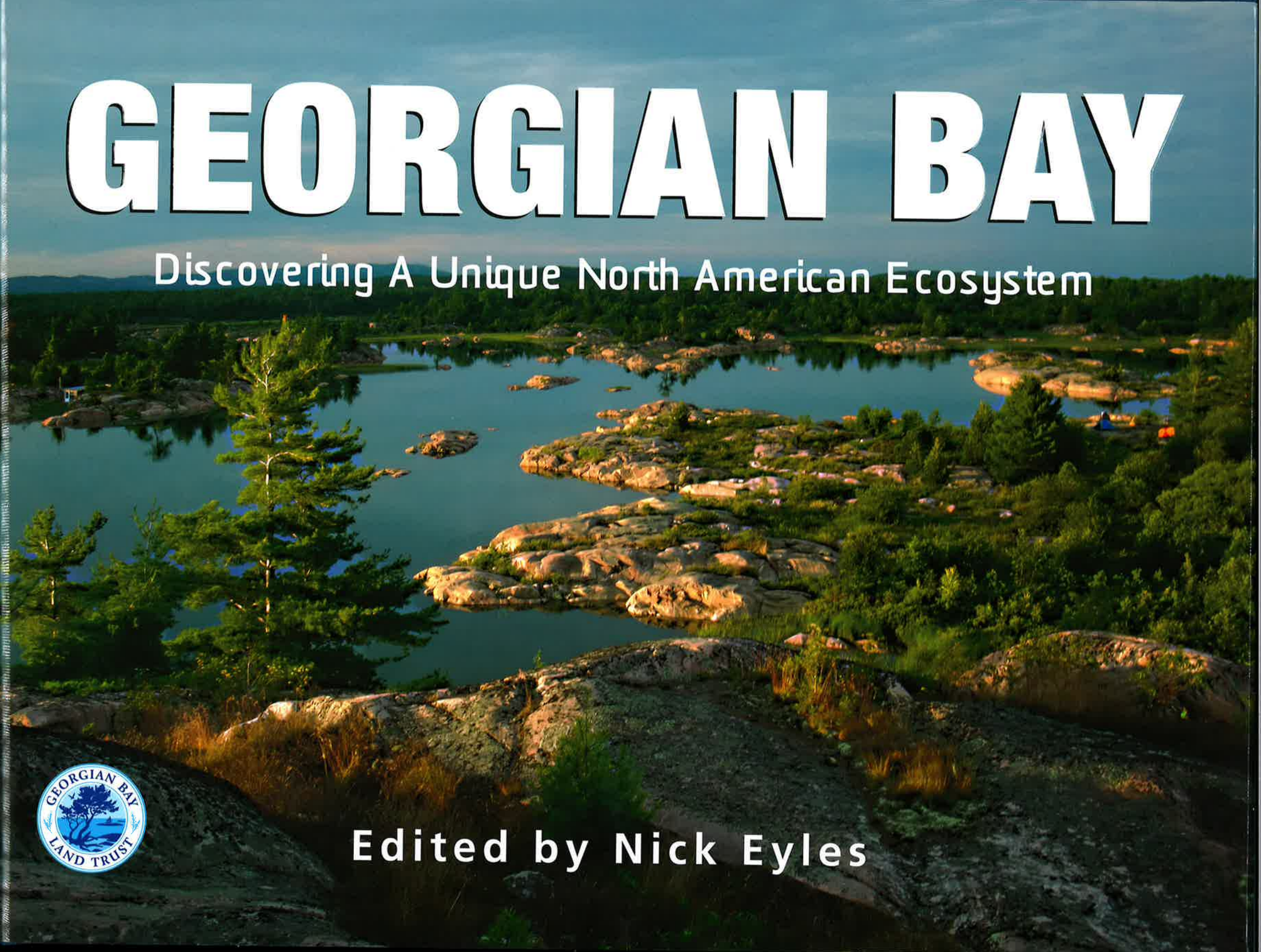
GEORGIAN BAY

Discovering A Unique North American Ecosystem



GEORGIAN BAY LAND TRUST

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Painting of creation of Middle Woodland mounds

CHAPTER

8

FARMERS, FISHERS, HUNTERS AND TRADERS: INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES ON GEORGIAN BAY

RON WILLIAMSON
MARTIN COOPER

Cultural Change Comes to Georgian Bay

About 2,500 years ago, profound technological and social changes were taking place across the southern margin of the Canadian Shield. Ceramic vessels used for cooking and to store water were introduced into the Great Lakes region from the southeast United States, signalling the growing importance of cooked wild plants in diets. Thereafter, fragments of broken pots became as common on archaeological sites as are the broken stone tools and small flakes created and discarded during flint knapping of silica nodules. This period is also known across the Great Lakes region for heightened interaction with far distant groups, especially in shared burial ceremonies.

Ceramic vessels were pinched and coiled from local clays to form the pots and then smoothed and decorated on their interior and exterior surfaces, usually near their rims. By 700 years ago, the pots were globular shaped and were decorated with incised horizontal, oblique, opposed, and other complex impressions, sometimes reflecting design sequences from far distant communities. Archaeologists examine the variation in design motifs and techniques used to decorate pots to identify the ethnic affiliations of their makers and to date the sites on which they are found.

The seasonal subsistence cycle of this period involved families harvesting wild plants and animals from locations where they concentrate such as wild rice beds or fish spawning runs. Alternatively, small interior fall and winter hunting camps were occupied by single families. Hunting technology was similar to that of previous times with the use of the atlatl or throwing board. A chert arrowhead-tipped dart was used on a throwing platform, which propelled the dart with considerable velocity into the prey. Carved and polished banded slate birdstones and bannerstones were used as atlatl handles, bases or counterweights and are some of the most beautiful carved stone art ever found in northeastern North America. Fishing was also a focus of the annual round and groups employed a wide range of equipment including nets, weighted with notched stones, lines with bone and copper hooks and gorges, and spears with barbed harpoons made of bone.

Georgian Bay in the Great Lakes Social Landscape

Gravesites reveal much about regional interaction at the time. Some grave goods were made of exotic materials that were exchanged over long distances, such as native copper from the Lake Superior basin and silver from near Cobalt, Ontario, both of which were fashioned into ornaments. Galena (lead ore) from the St. Lawrence Valley has

Left: **Birdstone,** *Wilfrid Jury Collection.*

Right: **Meadowood cache,** *Peace Bridge site.*

also been found. Very thin and finely fashioned bifaces, made of Onondaga chert quarried from around the east end of Lake Erie, were common. Bifaces represent a middle stage in the reduction of blocks of chert into finished tools. Between about 2,700 and 2,300 years ago, people across what are now New York State, Southern Ontario, and Quebec produced extraordinarily thin and finely made bifaces that could easily be used as points or knives or further flaked quickly into scrapers or drills (such as those at – Meadowood Cache – Peace Bridge). Other goods that were placed with the deceased include polished gorgets and birdstones indicating the latter were not only used on hunting equipment but were also highly valued in the afterworld. The contributions of these offerings to the graves of fellow community members suggest that people were mourning the deaths of those other than their immediate family members. It was also common for people to sprinkle ochre (hematite iron) around and on the remains of their deceased as well as their grave offerings. This substance is bright red and likely symbolized blood, restoration, and rebirth.

By 2,500 years ago, these increasingly complex burial ceremonies sometimes involved the construction of burial mounds based on ceremonies originating in Ohio and even the Mississippi Valley. While the use of prominent natural features such as knolls or sand banks for burial had been common practice previously, people began building small oval or round mounds, which averaged ten metres in length and width and rarely exceeded two metres in height. Most were constructed along the shores of Rice Lake (such as Serpent Mounds), the lower Trent River system and the adjacent waterways draining into the eastern end of Lake Ontario. The practice of burying community members in mounds ceased about 1,300 years ago. Some of the grave goods in this period include gorgets of marine shell, elaborately shaped objects made of copper and mica and exotic cherts such as Flint Ridge chalcedony from the Ohio Valley referred to overall as Hopewell by archaeologists. These types of sites are known as Laurel on the Canadian Shield, Saugeen on the Bruce Peninsula and southward, and in eastern Ontario, Point Peninsula.

One of the most interesting sites of this period is situated along the north shore of Georgian Bay on a beach in Killarney Bay. First examined in the 1870s by the Geological Survey of Canada, it was excavated during the mid-twentieth century by the University of Michigan, who believed that burial mounds above the beach were human-made. Subsequent work at the site, by the National Museum of Civilization (now National Museum of History), led researchers to believe that the mounds were natural sand knolls. More recent examinations of the mounds by scholars from Laurentian University, however, yielded geo-archaeological data that indicated sediments had been added to beach ridges to enhance the mounding.

Cache of Middle Woodland bifaces, Port Colborne site

Ceramic vessels recovered at the site belonged to the Laurel/Point Peninsula Tradition, while others were more similar to the Hopewell Tradition of the Ohio Valley. Grave goods included native copper celts, a blocked end tubular stone pipe, and a cache of 67 bifaces. Despite the antiquity of the site, portions of woven baskets or mats and spear points with portions of wooden shafts still attached were recovered. One of the fascinating aspects of this site was the caching of bifaces, which was a common activity between 4,000 and 1,500 years ago (Port Colborne bag cache). Cached bifaces represent a sophisticated ceremonial practice suggesting their manufacture by a limited number of knappers and thereafter distributed across the

Donaldson copper panpipe.

landscape; few if any of the caches contain any of the thousands of small flakes that would have been discarded during their production. Given the hundreds of caches that have been documented, production was occurring well beyond the individual needs of the knapper or the band of which he was a member.

With time there was a change away from caches of bifaces made of local cherts to ones made of exotic flints from Ohio. This would appear to be coincident with the period of substantial cultural influence originating in the west in the upper Mississippi Valley, which was also expressed with mound-building. It is important to note that among both Iroquoian- and Algonquian-speaking societies, the origin of chert or flint is linked with creation stories and the actual spilled blood and broken bodies of important figures in those stories. Perhaps the knappers or hunters occasionally returned to the earth the stone that was so essential in their lives, a giving back of an important cosmological figure's blood or body.

The best known site of this period, the Donaldson site, is just south of Georgian Bay on the Lake Huron shore on the Saugeen River near Southampton which was occupied by a local band during the spring and early summer where riverine resources, most notably spawning fish, were exploited in large numbers. Like other populations living around Georgian Bay, the Donaldson people participated in burial ceremonies that included the provision of exotic grave goods including stone ear spools and copper panpipes.

It is likely that the Algonquian-speaking Odawa, described in seventeenth-century European accounts as living in the Blue Mountain area and along the Bruce Peninsula, were derived from the populations at Donaldson and similar aged sites in the Georgian Bay region. The cherts and other source stone from Donaldson and other regional sites also derive primarily from the Michigan Peninsula-Lake Huron basin area; artifacts have also been found that were made of catlinite, an argillite that turns a beautiful deep rust-red colour when polished, from sources in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Another population dating to the same time period was situated on the Nottawasaga River in Simcoe County. The Blueberry site, situated in Wasaga Beach, for example, yielded evidence of two hearths along with fragments from at least six ceramic vessels. The design attributes on these vessels can be related to both Saugeen and eastern Point Peninsula styles. Stone tools were also recovered that included thirteen scrapers, drills, and bifaces along with the waste flakes generated by knapping of cherts from the Fossil Hill formation and Kettle Point on the Lake Huron shoreline near Grand Bend. A small sample of calcined animal bone was also recovered from which only white-tailed deer could be identified. The site also yielded one rolled round bead made of native copper. A number of burials have also been documented in the sandy dunes along the beach and lower reaches of the river with grave goods that include antler hafted beaver incisors and projectile points, tools made of elk leg bones, and ground stone celts. All of these sites are thought to be about 2,000 years old.

In the southeast part of Georgian Bay at the mouth of the Severn River, four more sites have been documented, the largest of which is the Baxter site occupied between 2,000 and 1,800 years ago as a late summer/fall camp. The site yielded caches of eight banded slate gorget preforms and thirteen pointed whetstones, indicating that these items were being produced at the site for exchange through wide reaching trade networks. Other trade materials present at the site included native copper from Lake Superior and Flint Ridge chalcedony from the Ohio Valley.

Growing Rather than Gathering Food

While there is evidence of maize being used more than 2,000 years ago in the Great Lakes region based on the identification of maize-based phytoliths or silica-based compounds on the interior surfaces

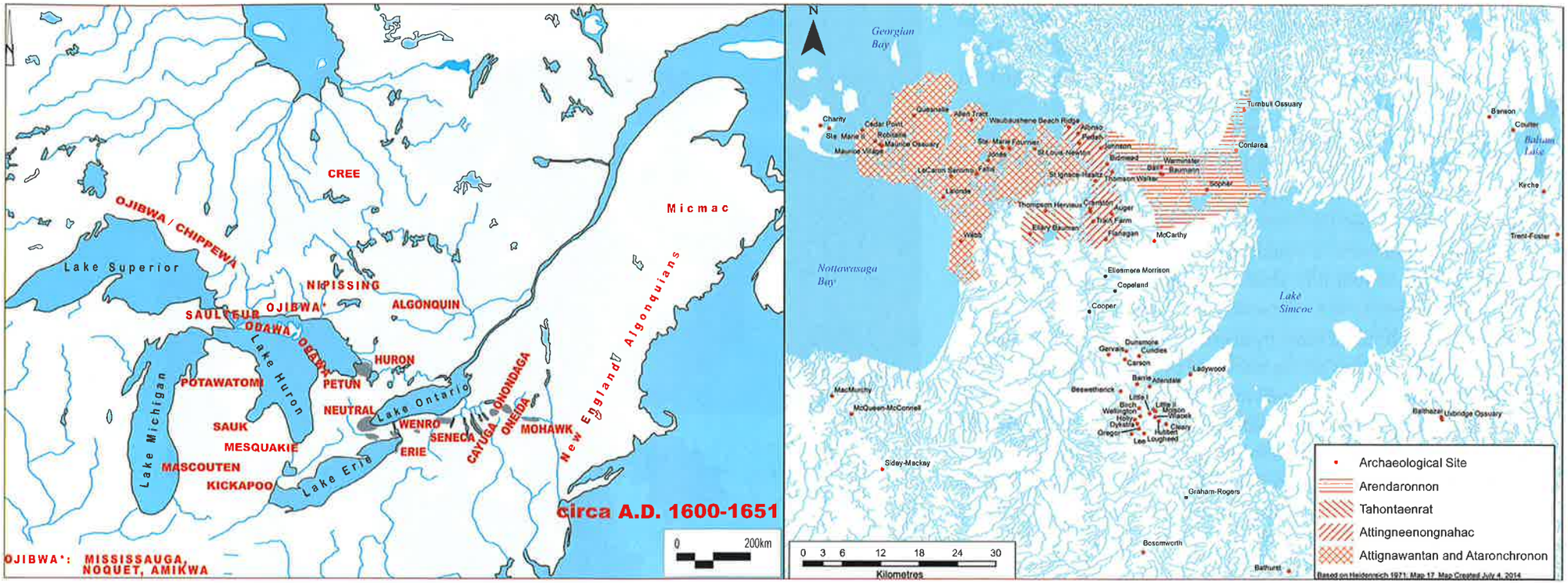
of ceramic vessels, the earliest sites on which carbonized maize kernels or cob fragments were found date to circa 1,400 years ago. For the preceding thousand years or so, maize was a supplement to the diet rather than a mainstay. Isotopic analyses of bone collagen and carbonate of human bone samples from a wide range of sites, undertaken with the permission of First Nations, indicate that it was not until at least 1,000 years ago that maize became the focus of their economies and diet. Once it was regularly grown and harvested close to base settlements, it could be stored for winter use thereby reducing the need to split into small family groups and disperse into the interior. The first base settlements contained a small number of elliptically shaped houses, most measuring approximately six metres in length and three metres across, encircled by flimsy fences or single-row palisades that likely functioned more as windbreaks. The presence of large, deep pits, probably for storing crops, suggests inhabitants committed to agriculture. With time, the adoption of a farming life led people to a significant change in how they traced their descent from their father's to their mother's side. This perhaps developed because of separate activities for men and women whereby women remained in or nearby base settlements most of the year to plant, tend, and harvest crops while men were frequently away to hunt, fish, and raid their enemies. This in turn led men to reside with their wives' families and also resulted in the development of larger house structures and eventually the longhouse, a communal residence in which a grandmother and her daughters' families resided.

All of these changes coincide with the first appearance of the Iroquoian language in the Great Lakes region. Before the introduction of maize, all of the people in north of the Lake Ontario basin were likely Algonquian speakers. At the same time the atlatl was replaced by the bow and arrow for much more effective hunting of large game. Once this new lifestyle had been introduced, the people who were residing along the central north shore of Lake Ontario evolved into the ancestors of the Huron-Wendat and Tionontaté (Petun), while those to their east along the St. Lawrence Valley were the Iroquoian groups first encountered by Jacques Cartier near modern-day Montreal. South of Lake Ontario, in what is now central New York State, populations also adopted this lifestyle and evolved into the ancestors of the Five Nation Iroquois (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk) who inhabited Southern Ontario in the mid-to-late seventeenth century.

16th century *maize cobs, Mantle site.*

Maize horticulture is best suited to the arable soils and relatively milder climate found along the southern littoral of Georgian Bay, in contrast to the Canadian Shield on the east and north shorelines and the limestone plains of the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin Island. This dichotomy resulted in a symbiosis between Georgian Bay communities and agriculturalists developing along the north shore of Lake Ontario. The latter were likely exchanging maize for skins and hides with their northern Algonquian neighbours as the Wendat were known to do in the historic period; the first Europeans in the area described the Wendat economy and their growing of a surplus of corn for trade as representing the granary of the north.

No agriculturalists actually arrived in the Georgian Bay region, however, until the late thirteenth century. These were some of the Iroquoian-speaking ancestral Wendat from the north shore of the



Left: ***Early 17th century*** *location of Indigenous nations.*

Right: ***Early 17th century*** *Wendat tribal locations.*

Lake Ontario region who had likely negotiated their arrival with northern Algonquian bands who resided in the area, especially those who used the Simcoe County landscape. Some thirteenth and early fourteenth century sites in the Kempenfelt Bay area yielded clear evidence of co-habitation by Iroquoian and Algonquian peoples. The best evidence for such a scenario includes the presence of American eel at the Wellington site, likely representing food brought by the ancestral Wenda, from the north shore of Lake Ontario since it was unavailable locally; significant differences in the frequencies of chert types between two house structures on the site, one yielding significant quantities of chert thought to be far more available to local Algonquians than ancestral Wendat and the presence of ritual burials of multiple small fur-bearing species, also documented in four features at the nearby, slightly later Holly site. These features are unique finds in Southern Ontario, and are similar to the interment of disarticulated, generally young or immature dogs (and other animals) in ceremonial contexts among Algonquian-speakers of the region.

By 800 years ago, people residing east of the Bruce Peninsula and throughout Simcoe County were fully committed agriculturalists eating more than a pound of maize per day, comprising more than half of their diet. Maize was supplemented by beans and squash; sunflower and tobacco were also grown by then.

An absence of deer from Simcoe County at this time meant that hunting parties were sent south at the same time as hides were sought through exchange with their Algonquian neighbours. Wendake, the home of the Wendat, was bounded by Lake Simcoe to the east and Matchedash and Nottawasaga Bays at the southeastern corner of Georgian Bay to the west. Their confederacy consisted of four allied nations: the *Attignawantan* (Bear), *Attigneenongnahac* (Cord), *Arendarhonon* (Rock), and *Tahontaenrat* (Deer). Another population known as the *Ataronchronon* (Bog) does not appear to have been an independent member of the confederacy and were a division of the *Attignawantan*. Their collective name for themselves, *Wendat*, has been interpreted as meaning "islanders" or "dwellers on a peninsula." More specifically, the Bear occupied the southern shore of Georgian Bay, along the Penetang Peninsula from Nottawasaga Bay to Midland

Bay while the Ataronchronon occupied the south shore of Georgian Bay from Midland Bay east to the Coldwater River.

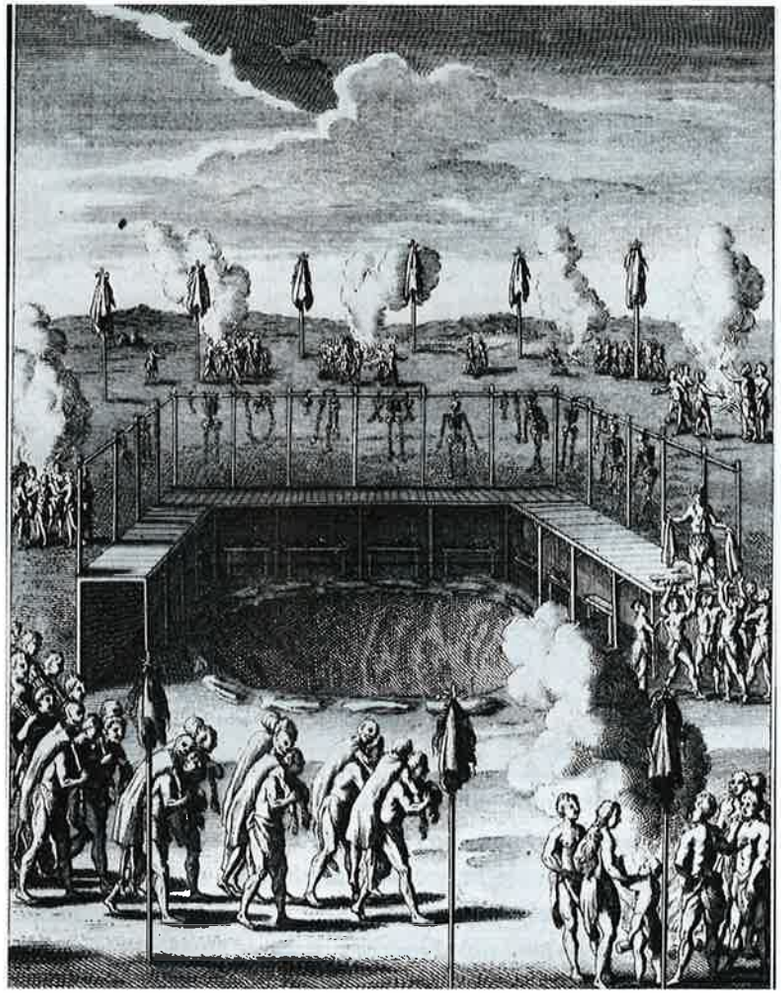
After the arrival of Europeans, there is a rich seventeenth-century documentary record of the lives of the Huron-Wendat. The three principal sources are the works of Samuel de Champlain, an experienced soldier and explorer who recorded his observations of Wendat (and Tionontaté) life, during a winter spent among them in 1615–16; the detailed account of Gabriel Sagard, a Recollet friar who spent the winter of 1623–24 with them; and the annual accounts of the Jesuit priests who lived among the Wendat from 1634 until 1650.

The Tionontaté lived immediately southwest of the Wendat in the Collingwood-Craigleith area having migrated there a few decades prior to European contact. Their economy was similar to that of their Wendat neighbours; they also enjoyed privileged access to the items secured by the Odawa through their extensive trade networks. Their confederacy included two separate groups, the Wolf and Deer. At the time the Jesuits arrived in Huronia, the Wendat and Tionontaté were allied against common Iroquois enemies. Their combined population prior to the spread of European epidemics in the 1630s has been estimated to have been 30,000. The ancestral Tionontaté and Wendat Iroquoian-speaking horticulturalists were closely tied economically and politically to their Anishinaabeg neighbours. This becomes most evident during the contact period from French documents that discuss the close connections that the Tionontaté had with the Odawa and the Wendat with the Nipissing.

In 1640, the Jesuits who were living with the Wendat recorded that along the eastern shore of Georgian Bay, there were three Anishinaabeg groups called the Ouasouarini, Outchougai, and the Atchiligouan or the Birch Bark people, the Heron people, and the Black Squirrel. Along the north shore of Georgian Bay was the Amikouai (Ojibwa), or nation of the Beaver, the Oumisagai (Mississauga), and the Baouichtigouian or people of the Sault. Throughout the 1640s, the Sault people are documented at the juncture of Lake Huron and Lake Superior, near what is now Sault Ste. Marie.

The Nipissing who inhabited the region of the lake by the same name were situated on the historic route between Quebec and the Wendat country. In the autumn, some Nipissing made the journey south to spend the winter with the Wendat.

The Odawa or Ottawa were situated on the Bruce Peninsula, Manitoulin Island, and the eastern shore of Georgian Bay. When Samuel de Champlain arrived at the mouth of the French River earlier in 1615, he became the first European known to see Georgian Bay and encountered a large contingent of Odawa warriors who he called Cheveux Relevé (High Hairs), so named for their distinctive manner of wearing their hair raised in the front in a style and described by the French as a pompadour.



***Early 18th century** drawing of a Wendat Feast of the Dead, Joseph François Lafitau.*

There are a number of examples of shared ceremonies between the Iroquoian and Algonquian nations. A Feast of the Dead, for example, was held in September, 1640 about 20 leagues or 60 kilometres north of Wendake along the Georgian Bay shoreline. Such ceremonies had been common among the Huron-Wendat for several

Left: ***Semi-subterranean sweat lodge****, Wiacek site.*

Right: ***Wiacek site*** *sweat lodge with bear skull.*

centuries but were new to the Anishinaabeg. At the time of village relocation, those that had died over the tenure of a village would be gathered to be interred together in an ossuary thereby creating a community of the dead. In this case, it is estimated about 2,000 people from many Nations assembled for the gathering. The Jesuit observers singled out the Nipissings, who appear to have been the hosts, and noted the presence of the people of the Sault, and also the Wendat. It was apparently a multi-day ceremony with feasting, mourning, games, and gift exchange. The Jesuits also described a splendid Feast that was prepared for the Wendat and noted that the Algonquin Nations were served separately from the Wendat as they spoke different languages. Separate ceremonies were subsequently held for the preparation of the dead and associated gifts.

Community Building

Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, ancestral Wendat people in Simcoe County inhabited large, generally unpalisaded villages of four to six longhouses, situated adjacent to a source of fresh water and surrounded by hundreds of hectares of well-drained loam soils on which to grow crops. Given the ever-declining fertility of the corn fields and supplies of firewood, as well as the problem of managing considerable quantities of organic and inorganic refuse, these villages were only occupied for a few decades. The Wendat field systems were so extensive that the Jesuits, a century later, speak of getting lost in the fields while travelling from village to village. As the fertility of the fields were depleted, it was necessary to clear new land until after 15 to 20 years the distance to travel to outlying fields from the village became so great that it was necessary to establish new villages.

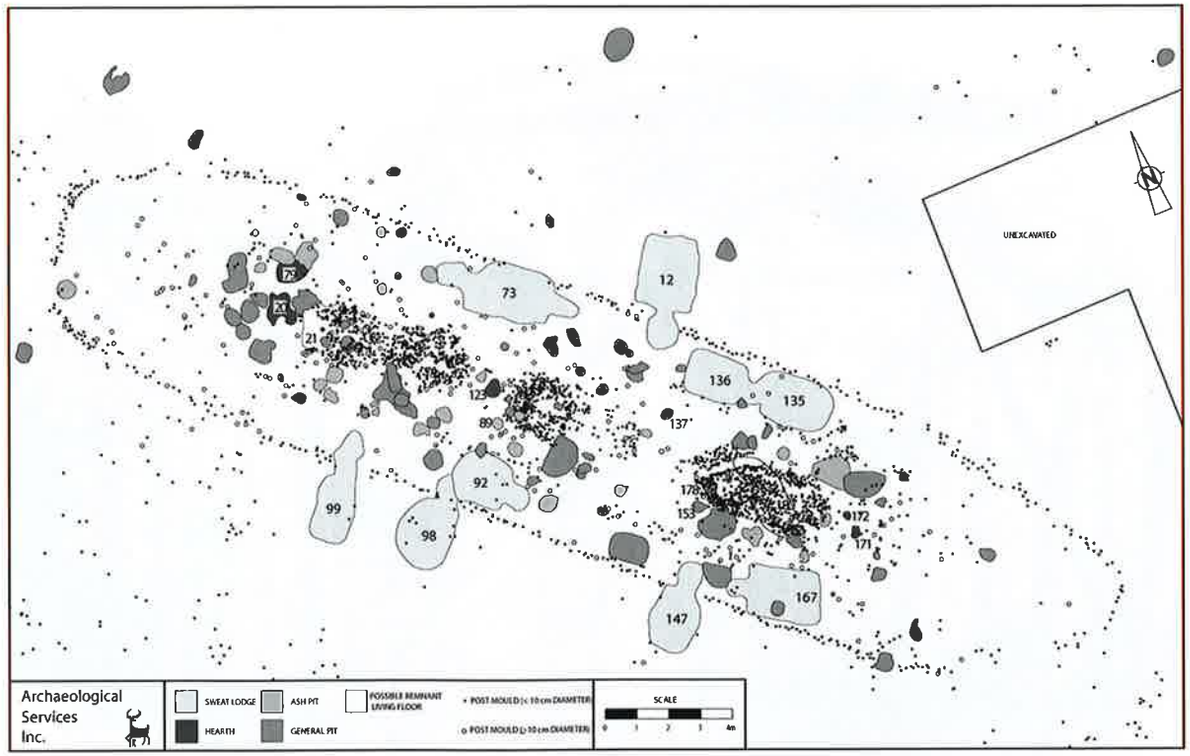
There were dozens of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Wendat villages throughout Wendake where chiefs were elected from the principal clans. Villages housing hundreds if not more than a thousand people required new social and political structures to regulate village affairs and relations between villages. Village councils, more formalized community planning, various social groups such as curing societies, as well as group rituals such as feasting and community burial, all emerged during this time period. Curing societies are first visible in many of the longhouses in the form of semi-subterranean sweat lodges – a special type of feature that made its appearance in the late thirteenth century. These structures were likely used for religious and medicinal purposes, as the practice of sweating is thought to have been a means by which to communicate with the spirit world. They consisted of large, deep, rectangular pits with entrance ramps at one end, extending upwards

to ground level. Archaeologists can identify the bottom of the pit by a thin, flat layer of dark soil mottled with charcoal and ash containing fire-cracked rock and artifacts. This layer, the living floor, developed by the repeated dousing of hot rocks to produce steam. They were covered by a frame made of bent saplings, perhaps covered with hides or bark. Sweat lodges may have served to cement the newly emerging social and political ties among the various members of the village. Occasionally, an animal skull is found on the living floor of a lodge, perhaps symbolizing clan identity. Elaborate bone tools and pipes have also been found in these features, which sometimes served as places to bury the dead. The partially excavated Hubbert site, west of Kempenfelt Bay, contained at least three houses featuring a total of seventeen semi-subterranean sweat lodges indicating considerable effort at social and political integration at the site.

In theory, holes in the roofs of longhouses allowed smoke from the hearth fires to escape although Wendat health suffered as a result of spending too much time in smoke-filled longhouses. Not only were respiratory infections common but some also contracted tuberculosis. Living in close proximity to organic refuse along with rodents, dogs, and considerable numbers of people would have heightened susceptibility to disease.

By the mid- to late fifteenth century, some villages attained sizes of two or more hectares resulting from population growth and the coalescence of smaller villages into larger ones. Attignawantan (Bear) and Attigneenongnahac (Cord) were the original co-founders of the Wendat confederacy since both had been resident in Wendake for at least 200 years previously. Later additions to the confederacy were Arendahronon (Rock) who moved into Wendake about 1590 and the Tahontaenrat (Deer), who joined around 1610. Champlain was told by the Arendahronon that they had formerly lived in the Trent Valley and had abandoned the area due to fear of enemies. The Tahontaenrat (Deer) likely originated with north shore of Lake Ontario communities. The Tahontaenrat and Attignawantan spoke different Wendat dialects perhaps attesting to their geographic separation. Thus, by shortly after the turn of the seventeenth century, the north shore of Lake Ontario was devoid of permanent settlement, these populations having relocated north to join the Wendat and/or Tionontaté confederacies.

For the next four decades, French traders and missionaries travelled from Quebec to Wendake usually taking the same route via the St. Lawrence to the Ottawa River to the Mattawa River to Lake Nipissing to the French River to Georgian Bay. The route taken from the mouth of the French River to Wendake followed the east side of Georgian Bay to avoid the Iroquois or Haudenosaunee, enemies of the Wendat and their allies.



***Longhouse** with sweat lodges, Hubbert site.*

The Onset of Disease

By the 1620s, there were several well-fortified Wendat villages which housed hundreds of warriors who were prepared for Iroquois raiders; most nations also had ancillary villages as well as nearby locales where Algonquians came to winter. According to seventeenth-century accounts, the Wendat-Tionontaté population totaled 30,000 to 35,000 before the initial epidemic of 1634. The 1630s and 1640s were disastrous times for the Wendat. In 1634, measles spread throughout the Attignawantan villages during the winter followed by influenza in early September 1636, persisting until spring of 1637. Between 1634 and 1637, Wendat and Tionontaté populations experienced a

Water colour of the ruins of Sainte Marie II by Father Felix Martin.

20% decline, leaving just 23,000 people alive by the end of 1637. An epidemic of smallpox ravaged the Wendat and Tionontaté between early fall 1639 and spring 1640, reducing their population to between 10,000 and 12,000 as documented by the Jesuits in the 1639-1640 census. In 1639, the French established a central mission that became the first European settlement on the Great Lakes. Named Sainte Marie by the Jesuits, it was located in Attignawantan (Bear) territory just south of Georgian Bay on the Wye River in present-day Midland. The settlement became the primary centre of Jesuit missionary activity in Wendake. Sainte Marie has been recreated to provide visitors with a glimpse of what life may have been like during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Over the next ten years, the Wendat were attacked repeatedly leaving only 15 settlements remaining in 1649. Some Wendat fled to the Tionontaté, but in December 1649, their main fortified village of Etharita was destroyed by Iroquois and about 1,000 people were forced to travel to Iroquois country. Another 500 to 1,000 Wendat-Tionontaté fled Tionontaté country to settle on Gahoendoe (Christian Island). With the escalation of hostilities with the Iroquois, the Tahontaerat left in 1649 to reside with the Neutral and then eventually with the Seneca. In 1648 and 1649, three villages near to the mission of Sainte Marie fell to the Iroquois including Taenhatentaron (St. Ignace), the site where Jean de Brébeuf and Gabriel Lalemant were martyred.

The most comprehensive excavation of a site of this period (and its reconstruction) occurred at Sainte Marie. By 1648-49, the presence of the Jesuits and their lay assistants in Wendake had increased substantially to around 50 Frenchmen, coincident with the growth of the Sainte Marie mission into a well-fortified French settlement and associated farm. Detailed information about the layout and buildings within the mission were determined through a series of archaeological investigations by Ken Kidd of the Royal Ontario Museum and subsequently by Wilfrid Jury of the Museum of Indian Archaeology at the University of Western Ontario. These revealed a wooden palisade and internal ditch complex as well as later stone fortifications along with subdivided European and Indigenous compounds, the former with a complete longhouse and the latter with a chapel, trade shops, a cookhouse, barracks, a barn for domesticated animals, a hospital, and various other dwellings.

Wendat refugees from Iroquois aggression from the rest of Wendake, including the widows and orphans from Ossossané, fled to Gahoendoe (Christian Island) in the spring of 1649. When the advance of the Iroquois had reached the gates of Sainte Marie I, the remaining Wendat and Frenchmen departed with all their belongings by boat and raft, eventually reaching the south-eastern shore of Christian Island. While an exact number is unknown, thousands had fled to the island. The Jesuits and their workmen constructed a four-cornered fort with stone curtain walls and bastions named Sainte Marie II and also helped to strengthen the fortifications of the adjacent Wendat village. Conditions at the settlement were disastrous due to disease and crop failure brought on by drought and famine, which in turn led to cannibalism. There was also the constant threat and harassment by the Iroquois. The French and about 300 remaining Wendat abandoned the fort for Quebec in June, 1650, paddling up the shores of Georgian Bay to the French River and their route to Quebec, ending the French and Wendat occupation of historic Wendake. The first recorded visits

to Sainte Marie II subsequent to the French period appear to have been in the nineteenth century when various clerics recorded their observations of the ruins of the fort.

The Tionontaté had fared no better at the hands of the Iroquois and abandoned their territory in 1649. Several Tionontaté sites have been investigated including the Plater-Martin site, located on a terrace overlooking Georgian Bay in Craigleith. Well known for well over a century, the site was investigated by famed local archaeologist Charles Garrad, who identified the site as the Tionontaté village of Ekarenniondi, which was also known as the Jesuit mission of St. Mathew. Plater-Martin and the nearby Plater-Fleming site are believed to have been contemporaneous, comprising the Jesuit Mission of St. Matthias. Both villages date to the last decade of Tionontaté occupation prior to their dispersal by Iroquois in 1649. Such a late date for these sites is supported by the recovery of relatively large numbers of European trade goods, including European glass beads, iron tools, brass kettle fragments, gunflints, and Jesuit rings.

According to the Jesuits, the village of Ekarenniondi, while principally Tionontaté, was also occupied by Odawa. The presence of bear jaw tools at the site, typically found on Odawa sites throughout the Georgian Bay region, supports Champlain's observation of Algonquian inhabitants at the site and reflects the close relationship between the Tionontaté and Odawa, which had been first observed by Champlain three decades earlier. The site also yielded evidence of a unique smoking pipe industry, represented by finished pipes some with animal and human figures carved on the bowls and numerous pipe preforms all made from local limestone. Large quantities of marine shell, which originated on the mid-Atlantic coast, were found on the site. Notable is a piece of conch columella which has been shaped into a gorget and was likely worn around the neck by threading a thong through the two drilled holes. Pieces of the shell would have been obtained through a trading network that extended to the southern Atlantic coast. Tubular marine mollusk beads and a well-made tubular "wampum" bead, perhaps manufactured from quahog shell, were also recovered.

The Plater-Fleming site situated within 400 metres of Plater-Martin is estimated to be just over one hectare in size with several longhouses surrounded by a three-row palisade. Five dog burials were encountered, each showing signs of ritual dismemberment, consistent

Plater-Martin and Fleming goods

Plater-Martin and Fleming goods

Plater-Martin black bear mandible

Courtesy of John Howarth, courtesy of ASI

with Anishinaabeg ceremony. Such ceremonies involving the ritual treatment of dogs are known from the documentary record of the Upper Great Lakes, as well as being identified archaeologically on sites in the Bruce Peninsula, Manitoulin Island, and on the Canadian Shield. Unique to the site is a bear effigy pipe made of steatite. Among the recovered animal bones from the site, as well as from Plater-Martin, were modified black bear mandibles associated with Odawa bear ritual.

Several other archaeological sites related to the Odawa have been investigated in and around Georgian Bay such as the Providence Bay and Shawana sites on Manitoulin Island, Hunter's Point site on the Bruce Peninsula, and the Glen site on Flowerpot Island. Common to all these sites is a wide variety of cherts used for making stone tools such as projectile points, knives, and scrapers. These varieties include Fossil Hill, Wike, Detour, Norwood, Kettle Point, Hudson Bay Lowland, Onondaga, and Bayport, most of which can be found within the Georgian Bay-Lake Huron watershed but would have required long-distance travel by canoe to obtain. At the Providence Bay site, bone and shell artifacts including beads, sucking tubes, and shell pendants were found as well as European items such as iron knives, trade axes, and trade beads. Maize was grown and beaver was the most prominent mammal followed by snowshoe hare, fox, domestic dog, raccoon, marten, fisher, mink, black bear, white-tailed deer, woodland caribou, and moose. Fish formed the major animal component of the diet and included sucker, trout/whitefish, lake sturgeon, pike/muskellunge, catfish/bullhead, burbot, bass, yellow perch, and yellow walleye. Also recovered were several species of bird, with loon being the most prominent, as well as several varieties of turtles. Of special interest was the presence of burials of dogs, beaver, loon, and eagle.

The Hunter's Point site is a large multicomponent Odawa site located on the west side of Georgian Bay on the Bruce Peninsula. It is known to have special spiritual and cosmological significance for Indigenous peoples in addition to its use as a hunting and fishing camp. In fact, the abundance of fish and birds in the region may be the reason why the area developed as a place for healing. The presence of bear, dog, hawk, and eagle is significant given their affiliation with ceremonies. While the main occupation has activity areas dating to between 1600 and 1625, based on the presence of European trade items, the site has also yielded evidence of ceremonies performed by late-nineteenth-century Mississauga, Ojibway, or Potawatomi indicating continuity in the traditional use of the site for hundreds of years from the pre-contact past to the present. Ceremonial objects found at the site include a pendant made from dark-reddish brown shale depicting Anishinaabeg iconography relating to cosmological beliefs. One side of the pendant is depicted with Mizipichu, another land-based animal and radiating lines representing Megis. The other side of the pendant depicts a shaman and power lines. A shell amulet resembling a Thunderbird was also found.

The Glen site, located on Flower Pot Island, is an Odawa fishing camp occupied during the early seventeenth century and was most likely inhabited between October and November during the spawning season of various fish. Some of the Lake trout remains were exceedingly large by today's standards-with up to 100 pounds.

Conflict and Change after 1650

By the beginning of the 1650s, the southern Georgian Bay region had been temporarily abandoned by the Wendat, Tionontaté, and their Algonquian allies due to decimation by European-introduced disease and attacks by the Iroquois. In the 1660s, the Iroquois established a series of settlements in Southern Ontario at strategic locations along the canoe-and-portage routes that linked Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay and the upper Great Lakes, through Lake Simcoe. By the 1690s, these settlements were abandoned by the Iroquois and the Mississauga had moved into the territory and was the Nation with which the British eventually reached land agreements with in the mid-eighteenth century, although many of these remain contested.

Within a decade, however, the former inhabitants of the Georgian Bay region were travelling across their territory and even establishing settlements. Pierre Esprit Radisson, for example, recorded in his travel journals the presence of an Odawa village also inhabited by some Tionontaté-Wendat, on Manitoulin Island around 1658-1660. Their group also engaged in hostilities with an Iroquois party, and Anishinaabeg oral tradition holds that they had a major role in finally pushing the Iroquois out of Southern Ontario in the late 1600s. They speak of a huge pincer movement with warriors travelling down the east side of Georgian Bay, from Sault Ste. Marie, while others came across from the Bruce Peninsula from Manitoulin Island, and still others from farther south. Numerous battles are related including ones near the current Saugeen Reserve on the shore of Lake

Huron, in Wasaga Beach near Collingwood, on Indian Hill near the Teeswater River at Owen Sound, on White Cloud Island in Colpoys Bay, on Griffith Island at Cabot's Head, in the Fishing Islands around the Bruce Peninsula, and at Red Bay, the latter having purportedly received its name from the bloody waters following the defeat of the Iroquois at that location.

There are also historic accounts of Anishinaabeg within the Georgian Bay region in the early eighteenth century; for example, the "Enumeration" of 1736 places people on Manitoulin Island, all from the Crane branch and others at Matchedash Bay, Lake Nipissing, and at the Falls of Saint Marie. This same Matchedash band was recorded later living on Georgian Bay Islands from 1838 to 1842. Still others resided along the Spanish River, on the north shore of Georgian Bay. In the early 1760s, Alexander Henry encountered a village on the island of La Cloche on the north side of Manitoulin Island and in 1793, John Simcoe met Indigenous peoples at the mouth of the Severn River. Indigenous settlements on the Bruce Peninsula also appear on maps of the period, first on a 1725 map of "Canada" by Chaussegros de Léry and on a 1788 "Sketch of Lake Huron" by Gother Mann. Cape Croker Indian Reserve ("Neyaashiinigmiing" or Nawash) means "point of land surrounded on three sides by water." They trace their history through centuries of European encroachment and a series of surrenders to the reserve they inhabit today.

The Present Day

By the turn of the nineteenth century, there are also clear historical records as well as oral accounts of Anishinnabeg families hunting, fishing, farming, and trapping throughout western Muskoka on the eastern shores of Georgian Bay. Chief John Aisance, for example, led his band to Beausoleil Island in 1842 from the Coldwater settlement. They established a small largely agricultural community with settlements at Cedar Springs and further north in the Beausoleil Bay area. The Cedar Springs settlement consisted of 20 log houses, a barn, and a schoolhouse. Crops were grown on the surrounding islands and more than 5,000 pounds of maple sugar were produced annually. Due primarily to poor soil fertility, the band moved to Christian Island in 1857. The Cedar Springs settlement is now an archaeological site consisting of 25 artifact concentrations, occurring in association with house mounds or discrete scatters; the second settlement contains in addition to the nineteenth-century occupation, pre-contact components dating to 3,000 years ago.

Chief William Yellowhead's Anishinaabe name, "Mesquakie," is the basis for the word Muskoka, which was used by early fur traders to refer to the Muskoka River watershed. Ojibwa families living on the Indian (Biasong) River were later referred to as the Muskoka band, not because of any connection with Mesquakie, but because of their geographical location. They lived in the area of Port Carling until 1868 when, due to the encroachment of Euro-Canadian settlement, they were compelled to move to Parry Island (now Wasauksing First Nation). The Menominee family was also well known to early settlers and surveyors during the middle- to late-nineteenth century and they too had moved to Parry Island in the early 1870s. It was not until 1917 that the Moose Deer Point Reserve was established; that band had also been at Beausoleil Island from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.

The southern portion of Muskoka is still familiar territory to M'ngikaning (Rama) families. The Severn River was an important travel route to hunting territories in the interior of Muskoka and along Georgian Bay. As late as the 1930s, the Simcoe, Williams, and Ingersoll families were living, at least for part of the year, on Sparrow Lake.

More generally, traditional travel routes would have involved overland trails and canoe routes marked by blazes and natural orientation features, but included portages and transitory camps. In Muskoka many of the major canoe routes and portages of the past continue to be used today by recreational canoeists. The canoe route from Georgian Bay to the Huntsville and Lake of Bays area was an important route for Muskoka Band members. The Severn River also represented an important east-west canoe route providing access to Georgian Bay and points east via the Black River.

The late nineteenth century saw the settlement of other Indigenous groups on the eastern shore of Georgian Bay. A large tract of land near Georgian Bay was purchased and settled in the 1880s by Mohawks originating from Lake of Two Mountains near Montreal. The Wahta Mohawks were no strangers to this territory, however, having travelled extensively through the region since the eighteenth century. Not only were they familiar with the area through their participation in the great fur trade canoe brigades, but they also ran fur trade posts and acted as guides for Euro-Canadian travellers

and explorers. Established first as the Gibson Reserve in 1881, it is now known as the Wahta Mohawk First Nation. The reserve, situated near Bala, sits astride Highway 400 and is known for its successful cranberry harvesting and maple syrup enterprises.

Manitoulin and the surrounding islands are also central to the story, both past and present, of Georgian Bay. Manitoulin means "Spirit Island" in the Ojibway language and is regarded as sacred to Anishinaabeg peoples. As we have seen, the Island has been inhabited for at least 10,000 years and was intermittently occupied during and after the Iroquois wars. In the 1830s, Lieutenant Governor Bond Head requested the agreement of those living at the time on Manitoulin Island to permit other Nations to move to there to form a protected homeland reserved exclusively for those First Nations. A treaty to that effect was signed in 1836 (The Bond Head Treaty), which was subsequently ratified by the Crown. All of the islands in Georgian Bay, and as far west as Sault Ste. Marie, were reserved for First Nations—the Anishinaabe were guaranteed the "innumerable fishing islands" and the "Great Father [would] withdraw his claim to these islands." In 1862, however, the government was concerned that few other nations had moved to Manitoulin, which resulted in renegotiation of the treaty and the opening up of the island for settlement by non-Native people. The Wikwemikong chief did not accept this treaty, and that reserve remains unceded (land and sovereignty was not surrendered to the Federal Government). The island to the west of the Wikwemikong territory was ceded to the Crown, and Native Reserves were established for the various Aboriginal settlements.

At present day, there are seven reserves on Manitoulin including Wikwemikong, M'Chigeeng (formally West Bay), Sheguiandah, Sheshegwaning, Wauwauskinga, Zhiibaahaasing (formerly Anishinabek of Cockburn Island), and Aundeck Omni Kaning (formerly Ojibways of Sucker Creek) First Nations, all of which not only provide a 10,000- year-old link to the history of Manitoulin Island, but all of Georgian Bay. The presence of these and the other Georgian Bay reserves attest to not only the founding population of the region but to a series of vital communities guarding both the integrity of their past and their future on the sacred landscape that they too call home.

Highway 6 meanders *through the white quartzite foothills of the La Cloche Ranges, a 2 billion year old fold and thrust belt.*