



# Arch Notes

The Newsletter of the Ontario Archaeological Society



*Collaborative Archaeology, page 4*

## In This Issue

Board of Directors.....	2
President's Message .....	3
Collaboration in Ontario Archaeology .....	4
The Long Road to Collaboration: A History of ASI Relationships with Indigenous Communities with a focus on the Huron-Wendat Nation .....	4
Zoom, Collaborative Approaches and Remote Research .....	15
Collaborative Archaeology with the Huron-Wendat Nation: A Seven Year Retrospective .....	17

Alicia's Quick Guide to How Not To Do Community Based Research.....	24
Celebrating the Heart Berry Moon.....	26
In Memoriam: H. Bruce Schroeder (1933-2020).....	30
The Arthur Amos Marine Heritage Award .....	32
Call for Paper and Poster Abstracts.....	33
Regional Chapters .....	34

# Collaboration in Ontario Archaeology

Collaborative and community-based archaeology has been gaining traction over the last few decades. Increasingly, archaeologists are becoming aware that in many cases, they have been acting as stewards, and sometimes gatekeepers, over a heritage and history that was not their own. Engaging and working with descendant communities has been argued by many as a way to help the discipline move away from its colonial roots. In this issue contributors reflect on their experiences with collaborative archaeological projects in Ontario.

## The Long Road to Collaboration: A History of ASI Relationships with Indigenous Communities with a focus on the Huron-Wendat Nation

By Ron Williamson<sup>1</sup>, Rob MacDonald<sup>1</sup>, Martin Cooper<sup>1</sup>, Louis Lesage<sup>2</sup>, and Susan Pfeiffer<sup>3</sup>

### Beginnings

In 1977, Ron Williamson, founder of Archaeological Services Inc. (ASI), woke up Christmas morning to find a copy of Bruce Trigger's *Children of Aataentsic* under the tree. Reading these two volumes over the next month or so was to lay the foundation for Williamson and ASI's commitment to Indigenous engagement throughout the company's history. *Aataentsic* is considered one of Bruce Trigger's masterpieces. It is an incredibly detailed narrative of the events of the 16th and 17th centuries in what is now Quebec and Ontario and surrounding regions and was constructed to give the Huron-Wendat and other Indigenous leaders their own voice in what had up to that point been very much history written from a colonial perspective. Trigger, of course, went on to write other internationally significant

books and articles and helped to lead the way in North America in bringing archaeologists to an awareness of their responsibilities to Indigenous peoples whose past they were examining.

The experience reading that was followed later that year by Williamson receiving a license and Ontario Heritage Foundation (later OHT) grant to examine the Liahn 2 site, a threatened Meadwood cemetery near Mitchell's Bay, Ontario. With the assistance of Bill Fox, who had worked closely with Indigenous communities in the north in the early 1970s, and motivated by the events at the Neutral Grimsby cemetery the year before, Williamson approached Chief Robert Williams of Walpole Island for permission to excavate the site and to arrange for some of the Nation's students to work at the site.

This was Williamson and Martin Cooper's

first experience with a fully integrated Indigenous monitor working on a site.

Williamson had been at the Draper site in 1975 and returned to the New Toronto Airport Project Lands for the following field season to participate in surveying the proposed airport lands. In 1978, he returned to the Draper site for the second full season of excavation. The following year, he returned to the airport lands to excavate the Robin Hood site, a pre-coalescent Huron-Wendat village, for his MA research, when incidentally, he first met Konrad Sioui at the Spang



Iroquoian village (*Tawiscaron*) constructed on the shore of a former quarry lake at Frontier Landing, Fort Erie, Ontario, 1983.

1 Archaeological Services Inc.  
2 Huron-Wendat Nation  
3 University of Toronto





**Complete longhouse constructed by Haudenosaunee students at Tawiscaron, Frontier Landing, Fort Erie, Ontario, 1983.**

site, a mid-sixteenth century Huron-Wendat site. Sioui, with his brothers, would go on to win a unanimous decision at the Supreme Court of Canada in 1991 that affirmed that the Huron-British Treaty of 1760 was still valid and supported their claim that Huron-Wendat people could carry on their traditional activities on Crown Land. He later became Grand Chief of the Nation between 2008 and 2020 and advanced significantly his Nation's interests in their archaeological record on their Ontario homelands.

### ***ASI – The Early Years***

In 1980, in the second year of his PhD research, Williamson founded ASI and in 1982, he and Martin Cooper began consulting with a group of four recently retired British Naval officers, who came to Canada and went into business with a Fort Erie entrepreneur named Jack Barton, to build and operate an Indigenous-themed entertainment park in Fort Erie. Barton's wife, Joan Barton, was the President of the Niagara Branch of the Ontario Native Women's Association with deep roots in the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre (FENFC). While Cooper focused on his PhD investi-

gations into the Neutral occupation of the Niagara Frontier but also helped with the project, Williamson began an intensive collaboration with the five business partners and the FENFC to design and construct a palisaded village with one completed longhouse and three other frames surrounded by a palisade. We also helped to design and oversee construction of a modest log-cabin style resource centre with AV capabilities and a large stone fireplace. Educational and public programs in pre-contact Iroquoian life were designed and offered in both the village and resource centre. The houses and palisade were constructed entirely by Indigenous builders, mainly Haudenosaunee young men from Fort Erie and Buffalo. All of the staff, for the three partial years that educational programs operated from 1984-86, were young Haudenosaunee men and women. For a discussion of longhouse construction as "Replication or Interpretation," see Williamson (2003). This building experience and the educational programs in Fort Erie were the model for the later village construction and program offerings at Pinetree Native village in Brantford that were run, for the most, by the local off-reserve com-

munity. Both programs failed due to loss of continued operational funding after governments, who were willing to pay to build the facilities, very short-sightedly refused to help fund their operations, a problem that continues in that sector today.

ASI's constant presence in Fort Erie in the 1980s led to our retention by the Town for the Snake Hill project, which was an emergency investigation of lakeshore lots to the south of Old Fort Erie where human remains had been found by home builders and reported to the media. It was soon discovered that the remains related to the construction of a battery and a small American field hospital and cemetery south of the Fort in 1814. Following the exhumation of the American soldiers found in the cemetery, some of them terribly mangled by battle injuries, 29 American soldiers were repatriated to Bath National Cemetery in New York (Pfeiffer and Williamson (eds) 2001; Litt et al. 1993).

This continued presence in Fort Erie led to 13 continuous years of excavation at the Peace Bridge site, on behalf of the Town of Fort Erie and the Public Bridge Authority of Buffalo and Fort Erie. The Peace Bridge site is a large quarry, occupation, and burial site encompassing an area of over 80 acres, represented by a buried paleosol beneath the streets, parking lots, and residences of Fort Erie near the Peace Bridge. In some parts of the site, the density of artifacts reached levels in the thousands per square metre. These 13 years of investigation involved reinvestigation of the Surma site, a Genesee and Transitional Woodland period occupation and cemetery discovered in 1965, and work on and around the Orchid site, where the year before, Marian White had documented a Neutral cemetery surrounded by historic period burials and others dating to 1500 years ago. It is now known that these sites are places where burial events occurred over a 3500-year period that are all encompassed within the huge Peace

Bridge site (Williamson and Cooper 1996; Williamson and MacDonald 1997, 1998; Robertson et al. 2006; Williamson et al. 2011). In September of 1995, Williamson was invited to attend and aid in the repatriation of all of the hundreds of ancestors remains and grave goods from Orchid into a deerskin-lined pit on the grounds of Old Fort Erie. He was also invited to the "Feast of the Dead" where he was charged with the responsibility to ensure that all of the grave goods that had been excavated at Orchid were returned by the National Mu-

gy Award. Several years later, Williamson teamed up with Mohawk Traditionalist William Woodworth, a student of legendary Haudenosaunee Traditional Chief Jacob Thomas, to create a video about the Peace Bridge site based on the book (Douglas 2006). In that same year, in an innovative and evocative evening, the ASI Peace Bridge team attended an evening celebrating the recovery of a complete late 7th century ceramic vessel that had collapsed in a feature on the site and that had encapsulated the remains of a soup. Based on the food

was a collaborative effort by ASI in partnership with the Town of Fort Erie, Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre, Fort Erie Museum Services, and the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority and features both ancient and contemporary Indigenous art (see <https://asiheritage.ca/portfolio-items/the-mewinzha-gallery-exhibit/>).

### **ASI – AMPs, Ossuaries, Redhill Expressway, and Northern Ontario**

The year before work began on the Peace Bridge site, ASI initiated a program of regional survey and excavation at the Paleo Sheguiandah site (with Peter Storck and Pat Julig) as part of an archaeological management plan for the Township of Howland, Sheguiandah First Nation, and the Ojibways of Sucker Creek First Nation (now Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation). This study involved working very closely with the Chiefs and elders of the communities as, in addition to archaeological sites, traditional use sites were also mapped to help the communities with their long-term protection (Robertson et al. 2002). In one interview, the Chief's mother, speaking in Anishinaabemowin, described a quartz knob on the Georgian Bay shore as a lookout for the Iroquois, a place of importance obviously passed down for almost 300 years. Not long after, ASI also carried out a similar plan for the Township of Muskoka and the Wahta Mohawks, again collecting and mapping information about traditional places and routes. It was those studies, along with similar ones at Christian Island, Walpole Island, and Oneida Nation of the Thames, conducted by other consultancies, that led Jane Kelly and Williamson (1996), in a discussion of four-field anthropology in Canada, to comment that CRM archaeologists in Ontario and perhaps nationwide were working with and for Indigenous communities securing information that had previously been collected by cultural anthropologists.

It was about this time as well that



**Tobacco Ceremony (FENFC) at Peace Bridge Site in 1992**

seum along with the ancestors' remains (Williamson and MacDonald 1998:21).

All of ASI's work at the site was coordinated with the FENFC, whose Executive Director at the time was Wayne Hill (no relation to the current HDI Supervisor). Hill in consultation with Six Nations Council had many difficult decisions to reach regarding the hundreds of ancestor burials on the site. Across the road from the Surma site, for example, a new Canadian commercial customs facility had to be redesigned by the famed architectural firm, Moriyama and Teshima Architects, to stand on piers in order to avoid dozens of burials. Williamson and MacDonald (1998) were exceedingly grateful that Hill agreed to author the foreword to their book *Legacy of Stone*, which was the basis for the 1998 OAS Peggy Armstrong Public Archaeolo-

med up to recreate the soup, which was then prepared and presented to over 100 members of the public at an event sponsored by the Greater Fort Erie Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre. The evening ended with Beverly Hill, who gave a tear-filled speech relaying how honoured she felt to have recreated a soup prepared by her ancestors 1300 years previously. To get a recipe of the "Ten-Fish Soup," either see the book or go to <https://asiheritage.ca/ancient-ten-fish-soup-recipe/>.

Incorporated into the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority's administration building is an exhibit that is usually open to the public from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. It is called "Mewinzha – A Journey Back in Time" – an archaeological display and interpretive centre located in the building atrium. It



discussions about consent in advance of archaeological projects were central to country-wide, provincial, and territory-based workshops that preceded the CAA adoption of the *Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Heritage* (CAA 1996). The Ontario discussions were co-chaired by Williamson and Sylvia Thomas of the Chiefs of Ontario. The *Principles* in the resultant statement acknowledge our responsibilities to negotiate and respect protocols, developed in consultation with Indigenous communities, relating to the conduct of archaeological activities affecting their culture. The requirement of explicit consent, however, was not agreed to by the archaeological community. That reticence, in part, came from government agencies regulating the general land use development system in most parts of Canada – agencies that had not yet recognised the legitimate Indigenous interest in land planning and stewardship. Before the last election in Ontario and the election of a new regime disinterested in Indigenous concerns that might slow development, the Ontario Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Indigenous Relations were discussing with municipalities the process by which free and informed prior consent might be obtained from appropriate Indigenous communities by municipalities in advance of all land use change.

While we are unaware of any other regular interaction on the part of Ontario archaeologists with the Huron-Wendat Nation after their participation at the Spang site in the late 1970s, the Nation was integrally involved and were full collaborators in the 1999 repatriation of the ancestors from the 1947-1948 excavation of the 1636 Ossosanné ossuary excavated by Ken Kidd of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) (Kapches 2010). Mima Kapches, a former Curator of New World Archaeology, ensured ROM collaborated with the Chief and Council of the Huron-Wendat Nation.

CRM practice before and after that time concerning burials found on ancestral Huron-Wendat sites in southern Ontario was to contact Six Nations Council who would represent the deceased as they had with the Huron-Wendat Tabor Hill ossuary in 1957. The rationale for this was that Six Nations represented the geographically closest Iroquoian-speaking nation to the ancestors, somewhat following the guidance of the Cemeteries Act at that time. It was for that reason that ASI worked very closely with Six Nations and in particular Councilor Ervin Harris in moving the Moatfield ossuary that had been so terribly impacted by a lamp post on a community soccer pitch in north Toronto (Williamson and Pfeiffer (eds) 2003). Bev Garner's (2003) poignant epilogue in the Moatfield volume describes that process of reinterment and our learning from the elders, in particular Barry Longboat, a Haudenosaunee faithkeeper. The excavation of Moatfield led to discussions among many southern Ontario nations at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto about the excavation of burial sites. A best practices document was developed with support from the First Nations Burial Committee of Toronto to assist with understanding the existing Cemeteries Act processes, with all its horrible colonial language, and to guide archaeologists and communities in how to address the accidental discovery of

human remains in Ontario. Our work at Moatfield also led to a close working relationship over the ensuing decade with Barb Harris, to whom we will return below.

Contemporary with the Moatfield work, ASI undertook extensive archaeological assessment and mitigation work for the City of Hamilton's Red Hill Valley Parkway project. The survey work began in 1996 and this led to the salvage excavation of numerous sites through the early 2000s, including the Mt. Albion West early Paleo site. Like many large infrastructure projects, it was contentious in Hamilton and beyond, ultimately coming to the attention of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy Chiefs Council (HCCC).

In the spring of 2001, Onondaga Chief Arnold General and Cayuga environmentalist Norm Jacobs confronted the ASI crew led by Rob MacDonald starting the salvage excavation of the Mt. Albion West site and insisted that they leave the premises. After many days of mediated negotiation with City of Hamilton officials and the project team, work resumed at Mt. Albion West under the watchful eye of Six Nations monitor Wayne Hill (now Archaeology Supervisor for the Haudenosaunee



Moses Mandamin, Whitefish Bay Elder, Martin Cooper and Zeeshan Abedin (ASI), TEK workshop, Whitefish Bay Nov 4, 2011, Lake of the Woods (photo by Nick Walker)



**Mary Baxter, Marten Falls FN Elder smoking sturgeon, Baxter Family Camp, Washi Lake (Albany River) (photo by Martin Cooper)**

Development Institute (HDI)). Professor Gary Warrick of Wilfrid Laurier University served as technical advisor to HCCC. The project was carried to conclusion concurrent with a series of many challenging discussions between HCCC and the City of Hamilton with participation by ASI. These negotiations helped to lay the foundation for Indigenous monitoring programs subsequently implemented by HCCC through HDI and by Six Nations of the Grand River and other nations. They also yielded a series of agreements between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the City of Hamilton, including an Agreement Concerning Respect for and Protection of Human Burials in the Red Hill Creek Valley and Assurances Concerning Archaeological Work in the Red Hill Creek Valley (October 22, 2003) and an Agreement Respecting the Human Heritage of the Red Hill Valley (January 9, 2004). Finally, they led to the establishment of a Joint Stewardship Board for the Red Hill Valley (<http://jointstewardshipboard.com/>).

While all of this work was occurring

in southern Ontario, ASI was undertaking a number of significant projects in northern Ontario, led by Martin Cooper, often interacting closely with, or working for Indigenous communities.

Some of these were heritage components of tourism feasibility studies for Indigenous clients including Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek (formerly Sand Point First Nation) in 2001 and the Animbiigoo Zaagi'igan Anishinaabek in 2009. In 2009, he worked with Adamson Architects on the development of Indigenous design elements to be incorporated into the new Thunder Bay Courthouse. This involved extensive consultation and vetting of these design elements with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) Elder's Council.

Of particular significance was a multiyear project (2011-2015) for Coventry Resources and Chalice Gold in the Lake of the Woods area that involved Indigenous consultation, the development of an archaeological management plan, and the collection of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) from Indigenous

Knowledge Keepers from the surrounding First Nations. This was done prior to the change in the Ontario Mining Act, which now requires Indigenous engagement and development, as well as a provision to remove sacred sites and burials from mineral staking. This was in part brought on by a landmark case involving the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) vs. Platinex, a mineral exploration company. Cooper served as an expert witness for KI, providing testimony of the archaeological potential of Platinex's proposed exploration area south of Big Trout Lake.

Cooper also conducted Indigenous engagement and arranged site access for an extensive study of pictograph sites in the Temagami area and along the north shore of Lake Huron.

Outside of Ontario, ASI projects directed by Cooper included Indigenous consultation with the Labrador Inuit, involving the collection of TEK information as part of a mineral exploration project north of Nain Labrador in 1996, peer review of the archaeological assessment of the Shore Gold Mine for the Muskoday First Nation in Saskatchewan in 2011, and extensive consultation with Regina's Indigenous community as part of the City of Regina's Cultural Plan in 2013.

### ***The Huron-Wendat Nation return full-time to Ontario***

The desire for greater Indigenous involvement in Ontario archaeology by many archaeologists, including ASI leadership, saw slow but incremental development through the 2000s concurrent with a widespread and growing shift in post-colonial attitudes worldwide. These shifts were reflected in part through case law, such as the 2004 Haida decision by the Supreme Court of Canada upholding the Crown duty to consult and accommodate Indigenous rights-holding communities in accordance with Section 35



of the Canadian constitution, but also in statements such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007).

In 2004, during his final tenure as Grand Chief of the Huron-Wendat Nation, Max Gros-Louis invigorated the Ontario presence with his staff, Luc Laine, and Heather Bastien, with whom ASI and Williamson in particular, worked very closely on a number of files. Their renewed presence in Ontario resulted from a legal action filed by David Donnelly in 2004 on behalf of the Nation arguing that the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) had not consulted properly in their decision to establish a cemetery adjacent to the ancestral Wendat Milroy site in Markham, Ontario. The ORC was found guilty, which led thereafter to most southern Ontario First Nations being contacted regularly regarding Ontario government land exchanges and environmental assessments (EA), although few Nations had the capacity to handle the new demands for their comment.

Following Milroy, ASI began to regularly engage with the Huron-Wendat Nation. David Donnelly, the lawyer for the Huron-Wendat at that time, had contacted Williamson directly in 2005 when media reports surfaced regarding the discovery of the Teston Road ossuary during the widening of the road, and requested that ASI contact the Huron-Wendat in addition to Kris Nahrgang, who at the time was the consultation coordinator for Scugog Island First Nation, the closest nation to the site. Eventually, Six Nations was also contacted. The Huron-Wendat, once they were involved, assumed responsibility for making decisions about their ancestors and represented the deceased as they had at Ossossané, six years earlier. For ASI, this was a turning point, as thereafter, we maintained a close working relationship with the Nation's consultation team that initially included Heather Bastien, Luc Laine, and their lawyer David Donnelly.

This work with the Huron, much of



**Dedication of the Teston Road Ossuary Preservation, 2007, from left to right: unnamed HWN member, Chief Kris Nahrgang, Roland Sioui, HWN, Heather Bastien, HWN, HWN Grand Chief Max Gros-Louis, Chief Steven Granda (Wyandot of Anderdon Nation)**

which also involved the integral work of former Chief Kris Nahrgang of Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation, led to the formation of a group that was called the Founding First Nations Circle (FFNC). That group with the addition of Barb Harris of Six Nations, made a submission to the Ipperwash Inquiry Policy Panel. The basis on which the FFNC was created was to follow the intent of the Dish with One Spoon treaty by having the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee and Wendat all work together to protect their joint cultural heritage in Ontario. Williamson ended up appearing as a witness on the Ipperwash panel on the basis of the submission as ASI had taken the lead to create a document on the part of this group. Its submission was followed by a request on the part of Noelle Spotten, legal counsel for the Ipperwash Inquiry, to seek permission for the Commissioner to quote from the Report submitted by the Circle in December 2005.

As the provincial Crown grappled with how best to fulfill their duties, municipalities found themselves wondering what their role was in the process and began their own Indigenous consultation

processes, especially for major municipal class EA projects involving archaeology. It was in this context that ASI began engaging more regularly with other Indigenous communities, especially the various nations who were signatories to the Williams Treaty, through large infrastructure projects such as the Southeast Collector sanitary trunk sewer project for York and Durham regions and the Highway 407 East project for MTO. Beginning in 2006, MacDonald shared his history with Indigenous archaeology monitors at Redhill at these consultation meetings and gradually the idea began to expand. In 2007, HCCC established the Haudenosaunee Development Institute, which established its own archaeological monitoring program and in 2008 the Association of Professional Archaeologists sponsored the first monitor training program at Six Nations of the Grand River. This was followed in 2010 by a similar program for Williams Treaty Nations, supported by a grant from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and presented in conjunction with Curve Lake First Nation. ASI staff, including Kira Beau-lieu, Andrea Carnevale, Sara Cherubin, Rob

MacDonald, Andrew Riddle, Doug Todd, and Rob Wojtowicz, have participated in many of these volunteer-run training programs, now organized by the Ontario Archaeological Society across the province.

In 2010, in preparation of the Regional Official Plan Review, York Region, with ASI (Williamson and Zeeshan Abedin), coordinated an extensive consultation program called "Planning for Tomorrow" with 13 Indigenous communities. This

the Ipperwash Commission Policy Panel for municipalities to undertake AMPs.

### ***ASI, the University of Toronto and the Huron-Wendat Nation***

The FFNC was also the model for the consultation that was undertaken on behalf of the Ontario government for the Seaton Land Exchange but was challenged by a number of First Nations, notably the Williams Treaty Nations. While the notion

had begun meeting with the University of Toronto (UofT) (Pfeiffer and Lesage 2014; Forrest et al 2021) to discuss the repatriation of ancestors held by the Department of Anthropology and to develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

A cleansing ceremony in which the stored collections were smudged with sweet grass was held in 2008. The discussions envisioned a collective repatriation of all those ancestral Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat human remains that had been excavated by UofT archaeologists since the 1940s, until 1975 when such excavations ceased. When the FFNC ended in 2007, there was a hiatus in that dialogue. In 2010, the Huron-Wendat Nation elected to renew discussions, with a focus on their ancestral sites. That agreement was completed in 2011. Arrangements for the repatriation included an MOU with the OHT (Ontario Heritage Trust) regarding the land for the reburial. The grave goods to be included in the reburial were documented and photographically archived by ASI. In September 2013, over 1700 Huron-Wendat ancestors from twelve archaeological sites were reburied at the site of the Kleinburg Ossuary (which had been excavated by UofT facul-



**York Region AMP Planning Session with 13 First Nations, 2011**

program lasted four years and it was during this consultation process that the idea of undertaking a Regional AMP (archaeological management plan) first emerged. In fact, the idea was suggested and supported by the participating Indigenous communities. With regard to undertaking an over-arching AMP, the Region was keen on getting ahead of archaeological issues and wanted to avoid conflicting situations that often arise during the development process. The AMP was to provide a way for the Region and all of the local municipalities to be knowledgeable about existing and potential archaeological resources within their jurisdictions (some of the local ones, for example, Richmond Hill and Vaughan, had already done their own). To that end, ASI was retained by York Region later that year to undertake their AMP with the intention that it would also meet the recommendation of

of the FFNC was unanimously endorsed by the justices that eventually heard the case (*Hiawatha v R.* 2007), they also unanimously affirmed the Aboriginal rights of the Huron-Wendat to manage their own cultural heritage in Ontario. This case, however, ended the usefulness of the Circle.

Not long after the Ipperwash hearings, the FFNC



**Celebration at the opening of the permanent Indigenous History Exhibit in the Department of Anthropology, at the corner of Huron Street and Ursula Franklin Way, May 2012. Left to right: Susan Pfeiffer, Barb Harris, Luc Laine, Joanne Thomas. See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUagC9yAAXo>.**



ty in 1970). The site was then re-named Thonnakona (Pfeiffer and Lesage 2014).

As agreed between the Huron-Wendat Nation and UofT, the Department of Anthropology retained one tooth per person, plus small samples of disease-altered bone so that new stories about the ancestors could be revealed (see Forrest et al 2020). The Department curates them on behalf of the Huron-Wendat Nation (HWN), who actively engage with the researchers to determine whether potential results could be anticipated to better understand the life and times of the ancestors. If so, plans are made to undertake and publish the research collaboratively. To date, there have been several published studies, with the potential of more to come. Studies of dietary and environmental isotopes from the dental tissues have corroborated historic and traditional accounts of community movements (Pfeiffer et al. 2020). The studies have also provided new information about gender-related food practices as well as dietary disruptions associated with 17th century conflicts (Pfeiffer et al. 2016; 2017).

The Department of Anthropology at UofT had created a Repatriation Policy in 1999. That framework, combined with subsequent efforts to consolidate and document departmental collections, pro-

vided a basis for other repatriations to descendant communities. In 2009, the Akwesasne Mohawk and Ontario Power Generation requested repatriation of ancestral remains and artifacts associated with burials from the multi-component Ault Park (Sheek Island) site (BgFr-1). Salvage excavations by UofT and the National Museum preceded its flooding by the St Lawrence Seaway in 1958 (Spence et al 1990:163; Rob Pihl is currently completing his PhD dissertation regarding this excavation entitled *Ware is Point Peninsula? Ceramic Variability and the Search for Identity in Middle Woodland Southern Ontario*). The Department of Anthropology provided representatives of Akwesasne with copies of all reports and images associated with the archaeological human remains that were removed during those excavations and that had been held at UofT. Considering the multi-component nature of the site, we requested that they receive and handle the remains in a manner that would include communication and potential engagement with other First Nations groups, such as representatives of Algonquian-speaking and other Iroquoian-speaking groups who have an inte-

rest in this region. At their request, no media release was made of this transfer.

### **ASI and the Huron-Wendat Nation: A New Era**

The mid-to late 2000s was also a time of continued excavation by ASI and others of numerous Huron-Wendat villages in their ancestral territory along the north shore of Lake Ontario and Barrie region (Williamson 2014). One of the largest of these was the late 16th century Mantle site, later renamed by the HWN as Jean Baptiste Lainé. The site was subject to many public interpretations and presentations that were fully collaborative with the Nation such as the naming of the adjacent Wendat Public School, the History Television film *Curse of the Axe* and the more recent award-winning display concerning the site entitled *Archaeology Alive* at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum, to name only a few. The Nation also participated



Excavations at Ault Park, 1956-1958. Photograph from archives at Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto.



Bruce Trigger working with two volunteers, Ault Park site, Ontario, 1957, Courtesy Ontario Hydro, St. Lawrence Power Project.

in the creation of an interpretive design for the Alexandra site in east Toronto, in the creation of the Huron Trail that extends through the Parsons site (<https://torontoist.com/2013/06/heritage-toronto-leads-a-historical-bike-tour-of-the-huron-wendat-trail/>) (see also Sandberg et al. 2021), and in the earlier Shared Path trail (<https://peopleplancommunity.com/the-shared-path-le-sentier-parcage-torontos-newest-discovery-walk/>) along the Humber River.

More generally and with time, HWN's involvement in Wendake South transitioned into a truly intense and invested position. This transformation coincided with the change of governance from Grand Chief Max Gros-Louis (2004-2008) to that of Konrad Sioui (2008-2012). In 2011, resources of the Nionwentsio Office were assigned the portfolio of "Ontario files" with the mandate to ensure harmonious relations with Ontario political organizations (Aboriginal, federal, provincial, and municipal) while ensuring that the HWN heritage, more specifically its archaeological heritage, is protected and enhanced. On June 15, 2015, the Huron-Wendat Band Council unanimously adopted a resolution to protect its archaeological and cultural heritage in Ontario—particularly burial sites—from development projects (Conseil de la Nation huronne-wendat 2015:4). This increase in political and administrative interest in the Nation's heritage in Ontario also developed among the population, with the result that at the turn of 2020, a team of a dozen Hu-



**Dedication of the Huron Trail, south of York University, 2013, upper right, Louis Lesage, HWN Daniel Proteau second from upper right, HWN children holding HWN flag.**

ron-Wendat monitors was formed and participated in the excavations of various archaeological sites in southern Ontario.

From 2008 through to 2016, Williamson engaged with the HWN on a weekly basis answering questions about proposed archaeological work in Ontario and providing advice on requests for engagement to the Nation on the part of various environmental assessments and land development proposals. In 2013, the team Chief and Council assigned to the Ontario files changed and Chief Line Gros-Louis, Melanie Vincent, and Dr. Louis Lesage (and later Maxime Picard) assumed responsibility and Williamson continued to work on a regular basis with the team until the present time. Since fall 2020, Chief René Picard assumed the territorial responsibilities, including Ontario, with the rest of the team.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, ASI was not solely focused on its relationship with the HWN during this period but had also been working closely with the Anishinaabeg Walpole Island and Saugeen-Nawash Nations on their litigation programs for land claims. ASI (Williamson and Cooper) were retained by both Nations in the early 2000s and in the case of SON

(Saugeen Ojibway Nation), Williamson prepared, in 2013, two reports (with the help of Annie Veilleux of ASI) and a third report, in 2017, on the glass beads of the Ne'bwaakaah giizwed ziibi/River Mouth Speaks site (with Andrea Carnevale, Brandi Lee MacDonald, and Ron Hancock) that Jackie Fisher excavated along with Bill Fitzgerald and SON. These reports

were the basis of Williamson's testimony at the trial in 2019. No decisions have yet been rendered on the case.

### ***Indigenous Archaeology - Growing Pains***

The growth and development of Indigenous involvement in Ontario archaeology through the 2000s occurred against the backdrop of evolving social justice activism and discourse with respect to relations with Indigenous peoples, as illustrated by the previously mentioned Ipperwash Inquiry (2003-2006), the occupation of Douglas Creek Estates in Caledonia (2006), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2008-2015). This discourse has continued over the last decade as illustrated, for example, by the Idle No More movement (2012 – present), the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls inquiry (2016-2019), and the protests across Canada in support of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation blockade of the Coastal GasLink Pipeline in BC (2020). A decade ago, Ontario instituted engagement with Indigenous communities with respect to their archaeological heritage as a statutory obligation, pursuant



to archaeological licensing requirements under the Ontario Heritage Act, through their Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists (2011). Many rights-holding Indigenous communities in Ontario now provide monitors as part of their engagement program, and some, such as the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation's Department of Consultation and Accommodation (MCFN-DOCA, established in 2015) have their Fieldwork Liaison Representatives supervising other sorts of environmental assessment projects in addition to archaeology. Several, such as MCFN-DOCA and Saugeen Ojibway Nation, have developed their own archaeological standards and guidelines. Now, on any given day during the archaeological field season, ASI crews work with several dozen Indigenous monitors from many different nations across Ontario. For as many reasons as there are people involved, this engagement does not always go smoothly, but ASI remains committed to the principles involved and we derive some sense of accomplishment from how far things have progressed over the last two decades.

The continuing growth of Indigenous engagement as a feature of archaeological consulting has required ASI to invest in internal process improvements, personnel and professional development including cultural sensitivity training, on-going high-level discussions with First Nation consultation staff to define best practices and resolve issues, and most importantly, a concerted effort to help our clients adapt to the fact that underwriting costs to include Indigenous communities in archaeological assessment and mitigation work is increasingly part of the development approvals process and viewed as best practice. To assist in this effort, ASI has prepared a brochure entitled, *Indigenous Consultation and Engagement: A Primer* (2019) as a reference for both public- and private-sector clients entering this arena for the first time.

### ***Yändata' Limited Partnership – Collaboration in its most Reconciled Sense***

In late 2017, ASI was approached by the Huron-Wendat Nation to see if we would be interested in helping them set up a company to look after their own archaeology in Ontario, with a strong emphasis on recruitment, training, and professional development of staff from Wendake. This request clearly aligned with the values and vision of the ASI partnership, so talks began to explore this idea. By early 2019, a joint venture business plan had been developed and agreed upon and Yändata' Limited Partnership was incorporated in June 2020 with the Huron-Wendat Nation as the majority shareholder. Yändata' means "village" in the Wendat language. As explained by former Huron-Wendat Nation Grand Chief Konrad Sioui, "ASI has embraced the opportunity to transfer archaeological expertise and knowledge to the Huron-Wendat Nation. This partnership aims at reconciliation and supports an innovative corporate ethic sought by Indigenous peoples in a contemporary world."

For some time, ASI leadership and other professional archaeologists have been concerned that the current approach to Indigenous engagement, only involving monitoring of archaeological fieldwork, limits the scope of engagement in the full process of archaeological investigation and dissemination of knowledge. Thus, it impedes the long-term aims and ambitions of community-based Indigenous archaeology. We believe that Yändata' LP could serve as a template for Indigenous communities that wish to broaden their hands-on involvement in researching and managing all aspects of their own archaeological patrimony. The ultimate objective is to build Indigenous expertise and capacity to a point where ASI can withdraw from the partnership and Yändata' LP, or its successor, can carry on as a wholly owned and operated business of the Huron-Wendat Nation. An integral

part of this process is the development of a comprehensive internship and training program based on a similar one developed for the Navajo Nation by ASI's management consultant, Quest Management, LLC. One year after the incorporation of Yändata' LP, this plan is now being gradually implemented in stages with increasing interest—and understandable scrutiny—by other Indigenous communities with whom we are seeking involvement and support. Given the important skills and professional development aspect of the project, we are also pursuing collaborative partnerships with several academic institutions. We are hopeful that Yändata' LP will help achieve the vision for archaeology expressed by Grand Chief Sioui on behalf of his nation and other contemporary Indigenous peoples.

### ***Full Circle***

When Williamson retired from full-time work at ASI in 2016, he continued to work with the HWN on their files in Ontario and also advises the directors and staff of Yändata'. He and Debbie Steiss (his former business and life partner) also sit on the Board of Directors of the Shared Path Consultation Initiative (<https://sharedpath.ca/>) (SPCI) where he is Vice President, Debbie Steiss is Treasurer, along with Carolyn King as President, a long-time friend and collaborator on many projects. Dean Jacobs is an Emeritus Board member and Dave Mowat, Heather Dorries and Stephanie Burnham are the Indigenous members of the board. SPCI is a charitable organization whose vision is to work toward a future in which Indigenous voices and rights form a sustained and integral part of land-use planning law, policy, and governance in Ontario. Both ASI and Williamson/Steiss personally have contributed substantial funds to establish SPCI and ensure its long-term viability.

Finally, and to come full circle from those moments opening up his Christ-

mas present in 1977, Williamson recently established a graduate fellowship in the Department of Anthropology at McGill University for Indigenous students in honour of Bruce Trigger. It is hoped that Huron-Wendat students will be among those, who in pursuing careers at Yändata' LP, will attend McGill and experience the benefits of a scholarship in the name of one their honourary Great Turtle Clan members.

## References

- CAA  
1996 Report of the Canadian Archaeological Association Aboriginal Heritage Committee, *Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Heritage*. (Co-edited by Bev Nicholson, David Pokotylo, and Ronald F. Williamson. 70p.
- Conseil de la Nation huronne-wendat,  
2015 Position of the Huron-Wendat Nation Regarding the Archaeological and Cultural Heritage of the Ancestral Lands Located in Ontario. Taken from the Minutes Binder of the Conseil de la Nation huronne-wendat, Canada, Village des Hurons, Wendake – Copy of Resolution Number 6598, June 15, 2015.
- Douglas, R.  
2006 *Legacy of Stone: Uncovering the History of the Niagara Frontier*. <https://www.archaeologychannel.org/video-guide-summary/98-legacy-of-stone>, Featuring William Woodworth, Mohawk Traditionalist and Ronald F. Williamson
- Forrest, C., R.F. Williamson, S.A. Pfeiffer, and L. Lesage  
2021 The Joy of the Souls: The Return of the Huron-Wendat Ancestors in *Working with and For Ancestors: Collaboration in the Care and Study of Ancestral Remains*. Edited by Chelsea E. Meloche, Laura Spake, and Katherine L. Nichols, pp 151-165, Routledge, New York.
- Garner, B.  
2003 Epilogue in *Bones of the Ancestors: The Archaeology and Osteobiography of the Moatfield Ossuary*. Edited by Ronald F. Williamson and Susan A. Pfeiffer, Mercury Series Paper No. 163, Canadian Museum of Civilization. Pp 349-351.
- Kapches, M.  
2010 Ossossané Ossuary: The Circle Closes. *Archaeology of Eastern North America* 38:1-16.
- Kelley, J., and R.F. Williamson  
1996 The Positioning of Archaeology within Anthropology: A Canadian Historical Perspective. *American Antiquity* 61(1):1-16.
- Pfeiffer, S., and L. Lesage  
2014 The Repatriation of Wendat Ancestors / Le rapatriement des ancêtres Wendat. *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 38(1):5-12.
- Pfeiffer, S. and R.F. Williamson (editors)  
2001 *Snake Hill: An Investigation of a Military Cemetery from the War of 1812*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 443p.
- Pfeiffer, S., J. Sealy, R.F. Williamson, S. Needs-Howarth, and L. Lesage  
2016 Maize, fish and deer: investigating dietary staples among ancestral Huron-Wendat villages, as documented from tooth samples. *American Antiquity*, 81(3):515-532.
- Pfeiffer, S., J. Sealy, R.F. Williamson, C. Forrest, and L. Lesage  
2017 Patterns of weaning among ancestral Huron-Wendat communities, determined from nitrogen isotopes. *American Antiquity*, 82(2), 244-261. doi:https://doi.org/10.1017/aaq.
- Pfeiffer, S., R.F. Williamson, J. Newton, P. le Roux, C. Forrest, and L. Lesage  
2020 Population movements of the Huron-Wendat viewed through strontium isotope analysis. *Journal of Archaeological Science-Reports*, 33(102466).
- Litt, P., R.F. Williamson, and J.A. Whitehorse  
2003 *Death at Snake Hill: The History and Archaeology of a War of 1812 Cemetery*. Toronto: Dundurn Press, 158p.
- Robertson, D., E. MacDonald, and R.F. Williamson  
2002 Sheguiandah in 1991: The Role of Heritage Planning in the Reinvestigation of the Site in *The Sheguiandah Site: Archaeological, geological, and paleobotanical studies at a Palaeoindian site on Manitoulin Island, Ontario*, ed. Patrick Julig, Mercury Series, Paper 161, Canadian Museum of Civilization. 2002, 67-100.
- Robertson, D., S. Austin, and R.F. Williamson (editors)  
2006 *In the Shadow of the Bridge II: The Archaeology of the Peace Bridge Site (AfGr-9), 1997-2000 Investigations*. Occasional Publications of Archaeological Services Inc., Volume 2, Toronto.



2006. 542p.
- Sandberg, L.A., J. Johnson, R. Gualtieri, and L. Lesage  
2021 Re-Connecting with a Historical Site: On Narrative and the Huron-Wendat Ancestral Village at York University, Toronto, Canada. *Ontario History* Volume CXIII, No. 1:81-103.
- Spence, M., R. Pihl, and C. Murphy  
1990 Early and Middle Woodland. In *The Archaeology of Southern Ontario to AD 1650*. Chris J. Ellis and Neal Ferris, Eds Occasional Publication of the London Chapter, OAS No. 5, London.
- Williamson, R.F.  
2003 The Search for the Iroquoian Longhouse: Replication or Interpretation. in *The Reconstructed Past: The Role of Reconstructions in the Public Interpretation of Archaeology and History*, edited by John H. Jameson, Jr. AltaMira Press: Walnut Creek., Chapter 8:147-165.
- 2014 The Archaeological History of the Wendat to A.D. 1651: An Overview, *Ontario Archaeology*, 94:3-64.
- Williamson, R.F., and M.S. Cooper  
1996 Prehistory and Archaeology. in *Many Voices - A History of Greater Fort Erie.*, edited by Jane Davies and Joan Felstead, Fort Erie Museum Board, 1996. Chapter 1; pp. 2-13; revised 2004.
- Williamson, R.F., and S. Pfeiffer (editors)  
2003 *Bones of the Ancestors: The Archaeology and Osteobiography of the Moatfield Ossuary*. Mercury Series Paper No. 163, Canadian Museum of Civilization. 351p and CD ROM.
- Williamson, R.F., and R.I. MacDonald  
1998 *Legacy of Stone: Ancient Life on the Niagara Frontier*. Toronto: eastendbooks, 168p. Second Printing, 2000.
- Williamson, R.F., and R.I. MacDonald (editors)  
1997 *In the Shadow of the Bridge: The Archaeology of the Peace Bridge Site (AfGr-9), 1994-1996 Investigations*. Occasional Publications of Archaeological Services Inc., Volume 1, Toronto. 527p.
- Williamson, R.F., D.A. Robertson, M.S. Cooper, R.I. Macdonald, S.J. Austin, and R.H. Pihl  
2011 Life and Death at the Quarry: The Early Woodland Archaeology of the Peace Bridge Site. Special Volume in Honour of Michael W. Spence, *Ontario Archaeology* 85-88:39-68.

## Zoom, Collaborative Approaches and Remote Research

**By Katherine Davidson, PhD Candidate, Carleton University**

My first introduction to Zoom was in autumn 2018, more than a full year before the Covid-19 pandemic saw society-at-large switching to Zoom and other video chat platforms. I was planning a collaborative school project around archaeological collections with teachers from Wasaho Cree Nation School in Fort Severn, Ontario, as part of my MA research. Zoom had long been one of the pivotal education resources for the school's K-8 students, and teachers from other parts of Ontario regularly hold classes with Fort Severn students through the platform. Zoom

allowed us to talk about artifacts from the Fort Severn HBC Post Site (Gllv-1), to ask questions and brainstorm face-to-face, even though we were 1500km apart.

Zoom and other video chatting services have shown us in the last year how to leverage technology to keep learning and teaching when we cannot be in the lab or on site. It has allowed us to connect with loved ones and colleagues whether across town or across the world. This approach can also be used to connect with archaeological stakeholders, such as between remote communities, institutions and sites of study. Such a collaboration forms the basis of my graduate research, which I discuss here.

### *Research Approach*

My research approach uses digital methods to engage with archaeological stakeholders in Northern Ontario. In my MA research (Davidson 2019), digital methods were used to share perspectives on archaeological collections between an archaeologist and community members, alongside traditional archaeological analysis. My doctoral research at Carleton University expands on the methodology used in my MA, incorporating digital ethnography, object-elicitation and public engagement to discuss understudied archaeological collections and the meaning they have for communities. These methods bring communities into the process of archaeological