

Extended First Peoples Overview

History of settlement across the area

The First Peoples history of the region of Kingston is complex, and the land needs to be viewed as an open space which was not defined by national, provincial or the regional boundary lines as they exist today. The fluidity of space and occupancy of the Kingston region is very complex and multi-faceted. What is known is that communities of Late Woodland people (from approximately 1200 to 1450) and the St. Lawrence Iroquois (present in the 1500's) were known to exist and perhaps even co-exist but later developed or merged into their modern descendant First Nations.¹ When the first Europeans began to arrive in Southern Ontario in the early 1600's, the north shore of Lake Ontario and the area originally known as Katarokwi (Kingston) had continued to be a shifting home between the Huron-Wendat Peoples and the Five Nations/St. Lawrence Iroquois.² In the Mohawk language, the name Katarokwi means *a place where there is clay or where the limestone is*, and is defined by two rivers, the Cataraqui River and the St. Lawrence River, while Lake Ontario ecologically marks the region.³ The French translation of the Algonquin use of the term Cataracoui, means *great meeting place*.⁴

Along with the Neutrals bordering the north shore of Lake Erie to the west and the Petuns who occupied the areas south of Georgian Bay, the language that was spoken amongst the Huron-Wendat, Neutral and Petun was part of the Iroquoian family of languages, shared within the Five Nations Iroquois.⁵ North of these Iroquois speakers and moving west to east from Michigan around Lake Superior, North of Lake Huron to Quebec were the Potawatomi/Delaware, the Chippewa, Mississauga-Ojibway, Odawa (Ottawa), Nipissing and Algonquin communities. These 6 groups often referred to as the Anishinaabe (pronounced: An-ish-i-na-bay) or *Original People* in Algonquin, all shared a common Algonquin family language and often interacted and traded peacefully. To the north of the Anishinaabe Peoples large populations of Ojibway and Cree occupied vast areas of land, much like they do today where Cree and Oji-Cree languages are still spoken widely amongst these people.

Surrounding Lake Ontario and Lake Erie into what are now areas of the province of Ontario and the states of Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York were the Five Nations Confederacy or League of the Iroquois who, from west to east, identify as Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida and Mohawk.⁶ This Confederacy shared a common Iroquois language family, although each group utilized their own unique

¹ Alan McLeod, 2013, The Third Crossing Environmental Assessment Report on First Nations Consultations, p.7.

² Master Plan of Archaeological Resources 2010, Technical Report, passed by the City of Kingston, p.22.

³ Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, November 2011, Tsi Nionkwahskò:ten, Cataraqui River: Proposed Third Crossing; oral history shared from community Mohawk Grandmother.

⁴ Brian S. Osborne and Donald Swainson, 2011, Kingston: Building on the Past for the Future.

⁵ Master Plan of Archaeological Resources 2010, Technical Report, passed by the City of Kingston, p.22.

⁶ www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/; Helen Hornbeck Tanner, Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History, 1987, pp-24-25.

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vocabulary. During the late 1600's, various families of Seneca, Cayuga and Mohawk ancestry had established communities at both the western and eastern ends of Lake Ontario and at various spots heading east up the shores of the St. Lawrence River.

During the late 1600s, the Huron-Wendat moved north-northwest toward their Petun allies near Georgian Bay, as did the Neutral, to avoid tensions with the Five Nations. At the same time, as French traders, military personnel and settlers made their way west across the region, they aligned themselves with many of the Algonquin and Huron traders they first encountered along the St. Lawrence River, the northern shores of Lake Ontario and various inland waterways, otherwise identified as inherent trade routes.

By the beginning of the 1700s, the Anishinaabe Mississauga's from today's Sudbury region began to move south and tensions over space and resources arose with some shifting Iroquois Confederacy groups. This ongoing Mississauga and Iroquois conflict prompted the growth of Mississauga settlements in the Credit River region at the western end of Lake Ontario, and in the Katarokwi region. There were many French military agents that also confronted the Iroquois Confederacy from the south during this time. However, with the arrival of British traders, military personnel and settlers in the early 1700's, the Five Nations Confederacy, which took the Tuscarora Nation into their fold in 1722, aligned themselves with the British, and helped to overrun many of the French, Huron and Anishinaabe settlements along the lower St. Lawrence and Great Lakes waterway.

With the British establishing a more permanent colony along the north shore of Lake Ontario in 1758, and in particular with their occupation and expansion of the Katarokwi area, the Mississauga who had established a community in the region in the early 1700's ceded Kingston and the surrounding territory to the British crown in 1783 with the signing of the Crawford Purchase.⁷ Within 30 years, the Mississauga initially shifted their main occupation to Grape Island in the Bay of Quinte, but within two decades the Mississauga settled further north in two separate communities, the area known today as Bedford or along the southern border of Rice Lake, later becoming the community of Alderville.

As the American-based United Empire Loyalists, sympathizers with the British during the American Revolution of 1776, agreed to move peacefully into British Upper Canada territory during the late 1700's early 1800's, trading with the Iroquois Confederacy and Anishinaabe peoples continued in Katarokwi, then to become known as Kingston. As the community grew and flourished as an important site for political and judicial institutions over the 18th and 19th centuries, Market Square, behind what is now Kingston City Hall was the main trading location where food stuffs (especially rice), tobacco and hides exchanged hands between First Peoples, the United Empire Loyalists and other recent immigrants to the established British Colony of Upper Canada right up until modern times.

⁷ Master Plan of Archaeological Resources 2010, Technical Report, passed by the City of Kingston, p.22; Osborne & Swainson, p. 20.

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The Iroquois (Six Nations) Confederacy known widely by the Cayuga word Haudenosaunee (pronounced: Hoe-den-on-shown-ee), the *People of the Longhouse*, today have 18 communities across southern Ontario into eastern Quebec and New York State, with the Tyendinaga-Mohawks at the Bay of Quinte being Kingston's closest First Peoples reserve community, and the only government recognized territory within the Kingston region. Mississauga and Algonquin communities also still reside across southern Ontario, with Algonquin communities also extending into eastern Quebec.