

Conference on Iroquois Research

Fostering and promoting research on the Haudenosaunee since 1945

**2026 Conference on Iroquois Research
81st Edition (1945-2026)**



**Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory
October 2-4, 2026**

**Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na
39 Salmon River Rd
Shannonville, Ontario K0K 3A0**

**Teyentharáhkwa: (613) 970-3045
<https://tto-kenhteke.org/>**

IN PERSON and online via ZOOM

PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS

_____ FRIDAY _____

Tours are FREE

Registration required, Drivers needed!

Email Francis Scardera directly: francis.scardera@sympatico.ca

Tour of Tyendinaga (9:30 am - 10:30)

- Eagle Hill (Dan Brant)

Afternoon Options

Option A.

Rock Art Sites (12 to 5 pm) - Carpooling - we will need drivers!

- Bon Echo Provincial Park—Boat Tour 12 noon.
- Petroglyphs Provincial Park

Option B.

A Path Forward (1:30-6:00pm)

Special Event For The 2026 Conference on Iroquois Research

Macaulay Heritage Park

23 Church Street, Picton, ON

- **Although admission is free, donations are greatly appreciated.**

In addition to exploring the A Path Forward (APF) gallery, guests will have a special opportunity to view archaeological materials connected to Indigenous presence in what is now Prince Edward County.

For this special event, a remarkably preserved and reconstructed clay vessel excavated at Sandbanks Provincial Park in the 1970's by a team led by the Royal Ontario Museum will be brought to APF for display. The crown points around the rim, collared neck, and design suggest Mohawk-Onondaga Pottery Classification. Analysis indicates that it was made in the Niagara region approximately 1200-1300 CE and brought to what is now Prince Edward County where it was used.

Guests will also be invited to preview and provide feedback on a working draft of an archaeologically informed interpretive project being developed for APF. Drawing upon artifacts currently displayed in the gallery, the project explores the long history of Indigenous presence in the area. During this special preview, suggestions, questions and corrections are welcomed!

Conference guests are invited to visit anytime between 1:30 and 6:00 p.m. to explore the gallery, see the special archaeological display, and contribute to this developing project.

Visit www.apathforwardpec.ca

_____ **FRIDAY EVENING** _____

ZOOM = Online Live

PANEL = Three or more presenters

6:00 — 6:30 pm

Opening Thanksgiving Address

Tahohtharatye

Welcome at the Woods Edge, Announcements & Tributes

6:30—7:00 pm

Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na

A new language and cultural center in Tyendinaga

Callie Hill, Chief Executive Officer

Tour of new facility

7:00—7:30 pm

Legacy Project—Conference Publications

Francis Scardera

_____ **SATURDAY MORNING** _____

Light Breakfast is INCLUDED for ALL participants (on site).

9:00-9:30 am

From Warriors to Mercenaries: Tuscarora Serving as Tributaries in North Carolina 1715-1761

Chandler Allred

Following the end of the Tuscarora War in 1715, the Tuscarora Nation's influence in North Carolina had shrunk. The war the Tuscarora fought ended in the diaspora of their people, with hundreds killed and hundreds enslaved by militiamen and Yamasee warriors. Tuscarora families scattered; some hid further in the pine barrens and swamplands of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Other families relocated to the North to take shelter with their Haudenosaunee kin. However, a significant population relocated onto reservation territory under the rule of Chief Tom Blount, selected as the “King of the Tuscarora,” by the North Carolina Council. The Tuscarora were in a new state of existence that they had never experienced before. With their power lessened and needing to rebuild from years of war, the Tuscarora found themselves as a tributary nation at the behest of North Carolina. Although this was a foreign concept to the Tuscarora, their leadership, under Chief Blount, understood that they had to use their position to maintain some level of autonomy under the oppressive thumb of colonial power. From 1715 to 1761, the Tuscarora served the Colony of North Carolina as tributary mercenaries, fighting alongside, defending, and working with the colonists in three separate wars. Between wars, they brought gifts and re-affirmed their position as tributaries to North Carolina. The Tuscarora on the Indian Woods Reservation were the last nation in eastern North Carolina to hold out against the wave of Manifest Destiny, securing their lands until 1828. The objective of this thesis is to examine the tributary work conducted by the Tuscarora and how, through it, they navigated this new world.

9:30-10:00 am

First Fruits, Applejack, and Picnic Pies: Nottoway-Tuscarora Fruticulture over Four Centuries

Buck Woodard

William and Mary

At the annual Tuscarora Picnic & Field Days, the Nation booth sells fruit pies to raise funds and build community; Tuscarora clans take turns manning the food booth from year to year. Esteemed pies are identified by kinship to their female makers, matrons within the clan, sought after for their recipes and fruit types, steeped in familial tradition and affinity. Pie at Tuscarora reflects cultural traditions associated with fruit, crosscut by historical connections to Virginia and North Carolina, an Iroquoian worldview, and more recent political economy. This paper draws on ethnographic fieldwork and historical research to examine Nottoway-Tuscarora fruticulture.

10:00-10:30 am

A Path Forward

Erin McFaul Davis

Education Coordinator and Site Curator for A Path Forward

Prince Edward County

A Path Forward is a permanent and evolving exhibit, co-curated in partnership by Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na and The County Museums, that explores Truth and Reconciliation and the shared past, present, and future of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Prince Edward County through the artwork of contemporary Indigenous Artists.

10:30-11:00

BREAK—Artists and Exhibitors

11:00-12:30 [PANEL]

Behind the Bricks:

The Life and Times of the Mohawk Institute, Canada's Longest-Running Residential School

Rick Hill (Tuscarora), Thomas Peace (Huron University) and Alison Norman (Trent University)

This panel will discuss both the book process and the research findings for our recent publication on the history of the Mohawk Institute. As a panel we will discuss how the editors and authors of the book came together many years ago to form the Mohawk Institute Research Group in 2020 and the work to produce our book which was published in late 2025.

- Rick Hill will speak about the process as well as his chapter dedicated to Survivors & Stories. [Virtual Tour]
- Thomas Peace will speak to the book as well as his student project to transcribe a student register from the 1870s.
- Alison Norman will speak to research and reconciliation, and her chapter on the Institute as a teacher's college.

12:30-2:00 pm

LUNCH BREAK —ARTISTS AND EXHIBITORS

Lunch is INCLUDED for ALL participants (on site).

Focus—Erie Canal

2:00-2:30 pm [ZOOM]

Recent Excavation of the 1842 Erie Canal Lock

Denis Foley

2:30-3:00 pm [ZOOM]

Student Tours—Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum —Oneida (Madison County)

David Babson

3:00-3:30 pm

Joseph Brant in Word and Image

Terry McMaster

Cherry Valley Historical Association and Museum

The Mohawk warrior Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea) is an extremely controversial figure. One of the most famous Native American persons of all time, held in high heroic status by some and considered a traitor and a villain by others. His life and image stir up emotions for nearly all who know of him. Rather than trying to determine his character through biography, this presentation will highlight the man through stories others told about him and through various artistic renditions done over the course of his lifetime. A highly personal connection to Brant will also be revealed by the presenter.

3:30-4:00 pm

The Mormon Afterlife of Handsome Lake's Three Messengers

Thomas W Murphy

Mormon Social Science Association

Dictated by Joseph Smith in 1829 in Seneca territory, the Book of Mormon contains surprising echoes and allusions to Haudenosaunee oral tradition. Drawing from *Unsettling Scripture: Iroquois and the Book of Mormon* (2026), this presentation highlights the appropriation and representation of Handsome Lake's three messengers. The Mormon Peacemaker (identified as Jesus) selects three disciples to lead a great and marvelous work in the latter days. He miraculously transforms them into purified and whitened immortal beings, purportedly like unto Jesus and his Father. Known today as the Three Nephites, Handsome Lake's messengers continue to play prominent roles in global Mormon folklore.

4:00-4:30 pm

Jöhéhgöḥ and the Three Sisters

Sabina Jenkins-Ortolano and John Whitman
Cornell University

In a recent paper, Henhawk and Jordan (2026) point out that oral accounts, specifically at the Six Nations Reserve, No. 40, do not coincide with the picture of the “Three Sisters” – corn, beans, and squash – first presented by Lewis Henry Morgan and since popularized in writings and other media inside and outside Haudenosaunee communities. Morgan (1851: presents the English term “Three Sisters” in tandem with the Onöndowa’ga:’/Seneca word jöhéhgöḥ (Gayogohóṇq’/ Cayuga gyqnhéhgqḥ, Kanien’keha/Mohawk giohéhkwen ‘our sustenance, what we use to be alive’). Since Morgan, the concept of the Three Sisters has come to be emblematic of Haudenosaunee agriculture and more generally traditional life. But Henhawk and Jordan show that the extension of the key term jöhéhgöḥ/gyqnhéhgqḥ is much broader than just maize, beans, and squash Haudenosaunee traditional communities, potentially including any life sustaining substance, even water (A. Stephen Henhawk, p.c.).

In this talk, we explore how jöhéhgöḥ/gyqnhéhgqḥ and the “Three Sisters” came to be conflated by identifying the references to one or both in the letters from Ely S. Parker to Lewis Henry Morgan, and in Onöndowa’ga:’ and Gayogohóṇq’ versions of the Ganö:nyök/ ‘Thanksgiving Address’ the recorded in the mid-20th century. The first use of the English term “Three Sisters” known to us occurs in Parker’s report to Morgan on a speech by Soshé:owa’ Jemmy (Jimmy) Johnson at Tonawanda in 1848 (Parker 1848: 7). No Onöndowa’ga:’ language source uses the term ‘three’, while texts using a term for ‘sister’ appear only in the 20th century. The Ganö:nyök version recorded by Chafe at Tonowanda in 1959 indicates that the collocation dewenode:nö:de:’, jöhéhgöḥ ‘they are sisters, jöhéhgöḥ’ arose after the advent of Gaiwi:yo:h.

Behind the Bricks: The Life and Times of the Mo- hawk Institute, Canada's Longest- Running Residential School

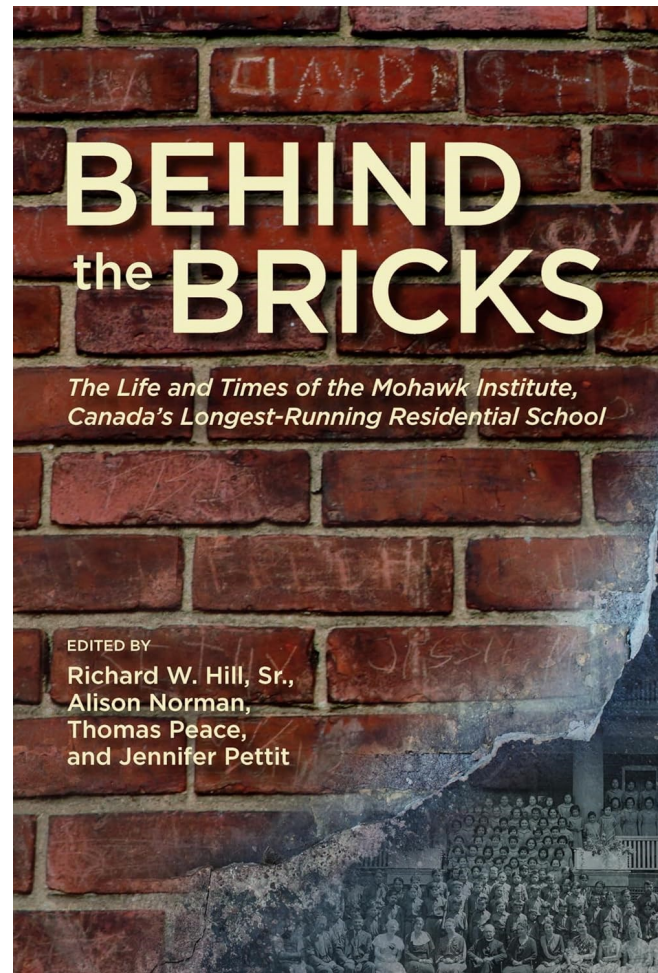
**Edited by: Richard W. Hill Sr.,
Alison Norman, Thomas Peace,
Jennifer Pettit**

From the outside, the Mohawk Institute looks like a large and welcoming school building. When one looks behind the bricks of the school, however, a much different story becomes apparent. Conceived and overseen by Six Nations community member Richard W. Hill Sr., *Behind the Bricks* is an important work that provides deep insight into the Mohawk Institute, Canada's first, and longest-running, residential school, operating from 1828 to 1970 in Brantford, Ontario. Many see the Mohawk Institute as a model for the residential school system.

Behind the Bricks brings together Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts. The book begins with an overview that traces the history and context of the school, and the remainder of *Behind the Bricks* touches on a broad array of topics from the experiences of students, to archaeology and architecture, to the role of religion, and beyond, drawing on a wide variety of sources including government documents, church records, and oral history.

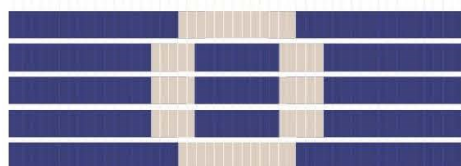
Behind the Bricks examines the policies and motivations that shaped the experiences of all three parties involved with the school—the government, the church, and the students and their communities.

With contributions by: William (Bill) Acres, Diana Castillo, Sarah Clarke, Jimmie Edgar, Wendy L. Fletcher, Bonnie Freeman, Tara Froman, Alexandra Giancarlo, Cody Groat, Evan J. Habkirk, Richard W. Hill Sr., Keith Jamieson, Sandra Juutilainen, Magdalena Miłosz, David Monture, Teri Morrow, John Moses, Alison Norman, Thomas Peace, Jennifer Pettit, Paul Racher, and Bud Whiteye.





IROQUOIS
AND THE
BOOK OF MORMON



THOMAS W MURPHY

Unsettling Scripture

Iroquois and the Book of Mormon

Thomas W Murphy

THE JUANITA BROOKS SERIES IN MORMON HISTORY AND CULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH PRESS, 2026

A groundbreaking exploration of the unexpected intersections between Haudenosaunee oral tradition and Latter-day Saint scripture

In *Unsettling Scripture: Iroquois and the Book of Mormon*, anthropologist Thomas W Murphy delves into the visions of Seneca prophet Handsome Lake, the epic narratives of the Iroquois Confederacy, and the origin story of the Book of Mormon, revealing surprising parallels between Indigenous and Mormon traditions.

Through ethnohistorical research and decolonizing methodologies, Murphy reexamines how both communities understand their origins, faith, and prophecy. From Handsome Lake's revelations to Joseph Smith's seer stone, from ancient sibling rivalries to the Great Peace, this book unsettles traditional narratives while opening new conversations on scripture, identity, and cultural exchange. Drawing from living Indigenous voices, *Unsettling Scripture* challenges readers to rethink sacred texts and the histories they tell.

Thomas W Murphy is president of the Mormon Social Science Association and former chair of the anthropology department at Edmonds College.



"In what will certainly be one of the most provocative and shocking books to mention the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Murphy delves into the most infamous case of cultural appropriation that ever took place: the 'revelations' recorded by Joseph Smith in the Book of Mormon. Murphy goes beyond the similarities to the visions of Handsome Lake, a late eighteenth-century Seneca prophet, and suggests the stories Smith told about the 'Kingmen' and 'Freemen' were actually about how the American Revolution unfolded in Iroquoia. Many of us have wondered about what inspired Smith, but Murphy is the first scholar to really go there."—**Darren Bonaparte**, author of *Creation & Confederation: The Living History of the Iroquois*.

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(ONE post open)

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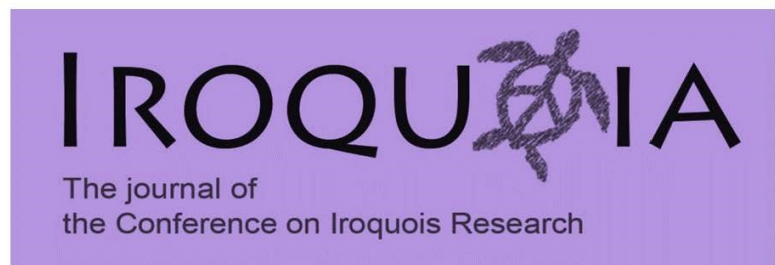
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Volume 9 2026



Ernie Benedict and Larry Hauptman

VOLUME 9

Now available online!

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