

Changing the Narrative: Connecting Indigenous and Settler Histories at Black Creek Pioneer Village

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This project is part of a multi-year research project to bring Indigenous connections, content, perspectives, and voices to the interpretation of early settlement of the region at Black Creek Pioneer Village. It is being carried out as a collaboration between Dr. Jennifer Bonnell and Dr. Alan Corbiere from York University, independent historian Dr. Victoria Freeman, Black Creek Pioneer Village (BCPV), and Jumblies Theatre Company.

Project Goal:

- increase the representation of Indigenous history and content at Black Creek Pioneer Village
- create a permanent exhibit space for the museum focusing on interconnections between Indigenous and settler history within the region
- contribute to a GIS mapping project identifying important locations related to nineteenth century Indigenous history and settler/Indigenous contact in southern Ontario.

Research method:

- locate archival scans of North American Methodist newspaper *The Christian Advocate and Journal* and *Zion's Herald*, (1828 to 1833) in digital database
- search for articles relating to the history of Indigenous peoples in the GTA and Southern Ontario.

Source materials:

- correspondence and reports from Methodist missions established in the region,
- tours by Indigenous Methodist missionaries to Upper Canada and United States to speak at larger Methodist gatherings and preach to unconverted Indigenous peoples in those regions.
- extensive accounts of the creation and distribution of bibles translated into Kayen'kéha (Mohawk) and Ojibwe.

Some findings:

- historical contact between Indigenous peoples and settlers took place through missions, churches and schools established by the Methodists throughout GTA, including missions at Credit River to the southeast, Scugog Island to the west, Grape Island and Snake Island to the north on Lake Simcoe.
- also revealed links and movement of people within the Methodist Indigenous and missionary communities over a much larger geographical range, including mission sites from Lake Huron and the Bay of Quinte to the Thames river.

Mapping Contact

