

# *The Toronto Carrying Place Trail: A Shared Legacy*

## Objectives and Description

In commemoration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the possible use of the *Tkaronto Portage*, or Toronto Carrying Place Trail, by Franco-European explorer Étienne Brûlé during September of 1615, the Etobicoke York Community Preservation Panel, in collaboration with the Etobicoke Historical Society, the Swansea Historical Society, the West Toronto Junction Historical Society, and the York Pioneer and Historical Society, is hosting a mini-symposium and other activities on September 26, 2015 on the life and times of Toronto's first European visitor and the significance of the Toronto portage route to the city's early history.

The venue for the mini-symposium is confirmed as the Old Mill Inn (Brûlé rooms A and B, with a capacity of 200-250), followed by outdoor "living history" theatrical installations at designated points adjacent to the Shared Path/Pan Am Path in King's Mill, Home Smith, and Étienne Brûlé Parks.

This program will bring together a panel of four academics/local historians with particular expertise on subjects including Étienne Brûlé, the Toronto Portage, and diverse First Nations' cultural groups in Southern Ontario during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Each expert will be allotted one half-hour to present the details of their research, with an additional ten minutes granted for questions from the audience. At the conclusion of the four presentations, the floor will be opened to a more general discussion, inviting both panelists and audience members to participate in articulating their questions and opinions regarding the significance of early contact in 17<sup>th</sup> century Ontario. Audience members will then be invited to participate in a guided tour to four distinct theatrical modules along the Shared Path/Pan Am Trail, providing increased insight into some of the personalities whose stories have intersected with those of the Humber River.

This event will be free of charge and open to all interested members of the general public, with light refreshments included at the Old Mill Inn.

The **primary objective** of this event is to contribute to the on-going conversation regarding the origins and roots of the City of Toronto. While identifying the importance and significance of early Franco-European exploration in the region, this event includes a mandate to reflect upon the impact of European contact with the Huron-Ouendat and other First Nations' groups in early 17<sup>th</sup> century Canada. In order to accomplish this objective, our marketing materials and promotional outreach will target local libraries, schools, museums, and all heritage groups and organizations operating both within and outside the city. It is our hope that our attendees will both contribute to and learn from a more critical conversation regarding the nature of our collective heritage.

A **secondary objective** of this event is to establish a new form of collaboration among the history-focused organizations operating in this part of Toronto. With a vested interest in our region's particular culture, heritage, and character, it is our hope and desire that, through the forging of stronger partnerships and the introduction of new innovative programming initiatives, each organization will benefit from stronger recognition within the communities they serve and an increase in their membership bases.

Confirmed Panelists:

Christian Bode, President of La Société d'histoire de Toronto

Dr. John Steckley, Professor at Humber College, Huron-Ouendat anthropologist and linguist

Christopher Moore, Canadian author and historian (also potential panel Chair)

Other Potential Panelists:

Martin Cooper, archaeologist, ASI

Jamie Hunter, archaeologist, former director of the Huronia Museum

Douglas Hunter, author, director at the Champlain Society

Dr. Mairi Cowan, Professor at UTM, historian of medieval and renaissance France, creator of *Exploring the Explorers* educational module (Dictionary of Canadian Biography)

Dr. Heidi Bohaker, Professor at UofT, First Nations history/pre-Confederation Canada

Dr. Carolyn Podruchny, Professor of Indigenous Studies at York University

Potential Participants in Theatrical Installations:

Ars Musica (Artistic Director, Colin Mendez Morris)

Centre for Indigenous Theatre (Artistic Director, Rose C. Stella)

Humber River Shakespeare (Artistic Producer, Sara Moyle)