

# Agenda – Honouring Voices at Waterdown District High School

May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Location:

Waterdown District High School, Room 2048  
215 Parkside Drive  
Waterdown, ON LOR 2H4  
School #: 905-689-6692

Contact: Nathan Tidridge (Cell #: 905-870-7103), [ntidridge@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:ntidridge@hwdsb.on.ca)

People Involved:

Sherlene Bomberry, Mohawk Residential School Survivor  
Dr. Jenny Dupuis, Aboriginal Community Liaison for the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board  
Tory James, University of Windsor  
Alex McKay, Artist  
Dr. Amber Skye, Indigenous Studies Program at McMaster University  
Nathaniel Stajov, Undergraduate in History at McMaster University  
Yvonne Thomas, Jake Thomas Learning Centre  
Nathan Tidridge, History Department, Waterdown District High School

Classes Involved:

Waterdown District High School Outbound Program  
Grade 10 Civics  
Grade 10 Canadian and World Studies  
Grade 12 Canadian History, Identity and Culture  
Grade 12 English

Vision:

The day will be broken into its regularly scheduled periods, with a “theme” given to each one. Classes would arrive for specific periods, but if students want to stay for more than one session that’s fine.

*Discussion topics and suggested questions:*

**Period One – Love**

- What does the word “love” mean? (Literally “What is love”?)
- Is “love” where we need to start this discussion? Why?
- Dr. John Borrows recently argued that the concept of love should be introduced into our constitution. Does love have a place in our official society?

## Period Two – Relationship

- What does it mean to be in relationship?
- What is the Covenant Chain?
- Can a proper relationship with Canada and First Nations exist?
- What is the role of the people in this room in establishing relationship?

## Period Three - The Importance of Treaties

- What is treaty?
- Why are treaties still relevant?
- What does the phrase “We are all Treaty People” mean?
- Is treaty a final act, or an ongoing relationship?

## Period Five – The Effect of Residential Schools

- How do the previous conversations (love, relationship, treaties) lead us to this topic?
- What was the effect of residential schools?
- What does “Reconciliation” mean and how do we move toward it?

Each period could open with a statement, or talk, by an elder followed by a question and answer period. Dr. Jenny Dupuis will provide bannock for the speakers and students. It is hoped that each session could begin with a smudging.

I thought the best thing would be to keep this as unstructured as possible, but would like to hear what elders think about the format. Ultimately, my hope is that students come to listen – a lost art for many of them.

The layout of the room will be a circle of chairs (all desks will be removed) with Alex McKay’s “Treaty Canoe” hung in the centre.

Near the canoe will be a replica belt (created by Ken Maracle) of the 1764 Covenant Chain Wampum Belt exchanged by the British Crown at the conclusion of the Treaty of Niagara.

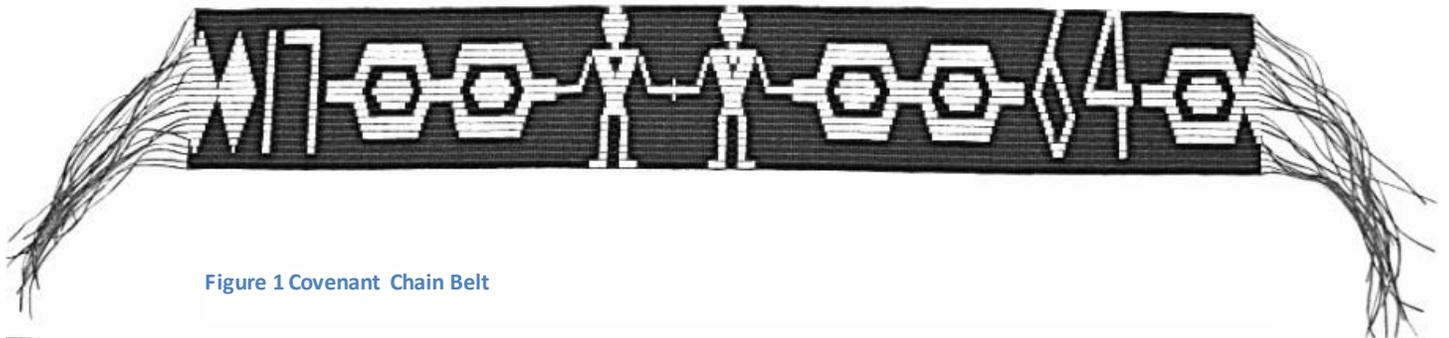


Figure 1 Covenant Chain Belt

### Alex McKay's Vision:

Treaty Canoe is about speaking to my own people, to the dominant culture, and to some extent to the rest of non-indigenous Canadians, about the reality, the truth of our relationship with Indigenous peoples, and the benefits and responsibilities derived from that. I don't mean that I can lay claim to a comprehensive knowledge of the truth in all its details, but I do mean what we have been taught, what is presented in the media and by the Crown, is not the truth, and we have a responsibility to become educated, and to educate our children, and engage in a relationship with indigenous people that is truth seeking, and justice seeking for our benefactors, the people through whom we are here and have a relationship to this place we call Canada, North America, and they, if one can name it collectively, call Turtle Island.

We do not have a truth seeking system of justice, nor of education. Certainly Idle No More is doing a great deal to address this. INM is also seeking non-indigenous allies. I think Treaty Canoe falls into that category.

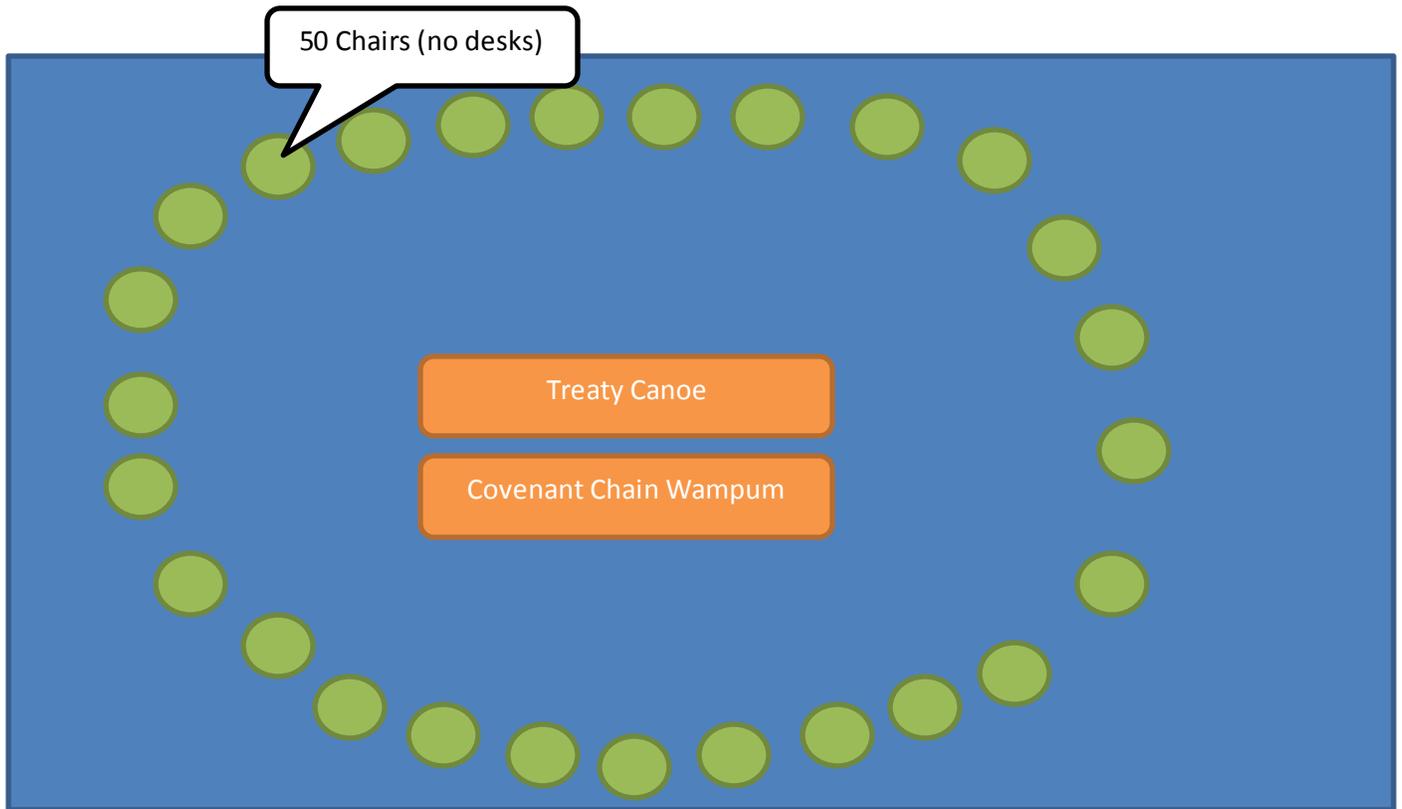
Treaty Canoe is about truth seeking, and that is a process that is more about listening - to Indigenous peoples - than any telling on my part. I am continually at a loss as to what I am supposed to say, without in fact disarming TC.



Figure 2 Alex McKay's "Treaty Canoe" at Rama First Nation (Oct 7, 2013)

WDHS Periods

Period One	8:05 (usually starts after announcements at 8:15) -9:20
Break	9:20-9:30
Period Two	9:30-10:45
Period Three	10:50-12:03
Period Four	12:05-1:15
Period Five	1:20-2:35



*Room 2048 Layout (Desks will need to be removed)*