

# Signs of the times — a reminder of Mohawk Territory

By Jim Windle  
EAGLES NEST

Gentle reminders have been placed around the Eagles Nest Tract within the provincially recognized City of Brantford by the Mohawk Workers, in the form of signs carrying the simple message, "Mohawk Territory - established 1784."

The signs are intended to remind Brantford residents and politicians alike that there is a serious and legitimate dispute over title of the land that the Mohawks Warriors under Joseph Brant and others of the Six Nations, along with Delaware, Tutelo and members of affiliate Nations, settled upon under the Haldimand Proclamation of 1784.

The small white wooden signs have been erected around the Mohawk Village lands in particular including the Mohawk Chapel, Kanata Village Museum, the Glebe lands located behind Pauline Johnson High School, and at the corner of Erie Ave and Birkett Lane.

The Erie Avenue location has been the scene of several attempts by developers to build an extensive housing project which has been stopped every time by Six Nations men and women land protectors over the past two years.

"I am in full support of what the Workers have done," said Men's Fire member Bill Montour, who has stood against development of contested Six Nations land throughout

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# Mohawks Workers serve notice in Eagle's Nest

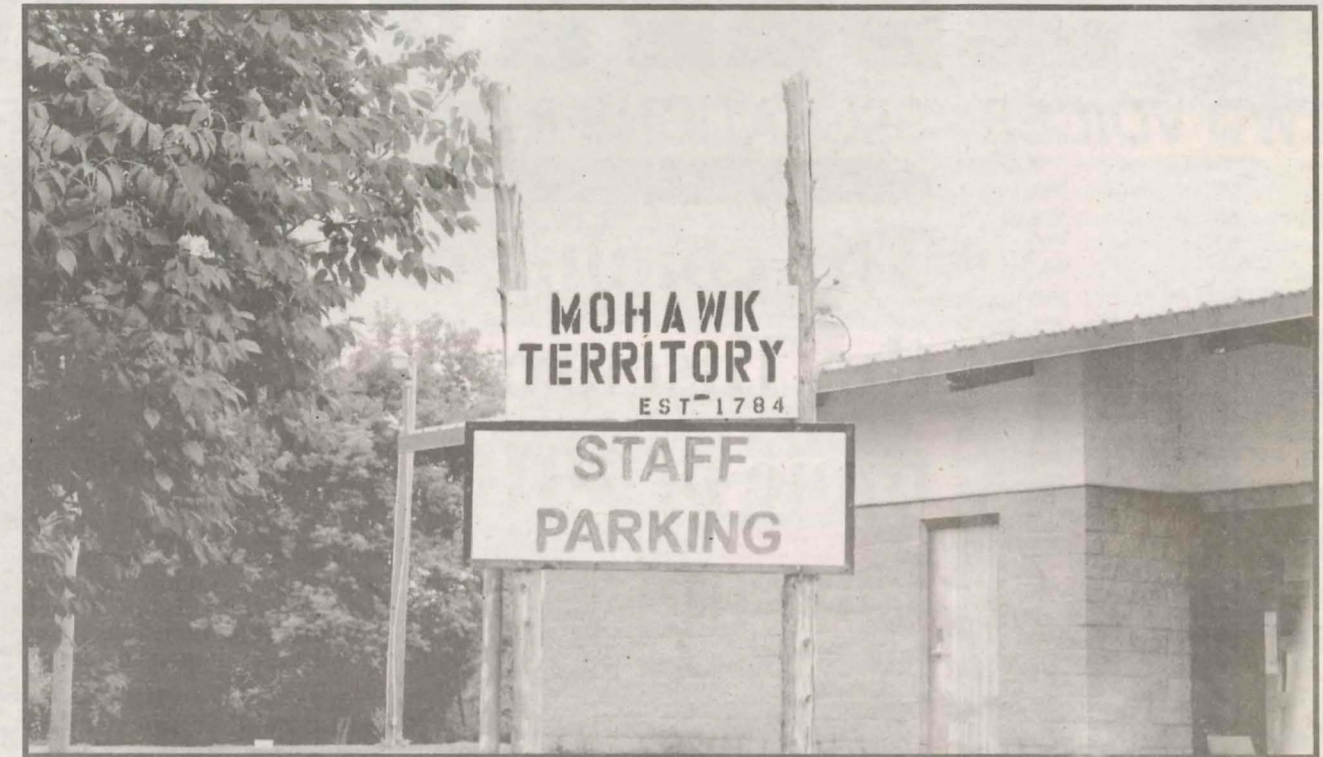
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 Brantford and Brant County. "I am not speaking on behalf of the Men's Fire right now, mind you, but I personally agree with what they (the Workers) are doing and I support it fully."

According to Mohawk Workers spokesperson Bill Squire, the signs have been put up under the authority of the women of the Mohawk Workers who are concerned about the resumption of the negotiations under the Elected Council's leadership and the Confederacy's stance that they will continue in the lead role at those talks despite Band Council's declaration.

"The women made a commitment to put up those signs as a reminder to not only Brantford, but to Six Nations Elected Council and Haudenosaunee Confederacy Council that this land is Mohawk land and neither the Confederacy nor

it with all of Six Nations," Squire has stated in the past. "It's just that us Mohawks have been marginalized and ridiculed by both Band Council and the Confederacy Chiefs, when all we are trying to do is re-establish the proper lines of authority, as spelled out in the Great Peace before the Code of Handsome Lake made its way into the Longhouse."

According to the Mohawk Workers, a politically and socially active organization with a long history with Six Nations, they only wish to restore order to the Confederacy by following its original plan as laid out by the Peacemaker. It is their contention that neither Allen MacNaughton nor Joe Skye who presently occupy the Mohawk bench at the Longhouse, are legitimate Chiefs, according to the qualifications as spelled out in the Great Law, (or Great Peace as the Mohawk Work-



established a male dominant, European world view in its place.

"The women decided that it's time to get active within Brantford and remind everyone that the land was given to the Mohawks for loss of traditional lands in New York State, and was for the perpetual care and maintenance of those who came to receive the Haldimand promise," says Squire.

The Mohawk women want to ensure that these signs remain up and maintained, and not be removed by the city or anyone else.

"We will view any action to remove or deface those signs as an act of aggression," says Squire. "This is no threat, but rather a graphic reminder of whose land this is."

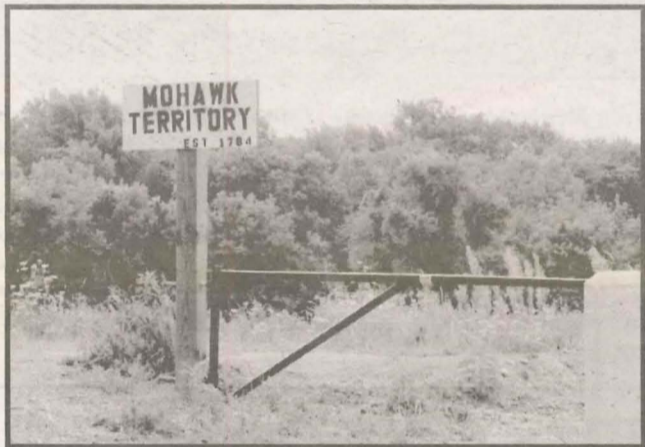
In the recent past, Elected Chief Bill Montour has agreed with the Workers' stance that the Mohawk Village lands of the Eagles Nest are, in fact, Mohawk territory and should be honoured and protected as such.

Montour is also calling

for a new negotiation team which would include representation of the Mohawk Workers. The Confederacy

has since demanded that the talks continue with the Confederacy in the leadership role — a position neither the

Mohawk Workers, nor the Elected Council agree with.



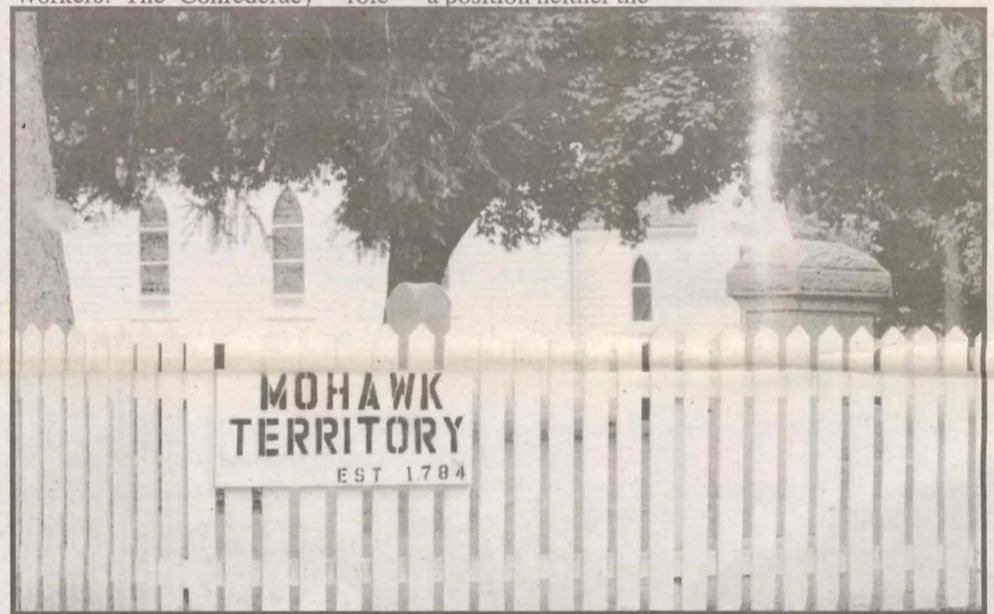
the Elected Council should be making decisions over it without the Mohawks input and leadership."

It is the stand of the Mohawk Workers that the Haldimand Deed is primarily a Mohawk document and the Mohawks should be at least at the table, not the Elected Council or the Confederacy Council.

"That does not mean that we are unwilling to share

ers refer to it).

It is their belief that the Confederacy has become weak and politically impotent over years of duplicated titles and the introduction of the Code of Handsome Lake which the Workers believe has no business within the politics of the Six Nations at large. They believe that the Code has stripped the Clan Mothers of their Creator given authority and es-



*A series of signs have been placed throughout the south Eagles Nest area to remind all that the land still belongs to the Mohawks who have never surrendered their interest in the Haldimand Tract lands in general, nor the former Mohawk Village in particular. (Photo by Jim Windle)*