

Six Nations role in War of 1812 Stoney Creek battle to be highlighted

By Donna Durie
Writer

Six Nations' role in the War of 1812 and Battle of Stoney Creek will be highlighted during a special ceremony this spring.

It's the first time Six Nations' role in the war will be highlighted in the 200-year history since the Battle of Stoney Creek has been commemorated.

City of Hamilton representatives told band council last week that it will ensure Six Nations receives recognition and respect for its role.

"The voice that hasn't been heard around the Battle of Stoney Creek for the last 200 years is your voice," said Ian Kerr-Wilson, manager of museums and heritage with the city.

Commemorations will take place May 31 at Battlefield Park in Stoney Creek. Kerr-Wilson said there has always been a focus on

British loyalists at both the park and commemoration ceremonies but this year, they're looking to change that.

"You look at the monument (there) put up 100 years ago - it's very British," he said. "It's very colonial. But this is the 21st century and we're looking at something different to say we've moved on from those ideas."

Keith Jamieson, chair of the Six Nations Legacy Consortium, is working with the city to craft Six Nations' involvement during the ceremonies.

Jamieson told council he and ceremony officials are making sure there won't be a repeat of last year's disastrous attempt to represent Six Nations in the War of 1812 at Queenston Heights.

The community was outraged after an original agenda with a large involve-



Keith Jamieson shows band council sketch to adorn monument (Photo by Donna Durie)

ment from Six Nations relegated them to the bottom of the agenda, in a manner Jamieson referred to as "singing and dancing Indians." Jamieson cancelled

their involvement in the event.

Elected Chief Bill Montour sent a strongly-worded letter to Governor General David Johnston expressing

his displeasure over the incident.

"Let me assure you since that happened, I've yet to be asked to get involved in something similar without

an absolute assurance upfront that we will not be treated like that," said Jamieson. "I've always made it clear that if there's to be changes in an agenda we have a right to be informed of the changes in the agenda (beforehand)." Jamieson continued, "I think it sent a pretty clear message to a lot of people in the province. Not only is it embarrassing, it's ignorant. People learned after that."

Jamieson is acting as advisor to the planning committee.

He also updated council on the group's progress in designing a \$300,000 monument it wants to erect at Veteran's Park to honour the role of Six Nations warriors in the War of 1812. He revealed a drawing of a Six Nations woman holding a baby that will be etched onto the monument.