

Six Nations celebrates historic ties to "Crown" with

By Donna Duric
Writer

This year's Bread and Cheese Day celebrations saw some of the largest crowds ever, with thousands of people packing the Gaylord Powless Arena on Monday to receive their annual helping of fresh bakery bread and zesty chunks of cheddar cheese.

Like a well-oiled machine, about 80 community volunteers handed out around \$25,000 worth of bread and cheese (2,500 loaves of bread and 3,000 pounds of cheese) Monday.

Six Nations Elected Chief Ava Hill said it was one of the largest Bread and Cheese Day crowds she had ever seen.

"It's the biggest we've ever seen it."

The annual event stems



Thousands lined up for the annual Bread and Cheese giveaway at Six Nations on Victoria Day Monday after over 80 volunteers spent hours cutting the blocks of cheese and loaves of bread in preparation for the giveaway that is drawing people from all over southern Ontario, New York and Quebec. (Photo by Jim C Powless)

from the tradition of Queen Victoria giving gifts to the Six Nations community for their allegiance to the British

Crown during the American Revolution and War of 1812.

"It's significant in that our relationship is still

with the Crown," said Hill. "It's a gift from the Crown and we continue to celebrate it every year."



Six Nations Elected Chief Ava Hill and Dave Lavac, Ontario Liberal candidate for Brant riding ham it up during Monday's Bread and Cheese celebrations. (Photos by Jim C Powless)

Thousands came from near and far, with some Six Nations members even trekking up from New York State, Quebec,

Northern Ontario and surrounding towns of Brantford, Hagersville, Caledonia and Hamilton. (Continued on page 3)

Victoria Day Bread and Cheese celebration



Jascinda Martin-Able home from college, carried a huge Bread and Cheese Day smile through the lines. (Photo by Jim C Powless)

great day, a sunny day, a celebration in itself."

An outdoor midway that accompanied Bread and Cheese Day celebrations was packed.

Johnson, a Vietnam War veteran, said the day is an important reminder to the Crown about Six Nations' allied relationship with the Crown, during both wartime and peacetime.

"It's our association with the Crown and always will be," said Johnson. "We were allies, not subjects, but allies and that's really important to remind people and the



Councillor Helen Miller hands out bread and cheese.



Six Nations Councillor Terry General and his wife Cheryl were giving out bread and cheese to the elders when moments later they were swarmed by a crowd of people who made their way into the arena early through a side door and began taking the bread and cheese. Volunteers ran over to disperse the crowd.

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the community event has begun rival a tourist attraction.

"It's a time for them to reacquaint with old family and friends and make new friends," said Hill,

who's been volunteering at the event for over 10 years. "It's a good day because everyone comes together as one community and that's the message I want to get out there. We're all one community and we all want the same things."

The whole process of handing out bread and cheese took about one hour, starting at noon, after a parade led by Six Nations veterans first wound its way through the heart of the community, down Fourth Line, and into the arena parking lot, showcasing floats from various community groups and organizations.

Six Nations Councillor Bob Johnson, who was at

the arena at 7:30 a.m. on Monday to start cutting the bread and cheese, said this year's event

Crown."

There were no complaints about the quality of the bread and cheese

choose the companies to supply the bread and cheese. Last year, there were complaints of undercooked bread.

"This year, it's great," said Johnson.

ironically, he said the weather was "too hot."

He said his favourite part of Bread and Cheese every year is seeing old friends and community members.



Yup, love that Bread and Cheese!



Carolyn King, a former new Credit chief, attends the tasty event.

couldn't have gone better.

"This is terrific," he said as throngs of people sauntered through the arena, chunks of bread and cheese in hand. "I'm more than pleased to be part of this day. It's one



A parade winds its way through the huge lineups at the arena Monday. (Photo by Jim C Powless)



The line-up stretched down Fourth Line almost to Chiefswood Road.

this year, after council undertook a special taste-testing session weeks in advance of the day to

Six Nations Fire Chief Mike Seth, who attended with his family, said the day was "excellent" but,

The funds for the event came out of Six Nations' roughly \$2 million Ottawa Trust Fund.