

TIMELINE

1956 A provincial park is proposed along the shoreline of Georgian Bay at an area called 'Methodist Point' by local residents. The idea, although popular meets opposition by area landowners. The plan is put on hold until 1961 when the concept is fully revived.

1963 The first lands were acquired for the park under the provisional name of *Methodist Point Park Reserve*.

1965 The area of the park proper was established. Lands of future interest were identified.

1968 *Methodist Point Master Plan Phase I* establishes zoning and development priorities. Surveys of the park boundaries took place. Hydro lines were installed in the park.

1969 Ontario Junior Rangers were stationed in the park to aid with development.

1971 The name Étienne Brûlé Provincial Park is given serious consideration but eventually falls out of vogue by 1973. The name debate continued.

1972 Extensive archaeological surveys are carried out by a team under the supervision of archaeologist Roberta O'Brien. Archaeological assessment continued into 1976 with both aboriginal and historic sites identified and mapped. Robert Carlisle is engaged to survey the geography and geomorphology of Methodist Point and Giant's Tomb Island. Dr. A.A.Reznicek conducts botanical surveys of Methodist Point and Giant's Tomb.

1972 Early development takes place including the cutting of roads, parking lots and campsites under the initial watch of Superintendent Bill Brown who managed both Methodist Point and Six Mile Lake Provincial Park.

1973 *Methodist Point Park Reserve Master Plan* is published.

1974 Tom Stott becomes Awenda's first Superintendent.

1975 Awenda is regulated as a provincial park. The Maintenance barn is constructed.

1976 The Administration Park Office is completed.

1978 Catherine Tanner, Dianne Boot, and Paula Hill are hired as the park's first naturalists. The park is opened to local residents on a trial basis; 150 Campsites are available (Turtle, Hawk, and Bear Campgrounds).

1979 Awenda Provincial Park is opened officially by the Minister of Natural Resources, the Hon. James A.C. Auld. Dignitaries attended the ceremony at the Administration Park Office with an unveiling of the dedication plaque.

1980 Martin Farrell becomes Awenda's first Visitor Services Coordinator working as the sole naturalist while conducting the first public programs on park heritage education themes.

1981 Gord Murphy becomes Awenda's second Superintendent.



Awenda's first campers - August, 1978



Giant's Tomb Island

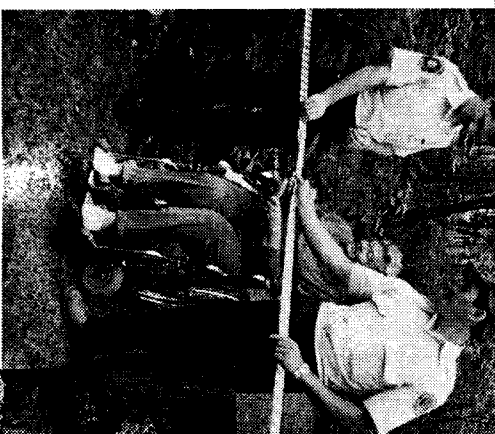


Awenda's 10th Birthday, 1989

- 1982 Fifty additional campsites are added when Deer Campground is opened. Additional day use parking facilities are made available. The staircase down the bluff is constructed on what is now the Nipissing trail.
- 1983 The log cabin at the *Trail Centre* is built by Marc Maheu, the park's current Maintenance Foreman.
- 1985 Giant's Tomb Island is regulated as part of Awenda, adding an additional 462 hectares of land as well as 393 hectares of surrounding water.
- 1989 Awenda celebrates its 10th anniversary.
- 1990 Mike Armstrong arrives as Awenda's third Superintendent. The *Awenda Provincial Park Management Plan* is published.
- 1991 The viewing platform is completed at 2nd Beach.
- 1992 The *Friends of Awenda Park* organization is incorporated. The Beaver Pond trail is opened. Universal accessible services and comfort stations are made available in all campgrounds. The Nature Shop opens for business. The number of showers is increased from six to twenty.
- 1994 Additional day use parking is added throughout the beach parking lots.
- 1996 The Activity Centre is opened as a program area for heritage education events.
- 1997 Wolf Campground is opened, adding an additional 74 hydro equipped sites campsites. A recreational vehicle parking lot is added east of the existing beach day-use lots.
- 1998 Snake Campground is opened, adding 51 more campsites.
- 2000 Second Lake re-named Kettle's Lake after a local family who owned the property. The Stone Cottage was renovated and made available for rent to the general public in 2001. An additional 8 hydro sites are added in Hawk loop, and an additional 20 are converted to hydro, to bring the total number of campsites to 333. The universal access lookout platform at Kettle's Lake is opened.
- 2001 Upper Beach Trail renamed Nipissing Trail.
- 2002 Canoe Rentals are offered at Kettle's Lake.
- 2003 Brabant Point is dedicated at P1 on Kettle's Lake. The park's garbage and recycling programs are consolidated in one location at the existing Trailer Dumping Station.
- 2004 Awenda celebrates its 25th anniversary. The Nature Shop is re-opened in the spring of 2004, which effectively doubles the retail space. All profits support heritage education and research within Awenda.



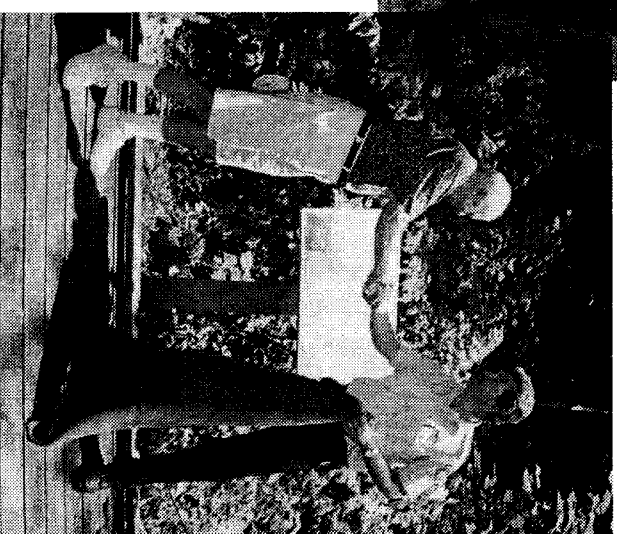
Beaver Pond Trail



Lee Heinzman opens the universal access Beaver Pond Trail, 1992

Friends' President Dan Webb

*and Superintendent
Mike Armstrong unveil
a Friends' sponsored
trail panel, 1998*



Awenda Provincial Park

Initially the word *Awenda* was translated from the Wendat (Huron) language, to mean: "a man's word is his bond". As this Iroquoian speaking nation did not have a written language the spoken word was the highest point of trust between two people. The name Awenda was chosen to honour the Wendat nation who lived throughout the area for hundreds of years up until their departure in 1650. It is appropriate that Awenda was so aptly named, as it is held as a protected trust for present and future generations of Ontarions.

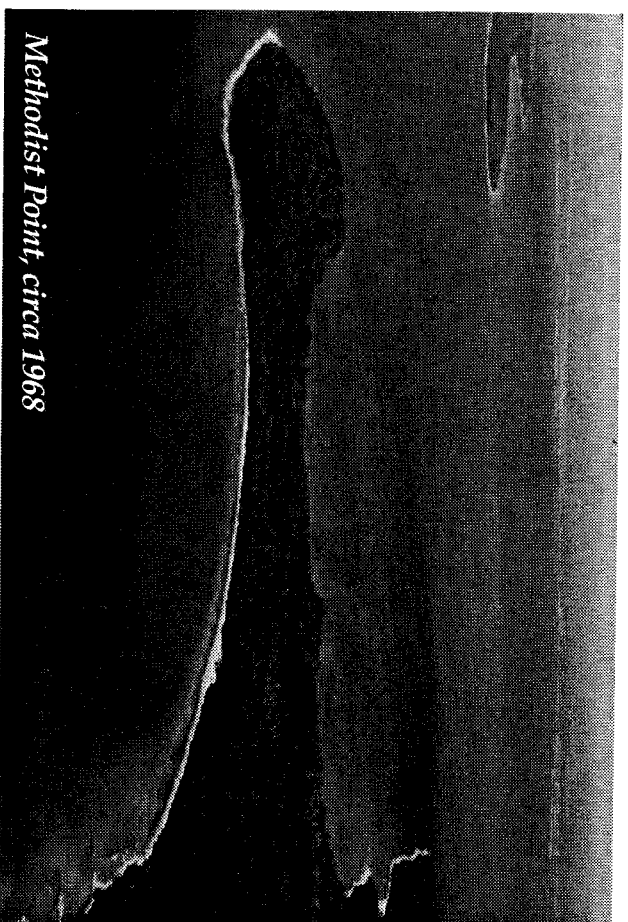
In a recent revelation an alternative translation of *Awenda* has come to light. Awenda has two literal translations "voice" and "word". It was usually combined with the verb ending "io" to create *hawendio* which is the Wendat word for "creator". This too, makes for an appropriate name for the park as it reflects the strong connection many people feel having experienced this natural haven.

The park was officially opened on July 4th, 1979, as a natural environment class park. Since that day an estimated 1.8 million visitors have enjoyed our beaches, trails, campsites and other amenities. For the past twenty-five years, our visitors have marveled at the splendour of Awenda's natural beauty. As a result, many of them have developed a deep and lasting connection to this green island oasis. We hope you enjoy our anniversary season and celebrate with us as we acknowledge 25 years of Awenda Provincial Park history!

This is the story of the formation of *Awenda Provincial Park*.



The bond remains the same.
The bond remains the same.



Methodist Point, circa 1968

"Attignawantan" (the Huron Bear tribe) while having cultural and historical significance, were not given much consideration. However, the name "Ihonatiria" received a great deal of attention due to the fact that it is the name of one of the nationally significant village sites found within the park's boundaries. "Wendat" too, was a popular choice, but at long last the name "Awenda" was selected as exemplifying the historical qualities sought by park planners.

Initial archaeological surveys quickly identified Methodist Point's historical values, including 11,000 years of human occupation. The embryonic park became a park thought of in terms of its cultural heritage and the subsequent human interconnections

Although the idea of the park was conceived of as early as 1956, there was considerable debate over its name. Due to the unique archaeological diversity contained within its boundaries, it was unanimously agreed that the park's name should reflect the passage of those whose feet had tread upon the forest paths of this land long before us. With this goal in mind a wide selection of possible names were presented for consideration. Throughout its development, the park was referred to by the working title: "Methodist Point Park Reserve". Within some circles of the Department of Lands and Forests, the name Methodist Point enjoyed support due to its traditional use by the citizens of the surrounding area and its presence on maps dating back as far as 1894. However, despite its traditional local use, Methodist Point was found to be insufficient to describe the true breadth of historical human habitation of the park area.

Another popular choice of name for the park was that of the famed seventeenth-century French explorer and interpreter, Étienne Brûlé. The name "Étienne Brûlé Provincial Park" seemed to enjoy practically universal appeal among municipal and provincial officials in 1971. In fact, D. Arthur Evans, the M.P.P. at the time strongly favored the name, going so far as to make it an election promise to the francophone population in the north end of his riding. However, Brûlé proved to be just as controversial 340 years after his death as he had been in life. His name fell out of vogue in 1973 when questions were raised at the Ministry of Natural Resources over the accomplishments and character of Brûlé. In a report denouncing the use of "Étienne Brûlé Provincial Park", two archaeologists made the assertion that "The honour of the Historical Sites Branch is at stake", over the naming issue.

It was finally decided that the park's name should reflect its native history and no fewer than 15 possible suggestions were tabled. Some names such as "Tondakea" or "where the land disappears in the water" (an actual Wendat village) and another choice,

with post-glacial geology and unique resources. One plan for the park envisioned it as a single, contiguous site to be used as a type of archaeological field school.

Land acquisition began in 1963 and development commenced in 1967. Further studies in the early 1970s highlighted the park's unique combination of provincially and nationally significant cultural, biological, and geological features. The focus of park planning, including its future interpretive program, changed accordingly.

In 1968, Chief of the Parks Branch, P. Addison revealed that the proposed park would include 1300 tent and trailer sites. Fortunately site investigations discovered that much of the future park landscape was sensitive to development and would not physically allow for more than 300 campsites. Development continued in earnest through the 1970s until the park officially opened on July 4th, 1979.

Much later in 1992, *The Friends of Awenda Park* was incorporated as a charitable non-profit volunteer organization. Through their hard work and dedication, the Friends have contributed to the park in a number of essential areas and continue to be an integral part of Awenda's ability to provide our visitors with ever-increasing educational and recreational opportunities while preserving this special place for the enjoyment of generations to come.

It is hoped that your visit to Awenda provides you with many life long memories and that you are able to experience the spirit of what is a very sacred trust. Awenda Provincial Park staff past and present wish all Friends and visitors a memorable and enjoyable 25th anniversary experience. Enjoy your discoveries!

The following timeline highlights the many significant events which have shaped Awenda's development history.