The Wendat/ Wendake (a.k.a. Huron)

 The Wendat, or Wendake, (Huron was a name given to them by the French fur trappers) was an alliance of four nations, much like the Haudenosaunee Confederacy (some people believe there was a fifth Nation as well).



Before they landed in Quebec City, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge met with Grand Chief Konrad Sioui of the Huron-Wendat Nation in 2011.

JEAN-BAPTISTE LAINÉ SITE

In the 16th century, prior to the arrival of Europeans, a village was founded on this site by the Huron-Wendat, a Nation of agriculturalists and fisher-hunter-gatherers. In response to increased conflict in the region, many smaller villages merged to form a three-hectare settlement of 1,700 people, with more than 50 longhouses arranged around a central plaza, surrounded by a palisade, a ditch and an embankment as protection. The economic and political functions of the Huron-Wendat Nation were highly sophisticated, integrated and coordinated. Artifacts from the site, which include a fragment of a Basque iron tool, demonstrate that the Huron-Wendat formed alliances and traded goods with other First Nations in complex networks that extended across the continent. The community later moved north to join the Huron-Wendat Confederacy in the lands south of Georgian Bay. The village was identified by archaeologists in 2002 and excavated between 2003 and 2005. Known initially as the Mantle Site, it was renamed the Jean-Baptiste Lainé Site in honour of a decorated Second World War Huron-Wendat veteran. The site is significant to our understanding of Huron-Wendat socio-economic and political history.

Ontario Heritage Trust, an agency of the Government of Ontario

A plaque unveiled by the Ontario Heritage Trust (after consulting with the Huron-Wendat Nation) marking the site of a major Wendat settlement in Stouffville, Ontario. August 25th, 2017.

- The Wendat's traditional territory was throughout Southern Ontario, but in particular encompassed the southern end of Georgian Bay with over twenty villages made up of longhouses. They travelled throughout Southern Ontario and beyond.
- Those who lived in the longhouses were determined by the women.
- Wendat society was matrilocal – men had to move into the household of their wives.
- Wendat society was also matrilineal all children belonged to the clan of their mothers. Young men could not inherit the property of their fathers rather, they looked to their mothers' brothers.
- Divorce was frequent and simple the men only had to leave their wives' homes to reside elsewhere.

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- The Wendat recognized eight clans (Turtle, Wolf, Beaver, Deer, Hawk, Porcupine, and Snake). Clan members shared longhouses and traced their lineage along the female line.
- The senior woman was the matriarch (ruler of the family or clan).
- Several clans usually resided in a village presided over by a council of clan chiefs, peace chiefs (sachems), and wise men. The men held their positions based on the ancestry of their mothers. The senior women of the clans nominated, censured, and could even recall chiefs.
- Successful warriors, great orators, and men who received recognition could become chiefs, but they could not vote in council or pass their title to their descendants.
- Decision making in the council was by consensus, with speeches and persuasion playing major roles.
- Women tended the crops while men hunted and fished.

