



The Jijuktu'kwejk Project (updated 24 July 2016)

The river that runs through the eastern Annapolis Valley, carrying the fresh waters of runoff & spring water to the sea, have pulsed with the rhythms of the tides since before human beings were known to have roamed this part of the earth. For millennia these waters have nourished creatures along their banks & nestled in the iron-rich silt & salt marsh grasses of the wetlands & inter-tidal areas they flood over.



The Jijuktu'kwejk River near Kentville (behind Meadowview Community Hall) — photo © marke slipp

In 2011 the Annapolis Valley First Nation band council made a resolution to have the name of the river that restored to the Jijuktu'kwejk (Narrow River). <http://tinyurl.com/AVFN-Resolution>. As it stands, when entering or leaving this Mi'kmaq community near Cambridge, Nova Scotia, people have to cross a bridge, under which flows a river labelled as the Cornwallis River.

The name of Cornwallis is one that Mi'kmaq across the province find offensive due to the Scalp Proclamation made by the first British colonial Governor of Nova Scotia, Lieutenant General Edward Cornwallis. The 1749 proclamation was made in order to get rid of what Cornwallis saw as a problem — the original inhabitants of Mi'kma'ki. Governor Cornwallis offered “*a reward of ten Guineas for every Indian Micmac taken or killed, to be paid upon producing such Savage taken or his scalp.*” This applied to every Mi'kmaq person, be it man, woman or child. Elder Daniel Paul documents this thoroughly in his book and on his web site.

www.danielnpaul.com/GovernorEdwardCornwallis.html

On February 14, 2015, a small group of people, led by Richelle Brown Redden and her son Caiden, marched through Kentville with placards spelling out their desire to see the name Cornwallis removed from all the public places in the town. This rally was in response to Caiden's questioning his mother as to why a river would be named after a person who treated the Mi'kmaq people so poorly. (See newspaper article at www.tinyurl.com/14Feb2015-River-Rally)

Arising from this event is a movement to see the name of the river revert back to its original, historic name, Jijuktu'kwejk (“*Jee-Jee-wook-tuk*”), alternately spelled Jijikwtuk or Chijekwtook (plus other versions, although all are pronounced the same). The pronunciation of this and many other original Mi'kmaw place names is available on the recently published Mi'kmaw Place Names digital atlas: <http://mikmawplacenames.ca/> (Click on the yellow dot and a pop-up window appears with a MP3 file to listen to. You may have to do it twice — technology, you know...)

In late 2015 Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil had the signs denoting the colonial name for the river removed from the AVFN bridge, a small gesture in response to requests from Daniel Paul and other people in Halifax (K'ijipuktuk) calling for the removal of the statue & the park named after Governor Cornwallis. <http://tinyurl.com/McNeil-requests-statue-removal>

The title of the river has gone through a number of changes over the years since the Europeans landed and began to settle the area. The Acadians called the river by various names — Riviere St. Antoine in the 1600s & Riviere des Habitants in the 1700s. The Planters, imported by the colonial government of the late 1700s after the Expulsion of the Acadians (or *Le Grand Dérangement*), knew it as the Cornwallis River. It has remained so since. Local historian Ed Coleman documents this in a number of articles, most recently in March of 2015. <http://tinyurl.com/Ed-Coleman-River-Name>

With the advent of the Truth & Reconciliation Committee's recommendations released in 2015 there has been a greater desire on some people's part to see the river revert to its original name. It is a small gesture of reconciliation, a beginning to a dialogue about our shared history, about the unceded Mi'kmaq land we live on, and about a long history of injustices perpetrated on the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Some argue that "*we shouldn't erase our history*" or that "*we shouldn't judge the actions taken in the past by our modern values.*" It is a part of the discussion that needs to happen. You can read some of this at <http://tinyurl.com/Righting-the-Wrongs>

We generating support for this initiative by educating people and contacting our provincial & municipal representatives and letting them know that we are interested in seeing the name of the river re-honoured with its original, historic name. Will you be a part of this movement?

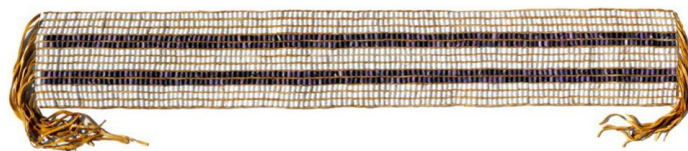
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MORE RESOURCES: *Learning From The Knowledge Keepers of Mi'kma'ki* is a free online course offered by Cape Breton University. An archive of all of the sessions at <http://tinyurl.com/Indigenous-Knowledge-Keepers>

TRUTH & RECONCILIATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS: A wealth of information exists about the TRC's findings. The 94 Recommendations are at <http://tinyurl.com/TRC-Call-To-Action>, <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/> & <http://nctr.ca/reports.php>

TREATIES: The treaty signed at Boston in 1725 and all subsequent treaties were "Treaties of Peace & Friendship". The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands & resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq & Maliseet title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship. More about these treaties at <http://mikmaqrights.com/negotiations/treaties/> and <http://tinyurl.com/We-Are-All-Treaty-People>
The key message is that we are all responsible for reconciliation & change because We Are All Treaty People.

Stay up-to-date with information on Facebook: [The Jijuktu'kwejk Project](#)



Two Row Wampum ~ one of the oldest treaties between Indigenous & European immigrants

← **NOTE: Some of the information on this document has been updated.**
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