



## **Guest speaker: Mike McDonnell**

**Mike McDonnell** is a retired police officer. His longtime hobby is studying the American Civil War. As **Mike** told us in a previous presentation, many Canadians fought for the North in the Civil War. This time around, he explained how the issue of slavery caused the war.

The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 confirmed that slaves were property even if they escaped to, or were taken to, states in the North. The law said escaped slaves were to be returned to their owners in the South. Slave catchers could legally track down Black people and force them to return to the South. The law made it illegal to help slaves escape or to hinder returning them to their owners.

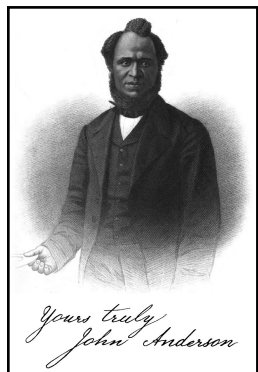
In August 1850, 2,000 abolitionists gathered at a convention at Cazenovia, a small place in upstate New York. The convention issued a letter predicting a Black insurrection if the South didn't end slavery. **Frederick Douglass**, the most prominent Black abolitionist in the United States, spoke at the convention but did not support the letter and its prediction of armed Blacks taking revenge on slave owners.

In 1776, the U.S. had 400,000 slaves or 20 per cent of the new country's population. By 1861, the number of slaves had grown to four million in the U.S. population of 31 million. The invention of the cotton gin had mechanized cotton production, requiring more slave labour.

In 1857, the Supreme Court, decided in the **Dred Scott** case that slaves were property everywhere in the United States. Many escaped slaves fled to southern Ontario to prevent being captured and returned to their owners in the South.

Most people in the North did not support the Fugitive Slave Law and the Dred Scott decision. But one man in particular — the fanatic **John Brown** — dedicated his life to fighting to free the slaves, first in Kansas in 1855 and then in a doomed raid on the federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry, Virginia, in 1859. Brown hoped the raid would spark a slave insurrection. It did not and Brown was hanged.

**Mike** showed a series of maps detailing the extension of slavery across the southern and western United States. The rivalry between free and slave states culminated in the Civil War from 1861 to 1865.



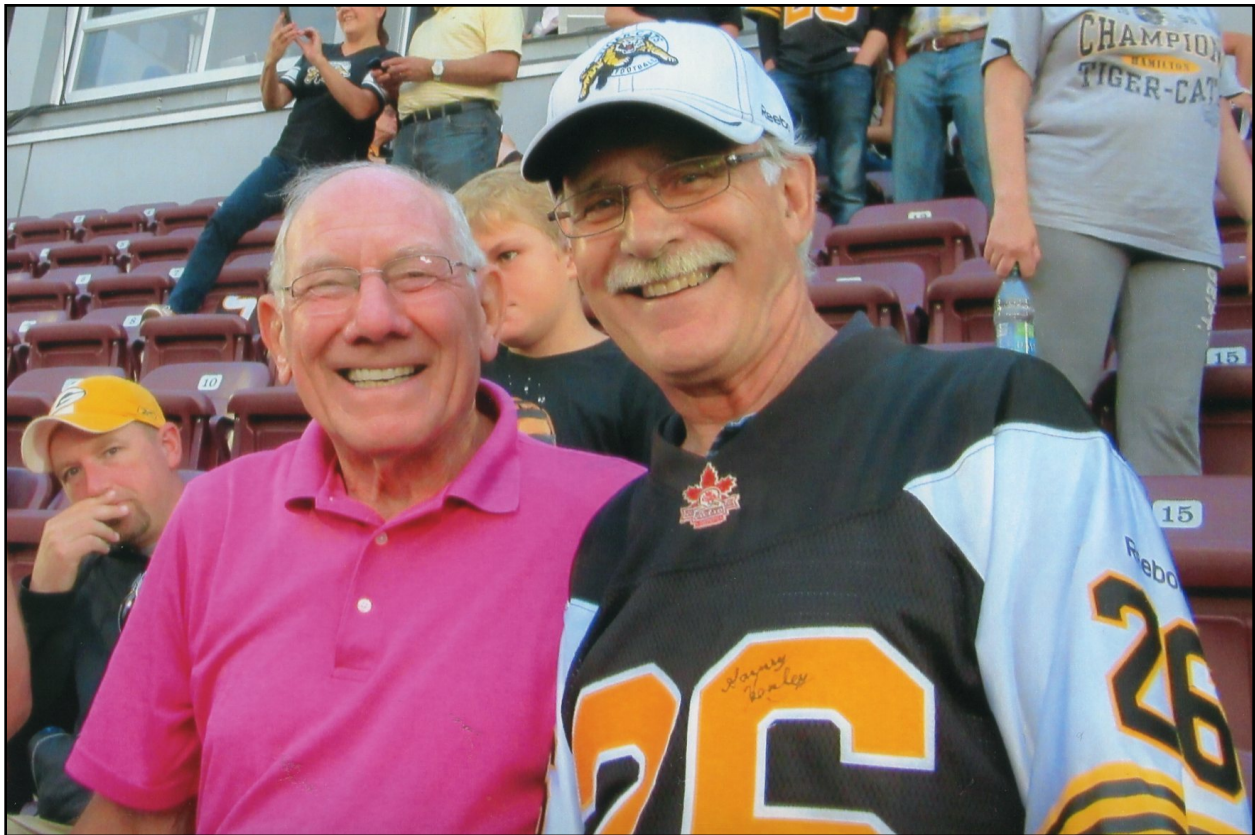
**Mike** closed his presentation with the story of **John Anderson**, a Black man who killed a white man during his escape from slavery in Missouri in 1853. Anderson fled to Ontario, settling in Caledonia, then hiding among the Black community in Simcoe. In 1860, Anderson was arrested and jailed in the building, which is now Simcoe's public library.

The Court of Queen's Bench in Toronto ruled Anderson must be extradited to the U.S. to stand trial for murder. In 1861, a higher court, the Court of Common Pleas, freed Anderson on a technicality and Anderson disappeared.

**Dan Pearson** introduced **Mike** and **David Judd** thanked him.



**Mike McDonnell**



Legendary quarterback Russ Jackson with Frank Brock.

**More Memories of the CFL: Frank Brock**

**Frank Brock** presented More Memories of the CFL. **Frank** is a longtime fan of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and the Canadian Football League. Frank explained the league’s complicated playoff process and tested our memories of the nicknames of some of its greatest players.

**Gus Takacs** led the way with correct answers.

The CFL was founded in 1958, combining the Interprovincial Rugby Football Union founded in 1907 and the Western Interprovincial Football Union founded in 1936. The Tiger-Cats, founded 150 years ago this year, is one of the oldest teams in professional sports.

**Frank** reviewed his collection of photos, books, miniature helmets and other memorabilia that he first presented to us in June. **Frank** and his son **Matt** have been photographed with the Grey Cup. **Frank** also has his picture with stars **Garney Henley**, **Joe Zuger**, **Russ Jackson** and Ticats owner **Bob Young**. Thanks again, **Frank**, for sharing your hobby with us.

**Grey Cup update:** The Winnipeg Blue Bombers defeated the Hamilton Tiger-Cats 33-12 to win the Grey Cup on Nov. 24. Said Frank, “There is no joy in Mudville.”

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