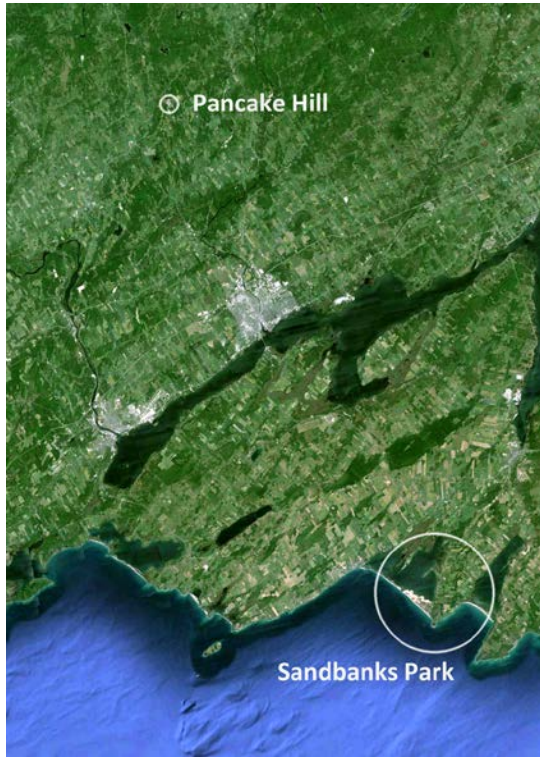




## Pancake Hill... and its Connection to the Sandbanks

*John A. Brebner, December 2015*



*Google Earth Maps; Above: Hastings/Prince Edward; Image 15-2338.*

*Below, right: Close-up of Pancake Hill; Image 15-2339*

It's known as "Pancake Hill" because the different water levels formed beaches that resemble a stack of pancakes! And that suggests frequent and rapid changes in water levels as ice melted and ice-dams of glacial water found regular escape both to the south through what is now New York State, through the Hudson River, as well as north-east along the St. Lawrence River.

The coarse sand and rounded boulders are identical to similar deposits in Prince Edward County, that are still visible in quarries along Ridge Road.

From one of the highest points in Hastings County, on Sills Road, about 4 km east of Hwy 62, (44° 22'07.11" N 77° 25'55.79" W) and located 50 km north of the Sandbanks Park, this unique geological formation is unlikely to attract the casual tourist.

Looking much like a non-descript gravel pit operation (which it was!), requires some imagination to see its geological importance!

But from this vantage point, one can look north and west 50 km over what was the submerged land in post-glacial times along the shores of Lake Iroquois.

Pancake Hill is an ancient and well-preserved ice-age beach... over 200m above Lake Ontario! It marks the shoreline of glacial Lake Iroquois, just before those frigid waters broke through ice dams and flooded through northern New York state almost 12,000 years ago. The torrent of water, and the subsequent lowering of the lake level were the precursors of the glacial material deposition at the western edge of what is now Prince Edward County and the birth of Lake Ontario.





Above: Panoramic view of deposits;  
Image 14-3022, John A. Brebner

These were the same raw materials worked by winds and waves into those fine drifting beach sands that we see today in the Park.



But standing on that ancient beach on Pancake Hill, so far above Lake Ontario really gives the viewer a better idea of both the extent and depth of glacial Lake Iroquois. It covered most of Prince Edward County!

And without that glacial lake, the sandbanks that we enjoy today would not have formed!

Have a quick visit, and imagine the size of Lake Iroquois almost 12,000 years ago!

Glacial till, well worn by wave action; above; Image 13-6022;

Below: Image 13-6029; John A. Brebner

Below: View west along Sills Road from the top of the ancient beach to the bottom of glacial Lake Iroquois;

Image 13-6002, John A. Brebner

