Châ Ûpchîchîyen Kudebi

[CHÂH oomp-cheen-chee-YAYDN koo-DAY-bee]

TOWN OF CANMORE

This is a story about the history of this place from the Îyârhe [ee-YAH-hhay]. Îyârhe means "mountain people." We are a branch of the Sioux/Dakota/Lakota/Nakoda people, who are now called the Stoney Nakoda Nation.

Îsniyés [ish-niesh] — Thank you.

This story was shared by Chiniki Elders of the Stoney Nakoda Nation. The artwork and bench were provided by Stoney Nakoda Nation members, in a joint 2017 Canada 150 project of the Chiniki Elders Advisory Council and the Municipal District of Bighorn.

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This area is called **Châ Ûpchîchîyen Kudebi** [CHÂH oomp-cheen-chee-YAYDN koo-DAY-bee] which means "shooting little spruce tree."

When our grandfathers were young, the Canmore area was a prime camping site. During a dispute with a rival tribe, four braves intruded into a Stoney camp and stole four horses during a very dark, crescent-moon night. As the thieves were leaving, the Stoneys noticed them and tried to give chase without having time to catch and mount their horses. They were on foot and shooting in the dark. A Stoney brave hit an intruder near the shiny part of his saddle. Elders cautioned the braves and told them to wait for daylight before checking the thief, to ensure they would not be injured or ambushed by him.

In the morning, they discovered that they had shot a little spruce tree and not an intruder! They knew the thieves had gone east and were riding in the Ghost River in order to hide their tracks. The braves knew that if the thieves got as far as the canyon, where the Ghost Dam is now, they would be able to escape through the deep, narrow canyon at **Garhen Neduwa** [gah-HHAYDN Hay-doo-WAH] — deep canyon (the Stoney name for Cochrane). The Stoneys rode across country so swiftly, they arrived at the canyon ahead of the thieves, and retrieved their horses.