

Chânḥ Pay Oda

[chahm-PAY OH-dah]

EXSHAW



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*.

Īsniyés [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.

This initiative is made possible by the Community Fund for Canada's 150th, a collaboration between Banff Canmore Community Foundation, the Government of Canada, and extraordinary leaders from coast to coast to coast.



Canada

Top: Gordon Wesley,
Stoney Nakoda Artist.

Bottom: Dretin Goodstoney, Stoney
Nakoda Youth, Grade 6, June 2017.

In this place, there are very sacred mountains that were used by the *Îyârhe Nakoda* for vision quests. Deeply spiritual pictographs, drawn by our ancestors, are also in this area.

This area was used regularly as a seasonal camp for hunting, fishing and collecting medicinal and sacred herbs and berries. Some of these plants were, and still are, used for smudge ceremonies.

The Stoney name for this place, *Chânḥ pay Oda* [chahm-PAY OH-dah], means “many stumps.” This name comes from the many stumps that were left by the Stoneys who harvested Douglas fir trees in the early 1900s. They were employed by cement plants around Exshaw to harvest the wood and cut it into six-foot lengths. The wood was transported to the plants, where it was used for fuel to heat the rocks which were then crushed to make cement.

