



- THE CHEKONEIN (chuk-kong-ee) FAMILY TERRITORY**
- 1. Uplands Park
 - 2. Gonzales Point (Kukeruk, "place of war")
 - 3. Mount Douglas and Cordova Bay
 - 4. Discovery Island (Sungwun, "place of the family who lived on the island")
 - 5. Chatham Island (Sungwun, "place of the family")
 - 6. Cadboro Bay (Sungwun, "place of the family")
 - 7. Spurn Head
 - 8. Willows Beach (Sungwun, "place of the family")
 - 9. Bowker Creek
 - 10. Jenny Jones Island (Sungwun, "place of the family")
 - 11. Telegraph Cove (Sungwun, "place of the family")

Songhees oral history gives the family names Sna-kah, Lelek and Chucheleq to those once living at Cadboro Bay (6). A site where the Royal Victoria Yacht Club is now located, included an adjoining fortified defensive site on Spurn Head peninsula (7) to which people retreated in time of warfare. The Sitchanalh lived at Willows Beach (8). Much of their village dates within the last 1,500 years, however, the southern portion dates back 2,700 years. An older village site, at Bowker Creek (9), occupied for a few hundred years, dates back 3,000 years. Two shell middens located in Cordova Bay (3) are up to 1,800 years old.



"Che-A-Clack", Chief of the Songhees - oil by Paul Kane, 1867. BCMA PM 9044
 "Che-A-Clack was a prominent member of the Chekonein family. He was Chief of the Songhees from the 1840s until 1867. Che-A-Clack obtained the name 'Che-A-Clack' from his 'father' who was 'Che-A-Clack'."

There are over 170 different indigenous plants in Uplands Park. Women and their families harvested the land and marine plants for their herbal remedies and nutritional purposes. The camas lily bulb, a common food source once extensively traded, can be seen all over the Cattle Point area. Jenny Jones Island (10) was also a favourite camas gathering site. Another local plant is the Bitter Cherry tree, which was used for making baskets and wrapping joints of spears and arrows. The Bracken Fern was used for pit cooking and food trays. Every year the Lekwungen burned the underbrush to maintain open areas that produced plant crops such as camas bulbs and berry plants.



Preparing for travel between Victoria and Discovery and the Chatham Islands - 1890. Photo taken at Victoria Gulf Club BC Archives U-0008

During the 1800s the Chekonein were known to migrate annually. Every summer most of the families paddled across to their villages on San Juan Island, a distance of approx. 15 km., to fish the local reefs for sockeye and pink salmon.

Keeping Culture Alive

THE CHEKONEIN FAMILY

Uplands Park (1) in the Municipality of Oak Bay is situated in the traditional territory of the Lekwungen people of which there are seven main family groups. One of these is the Chekonein group which occupied the area from Gonzales Point (2) to the south, Mount Douglas and Cordova Bay (3) to the north and Discovery (4), Chatham (5) and the smaller islands to the east.



Archaeologists have discovered the remains of village sites in the form of midden or layers of shell, ash, charcoal, bone and fire-cracked rocks. Self governed village sites with big houses sheltering extended family groups of 30 to 200 people were often located in the bays.

During the 1840-50's, most of the Chekonein moved to Victoria's Inner Harbour. Those that remained behind stayed on part of Discovery and the Chatham Islands which remain in the possession of the Songhees today.



Men went to the woods for deer and elk. Along the water ways they hunted for birds, ducks and geese. The diet was supplemented with sea urchins and shellfish, seals, sea lions and dolphins, herring, rock and flat fish, mud sharks and greenlings.



Wood for canoes and house posts and planks was obtained from tall cedar trees in the forest of Cordova Bay. Travel by canoe included the use of a portage of goods between Telegraph Cove (11) and the Cadboro Bay settlement.

THANK YOU
 The Songhees and Lekwungen people of the Chekonein family have been instrumental in the development of the Chekonein Family Territory. We thank you for your contribution to the Chekonein Family Territory.

After European settlement the Chekonein and five other family groups who originally spoke a dialect known as Lekwungen amalgamated and became the Songhees Nation. The groups established a settlement in Victoria harbour that was later relocated to reserve land between the Municipality of Esquimalt and the Town of View Royal.

The Songhees are one of many Coast Salish Nations residing in the historical territory stretching from the lower Fraser Canyon and southern coast of B.C. to the Puget Sound and Olympic peninsulas in Washington, USA.

Today these descendants proudly maintain their culture through traditional practices and the teachings guided by the families and elders.

For more information contact:
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