

q'ushin'tul' 'u tunu shxw'a'luqw'a'

by

yutustana:t (Regena Seward-Wilson)

Grad. Certificate (Linguistics of a First Nations Language), Simon Fraser University, 2018

Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

in the
Department of Linguistics
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

© Regena Seward-Wilson 2019

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Summer 2019

Copyright in this work rests with the author. Please ensure that any reproduction or re-use is done in accordance with the relevant national copyright legislation.

Approval

Name: yutustana:t (Regena Seward-Wilson)

Degree: Master of Arts in Linguistics

Title: q'ushin'tul' 'u tunu shxw'a'luqw'a'

Examining Committee: **Chair:** Nancy Hedberg
Professor
Department Chair

Donna B. Gerdtz
Senior Supervisor
Professor

Ruby Peter – Sti'tum'at
Second Reader
Hul'q'umi'num' Elder

Date Approved: August 8, 2019

Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

- a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics

or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

or has conducted the research

- c. as a co-investigator, collaborator, or research assistant in a research project approved in advance.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed with the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Update Spring 2016

Abstract

This project is a personal look into Hul'q'umi'num' place names and how they provide a linguistic coding of our cultural heritage. I discuss the cultural and personal significance of some of the places in the unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. I call on my family history through the oral tradition of my people and draw on my own personal experiences to tell stories in our Hul'q'umi'num' language of the places I am from, the places I have lived, and the places I have pulled a canoe. It is my hope that this research will help us reach a deeper understanding of place names and the teachings associated with the lands in which we live. I hope to inspire future generations of language learners by handing down the wisdom of our Elders to the younger generation and by showing the connections between our heritage teachings and language.

Keywords: Coast Salish, Hul'q'umi'num' language, place names, cultural teachings

Dedication

I dedicate this paper to the most important mentors in my life, my aunt yutustana:t (Mandy Jones), my parents sewit (William Seward), xuthulwut, (Anne Seward), my uncle humuth (Jerry Brown), my aunt qwutqwumulwut (Joan Brown) and to my grandparents qwutqwumustun (George Wyse) and Margaret Wyse who raised me to love my culture and language. This is also dedicated to my husband wilseem (Charles Wilson), my daughter xuthulwut (Taleea Wilson), my two boys wilseem (Zachary Wilson) and qwumuletun (Silas Wilson).

I would also like to dedicate this paper to my special unforgettable nephew (son) sewit. Though I was only able to have you in my life for such a short time, I will always love you and will always remember the time I had with you.



Acknowledgements

As I think about the life choices that I have made for my career, I think of my grandfather qwutqwumustun (George Wyse). I was so lucky to have spent time with him and to watch and learn as he taught students and adults our language and culture. His loving and caring way could hold the attention of his audience, who would always enjoy his teachings. This is where my aunt yutustana:t (Mandy Jones) has learned this way of teaching and I hope to continue in her footsteps. I also thank yutustana:t for helping me in my journey of learning my language. I watched her in her classes teaching students our language and culture, and she has given me the strength and encouragement to move forward in my career.

To my professor Donna Gerdts, I thank you so much for your dedication for helping to save the Hul'q'umi'num' languages. Also, to my respected Elder sti'tum'at (Ruby Peter) and swustanulwut (Delores Louie), I thank you for your willingness to always share your wisdom and teachings to help all of us students in our language and culture.

Thanks to my auntie qwutqwumulwut (Joan Brown) and my uncle humuth (Jerry Brown) for their cultural teachings and loving guidance in our language, and sho'q'pux (Nancy Seward) for administrative support. I also would like to thank Bill Taylor who is always there to help me with anything and everything that I was struggling with, thank you.

Lastly, thanks to Lauren Schneider for technical support and editorial assistance for this project and Michelle Parent for drawing the maps.

Table of Contents

Approval	ii
Ethics Statement	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Table of Contents	vii
List of Figures	viii
Preface	ix
Chapter 1. Introduction	1
1.1. <i>snuneymuhw tsun</i> — “I am Snuneymuxw”	2
1.2. Researching Snuneymuxw place names	8
1.3. Road map of the project.....	10
Chapter 2. The places I am from	12
2.1. Introduction.....	12
2.2. <i>stl’iilnup</i>	12
2.3. The life and breath of <i>saysut-shun</i> : a sacred training ground.....	13
2.4. <i>’unwinus</i>	18
Chapter 3. The places I live	19
3.1. Introduction.....	19
3.2. <i>tl’eel’t-hw</i> : <i>xeel’s</i> transforms the seal at Gabriola Island	19
3.3. <i>tuy’tuxun</i>	22
Chapter 4. The places I pull canoe	25
4.1. Introduction.....	25
4.2. My canoe trip	27
4.3. <i>tha’thhwum’</i>	32
4.4. <i>kwulsiwulh</i>	33
4.5. <i>hwsa’luxwul</i>	38
Chapter 5. Linguistic decoding of some place names.....	40
Chapter 6. Conclusion.....	48
References	50

List of Figures

Figure 1 Snuneymuxw place names mentioned in Chapters 1–4	11
Figure 2 The 'unwinus A's (Picture taken by Cindy Wyse, 1980)	18
Figure 3 c'uqw'nustun (Bill Seward) (Littlefield 2000: 3).....	21
Figure 4 The Hamilton Spectator, July 20, 2017	25
Figure 5 My husband, wilseem (Charles Wilson), has brought our boys to this place and taught them the respect of the land while learning to hunt and survive here. (Photo taken by Zachary Wilson, 2012).....	26
Figure 6 My canoe family. (Picture taken by Zach Wilson, 2018)	31
Figure 7 Petroglyph of tha'thhwum, man changed into a rock	32
Figure 8 Joe Wyse's father, "Sugnuston, and unidentified female in front of his house with painting and sculpture portraying the origin of the Solexwel, circa 1858. Image A-16-153 courtesy Vancouver Archives" (Cryer 2007: 204).	38
Figure 9 Snuneymuxw place names mentioned in Chapter 5	47

Preface

'een'thu p'e' *yutustana:t*. Regena Seward-Wilson tunu s-hwunitum'a'lh nu skwish. tun'ni' tsun 'utl' snuneymuhw. tunu men *sewit* (William Seward). tunu ten xuthulwut (Anne Seward). tunu sul'si'lu qwutqwumustun (George Wyse), Margaret Wyse, *c'uqw'nustun* (Bill Seward), and 'essot (Mary Seward). tunu shtun'naalhtun quw'utsun', leey'qsun, pun'e'luxutth'.

I am *yutustana:t*. Regena Seward-Wilson is my name. I am from Snuneymuxw. My father is *sewit* (William Seward). My mother is xuthulwut (Anne Seward). My grandparents are qwutqwumustun (George Wyse), Margaret Wyse, *c'uqw'nustun* (Bill Seward), and 'essot (Mary Seward). My roots are from Quw'utsun', Lyackson, and Penelakut.

My parents never spoke Hul'q'umi'num' but I was lucky enough to live as part of my childhood with my grandparents George and Margaret Wyse, and they were fluent Hul'q'umi'num' speakers. All of my family were strong believers in our culture and they instilled this in me. I hear myself using the words that have been shared with me by my parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles when I am teaching my children as well as my students. These are the words that I will be able to use to pass all my teaching down to my own children and to many nieces and nephews.

I am interested in learning to speak Hul'q'umi'num' fluently so that I can contribute to developing language materials for classrooms. I hope to continue advancing in all areas to continue to teach the language in the schools as well as in my community. I believe that in order for me to learn and hold the language, it is something I need to do every day, from work to community to ceremony. This is the path where the language is alive.

Chapter 1. Introduction

The Hul'q'umi'num' First Nations people live on the southeastern part of Vancouver Island and on some of the southern Gulf Islands in British Columbia. Our life on our ancestral territory along the Salish Sea has been changed by colonialism, but we are still here practicing our Coast Salish culture and speaking our language. While new colonial names have been laid down on our lands, we still have our own names for places in our territory. In this project, I tell about some of the places within the unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.¹ I relate some of the ancestral stories and I tell stories that reflect my own relationship to our places.

I draw on the knowledge handed down from my relatives as well as my own experience to help explain to language learners the window that the cultural teachings and language provide into seeing the land as our ancestors saw it. As such, I have chosen to use the Hul'q'umi'num' language, the language of these lands, to give a voice to the Elders' knowledge in composing this project. For representing Hul'q'umi'num' on the written page, I will use a orthography developed to represent the sounds of our language.²

This first chapter is intended to set a foundation for my efforts. It starts by introducing place names and their importance from an ancestral perspective, especially as it relates to teachings, it talks about the methodology I used in this research, and it ends with a roadmap of what appears in each chapter.

¹ The term Snuneymuxw, which some say means “people of many names”, is used by the Island Halkomelem to refer to the people that live in the vicinity of Nanaimo, British Columbia.

² Explanation of the orthography can be found at <http://sqwal.hwulmuhwqun.ca/learn/learning-the-sounds/alphabet/>. This orthography differs in several ways from the one used in Gerds & Hinkson (1996), Gerds (1997), and Gerds et al. (1997). The velar fricative is represented as *hw* instead of *xw*; the alveolar affricate is written as *ts* instead of *c*, the apostrophe representing ejective is written after the sound, vowel length is represented as a double vowel rather than by a colon [:] after the vowel. Some names remain in the old orthography or are otherwise presented as spelled by holders of the name.

1.1. *snuneymuhw tsun* — “I am Snuneymuxw”

“Every bend has a name, every hill a story, every dark pool a tradition.” (Rozen 1985: 6)

This section is intended to introduce the place names as understood by our Snuneymuxw ancestors. It is my hope that it will help us reach a deeper understanding of place names and the teachings associated with the lands in which we live. Our ancestors have taught us that all things are interconnected; culture, land, language, and people are *nuts'umat* (as one). This has been said by many Elders by their actions, recorded history and teachings remind us place names are crucial to help us to connect and honour the land. The place names are sacred to us and are in danger of being forgotten due to lack of use by the First Nations people themselves.

Below I will share some words, powerful words and teachings, from Snuneymuxw First Nations People. This is important because it helps us to remember and value the oral traditions that our ancestors used. The places names that were given to use were named after directions, descriptive terms, natural features, plants, and animals that were part of the lives that our old people lived. My ancestors were able to live off the land and they have shared these teachings. They have left behind these words for us so that we might have a deeper understanding of our history.

These words of wisdom from William White & Rita George-Green (2011) celebrate the importance of our heritage teaching.

These are the Gifts of the Old People:

It is the Old People who said the People are related in time and Space

The old people gave these places names, places of power!
...places which hold water, and could clean and strengthen
...places which hold great death and sadness – say clear!
...places which hold teachings, and could clean and protect
...places which hold songs and stories, our connections to each other

It is the old people who said we are all related!

Places for men. Places for women.

Places for families.

Places for natural and supernatural beings, their home since the beginning of time itself.

We are from the beginning of time itself!

In this way, one generation to the next is connected.

Walk carefully, prepare yourselves.

Make yourselves ready!

You must be clean in heart and mind. — Make your Minds Strong!

All of these things...make the land sacred.

All of these things remind us all of the importance of taking care of each other.

In this way People too, are sacred. — Make Your Minds Strong!

We are all related in time and place.

These are the teachings of the old people, given to them by the Creator.

There are songs, there are prayers. This IS the path!

Walk carefully, listen carefully, prepare yourselves.

The wind holds the voices of the old people, as does the land.

The wind moves the teachings of the old people.

When you are strong and in balance and ready. — Their voices will speak to you.

Stories about strength, preparing yourselves, and a brand new day!

We are connected once again!

Stories, songs, prayers are the gifts of the old people.

It is they who hold the gifts of the old people.

It is they who hold the memories of time and place.

We are all related in time and place, time and space.

We belong to each other. — Make Your Minds Strong!

We should take care of each other.

These are the gifts of the old people. Listen carefully!

The above words and teachings were originally written in English and have now been translated into Hul'q'umi'num' with assistance from sti'tum'at (Ruby Peter) with assistance by Donna Gerdts. I worked on this translation because I believe it has a stronger meaning in Hul'q'umi'num' than in English that will touch our hearts and minds.

s'a'hwustaalt tun'ni' 'u tu syuw'a'numa' mustimuhw

Gifts from the ancestors

1. nuhiimustewut 'u tu syuw'a'numa' mustimuhw tu shni's tu s'aalh tumuhw!
The old people gave these names, to all of the places of our territory!
2. nilh tu shni's tu qa', kwun's sthuthi' 'uy'ama' 'i' tun' shkw'am'kw'um'.
These are places of water, where you strengthen your spirit.
3. shni's tu sq'aq'i' mustimuhw, stuwuqun, sht'ees kwun's lha'wuthut.
... places of death and sadness, where you heal yourself.
4. shni's kwun's kwen'nuhw tu' syuw'a'numa' snuw'uyulh, sht'es kwun's 'uy'ama' 'i' la'lum'utul'.
.... places which hold teachings and could clean and protect.
5. shn'is tu kwun's kwen'nuhw tu st'ilums, sqwul'qwul' sxwi'em'.
.... places which hold songs and stories.
6. tu ni' sqwaqwuls' tu s'ul-hween kws mukw' tst 'uw' hiiya'yutul'.
It is the old people who said we are all related!
7. shni's kwthu suw'wuy'qe', slhunlheni', 'a'hwul'muhw mustimuhw.
.... places for men, women, families.

8. shni's kwun's kwen'nuhw tu shkw'am'kwum' syuw'a'numa' tun'ni' 'u kwthuw' hwun'a' 'ul'.

.... places for when you get spiritual powers, their home since the beginning of time itself.

9. tun'a lhnimulh 'i' tl'lim' tst 'uw' tun'ni' 'u kwthuw' hwun'a' sutst 'uw' st'e 'u kw'uw' yu kwun'atustul' kwutst 'i' 'u tun'a.

We are from the beginning of time itself! In this way, one generation to the next is connected.

10. yu la'lum'uthut 'u kwutst 'i'mush! ni' tst yu thay'thut!

We walk carefully! We prepare ourselves!

11. yath 'uw' 'uy' tl'ulim' tu shqweluwun tst kws yu 'i'mush tst, 'uw' hay tu 'uy' shqweluwun kwun'etut.

We must be clean in heart and mind. We carry good hearts and minds.

12. 'u tuw' mukw' ni' sht'e tst 'i' nilh ni' 'uw' hay 'ul' 'uw' kwun'et tu xe'xe' shqweluwun.

All of these things we carry are sacred.

13. tuw' mukw' stem ni' kwun'etut ni' 'u tu shqweluwun tst 'i' ni' tst hay' 'ul' tl'i'stuhw kwutst kwun'et.

All of these things remind us all of the importance of what we hold.

14. we' tu mustimuhw 'i' 'uw' tun'ni' 'u tu xe'xe'.

People too are sacred.

15. 'i' stitum'stuhw ch kwu'elh tun' shqweluwun.

Make your minds strong!

16. nilh ni' snuw'uyulh syuw'a'nama', hay 'ul' xe'xe' tun'ni' 'u kwthu xe'xe' syuw'en' tst.

These are the teachings of the old people, given to them by the Creator.

17. tun'a lhnimulh 'i' mukw' tst nuw' hiiya'yutul' tun'ni' 'u kwthu hwun'a', 'i' 'i' tst 'uw' tetsul 'u tun'a.

We are all related from the beginning of time up to this day.

18. qux st'ul't'ilum' 'i' tl'uw' st'e tu st'i'wi'ulh.

There are many songs that are just like prayers.

19. tun'a 'i' tst 'uy' yu stetul'shut, 'i' ni' stl'atl'um' kwun's yu la'lum'uthut, yu hwiil'asmuthut, yu kwun'et kwthun' st'i'wi'ulh.

This IS the path! Take proper care of yourself, pay attention to what's around you, and carry your prayers.

20. nilh tu stsuhwum spuhel's st'e 'uw' niis yu kwun'etus kwthu syuw'a'numa' snuw'uyulhs, tu shte's tu, yuw'en' tst hwulmuhw mustimuhw.

The wind holds the voices of the old people, as does the land.

21. nilh tu tumuhw nilh shni's tu syuw'a'numa' snuw'uyulh.

The land is a place of ancient teachings.

22. ha' ch kw'am'kw'um'stuhw tun' shqweluwun, 'i' ni' ch wulh st'e 'uw' niihw stl'atl'um' saay' kwun's 'imushstuhw tun' shqweluwun.

When you are strong and in balance, you are ready.

23. 'i' nilh tse' kwthu sqwal ni' hwiinem'utuhw, ni' ch tse' hwu kwun'et.

You will listen to the words, and you will carry them.

24. kwthu ni' kwun'etuhw tun'ni' 'u kwthun' syuw'a'numa' 'i' nilh ni' 'un'
shkw'am'kw'um's tun' shqweluwun. yath ch 'uw' thay'thut 'u tu mukw' xew's
skweyul.

Ancient stories about strength. Prepare yourselves for a brand-new day!

25. 'i' st'e ch 'uw' 'iihw yu kwun'atsustul' st'e 'u kwthey'.

We are connected once again!

26. nilh tu sxwi'em', st'ult'ilum', st'i'wi'ulh, nilh ni' s'a'hwustaalt tun'ni' 'u kwthu
yuw'en' mustimuhw tun'ni' 'utl' lhnimulh.

The stories, songs, and prayers are the gifts of our old people.

27. lhnimulh ni' kwun'et tun' syuw'a'numa' tun'ni' 'u kwthun' s'ul-hween.

We hold the gifts of the old people.

28. lhnimulh ni' st'e 'uw' niit yath 'uw' he'kw' 'u kwthu niilh sht'es kwthu ni' shni's
kwthu niilh sul'uthut-s 'u kwthu wulh hith.

It is us who hold the memories of time and place.

29. mukw' tst nuw' hiiya'yutul' 'i' 'u tun'a tun'ni' 'u kwthu wulh hith.

We are all related here since long ago.

30. 'i' yath tst tse' 'uw' yu kwun'atul'.

We belong to each other.

31. kw'am'kwum'stuhw tseep tse' tun' shqweluwun!

Make your minds strong!

32. 'i' yath tseep'uw' la'lum'utul'.

You always take care of each other.

33. nilh hay 'ul' 'uy' ni' s'a'hwustaalt tun'ni' 'u kwthu syuw'en' tst, syuw'a'numa' tst.

These are the gifts of the old people.

34. tl'lim' tseep 'uw' hwiin'eem'.

Listen carefully!

35. ni' hay. hay tseep q'a'.

The end. Thank you.

1.2. Researching Snuneymuxw place names

'uy' skweyul, sii'em' nu s'ul-hween, sii'em' nu siiye'yu. 'een'thu p'e' yutustana:t tun'ni' tsun 'utl' snuneymuxw, mun'u 'utl' sewit (William) 'i' xuthulwut, (Anne Seward), 'imuth 'utl' qwutqumustun (George Wyse), tun'ni''utl' snuneymuxw 'i' Marge Thomas, tun'ni' 'utl' leey'qsun.

I have drawn the majority of my inspiration for this work from my grandparents, especially from my late grandfather, George Wyse. My grandfather, as did the other Elders of his time, modeled a strong commitment to the people, high standards of work ethic and an unmovable love for our culture. He was constantly challenging us to do more and to be better in every aspect of our life. I often think about his passion, and in my walk of life I attempt to follow his lead. My commitment to learning is my testimony, and this is my humble effort to follow in the footsteps of my grandfather. Thus, I hope to influence others to follow his lead. This approach will certainly be a great benefit to our community.

What I have come to realize is that first and foremost we must recognize that the connections between language and land are multifaceted and complex and that are inseparable from culture and the people. These are our truths defining the relationship between land, language and culture. It becomes obvious that the language is the bridge between the physical and the spirits within—or the land and her natural elements if you

will. What I have come to realize is that the language and culture work together through rituals and ceremonies in such a way that when they work together, they produce a much greater outcome than they would by working in isolation. Essentially, it is a sacred relationship that is intended to awaken the spiritual bond between human and canoe. Through the words of our Elders it is ever so clear that without the language, the culture of our people does not live. Worst of all, without the language we lose the ability to connect to the spiritual world and our way of life would be lost. Having said that, we have also been told that reviving our language begins with each individual. We all need to do our part. My studies are helping me maintain the teachings of our grandfathers and transfer them to the next generation. With my newly acquired knowledge, I know have an opportunity to teach not only the language, but to also help future students understand the sacred relationship between land, language, and culture. This understanding is critical to help preserve our way of life and our wellness depends on it.

Traditionally, European history privileges the written word over oral Indigenous histories. However, it is now commonly recognized that written records on the subject of Indigenous knowledge cannot be assumed to be more accurate or complete. The Indigenous method of recording history has been highly dependent on the oral tradition of storytelling. While this method has been historically criticized as imperfect and merely folklorist, oral traditions are now, thankfully, recognized by Canadian courts. For example, in 2002, Justice David Vickers in a major court case determined that the *tsilqot'*in Nation's oral histories as presented were acceptable evidence. Ultimately the acceptance of oral history was significant enough allow the *tsilqot'*in Nation reclaim their Aboriginal rights and title to their ancestral lands. While the Crown attacked oral tradition as "untrustworthy and demanded that oral histories be verified by comparison with written documents", Vickers argued that among other things that the need for written proof is part of a "consistent theme" of "disrespect for Aboriginal people" found in those records (*Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*, 2007).

Moreover, Indigenous place names transcend the boundaries of European languages. From an Indigenous perspective, place names are not just labels for individual sites, rather, they are much like the language, the people, and the land, existing as an expression of the creator, and the relationship between each is a living thing. The story

behind the place name *tha'thhwum'*, the site of “Petroglyph Park” near the mouth of the Chase River, given in section 4.3 below, is an example of this relationship between place name and a significant historical event. In this story, xeel's the transformer meets a man named *tha'thhwum'*. Names are thus our record keeping, an important way of remembering the teachings associated with the encounters with xeel's. Recording the significance of these place names is an important method of documenting the history of our lands. Namely, it draws attention to human activities associated with the place name.

It has become evident that it is important not only to remember a place name, but to truly understand the history of the name. As such, I am grateful for the help of my aunt *yutustana:t* (Mandy Jones); she has given me the words to remember and learn these personal stories of our lived experiences within the Snuneymuxw territory. I am also grateful for opportunities to visit these sites regularly. In the summer months, we pull war canoes past these places. It is a magical experience. With each breath, we can hear every stroke hitting the water, it is so calm, quiet, and peaceful. We, the people of this place, live the name of the place. In the same manner the canoe responds to the water, we respond to the water, to the rock and to the canoe, humbling to say the least.

1.3. Road map of the project

In the next chapters, the conversation is expanded to consider the place names in the context of the stories and activities that are associated with the place names. It becomes obvious that these legendary locations are an important part of our history, but also my research shows that these place names have been shared with us by our Elders to help us find a deeper understanding of our vast knowledge system, and ultimately begin to relate to these lands in an authentic fashion. It is truly a humbling experience to view place names in this way.

The following chapters are devoted to locations nearby where I live or places that I have frequently traveled. What follows is a series of stories connecting to these places. I can honestly say that this is the first time that I have taken the time to think about the vast history and amazing relationship that our ancestors have had with this great land. I invite you to join me in this journey, to think about what is referred to as “Nanaimo”

differently, to experience the history as recorded by our Elders. Notably, I will not offer an analysis of each story, but rather, in the traditional way that teachings are related, I suggest that you listen with an open mind and heart so that you too will have a unique experience when you hear it. This is the magic of our lands — healing, growing and living in a good way.

I divide up my presentation in this way: Chapter 2 focuses on the places I am from, Chapter 3 is about the places I have lived, and Chapter 4 is devoted to the places I have pulled canoe. Each of these chapters discusses the cultural and personal significance of these places. In Chapter 5, I discuss the linguistic analyses of twenty-eight Snuneymuxw place names, showing how the meaning of the name reflects our cultural knowledge of the place.

The place names that are discussed in Chapters 1–4 are located on this map³ to help the reader follow the discussion:

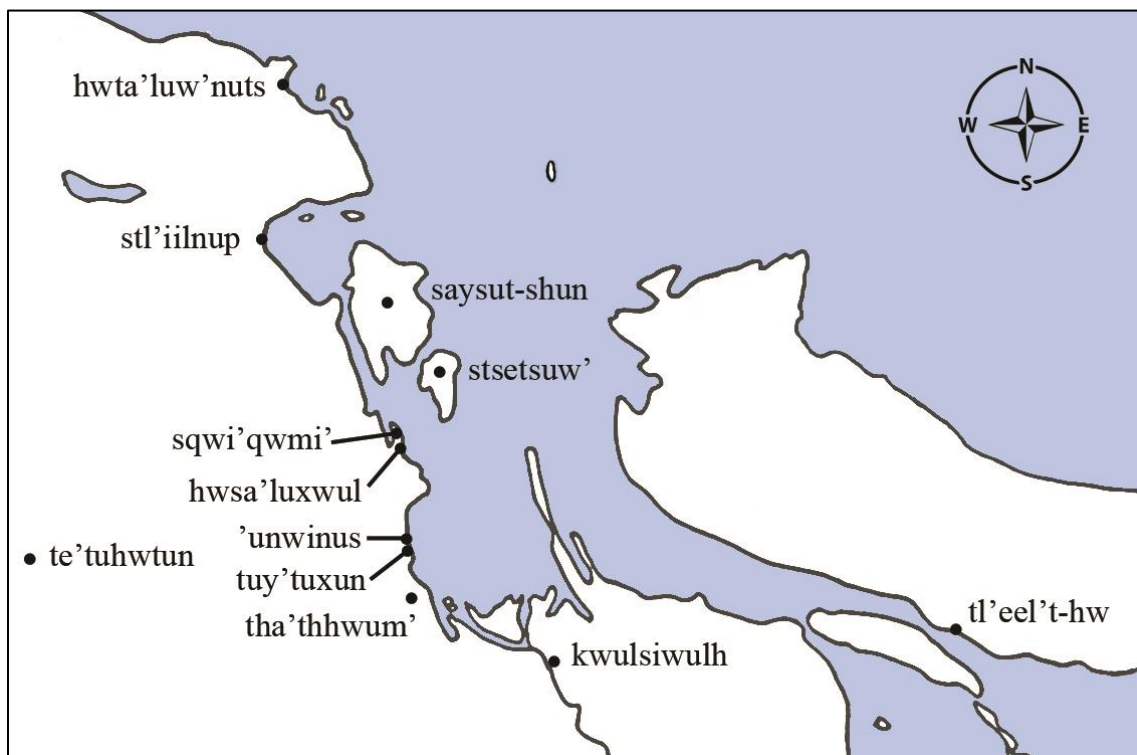


Figure 1 Snuneymuxw place names mentioned in Chapters 1–4

³ A special thank you to Michelle Parent for creating the maps for this project.

Chapter 2. The places I am from

2.1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to a discussion about my *shtun'naalhtun* — family roots. The sense of connection has inspired me and reminds me of the vast knowledge of these great lands. It will hopefully contribute to a new conversation, helping us change our perspective on family history in order to think about it from the context of the lands that we are connected to and the teachings associated with them. Although there are many place names associated with the Snuneymuxw and Leey'qsun territories, a complete and thorough discussion of all of them goes beyond the scope of the project. This is but a glimpse.

2.2. *stl'iilnup*

The first place name I will discuss is *stl'iilnup* [called *stl'iillup* by some] (Departure Bay, Nanaimo). This very significant site to the Snuneymuxw peoples, was once was a permanent winter village site. The name likely means 'deep ground' or 'tide goes out a long way' (Rozen 1985: 45). The majestic homestead was a village containing three rows of houses. It was said to be the "real home" of most of the Snuneymuxw people. At all times there were permanent house-frames there, and planks were brought from some of the Nanaimo River houses on a seasonal basis. The Nanaimo River people moved here from December or January until March. This would indicate that the Departure Bay village was the site of most of the winter spiritual ceremonies of the Nanaimo people. (Barnett 1938: 140; 1955:23; field notes cited by Rozen 1985: 45). It was a common practice among Coast Salish people to move with the seasonal availability of food and resources. It was indeed a practice to follow the food source, but it was also an opportunity to maintain a connection the numerous Snuneymuxw sacred sites. The traditional seasonal sites may have been mistakenly identified as being unoccupied by settlers. I suggest that this manner of living was misunderstood and is still misunderstood today by outsiders. Within a Salish paradigm this habitation was continuous, when viewed within a cyclical time frame.

2.3. The life and breath of *saysut-shun*: a sacred training ground

The island of *saysut-shun* is part of Snuneymuxw First Nation traditional territory. The island was a popular place to live during the herring run during late winter and early spring. It was also a source of natural medicine and spiritual healing. The name means ‘training for running’; canoe paddlers, runners, and warriors would bathe here before preparing for the task ahead. These lands and their sacred resources from the beginning of time have touched every aspect of our life. Today, as in the past, we enhance our relationship to *saysut-shun* through reverence, humility, and reciprocity.⁴ This is how we have come to know this sacred island; it is a ceremonial way of life which helps us grow and learn through spirit. Our legacy, *saysut-shun*, is rich with stories and place names.

It is well known that storytelling, from the beginning of time, was intended to preserve a way of life. Ultimately, these stories attached to *saysut-shun* remain as an important source of power, bringing to life the teaching that help us remember the past, explain our present and prepare us for the future. These incredible place names are a testimony that we have a profound relationship with *saysut-shun*. That is, as understood by our Ancestors, place names do more than simply refer to a place, they encode a vast amount of information about our history, culture, and the language. One cannot fully understand this understanding by words alone; one must experience the life and breathe of *saysut-shun* to fully appreciate her gifts. In what follows is one of the sacred stories about *saysut-shun*, and this was put into Hul’q’umi’num’ by Ruby Peter with editorial assistance from Joan Brown, Thomas Jones, and Donna Gerdts.

⁴ The word *thaythut* means “prepare oneself” and the lexical suffix =*shun* refers to “foot”. This place name represents an old form of the language, which had a phonological shift of /s/ to /th/ in recent times.

stl'elukum sxwi'em'

The story of the fierce creature

1. 'u kw'un'a-a-a wulh hith 'i' ni' tu swiw'lus 'utl' saysut-shun skwi'kwthu.
Along time ago there was a young man who lived on Newcastle Island.
2. 'i' mukw' skweyul 'i' nem' hunum' 'u kwthu hun'utum' lhap'qw'um'.
And every day when he would go to the pass they called lhap'qw'um' (boiling).
3. 'i' nilh ni' shni's lelum's kwthu stl'elukum.
And that's the place where a stl'elukum (fierce creature) had a house.
4. 'i' nilh ts'u yath nuw' sht'e kwsus sxul'xul'ts' tu qa'.
The water was always rough at that place.
5. 'i' nilh ni'shni's kwsus tsi'ts'elhum'utus thu hay 'ul hw'uy'uqun slheni' t'it'ulum'.
And he would hear a beautiful female voice singing.
6. 'i' 'uwu kws tum'tems 'i' lumnuhwus they' slheni' ni' t'it'ulum'.
He could never ever see the woman who was singing.
7. 'i' tl'lim' thulh nuw' shtatul'st-hwus kws stl'i's kws lumnuhws 'i' kwunnuhws.
But he knew that he really wanted to find her.
8. nilh kwu'elh shus nem' hwu kw'akwi'uthut suw' t'ut'i'wi'ulh kws lumnuhws lhu hay 'ul' hw'uy'uqun slheni'.
So he went for a spiritual bath praying for the woman with the beautiful voice to be shown to him.

9. stl'i's kws tl'lim's 'uw' lamtul.

He really wanted to meet her.

10. nuts'a' skweyul kwus wulh hay kwus kw'akwi'uthut 'i' ni' wulh ni' 'u tu shni' 'utl' stl'eluum lelum'.

One day after his bath he was down where stl'eluum lived.

11. 'i' wulh lumnuhwus thu slheni' ni' 'u tu shlhq'a'th 'utl' lhap'qw'um' 'i' ni' tl'e' wulh ts'elhum'utus kwus t'it'ulum'.

And he saw the woman across the water at lhap'qw'um' and he heard her singing.

12. nilh shni's 'i' tl'lim' nuw' hwushtatul'st-hwus kws tl'lim's 'uw' stl'i's kws lamtuls 'u they' slheni'.

He knew right away he really wanted to meet her.

13. 'i' skw'ey kws nem's shaqwul 'u tey' kw'atl'kwa nilh kwthu hay 'ul' hisul' thi stl'eluum ni' ni' 'u kwthey'.

However he could not cross the water because of the fierce monster that was there.

14. ha' ni' nem' 'ushul tu mustimuhw t'a'thut yul'ew'ul 'i' ni' 'uw' lhuyxtum 'ul' 'u kwthey' stl'eluum.

When people would try to go past, the monster would eat them.

15. we' tu snuwulhs 'i' ni' tl'uw' lhuyxtum.

Even their canoes he would eat.

16. ni' 'u kwthu xu'athun skweyul kwus ts'itse'lhum'utus kwus t'it'ulum' 'i' tl'lim' nuw' xulh kws lumnuhws.

After four days of hearing her singing, he was really dying to see her.

17. sus 'uw' hwkw'astus lhu snuhwulhs qwsutus kws nem's sha-a-aqwul 'utl'
lap'qw'um' kws lemut-s thu 'iyas slheni'.
- He went to his canoe and dragged it and put it to the water so he could paddle
across to lhap'qw'um' to see the beautiful woman.*
18. 'i' 'i ts'u yututeem' thuw'nilh slheni', "unuhw! 'unuhw! lhuyxthaam tse' 'u kwthu
stl'eluqum!"
- The woman was yelling, "Stop! Stop! The monster will eat you!"*
19. 'i' 'uwu ts'u niis hwiinem' kwthu swiw'lus.
- But the young man wouldn't listen.*
20. sis 'uw' thu'it lhuyxtum 'u kwthu stl'eluqum.
- Sure enough the monster came and ate up the man.*
21. we' kwthu snuhwulhs 'i' ni' tl'uw' luyxtum.
- Even the canoe he ate up.*
22. wulh xeeem thu slheni' sus nem 'uw' xwchenum nem' 'u tu lelum's ni' 'utl'
stl'illup, nem' kwunutus tu shuptuns tu mens.
- The woman started to cry and she went running home to stl'illup (Departure Bay)
to get her father's knife.*
23. sis 'uw' xwchenum hwu'alum' nem' 'utl' lhap'qw'um'.
- So she ran back to lhap'qw'um'.*
24. tus sis 'uw' nuqum, nem' t'itsum nem' 'u kwthu stl'eluqum ni' lhey'xt tu
mustimuhw.
- She arrived there and dove in the water swimming to the monster who eats people.*

25. kwus wulh hwusun'iw' 'u tu stl'eluum 'i' ni' yulhilhts'utus tu sun'iw'
shts'ul-hwiwuns.

When she was inside the monster, she was cutting his insides.

26. sis 'uw' 'utl'qnamut tu mustimuhw ni' lhuyxtus muq'utum.

The person who had been swallowed managed to get out.

27. 'utl'qnuhwus tu sye'yus kwthu swiw'lus.

She managed to free her friend, the young man.

28. sis 'uw' kwunutul tu swiw'lus 'i' they' slheni' ni' hwu'a'hwul'muhw, ni' tsta'lusth.

And that woman and the young man got together as a couple—she became his wife.

29. 'i' mukw' tu mustimuhw ni' hulitus, nuw' shtatul'stuhw kws nilhs ni' q'aayt kwthu
stl'eluum ni' ni' 'u tey'.

*And all the people that she saved, they knew that she was the one who killed the
monster there.*

30. niilh lheyxt thu mustimuhw niilh ni' 'u tey' snuneymuhw,

That's the one who ate the people there at Snuneymuxw,

31. stutes 'utl' lhap'qw'um 'i' saysut-shun.

near lhap'qw'um and Newcastle Island.

32. ni' hay!

The end.

2.4. 'unwinus

These lands, as it has been told to us from the beginning of time, have been our first teachers. They have sustained and defined our culture, traditions, spirituality, and social and economic way of life since time immemorial. This is the perspective of our ancestors. It is our responsibility to find the means to protect and enhance this way of being. It is the intent of this chapter to draw attention, in a modern context, draw attention to the importance of sense of community.

'unwinus is a very important part of our community. The word 'unwinus means 'middle or village in the centre.' This location now houses our administration building. As a young girl I played softball for an all native senior women's team. Our team's name was given to us from my grandfather which was 'unwinus A's. We were all from the 'unwinus area and was very proud and honored to carry this traditional name.



Figure 2 The 'unwinus A's (Picture taken by Cindy Wyse, 1980)

Chapter 3. The places I live

3.1. Introduction

This chapter, much like the previous chapter, is an attempt to look at the land differently and to begin to understand its history and to strengthen my sense of connection to the places where I live. It is a ceremonial quest, if you will, to draw strength, knowledge and a new perspective from every mountain, every river, every rock and every story that resides in the Snuneymuxw territory.

I often sit on my deck, reflecting on the grounds on which I live. The winds of the past, the ancient tides are drawing ever nearer, illuminating a new path. It has always been here, but not visible to my eyes. Today, the language has brought me to a different mindset in that these lands and these waters provide me much counsel and a new perspective in all that I do. I have found deeper understanding and an old connection which was well understood by my parents, grandparents, and my ancestors who occupied these lands from the beginning of time.

3.2. tl'eel't-hw: xeel's transforms the seal at Gabriola Island

In this story told by Roy Edwards about an ancestor who had transformed into a seal. He was changed by *xeel's* into a rock that sticks its nose out of the water just like the head of a seal. This rock is on the northeast end of Gabriola Island. This story is presented in Thom (2005: 121) and has been modified and added to below.⁵ The story is brief but the reason why the story was told is revealing.

You know... our people used to go on the outside [of Gabriola Island] to pick seaweed. So, when you talk about Gabriola, we are not only talking about that little parcel right out in tl'eel't-hw but out on the outside too.

⁵ Spelling of Hul'q'umi'num' words have been updated to current practice.

That's where you see that xeel's comes in. There's a little rock there. I don't know what *ni' tsukwsta'mut sis 'uw' kweel*. [What he was doing was hiding]. It's inside that little rock.

'uw' hay 'ul' tthu sxuy'usth ni' swi'wul'. [It was only his head that was showing.] *tus tu xeel's sus 'uw' 'iyeqtum sus 'uw' hwu smeent*. [The Transformer got there and he changed him into a rock.]

That's outside of Gabriola. Out on that side [pointing to the northeast side of Gabriola Island on a map].

nilh kwsus qul'qul'uls tu skweyul 'i' kw'lhastus tu s'ul'eluhw 'u tthu snas st'e 'u kw' 'uy'ilumstuhwus they'. [When the weather gets stormy our ancestors would pour grease on it (the rock) to change the weather to nicer weather.]

And so, we have only been talking about the inside but, we had the outside area too, because it's a *lhuq'us* [seaweed] picking area. It's not a clam digging ground it's *lhuq'us* in that area on the outside of it, all along here [pointing to the Flat-Top Islands along the northeast side].

And on this side, it was xeel's that changed him into that, [in that] little area. But that's our seaweed picking area. It's not just any old place where we used to pick. The seaweed is an Indian vegetable, you chop it up and mix it with soup, you chop it up and mix it with fried potatoes and you mix it with herring, herring roe, *ts'um'ush* [herring roe].

Similarly, an account from my grandfather, c'uqw'nustun (Bill Seward) was given in Littlefield (2000: 3-4), which gives us a sense of what it is like to be with and understand the gifts of the land:

The place is called *tl'eel't-hw* [rich or special place]. When my Dad was little there were longhouses there. They were right along the beach where the houses are now. Graves were also along the beach. Many have been washed [away] by the sea. By the caves, there is a mountain where the shaman and the hunters carved the rocks. And you can see all the way down the inlet. That is where they could watch for the enemy, at Pipers Lagoon.

When it came to my age, we camped there, all year round. Stayed there for weeks, when I was a little boy. It is still a camp for the Snuneymuxw. We had no such thing as welfare. We lived on the sea—fish, clams. That is where we dig clams. They made pits. They dug pits to cook the clams. When they used to go berry picking, hops, they took clams for their food. We had no fridges. Everything was smoked.

Our tea was in the woods there, and roots. I used to go with the Elders when I was little and pick plants for tea, roots to eat.

When I was little there were only a couple of houses then. People there were friendly, helped each other. Fished for cod. The cod likes the kelp beds. Used the kelp to cook clams, seaweed, or in the pits. Elders say, don't throw your shells back in the water. The urchin will go away. They don't like them. Must bury them on dry land.

Visitors came here too, [from] Chemainus Bay, Duncan, Nanoose. When I was growing up they asked permission to dig clams. We always shared. It is our belief, our religion. It is still my belief. I remember it was always a sacred place. I was not allowed to run around the beaches, because our ancestors are buried on the banks there. They are around. It is a sacred place. Our dances used to be held there.



Figure 3 c'uw'nostun (Bill Seward) (Littlefield 2000: 3)

I share these two stories to give a sense of how the Elders lived with the land. You get a strong sense of place, especially the teaching that are associated with these lands. The passion and deep respect for the land and each other stands out in such a way, that we soon realize that this way of being has been lost. The message that I draw from both stories, is that there is a need to spend time on the land, to learn to understand that in my grandfather's words: the places where we lived are rich or special places. It is very powerful for us to think and be with the land in this same authentic way. Each place is unique and special. This was the way of the ancestors, and today, it is a compass pointing us back to a deeper understanding.

3.3. tuy'tuxun

tuy'tuxun is located on the south part of Indian Reserve No. 1 and the name means 'upstream'. I can remember this area as being a big grass field. This is where my ancestors lived in longhouses which were all lined along the beach where I lived as young child, raised by my grandparents *qwutqwumustun* (George) and Margaret Wyse. Our great-grandmother lived there, *halinamut* (Mrs. Jimmy Joe Wyse). Next door lived my grandparents. That's where I was born and raised, in *tuy'tuxun*. As young children, we played soccer and softball in the grassy field. In my life so far, five generations of my family have lived there in that area: my great-grandmother, my grandparents, my parents, myself, and now my children.

What is important to note, that has long been known to the ancestors, is that we live with many creatures seen and unseen. The story that follows as told to me by my uncle helps put this perspective. Thank you for translation assistance from Ruby Peter and Donna Gerdts.

tu stl'eluum

The fierce creature

1. tun'a sqwul'qwul' 'i' nilh sqwul'qwul's tunu shhwum'nikw, humuth.
This is a story told to me by my uncle humuth, (Jerry Brown).
2. nilh shni's tunu lelum' 'i' nilh xut'ustum' Shoreline shelh, niilh hun'utus tu s'ul-hween tst kws shnilhs tuy'tuxun.
I live on Shoreline Road known to my ancestors as tuy'tuxun.
3. stl'eluum tu ni' 'u tu shni's tey' sta'tluw' nem' stutes 'u tu lelum' tst tey' stl'e'luqum'
stl'eluum is a creature who would go to a fresh water stream that used to run beside my house.
4. niihw ni' 'u kwthun' lelum', tun' shni's 'i' kwun'atul' 'u tu stl'eluum, 'i' skw'ey kwun's 'uwu kw'ey kwun's 'uwu 'uw' 'aantuhw kws hwu ni's 'u tun' shni'.
You were to live with stl'eluum, meaning you share the space with him.
5. ha' ni' kwthun' ti'ya'xween, 'i' nilh 'un' suw' na'usum 'u tuw'nilh stl'eluum kws ts'ewuthamut.
If you were having any kind of trouble, you would ask him for his help.
6. ha' 'uwu niis stl'ulim' kwthun' sul'uthut 'i' 'u tun'a tumuhw, 'uw' niis ni' kwthuw' ni' skw'ey xwte' 'u tu stl'eluum, 'i' nilh 'un'suw' 'uwu niis hwu 'uy' ni' 'u tun' ts'lhhwulmuhw.
But if you were not living the proper way and disrespecting the stl'e'luqum' in any way, you would have bad luck in your family.

7. tun'a sht'es tu huli 'i' nilh snuw'uyulh kwun's 'i yathut 'u tuw' mukw' stem, ni' le'lum'utuhw tu ni' 'un' shni'.

This is a life lesson that you must respect all things around you.

8. kwun's 'uy'ithut 'u tuw' mukw' stem nilh kwsuw' tuni's 'u tu syuw'a'nama', tun' ni' 'u kwthu syuw'en' tst.

You learn to live and show respect to all things, because they occupied this place even before our ancestors.

9. tun'a nu sqwul'qwul' 'i' nilh kws skw'ey kwun's tul'nuhw tu sqwal tst, 'uw' hay kwthu snuw'uyulh yu kwun'etuhw. skw'ey kwun's 'uw' kwukwun'ut 'ul' tu sqwal.

The reason I am retelling this story is that you cannot just learn the language.

10. st'e 'uw' niis yu kwun'astustul' tu snuw'uyulh, kwutst yu ts'its'usum', 'i' yath ch 'uw' yu kwun'et.

You have to learn the teachings too; they go hand and hand.

11. tu tumuhw 'i' tu qa' 'i' ni' tl'uw' ni' kwthu swe's syuw'en's ni' sht'es sniw's.

The land and water are like a person, it has rights too.

12. hay 'ul' qux kwus nuts'tul tu ni' st'e 'uw' niit shq'uq'a' tst, ni' kwthu 'uwu kwlh skw'ey kwun's lumnuhw, st'e 'ukw' tu st'l'eluum, 'i' skw'ey kwun's lumnuhw.

We live with many creatures seen and unseen, st'l'e'luqum' is unseen and very powerful creature.

13. 'i' hay thulh 'ul' kw'am'kw'um' tu snuw'uyulhs 'u tu ni' sht'es.

That is a very powerful teaching about that place.

14. tun'a sqwul'qwul' 'i' nilh sqwul'qwul's tunu shhwum'nikw, humuth.

This is the story told to me by my uncle humuth, (Jerry Brown).

Chapter 4. The places I pull canoe

4.1. Introduction

Canoe culture, as with other Coast Salish cultural practices, is a process of learning grounded in spiritual relationships. This is the language of connectedness, relatedness and respect. The canoe is a Coast Salish art form that honors and reveals our relationship with the natural world. The human-like qualities of the canoe are honored in the art form. Canoe parts include a head, ribs and a heart, acting as a visual reminder that the canoe has its own breath, thoughts and feelings, and that it must be treated with the utmost respect at all times. The canoe gives us a tangible experience of living and honoring a spiritual being, training us to be humble and prayerful in our life with the canoe. Without a doubt it is a vessel that restores the balance between the physical and spiritual for the Coast Salish communities.



Figure 4 The Hamilton Spectator, July 20, 2017

As a young lady I started paddling on the war canoes and still do to this day. In this chapter is a brief description of some of the areas where we paddled. In this chapter is a brief description of some of the areas where we paddled and trained. *te'tuhwtun* (Mt. Benson) is a *xe'xe'* (sacred territory), where we trained by running together as a team, showing respect to all around us in this sacred territory so it will help us in our lives. Section 4.2 describes our practice circuit passing by many locations. One place we paddled, *stsetsuw'* (Protection Island), is also where my husband taught our children to hunt for deer and elk.

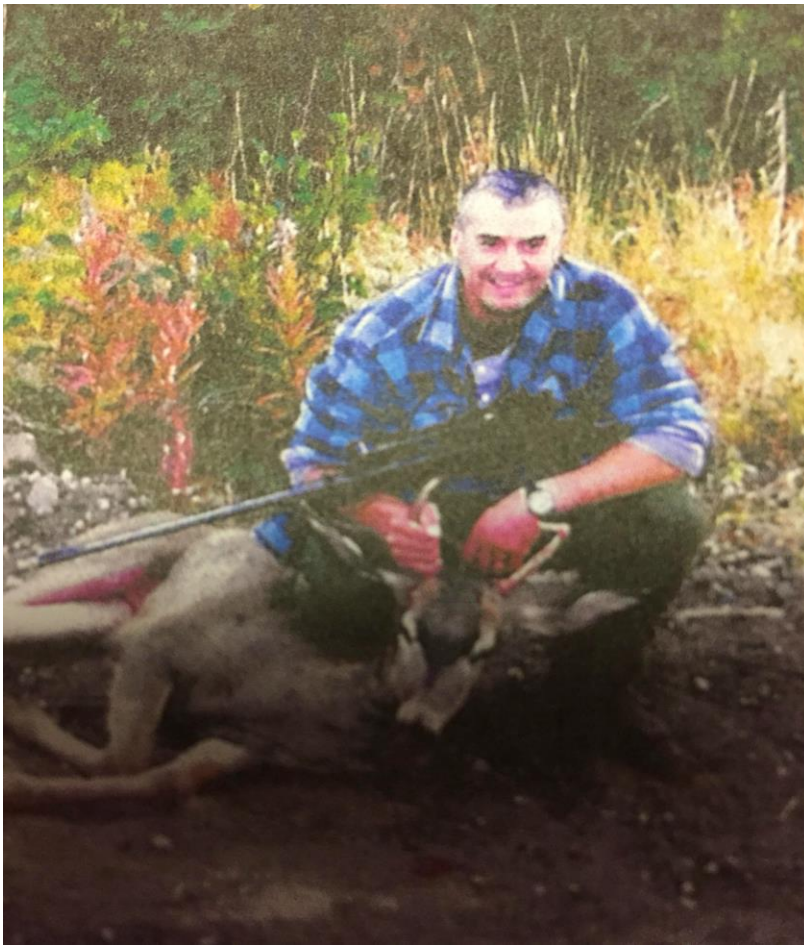


Figure 5 My husband, wilseem (Charles Wilson), has brought our boys to this place and taught them the respect of the land while learning to hunt and survive here. (Photo taken by Zachary Wilson, 2012)

In the summer months, we go paddling past *tha'thhwum*, an important spiritual site described in section 4.3. During the summer months, we would paddle up the river and store our canoe at *kwulsiwulh*, and I give a story about an event that happened at this place in section 4.4. *hwsal'uxwul* was another location where I spent much time paddling and swimming as a child. Some of the ancient history of this place is given in section 4.5.

There are many places associated with canoe pulling. This chapter presents just a few of them. It is my hope that it will continue to draw attention to the importance of place names and the long history of connection to these places of the Snuneymuxw people and the ways that we are still connected today. The hearts and minds of the current paddlers and the future generation of paddlers will be strengthened by learning the importance of the places where they paddle and train.

4.2. My canoe trip

Our community is located by the seashore. As my grandfather would always say the sea was our highway. This is the manner in which we traveled between communities, with the trusted canoe. The story that follows is my lived experience, helping me understand the importance of family while living and breathing as our Ancestors.

'i'shul' kwun'atul' 'u tunu ts'lhhwulmuhw

Paddling with my relatives

by *yutustana:t* (Regena Seward-Wilson), translation by *sti'tum'at* (Ruby Peter)⁶

1. 'uy' nu shqweluwun kwunus nem' 'ula'ulh 'u tu snuhwulh, tuyuwulh, 'i'shul' kwun'atul' 'u tunu ts'lhhwulmuhw shhw'a'luqw'a'—

I was very happy to be on the race canoe, paddling together with my relatives—

2. tunu men sewit; tunu shhwum'nelukw yutustanaat, qwutqwumulwut, essot; 'i' tunu swuy'qe' shhw'a'luqw'a', tsuysheyshum, citulqultun, sulsilum, qwutqwumustun, slheni' shhw'a'luqw'a' 'essot, sewitaat; tunu sta'lus wilseem; 'i' tunu me'mun'u xathulwat, wilseem, qwumuletun—tuw' mukw' tunu shhw'a'luqw'a', we' tunu stutiwun.

my Dad; my aunts Mandy Jones, Joan Brown, Mavis Wyse; my brothers Jamie, Tim, Tom, Dallas, my sisters Bridgett, Billie-Ann, my husband Charles, my children Taleea, Zachary, Silas—all my relatives, even my nieces and nephews.

3. hay 'ul' 'uy' nu shqweluwun kwunus ni' 'ushul kwun'atul' 'u tunu shhw'a'luqw'a' 'ula'ulh 'u tu tuyuwulh, 'upeenu 'i' kw' na'nuts'a' snuhwulh.

I was very happy to be together with my family on board the 11-man race canoe.

4. ha' tst ni' wulh thuythut kws nem' tst 'ushul, 'i' ni' tst q'puthut ni' 'u thunu lelum'.

When we get ready to go out on the canoe, we meet at my house.

⁶ Thank you to Donna Gerds for transcription and editing.

5. nilh skipper tst tu tsuysheyshum ni' shni' tst kwutst q'apthut; 'i' m'i sq'uq'a' tunu shuyulh tsuysheyshum, nilh skipper tst, yuwi'n'a'qw tst.

Joining us is our skipper, my brother Jamie, tsuysheyshum.

6. ni' tst sq'uq'ip ni' 'al'mutsun' 'uw' niis kw'iinu tse' kw'u nem' tus, 'uw niis kw'iinu kw'u ni' tse' tus 'uw' nilh tse' tu t'xumulu 'uw' nilhus tu 'apeenu 'i' kw' na'nuts'a' ni' hakwushut.

We wait to see how many pullers show up to see if we go on the 6-man or 11- man canoe.

7. sutst nem' 'uw' se't, t'uhwstuhw tu snuhwulh, nemustuhw 'u tu tsetsuw', thuythut, thuythut 'u tu shni's tu na'nuts'a' kws yu 'aam'ut-s tse' 'yu 'i'shul'.

We carry the canoe down to the water and each of us is assigned the seat where we will paddle.

8. ha' ch 'ula'ulh 'u tu hay 'ul' thi snuhwulh, skwey' kws yu nuts'tuls tu s-hwutusth tu slhq'a'we'lh, yu sul'iq'tul' 'ul' mukw' tu shn'is tu 'ula'ulh 'u tu snuhwulh.

When you are on the bigger canoe, you have to balance out the weight of all those on board.

9. ha' tst ni' wulh hwu saay' kws huye' tst, 'i' ni' tst tl'lim' 'uw' yu sthuthi', ni' tst 'uw' st'e 'ukw' nuts'umat shqweluwun 'u kwutst 'ushul.

Once we are ready to go, we all have our paddles in the water, we all work together and paddle as one, everyone in unison.

10. kwutst nem' wulh 'ushul 'i' ni' tst nem' tuyul nem' yul'ew' 'utl' 'unwinus, shni's tu snuneymuhw hwulmuhw.

We start out paddling north, first passing 'unwinus, which is the middle of the Snuneymuxw Reserve No. 1.

11. ni' tst nem' 'ushul nem' yul'ew' 'u kwthu xut'ustum' hwsa'luxwul.
The next place we pass is hwsa'luxwul (which is now Port Place Mall).
12. sht'es kws yu 'eey'uq tu tumuhw ni' hwu hay 'ul' tu thithu hulelum' ni' ni' 'u
kwthu nuts'a' tu ni' yu shyul'ew' tst.
*Then we pass the point (where Cameron Island use to be) and where there is now a
tall apartment building.*
13. kwutst nem' yu 'i'shul' 'i' nem' tst yul'ew' 'u tu sqwi'qwmi', xut'ustum'
Protection Island.
*We paddle through the channel to sqwi'qwmi', Protection Island. (Brechin Dock
boat ramp is on the left and Protection Island and Newcastle Island is on the
right).*
14. sutst nem' 'uw' tslhaqwthut 'u kwthu sqtheq stth'utth'kwiwun 'u kwthu skwthe',
nilh nem' shyul'ew' tst.
We go through the narrows to the left of the island; that's our route.
15. ha' ch ni' tslhaqwthut 'u kwthey' 'i' ni' ch wulh wil' tu shni's tu hwuy'qwul'ulh
xut'ustum' BC Ferries.
We go through to where the B.C. Ferries dock is.
16. ni' tst nem' 'ushul nem' tus 'u kwthu xut'ustum' stl'iilnup 'i' yelh sutst m'i
hwu'alum', m'i q'aanthut t'akw' 'ewu 'utl' tuy'tuxun.
*Then we paddle to stl'iilnup, Departure Bay; this is where we turn around to go
back home to tuy'tuxun.*
17. nilh ts'twa' tsulel' 'i' nuts'a' tintun kwutst nem' yu 'i'shul' kws nem' tst t'akw'.
It's almost an hour that we paddle and then we head home.

18. yathulh 'uw' 'iis 'ul' 'uy' nu shqweluwun kwunus ni' sq'uq'a' 'u tu
ts'lhwhulmuhw 'ula'ulh 'u tu snuhwulh.

It's always a good feeling to be together with my family on board the canoe.

19. ni' hay. hay tseep q'a'.

The end. Thank you.



Figure 6 My canoe family. (Picture taken by Zach Wilson, 2018)

4.3. *tha'thhwum'*

This is a story that has been passed down to me and it is a story that is part of my experience as a canoe puller. We have been told that *tha'thhwum'* is the name of the place known as Petroglyph Park, near the mouth of Chase River, and that the name comes from the name of a man who lived there. Diamond Jenness in field notes cited by Rozen (1985) relates this story.⁷



*Figure 7 Petroglyph of *tha'thhwum'*, man changed into a rock⁸*

“A powerful man named *tha'thhwum'* lived near the mouth of Chase River. Whenever he speared flounders, rock cod, or crabs on the beach there, he carried them up the hill to his home. After laying the fish and crabs on the rocks, he measured them by pecking the rock around them, thus making the petroglyphs still

⁷ Orthography has been updated.

⁸ This picture was featured in the video *Elders' Elders* (1995).

evident there today. In another part of the story of this man, the special method by which he cooked his food is mentioned.

tha'thhwum challenged *xeel's*, the Transformer, in another part of the story of "Petroglyph Park". After a long contest, involving the ability to impale flounders in the air, *xeel's* finally beat *tha'thhwum'* and changed him into a figure on the same rock where the fish and crabs were. His canoe was also changed into a rock on the beach below the other petroglyphs." (Rozen 1985: 47)

For many years, we have pulled past where the rocks of *tha'thhwum'* and his canoe were located.

Another version of the story tells about how the river was named after the man who lived there, a strong man named *tha'thhwum'*. He was a fisherman and every fish that he caught he would lay on the ground. He would measure them using markings on the rocks to measure how big his fish were. One day *xeel's* came and challenged *tha'thhwum'*. *tha'thhwum'* would throw a fish up in the air and catch it through the mouth with his spear. *xeel's* said, "I can do that." He threw the fish up in the air but missed the mouth with the spear. *tha'thhwum'* grabbed the spear and showed *xeel's* once more but *xeel's* got angry. In his anger he turned *tha'thhwum'* into stone. *xeel's* went to the beach and saw his canoe. *xeel's* transformed the canoe to rock as well.

Places where things are transformed by *xeel's* may be claimed as being owned by the descendants of the people mentioned in the story. The stories of *xeel's* that may be encountered in the world today are the considered evidence of the mythic happenings.

4.4. kwulsiwulh

During the summer months we would paddle up the river and store our canoe at *kwulsiwulh*, the name of the village closest to the mouth of the Nanaimo River. This village was located on the east side of the lower Nanaimo River near the northwest corner of Indian Reserve No. 3, near where *k'elats'elten* (Chester) and Eva Thomas lived and where the Nanaimo River splits into two channels (cf. Barnett, as cited in Bouchard, May 1992: 4). Chester was a master canoe carver who helped maintain our canoe. Chester

would be full of stories and legends to share with me and my teammates. For example, he shared with us the story of Newcastle Island, which is called *saysut-shun*, given in section 2.2.

This story is a teaching that my uncle Jerry Brown shared with me based on teachings he learned from his uncle Chester Thomas.

qw'iqw'um'ut tu smem't stseelhtun ni' 'utl' kwulsiwulh

Delivering fish to kwulsiwulh

A story by *humuth* (Jerry Brown) as told to *yutustana:t* (Regena Seward-Wilson)
and translated by *sti'tum'at* (Ruby Peter)

1. tun'a sqwul'qwul' 'i' nilh' sqwul'qwul's tunu shhwum'nikw, humuth.

This is a story told to me by my uncle humuth (Jerry Brown).

2. yath 'uw' tse'ts'uw'utus tu musteyuhw tunu shhwum'nikw humuth.

My uncle is always helping people.

3. 'i' yath 'uw' nilh sul'uthut-s nem's 'imush mem't 'u tu stseelhtun nemust-hwus 'u tu s'ul-hween.

One thing he always does is delivering the fish to the Elders.

4. nilh nuts'a' sqwul'qwul' 'i' syuthustham'shus.

This is one story he told me.

5. nilh kwu'elh tu sqwul'qwul' 'utl' humuth.

This then is Jerry Brown's story.

6. 'i tsun kwun'atul' 'u tu su'aasuqwt nu mun'u Elmer, 'apun sil'anum. 'i' ni' tst 'utl' kwelsiwelh, xut'ustum' Raines Road
Me and my youngest son Elmer, who was around 10 years old, were at kwulsiwulh, what's called Raines Road.
7. 'i tst yu hunumu'stuhw tu stseelhtun 'u tu lelum's tunu shhwum'nikw Chester Thomas.
We were distributing fish, going to my uncle Chester Thomas's house.
8. nus nuw'ptem'ut tunu shhwum'nikw Chester 'uw' kw'inus kws stl'i's stseelhtun, susuw' thut lhq'etsus 'uw' 'apunus nilh ni' stl'i's.
I asked Chester how many fish he wanted, and he said he only wanted 5 or 10 fish.
9. 'i tst wulh tsulel 'i' hay kwutst qw'iqw'um'ut tu stseelhtun swe' 'utl' Chester 'i' wulh tus tu stiwuns, Brian Thomas, susuw' thut tl'e's 'uw' stl'i's kw' stseelhtun.
We were about halfway through unloading of Chester's fish when his nephew Brian Thomas came and asked if he could have some fish.
10. nus 'uw' thut-stuhw. "uy'. kwunnum ch p'e' 'ukw' 'uw' sht'es 'ul' kw'un's stl'i'."
And I said, "Yes. Take as many as you want."
11. 'i' hay tskw'ush kw' stseelhtun kws stl'i' 'utl' Brian.
Well Brian wanted 20 fish.
12. nus nuw'' qw'imut tu stseelhtun 'u tunu tluk.
So I started taking them off my truck.
13. 'i' yu hunum'ustum' 'u tu tumuhw kwus yu we'wun'shum' tu stseelhtun.
So was tossing the salmon on the ground.

14. 'i' ni' ts'twa' st'e 'ukw' nets'uwuts sxun'u kwus tsakw tu lelum's.
And his house was about one hundred feet away.
15. 'i' wulh nem' yu lhalhutsthut, susuw' ts'ewutum 'u tunu munu Elmer, nemustuhws
'u tu lelum's 'utl' Brian.
*It was starting to get dark at this time, so my son Elmer started to help bring the
fish to Brian's house.*
16. hay 'ul' thithu tu stseelhtun, hay 'ul' hwutus, susuw' yu hwukw'ustum' 'ul' 'utl'
Elmer tu stseelhtun tu ni' hunum'ust-hwus 'u tu lelum' 'utl' Brian.
*Well the fish was so big for Elmer that he had to drag the fish all the way to Brian's
house.*
17. nus nuw' t'eyuq' nus' uw' thut-stuhw, "uw' nilh tse' 'ul' tu Brian. 'ilhe, Elmer!"
I got mad and said, "Brian can do it. Let's go Elmer!"
18. thut tunu shhwum'nikw Chester, hwtumqinum, "ni' ch qul'qul'iil't tu ni'
shqwaluwuns," nilh tu Elmer nilh ni' shnu'asth.
*My uncle Chester said in a stern voice, "You are ruining his heart and mind"; he
was pointing to Elmer.*
19. thut-st-hwus, "tl'lim' ch nuw' qul'qul'iil't tu shqwaluwuns.
He said, "You are really ruining his heart and mind.
20. stl'i's kws yu ts'ets'uw'ulhtun's 'i' 'i ch qel'qul'iil't tu ni' smem't."
He wants to be of assistance to others and you are ruining his gift."
21. 'uwu tsun niin' tl'lim' 'uw' yu xetst tu ni' sul'uthut 'utl' Elmer.
I didn't consider what Elmer was doing.

22. tl'lim' tsun nuw' tsmulmelum thut-stuhw tu Chester.

I apologized to Chester.

23. tu ni' shhwiiw'tsuste'lt 'utl' Chester, shnem's yu hwuw'tsustus tu stl'ul'iqulh
sht'es 'ay'i'thut kwus yu ts'its'usum'

*The teaching that Chester was passing down to me was the gifts that our children
have are the gifts that we show and teach them as they grow.*

24. nilhs ch st'e 'uw' niis yu hwiiw'tsust kws nilhs tu 'uy' shqwaluwun tu ni' 'u tu
tth'ele's, 'uwu nilhus smutth'qun's.

Teach them to always think and talk from their heart not their minds.

25. niilh yuhw 'a'lu stsekwul' tu ni' yu sqwaqwul' tu syuw'en'tst.

This is how our ancestors spoken.

26. nan 'uw' 'uy'ulh tu syuw'en' tst.

Our Elders had a very good way about them.

27. nilh kwu'elh stl'atl'um' kws yu 'aam'ust-s tu stl'ul'iqulh 'u tu snuw'uyulh.

This is the way we should be teaching the school children today.

28. tun'a sqwul'qwul' 'i' nilh sqwul'qwul's tunu shhwum'nikw humuth.

This is a story told to me by my uncle humuth (Jerry Brown).

4.5. hwsa'luxwul

The name *hwsa'luxwul* means 'place of grass'. This was one of the places that I grew up paddling in my canoe and swimming as a child. This place is located at the Nanaimo River, just upstream from the highway bridge (Cedar Bridge), by the Nanaimo Indian Reserve No. 2.

There were longhouses located here when my ancestors lived here. The picture below is of one of those longhouses.



Figure 8 Joe Wyse's father, "Sugnuston, and unidentified female in front of his house with painting and sculpture portraying the origin of the Solexwel, circa 1858. Image A-16-153 courtesy Vancouver Archives" (Cryer 2007: 204).

The story of the pole pictured above is as follows:⁹

One night there was a very big storm. The two little people sat in their house and all about outside they heard noises in the air, like lots of people talking *-naan'um'* we call it! By and by the woman went outside to look at the storm. “Come,” she called to her husband, “come out and listen.” The man went out, and the wind was so strong that he could not stand but had to kneel on the ground. Well, there he was kneeling down, his hands on the ground and looking up to the sky. Never had he seen such rain: and the lightning —*s-hwuhwa'us* is our name — kept coming like great fires! Suddenly there was a loud noise! Something like iron fell about the man had pains went all over him and down his arms into the ground, then he fell over like a dead man.

When he woke up the rain had stopped, the lightning had gone away, and he was kneeling again and holding to each of his hands was a little child. They were both boys just what he and his wife had always wanted! He carried the boys into the house, and to one they gave the name *shumuhw* which means rain, and the other they called *schy-as-thun* or thunder, and the man gave himself the name *thq'ult-hw*, because he was kneeling when all that happened. (Cryer 2007: 207).

The power of the elements have long understood by our ancestors. Today, the power of the elements is misunderstood, studied only for the sake of predictioning weather patterns. But from a traditional perspective, the elements brought many gifts. The stories give a strong sense of how each locale has unique memories, an amazing story, and sacred lessons for all to follow. I invite you to look at these great lands through an ancestral lens. This is intended as a gentle reminder that these lands and its resources touch every aspect of our lives. The Indigenous people have long realized that the privilege of these great gifts comes with a great responsibility.

⁹ Orthography of Hul'q'umi'um' words have been updated where possible.

Chapter 5. Linguistic decoding of some place names

The importance of place names cannot be overemphasized, serving to reveal not only a territory and our relationship to it, but also the generations of events that have shaped our history. In the above chapters, I have explored ways that place names and their stories are used to articulate ideas of territory. The canon of narratives that are associated with place names, much like those associated with our Indigenous personal names, are powerful linguistic resources that express certain storied senses of place and ancient connections. When people use place names as linguistic shorthand for complex social metaphors, they have learned to think with the land. Decoding and learning the linguistic message embodied in a place name allows us to connect with our ancestors and continually renew our collective cultural memory with that place. By linking our own individual experiences to the land, we make new, important connections that in turn become part of our collective cultural heritage.

Because of the importance in culture in decoding linguistic place names, it is not a job that should be undertaken solely by a linguist or anthropologist who is not a member of the community. Afable and Beeler describe work on place names from outsiders where “poorly heard” and “imperfectly recorded” place names are analyzed and compared with words in existing dictionaries of Indigenous languages, without adequate knowledge of the grammar of the language. A lack of understanding and context results in “highly conjectural and often fanciful etymologies” that cannot be accepted without critique (Afable & Beeler 1996: 189).¹⁰

It was for this reason that the place name research by the Snuneymuxw First Nation was supervised by our own Elders partnered with anthropologists and linguists, including Lorraine Littlefield and Donna Gerds, who brought decades of experience

¹⁰ Afable & Beeler (1996: 189) lists some publication in which such faulty analyses are discussed, including Beeler (1954, 1957), Day (1997), Goddard (1977a), and Kenny (1956)

collaborating with our Elders to this project. The result was a map of the Snuneymuxw territory with 64 Hul'q'umi'num' place names.¹¹

Around the world, place names are known to have deep cultural significance — providing a link to a people to the lands they live in.

Place names reflect and to an important extent constitute a detailed, encyclopedic knowledge of the environment, and they have much to tell about how native peoples perceive, communicate about, and make use of their surroundings. They name prominent landmarks and places that were important for the plants, animals, and other resources found there. Other names indicate the sites of recurring activities of singular events involving members of the community or supernatural figures. Sounds, such as echoes and the noise of tide rips, crucial factors in foggy weather, are described in place names. (Afable & Beeler 1996: 185)

Below, I present twenty-eight of the place names organized by semantic classes: place names that are associated with animals, plants, natural features, directions or locations, or that give a description of the place based on the way the place was used or an event that happened at that place. I show the linguistic decoding and explain how the meaning of the name relates to the cultural or cognitive significance of the place.¹² I present this formatted as a handout so that it can be easily used for teaching purposes. For each place, I give the Hul'q'umi'num' place name with the linguistic derivation, the loose translation of the name, its location, and also any additional cultural or historical notes. You will find a map below with the number of each place name.

¹¹ Some place names are listed in Gerdts et al. (1997) and sound files of these can be found on Gerdts & Penrowley (1999).

¹² Thank you to Donna Gerdts for sharing her handout on linguistics of Snuneymuxw place names.

ANIMALS

<i>Map key</i> ¹³	<i>Place name</i>	<i>Linguistic information</i>	<i>Location</i>
(1)	qwunus	whale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rock looks like a whale with its mouth open 	rock west of Indian Point, located past tl'eel't-hw (False Narrows) channel by Gabriola.
<p><i>Additional note:</i> At one time there were many whales, especially humpbacks, in the Strait of Georgia. Commercial whaling in the strait started in the 1860s. In 1907, a whaling station was established at Page's Lagoon, Nanaimo, and a few months later, after killing 97 whales, they were all gone. Humpbacks were not seen again in the strait until 1976. Snuneymuxw people off the outer coast of Gabriola Island may have hunted whales, though the more usual large mammal gathered was the sea lion.</p>			
(2)	sqwiqwmi'	little dog <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diminutive form of the noun sqwumey' "dog" 	The beach at Cameron Island
(3)	stl'i'tl'uluqum' stleluqum=wild beast, fierce thing	little monster <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diminutive form of st'eluqum "wild beast, fierce creature" 	100 yards south of p'tth'un'utsus , near the mouth of the Nanaimo River
(4)	sxuyum	goldeneye duck	The Millstone river
(5)	hw'ulhuquy'um	snake place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'ulhqi' 'snake' and the affixes hw=... =um adds the meaning 'a place replete with ...'	Snake Island
<p><i>Additional note:</i> This site is linked to a legend about a young girl from Departure Bay who disobeys an important food taboo and eats too many ferns. She becomes pregnant and is put on the island where she gives birth to snakes. Her parents then rescue her leaving the snakes behind. These snakes,</p>			

¹³ See Figure 9.

	Elders say, are still there but you may not see them until you step on the beach when they will suddenly appear underneath your feet. The Snuneymuxw have a strong aversion to snakes and were told to never eat fish caught too close to this island for fear that they had been feeding on the snakes.		
(6)	hwkw'eets'um	dog fish place • kw'eets' 'dog fish, shark' hw= =um add the meaning 'a place replete with ...'	A lily pond after kw'ula'hw on the Nanaimo River

PLANTS

(7)	hwqethulhp	ironwood place • qethulhp "ocean spray, aka ironwood plant" hw= adds the meaning 'a place associated with ...'	Located at I.R. #5 Indian Point (Gabriola).
<i>Additional note:</i> Ironwood or ocean spray is a very hard wood that was used to make a variety of tools including digging sticks for harvesting roots.			
(8)	hwsa'luxwul	grassy place • saxwul 'grass' with =l= infix meaning plural. hw='a place of...'	North end of I.R. #1, near a little river (grassy land). Port Place Mall, Centre Douglas Treaty Village.
<i>Additional note:</i> This location where Port Place Mall now stands was a central village referenced in the Douglas Treaty.			

NATURAL FEATURES

<i>Map key</i>	<i>Place name</i>	<i>Linguistic information</i>	<i>Location</i>
(9)	spe'ulhxun	meadows •spulhxun “field, clearing”	An open field near Harmac, a gathering place, also a hunting ground.
(10)	snuwulnuts	sheltered bay • lexical suffix =nuts “bottom” is used for bays	Fishing ground near Dodd Narrows
<i>Additional note:</i> This site was an important fishing campsite that was used during the summer months. An important resource here aside from fish was horse clams. Elders maintain that there are special volcanic rocks found on the beach that do not crack when used in the fire pits steaming clams.			
(11)	sq'uyup	waterfall	The falls, a natural pot for salmon
(12)	thithma'	icy • thima' “ice” is modified to sthithuma' “icy”	Bay facing out just before Indian Point (Gabriola).
<i>Additional note:</i> Elders say this bay is the last place ice melts on the island in the spring.			
(13)	hwta'luw'nuts hw=determiner staluw=river	place where river branches • sta'luw' ‘river’ and the affixes hw= ‘place of’ lexical suffix =nuts “bottom” is used for bays	At Hammond Bay “a small branch of a river”.
(14)	tth'itth'xutqsun	gravelly point • diminutive of tth'xut=gravel = the lexical suffix =qsun “nose” is used for points of land	Indian Point, I.R. #5, physical description of the beach at Indian Point.

(15)	tl'uts'u	rock	Big rock on south side of Gabriola Island.
<i>Additional note:</i> This is the word for rock in the Snuneymuxw dialect. Other Hul'q'umi'num' speakers use the word <i>smeent</i> for rock.			
(16)	'iliyuthun	mouth of a river	Mouth of Nanaimo River
(17)	shqa'qul	puddles	Entrance below a small island at the mouth of the Polkinghorne Creek River.

DIRECTIONS/LOCATIONS

(18)	qulastun qul - bad asum- to face a direction	face backwards • qul - bad lexical suffix =as “face”	Mark Bay – west side of Newcastle Island (backwards). The bay turned the wrong way, South side
(19)	tuytuxun	upstream side • tuyt “go upstream” lexical suffix =exun “arm, side”	South part of Indian Reserve No. 1
(20)	wuqw'uxun	downstream side • wuqw' “go downstream” lexical suffix =exun “arm, side”	North end of Indian Reserve No. 1
(21)	'unwinus	middle ridge 'unwulh – middle lexical suffix =inus “chest” also used for ridges of land.	Center part of Indian Reserve No. 1

DESCRIPTIVE

<i>Map key</i>	<i>Place name</i>	<i>Linguistic information</i>	<i>Location</i>
(22)	lhap'qw'um'	boiling	Village/campsite near Newcastle marina
(23)	sts'e'shun ts'e' = to be on	step with foot • ts'e' = to be on lexical suffix =shun "foot"	The shallow part of the Nanaimo River, the first "riffle" near Chester Thomas' property.
(24)	thuwam'	bleeding	Petroglyph park
(25)	hwtsumiilutsun	close together • tsimul "to get close" • utsun "back" hw= "place of"	Twin beaches
<i>Additional note:</i> two beaches close together. This site was also a fishing camp in the early spring to late August where Snuneymuxw people caught spring salmon and blueback (coho). One elder remembers a story about 7 foot giants who lived here and are buried close by			
(26)	hwiiyum'	good water place • 'uy' "good" hw= place associated with water	A spring in the creek that drains into Halam Creek, a quarter mile from its mouth "clear Water"
(27)	hwthiqun	loud voice place • thi "big" lexical suffix qun "throat, voice"	High bluff near Hognn Lake
(28)	p'tth'unutsus	prickly wrist • p'utth' "sew, prick" =unutsus "wrist"	Big rock at the mouth of the Nanaimo River

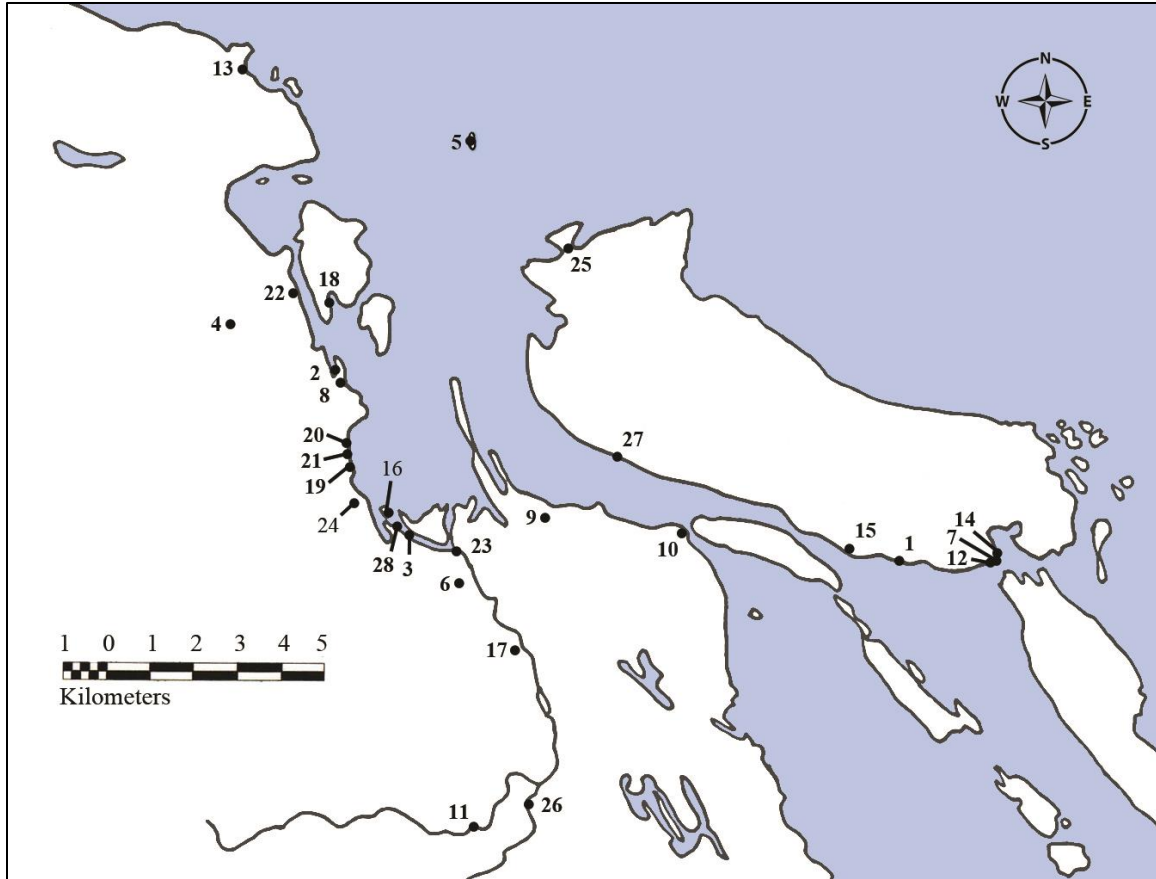


Figure 9 Snuneymuxw place names mentioned in Chapter 5

These were just a few of the place names in our territory. I used these to illustrate how the linguistic coding relates to the meaning associated with a place. We know many more place names, some of them we understand linguistically, and others we have lost the thread of where the name comes from and what it means. Many other names have been lost altogether. We are deeply grateful for the knowledge that has been handed down from generation to generation so that new generations of Hul'q'umi'num' language learners can come to understand the true meaning of places in our territory.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

This community is my community. Like everything else in life, we recognize that language learning must have purpose, be connected to all that is sacred and speak to the will of the land. It is well known that one must stay focused and disciplined while studying the language, that is while learning in a traditional way, one cannot be fearful, depressed or have any other negative emotions. As I reflect back on my life, I realize that the teachings were part of our everyday life, and I now know that part of the teaching is to spend time on the land learning to draw inspiration, strength and purpose with every visit.

I began this journey in an attempt to understand the origin of Hul'q'umi'num', to embrace its sacredness, and to consider our language in a context that moves it beyond a tool for communication. Most importantly, it has been an effort to live with and respect the language in the way of our ancestors. What I have come to realize is that the essence of our people is highly dependent upon our ability to sustain our spirituality. This most deeply held belief is the cornerstone of our education system, for it offers a way of learning that has been built on the relationship between language and culture in the context of the natural world. In what follows is an attempt to briefly answer the impact of reviving our language and the sacred aspect of the spoken word. In essence my research is about doing meaningful work that will contribute to reviving our language and a way of life.

First, my grandfather, one of my mentors, constantly reminded us that the Hul'q'umi'num' is a gift from the Creator. Since the beginning of time, the Elders have passed down our laws, teachings ways of life and guidelines through Hul'q'umi'num'. These laws were passed down from one generation to generation, that is, our laws live in Hul'q'umi'num'. There was always an emphasis on the spiritual essence of Hul'q'umi'num' and its ability to offer the gift of connectivity to the natural world. These are our truths, defining the relationship between land, language and culture. It becomes obvious that the language is the bridge between the physical, or the land and her natural elements if you will, and the spirits within. What I have come to realize is that the

language and culture work together, through rituals and ceremonies in such a way, that when they work together, they produce a much greater outcome than they would by working in isolation. Without language this will all be lost.

Second, from a Coast Salish perspective, our Elders, again, have told us that our language is a spiritual language; it is the language used when communicating with the spiritual world. As I have witnessed, when you string words together in the right order, in the right place, and with the right frame of mind, like magic, the spiritual energies are revealed. Moreover, Hul'q'umi'num' has the ability, with an emphasis on words and phrases to describe Coast Salish people's relationships with their families, the land and the water, and the Creator. Without the language, our people will not understand these unique relationships. But, today, we pause and think about the place names, as a means of growing and learning through language and culture.

This paper has shown how my family history and culture has provided Hul'q'umi'num' place names that have been handed down from my ancestors, to me, then to my children. Sharing our culture connects us to our land and language by using our ancestral names. With every crackle in the forest and every whisper of the wind, we hear the sounds of our Hul'q'umi'num' language. With every sound that I hear when I'm running in the forest, paddling on the canoe, I connect to my culture and language. I am able to share my personal history with my children regarding stories of our territories. This will help to keep our place names from being in danger of becoming extinct.

References

- Afable, Patricia O. & Beeler, Madison S. 1996. Place-names. In *Handbook of North American Indians* 17, *Languages*, Ives Goddard (ed.). 185-199. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution.
- Bouchard, Randall. 1992. *Notes on Nanaimo Ethnography and Ethnohistory*. Brentwood Bay, B.C.: I.R. Wilson, Consultants Ltd.
- Cryer, Beryl Mildred. 2007. *Two houses half-buried in sand: Oral traditions of the Hul'q'umi'num' Coast Salish of Kuper Island and Vancouver Island* (Chris Arnett, ed.). Vancouver, B.C.: Talonbooks.
- Gerdts, Donna. 1997. *'i'lhe' xwulmuxwqun*. First Nations Representatives and Nanaimo School District 68.
- Gerdts, Donna, Edwards, Leonard, Ulrich, Charles, & Compton, Brian (eds.). 1997. *Hul'q'umi'num' Words: An English-to-Hul'q'umi'num' and Hul'q'umi'num'-to-English Dictionary*. Prepared for the Chemainus, Nanaimo, and Nanoose First Nations and Nanaimo School District No. 68
- Gerdts, Donna, & Hinkson, Mercedes. 1996. *Hul'q'umi'num' Phonics*. First Nations Representatives and Nanaimo School District 68.
- Gerdts, Donna, & Penrowley, Colleen (eds.). 1999. *Halkomelem Talking Dictionary*. Nanaimo First Nations and Nanaimo School District No. 68. (3500 words with sound sorted by semantic field in Multimedia Toolbox.
- Littlefield, Loraine. 2000. The Snunéymuxw village at False Narrows. *SHALE* 1, 3-11.
- Our Elders' Elders, tu snuwayulhs tu s'ul'eluxw*. 1995. Film prepared from Nanaimo Museum exhibit.
- Rozen, David Lewis. 1985. Place-names of the Island Halkomelem Indian People. MA Thesis. Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
- Snuneymuxw Placenames. 1996. Map produced by Snuneymuxw First Nations Treaty Office. Nanaimo, British Columbia.

Thom, Brian D. 2005. Coast Salish senses of place: Dwelling, meaning, power, property and territory in the Coast Salish World. PhD Thesis. Montreal: McGill University.

Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia, 2007 BCS 1700, Victoria Registry No. 90-0913.
(November 20, 2007)

White, William, & George-Green, Rita. 2011. These are the Gifts of the Old People.
Snuneymuxw News 5(23), 6.