

Important Dates in Nechako Plateau Area

- 1745 People move out of Chunlac after a series of military exchanges with the Chilcotins. Most of the villagers settle with kin at Lheidli, Saik' uz and Nak' azdli
- 1755 The great Chief Kwah (Gw eh) is born, son of nobleman, Tsa luk ulhye, from Binche and a Fraser Lake woman. He had a brother, Oe hulh tzoen, known as Hoolson to the traders and a sister.
- 1805 Trading post established at Stuart Lake
- 1815 Salmon failure (Fraser-Nechako runs)¹
- 1823 Chief Kwah hosts a great balhats in late June and people come from near and far
In the 1820s and 30s, the territories were controlled by the clan system, and the great numbers of furs Kwah traded were probably acquired from relatives and sons
Also, the deneza controlled the fish weirs and Kwah provided the Fort with fully one-third of the 36,000 salmon they purchased annually
- 1824 Male population of Stuart Lake area, including K' uz che, Dzit lainli: 265
These include five chiefs and seven men of note@
Indians from Yekooche and Binche trade 2620 salmon at Ft. St. James; also, two Yekooche Indians come in with 990 salmon for trade
- 1826 108 men have credit at Ft. St. James; 189 at Fraser Lake; 120 at Lake Babine
- 1828 Nearly all villagers from Tache and Nak' azdli attend a balhats at Binche
- 1830 Salmon runs fail
Balhats held at Stuart Lake
- 1831 169 men have credit at Ft. St. James
In June, villagers from Fraser, Stuart Lakes and Fort George attend balhats at Nak' azdli
- 1832 Salmon runs fail; Fraser Lake Indians face famine
Balhats at Stuart Lake
- 1836 Smallpox in northern interior and south coast of Alaska to 1838

¹ From ATraplines and Timber: Social and Economic Change Among the Carrier Indians of Northern British Columbia@ by Douglas R. Hudson. Thesis for requirements of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Alberta, 1983 unless otherwise noted

Several people at Nad' leh Bun die of starvation
 [Anderson reports that 36,000 dried salmon were purchased and stored; other posts obtained similar numbers]

- 1838 Smallpox epidemic wipes out all the Carriers south of the Bulkley River
 The Cheslatta people are almost wiped out (Borden 1951)
- 1840 The great Chief Kwah (Gw'eh) dies
- 1842 63 "mountain Sekani" starve to death at Ft. McLeod
- 1847 Measles epidemic spreads to interior
 Stuart Lake Indians are facing famine; an abundant salmon run arrives by September
- 1849 Salmon fishing poor because water is too high to set weirs
 Balhats held at Stuart Lake, K' uz che
 Measles raging in all villages
- 1850s Caribou migrate out of the Stuart Lake area, probably due to climatic shifts and disturbance of their habitat by gold-seekers
- 1850 McLeod Lake: few survive the great sickness and starvation
 Measles epidemic devastated the whole district
- 1851 Salmon runs fail
 Parties arrive from Fort George and McLeod Lake reporting starvation
 Balhats at Stuart Lake
- 1852 Villagers from Lake Babine attend balhats at Nak' azdli
- 1855 Salmon runs fail; not one salmon is caught in Stuart Lake
- 1858 New Caledonia becomes part of Colony of BC
 Governor James Douglas grants Indian people the right to pre-empt land
- 1860 Colonial Ordinance prohibits Indians from pre-empting land. The province of BC adopted this policy and enforced it until 1948
- 1862 Smallpox brought in by Chilcotins kills "immense majority" of Indians
 HBC vaccinates Carriers around Stuart Lake and Fraser Lake
 Father Morice documents two traders deliberately distributing smallpox-infested blankets; this re-initiates the epidemic and takes another high death toll.²

²Morice, AG. The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia.

- 1868 Using the Durieu system, a chief, captain and watchmen are appointed in each Carrier village. Chief's duty: to vaguely perform the absent priest's duty; captains are the ministers of the whip; watchmen report infractions to chief and council and the soldiers act as policemen or constables transporting the accused to chief and council and keeping them in custody
 The priests ban polygyny, matrilineal inheritance, gambling, conjuring and drinking
- 1870 Leon cho Prince, son of (Zamejal) Simeon LePrince and his second wife, *Dushish* (Leticia), is born. Leon cho becomes a great leader and takes the name *Ts'oh Daih*
- 1871 The Colony of BC becomes a province of Canada
 Reserve lands are established for: K'uz che, Tache, Nak'azdli and Binche + four on Babine Lake. This coincided with gold discoveries in the Omineca Mountains
- 1873 Oblates establish mission at Fort St. James on the site of a "winter village"
 Small churches are built in surrounding villages
 A residential school is opened at Williams Lake and boys from the Stuart Lake area attend; in 1876 it is opened to girls. Native children from the surrounding area attend, including children from the Stuart Lake area
- 1878 By now, there are twenty houses built beside the the Mission at Ft. St. James
 Agricultural implements are supplied to Stuart Lake Indians
- 1879 Population at Stuart Lake (no numbers for Nak'azdli) 94
- 1884 The Indian Act outlaws the potlatch and reduces the legitimacy of matrilineal descent
- 1888 The most debilitating of epidemics to date, combined with various factors makes 1877-8 as especially difficult year, to say the least:
 Saik'uz trappers not extended further credit because their territories are trapped out
 Scarcity of fur-bearing animals
 Unprecedented mildness and brevity of winter
 A great deal of sickness
 Starvation among the Indians
 A number of excellent fur trappers die
 Salmon fisheries fail
 Absence of rabbits and other food animals
 Hardships force a number of movements of people throughout the region;
 ie Babine women marry into Tache because of starvation
- 1890s Hudson Bay Company is concerned about growing numbers on their "Relief List for Starving Indians"

- 1890 An Indian Agent, Loring, is appointed at Hazelton and his jurisdiction includes most of the Nechako Plateau.
- 1892 Whooping cough at Binche
Father Morice actively encouraging traplines to be given to male heads of families, rather than through the matrilineal clan system
Railway construction was in the plans; so, Indian reserves were re-surveyed
- 1893 Population Stuart Lake 166
- 1895 Influenza causes quite a number of deaths at Fraser Lake and Saik'uz
- 1905 Fisheries officers begin destroying salmon weirs at Babine Lake
Salmon fishing is prohibited in the mouth of streams, and restricted to evenings and weekdays; thus nets have to be set in the evening and removed in the morning - this will affect the Stuart, Fraser and Babine Lakes shortly
- 1906-10 Father Coccolla notes that people are still reluctant to practice filial inheritance, and matrilineal kin are still claiming their traditional territories
- 1906 The first moose is sighted at Nation Lake; they begin moving south fairly rapidly
- 1908 Salmon spawn obtained from twelve miles up the Sutherland River for a hatchery on the creek draining Cunningham Lake
Stuart Lake Indians obtain fish from hatchery after salmon runs fail
- 1909 Salmon runs fail
Plans to build a railway trigger a land boom: land is taken up in the Fraser, Nechako, Bulkley and Kispiox Valleys
Forest industries also took an interest in the valleys adjacent to the Grand Trunk line
The first sawmill in the district is opened at Ft. George
The construction of the railway integrates the region into the national economy as a resource hinterland
- 1910 Stuart Lake agency created to deal with Stuart and Fraser Lakes area
1910-14 - many Indians find employment building the railway
- 1911 Federal government offers Barricade Treaties to Indians on Fraser River system; the Dakelh people at Stuart and Fraser Lakes agree to dismantle their weirs in return for nets, farming implements, a school and other provisions
Fraser and Stuart Lakes have the lightest sockeye runs in history
- 1912 Babine Lake salmon run is small
Father Coccolla arranges the sale of Fort George to the Grand Trunk Railway. The *Lheidli tenne* are forced to move from their traditional territory to their present location at

Shelley

- 1913 Salmon runs collapse due to railway construction creating a slide in the Fraser River: no sockeye reach Stuart Lake
 On the coast, the commercial fishermen catch 31 million sockeye salmon - a record still unsurpassed
 Many families from Stuart and Fraser Lakes shift to fishing in Babine Lake
 Rose Prince, daughter of Jean Marie (Zaa Marie) Prince and Agathe Todd of Inzana Lake (Nak' azdli) is born. She was very devoted to the children at Lejac Residential School and to the Church. Five years after her death in 1949, witnesses testified her remains were incorruptable; hence, there is a move to canonize her as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church
- 1914 A day school is established at Fort St. James; it later becomes a residential school with students from other villages attending
 Thirty families fishing on Stuart Lake catch 500 salmon; only 390 caught at Fraser Lake
 Railway construction begins in region
- 1915 * An estimated 20 salmon caught in Stuart Lake
 * Spring salmon, which spawn in the Stuart River, have a strong year with approximately 5,000 springs spawning in the upper reaches of the river
 * Fort Fraser band reports to Royal Commission that there have been few salmon in the past two years; the Chief cites the commercial fisheries and the banning of the barricades as causal factors. He also noted they were now using the nets supplied by the government
 * The DIA reports dramatic increases in relief payments at its Lytton, Williams Lake and Stuart Lake agencies, and the Indians complain of the scarcity of salmon due to an obstruction in the Fraser River
 * The Indians from Stuart and Fraser Lakes note the wasteful trapping methods of the non-native trappers is depleting the beaver. They further point out that they have conserved the animals since time immemorial hence they request their ancient privilege to hunt and fish as they always have.
- 1916 Babine Lake suffers a shortage of salmon
 Fewer than 100 salmon are caught in Stuart Lake
 Stuart Lake bands request more reserve lands from the Royal Commission, but are denied
- 1917 Population Stuart Lake area: 373
- 1918 Spanish influenza: 42 die at Saik'uz, 46 at Prince George, 70+ at Stuart Lake
 Whole families are wiped out; many die on their traplines; so search parties are sent to look for missing family members
 Ft. St. James opens its first sawmill
- 1920s When the provincial government begins registering traplines, many are passed down

patrilineally

The RCMP establishes its presence and begins to assist the Indian Agents in enforcing the

Indian Act

Caribou herds have virtually disappeared from the Stuart Lake region

- 1922 Status Indian children are legislated into residential schools
Lejac Residential School opens at Fraser Lake
- 1924 RCMP report conflict between Indians and non-Indians because the non-natives are encroaching on the territory needed for subsistence **[place?]**
- 1926 Traplines are registered and Indians are allowed only individual registration, despite the overall corporate nature of resource ownership in BC
- 1927 Indian Act is amended and makes it illegal to hire a lawyer to address the issue of land claims
- 1929 Stuart Lake Indians catch approximately 9,000 sockeye. This is reportedly the first time in ten years they have caught more than they used in a fresh state
- 1930s Moose begin appearing in considerable numbers throughout the northern Fraser River watershed
- 1931 RCMP lay charges of witchcraft against two Moricetown Indians. They were given suspended sentences
- 1934 By now, a considerable number of moose have moved into the Stuart Lake area and people fished for salmon only to supplement their diet of moose
- 1939 Mercury mine at Pinchi Lake opens through 1945. Many Indians work there
- 1940s The construction of fish ladders in the Fraser River canyon begins to bring salmon numbers up, although not to their pre-1913 numbers
- 1946 Of approximately 3000 traplines registered, 1560 were held by Indians
Stuart Lake Indians petition to have their traplines returned citing ignorance of trapping regulations and the failure of the Indian Agents to inform them of regulations. They request that their ancient privilege to hunt and fish for food purposes be restored without any restrictions whatever (Submission No. 21, pp. 874-5, dated July 1946)
- 1947 Indians can vote in provincial elections if they give up their Indian status
- 1949 Day schools open at Saik'uz and Ft. St. James (St. Maria Goretti)
Indians can vote provincially without giving up any rights

- 1952 ca. The Catholic Church removes the Indians from the Mission Lands at Ft. St. James to the reserve lands at the head of the lake. They do not provide any compensation for the lands, the buildings, nor the Indian labour used to clear the lands
- 1952 The legislation outlawing the potlatch, and prohibiting the hiring of lawyers to address the land question is quietly dropped
- 1960s The pulp industry centred in Prince George leads to consolidation of logging companies, vertical corporate integration and year-round operations. This undermines the seasonal bush employment Indians depended on to supplement their trapping and subsistence activities
Towards the end of the decade, there is increased dependence on social systems
- 1960 The Indians of Stuart Lake request a Tree Farm License. Farming and logging have alienated their trapping activities; therefore they request a TFL and non-natives to teach them the management of this enterprise
- 1968 *Deneza' Ts'oh Daih*, Leon cho Prince, dies at Nak'azdli
- 1968 The Catholic priest orders the razing of 24 Camp at Ft. St. James, the settlement where villagers from upper Stuart Lake lived during the summer while they worked in the sawmills
- 1972 The British Columbia Railway (BCR), in a dispute with the Tl'azt'enne, argues that their traplines are under-utilized; therefore, they should not have to compensate for loss of income for trapping
- 1975 The Tl'azt'enne blockade the construction of the BCR through their reservation because it interfered with their hunting, fishing and trapping livelihoods
- 1982 The Tl'azt'enne receive a timber harvesting license within their traditional territory