

# What's in a Name?

Do you sometimes wonder about the place names in a region that is new to you? Here is a glossary of some of those in the Bella Coola Valley, many which have their roots in First Nations language and culture.

## Atnarko

An Interior First-Nations name meaning *"The river where the Nuxalk people live"*



Photo courtesy BCVT/James Taylor

## Bella Coola

Anthropologist Franz Boas, who lived among the Nuxalk and studied their language reported in 1898 that *"Bella Coola"* derived from *"Bilxula"*, a term used by people in Bella Bella to identify the people living in the Nuxalk (Bella Coola) Valley.

## Bentinck Arm & Burke Channel

Inlets leading from Bella Coola to the Pacific Ocean. The Channel was named by explorer Captain George Vancouver for 18th Century British statesman Edmund Burke, and its two Arms (North and South) were named for William Cavendish-Bentinck, British Prime Minister.



Photo courtesy BCVT/Ximena de la Macorra

## Clayton Falls

Clayton Falls was named for John Clayton, trader/storekeeper, who took over the Hudson's Bay Company operation when it closed in 1882. His family was among 16 non-aboriginal people living here at the time. Called *"Kw'qwla"* by the Nuxalk people, it is believed to mean *"Place of Many Faces"*.



Photo courtesy BCVT

## Firvale

Some say the Seventh-Day-Adventist migrants who first settled the area were directed *"Fur-ther"* up the Valley. Others say it was named for the Douglas Fir forests in the area. The Nuxalk call the area (its sunny slopes popular for berry picking) *"Noomst: The Sound of Berries Popping Underfoot"*.

## Four Mile

This Nuxalk village site, Mile 4 from the log dump west of the Harbour, takes its name from the days of large-scale commercial logging.

## Hagensborg

*"Borg"* is Norwegian for village or town. Hagensborg is named for Hagen Christensen, who in 1895 built a store and a small collection of buildings that became known as Hagen's Borg. He became the first postmaster.



Photo courtesy BCVT



Photo courtesy BCVT/Michael Wigle

*Heckman Pass* at the top of "The Hill" was named for early Atnarko trapper Max Heckman, whose brother Lou drowned in the Atnarko. They are both buried near Stuie.

