

Chris Edaakie Story  
Interview Notes  
March 14-16, 2004

#1: CHRIS (1 hour, 12 minutes)

- = Indian name is Nawetsa (Arikora) "I am going, but I shall return."
  - = VERIFY how Chris' Indian name is sourced and its spelling.
- = That is the same name as our drumming group and the drum itself: "I am going, but I shall return."
  - = Drawn from a Plains Tribe culture (Chris' family very interested in exchange and relationships with Plains cultures)
- = Most of the songs we sing honor our warriors: ask for blessing in defense of the people and their land
- = The Zuni are traditionally agricultural people: "Our whole Zuni lifestyle is built around the agricultural idea: moisture, planting, corn, grain, the seeds of life."
- = The power of song: "We (Nawetsa) sing an honor song my father wrote for our mother The Salt Woman. It expresses our belief in the sacredness of the Salt Lake in Utah. I guess it works pretty well, because we were in a battle with a mining company to protect the lake, and we won. They were preparing to strip one of the Plains Indians most sacred sites and we stopped them.
  
- = (5:00) My career as an artist for social change started when I was four years old.
  - = "My grandparents both grew up the traditional way."
  - = "They were one of the families within the community whose roots were very strong. My grandfather was one of the religious leaders, a medicine man, in the village."
  - = "People would line up outside his home asking for my grandfather to conduct a ritual for someone in their family, or set a bone, or give them spiritual advice."
  - = "Every summer, I lived with my grandparents in their farmhouse by the lake. There were horses to ride, corn to plant."
  - = "It was very romantic being brought up the old way, but it was hard, too: there was also no running water, no electricity, no TV. No video games, and I loved video games at a very early age."
  - = "Those summers were when I gained my traditional knowledge, and my grandparents were my teachers."
    - = grandfather brought me to the kiva and explained about my role as a religious man (VERIFY: "Red Fire Ant Society" --- is there a logo?)
    - = grandmother taught me...
    - = father taught me the traditional prayers and songs after grandfather passed on
  - = "One night, at the end of the summer when I was 4 years old, I decided I was not going back to my parents"
    - = In Zuni culture, babies are more in touch with the future: "I saw the way I wanted to spend my life. I decided that I wanted to acquire the traditional knowledge that my grandparents had.

= “The traditional way is not only about the past. Zuni believe that tradition roots us always: where we’ve been, where we are today and where we’re going tomorrow.”

= (12:00) “When I moved back into my father’s home as a teenager, my life changed dramatically.”

= Grandparents were farmers, father is hunter-gatherer

= “Some of my fondest memories are going hunting (waterfowl, songbirds) with father in the woods.”

= He taught me how to take the feathers from these birds and willow-sticks are used in prayer songs

= DETAILS: info here about hunting, ceremony