

FORREST CUCH, Executive Director, Utah Div. of Indian Affairs
LONG BEFORE SPANISH CONQUISTADORS CROSSED THE
LANDSCAPE... BEFORE TRAPPERS FOLLOWED THE RIVERS
AND STREAMS... LONG BEFORE PIONEERING SETTLEMENTS
DOTTED THIS REGION... BEFORE ANYONE ELSE WOULD TRY
TO WRITE THEIR HISTORY, FIVE PRINCIPLE NATIONS OF
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE CALLED THE GREAT BASIN THEIR
HOMELAND. THEIRS IS THE FIRST STORY OF THE PEOPLE IN
THIS PLACE. I'M FORREST CUCH, JOIN ME AS WE STEP INTO
THE EXTRAORDINARY WORLD OF THE NORTHWEST BAND OF
SHOSHONE.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:
JANUARY TWENTY SEVENTH EIGHTEEN SIXTY-THREE...IT
WAS A COLD, BITTER NIGHT. AS THE NORTHWESTERN
SHOSHONE CAMPED ALONG THE BEAR RIVER OR *BOA OGAI*,
AN ELDER, TINDUP, HAD A DREAM. HE SAW THE PEOPLE, THE
"NEWE" AS WE CALLED OURSELVES, BEING SHOT DOWN BY
PONY SOLDIERS. THE NEXT DAY HE URGED THE PEOPLE TO
PACK UP AND MOVE THEIR CAMP.

HELEN TIMBIMBOO, Elder
He dreamed that uh some
disastrous thing is going to come upon them, that uh, that he
should uh move out of that place.

BRUCE PARRY, NW Band of the Shoshone Nation, Chairman
He told the people the day before the massacre, he said "if you want
to live you'll leave with me today", and uh some of em did leave, but a
lot of em didn't

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:
THE NEXT DAY, TINDUP'S NIGHTMARE CAME TRUE.

LIFE WOULD NEVER BE THE SAME FOR THE NORTHWESTERN
SHOSHONE.

SHOW OPEN: 20

UNDERWRITER:

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NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

OUR ANCESTORS WERE THE SOME OF THE EARLIEST INHABITANTS OF THIS LAND. FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, OUR PEOPLE, THE *NEWE* TRAVELLED THE REGION THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME UTAH, IDAHO, NEVADA, AND WYOMING.

LARRY NEAMAN, NW Band of the Shoshone Nation, Tribal Council Member

So So Goi, "Ground Walkers," They're travelers. They don't stay at one place. They move. When the, when summer comes they move where all the plants that they need for medicine, and for the winter comes. They follow where the, the elks and buffalo and everything goes, you know, they follow it along because they kill it for their winter food, you know. They get their blankets out of hides, they make shoes and whatever, because winter's, they know winter's hard.

BRUCE PARRY (Walking with Forrest Cuch)

And we had all kinds of berries, and uh and choke cherries, and all kinds of wild grasses and uh abundance of game. Fishing rivers like this-..

FORREST CUCH

And the geothermal-

BRUCE PARRY

Geothermal in the area, yeah it was really, really quite nice.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

WE HAD NO WAY TO KNOW HOW MUCH OUR LIFEWAYS WOULD CHANGE. ON JULY TWENTY-FOURTH, EIGHTEEN

FORTY-SEVEN, RELIGIOUS LEADER BRIGHAM YOUNG LED A GROUP OF MORMON SETTLERS INTO THE SALT LAKE VALLEY. EARLY ON, MORMON MISSIONARIES FROM THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS ATTEMPTED TO CONVERT THE SHOSHONE. WE TRIED TO COEXIST, BUT SOON THE TIDE OF PIONEERS OVERWHELMED OUR HOMELAND.

BRUCE PARRY

Before we had been hunters and gatherers for hundreds, if not thousands of years. Uh when the pioneers came and uh their animals were eating the natural grains and the game were being killed by the non-Indians as well for food. It really uh created a very difficult time for us...

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN NW Band of the Shoshone Nation
Cultural Resources Manager

So when the fences went up, our stores closed and where did our people have to go?" And Brigham Young did have the Indian people have a little piece of paper and on that paper it said, "Give these Indians food." So the Indians would take this paper and go to the homes of the pioneer people and uh, ask for food. And I think they would take food too. And they would take cattle and...

BRUCE PARRY

They looked at it as thievery, and you know uh we looked at it as sharing. If we had it, and they needed it, we'd give it to them, and they-we figured they'd do the same but, it didn't work that way.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

TENSIONS MOUNTED BETWEEN SETTLERS AND THE SHOSHONE. HORSES AND CATTLE WERE STOLEN. MINERS WERE ATTACKED. WORD OF TROUBLE TRAVELED TO THE ARMY STATIONED IN SALT LAKE CITY. COLONEL PATRICK EDWARD CONNER DISCOVERED THAT A BAND OF NORTHWESTERN SHOSHONE WAS CAMPING AT HOT SPRINGS BY THE BEAR RIVER NEAR FRANKLIN IDAHO. HE MARCHED HIS MEN NORTH, DETERMINED TO PUT AN END TO THE RAIDS ONCE AND FOR ALL. CONNER NEVER EVEN WORRIED THAT THEY WERE MARCHING TO THE WRONG BAND.

BRUCE PARRY

You know, actually, there were originally 10 bands of Northwestern Shoshones, and uh Pocatello's band was the most aggressive... Had you really wanted to attack the people that were causing the trouble you'd have gone further up than Idaho to Pocatello's band and found them.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

JUST BEFORE DAWN ON JANUARY 29TH, EIGHTEEN-SIXTY-THREE, TWO HUNDRED SOLDIERS MARCHED TOWARD THE BOA OGAI, THE BEAR RIVER. THE BREATH OF THE MEN AND SWEAT OF THE HORSES CREATED CLOUDS OF STEAM AS THE COMPANY ADVANCED.

BRUCE PARRY

It was a quite a wild deal. Chief Sagwitch woke up, looked to the hills over there and saw steam rolling off the hills and he- they of course knew it was uh the horse-horses sweating because some of their friends in uh Franklin had told 'em that the troops were coming.

MAE PARRY (1920-2007), Tribal Historian, Archival Audio,

And he told the men, "don't shoot first, let's hear what he has to say." He said, "if he's a good man...he will listen to us." They met the soldiers at the Bear River. They were on one side and the Indians were on one side, and before they could even explain their side of the story, the soldiers shot at the Indians.... a few of them had rifles, but they were only used for killing the large animals. They soon ran out of bullets and the few that had went over there with bows and arrows also ran out with arrows. They had nothing to fight with. The soldiers were killing every Indian, woman and child and babies. They killed their dogs, they killed everything that was moving.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

One of the ladies had their baby and floated down the river, kind of went where the over-hanging of the side of the bank.

MAE PARRY

And the baby was crying. And she knew if she went into her hiding place, it was just almost impossible for her to keep the baby

quiet. She tried holding the baby's nose, and it didn't help the baby still cried. So she decided to let the baby go. And the baby went floating, it drowned and floated down the river

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

And she chose to drown her baby rather than someone else take its life. I think that had to be very difficult...

MAE PARRY

They were just dying left and right, the little children, they were lost, they didn't know where their parents were. And the soldiers would get them by their long braids, their hair. And just dash them into the rocks. Dash their heads on the ground. Just kill the children.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

BY THE END OF THE DAY THE GROUND WAS LITTERED WITH BODIES. THE SNOW TURNED BLACK FROM THE ASHES OF BURNED TEEPEES AND RED FROM BLOOD. AS ONE SURVIVOR SAID, "IT WAS LIKE LOOKING ON A STRANGE LAND." TO THIS DAY, NO ONE IS SURE JUST EXACTLY HOW MANY OF OUR PEOPLE DIED. REPORTS RANGE FROM TWO HUNDRED-FIFTY TO NEARLY FIVE HUNDRED KILLED, MAKING IT ONE OF THE LARGEST MASSACRES IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES -- LARGER THAN SANDCREEK, LARGER THAN WOUNDED KNEE.

BRUCE PARRY

None of the people that were massacred ever got a decent burial. The old people up here and the Indians have told me that the Indian bones just layed on the ground for years and years and years. Well uh, did you know the tribe was pretty well decimated the life they had experienced it was going to change drastically. And I think they gave a lot of thought to what they were going to do.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

I think some of their options were either go to a reservation or to stay here and become part of the community and that meant joining the church.

BRUCE PARRY

In 1875 uh all of our tribal members joined the LDS church. Which is another big change for them, and uh, we kind of got away from chiefs and that --we became elders and high priests. And chiefs didn't become so important to us at that point.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO MADSEN

Sometimes I feel if it wasn't for the church you know, we would have scattered and I think the fact that we were tied to the land and didn't wanna leave our homelands, that we got to stay. And sometimes I think that we became the good Indians that they wanted us to be and survived.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

SURVIVAL MEANT LEARNING TO FARM. THE LDS CHURCH HELPED FAMILIES FROM THE NORTHWESTERN BAND SETTLE ON CHURCH LAND IN WASHAKIE, A SMALL COMMUNITY NORTH OF BRIGHAM CITY, UTAH. OUR OLD LIFESTYLE WAS GONE, WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY RESERVATION LAND TO CALL OUR OWN. FROM 1878 TO 1960, WASHAKIE BECAME OUR NEW HOME.

LARRY NEAMAN

Everybody did everything, you know, helped each other, you know. And they'd come together. I remember when they had a big gymnasium ... And they used to have shindigs for Christmas and New Years when everybody danced.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

BUT THE COMMUNITY DIDN'T LAST. DURING WORLD WAR TWO, PEOPLE LEFT TO FIGHT, OR WORK IN LOCAL FACTORIES. FARMING ON THE ARID LAND WAS DIFFICULT, AND MANY PEOPLE FOUND SEASONAL WORK ELSEWHERE. MANY BUILDINGS APPEARED ABANDONDED, AND IN 1960, THE CHURCH DECIDED TO SELL THE LAND AND ORDERED THE BUILDINGS TORCHED. SOME OF THE HOMES WERE EMPTY, BUT OTHERS WERE FILLED WITH PERSONAL BELONGINGS, SCRAPBOOKS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS. WHEN PEOPLE RETURNED TO WASHAKIE THEY FOUND THEIR BELONGINGS TURNED TO ASHES. THE BURNING OF THEIR

HOMES TESTED THEIR FAITH.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

I think a lot of 'em became disillusioned by, by that act; certainly not the doctrine or the teachings of the church, but, but that act. You know they became displaced again. And where were they to go? Because really there was no place to go. I think having a community setting like they did at Washakie gave them a chance to practice more of their culture. The setting that we have now where everybody up and down the Wasatch front, southeastern Idaho makes it more difficult. That community-ness is not there, the struggle that we go through now trying to preserve or continue some of the culture with our children is more difficult.

TRANSITION: PATTY DRUMMING WITH KIDS... TO CHURCH MUSIC.....

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

I think for those of the Northwestern band, the assimilation came, it was both good and it was both bad, because you had to give up something for the other.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

SURVIVAL MEANT JOINING MAINSTREAM SOCIETY, BUT IT CAME AT A COST—THE LOSS OF TRADITIONAL SPIRITUAL BELIEFS. TODAY, MOST OF THE FIVE HUNDRED MEMBERS OF THE NORTHWESTERN BAND SHOSHONE ARE BAPTIZED INTO THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER -DAY SAINTS. FOR MANY, THE TWO BELIEFS--AMERICAN INDIAN AND LATTER-DAY SAINT--CAN LIVE SIDE BY SIDE, BUT FOR SOME, IT INVOLVES A CHOICE, A SACRIFICE OF ONE FOR THE OTHER.

HELEN TIMBIMBOO

The Mormon religion tells us that um you cannot have two Gods. Ok? And your Indian belief is a different thing. Specially the ones that are into uh the Indian doctrine, you know? That's a gift. I remember my oldest sister was one of 'em, and she was good. But she had to give it up to, because she wanted to really get into the Mormon church and take her endowment. You know when you go to

the temple? Uh our teaching tells us you can't have two Gods, so she chose the Mormon, and left uh the Indian part alone. And gave it up, so, that's a big sacrifice. But now today as I see our LDS young men out there they're practicing two things. They're believing in their Indian ways jumping around hoopin' an hollering, And try to hold the priesthood, you can't do that, it's a no-no in our belief.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

One of our elders Kenneth Neaman, said that it, the religion was so much like our own religion. There was, we believe in life after death, we believe in, in, one great being or spirit or god. Um, maybe the difference is how you pray to it, to them or to him or to whatever. It's just, but it's the same

LARRY NEAMAN

If somebody's sick you can blow this, but you have to go four directions...So when you pray and you blow the whistle, and the, you know, The Creator knows that somebody's sick, somebody needs help...'cause what does the eagle do? It flies waaay up there. It takes your message, your prayers up to your Creator.

Both my native, my Shoshone, well, Indian way and both, non-Indian way, both I know that, uh, God talks to everybody, you know? But in the LDS way they say, you know, "Don't do it," or, you know, "You shouldn't do it." Just long as you're not idolizing it, you're ok. That's the way I see it. It just like all these young girls and young boys, you know, when they dance with eagle feathers, you know, doing their powwows, they always say, "Well, what happens if, if I join the Church? Do I stop? Do I get rid of all of my stuff?" An I says, "No, you don't. What you do is you just don't idolize it." You're not worshipping your feathers or anything, so that's the way I always tell them so they, you know, look at it in a different way. The importance to me is I have passed it onto my boys and I have done it for my older granddaughter and my older grandson to teach them to dance and teach them to bead, and it's very important to me so I have passed on the songs that I know and I pass it on to them.

LARRY DRUMMING

LARRY NEAMAN

Some of them are kind of like a death song and some of them are, you know, happy songs, you know, the Northwestern don't have that. They don't have their... they don't even have a ceremony songs or anything because they don't know any, you know. I think me and my boys are the only one that knows.

TRANSITION: DRUMMING TO MASSACRE SITE

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

...after the massacre, you know, those people that had skills were lost... And I look at the medicine people. You know, who had those skills? You know? Because right now, there's nobody in our tribe that has that gift and to me it is a gift. Have we gone so far away from our beliefs that we will never be able to recapture that back again.

TRANSITION: HELEN READING IN NW SHOSHONE-- COYOTE TALE TO KIDS

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

I look at our, our children of the tribe now and language is very, very important to me because it, it defines how these people saw the world, through their language, how they expressed themselves. And I think that is the basis of who these people were.

LELAND PUBIGEE, NW Band of the Shoshone Nation, Vice-Chairman

Well today they're having a hard time, they're losing their language, the old language, Shoshone words. Most of the people like to speak English and it's easier and better for 'em, that's what they went to school for. Back in my days, y'know, if your father mother speaked Shoshone, there were no problems, you all speak Shoshone.

HELEN TIMBIMBOO

The full blood, now like us, we're slowly dying off. And what we have here now is, blonde hair, red hair blue-eyes, gray eyes, those are our young generation. And who's going to believe them when they say "I'm a Northwestern Shoshone"? They have to be speaking their native language for them to believe them. That's their disadvantage. So we better hurry up quickly and try to teach 'em.

TRANSITION: MORE OF HELEN READING TO KIDS

BRUCE PARRY

A lot of our cultural ways kind of went the wayside, uh because uh we didn't live in a large Indian area where those things were preserved, and so since 1875 we've been kind of competing with everybody in the world for jobs and for, you know, and schooling. And as a result uh I think it's put us a little further ahead as far as thinking about business. We've had to go to non, non-Indian schools, uh we've had to go to non-Indian universities, and we were just thrown in and uh had to compete, and so, I think that's probably why some of our leaders are a little better educated, and a little more apt to think about creating businesses to support our tribe.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

THE NORTHWESTERN SHOSHONE BAND IS FINDING NEW WAYS TO GROW OUR TRIBAL RESOURCES BY CREATING PARTNERSHIPS WITH OUTSIDE COMPANIES. TODAY WE ARE BACK ON ANCESTRAL LANDS -- BREAKING GROUND FOR A FUTURE GEOTHERMAL ENERGY PLANT.

BRUCE PARRY

This is really a significant day for the tribe. We used to camp near all of these geothermal sites in the wintertime to stay warm. And uh now 150 years later we're back to the geothermal sites, only this time we are producing energy for the country. It's just a great feeling to be able to help our tribal members because we've been so deprived for so long, it's uh actually a crime. But we're gonna to be able to do anything we want now. Uh independent, if we don't want to take federal money, we won't take it. We are truly going to be a sovereign nation. So that's the-that's the greatest thing to me.

NARRATOR, STEPHEN DAK HARVEY:

BUT EVEN AS THE TRIBE LOOKS TO THE FUTURE, WE WILL NEVER FORGET THE SACRIFICES THAT OUR ANCESTORS MADE NEARLY ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS AGO. EVERY YEAR WE GATHER TO REMEMBER AND HONOR THEM.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO-MADSEN

When I talk about them people from way back then, it's like you talk in honor of them and what can I do for them because they went through so much? And I have it easy, and all I have to do is tell their story. So sometimes it's like they're with me. I know they're with me. And I hope I do them justice. To honor them.

LARRY NEAMAN

We'll never disappear. No matter how we are treated, you know, we always come back. They killed us over there in the Bear River Massacre. We come back. They burn us out here in Washakie, we are here. There is no way they can get rid of us. We're always going to be here and like We Shall Remain – well, that's it. We stay here – there's no way they're going to get rid of us, we'll always come back.

PATTY TIMBIMBOO

Even today I still feel that this is our land. You guys are just here. You might own the property but this will always be my home... Generations and generations and generations of our people have lived here and it is, it'll always be our home

UNDERWRITER

CREDITS