



Mi'kmaq: First Nation people

Mi'kmaq culture

Narrator:

Chief Misel Joe is the spiritual and political leader of the 700 strong Conne River community. He and others secured protected status for the area 25 years ago when it became a reserve.

Chief Misel Joe:

My first trip on the land with my grandfather, I still remember very clearly the things he did. And the walk to get to where we need to go. And I was only five or six years old. But I still remember that.

And the medicine that we would see along the way. He would talk about the medicines and sometimes use the medicines. So I remember that.

Museum Visitor:

What's your story of the Jingle Dress?

John Jeddore Junior:

In Whitefish bay there was a woman, she was sick one time, really sick and she wasn't getting any better and her grandmother had a vision that she had to make this dress, the Jingle Dress, you know, she prayed and her family prayed and you pray and you dance, and you pray and then she got better.

Comm:

John Jeddore Senior's grandson, John Jeddore Junior, works part time in the community's new local museum, built with Federal funding to celebrate Mi'qmaq culture.

John Jeddore Junior:

I go to Memorial University in St John's, Newfoundland Labrador. I just finished a degree in Biochemistry. And I'm hoping to attend medical school.

My grandfather, if he went hunting with you, if he went and trapped a beaver, he'd lay the bones of the beaver back in to the river.

If he trapped a fox and he took the meat, he'd take the bones of the fox and he'd lay it on an old fallen tree. Because that's what you do. That's what the Mi'qmaq people do.

There was all those little things about his hunting that he did that were Mi'qmaq. There were bones in the beaver's foot and he wouldn't eat that because it was taboo. It was bad luck if

you ate that. And there's a gland in the moose or the bear, I can't remember, you can't eat that either because that's taboo. And he used to tell me if you ate it you'd have a bad hunt.

John Jeddore Senior:

I like the wildness and I like the animals. And I just go in and enjoy it that way. I don't know how much longer I'm going to be able to do it. But I still love the life.

Chief Misel Joe:

I walk in the woods. And that's my Church. I talk to people and that's my Church. So I'm not bound by having to go to one little building to pray and to speak to my Creator. I do that here. Particularly in the woods I do it. So I have no incredible hang ups about not going to Church.