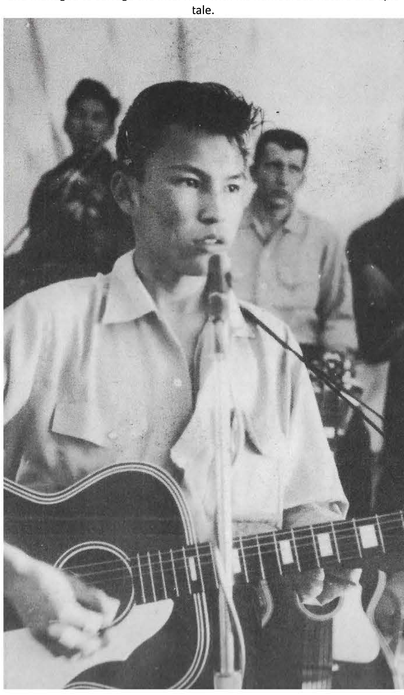
Musicians of the Midnight Sun

Thank you for visiting the Musicians of the Midnight Sun website. Even though these blogs are being posted many weeks after the launch of the Musicians of the Midnight Sun website, my hope is that they will remain as a document along with the website itself with the intention to give a little bit more of a personal story of my relationships with these featured artists.

Albert Canadien:

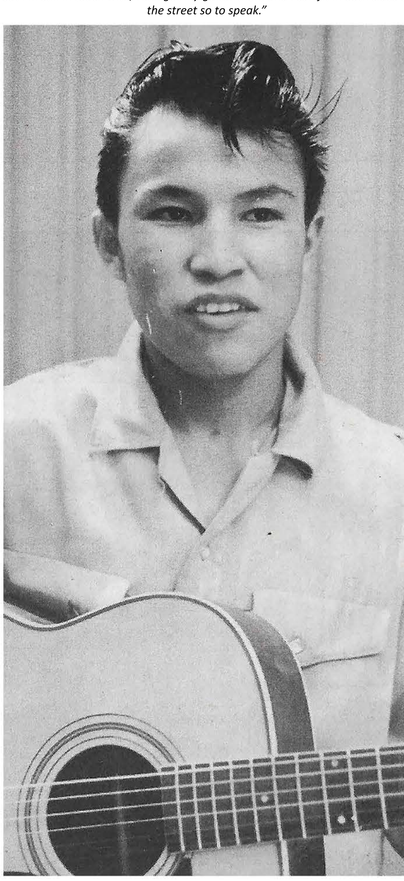
I can't say for sure when I first began to hear of "The Chieftones". The story was larger than life, worthy of any Hollywood plot, almost mythological coming out of the north. I started to hear more when I began these interviews. I learned that Albert was living in Yellowknife and arranged to meet with him. I admit to being a bit more than naïve when I walked into the interview with Albert. He graciously tolerated my clumsy interview technique and managed to salvage the interview with his humourous nature and epic tale.



Albert Canadien, Akaitcho Hall, Yellowknife, NT, 1960-61
(Photo from Akaitcho Gazette publication, June 2001)

I will let you read or listen to the complete interview, I obviously can't say enough good things about Albert. It's been really good to get to know him and to learn that he has worked alongside many of my good friends in various capacities with Language policy and programming over the last few decades following his time playing with "The Chieftones". He has served and continues to serve his home community of Zhahti Koe, Fort Providence. He has played and continues to play his guitar, sometimes with Johnny Landry, at festivals in the north. He has written a book, "From Lishamie", published by Theytus Books of his early years living on the land and then in residential school. He has seen a lot in his life, lived through a lot and played through it all. From hearing the Slavey drum songs as a boy to playing electric guitar in Madison Square Gardens to re-connect with the traditional Slavey songs with the Dhe Cho Drummers, as Albert says it;

"No, it's just like I went through the mill. I've experienced the whole thing. It's just like my work cycle. I started out with CBC and I went over to local Government and I was assistant clerk with David Hamilton at the Legislative assembly and after that I became the director of the language bureau. I've made a full circle. And then after that I went back, band manager at Fort Providence and there after I came here. But it's the same thing, like you go the full cycle, you experience the full cycle of music and your back. It's funny how I started off with contemporary music like country music and rock and stuff like that and then I ended up back home doing drum music and some Slavey songs but I'm still in touch with, I still got my guitar there and I can fit in both sides of the street so to speak."



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