



Home Means Nevada, 1986: Folklife in the Silver State

This thirteen-part radio series from 1986 presents vignettes of Nevada’s multi-faceted folk culture. The shows were produced from recordings made on location—in folk artists’ homes, places of work, and at public gatherings. From the making of neon signs to the construction of Shoshone cradleboards, from Basque dance music to buckaroo poetry, the cultural diversity of Nevada is only hinted at in this series—there is much, much more! The videos can be viewed on the [Nevada Arts Council’s YouTube website](#).

Home Means Nevada was produced by the Folklife Program of the Nevada Arts Council in cooperation with KUNR-FM (Reno), KNPR-FM (Las Vegas), and KOLO Channel 8 (Reno), with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of Nevada. Scripting, editing, photography and production were by Blanton Owen, the first Nevada Arts Council folklorist. Narration was by Deb Spring, KOLO Radio (Reno). The series has been remastered to digital audio, featuring photos from the original field research in the Nevada Folklife Archives.

Program 1: Bernardo Yanci, Basque Accordion Player

Bernardo moved to Elko from the Basque Country of Spain in the 1950s. He plays traditional Basque music on the piano accordion. He talks about his music and performs three traditional dance tunes.

Program 2: Martha Dick – Shoshone Cradleboard Maker

Martha Dick and her son Richard, from the Duck Valley Reservation, talk about how Shoshone cradleboards are made and how they symbolize traditional Shoshone culture.

Program 3: Tom Martinet, the Language of Gambling

Games of chance all have their special in-group language, and Tom Martinet, a box man at the Horseshoe in Las Vegas, describes the use of such language on the craps table.

Program 4: Randy Stowell, Rawhide Braider

Randy Stowell, who ranched in Currie and Rowland, is a master at making horsehair cinches and mecates, and braiding many kinds of rawhide horse and cow-working gear, which he discusses here.

Program 5: Larry Schutte, Cowboy Singer

In 1986, Larry and his family ran a ranch near Tuscarora. He recites cowboy poetry, makes horsehair and rawhide gear, and—in this show—talks about cowboy songs and sings “Nighttime in Nevada.”

Program 6: Jack Darland, Old-Time Fiddler

Jack Darland, of Babbit, talks about what old-time style fiddle playing means to him. Jack and Linda Darland play “Little Green Valley,” “Black Velvet Waltz,” and “Cowboy’s Waltz.”

Program 7: Ernie Fanning, Cowboy Poet

Ernie Fanning, of Sparks, explains how poems come to him in flashes of inspiration and how he feels poetry should be performed. He recites his poems “Alone” and “The Vanishing Valley.”

Program 8: Mark Dahl, Bit and Spur Maker

Mark Dahl, of Deeth, makes silver mounted bits and spurs. In this show he discusses the decorative elements of his art as well as the practical side of making gear for working cowboys.

Program 9: Stan Forrest, Neon Sign Glass Blower

Stan Forrest, of Las Vegas, began bending glass for neon signs in the 1940s. Here he talks about the details of his craft and why it pleases him.

Program 10: Katie Frazier, Paiute Singer

At the time of this recording Katie Frazier, of Nixon, was 94 years old. Here she performs and discusses “The Bear Dance,” “Rabbit Dance,” and a hand-game song.

Program 11: John Weinkauf, Boot Maker

In 1986, John Weinkauf’s Desert Leather boot shop in Washoe Valley was filled with custom-made western slip-on and lace-up boots. Here he describes some of the more difficult aspects of his craft.

Program 12: Jack Darland, Prospector

Jack learned prospecting from his father and grandfather, went to school to learn more, and made his living in Babbitt selling claims to large mining operations.

Program 13: Waddie Mitchell Cowboy Poet

A young Waddie Mitchell talks about poetry and buckaroos, and discusses the traditions surrounding them both. He recites two of his poems, “Gone Fishing” and “The Book.”