

A One Way Ticket

Red Lake's Immigration Story

Opening in June 2009:

Since the Red Lake gold rush of 1926, thousands of immigrants and displaced persons from around the world have found their way to Red Lake to work in the gold mines. Some were lured by adventure, but most were escaping economic hardships, famines or political and religious persecution in their homeland. Others left home to escape unbearable family situations.



Red Lake waterfront ca. 1940s *Photo courtesy of Ethel Dodd*

Once here, they lived in neighbourhoods commonly known as Finntown, Little Italy, DP town, Little Poland, Little Germany, Little Sweden, etc. There were also entire streets where every home was occupied by a family of a different nationality. Today, due to intermarriage between various cultures and other factors, these neighbourhoods are no longer distinguishable from one another.

To build the prosperous and vibrant community that Red Lake is today, it was necessary for all residents to get along, no matter what their relationships had been in their homeland. By

working together, adults of all kinds of cultural backgrounds, ethnicities and histories learned that they were all on common ground, and in the process came to accept one another. Their children played together, went to school together, and married one another.

Immigrants made major cultural and economic contributions to the community. Their legacy will be celebrated in a special exhibit

where visitors will have an opportunity to walk in the footsteps of these remarkable pioneers.



Finntown, McKenzie Island, 1935