

Message from the Artistic Director Rhonda Bobinski

"When I was approached by Michele Alderton to be the Artistic Director for the Outdoor Art Gallery Program again this year, I was more than pleased to take on the responsibility. I feel fortunate to live in a community that is so rich in artistry, and will take any opportunity to absorb myself in the creativity of others. The artistic community is strong and thriving, as can be seen when you walk down our streets. Colourful banners line the sidewalks, welcoming people from near and far to share in our culture, heritage, and connections to the past and present."



RLDHS Alternative Education Art Class

The students of this class were very enthusiastic about participating in the Outdoor Art Gallery Program. They wanted the opportunity to show the community their positive attributes, with one of those attributes being their artistic talents and creativity. The students selected personal symbols to reflect who they are. I added the branches and leaves to symbolize the importance of a strong support system. Over the course of the semester we, as a class, developed a strong friendship and this banner represents both our individuality and our dependence on each other. The participants of this banner are (from left to right, top to bottom) Darryl Teli, Jordan Mamakeesic, Delaney Payesh, Neal Meekis, Mitchell Fulawka, Ethan Van Dusen, Derrick Thompson, Linnea Kesick, Angeline Meekis, Dayna Jamieson, Tylor Clement, Travis Campbell, Shirley Perrault, Chantel Blackhawk, Adrienne Pronteau, and Warren Campbell. Jody Tougas also helped out in the painting of this banner.

Valerie Blab

The old water tower on Forestry Road was a familiar landmark on RedLake's horizon since it was erected to serve the Gold Shore Mine whose first shaft was sunk in 1936. Meeting its demise in 2005 when it was taken down and dismantled; the water tower vastly outlasted the mine which closed in 1938 after only two years of operation. The archives tell us that one miner commented that "there wasn't enough ore to fill your pipe!"

The graffiti adorning its rotund belly was a testament to the ghosts of graduations past and attested to coming-of-age rituals and adventures of daring of several generations of Red Lake teenagers. One such once-upon-a-time teenager who had ventured inside the "belly of the beast" claimed that the echo quality inside the drum was quite wonderful to experience!

I know that having walked by it hundreds of times myself, I share the sense of nostalgia and loss felt by many residents who miss the familiar silhouette on Forestry Road of the Old Water Tower.





Rhonda Bobinski

I started high school in Red Lake in 1986, with a “new” art teacher, Gary Lovett, who had just moved down to Red Lake from Norway House, Manitoba. We soon became friends and Gary tried to teach me a bit about Art. We soon found out that we’re both stubborn people and neither of us like to admit when we’re wrong! But of course, I did learn a lot from Gary, and I think the most important thing I learned is that an art teacher needs to show their students that first and foremost they are an artist. Gary’s passion for his artwork was very evident and I remember countless times Gary came into the classroom talking about the late night he had in his studio.

There is a lot of symbolism laced throughout this banner which reflects Gary as an artist, as a teacher and as a friend. I painted the banner in Gary’s abstract style, or as he liked to call his style, “The Group of One”. Gary’s focus was on the Northern terrain and he had a very unique way of representing Northern Ontario. He was very well known for his northern light paintings. When I graduated from high school my parents bought me one of Gary’s northern lights paintings as a gift. It now is the first art piece you see when you enter my home. There are planets floating in the sky to represent Gary’s “snivelers” which is what he liked to call his “favourite” students. The duck represents a memorable trip I took to Gary’s cabin on Minaki with the Lovett family. I was teased for years for trying to get Gary to shoot the ducks, when in actuality, they were decoys. Hey, it was 4 in the morning and there was a lot of fog on the lake! The large fish has twofold meaning: Gary was a fishing guide at Minaki and was an “expert” fisherman. But Gary also had us do “fish prints” as an art project one year. We caught a sucker fish, dried it out, painted it and printed it. I’m sure that practice would have the humane society knocking on our door if we were to try that today, but back then, “It was art, man!” The blueberries are actually there because Gary

used to make us listen to a band called “The Traveling Wilbury’s” but always called them “The Traveling Blueberries”. You can see that in the art room window is a silhouette of two figures, that being the teacher and the student. It can represent Gary and I or it can represent any teacher/student relationship for that matter and the creative energy that resonates from the art room. Friendships that are built there are strong and continual. In the foreground are zucchinis growing in a garden. Anyone that knows Gary knows that he loved to garden and was always pawning his zucchinis off on people! Finally, I included a fallen tree because Gary always said that no landscape was complete without a fallen dead tree!

I wanted to pay homage to Gary Lovett, who left us abruptly last fall in 2006. He may be gone, but his spirit still continues to inspire us creatively.



Kaaren Dannenmann

When we were first contacted and invited to do a banner, we were informed that the theme was “Pioneers” and so I went to the dictionary to find exactly what that meant. The dictionary under my table says: One who ventures into unknown or unclaimed territory to settle. That kind of rankled, it was like the same old terra nullius mentality and I thought I should depict something to remind others that this was not terra nullius, that, in fact, it was populated by huge groupings of people such as those of the atik totem, the caribou clan.

My painting was meant to depict the holistic and inclusive belief system and life patterns of the Anishinaape of this area and their communities which included the land and all the life on the land. We may be invisible to most people, but we are vibrant and flourishing, resilient and healthy, strong. This banner is meant to honour my people, the Anishinaapek of the past, present and future.

Lesia Dayneka

My father Dimitri Boyanowski emigrated from the Ukraine to work on western farms. Instead he started in the loquois Falls mills.

He met my mother in Winnipeg. In 1933 he started working at the Howey, McKenzie, Cochenour, Hasaga, Madsen, and Griffith Mines. He was sent to Toronto to learn how to weld and work the lathe at DeHaviland on the Mosquito Bombers.

While working at McKenzie and Cochenour, before we had a road, he lived in the bunkhouse coming home on weekends by boat taxi in the summer and in the winter by cross country skiing and skating on the frozen lake. When my father worked at Hasaga I was under 9 years of age. I was sent with his lunch pail up into the head frame where I waited for him to finish eating before I took his lunch pail back home.

For entertainment the adults had dances in the Hasaga Cookery where my father played the guitar and mandolin. The benches and tables were pushed to the walls. The children were allowed to play until they tired and curled up under the benches, out of the way of the adults dancing.

My father and I spent as much time as we could in the bush, snaring fish in the Buffalo Creek, fishing along the shore lines and collecting wood for heat and cooking. We did not have a refrigerator so we caught only what we could eat at one meal.

My father cleared land with an axe, and by shovel he tilled the land. We could harvest enough vegetables for twelve months storing them in the root cellar.

Before the highway was built, large heavy items were brought in by tractor train in the winter and scows in the summer. Only perishable items, liquor and people who could afford a ticket came by plane.

The local mine managers let us use dynamite boxes for furniture and walls in our two room shack. The kitchen was filled with wonderful food and used for entertainment where singing and playing instruments was the norm.



We were one of the first homes to install an electric light in one socket on a wire hung from the ceiling for reading, replacing the kerosene lanterns. We were told it was not natural subjecting ourselves to electricity and potential cancer.

Eventually the mines helped valued employees to build permanent houses with used building materials and mine equipment. Advances were given on pay cheques with no interest or service charges for building materials and to help pay for education and travel after high school for the children of the miners. This created a two way trust between to mine and employees.

Children were told to play outside all year round. We build forts and snow tunnels. Skating and sliding were a joy.

In summer we swam in the lake and built rafts. Hopscotch with treasured broken glass, marbles, and pick baseballs in the school yard was always popular.

In the 1930's and 1940's the miners were very ambitious for their children to exceed them in trades, business and professions utilizing the excellent education at the time. At the 50th high school reunion multiple diverse professions were represented starting with an atomic energy scientist.



Brenda Drager

I chose to paint the Linda Lundstrom La Parka because she is an example of a local woman, from our small area that went out and made her mark in our country. She was a business woman when the percentage of woman in business was very small and she was able to balance her family life and professional life - a fine example of "having it all" and enjoying it. Her parka was embraced here in Red Lake partially because she was from here but ultimately because it was a sensible alternative for our northern weather. She has come back here occasionally to share her designs with us and has incorporated native designs into her jackets, so she hasn't forgotten her roots. I have a memory of seeing a different color of La Parka daily in the winter months here in Red Lake and wanted to convey the multitude of colors we were privileged to see in our all white winters.

Kaila Erb

I am a Caucasian female of British descent, so what could I possibly know about pictographs? I don't know their meanings or anything about how to make one, but I do know they are special.

My dad took me out to a pictograph and seeing this ancient art form out in the wilderness was a magical experience. This is when I realized that the art of pictographs is more than red figures on rock. The art of pictographs is the entire experience of going to see them. In my banner I wanted to show that you can not capture the beauty of a pictograph in a picture or a painting or even a banner. The only way to see the beauty is to paddle out there and experience it.

The poem in the sky is made of phrases I took from a short write up my dad had written about pictographs. My dad had shown me this after I came up with my idea for my banner. I thought it was neat because it said in words everything I was trying to show in the painting.

So the moral of this story is to paddle out and visit a pictograph and then you'll understand my banner!





< **Diedre Gauthier**

Patrick Hunter

I decided to paint my banner about Cliff Harvey because I think he really represented what the subject matter was about, early pioneers to the Red Lake area. The banner shows Cliff and his dog, and his boat, which was probably an asset considering he lived on an island in Howey Bay. I don't exactly know that much about him, but from what I heard he loved living the simple life and being in the outdoors. I was simply inspired by his strength, considering he lived quite an isolated life.

Karin Kolman

The banner this year was to focus on the theme of the pioneer. I also wanted to ensure that there was a personal connection to the banner, so my banner is dedicated with love to my husband, Gary Kolman.



Gary was born and raised in Madsen. I searched for pictures and decided to make my banner look like a page in an old photo album.

Gary was born in a nursing station in 1945 as my first picture depicts. I also depicted different stages of his childhood growing up, from a baby in the carriage to the one room school he occupied until he went to high school. With no TV, sports were a big part of life. Gary has always been very active from a young age on, with baseball being one of his loves. He also loves hockey, curling, fishing and golfing. In the final image, I painted Gary's first truck which depicts his young adult life. This also represents Gary's passion for classic cars.

Leanna Laramie >





Devon McClosky

Fiddle heads, chanterelles, lichens, marigolds... then and now. Enchanting flora in Red Lake observed by passers-by and pursued by field gurus today, are the same species and features experienced by LakeRed pioneers. Buildings erode, signs fade, and roads grow over. However, relics in the natural environment remain the same. If you're preparing a wild crafted menu, complete with boundless spring greens, summer fungi and a bouquet of the first flowers to bloom, these will be the same species harvested and gathered by those as zealous before us. Just don't ask where to find them, if these 'honey holes' located off the beaten path haven't been passed down through your family tree, you'll have to discover these oasis's by your own search or, by happenstance.

Victoria Elaine McIntosh

Sandy worked hard for most of his life. He worked as a bushman, logging and so forth. He also diamond drilled at an early age before working underground in the Red Lake district until his retirement in the mid 70's.

Originally from Ste. Catherine's, Ontario, as the son of Scottish/English immigrants, Sandy found his way further north in Ontario. Hard work never intimidated him, even being a small man. His children remember him being strong in many ways and very compassionate in others. As in this portrait, his love for nature and animals is evident, and it helped make his life easier to cope with considering all of the hardships he had to endure in making a living, literally from the ground up.

Sandy raised a large family, most of his children growing up in the Red Lake district, living in Balmertown and then McKenzie Island. Sandy always made time for his children. His son Allen remembers him as a man with a lot of knowledge and many stories to tell of his times as a young man in Red Lake.



I have never met my father-in-law and I chose this picture, because when I look at old pictures I am always fascinated to know what the story is behind the picture. I know in their time they had a lot to say, and share with the next generation. As a portrait artist, I try to tell these stories.

I dedicate this portrait to all of Sandy's descendants, to the ones he never met and the ones yet to come.



Donald Nord

Back in the early 1950's, I remember a soft drink company here in Red Lake, with the name "Red Lake Bottling Works". It was a unique name with a unique logo on their bottles. Soft drinks back then were all bottled in glass, many of which had diverse shapes and sizes, colours and logos. Bottles like these are now highly prized as collectables.

The concept of once again having a small but local enterprise in our town with a special bottle and logo, which characterizes our heritage and history and as a bonus utilizing the concept of recycling is, I believe, a good thing and should be encouraged. We can stop reporting plastic and aluminum into the landfill sites, establish a cottage industry producing it's own special recipes or formulas, with the intent of good health and good living in mind, and by all means, lets make and design a container that is "ART".

Cherie Penner

I chose to depict the majestic eagle and the long suffering wolf who have survived as an intergral part of our heritage; the original habitants of our beautiful lake and forested area despite the onset of logging, mining and tourism.



Janet Power

Youth activities have always been an essential part of the community. Parents started and supported many groups for the area’s children. This year, RCSCC Patrician celebrated its 30th birthday. Red Lake District MatCats Gymnastics Club celebrated its 25th birthday. The Balmertown Skating Club has been officially sanctioned for as many years. Since I and my family have been involved in these groups for years, I decided to honour their years of providing safe, accessible, challenging activites for the area youth.



Carolyn Spicer

This is my second year painting a banner for the OutdoorArt Gallery. My first banner was of my daughters in jingle dresses. I wanted to design another banner with an aboriginal theme but it also had to follow this year’s “pioneering” theme. I was encouraged to try the Woodland style of art this time, a style that was in fact pioneered in this area by Norval Morriseau. I was also inspired by the beautiful artwork of Roy Thomas. I chose images and symbols that I connect with as well as those that reflect who I am and what is important to me.

The figure at the bottom of my banner shows the back of an aboriginal woman sitting cross-legged. This represents me as well as other strong Aboriginal female influences in my life. My aboriginal ancestry is very important to me. I want to learn and understand more about this culture, which I find to be very empowering and inspirational. The three eagle feathers signify my three children who are a constant source of joy and pride to me. I included the turtle to represent the legend of Turtle Island, an important story to the Ojibwa people, which I have always found interesting. I had originally planned on an image of a sun for the top of the banner, but I was informed that a snowflake might be more appropriate since I have an extensive snowflake collection and am therefore known as the “Snowflake Queen”. I think it was the right choice. The line running from the woman at the bottom through all the images on the banner shows my connection to all of these things. My banner is blue because it is my favourite colour.



In the end, my banner has a fairly simple design. I’m happy with the result and want to thank Rhonda for all her tireless help and advice. Once again, producing a banner was a very fun and positive experience. I hope to get an opportunity to do it again some day.

Taryn Vachon

This banner is a tribute to my grandfather, Walter Sukiennik. Like many men in the community of Red Lake, my grandfather came to the district to work in the gold mines. He immigrated from Poland in the 1950's and began his career at Madsen Mine. The stability of the mine, allowed Walter to begin a family with his wife, Josie, and make Red Lake their home. The intense labour of mining was offset by the camaraderie amongst the many immigrants working underground together. In 1991, with a lifetime of achievement and hard work under his belt, my grandfather retired from Dickenson Mine. He hesitated to leave a career that he had loved for so many years.

Walter's tight connection to the mine remains intact long after his retirement. He still loves to share stories from underground and talk about modern equipment and practices. As I have learned, all miners share a fondness for their work and can talk about it for hours. Gold is a link that remains strong in this community. As one generation of miners move on, another steps in. Families continue to depend on our local gold mines to employ men and women and keep the economy of our small town growing. Few in the district have no mining links, but they too can appreciate the impact of this industry on the beginnings of our community, as well as its future.

