



# **Annual Report 2020**

Prepared by  
Trevor Osmond

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# OUR PURPOSE

## MANDATE

The Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre is responsible for preserving, promoting and interpreting Red Lake’s natural and social history.

## MISSION

Working in partnership with the community, the Municipality and key stakeholders, the RLRHC strives to be a leader in preserving, promoting and celebrating the region’s natural and cultural heritage. This mission is fulfilled through:

- Ensuring that the community of Red Lake’s ongoing history is documented and represented through exhibitions, research, art and events.
- Creating an environment of exploration, where education and growth bring together communities and provide opportunities for sharing knowledge and experiences.
- Together with community representatives provide opportunities to strengthen Red Lake’s positive identity through exhibits, events, programming and performances.

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## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

2020 was an unusual and very challenging year for the Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre (RLRHC). In a few short words, the following were areas of concern and activity:

- The slow pace of building reconstruction
- Artifact inspection, restoration and preservation as required
- Reviews of existing catalogues and documentation for accuracy and completeness
- The global COVID 19 pandemic and the ensuing restrictions and changes to keep workplaces safe
- Concerns on the effect of the loss of traditional supplemental revenue sources and their effect on the organisation
- A 6 day mass evacuation of the entire Red lake area in August due to a forest fire
- Assessing exhibits to determine which would be retained and what was required in order to reconstruct those exhibits
- Planning for eventual reopening of the RLRHC

The pandemic was declared in March bringing all but essential services to a grinding halt. This meant that creative solutions were required to continue to complete the physical work in the building and maintain a “safe” worksite in order to prevent the spread of COVID. Meanwhile our staff had to create a safe working environment in their temporary location. At year end, there was a glimmer light at the end of the tunnel. The contractors were expected to complete work in the first quarter of 2021 which would allow the collections to be returned to the RLDHC building, the exhibits to be rebuilt and the facility to eventually reopen. Notwithstanding the task of unpacking the collections, refurbishing the work areas and reconstruction of the exhibits will be the challenge for 2021.

From the operations perspective a significant challenge loomed. The government ordered non-essential business and services to close and where possible for businesses that stayed open employees were required to work from home if possible. Shutting down was not a viable option for the RLRHC. The daunting task of assessing the collection’s condition after the 2019 roof incident, salvaging whatever was possible and ensuring that all the items to be returned to the RLRHC were still in good condition and free of mould and other contaminants had to continue regardless.

The Curator and interns worked out of a temporary location in Balmertown for the entire year. This was a former Northern Store and the assets of the RLRHC were stored there as well. Work consisted of unpacking assessing and cataloguing every item.

The primary impact on the RLRHC was the loss in revenues from facility rentals and reduced revenue from the gift shop. The organisation was fortunate to receive a few donations the largest from Evolution Mining for a “Hang It Up System.” The RLRHC applied for and received federal wage subsidies which

allowed the RLRHC to retain staff and employ interns to work on the collections. Without this subsidy the facility would not be in a position to reopen in 2021.

The Director was given space in the municipal office. Developing the 2021 budget during a period when there was no firm date for reopening, with little or no indication of costs to restore or replace exhibits and dealing ever changing COVID restrictions. The only certainty was that much needed revenue from facility rentals and gift shop sales would essentially be unavailable as it was in 2020 until the facility reopens in 2021. While no physical visits other than for essential purposes were allowed, the RLRHC worked to deliver programmes online to keep in the public eye.

The Board continued in its governance and supporting role meeting in person when allowed and by ZOOM when restrictions dictated otherwise.

Thank you to the staff, all board members, the volunteers and the public for your continued dedicated work in support of our centre. Thank you to the community for bearing with us as we endeavour to return to normal operation in these unusual times.

John Frostiak

Chairman

## REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR

For most people, the year 2020 will go down as one of the most difficult years in recent memory. In still reeling from the damage of the storm that blew off the roof on September 2019, the RLRHC staff had managed to move the collection to a safe location where it could sit until such time as the RLRHC had time to address everything.

Since it was clear that the RLRHC would remain closed for some time, staff had to change tactics on the fly. If classes couldn't visit the RLRHC, then the RLRHC would visit the classrooms. RLRHC staff ran two excellent programs early in the year, and were ready to deliver more. Just as things began to get more organized, Covid-19 made its way over to North America. This would grind most operations to a halt. The change of from the warehouse to working from home kept staff working. Communication and self-motivation were challenges during the period. Nonetheless, RLRHC staff were able to complete several important projects during lock down. Instead of being able to focus on the artifacts, public programs, events and exhibits, staff moved to working on policy, online content, podcasts, and grants.

As restrictions were relaxed, RLRHC staff returned to the Balmertown Warehouse site. The RLRHC felt insulated from many of the issues that other small businesses were having due to its closure. With no plans to open the warehouse to the public because of the amount of work needed, staff could focus on the objects, assets, repairs and unpacking/repacking.

The Gift Shop was open for limited sales during the summer and fall months, but only by curbside drop off or delivery. Eventually it was opened up for Christmas shopping. As a result sales were not as good as previous years, but considering the circumstances, we were glad to receive the customers we did.

In mid-August, Red Lake had to be evacuated due to a forest fire that started very close to the town of Madsen. Through some hard work, quick thinking and of course help from Mother Nature, Red Lake experienced very little in the way of damages. Many long-time Red Lake residents recalled a similar event taking place in 1980, when fire-14 made it incredibly close to the town. As both the fire and pandemic were such serious threats, RLRHC staff recognized that their importance and began collecting Red Lake's fire and Covid-19 stories.

As the year began to near its end, contractors had fixed the roof, torn out the drywall, tested items for mould growth and reinsulated walls. Many previous building issues were dealt with during that time. Contractors are hopeful that work will be completed early in the New Year.

My staff and I have been bombarded with difficult situations, found ways to deal with the situations, only to have the situations change again. Despite the fact that it was, at times exhausting, my staff were able to rally and meet the challenge head on. They were also able to react to the situations with grace and problem solving the next issue when it came up. Perhaps 2020 did not go as planned; however, we did successfully manage to keep our lights on, our employees working, our artifacts safe and met our mandate in the best way given the circumstances.

Sincerely,

Trevor Osmond  
Director



## STRATEGIC GOAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre's (RLRHC) strategic plan covers five organizational directions towards ensuring that its vision, mandate and mission are met. These strategic directions were dealt with as follows in 2020:

### INVESTING IN BUILDING RED LAKE'S CULTURAL IDENTITY

Under normal circumstances, the RLRHC invests in Red Lake's cultural identity by running events and programs, creating exhibits and being a part of Red Lake's various celebrations. Sadly this was made impossible by the circumstances of 2020. Instead, the RLRHC focused on developing content online, and asking the public to contribute their stories of their reflections during the pandemic and Fire-49.

Since the Gift Shop was open for most of the year, very little merchandise was purchased in order to fill the shelves. Those garments that were ordered had deep ties to Red Lake. Clothing such as the OG t-shirt, made of some of Red Lake's first geologists made shoppers smile.

Despite the setbacks in other aspects, partnerships were strong throughout the year. The RLRHC worked with Highway 105 Tourism and Marketing Board to plan for 2020 and when it was realized that the pandemic would not be halted, planning began for 2021 instead. This meant applying for grants, designing promotional material and finding like-minded organizations that may be able to contribute to the betterment of tourism in the region.

### INVESTING IN DEEPER INCLUSIVITY

Despite the difficulties of being closed to the public, the RLRHC was able to meet many of its goals of investing in deeper inclusivity. RLRHC staff worked closely with the Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre (RLIFC). The RLRHC helped to reinvigorate the Drums of Red Lake, a monograph written to tell the story of Indigenous people in Red Lake. The RLRHC also sought out individuals to interview as part of the RLRHC's plan to record the stories of Red Lake's Elders. Sadly with Covid-19 restricting face to face meetings, many of these interviews were put on hold for the safety of all parties. This was a continuation of a project which had been in the planning stages for the past two years.

The RLRHC's Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) Intern Amanda Laverdure was influenced by her time working with Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre staff and clients. She created several step by step programs including a number of "how to" tutorials including make dream catchers, bannock, and creating sun catchers.

The Board also discussed the fate of Fairwind's (Naamiwan's) Drum. As one of the most important cultural objects in the RLRHC, Fairwind's Drum has been the centre piece of the main gallery for nearly 12 years. Donated in 1991 by Gary Butikofer, a retired missionary and a former school teacher at Poplar Hill with a propensity for collecting indigenous cultural objects, the Drum came to the RLRHC during that time. The Board of Directors discussed the possibility of the Drum being repatriated. Due to its long history, the Board recognized that the repatriation would be more complicated than simply giving it back to a specific band or community. In order to make an informed decision, it was important for the Director to reach out to those who know the story of the Drum.

There has always been some controversy in regards to the drum. It has been argued that the drum had been sold to an “outsider” during a time when the community of Poplar Hill was struggling. Others would say that since it was created in Pauingassi, it should return and be a part of that collection. Still others would say that it should be returned to nature.

No decision was made about the Drum, with one exception, that if the people are ready to accept the Drum, it will be given to them. The process will take some time, perhaps years. Despite this long journey, the RLRHC is invested in seeing the Drum returned after doing its due diligence in ensuring that its fate is agreed upon by all interested parties.

## **INVESTING IN A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

In early 2020, with the RLRHC staff had already been coping with major changes since the loss of the building. Without a stable position to build from, it was going to be difficult to be able to think about improvement while so many things were already put on hold. Staff were extremely busy and due to Covid-19, it was difficult for staff to keep up a dialogue with the community. Instead, most of staff time was put towards caring for the collection and dealing with the reconstruction and revitalization of the building. Despite these plentiful issues, with crisis also comes opportunity.

RLRHC staff began to look towards a time when they could access the RLRHC building and improve it. Looking into previous issues, staff identified a number of small issues to be looked at. Simple aspects such as the location of switches, thermostats and outlets were identified and where possible, changed. These changes allow the staff to better utilize space within the building. The Temporary Gallery, the most notable of these particular changes, now has four unbroken walls. This will allow future exhibits to be mounted more easily and will no longer struggle with a divided space.

The NOHFC Registration Intern developed a redesign of artifact storage space in order to better manage the collections. The Intern also did a great deal of the initial work in pricing out the best art system for the RLRHC’s needs. The work done by the intern led to the acquisition of grant money.

Throughout 2020, the Director worked towards seeking out opportunities in order to improve the RLRHC building by developing an improvement plan. In order to realize this plan, grant money was required. As a result the Director sought funding through approximately a dozen different grants. Funds garnered through Evolution Mining helped the RLRHC pay for an art hanging system called Hang It Up. A grant was procured through the Ministry of Canadian Heritage for the installation of a new basement storage room in order to better store artifacts. Several other grants were received and helped maintain the RLRHC while it has been closed to the public.

## **INVESTING IN OUR MATERIAL AND NON-MATERIAL CULTURE**

During 2020 it became clear that the RLRHC building was going to need quite a bit of work in order to ensure that it was up to museum standards. Since the RLRHC had already been working towards changes in exhibits, storage and risk management, it the year’s events provided an opportunity to help the RLRHC grow.

In early 2020 the RLRHC was able to pass its Collections Management and Conservation Policies. Upgrading the approach of work done by staff was one of the major portions of the Strategic Plan. With



the upgrade to these policies, RLRHC staff can now better train interns, streamline work and make work more effective.

As part of the plan, the Director has been working on an emergency plan for the RLRHC. This project has been ongoing for the better part of five years. During the 2019/2020 disaster, a number of issues arose regarding the inadequacy of the original plan, and the redesign. These issues were only discovered when trying to collect resources in order to facilitate the rescue of artifacts, evacuation of staff and materials, relocation to a makeshift storage/work area and how to properly engage the insurance company during the cleanup process. Now with this new information, the project has undergone a bit of a renaissance. Greater details about the building, availability of services, the role of the Municipality and the requirements of the insurance company will now be added to the emergency plan.

Displays were evaluated for damage. Only two exhibits were irrevocably damaged, as a result most of the displays can be retained. Both Gramma Gene's Hells Acers and Mel White's Barber Shop will need to be recreated. To ensure that the exhibits were designed and ready for replacement in the timeframe required, the RLRHC sought out a grant opportunity through Young Canada Works (YCW). Successful in their bid for the grant, RLRHC staff were happy to welcome an exhibit designer intern in late 2020. This exhibit designer was able to recreate the Gramma Gene experience, upgrading the technology, and concept behind her cabin. She will also be working on updating the RLRHC's aviation hanger exhibit.

The Board of Directors have been consistently updated on the building, exhibits and artifacts. As a result, Board Members have a better understanding of the needs of the collection and the importance of making these improvements along the way.

## **INVESTING IN ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE**

As an organization, the RLRHC went through perhaps its most difficult year in recent memory. Coming out of a lackluster tourism season, and into a building disaster meant that the RLRHC was reeling. To make matters worse, the RLRHC was required to tighten its budget as the Municipality of Red Lake was not able to match previous year's donations. With no sources of self-generated income and not enough donations, the RLRHC required funds from other sources. In February, Covid-19 became a global threat. By mid-month both the Provincial and Federal Governments were contributing funds in order to help organizations survive the next few months. The RLRHC was able to secure this funding which allowed for employees to continue working.

While the situation was so volatile, the budget had to be tightened to ensure the RLRHC kept going. Work on exhibits had to be delayed, gift shop acquisitions were reduced and any celebrations were canceled. The changes meant the survival of the organization, but a poor year for enhancing the identity of the RLRHC. In order to re-establish itself as a symbol of community pride, RLRHC staff will need to work hard and be effective with their communication strategies, fundraising, and continue to seek out community volunteer opportunities.

In order to help smooth the transition of a closed centre to an open building/tourism season, the RLRHC has applied for funding through NOHFC for an Events and Programming Facilitation Intern. The intern will be expected to help reignite the community's interest in the RLRHC and create opportunities in the community.

## VISITORS

The visitorship has been one of the ongoing successes of the RLRHC. Sadly in 2020, the building was unavailable and as a result no visitor statistics were recorded. Provided the RLRHC is able to open in 2021, there will need to be a concerted effort made to build interest in the Centre.

The RLRHC did see its Facebook Friends increase by 7%. This small increase is in line with previous increases through the years. It is made all the more impressive given that the number of posts on Facebook was limited.

Year	On-site Visitors/Renters	% compared to 2019	Facebook Friends
2016	7,621	131%	789
2017	9,115	155%	997
2018	8,661	147%	1,115
2019	5,888	N/A	1,235
2020	N/A	N/A	1,330

**Table 1: Visitors and likes by year**

## EXHIBITIONS

### PERMANENT EXHIBITS

The RLRHC's permanent exhibits were taken down and packed away in late 2019 and early 2020. All artifacts were removed from displays and put into storage. While little changed over 2020, change may be significant in 2021. Both Dr. Aiken's Dentist display and Hell's Acres were destroyed in the flooding that occurred as a result of the roof incident.

Despite the lack of physical exhibit work, RLRHC staff discussed the two exhibits at length. The Registration Intern provided a preliminary redesign of the Hell's Acres exhibit. In order to move this process forward, the RLRHC secured funding through Young Canada Works (YCW). This allowed the RLRHC to hire an Exhibit Design Intern. Primarily focused on developing the Hells' Acres exhibit, the intern also dabbled into upgrading the aviation exhibit as well. The plan involves using the aviation video currently used on the big screen in combination with the current children's play area. The exhibit will be designed with creating a visitor experience where they feel like they are in the shoes of an early bush plane pilot.

### TEMPORARY EXHIBITS

No temporary exhibits were designed or created during 2020.

Exhibit/Display	Year Installed	Changes
HBC Post	2007	Reduction/ relocation (2019)
Woodland Art Wall	2008	Redesign (2021)
Fairwind's Drum	2011	Redesign (2021)
Hell's Acres	2011	Replacement
Prospector's Tent	2011	N/A
Aviation Video	2011	Move to aviation exhibit
One Way Ticket	2011	Reduction (2018)
Mel White's Barber Shop	2011	Relocation (2019)
Dr. Aiken's Dentistry Office	2011	Relocation (2019)
Children's Play Area	2011	Becoming an aviation exhibit
Material Culture from Pikangikum	2014	Redesign (2019)
Nature Trading (Front hall)	2015	N/A
Animal Tracks (Front hall)	2016	Some repair required
Beneath It All: Red Lake's Mining Story	2018	Redesign (2019), repairs required

**Table 2: Permanent exhibits by year**

## EVENTS

Due to Covid-19 and the damage done to the building the year prior, the RLRHC did not host any events. In February 2020, many staff members participated in the Winter Carnival, however, instead of hosting an event, staff helped out at other events. This provided a chance for staff to mingle, see what events other groups had put on and contribute in a meaningful way, despite the fact that for the first time, the RLRHC did not have its own event. Sadly that was the last community wide event of the year.

In order to help reconstitute RLRHC events, the RLRHC procured funding from NOHFC for an Events and Education Facilitation Intern. The intern will start in 2021, with the expressed focus of helping develop events and programs while still maintaining social distancing, masks, and any other pandemic precautions. It is the hope of the RLRHC that the doors will open sometime in the late summer; however, it is dependent on the relocation of the collection, the building of exhibits and finishing the rest of the needed building repairs.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

### OVERVIEW

In early 2020, the RLRHC focused on programming that would bring the RLRHC experience to Red Lake's school children. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, the RLRHC visited GLC for a Fur Trade program. The Director and Traditional Knowledge Consultation Intern developed a program that taught children about the timeline of the fur trade, ensuring that each student understood what it was, before going into the details about the history of the fur trade specific to the Red Lake area. The program went over extremely well. Staff had hoped to take the program to a variety of other classrooms in order to share the experience.

Then Covid-19 hit. Staff responded by developing ideas that would allow programs to be presented over skype. Sadly, as the situation got worse, it was unknown if children would be in class at all. To make matters worse, a stay at home order went into effect. With such a difficult task, a change in strategy was required. It was determined that the only way to reliably present content to the public was through the RLRHC's website. To that end, Heritage Online was created.

Year	Revenue
2020	\$0
2019	\$1187
2018	\$984
2017	\$497
2016	\$677

***Table 3: Revenue by Year - Educational Programming***

Featuring programming that was accessible through the RLRHC website, Heritage Online included crossword puzzles and word searches with content straight from the history of Red Lake. The RLRHC also put together a podcast that ran for six episodes which included a history of two of the RLRHC's objects (a 1979 Eclipse rocket and an indigenous moose horn). Topics also included volunteering, evolution, and professional biographies of both the RLRHC's 2020 NOHFC interns. In addition to the podcasts and puzzles, Heritage Online also included a variety of games, crafts and activities. The Traditional Knowledge Consultation Intern also created step by step instructions for drawing comic characters with an indigenous twist, creating dream catchers, sun catchers, pysanky, flower pounding, eco printing, bannock, making wild teas, and a guide to picking mushrooms safely.

## **FACILITY RENTALS**

One of the RLRHC's largest revenue sources in years past was through its facility rentals. Sadly like the later part of 2019, there were no facility rentals possible. Facility rentals will only return when the main gallery has been restored. Until then, the RLRHC will require additional revenue elsewhere.

Year	Revenue
2020	\$0
2019	\$7,900.02
2018	\$14,481.62
2017	\$13,503.40
2016	\$12,166.33

***Table 5: Income generated from rentals over the past five years.***

## GIFT SHOP

The RLRHC's gift shop was closed from January 1<sup>st</sup> until December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. With the exception of a few sales through delivery, the RLRHC did not have any during that time. Opening for Christmas sales, the RLRHC was able to showcase some new items to the public.

Year	Total Revenue
2020	\$7,625.57
2019	\$33,634.82
2018	\$38,239.24
2017	\$41,745.14
2016	\$26,455.49

*Table 6: Total gift shop revenue by year*



The RLRHC continues to showcase local artists and their art work in new and interesting ways. In winter of 2020, the RLRHC was happy to introduce a custom golf ball set with imagery from Patrick Hunter, a new camp style mug with the image of a fox. In addition, prints of a variety of artists were made available by utilizing some of the grid wall. Consigned goods made up 38% of the total gift shop revenue of 2020, down slightly from 2019.

The Gift Shop still had many old favourites including mugs, wallets, art cards, key chains, t-shirts, hoodies and scarves. The RLRHC held off on large scale orders because the pandemic showed little signs of slowing down. In 2021, after the building has been put back to normal, the gift shop will need to be a priority to ensure visitors are able to get what they are interested in.

## Collections and Conservation: Material Culture

2020 has been an interesting year for collections. A large portion of time was dedicated to inspecting and repacking the collection for the move back to the Heritage Centre. After the roof blew off the Heritage Centre, artefacts were packed quickly to get them out of the building that they needed to be inspected to ensure that there was no damage. The inspection was done mainly by Lisa Hughes (Curator) and Jenna Locke (Registrar Intern), although Amanda Laverdure, (Traditional Knowledge Consultation Intern) and volunteers helped when available. Thankfully, there was very little damaged caused by packing and moving the items. There were several items to inspect, so boxes were only inspected. If the boxes were poorly packed, then they were marked or moved to the office area to be repacked.

After the inspection, the focus shifted to repacking the artefacts properly, creating an inventory and fixing several collection issues from previous years. The inventory was for the Heritage Centre's records, but also for First Response, the company hired by the Insurance Company. During the inventory, several issues were discovered and slowly this information is being corrected. The main collections issues are incorrect catalogue numbers on objects, objects without catalogue numbers and having items in the collection that should not be there such as loans and deaccessioned items. Lisa worked on solving issues, fixing problems and also repacking the collection. Lisa taught Jenna the collections standards, which were slightly different in Canada than in Australia. In addition, Lisa worked with Jenna to gain the confidence to work with the collection, turning her theoretical knowledge into hands-on, practical experience. Jenna learned quickly and she spent a large portion of her time photographing artefacts, cataloguing artefacts, updating information in the collections database (PastPerfect), and properly packing and storing artefacts. We did not have enough time to rehouse all the artefacts, but we were able to reorganize the remaining boxes, so artefacts were safely packed for the move back to the RLRHC.



(Left) Jenna preparing wedding dress for photographing. Afterwards, Lisa and Jenna worked to properly fold and interleaf the dress in a storage container.



(Right) Jenna affixing a semi-permanent catalogue number to an artefact (Stereoscope) with B-72.



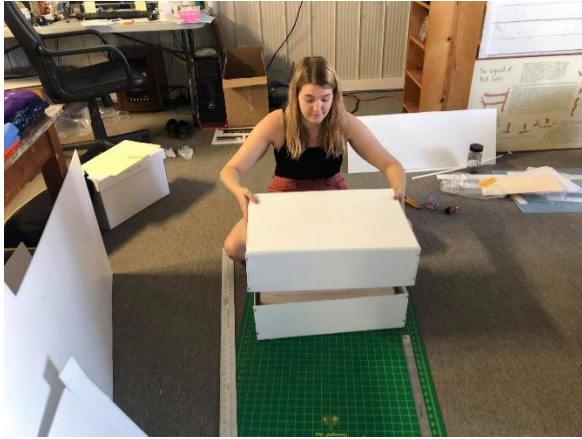
Being in a temporary location and working out of boxes meant that the focus was not on collecting artifacts this year, but there were still a few donations in 2020. There were a few amazing photographic collections from the 1930s and 40s. Also, staff tried to collect information and photographs for Covid-19 and also Fire 49. One of the lessons we learned from Fire 14 was that many people forgot about some of the small details when they did an exhibit 30 years later. Many potential donors were asked if they minded waiting until we return to the Heritage Centre in 2021. These potential donors were very understanding and we look forward to their donation after we return to the Heritage Centre.

Next year, the focus will be redesigning the storage area, returning the items to storage, ensure the artefacts are properly photographed and stored. Work will continue on solving collections issues as well as continuing to catalogue donations and properly store them.

With the disaster last year, it was essential to inspect and segregate any damaged items. After seeing the extent of damage to the RLRHC building, it is amazing how little damage was done to the artefacts. There were only a few items damaged by water and the emergency move. Items, such as a glass lantern and some record (LP)s broke during the move and are damaged beyond repair. Most items which got wet in the RLRHC started to mould. They were segregated in 2019, but a few more items were found in 2020 during the inspection. These items were sealed in plastic bags and are in a freezer waiting for conservation. An application was sent for the Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI) to conserve these items. Unfortunately, CCI was funding iron items, our mostly paper and plastic artifacts could not be accepted for conservation. CCI recommended the RLRHC resubmit an application in the future.

Some items may be able to be conserved by staff in the next year or two. For example, trophies can be polished by staff. Each time a piece of silver is cleaned it takes away a layer of the silver, so this cleaning will not be done until a suitable storage area can be created to slow tarnish. Some items that were broken may be able to be repaired such as the leg of a wooden table and a Popsicle lamp shade which adhesive lost its strength. Unfortunately, the mould can only be removed with the proper equipment, in a well ventilated room (preferably a fume hood), so the items remain frozen until conservation is possible.

The main goal this year is preventative conservation. New storage boxes have been created and several artefacts were packed properly using conservation materials. Clothing has been properly folded and interleaved with acid free tissues paper. Proper supplies have been purchased for old negatives and slides. Less than 5 % of the collection has been packed using preventative conservation methods, but more work will continue next year.



(Top Left) Jenna building custom boxes and hoping that the lid fits!

(Top Right) Jenna cleaning the polar bear rug before repacking. The vacuum hose is covered in cheese cloth to ensure that the suction is reduced and the artefact is not harmed or valuable pieces are accidentally vacuumed.

(Bottom Left) Custom box with dividers for stamps. Previously, most of these stamps were all together in a Ziploc bag and rubbing against each other. Now they are divided, protected from scratching each other and easier to find. With proper storage, it prevents artefacts from getting destroyed and limit the amount of handling.

(Bottom Right) This custom box for a ceremonial pipe has labels on the top and side. Inside the box, foam has been carved so the pipe stays in position and then the foam is covered in acid free tissue. This keeps the artefact protected while in storage, but also allows limits handling. The box is not only for storage, but can also be used for transporting and display. If anyone asks to see the ceremonial pipe, it can safely be brought out and displayed.

## FUNDRAISING AND DEVELOPMENT

The RLRHC is funded in large part by the Municipality of Red Lake. The municipality covers much of the cost related to personnel, occupancy and building maintenance. In addition it supports the day to day functioning of the RLRHC through sharing human resources services, technical assistance and health and safety functions. In return, the RLRHC offers a welcoming space for special occasions and events. The Canadian Museums Operating Grant (CMOG), bestowed by the Government of Ontario, helps to offset the costs associated with housing a collection. The Heritage Centre has been a proud recipient of the grant since 2005.

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC), provided by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines has provided interns with the opportunity to gain experience in their field of study. In addition, those hired as part of this grant have frequently acquired prestigious positions after their employment with the Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre. In 2019/2020, two positions were funded by the NOHFC grant. The positions include the Registrar Intern and the Traditional Knowledge Consultant Intern. In addition, the RLRHC was also awarded funding for two interns to be hired in 2021.

In the past, Ontario's Sunset Country Travel Association has provided funding for an employee during June, July and August. Sadly the RLRHC was unable to accommodate another person in the warehouse due to Covid-19 related constraints. Instead, the funding was used to address some of the website related difficulties that had developed over the past two years. The RLRHC hired a young student who helped develop and strengthen the RLRHC's donor wall page, make changes to the RLRHC's store front and generally updated the website.

The RLRHC did not receive any donations through its donations box in 2020. Without visitors, there was no expectation that the donation would provide a revenue source for 2020. The current funds from the donation box are being stored until the building is open to the public. Despite the closure in 2020, the RLRHC managed to sell two Donor Wall tiles. This provided some needed, but unexpected revenue.

Community support for donations was extremely strong during 2020. A total of \$10,000.93 was raised through the community and corporate sponsors. Corporate donations made up the lions' share at 81% and community donations made up the rest. Many of these donations were project specific; however, the majority of community donations were made out to the RLRHC in memory of Richard Pasloski who sadly passed away on April 14, 2020. Richard will be remembered by his family and friends, and also by the RLRHC for his tireless contribution while on the Board of Directors.



## MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Since the closure of the RLRHC for most of 2020, there was a freeze on most marketing and promotion for the year. In 2021, the RLRHC Director and Board will reassess once a more clear opening day is hypothesised. During 2020, the RLRHC reached out to the public using social media and its website. Unlike years past, marketing and promotion were not the primary focus of the RLRHC.

Year	On-site Visitors	Website Visits	Facebook
2019	5,835	23,182	152,624
2020	154	15,748	67,854

The number of onsite visitors went from 5,835 to 154 from 2019 to 2020. This reduction in onsite visitors is unsurprising given the pandemic and closure. There was a 32% reduction in the number of website visitors over the period, despite significant effort by staff to put content online. Facebook saw a 56% reduction in visitors during 2020. This was in part due to a reduction of overall presence on Facebook as staff contracts ended. A concerted effort will need to be made in order to ensure that the RLRHC's presence returns a few months before its opening.

## MEMBERSHIPS

As predicted, membership sales in 2020 were reduced significantly from previous years. Only five memberships were purchased during the year. Since schools have been struggling to keep their classrooms open there hasn't been a strong call for programming. Nearly all memberships were purchased in the time period where the RLRHC opened its gift shop for Christmas sales.

Memberships fit into the following categories:

### Annual Membership

Individual \$25

Senior/Student \$20

Family (parents and children under 16) \$40

Senior Couple (one member over 65) \$30

*Free admission to all exhibits*

- 20% off all non-consignment gift shop items
- Advanced ticket sales for events put on by the Heritage Centre
- 50% off educational programs

### Non-Profit Organization Membership

Annual Organizational Membership \$50

*Free admission to all exhibits*

- 20% off all non-consignment gift shop items (Organization purchases only)
- Advanced ticket sales for events put on by the Heritage Centre
- 10% off all facility rentals
- 50% off educational programs

### School Membership

Annual School Membership - Cost dependent on the number of students attending the school

*Free admission to all exhibits*

- 100% off all standard school programs
- 10% off all facility rentals

### Corporate Membership

Annual Organizational Membership \$150

*Free admission to all exhibits*

- 20% off all non-consignment gift shop items (Corporate purchases only)
- Advanced ticket sales for events put on by the Heritage Centre
- 10% off all facility rentals

*Free admission for life (no expiry)*

- Free access to our digital and physical archives
- 20% off all non-consignment gift shop items
- Advanced ticket sales for events put on by the Heritage Centre
- Member's name acknowledged in the lobby of the Heritage Centre
- 50% off educational programs

### Lifetime Membership

Individual \$150

Family (two adults & children under 17) \$300

Membership Type	2017 Purchases	2018 Purchases	2019 Purchases	2020 Purchases
Lifetime Membership - Family	2	1	1	0
Lifetime Membership - Individual	2	0	0	0
Annual School Membership	1	2	1	0
Annual Non-Profit Organization Memberships	3	3	4	1
Annual Family Memberships	5	4	3	1
Annual Individual Memberships	8	19	8	1
Annual Senior Couple Membership	6	7	7	1
Annual Senior Individual Memberships	7	8	6	1
Corporate Membership	2	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>5</b>

**Table 7: Membership types sold by year**

## OUR TEAM

### STAFF

Long-time Director, Trevor Osmond's day to day activities include fundraising, project planning, managing tasks and reviewing the budget. His role includes creating work plans, interviewing and hiring staff, ensuring that staff have the proper training and monitors new staff during their orientation. Other roles include managing the gift shop and educational programming. Finally, the position is responsible for developing community partnerships, strategic planning and evaluation.

Lisa Hughes continues the process of improving the RLRHC's collections, facilitating artefact donations, achieving and maintaining museum standards. She ensures that staff have a clear focus when working with RLRHC collections. Exhibit planning, creation and maintained are integral to the RLRHC's continual growth and Lisa handles most of the primary duties related to exhibits. She also monitors and evaluates volunteers insuring that they are enjoying their work at the RLRHC while still accomplishing the goals set out for each project.

On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, the RLRHC welcomed returning employee (former YCW student) Amanda Laverdure. Amanda took the position of Traditional Knowledge Consultation Intern funded through the NOHFC internship program. It was the RLRHC's hope that Amanda would be able to organize the current resources on indigenous history and culture, meet with and interview Elders from the indigenous community and prepare for an exhibit that explores Red Lake's first people through their own eyes. Sadly with the building and pandemic issues, the purpose of the position had to be amended. Instead, Amanda took on a heavier programming role, helping to create most of the content for the Heritage Online material for the RLRHC's website. Amanda also worked closely with indigenous Elders, learning and practicing many of the skills as well as hearing many of the teachings important to the core of indigenous life in Northwestern Ontario. While Amanda didn't get to perform all the interviews she was hoping to cover, she still has an interest in seeing the project through until its end. Amanda still hopes to finish the project, even if that means volunteering with the RLRHC in the future.

Jenna Locke, fresh from an internship in Australia, also joined us on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019. Jenna's job is focused on improving storage conditions and housing for artefacts. Jenna was hired to create a plan to make significant changes to the Mezzanine storage area, however, with the roof incident; she became involved with the evacuation, and stabilization of the RLRHC's artifacts. Jenna finished her report, performed the research for an art hanging system, and helped out in many unexpected but welcomed ways. Jenna was a driving force in creating the RLRHC podcast, produced the first redesign of Hells Acres, and made a significant impact in the gift shop.

As part of the summer student position funded through Sunset Country, Keren Ma joined the RLRHC team. This was the first the RLRHC had ever hired a remote employee as part of its summer staff. On July 13, Keren began to review the RLRHC looking for coding errors, mistakes, and making a list of areas to streamline. Having a background in computer science, Keren took to the project right away. She would also be active on social media and prepare the new groundwork for the RLRHC's Donor Wall Interactive.

In late 2020 (November 23<sup>rd</sup>), the RLRHC welcomed Heather Kehoe to the team. Heather has an art background from out west in Calgary. Since joining the team she has been working with the Curator and Director in order to redesign the Gramma Gene's Hells Acres exhibit. In 2021, she will also be looking at designing a new aviation exhibit, using some of the current hardware and technology.

The individuals who contributed their energies to our team were:

Director	Trevor Osmond
Curator	Lisa Hughes
Intern, 2019 – 2020	Jenna Locke, Registrar Intern
Intern, 2019 – 2020	Amanda Laverdure, Traditional Knowledge Consultant Intern
Summer Student	Keren Ma



## VOLUNTEERS

The RLRHC had a very difficult year in terms of volunteers. Only three volunteers participated in RLRHC activities. The challenges have been many, but the RLRHC staff still welcome volunteers even with all the closures and building maintenance. Since losing so many of its volunteers in 2019, the RLRHC has struggled to reconnect with the public and search for more interested residents. Once the RLRHC opens in earnest, the museum will need to address this issue. Since volunteering was so sporadic and the RLRHC has been under unusual conditions, not enough volunteering hours were recorded in order to provide an accurate representation of the volunteer's hard work in 2020.

This year, we had fewer volunteers, but that was expected with Covid-19 and the limited space at the temporary location. The main work for volunteers was working with the collection. This requires training, which two of our regular volunteers had. They continued to volunteer when there was work available. They helped with moving artefacts around, cleaning the warehouse, inspecting artefacts for damage, and then repacking. They also helped with the set up and packing of the gift shop and nature trading at the Balmertown location.

We gained a new volunteer in late autumn of 2020, who is a student. She is being trained on working with the collection. She started to learn basic tasks on the collections database and how to photograph artefacts. After the items are photographed she also worked on downloading, labeling, copying and editing the photographs. Then she attached the photographs to the database. We hope she will continue to volunteer in 2021.

We have been very fortunate to have so many volunteers. Some volunteered weekly, but many people volunteer for a day or even a few hours when necessary for particular projects. We look forward to next year and hopefully the return our volunteers, as well as new volunteers!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors have stayed with the RLRHC through a difficult 2020. We count on their support, guidance and knowledge and it has been keenly displayed since the end of 2019.

Council Representative:	Janet Hager
Chair:	John Frostiak
Vice Chair:	Gary Horne
Secretary:	Graeme Swanwick
	Kaaren Dannenmann
	Amy Newport
	Hilary Reid

## MEMBERS

### *Organizations*

The RLRHC would like to thank the organizations that have stuck with us through the thick and thin of 2020.

### ***Individuals, Couples and Family Members***

The RLRHC would also like to thank the individuals and public for support and investing their time and effort into projects throughout the year.

### **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS**

We are deeply grateful to the following contributors for their generous financial and developmental support of the RLRHC. We look forward to working with these community partners in the future:

#### ***Operating Grants***

Canadian Museums Operating Grant (CMOG)  
Municipality of Red Lake  
Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation  
Government of Canada

#### ***Project and In Kind Donors***

Balmertown Food Fair  
Red Lake IGA  
Evolution Mining  
Science North  
Canada Helps .ORG  
Nancy Philips and Russel Smart  
Szaflik, Duncalfe, Pasloski, Swan, Wasylenska, Dodd,  
Rusk Hager, Aiken, Newport, Lundstrom,  
Waatainen, Laverdure and Cormier families.

#### ***Project Partners & Affiliates***

Chukuni Communities Development Corporation  
Sunset Country Museum Association  
Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre  
Pimachiowin Aki UNESCO World Heritage site  
Science North  
Highway 105 Tourism and Marketing Board  
Norseman Festival Committee  
Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and  
Mines  
Red Lake Airport  
Red Lake Margaret Cochenour Memorial Hospital  
Patrick Hunter  
Clever Corvid Art and Art Workshops  
New Starts for Women  
Southpaw Photography

We would also like to thank First Response and REMR Roofing for coming in and rescuing our building. Without their dedicated work, we would not have made it through 2020.

Finally we would like to thank the Municipality of Red Lake who supported the RLRHC during our disaster by providing office space for the RLRHC team to work out of, gave support when it was most needed, worked together with RLRHC management to develop Covid-19 strategies and were there to help discuss rebuilding tourism in our area.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

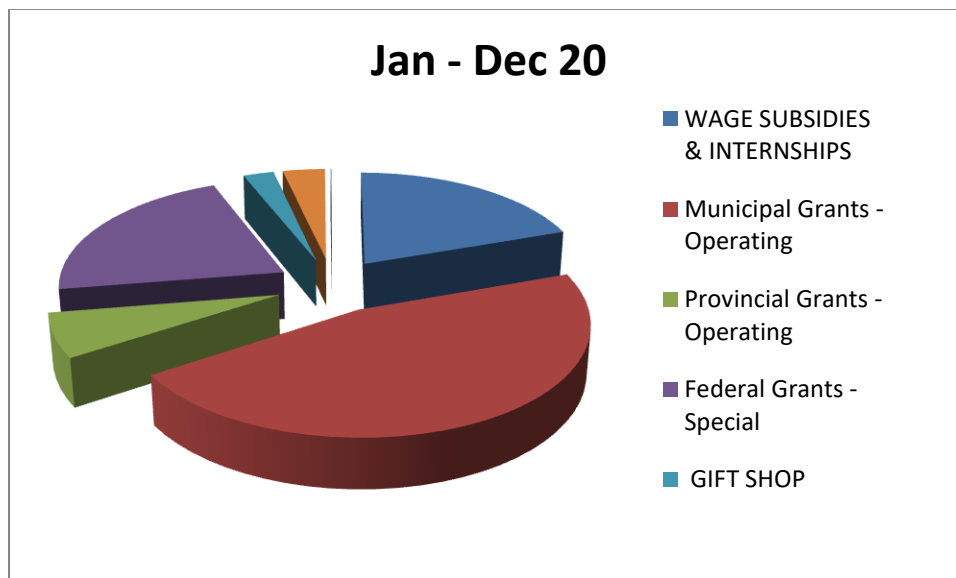
### REVENUE

Since 2020 was such a difficult year to predict, revenue streams were extremely hard to maintain in certain areas. In others, funding from unexpected sources helped the RLRHC get through the difficult times. In order to account for budget issues on their end, the Municipality of Red Lake were not able to provide the first request for their yearly portion of the RLRHC's operating costs. The RLRHC had to resubmit a budget based on the realities of a reduced tourism season, and the possibility that Covid-19 might expand out of Asia. The Municipality of Red Lake agreed with the second budget presented.

The reduction in municipal funding meant that revenue streams had to be analyzed very carefully as well. Operational Grants and wage subsidies were the backbone of the RLRHC's revenue. Rentals, admissions and bank interest were nonfactors as the RLRHC wasn't open. Likewise educational programs and special events were quickly closed down as a result of Covid-19. Membership Revenue was lower than expected (83% of expected revenue), and gift shop sales were only a fraction of 2019's sales. Despite the low sales (64%), it is actually remarkable that the RLRHC was able to do so much business in the span of two weeks and a few pick up/drop off sales.

In developing the budget, the RLRHC was relying on donations and sponsorships to provide the revenue to get through the year. A lofty and ultimately unrealistic amount of 15,000 was expected in 2020. Despite the difficulties, many donors contributed to help keep the RLRHC lights on and its employees working. A total of 10,525.93 or 70% of expected donation revenue was accumulated during 2020.

While Covid-19 made things extremely difficult in many ways, in others, it freed up some grant money. An unexpected \$65,682.74 from Federal grants allowed the RLRHC to stabilize during the year. Combined with the insurance payout for ruined or destroyed assets, the RLRHC revenue actually looks substantial (38% over the expected revenue).

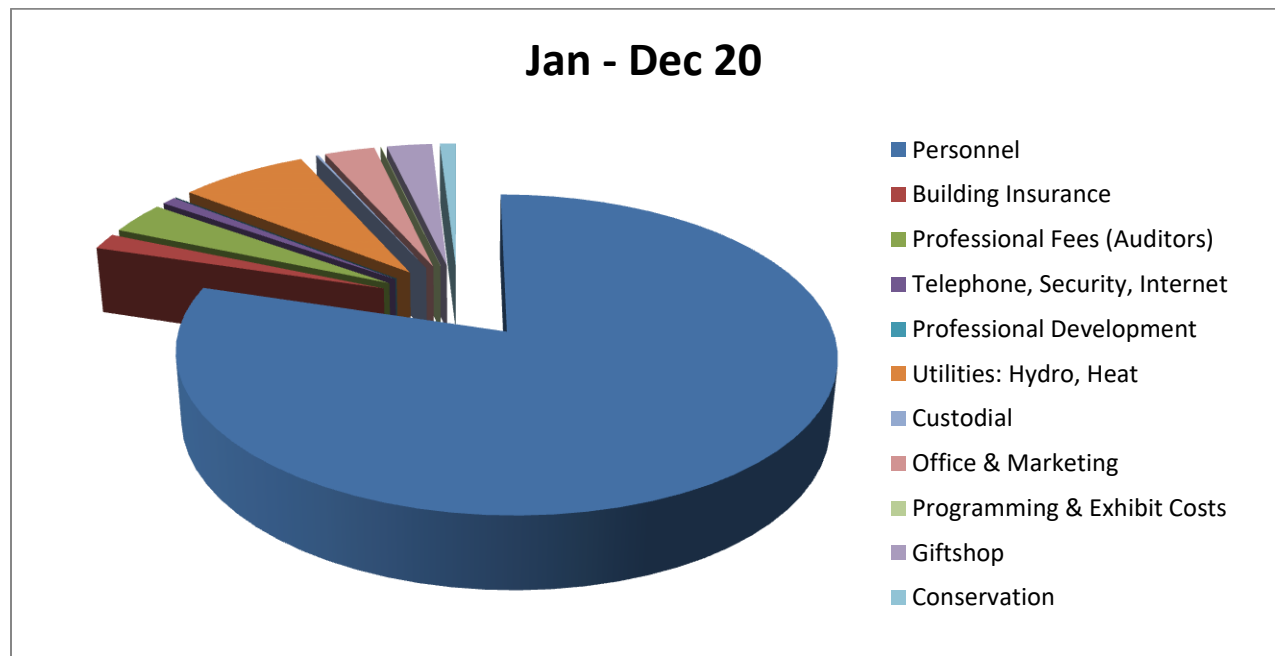


## EXPENSES

In order to address the issues of revenue reduction, the budget was amended in early 2020. Despite the amendment, many steps had to be taken to ensure that the operational grants had time to process. As a result, staff held off on many their expenditures until funding had been accumulated. Personnel, professional fees (the cost of the 2019 audit), and communication were all slightly over budget. No funds were put towards professional development as Covid-19 was extremely restrictive. In addition, the work at hand meant that there was little time to deviate from the work plan.

Utilities and custodial costs were much lower since the RLRHC had been relocated the year prior. Programming and event costs were non-existent and costs related to exhibits were extremely small (15% of expected). Gift shop expenditures were low as well for two reasons. A lack of orders due to the pandemic and the recent order of gift shop goods meant that stock was still abundant.

Office & marketing has been a catch all category in the past and had accumulated much less expenses in the past four years than other areas. In order to cut costs the RLRHC slashed its budget from \$8,000 to \$3,000. Since so many unexpected things happened in 2020, the Office & marketing expense line was used more often than in other years. The total office and marketing expenses for 2020 were more in line with calculated expenditures of past years, rather than that of a year whose budget had been reduced in that area. This meant that the total use was 247% of the total expected costs. Overall, the expenses very close to expected values (just 2% over expected).



## VARIANCE

The total net, unaudited revenue for the RLRHC's 2020 fiscal year was \$90,472.83. This figure looks extreme; however, there are many circumstances that have to be addressed. During 2020, the RLRHC

was paid a lump sum of insurance money in order to purchase and replace furniture, and other similar assets. This amount has been reflected within 2020's revenue, but the expenditures for that money will happen in 2021.

Also included in the fundraising line was a donation for \$7,500.00 from Evolution Mining. This donation was made in order to purchase an art hanging system. Since the donation is part of a larger grant application, the corresponding expenditures will not happen until 2021. These two project variances represents \$72,000.00 of the \$90,472.83 (or 75% of the net revenue), in question. Additional, smaller changes in wage subsidies will reduce the amount even further. Much of the rest of the extra revenue can be attributed to donations and unexpected support. Without this support the RLRHC would not have remained open during the early to mid-2020. With the support from unexpected sources in 2020, the RLRHC to go into the 2021 fiscal year with a safety net, and the ability to replace some small assets that were not covered by insurance.