Isolation

Hello Friends of the Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre (RLRHC). Many of you find yourself in isolation and may have been there for a considerable amount of time.

Others may have been forced into isolation because they have been travelling or have symptoms. But why are we isolating?

First, it limits the exposure to the virus. This virus is a difficult one to manage. It is less deadly compared to Ebola or rabies. In some ways that makes it more difficult to get rid of. It means that people don’t take it as seriously, or continue to move around while sick. In addition, it also spreads even when the carrier isn’t showing signs of infection. This makes it extremely difficult to track.

The second reason for isolating is because it has proven to be effective in the past. Outbreaks of viruses are nothing new. The Spanish Flu was the last global pandemic (1918 to 1919).

This strain of influenza devasted a war torn world. The virus was slowed when populations went into isolation. By the summer of 1919, the flu pandemic came to an end, as those that were infected either died or developed immunity.

It has been theorized that the virus may have mutated into a less harmful strain, which made it more treatable.

Online Activities

In order to help keep you occupied during this difficult time, the RLRHC will be providing online content. Currently this is limited to some brain teasers, however, you can expect that the RLRHC will expand content in the near future.

YouTube: The Heritage Centre will be adding programs onto its YouTube page. This includes but isn’t limited to crafts, tutorials and lectures.

RLRHC will also be running a Q&A in order to address some of the questions from our stakeholders. If you have questions about the work being done at the building, local history, science or anything else, you can send us that question via email.

Facebook: We will continue to post stories, photos and questions through Facebook. We will also continue to post updates like this newsletter.

Website: The RLRHC has been working very hard to add content to its website. You may not know it, but the RLRHC has three years of exhibits available to explore. Interested in the vast history of mining in Red Lake? Visit the Beneath It All: Red Lake’s Mining Story exhibit. We also have exhibits on early transportation, Woodland Caribou Provincial Park and Red Lake’s history of fishing for you to explore.
Red Lake Reunion

Once upon a time, adventurous men & women travelled to the Red Lake area. They worked hard, lived hard, played & loved hard; they were true pioneers & survivors!

Many were immigrants, new to our country & whether you were born there or moved to the Red Lake area, everyone became Red Lake proud!

We are the offspring of those who worked in the mines, were entrepreneurs and service providers in the mining communities.

On Wednesday September 25, 2019, thirty-one of us, born before 1960 arrived at the Canada Inns Polo Park full of high spirits and enthusiasm, excited to see our fellow Red Lakers. Many were at the 2017 ‘Get Together’ and knew what a good time the next few days together would bring.

It felt good to be young hearted again, singing the RLDHS song & sharing our small town tales. We learned about the future of gold in the Red Lake District, and were enlightened of our First Nation’s history in the area.

We danced, sang, listened to jokes, stories & testaments to life growing up in Red Lake & even donned a miner’s hard hat & fishing rod in our photo booth!

We didn’t realize we were making memories, we just knew we were having fun!

Shortly before our reunion, we heard of the wind storms that had devastated the Red Lake Heritage Museum. At our farewell brunch before we all headed home, everyone in the photo decided unanimously right then and there to make a generous donation towards repairs to the RLRHC. Marlene Gordon, Ed & Karen Lemaire, Tom & Meredith Melnick were registered but unable to attend yet graciously donated. Over the past few months others have made their own individual donations towards the Museum.

After all, we are true Red Lakers! We understand the Heritage Centre is looking forward to a October 1st re-opening!

Congratulations and all the best!
Museum Funding

Canada’s Museums as with all public facilities, the nation’s Heritage and Culture sector has taken significant measures to respond to public safety needs.

The Canadian Museum Association (one of our funding and oversight bodies) has been working with Minster of Canadian Heritage Steven Guilbeault to find ways to support our sector. The Department is looking at funding approaches in a flexible way, and “will continue to explore how the federal government’s relief initiatives may assist Canadian museums in this time of crisis.” Similar efforts are taking place on the provincial and municipal levels. Dr. Vanda Vitali, Executive Director of the Canadian Museum Associations, commented “the commitment of museums to public safety has not gone unnoticed. One only has to browse social media channels to see how museums are being held up as a bright place during a dark time.

The staff and board of the Red Lake Regional Heritage Centre continue to work hard to find alternative ways to bring programs and services to our region. Many of you have already discovered our online exhibits, done your virtual shopping at the Cheeky Beaver, and have seen some of our Facebook based activities for children and families.

* Does not contain all donations done through the Municipality of Red Lake.
Patrick Hunter—Art online

Last week, local artist Patrick Hunter went from artist to online art teacher. His first time every teaching live, and online, Patrick shared many tips and tricks with viewers.

Patrick had this to say about the event:

"Thanks to everyone who tuned into watch and participate in my first online workshop last week!

My next workshop is going to be on Saturday April 7th at 1pm (Red Lake time). I am hoping that this works well for the folks that work, and hope that they can join in too. The link to the design to print is below."

Patrick notes that although he much prefers to teach in person, he is adjusting to the new method using social media:

“There’s a bit of a learning curve for me too, but I hope that it at least provides a break in the day where you can stop and do something different that is hopefully relaxing.”

The materials needed for the workshop gives folks that don’t have a ton of artistic experience the right tools to gain some artistic confidence.

For more information, visit Patrick’s Facebook page or contact Patrick directly on by Facebook or through his newly redesigned web page.

“Stay tuned to my social media platforms for an official workshop post before Saturday!”

Building Repairs and Timeline

With all of the recent focus on covid19, Red Lakers and friends of the RLRHC may need a bit of a reminder that we actually have two simultaneous crisis at the Heritage Centre. Remember that problem with the roof?

It has been a month since the last newsletter, and a lot of terrific progress has been made! A company called “First Response” has joined the restoration process, bringing much needed expertise in managing the rehabilitation of a public building such as ours. They began by doing a thorough assessment of the work done to date as the baseline for developing a comprehensive plan for cleaning and restoring the building. They have photographed every part of the Heritage Centre, and assessed our equipment. We now know what equipment we can keep, and what has to be replaced. It has been a long and detailed job, but essential for getting us back in operation.

The artifacts in our collection are, as you know, safely warehoused in Bal-merton. Staff has been assessing them for damage and restoration needs, and updating collection records. Reports on any heavily damaged donations are presented to our Board of Directors for decision making, separate from the equipment assessment.

The next phase is evaluating the structure. Drywall will be removed to test inner and outer walls for moisture. Flooring will be assessed for water damage. Any mould that has built up will be removed. Final, electronics, including outlets, will be tested. At that point damaged materials can be removed and replaced. We don’t have a firm timeline on that, as it depends on the amount of damage we sustained.

The final phase involves replacing equipment, and moving back in to the building. We’ll start working on putting the collection back into permanent storage and updating our catalogue once again. Damaged exhibits will either be repaired or replaced. There will be some work that we won’t be able to do in house and will need to be handed off to exhibit specialists. We’re aiming for October 1st, just in time for the annual Fright Night.

Of course, a lot can happen in between then and now, so stay tuned for the next newsletter.

Stay safe everyone!