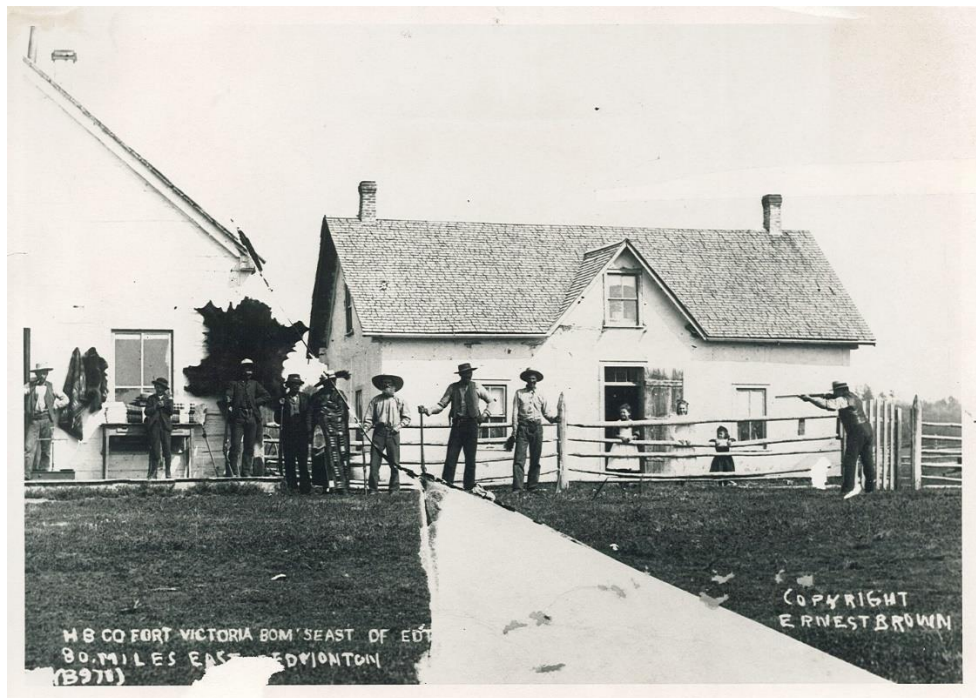


# Smoky Lake History

This area was rich in fur bearing animals which attracted the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company to establish trading posts here in the early 1800's. Originally named Fort White Earth, the site that was eventually to become the Town of Smoky Lake, was actually intended to replace the settlements at Fort Edmonton and Vermilion. As was the custom of the day, soon after the trading posts were established, Christian missionaries came to the area. Certainly, they were there to keep the trappers and their families who populated the trading posts close to God, but their first objective was to convert the "Indians" to Christianity. Once the settlement began to grow, these missionaries were instrumental in providing education, medical care, housing and entertainment to all who called Smoky Lake home.



*Victoria Settlement*

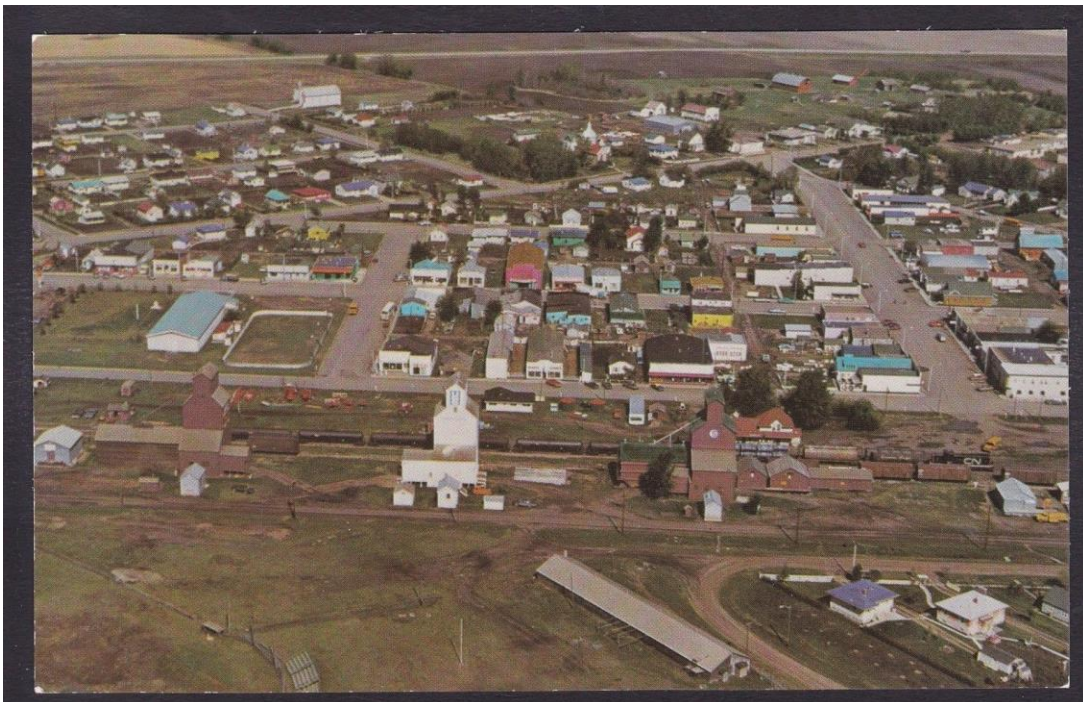
Although the area of Smoky Lake was busy with trapping and trading in the early 1800's, the actual settlement did not begin until the late 1800's and by 1915 the area was heavily settled. During those early years, some local farmers brought supplies by wagon from Fort Saskatchewan and from Edmonton along the Victoria Trail and opened up stores in their homes to serve the different districts. All of that changed in 1909, when the first post office in the Smoky Lake district opened up and the railroad soon followed in 1915. Smoky Lake's first store opened its doors in 1916. The following year, Smoky Lake was given the official status of Hamlet and in 1919, the rail line to the fast-growing community was completed. That same year, the Standard Bank opened for business and later became the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce which still operates till this day. The year of 1919 also saw the Town purchase the hospital that had been set up by the Mission at Pakan and move it to Smoky Lake.



In 1920, the citizens of Smoky Lake built the Town's first school and appointed H.E. Evans as school principal and Mrs. Sutton as the first teacher. Smoky Lake was incorporated as a village in 1923 and as a town in 1962.



*Smoky Lake 1940s*



Smoky Lake in 1960s

