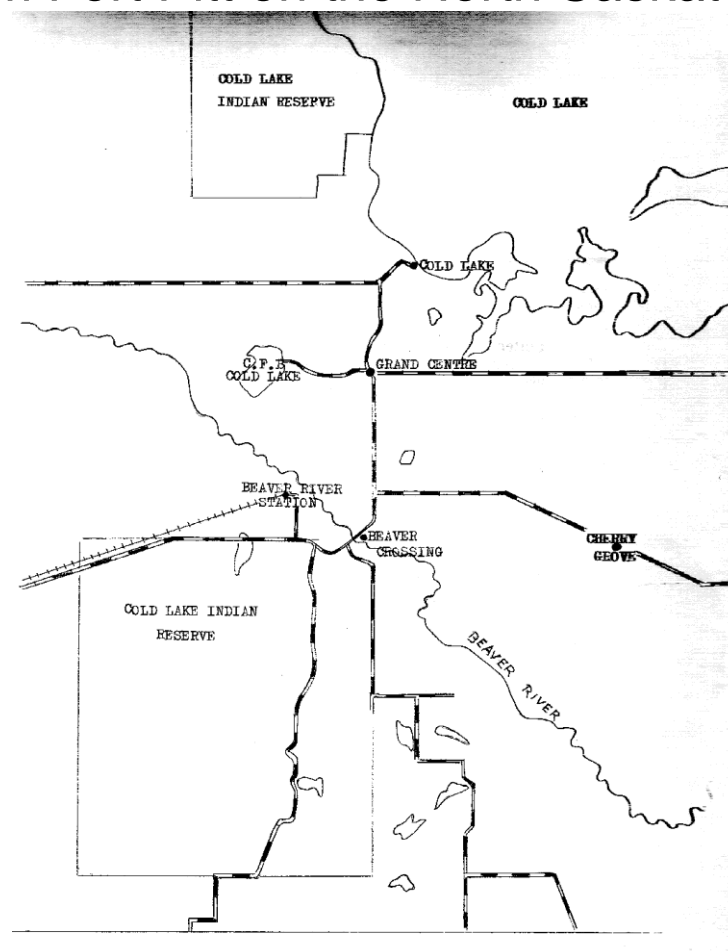


The Early Days of Cold Lake

The Beaver River became the preferred route into the fur rich Athabasca country in 1778 with the successful trip by Peter Pond from Ile a La Crosse and Fort Original (near Moose Lake; the earliest fort in Alberta). Pond brought out 80,000 beaver of a rich quality not seen before. The trade was slowed by an epidemic of smallpox that is estimated to have killed nine tenths of the Chipewyan Indians of the northern region. David Thompson in his extensive travels in the region put the Beaver River and Cold Lake on the early maps. Later trade goods were shipped into a HBC post at Beaver Crossing (It collected furs from many smaller outlets in the area) from Fort Pitt on the North Saskatchewan.



Cold Lake about 1949

After 1905 early pioneers began to adapt to the Cold Lake climate and reaped the benefits. Agriculture could be supplemented by commercial fishing. For a while an active tourist promotion tried to bring early tourists to the shores of Cold Lake.



Bellview Hotel 1926

A flourishing community grew in Cold Lake (now Cold Lake North) based on tourism and commercial fishing.



Yearly tithe paid with cut wood to heat St. Dominic Church 1940's

The continual process of change during has brought Cold Lake to its present stage of development. The growth of Cold Lake has been from its natural attributes, the forests, fish, agriculture and oil. Cold Lake did not grow in isolation but flourished as a community with the surrounding countryside.



Coal fired steam train at Beaver Crossing circa 1945

Building the Beaver River Trestle in 1951

The coming of the railroad to LeGoff (or Beaver Station) in 1931 and then to Grand Centre in 1951 over the 102 foot the Beaver River Trestle was a big change for the entire Cold lake area. Developments in the area affected the people of the surrounding communities. The opening of the Grand Centre creamery by Mr. Toppenberg, proved a boon to the

many farmers who had no stable market for their dairy products.

The construction and arrival of the Cold Lake Air Base in 1952 was the next great important event the area. Businessmen benefited because of increased business and the many farmers and residents found work and they were at last paid a set wage for their services. The main runway and two hangers were usable by spring 1954. The work at the Base was continued for many years as new facilities were added. A school started in 1954, roads paved in 1955, an Airbase hospital in 1954 and in 1977 the Primrose Bombing Range was added.



4 Wing - Cold Lake

In the 1950s the development of CFB Cold Lake pushed the growth of the entire region and lead to the development of Grand Centre as a commercial and transport community.



Grand Centre 1955

In 1980 the Esso Resources development began another era of growth for the area.



Cold Lake North

In 1999? The City of Cold Lake resulted from the amalgamation of Grand Centre, Cold Lake and Medley often known as Cold Lake South, Cold Lake North and Cold Lake East.