

# Lac La Biche History



The Lac La Biche area captures your heart and imagination so quickly; it immediately feels like home. Lac La Biche is located at the intersection of highways 55 & 36, approximately 220 kms northeast of Edmonton and is nestled along the southeast corner of Lac La Biche Lake.

A long and colorful history is reflected in the people that you will meet when visiting in the Lac La Biche

Region. The diverse cultural mix seen on the streets of our towns and villages is a clue that there is more than meets the eye in Lac La Biche.

Documented history tells of a mapmaker by the name of David Thompson travelling through the region in 1798 trying to find the illustrious Northwest Passage. When he arrived, there were already many people living around the sandy shores of Lac La Biche. The reasons? The fishing was great, wild game plentiful and from the lake it's downhill both ways - so to speak. A height of land just south of town, known as the Little Divide, allowed the river traveler to go downstream from Lac La Biche no matter which direction they traveled.

Their thriving business community provides a strong base for their industry such as agriculture, forestry, oil and gas, tourism, and much more. Their strong economy provides security for families and individuals that have made Lac La Biche their home.

Lac La Biche is one of Alberta's most beautiful locations. Nestled in a forest, it's like having Mother Nature at your doorstep. There is an abundance of wildlife to be seen, beautiful lakes, as well as sandy beaches. Some of the various cultures that settled in the area and reside here today are: The French Canadians, who arrived as 'coureur de bois' and free traders, saw a prosperous future and stayed; Lebanese settlers that came to the area in the early 1900's and started commercial fishing and mink ranching; The Russian Old Believers are another distinct cultural group and are the areas newest residents and came to Lac La Biche as they chose to abandon their homeland to escape persecution from the communist regime. Despite English as the working

language, it is not unusual in the course of a day to hear or speak to someone in French, Arabic, Cree, Métis, Michif, Italian, Ukrainian, German or Russian.

Today, Lac La Biche has a population just over 2,500 people and its land mass covers over 6 square kilometers.

## Photos at Lac La Biche Mission – Now a Historical Site





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RP. Legoff and students  
with Pelican - LLB Mission