

YMCA JOHN ISLAND CAMP ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



YMCA JOHN ISLAND



Fall 2014

185 ALUMNI AND FRIENDS GATHER TO CELEBRATE 60 YEARS

They came from 6 decades, from BC to Nova Scotia to join together in a weekend of renewing friendships, having fun and getting reacquainted with the memories from camping years gone by. The mix of alumni and friends from various decades showed that the people may have changed, the buildings have been renewed, and programs are different but the spirit of John Island Camp is still the same...alive and active.

185 John Islanders celebrated together and managed to raise over \$6,000 for the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign at the same time in an auction with the barefoot auctioneer, Chris Jackson. Prior to the meal, everyone watched two CTV News videos about the camp and its 60th anniversary that had been featured on the Northern Ontario CTV network. A slide presentation prepared by Jenn Didine showed John Island through the various decades from the camp's beginning in 1954 to 2014.

We were fortunate to have early year supporters such as Bob Bryson attend. Bob was a member of the Sudbury Y's Men's Club, a Y service club that built John Island Camp as volunteers. The youngest future camper to attend was Liam Ethelston, the 3 month old son of Dave and Erin Ethelston (nee O'Neill). Dave and Erin met while on staff at camp.



Jenn Didine and Daphne Loukidelis share MC duties

Those in attendance were all given a specially designed 60th Anniversary mug made of corn. Special anniversary t-shirts and satchels were available for purchase at the reunion with adult sizes still available. While in attendance at the dinner, many alumni wore t-shirts from the years they were on staff at the camp.

On Sunday at the camp during the open house, all alumni were invited to sign a commemorative wooden plaque indicating the years they were at camp. The plaque, prepared by alumni Jody Waddell, will hang in the dining hall as a reminder of the event and all those who were able to visit the camp on the 60th anniversary.

Your comments about the anniversary are welcome. See the back page for info.



Participants enjoying dinner at the 60th Anniversary

**WORK WEEKEND - MAY 8-10
2015**

Save the dates of May 8 - 10 so you can join the weekend work crew helping to get camp ready for the spring and Summer

See page 8

**2015 JIC LEADERSHIP
PROGRAMS GARNER
GREAT RESPONSE**

Registration began on Nov. 4th for the JIC leadership programs, but already sessions are filling.

See page 4

**60th ANNIVERSARY SWAG
STILL AVAILABLE**

60th Anniversary t-shirts and satchels are available for sale while they last.

See page 2

Merry
Christmas

John Island Camp Alumni Who Made a Difference**JEAN WICKSTROM—CAMP COOK EXTRAORDINAIRE** (1969-1988)

- by Marett McCulloch



Jean Wickstrom at 90

Jean has been one of the most influential forces over the years at JIC. Not only has her irrepresible personality made a lasting impression with many staff and campers over the years but her hard work was a model for us all. Jean worked at John Island as head cook from (1975 to 1986???) Jean woke up at the crack of dawn every morning to ensure that we were properly fed and stayed up late into the night to inspect the kitchen and dining hall and guarantee that they were spotless the next morning. Jean has fed and nurtured thousands of campers during her tenure at JIC. When we think of Jean's cooking we most certainly recall her famous lasagna. She also made banquet night a real feast for us during each session with her turkey dinner. She easily fed hundreds of mouths daily with what seemed, little effort. She was a pro.

Jean also has a terrific sense of humour and could give as good as she got. Often better. Directors sought her counsel and it was always thoughtful and fair. We can all easily remember Jean's spirit and joy of interacting with the entire staff. There were not too many pranks that we could pull off without her assistance. Often some of the best ideas came from Jean. She helped to inspire the prankster in all of us.

Jean's playful side was always on display. Despite her strict kitchen rules, she was always tongue in cheek whenever any of us dared to break them. We recall being chased by Jean in the middle of service with a wooden spoon or a pan if we were ever out of line. And we loved it!

If we would be raiding the tuck shop or the kitchen late at night, the major concern was not if we had unwittingly left a door unlocked and susceptible to the scavenging raccoons, the mess or loss of provisions that (on occasion) would result. The real concern was that Jean would wake up to find out and we would never want to have to face her wrath after anything like that ever happened!

Jean has a heart of gold, does not suffer fools and we adore her for it. She has made an irrefutable mpression to thousands of campers and staff. She is quick-witted and wise. We love her and she justly deserves recognition for her incomparable contribution to JIC. She is always forward thinking and helped to drive change on the island. Many years after Jean moved on from John Island, we know the island stayed near and dear to her heart. She still recalls many stories of her adventures there with her daughters and many staff members that were lucky enough to get to know her well.

Her spirit lives on at JIC and she will always be remembered by those of us who were lucky enough to have a chance to get to know her while we were there. It is a privilege for those of us that continued the friendship long after we left JIC.

Jean still lives in Sudbury at Finlandia Village and is as vital and spirited now as she was when she left 30 years ago.

60th

60th Anniversary
t-shirts— \$15.00

Swag available



60th Anniversary
John Island Camp
Satchel
\$40.00

To order, contact Summer Brooks, Camp Registrar, at Summer.Brooks@sudbury.ymca.ca or 705-674-6171
Shipping charges will be extra.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS - WORKING TOGETHER PRODUCES RESULTS

Our partners in camping at John Island enrich the camp experience for staff and campers. We have enjoyed working with various groups across Ontario for years and have developed and partnerships in many areas. We highlight our partners in the newsletter as they helped make John Island a better camp.

SUDBURY MANITOULIN CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION - by Anne Salter

The Sudbury Manitoulin Children's Foundation (SMCF) was formed in 1976 and was mandated to "promote, devise, sponsor, establish, assist, develop and participate in measures and programs calculated to benefit children and families from the Sudbury-Manitoulin area". In 1983, SMCF decided it wanted definite programs of their own and hired a private firm to determine what the pressing needs for disadvantaged children within the districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin were. The study concluded that summer camp held the ultimate benefits for these children on all sorts of levels. It also concluded that SMCF should not create their own camp, rather it should sponsor these disadvantaged children to attend existing camps within our regions – thus benefiting both the children by providing them with memorable experiences they would otherwise be denied and supporting the summer camps in Northern Ontario. From this study, SMCF created the "Send-A-Kid To Camp" program and 1984 marked our first year sending children to camp and the beginning of a valued partnership with the YMCA's John Island Camp and Camp Falcona and close to 30 camps across Ontario with the longest standing relationship being John Island Camp and Camp Falcona.



Summer camp offers children with social, emotional or behavioral needs the opportunity to socialize with their peer group in a safe and structured but relaxed environment. It provides those with home based troubles the perfect opportunity to take a "vacation" from their daily struggles and to gain much needed self-esteem, confidence and so much more. However, for many children in the districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin, the opportunity to attend a summer camp, escape the confines of their housing project or relax in the company of peers without the worry of abuse, neglect or hunger is not a reality. Summer camp offers these children the opportunity to meet new friends, learn new skills, appreciate nature, meet role models, create positive memories, experience self-growth, provide the chance to blend in with society, and if nothing else, give them a break from often stressful home situations. For many of our campers, their trip to camp will be the only positive thing they will experience that summer.

Close to 50 registered social agencies presently refer children to our program. These children are referred to the "Send-A-Kid To Camp" program for a variety of reasons; they may come from one or two parent families in financial need that do not have the enough money to provide them the opportunity to attend summer camp. They may have been in families where violence is an everyday occurrence or where sexual, physical or mental abuse has occurred. SMCF and the YMCA's shared belief that children should be able to enjoy their childhood, that it should be full of positive memories, role models and learnt skills regardless of their families social status is what makes SMCF's relationship with the YMCA camps so special.

31 years since the "Send-A-Kid To Camp" program was initiated and we are still enjoying a positively wonderful relationship with those YMCA individuals that work hard to ensure that these two wonderful camps are successful in providing cherished memories for their campers. Hundreds of disadvantaged children that utilize the "Send-A-Kid To Camp" program each summer are still reaping the benefits of attending John Island Camp and Camp Falcona each and every summer since this program was initiated. For 23 of these years I have been privileged to be the Executive Director of SMCF and I can say, without hesitation or doubt, that the camping experiences that campers garnish from attending these two camps signify all that is good and beneficial for children in need.

In conclusion and as a personal note, I have sent my own children to these fine camps during their younger years. They are now 21 and 18 and still tell the tales, sing the songs and keep in touch with a few of the other campers they met there. Camping is an opportunity for children to grow their own memories, personalities. Nature mixed with fun, free time, group activities and like-minded peers is an amazing combination. I sincerely look forward to further interactions and a valued partnership with the dedicated individuals at the YMCA that make John Island Camp and Camp Falcona such a wonderful place for our children to spend time.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS FOR 2015 ALREADY FILLING

With camp barely closed for the 2014 season, registration for leadership programs at John Island for 2015 have been brisk with some programs filled. The programs have been very popular in recent years requiring an earlier registration start date to help accommodate those wishing to attend. John Island continues to be recognized for its leadership programs which now comprise a high percentage of all camper registrations.



Norquay 'B' group about to depart on their 35 day Missinaibi River canoe trip.

When John Island opened in 1954, the leadership program consisted of a one or two year CIT program (Counsellor in Training). It was not unusual for a 14 year old to get experience as a CIT and to become a counsellor as young as 15. As time passed, the program content changed considerably with a Junior Counsellor year acting as a buffer between CIT and Counsellor at times. Junior Counsellors were often 16 years old and was a volunteer position. As standards changed generally throughout the camping movement, so did the leadership training and counselling standards change.

Today, as in the last several years, the John Island leadership training program consists of a two year program with stricter age requirements. The first year leadership program, called the

“Greenway” program is a program concentrating in developing soft counselling skills and improving competency in some hard skill areas of camp. The Greenway program is for 15 year old males and females. The “Norquay” program is the second year of training and concentrates on tripping skills, leadership specific skills, and counselling experience with experienced counsellors.

The Norquay program has two options that participants can choose— the extended canoe trip option and the in-camp program option. The River Canoe Trip option features a 35 day long canoe trip along one of our northern Ontario rivers. Both options experience all the leadership requirements of canoe and kayak trips.



Greenway Leadership participants - 2014

DETOUR MICHIGAN MUSEUM SEEKS HELP FROM JOHN ISLAND

The Moiles brothers and the Moiles lumber mill in Detour Michigan played an important role in Detour’s past, but yet their local museum apparently had very little information on either. John, Bart and the other Moiles brothers were considered to be the black sheep of the family and the community, according to a representative of the Detour museum. Because of this, there is little information available in the community about the brothers and their activities surrounding the famous “Stolen Mill” which ended up operating on John Island on the grounds that the camp now occupy.

In phone calls to the camp this summer, the museum requested information and photos that we might be able to share with them so they could set up a display of the long lost brothers and their ill fated lumber mill. The camp has a significant collection of photos and information about the brothers, their ancestors, and the mill which they brought to John Island. We now have a display of this part of John Island’s past in the new camp Museum which is located in the renovated craft shop.

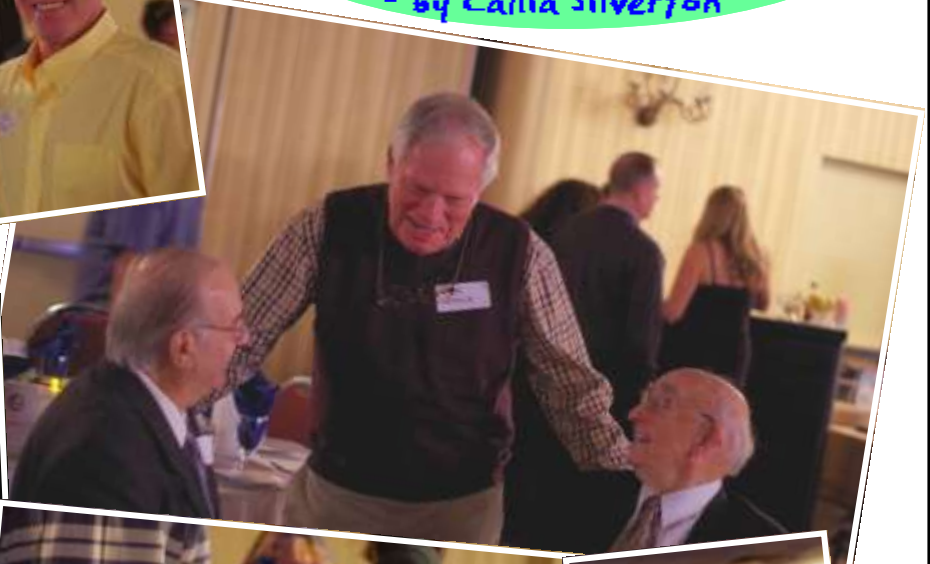


Campers explore the museum

2015 CAMPER REGISTRATIONS (NON-LEADERSHIP) BEGIN JAN. 6

A reminder to all alumni and friends that are thinking of giving a session of camp at John Island in 2015 to a son or daughter - or a grandchild - that Leadership registration has begun and camper registration begins Jan. 6th.

60th
Anniversary Dinner
Photos
- by Callia Silverton





To see more of Callia's photos,
visit the John Island website

WE WISH TO REMEMBER. . .



Memory Book on display at 60th

A book to remember those who have passed on and who have made a significant impact in the lives of others and the camp was unveiled at the 60th Anniversary dinner. There have been many individuals who we wish to remember for their contribution to camp and to the lives of others. The book will be kept in the new museum in the renovated craft shop at John Island.

Several entries were made in the book at the 60th dinner and several others have indicated they would very much appreciate the opportunity to remember others in this way. Any JIC Alumni wishing to make an entry in the book can send us along a hand written message and we will see that it gets in the book. One photograph to accompany the written message would help others identify with the person. These items can be sent to us on the internet at gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca

MOUTH WATERING RECIPES FROM THE JIC KITCHEN

There is no better way to simulate the John Island experience than to sit down and enjoy a juicy slice of John Island meat loaf or to sink your teeth into a John Island butter tart. There is no real secret to most camp specialties—just follow the recipe and enjoy!

John Island Meatloaf

(when meatloaf becomes a gourmet entre)

The Meatloaf (makes 18—20 portions)

- 5 lbs. minced beef
- 3/4 cups onion soup mix
- 1 1/2 cups oatmeal
- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 3 eggs
- 3/4 cups grated carrots
- 1/2 cup milk

The Topping

- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 3 tbsp. vinegar
- 3 tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- mustard (if desired)

Form the top portion of the recipe into long loaves, make a trough with your hand along the top of the loaf and fill with the topping.
Bake until 170F

John Island Butter Tarts

Make your own pastry or try our never fail crust

Pastry

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1/2 cup ice cold water

Filling (makes 18—20 tarts)

- 1 egg (beaten)
- 1/3 cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 tbsp milk
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 tsp vanilla

Mix all filling ingredients and fill shells approximately 2/3rd's full. Bake at 450F for 8 minutes and then 350F for another 10-15 minutes (until tops are golden brown).

REUNION AUCTION RAISES OVER \$6,000 FOR Y STRONG KIDS DRIVE

Auctioneer Chris Jackson, in true camp fashion, walked around the tables at the 60th Anniversary dinner barefoot with microphone in hand auctioning the donated items. There was a flight over John Island, a hand crafted canoe paddle and 2 doz. Cinnamon buns amongst the auction items. When the bidding was over and the items claimed, a JIC alumni made a donation matching the total raised, bringing the grand total to over \$6,000.

Thanks to all those who bid on the items, those who donated the items and to Chris Jackson who has to be the camps most energetic and successful Strong Kids auctioneer. Many kids will benefit from money raised.

MARINA MOORE, JIC ALUMNI, BEHIND THE CAMERA**CTV VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS REUNION AND CAMP HISTORY**

Slinging the huge camera around camp was no problem for Marina Moore. Marina is a John Island Alumni who joined the spring Work Weekend at camp this year and brought along a CTV News camera with plans to document the events leading up to the 60th Anniversary and some of the history of the camp. Marina is part of the CTV news team in Sudbury and a popular on camera personality throughout Northern Ontario.

Marina filmed featured interviews with a number of alumni at camp for the work weekend. She talked to alumni from a number of decades with a John Island history at camp and included a number of photographs of the past years at John Island.

The end product was two feature news items which appeared on the Northern Ontario network of CTV News over two days. Anyone interested in catching these two videos can still do so by going to the following internet addresses or by checking the John Island Camp Facebook page.
 northernontario.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=371994
 northernontario.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=372862



Marina Moore getting her camera set up for a shot

JOHN ISLAND 2014 WOMENS' WELLNESS WEEKEND**AN ON-LINE SUCCESS LOVE STORY**

The internet helped us fall in love this summer in the North Channel of Lake Huron. We were five friends looking for a fun summer adventure, and searching the internet we found the John Island 2014 Women's Wellness weekend. In June we drove up to Canada originating from our home states of Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Not knowing anyone outside of our small group of five, we boarded a yellow school bus at a truck stop on the Trans Canada Highway. Little did we know with the first step onto the bus that we would fall in love.

That weekend in June was magical. We fell in love with our fellow campers. The seasoned campers were welcoming, inclusive, crazy fun women. (A special shout out to our roommates in the blue fedoras – you ladies were the best!) The adventuresome new campers like us shared in the delight and discovery of what the wonderful little island had to offer. We fell in love with the staff that was highly competent and hard working. It was obvious the staff cared for and encouraged each other just as much as they did the campers; their positive working relationship was a pleasure to observe and encounter. How could we do anything other than fall in love with the guest speakers and workshop leaders? These men and women gave so openly the gift of their knowledge and joy for their craft. Their enthusiasm for such things as birding, star gazing, art, hiking, and yoga, was inspiring and infectious to us lucky enough to have shared with them.

The Women's Wellness weekend was a wonderful, spirit and fun-filled adventure for which we are grateful to have experienced. We hope to come back and see our lovely fellow campers again someday. The YMCA camp on John Island is an absolute gem that has left an indelible impression in our hearts. Stepping off the yellow school bus at the end of that weekend in June, we knew that we would forever be indebted to the internet for helping us fall in love.



The five women came from five different states in the United States
 Sandra, Nora, Marianne, Margaret, Teresa

- by Marianne Knox

135 ALUMNI VISIT CAMP DURING ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND

REACTION TO CAMP UPGRADING WITNESSED AT OPEN HOUSE

Many of the alumni visiting the camp for the first time in years were overwhelmed with the improvements and upgrading of the camp since their last visit. Groups of alumni and individuals wandered around the site and renewed their memories of previous eras at John Island.

“It’s still the same as I remember it but everything looks so clean and new” was a common comment heard throughout the day. Some found their names on the plaques in the dining hall and new leadership centre. Others spent their time walking the beach, taking off their shoes and letting the familiar sand of camp warm their feet.

A huge piece of white pine that had been hewn and made smooth at the hands of alumni Jody Waddell was brought from the dinner the night before for anyone taking part in any portion of the anniversary celebrations to sign and leave their mark in true John Island fashion.



JIC Alumni attending Open House

As alumni and their families munched on sandwiches and snacks in the dining hall, staff and campers from all six decades that the camp has operated shared stories and experiences. As the day came to a close and good-byes were heard on the trails and at the docks, one common thread became very evident amongst alumni of all ages - the experiences that were gained at John Island had a major influence on their life that will never be forgotten. It is truly a “magical place” .



A group of alumni renewing their JIC connection

JOHN ISLAND’S POET LAUREAT PLANTS SEEDLING

WHITE PINE SEEDLING TOPIC OF POEM

Grant Pilkey may be thought of as many things - a high school teacher, a member of the Y’s Men’s Club that built John Island Camp, a story teller, etc. — but in retirement, he is gaining a reputation as a poet. When Millie’s Grove was dedicated in memory of Millie Facca, a long time staff member of the YMCA and avid supporter of the camp, he wrote a poem to highlight the occasion.

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary, Grant took the white pine seedling that he received at the dinner and planted it in Millie’s Grove....and wrote a poem.

I planted my white pine seedling in Millie’s Grove
It looked so fragile and wee
I hope it grows up to be a big strong tree
To spread its limbs and cast its shade
And occupy a space in a magic glade
Where campers and staff can come to find
Growth in their body, spirit and mind
Where we can gather to take the dare
With best ever friends who care and share



Grant Pilkey

Thanks to John Island for allowing all of us to grow.

Grant

ANNUAL WORK WEEKEND — MAY 8-10, 2015

Time to reserve the dates for one of the best weekends at John Island every spring—the annual Work Weekend. We supply the materials, the tools, the transportation from Walkhouse Bay to camp and make sure you are fed. You provide your time and skill as we open camp and prepare it for a busy season of activity.

As usual, there will be painting, brush clearing, carpentry work, putting up staff tents, and if the wet weather holds, work on getting the old high water dock back in shape so it can be used next summer after over a decade of sitting idle.

Friday evening will be a time to meet everyone and make sure you have your hunger looked after before moving into the cabins. Saturday will be spent putting in a good day's work with time again following dinner to socialize and lay back for a while. Sunday morning we will finish off any unfinished projects, have a good lunch and be ready to depart after we eat.

For detailed information on departure times, etc and to let us know who is coming (children welcome with parents), contact Scott Thomas, camp director at: scott.thomas@sudbury.ymca.ca



Work Weekend 2014



Ken Machum at Family Camp—1987

WE WILL REMEMBER. . .

Ken Machum - (JIC 1960's) - Ken was an active camper who enjoyed every minute at John Island. He attended as a camper in the 60s and he brought his family in 1987-1988 to share the JIC magic with them. John Island developed Ken's love of nature. He enjoyed spending time with his family at their cabin on Manitoulin Island. Ken passed away on June 30, 2014. He will be remembered by many of our alumni for his involvement and interest in camping



Charlotte Bailey

Charlotte Bailey - (JIC 1970 - 2002) - For 17 years Charlotte worked in the kitchen at camp, ending her John Island career as

Food Services Manager. She will be remembered for her many years providing tasty meals, especially her turkey dinner for banquets. Charlotte passed away in October of this year from cancer.

The John Island Camp Alumni Newsletter is available 3 ways:
 1. On the internet 2. By e-mail 3. Printed and mailed
WE NEED TO KNOW YOUR PREFERENCE(S)
 Send us an e-mail to: gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We all know that camp friendships last a lifetime. However, time can separate us and send us to unknown addresses and even distant countries.

Send us an e-mail about yourself—where you live and what you are doing and whatever else you would like to share with those who you may have lost touch with. We have an active mailing list of over 750 alumni and hundreds more check us out on the John Island website. You can contact us at: gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca



YMCA SUDBURY CAMPING SERVICE
 140 Durham Street, Sudbury, ON, P3E 3M
 705-673-9136 705-674-6171 (Camping Office)
 1-800-465-9622 (Toll-Free) 705-675-8777 (Fax)
www.sudbury.ymca.ca www.johnisland.ymca.ca



For past newsletters - visit the Alumni section of the John Island website.