



# Alumni Newsletter

## The JIC Treasure - the Alumni!

When we started looking at a regular edition of a John Island Alumni Newsletter back in April of 2003, we had two goals in mind. First, we wanted to provide a vehicle for those touched by the magic of John Island Camp to keep up to date and in communication with the camp. Second, we wanted to build a strong resource base for the camp as the camp was in need of a major rebuilding program.

Today, and a full eight years later, we have learned much about the people that have made John Island Camp one of the remarkable experiences in the lives of thousands. We have learned that the alumni may not have been recently involved with the camp, but continue to recognize the impact that the camp had on them and continues to have on youth today. That has been clearly shown by the over \$800,000 raised in the current JIC Renewal Campaign – all from alumni and friends of the camp.

When we have asked people to write for the newsletter we have always been met with enthusiastic responses and offers to help. When we have asked for help with work weekends at the camp, we have had alumni come with their children, grandparents and even neighbours to help out – in rain, snow and the occasional sunny weekend. Alumni have been affected for life by the influence of the camp on their lives and have never forgotten that influence.

In an age when everything around us is changing so quickly. Camp is seen as one oasis that tends to remain stable and familiar. Those camp values that we knew as campers or young staff are still camp values today and it is good to renew our acquaintance with that type of stability in our lives. More and more third generation campers are now experiencing those same values and John Island Camp magic.

With the near completion of the complete rebuilding of John Island Camp, third and fourth generation campers and beyond will continue to be able to benefit from the stability that camping brings to all of our lives and the values that have influenced so many of us in the past. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the rebuilding program through a donation, through volunteering with work weekends, or by helping provide information for our Alumni Newsletter.

## Kismet Model to be Presented YEAR LONG PROJECT COMPLETED

When Ian Gray first visited John Island, it was back in the early 1950's before the camp was completed and before any campers had set foot on the island. His father, John Gray, was the adult program director at the Sudbury YMCA back then. Ian tagged along when his father went to the island to help build the camp. Now, 60 years later, Ian is returning to help with the spring work weekend, but he is bringing a gift—a very important gift.

Ian, amongst other things, is a professional maker of models of boats that sail the Great Lakes. He has used his special skills to make a scale model of a boat he remembers from the 1950's trips to John Island—the Kismet!

Ian will be making an official presentation of this beautiful piece of work to the Sudbury YMCA on Thursday evening, May 5th at 6:30 pm at the YMCA in Sudbury. The model will then travel to the camp for the summer where it will be on display in the dining hall.

All John Island alumni and friends are invited to join us at the Y on May 5th for the presentation.



## Spring Work Weekend May 6 - 8th

Haven't had an opportunity to get out to camp so see all of the new construction and equipment first hand? The annual Spring Work Party gives all John Island Alumni an opportunity to unpack that old sleeping bag and camping gear and spend a few days re-acquainting yourself with the camp of your early years.

The boats will be leaving Walkhouse Bay for camp on Friday afternoon and evening and will return after a full weekend of work and fun after lunch on Sunday.

There is always lots of work for all members of the family and we will provide you with a place for your sleeping bag and lots of good camp food for the weekend. We will have lots of tools and supplies at the camp, although some prefer to bring their own tools to work with.

If you are interested, contact Pete Kerigan (Camp Director) by phone at 705-674-8315 or by e-mail [pete.kerigan@sudbury.ymca.ca](mailto:pete.kerigan@sudbury.ymca.ca)

MOVING? Please let us know your new mailing address so we can keep the newsletters coming!

# SUMMER AT JOHN ISLAND LEADS TO CAREER

Mike Scott - 1996 - 1999

My first exposure to JIC happened purely by chance when I was watching TV one Sunday afternoon and saw a commercial advertising the camp. I was attending Cambrian College in Sudbury to upgrade my education and did not yet have any jobs lined up for the summer. I thought "wow, that looks like a cool place to work." So, the next day I called the YMCA, interviewed with then assistant director Jim Shaver and was hired. Not having attended JIC as a camper and working my way up through the Greenway/Norquay program, I was coming in to this whole thing as an outsider. Let's just say that the feeling didn't last very long.

I frequently think about JIC and have a hard time believing that I last worked there almost 12 years ago. I still have many memories of John Island, like spraining my ankle during my first week and using crutches the whole first session (so much fun given that the whole place is covered in sand), taking the younger campers on out-trips and sharing their excitement, playing capture the flag, and of course setting up our brand new tents in tent city for family camp. I still have the tent and backpacks purchased from those Jack Wolfskin catalogues in the main office. I used them again this summer as my son and I experienced our first father/son camping trip.

The YMCA has been a big part of my life during the past 12 years and it all began with that first trip across the channel in the back of Old Ironsides. Working at JIC opened up a door to Camp Chief Hector in Alberta where I was able to work during their spring session in '97. In January 2000 I went to work for the Brockville YM-YWCA. In October of that year, another staff member and I were chosen to travel to Belarus (formerly part of the Soviet Union) to visit their YMCA and learn about their programs. This was a unique experience that would never have happened had I not been working for the Y. My wife Bobbi and I also met at the Brockville Y. She was working membership services and I was "the pool guy".

We were married in 2003 and 6 months later moved up to Moose Factory on the shores of James Bay for her work as a nurse. There was some- what of a mini JIC reunion as Ryan Forsyth and Sean Lougheed were there for a while teaching in Moosonee. I also happened to run into Colin Veevers at the train station one day...small world. During the first few years of our relationship, I would frequently tell Bobbi about JIC sounding a lot like Alyson Hannigan's character in American Pie..."this one time, at John Island". She would always ask me what the big deal was. She was able to see what I was talking about when we attended the JIC anniversary party in 2004. Our son Carson was born in 2005 and our daughter Lotus followed in 2007. We were in the process of moving south and Lotus experienced her first family move & train ride at only 10 days old.

We currently live in Trenton, Ontario. Bobbi works at Belleville General Hospital and I am once again at a Y, working for the YMCA of Belleville and Quinte in the Aquatics Dept. While talking to the lifeguards between swim lessons a few weeks ago I learned that one of our instructors, Nic Durish, had been going to John Island for over 10



Mike Scott and family



**MOVING?**

We want to make sure we don't miss any of our alumni when we mail out our newsletters twice a year. If you move or are planning to move, please let us know your proper mailing address as well as your e-mail address.

If you know of any John Island Camp Alumni that are not receiving the newsletter, please send us their mailing address or e-mail address so we can add them to our mailing list.

Send your contact information to by e-mail to [gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca](mailto:gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca) or by regular mail to:

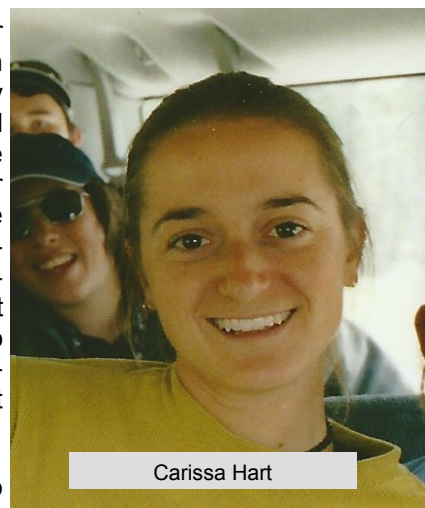
John Island Camp Alumni  
YMCAQ Sudbury  
140 Durham St.  
Sudbury, ON P3E 3H5

Jack Soule behind the wheel of the old vehicle used to help during the construction of the camp in the early 1950's

# FROM JOHN ISLAND TO NEW ZEALAND AND BACK TO CANADA

By Carissa Hart - 1999 - 2000

My first year on staff was in '99 as a Camp Norquay Leader. I did that for two years and then I became the Program Director and worked with my partner in crime Erika Lougheed and Scotty from NZ. In 2001 I was one of the River Norquay Leaders with Erika's other wonderful half, Sean. After the Attawapiskat, I still had the canoe itch so I spent a year in NZ guiding for a canoeing company on the Whanganui river. It was a different world of canoeing / camping. Since the river was in a protected National Park, all of the campsites were pre-established. The food was also a far cry from powder potatoes. Our meal on the first night was complete with appetizer, salad, main and then a pavlova dessert with fresh strawberries and freshly whipped cream. It seemed that the cooking part of the job was just as important (and as labour intensive) as the canoeing part. After coming home to Sudbury and working at the Y during the year, I went back to JIC as the River Norquay leader again, paddling the Albany with Turbo. This was my last summer at JIC.



Carissa Hart

The following year I went to Teacher's College at Nipissing then moved to Golden BC where I taught on call and also worked at Kicking Horse Mountain resort for Guest Services then as a Programmer. After I realized that I was going to stay there longer than "just a season", I got a job teaching French Immersion at the high school. During the summers I worked as a guide for a hiking / canoeing company. When I took that job I thought that I would be canoeing but it turned out that I was mostly hiking up mountains. To be honest, it took a few weeks for me to adapt to using my legs instead of my arms. I worked for the same company for many years, bringing people on day hikes that spanned from Tofino to Jasper and everywhere in between. The majority of my hiking tours were in Banff, Yoho and Jasper followed by a 4-day canoe trip on the Athabasca River. My last tour was the summer of 2009. I'm currently living in Fernie and I'm on a different kind of adventure. My son Liam was born in February of 2010. I spend my days watching him take in the world for the first time. We love going to the library for story time and we spend as much time outside as we can. I can't wait to take him camping this summer.

Now that I'm a parent, I have a new appreciation for the trust that parents have for the staff at JIC. I had a hard time leaving Liam at home with a trusted babysitter to go out for dinner for the first time. Leaving him in the care of strangers from 1 to 4 weeks would require a huge leap of faith. Everyone from the maintenance crew who take care of the boats that the campers travel on, the cooks who provide them meals, the dishwashers who keep everything clean and the counsellors who encourage them to step out of their comfort zones while keeping their safety in mind, are all to be commended. What an honour it is for us to have had that responsibility. I hope that this summer's Staff and Leaders know how important their jobs are and all of the best for a memorable one!

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## NEW STAFF APPOINTMENT AT SUDBURY YMCA

### JOHN ISLAND WELCOMES NEW YMCA CEO



YMCA CEO Kim Kanmacher

We are extremely happy to welcome the new CEO of the Sudbury YMCA - Kim Kanmacher. In a restructuring of the YMCA in the north, Kim will be the CEO of the YMCA's in North Bay, Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie. While the three YMCA's will remain independent with their own governance, management and some administration functions will be shared to make all 3 more effective in their communities.

Kim has been involved with the YMCA movement since 1987 working with the YWCA of Cambridge, YM-YWCA of Guelph, Cambridge YMCA, and North Bay YMCA. Prior to moving to North Bay in 2002 as CEO, Kim has held various positions including General Manager of Membership, Facility, and Child Care Services throughout her YMCA Career.

Kim's past nine years in North Bay have been both rewarding and challenging with the reorganization and revitalization of YMCA programs and services, developing a new strategic plan and direction for the association that included a strategy for positioning the YMCA in the community as a charity, through the Strong Kids Campaign, membership involvement, growth and retention. Today, the North Bay YMCA is serving, connecting and engaging more individuals and families than ever before. Outside the YMCA family, Kim's family includes her husband Gregg, and daughters

Kayla (23), Kirstie (19), and Brooke (19).

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# WATCH OUT FOR THE POISON IVY

## THE BEGINNINGS OF FOUR GENERATIONS OF JOHN ISLAND CAMPERS

By: Ken Smith—1954—1957

“Watch out for the poison ivy.” my mother called as I headed through the sand cherry bushes toward the beach. It was the summer of '52. My family was just one of 9 families who had chosen to spend one week of the summer holidays on John Island building a dream. This year my father would almost single-highhandedly built cabin 4 (at least that was my impression), as I chased Ron Burgess, my brother Doug and sister Heather with a stem of poison ivy.

Originally cabins were numbered according to the sequence of the build. I think the build got up to 5 before the work crews and their families received upgraded accommodations and upgraded from sleeping in an old circus tent which doubled as hotel and dining hall.

A couple of work crews later, in July of 1954 I was fortunate enough to be one of the first campers on John Island. I was in cabin 4, the one my dad had built. There were eight of us in cabin 4, Ron Burgess, Mac and Jim Sinclair, Jack Soule and, I believe, the Aistrop brothers, Brian and Cliff.

One of the neat things that they had, back then, was a card system that charted your progress in swimming, sailing, canoeing and several other activities. After completing a level and gaining a skill set you were awarded a proficiency card and you moved on to the next level. It helped campers with goal setting, achievement and perseverance all elements of character building.

It was a different time. A different era. World War II had ended 6 years ago. The Korean War was yet to reach an armistice in November. Riflery was one of the skills taught.

Poison ivy covered the island. The lake level was about 4 feet higher. The Gem and the Kismet could both tie up at the back dock. Waves lapped the sand cheery bushes at the front beach. There was no land joining Ivy and John Island, just a sandbar several feet under the surface. This was the site of the infamous “Car Wash”.

Saturday after dinner and before campfire was “Car Wash”. During “Car Wash” all the campers were herded up the beach, past the site of the Senior cabin to the isthmus between Ivy Island and John. There everyone stripped, scrubbed and shivered in the icy water. Having gone through “Car Wash” over a couple of years, I can attest to the fact that Global Warming is a reality :-)

That year, Jack Smith, craft director, carved totem pole about 12 feet high out of a red pine that he had selected from the forest behind the dining hall. Each camper got to carve his initials into a plaque on the back of the totem pole as part of John Island history. The totem pole was erected in the campfire area, where we all took the campers pledge. The original pledge (with one modification) still hangs on the back wall of the dining hall.

After a year in the intermediate section, I moved into the Senior cabin. The counselor was Lance Bailey a seasoned out tripper, whose mission was to explore new destinations for future canoeing out trips. For the next 3 weeks we were away from the camp for 5 days, returned to restock and then were away again for another 5 days.

First we travelled to Oak Bay, then up the Serpent River as far as the falls, finally to Algoma Mills. Our first trip to Oak Bay met heavy winds. The waves were so high that when in the trough you were completely alone. All other canoes were out of sight. When we finally reached Oak Bay, Tom Creet was the first to step out on dry land. Unfortunately he stepped on a spider with his bare feet and spent the next day fighting a fever caused by the spider bite.



Three generations of the Smith family at Family Camp, 2009

The Serpent River was a different challenge first fighting the 6 sets of rapids upstream, then shooting them on the return run ... only one canoe tipped. Unfortunately it had the majority of our food in a pack and, you guessed it, the pack was not lashed to the boat.

All I remember about the Algoma Mills trip was the final day returning to camp. It had been raining for 2 days and the wind was right in our face – it must have been at least 30 mph. We had planned to be back in camp by noon, but the weather forced us to land somewhere around 3<sup>rd</sup> beach. We pulled out the canvas 4x8 tent, now weighing about 80 lbs. and strung it between 2 trees. There we huddled together to try to dry out and get some warmth back. There we weathered out much of the storm, arriving back at camp just after dinner. The great thing about the trip was learning how to start a fire in the rain when everything is soaking wet – birch bark and pine needles.

The final week Bill Simpson was to lead us to Little Current for a leisurely 3 day trip across relatively calm open waters.

The next year I was Counselor of cabin 6, then maintenance man for half the season, before hanging up my paddle and moving into the working world and life.

But the story doesn't end there. From campers to family campers. I think we made 6 trips to family camp, beginning in 1972. The most recent was 2009 where we dug up a time capsule buried near the senior cabin.

Two of our 3 children, Craig and Tracy, became ardent campers. That's where Tracy met her future husband Stephen Baird as they led a 6week canoe trip to James Bay . I think it was on the Albany trip. 2009 was a family reunion on John Island. It was important to commemorate a life shaping experience that began with my parents in 1952 and continues with our grandchildren, Kyle, Shane, Henley and Duncan.

We have at least one more trip to go, adding John Island to the lives of Thomas and 2 yet unborn and unnamed grand children, part of the 4<sup>th</sup> generation to be part of a character building experience that is John Island.

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## FROM BACK BAY VISITOR TO JOHN ISLAND STAFF

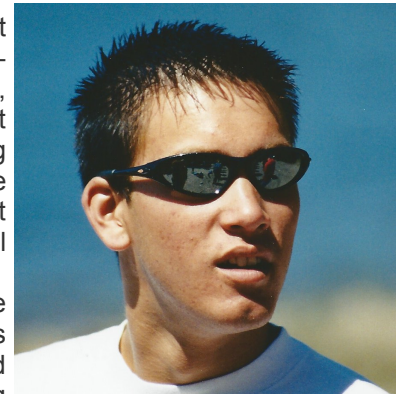
- by Nolan Semrau (1997 - 2004)

I have now been married for 2.5 years to the amazing Rachel Gannon who I met back in 2004 while we were both attending Iowa State University. Since our undergraduate graduation in 2006, Rachel and I have been living in Los Angeles, and most recently, Monterey, California. Rachel and I have a 4-year old Raggamuffin cat named Fredy but no children just yet. I am currently a Captain in the United States Air Force and serving my time on active duty by earning my Masters in Astronautical Engineering from the United States Naval Postgraduate School. Prior to going back to school, I was a Flight Test Engineer working on a US Air Force unmanned aircraft, and after graduate school I'll remain on active duty and work on US Air Force space programs.

Rachel and I are still very active outdoors, and luckily California provides a wide variety of activities to keep us busy. We spend many weekends rock climbing in places like Joshua Tree National Park, hiking in Yosemite, snowboarding in Lake Tahoe, and we look forward to an exciting whitewater rafting season in northern California following this season's record snow levels. Rachel and I love to travel abroad and domestically, and are particularly looking forward to the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. I am an avid cyclist and when I'm not training for on-going competitive events or we're not going camping, Rachel and I love to head up to the San Francisco Giants baseball stadium for an afternoon at the ballpark.

My family is still very active in the JIC community.

I am especially proud of my younger brother, Alan, who is JIC's Assistant Director for this summer. My family owns a cottage not too far from the Benjamin Islands, and I hope to be able to show my wife the wonderful region where I spent many summers exploring, learning, and growing into the person I am today



Nolan Semrau

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## SPRING HOUSE-CLEANING? THINK OF JOHN ISLAND.....

If you are cleaning up your basement or garage this spring and are looking for a new home for sports equipment, board games, tools and even kitchen equipment, then John Island might be a great new home. We are always on the lookout for gently used but still useable camping equipment, sports equipment, games, kids books, kids movies, etc. If you can help, please contact Pete Kerigan at [pete.kerigan@sudbury.ymca.ca](mailto:pete.kerigan@sudbury.ymca.ca).

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# ALL ABOUT ALUMNI

NEWS, UPDATES, AND HAPPENINGS IN THE LIVES OF JOHN ISLAND ALUMNI.....

**Maggie Low** - I was a camper and staff member at John Island from 1994 to 2005. I spent six glorious summers as a counsellor, greenway leader and eventually program staff. I have nothing but the fondest memories from my time at camp and love going back to visit. Now I live in Victoria, BC. After finishing an undergrad at Guelph, I moved west to do a master's degree in Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria. I love school and teaching so I hope to pursue a PhD in the coming years. The west coast suits me well- I can run, hike and bike all year round! Although I have come to love the ocean, my heart is still with Lake Huron and the beautiful shores of the North Channel. In fact, one of the things I miss most about my summers at camp is canoeing! Sure, folks from the west coast like to kayak but they've got nothing on paddling a red old town canoe down the Spanish River!



**Andie Burk** - (JIC Support Supervisor '93, '94, '98, Norquay Leader '96) continues to live in beautiful Haliburton with her husband Brian. Their son Aiden (age 6) had his first camp experience last summer at YMCA Camp Wanakita. This summer Aiden and his sister Isabel (age 5) will spend another week at camp. Andie teaches mainly at the Junior and Intermediate level for the Trillium Lakelands DSB. She love visitors! You can contact Andie at [andieburk@aol.com](mailto:andieburk@aol.com).

**Stephanie Grenko** - Since camp ended at the end of the 2010 season, I've finished my master's in Recreation and Leisure Studies, moved to Fernie, adopted a dog, got engaged and will be directing Blue Lake Camp based out of Cranbrook, BC. It's all very exciting, although I still wish I could be at JIC too. Blue Lake Camp is a small overnight camp in Canal Flats, BC (office in Cranbrook). It's run by the Blue Lake Forest Education Society (BLFES) which is a non-profit, charitable organization that focuses on providing education opportunities to children and youth through experiential learning programs. The center was established in 1977 and they host a number of other programs during the year like school group visits and a Forestry Skills Training Program in partnership with the local college.



**Alasdair Hamilton** - Camper 1999-2000, Counsellor 2001-2003, Greenway leader 2004-2005, Counselling support staff 2006-2007

In the fall of 2007 after leaving JIC, I traveled by train across North America. Along the way I met up with and stayed with many JIC alumni. Alumni are an adventurous group, and we tend to move all over the world, so it makes couch sitting really easy! After my travels, I returned to my hometown of Toronto and began working at an organization called Safehaven. Safehaven runs a respite home for children with multiple disabilities. The home is a facility for families that need a break or respite from the exhausting task of looking after their medically fragile children. The home is heavily funded by Canadian rock legend Neil Young.



This past year I enrolled in the school of education at Trent University in the primary/junior division. I have taken a teaching position overseas in Kuwait and will be living there for the next two years with my partner Ellen. Having almost completed my education degree, I cannot help but thank JIC for all that it has taught me. I look back at my 7 summers at JIC with the fondest memories. Those same memories have assisted with planning lessons for school, or dealing with difficult situations with students. One cannot help but feel that JIC equips you for almost any situation one may face when dealing with children. JIC may be a summer camp that we attend for a short duration of our lives, but it teaches us values that we hold for a lifetime.

**Angela Punch** - I was 11 the first time I went over on Ironsides with my class for Earthkeepers and the following summer I started as a camper in a one- week session. I spent the following nine summers attending and working as a counselor, ropes supervisor, Greenway and Norquay leader. I credit these 9 summers at John Island with a lot of the choices I have made in my life, my career and family specifically. I knew after working with kids all those summers that teaching was what I wanted to do. I graduated from Lakehead's education program in 2003 two years after my last summer on the Island and I've been teaching ever since. I met my husband Ryan (Smith) the first summer I worked at camp in '97. We spent many campfires and skit nights performing together. We often think about those summers and shake our heads in disbelief that all these years later we're married and raising two children of our own. For those of you who know my husband Ryan, you'll be happy (or nervous) to know that our oldest Doran (2 years) is very similar to his dad. Stella (7months), was born last summer and has potential to one day lose her voice at a campfire leading songs. We are now living in Bracebridge and both Ryan and I are teachers in the area. We often think about the sand and pine trees when we are eating in our kitchen where a painting of the dining hall hangs.

## THE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER NEEDS YOU!

Alumni like reading about other alumni - learning where people they camped with have gone, what they are doing, what life's journeys have brought their way. We are always working on the next edition and would like to hear from YOU! Send us an e-mail with information about you that we can print in our next edition. We are also searching for alumni to write an article or column for the newsletter. If you are interested, send an e-mail to: [gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca](mailto:gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca)

**Kris Wilkinson** - (1973 Family Camp, 1979-1995 camper and staff)

The Wilkinson's love of John Island and the North Channel began in 1954 when my father, Jim, attended as an eight-year-old camper. From the beginning, he was hooked. His love for the area was so great that in 1975 he purchased Aird Island Camp just east of John Island as our family cottage. He also became very committed to the Sudbury YMCA and was instrumental in the successful fundraising campaign of the early 80s that breathed new life into the organization.

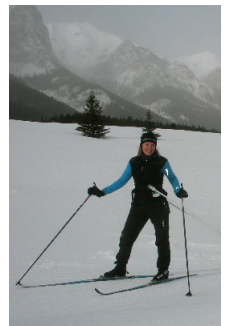
In 1979 it was my turn, so, at the ripe old age of six I was off to Little Guys at John Island. I was cool with that. I had been many times as a child and my best friends, Linley Littlehales, Megan Bisset, and Kate Laine were by my side, the four musketeers. It was my turn to get hooked. My friends and I went to camp together for many years; we worked towards our badges, wanted to win cabin inspection and cajoled each other into the Polar Bear dip every morning. We loved it all. I wish I had the space to share the many hilarious stories and adventures. I went on to be a CIT, JC, Counsellor, and LIT Leader. I learned so much.

University. Big decisions about where to go and what to study. I chose Guelph. It had a program called International Development. I jokingly called it "save the world studies." I chose to focus on the environment. Was I influenced by twenty years of summers in the woods? Absolutely.

Fast forward a few years and here I am in Calgary. My husband Dalton and I have three little girls; Maija (8), Ryann Linley (5), and Sara (2); the three musketeers! We spend as much time as we can in the mountains and ski avidly. We have a company called N/ERGY Solutions that helps large industrial and commercial energy consumers reduce their carbon footprint by using less electricity (it also saves them money). We like to joke that we are saving the world one kilowatt at a time.

In the summers we make the journey back to the North Channel, to Aird Island. My Dad and Mom, brothers, nieces and nephews and friends fill up the cabins. At dinner we sing Johnny Appleseed and evenings are all about songs around the campfire. All of our lives are so much richer because of John Island Camp. I will be forever grateful for my time at John Island.

**Larysa Henry** - Larysa has logged many adventures since her time at John Island camp (In-camp Norquay Instructor 2002 & 2004) . After finishing her teacher qualifications in Thunder Bay, ON at Lakehead University she spent a year teaching overseas in Taiwan. She once again found herself living in Northwestern Ontario when she returned to Canada in 2006 to pursue a Masters degree in Education. After two years of graduate school she moved to Ucluelet, BC where she spent a memorable Spring and Summer operating her cousin's Bed & Breakfast, Horizon's West. Moving to Calgary, AB in the Fall of 2008 to work at a school for children diagnosed with learning disabilities marked the beginning of another rewarding journey. Larysa and her husband Stephen currently reside in Calgary, AB where they both teach students who amaze and inspire them each day.



## SUDBURY YMCA CELEBRATES 75th ANNIVERSARY

### JOHN ISLAND ALUMNI THERE IN FORCE

It was one of those rare happenings that brought people together after years of having gone their own way. As the celebrating of the Sudbury YMCA's 75th Anniversary started on April 9th, it became more and more evident that John Island Camp has played a major role in the history of the YMCA. Past camp committee chair and the original promoter of spring camp experiences for school students at John Island,



John Island Director and YMCA Canada President & CEO Scott Haldane

Grant Pilkey, looked as young as ever. Al McCann (Camp Director from 1956 to 1958) and his wife Grace reminded us of many stories and experiences of life in the first years of the camp. Mary Waddell (Girl's Camp Director, 1971), Ron Mulholland (Camp Director 1980 to 1983), Sue McCrea (Camp Director 1983), Rick Wise (Camp Director 1986 to 1991) and Pete Kerigan (current Camp Director) were all present with several of their camp staff members from John Island's historical past.

It was a great celebration of the YMCA's first 75 years in Sudbury and a promising look forward to years to come. The 300 people present walked down memory lane with hundreds of artifacts from the Y's past with many reminders of John Island and its first years as an important part of the YMCA.



75th Anniversary Logo

## DON WADDELL - A TRUE CAMPER

John Island Camp lost a friend this past February. Don Waddell was a counsellor, a staff member, camp director, and more recently a dedicated volunteer with John Island. To Don, John Island Camp was life as it should be. It was a community that allowed individuals to be their best. It was a supportive environment that also allowed persons to fail with being a failure. And that was Don Waddell - a leader and friend that encouraged you to be your best and a support when things were less than perfect.

Many of us are better persons because of Don and his unforgettable influence on our lives. He touched hundreds of people with his enthusiasm and spirited belief that by working together and supporting others we can accomplish wonders. In our city he championed projects such as the board walk along the shores of Lake Ramsey; bicycle routes throughout our city; a skating path on Ramsey Lake, etc.

At John Island, Don mentored many during his lifetime of commitment to the camp. Every person he came in contact with was important and supported. New ideas abounded and health and safety were always paramount. He was an avid canoeist and tales of his canoeing adventures abound. It is not unusual that when Don's name is mentioned the response is, "I knew Don. I can remember when.....". He touched many of us.

Don's last few years were not easy. He suffered with heart problems that prevented him from doing many of the things that he had lived for throughout his life. Frustrations from the many restrictions that his illness placed on his activities were magnified by personal issues that ensued. He never gave up. He was committed to developing a solar energy program for John Island and did his best to prove the viability of that move. He had one cabin setup to test the system and was attempting to follow through with the rest of the camp. He found his health restrictions were making things more and more difficult as the medical community tried to get his problems solved.

Unfortunately, time ran out for Don and he peacefully passed away at his home on February 24th. He will be remembered as a John Islander that made a difference - a difference in his community, a difference with his family, and a difference at John Island Camp. Don was a fighter and the legacy he has left shows that he was a winner.



William Donald Nelson  
McKessock Waddell



### Complete Canoe Trek From John Island to Sudbury - Sudbury Star, July 16, 1965

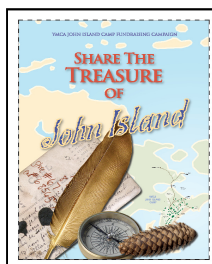
Pictured with Outtrip Director George Koski (left) are (top row) Mark Cheshire, Ian Thomson, Stuart Spec, & Bill Grace. (Bottom Row) George Koski, Leslie Burford, Alan Miles, Ken Machum, Ken Holloway, John Dixon and Jim Lanzo.



### YMCA SUDBURY CAMPING SERVICES

140 Durham Street, Sudbury, ON, P3E 3M7  
705-673-9136 705-674-6171 (Camping Office)  
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www.sudbury.ymca.ca www.johnisland.ymca.ca

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



For information on the John Island building renewal campaign go to:

<http://www.johnisland.ymca.ca/images//zbuilding%20progress%20-%20fall%202010%20for%20website.pdf>

To donate to the John Island building renewal campaign - contact Gary Gray at [gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca](mailto:gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca)