

Alumni Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 13-14, 2014

60th ANNIVERSARY REUNION EXCITEMENT GROWS

Excitement rivalling the recent Canada-Sweden Olympic Gold Medal Hockey game is growing over the John Island Camp 60th Anniversary Reunion. The excitement is justified as the camp has spared no expense in preparing for this once in a lifetime experience. It will be an event long remembered by alumni and their descendents—a gold medal event!

What is so noteworthy of a 60th anniversary? The answer is YOU! It offers you an opportunity to rekindle your ties with the camp and the people that made those years such a remarkable time in your life.

There is that feeling that seeps through your soul as you sing "Johnny Appleseed" with a room full of John Islanders once again. It is the warmth that you feel when you discuss that final campfire your last year at camp. It is the friendships that you realize never died or even weakened during all those year since you knew each other at camp.

A planning committee has been putting together an event that will rekindle and bring alive the memories that we all have of our John Island experience and how important camp has been in our lives.

As we prepare for the September event, YOU can help make it a more meaningful time for everyone. We want photos from all decades of camp sent. We are looking for right from 1954 to the pre- other memorabilia that we can share with others and even stories that we can put in a special 60th Anniversary edition of the Alumni Newsletter.

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JOHN ISLAND CAMP 60TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION

Saturday, Sept. 13th - 6:00 pm. at the Howard Johnson Hotel in Sudbury

Please ensure that your name is well marked on anything that you send to us to we can get it safely returned following the reunion. If it is something that can be sent via the internet, we will acknowledge the sender as identified in the e-mail or social media.

YOU can help make this a time to remember. Thanks for your help!



A few of the alumni at the 50th Anniversary dinner in 2004

CAMPING QUOTES BY NOTEABLE CANADIANS:

Rick Mercer talks about his YMCA camping experience in the February 2014 OUR KIDS magazine distributed by the Globe and Mail: "At summer camp I finally found something I was good at"

Rick was a camper at the St. John's YMCA-YWCA overnight camp, Camp Caribou.

Stuart McLean talks about his YMCA camping experience in the Spring 2011 JIC Alumni Newsletter:

"Camp was my safe place. . . it gave me the tools, the confidence, the opportunity to discover my life."

THE COUNTDOWN TO A NEW CAMPING YEAR. . .

WATCHING THE ICICLES DRIP

Well over 275 campers are already registered for John Island 2014. The work projects for upcoming year are well planned and ready to start. The staff is 98% hired and ready to begin their spring and summer experience. This all sounds very promising, but as we look out of the camp office window at the Sudbury YMCA, we are watching the icicles drip as the winter sun is just starting to have an impact on the snow and ice.

With the temperature still going down to -20°C at night and the snow banks still growing as our long winter just keeps going on and on, it is difficult to comprehend that in eight weeks the first scheduled trip to John Island will herald the beginning of John Island's 61st year of operation. However, with the enormous number of items to attend to, the time goes quickly. There is no allowance for transportation boats not to be operating, food deliveries to be unplanned, fuel not to be on site, building supplies not ready to go, etc. etc.

The focus this spring is not only on the preparations for a summer of excited campers to participate in a challenging and satisfying program, but in preparations for the 60th Anniversary Reunion. With accommodations to be booked, a program to finalize, transportation to arrange and a thousand details to be finalized and communicated, the camp office at the YMCA has become an exciting place to visit.

Yes, there are icicles dripping outside right now, but not really a lot of time to sit and watch them drip - we just hope they finish dripping in time for camp this year.



Lake Huron Ice Cover This Winter - Can you find John Island amongst the frozen landscape?

MAY 9—11, 2014

ANNUAL WORK WEEKEND AN ALUMNI PHENOMENON

Gather your warm working clothes, a sleeping bag and toothbrush and you are ready for the 2014 version of the John Island Camp Work Weekend. Everything from painting, brush clearing, and minor construction work to cleaning, opening buildings and repairs. Everything from great meals, snacks and evening refreshments to the refreshing taste of cool, clear John Island water. Everything from working with other alumni and their families to relaxing in the evening when the days work is done with NHL playoffs on the screen.

Those who have been to a John Island Work Weekend are probably already committed to the weekend and we hope that any alumni who feels inclined to help keep the camp in good order and ready for the upkeeping season will come and join this annual alumni phenomenon. In order for our kitchen crew to have lots of food available, we ask that you contact Scott Thomas, JIC Director, to let him know how many are coming as part of your group. Scott's e-mail address is scott.thomas@sudbury.ymca.ca

See you at the Walkhouse docks on Friday May 9th. We will keep you informed of travel arrangements to the camp.



Kim Caruso of the Sault Ste. Marie YMCA cleaning up after painting

ALUMNI SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO CAMP

- by Carolyn Crang



Doug, Gord, Tom, Ali Chown and mother Carolyn Crang

In my 12 summers at John Island Camp, first as a camper, then as a Counselor-In-Training, Counsellor and Canoeing/Waterfront Instructor, I could never imagine doing anything else each summer. It was the only option. My friends were there, people I admired came back year after year to teach and guide me, and I got to live for weeks at a time without my parents—the freedom! I learned to get along with others and we shared everything for the whole time we were there—even the occasional toothbrush or bathing suit!

Together we got up for Polar Bear every day to get our badges, we worked on our canoeing, sailing and swimming levels, we sang songs with our arms draped around each others' shoulders at camp fire, and played Capture the Flag like the winner would rule the world! The campers and staff had real character and knew so much about the wilderness, the flora, fauna, insects and animals, the outdoors

and how to motivate kids to get over the wall when they were afraid of heights. They did interesting things like making their own paddles and using them to navigate the Spanish River.

I would come home at the end of the summer and spend the first few days still in “camp mode”. I couldn't explain my mood to anyone—it's just that I was not at JIC and the world was not the same. Then I would slowly start to tell stories about the summer adventures—the crazy things we did, the fabulous times we had, the great friends who were there, and the new ones I had met. I'm sure my parents thought I was exaggerating with every word. But they knew and understood how much I loved that place and were willing to listen to every word.

My mother Phyllis Hughes/Crang had gone to Camp Falcona as a child and she understood the importance of summer camp and the impact such experiences could have on a child. They were happy to send me back again and again so I could keep learning and growing, to let John Island shape me, to help me figure out what I wanted to do with my life, who I was and who I wanted to be—and it worked! And now I have the chance to do the same with my children.

I think most parents send their children to camp with the hopes that they will meet new friends and cherish the old ones, figure out how to manage their behaviour and belongings all on their own, learn and practice some skills they can use throughout their lives, and come home to tell some wonderful stories of the great adventures they had at John Island! I know my children have had their own experiences, and many have been very different from mine, but in the end, John Island gives them a place to grow, to learn, to lead and to follow, and I am happy to send them off for yet another year—PMAC NHOJ!

60th ANNIVERSARY REUNION SURVEY

In order to help the Reunion Planning Committee in their preparations for the reunion, they are seeking your help. They are requesting that you complete a short Reunion survey online. It should take only minutes to complete and return electronically. If you have not already received a copy, it is available now on the John Island Camp 60th Reunion Facebook page at www.facebook.com/jic60.

LOOKING UP AT JOHN ISLAND'S PAST

First timers often get a bit of a kink in their neck as they look at the ceiling of the John Island dining hall. They just can not stop looking. From the bow of one of the old red canoes that was mounted like a trophy moose head back in 1967 to a plaque commemorating the visit of 20 Japanese youth to the camp in the 1980's, there is a cornucopia of John Island memorabilia hanging from the ceiling.

"Why is that cricket bat hanging up there?" one young visitor asked his father. "His dad replied, "For the same reason there is a lacrosse stick hanging over there...at one time those sports used to be played here at the camp." The past has been kind to John Island. As interests and trends have changed, so have the items that keep us reminded of those same interests and trends.

The amazing model of the Kismet crafted by Ian Gray resides in a special case on the dining hall wall. Danika Vandersteen's painting of the front beach swimming area, Cathy Thomas' blanket made from a myriad of old JIC t-shirts, and plaques and other memorabilia have all found a special place on the walls and ceiling of the dining hall, keeping us surrounded by the rich past and history that has helped mould the John Island we have now.

As our history grows, so does the demand for space on the walls and ceilings of the dining hall. The next stage of preserving our rich past will see an expansion to the ceiling of the new leadership training centre and other buildings in the camp frequented by campers who can look and excitedly proclaim, "Hey...there's my mom's name on that plaque!"

As alumni visit the camp on September 14th, who knows what surprises they might find on the ceilings of the camp buildings.



Plaques, some going back decades, adorn the dining hall ceiling



The model of the Kismet commands key spot on dining hall wall.

Precision craftsmen from the Amatol group of volunteers construct a frame for Danika Vandersteen's painting



NEW JOHN ISLAND VIDEO ON YouTube

If you haven't seen it yet, you will want to check out the new John Island video on YouTube. It was created by Over the Atlantic - a marketing company in Sudbury - from photos and videos taken at the camp .

The video highlights comments from campers, staff and parents about their John Island experience as well as scenes of John Island today and current day activities.

The video can be accessed by visiting the John Island Camp website at: www.johnisland.ymca.ca



SEVENTH SUMMER OF JOHN ISLAND'S AUSTRIAN CONNECTION

- by Stephen Harvey

Since the summer of 2008 John Island Camp has hosted 2 young ladies from Bregenz Austria for a period of one or two weeks. These "Austrian girls" have volunteered at an early July camp and have returned to Austria with warm memories of the friends and experience of life at a camp on an island in one of the world's greatest lakes. They have helped with many aspects of camp life – in the kitchen and in cabins. This experience has been enabled by Jannick and Stephen Harvey and staff at John Island. The Harvey's cooperate each year with a high school in Austria to select 2 students from the grade 11 class and prepare the young ladies for travel to Sault Ste Marie by purchasing plane tickets and addressing the various logistics of young foreigners traveling to Canada. Many Austrians are familiar with outdoor life so the guests get along quite well at camp. Sometimes they spend an extra week with us at our cottage on nearby Lake Lauzon and there have been some amusing encounters with bears and lots of laughter.

The story of the Austrian connection would not be complete without reference to an unfortunate event in our lives. I was a camper and attended London Y Camp Queen Elizabeth in the late 60's and 70's and really enjoyed the experience so it was with great enthusiasm that we sent our two girls, Shelagh and Kathryn, to John Island beginning in about 1998. Camp life has changed a great deal since I was a camper and in most positive ways – I recall how impressed I was when the counsellors greeted my girls at drop off. Kathryn really loved camp and trained to be a counsellor at Camp Falcona in 2005. In 2006 Kathryn joined others in the Rotary Youth exchange and travelled to Bregenz Austria in August. On Nov 25, while going out with her friends to celebrate her 18th birthday, she was struck and killed by a train. This left a great hole in our worlds. I struggled in many different ways and came to a conclusion that I had to do something positive, in a way Kathryn would have done if she had been able to carry on with her life. Kathryn – Kat - loved people and she enjoyed a rich life. We went with Shelagh to Austria in the spring of 2007 and while there I discussed the possibility of bringing girls to Canada to experience some of "Kat's Canada" with Kathryn's English teacher at the school in Bregenz. It seemed to me to be a good thing to do and something that would have brought a smile to Kathryn's face, so the plan hatched and the Austrian connection began.

Lisa Seidl, Corinna Riesterer, Riccarda Sutter, Margaritha (Maggie) Koriotoh, Verena Germann, Madeleine Hemetsberger, Antonia Sutter, Anna Sophie Holzmüller, Lisa Neames, Sandra Bargehr, Rebecca Linger, Hana Dadic, and soon Aurelia Hollersbacher, Katharina King have seen a part of Kat's Canada. I know that they all think differently about the world and the wonders of friendships kindled in the out-of-doors at the remarkable John Island YMCA Camp. Thank you



2012 Austrian students Lisa Neames and Sandra Bargehr at John Island.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE JOHN ISLAND MEMORY?

We all have our favourite memories of camp, but often there is one or two that really stand out - life altering moments in many cases. As we prepare for our 60th Reunion, we are gathering as many of these "favourite memories" as possible to share with each other.

Carolyn Crang writes, "Together we got up for Polar Bear every day to get our badges, we worked on our canoeing, sailing and swimming levels, we sang songs with our arms draped around each others' shoulders at camp fire and played Capture the Flag like the winner would rule the world."

What is your favourite memory? Send a brief description to gary.gray@sudbury.ymca.ca

CLOSE TO 40 YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT

HERRINGTON FAMILY CAMP STORY

- by Chris Crader

Grosse Pointe, Michigan....Met with the response "Where?!". This is how our summers at John Island have started for close to 40 years! This is my hometown, and where I have been raising my family for the last ten years, as well. My parents discovered John Island back in the late 70's through family friends, one of whom was Canadian with cousins who lived in Sudbury. They sent my sister, Kathy, and me for various combinations of Girls Camp and Co-ed Camp at first. When we came home with such great stories of our weeks at camp, they decided to join us for the last week of summer at Family Camp. My fondest memory, or at least my most vivid memory, of family camp was an evening canoe fishing trip with my mom and dad, me sitting in the middle of an old Grumman.

My dad hooked the biggest pike I'd ever seen, and as he was reeling in the fish, with every intention of putting it in the canoe, the only thing keeping me from jumping out the other side was the realization that all of that toothy, slimy pike's relatives were also out there in the lake! As we grew, the life lessons we learned at JIC, both at kids' camp and family camp, never left our hearts and minds. Oh, and the camp songs, too. Funny how you can hum a bar or two and all of a sudden, you're taken right back to campfire or a canoe trip or hike, and your old camp buddies are right there with you....I wanted that for my kids and family, too! In 2006, I convinced my sister and parents to let me sign us all up for a week of Family Camp. Our kids were 8,6,6 and 3 1/2 at the time, and my parents were so excited to get to spend a whole week with their "girls" and grandkids. We all knew what our John Island of old was, but were a bit apprehensive of the JIC of the 21st Century.

All for naught! Other than being dropped off at the Low Water Dock, it was so familiar that all the good feelings came rushing back as we walked onto the island, sharing with our kids how little things had changed. To be able to experience camp as a parent rather than a kid camper gave a new depth to my love of John Island. As an extra bonus, the following year, our friend, Daphne Loukidelis, and her girls also came to Family Camp. Daphne and Kathy had been campers and then CIT's together, and now our girls have become fast friends as well as cabin mates, continuing the tradition begun over 30 years ago.

Our "kids" are now almost 17, almost 15, 14 1/2 and 12, and the week at Family Camp is their favorite week of the year. I have said for years that when your teenage kids actually look forward to "disconnecting" and reconnecting with family, I will move mountains to make that happen! They have been able to see their grandparents fly down the Zip Line, go fishing with Gramps, challenge Gramma in Iron Chef competitions, go for a Polar Bear every morning, figure out how to live with family and friends in a cabin for a week. We love seeing them get up at campfire to sing a group song, sometimes an "oldie" that us old-timers have coached them on. Whenever they go to Back Bay Clay, they have always had to find Gramma and Grampa to show them their clay "monsters" before they car wash in the lake.

My very creative sister has produced some wonderful skits that the whole family participates in over the years. Kathy and her daughter, Darby, now come from Shang-Hai, China. John Island really only gets better with time-composting outhouses are SO much better than the old loos, solar power in the cabins, wind surfers, new cabins, the beautiful shower house, just to name a few. The essence of John Island, though, is the same-family and friends, new life lessons and experiences, creating memories and connections to last a lifetime.

This year, our contingent will be small, only my children and myself, joining with Daphne and her girls. We will miss our Shang-Hai crew due to school commitments, and Gramma and Grampa due to health issues, but I guarantee, as soon as we are back to the real world, we will be speaking our common language of John Island-ese, telling of all the adventures at which we missed their presence, maybe teaching them a new camp song, or about the big pike Will caught, or the latest wild animal sighting. We are forever grateful to the Rices, who introduced to John Island so many years ago, and consider ourselves some of the luckiest Americans around that we know the secret called John Island Camp!



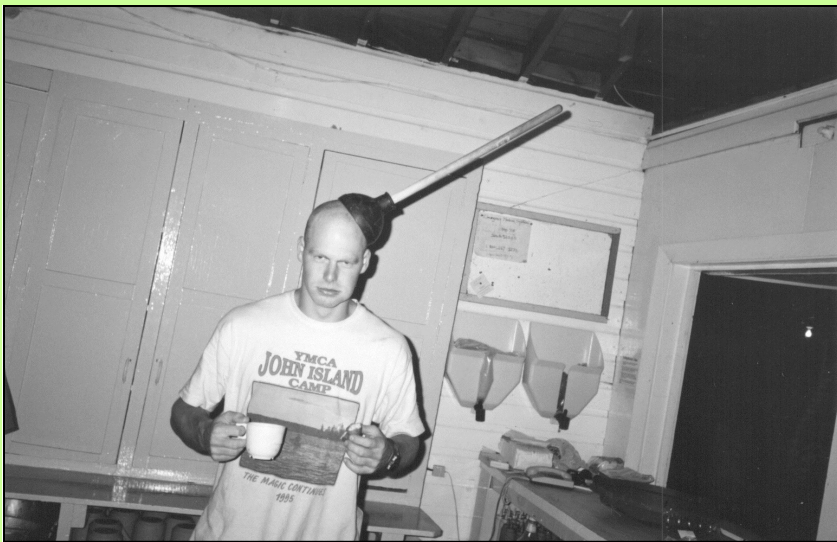
Standing L to R is Kevin Lynch, Kathy Lynch, Darby Lynch, Sara Crader, Beth Crader, Chris Crader. Sitting L to R is Jack Herrington, Will Crader and Rose Crader



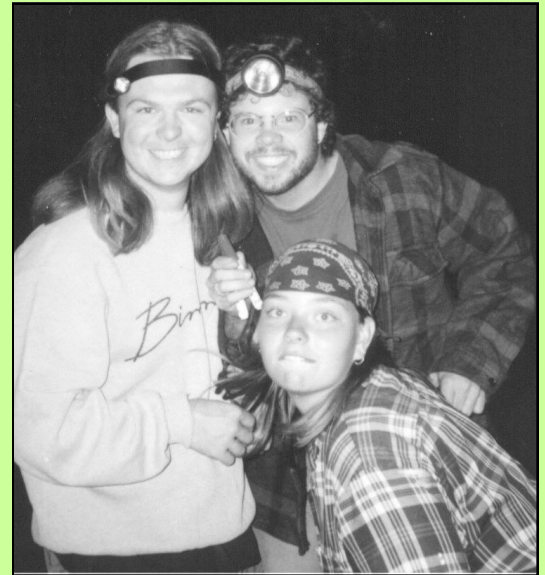
The ice house at Mitchell's dock in Spanish back in the '50's. Can you identify either of the 2 boats in the background?



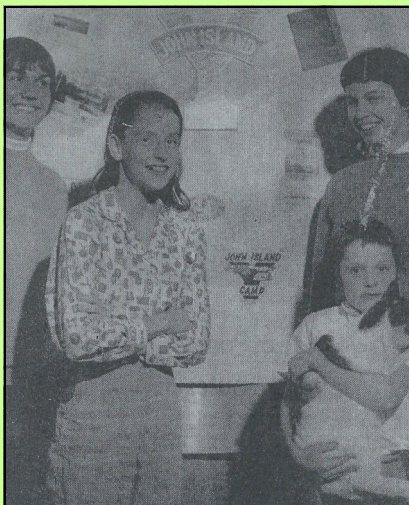
Staff are always looking for a good place for romance



Always wondered where that thing was kept!. Scott Hamilton took the plunge.

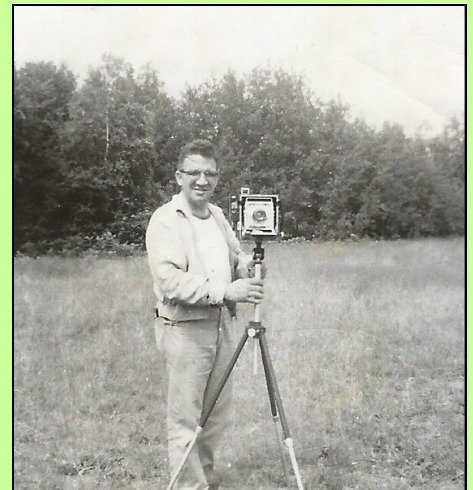


Hair styles are always changing. If this were current, it would be a selfie of Brian, Fraser and Tracy.



1964 Girls' Camp Reunion with Jackie Crawford, Christine Dixon, Allison Field, and Carol Lapp.

Photos from the past
Do you have photos to share for the 60th Reunion?



Jack Smith with his camera in 1958

NOTES ABOUT JIC ALUMNI AND EVENTS

Henry James Fraser (son of Joanne Fraser-Clarke) entered the world on September 8th, 2013 in the countryside of London England. As his Mum has always been one for the outdoors, Henry already seems to love his walks and adventures in the green English farmland. When he is older, we hope to send him to JIC so he can experience all of the fun and adventure I experienced—plus, he will be the cool kid with the British accent.

Caitlin Murphy lives in London with Yuri, her husband, and three children: Felix, 4; Leo, 2 and Eva, 9months. Summer days spent paddling and sailing are, for now, in the past but she did manage to capsized a laser in the Thames not long ago.

Daryl Smith (JIC - late 1990's and early 2000's) is planning a May wedding with **Juliane Eibner**. Those knowing Darryl can contact him for all the details.

Abigail Ethelston, 2 year old daughter of **Dave (Carney) Ethelston** and **Erin (nee O'Neill)** is expecting a brother or sister sometime this summer. More John Island campers on the way.

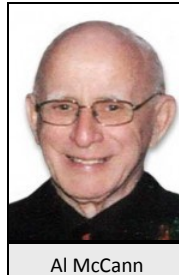
Carly Gasparini (JIC staff 2000 - 2004) and her husband **Peter Whittington** are also expecting a new family member this summer in time for Family Camp.

It is with sadness we report the passing of the following alumni during past year. They will all be missed:

Al McCann, (Camp Director 1956-58) passed away recently in Windsor. Both Al and his wife, Grace, were responsible for many new innovations at John Island during their years on staff. Al passed away in February, 2014.

Steve McCulloch, (Camper in 1977 and 1979)) passed away on September 9, 2013 after a courageous battle with cancer in Sudbury. Steve is survived by his wife **Marett (nee Lund and JIC Alumni)** and children Montana (15) and Garrett (13) - both JIC campers.

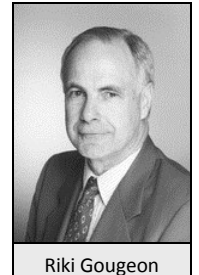
Ricki Gougeon, (Staff member, 1950's) and his nephew **Jamie Gougeon** were tragically killed in a plane crash in July of 2013.



Al McCann



Steve McCulloch



Ricki Gougeon

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



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