

ART AND STUFF

BAY LINE GIRL

There are no roads to Churchill; there is only a railway known as the Bay Line. The Bay Line Girl highlights women that survive and thrive in this community at the end of the line. This winter's Bayline Girl is Cindy Wasylkoski.



Originally from Princeton, Ontario, Cindy came to Churchill for the first time in 1983 with Katimavik. She was 19, and remembers flying over the tundra with her girlfriend, noticing how sparse it was, imagining being in their cabin (to be shared with four others), out at Akudlik, for three months, with no outlet. Their first impression? 'We need to find a guy with a truck.'

And so they did. Cindy met Randy waiting for her friend outside the pool. "He was really quiet, and I was really chatty," she says. While they were dating, they would go for drives, and he showed her the birds and the barrens and the bees and the trees. They watched bears at the dump by the light of the fire...

When she went back to Ontario, she was accepted to Western University, but took a big leap and moved back to Churchill in 1985 to be with her man and his truck. They have three kids together, and have kept busy throughout the years with the kids' hockey scene and fundraising efforts for the Churchill Music Program, not to mention other community activities. She did go back to school, a few years back, to study reflexology, but says it's hard finding the time to practice.

Cindy worked at the school as a secretary in the late '80s, and came back when her kids were all in school. Her office is generally chaotic, and she takes care of everything with a big smile on her face. She says the job has taught her a lot about multitasking and taking things in stride. "The child is number one," she says, "we all need to work together with that in mind."

Picnics on the beach and playing road hockey are memories her family will keep forever. "I feel fortunate," she says, "it's been a good experience raising kids in Churchill. They can learn to appreciate the small things here." And difficult though it may have been to live so far away from her family, and the elusive 'south', she wraps it up quite nicely by saying "there's a big advantage to living in the north if you can realize the benefits of walking in the woods."

Prepared by Carmen Spiech

KATIMAVIK

Katimavik, which means 'meeting place' in Inuktitut, is an 8-9 month travel/volunteer program offered by the Canadian Government (Department of Canadian Heritage) for young adults from the ages of 17-21. Participants spend about three months in each of three different places throughout the country. Their room and board is covered throughout the program, and they earn \$1/day, volunteering their services to various local projects.

The program was started in 1977 by the late Senator Jacques Hébert with the help of then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Senator Hébert believed in the importance of educating youth through community involvement, and when Katimavik's funding was cut during the Mulroney years, he went on a 21 day hunger strike in protest. It did little to sway the Conservatives, and the nationwide travel project remained unfunded throughout the Mulroney years, from 1986-1994. (Incidentally, these years coincide exactly with the years my peers and I would have been eligible to participate, but hey, we got free trade and big hair.)

Since 1994 the program has been back in action, providing thousands of Canadian youth the opportunity to experience different jobs, exposure to different places and cultures. Not

to mention being immersed into cohabitation and daily affairs with others. Friendships are forged, character is built, skills are learned, and memories are made.

Cindy Wasylkoski, a former Katimaviker who spent three months in Churchill in 1983 helping out with the Boreal Gardens project says, "I want to promote this program, what a good experience it would be for kids here. It was just so much fun!"

She thinks it is the perfect opportunity for kids that have grown up in remote areas, to teach them about other places and ways of living, "especially if they are unsure of what they want to do after high school," she says.

In 2006-2007, Katimavik participants contributed the equivalent of 743,997 volunteer work hours, equivalent to about \$11,630,000 in economic return for partner organizations in participating communities.

- Prepared by Carmen Spiech

For more information on Katimavik, check out their website: www.katimavik.org, or see Mrs. Flett at the school.

BLIZZARD POETRY

Fear

The fear
has got me again
Its day three
and we're still three decades
from Hunter Thompson
and LSD

Today, its just me,
they haven't invented TV,
and the white outside
swirling voices whispering
to sleeping dogs
lying

Wake up
Its time to move
maybe just my fingers
and toes, change my clothes
I'm okay, there's a new life
three feet away

Fever

That's a big drift
outside my window
getting bigger every week
another layer of
psychoses blows in
climbing up the porch
to my door

Knock knock
orange you wondering
why I didn't say banana?
Get it? Or maybe out
to the other side.
The Out side

Minus fifty's
pretty nifty in a sea
of greenland sharks,
polychords and koubassa,
and later texas hold 'ems
right now, its less so.
So...
maybe one more
cup of
joe.

ART AND STUFF

THE REIL THING

This February marked Manitoba's first 'Louis Riel Day' so on this fine provincial holiday, the Hudson Bay Post is putting Churchill's own Reil in the spotlight.

Reil Munro was born in Churchill in December, 1970 to Kathy Redhead and Don 'Scotty' Munro.

Don worked on the tugs, pits and at NTCL, after coming to Canada with the Hudson's Bay Company. His mother was a waitress at the old Churchill Hotel and that's pretty much where they met.

This winter, Reil came up to Churchill with a film crew working on a two-part mini-drama called 'Rough', excited about returning to his boyhood home.

A big man, he is outgoing and personable. He leans back on the chair and laughs, 'I took a paycut to come back to Churchill, more for the chance to go back home than to work in -30!'

'On my first day off, I walked around town just reliving some memories. I lived on Hendry St. and walked back there yesterday. It's like a movie, except it's your own life. I stood outside and you can see your own family in the window, you can see yourself on the porch, heading out to play street hockey. This is where I first pretended to be Ken Dryden!' he laughs.

He remembers playing hockey on Hendry Street and visiting his grandfather, Johnson Redhead, living down on the Flats. While down there, he would run over to pet the beluga whales in holding tanks at the Beluga Motel.

'My dad used to take me out on the



The crew of Rough shooting along the Churchill River, inset - Reil Munro

boats. We went out when they were dredging the river and dumping earth into the bay. I remember other little things, hanging out at the Complex, my name is still carved in the polar bear. Showing up with a garbage bag full of hockey gear for my first practice and the coach helping me get started.'

Reil's family lived in Churchill until 1983, then moving to Winnipeg. 'It was a new beginning when I left, no one knew me in the city, even thinking like that felt strange.'

Since then, Reil lived in Calgary, Toronto and Scotland for a year, feeling it was important to find his Scottish ancestry as well as his Aboriginal heritage.

Now working in the film industry, he recounts how far away this life seemed to him only a few years ago. 'When I was 22, I thought that I wanted to be a welder. I couldn't get my ticket and after that I worked construction for several years and somehow I ended up with the movies. I thought I was ready

back then but we are all on a path and you can't change that path.'

'I started realizing that we all have stories to tell, and that for me to tell mine, I had to see how it was done first. That's why I started in film.'

Since then, he has worked on over 100 productions, ranging from feature films and movies of the week to music videos and documentaries. It has taken him to Whitehorse, Montreal, parts of BC, Alberta and all over rural Manitoba.

He also has worked as an Aboriginal Liaison Officer for the film industry, speaking to kids about careers in film and raising awareness of opportunities for Aboriginal youth. He sums it up, saying, 'the problem is that youth need to have someone to look up to in Aboriginal culture. This big Indian is doing it, why can't I? Lots of people don't realize how accessible the film industry is... you need a good attitude, personality and work ethic.'

He credits growing up in Churchill for

his work ethic. 'You could see that, up here, you either worked hard or you didn't really work at all. I wanted to be someone who worked hard, worked for what he got. I didn't want to sit around. Even when I was young, I would empty garbage from the cafeteria in exchange for a free cheeseburger from the owner, then go sit in the polar bear and eat it!'

Besides working as a grip, Reil has produced three independent films so far, In Mind, Runs Deep and Journey My Heart. His latest work, Journey My Heart, a documentary about a young lady, Joanne Soldier, an Ojibway jingle dress dancer. It follows the spiritual, mental and physical commitment that goes into the preparation for pow-wow competitions.

'I tried to use motion picture techniques but in a documentary style. It took five months to edit and sound edit. This stemmed from people I met in sound industry, establish relationships and people are going to help you out. A lot of this industry started as and still are aspiring film makers.'

He is working towards being a Key Grip in the motion picture industry in Manitoba and possibly to get his helicopter license.

'Young aboriginals, any young people, have to understand not to underestimate the skills they have. You can do this job - if I can do it, anyone can. I was born in Churchill and I walked these same streets never thinking that I would be a film maker. All you have to do is work at it. Gather knowledge, take advice, communicate.'

- prepared by Kelsey Eliasson



POLAR BEARS OF CHURCHILL

This full-colour guidebook follows the polar bears of western Hudson Bay through one year in the sub-arctic. Written by local author and guide, Kelsey Eliasson, Polar Bears of Churchill is a comprehensive guide to our bears.

Available the Eskimo Museum,
Wapusk General Store,
Gypsy Bakery and
Arctic Trading Company

www.polarbearalley.com

