

# Introducing Coach Joan

SNCC member Joan Crawford is another new dragon boat coach on the Paddles Up! UNLIMITED team. Congratulations on your new role! Thank you for taking time to answer questions for the Catch.

- **How did you get involved with paddling sports?**

- I went to camp in Port Sydney for the entire summer from the age of seven until I was thirteen. Canoeing and swimming were huge. Canoe trips included portages, rapids, days of paddling, and so much fun.

- I grew up in Burlington about a 5 km walk from Mohawk Canoe Club, the same club that Doug Jones started paddling – albeit years and years and years apart! We paddled on Lake Ontario. When the Lake was too wavy, we would walk the war canoes, C-boats and kayaks, over the beach strip to Hamilton Bay to practice. Back then the bay was known for leaches so we learned about boat balance very quickly!
- A war canoe was the first boat I was in. The stroke has changed so much since then . . . of course that was so long ago we barely had television!! I paddled sprint kayak K1, K2 and K4 as well.



- **How did you get involved with dragon boat?**

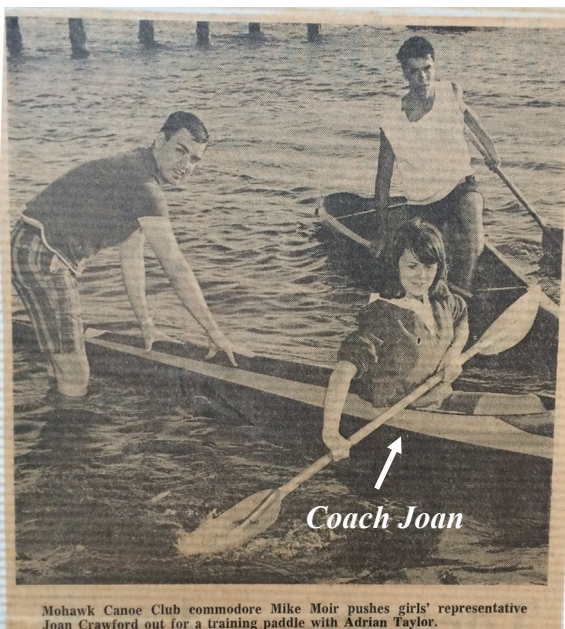
- After University I came to Niagara. I heard about rowing not paddling. Life happened. I didn't try rowing until I was fifty. Recreational first, then competitive masters, out of Notre Dame Rowing Club down the Welland Canal near Woodlawn Avenue during the summer it was built.
- The most fun was 'head racing'. They are fairly long distance races against the clock. The boat

completing the course in the shortest time in their age, ability and boat-class category is deemed the winner. My favourite regatta was "The Head of the Charles" in Boston. Incredible. Ten thousand participants from 24 countries. You maneuver through: numerous bridges; 'S' turns; hair pin turns; lanes; rules about passing, etc. Gruelling but fun!

- While rowing on the Welland Canal I saw dragon boats. It seemed peculiar that they would 'sit' while paddling. In a war canoe one knee is down on a knee pad/bun and the other leg lunging forward. I wanted to give it a try.

- **How did you get involved in coaching dragon boat?**

- The Commodore/Board of Directors asked me if I'd like to take the course.



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- **Can you share a memorable paddling experience and what you learned from that experience?**

- I was lucky to have Sally Rennick as a coach. What a wonderful introduction to dragon boat paddling. To be a part of something way, way bigger than yourself and yet feel the oneness of commitment, and drive as the boat moves. It is so fulfilling. We are all so very different - until we step in the boat!

- **Can you share a memorable coaching experience and what you learned from that experience?**

- 2018 was the first year SNCC offered dragon boating for special needs individuals. Along with many other dragon boat paddlers, I volunteered to help. Those Friday nights were so much fun! The joy was contagious. The glow lasted all week!

- **How long have you been with SNCC?**

- I joined in 2016.

- **What is it like being with SNCC?**

- SNCC is very inclusive. I felt that from the first visit. It is a place to unlock potential – and not just 'paddling' potential. So many members strive to achieve a higher standard in both paddling and personal performance. There are so many volunteer opportunities within SNCC. Each of us has so many diverse attributes to augment 'our club'. The more we 'put in', the better it becomes.

- **What do you hope to accomplish as a dragon boat coach at SNCC?**

- I don't think just taking a course makes you a coach; but, I think it does enable you to define what success means, what's important to you, and what it could look like. I hope I can help focus the *Paddles Up!*

- *UNLIMITED* paddlers to maximize their natural gifts, their performance, and help them learn.

- **It feels like this could be an exciting year for SNCC. We can all help.**

