

Rowing Team: Biographies



Kevin Vallely

In 2003 Kevin Vallely was named one of Canada's leading adventurers by the Globe and Mail. His adventuring resume is stacked with compelling expeditions to all parts of the world including skiing Alaska's 1,860 km Iditarod Trail; scampering over Vancouver Island's West Coast Trail in record time, attempting to bike and climb the island of Java's 13 -10,000-foot volcanoes (a trip cut short when post-9/11 Indonesia became too dangerous); competing on the only Canadian team to finish the last and most difficult Eco-Challenge adventure race held in Fiji in 2002; retracing a 2,000 km Klondike-era ice-bike route through the dead of an Alaskan winter, and most recently, with teammates Ray Zahab and Richard Weber, breaking the world record for the fastest unsupported trek from Hercules Inlet to the geographic South Pole.

Kevin graduated from the McGill University School of Architecture in 1988 where he was awarded the Royal architectural Institute of Canada medal as top graduating student. He's a recipient of a Commonwealth Scholarship to Cambridge University. He works as a designer focusing on single-family residential projects. Visit www.kevinvallely.com Email: kvallely@gmail.com



Paul Gleeson

Paul comes from Limerick in Ireland and has lived in Vancouver since 2008. Growing up, sport was always a huge part of his life with rugby being his main passion for many years. In 2003 Paul cycled across Australia from Perth to Sydney. This 5,000km cycle which took 60 days to complete, might have been a bit quicker if it wasn't for getting knocked down not once but twice by cars – luck of the Irish, don't think so!

Paul's next expedition took him from land to ocean. On November 30, 2005 Paul rowed out of a small marina in the Canary Islands and after enduring the tail end of a hurricane and 2 tropical storms that dished up some of the worst weather ever recorded for that time of year, Paul arrived into the Caribbean Island of Antigua to complete an 85 day rowing voyage. Paul and his rowing partner Tori wrote a book about their Atlantic exploits which was published in Ireland in November 2006 and in Canada in 2009 – the book is entitled "Crossing the Swell".

When on dry land, Paul is a self employed personal advisor. Visit www.paulgleeson.com Email: paul@paulgleeson.com



Frank Wolf

Frank is an award-winning Canadian filmmaker and writer specializing in adventure and environmental documentary film. As director and host he has covered stories from around the globe using a unique shooting style and humorous approach in order to make the often esoteric outdoor world appeal to a broad audience.

Frank's exploration resume is packed with some amazing adventures that include retracing the Sandakan Death March in Borneo, cycling 2,200km along the frozen Yukon to the Northern Coast of Alaska retracing the Nome Gold Rush of 1900 and more recently completing a 2,400km journey by bicycle, foot, pack raft and sea kayak during a ground-level investigation of the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline project which would cross over 1,000 watercourses and bring oil supertanker traffic up the B.C. coast for the first time ever. Frank's documentary of this last trip "On the line" has been featured in film festivals all over Canada. Frank will be making a documentary on the team's North West Passage expedition. Visit www.frank-wolf.net Email: gravywolf@gmail.com



Denis Barnett

Denis also comes from Ireland, Dublin to be exact and was born to Frank and Valerie Barnett in late August 1980. His early years were spent playing Rugby and Sailing before his hunger for a little more excitement took hold. Rally driving was first up, followed by water skiing and sky diving and when time allowed a career in Financial Services. When considering rowing the Atlantic Ocean in 2006 Denis made enquiries with some Irish people who had completed the row. A move to Canada soon followed and the idea was put on "ice".

His love of machines and curiosity of the ocean drew him to reinvent himself with a successful career in the Shipping Industry based in Vancouver. A chance meeting with Paul Gleeson in a bar in Vancouver occurred and they realised that Paul was the guy Denis had been pestering on the phone (but never actually met) the previous year in Ireland. When the idea of rowing the North West Passage came up a couple of years later the chance was never going to be passed up and the whole rowing on "ice" came full circle. He doesn't believe in fate, but if he did... Email: denis.barnett@yahoo.com