

PRESS RELEASE

Sudbury, Ontario (June 16, 2014)  
For Immediate Release

New Book Featuring 40 Swimmers of the Great Lakes, from 1954 to 2012,  
Launching in Oakville on July 5th

Why would anyone swim the Great Lakes? In *Solo, Yet Never Alone: Swimming the Great Lakes* Sudbury-based sportswriter Laura E. Young sets out to answer that question.

Not only is this the first book in nearly 60 years to tackle open-water Great Lakes swimming from a Canadian perspective, but it's also the first to use extensive interviews to journey into the minds of over 40 amateur swimmers of the Great Lakes—from 1954 to 2012.

The summer of 2014 marks 60 years since Marilyn Bell became the first person to swim across Lake Ontario. All Canadians know of Bell and her 1954 swim. Most of us can recall a few other crossers—probably Vicki Keith; perhaps Cindy Nicholas. And Oakville residents likely have heard of the LOST swimmers (Lake Ontario Swim Team). But few of us know that in fact, including Bell's swim, 74 swimmers (mostly amateur and mostly Canadian) have made 66 crossings of Lake Ontario, 19 of Erie, five of Huron and Georgian Bay, two of Michigan, and two of Superior.

What drives them to undertake such an ordeal? Young interviewed over 40 Canadian swimmers, both the icons we know, such as Marilyn Bell and Vicki Keith, and the many not-so-regular Canadians who also answered the challenge to swim across a Great Lake. Young's grassroots approach—supported by 9 maps of the crossing routes, 27 media and swimmer-supplied b/w photos throughout, and a centre section of 14 full colour photos—makes *Solo, Yet Never Alone* a significant contribution to our understanding of open-water swimming.

An experienced open-water swimmer herself in smaller lakes, Young explores how the athletes deal with success and failure when swimming the world's largest network of interconnected Lakes. As part of her research, she accompanied a crossing in 2010 and learned first-hand the power of the Humber River current and the waves on the Toronto side of Lake Ontario.

**On Saturday July 5<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 am to noon, Laura E. Young will launch *Solo, Yet Never Alone* at the Central Branch of the Oakville Public Library, 120 Navy Street. She will be joined by LOST Lake Ontario crossers Rob Kent, Madhu Nagaraja, and Melanie Price. In conversation with the author and the audience, they'll talk about what drove them to undertake such an extreme adventure.**

*Solo, Yet Never Alone* speaks to the essence of what it means to be an athlete in any sport, at all levels, and why people choose to do great things. Readers get a down and dirty view of the Great Lakes: reading about the unique ways swimmers keep their fingers warm in the middle of Lake Huron at night; about the bribes, the hallucinations, the seasickness in fresh water. These are the Great Lakes as you haven't seen them lately: massively in charge; full of waves, weather and attitude. Read about the lure of the Lakes, curving over an elusive horizon, and how they can abruptly trash a swimmer's dreams, or fulfill them—despite training, tactics, and team.

*Solo, Yet Never Alone: Swimming the Great Lakes* is published by Scrivener Press of Sudbury, and is in bookstores now, or available online from the publisher at [www.scrivenerpress.com](http://www.scrivenerpress.com)

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