

Paul Kirtley Podcast Episode 62 Transcript

[00:00:00] **Paul Kirtley:** This is the Paul Kirtley podcast, episode 62,

[00:00:05] **Podcast Announcer:** the Paul Kirtley Podcast, wilderness Bushcraft Survival Skills, and Outdoor Life.

[00:00:18] **Paul Kirtley:** Hello and welcome. Today's guest is Jon McArthur. John is based in Alberta, Canada, where he has spent over two decades serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, working in various capacities for the Royal Canadian Air Force. He's also supported operations in some of the most austere environments in the country.

Alongside his military career, John has been deeply involved in both military and civilian search and rescue. He spent many years volunteering with Cold Lake Search and Rescue, as well as working with ground search teams connected to the Air Force, and so gained extensive experience in cold weather field operations and the realities of finding and recovering lost people in remote terrain.

John is also closely connected to the lineage of Northern Forest bushcraft. Through his time with the late Mors Kochanski, after first meeting Mors as a student at the Karamat Wilderness Ways, John went on to build a strong personal friendship with him, spending significant time learning, recording conversations, and helping to carry that knowledge forwards.

He's also a registered member of the Pine Creek First Nation, and in recent years has increasingly drawn on that heritage in his teaching. This includes incorporating traditional perspectives as well as storytelling as a way of helping people better understand and retain knowledge about the land and its resources.

John has taught wilderness skills to a wide range of groups and has a strong interest in how skills and knowledge are passed on effectively. He's also been closely involved with the Global Bushcraft Symposium, particularly the 2019 event in Alberta and the 2022 event in the UK, where he played an important role behind the scenes helping bring together bushcraft survival and wilderness skills practitioners from around the world.

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without further ado, let's get into today's conversation. Well, I'm very happy to be sat here with Jon McArthur.

We're in his basement and we've just been out in the, woods in Alberta for some winter camping and filming various videos for a couple of projects. So that's been good. And we've, retired back to John's house and we thought it'd be a good opportunity to catch up and

[00:03:03] **Jon McArthur:** yeah,

[00:03:04] **Paul Kirtley:** have a podcast.

'cause you've been on one of my podcasts before, back in 2019.

and you were visiting with Mors Kochanski at the time? Yes. And We're able to have a bit of a chat, all three of us, and then

You left me with Mors for a bit. but it's nice to host you again and, dedicate a whole episode to

[00:03:25] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah, it's good.

[00:03:26] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah, so welcome.

[00:03:28] **Jon McArthur:** Thank you.

[00:03:28] **Paul Kirtley:** Thank you. Yeah, thank you for being here. why don't we, why don't we start there then? I think that might be a good spot to start with, why we were talking back in 2019 and I think we, there's kind of various spurs that come off that, right? Both in terms of how you'd got to that point, how I'd got to that point of having a conversation with you and Mors and what was coming at that point.

so at that point we were talking about the forthcoming

2019 GBS

[00:03:57] **Jon McArthur:** that happened here in Alberta.

[00:03:58] **Paul Kirtley:** That happened here in Alberta that I came across for in the summer of 2019. So we were speaking earlier in 2019, I think. I can't remember

[00:04:07] **Jon McArthur:** exactly. Yeah. I think it was January. Yeah. February, around this time.

in. In, we were at Mors place. I remember that quite clearly. But it was, kind of a chance to, talk about the GBS and a chance for you to sit down with Mors.

And, yeah, it was, a good, it was a good day. And we left you with Mors and you guys had a good chat. Oh,

[00:04:31] **Paul Kirtley:** we did. Yeah, yeah. It was much appreciated. It was always good to talk with Mors and, of course.

you were fortunate enough to spend quite a lot of time with Mors in his later years. And, we've been listening to a few recordings that you made of conversations about various aspects of survival and Northern forest boreal bushcraft, with Mors, some of them quite direct and to the point.

Some of them. Quite, they covered a lot of ground,

[00:05:07] **Jon McArthur:** verbal adventures.

[00:05:08] **Paul Kirtley:** Verbal adventures, yeah.

[00:05:09] **Jon McArthur:** With Mors. Yeah. Oh, for sure.

[00:05:13] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Yeah. So that was, that has been good to listen to. We've been listening to those in the, tent in the evenings after we've been finishing

Filming. So, as you said, it almost felt a little bit like we had Mors camping with us.

[00:05:24] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah, I, yeah, it was kind of, it was such a nice, because that was, I think one of the things that I really kind of like looking back miss about him was you always would hear him talking. It didn't matter if it was talking to you.

You might be around the conversation, but you would always hear him having some sort of conversation with someone about a plethora of different subjects. But it was him talking in the background, and it was us having him in camp was, it was reminiscent of having him at camp and listening, right?

It was.

And thus having the, a Bluetooth speaker and the ability to, listen to 'em loud and, just kind of sitting back in, in that setting too. and then with the amount of research that we did into his materials, and then actually out doing that work on the ground in the land Was, it really, uplifted my spirits and some of that, those conversations were so long, but that, to listen to them and then have, you to sit there and reflect upon them and, kind of, kind of compared some of the information with Mors as you're running a big sluice mine. And there was little nuggets of gold that would come down the sluice, but there was usually a lot of like, other information and, just the conversation could go in any direction from kitty cats to, Wiccan to the Egyptians like, and they were all like.

Interesting to hear. Yeah. Like, there wasn't anything that he would talk about that wasn't just super interesting or just pull you in. And he had that ability to do that with you. He just pull you in and you'd wanna listen to what he had to say.

[00:07:09] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Yeah. Well, he was very well read, wasn't he?

And, had a lot of, had a lot of varying interests and, not the least among them being, survival and bushcraft, but there was a lot around that, that he drew on. To inform what he was teaching and what he was explaining to other people and how he saw things connected together.

And I think the other thing that's been interesting as well is, we've been looking at, various different stages perhaps of his work, More than bushcraft later, bushcraft, some of his pamphlets, some of the boreal safe travel work, and then some other notes and diagrams and thing, notes that I've made from the Karamat course as well, which is another time when you and I.

And met, unfortunately that was after Mors had passed, but,

you and Kelly and Dale, were running that course. And, myself and Ian and Henry, who worked with me, came over to, to see what that was all about. And see, I guess for us it was the closest to the source for things like the Roycraft ski shoe or Snowshoe, the Roycraft pack frame.

And a number of other elements that were in the lineage of, Tom Roycraft and, Mors Kochanski. And, I'd seen a lot of those things before. so I'd seen the ski shoe, last felt, and Rays had shown me that back in 2003, I think, when I'd done a course with them in Arctic, Sweden. But I think it's always good to come to the closest to the source you can.

And there's, there were details there. that I'd not seen before. And also. The pack frame. You did a, fantastic lesson on the pack frame during that course. And I've seen other people show pack frames, I've seen lots of pictures of pack frames and I think I heard you say the other day that Tom was quite humble.

He was like, well, I invented the triangle.

[00:09:10] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah.

[00:09:10] **Paul Kirtley:** But there's a lot of detail there that doesn't often, I often see. Doesn't get

Put across. It's missed Or perhaps were there, various stages of development that different people have been shown, do you think? and there're kind of, there's a kind of a few parallel lines of teaching come outta that.

[00:09:29] **Jon McArthur:** Well, if we look at like, even the origin of it, it was the discussion points from what I understood was it was a soldier who had served in Korea and whereas Tom was in the Royal Canadian Air Force, they were having a discussion and about how. They would bring like animals and grains and stuff to market in Korea, and they'd use a very similar type of pack frame, but it had super long legs, right?

So a person could walk so far and then to rest they would lean back and then they would like take the weight to the ground and then they would lean forward and that would work going down a road. But where Tom had started making modifications or to, they kind of mused the idea, shorten the lags and make it out of improvised material so that if you were in the bush and you did need to move some large amounts of stuff or some gear around, you were able to come up with that and it would make for a better way of conveyance, moving your gear.

And that was, I think where, and then we watched a, video, with Tom in it from the late 1960s. he had, been using that pack frame.

And, it showed the host of the television show, how to like, wear it and whatnot. And if you look at the, that construction and that, I don't really could say there was a lot of big changes.

There were some nuanced details. So with the advent or the, not the advent, but the, easy access to paracord. So Mors would speak of like space, age materials. So like Mule tape and Mylar blankets, paracord, polyethylene plastics, right? These space age materials, were kind of introduced in, in, in, maybe earlier in their careers, but they were newer materials to those people and then they were able to adapt them for, The bushcraft survival and where I, see one of the big changes is where we use constrictor knots and we use, jam knots to construct it. And if you look at like, old pictures of Tom's frames, one I've inspected, like they were put together, with lashings, like, and, different stuff. And also, again, in the bush, I've seen Kelly Harton.

he's, a great modifier. He takes an idea and takes it a little bit farther and, finds all the practical uses, as And I've seen him, snot together one his words Snot together one, and, and Jiffy. Right. he would, he could use spruce roots, right?

So there's, methods, naturally occurring and all that you could do and, to put that together. So that was always just a nice, extra tool, that you could have in your survival kit that will help you. 'cause it's, a knowledge piece. So I think that, the basic frame, is, the same, but it, the, field expedience of building the frame, putting it together is really good.

And then from an instructor standpoint, it also works really well as a, first project. you want to teach the jam knot in contacts. This is a really good way. this is the constrictor. So you get two knots that you can teach, kind of doing, I don't wanna say bench work, but like groundwork, easy work in front of you.

So you can teach those things. And then the students have The, the, the materials, the substrate that they're working with right there in front of them. So then you can teach that right there, and that gets the jam knot and the constrictor for your first kind of, and there's a little bit of woodworking.

you're carving, you're you're cleaning the bark off if you're making a really nice frame, something that you want to keep around so you don't have that bark rubbing into you. And then you learn about chaing the ends, and cleaning up. So, and it also teaches you measuring, right?

Because there's some loose measurements in there. So, yeah, they, it's been I think, pretty consistent in its application. But people have made improvements every time I've, it gets, used.

[00:13:56] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. No, I know. I was, intrigued that I, went to do a, course, with Cody Lundine in, Arizona, in 2023.

And that was actually one of the things, dunno if you recall, at the GBS in 22, Lisa and I did a, a q and a and someone in the audience, I don't remember who asked me. What I was inspired to do by GBS and what my goals were to, learn more going forward. And we'll come back to the GBS. I'm sure in this conversation, and there was a couple of things I said, well, one was to go and do a course with Cody.

[00:14:33] **Jon McArthur:** And

[00:14:33] **Paul Kirtley:** the other one was to get more involved with the, the cyber Tracker certification

With John Rider and I've done both of those things. And, what was interesting was even in the context of where Cody is, which is in the, the high desert or high, depending on where he is operating, but it's in, pretty arid region in the southwest of the United States.

And, He had learned from Mors certain things back when he was a lot younger and he's still teaching those things.

As part of a wider programme that he teaches that's tailored to the environment that he is in down there In Southwest and, the PAC frame was, one of them.

Yeah. So it's, it was interesting, but he had a slightly, different take on it in that we also, we finger wove the straps.

So we then we had to take, quite some time to do this finger weaving, which was great actually. I really enjoyed doing that overall. I mean, at times I felt like I was never gonna get it finished, but, you just had to take some time in the evenings or between getting back to camp and when the evening meal was ready, if someone else was cooking the meal, we took it in turns to cook the meals and yeah, I got it done.

But it was nice again to do Pack in a different context using. Local materials down there. And then also making the actual pack straps as well from, from

natural fibre, it was duet, but, simulating what you could do once you had some natural fibre made as well. So, yeah, it's, it influenced and utilities, it seems to have been spread far and wide Since Tom.

Tom brought it to the fore back in the day. just sort of back backtracking a little bit, how did you come to, know Mors and, spend time with him and what was your relationship with Mors over time? Can you spend a bit of time telling us about that?

[00:16:31] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah. so first time I met Mors was, at a Karamat Wilderness Ways.

He came in as a guest lecturer, a lecturer there, to, speak to us right at Karamat. And, you

[00:16:46] **Paul Kirtley:** were a student on the

[00:16:46] **Jon McArthur:** class? I was a student, yeah. In the summer 2015 course.

And it was kind of. Really neat. Like to sit there and listen to someone that just had so much information and it was so sharing and it was like, it kind of, you'd see a group of people get kind of really, I don't wanna say giddy, but pretty happy that Mors was coming.

And he would sit there and just talk to us and talk to us about, books or talk to us, and it was all built into the greater kind of plan for the course, but it was just a lot of information and we got a lot of time with him to sit there and listen. And then, I come back, I did the winter course and then I came back to the next summer course in 2016 as a campy.

And I did Campy for a couple times. And then

[00:17:43] **Paul Kirtley:** So that's a camp assistant?

[00:17:44] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah, camp assistant. The campy. you. You, make sure the fire's going and the coffee's made, and you take care of all the, it looks like, the logistics of, the camp, the running of the day to day, making sure that just camp's running.

But it also gives you a very unique position where you can observe every function of the camp and everything that happens. And then you can spend time

listening to Mors when he comes back to lecture. And, at the time I was the vice president for Search and Rescue Alberta. So our association of the teams in Alberta, and I was kind of, we were looking for some different, guest speakers and stuff for some of our conferences that we had coming up.

So we were able to, talk to Mors and. had, said, Hey, would you like to come out to Buck Lake to our search and rescue conference? And, he did. So that was really nice. And he gave a nice, about an hour long lecture on survival search and rescue survival kit ideas and different things you can do low cost, but still have a good effect.

So, being a, practical frugal man Such as him, he, came there and, did that. So we got, to know him through that. And then we had Ho Alberta hosted the national, search and rescue conference, in the fall of 2016. And then we had, put on a survival camp. And then again we got Mors to come out and, some other instructors came out and they shared different skills to all people from across Canada in the search and rescue field.

And then kind of. Some's in around there, started getting this a couple times. I was invited out to Mors place, so I took him up on the offer. we'd go out to Mors and, we'd sit and listen, talk. We would make some recordings of some ideas. We were, teasing out. And, just, kind of just built a really good friendship.

Well, with him, in the, his last years of his life. spent a lot of time, out, out Edson piers at his place in Bear Lake. And, just spent time talking and we did some travelling and then we had Mors come out here. as I said before, I've been member of the Ro Canadian Air Force now for the Canadian Air Forces for 22 years, and I was, Working with the ground search and rescue team and we ran an exercise called Frosted Flyer, and that's where we would do cold weather survival for aircrew and pilots in a permissive environment because we have a huge air weapons range in the north. And we got Mors to come out and Mors gave a speech there and we listened to that.

Right. Frostier 17 speech. And he would have all this information and Mors would stay at our house and we'd have just these wonderful visits, and then we would have a whole bunch of, bush people here around the dining table. We'd have these big meals and people would come here to visit with Mors.

So it was just like kind of a lot of time spent. It's getting to know him as, the man he was, and, but also being kind of, I was seeking a mentor, but I found a friend, I think is always kind of how I look at that relationship. Was just became

really close with him and became, a, Muslim type, character in my life, a grandfather Where he, really would spend a lot of time just talking and musing out ideas and it was just such an enjoyable man to spend time with, right? It was, it, yeah, I can't say much more than that. but that's how it happened. Was, wanted to go take some courses in bushcraft and learn a little bit more and, what better than the source.

[00:21:47] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. you said to me the other day that you, at that stage had done every single. Ground search and rescue course that was relevant, and you then decided that you'd want to go and do some more bushcraft survival, wider education, and that's how you came to be. at Karamat,

[00:22:09] **Jon McArthur:** well, we were teaching kind of the down, but not out RCF, kind of standard for survival, in our courses and some of the, I just, I, seen a spot I thought, where we could improve our own training, personal development with some bushcraft skills and modern survival. And just any time that you, you spend doing it and building that network and meeting other instructors, you really get To, to hone your skills. Right?

[00:22:42] **Paul Kirtley:** Absolutely. Absolutely. And just, for the sake of clarification, 'cause there's a lot of strands to this. I mean, and I've known you for quite some time now and I've kind of got to understand all the different various elements to these relationships and different things that you are involved in.

But in terms of the search and rescue, you were involved in search and rescue, both within the Canadian Air Force But then also within the civilian organisation with in Alberta.

[00:23:09] **Jon McArthur:** Yes, that's correct. So I kind of summed that up. there was a ground search and rescue team, not, we weren't SART techs, we're all technicians.

My background is aircraft structures, so seing, sewing, welding, machining, fixing aeroplanes , metal work, that kind of stuff on the Go Fast aircraft here, the Hornet. And it brought me to this area. Just north of here, we have a hundred mile by 80 mile air weapons range. that's on austere, very austere, hard to access land.

And for years, like since the fifties, they maintained a ground search and rescue team that was made up of technicians and officers from the wing who in time of

needs say a crash, they would be able to, deploy to the air weapons range to affect, recovery. so that was kind of one part, when I first got up here, they offered a opportunity to go do cold weather survival and I went out and did the Frost Flyer instructor course with the team.

And, I also at the same time was involved as a new member with Cold Lake Search and Rescue, our civilian team here in town. So I kind of. Had bridged two, 2D like foot in each side, I guess you could say. On the civilian side. And I maintained, almost a 17 year relationship volunteering, with search and rescue on the civilian side.

And then, over, over COVID, they changed how the team was gonna be run and they've reduced it to, to a smaller amount of people. So that's, moved away from doing the ground search stuff in, on the base, and now kind of just taking a break and doing more, more bushcraft and survival and concentrating on my own things, I guess.

[00:25:16] **Paul Kirtley:** So while we're on the subject of search and rescue, particularly on the civilian side, What are some important lessons that you, Either knew about and have seen sort of reinforced Through your SAR work or things you've learned about through experience, through training within the, SAR organisation that you've been involved in.

What are some important lessons, tips, things to consider? Maybe things that are obvious that need reinforcing or maybe things that aren't so obvious for people who spend time in wild or remote places, or even not necessarily Remote places that end up being the subject of a search.

[00:25:56] **Jon McArthur:** So first off, I would say one of the best programmes I, was involved with and I became an instructor for was the hug a tree programme.

or if you look it up, adventure smart.ca, on there, the Adventure Smart Programme, they have, different facets of. Of they have a survive outside. They have the hug a tree for the kids, the survival outside's for a little bit older. and sometimes us, our person will come out and maybe give a few tips, fire lighting, but the hug a tree's very basic for children.

So I got to, engage, different community groups, schools, teaching that stuff. And I'll say, just because I think that they did the research really well, but the Adventure Smart Programme talked about the three T's of the Adventure Smart

programme, and that was one to take training. So before you're gonna go do something, go and find experts in the field and train and learn.

So if you want to become, go out and do camping or survival stuff, or maybe go take a course, right? Go find a reputable school that has good instructors and take some training. The second is take essential equipment. And we could have, probably just one podcast on what does, but they've gotta figure it out, the 10 essentials and they've got it on their website.

So you can go there and see exactly what they suggest. And, as a, SAR practitioner, and we're doing this on the preventative side of search and rescue, PSAR side, definitely go look at the 10 essentials. And, it's pretty common sense stuff, but sometimes common sense isn't commonplace.

And if you're a new Canadian and maybe. You've never really done it and you want to get out, that's a great place to start. And then probably the most important part is tell somebody where you're going. So that's the three T's is to take training, tell someone where you're going and take the essential equipment and the 10 essentials will cover it.

But obviously you'll probably have a little bit more room in your bag and people to tailor your, your contents. Right. And then if you don't take training, what's the point of having all those wonderful things in your pack if you don't know how to use them, if you never tested them.

So again, that, before you go out on your big adventure, maybe, do some smaller adventures closer to home. Hudson Bay starts, that kind of stuff.

[00:28:28] **Paul Kirtley:** And for those that dunno, Hudson Bay start is one where when you set off you, you go for a short distance and then set up camp rather than going for a full day and then setting up camp and realising you've left something essential backup base.

[00:28:43] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah, that's a, and then I'd say the, probably the most interesting. Thing that for me, on I guess a cerebral level was when I started getting into lost person behaviour.

You're introduced to lost person behaviour. when you start doing your star basic, so you can kind of see, the different, models, Uck, model, and then you start getting into some of the more advanced stuff with, Dr.

Bob Koester and his work in lost person behaviour. very fortunate, to have had Dr. Bob Koester come up to Cold Lake twice now for, training. He taught us on a lost person behaviour, train the trainer. So I took that, training so that I could teach that course here in Canada. And then also he came up and assisted with a, a search management course.

which was very interesting because we were able to take a lot of the tabletop, exercises and really apply the lost person behaviour and really start to model the, Ourselves and our process, putting first things first. It was lost person behaviour first. Like, try to put yourself into the shoes of the person and, maybe the mistakes that they made that led up to, them becoming, overdue, lost, missing kind of deal.

And, it's really given me a good insight to why things go the way they do. And there's a little bit of psychology mixed into it. And I'd say like, just on a personal level was the lost person behaviour and then applying it, with, kind of the more, I would say kind of original American style, down in Washington that was developed by Skip Stoffel and then it was delivered by his son, Brett Stoffel.

but that kind of ended the search and rescue. We were able to really. Hone some of our skills and in looking for people, and I mean, it's not even anecdotal, testimonial, I could say, I have at least three examples of how lost person behaviour has brought people home. And the application of it in the pre-planning cycle before you go out on the ground to even start looking really helps you narrow down, your, possible, places of discovery for the, subjects, right?

But those two I thought were really good. The really good, the adventure smart, because it's the basics of the basics. And, we think about players, I'm Canadian, here, you think about the NHL hockey, right? even the best players still shoot puck on net, right? The very basics of it. And that's the. Learning the basics to how to shoot puck on that, is also, learning. You take a little bit of training and have the right gear so that you can use it. And I think that's like a kind of that message out of it is even the best practise, the basics.

So, yeah.

[00:32:04] **Paul Kirtley:** And I think sometimes basics, it's almost the wrong word, isn't it? I'm not saying that you're using the wrong word, but I think we often describe things as basics. basics are the things that we learn first. Basics

are the things that we learn when we're getting into a subject or a sport, or a pastime or a hobby or whatever it is.

but the basics are often the foundations, aren't they? They're like, they are the things on which everything else is built.

[00:32:29] **Jon McArthur:** Core building blocks.

[00:32:30] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Yeah. And, I think it's important to remember that, The reasons that a lot of things are taught. First, maybe they are a little bit easier to do than some of the more sophisticated techniques or what have you, if we're talking in generality, but generally they are the basics.

If we wanna call 'em that. Are they? Are those foundational keystone building blocks and whether we're talking about navigation or survival skills, or making sure you're equipped properly, I mean, those things don't go away, however experienced you are, the importance of those skills are still there, right?

are there, in terms of the lost person behaviour, are there things that people generally do that are counterproductive that they, that you, that they shouldn't be doing?

[00:33:18] **Jon McArthur:** Well, they normally, like they, they start off and they don't tell anybody where they're going. So, you think about.

Oh, I was telling you, like one of the things I do here, I could just leave my house on my a TV on my quad and I can go, there's a 330 mile trail, 400 metres from here. There's, all the trails all the way to the north over here, you can travel. So anyway, the,

[00:33:46] **Paul Kirtley:** it's one of, one of the cats scratching at something in the background.

I don't know whether that's getting caught on the microphone or not. We're just, we're both kind of being slightly distracted, not because it's distracting us, but we're like, is that getting picked up by the mic?

[00:33:59] **Jon McArthur:** So just, what people do is sometimes they just don't think out their impact.

Right? They're, focused on, I just want to go berry picking here. And they don't tell anybody, Hey, this is where I'm going and. People not knowing where

you're at, may be a great thing here and there, but sometimes when they're, when you're going out into the, field, it's good to let somebody know, kind of another thing is like for lost person behaviour.

Well, I'll be honest, there's a lot of alcohol involved, for, the lead to accidents.

Right? That's a, so, and then we're seeing more and more, as, harder drugs kind of make their way out into different, regions of Canada. You're seeing more stuff with drugs.

So I think another piece to this is, technology's improved. So there's, I, honestly think that there's less people get it going missing. Right. just from my own kind of personal knowledge base from this at re region, there's, normally something wrong, right? Like. the person just going out and having an accident and falling down is probably more rare than there was some nefarious activity or there was, drugs, alcohol involved.

So get yourself set up for success, right? I don't think anybody gets up in the morning says, Hey, I'm gonna get myself lost today. But in retrospect, in hindsight, looking back, you can definitely see a pattern of, poor decisions that led to an outcome that is not very desirable.

[00:35:46] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah.

[00:35:47] **Jon McArthur:** So,

[00:35:48] **Paul Kirtley:** yeah. That's interesting. And I think it's an interesting one about you you use the example of someone going berry picking and I think it's, I think if we're going out for a week long canoe trip. We're probably gonna tell somewhere we're going, right?

and they're gonna know you're going somewhere, right?

'cause you've spent the last three days packing in the basement or whatever, and it's like you, you're heading off, maybe you're going with friends. Someone in the group has told somebody. Whereas if you just, I'm gonna nip off on the a TV or the side by side, or I'm gonna go down this, dirt track with my truck to, to pick berries or go fishing for the afternoon.

It, is those things that where you often, it's just the afternoon, right? It's just a few hours or it's just on the way home from work. You don't necessarily tell someone where you're going on those

[00:36:31] **Jon McArthur:** No.

[00:36:31] **Paul Kirtley:** On those occasions. Yeah. Yeah. It's interesting. We, will link to all of those things that John mentioned.

By the way, the, websites, the Adventure, smart Canada, the, those links will all be in the show notes. With respect to the military side of the search and rescue, how many people are sort of doing that these days? I mean, how many, is it a fairly small band of people? Because I'm just I'm just thinking about, so, so for, in the UK for example, we have an REF Mountain Rescue Team. And they're, and I know some people within that and, it's specifically mountain rescue, although they do other recovery and rescue work. because a lot of the time I think historically planes have gone missing in upland areas.

they've been flying low. we live in a wet, cloudy island, historically, I think a lot of crashes and, missing planes, were in hilly areas. And also some of the low flying areas for training are in mountainous areas. So it was natural that, natural that happened.

But those groups aren't particularly large in the uk. are they, so you are, based here. You've got the air weapons range

Here. outside of sort of close to bases, is there a, is there an organisation for. For search and rescue in the Air Force? Or is it very much there

[00:37:58] **Jon McArthur:** is

[00:37:59] **Paul Kirtley:** base by base.

There is.

[00:38:00] **Jon McArthur:** Well, okay. So they have different, joint operation centres JCCs, that coordinate. So depending upon what type of search it is, what it is deemed as, so if it's an aircraft crash, that's a federal responsibility To respond to. and then this is where Canada's, air Force to work in.

The Air Force has search and rescue technicians and search and rescue technicians will work inside of a search and rescue unit, a squadron, that's the, and there'll be crew, air crew onboard helicopters, fixed wing sar, different, modes of transportation. But they're able to deliver these people via parachute or hoist, operations to be able to get them on the ground.

And they're very. Very highly trained medical. they basically, you have an advanced paramedic, kind of almost Olympic athlete type of person. Super smart. They're highly motivated. They're really fit. They're trained in a, plethora of different, disciplines, mountain rescue, scuba diving, wilderness survival.

So they're kind of, the answer for a lot of problems in the vast Canadian wilderness because you can get airborne, pretty quick. You can cover a lot of distance in a, C one 30 or, whatever they're using out on the coast right now. I'm not sure. for like maritime sar. But you can deliver these people really fast and they show up with equipment, right.

Medical equipment, they show up with survival gear. So if you think of somebody that may be in the worst way, and you can just look up some of these, stories of, heroism that our Canadian SART techs have done, it's, it's, I can't even imagine. I almost get like, kinda like just thinking about some, the stuff that these guys do, but they'll jump out of a C one 30 into an ice flow to go rescue.

people lost their lives and they say like, I always remember meeting different, SART techs over the years and some of them have just been like super amazing people. And one of the things is like with the SAR trade was always that, It wasn't, if you're gonna get hurt, it's gonna be when and how bad.

Right. You think about people parachuting, we're really fortunate, one of our, one of our years at Karamat, we had a, young guy, Alfred Barr, who was a SAR tech, and he came because he, wanted to become better at the, the bushcraft stuff and he knew how it would help, him doing his job if needed.

unfortunately Alfred died in a parachute accident, and, but that was, part of those, that type of people that, that do that work. You know what I mean? Somebody that's willing to step out into the dark for someone else. And put, their life, that other person's life ahead of their own.

it just kind of neat. So yeah, we do have a pretty. Vast, robust organisation. I, couldn't speak to numbers, Where they're at in recruiting. I'm not privy to that right now. So.

But, what we do have is very good. they trained very hard and I mean, that's class four.

was, para rescue was Tom Roycraft. Who was a pair rescue man.

[00:41:44] **Paul Kirtley:** Yep. So that was the old, so SAR tech now, but para rescue Was an older term for that. and can you tell me a little bit about the training? 'cause again, it links back to Tom and Moore. the training for the para rescue, but also the nurses

That kind of, there's a sort of parallel story there, isn't there?

[00:42:06] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah. It was kind of neat when I started doing the research, more around Tom's career and then starting to get an understanding of how the trade used to work. there was division of kind of skills and labour.

the para rescue men would jump with a parachute trained nurse, that would go, and do all the medical. So, we're talking like 1950s for Tom when he went through. so that was kind of the way things were then. So the pararescue men would, set the tent up, get the fire going, in a wilderness environment or do the work, help stabilise the patients.

So they would learn a little bit and then obviously. over the years they've completely changed that, where, advances in medical and communications, they've been able to train the paramedics, the, SART techs to be, advanced life care para paramedics, a LS So pretty, interesting where they're at and, all that for sure.

but yeah, they, it was a, paired team with a nurse. And, a para rescue men, and they would jump together, into the abyss to go help someone.

[00:43:23] **Paul Kirtley:** and what was the training that Tom and Mors used to do for nurses? Were they power rescue nurses or

[00:43:29] **Jon McArthur:** No. No. So, so that came outta that, HartwellHartwellartwell. there's an evacuation that was needed. the weather wasn't great, and they were coming outta the Northwest Territories, I believe 72. But, anyway, onboard the aircraft, four Souls. they had a pregnant woman that needed to be transferred. They had a young fella, a 14-year-old, and then the nurse, Judy Hill, who was an English nurse that had come over and was working in one of these remote nursing stations.

And they had basically, Hey, we really need to move this patient. can we please do this? And they, I guess had an, air incident, crashed. And upon impact, the, nurse was killed, Judy was killed. and then, there wasn't a lot of details on when the pregnant woman died, but it was very shortly after.

And then Hartwell, he lived, had both of his ankles broken, didn't have good mobility. And then, the young fella, he, he lived but he ended up perishing. So what made this kind of, the interesting part was the pilot had turned to cannibalism and ate parts of the nurse to, in order to keep himself alive, but the boy refused to, so.

They figured he had perished, around day 37, and I think day 42 is when Hartwell up. But this kind of, cause, as you can imagine, a sensation, this was, I was thumbing the book, reminding myself this, is a story that I heard from Mors, but, essentially Blue Lake Centre, became kind of a centre of like nurses training.

And they had, different people who were working in these remote places. They wanted them to be cycled through to get some site of, survival training. And they tried a couple different schemes of manoeuvres to get, the right people, to teach this stuff. And then in the end, long story short, Tom Roycraft ended up getting hired and then hiring Mors to help him teach nurses, wilderness survival.

And that was, kind of. W we heard the, story, of how Tom and Mors met and they kept in touch and yada, But they started having, the teaching of the Blue Lake Centre. But that was the skills, that they were wanting to give to the nurses.

But that's what Mors and Tom really kind of got to know each other and teach together really well. And there was like, a lot of boys would say, like, it was a lot of really good teaching and, where he really honed his craft, teaching the nurses, the women's survival at Blue Lake Centre.

[00:46:30] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah.

for those that don't know the story, how did Mors and Tom meet?

[00:46:38] **Jon McArthur:** do

[00:46:38] **Paul Kirtley:** you remember the,

[00:46:38] **Jon McArthur:** so they met on the street in Hinton, right. And there was a couple dates thrown around, but, it's, I, if I was the, if had the guess it was probably like the fall of 68. It was kind of where.

My best guesses fell on that one. But it was basically, Mors was in Hinton and he seen, a man dressed in green fatigues and on his shoulders he had a thing that

said civilian survival instructor. And Mors walked up to him and just started a conversation as Mors would. And, it seemed that they hit it off and they became lifelong friends.

[00:47:19] **Paul Kirtley:** and Mors, of course was interested in

That stuff at that point. Right? Oh,

[00:47:23] **Jon McArthur:** definitely. For sure.

[00:47:25] **Paul Kirtley:** Attracted, to that. Attracted to that. So there's lots of interesting spurs and, kind of loops to this. Aren't there? if we, fast forwards a little bit to when we first met, that was

[00:47:40] **Jon McArthur:** outside of a porta-potty

[00:47:41] **Paul Kirtley:** outside 2018

[00:47:42] **Jon McArthur:** in, Bushcraftfestivalen.

Exactly.

[00:47:44] **Paul Kirtley:** Bushcraftfestivalen. Nice event in In Sweden. And you and I had communicated a little bit prior to that, and I knew you were gonna be there and, yeah. We, met there and you were doing a bit of a grand tour of Sweden.

[00:48:01] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah, well it was, you gotta love the networking possibilities of the internet today.

And kind of made a friend with, Johan Forsberg from Nordic Bushcraft. And he, we just went back and forth and then he says, oh, you should come over to this event and then we should, go, Well, basically it turned out to be two weeks of me, hanging out with Johan and his Volvo, is very Swedish.

Swedish Volvo. Yes. Driving around and going to very bush crafty kind of neat places. And part of that was that Mors had visited Sweden and I wanted to see Sweden. in 2018. It worked out. And, I, I, hadn't travelled much in my, on my own at that point in my life. And, I was, I just, I was just in my early forties and I was like, I wanna do some travel.

I never really got to travel. And I got into the bushcraft scene and I was really enjoying the people and, Moore's just spoke so highly about everything, Sweden. And, I just wanted to go there and, basically, Johan invited me and we went over and man, got to see, all kinds of stuff.

The Wetterlings factory was now as G r a n s f o r s , M o r a knife more, and I, got to, go to two events, Bushcraftfestivalen. and then the, O u t c r a f t down south at Inland. yeah, it was just like all over that place. met so many different people. we would just. Oh, this person's not going to this event, but let's go here and we'll go meet at tab bo, tab boron, or we're gonna go meet one of the neatest people I think I met over there was a Peter ing, just an amazing, Flint napper and, kind of, I guess he true, like a crafts person, like, could just pound stuff out of rocks.

Like I've never seen, like, because just like blew my mind because I, wasn't ever really exposed to that end of the skills. So watching somebody so skilled. But yeah, I really got to bomb around Sweden and see a lot of, like, I seen so much, drank a lot of beer. It was good.

[00:50:22] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. no, those events were very good.

Those events were good. And this is, and that was the first time we'd met. And of course you talk about Mors, Talking highly of Sweden. Mors had been at the 1995 event organised by Lar Felt. and that included various other people, Ramirez, Mel Deese, Tom Chens, Turka from, who's surname I get right now from Finland, and lots of Lots of really interesting people. And, we were talking about this again the other day. Mors was a huge proponent of Moura knives early on.

[00:51:00] **Jon McArthur:** Yes.

[00:51:02] **Paul Kirtley:** if you see pictures of him many, moons ago with his beret, and he has a moura knife around his neck.

yeah. so, so yeah. big influence and lots of cross-fertilization.

And I think it's, I think it's important to remember that, even though, people like Mors very much ploughed their own furrow and, did their own work and did their own research and had their own, I guess sphere of influence locally. They were also looking beyond that and There were these cross fertilizations and we were speculating, weren't we just the other day? Like, pre-internet. Were they,

were these guys like writing letters to each other? were they getting on the phone? I mean, I, speak to Tom Uchin occasionally, and that is

a phone call.

And I guess maybe that's how they, those guys used to communicate if they didn't visit with each other. Right.

[00:51:58] **Jon McArthur:** you seen a little, you pointed out something when I showed you, so I had that little matchbox survival kit that Mors me.

And then you pull it out, and then you're looking at the fire steel and you're like, he probably got this from Lars.

Yeah. Right. And it, it would make sense with what the name on it. And I just, that made it to me, like, it just these like little, closing of circles that we've been doing. Yeah. It was like, oh, this and this, and yeah. It's been very. Very good that way. 'cause that the cross pollinization, cross fertilisation.

But that's like kind of a, I think that one of the things that Mors really taught me about was that there was all kinds of different people in different ways, and you had to just be open to those ways. And that's somebody that he was never really tied to. he wasn't dogmatic.

He's like, this is a good way.

And you probably won't suffer if you use this. And, but I'm not gonna be the one that's uncomfortable if I don't use it. But he, if you want to try, but he was never, ever, like, like, I'm gonna stand and fight you on a subject. It is like, oh, okay, well then go try it.

Yeah. So it was always kind of neat, like, he's open to all kinds of different, but he, he learned lots, like from there, and the craft and seeing stuff. And he brought that stuff back from. From Sweden, and that relationship was, before then. 'cause we were talking, it wasn't just that day.

Oh, we, they, everybody met each other. There's, Lars travelled, there's pictures of Lars at Tom's place with Mors, right, yeah. That I showed you. So stuff like that, like there's a long relationship, as Tom was a guru. Like that's what Mors is. He was my guru. He was like, Tom was the wilderness survival instructor that was there from 80 19, not 54, I think it was 57 to 87.

It was. And it was his time at Jarvis Lake was both military and as a civilian working for the military. And that was the guy like. I've been to his house. I've spent time with the family. I've seen some of, like Tom's handiwork and the tools, that he made, he like, he was very like hand skilled and he was a carver.

Right. You've seen the little bannock gods that he made. Yeah. And gifted to, to those, the host of that television show. But there was all this different skills, like, and we saying before the internet. Yeah. This was all before the internet. Like, eh, you think about now, oh, I want to learn how to do a bow drill.

I can go on the internet, I can see that. I can see somebody do it and they're successful. Well, they didn't see any pictures of anybody or videos of anybody being successful, so they just started experimenting. And I remember Mors telling me one of the ways they would experiment was they had an electric drill.

And they would cut pieces of wood and chuck it up and they'd be, okay, balsam, fur base with a popular stick. Okay, we get this. And they would, press it down and they'd spin it for so long and they would see, oh, this works really good. Oh, pine on Pine, this is okay, but not as good. And they had notes like, and then this is the optimum, right?

This is the optimum. Oh, if it's, so anyway, they, were able to, work together and those guys cross-pollinated. That's a perfect example. Mors had his kind of learning and the stuff that he had been doing, but here was Tom, this man who had this, really good skill. and you think about that the first time, and this is what Mors says, the first time I seen Tom give an axe lecture, he just knew there was so much more.

Because nobody he had ever heard speak. Ever dealt with that tool in the same way. Yeah. The proficiency. And that was really where Mors was hooked on Tom. Yeah. Was that Axe, axe demos, right?

[00:56:20] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. We had him mentioned that a couple of times. And one of the things we were listening to the other night, Mors said, I've been using an axe.

'cause Mors had a rural upbringing, right? And his parents were immigrants from Poland, and they had a lot of handcraft skills and traditional living skills. and Mors said, I've been using an Axe my whole life. And then when I saw Tom use an axe, I realised there was a whole lot, learn a lot more to learn.

And yeah. And so again, there's a lack of kind of ego there and dogmatism, right? It's like he's, he, he was able to see, someone there that he could learn from, right. As well as work with ultimately.

[00:57:00] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah. Mors wasn't afraid to say he didn't know something. And I think that's for somebody that knew as much as he knew, if he didn't know.

He'd just be like, I've never heard of that.

[00:57:10] **Paul Kirtley:** And then tell you a story about something else.

[00:57:12] **Jon McArthur:** Wow. Razzle-dazzle.

Yeah, for

[00:57:17] **Paul Kirtley:** sure. But yeah, no, you're right. He did. he wasn't a bullshitter. Absolutely. That's super.

[00:57:23] **Jon McArthur:** But he could bullshit you.

[00:57:25] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. But yeah. Yeah. He could pull your leg for sure. yeah, For sure. For sure. so we, we got to GBS 19 and I came over, to speak and you were, I think instrumental in some ways in making sure that happened.

you definitely had my corner for coming over and speaking.

and you were part of the quite large organisational crew for the global Bush Crest Symposium in 2019.

and I think that was a, I think in some ways that was a kind of seminal event as well. It, was exciting to be there and to be part of that melting pot of people from all over the world.

there was clearly an Alberta contingent That was centred around Mors and I guess, historically Tom as well, there's a kind of centre gravity to this part of the world in terms of that lineage and that, there's a whole bunch of people that, that surround that.

and then there were people from across Canada, so you know, Les Stroud and Caleb Musgrave and, André-François Bourbeaubeau and Manard from Quebec.

So there's a really nice cross section of people from, across different parts of Canada, not just from Alberta. And then of course we had, The wider North American contingent.

Tom Lutyens is a million miles away and, people, Dave Wescott and, and people

[00:59:00] **Jon McArthur:** Holladayyyyyyy

[00:59:01] **Paul Kirtley:** and

Dave Holladay. Yeah. and yeah. Really nice bunch of people from all over the states. And then of course, a few of us came, were able to come across from Europe, so myself and Lisa Fenton and Tieman and some of the, some of the, the Danes and Swedes and yeah, it was a really nice event.

But, I think it was also quite poignant that it was, one of the last things that we saw Mors out as well. Of course, Lars, who was one of my big mentors. And particularly in the northern, skills and the cold weather skills was able to come across. And again, it was nice to see, Tom Lars And Mors together. as they had been back in 95.

[00:59:54] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah, for sure.

[00:59:56] **Paul Kirtley:** yeah. So any reflections from you on that event? I know it's like, it's a long time ago now.

[01:00:02] **Jon McArthur:** Well, I think for me, 2019 was about Mors. And, I've never had a problem being in service to someone and, being able to see the joy that Mors took in that, I mean, it was so close to the end of his life, right.

It was like five months out. but it was his chance to say goodbye to a lot of people. And I don't think they, some people even realised that's what it was, But it was him to have his last kind of chance to spend some time in, in that environment that, that global environment that, that he helped foster.

Because he was very open to. Being around people from different places with different ideas. That was one of his strengths. And it was a chance for him to say, goodbye. And I know, like we had lots of conversations about 2019 GBS at Mors Place after, and it was, it was a highlight for him and he got to spend time with just so many different people and people got to meet him.

And, that was for me, what it was, there was a lot of work to put out an event like that. But it, if you're passionate, and I love the idea of us all getting together. I got to see a lot of my friends, I got to see you again, Johan, come across again. And people I'd met in other places.

So it's always nice when you get a chance. I, being, as long as I've been in the military, kind of your friends, sometimes you. it by, just by happenstance of service, you up and move or you're gone and you don't see people. But it was like one of those, it was like a bit of a homecoming at times.

You get to spend time with people and it just pick up from where you left off.

Right. You, and that was, I think, a really nice part of the GBS, getting to run into some of, my friends that I would only get to see if I was in their country. And people made it a priority to be there.

they wanted to be part of it. They wanted to spend the time. So it was nice to be around like a bunch of, like-minded people, that, that were there to kind of learn, those, people. Right. that's, that was what I really enjoyed. About it. And I think my, maybe my experience with GBS 2019 was a little bit more laborious than others.

being the, doing the logistics and the volunteer coordination. But we had fun as volunteers as well. Like I had a really good group of people, so I built a lot of like, good connections 'cause we spent so much time in that group. And, we ran the back end of it. Right. it was, if a coffee needed to be made or toilet paper needed to be got, we figured it out.

but it was the time I think, for me. And the 2019 was just, I remember like, I got a couple little videos here and there, but I just watching Mors interact with people and, It, that's, that was really brought for me was like, check watching him just enjoy himself. Right? Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah.

[01:03:29] **Paul Kirtley:** It was good. It was good time. It was a good time. and then of course we did our best to carry that legacy on at the GBS, legacy with 2022.

Should have been 2021, but COVID happened. Yeah. And, I did manage to pop back again, as we've already said, pop back again to Alberta to visit with you guys on the CARAC course.

And very early 2020. that was a very strange time. I'd been in Australia over Christmas. I came back to the UK, or I'm not in the UK now. I went back to the uk, did some training with my guys in the woods in January.

And then I came out to Canada in February for the CARAC course and yeah, it was already, people wearing masks in airports and people talking about the Wuhan virus and

And I think in retrospect, perhaps a couple of the people that weren't very well on that course perhaps had COVID, we can only speculate. Right. But, what's

[01:04:30] **Jon McArthur:** the sickest I've ever been was coming off that

[01:04:31] **Paul Kirtley:** course. I didn't realise, I didn't realise you was, you mentioned that the other day. I didn't realise that because I

[01:04:35] **Jon McArthur:** went down for three days after that one Yeah.

Coming outta camp and I just thought, oh, it was just, but then when COVID came full bore and all that, like I never really suffered through it. The next time that I had, I tested positive for it. Right. At that time they didn't even have a test.

[01:04:52] **Paul Kirtley:** No.

[01:04:53] **Jon McArthur:** But I mean, that was the sickest I had been like, I think in my life.

Yeah. Like it was three days and I, was like, I can't even get outta bed anyway.

Yeah.

[01:05:00] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah.

[01:05:00] **Jon McArthur:** It's, it was just a weird time, right? Yeah. Yeah.

[01:05:06] **Paul Kirtley:** It feels like a long time ago. And of course, we were supposed to be doing. At GBS in 21.

the, mantle had been passed to me, and I'd got Lisa involved as well.

I think that would, thought that would be a good team.

And we were literally given the big hammer, which again, had a connection with Roycraft and the

[01:05:26] **Jon McArthur:** By

[01:05:26] **Paul Kirtley:** David Delafield and Global Yeah. And Chris Noble. And yeah, we then had to make it happen for 21. Unfortunately we couldn't do that because of COVID and people couldn't travel.

And, we did it in 22. And you were very, again, instrumental in, helping me with that. you did pretty much all of the social media for

[01:05:47] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah. And taught me lots.

[01:05:49] **Paul Kirtley:** yeah.

[01:05:49] **Jon McArthur:** There was a lot for me to learn, but, different apps and stuff. But yeah, it was, kinda interesting to put all that out for,

[01:05:56] **Paul Kirtley:** yeah.

Yeah.

[01:05:56] **Jon McArthur:** And then, kind of just the little help here and there when I was there. Hey, can you move this or do help with that? Yeah, that was, it was good. But you had it organised. It was a good event.

[01:06:06] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Thank you.

[01:06:07] **Jon McArthur:** I really enjoyed it.

[01:06:08] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Well it was nice to get, those of you that could do stuff from a distance that had been involved in 2019 and who were happy to help again for 22.

and to be honest, there was nobody that said, I'm not happy to help you. But, it was like, Alex had been involved in the sponsorship. Joe Flowers had been involved in the particularly, he just has this ability to extract things from giveaway sponsors. Yeah. And, the amount of cutting tools and other materials he seemed to extract from people is, was impressive.

and I know you were also able to get some things from people and, yeah. And also help with the social media, which took. it took some time, that the promoting an event like that takes a good, amount of effort. And you were very helpful in that and it was good to, pass ideas and also, compare and contrast with what went on for 2019 and make that happen in the uk.

And you were able to come and then, and you were also able to, give a talk. what was the subject of your talk at?

[01:07:17] **Jon McArthur:** It was using stories, kind of along the First Nations side of was. I had a student one time that had said to me, John, I like what you taught me, but I think it'd be more enjoyable if you had some stories to add.

So, and it was kinda like, at first I, but I'm here to teach you the information, but I really chewed on that piece and, I started to get a better understanding of. different stories that could be told if you're trying to help with plant knowledge and different stories are told over again at different times.

'cause they have different lessons to be extracted. whether that be danger on thin ice or how to remember where to find Chaga. Right. Little Abe kind of stories and lore, or indigenous lore that, but they kind of being able to incorporate that into the, into your teaching.

[01:08:22] **Paul Kirtley:** So

[01:08:25] **Jon McArthur:** I, I think, I, look at that comment. I think about that back and it was really, I think a way of a student telling me, I don't learn the way you just taught me. If you, 'cause I was asking like, it was like, I. we would have a sharing circle at the end of my courses, which, anywhere Elks would probably be known as a after action review, an a, a R.

But, we'd have a sharing circle so everybody in the circle can, he can, tell you, this or that. And I wasn't a Jared. He, had said this to me. and at first I, I didn't know how to take that, but then was a lot of kind of reflection upon it. And it was, Hey, some people just learn differently and a story helps sometimes, but that it, I guess, and I kind of looked at a, bunch of different things, but it's just storytelling.

I grew up around a lot of really good storytellers. and, I wanted to incorporate that piece and give that kind of, piece, like something different. I thought of all the different stuff I could talk about there, but it was, I really kind of fell on that storytelling piece.

And I think if I was to re-give that today, I'd have better examples because I, use that also, in my own, to keep it as a forward thought to be able to improve my teaching.

[01:09:54] **Paul Kirtley:** that's interesting. And one, one element of your story that we haven't really touched on yet in this conversation is the First Nations u you mentioned it there in, in passing and sort of implicitly with the storytelling

Piece. but there's a lot of, I know a lot of my listeners in the UK probably are not familiar with the term I should nabe. And, maybe not even familiar with the various First Nation, peoples in terms of where, if. Talk to me about Ojibwe. Or Dene. Or Cree. I've got some idea of kind of where in Canada They are. and the sort of terrain they might be historically associated with and, where their skills and

[01:10:43] **Jon McArthur:** Knowledge

[01:10:44] **Paul Kirtley:** of nature and all of their, all of their culture sat within. But I wouldn't say my knowledge is great, but, and, I continue to learn from people like you and others that I have contact with.

but let's explore that piece a little bit. 'cause that's been an evolving story even in the time that I've known. You and,

yeah.

[01:11:07] **Paul Kirtley:** So I dunno where you'd like to approach that from. Well,

[01:11:11] **Jon McArthur:** I mean, I'm obviously mixed, right? I'm, I have white, I have, I am a Heinz 57, res dog. I'm a bit of this, a bit of that, right?

but that's, I think, typical of anywhere. So I would never say. I am explicitly this. However, I have, I am a member of Miso Go and Abe Pine Creek First Nation. and as the Canadian government sees me, I have a certificate, of Indian status. Right. So I am a band member. Right. I just, and I think one of the reasons why in the past I didn't say a lot was because I look white.

So that's always been a kind of a bone of contention. If you look here in Canada, there's a lot of pretends in Canada. And, there's, people who've passed themselves off as this or that, you can just look at Buffy St. Marie. Right. Like

that was a big, big problem here in Canada, singer that passed themselves off as Peg Wass First Nations member.

that the, that they were this. But they turned out to be an Italian girl from New Jersey.

Right. and then I don't think a lot of these people understood back when they were spinning their stories. they would go from town to town, and this was, I think one of the Buffy St.

Marie's undo was she would go from town to town, but she would change your story slightly in the papers, but now you can search all those newspapers and see this stuff.

Anyway, the reason I say this is because I never ever wanted to try to be like, Hey, I know this because I'm First Nations, I'm this, or, use that as a, I just wanted to be John.

Right. John, the guy that came and did the good work and put the efforts in. there was a change, I think, in the social conscience of a lot of First Nations here in, in Canada, indigenous people, with the, some of the revelations around. more of the stuff that has come out with the residential schools and the absolutely disgusting behaviour of the government at the time that, ran these things.

And, didn't really say this, but you know, my grandmother, she was basically raised in a residential school at Camper V and her mother was an orphan that was raised by the nuns at Camper Bill. So, we think about like that and we talk. I, think that my grandmother was quite pleased that we were white passing, like, I mean, so.

The residential schools really did a number on First Nations culture. You think about like, the kids weren't allowed to dance, they weren't allowed to speak their language. My grandmother was beaten for speaking, MBE Moen at the school, so they'd have to do it in secret. There's a lot of things that, that were happening that weren't good to those people.

Like, when I say those people like my family, that's real. It's like, that's my, I'm a present living person right now, and, my grandmother was in a residential school for, and wasn't treated good. And then lived in a racist town, Brandon Manitoba.

Right. Like, so it's kind of, it was, she would always say even a fish wouldn't get in trouble if he kept its mouth shut.

Right. So applied to that lesson was, Hey, we don't need to, 'cause there, there was, she was pretty honest when she'd say there was no good in being an Indian.

Right. So it kind of became, it was something that we just didn't talk about. And then I kind of had been around different, different people in this community that, I'd be around people that would maybe not portray or they would talk about things, with First Nations communities that I didn't like, and they would think that I was just another white guy that was gonna go along with it.

So it's, I think now I just put it out there a little bit more. I'm proud of my culture. I've done a lot of work to learn, ceremony. And it's helped me a lot in my connection with the land. and understanding that there was always this connection, but I didn't understand, where it came from.

And now I've really. Been blessed, by the creator to be able to be put in a position here in Cold Lake and to be able to teach youth. I'm, I've started some programming here with the local First Nations. we're here on Dene, so, the Dene Land here, in, Coal Lake. And, I get to spend time with some of the elders and the youth from there and other bands around there.

There's a lot of Cree and there's a lot of Metis. There's a lot of mixed around here, but, very fortunate, just 70 5K down the road, is Dr. Kevin Lewis, who runs KAKE Cultural Camps, and he was also an attendee at the First Nations camp in, GBS 2019. And, so he's been another person that's helped shape my, understanding, and of First Nations world.

And I've been, pretty lucky to work within it. here and, and help develop more programming for the youth. And that's I think it's starting to become, my, my focus is to do more of the, online training and survival instruction here for, the First Nations youth and other youth.

Of course, I'm not saying I'm not here to teach anybody, but it's, the focus is as of late, has been, first Nations, youth training. And that's kind of, I've, I've been kind of off the main beaten past since COVID. I think COVID kind of made me, forced me to look at what was at home. 'cause I feel like before COVID I was always like going out to find other places to go teach, or I wanted to teach at some other place.

And then COVID made me made me forced look to stay, Hey, here at home there's a lot that work that needs to be done. And it's, a chance to. To help people connect to nature. And I know my time on the land, how healing that is. And we say will take seven generations to, to heal the damage of the residential schools.

Right. So, if my generation can help improve the, that path, that's kind of what I would like to do is just provide a good quality instruction. I, everything that, that I, I did in the last week with you. I, in the end in my head was this, will teach, help me teach, better the skills for the kids and if one day they need that, they'll be able to draw on

[01:18:32] **Paul Kirtley:** that.

Yeah. Yeah. I mean, we've left some things up in the woods, which will

Be directly helpful. and then we've also had some good conversations about what's possible there. And, the other thing that was interesting to me as well is that you've already seen some results. 'cause we were talking about, Finn And some of the people that work with him, for him.

And at least one, sorry if I'm not remembering right. At least one, maybe a couple.

but people that you trained before,

[01:19:08] **Jon McArthur:** they're working there now.

[01:19:09] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. And that, and you train them in skills to be able to look after themselves in the bush, and now they're able to be employed on the land

with various things that need to be done. And they've got the skills to be out a long way away from help and be able to look after themselves if anything goes awry.

[01:19:28] **Jon McArthur:** and that's kind of the, giving those skills to people so that if they do run into trouble, which we discovered, you can run into a lot of trouble, in the bush, in the wintertime.

Right, right. When it's cold. There's a whole bunch of pitfalls there. Right. But it's a lot of good skills for those people to be able to help take care of themselves. Yeah.

[01:19:51] **Paul Kirtley:** And what are the some, I mean, we, know I think generically

That a lot of first Nations around the world have lost much of their knowledge of how to live from the land.

in large part because of displacement. whether we're talking about, Navajo being shifted off their land or whether we're talking about, treaties up here Where people were left with very little, range compared to what they could have. moved around nomadically and before, whether it's the residential schools, and that happened in Australia as well, remember?

Similar system where people were separated from their family, separated from their culture, and that culture was then not passed on. It was actively. Squashed, like you were saying with your family, but that passing on of skills and knowledge on the land didn't happen because they weren't there, right?

and I think a lot of people are kind of aware of that, that, we've moved to a planet of people that are living in a, urban, suburban environment. And it's the same, it's the same for all of us, right? even in the UK there's a lot of people who, in the past, that have grown up in the countryside, they've had some country skills.

They might have poached rabbits, they might have picked mushrooms and berries and they're not exposed to that anymore because their parents dunno how to do that. Their grandparents maybe knew how to do that. And you only need one or two generations where they're not doing that. And the, and those skills are broken, but there's a bigger issue isn't there with First Nations In terms of, there's a kind of, in a lot of the, in a lot of the reserves. Up here, or the reservations, further south there, there's a real kind of vicious circle isn't there, in terms of unemployment, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, lots of other abuse.

And it's, hard to then break outta that again, isn't it?

And I think that's, again, one of the important things about getting the young people out on the land, right?

[01:22:05] **Jon McArthur:** Well, there's a lot of opportunity for the young people to be on the land as adults and be on the wage economy, right? If you look at people that are on subsistence versus people who are on the wage economy, they're gonna live a better quality of life.

Right? So for a bit of time and being around maybe some positive people who could have a, a good, pass some share good knowledge, right? I think is really important. and showing that there's more, like there's more to the bush than just a place to go, drink or

And then couple that knowledge with, the elders knowledge. when I say the elders, so like, if they have like, certain plant knowledge, medicines, stories, it is a richer culture to be had. But if you're not able to operate in that environment, because nobody can just walk out just because, you know you're Abe or Cree, you're just not gonna be a better survivalist.

Right. There's, there's a lot of like different skills and exposures and if you're, an urban native, you might not get the exposure to the hunting and being on the land, but there's a lot of like a value, right? So I think there's a, I, don't wanna say we lost our way was taken.

Right? That's, kind of, when I look at this, pragmatically our way was taken and our land was taken.

Right? And every treaty that's been written has been broken.

Right. The first nations of North America, of Turtle Island have been treated worse than any country that we've ever been at war with.

You look at, like post World War, Germany, Japan. All the treaties, all that stuff, they've come out on top better, economically than the First Nations. They, took the land, they took their hair right, their way of life. and I, and I don't mean that, just like uneducated Lee, like, oh, they took our land.

They, no, they did. They, and, they traded it for, Bibbs and Bobbles.

And even today our chief, chief NI's fighting in the courts right now, like, on treaty rights, right. So, I mean, it's a subject to me, it's it's very personal because I think about this, if I was to say, Hey, could you imagine if I, went to your sister's house today and gathered up her kids right now, and then I took 'em to the school because, we don't like the way, you're teaching your kids or the way

you're living, or maybe, you're an immigrant and well, maybe you're gonna speak to your kids at home in, Arabic.

We don't want you to speak to your kids at home in Arabic. We want your kids to be this vision of this, right? So it's there's, a bit of, for me to, like, I think because it does evoke emotion. It does it anger. When I think about how they would've treated, my family members and not just my grandmother, it was all the, all those people on that side, right?

And then, if it wasn't for the living conditions and the way things were, you think about 60 scoop, well, it would've been very easy for my father to have been scooped up in the sixties, and been forced into a residential school. I mean, he would tell you, that his experiences with the Catholic church, that ran schools and, Brandon wasn't much better, right?

But at, least he got to go home was his, he felt fortunate. He got to go home every day.

So. It's, kind of an interesting perspective, to have as somebody who, you know, my, my one side family is settlers, on the East coast and I grew up there. so I have that as an experience. And then I also, lived a good deal of my life in Manitoba on home territory and got to see the absolute kind of like damage and stuff, but getting back to kind, trying to circle back here, but, getting the kids back out on the land.

maybe not in that day. You're giving them every skill, but you're planting a seed. And, I think, over the years I've seen, a lot of these seeds grow into really strong trees. ace a por is the maple, so the sapling.

I think that's kind of the.

The, piece is anybody that's a survival instructor or is giving back. And, I feel like I'm giving back to my community, but I also feel like I'm helping raise them up. and these skills that they will, they gain when they're out on the land learning training like this will be so beneficial to them to be able to make their own connections, take their own kids out, to be able to take their own kids out and teach 'em how to make bannock or teach them how to go catch game or, and be safe doing it.

Right. So there you're, I'm hoping that some, these people will gain a better appreciation and not look at the bush as a scary place to be, but a place that could be comfortable with a little bit of knowledge.

[01:27:52] **Paul Kirtley:** Well, I think that's a good way for anybody to look at it, right?

But yeah, particularly important for, people who have been kinda wrenched away from it, Yeah. that's very interesting. and poignant. John, thank you for

Sharing that with us. And so you continue to work, with the youth. You have Bear Lake Bushcraft.

which is a nice ode to Mors as well, not, not to kind of go back to Mors too much, but Again, there's a connection there, isn't there with, there is with Mors, in the name.

[01:28:30] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah. So Mors would teach his courses on Bear Lake. when he originally started, he had a base camp there, and he just lived like a stones throw from it.

And as you pulled up to his place, you could see Bear Lake from, the top of the hill kind of, and he was just up the hill from it. So it was just a short walk down and then it was just. It kind of came to me one day. It was actually on one of those recordings. It was me telling him that's what I had decided to call my business was Bear Lake Bushcraft.

And I was explaining it to him, to him and Diana, his wife. but it was like, an note demo wars in that, And then the other part is kind of maybe less known, but, you look at me, I'm a big old dude with Baird and a lot of people have made a reference, a big old bear.

[01:29:27] **Paul Kirtley:** Right?

[01:29:28] **Jon McArthur:** my de friends here call me Estro, so it's Big Bear. And Dene. and it's kind of just a funny, like how that bear, name has stuck and then I just, I like bears and it was just like, it, just was a worked good. But yeah, Mors lived there taught, 40 some years of his life.

And it was just a low pro little nod to him and

Kind of. Him making that interest in, in, in, the bushcraft and of stuff. And then me wanting to get out and, hang my own shingle essentially. as Kelly told me, hang your own shingle. Like, So that was what I did, was, put myself out there and slowly been developing it.

And, as a, as I was telling you, who's my biggest competitor right now? The Canadian Armed Forces. 'cause they take all my time. Right. So, soon, I'll be, maybe, done with the military and the next few years, I hope, and I'll be able to do that stuff like maybe full time or maybe we'll come earlier.

Right. I'm pensionable now, so it's, trying to figure that, piece out. but that Bear Lake is kind of the, you Oh my. My company, it, is I got it insured. it's all like properly put together so that, I can go after contracts and grants and do work and that's kind of, I think right now my focus will be taking, it's a capacity thing, right?

So, taking on as much as I can. And I really like this format of teaching, my first Nations, kids and, other kids in this group. I that format 'cause it kind of fits. I don't have to travel too far. I mean Yeah. Go to travel at, to Karamat for a course, right.

For a week long course. It was, six hours to start the trip, right? Yeah. So, it'd be a six hour drive out. So then a six hour drive back. Well, for that's like. Almost two days of work just driving there.

[01:31:40] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. It's

[01:31:41] **Jon McArthur:** a

[01:31:41] **Paul Kirtley:** long way. People don't realise, people outside of Canada don't realise how big Canada is.

And even what looks a short distance on the map is a long distance. I mean, I was talking to my mom just before I came out, can I regular catch up call? But, I wanted to catch up just before I came out to Canada and I'd previously said, I was flying to Toronto, overnighing in Toronto and then flying out to Edmonton.

And my dad being my dad, he likes to get maps out. he's, he has a Reader's Digest atlas on the shelf in the living room. I, grew up with a lot of books. so it's always nice to, there's a lot of books here and, we always talked, you talks about Mors books as well. But yeah, my dad has this Readers Digest, Atlas. he does use Google Maps and things now, but you know, I always remember him getting this Atla, whenever anybody talked about summary, he wasn't quite sure where it was. He got the Atlas House. Oh, there. So anyway, so I'd imagine he did something similar, either online or with his atlas.

So, so when I spoke to my mom just before I came out, she was like, oh, that's quite a long way. Dad was looking us quite a long way from Toronto to Edmonton. I'm like, yeah, it's nearly a four hour flight.

and then you pick me up in Edmonton and then we had several hours drive from Edmonton to get up here.

Yeah. It's like a four hour flight in a 8, 3 20 from Toronto. A

[01:33:04] **Jon McArthur:** thousand kilometres an hour.

[01:33:06] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Yeah.

[01:33:07] **Jon McArthur:** Basically what those do.

[01:33:08] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Yeah. It's a big place. Yeah. Anyway, sorry. I didn't mean to derail the point. No, you're right. It's like Karamatts local, but it's still six hours.

[01:33:16] **Jon McArthur:** Well, that's it. Like, and then you think about that's a lot of time, so I was taking so much of my leave

And I wasn't able to do things like we just did. Because I would spend a week of my hard earned leave to go at a camp, six hours away and work 16 hours a day. I got to meet a lot of cool people and I got to meet, and practise my skills.

but it was just, it was, after Mors passed away, it was kind of, I just, I enjoyed what I've got on the go here. Yeah. And it's a lot less work to get at it. Yeah. So, and, I'm kind of finding, lots of, lots to do here. So it's, it's a little bit more relaxing that you're not using up all your leave.

To go teach, that was 10 days of leave if you're teaching summer and winter. Right. so that's like, most of your leave gone. Two thirds or, two fifths of your leave gone, to go work essentially. 'cause it wasn't a vacation. No. Working at a camp like that, you know that.

So, but good experience. I mean, it's, helped me develop, skills and, processes that I apply to my camp. Seeing that many people in camp, right. Because we've seen anything from, I think we would have anywheres from 11 students to whatever years was there was I think to 30 people in that camp at that time.

Yeah.

[01:34:45] **Paul Kirtley:** It was too many.

[01:34:46] **Jon McArthur:** So

[01:34:46] **Paul Kirtley:** if I'm blunt, but

[01:34:47] **Jon McArthur:** Well, it's just what it was, right? Yeah. But I just, I kind of was like, after 2020, I enjoyed it. Mors was passed. The kind of going that far. I just, I really enjoy being home.

Ah, how do you put that? Right.

[01:35:02] **Paul Kirtley:** I think, and I think COVID did that to quite a few of us That we We, it centred our focus in a lot of different ways. Yeah.

[01:35:09] **Jon McArthur:** There's so much to do, like, at home. So you think about, I can teach the, 14 days in a year, but I don't have anywheres near that amount of travel. And it's just nice to just get the work done here. And everything I do here is all on the land here.

Like, it's all close. So it's, I get to enjoy those same spaces, when I'm recreating as well as, working now, so.

[01:35:34] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Yeah. No, and it's great.

Great part of the world. It's, there's a lot of trees and muskeg and beaver ponds and water and up here. Yeah. You don't need to travel anywhere else to get that.

[01:35:46] **Jon McArthur:** No, And it's, there's lots of crown land. And then I've got lots of good access to different areas, so it's. and then you kind of, you got a glimpse of my friends. I got really good support. Like, I got friends that, loan me snowmobiles. I got friends that come out with snowmobiles to move equipment.

[01:36:07] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah.

[01:36:09] **Jon McArthur:** we had friends that, all Dougie walked out there on his, crutches to deliver some, snacks and, hang out and yeah,

[01:36:16] **Paul Kirtley:** he was coming anyway, but yeah, he brought some snacks and you walk 2K down a snow machine trail on crutches. Yeah. Yeah.

[01:36:23] **Jon McArthur:** So,

[01:36:23] **Paul Kirtley:** yeah,

[01:36:24] **Jon McArthur:** it's kind of, just like I got a, good group here, and I don't have to travel too far, so it's really nice.

Yeah.

[01:36:32] **Paul Kirtley:** That's awesome. Well, I look forward to seeing what you do with it. I think it sounds to me like it's kind of the next step that you're starting to

Develop and you've been developing it for a while. Right. you were showing me a lot of things earlier today since we've been back to you, your place, with the, the logo work and.

the sewing that Laura, your partner's done and the craft work that you've both done and, the different projects that you have under the, Bear Lake, banner, if you like, the Bear Lake umbrella. And you, there's lots of potential and I can see that you're kind of chomping at the bit to, to develop those things a bit more.

So I look forward to

[01:37:15] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah.

[01:37:16] **Paul Kirtley:** To seeing, what you do with it. Making

[01:37:17] **Jon McArthur:** time.

[01:37:18] **Paul Kirtley:** Right. Making time. Yeah. Yeah. and, and you being able to continue to do the good work that you're doing here with, with the young people in particular.

it seems very important. so yeah.

That's awesome. That's awesome. Good. I think I've, I think I've kind of exhausted the things I wanted to ask you about. is there anything that you'd like

to ask of the audience or. the thing that I always ask people at the end is where people can find you as well, and we'll put links To, to that. And, but equally, is there any ask of the audience or anything that you'd like the audience to think about as a closing thought or comment?

[01:38:02] **Jon McArthur:** Well, I, nothing too deep. I just think that something you had said this week was pretty profound and it, I'll probably muse this out a bit, but it was when we were talking about, and you're gonna have to give me, because I just remember reminder, sometimes you just need a reminder.

But that piece of, I've learned a lot of stuff, but I've also forgotten a lot of stuff. And sometimes that reminder and this past week where we've gone out and spent a week, eight days out in the bush. Right. hot tenting, building stuff, doing bush craft being, doing winter skills. Right.

every, like, everything from snowshoeing to everything else, But there was some reminders that weren't, like, weren't the things we built.

It was the little ones, the little pieces around that was Oh, right. This, that, like learning those little reminders.

[01:39:02] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah.

[01:39:03] **Jon McArthur:** But we had kind of got to the end of the week and I was like, I don't want to go now.

[01:39:08] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah.

[01:39:08] **Jon McArthur:** I like, we just spent the hardest point, like the hardest time was like getting those reminders.

[01:39:15] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. Getting established.

[01:39:16] **Jon McArthur:** Getting established. But the reminders would come. Right. And I had this buddy Will, he was my boss at one of the squadrons on the base, and he'd always have this phrase, pain retains, right?

So he was a sniper in the Royal Canyon Regiment and, he did some really hard training and, but it was pain retains. So like, it's like these little nuggets that kind of, oh, right, this the cold, this the wet that the hot this, right. There was a bunch of little reminders of this.

It, wasn't that we were off track, but sometimes just those little details, right, those little winds, those little putting them together is what strings out the bigger win, I think.

[01:40:00] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. And, I think, you have to be out. doing things and you get your own reminders

[01:40:06] **Jon McArthur:** at least 10 times.

[01:40:07] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. More so you have to do things at least 10 times, otherwise you're a liability to yourself.

[01:40:12] **Jon McArthur:** And I don't wanna be a liability myself. So,

[01:40:17] **Paul Kirtley:** but yeah, going out and practising these things and applying these things and being out in different seasons and even within the same season and different conditions.

And we've had a range of conditions this last week.

[01:40:26] **Jon McArthur:** It rained from

[01:40:27] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah.

[01:40:27] **Jon McArthur:** 35 below to rain

[01:40:30] **Paul Kirtley:** plus four and raining. Yeah.

[01:40:31] **Jon McArthur:** Unreal.

[01:40:32] **Paul Kirtley:** Yeah. and all of those conditions bring their own challenges. and yeah, just being out and as you say, being reminded of the detail and nature reminds you of the detail. Conditions remind you of the detail and the repetition is then. Developed and, yeah, just I would encourage people to get out and do things. it's nice to, and I've written a book and I've, there's another book in the pipeline and, we're all surrounded by outdoor books here at John's, and it's the same at my place.

And it was always the same at Mors place. And, I produce online materials and we've been producing some online materials this week, both for online courses as well as YouTube. And that stuff's important and I think it gives people more

knowledge than we were able, we were scrambling around lofty Wiseman survival handbook and you mentioned a few books to me this week as well that were influential on you when you were younger.

but we've got so much information now, or so much ability to access information. But the fundamental thing still is that we should go out and reply these things. And, that's how you really consolidate your knowledge and your skillset.

[01:41:47] **Jon McArthur:** The, It's singing, you're singing of books. So one of the, one of the things I gifted you was, the book, the Moon of Crusted Snow.

And I can't wait for you to read that 'cause I can't, like, it was such a good story. And the last book that I was really, that really adamant that you would read was The Wind and the Caribou. But,

[01:42:10] **Paul Kirtley:** that was great.

[01:42:10] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah. This one is like, on that same level. So if you're looking for a good book, maybe you're like, Hey, I'm looking, I want to pull the survival thread a little bit more, but I want a different perspective.

And you're not the, I've given that book to some different people. And everybody that's read it was just like, wow, that is a different perspective. And, no spoilers here. It, was an Ojibwe, reserve in Northern Ontario, but became to an end of world event. How does that play out? And the, author used to be a reporter journalist for 18 years to the CBC, Waubgeshig Rice. This book is just so good because we, talked, skills and context right, for the GBS, right? And we're this really brings home a lot of the skills that you would need in that, Mors loved these post-apocalyptic.

I wish Mors would've been around to read this book Because it was just such a good book. So, I guess if I was making any ask of people out there, in, in, memory of Mors, find a good book and read it. And if you're looking for one, get that the Moon of Crusted snow. And give that a read. I'll guarantee you'll want to read the sequel.

[01:43:35] **Paul Kirtley:** Okay.

[01:43:35] **Jon McArthur:** So, cool. That's my, my, my Cell, or

[01:43:38] **Paul Kirtley:** I'm looking forward to getting into that on my flights and my, Journey home. Time in airports, time on flights, and I'm reserving that to

To help me soak up that time on the, way back.

So I look forward to that. Yeah. So thank you for that, John.

[01:43:52] **Jon McArthur:** So a small, to close that circle with that, the first person that got me onto that book was Finn. He goes, you gotta read this. And I read it, I couldn't put it down, he said, So then I read it, I couldn't put it down. So, and then it got moved around, so there's been multiple copies now.

So when I go to the bookstore, I just buy a new one now, so, 'cause there's gonna be somebody else I want to give it to, so. Yeah.

[01:44:15] **Paul Kirtley:** Cool. Well, we'll link to that below as well so people can find it easily. And thanks for all of those different aspects of your story and, reminiscing and looking forward today.

John, I really appreciate you.

Being back on the podcast. I really appreciate your hospitality here and, Laura's hospitality, staying with you guys and, look forward to, some future adventures as well.

[01:44:36] **Jon McArthur:** Yeah. Perfect. Thank you.

[01:44:38] **Paul Kirtley:** Thank you,

[01:44:38] **Jon McArthur:** Chi miigwetch.

[01:44:40] **Paul Kirtley:** Well, thanks again to John for joining me on this episode.

I hope you, the listener, enjoyed our conversation and that it gave you a deeper appreciation for the lineage of bushcraft knowledge, the influence of teachers like Mors and Tom Roycraft, and how these skills have continued to develop and be passed on over time, including through cultural perspectives such as those rooted in First Nations traditions.

All the links we mentioned are listed on the page for this episode over@paulkirtley.co.uk slash podcast six two. That's Paul kirtley.co.uk slash podcast six two. And if you'd like to go deeper into bushcraft with me, I've created a structured sequence of articles, podcasts, and videos that takes you step by step through key skills and ideas.

It's the best way to follow my free. Online material in a sensible order and get the most from it. You can join@paulkirtley.co.uk slash emails. That's paul kirtley.co.uk/emails. Thanks for listening, and I look forward to bringing you the next episode before too long. Take care and enjoy the outdoors.

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