

ISSUE 44

THE DEVICE

OCT 2018

DISPRO OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

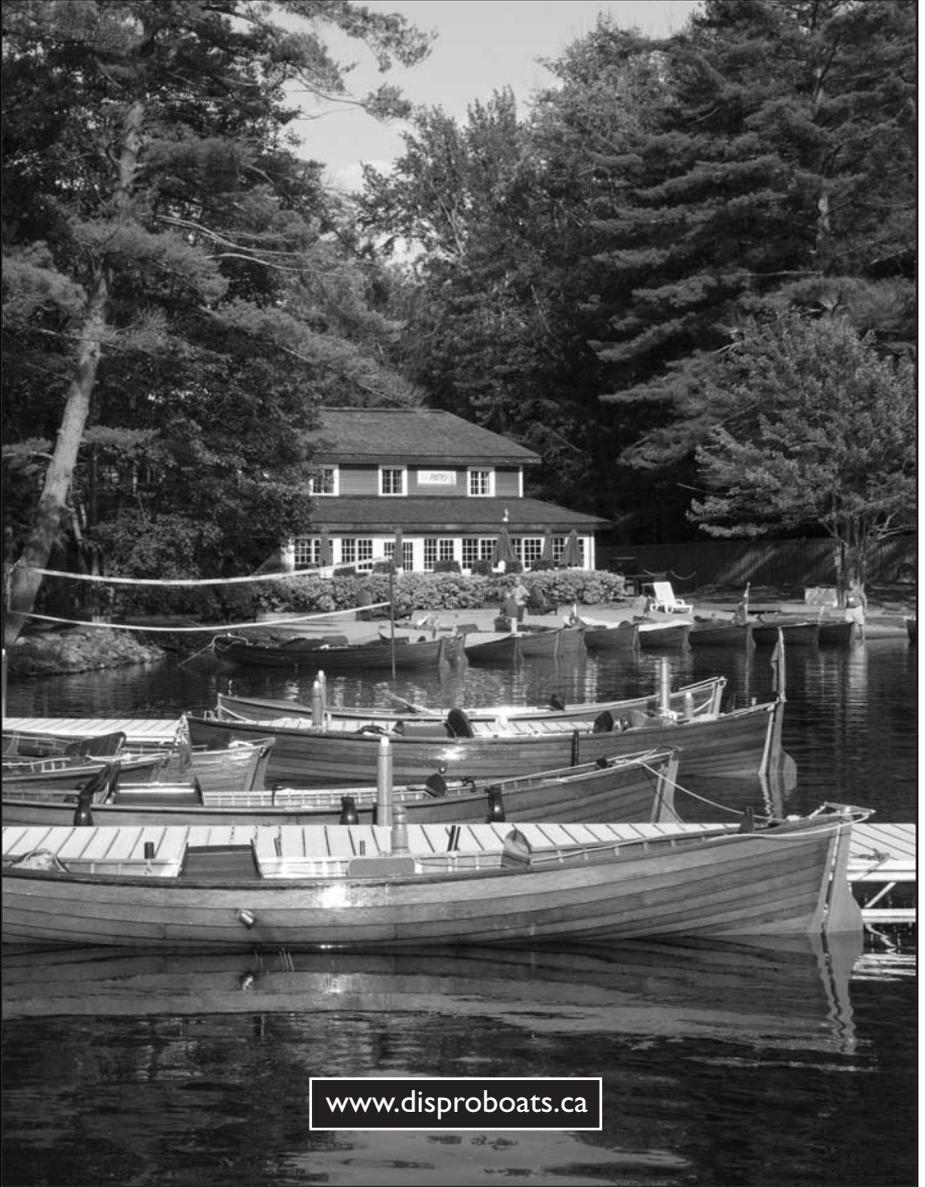


Photo: Dave Moffat

www.disproboats.ca

Dispros line the docks and beach at Patterson Kaye Resort for the 2018 Regatta.



President's Letter • October 2018

As the season draws to a close we may shed a few tears as we put our Dispros to bed after a wonderful season on our rivers and lakes of Ontario. How fortunate we are to live or visit in a province with so many unequalled boating opportunities in our most loved and admired Dispros.

Mike Windsor provided us with three of these exceptional opportunities: the beautiful French River being the first designated Canadian Heritage River; Kawagama Lake being the largest lake in Haliburton county with no towns or settlements on it and thirdly the historic Pointe au Baril being first explored by Samuel de Champlain in 1615 and the wooden Ojibway Club built in 1906 by Hamilton Davis.

Our fourth opportunity on the water as a Dispro group was on fascinating Lake Muskoka. With 93 persons and 34 boats our 40th Regatta was a big hit. The weatherman kept us guessing on Saturday through the fog but Mary and John Storey led us to the sunshine in Gravenhurst. On Sunday we were most fortunate to travel back in time to the historic "Beaumaris coast" and step up to a break at Chris and Louise's 1904 cottage. One never tires of pursuing our ancestors adventures in the past. Scrumptious wine & cheese by Karen Boyer and crew provided ample opportunity for all to chat and catch up. Our Saturday night entertainment, "The Auction", a well established pleasure and delight was led by our competent treasurer Sheila Burk and her band of volunteers.

I am pleased to announce The **Regatta 2019** will be held at **Glen House**, the Thousand Islands on September 6, 7, 8 so we can again enjoy the camaraderie of our many friends and enjoy the many islands and sights of the beautiful St. Lawrence River. Accommodations will be reserved at the resort and registrations for the Regatta will be made through Barb Dickson, our able Membership Chair. She also will have your registration for membership available.

Our selection committee of Kerry Harmon and Karen Boyer, Helen and Stan Byrne, Sheila and Bob Burk and Mary and John Storey are busy at work searching for our regatta locations for 2020-21 and 2022-23. They will report to the executive and choices will be made. It has become increasingly more difficult to find a suitable site which meets our demanding criteria. We have tried to listen to your ideas. You have suggested some lodges through the survey and we will be reviewing those for a fit with our criteria.

Helen Byrne will announce your three 2019 UUMMTs in the March Device and Kerry Harmon will announce further details of the 2019 Regatta as well.

The Survey: This was completed by almost everyone before the Sunday BBQ. Thank you everyone for participating. Your executive will be working over the winter trying to put your suggestions into practice. If there are further areas where you have suggestions or ideas, please contact myself or another member of the executive. We would also love your help, expertise or leadership in any area. This is your association!

The Website: www.disproboats.ca Please use this website for updated information.

Facebook Page: under **Dispro Group** . . . a great place to connect with each other, and share your photos.

The Fall Workshop will be completed by the time you get this Device. We are looking forward to a great day with over 33 participants.

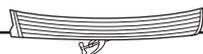
Most importantly, as this is the last Device for 2018, I would like to thank my very able executive for all the tireless hours they have put in to make the year of 2018 in your Dippy more fun. And last but not least to all of the members of the Dispro Owners Association for your support, enthusiasm, and participation in our many activities. Without you, we would not have such a strong, vibrant and friendly club.

Keep calm & Dippy on
Ann Verth

Fifty Years Ago



Same guy, same boat, same pose, same DATE, August 16, 1968/2018. Some things never change. Just add 50 years and anyone can do it. Who is it?



40th Dispro Regatta • Patterson Kaye Resort

The 40th Dispro Regatta was held at Patterson Kaye Resort on the weekend of October 14-16, 2018. Although held a week later than usual, the Regatta was the recipient of absolutely wonderful warm weather. Friday saw the arrival of 91 members along with 31 boats. Many old acquaintances were renewed and for others it was their first time attending a Regatta. Some travelled great distances to join us including Calgary (to get out of the new fallen snow), Texas, Michigan and many points throughout Ontario. After Friday night dinner, John Storey lead the Skippers Meeting and outlined our cruises and points of interest for the next two days.

After Saturday breakfast and the annual group photo, the fleet set off in very heavy fog. It was eerily quiet and magical with very few other boats out on the water. By mid morning more shoreline gradually came into view as the fog slowly lifted, giving way to a very warm and sunny day. Passing along the shore of Browning, Heydon, Crawford and Rankin Islands we worked our way towards the lighthouse at the Narrows and then down to Gravenhurst. It was going through the Narrows that the lead group of boats met the Wenonah II, which proved to be a bit of a surprise to both groups. Overheated engines due to stuck water pump balls was problematic for at least three boats, but all arrived safely at the Gravenhurst Wharf for our lunch stop. Our safety boats were most helpful throughout the day and were required for the occasional tow. Sometimes just a bit of moral support was required and knowing they were close by and available was comforting. Following lunch, the boats headed on a more direct course back to Patterson Kaye. Once docked, and after a brief rest and perhaps a bit of time to freshen up, we were treated to a delicious wine and cheese reception, arranged by Karen Boyer and Kerry Harmon and their team of elves. A large selection of cheeses and other finger foods, wine and beer along with plenty of socializing capped off a lovely afternoon. Following dinner, the auction was held led by our auctioning team of Mike McGarrell and Paul Gockel. Many wonderful items were donated and up for grabs, such as a picnic basket, jewellery, wine, bird house and of course, boat paraphernalia. A total of \$1,800 was raised from the evening.

After Sunday morning breakfast, the boats were off for a two hour morning tour heading west from Patterson Kaye up to Squirrel Island and then back down past Christmas, Old Woman and Wilson Islands returning to the resort by 11:30. The Regatta concluded with a barbeque lunch followed by the varnish awards, thank yous and the handing out of plaques. Thank you to all of the members who attended and to those committee members who worked so hard to make such an event happen.

Ian and Barb Dickson



Photos: Dave Moffat

DOA 2018 Auction Report • Patterson Kaye Resort

It was fast, it was furious and some people were furious because they missed that all important item that got sold way too fast...but it was fun and it kept everyone on their toes.

The Dispro Owners Biennial Auction was another roaring success. The items were piled 2 to 3 deep on the tables. This one particular number I recognized kept coming up!!! Bob what are you buying!!!

I had my nose in the paperwork trying to keep up to the registering of the sales so the reins on my hubby were a little too loose but we did come home with a lovely blue bowl and a bumper and, and, and, and Jake (Peyton) got the Dispro helmet that Jim Domm use to occasionally don. Thanks Jim. It will be part of the attire of J & B crew.

Not many Dispro parts went up for grabs. In the early years those people rebuilding or refinishing their Dispro couldn't wait for the Auction because that is where those most needed parts came up for sale. I think those most needed parts are safely stored in boat houses for the Just in Case situations. The Hound Doggers didn't even have much luck this year.

Once all the dust was settled...we netted approximately \$ 1,885.00 I will put it in safe keeping.

Thank you to my team who helped during the auction and thank you to everyone who so generously donated and purchased others peoples no longer needed treasures.

We always learn to do by doing, so stay tune, our 2020 auction will be even better.

Sincerely
Sheila Burk

Recollections of a Dippy Trip

Way back in 1984, the late Ron Hill wrote this wonderful account of a Georgian Bay Misery Trip. It is reproduced here as suggested by Paul Dodington and as a follow up to The Ron Hill Memorial UUMMT in August. It makes for a good read. Enjoy.

Some owners of antique vehicles, be they cars, planes or boats, enjoy their treasures only on display, featuring “please Do Not Touch” signs. Often they are overrestored, far beyond the manufacturer’s specifications—“Better Than Brand New”. Two thousand copper nailheads had certainly not been polished before being varnished at the factory. You might as well have a glossy photograph of your boat forever frozen in perfection, no sun to dull the varnish, no moisture to rot the stem or garboard, no mis-calculated gas mixture to seize the engine. To get full and satisfying pleasure out of your pride and joy it must be used. Restoration is certainly part of the fun but maintaining your antique in top condition while using it the way the manufacturer intended gives the richest satisfaction.

This is why every summer an intrepid group of happy owners (along with some innocent friends) of the legendary Disappearing Propeller boats embark on a 500-mile trip up the coast of Georgian Bay, Ontario, and back through some of the most spectacular and rugged scenery in Canada. This is the boat designed in Muskoka in 1914, whose propeller lies amidships and, thanks to a protective bar called a skeg in front of the propeller and a universal joint, is pushed up into a housing if an underwater obstruction is hit. To find out whether this contraption is in working order, the tour takes in some very treacherous waters containing veritable minefields of jagged shoals, narrow channels and invisible sandbars.

Last July the “misery tour” started at my cottage at Port Severn, where the Severn River tumbles into Georgian Bay. Five Dispros arrived in the afternoon and fifteen anachronistic sailors prepared a “last supper” in civilized surroundings. Early next morning the emerging pale sun found us all overloading our Dippies with life’s necessities. It is important to make an early start. So mid afternoon, with all engines finally running and gear in place, we set out for Little Current at the top of Manitoulin Island some 250 miles to the northwest.

The first overnight was at O’Donnell Point, a windswept promontory overlooking the bay and with a protected lagoon behind. That night, of course, there was a storm of typical Georgian Bay ferocity. Those who were foolish enough to pitch their tents on the rock’s bald top ended up shivering in my tent which I had “sensibly” pitched lower and closer to the boats. The howling west wind raised the water level to the door of my tent and launched all the boats. For a frantic half hour, knee deep in black swirling water, we bridled the boats, knowing the water would eventually subside. We didn’t want morning to come and find the boats forty feet up on shore. The storm abated about 3 a.m. but Georgian Bay once aroused takes its own sweet time to settle down. Though the morning was reassuringly warm and bright we had mountainous, frightening rollers to contend with, so huge that if you were in a trough you completely lost sight of your companions one trough over. This was the cause of the next disaster.

As we headed towards Franklin Island for the second overnight, the still-rolling waves were now astern. My friend Bill, a city-bred history teacher, and I were engaged in animated conversation when we suddenly realized that our feet were underwater. I grabbed the pail and started bailing, as nonchalantly as I could since I didn’t want to frighten Bill who had been wary about coming in the first place. The bailing didn’t seem to lower the level any; in fact, the water was now over the housing and this extra weight was screwing up the steering. Bill, buckling up his life preserver, was no longer animated and had turned the colour of this morning’s oatmeal porridge and the same texture. Fortunately we rounded the final turn of the day’s run into quiet water and I realized the cause of our trouble. When packing that morning I had put too much luggage in the rear of the boat, making it stern-heavy, and the huge waves plopped several gallons of water over the back deck each time they rolled under. In nautical terms we were being pooped by following waves. Another hour of full sea and we would have been swamped completely.

It was good to get settled on Franklin Island. All fifteen of us had soaked clothes so we hung them out to dry on every available pine bough. Barry, a seasoned camper, said it looked as though the laundromat had exploded. It had all been too much for Bill, though, and when we went into Snug Harbour for provisions and he spotted a bus marked Toronto he promptly got on board, with rubber coat and large orange life preserver still firmly in place.

Pointe au Baril is a mandatory stop on the way up and back. We can depend on an appreciative crowd to greet us at the Ojibway Hotel dock as our ancient and shining boats are a social lubricant. If this scruffy entourage were to approach the hotel from the woods the reception would no doubt be different. It is a welcome brush with civilization. Homemade bran muffins, fresh fruit and superb ice cream are a cut above Dippy Bilge Beans.



Ron and Jeff Hill on a Georgian Bay Misery Trip in 2006.



While winding our way through the many islands back to the bay we managed to manoeuvre our Dispros five abreast and keep them there to the admiring glances of nearby cottagers. This is a risky business. of course, and it is the perfect spot for an impressive disaster. Bruce's "Hawkstone" obliged and suddenly dropped back with the little engine racing madly. His beautiful bronze propeller had spun off to the bottom of the bay. Some scuba divers nearby offered to search. Bruce sat red-faced while the divers retrieved only an aluminum Mercury prop. He had forgotten to dimple the shaft for the grub screw. This boat has complete propeller protection but you can't protect the propeller from its owner.

Not all disasters have to do with boats and engines. John's daughter Kimberley celebrated her birthday while she was on the trip with us. We tried to make the Irish stew taste better that night (hopeless task) and we had brought a chemical-filled cake that would have lasted a decade. The special treat was a large bottle of good red wine carefully nurtured the whole trip. As John was getting out of the boat he slipped on some moss and the bottle was smashed. Bill Davis' L.C.B.O. was seventy miles away, three months by Dispro. It is distressing to see grown men cry but I was one of them.

The most terrifying summer weather a sailor must endure is fog. Most of the pleasure of the trip, other than running the boats, is visual, particularly at the top end when you can see the white-capped mountains of Killarney across the water. But in a fog when you can't see the bow of your boat it is frightening indeed. We had just returned from Key Harbour when the fog began rolling in. Automatically we all fell in behind Paul who is our undisputed leader. It is unlikely the trip would take place if he didn't go. Out come his charts, compass, watch and his unerring sense of direction. Engines were reduced to less than trolling speed (one thing a Dispro does well is go slowly). Each captain anxiously watched the shadowy outline of the sternpost of the boat ahead lurching to port and then to starboard as Paul's lead boat snaked it's way around garboard-grabbing obstructions. After what seemed like an eternity our camping island loomed into view. Everyone cheered! Paul, having expended so much nervous energy on our behalf, slumped into his bedroll as soon as we had pitched our tents.

It is strange that there is the same intensity of excitement on returning home as there is on leaving. As Tom, one of our regulars, said, "It is odd that every one of us has a comfortable cottage with hot water, stove, toilets and soft beds yet every year we voluntarily commit ourselves to the discomforts of the bay." But we all feel that it is worth it. True, the meals (Paul calls them nitrite festivals) are basic camping dull, and the beards get itchy, but we have been together again to share the beauty of Georgian Bay, to enjoy each other's company, and to increase our love and understanding of a durable little craft called a Dispro.

Ron Hill



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