

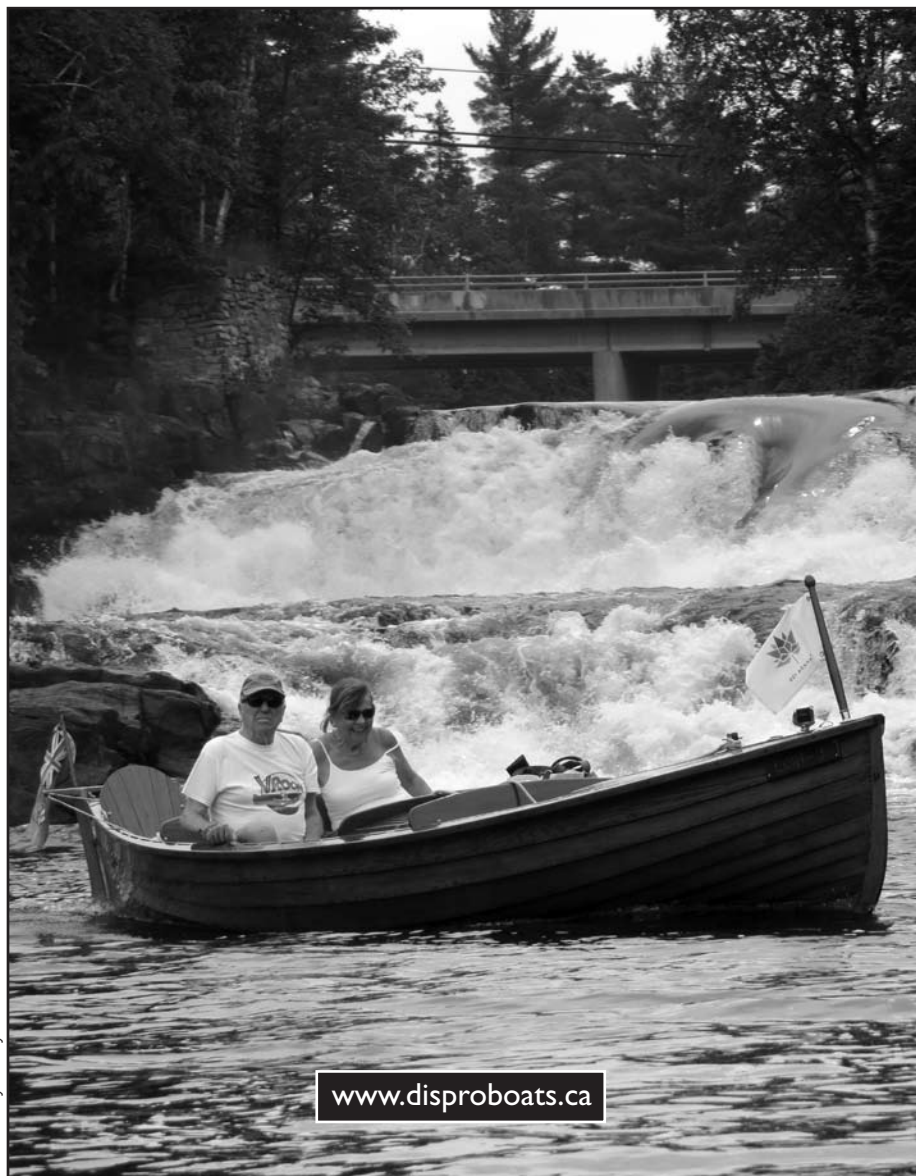
ISSUE 39

THE DEVICE

AUG 2017

DISPRO OWNERS

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



www.disproboats.ca

Photo: Mary Storey

Jack Law and Lorraine Human enjoying the spectacle of Marsh's Falls on the Oxtongue River.



President's Letter • August 2017

Again sadness has settled on our club with the passing of two of our members, Ron Hill and Bryan Hollebone. These unexpected losses to us, to their families and to their friends leaves me, perhaps sentimentally and naively at a loss to absorb how this occurs. Life goes on. In this issue of the Device, number 39, others with insight and sensitivity pay respect and offer tribute. As well, we can be reassured, in their wise observations, how a club like ours can provide meaning and benefit in the interactions among its members. We matter to each other.

Our UUMMTs exemplify the good times. We have had two so far in 2017, the former to Lake of Bays and the latter to Campbellford. By now the infectious enthusiasm of these two trips must be well known since a flurry of communication occurred after each, attesting to the high spirit that was generated and even to the result of propelling that spirit into recommendations such as having a Regatta Old Time Dance. The third trip is set to occur August 19th, leaving from Parry Sound to Killbear Park on Georgian Bay.

Regarding our upcoming Regatta, we now have several dippys, confirmed along with their crews. Glen House, our host, is fully booked; the agenda ready to roll.

Let us go to Gananoque full of expectation and enjoy the conviviality, caring and affection that fills the air every time we meet.

READ ON . . .

Helen Byrne



Photo: Gary Campaigne

Socializing in the locks was all part of the Canada 150 Flotilla.



Marine Forecast

Issued 0:900 AM EDT 17 June 2017

Water Temp (C)	18	Wind (knots)	SW6 Gust 12
Wave Height (m)	0.2 to 0.4	Press (kPa)	100.6 falling
Wave Period (s)	2.0 to 4.0	Air Temp (C)	21

Dwight • Lake of Bays • June 17, 2017

Dispro	Captain & Crew	Dispro	Captain & Crew
<i>Allegro</i>	Mike Windsor, Rhonda Turner & Jim Onions	<i>Maigret</i>	Roger, Betty, Andrew & Myrna Dymnt
<i>Electric Dispro</i>	Mark McLean	<i>Mrs. Miniver II</i>	Mary & John Storey
<i>Irrigator</i>	Tom & Ann Verth, Pauline Byrne & Rich Corden	<i>Muggins</i>	Pamela Gibson & Robert Clipsham
<i>Kahshe Kelly</i>	Bob & Alison Butler	<i>Poonamalie</i>	George & Betty Piper
<i>Little Miss</i>	Dave & Barbra Moffat	<i>Putt Putt</i>	Karen Boyer, Heather Cooper & Kerry Harmon
<i>Lori-J</i>	Jack Law, Lorraine Human	<i>T's Delight</i>	

Twelve Dispros, including one electric, with Captains and Crew gathered at the Dwight Beach boat launch in near perfect weather in anticipation of another action packed UUMMT. At 10:30 the flotilla departed following Muggins in a mostly southwest direction ably pursued by the designated lead boat, in the finest UUMMT tradition!

Note: A possible record is being investigated as only one boat was left behind! This was due to the Captain and Crew going AWOL! There were no failures to start, engine fires, missing flywheels or similar minor technical issues were experienced. If anyone can confirm or deny this performance please advise.

The assumed leader unerringly lead the flotilla across the bay and single file up the serpentine Oxtongue River to the bowl at the base of a beautiful two tier Marsh's Falls which was still in its spring runoff mode. The river was very scenic with it continuously turning back on itself providing an endless opportunity for the photographers to take pictures of boats appearing and disappearing around corner sand bars and clumps of brush. The channel was deep and free of unexpected shallows but numerous dead heads kept Captains and Crews alert. Local fishermen were met and passed going up and down the river with reports of two pike having been caught, but I didn't see them, did you?

As captivating as the falls were, the vortex at the base of the falls was fierce; imagine those scenes from Pirates of the Caribbean, with most boats taking two revolutions to break free. One boat carrying two couples was held in for three rotations or more! At least two boats tested the correct operation of their devices on the bar between the bowl at the foot of the falls and the river. It was a beautiful scene none the less and capped the trip up river to perfection.

Allegro the twin, and 'fastest boat in the fleet', was able to break the vortex in one revolution and assumed the lead role down the river and unerringly across the bay into the Dymnts' cottage for lunch. It was the perfect location in every way. Each boat was greeted by the congenial hosts and their knowledgeable and helpful dock crew. There was dock space for every boat, indoor conveniences, comfortable seating inside or outdoors by the dock, the better to enjoy a lovely day. And to cap it all very tasty UUMMT 36 commemorative handmade cookies by the tray full. The shore lunch was outstanding, another highlight to the day.



Photo: Mary Storey



Photo: Mary Storey

Karen Boyer, Kerry Harmon and Heather Cooper at Marsh's Falls on the Oxtongue River.

A special thank you goes out to the David & Joanne Dymont family one and all with extra recognition to Paisley the dog for making a late but memorable appearance.

Upon leaving the Dymonts we headed further south across the lake with the fast boat assuming the lead role. She quickly established a large gap and seemed to be reveling in the thrill of it all as she arrowed out into the lake, away and alone toward darkening skies... The rest of the boats followed the chart for scenic tours, first around the perimeters of Portage bay, past South Portage and then back north up the shore to Rat Bay. Both bays were sparsely populated with homes and cottages, fewer buildings and more forest than we see on the Muskoka big lakes, all very nice. The cottagers all seemed quite friendly and waved back! Most seemed to enjoy the diversion of our boats passing. I have been told that our dippy approaching up a bay sounds like a helicopter. What must 4, 6 or 8 unseen coming up a narrow river or bay be like? Perhaps that's why the cottagers seemed so pleased to see us.

Historical Highlight: South Portage at the head of Portage Bay was once the Lake of Bays terminus of the self billed shortest commercial railway in the world, one and one eighth miles. It ran to and from Peninsula Lake, from 1905 until 1959. The engine is now on display at the Muskoka Heritage Centre, Huntsville.

At the mouth of Portage Bay an impromptu race began for the much coveted lead boat position. Little Miss, having jettisoned a crew member and tuned by the infamous Dr. Dispro, challenged Poonamalie, drew out a slight lead, then appeared to 'receive a call', broke off to starboard and returned to her dock! What was all that about?

By mid-afternoon, 2:30 PM Est, the pleasant morning light cloud cover had gradually turned dark and a bit threatening, the wind and waves were up a bit blowing us straight back toward Dwight Beach. All the boats and Crew landed safe and dry and were back on their trailers just prior to Environment Canada issuing a 'Tornado Warning' for the area. The clever Crews, heeding the warning, quickly devised a plan to seek shelter and sustenance at a known 'local' in Dwight. The more foolhardy amongst us were last seen driving west into the eye of the storm, stopping only for ice cream at Kawartha Dairies in Huntsville. All part and parcel for a great UUMMT!

A grand day out was had by all. More adventures await in Campbellford at UUMMT 37. We look forward to seeing you there!

Kerry Harmon



Trent Hills Canada 150 Flotilla July 14-16, 2017

What a ride! Was your favourite in the spectacular red and white parade of boats through the Trent Canal in locks #13,14, 15/16/17?, Campbellford?, or Hastings?, or was it one of the many complimentary social events that our hosts the Trent Hills Chamber of Commerce provided for us? Or it might have been the final impromptu evening soiree at the Campbellford Riverview Inn/Motel (tall tales told by all).

Friday July 14

Some of us arrived early afternoon to tour the town of Campbellford and surrounding area. The Ranney Gorge Suspension Bridge was the first breathtaking image of the Trent Hills. The bridge is 300 metres across and about 9 meters above the Ranney Gorge. Other attractions were a giant replica of a toonie designed by a local Campbellford artist for the Canadian Mint. Also, Pisces Pete in Hastings marked the importance of the fishing village at the mouth of Rice Lake. However, Rachel and Barb, "our scrappers" found their heaven at Frog's Whiskers Ink (where our Dippy stamp was created). A bigger hit for others was "the World's Finest Chocolate Factory" – delicious with red wine!

Friday evening our hosts the Trent Hills Chamber of Commerce treated us to a fine country dinner and dance featuring the Donegal Fiddlers Orchestra. It was an evening of wild dancing led by none other than "Jack Fred Astaire Law" and "Pamela Ginger Rogers Gibson" plus the full cast of other Dipsters as seen on Dispro Facebook page. Trent Boating Club were great hosts as well.

Saturday July 15

The following morning the Chamber again presented a wonderful pancake breakfast in Old Mill Park served by the Rotary Club. Then we were ready to launch.....almost....only 2 had a bit of a hitch. So good to have other Dispro friends to ride with!

Off we went under good skies, which got even better, on the 150th Flotilla. This was an event – crowds lined both sides of the canal as the Fire & Rescue led the colourful red & white parade forward, followed at the end by the Little Red Tugboat Boat. Safety was a major concern for the Trent Severn Antique Boating contingent, always making sure all of us were in tune.



Photo: Ann Verth

Gary and Rachel Campaigne proudly flying the flag.



Photo: Gary Campaigne

Bob and Sheila Burk cruising the Trent in their "fully rigged" Dispro.

The locks, the locks, the locks....were they hot? On the Dispro Facebook page you will see all 11 Dispros and their 29 members cram packed into locks #13 and 14. We survived (aided by the Chambers generous boxed lunches). We hit Hastings later in the day for a BBQ and a local band.

Back to the Campbellford River Inn to continue with an impromptu outdoor summer evening party where we sat around and told tall tales (some taller than others), "remember whens", drank fine wine, scotch & buckets of beer, bet on Sheila & Bob's queries and listened to Shakespearean quotes. We could not find Eric – he must have been at the haunted house.

Sunday July 16

We did a lot that weekend but managed to finish off with a breakfast at the Riverview Restaurant and concluded with "til we meet again" in Parry Sound August 19 for just another mysterious Dippy trip. Hope to see all those Muskoka Dippy's in full force!

Ann Verth

Upcoming Events in 2017

Sat. Aug. 19 – UUMMT 38 – Parry Sound

10 am We'll put our boats in at 27 Waubano Beach, Prospect Street, beside the Coast Guard property in the town of Parry Sound. Lots of parking and washrooms are within this park. We'll cruise across the Parry Sound bay to the northwest and pull up on the sand beach of Killbear Park, just past the lighthouse. After our picnic lunch, we'll head along the shore of Parry Island, viewing Depot Harbour, now a ghost town but was once the western terminus of the Canada Atlantic Railway and a busy port on Georgian Bay. If time permits we will tour the inner harbour of Parry Sound, home to the Stockley Centre, Island Queen boat and the busy activity that supports the 30,000 Islands.

Sept. 8-10 – DOA Annual Regatta – Glen House Resort, Thousand Islands

Thousand Islands here we come! Glen House Resort, just before the Ivy Lea Bridge, sits on the St. Lawrence River. Quiet, idyllic, protected yet beckoning afar. This is it! This DOA Regatta will be our 39th.

Finally, please recall that we agreed to welcome a sustaining addition of younger enthusiasts to the DOA. Towards this goal we encourage the inclusion of your children and grandchildren to this year's Regatta.

"Ode to the King"

Many of you know that Ronald William Alexander Hill passed away on Friday, July 21. This was a very sad day for the Dippy world. No one loved Dippies more than Ron Hill, and very few people knew as much about Dippies as Ron. Additionally, very few people have spent as much time in a Dippy as Ron. Although, there was really no way to prove it, Ron always claimed that he was conceived in a Dippy. His father did have the original "Fisher" back in the 1930's.

I first met Ron in the late 1980's (indirectly arranged by long-time DOA member and Past President, Jim Domm), and ever since he has been my go-to guy whenever I had a Dippy related problem, which most of you know has been relatively often. Never once did Ron fail to tell me how to fix the problem. He was also quick to remind me that "Essa" was an OAG - "Only a Greavette". For seven straight years (1997-2003), Ron and I rented a place on Lake Rosseau for the week following the Dippy Regatta. We dipped all over both Lake Rosseau and Lake Joe. As we say in the South, we were both in "Hog Heaven".

After the seven years of renting, Penny and I purchased a small cottage on Lake Muskoka and Ron came at least once every summer for the twelve summers that we owned the cottage. I would always say, "Ron, what boat would you like to go out in?" His answer never varied: "The Dippy". I could have had the finest Minett or Ditchburn in Muskoka (which I did not have) and his answer would not have changed. He simply loved Dippies.

Many of you know that Ron was affectionately known as "Oh Great King". This well-deserved name was first pinned on Ron by fellow DOA member, Dr. Bob ("The Old Tipster") Johnson. Ron would sit in the stern of the Dippy with a very regal posture. He just looked like a king. The name was later shortened by Paul Dodington (long-time DOA member, Past President, "the Dippy Dr.") to simply "OGK".

I could write a book about all the wonderful times I had with Ron: attending Dippy regattas together (he took me to my first, #17), cottaging while staying at the rental on Lake Rosseau, boating on the St. John's River Cruise, having him visit our lake cottage, visiting his former cottage, "Dire Straits", and many, many other great experiences. Ron was first and foremost a gentleman in the truest sense of the word. He had a delightful and creative sense of humor. He was also extremely intelligent. I never mentioned a subject that Ron did not know something about (with the exception of computers). I loved the fact that Ron had the ability to make just about anything. I always thought that if you couldn't buy an object, you did without. Not Ron. He just made it, whatever it was. (For example, he reproduced original-type Dippy lights).

This past July, I flew up and attended the UUMMT at Campbellford, thanks to the wonderful hospitality of Barb (current DOA membership chair) and Ian Dickson (DOA Past President). Monday, after the UUMMT, Ian and I visited Ron at his house in Penetang. Ron's son, David, was visiting him, and the four of us went out to lunch. Upon returning to his house, Ron spent the better part of an hour showing us everything he and his other son, Jeffrey, had done on the 1946 Sea Bird that they were restoring. It was obvious to me that Ron's physical health had declined considerably since I had last seen him on the Holland-America Dippy cruise in February. Even so, I was shocked to learn that this was Ron's last outing.

Ron was very fortunate to have his two wonderful sons. Both Jeff and David were devoted to their dad and Ron doted on both of them. The boys went beyond the call of duty (I call it "payback") to look after Ron. They felt and demonstrated genuine love for him.

Penny and I loved Ron and will miss him immeasurably. He was a dear friend and an amazing person, and we are better people for having known him. His absence leaves a tremendous void for those who knew and loved him. Every time I get in a Dippy, I will think of him. I know Ron is in "Dippy Heaven".

Leslie W. Rue

Ronald William Alexander Hill, remembered

Dippy-on, O Great King

Ron Hill's recent death less than a week ago prompted me to get some of my reminiscences down to share with the dippy club. He was a prominent feature with us for nearly 40 years.

I first met Ron on Georgian Bay's Byng Inlet in 1979. It was my first GB dippy tour. The heat of summer was upon us but Hill showed up at Byng in his red and black plaid wool jacket and his spider pants. I thought it was mighty strange attire, but we spent more time going over the fine points of Emily, his fresh-from-the-orchard Scout dippy. I remember him driving full bore into my dippy somewhere inside Collins Inlet as he admired the scenery but not the boat ahead of him. "O dear" came his ejaculation. That same fall at the Pinelands regatta, he drove into my dippy again under the old Port Sandfield swing bridge. This time he was in Fisher. But he was always mad at the guy he drove into, never himself. I just muttered something about "damned school teachers" and left it alone.

Ron Hill had so many expressions they've become clichés to some of us. Expressions such as "o dear", using his inflection, of course, when Burt Hurst reminded him he had left out the stopwater in Sarah; "Not Güd", as a child while being force-fed strained asparagus, as well as "daboes" for his childhood potatoes; "I'm not camping at midnight", as we couldn't find a suitable Georgian Bay campsite; "earn, earn, earn" as anyone struggled with a project; "Gleek Plick" in a moment of racial illumination, and "turkey frame soup" for his inimitable post-Thanksgiving treat—the swan song for the turkey.

Polite as he always was, he'd tolerate no guff from anyone. He could always put Rue in his place if "Mr. Flexibility" got out of line. But it was Les who dubbed him with the moniker, O Great King. I witnessed this one September as Hill and I rode around in Rue's dippy, Ron in the stern seat, of course, looking most regal, always staying dry, without a care in the world, waving at anyone who passed by. He did the same in the back seat of my Reo as we toured through Algonquin Park in the 1980s. If it broke, he didn't need to fix it. Someone else looked after such things. His demeanour was kingly, but never snooty.

Camping was a delicacy with Ron. I learned from him that camping didn't need to be a garbage run, a sodium nitrite festival, a poop loop scoop. With Ron you could camp well, bringing all the ingredients necessary to have a properly cooked, first-class hot meal. First-break oats (his favourite), potatoes, ("daboes") carrots, apples, fruit comote, shredded coconut would always compose his repasts. On my early Georgian Bay dippy trips I gravitated to Hill during meal time. Of course, sometimes the racoons dined on these delicacies too, so he needed to sleep with one eye open. He'd bring a folding cot for his bed, not just sleep on the rocks. The overloaded dippy didn't matter; Emily or Fisher stowed it all.

Then there was the matter of his home. Never have I seen a place kept so immaculately. I was never fortunate enough to witness his tudor mansion on Castlefield in Toronto, but I heard many stories about its beautiful leaded glass windows and old-growth interior woodwork which he so understood, enjoyed, respected and taught me to appreciate too. Too bad others don't and it's too late now; it's been renovated (ruined) by Toronto's nouveau riche, but his home in Penetang that I did know was like a showroom. Still decorated a la Dick van Dyke, it was always a welcoming place, small, but tasteful and comfortable. Fresh bran muffins and Hill dressed to the nines were the signs to tell you you were a welcome and expected guest. Ron's presence was the most welcoming feature.

I once told Ron that I was sorry not to have had the opportunity to have had him as my industrial arts teacher. I could have learned so much. His knowledge coupled with his patient understanding and appreciation for everything in the shop—tools, machinery, lumber, even the kids—was peerless. He loved his work. The staircase he built for Rue's boathouse was spellbindingly beautiful. I know. I helped him deliver it by boat and then inaugurated it by running up and down to test it.

Serious as he could be, he always understood your humour. Two weeks before his demise we were on the phone when he told me of his doctor's foreboding diagnosis. I suggested to him he find another doctor! He laughed heartily.

I had the privilege to see Ron Hill in a colour family movie taken in 1940. He was attending a family wedding and marched with dignity across the front of the camera, looking ever serious but never looking at the photographer. I recognized this seven-year-old's profile immediately and was able to identify him positively for the film's owner. Aside from the moustache and the size, it was Ron Hill to a T, only in miniature!

Later this fall, the dippy old guard will gather for a farewell dippy cruise somewhere on the Muskoka Lakes. We'll hold up a can of dippy bilge water to someone so close to us and pour a toast to Ronald William Alexander Hill, the one and only O Great King. Dippy-on, O Great One.

Paul Gockel

~~~~~ Dippy Vignettes ~~~~~

"You have reached the fine home of Ronald William Alexander Hill. I will advise him of your call, if he ever wakes up. Please leave a message. Bye!"

Those of us who were privileged to regard ourselves as friends of Ron will be familiar with his unique answering machine greeting. It reveals so much about the character and personality of the speaker; his early education at Appleby College, a private school for boys, where he learned the correct and appropriate use of the English language; his penchant for doing all things with finesse and in good taste; his wry sense of humour, and in particular to make fun of his own failures and shortcomings. As the ruthless, relentless advance of old age gradually curtailed his ability to keep up his high standards and keep up appearances, he never lost his adaptability.

Ron will be remembered as part of a small nucleus of closet Dippy devotees that began to gel into a cohesive group in the 1960s and early 1970s. It started out as lone individuals, like myself, who loved Dispro boats because of idyllic early childhood experiences associated with them, often shared with revered family elders who had long since gone to their Great Reward. Going for a ride in a Dippy allowed us, in a way, to re-experience the excitement and expectation of adventure associated with a time, long past, when life seemed to be a lot more predictable and a lot less complicated. The first two paragraphs of Ron's foreword printed right at the beginning of the book, "The Greatest Little Motor Boat Afloat" are a most articulate revelation of his almost visceral attachment to, and love for these boats. It's well worth re-reading.

Nostalgia is all well and good, but Ron's contribution went far beyond that. He was extremely knowledgeable about various species of wood, and woodworking. He was the first to identify cypress as the original material of choice for planking, keels and seats on the pre-Greavette Dispros. Ron appeared on the scene as the inevitable decay process was taking its toll on many of our hulls, and he showed us how they might be faithfully refurbished. He attempted and completed restorations of boats in the most advanced stages of decrepitude. Sarah, son Jeff Hill's boat, was one of the first.

I'll never forget the circumstances of our first meeting. Ron taught woodworking at Central Technical School in Toronto, while I taught Small Engines at Castle Frank. In the late 1960s a maintenance worker who travelled between schools spotted Ron working in his shop after school on a copper jacket Dispro engine, an old family artifact. "You know," he said to Ron, "there's some a**hole working on one of those over at Castle Frank in the Small Engines shop."

Next day, a miserable, dark, slushy February day unfit for man nor beast, found him pounding on my outside shop door, his dripping nose pressed against the glass, at about 4:30 pm. He appeared at first glance to be an unsavoury character, so I tried to shoo him away. But his persistence paid off, and I relented and let him in.

I was taken aback by the politeness of his introduction, and we soon bonded over my copper jacket engine. Obviously, I had misjudged him at first, but still harboured some suspicion of this dark, heavy-set character with prominent black eyebrows. He wanted to find out where he could find an old Dippy to replace one named Fisher that he remembered fondly from his boyhood. Apparently, Fisher had been stored, minus engine, at a marina at Port Severn, but had mysteriously vanished sometime during World War 2. Muttering under my breath, "Why the deuce didn't you take better care of it instead of entrusting it to a marina?" I told him that I'd keep an eye out for one, but don't call me, I'll call you.

The following week brought a repetition of the same visit, except that this time, he brought an old, black family photograph album containing a series of sepia pictures of a trip up the Severn his parents had taken in Fisher in the summer of 1932.

"I was conceived in Fisher on that trip!" Ron exclaimed.

"What?" I blurted out. "Really? Well, in that case, I know exactly where you can get a hull. If anyone should have a Dippy, that person is you! I dragged one home from Beaverton last fall. It was filled up to the seats with cedar leaves and rotting apples, but the seats and seatbacks are all there, with matching serial numbers, and she has such beautiful lines! But she needs work, mind you! I'll give her to you, free, but there will be two strings attached: firstly, if you haven't done anything with her in 2 years, I'm coming to get her back. Secondly, if you do restore her and ever decide to sell her, I'd like to have right of first refusal."

Ron was as good as his word. He took the 1926 Scout model, and over the next several years performed the most ambitious restoration on her anyone had yet attempted. He christened her Emily, the name he and Jane had chosen for the daughter they never had. She was re-launched with great ceremony on August 11, 1973, just in time to participate in the first ever formal Dispro Regatta held at Woodington House that weekend. Ron won many awards with Emily, and took her and his young sons on many camping trips up the Severn and on the first Georgian Bay Misery Trips. And when it became time to say goodbye to her in favour of the larger and more seaworthy Fisher number 2, he sold her back to me, (minus his engine, of course,) as he had promised. Look in the epilogue that Ron wrote in The Greatest Little Motor Boat Afloat to see photos and learn more about Ron's important and unique contribution to the revival of these wonderful boats.

Ron's legacy lives on. After my re-acquisition of Emily, I restored an authentic 1926 Silent Dis-Pro engine to put in her, and my family had many fun times with her. Miro Forest is her present custodian, and uses her regularly. And Ron's hull restoration is still holding up well, after 44 years of use. Better than brand new!

Ron always ribbed me for letting Emily go when I acquired the mahogany Dis-Pro Special, with the fancy brass trimmings, the electric instrument panel light, and the pretty twin cylinder Arrow copper jacket engine. He had dropped in on a summer's day for a visit, and was warmly greeted by my mother, who served him tea and her own special brand of homemade muffins on the front verandah, overlooking Lake Rosseau. I was returning from Port Carling in Evelyn, the 2-cylinder engine was purring like a kitten, and as I rounded the point into view, Ron exclaimed, "Omigod, he's out there in the Tart!" My 85 year old mother glowered at him, and stated quietly, "I'll have you know, Mr. Hill, that that boat is named Evelyn after me!" This was the only time Ron ever committed a social faux-pas to the best of my knowledge. They joked about the incident for years, but she never let him forget it.

As our friendship deepened over the years, we discovered that we had many similar interests and attitudes: classical music, antique cars, poetry, Gilbert and Sullivan operas, Group of Seven paintings, fine architecture... the list goes on. I remember fondly one sunny afternoon when he had brought his latest restoration, Harry, to have the engine installed, aligned and wired. Suddenly, a violent thunderstorm erupted, and we were forced to tarp the boat and retreat indoors. For some unknown reason he happened to mention one of his early boyhood memories, listening to the radio broadcast of the May 12, 1937 coronation service from Westminster Abbey. "How'd you like to hear it once again?" I asked. "I have the whole thing on original 78 rpm records plus the King's speech... the REAL King's speech! All 28 records!" Several hours later, the storm had long gone, but we were still absorbed in the coronation. Afterwards, Ron made us one of his tasty suppers and stayed overnight. Next day, we finished the boat! And every time I play that 1928 Orthophonic Victrola, I recall that stormy afternoon with Ron.

Ron was a very proud man. Like Queen Victoria, he was not interested in the possibility of defeat. At the conclusion of one of our more challenging 10-day Georgian Bay Misery Trips, his Dippy ran out of gas a couple of hundred yards from the launch ramp at Snug Harbour, so I threw him a line to help him in. "I will NOT be towed!" he shouted over the howling wind. And he rowed the rest of the way.

Ron and I had a very special relationship, more deep, perhaps, than any of the others. The one thing we had in common, was that we had each endured the tragic, untimely loss of the loves of our lives; Jane to cancer in 1984, and Nora to suicide due to a late-onset mental illness in 2009. Unless you have walked in another person's shoes, it is difficult, if not impossible to fully appreciate what that person has gone through. After Nora's death, I was finally able to comprehend what Ron had endured years before, and was able to lean on him for emotional support, advice and understanding, which he freely shared. Since then, there have been many visits back and forth, and many midnight phone calls. Until the day of his death, Ron never got over his loss of Jane though 33 years had passed. He remained faithful to her memory to the end. Ron and I have both been blessed with children who have kept us going. Kudos to Jeffrey and David for keeping the faith.

As a parting gesture to my dear friend, Ronald William Alexander Hill, I'd like to leave you with these lines penned by William Wordsworth around 1803-1806, from his Ode on Intimations of Immortality:

*What though the radiance that was once so bright
Be now forever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind.*

Paul Dodington



Photo: Mary Storey

A classic photo of Ron and Jeff Hill cruising the Pickerel River in June 2014.



Special Offer

to DOA members

One of a kind pottery mugs, handmade by a local international potter. Each mug is numbered and signed by the potter and features a Dispro design and Dispro Owners logo.

Three types of wine glasses featuring an etched design are available. Glass versions with and without stems and an acrylic version without stem.

Mugs ~ \$25. each

Glasses ~ \$10. each or 2 for \$15.

***For sale at all Dispro Events
or can also be ordered from
Barb Dickson at 905-628-8263.***



Testimonial

"The mug is wonderful...love the feel, size and holding the beauty...use it every day."

"The Dispro acrylic stem glasses...we could not be without them for our outdoor party. An absolute must for any Dispro get together! Campbellford proved that! Get yours!"

Ann Verth



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