

ISSUE 64

THE DEVICE

JUNE 2024

DISPRO OWNERS

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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please regularly visit
our website at

www.disproboats.ca



Photo: Paul Jenner

Out going president Ian Gibson hands over the "Corroded Connection" badge of office to incoming president Jim Butler at the April 28 AGM held at Boston Pizza in Gravenhurst.



President's Letter • June 2024

Dear Members,

Welcome to another start to the boating season. I am very pleased to be your new president and look forward to an exciting and active year on the water. For those of you who don't know me, I'm a relatively newer member of the DOA but I'm the second generation of our family in the club. Our family has been cottaging on Kahshe Lake for 75 years and my parents, Bob and Alison, first launched their Dippy on the lake in 2005 and joined the DOA that year. This is our 20th Dippy boating season and I'm looking forward to many, many more summers to come of adventures with this great little boat.

The DOA's Mission Statement is:

The Dispro Owners Association fosters fellowship amongst all Disappearing Propeller Boat owners and enthusiasts with a desire to preserve and use the boats.

I can't deny the attraction to owning these quirky little boats, but I believe it's the fellowship aspect of the mission statement that is the true underlying strength of the DOA. At any DOA event I enjoy listening to all the stories and adventures that have been had and invariably these stories focus on the people and shared adventures together rather than the boats themselves. The boats are really just the vehicle for us to develop lifelong friendships and memories. I've seen firsthand through my parents the countless happy memories they have thanks to the club.

To that end, the executive is working hard to organize a full calendar of events for 2024, continuing to create opportunities for new memories and stories to be recounted in years to come. The AGM was held on April 28, 2024. Boston Pizza at Gravenhurst Wharf was the location and it was well attended with over 50 members. Ian Gibson welcomed all and did a wonderful job chairing the meeting. I'd like to thank Ian for the great job he did as president leading the club last year and will look to him for mentorship as I take the reins for this year.

The new executive was voted in and we are excited to lead the DOA this year. We have a number of interesting UUMMT's scheduled for this summer with the first being held on Jun 22 in Milford Bay on Lake Muskoka. In July we are at Raven Lake in the Dorset area and Eric and Cynthia Luks are graciously hosting the August UUMMT in honour of their home (the home of Billy Johnston) turning 100 years old.

With the cancellation of the ACBS boat show in Gravenhurst in July due to the construction by the wharf, we will not have the annual DOA display at the show but we are looking into possible replacements and/or alternatives. Details to follow as they become available and will be posted on our website.

Our annual regatta is being held at Fern Resort on Lake Couchiching from September 6th to 8th. The regatta is always a great time and the pinnacle of the year for the DOA. This year is an auction year which always adds to the fun. It's a great opportunity to get your Christmas shopping done early and my family is always thrilled with the treasures that find their way home after the auction.

I look forward to seeing everyone out on the water this summer. After struggling to get our boat running properly last summer, we resolved all the issues at the regatta and am hoping for a trouble-free boating season. Wishing fair winds and following seas to everyone.

See you on the water.

Jim Butler





2024 Annual General Meeting

April 28 at 1:00pm, Boston Pizza, Gravenhurst

Ian Gibson: Chair

Ian Dickson: Past President

Robert Clipsham: Past President

Jim Butler: Vice-President and

Recording Secretary

Bill Otton: Director

Sheila Burk: Treasurer (regrets)

Barb Dickson: Membership Secretary

Gary Campaigne: Website Coordinator

Paul Jenner: Device & Trader Editor

Item 1: Call to Order and Welcome

Item 2: Approval of Agenda

Motion 24-15: That the 2024 AGM Agenda as presented be approved

Moved: Karen Boyer Seconded: Sandra Turnbull Motion: carried

Item 3: Approval of the DOA April 23, 2023 AGM Minutes

Motion 24-16: That the minutes from the April 23rd, 2023 AGM be approved

Moved: Sandra Turnbull Seconded: Helen Byrne Motion: carried

Item 4: Financial Report

Financial Report presented by Sheila Burk, Treasurer

Motion 24-17: That the Financial Report as presented be approved:

Moved: Sheila Burk Seconded: Tim DuVernet Motion: carried

Item 5: Membership Report

Membership report presented by Barb Dickson

- Introduction of new members
- Expecting 2024 membership to be down to approximately 175
- 8 new members have joined since 2023 AGM

Item 6: Device and Trader Report

Report presented by Paul Jenner

- Up to issue #64
- Paul gave thanks to the many contributors who are key in making the Device and Trader a success

Item 7: Website Report

Report presented by Gary Campaigne

- Website has been successful in bringing new members into the club this past year
- Website continues to be a great reference for the most up to date info on Events

Item 8: 2024 Regatta Report

Report presented by Jim Butler

Item 9: 2024 Events – UUMMTS

- June 22nd – Milford Bay, Lake Muskoka. Hosted by Brad and Karen Jackson
- July 23rd – Raven Lake, Dorset. Organized by Karen Boyer and Kerry Harmon
- August 15th – Port Carling, open house tour of Billy Johnston's original house and lunch (hosted by Eric and Cynthia Luks)

Item 10: Future Regattas

Regatta Research Committee presented by Karen Boyer and Mary Storey

- Discussed planning criteria and shrinking number of locations that meet all the requirements
- Mary provided overview of a 'modified UUMMT' as an alternative to the traditional regatta – Pick an area, use local hotels/motels, and launch boats each day similar to a UUMMT. Pick a local restaurant for a group dinner on Friday and Saturday night.



Item 11: **Changes to DOA's Constitution**

Presented by Robert Clipsham

Robert presented the position that a small change to the DOA's constitution be made by the addition of the wording to Article 6 as indicated below:

- Maintain an archive of all DOA artifacts, documents, records and memorabilia

Motion 24-18: That the changes to the Constitution as presented by Robert be accepted

Moved: Bob Burk Seconded: Louise Cragg Motion: carried

Item 12: **Nomination of 2024/25 Executive**

Slate of Officers

- President: Jim Butler
- Vice President: Bill Otton
- Director: no nominations – position remains vacant
- Past President: Ian Gibson
- Treasurer: Sheila Burk
- Membership Secretary: Barb Dickson
- Newsletter Editor: Paul Jenner
- Website Coordinator: Gary Campaigne
- Recording Secretary: Jim Butler

Motion 24-19: That the 2024/25 Executive be accepted as presented.

Moved: John Storey Seconded: Tim DuVernet Motion carried

Item 13: **Presentation to incoming President**

- Ian Gibson made a presentation to Jim Butler of the “Corroded Connection” and the President's gavel

Item 14: **Presentation to outgoing President**

- Jim Butler made a presentation to Ian Gibson to recognize his contribution to the club as president

Item 15: **Adjournment**

Motion 24-20: That the 2024 DOA AGM be adjourned. Moved: Motion carried



BREAKING NEWS

As indicated in the above minutes from the AGM, a vacancy existed in the executive.

We are very pleased to announce that Bob Burk has graciously stepped forward to fill the position of Member Without Portfolio and agreed to elevate through the positions up to President. Welcome aboard Bob and we offer our sincere thanks.

The DOA Executive



Upcoming Events in 2024

We remind members that UUMMTs (Unofficial Unorganized Mini Misery Tours) are unorganized and unauthorized and as such the DOA leadership is not in any way responsible for any misadventure that might accidentally occur during any such event. These "mini tours" are fun and we look forward to them each year, but please exercise caution and be safe.

For first timers, come prepared for all possible weather and lake conditions. Bring your own lunch, water and supplies to be self sufficient. Your fellow Dispro boaters will be happy to guide and assist you.

Tues. July 23 – UUMMT 53 – Raven Lake

Location: 21624 Highway 35, South of Dorset. Public launch ramp, small dock, vehicle and trailer parking. Seasonal washroom. Lake charts provided. Plan is to circumnavigate the lake. Some cottages but also scenic, undeveloped shoreline and wildlife.

Please arrive and launch your boat to begin our cruise by 10:00 a.m. We will be following the shoreline to the head of the lake with a lunch stop at Dorset Lions Camp. Boats can be pulled up on the beach or limited docking. Grass area for picnic but no tables or chairs. Washrooms in nearby community centre. As Tuesday is a non dialysis day, patients and their families will be invited to visit to learn about our boats. The afternoon cruise will be along the opposite shore back to launch.

For information: Karen Boyer and Kerry Harmon – 705 645 9513 / home land line.

Morning of July 23 – 705 205 6166 /705 205 9513 / cell.

Sat. August 17 – UUMMT 54 – Port Carling

Please come and help us celebrate the 100th anniversary of the house that Billy Johnston built for his wife Mae at 95 Joseph St. in Port Carling. You are most welcome with or without a boat. Optional period dress or hat a la 1924. Launch at Hanna Park around 10 am and boat over to the house docks. Four marked docks available at house and neighbours for 16-18 boats. Lunch/soft drinks will be provided at 12 noon at the house by the Luks family. Afternoon cruise south on the river and around Horseshoe Island. **Please RSVP as soon as possible by email: theluks@rogers.com or 705 765 6256.** After the event, dinner may be arranged if desired at the Port Carling Legion or elsewhere.

Cynthia and Eric Luks

September 6-8 – Annual Regatta – Fern Resort, Lake Couchiching

If you plan to attend but have not yet registered, please book your reservation at your earliest convenience. **Please note that the Resort is no longer holding rooms for our group.** Rooms will now only be available on a first come first served basis.

Please don't forget it's **Auction Year**. So start collecting those treasures. It's always a fun event and not to be missed,

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DON'T FORGET
IT'S AUCTION TIME AGAIN
AT THE ANNUAL REGATTA

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Idle Hour Has Made It To 100 Years

By Paul Gockel

Chapter 1

In 100 years, I'm still only the second owner of this boat. It's difficult to believe that I have owned my dippy 56 of those 100 years, a longer period than her original owners. Has anyone owned their boat this long?

Mr. A. S. Zavitz of Waterloo and Torrance was the first owner of my boat. Unfortunately, Mr. Zavitz died less than 12 months from my purchasing the boat in 1968, so I never had the opportunity to interview him. I'm not so sure that at 14, I would have been able to muster the correct and worthy questions or courage to compile an accurate story, but we were able to interview his daughter, Thelma Stroh. The stories that follow were related to my parents and me from her in 1968.

Built in 1924, this Dippy, number 3368, was left in DP factory storage until 1926. She may have been a victim of the company's reorganization or "irregularities" as Leila Cope refers to it in her History of The Village of Port Carling. Whatever the reasons, Mr. Zavitz, a high school math teacher purchased this deLuxe dippy for his cottage in Torrance during the early summer of 1926. He even purchased the four custom-made life-saving cushions. Commensurate with digging your own grave, she was conscripted to tow timbers to their property that same summer to build her own boathouse. The boat has lasted longer than the boathouse.

A.S. courted two wives in this boat (but not at the same time.) Slow speeds for extended periods proved to be successful in taking a wife for himself. This was obvious as the carbon build-up in the muffler was extensive. It didn't seem to hinder the engine's operation or his. Soon after the courtship of the first wife, along came daughter Thelma about 1927. He worked fast quickly—cottage, boat, wife, daughter, in that order.

After getting used to the Dippy's foibles, it seemed Zavitz's enjoyment of the dippy was paramount for his long school-teacher summer vacations. He even bought a book on gas engine ignition which I now own. Mr. Zavitz eventually taught his daughter Thelma how to start and operate it. Once started she was not permitted to run the engine any faster than ½-speed as indicated by a scratch mark her father had placed on the dashboard's timer quadrant. Around and around Torrance Bay she'd cruise, holding on to both sides of the steering line, until she'd get tired of running in circles and eventually head for the boathouse, kick off the switch and glide into the slip.



Mr. Arthur S. Zavitz



3368 about 1930

Sometime around 1929-30 the Dippy met with disaster. Zavitz plowed into a rock and severely damaged the stem and a number of planks. The rock never made it to the skeg. The boat went off to Murray Neal's (1915-1980), a Torrance man not without some boat repair skills. His cedar planks and new red oak stem gave Zavitz more years' use out of the dippy.

But the family's annual event with the Dippy was monumental. Each summer they would cruise from Torrance on Lake Muskoka all the way up to Natural Park on Little Lake Joe. This is no small feat. Loaded to

the gunwales with picnic baskets and gasoline, the family would board the Dippy (Zavitz never named the boat), lock through at Port Carling and spend a good portion of a lovely summer's day plying Muskoka's clear waters to the park. With lunch consumed, a souvenir view of Mirror Lake, legs stretched, and hoping not to be crushed at the dock by RMS Sagamo, they'd head back to Torrance usually as the sun was setting..

Some years later, Thelma gained a young brother, Gray, and he too would become part of the Dippy's family and learn of its idiosyncrasies.

Unfortunately, Zavitz's first wife died so the Dippy was immediately called into service to court the second wife. It must have worked because more carbon build-up in the muffler secured the young lass' hand!

After some years the Dippy started to leak. There's nothing unusual about that. We're not sure when this problem became a nuisance but they cured it by purchasing a lovely brass double-acting Wilcox-Crittenden bilge pump. Of course, in the boathouse, Dippys are bow-heavy, allowing all the gathered bilge water to collect under the bow deck. This concentration makes things easy but manning the pump handle motion is difficult under the deck, hindering long and efficient pump strokes. Zavitz overcame this problem by drilling a hole in the king plank for long and easy pump strokes. Too late. The hole in the varnished deck would not have been my first choice but I guess it served his needs. Furthermore, it looks like this hole was made with a keyhole saw, not a nice round bit. Oh well, I now consider it an identifying feature on my boat, unsightly though it is. I purposely have made no attempt to plug it, claiming it to be just part of the boat's history. I use it to hold the jack staff, slightly increasing the boat's otherwise invisible presence on the lake, so it wasn't a total loss.

In 1951, and at a cost of \$13.15, the boat received a complete new propeller shaft with universal joint. At about the same time, the family was afraid old A.S. would have a heart attack trying to pull the starter cord so off it went again to Murray Neal's for the installation of a brand new, electric-start Coventry Victor engine and universal joint. Only two items were lost during this conversion—the dashboard spark quadrant with the scratch mark on it and the 10 x14 propeller. This act, accomplished with much tact and skill, even if I didn't approve of it, also probably saved the boat from the burn pile. But the conversion tells us that Zavitz considered the boat worthy of the expense, so more years' use with the Coventry engine were now theirs. About the same time some thick white gloppy crud was smeared all over the stem and stern posts where they found the boat to have excessive leaks. These acts gave them a few more years on borrowed time. I know they received 17 more years' use from it.



3368's original boathouse



But by 1968, they had given up. The kids were older and had kids of their own. This wooden boat was 44 years old, leaked and was difficult to water ski behind. The original curved floorboards had been replaced with flat plywood to keep passenger's feet drier, the gas tank had started to leak profusely as witnessed by the very dark oil stains still on the boat today, a tiny white light from a hot rod had been secured to the skyboard to serve as a stern light and the device mechanism was seized in the down position. To their credit, the Zavitzes did everything they could to keep this boat going, a testimony to their affection for it. But a shiny 16' Greavette outboard with a 40 HP Johnson motor had caught their eye and there was no going back.

Chapter 2

Dogs are lovely creatures but it's sad when they get ill. We were bringing our dog safely back from the vet's when, as a passenger in the back seat of our 1939 Buick I spotted the aft quarter of a Dippy lying at Duke Boats. I yelled out something like "STOP! There's a Dippy!", bolted from the rear suicide door and ran down to the dock. Sho' nuff, it was a deluxe dippy with the Dis-Pro Light still affixed to the bow deck, and the boat was for sale. Everything was there including the factory oars, original varnish, flawless planking, all the original seats and pristine deck with a hole in it. Obviously the previous owners had taken care of her. I showed it to the family. My mother, in order to avoid an immediate decision, said, "Wait till the weekend when your father gets up. We'll see what he thinks." So we took the dog home and thought about the boat.



Bringing her home! My sisters and me cruising up the Indian River on the beautiful cushions. August 16, 1968

Admittedly my father knew nothing about wooden boats, Coventry engines, Dippies or bilge pumps, but he did know Paul Dodington, through antique car clubs, who happened to be standing there looking, too. "Yep, that's a boat". After a huge pump-out, a test drive around the bay and some wrangling with Aud and Claude Duke, rescued only by the intervention of their sister Alva Wilson, the boat was mine. That was August 16, 1968. We dipped home as my parents followed in their modern boat. Just before we left, Barry Duke yelled, "Hey, you want the cushions for that thing?" I still have those original black kapok-exploding life-surrendering sinkers; possibly the only known complete original set to exist.

We secured the name of the original owners and drove the '39 Buick to Torrance to meet them in order to secure more info and stories. We had a lovely time, and a nice interview with Thelma on their front porch, expecting to gain nothing more than the boat's history. That's when I found all the facts related in the previous chapter. I meandered down to the dock, passing their firewood pile with the original dippy floorboards sticking out all through it, and looked into the sanctity of the boathouse just to see where the boat had lain for so many years. WOW! There, sitting on the dock, neatly, in boxes, was the boat's original Dis-Pro engine and all its related parts! Providence unbounded!

I had visited Ron Whitehouse's and Hugh MacLennan's collection of Dippy parts. All the engines had bashed water jackets. I got to thinking this was normal. This engine's jacket



on the dock was the first one I had seen in pristine original condition! No dents! The Zavitzes did want money for the engine and parts, but the funds I received from the sale of the Coventry more than made up for the cost of the Dis-Pro engine. So far, I'm winning. Along with the engine and related parts came the original owners' manual—the first one to surface in years! I was one deliriously happy and a knowingly fortunate Dippy owner.

Two weeks' use was all I got that summer. My father and I hauled out the Coventry Victor engine and sold it to Murdon Marine. Then I took the boat home for the winter. The owner's manual was copied and then went in my parents' safe deposit box. School grades fell as I slept, ate, dreamt of dippy all winter. I even made and kept a journal of everything I did to the boat.

I got the device to move. That was a major accomplishment. My father and I made a new engine bed out of white oak, suitable for a Dis-Pro engine and installed it. I stripped and scraped and sanded till I was blue in the face. The only thing I could do to stop the leaks was fiberglass the bottom. I possessed zero woodworking skills, much less sophisticated boatbuilding skills, so I had to. I spent many hours under my father's direction filing the connecting rod cap to get a better fit on the crank pin. I might have made an improvement. \$10.12 bought me a brand new Gray and Prior universal joint. I found a buzz coil that buzzed. Whether it sparked or not, I don't remember. I assembled everything according to what I thought was correct.

Many an afternoon was spent starting the dippy engine in the basement. I had made a stand for it, but my parents had some difficulty with me pouring gasoline into a leaky carburetor that was next to the gas-fired hot water heater. They just didn't understand. Add to this the stench of dippy exhaust permeating their lovely home. Future engines ran outside.

Springtime finally arrived and back we went to Muskoka with the completed Dippy behind. We launched it at Water's Marina. It nearly sank. We hauled it out to find water gushing from the device/hull seam. Harry Waters gave us some dope so we re-caulked the seam and re-launched. Much better.

I finally got the engine to go but I think that coil was not much good. More work followed. My mother spent the summer making floorboards. Armed with a sabre saw and a nutmeg grater, she made superior floorboards! I copied her patterns and they're in the boat today.

So started a 55-year love affair with my Dippy. I named it *Idle Hour* after a steam tug, which operated out of Toronto Harbour and with which my great grandfather had some association. I was out in that dippy, rain or shine all summer, every summer. My parents would show concern but they knew I'd always come back home. I did, or I'd learn. I scoured Lakes Joe and Rosseau, but Muskoka was a little too far, too big and too scary for me.

But it wasn't all roses. There were many frustrating hours too. Like the time when the battery was dead in August, or the coil was no good because it got wet or just stuck, or you finally found that dead ants in the carburetor elbow was keeping the engine from running, or a chunk of carbon deposited itself right across the spark plug's gap and the engine quit dead. Compounding the problem, these annoyances only happened with a boat load of people.

Then came the Georgian Bay cruises. I participated in those from 1979-1983. People still gape in awe when I mention the distances we covered, and on the body of water we covered them, and the boat in which we covered them. The boat and engine gave me no trouble. I've often wondered how that bottom survived the pounding waves with nothing but mush for ribs.

It's been a long time of maintenance, repairs, restorations, fondling, caressing, cursing and just looking at it. Everyone on Lake Joe knew me by the dippy I drove. Many a job came my way because of it. It is built with the most definitive array of book-matched planking anyone could want. It's absolutely flawless and bears mute testimony to the



size of the trees back then from which lumbermen could secure dimensionally stable flat-sawn lumber.

By 1999, *Idle Hour* had seen 31 years of abuse under my administration. I had the time, so a complete restoration was necessary. Off came the fiberglass, the mushrooms growing under the fiberglass, the engine, device—everything came out. Two friends helped me strip the hull of varnish and fiberglass and it spent the winter in my shop.

Now came the challenge, but nothing extraordinary. Three new rounds of cypress planking, keel, and white oak stem, stern posts and 46 new flat-sawn green, white oak ribs all went into the boat. I saved as much original wood as humanly possible. I reused both splashboards as they came off intact, saved them and reinstalled them. I wasn't trying to show off my woodworking skills replacing the boat, I was trying to save an old boat, replacing as little wood as possible. Paul Dodington and the late Roy Davies did

some very nice mechanical work and by the following October it was ready for launching. This time, no leaks and it took off like a rocket ship. What a joy!

The regatta at Patterson Kaye in 2003 was eventful. I phoned Thelma Stroh, now approaching her eighties, and invited her

Back in the saddle again. Thelma Stroh at the helm of her Dad's dippy while Paul Gockel looks on.



and her husband to come take a ride. She asked if I was "coming in Dad's boat?" I assured her, well, yes, I was. It was amazing to see how after 40-some years being away from the boat she still knew exactly how to take proper control of it. She looked for the scratch mark on the quadrant—her speed-limiting mark which she remembered, but couldn't find. I assured her that the component had been lost many years before my ownership and

Paul and Thelma in her "Dad's" boat at Patterson-Kaye Lodge, September 2003



All photos: Paul Gockel Collection



needed to be replaced. But she was in complete command of the boat, grabbing both sides of the steering lanyard as before, wide-eyed and attentive as ever! But that little trip around "The Gut" was all she wanted. They drove back home, probably dreaming of her youth. Thelma Stroh died in 2009, but the Dippy circle was complete. I was so lucky to have had her there for that event. I never mentioned the hole in the deck.

Idle Hour still plies the waters of Lake Joseph every summer with a contented owner and maybe a passenger or two. Admittedly, after 24 years it is starting to leak somewhere. I could probably stop it and might just do so, but finding it is no fun. It is so minimal that the punishment probably isn't worth the crime. I can get six months' use out of it before I need to think of bailing.

Like most Dippies now, she runs flawlessly on 12 volts. I've made the E-1 timer disc runs absolutely true which saves replacing brushes and eliminates misfires, I made and installed new engine gaskets so the engine and bilge stay clean. One can always find something to do to improve his Dippy. Yet it's still a genuine 100 year-old boat—just the way she came from the factory!

The future? I'm keeping it. The original Sitka spruce in the laminated port gunwale has a rotted area so it'll need to come into the shop and have some new pieces installed. Of course, the old-growth cedar is still perfect and there it will remain. I'll do my best to keep it going.

We're all fortunate to have this sort of narrative-- the story of our boats. It gives the boat more meaning, more life, rather than an object standing still in a questionable period of time. It has a beginning, a present, a presence and hopefully a future and a story to tell. It's now well told.

Who knows what will befall our beloved Dippies after we're all gone. The satisfaction of having done it yourself is enormous. But I'll keep her going as long as I can. It'd be nice to know I could have her another 56 years.

Paul Gockel



Ron Hill was a father, a husband and a tech teacher. He was also a lover of boats, a leader, a camper and a friend to many.

The late Ron loved his Dippy and other assorted boats. For many years he was part of the annual Georgian Bay Misery Tour group who travelled by Dippy and camped at various places along the shores of Georgian Bay for several years, often travelling 500 miles.

Ron was part of the original group who started the Regattas and the Dispro Owners' Association. He was president of the club in 1982-83. The prologue in the front of the book, *The Greatest Little Motorboat Afloat*, was written by Ron while his wife did the editing for the book.

This is an interesting story told by Paul Dodington and son Jeff Hill: Ron found out from one of the roving maintenance workers at the Toronto Board of Education that there was a teacher at Castle Frank High School who was also working on one of those copper jacket engines, and so Ron showed up at Paul's Small Engines shop door after





Ron at the 2008 regatta.

foot Uncle Sam, more suited to Georgian Bay waters, which he christened *Fisher*, he sold his beautifully restored prize-winning *Emily* back to me. She's now owned and cared for by Miro Forest of the DOA.

Ron was often a 'go to guy' for other Dispro owners not as mechanically skilled as he was. Moreover, he was a good friend and mentor to many of us.

We salute Ron's many accomplishments in our Dippy club.

school on a bleak February afternoon in the late 1960s. When he answered the pounding on the door, he said in jest, "If you're not vinting to buy, vill you get yer bubbling nose offa da vindow?" This was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. What Ron wanted to know was where he could obtain a dippy hull to replace one that his father had owned back in the 1920s, named *Fisher*, which had somehow vanished while in storage at a Port Severn marina during the war years. Paul simply dismissed him, saying that lots of people are trying to find an old Port Carling dippy to restore, but they are as scarce as hens' teeth.

The following week, the persistent "bubbling nose" appeared at his shop door again, but this time he brought an old photo album showing family pictures of Ron and his parents on adventures with the original *Fisher*. While showing Paul the album, Ron mentioned in passing that he had been conceived in the boat on a trip his parents had taken up the Severn River above the Big Chute marine railway early in 1932. "What?", Paul said. "Is that true? In that case, if anyone in the world deserves to have a Dippy, that person is you!!! Of course, I know where there is one, and it is at my cottage in Muskoka. It's only a 16-foot Water-Ford, but it is yours, free of charge, on a couple of conditions."

"Here are the conditions: First, If you haven't made a decent start at the restoration after one year, you have to give it back. Second, if you do restore it and want to sell it in the future, I want right of first refusal".

Ron was as good as his word. Many years later, after he had found and restored a beautiful 18-

Mary Storey



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The Device is published 4 times a year in March, June, August and November. Deadlines for the submission of articles and photos is 2 weeks prior to the first day of the publication months.

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