

ISSUE 32

THE DEVICE

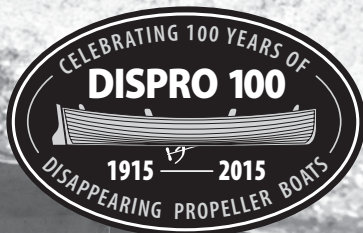
OCT 2015

DISPRO OWNERS

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

www.disproboats.ca

CRUMPET



Another Dippy admirer.



President's Letter • October 2015

Wow, what a year for Dispro Owners Association!!! Three large events and a UUMMT. Participation of members was outstanding, boating was spectacular and the weather was fabulous. I've run out of superlatives.

2015 will go into the memory book of many DOA members when they think of the numbers of boats, the opportunity to do lots of boating and the friendships renewed or developed.

I do not know how to thank the executive and those who assisted us in making all of these events happen. What a team! As I type this message we have just completed the Annual Regatta which was a huge success with numbers of people and boats that we haven't seen in years. Seeing approximately 40 Dispros at the docks at Cleveland's House and mid-day in the village of Rosseau was a photographer's dream. When we followed many of these boats up Lake Rosseau on Saturday morning, it appeared to be a sea of little ants following the sun to the far shore, what a sight!

Now, we get to personally finish the year with a few final cruises to see the autumn leaves and then do my dreaded task of 'putting the boats up'. I dread this for two reasons: it means that another year of good boating on the lakes ends for several months and the task of putting our boat away on its trailer on the front deck of our boathouse is not a pleasant full-day task each and every year. However, it will be well protected from the many metres of Muskoka snow.

Your executive will meet over the winter to plan the usual Annual General Meeting, three UUMMTs, Regatta, auction, and fall workshop for 2016. Please mark your calendars for August 5-7 to attend the 52nd Annual Antique Boat Show in Clayton, New York. This prestigious event will have Dispros as their feature boat for 2016. We will consider this event as one of the UUMMTs for next year. The celebrations continue.

As this is our last communication for 2015, you can rest assured that we have celebrated the hundredth anniversary of the invention of our little boats in very special ways. Many, many people are now aware that the Disappearing Propeller Boat and the Dispro Owners Association are both here to stay for at least another 100 years.

When the days are short and dreary and the snow is piled high, just look at all the pictures of our activities this year in the Device and on the web site. Remember the fun times this past summer.

All the best, *Mary*

P.S. My apologies for leaving out the names of Cynthia and Eric Luks from the Centennial Committee mentioned in the last issue. How could I forget their huge contribution from procurement of permits, tent, and rental chairs and tables, to involvement with local government to opening their home/Johnson House for tours? Thanks to you both.



2015 Georgian Bay Misery Trip

Photo: Gary Campaigne



On Monday, July 27th, seven adventurous individuals headed north to Killarney, with four Dispros, for five days of camping and exploration amongst the islands of Georgian Bay. Dennis Howchin came with his son in law Todd and grandsons Carter and Carson. Dave Moffat travelled with his grandson Reid. I was by myself. We all enjoyed some of the world renowned Henry's fish and chips before venturing out of the harbour. It was a gorgeous, sunny, hot day.

Eventually all four Dippies reached Silver Island and we were delighted to find a favourite campsite empty. It is spot where DOA members have camped on previous Misery tours, with a sheltered inlet, flat areas for pitching tents and a beautiful view of Georgian Bay looking north towards Killarney. Everyone set up their tents and relaxed.

Tuesday morning we set off into the open bay and headed to Green Island. The temperature was 33C that day, with calm waters. It is interesting to note the rock changes from granite. The shore of Green Island has flat layers of limestone. Each of the Dispros was anchored at the stern with the bow tied to a rock on shore. Everyone explored at their own pace, went swimming or fishing, and had lunch. It was such a wonderful day we decided to venture further out to a smaller, more remote island which appeared to be a sanctuary for birds. It was clear enough that Manitoulin Island could be seen in the distance.

Wednesday was a day set aside to fish and explore the local area around Silver Island. It was another very hot day. Everyone went swimming to cool off and freshen up. Rain was encountered in the early evening, but it cleared and everyone managed to emerge from their tents and play some card games.

The original intention for Thursday was to venture south to the Hens and Chickens, a maze of small islands only a Dispro can navigate. However, the weather did not cooperate. Mother nature created winds of 44km/hr with gusts to 60 km/hr. Everyone stayed put on the island. Water levels had increased several inches and the boats had to be pulled up higher onto shore. I had to move my tent to a more protected spot since it was being battered. Todd and the boys had a great time playing in the surf amongst shoals, getting knocked over by waves and wind. Time was also taken to collect blueberries. Coming back from the west end of the island on one occasion, Carter and Carson spotted a bear about thirty or forty feet away from them. They quickly jumped back and watched two cubs follow mom.

Cont'd on back page



37th Annual Regatta • Cleveland's House • September 11-13

The 2015 DOA regatta was held on September 11, 12 and 13 at Cleveland House, Lake Rosseau. 107 people and 42 boats participated. Friday and Saturday were sun and cloud with temperatures 15 – 20 degrees C. Sunday was cool and rainy.

A number of boats were launched Friday afternoon with the help of the dock crew. A shuttle service was provided to reposition cars/trailers from the launch area to the resort. There was ample dock and beach parking.

All meals at the resort were very good this year. In fact I think they were as good as any we have experienced at any resort over the years.

After dinner on Friday, Mary gave an update on the plans for the weekend. Ian Dickson gave us the low down on 'PADDLEGATE'. During the 100th celebration, Les Rue had a paddle STOLEN from his Dippy while it was on display. Les was very upset since this was the first thing stolen since he has been coming to Muskoka. Ian decided to launch an investigation, in conjunction with the OPP to find the stolen paddle. After a half hour description of the efforts made to recover the paddle, Jim Domm, in a vintage police uniform, dragged John Storey, Les's paddle in hand, into the building. It turned out John had borrowed the paddle (forgot his at home in the confusion of the day), to allow him to take centennial celebration dignitaries for a dippy ride. When John returned to the dock, Les's boat was gone. Les's paddle was returned Friday night and his faith in Muskoka restored! Good Fun!



The relay race winning team receive the trophy. From left to right: Mike Windsor, Gary Campaigne, Barb Dickson, Rachael Campaigne, Ian Dickson, David and Gwynneth Simpson, and Ronda Turner.



Passing the noodle during the relay race on Sunday morning. The race provided some exciting moments as the two teams of three boats each went full throttle to win the bragging rights for the fastest Dippies.

Saturday, we had breakfast, then went on a boat cruise to the village of Rosseau. After lunch and a tour of the shops, the group returned to the lodge. Before dinner we had a lovely wine and cheese reception. Many thanks to Mike and Ronda! After dinner the grandson, now retired, of CJ Minett, gave us a history of the lodge, and recounted his memories of growing up at the lodge owned by his grandfather.

Sunday morning, we had breakfast then congregated at the beach in light rain. Two relay teams of three boats each, was to take a pool noodle around an island nearby. Their progress was monitored by two patrol boats. To the dismay of the onlookers, the winning team was disqualified for passing on the wrong side of a buoy. The vision of the person in the patrol boat was brought into question. A video replay was requested, and an investigation launched. Under intense scrutiny, the judges let the race results stand and compensated each of the losing boats with a can of varnish.

After the race, the rain became steady with temperatures below 10 deg C. Ten or fifteen hardy boats went on a short cruise around a number of islands to the south of the lodge. After lunch, plaques and awards were presented, acknowledgements made.

Dennis Howchin



Lunch stop at Rosseau.

The mysterious case of Les Rue's missing paddle was solved when John Storey, aka, "The Creep", was apprehended by authorities. PC Domm paraded in the culprit for all to see. "Paddlegate" was a very entertaining account conceived and presented by Ian Dickson.



Photo: Lorraine Human

“W.T. (Conspic.)”

I'm sure many of you noted this marking on your charts during the annual regatta at Cleveland's House. I'm sure you also noted that nothing on the terrain matches this description on the charts, or even knew what it meant. Here's the story.

Until about 20 years ago, the old water tower (W.T.) from the Royal Muskoka Hotel stood on this site. Many was the time we'd see it (conspic.) by boat as we ventured to Rosseau. As time passed it became less and less conspicuous as the surrounding trees grew taller and taller, covering the tower and tank. We'd jaunt up there in our 1912 Reo occasionally just to see it, too--in fact, that was how I last saw it, looming large, in about 1988. Of course, I stupidly assumed it would last forever.

Saturday, we made an unscheduled stop on our way south to snoop around the old hotel site when we were invited in for a visit at a stranger's cottage. (They knew nothing of dippies but were amazed with them.) I mentioned to these people the water tank and tower and was regaled with the facts of its demise. He gave me the particulars, so I followed them up.

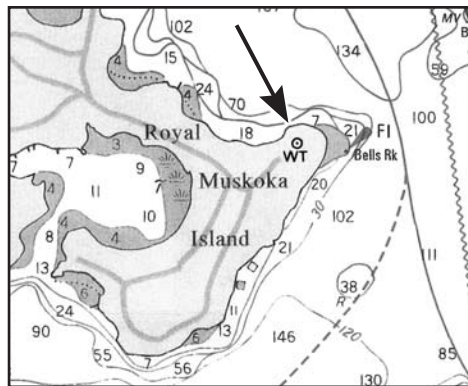
Due to some typical insurance company's rampant stupidity, fear and lust for cash, the tower was dismantled about 20 years ago, but unlike everything else of historical significance in Muskoka, this artifact was carefully removed and stored away, not smashed up and sent to the dump.

Monday morning I went to Tamarack North's office in Port Carling. Dave Cluett, from my power squadron days, showed me what had become of the Royal Muskoka Hotel's water tank.

Now I assumed the tank had been made of cypress as any water tanks I had ever seen had been built of “the wood eternal”. I had visions of buying it all for future dippy repairs! Not so with this one. This tank had been made from many, many pieces of 3” by 6” quarter-sawn Douglas fir. I got to touch, feel and look at the old tank--well, a small portion of it as it is now a large, 10-foot-long table in Tamarack's meeting room. The trestle upon which it sits is also made of the same vintage lumber. The people who we met up the lake also have such a table, but theirs is banded with one of the water tank's steel bands and its legs are from the nearly 4” to 6”-square angle irons which had made the tank's lofty tower.

Wood lovers would drool over the Douglas fir. Built in 1902, the tank's old-growth fir was unbelievably close-grained--maybe 10-15 rings per inch. It had probably grown on the dark side of a mountain for many hundreds of years. Fir was seldom used for boat building mostly due to its resistance to bending, so I didn't need to buy the wood lot, but it was formerly ranked as one of the more rot-resistant woods. Most old-growth lumber, no matter what the species, was rot resistant.

The hotel's burning has always been fraught with controversy. Many say to this day the water tank was suspiciously empty when the hotel burned in September 1952. I have colour slides of the site just days after the fire as my grandparents came back from



Cleveland, Ohio to see and photograph it. The tank and tower stood unscathed for better than 30 years after the fire. Old advertising literature never shows the tower, however.

Why this W.T. legend remains on the navigation charts is anyone's guess, but it's the only document we have to the relic. Although the table in Tamarack's basement is no longer a water tank or conspicuous, it's comforting to know someone had the foresight to save and appreciate valuable material and wisely use it in the best manner he knew possible instead of filling up the landfill with yet another unretrievable artifact from Muskoka's distant past.

Paul Gockel

Dispro Owners Association Archives

Housed in Aisle 1a at Muskoka Boat & Heritage Centre in Gravenhurst are the club's archives. Six boxes plus some boat parts, some posters, and a few other items make up this collection.

All of the financial records for the first 30 years of the club fill some of the boxes. Another box has file folders for each year since the club started. These folders hold notices, memorabilia, regatta registrants lists, newspaper clippings and anything printed from that year. Another box holds most plaques over the 37 years of the club, each and every members roster and several of the group photos taken at regattas.

President's binders hold minutes and financial statements of each executive meeting. Every magazine with an article about Dispros and copies of The Greatest Little Motor Boat Afloat as well as the cookbook are in another box. There is even a rusty engine flywheel found just a few years ago at the site of the factory in Port Carling. This year a great number of magazines and newspaper clippings will be added to the collection.

From time to time there is need to dig into these resources to answer a question from a club member, the press or the general public.

If you would like to see these archives or have a question whose answer could be found therein, please contact Mary Storey.

Mary Storey

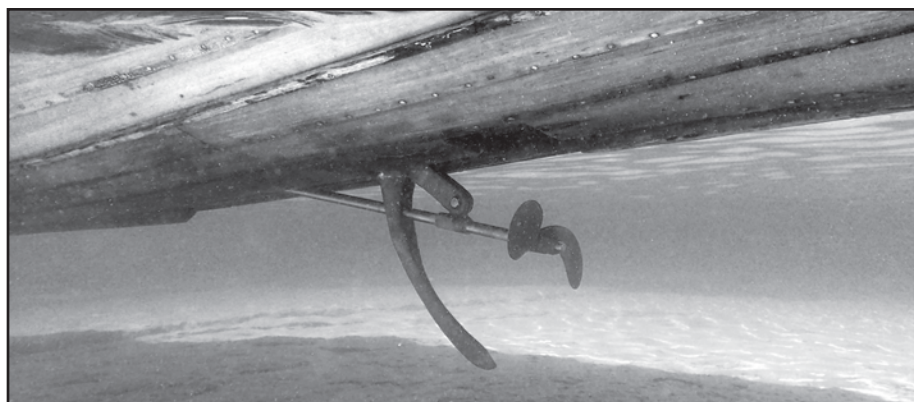


Based on an actual mishap at this year's regatta and thankfully nobody got hurt. The lesson learned: Dippys are tippy! Always make sure your partner is seated before jumping out of the boat.

The weather forecast called for winds to reduce to 15km/hr Thursday night and then climb back to approximately 25km/hr Friday morning. Everyone, therefore, made an attempt to have breakfast and pack all their camping gear by 9:30 a.m. By 9:45 the Dispros were headed off to Killarney. Rain gear was worn, not for any rain, but to try keeping dry from the spray while riding two or three foot waves. The cruise back to Killarney lasted about two hours. As usual, all four Dispros met the challenge. After helping each other load boats onto trailers, as DOA members always do, we had lunch in the village and then said our good byes after another memorable tour.

As you can tell, there is a good reason it is called a "Misery" tour. One needs to be adaptable and willing to take on whatever nature throws his or her way. It can also be a lot of fun if you enjoy roughing it for five days.

Gary Campaigne



Photos: Gary Campaigne

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



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