

## A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY TROJANYACHT.COM | AUGUST 2016

It's ironic that the very boat I purchased in 2016 is almost certainly one that I admired - and dreamed of owning - as a child riding shotgun in my father's motorboat in the 1980s.

I remember evening rides to Barrett Marine to gas up his 1960s-era Arkansas Traveler. We'd putter the two-or-so miles to the canal, motoring past the state park marina with its sailboats and its cabin cruisers that, to a little boy, may as well have been superyachts.

My brother, always a fan of going fast, would marvel at the sparkly speedboats, which were very popular on the lake at the time. I'd have my eye on something else: big, slow boats - anything with a cabin, really. You see, to me, the idea of ever getting off the boat was, frankly, off-putting - I wanted nothing more than to stay out on the water forever. Hoisting the boat upon our return to the cottage would be the saddest part of the day for me. You're telling me some people have both a boat and a home? I'd watch the Chris-Crafts and the Carvers motor past and wonder why anyone would want anything else.

What a sight we must have been, my whole family packed into a small, decrepit motorboat, seemingly from yesteryear. I was probably only six or seven years old, but even then I understood that class distinctions could be made out on the lake, just as everywhere else. Some people had brand new houseboats, while others were lucky to be in rickety rowboats with antique motors. We were at the lower end of the boating chain. When we were out on the lake waterskiing, or jumping waves on busier days, it was easy to forget this; on trips into the marina to get gas, however, our status suddenly became clear.

I remember looking up at the boating elite, sitting up on the decks of their yachts sunning themselves. I wondered if they were looking down at us, judging us. I also wondered if they could sense my envy.

"The reason so many of them are in the marina is because after you've spent that much money on a boat, you don't have the money for the gas to go anywhere," my grandfather would quip. It didn't do much to curb my jealousy... even in the marina, these people were still waking up on a boat! Why couldn't that be us?

I remember reminding myself that my family was fortunate to have a cottage. Sure it was old - older than my father's boat, even. And sure, it was in pretty decrepit condition: no insulation, old wiring, and no toilet facility. My father had told us what some of the boats in the marina cost - and there were a few that might be worth more than our cottage! He tried to explain depreciation to me, but I was too little to understand.

Thirty years later depreciation is what has provided me with the opportunity to own a piece of history – and, quite possibly, a piece of my own history, as well. My 'new' summer home is a 1977 Trojan F36 Tri-Cabin. I've been told that it spent the earliest part of its life in Waterloo, New York, docked at Barrett Marine – the very marina in which I, as a little boy, would stare at houseboats and cabin cruisers and dream.

I remember a few boats with benches on the bow. That had looked so cool – my father's boat barely had enough seats for the four of us, and they were old and uncomfortable – at least two of the seats pinched your bottom with every wave the boat hit. For a pleasureboat, there certainly was a lot of pain! I remember looking at these yachts with their comfortable, cushioned benches molded right into their fiberglass decks, wondering what it must feel like to lounge up there.

I remember one in particular because on it sat three young girls not much older than my brother and I. I remember looking up and waving as we passed, as people out on the water often do. The girls did not wave back. Instead, one made a disparaging remark about our boat, and they all giggled. Snobbery at its finest...

My 'new' boat has just such a bench. It is quite comfortable. I looked at it during the walk-through and couldn't help but wonder if this was the same boat I'd been insulted from decades before...

My grandfather had the foresight to purchase lakefront land when it was cheap in the 1940s. His friends made fun of him, even calling it "Dick's Folly", in part because the land he bought had nothing more than a dusty old dirt road leading to it. He built a boathouse for his sailboat before he left for the war, and added a kitchen and bedroom to it upon his return. When he died in the late 1980s some of his old friends approached my grandmother with offers to purchase it. She didn't sell it, telling people it would never leave our family.

My grandfather probably knew in the 1930s that lakefront land would be valuable one day, but that didn't matter – he, like me, just loved the water. Over the years his 1930s-era cottage, complete with tap water drawn from the lake and an outhouse on the hill, became a relic of sorts on the east side of Seneca Lake. Its presence in my life made me appreciate two things: the water, and classic, antique type stuff.

It turns out that my father wasn't wrong – the value of lakefront property increases from year to year, while the value of boats typically does not. Our summer cottage is worth much more in 2016 than it was in the 1980s. And my 1977 Trojan F36 Tri-Cabin, once a jewel of the marina, is likely nearing the end of its life.

Still, the moment I saw it on Craigslist I had a flashback to the 1980s. I saw myself in a boat, as a little boy, looking up from that Arkansas Traveler, dreaming of living on the water one day.

In a moment of clarity I told myself I had to own it.

Wave to me if you see me out on the lake - I promise to wave back.

Can't wait for y'all to come and visit...