

Graeme Ferguson’s Antique Boat Collection

Graeme Ferguson (1929-2021) was a filmmaker, inventor, and one of the founders of IMAX Corporation. He is also the author of an upcoming book, “The Naphtha Revolution” (to be published in September 2022,) a history of naphtha-powered boats. Invented in the 1880’s, naphtha launches were the first Owner-operated motor vehicles, two decades before the motorcar. Since the 1990’s, Graeme Ferguson lived on Lake of Bays, Ontario, which was also home to his collection of three antique wooden boats: *Faye*, *Marie*, and *Heather Belle*.

Faye

Manufactured in Geneva, N. Y., by the Fay & Bowen Engine Co. “Faye” is 22. Ft long and her hull number - 516 – dates her to about 1914. A company catalogue of the period states: “Although we still build the old ‘Fantail’ model to order, the popular type of smart boat is the ‘Torpedo’ hull.” The original Fay & Bowen engine (probably 2-cylinder 10 H.P.) went astray and eventually “Faye” was brought to Canada to be converted to steam. Nothing came of this, and in 1987 she was restored by Clarion Boat Works and fitted with a 60 H.P. Chris Craft engine. She still sports her “noiseless” underwater exhaust, a standard feature of Fay & Bowens of that time.

“Faye” was a particular favourite of Graeme’s wife, Phyllis Ferguson (1950-2021).

Estimated Value: \$51,663.00



Phyllis Ferguson piloting “Faye”



Marie

“Marie” was built in Bracebridge, Ontario in 1917, at the Minett Boat Works. She is a 26 ft long displacement launch. “Marie” has a G.M. 4 cylinder, 110 H.P. engine. She is an outstanding example of the work of H. C. Minett, Muskoka’s, and probably the world’s, finest builder of mahogany boats. She was restored in 1985 by Tim Butson, of Port Carling, Ontario. “Marie” came to the Lake of Bays, after being purchased by Graeme Ferguson in 1995.

Estimated Value: \$412,500.00



Graeme Ferguson, on Lake of Bays, enjoying “Marie.”

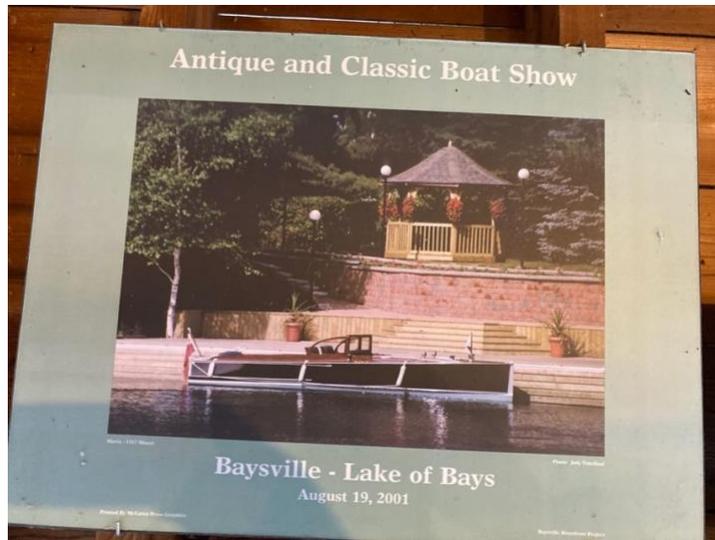
PHOTO: TIM DU VERNET



“Marie” at the Baysville Boat Show



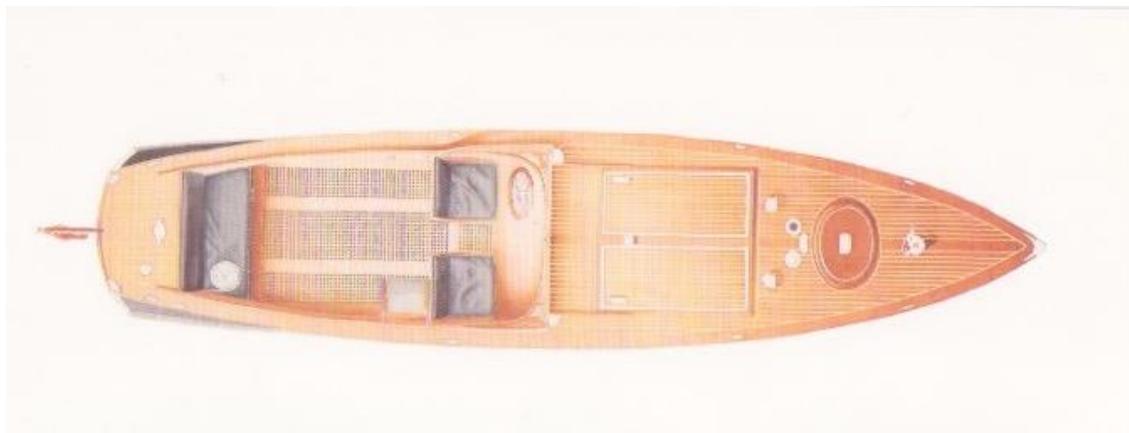
“Marie” at home, being visited on a boathouse tour.



"Marie" was the poster boat for the first Baysville Boat Show in 2001. PHOTO: TIM DU VERNET



Prow view of "Marie"



"Marie" PAINTING: JAMES FILLIPOFF

Heather Belle

“Heather Belle” is a 36 ft cabin launch, built in 1890 by the Marine Engine and Machine Company of Harrison New Jersey, which was owned by E.C. Harrison, a close friend of U.S. President Grover Cleveland. It was this boat which inspired Graeme Ferguson to write the book, *The Naphtha Revolution*. When “Heather Belle” was delivered to Canada in 1902, she was powered by an alco-vapor engine, invented by Frank Ofeldt, who was also the inventor of naphtha engines. “Heather Belle” resided on Lake Rosseau for many years, before coming to Lake of Bays. She is now powered by an electric motor.

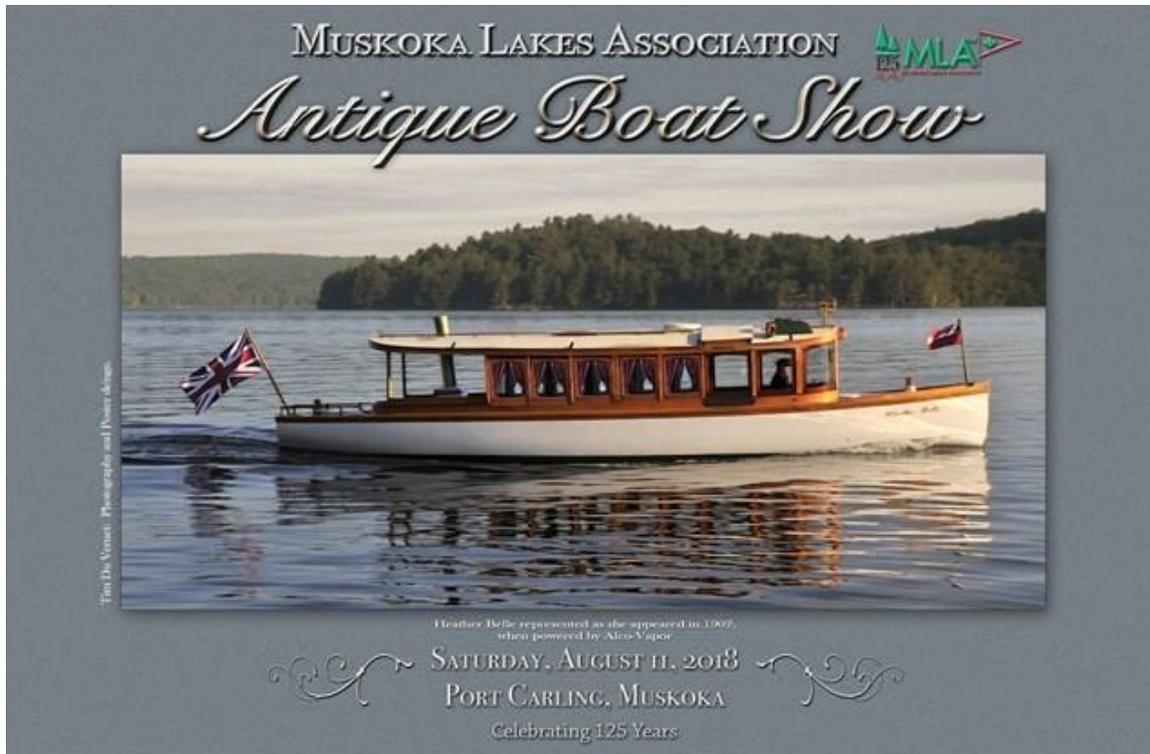
Estimated Value: \$480,162.00



“Heather Belle” on Lake of Bays



“Heather Belle” features a beautiful oak interior.



“Heather Belle” was poster boat for the 2018 Muskoka Lakes Association Antique Boat Show
 PHOTO: TIM DU VERNET



“Heather Belle” at home.