

September 17, 2007

Jack Alexander, Chairman
Trent Severn Waterway
P.O. Box 567
Peterborough, Ont.
K9J 6Z6

Dear Mr Alexander,

On September 10, 2007 we and another couple rented a houseboat from Happy Days Houseboats near Bobcaygeon, Ont.

On setting out towards Fenelon Falls we remarked on the absence of many bouy markers in the channel. We made it to Fenelon Falls and back to Bobcaygeon without mishap. Upon leaving Bobcaygeon (south) we hit the Canadian Shield tearing off the bottom half of our engine. The wind was blowing hard and without the kind assistance of a local gentleman and his wife (Randy and Susan Hinton), on shore, we would have been in dire straits and perhaps the damage might have been catastrophic as we immediately lost power when we hit.

We are not novice houseboaters having traveled the Trent Severn waterway three times in the past 15 years, the most previous time being in 2005. We formerly traveled incident free even though the first time we were complete novices. We were informed that bouy markers have been being removed since 2006 to a total of over 400 at this time. As you can see by the enclosure, with this letter, this was an expensive tragedy for all of us. We feel that one green marker in the Bobcaygeon channel would have alerted us to our error and prevented this accident. We do not disclaim our responsibility for this incident but feel that removing channel markers to save, at best, a few dollars borders on the "criminal". The money we spent on towing, lift charges and replacement of the motor could have been spent in the local economy and the fear we felt during this horrific incident did not make for a wonderful vacation as we have had in the past.

We also had a near miss going into the Buckhorn lock when we did not see the marker deep within the channel and almost motored into two unmarked cables over the falls. In that case only the voice of the lockmaster saved us telling us to "back out of that area". When we finally got to the proper channel we noticed the original mooring cement from the disabled bouy marker was still present.

We would be interested in who initiated this bouy marker removal program and how much money it has saved your department. We would also be interested in how may incidents of this nature have ocured since your ill conceived decision. We personally have been told of six from the people of Happy Days this season alone. We have heartily recommended to many of our friends the beauty of cruising the Trent Severn and the ease of navigating the waterway but feel we can no longer continue in this practice. In fact, we will now warn our friends that the waterway is dangerous.

As you will notice from the bottom of this letter we are sending copies to as many persons as we feel should be notified of the danger we feel is present in the waterway. This was not the way we wanted to end our vacation.

Sincerely,


Jim and Mary Lou Fox
515 E. Michigan St.
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858
989 773 3226

cc:

Parks Canada National Office
Douglas Downey Chairman, The Panel on the Future of the Trent Severn Waterway
Honourable John Baird Minister of the Environment
Bobcaygeon Chamber of Commerce
The Toronto Star
The Peterborough Examiner
Happy Days Houseboats

encl.

OUR NUMBER	316291
DATE	Sept. 12/07
CUSTOMER'S ORDER	

SOLD TO Jim Fox
 ADDRESS _____

SHIP TO Happy Days Houseboats
 ADDRESS _____

TAX REG. NO. _____ SALESPERSON _____

FOB _____ TERMS _____ VIA _____

INVOICE

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT
	1/2 Damage to # 20 Houseboat pd Hit Rock		1250 00
	Wipe-Out Prop	350 00	350 -
	Tow from Bobcaygeon to H.D. Marina	100 00	
	Lift out to repair	150 00	
	Replace lower unit # 1623-8951-A43	4988 38	
		GST	314 30
		PST	419 07
		TOTAL	1250 00

Blueline DC31

6321.75