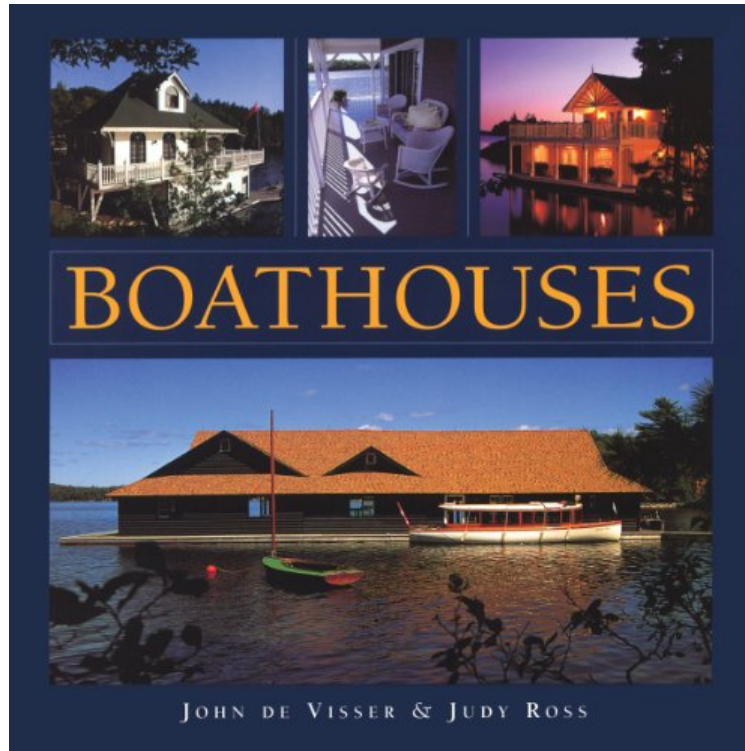


## Boathouses

*John Visser R.C.A., Judy Ross*

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**John Visser R.C.A., Judy Ross : Boathouses** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Boathouses:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Photos are SmallBy Iowa LawyerGood topic. Very much about Ontario, Canada, if you're interested in that area. My only complaint is the photos are a little too small. Instead of filling the entire page, the photos are "framed" with a lot of white margin. Good coffee table book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful Book!By Tessa HartgroveI bought this for my husband as a Father's Day gift. To say he was happy would be an understatement! I noticed the smile on his face with each turned page. This is a lovely book, and I would highly recommend it for anyone who loves the great outdoors, and especially the water!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Geographically challengedBy William C. McIntire, IVI thought that this book was going to reflect the best of both traditional and more modern interpretations of the finest boat houses all around the Great Lakes. Instead it is a limited selection of mostly uninspiring, older boathouses all from the same area of Canada. Nearly a waste of money.

Stealing a look at charming classic and contemporary boathouses Award-winning photographer John de Visser and lifelong cottager Judy Ross take readers inside 45 of the North Country's most enticing boathouses -- the rustic, the charming, the grand, the glamorous. Some date back to the 1800s and have changed little over the past century; others are recent eye-catching additions to the water's edge. Styles range from Victorian lavish to Shaker simplicity to

Adirondack modern. Inside are inspired sitting rooms, bedrooms, baths, kitchens, and cherished collections of antiques and memorabilia. Lush color photographs reveal how owners, architects, and designers have made each working boathouse an exceptional place to live as well as a perfect home for prized canoes, sleek motorboats, vintage mahogany launches and, in one case, a day-sailer with a 35-foot mast. Boathouses is brimming with design ideas for cottagers, decorators, builders, architects -- even landlocked homeowners.

Brimming with design ideas and practical advice, this book offers inspiration for cottagers, decorators -- even landlocked homeowners. (Doctor's )The strength of Boathouses is in its photography... a good addition to any cottage, or boathouse, table. (Zander Sherman Muskoka Magazine)Each boathouse is featured over several pages, with luminous interior and exterior photos... plenty of stories and anecdotes... All together, the boats, the boathouses and the many beautiful vistas combine to create a pleasant diversion for readers who want to immerse themselves in Muskoka's distinct culture. (Carolyn Leitch Globe and Mail 2006-06-16)Filled with history and photographs... that will leave you dreaming of owning one of these lovely boathouses someday. (The Cottager)The beautifully illustrated tome walks you through 45 fantastic boathouses in Muskoka... An excellent gift for anyone with a retreat in the Muskoka area, this book might snag you a weekend invite. (Jenn Houlihan Style at Home 2006-08-01)A lovely album of high-end boat shelters and their associated residences. (Woodenboat )The rustic, the charming, the glamorous and the grand!... The inspiring sitting rooms, kitchens, beds and baths are filled with decorating ideas galore. (Cottage Style)Brimming with rich, detailed photographs, design ideas and practical advice, this book is essential for cottagers, decorators, architects -- even landlocked homeowners. (Great Lakes Boating Magazine)Boathouses would be a good addition to any cottage, or boathouse, table. (Zander Sherman Muskoka Magazine)This [book] offers inspiration and insight for any designer whether working at the cottage level all the way up to full-sized Victorian representations.... A popular pick. (The Midwest Book : California Bookwatch 2007-02-01)[Ross]' passion for the region and its beauty if hard to resist. (Liz Campbell FYI (Oakville) 2012-09-30)About the Author As one of North America's finest photographers, John de Visser's images have been featured in more than 40 books, including Summer Cottages and The Thousand Islands. He lives in Cobourg, Ontario. Judy Ross's travel and lifestyle articles have appeared in House and Home, Cottage Life, Town and Country, and Travel and Leisure. She has co-authored five previous books with John de Visser. She lives in Collingwood, Ontario. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Introduction Life in a Boathouse My summer days begin when the sun rises over Crown Island on Lake Muskoka. Shafts of sunlight ripple across the lake and bounce off the water into my boathouse bedroom. Without moving from my bed I can see this miracle of day breaking. I get up and put the coffee on. As the boathouse fills with gauzy light, I pad about in bare feet and enjoy the quiet while others continue to sleep. With warm coffee mug in hand, I make my way outside to water the flowers in the window boxes that line two sides of the boathouse. I pick off dead blossoms, poke at the soil, and breathe in the fresh air, fragrant with pine. The dock underfoot is damp with dew, and the sun is just beginning to drink up the morning mist as I slide into the lake for my ritual morning swim. All is silent, except for a seagull calling to me from the boathouse roof. Treading the soft water a short distance from shore, I watch my cat, the only other creature stirring, as she rounds the corner of the boathouse, crosses a patch of rock, then curls into the base of the cedar tree next to the bird feeder. This routine happens every summer morning at our island boathouse-cottage in Muskoka. It is my family's treasured retreat. The boathouse is our emotional anchor, the place that roots us, the place to which we all return. I've been coming to these two small islands belonging to my aunt since I was a child -- long enough to know every inch of lichen-covered rock, the shoreline's every nook, and the height of every pine tree. Now my daughters perpetuate this loving attachment to our small patch of earth. "Can't we go up just for an hour or two?" my younger daughter implored recently because she hadn't been to the boathouse for months. In our family "go up" has always meant "go up to the lake." The island's cottage has existed, in various forms, for a long time, but our livable boathouse is new. Its construction was an all-consuming project that took place in the summer of 1988. That was a summer of much building activity around the Muskoka Lakes. A construction boom took place in this cottage country between 1985 and 1990. Property was selling for unprecedented prices and many extravagant new cottages were built with immense boathouses at the water's edge. The last time the lakes experienced such epic boathouse-building was between 1905 and 1930, during Muskoka's steamboat era, when cottagers depended on boats to get to their summer homes. Few roads had been opened into the area, so the early cottagers arrived by train, then boarded the appropriate lake steamers that would carry them and their belongings to their cottages. In 1905 the Muskoka Lakes Navigation and Hotel Company ran the largest inland-waterway steamboat line in the country, ferrying cottagers and hotel guests from one end of the lakes to the other. Fifty thousand guests could be accommodated at scores of fashionable summer resorts. Many cottage owners found the navigation company's timetable too erratic, so they bought their own steam-driven launches. These launches were large enough to hold family groups with their attendant trunks, wicker baskets, packing crates and hat boxes. Some of these private steamers were enormous. The Wanda II, for example, was a 94-foot steamer built in 1905 for Timothy Eaton, the Toronto department store tycoon. It could hold fifty passengers. Before long, dozens of private steamers plied the lakes, each requiring a boathouse for shelter. Before the advent of the steamboat, the only shoreline buildings were crude sheds put up by settlers to store their

canoes and rowboats, or the somewhat more elaborate dry-slip boathouses belonging to the cottagers. The latter had ramps that sloped into the water so that unmotorized craft could be pulled out of the lake for winter storage. But when the large new private steamers arrived on the lakes, they required buildings that had long slips and tall, pitched roofs. Sheets of tin were used to cover the ceilings, and smokestacks were cut into the rooftops because the boats' wood-fired engines were stoked while the craft were still in their berths. This hazardous arrangement caused frequent boathouse fires. Many early steam yachts were destroyed this way, including the lovely Wanda II, which burnt in a boathouse fire at the Eaton's summer estate on Lake Rosseau in 1914. By their nature, boathouses are intrusions on the landscape. Every one built obliterates another patch of scenic shoreline. But many have architectural merit that goes beyond their function. Architect Tony Marsh, who has been involved in twelve Muskoka boathouse projects, maintains that "the design of the boathouse is more important than the cottage because it's more visible. It's a less serious building, really just a garage for boats, so there's room for some whimsy in the design. Details like fish-scale shingles in the gable ends, trellises and window boxes are what make them interesting as buildings." In the architecture of boathouses, it seems, form can follow fancy. In the early years, architects were rarely involved in the building of boathouses or cottages. Many turn-of-the-century cottage designs came from pattern books, popular building guides published during the Edwardian era. The one architect known to work in Muskoka around the turn of the century was from Pittsburgh. In the early 1900s Brendan Smith was hired to build cottages and boathouses for a few of the Pittsburgh group who summered at Beaumaris. Most notable are the much-photographed Clemson boathouses that look like big and little brother due to their jaunty matching roof lines and porthole windows. Another Brendan Smith structure is found at the Hillmans' property on Gibraltar Island, where two look-alike brown boathouses with fanciful white trim stand side by side. Both these sets of boathouses were built by Peter Curtis, a local builder who left his trademark in the form of wooden cutouts. At the Clemsons' the cutouts are heart-shaped and can be seen on railings, shutters and dock benches. At the Hillmans' the cutouts are diamond-shaped. -- Second storeys were often added to boathouses to accommodate staff. In those early days, families often stayed for the entire summer -- mothers and children, assorted grandparents and aunts, cousins and others. Servants ensured the smooth running of such large enterprises. On Lake Muskoka at the turn of the century, James Kuhn, a banker from Pittsburgh, built a huge estate on Belle Isle and then brought to the island a staff of twenty-six, a number of whom lived in the family's boathouse. At some cottages the boathouse's upper storey was used as a dance hall and was festooned with streamers and paper lanterns for Saturday-night parties. As gasoline-powered motorboats took over from steamboats and steam-powered launches, the need for large waterfront buildings lessened, and from 1930 to 1965 few boathouses were built. Some of the older ones that hadn't burnt or fallen down were altered to get rid of their smokestacks and tall, covered slips. In some cases a floor was added to increase upper-level living space, and because family servants were now a thing of the past, the second storey became dormitory space for the children. -- For years boathouses -- particularly those located along Millionaires' Row at Beaumaris --- have been focal points for afternoon cruises around the lakes. But it wasn't until the early 1980s that there emerged a renewed interest in "Old Muskoka" cottages and boathouses. Muskoka once again became a fashionable summer place, much as it had been during the golden years of the 1920s, when Muskoka events and gatherings were reported weekly in the society columns of Toronto's newspapers. Many of the old boathouses were restored, and new ones were built to imitate the old style. Upper levels that over the years had become storage space, or recreation rooms for children, were also looked at with renewed interest and in many cases renovated for adults, either as gue