



Buddy Line

January - February 2011



Celebrating 50 years of Fostering the Sport of Recreational Scuba Diving in Scarborough

By Jack Purchase

We are at that time of year again when we begin to switch from winter to summer activities. A sure sign of this transition has to be the "Ice Floe Race"! The 48th running of the Ice Floe Race was held on Sunday March 6th. SUCI was the only club to field both a women's and a men's team. Thanks to Dieter Aupperle for organizing SUCI's participation in this event. I'm sure at times it must have felt like herding cats. Our women, captained by Lee Ann Smith, took 4th place ahead of 2 men's teams. Very well done! Our men, lead by Dieter Aupperle ended in 3rd place. Not bad considering there were only 10 in the team and the winner, only 7 minutes ahead of us had 16. Thank you to all The SUCI participants, helpers and watchers. We showed everyone involved that SUCI is well and truly alive and kicking.

The Outdoor Adventure Show, Feb. 25th to 27th was a great event for our club. Thanks to the organization of Rick LeBlanc, all the many members who came to help, and to Raimund Krob for his continuing passion for all things scuba, we had a great response from the attendees. This directing leads to our next event.

Our spring events start with "Discover Scuba Diving" on Saturday March 26th from 2.00pm until 5.00 pm. It looks like we will have a very busy time and I would be most grateful to all members who step up to the plate to help.

Our club is all about renewal and training. I would appreciate any comments you may have which would help us reach potential prospective members in our demographic.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR UPCOMING SUCI EVENTS

Please, for our 50th Anniversary DVD, bring any pictures, tapes - whatever. Don't worry if they're in a shoe box, just label it and Dieter will take it from there. BTW, Dieter could do with some others to help him on this task - especially if you have some knowhow in uploading etc. Let him know at the meeting or email: dieter.aupperle@sympatico.ca

We will have Len Rosen from the Canadian Blood Services at the GM to talk about our Blood Mobile Clinic **April 6th**.

Our Discover Scuba Diving event is coming up soon: **Saturday, March 26th, 2:00 - 5:00 pm**. Attached are two flyers (take your pick!) that members can print and bring to their offices, post at grocery stores etc. - we'd appreciate it!

Full Dive Season Package is now on our website for your perusal - lots to check out thanks to the efforts of Rick Le Blanc! Sign ups will take place at the **GM April 11th**.

April 2nd is the Shipwreck Symposium - check our website calendar for details. We have 2 discounted tickets for anyone interested, since we will be out of the country. Contact Nora at diverlady2002@gmail.com

On April 14th, Wendy Fitzpatrick has decided to climb the 1 776 steps up the CN Tower to raise funds for WWF, specifically in regards to climate change. For every donation of \$20, you get a tax receipt. For more info, click on this link: <http://my.e2rm.com/personalPage.aspx?SID=2884421&Lang=en-CA>

Scuba Swap is **April 16th** - check our website calendar for details or <http://www.scubaswap.org/>

Our social director Heather Courneya has been hard at work organizing social events for our members. The following are a couple of events attended by SUCI members.

SUCI GOES SKING. Feb. 11, 2011

submitted by Patricia Strewie, Heather Courneya,
Paul Francis & Nora Mark

Patricia's fond memories:

"It was pretty darn cold, but still a perfect ski evening at Skyloft Ski Resort. Night skiing opened at 4, and we couldn't all be there at 4 on a Friday night, so we bumped into (not literally, of course) fellow SUCI members and their family on the slopes. We're obviously a bunch of outdoor enthusiasts anyway, so had lots of fun skiing and après-skiing together. It flurried gently during the evening, so every time we did a run we were skiing on a bit of fresh snow. And we did lots of runs since we never had to wait for a lift - constantly up and down - a great workout. I think I had even more fun because I was wearing my MP3 player and was skiing to the music - best way to do The Conga! I love spending time with my kids, so it's a bonus when our club does things we can all do together. I'm convinced that they will be divers one day, too. And it was probably one of the cheapest ski outings I've had with my kids - will have to do that one again."

Heather Courneya recalls:

"The night was mostly clear, with enough flurries to keep the runs fresh. Adele and I arrived and went downstairs to change. Heather arrived shortly thereafter. There were no lines to speak of so it was straight up to the top and zipping down to the bottom. After a few runs we got cold and went in for a cup of hot chocolate. Cheryl's nephew led the way down several times. He was easy to spot with his black jacket with the yellow stripes. Soon we hooked up with Paul and there were 4 of us on the chair lift. No spills. We were happy about that."

Paul Francis' thoughts "It was great seeing Patricia with a big smile on her face, swooshing down the slopes swaying to the music playing in her ears without any ski poles. She indeed looked very carefree and exhilarated (in her own world) as she blazed down the hill into the falling snow. Me on the other hand, since I hadn't skied for a couple of years, forgot to do up my ancient bindings properly and flew out of my skis the first time I made a turn (not a very auspicious beginning). After a bad start everything was great. There were no lineups at the chair lift. The weather was a little cool (Rick ended

up with cold hands) so you didn't want to stay out for more than a couple of hours at a time, there was a lightly falling snow which looks great at night in the lights lighting up the ski slopes and it was a lot of fun. It is always interesting seeing people you associate with scuba gear in a different environment (wearing ski helmets and toques). Inside the ski resort, sitting around eating and drinking hot chocolate with your friends is always very enjoyable as was the after ski party at the pub down at Altona Road and Kingston Road."

Nora Mark's comments:

"Good value, great conditions, busy but not crowded, no major spills to talk about, unfortunately! All were competent skiers, enjoyed meal afterwards at Harp and Crown. Patricia was bouncing all over with a smile on her face, Jack felt very energized by the outing, Rick was a little cold but braved the weather ;), Marian showed his flair for the sport - nice to see him join us again, Nora was happy to be on the slopes again - without the responsibility of 70 or so students. Many thanks to Ken for accommodating us at such a good price."

SUCI GOES TO THE THEATER

picture by V Reid

The most recent excursion was a trip to see the "Full Monty" at the Scarborough Playhouse Theater on Feb. 16th. What a great show it was. Good job Heather!



Those attending were: Front row Patricia Strewie, Stella Silva, Vivian Reid, Cheryl Maugham. Back Row, Janet Hulbert, Heather Courneya, Jack Purchase, Val Seibert, Helene Glyselinck. Missing from the photo are Pat Carnwith and Sital Patel.

SUCI AT WORK AT THE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE SHOW

Once again, the members of SUCI came out in full force to the Out Door Adventure Show at the International Center on the weekend of Feb. 27-29th to either, distribute literature on the club or go into the dive tank and demonstrate skills to interested parties who stopped to chat and receive invites to our Discover Scuba in March. It is my understanding that names & contact information of over 90 people interested in participating were obtained.



Sunday morning's crew ready & eager to start work
Richard, Paul, Raimund, Marilyn, Rick, Ron, Helen, Jack, Vvian, LeeAnn, Stella, Patricia



Ron & LeeAnn hanging our SUCI banner. As always, SUCI members are always ready to lend each other a helping hand



LeeAnn assisting Paul with his dive gear before entering the dive tank. Ron in the background



Paul & Ron entertaining the crowd by demonstrating their expertise in an underwater environment



Rick talking to the crowd about the fun of scuba diving while Paul & Ron demonstrates some necessary skills.

SUCI DIVERS TRAVEL TO CURACAO

article by Heather Courneya

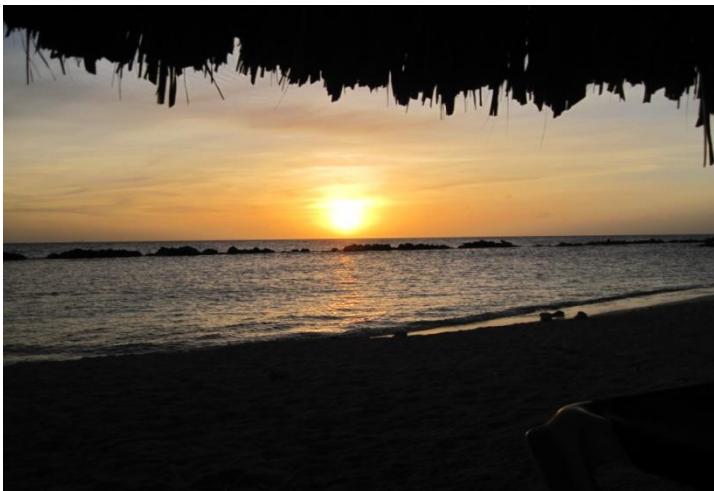
Pictures by Heather Courneya & Dieter Apprele

It was a cold dark morning when we headed to Pearson International Airport. There were 9 of us. Dieter headed up our little troupe of divers. It wasn't long before we were all in the lounge waiting to load up on the plane heading for BREEZES RESORT – SPA – CASINO in Curacao. Curacao is a small Dutch island in the Caribbean ocean.



This little oasis was all inclusive and had it all from Rock climbing to bicycle riding. Known for the diving, this was the best option offered for the adventure seeking SUCI group.

We made some wonderful memories. With some very funny stories and some fabulous sunsets.



Our first opportunity to dive was on Monday when we did our check out dive. Several of us checked out new equipment. We saw a Queen Angel, Christmas trees, trumpet fish and clown fish. It was at that check out dive that we found Ester still had her application for her dive license in her open water dive book. Lynda whipped Ester off to the front desk to fax her application to Padi.



We all went into town after that. We walked around Willemstad and found a lovely restaurant to eat in while we overlooked the Queen Emma Bridge. This bridge swings open to let large boat traffic through. People walk over the bridge. When they are about to swing it open, the whistle blows and everyone gets off the bridge. While the bridge is open there are ferries to take people back and forth.



Ester spotted a lovely looking blue restaurant.



We all got seated at a table and watched in amazement as the bridge swung upon to let a big tanker through loaded with beer. There is a fellow that starts an engine and the bridge actually has what looks like boats supporting it. The operator runs the engine that powers the boats to open the bridge or swing it to the side. Amazing! Dinner at this restaurant was really delicious.



On Tuesday the sea was rough. Our first dive was at Small Wall. Visibility was not good because of the rough waters. We saw some small fish and coral. As we made our second stop at Shipwreck Point, I yelled up to the front of the boat to my buddy Adrian, that I needed to get into the water or was going to throw my breakfast up all over the back of the boat. Adrian waved me on as he threw up over the side of the boat.



Well almost the side of the boat. While I was hanging on to the line trying to settle my stomach the other divers jumped in. I stuck my head under the water to no avail. Throw up I did! Once, twice, three times. Everyone scattered. Except the fish of course! Adrian finally arrived and under the water we went. We had a lovely dive. We saw a small lion fish. These fish are not indigenous to the Caribbean and are hunted. Our dive master speared the fish. We didn't see anything large, but the coral was very pretty.

After diving, Adrian and I couldn't get off that boat fast enough. I took off to the room to lie down. The room kept spinning and I felt like I was still on the boat. We all met up for dinner later on and had a laugh over the

episode. This is when Adrian shared what went on in the bathroom with us. Apparently he needed to do a #2. The bathroom door didn't latch. There he was in the bathroom, trying to hold the door closed, his pants around his ankles, swinging to and fro with the swells and low and behold, there was no toilet paper! The captain was not impressed when Adrian brought the mess in the head to his attention!

Adrian, Lynda, Ester and I went on a West End bus tour the next day, while the rest of the gang dove again. We saw dramatic rock formations, beautiful beaches and learnt the history of the island. We saw a typical



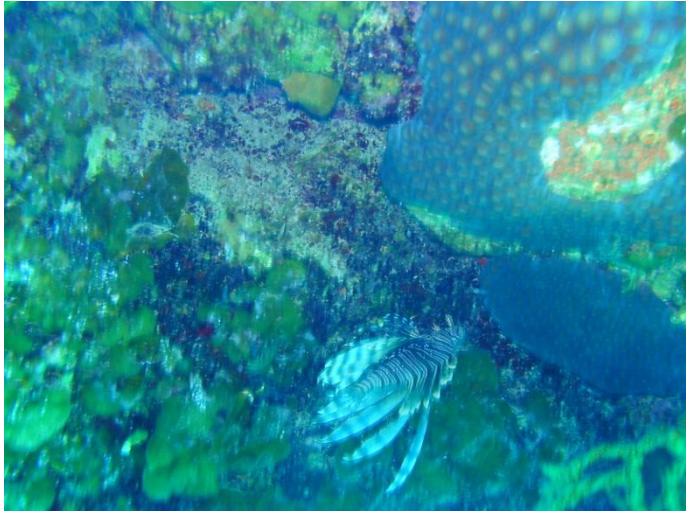
plantation home where they erected a statue symbolising slave freedom. We visited the famous Boka Tabla cave.



On the way back we stopped at the old salt-flats of Jan Kok, where we, once again, saw Flamingo birds.

Our tour guide shared some very interesting facts about the aloe plant and its healing properties.

While we were on our bus tour, mad things were happening under water. The group that had gone diving that day were watching the dive master spear many lion



fish. Manny was really quite good at spotting the little devils hanging out just under the coral. The dive master looked to Janet and motioned for a knife. Well Janet knew Manny had a knife so she turned to him and started feeling around for the knife. She was really man handling the guy! To her surprise this guy had a yellow sausage. This was not the fellow she thought it was. While this was going on, Manny was looking on with interest. Manny watched the fellow's face and his reaction, then Janet's reaction to the knowledge that she was feeling up this guy! I can tell you we had some laughs over this one. The fellow said he had seen many groupers under water but never a grouper. The group met up again for dinner and discussed everyone's day. The warm breeze blowing off the beach towards us seems a long time ago, as I sit here typing this up in the frigid cold of Canada.



Thursday we loaded up again and headed for the dive site, Newport. The day was sunny and the seas were

thankfully quite calm. As I sat looking over the water I saw tons of flying fish. We were fortunate enough to have seen a pair of pink flamingos flying by very close to the boat as well as a small turtle swimming beside the boat. The dive was lovely. Was this the dive that Norm just about lost his dive belt?



The next dive was Lost Anchor. One of the dive masters told us that this was her favourite dive location. I thought this was the best dive location so far. We saw two lion fish that were speared by one of our dive masters. There were a lot of fish and the coral was beautiful. It was a very relaxing dive.

Good news! Ester received her Padi license and will go out on the dive with us on Friday. We did a check for her equipment that afternoon. We had a little difficulty getting her weight right. But with Dieter's and Adrian's help we got it all straightened out and had a nice dive around the coral in front of the resort. The current was strong. We were tired when we got back in but it was so exhilarating.

That night we all met at the "Italian Restaurant" for a great meal outside on the terrace. Dieter, Ester, Adrian, Linda, Norm, Gillian, Manny, Janet and I savoured the ambiance.

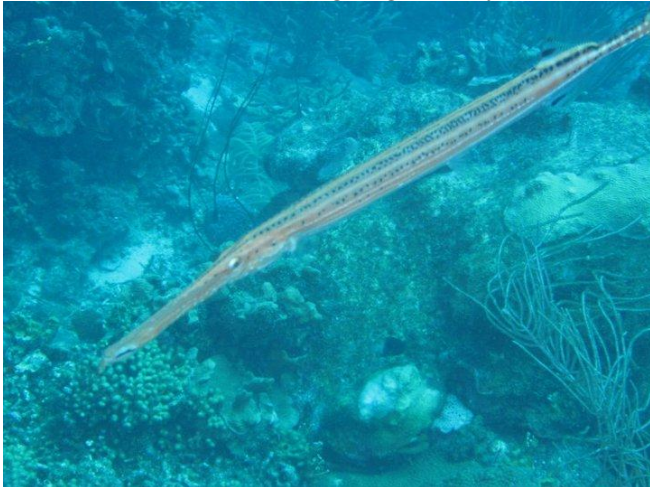
Our last day to dive was Friday. We all got on board. I knew Ester was nervous as she was very quiet. We went to the Superior Producer site. It was a calm sunny day. This was a deep dive and only divers with 30 dives were allowed to dive. I was shocked at how fast we seemed to get down to 75 feet. Visibility was really good and we could see the wreck clearly. Nothing like any wreck we see up here in Ontario. As Janet said, the wreck was decorated with beautiful coral. I looked up and saw two or three large barracuda above.

The next dive was Cornelius Bay. This was Ester's first real dive. We saw many trumpet fish, a pair of grey

angel fish, a school of blue tang fish. The coral was amazing, from the brain coral to the tub sponge and fan coral.



Ester looked like she was going to explode when she got back on the boat. She said, "Don't tell my ex-husband or children but that is the high light of my life so far." I



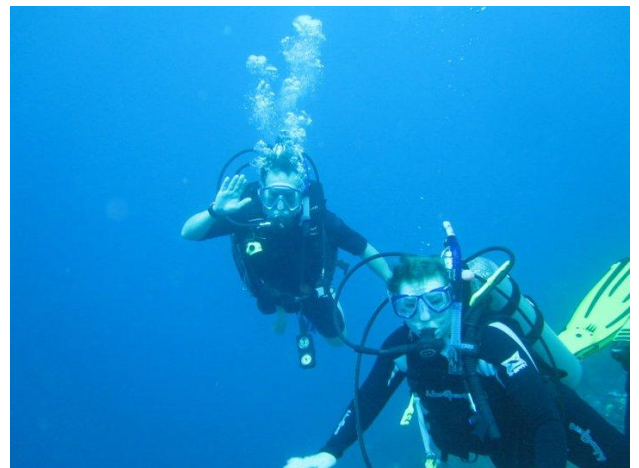
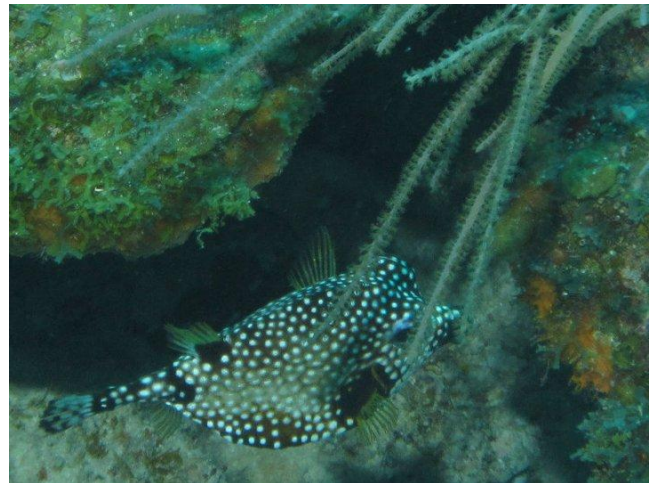
think she liked it. She said she felt like she was the star in a movie with Lloyd Bridges!

I think Friday was the day we watched Lynda turn into a trapeze artist! Adrian got some wonderful pictures and a movie of "His Feet" as he didn't turn off his camera. Lynda did a great job and had her own SUCI cheering section. Go Lynda Go!!

We had reservations at the Japanese restaurant Friday night. The chef cooked right in front of us. We all thought this was the best dinner yet. There was a contest going on stage after dinner for the best dancer. Some of us girls got up on stage to enter the dancing contest. Our men could have cheered a lot louder to help our cause, but unfortunately due to their lack of support we didn't win. Some twenty something young chick, that could really shake took the title. We all had fun anyway.



On Saturday some people went on tours, while others went into town to finish up our shopping. We all met up for a BBQ dinner on Saturday night. It was at this dinner that we all shared why we got into diving. Dieter was presented with a picture frame from his admirers Margo and Anke as well as shirt with 8 piranhas which symbolized the 8 SUCI members. After dinner some of us got into our bathing suits and with snorkel, mask and flash light in hand when "Night Snorkelling" We saw tons of lobster, a jelly fish, sea urchins, shrimp, needle fish and a huge puffer fish.



Most importantly no one was hurt. We dove safely! To top things off, you won't believe what happened on the plane. A set of washrooms were not working. This caused a long line up to form. To try and alleviate the problem, the stewardess told the people on the plane that she was opening up the washroom that had no water and it would be necessary to put a bottle of water in the washroom to be used to rinse the toilet. "Under no circumstance can you use this washroom for anything but #1. We were howling in the aisle over that one with Adrian in mind.

- Yellow boxfish – bright yellow, good size of 12 inches or more
- Porcupine fish – quite a few, 12 to 18 inches
- Large school of big eyed jackfish
- Moray and jewel eels
- Plenty of trunkfish and boxfish

MY TRIP TO COSTA RICA - FEB 2011

article & pictures by Nora Mark

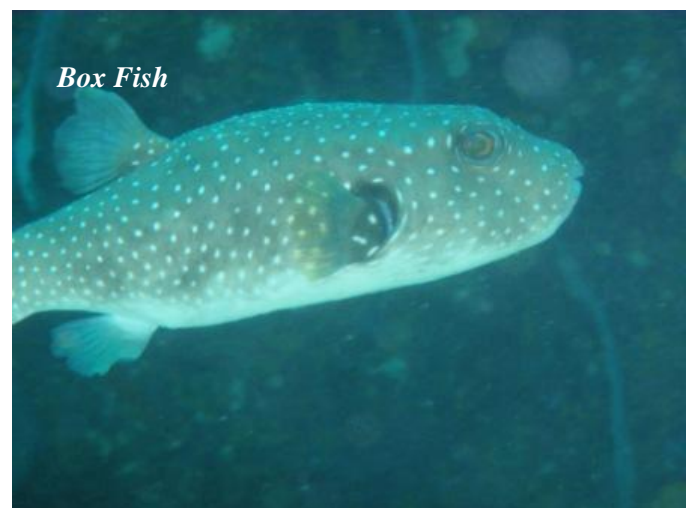
On Monday, I finally went to Caño Island to do some scuba diving. The dive charter had to defer the trip for a few days in order to have enough people for diving or snorkeling; however, I also had to wait because I got a cold, of all things!

It is a long way out to Caño Island (90 min. or so) but we did stop to watch some speckled, dark coloured "common" dolphins that were swimming around us – always fun to see. The island itself was breath-taking: rocky cliffs and low mountains covered by trees and shrubs typical of the jungle. There were a number of beautiful beaches nestled between large jagged rocks. Right away it reminded me of the setting for Tom Hanks in *The Castaway*. (Apparently the movie was filmed on another island in the vicinity.) We had access to an old building that houses a ranger station as well as washrooms etc. The area is well protected – no removal of shells etc. allowed. As we dropped off our snorkelers, we saw the shadow of a huge devil ray (similar to a manna ray), surprisingly close to shore.

Both dives were not too deep – 45 to 60 ft. As I've heard, the visibility varied but wasn't the greatest: about 30 to 40 ft., at best. Being in the Pacific, marine life was different. Early in the first dive, we saw a very large sting ray – perhaps the giant reef ray. They can reach a length of 10 ft. and on this one, the tail alone was 3 to 4 ft. long. Looked elegant as it moved.

A few white tipped reef sharks (4 to 5 ft.) resting in the sand were quite shy and quickly swam away when they saw us. Other marine life of interest were:

- Moorish idol fish – lovely colouring (see pic)
- King angelfish – only on Pacific coast of US to Central America



Spotted Morey Eel



There was considerable current during both dives and some soft coral on huge rocky outcrops, often covered with a type of anemone. On the second dive, a rock wall was quite striking and evidently a suitable habitat for several eels.

After our dives, Kumari, owner of Mystic Diving, treated us to an amazing lunch consisting of an array of tasty homemade dishes – all done by her husband! We then all had some fun snorkeling and swimming through a school of hundreds of big eyed jacks.

On Tuesday, I had a fun time zip lining – a really neat experience! After a long climb by truck up to an elevation of 2000 ft., we did our first of 14 zip lines. By sitting in a harness, with plenty of carabineers etc., I felt very secure.



Speed control was quite easy, especially when slowing down to approach the platform for the next zip line. All of these platforms were built around a very large tree. Twice we got to repel down the tree and the second time were invited to hang upside down – which I did, for fun! As we zipped over a river and a small waterfall, the gurgling of the water added to the sounds of various bird calls. We did hear a howler monkey but didn't get to see it.

When at the top, there was a beautiful view of the mountains. At the end of the tour, we all had a chance to swing on a rope and again, by placing our feet around the rope, got to hang upside down. It was a riot!



By staying with my friend Barb (who shares ownership of a house and has been here many times), I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people, mostly Canadians who either have moved here permanently or live here several months of the year. Just seeing their unique and elegant homes, and listening to their experiences of living in Costa Rica, has made my stay memorable.



The restaurants were also amazing! Gourmet dining ranged from French to Indonesian and East Indian. There was even a wonderful open “drive thru” that offered a varied menu with a local flair – this run by a Jamaican Canadian, a great guy!

I hope to return to Costa Rica someday – and also visit Panama!

The following contains four of the seventeen reports spanning the period of 1853 to 1992 of Accidents on the Niagara River. Space permitting, I will add new articles at each publication of Buddy Line. For those of you who wish to read all of the reports immediately, check this site:

<http://www.niagarafrontier.com/accident.html>



/a history of major accidents, rescues and tragedies/

July 16th 1853 - three men working on a dredging scow (barge) which was anchored in the Niagara River east of Goat Island decided to go to shore during the afternoon. The only way to shore was by use of a row boat. As the three men started rowing to shore, they soon discovered that the current of the water was much stronger than they had anticipated. Suddenly one of their oars broke. The small row boat entered the American Channel rapids and swept downstream. The rowboat capsized. Two of the men were swept to their death over the brink of the American Falls. The third man, Samuel Avery, was able to grab onto some tree roots growing from a rock just east of Chapin Island. Avery spent the night stranded in the cool fast flowing water. The sound of the rapids prevented any of Avery's screams for help to be heard.

The next morning, Avery's plight was observed by several tourists. Efforts to rescue Avery began. Initial efforts consisted of releasing boats and raft from the Bath Island Bridge. None of the craft were able to reach Avery. Finally a boat which was tethered to the Bath Island Bridge was guided downstream and reached Samuel Avery. With little strength left, Avery was able to climb into the boat but the boat immediately capsized throwing Avery back into the turbulent waters. Throwing his hands up in surrender, Avery let out a final scream, fell backwards into the water and was swept to his death over the American Falls .

February 4th 1912 *- by noon on Sunday, approximately 35 persons were standing on the ice bridge which had formed covering the Niagara River below the Falls each winter. This ice bridge was huge, thick and solid, allowing people to cross the entire width of the Niagara River from Canada to the USA on the surface of the ice rather than using the International Bridges located downstream. Two such persons on this

ice bridge were Eldridge Stanton, age 32 and his wife Clara Stanton, age 38, both of Toronto, Ontario. The Stanton's had been married for six years and had come to Niagara Falls twice each year; once in summer and once in winter since being married. They had arrived in Niagara Falls on Friday for a winter weekend visit. They strolled hand in hand as they crossed the ice field.

Also on the ice bridge were Ignatius Roth age 17 and Burrell Hecock, age 17, both of Cleveland, Ohio. William "Red" Hill was opening the little refreshment stand he built every year as soon as the ice was thick enough. With him were Monroe Gilbert and William Lablond.

Hecock and Roth were throwing snowballs and playing leapfrog.

Hill suddenly felt a small tremor under his feet. At the same time came a loud groaning sound from the base of the Falls which could be heard over the roar of the distant Falls. Immediately Hill recognized the danger and began running towards the Canadian shore as he shouted for the others to follow him. Lablond, Gilbert and the boys followed Hill. Mr. and Mrs. Stanton turned back towards the American shore.

The ice bridge began heaving up and down as the grinding noises became louder. The ice had began breaking apart. As the Stanton's ran towards the shore, they suddenly stopped a stones-throw width away as the ice separated from the shore and water appeared where the ice once was. As the gap began to widen, the Stanton's were frozen in place by shock for a second before turning and racing for the Canadian shore. As they ran, Clara Stanton began to slow and stumbled to the ice from exhaustion within 50 feet of the Canadian shoreline. Eldridge Stanton tried unsuccessfully to lift his wife. The ice field on which they were standing began to move. Stanton grabbed his wife and tried dragging her as he shouted for help from the men ahead.

Lablond was in waist deep icy water and with the assistance of Hill they pulled Roth to shore and shouted for Hecock to jump to safety. Hecock heard the cries for help from Stanton and turned around. Hecock rushed toward the Stanton's in a desperate attempt to save them. Hecock reached the Stanton's and helped Eldridge lift his wife to her feet. Together they tried to get Clara to shore but the gap between the ice and shore was quickly widening. The three were now stranded as the ice bridge flowed ever quickly downstream.

The ice sheet was swinging wildly. On this ice sheet, the Stanton's and Hecock paced back and forth. Hecock and Eldridge were seen talking while Clara stood holding her

husband's hand. As they passed beneath the first of three bridges spanning the Niagara Gorge, the ice sheet seemed to edge towards the American shore. Directly downstream, a hydro-electric station was discharging water into the river. The pressure from this discharge crumbled the nearest edge of the ice forcing the three to the opposite side.

The giant ice sheet broke into two pieces. One half drifted towards the American shore while the other half on which Hecock and the Stanton's stood remained in mid-stream. The first half grounded out against the American shoreline. On each of the two lower bridges located three hundred yards apart, firemen, policemen and railway workers had stationed themselves in order to lower ropes to those stranded as they passed underneath.

Stanton was seen to place his arm around the waist of his wife. About a quarter mile above the rapids, the ice sheet broke in half again, this time separating the Stanton's from Hecock. Hecock waved and shouted something. Stanton returned the salute. Clara crouched down beside her husband. The river current was becoming faster as it neared the rapids.

Hecock's ice sheet remained in mid-stream. Hecock took off his coat in preparation of attempting to grab one of the dangling ropes. As he passed beneath the bridge, Hecock grabbed one of the ropes and swung free of the ice flow he was riding on. Hecock was plunged waist deep into the water as his rescuers attempted to lift him. As he was hoisted 60 feet above the water Hecock lost his grip of the rope and fell into the raging river below. Entering the rapids, Hecock was never seen again.

The Stanton's had watched Hecock's valiant attempts. As the flow swirled under the cantilever bridge, Stanton quickly grabbed the nearest rope and looped it around his wife's waist. As the flow continued and the rope became taut, it broke. Stanton grabbed another rope as they passed underneath the Lower Bridge. He quickly tied the rope again around his wife's waist but changed his mind and untied the rope, knowing it would be futile. Stanton took his wife in his arms, kissed her and let her down. They both knelt together with his arms around her. The flow remained intact until it reached the giant wave in the rapids and spilled over throwing both into the raging water to their deaths.

August 6th 1918 - At about 3 p.m. on the afternoon of Tuesday August 6th 1918, a steel sand scow (barge) was engaged in dredging operation in the fast currents on the American side of the Niagara River opposite Port Day at the

entrance of the Niagara Falls Power Company hydraulic canal. The scow was being towed by the tug boat - "Hassayampa" being operated by Captain John Wallace. The scow had two deck hands aboard. They were Gustave Loftberg, age 51 and Frank Harris, age 53. The tug and scow were owned and operated by the Great Lakes Dredge and Docks Company. During the operation, the tug suddenly struck a sandbar approximately a ½ mile upriver from the Falls. The taunt rope that held the barge to the tug snapped "like a thin string".

The powerless and empty barge quickly drifted out of control into the Canadian channel and towards the Horseshoe Falls. Loftberg and Harris were helpless and could do nothing to stop the scow. They were seen trying to slow the swift progress of the scow with the use of makeshift oars but with no success. Although some reports indicate that, they opened the two holes in the bottom of the scow to allow water to enter the barge, they simply had no time. Loftberg and Harris could only hope and pray for a miracle as they faced to see rising mist of the great Horseshoe Falls growing closer by the second. The roar of the Falls echoed in their ears. In a twist of fate, the scow became grounded and became lodged on a rock shoal at 2,500 feet (767m) upriver from the Horseshoe Falls in the shallow but fast moving cascades.

The alarm that the sand scow was being swept towards the Falls with two deck hands aboard spread throughout Niagara Falls, New York and the towns on the Canadian side. Hundreds of people crowded the buildings that lined the shore and the riverbanks to watch the human helplessness and the scow's progress. When the scow grounded it electrified everyone. Hundreds of men made for the point on the Canadian shore nearest the ledge.

Employees of the Toronto Power Company who had watched the scow drifting in the river from the roof of the company building rushed to telephones. Calls were sent to the fire departments in Niagara Falls, New York and Niagara Falls, Ontario and to the Life Saving Station in Youngstown, New York.

Benjamin Hall of Pennsylvania Street in Niagara Falls, New York witnessed the barge careening out of control through the rapids until it ground in mid stream just off the head of the island. At the urging of Mr. Hall, the Youngstown Life Savers (United States Coast Guard) were sent for.

Loftberg and Harris began ripping huge timbers from the inside of the barge and were seen throwing some

overboard. They were actually building a makeshift windlass (a winch device) in hopes that if a rope line from shore could somehow reach them they would be able to secure the line to the barge in order to hopefully prevent the barge from becoming dislodged and moving any closer to the Falls. A bungled haul would mean the dislodging of the scow.

With sheer determination and with their very lives at stake, Loftberg and Harris completed building the clumsy windlass. The two stranded men could now only wait.

While awaiting rescue, Loftberg, thinking safety tied himself to the barge. Harris, on the other hand tied a rope around himself with the other end tied to a barrel. Harris thought that if the barge broke free, he could jump clear and hope that the barrel got caught up on more rocks.

A rescue boat could not be utilized to rescue the two men because of the distance, the turbulence of the rapids and the proximity to the Horseshoe Falls.

The Niagara Falls Fire Department was the first to arrive at the Power Company Building. They brought with them a small life saving gun. It was carried to the roof of the building. Chief A. H. Newman discharged the gun. The rope rolled out towards the barge. It spun out about 300 feet (91.4m) before falling into the river. A second attempt was made but with the same result. In the meantime an army truck bearing five men from the Life Saving Station in Youngstown and their equipment including a larger gun and longer ropes. The five men were on their way from Fort Niagara at best speed driven by Private Fred Daubney. The truck made the 25 mile trip in 35 minutes.

When the men from the Life Saving Station arrived with a gun capable of firing a lifeline to the scow, they mounted their gun on the roof of the Toronto Power House. The first shot to the scow with a light weight rope was successful shot over the barge. Loftberg and Harris grabbed the rope and began the process of pulling it aboard and connecting it to the windlass. In the meantime, the rescuers tied a much heavier rope to the end of the first rope. Loftberg and Harris began the long struggle of winding the rope in from the power house to the scow. The weight of the heavy rope was being carried downriver by the torrent of water and threatened in itself to dislodge the barge. At a time more than a hundred men on shore were needed to pulled the rope taut in order to prevent this from happening.

After many hours of labor under terrifying conditions, Loftberg and Harris were able to bring the heavy rope

aboard the barge and secure it to the windlass. By this time darkness had arrived.

With nightfall, huge searchlights were erected and trained on the scow and rescue rope. A breeches buoy (a chair like attachment) followed the line but became snarled half way across.

At 3 a.m. on Wednesday August 7th, Red Hill Sr. went out hand over hand along the rope as his body was tugged by the current of the rapids. Red Hill Sr. reached the tangled breech buoy and worked for hours until he was able to untangle it in order to allow the rescue.

With the arrival of dawn, thousands of people crowded the shoreline watching this drama unfold. At 8:30 a.m., Red Hill journeyed out again. This time Hill got within 130 feet (40m) from the scow. From here, he was able to talk to Loftberg and Harris. Hill discovered that one of the small coils of rope on the scow was wound around the big rope from the breeches-buoy, preventing the buoy from getting closer to the scow. Hill tried to shout

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directions to Loftberg and Harris but both had become so weak that they had difficulty untangling the rope. With Hill giving instructions and the persistence of both crew members, the rope was finally untangled. Hill returned to the roof of the Toronto Power House.

With Charles Possert and Thomas Darrington, both riggers from the Toronto Power Company working the lines, Hill was able to make his way to the stranded scow. Harris, suffering from hunger and exposure was the first removed from the scow to safety. Loftberg followed. It was 10 a.m. by the time Loftberg was brought safely to shore.

William "Red" Hill Sr. was awarded a Carnegie Life Saving Medal for his heroic efforts. The crew of the scow had been rescued without any loss of life.

May 1st 1950 - Two test pilots crawled out of a helicopter which crashed into the Niagara River approximately 300 yards upriver from the brink of the Horseshoe Falls. This helicopter crashed during a rescue attempt to save a woman who had become stranded in the Niagara River approximately 75 feet from the shoreline of Goat Island. The two airmen and the woman were subsequently rescued by boat.

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