

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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DUKW 34 AND M/V CARIBBEAN SEA

* Docket No.: DCA-10-MM-025
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Telephonic Interview of: BARBARA ANDERSON

Conference Room
Sector Delaware Bay
United States Coast Guard
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Monday
July 12, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice,
at 4:43 p.m.

BEFORE: LIAM LARUE
Accident Investigator

APPEARANCES:

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JOHN LAWRENCE, Vice President
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K-Sea Transportation

JOHN FITZGIBBONS
Ride the Ducks

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Sector Delaware Bay

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I N T E R V I E W

(4:43 p.m.)

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2
3 MR. LARUE: Okay, we've got the recorder on. It is 4:43
4 in the afternoon on Monday, July 12th. This is Liam LaRue from
5 NTSB and I'm here at Sector Delaware Bay in Philadelphia, and
6 we're here today talking with Barbara Anderson over the phone.

7 Barbara, could, can you make sure I've got your name
8 spelled correctly please? Just spell it for me.

9 MS. ANDERSON: B-a-r-b-a-r-a, A-n-d-e-r-s-o-n.

10 MR. LARUE: Fantastic. And I'm going to have everybody
11 else that's here go ahead and introduce themselves too.

12 MR. LAWRENCE: Captain John Lawrence from K-Sea
13 Transportation.

14 MR. GLADISH: Chief Warrant Officer Gladish, United
15 States Coast Guard, Sector Delaware Bay here in Philadelphia,
16 Casualty Investigations Division.

17 MR. FITZGIBBONS: John Fitzgibbons with Ride the Ducks.

18 MR. LARUE: All right, that's everybody.

INTERVIEW OF BARBARA ANDERSON

19
20 BY MR. LARUE:

21 Q. Just to start off, could I get your age, please?

22 A. Fifty-one.

23 Q. All right. And do you remember exactly where you were
24 sitting on the boat that day?

25 A. I do. I was the third seat back on the left, and I was

1 by the window.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Well, the open space.

4 Q. All right. And who was next to you?

5 A. David --

6 Q. Okay, great.

7 A. -- from Hungary.

8 Q. All right. So if you don't mind, just please walk us
9 through what you remember from that day and, you know, just give
10 us as much detail as you can, and then we'll step back through
11 with any questions we have after that.

12 A. Okay. Well, at one point during the tour, the boat
13 started smoking and I think the captain was saying that it was a
14 fire. So he asked the -- his son to -- at the time, I didn't know
15 it was his son, but he asked him to shut the engine down, which he
16 did. And then he called in to Ride the Ducks and they told him to
17 throw the anchor out, I believe, because that's what they did next
18 and I sort of heard part of that conversation. And we were
19 sitting in the water. I -- it seemed like a long time to me
20 because, I'll be honest with you, the whole boating this is not my
21 favorite and I do get kind of motion sickness --

22 Q. Um-hum.

23 A. -- and it was about 100 and some degrees and hot and
24 smelly. And we were anchored and floating and I was texting my
25 daughter to tell her that how awful this was. And at one point

1 the captain did take some duct tape and taped over the vent
2 because it was spewing some black smoke that didn't smell very
3 good.

4 During the text, I think I turned around and saw the
5 barge. It was far enough away, but I knew enough that I said to
6 myself this thing cannot stop, there's no way it can turn. Well,
7 I, at that time, thought we're all going to perish. So I was
8 sitting there for a while, and then I felt like I needed to do
9 something, so I stood up and said, "Grab a life jacket," and I
10 pulled the yellow tab. I think I held on to one, but I'm not
11 sure.

12 I looked back. The barge hit us and that was the last
13 thing I kind of remembered, and then I was in the water kind of
14 all chaotic, churning, turning, and it was pretty dark. I think I
15 must have opened my eyes because then I saw light. As soon as I
16 saw light, I popped up. But during my time in the water, I
17 remember thinking I cannot believe -- I thought the barge was
18 going to kill us actually, and then I was like I can't believe I'm
19 going to drown because this my worst fear. But I really wasn't --
20 I was -- like, I wasn't fearful. I was like, oh, well, I guess
21 I'll conquer that fear, and then I was at the top.

22 And then when I got to the top, I felt like I had to --
23 I was kind of feeling and coughing, but I felt like I had to climb
24 on the boat a little bit. I don't think it had submerged at that
25 point because I really recollect, I think, like putting my hand on

1 the boat. And I was tired and I wanted to just stop, but I said
2 to myself, Barbara, there's people under you. I almost had the
3 sense that maybe I felt people under me or somebody was grabbing
4 my leg. I don't know. So I just kept trying to get up, but the
5 boat went out from under me.

6 So then I was just there and all these people started
7 popping up. And I looked for my boyfriend, and then I heard
8 Jackie scream, "Laura." So, I turned to her, because I am a
9 mother. Fortunately, none of my children were on the boat. And I
10 saw Jackie was struggling with one of the Hungarian teachers, so I
11 climb over to her. And at this point, I am holding a life jacket,
12 but I didn't have it on yet. So I put that on. Actually, I put
13 that on before I swam over to her. I put it on, swam over to
14 Jackie, and then I helped get Timea in a life jacket, who's afraid
15 of the water. That's the other -- one of the Hungarian teachers.
16 So we got her situated. Then I saw my pocketbook drifting, so I
17 grabbed that. And then Paul had come over towards me and at that
18 point I remember looking up and seeing the Coast Guard boat
19 coming, you know, the rescue effort --

20 Q. Uh-huh.

21 A. -- and then they picked -- actually, a police boat
22 picked us up. I think the Coast Guard went and picked up somebody
23 else, and then we swam towards the police boat, and then I saw,
24 you know, the Navy SEAL boat. In the meantime, when I looked up,
25 the only thing I really recall seeing was the children swimming

1 towards -- well, other people; I don't know that they were all
2 children -- but people swimming towards the dock, and then I
3 remember thinking, well, that makes sense to head there. So that
4 was kind of my recollection of it. Once we got picked up, you
5 know, we were escorted to the Seaport Museum.

6 Q. Did you have any injuries?

7 A. Just a small cut on my arm.

8 Q. Did you end up going to the hospital?

9 A. I did go the hospital. I, however, was not checked out.
10 I'm a nurse, so when we got into the Seaport Museum, I know they
11 started a triage effort, but it wasn't necessary because there
12 were no, you know, significant injuries that they could discern at
13 the time. So, basically, once they got our information, Jackie
14 just asked me to go to the hospital with three of the Hungarian
15 children and we went -- we were ambulated over to Hahnemann.

16 Q. Okay. So you went with three of the kids to Hahnemann?

17 A. Yes, and the three children were checked out at
18 Hahnemann.

19 Q. Which ones was that again?

20 A. That was Peter, Adrienn, and Rena (ph.).

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. They were with me.

23 Q. Rena. All right, great. All right. I'm just going to
24 step back through and ask a couple of questions.

25 A. Wait. It wasn't Rena. Oh, my gosh, my brain. Hold on.

1 It wasn't Rena. Wait. It was -- yes, it was. Yes, it was.

2 Sorry. Sorry about that.

3 Q. No problem. From where you were sitting, you said that
4 you turned around and saw the barge. Did something make you turn
5 around or did you just happen to look back?

6 A. Yes. Now, I will be honest with you. I didn't
7 recollect this at the time, but the captain was conversing with
8 the Ride the Duck Central, I'll call it, and I know, you know, he
9 was saying that, you know, someone's going to be here, they're
10 going to send another boat. And then I heard him say something
11 about you don't have a boat, and I did hear the captain at one
12 point say this isn't good, and I think that was probably the point
13 I turned around.

14 Q. Okay. And how far off do you think the barge was at
15 that point?

16 A. I'm going to say -- wait. See, this is hard. I'm not
17 very good with distance. Maybe a half of a football field.

18 Q. So how long do you think it took from that point until
19 the barge hit you guys?

20 A. I'm thinking probably, I'm going to say a minute and a
21 half, two minutes.

22 Q. Okay. So not a long time?

23 A. Well, you know, you're trying to remember this. You
24 know, maybe it felt like a longer time because I had a -- I did
25 have time to like have all this thought process. Oh, because

1 another piece of -- I didn't even -- I forgot to mention this.
2 Another piece was between that time and the life, you know,
3 pulling the life jacket, I remember thinking should I jump or
4 should we stay on the boat, because I didn't want to panic people
5 because everybody was still really calm and sitting in their
6 seats. So I didn't want to panic them, but there was a piece of
7 me that said if we jump, we cannot out swim this barge. Like, it
8 was close enough for me to decide we couldn't do that. So I
9 thought, well, maybe it's good if we just all stay together.

10 Q. Uh-huh.

11 A. So I did have a, like a -- I'm going to say a little bit
12 of time to have all those thoughts.

13 Q. Okay. Did you hear the captain making radio calls to
14 the barge, to the tug and barge?

15 A. Not to the tug and barge, but to the, to the Duck
16 Central, I did.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. And the crewmate, in the meantime -- I didn't tell you
19 this part -- at one point did get up on top of the DUKW boat and I
20 know he grabbed a life jacket and got on top of the DUKW boat and,
21 I'm assuming, tried to alert them, but -- I mean, obviously, the
22 tugboat we couldn't even see and I don't know -- you know, I could
23 see the top of the barge, but it didn't appear that people saw us.
24 Let me put it that way. I didn't -- you know what I mean?

25 Q. Right. Did you have any issues getting the life jackets

1 down?

2 A. I did not, but I was one of the few people that did hear
3 "Pull the yellow tag", so that's what I did. I just pulled the
4 yellow tag. I think other people were struggling with some little
5 thing at the top, but I, you know, didn't have a problem because
6 that's what I did.

7 Q. Right. And so you were passing them out. I can't
8 remember if you said whether or not you got one for yourself or
9 not.

10 A. I wasn't really passing them out, I was just pulling the
11 yellow tags. And I think I did hold on to one because -- I think
12 I did. Because when I got to the top, I don't remember -- I had
13 one close by if I didn't pull the -- I think I had one. I'm
14 pretty certain I held on to mine.

15 Q. Okay. And then once you were in the water, you said it
16 was pretty chaotic, but do you remember if -- you know, a
17 particular direction you swam or if you had to pull on something
18 to get out?

19 A. Yeah. I felt like I had to -- that I was using the boat
20 to help me expedite getting out of the way so other people could
21 come up.

22 Q. And did holding onto the life jacket, you know, affect
23 that in any way, that you can remember?

24 A. I don't recall that. I do feel like I might have bumped
25 into something, people, something. Like it -- because I have a

1 sense of a lot of people being around and we needed to get out of
2 the way so other people -- you know what I mean? Like, it wasn't
3 just easy for people to keep coming up. Like, I had to try to get
4 out of the way and keep -- I guess I was kicking my feet at that
5 point --

6 Q. Uh-huh.

7 A. -- trying to get up.

8 Q. So, do you think you went out, you know, the window on
9 the side you were on, or do you think you went out maybe the, on
10 the other side, or --

11 A. See, I'm going to be honest with you. I just assumed I
12 went out the window the side I was on --

13 Q. Uh-huh.

14 A. -- but, really, I have zero clue. I think I totally --
15 once I -- once it capsized, I really don't recall anything other
16 than once I saw that light and then trying to get up.

17 Q. Right. Are you a good swimmer?

18 A. Not great, no. I mean, I'm -- I can swim, but I am 51.
19 I'm a little out of shape.

20 Q. I think that's --

21 A. And I do have a bit of a fear of boats and water, so
22 that didn't help, probably.

23 Q. Right. I was going to say this probably isn't helping
24 that fear, right?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. The last one before I pass it off. Who else was on the
2 police boat with you?

3 A. Jackie, Paul, Rachel, this very large man -- Jackie,
4 Paul, Rachel, the large man, and there was one other person. Oh,
5 Timea. It was Timea. And there might have been one other person,
6 but definitely those, that group.

7 Q. Great. All right, I'm going to pass it around.

8 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

9 Q. Barbara, this is John Lawrence.

10 A. Hi, John.

11 Q. I was at the house the other day, conducting some of the
12 interviews as well.

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. I think I met you. One -- first of all too, I just want
15 to mention that, you know, when we were talking to many of the
16 students out there, they were all very -- spoke very highly of
17 yourself and Ms. Kennedy as far as just all the support and help
18 that you had given them, you know, actually during the incident
19 and, obviously, afterwards, just to say that. But, really --

20 A. Thank you.

21 Q. -- the one question I have, and I know this is a
22 difficult question, is the two students that didn't make it, they
23 were sitting just forward and across from you?

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. Did you happen to see, at the time of the incident,

1 maybe any actions that they were doing at the time?

2 A. Unfortunately, I did not. Because I said that very
3 thing. Like, my thigh was probably right there where Zab was.
4 Because I -- that's -- I pretty much stood up to grab, you know,
5 the adult life jackets on that side of the boat.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. But, no, I really don't recall anything.

8 Q. Okay. And the other thing, did you happen to see on --
9 see the tugboat next to the barge at all? I don't know if we
10 covered that before.

11 A. No, I could not see the tugboat.

12 Q. Okay. And you didn't see anybody on the barge or
13 anything?

14 A. No, I did not.

15 Q. No? Okay. Thank you very much. That's all I have.

16 A. Okay, thank you.

17 BY MR. GLADISH:

18 Q. Barbara, my name is Chief Warrant Office Rick Gladish.
19 I work with the Investigations Division for the Coast Guard in
20 Philadelphia. I'm glad you're here with us today, and I only have
21 two questions. The first one is -- and forgive me if it was asked
22 and I just didn't hear it. Was there an order given by the
23 captain or the crewman on putting on the life jackets?

24 A. There was not. I am certain of that.

25 Q. You're certain of that. Okay.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. And, Barbara, what was the coordination like in the
3 situation? I know it didn't seem like a lot of time, you know, to
4 take any kind of action that would have, you know, got you to a
5 safe place, per se, but was the coordination between the captain
6 and the crewman, was it -- in your opinion, how did that go with
7 what was going on?

8 A. Any rapport between the captain and the crewman -- I
9 think he had him go on top of the boat. That's all I remember.

10 Q. Uh-huh.

11 A. I -- and, you know, there's no rapport because the kid's
12 on top and the captain was below.

13 Q. But up to the point of when the casualty occurred --

14 A. Oh, up until that point --

15 Q. Yeah, yeah, correct. I'm sorry.

16 A. -- he did have him -- you know, he got out of the seat
17 and the captain got in the seat and he helped throw the anchor
18 over. And then we were -- I -- well, me personally -- I shouldn't
19 say we. But I was trying to make light of it, so Jackie and I
20 were kind of joking around. Because when we had done our trip in
21 Hungary, the bus broke down. So, I'm like, oh, yeah, Jack, this
22 is like in Hungary when the bus broke down. Like, you're trying
23 to make light of it --

24 Q. Uh-huh.

25 A. -- because it was really hot --

1 Q. Uh-huh.

2 A. -- and kind of, you know, not a lot of fun sitting in
3 the ocean -- or in the river. But I don't recall that, you know,
4 there was really a whole of rapport between him and his son, but I
5 kind of turned around joking and -- and then, like I said, I was
6 texting my daughter, so you're looking down.

7 Q. That's all I have. Thank you, Barbara.

8 A. You're welcome.

9 Q. I'm going to pass it along now.

10 A. Okay.

11 BY MR. FITZGIBBONS:

12 Q. Barbara, this is John Fitzgibbons with Ride the Ducks.

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. You had said earlier that you heard a call in to Ride
15 the Ducks for assistance for a tow. Did he make any calls on the
16 radio, do you remember?

17 A. To the radio?

18 Q. On the radio, yes.

19 A. On the radio. I can't recall that.

20 Q. Okay. That's all I have.

21 A. Okay.

22 BY MR. LARUE:

23 Q. All right, Barbara, it's back to me. It's Liam from
24 NTSB. The last question is is there anything else that you can
25 think of that we didn't ask you about that might be important?

1 A. No, I don't think so.

2 Q. Okay. Well, then I thank you very much for talking to
3 us. I'm going to shut the recording off. I just want to make
4 sure you knew we were recording and it was okay with you?

5 A. Yes, that's perfectly fine, and good luck with your
6 investigation.

7 Q. Thank you.

8 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: DUKW 34 AND M/V CARIBBEAN SEA
 Interview of Barbara Anderson

DOCKET NUMBER: DCA-10-MM-025

PLACE: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

DATE: July 12, 2010

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to
the recording accomplished at the hearing.

Karen M. Galvez
Transcriber