

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: JANET KEEN

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

Sunday  
July 11, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice,  
at 2:53 p.m.

BEFORE: LIAM LARUE  
Accident Investigator

## APPEARANCES:

LIAM LARUE, Accident Investigator  
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JOHN LAWRENCE, Vice President  
Health, Safety, Quality and Environment  
K-Sea Transportation

BILL GATLEY  
Ride the Ducks Philadelphia

RICHARD GLADISH, Chief Warrant Officer  
United States Coast Guard

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>I N D E X</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
Interview of Janet Keen:		
By Mr. LaRue		4
By Mr. Lawrence		14
By CWO Gladish		15
By Mr. Gatley		16
By Mr. LaRue		16

I N T E R V I E W

(2:53 p.m.)

1  
2  
3 MR. LARUE: It is about 2:53 on Sunday, July 11th. This  
4 is Liam LaRue from NTSB here at Sector Delaware Bay, and we are  
5 today to interview Mrs. Janet Keen, and I'm going to have  
6 everybody here in the room introduce themselves.

7 MR. LAWRENCE: Captain John Lawrence from K-Sea  
8 Transportation.

9 MR. GLADISH: Chief Warrant Officer Rick Gladish, United  
10 States Coast Guard, Sector Delaware Bay, here in Philadelphia. I  
11 work with the Casualty Investigations Division.

12 MR. GATLEY: Bill Gatley with Ride the Ducks.

13 MR. LARUE: Okay.

INTERVIEW OF JANET KEEN

14  
15 BY MR. LARUE:

16 Q. Jan, just two quick questions before I have you jump  
17 into your story.

18 A. Sure.

19 Q. Could I get your age please?

20 A. Sixty-seven.

21 Q. Okay. Great. And do you remember exactly where you  
22 were sitting on the boat?

23 A. I'm pretty sure that I was sitting in the fourth row  
24 back on the right side.

25 Q. Okay. Great. And then, what's your recollection of

1 where your husband was sitting?

2 A. Well, I believe he was sitting in the second seat from  
3 the back on the opposite side, on the left side, because he  
4 couldn't -- you know, he got on and sat down.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. As best he could.

7 Q. So --

8 A. And we went up forward a little bit.

9 Q. So does that mean there was just one seat behind him or  
10 two seats behind him?

11 A. I think there was just one.

12 Q. Okay. And do you remember if there was anyone sitting  
13 behind him?

14 A. I don't believe so.

15 Q. Okay. Great. So what I'd like you to do please is to  
16 just, to jump in with your story, you know, from the time you got  
17 on the DUKWs and tell us about, you know, what you remember.

18 A. Well, as you know, we had our grandson with us and the  
19 trip was to show him a little of historic Philadelphia, and so we  
20 enjoyed the land portion of the tour and we were talking about  
21 some of the things and some of the Hungarian kids that were around  
22 us were talking -- nothing specific but we were commenting on  
23 other sights that we were seeing. And then it got time to go in  
24 the water and RJ, our grandson, got so excited because we're going  
25 in the water now, and I know we went as far south as we were

1 supposed to and we turned around to come back and I, I think we  
2 were -- in my mind it felt like we were about halfway back to the  
3 starting point of going into the river.

4           And we looked at -- you know, we looked at the boats and  
5 we looked at the aquarium which was on the other side of the  
6 river, but we didn't go -- I don't think we went quite that far  
7 but we were talking about it, and my grandson was kind of standing  
8 up in front of the seats and he was looking backwards towards my  
9 husband. And all of a sudden he and some other kids in front of  
10 him -- well, first of all, before -- I should go back. Before  
11 that happened, I smelled what I thought smelled like burnt sugar,  
12 even before I saw the white smoke. And then I -- so I started  
13 looking around and then I saw the white smoke and it got a little  
14 thicker and it -- to me it was a definite smell of burned sugar.  
15 And then my grandson said oh, no. It smelled like pretzels. I  
16 said okay, it smelled like pretzels.

17           But the captain immediately pulled the intern or  
18 whatever he was out of the seat, turned off the motors, called  
19 into his headquarters and said that, you know, there was a fire of  
20 some sort and he -- we needed a tow. And I believe he only did  
21 that one time, if I'm not mistaken, and then he sat down with his  
22 back to the front of the barge -- front of the boat, and he was  
23 talking to us, giving us little anecdotes to keep us occupied  
24 while we were waiting for the tow. And all of a sudden he jumped  
25 up and he picked up the mic and he started -- he said, barge going

1 north on the Delaware, we're dead in the water in front of you,  
2 and I know he said that at least twice. That's when I turned  
3 around to see what he was talking about.

4 Well, my grandson started screaming. People in front of  
5 him started screaming, and he kept saying we're going to die,  
6 we're going to die. And I'm trying to calm him down, but when I  
7 turned around, from where I was sitting, I could only see directly  
8 out of the back of the boat. I couldn't see to the sides so I had  
9 no idea of the size of the barge. I just knew that it was very  
10 close. And so he grabbed a hold of me. I grabbed a hold of him  
11 and I said, if we go in the water, you just remember to kick, and  
12 that's about all I had time to say and the barge hit us, but when  
13 it first hit us, it kind of pushed us to the side and I remember  
14 thinking, oh, we're going to be okay. It's just going to push us  
15 out of the way.

16 Well, the next thing I knew, it went over and we were  
17 all in the water. And for some reason, I thought if I pick my  
18 right arm up I'll know I'm going in the right direction and I'll  
19 kick, but I still had hold of my grandson and he had all a hold of  
20 me around my neck. And we both kicked and kicked, and then I'm  
21 sure it was only a very few seconds, we saw the water become  
22 lighter and we knew that we were getting close to the surface.

23 And as I surfaced, I saw these two life vests floating  
24 and I grabbed a hold of them. I handed one to him and one to me  
25 and I still kept a hold of him but at least we knew we were safe

1 in that respect, and I looked around to see where other people  
2 were. I could see some people were closer to the dock. Some  
3 people were further out in the Delaware than I was, and I didn't  
4 see my husband right away, and then a minute or so later I heard  
5 him calling me and I turned around and I finally saw him and I  
6 lifted up my arm and waved to him so he knew where we were and he  
7 swam over. And once we were all together we kind of relaxed as  
8 much as you could in that situation. I never thought we weren't  
9 going to be rescued because I saw all the boats and I knew that  
10 they would get to us.

11 But when we went on the boat, as you know, he was  
12 separated from us, and the boat that picked RJ and me up had two  
13 women on it as well, and when they got to the dock -- we had  
14 trouble getting really close enough and it was difficult to get --  
15 for us to get out, but the two women got out and then RJ got out.  
16 They lifted him up by both arms and just pulled him up on the dock  
17 and then somebody took him up towards the Seaport building. And  
18 the guy who -- the policeman who was driving the boat said to me,  
19 can you get out by yourself? And I said I don't think so because  
20 I was still too shaky. And he said, then do you mind, we're going  
21 out to look for more people. So I said no, I don't mind at all.

22 And as we turned around and started heading back out  
23 into the Delaware, I saw my purse floating by and I said that's my  
24 purse and he tried to grab it with the hook but he couldn't. I  
25 said well, don't waste any time on it, you know, and he -- we went



1 out further looking and they had a sonar on the boat and they were  
2 trying to look for any anomalies to try to mark the position of  
3 where the DUKW went down. And so I was watching with him as much  
4 as I could and I pointed out a couple things and he said, oh, no,  
5 that's nothing. And finally he did mark, he did mark it somehow.  
6 I don't know what he did but I saw it come up on the screen,  
7 marking whatever number it was.

8           And I mean, I knew that we were like between 40 and 50  
9 feet deep at that particular point. Anyway, at that point, once  
10 he did that, we didn't see any other people floating around and he  
11 said, I've got to take you back because they're going to be  
12 wondering where you are, and I was thinking the same thing, so he  
13 did take me back and they helped me off and two policemen walked  
14 with me back to the Seaport and I was reunited with my husband and  
15 my grandson and everybody was wonderful, as best they could. I  
16 mean, that we had shirts. We had blankets. We had sweat suits.  
17 We had shoes. We had socks. But every -- you know, whatever they  
18 could give us to keep us comfortable, they did. And of course,  
19 staying there a few hours until we had given our statement was a  
20 little -- it was difficult because we were really cold by that  
21 time since we were so wet and it was air conditioned in there.

22           But they did the best they could and a policeman went  
23 back to the Visitor's Center and got my license for me so at least  
24 I would have some kind of identification and somebody else went  
25 with us from -- I guess it was the Salvation Army, when I went to

1 get our car, because the parking garage closes at six and we had  
2 no way to get out of there, he went with us. I got my car and  
3 drove it up and another person, a male in a white Prius, the two  
4 of us, he went -- the guy from the Salvation Army went and got a  
5 hold of somebody to let us out, and then we were on our way. We  
6 went back to the hotel. And we got numerous phone calls from  
7 different services, and of course, when the news agencies started  
8 calling, we couldn't figure out how they knew where we were  
9 because we hadn't given anybody the hotel where we were staying in  
10 Philadelphia, but they're very resourceful.

11 Q. That they are.

12 A. Uh-huh. So we really didn't give any details to anybody  
13 because, you know, we had to relive it, and actually, I did not  
14 realize that I had been hurt at all except for a small scrape on  
15 my toe until the next day when I realized that my forehead was  
16 really sore and I could feel the bump, and as a matter of fact, I  
17 had two bruises on my cervical spine that I didn't find till  
18 yesterday, so -- but we did go to the doctor Friday afternoon and  
19 I was concerned because I have asthma and I knew I had swallowed  
20 water and I was concerned about that, and also for my grandson who  
21 has allergy type problems. But they listened to my chest and  
22 (indiscernible) chest and they said, well, you didn't aspirate any  
23 of the water so that's a good thing. And they gave us Xanax, for  
24 both of us, and other than watching for other symptoms, there was  
25 nothing more they wanted to do immediately.

1           And the funny thing is I'm scheduled for a stress test  
2 Friday. I said I really think I already had it.

3           (Laughter.)

4           MS. KEEN: But that'll be a good thing because that will  
5 show if there was any damage that way, you know, but I, I was  
6 doing better than my husband is emotionally and I think that's  
7 because I didn't realize how big that barge was until I saw it on  
8 TV the next day going over the boat. Then I realized how much  
9 danger we were in. You know what I mean? I just didn't -- I  
10 guess -- I don't know.

11           BY MR. LARUE:

12           Q. Right, right.

13           A. Sometimes. So -- and as long -- and the important thing  
14 to me, of course, was that we were okay. We were there. We're  
15 still alive.

16           Q. Right. And we're certainly glad that you guys are okay.

17           A. Yeah, I am too. Thank you. So I had lost my wallet.  
18 I've lost my keys. I've lost my sunglasses. Something else was  
19 in there. My cell phone, which I don't care about. I mean, I  
20 will get a new one but I was concerned that it was ironic that the  
21 things that were missing were all identifying in some way, and I  
22 do know the officer who had my pocketbook told me that someone had  
23 found it on the shore and turned it in, so I don't know if the  
24 someone that found it helped himself to the wallet. I don't know.  
25 So we decided, well, for the (indiscernible) and the problem we're

1 going to have our locks changed.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. And of course our cards we'll take care of.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. So that's it.

6 Q. Well, let me step back and just ask you a few questions  
7 about --

8 A. Sure.

9 Q. About the story. Could you tell me a little bit about  
10 the safety brief the captain gave?

11 A. In the beginning he was, he was fine. He told us, you  
12 know, that -- he showed us that the one side was for child or  
13 anybody up to 90 pounds and the other side were for over 90 pounds  
14 and adults, and we knew that, but there was no reason to put them  
15 on while we were driving around the city, and he didn't say --  
16 when we got into the water, he didn't say you should put them on.  
17 And I guess none of us really thought about it at that point. I  
18 mean, I've been on -- I can't begin to tell you how many cruises  
19 and to the talks that they give you with regard to emergencies on  
20 the ship and your life vest and all that, but he just didn't say  
21 put them on and he never said put them on. As far as I can tell,  
22 as far as I remember, even when he saw the barge he didn't say put  
23 them on.

24 Q. Okay. You described some of the radio calls that they  
25 captain made.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. And you said that there were, there were two that he  
3 called out to the barge specifically?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Do you remember seeing if he actually may have reached  
6 down and changed the channel on the radio at all at that -- any  
7 point?

8 A. Not that I recall. He may have done it but I -- if he  
9 did, I didn't notice.

10 Q. Okay. Let's see here. Are you a -- can you swim?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. I can float, obviously.

14 Q. What's that?

15 A. I can float.

16 Q. Oh. And the boat that you were pulled out onto, you  
17 said it was a police boat?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And there were two other women on board?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Do you -- did you ever, you know, get a name for those  
22 women? Were they American, Hungarian?

23 A. I did not get a name and one -- I think they were  
24 American. One was a younger girl. She had reddish hair, if I  
25 remember correctly. I mean, she was probably a teenager, not a

1 young teenager but almost an adult, I would say. And the other  
2 one was an older woman, maybe, maybe around 50 or so with short  
3 hair, and I did see her in the Seaport. She was interviewed  
4 extensively by a -- and I don't know what branch of the service  
5 this woman was in, this detective, but she was heavysset, a black  
6 woman, so I don't know if that helps you at all, but that, that  
7 was the same woman that had been on our boat.

8 Q. Okay. I think that's all the questions that I've got  
9 right now. I'm going to pass it off and see if the other  
10 gentlemen here have any questions.

11 A. Okay.

12 BY MR. LAWRENCE:

13 Q. This is John Lawrence.

14 A. Hi.

15 Q. Mrs. Keen, I was just wondering if the -- do you  
16 remember anybody telling you just before the barge hit, and maybe  
17 you've said this already and I didn't catch it, to put on your  
18 life jackets?

19 A. No. No one did.

20 Q. Or to -- I've heard reports to get off the boat. Did  
21 anyone give you any instructions at all just before the barge hit?

22 A. Not that I recall, and not that I heard. And like I  
23 said, a lot of those kids were screaming so if somebody said  
24 something, it's possible I didn't hear it.

25 Q. Okay. Do you remember anybody actually jumping off the

1 boat prior to being in the collision?

2 A. No, I don't.

3 Q. Okay. Thank you. That's all I have.

4 A. Sure.

5 BY CWO GLADISH:

6 Q. Ma'am, it's Coast Guard here, Mr. Gladish. How's your  
7 grandson doing? Have you heard from him since he left on the  
8 plane?

9 A. I spoke to him yesterday and I spoke to his grandparents  
10 and his mother and he's -- it's a big adventure at this point. A  
11 Navy seal saved him. He thought that was pretty cool. He got  
12 free shirts and free shorts and free -- he was so involved with  
13 the things that happened afterwards that I really don't think he  
14 was giving a lot of thought to the actual trauma itself, but I do  
15 know he was interviewed at his grandfather's home in Baton Rouge.  
16 I guess it was last night, Friday -- I'm sorry -- Friday night  
17 when they arrived home, which was probably somewhere between six  
18 and seven, by one of the local TV stations.

19 Q. Your husband said that, you know -- you know, he said  
20 he's only eight or nine, correct?

21 A. Yeah. He'll be nine in October.

22 Q. Right. So he seemed to think -- grandfather seemed to  
23 think he's, you know, young and pretty resilient yet, that --

24 A. Well, that's what we think.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. But you just never know.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. You know. I mean, all of a sudden he wanted to sleep  
4 with a nightlight on, and that before this accident happened,  
5 which he hadn't done in years.

6 Q. Right.

7 A. You don't know what sets them off.

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. But actually at this point, I would say he was 100  
10 percent fine, as far as you could see.

11 Q. Very good, ma'am. Thank you.

12 A. Okay.

13 BY MR. GATLEY:

14 Q. This is Bill Gatley with Ride the Ducks. Just want to  
15 say that we're very happy that you're here to do the interview.

16 A. Thank you.

17 Q. And your family recovery. If there's anything that you  
18 need or your husband needs -- I think we've made contact with your  
19 family a couple times -- don't hesitate to call us. We'll do  
20 whatever we can to help you, and I really don't have any other  
21 questions.

22 A. That's (indiscernible) and everything is fine. I mean,  
23 we're doing -- we're replacing what we have to replace that we  
24 need at this point. That's it.

25 BY MR. LARUE:



1 Q. Hi, Jan. This is Liam from NTSB again.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Just the last question is, is there anything else that  
4 we haven't asked you about that might be important for us to know?

5 A. Not that I can think of.

6 Q. Okay. Great. I'm going to go ahead and turn off the  
7 recording. I just want to make sure that it was okay with you  
8 that I recorded this?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Okay. Great. I'm turning it off.

11 (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  
                                  Telephonic Interview of Janet Keen

DOCKET NUMBER:           DCA-10-MM-025

PLACE:                     Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

DATE:                      July 11, 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.

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Susan Ueberroth  
Transcriber