

On Saturday, July 28, 2007, Mike and Lynn Holda met Cindy LaRosa and Kevin Magee at the Rocky River public boat launch. The day was a hot 75-80 deg F with overcast skies and the wind blowing from the north. The past few days had been stormy with rain, but it was decided to try and do some diving despite the less than promising conditions. After launching Mike's 19' boat "Erie Lady" and undergoing the almost mandatory police "safety" inspection while going down the river, they reached the lake to discover 3' seas with occasional 4' waves and a fresh breeze with small whitecaps. It was decided to press ahead to a nearby wreck and see how the conditions progressed.

They traveled about 6 miles to the wreck of the "Two Fannies," a barkentine that sprang a leak in rough weather in August, 1890, after 28 years of service on the Great Lakes. She was carrying iron ore from Escanaba, MI, to Cleveland, OH, as a consort under tow with two other ships by the tug "Crusader." After losing the battle at keeping the water out with the pumps, the entire crew escaped safely in the yawl boat right before the ship plunged under the waves in 55' of water off Bay Village, OH. After hooking the wreck, everyone geared up while Mike's wife Lynn watched the boat and relaxed. The seas were subsiding slightly, and the sun was beginning to make an appearance. The surface visibility was very good at 10'-15', and upon descending it was discovered this great visibility extended all the way to the bottom. In fact, this was the best viz anyone had ever seen on this wreck. The bottom temperature was a relatively warm 52-53 deg F, and the ambient light was bright and sunny. The anchor hooked the wreck on a piece of the hull that was about 20' away from the rest of the wreck on the north side. The ship lies east-west with the bow pointing east, the hull sides mostly collapsed, and wood debris filling the middle of the wreck.

The stem and part of a cutwater are standing in a pointy bow shape. The cutwater looks like it may have once held a scrollhead since it is so prominent. Aft can be found a massive fallen Sampson post and the spindle of a very large windlass with the pawl rim, Carrick supports, and end spools all easily viewed. The iron cover of a capstan can be seen lying near the fallen Sampson post on the starboard side. Frames and planking can be seen on both sides of the ship, sometimes standing 3'-5' high and sometimes fallen and splayed outwards. Due to the excellent visibility, it could be seen that many large hull pieces run out away from the ship, creating a large debris field to be explored. Several large centerposts are standing 5'-8' high in the center of the ship followed by a standing centerboard box that is about 2' wide and 8' high. On the port side up against the box is a fallen mushroom-shaped capstan lying on its side. Above the centerboard box are suspended deck beams and hatch frames, all precariously hanging in space and balanced on the centerboard. Near the box on the starboard side can be seen the centerboard winch lying on the bottom. More centerposts can be found aft of the box, and then a second centerboard box is encountered. This is the second time in as many weeks that Kevin has noticed this fairly rare feature of double centerboards on a shipwreck, both on barkentines. More hatch frames are suspended above this second centerboard

box, and the second centerboard winch can be found lying on the bottom near the hull on the starboard side.

More centerposts with a distinctive "T" shape are aft of the second box, and then a standing rudder is at the stern. The rudder is large in size and stands about 8' above the bottom with the rudderpost reaching about 15' high. The sides of the ship stand 5' high at the stern, especially on the starboard side, and the curved underside shape of the hull is visible. Due to the excellent visibility, one thing that is immediately obvious is just how big of a ship the "Two Fannies" really was. It was 150' in length and 33' in beam, just slightly smaller than the "Dundee." Despite the great visibility, the full width of the ship could not be seen without swimming a considerable distance from side to side, and all of the equipment of this ship is oversized and huge when compared to similar equipment of the smaller schooners of the era. Overall, it was fantastic to see this wreck under these conditions, and to top it off, dive treasure was found and recovered.

After surfacing, conditions had calmed to 2' seas with bright and sunny skies. Therefore, it was decided to proceed another 6 miles farther up the coast to the next wreck, the "Craftsman," a steel barge that capsized and sank in rough seas in June, 1958, off Avon Point in 40' of water while being towed from Huron, OH, to Cleveland, OH. It had a crane and two crewmen aboard. The Coast Guard saved both crewmen just in time, and the crane was pitched out of its turret during the sinking event. This is one of the wrecks surveyed and moored by MAST, so it was convenient to attach to the mooring. Upon descending, the mooring was discovered to be attached to a large permanent concrete block off the northeast corner of the wreck with the wreck lying east-west. A rope runs from the mooring to the deck of the wreck, which is about 5'-8' above the hard rock bottom. A large winch is located on the deck on the northeast corner along with some bitts (bollards) and cleats. Swimming along the length of the wreck, many bitts, cleats, and occasional deck openings can be seen. The openings have ladders that lead down into the interior of the barge, but it is mostly filled with silt and would be extremely hard to enter. A 55-gallon drum was partially buried on its side in one opening on the northwest corner of the wreck. A large circular turret with geared teeth can be found near the center of the barge where the crane used to be mounted, and a second large deck winch can be found at the southwest corner.

After following the rope back to the mooring block, it continues to the east about 100' until it attaches to the tip of the crane's boom. The boom is a steel truss structure and lies in a northwest-southeast direction. Due to the great visibility, one could navigate to the crane far off the line, and lots of cable and other metal debris was found on the bottom along the way. Once the boom is reached, it can be followed to the southeast until reaching the remains of the crane cab, which is attached to the boom and lying on its side with its bottom pointing south. Small wheels that would have mated with the barge's turret can be seen on the underside along with a large tree lying on the bottom stuck against the full length

of the cab. Two pulley wheels for the boom's cables can be seen attached to the top of the large metal square cab, which is partially crushed. Nestled between the boom and the main cab is a large clamshell bucket for the crane, a detail never before noticed in poorer visibility. At the aft end of the cab is a boiler that would have been mounted vertically. The top end is open, and it is now filled with silt.

Seen hugging the crane cab was a large school of minnows, and the barge had at least three large curious bass, several perch, and tons of gobies on it. The bottom temperature was a balmy 64-65 deg F, and the visibility was so good that the bottom could still be seen half way up the mooring line. Once again, dive treasure was found and recovered, making for a profitable day. It was an excellent day to be out on the lake despite the poor forecast, and after the dive a lazy swim around the boat was undertaken by everyone to cool off. Finally, a pleasant boat ride back along the coast to Rocky River was done with time taken to look at all the rich mansions along the lakefront.