

On Wednesday, June 25, 2008, Aqua Specialist's mid-week evening dives aboard the "Holiday" began for the season. It was a pleasant 70 deg F evening near the old Diamond Jim's Steakhouse on the Cuyahoga River where six divers gathered at 6:00 pm for a one-tank dive. The divers included John Norris, Jay McGrath, Chris Pearson, and Kevin Magee. Captain Wayne Bratton piloted the "Holiday" down the river and out into Lake Erie to dive the "Old Cleveland Crib." This submerged water intake is in approximately 50' of water and is marked by a large white buoy less than a mile west of the "5-Mile Crib" off downtown Cleveland. Since the buoy already marks the crib, the boat was anchored so its transom was near the buoy. The divers then swam to the buoy and used it to descend/ascend.

Upon descending, the large chain of the buoy was found to be attached to a concrete block on the northwest corner of the crib near its top in about 35' of water. The chain then travels 10'-15' further to the east to another concrete block with a floating bucket to keep the chain partially off the bottom. Wrapped around the buoy's chains were at least one boat's anchor rope and several smaller polypropylene lines. Good water clarity was also found with about 5'-8' of visibility on top of the crib. Despite the late hour, ambient lighting was good, and a light was not required to see. The crib is constructed of many large and small stone blocks all neatly piled to form a large circular mound with a depression at its top center. The crib is approximately 100 feet in diameter, 50' deep at its base, and 35' deep at its top. Swimming towards the center of the crib, one can descend into its center intake cavity. This cavity is approximately square in shape and lined with large wood timbers to form a box with a large wooden grate at the bottom. This grate measures approximately 30 feet square, and its sides are also grated at the edges by downward sloping metal bars. The top of the grate is approximately 45' deep. Peering through the grate's openings near the sides, the bottom can be seen about 5 feet below, but at the center a deep vertical shaft can be seen cut into the bedrock that descending into inky blackness that no dive light could penetrate. The water intake's tunnel supposedly descends to a 90' depth. No noticeable suction was detected on top of the grate, but a slight north current was obvious on top of the crib and at the surface.

Surprisingly, not much fish life was found beyond gobies and a few perch. Returning to the top of the crib and descending over its sides, visibility was found to decrease dramatically below a depth of 45', and nothing could be seen deeper than that. However, around the sides of the crib on the southwest side were found large rafts of timbers, some constructed in a linear grated fashion. Iron railroad rails were found on the east side, and large boulders were found scattered all about. Water temperature was very warm at about 65 deg F with no thermocline detected throughout the dive. At the end of the dive, a large school of minnows surrounded the divers at the safety stop under the buoy. Upon surfacing it was found the wind had shifted, moving the boat farther away from the buoy and requiring a long surface swim against the surface current to reach

the boat. The wind and seas had also increased from 1' to 2', and a rain storm was obviously coming. After all divers were recovered, it started to gently rain, but thanks to the large size and comfort of the boat, all stayed dry as they headed back to shore while eating their sub sandwiches provided as part of the trip. It was a great relaxing after-work dive, and more trips will be run on July 16, July 30, Aug 13, Aug 27, and Sept 10 for those that would like to sign up at Aqua Specialists.