



Labour Day safety patrol By David Acton

On Monday September 1 Fraser Lifeboat departed Steveston and headed for Sand Heads where approximately 200 plus vessels were engaged in sport fishing. A call came in from Coast Guard Radio around 11:15 saying a vessel had sunk and was posing a navigational hazard. The Department of Fisheries Patrol vessel transferred the 3 occupants from a pleasure craft. Fraser Lifeboat headed for the location and after talking to Coast Guard Radio and the Fisheries vessel, we were asked to try and tow the submerged vessel to Wellington Point in Ladner.

We conducted an SAP and determined if it was safe to approach the vessel, concerned it may sink fully. A quick release tow was attached, and with some effort we pulled the boat out of the water and towed it safely to Wellington Point. We were prepared that if we slowed down the vessel would sink again, which it did just near the dock. A line was passed to shore and the owner and his friends were able to pull it into the boat launch with help from a truck. All in all, the boater was very lucky to get his boat back and that no one was injured when it initially sank.

A6 The Delta Optimist September 4, 2025

Big sockeye run also surprised Tsawwassen First Nation

PHIL MELNYCHUK
pmelnichuk@delta-optimist.com

The silver sockeye came back in big numbers this summer putting smiles on the faces of Tsawwassen First Nation.

About 20 fishers with the TFN have been on the water off Roberts Bank, Steveston and the Fraser River, enjoying the surprise.

“People are just beaming and smiling right now,” said Krystal Lockert, manager of environmental stewardship with TFN.

While about 2.7 million sockeye were predicted to show up, about 10 million decided to make the trip up the Fraser River this summer.

“It took us a bit off guard, because as you know it’s not a dominant year for sockeye,” said

Lockert. “It’s actually next year we were anticipating a big run.

“It’s a real feel-good story because salmon, particularly sockeye, ... it’s something that they have always had,” and the lack of access to sockeye over the years has been sad.”

She pointed out TFN hasn’t had a sockeye community food fishery since 2022.

There are other species of salmon but sockeye connects everyone in the community with canning and smoking activities, she added.

“Even having a little bit of that back is a reminder, or having the opportunity to have sockeye, three years removed from the last time, is really well appreciated in our community,” she said.

She said the TFN was



TSAWWASSEN FIRST NATION PHOTO

About 20 fishers with the TFN have been on the water off Roberts Bank, Steveston and the Fraser River, enjoying the silver, sockeye salmon run.

as surprised as any at the size of this year’s early Stuart River sockeye run, saying they haven’t been able to fish those since 2008.

While some criticize Fisheries and Oceans Canada for its predictions of the run size, Lockert says it’s not easy to be exact.

And with sockeye, it’s difficult to know the size of the run until test fisheries have taken place.

Closure of fish farms and cooler ocean temperatures the last few years are two possible explanations for healthier salmon returns.

“There’s no one kind of smoking gun to point

to it,” she said.

And maybe all the salmon habitat restoration projects are starting to have an effect, she added.

One possible explanation is that more salmon are escaping the Alaska fishery farther north.

Lockert said there’s always lots of back and forth between the stakeholders on the Pacific Salmon Commission, including the Americans, she said.

“Basically, we have to share to an extent.” And she recognized commercial fishers do have a lot of concerns and have been really fair in their discussions with TFN, she said.

As well, with respect to escapement, “you want to allow some fish to be caught.

“You don’t want to

allow an excess ... to make it the spawning grounds,” Lockert said, adding that could hurt future returns.

“I think everyone is looking at what the best possible outcome is for the future of the fish.”

Tsawwassen First Nation operates a community fishery in which the nation buys the salmon from the fishers, then distributes it to Tsawwassen members.

She added they’re responsible just as much as anyone else for the future of the fish and following regulations.

“It’s a real priority for us to be transparent about what we’re doing and how we’re doing it.”

Another late summer sockeye run may happen while a huge run of pink salmon, possibly 27 million, is expected later.



September 11, 2025 **The Delta Optimist A19**

Community

Forty-five years volunteering on the Fraser

The well-reported huge salmon run on the Fraser River has given Aboriginal and recreational fishers a bonanza of fish. The commercial fleet was also given a short opening in the river.

Over the years the Delta Lifeboat has built a close relationship with the Coast Guard, Victoria Vessel Traffic Services (which monitors all commercial shipping) river pilots, commercial shipping, Aboriginal and commercial fishers.

Assisting commercial traffic navigate through dozens of nets often set across a narrow channel helps ensure the safety of both fishers and transiting vessels and reduces possible conflict, especially in the recently



PHOTO SUBMITTED

The Delta Lifeboat with the Coast Guard hovercraft conducting joint search and rescue exercises.

imposed clear transit zones.

Aboard the Delta Lifeboat, senior coxn' John Horton has, over the years, conducted safety patrols during Fraser River fisheries.

Supported by an all-volunteer crew, these patrols have proved highly successful not only assisting fishers in trouble but helping to reduce

accidents by giving early warning to fishers, which enables them to remove nets from the channel in time for a ship or tug and barge to pass.

The Delta Lifeboat is owned and operated by the Canadian Lifeboat Institution (CLI) and although it has no policing authority, it works closely with the Vancouver Port Authority.

The CLI's Fraser Lifeboat also conducts similar patrols based out of Steveston.

On Saturday, Aug. 30, the Canadian Coast Guard recognized Horton's 45 years of volunteer support to Marine Search and Rescue, much of which has been assisting the fishing industry.

Horton has personally logged 929 rescues or assists which have included searches, fires, sinkings, strandings, medical distress, man overboard and many disabled vessels towed to safety.

Although 90 years old in November, Horton is still very active, passing his skills to other eager volunteers.

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On Saturday, Aug. 30, the Canadian Coast Guard recognized Horton's 45 years of volunteer support to Marine Search and Rescue.



Government of Canada

Gouvernement du Canada

News release

September 2, 2025– Ottawa, ON – National Defence / Canadian Armed Forces / Canadian Coast Guard

The Department of National Defence (DND) today announced the integration of the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) into the Defence Team, marking an important step forward in strengthening Canada's maritime security. This change will enhance coordination across government and ensure Canada is even better prepared to safeguard its waters and coastline.

By joining National Defence, the CCG will add its world-class expertise and capabilities to efforts that protect Canada's sovereignty, building on its legacy of protecting Canada's maritime interests and resources. This transition also includes key personnel from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, bringing greater collaboration across departments in support of Canada's maritime priorities.

The CCG will remain a civilian Special Operating Agency, with no change to its status. It will continue to play its vital role in search and rescue, icebreaking, environmental response, safe navigation, and ocean science. To complement and build on this transition, the Government of Canada has also proposed [expanding the CCG's services](#) to include maritime security activities under Bill C-2, which is currently before Parliament. With this, the CCG will be positioned to do even more to protect Canadians at sea and support national security.

Through this integration, the CCG, DND, and the Canadian Armed Forces will be able to work more closely than ever, sharing information and coordinating operations to meet emerging challenges. This is especially important in the Arctic and other regions where cooperation is essential to keep Canada safe and secure.

The inclusion of the CCG in the Defence Team is a milestone that reflects the Government of Canada's commitment to strengthening maritime security, advancing collaboration, and ensuring a strong and coordinated presence in Canada's waters.





During Thursday night training John O. received his crewmember epaulettes from David. John already qualified on October 15, 2022 but CLI coxswains are still catching up handing out the new epaulettes.



Callout and training

September 13. While preparing the Fraser lifeboat for departure on Saturday morning a call came in from CCG Radio about a disabled white sport fisher with 2 men aboard, approximately 1.5 nm NW of Sand Heads, possibly a fishing line caught in prop and needing a tow. CCGR advised they didn't consider it urgent and the crew was on their own if they answered it.

The decision was made to respond to the call and the Fraser departed for Sand Heads. While underway the crew had time to do the G.A.R., layout the towline and handed Troy his New Crewmember epaulettes.

Congratulations Troy! B.Z.

At Sand Heads a course was plotted with

the last known GPS position. Lookouts were appointed but it was like finding a needle in a haystack because there were many white sport fisher vessels. The Fraser did several searches of the area but never saw the reported vessel or any other vessel having problems. The crew advised CCG Radio and discontinued the search, heading back for Sea Reach to proceed with the training.



At Sea Reach it was arranged that the Delta lifeboat would hide MOB dummy Oscar somewhere on the shore near Reifel Bird Sanctuary and Fraser was “tasked” to conduct a shoreline search. The Delta crew had made the search more difficult by dressing Oscar up with a dark blue jacket over the orange floating suit but the Fraser crew was able to locate Oscar. An SAP was conducted and it was decided to beach Fraser and retrieve Oscar with the extension ladder. Still too deep to get ashore the X-boat was used to recover and bring Oscar aboard.

After the successful exercise the Fraser rafted with Delta where a debrief was held while enjoying a cup of coffee and cookies. Before departing back to the stations, a knot tying exercise with both crews was conducted by Ron. As of note, Juan donated a man overboard pole to the CLI.

Training and callout

Saturday September 20. The Fraser started the training by filling up the fuel tanks at the Steveston fuel dock. Because there is an always changing crew with different experience and knowledge on board even fueling is a training exercise. After the tanks were topped up to 850 liter each the Fraser sailed to Sea Reach to conduct MOB training with Oscar, using the rope under arms method of recovery (rope underneath armpits, over chest and crossed at the back).

To test the FLIR on the Delta, the Fraser beached at Westham Island and put two crewmembers ashore hiding behind the shrubbery. The crewmembers on the Delta were able to spot one crewmember but missed the other one. A debrief was held on the Delta.

Fraser headed back to Steveston and while docking a marine assistance request came in for a vessel needing a tow off Sand Heads. Fraser responded, dropping off Oliver and Bruce who had other engagements scheduled. The Fraser was advised later that the vessel had a contract with C-Tow, who advised they would be at least 20 mins before leaving Steveston. Canadian Coast Guard provided the crew with a contact phone number for the vessel. Contact was made and a lat / long was provided. The coordinates were entered into NobleTec and a course was plotted. Less than 1 nm away, C-Tow passed the Fraser, went to the vessel and they took it in tow. Fraser acted as a radio link because C-Tow and CCG radio couldn't hear each other. Once info was passed the Fraser departed back to Steveston.

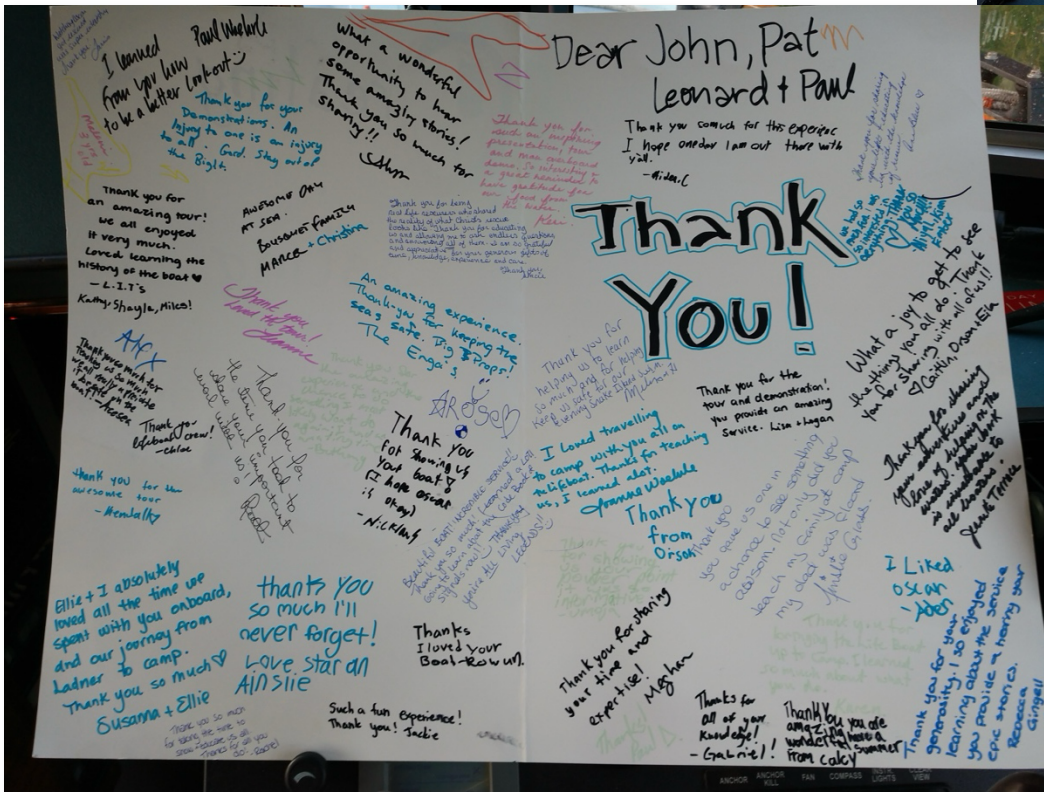




Fraser reported on 83A a blue and white commercial fishing vessel on its side at the other side of the jetty past Steveston Bend. At first CCG knew nothing about it but then RCM-SAR 6 reported there was a tasking 2 days before and the hovercraft handled it. The prop shaft was sheared and the vessel's name was Sea Nile. Arrived Steveston and shut down. Good job by all crew.

Camp Artaban Thank you card

The CLI received a beautiful heartfelt thank you card from camp Artaban.



Donation mugs

The new batch of donation mugs has arrived in time for the next public events.

Donate \$20.00 and you will receive the mug. Please contact Ron van der Zwan now to get this keepsake.





CLI 2025 Fraser River Environmental audit by John Horton

As in previous years, CLI's Delta Lifeboat hosted an environmental survey of the Fraser estuary on Monday 22nd September to conduct an audit on wildlife in the estuary. By recording their annual findings, the general health of the area can be ascertained.

Two more surveys will be conducted in October.



Lucille Johnston Workboat Parade

As part of the annual RiverFest the Delta and Fraser lifeboats participated in the Lucille Johnston Workboat Parade along the New Westminster Quay. Crewmembers were able to bring a guest aboard and a potluck lunch was held at the Delta lifeboat before the parade. The Delta anchored off the Surrey docks at approximately 1145 and Fraser came alongside. Food items were shared and of course John made his famous spaghetti sauce. At 1330 anchor was weighed and both vessels sailed to the rendez-vous point near the Queensborough swing bridge in preparation for the parade. This year saw a record number of workboats including RCM SAR 6 & 7, RCMP and Vancouver Fraser Port Authority Harbour Patrol leading the parade. At approximately 1430 the fleet proceeded upriver towards the New Westminster Pier Park. Due to two tugs with a log boom coming towards the swing bridge the parade had to get close to the quay. Onlookers therefore had a great view of the parade. Delta and Fraser made a pass twice with the Fraser showing off their ability to make a quick 360° using split throttle. Both vessels returned to their stations after another great opportunity to show the CLI flags.



Veterans Lunch By John Horton

The Tsawwassen Royal Canadian Legion holds a Veterans Lunch each fall. This year 4 CLI members, who are naval veterans, were invited to attend on Sunday September 28th. CLI is very grateful for the ongoing generous support received from this Legion.

Rotary Cruise By John Horton

On Tuesday 30th September the "Delta Lifeboat" welcomed fellow members of the Ladner Rotary Club aboard. The CLI is a new member of the club and it was our chance to demonstrate CLI's roll in SAR and the lifeboat's capability.

CLI is grateful for the generous support given by the club.





Jet fuel tankers By John Horton

This summer saw the start of regular deliveries of aviation fuel to the new YVR airport fueling jetty in Richmond. Large tankers now transit up and down the Fraser River to keep YVR supplied. Also, LNG tankers are now taking on LNG at Seaspans' Tilbury facility. This product is then delivered to commercial ships and ferries that burn LNG.

On several occasions the CLI's lifeboats were requested by the Port Authority to provide an escort for the transiting tankers during aboriginal and commercial fish openings.

It should be noted that tankers are required to have special "tethered" escort tugs in case of mechanical breakdowns in inside waters.



CLI Christmas Dinner and Fundraiser

Friday November 28

Beach Grove Golf Club

We hope to see you all there!

