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Saints Rest Beach is on the West side of the City of Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada and stands on the infamous Bay of Fundy. This Bay has one of the highest tides in the world with the water dropping as much as 150 / 200 feet on occasions. The water temperature never exceeds 6 / 7 degrees Celsius and at low water the angle of the beach is 20 / 25 degrees. The Beach is very rocky and is close to a nature park which is regularly used for cycling, walking and picnicking.

On 2nd September, 1996 many people had gathered at the beach to watch the exceptionally high surf caused by the head winds of Hurrigan Edouard. The waves created at this beach grow very high and then crash down very hard onto the shore. The undertow created is so strong it is virtually impossible to escape from it.

At about 2 p.m. Doug Trentowsky and his girlfried were walking their dogs on the beach when they noticed several young children playing feet deep in the water. The children were running after the retreating waves and then trying to outrun the incoming surf before it crashed onto the shore.

Unfortunately three of the children were not quick enough to beat the incoming wave and were thrown to the ground and rolled round like pebbles in the surf. Doug Trentowsky quickly removed his shoes and jacket and ran into the water to rescue the children. He managed to grab two of them very quickly and threw them to safety higher up the beach. He then began to look for the third child, Sarah Jacquard aged 10 years. After finding her some 20 to 30 feet from the shore he pulled her to him. The waves, which were 10 - 15 feet high, pulled them apart and washed Doug back onto the shore. He immediately went back into the water and grabbed Sarah but the tremendous waves parted them again. This happened several times but he eventually grabbed hold of her shirt and started to pull her towards the shore. As he reached the shore another man entered the surf to assist but was himself hit by a large wave.

Doug, who by this time had again lost his hold on Sarah, tried unsuccessfully to get hold of the man. As Doug turned round he saw the girl drifting by and managed to grab her hair, pulled her up the beach and passed her to another bystander. Seconds after he passed the girl to safety another wave hit him and carried him out to sea. He remembers being tossed around in the waves for a while and being beaten against the rocks. A large wave then dumped him onto the beach. He states that at this time he had no energy left and would have drowned if it had not been for bystanders grabbing hold of him as he was thrown onto the beach.

The man who had also been swept into the surf when trying to assist Doug was eventually rescued by a Fire Service jet boat that had been called to the scene.

For this most courageous rescue carried out in appalling sea conditions Doug Trentowsky is awarded the 1996 Mountbatten Medal.