



VOWS

Heidi Snow and Arthur Cinader Jr.

By LAURA ZIGMAN
Published: August 11, 2002

DR. SUSAN SNOW, a physician who is the granddaughter of the founder of the Maine chowder-making company, F. H. Snow's, says lobsters know when to let go. "Most people struggle when a lobster bites them because they don't understand that it will eventually release its grasp," she said.

Fortunately for her daughter, Heidi Heather Snow, Arthur Cinader Jr. wasn't lobsterlike at all. He was determined not to let go.

Mr. Cinader, 33, and Miss Snow, 30, met on a ski trip in 1992. Miss Snow, then a student at Tulane University, had gone with her friend Karen Rosenfeld to Vail, Colo., where they met up with a male friend of Ms. Rosenfeld's and his pal Mr. Cinader, who is the son of the founder of J. Crew, the clothing company.

"Arthur definitely noticed her," recalled Ms. Rosenfeld. "But this was not a ski match made in heaven. We wanted shopping and night life and leisurely skiing at noon. They were hard-core skiers. So Heidi and I left for Aspen."

Miss Snow met someone else and was engaged to be married when tragedy struck. In 1996, her fiancé boarded TWA Flight 800, which exploded off Long Island, killing all those aboard.

The pain Miss Snow felt stayed with her. "People around her felt that she should be getting over it, but she wasn't," said Cori Wells Braun, a photographer who lost her father in a plane crash. "You need as much understanding and support as you can find for a very long time when something like that happens. And when Heidi realized that a

support system wasn't in place for her, she began rearranging her life."

Eventually, Ms. Snow founded AirCRAFT Casualty Emotional Support Services (Access), a New York group that helps others who have lost loved ones in airline disasters, including those from 9/11.

Mr. Cinader re-entered Miss Snow's orbit in 1997, at a Manhattan fund-raiser for Access. (Ms. Rosenfeld had invited a group that included Mr. Cinader, who had become a Web site designer.)

"Arthur seemed to have no memory that we'd met once before," Miss Snow said. "It took him a while to make that connection." But once it was made, it was complete.

"He was smitten," Ms. Rosenfeld said.

If only the rest were that simple.

"Arthur knew her situation, knew that she hadn't dated for quite some time," Ms. Rosenfeld added. "So having had experience designing Web sites, he offered to help her do one for Access." She added, "It was months of wooing and months of working."

"I wasn't the easiest person to be with at that time," Miss Snow conceded. "But Arthur made sure that when I was ready, he would be there."

Mr. Cinader, an avid adventure seeker, said he chased Ms. Snow for about six months before he got her to agree to see him romantically. "I thought maybe he should move on," said Abigail Olsen, one of Mr. Cinader's sisters. "But he said he knew that he had to be patient and give her time and space."

His persistence -- and patience -- eventually paid off. In June last year, at her family's house on Sebago Lake in Maine, Mr. Cinader asked Miss Snow to marry him -- "under the stars and in full view of one of her brothers, who saw me fumbling with the ring," he recalled.

On Aug. 3, they married at the Blue Point Congregational Church in Scarborough, Me., a small, red-brick structure built by the bride's grandfather, Harold Snow, a former president of F. H. Snow's who once hooked up a fog horn to the telephone so it would alert him to someone's call when he was in the backyard.

After a short ceremony, the nearly 100 guests walked up a grassy hill to his house for a clambake that his family says is as much an art as it is science: a fire pit filled with five bushels of clams and 85 lobsters, and covered with bushels of seaweed. "The Indians understood the lovely flavor that the burnt seaweed gave the food," Mr. Snow said.

Under a white tent, where guests hungrily eyed a three-tiered wedding cake covered with Maine blueberries, the bride (in a Vera Wang gown) and her bridesmaids (in short blue gingham dresses) square-danced. Against this picture postcard summer backdrop, the guests also buzzed -- quietly -- about Miss Snow's triumph over grief.

"Arthur has said that he knows Heidi doesn't take him for granted, because she understands loss," the bride's mother said. "And because she understands loss, she has a different understanding of life."