

Nelson Merritt

Interveiwed by Cindy Graham, Dec. 7, 2000



Q. What is your name?

A. Nelson Wilber Merritt, born January 28, 1919.

Q. Who were your parents?

A. Gilbert Merritt and Jenny Merritt

Q. What was your mother's maiden name before she was a Merritt?

A. Mitchell.

Q. Where were the Mitchell's from?

A. I think theys from England. They lived down where the parsonage is, where Steve Morehouse, the other side of Seldon.

Q. So your father met your Mother.....?

A. Yeh. Dad was from Mink Cove.

Q. Do you remember anything about your grandparents?

A. No. Theys all dead, but I had a step grandfather. He's the one gave me the house.

Q. That's on your father's side?

A. No, Mother's side. He use to come up every Saturday night and get me. Give me one of the old fashioned pennies, and I use to go to the store and get a big sucker. Come over here and then Sunday morning we'd go down and get a big bucket of clams and he'd fry them up and were they ever good. And he had a great big molasses patty pans, and they was **some good!**

Q. So your step grandfather's name was?

A. Sonny Morehouse.

Q. And he came up from?

A. Way up above the Church of England where we lived, where Richard Denton lives.

Q. Where Richard Denton lives now, in that house?

A. Yeh. Arthur Carty bought it first and then Richard got it.

Q. So somebody else told us about these big pennies and they were going to show us one, but we forgot to have a look at it.

A. Oh, yeh, they was big as that. And you could get a sucker big as that!

Q. Was a big penny worth more than a little one?

A. No. Same. He didn't want Carl, Seldon or Mary around. No. Come get me every Saturday night.

Q. Yeh, you were his favorite.

A. And then he had a big stove with a hearth on it, and I Osborne Morehouse and I use to get here and cut brooms, rope, leaves, smoking, and he'd sit there in the rocking chair and you couldn't see him at times there was so much smoke in here. Didn't say a word to us. No. Just sit back there and keep rocking.

Q. Why were you burning that stuff?

A. Having a smoke. Thought we were.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Up on the hill.

Q. O.k, So your very own house, the house that you grew up in?

A. Richard Denton's house. We's all born there. And Mary and Carl and Seldon, they had their tonsils out - they wouldn't take mine out. I still got them.. Mine was too big to take out. They wouldn't take them out.

Q. All that surgery was done at the house?

A. Yeh, on the diningroom table. That was a long while ago.

Q. Anybody ever have appendicitis?

A. Carl. We was putting the water pipes from here over to next door. Dad had to quit and take him to hospital. I got everything I came with all but my teeth. They had their adenoids out at the same time they had their tonsils out.

Q. You remember being in the house when the surgery was going on?

A. No. They would have kicked me out of the house when that was going on.

Q. Altogether your parents had how many children?

A. Four.

Q. So there is you, Seldon, Carl, and Mary. So what was the order of them? Who's the oldest?

A. Mary, me, Carl and Seldon.

Q. Seldon was the baby.

A. Mary's, not suppose to say. She don't want anybody to know her age. She's 86.

Q. O.k. Do I know Mary? Where does she live?

A. In an apartment in town. Just below the hospital, that big apartment there.

Q. Who did she marry?

A. She was. I'll have to think that one over. Watts. They lived in Sudbury for a long while. Sudbury Ontario. Max. Max Watts. He's from Cape Breton, he was police. They had two girls and a boy. Donna, you know her, Seldon is no longer alive, Mary still alive, you're still alive and Carl is still alive.

Q. Where does he live?

A. Saint John. He worked in the sugar refinery. He had a slight stroke last year. I had one after that.

Q. I didn't know you had a slight stroke.

A. Yeh. I had a spell here a month ago. I was out painting the outside windows, came around and worked in the flower bed and I came in the house. I never felt so bad in all my life. I knew I was going somewheres. First thing I knew Graham was on the telephone, and Garf was holding my hand, he thought I'd died. Took me in the ambulance to the hospital. Couldn't find nothing wrong. Too hot that day. Said I had sun stroke.

Q. That could very well be. Sunstroke is nothing to fool around with.

A. So they told me not to stay in the sun too long. I never felt so bad. I started to go in the room, and woke up and thought what the Hell am I doing on the floor.

Q. How old are you? You are?

A. 82. Your thermostat doesn't work as well anymore when you're 82, that's the problem.

Q. January?

A. Yeh, January 28. I think there is only Jack and I, and Dougie Harris – fishermen who use to fish out here. All the rest gone. God, there use to be 20 boats.

Q. So paint me a picture of what the fishing scene was when you first got into it.

A. Well, about half of them, four boys I guess, use to go up to the TR brook from the school on a picnic. On our way back, old Mr. Edwards, the teacher, “we’re going to the brook and smoke.” “Oh, no you’re not, you’re going right home now.” “Oh, no we’re not, we’re going for a smoke.” The next morning when we went to school, he called us right out in the porch. He said hold your hands out. This great big strap. No, sir, we’re not taking a strapping, the four of us, and we quit. Came home, Dad was lobstering in the Bay of Fundy and Cairn Merritt, cousin of mine, oh, you’re not going to school, I know where you’re going. You’re going lobstering with me in St. Mary’s this fall. So we built 150 traps, and I had to go lobstering.

Q. So how old were you when you quit school?

A. 17.

Q. Well, that’s not so young. So who were the four of you? It was you and.....

A. Harper Eldridge, Roy McCullough, and Osborne over here.

Q. So your teacher caught you doing that. Where was the school?

A. Oh, up on the church hill.

Q. So where did the teacher cross paths with you?

A. He was from Cape Breton, stricter than the devil.

Q. How many years was he the teacher there?

A. He was there three or four years. He use to stay up Mr. Jeffrey and Gladys. And his sister was Rob Denton’s wife, down the river, he was a sister to him and she was just as bad.

Q. Where did she teach?

A. She taught there before he came.

Q. They only ever had one teacher at a time, didn’t they?

A. Yeh, but boy they was strict. I know one time, Berta Eldridge, I don’t know what happened, and he called her up gave her a strapping. And going back to her seat she stamped her feet. Come back here, you haven’t had enough have you? She had to go back and get some more.

Q. So how did he give this strap? What did the strap look like? Was it a leather strap?

A. Oh, yeh. It was about that wide. He'd take the hand and hold it like that, and that would hit right there and boy it would sting.

Q. So how often did you get the strap?

A. Oh, about once a week or more!

Q. If they were very strict, maybe it wouldn't take much to get the strap?

A. No. I think all the boys got a strapping every day.

Q. Did they feel like it was unjust or.....

A. Yeh. They needed it, that bunch.

Q. And the sister that taught, was she just as heavy handed with the strap?

A. Oh yeh.

Q. So you all went to school, you went to school pretty long, you made it to 17.

A. We was all, Harper and Osborne, they was a year and a half older than me. And Roy was too.

Q. So you said your father was over fishing in the Bay of Fundy,

A. Yeh.

Q. Lobster fishing, or something else?

A. Lobstering and trawl fishing.

Q. I didn't know they jumped across from bay to bay back then.

A. He finished out the season in the spring over there. Then in the fall went out here. I had to do the steering too.

Q. Was that a hard job?

A. Well, the boat wasn't very big. And he'd tend the engine and somedays it was rough. The old bow was only out of the water that far, going like the devil in them seas. He'd say hold that tiller straight and don't let go of it or we'll go upside down. I was glad when we got to the wharf.

Q. Well, that's how you cut your teeth in fishing. Wouldn't be cutting your teeth if you weren't half terrified half the time.

A. Then we got a bigger boat and Dad quit and Seldon and I went. Then we got a bigger boat.

Q. O.k. Let's back track a little bit. So that fall, you quit school, that fall you were building your traps and you're in St. Mary's Bay lobster fishing. You are 17 or 18 years old.

A. 18 then, most likely.

Q. What can you remember about, that boat was how big?

A. Oh, it was about 28' long. Maybe 5' wide.

Q. What was the engine in it?

A. An old Acadia. Every trap you had to stop it and hook the wire then haul the thing up to start it.

Q. Did you actually have to cut the motor right off?

A. Oh yeh.

Q. Were they reliable to start a couple hundred times a day?

A. Yeh. Make and break, they called them.

Q. Was that the same thing as one lungers, or is that a different thing.

A. Yeh, one lunger, yeh. Dad one time, sent to Lunenburg to get a new engine, and they had no steel or anything so he went around and got all the old stoves and that and sent a big truckful down there so they could build an engine.

Q. Must have been during the war, was it?

A. Yeh, the First World War. Heard him say about it.

Q. So did they make him an engine?

A. Yeh.

Q. So for a long time people have been going to Lunenburg to get some stuff to go fishing. So when you were 18 and you started fishing over here, do you remember how many boats?

A. Oh, there was around 10.

Q. All the same kind of boats?

A. Well, some was bigger and wider.

Q. And you built 150 traps, but you must ---- how many could you fish altogether?

A. Many as you wanted to I guess. Then after Seldon and I went lobstering, after a few years, we was together all the time, Jack and Osborne, we could set 600 traps where the other fellows could only set 350.

Q. So you combined your licenses?

A. Yeh.

Q. And you were allowed to set 600. Well, that makes for a pretty good team.

A. But we never set that many. Couldn't haul them. 350 is all you can haul in a day. Then you're busy.

Q. Who were some of the other people that were fishing out of Sandy Cove then?

A. Jack and Osborne, Colin Crowell, Gordon Allard, from Ontario somewhere, Clinton Harris, Dougie Harris, Lee Harris, Warren Crowell, Harold Crowell, Purdy Pinon, Clarence Hersey, Chip Saunders and Bill Eldridge, and Harry Saunders and I can't think who was with Harry. Harry, in the winter time took a big tub, and took the hot water off the engine and he stood in it to keep his feet warm, out their lobstering.

Q. That was inventive of him.

A. Yeh.

Q. Must have had bad circulation in his feet!

A. He must have. I can see him now standing there in the water. I know some days I'd like to have had some.

Q. What did you have for gear, for oil clothes? Were they pretty much the same as they are?

A. Same as they are today.

Q. But you had knitted mittens, instead of.....

A. Edna Dutton use to knit them double.

Q. Who use to knit them?

A. Edna Duttonton, Sypher's wife. I don't know how many pairs she knit every fall. Well, start in the summer. Had to. We use to get them from a Delaney, fellow on the Island, they'd shrink up so after a few days you couldn't get them on.

Q. They'd shrink up too much.

A. Yeh, they'd be that thick. I can see the icicles hanging off my chin now, some days off there.

Q. Did you have a beard?

A. No.

Q. No beard and they'd still be handing off your chin.

A. Yeh, we use to lay out in the cove there and plug the lobsters and put them in the crates, that wind out here screeching norwest, that water coming over the stern and hitting ya. And it would freeze as fast as it would hit. I know sometimes I didn't know I had fingers, trying to plugI'd take both hands to plug them my fingers was so numb.

Q. So you wouldn't plug as you went along all day, you'd do it at the end of the day. Any reason for that?

A. No, that's the way everybody did, them days.

Q. Did you have to fill bait bags at the end of the day too?

A. Yeh. In the evening. After the first four days. We had enough for four days. Then we'd have to come in, get home here 9 or 10 o'clock at night, then some nights the snow would be nigh and up to your knees, coming up that wharf road and blowing and blustering. It was winter then.

Q. So did you travel back and forth to the wharf, you walked most of the time?

A. Yeh. I use to go right down here and go down the old road. The road use to be down here years ago. That's where they hauled the freight and everything up that hill. Bring it up there over the hill there. Dad and I use to go down the hill there, and Osborne. Closer to the wharf. But coming home they'd be too much snow coming up that hill. So I'd come the other way, because there was always car tracks down on the wharf.

Q. Did anybody have a truck or anything?

A. Not that many. No some years they couldn't get down there. We'd have to take the lobsters up to the store up there. Some of them.

Q. Up in front of where the store is now?

A. Yeh.

Q. You'd come to the beach and land the lobsters there?

A. Yeh, wait til high water and take them up there.

Q. And then who would buy them?

A. Well, Bucky Snow.

Q. From Digby?

A. Yeh. Now and again Elmer Wyman from Tiverton use to come up in a boat and buy. Him and Bucky got into it down here one time. Lobsters was 12 cents.

Q. Twelve cents a piece or 12 cents a pound?

A. A pound. They got into it and God, we got 17 cents that day a pound. Thought we was getting it.....

Q. Just for one day?

A. Yeh,

Q. Just for the day of the argument.

A. Yeh. Oh, Carl and I use to catch rabbits, and Elmer Wyman, he'd take them down to Gordon Elliott, I think it was, had the foxes down there, and he to buy rabbits for the foxes.

Q. So they'd end up as fox feed.

A. Yeh. 15 cents a piece. Rabbits were worth more than lobsters.

Q. So, it sounds like when you were fishing here, you were only in this house?

A. Yeh.

Q. So your father lived in this house at one point too?

A. He came and my mother, same time I moved here.

Q. So how did they come to come to this house.

A. Well, Grampie gave it to me, and we all moved over and Mama looked after him.

Q. So he was still alive, gave it to you, that was often done to give it to the next generation.

A. But the Morehouses didn't like it. They tried hard to get it away from me.

Q. So, set me straight again. Your Grandfather's name was Sonny Morehouse. And he was your mother's step father.

A. I don't know if he was a brother to Orrie Morehouse or not over here. Could have been, because they're the ones that tried everyhow to get it. Addie and Endon, they lived here for awhile before we came.

Q. So Sonny Morehouse gave this house to you, his wife must have died, and so he's thinking ahead....

A. If he had a wife, I don't know if he did or not.

Q. So you all came over and lived here until you were – you weren't that old when you got this house – and you've lived here ever since.

A. Yeh, I was eleven years old, I think.

Q. Where you aware that you had a house?

A. No. I didn't know for quite awhile after. Then I got the will and that and showed it to them.

Q. It's not something you need to know when you're eleven.

A. No.

Q. You might have kicked your parents out or something, at the age of 12!
So what happened to your other house when you left the house on the other road, what happened to the other house?

A. Arthur Carty bought it.

Q. So when you moved over here, and before that, what do you remember about your mother's typical day in running the household.

A. Well, Dad was fishing all the time. The only water she could get, she had to take the buckets and go way down the shore and way around – there was a spring there. That's how she carried the water for washing clothes and everything. Dishes and everything.

Q. No wells?

A. No.

Q. How come nobody dug a well?

A. Well, there was one up above Edwina's there on top of the hill and Dad tried to fix that up, and Sand Harris was working there putting boards on it and that, to make a peak. Carl and I went up, and after awhile, I wonder where he is. I went and looked in the water, here he was floating around there. Sand seen me, I couldn't speak. He reached down and got him right by the hair of the head and hauled him out. Scared! We never went up there again after that.

Q. So you say it wasn't easy to be a wife and mother in those days, just the daily chores were pretty hard to do.

A. She was washing clothes up there, I was only young. I got two teeth out. The doctor gave me a pill and I went to get a glass of water and I held the glass up and I kept right on going

backwards and fainted dead away. She was washing clothes in a big basin there and she threw that right in my face. I wasn't long waking up! Then I had to scrub the floor up.

Q. Couldn't let that water go to waste! Did you knock your teeth out on the boat, did you have an accident on the boat?

A. No. Went to Weymouth to get them out. Anybody could have pulled them out.

Q. How come you had to go to Weymouth? There wasn't a dentist around here?

A. No.

Q. But there was a doctor in Sandy Cove, wasn't there?

A. Yeh, Dr. Rice. Old Bob Bishop across the road from us, I've had my head split open a dozen times.

Q. Who, you?

A. Harold Crowell, Garland O'Neil and Godfrey, them. Lived up above me. Had two big chestnut trees in front of the house. They was going home from school or somewheres, I'd put the chestnuts to them, and they'd put the rocks to me. Cut my head open, and Mother would take me over to Bob Bishop.

Q. This happened regularly?

A. Oh yes. Big rock going through the field to the Bay of Fundy there, and we played on that one day, and I said, I can crawl down that head first. And I did. About half way, and then I dropped and cut my head open.

Q. Who were you trying to impress?

A. I don't know. Just raising the devil. That old barn up there, there was a place about that far on top of the mow. Playing there, jump out of there and down on the floor. I jumped one day and there was a hack there, I drove it right up through my foot.

Q. How many prongs through?

A. Just one. I got to hooting and hollering to Carl -haul that thing out of there! He hauled it out.

Q. Who took it out of your foot?

A. My brother, Carl. Mother took me over to Bishops. He put, I don't know what on it, I know it stung like the devil. Wasn't iodine.

Q. And it's a good thing too. Because in our interviews we heard of a story of a guy that died of lock jaw.

A. I had three or four nails. Went to Tiverton one time to the doctor and had to get a shot. Somewhere else.

Q. What were some other medical emergencies your mother might have had to deal with, or your parents?

A. Everything, I guess. Raise the devil, use to. Here a few years ago, had two traps set up, lobster traps. Stacey come to get me - I was lit. We went up, I waded way out and got them. Then coming back there was a log there, I said, Stac. I can run that. I run it alright. About halfway and away I went. There was a rock big as that, I told everybody I split it right in two.

Q. Now wait a minute, you're doing what on the log?

A. I said I was going to run it. Run the length of it.

Q. Just run the length of it?

A. Yeh. Slippery, and I.....Garf and Stacey took me to town. Stacey said he carried me half way. Knocked me out. They took me up to the hospital and they put four stitches in the top of my head.

Q. This was how long ago?

A. Oh, eight to ten years ago.

Q. Not too long ago.

A. Crazy, cripes.

Q. Yes, some of us never grow up.

A. Yeh. I tore that finger way up there down to there and across to there.

Q. Now how did you do that?

A. Up to the school house when we was cleaning the yard and everything. Jumped the fence down across from the school to clean down in the field. Old barb wire. I ripped that open. Took me down to Edna Duttons. Dutton held the finger, Edna got the bottle of iodine and poured in it. And it's a good thing he had a hold of the finger. I's liable to go out through the window. Burn! Holy jimney, did that burn.

Q. Do you remember most children being healthy when you were growing up?

A. Yeh. I think they's better then than they are today.

Q. You think so?

A. Yep.

Q. They certainly would have played outdoors more.

A. Oh, yeh.

Q. No television.

A. We's out all the time. If there was any ice on the lake. We'd be there day and night.

Q. What was your lake that you skated on?

A. Over here –

Q. Going over to the Bay of Fundy?

A. Yeh.

Q. Does that lake have a name?

A. Sandy Cove Lake, I guess.

Q. I had a beautiful time skating on that lake myself last winter, all by myself. I couldn't find a sole to go with me. But you can remember it being frozen and good for skating every winter?

A. Yeh. They'd be a crowd there and we'd play drag line.

Q. What's drag line?

A. Oh, you have a line across, and you get somebody to chase you, try to catch you. One time, there must have been a dozen, Jack Morehouse trying to catch me. I went around the crowd this way, and he came around this way, and we brought up. Lost one or two teeth. Laid on the ice for a long while. We both did. Knocked the wind right out of us.

Q. So the point of the game was, you win, if you got caught, they'd drag you back across the line?

A. Yeh.

Q. And there'd be more of you to catch the ones that's left.

A. Next time you'd be the one chasing.

Q. Sounds like fun.

A. I remember the first time I had just the skates you tied on your feet.

Q. On top of your shoes or boots?

A. Yeh. Went down from the school in the field, and there was a little pond up there in the lake. Down through there. I got down there, guess I'll try it. I put them on and I started. First thing I seen a million stars in the sky. I landed on my back and hit my head. I left the skates right there and went home. Mother says you go back and get those skates and bring them home here if you're not going to skate.

Q. Were you all by yourself?

A. Yeh. Went down in that field one time, strawberries, all kind of them. Had a big waterglass. Had it nearly full. A darn big snake – I never went to look for the glass again. I left it right there! Strawberries and all. I am scared of snakes.

Q. Lots of people are.

A. Yeh. I'll kill them if I can get something to kill them with. I had potatoes up here one year, digging them out, dug a hill and there must have been a dozen! I buried them up so dam quick.....cold chills.

Q. Do you have any stories about there being a great big fish in that Sandy Cove Lake?

A. Yeh, a big stuergon.

Q. Is this true?

A. Yeh. We put it there. Yeh, me and Graham.

Q. You and Graham? You mean your son Graham.

A. We got it way up the head of the bay. We had a weir up there. We use to get a dozen a day. One day I said, lets take one down and put it in the lake. I never seen it again, but they said it grew big.

Q. I heard stories about it you know, but I thought it could be like the Sandy Cove Loch Ness Monster story.

A. I guess it died, I don't know.

Q. Well, their cycle has to include salt and fresh water, I think.

A. I don't know what the devil they eat in the lake. Unless they eat the leaves, or grass or something.

Q. I don't know, but I think plenty of kids were scared to swim in that lake because of the big fish.

A. Or lilies, maybe they ate the lilies. Don't think they can bite you, I think they just suck the stuff out of you. I didn't like the taste of them.

Q. What kind of meals did your mother cook when you were growing up?

A. Oh, we always had all kinds of meat, chicken, hens, eggs,

Q. Your place over on the church hill would have had a barn ? Did this place have a barn also?

A. Yeh. Yeh. We had oxen here and cows.

Q. Your father kept oxen?

A. Yeh.

Q. Cause not everybody kept oxen.

A. Darn nigh, in Sandy Cove.

Q. Did you have two or one?

A. We had two.

Q. Your father kept two?

A. Yeh. Arthur Carty and I, Merle Tidd, we built the road to the bungalow, way up in under the mountain there.

Q. Using your oxen?

A. Yeh. And when Put built the house down the road here, I was down here working that day. I had nearly a load of rocks on the wagon, she hollered to Dad – so I run right home and left the oxen there. Oh, half an hours time they see the oxen coming up in the yard. They came home, rocks and all. I had to turn around and take the rocks back down there.

Q. So that was a different thing back then, people – taking care of livestock was a daily part of their lives.

A. Yeh, Angina . Dr. stayed here night before that all night.

Q. So he was already not good.

A. Yeh.

Q. How old was he, do you remember, when he died?

A. Mama, she was in her 80's.

Q. So at one point, you got married. But you still lived in this house, and your parents lived with you when you were married.

A. Yeh.

Q. So you can remember the day your father died pretty well.

A. We lived in this part, and Mama lived in the other part after Dad died. We fixed that up there.

Q. But that house hasn't changed a whole lot though. You've kept it pretty much the same.

A. Yeh. Had a door on that side for her – now we've got cupboards there.

Q. Did you mother have her own kitchen?

A. Yeh. Bedroom. We put a toilet seat in there for her.

Q. So what year did your mother die, do you remember?

A. Oh, gee. She died up the valley. We couldn't get her in the place in town, up in Windsor.

Q. So at that point we already did have Tideview Terrace at the time?

A. Yeh.

Q. Can you remember anything about the poor house, or the poor farm?

A. Not that much. In relation to Sandy Cove very much.

Q. Would you say your family – when you were growing up you had everything you needed. Nobody was wealthy, but was there anybody in your community that did have a lot of money that was well off?

A. I don't think there was too many.

Q. Everybody seemed like they were about the same?

A. Yeh. Everybody, most everybody had hens, had your eggs, and a cow or two and oxen, pigs, always had pigs.

Q. Did you do a lot of sharing with your neighbours, or trading or bartering?

A. No. They use to come up from the Island with slack salted pollock. Always had a hundred pounds of that for winter.

Q. A hundred pounds of slack salted pollock?

A. Put in the haymow.

Q. Why the haymow?

A. Keep it good. So it wouldn't all dry up.

Q. So the difference between slack salted,

A. They'd be pollock that long and that wide and good. And back potatoes. Gee.

Q. How do you cook slack salted pollock.

A. We just stripped it off and ate it that way.

Q. You wouldn't soak it out if you were having it for a meal?

A. No. Then they use to be a fellow from Little River use to come around with smoked fish. Mostly all hake. That was good. Cook that up.

Q. What was his name?

A. Some Denton, I don't know what his first name is now. Been a long while ago. Hell, that's when we lived – I guess we was over here for a couple of years when he came around. But when we lived on the hill he was always around. Every week we'd get one of them big fish. Wasn't very much then. Cost a lot more today. I thought Llewellyn might be around today with fish.

Q. I haven't seen him in a long time.

A. He was here two weeks ago. With haddock. I heard the draggers coming in last night. Maybe he couldn't get any haddock. He charged a little more last time.

Q. Like probably.....

A. \$11.00 for two pounds

Q. When you were lobstering with your father, would you eat lobsters?

A. Oh yeh.

Q. What can you remember about how you learned the fishing grounds, and how plentiful the lobsters were?

A. Well, the first couple of years it was a hard job to find the grounds where the lobsters were, but after a while it came to you. Close your eyes and go there.

Q. You think that's a lost skill now?

A. No, I think I could find most places.

Q. You could, but this generation, couldn't do it without some electronic equipment.

A. Yeh, they'd have to see the bottom and see where the ridges are and everything. See after that hurricane we had there in the winter, it tore up a lot of the bottom up out here.

Q. The Ground Hog Day storm?

A. Oh yeh.

Q. It changed the bottom?

A. Oh, yeh.

Q. I didn't realize that. Were you still fishing then? That was 1976.

A. Yeh. We lost our double fish house down here and everything in it. Bait bags. Just got a new case of oil, found four quarts of it – lost all of our bait bags and everything we had in the building.

Q. Did it just go out to sea?

A. Yeh, 130 traps off the wharf – never got any of them. I don't know where they went. The undertow must have taken them right out.

Q. So that was in February, but they weren't in the water.

A. No.

Q. But you lost them anyway, that's one thing sure.

A. That wharf you couldn't see it. It looked like sailboats coming in the cove, the trees and that.

Q. That was just before my time here so I missed it all.

A. That piled up on the wharf amongst the traps. What a mess. Think they was two days with chain saws cutting the trees of the wharf and that, between the wharf.

Q. Did the Government pay any insurance for all this lost year? Did anybody in Sandy Cove lose their boat?

A. Yeh. No, we was lucky. Couldn't get near them – head of the wharf. It was going like this, back and forth. Our boat was next to the wharf, it was right up on the top and going like this. We thought we was going to have a hole in her, but we never. David Gidney and I was the first ones down there. We parked the truck right up the head of the wharf. I had shoes on and he had his slippers on I think. His boat was out further, so I kept watching it. The traps up to the head of the wharf was moving. I'm getting out of here. I took off and David seen me. I said, gee David, I don't know if you can get up there or not with the seas a going. I'll holler when I see it go down some because the truck was up at the head of the wharf and the water going right around it. I hollered and he came and he got quite wet. We backed the truck up, 30 or 40 feet, and after awhile, we had to back it up again. The tide kept coming. And half our building and it was

going like this, and all at once down it went. Next sea took the rest. And Newcombe and Harold's building. One sea hit that and that went all to pieces right there. And Colin and Gordon they had a building, and that came right around and went right down where our building was and it stayed right there.

Q. Took the place of yours.

A. Yeh. Some of the boats in the haul out up there, we had to tie them so they wouldn't go the devil off. Somebody tried to row out, but the devil, you couldn't row no how.

Q. So how many hours and days before that storm subsided?

A. Well, it died down that night.

Q. But it did a lot of damage.

A. Oh yeh. High water. Over there by the store it came right over the road. Up to Seawall, you couldn't get across there no how. Had to drive down on the beach.

Q. And then you were with our power for awhile.

A. Yeh, six or seven days I guess.

Q. Were people in a state of shock, or were they instantly jolted into action.

A. Yeh. Bruce, down here, Tidd, he got a generator, oh every other day, Grant would go down and get it and bring it here. Keep the fridges running. Two of them small drivers came right across that road up there Seawall, boats way up in the woods.

Q. There was one boat in the woods at Griffin's Cove but I think it was probably from the Ground Hog Storm – it is still there.

A. Yeh, I see that. I think that was one of the Indian's boats.

Q. This one's been there for as long as I can remember. Might have belonged to Percy Walker, I'm not sure.

A. Three or four there in Weymouth, or New Edinburg. They's the Indians. They had pretty well had it.

Q. Can you ever remember any Indian that are natives, coming down here summertime or any time of the year?

A. They use to – over in the bay there in that little field. I use to go down.

Q. Over the Bay of Fundy?

A. They use to tent there.

Q. Where did they come from?

A. From Bear River, I think, or somewheres.

Q. And what did they come here for?

A. They had baskets and stuff, and they had a big dog. Harper and I one night over there, see it use to be all trees going down through there on both sides of the road. Darker than dark down through there. Harper and I was sitting in the road, just half way there, where you go down to the Bay of Fundy shore, Carl Eldridge's sister and Marion MacKay, we heard them acoming. Harp says don't say anything. They got right opposite and we let the screech out and we took. Down that road, up through across and cut through the woods. We was scared the Indians was going to set the dog on us. We made a big circle, come back up on top of it and sit there and listen. After awhile we never heard nothing and we got the dog out, and Harper and I and Austin, we use to go over there and lay on the Bay bank all night, some nights.

Q. So Harper was one of your best friends growing up.

A. Yeh.

Q. About the same age?

A. Well, he was a year and a half older. We use to go hunting all the time.

Q. So Harper was – is Harper the one that enlisted and was killed in Italy?

A. Yeh, and Sidney McCullough was killed in Italy.

Q. Did you ever enlist?

A. Yeh. I was over to England.

Q. How many years altogether?

A. I was only in a year and two months, and I got my back hurt and that over in England and they shipped me back.

Q. What about your brothers?

A. Yeh, they's both – well Seldon was over there for four years. I don't know if Carl was over or not. He was in the army. And Roy McCullough was Cindy's brother. Him and I was always good friends too. We always went drinking and to parties and that, together. One night up in town, Roy and I and Clint Harris. Roy got the fluid, he sitting in somebody's doorway down town and I had this big overcoat and felt hat and everything – all dressed up. Clint says here comes the bus, so I took it across to get Roy and across that railroad track coming across the road there, I stepped on that and I went up as high as that ceiling, came down, cut right through my hat. Went up to the bus, Harry says get the hell in here, we're going up to the hospital. I said,

I'm alright, Harry. Clint went down and carried Roy up to the bus, and I stayed over to Colin and Lenora, over the cove that night. Boy, I didn't feel like getting up the next morning. Colin came up with a cup of tea and some toast, I no more than had that in my stomach and I had to take to the bathroom. Now look, here comes Mary, my sister, over the road. I said Oh my God, I hope she don't stop here. I waited until dark, well, I guess I'll leave. I went up to Roys. He was still in bed.

Q. How old were you guys then?

A. Oh, I wasn't married. I suppose 18 or 19.

Q. Yep. Pretty young. Can you remember getting word that Harper had died in Sydney and how that affected the community?

A. Yeh. I think of him a lot. Everytime I go deer hunting I think of Harper.

Q. Yep. Cause you use to hunt together. Yep.

A. We'd go up the old road and then come down through, and we'd get to the top of the hill, and he'd go home and I'd go across the fields.

Q. Hattie Johnson, had hens

A. And he'd go out and sneak the eggs and go down to the Orrie Morehouses' and get her to cook them for her. Cause she wouldn't let him have them – she wanted to sell them. He'd sneak them and take them down there.....

Q. Now, I heard of kids being given an egg so they could get some penny candy, but this is different.

A. I seen him going every morning. And I said, yep, he's going down to getthey only had one cow and the hens. Never had a pig. That's been along while ago. God, fifty odd years ago.

Q. The houses in Sandy Cove were all so beautiful. I mean, the village stands out with such beautiful houses, the craftsmanship in them and everything. Can you remember, what's the age of these houses. They are all older than you, mostly.

A. Yeh, most of them. This one is 160.

Q. This house that you're living in is 160! Wow.

A. Yeh. Some of that Popular House- that came from up in back of the lake. And Addie Morehouses', the house down there, that was from up there. And the one up there in Lakeside, they hauled that from across the lake.

Q. The green house, where Arthur Bull lives, you mean?

A. Way up off the road. Dimocks, use to be.

Q. Where Audrey Walker lives?

A. Yeh.

Q. That was hauled from the back of the lake?

A. Yeh, they hauled that right straight across the lake.

Q. When it was frozen?

A. Yeh. Yeh, I know 6 or 7 cellars up that old road, apple trees where places were.

Q. So in some case, those cases those houses were moved.

A. Yeh. They're old.

Q. Why did the people move from there, was it to get closer to the new highway?

A. Yeh. This road was the highway coming through, and when they built the other one, I suppose they wanted to be on that road. Now people come and they want to build on that old road.

Q. You know, everything goes full circle sometimes.

A. An old lady bought the old farm up there from the states. I don't know – she paid \$80,000.00 for it. Holy jiminey, it isn't worth \$50,000.00.

Q. Except for the location, if it appeals to you, its probably worth something. And that's a significant sort of historic house for Sandy Cove, wouldn't you say?

A. She was going to get it fixed up, but God, she took off for the states. She got a couple load of wood.

Q. She's not living there right now?

A. No. Tony Chute was going to fix it for her.

Q. Well, maybe she'll be back.

A. And the old Norville Morehouse place, they might as well tear that down and build it new.

Q. Well, I owned that for awhile, myself.

A. That would cost more to fix it than it's worth. Goddies.

Q. It's still a nice little spot, don't you think?

A. Yeh. yeh. Its nice there.

Q. But must be, must be bad inside, the cellar and that.

A. Yeh, it is.

Q. The old kitchen there. Cause no one every done nothing to it. Neither did its subsequence owners.

A. The only thing he kept was the barn.

Q. So when you were kids, how much travelling beyond Sandy Cove would you do?

A. Not very much.

Q. Would you go to Lake Midway?

A. Oh yeh.

Q. On foot?

A. Yep, That's where I went to see Betty.

Q. So she was a ...?

A. A Graham. Yeh, use to go up there, only take me 20 minutes to come home. I'd fly. Up above the old place there one night, coming down, darker than the devil, a dam deer jumped in front of me. Boy when that went for the woods, I wasn't long getting down the road. Boy, some nights you couldn't see 10 feet ahead of you.

Q. So Betty, what Grahams was she part of?

A. Alton. Alton and Nellie Graham.

Q. They lived at the lake side.

A. Yeh, where Alton's got the new house.

Q. So how old were you when you first started courting Betty?

A. Oh, 20 some.

Q. Was it before or after you came back from England?

A. After.

Q. Who was the first one of the four children in your family to get married?

A. Mary, Carl, me and Seldon. I think I got married before Seldon.

Q. What was it like having a couple of generations of family under one roof? That was a pretty common thing then.

A. Yeh, it was then.

Q. Going back a little bit Nelson, to when you were a kid. Now you're always rock climbing and raising the devil, but were your parents fairly strict with the four children?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have chores to do before you could go play?

A. Oh yeh. We'd have to go way down the shore there and get water. After school nights, I hated to do it but had to have something to drink and wash up and everything. Tend the cow, milk it. I always done the milking. I wasn't very big, but.....

Q. And before we started the interview, you were telling me a little bit about Sunday. You had to go to church three times a day.

A. Yeh.

Q. Was your family especially religious, or this is what everybody did?

A. That's what everybody did then.

Q. So you went to Sunday School in the morning,

A. Yeh. Sunday school in the afternoon, church at night, Methodist or the Baptist whoever was having church that night.

Q. Didn't matter.

A. No. All dressed up, felt hat and overcoat in the wintertime.

Q. Would you mind repeating that story for me about ruining your outfit when you were bicycling?

A. Oh yeh. Jim Graham and Bud Graham, use to hide them up to the top of the hill. So Harper and I found out where they were, and we was going to go up the road a ways on them. Got going too fast when a car came up behind and blew the horn. I rammed the brakes on and down over the handle bars I went. Tore the knee out. I came home and tried to sew it – the hole was too big, I couldn't sew it. The next Sunday I had to put it on and come down. Dad was sitting somewhere here. He got right up from the table, what happened to your suit? Well, I had to tell him. Well, you're going to wear it. See if your Mother can put a patch on it. Scraped my hands

all up. One time, Sid Gidney had a store over the cove here. I use to help him get ice and that down underneath for the summers.

Q. He had his own ice house under neath the store?

A. Yeh. So, I wanted some tar. I seen it there. So one night I sneaked over and sneaked in, jumped over the counter and jumped right into the barrel. I was tar from here down. My clothes, I sneaked over next door, behind the hedge, there was nobody there, I took my clothes off and threw them away.

Q. What did you want – it was tar or tar oil?

A. It was tar.

Q. What did you need this for?

A. For a net, smelting net for in the spring. That was one of our things, smelting then. So, I sneaked in the house and got hot water and soap and I started to scrap tar off. It burnt the devil out of my legs. After a week or so, Mamma said, where's your underclothes? You only got one suit. I don't know. I wouldn't tell her.

Q. How is it you ended up in the tar barrel? The way you came through the store window, you just landed in the tar?

A. No, it was on the other side of the counter. It was about that high,

Q. You jumped over the counter and landed in the tar.

A. Landed in the dam tar.

Q. And you basically were breaking and entering?

A. Yeh. Crawled in the window, down in the cellar, and up the trap door.

Q. This is all by yourself. No accomplices.

A. Oh no. Good thing I guess. And nobody ever knew it.

Q. You didn't leave a little trail of tar?

A. I don't believe. I never told anybody. I think you're the first one I've told. Gee, my legs – burn! There for a week or more.

Q. Was that from scrubbing or from the tar?

A. It was from scrubbing and tar. Cause I had to scrub it so hard to get it off my legs.

Q. We heard of steam tarred rope and stuff like that. Was that a treatment that people did or did they buy their rope that way?

A. No, they tarred most of it. Our seines for the weir, we always tarred them every spring.

Q. How did you do that?

A. Build a fire over the Bay of Fundy, a big pot and heat it and then have a roller and roll it through the tar and roll it out and two or three of ya hauling it.

Q. So this was straight tar. Not diluted or anything, just tar.

A. Yeh.

Q. You heat it up and roll the line through it.

A. Con Gidney and Bailey and them had the weir there, and them big small bungs, Con was trying to get one out and after awhile it came out and he was unscrewing it and when that came out it hit him right there. His shirt wide open, and the next spring, that tar was still there.

Q. What do say it was, it was a bung?

A. A bug bung in the barrel. There's a big bung and there's a smaller one. You always took the smaller one out to give it air for the big bung, so that wouldn't come at ya.

Q. So Con Gidney was Dickie Gidney's father, wasn't he? And his name crops up in just about every interview we do. What was it about him?

A. Oh goddy. He was everything.

Q. Was he a big man?

A. Yeh, stocky. That thing jacking deer – you'd be driving along and he'd seen the deer, he took the rifle out the window and that deer was dead. Didn't matter where it was. The Mounties use to go there all the time. You fella's want a deer or lamb? He use to keep sheep and that's how he killed all the sheep. Poor old Con, see they use to make gaskets and everything down there.

Q. Was he a fisherman? Or a bit of everything?

A. Everything. He use to net fish, with a herring net. Up St. Mary's. Old boat, floor boards about that far apart and right over the shaft I guess it must have been a little further, use to have a dog. And this day they had taken off, and the dog's tail went down through and caught around the shaft and ripped the tail right off its backside. That dog flew out of that boat and overboard and took off. He said, you'll heal up after a few days. I don't think - he only washed once a month.

Q. Who was Con Gidney's wife?

A. Betty, I don't know what her – she was from around the bay somewheres. Her first name was Betty. She was nice, though.

Q. Was Con Gidney a drinker?

A. Yeh, oh God yes. That's why the Mounties went there, to have a good party. He always had deer meat, or lamb, or lobsters.

Q. He sounds like quite the character.

A. Yeh, he was.

Q. What are some other colorful characters you remember in Sandy Cove?

A. Well, his brother Sid Gidney. Him and I and my brother Carl. Red Sypher use to have to deliver coal to Digby in all the places. Garages and everything. One of them big trucks, well two or three truck loads. So Carl and I use to help Sid haul it and we'd be blacker than black, come home with a load and drive in the yard. Well, about suppertime, come on go in and get our supper. Gotta unload this after supper. Go right in and sit right down at the table, blacker than – never washed or anything. Then he had an old truck there, he had more wires on that. Barbed wire and all kinds of wires holding the thing together.

Q. Real old rattletrap!

A. Yeh We hauled coal three weeks steady, every day. You'd cough up coal after two or three days.

Q. I guess! Blow it out your nose!

A. Oh yes, black!

Q. People around here burn coal too?

A. Oh yeh.

Q. In Sandy Cove?

A. Yeh. Oh, I was going to tell you about Clarence.

Q. Yes, Clarence Hersey.

A. Yeh. He use to haul coal in a small truck. So we went in town this day, drinking, had a dozen bags of coal. Came down. Backed up the cellar door. Throw the coal down the cellar in the bags, I guess Clarence forgot to let go of the bag when he threw it and he kept on and went down. Dam nigh killed him. Right down the cellar steps. I said Clarence, what are you trying to do? I don't know!

Q. I was surprised that people were allowed on coal as opposed to – that was something they would have to buy, instead of.....

A. Yeh. It wasn't that high then I suppose.

Q. No.

A. Dirty dam stuff.

Q. Was it hard coal or soft coal?

A. Hard coal. Down in the cellar there, go down there and shovel that in the furnace. Come up and wash and wash.

Q. So it must have burned in furnaces, not in a stove like that.

A. Well, I have burned it in there. You'd fill it right full, then around two o'clock you could see right down through the dampers. Well, I guess I don't have to put anymore in, I can still see it.

Q. Red.

A. Red! You could see right down through. But never hurt that stove one bit. I got that and my washer and fridge from Red Sypher. Gave us 10% off everything.

Q. For getting three appliances at once?

A. Yeh.

Q. Can you remember when you first got electricity?

A. No. I don't know how long that's been.

Q. Can you tell me a little bit about – Sandy Cove was a big tourist area. People would come and stay all summer.

A. Yeh, there must have been six or seven places. Over to Ansie Elleries, over the bay, where Mary Paul, that place there, mostly all women, and they was all school teachers, use to come there.

Q. For their summer vacations?

A. Yeh. Dad use to be trawling, and he could bring Ansie up one haddock, feed all of them. Yeh, they didn't get a devil of a lot of haddock. Fifty cents a piece, haddock. For the big ones.

Q. So the haddock were big. It's not that they were little eaters, it's that the haddock were big. And what were some of the other guest houses? Was that next door to you?

A. Right here. Harry Johnson, Addie, they use to keep tourists. Chip Saunders. And Jeannette Dakin, Eddie MacKays, the hotel, Percy Harris use to keep them.

Q. Was your family connected any way to the tourist trade?

A. No.

Q. Your sister didn't work?

A. No.

Q. Except your father supplied them with fish.

A. Yeh.

Q. Can you remember meeting them? Were they Americans?

A. Oh yeh. I use to take a crowd across to Weymouth in the boat. Use to be over here every other day.

Q. What did they go to Weymouth for?

A. Oh, just to see the place. Get some liquor. I had a girl with me one day from the States, oh, yeh, Sypher's down here, they kept roomers too. She use to stay in there. She went across the bay with me. Come by, that fog was so darn thick you couldn't see 20 feet. We got on the wrong side of the buoy coming out, and after awhile we kept jumping over these rocks. I didn't say nothing. After we got out a little ways, I said you stir – I got to go look see if we're leaking any. Gee. Boy it was scary. The camp over there, the girls. Owen Ingles, we had him over here showing us how to drive a weir and everything. Had quite a big boat so we use to take a crowd of them girls and campers over to Weymouth. One night the fog thicker than the devil and around half past eleven, went over there to go to see the movies. Coming out we ran aground right up behind the lighthouse there. Well, we had to wait until the tide got down, and walk them over to New Edinburg and hire a taxi and bring them all home.

Q. Camp directors weren't too worried about liability back then?

A. No. We laid in the boat until the next tide and got out of there. Owen and I use to go across there – gee. Across there one day, rough, holy jiminy, I was a steering. Seven or eight of us. I was going too fast and she went down into the water and took windshield right out of the boat. Out through the door that went. Owen said, slow this thing down. We kept on going. Over there one time, him and I, got drinking, just got back to the wharf and happened to look and see Owens brother coming with a sail boat. Quite a big boat. Gee, Owen said, you get in the forecastle, I'll close the door and I'll sit on the gas barrel with my pipe, he won't stay long. Tought he was going with a girl over here. Gee, rough weather. Yeh, Owen said it is. Where you going? Well, gotta go up the girl. There was something going on in the hall that night over here. He no more than got up on the wharf and I opened the forecastle door. Yeh, Owen was sitting right on them gas barrels lighting the old pipe up. I use to go across with Wessy Ingles, I went across there one time with them. It was rough. Had a load of lumber on the deck, the hole

full of sawdust for the smokers over there. And we laid in Tiverton, and about one o'clock he woke me, get up and reef the sail in. Take a reef in it so it wouldn't be up so high. So I did. Then I went down and opened a can of tomato soup. Worse thing I ever took. Boy going out by that lighthouse, the seas were a lot higher than this kitchen. You could see them coming in. Gee, Wessy'd say, I hope they go over top of these. I'd say, I hope so too. Half way the Plymouth engine that stopped. Got wet. The old buick kept on – now and again it skipped. Took us 8 hours.

Q. It had two engines in it?

A. Yeh. Eight hours going across. When we got up to White Head, going down through the channel, the only time I could get out, seen the oars going out over the stern going across, I went out in the forecandle and I looked down and there was red pails, everything else floating. Right up over my bunk. I beckoned to Wessy, come look. Gee Johnny he said, go down and bail that out before I make land. He was going down Seal Cove. I got her all bailed out, god. In the hole you couldn't tell whether it was sawdust or what it was, it was so wet.

Q. Was it ruined?

A. No, no. They dried it. Put it in – spread it out and dried it.

Q. I visited those smokehouses in Seal Cove a couple of years ago. Went over in a lobster boat with the bicycles, wandered around those smokehouses. They were amazing; the smell is still there. They are not smoking the herring anymore, which is sad to me. The ceilings are black and smoky and you can smoke it. Now, what led to the end of that?

A. I don't know. Market must have got bad or something. Gee they use to smoke a wack of them.

Q. They said they smoked a lot of bloaters for the Boston bars. I guess maybe people don't eat bloaters in bars anymore, but it just seemed so sad to see them empty.

A. Yeh, they use to take a lot of the herring about that long for smoking. Load after load they use to take. And Wessy, he hauled all the sawdust across there. Every darn bit. Started across there one time, had a load of lumber, had to crawl in through the windows in the forecandle. He got one of them big scows down East Ferry, the old ones they use to have. Going to take that over to Three Islands where he had the weir.

Q. Did you tow it?

A. Yeh. We started. It started to breeze up when we got quite a ways over and flood tide and below White Head there's quite a ledge. We was towing, and after awhile, before we got there, the darn thing went under and the hatch came off – oh, Wessy said, take the dingy and pull yourself back and try to bail it. I went back and I bailed half a dozen buckets and I said, this darn thing goes down again, where am I going to be? I pulled myself right back. I said, you can't bail that. Oh, I pulled back and put another rope on it. And we got nearer to the ledge and we knew we'd make it by there cause the flood tide was taking us up hill and we had to haul back and cut. Next day it was blowing a hurricane, notheast, I don't know where it ever went. Never found it.

Never asked him how much he paid for it. And he lost it. He wanted to take it over there where he had the weir. Well, the tide had to be way up before the herring could get down in there and he wanted to dig it out more and put the rocks on that -

Q. On the scow?

A. Yeh. That weir you had to bail it all by hand. Put them all on the deck, bail them down in the hold, then we use to take them across the bay Sanford and them places. All them places down there took 50 barrels. Howard, Owen's boy, he was quite a boy then, he use to come with us. They'd go down and take all the herring out. Going to Sandy Cove. Put the sail to her, shut the engines off. Sail. He'd go up and lay down and go to sleep. Howard'd see him. We're going to have an engine going. He'd start the engine up. Wasn't long, I'd see Wessy's head come out the forecandle. Turn that off.

Q. Do you suppose that saved fuel?

A. Oh yes. But that was some work to load that big boat. Over 100 hogsheads.

Q. By hand?

A. By hand. Dip it out the weir in the dory, bring the dory along side the boat, dip it on back, then dip in down in the hold.

Q. That's a lot of herring. I went out with Stanley this summer and saw exactly 100 hogshead going aboard the carriers. That's a lot of herring.

A. Yeh, the first time we saw the weir up here, we drowned 100 hogshead, took out about 40, he never had his boat tied and it came right together and they drowned right in the seine. 100 hogshead. There was an American boat there, Connors boat didn't say nothing. Said we'll take a gaff, dip net, lights and a handle out, tie your boat, seine and everything right in the weir. So we did. Went up next tide, I'd hold that dip net under the rail and you could feel them herring, - we loaded that carrier, took them way out in the bay, dipped them on deck and dipped them over.

Q. So once they are drowned they are no good anymore, whatsoever. Why aren't they any good anymore?

A. No. They soften up. We only tore two little holes in the seine, but that was some work. Started early in the morning and never got done until 12 o'clock that night, I guess. Had to go back there 3:30 in the morning.

Q. Nobody ever said fishing was easy! So you learned how to lobster fish from your father, that's where you learned all about lobster fishing.

A. And I took everything in where we had the traps, where we would find the best lobster ground, everything.

Q. So he was a good teacher.

A. So how did he take Seldon under his wing too.

Q. How did he teach everybody?

A. Oh, I took Seldon. Dad was all through.

Q. But you learned from your Dad; Seldon learned working with you. So when your Dad retired, he owned a lobster license, but in those days it was – was his license transferred to you and Seldon?

A. No, you could buy them. Theriault, the fishery officer, Dad use to sell them for him. He use to come here with the licenses, twenty-five cents.

Q. Pieces of paper.

A. Yeh. That's all it cost us then. Now its way up over a thousand?!

Q. Lots, licenses are worth a lot now.

A. He came one time we had a big pot of small lobsters cooking on the stove. He'd sit right there by the window –

Q. The fishery officer?

A. Yeh. Well, I knew they was getting done. After awhile, Mrs. Merritt, you better take them things off the stove, I believe they're done. Jeepers, Mama didn't know if to come out or not. She was in the other part of the house. I took them off, poured the water in the sink, then asked him if he wanted one. No he said, I get plenty.

Q. Was there ever a time when small lobsters - you could bring in anything?

A. No.

Q. There was only the sized one that you can remember.

A. Yeh. Gee. We use to get a wack of them down here on the beach.

Q. Without going out in the boat?

A. Oh yeh. Ray Bishop, he got caught on the otherside one time. Down there after lobsters.

Q. So how many years did you and Seldon fish together?

A. Thirty.

Q. Thirty years together?

A. Yeh.

Q. So your father retired and that's when you and Seldon started up together?

A. Yeh.

Q. And you took your father's boat. And probably before long you replaced that?

A. Oh yeh. Got a new one. Had that one for 10 or 12 years then we got another new one. We had car engines then.

Q. Would that be the Sylvia and Betty, that boat?

A. Yeh.

Q. Which I came to know in later years, under a different name.

A. I haven't seen Conrad since he was done lobstering. Don't know where the hell he is.

Q. Around.

A. Last time I seen him he was in the tavern, him and two women.

Q. So how old were you when you and Seldon retired? How did you make the decision to retire yourselves?

A. Well, the wife done that. Told me I was getting too old to do that. I quit that and went foreman down to East Ferry for 10 years.

Q. Foreman on?

A. Lou Raymonds and the fish plant. Gordon Theriault, I was with him first, then Gordon sold out to Lou, and the last year or two, Sidney thought he was going to take over, Lou's boy. Lou would say, don't think nothing of him. I said I don't give a dam if he's here or not. Sidney use to take the boxes and weigh them before the boats got there. When I'd start to weigh a fish, I'd put them on a scale, they'd be about 10 pounds heavier. Sidney caught me. What are you weighing them for, I got them all weighed. Yeh, but your weight is not like mine. He went right out the building. A man from Grand Manan use to come in there over 100,000 pollock, great big buggers of pollock.

Q. That came from a dragger?

A. Yeh. He knew where to get them big pollock. In there one night, he started to snap all the lines. He had to get out, and two boys down in the hold pitching fish, they had to go with him. They'd take off and go to the River and stay all night. Got so rough. Holy jumpin'.

Q. So as a foreman of a fish plant, could you see anything happening in the fishery that would lead you to think it was going to come to an end?

A. Oh, you could tell. Clifton Frost and his boy, Lewis, they was dragging St. Mary's – they come in twice a day. Once in a while, you'd get a haddock about that long, but most of the time they were that long. You could tell right then they was going to ruin it taking all them small haddock. After they quit them the second year, you never saw a haddock again in St. Mary's. We use to get them in the weirs, haddock. No, never seen a haddock again.

Q. That's a pretty scary thing.

A. You're darn right. And they let them big draggers down off Halifax bring a whole load in. We'd pick them over and we'd maybe get four or five boxes out of the whole 100,000. It is just ruined. You could see it coming. Shame.

Q. So would you say there will probably never be haddock in St. Mary's again?

A. I don't think, no. Because they're not letting them go. They are still doing it. They go to early in the spring and catch all them spawn haddock. Shame. Them big cod fish, right full of spawn. I don't know what in the devil the fishery officers think when they're – why they let them do it. They say they are trying to bring fish back, but I don't see where they're trying to bring them back. They're still trying to kill them.

Q. What do you think would be the last thing we could do, to protect what we have left?

A. They gotta yank them draggers out.

Q. That leaves a lot of people without a way to make a living though, so how do you deal with that?

A. Well, the government has to do something. To keep letting them draggers do it, there ain't going to be anything. But if they would let them go hook and line like we use to trawling, and there's no hake, they're gone. Dad and them use to be haking, the boat would be right full everyday. All the boats. And since them draggers got in, there's nothing left. They're ruining the whole dam works.

Q. What do you think about the future of the lobster fishery?

A. Well, if they cut that summer fishing. There is nothing up here this year. Its going to be the same way up there in New Brunswick, where the Indians fished all summer.

Q. It's going to ruin it.

A. Well, I think it's a sobering thought when there use to be haddock and they aren't anymore, same thing can happen with just about any species. Hake, they're gone. Catfish, they're gone, and when I first started down there, catfish! They'd be that long,

Q. You'd get them in your weir?

A. No, the draggers. But this last two or three years they don't get any. That's why lobsters came back. Catfish and cod fish use to eat the lobsters.

Q. But I think it's a good thing to have lots of variety out there. In the water, in the forest, everywhere.

A. Yeh. Halibut, flounders. Clifton Frost and two draggers we had, they'd come in loaded with them flounders that long. We done good cutting them. Didn't let them grow up. Never had a chance to spawn or nothing. There two years ago, where the seiners seine the herring up the head of the Bay of Fundy, they went up there the draggers, loaded them with great big flounders. Solid full of spawn. Killed them all. Never heard tell of any up there this year when the seiners were up there. That's why there's no sardines those dam seiners, catching all the spawn herring. And, I don't know, the government don't seem to think anything of it. Shame. For the next generation coming along. What the devil are they going to do?

Q. Well, Sandy Cove was a pretty busy spot at one time. I don't know what its heyday would have been, but I assume when you had all the tourist homes open,

A. See, Ernie Morehouse use to have the factory over the Bay of Fundy.

Q. What was being made at that factory? Candy?

A. There must have been eight or ten boats over there. Some were haking all summer. He had people from Centerville down here splitting fish.

Q. What was the end product for hake usually? Dry fish?

A. Yeh. They dried it and shipped it overseas to the poor countries. They was cheap. Dad use to fish some weeks all week for \$1.50 to \$2.00. Up to Centerville, must have been 15 boats up there haking, down on the Island, all them boats, hake. They was drying them everywhere.

Q. When you started fishing on your own, you lobster fished? You did handlining, trawling?

A. Little handlining.

Q. Did you build a weir every year?

A. No.

Q. So you were primarily a lobster fisherman.

A. Yeh. And weir fishing.

Q. And you were saying, Owen Ingles, had him to show you how to build a weir. So that's not something you father was able to teach you.

A. No. He helped us in the weir. Spiking the top poles, he lost two axes for us. Missed the spike, and the ax kept right on going.

Q. And an ax was kind of indispensable in those earlier days. People took pride in sharpening their axes, and ...

A. But these axes, we tried to get some with a wide head on them for driving spikes. They was hard to find.

Q. Did you ever hear tell of 'blenkhorn' axes?

A. Yeh. Blenkhorn, I use to like the double biters in the woods.

Q. Now I don't know what the fascination would be for double biter, they look like they'd chop something off, but what was so good about them? Two sharp sides?

A. Yeh. I can cut this way and this way, a lot of people can't. Seldon could cut this way, then he'd have to turn the other way and it looked like a beaver cut it!

Q. Was this for cutting the tree down or limbing it?

A. No, cutting the tree down. That's how we always did it.

Q. Nobody had invented a

A. Theriault brought them swede leads out – Brad and I use to cut eight or ten people's wood around here in the winter. Way up the old road, way up on the thirds. Left here on morning, Dad told us not to go it was so dam cold. But we went. Everything was froze so hard, we had to walk back home.

Q. You were pretty young when you took on this task of cutting a lot of wood for a lot of people.

A. Yeh. Then I use to take the oxen and sled and bring a whole load back for this fellow next here, Harry Johnson.

Q. Was this hard wood or soft wood?

A. Soft wood.

Q. People burn soft wood.

A. Left it the whole length on the sled. Bring a load down, up that hill, and go back and get another half load, go back and load the rest on and bring it down. Brad and I cut for Arne Morehouse down here, the other side of Myrtle's one time, up the old road, he'd to town, he got a double case of beer the night before. Left it out in the back end of the house, porch like, told us to come out at noon and have a beer. We went down there, that was froze harder than a rock. So we had no beer for dinner. We quit around 4 o'clock in the afternoon, went down. We got Brad

feeling good and her and I watched him going over the road. He was taking the whole road. I said, he'll get the devil tomorrow. She'll be right over here after ya.

Q. O.k. Brad is a Merritt, right?

A. Cousin.

Q. Cousin, he's a cousin.

A. Brother to Ken and Arley. Brad, Ken, Arley. I think there was only three boys. And two girls, I think.

Ken use to like to play crib. Uncle George did too. He was a brother to Dad. He'd play by his self, crib. Put a hand out for his self and a hand out.

Q. And he played fair and square.

A. Yeh, sometimes he'd get beat! I don't know how he done it.

Q. Did you play lots of games with your parents when you were growing up?

A. Not that much, no. Use to go out a lot. Go to certain houses. Use to go to Stanton's and Barbs, when they lived down where the store is. Colin Crowell, use to go there. I don't know who else it was, but we was sitting there playing one night. Barb wasn't playing, Roy and somebody else was playing together. I think Austin and I was playing. Barb was going around to see our hands. Gee, and I caught her. I jumped right up, and I threw the cards, and I said, you take your dam cards and I walked right out of the house. I never went back there for a long time. Gee that made me mad, cause I don't like to cheat.

Q. No need for adults to cheat.

A. No. I was some mad. Good thing she never said nothing.

Q. What did your parents do for relaxation after work? Did having the other generation in the house sort of cramp their social life a little bit, or that was so typical.....

A. Not that much. See Dad was fishing, he'd be gone for a whole week over the bay. Stay right there. I use to take the dinner pails over for him and Sam Harris, they use to fish together.

Q. When you say they fished over to the bay, they went.....where?

A. Haking over there. Yeh, I use to go over and take their dinner pails and they stayed too late, til dark, I wouldn't come back. Dad would say Sam, take him up over the hill, put him on the trail, so Sam would walk back and I'd come through the woods there.

Q. You were a little roamer. Head first into everything.

A. Then Dad would have the foreman's job on the wharf over there. And old Putman, engineer down here, so he use to get cold. So Mary and I, we'll warm him up. So we went and got some of

the creosote and filled that big long barrel, he got in the corner and he couldn't get out he got so hot. Dad had a lot of salt for his lobster bait, we kept dumping the salt in. That night, he came in to us, where's all the salt? Potsy, we had to put it in the stove. I got in here and I couldn't get out.

Q. That's how I put the fires out in my oven, throw a little salt in.

A. Edie's oven caught fire here last year. They wasn't home. The kids was there. I don't know what they was cooking. So they grabbed a box of soda and put it out.

Q. Does soda work?

A. Yeh.

Q. Soda works, yes. Good thinking.

A. I've tried it in my stove to see if it did. Oh here a month ago. I had a good fire going and I took it and went like that and it went right down.

Q. Kitchen is a good place to try some experiments.

A. I think that stove needs wood. I can feel it cooling off. We had to anchor our boats out in the cove nights.

Q. How come?

A. No channel here then. Had to row in and row out in the morning. And eel grass, oh it must have been 10 feet high. And rowing the oars and that would get balled up and you'd have to haul the oars back in the dory. Oh, what a job.

Q. You had a wharf similar to what's there now. It was in the same location.

A. Yeh, but there was no channel to it.

Q. I thought the first time they dredged that channel was for the big new wharf.

A. No.

Q. They had dredged it before?

A. Yeh. You had to row in and row out and if it breezed up southeast or something in the night, and the tide up, you'd have to row out and get your boats and bring them in.

Q. When you stand up on top of Mount Chewable, and you look down and you think that must be one of the most perfect natural harbours in the world, but it needed a little manmade help.

A. Oh, jiminy yes. That's when you'd see the lobsters, in that eel grass. You try to catch them! They'd go some.

Q. Were you ever involved in any rockweed harvesting?

A. I did one year, around the cove here. Too darn much work. Haul that home with the oxen, spread it out, dry it. Wasn't worth it. Emmerson Graham, he was buying it then.

Q. Was Emmerson a brother to Jim and Bud and everybody?

A. Yeh. Bobby, Emmerson, Jim, Bud, and Beverley out – he's out beyond the terrace. Beverley's alive, Bobby's alive and Jim and Emmerson. Bud's gone and all the girls are gone. All with cancer.

Q. Well Jim looks to be in fantastic health – well he had his appendix taken out.

A. Yeh, I called him after he got home awhile. I said, Jim, what are you going to have a baby next? HE said, I don't know, maybe. Yeh, we had the thing up to the lake there this summer and all got together.

Q. Was there a reunion of some sort?

A. Yeh. Bobby and Dorothy got me out behind the big tent they had, took me in the wheelbarrow, dressed me all up, flowers in my hat, big bow up the wag here, and after it got going awhile, he wheeled me out front. They all got laughing. That Mabel and Emmerson's wife, they sit right in front and I didn't dare look up at them. They'd get me laughing. There was five all dressed up as women up on the hill. They were hooting and laughing at me in the wheelbarrow. Then they walked down by. I don't know how many pictures they took.

Q. You got any of those pictures here at your house?

A. No, I haven't got any. I thought some of them said they was going to send me some, but haven't yet.

Q. Did this take place at the lake, or at Alton's house?

A. At Alton's house. He borrowed a great big tent from Sobey's or the Superstore.

Q. And it was a reunion for the?

A. Grahams.

Q. Guess I missed it.

A. Yeh, there was quite a crowd there and all kinds of stuff to eat. Bob, the wife and I we took a quart. We drank that. She lives to drink. Had a big cooler there, she put the bottle right in the cooler. When I had that spell here three or four weeks ago, I don't know how Mabel found out but she called. How are ya? Good. Well you better be good for next year, when we go to the reunion again!

Q. So do you think that spell slowed you down a little?

A. Well, it has in one way. I have to watch some mornings I so darn dizzy, I don't know if I'll go sideways or backwards. Feel like going – but I think most of it is my ears plugged off. Awful sore, this one. I put Vicks there last night but it's not sore today. I use Vicks for most anything.

Q. What were some of the remedies when you were growing up? I mean you didn't even have penicillin until World War 11, I think around there.

A. Old Minards Linament.

Q. Having your grandparents living with you. Did they have any remedies that were special?

A. No. No. Medicated ointment and Minards Lineament. I liked the medicated ointment. I have sinus a lot, I put it right over my eyes so it will burn. Sinus is gone in two seconds. Eat a little of it.

Q. What, you eat it?

A. Yeh, won't hurt you. Audrey said what the heck you putting that in your eye for? I said take that pain out of my head. It will, right quick. But I can't get none anywheres.

Q. Well, I'll have to bring you some tiger balm. Ever hear of tiger balm?

A. No.

Q. That's pretty strong stuff, you might like that. After you've had it on you for about five minutes, then you start to feel it. You don't feel it at first.

A. I give Dee Dee a sinutab this morning.

Q. Were you to town this morning?

A. No she was down here. I have sinus on this side a lot. I keep a box handy. I got three left. I'll have to get some Saturday.

Q. So Saturday now a days is your day to go to town?

A. Yeh, Garf and I.

Q. What was going to town day for your parents when you were growing up?

A. Oh, not very often. They use to go mostly every Saturday night up to the movies or something. With Harry Saunders use to drive the bus and Guy Morehouse, Guy use to have the small bus.

Q. Harry Saunders had the bigger bus?

A. No, Guy had the big bus and Harry had the smaller one.

Q. I think the bus is a good idea, too bad we don't still have one.

A. Yeh. That night I fell, I was in the small bus, with Harry Saunders and Lenore calling, got to Centerville, Oh Harry, I got to pee. Well, Lenore, you hold him right in the door and let him pee. We use to go to the bootleggers there in town.

Q. That was the closest bootlegger?

A. Yeh. Saturday nights. Two old ladies and an old feller, use to make beet wine. Earl Gidney took me there the first time. We went in, if there'd been a hole in the floor I'd like to crawl out of there. They was sitting across the room from ya, never said a word, sit there for 10 minutes, they just kept looking you over.

Q. These are the ladies that made the beet wine?

A. Yeh. Two old ladies and the old man. They'd just stare at ya. What do you want? Want it good. And one not as good. So she'd go up stairs and bring her down. Had the corks tied so it wouldn't come out. Take that cork out. You had to sit there and drink it. When you'd take the string of the cork, and that cork hit the ceiling. The old smoke came out the bottle. Jeez, it was good and strong. That kitchen ceiling was blood red. They must have made it upstairs.

Q. So how come you had to drink it there?

A. She wouldn't let you out.

Q. Couldn't take the bottles with ya?

A. No. Had to drink her. This night Seldon and I and Roy McCullough went up there, went to Ed Webbers, he was a bootlegger, Roy and Seldon they kept walking and I went to the door, knocked and they was no answer. I knew there was somebody when I heard the piano playing. I came around and went up on the platform and tapped on the window. She looked, so I got down. Seldon and Roy came and I says seen the Mounties? Yeh, they just went up the road. So we started and got nearly up to the Bank, this car came a mile a minute behind us. Stopped. Every door flew open. There was two Mounties and three plain clothes men. I had a big overcoat on and a flashlight inside, he reached right in and got it. Asked Seldon his name and Seldon couldn't speak, he was so dam scared. So we decided we'd go get beet wine, then. We started up there and got up around the corner so we could see down by the house, and there was the Mounties there. Harold Titus and Elwood, - Elwood had the glass right in his mouth and the Mountie took it right out of his mouth. It's a wonder Elwood didn't hit him. So we turned around and got the devil out of there. So we never got nothing to drink that night.

Q. So you mentioned taking people over to Weymouth for alcohol, could you not buy alcohol legitimately in Digby?

A. Oh yeh. They just wanted the trip. Lot of them had never bee on a boat, I suppose.

Q. But when you went to Digby Saturday nights, how come you went to the bootleggers?

A. Well, the liquor was closed by the time we got there. That was down the street from where the liquor store is now.

Q. Was there a time you can remember of prohibition or temperance movement or something? You could always get liquor?

A. Yeh.

Q. What about across the bay, the rum runners, that's earlier is it?

A. Yeh, that's earlier. I never seen none of them.

Q. You never remember St. Mary's bay being a place used by smugglers or anything, it was just a place where people fished and made a living.

A. Yeh. Weir and lobstering. They use to fish out here, trawl boats in the spring for haddock, still had the factory down here, ice place.

Q. Factory down here, was it a cannery?

A. Yeh.

Q. Canned fish? Or lobsters or herring?

A. No, fish mostly, I think. Big ice shed there, smokehouse, smokehouse was on this side of the road, factory was on that side and the icehouse was on top of the hill.

Q. Was all part of one?

A. Yeh.

Q. Who owned that?

A. I don't know who owned it. That was gone before my time. Use to go down in that factory and raise the devil.

Q. Was it a vacant building?

A. Yeh. Somebody from Digby had the dredge, so he left it here in the winter. Warren Bates lived up across from the Methodist church, he was a carpenter. He was down there, way up on the frame and Osborne and I and Earl Gidney use to go down and get in the building – Mr. Bates, any bait today. And we'd keep it up. When we see that saw drop, you wanted to get coming up this hill because we knew he was after us. We'd go in, Osborne and I, in here, Earl went over to his grandfathers, Harry Johnsons. He use to come right up and knock on the door – them boys here? Grampie would say no. See them going over the road. He'd go over the road, but he didn't know where to go. He'd no more than get down there and up there, and we'd sneak down again and holler. He never got a hold of us. When he lived up on the hill, Austin Morehouse,

Jack Morehouse, use to be the fishery officer, they use to go up there and put tick tack on Warren Bates house.

Q. What's tick tack?

A. Oh, put a pin next to the glass on the outside of the house, and you have this rosin, scraping on it, make a devil of a noise. Squealing and that. They use to do the top of his window and get way up in the Methodist church, way above, he'd come out and walk all around the house try to find it. But he should have had a broom or something. So this night, he went up there and he seen them just putting it on. They took. He came out with a shotgun and he took after them. Jack and Allison Morehouse, they took down across the field, the shore, Austin went up through the Church of England. MacKay had his horse in the field there where Ken Carty lived. It was laying right along side of the fence. Austin jumped the fence and jumped right on the horse. I don't know who it was said Austin beat the horse across the field.

Q. I think you guys just like to be chased.

A. I use to go with a girl across the cove there, up the hill. She was keeping house for two whole days for someone from the states, I guess. I use to go up tap on the window and she'd raise the window and I'd go in. This night, we lay on the bed there and a tap came to the door, I wasn't long getting underneath the bed! Irene out the door with her to see what the old lady wanted. She closed the door and I wasn't long getting out of that window and down across the field. I though she's liable to call the somebody. Went up two or three nights after that, Irene didn't say she wasn't going to be there. Tapped on the window, up came the blind, who was it but Effie Carty.

Q. Was she one of the older ladies?

A. No, she was there – took her place that night. I thought Elsworth Carty will be after me now. Down across that field, down on the flats, around the flats and home.

Q. So when you started to be interested in Betty, did you court her about the same way or a little differently?

A. A little different. I use to come home and go up in the bathroom and I'd signal Irene and she'd signal back. Long while ago.

Q. Signal with what? A flashlight, a candle?

A. Yeh. That's been a long time. She's still alive – she's down in Halifax someplace. Her husband died here a couple of years ago.

Q. She wasn't from around here?

A. No.

Q. She came here to take care of these ladies?

A. Slede and Rose Lee were the sisters, they was adopted. Irene and Don have two boys. One is a Mountie and they've been there two or three times, these boys. Yeh, still think a lot of her. Went with her four or five years. So Betty and I, we got caught so I had to marry her!

Q. How old were you when you got married?

A. Oh, twenty some.

Q. And Betty was?

A. She was 18. Yeh, worked next door. One night in the cabin there, we went over there, laying there, we fell asleep. I had to go lobstering. I wasn't long getting out of the cabin home here. Dad says, where the hell you been? Out. I know you been out.

Q. So can you describe to me a little bit what it was like when you were young and newly married and starting a family of your own? You had three children? Three boys?

A. Three. Three boys. Yeh. Grant and Danny over here Morehouse, Tommy, they use to get out here and wrestle, I thought they was going to kill one another sometimes. Yeh, Craggie born in the winter, Eric Gosson over here took her to the hospital that night. It was snowing some when we left here. We came back it was a snowing! Halfway to Seawall hill we got down the hill after awhile, backwards, tried to get them chains on there at Seawall with that wind out of there and a blustering. Thought we'd freeze. After awhile we got the chains on.

Q. He was the first born, Craig? Craig is the oldest?

A. No, Grant.

Q. All three of your children were born in the hospital?

A. No. Home. Up on the hill. Yeh. Grant was born April 17, - the snow then was as high as the top of the windows. Dr. Rice had the horse and he had to come up off the road here and there anyway he could get there. It is hard to believe that was the 17th of April. Mama said the snow was right to the top of the windows. I know there was church, left the church and you'd go along like that along the telephone wires. Wilfred Gidney use to give us the devil. Don't know what it does - it must do something to the telephone taking the wet mittens and going along there, scraping along it. Wouldn't be long you'd see him coming. We'd take of across the church yard, go over to the bay through the woods there.

Q. That would be Junior Gidney's father.

A. Yeh. Yeh, I can remember Wilfred's father and mother down there in Mink Cove, lived across from Cons. Yeh, I use to have to go to Mink Cove to get molasses.

Q. Where did that come from molasses, instead of one of the stores in the village?

A. Didn't have it.

Q. Didn't have it. Didn't carry molasses.

A. Theriaults down there in Mink Cove. I know mother gave me a five pound pail, I took the sled going down the church hill and down that way. But I didn't make the turn, and I rolled on top of the five pound pail, and it went just like that. I went home crying. What happened. Well, I couldn't make the turn. Well, you know where the sled is going to be. Right there. You're walking now. Up that hill and down to Mink Cove. With a new pail. Before I got home, I had the molasses half ate. There'd be that much foam on top, oh, was that good. Down in the bottom, sugar. Wash my hand off in the snow. Is that all the molasses they give you? Yeh. How much did you eat? None. Poured it out in the snow and ate it? Yeh, a little. Buggers.

Q. So were they making the molasses down in Mink Cove?

A. No, it must have come in the River I suppose, and they hauled it up by oxen. But after awhile, they got it here. And this is the only road you could get to the wharf. This steep hill. Eddie MacKay hauled all the freight. He was coming up the hill there with the keg on, it broke lose and it smashed and he got right down on his knees, I don't know if he did or not, but they said he did. Licking it.

Q. So you say at one time, the road that branches off to go the wharf now, wasn't there.

A. No, that's a new road.

Q. Yeh, that's a new road when they built the new wharf, right?

A. Gosh, I've been here since then and I can't even picture how it use to be.

Q. Well, you must have been down this old road haven't you? It's just that I am so use to the new road now, I can't picture how it was.

A. Can't get down through there now. I use to every year cut it out with a scythe. Haven't the last couple of years.

Q. What did the people that lived in this part of Sandy Cove think when they built the new wharf?

Was it a good thing?

A. Yes. It was good, get them draggers away from them small boats. Yeh there is not too many of us fishermen left. Me, Jack Morehouse, and Dougie Harris.

Q. Where does Dougie Harris live?

A. Deep Brook. I seen Doug this spring. He's getting along. Dougie must be close to - crawling up to 90. And Jack Morehouse is close to 90. All the rest are gone. Yeh, Dougie nearly went for it - boat filled out here one time. His brother was with him - Lee - Clifton grafted Lee as he was going down. On the arm, hauled him aboard.

Q. The boat had sunk.

A. Yeh. Dougie was on the stern. We just came ashore with a load of traps, when we seen Con a coming wide open. And Roscoe Foster was there, he came right home and got a bottle of gin and took it down. Warmed them right up.

Q. They say, in the story of the sinking of the Robert Cann, we heard lots of different accounts of that story, during these interviews, and lots of people say it was a mistake to give the whiskey – well only one guy survived. But a second guy was hovering there, and everybody else was dead. But Capt. Ells survived and then this other guy, they gave him whiskey to warm him up, and they say lots of people end up by saying and ‘that’s what killed him’.

A. I think the woman was still alive when the boat struck the land. They must have suffered some.

Q. I’ve read and heard a lot about it and it sounds like one of the most horrendous nights anybody could spend.

A. How that fellow walked out through the woods there. Out to Audrey’s there. Must have been some dam cold.

Q. Well, well we’ve heard lots of people say that when he arrived at the door, he was scary to look at because he looked like an icicle, like a snowman.

A. Yeh, that a story I have become pretty intrigued with.

Q. Can you shed any light on the Jerome story? Nobody has told us anything about the Jerome story.

A. No. I don’t know nothing about the Jerome story. You’d have to ask Edwina McCullough. She’s the one that they took to town and interviewed her. She took him over where the rock is now where they found him. I can’t straighten them two fingers.

Q. What is that a result of?

A. I done that the day I fell down cellar.

Q. Just like last year?

A. Yeh. Alton had to get a hold of them and haul them out. Didn’t quite haul them far enough. Don’t bother me. The little finger now and again gets sore. But this is the one that bothers me. It snaps right in there, and you feel it snapping.

Q. All in all would you say you’re in pretty good shape for 82?

A. Yeh. Gone through a lot of it.

Q. How would you sum it all up so far?

A. Pretty good. Done a lot of hard work, use to lobster fish all day, put a big garden in every year. And done most all of it by hand. Digging up, and everything. I come home oh five o'clock, yolk the oxen up, go haul rocks off until way after dark. Mamma would holler to everybody – SUPPER! Yeh. I'd keep on. After awhile, first going off there I'd see Dad coming up. Come on boy, time to quit. We gotta go lobstering in the morning. Yeh, I know. And I use to plant down in the lower field. We'd never starve while I was around.

Q. Never ever cold.

A. Just now.

Q. All right, I'm going to wrap it up Nelson, unless you can think ofwas there one more thing you were going to tell me? Was it one of your favorite yarns. Especially if you had a drink or two, what are some of your favorite stories?

A. Well now, Victor Jeffrey, Buddy Crowell and I took the boat and went to Weymouth one time. Buddy had to have some teeth out so him and Victor went. I went up to the liquor store and got some liquor. I went down to the boat and they was gone so long, so after awhile I got up on the wharf. I seen them across the bridge a coming. I said come on, and this car come the other way going like the devil. I said, watch out for them black fellas. I never looked to see who was in the car. That thing stopped, and these black fellas got out and said What did you say? Nothing, I was hollerin at them. They came and we got out of there dam quick. Scared! Oh, Dad and I and Don Walker went across the bay one time. Dad gave Don to go get a quart. He came running, lets get going! Lets get going! We got down aboard the boat and I started, Don said, I didn't have to pay. Here's your money. It was sitting in around the corner, so I just reached in and got it. I seen the Mounties down there North Weymouth, and I knew what for.

Q. So it was as common for you to go to Weymouth as it is for you to go to Digby now.

A. Yeh. Seining the weir one day, Orrie Morehouse and Eddie Theriault came. So we went up to seine, we had lots of mackerel and some lobsters. Orrie said I'd like to go to Weymouth. We took off. The tide was way down and that channel going up there is more crooked than the devil. We run right out and the backwash came and washed us back in the channel. We kept going, we was too late getting there. So I went up and old Louis J. was still in there. I tapped on the door, told him what I had. He said, come down the cellar. Took both lobsters and mackerel, he passed me out two quarts and I passed him a bag of lobsters. We left there and went down to New Edinburg; Orrie wanted to go there because he knew a lot of them from lobstering. We got there, and a crowd got there, boys and girls playing music and that. Came twelve o'clock, Orrie said time we was going home. Eddie and I didn't want to leave. We was having too good of a time. Eddie, there has a store, so Eddie got these sardines, I don't know how many pans he ate – them great big sardines, coming across that bay, he got sick. He went home, Faith called me the next morning. She says if you ever take him across the bay and feed him sardines again, I said, I didn't feed him sardines, he fed hisself. That the way with Edgar, got drunker than the devil and sick. He was in the weir over there. He went home, he was some sick. I went up the next morning asked him to go to the weir. I could see he was too sick to go anywheres.

Q. Who were your partners in the weir or did they change? Did you always have the same group?

It was you and.....?

A. Always did, Brad Merritt and I, and Cliff and Duttonton Sypher and after awhile, Duttonton, he got out of it. Arthur Carty went with me. He got out of it and Osborne over here went in it. Then we got greedy and built three and we went in the hole then. Seldon was with us. I had to feed him three summers. Haven't made a cent. Good thing we was saving money to feed him and feed ourselves.

Q. What was it like having a brother for your fishing mate for thirty some years?

A. O.K. We got along good. Jack and Osborne same way.

Q. You say Jack and Osborne didn't combine their licenses? They just had one?

A. They had two, one each. Same as we did. They fished together same as Seldon and I. They could have had 600 some traps same as us. Now when I moved here, Osborne was fishing and Jack was not, as I recall.

Q. How many years?

A. I came here in 1978. Yeh, well I've been out of it close to 20 years. Time goes so, that we don't know it's going.

Q. You say you worked down at the fish plant, so you were

A. Fish plant. Eight or nine years. Betty told me to get the hell out of that. So I said o.k., I'll take the pension. So I did.

Q. How old were you when you took the pension?

A. Gee, I don't know.

Q. Before you were 65?

A. No. I was a little over 65. I wanted to work. I didn't want to give up. No, she said it was time to quit, so o.k. We won't have so much. That's all right. But I liked it down there, the crowd and the work. I was me own boss. Truena, she use to come down now and again, and I'd have to go up and show here the books. Truena, Lou Raymond's wife. She'd have to go over the books to see if I had made any mistakes or anything. Only made one. Small dragger from Tiverton. I don't know what happened that day. He called me that night and said - Nelson, I didn't have that many fish. Well, I said, I'll look the book over in the morning and see what I put down. Came to me I had too many codfish down for him. I think we was drinking that day! I was seeing double, or I wasn't seeing at all. Use to stay down there all night. Five of us, cut more fish all night than the whole dozen there in the daytime.

Q. Yeh, there is something about working at night.

A. Temperature or something. Air is different. Farstad boy, I don't know what happened. Drowned himself or not. Darn good worker too.

Q. Farstad boy? What happened to him?

A. Well, we figure he went in a dinghy and tied a rock around his neck and jumped over in the passage. That dam thing – Delroy and I got a case of beer one day and we hid it in the factory upstairs. It's a big building, all kinds of places. We got done work that afternoon and we was going to have a drink. We went up and we couldn't find it nowhere. Gary Farstad, he seen us, watched us looking everywhere. I said, Delroy, somebody got that. He started to laugh, Gary. I said dam you – how did you know we had a case of beer. Oh, I smelt that! He must have. You couldn't hide nothing from him. He'd go out at night, twelve or one o'clock with a fork lift, go get ice at the next plant. The platform was only that wide. No lights or nothing. It's a wonder he hadn't run right off that platform.

Q. He was a good forklift operator.

A. Yes sir. One day I went up the gurry slip, and I got one of the boys to go wash it off. One of the Robicheau's there from Gullivers, a big fellow. Put the hose to him and washed him right off. And the tide was only up two or three feet. Wonder it hadn't killed him. About a 12 to 15 foot drop, among all them braces and that. He came up the building, - what the hell happened to you? Well he washed me off the platform. I said, you get the hell upstairs – there is all kinds of clothes up there. I don't know whose they are, but put them on. Get down here and get to work. You wasn't suppose to be out there on the platform.

Out there one day the gurry, was winding it up with a shovel. I had the shovel on it like that, I didn't know Titus was behind me, and I touched that and the shock and I threw the shovel right back, and it just went over his head way down on the beach. If that had hit him, it would have taken his head right off. Like here one night with the electricity. Use to keep the meter box in that cupboard. The fridge was over there. Thundering and lightening here like a bugger here that night. Had the kids in Mama's bedroom, Mama, I came out to get my rubber boots behind the stove. I got them, I just got about there, that lightening hit that, the fuses threw that door open, the meter box opened the fuse went right across and drove right in the fridge over there. Then the lights went out. And with all the smoke in this kitchen, I got a flashlight, I didn't dare go outdoors it was raining so dam hard. I looked out the window, didn't see no fire, went the devil back in the bedroom with the kids. They was a hooting and crying and hollering. Betty and Mama was trying to keep them quiet. Oh, Mamma said, this isn't nothing. You ought to have been in Boston in the states when they have thunder and lightening storms.

Q. Have you travelled very far from Sandy Cove in your life?

A. Oh, I've been out to B.C. twice and to Boston I don't know how many times carrying fish. Montreal, Toronto.

Q. England.

A. Yeh. I went to Montreal there one night with \$40,000.00 worth of lobsters. Rain, I never seen it rain any harder from here to Quebec border. Then it started to freeze and snow. You couldn't see that stove ahead of us. I had my head out the window half the time. Go right, go left. Couldn't see the white line or nothing. Mounties came along side and said get this rig off the road. Garf looked at me and I looked at him, Garf said what are we going to do? I said, keep the dam thing going. We gotta get them lobsters before they freeze. We kept on going, trucks off the road, cars off the road. We got nearly there, we stopped and was going to open the back door see how the lobsters were. I couldn't get in that door, so much ice on it. So we kept on going, got up there, opened the door and they was only one crate way up the front of the truck that had started to freeze. We had two heaters in the back, and Garf was scared they wasn't going to make it.

