

Anton Christen Oral History
Date of Interview: Unknown
Location: Unknown
Length of Interview: 02:57
Interviewer: WB – Walton Blogoslawski
Transcriber: NCC

Walton Blogoslawski: – some of your experiences. This is Anton. Your last name?

Anton Christen: Christen. I'm from Boston, Massachusetts, from the Union Oyster House in the oldest restaurant in the United States.

WB: All right.

AC: Yes.

WB: You have been shucking oyster for how long now, Christen?

AC: Fifteen years.

WB: Okay. How did you get into it?

AC: I actually worked there for seventeen years. I used to be a sous chef in the kitchen and decided to step down and do something different. Because I actually speak three languages.

WB: Oh.

AC: I'm originally from Switzerland. I speak French, German language. It's very good for the house because we have so many tourists from all over the globe, including Canada because they speak French over there.

WB: Montreal.

AC: Montreal, yes. That's the reason I like to work in a bar. The bar itself is actually – almost 190 years old.

WB: Holy smoke.

AC: (There are theory, it's a spiritual bar, on the oyster bar?). It's 190 years old.

WB: Damn.

AC: Yes.

WB: What kind of oysters do you shuck with?

AC: I usually work – we probably have two or three different kinds. Most of the time, we have some from Massachusetts and from [inaudible]. Usually from Milford. I mean, Milford, Western Connecticut.

WB: Blue –

AC: The Blue Points.

WB: Blue Points.

AC: Usually Blue Points. Some from Massachusetts and maybe something else, but not in – from the other side, I mean west coast. It's from the east coast actually. From the cape, like [unintelligible] and all those [inaudible].

WB: What got you into the business?

AC: Yes. I'm a chef by trade. My dad, you know – I mean, that's the reason I'm in – I'm in the states in seventy-nine. I used to be a chef in New York.

WB: New York City?

AC: New York City. In Los Angeles, a sous chef in a big hotel.

WB: Oh.

AC: Okay. Back to Boston for the [basic hotel?]. That's a nine hundred-room restaurant – room hotel, been the chef as – in the oyster house for two and a half years. This time, I stepped down and worked on a bar.

WB: What kind of oysters do you like the best to shuck?

AC: The way we shuck, we use a rock. The one actually from Blue Points, very easy for us to shuck because they have a big opening and it's easy to shuck for us.

WB: (To get in, here we go?). Okay. Well, I was just curious. I wanted to get, you know, the perspective. I am going to shuck this –

[end of transcript]