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Dewey Livingston: This is July 23, 2009, and this is an interview Harry Sherman in Redwood City. This is for Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary's Oral History Project about Cordell Expeditions. The interviewer is Dewey Livingston, with help from Jennifer Stock from Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

So the first question is just briefly, could you tell us about yourself, where you came from, and how you got to be here in the Bay Area?

Harry Sherman: I was born in Napa, September 13, 1932. In one month, it'll be my 77th birthday. I was the oldest guy on Cordell most of the time. I went to Napa up there and both my parents worked at the Napa State Hospital, my mother off and on, and my father up to about 30 years' service and my mother about 15.

And when I graduated, I went to work for the state hospital myself, and I was there four years. The last two, I was attending junior college in Napa up there. And then after junior college, about 1955, I moved down to San Francisco to go to San Francisco State. I finally graduated from there in '58, a BA in sociology and half in business.

Never got to my occupation of what I wanted to do mainly because up there my feet ended up claw-foot deformity with hammertoes. And so I've had six operations on each foot over the years of all that caused problem. When I was 15, my hip separated from the socket, so I had a lot of problems with that. Right leg ended up three-quarters of an inch shorter. So I lost out on the physical thing.

Always wanted to be a cop. Even tried for a couple a times for the state for something like that, but I couldn't go into the service. I've been 4F since I was 17. So up there I tried several times for service and never could make it up there or something like that. So after that I was going to college and just working part-time with the Bank of America.

Got married. Lasted a year. *(Laughs)* Didn't work out at all. And

since that time, I worked as a special police officer in San Francisco for a private company, and also worked in some bars. Arrested a car fire. The guy kept setting fires in cars. I staked out and I caught him one night doing it. Never got any credit for it. Fire department took over that because he'd been causing car fires down in San Francisco where he worked. So they solved about 30 car fires.

Later on up there, I worked with a guy up there I met. I was starting to go law school at Hastings. Only went one year. I didn't like it at all. But during that time, I met a guy and we ended up kinda ended up as special deputy sheriff in San Mateo working some drive-ins or something like that, and also the Eichler Highlands down in Belmont or something like that. And up there I even caught a house burn one time, so that's when I actually experienced for arresting anybody. But since that time, after that I moved down to San Jose for a year.

Worked with a guy setting our barricades for construction. In fact, that was the time when 101 was changing from a two-lane to a three-lane up there, so we were covering the entire freeway up there while working on projects, and also there was a lot of building in San Jose for putting up barricades for construction and manhole covers and every other bloody thing.

When I came back, ended up on unemployment for two months. I couldn't stand that. I went to work for a process serving company. So I was serving summons and subpoenas all over San Francisco up there, some of the worst neighborhoods that you can think of, of serving the summons to people up there and things like this. And during that entire time, no matter how bad the territory I was in, I never had a damn bit a problem, (*Laughs*) not one single problem I'd go – and these were the worst neighborhoods in San Francisco, also Hunter's Point, and few other places up there.

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But I ended up there a couple a years, and finally I end up working for the post office. And I just retired four years ago after 34 years with them. So my total working time is a little over 51 years, so I got tired. (*Laughs*) And also that last part up there, I ended up with some problems with my heart. It wasn't a heart attack or

anything. It slowed down. It started slowing down, and it was making hard to work. And I had one episode, I went into the hospital and they thought they had it okay. Went back to work up there after a week, but week later, I had another episode. They ended up putting a pacemaker in me. So that was –

Livingston: And how'd that –?

Sherman: Yeah. Put in a couple of years. I hadn't had a bit of problem for it. I've gone in checks three times, and so far nothing has ever happened. And I just decided – at that time I was 72. It's time to quit working. So I left it, retired from the post office. I kept my insurance. Retirement is not that really great. It's not great up there. And my Social Security isn't good because even those all those years I worked – and they took Social Security out – if you worked for the Federal Government, they cut it in half on your Social Security, so mine was cut in half. So I get a little tiny check for that. Otherwise I'm getting by.

But the insurance I kept with my Blue Cross that I had all those years, which is nice because I've had both knees replaced two years ago.

Livingston: So that helped.

Sherman: I've had the both of 'em because my kneecaps completely wore out.

Livingston: Well, what got you interested in diving? When did you get interested into diving? And where did you dive before Cordell?

Sherman: After I got back from – it was two things. After I got back from San Jose, after the year down in all the barricades and everything, and I was working as a process server, I started getting interested in karate and Jiu-Jitsu up there, and I was going up for a couple years and that started in '63. So now I've now had about 45 years of it, the training, and everything.

So there – but also '68 I got interested in diving. Not only been actually in the ocean once on a sea scout trip to Catalina Island, so

swimming out there in the water up there like that. So I got into diving, and it was '68 when I started diving.

Livingston: Where did you dive? What type of diving did you like to do?

Sherman: I've got at least 50 dives with Club Hammerheads. San Francisco Hammerheads was a diving club. It originally started out at Giddings School up there, so Giddings was mentor up there a lot of times.

Livingston: Art Giddings?

Sherman: Al Giddings.

Livingston: Al Giddings. That's right.

Sherman: The guy who does all the underwater movies, right? He even came by our club one night and showed his movies he made on the Andrea Doria. And he went on some other movies up there. But the Hammerheads were a lot of free diving, abalone fishing, anything like that. All the entire North coast; covered it from one end to the other.

Livingston: Was there something specifically you were interested in diving like abalone or exploring?

Sherman: Well, at the time up there I got a little interested in photography. We did two dives in Lake Tahoe, and I've got movies from both of 'em. One of 'em was underwater at Lake Tahoe, and the second was a funny movie we made from the beach, which cracked everybody up when it came out.

The biggest part of the thing was that there unloading to go down the beach, had this phony tank made out of papier-mâché. And this girl and guy is unloading the back of the truck, and he's standing out there. And here comes this tank from flying out, banging _____ to the ground. We had things like that all over to make it funny.

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And during that time I made at least four or five boat trips out of

San Diego, Los Angeles area. Dove along the Channel Islands mostly. And also during this time – I guess it was about the same time – I could look it up here. Just a second.

Oh yeah, it's also in October '72, I took the **Noway** course down at the pool in Palo Alto up there, and that there – and the swimming, I got through everything. Every single test they threw at me, I made, even though it practically killed me. I made it even in the long swim because I'm the worst swimmer in the world. In fact, I'm the only guy in the world who can lay in a pool, put a paddleboard on, kick like crazy, and go backwards. So my kicking is completely fouled up or something like that.

But I took the **Noway** course up there, and I screwed up on the written test, so I flunked – they flunked me out up there. Two questions up there – one of 'em was on artificial respiration. I'd gone through every single Red Cross training course there is, from first aid to instructor, from swimming to instructor, and everything like that. And at the time up there, they weren't using the breathing method. Red Cross was not.

So I go down there in **Noway**, and they put on the thing of, "How many breaths do you take?" and, "How many pumps do you think?" I didn't know a bleeding thing. That was one of the questions that screwed me up. But anyway, a friend I went to the school with, got a job as an instructor, scuba instructor, at San Francisco State.

So in '72, I was his assistant. So we went through all the swimming and trying to think of all things to – we went for it was about a three or four-week course. We couldn't think of anything else to throw at the people who we made several dives and Monterey, and also in the north coast and few other things like that. That was one of my big experiences of there.

Lake Tahoe was up there. '75, I made a dive in the Bahamas on a three-masted schooner called the Phantom. It's a ship they'd hire out for diving take 'em from the time they go from island to island, or something like that. Got a movie out of that one, and also, '76, I dove Baja, ten days on a trip down to Baja on a boat, living on a

boat. So I dove all over the southern part of Baja, California up there.

Let me see. '76, Cayman Islands again. This was another boat trip, ten-day boat trip or something like that. In '77, later that year, I went through Washington and British Columbia. A friend of mine who's originally from Washington, we went out on a diving trip. We practically dove the entire Washington Coast and all the way up to as far as the road goes in British Columbia and did some diving all over there up there. That was interesting diving or something like that.

I'm trying to remember. Another trip or two down to here, Channel Islands or something like that. Let me see. Where do I – a couple of other boat trips. '83 Kona. Friend of mine had a timeshare apartment over there, so she lent it to me for one week, and I went over there and I dove on the boat out of there – it's just a small boat, but they take you to the most interesting places.

They say if they can't take you to a place where you spend an hour underwater and not get bored, they don't go there. And up there, this was – I swam into a cave where about – reef sharks were swimming around and they're passing by you back in fourth up there. And another one was lava tube up there. One other guy – we were two experienced enough, so he took us up there, and we're crawling through the rocks and all over in little tiny, tight spaces. And we come to this one place that just blew your mind. It was a shelf. It was only about this high and was about maybe 20-30 feet long. And inside were the largest puffer fish you've ever seen in your life.

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There were about 20 of 'em in there in that one little spot. That's the only spot they ever found up there that these things hang out at. It was interesting dives up there. I had a great time.

Livingston:

When did you first hear about Cordell Bank?

Sherman:

1968 [1978]. Bob had his first dive in 1968 [1978]. He started in '77, and they made that one dive in '68 where they found one pinnacle by accident and everything, and then they got pictures and

collected of samples. In November of that year, he came by the UPS meeting, Underwater Photographic Society in San Francisco, and he gave a lecture on that. And it intrigued the hell out of me.

I was the only one out of that meeting who ever came to one of his meetings or anything else, the only one, and up there – and that was it. That was when I got interested. It was November that year.

Livingston:

Had you heard of Cordell Bank before that?

Sherman:

Nobody had ever heard of Cordell Bank before. In fact, is what you do up there when Bob described it, it's 20 miles out to sea, and you go down 150 feet. And this is – people in UPS looked at anybody – throughout the entire time we dove there – looked at us as complete idiots. They did not take us for granted – believe us or anything.

And when we told 'em stories of going down and diving 150 feet and you saw red and yellow, nobody in the world believed it till they finally proved it, that this actually happens down there. But nobody believed us. When I – this is – I got notes up there of theirs.

The first meeting we ever had I went to was in March of '79 up there. And we did a March and an April up there meeting. The first diving practice we did was in June of that '79. And what we did was the time up there is getting a whole bunch of together to go down to Monterey, find a deep spot. We finally got to about 80, something like that. And we had this time-lapse camera. Lee Tepley had a time-lapse camera. It set on an A frame this tall, bars on each side, frame. And this camera, which is about this size, just hung from it. And it takes pictures every second, or something like that.

And we were going to use it on Cordell bank, and we took it out there, and we had a hell of a time trying to get this thing organized and everything. Before we even went on this dive, Bill Kruse, who was another member down here, lives right down here in Palo Alto, he took it home to his house and was trying to figure out to

make it work. Something was not quite right.

So I went down there one day and he's working on the thing up there, and I go down up there. And we're playing around with this thing. And no matter what he does, it doesn't work. And I made a mention. It says, "Why don't you turn this thing around, the way it doesn't go?" It worked perfectly. So when we took it down to Monterey – this was on a dive up there – we set the thing out there, takes pictures. Then we went out to dinner.

Finally around 9 or 10:00 at night, we go back to pick it up. This is the night dive up there. This dive finally ended about 12:00 or 1:00 in the morning. We did get pictures up there, actually up there, the pictures up there. And it was a starfish crawled inside an anemone. Those little tube anemones, he crawled inside of there. We got this picture of him doing it out there, and that's about the thing that ever came of it.

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We finally decided, "This is too much trouble to do anything with." We made a few other practice dives up there at – let me see, in August, early, one in September when we practiced putting out a transect line.

Livingston: And those were all not out at Cordell Bank?

Sherman: No.

Livingston: Your practice sites were Monterey –

Sherman: All these practice dives – this is the first time have we ever got together and tried to do actually just something underwater and a few things like that. Now is what I want you to do is stop for a moment, and I'm gonna have you go back.

Livingston: Could you tell the story then of that dive?

Sherman: Well, 10/10/79 – I'll tell you the truth. On all these dives, I wasn't even mentioned in the film, right, even though I'm filming, right, because I was just an added passenger. I talked myself into going even though – there. And this is a – I'd say most of the dives, I

was not a particular member that I had to be on that boat or something like that. Most of this time I was just a guy that was sitting around who helped everybody else get ready for their dive and everything like that.

And when I got in or something like, I'd try some of my video or film that I had at the first time up there until my camera was complete – I ruined about three cameras up there during this entire time up there or something like that for the whole time up there. So I was really not a major member of this whole thing.

Like, Tom and Bill were always the first. They'd go down, set the transect light and everything like that. That was their job. That was their main thing. Bill took a lot of photography, so that's why you see a lot of pictures of Tom in it because Bill took all those pictures up there like that.

Plus the other thing, the others, Sue Estey and Don Dvorak are great picture takers, and a few other people like that, but I was never really the major person in this thing. I'm the guy that came along. I was there all the time and the thing like that. But after that dive on 10/10/79, Bob made a decision. And so up there – we started going out on boats.

We were doing about five or six trips. We did nothing but drive back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. And we write down the Loran readings constantly, the depth readings constantly, back and forth, back and forth. We did this on several trips. And it gets boring out there doing this thing like that. But that's how we found the pinnacles before we'd go out and dive on 'em again.

Now during this time, there're two little stories I'll tell ya. First one is up there is – let me see, on – December 30th. Let me see, yeah – let me see. Let me have – well, yeah. This was about '80, something like that. We brought a boat up there and we were gonna do some diving, a fishing boat some guy from San Francisco brought up there, brought it up to Point Reyes.

When it got up to Point Reyes, he came up there later. He was

having trouble with his boat, or some engine, or something. And he came up to the dock and we were standing there, waiting up there for him and everything like that. And we was a little – starting getting frustrated trying to dock there because the pier was high at the moment. And this is where the big joke came when he said, “Would you throw down a tire?” And Tom Santilena leans over the top and says, “Radio lindias pligue,” which cracked everybody up but didn’t make the boat happy or anything like that.

But anyway, up there, we decided to load the boat anyway that night, so we loaded it up so we’d be ready to go in the morning. We come by in the morning and the engine is not running, does not run at all. And so John Santilena was sitting there trying to get this – find out what’s going in the engine. And he’s sitting there with the engine. The only way you can keep it going is by using a spray on the carburetor to keep the engine going because there was little – find out there’s little air in the gas line.

And here’s my little dog. This is Soosie. And I went down there next to John, and I’m sitting down there. My dog’s on my lap snapping at flies that are flying around there. We’re sitting there with this air in his gas line. We can’t keep this goddamn engine running. And I’m sitting there, and all a sudden I look over to my side over here and see this little air filter. I reached over and turned it. It was loose.

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Turned it, the engine started running perfectly. Air disappeared from the gas line, but we can’t go anywhere because it’s too late for diving or anything. This guy wants to go home. So we find out there he’s having trouble with the intakes, too. So I made the only dive at Point Reyes dock to clear the seaweed out of the air intake, which I wasn’t very happy doing the dive, but I had to go down there anyway ’cause nobody else was about to. But that was one big thing up there.

Another thing happened, too, is my small dog – the piers up there on one morning. I’d drive up there at night. I had a pick-up truck with a shell on it and I’d sleep overnight in the thing on the thing to get an early start in the morning. And I’m getting up there about six o’clock in the morning. I wake up. I take my dog out for a

walk. Another guy was there, too, and so we're walking. Walked out on the pier where the boats are docked, and my dog walked off the pier. It walked off the pier into the water, fell about six feet up there. And all I see is this little tiny dog paddling like – with his eyes wide open. And I try to call him, but the echo, he couldn't tell which direction I'm coming from.

So I had to jump down, strip off my clothes, and jump in the water and go after him. And that's where I discovered how cold the water is. Because you know they say you hit cold water and it sucks everything out? That's exactly what it did. I only had to swim a short distance to my dog and pull him back in, or something like that but it was one of the most tiring swims I ever had in my life. And it was so cold. It's foggy. It's dark. It's cold.

I go back to my pick-up truck. I'm standing there in my shorts and I'm warm. That's how cold the water was. I was warm. But that's another trip on the things up there, going back and forth all the time.

Livingston: Now was that at Point Reyes at the fish docks there that you're talking about?

Sherman: Yeah, Point Reyes fish dock. Most of the time we went to Point Reyes up there or something like that.

Livingston: That's your stop-off point or it's your staging point?

Sherman: It's the stop-off point – no, so up there where you spend overnight. When we go back there, we come back all the way to Point Reyes and do the anchorage up there, because you just can't anchor outside or something like that or just float around all night.

Livingston: Can you tell about your first dive down to Cordell – are you ready to tell that?

Sherman: Yep, yep.

Livingston: And while you're looking there, I'm taking it that then this 10/10/79, you don't dive, right?

Sherman: No.

Livingston: And that's the one where they found that their anchor wasn't in the right place?

Sherman: That's where we needed to find a pinnacles, and that's why we did all the boat drive back and forth and a few other things up there.

Livingston: Okay. So your first dive?

Sherman: 9/14/80.

Livingston: Could you describe that in as much detail as you're willing to go?

Sherman: It's going to be a very short dive. *(Laughs)* Here's what happened. I dove with Don Dvorak and Sue Estey. I was the first one down. Don was behind me and Sue was the last one down. Well, this was their first time on Cordell Bank. She didn't feel good, so she went back up. So Don and I are sitting on the bottom looking around at Cordell Bank. I'm gonna get my camera ready and start shooting, or something like that.

And we look around. We're looking all over the place. Where's Sue? We have no idea where she is. So what do we have to do? Go back up. So my first dive down there, even though I had a view and everything, saw all the fish coming down – when you dive Cordell Bank, when you come down there, you first think you're there, but it isn't. It's a school of fish, just large blue fins – little fish up there. It's a large school of 'em. You just have to swim through them.

Then you swim through the smaller fish that are on the top of the pinnacle. Then you finally get to the pinnacle. So it takes a while to get down up there going this deep. But Don and I both had this short dive. So we came back up. So that was it. Even though it was beautiful and I loved it, we made the only honest decision to go back up, because we didn't know where she was.

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Livingston: So what were your impressions of that first look of Cordell Bank?

Sherman: Beautiful, gorgeous. I've told this to several people before they go on their first dive to Cordell Bank. You're gonna go down there, and you're gonna come back up and you gonna tell me that Carmel, Monastery [Beach] is a desert. And that's exactly what they say. You come back up, Monterey just does not even compare to what you see. There's so much life down there.

That cover of the book that they did on – I said on my last dive was it looked exactly like that. And most of the time it looked like that. There were few places where there was just rocky places or something like that. And there's one dive which you'll – especially see, especially in this other film up there, of how the rocky part of it here, and the holes that we found, every single one of 'em.

The second dive was 10/10, believe it or not, 1980, comes up October, those great days. And this was off the Landrum's boat, too. We went down there, got to 160 feet. I got my movie camera out. I'm sitting down there and I'm happily filming along for something. And after a couple of minutes, Bob comes over, taps me on the shoulder, and goes like this 'cause what he did was he went down there and he didn't like the way the anchor was sitting, so he tried to move it. And he spent a couple of minutes there trying to move this bloody anchor, and ran out of air. *(Laughs)*

He was running very low out of air, so is what happens up there. I had to go back up again, right? This would – both two dives on there were short dives. Still beautiful because I was sitting there. I was enjoying the scenery up there with my camera and everything like that, but it was both short dives.

Livingston: So that second dive, who was involved with that second dive?

Sherman: Bob Schmieder was even there when, I don't remember who the other guy was at the time. In fact, I don't even think I wrote it down in this dive log up there, this covers all the – practically everything. You don't even get over to here before you get to Cordell up here, up there.

Livingston: So on that dive that you were pulled up by Bob, did you do any data collection or –?

Sherman: No, I was all filming. At the time up there, my movie camera was working fine up there. It was only on a later dive did it broke the lens on a **decon** lens, ruined camera. So it took me a while to get another one up there, which I still flooded on ruined another camera. But I did gets a lot of photography off there most of the time.

Livingston: So was your role mostly taking movie footage?

Sherman: Yeah, movie footage of something like that, or video later on, or something like that. But that – and also is what Bob said is every time – I don't know if you've ever seen his collection of reports that he made every single year after that thing. He says, "If you don't write it down, it ain't there." So that's the one the thing he meant. When you came up from a dive, you wrote everything down that you could possibly remember. And that's – I've got more of that in those books than I do in my logbook, or something like that.

But there was – '81, made five dives, and during this time, a couple of times was that we'd be wiped out. We'd make a long trip out there and you can't dive either day, and you come back. There were several of 'em like that. One time we went out there, started to go out there and **Pisces** had trouble with the boat. We had to turn back. We couldn't go out at all.

One time we went out and he ran out of gas. *(Laughs)* About halfway to the Farallones, or something like that, he ran outta gas. And we haven't even started yet, so that was one long day, or something there – that was an experience and a half, because is what happens up there, the Coast Guard took a while to find us. We kept giving them Loran readings, but they didn't know what the hell they meant, so they couldn't – took us a while. Finally a cutter came by and started towing us back. Halfway back the line broke, they had to do it again.

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We came into the Fisherman's Wharf and we're docking along side there. And the skipper of the boat didn't know – he needed to pull the boat in and pull the back in this way. And the guy says, "Port, go port. (*Shouts*). Where are you going? Starboard." And during this time, Bob had these long bamboo poles with a flag hanging on 'em. Those were the marker buoys used at Cordell Bank. I kept one of the flags.

Livingston:

"Cordell Expeditions." Yeah. Oh, that's great.

Sherman:

These were on bamboo poles, and so half the bamboo poles got crunched next to the pier because this guy's – this Coast Guard skipper didn't know which way he's going. We spent the night at wharf there. Next morning, I had to – the only – I was the only guy who knew San Francisco, because I'd lived there for a while.

So twice I had to go find a diesel station – it was out by Hunters Point area – and get a couple of cans of gas of diesel fuel because it was the only station around that sold diesel fuel at the time. And I had to make two separate trips to get diesel fuel to get back to the boat so we could run back to Berkeley so we could go home.

So a lot of these trips like that were like that. One of the best – two examples. One up there, when we were doing the survey of the lines, one of those trips the water was so flat. I mean, absolutely flat. In fact, it was so flat that every time we went across the pinnacle, there was a slight movement in the boat because of the current, or something like that, or a difference in the water temperature or something. Not a big difference, but it could be felt, especially the guy who's up there steering a boat up there. All of a sudden his wheel goes like this.

But during that time while that water was so flat, I looked over the side, and here's this seagull swimming along and left a wake 30 feet behind him. That's how flat it was. I don't know if you've seen a Plexiglas thing Bob made of the scroll that was made that day. You could see the pinnacles. They're just close together up there. He made a three-dimensional thing out of it, but it came out beautifully.

Another time up there in initially on Cordell was we – oh, they're two times up there. I – yeah, the first one up there was we went out, and it was a little bumpy out there, and we're not sure if everybody was gonna dive or not. But Bill Kruse, Lee Tepley – I can't remember the other guy – were going down. And Lee Tepley sat on the boat and was going backwards and banged his head on the way down, so he had a slight headache or something.

They got down to the bottom and the current was so bad, they just couldn't do anything, so they canceled the dive. Bob Hollis was on that trip up there, and some other guy – I can't remember who. He was famous, or somebody, couldn't remember his name. But when we came back, they decided they didn't like this. This is too rough; can't do this. Bob Hollis stayed overnight, parked at Point Reyes.

Go back out the next day and it's practically flat. There is practically nothing out there. Everybody got down. Everybody got down and Bob Hollis loved it. Said it was – he would give us some equipment later on another trip, _____ helped us out. But he thoroughly enjoyed up there. But this – the change in the weather was just absolutely amazing.

Livingston: Did you notice other changes from one dive to another down on the bank?

Sherman: No. There was only one time, which I'll tell you about in a little bit. But I want to tell about the other experience up there. We were on Breck's boat and we were going out, and almost got run by a tanker just before we got to the Golden Gate Bridge. He passed within five feet of us. I don't know whether he had any radar or not, but he's just floated by us or something like that.

And during rough times of the weather, if it got a little rough, you'd follow the fishing boats and they'd go along the coast. Instead of going out, they stay along the coast all the way to Point Reyes before you go out. Well, we were out there one day and we were going out there. Got to Point Reyes and we're going out, and it's rough waves, and this is automatic steering.

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So I'm sitting up in the wheelhouse, and I'm sitting there watching these waves, and we're bouncing around a little bit. And all of a sudden one wave came this way, one of 'em came this way, and one of 'em came this way, and hit us. I just looked at those things and I yelled – I turned around and yelled at the back says, "Hang on."

And Breck has always got seasick. So he's in his cabin. He's always got seasick. He was throwing – every single time we ever went out in a boat, he's seasick. So everybody else steered the boat, practically, except when we were on the bank. Then he was alright. He had a can up on the pilot bridge, heaving into it all the time.

But we hit that bloody thing, and everything in the back – it sounded like somebody opened a closet and everything fell out. It was just a mess. And Brett comes roaring outta there, and he said, "Where the hell are we?" He immediately turned the boat back. We went back to Point Reyes. I think we made a dive the next day, but it was a little rough at that time.

Livingston: So am I right then that you would go up and settle yourselves in at Point Reyes, so to speak, and then go out for a number of trips out from that one trip?

Sherman: Yeah, or we'd go straight out. If the weather's nice, we'd go straight out. A couple of times it wasn't. You'd be bouncing all over. There was a couple of times you'd get wiped out completely. That happened also on the other dive down in **Speeder** Bank. They used to get wiped out and we couldn't go anything.

Livingston: How long would you be prepared to stay up at Point Reyes for attempting to dive? Three days, five days?

Sherman: No, it was only a two-day dive. It's always the weekend or something like that. It was never a three-day thing, or a four days, 'cause most everybody worked. I was still working. I had to get back to work. Everybody had to get back to work.

At the time, I had Saturdays and Sundays off while I was working for the post office. I was inside doing – well, all the time when I was in – so I had Saturdays and Sundays off, so I could do it no problem. A lotta people couldn't. So if they're – that's why dives were so different of who you're diving with, or some – but most the time, I dove with either Don or Sue, most of my dives.

And what happened down there at the bottom, there was a couple of memorable dives. One of them finding the holes. One time somebody had taken down a big brown pipe and was gonna bang into it, see if you can select any sediment. I was set down at the bottom of one of these holes banging on it and it just sounded like you're clanging – hitting it with a hammer. Bang, bang, which we found out later up there, the Farallon Islands, the entire Cordell Bank is nothing but solid granite.

And it came from L.A., (*Laughs*) millions of years. It keeps floating up. The entire chain up there is entirely solid granite when we did the survey for the geological survey. They couldn't ever get samples off the rock because they couldn't drag anything. There was no loose rocks. So that's why we went two days down there banging on rocks to pull it back up there.

(*Whispers*) Fantastic diving, Farallon Islands, the upper islands. Fantastic diving. But the other thing, most of the diving up there – one memorable dive was there is – I'll always remember it. It was a sort of a rock face like this, and there was a deep channel into another rock. And on top of this rock's face was a coral that big sitting right on the peak. And down in this valley, sand valley down here, must have been 20 lingcods just sitting there.

Livingston:

You don't see those too often.

Sherman:

You don't see those, no. When we dove out there, I've seen – I'm trying to think of my whales, humpback whales. In fact, one time while we were doing this survey up there and two of 'em swam underneath the boat, came up real close to us. The guy was a different skipper than Tom Landrum, but he said he could attract 'em. So he has this little flute. He gets up there and he starts playing it and both these humpbacks came up to the boat and swam

under it. He's playing on his little flute or something. They're swimming around him.

00:45:15

After he quit, they went away. And I've seen the humpback whales, the other thing's up there, and a blue whale. Blue whales, monstrous thing. First time I saw one of those, I couldn't believe it. Saw the humpbacks do the jumps out of the water and everything like that. But the report on there you could see every practical sea lion there is, several different types of porpoises. Saw a pod of six killer whales come swimming by one time.

And on way back one time, I looked at – I was doing something in the cabin and I looked out over the side and here's a big sea turtle swimming along time. That was on the way back, about halfway back. So I've seen all sorts of animals.

Livingston:

So what did you tell people when you got home, or friends, or whatever of these experiences that most people probably can't relate to? How did you describe these?

Sherman:

Well, I described it to friends or something like that, but not one single one would ever volunteer to go with me out on a dive. They would not do it. You go out there and you get 20 minutes bottom-time. The people dive on computers and everything like that, and you think, you don't need – all you need is a watch.

You got your pressure gauge, or something like that. You dive down there, and I had a dive timer. There's a little old tiny dive timer. That was what I went by. I'd go down there, and when that thing got either between 20 and 25, I looked to make sure I still have enough air for everything, and then go back up. You decompress, take your time, always be conscious of where the hell you're at.

Livingston:

So what did you tell people about what you saw when you're diving?

Sherman:

Well, the first thing was you saw color in the water. Nobody believed you. Probably there's a lot of people who still don't believe you because they have never read the record of the

Corynactis transfers color or some _____, and everything like that. Different species change color, so nobody believed that.

Everybody kept thinking you're crazy, you're crazy. Nobody dived past 100 feet. In fact, I don't think any of the UPS members have ever gone deep up there. They most they're even dives in Monterey are very seldom. But their main things are trips. To Indonesia, Australia, you name it, somewhere. That's where they go on trips. So let's – they didn't have any use for us at all. You're crazy.

Livingston: So yeah, so what was in it for you? Why did you want to keep diving there?

Sherman: It was so beautiful. You can't beat it. There's no way you can beat that dive. There's no way. Farallons comes pretty close. There's a lot of things in the Farallons come pretty close to it. One part of the Farallon up there on the northern, between the last rock and Noonday Rock are something that's underwater that's sorta they blew the top off, because ships were hitting it.

Right in there there's sort of a flat area. It's about 120 feet, something like that. We tried to collect rock samples. You had to dig through that much growth in order to get it to a rock. And it's green, and it looked like green rolling hills, just like this underwater. Visibility is 100 feet. I look over, and here's the Medusa, the big, large, long ones, ten feet long swinging over my head. So you can't beat things like that.

You just – there's no way. I dove with – one dive I did up there was – I can't remember what year it is. It was – what the hell? I don't even have it written down. Oh, here it is. In '84, I did a dive in the Orkney Islands, just above Scotland. And up there, we dove on the German World War fleet that was sunk there.

00:50:05

Livingston: Must have been cold, and really interesting.

Sherman: Nope.

Livingston: No?

Sherman: It's exactly like Monterey. There was no difference in that diving from Monterey. And the strangest thing's **Scapa Flow**, the Germans after World War I, all the German fleet was transferred to **Scapa Flow**. One of the greatest movies I think that would ever made was all this line of German ships, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, submarines, in one single line traveling across the English Channel to **Scapa Flow**, and there's no footage of it.

I tried to get some, 'cause I made a movie on the whole place up there. And what they did up there on one single day, the Germans didn't know what they were gonna do with the fleet and the people up there that was just skeleton crews. And they were roller-skating around on the decks up there. The place was falling apart, so they decided to scuttle the entire fleet. So they sunk it.

Battleships ended up upside down up there because of the heavy weight and everything like that. And during the time up there, the British thought they were trying to escape or something, so they sent out their – and actually killed seven of the people up there because they thought they were trying to escape. They actually weren't. They were just scuttling the fleet.

In fact, there was a woman up there I met who was with schoolchildren that day, and they took a boat trip that day. And that's the day they decided to scuttle the fleet. So they were sitting in this boat watching all these boats sink all over the place. I shot some footage of there that they – the ships were really originally – they sunk caissons into the ships, and people crawled into the caasons into the ship, divers working outside, inside, cleaning out all the boat, closing up all the holes.

They raised the ship upside down, then towed it down to the shipyard in Northern Scotland where they tore 'em apart. There's still five of 'em still sitting there, large ships. I dove on 'em.

Livingston: Now at Cordell Bank, how many dives did you make?

Sherman: Twenty-three total.

Livingston: Twenty-three? And why did you stop, or why did it stop at 23?

Sherman: That's because we ended it. We quit. '80's – what is it – '83 – no '82. '82 was last – was 11/14 was the last dive on there – and that was the – oh, the one I gotta tell ya this other thing up there. You'll see it in the movie up there but the dive was to made on one pinnacle, and there was another pinnacle nearby. And they were gonna drop the anchor here and tie a transect line to swim over to this one.

Well, during the movie you're gonna see Tom Santilena carrying the transect line across the side. Bill Kruse looks like he's about 50 feet away from 'em, swimming. Shot the picture of him; 100-foot visibility. The next dive I went down, following behind Bob, came down to the pinnacle, grabbed a hold of the transect line and walked into complete darkness.

A plankton bloom came down and went right through the middle of that one little area. So the entire time I'm crawling across this line, I can't see a bloody thing. I can't even see Bob in front of me. So I'm going across here, and we find get to the other side, and we find this other pinnacle which had this big monstrous hole in it or something like that.

We got some – and coming back was fine. But that one particular moment coming across there was a plankton bloom that came in and you couldn't see nothing. You're just trusting your strength. That's what Cordell Bank's like. You trust up there. When you go down 160 feet or something like that, it takes a while, and you're wondering, "Where the hell is it? Where in the hell is it? It's gotta be there somewhere."

That was like it is on your first dives up there. You're trying to get to it.

Livingston: Was every dive different?

Sherman: Yeah. Every dive – senior year's a lot the same, but every dive was – there was something, always something slightly different, or

something like that, the rock formations, the holes we found, all of those holes. We dove every single one of 'em. I've seen practically every single one of 'em up there at the time up there, so that's one thing up there. And you're wondering what they were for and everything like that.

00:55:00

Livingston:

Were you among the first people to find the holes?

Sherman:

No, I wasn't the first one that found out. I think Don, Tom and Bill found the first one. Then we found the other ones nearby it, a few other places. But you couldn't figure out what it was. We finally figured out what it was. It was the Navy. Somebody had been there before, diving up there and blow holes in it – because there's no way. That thing is solid granite.

There's no way you could chip it at that thing and get anything out of it chipping it. It had to be blown. It had to be shaped charges up there and blown out. And probably they put sensors in it. Because at one time we were trailed by a destroyer coming back, one of our earlier dives. It stayed behind us all the way coming back to San Francisco. I don't know if they wanted to do anything or not.

Coast Guard came over one time and was taking pictures of us. I guess they take pictures every once in a while of boats all the time out in the ocean or something like that, but they came by and flew around us a couple of times. And now a submarine I think was behind us at one time, too. And during the time, we did a – **Lee McCarran**– you remember him from the KGO?

Livingston:

Kinda, yes.

Sherman:

He was the specialty reporter. At the time Van Amberg was the news man at the time. Lee McCarran, he came out with us several times and made several dives on the whole thing up there. So he was familiar and we were on Channel 7 twice, reports of that. And at one time up there, they were thinking of canceling the dives up there because whether the Navy was insisting we were in the wrong place, we shouldn't be there, or something like that.

There was little controversy or something like that where we first found the holes. So up there – but Lee McCarran did a good job on reporting up there on the Channel 7 reports. He did it twice. I've got copies of it, too.

Livingston: Well, so it sounds like you did run into other people out there now and then.

Livingston: No, never. Never saw another person the entire time. Late – now up there is what happens is a lot of fishermen have found the pinnacles and they know where they are, or something like that, so they're fishing. Let me see. The one time we went out there, it was the only time Bob let us fish. We fished for 10 or 15 minutes, 10 minutes at the – all he had was a pole, three hooks hanging on it, no bait.

Drop 'em down before that thing hit the bottom, you'd had three hits. Just like that, boom, boom, boom. You take more time pulling the damn thing up than you did up there. In that short time, 10 or 12 minutes – it wasn't very long because he wanted to get back – we filled up a garbage can full. We filled up the garbage can. It was only three of us fishing. And we've hauled – as soon as he dropped the thing, as soon – and before it even hit the bottom it'd be a fish hitting on it, things like that. And that's how the schools were at that time.

On this last dive that I made, the schools were not that thick. There weren't that many. Before it was just you had to plow your way through 'em, but it wasn't this last time.

Livingston: Did you have any scientific interest in this, or knowledge about it, or did you –?

Sherman: Not really. I'm just an enjoyable diver. I was thinking of pro diving one time in my life. There's no way, or something like that. It's too much or trouble, or something. Just have fun. I don't look at diving as a work or something probably is a biological thing.

We had a couple of dives up there in the Hammerheads where we

did a survey. We put down a plate with some different metal on each corner, and we set it down in Point Lobos. And we watched of the growth of how growth was going on of something like that. We did that for about a couple of months. In fact, we got – while everybody was trying to get into Point Lobos, we had a free access. So we were just diving at Point Lobos for a couple months there for practically free without any hassle. And that's where they were only letting ten divers in at a time, or something like that.

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But other than that, the scientific thing up there, I've gone through all the samples. Several times go over to Bob's house to separate samples or something like that, and do all that work or something like that, and try and note everything like that, but that's about the main part of my scientific thing.

Livingston:

What's your impression of Bob as a leader, and how did he assign you particular roles?

Sherman:

I don't think it was ever assigned. No, is what happens is like I said, I was not a major thing. So even though – well, let's put it this way. Even though I'd dive all those dives with Cordell Bank and I dove the thing down there and we'd go to Rocas Alijos – twice I went there – and Easter Island. He appointed some guy he just met who was running a dive school as the head master.

He was gonna tell us what we're doing, if we had to do a check-out dive to satisfy him. And we had to make sure we're doing everything right in order to satisfy him. And, Christ, we had, I don't know, I had 20 years experience diving over him. So that's the way Bob was. He'd always picked somebody out of the blue or something like that was over us all the time up there, and it got me a little bit so – but it didn't bother me. I just sat and went along with the tide in order to get my diving in.

Livingston:

Did it appear to you that preparation and all of that for these dives was done well?

Sherman:

Yes. Before every season, we had to do a practice dive. Everybody who was going on that dive had – going off that season, had to do a practice dive, and the practice dive to 150 feet with

double tanks in order to get down to see how you _____ up there. We took people out. A couple of 'em decided this was not for them, even off Monastery, go on up there near close to the end up there and take 'em down to a 100 feet or something like that, and it's a difference experience.

Some people react to it well. Some of 'em just totally panic out, or they just can't do it. But we had to do it every single time. I even dove down to the Monterey trench, went down to 150 feet in the Monterey trench sloping down. All it is, is dirt. It's not very interesting. Went down there just for a practice dive one time. I went down with Bill Kruse, and I think Tom Santilena up there. We went down there just for the hell of it, just to get a practice dive in. We did it a lot of times. Every single year, you had to go out and do that practice dive.

Livingston:

And so you felt that the safety precautions were adequate?

Sherman:

Safety precautions were better than average. You had to – when we went down there, Bob would have to find the pinnacle. Then he'd have to find the current. Then he'd have to find everything else and make sure that when you drifted over that thing, the anchor would go down and lay over the top of the pinnacle. It had to be that way. Otherwise it didn't go.

It takes a while. You're sitting out there waiting to drop the anchor all this time up there. Then you had to set the buoy, the raft out there, whatever it is. Hang the T-bar off it. Get everything ready. Everything has to be ready first. You know what the T-bar is? It's a pole, hangs down ten feet with a crossbeam on it that's exactly ten feet and there's a tank hanging on it. So that's if you run out of air or something, you gotta a tank when you come up for decompression.

You have to hang on this line for about 10, 15, 20 minutes sometimes, depending on your depth and time below. So you had to have those. Had to have a safety diver out there. Besides somebody that's in the boat, there had to be a safety diver in order when you came up, he would go down and take your equipment from it, and put it in the boat so you wouldn't have to hang on to it

or stuff like your cameras and whatever dive bag you had. You gave it to him and he'd put it back up there.

Then when you went down, you went down in teams of two or three. It'd have to be ready, get everything set, check your tanks, your air, everything before you got down, sit on the edge of the boat. When you get in, drop off right next to the buoy up there. You have to be down. Then you'd check your gear before you go down. This is time-consuming as hell. This takes a lot of time, so that's why up there we'd only get _____ a day, or something like that, and the last one is late or something. You don't wanna – you want to get back to Point Reyes before its dark or anything like that. You don't want to run any trouble.

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Then when you're ready to go down, you go down. Then you do your dive _____ thing. When you come back up, you do your decompression. You do your decompression first. Then you get in the boat, and you come back and you tell exactly what happened. Then, the second team gets to go in. Then, the second team gets go in. Not until they're back on board that boat do the other party leave. This is pure safety up there.

Nothing is put – there is only one time there were three dive teams in the water at one time. The water was calm, peaceful, over a 100-foot visibility. And I remember the time because up there when I got down the bottom, here's another team sitting down there waiting for us, or something like that. And one was going up and another one was starting to come down. That was the only time there was more than one team in the water at any other time, and it was just because the conditions were absolutely perfect and it happened that way.

Like we said, never an accident. One guy did have migraines, so when he came back from diving, he had a migraine headache or something like that. So we – but that was something he already had before and it was no problem. It's just that he wasn't in very good shape at the time. But he was a firefighter. He was an emergency firefighter from Redding. But that's the only incident. Not one single – except for Bob.

One morning we're going out – or evening – when Breck was going out on there, I'd usually come down to Berkeley and stay overnight on the boat, so we'd get an early start. I came down there and Bob came down there. Breck hasn't been there yet, so the gate's locked. So Bob decided to climb over the fence and go over and unlock the door, right? So as he's going over, he slit his hand open. So I had to drive him to the emergency ward to get his hand sewn up. And had to fight to keep him back on the boat. He wanted to go diving anyway, but we argued like hell to keep him off there.

Livingston: But what were the major dangers out there? Was there something that even you were a little wary about? What were major dangers?

Sherman: No, no. Some guy said they saw a shark one time. Said it was mako or something like that up there that was swimming around before. But never – I've never saw anything. I've been – I'm dying to see a great white shark. I've never seen one in my life, and I've been on the Farallon Island twice. That is something people do not get to do.

But we were invited on it twice, because the sanctuary people came out with us on several trips to document the animal life and everything. So they invited on us, the island. I've been on it twice. Nobody's – that just doesn't happen. You know how you get on the island?

Livingston: Yeah.

Sherman: There's a crane. Crane that goes over and drops down this little basket with a hand-hold – (*Makes Noise*) that's fun.

Livingston: On Cordell, what was the deepest dive you made?

Sherman: Probably 160-170, something like that. I coulda gone deeper one time. I was watching two of 'em and pulled a transect line. They were about ten feet below me, but other than that, I was just watching them. In fact, I filmed them a little bit. But mostly up there – there's one thing I did get to – what was it? A hundred and eight-five feet in the Cayman Islands.

I'm swimming around the Cayman Islands seeing scenery all over the place, so I'm was feeling good. I decide to go down a little bit deeper to see if anything was different. The only thing different, those big barrel sponges that **peep** up, they're a little bit bigger. They're a little bit bigger, but that's it. I just dropped down there and turned around and went back up. When I got back up, there was some guy about at about 60-80 feet above me. He says, "What are you doing down there?"

Asked me later, said, "I'm just taking a peek." But that was the first time I ever got that deep up there. But mostly at Cordell, it was 160-170. That's about all. My depth gauge was perfect.

01:10:10

Livingston:

Did you find much difference just in the 10 or 20 feet, differences in depth on the bank?

Sherman:

It thins out as you get deeper. Now one time, we had a small remote camera hooked to a tether that we took out there. And Bob did some filming up there and saw one sponge up there that was different than anything it else. It was a tubular sponge about this big around, about this high, purple. And that's the only – one other time I saw was on the last dive, on that **white** pinnacle, I saw that same bloody sponge. Surprised the hell out of me because mostly this other one was about close to 200 feet. I'll show you this other movie, and you'll find out exactly what the bottom looks like, some part of it anyway.

Livingston:

Now while you were doing these dives, and perhaps especially, as they went on and on up into the '80s, did you ever think yourself about, "This place should be protected," or, "This place should be some sort of conservation effort"?

Sherman:

Oh, we knew that from the beginning that it had to be protected somehow. I didn't do the work on that. Some other people did the work on the conservation and everything. That wasn't – like I said, I'm the guy off here on the corner up there, standing around, looking around up there. So other people did it up there, but I knew it should be preserved. I wish the preserved the fishing out there.

They preserved the diving. You can't dive on it. You know why? You can't put an anchor on it. You can't drop an anchor. That's why they set about a world's record on diving out there, because nobody else can beat it because you can't do it. You have to do it free-diving or something like that, or something – a free up there trying to pinnacle and then dive down and try to find it while you're on your own. But you can't drop an anchor anymore. They put that law in there?

Livingston: Wouldn't that be too dangerous to go without an anchor, without a line?

Sherman: Oh, yes. You'd get lost immediate. You get off a pinnacle, you got several hundred feet. That thing is sitting right on the edge, on the northern edge of that thing. That's where it drops.

Livingston: Was that the general consensus amongst the people diving? Was it this place really needs to be protected?

Sherman: Yeah. There were sanctuaries going up in Monterey Bay thing up there like that, that there should be a separate one up there. It's a shame, though, that more people can't see it, what's it's actually like to go down and do a dive on it because you just can't beat it. I've never seen any other place in the world that even come close. I've seen lot of the UPS shows or something, the underwater stuff from the islands or something.

I dove Hawaii, and I've seen these other stuff from other countries, or something like that, where you see these little – the flowering and the coloring. It just doesn't compare because Cordell Bank is so thick. Everywhere else it's thin. Cordell Bank is thick. You got things growing on top of things. It's so healthy out there, the growth. Everything is sitting on top of everything else. You just don't see that anywhere else in the world. It's unique.

Livingston: So how did this experience, up till '83, influence you after it was completed, when it was all over? How do you feel that's influence to you?

Sherman: I wanna go back! I still wanna go back. If somebody said up there we'll go Cordell Bank, I'd dig out my diving gear and my double tanks, and I say, "Let's go." Any day of the – any day. Of course, I haven't dove for a couple of years now. I had a thing kept my insurance good because I had both knees replaced, so my knees don't bend the way they used to. And so it'd be a little tough.

01:14:47

In fact at the last dive I did was a couple of years ago. Went down to Monterey with Don Dvorak, and not only I couldn't get down, I couldn't swim in a straight line. I was veering off all over the place up there. I couldn't swim in a straight line, so my diving is not that good anymore. I'd still love to do it. I've still got my gear. Still got a dry suit and my wet suit up there. I could still do it, but I just haven't up there. But I'd still go back. Another place I'd go back to is the Farallon Islands. Have you seen all the islands?

Livingston: I've seen the big islands, the south islands.

Sherman: I've got a map up here, the Farallones, if I can find it. There's the big island. Then there's the middle rock. Then there's a little bit here, then Isle of Saint James which is a group of rocks. Then you go further up in northern rock, and then the other pinnacle that's underwater something like Isle of Saint James. Nice diving up there. It's nice photography up there. You go down. It's fairly shallow up there where you can dive up there. And you can swim through the entire rock, the largest rock over there.

There's a cave. It starts about this far underwater, and it's about, I don't know, about 15 feet wide, and it goes through the entire rock. Goes in, and there's a slight curve, and it comes out the other side. When I dove inside this thing up there, I tried to film it. My film turned out over light, too bright, because everything in it is white. You gotta an anemone. You got a starfish. You've got all these others. They're white. There's no sunlight in there, so it's totally white. And if the waves are breaking on the other side, it sounds like an explosion going off at the end. Boom, once in a while. Boom.

But it's – I'd love to get back in that cave again, just another peek

or something to photograph it correctly. There's one rock out there – I think middle rock. It's curved. One side of it is curved. It's got a – on the northern. Yeah, I think – no, western side. It's curved. You could take a boat up to within five feet of that rock, and it's still got 100 feet beneath ya, because the _____ goes
(*Makes Noise*).

There's two or three little tiny ridges about this wide on the way down. The bottom is just rocks on the bottom. But the thing, you can come up right next to the bloody rock up there with a boat, and you won't even see the bottom. I dove on that thing with Bob up there. Fantastic rock to dive on, and that's just plain rock.

Livingston: Now when you were diving Cordell Bank during those times, did you have any feeling that this was gonna lead to something, that there was some importance to what you were doing?

Sherman: I think we were exploring something that has never been seen – before other than the Navy – it's never been seen before and we were documenting the hell out of it. We had more documentation on that bloody island, I think, than any other island around anywhere from all the trips we made back and forth, and all the pictures and diagrams and notes and collections of every conceivable variety, things that never – people haven't seen for years, or something. And we'd think up there is so – it's unique in the world. And this movie up there I'm gonna show you explains why it is.

Livingston: Can you repeat something you said earlier before we started recording about people don't belong there?

Sherman: I don't belong there. As a human being, you do not belong 160 feet underwater with just a little breathing tank on your back. It's the unknown up there that you realize that you could be in serious trouble at any moment in time. In fact, I was down there – oh, I didn't tell ya. One time I was down there and my – it was towards the end of the dive. My regulator free flowed. I was totally out. The thing is – I couldn't put it in my mouth. It was blowing so hard up there, the pressure pushing it out. I couldn't even get with it.

01:19:52

So I had to go over to Bob who was close by, tap him on the shoulder show him that, and I had to use his octopus till we went up, or something like that. So they're like that. So you can get in serious trouble. It's always say the buddy system, the buddy system. You know what the buddy system is? It's a fallacy. On Cordell Bank, it's total fallacy. There's no way a photographer can sit there and try to take a picture while somebody is banging on 'em or bumping into 'em or bothering the hell out of 'em. You do not want anybody near you.

If you're trying to shoot a movie underwater, trying to hold a camera still is one of the worst things in the world if you're following something like that. It's really – you don't want anybody bumping you. “You get the hell away from me.” So you know they're there, but they're not that close to you. So real close buddy systems – it's nice. You're down there. You know when they're down there, and they're close by except for that one time when I got lost from everybody else up there. That was the only time I was ever lost. I knew where they were all the time. “He's over there taking a picture.” I'm not going to go near 'em. I'm not going to kick up any sediment, or something like that, disturb the water.

Livingston:

So what happened with your films? Were they yours or did you hand those over to Bob?

Sherman:

No, I've got all of mine up there, the ones I have or something like that. But I did turn some of 'em to Lee – no. I can't even think of his name now. The guy from TV, KGO, Lee McCarran. I turned some footage over to them. They used some of it, not much. They had some other things. They mostly used the slides up there. Slides were the best really things up there that went on, except for one dive which you'll see in the movie here.

The one guy borrowed a Sony camera, full-size Beta with an underwater housing. And he talked 'em in to taking out on a dive to Cordell Bank, and he shot some video down there. So my original filmage you're gonna see, there was an intersperse of film. Most of it – a lot of it was mine. Some people – some other film,

or something like that. But then when this video was shot – we originally put this whole thing together to show it to the UPS to provide for one of their shows they had. We presented it. They said, “No, it’s no good.”

It was a combination film and slide show, perfectly timed. Everything worked out great. They didn’t like it. They didn’t like it. We didn’t make anybody happy. Well, a little while later they took that video and interspersed it where the film was, and it came out beautiful. We loved the movie. In fact, everybody was enjoying it, I think. The members up there that saw the thing, thought it was great. I think it was nice.

And then UPS came up one time. I took the video and entered it under Bob’s name. It won second prize. Bob and I are sitting in the audience or something, and they announced the winners of the prize or something. He’s looking at the program. He sees his name written in for second prizewinner. He didn’t even know it. I entered it under his name, and it won second prize for the UPS after they turned us down two years before. So that was – it cracked me up. It cracked him up, too.

Livingston:

So let me see if I got this right, that you took the films for your own purposes, that you weren’t really doing it for Cordell Expeditions as much, or were you?

Sherman:

Well, I tried to put movies together for Cordell. In fact, I made one on the Rocas Alijos one, too, up there. The camera I had when I went to Easter Island screwed up terribly. Shutter went outta sync. They used some of that film in the movie that somebody else put together on Rocas Alijos. There was a professional photographer along on that trip and shot a lot of film that Bob’s still got, but it was never put together.

I’ve only seen one little part of it. It even had me in it swimming around there with one short part. Just like the film that they showed at – did you see the Film Festival? The first Cordell Bank one, the one when he was shooting around on the underwater thing up there? Do you know the guy who was jumping off the boat? That was me doing a header, flopping off the boat. But that’s the

only one part of that little movie. I might get a copy of it just to keep it around.

01:25:00

Livingston:

Well, now that Cordell Bank's a national marine sanctuary and you were part of that whole process. So how does that feel to know that you're part of this process that resulted?

Sherman:

Great. When I found out I made the most dives on it, that really surprised the hell outta me because I thought somebody else would be, too. But I know a couple of times people didn't go on dives or something like that because of some reason or other. That probably up there – Bill Kruse must have at least 20 something dives on that thing, and I know Don must have close to that many.

Sue had a lot of dives. After she got through that first experience, she was one of the – she was an experienced diver. She's been all over the place. She was on the bank out here and then the Rocas Alijos, and also on Easter Island up there. So she's been around a long time; very good diver.

Livingston:

Well, is there anything else specific to Cordell Bank that you don't think you've told us that you think would be of interest?

Sherman:

I'm trying to think. Other than the other trips or something like that up there like this, not really at the moment that I can think of.

Livingston:

Well, why don't you show us the movie, and thank you for this.

[01:26:22. End of Audio]
