

Fishtales, Saturday, September 29, 2012
Working Waterfront Festival

Interviewer – Markham Starr
Interviewee – David Blodgett

MS Ok So what is your name?

DB My name is David Blodgett. I'm from northern Vermont up on Lake Champlain area. And about 35 years ago I was sailing my little sloop right down, excuse me, north, i was headed north in the middle of Lake Champlain at its' widest point which is about 12 miles wide in front of Burlington, Vermont, very light breeze. I decided I'd fish. I was alone, so I had one of those Zipco rod and reels from what would be today Walmart but back then was Newbury's or somethin' like that. Maybe it was 7 dollar rod and reel total, you know? I didn't have any worms or flies or clams or fancy stuff. I did have a hot dog, natural casing hot dog. I peeled the skin off the hot dog and put it on the hook so a little piece of it trailed out like I would if I was fishing with worms. Cast back behind, off the stern of the boat, and let the line run out probably, oh it must have been a good 35-40 yards. Put the pole down on the seat in the, right up there in the cockpit, put the pole down and continued to head north on the lake with a light breeze, sails up wing and wing. Half an hour goes by, no more wind, just barely moving. Another half an hour goes by, WAM! Fish pull. BRGGGGOW! Over the side, off the boat! Water's clear up there. I can see the fish pole; I'm not going fast enough to get away from it. I grabbed another fish pole and threw it over the side with a hook to see if I could hook it. I didn't get it of course. I look back and behind me where the bait was, a great big salmon came out of the water, completely out of the water, exposed himself fully. At that distance I'm guessin' he was probably 28-29 inches. Went back in the water. Now I've given up on the pole of course. I've gone another 15 yards or somethin'. I'm not moving very fast. Came up one more time and splashed at the surface. That was the end of it. Pole gone, salmon had my hot dog skin. He had my Zipco fishpole. Hopefully he broke it off and got away and lived to do it another day. That's my story!

MS That's pretty good.

DB That's a hell of a fish story, huh! I love tellin' that story, but it's a true story that happened to be on Lake Champlain, oh 35 or so years ago.

MS So are you from this area?

DB I'm still from northern Vermont. I have a sailboat over on Narragansett Bay in Warwick, Rhode Island. I'm retired. I live most of the summer on the boat from March until first of December. The first of March to the first of December. As you can see I'm shorts and t-shirts today. I'm a cold weather guy. I was born in a snow bank in late October. I was still alive two weeks later so they moved me in under the porch. Lived another week under the porch till they figured I was a keeper. Yeah. 62 years ago in a

couple of weeks. And I'm lovin' it, lovin' retirement and lovin' my sailboat and couple of weeks ago I went lookin' for a bad day, couldn't find one. So life is good.

MS What did you do for work?

DB I was a biomedical engineer in Vermont, Northern New Hampshire and Northern New York State. I actually worked for the University of Vermont for 35 years. And had great experiences. I worked in open heart surgery, I worked with some of the earliest surgical lasers, not only did I service them and make sure they're working right, but I taught surgeons how to use them. They'd go off for their one day class and come back experts and then they'd need somebody to show them how to use it. Teaching docs and nurses how to use cardiac monitors and all the new gadgets as they came out, they, you know they were new stuff and these guys were docs, they'd already been docs for 10 and 15 and 20 years. And they were very focused in their specialties so this new stuff come and out you know what do they do, and we make recommendations to the hospitals, you know what to purchase. Ten manufacturers come out with a new electronic thermometer. Well which one is dependable, which one is accurate, which one is priced right for what you're getting. You know what I mean. So we would make those recommendations to try to help guide the hospital's financial decisions which ultimately made health care costs more and more, no [laughs]. That's another story altogether. That's another day. Yeah I loved it, so.

MS Great!

DB So life is good. So that's what I had. That was my story though.

MS That's good. You can get a chance...