



individual mussels again and shells fall through and anything small will fall through the cracks.

AC: O.K. How did you get started doing this?

HH: My father musseled and decided to retire and I bought his boat and continued.

KG: Is there any certain way that you have to prepare the mussels to be sold? Or is that...

HH: Yes. After they are cleaned in the mussel washer they are handpicked to separate the inferior mussels from the marketable mussels which are handpicked and are bagged in a mesh bag.

AC: How often do you have to go out and work?

HH: Lately I go twice a week. In the summertime it increases with summer demand for mussels. Then we will be going out three to four times a week.

AC: How many mussels do you usually bring in each time you go?

HH: A thousand pounds? Wait, two thousand pounds.

HH: Yeah, I've been doing this for eight consecutive years now. The first year my wife and I were out there handpicking the mussels and we did it the really hard way with the dream that in the future we would be able to hire people and have a mussel washer to wash the mussels. After eight years I don't do much of the picking part...but I have people helping me so I don't have to do it at all now.

LH: He kicks in and makes it happen. The intentions are for people that are hired to do all of it but he can either sit back on the boat and watch them work or he can pitch in and help get it done. For the most part he's not gonna sit back and just watch people work.

AC: Get it done quicker"

HH: Yeah, it speeds up the day.

AC: How long are you guys usually out there for?

HH: Eight to ten hours.

KG: Um. I had a question but I just lost it.

AC: How did the business get started?

HH: My father started the business as the Frenchmen Bay Mussel Company distributing mussels, selling mussels wholesale and when he retired the restaurants continued to call him looking for the mussels and that is when he said, "Hey, you could get some money by going out and getting some mussels and cleaning them up and bringing them to these people."

AC: So do you sell just in Bar Harbor or all over?

HH: We sell from Bar Harbor to Portland. We wholesale a lot of mussels from Portland and we distribute the mussels and fish that we pick up in Portland. We distribute along the coast and back to Mount Desert Island. The fish is a new part of our business. We always had the idea we could add other products since we have our basis of a clientele. This year we added other products so instead of one restaurant taking just their mussels from us; they also take some of our fish.

AC: What kind of fish do you sell?

HH: Haddock. We sell your traditional North Atlantic haddock, hake, cod, halibut and we also do specialty fish from other parts of the world such as the Greek baby octopus and...

LH: California anchovies.

LH: Wild sturgeon coming from Washington State and Scottish salmon.

HH: In the last twenty years the business has changed drastically with more people getting into the fisheries because it has always been thought of as a way to make a good living. This has brought us out of many fisheries such as sea urchins and scallops that we used to fish for because they are not in the ocean anymore in abundance enough to harvest and make a living at. The global positioning system has enabled us to see better where we are in relationship to the ocean floor and making it easier to come back to a spot that is rich with harvest.

AC: So you say it is getting better or worse, the business, with all the people coming to do that kind of work?

HH: It has forced probably management issues to come to the surface because like me, other people came up with concerns of over fishing and the future of the fishery. Although there are some people who would rather go out and take it all now and make a buck now, and move on and do something else. What I call a true fisherman is the one who is in it for the long run. This person sees the ocean as an abundant resource that is very delicate and as long as we take out our share and leave the share for future generations in the ocean then it will continue to be a thriving industry.

AC: Do you enjoy being on the ocean a lot?

HH I do. Especially on warm, sunny days.

KG: What would you say is your favorite piece of new technology that has come out that helps you?

HH: I have a new radar GPS and it can be used as a radar to send signals out and it will show me a chart of the area where my boat is and I can also use it both at the same time where the radar will overlay over the GPS map creating...

LH: Virtual fishing.

HH: Yea, it creates a virtual fishing. It is kinda like a little video game.

LH: If it is very foggy that is all he has to rely on.

HH: Or dark.

LH: Or very dark. It is very much like playing a video game. Now that he has this equipment, he used to have to have a couple of people with flashlights on the bow of the boat to watch out for things if he had to travel at all in the dark or the fog.

HH: the GPS shows me where I am. But it won't show me where other vessels are, so that is what the radar does. It sends out a signal to tell me where the other vessels are and puts it on the charts for me.

AC: That is cool.

HH: It is. There are some other newer technologies that record more data for data analysis on your boat and your fishing. It will keep a log for you of pretty much everything your boat has done so that if you ever need to look back, it is right there at your fingertips.

LH: We don't have that.

HH: It plugs into a laptop computer and it is used from a laptop computer.

LH: It is also coming from the federal level. Log books are required in a lot of the fisheries so for data entry where there is a very strict quotas on ground fish, the number of fish you catch, the fishermen fishing ground fish are required to have this equipment so that they can instantly let the federal government know what they caught – so when the quota is met, they are into port and everybody's computer has to match what it is that they are landing. We don't have that; we won't for quite some time.

HH: Also the fish finder which uses sonar waves. It shows on a screen where the bottom is and anything that is between the bottom and the surface will come up as a little red dot but if there is a school of fish it will be a larger area.

AC: How long does it take you to get ready in the morning? Do you have to bring the boat out every time or does it just stay out there?

HH: My boat lives on a mooring. In the morning after the crew arrives we need to gather the gear that we need for the day which can take fifteen minutes to get fuel and make sure we have everything we need. Then we need to drive to the boat and row out to the boat. Then I have to start the boat up and warm up the engine and that takes about ten minutes; it is a diesel engine and they run better after they warm up. And after about a half hour boat ride, we are usually at our harvest grounds.

AC: Does it take a lot of work to get ready in the morning?

HH: No, no.

LH: Not if the crew knows what to do. If we have a crew that doesn't have a driver's license and he has to pick the crew up, he'll do everything himself and then go pick the crew up and that ends up taking a longer time.

AC: So do you like to hire different people each year?

HH: I try to keep people as long as I can, however, some people get worn out. Some people make life choices that make it so I have to let them go and some people make life choices that they want to go and move on to better things.

LH: And fairly regularly people that work for us end up going to jail.

HH: Yes, either that, or they go to jail.

LH: Well, we have a habit too of hiring some of the same people and sometimes people end up going to jail for things that make it so you can still hire them again even though they have made poor choices and gone to jail.

AC: Well, thank you for coming. I think we have all the information we need.

LH: So now can I ask a question? What are you doing this for?

AC: It is our big sophomore project. WE have to interview someone in the fishing industry and then type it up afterwards.

KG: It is for the NOAA Corporation. They are trying to find out about the fishing industry and how it works and stuff.

AC: So we are actually suppose to help fishermen.

LH: and HH: Good.

LH: NOAA does a lot of good work. Our homepage on our computer is the NOAA weather page and it is something that we regularly have on line.

KG: Well, thank you so very much for your time.

LH: Sure.

HH: Thank you.

LH: Good luck with your interview. If you girls ever want to take a field trip out to the let me know cause we are right in Hancock.

HH: And if you need any more information give me a call.

KG and AD: All right. Thank you.