

Interview with Christine Sykes [CS]
Occupation: Fisherman's wife
Port Community: Point Judith, RI
Interviewer: Angela Wilson
Date: January 5, 2012
Catch Share Oral Histories Project – NOAA Fisheries
Logger/Transcriber: Elizabeth Wetterhahn
INDEX: [minutes:seconds]
Sykes Home, Wakefield, RI

Interview

[00:00]

AW: For the record, this is Angela Wilson, and it is January 5, 2012. And I am at 1974 Ministerial Road. And I'm here with Christine Sykes. I need you to state for the recording that you have read, agreed to, and signed the release form.

CS: I have read, agreed to, and signed the release form.

AW: Wonderful. To begin, could you start out by stating your name and address, your homeport, vessel name, and how you're related to a fisherman. If he's in a sector or not. And sort, of how old you are, if you don't mind me asking.

CS: Alright, my name is Christine Sykes. I'm 60. I live at 1974 Ministerial Road in Wakefield, [Rhode Island]. My husband fishes on the *Virginia Marise* out of Galilee, RI, and he is in a sector.

AW: He is. And what number sector is he in, do you know?

CS: No.

AW: And you know what's horrible, I interviewed your husband and I can't remember either.

CS: Oh.

AW: But, I'm sure that we'll look at the transcripts. So, to sort of start out this interview, we sort of just want to get a... sort of an idea of your story, your family's story. So, for example, where you're from, how long you've been here, your structure of your family, and some of your educational background. Maybe how you even met your husband.

CS: Well, I grew up in Blackstone, MA. And I was taking classes at URI in Providence, but then I ran out of classes to take there, so I moved down here in 1980. Worked at George's part time, and that's where I met Rodman. It's a fisherman's restaurant.

AW: And was he fishing in Point Judith at that point already?

CS: Yeah, but he was fishing on the *Deborah Leigh*, which he eventually bought. But he was a deckhand then.

AW: And did you finish your degree at the University of Rhode Island?

CS: Yes, I have two of them that I never did anything with.

AW: Oh, really? What do you have degrees in?

CS: Food science and mechanical engineering.

AW: Mechanical engineering... holy cannoli. And how long have you lived here? Since 1980?

CS: Yeah. Not in this house, but I've been down here in South County since 1980.

AW: And no children? Just the two of you?

CS: Yeah. Just the two of us.

AW: And a pack of wild dogs?

CS: Yeah, usually. We have four.

AW: And when did your husband get involved in fisheries? In fishing?

CS: Oh, well like 17 years old. He used to work for his grandfather.

AW: So he's been fishing pretty much his entire adult life?

CS: Yeah.

AW: And did he start off as, like any other greenhorn, a deckhand?

CS: Yeah.

AW: And worked his way up?

CS: Yeah. Started out as cook.

AW: As cook?

CS: Yeah, that's how... out there anyway, how you start off.

AW: And did he... he moved up to captain and then eventually boat owner?

CS: Yes.

AW: And does he captain his boat that he owns now?

CS: Yes. He and two crewmen.

AW: And what does he... what species does he usually target?

[03:31]

CS: Finfish. Depends on what's running. I guess they're getting yellowtail lately 'cause they're there. Codfish when they're around. It's just whatever's available. Sometimes squid.

AW: What has been the most common that he's talked about over the last couple of years?

CS: Well, they can't catch flounder anymore, but that was a big one. Yellowtail and fluke.

AW: And does he go out for long periods of time?

CS: No. When I first met him, he used to. That was before cell phone days, so I never knew when he was coming home and stuff. And now its... well, now, you know, because of the limits, he's got to come in every day. Which is weird, 'cause I have to cook every night. Oh yeah. You know, you're used to being alone for two or three days, four days.

AW: Yeah.

CS: Now that he's home every night, its like geez.

AW: Yeah, my husband goes out for two weeks.

CS: Oh, yeah.

AW: If he came home every night, I don't know what I'd do with him. I like him around, but...

CS: Yeah.

AW: You know, sometimes I like my own....

CS: Yeah, yeah.

AW: I get it. Since sectors have begun... what was that, in 2010? Has what he fishes for changed? Have you noticed? Or the amount of time he spends fishing, has that changed?

CS: Sometimes he puts long days in now. Like, you know, he'd be in by 2 or 3, sometimes he doesn't come home 'til 6 or 7. But I don't notice any difference in the way he fishes.

AW: And how about your household structure? Has that changed at all or is it pretty much the same as before sectors?

CS: Except financially, it's the same. We're doing much better financially.

AW: You are doing much better financially then?

CS: Yeah.

AW: Well, that's a plus, right?

CS: Yeah.

AW: Do you work?

CS: Yes.

AW: And has your percentage of income towards the household changed over the last few years? Like before sectors and after sectors?

CS: No, it's the same.

AW: It's the same. And we're here at your beautiful home... would you consider this a fishing community? This particular neighborhood that you live in?

CS: No.

AW: And how about your social structures? Do you tend to hang out with other fishermen or their wives or other people that work in fisheries?

CS: Well, he does. But we don't really hang out with people now. I mean, we know a lot of people but we don't like go to their houses or go out to dinner with them. But if we did, that's who it would be.

[06:13]

AW: Other people that are fishermen or their wives?

CS: I think so, yeah.

AW: Yeah? And have you, in the past, had that sort of social....

CS: Yeah, we were a little more active when we were younger.

AW: And when you were younger you tended to hang out with fishermen and their families?

CS: Yeah.

AW: And do you have any people in your social circle that are not fishermen?

CS: Yes.

AW: And do you spend more time with them than you do with fishermen?

CS: As a couple?

AW: Yeah. Like, you know birthday parties or coffee and lunch or something.

CS: I can't answer that.... I don't know.

AW: Alright. Let's see, how about, in your opinion, were there any years that were better for the fishing industry than others?

CS: Well, when I first was around, I thought it was better. You know, there weren't so many restrictions on them.

AW: In the early '80s?

CS: Yeah, mid to late.

AW: Mid to late '80s?

CS: Yeah. You know, they didn't have to, you know, count every fish that comes over. And you know, he's... like, he doesn't really complain about too much, but when he does, I can't stand [it].

AW: Yeah.

CS: You know, he used to enjoy fishing and he doesn't really anymore.

AW: He doesn't?

CS: No.

AW: Oh, that's a shame.

CS: I mean, it's the life, you know? His grandfather and uncles were fishermen.

AW: So he has, you know, fishermen in his family?

CS: Yeah.

AW: Way back?

CS: Yeah. He's the only one left doing it, but....

AW: And do you have any nieces or nephews or....

CS: Yeah.

AW: And none of them fish?

CS: No. Well, they're a little too young but, he's got a brother who works down at the docks.

AW: And does he have children, his brother?

CS: Yeah, the two nephews. And they're like 5 and 8, so....

AW: Oh, so no one knows what they'll do yet.

CS: Yeah. I would imagine they would, but....

AW: So you did mention that your income has gone up since sectors started.

CS: Yeah.

AW: So would you say that your quality of life has also improved?

CS: Well, I'm not much of a spender so... I mean, I like save more and try to pay off the mortgage, you know. I'm putting more towards that. Well, I guess so. You know, sometimes I splurge. I splurge more now than I used to. 'Cause I'm pretty tight with the dollar.

AW: Yeah.

CS: He's not, he gets what he wants.

AW: Yeah.

CS: You know, yeah. No matter what. Before, you know....

AW: So....

CS: So yeah, I guess so.

AW: So you still have....

CS: Yeah, I don't worry about things. No, well actually it's like when's the other shoe going to drop, you know? When's this going to stop, you know? When's the paychecks going to stop...?

AW: Yeah.

CS: ... going down. But, you know, I don't think about it too much.

AW: So you'd say that you have less stress in your life? You're a little bit more, not carefree, but don't have to worry so much?

CS: Financially? Yeah.

AW: Let's see... were you part of a fishing family growing up?

CS: No.

[09:32]

AW: Did you ever have any involvement in fisheries before you met your hubby?

CS: No, except for working at the fishermen restaurant. And that's like... I worked there just that summer. But you know, it was neat seeing all the lumpers come in and... cause we used to be open for breakfast and they'd all come in for breakfast.

AW: Yeah.

CS: Yeah. Hang around the bar and all the fishermen were there.

AW: Have your career choices been influenced by fishing? So, I know you said you have two degrees that you never did anything with?

CS: Yeah.

AW: But, you do have a job.

CS: Yeah.

AW: And has that been influenced by his lifestyle as a fisherman? I mean, obviously their job affects us....

CS: Yeah.

AW: ... as their wives. You know, I know that we have to be pretty flexible, you know, to sort of live this life.

CS: Yeah.

AW: But I was just wondering if it's really affected how you have chosen your career path.

CS: Well, I'm not very ambitious and I don't have much faith in myself. Like, I graduated between 5th and 8th in my class from ____, but I still don't, you know. So, it was easier not to... I didn't feel any pressure to get a job because he was doing okay. And I didn't work until 1990, so I didn't work for like 6 years after we got married, so.... Now I've got a job just 'cause I was bored. I've still got the same job, for 22 years.

AW: Something to do?

CS: Yeah.

AW: Yeah.

CS: But I like it. You know, I like going to work. I can't imagine not. I mean, I get out at noon as it is, but I couldn't imagine not having that little chunk.

AW: And what do you do?

CS: I work at a lumber company and I, like, payroll clerk and do different clerical things.

AW: Must be interesting to meet all the different people who come in and out of the lumber company.

CS: Yeah.

AW: Lets see... and how do you find the balance of work and home when he's away or when he's home? Is there a difference for you personally? I know that he fishes during the day now, so he's not gone for....

CS: Right.

AW: ... big chunks of time, but.... Do you find it challenging to sort of make that balance of his career versus your career and, you know...

CS: No.

AW: And has there been any change in your, like personal relationship or the way that you run the household, since sectors have started?

CS: No.

AW: So pretty much the same?

CS: Yeah.

AW: Do you know why your husband chose to join the sector?

[12:14]

CS: I believe he thought it would be more profitable for him, you know? 'Cause he caught a lot of fluke in the... whatever he is, or was... they weren't buying. So he knew that he'd get quite a few in his, you know, catch. I think that's why.

AW: And that's worked out for you guys?

CS: Yeah.

AW: And one of the goals of this, of all these interviews that we're doing, is to see if there's any pros or cons of sectors, sector management, that we're not seeing 'cause we don't, you know, live in the same world of sectors and they don't affect us directly. Do you have any pros and cons...?

CS: Well, this observer thing. Is that sectors? 'Cause if so, it's....

AW: Well, they have observers on different boats for different species in different programs. I know that the groundfish industry has government-funded observers.

CS: Well, I mean, that's also stress for him. I mean, personally, all the stuff that they've done to them, I think are very humiliating, debasing. And I would have thrown my hands up a long time ago. But I know he can't. And sometimes... you know how awful it is to have somebody, you know, on your boat every night. And the stupid questions they ask every single time, and just.... And he doesn't say it very often, but when he does, I feel bad. I don't know, like he can't be trusted. I know some guys are out there, but people get away with it, you know? They'll steal. I don't know.

AW: They've ruined it for the rest of them, for the honest fishermen.

CS: Yeah.

AW: Now you mentioned that the observers are really sort of a pain in the side. Are there any other parts of the way that fisheries is being managed that he really has trouble with?

CS: Well, like when he doesn't get an observer, he gets cut. His quota, or whatever, gets cut by 10% or whatever. And then he was saying one day he was fishing near a ___ boat and he dragged a bunch of dead cod carcasses, or whatever, and they charged them to him. They said "well, you caught it, so it's off your quota." I mean, I don't know, I don't know if that's what you're asking, but....

AW: Yeah, that's exactly what I'm asking. So, you said the observers really bother him?

CS: Yeah. Having to, you know, call them and they call and, you know, they call on deck "Oh, I'm going fish next week. When are we out?" I don't know, call me next week, you know? And then, I don't know, sometimes he wants to stay over on Block Island, but he can't 'cause he has to come back in and pick up an observer or drop an observer off. And it's just, you know...

AW: I mean, observers can't meet him on Block Island?

[15:27]

CS: They're not...no. 'Cause if he leaves at 3 in the morning, I mean, they can take the ferry over that night, the night before, but what are they going to do out there?

AW: Oh, that's true. So those are sort of the cons about sectors... is that he has the observers and he feels like he's being, like watched? Like he's not being trusted?

CS: Well, that's how I had thought. I don't really know how... well, you said government-funded, but eventually aren't they going to have to pay for it?

AW: I'm not sure.

CS: That's what I heard.

AW: I know that in the scallop industry, they pay for it, the actual fishermen.

CS: Yeah. Well, I think that they're threatening them.

AW: But I think that the groundfishermen, I don't think they're going to have to pay for it. I think its something that's going be government-funded. I think it should continue.

CS: Yeah.

AW: Personally, as an ex-observer myself, I think that it should be government-funded.

CS: Yeah, right. They're the ones who want it.

AW: I never worked with the groundfish industry, because I just stuck with shellfish. 'Cause it's easier to count shells.

CS: Right.

AW: How about pros of the sector, besides financial, for your family? Do you see any other pros that have affected either yourself or your husband?

CS: Not personally. Nothing jumps out at me.

AW: And how about... does he seem to be under more or less stress now that... more stress?

CS: Oh, yeah. I don't know, the sector thing is just so... all the regulations. Definitely more, which is why he doesn't want to be fishing anymore, which is why he doesn't enjoy it anymore.

AW: And has that been since sectors started? Or...?

CS: Before.

AW: Before. So sectors is just one other management thing that he has to deal with?

CS: I mean, I think he likes being in the sector, 'cause it used to be like 200 pounds a day. Now it's, you know, he can catch what he wants and catch when the prices are good. So that's good, but, whatever other regulations they added on because of the sectors....

AW: So the sectors have sort of made his fishing more predictable maybe? Or more...?

CS: Yeah, well more flexible.

AW: More flexible. So the actual fishing part is not as stressful for him, but the regulations are more stressful.

CS: As far as I can see, yeah.

[18:12]

AW: And so, what is your opinion about where the sectors and everything... and how everything is being managed? Your personal opinion.

CS: I'm not a very deep thinker. I really don't, you know....

AW: And does the sector provide you with any assistance, or your family, with any insurance, or support, or...?

CS: Not that I'm aware of.

AW: No, okay. And do you have health insurance?

CS: Yeah, but from my work.

AW: Through your job?

CS: Yeah.

AW: And does he have boat insurance?

CS: Yes.

AW: Has any of that changed since sectors started or is it all the same as it was before?

CS: Yeah, it's the same.

AW: The same.

CS: I mean, you got different boats. You know, [they] went from wood to fiberglass, so it's cheaper. But that had nothing to do with sectors.

AW: Oh, so he changed boats over the last couple of years.

CS: Yes. New boat, new mortgage.

AW: Yeah. And what happened to the... what was the old boat's name?

CS: The *Deborah Leigh*.

AW: The *Deborah Leigh*. And what happened to the *Deborah Leigh*?

CS: He sold it. And the guy took it up to Maine and it burned.

AW: Oh, that's so sad.

CS: Yeah. I saw a picture of it. You could watch it on the Internet... very sad. 'Cause he had it for twenty-something years.

AW: Twenty years.

CS: Twenty years, yeah.

AW: And did he buy that boat new? Like brand new?

CS: No. He worked on it, and then the guy that owned it built another boat and made his son-in-law captain. And Rodman got the... so he bought the *Deborah Leigh*. Because it... yeah, because like, he had always run the *Deborah Leigh*. And then the guy builds a new boat and gives it to his son-in-law who, you know, just started working on it, so I mean, I guess let's stick it in the water, but he was pretty upset, so....

AW: And so he had the *Deborah Leigh* for twenty years.

CS: Yeah.

AW: And then he bought the new boat.

CS: Yeah, because a wooden boat, you've got to take it out, and paint it, and you know, like \$10,000 every year. Plus insurance was way higher, 'cause it's a wooden boat. So... but he wouldn't go to steel. He went to fiberglass.

AW: And how was the transition between the two boats? Did you guys own two boats at the same time for a period?

CS: No. But he sold the *Deborah Leigh* for next to nothing, so it's not like... but the mortgage was paid off. We had a 10 year mortgage on that, and that was tough. But once it was paid for, it was like, such a load lifted off me. That's why, you know, when he decided to get another boat, another mortgage... plus the house has kind of been in with the mortgage, so... like collateral.

AW: Oh, for the boat?

CS: Yeah.

AW: You've got to move things like that around for this industry.

CS: But, you know, 60 years old with a mortgage this size, it's kind of like, supposedly I guess what he sells when he does decide to retire is all about to take care of it.

[21:17]

AW: And how was the transition from one boat to another?

CS: Well, he bought a shrimper. So when it came up he had to re-rig it all. And he's okay with it. The crew's kind of... 'cause it's smaller than the *Deborah Leigh*. So they kind of bitch, but I guess they're getting used to it now. But in the beginning, it was... they weren't too happy.

AW: And....

CS: It's smaller.

AW: It is smaller?

CS: Yeah.

AW: But he's doing more day fishing than longer trips, right?

CS: Yeah, but that doesn't have to do with the boat. That's just 'cause, I don't know, I guess because, you know, you can only catch so much per day. You've got to come in, take it out, and start again.

AW: And so he chose fiberglass because of the expense?

CS: Less expensive, yeah.

AW: Yeah. And how was the transition from one boat to another for him? Like, as his spouse, watching him deal with the boat change, I know it can be stressful.

CS: Yeah.

AW: How was it for him?

CS: I think he enjoyed it. You know, rigging it up the way he wanted and stuff.

AW: Like a little kid on Christmas?

CS: Yeah.

AW: Yeah, yeah. I can only imagine if we got a new boat.

CS: Yeah.

AW: Yeah. Well, at least you didn't have both of them at the same time, you know?

CS: Yeah, no. We weren't fishing both.

AW: And where did the new boat come from?

CS: Florida.

AW: Florida. And did he go down and get it?

CS: Yeah, he spent 2 or 3 weeks down there, looking at them. He got a boat broker. And some guy down there screwed him out of some money. I don't know, I don't know how much it was, but he sent him letters a few years after. You know, "you're a deadbeat" and all that stuff. He won't tell me how much it is, so I don't know if it's like an astronomical amount or....

AW: Like \$500 or....

CS: Yeah, I don't know if he'd do it for that little, but... I think he finally gave up.

AW: Really?

CS: Yeah.

AW: Wow.

CS: 'Cause that was like 2000 and... I can't even remember when he bought the boat, 2004, 3, something like that.

AW: And do you spend any time on the boat at all?

CS: Before I started working, I'd go out with him once in a while. But now, you know, in the summer, we'll go down if he's going to fillet fish or something. I'll go hang around.

AW: Yeah.

CS: Yeah. I mean, I like being down there.

AW: Yeah, me too.

CS: I feel very fortunate to be a part of the community. Fishing community.

AW: I think it's very special and....

CS: Yeah.

AW: ... and unique. Yeah. One of the things I really like about having a fishing family is that when you get time off, you get quality time.

CS: Yeah.

AW: And a lot of people that work a 9-5 job Monday thru Friday....

CS: Yeah.

AW: They don't have that opportunity.

CS: Yeah.

AW: And they also don't have the opportunity to, you know, sort of have the freedom to be their own boss.

CS: Yeah.

AW: Yeah.

CS: Yeah, like we know people, well some guys, some that are 65, 68, maybe close to 70 and they're still a deckhand. And I was like "I couldn't imagine."

AW: Yeah.

CS: You know?

AW: I've met some of the most interesting people in the... down at the docks or out fishing.

CS: Yeah.

AW: Phenomenal stories.

CS: Oh, yeah. He's got some. They're mostly borrowed stories, but I'd love to get them on tape, but he won't do it.

AW: 'Cause then it's on record.

CS: I guess, well, he always claims to be some, you know, [a] humble guy, loves to be the center of attention.

[24:33]

AW: So based on your full experience with sectors and the change in management over the last couple of years... if you knew another fisherman or fishing family, would you suggest to them that they should join a sector? 'Cause you know, you have the option of whether to....

CS: Well, I know he does. He's always trying to get people to join them. So, I mean, going... I would have to say yes, I guess.

AW: Do you ever go to any council meetings or organizations or....

CS: I don't. He does.

AW: Or like any fundraisers or anything like that?

CS: Fundraisers for...?

AW: Like the Fishermen Survival Fund or anything like that.

CS: Well, I mean, Point Judith fishermen have a scholarship fund. We have all of those. We have a memorial fund. We do those, but not like regional ones or national ones or, I don't. I mean, he goes....

AW: Do you go to any of those events for the scholarships or...?

CS: Yeah, we went to one of the....

AW: You did. And was it like a dinner or...?

CS: No, it was a swim.

AW: A swim?

CS: I didn't swim though. You know, jump in the water on New Years Day?

AW: Oh, yeah. And how do you feel about the future of the fishing community in Point Judith, obviously?

CS: Well, it's... there's no young blood getting into it, so, you know. Young kids don't want to get into it. And then, seeing the way things are, do they really want to get into it, you know? Not exactly thrilled with the way things are, so why would a kid want to do that?

AW: If you knew a young person who was considering fishing as a career, would you encourage them to do so, or would you sort of shy them away from it?

CS: I think I'd shy them away, but I think he'd say, "Oh yeah, come with me." Of course, he wants to see it go. And I don't know what to tell them.

AW: So you sort of see it on the decline in Point Judith?

CS: Like, I don't think it's declining now, but I don't see where it can sustain itself unless somebody else, you know, some younger people come in.

[27:03]

AW: It's so sad, 'cause it's such an important industry.

CS: Yeah, I know.

AW: Now you mentioned your husband does go to meetings and events and things like that, does it take up a lot of his time, going to all of these different...?

CS: Not really.

AW: ... meetings and....

CS: No.

AW: ... organizations and....

CS: No. He tends to go to the important ones.

AW: And since he started fishing in the sector, has, sort of, the way he manages his time, has that changed at all?

CS: Well, he spends a lot of time on the internet. Yeah, I mean, you know, on the computer, doing stuff like that. Mailing stuff in and, I mean, I don't know if it has to do with the sector. It used to be, like if he didn't go fishing, he'd be home by 1. And now it's always later than that. But that's just working on the boat, so I don't think that has anything to do with sectors.

AW: Is that since he's gotten the new boat, he's like down there fiddling around?

CS: Yeah.

AW: What men will do.

CS: Yeah. That's what he's doing out there... fiddling.

AW: Yeah. And have the responsibilities at home changed at all, or is it still pretty consistent?

CS: Well, I seem to help more, like with boat stuff. Like, well, sort of, I call it sort of, but he has to do it every month. So I do that. And I help him on the computer when he has to keep track of his fluke and, so you know, I think I'm helping out more.

AW: And so you sort of... since sectors began?

CS: Yeah.

AW: And just sort of keep track of his paperwork and....

CS: Yeah. Not all of it, but you know, I do have my little areas.

AW: And how about things at home? Do you find that because he has to spend more time reading regulations, or what have you, or gets home later because he's on the boat fiddling around, that you have more responsibilities around the house or...?

CS: No.

AW: About the same?

CS: Yeah.

AW: And how about you personally? Have you felt any changes in your relationship with him since sectors began?

CS: No.

AW: Pretty much the same?

CS: We're just fine.

AW: Yeah. I don't know, sometimes, you know, I know if my husband stayed home every day I'd feel some changes in our relationship.

CS: Yeah. Well, that's not about sectors.

AW: Alright, so I just have a couple more questions and then we're done. The way that they've structured sector management for the fishermen now, do you think that there is anything that would work better than sectors?

[30:09]

CS: I don't have an opinion on that.

AW: Okay. How about something that you would change about sectors? Something that you know that he talks about that, you know, or not really?

CS: No.

AW: So, in conclusion, there are a few questions I'll ask about the... really the Voices of the Fisheries interviews.

CS: Okay.

AW: Is there anything that you would like people to know about being in a relationship with a fisherman?

CS: You eat very well. You never go hungry. You don't have to worry if you haven't taken anything out of the freezer, just bring some fish home!

AW: It's true.

CS: So I never have to worry. So if I open a can of beans, he'll bring fish home. That's our favorite meal. I think it's a special life, you know? I'll look at those ___ who think that think they're cool. Well, I think he's cool, or I think it's cool.

AW: I have to agree with you, yeah. Is there anything else that you wanted to add that I didn't ask you? Anything on your mind about sectors or even not about sectors?

CS: Well, I wish I'd brushed up a little more about sectors 'cause I really don't know that much about it, except that, like I said, it's more flexible for him fishing. But I don't really, I don't know, the fishermen tell me "we don't like..." He keeps a lot in, and I don't pry. Well, not pry, but I don't ask, because I guess I don't feel the need to know. So I feel kind of like, I don't really know, you know, you're asking me all about sectors and I don't know that much about it except what I said.

AW: That's good. Honestly, I don't know that much about it either. I know that, you know, they pool their quota and....

CS: Yeah.

AW: But the intricacies of sector management....

CS: Yeah.

AW: They've actually asked me not to read up on that so that I can ask....

CS: Oh, I see.

AW: ... questions as if I had no idea.

CS: Oh, good. So that makes it easier.

AW: Yeah, so we're both in the same boat.

CS: Okay.

AW: Hopefully it's made of fiberglass.

CS: Yeah.

AW: And, in conclusion, is there anything... your views or even a story that you want to share for future generations about fishing or about being married to a fisherman? Anything extraordinary that you have....

CS: Geez, give me time to think about it, 'cause I probably have many of them. But I can't think of any right now.

AW: Yeah. Any like cool thing that happened or... I know we were once told about a net showing up on, you know, someone's boat.

[33:10]

CS: Well, they're all very superstitious. So, one day he was in the wheelhouse. They were in the middle of going somewhere. And he woke up and he looked up and there was an owl sitting there looking at him. And he looked in his superstition book, and it's bad luck. But the rabbit ear's an owl feather. So he got the whole crew up, we had to find an owl feather. And I don't think they found one. So when he got home, he called, we have a taxidermist friend, and he immediately shipped down a bunch of owl feathers. And hopefully that counteracted the bad luck.

AW: And does he keep an owl feather on the boat?

CS: I believe so. I think so.

AW: Really?

CS: Yeah.

AW: That's so crazy.

CS: And then whenever, when you drag up coal, that's supposed to be good luck. He's got a bucketful of coal.

AW: And he keeps it?

CS: Yeah.

AW: I've never heard that. I'll have to tell my husband.

CS: But I bought a book of superstitions once. That was....

AW: I've heard a lot of crazy superstitions on boats, over the years.

CS: No beef stew. No women or priests.

AW: No black bags, no suitcases, no bananas.

CS: Oh, I've never heard that before.

AW: Yeah, I've heard all kinds.

CS: Something about coil in the wire, the rope a certain way, and you can't let the hatch cover....

AW: Yeah.

CS: You can't whistle or say p-i-g.

AW: Never, which is crazy because the p-i-g, they used to... sailors, back in the age of sailing, used to tattoo them on the bottom of their feet, because during a shipwreck they were the only thing that floated.

CS: What, the feet?

AW: No, the pig.

CS: Oh.

AW: And a rooster. The two things that floated up in a shipwreck.

CS: Oh, okay.

AW: So they thought if they tattooed them on their feet, then they'd float up, too.

CS: Oh, okay. That's a good one.

AW: Well, thank you so much Christine. We're done for today. And just for the record, this is Angela Wilson, on January 5, 2012... not 2011.

CS: No.

AW: And I'm here with Christine Sykes and thank you so much for letting me interview you.