

Interview with Arne Ole Andersen, November 9, 2006  
Name of person Interviewed: Arne Ole Andersen (OE)

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Facts about this person:

Age: 79  
Sex: Male  
Occupation: Retired Boat owner  
Home ports: New Bedford  
Residence: Fairhaven  
Ethnic background: Danish

Interviewer: Millie Rahn (MR)

Also present: Kirsten Bendiksen (KB)

Transcriber: Sarah Smith

Place interview took place: Fairhaven, home of Ole Andersen

Date and time of interview: November 9, 2006

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**KEYWORDS**

Denmark; Norwegians; swordfishing; overfishing; technology; drugs; global warming; New Foundland

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- [00:00] Born in 1929 in Denmark; grew up in fishing and farming village
- [01:45] Went to sea at fourteen in Baltic traders; sailed on bigger ships after the war, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish ships; came to America and sailed in American ships in Korean War
- [04:33] Had bad weather one time coming back from France and the propeller fell off; worked on deck on these boats when he was seventeen or eighteen; went from one ship to another and then got US visa
- [07:18] Shipwrecked on a reef one time off Hawaii; another time was on a lobster boat that started filling up with water; did ground fishing and then swordfishing; stopped fishing about ten years ago; fished mostly out of New Bedford
- [10:40] After getting shipwrecked in Hawaii went to New York to work on a scalloper; he got the job of cook when the cook didn't show up; moved to New Bedford in 1957; lots of Norwegians in New Bedford; New Bedford was a good place to be; only a few Danes here
- [12:59] Fished on mostly Norwegian boats with Swedes and Finns; Norwegian boats were good because they would eat lots of fresh fish; Newfoundlanders like to eat salt cod; went to New Foundland a few years ago on vacation; MR and OE talk about New Foundland
- [16:23] Went two or three hundred miles from New Bedford fluking; Newfoundlanders had lots of superstitions; Newfoundlanders would come to the boats dressed up; they looked at him funny for being Protestant; Newfoundlanders were good people but drank a lot
- [19:59] Never been on a steel boat; would pursue something else if he had it to do again; OE and KB talk about the Lillian B; you were a good fisherman if you didn't drink too much and showed up on time; need to do a bit of everything; only knows about fishing today from what he reads in the paper; read there will be no fish fifty years from now; no fish in Nova Scotia or Newfoundland, and aren't fish in New Bedford like there used to be
- [23:57] Future of the fishery looks grim; OE and KB argue over the evidence; not bringing in fish like they used to; now with these modern boats the fish don't have a chance; fishing very different today; fishermen killing themselves with technology; almost wiped out the fleet in Boston; slept through a hurricane once while at sea
- [27:20] Lots of scallops here, but scalloping comes and goes; now there is global warming; fish buyers who own twenty boats and won't give the highest price for someone's catch; corruption on the waterfront; drugs are dark secret of New Bedford
- [30:25] One time pulled up an airplane with two decomposing bodies in it; only ever seen one sea turtle; used to see a lot of sharks, but there are no sharks anymore; sharks used to bite the cod end of the net and eat the fish; one time caught a lot of sharks, so traded them for swordfish; there are no swordfish now – they have to go to Flemish Cap to catch them
- [34:19] Lived well fishing; never had to go out on Sundays back then; this was one of the best places in the world for fishing; just makes things for boaters now, and works on his house and boat; keeps a 28 foot boat; would take the dog on the boat all the time; people don't take their dogs on fishing boats
- [37:45] Doesn't talk to many fishermen these days
- [39:15] When he was fishing there was a lot of talent on the boats; you don't see that today; KB and OE discuss shore supply businesses in New Bedford; when he started fishing there was no nylon, and wooden rollers and doors
- [42:36] Fish don't have a chance today; they should have a quota; there are too many boats today; people are greedy and want what others have; it would be devastating to New Bedford if the fishery shut down; closing remarks
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**TRANSCRIPT**

[00:00]

[Start of Audio]

MR: Yeah... so I'll ask you some questions, but feel free to, you know... things that I hadn't thought of. Let's start, uh, today is Thursday, November 9, 2006, and I'm here in, uh... my name is Millie Rahn, and I'm a folklorist with the Working Waterfront Oral History Project, and I'm here in Fairhaven at the home of Ole Andersen, and Kirsten Bendiksen is here also as part of the interview, taking care of all the technical support. So... um, Mr. Andersen, tell me a little bit about when and where you were born, and... how you came to end up fishing in New Bedford.

OA: Well I was born 1929 in Denmark. And, uh, I was born and – and adopted out. And I spent about fourteen years on a dairy farm and a fishing village. So I went out fishing – farming was never my... my, uh... that was not my, what is it you say?

MR: Your forte or your favorite thing to do?

OA: No, that was not my favorite thing.

MR: Yup.

[01:45]

OA: But I did grow up with a lot of animals and things and... heh. And when I was fourteen I went to sea. And that in what they called Baltic traders. That was wooden, that was schooners and ketches and things we sailed to Norway, Germany, Sweden, Finland. There was a war going on, Denmark was occupied by Germany. So you were limited at...

MR: Oh right... Right. That was during the war.

OA: Yes. Then after the war, when the war was over, I went in bigger ships, big motor ships, uh, freighters and... and 1947 I came to United States first time. And, uh... I sailed in Danish and Norwegian ships, one Swede, and then the Korean War broke out. And when that Korean War broke out there was a shortage of seamen in United States. So I went out, up and got my seamen's paper, and then I sailed in American ships. Mostly ammunition ships to Korea. But also some coal ships to Europe. And I – I was on a Liberty ship. And we was out on the same time as this Captain Carls, with his Flying Enterprise. I don't know if you know anything about that... no.

MR: I don't...

OE: No, that was I. Eisbansen's (sp?) line, that was... Lands End of England, we were anchored there and she had a terrible, terrible lift and everybody left except that Captain Carls and there was a big thing there.

KB: Can I just check something here before we go any further. Does this look right to you?

MR: Mmm hmm.

KB: Okay.

MR: Are you getting it through the headphones?

KB: Yeah, yeah.

MR: Yeah, its, it...

KB: I didn't know if I had it backwards, the tape

MR: No, no that's right, that's right

KB: It looks right

MR: If its backwards it wouldn't work, you know, it would...

KB: Okay, it wouldn't work.

MR: Yeah. So...

[04:33]

OE: And, we got underway, we had two anchors out, and that ship, it was really a good crew. The captain was Norwegian, and there was a Danish engineer... that's all I remember. But we had horrible weather. And we couldn't keep the propeller underwater, we were on ballast, empty. We towed a load of coal to France. And empty back, we were headed for Jacksonville. Ha... they put water in the hold, the after hold to keep her down, and, heh, well it helped some but not enough. All of a sudden there was a rumble, a big rumble and the propeller fell off. Heh.

MR: Ooh...

OE: And we were halfway between Portugal and the Azores. So we drifted two, three days, and a big Dutch towboat took us into St. Michael, the Azores. And we had a spare propeller, they put that on. And then we went back to Jacksonville.

MR: Hmm.

KB: Wow, and you were fourteen?

OE: No, I was older then. I was probably...

MR: This was during the Korean War...

OE: seventeen, eighteen then...

KB: eighteen...

MR: And what was your job on these boats?

OE: I was on deck.

MR: You were on deck, okay. And on the earlier boats as well, the Baltic...?

OE: No, you were everything, these sailboats there, you were everything, cook, and you were everything. You were everything. Heh heh.

MR: Mmm... So is that how you decided then to stay in the States?

OE: Then I... from one ship to another I'm... then I went and got my visa so I was legal year so that took a couple of years, but at that time it was very easy, there was open quota from Denmark, so I went up to a consulate in Peru, in Lima, Peru, and, uh, put in an application for visa.

MR: In Lima, Peru. That's amazing.

OE: Yes.

[07:18]

MR: Now you were showing me a certificate here, um, from the Coast Guard, certificate of discharge on October 10, 1957.

OE: Yes...

MR: A shipwreck? Could you tell me more about this?

OE: Well, just went up on a reef. That's all. And she didn't get off. Then she slid off afterwards and sunk. And in fact I have some picture of that. Where we on the lifeboats.

MR: Wow...

OE: It took awhile, and then finally a Navy towboat came out, but it was too late. She was gone, so they towed us off and towed us into Hawaii.

MR: Hawaii... Wow. Did you have other close calls like that?

OE: Well, yes. I was in a fishing boat here named Lynn. And, uh... that was Leif Tolafson. And, uh, we were out, way out, too far out, we shouldn't even be that – it was a small, she was only 54 – she was built as a lobster smack. She had water all midship section, it was a well, big well to get lobsters. But... the hatch back aft came off. It was pretty bad weather. But lucky enough we found out what it was and made it into Block Island.

MR: So, what were some of the – what kind of fishing were you doing... most of your days?

OE: Well, done all kind of fishing, ground fishing, haddock, cod fish, yellow tail, flou- flounders, and... then I was swordfishing, the Chilmark sword, longlining... that time there was so many swordfish that the boat was full.

MR: Wow...

OE: Yes. Now there's not one. I talked to some guys over on Menemsha, they went out, they didn't catch any, I think, this year. Last year they get two swordfish.

MR: Hmm...

OE: That's how bad it is.

KB: Huh!

MR: And when did you stop fishing? Have you stopped fishing?

OE: I stopped fishing... uh.... Lets see now... about ten years ago.

MR: Mmm... and were you mostly fishing out of New Bedford then?

OE: Yeah.

[10:40]

MR: So how did you end up getting – how did you come from Denmark in all of your travels and make it to New Bedford?

OE: Well, like, on that ship there where we shipwrecked, we traveled from Hawaii, and then I went out in New York. There were scallopers out of New York then. Out of Ulma (?) Park. And I get asitis (?). Shucker. But there was heavy drinking there them days, I suppose today too. And then cook didn't show up so then I got the cook job. And they were going... they usually fish down off New York, but we went to Georges. There was also Lief. And then we come into New Bedford, and I said to myself I'd better stay here. And a lot of Norwegians. Oh my God there was Norwegians all over Purchase Street in their sweaters, you could tell em, you know. And, you know, New Bedford ships to play was a good place to operate out of, Grumfield (?), Rasmussen, Sally, you know, what a site. They knew everything. That was, you know, that was really wonderful here then.

MR: mmm....

OE: There was a Norwegian bakery here... and... and, uh... there was another things.

MR: And when was that, do you know? Was that in the....

OE: That was 1950. In the fifties.

MR: Okay.

OE: That's... date, you have to go by the date there.

MR: So it was after 1957, okay.

OE: Yeah.

MR: Um... were there many (ahem), were there many other Danes here?

OE: Uh, maybe a dozen.

MR: So not many...

OE: No, not compared – Norwegian was the major... Nor – Norwegian and Newfoundlanders.

MR: Mmm... So were most of your crews made up of both Norwegians and Newfoundlanders?

[12:59]

OE: Well, there was two Swedes and there was some Finns and... but the majority was Norwegian, I was a boat where we were all Norwegian, the last boat I was on. Then I had my own boat after that, and the last one I was on was the Paulinates (?) after seven years. And there was strictly Norwegians. And then them boats them days, there was no place in the world like you had in these boats. Especially a Norwegian boat, because they like to eat fish, see? And we ate fish right off the deck.

MR: Wow...

OE: Cooked fish, sometimes, midnight. Cooked lobsters, and codfish heads, and big feast.

KB: Ha ha.

OE: Yes! But of course there was other nationality didn't like that you know, all this fish. But I was right in heaven. Heh heh heh.

MR: I always ask fishermen if they eat fish because some say yes and others say no they – they'll eat anything but.

OE: Scandanavian does. And New Foundland, but Newfoundlanders they like to have salt fish.

MR: Right... Yeah, I lived in New Foundland for awhile, um... salt fish was a... a bit...

OE: Yes. I was up in New Foundland.

MR: Yeah?

OE: Yeah. Five, six years ago, me and my wife, we drove up there.

MR: Where did you go?

OE: Up to, uh, St. Anthony.

MR: Oh yes.

OE: Way up.

MR: Yes, right. On the Laborador Straights.

OE: Yes, and we ent over to Laborador. And some meadow there, there's a Viking museum there.

MR: Oh, right. Yes.

OE: Id' like to go back again, then I'd go over to St. John for... that's a long haul too.

MR: Yes. Especially from St. Anthony.

OE: Oh yeah.

MR: That's where I was, St. Anthony.

OE: No, yeah, but if you take the ferry from North Sydney over to um...

MR: Argentia.

OE: No, no, no.

MR: Port aux Basques?

OE: Port aux Basques.

MR: Oh yeah. And then it's still a long trip.

OE: Oh yes. About five hundred miles. New Foundland is big.



MR: It is.

OE: Oh yes.

MR: And there's nothing in between except...

OE: And it was funny, you know... we drove up, and... crossed in Calais when you go into New Brunswick. So the Canadian guy said How long are you going to be away, you gone?, and I said Well, I gonna keep on going until I can get salt codfish, and he said Then you gotta go to New Foundland. Heh heh heh.

MR: Yup.

OE: And there – we had it every morning, for breakfast. And they drowned it in butter, so I said you gotta keep the butter on the side, there's too much butter. (laughs)

MR: (laughing) The salt and the butter, its amazing that anybody lives past thirty or so...

OE: I know, you'd think their arteries would be all clogged up.

MR: Yeah, well they're not the healthiest people around.

OE: No.

MR: No.

OE: But they do that in Norway too.

KB: Yeah.

OE: Oh yeah, but in Northern Norway, Loufou (?)

KB: Oh yeah

OE: Up there, their salted codfish is...

KB: Oh yeah, yeah... right.

[16:23]

MR: Where is there furtherest you did any fishing away from New Bedford?

OE: Oh, I don't know. Two-three hundred miles out. Northern edge. Or maybe down off Cape May. We were down there fluking.

MR: And what is fluking?

OE: Fluke, that's a big flat fish. Sometime in the winter you go – you would go there for them. They come up here in the summer too.

MR: So working with all those Newfoundlanders and Norwegians, were there any superstitions or beliefs that people had or practiced?

OE: Oh yes, very seriously.

MR: Yeah.

OE: Like the Norwegians – the, the... the Norwegians not so much but the Newfoundlanders, like you had big boats like Nautilus and there was twelve men, bug groundfish boat, and these Newfoundlanders they lived down New York or Long Island, and when they came up here they were dressed in ties, hats, overcoat. Oh yes, they were very gentleman, and as soon as they get on the boat they would change their clothes, but their oilers on, and they working the net, and they would go out if there was a gale of wind, that Laird (?), he would go out and lay off No Man's. Well, there was superstition, like you didn't talk about pigs, you never mentioned that word, you didn't flip the hatches upside down, and they didn't like yellow oilers either.

KB: I was gonna bring that up with the list, yeah.

OE: And they didn't like that.

KB: Yeah...

MR: So that was... why... why yellow oilers? I hadn't heard that one before.

OE: That's a good question. And then a guy, he had bought a radio over New Bedford ship supply. And they sold some Norwegian radios. And you could get the fish news way down Georges. So these – these Newfoundlanders, they're sitting looking at that, that was hanging up, so one Newfie he says, What is that crazy Jesus thing there? And another said, That might be an antique Christ thing. (laughs) Yeah, they were unbelievable.

MR: Interesting, interesting.

OE: And if you were Protestant, you know... like, they looked at me, you know. You a black Protestant ain't you. I said no, I'm not a Protestant, I don't go to no church, I got nothing to do with that. (laughs)... Yes, but overall they were good people. Good family people. They were a little heavy in the drinking too, you know, but they were good people.

MR: Yeah, hard wor...

OE: And so was these old Norwegians. They were good people.

[19:59]

MR: What do you think about fishing today? How does it compare to...

OE: Oh, I don't know...

MR: ...the old days?

OE: ...I never been out in these new boats.

MR: Mmm...

OE: I never been on a steel boat.

MR: Mmmm....

OE: I wouldn't know...

MR: So you al – always on wooden boats.

OE: Yes.

MR: Was it a good life for you?

OE: Yeah, I think so.

MR: Would you do it again?

OE: No, I don't think so. I might pursue something else. Tow boating, and things like that. But, uh, it was not bad. If you were on a good boat you were all set.... You see, I was telling you, I remember when young Caroline used to sit down Fort Phoenix and I think there was CB radios they had that time, and then Lilian B be going out, see that boat radar and Ulu was there, and they had some guys going skipper.

KB: Yeah, Lilian B, that was a long time ago.

OE: Yes.

KB: (laughs) That's a long time ago!

OE: I think she wind up down Long Island and, um, I think sunk.

KB: I don't think she sunk, I think they're using her for something else.

OE: Oh, they are?

KB: Yeah. You should ask Frida, yeah.

OE: Huh.

MR: What do you think makes a good fisherman? Or, made a good fisherman when you were... out there?

OE: Well, if you didn't drink and you were there on time, and, uh, you learned a few things, you, like, good at mending twine and things like that. And... there was some good men. There was trouble, make a stew, you know...

MR: Mmm hmm...

OE: But... there- there was good men.

MR: What were some of the best skills that you had, that you learned?

OE: Well, splice wire and spliced rope, and... I can sew canvas too... things. In a boat you gotta be able to do a little of everything.

MR: Mmm... If someone (ahem) If someone was starting out today, what kind of advice would you give them?

OE: Well, you... I only know what you know, like the paper.

MR: Mmm hmm.

OE: And it was in the paper here that fifty years from now there be no fish.

KB: Yeah, that's not so, though.

OE: Well, that's what somebody says, but you see I look at the paper and the trips come in, that's – there sure ain't much fish. And now I come from Denmark, like Espier (?) there used to be a thousand boats out there. Today there might be fifty or...

MR: Mmm.

OE: And that's the whole of Denmark, they've cut the fleet right out.

KB: Mmm.

OE: And the only place that there's any fish that's way up Northern Norway up there, Barent Sea and up there. And there's no fish in New Foundland. There's no fish in Nova Scotia to speak of. So its going to hit – there's no fish here like it used to be. Oh, that's so far off, it's unbelievable.

[23:57]

MR: Yeah, I was gonna ask what you thought the future of the fishery is.

OE: I – I – I think it looks very grim. But I could be wrong, I'm not a scientist.

KB: I know a lot of the fishermen are sayin' there's just as much fish out there now as there was in the sixties. They're throwing twenty-five thousand pounds of codfish over the side.

OE: Could be. I don't know.

KB: Sorry... sorry...

OE: I don't know. I don't know. But I know they're not bringing in the amount of fish.

KB: Yeah, but that's because they're not – they cant go where the fish is, and they're only allowed to bring in so much. So when they say the landings are down...

OE: But, you see...

KB: ...they can't bring it in, its not 'cause...

OE: ... you see, this fleet you have today, with all that horsepower compared to what you used to have...

KB: Oh yeah.

OE: ...or the navigation system, and the nets. It's a completely different ballgame than it was... thirty years, forty years ago.

KB: Oh yeah, technology, sure.

OE: And that technology, that's – that will kill you. That's the same that you start hunting deer from a helicopter.

KB: Hmm...

OE: It's too modern. It's too modern. There – there's no way the fish cannot compete with that.

KB: Mmmm....

OE: But maybe I'm wrong, I have no idea.

KB: Yeah. 'Course now they're making like haddock, like, separators, and they're making, you know, nets...

OE: Yeah, well, I don't know.

KB: Mmm.

OE: I don't know nothing.

KB: Mmm, yeah.

OE: I can only say this, that you don't see this thousand pound of fish, there was days there was thousand pound of fish here in New Bedford, and up in Boston, when I come on, there was eighty bean trawlers. I was in a couple of them too. And they brought in two, three hundred thousand.

MR: Mmm.

KB: Mmm.

OE: Haddock. That's what they wanted in Boston. But that's... all of a sudden they couldn't get trips and nobody would build no new boats up there because of... and, 'em, it just fizzled out. Now there's not one boat in Boston. Well, there's few regular draggers, but.... But that's to get wiped out. And, uh... I don't know. I really, I – I couldn't, uh, I would, I would...

KB: Mm. You musta been out some awful storms, huh?

OE: Well, everybody have.

MR: But were, do you have any, do you have any that stand out in your memory, or close calls, or... besides a shipwreck.

OE: Well, I was out in a hurricane, the Mary Tappa. Heh heh. I slept right through.

KB: Oh no!

OE: Yes.

KB: What hurricane was that?

OE: I don't remember.

KB: Maybe the '54. No?

OE: No.... that one here didn't go... she was just out – offshore.

KB: The one you were in?

OE: Yes.

KB: Oh, oh.

MR: Mmm.

OE: And she only lasted couple hours.

KB: Aah.

MR: Hmm.

[27:20]

OE: That same, there's a lot of scallops around. And lot of money being made scalloping. But the scalloping not going to last. Scalloping comes and... comes and goes.

KB: Mmm hmm. Mmm...

OE: You know, there was so bad here, scalloping, that was when they were going to Alaska. Heh. Two – two, three thousand pounds, that was all they could get... fish have tails, and they can swim away...

MR: Mmm hmm.

KB: That's right.

OE: And, uh, fish they take very, very little. Now you have global warming. I don't know how severe that is, or what it is, only what I read in the paper and get in the news.

KB: Mmm.

OE: And there's controversy about that too.

MR: Yeah.

OE: Some people say there is no pollution.

MR: Well, its interesting the discussion about, is there fish or no fish, um, I just know from interviewing people who argue one side or the other, but my favorite answer was, somebody said, you know, fish don't keep appointments.

KB: (laughs)

OE: Nope!

MR: You know, they're not out there July tenth every year...

OE: No, no, no, no, no.

MR: ...when they go out to be counted, and... and I think fishermen who've been out fishing and their families been fishing for generations kind of pass on that knowledge, knowing that things change, the weather change – the weather's always changed, the seas have always changed...

OE: Well, we definitely have a different weather now.

MR: Yes.

OE: And the fish... the plankton and things, is very, very sensitive... but then you have another bad thing here now. And that is that big fish buyers.

MR: Mmm...

OE: They own boats now, there's some fish buyers, they own twenty boats. And that could own the fleet too. Because the fish buyer, he not, is not necessarily going to give high price for the fish because he'll get it the other end.

KB: Mmm...

OE: That's something they don't know. And there's some fish buyers are bad. I – see, I've talked to a lot of guys, young guys. And there was one fish house where they took out fish and they come in at night. That's corruption on this waterfront, and I think it's worse now than ever.

MR: Mmm...

OE: And, uh, they ask him, Well what do you want? You want cocaine, or you want... what do you want? Let's send for some girls to come down. Cause they were going to take out there in the morning, at that fish house. So it's, uh, it's a dark side.

MR: Mmm...

OE: The drug. That's the real dark side in New Bedford. And I don't know what they gonna do about it.

[30:25]

MR: Did you ever pull up anything unexpected?

OE: An airplane...

KB: Huh!

OE: ...with two guys in.

KB: NO!!

OE: Oh yes.

MR: Where was that?

OE: Off Nantucket airport.

KB: No kidding! I never knew that.

OE: Yup!

KB: Whew!

OE: Small. Piper crop (?).

KB: Were they alive?

OE: No, no, no, no, no.

MR: How long did – how long had they been...

OE: Oh, probably a week. But they were already...

KB: Ohh!

OE: ...decomposing.

MR: Yeah.

OE: Badly.

KB: Ooh... Ooohhh... Ooh, that must have been awful. Wow.

MR: Well that's the biggest thing I've heard anybody...

KB: Mmm!

MR: ...mention. Wow.

KB: Wow is right.

OE: But then they talk about sea turtles. That's a big thing about sea turtles. All the years I've fishing I've only seen one sea turtle.



KB: I know, that's what Reyda (?) says and everybody else too. I know.

OE: I only seen one sea turtle.

KB: (laughs)

OE: But then there used to be a lot of sharks. There used to be so many sharks you couldn't fish. They bite they cod end.

KB: Oh, no kidding!

OE: And we even put scallop rings and they got in.

KB: Really!

OE: Oh yeah, when you're hauled back there are big brown dogs. There was sharks as big as this room here, and they come up, and...

MR: Wow!

OE: Bit the net, and ate the fish.

KB: Oh!

OE: But you don't have them anymore.

KB: Yeah, see one compensates, yeah...

OE: You know, there's no sharks anymore.

KB: Mmm.

MR: Yeah, I've never heard anyone mention...

OE: See, that time when I was swordfishing, we got a lot of herring shark. What the hell else do you call them here? They're hallblack (?) in Norsk. What the hell is it you call em? They sell em in the store now, they taste just as good as swordfish.

KB: Oh... yeah, what is that? Yeah, I can't think. It begin with an M?

OE: Maybe.

MR: Monkfish?

KB: No.

OE: No, no, not monkfish.

MR: Malumai? Mahi mahi.

KB: That's what I'm thinking of, yeah.

MR: Mahi mahi?

OE: No, no, that's Hawaiian fish.

MR: Oh, yeah, okay.

OE: Ha. But anyway we got so many of them. And there was no market here for them at that time. Nowadays. But then there was a Norwegian fleet came over here, sharkfishing. And they took their sharks to Las Palmas, the Canaries.

MR: Mmm...

OE: Do you remember when all these Norwegian boats came in here sharkfishing?

KB: No.

OE: Oh yeah, they were full of them.

KB: Really?

OE: So, the Larsens, they from Norway too, over on Menemsha. And we had... we had a big boatload of them. And we went alongside the Norwegian boat, and the swordfish, they couldn't sell them. So we exchanged for swordfish, and... heh heh.

KB: Aah!

OE: Yes.

KB: For heaven sakes.

OE: But, uh... there is no swordfish now, they go all the way up to Flemish Cap. That's two hundred miles off New Foundland.

KB: Mmm...

OE: They go up there for – to swordfish. But... they've been in their holds a long time. There's no taste or nothing to them.

KB: Mmm...

OE: No.

[34:19]

MR: What are some of your best memories of fishing?

OE: Well, that's probably... well... I really don't have any real bad memories. Like I said you really lived good, and it was a very free life. And you come in, you had your days ashore, and them days you never went out on a Sat – on a Sunday or anything.

KB: Right... mmm...

OE: It was different story, or this was firstly one of the best places in the world here to fish.

KB: Mmm...

MR: Mmm...

OE: So you...

KB: Yup...

MR: Is there anything you wanted to ask?

KB: No, I'm just wondering if there's anything else that you got up besides that plane, and, I don't know...

OE: No...

MR: If...

KB: Never got torpedoes?

MR: ...that's hard to top.

KB: No torpedoes, or...?

OE: No.

KB: No?

MR: Mmm...

KB: Mmm... that's something though. Whooph. Mmm...

OE: Yeah.

MR: So you're still keeping busy making nets...

OE: No.

MR: ...and doing those sorts of things?

OE: No, no. I just tying knots and make things for boaters...

MR: Okay.

OE: ...you know.

KB: That's nice.

OE: But I got enough work in the house, you know, and the boat.

KB: Mmm.

OE: My boat is hauled out now.

MR: I was going to ask you, your boat...

OE: It's in a boatyard down the South end of New Bedford.

KB: How big is your boat?

OE: Twenty-eight feet.

KB: Twenty-eight feet... wow.

MR: Hmm.

OE: Right behind me you can see this picture there.

MR: What's the name of it?

OE: Torfast (?) It's named after the dog. I had a – I always had dog.

KB: Okay

OE: And dogs in Denmark, they all named Torfast out in the farms, yes.

MR: Aah!

KB: Oh, really, oh, that's cute.

MR: Torfast, that means, uh... uh, fateful.

KB: Aww, isn't that nice. T-O-R? Torfast?

OE: Yeah, Torfast. That's... see the dog there?

MR: Yes.

KB: Aww, yeah...

MR: So you would take your dog out with you?

OE: Oh yeah, he was on the boat all the time.

MR: Did anybody ever take a cat?

OE: Yeah, I think cats and motorboats...

KB: Anybody br-bring animals out fishing?

OE: I never been on a boat with animals fish...

KB: No, no... never thought about it.

OE: No, that wouldn't – that, that wouldn't be a good place for an animal.

KB: No, no...

MR: I know a lot of the shellfishermen in, uh, Narragansett take their dogs...

OE: Yeah, well that's a... well they're going in every night, they don't...

MR: Yeah, yeah right, exactly...

KB: Yeah, yeah, that's the big difference

OE: That's the, but, the...

MR: Yeah.

OE: That wouldn't be a good place for a dog, you know...

KB: No.

OE: ...offshore fishing boat...

KB: No, no, no... no. (laughs)

[37:45]

MR: Hmm! Well is there anything else that you'd like to add that we haven't th... thought of?

OE: No, not really, because... like I said, right now I don't – I only know what I read in the paper, and... Carl comes over and talks to me every once in a while.

KB: Carl Bendiksen?

OE: No... yeah, I know Carl too.

KB: But Carl who?

OE: Carl, that little Italian who skipper on your boat.

KB: Oh! Carl Corral.

OE: Yeah, and he brings me fish now. He was with me for quite awhile.

KB: Oh yeah.

OE: And, uh... other than that I don't – I don't – if I go down the dock I don't know anybody.

KB: No, no...

OE: No.

KB: No... no.

MR: Hmm.

KB: It's changed.

OE: It is.

KB: Mmm.

MR: Yeah, that's why we like to get the stories of... the older days and what's going on now. We've been – this year in particular we interviewed a lot of younger fishermen, and um, as the weekend – over time, the differences, the – the technology is different, the boats are different, the, um, make-up of the crews are different, the experiences are very different.

OE: Yeah...

KB: Mmm...

[39:15]

OE: You see, just – when I was fishing, special these Norwegian, where there was Norwegians, there was a lot of them cooks, you know, they had been to cooking school in Norway. And they would cook in the merchant marine, and they could really cook. They had skills. And there was also some of the mates and skippers there, that had license for big ship there – there was a lot of skill...

KB: Mmm... mmm...

OE: ....what you don't see today.

KB: No.... you're right. It's true.

OE: Like your husband now, that's really tremendous what he have done, I drive by, I see the nets and things he make, it's unbelievable.

KB: Mmm... mmm... mmm hmm.

OE: Its really some – something.

KB: Yeah... yeah... yup. And that was a struggle, cause he started it when the fishing was going down...

OE: Yeah, I would...

KB: ...in '87.

OE: ...I bought stuff from – I've been out to your house in Dartmouth.

KB: Mmm hmm. When he first started then, yeah.

OE: Yeah, yeah. He was in the garage.

KB: In the garage, yup.

OE: Do Levine ever talk to you...

KB: (laughs) Isn't that cute. They say hello.

OE: Yeah.

KB: (laughs) Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

OE: Well, Levine don't have to worry. He – I don't think he's worried.

KB: No, no. They're not growing.

OE: No.

KB: You know, they just – status quo. Mmm...

OE: Yes. But I don't think they interest in growing.

KB: No, no...

OE: No.

KB: Mmm hmm. Well...

OE: Then there's... that Leif Jacobsen. He started that... Euro. That's down where I have my boat.

KB: Mmm hmm.

OE: I don't know if they're doing much.

KB: No, I don't either. But that's down there, yeah. So that's where you keep your boat?...

OE: South End.

KB: Oh, that Euro Products down there, that's where you have your boat, right.

OE: Yeah.

KB: Mmm. Yeah I don't know how much they're doing either.

OE: I see they had a truck there, Swan Net, that's from Ireland.

KB: Mmm Hmm.

OE: Midwater nets.

KB: Yup, yup. Swan Net. Yup, yup... Yeah...

OE: Then there's the I and P (?). Are they big?

KB: They're pretty big. They're a Canadian company.

OE: Yes.

KB: So they have their headquarters in Canada.

OE: Yup. I and P.

KB: Yeah...

OE: And then the New Bedford Ship Supply, do they s... they still at it, right?

KB: Yup, yup... yup... yup... all of them.

MR: Yeah, even thinking of the differences between shore support gear manufacturers from early days to now has got to be really different.

OE: Well it was more simple.

MR: Mmmm...

OE: When I started, you know, there was no nylon, either.

MR: Oh, right.

OE: Wooden rollers then.

KB: Right, right, right. Wooden rollers, right.

OE: No net drums, nothing.

KB: That's right, over the side, yeah.

OE: Side rigs.

KB: Yup, that's right... right. Wooden doors.

OE: Oh yeah.

KB: Mmm...

[42:36]

OE: See, the fish has more of a chance. Today they don't have a chance.

KB: Yeah.



OE: No.

KB: Yeah.

OE: And now, I also hear this, they throwing codfish overboard.

KB: Yeah.

OE: See, the law is not right.

KB: No, its not.

OE: That – that – that's waste.

KB: That's waste is right.

OE: So that's no good.

KB: No, no, that's right.

OE: Uh, maybe they should come down to a quota – take everything.

KB: That's what I've said right along.

OE: Take everything.

KB: You know, you're allowed so much a year, and however you want to get it.

OE: Yup.

KB: You want to fish all year or you want to fish for three months, just your quota.

OE: But see the thing is, there's actually too many boats I think, too.

KB: Mmm...

OE: There's too many boats. That's – that's the whole trouble.

KB: Yeah...

OE: But, that's the way things are, that's mans greed, see, one makes money, well then another one wanna make money too.

MR: Mmm hmm...

OE: See, it's hard. It's hard.

KB: That's right. It's a whole different business.

OE: But, ah, it should would be a blow to New Bedford if things really went bad.

MR: Oh yes.

OE: No question about it.

MR: Well, if we don't have anything else right now we can say thank you very much, and we'll turn off the tape recorder, and...

OE: Well, any time.

MR: Any time, well, I'm sure well think of more things and we'll probably...

OE: Okay.

MR: ..reel you in for something else later on. [laughs] Okay.

[44:19]

End of Audio