Christy Fox-Allen

Transcript of an Oral History
Conducted by
Anjuli Grantham
at
Gull Light, Uganik Bay, Alaska
On July 8, 2015
(With subsequent corrections and additions)

Kodiak Historical Society

About West Side Stories

This oral history is part of the West Side Stories project of the Kodiak Historical Society. West Side Stories is a public humanities and art project that intended to document the history of the west side of Kodiak Island through oral history, photography, and art. The oral histories chart the personal stories of individuals with a longtime connection to the west side of Kodiak Island, defined for the scope of this project as the area buffeted by the Shelikof Strait that stretches from Kupreanof Strait south to the village of Karluk. The project endeavored to create historical primary source material for a region that lacks substantive documentation and engage west side individuals in the creation of that material.

The original audio recording of this interview is available by contacting the Kodiak Historical Society. Additional associated content is available at the Kodiak Historical Society/ Baranov Museum, including photographs of interview subjects and west side places taken during the summer of 2015, archival collections related to the west side, and journals and art projects created by west side residents in 2015.

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Note on Transcription

After the initial transcription was completed, a second transcriber performed an audit/edit by listening to the oral history recording and verifying the transcription. The interview subject then had the opportunity to add or retract information. The following transcript is the resulting document. Editing is intended to make the interview easier to understand. Bracketed words indicate they were added after the interview. The use of […] indicates that something that was spoken does not appear in the transcription. Often, these are false starts. In some cases, it is information that the interview subject retracted later. The original audio file is available for listening.

Citation

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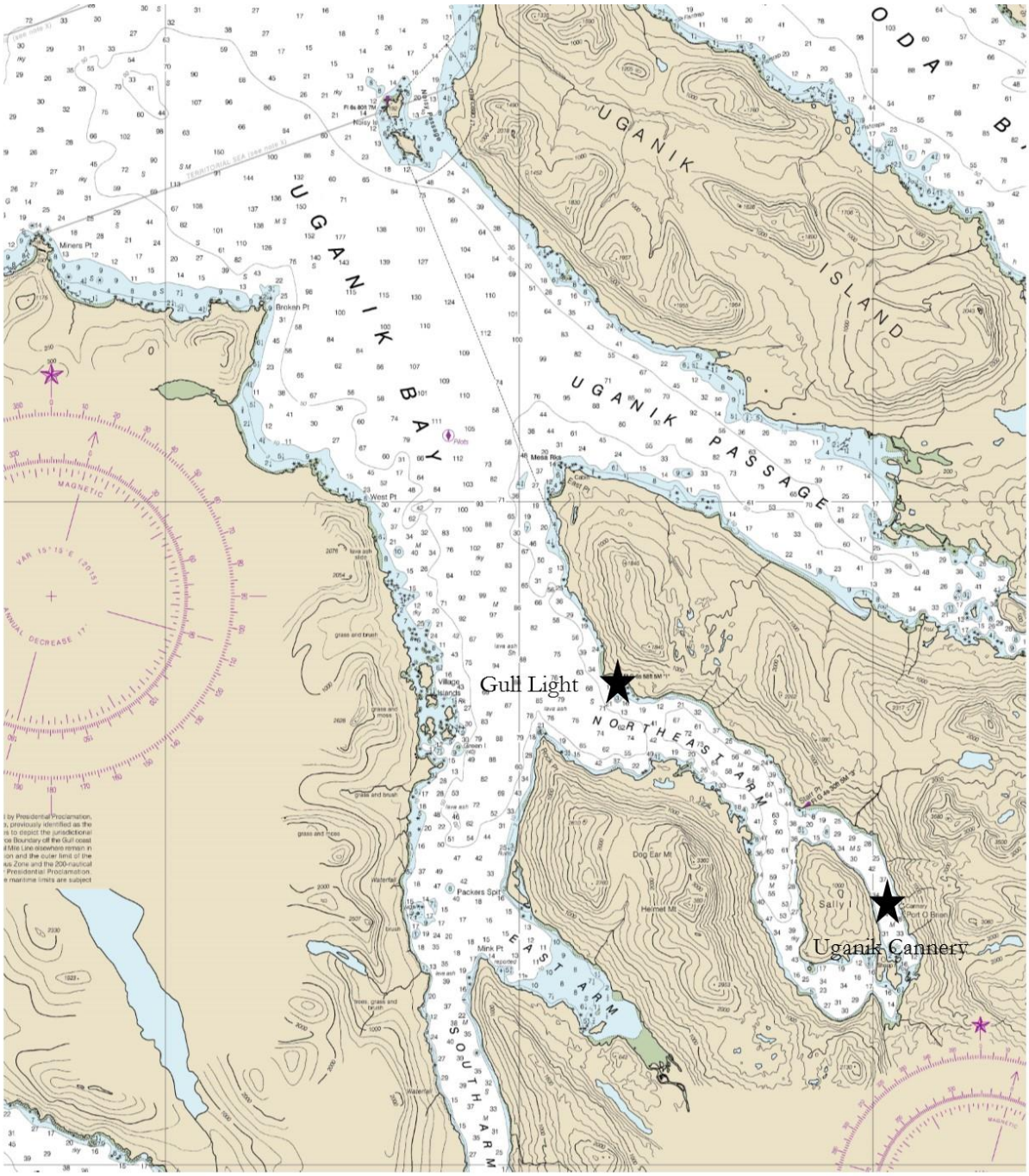
Key Words: Uganik Bay, setnetting, Uganik cannery

Cover Photo: Christy Allen with husband, Bob Allen, son, Tyler and his wife Rachel, and their children, Evelyn and Ivan, at Gull Light on July 8, 2015. Photographed by Breanna Peterson for West Side Stories. P-1000-5-401.



Select locations within Uganik Bay mentioned in the interview.

Oral History of Christy Fox-Allen

AG: Today is July 8, 2015, and I am at Gull Light with Christy Allen. This is Anjuli Grantham, and this interview is part of the West Side Stories Project. Christy, let's start at the beginning. Could you please tell me when and where you were born and a bit about your childhood?

CA: I was born July 7, 1952 in Seattle, Washington. I still have the Western Union telegram that my mother sent my father while he was in Uganik Bay at the San Juan Fishing and Pack Company saying it's a girl. I spent every summer in Alaska, or in Uganik Bay, since 1953. I pretty much grew up in the Uganik Bay cannery from '53 until I became a setnet gillnetter in 1990. No, let me back up here. My memory's catching up with me. 1980 was my first summer fishing in Uganik Bay. Prior to that was childhood in Uganik Bay and then later worked in the cannery.

AG: Do you have siblings?

Jody and Ivan Fox.

CA: I have two siblings. Michael and Steven Fox. They are both commercial fisherman. One is a Bering Sea crab fisherman and does Bristol Bay salmon. My other brother, Steven, is a Bristol Bay salmon fisherman.

AG: Can you tell me who your parents are?

CA: My father is Ivan Fox and my mother is Lillian Fox, but she's better known by the name Jody.

AG: I'm very interested in knowing about your early experiences because your family's so important in Uganik. Maybe you can tell me a bit about what brought your father to Uganik.

CA: My dad came to Uganik, well basically, he came to Uganik via Kodiak. Lived in town for several years. He helped build, I believe it was the Navy Base at the time, and all the bunkers. He came to Kodiak because his father had died. He was eighteen, he had five younger siblings, so he came here to make money and help out with my grandmother who lived on a small farm in Eastern Washington. He progressively got on a tender. He was running a tender. It was for San Juan Fishing and Packing Company […] [The *San Antonio*]. So he was running a tender, and then he [...] got on a seiner for Bill Pikus whose son, Pat, is still fishing here locally. They were originally from, I believe, Puyullap, Washington, but Dad fished with Bill Pikus, and we always liked to make jokes about the fact that it was back in the day when you held the set with a pair of oars. Of course, the seines weren't as big and as deep. Then once he got on board a tender, they needed a bookkeeper in the office and he had bookkeeping skills. So that start launched his career in what I like to call the white collar part of the fishing industry. He went from becoming the

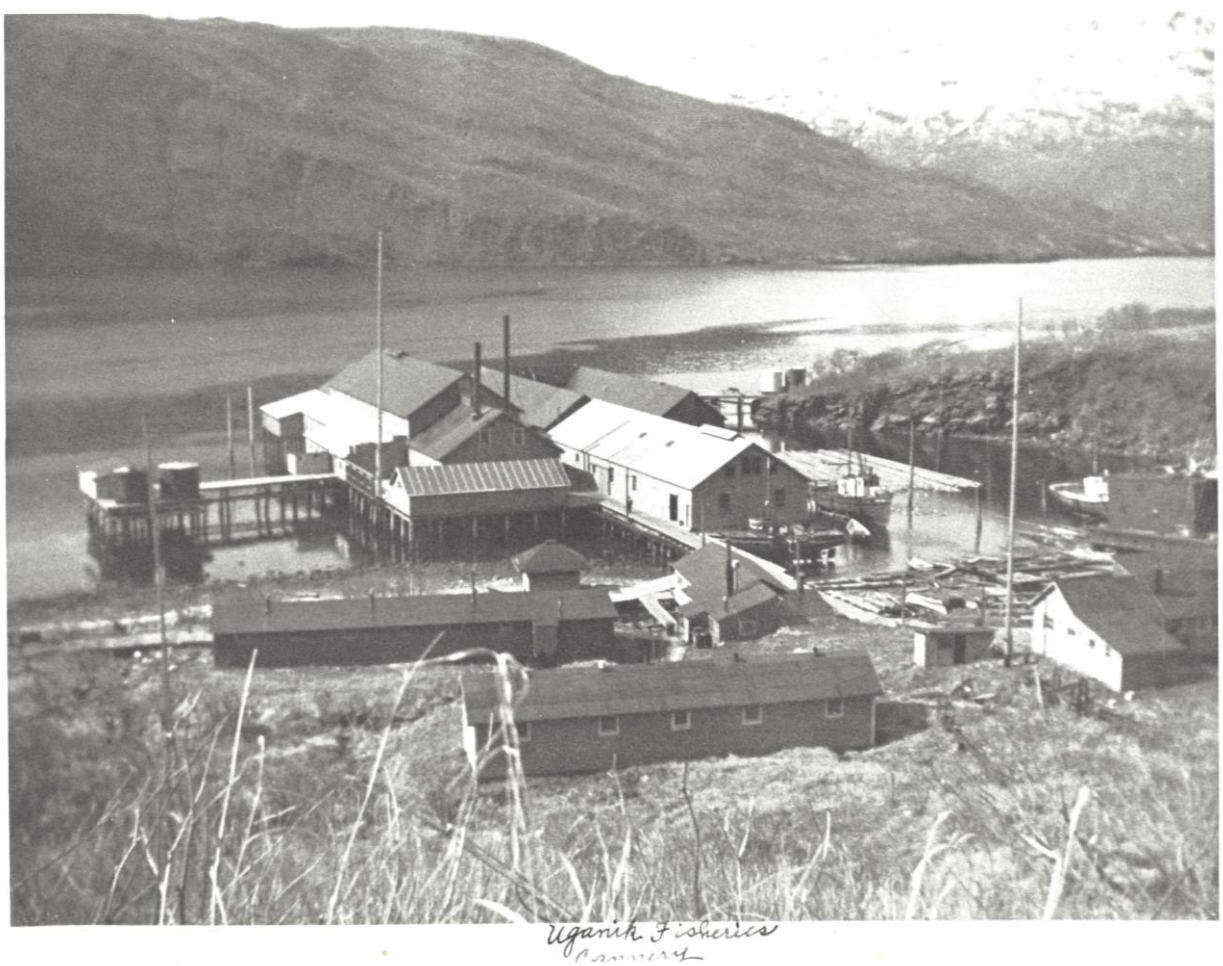
San Antonio at the Uganik cannery. Ivan's first tender.

bookkeeper to, I think it was about 1958 or '59, he became the superintendent of that cannery and he was there until, I think it was 1983 was his last summer.

AG: What do you know about the early history of the cannery?

CA: The early history of the cannery was there was a family called the Calvert family. They had sent a man [last name Roberts] up here to scout out locations for a cannery, and he ended up scouting out two locations in Uganik Bay. The first one is referred to as the herring plant [It was actually built as a salmon cannery called Uganik Fisheries, and had 3 salmon traps, Cape Uganik, Trap 6 and Cape Raspberry. It ran briefly as a salmon cannery. Sold to San Juan in 1945, ran 2 year as a herring plant and closed, over a labor strike], and the herring plant actually was the better of the two locations. He [Roberts] kept it for himself. They had electricity with water wheels back then. Then the other location is the Calverts built the San Juan Fishing and Packing Company, and they owned it for a number of years. In fact, just last year I ran into the daughter of the man who had built it. [Lorrie Calvert, lives in Seattle.] So the Calvert's owned it for several years, and then I think it was probably in about '64 or '66 that a company called Whiz Fish, which was a subsidiary of New England Fish Company, also better known as NEFCO to a lot of people, bought the place out and the Calverts sold out. So NEFCO held onto it for quite a few years until they went into bankruptcy.

AG: Was the Calverts— is that when it was known as San Juan?



Herring plant, Uganik.

CA: Yeah, the Calvert family, it was known as San Juan [Fishing and Packing]. They had, I believe, two canneries in […] Alaska, and the other one was, I believe it was in Cordova. [Evans Island, Prince William Sound] […]

AG: So it was kind of a smaller operation?

CA: Yeah, it was a smaller operation. It was basically, you know, they may have had a third cannery but I'm pretty sure that they had two. I visited the second cannery that wasn't on Kodiak in 1957 when I flew south on a Grumman Goose from Uganik Bay. We landed there for lunch. I don't remember it very well. I think I was about five at the time.

AG: What do you remember of the Calverts?

CA: I don't remember the Calverts really at all. They weren't really active in the management of the cannery during the summertime. Star Calvert and a nephew, or the son of one of the owners, would come every once in a while, but basically there was a man by the name of George […] and Helen. George and Helen, who was the superintendent. That was when he became ill, is when my father took over running it. I don't remember that much about them. I can see them visually, but personal

Left, George King (manager of Uganik cannery), California press representative, John Lyng (herring plant manager). P-788-4.

notes I just don't have any. My mom might know more about them than I do. I was too young to remember much about them.

AG: Did your parents meet up here or was it in Seattle?

CA: My parents met in Seattle.

AG: Was your mom from some sort of fishing family at all?

CA: No, not at all. No. My dad was probably the first one in his family to get out of farming and come to Alaska and he just fell in love with it.

AG: Tell me your earliest memories of being out in Uganik.

CA: My earliest memories of being in Uganik were going out in the boat with my mom and dad for boat rides and going on picnics on what we called Sheep Island. When we were little kids we used to bring our tricycles up and we used to […] ride through the warehouse with them. After the earthquake in— was it '62?

AG: ’64.

CA: ’64. This side of the island dropped quite a bit, so they had to raise the floor of the cannery in there because the tide was flooding it. That's where they put all their salmon that they had packed for the summer. We used to have great fun. It was just like this huge open playground of riding our bikes indoors in the cannery. I'm sure my mom loved turning us loose down there. We were all a

year apart in age. Then later, when they used to bring the tin in for the salmon and they'd have these huge boxes of tin stacked up, we would take and make forts through them. We would pull out the cases and we would put these wood boards across and then put the salmon [boxes] back on, so we had mazes going through the salmon cans. Then when we got a little older we started our little enterprise of washing the fishermen's clothes for a dollar a load, washed and dried, and it was when the Dungie crab fishing was still going on. So we would sit underneath the machine, the heading machine, and we would pick up fish heads and drop them in the cardboard boxes that the tin had came out of. It was before we had Hefty bags. So we had these soaking wet, disgusting slimy boxes of salmon heads. My dad would come down later in the day for us and haul them into the freezer and then we were selling those for a dollar a box [for bait]. Eventually, I got to the point where I think I was 15, and I was still probably not legally supposed to be working in a cannery for insurance reasons, but I got to start working in the egg house, packing eggs. That was a long summer. We'd start at eight in the morning and sometimes we weren't done until two [AM the next day], and long after the cannery was done canning we had so many eggs to pack that they were lined up down the fuel dock. After I did that for a couple of summers I started working in the mess house as a waitress and then eventually, I became the second cook, and my last summer there was in 1977 doing that.

Ivan and Christy, Uganik 1953.

Ivan and Christy, 1953.

AG: What would you do in the summers before the age of 15? Mostly make mazes?

CA: Yeah, we were just mostly doing what kids did. We just played. Played on the beach. My dad, when we were really little, and I'm trying to remember it. I mean, today's standards we would be in protective

services, but he gave us an old wooden slab of a boat, and he had about maybe ten fathoms of line on it, and we would row around attached to the transit dock. Then when he felt like we had mastered rowing, he gave us a little five-horse outboard. People used to make jokes about the Fox kids wearing their life jackets, that we must have been born with them because we would put them on in the morning and we would never have them off. Rules and regulations were you could not be on the docks without them. […] Eventually, he finally cut the line loose, and let us cruise around in our little five-horse at about half a knot. Then eventually we got to the point where they kind of just turned us loose and just said, "Don't go past Starlight." [named after Star Calvert] And we would pack up things like Pilot bread and Vienna sausage and we would go back to Sheep Island where we'd had picnics with my parents and we would pretend that we were marooned and have little camp fires. Finally, we got the courage to go around Sally Island and hope Mom and Dad didn't see us coming back around the corner. I think when I was twelve we took up waterskiing, so we were doing some waterskiing. You know, we just had a lot of fun just using the toys that were there. We'd climb up the pile driver and we were jumping off of it. That was more like when we were 16, 17. When you're working in the cannery and you get a little bit older you start making friends. All of a sudden you aren't the little kid anymore. You're working with people your own age, and some of them have been lifelong friendships. It's where I met my husband, when I was 16, turning 17.

AG: Wow, you met quite young.

CA: Yeah, we did.

AG: What was your annual cycle when you were a child? Did you get out of school early so you'd be able to come up here or how did that work?

CA: We would get out of school about the tenth or twelfth of June when we were probably in grade school. My mom would take us out maybe a week or two early. Then when we got to older age, junior high, high school, you just couldn't jump out of school and come up here. Mom would stay home with us and we would all come when we were done with school. I couldn't wait to get here. To me it was like going home.

AG: What was it like to transition back into Seattle after?

CA: Difficult, and still is. It's like you go back to Seattle and you are happy to see your friends, but you feel out of synch with city life. It takes slowly getting back together with your friends and doing things. I still feel that way. I sort of feel like I need to slowly progress back into driving in traffic. I really like the solitude here, so I find it a very peaceful existence. Yeah, it's great being here. City life can be hard.

AG: So in the '50s, early '60s, who do you remember was living in the bay?

CA: Living in the bay in the '50s and '60s was Fred Sullivan and Bill Young. They had a house on the other side of Sally Island across from the cannery. Of course, there was always a watchman. Kay and Dan Wagner were the watchmen at the San Juan NEFCO plant for years. Kelly and Natalie Simeonoff were the watchmens at the herring plant when there was still something left to watch. And at Village Islands, Al and Hazel Owens spent a lot of time out here, and Deedie [Pearson] with her first husband, Wayne Hans. There were a couple of Natives that lived over in Village Islands, [Teddy Pestrikoff]. […]. A guy, he was young at the time, he's now passed away, we called him Chief [Asicksik] and I can't even think of his real name. We just called him Chief. He lived there in the winter time, and then during the summer he was a shipwright carpenter at the cannery. I remember he used to make us these fabulous bow and arrows. They are all play, not for hunting, but he was quite the handy woodworker.

AG: Do you know who the O'Brien was or why is it called Port O'Brien?

CA: Back when you made that comment, there was a family named the O'Briens that were watchmen there for several winters. […] I cannot exactly remember, but I have a feeling it may be in one of the tape interviews my dad did. I believe Port O'Brien was named after a man, I have no idea what his significance was, but he had something to do with the early pioneering of this bay. That location, I don't know if it was tied to San Juan Fishing and Packing, but I can ask that question and see if I can find that answer out for you. [Bert O'Brian worked for San Juan Fishing and Packing. He set up their salmon saltery, the original Uganik Cannery in 1927.]

AG: Any idea about Sally [Island]?

CA: No, not at all.

AG: I know that there is a headstone. Do you know the story of that?

The gravestone's location and inscription, within the Uganik Cannery carpenter shop. P-1000-8-155.

CA: Yeah. The headstone sat in the rope locker for years and years. I remember asking my dad as I was a little girl, "What's this all about?" He told me that it was two brothers, I believe, and they had been living over where Freddy Sullivan had been before. Evidently, back in the day when the mail boat would come in once a month or something like that, they would bring in supplies and things to the cannery during the winter months. Evidently, the day that the boat came in, he skiffed over to get the supplies and on the way back home, I believe I was told that he fell overboard and he drowned. So his family wanted there to be a marker up here, and the marker was set up and sat for years in the warehouse until somebody, I think it was a couple of the carpenters, and I think Dave Shuckman [and Doug Robb] was one of them, who lives in Kodiak now, moved it over and they put

the longitude and latitude. It's in the carpentry shop. Have you been into the cannery? If you go in the carpenter's shop, I think there is a little story about it and they put the marker up. [It is on Sheep Island] […] I'm not even sure what year he died. It might have been in the late '40s.

AG: […] Let's say you are just landing at the cannery. Could you give me a description, a tour of the cannery as your remember it when you were younger?

CA: Well, it was before we had the plane float. […] We always seemed to fly out with Kodiak Western, and it was owned by Bob Hall. We'd fly out on a Widgeon or a Goose. The plane would just be bobbing around out in the bay and we had to get out of it and get into a little boat and go ashore and get out there. Those are my earliest recollections of that. And I kind of actually had not even thought about that until you brought it up. And we'd get to the cannery and it would be, you know, to watch the changing of the seasons here was always fascinating for me because I would see it in Seattle and then come here and have spring again. […] My mother was probably the only female in the bay for years and years and years. There were no women at the gillnet sites, no women working in the cannery. It was really an all-male crew. And if a women ever did come into the cannery, it was quite the novelty, like, where did she come from? We were pretty doted upon as being little kids. I mean the Filipino mess house, I used to love to go over there and visit with Foster Macabio because he made the most wonderful raised donuts and maple bars. They would pick me like five gallon cans of berries. There were strawberries all over. It was like we had a lot of family there, not related, but year after year, the same people we would see and they were almost like uncles to us. Unfortunately, I'm thinking those old timers are gone and now I'm the old timer.

AG: Who are some of these people that you fondly remember?

Ivan Fox with Kern in the Blue Room.

CA: Well there was a man named Marvin Goodall [machine shop Foreman] and he was from Seattle. He was the man who kept things running in the cannery. My Uncle Dean, Dean Fox, worked in the Port Engineer shop for years. Of course, I knew him on a more personal basis, 365 days of the year. I mentioned Kay Wagner, Kay and Dan Wagner, they were amazing watchmen. You'd come back in the spring and she would have made new curtains, and everything would be painted and everything was always neat and tidy. […] Her husband ran a power scow during the summer, and when she would go down and take over watching the herring plant, I used to go down and spend a week or so with her. She was all girly girl. We'd have pedicures and manicures. Let's see, who were some of the other people? Boyd. We called him Buck, but his name was Boyd Roberts, and he went back to the days of the traps. And when they quit doing the traps, I remember when the crew would be here getting all the logs and pilings lined up to go out. He was probably there from the late '40s until he retired, and still friends with his son. His son worked in the cannery. Obviously, the bookkeepers that came and went, you got to know them. They had what we called then the Blue Room. It was separate from the dining room. It was where a lot of, over lunch and dinner, it'd be where the planning would be taking place, "We're getting 80,000 pounds of pinks in we're gonna unload." You know, "What's happening in the machine shop?" It was those people that sat around there, the chief port engineer, the guy that kept the cannery running, the bookkeepers, my dad, of course my mom and my brothers and I. It was kind of like a big family.

AG: Tell me about that first summer in the egg house, what was the work like and what was the environment like?

CA: It was long hours, cold and wet. I remember at mug-ups grabbing two cups coffee, one to pour on my feet, my boots. We were standing on cement floors and it got really tiring. I was good at it, at packing the eggs. It was pretty mundane and repetitive. But my dad told me when he gave me the job that, "No one's gonna work harder than my kids, so if you stand around and gawk and don't work hard, you're setting the pace for everybody else." I remember looking up through a screened wall, I could see him every once in a while, looking at me (*laughing*). I was good at it and I was fast. And I think we got a really good work ethic from him giving us that little talk to all of us. After I quit working in the egg house, I tell you, the Japanese foreman [Itaya] for the egg house would come find me in the mess house to come pack when I was done with dinner. But it was really long hours, and I was probably the youngest cannery worker there, but [...] you would kind of have to go off in your own little daydream to keep yourself entertained. Literally, there were some days that we would work from eight to two in the morning and it was over and over again. I remember I […] looked at my social security stub that came recently, looking at what I made that summer. I mean I worked so many hours. I think I made about fourteen or fifteen hundred dollars, and it didn't seem like much money now, but when I looked back on it, when you're 15 years old, it was sort of the beginning when my mom and dad decided, "You are financially on your own." So it was good. I worked on the patching table for a little while. It was fun. It kept you busy 'cause those cans aren't gonna stop coming. But yeah, working the cannery is kind of mindless work, and it's tiring and it's long and it can often can be cold and wet. You're not wet, but you can be cold. It's damp.

AG: What was the work that you did? What does it mean to be in the egg house?

CA: To be in the egg house, they would take the eggs and they would put them in what looked like a great big huge mixer and they would brine them with salt and I think maybe some nitrates or something to retain the color of the skeins. Then they would take these big blue baskets and they'd dump them out on a sorting table. They would sort them into grades. Mostly ones, twos, and threes.

Chirsty at Gull Light, 1970.

You'd save the grade one for the top. We were packing in wood boxes lined with plastic. You would basically pack a number two box and then they'd have you lay number one skeins on top of it to make it look good for whoever is going to buy it. But between every layer of eggs you had to pack them and tuck the end of the skein in. It wasn't just throwing them in there. They wanted a presentation to it. They wanted the thicker end of the skein going one direction, and what I always called the tail end of the skein, tucked in. Then you would take a little shaker and do a layer of salt over the top of it, until you got to the top. And they were always a little higher out of the box than you thought they should be. But they wanted them that way because they would settle down and they would stack them up. It was a pretty simple process, but I think it was, when I look back at it as a gillnetter now, it must have been pretty lucrative for the canneries. It was something the fishermen were not getting any compensation for at the time, and I'm pretty sure they're not now.

AG: So what was the composition of the egg house crew?

CA: The composition of the egg house crew was usually made up of six or seven Japanese men that would come over from Japan every summer. Some of them were repeats, some of them weren't. Itaya, the man I mentioned earlier, was probably there five or six summers. They didn't know very much English, so by the end of the summer you were pretty well communicating with them by hand signals and signs. They were always very happy group of guys that we worked with, and I don't remember any of them ever having a harsh word and not having a smile on their face.

AG: Were you happy to transition to the mess hall?

CA: I was happy to transition to the mess hall because you're getting out of—-. I think after three years of packing eggs I was happy to have a different change of pace 'cause like I said, it was very mundane, very boring work. The mess house got to be that way, also. Eventually, my job was basically, we'd go in early in the morning and we'd peel like a hundred pounds of potatoes and get everything set up for breakfast. Meals were served family style, where we would serve food in bowls and people would help themselves. Eventually when I became the second cook, I was doing the mug up trays and I was doing the midnight meal for the cannery workers. I look back on it now and think, I wish I had the opportunity to do it again. I was pretty young and I would have probably exerted a little bit of more change in what we were eating.

AG: Tell me about the food.

CA: The food was pretty straight forward. […] Every Saturday night would be like steak night. I remember that what we had to cook on was this huge oil stove. I remember the cook cranking that thing up. […] There'd be smoke and grease going everywhere. It was pretty much, like lunch would be soup every single day, and there was always something like a starch, like mashed potatoes, and roast beef. Of course, we didn't have access to fresh vegetables, so it was canned vegetables. We always […] tried to do a green salad for lunch and dinner. […] We always had a baker, so there was fresh bread. And all of the mug ups were all fresh cookies and cinnamon rolls and that sort of thing. I look back on it, I think after working there for three months and having the same like roast beef and ham and yams. I'm sure it got as repetitive for those poor cannery workers as it did for us to have to cook it. […] Every year it seemed like we had a different cook. And I'm not so sure that they even did the ordering. I think it may have just been done by my dad. It was just repetitive McDonalds meats, this much hamburger, this much that. Now I look back on it and think their supply bill would have been much higher if I had some free reign because mug up trays were mostly sliced salamis and bolognas and stuff I won't even consider buying now.

Uganik Cannery mess hall in September of 2015. P-1000-8-165.

AG: What was the eating schedule?

CA: Breakfast was at [7:15 AM] and when I was little we used to have a cow bell. And this little woman, it was Ellen and Eileen and Jim Pierce. It was a husband and wife. They were just small little women. I remember Caroline would go out at about 7:30. She would ring that bell and you could hear it all over the cannery and that was kind of like "get up." She would ring it at [7:15 AM] and that would be breakfast and breakfast was over at [7:50 AM]. People pretty much […] weren't

assigned a table, there were tables of 8 or 9, nobody was assigned where to sit, but everybody pretty much staked their spot with the people they wanted to eat with. And it sort of pretty much became you knew where everybody was by the end of the summer. The machinists all kind of sat together because they were talking about what was going on. We'd have breakfast at [7:15], lunch was at noon, dinner was at 5. They had mug ups at 10 and 3, and then again at 8. And then if the cannery ran past 10:00 or 11 at night we would have a midnight meal, which was basically a breakfast. Sometimes they would knock off at midnight, a lot of times they'd go back to work. So it was basically mug ups at 10, 3 and 8:00 and breakfast was at 8, [7:15] lunch was noon, dinner was at 5.

AG: So lots of eating opportunities.

CA: Lots of eating, and lots of time spent in the mess house, preparing salads and peeling potatoes and foods. Like I said we had a full time baker who baked all of our breads and all of our pastries and cookies. I remember when we got our first oven, electrical oven, which had these trays on it that would rotate. We thought we had died and gone to heaven because before that we'd be like, I need to bake the bread in this oil stove and we've got roast cooking for lunch. It got to be a lot. The big huge electrical oven was fabulous. I think it is still sitting there.

AG: That was a happy innovation.

CA: I remember that mess house, as a little girl, thinking it was huge, and now I walk in and I think wow, this place is pretty small.

AG: At this point was it still a Filipino mess hall and everyone else mess hall?

CA: Yeah, it was always that. It never changed. At one point they gave everybody the opportunity to choose which mess house they wanted to eat in. But you couldn't flip flop back and forth because it was too hard […]. We usually fed 85-100, and Foster usually fed probably about 50 to 60 people. Everybody loved his pork adobo and chicken adobo, and he just had more stir-fry type stuff than we had. So a lot people would choose to eat there. Eventually sometimes they'd flip back because they got tired of that. […] Their mess house was separate than ours, but as far as Uganik went, Foster ordered all of his own foods himself because he was heavy on ordering his foods from his country that he knew his guys would like to eat. He was a really great cook.

AG: So he almost had more control over the food than the other mess hall

CA: Yeah, actually, he pretty much did. He would come in in the springtime and he would put in his order for 200 pounds of ginger. [...] I remember shitake mushrooms for some reason with him. Yeah, he had a lot of spices and things that none of us knew. What do you do with this things? He had a crew, but I don't remember in particular if he had certain guys that came back every year, but Foster was there for as long as I can remember. So when this cannery shut down, my dad took him up to Bristol Bay and he was cooking up there. I think it was the summer of '74 my dad was in Africa for New England Fish Company and we had a skeleton crew and Foster was our cook in the main mess house that summer. He taught me how to make white rice (*chuckle*).

AG: What was Foster's story? Was he from the Philippines?

CA: He was from the Philippines, and I'm not sure how he got here. I look back at some of these people I just took for granted, that now I wish I could just ask them these stories, "How did you get here and your family?" He was kind of like almost like an uncle or grandfather to me. He was at my wedding. He lived in Seattle and we'd see him during the winter months. [...] Robert Torres was half-Japanese and half-Filipino and he came from Japan to work. He now runs Pederson Point. He was one of my dad's prodigies. My dad saw that he helped run the egg house. My dad had a lot of

minorities that worked outside of the Filipino structure. We had a black storekeeper, a black bookkeeper. His other bookkeeper was a Filipino. I think that it was status-quo, and when Silme Domingo came into play, he was a student at the University of Washington. It was […] the height of Black Panthers […] and riots in LA. It was a perfect storm. I think that if any thought had been given to it, it would have changed [separate mess halls]. As far as the accommodations for living, the people that got there in mid-May would get the best rooms. The Filipino bunk house was not up to quo. It was cramped, it was small, it could have had improvements, but a lot of times I think it came down to not really seeing it and finances. The canneries were not interested in building big huge bunk houses for six weeks [of use]. I now totally forgot what your question was. (*laughing*)

AG: Oh, just about Foster's story.

CA: Oh yeah, Foster. I don't know. I know he came from the Philippines though because he still had his accent, but I don't have any idea how he got here. I wish he was still alive. He just died a few years ago.

AG: Was it that the Filipino cannery workers had their own boss?

CA: Yeah, Tony Diaz.

AG: How did that all work? What was kind of like the hierarchy?

CA: Well, Tony Diaz was there for as long as I can remember, too, from the time I was a little girl. We had Little Tony and Big Tony. Little Tony was really crazy, he was hysterical. I don't know how these guys mastered the English language and they could speak so fast. […] Big Tony would bring the crew in. I know it had a lot to do with the union. I recently was reading some of this stuff about the union that I didn't realize it, all the corruptness of it. People were paying to take my kid [to hire] and all this kind of stuff. I don't even know how involved Tony Diaz was in all of that. But yeah, everybody came out of that union in Seattle. And a lot of the crew were repetitive people that came back. I remember […] the Filipinos coming from the Philippines and going back home. They would put their things in cardboard boxes and tie them up and it would be marked the Philippines. I always kind of thought, "That's a long ways to come for a job." Probably you made a good chunk of money in a short period of time, but it wasn't all that lucrative. So it kind of gave me a vision into what life must be like where they live. A lot of them were older men that came back every single year, and then pretty soon their sons were coming. We used to all get together in a bunkhouse room and hang out together. I still see a few of the guys that we worked with, Robert Torres in particular. And the summer of [...] '74 when my father was in Africa and we had a skeleton crew, […] we had a couple of guys there that I got to know pretty well. Jose Bartolo was one of them and Junior Condes. I still see them. We get together. We keep thinking we're going to have a Uganik Bay reunion. Through networking we'll get everybody together, but it hasn't happened.

AG: A good photo op, for sure. Let me know. I'll do oral histories!

CA: Yeah, I know. Everyone keeps asking me. I told Toby Sullivan that Robert Torres would probably be a great person to interview because he can probably tell you more about the history of Tony Diaz who was there for years. It's like I said, I had taken them for granted. Now you look back and you think, I wished I'd asked them, "How did you get to this country?" and a little bit more about their family. I know that Foster would go back to the Philippines because he has family there still. But his main residence was Seattle. He lived in the International District.

AG: So when was it that women started working in the cannery?

CA: The first women to work at the cannery actually came out of Ouzinkie and Kodiak. I remember the women [Irene Graves, Brenda Ellison], but some of these names that you read in the paper, you know, he must be related to Mary Panamaroff […]. Probably the women started working in the cannery in the early 60's. They were all local women. Some of them were fishermen's wives that fished for the San Juan Fishing & Packing Company and they would just come out here. Irene Graves, her husband fished for the company. There were families that came out that were fishing families, and the women just started working in the canneries. Then pretty soon they started bringing more college aged women from Seattle. In fact, most all of the crew that came out to that cannery for years and years were flown out of Seattle. The Filipino crew came out of Seattle. All of the mechanics came out of Seattle. Then at one time, my dad was flying and Wasilie Paul, was his name, and a group of his guys. He would be the boss of his group of guys, and they worked in the cannery, also. I'm not sure how Wasilie Paul got to Uganik Bay, but it was probably 8 or 9 [Inuit]. That's when the first banya was born at the cannery.

AG: What was the hierarchy at the cannery? As far as from top of the totem pole on down.

Uganik Fisheries boat at the transient dock in Kodiak. P-463-12-28.

CA: Well it was probably my dad, obviously was at the top of the totem pole. And then it would break down into […]. There was the beach gang foreman, who I told you was Boyd Roberts who we called Buck. Then there would be the port engineer shop that back in the day they used to maintain. San Juan had its own fishing seiners. They weren't privately held at that time, so they had a maintenance crew that took care of those boats. They had a cannery foreman who was in charge of keeping all the canning equipment running. I don't know, that's kind of it. There was my dad and obviously the bookkeepers, but he didn't really have any jurisdiction over running anything. So it would probably be the cannery superintendent, the beach gang boss, the port engineer boss and the cannery foreman.

AG: What's beach gang work?

CA: Beach gang work is basically maintenance. They would maintain the docks, the water pipelines. They'd tar the roofs every summer, paint the buildings. That would be May and June work. When we started canning they were responsible for off-loading the tenders. That was it. They were sort of the maintenance crew. Something went wrong with the waterline, they'd replace waterline every spring that needed to be replaced. Replacing piles. They used to have a pile driver where they would replace pilings on the face docks. So yeah, they were the maintenance guys.

AG: Tell me about the San Juan fleet.

CA: San Juan fleet was purchased after the fish traps went out. And some of those boats were actually, I remember they had like the UF. They went by numbers like *UF 21* and something like that. I think the UF stood for Uganik Fisheries, which may have been boats that were used for the herring down at the herring plant. But then they had SJs which stood for San Juan, *SJ-11*, SJ this and that. And a lot of the fishermen that fished those boats came out of Longview, Washington. They fished the Columbia River so they were fishermen before they came here, and they'd all have the same boat every single year. Eventually those boats got pretty old and tired, and I think San Juan decided, probably NEFCO is probably when it happened, decided, "We don't want to maintain a fleet of seiners anymore." So that's when people started buying their own boats. Like [...] Bill Pikus bought his own boat. And [...] Sonny Peterson built the *Raven*. Don Vinberg built the *Dee Donna J*, which is now known as the *Family Pride*. Bob Freeman had the *Teri Gail*. These are all guys that aren't with us anymore. But they all started building limit seiners. Things got bigger and more powerful and nets got deeper and longer and all those boats, to my knowledge, I don't think there's any of them around anymore. They weren't big boats. They were probably 32-foot small seiners. Good for fishing inside the bays, not out on the capes.

AG: And where were they built?

CA: I don't know.

AG: I'm trying to imagine […].

CA: They weren't built here in this bay. I have no idea where they were built. My husband might be able to. He worked on the beach gang, so he might be able to answer that question. Most of them just eventually got sold off, and they would be probably fifty years old by now and they've probably been scuttled or are on a beach someplace. [My father, Ivan Fox, talks about the history of these boats and the men that ran them in one of his taped interviews I have.]

AG: Were most of the fish prior to statehood that were processed here fish trap fish?

CA: Yes, they were fish trap fish. And that's when they used these left over World War II what they called power scows. And they were dry power scows. And they would just have these big sectioned off wood, I don't even know what to call them. Bin boards. These walls of bin boards. And I remember them coming in just loaded to the top with fish. And no refrigeration, and they would cover them with burlap tarps and try to keep the tarps wet to keep the fish fresh, but I can only imagine the quality of control back then as to what was getting canned. They tried to move them as fast as they could, but as you know, sometimes we have more fish than hours in the day. Eventually some of those power scows became RSW, refrigerated sea water, and my brother owns one now as a matter of fact, the *Dorthea*. And when he's not fishing in Bristol Bay, it tenders in Bristol Bay. But you don't see too many of them around anymore. I always have fond memories of them because they had the big aft house with nice living quarters. And NEFCO owned a fleet of power scows and different boats. And then I think eventually they decided, "That's too expensive," and they started chartering from people. But yeah, the first fish were all basically fish that came out of traps.

AG: And where were the [boat] ways?

CA: They're right in at the cannery. They sit right underneath the office and the mess house […]. Some of them eventually were private boats that got put up there, but all the boats that were owned by the cannery were put up on the ways during the winter. And then there was a second set that was built probably in the early '60s that you can't see from the cannery. I haven't been back there for a long time. I don't even think it's there anymore. I think it was dismantled. But they'd put up boats over there. I'd say all and all they probably stored about maybe twenty boats.

AG: And is that about the size of the fleet?

CA: That was about the size of the San Juan fleet. And then eventually when people started buying their own boats, the fleet continued to grow.

AG: Do you know much about how that— because I know fish traps went out in '59, was your dad and other cannery men already recruiting seiners to come in and kind of fill that void so they could be fishing?

CA: I really don't know. That would be, I think, the natural progression of it, but I'm not sure. I remember my dad and mom going down to Portland and having a big dinner every year with these guys, so I'm pretty sure that somehow those guys, the people that ran the seiners, were recruited originally out of Longview. And they would be brothers to each other and family. Probably something along the same way that all the Italians from Monterrey, California got to Bristol Bay. So I really don't know that answer to that question. To me, it was just probably they were recruited to come fish. And I'm sure that maybe there was some seining [...] while the traps were there, but when the traps went they definitely needed that supply of fish. So I think that's when they bought these boats and recruited Ilwaco. It was really Ilwaco fishermen to come, Longview, to come fish them.

AG: Do you remember fish traps in the bay?

CA: I do remember fish traps in the bay. I don't remember seeing them operate. I just remember going out there and seeing them and seeing the little trap shacks that the people would live on top of in the summer time. I thought it would be a great playhouse. And I just remember the long pilings just rafted together in May and August when they would tear them out and bring them back and they would stack them up on the beach at the head of the bay.

AG: Where were the fish traps in Uganik?

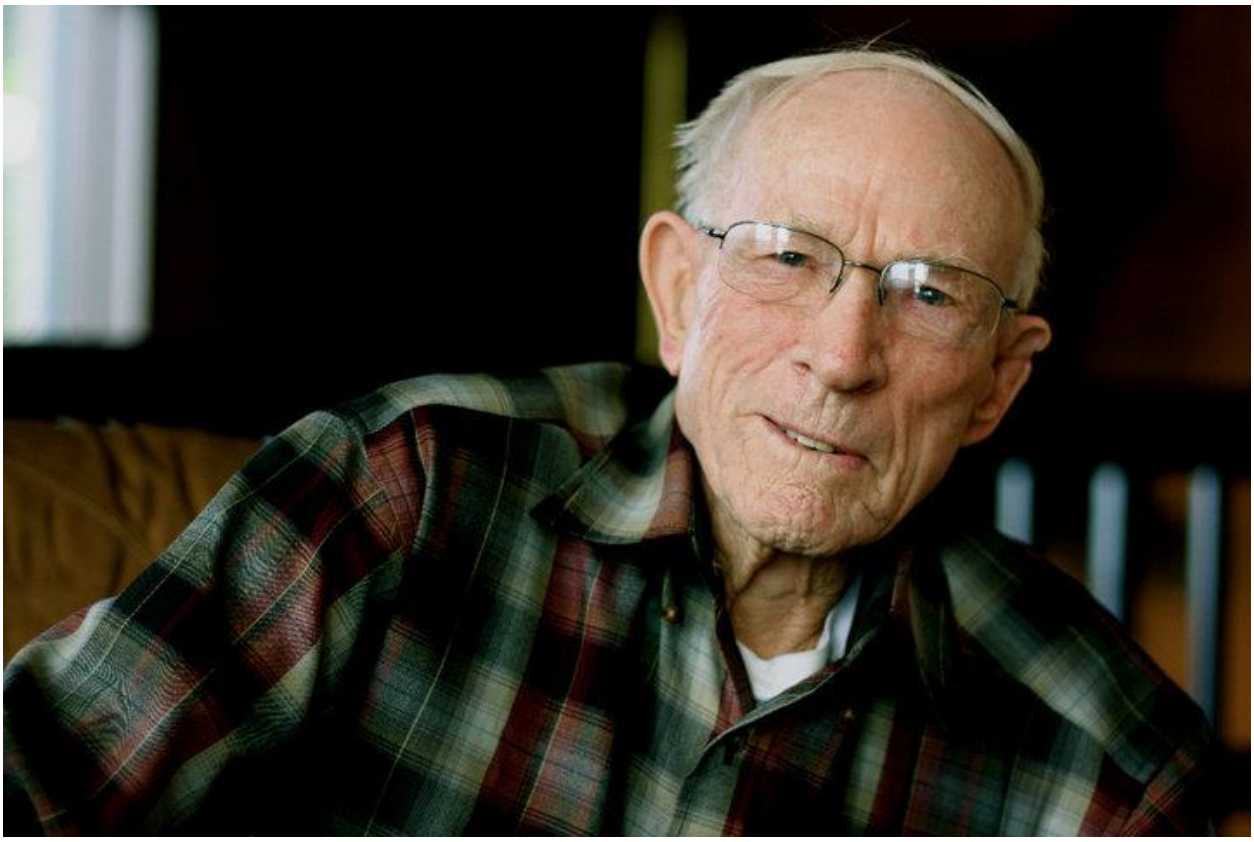
CA: Well, there was a fish trap, obviously, at Trap 6. […] I'll have to go back and look these up. I believe that there was one in Malina Bay. I'm drawing a blank. I think they had like three of four. [All these traps and locations are in an audio tape of an interview with my Dad]

AG: So there weren't that many within Uganik?

CA: No, I think the closest one inside this bay might have been Trap 6. I think my husband could answer that question because he worked on the beach gang and probably, working with Buck, probably knew that better than I do. But actually my dad has all of this in journals. And probably in those journals has how much fish came out of every single one every day.

AG: Wow.

CA: Yeah, […] I haven't gone through them but he has quite a stack of journals. […] It was amazing to me, he even had, [when] they added a new piece of equipment at the cannery, he'd write down who manufactured it, the serial numbers, where it came from. He was really amazing at keeping track of all of that.



Ivan Fox.

AG: That's incredible record keeping!

CA: Someday I'll go through them. He's got, you know, shelves of books and file cabinets full of stuff that he's kept from that.

AG: Wow. So what about the growth of gillnetting in Uganik?

CA: Gillnetting started [...] well, I remember Slim Trueman. He was one of the key people in this bay for getting, you know, gillnetting going. […] What I remember is he would show up every June with his entourage of young guys. And some of them, like Keith Moore, I think Keith Moore started with him, are still fishing. They would show up at the cannery, it'd be quite a large group of people because we'd always feed the fishermen when they were coming and going. And he pioneered a lot of these gillnet sites out here. Obviously, Paradise was one of them. Broken Point, Miner's Point, where Dave Little is now. I can't think of what he calls—.

AG: Surf City.

CA: Surf City. I thought for a while that maybe East Point and Eskimo Pie had been, but John [Chaliak]. I think it was Kelly Simeonoff maybe that had Toshwak over here, also. Bartenders was another one that Slim had done. So I think he might have had, you probably know the answer to that question. He probably had six or seven sites. And then they eventually got sold off to people, and then you know I can pretty much go through every site and tell you who owned it. And then Deedie Owens [Pearson], her first husband Wayne [Hans], he had a boat called the *Juan*, and he was a seiner. She and her mom and dad and her sister Hazel had a couple of gillnet sites along the other

side of Uganik Bay. Her brother Fred was a gillnetter, too. Yeah, they just kind of like popped up overnight.

AG: Yeah, because it seems before there wasn't a lot was happening as far as setnetting. I'm wondering what impacted that transition.

CA: Well, I think my dad had the foresight to know that when the traps were going out you needed a supply of fish. I think that he helped a lot of people get set up in the fishing business back in the days when the companies used to loan people money or help them buy a boat. A couple of times my dad personally helped people buy boats or loaned them money to buy a permit. Of course, that was before limited entry, and the Refuge I don't think was quite as concerned about what was going on in the bays. And so everybody just kind of came out and picked a site they thought would be a good place to fish and threw up a little gillnet shack. Of course, we've come a long ways from there. I know Paul Newgaard was one site out which is now Shark's Cove. He pioneered that place. So yeah, it was only about maybe four guys that pioneered most of these sites in the bay.

AG: What type of person did it take to kind of pioneer a new site?

CA: Well you know, Kelly and Natalie Simeonoff […]. Natalie was a really deep thinker. She was really involved in the Alutiiq, brought to the forefront a lot of remembering her heritage and things. They were both Natives. I don't know what kind of person. I think you had to be a little left of center to come out here and set up camp and not have, you know, […] we didn't have running hot and cold water back then. I'm sure they didn't. You know, you got all of your food out of the cannery. I think you had to be tough. I don't think it was for anybody who couldn't, you know, go out and live— work in an Opheim wooden dory and sloppy seas and get wet. And probably not living in very comfortable circumstances. But I think that what keeps drawing everybody back here, or back then, was maybe just the love of the bay and the nature and the camaraderie that you build with your fellow gillnetters. Like I tell my friends in Seattle, yeah, my nearest neighbor is like three miles away, but we get together and have parties. And we may not see each other that often, but you build a really strong bonded friendship with people in this bay.

AG: What was the relationship that the cannery had with the fishermen?

CA: Well, the fishermen originally were pretty much employees of the company. And as far as the gillnetters go, they would store all of their boats and gear, and like I said, they'd come through and use it as their launching ground to get their nets together and all of that, their grocery supplies. They used to have a pretty regular, good stocked store in there. […] The tender would try to be supportive of bringing them their groceries, picking up their fish. For a while there they'd give everybody a six-pack of beer when they delivered. And then I think something happened with the government about you can't do that anymore, so then it was switched to a half a gallon of ice cream and then petty soon it became soda pop. I think that the fisherman for the most part, depending on what kind of person you were, you had a good rapport with the cannery. And they had kept the washhouses up for fishermen to come in and take showers, and use the laundry facilities, and set up camp from there. You know, come in at the end of the season and put your boats away, put your gear away. Everybody had gear lockers that they were numbered, and they would put their things in there, their outboards and personal stuff they wanted to leave. So it was kind of like a, maybe like a little bit of a base camp for people to start from. And they used to, you know, that's one of the things that we really miss is being able to store our boats in at the cannery. We don't live on Kodiak so it was nice to be able to go in there and put our boats away and put our gear away and, you know, take a shower, spend the night and fly out the next day.

AG: How did things change when NEFCO purchased the cannery?

CA: It became bigger. It's when NEFCO basically did away with- I think pretty much all those company owned boats got sold to the person that was had been fishing them as an employee if they wanted them. And they put in another can line. And they put in a small freezer house, and they brought in the eggs. So it went from basically two, I think it was maybe a two one-pound can lines, to two one-pound can lines, a half-pound can line, freezing. We were freezing H&G head and gutted salmon in trays. And the egg house got added on. So, it kind of grew quite a bit back then.

AG: What were some other major changes that took place at the cannery when you were younger and your family was still living out there?

CA: Oh, I can remember they had to put in chlorinated water. That was a huge thing for processing. They had to put in sewer, [...] anyway, you couldn't dump your sewer lines into the bay anymore, so they put that in. I remember when they used to dip the nets in tar, and then all of a sudden nets went to being more like, you know, that was over with. I remember that they used to stand on the dock and they would count the fish as they came off. You didn't sell your fish by pound. You sold them by individual fish. So there'd be guys in there counting them, and there would be somebody down there with a fish pew, pewing them, and it wasn't always in the head. And I remember they thought that it would be better if they used pitch forks, which is even worse. So some of the Food and Drug [Administration] changes. Like Food and Drug was coming in there, and you had to have cement surfaces and plastic walls. And they went into being able to you had to dip your hands in a Betadine dip before you went into the cannery. It went from your hair in a ponytail to your hair covered. So Food and Drug made a huge difference when they came to the scene. And other government things came in and said, "No, you can't pump, just dump your fish heads and guts into the water." It went through a grinder before it was pumped out into the middle of the bay. So it was mostly things like that that I saw. The fuel dock, how fuel was handled. You had to have something to catch the fuel. There's a lot of, I'm sure, fuel that's in that ground in there. But sort of things like that, you know, it just kind of leapt up into the next century, as far as, you can't keep doing things the way they were done back in the '30s and '40s. I remember Food and Drug being quite the big changer as far as how things were done.

AG: Do you remember when other tenders started coming in the bay and other competition?

CA: Interesting. Back then, there was one other tender that came in here, a cannery from town. I think it was APS that was starting picking up some of the gillnet sites, and it wasn't that much of a competition because by then the seine fleet had grown quite a bit. Obviously, my dad wanted to keep all the gillnetters he could. It was kind of like "if you don't fish for me you don't belong here" attitude. It was that way with a lot of the superintendents. What I remember that a lot of people don't remember anymore is we had on the island what was called a combine. And different canneries would get together and they would say like, Port Bailey would [say], "We're not gonna can this year. Will you can our fish?" Or Larsen Bay. Not every cannery would operate because it wasn't financially profitable for them to all be running. I'm not quite sure how they handled it, but everybody had different tenders. So you would have tenders picking up New England fish, from Larsen Bay fishermen, from Brindle's place. And I'm not sure how they broke out the profits on all of that. I think that was done away with because of [...] probably price fixing. I remember huge strikes back in the day, because it was back when they actually did a contract with fishermen, and they negotiated what they were paying. Not like, go fishing and we'll tell you in August what you are going to make. But, you know, from the fishermen's standpoint I can see where you wouldn't want to have canneries getting together and coming up, beating out a contract together as to what they're

gonna pay you. But at least you knew what you were getting paid. It also was more cost effective for the canneries to not- on a summer like this, or hopefully it's gonna turn around, but on a summer like this, it might be better to have two canneries running than eight canneries and seven of them go bankrupt. You know, there was something to be said about it. It's kind of like this cannery in here would still be running if it hadn't gone solo and changed hands so many times.

AG: When the combine would happen, would you guys usually pack fish and for who?

CA: Yeah, Uganik usually always did pack fish. It was one of the ones. Like the smaller ones sometimes wouldn't, like Port Bailey wouldn't. […] Sometimes Larsen Bay wouldn't. I think that Brindle down in the south end in Alitak— who owns it now? Ocean Beauty I think owns it? I'm not sure if they ran. They might have been since they were strategically at the south end of the island. And Uganik Bay would be the cannery on the west side that would run. And probably one in town. And like I said, they all co-shared their tenders and their fleets, but didn't necessarily have a full crew in the cannery working. And these canneries are, I always call it the dinosaurs because they are incredibly located far from town. I remember Standard Oil's fuel tanker come in here for fuel. And then we used to have a freighter come in to pick up all the freight. And then eventually it was Sea Land with the vans. And then flying all your crew in and then the logistics of maintaining these canneries. I think, it makes me sad, but I don't think they're gonna be, I don't know how much longer, I've seen a lot of them go. I don't think that we'll probably ever see this one, this Uganik plant, run again. In fact, I went in there yesterday and took a look at the dock and thought somebody needs to weed whack the grass.

AG: How does that make you feel?

CA: Sad. Yeah. It makes me feel sad.

AG: Tell me about some celebrations.

CA: Well, the Fourth of July was always a big one. Yeah, at the cannery we always had a big Fourth of July. We would like instead of having breakfast, lunch, and dinner we'd have a late brunch and then we'd have kind of a mid-day meal and people would snack all day long. I remember my dad would have like pallet loads of beer. We'd have cases of beer. It would be just the one time that we were allowed to have alcohol in the cannery. And of course, everybody with these young kids away from home, so everybody pretty much had a big party day. And as far as any other celebrations, we would sometimes accompany the beach gang skiff. Ten of us would pile in it and take off into the bay. Seemed like we always broke down and somebody always had to rescue us. But we did a lot of, you know, getting together and doing our own things. Like I said, we used to waterski. We'd get a group of people together. Sometimes we put twenty of us into bunk beds [room, sized for four], with four people and sit around and party and talk. They had these old 4-wheelers that were like a great big red flyer wagon that we would stand on at the top of the ramp and we'd drive them down the ramp and turn the corner. Which I look back now and I think how incredibly and terrifyingly dangerous that was because on one side you're falling off, the other side was into the bay and another side was sheet metal that was all torn up. But we used to make our own fun. Like I said, we'd go on hikes. We hiked the mountain behind the herring plant one time. You put a group of kids together they'll figure out something to do. Something you're not supposed to be doing. The banya was always a big hit when the banya got built. It was kind of a big social thing. Of course, there were groups as there are in anything, but these people got along with those. A lot of times we'd be fishing for herring off the front dock, so we'd have a big barbecue over at the Filipino mess house. They had a big, outdoor barbecue so we'd go over there and cook herring.

AG: Would you have like fireworks and everything on the Fourth of July or any games?

CA: No. No fireworks.

AG: Just a big party.

CA: Just a big party. No fireworks, too much wood. There are big fire hazards in there. So there were never any fireworks on the fourth of July. Not like out at the gillnet sites (laughter).

AG: So when was it that you started fishing out here?

CA: I started fishing in 1980.

AG: Okay.

CA: We bought this place from Cliff Trueman. We bought his permit actually. We bought it from Wink Cissel, Wink and Jeanette. And we bought the permit from Cliff at the Blue Moon Tavern on 45th Street in Seattle. And I think that when we bought it, Wink Cissel took his permit from Gull Light out to Miner's [Point]. Unfortunately, […] Wink never lived to fish it. He died that winter in a boating accident. So that was our first summer. We had no idea what we were doing. I was just cannery. My husband and I were just cannery workers. We were married by then and we had our son. He was about nine months old. Bob had come out and fished in '79 with Wink for a couple weeks to see how it went, and then he moved down to fish with Gary Cue at— we called it Cue Ball back then, kind of learn what to do. Gosh, we must have moved sets every three days until we finally got it all figured out. So we fished in here for a number of years, and then Don Fox let us come out and fish a set off Broken Point. This is not, you know, we catch a lot of pink salmon in here. We're kind of so far in the bay we get what everybody else doesn't get. So we commuted for a while from here to Broken, and then in '98 we bought Midnight Cove from Leslie Smith.

Ivan Fox, Bob Allen and Ashley Allen, 1984.

AG: What was the inspiration to start setnetting?

CA: Well, my husband and I were both married, both out of college. We didn't want to continue working in the cannery. It wasn't conducive to our being married. And […] my husband had been on the *Flying Tiger* which was the gillnet tender at the time. And he had kind of fallen in love with the people and the life out here. And I knew that I didn't want to quit coming here in the summertime. Nor was I gonna keep working

in the mess house. I was burned out. So this was our way to come out here every summer. So it was a real change of pace for me to go from the cannery to out here. I loved it. And I didn't get in the boat too much that summer because I was taking care of a baby. But it was just a really great lifestyle. I love it. I look forward to each summer being here. No regrets. My kids love it. And we've employed a lot of my kids' friends through the years. Yeah, I mean, I feel lucky. Really lucky that I get to be here.

AG: What are some of the challenges associated with setnetting here?

CA: Weather. When we're fishing inside here, we're pretty lucky in this bay. When we're fishing Gull Light it's pretty flat calm most of the time. But the Shelikof, the weather out there is not always your friend. Sometimes we call it Lake Shelikof. But we've had boats flip on running lines. And we do what we call dinghy drills. If you can't bring the skiff into shore you get in a little boat. No one's ever gotten injured. We don't go out when it's rough, too rough. And we caught massive amounts of fish out there during certain seasons, so it was really long hours and long work. I didn't really go out in the boat much out there [Midnight Cove]. We had a crew of six people and I pretty much was the shore support. And I did everyone's laundry, and changed the sheets on their bed. I mean, they had it pretty nice out there if I was there. And I did all the cooking, and I was cooking for twenty year olds. I remember going through sometimes 150 pounds of flours in the summer time, just making bread and cookies and stuff. And, you know, it's so different being out there [in the Shelikof]. Once you turn the corner at Bartenders, you feel like you are entering the Outer Limits or the Twilight Zone. It's a little scary because things can go wrong out there. But it's beautiful. You have the fabulous view of the Katmai and the sunsets and the ocean smell. So yeah, I'm glad that I got to experience both inside and outside fishing.

AG: What was the transition from being someone that was a processor to a fisherman?

CA: It wasn't that difficult to tell you the truth. Because all the other gillnetters were really welcoming you into the bay, and I knew most of them anyway because they would come in the cannery for mug-ups and do their laundry and stuff on the weekends. Back then, the way Fish and Game managed this bay, was fishing was open Monday to Friday. So the whole fleet would come in on Friday night and the weekend and the cannery would just double in population. So I got to know a lot of these people before I ever transitioned out here. And the logistics of not having a washing machine and stuff like that. I was one of those people all of a sudden who was going into the cannery to do my laundry and do my grocery shopping. It wasn't that hard of a transition for me, I don't think.

AG: Tell me about your education.

CA: My education. I grew up and went to high school in Seattle. Queen Anne. Go Grizzlies. It's no longer— it's now an expensive condominium on top of Queen Anne Hill with a fabulous view of Seattle. I went to Shoreline Community College and got my Associate Arts and Science degree and applied to the University of Washington to the nursing program. It was a lottery back then. I wasn't one of the winners of the lottery, so I decided to go into the program where I became a surgical technician and I worked in surgery.

AG: How did your medical training help or how did that impact your life out here?

CA: [...] What probably made me interested in nursing and going into surgery was my dad had some surgical training and he used to suture people at the cannery when they got cut. So I used to help him. It's like crazy when I look back after going through surgical school. I look back at like, "Oh my God we're lucky we didn't—." We had people come in with halibut hooks imbedded in their hands

or needed to be sutured up. I don't think that my surgical training really helped me any out here. I mean I've never luckily had to use it. If anything, it made me more aware of keeping the boat clean for bacteria and that sort of thing probably played a little bit into it. But that's probably about it. Cross-contamination, I'm always telling people, you're cross-contaminating that. But as far as helping me be a better fisherman, no.

AG: Did it work well that you were able to leave during the summers from your normal job?

CA: No, it didn't work very well, as a matter of fact, because hospitals don't want to hire you for nine months and have you train and leave. And I always thought that I would go into working in a physician's office that did surgery, and that didn't really work out well, either. I had a couple of job offers and when I told them that I'm leaving, you know. What I started doing is I did a little catering for awhile because I had the food background. And I got into real estate. So that worked well with coming up here. And that's what my husband did for a few years, too, until he took over running another family business that we have in Seattle. We had a bookkeeper, a husband and wife who pretty much took over running everything for us. And then when Mike and Kathy Hoyt retired, it kind of got to be the point with gillnetting whether we were going to be able to continue to do this. Yeah, it was difficult being able to keep the two balls in the air, to have a job in Seattle and then one here. And we always called gillnetting at Gull Light, for the most part, our paid vacation. You know my daughter is now 33 and would like to have kids and she would like to come back and gillnet because she want her kids to have this experience, too. So, it always makes you feel a little bit like a fish out of water when you are in Seattle because you look at certain things that people are upset about and you just think, 'Don't sweat the small stuff." It always made we [me] slightly a little out of

Christy's son, Tyler with wife, Rachel and children, Ivan and Evelyn at Gull Light. P-1000-5-383.

synch with my peers from high school. I was never the pink, frilly person, and I think it was because of here. I think my daughter is the same way. I mean she is pretty intimidating to a lot of men because of what she can do with the skills that she's learned up here.

AG: Tell me about raising children out here.

CA: Oh, it's great. It's like they never had plastic toys here. They had a little wheel barrow or something. They couldn't wait to get out the door in the morning and spend hours on the beach. And they had a treehouse up in the trees, and they liked going in the boat to visit other people's places. And if it was a rainy day, we had cassette stories, cassette tapes and stories, and they would sit there and listen to cassettes. And one summer I think Tyler discovered that at about 10 he could read, and we could hardly get him out of the cabin. And there is no TVs. There was nothing to entertain us. It was before video games. Tyler and Ashley were probably in the boat picking fish by the time they were 12 and making their own money. So they had kind of a short childhood, and I don't think either one of them would tell you that they regretted starting working early or their summers here. They both try to come back every year for a short time. And now my grandchildren. So, my grandchildren have to get out of the house a little bit more. But, it's good. I mean Ivan [Allen], he's a little bit older. He'll be 6 in a couple of days, and so he's all gung-ho about being here.

AG: One thing I wanted to circle back to and I just remembered, was you said that you remembered strikes when the fishermen used to work for the cannery. Could you describe that?

CA: I don't think there were strikes when the fishermen worked for the cannery. There were strikes when they became independent of the cannery. The strikes would be, you know, usually they would post what they were gonna pay for fish. I remember one strike particularly, and it must have been in about 1973, that was quite heated and lasted for quite a while. It lasted to the point where the canneries I know were getting really panicky about if we were going to make our pack and make any money this summer. And it finally ended, but the fishermen had a negotiator that would be—. They had their own little union, I believe, and they had their own negotiator. Dad would fly into town and they would spend hours sitting around a table knocking it out. A lot of it wasn't paid by pound. It was kind of what they called a sliding scale. And if we get paid this much for our pack we'll give you a spring bonus. And a lot of that sort of thing took place, as far as, "We're gonna pay you this base rate, but if we make any money we're gonna pay you more." And I think it's done to a certain extent to this day. Yeah, you know they never know what they're going to be able to sell their case of salmon for in July until it's sold. It's kind of a crazy way to make a living really when you […]are out fishing you really don't know what you're gonna make.

AG: When was it that you transitioned out here, in general, from being paid per fish to per pound?

CA: Don Fox could answer that question because he still talks in fish. I look at him, "You only caught 42 fish today?" You know, I'm thinking that the poundage thing might have taken place somewhere in about '66 or so. I might be wrong on that. I just remember them having the scales and starting to weigh them and the scales coming to the cannery and them testing them to make sure they're accurate and the scales going onto the boats and stuff like that. But I really cannot remember exactly when that happened, but it had to have been probably mid '60s.

AG: This one thing. It's interesting to look that it used to be by cases, and then it went by fish, and now it's all by pounds.

CA: And Dad always used to tell you how many cases. "This summer it's taking us 48 pinks to do—." He's got all this stuff in records of how many fish it took to do a thing. Fish are small this year, whatever. So I probably, you know, when they were doing the per fish into a case, didn't take them

too long to figure out that maybe we'd be better off going to a scale. Because it is all technology, too. The technology changed so rapidly.

AG: What were some changes in the technology related to the processing?

CA: A telephone was a big technology improvement. I remember the Western Union schedule going out every single day and how they had to communicate that way to get groceries or supplies. The mail plane came once a week, and all of a sudden it was coming six days a week, and they put a telephone in which I never thought I'd see the day. Now I'm waiting for when I come out here and flip my cell phone on and see if I have a connection. Yeah, so I think the telephone and computers, and just like any other office, instead of everything being ledgered out and making plane reservations through Western Union and stuff like that. They had radio schedules. In fact, my dad's call for Uganik Bay was [...] KIJ47. So he had the big band radio. I was told, after he passed away, there was

Ivan and the radio schedule at Egegik.

people that wrote and told me that, "I never met your dad, but I heard him on the radio." He has a memorial tile down at the [Seattle] Fisherman's Terminal, and that is what is under his tile, KIJ47, Uganik. So yeah, going from the big radio to having the telephone and then also having computers I think was huge. And now here we are sitting at a gillnet site where I can do a Skype phone call or e-mail my groceries to Safeway and deliver them to the tender. I never thought I'd see that when I started here in '79.

AG: What about processing technology?

CA: I don't think the processing technology changed all that much, to tell you the honest to God truth. That canning equipment is pretty darn old. […] This cannery was never set up with Baader

filleting machines and stuff like that. The technology that I've seen is maybe better equipment. I never saw it here. This is an old school cannery. They tried to do freezing which they were all frozen in the round. It went into a big bag, and what happened to them after that is they went off to Japan and they probably did something else with them. I think the technology that I'm seeing in the industry now is it's really hard to do because you get such a big volume of fish in a short period of time, it's value-added. Value-added, skinless, boneless, half-pound cans instead of one pound cans. I think the demographics of the people that eat canned salmon are probably in their eighties and nineties. I mean, I don't know anybody who goes to the grocery store and buys a can of salmon. I honest to God don't. I process my own and can my own. It's not mostly sold in the United States. So I always thought they need to do some kind of value-added product like a boneless-skinless filet with some sort of marinade in it. But like I said it's hard to process that much fish that way in a short period of time. So I think now, more and more, I think people are going to frozen, and then probably down in Seattle or places where they can deal with it on a slower pace, they are doing value-added. At least I'm seeing a better quality of frozen fish in the grocery stores in Seattle. Where you used to never see frozen salmon years ago.

AG: What sort of changes have you noticed from the fishing side? Changes in the gear that you're using or the boats.

CA: For gillnetting, we used to fish out of these wooden dories and nets were always getting snagged up on them. And the gear, as far as our lead lines and cork lines, has gone to better quality materials. We went to aluminum boats and then pretty soon we put rollers in the bow so we could pick up the set line and use our outboard to power down it instead of pull down it. We used to go sideways from port to starboard instead of bow to stern. And pressure washers, volume pumps for getting the algae and slime off the nets. And then we went to pressure washers. I think we became a more efficient killing machine to tell you the truth is what we've done. And deeper gear because [...] we've fished up to I want to say 120 [meshes]. That seems way too deep. One hundred and twenty meshes or something. Our nets got deep. I know I used to go home at the end of the summer being total upper body buff.

AG: What sort of changes in the bay seem striking to you?

CA: More houses. More people living here year round. Village Islands used to be 40 acres owned by Dan and Nan Reed. And there used to be a cannery over there, also. And Nan worked at that cannery in the mess house and met Dan who lived out here. And that 40 acres, when they died, they sold it off in I think in 5 acre [parcels]. So I am sitting here right now, looking at houses I never saw when we first bought this gillnet site. And then there is a small plot of Native land here that has a couple of houses on it. But I'm seeing more. And then the gillnetters are allowed more cabins now. I think 600 square feet and 400 square feet and an ice house or mechanical rooms. Just seeing more people. I don't know if there's any more gillnet sites, but definitely more people living here year round or have a summer home here. The Pingrees have got the Quartz Creek Lodge which was never there, so I see traffic coming out of there everyday. It's just the population has really grown. It used to be maybe two people at a gillnet site and that was it.

AG: […] I know in 1980 there was ANILCA and the Refuge boundaries extended because before it seemed before they had less coastal land. Do you remember when that happened and really the kind of change in management and how that has been perceived in the bay?

CA: I don't remember that much about it, but what I can remember is we used to be here at the gillnet site and we'd never see anybody from the Refuge or Fish and Game or anything like that. And then Jay Ballinger, who is Refuge manager, I don't know how long back he goes. They pretty

much got the *Ursa Major* and they'd come out every summer and visit and they started setting up rules and regulations like you can't have a motor vehicle and your cabins can only be this big. I think that, I mean, obviously, the Refuge is celebrating their 75th birthday and the gillnetters have not been here nearly that long. So I think we were kind of probably a surprise to them, and they were caught maybe a little flat footed that people were building cabins on land and then they had to get up to speed. So it was pretty much a wild frontier out here. "Yeah, this looks like a good place. Let's build a cabin." I might me [be] wrong about this, but my general impression was that nobody was too concerned. Then pretty soon if you had been here, they gave you a lifetime estate. If you had a pretty big thing going on, like Jeanne Shuckman or Shepherd over in Mush Bay. That land has been there forever, but it was never private land, so she has a lifetime estate. And as far as here, we own the cabin we're sitting in. When we built it Jay Ballinger said, "Thanks for building me a new cabin." Now we've received notice that we own the cabin. I think they're still figuring out and putting restrictions on people. I don't think it's a bad thing. Sometimes I wish that we could maybe build a little bigger cabin, but what for? We're only here three months out of the year.

AG: It's true. Do you remember when limited entry came and how that might have impacted things on the west side?

CA: I really don't. I think I was probably too young and too oblivious and not into the fishing.

AG: What about Exxon? How did that impact your family or the operations in the bay?

CA: When Exxon took place and I first heard about it, I thought, "Oh, that's not going to affect us at all. That's a long ways from Kodiak." Then when it did affect the island, we chose to come up later because we knew they weren't fishing. And then we came up and thought we were going to get hired by Exxon, or was it VECO, to do the cleanup. And we went and did the whole seminar thing and they basically said, "Sorry, you're kind of late to the party." So we came out here anyway and hung out for a while. They were getting a big glut of fish down in Olga Bay, and my husband and our crewmember, Michael Kirk, we weren't making any money cleaning up. So they decided to go down there and fish. So the tender took them down there with our boat and our gear and stuff. I didn't go. The kids were pretty young at the time, and we just stayed a month and went home in early August. But Bob went down to Olga Bay and fished. And we didn't have any oil in here in this Uganik Bay this far in to clean up. Personally, I don't really think I would have wanted to spend my summer wiping rocks. But Bob went down there and it turned out to be a pretty lucrative season for him. He was gone quite a while. Of course that really messed with our Exxon settlement because we fished. But we actually probably made more money fishing than we would have cleaning rocks that summer. So, that was about really the only impact that it had. I think the impact maybe later was the idea of tainted fish from Alaska with VECO [Exxon] oil. It affected the prices for us for several years after that. I should say Exxon Oil. Not VECO oil. The whole clean up thing for me was kind of like Exxon throwing money at something just to make it look good. It didn't really clean up anything. It just made it look better to the rest of the world that they were trying.

AG: A public relations campaign more than anything?

CA: Exactly. Because there's no way you can go out with a cloth and clean every rock on the beach and who's cleaning the bottom of the sea?

AG: Tell me about when the cannery closed and how that changed things in the bay.

CA: I think it went through a closure once in the interim before it finally closed. I used to see a lot of boat traffic going in and out of here. You don't see it any more. You see a boat like today, the *Ursa Major*, it's like, "Whoa, there's a boat out there." It kind of was hard for a lot of people, I think,

because they counted on it for a place to store their boats during the winter time, and where to launch off into the summer, and where to end their summer. If you needed supplies or needed something to get fixed. It probably expedited the use of people getting satellite dishes out here so we could communicate with town. I think that, you know, like if you were fishing for APS you never went in there anyway. […] We fished for APS, too, for a few summers, so we were pretty much used to not having the cannery there. For me, personally, I miss it because it was like my other home. But I don't think the transition was that difficult. A lot of the people that fish out here live in Kodiak, so they'd skiff in and out of town and keep their boats in town. But for the few of us that live in Seattle, yeah it was really hard to be told you can't keep your boats in here anymore, so ours comes up on the beach. So it's not— it's just a little bump in the road.

AG: What year did it close? Do you remember?

CA: I really don't remember because it went from, you know, New England went bankrupt, and they really weren't bankrupt, they just needed some time to reorganize but they closed up anyway. And then Ocean Beauty leased it for a few summers. And then a group of fishermen cooperatively bought it and that didn't work out. I can't remember if they were before Chugach or after. But then Chugach was a Native corporation and it went bankrupt with them. And then I think that's when Shoop bought it, the current owner, and I think it ran a couple of years for him. But, you know, here it is 2015, I don't think it's ran for probably maybe eight years or more. At my age I think 8 and I might as well double it and I am closer to being correct. (*laughter*)

AG: I keep asking and everyone says "early 2000s" so I need to try to determine.

CA: Yeah, I probably could find that out for you. I am trying to think about how long ago. We quit fishing for it after all the changes were taking place. We just stuck with Ocean Beauty. They quit fishing it, and we just stayed fishing for them.

AG: Is there anything else that you want to share at this time, about Uganik, about your life out here, the cannery, fishing, people?

Christy and Ivan get on the Beaver for Uganik.

CA: Oh boy, I don't know. I can't really think of anything off the top of my head. Every once in a while I will think of something, and think, "Wow, that's really crazy that we used to do something that way, or that the cannery was ran that way." Like I told you about the influx of women was like the big shocker for the bay when women started coming out here. I was going through my head a couple of summers ago about gillnet site permit holders. I think it was almost the women outnumbered the men, which in my mind was fabulous. And like beach seining on Packers Spit, that's come and gone. It's more of a family-oriented business. I mean it used to be a pretty crazy, wild group of people out here. And I've seen some pretty crazy events, as far as people shooting people, and people knifing people, and people having too much to drink,

falling out of boats and showing up in somebody's net dead. I've known a lot of things and stories I've told people through the years that they look at me and can't believe. "That's not possibly true." It's just like, events out here that take place that you just never see anywhere else. The humpback whales. We went over the top of a shark the other day that was just basking. I've just seen a lot in my lifetime of changes as far as equipment for fishing and people, the bay growing, and the way it's become more family run business instead of two guys being plucked off out of Tony's Bar in town and "Do you want to go fishing?" So yeah, it's like I said, it's family oriented, but we've become more of an efficient killing machine as far as how we target fish. Unfortunately, we are waiting for the fish to come to us as gillnetters, but when they come, for the most part people have better gear. Yeah, it's been an interesting journey.

AG: Is there anything else?

CA: I don't think so.

AG: Thank you, Christy, thank you!

From left: Tyler holding son Ivan, Christy, Rachel holding daughter Evelyn, and Bob Allen at Gull Light. P-1000-5-400.