

Name of person Interviewed: Karen Mitchell [KM] and Jennifer Mitchell [JM]

Facts about this person:

Age (if known)

Sex Female

Occupation Employees, R.A. Mitchell Co. Inc. marine/industrial engine  
and generator systems

If a fisherman (if retired, list the ports used when fishing),

Home port,;

and Hail Port (port fished from, which can be the same) MB

Residence (Town where lives) JM-Fairhaven; KM-Fairhaven

Ethnic background (if known)

Interviewer: Millie Rahn [MR]

Transcriber: Janice Gadaire Fleuriel

Place interview took place: New Bedford Harbor Development Commission

Date and time of interview: Sept. 23, 2007

## INDEX / KEYWORDS

KEYWORDS: Women; Shore business; Engines; Generator systems;

[Start of File WAV\_0011\_001]

- [00:00] JM schooling and jobs before starting in father's business doing bookkeeping; KM schooling and working in father's business shadowing her father; Family aspect to the business, including among other employees;
- [03:42] KM more involved in the sales/repair aspects; Father's mechanical expertise; Perceptions of them as females in the business—a few want to talk to a man/their father because of his reputation, but many have seen them grow up with it and appreciate having them there; Grandfather started the business; Service aspects, having the needed parts, very important to support fishermen's livelihood; Most women they deal with are not from boats but at settlement houses, sometimes deal with captain's wives; Each have children, not sure if they'll come in the business or not; About 18 employees—numbers fluctuate, sometimes hire more seasonally to do various tasks;
- [09:59] Facets of company include work with pumps, boat generator sets and propulsion engines, commercial and residential generator sets; Fishing customers mostly local, but others from all over New England and one Caribbean Island; Challenges of working and being mothers; Changes in communications/technology aspects of fishing industry;
- [13:33] Changes in engine/generator technology to electronic/computerized; Fishermen need to adapt to engine/generator changes, rely more on the dealer for diagnosis, repair;
- [15:30] Major supplier is John Deere (Waterloo, Iowa), Marathon generators (Wisconsin); Families' support for their need to work/travel at times; KM husband policeman; JM husband works at Titleist; Their mother doesn't work in the business/helps with babysitting when needed; Fast-paced work environment; Mother brought them to shows growing up so could see their dad, including to Europe; Lister-Peter, England, was supplier their grandfather started the business with;
- [21:10] Challenge of not talking "shop" at family get-togethers; Call father "Bob" at work—easier when paging him, talking to employees about him; Generally treat their differences at work with humor, no long-standing disagreements; Comparison to Bendiksen and Gundersen family businesses, where Kirsten/the mother is also involved; Hope that as they learn the business more, their father can take more time off, relax more instead of continuing to work so hard; Flexible work environment for them, other employees;
- [27:28] Father very happy/relieved to have his daughters in the business to help him out; Grandfather died at age 62, didn't get to see where business is now; Nerve-wracking aspect to carrying on the business after their dad, because he has so much engineering/mechanical background; Business has good staff—excellent mechanics;
- [30:23] Want visitors to see that the business is much more than selling a product off the shelf—such as insurance, trucks, employee benefits, that lots of companies are involved in getting boats out fishing, that people are excellent and hard-working

people, that industry doesn't deserve the bad rap about ruining the ocean; There is a mutual respect among those in the industry, hope visitors respect what they do, too;  
[End of File WAV\_0011\_001/End of Interview]

## TRANSCRIPT

[00:00]

MR: Today is Sunday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007. My name is Millie Rahn. I'm the folklorist here doing oral histories at the Working Waterfront Festival in the HDC building in New Bedford. And I'm here with Jennifer and Karen Mitchell, who are part of their family business, selling motors and engines and all the related equipment to people in the industry. And, it's particularly interesting because, I interviewed their father, I think it was the first year we did the oral history interview. And so this interview will be talking about the next generation as well as two women in the industry.

So, why don't we start... Just tell a little bit about yourselves and, how you got into the work that you're doing, and give us your name...

JM: My name is Jennifer [Demalo?]. I did get married in 1997. Little background. I went to local high school here. Bishop Stang High School.

MR: That's in New Bedford?

JM: That's in Dartmouth. I graduated in 1991. Went on to Emmanuel College and graduated in 1995. From there I worked in the Boston area at a preschool, as a business manager of that preschool. And then I got a phone call from my father one day, asking for me to come and work for *him*. Doing basically bookkeeping type work, and, much the same as what I was doing at the preschool. We had just—my husband and I had just purchased a house in Fairhaven. And we were commuting at the time to Boston, both of us. So it made sense to stop the commute and start working for my dad in the family business. It's something that—you know we had, my sister and I had done, summers and over school breaks anyways. So we were used to being in that environment. So, it made sense to make the move, and very soon after I started working for my dad I got pregnant and worked right up until, basically my due date. And, took a few months off and went right back. And I've been there just about eight years.

MR: And how about you Karen?

KM: Well, my name's Karen Joseph. We use Mitchell at work. Because it's just easier to use your maiden name, especially R.A. Mitchell Company. I graduated from U Mass Amherst, with a business degree, with a focus in HR. Which is what I wanted to do with the company, work in the human resource department. However, I've actually been shadowing my father for about four years now. So, I've been learning all about the emergency generators and that side of the company. And still do a little bit of the business side of it, but. And I'm a mom with two kids. So, that's always fun. It's a big family business as well, so. Our kids are just part of it. And actually all the employees' kids are a part of the big R.A. Mitchell family, so.

MR: Do you have siblings who are also in the business?

JM: Well, we have one sister that lives in Plymouth. She has three children. And, being so far away, doesn't make sense for her to commute that far.

KM: Three girls in the family. My dad had three girls, so.

JM: Right now she's not involved in the business.

KM: Yeah. She would like to be, but, you know it's just difficult.

[03:42]

MR: Do you get involved in sales, or, repairs?

KM: Yes. Very much.

MR: You know, so you have to be very knowledgeable about the—

KM: Very much involved.

JM: Karen is very much more involved than I am.

KM: I have to be knowledgeable. And that's what I'm learning. You know, I'll never know everything. I mean, my father's brilliant when it comes to knowing everything about an engine. He was a mechanic, so he started that way. But we..., not being mechanics, you just jump into it and learn, and learn as much as you can. But, yeah I actually do a lot of the sales with him. He'll do—I mean I can take the phone calls and I can help out and sell. He's really the salesman, when it comes to it. But I'm learning. I'm doing pretty good I think. Sold a few.

JM: [laughs]

MR: So, how—and this is kind of what we're getting it this year with talking about women in the industry. How are you perceived? Do you find that people are shocked, maybe? Or they're...?

KM: I think there's a few people that—you know, that are old school that want to just talk to a man. You know?

JM: Plus my father's got such a good reputation of knowing *so much*. Knowing the applications, the generator sets for the fishing boats. They just—they do prefer it. It's not that they *don't* want to deal with us. But, he has just such a good reputation that they would just rather deal with him.

KM: Mm hm. But I think overall—I think people are pretty good.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Pretty good about talking with us and working with us.

JM: Mm hm. It's funny, we grew up going to the fish expos and going to the trade shows as little girls when Mom used to bring us. And so now we're seeing even some of the vendors that we buy the equipment from. And, some of the older fishermen and some of the boat owners, they remember us when we were just little girls in pigtails at shows, so.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: To see us now,...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...it's kind of nice that they do remember us. And a lot of them remember my grandfather. And so we hear a lot of nice stories about my grandfather. We get a lot of positive feedback...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...that they're glad we're in the business. Because it's a permanent business on the waterfront, they're glad to see that it's going to continue.

MR: Yes.

JM: Provide the same level of service that my father and grandfather...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...built their reputation on. As providing that service. And we're very... We just understand that is how the business has to be run.

KM: Right.

JM: Is based on service. And based on the availability of being...

KM: This is somebody's livelihood.

JM: Exactly.

KM: The fishing industry is somebody's livelihood. So you need to make sure that, you know, your men are there, your parts are there. And you've just, you've got to take care of them. That's more important than, you know, perhaps a home generator. That's not somebody's livelihood. You've got to make sure that you take care of those people. I think that's...

MR: And your family...

KM: I was going to say that's what my grandfather, R.A. Mitchell—Robert Amos Mitchell was my grandfather—and that's what he always strived for. If you're going to sell something, you *must* have the parts.

JM: Stand behind it. Have the parts. And the employees with the expertise to be able to...

KM: Yeah.

JM: You know, get it right back up and running if it needs to be.

MR: So that is a little bit different. I know your family business has been around for more than fifty years.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: Mm hm.

MR: And you do have a great reputation. So, obviously if you're in that building, that's part of your inheritance in the industry.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: Mm hm.

[07:04]

MR: Do you think women—generally, do you deal with women captains? Do they come in?

KM: No.

JM: No we really don't.

MR: I don't know how many there are in New Bedford.

KM: I think—I don't know if there's any captains in New Bedford. But I know there's a couple of women that work on the boats. And most of them, I would say, most of them, you know, probably do a lot of the ordering and shipping for the...

JM: Mm hm.

KM: ...for the boats. But unfortunately we don't get a lot.

JM: No. We do a lot of the settlement houses. So I guess with the women in the settlement houses. But, I wouldn't say we have to work that closely with them. Because, it's nice to say if you do your job right you don't have to deal with the little minutia issues of billing problems or billing questions.

KM: It does run fairly smoothly.

JM: Yeah. But when we do need to speak with someone—say a woman in this industry, it's someone at the settlement house, or...

KM: Yeah. Yeah unfortunately there's not that many.

JM: Some of the fishing boat owners' wives we'll deal with sometimes.

KM: Yeah.

JM: They do some of the bookkeeping for their husbands, that kind of thing.

KM: Yeah.

MR: Yes. That's come up in some of the interviews...

JM: Mm hm.

MR: ...where, they do all the—it's another version of shore support.

JM: Absolutely.

KM: Absolutely.

MR: So. Do you think your children might come into the business down the line?

JM: It's hard to say.

KM: I know. I would hope they would, if they stay close. But, I almost would—I don't mind whatever they do.

JM: Right. My son, likes to think he's going to be a professional sports player.

KM: Yeah!

MR: [laughs]

KM: They're only—My son's only four and hers...

JM: I have a son that's eight and my daughter is six.

KM: They call him "Boss" though when he comes in. Jennifer's son, they call him "Boss." "Hey, boss. How are you?" And he loves it. And the guys there—I mean, they're like our family. Some of the employees have been there over twenty years. I would say five of them...

JM: Mm hm.

KM: ...have been over there twenty years. Twenty, twenty-five years.

JM: There's about five of them, right.

KM: We've grown up with them. So.

MR: So you've been depending on each other, interrelated both—you know, the social aspect of the business and the business aspect.  
How many employees do you have?

JM: About eighteen total full-time employees.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: It fluctuates a bit. Sometimes we need to hire more, here and there, seasonally.

KM: During busy season. Yeah.

MR: And that's to do... Maintenance, and...?

KM: Running parts. Just helping the guys, you know, we do a lot of custom work, with, custom building, generator sets for the boats. So, we cut steel. Weld it. And then they'll pass it off and one of the guys will paint it with a special paint.

JM: Right. We have a little [?]

KM: [?]. Yeah, the electrician will custom-build the panel for whatever the boat needs, and the size and the specific metering that they'll need. So, that's when we need some of the guys to help out.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: From all over the place. Whatever we need [laughs]. Computer help [laughs].

[09:59]

JM: Yeah there's different facets of the company. We do work with pumps, and the generator sets. Getting into more of the propulsion engines on boats as well. And, we do also commercial generator sets and residential generator sets also.

KM: Yeah. There's a lot of different... And then you, of course, maintain everything.  
So.

MR: And are most of your customers local? Or are they all over?

KM: I would say... I would say most of the fishing division is all local. We do up in Gloucester and different areas up in Maine and so forth, but. We try to focus locally on that aspect of the company.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: However we do emergency generators for homes. And that's all over the state.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: And we've also—we're a distributor in the New England area. So we've got Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, everywhere.  
And then we also have a Caribbean Island that my father has built a good relationship with an electrician so a lot of our units go to that island.

MR: Wonderful. Do you get to travel?

KM: Yes. Yeah. It's tough, too.

JM: Mm hm. Having a family...

KM: Yeah.

JM: Being, women in the industry, I think that's what, is the biggest challenge...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...and trying to do the job of children after school.

KM: Being the mom.

JM: Just being a mom. Yeah.

KM: You know? That's a hard part. It's very good, because working together we take care of each other's kids.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: If I have to travel—like the other day, she had to pick up my son from school. And I've done it for her. So I think that—being a woman in the industry, you have this...this need to be a mom but you also have to be a business woman.

JM: Mm hm. That's a bit of a—that's the biggest struggle I think.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: Yeah. I was going to say, so much of the industry is the partnership of, couples, or..., you know, families over generations.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: Or maybe the older—the grandparents are looking after the children. And that's so much—you know, that's parallel to what's going on with the fishing families. You know, you're just doing another version of that. Because, many of them have been in fishing for several generations. So that's interesting, the mom part.

KM: Yeah. So you must have a good insight of what's been happening in the fishing industry with all these interviews. It must be interesting to be able to know everything.

MR: It is. Well, we're documenting it as it's happening. And that's what I think is so amazing. Just in the four years the festival's been on the go, things have changed. And, the demographics are changing, certainly from a folklorist's point of view. The occupational folklore—I myself have interviewed a lot of the old timers. And they're talking about, you know, when they were out at sea without good mechanics, or they didn't have the communication tools people have now. They didn't have the regulations either. But they had to be... Not that, that the fishermen now are not incredibly diversified in their knowledge—I mean they have to be able to do everything at sea.

KM: Yeah. Absolutely.

MR: But, it was even harder in those days. Because, they just weren't linked to the support system that they are now.

[13:33]

JM: Things are so different now with, some of the engines and generators that we provide. As the technology in the world changes, so does... the actual engines change. They become electronic, where you actually truly need a laptop, sometimes, to diagnose the issues with the engines. And, just to get them corrected for the spec of the boat...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...and for what they want. You know, you can plug a laptop in and it will give you readouts. And that is available to us, but, it's very different now that we're a little bit more specialized and we have to have very specially trained technicians...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...to be able to work on these engines.

KM: These electronic engines. Yeah.

JM: And... So that changes for the fishermen that perhaps are used to doing some of that...

KM: Diagnosing it.

JM: ...repair work themselves, diagnosing it themselves. They would have to rely on us a little bit more. So...

MR: So if they have a problem out at sea, they can diagnose it and call you and say "This is the problem"?

KM: No. Usually not, because, the boats don't have the laptop...

JM: With the special software.

KM: ...with the software. It's usually us. Most likely what would—what most boats do have is have backup. So if there is a major problem they shut one generator down and they put the other one on.

JM: Plus, we can—based on symptoms, we can diagnose many problems over the phone.

KM: Most of the guys on the boat can as well.

JM: Right.

KM: It is a diesel engine, so there are the basics that you can go through and do the checks. But most of the major problems, you just plug the laptop right in and... But unfortunately you can't give that information to the guys. You have to come in. And that's what makes it so important to make sure we push our engine manufacturers to build an excellent piece of equipment. Because, again, that's somebody's livelihood out there.

[15:30]

MR: Right.

KM: And it's their livelihood, yes. But you only get a limited number of fishing days.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: And... And also, safety. You've got to make sure that things are OK for the crew.

MR: Exactly. And where are your manufacturers from?

KM: John Deere. It's in Waterloo, Iowa. And that's the major one that we've been working with on the fishing industry generator sets.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: John Deere engines, with Marathon generators. And they're also out in the Midwest, Wisconsin.

JM: Hm. And they're both premier brands that we do.

MR: Interesting that they're in the Midwest [laughs].

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Yeah. That's—Most manufacturers are out in the Midwest. Lot more room and space.

MR: Yeah. And a tradition of manufacturing and things.  
To go back to when you were talking about being moms. Do you... Does your family understand that this is all part of your, your entire life so that it's...

KM: Mm hm.

MR: ....like being—you don't go on the boat necessarily but you do go on trips, just like fishing families do.

JM: Mm hm.

MR: Part of their job is to take care of things at home until you return.

KM: Absolutely.

MR: Do they resent that? Do they understand that that's part of their job?

KM: Nope. It's a perfect example. I went home the other day and I said, "Pete, I have to go to Iowa." And, you know... "It's going to be for three days." And he just sort of shrugged. He said, "OK." He knows what he has to do.

MR: That's your husband?

KM: Yeah. And he'll have to—you know, he'll juggle. And my mom will probably come over. And we all juggle.

JM: Mm hm. And I know when I need to help her, too.

KM: And he does understand. He does understand. And unfortunately, he understands and then the next *week* I'm going to be away. So he does. He does. He's good. And you have to have, I think husbands like ours that do understand. You know, you've got to—He knows it's a family business.

MR: I was going to say, they're part of the family business too. Whether they're physically in the office or...

KM: Yeah. And he's in the—sort of the family business as well. He's a policeman. And his father is, his brother is, his uncle is. It's a family tradition for him as well. So, I have to balance that out and understand that—you know, when he has to work he's got to work. It's just a job. We've got to support each other.

MR: [To JM] And what does your husband do?

JM: He works at Titleist.

MR: And what is that?

JM: Golf ball, golf equipment manufacturer. So he does work local. So, his flexibility—he can help me, you know, a bit. But he has that, you know, nine to five business office job type thing. It's a little bit less flexible. But...

MR: Do you travel as well?

JM: I don't travel as much, no.

MR: Yeah.

JM: Because she's, as she said before just basically shadows my father, does a lot more of the sales side. I do more of the back office support and that kind of thing. So,

I tend to be in the office a bit more. There's no need for the three of us to travel. And the three key people away.

KM: Usually somebody's got to stay at the office and run it when the two of us are away.

MR: And does your mother work in the office as well, in the business?

JM: No, she doesn't.

KM: No. She does babysitting [laughs].

MR: That's her job. That's her role.

KM: And she understands, too.

JM: She does.

KM: Yup. She does.

JM: It's very fast-paced, when we're at work. We barely even have time for phone calls. Because, to be able to even talk to her, and—you know, it can be a quick phone call. "Mom, we need you to get the kids off the bus." You know. "Today."

KM: "Something's come up."

JM: "Something's come up." And it's—just, it's a very fast-paced environment.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: When we're at the shop. It's—phones are always ringing. Customers are coming in through the door. We're chasing down parts, or we're doing...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: You know. It's a very fast-paced environment.

KM: So it's good that she's there for us. It's very important. Very important. And she's—I mean she's grown up with it. She, brought us to every show. You know, just so we could see my dad. And, she would take us all over the country. All over the world actually.

JM: Right. That's one thing when—my parents really did instill in us when we were young. That, seeing the world was important. You know. My father had to go to England for, Lister Diesels—Lister-Petter, really—that factory is in England. And that's another line that we deal with a lot as well. And, so when he had to go that factory we all went to Europe for a month.

KM: Backpacked around.

MR: I remember him talking about that. Yes.

JM: He was—he only went for about two weeks. Because of course it's harder for him to be away from the office even at—this was, twenty years ago.

KM: Yeah.

JM: But. He went for two weeks and then my mom took us around for two weeks.

KM: Yeah.

JM: But, it was fun.

KM: Yeah I forgot to mention that. The Lister factory. Lister, which was the start of...

JM: Right.

KM: ...our company, which is Lister-Petter. And that particular engine line is what my grandfather started with. I said John Deere, and Lister's is one of the main ones. That's actually the main start of our company.

JM: More recently we've been doing more John Deere engines. But, really the start was Lister.

MR: Well England has such a long maritime history as well.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Yeah. That's a good engine.

[21:10]

MR: One of my other questions was—working together as a family, is that, a *good* thing, or, you know? Does it have its different stresses and strains.

JM: [laughs] Well, I think that—when you asked about our husband's support, sometimes the biggest struggle is when we do have family get-togethers, it's a struggle for us to get together and sometimes not say, "Oh, I forgot to tell you something that happened at work."

KM: [laughs]

MR: [laughs]

JM: And they'll just sort of roll their eyes and say, "Come on," you know, "shop talk."

KM: Yeah.

JM: That's sort of—you know, it's all in good fun. But, they'll sometimes give us the "no shop talk" little speech. But sometimes it's really hard not to.

KM: Because we don't get to like, talk as much at work.

JM: I know that sounds—

MR: It's just so busy.

KM: You know, we work together, it's not necessarily, father and sister. It's just—you know, we work together.

JM: Right.

MR: Right.

KM: So. But sometimes it does have its stresses with our dad, and...

JM: Mm hm. We actually call him "Bob" when we're at work.

KM: Yeah.

JM: He's not "Dad" at work. He's "Bob."

KM: Yeah.

MR: He's the boss.

KM: Yeah.

MR: [laughs]

JM: Well. Not only that, it's just—

KM: It's hard to page, "Dad, you have a call."

MR: [laughs]

JM: [laughs] Or when you're talking with one of the other employees, and you need to stress something, it's "Bob would like this done," not "My dad." It comes across a very different way. And it's something that we—I guess it's more of a respect thing, too.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: We want to seem respectful—

KM: He's the boss, not just Dad. But it is—she had asked about with us, at work, and the relationships. It's interesting sometimes.

JM: Yeah. It can be interesting.

KM: [laughs] Yeah, we have our—we've had our fights.

JM: [laughs]

MR: I was g—I was thinking in terms of too much togetherness.

KM: Yeah.

JM: Right.

MR: You know, especially, like when you say, you have family time and the whole clan kind of gets together. But you've seen each other incessantly. You know?

JM: Yeah.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: All week. And then.... [laughs].

JM: But it's not—I mean, I wouldn't say that we ever have...you know, we have our sort of—we have our disagreements that we more laugh about after, I think.

KM: Oh yeah.

JM: Than—you know, there's never any long-standing disagreements.

KM: No, no.

JM: Like that. It's never—. There's never grudges held. It's more, “Oh you wouldn't believe what....

KM: Yeah [laughs].

JM: ...what he said today.” Or, “Oh you wouldn't believe...” It's more... It's more good-natured I think.

KM: Yeah. And we—I don't think I'm ever... Jennifer will come over to dinner after I've seen her for work. We'll go to dinner at her house. My dad will come over. So we—I don't think we see too much of each other.

MR: Do you live locally, both of you?

JM: Yeah.

KM: Mm hm. We both live in Fairhaven.

MR: And where does your father, your parents live?

KM: Fairhaven as well.

MR: OK. So, it's very tight.  
And know there's some other families, like the Bendiksens especially.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: Who I know quite well and I've interviewed, worked with over time. And, you know, it's kind of the same issues with them now. And they're going into the third generation. Maybe.

JM: That's a little bit different. Because Kirsten works right in the business as well. So I think that that, might even add more of a stress level I would think.

KM: Yeah.

JM: Having all of the family right there. But—we do try to—we separate it a bit. It's more that, every once in a while we'll have something come up that we'll need to talk about at home.

KM: Yeah.

JM: But it doesn't happen all the time.

KM: We also have our other sister. And my mom's there, or... It gives it a little break so it's not all, family. Like you said the Bendiksens the whole family works there.

JM: Mm hm.

MR: Yeah.

KM: That must be—that must be interesting.

JM: Or the Gundersens, too.

MR: Yes. Yes, I interviewed them as well. Yeah, those dynamics. And I guess a lot of it depends on the family dynamics, too.

KM: Yeah.

JM: Mm hm.

MR: But when you've grown up in the business you just, you don't *know* anything else, in a sense.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: So that part I find fascinating. And, it doesn't affect other employees, that they don't... Because, you're good at what you do, so...

KM: Yeah.

MR: ...you're not dealing with nepotism issues.

KM: I think most of the employees are happy that we're there.

JM: Right.

KM: Because we've come in with new ideas, and...

JM: Mm hm.

KM: ...you know, insight. And actually also, helped my dad out so much, taking the stress off him, that he's just a completely changed guy. You know, before he didn't have as much help.

JM: Right.

KM: So with us he know that, "Oh, I can sit down and I can relax a little bit."

JM: Mm hm.

KM: He's been actually traveling, and actually taking some time to relax. I mean, he would travel, and would never even pack a bathing suit. He still doesn't actually. But, you know, he'll actually bring a book. And he'll sit and relax and read for one day. You know, and work the other five, on a business trip. Whereas before he was *go go go go go go go*. I think he now understands that...

JM: Mm hm.

KM: ...he's got us to help out. Which I know is a *big* relief for him.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Because, it's a lot of stress. You don't just have the employees. You have their families that rely on you.

JM: Mm hm.

MR: Right. And you're providing continuity for—they know they have job security.

JM: Right. The other thing that's important too is, he gives us a lot of flexibility when we need to, but he would always afford the other employees that same flexibility.

KM: Yeah.

JM: You know, there's an employee or two that—you know, it's just basically a standard thing that they have to come in at eight or eight-thirty. Whereas, some of the other employees work at seven-thirty. You know, he works around schedules...

KM: With children and family, and...

JM: You know if—a child is sick, our bookkeeper, if she has to bring her daughter into work if she wasn't feeling well, or had to leave early for a dentist appointment. It's understood.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: And it's more—I wouldn't call it an honor system. But it's more—we don't have time clocks. We like to believe that the employees just do their job, and...

KM: Yup.

JM: ...they make up time when they need to. So... He does give us the flexibility but he's very good about affording the other employees that same flexibility.

KM: Yes. It's never. I don't think anybody was really angry...

JM: No.

KM: ...that we came in, and, started working. Or "Daddy's little girls" or something. Everyone's always been really, really good. And like I said, we've worked for them for so long.

JM: Yeah.

MR: Right.

KM: You know, we grew up with them.

[27:28]

MR: And again, you know, you're in a community that has been so family-oriented in the industries. And, passed on through the generations. Families understand that this is.... It's not like, working at a bank or something like that.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: You really are dealing with people's lives, and livelihoods.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Yeah.

MR: And there must be that tremendous sense of relief to know that, it's in good hands.

KM: Oh, it's true. I remember somebody else—Mrs. [?], she did an interview with him for the newspaper. And I keep—She asked him like, "How is it having your girls?" And he just literally, he welled up. And he just said, "It's *such* a relief." You know. "It's so good to know that I can..." And he was going on, with my grandfather, it would be so important to him to know that my dad has done so well. And that he's now passing it on to us. I think that would make him really happy.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Our grandfather actually died quite young.

JM: He did. I think my grandfather died when he was sixty-two.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: Or sixty-four. And that's just too young. And, I wish that my grandfather got to see us.

KM: And how well my dad did, too.

JM: Exactly. He's really—

KM: You know, he's really brought the company to a completely different level.

JM: So.

MR: And I think... Symbolic isn't the right word, but I guess it is kind of symbolic that, the fact that this is a family business that will be carried on by women. And maybe...

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Yeah.

MR: ....your children, maybe not. But, you know, on the waterfront, that's going to be a visible statement.

KM: Yeah. Yeah. It's a little nerve wracking.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: It is.

MR: [laughs]

KM: Because you'll never—you know, like, our dad knows *so* much.

JM: We wish we could bottle his knowledge sometimes.

KM: I know.

JM: Clone him. [laughs]

KM: That's what makes me so nervous about..., about continuing on.

JM: The future, yeah.

KM: Because, the future—it's just that he's.... Will we ever, ever...?

MR: Well, he's got a head start.

KM: Yeah. Yeah.

MR: So. You know, and the engineering and mechanical background. Where you have more business background.

KM: Yeah.

MR: But, you have lots of time to...

KM: Yeah.

MR: ...to learn a lot of that, too.

KM: :Yeah.

MR: And how other people around who, know that.

KM: Well that's the good thing. We surround ourselves with some really, really...

JM: Very good support staff.

KM: Yeah. The guys that we work with are wonderful.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Brilliant. Excellent mechanics. You know, they just know their stuff, so.

JM: They're generally good people, too.

KM: Yeah. So, yeah, if you surround yourself with some good people it won't be so bad [laughs].

MR: Yes.

KM: But it still is a little nerve wracking.

JM: Because we'd like to see my father be able to, take time off and relax.

KM: Yeah. He's worked hard!

JM: Right.

KM: He's worked really hard so we want him to be able to get out. And do some more things.

[30:23]

MR: Well. What would you.... One of the questions Laura wants us to kind of ask to wrap up, is, what would you like the festival visitors to understand about the commercial fishing industry and the working waterfront? From your perspective? What would you like them to take away from this weekend?

JM: Well... Just like I said, there's so much more than the office side. And even, the true support, I guess,...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...that, we're not selling a product off the shelf. We're selling a lot more than just, a generator set. I think it would be nice if people understood that, there's so much that goes into running a business around here. The magnitude of the insurances, and the building expense, and the trucks that we have to provide. And the benefits that we give the employees. It's... Running that business is just so much more than just simply selling a product right off the shelf. It's a lot more.

KM: Right. Which goes to, like, the whole—everything related to the industry. You know? It's...

JM: Mm hm.

KM: ...all these companies working together to get these boats out fishing and making money. I think for myself what I'd like people to go away with is that the fishing industry—people are really good. And I think for a while it had a really bad rap. But, the people are excellent people.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: You know. Just, a few—yeah, so there's a few idiots that ruin it, or give it a bad rap. But generally, people are *really*, very good, very honest.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: Very fair people that work *very* hard to do what they do. And that, they're only doing a job. They're farmers of the sea, so, you know, they're doing what they do best. I think a lot of the regulations are hard as well. People give the fishing industry a bad—again it's a bad rap, but they want to—they say they're ruining the sea and they're ruining the ocean. Well they're only doing the best they can, they're doing the best they can.

JM: Mm hm.

KM: And you shouldn't punish them for that.

MR: Right.

KM: You know. They're doing the best they can and that's the most important thing. That they're *very* good people.

JM: Mm hm.

MR: Yes. And that's the common denominator in *all* the interviews over the years, and again this year, is the passion.

KM: Mm hm.

JM: Mm hm. It's a brotherhood. And, not—we have to work with so many other different companies as well. And, it's just a mutual, genuine respect...

KM: Mm hm.

JM: ...that, that I hope—I know *we* have the respect. But I hope that...

KM: People respect...

JM: ...people respect what we do.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: Yeah. Because these—it's a small community, and it's a long-lived community. So, you know, you've all been working together for several generations.

KM: Mm hm.

MR: And, new people will always come *in*, but, it's still, carrying on the tradition of the working waterfront. Is there anything else that you want to say that I haven't asked you? That pops into your minds?

JM: I don't think so.

MR: OK. Well I will say thank you very much.

KM: Thank you.

JM: Thank you.

MR: OK. That was thirty-three minutes. That's not bad.

JM/KM: [laugh]

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