Deedie Pearson

Transcript of an Oral History
Conducted by
Anjuli Grantham
at
Kodiak, Alaska
On June 12, 18, and 26, 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 following transcript is nearly a word-for-word transcription of the oral history interview. 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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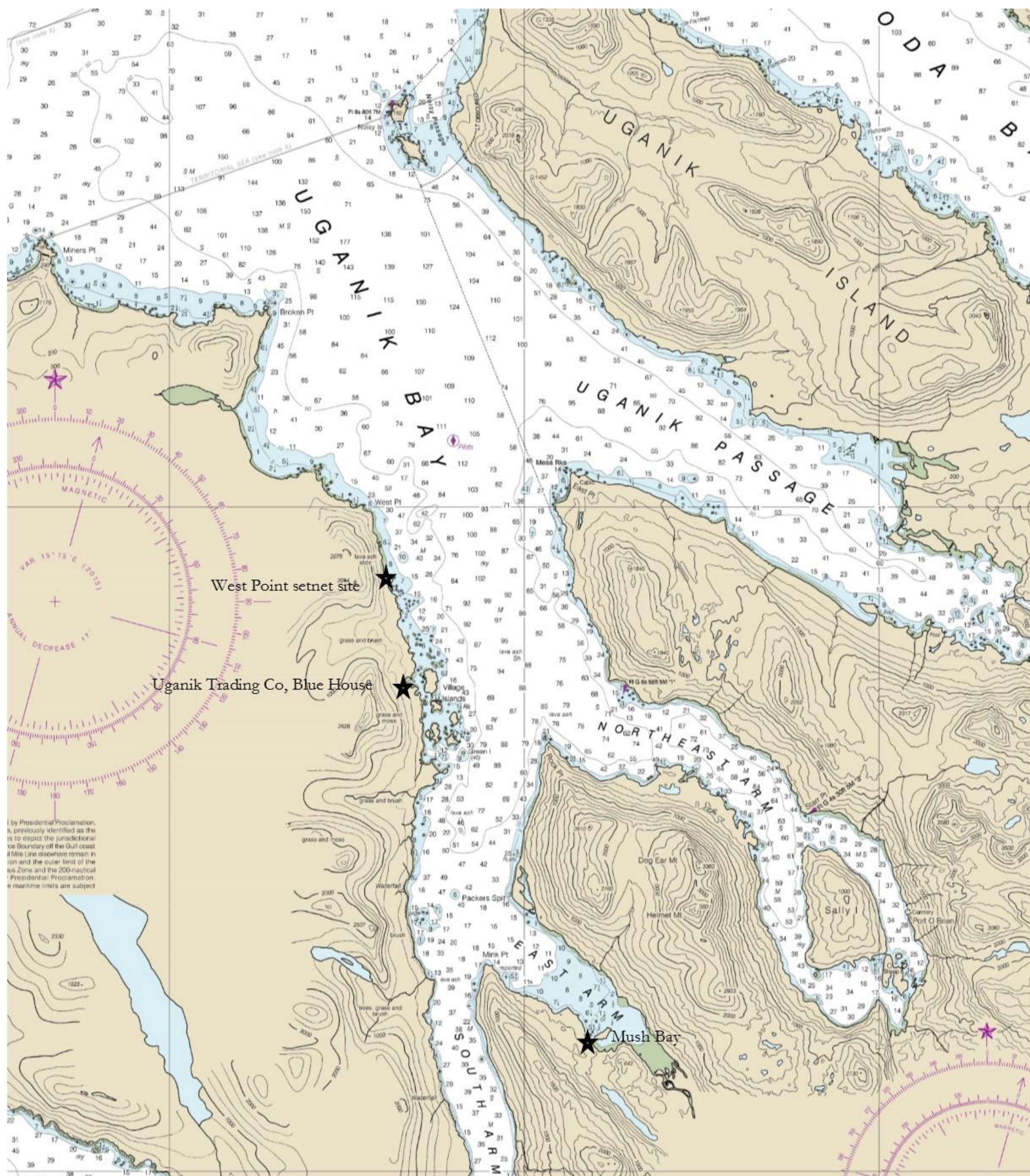
Cover Photos: Deedie Pearson, on the right photographed in Kodiak on June 12, 2015. Photographed by Breanna Peterson for West Side Stories. P-1000-3-08.



Select Uganik Bay locations mentioned within the oral history.

Oral History of Deedie Pearson

AG: Okay it is now recording.

DP: My name is Geneneiva Pearson, better known as Deedie Pearson. I came to Kodiak in 1941 on the *Denali* from Ketchikan where I lived here for two years, having moved from Ketchikan in 1939. And it was a wonderful trip across the Gulf and the Denali is a great big steamer at that time. We landed at the dock that used to be Kadiak Fisheries. Now we walked down the beach to get to town because there wasn't any taxis or anything.

AG: How old were you when you when you arrived in Kodiak?

DP: I was seven.

AG: And what brought your family here?

DP: My dad's job. Worked for Territory of Alaska. He was in the employment office. That time Kodiak was full of activity even though the war hadn't started. Lots of servicemen and lots of workers working on the Base and a very interesting town.

AG: And who did you come with at that point?

Al and Hazel Owen. P-776-77.

DP: My family.

AG: Who was in your family?

DP: Seven of us kids, but two of them had already graduated from high school so stayed in Ketchikan. And my sister, Viola, my brother, Bud Owen, we were all Owens at that time, of course and myself, my sister, Hazel, and my youngest brother Fred.

AG: Could you tell me again what year was that that you arrived in Kodiak?

DP: 1941.

AG: 1941.

DP: June, 1941.

AG: And what did you do when you arrived in town? Did you enroll in school?

DP: This was in June and my mom had to find a place to live. Finding a place to live in Kodiak was difficult then because there was so much activity here and she found a woman who was willing to let us stay in her house for a couple of weeks while she went to Ouzinkie. It was an interesting house. It had a path, I think we had a pump for water. I'm not sure we even had running water. We didn't have running water, I'm sure. Slept on the floor.

AG: Where was this house?

DP: Down to where about the KEA building is today. And at night when we were trying to sleep the little mice would be running around the house and mom said (*chuckle*), "I'll fix them. I'll get red pepper." So she put red pepper all around and next night they were running around and they sneezed a lot.

AG: (*chuckle*) That's really funny.

DP: And then she saw someone moving out of a house over by […] the George Magnuson home. Actually, it was his house, he and Pauline Magnuson. You'll find that they're very prominent people in Kodiak. And this house was built right next to their mom's house, and they were staying with her even though they were married. They were staying in the home with mom because it was […] her desire to have them close by. So we had this little three room house and we slept on the floor with kids and sleeping bags.

AG: Where was the Magnuson house at?

DP: I would say it's […] probably about where the Mecca is today. […] Kodiak used to have a ridge that went through town that was taken out.

AG: Is this the same house that Hazel mentioned was the one that was the pink house that might have been haunted?

DP: No, this was a house that became the house that Hazel and Ben Ardinger moved out of on Rezanof. It was enlarged considerably. They had their first music store there.

AG: And could you describe Kodiak when you first arrived?

DP: Full of people. Full of soldiers at night. We weren't allowed to go out of the house at night. Dusty street, no sidewalks, crooked main street, beautiful place, no boat harbor. […] Where the boat harbor is now was a big flat. When the tide went out it went way out past, I'm not sure where. Anyways, there was a big tide flat and the eagles used to sit out on the flats.

AG: Okay.

DP: There were two stores in town, Krafts and Erskines, and you either shopped at one or the other. Usually people had their loyalties to one store or the other. So my older sister, who was graduated from high school in Ketchikan, went to work for Erskine's. You had to wear starched uniforms, and early on they didn't really take cash down there. It was charged PAF, pay after fishing. By the time we came to town they were taking money, but Peggy Sutliff when she first came to town, I think she came in 1938, she went down with money and they didn't have any way of handling money.

AG: Wow. Do you remember the Erskine store?

DP: Oh yes.

AG: Could you describe it?

DP: It was a dry good store. It had the meat department. It had groceries. It had women's clothing. It must had men's clothing, too. I don't remember that part, but I know it had electronics. I believe there was a man that had a little radio station there and just broadcasting music. In fact, my older sister married him. Allen Knowling was his name.

AG: What was his name?

DP: Al Knowling.

AG: Knowling?

DP: Yes.

AG: Okay.

DP: We had a big dock and under the dock you could see the Russian stone dock with the big rings where the sailing vessels used to tie up. I'm sure you've seen pictures of that in the museum. Yeah, I saw that. The way the dock was shaped, you could walk out and face the dock and look back and you'd see the Russian dock. What a pity it was covered up when Petro Marine, no, it wasn't them it was another company that built there. I took all my pictures down there after the tidal wave. It shows it being left. The only structure along that whole channel that was left after the tidal wave.

AG: Do you have memories of Mr. and Mrs. Erskine?

DP: Yes.

AG: Could you maybe share some of those?

DP: Well, she was always out working in her rockery which used to flow down toward the store which was at the foot of the hill and we went there on trick or treat. She invited us to come in and sit down and visit with her for a while before we got our treat. That was a big thrill.

AG: What sort of treat would she give you?

DP: I don't remember that. I remember we had to pay for bags usually and its Halloween was raining and snowing. The bags would actually fall apart by the time we got home. That was the main thing I remember is going to her house.

AG: What sort of lady was she?

DP: Oh she was elegant. Very friendly, kind. You probably know Norm Sutliff's story how he met her.

AG: Could you share that?

DP: It's already recorded though on it.

AG: Okay. What about Mr. Erskine?

DP: I don't have a vivid memory of him as I knew of her. I didn't see that much or something. But the school was good. I went to third grade and met lots of people, the Madsen family. Germain Madsen was a school maid and Vivian Pagano and lots of people that aren't here anymore, moved on. Silvia Larsen, Betty Beals. Marie Cope. They were all in grade school together.

AG: And do you remember […] the time of the buildup of the war? What the sensation was like to live in Kodiak during World War II?

Deedie Pearson recounting her story. P-1000-3-18.

DP: Well I remember when the war happened […]. I remember the thought was, "I wonder if we'll get out of our house again." We did live in that pink house at that time. It was pink because it had redwood siding on it from California.

AG: Do you recall the outbreak of the war then?

DP: Yes.

AG: Could you describe that moment?

DP: I just remember wondering if we'd ever go out of the house again after we heard about it. It happened on a Sunday. I didn't know if we'd be going to school or whatever, but we did. But everything had to be blacked out. They had patrol people that went around. If you had a little crack of light coming through they would douse the lights. We never went anywhere at night anyways, you know, little kids. We didn't go on at night in the winter time. This harbor out here was full of huge transport ships like where that one is parked right now where the oil barge is. Full of ships, lots of planes coming and going. Lots and lots of servicemen in town. Lots of trucks with servicemen in town driving through town going to Abercombie. Everyone in town was supposed to go out the road to somebody else's house. We all were assigned to somebody else's house on Mission Road, but we didn't go. Mom said we're better off in this place or go down by the beach which had a cliff there at that time. […] Where Wells Fargo is was a cliff. Lawrence Anderson lived up there. You might want to talk to him. You know Lawrence Anderson? His mother did the ironing for many of

the people that worked at the store, the Erskine store. In those days, […] one day was for washing, the next day was for hanging clothes, and the next day was for ironing. It had to be sprinkled and rolled up, you know, so it'd be damp. Flat irons on the stove. Have you seen a flat iron?

AG: Lots of work.

DP: You had to keep them hot, but not too hot or you'd scorch things. It was real tricky. But mom, she was always advanced in what she wanted to do and she found out Sears Roebuck had a steam iron, she went down and got that steam iron. And she invited all the ladies in the neighborhood to come down and see the steam iron. They didn't have to do that anymore. Just iron when you got around to it. (*chuckle*)

AG: What did the ladies say?

DP: They thought that was pretty neat. Some people are resistant to change though. It's the way I've always done it, so I don't know if they changed or not, but I know she got the first steam iron in town.

AG: So during the war was there some way that you and other children participated in the war effort?

DP: I learned to knit over at the hospital with the nuns over there. I think they call them Gray Ladies or maybe it was just a group of ladies that got together and did that. They knitted scarves for the servicemen. I learned to do the European pick stitch. You don't throw your thread. You know the difference? Never seen people knit? Usually they sew their thread. European knit stitch, pick stitch, you just pick it. I learned to do the throw when I was doing many colors later on, but it was handy knowing how to handle my thread and so forth. […] I had three brothers in the war.

AG: Were they drafted or how did they enter the war?

DP: My oldest brother was in Bozeman, Montana, going to college and they signed up for the reserves. Of course, the reserves were pulled up right away. He ended up being in Normandy invasion. That's a picture of him there.

AG: Did he survive?

DP: Oh yes. That picture of the boat, skiff. That's him fishing with me. The other two were drafted, I think.

AG: You know Deedie I think I would like very much to speak with you another time about World War II in Kodiak, but I'm thinking for the sake of this interview maybe we can talk about West Side stuff.

DP: Okay.

AG: So you mentioned that your father was working for the Territorial employment department. How was it that he first entered the world of fisheries?

DP: He bought a boat, the *Marmot*, and he was a partner with one of the VonScheele men. Tom VonScheele and he were partners on the *Marmot*. *Marmot, Skippy and Tippy* were all three sister ships that came up on the *Lackala* which was a boat that used to dock at the Erskine dock. Small steamship.They were the ones, the *Cordova* and the *Lackala* came up in the wintertime. Big ones came up in the summer.

AG: Could you describe the *Marmot*?

DP: (*speaking to someone else*) Jim?

AG: Oh he's reading.

DP: Is he gone?

AG: I could ask him at another point.

DP: I can't remember. It was 42 or 48 [foot]. I'm not sure. It was a newer style. New boat. Privately owned. Where most of the boats were owned by the canneries in those days. They had big fleets of boats. The fishermen worked on a percentage from them. We were living on Marmot Island during the summertime when he was fishing on the Marmot and in 1947, he and my brother Bob bought Katie Danielson's sites. West Point. (*paper rustles*) But they had a home down here in Mush Bay. Right here.

AG: At the saltery?

DP: [Yes] It's not there anymore.

AG: I'm curious. Was the *Marmot* named after Marmot Island?

DP: I suppose it was.

AG: And at that point were there many independent boats in Kodiak?

DP: I don't think too many.

AG: What do you think your father and his partner were thinking when they decided to go in and do an independent operation?

DP: I think that they'd be independent. Tom lived in Afognak at that time and I suppose having a boat there in the winter was helpful, too.

AG: […] How did people that fished for the canneries- do you think that they had good relationship with the canneries or was there a reason why it seemed more beneficial to be an independent fisherman than a cannery fisherman?

DP: I think most people had great relationships with the cannery workers and the cannery superintendents. I never witnessed anything that wasn't good. Maybe other people have a different

opinion, but that's my opinion. It was good. But you know if they only work on a percentage you can make more money if you have your own boat and for Tom he could use it in the wintertime, too, to go back and forth to Kodiak. I suppose that was the motive for him. I don't know. I never heard of any much discussions on it, frankly.

AG: Do you remember which canneries your dad delivered to on the *Marmot*?

DP: San Juan.

AG: So does that mean that they mostly fished on the west side using the seiner?

DP: I think they did. They occasionally went to the mainland though. Yeah, the west side, I think that's all considered it. I don't think they came around to Ugat or down to Old Harbor or anything like that, no. Hey Jim? Do you remember how long the *Marmot* was?

JP: I can't hear you.

DP: How long the *Marmot*? The length the *Marmot*? The boat *Marmot*?

JP: The length of the boat?

DP: Yeah.

JP: About forty-two feet.

AG: Okay.

DP: It's all wood of course.

JP: Yeah.

AG: Could you remind me about what year it was that your father purchased the *Marmot*?

DP: '45.

AG:'45. Okay. And at that point your family was already living on Marmot Island?

DP: In the summertime.

AG: What brought you to Marmot Island?

DP: Well we went out there in 1942 trapping.

AG: For what?

DP: Fox.

AG: Could you describe that a bit more?

DP: Marmot Island?

AG: Yes […] Was it because there was a fox farm there already?

DP: No, it's wild fox.

AG: Oh.

Bob Chamberlain. P-776-2.

DP: Well that's a whole story in itself. Bob Chamberlain, Robert Chamberlain, came down here from Fairbanks. He was one of the ones that went up on the '98. He was at Nome. He was at Rampart. He was at Nome. He was at Iditarod. He was in Fairbanks. He had a strike out in Dome Creek up there. He use to come over and tell stories when we lived in the pink house. He'd sit there all night and tell stories to my dad. So I guess he got interested in it. So he took leave [from] his job, we went out there. We were out there when the *Phyllis S* was cut in half. We were supposed to come in on.

AG: You were supposed to come in on it?

DP: He didn't know. It didn't show up.

AG: My goodness. Could you tell me about the *Phyllis S* in your experience with that?

DP: I never got on it because it never came. It was […] you know the story of the *Phyllis S*? Okay.

AG: But maybe you can describe because future historians will not.

DP: *Phyllis S* was a mail boat going around Kodiak Island every two weeks in the wintertime, and I think they went around every week in the summer or something like that. Stopped at all the canneries and residences like Terror Bay. […] It happened near Whale Pass. A military boat was going through there and they wouldn't alter their course and the mail boat did not see them because the sun was in their eyes. […] It was late in the winter. Sun was low. And they just cut 'em in half. Johnny Reft was on it. You know him? You might wanna interview him. His

mom was on there. There were two people I think drowned, and the boat, a part of it, used to be in Whale Pass for a long time. I think it was the bow, I'm not sure.

AG: How did you hear about the accident?

DP: I didn't hear about it till we got town. My brother Bud, Marty Owens' dad, was in high school and he got another boat to come after us. […] *Major Board* was the name of it. Captain's name was Rockwell. Called him Rocky. And they came out there and we'd been watching for a boat for days. I don't know probably a month maybe. I'm not sure how long we waited for a boat. There was coming up northeast, which is a big blow on that side of the island. I heard a knock and my dad went down the beach road, "There won't be any boat today. It's too rough out there." I'm pretty sure we were sitting down to our big, we usually had pancakes or mush, either one. Pancakes were about plate size. Sourdoughs, of course. Heard a knock on the door and we all looked at each other. "Gosh, who could that be?" Nobody else lives on the island, period, you know. Turned out it was Billy Nome. Billy Nome had lived as a young man out there with Old Bob. He was a deckhand on the boat. Too bad you couldn't interview him. He just passed on here recently. He lived down in Tacoma. Visited him several times down there. What an interesting guy he was. And anyway […] it didn't take us long 'cause we were ready to go. We just grabbed everything we had and went out and he had to row us out in the skiff and the surf was getting pretty big. It's the boat, I can't think of a boat like it 'cause it was like, have you seen pictures of the *Sunrise*? It was like a tuna seiner. There was a captain, so way up high, the deck. So anyway […] we leaned down, grab a hand […]. He dragged us up on the boat and the boat went rocking out there in the surf. He had dogs he had to do the same thing. He got her paws up and they grabbed her up and pulled her up. He had to row back and get my dad and Old Bob and when they rolled down we couldn't even see them. Big swells. Gosh, if we didn't get off the island. It's a place you never leave a boat out, not a skiff or anything. Anyway we made it.

AG: And at that point you heard why the mail boat never arrived?

DP: I don't remember that part.

AG: So then from Marmot Island, […] you were just there in the summer times usually […]?

DP: We did go out one winter. That was the winter we were waiting for the boat to come pick us up.

AG: Could you describe your schooling out there?

DP: Well, I had great schooling 'cause, we called him Old Bob Chamberlain 'cause I had a brother, Bob, so he was Old Bob. He was always drilling me on… when I was in the fourth grade I was taking multiplication tables and history. When I got out there, I guess I did well, I didn't have any trouble going into fifth grade. So I guess I did okay.

AG: And at this point was there a fox farm out there already?

DP: No, it's all wild fox.

AG: Oh.

DP: You had to outsmart the fox.

AG: How would you do that?

DP: Well we buried fish for one thing. We did bait sets and they set traps where the fox traveled and so on.

AG: So this is something I'm interested in when I read about fox farming. Feeding the foxes is always a problem. So you said that you would […] go fishing and would you just-?

DP: There was a salmon stream right by the house. In the fall after they'd spawn, we'd bury the fish so they'd still be usable later on. We didn't use them a lot, but they did use them as bait sets on to attract the foxes. You buried the bait and set the fox traps around it. And we had a dog. She was an Airedale, fairly large size dog. So she used to have a little backpack. She'd pack the traps around for my dad.

AG: Were these kind of classic metal traps or were they special types of traps?

DP: Just metal.

AG: So then you would bury the fish and that would then attract the fox. Just the scent and they would go towards the scent of the rotting fish and then be caught in the trap?

Fox farm at Marmot Island. P-776-5.

DP: Right.

AG: How many would you get?

DP: You know I, I'm trying to remember. […] I would just be guessing maybe. I have a picture somewhere of them. I don't know how many.

AG: Do you know who planted the fox there?

DP: Well Bob took some of them off. It was a fox farm before he bought it. He got it in the '30s sometime. Called it a farm but it really wasn't a farm.

AG: Could you distinguish between a fox farm and what this was?

DP: Fox farm […] they're raised in pens like they used on Crooked Island over here. I went over there as a kid too. Used to visit with her.

Ardingers can tell you about that. In fact, the King's Diner, that was a descendant. Robert King was a descendant of that family. They were Johnsons. Daughter married a King. So they would be the great grandparents of the King family that runs the diner.

AG: Okay.

Fox at Marmot Island. P-776-1.

DP: They had everything in pens. They had dark pens, metal pens. They had a metal building, I should say. Pens inside. Those were the ones they were gonna harvest. The females and the young were outside. In outside pens. I think they fed them salmon.

AG: Why is it that Bob and your dad then decided instead of doing this kind of fox farming method to just have them wild?

DP: They were already on the island wild. It's a fairly large island. I imagine getting enough feed to feed them would be hard. We did have a salmon stream, but I don't know how many you could count on. Because every year the surf would build up the rocks in front of the stream. Sometimes there'd be fish, sometimes there wouldn't. The beach changed every winter.

AG: What happened then once the foxes were trapped? How would you prepare them for selling?

DP: Well, they skinned them out every night. I remember that's the only time they lit up the Coleman lantern. The rest of the time we had kerosene lamps. Not much light. They'd skin them out very carefully and they'd rub them down with cornmeal and all that. Of course, they'd turn them inside out and then they'd be dried. Room temperature.

AG: Was there a special building for this?

DP: Just the house.

AG: What did you think of this when you were young?

DP: Well at eight years old you just take things as they come you know. Never been around anything like that before, but living on Marmot that's another story. It's a wonderful place to live.

AG: Why?

DP: Beautiful like Abercombie. […] Well after we left there we went up to Fairbanks. My dad had another job up there for the government. Called the War Manpower Commissioner, no one could quit in those days unless they had permission, or they'd be drafted right away. You had to be ready for a job if you were referred somewhere. Sorry my voice is so scratchy. I hate that.

AG: It's fine.

DP: And we went up there. We went up there for almost a year and then we came back on Marmot Island. We got a horse, we got cows, bull, chickens, and guinea hens, and pigs. And that made it a lot of fun having a horse out there. We had a field that we used to raise grass in for her and cut the grass just like the old-fashioned days with the big scythe. Put it up on a little Go-Devil and bring it into the barn […]. It was a wonderful time for us. […] We did that for three summers.

AD: Could you describe the buildings out there? How many were there and what sort of functions did they serve?

DP: There's one house there with the redwood siding on it that was there when old Bob bought the place from. I think he bought it from a man lives over on Afognak. I have to think of his name. I think his name is Pajoman. And there was another building next to that which is a storage shed. We used the old house for tools and called it the tool shed, and feed for the chickens and pigs and stuff. And there was another nice house and I think it was nice in those days. It was a two story house with a three rooms upstairs and unfortunately the house moved off its foundation during the tidal wave.

AG: Okay. I am back here with Deedie Pearson on June [12], 2015, and I think we can just pick up again describing Marmot Island?

DP: We had a big meadow. We used to love to go out there and play around. There was fish in the lake. We had silvers and reds and dogs and humpies that went into the stream and then in the lake. Took care of the silvers and the reds. And the reds we found were in the little minnows or what do you call them little fry were up in the little feeder steams. And the water would start to dry up in the summer we'd go up and get a can and we'd take all this little fish back down to the lake, try to save them. […] We learned to garden out there. I loved garden and started then with Old Bob. He had lots of good ideas to gardening and so I learned a lot from him. He had been raised on a farm in Puyallup, Washington and like I said he came up to Alaska in '98 with the Gold Rush. He had lots of wonderful stories to tell us.

AG: So what were his gardening techniques?

DP: Well, he was an organic gardener. Buried fish in the garden and we used organic material. There were a lot of bugs so he had a smudge he'd start on the ocean side of the garden. It was so we could be in the garden to keep the bugs away.

AG: What was it?

DP: It was logs and stuff. It didn't burn really good but enough to keep the bugs out. Hazel and I had to weed a row of, we had a big garden, we had to weed a row of the garden every morning before we'd start playing. Go down the beach and get another bag of drift wood for the stove. We had gunny sacks full so we'd go down, fill up a whole bunch of gunny sacks at once and we'd just pull out of our sack when we needed one. Very efficient, I guess.

AG: What would you grow?

DP: Rutabagas. We had rutabagas as big as a plate. Huge. Gosh, we went out to that one fall in 1942. He buried them in sand. In the cellar he had made benches in there of sand. Had quarts of strawberries. Lots of radishes. We had so many radishes mom decided she'd saute some or boil them. They were good that way as well as fresh. We had a lot of other things like potatoes, of course. I don't remember too much lettuce or anything like that. We probably had it, I just don't recall it. We had lots of berries, raspberries and strawberries. And jarring up strawberries was so much fun. Course we had the cows so we had whip cream and that was great. Mom would go out and milk the cow every night. I guess she went in the morning, too. I don't remember that part, but some nights, stormy like Kodiak can be, you know. She'd just wait for them to come in instead of going after them. Keep in the barn until they finally came home 'cause we kept the calf up. We knew mom would be home pretty soon. That was fun.

AG: So there was the old cabin, there was the barn, there was the larger new house and any other buildings on the island?

DP: Trapping cabins on the other side of the island.

AG: What was that used for?

DP: Well, Old Bob would go over there and he'd trap the east side and he'd trap the west side. That was also after the war. We finally retrieved butler huts that were put out there. There's a listening post out there, military.

AG: Could you describe those?

DP: Well, they're quonset huts. We called them butler huts, I think. And we thought, "Oh, boy," because we heard that when the military left, they left everything. They didn't leave anything behind. They'd left the door and a bag of beans, that was it. During the war they'd come over to the house and borrow things because they'd run out of food. They'd leave a note, "We borrowed your coffee, we got this, we got that." Also there was a herd of cattle on there at that time and they harvested them too.

AG: Whose cattle?

DP: Belonged to Old Bob. They took care of themselves […] When he looked at the herd there were two dry cows and five bulls. I think that's all. That was the end of that herd. Holsteins. The big guys. The one time we did go up to harvest my dad was fishing that year so he wasn't there, but Old Bob went up there, too. Up on the ridge of the island and he'd hunt them down like wild animals because they weren't tame anymore. He took the horse along and horse kept looking back. The horse was a really good horse. She'd just follow along so you wouldn't have to be led or anything. She just followed along. Kept looking back, looking back, hanging back, hanging back and finally he saw the pig coming out of the bushes waiting for everybody. Well, they finally found the cows and they saw the pig and they took off. She probably squealed or did something because they didn't know what she was. The next day he took off he left her in the barn and we could hear her squealing clear down at the house. Anyway, he got a big bull. We had to go out and help him up. Took down thousand pounds of meat, plus twenty pounds of tail. I wanted the tail. Oxtail soup is pretty good if you haven't had it. It's rich.

AG: How would you preserve your food?

DP: You had to can it all up fast. We had a screened back porch. That's where I learned to can meat which is helpful. [...] Deer. All these skills came in really handy for me when I was on Uganik, I learned to can. Deer meat out there of course. Wood stove, of course. It was great for a bunch of kids to have fun like that.

AG: So your family would live there mostly. You said three summers, huh?

DP: Yeah.

AG: And then one winter?

DP: Yeah

AG: And during the summer, was you father fishing the whole time?

DP: Yeah. Not the first summer. They got the boat in '45.

AG: So how did that work? Would he come home at night or was he gone?

DP: No, he had just dropped us off and left us. No communication, nothing. Things weren't available then. I'll tell you the main thing I remember was when the war was over with Japan, we used to listen to Tokyo Rose every night on the radio for news. It wasn't very good news, but we listened. And then she saw the boats they destroyed, how many planes they shot down, the prisoners they took, that was usually her story. And that day she started out saying oh yes the US, don't quote me exactly, but they dropped a new fire bomb on us, there was nothing more than just a fire bomb they said different, but it wasn't. The next night, or two days later when the next one dropped she didn't say anything about it. Nothing. And the war was over shortly after that.

AG: Did you know what had taken place for other news sources?

DP: Probably did, yeah. I was on a plane going to St. Louis and there was this nice Japanese lady the whole trip in. Was an anniversary year. I don't remember what kind of anniversary, forty or fifty or whatever it was of the atomic bomb being dropped. I said to myself, "If she's mad at me she only has fifteen minutes to ride this plane and we'll be in St. Louis and I won't have to worry about it." So I said, "What do you think about the atomic bomb?" Sat there quietly for a while and she said, "Probably the best thing we could have done. 'Cause you saved many Japanese as well as who knows how many American lives. We would have fought till the end." She told me how they were training the women with butcher knives and going up to the GIs and stabbing them.

Al Owen and Bob Bartlett. P-776.

AG: Did you interact much with the men that were stationed on Marmot?

DP: I never saw them. They were probably only there for a year. We lived in Fairbanks.

AG: So then I presume that your father must have had some success fishing on the *Marmot*?

DP: I guess so. Oh yeah they'd catch a lot of fish like 600,000 humpies, but four or five cents a fish didn't go very far.

AG: And at this point was your father involved in politics?

DP: Well, he was always active in union work around the union. He went to Washington D.C. representing unions and so forth.

AG: Which unions?

DP: I imagine it was the carpenters. I'm not sure.It was the main one in town then. Then when he was out there later on by himself while we were, it must be like in '48 probably. He was out there trapping while we were going to school in town here living at this little cabin that used to be right next to this house. If you look up on the hill on the pictures you'll see it there. We liked it 'cause it had flush and it had running water and heat. So anyway he had to go and he knew, he didn't get picked up when he was supposed to. Why he didn't get picked up that time, I don't remember. He rode in all the way from Marmot Island. During the night he got blown out past Long Island. Hazel said he got picked up by somebody. I don't remember that part of it. Have to ask Fred. And then he was elected in 1948 to the legislature for the first time in the House. There's a picture right there.

AG: I see that. It's a really great photo.

DP: Yeah. Do you have that photo down there?

AG: Uh-um. No. I'd like to scan it if we could.

DP: That's from Juneau Museum. He's the one on the right.

AG: I see. The tall one. Very tall. Looks like Hazel.

DP: […] Those are all senators. The first senators, since we became a state in 1959.

AG: So you said '48 is when he was first elected.

DP: And then he served in the legislature in 1949.

AG: '49.

DP: Well I think that's when the legislature started. Maybe he was elected in 1949. I don't' know.

AG: Okay.

DP: But they only met every two years, the Territorial Legislature only met every two years.

AG: And at this point you are already living in Uganik?

DP: We were only out there in the summer.

AG: Okay. Well is there anything else that we should talk about concerning Marmot [Island] before we move on to the west side stuff?

DP: It's hard to describe. It's such a beautiful place, big garden. Old Bob had a garden on the east side over at his cabin over there. He was a very efficient guy and he'd go over in the fall and get ready for trapping. Just have to take his sugar and his tea and coffee, flour. He already had has vegetables over there, he had a root cellar. Canned up strawberries and rhubarb. Raspberries. We

used to go over there and pick. Nice little log cabin. […] Reed Oswalt family got land out there. And he dug that bottle. It's behind that chair, a green bottle over there. He brought me some other things I shared with the Sutliff family because they were very close to him, too.

AG: To Bob?

DP: Yeah. After he moved to town. Sutliffs use to live in the house next door. That's the house Peggy and Norm were living in. They added on to it right here. There it was a little cabin. And he and my dad started Sutliff. Owen and Sutliff Lumber Yard. [...] [And then it became] Sutliff and Son.

Owen and Sutliff Lumber Yard. P-776-52.

AG: When did you move to Anchorage?

DP: Christmas Eve of '48.

AG: Before we move to there, it was in '47 that your family purchased the Danielson's place. What did you know about the West Side before then?

DP: Nothing. I think we went out on the *Vida B* and it was a new boat. That's what I remember.

AG: What was it?

DP: The *Vida B*.

AG: *Vida B*?

DP: Ask Hazel if that's the same boat. That's what I remember. I can ask Fred. He has a good memory even though he is five years younger, he remembers a lot of stuff I don't know.

AG: And why did your family purchase the Danielson's place?

DP: Suppose the family could be together that way. My dad sold the boat to Tom VonScheele, his partnership in it. And you can see it's a long ways out to West Point. We had this little power, putt-putt-putt-putt-putt-putt.

AG: So from the Danielson's then can you describe what your family purchased?

DP: It was a nice house down there, two-story house.

[…]

[Breanna Peterson, project photographer, enters.]

AG: […] Could you repeat again. […] Was your family familiar with the Danielsons before you purchased their place?

DP: I don't know if my dad was or not. He probably was down there because fishing on Packers Spit. You know where that is?

AG: Um-huh.

DP: […] I really don't know how he became acquainted with her. I really don't know. But her husband passed away and she couldn't take care of it anymore. Fishing by herself was not an option. Down there by West Point, there was a cabin along the beach. Very nice place with a little lake behind it. Very beautiful spot. Lake on one side and the ocean on the other. Cabin's gone now. It's finally disintegrated. But it was a beautiful spot. We loved going down there. We'd go down there and stay during the opening of the season and we'd come back to Mush Bay. Season was closed on the weekends. That's how the federal government operated it. They were open Monday at six o'clock in the morning, closed at six o'clock Friday no matter what the season was. Whether there was a lot of fish or a little fish. Course those were the days of the fish traps and [...] there were probably fish for the setnetters, people inside the bays, but then it would be gone because the traps would scoop 'em all up.

AG: So then your family purchased these sites at West Point or just the cabin at West Point?

DP: The sites.

AG: And how many?

DP: And the house.

AG: And the house. And then also down in Mush Bay, you purchased the?

DP: The saltery and the house.

AG: Could you describe the saltery?

Mush Bay. P-776-49.

[00:03:11] DP: Well it wasn't painted. So it had that silvery look of weathered wood. It was two story. It had a dock. A small dock out front of it. It was on pilings. Reason it had two story they pulled the nets up into the upper story. That's how they stored them. And they had been there for years and there was a saltery so they had running water out there in the summertime to it. We learned to salt fish which was very helpful years later, too.

AG: Could you describe that process?

DP: They used to bring the fish down every day in this little putt-putt dory. We took turns going down to help with the fishing, us three kids. And you know how you split the fish?

AG: Yes, […] how would you go about salting? Was this salmon or cod?

DP: It was salmon. Well, you have to cut off the head first and you just go down the back bone on top of the bone clear down to the tail and you open that side up and take the guts out and then you take the other side and slip a knife under the bone on the other side. It takes quite a bit of skill to do it good. Not make a mess of it. Not chop it up. It's not easy. Then you lay them skin side down. We had five hundred pound. We had a huge tierces they call them, oak tierces, in five hundred pound barrels. There was sixty pound barrels, there was hundred pound and there was five hundred pound barrels. Lay them down, skin down and you just keep layering them up and you sprinkle salt on each layer and you sprinkle rock salt. Rock salt draws the moisture out of the fish and makes its own brine that way. And then you let them do that I think about two or three weeks. I can't remember the exactly how long on all of it. You'd skim off the blood [...] and we'd repack them. Make sure everything was good.

AG: So you just put a thin layer of salt in between the fish in the barrel and then you would unpack them? Would you rinse them at that point?

DP: I don't think so.

AG: Okay. And would you put them in a new barrel or back in the same barrel?

DP: It all has to be washed out clean and sealed up. Salting used to be very, very popular because that was one way of preserving fish, you know, for a lot of people love salt. I like salt fish. Soaking it out was a trick though to get it just right. You either do it so much there's not any flavor left or too salty, like oooooo, bitter, you know, if there's too much salt.

AG: So […] when you repacked the salmon, did you also put more salt in it the second time around?

DP: I don't think so. You used a brine but you cleaned the brine thoroughly. Gosh when you do meat that way, you know, you make and salt meat. We did that at Marmot Island as well as canning it in jars, but you take it and you boil it and you take all the blood scum off and clean all that off. You pour it back over again.

AG: Where would you get the barrels and the salt?

DP: We got it from the cannery, salt in San Juan. They were very supportive of everything.

AG: And then did you sell the barrels to San Juan?

DP: Yep.

AG: So were you independent fishermen or were you cannery fishermen at that point?

DP: We're independent. They're just good people. They just helped us out a lot even when my mom and dad and I established a little hand-packed cannery in 1959 in Village Islands. Right here.

AG: Well, before we get to that, because I'm very interested in learning more about that, you've described West Point and Mush Bay. So how did you get out there?

DP: On the *Vida B*. And occasionally I sat on the bow on the way out. It was like a day like today. It was so calm, a beautiful day. Till we got on the other side and it was a little blowy over there. I saw a bunch of canneries first and we got off there and my dad also had a little boat called the *Anita*, was a 29-foot open boat which means it wasn't decked over. It had a, what do they call it, a seine box in the back on the stern. Piled the seine inside. You figure it had a box and it had a roller, pull the fish in. We had to do it all by hand,of course. No power blocks in those days. The only help we had was the winch to winch it up. So what we did, we fished the fish sites for June and when the humpies came in we went on this little boat and seined. Learned how to seine.

Robert Owen with set net kegs. P-776-24.

AG: So you were then seining at West Point?

DP: We seined all over then. We setnet at West Point in June and then we transferred to his little boat to do seining in July, after the Fourth of July.

AG: And why did you do both seining and gillnetting?

DP: Well [...] humpies were six cents a pound. You can't catch enough humpies to make it. Seining wrapped up many more humpies. In those days there were lots of humpies. So there would be dark spots. Nobody would set on a school of fish unless there was a dark brown spot because it was too much work or just a few fish. That's how they were then.

AG: And what sort of nets were you using?

DP: Seine.

AG: Were they made of linen or?

DP: Linen net. The setnets were linen, too, and we had to dye the nets. They came white so you had to dye them. Kind of a tan color, let's see what did they use, tanning bark of some sort. Dye the nets. So we had to do that during the season. Build a fire on the beach and put the water in a big barrel and get hot water as much as we could, and we'd dye the nets that way.

AG: So would you receive the nets already hung?

DP: No. I don't see anybody does that.

AG: So you would hang your own nets, too?

DP: Of course. Had cedar floats in those days. They were about this big. Have you seen the floats? And they had to be waxed because they'd soak up water and they'd get very, very hairy. Pulling the net in and out.

AG: Did you wax them, too?

DP: Oh yeah.

AG: So maybe you could describe what it took to prepare a net for fishing?

DP: Well.

AG: Because it seems like quite the process.

DP: It is. We you have to get the order your net first and know what you're ordering. Get the net in and then start hanging it, and Jim has hung a lot of nets. He can probably tell you a lot more about it than I can.

AG: Jim who?

DP: My husband.

AG: Oh great. Okay, good.

DP: He's a seiner and he ended up having setnets at the end of his career as a seiner. He hung my nets and my brother Jack use to hang them, down in Wenatchee, and send them up to us. He liked to do that. Too bad you couldn't have talked to him 'cause he passed away here just a few months ago.

AG: I'm sorry.

DP: He used to be on a pile driver to drive the traps. Do you know Martin Wondersee?

AG: I've met him, yes.

DP: Well he can tell you all about traps. In fact, I did an interview with him on trapping. Making traps. Trapping fish. I believe he was a watchman, too. I wouldn't swear to that. It seems like he was. Ah!

BG: Am I getting too close?

AG: So you would receive just the completed net, but then you would have to hang it on the line.

DP: Cork line.

AG: How would you prepare the corks?

DP: Oh they'd have to be waxed. Nowadays, of course, they have these spongex. They're easy and there's a little rope on each of them 'cause it had a hole in the middle and a little rope comes down and attaches the rope.

AG: So would you just melt a bunch of wax and put the corks in there, or how did that work?

DP: I think that's how it's always done. We never had to do it that I know of, but I know it had to be waxed.

AG: And so you owned your own nets. It wasn't that you were using cannery nets?

DP: No.

The Owens family's first summer at Mush Bay, 1947. P-776-53.

AG: […] When you were first going out there, it was 1947. That was your first season out there?

DP: Right.

AG: How would you, or when would you, move from West Point and Mush Bay? At what points in the year would you live in the different places?

DP: We only lived there in the summer. We'd go down to fish camp, as we called it, when the season was open in June and then we went back to Mush Bay and on weekends or whenever. Like I said us kids took turns. My brother Bob and my dad did the fishing mainly and then went out on the boat in July. I think the season closed on the thirteenth of August. It was very ridged in those days. They didn't have any flexibility. The mismanagement, we all felt it was mismanaged because it was managed from somewhere else and so forth and so on. There was one boat, […] the *Eider* that went around the island trying to enforce regulations. Like you aren't supposed to fish in Mush Bay from here to here. I have to tell you about Packer's Spit. When we first went there, there was still. You know the story of Packer's Spit? They have it down there about the cannery at the Baranov Museum. There's pictures of it even. I think it burned. Don't quote me on the time, I think it closed the fifteenth or 1915 and it burned a year or two later. But in the back, there's a lagoon right here. See that kind of there. Not really well, but you'll see it. You can kind of see it there. There were

Alaska Packers Association cannery at Packers Spit. P-356-27.

scows, there were skiffs, everything was turned over and you could still walk on it. So there's still that good in those days and there's a few pilings sticking out here on the end.

AG: Was anyone living there?

DP: Not at that time. There was a little cabin. I think his name was Toshwak. He used to fish 1947. They weren't anybody living. No beach seiners, but he must have been a beach seiner. Then this beach down here is called Toshwak. He used to seine it. […] Nah, I'm sorry, setnetter. Here. I marked these places. You could mark 'em if you want to.

AG: If you'd like to. Right here?

DP: Yeah. Toshwak. And also there was one cabin right around the Toshwak. Cabin. 1947. You do have pictures down there of the cannery. It wasn't big or anything, but there were bricks around

there. I think the bricks have been carted off. I know Jeanne [Shepherd] has done a beautiful job. I hope you get down to see her place. It's outstanding.

Jeanne Shepherd at Mush Bay. P-1000-8-106.

AG: Is Jeanne's place your old home?

DP: Yes.

AG: Okay.

DP: But it looks a lot different nowadays. She's done so much to it. It had a peaked roof like this which is small. You know you walk down the middle of the roof and upstairs is bedrooms. It's kind of small when you get down to the edge wall. They lifted that up. Like that and made a big room up there. She has a beautiful garden, beautiful green houses and beautiful banya.

AG: Did you garden out there as well when you were younger?

DP: We were only there in 1947. We had radishes and stuff like that not, not extensively. Katie had a big strawberry garden. It's […] still a strawberry garden today, same place.

AG: What do you remember of Katie Danielson?

DP: Well she was a fantastic lady, lots of stories. Taught us how to salt fish and she said, "Okay, let's pull out to the Spit," which means row. We always rowed out there. Stood up and rowed this way. Standing up.

AG: Standing up.

DP: Well it was a big dory you could barely sit down.

AG: Wow.

DP: She was gracious. We all thought the world of her. Jeanne can tell you a lot about her 'cause she used to go to and visit with her a lot. Jeanne Shepherd. You know Jeanne? She's probably the best source 'cause she's more closer. In later years she became Katie Rogers. Married a man by the name of Rogers. Most people know her as Katie Rogers and her daughter still lives in Anchorage and Jeanne's very close to her.

AG: […] I'm curious about the fish that you decided to salt versus can. Did you sell some of the salmon to the cannery and then keep some to salt, or did you do all of your own hand-pack operation in the saltery?

DP: We salted the reds. If we caught dogs we sold them. And humpies don't usually come until July.

AG: And the rest of them your dad would deliver to the cannery or was there a tender at that time?

DP: There was another cannery that was down at the other end of the island down here. West Point Packing Company. It tells all about in that book you have. Herb Dominici was the owner and operator. He's a fantastic man. He used to sail up to Bristol Bay in those big sailing vessels, *Star of India*. I think it's down there by San Diego. He used to tell us stories about sailing on those vessels. Leave San Francisco and he said most of the crew were drunk. Not easy getting out of there. Then you go up to Bristol Bay to spend the whole summer up there. They took everything they needed, all of the food they were gonna eat, and the crews they were gonna work with, the whole works. Usually they had two different types of crew. They usually had like Chinese and another group, maybe Filipinos. They'd compete all the time against each other, egg 'em on that way. On the way back then they'd have these card games, crap games, you know, and a lot of guys wouldn't have anything left by the time they got down to San Francisco. One time they got to San Francisco and a big storm came up and blew them way off course. They just had to fight their way back and the skipper used to make arrangements with whoever came out to tug or take them into the bay and this guy was real conservative I guess you'd say and he didn't wanna pay the price. So after that the company made all the arrangements so they didn't have to go through that again. His crew didn't like that very much after being up there for I think they left there in March sometime. It was just gonna get back to her in September. It's a long time.

AG: So did you spend time visiting with him in Village Islands?

DP: The only time he'd visit would be after the season 'cause he was a busy man. You'd have to go down there and get our mail every time the mail guy came in and so we'd see him every week, but

uh. He was a great big fellow. He had lots of experiences to tell after the season was over. He loved to talk. During the season then he was a busy guy.

AG: Were there many people engaged at the West Point Packing Company?

DP: They had three workers.

AG: Packing?

DP: No, he actually was mechanized, but they butchered by hand. He ran the can machine, he ran the power plant, he ran everything. He had three Filipinos. That was it.

AG: And who did […] the fishing?

DP: Well, […] whatever setnetters were. I asked my brother, Fred, when he was up here a week or so ago. Who was fishing. My brother went… Ah, I'm getting ahead of myself. We moved to Anchorage that Christmas Eve in 1948. My two brothers took over the operation out there and my dad got a lot of things started so when they came back from the war they'd have things to do. When he was partners with Norm [Sutliff].

AG: […] I know that your dad was seining, there was also gillnetting and there were fish traps. So for the West Point Packing, did he have gillnetters, did he have seiners, or did he just use trap fish?

DP: What Fred said, he had three setnetters. […] When he started out he had only three, which was my brother and this is after. Fred, my youngest, when we moved to Anchorage in '48, he came down here fishing in '49 with Bob. He said they only had three. Phil on East Point, Ted Pestrikoff, and this fellow over here. And I'm not sure if he had Slim Trueman. I'll ask him again. I don't remember who he said. Somebody out there.

AG: You said-

DP: Broken Point.

AG: You said Ted Pestrikoff and who else?

DP: Toshwak.

AG: Toshwak

DP: I believe Slim Trueman. I'll have to check with Fred again on the third person. Of course he was out here at Broken Point.

AG: And then Fred, did he also fish for him?

DP: My brother, Fred, with my brother Bob. He was like ten years old then. Eleven.

AG: How old was Bob?

DP: I don't know.

AG: Older.

DP: Yeah. He'd been in the war and he came back

AG: And so it was the older brother and the younger brother fishing together?

DP: Right.

AG: And they would deliver to West Point at that point?

DP: Yeah. When I moved back over there in ’59, I think there were seven. Seven setnetters in the bay.

AG: Who was that?

DP: Well it was NIck Berestoff. He was fishing out at Miners Point which is out here. And Slim Trueman and us and Ted. Trying to think who the other ones were....

AG: So Slim Trueman was where?

Deedie Pearson referring to chart of Uganik Bay. P-1000-3-04.

DP: Broken Point.

AG: Okay.

DP: They call it Broken Point. He wasn't exactly right on the point. He was in here somewhere. I can't tell you exactly where. I think about here though. [Referring to a chart of Uganik Bay]

AG: Okay. Near the cabin?

DP: Well, that was his cabin.

AG: Oh okay. And then who was over here?

DP: Ted Pestrikoff. He was from Ouzinkie.

AG: And what did he call his site?

DP: East Point.

AG: Okay. What did you call your place?

DP: You mean where we fished?

AG: Yes.

DP: West Point.

AG: West Point. Okay.

DP: The cabin was right by here.

AG: […] East or west of the point?

DP: It was on this beach

AG: Right here?

DP: Yeah and the lake was behind it and you can see the little tiny lake. Actually, not very good. Right there.

AG: Oh okay.

DP: Not very big.

AG: Owens. And who else in '59 was setnetting out there?

DP: East Point.

AG: So we have Nick Berestoff at Miners, Slim Truman at Broken, Ted Pestrokoff at East Point, the Owens at West Point.

DP: […] I don't know who it was. Might have been these guys around the corner here. Pineapple Cove they called them at that time.

AG: Around here.

DP: From Ouzinkie.

AG: So by that time much had changed from […] first going out there in 1947 to 1959 […].

DP: Oh yeah the homestead here, Daniel Boone homestead. Right here. Daniel Boone Reed, excuse me. And then other than that I don't think too much had changed.

AG: How do you think that fishing influenced your father in entering politics?

DP: Well you know it wasn't easy way to make living, but he liked it. He liked it a lot. It was just a part of what you did. You lived in Kodiak, you fished, right? In fact some people forget […] none of us would be here if it wasn't for fishing. I often think of that when I read the Kodiak Mirror. I call 'em up and say, "We hardly even know we're living in a fishing town except for one article a week." […] I noticed they did say when salmon season was starting, so what happened to the herring season? I didn't hear anything about it and there was not a thing in the paper either. Whether there was a bust or not, it's a big difference to the cannery workers if they have fish coming in. I don't know it. Do not know everytime you see that oil barge you know the price is either going up or down. Just filled up our whole tank yesterday and looked to see what I got charged at. Well anyway when the traps were built, Trap 6 is a gillnet site today. So here were Myricks, oh you know Betsy, and then there's Daylight Harbor and then there's two, Sue and Dan Ogg on the shore here. And there's Eva Holm down here at Uganik Pass. Suzanne Abraham and there's Toby Sullivan here. And some new people just bought this place down here.

AG: Where were the fish traps when you first voyaged out there?

DP: There's one right here in Ken's Lagoon.

AG: Where?

DP: Coming […] out of this area.

AG: Right here?

DP: I don't actually know that location. I never did get down there. Didn't get around very much. We just had so much to do in our own backyard we didn't run around much. Went to the cannery now and then and that was fun. It's great fun because you get all of those goodies at this cook house.

AG: Like what?

DP: Coffee time they had all the leftovers from the previous meal or whatever it was besides sweets. Kids always liked sweets, cookies and cinnamon rolls and all that kind. They always had a baker that was always expert baker. The food at the canneries was fantastic. They use to open up great big cans of fruit every meal. They had these great big old dishes and they'd dump them down the shoot because hardly anybody ate it. I couldn't see it, "Oh my gosh, look at all that food, down the shoot." Out into the bay. Every single thing went into the bay in those days. All the gurry went into the bay, all the heads. You'd be fishing out here sometimes and they'd just come floating up to our net and get caught in the net. It was terrible. If you'd dip a line in it'd smell like that forever. In fact in the fall you'd go over there for months and months it'd still smell like gurry, that bad. […] Well, I'll have to tell you, I think Fish and Game did a fantastic job rebuilding the fisheries because the year 1959 was so bad. That's the year we became a state. That's the year we moved back over to Kodiak. And it was Bill Pikus. You probably know the Pikus family here in town. Their dad, I think he caught twelve or thirteen thousand fish, not pounds, but fish that year. That was it. We didn't do very well either. So we limped along for several years and finally they just closed the red season for about twenty years building it up again. It made a big difference for setnetters, to be able to catch reds again and then once the Aquaculture Association built it up it really made a big difference. I'll have to hand it to them I think they did a great job of management. It took many years there to get things back to where it should have been. Traps just about wiped us out. I was visiting with Ivan Fox who was a favorite of everybody as superintendent of Uganik Cannery one time at his place down in Eastman, Washington and I said " Well you really let us have statehood didn't you?" and he said "Yeah."

AG: What do you think meant?

DP: He said because the traps weren't worth it anymore. There wasn't enough fish to worth building the traps and they had to pay something for the site and they knew if we became a state we'd wipe them out, which we did. Actually that was a separate vote, you know, to wipe out fish traps, restrict fish traps, from accepting the Constitution.

AG: So before statehood what sort of fishing was taking place in Uganik?

DP: Just salmon.

AG: There was no cod really that was taking place at that point?

DP: No. […] I don't think anybody even came out for halibut. There were a few halibut fishermen who came up here and they were Canadians.

AG: And were there a lot of people that were fishing in Uganik or was it a place that mostly it was the traps were getting everything so it was not […] considered a good fishing place?

DP: Boats used to come up there and then once the beginning of the week and this […] Alaska Packers cannery that had this cannery out here [at Packers Spit], they fenced this line across, right here. Had a fence across from this creek here? Called it the Dego Bunkhouse, the creek, 'cause they had Italians. They had them here.

AG: Here? When was that?

DP: When that cannery was operating. It that book you have down there you can tell what years they're operating. They had a fence across there with chicken wire. They opened it up on the weekend to let the fish go through.

AG: Across the entire bay?

DP: Across the entire bay. I mean they operated just like logging camp. They wiped us out and then they moved to another place. So what they did, they moved to Larsen Bay. They lived and moved all Olga Bay. […] It's just the way they did things.

AG: So you're saying that the crew would rotate to different places?

DP: No, the canneries would move. They closed it in 1915 because the fish were gone, as I understand it.

AG: Was there anything there when you were a child?

DP: I didn't see anything. I don't think so. […] If anything's left unattended for a while it gets legs and the material gets reused somewhere else, recycled.

AG: It's true.

DP: There was a herring plant here.

AG: There's still the remnants of it there, right?

DP: Yep. They had traps and […] I knew San Juan had traps. Bought them out for their traps. Converted that to a herring plant. It was a salmon plant. It was so wonderful because they had water power. My brother, Bud, worked over there and […] everything in cannery was run by pelton wheels. We have one at our place, or we had one. We sold it to my nephew, but we have one here [Village Islands]. It's wonderful because you had power year round. The year round, instead of turning on the power plant at night or when you have to have it to have power all year round. Their carpenter shop, their machine shop, their can line, their refrigeration, everything was run off their power on the stream.

AG: What did you call the herring plant at that point?

DP: Herring plant.

AG: You just called it herring plant?

DP: Yep.

AG: Who operated it?

DP: San Juan. Originally, it was Uganik Fisheries. They bought their boats […] It was the SJ boats and the UG boats.

AG: What color were the boats?

DP: I know San Juan had white and green. I can't remember Uganik Fisheries. Maybe they were gray and green, I'm not sure.

AG: Who was involved with the Uganik Fisheries?

DP: Who? You mean who owned it? I have to think about their names. Of course, Ivan was our favorite superintendent, but before that George King was a superintendent. 1947, George King was the superintendent and I think Ivan was his nephew or something like that.

AG: I see, but it was the herring plant and and the other cannery at that point were still […] both operated by San Juan? Even though they had the two different names?

DP: Well, Uganik Fisheries was it when it was a salmon […] plant. Because they had their own traps and I really can't tell you exactly where all the traps were. Raspberry Cape I know was one of them. Cape Uganik was another one. Talk to trap people about that 'cause I didn't get out much. They didn't travel back and forth that much to know what is what, honestly.

[…]

DP: So do you wanna start out with Clara then?

AG: Well, let me just start with the introduction. Today is June 18th, 2015. I'm sitting here with Deedie Pearson. This is Anjuli Grantham and this is the second installment of this interview for West Side Stories. So yes, let's go ahead and start with the Helgason's.

DP: Clara Helgason lived over there [Terror Bay] with her husband Kris, who was a great guy. Everybody loved Kris. I think he was Iceland, I'm not sure. He had the most twinkly blue eyes you ever wanted to see. Big smile, always laughing, always good humor. And her brother Bill Baumann lived with them and he was a very wonderful guy, everybody liked Bill very much. He was skipper of the power scow, I think the Viekoda. Viekoda is another bay over here, you could probably see it, Viekoda Bay, and they had a bear camp there. They also fished. She had a beach seine and a jitney. So she had various women that I knew at various times fishing with her.

AG: Like who?

DP: I think one of her daughter-in-laws for one and a watchman's wife from Uganik cannery. I can't think of her name right now, that was long long time ago, long time ago. But she was well liked, I used to talk to her almost every day on the radio. They had a bear camp, they had a very popular bear camp. She was a great cook and her husband and her brother were great guides, and her son, that she called Sonny. She had, I think, three boys. Their names were the Wood family, but her son Sonny Boy she called him, took the Helgason name.

AG: So she was married before?

DP: Yes. Well actually she has a great history. During the 1912 eruption of Katmai she was living out here in Kalsin Bay, with the experimental farm that was out there at that time.

AG: With who?

DP: Experimental farm. Her dad was a running it out there and he told us the story, you want that too? Okay. She told us the story that morning she always liked to work with her dad she was five or six years old just a young girl. She preferred being out side with her dad rather than with her mom, I think it was her step mother probably. But she said it was very ominous that morning, dark clouds, and her dad said, "No, you can't go," and so she was mad at him. So she went out there and they had sheep. She shut them up in the barn, just for spite. And the ash began to fall. They actually had to leave their house and sleep in the barn. I think she said the only thing they took out of the house a blanket, and I'm not sure if the house survived. I remember that part clearly. So when the ash quit, he hooked up the horses that he had to turn over a skiff. They always had their skiff upside down, you know, so it doesn't fill up with rain water, turn it over and dump the ash out. Well that wasn't right. Right side up because they had to dump the ash. Ash was on the beach in Kalsin Bay and he had to row to town. That's how everybody got around in those days, they didn't have any what they call kickers these days, you know out board motors, they rowed to town with the family. I think there were a couple other siblings. They got to town. They tied up. I'm trying to think of what would be there. What's that first cannery you come to?

AG: APS maybe?

DP: No. Down here.

AG: Oh the just right down here?

DP: Yeah. Anyway there was a row of houses there and their best friends lived in one of those houses and they went up there and the house was empty and I believe I think it wasn't even locked, which was very unusual. I remember she said the ashes came up over her knees when they started walking through town they ran into the marshal. He said, "Well everybody was on the boat," no one was in town, but they could stay at the jail. She said, "I started crying my eyes. I didn't want to go to jail. That's a terrible place for a little girl!" Then Mike Rostad could tell you a lot about Clara. He interviewed her. He was going to write a book for her. He knows a lot about her so you could get a lot more information from him.

AG: Okay. What was the name of their bear camp?

DP: I don't know probably Helgason, but I'm not sure.

AG: And when did you all get radios out there?

DP: The two way radios? We got ours when we came back in '59. It was a two way, it wasn't a side band in those days. We had a very long reach. That's why they put this side band in, it didn't have such a long reach. In fact, I guess, when the third world began to put in radios they needed more

space so they just put us on the side band. Crystal radios. Crystals for the various frequency they wanted to use.

AG: Crystals?

DP: That's what they call them.

AG: And I'm wondering if you could describe, what is a jitney seiner?

DP: It's a power boat it has room for the seine and it was probably maybe a twenty footer. A lot of the seiners had jitneys in those days, especially the people that liked to fish close to the shore, maybe in closed waters. [They] had jitneys.

AG: And is a jitney the name of the type of boat or is it the gear that is used?

DP: It was the type of boat.

AG: Okay.

DP: They were used, like I say, some people liked to use them that were creek robber people. Not that she was a creek robber. Then they'd put the main catch on their boat and deliver it that way. Shallow water or close in, it was like that.

AG: Who else was beach seining beyond Clara that you remember?

DP: A lot of people on Packer Spit. Like Coyote [Bowers]. Dianne [Herman] can tell you a lot about Coyote. She can tell you more about Packer Spit because she was down herself so I'll just leave that for her. 'Cause I was never there during then I was busy set netting. Once in a while we'd go down there, but I just didn't know the people very well. I knew of them, and so forth.

AG: How about back in the '40s when your family first started out there was there anybody beach seining?

DP: There wasn't anybody beach seining. I think Tashwok probably beach seined before that, but you know how beach seining works?

AG: [Yes] Could you maybe describe it though?

DP: Well you had the seine piled up on the beach. Had a jitney or a power, usually a power of some sort to pull out the seine and hold the hook, just like on a seiner. The fish come in and when you think you have fish then you come around to shore. Then you have to pull all that web in by hand. There's lead [line], so once you get that net, the other end to the shore line, you can see a big half circle out there. Then got the fish because the net has already hit the beach at the bottom. It's a lot of hard work pulling it in by hand. Clara had it set up so that she could pull in by the jitney. She had a block and tackle kind of thing, I don't exactly know how it worked. But finally fixed it up for her, so it was pretty neat.

AG: Where did she deliver her fish?

DP: She delivered to San Juan. Tenders stopped by and picked them up. That's a long ways, she could be in by boat.

AG: Could maybe describe the Helgason's place?

DP: As you walk out of the beach there was a little gear shed, and then plane always landed at the gear shed. They had a little motorized track vehicle of some sort, or wheel, I don't remember exactly what it was like. For picking up baggage or freight or anything from the plane. They'd drive it up to the house. They had a flat spot there, which was nice. They had a nice garden, and a smoke house and a meat house for hanging up meat, deer and so forth. And the house. They had a big, nice kitchen with the big Olympia range. Everybody had those in those days. She always had a hot pot, tea kettle going to make chai. She always had strong chai. Not with bags either but a strong tea. You pour some in your cup and see that hot water because it was so strong you couldn't drink it. They ate in the kitchen, she had a living room and I think she had two bedrooms. They had cabins for their guests. Weatherby rifle. Weatherby rifles are very famous, they were, I don't know if they still are or not. But he left his rifle there because he used to come back and shooting and hunting all the time. This is before hunting, the deer was evident and the area. But she had very high clients there. I remember there was a princess from Morocco maybe, I don't know, don't quote me because I don't know. I don't remember. But she has a lot of famous people there and they all loved Clara and they had such great stories [...]. In fact she laughed and of course Kris had stories. They were a wonderful couple. And after Kris passed away she moved to Kodiak.

AG: When was that?

DP: I don't really know what year was.

AG: That's fine. Were they living at the same piece of property that her parents lived at?

DP: Yes, they had a gold mine, her parents had a gold mine. The last I heard was, that the last time they mined, I'm not sure who was the miner, it was probably them. They have a barge full of the hard rocks. It was a hard rock mine. It tipped over and I think that was the last time they did it.

AG: Did you talk much about the mining operation of her family?

DP: No. There was a fellow that came to the museum that told all about it, everybody around the island [who mined]. I made a copy of it, but I don't know if I still have it or not. It was great, it was so interesting. It used to be a big deal here. Miner's Point, well that's one place. And the Ellison family at Horseshoe Bay, they had a mine [...] Ellison's was just kind of an angle from the mine that they [Helgason's] had, a rock line. And then Miner's Point. There is just kind of a vein there apparently.

AG: Do you know of people that mined within Uganik or Miner's Point when you were younger?

DP: No. Well there's one fellow, Fred Sullivan and he used to go out and kind of disappear for months. He'd come back with some gold and he never told us where he went. So, I guess there's gold out there if you know where to go.

AG: But by the time your family lived out there, there wasn't a lot of active mining happening?

DP: No, not on $32.50 an ounce, or $32 an ounce. I guess there was no difference. But after the World War I, I don't know what happened. But before that time, there was a lot of activity in different places, Uyak and these other spots.

AG: What other sort of economic activities were taking place on the west side when you first started going out there?

DP: Building fish traps and a small amount of trapping. I think maybe Trueman did some trapping. There wasn't a whole lot. Everything was pretty much dependent on the fishing activity in the summer and I don't know halibut fishing or anything like that or commercial fishing except salmon that I recall. Oh wait a minute there was herring. There was herring.

AG: What do you remember of the herring operations out there?

DP: Well the Uganik Fsheries was purchased by the San Juan Packing Company and they turned it into a herring processing plant. And I think they had several big herring seiners and they were like big tuna boats, same type of boat with, you know, a big top house, balcony on the front part. And the herring plant was a short operating outfit. My brother, Bud. You know Marty Owen? His dad worked there as a carpenter. Norm Sutliff's dad worked out there, too, as a carpenter, Charlie Sutliff. Then we went over there, 'cause we were living at Mush Bay, and we went over there several times to visit. What was wonderful about that plant, maybe I already told you this, it ran our water power. It had big water wheels. From the carpenter shop the electricity for the plant and [...] powered all the machinery that canned the fish all on water power. It's running away down there today […]. They had everything like San Juan. They had bunk houses. They had a big mess hall. I think I told you about how much fun it was for us kids going to mess hall and see all that food. Coffee time everybody was invited to come in and nowadays it's just falling in the bay. It's just too bad. All that water is going to waste. I was hoping that Aquaculture would consider it for awhile. I guess to clean up would be too expensive to clean it up. It'd be a great place for a hatchery because of all that good water. Lots of good water coming in.

AG: I'm wondering why or how is it that your family started setnetting? Did you learn from someone or what was the inspiration for that?

DP: Well, I'm not sure why my dad purchased it. I just have to assume he thought it would be nice for the family. Remember I was telling you living on Marmot Island in the summertime, going to school here in town, and we learned it from Katie Rogers. Actually, she never went down there. I think she just told them what to do. You set the anchors a certain way, you set the net a certain way, and so forth. I remember me, moving the oars. Nowadays they do it with power or they pull themselves out. But I was on the oars trying to, in a northeast, blowing, which is on shore. In a great big dory, I was the rower, they were throwing the net out over the stern. First time we set out I know it was a mess 'cause I didn't know what I was doing. They didn't either.

Herring plant in Uganik. P-788-6.

AG: Do you remember the first season of setnetting?

DP: Oh yeah.

AG: How did it go?

DP: We only fished end of June because there wasn't, you know, [...] I should say six cents a fish, humpies. You couldn't catch enough to make a living. In those days even a seiner didn't usually set on a school of fish unless there's a brown spot. Lots of fish were too much work.

[Jim Pearson enters the room and a brief conversation ensues regarding a future interview with him on Terror Bay and the events that took place regarding the Baumann murders]

AG: So your first season setnetting.

DP: Well, we'd take turns as kids going down there back then. There was a little cabin here. A little two room cabin between the lake and the bay and that was a beautiful spot to be in. […]

AG: And that was that West Point?

DP: Almost to West Point, part way out there. Beautiful little lake and there was always ducks on the lake and a big bear trail that went by and never did see any bears, thankfully, but we use to have to walk to the other end of the beach there to get fresh water by the bear trail. And there was a little garden down there that had rhubarb and strawberry, and I'd walk around the lake. We had to walk to the other beach because that was the beach where we could bring the nets up. […] When the season was closed at the end of the week, we had to pull the nets up on the beach and try to wash them as best as we could. In those days there weren't any power pumps. So we'd switch the nets as best we could in the water. Then we'd spend the weekend picking the seaweed out. They had to be dried because they were linen nets. Couldn't be left in the skiff like nowadays.

AG: What would happen?

DP: They'd rot away from the debris of the seaweed and the slime and all that green stuff comes up the lattice. Oh, it's getting hot in here, isn't it?

AG: It's warm.

DP: We'd go back and forth everyday […] back to Mush Bay because we had to take the fish down there to salt them. I think I explained that last week.

AG: Yes.

DP: The fish you take out the backbone and you lay it out. With the belly in the middle. Cut the head off. First thing you split down one side of the back you split down the other. Throw the backbone out, but you leave the tail. Stack them together so when it's laid out looks something like this. And you laid skin down and salted and layered up that way and […] the salt draws the moisture out of the fish so it makes its own brine.

AG: I'm wondering about the boats that you used. Who built the boats for your family or where did you acquire the boats?

DP: Well, the original boats came with the purchase of the setnet site and the house and then later on my brother built boats. There's picture of one right there.

AG: Okay. Which brother?

DP: Brother Bob. He was a carpenter. He could build good boats. So that was plywood and […] the rails was fiberglass. We didn't have any hang ups. That was the hard thing of most of the boats we always had all these snags in there. They were wooden boats. This was a regular old skiff that had ribs in the bow stem and so forth. Just like any boat. Didn't have any outboards at all so you used the oars to move around and then we took the fish down to Mush Bay to split them and put them in a power dory. It was putt-putt-putt-putt-putt. It wasn't very fast, but it was a darn good boat. Actually it was many years later I saw that boat going to sea and laid up on the beach down there on Mush Bay. There must have been a big tide came in and washed it out and I saw it out there just riding the waves as it was going out. Great skiff. Or maybe not good anymore. Engine was out of it.

AG: Were there any innovations in boat building while you were setnetting over the course of your career fishing?

DP: Well […]I don't know if anyone built a skiff like Bob did, but then they went from wood to aluminum and from aluminum they went to pick rail which was posts that set in the rail between them too and they'd bring the fish up over the rail and that was easier than hanging over the side picking them up that way. Then they put rollers on the bow and then the stern so they picked up the net and they rolled through the net. And let the fish come over the bow instead of picking them up side picking. It's a lot of work, side picking you have to […] pull it all up and get the fish out and you move up the boat pull up the next section by hand and pull all the fish out, drive through the nets so to speak. You see what I'm saying? If I get to see some in operation out there. And the next thing was power washer and wash all that seaweed and jelly fish and slime and all that stuff out. And before that we use to take it, put it up on the dock where we had, in Village Islands, to wash it out with fresh water. After that we had those power washers. Made a difference. Made it so much easier. A lot less work.

Deedie setnetting with her brother, P-776-80.

AG: When was that?

DP: Well, I suppose they started maybe late '70s, early '80s. Aluminum skiffs. I don't know when we got ours.

AG: And how about when you said, I don’t remember the words that you used, but you said bars or bar.

DP: Oh, on the picking bar?

AG: Yeah. When did that come about and how did you learn about those?

DP: Well that was […] in the aluminum boat because you had to have something to put in sockets or something. It was […] like maybe four and a half feet. I don't know. I can't remember exactly. I mean the lengths of the area that you wanted to bring the net up over had two ears sticking up so you could park the net there. And then you could pick the fish out there ‘cause the fish could be hanging. I could draw a picture and you could see.

AG: No, I understand.

DP: Then people started using this, what do you call it? Like astro turf. They’d wrap astro turf on there and then that would help clean some of the silt and stuff out. You'd be surprised what you get in the water. As you pull the net up and down so that helped keep it a little bit cleaner. And after that the first thing you in the morning is going to wash the net, wash all that stuff out. In fact before that we used to have to go down there and clear the whole net with the jellyfish because the jellyfish would be inundating the net. They'd have to pull out all it by hand with the jellyfish. Then you’d start catching some fish. So many jellyfish. Pretty to look at though. We used to call them Tooty Fruities. They'd be like butterscotch and lavender and strawberry and vanilla and it's amazing how beautiful they really are. They’re quite interesting to watch swim, too. You ever watch them swim? You know what I mean. They also sting you. So you don't like them too much, but they're a real detriment to fishing nowadays and it seems like the warmer the days are the more jellyfish you get.

AG: What sort of animals did you have out there?

DP: We always had a dog. In the early days we always had a dog ‘cause once we got established here in the ‘80s in Village Islands we had chickens. Which we brought back and forth to town. We have one here. We have a chicken house here in town. We had rabbits for a while and had a few geese. You’ll meet Wendy. You know Wendy and Harvey?

AG: No.

DP: You'll meet them. They'll be there. They are the ones that bought our site at West Point and the kids had rabbits and they had geese and chickens.

AG: […] Was there anyone living at Village Islands when you first moved out there?

DP: No, just the watchman at the West Point Cannery. He worked for Herb Dominici. Did I tell you about Herb?

AG: Yes, you did.

DP: Yep.

AG: And his small operation. Was Josie Sandvik out there at that point?

DP: She was. She owned it before she sold off to Herb. When we first went out there in the '40s. She was there. She was kind of like Herb. She did everything. Very, very, versatile strong woman. She ran the whole operation out there. I don't think her husband did a whole lot.

AG: Did she have any employees?

DP: She probably did. You know I don't remember them though I wasn't out there that often. Probably had a couple, but I don't know who they were.

AG: Was Daniel Boone Reed out there at that point?

DP: No, I think they came in '51 or '52, but I'm not positive. I don't remember the exact date.

AG: […] Could you describe Daniel Boone Reed?

DP: Well, I have some pictures somewhere of him. He looked like an Eskimo. His father was from Iowa. His mother was an Eskimo. I think they were above Kotzebue. You want more of a description?

AG: […] Maybe his personality or what he did out there?

DP: I don't wanna say really.

AG: That's fine. So I know you said your family spent summers there, correct? Did you live year-round out there when you were a child ever?

DP: No. I was in high school and we only fished that one summer '47, '48 we were in town. My dad turned over to my two brothers that came back from the war.

AG: Okay.

DP: Rob and Bob. And we moved to Anchorage, Christmas Eve in 1948 and returned in May of 1959.

AG: Okay, so it was a decade that you were away?

DP: Just about. Yeah.

AG: And what happened in that decade?

DP: I went to school. Got married. Worked for airlines. Alaska Airlines and Pacific Northern Airlines. I think my folks moved back down here 1957 and they started this little cannery. You've seen pictures of the saltery down here, haven't you?

AG: I don't know. The one at Mush Bay?

DP: Yes. Well there's all kinds of pictures of it on the site if you look up [tanginak.com]. Maybe I could do that. Remember Norman Smith?

AG: Okay.

DP: His son, Timmy, he had sent a whole bunch of pictures on there, Mush Bay as well. That one down there that you see is my dad. And on the left that's another one you'll see in there.

AG: Nice photo. […] Was your dad […] in the territorial days involved in politics?

DP: Yes. I don't know if he was elected in '49 or '48, but he served in the Territory House and in the Territorial Senate and when we became a state he ran for the senate from this district. Before Alaska was divided into four districts […]. We were the third district which included the Aleutian Chain and included Valdez. I don't think it included Fairbanks. I think that was a different one. It included Palmer and Valdez and Cordova and Kodiak and the Aleutian Chain. You can probably find it on a map that would show you what the four divisions were, but he represented the third division. When we became a state, Kodiak actually had two representatives, one from the house and one senator which represented Kodiak and the chain. The Pribilof Islands I think that was part of his district. Now you know what's happened. It's gotten all chopped up, different configurations. We lost one representative because Anchorage and Palmer gained so much population.

AG: Was he serving in the Territorial House or Senate or just would have been House, huh? The Territorial House?

DP: And the Senate.

AG: And the Senate. When your family was living in Anchorage, too?

DP: Right.

AG: So he was a representative from Anchorage and then Kodiak?

DP: It was the Third Division.

AG: Okay. It was all the same?

DP: It was all the same.

AG: Okay. What was your father's main political desires? What did he hope to achieve for the territory?

DP: He always said he worked for the working man. […] It was his desire to work for the working man and to get ready for statehood and the same type of operation we have now where there's a lot of opposition to anything that was progressive. In those days it was the same old story. So I would say he was a progressive Democrat. He got a lot for Kodiak. I remember that he got during his 'cause he was chairman on the finance committee. Which was a good place to be. In the senate he got these runways in all these villages around the island here. I remember we got a new bridge for

Karluk. And then this court house that we have, that was the Fish and Game building. And also the school system and it didn't seem to work out too well for the villages, but they wanted to be able to give the village kids a more of a broader education. Rather than just having a few teachers, they could bring the kids in for high school. They could have more of a broad selection of classes because they have more opportunities for teaching. And so, you know, you see those apartments along there by the school and where the Borough [Office Building] is now?

AG: Yes.

DP: That was all part of that school system. Kids lived with you, in those apartments as well as in homes. They brought kids down here from up north. You know, like the Arctic area. It was very hard for them. They just didn't like the rain. I mean, they weren't home. They didn't have their traditional food. It was really hard for the kids. Kids around the island here I think were fine, but it just didn't work out. We tried it for Nome and Kodiak and I don't know where the other centers were. And they limited just two students in their own area maybe. Maybe it would have worked out. But when they bring kids from up there, that was just was too much for them. And kids like to be home with their parents. I think parents like to have their kids home, so it was just hard.

AG: I'm wondering, politically of course, fish traps were a really big issue. However, your family seemed to have a very good relationship with the cannery, so how did that work to be on friendly terms with the cannery but against the fish traps?

DP: Well, I think you always have people that are on opposing sides but can get along though. I don't agree with myself all the time. I can even change my feelings about different things you know, but I mean you don't have to disagree. What am I trying to say? ’Cause you don't agree on everything together, you can still be friends. I think we find that in every aspect of our lives.

AG: What did you think of fish traps?

DP: Well from my experience they were detrimental to the local fishermen and anyone that even came up here from the lower forty-eight to fish because on Monday and Tuesday you might have a good catch, but by the end of the week there was hardly anything to catch. Fish traps, they had to stop fishing on the days they were closed so the fish had a chance to build up in the bays. But Ivan Fox, who was a favorite of everyone, superintendent of Uganik Cannery, better known as San Juan. In an interview I had with him many years ago I said, “Well you wouldn’t let us have it […] statehood,” and he said, “Yeah, because it was too expensive to build those traps up,” and they weren't getting enough money from it anymore. I think I told you that the year we became a state, 1959, was one of the poorest catch years that we'd had for many years ‘cause it was nothing left. Besides the management of the federal government wasn't too much of a hands-on thing. I mean they set the season to start a certain day and end at a certain day and that was it. Two days off and so […] it just over the many, many years. Well just like Uganik, they had a fence across the bay stopping all the fish from going up the river. Those fish died off because they couldn't reproduce and they moved on to another bay. Like logging camps, kind of.

AG: And so the year that Alaska became a state is the year that you returned to Kodiak?

DP: [Yes]

AG: Could you maybe describe what the energy was like upon statehood in Kodiak?

DP: Aleutian homes had been built I think in the early '50s. Most of them were empty. Wasn't very much call for that. I don't know why they built so many of them at the time, but they did. Some of them military people lived there and that was about it. After the tidal wave came and wiped out a lot of housing then they became occupied and became quite valuable. I think they were like twelve, fifteen thousand dollar buildings early on. I doubt you could buy one now for, I don't know, maybe a hundred thousand or more. They weren't very well-built according to what I've understood to start with. It was not particularly active, although king crab had been discovered and so forth. It wasn't a big deal. It would become right after the tidal wave. It seemed like everybody was after crab. Many boats sitting out here and fresh water pumping their crab because they wasn't any dock and there wasn't any facilities to have their product purchased. King Crab was the only one that was left after the tidal wave. You probably know that, but it didn't take long for the enterprising people to get going here. They brought in a lot of floaters, like the *Kalakala*, or several that were barges like the one in Port Bailey down there by International Seafoods plant on the water front. Everything on that water front had been wiped out. There was a cold storage. There was a government dock. There was the Erskine dock. It was a clam cannery and that was all wiped out, just clean, and everything on there except the old Russian dock. That was it. I had photos but I took it down. Alice [Reyser, museum archivist] has copies of it. I'd say Kodiak was pretty quiet because the Navy was, I don't think it was called the Navy Base anymore. It was more like, I forgot the terminology they had. It wasn't a base so to speak anymore, didn't see any big ships. It wasn't till the Coast Guard took over again we started seeing big boats coming in here. Shouldn't say again. The ship took over and I think that was like in the late '60s, early '70s. In fact, the Base looked pretty pitiful. The big hanger you drive by on the way to Bells Flats, there were broken windows in it, needed paint, it looked terrible. The Coast Guard has been able to get enough money, thanks to Ted Stevens, to fix it up and refurbish it. Well once king crab became king, it really went to town around here. That's when things began to roar and the housing became very short supply and I think they […] decided not to talk to some of the people about king crabbing, but I think ten cents a pound was what they got for it at first. Imagine that today. (*chuckle*) I think that's what it was.

AG: And why did you return to Kodiak?

DP: My mom and dad invited us to come over and join them in the cannery business out there.

AG: Why did you decide to do that?

DP: Good question. Sounded like fun to get back to Kodiak. I was working for Pacific Northern Airlines. I had a good job, but I don't know, just sounded like an inviting thing to do. Besides when your parents ask you to do something you usually do it, right? It was probably part of it.

AG: So it was you and your husband?

DP: Yes.

AG: Who was your husband?

DP: Wayne Hans.

Wayne Hans. P-776-25.

AG: And could you maybe describe returning to Mush Bay after all those years?

DP: Well my dad purchased a boat […], a cannery tender.

[…]

AG: Okay so you were about to describe returning to Mush Bay after all those years?

DP: Well, we loaded up this cannery tender 'cause we brought a lot of our household goods over on the airlines. And we loaded up the cannery tender and went out there and it was beautiful getting into Mush Bay. I hope you get down there. It is one gorgeous place especially in May and June. The roses bloom all around the bay and it just smells so sweet and nice it's a wonderful place. Uganik River it flows into it. There's a little island to the right of the house. We loved going out there and walking around the island. And the Rohrer Bear Camp, which was the Madsen camp at that time. Did you find out […] why he [Roy Madsen] was the headman?

AG: Yes.

DP: Pretty cute huh?

AG: Um-huh.

DP: And we used to find the bear trap they had. They were big traps. […] They were built out of wood and they would entice a bear to go in and the door would fall down. Kind of like that trap out there for the squirrel. There were at least two of those traps in the area. I think Charlie Madsen used to trap maybe young bears. I remember, in their yard, I think there were four little bears one time. He shipped them off to the zoo. I have a picture of Germaine Madsen if you'd like.

AG: Very nice.

DP: That's one of his sisters. Roy Madsen's sisters. She and I were in […] class together. One of my first friends when I came to Kodiak and I was in third grade. They lived in the Sunbeam Hotel which was. You probably have pictures of that down at the Museum. And the top floor was her doll, her play room and I went up there and oh my gosh she had so many dolls I couldn't believe it like

going into a store. It was wonderful. All buggies and dolls and clothes and we had lots of fun playing up there with her.

AG: How close was the Madsen Bear Camp to your family's place?

DP: An easy walk. I don't know. Down the beach a ways. We use to go down and dig clams out down the beach in the summer time. Alf Madsen was running the camp at the time. That's when one of his older brother. Did he tell you about Alf?

AG: [Yes]

DP: Well, he was a pilot and he use to park his plane right in front of the house. We had lots of nice conversation with him. He'd come in and have coffee with us. Not with me, it was my family. And that was always fun to see him and he was always working on the camp making it a little bit better. We used to walk down there every day just to go for a walk. We'd look at the camp […]. I don't think it's ever been broken into that I know of, but just kinda looked at it every day. You walk around the island. It's a beautiful place down there in the summer time. […] Wintertime it's a little different because the ridge behind is so high that the sun doesn't get down. You can see it across the bay, but you [...] have no sunshine. So my folks had already started building out at Village Island. I can show you where that is on the map.

AG: Over here?

DP: Behind the big island. I can't see it.

AG: Here.

DP: Big island at the north end.

AG: They started building a cannery or a house?

DP: A cannery and I think I mentioned before when they disassembled the traps, they just let everything go and they had a lot of planks they used for various [things]. I don't know what exactly they were all for. Have you seen the one [model fish trap] that's out there on the display at the college?

AG: Yes.

DP: You've got an idea of what they're like then. Anyway then […] my dad went around […], Daniel Boone helped him, and they went around the bay and they collected all these planks and they'd put a staple in, so when they came in they had a long, long tow of planks coming in and that's what they built it out of. It was small. Not very big at all. But it did serve its purpose.

AG: Could you describe the cannery?

DP: Well, the cans were filled by hand by my mom and all of them were hand packed. The first year we just had a regular sealer like you'd have at home. Second year we had a vacuum pump that would

seal and also make a vacuum in the can which is much better because when you do hand pack you have to— and my dad was kind of an innovator because he'd had lumber mills and shingle mills, things like that, so he knew about belts and pullies and all that sort of thing. Anyway he got this steamer and we used it for a cooker. It had three levels and we could cook seven cases at a time. Fifty cans in a case. The second or third year we were there, we put up eight hundred cases, a lot of fish packed by hand. My dad was a butcher and I was a slimmer and I'd slime them all. We'd hold them over night and they'd drain really well and then we cut 'em up the next morning. […] In the first couple of years I had this hand cutter, big blades on it, and I'd fillet the fish on this section and then I'd have to pull the handle down-crunch. Big reds took a lot of energy to crunch them, cut them up. And eventually we were mechanized. We had a power cutter so I didn't have to do that anymore.

AG: When was it mechanized?

DP: When? Gradually.

AG: And what did you call the canning operation?

DP: Uganik Trading Company. It's in your book. [Pat Roppel's book]

AG: Who fished for you?

DP: My brother and my husband. If we had a hundred, a hundred twenty-five [salmon] a day that was good. That was all that we could handle. Occasionally, we'd get a hundred and fifty.

AG: And were they setnetting or seining or how did they get the fish?

DP: Setnetting. We had the setnets until the time we sold them to Wendy and Harvey.

AG: So at that point you were still at the same set net site that you'd purchased from the Danielsons?

DP: [Yes] And now instead of bringing the fish to Mush Bay for the saltery operation you brought it to the trading company for hand pack.

DP: That's right. I'd say one reason they moved up there is because the water was so much better. They had more of a steady supply of water.

AG: Why was water important?

DP: You gotta have lots of water when you're working with fish. And the supply there at Mush Bay wasn't very good. It had limitations to it and where we are now we had a water wheel. It generated electricity. Several springs and stream. There's one stream and several springs. So we have excellent water there now.

AG: Who would you sell the cans to?

DP: A&P Stores bought them mostly. See this little lagoon right here? That's where we are in that lagoon.

AG: Okay.

DP: That's it right there.

AG: A&P Stores?

DP: They use to be popular. I don't know if they're still are anymore, but San Juan would give us a big help. They always came over and picked up our pack or we took it over there, one way or the other, and they'd take it to town. Ivan was very good to us. Without him I don't know if we could have operated because we were dependent on them for a lot help.

AG: Why did your parents decide to open their own cannery?

DP: They wanted to do it. I don't know why. My dad liked […] mechanized things, I think. He missed his lumber mill. All the belts and the pulleys and all that stuff running. I don't know, he never did say really. I don't know. Something he just wanted to do. Actually they were processing some crab up there in Mush Bay before they moved out to Village Islands and they did some salmon up there, too. Mom would, just the two of them.

AG: And at the Uganik Trading Company, what did you process?

DP: Fish. Salmon. Just salmon

AG: Reds? Pinks?

DP: Well, we preferred to do the reds and occasionally somebody would slip one dog in on us or something you know, then we'd can that for ourselves, but we didn't can pink except for our dog.

AG: And what sort of label did you have?

DP: That was put on by the store that bought it. We didn't have a label.

AG: […] your parents, they processed salmon and crab. Could you maybe describe the difference?

DP: Well, crab's a lot of work. You gotta pick all that out you don't have mechanism. Jim could tell you about crabbing because he built machinery down there for King Crab that would separate the shells from the crab meat and so forth and so on. He can tell you a lot about that 'cause he worked down there. That's before I knew him. He can tell you a lot about crabbing.

AG: How […] was Uganik different when you went back ten years later?

DP: I wouldn't say too much different. The cannery was about the same. Same people were running it. I was an adult and that makes a difference, but I was still a kid around mom and dad (*chuckle*). It was great to be back, but we did live out there the year round though. We built a house. That

cannery tender I told you about? After we finished packing that first year we came into town to pick up our building material. We got it all from Norm Sutliff, and actually, the Sunbeam Hotel had been renovated and the windows that were in there were in Norm's shop. […] You know where Sally's Eyeland is? That was his shop there. That was his hardware store at that time. He built that building. Set a big Paul Bunyan sign up there and we bought those windows. I think they were about thirty dollars apiece or something so I had those windows in out there until the bear broke most of them out. But we got […] everything on there including a furnace, a floor furnace, insulation, tar paper, plywood, all the structures, the two by fours, the two by tens, and so forth, all on the boat. When we came to Uganik Pass and we hit a rock and it sank, eventually. It doesn't show it but its right in this area. So that was a big deal trying to get all that material off before the boat sank.

AG: […] What did you do?

DP: Well, my dad got on the radio. We had a two-way radio on there and he called RA Flying Service and Bill Harvey said, "I'll be right out." He came out with his Supercub and he stopped there and he picked up Mom and he took her to Mush Bay. Came back and got me and he took me to Mush Bay and then two friends, Fred Sullivan who had a home over here. About right here I guess. And the Helgasons. They both had little seine boats out there. They lived there year round. They came and picked up the supplies off the boat. Most everything was saved. Even the widows were saved. The only thing that we lost really was a lot of the insulation 'cause it was rock wool and it just soaked up the water and was gone. We took it over there and piled it up and so then, must have had a skiff or something. I don't know how we got off the reef. We lived in trap shack, that trap shack that's right there? We had two of them on the dock. Every year we'd expand a little bit and the trap shack was our cook shack and we had another one which was my mom and dad where they slept, in the front, and my husband and I slept in the cannery on camp cots. They're building the house that's up there. You can see the house when you go by. Maybe you'll stop there.

AG: Who lives there now?

DP: Well, Jason owns it and he has a worker out there named another Jason Cottle living out there. Right behind it. In that lagoon is a little cabin that Tim built for a fellow named Ron Dunlap. This and that he lives there year round, in that lagoon in that cabin.

AG: Were there other people that were setnetting when you returned to Uganik in 1959?

DP: Yes, they were out there at Pineapple Cove which is around the corner there at Miner's Point. They weren't that far down. Yeah, they probably were. People were there, but they were fishing for the other side. Only know ones that were fishing for this side.

AG: What's the other side mean?

DP: Larsen Bay. You know I guess there might have been people out there already. I don't know. Somebody around the corner there called it Pineapple Cove. They were pineapple brothers.

AG: Here?

DP: I don't think it was. That's too far. More this way towards Miner's Point.

AG: Who was fishing at Pineapple Cove?

DP: Well their names were Anderson. They were Hilder Olsen's uncles. You know Hilder?

Nan and Dan Reed. P-776-55.

AG: [No]

DP: There was somebody fishing on Miners Point, Broken Point, East Point, and us at West Point and that was it. Nobody else except maybe the Ellison's. Maybe they were fishing on the other side.

AG: Was it the same people who were fishing there before or was it new people?

DP: I didn't really know who was fishing there before. I just know the sites where everybody fish. And Nan and Dan Reed were living down here in Village Islands. They had a homestead. Nan was a wonderful person. Everybody loved Nan. She'd have done anything for anybody. Well, Dan was very generous in his way, too. Generous people. They'd help wherever they could.

AG: Could you give me an example?

DP: Well, every time I went down you took something home in your hand, you know, some kind of something they made in their garden or something Nan would put in a jar or something like that and if either one knew that you needed help they'd be right there. Of course they got a lot of help too. My dad, we used to go down and help them do their wood, cut grass, put up hay for their animals. They had a lot of animals. They had cattle. They had sheep. They had angora goats. They had milk goats. Had donkeys. They had geese, ducks, goldfish and birding dogs. They had everything. It was an interesting place. Dan was good at planting rhubarb. He'd make a great big hole, he'd fill it up with a lot of fish gurry and he'd plant the rhubarb, and my gosh, they would be this high. Nick Berestoff and Larry Ure lived down there with them and a fellow by the name of Chief Asiksick. I think you have a sled down at the museum built by him. He used to live with us there and he started building us sleds when he lived with me. I don't have one right now. I gave it away, but I had several at one time. He'd see a cedar bolt on the beach and then in about a month or two you'd see a sled. It's such a long process, if you ever get a sled I hope you cherish it because, man, what a job. Sand it all. Sometimes he'd come up and he'd take those struts you know along the bottom like that. He'd just break it, put them in and we'd have a little fire and he'd put it in and I asked, "Chief, what are you doing?" "Well they weren't right." He was very particular. His dad was a sled maker up in their village at Satolik and so he learned to make them. They'd make toy sleds. He learned from a craftsman. He had to have everything perfect.

Chief Asicksik. P-986-74.

AG: Why did he move to Village Islands?

DP: Well he was living over here with Fred Sullivan and they did a lot of partying. I mean he wanted to get away from that so he came over and started living with us. So he helped a lot around there. He was a great guy. Go out duck hunting. He could bring in a duck and put it on the table or in the kitchen there looked like something came out of a butcher shop. Fin, feathers and everything would be out of there. It'd just be beautiful. Go rabbit hunting, same thing. Everything'd be ready to put in the frying pan.

AG: Who was Fred Sullivan?

DP: Well, he was a World War II vet. I think he went through the Okinawa battle. I liked Fred a lot. He was a nice guy, just had an alcohol problem like a lot of people that lived out there did. Later on he was shot by a watchman that worked at the herring plant.

AG: Could you repeat that?

DP: Do I have to?

AG: You said he was shot?

DP: Yeah, he was killed. A lot of people were killed out there during this time.

AG: Do you know why?

DP: Alcohol. Partying. You get along fine, then they start to party and then they wouldn't get along. I know a lot incidences where they'd perish because of it. Mike Gerasimoff was one. You really wanna record it?

AG: The what?

DP: You really want to record all this gooey stuff?

AG: I think so. It's definitely a part of the history.

DP: Yes, it's all because of alcohol. They used to do a lot of drinking down there at the West Point Cannery. There was three guys that lived down there. Do you want me to give names too?

AG: Sure. It's up to you what you want to share, but it's all information I think's just valuable for the history of the West Side.

DP: Yeah, just do without names. Is that okay?

AG: Yes. Whatever you would prefer.

DP: Well they were all great guys. We enjoyed them all. We had very fine times with them. We used to have them up for dinner and Christmas, things like that. Often have tea and cookies or cake or pie or whatever. They took some home 'cause you can't eat it all, you'd take some home. But they had an alcoholic problem and it's kind of a— The thing that once you bought your groceries for the winter and your new boots and your new socks and whatever ever else you needed and maybe a new kicker or whatever and the rest of it was for drinking I guess. Just two slabs of bacon and a bunch of onions and potatoes and you had your salt fish so […] you were set. Rest of it was for drinking. […] They would charter plane, bring it in with quarts of Seagram. It got so bad down there sometimes they'd be laying on the floor. We went down to pick up the mail one time and the watchman was laying on the floor and he woke up enough, he crawled over to the table and poured himself another drink and laid back on the floor. Anyway, Mike Gerasimoff who was from out westward, they said he was a native from out westward, […] they'd always kind of criticize Mike, but once they started drinking then he was salia, which means brother. He was coming back from Ted's [Pestrikoff] one

night, tide was in, he just didn't make it around the cliff. Drowned. Another one when we were building our house up there everybody was gone for the day [to the] cannery to pick up freight that had come in. And two of them came down my way. These are different guys. Actually one was Mike. And they stopped on the beach. I was sleeping on the trap shack. I went out on the dock and talked to them. Said they were going on a picnic, did I want to go with them. But I said, "No, I've got things I need to do, thank you, but anyway, no thanks." So later on that afternoon here they came. I could see Mike standing up in the skiff and I'd gone up to the house which is up on the little knoll, I could see them coming. I only see one of them. I thought oh well, other guy's probably laying down in the skiff. But he's very slow in getting there and he came up to the house, knocked on the door and I didn't answer the door, didn't have any door knobs in either, but he never tried to come in thankfully. He was standing out there. "I wanted you to help me put this dead man in the skiff, but you won't come out." I thought well he's probably passed out on the beach or something, oh my gosh. So he was rolling around down there a lot for a long time. Finally he took off and later on in the evening we saw a lantern coming up. This was in probably September, first of October. It's dark at night. There was a trail that came from Daniel Boone homestead up to our place here and I saw this lantern moving and I thought, "Gee, I wonder what there're coming up here for." He said Mike had sobered up. He came back and he said that Danny fell overboard and he was trying to tow him and the rope broke and so he was out there by the morning, that's where he'd been fooling around. They decided they had to stay at the house all night. Next morning, sure enough they went out there and they fished him out.

AG: Danny who?

DP: I can't remember his last name. I think it was Boskofsky, but I wouldn't swear it up. I really don't know. I don't remember. Lots of sad stories. Then the little cannery down there was sold.

AG: Is this the West Point cannery?

DP: [Yes]

AG: Is that the same one that was the Josie Sandviks and then it belonged to Herb Dominici?

DP: [Yes]

AG: Okay.

DP: And this gentleman I think he was associated with the University of Washington. I don't remember the name. They may still own the property, but anyway he had a lot of buildings down there. He tore down some of the old buildings and put up a new cookhouse and bunkhouse and they looked really nice. They were nice people, but they had a bad pack the second year they were there that wiped them out.

AG: What's that mean to have a bad pack?

DP: Well, their tenderman wasn't very good about keeping their fish fresh and he maybe bought old fish and then fooled around getting it to the dock or something. I'm not sure what the whole story is now. So they put a watchmen there and his name was Mel I don't remember his last name, but it

went on for several years. They didn't get any money. He didn't get paid so he just started selling everything. What he couldn't sell, he burned down. Eventually there wasn't anything left there but a few posts. So he slept under a tree that night after he'd burned everything down and went over on the big island. There was a cabin over here. He went and stayed in somebody's cabin on this island. Stayed in the smokehouse I think. Eventually, he moved to the herring plant. Right here. San Juan herring. It's about a mile between these two. Family out there now is Pingrees, who have built a beautiful lodge about right here. It's a gorgeous place. It's beautiful. This is so well articulated in every way, the Pingrees.

AG: And so that was the end of the West Point Packing, huh?

DP: Yep.

AG: How about your family's hand-pack operation. How long did that continue?

DP: Well, when the tidal wave came along that was another story. You wanna hear that?

AG: Yes.

DP: Well, I had a good friend who was a teacher here in town and her name was Melissa Stevens. And my brother, Bob, brought her out there for the weekend and it was. […] Anyway it was Easter weekend and we came out on Good Friday. It was a beautiful day. We walked down to Ted Pestrikoff's. Like I say, those guys are so neat when they are sober. They're wonderful people teaching us the Aleut language. Course Nick Berestoff, he would say one way and Ted would say another. One was from Afognak and one was from Ouzinkie. […]

AG: Where was the Pestrikoff place?

DP: It was at the end of the islands here. The little cove.

AG: Okay.

DP: I have pictures of where there used to be a Russian Church there. Have you seen those pictures? They have them over at the Alutiiq Museum. There's three guys standing there with them with a big kayak.

AG: Okay. Yeah.

DP: Have you see that?

AG: [Yes]

DP: That's where that house was.

AG: Okay. I'm sorry, please continue with the story.

DP: Okay, we walked down there 'cause it was a nice walk, a beautiful day like today, only it was March, of course. He brought us home in his little speed boat which was an Ophiem dory. You know about them? We were having tea and cookies or something like that. He got up to walk to the kitchen. About the time we started shaking, he said, 'I feel like I'm getting drunk," and he just told us all about 1912. So we're ready for another disaster, you know. He said 1912 the kids were all excited because the tide went way out and the kids were running down the beach and he yelled and told them, "Get up here right now. It's gonna come back very quickly." So they ran for their lives and they got up there in time. Nobody was lost. He said something about the little birds, you know, they were on— I don't wanna talk about that, I guess. But anyway, he is making comments and after we quit shaking we started looking around to see if any water lines were broken or water lines or anything like that. Everything seemed to be okay. So I started fixing dinner. You know when you have company you start thinking about the next meal and so forth, so I started cooking dinner and my brother, Bob, always liked to listen to the news so we turned on the radio and it was silent. Turned up to the next station, Anchorage station, one we listened to, we had an aerial that would bring it into us. No sound, nothing. Well, this is strange. All three of 'em and now we can't get anybody? That's really weird. So went over to our little two-way radio which nowadays we call them side-band. They were not a side-band as I explained earlier and I called Kodiak. No answer. Called Kodiak Western. I called Bill Harvey. No answer. I changed over to a high frequency where I could hear a tower in King Salmon talking, and they said the tower at the Anchorage airport collapsed. We knew it was wide spread but we didn't know. That's all we heard. So I kept the radio tuned in just in case we'd hear something later, but then we started noticing all these big whirlpools out front, the tide coming and going, big big whirlpool. Talked to our neighbors that were over at the cannery, the Wagners. Kay and Dan Wagner were the watchmen over there and I think Kelly and Natalie Simeonoff were over at the herring plant. Used to keep watchmen down there until the place started falling apart. Then something happened to the house. Something burned down the cabin they lived in, so that was the end of that for watchmen. And so about eight-thirty, nine o'clock we started getting reports on the radio of Anchorage. The people were calling and saying we're okay and we're okay, we're okay, we're okay. There wasn't any communication. They were just hoping somebody would pick it up outside. Someone else would hear the radio station, know that that family was okay. So I used to listen to that frequency quite a bit. It was 32-0-1. […] I used to talk to the cannery on that 'cause it was kind of a private one. 24-50, everybody could listen on the radio in the area, you know, so you didn't have any privacy, so I talked on 32-0-1 and they'd say, "What happened to you? I don't hear you no more?" Anyway, 32-0-1 was more private, but I turned over to that one and I heard then Rainy Pass Lodge calling their counterpart in Anchorage. And they said, "How you doing? We're okay," and so on and so forth. And so I called the Rainy Pass Lodge. See that's how good those radios were. That's a long ways from here. It must be eight, nine hundred miles, maybe even further. They could hear me and I said, 'Would you please ask them, check on the Jones family?" Gave them their phone number and sure enough they answered their phone and said they were okay, so that was great. Mom and Dad were in Juneau 'cause the legislature was in session and they didn't know what happened to any of us at that point. Then pretty soon the ACS, which was Alaska Communication System, which was, not sure if it was the state government that sponsored it or what it was, but anyway they had an operator up there who would get weather from all of us twice a day, nine o'clock and four o'clock in the afternoon, and they came on and the operator said, "Kodiak's all gone. It's all washed away. There's nothing left." They got a generator up there so they could talk to everybody around the island. So everybody around the island started answering them saying they're okay, they're okay. Zacher Bay, Karluk, and Larsen Bay, and Olga Bay, and Old Harbor. In Kitoi Bay everybody was fine at that point, but then I could see the tide was coming in

and out every half an hour or so. Everybody's kind of tired, so Melissa was especially tired. She was a school teacher. She had something like three hundred students. She taught French from the fourth grade on, or third through high school. She had three classes of French in High School. She went to bed at eight o'clock, something like that, and so the rest of us we're sitting around listening and then finally everybody else decided they were tired and I said, "I'm just gonna stay up and watch." It was a moonlight night. You could see the tide coming up and down, up and down. I could see well the next time it was gonna come over the dock. So I got them up and we all went down there and we picked up everything we could, put it up on benches or tables or something, but when it came in the next time, the planks were about that thick and it came up about, we had this much freeboard. I was very grateful for that. It came into the cannery over there and it got into all their retorts. It got into all the boats that were up on the ways. In those days everybody had a Chrysler Crown Engine. They were all wooden boats so they had the plug pulled out 'cause they were up high, way above the tidal currents, or you know, the tide, they wanted to do that, let the rain water just drain through. You get water in boats in the winter time it pushes corking out if you let them accumulate water because then it freezes, it pushes them out. You keep the plugs pulled. And at West Point Packing I think he had about four feet of water inside of his [cannery]. We didn't have any. We were so grateful and thankful for that. It went down and that was the end of that. The winter came, big tides and big northeaster storms, then we did get a lot of water started to run. It would splash through this bay. The tide was, the waves would come through, it'd splash, so we had to take the whole thing down and build it up.

AG: Take what down?

DP: Take the buildings down and longer pilings and build it back up again.

AG: And that was because Kodiak sunk?

DP: Yep. I don't know how much it was. We hear different stories. I don't know what the official is. It's like a teeter totter. We went down, we went up. Over in Cordova, the docks were too high. They weren't useful anymore. Had to dig out their boat harbor. Nice over there again though, but the way it was. So Daniel Boone came down and worked on that and Chief was there and he worked on that. So did my husband. He worked on it. I was a cook.

AG: Where was the West Point Packing Company? Right by Ted Pestrikoff's place or?

DP: Yeah. This slot spot right about here.

AG: Right around here? So at that point there were two canneries that were working at Village Islands?

DP: [Yes]

AG: And then there was the San Juan [Cannery].

DP: Right. That's the big operator over here. I don't know how many cases he put up. It probably tells you in that book you have down there. But he'd get over a thousand fish a day and he had three

guys that butchered for him. Mike Gerasimoff was one of them. He had, I think, I don't know if he had three Filipinos or two. I can't remember now. Like I said there was three, but I'm not sure.

AG: Do you remember them at all?

DP: I just remember one was called Joe and that's all I remember. He was a head guy. Many years ago they use to do a lot of nice thing. They made me a wooden spoon out of cedar and carved it out. It was a very nice one for bread.

AG: What sort of living did you make? Was it a good way to make a living having that cannery?

DP: No. It was adequate. Then my folks left though. They went to Washington D.C. My dad's job with the UN and so we didn't—. Then after that we only canned maybe a couple times after that, commercially.

AG: When did you end?

DP: '67, '68. Probably something like that. Then I came to town. Norm Sutliff called me up on this. Well, I didn't finish explaining about ACS. You could make telephone calls with it. So I could call my folks. I could call anywhere. Then they gave telegrams. You don't hear about telegrams anymore do we? And then our reports were sent over the radio. Anyway he called me up and said, "Can you come in and work in the store until Christmas time?" I said, "Well I guess so." Came in and worked for about a month and I thought after Christmas I'd go back home and he said well, "Peggy, Norm, we haven't had a vacation for twenty years. Could you stay with Barbara?" She lived right next door here. She was staying with my brother who owned the cabin that my folks had had before we moved to Anchorage. I said, "Sure, I guess so." So I stayed there and then when Peggy couldn't come home because of her dad's illness, I think I ended up staying about till April. I helped Barbara with cooking and so forth until she came home, I'm not sure of the date. And so that's […] that's the end of that one. Next fall, he called up, "Can you come in and work through Thanksgiving"? or something like. "Sure." I ended up working there for twenty-seven years.

AG: At Sutliff's?

DP: Yeah and fishing in the summer time.

AG: So when was it that you moved back to town for the winters or was it this whole time that you would come to town or did you live out at Village Islands year round?

DP: I lived out there until I started working at Sutliff's.

AG: Okay.

DP: I don't exactly remember what year that was. Sorry.

AG: That's fine. Can you tell me what it was like in the winter?

DP: Well the winters weren't too bad, but […] we use to get a lot of terrible southwest wind out there. That's the wind that you know picks up water here in town. That one used to blow a lot so that was kind of bad. Other than that it was a nice place to be. We had lots of wonderful friends out there. We used to go over and visit with cannery watchmen and his wife over there and stay for a few days and she would go over and stay for a few days and Natalie Simeonoff and her husband were out there for a part of the time and then Ted and Mike and those guys and Nick they were great, and Dan and Nan were wonderful people. So winter time was good, but I guess I did feel like I wasn't contributing very much in the [...] winter time out there.

AG: Did you have children out there?

DP: I don't have any children. There weren't any kids out there that I know of.

AG: What would you do? What sort of activities beyond visit?

DP: Cook, clean. First few years we didn't have hot water in the house. We'd have to start the boiler up in the cannery and get the hot water that way. Didn't have hot water for the soap in those days. It was that brown soap. Maybe forget all those things that have improved, you know and just use cold water for washing clothes.

AG: You washed clothes by hand?

DP: We actually had a washing machine. Maytag washer. Our neighbors had goats. I remember one time I hung all the sheets and things under the house, but we ran out of plywood when we built the house, using what was left over. I told you about the boat going down. Anyway, there was a gap, probably like this or something, under the house. We didn't have anything to cover it up with. Then the goats went under there and the billy goats smelled just terrible, oh my gosh. Ever been around a billy goat?

AG: Yes.

DP: He used to put two or three of them on one island by themselves and you'd just go by in the skiff and you almost had to hold your nose then it was so strong, oh my gosh. Anyway he went running [sound of eating] on my clothes under the house. So we just got some boards, just any kind of boards, just to keep them from going under there. But there were three nannies that adopted us for that winter. That wind would start to blow and they'd run around the house. They'd put their feet up on the big picture windows. Like that one, look in, and then they'd run around and come back. Then they'd go up on the porch and they'd put their feet up on the door and look in. "I want in the house. Please let us in." Oh my gosh. I remember one time there was kind of lull in the wind and I could hear a bell tingling under the house. Well they pulled those boards off under the house. They weren't so bad. But the billy goats were something else. And you'll meet most everybody. You're gonna meet Sue and Dan Ogg and Myricks and all those great people. Dave Little and anyway you'll meet them all. They're the modern people there out there nowadays. Most of them been there for years.

AG: So when was it that Slim Trueman started grubstaking people out there?

DP: I'm not sure the the real date, but very late ‘60s, ‘70s, in there somewhere. He got a lot of sites going that wouldn’t be going today if he hadn’t started. Like the one down in Cannon's Lagoon is one of them.

AG: The what?

DP: Cannon's Lagoon. Doesn't look like much, but it's a big lagoon. Yeah.

AG: Cannon's Lagoon?

DP: Um-huh. I’ll tell you where the site was. It was right here. We called it Surf City. Cannons lagoon was where there was a trap. That's the location of the trap, I don't know because all I could see was this sticking out. With the rowboat, we didn't go too far, you know. Came out there a long ways and there were traps. Trap Six is where Myricks are. You know them? Daylight Harbor. And Sue and Dan Jeffrey, they call it Bear Garden. It’s kind of neat. Beautiful place. Well, I hope you get over there. Now the iris are probably I don't know if they’re in bloom yet, but they have iris and skunk cabbage and they are a beautiful combination. Skunk cabbage is not real common, but it is on that island, at their place. And we use to go hiking a lot. Tried to do something on Sundays so Sunday would be special. Not just another day of cooking.

AG: Was there changes in the fishing after ‘64 that you noticed?

DP: Well, I think there were a lot more boats and the fiberglassed boats were becoming very popular and my brother Fred had a boat. On the weekends where we had his family, there were five on his boat, and his crew were four on his boat. I just had one person like my brother fishing with me. They were all at the house. I didn’t get around much on the weekends, whenever there was closer ‘cause we had lots of cooking to do and we had to provide them with goodies for the whole week. In fact, Jim used to fish down in south arm quite a bit. So one day there wasn’t much fish in the net and I asked him why don’t we go down to see what Jim was doing. Well let’s stop and take him a pie. I took him a pie. Took it way down the south arm to say hi. Oh boy I got in a deal they had a pie that one of the crewman’s wives, Ronnie Fadaoff. Ronnie Fadaoff lived on the outside of these islands facing south arm.

AG: So over here? Over here?

DP: Um-huh. She had sent a pie out. They hadn’t eaten the pie already given them. They took another pie. I call it Pie Point. I think that's it. I call it Pie Point. He used to fish there a lot and he'd fish out on Miner’s Point. We were married in ‘81. Jim and I were married in ’81. He had a nice boat called the *Dawn Mist*. Jason bought that, too, and he bought the house out there and the property. [...] Ivan's daughter, Christy Allen, had a site here. Nice place and then there's a site here, here and here. There's three sites along here.

Jim and Deedie Pearson, newlywed, 1981. P-776-39.

AG: So what was that made it so that there were so many more setnet sites?

DP: Well, they took over a lot of the seining spots that people that are there now they don't realize the difference it makes for the seiners. These places were all places that they hauled. Seiners used to haul here and here and all over the place they used to haul. Never did it at our place 'cause we already had setnets. I don't know was the water too deep. I never did see anybody even try to haul there. You know what I mean by making a haul? Uganik Island. Same way. Noisy Island area out there by— there's two, three sites there and the people don't realize now that that's for seine spot. East Point, used to haul here. Hold the hook. You know how the seiner works? Hold the hook and then they circle up. That made a big difference in the seine. The other thing I think made a big difference is the canneries didn't want these humpies that looked like they were ready for the river. Used to be the black humpies were okay and they'd school up in these bays like Mush Bay there'd be big. Just black humpies and they're not very good they're mostly gristle. You've seen them up the stream. Canneries didn't want that anymore. They had to catch them out there while they're fresh and good out on the capes. Most the fishing nowadays is done out on a cape. But before that I remember one year I came to town for a going away party for somebody that was leaving Sutliff's. Norm said, "I'll fly you out the next morning." Norm Sutliff, he had a little plane there in the hangar on Mission Lake. We came in and he said, "You ever been to Uganik Lake?" I said, "No, I never

have." He said, "Do you wanna see it?" and I said, "Sure." So we landed there. Why this doesn't show very much, does it?

AG: I think it's just not on the map.

DP: It's right up here. So we landed there and then we took off and my golly I counted seventy boats out here. There was lots around the Spit across everywhere, just this part closed. Like this I guess. That was kinda the end of that. They don't fish down there like that anymore. You could still go into the Spit but. You can ask Jeanne about that.

AG: Okay.

DP: Jeanne's the one that has a place in Mush Bay now behind this island right here. Here where it says saltery, that's Katie's old place.

AG: Why is it called Mush Bay?

DP: I don't know.

AG: And was the land that you purchased patented land?

DP: Down here?

AG: Yeah, 'cause I know that a lot of—.

DP: No, it isn't. We didn't know that. We thought it was. My dad wouldn't have purchased it had he known it wasn't. People had gentleman's agreement in those days and, Alaska Packers, we presumed they owned it. And they presumed they owned it. My dad said, "Sure that's okay. You can live there. We don't care." What they owned was out here. This is called Smith's Beach. Why it's called Smith's Beach, I don't know. When there was a lot of people on the spit they started calling it Mission Beach. "Why you call it Mission beach?" I said, "Well, because Reverend Smith, [they] said. That was Smith's Beach long before he knew about this place. I'm trying to get it converted back to Smith's Beach. It's just like Lily Lake out here. That's not Lily Lake. That's Big Lake. You know, where the planes land?

AG: And so the APA owned Smith's Beach, but […] your dad thought that they owned the property that you purchased.

DP: Right. And then Jeanne, I gave her all that information. I was hoping that she'd work with Congress and get the land just like Clara [Helgason] did over here [in Terror Bay], she somehow got the land. Well, the land was open. We could've filed on it, but we didn't know it wasn't privately owned. You know when they set the refuge in 19—, what was it, '41? '42? Something like that. We could've filed on it then and had a home site. My brother filed on down here where the cabin was and he had six acres there. Could have filed on it because then in 1958, I think '58, […] that two miles strip was open for entry. All around this refuge. They withdrew that. So that meant my dad didn't know that either was happening so he went down to file on it after he'd put that little structure

up the beginning of our cabin. He said, “Sorry, we’ll have to give you a lease because we own it now."

AG: That was the refuge?

DP: Yep. Twenty year lease that didn't take very long to run out, but I was able to swap that six acres that my brother, bought that from him, and I was able to swap it. Where the place where Hazel has her cabin out there and where our place was, is. Took a long time but they [Wildlife Refuge] were willing to do that because they wanted to take anything out of the refuge as they couldn't consolidate people into a certain area like the Village Islands instead of having them all over the place. I know it's patented land out there at Miners Point and Broken Point.

AG: How? Do you know?

DP: I heard it was to do with soldier’s script. Of course Miners Point they might have filed on that too and it was a mine in the ‘20s and ‘30s. I don't know.

AG: What do you mean soldiers script? Because I've heard of this before, but I don't understand how that works.

DP: I don't either. Might cruise on the internet and see what they say. I think it was a payment sort of for World War I probably. I don't know, that’s just my guess for it. No facts behind it. Just guessing.

AG: Well ‘cause I've heard that too. I've heard that Slim had World War I script.

DP: Yeah.

AG: What do you remember of Slim Trueman?

DP: I never did have a conversation with him. I'd see him going by in his skiff a lot. He'd go down to the cannery ‘cause he used to work for Herb Dominici.

AG: And he'd fish for Herb?

DP: Uh-huh. […] I never got to know him. I never did. He never stopped to see us or anything. Never got acquainted with him. But I knew Matrona. Ever heard of Matrona?

AG: I have. Could you tell me about her?

Matrona and Slim Trueman. P-962-14.

DP: She was a lovely person. Absolutely lovely. She was part Hawaiian. Let's see, how did this work? Something about the early sea otter fisheries. Sea otter hunting I could call it. These two brothers from her area, with the Russian. The Russians would take the kayakers down with them. You know about that? These guys got blown off shore and they ended up in Hawaii. Two brothers and they married Hawaiian women. They eventually got back home to Cordova and so Matrona, I suppose she […] would appear to be Hawaiian. Very lovely speaking voice, a beautiful person, just lovely. And her daughter—. Her husband, Jepson, they fished on this big island right here and it's kind of this little spot right there. That's still his site today. And she had lots of talents because she learned them from her Grandmother I think it was. Great grandmother. I don't know […] how far back it went, but she looked very Hawaiian.

AG: And where did they live?

DP: Who?

AG: Matrona, Slim.

DP: They lived at Broken Point.

AG: Okay. So it wasn't within Village Islands?

DP: They lived out there, but then they moved up to Blue Fox about the time I moved out there I think. I don't think that they were living there during the winter. He had some pretty hairy experiences. I think he went around to—. One time he might have been fishing for Larsen Bay. I think he went there for supplies. And you probably know more about that than I do.

AG: [No]

DP: You know it's sketchy. I think I heard it second or third hand. But he got marooned over there somewhere in Larsen Bay. Probably in Uyak Bay. Think he walked back. I think he walked across that peninsula to come back home. Something about that. I wish somebody would know that story. I can't refer you to Nan and Dan any more, well they knew it. I don't know it that well. Matrona was there by herself just about out of food. I guess she trapped rabbits and stuff to keep herself going till he got back. No radios in those days. I was one of the few people that had a uni side band out there for many years. So I was the one they called when they needed a plane or something from town. Find out when mom or the relatives or whoever was coming out and call the airlines and either find out if they had a schedule and what time they're supposed to be in and if they needed a plane to go back. I was the one they called 'cause I had the side band radio. Now everybody has the internet. Isn't that neat?

AG: [Yes] Did the mail plane fly into Village Islands at that time or how did you get your supplies?

DP: That time I got a lot of supplies at the cannery. We put an order for food in and they'd bring it up on the, on the uh, trying to think of the name of the company that did it. Anyway we got our food in the same time the cannery got theirs in so it made it really handy. They had a nice store over there. You could buy […] almost anything you needed from them.

AG: […] I know at that time back in the '40s, '50s, '60s, even early '70s the canneries were segregated.

DP: Yes.

AG: […] Could you describe how that took place or what you remember about that?

DP: Filipinos had a Filipino bunk house and it had their own cooks and they, as I understand it, this might not be accurate, but as I understand it there was a Filipino boss and he hired the Filipinos. […] He kind of ran the operation for them and I don't know what arrangements he had with them or anything like that. I remember Ivan [Fox] said there use to be a lot of guns but he'd collect them when they got there. They had their own cook and if you got invited over there for dinner you were really blessed because they were wonderful cooks. They had their own special food. […]. Definitely was segregated, but I don't think it was a bad thing 'cause they had what they liked. You know they were wonderful cooks. They had that nice bunk house. As time moved on they didn't like that anymore. Couple of them came over and forced themselves into the other cook house. So I think eventually they had two cooks. One for the Filipinos had their food and one for the other one. I

don't know if there was really room in there for everyone. I think they had to have two settings then because it—. Probably what they did.

AG: Because one of the mess halls was too small for the whole crew?

DP: Yeah and the blue room where the superintendent and the bosses ate, which was nice for them because […] because that's one time they could all get together and sit down and talk about things while they're eating their lunch or dinner or breakfast. And the superintendent's family always ate in there, too. We'd go there. We'd be guests. We'd eat in there, too, so it was pretty nice. It was a big blue room.

AG: Was it literally blue? Like painted blue? Or is that what it was called?

DP: It was probably painted blue. I don't remember. The food was always so good though. We loved that. And they were always famous for the wonderful food they put out.

AG: What else do you remember about the cannery's operations that impressed you as a young person?

DP: Well, of course it was fun going over there. We always went over there every opportunity we had because we'd get there on coffee time you know and that was good and they always had the coffee time. Use to go in the mess hall, but I think that made too much of mess. They finally started taking the bakery goods, they had big racks of bakery goods specially baked, we went down to the area where they could sit around and have their coffee. That was always fun. It was like going up town you know, and then they had movies over there. Once in a while we'd go to the movies. And the families were nice. That Jody Fox and her family were lovely people. So it was kind of a nice change for us to have someplace to go.

AG: […] San Juan became NEFCO, right? Is that how it worked?

DP: [Yes]

AG: And then NEFCO sold out. Do you remember times in which there was kind of conflicts between the cannery and the fishermen in Uganik?

DP: We had our strikes, but setnetters never did strike, not when Ivan was there. We only struck later on […] in the '80s I think.

AG: What do you remember of the strikes?

DP: Well, you know the seiners were pretty tolerant of us being not on strike because we benefited from them being on strike because we got the wage. We got the increase in the price along with them which maybe wasn't fair, but they didn't seem to object. But I don't think there's any hard feelings between the, I don't remember any anyway, between the fishermen and the cannery superintendent or the management over there. It's just the way it was. And they didn't really have a whole lot to say about the prices anyway, you know, it's all negotiated at another level. But the big year that we did strike, we had a meeting over at Dan Ogg's place, and we struck for one day and

then they said, “Oh, we better go back to work.” I said, “Why are we gonna strike in the first place when were just gonna do it in one day?"

AG: What happened?

DP: Well […] we struck along with the seiners. […] [A cannery superintendent] said those are my fishermen out there. They’re gonna fish for me. Well, give us the right price we would but—. We took a lot of hit, you know, when the oil spill happened because people weren't buying fish. I think we were down to five or six cents a pound for humpies where it had been fifteen or eighteen cents a pound, something like that. It was just ridiculous, you know, and so we just—. Honest to God, I can't remember what the prices were the year we were trying to strike. One who can tell you probably is Lacey Berns.

AG: Okay.

DP: ‘Cause she was involved and Virginia Adams. But everyday we’d get reports. I 'd get on the side band. I'd hold the VHF receiver so everybody could hear what was being said from town. That was a long, bitter strike, but the seiners struck pretty often. Jim was—, but after we got married probably in’82, ’83, somewhere near, I remember he was in town. It'd be maybe sooner than that. I don't remember the dates.

AG: So they, I’m sorry were you—?

DP: I just don't remember the dates.

AG: What did you call your setnet site?

DP: I called it Emerald Pond. That lagoon behind it reflects the color of the mountain. Called it Emerald Pond and then Jim changed it to Blue House. We had a blue house there. My folks had a blue house, a double-story blue house with let's see, one, two, three, four bedrooms plus the storeroom. When they left then the whole thing became ours and then it all burned.

AG: When?

DP: I don't exactly remember what year it was. It must have been uh, Jim?

JP: Huh?

DP: Do you remember what year it burned down out there?

JP: I can't hear you.

DP: I said what year did the blue house burn and the dock and everything?

JP: When?

DP: What year?

JP: Fall of ‘94.

AG: Were you out there?

JP: [No] We’d left. Three days before that.

DP: Jim had fixed up a lot of nice things. He'd insulated the house. He added onto the greenhouse. We had a greenhouse next to it. We were living in a big house there.

JP: No it was the wiring and it was from way back in the ‘20s and stuff. I should’ve known better […]. We left a heater on from the water wheel and I'm sure that's what caused the fire, but that’s the way things go.

AG: Yeah.

DP: Burned up everything except, we burned the—. You don't wanna hear all that, do you?

AG: It's up to you.

DP: Anyway it just about wiped us out because the house up on the hill, the original house, and the barn and the smokehouse was still there. Jim figured out he could rebuild. He built another dock, another warehouse and another power shed.

AG: Do you remember what sort of interactions you had with the Wildlife Refuge?

DP: It's always been good. We had fine people out here. I know for most parts been excellent.

AG: Was it controversial when they expanded the boundaries, after ANILCA in the ‘80s, and made it so that a lot of the land that was kind of beach front property became a part of the refuge?

DP: I don't think that had anything to do with ANILCA, did it? That was in the ‘50s when they took away the two mile entry. So wasn’t hardly anybody out there then. ANILCA didn’t affect us much as it did people in Olga Bay and things like that and. I can tell you more about that, but I wouldn't wanna put it on a recorder.

AG: That's fine. What about ANCSA? How did that impact life on the west side?

DP: What was it?

AG: The Native claims. Native land claims.

DP: You see I'd like to tell you about that, but I don't wanna do it on recording.

AG: Okay.

DP: I will tell you though.

AG: And were you out there in 1989?

DP: Yeah.

AG: Could you tell be about that summer?

DP: Well I was working at Sutliff's and it was hard to get away because I was a purchasing agent down there and they'd call. They want a thousand this and so many that. I just couldn't get away until late in August. Then as far as setnetting goes they wanted us to take, if we did fish, which they did not. Every night I went to a meeting I think, at Fisherman's Hall, to find out if we were gonna go fishing. I didn't realize we were never gonna go fishing this summer. It's finally dawned on all of us we're not gonna fish. We kept finding the tar balls in different levels of water, you know, it's suspended in the water, and I remember one day I went for a walk after work out here and the Buskin Beach was like a day like today and I just walked along there and I was walking, looking where I was walking, I wasn't just with my head in the air. But went back to the car and I went to put my foot in the car and holy smokes here is oil clear up like that. I'd stepped on a mound of sand that had oil over it. So that was a problem. They didn't want any— like if the waves came and covered it up then the next wave the next day a sheen would come up from that. Who wants to pick the fish through the sheen? Then they said well if you have tar balls you have to take them into Port Bailey to get them cleaned. That's impossible. We couldn't do that. It's a long ways from there. That's a four hour trip on the *Dawn Mist* or practically.

AG: To get the fish cleaned?

DP: Get the nets cleaned. You got any tar balls on them. Only people that got to fish that year are the ones in Olga Bay. They were insulated from it. We didn't fish at all. So that was a big disaster for most people.

AG: How did it impact your family?

DP: Well, I kept working at Sutliff's so I had a salary, but Jim didn't have any. And we had the crew out there waiting all the time, the setnet crew, we had a boat crew. Then we decided, well we had pipe, we were gonna pipe some more water down to get more pressure on the water wheels so we'd […] generate more electricity. So we paid them to dig the ditch, put the pipe in, so that was a benefit. Otherwise we would have done that after the season in the fall. It was really hard for people because they didn't know what was gonna happen next. You couldn't hardly hold a crew 'cause they didn't know if they were gonna get any money or not. As it was they did pay us, but it wasn't like earning a wage, you know. It wasn't the same at all. Fishing is just something you love to do when you do it. Setnetting is a lot of work, but it also has its pluses. Out there in the quiet morning hours picking fish. Evening hours when it's quiet. A little sea otter might come putting by. Hear the whales out in the bay you know if they're "whooo." Sea lions come by and grab your fish, well that's not fun, but it's part of the game. So it's […] still great for families. It's a wonderful way to raise a family is out on a setnet site. Everybody learns how to cooperate and do their part and be dependable. Like Jason, the one that I just talked to there, […] he was my partner when he was nine years old. Fished in that skiff. Hazel's son, Brandon, was my partner when he was ten. Getting up at five o'clock in the morning for little kids it's pretty tough. It's tough for adults and even more tough for little kids I think.

AG: Okay.

DP: 1941, Ray Martin organized a Fourth of July parade and so that was pretty exciting for the town to think we were gonna have a parade. And they use to have a lot of things going on between the fishermen and the servicemen like tug of wars and things like that. It was kind of fun. And my mom made us, my sister and I, a dress out of the bunting with the flag on it and she also made one for Lorraine Magnuson who was our next door neighbor. And then she made this sign "three American children." Though Lorraine held the sign in front of her face and we marched down the street and our little brother Fred was right behind us in a sailor suit. Mom put a tag on his back, too, "tag along." But by the time we got down to the dock he would no longer seen his way back in the crowd of people. He was only three years old then. So anyway […] that was the first parade that we had in Kodiak and I need to get that photo to you.

AG: That sounds like a very sweet parade. Is there anything else you would like to mention? Maybe questions I didn't ask you that you think are important to talk about concerning the west side before I turn it off again?

DP: Well maybe that strike. It became quite contentious here in town I think between some of the operators and the fishermen. But it got the fishermen together and the setnetters together and I think it did a good thing. It made a big difference in our structure in going forward and it lasted several years. They even had an office. I think there's probably lots of records of what happened. *The Mirror*, I think. They had a barbecue for people on the street and so forth. Fish, I don't know where they got the fish, but of course I was out there in Uganik. I don't even know what went on here in town except the reports that came to us on the side band from people that were working on it here in town. That was the first time that setnetters in my notion that went on strike. Every year that was I can't even tell you for sure what year. Bruce Schactler would be the one that knows though because he became one of the directors.

AG: The directors of what?

DP: The fishermen's cooperative union. I guess it was a union really, but I don't know what they call that. I don't remember now. It was quite a thing to go on strike for us 'cause we'd never been on a strike before.

AG: Is there anyone on the west side that I could talk to about it?

DP: Sue Jeffrey would know and Dan [Ogg]

AG: Okay.

DP: They would know and Lacey Berns would know. She's into Viekoda now. She use to be in—. Chris Berns' wife. Do you know Lacey? Yeah. Beautiful cabin right there. Danny Boone homestead's divided up among quite a few wonderful people. You'll meet them all when you go out there for the party.

AG: And is there anything else you'd like to share right now?

DP: I think there are more modern stories. You'll be able to get those from the people who are out there. When they came, why they came out there and so forth. Like Sue and Dan, they raised their son and daughter out there, and the Foxes they raised their two boys. I had lots of nieces and nephews that came to our place. And it's like I said before, it's a wonderful place for a family to work together and get to know each other and to take responsibility for what needs to get done. We had great times at our place. We had a big, big table there in the blue house and people would say, "Well, we heard what you had for dinner," or something. They still talk about it sometimes 'cause we'd say on the side band, "Well I'm gonna get," on the VHF radio, excuse me, "I'll make this and I'll bring that and I'll bring a ham and I'll do this and that for our dinners," and of course most people were not as modern at that time. They all are now. They all have hot and running water and banya or some way of taking a bath and all those things they didn't use to have, refrigeration and internet. Everybody's very modern out there now I think. I think it's wonderful. I"m so glad for them, but yeah. That's all I can think of right now.

AG: Okay. Well, thank you!

Ted Pestrikoff. P-993-5.

AG: It is June 26. I am here with Deedie Pearson and this is part of the West Side Stories project. And so Deedie tell me, please, about maybe Teddy Pestrikoff to start with?

DP: Okay. Ted Pestrikoff fished out on East Point many, many years probably starting in the late '20s. He also fished at Broken Point right out on the point. He'd row his skiff all the way from Ouzinkie, take him a couple of days usually, and then he would set up his tent and put his nets out there at Broken Point, and then it's for the reds in June, and then he'd move over to East Point for the humpies in July and August. He was not a very big man, but he was very, very strong. He could do that all by himself. And during the winter sometimes he was a watchmen at West Point Cannery which was owned by Herb Dominici, and that's how I got to know him mostly is during the winter. Fact he was with us when we had the earthquake in 1964. He was at our house.

AG: What was his character?

DP: Well he was a good man. He was very religious in a way. He always wore his icon. He was very honest and hardworking. Definitely a good citizen. I think he voted and paid his bills. He was a good man. And then he also owned the cabin at the end of the beach at West Point near the cannery, West Point Cannery. I think there's a little cabin still down there. And so we used to walk

down to see him quite often when he lived in the cabin or when he was the watchmen at the cannery. We'd see him almost every week if not more often than that.

AG: Did he live winters in Ouzinkie then?

DP: He did part of the time […]. In early years he probably went back to Ouzinkie. Later years when I was out there he was mostly around West Point although sometimes he would go over there for a visit. I guess he had a house. I really don't know, but he use to try to teach us how to speak the Aleut language and that was always fun.

AG: What did you learn from him?

DP: Of course everybody knows camai. .... Vashentok, that's cold weather. Pinotok is [bad] weather. Quenok is a sea lion. That's about it I guess. I don't know anymore.

AG: Useful words. Was he a boat builder?

DP: No, but he was a trapper. He told us he used to row from Ouzinkie out to Marmot Straits and trap in that area, not on Marmot Island but on the Afognak side, and he also rowed up to Uganik and trapped up the river.

AG: Do you know much about […] the trap lines and how people worked them? Was it that they would carry all their food or did they have cabins along the way? I'm just curious about the whole trapping operation.

DP: I think he took a tent because he lived in a tent there at East Point. He always had a tent there, never had a cabin. I was assuming he always tented. Of course he'd take his food. I don't think they lived off the land particularly and he always salted a barrel or two of fish every summer for winter and he would always have bacon, potatoes, onions, eggs. That's about it 'cause he liked the smoked fish. I mean he liked to salt fish. […] He always had salt fish soaking out. That was his main diet was salt fish potatoes, onions, and bacon and eggs for breakfast, and that was about it.

AG: And was it common to move around and follow the fish like he did?

DP: I don't know anybody else that did that. Too much work. He'd pull all his anchors, he had these big stock anchors and pick everything up and move it, the tent, the whole works, which was another site across the bay. I don't know how he did it all by himself but he did. Later years he had different partners. I think he had Matrona. He had Chief Asiksik. I don't know anybody else, but then he had two sites that he made them row their boat to. Nobody used any kickers. That was just for the weekend.

AG: He had two what?

DP: When he went out to pick the net they always had to row because he never approved using a kicker during the week. That was only for the weekend to go visiting.

AG: Wow. So he was setnetting starting in the '20s out there?

DP: I think so.

AG: Do you know if there was anyone before him that setnet in Uganik?

DP: Well Katie Danielson and her husband course were there early '20s. They had the saltery in Mush Bay and sites out there by West Point. A cabin there.

AG: I wonder who kind of really pioneered setnetting in Uganik?

DP: Other than those two I really don't know of anyone else. Although there were other people, I don't know who they were. Josie, the woman that ran West Point Cannery had several fishermen that fished here and there, but I didn't know them. During that time I didn't know them.

AG: How did your dealings with sea lions change over time?

DP: Well I think when my family first started fishing out there, there weren't very many around. I don't remember seeing any. There were more seals than sea lion I think at that time. I think occasionally we had a sea lion, forget what you call them, sea lion bombs I guess you call them. Throw 'em out. I never did. I think a lot of people did, but it wasn't much you could do about them. When they'd go along the net, they'd pick out what they wanted. If they wanted to get on the other side, they'd just make a hole and go through it. Big hole too. Very strong. Think they got everybody, they'd get a fish and they'd wave it. It's like they were having fun at you, but that wasn't it. They were just limbering up so they could swallow it. They'd wave it around and around. At one time there was a rookery right by one of our sets and we'd get like a hundred holes in a week or more to mend. We didn't shoot at them though.

AG: That's a whole lot of mending.

DP: Takes a lot of time. I thought you lost all of those fish. My brother Bob thought they also helped fishing 'cause they'd drive the fish into the nets sometimes. We never shot any.

AG: What are some unexpected things that you got in you net?

DP: Sharks. They were bad news because their hide is like sandpaper. And they roll up in the net and you either have to cut that piece out because it's all raveled and worn from their sandpaper hide. When you pull one of them up and their mouth's gaping at you, it's like a terrible sight you know 'cause they're so huge and they have these eyes that don't move, they just kinda stare at you and oh my gosh they're awful looking things. Pretty hard to get out of the net. You have to roll them out sometimes, especially if they were still alive. They'd take off and go again, but I think they were attracted to the nets because of the fish and then also the fish that dropped out of the net when the tide changed. You know they'd be laying on the bottom […]. I think they came in for those as well as the fresh fish.

AG: Easy hunting.

DP: They eat a lot, too. They're big. [...] Pretty big. I remember my brothers one time, they tied it up by the tail and they took it out. Tied it to an anchor I think and the anchor just took off. They never found it. It was "swoo."

AG: Wow. Strong.

DP: Very strong and they have these teeth that are like saws. They come up looking at you with these saw teeth and I understand if they loose a tooth another one just moves in just like a conveyor belt. Another tooth will run right into the spot.

AG: So tell me about Mr. Berestoff.

DP: Nick Berestoff was from [Afognak], a great, great, wonderful man. He always said he was dumb and I said, "You're not dumb. Anybody who can speak Russian, English and Aleut can't be dumb, Nick." He never went to school very much. He didn't know how to write. [He could write] his name and that was about it. And he loved to play Cribbage so he knew numbers and he could play Cribbage just like anybody else could. Very kind person. He too served as a watchman at the […] West Point Cannery. We went down there one time near Russian Easter and he was making kulich. Kulich everywhere. All kinds of sizes, cans, and so forth. I said, "See Nick? How'd you learn to do that?" and he said, "My mother taught me." So I said, "Gee I'd sure love to have the recipe." Said, "Okay, I'll save you the cans." So many cans of this, so many cans of that, so many cans, you know that's how his recipe went 'cause he couldn't write. We used to all go hunting together down to Cannon's Lagoon sometimes. [...]

AG: Do you want some water?

DP: It might help.

AG: Okay.

AG: Nick Berestoff. His kulich.

DP: Very good. So he'd ask to put in the freezer so could have some on Sunday. He fished right across, where Chris [Berns] is now [Paradise]. He developed that site. So he'd come over and get some kulich out of the freezer for his treat on Sunday. He made enough to last the whole summer, I think. Very dear person.

AG: […] He fished at Paradise […]?

DP: [Yes] That was his site.

AG: What do you remember of his site?

DP: Well I remember […] he used some bull kelp for a hose to bring the water in and […] occasionally they'd get seal out there in the wintertime.

AG: So he lived out there year round?

DP: Yes, he either lived at the cannery or he lived at Daniel Boone's place. He had a little red cabin up there […]. Did you walk around in that place?

AG: [No]

DP: That little cabin he built there. He built the banya. He did a lot of building down there at times. Anyway, we used to go hunting down at Cannon's Lagoon, so I'd kinda stick with Nick and maybe a whole group of us go down there. It's spread out. One time, we went along, he said, "Well, let's sit down here for a minute." So we sat down, working on his gun. He had it taken apart there with a screwdriver. He had an old .30-30, and you kinda needed a little help once in a while. So he took it apart, screwed it back together, and he stood up and shot a deer with it. It was laying right below us. He saw it the whole time. I didn't know it was there even. He was a great guy. They liked Nick, and he was a weatherman out there. He said his dad taught him how to look at the weather signs. Don't know if you looked across from Dianne's [Herman]. Did you see that big point sticking up? Rocky Point? That is a barometer. You could really tell the weather what happens, what it's gonna be. We'd go down and we'd say, "Well, we need to go to the cannery tomorrow, Nick," and he'd say, "Well, let's play a few games of cribbage." So we'd play cribbage for a while and he'd look out the window and he'd say, "Yeah, it's going to be fine weather. You going to be fine. It'll be fine." Always was. If he told us to go, we did it.

AG: Did he teach you any of his skills with weather watching?

DP: Well I know that one is if it's a cloud cap it's gonna keep on blowing. If the cloud goes away, and it's southwest, it quits right now. That was one that I learned. No he didn't teach us anything else, just that one that I remember.

AG: It's a good skill.

DP: Yeah, he's a great guy. Lots of wonderful friends out there over the years.

AG: Who was it that had the mail plane or that the mail would deliver to?

DP: Kodiak Western.

AG: Where did they drop the mail at?

DP: At the cannery site. Which was, you know Linda's out here, that moon shape beach, that's where the cannery was. A few pilings left, that's all it shows there anymore.

AG: And how often did the mail come?

DP: Once a week. Big day. I really looked forward to the mail.

AG: Did you have a good relationship with the pilots? Were there any pilots that you particularly were fond of?

DP: I know I can see them. I don't know if I remember all their names. Of course I knew Bill Harvey. Bill Harvey had the Harvey's Flying Services. His son has it now. It's run by the name of Warren. There's a bunch of them. There's Ball. They were all great people. All good pilots and some of the Olsen boys were pilots.

AG: I'm wondering, both Nick and Teddy were from Ouzinkie then?

DP: Ted was from Ouzinkie. Nick was from Afognak.

AG: And did they build in kind of the Russian construction manner like using the logs and?

DP: No. No, when he built it was very conventional. Weren't any timber out there to use for logs anyway you know unless they got something off the beach and that was just not very practical. Too heavy to handle without equipment and so on and so forth. No they just built it with […] two by four frame and so forth.

AG: It was quite the job to make sure that you have all the materials I'm sure to build. Just ordering and making sure that you had enough of everything would be challenging.

DP: Yeah. Did I tell you when we first built out there in 1959 at Village Islands, the house up on the hill there?

AG: No.

DP: I tell you about that?

AG: […] that the materials had to be saved from the boat.

DP: Yeah. Well you want me tell you about that first winter?

AG: Yes.

DP: Well that was pretty challenging in lots of ways. We made out okay. When we first had the cannery, of course, we didn't have time to dig the water in that first year, so a pipe was laying on top of the ground. And in the evenings, sometimes, my dad would be washing down after we processed our catch of the day. We cleaned all the fish at night when they'd be brought in from the setnet site and ready for packing the next morning. So sometimes my dad would be washing down and all of a sudden the pressure would go down to nothing. […]Take his little bag and knife and so forth and go up the hill. Bears would be up there making a sprinkling system out of it. He never took a gun with him or anything and he cut it. He spliced it and put it onto, not sure what you call it, stainless steel hose clamps. Come back down, wash him down again. Of course when winter came that didn't work very good […]. We didn't have time to dig in because we were building the house. So when it would freeze we'd have to go up there and pull it out of the snow and drag it down, throw it in the bay, and pull it back up again. Tie it to our belt. Climb up the mountain.

AG: The pipe?

DP: Plastic pipe. The building went pretty good. We started it around Labor Day weekend and we […] moved in around the middle of late October probably the middle of November probably we were in there. In the meantime, we lived in a little trap shack down there on the dock. That one. That was our cookhouse, that one. The weasels were around there then. They'd come in in the fall. So I was sleeping in a camp cot in the cannery part […]. Mom and Dad slept in the other trap shack, so were sleeping in the cannery on camp cots. At night the weasels would jump up on my bed, run over the top, and, "Oh my gosh, I can't stand this," but there's nothing I can do about it. They were such rascals. And one time I had bacon hanging up. I had it hanging up on one of the rafters to keep it away from 'em 'cause I had no refrigerator or anything like that. So I saw these little holes drilled into it so I thought that must be the little birds flying in and out of here. They must be doing that. Then one day here he was up there on that bacon. I got my broom and I knocked him off, and he went behind a pile and climbed up and shouted, "Why'd you do that for anyway?" Characters.

AG: The weasel?

DP: Yeah. And then I had a case of bread there and he just drilled through the loaf. A hole right down the middle of the loaf. When the cannery [West Point] closed up they left a lot of this stuff there so the watchman would either sell it to us or maybe the bread was excess. I don't remember how we got it, but we had a couple cases of bread. It was handy to have. I hadn't learned to make bread yet. He didn't help much. So as soon as the roof and the windows were in the house, I moved our camp cots up to the house and our sleeping bags. "Oh, I won't have that weasel tonight anyway." Then I wake up in the morning, it was sitting on the end of my bed in the house. We found a hole where we'd been working on, a plumbing holes, and he just came up through the hole in the floor. That's how he got in there. Standing on the end of my bed, "Well, what'd you move up here for? It's no fun."

AG: Was it the same one?

DP: I suppose. They all look alike. He's the only one that time came around though.

AG: That's really funny, but frustrating at the time.

DP: Well, they're kinda characters. They're lots of fun really in a lot of ways. Also pretty sassy. So anyway as winter came along as they got cold and […] it got down to twenty [degrees] we knew the water was going to freeze. […] We had it plumbed into the house and everything, but we just wouldn't lay it on the ground. Just wouldn't go. Just wouldn't keep running. So we'd fill up everything we could, every pot every container we could find as well as the bath tub, fill it up with water. My mom and dad came out for December. They had been traveling. They were there in December. Got so cold that the water froze solid in the bathtub in the house. Solid block of ice. I remember Mom walking around with paper bags on her feet so that keeps her feet warm. […] Well our insulation was lost, but it got very cold in those days we had a lot of southwest. I think the southwest blew for the whole month of December. We hardly got any mail days 'cause wind was blowing too hard. Shakes everything. And after that we got things going better. During the wintertime we always had projects. I think my favorite time was the fall. Harvest the garden, pick berries. We'd go over to East Point. Use to be a lot of cranberries over there at that time before the deer came into the area, lots of cranberries, low bush cranberries. There's high bush cranberries down in Mush Bay. Nan Reed and I use to walk on the islands and pick mushrooms. So you get

buckets of mushrooms over there and we'd dry them. I think they came because of the animals. Little meadow mushrooms like you buy in the store. Plus other kinds.

AG: How would you prepare them?

DP: Just like you do any other kind of mushroom. In spaghetti or eggs or.

AG: Did you can them, jar them, or?

DP: We dried them. Nan use to pick out these different kind of looking ones. I just, didn't appeal to me, some looked spongy. She knew what she was doing. She picked some and I never tried them. These others were like meadow mushrooms, just like the kind you get in the store, the pink underneath, you know, 'cause you had to get them right away 'cause they get wormy. You could always tell when you picked them 'cause the worms would go up through to the stem. There was puffballs. They were good. That was good times. That time there were lots of animals on the islands. Nan and Dan had their sheep and their goats on the island, Angora goats, and they were beautiful creatures. Just hold their head up so aristocratically. When their babies come in the spring they are the sweetest things. Pink ears and tiny little feet, just the cutest thing you can ever imagine. They're cuter than a little lamb and Angora goats all curly you know and pretty. And Dan and Nan would bring their ewes over to the barn, off the island in the spring, when they expected the young to be born. We called it dropping the young. And sometimes they'd get a little too eager to sheer them and they'd sheer a little too early probably, but there a reason for what they did. And one time they came down and asked if we had any old clothes 'cause they were trying to dress them up to put clothes on 'cause they were so cold. I guess in some areas they do sheer right after the lambs are dropped, but I don't think Kodiak is the right place for that. But anyway, then Nan would be in charge of taking care of them during the day so they'd bring them down and they'd walk. She'd walk north of us about, maybe another quarter mile ahead, and she established a little camp down there. So on a beautiful day, we had a lot of nice days in March, and I'd walk down there meeting Nan. We'd sit on a log and yarn socks and solve the world's problems. One time I actually enticed her to come stay in the house. It was blowing hard. It was cold and windy. She did, but she felt very sheepish about it. She said, "Well, what would Daniel think if he knew she was sleeping inside?" What she did was she had tarp. She'd roll up in the tarp. Have her .30-06 by her and her little dog, and that's where she'd sleep.

AG: But why? With the goats or?

DP: With the sheep.

AG: With the sheep so they could graze?

DP: Yeah. They had their lambs with them. […] I don't know if you noticed there's a stream across from where Ron [Dunlap] is. There's two streams that come into that little area back there, that lagoon. They'd come to the one on the left as you go in. They wouldn't go across that stream. They'd just stay there all day. Moms would just go on and leave them. Then they'd come back. They'd pick them up and, oh my gosh what if a bear—. I don't know. It never happened anyway. Dan kept the bears pretty well thinned out because of the cattle and the sheep and the goats and the donkeys. Had three donkeys and probably about six head of cattle, I think, something like that. And

Anjuli Grantham interviewing Deedie Pearson. P-1000-3-01.

I don't know how many, thirty or forty goats altogether 'cause they had milks goats and Angora goats. […] Billies stayed on the island and the goat and the nannies were on shore. They milked the nannies. And they used to make cheese and ice cream and what not for us. Cheese was really good, kinda like they're real soft cheese. It was nice. He took the cattle down behind Linda [Lindberg], the next beach beyond her, and bear killed a big bull and in the snow where she drug it and it just his footprints. Put it over his shoulder or something, I don't know what he did. Great big bull. And buried it and of course they found it. It wasn't completely buried. So all the guys in the area took turns going down and sitting in a chair trying to catch that bear, but they never did.

AG: What would they do with all of the products, the Angora wool and the lamb meat, and.

DP: What did they do with it? They shipped it out. Once in a while. Not every year, but they'd shipped it out. They wouldn't sheer all the sheep. Sometimes they had several years' growth on them. That's not good because the staple isn't strong when you got that weak spot. It starts again. So it wasn't too successful, I don't think. I don't know if they ever got anything out of that, but Nan always had high hopes and she never gave up that things were gonna work out. She had a spinning wheel and carding equipment and so forth, but I don't think it ever worked out very well for her. She tried really hard.

AG: Do you have anything that she made?

DP: No, I don’t think she ever made anything. He borrowed a spinning wheel. Barbara Hoedel has that. I bought it from Dan after she was gone.

AG: What was their background to know so much about animals and agriculture?

DP: For Nan you mean?

AG: Yes.

DP: Background, she was a secretary. Raised in New Jersey. Her husband was […] a newspaper correspondent living in Washington D.C. for a time, and she said she'd always dreamed of having green hills and sheep and chickens and goats and things like that. She never had any background in that. Then she met Dan out there. She came to Kodiak. She was secretary on the Base for many years. She was secretary to the banker here in town, Mr. Crutcher. Very good at paperwork and that sort of thing. […] You know it was kind of a dream of hers to have animals. As I understand it, her friend was a cook out there and she wanted to leave. It's only a few weeks of the season left, so she asked Nan if she'd come out and take over for her and that's when she met Daniel Boone Reed.

AG: A cook at the West Point Cannery?

DP: Right and the rest is history. I think they got married around 1951. It turns out that Jim and her son were very good friends. They went to school together here. And […] he went to West Point, graduated from West Point. I visited him a few years ago down in Georgia. Atlanta, Georgia. But that was Nan's dream. She loved growing things and she did organic gardening ‘cause they had all of the trappings for it. Had the manure and they had the fish and they had everything around there, leaves and so forth they used for their garden. They had wonderful gardens. Dan use to dig a great huge hole and fill it up with fish gurry. Plant rhubarb, and rhubarb took off and it was huge rhubarb. They had cherry trees and apple trees and lots of currants. When they started drawing social security, Nan was so excited ‘cause she actually had some money. So she brought all kinds of different trees and things out there. Nan actually had a setnet site right off the point right there at the house. She’d row out there and pick her net and then she’d would row down to sell her fish by rowing.

AG: Do you have any photos of Nan?

DP: I probably do somewhere.

AG: I'd like to see one.

DP: I know I do somewhere, I just have to find them. I have so many albums it's hard to know where to look. But Nan liked to try new things. So she heard about haggis. Haggis is made in Scotland, and I think it's made in the sheep stock. You know about it? Well she did that. She brought it up one time. We decided we didn’t care for it. Took it over to the cannery and they ate it over there. It was a moonlight night and they got in their skiff and they came out. And Dan and Kay Wagner were the watchmen at the Uganik cannery in San Juan. Then Nan, she would can up, guys would go get an elk on Raspberry Island and they'd bring it back and she'd can it up in jars, of course. Did I tell you about Danny Boskofsky being drowned?

AG: [No] Maybe. Is he the one that was out and his friend came to his house and knocked on your door?

DP: Yeah.

AG: Yes

DP: We didn't have any dull out there. I remember one time we had over 50 overnight guests. Not all at once of course, throughout the year. And lots of company was always nice. In fact, Peggy and Norman [Sutliff] and Dick and Barbara came out. Barbara was probably ten or eleven years old then. And Thanksgiving. Went out and got some deer and that night we pushed all the furniture back and took up the rug and had a square dance. It was fun. I thought it was a wonderful time. Really, we had good times.

AG: Why did you move to town?

DP: Well Norm called me and we had this two-way radio we could make telephone calls. He called me up and said, "How about coming into town? I need help down the housewares department till Christmas." Housewares at Sutliff's used to be at this north end of the store, only one story then. It wasn't extended way out like it is now. Said, "Oh, okay, that sounds like fun." Came in, I think I told you that, didn't I already?

AG: Yeah. [Yes]

DP: That's why.

AG: Called by work, huh?

DP: Yeah, but you know and then they closed the season for twenty years on red salmon. That's what we used to can, our hand-packed cannery.

AG: They closed, so they would only open for humpies out there?

DP: Yeah.

AG: When did they close it for reds?

DP: I really can't tell you. I can't. I don't remember 'cause it was probably after the tidal wave. Not really positive. It was closed for about twenty years. That's the best thing, you know. Fish and Game did a terrific job building the fisheries back up.

AG: Was there any grumbling about it when it was taking place?

DP: I don't remember any. I don't remember any grumbling. I just think that people had to figure some other way of doing things. Knew there wasn't any fish and everybody trying to get the few that were there. Everybody knew that wouldn't work. In fact, in '59, I think the only people that fished were the setnetters, and in June, I think, the seiners didn't even go to work until after the fourth of

July. So it was in '47, too. I don't think the seiners even went out until then to get the humpies, 'cause there weren't any reds to make it worthwhile to seine. 'Cause while the boats weren't cape fishermen either. They couldn't fish on the cape. They had to fish up in the bays and the red salmon I don't think they congregate in the bays that much. Everybody holds a hook out on Miners Point, Cape Raspberry and so forth. And I think it's also because is canneries want better fish. They don't want those black humpies that are up in the bay, so they insist on having fresher fish. Have you seen a black humpy? You know what it's like. Ted told me that in Ouzinkie, that in the fall he drove his grandfather around, and they'd look for a humpy that was floating around and they'd just pinch it to see if it was anything left to it and they'd eat it, just floating around.

AG: Even though it was dead?

DP: Um-huh. Yep. Let's see if there's anything else. Natalie and Kelly Simeonoff decided to build a cabin down the Southarm. So we fixed up a trap shack that we had, painted it and made it nice, and put a little stove in there for them. Helped them get started with their cabin. Later on, years later, we climbed up the mountain about two-thirds of the way up, we found another cranberry bed up there. Nan and Dan and Natalie Simeonoff went up there. Climbed and it was worth it. Beautiful up there. You know what that mountain looks like? One time I looked up there and I saw a mother bear and a small cub. Looked over to the left about a couple miles away. Three or four deer grazing away on this side, more or less at that same level. Mother bear was up there and she was looking. Finally, she took off full speed ahead. She told her baby to stay back where he was. He didn't follow. Full speed she went down there and the deer saw her coming there and boing-boing-boing they just bounced away, but it was after them that was for sure. You could see the baby up there wah-wah-wah. She ran back, "I'm here, I'm here, I'm here. We're not going to have venison. You're gonna have to go back and eat more grass for dinner, I guess." You can see some interesting things up there on the mountain. And later on the beavers moved in and that was fun.

AG: Because you could watch them building their dams or?

DP: We tried not to disturb them too much, but we did go up, kinda sneak up there, trying to watch them, but they just knew we were there. Flapped their tail. The baby they'd come over, hee-hee-hee, just like little kids, you know. They wanna see what's going on with mom, dad, they were slapping their tails. "You kids get back over here right now." Pretty soon I say, "Okay, we're coming." It was so cute 'cause they really wanted to say hi. Utilized everything in their dam that they could. One of my nieces was out there and she had on one of these floppy cotton hats, you know with a brim on it. Then she lost it so we went back the next day and found it piled with mud on the dam. And then we have a water wheel out there and so they saw that water getting away and I thought oh boy we can douse this whole valley, we capture all this water that's coming through the pipe, and that wasn't something they could capture otherwise because we had it coming from two different directions. And then my dad went over there and they had built a dam below the water. Did you get over by the water wheel?

AG: [No]

DP: They started down below and they actually got the water up enough to float up the generator. Had to take the dam apart. There they'd go. They'd build it back up and the beaver would be sitting there waiting for them, kinda, "What are you gonna do now, Buster?" and he'd pull it apart. He had

a big pile. Every time that beaver would rebuild, they'd go cut some new stuff. They never took anything out of that pile. Then Marty [Owen], my nephew, came out there. He was up in the army at that time up in the interior. He came down with his family, "Well I'll fix them." He took a bunch of tin cans and put them on a string and you know made holes in them so he could string them altogether so they'd rattle and clatter. The next they'd cut all the string down, they had them all filled with mud.

AG: Industrious, huh?

DP: Well smart too. Finally they gave up. They had to raise the water wheel up so, "We can't do that anymore." But I guess they're back over there again, up in their big pond. That was always a joy to go up and watch them. Eventually they got trapped out. We were so disappointed, but eventually some more came back. That's nice. Somebody trapped them. And we'd go clam digging at night in the wintertime because that's when the tide is low, you know. It's reverse. Instead of big tides being in the morning, big tides at night. Big run outs are at night instead of in the morning and then the day time big tides come in and the summertime the big tides are at night. We'd have to take a lantern and go out and dig clams at night. Which we did quite often. It was so good. We had two cats that liked clams. They'd get right in there, they'd dig with us. Digging the hole. We'd have a broken one, we'd give it to them. They'd eat it right there on the spot. They liked that. I had a garden. I had a couple gardens out there and that was fun. I learned to garden on Marmot Island so I knew how to start it anyway, get going on it. It was successful. Sometime in nice calm winter night Nan would invite us down for dinner we'd go down in the skiff, come home a nice moonlight night. Phosphorus in the water in August and September and October, so beautiful. I have to tell you about going down to Nan's. I can tell you a lot of stories about Nan. You wanna hear some more?

AG: I actually have to leave. I'm going to Larsen Bay on the next flight out.

DP: Tonight?

AG: Yes.

DP: Hallelujah! What fun. Well I'm delighted you get to go, I think that's wonderful.

[…]

Deedie Pearson and Anjuli Grantham. P-1000-3-23.