



NEW BEDFORD FISHING HERITAGE CENTER

Date of Interview: June 23, 2017

Bergeron, Chad ~ Oral History Interview

Fred Calabretta

Bergeron, Chad. Interview by Fred Calabretta. *Workers on the New Bedford Waterfront*. New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center. Date of interview: June 23, 2017.

This oral history was produced in 2017 as part of the *Workers on the Waterfront Oral History Project* conducted by New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center with funding from an Archie Green Fellowship provided by the Library of Congress.

New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center
38 Bethel Street
P.O. Box 2052
New Bedford, MA 02741-2052

Background

Name of person interviewed: Chad Joseph Bergeron [CB]

Facts about this person:

Age 39
Sex Male
Occupation Employee at Bergies Seafood
Residence New Bedford
Ethnic background French and Irish

Interviewer: Fred Calabretta [FC]

Transcriber: Michelle Murray [MM]

Interview location: New Bedford, Massachusetts

Date of interview: June 23, 2017

Key Words

Dockside worker, family owned business, Bergies Seafood, boats, commercial fishing boats, scallopers, draggers, New Bedford, fishing industry, lumpers, off-loading boats, seafood quality, scallops, scallop count, weighing scallops, sorting fish, grading fish, fresh fish, fish auction, baskets, pallets, vats, bags, ice, selling fish, delivering fish, fishing regulations, fishermen, fishing boat captains, grade sheets, seafood pricing, spawning season, low grade, high grade, haddock, cod fish

Abstract

Chad Bergeron describes his work for his family's company, Bergie's Seafood. He has been working in the business since he was eight years old. He does everything from lumping fish and off-loading scallops from commercial fishing vessels and scallopers to weighing and grading scallops and sorting, rinsing, grading and packing different species of fish. The hours/days/times he has to work are dictated by the arrival of a vessel into port. Fresh seafood needs to be unloaded quickly and delivered to customers in Boston and then locally. In addition to off-loading, he sometimes drives delivery trucks, handles sales, and does shipping and receiving. He also speaks about grading and sorting seafood as it is off-loaded and about how part of his daily early morning routine involves grading seafood at the fish auction. He describes his work off-loading boats as brutal work. The best part of his job is the people he works with and the connections he makes with others in the fishing industry because in his words, "Other than that, it's just dead fish."

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[00:00] Chad Joseph Bergeron is a thirty-nine year old shoreside worker who has been working in his family's business, Bergies Seafood, since he was eight years old. Chad's job includes duties such as off-loading commercial fishing vessels, grading fish, driving delivery trucks, selling fish, quality control, shipping and receiving and grading fish at the auction. He describes what is involved in off-loading a scalloper.

[05:00] Chad speaks about how he has to be ready to off-load a boat at any time of day or night depending on when a boat will be coming in to port. Because fresh seafood needs to get to market right away, the boats need to be off-loaded as soon as it arrives. Part of his daily routine involves grading fish at the fish auction very early in the morning. Next he talks about how off-loading fish differs from off-loading scallops.

[10:00] He talks about how the seasons affect his work. He speaks a bit about his crew of employees. Next he describes grading fish and the auction.

[15:00] He continues to describe the auction and seafood quality. He talks about how he can tell if a fish is fresh or not. Chad talks about how the fish is packed after it's been sorted. He goes on to talk about how he deals with different boat captains and how some may try to take advantage of them.

[20:00] Chad feels like everyone is out to make money and that causes conflicts sometimes. He talks about his work grading fish at the fish auction. He talks about the different nationalities of dock workers and how he's able to communicate with workers that don't speak English.

[25:00] Chad talks about the hours and schedule that he works and lack of break time because getting seafood off to market while it's fresh is important. He describes how tough the job can be. He describes the best part of his job as working with people and the connections he makes with others in the fishing industry.

[30:00] He gives his thoughts on whether or not this job is a good job for younger guys to get into.

[32:30] End of audio.

Interview

[00:00]

Fred Calabretta: Today is June 23, 2017. This is an interview for the New Bedford Fishing Heritage Center funded by an Archie Green Fellowship from the Library of Congress. As part of this project, we're interviewing shore side workers in the New Bedford/Fairhaven fishing industry to record their stories, document their skills and knowledge, and better understand their important role in the fishing industry. The recording and transcript will become part of the permanent collection at the Library of Congress. I'm Fred Calabretta and today I'm speaking with Chad Bergeron and we're at Bergies Seafood in New Bedford, Mass. And do you give us permission to record this?

Chad Bergeron: Yes.

FC: Okay. So just to start, if you could just give your full name.

CB: My name is Chad Joseph Bergeron.

FC: And your date of birth.

CB: 8/28/1978.

FC: Born in New Bedford?

CB: Born in New Bedford.

FC: Okay. Grew up in New Bedford?

CB: Yup.

FC: Now did you have family working in the fishing industry?

CB: Yeah. My grandfather is the one that started us in here. My grandfather fished for 30-something years, then he used to have my father come down and lump boats for when he used to take out and then that what brought my father down here. Then my father found jobs and then met up with his partner. And then they established Bergies and then eventually six, seven years later, I came down. As a kid.

FC: So how old were you when first started spending time here?

CB: Eight years old.

FC: Geez. So you started early.

CB: Eight years old. Yeah.

FC: And was the business always here on this location?

CB: Yeah always - this has always been the main front right here.

FC: Yep. And what were you doing at first like when you were a kid around it, you know? Helping out where you could?

CB: Busy work I'd call it. Like you know what I mean? I was so small, so like they would throw fish on the floor, and I would have a pick and I'd have to pick it and put it back in the tote. You know what I mean? They were just keeping me busy. But as I got older, more and more responsibilities.

FC: And who really kind of taught you?

CB: Who taught me everything? It wasn't my father. He was too busy running this business. It was his foreman - he's had three foremen and I've learned from each one of them. Their strongest points I've learned from, in other words, you know because everyone has strong points and weak points. I've taken their strong points and I'm collaborated it to where I am today.

FC: Now from when you were just a kid and they're kind of finding busy work for you then, how did you kind of continue to learn or take on more responsibility and...?

CB: Well, I'm the oldest of my family and my father just had us work. And we just came down on weekends, on holidays, summer vacations and just we worked. And then every year, I got older. I got more responsible and then just took on more jobs. And then over the years, you accumulated all this time of all these different jobs that you've done.

FC: And you get so you know what you're doing.

CB: Yeah. Through experience, you know?

FC: Yeah. So can you describe your job now? What you do?

CB: All right. I do everything. I off-load boats. I grade fish. I drive trucks. I sell fish. Quality control and... shipping and receiving.

FC: So you're covering a lot of ground.

CB: Yeah. And grading fish at the auction.

FC: And then I was just watching you off-load a scalloper down there. Maybe you could just run through that?

CB: Okay.

FC: Describe what you were doing and what was going on there on the dock.

CB: Okay. We were off-loading a scalloper. They send up three bags to a basket. Then we weigh the three bags. And then we put it in a vat that holds twenty-eight bags. So we make a column with twenty-eight weights on it. I mean, not twenty-eight weights, ten weights with twenty-eight bags. Then I just take counts of the scallops to make sure that it's accurate and the count is right because that's...each count is different money. So we have to make sure what they're saying is what it is.

FC: So there are 50-pound bags but they look like they run a little heavier than that?

CB: Yeah, maybe 52, 53. You know? Or 51 and a half and then it gets like 56, 156.

FC: I noticed you were cutting into - like sampling bags. Is that to get a count per pound?

CB: Yeah, yeah. Yep. Exactly.

FC: So you're getting sort of what size they're running and...

[05:00]

CB: Yeah. Those were 10-20s. So I was making sure that they didn't go over the 20 count. Because if it was it was going to be a whole - it would be another problem. And it would be different money too on top of it.

FC: So that's part of the sort of the grading part of it.

CB: Yeah.

FC: You got to know what you're working with and...

CB: And then also too you got to see the quality, because if you open up a bag and there's a lot of pieces...meaning a lot of mushed scallops, the person that I'm selling them too ain't going to want it so I'd have to go back and tell the captain and show the captain because it's going to reflect on his pricing. He ain't going to get the top dollar anymore. You know? Make sure all the scallops are clean. Make sure the count is right. You know?

FC: Yep, yep. And you look like you got a crew of maybe...well, you're working with some guys from the boat, right?

CB: Yep.

FC: And then your guys too.

CB: Yeah. There's about - for us there's about six of us.

FC: Yeah. Now did that boat come in last night?

CB: It came in this morning. 6:00 in the morning.

FC: Okay. Yeah. So you try to off-load it right away if you can just to...?

CB: Oh we will. There's no, there's no waiting. There's no waiting.

FC: Yeah.

CB: Because it's a market. So it has to hit today. So it has to go today. In this business, everything should have been done yesterday.

FC: Yeah. And everything's got to be fresh.

CB: Yeah. Because there's only so much ah...what is it - shelf stock? I'm lean life for the shelf? And then after that the fish go bad.

FC: Yep. Yep.

CB: For the freshness.

FC: Sort of like constant pressure in a way? I mean you can't sit around and wait.

CB: No.

FC: You got to do it.

CB: Yep.

FC: And what about if you - I mean do you get pretty good lead time with cell phones and stuff? You know when these guys are coming?

CB: More or less. Like we knew yesterday afternoon that he was coming in this morning. You know? And then I have a boat tonight at 11:30 and we knew this morning. So roughly twelve hours. Depending though, because sometimes you don't know what they're facing out there. Bad weather, something like that. They maybe only give us three or four hours. But it's better than pulling up at the dock and saying, "Here I am right now."

FC: Right. Yeah. Then it's a surprise.

CB: Yeah.

FC: So what...if you were to pick a normal day and just say what you did from start to finish, what would your routine be? Or is it completely different every day?

CB: It's different every day. The only thing that I do every day, that's routine, is I start at the auction grading fish. I start - I go there every morning at 5:00 in the morning. I grade the fish. Then I come back over here with the grade sheets and then from there on in, anything can happen. I could lump a boat, could off-load a boat, get in the truck and drive, and deliver the fish or a salesman is out and then I get on the phone and pick up his... where he left off. Every day is different. Every day.

FC: Yeah. But you're starting every day with fish grading at the auction. And you said that's at five?

CB: At 5:00 in the morning. 'Cause the auction goes off by six so I have to have my report done before then.

FC: And is that five days a week? Six days?

CB: Yep. It's Monday through Friday.

FC: And then what time do you usually get out of here?

CB: I leave here...um, like 1:30. Like right now, see, I'm going to leave as soon as I'm done with this interview and I got to come back again at 11:00 tonight. So it depending. Like if I got to come back later tonight, I may leave early. But normally, like 2:00. In the winter time, 1:00 and then in the summer maybe two to three. Depending if I don't have nothing in the afternoon or that night.

FC: So you've got a boat coming in tonight?

CB: Yeah. Yep.

FC: Scallop boat?

CB: Fish. Fish. Haddock.

FC: How is the sort of the operation different off-loading - I mean I know that scallops are bagged - is that the big thing?

CB: Mainly. You know...and the fish, there's different sizes that we have to separate. The boat don't separate it, so we have to size it and then...we have to put them in totes and crates in order to ship it out. Then they go on a pallet. It's a totally different operation. We have to dump the fish into this tank that washes it, that puts it on a conveyor, then on a table. Then for us to grade out instead of seeing what you seeing right there, which is dumping the scallops on that table.

FC: Yep. Do you have to do any - the scallops are already rinsed before they're bagged, so you don't really have to do anything?

CB: Yeah. No. No. I just got to make sure they're all good. The count's right and that's it.

FC: Yeah. So the fish is more work.

CB: Way more work.

FC: And you got different types.

CB: Yep. Different species. You know on one boat you could have like ten different species. So ten different species and mainly three sizes to each specie.

FC: And when they're coming off the boat in the baskets or whatever....

CB: It's a basket.

FC: ...they're already sorted?

CB: From specie to specie they are. But the size with um...

[10:00]

within themselves, no. And then sometimes if a boat runs out of pens, they made - there's certain species that you can put together because they give off the same slime. But other than that, they're all separated. And it makes it easier for us because some boats, they don't have the extra room, so they take like seven species even though it's a little bit of weight but those seven species, when they put it all together, then we have this big seafood platter out here and then it takes another hour and a half to do it. If they separated it, maybe it would've only taken us twenty minutes.

FC: Yeah. It makes a difference.

CB: Yeah. But they ran out of room, so they had to dump everything in one pen.

FC: So, if you had to break it down - how much fish, how much scallops - half and half maybe? That you handle?

CB: More, more fish than scallops. I would say...[sighs] I don't want to say weight-wise because - put it this way - we have seven boats that do scallops and then we have twelve boats that do draggers. Like that, weight-wise it would be off. You know - every boat's different. And depending on what time of the season and everything like that, so it'd be easier to say that.

FC: Yep. And speaking of the season, that must be another big thing with all the changes in the regulations, are certain times of the year busier or...?

CB: Well, in the wintertime the only thing that slows us down is Mother Nature. It's Mother Nature with the wind. We may not - there's some winters... I remember one winter, it was so mild on land it was almost like a spring or a fall. And then out there, was a disaster and they didn't fish for like three months straight. It was horrible, horrible. Like seven - seven to ten days without a boat which is un-rarely. Like right now, we're doing a boat a day. And then that winter particularly, I was counting it because I couldn't believe it: seven to ten days before you did a boat. And then when you did the boat, it barely had - I don't know - five, ten-thousand pounds because it only made it out for a day or two and then it had to come back home. It was horrible. So our biggest thing is Mother Nature. Not so much the regulations, because in the regulations we can take it in the beginning of the year and then stretch it out and then we have a game plan of what we're going to do all year long. But then Mother Nature comes in and says, "Nah. I'm going to change all that."

FC: Now if...so are you kind of managing things if a boat - if you're off-loading a boat?

CB: Yeah.

FC: Yeah. So making sure everything goes smooth...

CB: Yep. Make sure all the orders go out to Boston at a certain times because if it gets there too late then they cut it. They don't want it and then they kick it back and then it's just...makes a disaster - not a disaster, but it creates more problems on top of each other.

FC: Yep. And you've got a pretty good crew of guys?

CB: Yeah, yep.

FC: Some of them have been with you for a while?

CB: Yeah, there's a couple that've been with me. There's one kid Jamie - he's been with me for eight years. Victor's been here for fifteen years. Terry's been here for twenty years. And then those are your concrete people and then you have other people that maybe come in for six months a year.

FC: Decide they want to do something else?

CB: Yeah, it's a hard job. You know what I mean? Come wintertime or come in the middle of the night, you know what I mean? My father always told me, "No one ever grows up and wants to become a fisherman. We're just going at it or something like that." Nobody says, "Oh I want to be a fisherman. I want to work hard for the rest of my life." You know? [laughs]

FC: It just happens. [laughs]

CB: It does! Whatever circumstances you are in your life at that moment.

FC: So, in terms of - a few different things here - so, in terms of the grading part of it, how does that work or what are you looking for? You are sorting mostly by size - is that it or...?

CB: Grading where? Here or there? Or both?

FC: Well, both.

CB: Okay. Let's start with the auction first. Grading - it's already all sized out and everything. It's all tagged. I just have a report and I just got to mark down if it's good or bad, mainly. And I use numbers from seven to nine: seven being average and then obviously higher and then obviously lower, if the quality's that bad. And I just make sure that the fish is fresh. Fish go through a spawning season, which we're just coming out of. So the fish ain't - the quality ain't the greatest. The meat is mushy so when you fillet it, it falls apart. So your percentage would be less so you're going to put out more money to make less. So you got to make sure that's okay.

[15:00]

So I'm just making sure that just the quality... Now over here at Bergies, I'm making sure that the quality is right, that the grade, that the separation's right and also certain customers take certain kind of quality of fish. And I'm making sure that everybody gets what they want. Mainly. You know?

FC: I was going to say, what's the biggest difference between like a low grade and a high grade? When you're looking at it?

CB: A fish, if it's scaled - or a flat fish, if it's all red and brown or whatever it's because the storage. That means a lot of age. On a cod fish, if the eyes are sunken in, if I touch it and my fingerprint stays there that means it's old because it's soft. Things of that nature. On a haddock really to see if the gills are in because if the gills are in that means that their percentage will be low. The bloodline - to see if the blood because the blood was a very good sign. It will tell you how old the fish is. Because if the blood's like a auburn color it's been around for awhile. But if it's a vibrant, bright red it's just been caught. Little tricks like that, you know, that you just pick up as the years. It ain't something that they like teach you, just through experience, you know?

FC: Just being around it.

CB: Yeah. Basically. And then that's it. Just to make sure that it's just fresh fish, you know.

FC: So and it seems like the handling is really important because you don't want to - you can't beat the heck out of the fish. I mean - they've got to be in good shape. So right from the time they go...come off the boat, they got to be handled with care, right?

CB: Yeah. Yep. You got to put them head/tail, head/tail pack them. My father's big on that too. Head/tail, head/tail pack them in, in the tote right instead of on top of each other tumbling because then...then if you have a few fish that are like bent over and it ruins their fillet, then

again that's less percentage. That means that the company's losing money when whoever they buy it from and then if they bought it and they're losing money then they're only going to cut our bill because they ain't getting the top quality that they wanted. It all trickles down.

FC: Yep. And it seems like the ice is pretty important too.

CB: Yeah, very. Very important.

FC: Got to keep it as fresh as you can.

CB: Always. Always.

FC: Are the fishermen, most of the boat crews pretty good about keeping the stuff well iced down on the boat?

CB: Yeah. I don't have no issues like that anymore. Maybe years ago because it was so much of an abundance of boats and then you like had the good boats and you had bad boats. But with the restrictions and everything today, only people that survive is your good people. You know what I mean? Like the so-so couldn't survive. So you just have the best of the best really now.

FC: And are most of the fishermen pretty easy to work with? Do you get along OK with them or do you get a few characters?

CB: Yeah, you get a few characters. For the most part they're all right. But it's just that they're fighting for every nickel and dimes they ask. So if they can get over a little on you because they're hollering and screaming and they work you up, then so be it. You know? You just...you got to bring your A game and they're going to bring theirs and you just match up. You just got to remember that that's the boat and the boat makes you work so without that boat then you won't have work so you got to treat it right. You just make sure that he just don't take more advantage of you. You know?

FC: So that's another part of it besides the actual - you know, the hands on stuff - you've got to... you're dealing with people you got to play some games, like any other job.

CB: Yep. Yep. Because some...some captains they'll just sit back and you won't hear anything from them. They're nicest guys. And then some people they're right like, right over you, [gruff sounding] "Rah, rah, rah!" Getting you all bothered. You just don't want to hear it and you just do what they say, you know.

FC: Yeah. They really work you over?

CB: Yeah. And if they can see it, they just going to just dig in more. But for the most part, I have a great relationship with them because they've all seen me since I was a boy and they've all kind of grown up with me. They're all like my uncles in a sense, you know. So, a little different for me compared to just some guy off the street, "Oh I've done this for ten years."

FC: They know you know what you're doing.

CB: Yeah. There's even some I've even dated their daughters. You know what I mean? I've been at their house. I've had dinners with them, you know what I mean? So I have a different relationship so when I say something it's not because I'm trying to get over on you or something. I'm telling you the truth.

FC: Yeah, yeah. But does it ever get ugly down there?

CB: Yeah, it has. Not like exchanging hands but I've gotten, we've gotten in peoples' faces.

[20:00]

You know what I mean? Like we've... Again, it's money, you know? They, they...whatever their circumstance may be somebody's going to get short sided and somebody feels like they shouldn't and then there's the conflict.

FC: Everybody's trying to make a buck.

CB: Yep, yep. Especially today with the rules and regulations you got to be real sharp to make it work. And then one little glitch right there, you know what I mean, it could throw off your month that you thought you were going make profit or whatever and now you're not because you weren't paying attention or you took something for granted or whatever it may be.

FC: So when you're grading at the auction, are there a bunch of other people doing the same thing?

CB: Not really. There used to be. There used to be when I started this back in '03, there used to be. And then as the years went on, less and less companies got...went out of business or what they do now is they'll hire a grader and he'll grade for like seven, eight companies. So, really you only have three or four people but they're grading, total between all of us, they're grading for like twenty-five companies.

FC: So instead of each company having their own...

CB: Yeah, yeah. They pay somebody so much a cents - whatever they buy. Whatever they work out. Some get paid by the cent and some get paid by the week, regardless of what they buy.

FC: And people leave you alone when you're doing that?

CB: Yeah, for the most part. I got nobody chirping in my ear. Not unless I see somebody that works there and they're just shooting - just talking to me. That's it. But yeah, for the most part everyone's leaving me.

FC: And do you get people who aren't happy with what you come up with?

CB: No, I don't run into anybody like that. I don't see no captains, no nothing. Nobody bothers me. I send my report to whoever needs it. And then my job is done.

FC: So then it is what it is. You know what you're doing.

CB: Yep, yep. No controversies with that.

FC: So that part of your work seems pretty low-key compared to here kind of. You're kind of on your own...maybe a little more quiet.

CB: Yeah. And it's only like forty-five minutes of my day really. You know. Get the ball started.

FC: So then you're back over here maybe at six in the morning or something?

CB: Yep. Yeah quarter of six, six in the morning. First thing is to get all the Boston orders out because of the traffic and everything. And then all the locals will come after that, you know.

FC: So what - let's see what else I've got here - so it seems like a real mix of guys in terms of background. It looked like there were some Portuguese guys. There's some, you know....

CB: Spanish. I'm French and Irish. You've got some Portuguese. I've got Spaniards, Guatemalan, El Salvador, Puerto Rican. All different brands. And unfortunately the majority of us - I don't want to say this in a bad way - we're not really educated, educated like a college degree or something like that so, when we come together - where am I going with this? - we have differences and sometimes we butt heads. And we just have to overcome it.

FC: What about the language thing? Does everybody down there speak some English at least?

CB: Yeah. Over the years I've realized that it's easier for me to understand their language than it is for them to learn my language. Especially with the Guatemalans because they come from a third world poor country. They're not too smart to start with to learn different languages so it would be easier for me to grasp their language to talk to them than for them to do English.

FC: So you can speak a little a bit of some of these...

CB: Yeah, yeah I can speak enough to get the work done. I can't sit here and have a conversation with you but I can tell you everything what I need you to do in your language, work-wise.

FC: Yeah. That's interesting. It sounds like an interesting mix. And everybody's a little different.

CB: Yeah. Different nationalities, different foods, different backgrounds.

FC: Yeah. Different everything.

CB: Yeah.

FC: I'm half Italian. Half Scotch. We're all mixed, you know.

CB: Yeah. Yep.

FC: But for the most part everybody gets along. And you can... even if somebody speaks a different language, like you said,

[25:00]

you can communicate with them enough to...so they know what they have to do.

CB: Yep. Yeah.

FC: Trying to think of what else here. So, what about when you're working like a normal day, do you take any breaks?

CB: Yeah and no. If we have a lot of fish and it just happens to be like...in the morning time, I'd say no. Because the morning time is like a... shotgun. Because all those trucks - depending if we have one or two trucks trying to get out to Boston - those orders have to go before we can even take a break. Sometimes I don't take a break 'til 11, 12:00. And that's just to sit down and have a sandwich or something. Or there's some days where I wouldn't take a break until I left at 3:00 in the afternoon, like that. Or in the wintertime, all day's a break because there ain't nothing going on, you know?

FC: Yeah. It just depends what's going on that day.

CB: Yeah. But every morning, especially in the summertime, no breaks because those trucks got to get outta here.

FC: Do you end up working weekends at all?

CB: Yep. Weekends, nights, holidays. It doesn't matter. Twenty-four, seven.

FC: And that's mostly because of the schedule of the boats?

CB: Yes.

FC: When they're coming in, you got to be here.

CB: Yep. We got to be here. The only days I can count that we ain't going to work is Christmas.

FC: But any other day?

CB: Yeah. I've worked Thanksgiving, New Year's. It don't matter.

FC: Is that tough - the schedule part of it?

CB: For me, no because I've done it since I was a boy. Like I've grown into it, you know what I mean? But you pull a man thirty years old that lived a normal life and then throw him down here, he's going to like, "Yo. All you people are sick! Something wrong wit you! This ain't normal!" You know, I've had plenty of those and it's just for me it's normal. It's just the way I'm...it's easy for me, you know?

FC: Yeah. If somebody's done 9 to 5 Monday to Friday all their life and they're thrown into it, then they probably can't deal with it.

CB: No. And it's not for everybody neither, you know what I mean? The work, the hours, how you may work. I've worked 36 hours straight. I've done 62 in three days. You know, I've worked 32 hours, gone home, slept 8 and came back and did another 32. Never went home. Never changed. Nothing. That's just abnormal. It just ain't right. You know [laughs], it isn't! It just isn't, you know? But that's what...

FC: You grew up with.

CB: Yeah. That's what we have to do, you know?

FC: Yeah. What's the toughest part of the job? Or what don't you like about it?

CB: That, that. If I just wanted like a fifteen, twenty minute break just to stop and just let my brain just let go and eat something. But sometimes...

FC: You just can't do it. You're on, like all day long.

CB: Yeah, yeah. Yep.

FC: You're going.

CB: Or say when I'm lumping a boat, right? I'm in the fish hole. I'm there for five hours. I'm working for five hours. It's like going to the gym for five hours and never taking a water break. You know?

FC: Yeah. There must be days when, you know, at the end of the day you're feeling pretty wiped out.

CB: Yeah. Yeah. There's even days I'm driving home and I'm nodding at the wheel and it's like, whew. You know?

FC: Yeah. And you got to get up and be over there at five.

CB: Yep. But exactly...but I feel like because I've been doing it for so long, it's my second nature where I don't struggle to get up. I don't struggle. Thank God. Thank God.

FC: What do you like most about it, or what's the best thing about it?

CB: The people. The people that I've grown up around and everything, you know? I can take you with me and walk and I'll like, "This one taught me this." Or, "I had an experience with this one." "I went out fishing with this one." "Me and this was doing this." You know what I mean? I'm a peoples person so I like getting everyone together and then just experiencing everything together.

FC: So that part of it.

CB: That's what I enjoy, you know?

FC: Yeah.

CB: Other than that, it's just dead fish. Just sometimes there's a lot and sometimes there's a little bit. But working with somebody - let's say me and you, we're in a situation where our back's against the walls, say there's two boats and there's no help or anything - but me and you will get together. We'll buddy up and we'll get through with it and then later on when it's done and we did it, I can look at you and you can look at me and say, "You stood beside me." In other words, me and you, we just went to war and we came out, you know what I mean?

FC: Yeah.

CB: The camaraderie I feel with the men; that's what I enjoy.

FC: Yeah, yeah. Working together and kind of having each others' backs.

CB: You know. Yeah. Yeah, exactly.

FC: Things get tough or something. Yeah.

CB: Yeah. That's what I enjoy.

FC: It seems the more you do that,

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you kind of build up even more of those connections.

CB: Yep. And then it just goes on and you have more respect for the person or then another experience will come along, "Remember when me and you did this, and dah, dah, dah and we had this?" Or, "We did it like this?" Things like that.

FC: You think it's...is it a good type of work for a young guy to get into?

CB: If he's smart with his money. If he's smart with his money, it will be. You know what I mean? You just got to be...you got to be smart in your head to use the money right because it's not normal and your going to go through brutality. Your body's just going to get beat up. Are you anger and just mean over to the drug side to overcome the brutality or are you strong enough to overcome it and just toughen it up and then keep on going? That's the only two ways you going to go, you know? You can't dabble and dabble. You just, you're going to be...

FC: Yeah. It seems like some of the other guys we've been talking to have been saying that not a lot of young people are getting into the industry and stuff. Do you feel like that, where...?

CB: No. Well, I feel it all depends what part of the industry because right now, a lot of young kids are into scalloping because it's huge money. Huge money. And then the other end, they're not so much. So they follow the money. Like there's not really a lot - like immigration's really got the plant-wise, meaning like us factories. The immigration's over here. The young people are on the scallopers, not really on the draggers because there ain't no money there. So the old timers that made all the money years ago, they're the only ones hanging around now because they only have a couple of years left and then they're done. And then the people on and off-loading, eh...it's a mixture, you know? A lot of people use us to get familiar with the fish, to learn the boats and things like that and then they start talking. They get real comfortable with a captain. They start talking. The next thing you know, he's out fishing. He left you.

FC: Yeah, yeah. Well, that's good. I don't want to hold you up all day here, but is there anything else that you can think of that we didn't cover? Or...anything else about the work?

CB: No.

FC: Yeah? Okay. Well, that's great. Thanks!

CB: You're welcome.

FC: Yeah.

[32:30] End of audio.