



# NEW BEDFORD FISHING HERITAGE CENTER

Date of Interview 05/05/2017

## Joseph, Karen ~ Oral History Interview

Laura Orleans

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## **Background**

**Name of person interviewed:** Karen Joseph [KJ]

### **Facts about this person:**

Age  
Sex Female  
Occupation President, RA Mitchell Company  
Residence (Town where lives)  
Ethnic background (if known)

**Interviewer:** Laura Orleans [LO]

**Transcriber:** Laura Silverman [LS]

**Interview location:** RA Mitchell Company, 103 Popes Island, New Bedford, MA

**Date of interview:** 05/05/2017

### **Key Words**

RA Mitchell Company, Xavier Santos, Michael Pope, Peter Joseph, growing up in the fishing industry, female leadership roles in the fishing industry, family businesses, positives and negatives of working with family, public's view of the waterfront workers, small businesses in the fishing industry, future of the fishing industry.

### **Abstract**

In this interview, Karen Joseph describes her experiences growing up in her family's business, the RA Mitchell Company, on the New Bedford waterfront. She discusses her experience being a female in a leadership role in a male-dominated industry, as well as the positives and negatives of working in a family business. Finally, she discusses her hopes for the future of the fishing industry.

## **Index**

[0:00] Introduction to Karen Joseph, her use of the last name Mitchell professionally, brief history of the RA Mitchell Company, brief history of Karen's professional experience.

[4:42] Karen's memories visiting the company as a child, family environment of the RA Mitchell Company, Karen's various positions at the company beginning in the parts department, moving to sales and project manager, and then becoming Vice President.

[10:07] Karen's role as President of the RA Mitchell Company, examples of surprises during a typical work day, role of technology in interactions with customers, a typical day for Karen.

[14:52] Karen's husband, Peter Joseph's role as Service Manager, sense of community amongst shore side companies, the informal nature of business agreements between shore side businesses.

[19:30] The informal nature of business agreements between shore side businesses, lack of challenges Karen faced having grown up in the business and now having a leadership role, challenges being a female in a leadership role in a shore side company.

[25:03] Karen's discussions with other women in leadership roles at shore side businesses, benefits of working with family including spending more time with them, possibilities for a fourth generation to take over the family business.

[30:22] Challenges of working with family, earning respect as a business on the waterfront, Karen's thoughts about how the negative reputation of the waterfront is incorrect, the role of small businesses in the fishing industry, the difficulty of being a small business in the fishing industry.

[35:04] Karen's thoughts about the future of the fishing industry.

[37:24] End of audio

[0:00]

LO: So today is the fifth of May in the year 2017 and 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 are 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. And I'm speaking to Karen Joseph, correct?

KJ: Correct.

LO: Make sure I got the last name.

KJ: Mm hmm.

LO: And my name is Laura Orleans, and we are at RA Mitchell Company. It's about a little after 2:00 in the afternoon. So I'm going to have you sign a formal release, but just for the recording, do you give us permission to record you for this project?

KJ: I do, yes. Recording is fine.

LO: All right, so even though we just established your name, could you just introduce yourself?

KJ: Sure, sure. My name is Karen Joseph. I married Peter and I use his name for anything outside of work, but when I'm working here I typically go by Karen Mitchell. I'm very proud of the name and I like to have that. I think it helps with, you know, keeping the family tradition alive by still using Mitchell. It gets a little confusing every once in awhile so people aren't sure if Bob is my father or my husband, sometimes. But, yeah, I do, I do use Mitchell as well as Joseph.

LO: So tell me, what is your job today in the fishing industry?

KJ: Well, in the fishing industry, we are a supplier of our custom-built generator sets, and all the ancillary equipment that goes along with that. We'll do anything from control panels for the boats, pumps, they also use different types of our parts that we supply. So that's a big part of the fishing industry. We also have a new product line that we sell for the steering and the control side of the boats. So we sort of can capture almost everything that the boat could possibly need.

LO: Okay. So you've alluded to that this is a family business...

KJ: Correct.

LO: ...maybe backing up, how long has your family been involved in the industry?

KJ: The company was established in 1954 by my grandfather, Robert Amos Mitchell. And that's what we call it RA Mitchell. So since about, I think it was actually a little bit earlier, but I think really a good, the start date was 1954. He had been working in the in the community prior to that

just as a mechanic, working right out of his trunk of his car, bringing some parts around. So then after, I want to say in the '60s, I'm not exactly sure the exact year, my dad started and worked along with him. And then about twenty plus years ago Jennifer started, and then I came in shortly after that. So that's, Jen and I are the third generation family business and Jen and I work very close together; different parts of the company. I'm in the Sales and Project Management side, and she does the accounting, HR side of things. So it's really good that we've got it separated. We've got one of each of us doing different things but still working very closely together.

LO: So backing up when and where were you born?

KJ: I was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, at St. Luke's, forty plus years ago.

LO: Care to give a year?

KJ: No.

LO: I know, sensitive topic.

KJ: Yeah, no, no, I know, I know. And so I grew up in Fairhaven and went to Fairhaven school system, then high school was over at Bishop Stang, and I went to UMass Amherst for college where I earned my degree in Business. And I was working up in western Mass after college in the sports marketing industry, and that's when Jennifer called and said, "You've got to come back and help." Which I knew I always wanted to do, I just wanted to get some background in other businesses so I could bring that over to ours. I had worked here as a child doing, inventory, answering the phones, cleaning bathrooms, so, I do a little bit of everything, back then.

LO: Way back, what's your, what's your earliest memory of hanging out with your dad?

[4:42] KJ: Oh my goodness, earliest memory in the building, would be coming here and, actually it was in the building on Main Street in Fairhaven, and it's so funny, I remember the old fashioned check numbering system. And my sisters and I would come harass my dad's secretary. And my dad, actually there's two really funny memories that I have. And one of them was messing around with the check system and doing that. But we also used to take the o-rings that were in the parts department and wear them as bracelets. So, and all, everybody in Parts, they'd go to do inventory and they were short ten rubber o-rings because we were wearing them as fancy bracelets.

LO: That's funny.

KJ: But I do, I remember visiting and it's, what's really, just, I love that, it, we used to visit and there was a gentleman named Xavier Santos, and he still comes and works with us. So he's eighty years old, if not a little bit older, and he was working as a master mechanic for my grandfather and my father. And we used to visit him and my dad's secretary. Everybody was, and is, family. They were just a really good group of people. My grandfather and my dad are very, very good bosses. So, they created a really nice family environment which we try to continue on here.

LO: So when you actually came officially to work, what was your job title at that point, or your job description?

KJ: I, yeah no title, the description was just help where I was needed, you know, where there was a need for help. I did any, everything from quoting generator sets to processing invoices, working in the parts department, what else did I, I mean, pretty much everything. I was working in a sense under my dad. There was a Vice President here at the time, his name was Michael Pope, and he was helping my dad run the company, did a great job. So I just came in to fill in and just learn, to kind of, and learn from him.

LO: And then how did it evolve over the last, say, twenty years or...

KJ: Well after I came in from college we just found a need to expand in different areas of the company. We needed some more people to help in the parts department, so I moved over there which was a really good step because learning the parts really helped me understand the big picture. Knowing what could fail, knowing what important parts we needed to have on the shelf, that turned over really quickly. Some of the spare parts that were needed. So that side of the parts department really helped me work on the sales side. So working in the parts department, and then I just, I never had any formal training, I just listened. I sat across the office from my father and just listened. Every time he was on the phone, I just had an ear to him and was able to learn the way he liked things done, the way it worked, because he's been so, done so well, so I understood what worked and what didn't work. So after working in parts then I worked, then I actually got my own office. Michael ended up leaving, Michael Pope ended up leaving so I moved into that office and did the generator sales. And then I moved into project management which actually worked out well because my dad was very good at what he did and the selling side, but that's when computers started to take over and he was not really good with the computers and I was, so he would sell and then put the project on my desk and say, "Make it happen." So that's when I started doing a lot of the ordering of engines, ordering of generators, coordinating everything to arrive on time. And then write up work orders for the guys in the back so they could build the units which then we would get them in, and ship, and did a lot of the communication with the customers, which was really nice too, because I was able to talk to the customers and understand a lot of it too, so. And then just from that point just, eventually was given the title of Vice President, so that was a really nice, nice moment. I don't actually remember the year of it, you know, it was, it meant so much to me, but as an owner, a title is a title. I still have to clean the bathrooms and I still have to sweep the floors. But it was, it was, exactly. Anything that needs to be done. Anything that needs to be done. So, it, it's, I don't want to maybe take away from the fact that I was, you know, given that, but, I also think it's important that everybody, you just do what needs to be done in a family business.

[10:07] LO: And today are you still in that position?

KJ: No, actually I'm the President of the company now.

LO: Congratulations.

KJ: So thank you very much. Yup, my dad, he wanted to slow down. He wanted to slow down a little bit and, which is, which is great, he deserves that, although I don't know how much he's slowed down. He's still, you know, he might have gone from seventeen hours a day to twelve, you know. But, so yeah, I was given the title of President which is again, it's just an honor. I really like that, I like that about it. It just, it meant a lot, and I think it means a lot to my dad to be able to pass that on and know that he's, his hard work is in good hands, between my sister and I. So yeah, it is, it's really nice.

LO: So this is sort of the trick question. Tell me about a typical day. Is there a typical day?

KJ: Oh my gosh. The typical day is that there's no typical day. Every day is different. There's really always something different happening. Different in the sense, crisis. Sometimes well, within the fishing industry you just never know what's going to happen. They'll have a boat coming back in, and they've had a good trip, for example, and they've got to unload, turn around, and go back out again, maybe an unexpected day. So for them, so what we'll need to do is change our plans, get our mechanic over there, adjust the valves, get the boat ready to do another trip. So I'm trying to handle and coordinate all of that along with the parts department, making sure the parts are available. I'm coordinating with Peter Joseph, the Service Manager, making sure that he's got the guys available for me. So that would, that can spring up on us. Then we'll have an emergency where I've got to get parts out the door for another job that we're working on because let's say there's something down or a, so we'll have to coordinate, UPS Red shipments. We'll have a customer walk in the door wanting to buy a generator and sit down with you. We've got vendors that come in, so it's exciting because there is always something different. And then we'll get phone calls um, that, hey by the way, you were just, - actually we got one of our biggest orders this year by text message. Hey, by the way, you got the job, smiley face, emojis on a text message.

LO: It's funny...

KJ: Yeah.

LO: ...things are coming in in all different...

KJ: Yeah.

LO: I've heard other people even Facebook sometimes...

KJ: Yeah, yeah.

LO: ...messenger or whatever.

KJ: Yeah, it's, yeah, it's fun. It's the way things are happening these days. And that's why I think with my dad not having that technology behind him, you know. I think the way he has done it his whole life, which is communicating by phone, talking to somebody, or going and traveling, I think that's so important these days. There's been a lot of jobs that we've had over the years

where I've never met the person. And sometimes never even talk to them on the phone; sometimes messages will come in by email or, or fax, and you never talk to them.

LO: Do you think that now that the company is better established that's more possible, whereas...

KJ: Correct.

LO: ...when your, you know...

KJ: Absolutely.

LO: ... your grandfather or your father were just starting out...

KJ: Yeah. Yeah.

LO: ...had to build a reputation.

KJ: They had to. They had to go out there and meet people face to face. And I'm lucky because that hard work is done. It's, he's done a lot of that work for us.

LO: What time does the day start for you?

KJ: I am, well, in the company? Because at home I'm a mom. So you know, as a mom I'm up at about 6:30, 7:00. And then I'll get into work about 8:30, 9:00. Every day, again, is different, because I tend to do a lot of work before I get in. I do a lot of work on the computer answering emails, so I can get in at 9:30 but I've, the kids are off at school and I've done a lot of the work. When I get here I don't get a lot of time to do the paperwork that I need because of interruptions, good interruptions, still, but because of it, so I do a lot of it, I focus a lot of my time in the morning at home. And I'll get the emails answered, come in, work with the guys, get my projects done for the day, what's happening, what, what wrench has been thrown into my day where now I have to change and do different things. And I'll take a lunch at my desk, sometimes I'll try to sneak in, have a lunch with my husband. And, ...

LO: So your husband is here?

KJ: Yes.

LO: Yes.

[14:52] KJ: Yes, yup, Peter has become the Service Manager. He worked out back for a while. And then he just really caught on very, very quickly. He's got a really good sense of communication, really good communication skills. He was a police officer prior, so yeah, so he was able to communicate and put out fires very well. So having him go into the position of Service Manager where you're communicating, is really important, so yeah. We try to catch up with lunch every once in awhile. And then I will leave anywhere between 5:00, or last night I left at 11:00.



LO: At night?

KJ: At night. Yeah. It's just been really....

LO: That's a long day.

KJ: Yes. And, uh, it's, sometimes, this week I have not left before 9:00 at all. It's just busy. And it's quiet after, and I can get things done, and then I'll put things out on people's desks so the next morning when they get in at, say, 7:30, they know what I need to have done, so then if I get in at 9:00 and, yeah, in the morning, they know what needs to be done.

LO: So you light up when you talk about your work.

KJ: I love it. I do. I really love it. I love the people. I wouldn't like it so much if I, because it is paperwork, you know, there's a lot of paperwork, there's a lot of tedious work involved. But the people here and the people that we work with really make it so special. I just love when I'll have a customer walk in that owns a boat that worked with my grandfather. And that will be able to tell me a story, or great projects that my dad and this customer worked on together. It just really, it really motivates me. It really does.

LO: I get the sense from the many interviews we've been doing that the waterfront is, first of all, a unique place.

KJ: Mmm hmm. Definitely.

LO: And because there still is a lot of family involvement...

KJ: Mmm hmm.

LO: ...there are still a lot of shore side businesses that are family owned and operated, and even some boats...

KJ: Yup.

LO: ...still in that category, um, that there is that history.

KJ: Yes.

LO: It makes it very unique. And, um, and the sense of community is different...

KJ: Absolutely.

LO: ...even than other industries.

KJ: I definitely agree with that.

LO: Would you say that?

KJ: Absolutely.

LO: Yeah.

KJ: Right.

LO: I mean, you have something to compare it to, having worked in the sports marketing...

KJ: Right.

LO: ...right? So there's, I mean, I don't know, maybe there's a different sense of community, I'm not sure.

KJ: I don't, yeah. I'm not sure. I didn't work there long enough, but there certainly wasn't the camaraderie that there is here in this business. I think a lot of the suffering that these people, the boat owners, have gone through, other companies have gone through the success, it's between boat owners and, and shore side businesses, we've gone through it together. So it, it just makes your relationship with those people just so much stronger. Yeah.

LO: Um, so when you say that the, I'm trying to remember the word that you used...

KJ: Struggle? Is that the right...?

LO: Struggle, yeah.

KJ: Yeah. Well, business is tough. Business very tough and you really have to try hard to, when you have your own business. And a boat owner has their own business. So there's been some hard times sometimes. You know, you are forced, for example, to buy a new generator set. You're not expecting to have to pay \$20,000 today. And if you don't have that, your business can't move forward. And that happens here too, you know, we, in our own building, if, you know, say a truck breaks down, you know. There's a similarity. And with some of these customers that are expected to come up with \$20,000, the relationships that we've built over the years, we can work together. And the customers really have appreciated that, where we understand, hey you know, you can't fish without this, so that means you can't make money, and then you can't pay us. So if we help you, you'll help us, and we can work out bills, we can extend some credit, and we can become successful together.

LO: Do you think, is the waterfront still a place, people described it as a place where deals are made with a handshake.

[19:30] KJ: Yes. Absolutely. Yeah. There's still nothing very formal at all. I have engines out back where we're going to be putting generators together, I'm trying to say maybe about fifteen of them, and no formal paperwork. Guy next door, "Hey, I need two of them. I need them in, you

know, spring, the springtime of next year.” Okay. I'm going to get it ready. I don't need anything formal, I'm just going to give him a call when it's done. He knows that I've got it taken care of and I know that he's good for it. And yeah, absolutely. Especially this industry, the way in the fishing industry. You know, things are a little bit more formal when, there's say, a government job going on or a new boat being built down at the shipyard. That's a little bit more formal, but the fishing industry, absolutely. Yeah, yup. I'll get in in the morning and my dad will say, “Oh, I had breakfast with Mr. Bruce, Herman Bruce or something, and yeah, he's going to get a generator.” Oh, okay. Great. And then I have to scramble that day and get paperwork and things done together. That's why you never know what's going to happen.

LO: So even despite the use of technology for communicating, like with the texts and all of that...

KJ: Yes. Yeah.

LO: ...there's still that?

KJ: Absolutely. And that is where my father has done so well. Because he's always out and about, he's always out and about. He's always on the streets, you know, visiting the different waterfronts and saying hi to everybody, finding out what's going on. So yeah.

LO: So having grown up in this business with so many of, I assume, many of these employees watched you grow up, essentially.

KJ: Mmm hmm.

LO: Was it challenging for them to transition...

KJ: Yes.

LO: ...to you in a, a leadership role?

KJ: Yeah, I think so.

LO: Can you talk about that a little?

KJ: Yeah, sure, sure. It's ...

LO: And, and as a woman, I mean, there are sort of...

KJ: Correct.

LO: ...two things going on.

KJ: Good point, yeah.

LO: Yeah.

KJ: Yup. So yeah, all these guys, I think there's John Miranda and John Flekus, Victor Canera; they're thirty plus year employees, so I was a little girl in pigtails, you know, when they were young kids working here. So I think, I think the way we've made it work is: they understand respect. They respect my dad so much. So I'm lucky that they do respect him so much, so they respect me. And they want to please him still, so they'll do anything they can to still please him, which means work with me and help me and teach me. I think another part of what makes things work well between us, is I'm super curious. So I'm always out there asking questions and wanting to learn, and I think they respect that, you know. I didn't come in demanding respect. I think they realized that I want to learn, that I want to succeed and I want to grow. And by doing that I have to ask questions. And they see that as a positive.

LO: And you respect the fact that they have thirty years of knowledge...

KJ: Absolutely, yeah.

LO: ...or work experience...

KJ: Yeah, yeah.

LO: ...to share.

KJ: And that's why I go to them. That's why I go to them. So by me, not being, you know, a tough boss, I haven't been and I've learned that from my dad, you know. If you're fair, they're fair. You know, so that works out. Regarding the woman, being a woman, the guys I don't think here have a problem with it. I just think, most of them are dads and husbands so they, you know, they've grown up respecting women so I think that for them, has worked out, worked out well in my favor. But being a woman and dealing with some of the customers in the fishing boat owners, that has become a little challenging. Some of them will say, well, back, back in the day when I was a, you know, say fifteen, ten years ago when I was first starting out, you know, they didn't want to talk to me. They'd say, "Oh, I'll wait until there's a man that's going to answer." And like, well no, there's not going to be a, this is it, this is what you got. So I've pushed and I've tried really, really hard to learn so that when I did speak to these people that I spoke like I understood, so they respected that, so it was easier to gain their respect. Most of them, most of them are something like old school so they just don't, they just don't get it. But, but the majority of it has been pretty easy. Being a woman and a woman boss, I don't think has been challenging. That I don't think so. I don't think so. I think our guys here are not very chauvinistic, so they get it. Other parts in the industry being a woman, yeah, that's given me some challenges, but not my own guys or ladies.

LO: Are there many other women, not, not here so much, it's you and...

KJ: Yeah.

LO: ...your sister and obviously there are others...

KJ: Yup, the other girls, yeah. We have a generator sales girl, our head sales, yeah.

[25:03] LO: Really?

KJ: Yeah. Yeah.

LO: But what about in other businesses? Are you aware of other women...

KJ: Yes.

LO: ...do you ever talk with each other about...?

KJ: Yes, we do, yes. So there's another shore side business that I can think of, is Serena Gunderson at Scandia Propeller. We've had our conversations back and forth, and she's had to, you know, fight her way though as well. I don't know if she's going to, I don't know if she's leaving to become a nurse.

LO: I think that's my understanding...

KJ: Yeah, yeah.

LO: ...is she's in nursing school.

KJ: Yup.

LO: Yeah.

KJ: But yeah, there are some other women, the Bendiksens which, we've had our conversations with them and I've actually asked a lot of questions, you know, way back in the day, you know, and tried to learn a little bit from her. How'd you deal with it? What are the struggles that you found? What are ways that, you know, any advice for me?

LO: And...

KJ: Yeah.

LO: Can you think of any nuggets of advice or...

KJ: I just think what she, if I were to give advice and if I can recall, she just said be open and listen, as opposed to demanding and telling, you know. Just try to listen and understand what's the situation, and just don't be pushy, you know. Just be yourself, you know. So, I think that's the best advice that I could give. You know, but stand your ground. Know when you're right, you're right, you know. Don't let somebody just push you around because they think that just because you're a woman, you know, that you can be told by a man what to do, you know.

LO: So, um, with regard to the family business, you have it on many levels. You've got your father...

KJ: Yes.

LO: ...your sister...

KJ: Yes.

LO: ...your husband...

KJ: Yup.

LO: ...so tell me a little bit about the positives of that situation...

KJ: Sure, sure. Well, positives. I mean, there's so many positives. One of them that I think is just the most important is that I can come to work every day and be with my dad, you know, and my sister. I just think that's so great. I mean, we've always been a very close-knit family, dinners at the kitchen table with my dad and mom and three sisters. I mean we just, we would sit at the table for hours. So to be able to be here with them, is just, it just means so much. It just really means a lot to me. Some of the other positives are the fact that I get to learn from my dad. That, I think, is really important. You know, if I had moved off to California to get another job I would probably see them once a year, you know, and I just, I think it's so, it's so important to be able to be here. I like that.

LO: Are you ever not at work? You know, now, I mean, since you work together...

KJ: Yeah.

LO: ...let's say you go out for a family picnic on the Fourth of July...

KJ: Yeah.

LO: ...shop talk?

KJ: No. Not really, not really at all. We try not to, actually. We try not to. We, it happens, it certainly does happen, but we definitely try not to. But my dad is just, it's what he knows. It's all he knows. You know, he doesn't golf, he doesn't do those different things. He loves to boat, go boating, so out on his boat and go fishing and things like that, so, but, so then at some point some work is always going to come in. And usually we're with the kids and my kids are curious so they'll ask questions, so shop talk does come up but we, actually, you know, we try not to. Try not to. We try to talk about, you know, how the kids are, current events, or what's happening or, not super political, but just, you know, we try not to talk shop. It drives everyone a little crazy.

LO: Sure, sure. And do you imagine there'll be a fourth generation?

KJ: I hope so. I really hope so. I'm not going to push it with my kids. I want them to do whatever their heart desires. But do I want it? Sure, sure. My nephew, Riley, he's the oldest of all the grandkids from my dad; my sister Heather's got three boys. He's in college now, and he's going to transfer over to Mass Maritime. So, he might. He might try to pop over into the industry. I've got two children. I've got a son named Peter and a daughter named Kayleigh. Pete's thirteen, Kayleigh's twelve. She's wants to become a dentist, but I don't know if she's going to. Because she and my dad are so similar. You know she, her favorite show is "How It's Made." And she and my dad used to take pens and things apart and put them back together; she's really got that side to her. So I wonder if she'll become some sort of engineer and take over. Yeah, yeah. And Pete, if he doesn't become a professional basketball player, maybe he'll help out here too. Andrew, Jennifer's kids, there's Andrew and Alexa, Andrew's the oldest, he's actually worked here for a little bit, you know, helping out, doing some painting and doing some cleaning. So we'll see.

[30:22] LO: So what are the challenges of working with your family and your husband?

KJ: Yeah, the challenges are sometimes we don't see eye to eye. We've got different perspectives. And it's, and it's hard because, I don't want to, them to take things personal, but sometimes you have, like I said before, sometimes you have to stand your ground and say it like it is. But we're, you know, we're pretty, like I said, you know, we're pretty level-headed. We do talk out some of the jobs and some of the things and so we can understand. I guess some of the challenges are too, is that because we're so busy with work we don't have the family time that we used to have. If I'm home at 11:00 or, you know, we used to, when it wasn't as busy I'd have my mom and dad separately over for dinners and we would spend family time together. But now the challenges are we don't get that family time because there's so much work going on. Other than that, no, I don't think there's many challenges. We do, you know, work as hard as we can. I do think some of the positives are, like for example the other day my dad and I jumped in the car and drove to New York to review a job and I was able to spend some good quality time chitchatting in the car with him and going over work as well as family and non-work things. So that was nice. Being able to just spend the time is a nice positive.

LO: So you talked a little bit about respect. What do you think makes for respect on the waterfront, just in general?

KJ: I think the guys on the waterfront want honest and fairness. I don't think it's always about price for our business. They want to know that what they're buying, this is how I see from our point of view in our business, they want to know that what they're buying will be backed up with support, parts, and that is what we've prided ourselves on for so many, of our, entire sixty plus years, is support, backup, service. That is what's, that is what we pushed for, is that.

LO: So I know you're going to need to get going, is there anything that we didn't talk about...

KJ: Yeah, yeah.

LO: ...that's burning, you know, inside that you wanted to share?

KJ: Oh, well, I just think that the waterfront has a, perhaps a negative reputation. And I just, I just hope that later on, that people realize that it's a business and that they're very good people. I just hope that people don't think that the waterfront is what it is because of a few bad apples, you know? It's really not. It's a big group of dedicated, hardworking people trying to do the best that they can, and it's a family. Most of the, again, are family businesses, and everyone's just trying their hardest. And it's really a good group of people. I just think that, that's the most important thing that I would like to come out of this. Is that everybody knows that everybody just tries as hard as they can. And I also want, someday, what comes out of this is this is a very big business. This is a very important business. One of the largest, obviously in the country...

LO: You mean the fishing...

KJ: ...the fishing industry, yeah. Yup. And it's very important. And it's very hard for some of the smaller guys that are non-scallop fishermen, you know, it's not what it, people think it is. It's a struggle. And it's very had. And people work as hard as they can, and they deserve, those owners deserve the most that they can get, you know. I see a lot of business getting bailed out, I just wish that they could get some of the help that they needed as well, you know. Because, again, it's a good, it's a good business and they're good people.

[35:04] LO: Do you see a, um, a bright future?

KJ: I do, I do. I definitely see a bright future. I think it's going to be a little different. I think now, what I'm seeing over the years is instead of a lot of boat owners it's become bigger corporations which is, you're forced to, because you need the bigger corporate backup in a sense to be able to support some of these boats. But, I do see a good future for it. I definitely do. I always think positive, so I will. I will. I think if we can, the different engine lines that we carry, if those companies can help and back us and make the necessary changes to the engines to meet EPA requirements and they can help us, then we can help those industries. I think they're moving towards that.

LO: And do you, sort of, I mean, some of your job must be, sort of, strategic planning or thinking about how this company is going to evolve too.

KJ: Yes. Yeah.

LO: Do you have any thoughts about five years down the road, or ten years down...

KJ: I've got some ideas...Yup, I've got some ideas but, because of the way things change so much, I just never know, you know. With the new Trump administration and now EPA and people don't even know if they're going to have jobs or not, a lot of our planning might not be necessary. So, you know, the way things change every day, I don't know. But I think in about five years, I'm thinking my father's still going to be here because he's not going to, he keeps threatening, not threatening, but he's saying, oh, I'm going to slow down. I don't think he will. I think he just...

LO: How old is your dad?



KJ: ...loves it too, so much. Seventy-four? Seventy-four-ish? 1943 he was born. So yeah. So I think he'll still be here. Jen and I will still be plugging away, working hard, and maybe I'll have my kids sweeping the floor and helping me out and being my secretary and helper.

LO: Great.

KJ: Yeah. Yup.

LO: Well thank you, I could talk much longer but...

KJ: I know, me too, I could go on, I could go on and on. Well maybe we can still catch up on the next one.

LO: Do chapter two.

KJ: I know. Good.

LO: Well thank you. Unless there's more, right now.

KJ: Nothing I can think of at the moment.

LO: All right.

KJ: Thank you.

[37:24] End of recording