

NATIONAL OCEANIC ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

AN INTERVIEW WITH SEFATIA ROMEO THEKEN  
FOR THE  
VOICES ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY  
MOLLY GRAHAM

GLOUCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

TRANSCRIPT BY  
MOLLY GRAHAM

Molly Graham: This begins an oral history interview with Mayor Sefatia Romeo Theken. The interview is taking place on Monday, September 30, 2019, in Gloucester, Massachusetts. The interviewer is Molly Graham. We'll start at the beginning. Could you say when and where you were born?

SRT: I was born in Gloucester, Massachusetts, here at the Addison Gilbert Hospital, where I ended up working for twenty years. That was in August of '62.

MG: Happy belated birthday.

SRT: Thank you.

MG: Tell me about how your family arrived in Gloucester.

SRT: Oh, that's a weird little story I still love to listen to over and over. My grandmother actually was born in St. Louis, Missouri. She was the only one out of – I've written it all down, I have to go check – five siblings that were born in St. Louis. At four years old, they brought her back to Italy where they all grew up and lived. Since she was the only American citizen, she had the right to come back to America any time she wanted, and call her siblings over. When she came over, my grandfather – they decided to come to Gloucester because my grandfather fished and owned a fishing vessel in (Terracina?). They wanted to come here, where it was a fishing port. Unfortunately, my grandfather couldn't come because he didn't know how to sign his name. Because he couldn't sign his name – and isn't that ironic, now? Now we're not even teaching penmanship in school. He wasn't allowed to come. He had to learn how – because he was illiterate. He didn't go to school. He just was fishing all his life. My grandmother came. She brought my mother and the rest of the younger siblings. My mother has an older sister who stayed back because she was married, and my grandfather stayed with her. Unfortunately, my mother's younger sister, who was here, was going to school, and was hit by a truck down the Fort. That's where everyone came. You have Portuguese Hill in Gloucester, where most of the Portuguese went to the Portuguese church in the community. Then you had the fishermen who stayed down the Fort – Main Street, West End. That was where the Italians and Sicilians came, who went fishing. There's a lot of people, when they migrated to the United States, would go – if you worked in a factory, you go to a factory. You got your Lawrence, Saugus. That's how you know who scattered where, all of those areas. Here was mostly a fishing port, here and California. They decided to come here because they had some friends here. So when they came in the early '50s, my mother, my Uncle Tony, my Uncle Larry, my Uncle Vito, and my aunt (Marianne?), all came here. Like I said, (Marianne?) was the youngest sibling who passed. My mother laughed because they told her – my mother, when she was a young girl, would tell me stories how in Italy they would serenade you if they liked you. They would come by, and you have to hide behind the balcony because you weren't allowed to look at them. She would be serenaded. They had a hard life. She says, "I grew up during the war, and we were not allies with the United States." It was very difficult. Yet, they would wait for the American soldiers to come and give them chocolate, the bread, the flour, and the sugar, after the war was over. When she came to America, in her mind, it was going to be the best thing of her life. She didn't have to scrub floors anymore. She didn't have to do dishes because they said you can throw everything away. Everything is all that. But they never told her it was paper; of course you

could. But when they all moved ten families in one household, she had one bathroom, that was difficult. That was not what she was used to. She said, “We had a tiny little house, but it was ours.” She says, “My father at night would count feet instead of calling names out to see who was home.” And we’d have so much fun. We were all out in the open. Here, people were sharing things, and there were all these noises. It wasn’t like that. She still had some of her friends here. It was funny, she said it was the most amazing thing after, when they got their first home. But, up until then, she had to go to work. She went to go to work to help the family because my grandfather couldn’t come. So you have my grandmother with the five siblings, and who’s going to work? So my Uncle Tony went out fishing. The other one’s too young. My mother went to work, and she went to go pack fish. I’ll never forget, she told me that she was working at [inaudible] and Ocean Crest, and all that. She says that it was so cold in the water; you’re standing in the water cutting the fish. She was so cold. She lived right around the corner. She said, “That’s it.” She went home, [and] she put on her brother’s pants and his heavy shirt that he would wear fishing. She went back, and the foreman said she had to leave. She goes, “Why?” He says, “You’re not in uniform.” She goes, “Well, why can’t I wear what that guy’s wearing? I’m freezing. We have white dresses. With the hair nets, we look like nurses, but we’re packing fish. The guys all have the uniforms. Why can’t we just wear those?” Oh, it was like a terror. Because he loved my mother and she was a good packer, he allowed her to go home and change. My grandmother was furious, “How can you do that? You’re going to lose your job. How are we going to do it?” She goes, “Well, if I have to work like a guy, why can’t I dress like one? I’m freezing.” From that day on, my mother never wore pants. She goes, “Oh, yeah? Well, you know what? I’ll wear what I want when I want, how I want.” She says, “Every time I try to wear a pair of pants, it would bring memories of that day.” I said, “Mom, do you realize you were independent before you –” Because my mother was the sweetest. She’s not like me, very loud and obnoxious. My mother was the sweetest, kindest person. Always was a comedian. Always loved to laugh, loved people. My father was stern. So I took after, I believe, my father. I never knew her as an aggressive person to try to change things. She says, “You can change things, but sometimes, you know what? It’s not the right time or the right place. It wasn’t the right time and the right place. I had to work. I had to keep my mouth shut, and I just had to. There was nothing I could do,” especially after her younger sister passed. It was devastating because her father couldn’t come because he still couldn’t sign his name. It took him a year to learn how to sign his name. So, they all came. My father, when he came – the very first time when my mother came, and they went through New York, he actually was a stowaway on the boat, but you couldn’t tell he was a stowaway because my father’s family – my father was very wealthy, so he dressed and had money like the first class. No one even expected that he was a stowaway. He was there on the ship all the time. She goes, “He would eat and dress and dance and do everything like the first class. I couldn’t stand him. I was down in the bottom of the cubby hole.” They would ask what his name was, and he would give the name of her baby brother. He was on the boat. What happened was, when you get off, you had to go through immigration, and he was looking for a friend to pick him up. Because he was looking around, they picked him and they deported him. So, off, back to Italy he went. His family was devastated. He couldn’t come to visit my mother. They would write because there’s no phones back then, and there’s none of that. So they would write and write. He was devastated when he heard about the loss of the baby sister. He just says, “I can’t come. I wish I could be there for you.” So, she said, “This romance started again with your father.” She was angry with him because he was on first class. She actually had to go to Italy to get married. She had a three-month

honeymoon. She came back. He couldn't come yet, so my mother had to pack fish pregnant. She said, "I packed fish the whole nine months. There were no ifs, ands, or buts about it." I had to start our own little apartment to get ready for my husband. I was on Main Street. Now it's Mike Place, used to be Mike's Pastry. [She said], "I had to work. I was married. I set an apartment up. I had money to do everything. But then, after, what's that?" We figured within a few months, the paperwork would come in." Well, it took longer than expected. Here my mother is. It's like one month, two months, three months pregnant, four. She goes, "He's not coming." My mother is starting her life with my siblings, and my father just got here. So it's like, "Where do we go?" She had a dear friend, who loaned her money to actually go to Italy to get married on the boat. They're very best friends. She wanted to pay her off first because that's how we are. So whenever someone would come over, [they'd] send money. But she says, "There's no way." She was independent. She worked. She packed fish up until the day she gave birth. She said, "On all of you." Except with my life; I was different when I was born. My brother, who is terminally ill right now – my brother and my two sisters were nine months apart. So up until then, she said, "I was working through all the pregnancies." She gave birth, and my father wasn't allowed to come until six months after my sister was born, my sister (Marianne?). They named her after her sister who [was] lost. There's a [inaudible] information of – oh, so my father was deported? Isn't that weird? Hmm. When people talk about deportation, they really don't know how someone gets deported. Yes, he was a stowaway. I guess so. I guess just like everyone else. The fact is, my mother used to say his family was devastated because he didn't need to come to America. It wasn't for a better life; he was following my mother, which was like one of those love stories. My sister used to say every time my father would get angry with us, "What'd you go back for?" [laughter] My father did not fish. I think he tried, they said, but there's no way. He came into the United States and he did everything you could think of. In Italy, actually, he was spoiled rotten, didn't really have to do anything except look [after] the family's vineyards, but didn't have to do anything. Here, he'd have to work, and it's hard when you have polished nails to go to work. But he did. He started masonry – used to be called Town Painting in Beverly. Then he became the produce manager there. Then he became a head chef at Polcari's because a lot of people just went in the North End [of Boston]. So he would work all week, and then come home weekends. It was just so difficult. Finally, he went to school – learned the language quick enough that he went to school, got his high school diploma, went to North Shore Community College, started becoming a social worker, advocating for everyone, advocating especially for the fishermen because my grandfather was still a fishermen. My uncles were fishermen, my Uncle Tony. But my uncle Paul who was my mother's sister's husband had a fishing vessel. The other younger brothers, they couldn't go. Vito, Larry and Sal, there's no way – and Paul. There's no way. They went to school here. They went in the service. But my Uncle Tony just went fishing. It was a miserable life, but it was a good life. They went dayboat fishing, but my Uncle Tony didn't. My Uncle Tony used to be gone for three months at a time. When you come back, how do you defend yourself? How do you deal with all that? So, my father became one of the biggest advocates. He actually, with Carmine Gorga, started the first Fisherman's Wives [group], believe it or not, and they're men. [Editor's Note: Carmine Gorga is an Italian political scientist and president of the Somist Institute, based on Gloucester.] Back then, there were a lot of changes, and people didn't know. If you look at the real bylaws in the original – my father was one of the original board members of the Fishermen's Loan Fund in the '70s. He was also on the (board of action?) for poverty, for shelters. He actually packed city hall with five hundred members to build that housing across the street

because they didn't want it – central [inaudible] – which was the best thing. I was reading my father's obituary, and I'm reading mine. The only difference, I think, because I'm the same kind of advocate, love to help people, is he actually went to every City Council meeting. Are you kidding me? I was on City Council, and I didn't even go to every single one. He's a Democrat, and I'm unenrolled. If he would have seen me walking in a parade with a Republican, I think he would pulled me, if he could, underneath the ground – “What the hell are you doing?” But I was into politics since I was twelve, with him. I learned the rules and regulations. I married a fisherman, which was devastation to my family because no one was supposed to marry a fishermen. That was against my father's thing. It's not that he didn't like them. He just didn't want that kind of life for young widows, and the stories, and seeing all these widows. He just didn't want that for us. But I fell in love with a fisherman. We had our own vessel. I became involved with the [Gloucester] Fishermen's Wives [Association]. I was actually pregnant. I was nineteen. I got married at eighteen. Angela Sanfilippo was having a meeting at the St. John's Episcopal Church. My mother's house was across the street. I'm sitting on the porch, and this lady's struggling with all these books and stuff. I saw Gracie Favazza and her child. So I said, “Do you guys need help?” So, full pregnant, walked across the street, and I started helping her with stuff.” She said, “Who are you?” I said, “Well, my father's Enzo Giambanco. My mother's Rosalia. I married Nino Romeo, but he's out fishing.” “Oh, you're a fishermen's wife?” Well, let me tell you something. I never left. I've been there since I was nineteen in the role of, not even a board member, just an active member. Then I became a board member. Then I became vice-president. I think I've been vice-president now, I would say, a good twenty years. Yes, a good twenty years maybe, almost. Yes, twenty. Because my husband passed away twenty two years ago. My husband took his life because he couldn't fish anymore. Back then, I started learning and admiring other fishermen's wives and all the work they did because some of the stuff – it didn't matter [if] you had children, you went. Thank God I had family who supported me after because my mom, even though she didn't like – she fell in love with my husband and was so grateful that I married him. She loved him like her own son. So it didn't matter that he fished because he got fresh fish. You can't beat that. My grandmother loved him because he spoke Italian. My uncles loved him because they could speak fishing. So it was just great. Any time that I had to go away with the Fishermen's Wives to advocate for the rules and regulations, my mother and family would watch my children. It was very difficult because they would go out fishing for ten days. At the end of that ten days, you wanted to make sure that they have their voices be heard. All these rules and regulations, they were making them, but they're not listening to the input of the fishermen. I mean, you're having meetings and it's hard when you all know they go out ten days. Call a meeting when you know they're going to be home, the week of the holidays, the week of the Fiesta because everyone knows that's mandatory, you have to be tied in. Eighty percent of those boats were tied in because they were Portuguese or Italian. But they didn't. It didn't matter because they all worked nine to five Monday through Friday. That's what really angered us because the fact is – you know what? You want to hear our input. This community has always been saying there's overfishing out there. You're giving loans – now, when the boat builders were scarce and no one was building, and they fought the government and said, “You have to help us here, like you did with the farmers or this or that,” they started giving no interest or low interest loans to build the boats. Well, did they put a cap on it? No. Did they put the size on it? No. Did they put what kind of boat? No, they didn't care. So if I had a fifty [foot boat], well, then I'm going to get a fifty-five, and then you're going to get a sixty, and they started going to a hundred-and-five-foot fishing vessel. For what? Those nets

are going to fill. They got to build a net to fill that boat. What's wrong? We all said it, "What are you doing?" It's fine that people can get loans to build boats or no interest. It's fine that you want them brand new boats – that's great – but, put a cap on it. But they didn't listen. Put a size cap, anything. But they didn't listen. So, here you go, the fleet got bigger. We had at least seven hundred vessels. We saw it. We kept saying, "You got to regulate some things," because when you're coming in one day with eighty-thousand pounds of haddock – and it's out there, but every day, every day, there was no – you can go out and come in, come out and come in, come out and come in. There were no regulations, no nothing, and we warned them. Then, all of a sudden, when they got sued – see, what gets me is NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] is not proactive. They react. So they get sued. You know what? I call it dirty money because when they get sued by companies who say they're environmentalists, some of their money – trace it. Just trace where all their money comes from. That's wrong.

MG: You're talking about the environmentalists' money?

SRT: Yes. Some come from Pew [Research Center]. What's Pew? Some come from the oil companies. Really? How's that being environmentally sound? What do the oil companies want to do? Drill. Really? Of course, they want the fishermen out. What do the fishermen do? You know what I always believed, and I still believe, is that they didn't want draggers out there. Because when we drag the ocean, we took up what the government put underwater. See, the government never looked at these toxic places, and they buried them underneath in sea CADs [Contained Aquatic Disposal?] they used to call them. When they dredged – so I believe that the United States government has these CADs, and all these CADs have the nuclear stuff that's underneath and never are going to admit it. But fishermen were pulling them up. Fishermen were pulling them up. But where are the environmentalists there? No one listened. My friend got so severely sick, and his boat got taken away because he pulled up all this stuff, and he opened the drum. When he opened the drum, it spilled everywhere. It's toxic. Well, you're telling me we couldn't trace these drums? You're telling me, "Okay, so he got his mortgage paid. His boat was taken away; it's contaminated. He was sick and everything else," and that was it? Where are your environmentalists there? I kept saying it, and everyone says, "Well ..." I said, "You don't understand." I don't understand where's NOAA? I don't understand where is everyone? Where's Conservation Law Foundation? Where are these people? No one brings it up. I've never heard it once since. I'm the only one that I know when I talk to people that brings it up. What's underneath there that they don't want us to know that they allowed? Or, did they dump? Did they dump all these experimental things that they do? No one's going to let you know, are they? They're going to pull it up. So draggers don't drag those things [inaudible] okay. So, are they closing off certain areas really for spawning or because they know now the stuff is starting to lift? Now, how do you know so much about CAD cells? That's what they're called. It's because they wanted to dredge and put things in CAD cells here. Here is a very bad area to put any CAD cells because we're not like in Florida or New Mexico. Our oceans here are so rough. Now, with the climate changing – people who don't believe in climate change really need to go take a walk on the beach. But the fact is, it's worse. We would never be able to sustain the CAD cells.

MG: What is a CAD cell?

SRT: A CAD cell is underneath the ground. So instead of putting things on the surface, they go way, way, way under. They call it CAD cell. It's like a drum, and they seal it. It will go underneath the ocean. They say it'll be fine. It will never do anything. I don't believe that. I don't believe with the current we have, the climate change we have – I think all of those things are coming – I wonder how many CAD cells there are out there. You would put the contaminated sand or soil that you dredged with, or whatever else they put underneath there. You would seal it in a CAD cell like a test tube. You would put it way, way underneath the ocean that no one ever fishes, goes, or whatever. So it made me wonder if we're going to put contaminated sand back into the ocean and put them in CAD cells. Nobody really tested the way the winds and currents and the way have low tide, high tide, and climate change – no one even put that in perspective that it's going to happen. Now, we're talking about thirty-five to forty years ago that people are mentioning this, but no one listened. Here it is the draggers pulling up these things. How do you stop it? So you put more rules and regulations. It's not about overfishing. When the fishermen are telling you, the science is showing one thing, but yet, we don't have – why would you want to stop small businesses? Now, I don't know what's happening. That's why some of the stuff that NOAA does, I go to go listen to, especially when they talk to the schools, my schools, because I want to hear what they're saying if it's negative. They did a really nice documentary with the kids at the O'Maley [Innovation] Middle School. I was very impressed because they don't blame anyone. They just said, "You know what? We're not that the fishermen are liars." I wish they would tell them [the fishermen] that. "We're not saying they're liars. It's just that they fish here. We have to look at the whole aspect of the Gulf of Maine, and everywhere else." So, Gloucester [residents] are environmentalists. We are small business-owned, personally-owned. Do you really think we're going to hurt the ocean? If the fishing industry's done, then we're done. That we invested in all these boats, put our houses up for mortgage, and everything else – our kids' future – to overfish? Is there always one or two people that are going to be whatever? Absolutely. But don't forget, we're the first ones to get them and punish them. We had vessels calling on vessels – "No way. You're not doing that. You're not ruining it for the rest of us. This guy thinks he's Joe Schmo. He got the boat from his father, and now he thinks he can do it all. Get him out." That's how it worked. I was just very hurt to see that when you were telling them the science and no one's doing anything, instead of working with the fishermen – and I said that to NOAA. What gets me angry is a person who's retired from NOAA or Woods Hole or National Marine Fisheries [Service], and they come, and they tell you, "I've worked there for years, and the gear was always wrong." "What the hell are you telling us after?" The gear was wrong. Now, anyone who goes fishing and knows has a fishing [vessel], will tell you that if the wires on the doors or the nets don't match, if there's one even at half an inch difference, you're never going to be able to get a full catch. It's never going to cast and open up. So you're never going to get fish. Well, when they told us for twenty years the wire we were using was the wrong size, and it was never even, or however they want to call it, no one even said anything, and it was just brushed away. So all your science is wrong, but yet, you're investing all this money, and you still have an old boat, and you don't have the technology and the equipment and everything you have. So you what you're doing is, instead of getting a fishing vessel yourselves and actually working with us, you force us to have monitors or you force us to have people on our boats to go look at these things. Then we have to pay for it, which is asinine with all the money that they've had to use and do. Even after all these things that they found that was wrong with NOAA, and all these things that were happening – well, it didn't correct it, because I know a lot of people who lost their boats, who lost their houses, who

lost their businesses because one Mr. High-and-Mighty, who thought he was going to be great, said, "Fight me." How can you fight the government? I'm in government. You know what? We can go every day because it's taxpayers' money for attorneys. So if you're a small business owner, the attorneys are running up fifty-thousand [dollars], you're going to say, "Forget it. I'm out of here. I can't." But [with] the government, it doesn't matter because it's not their money to play with. It's the taxpayers' money. They could go on and on and on. I've seen this happen. I've been around fishermen all my life. I've seen this happen with boats and everything and people losing it. Then they want to know why suicide rates, and then they want to know why depression or alcoholism and everything else. Well, you know what? These are good men that you tortured. And yet, no one said anything and didn't care. Everyone else has a nine to five job. You go home, and you're relaxing. So when you take – and I live by experience. Because when we took the ocean away from my husband, depression set in. When the doctor finally told him he could never fish again ever, well, he took his life.

MG: Why could he no longer fish?

SRT: He was injured down the wharf because the thing started to deteriorate. Instead of doing things the right way, one of the wharf owners was trying to do things to save money. Actually, my husband was crushed. We even had him retrained through the Fishermen's Wives. We even had him do other things. But he just couldn't – he just kept looking out the ocean. He just got more and more depressed. He just wanted to be back there. He was a captain on a boat. He just wanted to be out there. I asked him, "Didn't you ever dream when you were younger?" He said, "You either worked on a farm if you were a farmer, or you went to sea." That's all they had. There were no dreams. "We don't have fire stations like you and the police, or this or that." He said, "None of the fishermen had dreams when they were little." Maybe here in the United States, but anyone that migrated into the United States, whether they were Portuguese or Italian, never had dreams. You were either farmers, or you were fishermen. That was it – or factory workers. You had your seamstress; you had all that. He says, "This is what I had. My father had a boat. I went fishing. I came here for a better life. I got a boat." That was it. It really broke my heart that you can't have even [a dream]. I mean, even little girls, we all had dreams of [becoming] ballerinas, teachers, whatever. We all had some kind of dream or hope to live through, and not to have a dream when you're not my mother's age. You're only three years older than I am, and I'm going, "You had no dreams." It's sad. So I tried to make my husband's dreams come true. He wanted a boat, even though I didn't want one, to be truthful. I wish that we just changed careers, but that's what he wanted. So I got involved. I got involved in all the rules and regulations. I would go to the State House. I would go to Washington with Angela. I would go down when there were strikes, when, finally, the Georges Bank was going to open, and all the fishermen went out there. It takes them a twenty-four tow to get out there. They come back. They hear as soon as they get there, "You got to come back because NOAA shut the waters, you can't go out." So seven hundred angry fishermen are on the State Fish Pier. That was like a war. Never in my life – I saw cars flipped over. I'm going, "Where am I? Wow."

MG: When was this?

SRT: Let's see. It had to be in the '80s, early '80s.



MG: This was in reaction to closing –

SRT: Georges Bank.

MG: What was NOAA's reason for doing that?

SRT: Something about the fish or the data of the fish. They had to wait a whole month for it to open. Here they are, ready to go, everyone gets out there, and when you go out there, they're saying, "You have to come back. You can't fish here." "Well, who's going to pay my oil?" It takes twenty-four hours to get out there. So who's going to pay [inaudible] the whole time? Who's going to pay the oil? Who's going to pay the men? Who's going to pay this? You're coming back, and when are you going to open? You don't know? You don't know? No satisfaction. No nothing.

MG: It wasn't communicated until they arrived?

SRT: It wasn't communicated. All right. They were going open. It's March 15th. Back then, they would have blocks, or they would shut down for three months, two months, okay. So there's a block. Everyone's getting ready. So on March 14th, they're all starting out there. No one said anything [about how] they're not opening it. They get out there, and they said, "It's not open." The Coast Guard's already there telling them, "You have to turn around. It's not open." You're not talking about just Gloucester. You're talking about Massachusetts. You're talking about New York. You're talking about everyone's out there. So when those seven hundred boats around this area came home, they all went to the Boston Fish Pier because we're all waiting to talk to our senators and saying, "This is ridiculous." The best, best, best senator that we've ever had for fishermen was Senator Ted Kennedy. He loved this port. He loved this port. He loved this port. I can't even tell you. I went into office because of him. He is the most amazing person that would never say no. There's got to be a reason. There's got to be a reason. We lost a vessel, the *Italian Gold*, and he made sure that we got some satisfaction, got the submarine to go underneath to see it. We lost *The Patriot*, and we have no satisfaction.

MG: Can you talk about those two wrecks? Wasn't there one that you couldn't get to the bottom of? Was it maybe a Russian barge?

SRT: Well, no. That was another one. But the *Italian Gold*, they really just didn't know how it went under. They were supposed to be coming in, and they didn't. They started seeing some of the stuff floating up top. No one knew anything – the area, where the stuff was floating, what was happening, they wanted to know. We fought and fought, and couldn't get anything. Senator [Ted Kennedy] got a little submarine, who went right under. It was sad. It was very scary and eerie, but it was like. "Okay, that is a boat." Can I tell you something? We lost so many fishermen here in Gloucester. We have a Fishermen's Memorial. When these bodies aren't returned, we have the Fishermen's Memorial, so at least they can have some kind of little bit of closure once a year, to throw some flowers out with the sea, just to mourn, because you don't have anything to mourn. You never see a boat, never see anything – no proof that this boat went under, no proof whatsoever. So when Senator Kennedy got the little yellow submarine and it went under, then you saw the whole thing and everything else. It was on TV, too. You could

actually see the *Italian Gold* and the wreckage. The families got to learn a lot, so did the boat owner, when you saw under there that the lifeboat didn't emerge. So what hit that boat that turned it over that the lifeboat didn't emerge or things didn't emerge? Then *The Patriot* – I had family – well, we call them “family,” (goombadis?), but we had very close friends – I had close, close friends on each one. When *The Patriot* – on January [3rd], I'll never forget that – went under, there's no reason why with Homeland Security and all the film and everything else that we don't know why that boat didn't go. Then, when the family paid for things to go under, and they said, I'll pay for it to get hauled up, it was yes, and then they said, “No.” Why? Out of her own pocket. She said, “I'll pay for it. I want it hauled. I want some answers.” She was very fortunate because her father – well, not fortunate; that's the wrong word. Her father and her husband were on that boat, and she was pregnant. But she was fortunate enough to be able to say, “I'm having divers go down and they say yes or no.” We had some divers go down. They did some filming. She wanted to be able to haul the boat up, but the fortunate – when I was saying she was fortunate is because at least they found her husband's body and her father's body. So they could put them to rest. But in her and the family is this anger that they're seeing things on the film – even I saw the [footage]. That boat was scraped. Either it was – they don't want to say anything – from a barge, the wire. The natural gas barges, they have a wire that they drag, they say, about two miles. That wire looks like it flipped the boat. Didn't realize it was making a turn, and the boat went over it. No one's saying no one's at fault, but give me the satisfaction. Professional fishermen who fished all their lives, been on boats that sank and survived, and there's no answer. You're saying it went by the Homeland Security? Why? Until today, I said, “If Kennedy was alive, we would have known all the answers.” They wanted to pay themselves, but they wouldn't. So, what are you hiding? You want us to trust the government, but the government don't work with us. Then the poor Coast Guard get blamed. It's not their fault. It's higher up. They have to do what they have to do. You're trying tell me – and we didn't have advocacy. I'm sorry. Senator Kennedy was an advocate for the fishermen one hundred percent. One hundred percent. I haven't seen that ever since. You're trying to tell me with the technology we have today, the things we have today – you see all these “Discover-whatever” underwater and everything else, and you're trying to tell me we can't give satisfaction to a family. So are we worthless? NOAA didn't come behind us. NOAA's never been there to say, “You know what? Let's help the fishermen for once. Let's do something.” When John Bullard [former NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Administrator] was in office – and I've known John [since] when he was mayor. So we go way back. I mean, really way back. It was funny way back. When he came into office, I called him into my office. I said, “You know what, John? I'm mayor now. It has nothing to do with the [Fishermen's] Wives. I have to put my city first. It's nothing to do with the fishing industry or whatever. I don't want to fight.” He looked at me. He only had fifteen minutes. But when I said I didn't want to fight, he sat here longer. I said, “I want to bring redfish back. It's coming back in abundance. That's what they're telling me. Redfish is coming back like you wouldn't believe. I want to promote the hell out of it. I want to make us the biggest redfish port ever. I need your help.” [He said], “Absolutely. You're right. We're going to do this. This is going to be great.” I invite him to the kick-off that we did in '99 [inaudible] red fish, was all excited. Not one F-in penny. We did more grants – not one penny. Not one freaking penny that I could have turned this port into a redfish port, commercialize it, get it out of there, so you don't have your cod or your haddock or anything being depleted. Nothing from NOAA. Not one support, not nothing. I put Bullard on a pedestal and got people angry with me. But I figured, “You know what? I have to do what's

right for my city. I will kiss John's ass as long as he shows me the money because my city needs it." My whole city – I was born and raised here – is a heritage place, culture, art, fishing that coexists, tourism, everything else, but I need a working waterfront to do it. I want that working waterfront. "John, help me." Nothing. Then I met with the new guy; he came maybe once, twice, talked to me, whatever – nothing. They go for grants. They go for all these things. It just seems strange that Gloucester never gets it. Who gets it is if you know someone who knows someone. It's all about friends. It's all about who you know in NOAA and what you can do, because some of the grants, it's ridiculous. I'm going, "How the hell did they get that grant?" Then they don't check up on it. So you're giving someone \$450,000 dollars and it's just sitting there? They keep giving – no offense, because it came to Gloucester, to the auction, to what was in there – about a line and everything else. They kept getting the grants because that person knew that person, but everything else – Fishermen's Wives wanted to get a test kitchen. We don't have a test kitchen. How are we going to promote stuff? We need to get a product out there to show people, like Gorton's, like everything else, that says, "We're great. We can do it with fresh fish." Get it out there because people think white fish is the best fish. Actually, I don't even like haddock. It's good for a chowder, that's it. I love to cook. My perfect fish was saltwater – and we can't get it anymore – was catfish. So the best next thing really to it, that moisture to hold it – is the redfish. The redfish, when it's filleted, is amazing – whiting. But people are afraid of bones. I'll show you a picture. I just made some soup with whiting, monkfish and redfish. It's hard. If you don't know how to handle this fish, you can get seriously hurt on the redfish. If they don't clean it right, you really can. How do I get that out there? I need money to promote that. I need a machine that's going to cut those little spines off. I call it little porcupine fish to get those off. Because if you hurt yourself, I've done it. That hurts. How do I get that? Yes. I go to the seafood shows. We did the redfish. We did the soup. It's delicious. It's all protein. I do my soup because when the doctor said – my brother's terminally ill, has less than three weeks, and he's getting bed sores. He's getting this, and he's getting that. He's bone on bone. He says he needs protein. We're doing the [anchovies?], we're doing this. So I said, "You know what? I'm going to make a stock. I'm going to make a fish stock, and I'm going to get all the fish and get everything out. I'm going to break it all up." He loved it. He loved it. He loved it. So I'm freezing little ice cube things, so melt it down little by little. It's not going to make him live and it's not going to make him comfortable, but mentally it's helping me. I just want to make sure that I can do everything I can. But that's all protein. We should be bottling that up and giving that to people who are ill. The fish that they don't want that they make us throw away, and we keep saying – it's a shame. Once the fish is on deck and it dies, whether they throw it overboard or they put it in the fish hole to preserve it for someone, it's the same work. They're not going to get paid for that. That's fish that the fishermen are not going to get paid for. So they still have to do the same work. Put it in a separate hole. I don't care what you want to call it, what tank you want to [use]. Get a special box for it. It should be coming in, processed, and bringing out. That's a hundred percent protein that's gone. It's ridiculous. They now are using fish skin for burn victims. Why are we throwing that back? Why are we throwing that back? I laughed when – someone thought I was nuts. I was talking to Iceland; they wanted to do some things. I said to them that when I was a little girl I loved to cook. I was seven years old and I burned my leg because I was always hungry and I didn't want to wait for the rest of the family to get up and eat. So I cooked. I did it myself. I burned my leg severely, but I didn't cry because I knew I'd get killed; I'd get punished. So I went to my grandma's house, who lived two doors down. She looked at it, and she called my grandfather

and she says, “Joe, get the fish.” I’m going, “How evil is she? I’m here crying and burning, and she’s telling my grandfather to get fish. Really, Nonna? Really?” I’m looking at her like, “Really? I’m dying here.” She gets the fresh fish. It’s still in a bucket with saltwater. She skins it. I’m going, “She don’t even care. She has no sympathy, this witch.” She gets it. She lifts up my nightie and she wraps my leg. I said, “She’s going to kill me now. Now she’s trying to kill me. “ As soon as that touched my leg, it was the most – oh my god. You want to sing, “Ah.” The pain went completely away. She wrapped it and put gauze. She says, “Now go home. I’ll be back with the rest.” I’ll never forget it. I’m sitting out – it’s fish skin, so you’re going to start smelling. Everyone gets up and we’re waiting for the doctor to come because we used to have the family doctor come on Sunday to pick up fresh fish when my grandfather came home. So my father says to my mother, “Did your mother leave the fish outside? What’s that smell?” I’m going like this, squirming, [thinking], “I’m going to get killed.” My sisters are looking at me like, “What is she moving around for?” I gave her that look. She goes, “Oh my God. What did she do now?” I’m going like, “Oh my God. Oh my God. Oh my God. I’m going to get killed. They’re going to know.” I wait until my grandmother comes in. So my grandmother comes in, the doctor’s there, and my mother’s looking. She says to my mother in Italian – she didn’t want the doctor to know anything – “Did you leave the fish outside?” She goes, “No, I have the fish here. It’s fresh.” “I smell fish.” She looks over at me. I’m dead. I’m dead. So the doctor’s sitting there, and everyone else. So she comes over – “She’s telling on me.” She lifted up my nightie again, she unwraps the gauze. My father’s looking. Now they’re all screaming in Italian. Oh, god. Dr. (Paetz?), he’s going, “What’s going on?” He’s looking at what my grandmother’s doing. She’s taking fish off my leg. The skin that was all bubbled [before] stretched flat. I’m going, “Oh, okay. It doesn’t look bad. It just looks like it’s burnt, [like a] sunburn.” She goes and wraps it again, and it feels so good. “Don’t take it off again.” He goes, “What happened?” He asked me. I’m not going to go tell everyone. Then I just told him that the cast iron was so hot that I forgot to get the potholder to take it and put it away, and what happened was it went – and I’m going, [stammers]. They all knew just by the gestures and they saw the leg and stuff. But we forgot to wrap my toe. My toe was almost really terrible. He goes, “That’s a third-degree burn you have there. I think we should take her to the hospital so she don’t get infected and stuff.” My grandmother was saying, “No, no *ospedale*. No hospital. No hospital.” She told me, “Don’t worry, I got it.” So she’s wrapping things. I have no scars. I’ve got the brown spots, but that’s it. I was telling people in Iceland. Sure enough, the next year when they come visit me, they have a Band-Aid made out of fish skin. It’s a hundred dollars. You’d think they’d give me one. They took my grandma’s idea. When you cut the skin of fish, it has that gel inside. That gel also has cells that are still alive. Do you know now forest rangers, everything else, they don’t wrap – when bears get burned from the carelessness of adults leaving fires or coal burning, they used put the gauze around their paw, but they would eat it and die. Now they put fish skins. So it would help that. If they ate it, it’s not going to kill them. So I’m going, “See, my grandmother was ahead of her time, too.” My father used to call her a witch doctor. Maybe she was, but whatever it was, it helped save my leg. Now they’re doing an experiment with that. So why are you throwing the fish out? Bring it in. Even if we all went to one factory because these fishermen would, even if they had to go extra to go to Boston to dump it knowing that it was saving lies, burn victims or something with the skins and with the inside, you’re feeding people. Are you for real? Even here, Neptune’s Harvest, they’ll take it, make more fertilizer, more use of it, more things. What are we doing? What are we doing when we’re taking good protein and good, hard work and just throwing it back? Don’t tell me that the whales are going to eat and

everything else is going to eat it. Because that's not happening. When they say there's no climate change, they better go do something because the ocean is getting hotter and hotter in certain areas, which was never like this. My biggest fear – I was talking to people – is they haven't seen it. Haddock spawn on the top. They don't go under to spawn. They spawn on top. Their spawn's not surviving with the heat. What are we doing? What are we doing? Are we even looking at that? No, we're all fighting with each other. Instead of saying, "Enough." Instead of saying, "You know what? You're going to be out of a job if there's no fishing industry." We're all going to be out of a job if we don't do something about pollution and climate change. So why don't we all say, "Enough is enough." Stand together, and say, "You know what? Enough of this bullshit." Let's take action. You can sue us. You can do whatever you want. If I owned a boat right now, I don't give a shit what you say. Arrest me. I'm going to bring my fish. I'm going to bring it down. I'm going to dump it on the wharf and say, "Use that." I don't want money. I don't want anything else. Here's my hard work; use it. Then I would take – if you want to arrest me, I'd take you back out there and say, "Look what's happening to our waters." The high sea levels, these fishing boats aren't going to be able to fish around here locally. Not for nothing, you're not going to be able to dock. One of the storms I saw that someone took a picture down Seven Seas Wharf where the Gloucester House is, it was so high tide that the boat was right on the dock. One more wind, and that would have went right through. How can you say that nothing's happening? I remember, as a little girl, that I couldn't even go on a boat when it's low tide because was just too (chubalub?) to walk all the way down there because it didn't have all these dockage. They had to climb down all these ladders. When it was high tide it was fine, because you had to go overboard. With so many fishing vessels, they would be tying up – they said when it was frozen, you could walk from here to Rocky Neck on the ocean with the boats tied up because everyone was inshore. There's been changes, yes. Have fishermen overfished? Absolutely. There's always going to be greed no matter what kind of industry you have. No matter what there is, there's going to be greed. What they did to the farmers, what they're doing to us. Actually, I went with Greenpeace to Missouri, where my grandmother was born. I went to Missouri to help fight with the farmers because what the corporations were doing to the farmers, NOAA was doing to us – "Yes, you can fish. No, you can't. Yes, you can get that. No, you can't." You're no better than these corporations. The fact is that corporations were buying the seed and then selling it to you, let's say, for five cents. It was great for five years and then they would triple. You couldn't even make money. They would actually buy your farm, and then you'd have to work it. It was terrible. Yet, they'd let factory trawlers in here. Their bycatch and their nets is the size that you could put – we tell people – ten jumbo airplanes. That's the size of their net. Their bycatch is what I caught all year. So you'd rather put me as a small business person out of work completely because their bycatch, one haul, was what I caught all year, but that was okay because it was all about what flag they put it on. You know what? Shame on our country because what they would say is, "Okay, I'm going to partner with you. I'm an American citizen. I would put the American flag," but actually it really wasn't Americans that were fishing. But nobody cared. No one looked. They didn't care. It was always about – because they had money to fight the government. Small business-owned vessels don't.

MG: Do they also have the funds to buy the permits and the quotas?

SRT: No one's going to be doing that no more. Fishing, the way that they [inaudible] no. Because you know what? They're getting it all imported. Shame on us. It's all imported. A lot of people don't even care what they're eating. What gets me is you go to a farmer's market, why aren't you going to a fish market? How can you say that you want everything organic, you want to do it yourself, but yet, you go buy a piece of fish, and you have no idea where it's coming from, in your own backyard. Look at us – "Gloucester fresh," your own backyard. Your own backyard's right here. There it is. You know what's fresh. It's not imported.

MG: It seems like there's got to be a win-win-win-win for the fish, the fishermen, the scientists, and the community.

SRT: Absolutely. Get a product, and let's [inaudible]. If there's a product that we know that it's not being imported like your redfish, I could have sold over fifty thousand pounds a week if I wanted to, but I didn't have the production. John Bullard didn't help me. No one wanted to help me. So they went elsewhere. I go to the seafood shows. I talked to them. I see what's there. We still have enough that we could do a lot that we could work together and actually get a production out there that, you know what? They're going to be high in demand. We're not going to overfish. You're not going to deplete anything. You're going to, in the meantime, can let the stocks grow and fish redfish. There's an abundance. I said to them, "That proves to you that there is something happening out in the ocean." The last time we had an abundance of pelagic fishing was over forty years ago. What's happening now with the ocean? Now they're saying that they're overfishing with herring. The herring's out there. It's just they're not letting you fish. They're always targeting something. There's mackerel out there. There's squid. They go right here in the boulevard, tons of mackerel, squid, and everything else. Squid fisheries are the most difficult of fisheries. It's hard. So actually, people who get their squid – unless you're having squid in Gloucester and it's coming to my house or any one of our houses, you're not getting real squid, sorry. I'm not even going to tell you some of the rumor I heard; it's disgusting. It's the most difficult fishery because you have to clean it, and when you get it, your hand swells so far up because the ink – it's so raw. My husband, when he went to squid fisheries, he went for a month, and he said, "I can't do this." My mother used to say, "[*speaks Italian*] It doesn't matter. We'll have bread and onions every day. We don't need steak." It doesn't sound the same in English, but it was, "It doesn't matter what you eat as long as you're home safe. I don't care. I don't need to be rich. I just need you home." That's all my mother used to say. She used to say, "Your kids are never going to know if you're hungry unless you make them think they're hungry. No one's going to know the difference." We were brought up that every day when we ate, we put a tablecloth. If you notice, I have one here, too – just like one of those. [laughter] Italian moms give you this guilt trip. But we would set the table every day the same way. So whether you're having a hot dog or whether you're having filet mignon, the table's set the same exact way – table cloth, plates, fold your napkins, knives, forks – the whole thing on the table. My kids hated it because we didn't even use half of them, but it was always set the same, so no matter what I put on that table, they didn't know anything. No difference. No one knew if you were rich or poor when you ate in an Italian home because the fact is we all were treated the same, the table was always set like you were at a restaurant even though we never went. That's how my mother said, "Treat yourself special because that could be your last meal with your husband. Make sure it's a memorable one for the kids. Pretend you're at a restaurant. Set your table like you're going out."

MG: Make it a special occasion.

SRT: Yes, and we did. Whether it was fish every night, every day, and I wish we had that fish. We used to complain when we were younger, “Fish again? Mom, I want to have what my friends are having?” “What, macaroni and cheese?” She would make me macaroni and cheese. “I don’t want it. It didn’t come out of a box.” This was all the Italian cheeses, and it was delicious, and I would say, “No, I want it out of a box.” They look at me like, “What the hell?” I got it out of the box. Oh my god, it was the grossest thing. I’m going, “Oh my god, I wish I had some of this stuff,” and the fish and the soups that she’d make. You could never get it as fresh as we have it in Gloucester, not even number 45. [Editor’s Note: Mayor Romeo Theken is referring to Donald Trump, the 45th president of the United States.] Not even number 45, I don’t care. He’d have to come here, and please don’t let him come here, so forget it. Anyone who has a fishing vessel knows how fresh, especially the day boats. You would get it. My husband would bring them home alive. It was awesome. The kids would squirm. The lobsters were walking. People have chicken races; we had lobster races. Give me a break. It took us a while to have a little respect for NOAA. We got that respect, but then they keep taking it away, and they’re not talking to us. The funny thing about it is we have an office here. I’d say eighty percent of all Gloucester residents, we don’t say anything to them because that’s their job, and they can’t do anything because they just work in the office. Same thing with the Coast Guard. It took us a long time to become friends, and we’re very good friends with the Coast Guard, as far as fishermen and commercial fishermen. We now have safety days together. We do things together with them. It’s like a bond. I just go, “NOAA, you’re going to suffer.” It’s declining. Things are done. People are getting tired of your regulations. They see the lawsuits. They see what’s happening. They see what’s going on. How about working with us? How about actually producing something that we both can say –? Now, I’ve also said, “Let’s do something with climate change,” with John Bullard. I went to one of his meetings, and we all said the same thing. There was New Bedford there, this, this, and that. I said, “Well, how about doing something with climate change with me?” Gloucester, we’ve had one of the worst five years – and I blame myself because I said, “I never want to be mayor until hell froze over.” The first year, 2015, boy, did it freeze. The next year, the high school going underwater, and all these problems that are here – seventy-five cars were totaled because it was just like, “Where’d the field go?” It was gone. It was a swimming pool.

MG: There was a flood?

SRT: There was a flood. It was terrible. It was one after another. We had no streets. Never in one hundred years have we seen this. So what is this saying? They say, “Oh, it’s not going to happen again.” The following year again [it happens]. Last year we said, “You’re not allowed to park there.” “Why?” Because we don’t know what’s going on. We never thought it was going to happen the first time, and then it happened again. I’m going, “No, no.” It was a joke. Seventy-five cars were parked in a parking lot at the Gloucester High School. The Gloucester High School field was underwater. It looked like a swimming pool. It went all the way into the street, on Commonwealth [Avenue]. Now, that’s bad. That’s never ever happened. The causeway, it was gone, down the Fort. That’s never happened. It’s scary. So let’s do something. I said, “I need your help here. I need NOAA’s help.” Because ninety percent of the

wharves are [privately-owned]. New Bedford, it's owned by New Bedford. It's vice versa. So they can get money. I can't get money. These wharf owners, they're paying flood insurance, they're paying all this stuff. Taxes, it's astronomical. Yet, they need repairs. When they repair, they also need extra help because they need to build it stronger and higher. They can't do it because who's going to loan them the money? Why would I want to repair your wharf if there's no fishing boats? Who's taking out there – so wharves have fallen in over the years and like last year. I need the government to come up and say – “I need some help.” I said to NOAA, “Why can't you help me?” This has to do with – let's do climate change. Let's do a study. Let's do what's happening [with] low tide, high tide. Do these walls need to be higher? We're protecting all of us. Where are they? Shame on me that I stopped reaching out, but I have to find other ways because all the good ideas and all the other things, I'm wasting my breath with them. That's how I feel as a mayor. Angela from the Fishermen's Wives, Jackie Odell from Northeast Seafood Coalition, they're fighting the fight. Me, as mayor, I can't fight the fight. When I became mayor, I put a fisheries commission together again that we used to have. Let them fight at this. There's fishermen on there. There's wharf owners on there, restaurants. Let them fight the fight with Angela and them because I am a mayor and have to stay neutral. I am supposed to bring in the money, find the money, and help them. That's what I'm trying to do, but I stopped reaching out to NOAA because all the grants and everything I see that's happening, not one time have they said, “Here, let's work together and do something.” I'm not asking them to let my fishermen go fishing. Never asked once. I never said to them, “I need science.” Never said that. Never said any of that. You'll never hear that elsewhere. I just said help me make Gloucester number one [in] redfish, something that's abundant. Help bring the coastal resilience. Help me fight the fight because these wharves are falling down. These fishermen, they're not going to be able to tie up. There's going to be no wharves, there's going to be no nothing. Help me at least fight that. If you could work with me on that one, don't you think the fishermen would say, “Well, okay, so now we understand you can't help us on that other side, but you're trying to help us here.” But not to give us a grant or not to do this, it's just sad. I just gave up. I did. I give up. I really did. I have to find it elsewhere. I'm so very fortunate that Governor [Charlie Baker] is respectful, and with this community has been very generous, as much as he can do, to try to help the fishermen and try to help things. We're trying to work on how we can get these wharf owners loans. It's hard. If you've never been in the fishing industry, how do you give money to someone who's a private entity with taxpayers' money? It's happened before. The government did. You made the boat builders build boats. You bought back our boats. So it's been done. It can be done. It's how do we get that. Fishermen's Loan Fund was there before. Can we set one up for the wharves? We need to do it quickly. Even the wharf owners are getting discouraged. So the protection that the government put on DPA, designated port areas, to protect the fishing industry, they don't want it anymore because no one's protecting them. It's not fair. It's one-sided. What the hell is going on, NOAA? You can jump on this city's wagon and say, “I'm going to go with this mayor. We're going to go. We're not going to argue. We're not going to talk sides. We're going to talk about our future of making it.” If I don't have a fishing industry and I don't have a working waterfront – I'm so lucky that GMGI [Gloucester Marine Genomics Institute] is there with all the stem [cells] and all the DNA and all the programs they're doing. Even the fishermen – “Oh, the fishermen aren't going to like it.” The fishermen think it's amazing what they're doing.

MG: Who is this?



SRT: You have to take a really nice walk and a tour. It's genomics. They call it GMGI. They do DNA on fish and what's underneath the ocean. They're right on the waterfront. People said, "That's going to put fishermen out." "No, it's not going to put fishermen out." "Oh, they're just going to tell NOAA –" "No, it's not." Fishermen love it. They're doing so much work down there. They're taking the DNA. They study it. But they also notice that there is a plant underneath the ocean that they're trying to duplicate. It's better than morphine, but it's not addictive. That's fabulous for us. Can you imagine finding a medicine that's not addictive but yet, will stop the pain? Then they said that lobsters and sea urchins are the only creatures that never got cancer. All other fish, all other products have. What's in their DNA that does it? I don't know, but I've been eating lobsters and sea urchins ever since. We joke around with them. It's fascinating. They can check the DNA, where are they spawning? Where's it going? Where's the cod? Where's that? It's so great, and we're so fortunate that we have it here. Upstairs from that is another company that's going to come in. So we all coexist with that – stem work, we have robotics. Some of the stuff and the gear that they have onboard fishing vessels are amazing. People think it's just uneducated people who are going out there or immigrants who have no place else to work. It's not true. We have Harvard grads. Russell Sherman owned his boat. He was a Harvard graduate. There's a lot of college degree persons. The best jobs that school teachers used to take in the summer was going fishing on dayboats because it's amazing. Everyone coexisted, except for NOAA. I worked with National Marine Fisheries, got a grant through the Wives to promote herring. I'm going, "How am I going to promote herring?" Underutilized species doesn't exist anymore. There's not that word. We don't do that anymore because everything is utilized. I was a product developer. I did that for a year. We developed it. We did a whole show, and we did a whole thing, but where is it? You give us a grant to do something, to promote something, continue it. We did. But you know what? They use herring for bait now. But if you would have let us continued, you wouldn't have had it for bait.

MG: Are you seeing fishermen who are concerned or talking about climate change?

SRT: I do. I do.

MG: In what ways are their industry or practices changing as a result?

SRT: Well, they're more afraid to be truthful. They don't know what to do because they see the tides always going in, the storms. They're out there. Next thing you know, they see it change all of a sudden. The lobstermen see it most because of the way they're moving to colder climates. They see the difference. What they're seeing, too, is different species coming this way. They know something's happening because that's not species that they ever saw in cold water.

MG: I wanted to ask you about where your family came from in Italy and what kind of fishing they were doing there.

SRT: They did seine boat. They had the gillnetting. I think it was the old schooner vessels were here, where you have a small dory go off on the boat, and then they throw the net overboard and you catch it. It wasn't like anything electronically. They would have fishing vessels, and they'd

have these small little dories behind them. They would put the two *lampadas*, they call them. At night, they go light fishing, and you have you two lanterns. They would see this school of fish, throw the net, pull it back up. That's how they do it. Next boat. That's how they [did] it when my husband was younger, and my grandfather – the same thing. So it was gillnetting – the twine like gillnetting, but they would do *lampadas*. It was our first original vessels here, the schooners. My grandfather came from (Terracina?). My mother was born there. My husband's family was there. My father came from Partinico, still in Sicily. His father came from Carini, so it was a mixture. My father's father was married to someone who was very well off. The had two sons, and then she passed. My grandfather left Northern Italy, and came to Sicily, where he met my grandmother. I used to laugh because there was a big age difference. So they had my father who was spoiled rotten by my grandmother, and my aunt. They were all very well off and couldn't stand the fact that my father would leave my grandmother's side. When she was following my mother, who was not from the same city as they were, to begin with, and then a fishermen's daughter, which was difficult. But he fell in love with my mother. My mother was the most gorgeous thing. Not because it was my mother. I see pictures and go, "Damn, why didn't I look like her." You see pictures, black and whites, and you see pictures of the olden days, and you go, "Oh my god, they look so much better now." My mother was just gorgeous. We joke around. I say, "Mom, (Gina?) just looks old and so did grandma. They look better now." My sister used to cry all the time, she was too skinny. My mother was bodacious. She was always full figured. She reminded me of Jane Russell, that look, the hair, the thick beautiful brown hair. She was just gorgeous. She was the funniest thing. She used to tell us stories all the time. It was just her and her sister. Never wanted to ever fight with her sister. She said, "It's all I have. It's not worth fighting over for money." She used to teach us, "Don't fight for money. Don't fight for this. That all comes and goes. But if you never see your sister again or your brother, then what happens?" I understood that because my mother's youngest brother, one of her younger brothers – besides the sister dying, my uncle passed away at sea; fell overboard and the propeller – I still hear that scream. I still hear the scream. I was probably seven years old. My sister Rosaria had to – we lived on Church Street at the time. We were up above my grandmother's house in the apartment. I heard that horrid, horrid scream. It's still in my ear from my grandmother, screaming when the police came to say that her son got in an accident out at sea. It was horrible, horrible screeching sound. I heard her say, "Not again. How many kids are you going to take from me?" My sister had to run to my mother who's not home – her and my father were around the corner, not far. Everyone walked everywhere – to go tell her. I can hear my mother screaming in the streets because Uncle Vito was one of her favorites. He was a hellion. Her and my mother and Uncle Tony were – Uncle Vito was always with us. He was just such a hellion. She wanted to kill him all the time. It was her little brother, and it was horrifying. I can hear the screech. It was terrible. I don't remember the funeral. I don't remember anything else. I remember seeing the coffin, but my aunt, who passed away – because my grandfather couldn't come – I grew up all my life watching a little girl in a white dress in a coffin. My grandmother had to take pictures for my grandfather, but we grew up with that. It was horrid. I never really said to my grandmother that she looked old because I could see the wrinkles. Those wrinkles were not because of age. My grandmother, when there was any kind of bad weather, I'd have stay with my grandmother, sleep with her, because my grandfather was out fishing. Even when we moved so far away, two houses down, I had to sleep with my grandmother. But if there was bad, bad weather, she would get out the rosaries and the little Bible, and we would pray and pray. I'd go, "Why am I stuck there?" I used to love it because I

got to do what I wanted. But when it was bad weather, really, really I didn't want to be there because it's like, no TV, no nothing. If it was thunder or lightning or anything else, you shut off everything, where my mother would sit outside and she would watch it and love it. So I grew up scared to death of storms, of thunder and lightning. I even scared to death my kids. I scared them to death. I wouldn't have changed anything, the memories. She had her husband out fishing. She had her son out in Boothbay. They'd go out for three months. "Is Tony coming in? Is Uncle Tony coming in?" It was hard. You can understand the culture and the traditions and the sacrifices. My grandmother would say to my grandfather and hear them saying, "With all these sons that we have, and all these things – because this one married an American and this one married American and this one married American, if we stayed in Italy, we'd be the richest people because they'd be all around us." Now, our children really aren't around because Larry, Paul, Salvatore and Vito, they all went to school and then they married all Americans. They went to the service and they went there. So it's not like you would in Italy – different traditions. She said, "Look at my brother Vito with seven boys, and still, we're all alone." She says, "It was hard." "The fishing community," my grandfather would say, "would always be together. No matter who you were from, whose father, whose son, whatever, you watched out for each other. You would go out fishing." It wasn't like you see with *The Perfect Storm*. Italian, Portuguese, they would go out fishing. They would come home, take out whatever they had to take, do the boat, and then go home. They would spend it with their family before they would go to the D.E.S. [Portuguese American Club] or they would go to the St. Peter's Club, because I think they were afraid of their mothers. I used to go down to the wharf to say goodbye to my husband. I'd always bring them out fishing. I would never not say goodbye. Then I knew when they were coming home, I would go to the edge of the fort. There's the house right there that's still there near the playground. We'd park in the driveway; she would allow us. We'd flash the lights off and on. I would wave, and I'd wonder, "Is that going to be the last time that I see my husband?" I tried to have him change. Actually, for about a year or two, he worked onshore painting and everything else. I didn't even know my husband was as talented as he was until he was home – electrical, painting, carpentry – the skills. Some of the stuff that he could carve and do, I was just amazed. I didn't even know he could do that. I really didn't even know who he was technically because he would go out fishing for ten days, home for three. So when you come in to port, you're taking out fish, you're fixing up the boat. Second day, you're still cleaning up the boat, getting it ready to go out fishing, and then you're with your family. The third day, you're going out. So it was like three days. The only time we could really plan things was Christmas and Fiesta. So when your husband went out on a large boat, you became families with that boat. So we invented playdates; we just didn't know what the hell it was. Because we would be – back then, we used to have ten women – the large fishing vessel would have between ten and seven men, never less than that. Now it's like five. Same boat sizes. It's kind of scary. So we would all hang around because I couldn't plan or go on vacation with you because you don't know when your husband's coming in. It wasn't that they lost a day of work; they lost a trip, which my husband did one time. It was a six-thousand-dollar trip. That was a good chunk of our annual salary. We planned with each other. If the boat had to come in for a haul and it was going to be in for a couple weeks, then we could all plan day excursions with our husbands. It was funny. One time, I said to my husband, "You want to go on a cruise?" He goes, "What the hell for? I fish all the time." "I want to go on a cruise. We only had one for our honeymoon. I want to go." "I'm not going back out there." [laughter] "All right, can we go on a plane? We'll take the kids to Florida." I wanted to go on a cruise, but no, my honeymoon was the last cruise

that I ever went on with him because he goes, “I’m out fishing all the time.” I said, “But it’s different.” He says, “It’s still water. I don’t want to see it.” I said, “Okay.” We joke around. I tell all the other ones, “When are you guys going on a cruise?” “He said the same thing to me.” The funniest thing is you respect – I see these women now and we’re still close because if the kids were young and there was no school – back then, we didn’t have pack and plays; we had real play pens that we’d have to carry, and all go to certain beaches where there was not a lot of people and that we could watch our children. My favorite would be the Pavilion, but that was a little bigger. When they were young, we went to Half Moon Beach, and it had a tree. So we’d carry everything down. All of us, all us women – there’d be the ten of us with all our kids. They’d all go swimming there. We’d all talk. Who was not allowed to smoke would sneak a cigarette. “No, no, the kids can’t see you smoking.” I’m going, “Are you for real?” We joke around. You didn’t hear a cell phone. You didn’t hear whatever. The boat owner would call you because you’d hear from a marine operator. They would say that they’re coming in for fishing. Then we’d all call each other, “Oh, god. They’re coming home. They’re coming home.” We’d all go back to our own houses because we would stay one week at my house, one week there. We’d all switch houses. But most of the time we slept at my girlfriend’s house in the summer because she was right on the beach. The kids all took baths together, all the girls in one tub with the showers, the whole thing. We put them to bed at six o’clock. The next thing you know, they’re exhausted from the beach all day. Then we’d talk – how we’re going to plan, how we’re going to get houses, and what are we going to do, and hopefully they’re coming with a trip. A trip would mean – every ten days was one trip. They’d call it a trip that they’d get fish and no trouble – and are we going to be able to survive. We’d help each other out. So, if someone was behind – “how’d you get behind?” We’d all budget each other. We all were lawyers and bookkeepers and fathers and mothers together. It was that bond that you grew with each other because, technically, we were actually married to each other more than we were to our husbands, especially if your husband fished on the same boat together for five, six, seven years. That’s a bond that’s you’re never going to leave. Our kids grew up. Until today, they all call each other brother and sister because they don’t know who belonged to who when they were younger. We’re all wives. It was great. I remember one saying, “Okay, I’m not going to answer the phone, so don’t call my house. It will be busy.” Back then, collectors used to call your house. “So what are you having trouble with now?” “Well, the cable because I ran on this one because my son needed the dentist.” There wasn’t insurance back then. Sometimes you couldn’t afford the health insurance. To be honest with you, a lot when they knew they were going to have a child, they get the insurance because you can take it off and put it on. It wasn’t open enrollment time. So they would get the Blue Cross Blue Shield. It was \$265 a month for a family plan when I first started. In 1980, that’s a lot of money. So when you’re going to have a baby you needed a health insurance, so you’d get it a couple months before and you make sure. Then you had to take it off. After the baby was done with the vaccination and everything else, you took it off because if you had one broker meaning no trip, lost a net, boat had damage, they’re home for a month to two months, anything you saved was gone. So you stop paying your insurance. What are the things you don’t need? You need your rent. You need food. You paid those. Electric, gas, but what other stuff? “Well, I couldn’t because of the dentist or this.” “Okay.” So we’d help each other out. We’d help each other out. If not, we’d go to our mothers who always helped us out. I’d go to my mom, “Enzo needs this, or this one –” “Okay, okay.” She knew. It was good for her. We survived that way. In the morning when they come home from fishing – it’s so funny because we’re all in the grocery store – we all lived in each other’s

houses, so we really didn't clean our own houses if we're out for the week. We didn't go grocery shopping. We all pitched in and did that. You see us all with the kids. My mother would watch the kids – the nursery school before we even had nursery school, every one's in my mother's yard or here or there or playing at my mother's house. My sisters were there. "All right, we're going grocery shopping." We'd go home. We'd clean our houses. We'd get the groceries. We used to joke around. We'd say, "Shit, shower and shave," all at the same time. Let's get all ready. It looks like we're home all week. It was funny. Our husbands used to laugh. They'd go, "You just cleaned today, didn't you? You just got home, didn't you?" [laughter] My daughter Carla would give me away. We'd go down to the wharf, we'd pick up our husbands, and we're all looking at each other – I think we went through withdrawals, really. We'd all look at each other saying, "We're not going to see each other for three days. You know we're not going to." The kids did, too. We all looked at each other and gave us this big smile. I'm smiling because I can see our faces now. I'd pick up my husband and I drive to the apartment. We're going home. My daughter would see that brown fence, "No go home. No go home. I don't want to go home." She'd have horrors. She didn't want to go home because she loved playing with the other kids and we did things. The three days they're home, we're in the house. The first day, like I said, we take them home. He's exhausted. I'm cooking. He's unwinding. He's taking a shower. We're doing family things. Second day, he's got to do the ritual. He's down at the boat all day. I'm home. My daughter's like, "We're not going to the beach today?" The poor thing. She's like, "We're not going to the beach?" I said, "No, girls." The other ones would just do what Carla would do because she was the oldest. We would not call each other in the morning. Then as soon as we know, they'd head down to the boat. We'd all be on – I'm calling Enzo. I'm calling this one. We all call each other up. I said, "My daughter's going through withdrawal." She goes, "So is mine. I want to go to the beach. I want to go to the beach." I said, "At least you live right near the beach." After they went down the boat all day and doing what they had to do, mending the nets, taking out the fish, and they'd come home and they eat and rest. Then we'd go visit my mother and his mother and the relatives. So second night, we're all doing that. Or they plan we're going to go out to dinner. We'd all get together to go out to dinner. All the men and women, we'd all go out, and we'd have such fun times. But it doesn't mean the kids got to see each other. The third day, because they really never stayed longer than three days. So on the third day, we're playing Suzy Homemaker and house. To the kids, "He's going out tonight. Just go with the flow, will you?" Off we go, all the wives. We all go down to the wharf. We're saying our goodbyes. Then we go down to the Fort. We're saying our goodbyes. The kids are all excited because they know that as soon as they're off and we see that boat's hitting the breakwater, we're all going to each other's house. Got the stuff for the car. We're laughing. We'd do that all summer long. The kids knew in school and winter – they all knew it. Then it started getting harder and harder, the regulations and the rules. So they weren't home just for three days. If they were home for seven days, it was harder for the kids, it was harder for everyone else. Then they're home for two weeks. Okay, we're taking the two weeks when they had trouble or they had to do something. But when they said that they couldn't go fishing – see, when you know that you're fixing the boat or you had some trouble, you know you're eventually going to go out. But when I started – back then, I lost my husband by then. It was totally different, but I was still involved with the Fishermen's Wives. My husband died September 11, 1997. I saw what was happening, and they were home for months. Now you saw – what do we do? Before my husband took his life, he was home. He got hurt in '94, so he was home for three years. How did you survive? How did

you do it? What do I do? I don't know what to do. Then the kids were older. One girl got angry and said, "Why should I have to ask him for? I never knew him." That really broke my heart. I said, "That's your father. He didn't choose to go out fishing. You have everything you have because he's out there. Show respect." Respect was going. When they were out fishing for ten days and come home for three days, even for a week, you knew they were going back out. It's our fault, too. We did everything. They had really no say. They did their sea; we did the shore. When they started to come home, they wanted to feel like they belonged. How can you make them feel they belonged when we didn't even know how to make them feel like they belonged? But yet, they wanted to show that they still could be head of household. So Angela and I would discuss things. Depression started, anger, anxieties. Kids were feeling it. Wives were feeling it. Your husband's home. You can do so much during the day down the boat; there's nothing else. So it used to be half a day down the boat; now it's a couple hours, that's it. As they got more and more down the clubs, that means they're going to come home drunk. What's going to happen? You can feel the tension because all your savings now is starting to deplete. Kids want more and you used to be able to give them more because you knew they were coming back in. Now you're saying no, which most of them didn't know. The fathers used to come home with their cash money, whatever you want to call it, and fill the kids' pockets. "Here's money. Here's ten, here's fifteen, whatever." It was nothing because you know he was going to come back. Now, when you're home for a month – oh, no. We're now learning how to budget differently. You're learning how to do things differently. But they wanted to also feel like they were a partner. We weren't ready to have them as partners. We had each other as partners. So we had to learn how to be wives again. We had to learn how to be partners again. We had to learn how to get them involved. Everything we did, we did on our own. So now you had to answer to them. We didn't like it either because now we had to answer to somebody. "What'd you do with the money? What'd you do with this? Are we going shopping? What's happening?" "Whoa. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I was free all my life. Now I'm back in my mother's household." You feel like you're a child again. "Wait a minute. Are you questioning what I'm doing? Are you thinking that I'm spending? Whoa." Then we'd all talk to each other, but see different cultures is – you talk about fun things. You talk about everything else. We knew each other. I knew all the women on the boat, so I knew what was going on because my husband was already home. But I could feel it. They said, "Well, how do you survive? How do you do it? What do you do? What do I do?" I said, "I got a job." It's not that I had to right away, but I was going mentally. I had to get a job. I just couldn't do it. I needed to get insurance on the kids. I needed to do things. I just had to get a job. I didn't care where I was working. When I had my boat, and I lost boat, I went to Gorton's [Seafood]. I worked at Gorton's, packing fish. My mother was so devastated. My mother was shocked. My mother was like, "You can't do this. I packed fish so you didn't have to. Your sister's in the engineering department at Gorton's. The other one's over here. This one owns a business. What are you doing?" It was tension. I said, "Mom, it's called survival. Don't worry." "No, anyone who works at Gorton's never comes out. The money's good. You got insurance." "No, mom. I'm not going to do it forever. I just need to help out right now. It's the quickest, and you got summers off. You get to collect unemployment. There's free health insurance. I can't do it, mom. I'm not going to file bankruptcy. I want to buy a house. I have to. End of subject. Don't bring it up again, and don't bring it up in front of my husband. That's it." You try to tell my mother to stop bringing something up in front of your husband, it's like – [laughter]. So I went to work at Gorton's from 1986 – my mother goes, "Who's going to watch your kids? You're

supposed to be home with your kids.” It’s like, “Who said so? You weren’t. We’re fine.” It was just so devastating. I think I felt more disappointed not because he wasn’t fishing, it’s because I disappointed my mother. It was just so hard. So I worked at Gorton’s. They’ll tell you that I was employed at Gorton’s because I never really worked; I talked too much. I used to say, “I can talk and pack fish.” “Well, they can’t pack and listen.” Put me on the line. So I joke with them now because I’m really close with all of them, I helped celebrate their 170th [anniversary], and I was telling everyone there, “I was employed here, because they’ll never tell you I worked here.” It just was great because we worked all winter long. The kids were in school, so really didn’t have a big difference. The money was good, and it was great insurance. My husband was out fishing, and I had my cousin babysit. When we had the boat and he was home, I was working the night shift, so he was getting upset. Then I switched to the dayshift and everything was perfect. Everything was perfect when I had the [dayshift] because nightshift, he’d be home from fishing and I wasn’t home. So he was alone. He says, “This isn’t a life.” I’m saying, “Really? How about when you went fishing for ten days and left me with the kids? This isn’t a life? Okay. All right. Why? You know what? Help out.” We respected each other, so it was a life. I did that for a couple of years until we could pick ourselves up, and we did. Then in ’91, we bought some land, and we built a house. I said, “See, mom? I’m not there all the time.” I said, “Mom, it is great money, but it’s not for me. Never was. But you know what? You got to trust me once in a while. I don’t want handouts. I don’t want bankruptcy because we lost the boat, lost this, or anything else. I can work, Ma. You taught me how to work. Just trust me.” She goes, “Yes, but you learned how to swear there. You never did that in my house.” Well, I did. I did. Every other word was the F-bomb. She used to say, “That’s it. She’s not working there no more. [inaudible] See what’s she turning into? See? You piggy. No swear my house.” She used to say, “No swear.” No, we weren’t allowed. We couldn’t even say the word “queer.” That was absolutely not. It wasn’t because someone was queer. We had no idea what it was. I was only a little girl. It was like, “You’re acting weird. You’re so queer today.” Oh my god, my mother, who knew what the real word was, was devastated. “Not in my house.” I just learned everything in the fishing community, became a stronger person. It really did. It made me who I am. It made me an advocate to fight for their rights even more. So I went into social work. I got a job after doing a thousand different kind of jobs; it didn’t matter. I was a survivor. I had four jobs at one time when he got hurt. I don’t care. I even devastated my family because I went to go apply for fuel assistance and food stamps for a month. My sister was furious. “You don’t do that. We’re here.” “It’s called survival. A mother does whatever she can to help her children. I don’t care about me, but I’m going to do what I have to do.” But I didn’t have to because there were there.

F: You have another meeting in ten minutes.

SRT: Okay, thank you. What time is it?

MG: I’m not sure.

SRT: My phone’s over there; I haven’t looked at it once. They’re probably all texting me, “You have a meeting. You have a meeting.” That’s why they went through the door. I just love talking about – it made me who I am. I said that even after my husband died, I was no longer a fishermen’s wife, [but] I was still going to advocate and fight. So I decided to run for City

Council to let the Italians and fishermen have a voice because I hated when we'd go to meetings, and they said fishermen were rapists. One city councilor made a remark, said, "You're rapists of the sea." My little girl goes, "Who's daddy raping, mom?" It was horrible. I said, "You –" whatever I said. I said, "That's it." I remember that. I got frustrated. I got hurt because of the way he died. I had to learn, what's it all about? What is depression and stuff? I said, "You know what? I'm going to help the Italian community, and I'm going to be an advocate for the fishermen. I'm going to fight." I still remained with the Fishermen Wives. I still fought. I went into social working. I had a job at the Addison Gilbert Hospital as a health and human service liaison/financial counselor. From there, I just became the biggest advocate for everything you can think of. Until today, I'm the only mayor, they think in the whole United States but definitely Massachusetts, who's still certified SHINE [Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders] and volunteering for the hospital on Fridays after we close to do SHINE work, especially now during open enrollment. It's too complex. This government is not helping our seniors who made this country. The younger crowd, you can be on your parents' insurance until the age of twenty-six. What do you do after? All these things that are happening, I still think that they need a voice. I still try the best I can to help fishermen, but still, have to understand that I'm a mayor, and I have to go neutral because not everyone believes the same way the fishermen do. I just support things, like with my Fisheries Commission, what we need to do. I have a great director, who's a fisherman. So he works for me part-time and fishes. That's great. So we get all the input on that. We have a great response and a great networking with the Fishermen's Wives, Fishermen's Partnership [Support] Services, the fisheries director, the Fisheries Commission with the Northeast Seafood Coalition. So many different groups that work together. I look at how am I going to promote my industry, while they're fighting the rules and regulations with NOAA. I said I'm not going to fight NOAA anymore. I'm tired. I need to find a way. I wish they would have taken me up on it. I'm just so disappointed that even with Bullard or this one, that no one's ever followed up. No one ever came and said, "You know what? Let's help Gloucester out. Let's show that we can work together." Here's your opportunity. You have a mayor that's not going to fight with you. You have a mayor who has great ideas and has the input of the Fishermen's Wives, Northeast Seafood – all of them. I had them all in my office one day. We were banged up. We couldn't even fit in here, but we're all here saying we're going to work together. They're going, "What?" I said, "We're going. I'm bringing them in. I'm meeting with NOAA, and no more fighting." You guys do what you need to do. They all said, "Okay. If anyone can do it, you can." I feel like I failed. I feel like I failed. I've been here since 2015, and not one grant, not one support system, not one call, not one "come here," or "can I come to your office?" Nothing. No one's ever asked to come to my office. I have to ask them, "Can you come?" That's sad. I'm right here in the same damn city as you are. Shame on you. Shame on you. They lost my respect. They really did. But I'll tell you something. When they shut down the government, I still reached out to the employees. We still try to help them out, but I'll be damned if I'm going to help the head out or anyone else. Those are my people in my community. You're in my city. You work in my city. You belong. I am your mayor, whether you live here or not, like the people at Gorton's. I help Gorton's. It's not fresh fish, but it still employs my city. But I lost respect for NOAA, not because of what you hear out there, but because I gave you a chance to work together. Climate change and find something that we can all work on to promote this city. All this importing – let's start exporting stuff that we do have an abundance of.



MG: That would preserve Gloucester's identity.

SRT: Exactly.

MG: I want to thank you for all the time you spent with me today. This has really been a treat to meet and talk to you.

SRT: It's great. I'm laughing, and I'm going to smile all day. I'll probably FaceTime someone who moved to Italy and email some other friends that we used to do all this partnership with them. We all confirmed and baptized each other kids because we were sisters and brothers. I'm just smiling because I can see us now. I can see all these little kids. I have one who's running for City Council. I have this one over here. I saw one yesterday. We're all laughing at Goombadi's. We're like sisters. We just laughed. Her husband had to go to Alaska, so my husband would call us the Alaskan sisters because my husband would go to Italy. Her husband would go to Alaska. We had one month with no husband. It was great. He said, "Go ahead. Enjoy each other while you can." We're still best friends today. But you saw the change. Her husband should be retired. He's completely almost deaf. He has hearing aids, but it doesn't help. We have to scream at him. He works in a fish hole, and he works in the engine room. All that [indicates engine whirring] – I don't know how the hell they do it. His back is hunched over. If you look at fishermen, they have no backs left. There's not electronically something, you can push a button, and these fish come out themselves. They actually have to do it themselves manually. The net, haul it in. Everything, all of that. Then you got to throw it overboard. It's ridiculous when there's so many people that are starving or stuff that we can do, and the DNA. All this stuff that people can want us to do, damn it. Let us do it. We're not asking you to give us money for it. We're just saying, "Do something with it." Talk about waste. Then, you're looking at what's happening. Well, you know what? You're polluting the ocean by throwing it back because not all of it's going. So that will be – eventually, it goes away or whatever. It's not like pollution but look at the pollution that's out there. Stop blaming fishermen for every little thing. It's so easy to say it. Just like the twine with the whales and the twine with the lobstermen. Not us. We changed our twine fifteen years ago. We were ahead of the time. My husband used to play with the whales. When they had their boats – and back then, they didn't have cellphones; we had CBs [citizens band radio]. We knew what channel to go on, and you hear this big [imitates whale sounds]. I'm thinking it's the whales. I thought it was fascinating. He said, "Don't, don't." I hear him, "[inaudible]," and they'd do that. They were warning the whales on their loudspeakers to get away from that area. That's the only way they knew how to make noise so they'd go someplace else. He said, "We don't want them in our nets. You don't want them in their stuff." First of all, it costs them a fortune to go redo their nets, and the hard work and the labor. They don't want to see them die. They played with them. They were out there. I used to tell my husband – I never had pity for him when he fished in the summer. I wished I could go with him; it was beautiful. In the winter, though – oh. In the winter, I'd get calls saying, "Your husband's right out here, but he can't come in." "What do you mean he's right out there? I can see the boats." "They have to stop." The Coast Guard called me. I said, "What do you mean? You're scaring the daylight out of me. What do you mean? What's wrong? Are they broken down?" No, because the spray of the boat would freeze, and they didn't have enough men on the boat to break the ice. So they have to go on the boat to start breaking the ice. If they keep moving, the spray of the motor and the ocean would

go on and freeze, that they'd sink because they were using sledgehammers to break it off. That's how bad it was one year. He said, "They can't move. They have to stay still. They have to break it, and then go a couple. Stay still, break it." It took them three hours for a five-minute trip. Ten Pound Island to here would have been five [minutes]. They had to stop. Coast Guard was there. They didn't have enough. People don't even realize. I used to say, "Why are you doing it? Why are you doing it?" He said, "That's all I know how to do."

MG: Yes. Well, I think we could probably talk all day, but you have a meeting, so I'll turn this off.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Molly Graham 11/25/2019