

Name of narrator: Curtis Carter (CC)

Interviewer: Amber Chulawat (AC) and Jamekia Collins (JC) recorded this interview with the permission of Curtis Carter for the research project “Boat Stories”

Primary Investigator: Dr. Jennifer Sweeney Tookes, Georgia Southern University.

Others present: No other people were present.

Date of interview: January 29, 2022

Place: The Fish Dock in Darien, Georgia

Duration of the interview: Fifty-six minutes and fifty seconds (56:50)

Repository for the recording: The audio recording will be uploaded to the website, Voices from the Fisheries (<https://voices.nmfs.noaa.gov/>)

Context for the Interview: Student interviews sit down with Curtis Carter, a local shrimper.

General Description of Contents: Curtis Carter discusses his history of shrimping, telling stories about he first got involved in the shrimping industry. He talks about his motivation to keep shrimping as well as how he has seen changes in many aspects of the fishing industry.

00:04

JC: Nice to meet you again.

CC: Same here!

JC: So here, this is an interview with Mr. Carter on January 29, 2022. This interview is being conducted in McIntosh County, Georgia and it is a part of the research project and interview collection titled books stories. The interviewers are Jamekia Collins and Amber Chulawat. So, first we want to get started. Would you tell us about your current or most recent fishing vessel?

CC: Okay. See, I've been on so many I can't hardly remember the names truly. I'm just checking to see if I got a picture of this boat so I can give the correct name.

JC: Or like your favorite boat doesn't have to be like your first one?

CC: Oh. My favorite boat was the "Night Train", which was my personal boat.

JC: How long were you on the Night Train?

01:35

CC: Oh, for about four years. This is the boat that that that I'm on now. Right now. That one.
[shows photo of a shrimping Boat]

JC: How long have you been on this one?

CC: Okay, I started on it in July of this year- of last year! And I'm still on it, Miss Pollyanna that's the name of it, okay. I've been shrimping since 16, the age of 16. I didn't graduate from school and shrimping was one of the things that I could do and support my family without complete an education. After I got into it, I stayed into it until today and I'm 75 years old. So, there's something- [phone rings] something I'm not saying that I should say, y'all work with me ok?

02:45

JC: How did you get into shrimping?

CC: I was a bad boy. I got married at 16. So that means I started out in the street early. And at that age, I had a family after that. It was work, you know, and that's what I did. I did as a deckhand until I was 19 and I started rowing a boat out of Key West, Florida. The name of it was the "Pay Tot". .it was about 60 foot long with a V8 engine. And- I shrimped there November December, January, February, March. And then we came back to the east coast in April. I stayed on that boat for a while and I got on a larger boat which was the "Elmore" and I worked it for about three seasons from Carolinas through Texas. I stayed on that boat for about three years I

gather and I got on a bigger boat. You know and it was from one boat to the next but that's how made my living, shrimping. And what else.

04:20

JC: Did you ever own your own boat beside the Night Train?

CC: Oh, the Night Train was the only boat I owned. Yes. I lost it through bad weather.

JC: Can you tell us about some of the people on the boat that you worked with? On any of the vessels you worked on?

CC: Oh, yes. Quite a few now. A lot of guys are going now, all passed on and Rufus Jones down in - Charles Campbell, Jack McLow, Paul Robinson, Leroy Campbell, Leon Campbell, Abe Brannen. Lots of guys, I mean, they're all gone. Guys after, it's been quite a few years you know what I'm saying. Yeah. But shrimping is how I made my living. And yet today I still am. If the weather ever breaks off, we'll be back out there again.

05:39

JC: So, kind of going back on that question I just asked how do you think the future of commercial shrimping or fishing in Georgia, how do you think that's gonna go?

CC: I think it'll go perfect. I mean, real good, its better now than it was then. Because when I first started shrimping, we only had a compass, a fathom meter, and radar. We didn't have navigational equipment. At this time, we went by trees, depth of water, or matter of fact, when I first started, we didn't have a fathom meter we used to use a rope with a weight on the bottom of it and drop it over board and you know, like drop it over and then measure the distance put it on a yardstick you see how much water we ran. Yeah, when I first started but that was, that go way back. Yeah. What else could I say? Kind of help me, kind of question me a little bit so I can.

07:01

JC: So what do you understand about fishing vessels that you didn't know back in the day when you first started?

CC: I didn't understand the operation on the motors. We had to practice with the equipment I didn't know if the motor stop running, what would cause it or if it ran hot, how to handle it. I mean, there are many things nowadays that it's like any other job, you get on, you don't know what's what until you get into it. So shrimping was always more like that, you know. And still is but nowadays you got you got all a moderate equipments I mean, if there's a snag somewhere out there if someone hit it already so they make notes of it, you know, this way when y'all come out

there there's a X there so you stay away it's like a red light you know, you stop on the ocean you go around it.. Yeah.

08:06

JC: So over the years have you seen any changes in the water or the weather that affected

CC: Ah yes, I have. When I first started shrimping, we had smaller boats 40 feet did the 50 feet, 55, 60 feet now you got 110-12 feet etcetera so these boats is equipped to work the bad weather where and we couldn't because the boat wouldn't stand it you know, not less, more us but you know, you won't come back once you go out there so it takes no chances in working in bad weather and stuff like that. Those are some of the changes you got there's more money now. Reason for that you got bigger nets, bigger boats. You cover more territory; you know what I'm saying? So yeah, there's a big difference here. There's a big difference

09:20

JC: So have you worked on any boats when there was any bad weather? Can you tell us any stories about?

CC: Yes. Years ago we used to leave, work Mexico. From Tampa, Key West and Fort Myers we work Mexico, Campeche, Kontor {?}, all these places were rough weather you had to cross the Yucatan Peninsula to get to these areas and oh man, there was some time boats didn't make it, you know, that kind of roughness. 'Course I wouldn't do that now. You know, even with the bigger boats, I wouldn't do it now because it was actually too dangerous but it was a way of living. You know? We did it. Yeah. The younger generation won't do it. I can tell you that

JC: Why do you think that is?

CC: The chances of surviving really, I mean I'll say the younger generation don't have the- like today they don't have the must do like we had. You know, it was either you do it or you don't get no money. You follow me? Well, nowadays, they don't do it, later for the money [chuckles], you know, seems like to me in the shrimping industry, It's a simple job, but it's dangerous. I mean, you can get misplaced. I mean, you can, there's so many obstacles against shrimping. But yet still. We did it, but it won't be done. Like we did it, nowadays. It seems like it should be safer, but it really isn't. I mean, bad weather. It can get bad, really bad. Bad enough not to work. Almost too bad to, would you say throw your anchor and just wait until it's over? Oh, man its still bad. You know? Shrimping is good, though. I mean, it's got its ups and downs. Yeah. If I had a chance right now to purchase a boat, I would. Yeah, I would. Because right now, is more

like out of season this time of year, or here. But all down, say from Fernandina, Florida to the cape on the East Coast and West Coast is like Key West etc. Well, normally, that's where we would be this time of year. You know, in my younger days here, that's where we would be Tortugas, or Tampa, Fort Myers, Apalachicola, all these areas is workable. The season never ever closed there. But see, we have a closure here on the East Coast.

13:16

JC: Did you have a mentor or someone in the community to help you kind of get into shrimping? Or like teach you the ins and outs of what to do?

CC: Oh, well, no, I didn't. Well, yes, I did more like my stepfather and my uncle. When I was much younger, after school, when school was out, I'd go out during the summer, you know, just to help them out. And by helping them out. I learned the job, also. So that's how I got acquainted with it. By working with my stepdad and my uncle. More like showed me, taught me you know, what to do, what not to do? And shrimping.

14:08

JC: Do you have any good memories from your time on their vessels?

CC: Yeah, it was. It was good. I mean, out on the ocean, you're away from everything, you know, and you get all this nice cool breeze and a seagull fly by and drop a crap on you. You know, something to laugh about, you know? And I yeah, I got good memories. And I guess I've tried to stay safe and that's why I'm still in it. You know, I learned something.

JC: Do you have any funny stories from being on boat that you could tell us?

14:53

CC: Funny stories? Well, this is, if you making money, it's always fun. You know, there isn't much you can do. You only got a crew of three people. So, I mean, you're working and you can't, I mean, only radio talks, you know, with other ones, but you can't sit down and do what we're doing because you on different vessel. But you can always keep a joke or play some music or something on radio, you know, wake up everybody, you know, stuff like this, you know, somebody might come up and say, "who's making all that noise this morning?" Wake up everybody. [laughs] I mean, you know, things like that, but nothing really, really funny. But just making the day you do whatever is necessary to make that day or week or month. When we, we used to go to Mexico, it was always 60 days, 90 days before you come back to the States. There's

some good times here. But sometimes you don't want to be out there too. What else? Where could we go next?

16:28

JC: Do you have any recommendations for the future?

CC: Of shrimping? In shrimping, I would say try to get along with your fellow shrimper. That's the main recommendation as long as you can. You might come in an area where it is 30 boats working, some will be going north, some will be going south. And the thing is, be able to pass each other without tying up your nets. You know what I'm saying? And respecting the next shrimper, you know what I'm saying? In other words, you know, I'm saying if he needed a little room, then you roll your wheel over, give it, make space or whatever. Communication.

Communication, yeah. Being able to talk and communicate with your fellow shrimper, that's one of the main thing. Because if you don't do that somebody's gonna get in trouble or not be able to work, you know? That's about it. I mean, it's fun, as long as you're making money.

17:48

JC: So how important is it to keep those relationships with other shrimpers?

CC: Very. I put that on a top. Yeah. Number one, if you can't communicate. You're going to have fights and quarrels and you don't need that. Yeah. Okay.

AC: You mentioned earlier about how, based on like, from when you started to now the technology has changed could you go into that and share your experiences with that?

18:24

CC: Yeah, well, I can just a little bit. After we got the navigational devices. It made the job much simpler. I mean, say if that tight little round piece on the table, right, there was the shrimping area. And there's 25 or 30 boats in there. If no one has a snag, a snag would be a hang, an object that would tear up your nets or etc. If we didn't have that, then that could cost you a day's work. You know what I'm saying? You can, you can destroy all your nets on that one hang, you know, you hit it one time, and you can't get right off of it. It's going to pull you around. It's going to make one side get on the other side. And communication and the navigational devices made a big difference in shrimping. Yes, it has. I don't know what else I can say, you know, anything else that we can go to or?

20:03

AC: You said that you somewhat had a mentor could you go and explain what it's like to learn those types of skills and how you got to learn them?

CC: Well, I'm gonna say that I got lucky because I started out with my stepdad and my uncles, you know, they did this. And, by me going out with them they taught me most of what they knew of how to and what not to, you know, I mean, I mean, it's, it's a lot the changes came about. If I could draw it, say there's a channel, this is a channel going out right here. Well, when I started, you had to, more like feel your way all the way out of here into the ocean. But now the new devices that they have is like a map. And it shows you the depth water, it shows you the banks, it shows you the buoys, you know, it's got everything on it. So it makes it more simple. And makes it. I appreciate that, that was good. Yeah. It takes a lot of guessing out of the game, wherein all you got to do now was find the shrimp. You know, which is isn't always easy, but it's better than it was before. I don't know how to stretch it, I would like to. [laughs]

21:54

AC: Have you shared your skills with anyone else. Like have you been a mentor to anyone else?

21:57

CC: No, no, I mean, if someone asks its mostly a short conversation, you know, we'll if I get a chance, I'll take you out as you try it. Oh, some people ask, well, can I go well, I'm gonna be gone for a week, can you prepare it? No, they're not prepared for that. You know? I mean, but there are a lot of people asked to go out they want to experience it. See what it's all about how it's done. Several. There's another thing the boats we have now. When I started, we didn't have bathrooms, we didn't have fully organized kitchen. You know there's one or two bed. Hey, man, it's more like right now is like home away from home. You got your bathrooms. You got your shower, you got a full kitchen, you got your TV, you got, you know everything on there. So, when you're not working, you can occupy your time doing something else. It's more convenient now than what it was before. Time made it better.

23:29

JC: Can you talk about, do you have a crew on the Night Train that you have right now?

CC: Oh, no. Oh, the Night Train is sunk, it is gone. Yeah, it sunk, but this boat that I'm on now, yeah, there's three of us on there. Roger Rabbit, John L Blidge {?}, And myself. Yeah. Three of us on that boat.

JC: So how are the, how are the relationships with the crew? Like how important is it to stay positive around your crew since you're around them for so long?

CC: So yes, the crew must stay positive all the time. I mean no arguments, no fights. We take turns in doing this. As a crew, as a deck man, we handles the deck, the captain stays up front and does most of the driving. Whenever he gets a little wary or whatever someone else will drive. You know, we swaps it around. You know, just trying to make it work. It's all about trying to make some money. Yeah, and if you got that thought positive in your mind, that's what you will do. You know, no arguments, no fights. You know, let's just do what we got to do and get this money.

AC: How did the night train sink?

CC: Oh, I'm not really sure I wasn't on it. I can only go by what I was told and you know I wouldn't want to put that around because it's not knowing exactly what happened.

[phone rings]

25:21

JC: Can you tell us about any other bolts that you worked on besides the “Night Train” and the “Polly Anne”

CC: The “Blessed Assurance”, I worked on it for quite a while, ‘bout three, four years. I even caught jelly balls with this one. We have, like this time of year right here, we had jelly fish and not for shrimping but I was told that they use it for medicine as a medical substance. I'm not sure I tried eating it but I had no taste for that one. [laughs] That way it was a decent boat. It still, its still a float. A new owner but it was a nice boat. I liked it. It belonged to Thurnell King out of Darien. Which is a state patrolman. It was fast [laughs]. Had V 12 motor in it, we pulled 2 68 foot nets with it. It worked nice, I mean Nice. Very comfortable boat. Yeah, I liked that one too. The “Shrimp Chaser”, it was a 72 foot, it was a big boat. I liked it. It was decent working. You know comfortable, yeah good work a little weather with it, you know. What they call a rough weather shrimper? Well, I was one of them, maybe that's why I don't like the rough weather now I've had enough of it just about. I ran quite a few boats in my time, Georgia to Texas. Nothing I had no major incidents nothing that would hurt the boat or myself with any of them really. Yeah. I have, I've tried to save a boat. It was the shaft broken. It was takin' on water. And I was trying to get it from St Augustine to May Port, Florida for and the weather was so bad until the Coast Guard came and got the crew off the boat and made me turn it loose. That was one of the

incidents that I wasn't too happy with, but it wasn't nothing I can do. They lost the boat. I don't know where it went. Don't nobody know where the boat is right now. It just went a drift and sunk I guess somewhere. But where? We don't know. I didn't like that story. But that's how it ended.

29:05

JC: What's the most interesting thing you've caught?

CC: Man, I caught a swordfish, off of Sea Island, off of Sea Island, Georgia. It was about 50, 40-50 feet long. And the sword was at least that long right there. [motions with his hands] On it, and it caught you know what a sword fish mouth I mean, the horn looks like it's got like sticking out on it. The Spurs. It took me almost a day to get it out of my net. It caught every bit of it. I mean, It was catching and wind up. Oh my god. That was one of the Yeah. A sword fish and I caught it off a Sea Island, Georgia. That was something else, man. It really was. That was one of my worst catch I mean we've caught back in the day, we've caught sharks that once they get into net we didn't have turtle shooters like we have now, the shark would go right to the into the bag of net and then shark was so big we had to cut the bag and let him rip the rest of it and once he got on deck he wanted the deck! The whole deck I mean it was we had to wait until he died before we can get back there and do our work yeah that shark woo, he was awesome, he would swing a tail like this and you find your all the catch going overboard everywhere so by him doing that we knew not to get close enough where in his tail or whatever would hit us you know that was one of the darnest event I had on a shrimp boat. That shark, yeah he was a monster and mean. Yeah we had to wait until he died but we can go back, he took the deck. [laughs]

31:25

JC: So you talk a lot about like sword fish incident and the shark incident so do you do maintenance on the nets whenever they tear up?

CC: Yeah whenever we get a shark bite in the net, yes we stop and we fix it, we sew it up and go back to towing again yeah. July, August all those sharks they will eat up your nets sometime it takes two or three days just to prepare the holes that are in the nets. I mean the nets already got holes in it but once they you know, you got to fix it or your catches you you're dragging for nothing because you catch is going to go. I always said a shrimp, they got a mind and their mind tell them if I see an opening, I'm gonna get out, so if they get in it they see that hole, they're gone man. You don't, you don't catch him so it's important to repair all your unnecessary holes you know, a shark bite or an object that might tear it you know we catch tree limbs, roots, and stuff

like that and they got weight to it so that the weight is heavier than the strength of the webbing so he had so it would automatically tear. Well you must fix that you can't drag around with unnecessary holes in your net.

33:02

AC: When you think about the future, do you think about there'll be more larger ships or smaller ships or boats like yours?

CC: Well the ships don't need to be any more larger than what they are because the larger your boat is the further off shore you got to go, the deeper the water and certain time of year you need to be in close, you can't come in close with a big boat, you got to stay off so I don't think they would, the larger boats I don't think there need to be any larger. I think that the size limit is already there, more power maybe you know be able to move faster or something but no not no larger.

AC: Have you seen a change in the shrimp population throughout the years?

CC: Well yes, the changes come with the size of the boat, the larger your boat which is like the largest boat now going catch more than the smaller boats because they got more webbing you know and that makes a difference. The larger your nets the more you catch.

JC: How have the changes in the shipping industry over the years how have they affected you?

34:47

CC: Oh I would say only for the better. Um, a lot of people don't like the turtle excluders. But personally, I think the turtle excluder saved us a lot of work like a lot of objects you would normally catch like horseshoe crabs and turtles and I mean you can catch a couple of turtles and they would almost like your nets are open like this. But the more weight you put on the tail of it makes it close it in, you know. And by having turtle excluders and stuff, a lot of stuff we would normally catch, the turtle excluders send that stuff back out so that gives you more time to drag to catch shrimp or with less debris, you know, I think the turtle excluder was a great idea. And now they done modified it where oh man, you can buy one when they first started with it they didn't last very long that the wires would bend or break and now they got them when they are stationary like you would buy maybe two or four sets a season. Now one, the one that they have would carry you through two seasons possibly you know what I'm saying? So, I've seen a lot of differences in that area.

36:37

JC: How about like in the pricing of like fuel and like shrimp over the years, how was that change from when you first started?

CC: Oh man it was a big change in that area now. Fuel was like 25 cents a gallon when I started, now it's nearly four dollars, so I guess that's with time everything is going up up up up!

[Laughter] Yeah, and far as the shrimps concerned, we didn't get as much money for the shrimp then but nowadays we can work and get more profit. Even though the fuel costs more by the prices of the shrimp being up, it helps to crew. Yeah.

AC: The current boat you have, were there any owners of that boat before you bought it?

CC: Oh, it's not my, it's not my, no it's not my boat is another guy's boat but he's a good guy, man. I can't, I don't even know his full name Marcus something but he's a good guy. He's a good boat owner. What I'm saying is if there's something wrong, he fixes it. You know? If he think that you need something or whatever, he fixes it, whatever it may be. He fixes it. He's one of the best guys. I think I worked for him quite a minute. Yeah. He's concerned about his boat and his crew. You know what I'm saying? So I gave him a plus on that. [Laughs]

AC: Where is that boat docked at?

CC: Darien at Thompson seafood. Thompson Seafood in Darien. There isn't but two so it's not hard to find [laughs] There's two seafood places in Darien. Docks with boat here, that's Boone and Thompson. Thompson and Boone. Right by the bridge in Darien.

39:13

JC: So where's your favorite place that you've ever shrimped?

CC: Blackbeard Hole. It's called, have you ever heard of Blackbeard Hole? No? Blackbeard is supposed to be the treasure island that's where a lot of ships and back in the days when they were hauling gold and jewelry and stuff like that. Blackbeard was one of the places that they almost always get tangled up because if you don't have full diagram of it, there's a lot of bottom you know his place you can work but you can't work it all the time I mean certain times you can go in low water you can't all the work you know I'm saying and but it's very shrimpy when there's shrimp in it that's why it's one of my favorite spots here. I like it. Blackbeard Hole.

[laughter]

AC: Did you find that spot did someone introduce?

40:27

CC: Oh, I was introduced. Introduced, it's like Brunswick. You know, you got a spot in Brunswick that you like to go to? For some reason or another? Well, I went back there because the shrimp were catchable. I mean, you know, you have good catches in it. There's quite a few spots. St. Augustine, Florida, I like it. Pretty shrimpy stuff like that. Okay, good. Good catches.

41:09

AC: What was it like to travel?

CC: In my younger days, it was fun. It was fun because every place you go to, you meet different people, you do different things, so we used to leave here, stop in Key West, we'll stop in Fort Myers, we'll go by Tampa, we'll stop in Mobile, Alabama, Louisiana. Right into Texas, had Galveston, there's Freeport, Ranchers Pass, all I mean right to the Mexican border almost you know, and it was fun you meet girls, different girls it's really all about the girl. Let's go there oh man it's pretty girl there okay we go yeah, yeah that's what it was more like you know just traveling, making money, meeting different people. It was fun. It was fun. I enjoyed it. I did.

AC: Do you have any memories you want to share about traveling?

CC: Might be ugly. No. [laughs] Yeah, I'll try to support all my kids, I don't know maybe some of them will pop up between here and there. You know? It was, it was fun. No, it was making money and having fun. That was all about. Trying to stay out of trouble. Yes, Okay.

43:03

JC: Did you ever stopped shrimping for a while and get back into it? Or have you been doing it consistently over the years?

AC: Oh, yeah, I quit. I quit. I went into construction. I did it for over five years. And well, that's because I had a brain aneurysm. And after having that aneurysm, I didn't trust myself on the water. I would have like dizzy spells. My blood pressure wasn't ready for the water. So I stayed on the hill. I went into carpentry, construction really. I did it for about three years and felt good after those three and I tried it again.

AC: Do you encourage anyone else to do it? Like do you have children? And do you want them to go into the industry?

CC: Yes, I have children but don't any of them go shrimping. They don't go shrimping. Because they have their education. And I'll tell you why. I went I got married when I was 16. My wife's mother, "oh, you're gonna marry my daughter" Yeah, you? Yes. Okay, ma'am, I will, I will. And my first baby was born in '64, second '65, third '66. So that's the kind of world I was in. [laughs]

It didn't give me time to go look for another job. I mean, I got one so I'll just hang in there you know what I'm saying? Yeah, '64, '65, and '66. Boy, oh my god wasn't funny after a minute. I wasn't ready for that man! [laughs] Back then the- well my family, my stepfather and all my uncles etc. I mean they supported their family you know I'm saying they were shrimpers and it was almost like, Okay son, this is how you do your family, you know you support your family and I just wasn't ready for that then. But I guess that's where I got my mentor from. You know what I'm saying? I went out and work, well shrimpin' was, you didn't have to have an education and all you got to do is know how to do it. And they got me through. Yeah

46:16

AC: So going back to the "Night Train" Where did you- where was it docked when you did-

CC: Fort Myers, Florida.

AC: And do you know the names of the people you worked with on that?

CC: I bought it from a guy named Wasi, Wasi {?}. I don't know his I can't think of his last name. I remember his first name. Stanley Campbell, Charles Campbell was on there with me and Pop Bradley, Poppa Bradley was on there with me. I keep looking at your last name, one of my best friends was a Collins, reason I said in Brunswick? He was a Collins.

[laughter]

AC: Did you know any of the prior names of the "Night Train"? Or was it always the "Night Train"?

47:42

CC: It was a Night Train when I bought it. I don't know what it was before.

JC: What type of boat was it?

CC: Oh, 73-footer.

JC: Do you know what year it was built?

CC: No.

JC: What about the "Pollyanne"? Do you know what type of boat is, like what size?

48:11

CC: This boat is 65 foot and its got a, it's powered by 34 six caterpillar and it's got generator, its neat, its got a bathroom kitchen its got three or four TVs you know, it's pretty nice this nice. Not a large boat, but it's nice it'd be good for March, April, May, June you all these months into

the coming that boat is perfect for it you know because you can work shallow or mid deep, know what I'm saying?

AC: Do you know what year that boat was built or is it like a fairly new boat?

49:09

CC: I got no idea Excuse me? I'm sorry.

AC: No, you're fine! You also talked about the "El Mar" Could you tell me more-

CC: "El Mar" It was a Carolina built boat. Now, whether it's still going or not, I have no idea but it was powered by V 12 GM and it didn't have a bathroom and had a kitchen, didn't have a bathroom. We used to use buckets to wash like a foot tub y'all don't know about that but more like sponge baths more like, yeah on those boats without bathrooms no showers you know what I'm saying. We kept clean though. It was a nice boat.

50:20

AC: You also mentioned another one, I'm sorry if I wrote it down wrong, the "Pay Taught"?

CC: The "Pay Taught" {?}, that was a 55 foot, it was built right here in McIntosh County. It was powered by V8 GM. It was a well-built boat because like I said I had it in Key West, Fort Myers. But it was wooden boat, nowadays we don't do too much the boat I'm on now is a wooden boat, but you don't you don't work no weather with it you know I mean, mediocre.. But anything goes over that try to get inside you know what I'm saying.

AC: And you know what year that was built? The "Pay Taught"?

CC: I want to say about '58. 1958 Something like that.

JC: And where's that boat now?

CC: It has been quite a few years, sweetheart. I have no idea where it's at now. It's not here in McIntosh I think someone in Carolina bought it along with the "El Mar", I think it went back to Carolina also.

51:52

AC: Who did you work with on that boat?

CC: It belonged to John Henry Miller, he died a couple of few years ago. That he was the owner of that one or both of them the "Pay Taught" and the "El Mar". Started out on the "Pay Taught" and I did well and the "El Mar", was a larger boat more power so he just like moving up the ladder you know bigger boat more power and from that boat I went to "Shrimp Chaser". Which was also a giant herring boat. That was a 73 footer.

53:01

AC: What was it like to get started in shrimping at that young of an age?

CC: It was like having a job. It was like, I'll be able to support my baby when it gets here. It was like, oh, okay, I got something going. You know? I was impressed because I mean, you see my size right now. I was one of the smallest captain on East Coast. I mean, people will hear my voice and think that I was maybe six foot 300 pounds. No, none of that they were all shocked when they found that I was 5'3, 140. You know, yeah. But I was well respected, pretty much is. Am I the only one, you got others?

AC: Mhm, they're in different rooms.

CC: Oh [laughs] Okay.

54:17

JC: So would you say you've enjoyed your time shrimping thus far?

CC: I have. It's pretty much. Oh, only thing I had happened to me on the boat was the freezer boat and my crew was in, in the bottom and I was up top handing down the shrimp. And like, you got to open the hole to get in there. Well, we had it tied back and the line came loose and the top tap me in the head which in, I backed up up and as I was falling I grabbed hold of the inside of the hatch cover and thing hit my hand. Had me there for a minute, I couldn't move. Had me stuck. That's the only incident that I had to happen bad, I mean I break my hand. But other than that, I mean I had no problem with working on the shrimp boat.

JC: I think that's all the questions that we have for you today. We really appreciate you sitting down and talking to us.

55:48

AC: Thank you. Do you have anything else you just want to share about your experiences or anything?

CC: Well, there probably is, but I'd have to take a minute to think about it. I mean, I was shrimping since I was 15, and now, I'm 75. Hey man, all a lot has happened in between those years. I was just asked, will I speak, well, I'll speak a little bit, but I don't know how all I mean, ways I should you know a lot of things that has happened in between that time, yes there is.

AC: Well, if you think of any feel free to share with us in the future.

CC: Okay.

AC: Thank you so much.

CC: Okay.

AC: It was great talking to you.