

**Name of narrator:** Marty Collins (MC)

**Interviewer(s):** Megan Bull (MB) and Samantha Sheppard (SS) with the permission of Marty Collins for the research project “Boat Stories”

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

**Others present:** No other people were present.

**Date of the interview:** January 29, 2022

**Place:** McIntosh County, Georgia

**Duration of the interview:** Fifty five minutes and twenty seven seconds (55:27)

**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:** Interviews sit down with Marty Collins and discuss his history of working on fishing vessels.

**General Description of Contents:** Marty Collins discusses his relationships with fellow commercial fishermen and how he first got into being a captain of a vessel at the age of sixteen. He also talks about how special his current vessel is to him and gives us some insight on what it has been like to travel while fishing.

**MB:** If at any point during this interview, you're welcome to stop or not answer any questions you don't want to. I think Jamekia already briefed you with all the informed consent papers. So if you want to complain about us, you can go to Dr. Sweeney-Tookes if you would like

**MC:** My daughter went to Georgia Southern.

**MB:** Oh, that's so cool.

**MC:** Yeah, she graduated probably six years ago.

0:24

**MB:** That's awesome. I think we're ready to start if you are. Okay, great. So this is an interview with Mr. Marty Collins on January 29th of 2022. The interview is being conducted in

**SS:** Belleville

**MB:** Belleville, Georgia it's part of a research project and interview collection titled Boat Stories and the interviewers are Megan Bull and Sam Sheppard. So to start off, could you tell us a little bit about your most current vessel?

**MC:** The official vessel now is the Lady Denise its a 96 foot steel hull, freezer boat I've been on her for three years prior to her I had a fishing vessel, Forgiven, fella I worked for is a preacher we had, my boat was supposed to be the Resurrection but his wife was real bad sick and we lost her a year ago so we named a boat after her so that was her boat so. 'Cause we woulda had the Redemption, Forgiven and Resurrection but that's where we are now but prior back I can go back up like I said I run boat's for the guy that Phillips Seafood here Charlie, I run the Blackbeard, Cindy Marie. I've been running boats since I was 16 years old.

**MB:** How long have you been on your current boat?

1:54

**MC:** I've been with the company I'm with now, been with 'em nine years. The one I got now I've been on there going on four years, five years the one prior, the Forgiven, five years and I just go on and on and on. You work with people till you get tired and then you move on, just go somewhere else. I worked for Speedy over in Brunswick at Petite Seafood, I run boats for him I run boats for Kenny Bolguson on down and Mayport, I run boats out of Texas. I've been all over.

**MB:**What are your positions on this boat?

**MC:** Captain.

**MB:** What were you on the previous boat

**MC:** Captain.

**MB:** Also, captain.

**MC:** I've been captain of boats since I was 16.

**MB:** Wow. So, is fishing a family business for you?

**MC:** Well my dad fished. My dad drowned in 1993, up in my old river shad fishin', which is commercial fishing, it's all the same. I mean we you know, when we can't do one fishery we do another fishery, I mean you know we are commercial fishermen.

**MB:** You mentioned what type of boat

**MC:** It's a steel boat. Steel hull

**MB:** What do you prefer to fish on?

**MC:** Well I like the steel boats. I like the fiberglass boats, actually a better boat because they're cheap you know I'm not gonna say cheaper but they're less expensive to upkeep I mean the steel just a lot a lot of money. But like I say the steel boats is where it's at now because we have to travel so much.

**MB:** What makes a fiberglass easier to upkeep and a steel better to travel?

**MC:** Salt and rust. You got salt water so you got rust and you got steel you got rust and you got to stay on top of rust but you know for the comfort the steel boats better but for upkeep the fiberglass boats better.

**MB:** Has the boat you're on now been through anything significant?

**MC:** Several storms. Like I say we work right now we work from Chesapeake Bay to the Mexican border. So we don't, ya know, wherever the shrimp are that's where we are. Normally this time of the year I'd be in Key West but right now my boats up on the shipyard for maintenance. You know, we've been three and a half years so it was time for us to haul out so we hold the boat out, gettin' ready to you know to start again. We was at the end of our, you know our time to do our maintenance. Like we try to pull it every three years you know to zinc and everything paint and make sure everything's good. But that's the best thing about a steel boat. You can go a little longer, the glass boats you can go longer than that. But if you go much longer on a steel boat it just costs you more more more all the time.

**MB:** Where do you fish most of the time?

**MC:** Most of the time I try to stay over here on the Georgia coast on the East coast. But like I say I do work the other side I do get to work all the way down like I work all the way to Brownsville, Texas.

**MB:** Have you been many other places?

**MC:** Well, like I say I've covered 'bout everywhere I can go from Brownsville to Chesapeake Bay, Virginia.

**MB:** Where's your favorite place to fish?

**MC:** Right here, home.

**MB:** Is there anything real unique about your current boat?

**MC:** Just the thought of her. You know, I got a lot of memories. Like I say, she was 57, she died with alzheimers and I can see her stages like I say when I come there, she was sharp and then she went down you know I was there for all of it, and I guess the best thing is she never forgot me. She forgot her husband but she didn't forget Marty.

5:52

**MB:** Can you talk about some of the people you've worked with?

**MC:** Well, nowadays we have a problem with crews. Reason we have a problem with crew is drugs, alcohol. Too much money given away, nobody wants to work and I use a lot, I use Spanish guys. I got one Spanish guy, worked with me for 14 years and I enjoy working with 'em but it don't matter. You know? You got to go to work, you take whatever but it's just hard to get crews and that's why we stay going the way we do. Our average trip is 30 days.

**MB:** Has that changed much over the years since you've been workin'?

**MC:** Oh yeah, that means the crew situation, in the last 10 years it's just gone to nothing. I mean, nobody wants to do it no more you know, it's not the money that you used to make I mean it's not there no more. But that's some kind of restrictions and I would say poor management of the fisheries.

**MB:** Could you talk about some memories that you've had while fishing? Funny, scary, anything?

**MC:** Well, we was off their red shrimpin', 1600 foot of water 15, 20 foot season caught a bomb and we rode it around for five or six days till we went to the dock and we went in Tybee Island they came down and checked it. Well they said it was live, they evacuated Tybee Island. I said ain't no way it's been on the boat for five or six days rolling from side to side, bam bam bam for I mean we didn't tie it down but we were lucky I guess we were very lucky but all goes, it's all upstairs he's not ready for me I guess so we got to go again. And we you know get being out there a lot as much as I'm in the ocean, I get to help a lot of people. You run across a lot of

people in distress, broke down, just needa ride you know pull us in, pull them into a port somewhere. I mean, you see a lot of that. Kind of interestin', people you run across who you meet, meet a lot of different people. You just about go anywhere. Like say from me, from here anywhere any port and you go to y'all know Captain Marty. Oh, yeah, we know him. Good thing he's changed in the last 10 years aint what he used to be. [Laughter]

**MB:** Have you noticed changes in the water or the marine life over the years?

8:57

**MC:** Well yes and no. I mean, things is not what it used to be. But we don't get to do the things we used to do either. I mean, it's hard to tell me that this is the problem here. Because we done something when you took something from me and what I'm saying is, like the shrimp they claiming, you know to harvest is down, down, down. But you took half of our bottom which is the sound. You take a farmer, he can't grow a garden without cultivating his ground. We can't grow shrimp 'less we can cultivate the you know, the sound. I mean, there's nowhere for me to go anymore. I mean, the bottom was just this soured up there, but we'll never see it again. They never, they don't want to see your anyway they want us gone. They rather buy shrimp from China. You know they're not worried about American people anymore.

**MB:** So have you noticed a lot of technology changes in the business?

**MC:** Somewhat. I mean we got things nowadays we never had on these boats, you know computers and and this and that, you know back in the day we didn't have none of that we had a radar and fathom meter, some people didn't have that. I mean, you kind of learned your ground where he was at you know, that's why most people worked one spot because they didn't look at none of that they looked at trees you go by you know, hill ranges and drag your bottom and nowadays I mean, just anybody can come do it because all I got to do is get a chip from me or somebody else and then go do everything I do.

**MB:** So you mentioned earlier you were captain at 16. When did you start fishing?

**MC:** Well, I worked with my dad and my uncle. I probably started, I was a full share deckhand at nine. I got a picture on my telephone where me and my uncle caught some pound notes right off a Sapelo down there off a Cabretta and that was in 1976. They got a picture of us in the, somebody just sent me that today cuz your younger guys coming into business gets a little biggity you know, we've been here a long time, I've fished all over the place I don't fish in one spot, but I don't like to see me come around but like I tell them this home. I've been here my

whole life I've been here before you was here. I'm gonna be here probably when you leave here cause you aint gonna make it. But in any way, somebody sent me a picture the other day of me and Uncle Jack when we call them pound notes and that was in 1976. I was 11 years old. I was full share deckhand then.

12:19

**MB:** What do you think the future of the industry is gonna be like?

**MC:** It's hard to say. At times I see I think I see where it's coming back. And then at times I see where it's we think it's going away again. But I mean it's all just gonna get down to it where only the tough gon' survive some gonna be a die hard that most of you just like me that's what I do just what I'm going to do till the Lord calls me home. I'm gonna do this. Regardless. I just love it.

**MB:** How do you think fishing is doing right now?

**MC:** Well, right now it's sad. I mean, well, at this moment, I mean there's nothing going on because we're not you know, the last couple of years. Three years, we've been very very blessed with a lot of row shrimp. A lot of people says oh, there weren't no shrimp, there weren't no shrimp. No, there was a little bit of shrimp. But you had to get out there and work. You aint gon' make one or two days and go home for four or five days and come back make one or two days. You got to put your time in. I mean a lot of people don't do that no more. You know they come out or make two or three drags, oh there ain't no shrimp they go home. But like I say, we stay. When I leave here 25/30/35 days, I tie back up. We work everyday and I did say day, I don't say night 'cuz we don't clock. That hurts our industry more than anything is the clocking part of it. They shut the nighttime trawlin' down would be so much better off.

**MB:** Do you have any children or anything like that and would you want them to be part of the fishing industry?

**MC:** Well, my daughter was. My daughter rode up on the boat with me for, I don't know 10 or 12 years. Every time she got out of school. She was on the boat with me. She worked. The guys used to tease me all the time to say she could drive straighter than I could. She, I mean she'd drive the boat as well as I would. I worked Key West we want to move bottom. I'd sent her to bed earlier in the morning so she'd get you know, because in Key West we work in the dark. So I get her up we take up an' dump out. I'd go to bed she'd drive me on to where I'm going. She was, like I say she started coming fishin' me probably she was 10/11 years old.

**MB:** Would you want her to stay in the industry in the future?

**MC:** I woulda liked to see it but she's got children. I never got to see my children grow up, i stayed gone and I don't want to see her have to do that. I mean I got my son in laws he wanted to do it my daughter's like no, daddy stay gone too much you know we want to see our children grow up together. So like say it'd been nice but you can't make it going in and out everyday I made it don't work like that no more I mean it's just too many restrictions to me, regulation, fuel cost too much. And like I say the crews you go out today and come back in in the morning you want to go back your crew might not be there so you stuck at the dock you missed a day and you actually go for two or three days that's why we stayed away we do.

15:57

**MB:** What do you think retirement would look like for fisher?

**MC:** Fishermen don't retire.

**MB:** Could we go back and talk about some other boats you've been on? I know you mentioned a bunch of them earlier. Could we talk about your experiences on those?

**SS:** Redemption and Forgiven?

**MC:** Redemption, I wasn't on. The Forgiven, I run the Forgiven for six years.

**MB:** What was that like? Much different than now or about the same?

**MC:** Bout' the same. I mean we do basically the same thing. Like I say the same man owned the boat. I mean, nothing changed. I'm still in the same place and just you know, the Forgiven it was kind of my favorite boat I guess. I mean, she got a lot of attention a lot of people, the name a lot a lot of pictures, you see that, I mean I see pictures all over the place of that boat hanging in different places. And my daughter's telling me all the time daddy you shoulda never got off cause they don't take pictures of your boat no more. But Forgiven was a good boat. I mean, we fought a lot of bad weather. I think the year I got on the Forgiven, Hurricane Sandy came so that was what would that be 2012/13, was like I say nine years ago from today. So that would put it what 11, no 11'd be 20. Anyway, Hurricane Sandy came the year I got the Forgiven. I left out of Bayou La Batre, Alabama coming around to the East Coast and we got down toward Fort Myers and we kept watching the weather. And at first we thought Sandy was gonna come on into the Gulf but it didn't. It came up the East Coast and we got to Fort Myers between Fort Myers and Key West, we had to slow down to let Sandy go by so we could come out of Key West and come behind but me and my Spanish guy it just me, him and my dog. We fought that weather for an extra two days. I mean it was horrible. But uh we made it. I mean we've always, I mean you pay

attention to the weather when you're out there a lot of people you know they take a lot of chances but I don't see it no, I done get this old just for to watch the weather I mean I can go somewhere and lay up a day on the boat. I ain't coming in, I go lay up in the river like I said we got a bad storm comin' I go to the bottom of sound and drop anchor and ride it out. We ain't goin' to the dock.

**MB:** What kind of boat was that?

**MC:** Steel boat. She was a she was a 87 Five. She was built in 2001. Lady Denise was built in 1999.

**MB:** Is it still running today?

**MC:** Yes. It's in Key West.

**MB:** Who's the captain? Do you know?

**MC:** Brian. Brian McCutcheon.

19:41

**MB:** Same name? The boat.

**MC:** Same name, Forgiven like I say my boss still owns it. We got three boats. Mr. Nixon, he's a very very good guy. Like I say him and his dad's probably second, third generation shrimpers. He shrimped his whole life and then he said he had enough of it. Something was tellin' him he needed start preaching so he went to minister school, become a preacher still got his boats.

**MB:** Do you have a lot of boat superstitions?

**MC:** Superstitions you know a lot of people talk about that 'bout bad luck I'm gonna ask you one question about bad luck and you tell me if I'm able to get up in the morning and put my shoes on how can I have bad luck? I don't believe in that.

**MB:** So no superstition. Okay, what kind of boat was the other one you mentioned? It was

**MC:** The Black Beard. It was a fiberglass 68 foot owned by Charlie Phillips which owns all this business right here. I worked with Charlie for a little while for I don't know how many years, it was a good boat.

**MB:** When's it built?

**MC:** I want to say probably the early 80s, maybe late 70s. Well, it's still around, I mean I think it's up in North Carolina now it burnt right here at this dock there was like three boats burn up right here. Electrical cord. I don't know if y'all talked to Mr. John McIver.

**MB:** We talked about him with somebody else.



**MC:** Okay. Well one of the boats was his. Like I say you wouldn't believe but in this river right here. Looks like Captain Dave coming in there. Back in and not very many years ago. There was probably 100 boats in here. Between that dock down there, that you see this all abandoned, nothing there and the more this dock right here, Skinner's Dock around the corner. Then you had Wards dock.

*[Shuffling]*

**MB:** Where were we?

**SS:** Docks?

**MB:** Yes, the three docks.

**MC:** Used to be three docks, Jean Brandon had a dock down there and I forget how many, but like I say between game Jean Brandon's, Phillip's Seafood, Miss Skinners and Wards there was 100 boats in this creek. Now there's probably 10.

**MB:** Why do you think that is?

**MC:** Well, A lot of boats faded out. I mean with the price of shrimp, price of upkeep, kind of put everybody out of business. And then the older guys, they were tired of going. They wasn't nobody to fill their shoes. I remember when I was coming up as a little boy, I looked at all the older guys as the old man, now they looking up at me as an old man. Like Capt. Truc, he was one of them like I say Mr. Dave Reid, Mike Palmer, that'd be the one y'all need to interview. Phew. Bless your soul, you don't know what might come out of his mouth. That's Mack, Capt. Mack, yeah his boat was named the Captain Mack. Very good fella.

*[showing pictures]*

**MB:** Do you know what kind of boat that was?

**MC:** That was 73 foot desco. Wood boat. She was probably built in the seventies.

24:22

**SS:** The boats that you own now or that you work on now, where those new when you got them or where they previously owned?

**MC:** They were owned by other people. I mean, they're still building new boats today. But they're not building many. I mean to have a boat built today is an ungodful amount of money. I mean you're looking at \$3 million to build a boat today. I mean, I think replacement on my boat is like three seven. You know to come up with the new standards that you know that we like to do away with your ice, you need freezers, I mean all you know I mean it just goes on and on and

on. But we were talking about building another boat, a new boat but about got my boss talked out, we don't need another boat. We need some more help. And that'd be the only reason I wouldn't want him to build another boat because we can't find nobody to run it and then you can't find nobody to work on it so why have it?

**SS:** Do you know the history of the boats that you have now?

**MC:** I know the Forgiven was the Tide, it was the Crimson Tide and I'm trying to think the name before when she was built new the name before we got it was the Crimson Tide. It was owned by man out of Bayou La Batre, Bobby Debany and the one I got now, the Lady Denise when she was built her original name was the Ring of Gold. And how it got that name was an anniversary. He bought a ring of gold and get to his wife on the anniversary or whatever Mr. Zurlock out of Alabama. But there was two of em boats I got the Ring of Gold and kept with it more down in Fort Pierce has got the Band of Gold .

**SS:** Do you know who was running that boat?

**MC:** I don't know if it was Buster. And I think the Band of Gold is the 50 year anniversary or whatever or I got them backwards or something but it's something to do with anniversaries and marriages, thats how to get the Ring of Gold and the Band of Gold. 25 years or 50 years or whatever.

**SS:** Does the way that people name boats, is that interesting to you? Do you have any fun stories about that?

**MC:** No, like I say a lot of people change the name boats right away, some boats I wished I'd seen them stay the same. I mean the name of the boat, was the name of the boat, leave it alone but a lot of people like everybody's gonna you know, somebody's got a new idea we go back to your superstitious. Oh it's bad luck to change name on the boat. I mean like it's I feel like if I get up in the morning put my shoes on by myself ain't no way I had bad luck that day.

**SS:** So you said your boats in for maintenance right now. Do you do that a lot? Do you do it yourself?

28:12

**MC:** Well, like I say right now we're on Tim Jimerson's shipyard over there in Bayou La Batre, Alabama. He built the boat and we're doing some upgrades, so it was a lot easier to let him do it because he knows the structure of the boat so he can put everything back the way it's supposed to be and where it goes and he don't have to go guessing where everything's adding go in and pull

the blueprints so here's this this and this you know, I go here so that's why we carry back to him. But we generally, we'll haul a boat every three years just to clean the bottom and you know inspect the bottom and make sure everything's good and put zinc on it because like you say with steel electrolysis, you know eat the steel so you keep plenty of zinc on 'em.

**SS:** What are you fishing for on these boats?

**MC:** Shrimp. Rock shrimp, pink shrimp, brown shrimp, white shrimp.

**SS:** Have you ever fished for anything else in your lifetime?

**MC:** I was probably 16 or 17 I went up north one time up there what they call flyfish we was up there with an older guy named Bill Joiner we was catching beeliners and stuff like that. We tried the scallopin' I didn't care much for it.

**SS:** Is that harder?

**MC:** Yeah, like I say, It's got more danger in it. I guess you could say I just didn't like it.

**MB:** Have you seen many injuries in your time?

**MC:** Oh, yeah.

**MB:** Related to fishing? How did that go?

**MC:** Well, like I said you got moving parts, you got people. You got accidents. I mean, I've seen them wrapped up in the winch, lose an arm. Luckily no lives. But you know, fingers, like I said I ain't never had anybody work for me that left here but I mean, you know there've been broken arms and feet and fingers and stuff like that. I mean, that happens.

**MB:** Have you had injuries related?

**MC:** Oh, yeah, we all get them. I mean, I got a knee right now that's messed up. We just pull an anchor one morning when I was probably in my 20s and a block come loose and hit me in the kneecap. Leg proolly swole up big as a basketball didn't go to the doctor but nowadays I feel it. I mean, you get older you feel old and you don't go to, like I say I broke that finger there proolly six months ago you see us all crooked there never went to the doctor or get it fixed just keep going. I mean but ain't something life or death, we're pretty much ride it out. I mean, just too much aggravation to go in to have something done. Lot of time it could be according to where you're at sometimes we could be 36/48 hours from anywhere. So you got to either call the Coast Guard if your life threatened, you just call the Coast Guard let them come get them or what but you know, we had a guy last January, my wife might still have the pictures of that. But uh, he had to come get him off the boat, he had a seizure. He seized out for six hours. But he never came to the

whole time before the Coast Guard got him off the boat. They came and it took them I don't know hour and a half or so to even get on the boat. They was all I don't know if you get different outfits, different places. I mean, the Coast Guard is something that we got to have and I appreciate em every day and I thank everyone one of em that ever boards my boat they write me 57 tickets, I still thank em doing his job. I mean if he's writin' me a ticket for some safety violation, I ain't doing my job. If its safety it may save me or somebody that works with me so it don't bother me and like I say to everyone one of em I'm gonna tell you I tell them thank you thank you for doing your job thank you for helping us so but did this time that it was kind of a unexperienced I guess I could say and they come to couldn't get the guy off the boat couldn't get on the boat I was running around freaking out because like I said this guys been seizing out for hours I'm worried about brain damage you know down the road. But he came out good I mean everything was fine he didn't come back to work he said he had enough of me.

**MB:** Have there been other times you had to call Coast Guard?

**MC:** Oh well nothing no not really. I mean I might have called him for other people or something you know trying to help somebody else out but most time you know we kind of pay attention it's just it's tough. Like I say, but we've been very fortunate that's 'bout been the only time I ever had anybody took off the boat for you know safety for sickness or whatever.

33:54

**MB:** How 'bout fun experiences you've had while fishing?

**MC:** Always fun, we find something fun to do every day. I mean you make a joke or riddle or just picking on somebody you know you're just always cutting up. Always you know cutting up one another, everybody's you know all the time joking around just trying to keep you know keep your morale up you get somebody don't want to cut up, joke around don't take long, that little old 100 foot boat gets about 10 foot long because all you feel is pressure. So we always cut up, do things to you know help one another out that's what we had you know that's what we get there. Try to make livin' let's get what we got to do and let's go home. But yeah, we have a lot of fun.

**MB:** Are there any specific stories that really stick out to you?

**MC:** Nah, cause I mean it's all, I mean theres different things and different places. I say I remember one year we went up Savannah River we tied up on River Street for a storm. I was on a boat called the Pay Dirt then.

**SS:** What's the name of it?

**MC:** Pay Dirt. That was a good old boat, it was a fiberglass over wood. She was built in the 70s. I had my daughters, my wife, our whole family, we was all you know we was all down there on River Street and all the northerners they want know, what you know what kind is this, but you know never answered so many crazy questions, but you try it sometimes you can be a little smart tail with em ya know have a little fun. Like we was in Key West one year, in there tied up in Stock Island and they were, the dock people were harvesting lobster. They were breaking them, you know? And the guy's like, what do y'all doing with them heads throwing them back over as you go cause you got hurry up get em back in the water so they can grow a new tail. I mean, you got to have fun every now and then.

**MB:** You mentioned earlier that someone doesn't get along. It can be real awkward. What was it like working so closely with your crew and living closely with them for you?

**MC:** Like I say I don't, all my guys, they know when they come with me we there to do one thing. Make this trip, do our job, do your job. And let's go home. We don't have time for drama. It don't happen cause we get very much, I'll bring it to the dock and you go do your drama somewhere else. We're not having it on this boat. I mean, I don't let mine, my problems at home. Don't come to my job. Because these guys, I don't need to make them suffer because of what I'm going through. And I tell them the same thing, you don't usually, your problems, leave them we get back you deal with them. Whatever you got to do, but we don't have that. I mean, all my guys, we get along good. I got one been with me 14 years so he rides them pretty hard. He's pretty tough. He's my deck boss, Joe. Down there, I tie up here at Sapelo Shrimp company and the guys round there called Joe the terminator cause he'll kill two or three people, thats working hammer knocker.

**MB:** What's his last name?

**MC:** His name is Jose Valetine, Voletero, he's from El Salvador. He comes every year in April and goes home every year at Christmas.

38:05

**MB:** Do you think most other crews, have a similar..

**MC:** Some. I mean somewhat the thing of it's a lot of these guys you're steadily picking up a man I mean, last year I probably have more crew trouble last year than I've ever had. I mean generally I got the same guys all the time. But here lately I mean and then some of these guys tries to go in and out I mean, it gets tough on em. I know it does when you get a guy that don't

know the program, everybody don't do the same on every boat. It's not the same. Everybody does one little thing different. And it throws the new man off. He used to going this-a-way with this captain right here and he comes over here and things got bit changed just a little bit. Sometimes you watch him or hear him out how they doin' something and you know maybe and then you'd like, well not gonna to work on here. We'll do it this way, the way we've been doing it. If I think it's a better way, I consider it don't bother me. But if I see my ways better we're gonna do it my way.

**SS:** You said earlier that you've changed a lot in the past 10 years, can you talk about that?

**MC:** Well that might not be for the good part.

**SS:** You don't have to.

**MC:** I used to be a wild man. I done calm down here. Got old I guess.

**SS:** And then you also talked about the weather. Have you seen a lot of changes in the weather in the past few years?

**MC:** You know, it goes and comes. I mean, seems I will get more storms now than we used to get on the East Coast I mean we used to not get them like that. But then you got to look over where the storms come from, you know a lot of people tried to put it off you know it's all because of what's going on over here what I call it, a trying to think of the name that they get they're using about the storms and this but it may not be what's going on on our country that may be where the storms are coming from. You know what's changed over there? What sent that storm this way, why didn't it go the other way? Or did that man up there say that storm needs to go on the East Coast it don't need to go on the West Coast. I mean, a lot of this they're putting off here I don't think, I don't believe in none of that. I mean, we don't have the same weather we used to have. You don't have the same children today you used to have. You look back in the old days when your children was coming up, children was coming up in the old days. They're not the same as they are today. I mean, everything's changed. Why? They changed a lot of our lives the government don't let you do what you used to do to your children. You can't spank your children no more, they don't want you to do it. It's wrong. When I come up, you've done something wrong you didn't get home to get a spanking at home you got a spankin where you done it at. Whoever was there caught you doing it spank ya then you get another one. It taught me not to do it. So you you know you look at it and you got to look at things in a different perspective. Things is not the same everywhere anymore. Children's not raised the same. The lands not being tended the same,

the rivers is not being tended the same. I mean, nothings the same no more. Everything's a change. They want to change everything. Let things go back where we used to be. You won't have as many problems I promise.

42:07

**SS:** Do you have any recommendations for the future commercial fishing?

**MC:** Like I say I would, I would love to see the nighttime trawling stop. You know, I think it hurts, I know for sure it hurts our industry. I mean the 24/7 I mean, do one or the other. Either work in the day and sleep at night or work in the night sleep in the day, you can't work 24 hours a day, no man. That's why you have a lot of accidents, you take a lot of these boats and come they 24/7, they don't ever shut them off. Well them guys after about 10 days going around the clock I mean you get two or three hours here two or three hours there, their mind ain't sane. Shut that off, let that man get him six/eight hours of sleep, get his mind back right, I mean I think a lot of the stuff to go this is happening today is on kind of people's tired. They're not paying attention. Man I see more and more boat accidents every day, boat running into one another I mean I'm not saying I'm perfect I'm not saying it won't happen because it can I mean it's very easily done. But I think a lot of this needs to be addressed a lot, you know the 24 hour trawlin' needs to stop.

**SS:** Do you think that could have anything to do with the drugs and alcohol you said that was a problem?

**MC:** Very possible. Lot of these guys aint going fishing without it, a lot of these guys won't go out with me cause I don't carry beer. We leave that dock, we go into work we don't drink. We go home, you get off this boat, go to your house, you do what you want to do, I don't care, but the day you come back here you have your head ready to go to work and that's what we go in to do. A lot of people who with me, ya won't let me carry no beer no aint carry no beer aint carry no alcohol we, I mean 20 years ago I was all game for it I'd done it all it aint no life in that.

**SS:** We have alot of people talk about sharks has that been a problem.

**MC:** The worst they've ever been. Why? This be a good one for y'all, go talk to your NOAA and asked 'em why the sharks is like they are. Number one you can't catch them no more, can't harvest em. You can't sell but I mean they're gonna say well you can still catch them, thats true you can but you can't catch but so many and the number that they give you is not enough money to do it. Because you're gonna go backwards. But the sharks is unreal. I got some pictures.

**SS:** Yeah,I'd love to see the pictures of you, your uncle and your dad as well if you have them.  
45:14

**MC:** Yeah. I like to see the shark fishing open back up. I mean, they stopped them from selling the fins and that's where the money was made. So now they can't do that no more.

**SS:** What did they use the fins for?

**MC:** Was it medicine? They send them overseas. Did they make medicine or something? But I really, I can't, I ain't never been into the sharks to start with but.

**SS:** Shrimper pull in money instead. Is that you? [referring to a picture Mr. Collins showed]

**MC:** Yes, I was in 1976.

**SS:** And he's handing you money?

**MC:** Well, it was the money we had. We found it on deck. A helicopter crashed off of Sapelo and we seen it when the crash and we seen it when the people got picked up. And that money was in the water. So we found it in our net. I found all of them on deck, showed him to to my Uncle Joe.

**SS:** That's your Uncle Joe?

**MC:** Yeah he passed away a couple of years ago, but like I say that was in 1976.

**SS:** You ever find anything else strange in your nets?

**MC:** Well out there red shrimpin' in the deep deep water. You catch hospital waste. As in needles and IV stuff. I mean just bags and bags of it. Well how does that get there?

**SS:** You have a picture from when you started shrimping?

**MC:** Oh like I said i'd have to look.

**SS:** That's okay.

**MC:** Yeah I don't have none in here but here you go. [shows a picture]

**SS:** Oh wow that's a lot of sharks. Lets see, 9 or 10. And this is next to your boat?

**MC:** Yeah,this is last year.

**SS:** And none of these are dolphins.

**MC:** No.

**SS:** That's a little scary. What did you do?

**MC:** Ain't nothing you can do. I mean they eat our nets up, I mean they wipe us out here's a little something I caught last year aint nobody ever figured it out what it was or why it got like that.

**SS:** Oh its yellow.



**MC:** Caught that down there off of Fernandina.

**SS:** Yellow shrimp.

**MC:** And again I was, I'm not gonna go into that, I'm gonna save that. But that's how you see different pictures of it.

**SS:** Do you don't have any ideas how it came that way?

**MC:** No I never got to figure that out. I called several people and nobody comes to really took an interest to come get it so, I guess it really didn't matter. There's a shark can't even land a fish that's king fish, or what's left of one. See if I had a good picture of my boat. I shoulda brought my grandson to operate my telephone for me.

**SS:** Its okay I don't know how to use mine either.

**MC:** There's actually them pickin up my boat hauling it out on the shipyard.

**SS:** The Lady Denise from Southport, Florida. That's a big boat.

**MC:** Its owned by Geralyn Denise Miller. Here's a picture of a little bit of shrimp.

**SS:** That's a little bit? Is that regular for you?

**MC:** I can't answer that. Here's a little bit more.

**SS:** Oh my God.

**MC:** That's up there in uh, that was just this year, that was recent the end of last year. I did become a dentist last year on a trip, last trip of the year. Had toothache two, three days God it wouldn't go away, wouldn't go away. I tried to use a string and pull it didn't work. I went got the needle nose, don't have it no more.

**SS:** You pulled your own tooth out on the boat? Did you want to go to a dentist?

**MC:** I didn't have time.

**SS:** The only reason you didn't go was because of time?

**MC:** You see my toes? That was my toes. The knife, the needle nose. Yeah, we, like I said shrimpin' is pretty tough.

52:25

**SS:** Do you have anything else you want to talk about?

**MC:** Like I say, I'd just like to see more I guess people come back to the industry. It would be nice, I like to see shrimpin' keep going. I mean if we don't have fresh shrimp for the people to eat what they gonna eat, what's places like this gonna do? I mean they buy imports regardless I mean you know, when you can't get shrimp, you gon' get it from somewhere else. I just like to

see the industry come back, I like to see to some of the regulations lifted, you know put the people put the shark fishermen back to work that be one. You know lot of the net bans and stuff. I like to see you know, some of the laws enforced a little better than what they do. I mean they don't enforce a lot of laws like they should I don't think but all in all, I just thought I'd like to see it you know, I like to see my grandson and get in it I mean he like kind of likes it kind of don't kind of likes it kind of don't but -

**SS:** Do you bring him out?

**MC:** He goes with me, he's like say he started going with me when he was five in the summertime. He been with me, he quit one year second day out I mean quit. Come up there and sit in a chair next to me said poppa, I said what buddy, I quit take me home, I said what I said what? I said we just come out son we was out of Brunswick, I mean it wasn't nothin to run him back. I said we just come out so and I said we got to make trip. He said poppa, I quit take me home. I was like I'll take you in a little while. Poppa lemme hold your phone. He called his grandma. Grandma will you go get me some gas for my four wheeler poppa's bringin me home in a little while, I'll be home. So we get all the way into Brunswick and get his stuff and I say all the way I'm 45/50 minutes I go in there tie up . So I got his stuff gathered up, walkin him up to his grandma and get put him in a car we get about halfway there. He stops. He said poppa, I say what buddy? He said you gon' pay me today. I said son, you know what? He said what?, I said you quit, you don't get paid. I'll tell Grandma. [Laughter] But all my daughter's, like I say my baby daughter really didn't like it. But my oldest daughter, she did. Sometimes they didn't want nothing off the boat but the money but they got papa too, sometimes.

**MB:** Well, I think that's about it unless you have anything else.

**MC:** I think that'll about do it.