William Rowe: Let's see what else you want to hear.

Carrie Kline: First, I want to hear you say your name. Say, "My name is…"

WR: My name is William Rowe.

CK: Your birth date?

WR: August 23rd, 1924. [laughter]

CK: Today must be already the 10th of December 2003.

WR: This door right here that you see on our side of the boat is a cargo door and that's the only way you had to get aboard the boat. You go in that cargo door and had all the cattle to the bow. All the cargo, horses, and so forth and so on [inaudible] that. They walk up a big set of steps. They will open a saloon and that was a big pot of water. They had a big grid, big anonymous steam stove, steam furnace in the middle of it for the heat. The rooms were off on the side. That was all I know about the steamboat the way it was designed and so on inside. As Frances said, I hit myself in stomach with an axe. I was about five years old back then. A great big blood shot found on it and set up bursitis and I was suffering. I was in pain. So, he called (Dr. Hubbard?) and Dr. Hubbard came and look and said, "Well, he's got to go to Baltimore to be operated on." The same boat just come in and left him. So, he put me in a car and rushed me out to Westham and got to the motel in Westham. Frances took me on a long dock. She and I walked it over. My father carried them out on a dock to the boat. We got on the boat already. I said, "I've got on a boat all right." We went to Baltimore. Of course, it was rough as a [inaudible]. The wind was blowing up a gale and were rough as could be. The boat would sway and would kill me. So, we got to cross to Potomac River and we got to Baltimore all right. We made it to Baltimore the next morning. It would take about four or five, three or four days to get to Baltimore by car from here. I mean, to get to Richmond because you had to go across swamps and mud old and Rappahannock River, pulled by our houses on a rope, and stuff like that. It would take you two or three days and we get to Baltimore overnight. So, that's what we did and got to Baltimore and all right and then came on back home. That was my experience on steamboat. Let's see what else you want to hear.

CK: First, I want to hear you say your name. Say, "My name is…"

WR: My name is William Rowe.

CK: Your birth date?

WR: August 23rd, 1924. [laughter]

CK: Today must be already the 10th of December 2003. You are still in Irvington.

WR: Yes. My father was here before me and his father before him.

CK: It is the 11th of December.

Michael Kline: He was telling you how many generations back.

WR: My father was here, I guess, his father and probably his father was here. They bought this piece property I live on now from Peter Chase, Frances' great uncle. He owned that property on that point all the way up to almost tied to the gate. He owned all that property and he sold it off. He sold that solid piece of property to my father, I mean, to my great uncle for two hundred dollars. [laughter] He had about four or five acres he bought for two hundred dollars and I'm still living on same piece of property.

CK: What is the first thing you remember about the steamboats?

WR: The steamboat? Well, the first thing I remember was going down and watching him come in and being on a dock when it came in. Of course, in later years, I guess, I was some ten years over, I guess, taking people's luggage up and getting five or ten cents or something like that for doing it. Let me see, what do you want to know now?

CK: Just the first thing you remember about it.

WR: I remember going down and I stand on a dock and all like that. When they would blow the whistle, I would leave. It would scare me to death. [laughter] My gosh, it's ever loud. That sets about all I remember about it. Of course, I remember the people coming down. The men, a lot, a lot of men in Irving, well, I wouldn't say a lot of men, five or six or something like that, would come down and eat supper on the boat. They have excellent food, good food. They would come down and eat supper on the boat and they would get off in whims. When the boat start to leave, they would get off and have a ride home and they see their spouse all day.

CK: What did they have for supper?

WR: I don't remember what it was. It was really good.

CK: What kind of food did they serve?

WR: I guess, just regular food. I mean, it wasn't special in food line, but it was good cooking, good cooking.

CK: Just tell me about being in that dining room, who served you, and what it looked like.

WR: The dining room was on the stern of the ship, the back of the ship. It was a nice dining room and I see the head servers come around and then serve you and stuff like that. It was really a quite occasion, a quite occasion, to go down and eat on the boat. [laughter]

CK: Talk about what the servants looked like.

WR: The waiters and so on? Well, they were dressed in white uniforms and come around you.

They were dressed up nice. That's first class. They had a lot of men. A lot of men wait on tables. Not many women are working on tables.

CK: On my mind, the tables are set up nicely.

WR: Yes, they were. The table is set up nice and everything was first class as far as I could see. I did enjoy watching.

MK: Is the white table clothes linen tablecloths?

WR: Yes.

MK: The whole thing?

WR: Yes, sir.

CK: What is that now?

WR: They're linen tablecloths and they were really fit and it didn't cost too much. I think for about fifty cents, I think, you could get some supper and a good meal. I don't think it charged anything. I don't know now about this, but I don't think they charge anything to go from Irving to Weems on the boat.

Frances Simmons: We ran through check. It was three dollars.

CK: So, you did this sometimes?

WR: Yes, I did it once, one time.

CK: One time?

WR: Yes.

CK: Was it a special occasion that caused you to get on the boat?

WR: No indeed. Some men were down on the dock and [inaudible] my brothers and Walter Jones and a bunch of them. They asked me to go along with them and said they'd bring me home and all I care. I said, "All right." I was just a kid so I went.

CK: Just a kid? Just a young boy?

WR: Yes.

CK: How old were you then?

WR: I expect, I guess, I was six, seven years old.

CK: What else did you see on that boat?

WR: Well, it was a very nice room we had when I was going to the hospital in Baltimore and it was very nice occasions. My mother slept in lower bunks and my father slept on the bottom bunk and get ahead with me in the bed with him because I was suffering that day. It was all right. It was good. I mean, as good as steamboat could be. I mean, you didn't have anything like running water, hot and cold running water, and a shower and stuff like that. It didn't have a bathroom and all like that.

CK: No bathroom?

WR: No. They had a wash station and a wash basin in the room. The bathroom was out in a public bathroom down the hall.

CK: For bathing?

WR: No, you did the bathing right there in the wash basin.

CK: So, you go down the hall?

WR: Yes, you go down the hall if you're going to the bathroom.

CK: So, they have a big hallway?

WR: Yes. It was a big saloon, a great big saloon. I guess it's called a saloon. What would you call it, Frances? Saloon?

CK: So, it is called a saloon?

FS: Yes, saloon.

WR: Yes.

CK: What is a saloon exactly?

WR: Well, I don't know.

FS: It's the size of a hall. They served beer on it, didn't they?

WR: Yes.

FS: You see, a prohibition was in effect and you couldn't serve alcohol except on the water. So, you could drink on steamboats.

WR: That's why a lot of men go there to eat because you could drink.

CK: Say that again? What did you say?

WR: I said, that's why a lot of men went there to eat on a boat because they could have their drinks right there when they were eating.

FS: Yes. So, you can drink.

CK: How did it work then? How did all that work then?

WR: Well, you couldn't drink on land. There's probation time. You couldn't drink on the shore. But in the public waters, you could drink. [laughter] That's the way that works.

FS: That's why they were called a saloon because they had alcohol.

CK: Were your eyes open as a young boy?

WR: [laughter] Yes. They were indeed. I learned a lot.

CK: Tell me what it was like, what you saw, how you felt about it. [laughter]

WR: Well, I was kind of scared first, but I got over that in a while. They've gone on all right.

CK: Scared?

WR: Huh?

CK: Scared?

WR: Yes. Well, I'm scared first, yes. I've been scared first, the first time I went on the boat. But after I went on two, three times, I got a hold and do it and I go along with rest of them.

FS: Tell them about going to camp in Lake Tobago. You went by steamboat up to Boston?

WR: Yes. I went to Camp Tobago in Boston, I mean, in Portland, Maine. I was eleven, twelve years old for summer and I went up on a steamboat to Boston. Now, how long that took? I don't remember how long it took.

FS: Several days?

WR: Huh?

FS: Several days?

WR: Yes, several days.

CK: Talk about that trip.

WR: Well, I don't really remember too much about the trip. I didn't want to go to start with it. I was a little bit mad because they're making me go. That's all I remember.

FS: My husband went along with you.

WR: Yes, that's right.

FS: What's his name?

WR: Jack went with me, her husband. I don't really remember. It's been a long time ago. That's a long time ago.

CK: What would a boy have done on the steamboat on those days?

WR: I don't know. I really don't know. I was miserable. I was miserable the whole time. That's all I can tell you about it.

CK: Were you ill?

WR: No, I wasn't ill. I was just as fine as I could be, but I was miserable. I was just aggravated to death. [laughter]

FS: Obviously, you didn't want to go to camp.

WR: Huh?

FS: Obviously, you didn't want to go to camp.

WR: I didn't.

CK: But you loved it after you got there?

WR: Yes. After I got there, yes, everything was fine. Yes, everything was fine after I got there. But the trip up there, I don't remember too much about it.

CK: Well, let us hear about the trip back then.

WR: Well, the trip back, I'm afraid it is happening. We had a good time. I was playing on the boat and stuff like that. I remember some joker wanted to fill me onboard, pick me up and held me over the side of the boat. I said, "He's going to drop me." [laughter] Some people will play with little kids, you don't like it. [laughter] So, that was all I remember about that.

CK: So, you played on the boat?

WR: Yes. I was all over the boat. I was all over it.

FS: Did you go up in the captain's corner?

WR: Yes.

CK: Take me all over that boat. Let us startup in the captain's quarters.

WR: The pilot house, yes. Well, I had the [inaudible] and things like that and I was looking at everything and I like it.

CK: What did you see from up there?

WR: Well, you can see pretty good. You can see pretty good. I never thought that I would be steering the ship and maybe I never thought I'd be shipped up in the pilot house upstairs, but I was.

CK: Who was up in the pilot house that day or that trip?

WR: No, I don't remember. The captain was there and I guess, a couple other men. I'm guessing, the pilot and so on.

CK: Talk about how they looked.

WR: Huh?

CK: Talk about how they looked.

WR: Well, they're dressed in uniform. They were dressed in uniform. Nice, nice.

CK: What kind?

WR: Well, the captain had on a blue uniform with a blue captain's hat.

FS: Better uniforms?

WR: Yes.

CK: Well, pretend I cannot see and tell me all about them.

WR: [laughter] That's about all I know about it. I mean, if it's a long time ago, then I really can't tell you exactly what I know about it, but that's about it.

CK: You see some brass buttons and white cap?

WR: Yes, they sure did.

CK: Well, let us travel the rest of the boat. As if I was standing next to you, take me all around it. We are leaving the pilot house now. What else was there on the boat?

WR: Well, we go to the pilot house, and then you come back and head on the deck up. I never went up on a deck or a top deck too much. But I guess, that was a deck you could lay in the sun and sit and get dark. But that was about it on the boat. I mean, I didn't see much on the boat. All there was a saloon and a captain's quarters and the dining room and stuff like that and engine room. When you're going back to that dining room, you could look down and see the engine room. That was quite a sight for me to see. All of brass and shiny things and all really amazed me.

CK: Had a lot of big machines?

WR: Yes, big machines. I can't explain to you like she did about the threshold. I can't explain that well.

CK: Tell me what it sounded like in there.

WR: Well, it was a clanging and banging and rambling and so on.

CK: Was there a lot of noise generally on the boat?

WR: Well, that engine room, there was terrific noise, yes. You couldn't even hear anybody talk.

FS: They use bells to signal.

WR: Yes.

CK: What is that now?

WR: Huh?

FS: Tell her they use bells to signal.

WR: Yes.

FS: Tell her.

WR: Well, they had bells to signal go ahead and fast and reverse and neutral. I think one bell was to go ahead and two bells was reverse, four bells for neutral. So, they had different systems like that.

CK: So, where did you find these bells?

WR: They were round bells. They were made upon a wall. They were on the wall over the

engine room and then above that.

CK: That is the way the engine room communicate to the pilot?

WR: Yes, that's right.

CK: How do you say that?

WR: Well, that's the way the engine room communicated with the pilot, by bells. It was by bells.

CK: So, there were people working in this clanging engine house?

WR: Yes. A lot of people are there now, feeding the furnace and no one like it. Shoving the coal on the furnace and that was a spectacle time for me and adore this as well.

CK: Let us see how wide would that be.

WR: Probably about four-foot square door and they will shovel the coal in that a great big fire now and the boiler you see up above it.

FS: To run by steam. To produce the steam.

WR: Yes, that's right. Everything was run by steam. Everything on the boat was run by steam.

FS: So, these are all White people then working in there?

WR: No, no, no, no, there's a lot of colored people working, a lot of colored people.

CK: Doing particular jobs they did?

WR: Well, I remember a colored man shoveled coal in there. I saw him. He was shoveling coal in the furnace and different jobs like that.

CK: How fast did he have to go with shoveling that?

WR: How fast he have to shovel? Well, they were steady shoveling. I never saw him stop. I guess, it's tough some time, but I don't know I never saw him.

CK: All the time shoveling?

WR: Yes. I guess, it was to go on in shifts and so on.

CK: It is a lot to keep that boat powered, I guess?

WR: Yes, that's right. They're to keep putting steam up, putting steam.

CK: So, they let a little boy sneak around and see something else?

WR: They weren't supposed to, but I ask on Bob.

CK: You what?

WR: Ask Bob.

MK: You know how boys are.

WR: Yes, that's right. That's right.

CK: Now I want to hear about life in the saloon.

WR: Well, there were a lot of people sitting around drinking and just there messing around.

CK: Well, you must have seen some carrying on you have never seen before.

WR: Well, yes, I did one time, yes. [laughter]

CK: Is that as far as we are going to go with that?

WR: Yes, that's right. Yes, I think about the stuff now.

FS: Was there a lot of smoking?

WR: Huh?

FS: Were people smoking a lot?

WR: Yes.

FS: What did they smoke?

WR: Cigars.

FS: Cigars?

CK: What is this now?

WR: Smoke cigars.

CK: Talk about how that room smelled.

WR: I don't remember that.

FS: Because once they've been on sea, you don't have smells. They don't stay with you. The wind blows them away. [laughter]

CK: Can you say that?

WR: What?

CK: Do you agree with what she just said?

WR: What did you say?

FS: On the water, the wind blows the smells away.

WR: Yes. The wind blows everything away. Nothing would smell really. The wind, you see, takes everything away.

CK: What this saloon looked like?

WR: There's a picture in Jack's book on the saloon. It's a picture somewhere.

CK: I think maybe that is what this is, but what I wanted to hear you talk about it.

FS: Is this way you remembered? Look. Describe it.

WR: That's it.

FS: Describe it.

WR: That's it exactly.

FS: Describe it.

WR: You come up the steps right here and you see this big steam red arrow. That's what I was talking about. You see that right there and it got seats up and down and so on and rooms on the side.

CK: Rooms?

WR: The state rooms.

FS: Did the state rooms open off of the saloon?

WR: Yes, the state rooms open off of the saloon.

FS: How in the world did your mother stand that?

CK: That is a very good question. [laughter]

WR: I don't know.

FS: There was no alcohol in this home or anything like that.

MK: She was not a saloon type.

CK: So, a self-respecting lady would have to stay near the saloon?

WR: Yes, indeed. She'd have to drink right with him. [laughter]

FS: Your mother never drank at work?

WR: No.

CK: I wonder how she felt about her accommodations.

WR: I don't know. I don't really know.

FS: Well, she came and went to the boat.

WR: Yes. She made several trips on steamboat.

FS: Tell how your mother met your father.

WR: Well, my mother was a nurse at the woman's hospital in Baltimore, where I was taken to be operated on. She was nursing a woman. The woman were trying to get well or something and she brought down here to the urban beach hotel on steamboat. She was staying with her at the hotel and she met my father there, at the hotel.

FS: Your father was single and living in the hotel?

WR: Yes, that's right.

CK: What is that now? Where was your father?

WR: He was living at the hotel and he met her there.

CK: How did they meet?

WR: I don't know that. [laughter]

FS: Probably in the dining room.

WR: I reckon it is.

CK: That is great.

WR: They got married. I don't know when or how or anything about that. Then my father bought this place up the road here where the Chesapeake Academy is. He bought that from (Cook Miles?).

CK: From who?

WR: From Cook Miles. They lived there for many years. I don't know what to say. He died in [19]49. He lived until [19]49.

SK: So, your mother took the steamboat down from Baltimore to Irvington?

WR: Yes.

CK: What did she say about riding the steamboat?

WR: I never heard her say too much about it. I never heard her say too much. I mean, that's just the way you had to go so she didn't say much about one way or other. She didn't even show us.

CK: How many rides would she have taken on the steamboat?

WR: Well, let me see. I guess, two or three, something like that.

CK: Well, I guess, she had to go back to Baltimore.

WR: Yes. She took the woman back to Baltimore and then she had to come back to see my father.

FS: She took you to the hospital. You were born in Baltimore. So, she went up there when she's pregnant.

WR: Yes, that's right.

CK: How did that work now?

WR: I was born in Baltimore at the woman's hospital in Baltimore. She went up on steamboat, of course.

CK: How did she know when to go up to the hospital if you do not mind my asking?

FS: As a nurse, I guess. [laughter]

WR: I don't know.

CK: She had to wait a good while on the boat, I suppose.

WR: Yes. It was an overnight trip. [laughter]

CK: I hope she had a nice state room.

WR: Yes. She had a good state room, I'm sure of that. I didn't have a sight to think about, but I'm sure she had a great state room.

CK: What were the state rooms like?

WR: They were quite nice. It has a little bunk and just built in the wall corner and had a washstand on the side. That was about all. They're very small, very small.

CK: Could you tell that you were on the water when you were lying in your bunk?

WR: Yes. You had windows. You could see out of the windows if it go on the side of one of the boats that got here. You had windows.

FS: Did many people get seasick?

WR: I don't remember.

FS: I wouldn't remember that.

WR: I don't remember that. I imagined they did.

FS: Did what?

WR: I imagine a lot of people got seasick, but I don't remember that at all. I know I didn't. I was sick from something else. [laughter]

MK: This has been fast.

CK: I did not know that it was after 1:00 p.m. I am afraid we're wearing our welcome out. I just lost all track of time.

FS: No, we don't have anything in plan.

WR: No. I mean, I don't have a thing.

CK: Is there anything else that we should be hearing about related to that?

WR: No, I can't think of anything else.

CK: Or the wharfs?

WR: The wharfs?

FS: The wharfs.

CK: The wharfs, the steamboat wharfs.

WR: No. I can't think anything about that.

CK: Anything else you can question about this?

FS: What is this about that they have three tubes and a [inaudible] that the captain used to give when he came and went?

WR: What?

FS: Never mind. I think you don't remember.

MK: Let us get you to the…

FS: I would like to tell one more tale about my father-in-law.

CK: Just wait until we got set up here. Start that again.

MK: You would like to say what?

FS: Something about Captain Lee Simmons, my father-in-law. He was an engineer who studied at the University of Virginia and very knowledgeable. But one day, he got a call from Urbana, saying that the steamboat was in Urbana and they had a leak in the boiler. Was there anybody in Irvington who could repair it? Well, nobody came forth. But he happened to be at Millenbeck, which is at the mouth of the Corrotoman River where his wife lived. They asked calmly if they came in to Millenbeck, which was one of the port of calls, anyway, if he could mend the boiler. Well, you can imagine what it would take to mend the boiler, but he said he would try. So, they put in there and they, of course, had to let all the steam off and get the boat completely shut down. He actually found the leak and he mended it with wooden pegs. Then he had to swell the wooden pegs so that they closed up the hole completely. Then they were able to fire up the boilers again and go on to Baltimore to get permanent repair. The dangers that they endured, if you can imagine, being on the water going up with that. Of course, when you're talking about boilers, you're talking about live coals and fire down in the bows of the ship. So, you know that there was great danger on all of these ships. One of the ships, the Richmond did burn, and the pictures of it in Jack's book about the Richmond burning. But surprisingly, when you consider that many dangers that were on these boats, it's surprising how few accidents they had, Because they really could have had with the consumption of alcohol, people falling overboard, and things of that sort. But these boats ran, of course, during the prohibition days and it was a very strict thing here in Irvington. We had one or two, what did they call them, Billy?

FS: What was his name? Foster?

WR: Yes, Foster.

FS: All the young boys in Irvington wanted to be like Foster and he was the rumrunner in Irvington. He had the fastest boat on Carter's Creek.

WR: His boat name was Wild Rose.

FS: His boat was named Wild Rose. Billy and Jack always wanted to have boats as fast as he had. But what he would do would be go out and pick up his room and come in and distribute it on the water. Of course, the law couldn't touch him. But there were one or two, there was big floor doors built here in Irvington, which was actually functioning but never got shut down, did it? But in fact, that was one of the things that the Commodore Murray, which was the commissioner of fisheries state boat was noted for having his parties out on the Commodore Murray because they couldn't touch him. He could have his drinking parties and his ladies and everything out there. I don't know whether I should say this, but many people have told me that that [inaudible] Lee would have been governor of Virginia if he hadn't been caught of his parties out on the Commodore Murray. I think members of his family still know that tale too. It's a pretty good conjecture that he probably would have been governor of Virginia if he hadn't, but scandal was a little bit going on then as it is today.

MK: You were born in the same year that the Tappahannock bridge was completed?

FS: Yes.

MK: You were talking a while ago when we have the machine off about everybody's first experience at Richmond. How did that go again?

FS: Well, Senator Tom Downing? was a little boy and he cut the ribbon on the bridge with an oyster knife on this side.

MK: Which bridge? Tell the whole.

FS: Well, in 1927, the first bridge replaced horse drawn ferry that used to go across between Warsaw and Tappahannock to cross the Tappahannock. When they built the bridge, where they had a big celebration, of course, connecting the Northern Neck with the outer world. Senator Tom Downing, who was a very young boy, cut the ribbon with an oyster knife on the Warsaw side. Of course, all the model Ts and the model As and all of them lined up and it went in great streams to Richmond. The mayor of Richmond was up there to welcome them and tell them all about the great first time. Many of them had been to Richmond and thought, "Well, you all would want to stay up here and I want to come up and do all your shopping and everything." One of the men said, "Well, I'll tell you, before the sun sets on Richmond, we are all heading back to Tappahannock and the muskrats are coming with us and they're going to lead the pack seeing it home sweet home to get back to Tappahannock." But it was a lot of fun. Of course, it

was really solid, the opening up of the Northern Neck. You could come down by land from Fredericksburg, but the Northern Neck made up these five counties. It is very narrow at one point. Up near King George County, it's just 15 miles wide. The first map of the Northern Neck was drawn by Captain John Smith. So, you see, we go back in history and we have a creek here. It's named Antipoison Creek. The reason it was named Antipoison Creek was because Captain John Smith was stung by a stingray and the Indian choose the mud at the bottom of this creek to cure Captain John Smith hence, we have an Antipoison Creek. But I don't know. I can't think of anything else.

MK: Well, the Oyster Wars.

FS: The Oyster Wars? Well, we didn't know up until just recently until the 1940s. The boats on the Potomac had guns on that mounted on the front of the boats and they actually were firing on each other for oyster. Potomac belongs to Maryland because Virginia didn't have the right to fish and oyster in Maryland without Maryland permits. So, they really did get pretty fierce with that and they patrol very heavily. Up until, as I said, just the [19]40s and [19]50s, they were quite active in their patrols. In Colonial Beach, for instance, they had a pier built out that they had a bar on the end of the pier so they could sell liquor in Maryland. You could come to Colonial Beach in Virginia going on the pier and drink because you're in Maryland waters. [laughter] So, there are all sorts of ways skinning a cat.

MK: Well, you must have other things you need to get on today so I appreciate that.

FS: Well, I think we've given you a lot.

MK: I feel like I have just read about fifteen books in such detail.

CK: You just brought the whole era to life.

FS: Well, it's something that, I guess, we've sort of lived it for many generations. Because when Jack did these two books, we did a lot of more delving into the records than we would have. I'm afraid it's disappearing because there's so many turnovers in our population. So, at one time, everybody knew everybody else. Well, we still got families like us and Billy that have been here for generations.

MK: What is your vision for the museum exhibit itself? Do you think all the things you have talked about here this morning, the whole setting for the steamboat era, do you think that that is what should be explored in these exhibits or where would you like to see the whole thing go?

FS: Well, the first place and I think it's in the works, but I'm not sure it's happened. Robert Burgess, and you know who I mean by Robert Burgess, he started collecting when he was a teenager, all the paraphernalia, and everything off of steamboats. He died in last couple of years. He had in his possession probably more actual artifacts and things off of steamboats than anybody known. My husband used to communicate with him and try to persuade him to maybe put them. At one time, he was on the board of the Mariners Museum and we thought, well, certainly he will give all of his artifacts and things the Mariners Museum. But he failed with

him. There's somebody and I don't know what his name is that's supposed to be negotiating with his family to give the artifacts and things that he has like the whistles and the bells and pieces of China and things of that and so on. I felt that's what a museum should have is that type of thing. As far as taking, say, you or I thought a steamboat look like. Well, I think if you actually have the main thing, that museum should be collecting place for the things. I know there's a lot of not just written about it, but there's a lot of letters and things of that sort that really should be in a museum. Because when people die and got moved on like all of that stuff's going to be lost if it's not kept in the museum and displayed properly. I don't mean that you can display everything, but I do think that it would be interesting to know some of the things. I know that they probably have some chairs and some furniture off of some of these boats and things that exist and as well as have it interpreted with the local language rather than have some people that would say, "On the Northern Neck," instead of "in the Northern Neck." It's always been in the Northern Neck. Of course, the way the papers are written today, well, they don't even use correct English much less than any other yes, indeed. There's a most about the house and all of these expressions that are really part of the Northern Neck and have been.

CK: What else is part of the Northern Neck? What are some of the other phrases?

FS: Well, I guess, yes, indeed is one of the best ones we have. But just the fact that we say most in house and about the house and that type of thing is something that we're losing and expressions that we use every day. Well, some of them are just old expressions probably used elsewhere. But whenever I left the Northern Neck, people could tell me right away that I was from the Northern Neck by the way of my accent. We're like Lancaster. You say Lancaster. Everybody comes here and says Lancaster. Even the people from Lancaster, Pennsylvania tell you it's Lancaster. It's not Lancaster. Well, I guess, radio started before, but television just had – and you say water. Well, water is not a Virginia word, it's water, and that type of thing. But I guess, television probably has done as much to destroy our speech as anything.

CK: So, you would like the museum to speak the way people here speak?

FS: Yes, I mean, the narrations and things should be done, I think, in local language, local conversation. But I don't want to be too critical because I know there are a lot of people that have had a lot of input in it. But I just feel that, of course, this is supposed to be a transportation museum so it really should cover things other than steamboats, the other forms of transportation, I think. Then they get the original grant for being a transportation grant rather than just steamboats.

M2: So, everything from pony carts to…

F2: Right on up to the [inaudible] laying all the rest. I guess, just boats in general because there are a lot of people who moved in here from Tangier, for instance. They all came by boat, came in the workboats and crabbing and things of that sort. All the blacksmith shop, I can take you around Irvington and point out many of these houses that are standing today that were here when the steamboats were here. I could point out where the steamboats came in and that type of thing if you were interested in doing that because you can see, for instance, better lives on one point. But you can see what Irvington had because I can see Billy's house. Not from here, but you can

drive mile and a half to get to his house because you're going to go around all these bottleneck creeks.

MK: So, water is not in distance at all.

FS: That's right. So, water was the main transportation.

WR: I see a picture of my house here.

FS: Yes, there's a picture of your house at the point and everything else. But we had lots of oyster houses and, as I said, we had a fish factory and we had an ice plant and all of those utility things. People used to send their children here to Chesapeake Academy and it was boarding school because of transportation. For instance, anybody who lived in Akron, Mr. [inaudible] who had children lived in Akron, which is what five miles from here, he sent his children over here and they stayed in the boarding school which was behind the Hope and Glory. Hope and Glory was academy building and then they had the dormitories behind it and there was no telephone line. Well, Mr. [inaudible] had private telephone line running from Auckland to Irvington so he could keep up with his children. Of course, the fish factories were great, the Hayden fish. Can you imagine, I don't know whether you've ever smelled a fish factory, they catch Hayden fish and they cook them and then they squeeze the oil out of them and use the oil for omega three. Now, they're saying that the fish oil is going to be the big thing. But they cook the fish and use it for fertilizer and food for animals, chickens, and cows. They put it in café too, I think. But you can imagine what Irvington must've smelled like when you had the aroma of the fish cooking. Well, most of the people derive income from it. So, they always said, "Smells like money to me." [laughter] But because with retirees and everything coming, yes, I don't think the fish factory still exist over in Ridgeville. But they have put all sorts of odor controls.

WR: Yes, they have first factories in Irving and then one in [inaudible].

FS: Yes. It did [inaudible] to Whitestone beach. Then over to [inaudible] in Dallas.

MK: Are there any of the African American families that you grew up with? Are any of those people still around?

FS: Yes. The Ward's who live right next door at my farm. I think the third generation is there, Jimmy Ward.

MK: Any of the older ones still there?

FS: Well, I think, you might say, older than me. I mean, he's about my age, I guess, Tommy Ward. He's the one who used to, before the Second World War, he would go around and collect all of the scrap metal and everything. We didn't have docks and things like that. If you owned a piece of wood while you use it, you burned all of things. Well, you didn't have the trash. You didn't have the plastics and the papers and everything then. But your metal, you used to have metal dumped down in the woods somewhere that you would dump so even a piece of coal or foam equipment or something like that. Well, Tommy spent his days before the Second World

War picking up all the scrap and sending it to Japan. Well, soon after that, he got drafted. He talked to my father and he said, "Tommy, you're going over there and they're going to shoot all that metal right back at you that you sold them."

MR: They did.

FS: They did, too. You know because you were there.

MK: What was [inaudible] took a bit of the old Fifth Avenue on the top of his head to town.

FS: Yes.

CK: You were in the war?

MR: Yes, I do.

FS: At 17, 18. Most of the boys from here at Irvington all went to war. That's when the tides was built. It was right after the war. There was hardly a man left in Irvington. They all went off to war, or they went to work in the munition factories. Well, my mother-in-law went to Richmond to work in Reynolds Metals making things for the war. Irvington really got sort of rundown at the hills right after the war because there were no men here to take care of the property and everything needed painting and fixing up. That's when Mr. Stevens came in and he bought this piece of property that used to belong to my great grandfather over there and built the tides in with the 50 room tides in and he said it was his gas station. It was a very nice place. I was the first waitress he had down there. To me, it was a great job because I was a freshman around at a women's college and my father had just been killed in an automobile accident. So, I really needed the money to finish my car. So, he asked me to get some friends, college students. So, I got five of my girlfriends and they stayed with my mother on the foam and we were there first waitresses down the tides. That was when all the boys were coming home from the Second World War. Billy and my husband, Jack, and all of them would come to the kitchen door because they didn't know where the girls were. So, we were royally entertained by entertaining all these boys. Billy's father had brought him up. Billy had been an only child. His father told him if he ever came home from the Navy alive, he would have him a brand-new Chris-Craft speedboat. So, needless to say, there was one standing at the dock when he got home. So, he used to take us all from the kitchen door at ten o'clock out in the Rappahannock River to party a little bit before we went home. Then my mother would have to go and one kind of family would come pick us up, take us home, and then take us back to tie dinner at 7:00 p.m. and in the morning to go serve breakfast. Those were the good old days when you had one car and a family and everybody went in different directions. [laughter] You wondered when you think back over and the world, everybody did what they did in those days. When you think of raising a family of four and running a farm and trying to keep up with all of the minute with no washing machines and all the automatic things that we have today, you wonder how our parents really kept up with life.

MK: Well, that is a wonderful place to live.

CK: There is no good place then with you two. You can do a whole other session about it.

FS: Well, if you think of another subject, that is something I'll be glad to talk about.

MK: Well, thank you. I am sure something will come up.

FS: In any way I can, I'm very interested in getting…

[end of transcript]