

Patricia Moore: I am Pat Moore, volunteer for the Bayshore Discovery Project, Oral History program. We are interviewing on April 7th, 2008, 10:00 a.m. Our location is the Harbor House Packing Company, Ogden Avenue, Port Norris, New Jersey. I am here with fellow interviewer, Olin McConnell of Port Elizabeth, New Jersey. Olin's family has also been in the oyster business for many, many years. He will help interview George "Babe" Wallace and Freddie Smith from Port Norris, New Jersey. Both men have been shucking oysters for over 50 years. We are here at the packing house, and I am meeting with Freddie and George. We are going to start with George. George, if you would just state your name for us please and where you were born.

Freddie Smith: My name is Freddie Smith, born in Port Norris, New Jersey.

PM: I need you to get a little closer to the mike and speak up.

FS: My name is Freddie Smith. I'm born in Port Norris, New Jersey. I lived on West Main Street in Port Norris.

PM: George, your name and where you were born.

George Wallace: My name is George Wallace. I was born in Calvin County, Maryland at 1914.

PM: 1914? What county was that in Maryland? Where did you say?

GW: Calvin County, Maryland. Calvin County, Maryland. I was [inaudible].

PM: Baltimore?

GW: (Huh?)?

PM: I am sorry. Help me, Olin.

Olin McConnell: Go ahead.

FS: Calvin County, Maryland.

GW: Calvin County, Maryland.

FS: Calvin County, Maryland.

PM: Calvin County?

FS: Yes.

OM: C-A-L-V-I-N.

PM: Calvin County, Maryland. Freddie, what year were you born?

FS: 1949, May the 5th.

PM: Where did you grow up? Did you grow up here in Port Norris?

FS: In Port Norris, yes. I've been down in Port Norris school [inaudible]. I helped [inaudible].

PM: So, you were not able to graduate high school?

FS: No, (never?).

PM: What did you do when you first started working on the boat?

FS: (Picked up?) oysters, dump dredges, and culled oysters. (I helped shove them up?), like that for Herb Sockwell. Remember him?

OM: Herb Sockwell. Yes, very well.

FS: I went along with him.

OM: My dad works for him also.

PM: What was the name of the boat that you worked on?

FS: Howard Sockwell. H.W. Sockwell.

PM: The H.W. Sockwell?

FS: Yes.

PM: That was the first boat you worked on?

FS: Yes.

PM: Did your dad worked on that boat also?

FS: He had (me?), I guess. Years come, I'd ran the boat with the captain, fifteen men below deck and had a cook. Jerry Green, do you remember him? He was my cook. Shelly [inaudible]. Shelly who? What's Shelly's name? What's Shelly's name? [inaudible].

GW: [inaudible]

FS: Yes, Shelly.

GW: Shelly (was the brother?)

FS: Shelly was my mate on Howard Sockwell.

GW: Yes, yes, yes.

PM: What was his name again?

FS: (I call him?) Shelly.

PM: Shelly?

FS: Yes. Shelly Ennals. He was my mate.

PM: Shelly Reynolds?

FS: Ennals.

GW: Ennals.

OM: Ennals, E-N-N-A-L-S.

PM: Ennals.

FS: He was my mate. Jerry Green, he was my cook.

PM: How many years did you work on the Sockwell?

FS: About four or five years (until they rebuilt her?). Then I took [inaudible] Bloom and they brought it back down here. Then coming to (Port Norris?), skimming oysters, (put oysters?) down by where we do the diggings and left there [inaudible] digging. (I did it ever since?).

OM: He has a brother named Howard who passed on maybe five years ago.

PM: Freddie did?

OM: Yes.

FS: Yes.

OM: He worked with Freddie just about the same thing. He was captain of the boat, went up to Blooms and (just about?) the same thing. Freddie can probably tell you a little bit more about Howard. Howard was older than you?

FS: Yes, about a year and half older than me.

OM: That close?

FS: Yes.

PM: How many brothers and sister did you have?

FS: Ten altogether, six sisters and four brothers.

PM: Were your parents from Port Norris also or did they come from another area?

FS: My father, he was down in Westmoreland, Virginia.

PM: Westmoreland?

FS: Yes. Then he moved up his way and married – my mother was Susan Moore [inaudible].

PM: What was your dad's name again?

FS: Thomas Smith. Thomas Andrew Smith.

PM: Thomas Andrew?

FS: Henry?

PM: Thomas Henry –

FS: Smith.

PM: Smith. Your mom was?

FS: Suzy Moore.

PM: Suzy Moore. A lot of Moore's down here.

FS: Yes. [laughter]

PM: That is my husband's name, Moore.

FS: Oh, yes? Moore?

PM: Yes, he is a Moore. I just want to make sure we are still doing okay. What year did they get married? Do you remember?

FS: No, I don't. Before [inaudible].

PM: I would hope.

FS: Yes.

PM: [laughter] Did he meet Suzy up here in Port Norris?

FS: Yes.

OM: Who is the oldest, Freddie?

FS: Norman.

OM: Howard is the oldest?

FS: Norman is the oldest.

OM: You are the oldest?

FS: Norman.

OM: Oh, Norman?

FS: Yes, Norman.

PM: Norman. Then who?

FS: Then (Julivienne?), my sister. Then we're going down the line, Elizabeth.

PM: Elizabeth?

FS: Yes. Then Matilda. Matilda.

PM: Matilda?

FS: Yes, and Lucy.

PM: Lucy.

FS: (Gaverene?).

PM: What is it?

FS: Gaverene.

PM: Gaverene.

FS: Gaverene and Suzy.

PM: Oh, she was named after her mom?

FS: Yes. He was twins with Junior.

PM: I am sorry?

FS: He was twins with Junior, my brother. She was twins with him.

OM: Do you remember how old Norman is?

FS: Norman is about eighty-four, eighty-five, (going on there?).

OM: Just so you can go from there, his parents were married eighty-four years ago. It was around that. I never heard of Normal before. Where did he live? I do not know Norman.

FS: Well, he left there once they – navy, two years on [inaudible].

OM: From where? He was never at this area, right?

FS: They never [inaudible]. He moved back down with the mom, stayed there for a while [inaudible].

OM: That was the first time. I have not heard of Norman before.

FS: Yes. He's the oldest one of the family.

PM: How old were you when you started shucking?

FS: About twenty something.

PM: Is that how many years you have been doing it now?

FS: Probably about a good thirty-five.

PM: Thirty-five years?

FS: Thirty-five, thirty-seven [inaudible].

PM: You worked for Bloom Brothers?

FS: Bloom Brothers and (George?) Jenkins

PM: Higgins?

FS: George Jenkins.

OM: Jenkins.

PM: Oh, Jenkins. I am sorry.

OM: George Jenkins. Anybody else?

FS: Herb Sockwell, I worked for him.

PM: Now, here at the Harbor House?

FS: I'm here at Harbor House now.

PM: That is Tommy Reeves who owns it, (does he not?)?

FS: No.

OM: He is the manager.

PM: He is the manager here?

FS: The manager, yes.

OM: He is the manager.

PM: Who owns Harbor House? Do you know?

OM: The guy is down in Maryland. It was a new guy, (I keep telling you?).

PM: When you began shucking, who taught you?

FS: Just watching other people.

PM: Just watching other people?

FS: Yes. (I caught?) on that way.

PM: I was doing an interview with Clyde Phillips a couple of weeks ago. Clyde shared with me that when he was working in his dad's shucking house, Phillips Packing House that he loved to go in. Because he said, the shuckers, as they were shucking, would sing gospels and keep in time with the banging of the knife and everything. Do you remember doing that?

FS: Yes, I remember doing it.

PM: Yes?

FS: Yes.

PM: What were some of the good songs you would sing?

FS: More like church (beats?).

PM: More like what?

FS: Church beats. More like church (hymns?).

PM: Yes, exactly. Yes.

FS: [inaudible] like that.

OM: I bet Freddie could sing a couple [inaudible]. He goes to church every Sunday. [laughter]

PM: Give me a few bars.

FS: Huh?

OM: Shiloh Baptist [inaudible].

FS: Shiloh, yes.

PM: Shiloh Baptist?

FS: Yes.

PM: Here in Port Norris?

FS: Yes.

OM: He knows the [inaudible] real good or gospel singing.

PM: Oh, yes, yes. I know [inaudible], yes.

FS: Yes.

PM: Now, you said you have been married.

FS: Yes, married for fifty-eighty years.

PM: Fifty-eight?

FS: Fifty-eight years. Then I got married again in about May – no, October the 20th. I got married again in October the 20th.

PM: Of 2007?

FS: In 2007.

PM: Oh, you are a newlywed.

FS: Yes.

PM: [laughter]

FS: See, my wife wants to get married again [inaudible]. She was trying to make it to sixty, but she [inaudible]. Well, we would get married now. (I've waited sixty to get married while we're fifty-eight?). I said all right.

PM: [laughter]

FS: [inaudible]

PM: What was your first wife's name?

FS: Nellia Smith.

PM: What is it?

FS: Nellia.

PM: Nelly?

FS: Nellia Smith.

PM: Nelly or...

FS: Nellia.

OM: Nellia.

FS: N-E-L-L-I-A.

PM: N-E-L-L-I-A. That is a long name. Smith?

FS: Yes.

PM: Was she born and raised here in Port Norris?

FS: No. She's born down in Maryland, Crisfield. Crisfield, Maryland, she's born down there. Later on, she moved up here.

OM: You know why I married her? Because she said she could cook. That is why [inaudible] all good cooks down there. [laughter]

PM: Now, let me get this straight. Did your first wife pass away or...

FS: No. My first wife, she's still in [inaudible]. She still lived [inaudible].

PM: So, who did you marry on October 20th?

FS: My second wife. My second woman.

OM: He had his vows – redid the vows.

PM: Oh, redid your vows.

FS: Yes.

PM: My husband and I are about three years away from our fiftieth wedding anniversary.

FS: Oh, yes?

PM: I keep telling him, "Well, are we going to go to the church and renew our vows and everything?" Forty-seven years ago, we eloped. We went to Maryland and eloped. He said, "Forty-seven years ago, I did not want to do it, and I am not going to do it in fifty years." What you get is what you got. So, I am not going to get that man in a church marrying me again. [laughter]

PM: Now, have you had a family, children?

FS: I had one child and she got killed down on Silver Run Road. (I guess?) about 5:00 a.m. just coming home.

OM: It is the same place my brother was killed.

PM: Silver Run.

FS: Yes.

PM: Yes.

OM: It happened at ninety, graduated from high school [inaudible] person around that time.

PM: Was it an auto accident?

FS: Yes. The car turned over, broken neck and broken legs and broken jaw.

OM: It is a bad road, a lot of hills with fence on it.

PM: Oh, yes.

OM: [inaudible] wife was killed there.

FS: Yes, yes.

PM: Yes. That intersection of [inaudible] and dividing Creek Road, too, always bad. What was his name?

FS: Who, my daughter?

OM: The daughter.

PM: Oh, it was a daughter?

FS: Yes. Dianne.

PM: Dianne?

FS: Yes.

OM: Dianne?

FS: Yes.

PM: Did she have a middle name?

FS: Elaine, I think.

PM: I am sorry?

FS: Dianne and Elaine.

PM: Dianne Elaine.

OM: Do you remember that, Freddie, what year? [19]80s?

FS: [19]82 or something like that.

OM: [19]82. How about that?

FS: I was down at [inaudible].

PM: How old was when she passed?

FS: In her twenties, I guess.

PM: Oh, gosh.

FS: [inaudible]

PM: What are the twin's names?

FS: One is named Sorrel and Janelle.

PM: Danelle?

FS: Janelle.

PM: Janelle?

FS: Yes, yes.

PM: Is that the other twin?

FS: Yes. One of them is named Kimmy.

PM: Kimmy?

FS: Kimmy, yes. The boy named Melvin.

PM: Melvin?

FS: Yes, Melvin.

PM: I congratulate you, (George?), for remembering all those names. That is great.

FS: [laughter]

PM: Do your grandchildren live near here, too?

FS: All of them, yes.

PM: They all live here?

FS: Yes, all live here.

PM: I am going to leave you alone for a little while. I am going over here to Mr. George.
[laughter]

PM: George, you were born and raised in Maryland?

GW: That's right.

PM: How old were you when you came up to this area?

GW: That's completely hard for me to say. I came here at 1939.

PM: 1939?

GW: Yes.

PM: I will figure out the math. [laughter]

GW: Huh?

PM: I will figure out the math for you. I will tell you how many years ago. How old are you now, George?

GW: Ninety-three.

PM: Ninety-three? God bless you. [laughter]

PM: My number to myself is ninety-four.

GW: Ninety-four.

PM: I am going to make it to ninety-four. If I get more, thank you, God. But that is my goal, ninety-four. [laughter] Did you move directly to Bivalve or Port Norris when you came here?

GW: I came [inaudible]. (George Berry, old times?).

OM: (George Berry?).

PM: George Berry?

OM: He worked for George Berry. (Stalls Berry?), he said he remembered him. Stalls Berry was George Berry's father.

GW: Yes.

PM: Oh, I heard that name before. Is it Berry or Ferry?

OM: B-E-R-R-Y.

PM: That is what I thought.

OM: He was another one that was big into the horseracing here in Port Norris, Stalls Berry and George Berry. I am sorry. [inaudible] also. Do you remember the horseracing here?

GW: Huh?

OM: Do you remember the racetracks?

FS: Yes, I remember that [inaudible].

OM: Back here?

FS: Yes.

OM: Prior to that, it went down to the [inaudible] oyster house. There was an old racetrack down there. But the one I remember, too, there was one up on the back road there.

GW: There were.

OM: Yes, big time. The oysterman had so much money they did not know what to do with it except raced horses.

FS: He's right. [laughter]

PM: So, when you first came up, you started working for George Berry?

GW: That is right.

PM: Did you start working as a shucker or did you start...

GW: (A shucker?).

PM: Did you ever work on a boat?

GW: Yes, I worked the [inaudible].

PM: The what there?

GW: (Melvin Sockwell?).

PM: Oh, same as him.

OM: (Have they worked?) the boat at wintertime, shucking the...

GW: (I didn't work down?) the wintertime.

OM: You did not work in the wintertime?

GW: (No, sir?). [inaudible] the wintertime.

OM: What did you do, plant oysters? Work while they are planting oysters in the springtime? Would you work on a boat when they were planting the oysters?

FS: (Up the?) bay.

OM: Up in the bay.

GW: No. [inaudible].

OM: In the springtime, yes.

GW: Yes. I worked on the...

OM: Three weeks?

GW: The Melvin Sockwell. I worked going to [inaudible] Bloom. (Two boys named Maddie, Little Maddie and Big Maddie?).

OM: Do you remember [inaudible]?

PM: What were the names again?

FS: I remember Little Maddie.

GW: Yes.

PM: What was it?

OM: Little Maddie.

PM: Little Maddie?

OM: They are long gone before [inaudible].

GW: (I think so?). [laughter]

PM: Did your parents move up with you when you came up?

GW: [inaudible]

PM: How come you left?

GW: The place was better [inaudible] the place. So, we all left home and came there. [inaudible] they wouldn't go for it.

PM: I see. Now, did you live up here then fulltime or did you just live up here during oyster season?

GW: Fulltime (from 1979 up until now?).

PM: Up until now. Congratulations. Did you get married here?

GW: Two times.

PM: What was your first wife's name?

GW: Lillian Lochie.

PM: Linda...

GW: Lillian, L-I-L-L-I-A-N.

PM: L-I-L-L-I-A-N. Her last name was?

GW: Lochie.

PM: Spell that.

GW: L-O-C-H-I-E.

PM: L-O-C-H-I-E. She was a Port Norris girl?

GW: No, she was a Maryland girl.

PM: She was from...

GW: [inaudible] in Maryland.

PM: From Maryland?

GW: Yes.

PM: How did she get up here? Did you meet her down in Maryland and bring her?

GW: No, I met her up here.

PM: Now, was she working up here?

GW: Yes.

PM: She was working as a shucker?

GW: She was a shucker, yes.

PM: How long were you married to her?

GW: She passed away.

PM: Did you have children with her?

GW: No.

PM: Your second wife.

GW: Her name was Junie Barnes.

PM: Bonns?

GW: Junie Barnes.

PM: Barnes?

GW: Yes.

PM: Was she from Port Norris?

GW: No. She was from Washington, D.C.

PM: How did you meet her, some wild weekend? [laughter]

PM: Did you meet her down in Washington or did you meet her up here?

GW: No, I met her up here.

PM: Was she working up here?

GW: Yes.

PM: She was also working in the shucking houses?

GW: That's right.

PM: Did you have children?

GW: Five.

PM: Five.

GW: Three girls and two boys.

PM: What were their names?

GW: Oh, Lord.

PM: [laughter] Here is the big test, George.

GW: One of the boys was named Archie.

PM: What was it?

FS: Archie.

GW: Archie.

PM: Archie.

GW: A-R-C-H-I-E. The other boy, I don't know what his name was. I never got his name. Two of the girls, one of them was named [inaudible].

PM: What was it?

GW: Like a tomato.

PM: Like what?

GW: Like a tomato.

PM: Oh, like a tomato?

GW: Yes.

PM: The other girls?

GW: The other girl's name was (Lavern?).

PM: Lavern. [laughter]

PM: Then the other daughter?

GW: She was born dead. We never named her.

PM: Oh, stillborn?

GW: Yes.

PM: You lived in Bivalve or Port Norris?

GW: Port Norris.

PM: What area were you living now? Where were you living with your second wife?

GW: In Port Norris.

PM: What was it?

GW: (Berry Road?). A street that we were living on was called Berryville.

PM: Berryville?

GW: Yes.

FS: Berryville.

PM: Berry Road?

FS: Yes.

GW: Yes.

PM: Are your kids still in the area?

GW: Huh?

PM: Are your children still living in the area?

GW: No.

PM: All gone?

GW: All gone.

PM: You just retired, did you not?

GW: Yes. [inaudible].

OM: I bet he is just resting up a little bit. He will probably be back next...

PM: Yes. The weather warms up a little bit. [laughter]

PM: It is a little hard to get you come out.

GW: Yes.

PM: Did you attend a church locally here?

GW: Not too often. [inaudible] Not too often.

PM: [coughs] Excuse me, I'm just getting over a cold myself.

OM: [inaudible]

PM: Yes. Let us say you have been living in Port Norris. You were here in the [19]40s?

GW: Oh, yes.

PM: What did you say, you were born in...

GW: 1929.

PM: 1929. So, you were like, what, eleven, twelve, thirteen when the war started?

FS: Yes.

PM: World War II.

FS: Yes.

PM: What was it like down here during that time?

FS: Pretty good back then, plenty of people.

PM: Plenty of work.

FS: Plenty of work, yes.

PM: Lots of stores?

FS: Yes. Calvert, just go down.

GW: [inaudible]

FS: Calvert and who – they had a front store. What [inaudible] name?

GW: Huh?

FS: The one who had a front store, what was his name?

OM: Davis?

FS: Named Davis?

OM: Up in town, Davis.

FS: Yes. Yes, Davis.

OM: There were quite a few stores up in town.

FS: Yes.

OM: Car agencies.

FS: Two shoe stores and [inaudible]. That's (Gray's Garage?) [inaudible]. You could buy a brand new car back then with \$800.

PM: Yes. [laughter]

FS: Brand new. When you were working in the different packing houses, I expect the conditions were a lot different than they are here. I've seen some photographs of the inside of some of the packing houses.

FS: Yes. Back then, we had [inaudible] six on the cart and throw them on there through the [19]70s. But now, you got to do it [inaudible] dump your own [inaudible].

PM: Were you paid the same way that you are now, what they call piecework?

FS: Yes.

PM: Always been paid that way?

FS: Yes.

PM: Do you remember how much you were paid when you first started?

FS: (Dollar in a half hour?) when I first started.

PM: How much?

FS: Dollar in a half an hour.

PM: Oh. So, you were paid by the hour?

FS: Yes.

PM: Not by the pounds that you shucked?

FS: No. But if I couldn't make [inaudible] by the hour, then [inaudible] that way.

PM: Now, you are paid by how many pounds you...

FS: I get salary now.

PM: Oh, you get salary now?

FS: Yes, now. Yes.

OM: Did you use to (put?) the oysters up off on the table, Freddie?

FS: Yes.

OM: Was that one of your jobs, too?

FS: Yes.

OM: You have to be strong to do that all day long.

FS: [inaudible] dump them up there.

PM: Wow.

FS: [inaudible] shucker.

PM: How long did it take you to shuck twenty-five oysters? How fast were you?

FS: I wasn't too bad on the shucking. I try and looked at other people, shuckers. I went by the hour. I sit back and watch them how to do it, but I can do it if I had to.

OM: Freddie spent a lot of his time as a skimmer, taking the oysters, grating them, putting them in cans and washing them. Freddie spent more time doing that.

PM: Is that what you are doing here now, too?

FS: Yes.

PM: George, you have been shucking?

GW: I was shucking since I was fourteen.

PM: You are pretty fast?

GW: I was shucking when I was fourteen.

PM: Fourteen years old, mercy me. You are pretty fast?

GW: I used to be. [laughter]

GW: I used to be. I can make about \$100 every day when I was younger. (I have to give it up?).

PM: When you guys were working like in the [19]40s, in the [19]50s, in the [19]60s, did the companies you were working for, did they provide you with medical insurance?

FS: No.

PM: You just got straight salary. That was it?

FS: Straight salary, yes.

PM: Did you work twelve months a year?

FS: Yes.

PM: You did work twelve months a year and five days a week and...

FS: Yes.

PM: If you were paid hourly, did they pay you overtime if there was overtime involved?

FS: Yes.

PM: Did you own your own home?

FS: Me, yes. Thank God for that. [laughter]

PM: You are still living in it today?

FS: Still living in it, yes.

PM: [laughter] That is good. That is good.

FS: That's why I got married. I could buy a brand-new car at my father's age [inaudible] buy a

brand-new car. He would buy a brand-new car [inaudible] house that you do on the safe side [inaudible] live in, get married. You rent it out.

PM: How did you father get so smart? He was a wise man to give you that advice.

FS: Yes. He had [inaudible]. He kept his [inaudible] in line.

PM: Did he work the boats?

FS: He crewed on a boat.

PM: He crewed on a boat?

FS: Yes. He started when he had sails.

PM: Yes.

FS: Yes. He would do that. Then he left there and he went cooking then with the crew.

PM: Now, when you would go out on the boat, did you just go out for the day and come back in or did you go out for several days and stay out there?

FS: When that sailed, we would stay (through the?) week.

PM: Oh, when they had sails, they stayed for a week?

FS: Yes. When you had (your power?), we'd go out every morning and come back every night.

OM: You worked from the time that sun came up until the time that sun went down?

FS: Right.

OM: The captain had you doing something all day long?

FS: Yes.

PM: Wow.

FS: The only break you got when – no sails. I mean, you had sails, no wind, no work. When the wind blows, we worked then. [laughter]

PM: You worked on some of the boats when they still had sails?

FS: Yes. I had and my brother had. But I always worked with power.

PM: You always worked with power.

FS: Make two loads a day and get on there.

PM: Wow.

FS: Going down on the [inaudible] and you go back to work. [laughter]

PM: What were some of the things that you did socially? Was there a favorite place that you used to hang out?

FS: I'd go down [inaudible] and look at the movies. Then I'd stopped [inaudible] new movies up there. I went up there.

OM: What was the movie down here, Freddie?

FS: It'd be on the Main Road down by I remember the church down there. Do you remember that church down there?

GW: Yes.

OM: Here at Shell Pile you are talking about?

FS: Shell Pile, yes.

GW: Shell Pile.

OM: It was on the corner.

PM: There was a movie theater down there?

FS: Yes. Then the tide come in while we're in the movies. Then you see big [inaudible] come running through the building.

PM: Oh, my. [laughter]

FS: But back then, it was a movie [inaudible]. I go there and I get through the door. I stooped down like a little kid [inaudible] going in. [inaudible] tall. [laughter]

PM: We used to try the same thing in (Northville?). There were sometimes when you wanted to look grown up to get in the movies. You want to become eight or nine again.

FS: Yes. [laughter]

PM: What were some of the other things? Were there dances down here or...

FS: I never [inaudible] on the corner. [inaudible] like that, but I never [inaudible] dancing. I

always stayed home, go to movies somewhere [inaudible] down there. [laughter]

OM: [inaudible] a lot of trouble down here, did there not, Freddie, on Friday, Saturday nights, car playing and then drinking and stuff?

FS: Yes.

OM: I was in the fire company when I was young.

FS: I didn't want to go to jail, so I [inaudible]. [laughter]

PM: How about you, George? Did you stay away from those places?

GW: No, I did not.

PM: You were there?

GW: No, I was there.

PM: I bet you.

GW: [inaudible] [laughter]

OM: He can play cards better than [inaudible] right?

GW: Oh, yes. I loved to play [inaudible].

FS: Yes.

PM: [inaudible]

GW: [inaudible] wouldn't eat. So, [inaudible] playing cards.

FS: Yes.

PM: That is great. That is great. You went to school here until you were fifteen?

FS: Yes.

PM: Did you go to school in Maryland?

GW: In Maryland?

PM: Yes.

GW: [inaudible] as far as I went. My mother took...

PM: Fourth grade?

GW: Fourth grade.

OM: Fourth grade.

GW: My mother told me I either had to work – I even had to get a job or go to school [inaudible] on my part. I was going to go on to school [inaudible]. I wanted to go to work. (I liked?) the money and [inaudible] to work. That's why I didn't get the level that I should've gotten.

PM: Well, that is a hard decision for a fourth grader to make. Money is a lot more appealing than spelling. [laughter]

FS: [inaudible] here. About twenty families [inaudible].

OM: There used to be houses all the way up and down (at both sides of this road?).

PM: Really?

FS: Yes.

OM: It was called Berry Road.

PM: Berry Road?

FS: Yes.

OM: Two stories high, (were they not?), Freddie?

FS: Yes.

OM: Apartments.

PM: That is what is now called Ogden?

FS: Yes.

OM: Well, the street was called Ogden, but the houses were called Berry Road.

FS: Yes.

OM: Miller Berry. Miller Berry was the [inaudible] on most of them. That is where the name Berry Road came from.

PM: Which Berry? What was his name?

OM: Miller.

PM: Miller.

FS: Miller Berry.

OM: You remember him pretty good, too, (do you not?)?

FS: Yes. I always [inaudible] with him. [inaudible] Ogden and Berry.

PM: They were two-story buildings, apartments?

FS: Yes.

OM: Yes. [inaudible].

PM: Yes. I went to school with lots of kids from Port Norris. I went to school with the manager here, Tommy Reeves. I went to school with his mom.

FS: Oh, yes. I know that.

PM: Janet.

FS: Janet, yes. She's still a nurse there, too. We lived with them. (They did good?).

PM: Yes, she is. She is still a nurse. So, I did a lot of coming down here, playing with friends in high school and things like that. In the [19]50s, you could just say things were really starting to close down and a lot of vacant stores and a lot of boarded up places by 1959. Have you always been happy living down here?

FS: Yes. Oh, I did. Yes.

PM: Had a good life?

FS: Good life. Thank God for that.

PM: Good.

FS: [laughter]

PM: How about you, George?

GW: Fine. I've got [inaudible] in the golden days. Now, I'm retired and [inaudible].

PM: You got a television? You got a TV?

FS: Oh, yes.

PM: Oh, yes. [laughter]

OM: Good jobs were hard to find down in Maryland when you were a boy, (were they not?)?

GW: Huh?

OM: Jobs down in Maryland were hard to find.

GW: Yes.

OM: That is probably one reason why you came out here.

GW: Yes.

OM: It seems like we pulled down a lot of people because there is always work here.

GW: Yes.

OM: Later years even, we would get a lot of guys up from Maryland to work on the boats in the springtime because there was not any work down there for them.

FS: Yes.

PM: Now, George, as I have been doing these interviews with different people from Bivalve and Shell Pile and Port Norris, just about everybody has a nickname. So, your nickname is Babe.

GW: That's right.

PM: Is it okay to ask you how you got that name?

GW: Because I was the youngest one in the family.

PM: Oh, there you go, youngest in the family.

GW: There were twelve of us, eleven boys and one girl.

PM: Really, in your family?

OM: That poor girl. [laughter]

PM: Was she the oldest, the youngest, or somewhere stuck in the middle?

GW: She was three years older than me.

OM: Wow.

FS: Three years older than you?

GW: Yes.

PM: Were you the oldest?

GW: No, I'm the youngest one.

PM: Oh, that is right. You said you were the youngest [inaudible].

GW: I'm the youngest one.

FS: [laughter]

PM: My goodness. Do you have any brothers and sisters still living?

GW: No one but me.

PM: You are the only one left?

GW: I'm the only one.

PM: God bless you. God bless you.

GW: All have died but one from the eighty-five. Every one of them, but me.

PM: How about that?

FS: [inaudible]

PM: What do you attribute your long life to? No smoking, no drinking? [laughter]

FS: No smoking and drinking. I quit. I stopped smoking when I was twelve and I quit twenty-two years ago. I was new to drinking then and I quit that twenty-five or thirty years ago.

PM: [laughter]

OM: Do you think it had anything to do with eating a lot of oysters [inaudible]?

GW: Oh, I think so. [laughter]

GW: I worked [inaudible]. The [inaudible] caught me eating the oysters [inaudible]. [laughter]

PM: Freddie, are any of your siblings still around and living?

FS: No. They're all gone, but me.

PM: Really?

FS: Yes, I'm the only one left.

PM: Were you the youngest or...

FS: No, I'm in between.

PM: You are in between?

FS: Yes. I'm older than the rest of the girls. I think I have one brother. I'm older than him, Junior. He would've been the baby.

PM: Yes. I am the oldest of five. Of course, you ask about liking the position you were in your family. The oldest is like, no, no. They hated being the oldest. I had to take care of all them, brothers and sisters.

FS: Yes. [laughter]

PM: But my youngest brother who was the baby, he did not like being the baby either because nobody would let him grow up. [laughter] Let me see. Do you have any stories about some of the guys that you have worked with or some of the places you have worked, some interesting stories?

FS: They treat me good. Everybody [inaudible]. I always liked them. They always liked me.

OM: Any bad storms, any bad accidents, anything like that?

FS: No. I've been in a hurricane in 1950. Yes, I remember that.

OM: Do you remember that being all flooded out?

FS: Yes.

PM: That was Hazel, was it not?

FS: Hazel, yes. When I had my third baby, I think, third child during (the Hazel time?).

PM: Wow.

OM: That storm was so bad. There was so much water in town that you could use a rowboat on

Main Street in Port Norris. They had to reopen down the street in a rowboat.

FS: Yes.

PM: This area has been pretty lucky with not being devastated with a lot of hurricanes.

FS: Yes, you're right.

OM: Especially lately.

FS: Yes, yes.

PM: Yes, yes. How about you, George? Do you have any good stories?

GW: No.

PM: No? None that you would put on tape, is that right? [laughter]

FS: I don't think so.

PM: Is there anything you want to ask me about the Bayshore or what we are doing? I am just going to ask you just a couple of more things about your family. What kind of traditions did you celebrate in your family that you kind of carried that your mom and dad kind of passed down to you?

FS: We had a couple of family reunions, something like that. Get everybody together. We come down and have a good time and all of that.

PM: Did you do anything special like at Christmas or Thanksgiving?

FS: No.

PM: What kind of food did you have, special occasion?

FS: (I packed?) everything. We had barbecues. Then some people bringing this and some bringing that, bringing this, bringing that, any food.

PM: What was your favorite?

FS: Well, I was never choosy. [laughter]

PM: If it's on a plate, you eat it?

FS: Right, yes.

PM: How about you, George, about some good old family recipes and food? What were some

of your favorites?

GW: My favorite was mashed potatoes and spinach. [inaudible] [laughter] I ate more spinach than Popeye.

FS: [laughter]

OM: Wow. (There is not?) too many people who loved spinach. Wow.

PM: Did you have gardens?

FS: Yeah. [inaudible] every year.

PM: Yes?

FS: Yes.

PM: What kind of things did you raise in it?

FS: Spring beans, (berries?), cabbage, strawberries, peas, sweet corn.

PM: Did you put them up? You and your wife put them up?

FS: Yes. I cut corn off the cob like that.

PM: Oh, that is my favorite with limas.

FS: Yes, with lima beans.

PM: Pole limas.

FS: Pole limas. Yes.

PM: I freeze them up. Then Thanksgiving Day comes, none of my children could stand the lima beans and corns. That is just fine. That whole bowl is just for me. [laughter]

OM: Him and his brother always had real big gardens up there. (I can always remember him?) saying that. So, [inaudible] you could (buy?) your house all the time then, a big old corn out there all the time?

FS: Yes.

OM: Now, Freddie did not mention it, but (it means?) he is a Shiloh Baptist. I know he can sing good, and one of his favorite things is singing. That has got to be if he is a Shiloh Baptist. [laughter]

OM: As a kid, my house was just over on the other side. I used to walk over there at night-times and the windows would be open. Well, I will tell you one thing, piano players could really take away the keys, (get going?) He [inaudible] half a dozen in the choir. Boy, did they raise that roof, practicing and stuff.

PM: I like that. I like that.

OM: They could really sing. The [inaudible] are really good. They are from that church, but yes.

PM: Well, I want to thank you, gentlemen, very, very much.

FS: Thank you.

PM: I might invite you back to see once I find out what I have got there, and I might still have some more questions for you. So, maybe we will get together and chat again, okay?

FS: Okay.

PM: So, thank you very, very much.

FS: Thank you. You're welcome.

PM: I certainly do appreciate the time you gave me.

FS: You're welcome.

PM: Thank you.

[end of transcript]