

John Kochiss: Today is February the 11th, 1981. I am John Kochiss. We are at the Suffolk Marine Museum. It is a Wednesday. We have our regular group, but some of our aircraft are missing. However, we have a newcomer who will be introduced shortly. We give our name to identify our voices so that whoever listens to this will know who's talking.

Molly Locker: We have our old memory. I'm (Molly Locker?) from West Sayville, the man with the golden memory.

Adrian Hook: Adrian Hook from West Sayville.

Walter Budd: Walter Budd, born in West Sayville, 1909.

JK: Good.

Charles Hook: Charles Chalk from Bohemia.

JK: He is the second time here.

Harwin Hook: Harwin Hook, West Sayville.

JK: Would you want to sit here?

WB: No, May.

JK: May? What is this? Your birthday, did you say?

WB: Seventeenth of May.

JK: Seventeenth of May, your birthday?

WB: 1909. I'll be 72 this year.

JK: Again, I did not get your first name.

WB: Walter.

JK: Walter. You say you were related to the De Waals?

WB: Yes. My great-grandfather was one of the first settlers, Gabriel De Waal. He had, I think, four sons and two daughters. See, Johnny [inaudible] mother was Aunt Helen, and then (Coba Quake's?) wife was another aunt. Then my Uncle John, Uncle Gabe –Gabriel, his name was – and Uncle Cornelius that lived on [inaudible] Case. My grandfather was Jacob De Waal. Then my grandmother's side, their name was Tucker. Uncle Whitt, he was 91. He still rode a bicycle. My grandmother's brother, the only brother they had. Then, let's see, who was the other Aunt? My Aunt Vanessa's mother, Aunt Nelly, and Aunt May. My grandmother was Jane, Aunt Jane. I think that's all they were.

Male Speaker: Well, what is her name? Aunt Colson.

WB: Yes, Aunt Bell, that's right. Colson.

MS: I think Colson in there somewhere.

WB: Yes, Aunt Bell. She married Jack Colson.

MS: We're all related.

WB: Yes, sure.

JK: Are you related to John Tucker over here?

WB: Cousins.

JK: Cousins?

WB: Yes. You mean John lives across? Yes, sure. Cousin.

MS: He used to live right across the street.

WB: Where John lived, right across the street is where we were all born. My grandfather's house, my mother and aunt were born there. He had no son. So, when I came along, I was just like his son. I had two sisters, Janice and Bernice. He told me stuff when I'm just 10 years old and 8 years old. I don't know. We must have been on the same wavelength. [laughter] Because, golly, I can remember just like now, all this stuff. It's all to the good. You see when you're going on the bay or hunting and all that stuff, that's right up my alley. He was a wonderful man.

MS: We didn't like school, but we could remember [laughter].

WB: Yes, I could remember right. [laughter] Yes, that's right.

JK: You did not like school too much.

WB: I quit school, third year high. I was going to graduate in June. There were so darn many oysters on the reef. I had to quit and go oyster. [laughter] I just couldn't stand it. [laughter]

MS: You remember coming out?

WB: That's right.

JK: So, you went on the bay. You have your own boat, or you worked for somebody?

WB: Well, I was with my grandfather quite a while. Then I went with various different people.

JK: What boat did your grandfather have then?

WB: The *Mini J*, the name of it was.

JK: Was she a sloop?

WB: A catboat. There were several of those catboats around. Boss Brewer had one, remember? I can't remember all of them, but there were quite a few of those catboats and quite a few sloops, [inaudible] had a sloop, Brent, all of them, [inaudible] Frank Cedar. What was – Brownie?

MS: Walter Brown.

WB: Walter Brown, [inaudible] Lander, and John Tucker. Old John had a sloop. We used to leave Monday mornings to go west, to go sail up, see, Sundays. We'd live on a boat all week. Then we'd come back Friday afternoon. That, to me, as a kid, boy, that was just like a honeymoon. I couldn't wait for summer to go and do that. I had me a little pair of tongs that had teeth. It was a great way to grow up.

JK: Was the catboat a better boat to tong from and work from than a sloop?

WB: No, it didn't make any difference. Actually, a sloop might've been a little better because you had a bowsprit. If you're swinging a lot, you could layer on there. You wouldn't shear so much back and forth. But they worked all right, bay boats, no problem.

JK: Why did they have a catboats then?

WB: Well, just how they happened to want them or buy them. It cost him \$550, he told me, brand-new.

JK: Who built it? Where was it built?

WB: I'm not sure, Baker. I'm remembering Baker Brothers. I'm not sure.

MS: Then there was Wicks.

WB: Yeah. The Wicks built, more or less, racing boats.

JK: Like Bishop?

WB: Bishop, he built boats. Beside Bishop, that's another. Baker built my grandfather's. That was quite a boat. He had a sail, the center board in there. He had a little gasoline [inaudible] motor, eight horsepower, two cylinders, and no reverse gear. This is making breaks. They stop. [laughter] Boy, she'd go bung, bung, bung. I'll never forget it. You had to adjust the needle valve on a boat or on a car or anything, if she's running too rich or too lean? He had a mark on the floor where that needle valve had to be. So, he had to have a range where that had to be [laughter] to make it go right. Imagine this. I remember all this. I can remember him so good.

MS: The igniters on them thing or something.

WB: Yes. They wouldn't work. There were no spark plugs to make them break. You had to take them off and file them a little bit and turn them down maybe an inch of a turn so they'd hit against the igniter that would make them fire. We had –what was it? Eight cell battery or dry cell batteries. They got their six dry cell batteries electric system from. It had a bridge port, lead stroke, [inaudible], and what other?

JK: Box?

WB: They had Old Palmer. He'd want to come to the dock. No matter which way the wind was, he'd let her go and put the switch off. He'd figure so you hit that dock. You wouldn't break an egg. There were guys with good boat.

JK: Did he use power mostly, or did he use a sail?

WB: Well, when he could use sail, he wouldn't use power because them days even, gasoline cost money. You had to live conservatively.

JK: Were there many auxiliaries in there?

WB: Oh, yes. Everybody used to do that. Some people would go to Babylon. We'd go to Islip, some to Bay Shore. Most of those people, you remember, from West Sayville to Sayville, go up Monday morning and come home Friday. Vanderburg's come alongside. They used to come every day and buy your clams. They'd tie up alongside and buy your clams. Then Friday afternoon, we had to come back. Of course, it was no good if you didn't know how to swim because it took you a little while longer to get home.

MS: Smitty used to have a 10-cent basket, we called them. He'd come down on a Monday morning with a big hand of bananas in the back of that bed. We used to have banana sandwiches.

WB: There you go.

MS: Yes, that's what we had, banana sandwiches.

WB: That's rough going [laughter].

MS: He said, "My grandmother lived off the fat the land." He said, "Lemonade every day."

WB: Yes, you said it. My grandmother used to make great big loaves of bread every Saturday, homemade bread. We'd take that with us on the boat, see. I don't know. Somehow, she'd dry up a lot of meat, and we kept it. It didn't spoil. Because we had no ice. We had no refrigeration. We had a little stove. We'd cook on the boat. As a kid, I loved it. I mean, this was great.

MS: [inaudible] used to make loaves of bread. It used to be about that long and that high.

WB: Yes, that's right. Every Saturday she'd make bread. Then she'd make some rolls too. Somehow or another, we always had baked beans and then fresh rolls. That was sort of a custom

to have Saturday lunch or something. Talk about the good old days. They were. We shot ducks, killed deer, pheasants, quail, rabbits, catch eels. We never bought potatoes. We'd trade the potato farmers for clams or something. We never bought a potato. But we lived good.

MS: We were poor, but we always had plenty to eat.

WB: Always had enough to eat. God, sometimes they snow out a hundred ducks in the snowbank around the house. You want a pair? Take them out, lay them on the furnace, throw them out, pick them and clean them. Nowadays you wish you had a couple. [laughter] That's right.

MS: His grandfather, in the wintertime when the bay froze up, they used to go gunning. Then they'd sell the ducks.

WB: Yes. That was legal, market gunning. It was legal. They'd go over to East Island, see. Well, East Island, did you know where that was? That's going now, Cedar Island, beautiful big island, cedar trees. They'd run the boat, the *Mini Jay*, in there, in the southeast side. It was a little hole at that point. They lay there all winter, get froze in. About from here to the wall in the island, they dug a hole. It was fresh water there. They had one of these pipes in there. It filtered that good. It was good fresh water. But each day, while winter, when they went to bring the ducks back he shot, he'd pick back with a little scooter. They had runners under it, and sails if it was wind. You'd sail back and sell them and then go on back again. Live on the boat. They had a coal fire in there. But, of course, it had to be a little rugged once in a while, [laughter] but that's what they did.

JK: Well, there wasn't much room in the *Mini Jay*. [inaudible] was it?

WB: No, just two people, him and another person. No head room. He had to go this way. [laughter] They had their bunks in there. They had their blankets. They had their little coal stove going. During the night, if it got cold, they'd shake her up, make it a little warm again. But they lived that way. He used to take gunning parties when battery shooting was going on. He was booked up every day.

JK: When did market gunning end?

WB: I think it was in 1918.

JK: Oh, that is early.

WB: Maybe I'm wrong. I think around 1918, when they couldn't sell ducks anymore. Of course, they used to kill them anyway. Then you sold them to everybody else.

MS: Sold them anyway.

MS: You never did help.

WB: Hell, no. We used to go in East Island...

MS: I'm making him confess now.

WB: We shoot ducks in March. We all done rig out. There was nobody to bother. Like game, we did it for fun.

MS: [inaudible]

WB: No, we did it for food. Let's face it. That stuff is put on earth for food. You don't overdo it. You don't kill one thing you don't use. Who would ever shoot a seagull? But you shoot something that's edible and help put food, meat on the table. Grandfather ate steak all winter long. He thought it was steak. It was deer meat all the time. [laughter] So, he was very strict, religious. He wouldn't hurt a soul. He wouldn't do nothing wrong. He was a good man. I was not that good. [laughter] We kept the food. We kept the meat on the table. [laughter] He used to eat steak. He didn't know where the hell it came from. [laughter] It's true. We lived in paradise, but we did. We sure did. Later years, see, I got to running my boat to Florida while I went back and forth there.

JK: You mean you from here, you would take a gun?

WB: Yes, every winter. After gunning season, well, the first thing, they stopped their gunning. This pretty lady there looking at me. But the first they stopped us shooting. They cut the limits and cut the season. So, it didn't afford me to stay here and take gunning parties all winter like we used to do. Then I got to go to Florida on December 1st.

MS: Then they'd done away with battery shooting.

WB: Yeah. Then we used these little white scooters, see. Boat 's painted white about as long as this table, with a little comb around. You'd put a white suit on. My grandmother used to make it for them. They've got a camp and a white hat that come under your chin. You'd tie it. Then you'd shoot – rig out the decoys. Then you'd get the scooter up, wind a little to one side, and the ducks come over. It worked pretty good. We'd killed a lot of birds. But that's the only thing you could do to get around a battery shooting. See, you had no additional weight. That was the way the law read. That's the way we'd take parties in, put them in scooters. We had scooters held two people in singles, but most of them would go two to one. You'd lay in there. If it was chilly, you'd had the big boat laying up the head anchored. I had a little boat, 20-foot tender. Go down and pick them up. Then you'd change people in the boat with whoever were shooting. If they killed some, you'd go down and pick them up and bring them back to the big boat, see. We always had hot meals. We'd have breakfast and serve lunch on the boat. All for \$25 a day. [laughter] That's all we got. Yes. Everything was relative. That was good money then.

JK: So, you have been dealing with the public and fishing and hunting and everything since you were...

WB: That was my mother's side.

JK: On your father's?

WB: My father's side, they were all railroad people. My grandfather, the same name as me, Walter E. Buddy, was a conductor on a railroad. My father was an engineer. Two or three other uncles were either engineers – (Joe Osborn?), the Osborn. He married my father's sister. He was an engineer. Sonny, his name was Abrams, and he was a conductor. They were all railroad people. But on my mother's side, they were all following the water. And that's what I like to do. So, that's what I kept on trying to do.

JK: Gabriel De Waal

WB: That was my great-grandfather.

JK: He had a number of boats. Do you remember the names of those? Do you remember seeing them or anything?

WB: Well, no. My Uncle John had a boat. This is his son, my great-grandfather's son. John De Waal had a boat in Greenport, a schooner called the *Annie G*. Uncle Gabe, that was Gabriel Jr at that point. You know Uncle Gabe?

MS: Yes, sure, I remember. He had Carmen one time.

WB: He ran the *JH Still* that's from Rudolph. Yes, through Rudolph. Uncle Casey, he had a clam boat. He had a boat called – gee, I can't think of the name. He had a catboat just like my grandson, same kind boat.

MS: I can't think of the name of her. He used to take out parties. I can remember they had a party down to Smith Point. They got caught in squaw down there. The women were frantic. He said to the women, "Well, the worst is yet to come." They were really upset.

WB: Scared them.

MS: He told them, "Well, go home and change your clothes." He had a sense of humor. I can never forget that.

WB: They lived on West Street, Uncle Casey, right here next to [inaudible] house on the north side.

MS: The oyster dealers in Holland.

WB: Yes, sure. They were in the oyster business. Sure. I think they came from Zeeland, the province of Zeeland. I don't know other provinces over there. I don't know all of them. But they came from Zeeland. They were in the oyster business over there. They used to catch set on these little boxes. They had plaster parts on them. When they'd set, they had all these boxes planted. They'd take a petty knife and push them on single. That's the way they used to do it. Of course, look at the work involved, but that's the way they did it.

MS: My brother John used to over go with Gabe [inaudible] on West Street over here. There sets he, "he says, "there sets Captain Cornelius De Waal." [inaudible] I got stuck up to my eyes.

He says, "There sets Jenny [inaudible]," who is a dressmaker, dressmaker and all.

WB: Yes. That was his wife, wasn't it?

MS: I remember good.

WB: That's another generation. My Uncle Cornelius' son, Bill and Nathan and Anna, and who else? Three?

JK: Gabe De Waal?

WB: Yes, but he is from my Aunt Beck. No. Oh, he had a Gabe. Oh, that's right. He was on the railroad.

MS: [inaudible] Him and my brother John used to pass. Then they had another older girl too, but I just can't think of her name. Can you think of her name?

JK: What was it, De Waal that lived on Brook Street?

MS: That was Gabe De Waal. He had three children.

WB: Uncle Gab, my grandfather's youngest brother. He had Evelyn and Virginia and Clarence. Clarence, later on, he got with MGM, with a movie. He was in a movie business. He married one of the Schubert's, you know, Schubert Theater. Yes, Clarence, that was Uncle Gabe's oldest, well, the only son he had. He had married a Schubert. Virginia's still alive. They live in Baldwin. But we are going through these generations so fast. I tell you.

MS: Virginia is about my age, right? We went to school together.

WB: That's right. Evelyn was an older daughter. Aunt May was their mother. Her name was May.

MS: They used to live in the old School. But Gabe, like you said, he ran the *Still* for Rudolph in the spring. He'd go take her over to the sound.

WB: They'd bring oysters for seed. They'd get little seeds from the sound around New Haven and Bridgeport bed and bring them through, fire around. They'd plant them here to get the growth. Well, they at least made a hundred...

JK: Did he just get it for Rudolph or for other people too?

WB: No. Mainly Rudolph had a share on the boat. He ran it for him. So, that was mostly for him. Other boats, big schooners ran for different company. Bill DeGraff, he had [inaudible].

MS: [inaudible].

WB: Ben Bishop had the *Amanda B*. All these big boats would come in here in the spring, like

in April. They'd plant oysters to replenish the beds for the fall. So, you didn't get the growth out of it. See, they were making a good night, 1,000 percent on growth alone.

MS: I'll tell you, Rudolph planted 1500 bushel on the lot in the West Channel, leave there six months. The following [inaudible].

WB: Yes, Fluff ran the schooner.

MS: Anywhere from 6,000 out to 6,500.

WB: Ninety-nine out of 1500.

MS: They paid \$1 a bushel for them. That was a good price, \$1 a bushel.

WB: Yes, those days.

MS: At that time, they were only getting \$4 a bushel for him. But just imagine the growth they got on there.

JK: He bought it for \$1, and he sold it for 4?

WB: Yes. But the growth, you see, they'd get ten times on the growth.

JK: In just a few months too.

WB: You can't imagine. They knew what we didn't.

MS: He had a gold mine in the West Channel.

WB: Yes. Those oysters were always good and fat there, in good condition. A lot of tide running along.

MS: Like I told you, he had ground off here, Rudolph. He stole from them. He stole from everybody else. That's why they chased him out here. [inaudible] in the West Channel.

WB: Sure. Well, seal ship blew points out some below there. They had a bunch of lots in there.

MS: Probably lots to sell [inaudible].

WB: Then the East Channel, Rogers had some, Frank Rogers. That was good area, good fat oyster.

MS: Rogers run very few oysters in here from the sound. He used to get a set down the beach [inaudible] every year. Then he had that ground on Smith Point. He dredged from the reef or Blue Point, all the way to Smith Point.

WB: He used Terry's bed too, didn't he?

MS: Sure.

WB: Well, see, that's what we used to do in the spring. When I quit school, we'd catch oysters in the East Bay, sell them to these shippers, we'd called them. These fellows bought oysters, Rudolph Vandenberg, and Fred Ockers. Then they'd plant them. God, they'd make at least 1,000 percent on growth. Of course, we got \$1. Then they'd try to get them cheaper.

MS: We sold them for 50 cents. They'd have to be running bushels too.

WB: They'd kicked the bushel basket, so you wouldn't [inaudible].

MS: [laughter] You don't want to leave that out.

MS: [inaudible]

WB: Fred Ockers was always good to me. I'll tell you, he's a good man. I sold him oysters. I wouldn't – why bother a man like that? He was a good man. So, you give him an honest bushel. He always was good with me as a kid growing up because I had to help take care of my family.

JK: You did that. You went to East Bay. You got the oysters here. Was that in your boat or the *Mini*?

WB: No, that was my grandfather's boat at the time. I didn't have a boat at that time.

JK: But you did that in the fall.

WB: In the spring.

JK: Oh, in the spring.

WB: We'd catch them in the spring. Sell them to these shippers. They'd plant them in the spring. Then they'd get the summer's growth on them until October, November. Then they'd catch them. Well, they had half shell at that time.

JK: But in the summer, you went, went west.

WB: We went west, clamming. The oyster season was over about June, wasn't it?

MS: You did have clam boat, that flat bottom thing.

WB: Yes. I bought that when I was 15 years old. I was running that towboat for Pete.

MS: Yeah. He runs [inaudible] from Greenport.

WB: There's another thing I did when I was a kid, 15 years old. [laughter] Pete Quake was a cousin of mine. He had three towboats. We'd bring sky loads of voices from Greenport to here and put them on board here for their winter's supply.

JK: Did you go through the Shinnecock?

WB: Oh, yes. We had no buoys at those times. We had a license stick. We'd paint a butter tub cover white. So, when it turned to night – we run day and night, see. You put a spotlight. Then you see your butter tub. Well, there's your rain. So, all through, we did that. But imagine a 15-year-old kid doing that today.

JK: You were in command of the boat?

WB: Yes. I ran a towboat, the *Ace*. He had three of them, the *Ace*, the *Jack*, and the *Salmon*. Pete, I went with him one fall to learn the route. In that spring, he let me run the *Ace*, a kid. But, gee whiz, I know how to do it.

MS: I'm telling you, some narrow too, when you sit down.

WB: Oh, you better believe it. You don't want to miss it. You'll go aground. Here comes that scowl at eighteen bushel of oysters plow right into you. Then you're in trouble. The rig and eight judges went with this boat for \$250. Would you believe it? Two or three anchors. That one had a single cylinder gas motor in it. That was one of them single igniter rigs.

JK: Well, that was not new, was it?

WB: No, no. It's been used. But the boat, it was an old boat.

JK: It was a flat bottom boat.

WB: Flat bottom boat. Had a centerboard in there, you could sail it. But later on, [inaudible] took that out.

JK: Where was this boat going?

WB: To Greenport. But for me it was all right. I made some money with that boat. To get it here, I tied it behind a scowl one time, coming up with load of oysters from Greenport, tied a bridal and towed her right on up, got her to West Sayville, had the mast laying on deck and all the sails. But can you imagine \$250? [laughter]

MS: She had a yellow point mast.

WB: Yes, that's right.

MS: I can remember who was stepping it.

JK: Now what was she designed for, built for, in the first place? Was she built as a working boat?

WB: It was built up in Greenport Bay, scallop boat, scallop sloop. Years ago, you used to see scallop sloops all over there, just like a sailboat race every fall. That was a big business. As a matter of fact, I can remember. I'm only a little kid. Remember seeing them sailboats?

Scalloping was a big industry. They had little buildings. They'd open scallop all along the shore, Jamesport, New Suffolk, Greenport, wherever. I was there, made winter work, scalloping.

MS: Everybody pitched in, women and kids.

WB: Yes. Everybody opened. Kids come home from school, they'd open. Their wives would open. The husbands would open when they get in. That's what they did. That was their livelihood.

JK: So, you bought one of those boats. That was not typical of the boats though, was it, flat bottom? Did you have a little cabin on it?

WB: Yes, had a cabin and the motor there. You had room for stove and had two hanging bunks, like pipe bunks in there. No, it was all rigged. Ready to go.

JK: What did you call her? What was her name?

WB: The *Finn*.

JK: The what?

WB: F-I-N-N. That was the name of it. I don't know where he got the name, but that was the name. They never did change it. But that was quite a boat.

JK: So, that was your first boat?

WB: First boat, I was 15 years old.

JK: You clammed with her, and oysters?

WB: Clammed, oysters, scalloped. See, we had scallops here once in a while. Got good scallops. Remember Annie [inaudible] used to run the shop for me? If he needed more opening, he'd get them. If he didn't, he'd do it himself. But all I'd do was catch. Well, we all did that. Everybody did it.

MS: There wasn't too many of them boats up here.

WB: No, no, there wasn't.

MS: You know the boats like Walter had, what they used to use them forty years ago? If Ben Hawkins was here, he'd tell you. They used to use them for logging boats. They used to run wood on them boats through the bay here and take it to New York, horse wood.

JK: What made those boats different than other boats?

MS: Because it didn't go much water.

MS: Shallow water.

WB: See this boat? Only 2 feet of water.

MS: Didn't draw the water.

JK: How long was she?

WB: Thirty-four feet.

MS: It was an overgrown shark.

WB: Yes. But would you believe it, after [inaudible] took that center board out, we kept that boat tight. She didn't leak. I'd fill a hole full of oyster lots of times. She kept free. She didn't leak. It's amazing, that type of hole that it didn't, but it was all right. I mean, I made a lot of money with that boat.

MS: The West Channel and Dixie channel, that number five buoy, that's where we'd cull.

WB: That's right.

MS: [inaudible]

WB: Just visualize catching 500 bushels of oysters with 20-foot handles, two people in one day.

JK: One day.

WB: We did it.

MS: [inaudible]

WB: Yes. Just grab them and pull them up, a tong full of oyster. You couldn't get the teeth together and dump them.

JK: Oh, my God. That was unusual, was it not?

WB: Yeah, unusual. But then I still had that old single cylinder. From that money, Jimmy knew a guy up Murdoch, in [inaudible], had a two-cylinder [inaudible] for sale. So, I took \$100 and bought that motor. Made it in one day. Them days, \$100 in one day was something else. We used to get four or \$5 a day, was big. So, when we made that a hundred, I put her right in the engine. Jimmy knew that it was a good little ten-twelve [inaudible]. Well, that was a good motor. That was all different.

JK: Were you in your teens?

WB: Yes, 17 at that point.

JK: Then what did you do after you after this? How long did you work with this boat, the *Finn*?

WB: Well, I had to get a new boat built. So, I built my other boat. That was on a big bay boat, different type. That's when Pete, we switched over, and the *Ace* fell apart, the towboat we were talking about. So, Pete says to me, "If you put a towing bid in, I'll give you a job towing again, like it did." So, I said, "Gee, why not?" So, the first work I did with that new boat was tow oysters back and forth from Greenport.

JK: What was the name of this new boat?

WB: *Marjorie Budd*, that was my first wife's name. Marjorie Budd.

JK: B-U-D-D.

WB: Yes, that's my last name, Budd, but Marjorie [inaudible]. I named her that. We towed, would you believe, 50,000 bushels of oysters? 50,000 bushels in ten weeks, from Greenport to West Sayville.

MS: Day and night they were running.

WB: We'd make three trips a week. You couldn't do anymore. You couldn't have more time. We'd leave here like 4 a.m., run all through the bay, get to Greenport, possibly noontime. They'd come with them, big steamers, load them off. We'd start back maybe 4:30 p.m.. Keep on coming, go through the locks, through Shinnecock, [inaudible] South Great Bay. We'd get here just maybe 4:35 a.m. This was all night work. Imagine when it gets foggy and stuff like that. We did it. Then I'd go get fill her up with gas. They'd take the scowl behind the steamer and shovel moldboard on a lot. Soon as we got loaded with the gas, I get some groceries, back we go again.

JK: How old were the oysters that you were transplanting?

WB: Just size mediums. Mostly all medium. They'd throw them here.

MS: Four-year-old oysters.

WB: Automatically, they became blue points.

JK: Is that not funny?

WB: They hit the water. They're blue points. They're ready for green points.

MS: Automatically. You got it right.

WB: That's right. As soon as it happened...

MS: That's a good word for it [laughter].

WB: So, they came out of here, blue point oysters.

JK: I understand Jake Ockers and a number of other oystermen along here were responsible for the digging of that the Shinnecock Canal for the very purpose that you were transferring...

WB: No, no. Southampton Town did that. Because you get an easterly wind before the inlets were there, before the Moriches inlet was there, and Shinnecock Inlet was there. You'd get a northeaster for three days. There wouldn't be any water in those bays. That always was a little canal. But it would come shoot Peconic in through there.

JK: It would be a natural.

WB: Yes, natural, but then on the other side, it would go the other way. The Southampton put that in there just to hold the level up in Shinnecock Bay. Six hours later, now there's a difference with the inlet. It's six hours difference in Shinnecock Bay for high water or low water, and Peconic. Then it reverses itself the other way. They got the locks tapered this way. So, it can come through Peconic. And when it starts falling in Shinnecock, they automatically go shut. So, that holds the level up in Shinnecock Bay.

JK: Like a check valve.

WB: Yeah. It is.

JK: What is the level about?

WB: There's a difference in level, 4 feet. But we used to construe it there with those scallops with a tide running when them gates were open. You want to be careful. You had to do it right because when you come through, the locks are this way, and the canal is this way. We had them bridled up short with the bridles. You have to give them about 6 more feet. You come down along that east canal and then let it go this way. So, you didn't hit those locks. You'd sink your scowl. You flushed everything. But we did it. We come right on through. Pete used to, before we come through head first, he used to stop with a jack. He had two motors. He'd be way up ahead there. He'd back them through. Let the tide take you through easy. He was a good boatman. He'd get that right. Then he'd back up a little. She was a little bit to one way or the other, he'd let her just drift through with the tide. Then he got through the railroad bridge. You had to go around and get going the other way again.

MS: The railroad bridge isn't far from there either.

WB: No, no. That's before. When I first went with him, the Shinnecock Bridge wasn't there. That Bay Bridge wasn't there. They just built that later.

MS: Now it's all changed down there.

WB: Yes, all changed.

JK: Only an outboard motor or a little motorboat go through. That's about it?

WB: Now? You can go through now. Now, big boat can go. Oh, yes, they locked you through.

JK: They locked you?

WB: Oh, yes, they got lock under this area, twenty-four hours a day. In fact, in the summer, those guys are worked to death. I bet 500 boats a day go through that lock. They're glad when the tide is coming from Peconic. So, the gates are open. Because otherwise, they used to work them manually. Now they work them with electric.

MS: Kind of interesting to stand there and watch them.

WB: When we used to come through lots of time with the scowls, I know the lock tender, Joe Warner and Harry Hand and those guys. Well, they'd shovel all the oysters off they wanted right on the locks, fifteen, twenty bushels. [laughter] They didn't give a damn. [laughter] They had oysters all winter because they'd shovel them over on the other side. [laughter] We all did it. Nobody cared.

MS: [inaudible] did care. What's the difference?

WB: Wouldn't do him any good if he did. [laughter]

JK: Now what years was this that you were doing this? 1920s?

WB: I was 17 years old now. When did I get that boat, Bill? [19]37, 1937. Remember? Walter Lightner, he built a lot of boats. He built the *South Bay*. He built one for...

MS: [inaudible]

WB: He built *Honest* boat. He built Paul Segal's. He built [inaudible].

MS: It's still around.

WB: Is it?

MS: Yes, up the creek.

JK: Where was his yard?

WB: Right on the creek. Who owns that building now?

MS: Well, when he built your boat, he was on this side of the road. He was on this side of the road. They had the shop. They moved over there. Now it's a co-op.

WB: Walter Lightner, he built a lot of boats. He did a good job.

MS: He was a good boat-builder.

WB: You better believe it. My boat, would you believe , was all full-length planks, 38-foot-6. There was not a bug in that boat. *Honest* too. 40-foot yellow pine plank. He made those boats. You can't get that today either.

MS: I helped [inaudible].

WB: Oh, well you helped too on my boat too, remember?

MS: I helped. We spread the timbers and stuff into it. Then he built a boat for probably the name of Pickens.

WB: Bill Pickens, the *All Hours*.

MS: It was a 65-foot boat, and he had full-length plank.

WB: Imagine that? They got it in Brooklyn from a lumber company. Cross Ireland is the name of the company, Cross Ireland in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. They got that lumber. Pickens had a big call, the *All Hours*, remember?

MS: Sure. We tell you that boat of Pickens, we got the keel for her up in the Quorum, up in Davis's farm in Quorum. That was an old tree. That thing was that big around. We went there. They cut that tree down, was 65 feet straight up, never had a branch on him. Old Jim Davis pulled that out of that swamp with a...

WB: Was he the house mover?

MS: Yes.

WB: Kurt Davis was his son.

MS: Pulled that out of that swamp and around them trees, gone down there. You know them old trucks he used to have? He took that tree and put on two of them. He put that and hoisted that on...

WB: He was a character.

MS: We took it to Bailey's mill, and Pat George

WB: Had it cut out.

MS: We were talking about a pretty site. They had a railway there and a sawmill.

WB: Carrier.

MS: Boy, that big slab of oak, 2 inches thick, that saw cutting. You see that big, big one. You know that bark was that thick too.

WB: For heaven's sake.

MS: He got all the wood, the oak wood for the stern, the stem, everything.

WB: Out of one tree.

MS: All under one tree. What a beautiful piece. If you could see that, it was a pleasure to see them saw that tree.

JK: Whatever happened to your boat?

WB: The first boat?

JK: Well, either boat.

WB: Well, the first boat I had, the one I got from Greenport. I had it for a long time. Then I sold it to Charlie Peppard. Charlie Peppard bought it. I don't know what he did with it. I don't know after that.

MS: Went to graveyard.

WB: Yes. I don't know why. I had my new boat built then. We called the *Marjorie Budd*. Then I did a lot of towing work with Pete. Then later on,, well, I took shooting gun parties, that boat, shooting ducks.

MS: Did you not have a piece put in the middle of her, 2-foot?

WB: No, no, no. I put a forward cabin over the hole. See, I took the hatches away and put another cabin to make more room, had the stove down there for winter gunning. I took fishing parties, tuna fishing, in that boat. We caught tunas and marlin, everything.

JK: So, you got all your boat experience here in Long Island, for the charter trade down in Florida.

WB: Well, I started charter. It was like in its infancy. We used to see, we'd call them these wealthy old people. They'd have a yacht. They'd have a captain. They'd go fishing. The captain had to have a hat on. He had to have a uniform. Holy mackerel. They'd go down the West Channel, anchor, go weak fishing. Then some of them would go offshore looking for tuna and stuff.

MS: He could smell swordfish.

WB: I caught quite a few.

JK: What happened to that boat, that second boat you had?

WB: Oh, she's in Nassau right now.

MS: She's still living.

WB: Hardis Thompson, he was working in the aeronautical division in Nassau, bought my boat, that old boat. When he bought it, she still had the four-cylinder Palmer motor in it. Do you know him?

JK: I have heard of him though.

WB: Yeah, he bought it. He uses it for his own use. Mainly what they do, like in the middle of September, they open a dove season on Andros Island. They don't kill these doves. They got white wing doves. They're a little bigger. By the million. They used to have a hundred a day limit. But why have a limit, for heaven sakes, for a hundred of that? [laughter] We used to go there the middle of September, down at Fresh Creek, that's the middle of Andros, on the east side. They'd shoot them, doves, my God, well, a hundred limit.

JK: Who ate them?

WB: They had Natives picking them and cleaning them, putting them in ice right away. They had so many. They'd even keep the hearts and livers in a little separate pile. Imagine that. I tell you who else used to go there, the Phipps family, Denny Phipps. Do you know Ogden Phipps? You know of him?

MS: They're a very wealthy family. They owned part of Texaco. They owned the Jordan Marsh stores.

WB: They give the land for the Hunters Lighthouse. You heard the Phipps Estate of Oliver?

MS: Yes.

WB: They used to that a lot on his beach. Well, the Phipps, Denny's a good friend of mine. His is old man too, Ogden. They used to go there just to shoot dozen, middle of the summer.

JK: How did you get to go to Florida?

WB: Originally?

JK: Yes

WB: Well, I used to go down Christmas week or ten days on a vacation before we used to go north, shoot deer, and stuff like that.

JK: This is while you had your boat here?

WB: Yes. I used to go down. No, let's see, how was that? I ran out of Pointer Woods some summers. I had the boat over there to the stake, Nona hurricane. Remember? I met a friend of

mine. He come up from Florida to run a boat for a man, Abby Young, Cy Young. Cy Young gives a baseball trophy every year? Him, his family was there. Anyway, Brandon Knight from Pompano used to come in the summers. We became very friendly. What a nice guy. So, then I go down the winter and stay with him for a week. He had two or three charter boats. So, this was all new to me. He showed me a lot about it down there. He said, "Why don't you come on down and keep you busy?" So, later on, business got to be so you couldn't do much on the bay, oyster clamming. I had a rebuild into a charter boat, that same boat, with a cabin, with a flying bridge, with a cockpit. You remember how she was, with the chairs in it. Walter Greek made the first trip to fly with me when we went. Do you know him?

JK: No.

WB: Well, anyway, we went. He made it for me all that winter. From then on, I kept going back and forth.

JK: Do you go by the Inman waterway or on the outside half?

WB: Either way, I don't even need a chart.

MS: You don't need the chart no more.

WB: No, I don't. I ran two boats up last year, one from Miami, Atlantic City for delivery. This guy's going crazy. He says, "Here's all the charts." I say, "You don't need them charts." He couldn't believe it. So, anyway, we come up. I put them away. So, it was the middle of June. Labor Day, he called me up out in Florida. He says he didn't move the boat all summer. He out in Atlantic City marina, a big state marina, I believe in the middle of May, come right here, go flounder fish. Later on, they got this [inaudible] fish in [inaudible]. It's tremendous. One man would book me the last week in May and the first two weeks in June, every year. The name was Hans (Laslo?) from Charlotte, North Carolina. He was president of Regal Paper Company. He had a [inaudible]. So, we became great friends. He'd chartered me there, and fish or not, I was still covered. Sometimes we caught a lot of blue marines. We won that tournament three times, had 400, 600-pound fish, blues. He died four years ago. It's a darn shame. He was a nice guy.

JK: Now you are just up here visiting.

WB: Yes. My sister's getting married Saturday. So, that's the reason I came up.

MS: I have to tape that wedding.

WB: Do you? No kidding. You're going to hear the biggest smack when I kiss my sister.
[laughter]

MS: I'll have it turned up to hear. You'll see me in the control room.

WB: Yes. You'll be in the control room. [laughter] No, I was going to fly up, but I thought, gee whiz, I'm doing nothing particularly till the middle of March, and I got that much shorter over there. I want to drive. I stopped in Aberdeen. Remember I showed you that book? This friend

of mine make decoys there. Oliver's got it. He makes them by the hundreds. He makes them either commercially or – Harry Jobes. He does a good job. They were painting them the other night when I there. I stayed two days with him. He gave me a couple of geese, had them all cleaned.

MS: I had a lot of geese in Maryland. Most he ever saw.

MS: Where Clara lives, she married a Johnny Bergen from [inaudible]the Southside Club, the Gilberg do you know?

WB: Young Johnny went down. He goes down with somebody, shooting so many. You might keep that if you like it.

JK: Okay. What's the fellow's name?

WB: Harry, J-O-B-E-S, Jobes. He's in Aberdeen. 77 Baker Street is his address. I spent two nights with him on the way up. A nice guy. He's a hunter. You know what his kid, his son's doing now. He's setting nets on in the Chesapeake catching stripe bass right now.

MS: You were telling me on the telephone.

WB: They got 1,000 pound there before the bay froze up in one night. But they're only getting, would you believe, only \$1 a pound.

ML: You know that they were 2.5 a pound out there.

WB: Somebody's ripping them off, ripping them good because they set these nets. They're sink nets.

MS: With them lawn nets or something.

WB: His sons are doing it now. In fact, they was out the other day when I left there.

MS: Marine was telling me about Stanley. That net is 40 feet deep. It's white on top, white going on. Then it's got a strip of black on the center.

WB: That's funny.

MS: White on the bottom and then fish sink got – there's a hole in there, see. They go in there. They do all...

WB: Hit the black net.

MS: Sometimes every mesh has got fish. He had a very good two weeks about a month ago.

WB: Did he?

MS: They wouldn't doing anything great there. He was going to go down to Key West. They catch macro Key West. They call them kind of macro.

WB: Spanish macro.

MS: Yes, Spanish macro.

MS: Well, they had these two good weeks. Then they got that cold spell down there.

WB: Yes. Froze up everything tight right around Christmas

MS: The fish all went out to the Gulf Stream. The Marine said their net's 40 feet deep. But the gang out to the Gulf stream there, that's too far.

MS: Couldn't make it.

WB: You can't set there anyway, too much tide, too many rocks [inaudible].

MS: Then for a couple weeks, while they had that cold weather, they didn't do nothing.

MS: Well, Jerry Collins was down there. He was going to go fishing with Stanley Jerry.

WB: Annie Stanley's son-in-law?

MS: His son married Stanley's daughter.

WB: Yes, that's right. Jerry.

MS: He went down there. The last week he was down there, he was going to go with Stanley the whole week. They couldn't get out. Roads are god darn hard. They couldn't get out. So, Stanley, I think either Monday was going to go down to Key West because they was catching fish down to Key West.

WB: You get blown out there too in all directions in Key West.

MS: Go to Cuba if you don't watch out [laughter].

WB: I used to go there years ago when Batista was in power. I knew the guy owned a national casino. Who owned the desert in Vegas that group. We had some fun boy. We'd go over the last week in April. They had the Hemmingway tournament the first week in May. Then they'd finish that tournament. Then you'd take a week after the rest up. Well I'll tell you, there was something. [laughter]

JK: So, you have been dealing with the public and fishing and hunting since you were a little kid?

WB: I've been very lucky.

MS: He's a television star too.

JK: You are a television star?

WB: Yes. I had a field of baby's diapers [laughter] with Ivory Snow. You know those Ivory Snow commercials? Well, there was a couple guys and a girl come down behind the boat in Miami one time. Well, they screened quite a few people. They said, "How'd you like to do a television commercial?" I said, "That'd be great." [laughter] I'd done for nothing. I don't know. But when they got all through, I was lucky they picked me and another fella named Jimmy O'Neill. He's some SCA key, has a charter boat too. So, we had to hold these babies [laughter] and see which diaper was the softest.

JK: Oh, really, you were one of those guys? [laughter].

WB: You know the reason why they thought because you're a commercial fisherman, your hands are coarse you can't tell. [laughter]

JK: Was there a difference?

WB: Sure there was. This was no kidding.

JK: They do not pat it?

WB: No, no, no. This was real. We had to have several trial runs before they ever put this on before we ever auditioned this thing. We'd go in the room. Well, it was in the Golden Strand Hotel in Miami. They had a whole bunch of it, fifteen, twenty guys coming in who finally got that far in it. They'd put a blindfold. You'd feel one was rough. One was right. This one was a little softer. No kidding. I could tell. Really no big deal. Then this was a coarse one [laughter]. So, later on, they give us a voice test. I don't know, but finally, I got to do it. It worked pretty good.

JK: How long did that contract run?

WB: Well, it ran a year. Janice, my sister, said, "I see you more now than when you were home." [laughter] It would come right on after Search for Tomorrow.

JK: Up here too?

WB: Yes. All over the country. Oh, yes. People call me up from all over. What you doing? I ain't doing it.

JK: Did they identify you? [laughter]

WB: Oh, yes, definitely. Sure. They said, "This is Captain Budd and Jimmy O'Neill." But here's the way, finally we had to do it. They had two little babies, see. One had Ivory Snow put on the back of his diaper, and mine had detergent. Well, we finally had to sit on an old boat down below to keep his cane below Miami, all full of old lobster pots and fishnets. We sat on the boat. They were taking pictures. Then we were blindfolded. I had to feel this when Jimmy's

baby. I said, "Jimmy, that feels soft." "No," he said, "Captain, but that feels soft," he said. We went back and forth like that a few times.

JK: Did they tell you?

WB: No, they told us what to say. I said, "Jimmy, it's got to be that. That's the soft." With that, they held his baby up, took our blindfold off. That was Ivory Snow. Mine was detergent. Darn little devil wet me all over. [laughter] We had all khaki shirts and pants. Your hair all messed up. See, we had to look commercial. [laughter] So, here we go. We had to take a few more takes. I had no more khaki shirts. We waving it around to us for God sake. No food. [laughter]

[end of transcript]