

Nompumelelo Hlophe: So, my name is Nompumelelo Hlophe and I am with my colleague Ahmauri Alford, and I am a Georgia Southern student. I am here with Rob Todd conducting an oral history interview as part of the project Fishing Traditions and Fishing Futures. I have already received informed consent and permission to record from Rob Todd, but could you please confirm that I am allowed to?

Todd Robert: I Confirm all that.

NH: Thank you very much. So, we have some few questions for you, but just get to know each other, can you just tell us more about yourself? When were you born and where were you?

TR: Well, I guess you would say I'm a fourth-generation shrimp fisherman by blood, so to speak. I grew up doing it, and I do it in my off time. But I am currently a professor at Georgia Southern. But this is what I do in my off time, such as spring break and as you see me right now and during the weekend. I'm not much older than you all. I'm only twenty-seven. I chose to get into teaching for the retirement. My father looked at me and told me that he didn't want me doing this because the shrimping industry is a dying industry. There are numbers that support that and I can tell you that here later on. But with it, he wanted me to have a retirement, and I decided that the quicker I could retire and retire for sixty, I should have enough energy to do what I want to do, which is this. My great grandfather was one of the first ones to shrimp fish in the state of Georgia when it was commercialized. Shrimping has been around here for many, many years. In fact, McIntosh County first started in the seafood, more so with oysters. It was big in oystering before shrimping. In fact, African Americans were the ones that kind of kick started the shrimp fishing and all before it was industrialized, before people started using boats. They used things called stop nets, which is where they would take a straight net with weights at the bottom of the net, and they would use poles, and at high tide they would go in the creeks, wait out in the creeks and all, and stick the poles on each side of the creek. So, when the tide went out, whatever was in that creek would get caught in the net. Then they moved into having boats. Well, those boats were – they ended up using car engines, and when the times I'm talking about is before World War Two, well, those engines you could not go in reverse. So, you only had one way to go in. In fact, you had fishermen that would have to go in right at daylight and come in right before dark. Nowadays, you have fishermen that do different types of trip fishing and all. For my family and my part, we still do daily, day in and day out because we want to sell a product that the customers want. We want to sell them a product that we would eat. We use no preservatives. All we do is use pure ice, and the quicker we get them off the boat, the fresher that product is, and I went off on a tangent.

NH: [laughter] That is okay. So, can you please just tell me where did you grow up?

TR: I grew up right here in the Valona community in McIntosh County. Valona is one of the three shrimping communities here in McIntosh. You have Darien, Valona and Belleville, which is in the Crescent area.

NH: When did you get into fishing?

TR: I got into fishing at a real young age. My father started carrying me when I was in

kindergarten. There came a year when I was ten, and I spent many a day on the boat with him going out each morning, because at that point he just couldn't keep a crew. He had a trusty crew, and they decided to go find more stable work where they could have a, I guess we would say 401(k) and some kind of retirement and all. Being ten and being at that point working around him, knowing some of the things I could almost do at that age, what a man could do. Now, you're not supposed to do that. Because by law, you're supposed to be licensed and you're not supposed to shrimp fish technically until you're eighteen, because it is a hazardous workspace. So, I started at a real young age and I'm still in it. So, I guess I could say I've been around this my whole life, but I really fell in love with it over twenty years ago.

NH: You mentioned earlier on that you are teaching at Georgia Southern. So, with that schedule, how is your schedule like and then trying to fit fishing into it also?

TR: Teaching is probably one of the easier schedules to deal with shrimp fishing because your biggest time is during the summer. I know, like where I stand, I teach full time, but like this semester my full time is teaching all my classes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. That leaves my Tuesdays and Thursdays off to come down here. In fact, I was here just Thursday helping paint and such. When the summer comes around, we're on our second crop of shrimp, so to speak. You have your row shrimp, which are your white shrimp in the spring time of the year. Then during the summer months, we focus on our brown shrimp. They more so get up in the surf, and when I say surf, I mean where it's more shallow up toward the beaches, and then come the fall, around September, October, you deal with your third crop and you're dealing with your third different type, excuse me, which is your white shrimp. Again, they're not row shrimp, but it's the shrimp that were spawned in the spring from those shrimp that was carrying row and row as you know, is eggs.

NH: So, you mentioned twenty years ago is when you fell in love with fishing. What was that moment when you realized this was what you loved?

TR: When I was in kindergarten, I liked being with my dad. Being a shrimp fisherman, you don't really get – especially when you're working as much as you have to. You don't get much time to spend with your dad in the times you're not really in school and what have you. I mean, just like I said, the summer months. Well, the summer months is when students get out. So, it was a time for me to go spend with my dad. It was also a time for me to spend with my grandfather, passively, so to speak, because it was always a joy going up to the will or even the bunks on that boat, because this is not that boat. This is actually my grandfather's boat that my dad inherited and bought from him. But I could hear my grandfather who was fishing too, and it was me listening to both of them. I would say probably the day that I loved it was – I can't remember how old I was. There was a day I told my dad, "I'm going shrimping with you." He said, "No, son, you don't need to. There's going to be a Northeaster. Seas are going to be kind of rough. You don't need to go. You'll get sick," and I did, but I went anyway. My grandfather called over to the radio on him and said, "You need to carry that boy home. He's sick." Daddy said, "No, I am not doing it. This is the most shrimp I've caught all week. I told him not to come. He's going to learn." Well, I did, and as soon as we got back into the sound coming home that evening and my stomach was starting to settle and we were starting to calm off, it was one of those, I guess, I didn't die and it was still something different. One of the things, and I imagine

some have told you why they get into it, is because it's a whole different office view than what we're used to in the college area. You get to watch the sun come up every morning across a horizon with nothing blocking it. You get to watch the sun go down across the trees with nothing blocking it. It's amazing things you see out on the water, some things we take for granted. A lot of people freak out when they see dolphins by the boat, but us, it's a natural occurrence. Different people freak out when they see sea turtles. It's a natural occurrence just seeing those creatures around us, and that was one of the things that got me into doing it. It was something different. It was something I also looked at as it was a part of my family's history. I mentioned my great grandfather. What I also didn't mention was I had another great grandfather. My father is third generation, twice. Both of his grandfather shrimp fished. In fact, one of them migrated from North Carolina to shrimp fish. Here in Georgia. He was shrimping in North Carolina, but it was a little bit more profitable in Georgia, and the climate's a whole lot better than those cold winter days. So, my father is third generation twice, which I guess you would say I'm fourth generation twice.

NH: So, besides your great grandfather and your father, is there anyone else in your family?

TR: Oh, I could start and go on and on and on. The boat that you see going on the railway and all. The guy that owns it and was running it. That is my father's first cousin. Now, his last name is Sawyer. My father's last name is Todd. Both of them have the same grandfather, which last name was Sawyer. My father had no siblings that got into shrimp fishing. He's the only son. But the cousin, he had a couple brothers get into it and his father did it, and his father's siblings did it. My grandfather had siblings that did it. My great grandfather on the Todd side had many siblings do it. In fact, the Todd family was one of the families that jumpstarted the Meridian Shrimp Company. It's no longer in existence. In fact, they kind of handed it over to the Brandon family, and it went through two generations of the Brandon's and the Meridian Shrimp Company. You might know where it possibly is if you've ever been. This way is over toward where the Sapalo ferry dock is in Meridian. He sold Mr. Brandon, the younger one who happened to get it last, sold to the state of Georgia so that they could have that land for all their purposes and all. But for my family and all, we docked in Valona for before my dad could remember. I have pictures from other people now. You're probably not. I'm probably not going to give them because they're the people. I'll give you mine, but I'm not going to give you somebody else's stuff. But around – you can't see it. But when you get in the parking lot, there's a point and just around that point was another dock and it was another little shrimping area called Cedar Point. It's no longer in existence. In fact, the last shrimp boat that was there, it sank two weeks ago, and that's what you see on the barges, the pieces of it.

NH: Oh, yes.

TR: Yes. That was a shrimp boat that sunk two weeks ago. When the dock we were at, the family decided not to do shrimping anymore and to get rid of the shrimp boats. We came back over here to Valona, where my grandfather started shrimping. So, it kind of brought it full circle a little bit that we're back to where he was. It's interesting you're on this one, because this is a vessel that my grandfather had built in 1973. In fact, I can point at different original parts to the boat that are still intact. Things aren't supposed to last in the salt water weather that long. Now, my father has it, and my goal would be for me to have it. Even though shrimp fishing is dying, I

might could get into the realm of getting the license and be able to take people to show what actually happened, similar to the Georgia Bulldog, or possibly just take the rigging off and I'll have just a nice yacht.

NH: So, what is this boat's name and what is the influence behind that name?

TR: The name of this boat is the *Sundown* and the, I say, last one of the boats that my great grandfather had was named *Sundown*. Now, that was the very first boat that my grandfather ran. It was a single screw, meaning one engine. This boat has two engines. When they say screw, it means how many propellers are under the boat. We have two. It was a single screw. It was built in the county by the by a man named by Jack Ward. Now, that boat only pulled one net. We're talking about a single trawl. In 1960, they went to North Carolina and drove back another single screw that was bigger. It was sixty foot. The original *Sundown* was forty-five, maybe a little less than that, and it was to pull two nets. They named it the *Twilight* because they said he'll be in before dark. So, there was the *Sundown*, then the *Twilight*. In the early [19]60s, right after my grandpa or my grandfather or great grandfather sold the original *Sundown*, but it was financed, and somehow the boat caught fire right here at this dock. In fact, remnants of it are probably covered with mud, but they're right around the little curve right here, straight off the corner of the stern. I can show you if you ask. Remind me. Well, my grandfather inherited or got the *Twilight*. My great grandfather was, in a sense, disabled by the time he was forty-two due to heart attacks, and my grandfather ran the *Twilight* till 1973, when he had this one built. So, he had two boats, and then he decided to sell it in [19]76 because that's a headache trying to run two at one time. It's hard trying to get somebody to do things your way when you have a system. He had this one built. It was twin screw. In fact, I'll give you a piece of fishing history. The very first twin-screw shrimp boat to be built on the East coast was built right here in McIntosh County, at the back of my great grandfather's house. In fact, that is between here and that point I was talking about. A man named by Dan Colson built that boat. Different ones, even my great grandfather made the statement that the boat would run sideways because nobody had seen it. It happened to work. Everybody started trying to go more that way, for the most part, when they were building boats, because you didn't have to wait on somebody to pull you. If your engine messed up, you had another one to come home. Having twin screw also made your boat a little bit shallower. This boat you're standing on stands about sixty-seven feet long. It draws no more than five foot of water. So, let me put it in this perspective. You know how I talked about the brown shrimp? They get up in the surf. How tall are you? Because you're shorter than her.

NH: I do not know American terms.

TR: How tall are you?

NH: I am five three.

TR: You're five three. You're a little over five foot. So, just think, as soon as water would go over your head, this boat will sit there and you can drag the nets there. There are times that we've looked in the doors of the boat are forty inches high from bottom to top, and you know when they spread, they're going to spread wide. I'll put it this way. We've watched the top of the

doors come out the water, and we were still having water under the boat. Now, back to the name of the boat. Yes, I know I came off. In [19]73, when there was a name to be needed for the boat. My grandfather named it the first name that he ran. He ran the sun down first, and he named it after that, and the *Sundown* has been a name that has stuck with the family. As you see from my hat, when I do my filming, I go under Sundown Productions. I don't go under my name. I just go under that. Sundown is a close name to the family, and I'd be willing to bet if something knock on wood, that won't happen. If something was to happen to this one, there might be another one because it was a close family name. Now, you're about a week too late because the *Twilight* was brought back to this county. A fella bought it and it just got sold, but it was tied up at that same dock, and it was interesting to be able to look at the, I guess we call it the first boat my grandfather owned because he didn't own the *Sundown*. His daddy owned it. It was interesting to be able to see that and look at a boat that my dad grew up on. So, that's where that name comes from.

NH: Would you buy the *Twilight* if you had the chance to?

TR: It'd have to be for a real cheap price because the boat isn't in that good of shape anymore. Not many people put in the – and this isn't me bragging. This is me being legitimate. Not many people put in the time that my family, especially my father, has put in to keeping a boat in shape. A lot of people patch and you can't do that. A lot of people holler about shrimping getting hard and hard times. Well, one of the ways you compensate for hard times is putting in the time when you do have the money to take care of your equipment. There's a lot of people that when something happens on the boat during the shrimp season, they have to take a few days off to wait on a part or something. Well, my family, we always tried to have that part on hand. Then if we have to come in early, you come in early, but the very next morning at 3:00 a.m., you're right back to work.

NH: So, can you just explain to us, how is the day like, like the whole day when you go out shrimping? When does it start and when does it end? What do you do?

TR: That varies. For us, it all depends on how much shrimp we're catching. You never want – we're not going to shrimp or keep shrimping if we're not catching. That just isn't possible. Now, there are times, too, where you leave one area to go to another one, and it might take you an hour to get to that next area, but you're not going to stay somewhere and keep shrimping. For my family, we leave the dock anywhere between 2:30 a.m. to 4:30 a.m. All depends on daylight savings and all depends on the tide. Because if the tide is coming in, you got to buck the tide. If the tide is going out, you don't have to run so fast. There's a lot of people that do that day in and day out, and they leave after us. Well, I'm going to put it this way. In the county, boats that are owned in this county, this is the fastest one. Just the way it was built, the engines that are in it. My grandfather wanted power, and in fact, those engines were put in the boat in 1983. They're the same engines. They were just taken care of. You rebuild them when you have to. For us, there's a term when you put it in the corner, they're talking about taking the throttle right there and pushing it all the way to the dashboard. That's putting it in the corner. The farther you make – the harder you make that engine run. It's like your car. The more gas it'll burn, well for us, the more diesel fuel. So, we try to save a little bit of fuel to make it easier on the boat expense. You deal with ice. You deal with fuel. I know some people have freezer boats. We still deal with

ice. Some of you may have been curious. I don't know if they told you what they're building right there. Those new pilings they're driving. All the people standing there, they're fixing to put an ice facility right there. There was an ice plant. It was in Cedar Point, and this is the very first year that that plant has shut down. Part of that is due to the cost to fix everything that's been in there for seventy-six years. The other part is the fella that owns it has cancer. So, an ice facility that was here over seventy years ago that has been supplying ice to all these shrimp fishermen. They're having to find a new alternative, which is new places. So, day in and day out, we go out before daylight, and there have been times, too, where we might make one drag, we might make two drags and be in by lunch, but there's also days where we'll be in right around dinner, supper time, 5:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m. There'll also be days, too, where we'll come in about 9:00 p.m., 10:00 p.m. With those nights right there, I can guarantee you, you're going to go right back to bed or come right back to work when you go to bed. You go home, shower, eat, and get right back up and do it all over again the next day. But I'll tell you something, and you might not be able to relate at this point, but I can. As a student and as a professor, I'm more tired as a professor because of the mental strain. But working on a boat, as a striker, as a crew, I don't have that mental strain. I let the captain have that and two hours of sleep, I can run a marathon on this thing. I can't do it teaching. I couldn't do it as a student neither.

NH: So, what are some of the positive and negative changes that have happened in the fishing community?

TR: Positive wise? I would say for what you're doing for the film I did for other research that's being done. It just seems like in the last two years, a little bit more research is being done. A little bit more is being done recording wise to show to the public what actually goes on and shows that there's a bad connotation on us with a lot of people because they think we're horrible people. They think we kill sea turtles and we don't. They think we're tearing up the ocean floor and we're not. Where we fish is sandy bottoms or muddy bottoms. There's not really anything there. I mean, there's footage that Brian and the other extension people with the marine office could show you where they were trawling, and you look underwater and you see where the nets are dragging. That's where we drag. Sea turtle wise, a lot of people think we kill sea turtles. Shrimpers were at first hesitant to pull the turtle excluder device, but before they made it mandatory, shrimpers, including my grandfather, were pulling devices very similar to that for bycatch reduction. Now, when they say bycatch reduction, you think the BRD, which is that triangular looking device that's in the nets, we did it to deter jelly balls and other stuff like that, so that the crews didn't have to spend so much time on the deck digging through all that stuff, for one. But the more of that stuff you catch, the more stuff goes in the bag of your net and the cod end. Well, you put more strain on your ropes and all, the heavier that bag is. So, you want to make things a little bit easier on you. The Ted was patent in McIntosh County by a fellow named (Sinkey Boone?). You all might know that. I'll tell you something you don't know because it's not documented. The big boy shooter. I think that's what it's called. It's the Ted with the bent bars. They're not any on here because we're doing maintenance. But when you look at it, it has the bent bars. My father's uncle, (Rodney Sawyer?), was one of them that built that Ted when he worked for NOAA at their office in Mississippi. He built it with a woman. They threw it on the shelf. He got tired of working over there and came back shrimping over here because he shipped over here before he went over there. Two years later, they pulled it off the shelf. He didn't get the credit, but he was the one that did that, and part of that inspiration

came from my grandfather. When they first started working on the Ted's, before they were really making them mandatory, it was in a testing phase, even with the shrimpers. I can remember as a kid growing up in the early [19]90s playing in Ted's, that were hung up between trees because they were testing the angles of the bar to see what would help them keep as much catch going to the bag as possible. So, that's one thing that a lot of people don't realize. They think we hated it. Let me tell you something. A lot of shrimpers might hate the price of what it costs, but it has helped them when it comes to catch wise, knocking a lot of that bycatch out, and I would be willing to bet 95 percent, if not more than 95 percent of the shrimpers would still pull that device if they said, "Hey, you don't have to do it anymore," because it helps them. Negative wise, you deal with a higher fuel price than what we did, and I know the fuel price isn't as high as it has been. I've watched this fuel price around these docks go up to over \$4 a gallon. Well, you're dealing with a vessel that's going to burn twelve gallons an hour in each engine. That's a high cost. Ice. Ice last year cost \$19 a block. Now, a block of ice is three hundred pounds. It's a three hundred-pound block, and they put it in a machine and it crushes it, and they blow it on the boat. This boat right here can hold twenty-eight blocks of ice. You go day in and day out. The ice isn't going to keep because it is going to melt. We don't have freezers here. We do try to insulate the fish on all, but there's also the cost of maintenance. Paint. That blue paint you see on the bottom of the boat, that paint right there cost over \$100 a gallon. One reason why it costs that much is because of the copper percentage that's in it. What that does is it deters barnacles and oysters, as well as the little sea worms that could be that big from digging into the hull of the boat. This boat is a wooden boat. It is not fiberglass. It's one of the very last ones. The Meganulon is a fiberglass hull. The grave digger that's on the railway. They just fiberglass his hull up to the water line, water line being where, like with this boat, the bloom at the white. So, they just fiber glassed him all the way around to the waterline. We're not fiberglass all now. We do have patches, but we're still not classified a fiberglass boat. We're wood because that's mostly what we are. Another negative thing, I guess you could say that we deal with is Mother Nature at this moment, and we can't help it. Now, I'll tell you something. Some shrimpers will tell you and some won't. Sometimes you got to let Mother Nature take care of herself. You run through these things. When I graduated from Georgia Southern because I went and got my bachelor's degree from there. I spent the whole next year on the boat with my father working this vessel. It was the most horrible year he had ever had. Now, as a crew member making the wages, which is very competitive, I didn't make quite – well, I was over seventeen, but not quite \$18,000 a year. There were two other gentlemen working alongside me that had families, so it was kind of hard to feed your family off of that. The following year things looked a little bit up. Well, this year right now, we had Irma come in and normally people would say hurricane will stir shrimp up, and it did kind of killed it. We deal with Black Gill. I imagine you know all about that. We deal with the tiger shrimp somewhat even though that's kind of phasing out just a little bit. But we still catch them around here even as inland as we are. They're more so shrimp that the bigger steel hulls catch more off shore, but we still catch them from time to time. Right now, we're worried because of the snow. It snowed in January, and the drains around here that dump off into our estuaries, that come out of the swamps and all froze over, those little creeks and all started to freeze over, and that could kill your shrimp crop. So, we're dealing with that. In 1989, that was the last time the federal government closed waters off of Georgia to twenty-five miles, which are closed right now. Hasn't been done that way in a while. So, there's that concern of what's going to happen. So, now you're dealing with an industry where just a sea farmer, well, a bunch of farmers get some kind of subsidy. We slightly do, but it's not like them. It deals with

tariffs for imports. But that's phasing out, and just like with any political figure, it doesn't matter Democrat or Republican. They've tried to phase it out a little bit. There's a gentleman around here that is trying to get Sonny Perdue down here for the blessing of the fleet this year. Sonny Perdue is our secretary of agriculture, and he keeps going, "We produce 0.17 percent of the shrimp consumed in the U.S." I said, "Dude, 0.17 percent. Do you think anybody cares about us?" That's the problem. Nobody cares about us. They don't know what they're getting when they go to Walmart. They don't know that they're not getting a fresh product. All they know is they're buying something that's cheap and shrimp is a delicacy. When you go somewhere to an event, what do you see? If you see shrimp, you go, oh, hot dog, look at this. You go to a seafood buffet and it's a higher priced buffet than a normal buffet with chicken. But the boat prices that we're getting when we sell to the docks and we sell to the people that are packing the shrimp and selling them, our price isn't where it needs to be. To overcome the fuel, to overcome the ice, to overcome maintenance, it just doesn't help. So, we deal with a lot of issues, whether they're environmental, whether they're economical, sometimes, whether they're publicity wise. A lot of people rather buy that cheaper item because those foreign ponds aren't tearing up the environment. But we're not doing that either, and we're providing a product that's actually healthier than what they're doing. It's been proven. Different ones are injecting a jelly like substance that's clear to make their shrimp bigger over there. Some places have their shrimp ponds under a chicken coop, and that's what the shrimp are eating. Chicken mess. Or is this pure or is this clean? One thing that makes our shrimp better, you wouldn't believe it, is our mud. We have some of the best saltwater marshes around, and part of that is due to our barrier islands and us being in that cove. If you look around, you see the green marsh grass all around and it's mud. That is Mother Nature's filter, and that's what makes us so much sweeter.

NH: So, you explain that Sundown Productions. Can you please tell us more about that? What is it?

TR: Sundown Productions is the name I go under when I'm doing films. I've actually done a film on the shrimp fishing industry here in McIntosh County, and the title of it is *A Trawling Tradition*. I interviewed over twenty-five shrimpers past and present, and my biggest focus was on getting them to talk about themselves, just as you're doing with me right now, to get them to talk about their own history, to get them to talk about the issues they have to deal with day in and day out, to get them to talk about the heritage behind it, because a lot of people around here are second or third, and you do run into some of us that are fourth. I mentioned my great grandfather doing it. He started shrimp fishing in 1923. He was way younger than us. He actually got thrown out of school by eighth grade. But part of that was because he wanted to get thrown out. But with the film, I went with the boat name because to me, I think you're kind of arrogant if you name your little production, little company after yourself. You should name it after something, and I named it after something that I've enjoyed being around and something that is part of me and my family. Had it not been for this vessel, you never know if I'd ever come to be. Another fact about this vessel. I was four and a half years old in [18]95, and my mother was almost nine months pregnant with my brother. I only have one sibling. My grandfather owned and ran this one. My dad had his own boat. The three of us were taking this boat from a railway around Belleville, going back to Cedar Point, and before we got back to the dock, the dock was somewhat close in sight. A fuel line burst on this vessel and the engine room caught fire and we were ablaze. I remember sitting in this same well, it isn't the same chair, but

sitting right here with my grandfather at the wheel. My dad said, "I'm starting to see smoke or something. Let me go down and injure him a check." I remember my dad coming in that back door because there's only one door to the galley coming up to the step right there going, "We're on fire." My grandfather looked at me and said, "Son, sit right there." They both went down there and was trying to tackle it. There's a newspaper article. I'd have to dig it out, but in that article, it states that, "Had I not been on the boat, my grandfather would have run this boat up into the marsh and just let it burn up." But with me being four years old, he didn't want to get out in the marsh away from the dock with me and have to deal with me in the mud. It's not when I say mud, I'm talking about having to sink in the mud and stuff like that and try to get away from the burning boat, because you never know when you have fuel. You're in a sense, dealing with a ticking time bomb. They carried the boat into the dock, was at Sea Garden Seafood and Cedar Point, and didn't even tie the boat up. They ran the boat up on one engine because the other engine was on fire. Ran the boat up to the dock on one engine, and they handed me off the bow to somebody that was standing on the dock. My aunt came up and picked me up, carried me home. My aunt says, or my mom went, "What are you doing? Why do you have my son? He's supposed to be with his dad and his grandfather." They said, "The boat's on fire right now." Here, my mom is almost nine months pregnant. So, interesting things that I can say I've been around. I've been on this boat when we've lost steering where there's a piece in the back of the boat where it connects to the rudders, and they call it a quadrant because it looks like a quarter of a pie. What that does is it holds the chain and it kind of turns any way the quadrant pulled away from the side of the boat. Well, it had been in there for forty years. Amazing how it lasted that long. Thank God the tide was just right when we were fishing. I've been on here when somebody had lost a Ted and we got it caught in the wheel. Had to come home on one engine. I've been on here on a Sunday morning because you believe in God. But the way we were brought up was you can't just stop for church in the sense of, because God blessed you with that day, you've got to go, and if God blessed them shrimp to be out there on Sunday, well, go for it. You've got to do it because you can't guarantee it to be there tomorrow. There's a lot of off time. In fact, this boat hasn't left the dock to go shrimping since the 1st of October. You're dealing with an industry that's only a few months, so to speak. It's real hard to make it. You have to have the knowledge. My father happens to have it, and he's passed them down to me. I don't know if you've met him. His name was Truck. He works with Brian in them. Truck worked on this boat a few years back.

NH: Yes. He has been everywhere. We are actually going to his church tomorrow.

TR: Truck worked on here, and he looked at me and said, "You need to go up there and study your dad's plot lines." I said, "Huh?" My dad walked by and said, "Yes, tell him, go study what isn't on that plotter, because all his lines are here." He knows from experience. He grew up learning from the older fisherman. You don't work off of that plotter, so to speak. You know where your little ditches are in the ocean to drag. You know where your hangs are. You know how you have to drag from here to there. When I was growing up, even in high school, my dad was kind of hesitant for me to put out, meaning me set the doors and nets out. So, what he would do is he would let me run the boat. He'd tell me how he want it run. He told me, "Take this compass. I want it on that number, on that degree. Keep it on that degree." So, I'd have to move the wheel to keep it on that degree. There'd be times that he would tell me, "Now, you see what's in front of you? Keep pointed at that tree. Keep going parallel like you're going." That fathom

meter right there tells you how much water is under the boat. There's no bigger fear than your dad's going to yell at you because you're looking at that meter and it says 0.0 and you feel the boat bouncing, but you're still holding the line he told you the hold. Did he yell at me? No. Held right where it was supposed to be, and he knew where it needed to be, and he knew what how much water was going to be there. When I talked about being ten, right? When I was ten years old, that was the first time I ran a boat, so to speak. My dad had one crew man. He wanted to get the shrimp up quicker. He knew he could go quicker than a ten-year-old, and he told me to go to the wheel and follow your grandfather who was on this boat. Keep the boat in between his wheel water because it would leave a foam trail, and I did. I looked at him and I said, "Well, what do I do when pops stops?" Well, you go around him, don't you hit him. Remember, he's got outriggers down and so do you. You've got to give him a wide enough berth to go around him, and that's one of the fond memories I have of fishing around my grandfather. Was I passing? My dad never got the shrimp fish with his grandfather because he was disabled and passed away by the time, he was nine. Mine passed away when I was in my senior year in high school. But I did go fishing with my grandfather one Sunday afternoon after church and I wish I had done it more, but I guess it was one of those. My dad was younger and he knew he'd keep a little bit better eye on me. I remember getting sick growing up all through kindergarten to age ten, and then finally it was like at age ten, a switch flipped with me because, hey, you got to work. You don't have time to get sick. The crew would actually hold me by my belt, being sure I wouldn't fall over if something was to happen because you might hit a log and it jarred the boat. The wind might gust and the boat roll or something. So, a lot of fond memories. I know I'm rambling and I know you all probably want to get gone. Anything else? What else you want to ask? Because I can go on and on and on.

NH: We are actually enjoying these stories. Can you tell us like for people like me and Ahmauri or people who do not live much in the – Ahmauri lives in the coast. But for a person like me who does not know much about the culture and heritage and history of coastal Georgia, what would you want me to understand about that?

TR: One of the connotations that some people have on the shrimp fishing industry is by what they see in movies example, Forrest Gump, right? They think that when you look at the pictures of Forrest when he's on the boat and you look at the picture of the boat, my father actually, and I actually shrimp around that boat that was in that movie before they ever carried it to California, that they think we're, in a sense, dirty, and the boats aren't really that clean or well kept. This boat goes through yearly maintenance every year. It gets painted every year. Now, some people go, "Well, it's for the blessing." No, it gets painted every year, whether we go to the blessing with it or not, because it's our downtime. We're trying to keep our mode of income up to standards. Keep it up. If you don't, you end up where you have problems when you should be catching shrimp. If you have problems when you're catching shrimp, you're losing money. It's not making money, you're losing it. We don't like losing money. So, the thing I want to explain to people, and I'd like for people to realize, and that's one reason why I did the film is there are normal, everyday, red-blooded Americans that are in a sense, people think they're living the dream. They don't really see it that way, but to others they are because they're their own boss, especially when they own their own boat. You get to work when you want to work, you go to work when Mother Nature tells you. But we're a completely different breed. I did my film and I imagine you interviewed him, Darryl Gale. I don't know if you met him. He probably would

have been in town today or something. Anyway, the Gale family, you might have known a win. They were actually the two brothers they interviewed about the Ottoman Haha Sea monster thing in the last week they hit Fox News and made national TV and all, and it's supposedly now a hoax because nobody's calling back. Well, they interviewed them. Well, when is kind of like his father Darwin, who just happened to pass away, who shrimp fished his whole life. They're hard to understand. When I did my film, my committee, because I did it in grad school, instead of writing a paper or doing the comps test, I did a film because my background is in broadcast journalism and I hate writing papers, even though I'm writing weekly for the Darian News on the history of the blessing of the fleet. In fact, I have an article that will be published this week on a shrimp fisherman that has retired and actually had a stroke on his boat while he was fishing. So, I've written an article on that, but they said, "You need to put subtitles on them. You can't understand some of them what they're saying. They need subtitles." I said, "No, that's who they are. I can understand them because I've been around them." But the son, Darryl, that I talked about, my father watched the film and was even impressed by the way he enunciated and pronounced. So, with it, it's an interesting thing to me, the connotation people have on us. We're family people. Though we're away from our family, we still love them. We're doing this to make money for them. It all varies, so to speak. But we're not these horrible people. Back to that sea turtle killing and all this. If we were killing sea turtles and trying to hurt the environment, where is our livelihood? There wouldn't be one. Mother Nature and the environment is what makes our bills get paid. It's what makes us money. It's what puts food on our tables, and if we don't take care of it, we don't have anything. So, we're not trying to destroy anything. All we're trying to do is provide the public with a product that is homegrown and a whole lot healthier than that elsewhere.

NH: So, what do you think the fishing community's future looks like?

TR: At this moment, I do not know. It's an industry. I'll put it this way. My dad knows that if I was to get on this boat, him to step off, when I get on it, and I run it and do it as my career, that I could make a living out of it. He wanted me not to do it, because he wanted me to have a retirement, and did not want me to worry about making ends meet every year. Like I said, it's an industry where you're only looking at a few months window of making money. You got to make it more months than that. You got to make it twelve months. Well, if you're fishing, let's say five months, that's seven months. You got to worry about no income and making what you made last. I'll give you an example. On this boat, we're going to paint almost everything. Now, there's some things we won't paint, like this pilot house won't get painted, the inside will get wiped off. But it's fine. But the rigging and all, the black, the white, all that gets painted every year. This boat gets hauled out every year and put on the railway. New blue paint goes on. We check everything the bottom to be sure everything's fine because there is metal. At the end of the day, you're trying to preserve that part and take care of your livelihood. It's like with a farmer, this is our tractor. You can't just beat it up. You got to take care of that tractor. Otherwise, it won't be there for you, and you got to find a mule. There's no mule here, okay? When you focus on all that, just spring maintenance is what we call it. It cost over \$20,000 a year just to paint this boat up and sand the boat down, because you got to sand the boat in places to make the new paint stick and to fix the little, not nothing big, fix the little odds and ends. Over \$20,000 a year, and that's just maintenance.

NH: What do you hope to see in the next generation? Like if I were to decide to go in the fishing industry, what would you hope to see?

TR: With a new crop. I'll call it that way because when I think the new generation, I'm thinking my generation with me being fourth, so to speak, like that. But with the new crop of fishermen that are taking over, for those that are retiring right around this time and all that are coming in with a younger age, I'd like to see them put more effort a little bit. The majority of them, you use yourself as an example in the question. If you were to get into it. There was a fella that came in. He was an onion farmer and my grandfather were living, and I'm not going to censor what he said. The onion farmer said, "Well, I've got a shrimp boat. What do you think about that? I'm going to get into shrimping." He says, "Well, what's your best advice?" He said, "My best advice is this. Do I know anything about onion farming? He said, "No, I don't think you do." He goes, "Do you know anything about shrimping?" Well, I mean, I guess not really." He goes, "That's my point. If you don't know what you're doing, you don't need to get into it. Because I'm going to tell you from somebody who does know about shrimp fishing. You have to put in more time, more money and more effort into it than what an outsider would think." A lot of people think you take and you go out, you drop the outriggers, you put the nets out, you drag and you catch shrimp. It's not the case. It is nowhere near that simple. There's a whole lot harder than that. There's a lot more to it. There are days you're not going to catch. There are days you need to be at this place or that place. There are some days you need to just stay tied to the dock because you'd have done better that day doing that than going out. So, I guess I would say for those that are getting into it and don't know anything about it, me would be different because I grew up around it, is to ask more questions and be more attentive to what older fishermen who are experienced, and even those that aren't that much older, but do have that experience listening to them and heeding their advice. Shrimpers are a good group of people. There are different ones that will talk about, like even with my family that were mean. We're not going to tell people where shrimp are at, and our example is, well, if there's a sack of \$100 bills on the ground and they're blowing in the wind, are you going to call your stop and call your friend up to help you pick them up or are you going to go ahead and start picking them up? You're going to start picking them up. But there are times where we know there's shrimpers that are having a hard time. They've had some kind of incident happen, and they do need some kind of extra funds and all, and my father will help them out. It's kind of a tradeoff deal. You help me here and I'll help you there. Some of the help isn't just on catching shrimp. Some of it is on helping with maintenance and stuff. I got them going forever, isn't it?

NH: You are good. Keep going. It pays me good. Nice stories. Yes. Were you saying sorry?

TR: That was about the end of it. What other questions you got? You got a whole paper?

NH: No. This paper is almost done. But I was to ask, would you advise a young person to actually go into shrimping, or what would your advice be? Would you say they should or should they go to college?

TR: My advice is they need to go to college or go to at least a trade school, get some kind of background. That's just like with me. I teach college. I got an education because my dad wanted me to get one because at the end of the day, if something was to happen, let's say there's

a bunch of shrimps to be caught. I can quit my job, get on here. But I still have that degree to fall back on and go back to work. So, it's always having that backup plan. You always need to have something else there behind you. My father has a high school education. A lot of shrimpers don't have that. I said my great grandfather dropped out by eighth grade. My grandfather graduated high school. He played baseball. Some different ones told me about how good he was at baseball, but he never played like legitimate high school ball and stuff because he was down here at the docks helping his dad. He was down here at the docks trying to make money for his family because he was the oldest out of all the siblings. In fact, my father's aunt, who was the baby in the family, she is probably eight years older than my dad that she was a baby when her father was disabled, and she even said that my grandfather was more of a father to her than her own father, because he did way more. He provided way more. Well, her dad also died when she was a teenager, though it was the latter part of her being a teenager, but still, you're dealing with an industry where a lot of people, and that's where that connotation on people thinking we're not a normal person because they think we're uneducated. You don't have to have a formal education to have sense, to have education and things. Some of the people that I know that love reading and when I say reading, like reading novels and westerns and stuff, are shrimpers. They know how to read. We complain about math. My grandfather was so damn good at math. When it comes to all the formulas you needed to do to put in certain boards in the boat, because not all your boats have those flush ends there at different angles, and you got to make different cuts and stuff. But he knew the formulas to make everything fit like it needed to fit. My dad had to learn that you deal with formulas when you're trying to put in the bars in a shooter and a turtle excluder device, you have to get the angles and stuff. So, you're dealing with a group that might not have that much of a formal education, but they're not dumb. If they were dumb, they wouldn't make it. In the film, I have my father and different ones talking about things they have to do, and my father talks about having to be a mechanic, a carpenter, a painter, an electrician, and the list goes on and on and on, because that's how you make it. The more you can do on your own, the more money you save because you're not having to pay somebody else to do it. Now, you talked about us or somebody like you get an education or not. That was one thing I took into consideration when I got to college, and I liked it so much, and it was, yes, this history does need to be preserved. It needs to be documented because it might not be here. When you look at McIntosh County, we have done gone through two big phases. We're in our third phase, and we're looking at the dying end of the third phase. During colonial days, McIntosh was a big rice producer. Then you hit the 1800s and it was the timber industry. Then it went into seafood. One of the things they're marketing now is jelly balls or the cannonball jellyfish. I imagine you all have heard about that. We're packing them here, and you've got different boats from here doing that. Cox have been called off here before. Oysters, crabs. Crabs go through two different stages. You're dealing with the peelers, which is your soft-shell crop. But during the summer months, you're catching the hard crab, which would be what you would put in a pot and steam and you would go get somewhere else. Now, where can you go to get the items that we have? Where can you go to get these sweeter seafood items? Oysters, shrimp, fish, flounder, whiting? There are others being caught around here. Stick around the marine extension office long enough and they've gone to what used to be Pelican Point is now the fish dock. God names Charlie Phillips. He's doing clams. He has his own clam farms, and they got to take you out in the boat to the farms. But it's still using our fresh saltwater, so to speak, or brackish. Where we're at, it's more brackish water. It's an interesting area to be in. There's a lot of history here and we need to document it because there were a lot of things when I

did my documentary, I didn't realize. I didn't know, but listening to people and talking, I knew. In the shrimping industry, shrimpers were a big part of the home front in World War Two. The Navy and Coast Guard came in and commandeered different shrimp vessels as well as put in – and when I say commandeered, I have a black gentleman named Clarence Baker. He had a boat called the Thunderbolt, and that boat was built in the [19]40s, and he recalled, and I have him telling that in the film about the boat had a machine gun on the roof, and it was in case they saw the German U-boats that were off of our coast. There are different ones that talk about and I can't quote. I won't quote because it's not quotes. It's a bunch of hearsay, but there's different ones that'll talk about different ones the community were taking and going to the German U-boats, selling them fuel. You were coming off the depression. You had to do what you had to do to make money. You couldn't fish. There's different ones that would talk about right there in dairying that they grew up right on the waterfront, and they had different little lookout houses and all that the military were dealing with, and if the boats left too early, they would shoot across the top of the boats to make them go back to the dock, because you weren't supposed to leave till a certain time in the day time to go to work, and you had to be back by a certain time. Mr. Clarence also talked about a story where there was a boat that was looking out, and there were two other boats, one was pulling the other, and they were fixing to shoot the boat, and somebody hollered, "Don't, don't, don't, don't, don't, don't shoot," because I know who that is. I know what boat that is. But things were serious way back then. There was actually a lookout house right up here, and they're still part of the concrete knoll from it where the dirt road came in, and there's a little field which would be on your right-hand side when you go out and it looks across the marsh, it's right there. There was a beacon light there for the sounds. A lot of history.

NH: Well, that is it for my side. I would like to thank you for your time so much. I have learned a lot from you. Your stories are pretty interesting, but is there any last words or questions that you would like to ask me?

TR: I don't have any questions to ask you [laughter]. Is there anything else you all want to know on the industry, period?

NH: If there is something that you would like to tell us about the industry, period, you can tell us.

TR: I mean, I've covered the basis of all of it for the most part. I do know Dr. Tuck said that we're going to let her look into seeing how we'll do it about screening the film for all you all, just for you all, for you to look at it. I'm going to work – or on a publication I just worked on. In fact, the woman that I was talking to that was taking the picture of my father. She is the editor and owner of the newspaper here locally, and is the one I write the articles for her, and I was helping her with a magazine that they produce that comes out three times a year. The biggest focal point in our area right now is the blessing of the fleet. We're going in our 50th year. My father's grand marshal this year. My grandfather was grand marshal nine years ago. In fact, he died the week he was supposed to be the grand marshal. He found a way to get out of it. In that publication, there is three articles that pertain to shrimping. One of them pertains to the history of the blessing, which I did. Everything on the blessing did take somebody to tell me something I don't know, because I did more research than anybody. In fact, I'm reminding old people what they forgot. There's a breakdown of my film in there, where she listened to the film and kind of

broke it down in different parts and use quotes out of the film and use pictures. But there's also a historian that I actually used in my film. I used the local historian that's big in coastal Georgia. He's got probably twenty, twenty-five, thirty books he's published, and anyway, he did some on shrimping. He actually grew up around here and knew some of the ones that I didn't know. I mean, he's already having grandchildren, so you're dealing with somebody that doesn't have children. So, there's a big age gap there, so to speak, and it's interesting being around these groups. I will see what I can do to get my hands on some of those magazines for you all to look at, and maybe you can get a better insight. My insight is not going to be like a shrimper that's been doing it for thirty years. Just this past year, my father had been captaining, not working, captaining a boat for thirty years. When my grandfather passed or he didn't, he was retired. We pushed into retirement. He got a water borne bacteria in his hand and like, killed him. My dad had to get him off the boat while he was fishing. When we pushed him to retirement, he was in his fiftieth year behind the wheel. That's not striking. That's running a boat. Running the operation. It's hard finding people on a normal job that do something thirty, fifty years. It just doesn't work that way. My father will be point blunt with you. He can't retire. Different ones have talked about buying this boat. I mean, you see what shape it looks, and it looks in good shape compared to the rest of them. You've looked around and you'll tell them straight up they don't got the money to buy that one, because I can't afford to sell it right now because he's only fifty-five. You don't know how long you're going to live. His father was the second Todd, the second male Todd to live to seventy. The one before him never married, didn't have any kids and lived to seventy-three. My grandfather died at seventy. His brother or his next brother died at seventy. The brother after that one, he's the oldest right now at seventy-five. He has kids and he's been married twice. So, you don't know life expectancy so far. You talk about cancer and such. Cancer isn't something that you might get. It's one of those when you're going to get it. My mother's father lived to be ninety-three. When he died, we know he died of some kind of cancer. I think it was lung cancer, too, but when he went into the doctor's appointment a few months earlier and they seen a little spot, he was too frail to do anything, so they just overlooked it. There weren't much we could do then anyway, other than just let it take its course. Plus, he lived fifteen years after his wife. His wife passed away before. I never got to meet my grandmother. She died right as they found my mother was pregnant with me. She died of a stroke. So, interesting things around here, but I mentioned the life expectancy. My father's grandfather, the Sawyer guy, never got to meet him. I did get to meet his mom. I have a picture of me with my dad, with my great, great grandmother.

NH: Wow. Sheesh.

TR: But I never got to meet any great grands, and I was born with only three grands. So, it's an interesting industry. The things you'll hear, the things you see. Trust me, if your students weren't here, that whole ordeal trying to get that boat and what they were doing is they fiber glassing the boat. They had to take what they call a shoe out from under it, which is the metal that's under the boat. What they did was they were to do it, you had to cut it in pieces and then drift the boat back, or pick it up and let it hit the water and move the boat and let it sit back down on the cradle so you could move the other pieces. Well, now they were trying to put it back together. So, you put part of it together, and then you take and do what they just did, and what they were trying to do was move the boat enough to put more metal plates back under it and weld it back so there's one continuous shoe again. Well, as you see, one of the things we have to

deal with is Mother Nature, and the wind was blowing to us too hard. We deal with that from time to time. During Hurricane Irma, I was on live with WTOC. I face timed them live and was talking to them on air, showing my face and all in the elements. One thing they kept saying, and I kept telling cutter he was wrong, and he finally believed me when I said, dude, I got the reef. I've got the stuff, the numbers to prove this. They kept saying, oh, gusts are up to seventy miles an hour. We had higher gusts with Irma than we did Matthew. Gusts were over a hundred miles an hour right here. I was right here on this boat, and the boat was pulled up in that slip, and the tide got up so high here that we almost could look over that building sitting right here. Had waves breaking across the stern because the wind was blowing in from this direction. I actually had to go buy a new truck because mine got flooded down here. It had four inches of water in the floorboard and that's salt water. There used to be a dock that runs and you can see the post and all out there in the middle of the marsh. When you come in, you see the pieces of dock that were laying side the road and the little field that was on your right-hand side coming in. Yes, that dock used to go all the way to that fish house. We watched it break in half. Watched the speed boat break loose and go there. The only thing that happened to boats and all here was that boat, the Sea Fox. That's where it ended up after Irma. It has no engine. The boat was tied at the end of this dock and broke loose and drifted all the way over there. Don't know how. It didn't hit no boats here, but it landed on the boats over there, and that's where they left it. So, that was the biggest damage to shrimp boats here. The other damage came after or due to Irma was a fellow went shrimping before we had power back, and what happened was when he was coming in the creek, he hit something that was submerged, he couldn't see, and it punctured a hole in the boat and he was fixing to sink, as in, he had about two more minutes and the boat was going to sink right there with that boat sitting. That was at *Twilight*. So, that would be kind of weird for me and my dad to look at the boat that kind of was family and just watch it sink right there, and we were doing our best to get it pumped out. We brought the crane over with a big pump and finally got it fixed to where when they got power, they could put him on the railway and patch him up. A lot of interesting things.

NH: How much did it cost you to try and patch it up?

TR: Oh, that was him. I don't know the cost. Railway pulls for some people, depending on how much they have to do, you're looking at anywhere from ten to twenty, if not more thousand dollars. It cost a lot to pull one of these things out. I mean, it's not cheap pulling a well, I say a yacht, but you would think like a nice sized speedboat in the twenty-to-twenty-five-foot range with multiple motors on the back. It cost a little bit to pull them in and out, and it's not as easy as you saw. It's you're dealing with a diesel engine down there that is way older than me pulling that stuff up. A lot of these things around here are antiques, and people don't realize that. That's where I come in. There are two different life rings at the house that I won't let leave. One of them is the last life ring that was on here when my grandfather was on this boat, because I know there's a value to it, and if I wanted to sell it, some sucker would pay some hundreds of dollars just for that piece to hang up in their living room or something, or in their playroom or something. We'll mancave whatever you want to call it. Another one is the first life ring that was on here when my dad got on here. Things to save. Things to keep as a momentum, so to speak. Various things. The chair that was right here. Now, the post is the same. But this chair right here. When my grandfather got off the boat, my dad started running it. He took the – after a couple of years, he took it off and wanted a more comfortable chair a little bit. Now, notice

there's some boats that they have recliners. You aren't supposed to be that comfortable up here. But he wanted a little bit more. He wanted one where he had arms here and that one didn't have any arms. It sits in a storage building with everything else. Because you never know. I might use it for something else. There are times where – this boat has air conditioning, and they got it back in, like, the late [19]80s on here. My dad was on here before air conditioning was on here, and you talk about hot. This boat isn't insulated, so in the summer, it's hot. In the winter, it's cold. You want to know what our heater is? It's a stove. You put a pot of water on it, which is where you going to get your coffee from, and you just let the stove run, and you just keep watering the pot because you don't want to run a propane stove with nothing on top of it. So, different people would joke, "Well, what is your AC system?" My dad would joke and say, "It's five two. It's a five two system. Five two." He said, "Yes, five windows down, two doors open." Just hope there's a breeze. Different people in shrimping now are so used to luxury. There's one thing on here that you don't see right here at the wheel. What do you think is missing up here? What do you think other boats have? Have you been on any other boats?

NH: We went to Georgia Bulldog.

TR: Okay. What is missing up here that the Bulldog has that we don't? I'd be willing to bet they have a computer, don't they?

NH: Yes.

TR: These aren't computers. This doesn't get on the internet. This isn't play on Microsoft Word. Those are plotters. All they do is plot the lines. Now, sometimes you use them just to see the certain area, because you've got to go in and go out. During the history, I had different ones talk about how when they got started, that they used a string to measure the water depth. You put a brick or a rock on the end of the string, you drop the string down, and when you got slack, then you knew how deep it was. No plotters. They had the lower end. In fact, I remember on my dad's boat when I was growing up, he had the one that had the needle that wrote on the paper. It was that old. Very few radios. Radios came more and more. In fact, with shrimping now there's less people shrimping. In the [19]70s, over 1700 commercial licenses was sold just in the state. You're looking at less than three-hundred now, and that number is continually falling. There's not as many boats as there used to be. There are pictures of dairy and lined up. There are pictures of this dock lined up with boats. You had different economic issues. We all know of the one in oh eight more so with the housing, did everything else. Just one of those things you have to deal with. There's a lot of adversities shrimpers have to overcome, economical, environmental, everything else. This is one of the most toughest jobs to be in. Yes. It's dangerous. I know people that have gotten their arms and legs ripped off due to the cables on the winches, because they weren't paying attention or messed up. Truck saved me one day because I was about to go swimming early one morning, because my dad wasn't paying attention and I was holding the lazy line and hadn't got it hooked into the line yet that it needed to be. I was holding the hook trying to get there. Well, this boat has over 650 horses. I held all 650. Truck grabbed me by the pants and so did the other crew. Why did I not turn loose the line and not hurt myself or anything? Because my dad get on to me for turning loose. The line should have had it already done, even though I was dealing with truck and horses. A little mishap because the hook got caught in the block, which it would from time to time, and my dad weren't paying attention.

He was just going off of, "Well, it should be done by now." He's seen the line somewhat halfway down and all. No big deal. Various things.

NH: Life in the sea is kind of interesting, I must say.

TR: It is.

NH: Shrimp is kind of interesting.

TR: It is. I say we go in day in and day out, but I've been on here where we've spent the night. Truck was on here when we did made six days in South Carolina for their beach opening. That's over an eight-hour run from here to where we went off of Hunting Island, which is still south of Charleston. Long way to go. It's interesting to me because I never was around it. When you go through by the Savannah Channel and you got all the tanker ships around you and they're way bigger than sixty-five feet. It's so interesting. You just pick your aspect. You sit around here long enough, you'll see various – species is the wrong word. Various types of seagulls. Various birds. Southeast Georgia around the coast is one of the best birding areas in the world. In fact, the, I think it's the Birders Association, or maybe the Audubon, some group, big group in the state, and they come down here for their annual meeting. I wonder why. Interesting things. See eagles from time to time, hawks. I'd have to recall what the name of that bird. That's aggravating because it just craps everywhere, and it does eat fish. We call it a water turkey, and it looks like a black goose is what it looks like with the long neck and all. Aggravating as all get out, half pelicans, various types of those. Interesting things. Anything else?

NH: Well, that is it. Thank you so much, Mr. Todd.

TR: Okay.

[end of transcript]