

Wild Caught  
Betty Edens Oral History  
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Interviewer: MB – Matthew Barr  
Transcriber: NCC

Matthew Barr: We interviewed John, and we've been filming with a lot of people like Mark for the last year or so. We're trying to build this story. So, talk about what we were just talking about. In other words, talk about growing up in Key West and what that was like.

Betty Edens: Okay. I grew up in Marathon. I was born in Key West. Key West had the only hospital there at the time. My parents went there in about 1946, which was the first part of the fishing industry of the shrimping. I would call my father a pioneer of this day, along with several others from this area. It was very small shrimping village, crawfishing. It was just a joy living there. As far as the people, you knew everyone. You wouldn't know if somebody was a millionaire or if they weren't. We all dressed alike. [laughter] It was very casual. Was nothing to know anybody like Mel Fisher or the governor at that time and for the fishing industry. They all got along great. What happened is there were just so many rules and regulations. We just got out at a good time, I think.

MB: So, now, was your father a fisherman?

BE: He was a commercial fisherman.

MB: You say he was a pioneer. How was he a pioneer?

BE: Well, back then, not very many people knew to go that way to – there wasn't very many people shrimping. Maybe one or two [laughter] at the time. They took chances. They left their families, and they took chances. Got on boats, went partnerships in boats and went down there. That was like in 1946. It really got big. A lot more people coming down in the – just a little bit, a couple years later from what I understand.

MB: So, now, when did your family move to North Carolina?

BE: Oh, let's see. About 1980, [19]81.

MB: So, talk about the move to North Carolina and how you –

BE: The big move [laughter]. Let's see. My father decided he wanted to move here. So, he moved his family, which there was probably still six of us home of the children. Most of us was pretty much grown, been taught traits, to work at an early age. They did a very good job at that. When we all come here, it was kind of hard settling down, not knowing anybody. But dad knew people from his travels, and my mother. So, it become easier and just making friends. It took a little while to get to know the people. A lot of them were clannish then before a lot of people started moving in. I found that good because it was like an honor if they talked to you or they got to know you. The more they picked, the more they liked you. I did learn that. I found that in most fishing villages, that's the way it works. My father rented out the fish house here and started a little marketing it – wholesale and retail in it. So, got to know people that way. He didn't live long once we moved here. He died within the first year. So, pretty much that's how I met my husband. I was working for Tom (Elbersen?) at a scallop house. I had to have a job [laughter]. So, I worked for him. So, I met John. He was bringing in, producing quite a bit, and sort of caught my eye [laughter]. So, we started dating. When he did, what really caught me

was him taking me in the river and showing me what it was about here. Once you go out there, you're in love. If you really love what's around you and the environment and just knowing how to produce it, it's an ever going, learning system out there. It's like you're studying it yourself for the first time. You're learning, and you just grow to it. It's something that you feel inside. It's like a great big love. A lot of people don't understand that. They don't know. They try it. They don't like it. They perceive to go to something else. They go back to it. That's something that I just – once you're out there, you're learning. Like, my first time was, he was shrimping. He gave me a clam rake. I went down Moore's Landing. I caught seventeen clams in five hours. That's a long time [laughter]. So, [laughter] later on and later in our marriage and all, he started teaching me other ways of clamming and being safe with the environment and the water, and safe with myself out there. I got up to three thousand or so per day on my own, and it's a good feeling. It's a good feeling that you've worked hard for something and you've accomplished that one goal. You're ready for that next step. You're ready for that new growth to happen in the fisheries. I tried oystering after that. I liked that. It was cold. Sometimes, the snow – little snow. You never seen snow, you loved to work in it [laughter]. I've seen the – I just had the joy of breaking the ice and just going clamming when the price was so high. I was like, "I'm by myself. Nobody's going to see where I clam," you know? It was just so great.

MB: Well, now, what with scallops, you've got to shuck them?

BE: Yes. You did it by hand. You took the gut off, and you left the meat, which I call the heart, which is the scallop to you [laughter]. That was a hard job. It was a nasty job, but I enjoyed it. It was the first job I had. Something my dad would've never let me do [laughter]. That was the first step. I guess it was the other women that made me feel good when I worked. They always were happy. Some of them sung a little tune. I guess the cleanup was the worst of it [laughter]. But it was a hard job, I thought. Standing on your feet for long hours and just taking the knife all day, and make sure you don't cut yourself and a lot of things.

MB: That sounds like hard work.

BE: Oh, it was [laughter].

MB: They do it right back here still?

BE: They use a machinery to do that. It opens them. You pretty much clean them. You have the meat and what you do is you take off the guts or whatever [laughter]. So, that was interesting. It's hard work. How the women do it, I don't know. I'd rather be in the river [laughter] any day.

MB: So, now back to your family. Now, you grew up in a – can you talk about your – well, you had a lot of brothers. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

BE: There was ten of us girls, four boys. My brother, Ken, actually navigated with my father down the Mississippi River at nine years old. He was nine when he first started navigating on his own. All my brothers were taught young. As girls, we had just things on the boat like cleaning it, making sure it was spotless when he come in, and any paint jobs inside. But we were

brought up to do something once he was in there to the dock. This was our participation with our family. This is the time that you got to see your father to enjoy what his lifestyle was. It was so exciting to see him come to the front door. Because you knew you were going to spend time with your dad on the boat. That's the only time you could go. You weren't allowed on the boat any other time unless he was there. So, we groceried up [laughter]. You ought to see people's faces when you go to grocery up for a big boat. [laughter] They're like, "Is it on special?" They want to grab the food out of the basket and such as that. He had two boats at the time. They were about 101-foot. One was a steel hull, and the other one was a wooden one. My brother ran one. They were crawfishing, and one would shrimp or vice versa at the same time. Like I said, they'd stay out for about thirty days or better. They worked the Cayman Islands and such as that. Never wanted for anything. I mean, never. It was like it was never ending. I mean, long as you worked and did your part and your share around, everything went smooth. Everything.

MB: So, you have really grown up in this world?

BE: Oh gosh, yes. I couldn't imagine being anything else. I've tried other things. But this is the place to be if you're born and brought up to be doing it and bred. I call it bred because that's what I was. I have some sisters that's not into the fisheries, and I'm sure they miss it [laughter]. I'm sure they do.

MB: Well, now, are any of your siblings in it?

BE: Yes. My brother, David, he's a commercial fisherman. My brother, Joe, he's not at this time because he's not able. My brother, Paul, he travels from Florida back here, shrimping, fishing. Got a little boat here now. He just came back. My sister, Terry, she's the one with the fish house, her and Bill. Patty, the *Miss Amanda* – that's Patty and Billy's boat. Oh gee. My sister, Nellie, her husband at times does it. He does electricians, stuff like that, but he still goes back to it. Oh, I got a sister in Alabama. Her husband works on a boat – big boats, rent boat. My sister in Florida. Her husband's called the net man now – my sister, Barbara's husband. The son has taken over the business on the boat. All her kids were brought up pretty much on the back deck [laughter]. So, I mean, when you see that, you're going to go for that goal of being the next rent boat captain [laughter]. That's the total goal of someone like me.

MB: You know, I wonder if it's a little bit like farming and a lot of people who say have a family farm, they grew up in it.

BE: Right. Right. You don't want to hand it over to somebody that doesn't know what they're doing. To me, that's a green horn as far as shrimping. Now, in farming, I don't know what there would be called. But [laughter] I imagine you'd put him in the backfield until he learned what he needed to know. [laughter] But that's what my mother did. My mother's father was a farmer with quite a few acres. I guess about four hundred in Hobucken, North Carolina.

MB: Yes. It is interesting because I have interviewed a few people around here who both fished and farmed around here.

BE: Well, that's how it all began. When they come in the Sneads Ferry area or in Pamlico, that's

how they did their supplies. That was their food. That was their system of means, of support. Great big get togethers. I mean, you wanted to have a family get together or a community get together, that's what they did. They went to the shoreline or rolled across to another place. They all got together, and they cooked their cornbread and everything else went to the shore and ate [laughter]. I mean, how much better can that get? [laughter]

MB: Sounds good to me. I am ready. Well, now, let's talk about – okay, back to meeting John, your husband. So, you met him – well, take us through and then your family with John.

BE: My family with John. John was highly respected, I guess, through my mom and dad. He is what I wanted [laughter]. They pretty much let me go on that, I mean, as far as being in the fishing and such. But they saw that it made me happy when I went, and I worked. My mother's always told me, "Betty, you don't need to be in the sun. You don't need to be doing that." But she knows I'm happy. She knows that that's what I wanted to do. Like I said, when you go out the first time, you pretty much know what you want to do. But it's a total goal. Each step that you take in the fisheries is like a step of being so much better than what you were – growing. John allowed me to grow, and my mother seen that. I can imagine it makes her feel good. I know my father would be proud [laughter]. I definitely do.

MB: Well, talk about your children.

BE: My children. Well, my children's been going in the river. I have a daughter, 21, and I have a son, 17. They've been going in the river ever since they were small. They were taught to swim at an early age, before one. Took them clamming with me. I'd have them either in a playpen on the shore with a tarp over them. Or they were in a stroller in the boat with me, walking down the shore, and of course a tarp over them, [laughter] over their head. But they were brought up to be on the water. Actually, they're very good (key haulers?). That's clamming. They like to wait until I find them, and they're signing good before they jump out of course [laughter]. But I'd say they've caught a couple bags a piece. So, that's good, I mean, for their age. I find that they are very musical and very good drawers. I mean artistic. So, I feel like it had a lot to do with it. I noticed they all play by ear, whatever they do, if it's an instrument. If it's a piano, they pick it up. So, I think being out there and having the freedom of really seeing what's there has helped them. Because they have this joy about them when they do play. They have their father go in there and sing along with them and all. That's something I've never thought I'd see [laughter], but they do.

MB: Well, now, talking about the genre, I talked about this with your husband, how – in other words, I believe that – now, what is your son's name?

BE: Robert.

MB: And you have a daughter.

BE: Right, Crystal.

MB: Crystal. Are they interested in getting in the fishing business Crystal and Robert?

BE: Crystal is at that age where she really doesn't know exactly what she wants, I feel like, as far as getting into the industry. She'd love to get her clamming license – she mentioned this past month – and start clamming with me when I start back. I told her she missed a season for me [laughter]. But she wants to get back into making sure that she can keep a license with all the rules and regulations. She said she just didn't know that she'd like to go ahead and get them in case they stop that. I have license for my son to sell. Because I'm pretty sure he's going to jump right in there and that's what he's going to be. I really do. As much as parents shove their kids to go to college and do, they always come back. Always.

MB: Well, so, would that please you if your son becomes a fisherman?

BE: Yes, it would because we need people that are going to be taught by those that's worked the area. Because I think that's important. He's worked with his grandfather, and he's very knowledgeable – Roy is. He's very knowledgeable, and I think he's a pioneer for around here. I mean, his ancestors did it, and I think he could be taught right.

MB: Well, let us talk about – because I talked about this with John, and John did have some trepidation about the future of fishing.

BE: Oh sure. I think everybody does. When you hear of a net ban, you're like, "Oh my goodness. They do that, what are we going to do in between the next season? Is it going to squeeze out catching and dwindling another type of fishery that's in the river?" I mean, you go from one – I mean, everything has to be evened out. It has to be like it was. Because too much change, you're going to have a heavy fishing. What that's going to cause is over-catch to me. I just don't see it happening. I think that you could try to say, "Oh, these fish are going to run here." No, it's going to run when the weather says to run, when they're ready. Not when man says, "We're going to document this for five years." In five years, you don't know what's going to happen. They didn't have white shrimp for years around here until after a hurricane or a spiel or something, and then they were back. I mean, just in abundance. I just don't think we can predict it. I think that we can try to help the environment. I think that we can equalize things out to – let's start with pollution. We've got one of the cleanest rivers there is right now. Are we going to keep it clean? Are we going to stop the pollution? That's what I want my child to do. When I'm not here, I want him to make sure it's being done correctly. Trawling, they want to get rid of trawls. They want to stop up above the bridge. Well, we tried getting on to experiment for two years. Well, you go to legislature, what do they do? They just say, "Oh, we're just going to have it this way. We're going to close it all the time for not the two years' experiment." So, yes, I think commercial fishermen are pretty scared to go out there and ask for what they really want. Unless you've got a lot of people backing you, that's scary because these people that live in so many faraway places, let's say New York, they want to come down and visit, what if they wanted to try it? They wanted to jump on your boat, and it's not there no more. They will never experience it. Never. It's a shame over what someone doesn't have the understanding of. I know I'm pretty hard about it. But I've seen some drastic changes that was very unnecessary. Very unnecessary.

MB: So, how would you characterize the future of commercial fishing?

BE: I'm going to say it like my father-in-law – we're going to be like dinosaur, extinct one day. To enjoy it the best way that you can now. To preserve it as long as you can. I think they're squeezing us out like they did in Florida. They squeezed people out. I went into Key West – not to change the subject, but I went into Key West. When I saw a monument at one end of a dock and I saw a cruise liner up there, and I was like, "This is incredible to think that pollution come from one thing off of boats because they were a sore eye. But yet you'll put a cruise liner in here and have to dredge out." So, yes, I think we're getting squeezed out. I think that you're seeing people that has money that don't even know what they're doing. They're going to regret it in the future. They really are. There's not going to be no place to go, no place to be, no place for their kids. So, I'm wondering, what's the purpose? What's the logic behind it? That's what I want to know, I think, and others.

MB: Well, how about the development aspect of it?

BE: Oh, pollution. That's the first thing you can – keynote. Hurricanes is going to wash it down. It's got to go somewhere. High tides – you've got a lot of marsh area. Let's preserve some of it. Let's quit building on it. Let's have someplace for the birds to go. I mean, there's so much pollution. You're seeing birds in places you'd normally never see them. Going to push those alligators in some tight places too, and they breed kind of quick around here. So, I mean, there's just so many aspects that they're not looking at when they're building. I think that the fertilizer alone, if you've ever been clamming, someone's fertilizing their lawn that's right there. They don't realize that you're breathing it. It's on top of the water. You can see it. Even though there's all these codes and regulations, they still do it. It's a terrible thing to see because you never know what's going to kill a fish. We can say it's one thing. How do we know it's not another? Do we really have the means in this area to be checking on it? Does it always have to be framed on something that it's not. When I go out there, I want to be safe. I don't want to catch some kind of disease or something that's going to kill me. I just don't want to see it for my kids or anybody else that just swims in that river. But as far as development, I think that you're going to see this place so build up. Just build up.

MB: The condos and everything. The malls and –

BE: Well –

MB: – motel. I noticed them haul the [inaudible] express over the high rise over [inaudible].

BE: I just now checked that out this past weekend, and I was like, "Well, it's not too bad. It's not right up there on the water like I thought they were going to have it." They did spare the marsh grass, you know? But the next one may not. But just think, all the fertilizers, all the sewage, you've got to have runoff. I mean, we are going to have flooding during hurricanes. It was shown to us in the last two. We have frequently storms, green ice that come this way. There might as well be a little hurricane. I guarantee you that the more septic tanks you see on the water, no matter what kind it be, if they bring in city, because there's going to be damage, you're going to see pollution. You're definitely going to see pollution. The more concrete you have, the more oils, and everything off our roads is going to come off in it. You ever walk down a road and smell the pavement come at you? Well, eventually, that's what you're going to smell.

Eventually. Pretty much can be sure of it. You are going to see oils.

MB: Now, what about the regulation aspect?

BE: Of fishing? Well, they really scared us with this moratorium and how it worked out. It worked out pretty good. They did leave a few of us out that worked together. Made it a little more difficult to stay in sort of to push us out, but we stayed. It was very scary. I don't know a family that didn't panic. I really don't. We were wondering just what legislator was going to do when they got it there. Even I went to Raleigh [laughter]. I wanted to hear. I wanted to make sure that what they said was true, and they weren't going to backfire it like they did the other things for us. I think some of it was very unnecessary. They already had the means to document in that aspect. They already had it. All they had to do was have the people and the manpower to put it to place. If I can go home and tell you what I caught per year and hand it over to you and pay my taxes to the government, so can the other people. I mean, because they were getting a copy of what we were getting, and that's a trip ticket. It was very upsetting to see so many changes. Because I'm wondering, were you trying to put a feud on the people that worked outside and pressuring them back inside with the regulations? Because they have their regulations. Then you have these that's inside with their regulations. Most of these men that work here – men and women, they work both. It's seasonal. I don't think they were thinking about the seasonal aspect of things and how they were actually putting us all together and squishing us into overfishing; is what I think it's going to be. That's how we're going to become the dinosaur; overfishing. I don't want to see that.

MB: So, long term, it is not – I guess that is a big thing with the documentary, is what –

BE: Long term. Well, if things go well with the documentation that they were looking for, that may have went over my head when they went to writing this up, it's going to take at least a good ten years to find out, I would think. I mean, because you've got weather. Weather has everything to do with fishing. I mean, without the weather, we don't have really [laughter] anything. You have to have it moving. It brings clams up and down. It brings fish ashore. It helps with the shrimping. It could kill shrimping; just a blow – a certain blow. So, I think we'll find out in about ten years.

MB: But I mean in terms of the long-term future of fishing.

BE: Oh, I don't think that we have long. Maybe twenty to thirty years. That's sad. That's sad.

MB: You mean here or everywhere?

BE: Everywhere. You see Florida, the way it's dwindling. Okay, the state over from it, they've got their rules and regulations. Fishermen keep quiet. They're so quiet because of the change. Some of them, they're really getting together, and they're really doing something. I'm proud of them. I mean, they're doing something beneficial for the communities when they don't allow a lot of that change. I think time will tell in the next ten years, like I said, if we're going to make it completely through or not for another twenty years. It's sad, but it's true.



MB: So, you think like for this town, Sneads Ferry, twenty years from now –

BE: Oh, you get the right person in here that knows his way around Congress, then it's not going to take that long [laughter]. I mean, think about it. I mean, anybody can come in and pretty much do what they want. They can buy this land up right here, put a supermarket there. I mean, okay, there's our pollution. There's another place dead in the river, you know? So, I mean, it's going to be up to the people that live here. Are we going to allow it? Are we going to let this happen? I hope not. I really hope not. I've seen it build in the past ten years, and I'm like, "Man." The places I used to go clamming are polluted now. You can have six boats part to a water or by a water. This is what people don't know, and it can become polluted. Well, there goes that area. Could take in a half acre. If people would just go look at the water quality – they're very nice there – and ask them for charts and everything, they'd see in the past previous years, how much actually is being taken away and what is being opened. A lot of times, they might hear of commercial fishermen wanting to open an area. Yes, open that area. Open that area. Work that area. Transfer that stuff because if it's going to be dead, it isn't good anyway. So, it's like a tit for tat. I mean, if you really want something, you're really going to have to push it. I think they're going to have to push this. No more growth on Sneads Ferry. No more on the water. There's plenty of land. There's plenty of land.

MB: But everybody wants to live by the water.

BE: Right. Well, build a pool [laughter], you know? I know I shouldn't say that, but –

MB: Well, I'm with you. I mean, it's hard to hold back. It has big money there.

BE: If all the beaches are taken up, what's the generation's going to do anyway? If there's no place to walk on a beach – a sandy beach or along the shore, what good does it do to fight now. This is what a lot of people think. I know that a lot of people would be against me. No, I don't like seeing them build on a beach. When I first went there, there was only one or two houses. I mean, there had to have been a reason then, two hundred years ago, not to build. There were hurricanes then. There's hurricanes now. I think that developers tend to not tell them the dangers. That's sad because there's always going to be movement of sand in current and water. We can't change that. There's no way you can put a jetty there and down the road, and it's not going to be destroyed. I mean, there's just no way. There's no way of changing anything. But the sad thing is these people that don't live here, that go to them condos, don't know that that water could be polluted in no time. Our ocean is only so big. Only so big and there's –

MB: That water could be in their front yard in no time there's an [inaudible].

BE: Oh. That's sad that a real estate agent would sell a person something like that [laughter]. I mean, it's dangerous to a whole family. Regardless how much money that person has, it's not fair. It is not fair.

MB: Well, let us talk about what you do here at the fish house.

BE: Oh, what do I do here? Well, this year was my most exciting. I've worked in most of the

fish houses – several of them here, and I've had different jobs. Mostly packing or heading shrimp, weighing. But Bill allows me to run the vat, get the – well, that's getting the fish off the boat – the shrimp rent boats. Running the vat, weighing them up, icing them, packing them. We're talking fifty to seventy-five pounds each thing – each box. He lets me retail and wholesale. It was so exciting. It was unreal. I learned so much the past summer that I can't wait to get in full swing again [laughter].

MB: So, you love your work. Talk about that.

BE: My work. Anything to do with the river – if my husband right now was to come down and say, "Betty, I need you to come help me clear mullets," I would go help him clear mullets. Because I know that, for one thing, he needs to clear them quick. But that is the family part of it. This is a family business here. What I love is when the tension gets bad, my brother-in-law sings. It makes you feel good inside, and you're like laughing at him, you know? Your customers come in; they feel good. They hear this good-natured person, and my sister down here. Just family all around you. Everybody's related to everybody [laughter]. They all make you feel good. It's like your work is nothing. You could work fifteen hours straight, and you're tired after you get home [laughter]. We packed probably two hundred boxes of shrimp in one day. It didn't seem like it. I mean, it was like an everyday occasion. I mean, it was good. All you had to do is keep the ice there, keep unpacking them and moving along. Encouraging that shrimper to go on back out, ice them up quick, and get them back. Seeing their faces when they come down after a good catch. Or seeing them depressed and saying, "Well, it'll get better this evening, you know." [laughter] Seeing their kids come jump on the boat and going out there and learning something new. Oh, it has so many advantages working here. Seeing the people from out of state come down and say, "I pay \$16 for one pound." Well, honey, you're getting it cheaper. [laughter] You're getting it fresh, and you're getting it off the boat. Seeing the shrimp go in the scales, and they're still kicking. You can't get no fresher than that [laughter]. Or a fish swimming around in the tub. Showing people how to head shrimp – just so much down here. Labor is the key word. You're a laborer. You have to remember that. You are to do. You can throw somebody else off track by saying, "I'm going to hold this for so-and-so," and you don't have the merchandise. You don't lie to the people. You don't have that merchandise, you don't have it. That's what keeps people going and coming back. Fresh seafood and having it there when you say you're going to have it. I found that to be the key. I guess during the wintertime, when you're squeezing mullets and white shrimp's still coming in, and you're working just as hard as you can to keep up with everything. There's a couple hundred pounds of big mullets or roe mullets, and there's a couple hundred pound per boat still coming in. You've got probably twenty boats working for you. I mean, you're hustling. It's exciting. It's hard to explain. It just makes you feel good when you go home, and you know you're going to get up the next morning. You're going to do it, and you're going to learn something new. Somebody's going to teach you something new down there. That's the part I like.

MB: So, at the heart of the season, you are working six days a week?

BE: Yes. At first, I wasn't. Actually, I was only supposed to be here three days [laughter] when he took me on underneath his wing. I had worked for him in – let's see, mullet season. That's a good season. I like big mullets. If one of the guys wants something – help clearing them, I can

do that. I mean, but I guess what really helps me with my advantage is my husband allowed me to do all this on the back deck. Without that knowledge, I don't think I could be here [laughter]. I'd be just another person looking at land job [laughter] definitely. But the experience that he has given me, and my father-in-law and my father, my brothers, is unreal.

MB: So, fishing is a way of life. It's way more than just a job.

BE: Oh, yes. Well, you have to know what you can do and what you can't do, mainly. You have to know yourself, even to your expenses. One year, I probably didn't spend \$50 at the grocery store, and that was for milk and bread. I had all the vegetables. The farmers had taught me how to freeze around here. All the shrimp, fish, and everything I cleaned while I was working on the back deck, I'd keep the real small ones, sell the larger ones. They were already frozen. I found that cleaning them, they'd last longer. A lot of people don't believe that, but it worked for me. I mean, just think, you can save all that money you worked so hard for, You can put it towards a boat or whatever, send your kids through college, whatever you needed to do. But it's all in what you were taught when you were young to do. My mother always had a budget, and it's the key to it now. You got a budget. I stress my husband about a big boat because that's what I want. That's what I desire [laughter]. I want to be a shrimp boat captain. I want him to teach me. I want to be able to say, "Hey, I did it." I want to be that last dinosaur that gets on that boat and shows the world, hey, I can do it. I mean, it can be done. We can keep this. We can make it survive. We can keep it going. I think that we get too much from overseas and not enough here. I think that just because cheaper, doesn't mean better. It does not mean it. Actually, I'm scared to eat it. I'm scared to get sick. If anybody knows seafood, I know it, and I'd rather have fresh seafood. I'm scared to buy anything frozen or anything like that. I really am. Some of it's real good. I see where the factories are made. I have family that works in some of the packing companies, and I go buy those brands. Anything in the USA [laughter], I know that they're going to track it down. They're going to find out. I don't think that we could do that if I was to eat something or put it on my table from there. So, yes, I think that the fishing industry helps people a whole lot more than what they think here. Some of the regulations, like with ice, are very good. Very good. I just wonder if people really know the truth about commercial fishing. I mean, I think this is great. I really do. The truth is, we're just hardworking people. If you have ever had to go out in the seas that I have to get back in [laughter], you'd say, "Oh, man, they had a good day." [laughter] May not have caught a whole lot, but we had a good day. There's nothing I like about working around the fish house, the stories I get to hear from the old timers. Because they're true. They're really true.

MB: People like Mark who've been through everything.

BE: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I run my mouth a lot around the fish house. They tell me I'm a talker. But I tell you what, when you get ready to tell me an old story, you will hear, "Betty be quiet." [laughter] Definitely.

MB: I think we are near the wrap-up stage. It's been a great interview. I appreciate it, talk about Sneads Ferry as a town. Because this documentary is going to try to portray a town – a fishing town.

BE: Well, the fishing village that I live in, everybody knows everybody. We have a lot of newcomers that come in here. But the older people are so charming, it is unreal. I think that when there's any kind of social event, they all pull together. I think that when there's a tragedy, you see people pull together. I mean, there's a lot of love there. People that probably you'd never even knew they were there, they're so quiet or they're in a different work area, they all come together. They shake your hand when they see you. It's been great. I mean, I went back to my hometown, and it's nothing like this. These people need to enjoy it all they can. They need to enjoy it. I think of people like Ms. Maggie (Rowe?) [laughter]. When I go into church, she pulls me up, and she takes me up to the – first time I'm ever into the church, Pentecostal one [laughter]. She takes me up there, and she says, "You're singing by me, honey." [laughter] She's in her nineties [laughter] now. Those are the things that are special about Sneads Ferry. Her father was a commercial fisherman, and [his] father before him. It's just the area itself with the people is so great. They've been good to me. I know that. They really have.

[end of transcript]