

Oral History Collection - Fishing and Fisheries

Arthur Nelson Oral History

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Interviewer: RL – Robert Livingstone

Transcriber: NCC

Robert Livingstone: My name is Robert Livingstone, Jr. I'm a retired fishery biologist from the National Marine Fishery Service. I'm on a quest to get information on the fishing industry of Woods Hole. This last week or so, I've been going around and talking to some of the old-timers and some of the younger people who are fishing. This afternoon, I'm visiting with Arthur Nelson, who is known to most of us who spent time with him on the *Albatross III* and have known him in Woods Hole as Swede Nelson. He's one of the older fishermen. So, this afternoon on January the 29th, I'm visiting his residence with Swede and his wife. We're going to have a chat about his experiences in fishing and his experiences with Sam Cahoon in Woods Hole. We're going to play this back to see. Now, I'm going to ask you some questions. I mean, it's just very informal chit-chat. But when did you first get into commercial fishing and whereabouts were you?

Arthur Nelson: Well, I got into commercial fishing when I graduated from high school in 1926 in Provincetown.

RL: You were in Ptown?

AN: [affirmative]

RL: I'll be darned. I didn't know that.

AN: I wasn't brought up there.

RL: Are you somebody who spent a long time with the fisheries who's – Ptown, was that Captiva, who went down with [inaudible]?

AN: Yes, I knew him. I knew him as a kid, yes.

RL: You fished out of Provincetown for a good many years, did you?

AN: No. I fished out of Provincetown for one year. Then I was in the Coast Guard for five years. Then I fished for another couple of years in Provincetown and came to Woods Hole in 1934.

RL: In 1934. What brought you to Woods Hole?

AN: To go fishing on the *Charles Fossey II*.

RL: To go fishing on the *Charles Fossey*. Who had the *Charles Fossey*?

AN: A man named Arthur Miller.

RL: Arthur Miller. You mentioned in another conversation there were a number of other fishermen that came to Woods Hole about this time. Who were they?

AN: (João Ferreira?), Henry Klimm, Kenny Shepherd, (Tuck Crowe?), Jerry Vincent, Warren

Vincent. Most of us stayed. This group here stayed. But there were others that also came, but they left.

RL: Was this in Sam Cahoon's heyday about the 1934s or so?

AN: Well, that was when Sam Cahoon was known as the yellowtail king.

RL: I've heard that.

AN: He handled more yellowtails than anybody.

RL: As a matter of fact, somebody told me that at the auction in Boston, they used to be called Cahoon's flounders.

AN: A lot of times, yes. He sent an awful lot of them.

RL: Because they were really a good grade of flounder, huh?

AN: Yes.

RL: How many boats were fishing out of Woods Hole?

AN: Well, that's a hard thing to tell because all the biggest parts of the Nantucket boats landed there in them days. All the vineyard boats landed there. Plus, when the western boats came down from Stonington, they landed there. Then they'd get boats in the summertime that came up fishing out of the Provincetown that would land there.

RL: Sam Cahoon's fleet, would they fish most of the year?

AN: They fished year-round.

RL: They fished year-round, except in this one winter, which –

AN: Well, they fished all that winter.

RL: Ken Shepard was telling me that they were tied up for over a month in that [19]35 – in January 1935.

AN: That's right. Yes.

RL: But this was also a time when you were – it was after the Depression.

AN: It was the Depression.

RL: You had a hard time making a dollar.

AN: That's right.

RL: Ken said that you had to borrow money from Sam Cahoon to buy coal and to buy grub.

AN: That's right.

RL: Things were really tough.

AN: [laughter] Those days, a married man ties his food to the grocery market and paid for it in the summertime. He couldn't swing it in the winter.

RL: That's quite a change. Was this all dragging?

AN: This was all dragging.

RL: Using flounder nets?

AN: Flounder nets.

RL: Using flat nets with the chain or —

AN: Flat nets. Just swinging flat nets before the heyday of the Yankee trawl.

RL: The Yankee trawl or the [19]36 or any of these others.

AN: They came in.

RL: What kind of a day did you have when you went fishing? Did you go out before daybreak?

AN: No. You left at any time. Well, you'd get your food and ice and water and go. You'd stay out two or three days depending on the weather. When it breezed up, you'd come home.

RL: Was there one special fishing ground where you usually went?

AN: Yes. I would say in the wintertime, it was off Noman's.

RL: It was off Noman's.

AN: Off Noman's. Then southwest from Gay Head to southeast from Noman's.

RL: But where was your main yellowtail ground?

AN: Off Noman's.

RL: That was?

AN: Yes.

RL: What about the banana or the corner?

AN: That was mostly in the summer.

RL: Okay. So, in the wintertime, it was off Noman's.

AN: Off Noman's.

RL: In the summertime, you moved out to the Nantucket trawlers.

AN: In the summertime, you'd take and go down to the corner, the banana, along that edge.

RL: Swede, what kind of fish did you catch?

AN: Yellowtail flounders, mostly. I get a few blackback flounder and a stray codfish now and again. But mostly, it was yellowtails.

RL: Were there codfish around then?

AN: A few, not too many. Not in numbers off there, no.

RL: I heard you have to get off Nantucket trawls.

AN: You had to go down the trawls.

RL: You had to go down the trawls to get the codfish.

AN: Get a ladder up on coxes.

RL: So, you tried to stay away from hard bottom?

AN: We stayed away from hard bottom as much as we could.

[laughter]

AN: We had no rollers or anything else.

RL: You were using chain?

AN: We're using chain.

RL: Using chain, yes.

AN: Just a rope and chain sleeve.

RL: You made your own nets?

AN: We made our own nets.

RL: That's something they don't do now.

AN: We take all the twine, cut it up, and make the nets.

RL: What were the size range of these vessels that you were going on?

AN: Well, they were anywhere from [laughter] the *Eleanor Kay*, let's see, the *Eleanor Kay* at that time was 30 foot. Later on, they put in an addition of 10 feet into it. I would say anywhere from 30 feet up to 70.

RL: So, 30 feet to 70. These boats did not go out to Georges, did they?

AN: Not in the wintertime.

RL: In the summertime, would they go out to Georges?

AN: Some of them went swordfishing in the summertime. Some went sailing, the bigger ones. The small boats stayed dragging.

RL: When they went sailing, you mean they went sailing mackerel?

AN: Mackerel. Some went swordfishing in the summer.

RL: But you were mainly fishing for flounders?

AN: We were fishing – dragging for flounders.

RL: So, what'd you do with things like goosefish?

AN: That day, you threw them overboard.

RL: You threw them overboard. Now, they get 30 cents a pound or two or more.

AN: They get many times higher than the other fish.

RL: I know that's something else.

AN: We didn't save skates. I know on the [inaudible], we must have thrown a million pounds away.

RL: Of skates and whatnot?

AN: Skates and [inaudible], goosefish.

RL: So, how many years did you fish on this one boat out of Sam Cahoon's?

AN: I was on different boats. I was on the *Charles Fossey*, then I went on the *Southern Cross* with Pete Grant.

RL: The *Southern Cross*.

AN: I went with Warren Vincent in the (*Anna?*). Then I was back with (George Fisher?) on the *Southern Cross* for a year, then took the *Betsy Sea*. Then I went with Henry Klimm. I was with Henry for, god, I don't know how many years, the *Eleanor Kay*, then the *Captain Bill*.

RL: Which was the first one that Henry had?

AN: The *Eleanor Kay*.

RL: The *Eleanor Kay*. Then he had, what, the *Captain Bill II*?

AN: No. The *Captain Bill I*.

RL: *Captain Bill I*.

AN: It's followed the [inaudible] Provincetown. Then he sold that. I was running that when he sold it. He had the *Captain Bill*. He had the *Eugene H*. He sold the *Captain Bill*. I went skipping with the *Eugene H*. He had the *Captain Bill II* up in – she was 72 foot, I think, back in Charleston, Maine.

RL: Well, she was built up in Maine.

AN: Yes, Charleston, do it while she had.

RL: How long were you with Henry Klimm?

AN: Oh, god, how long I was with Henry Klimm? Well, I started with Henry Klimm during the war.

RL: You did, huh?

AN: Yes, in the [19]40s. I went with him most of the time until I got through in [19]65, other than a little short inches in a couple of other boats.

RL: Were you also fishing squid with him for MBL?

AN: Yes, before. Yes, we fished squid for the – with Henry in *Captain Bill*, *Captain Bill II*,

Captain Bill III long lining with him.

RL: Well, you went long lining for swordfish or swordfish?

AN: Swordfish, yes, in *Captain Bill III*. I never went in the *Captain Bill IV*. I got through and I went watchman on the *Albatross*. That's when I started the *Albatross*, 1964.

RL: But you made quite a few cruises on the *Albatross*, too, didn't you?

AN: Yes.

RL: This was on the *Albatross III*?

AN: Yes.

RL: Now, you were on there for a long time.

AN: Well, from [19]64 until I retired.

RL: What about the *Albatross II*?

AN: I was never on there.

RL: This was the one that was the *Harvard*, was it? The *Albatross*?

AN: The *Albatross II* was the old *Harvard*.

RL: It was the old *Harvard*. Now, she was a Boston side trawler.

AN: She was a Boston steam side trawler that the fishermen wouldn't go on.

RL: You say the fishermen wouldn't go on?

AN: No. She was dirty. They were afraid of her.

RL: What do you mean she was dirty?

AN: Well, she was underwater all the time.

RL: Is that so?

AN: Yes.

RL: How'd the government happen to end up with it?

AN: General Seafoods gave it to the government for a dollar.

RL: For a dollar?

AN: Yes.

RL: I remember Billy Bruce telling me about that.

AN: Then the Navy took her during the war and they put in a big piece into her.

RL: That's right. Galtsoff told me about that.

AN: They renamed her. Then after the war, the Navy was supposed to put her back in the original shape, as near in the original shape as they could, because she was a lot longer. But she was more or less a misfit.

RL: She was a misfit, huh?

AN: More or less.

RL: I'll be damned. That's interesting. [laughter]

AN: Because that's when (Johnny Malachi?) and João Ferreira and all those fellas went on.

RL: That's when Austin –

AN: (Austin Powers?).

RL: Austin Powers and –

AN: Morris.

RL: Morris. What was Morris' name? (Morris Doyle?)? No.

AN: No.

RL: (Jack Sharkey)?

AN: No. Wasn't it Murray that was the kipper of it?

RL: That's right. Before Beattie.

AN: Beattie had it just before she tied up.

RL: But I remember that. Morris Doyle, I used to see him up at the fish pier.

AN: Yes, they had quite a few Newfoundlanders.

RL: Yes, they really did.

AN: Powers was a mate. Billy Bruce was a mate. Billy Bruce was first mate. I was second mate.

RL: So, you were on those cruises where you – the last quarter start the slaughter, huh?

AN: Huh?

RL: On those cruises where they used to say last quarter start the slaughter, when they were starting mesh selection and they caught all those haddock and had to throw them over the side.

AN: No, I wasn't there then.

RL: That was terrible. That was the most awful waste I've ever seen. Of course, now you look back and there were a lot of fish then. But it's really changed now. Do you ever talk to any of these young guys that are fishing out of Woods Hole now?

AN: Not too much. I don't see too much of them. Cavanaugh once in a while.

RL: Who, Larry?

AN: Yes. I'm not down around the waters anymore. I go down aboard a Henry and that's it.

RL: Do you think that they've learned the hard way?

AN: They learned the hard way and they're fishing in places where we would never even begin to think.

RL: You mean they're fishing – they're hard bottom fishing?

AN: Hard bottom fishing, the hardest kind.

RL: How'd they learn that?

AN: Well, I don't know. It's just a try.

RL: They're using a different kind of a net, too, aren't they? Are they using a German designed net?

AN: It's still the same. It's still the Yankee trawl.

RL: Is it still the Yankee trawl?

AN: Of course, they were – it's all polypropylene twine.

RL: Which helps float it up, yes.

AN: No more cowhides.

RL: No more of the big chafing cowhides. I remember those things were heavy.

AN: Now, they use polypropylene and tie it right to the cod end.

RL: Were there years when you fish – when you were fishing flounders, did you saw big changes in the numbers? I mean, did it fluctuate a lot?

AN: Yes.

RL: Huh?

AN: Yes.

RL: Did you know any of the people in the old fisheries that worked here? Ken Shepard mentioned Bob Goffin.

AN: Yes. We know them all. We knew all of them down there.

RL: You did, huh?

AN: Yes. Jim Mooney was the engineer.

RL: Who was this Jim?

AN: Jim Mooney.

RL: Mooney. Okay.

AN: He was the chief engineer down there. Goffin was the superintendent. They had a fellow named (Albert Raydell?).

RL: I never knew him.

AN: He finally went in the car messenger service for the fish, which is distributing trout and that stuff. Then I guess, he became head of the conservation in – I think it was Wisconsin.

RL: Did you know Paul Galtsoff, too?

AN: Yes. I knew him, but not really personally.

RL: Did you know Bill Royce when he was here?

AN: I know Bill Royce.

RL: Or (Bill Harrington?) or (Oscar Sette?) who did all the work on mackerel?

AN: No.

RL: It might have been when they were –

AN: I knew Bill Royce.

RL: You knew Bill Royce?

AN: Yes.

RL: There's been an awful lot of changes over the years, haven't there?

AN: Yes.

RL: Ken was saying that they even had a room down at the fisheries that they had set aside where you guys could hang up a couple of shirts or a suit. Because he said that the two of them served on the – were call firemen for the fire department. They needed a place where they could change their clothes or they could take showers. They even gave a room for showers down there in the old residence, I think.

AN: No. This Albert Raydell, he used to – we used to paddle around with him. He said, "We'd be taking our fish." He said, "I'll go down, turn the gas off, and you folks could come down and take a shower when you're through."

RL: Wow, that's really pretty good.

AN: That was a blessing.

RL: That was really something. That's a big help because, boy, you don't have that now.

AN: I know.

RL: Now, what are your feelings about the future of a fishing industry in Woods Hole?

AN: Personally, I can't see whether they can get one in there.

RL: You're talking about the docking facilities?

AN: Everything. That is the town dock.

RL: There's another area that – where they could build finger piers that somebody else talked

about between where Henry Klimm is and the fisheries breakwater.

AN: Yes. But who's going – who owns the land? The MBL owns that. The fisheries owns that.

RL: The federal government owns a lot of it and the MBL does.

AN: They're not going to give.

RL: In other words, it's just – it's too tied up.

AN: That's right.

RL: It's too congested.

AN: Same way over on the town dock.

RL: On the town dock.

AN: Fisheries owns both sides of it.

RL: I know that, yes.

AN: Right around to the art club. So, years ago, if they'd have had the facilities for tie boats up here, they could have had a very good fishing fleet out of Woods Hole.

RL: You mean in the area where the steamship authority is now?

AN: Well, anywhere. Yes.

RL: Of course, if the steamship authority was not here, you could have a fishing port.

AN: Well, that was it, see. When old man Sam Cahoon died, they were thinking seriously of closing off Sam Cahoon then on the steamship dock.

RL: Even then?

AN: Even then.

RL: Is that so?

AN: Of course, when the business folded away, they took – they bought out the gold land.

RL: Yes. Did you ever know the Spindel, Isaiah Spindel or the family that owned all that property? They were Sam Cahoon [inaudible].

AN: No. I didn't know.

RL: This was way back. This was the first sign of a fishing industry in Woods Hole, as a matter of fact. Tell me something about Sam Cahoon. What did you know about him? What kind of a businessman was he?

AN: Sam Cahoon was a smart businessman. He never met any of his fish buyers unless they walked into his office. He never went to New York to meet one. Like Austin, they came to him. If they wanted to meet him, they came to Woods Hole.

RL: That's interesting. In other words, the guys from Fulton Fish Market came down here –

AN: That's right. That's the only time.

RL: – New Bedford or from Boston.

AN: That's the only time he met them people. He did all his business over the phone.

RL: That was a real quality fish market, though, huh?

AN: That's right.

RL: That was a quality business. I've heard nothing but –

AN: When Sam Cahoon got a figure that a fish dealer had enough money against him, he'd call him up and say, "Well, Bob, I think it's time I got a check. You don't get any more fish until I do." So, he'd have a check in the next month.

RL: Is that so? That's pretty good.

AN: When they put the town dock in, it was all his [inaudible] went out. After the town dock, of course, they wanted figures. So, Sam Cahoon went to the meeting. He told him how much ice he sold, how many fish he landed, how much money was spent by the fishing boats on groceries. When the merchants in Falmouth had them figures, they were surprised that a man could do so much business over telephone.

RL: Isn't that amazing?

AN: They were amazed.

RL: I think that is fantastic. There was a meeting to talk about the town about the town dock.

AN: About the town dock, yes.

RL: What year was that?

AN: No. I can't –

RL: Would it be in the early 1950s?

AN: Yes, it was.

RL: But there was a town meeting to talk about this.

AN: There was a village meeting.

RL: Woods Hole village meeting.

AN: They had one in the community center.

RL: In the community center in Woods Hole?

AN: In Woods Hole, there was a meeting there, then they had one in the town hall with it.

RL: That is interesting. So, this is on record is what you're saying. This meeting would be on record.

AN: It should be.

RL: I'll be darned. That's interesting. I'll have to talk to Cynthia Cahoon about that, Homer's wife, yes.

AN: The merchants in Falmouth were very much amazed that Sam Cahoon could make as much money over a telephone without leaving his office.

RL: That's fantastic. So, what happened after that, I mean, to the plans for a town dock then?

AN: That was it. They got the town dock. You remember the old town dock?

RL: They had lights and you had water –

AN: They had lights and you had water down it. This one don't have it.

RL: You have nothing down there now.

AN: That's right.

RL: Ken said they used to get water because they bring Charlie Grinnell into a basket of lobsters. One time Charlie took the – got so many lobsters, he took them up the front office and then it ended right after that. [laughter]

AN: No. We got water even in the wintertime. We turned it on up the street and get a water and shut it off. Then finally somebody –

RL: Somebody washed down and left it running all night long and wasted and screwed up and so forth.

AN: Of course, the water came out of the [inaudible] budget.

RL: When you fished at Cahoon's and you landed your fish there, you unloaded your fish into trucks, did you, in boxes, weighed them, and so forth?

AN: We heisted them out. We went in boxes into the truck.

RL: Then the trucks went to?

AN: Boston, New York, Providence. Put on the train there for New York.

RL: Is that so?

AN: Yes.

RL: Was there ever anybody from the fisheries that was collecting data information?

AN: No, not them days. They didn't collect data then.

RL: They didn't, huh?

AN: No.

RL: How could I find out how much was landed at Sam Cahoon's, say, for one year just for this
—

AN: I don't know if would they have any records or not.

RL: There was a bookkeeper there. Ken Shepard said her name was Clara Adams.

AN: Clara, she's gone now.

RL: What family was she from?

AN: She was a Goodfellow. Her father was caretaker for the crane estate down on Juniper Point before Mr. Tate.

RL: Before John Tate?

AN: Yes.

RL: I'll be darned.

AN: John Tate took his place when Jimmy Goodfellow died.

RL: Clara Adams is dead, right?

AN: That's right.

RL: Well, she was the bookkeeper?

AN: Yes. But she handled mostly the retail business books.

RL: The retail business books?

AN: Yes.

RL: Did a lot of fish go up to Nagel's in Boston?

AN: In Boston, it was sold through Nagel.

RL: It was sold through Nagel. But there was nobody that was collecting data or doing any sampling?

AN: Not from the fisheries, no. Evidently, there must have been a yearly report sent in.

RL: Unless Cynthia Smith has some records left over from her father, then that's about all.

AN: That'll be about all, yes.

RL: What about Franny?

AN: Franny was – she worked with young Sam, but then Kenny got her out of there because crisis was too much. When old Sam first passed away, they'd have a family meet. (Homer Smith?) was in there.

RL: Homer was in there.

AN: (Ames?) from Osterville. So, Kenny finally got in front of that, and moved down to [inaudible] to get away from the family all together. Mrs. Cahoon and Sam – young Sam probably had his mother in there. The business could have been – probably could have been still going.

RL: Is that so?

AN: Yes. There was a million-dollar business gone in eight years.

RL: Was there in those days? Yes, that's pretty much. I'll think how much that'd be worth right

now.

AN: That's right.

RL: Several million.

AN: So, there was two or three different ones from New Bedford that wanted to buy out that business after Sam passed away.

RL: He was sailing with his family, and he had a heart attack.

AN: He won the race.

RL: He won the race?

AN: He won the race. When he got back into the war, he dropped dead.

RL: Where, in Woods Hole?

AN: In Woods Hole.

RL: Is that so? Right in Little Harbor?

AN: Great Harbor.

RL: In Great Harbor?

AN: Yes.

RL: What did he sail?

AN: He sailed one of them little Cape Cod knockabouts.

RL: A knockabout?

AN: Yes.

RL: Darn. Was it a strenuous race?

AN: No. It was not so strenuous. Strenuous, but it was just one of those things.

RL: Just one of those things. It was an awful good way to go, though, wasn't it, huh?

AN: Yes. The funny part was I went out with him one day sailing. Then after he passed away, somebody said to me, he says, "You could have gone with Sam Cahoon every time he raced if you'd been around." I said, "Why didn't the man tell me?"

RL: [laughter] For heaven's sakes.

AN: Because I'm heavy, I'd make good balance.

RL: You'd make good balance? [laughter]

AN: A lot of times, I'd hang way out and keep upright so he wouldn't carry some sail. They never told me.

RL: I'll be darned. Isn't that something, huh? Were most of the people that fished for Sam Cahoon pretty friendly? Did they know him on a personal basis?

AN: Yes. Everything was on a personal basis with Sam.

RL: That's another tradition that's going out of style, isn't it?

AN: That's right.

RL: Boy, you'd go – if you go up to the auction in Boston now [laughter], you're liable to end up in a fistfight.

AN: That's right.

RL: Boy, the cutthroats, I've never seen like it.

AN: Well, you went up in the morning, you'd tell Sam what you had. He'd get on the phone. The first thing he'd say, "Well, Bob, I can give you so much money. If I can do any better, I'll give it to you." A lot of times, he'd come in the next trip and he'd say, "Well, Bob, I did a little better than I thought the last – I thought I could the last time, and there's another cent."

RL: That's wonderful. That really is. Because now, if you put your fish in a port where they have to be trucked, they take off so much for – on your fish off the auction price. There are many ways to skin a cat and to chew you down, huh?

AN: Yes. They can cut you down.

RL: Well, that must have been a lot of pleasure, I mean, in fishing for a man like this. He must have had a very steady flow of fish coming in.

AN: He did. He had all the boats from, as I say, from the vineyard. Boats were around here them days. Quite a few of the Nantucket boats took out there.

RL: Were there any other fisheries besides the draggers that fished for Sam Cahoon? I mean, did he have guys that fished for swordfish for him?

AN: Yes.

RL: He had lobstermen,

AN: Lobstermen, Charlie Grinnell. Johnny Olson, lobsters. Also, (Caddy Hank?) would bring the lobsters down. Swordfishermen would come in there with swordfish. We went swordfishing several summers and landed them all there. (Gertrude D.?) landed here with the (*Christina Dan?*).

RL: The *Christina Dan*.

AN: We would always fish there, swordfish there.

RL: Did you ever go on any research cruises with the *Captain Bill*? I mean, did you go out with shorelander?

AN: No. I only made one cruise with (Bob Schroeder?).

RL: With Bill Schroeder?

AN: Yes.

RL: He's a beautiful guy. Was this on lobster?

AN: No. On the *Captain Bill II*, they went when they discovered the lobsters off there and the big red crabs.

RL: You were on that one?

AN: I was not.

RL: You weren't on there. I think this is the time when Ken Shepard said that they got so many of these deep-sea crabs. They used to put them on the manifold to cook them. They were all over the place.

AN: I wouldn't know. Bob Schroeder, he brought in a bunch of them.

RL: I came across some of his old notebooks out at the warehouse in the room that the library has some stuff stored in. He did a lot of work.

AN: Who, Bob Schroeder?

RL: He did more work than a whole team of these biologists do in this day and age.

AN: He made an awful lot of cruises on them, fishing boats, all kinds. Dory fisherman, you name him, he was on them.

RL: He knew a lot of fishermen. That's very important, I think. We're missing this. We're getting too tied up in data processing these days, you see.

AN: He wasn't on a boat 24 hours a week, but he knew everybody aboard and all about them.

RL: [laughter] Do you think that if they had a new and better dock facility in Woods Hole that it would stimulate fishing again?

AN: Well, that's the question. You've got your traffic flow, for one thing. It's a hard place to get in and out of Woods Hole, your main street, especially in the summertime. You've got no ice facilities nearby.

RL: I mean, you'd have to have the twine. You'd have to have a lot of things.

AN: You'd have everything. You'd have to have a regular –

RL: That's why these guys leave Woods Hole, go to New Bedford, and fuel up and take on their supplies.

AN: That's right. They get their fuel, they get their water, get their ice.

RL: So, you think Woods Hole with a greater fishing industry than they had in the past is a real question mark because of all the way the property is taken up?

AN: Personally, I believe so, Bob. I personally believe so.

RL: There's not much room. You could put a tee on the end of that.

AN: You could put a tee on the end of the walk.

RL: But that doesn't give you all that much.

AN: That's right. The walk isn't wide enough for a boat.

RL: You're right by the aquarium, you're in more or less of a congested area.

AN: I can't see all these sophisticated plans and everything. Personally, myself, I can't see it.

RL: The squid fishery for draggers is fairly new, isn't it?

AN: That's new.

RL: But that's a big fishery.

AN: It is a big fishery.

RL: Last year there were, I don't know, I counted 30-some boats right off Surf Beach last spring. But I guess that some people feel that the more boats that fish squid, the better that'll make ground fishing.

AN: Evidently.

RL: If you keep ground fishing –

AN: Because you take the American fisherman. He's not going to go to sea and stay a month.

RL: Okay.

AN: He's not going in a factory ship. They proved that in the Atlantic floor and the Pacific floor.

RL: I know. With all the bears out there in the Pacific, they really did, yes.

AN: But the American fisherman does not intend to go to sea and stay, as I say, a month, six weeks. Them days are gone.

RL: Well, it seems to me, Swede, there have been a number of changes in the recent – let's say, the last 10-year period where fuel has gone sky high.

AN: That's right.

RL: Gillnetting is becoming very, very much of a major fishery off Chatham and North Shore. I guess, even out on Georges now.

AN: They're putting the gillnets out there, too.

RL: What do you think about this, about the gillnets?

AN: Well, [laughter] it's an old thing. They used to do it. The only places they used to do it years ago was out of Portland and Gloucester. The Gloucester boats would come down to Plymouth. They'd fish all around Cape Ann and Jeffries. But it's new here as far as codfish gillnetting and groundfish gillnetting is concerned.

RL: Somebody told me it wiped out the line trawl fishery at Chatham.

AN: Well, it's a much easier.

RL: Two guys, much less fuel, you don't have to be as concerned about weather.

AN: No bait.

RL: No bait. That's the other thing. But the quality of the fish, it's not as good.

AN: Well, if you stop and figure, the fish sometimes are in their nets 24 hours. If it blows, they're in longer.

RL: In other words, they drown, they fill up with water, their gut goes to pieces. Then you've got sand fleas.

AN: They can't get to them. If it's blowing, they can't get to them.

RL: But these guys cover quite a bit of area, don't they?

AN: Yes.

RL: Those nets are two miles long and they can set three sets of those, this monofilament nylon, which is light.

AN: Very light. Takes no room. It's not like the old linen nets.

RL: You mean that you needed a whole bin to put them in.

AN: They had to put them on the reels, bring them in, straighten them out, put them on the reels, have two sets of them.

RL: Well, maybe there's a chance for a fishing industry and fresh market for fish because people are going to be eating more fish all the time, I think, in places like the vineyard, Woods Hole, Hyannis, and some of these ports where you can have day boats or different types of fishing techniques. But I think what most people would feel that the problem at Woods Hole would be the congestion in getting the fish transported out of here. Somebody once said that a fishing fleet in the town is not the most popular spot in terms of all the town people. When they were unloading squid down on the Falmouth Harbor last year, they complained about boats banging on the dock.

AN: Well, that's always been that. Of course, when I first started fishing, nobody had much use for the fishermen, the dirty old fishermen. Well, all the drunken fishermen. Well, Bob, you come from a strange place. I don't care whether it's from Stonehenge, Provincetown. You land in Woods Hole. You don't know anybody. So, you go to a beer parlor. At least you're going to sit down, and you're going to talk to the fellow next to you.

RL: That's right.

AN: But you don't know anybody in the town. It takes a long while for people to get acquainted. After we got acquainted here, we were thought to know them.

RL: I went through that when I – before I was married when I used to work for the Oregon Fish Commission. I was in a strange port, and I would meet the fishermen in the bar. I would go out

on the salmon trawlers with them or the draggers or whatever. I made a lot of friends that way. But when they go out and risk their life and they get uptight, they come in and they need to relax. That's what they do.

AN: That's right.

RL: They go to bars. I used to see some terrible drunks. But it hasn't changed. I mean, I guess, the lee side is just as full as it ever was in terms of some of the younger guys. The only thing you've got now, you've got drugs going with it.

AN: That's a bad part.

RL: That's a very bad part.

AN: It's a bad thing.

RL: It's a bad deal all the way.

AN: It could be any kid that ever sat on them.

RL: Well, I greatly respect some of the old-timers. I've enjoyed talking to people like Ken Shepard. He's also got a back that keeps it pretty limited.

AN: I know it. I was with him when he got it.

RL: You were?

AN: Well, we were in the *Betsy Sea*. She held down. He ran in under the deck, and the ice come down on him.

RL: Oh, boy. I'm going back to talk to Louis Doucette in Fairhaven, who has apparently made quite a tape about his relationships with his father when he was fishing. He's even let (Mr. Huff?) hear it, I mean, over at the Vineyard Gazette, I guess. But he has never gotten time or the energy to copy it. Do you know Louis, by chance?

AN: Yes, sure.

RL: In his basement, he's making nets.

AN: Yes, I know. When they were bringing the scallops in, he was up there. Tom had opened it up.

RL: Was he?

AN: Yes. There's Henry Klimm up there. He told me.

RL: Speaking of scallops, they're kind of going down, aren't they?

AN: Yes. But they claim now they've found another better small one somewhere. I don't know where.

RL: A better small one.

AN: Because they were talking about some boat being in with 12,000 pounds here. Then somebody said, "Well, they've got a better small one they're working on."

RL: Well, that's too bad to have to fish the small ones, but I suppose they will.

AN: It's \$5 a pound.

RL: Boy, I tell you, 12,000 pounds of scallops at \$5 a pound.

AN: Yes, when I first started in the business in Provincetown in the spring of the year, we'd get 60 cents a gallon for them.

RL: Sixty cents a gallon?

AN: Landed on the wall.

RL: In the shell?

AN: No. Open.

RL: I mean, chucked in the bags 60 cents a gallon?

AN: Yes.

RL: Well, that is impossible. Wow. Gosh. You know what? Somebody said in the Boston market they were paying nine-something a pound for scallops?

AN: These so-called bay scallops they've got around here now, they're southern calico scallops. Little bits of things.

RL: Are they bringing those southern calico scallops in up here?

AN: Sure. You see all the places you can get them now.

RL: In other words, the bay scallops are —

AN: They're all frozen.

RL: They're all frozen. I see. I know the problem.

AN: You see Nantucket.

RL: Nantucket, right.

AN: The biggest?

RL: Yes.

AN: All frozen. Channels all frozen.

RL: Swede, before I close this thing off, tell me about the little industry that you had on the side of catching the toadfish.

AN: We just caught them for the MBL.

RL: For the MBL scientists, yes. But you took a number of – the number 10 juice cans and put them on a string and –

AN: No, just set them on the bottom.

RL: Set them on the bottom. The toadfish like to go into boots or cans or whatever.

AN: They lay eggs.

RL: You still do that?

AN: Yes.

RL: You do? Wonderful.

AN: We've been doing it since the middle of last part of April.

RL: Can you make a little bit of shack money that way?

AN: Yes. You'll make enough to pay –

RL: To pay for your gas getting back and forth?

AN: To pay for your registration insurance.

RL: You fish on a walkway bay or –

AN: In walkway.

RL: In walkway.

AN: In the pond.

RL: Are there lots of toadfish out there still?

AN: Well, we've been fishing them now for about ten years down there. We get just as many every spring.

RL: This is a very important fish for scientific research because it's used in diabetes research, insulin. Is it used all year round here?

AN: Yes, it is.

[end of transcript]