

Oral History Collection - Fishing and Fisheries

John Valois Oral History

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Interviewer: MS – Unknown

Transcriber: NCC

Male Speaker: Monday, April the 29th, 1991, the day of another Woods Hole historical collection conversation. Today's conversation is going to be remembrances of Sam Cahoon and his fish market in Woods Hole, which was a fixture in the minds and memories and hearts of many, many people in Woods Hole over the years. Sam Cahoon was a remarkable citizen, businessman and friend to many and especially the commercial fisherman who worked for him. There's going to be a panel at the Redfield Auditorium who will be remembering Sam Cahoon. I suppose I should identify them from the very good article that Nancy Green prepared for the enterprise this last Friday. From Nancy's article, "Friends, remember Sam Cahoon of Woods Hole Conversation?" This was Friday, April the 26th in the Enterprise and the panel is going to consist of Warren "Whitey" Witzell. Then Jimmy Gifford, who apparently is distantly related to the Cahoon family. Then John Valois, who came here as what he called himself as a hot shot college racer. Spent some time with Sam Cahoon in knockabout races. Then (Liz Chase?), Mrs. Joseph Chase, who has done some research in the Bradley Museum and in other areas and has gotten to know Sam through this research. Then the other one.

Male Speaker: Hello everybody. This is the Woods Hole Conversations again. We're here to hear about one of the most significant elements of our past heritage. [inaudible] will introduce the panel in a few moments. I'm going to be ringing this Wood Hole school bell [inaudible] as we open the meeting. We're here because we felt that we needed more space and better acoustics for this particular meeting. So, courtesy of who are here and to proceed. We will also tell you that for those of you who do not know our organization, we have lots of very interesting brochures for your inspection. We have some cards that will help you know what's better. Charlie, I'll give it to you.

Male Speaker: Thank you, Gordon. My first housekeeping chores. There's a car upfront for the license plate 744 PAN that has an expired meter and the meter made and running up and down the street.

[laughter]

That's 744 PAN. Okay. On behalf of the Woods Hole (reserve collection?), I'm pleased to see such a great panel. As I said, there's a couple of minor housekeeping chores. Just to invite people to participate in this retrospective, I wrote to about fifteen people giving them all each an opportunity to join with us. These people that you see up front have responded. But I want you to know that I wrote to anyone and everyone that I knew had any direct connection with Sam Cahoon in the fish market. I expect some of the people who didn't respond either were a little shy or they may be in (Florida?) still or somewhere around here. Before I introduce our group of panelists, I want to acknowledge the work that Nancy Green does for these conversations. I'm just the man who fingers the individuals and Nancy picks it up from there, interviews them, takes their picture. Does all the back and forth with the enterprise. She does a terrific job. I think Nancy deserves a hand.

[applause]

There will be no conversation in May, and (Hildy Rosenbaum?), we must acknowledge her.

[applause]

For the coffee and the goodies that are always here. By the way, we've got some of our past conversations in the audience. So, if some of you people don't know, some of the people who conversed with us in the past. You might want to say hello to them when the conversations are over. (Madeline Broadbent?) is here, (Gary Handy, Rick Stoglin, and Bill Gallagher?). So, it's nice to see that turn out. As I mentioned, there won't be a conversation in May. We'll come up with a whole new schedule from June on. I've got two or three people sort of lined up. We have a couple of people who are on the fence. You know, they're a little bit inhibited from conversing before an audience. So, we have to get started today. I've got some people in the audience who've already approached me that want to say something about Sam, but not enough to sit up front.

[laughter]

In this case, you know, I'm counting one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight. So, if we give every person five minutes, that's forty minutes. Remember this is lunch hour when people have to go back to work after lunch. We've got a very short video or movie clip of the fish market. It wasn't good enough to put on the screen for this audience. Thanks to [Latin Edwards 00:09:10]. She's brought it with her, and she still have [inaudible] after the conversation. It probably was taken in the early [19]50s on 8 mm. It's been transferred about fifteen times when we finally got the video tape and it's so wiggly. But it's good enough for a few people to watch. So, for those of you who may want to look at it – by the way, I'm just going to talk a little bit about the talk that's going to be dedicated later on in the summer. So anyhow, I'm going to give each panelist about five minutes to say their piece, and then we'll move to the next one. Then those who want to contribute from the audience can do so at any time. Because I expect you may want to comment on what some of the individuals are saying at the time to make it a little more interesting. These conversations have been taped and they're transcribed and available to [inaudible] help the historical collection for anybody who would like to use them for anything. (Jennifer Gaines gave me about ten 3x5 cards from previous conversations where Sam Cahoon was mentioned. So, we've got a pretty good system for indexing the individuals. So, anyhow, we have John Valois, Whitey Witzell, Jimmy Gifford, Marshy Cross, Captain Louis Doucette, Liz Chase, Sammy Vincent [inaudible]. So, we'll begin with John. You can use those microphones. Don't pick it up if you don't want to. I'm going to say this is a conversation, so please feel free anybody to chip in any time you want. John.

John Valois: I spoke here not too long ago, and I think my voice carried all the way to the back of the hall. So, I think I can do it again today. First of all, let me apologize for the very indiscreet remark that was made in the enterprise that John Valois was a hot college racing sailor. I apologize for that. It's the truth, I would say.

[laughter]

This nation worked very, very hard in the decades following the Civil War. We worked so hard that by the time the 1890s came, we were in need of a rest. Yachting became a way of finding for certain people, the ghouls, the Vanderbilts, the Astors, the Bennetts, the Wet Moors, the

Newport crowd, their way of expressing their wealth through their yachts. This is the era in which Sam Cahoon enters into yacht racing. The Woods Hole Yacht Club was founded in 1896. Its first racing class were small spritsails. They were 13 feet long and there were many as twenty or three of them racing at certain times. But along came certain people in the community, the summer people, and Long Neck had the (Hibbets?), the Hottings and the (Schoke?). Mr. Edgar Hotting was an incredibly wealthy man who had two yachts that he kept in Great Harbor, the Montclair and the Saxon. The Montclair was a steam yacht of about hundred and one feet and the Saxon was a schooner and she went about ninety-six feet overall. The Hibbetts didn't do much lodge boat sailing or racing. They had smaller boats. (Charles Schoke?) was from the very well-known Boston family shows that he had a smaller boat. But over in Great Harbor where the Fosters and the Harrisons now William Frazier Harrison, Alfred Harrison and George Harrison is the family that I'm going to talk about now because that's the family Sam Cahoon went to work for in 1900s. And that's the best debt I have for his employment. The Spritsails raced and when you get racing people together, winning gets to be very important. Mr. Harrison decided that he needed to visit Bristol, Rhode Island, the home of Nat Herreshoff, the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company, to get a better boat. Nat Herreshoff looked at the rule and decided that "I'll design to the rule and not for the rule." The difference is this, that you design to the rule, you are going to look at it and possibly exploit it. If you design for the rule, you're going to build a boat that's very similar to the other boats. He decided to build to the rule, which he always did. He came up with a boat that was 13.5 feet long, 13 feet on the water line, almost 6 feet in beam, and it had a free board of approximately 9 inches. That means she was a big dish. I don't have to go on much longer to tell you that Sam Cahoon raced this boat. He was one of the new breeds of yacht captains. When the families used to come to the Cape Buzzards Bay shores, they would bring a reduced staff. They would be the cook, the pantry maid, the parlor maid, the chamber maid, then the coachman, the grooms, the gardener, and now the boatman. The boatman had very, very special privileges in the family. He sometimes lived on the estate in a special called a captain's house. Other times he would live on the yacht or possibly, he would live away from the family. Sam Cahoon lived in Woods Hole. His skipper, what I think was called the *Quakeress*. So, I think this little 13.5 footer. But remember, Nat Herreshoff at this time was beginning to start the golden age of yachting. These were the great big 200, 300-hundred-foot vessels that were being built for the Astors, the Morgans, the Ghouls, the Vanderbilts. He took special interest in this particular boat. He built very, very light. As I said, Sam won just about all the races in this. Where Sam got his early training, I'm not sure. I think he just picked it up. He was a seat-of-the-pants guy, sailed from field only. In the end 1902, the Woods Hole Yacht Club directory shows that there are now three divisions of spritsail. There's the working spritsail that the fishermen sailed. There's the spritsail that was for racing that the (Crossbys?) built. (Manton and Wilton Crosby?) built one that looked like a spritsail. Then there's this racing spritsail class. Then (Mr. Trowbridge?) had, Mr. Hotting had, the Harrisons, and there was another family, Foster, I think, that had the racing spritsail. Those four boats raced together. Little. I don't have to tell you that this destroyed the spritsails interest in spritsail racing was soon lost. Sam stays with the Yacht Club until about 1911 when it dissolved because of factors related to things I'm talking about. He appears in 1915 as the owner of a fish market in Woods Hole. I'm not going to have to talk about that. I'm now going to go to 1931 when (Penn Sands Point?) people decided that it's time to go back and reactivate the Yacht Club. It dissolved in 1911, (Vera Wahbach?), Andy Norman, (Dr. Josh Close?). He was in the Harvard Medical School at the time. Mrs. Murray Crane, the widow of Senator Crane from Dolphin, Massachusetts, decided to

become the person to bring this up before Frank Gifford and now the Woods Hole Yacht Club is reactivated in 1931. Sam Cahoon appears in 1933. He purchased a knockabout – Cape Cod Knockabout from Wareham. He called it the *Whiz*. He won all the races, needless to say.

[laughter]

In 1936, he talked to his close friend, (Prince Kroll?) of Woods Hole and convinced Prince that he should buy a knockabout and start racing. He didn't say he needed competition. He was far too modest for that. But he needed at least somebody to compete against him. Prince Kroll was the wrong man here. Prince Kroll and Sam were absolutely different in major ways in sailing. Prince Kroll was "Make the boat go fast." Sam Cahoon was "Attack the course. No tactical mistakes, play the course." He was a great tactician and strategist, Prince was not. By 1939, let me go back a moment. In 1934, the knockabout class organized and sailed its first regatta at high ends. 1935, Sam entered with Cynthia Cahoon as the register skipper of that boat, the *Whiz*, and they won in 1935 at Woods Hole, the Cape Cod Knockabout Championship but blew a gale that day. It was a northwest breeze that blew up to thirty knots and the course was up and down the harbor. The wind moderated by afternoon, and Sam went out and he had a very close race with (Frank Syme from Hyannis?) and the [inaudible]. But they won. So, Cynthia Cahoon, who's here today, has her name on that trophy. Did you sail it, Cynthia? Honest?

[laughter]

Again by 1939, he won SMYRA and again in 1941. But in 1941, he won it in a different boat, *Mae Win*. He had gone to Cape Cod Shipbuilding, talked to (Ralph Thatcher?). Ralph Thatcher is ninety-three years of age now, and I saw him only about a month and a half ago. I asked him about what was it when Sam Cahoon came to see you about the building of the *Mae Win*. He said, "I remember him. He wanted a perfect boat. He didn't want any butt blocks in it, full length planking. I think there was somebody in Woods Hole he wanted to beat."

[laughter]

Well, that was pretty cool. Sam was just about unbeatable. In 1951, he again won for the fourth time the SMYRA Championship. In 1952, in late August, he was sailing his last race. I competed in that race. It was blowing a strong southwest of that day. It was to Lackeys Bay down Naushon to the West, he took the fleet as it usually did when it blew hot. He could sail through waves just tremendously at it. But during the [inaudible], he left the helm and he didn't go back to the helm. Ken Shepard finished the race. (Bob Bigelow?) was second in that race, and I was third. As we always did, we always sailed by him [inaudible], which is just in front of the RJs dock. The sails were still in the boat. They were sort of helping him into a skiff and he went ashore and that was Sam Cahoon's last race. I can only mention one more thing about Sam Cahoon, he was one of the, without question, one of the greatest skills of sailors in this area. Probably it wasn't until the coming of (George Clues?) that we have anybody that resembled him and his knowledge of boats and his understanding of the waters. He just was a terrific sailor.

[applause]

MS: Sam Cahoon hired me at the ice plant. The only thing I can say the whole time I worked at the ice plant, Sam arrived one time. That was to run his dogs chasing rabbits. I'd say that's a pretty good boss, a lot of faith. They made about twenty tons a day at the ice plant. We made about 20 tons a day at the ice plant, and they stored about 350 tons. The ice plant was a convenience for Sam's market and unloading the boats and icing the boats down. This is what I understand. He got \$7 a ton for the ice, if I'm correct on that, and it's only a dollar a keg. Each keg weighed about 300 pounds. At that time when we were younger, we could handle those. I don't think I could now.

[laughter]

We had a pretty good crew up there. I was trying to think now how many days – we worked six days a week. Then I can't even remember who relieved us when we'd had a day off, but not too often. Sam was a great sportsman. After World War II, quite a few people came back from the service, and we had very good athletes who were told. People probably don't realize that now with baseball, basketball, no football. Of course, teams need uniforms. Sam would always come through and buy the uniforms. None of us played football, so we didn't have to bother with that. So, he got off the hook. Let's see, what else? I'd like to thank John for speaking four minutes of my five minutes allotted time.

[laughter]

Sam was always great. When I was going to buy my first house, I wasn't sure I was going to get the mortgage. But Sam had to be on the board of directors, I guess of the bank. He said to me, "You're going to buy the house?" I said, "I'd like to if they'll pass the loan." He said, "You got the loan, no problem." So anyhow, that's how I got my first mortgage. He helped, I'm sure. I can't think of much more to say now because I spent most of my time in the ice plant and we didn't see much of Sam up there. Only once. We just come down to the market and sometimes when they were busy and he'd help out. But after he came to work at Oceanographic for the high sum of \$225 a month, and I understand that was high with some people, we used to go with Sam's and lump fish. If you don't know what lumping is, that's when the fishermen come in and they've had a hard cruise, and they didn't want to stay around and take the fish out. They would hire people like me and Red and Marshy to help take the fish out. They paid very well, but you had to work hard. If you didn't take it out fast enough, then they wouldn't hire you the next time. Not the guy hiring you wouldn't hire you, but the rest of the crew would squat. So, they didn't want to spend a lot of time taking the fish out. It was tough work, but I'd like to say that we've never had any bellies then or I was probably 50 pounds lighter at least. [laughter] I guess that's about all I got to say now. We can pass that thing over to Red.

[applause]

Jimmy Gifford: Nancy Green called me some days ago and wants to know if I will participate in this gathering. I said, "Certainly." She said, "Well, what was your relationship with the Cahoon family?" I said, "We're all family." She said, "Well, what do you mean?" I said, "Well, I probably spend as much time at the Cahoon house on School St. than I did at the Gifford house on High Street. Of course, I grew up with the three girls and young Sam. Sam and I were really

close friends, so we saw one another quite often. My father owned the Woods Hole Garage, which is just up the street from the fish market so that we were close by all the time. I used to trot down to the fish market when we weren't too busy and annoy the fellows down in Section B unloading fish. So, pretty soon the Chase brothers and (Hal Crocker?) and the others would gently ease me out of Section B and tell me to go back up to the garage and mind my own business. But I had a very fond and lasting relationship with Cahoon family. We did a lot of things together in those days. As I said to Nancy, you could go swimming in any part of Woods Hole without any restrictions. You could go shell fishing and lobstering. When young Sam and I were quite small, we used to roll over to Pine Island, which is no longer there with Sam Sr. and my father and go duck hunting. The old fellows used to let Sam, and I roll. So, by the time we got over there, again, depending on the tide, we were getting kind of armory. So, we had kind of problem holding up the sixteen-gauge shotgun. But in those days, Woods Hole was a great place to grow up. As I say, we were protected. We didn't know what the outside world was all about. Of course, as Whitey said, after the war, when we came back, and I went to work at the Oceanographic I used to work at the fish market sometimes nights and on weekends with Marshy and Whitey and the rest of the people that were there. I'm just going to tell a quick story here before I finish. No, this is clean.

[laughter]

Some of them are. Sam owned a four-wheel tractor that he used to pull the flatcars, the little flatcars that they head over at the railroad station. They would go over and get four or five of those railroad cars, flatcars and pull them over to the fish market and load the fish boxes on. Then one of the boys would take them back over to the railroad station and load them on a freight car and ship them off to New York or Philadelphia or wherever they were going. Well, this tractor was quite pleasing to the eye as far as we young people were concerned. So, one Halloween, Sam, young Sam, and myself and Marshy and I'm not sure if (Dick Albus?) was with us or not. But we decided being Halloween, we should take the tractor for a ride.

MS: It was your idea.

JG: It was it my idea?

[laughter]

So anyway, we went down to the barn next to the fish market, took the tractor out. I'd snitch a red lantern out of my father's shop, and we hung out on the front and proceeded down Water Street, Main Street down towards the fisheries. We get down just beyond the (Lilly Building?) and one of the boys said, "I don't think we've got any water in the radiator." Well, so, we got off and took a look and sure enough, things are kind of low. Well, we didn't know where we could get any water, so we swung over near the [inaudible] pond, found a bucket and proceeded to put water in the radiator.

[laughter]

We were kind of dumb, weren't we, mate? But anyway, the next spring when Al Chase, who was

a mechanic, worked on the tractor, he took the panels off the side and investigated. He went into the office and he said, "Sam, is something wrong here?" Sam says, "What's the matter, Al?" He said the hole inside of this engine is rusty. He said, "I don't know why it should be."

[laughter]

But anyway, that was one of the many good episodes that we had growing up in Woods Hole. Thank you.

[applause]

Male Speaker: Good afternoon. I suppose you wonder why I called this meeting. Nobody wants to know. Wow. I haven't too many things to say. I don't want to take up too much time because Louis is next and God knows what's going to happen.

[laughter]

We may be [inaudible] with Louis. But days went on and days went on down there. One time we were taking a boat out at second A. This is up where the office was. There's a lot of people who got off the train waiting for the boat. He said come over and watch us take the fish out. So, this woman walks up to me, and she says, "Could you show me where the cohogs are?" I say, "Yes ma'am." I should say that she was quite a large woman, had a pair of shorts on her and a halter top. So, I said, "Well there's four barrels over there. There's a large and the mediums, cherry stones and a little mix." She says, "Well I like to see the large." So, I say, "Well go ahead and look at them." So, she's over there looking at the large and she leans on the barrel, heads to the barrel, and she's reaching down to take out a cohog. Sam, Mr. Cahoon is coming out of the office on the trot. He never walked. He was full speed ahead all the time. He walked by and that pipe went from one side of his mouth to the other. He's looking at that. He slowed down and he came by, and he said, "My [inaudible] them cohogs are getting bigger every day."

[laughter]

When I first started there, I got out of the Marine Corps in April of [19]46 and killed the summer doing something but I wound up at the market. I weighed close to a 185, 190. He put me right on the ice truck right away. At the end of the summer, I weighed about 165. He came by one day at the end of the summer. He says, "(My lot?), Bob. Is that you? You must have worked hard this summer." He says, "You lost quite a bit of weight." I say, "I have." I say, "It all went down that grinder and up that thing and down the chute."

[laughter]

He says, "Well, you look good." Another story about the ice. There was this small boat from the vineyard. I'm not going to tell you who the skipper was because Louis might know. [audio gap] him that I give him ice. He'd gripe to Sam that he wasn't getting his full weight, and he only took about 2 tons. That's fourteen kegs. So, he kept mouthing up to me time after time about not getting his weight. So, I told Mr. Cahoon about it. He says, "Well done." He says, "Next time

he says he wants two tons, give him two or three more kegs." I said, "Are you sure?" And he said, "Yes, Bob." So, the guy came in, took his fish out. He said "Cross, I want 2 tons and I want fourteen kegs." He says, "You want your weight." I said, "You'll get it." I gave him three kegs, one right behind the other. I have to [inaudible]. It's coming right up the hatch. He's down there swearing and banging the shovel on the side of the [inaudible]. He says, "I don't want that much." I say, "I got orders to give you an extra half a ton." I shove the grinder off and left him. He's standing there up –

[laughter]

There are a few other things that maybe I'll get in later. I don't want to take too much time up here for Louis. So, I'll pass it. The mic is yours, Louis.

[applause]

Louis Doucette: Well, I want to go out and tell you everybody that Sam knew I was always bumped.

MS: Yes.

LD: One time I was sitting in the office and this man came in. I was sitting alongside of Sam. He says, "My God." He says, "I've been trying to get down to see you for a long time, Mr. Cahoon." He's got a \$20 bill and he's holding it out. He says, "It seems like every time, about five or six years, I start out at Falmouth but I never made it." So, Sam said, "My God, you made it today, Bob."

[laughter]

So, he gave the 20. So, the fellow went out the door and Sam looked at me and said, "Did you ever see that fellow before?" I said, "No, Sam." He said, "By golly, I never did either."

[laughter]

He actually got the money. He knew where to come. I want to say that nine years I worked for Mr. Cahoon. I've worked for people since that time. I worked for men that lived on Riverside Drive, New York City. I've been out of Gloucester. I've been in about twenty boats, brand new ones, picked to go in them after they picked through the crowd. I finally was lucky enough to pick me to go. While I was with Sam, we carried the mast away – the foremast. It was an Oregon pine stick and he just glorified that. He made sure every spring that the mast was scraped down and varnished. We carried it away with a bag of fish. It was very rough and we took it down, very lucky that none of us got hurt. But anyway, I came home to Woods Hole after we rigged up. It was quite a while getting the net back in because everything went down – (galleasses?) and everything – when the mast lets go. Sam was at the ball game, but it would have been the same thing if he had been there. But Mrs. Cahoon answered the phone when I called. I asked for Sam and she said, "Is there something I can do for you, Louis?" I said, "Well, we carried the foremast away." I said, "Is Sam around? I'd like to tell him what happened."

There was not one word. The first thing she said to me, "Was anybody hurt?" Now, all the years I put in fishing, sixty years of fishing, it seemed like all the owners was always interested in how much is this going to cost to fix? But the word from Mrs. Cahoon was "Did anybody get hurt?" If Sam was on the phone, it would have been the same thing. There was no talk about what that new mast would cost, the rigging and taking the old one out and so on. That's the kind of people that Mr. Cahoon and Mrs. Cahoon were. Why I say her, many times she came down to the pier when we had the boat painted and we came to Woods Hole. We had left out pin boards ashore here because they had a big deal up here where we used to put our dragging gear for the winter time. We'd store it up there until we got to the next winter. We'd go up and take the stuff and we put the scallop gear up there. There was never anything ever said about what kind of fishing you were going to do. When you were captain of the boat for Sam Cahoon, you were captain of that boat. When I heard him speaking about him going yachting, which I knew about, and what he did in his little boat, this is the kind of a person he was. He had a little red truck. They had little red trucks down there. [inaudible] tell you, they have trucks. When they knew we were coming in, them trucks were ready. They were filled with gas and they were oiled and they were checked out, too. So that when the skipper, either I or (Eli?), get in, the truck was there, ready to go so we could go home and come back. Frances in the office – I'd never forget her. She always would ask us before we went out – and sometimes we didn't think about it – if one of the children's birthdays was coming up. If it was an anniversary or whatever the occasion might be, she would send some flowers to the home. Like I say, sometimes we fellows didn't remember that. If she hadn't said anything, we wouldn't have remembered it. But she always asked if it was all right if she did this. But this is [inaudible]. She was everything in that office. Mrs. Adams was in there – what a wonderful person. She worked there for many years for Sam. But (Frannie?) did so many things for us, for Eli and myself. She was a wonderful girl. I oftentimes think about what I got at Christmas from her. I was very happy to receive it. But I want to tell you about Sam. I've worked for all these other people. I cut myself down because I know there's other people want to say something. But I'm awful glad to be here to represent a man I worked for nine years. In my book, of all the people that I had worked for since or before, there's nobody who stands as tall as he did. That goes for all of the family, Mrs. Cahoon and Fran and young Sam and Cynthia. I didn't know the other girls too well. I just see them come in once in a while. Frances was in the office and of course I knew her the best because she was right there. One more thing, before I let somebody else take. Sam, I got a picture of him when he died that I've kept in my book. This is the book. I didn't just put it in. The whole thing is there about Sam, and I had that just as a reminder. But oh, I was in Nantucket in the storm. The Coast Guard came aboard to check our boat out, which they did a lot. When I brought up the papers and gave them to him, he said, "Louis, your papers had run out. You're a week overdue." The fine on the papers running out was \$80. Now, \$80 back when I'm talking about was a big piece of money. It was better than I would say half of the trip that I would get. So, it meant quite a lot. Now, if you're a skipper of a boat and you forget your papers, any other boat people I ever worked for, that is your responsibility. That is something that you would have to pay. It has nothing to do with the owners. But it did with Sam Cahoon. I called him to tell him that I was taking the steamer the next morning at 5:00. I hadn't been in the boat very long then, I think probably two years. He met me when the steamer got in Woods Hole. He was on the dock looking for me. He had the swordfish hat on. This is in the winter time, a little pair of sneakers and a light topcoat. Now he could have dressed much better than that if he had wanted to, money was no question. He gave me a check of \$80 to pay the fine. I told him that it was not

his responsibility, that it was mine. This is what he said, "The girls in the office has been told to keep a record of the skippers' papers when they run out and to let them know so they don't forget." Now this is what he said, "It is our responsibilities that girls made the mistake. They didn't let you know." You just got to think back. At these times, money wasn't flying around like it is today.

[laughter]

MS: It's flying around my house.

LD: I have to just put this in before I stop talking about people. I like the President of the United States and I love the United States. I wish they'd stopped using them airplanes as much as they do. You see, everything comes down from Washington down to the states, and our state is in quite a lot of trouble right now. It reflects on the little towns, the cities. In the town I live in Bay Haven and I have a daughter that's a schoolteacher and they just took a cut in pay. We've all brought up our families. It seems like after you bring up your families, you don't want to hear that school budget anymore. I don't care now because I've got a schoolteacher in there but most people don't want to hear it after their families are all grown up. But the money, things, it's like I said back in [inaudible] realize what money was and the money wasn't there. But with Sam Cahoon, whatever you needed on the boat – when the fathometer came in, we had nothing aboard the boats. The fathometer came in. I got into Montauk, New York. We were fishing off of New York out there in a hundred fathoms of water. We came in a snowstorm. This was the first trip with a fathometer. I run up from Montauk Point across to the new harbor in Block Island. You couldn't see the hand in front of you. When I had a man that had graduated from the nautical school in the canal could take any ship large as they come. He was (made?) with me and he said to me, "My God, Louis, you've got a lot of guts. But you've got to know what you're doing." When I called Sam and talked with Sam over the telephone, he said, "This was a bad storm." They had boats they were looking for and everything. Sam said to me, "My God, Bob, how did you do it?" I said, "That sound of the machine you just bought me." He says, "Is that right?" I said, "Yes. I sounded my way right in there." But I'm so happy to be here. I'm happy that this is being done for Sam Cahoon. I'm happy that everybody that had anything to do with this has done this because he was a great man. He was a man that was known all around. In Falmouth, he was a big man. Anybody ever came in touch with him loved him. So, I'm awful glad that you had this little get-together because the Cahoon family were a wonderful people.

[applause]

Female Speaker: I just want to say, I add that John Valois accounted to say that he became unreadable too.

[laughter]

Also, that he pleased the parents very much by making the wearing of life preserve at all times and setting a good example. Let's have [inaudible] have the last word on Sam Cahoon's success at knockabout racing. Sam Cahoon raced with a regular crew, the rest did not. His equipment was as near perfect as absolutely possible. Nothing ever broke. Not as much so as the rest of us.

His boat's bottom was scrubbed regularly, ours were not. I never knew him hit a rock as the rest of us did.

[laughter]

I think he was the first to take the route near the rocks, the Three Sisters, where less adverse tide got him back into the harbor sooner. He always looked for ways of improving his boat, when he asked the Yacht Club to approve two sets of side stays as regular equipment for safety. But he made the wrong move, the rest of us made it too. So, no harm was done.

[laughter]

He never took wind from other people's sails. They didn't feel free to take his. Sam didn't believe in protests and never made one thus the skippers hesitated to protest him. Of course, he sailed very well.

[applause]

Male Speaker: I first remember Sam Cahoon as a boy of five or six when I'd go in to get some clams to go fishing with – soft shell clams. Sometimes I'd have a diamond, sometimes I wouldn't, but I've always got the clams. He was just a delight to be with for a young boy because they'd always ask you questions where you were going and what kind of fish you would be catching and things of that sort. I'd always had time to talk to a young boy. It seems extraordinary that this very busy man could find time to talk to the child. But I guess my strongest recollection of him is when I raced with him. I think I raced with him for a couple of summers in the early [19]40s. We won every single time, as I recall, in a two-year span. I once remembered after we sailed into Lackeys and two or three other boats hit rocks and ran around and things like that, he made the comment, "God, they'll never learn." [laughter] That was a fond memory of sailing with Sam and I certainly enjoyed it.

Arden Edwards: I'm Arden Edwards and I'm a landscape designer. I grew up here in Woods Hole. Charlie asked me to talk briefly to you about the Sam Cahoon Park, which I designed and which was built last spring. I think it was the construction of this park at this particular time that instigated this conversation right now. I'd just like to tell you a little bit about its recent history – the site, that is. In 1966, Dan Clark and crew were rebuilding the bulkhead and putting in a ramp for the Steamship Authority on the former site of the fish market. They had taken down a two-and-a-half-storey building. In an effort to clean up the debris and improve the area, they devised this little plan. (Dan and Hazel Pingree?) and some of Dan's crew – I know Chip Shultz was there. I think it was his first job – came down with plants. In the middle of the night, by flashlight, they planted the area, a little perimeter of evergreens with a walkway on the interior and a large old anchor in the middle as a focal point. So, in the morning there was this brand new little park designed by Hazel Pingree. The Garden Club presented the Steamship Authority a few days later with a plaque for their recognition, recognizing them for improving the area. Hazel Pingree took care of it for quite a while. I believe the Falmouth Garden Club did also. But over the years it got very overgrown. I'm sure you remember that it was the only bit of greenery down in that very urban setting at the Steamship Authority. It was mostly used by

dogs.

[laughter]

In the spring of [19]89, the Steamship Authority again had to rebuild that dock and enlarge the ferry slip for their emergency ferry slip. So, they had to take down all the trees and essentially demolish the old park. They had a plan in hand for a new park, but they asked for input from the community for a design. So, Frieden Yentsch asked me if I would volunteer to do a little design for the area, which of course I did. I worked with a bunch of people from Woods Hole who were interested in it, and it was a good community effort. I wanted the design of the park to reflect the history of the site as a fish market. Also, I wanted to have some kind of connection between this little park and the larger waterfront park that's still to be built. So, I talked with Martha Bruce and the landscape architect who's doing that part and bounced some ideas off her. The connection actually is that there are little bronze barley fish in the walkway over here at Sam Cahoon Park and the same sculptor's doing some bronze barley fish for the waterfront park. I hope you've been down there, but there's a large granite wall that kind of doubles as seating and my hope was that that would help discourage the dogs. The old anchor is in the park and it's quite nice. I'm pleased that it's being used the way I thought. Where people go down there and sit there, have their lunch or their coffee or they just rest and chat. In August [19]89, I showed the Steamship Authority this plan and they said they would do it. At that time, I offered to raise some funds for the bronze barley fish and also a bronze dedication plaque which would tell about the site as a fish market. In February last year, they told me that they were ready to construct the park but that the name of the park was to be (Lowry Park?) because that was the name that they have been calling it for many years. Ted Fitzell, Jean McCluskey and I met with them a day or two after that. They told us this and convinced them that it would be unacceptable to change the name to Lowry Park. I had presented the design to organizations in Woods Hole and Falmouth as Sam Cahoon Park. The Mass Historic Commission liked the idea and we just couldn't change it. So, what happened was we reached a compromise and that was that there would be no official name on the plaque, which means that they can call it Lowry Park and we can call it Sam Cahoon Park. [laughter] In fact, we discussed many names. These were some of them, maybe all of them, Lowry Cahoon Park, Cahoon Lowry Park, Clark Park, Pingree Park, Harborside Park, Fish Market Park, No-Name Park, Dog Park, and its former name Dog [inaudible] Park. So, only oral tradition will determine that its name is Sam Cahoon Park. So, I really hope that you'll help out there.

[laughter]

I'd like to thank the Woods Hole Foundation, the Woods Hole Woman's Club, the Falmouth Beautification Council and the Falmouth Historical Commission for their donations towards the cost of these little bronze items. Also Ted Fitzell, Jennifer Gaines, Jean McCluskey, Ann Cleary, John Valois, Mary Lou Smith, Lloyd McCoy, Cynthia and Homer Smith and Frieden Yentsch were a great help in the project. The town of Falmouth donated the granite and the Woods Hole Historic Committee acted as a sponsor for it. Joan Kanwisher did a very nice pen and ink of the fish market and it's engraved on the top of the plaque. So, you can see, it really was a community effort and I think it's initiated some other possible projects. There's some leftover granite which I hope the Woods Hole Community Association we'll use to replace some of the

rotting steps along the channel. The town of Falmouth has agreed to give back to the Village of Woods Hole the very nice old watering trough that used to be in the corner of Luscombe Avenue and Railroad Avenue. Also, the Steamship Authority has a design that I did for them for a dog park.

[laughter]

It was a fun project for me to work on. Hazel Pingree was my first and second grade teacher. She was a very dear friend as I grew up. She just lived down the street. I remember the fish market as kind of the fun place to go as a kid. We used to go down and look at the lobsters and swivel off the dock trying to catch a (penny?). I was never very good at that, but it was always fun. So, I hope you can come to the dedication of the park, Sam Cahoon Park, which will be on the 22nd of June, the Saturday. It's at noon time. I think that I can get a better copy of this movie for that date and we could probably show it at the Bradley House or something. I would like to read the text that's on the plaque – this was improved by the Steamship Authority. "A fish market was established on this site in 1874 for Azariah Crowell and Isaiah Spindell. This market sold wholesale mackerel, menhaden, and fish scraps to The Pacific Guano Company for the production of high-quality fertilizer. Following the failure of the factory in 1889, wholesale business was dissolved and a retail fish market took its place. About this time, Walter Luscombe started a coal and livery business in an adjoining building to the north. In 1915, Sam Cahoon, a much loved and respected native of Woods Hole, bought the fish market and established a wholesale and retail business that was known from Boston to New York for its quality of fish. In the Boston area, large yellow-tail flounder became known as Cahoon's yellow tails. The closing of the market in 1966 sadly marked the end of an era. That year, the fish market buildings were demolished and a park was established on the site. The present park was built in 1990."

[applause]

MS: [inaudible] I want to thank each member of the panel for participating. Before we break up, a couple of people have asked me to say a few words. If you wanted to entertain anyone else, I want to say a few words. First, I'd like to give you (Carl Honeywell?). Carl, you wanted to say something? You want to stand up and tell us about your first job?

Male Speaker: Yeah. My first job down here in 1935 in the summer, I got from Sam Cahoon – got me a job on the (R/V Stimson?). I was a sword fisherman. I fished [19]35, [19]36, [19]37. Things were different in [19]38. So, after that I didn't fish anymore in the summer. You know what happened in [19]38.

[laughter]

[talking simultaneously]

JV: This is like a home week here. You won't see the natives again here like this day. All the boys here who grew up together. I was going to the corner of this building here to my grandmother's house [inaudible]. I can remember Sam, he was a boy. He was very philanthropic

because the boy said he gave his uniforms for our (polo?) team and everything. When we were kids getting out of school or grammar school, the Boy Scouts would be going to (Yawgoog?) for a camp for a week. He'd send one to take us down to Yawgoog. No question about it, as long as we behaved and everything like that. Then as I grew up, I watched them race. They talked about racing. I'm a sports fan. So, anything that's competition, I'm interested in. So, I get out on the end of the fisheries dock, watch them fire a gun, and within ten to fifteen minutes, Sam would have a hundred yard lead. You couldn't figure it out because they'd be only 50 feet apart in some areas. But he'd have the right eddy. He'd either be up by the spindle or he'd be in by the fisheries dock. Off he'd go and he'd end up winning by thirty minutes at the end.

[laughter]

Another thing, you talk about shrewd businesspeople. The old timers who used to get their money out of their pocket and everything like that. I can remember him sitting in his office in the swivel chair and I'd go in there. My stepfather had a marketer end of the street for a few years. We go down and get dollar bills and make change for 20 and so forth. We'd be sitting in there and of course, as everybody has said, he said, "Call everybody Bob." Here, he'd be on the phone and he'd say, "Oh, there's so and so again from New York." I stood in there one day and listened to him and talked to him. He said, "As soon as I get some," he said, "Wait a minute." Just then the prow of a boat came around the steamship dock. He said, "That'll be captain so and so in there carrying [inaudible]" or whatever the typical names they had on the fish boats. He'd say, "He'll have the yellow tail and he'll have the good ones." He said, "You'll have them in New York by 6:00 p.m. tonight." Because the trains ran five times a day out of here and they'd run the trucks out and then maybe the truck could take its load down to the province and they'd load on the province. Then his fish was known as the best on the East Coast, the freshest. Without even having the boat come in or unload, he'd know where the captain has been going, how many days he's been out, what he'd have on board. He said, "I'll have you ten boxes down there by 6:00 p.m. tonight." That's the type of businessman. He's also known to be very kind to the fisherman. There was the bail and wire fishermen. We call them out of Nantucket that were pretty bad boats and everything. They'd get into trouble. They wouldn't maintain their boats and everything. They'd get into Woods Hole and they'd say, "We need a stake." He'd send up, give them the money to get the groceries. He'd say, "I'll get them out of the next trip. I'll make sure and get it." He'd pay the bill for them and send them out like that. Many people around town said the people didn't know how much money –

[end of transcript]