

Interview with Lotson Griffin

Narrator: Lotson Griffin

Interviewer: Dr. Jolvan Morris

Date of Interview: November 24, 2014

Location of Interview: Darien, GA

Project Name: Georgia Black Fishermen

Project Description: African American participation in marine-related careers began as early as 1796, when the federal government issued Seamen's Protection Certificates to merchant mariners defining them as "citizens" of the United States effectively making maritime employment one way for Blacks to shape their identities. This project documents the fishery-related occupations of African Americans in coastal Georgia 1865 to present and gather information for future work that may ascertain the relationship between their decreased participation and changes in regional fish populations and the fishing industry.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Dionne Hoskins

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Abstract: On November 24, 2014, Dr. Jolvan Morris interviewed Commissioner Lotson Griffin as part of the Georgia Black Fishermen oral history project. Commissioner Griffin Lotson, a Gullah Geechee cultural leader and federal commissioner, discusses his involvement in shrimp heading and the broader shrimping industry, tracing his family's connections and the socio-economic roles of Gullah Geechee men and women in the community. Lotson also recalls his participation in local traditions, like the "Blessing of the Fleet," and the evolving Gullah Geechee identity, which was once stigmatized but has gained wider recognition, especially through federal cultural preservation efforts. He reflects on the importance of preserving this cultural heritage and the demographic shifts in the shrimping industry over time, as well as the cultural pride that has grown, especially with the acknowledgment of prominent figures like Michelle Obama having Gullah Geechee roots. This resurgence in cultural recognition is tied to traditional professions like fishing, which played a significant role in the Gullah Geechee community's livelihood. The interview highlights the disparity between Black and White fishermen in the 1970s and 1980s, where African Americans often worked as "strikers" for white boat owners. Although some eventually acquired their own boats, barriers like loan discrimination were significant. Economic challenges are further discussed in the context of the shrimping industry's decline, which led some fishermen to diversify into new markets, such as jellyfish ("jellyballing"). The rise of this niche industry, driven by demand from Asian markets, is framed as a modern adaptation by Black fishermen in response to the declining profitability of shrimping.

Jolvan Morris: So, if you'll just get started by telling me your name and what you do.

Griffin Lotson: My name is Griffin Lotson, I serve on the uh Federal Commission, which is the Gullah Geechee cultural heritage area, which is an act of Congress in officially – I think it was 2006, so I served as a federal commissioner there. I also serve as a city councilman in the city of Darien, Georgia. I do a lot of non-profit work and things of the nature.

JM: Okay, thank you...So just getting started with fishing, and the role of fishing in the Darien community.

GL: Yes, yes.

JM: If you could speak freely to me about shrimping, crabbing, oyster...oystermen...I know...

GL: Okay yeah well, I guess I'll go as they say from the beginning for me...I am a part of the baby boomer crowd so I was born in 1954, so 2014...that puts me right at about 60 years old and I got involved in the shrimping industry and my knowledge of it, I going to guess at the age of, I'll say teenager. My mother was involved in it, she was born in 1927. So she was what we call uh, heading shrimp...I was listening to one of the students at Savannah State and they say "beheading" or "de-heading" and I say "Okay, we don't say it that way. We call it 'heading' shrimp" and of course you can hear some the Geechee Gullah in my dialect, a little bit...So we would head shrimp, so basically uh there was a truck that would come by and it'd have a little top over it and if you wanted to work, you'd just stand beside the road. That's all you had to do, the truck knows the community...amazingly then and even now, 2014...100% of the persons that head shrimps were African American, even though you can make money and there's a lot of poor people in our county...for whatever strange reason it was predominately uh the person that would head the shrimps and you get paid by the heads and the...and the bucket of the shrimp heads and you learn how to be an artist at it because you would fluff the shrimp's head to where it would stay high. Don't bounce it too much because if it's filled, you get paid and you get paid by the bucket. So we did that up until almost the time I got out of high school, so that's how I got involved with the shrimp fishermen and most of the strikers on the boat were uh... uh Gullah Geechees and at the time we called them African Americans. Now we call them Geechee Gullahs or Gullah Geechees. A good friend of mine Cornelius, um...coined the phrase of the "saltwater Geechees." So uh...and we say that because we're close to the soft water here...saltwater in McIntosh County, Darien, Georgia and you'll speak of the saltwater Geechee you're talking about the African slave descendants from West Africa. So, most of the strikers were African American in my day; close to about a hundred percent. I was not much of a fishermen, but just a little bit. One of my dreams when I graduated from high school...I had two dreams: to see live wrastling [*sic*], 'cause a cousin of mine used to go and see the wrastling [*sic*], so weird dream, but that was my dream to see the wrastling [*sic*], so I went to Savannah and saw one live match and um...'cause our town doesn't have anything like that. My other was to go out on a shrimp boat. Uh, my father had a phrase and he would say "The Lotson's"...uh "...they're not water. They don't do...they're not from fishermans." We made most of our living...most of the Lotsons, on the land. Uh, different industries and things of that nature. And it stayed true, pretty much.

Very few of us made our living from the Lotson clan or the Lotson family on the water, but everyone I knew...my friends, my cousins, my neighbors, everybody went on the water and pretty much made their living. The father...predominantly the male would be the shrimp fisherman. One-hundred percent, far as I know. But the ladies and the boys and younger folks would do this...this heading the shrimps. So we would go to the docks, the boats would come in and they'd put the shrimps on the table and we would head them. And my mother would do it, my sisters would do it, my brothers would do it, I would. So I went out on the shrimp boat in 1973 and so I'm not much of a shrimp fisherman. I always tell a comical joke...is that I went out in 1973, it was gorgeous, it was beautiful, and I got sea sick and I said "Lord, if I ever make it back to the dock, I will never go again." So from '73 to 2014, I've never ever went back out on the shrimp boat. So I said 'comically' because we do the blessing of the fleet in our community and it's one of the biggest parades we have. And the blessing of the fleet is basically where we bless the boats, bless the fishermans as they go out; and they choose me every year to have words for the wreath; which basically is the wreath is cast for the loved ones that were lost at sea, and it's a lot of Gullah Geechees that have lost their lives. We have shrimp fishermens that couldn't even swim, but it was a way to make money, so they would go out on the water and make money and couldn't swim. So it's amazing, uh...and it's...I got one love story, I'll tell you about that one later... 'cause I work with one group called the Gullah Geechee Ring Shouters, and one of our individuals have a beautiful story and he tells it to me when we travel, telling people about our culture, about shrimp fishermen...matter of fact hopefully you'll meet him later. We call him Captain Jack, from Gullah Jack, from history in 1820s...I think it was. Gullah Jack...first account where I saw the word 'Gullah' in history. It may be before then, but Gullah Jack was mentioned in history and you can research all of that, so you can research all of that. So we have a Captain Jack, 'cause he's been a shrimp fisherman right at about sixty years, since he was a boy and his father was a shrimp fisherman so it's a lot of history; and hopefully you'll get a chance to talk to some of these individuals that know these waters like the back of their hand. I don't know the waters, but I've lived with it all my life...knowing about the shrimp fishermens...the good, the bad, and the ugly of shrimp fishermens. And I'm glad I'm able to know that history and now working with a group like you the uh African American Fishermens Oral History Project...uh that's fantastic, because I'm like "Wow, there's a rich history and no one is telling that story and it's dying out." It's dying out...fast.

JM: May I ask a question about the blessing of the fleet? Now when you say it's a tradition in the community, is that the Darien community or the Gullah Geechee community?

GL: Uh, basically it's a combination of both, uh but it started out, the blessing of the fleet...uh I think through the chamber of commerce or the city of ...of that area many years ago. Uh and it's been carried on for years and years and years and then it grew into the largest uh festival we have in our area. Matter of fact our city is about two, three-thousand people, but it bring about thirty thousand people to our little city, our little county. The county is about fourteen, fifteen-thousand. So people come from everywhere. My brother lives up in Washington, DC, Maryland area and they'll take a trip just to come back to the blessing of the fleet. We've found that a lot of people do that for whatever reason. They would love just to see the festification [*sic*]...uh festive occasion, I should say. Occasion of the shrimp fishermen and the parade and the boats...parades and so it's a great thing.

JM: And when is that usually held?

GL: That's usually in April and they have it with the tide because if they parade the boats and it's blessed...and traditionally at first it was blessed by the Catholics and then now...I was the first Gullah Geechee to have the honors to bless the boats. What year that was I can't remember...probably in the eighties. And then after that, we opened the way that just about all the churches now could do it. They kept it pretty strict, it wasn't like you know they would run you away, it was just a tradition and in the tradition they would just...uh the Catholic uh uh would bless the boats and uh certain religious groups would be the ones that march up. And then we got involved in it...when I say we...uh, myself getting involved in it. African Americans, it wasn't that many involved in it and then we opened the door to others, and now I don't even do it anymore because...I've done it enough. Let others get that experience of blessing the boats, so it's opened up to just about any religious group now.

JM: Okay. Um, what are your insights as far as the demographics? Like how many African American shrimpers are there that you know of currently versus in the past?

GL: Uh. In the past, because everyone I knew in my community shrimp fished pretty much, almost everyone, so you knew everybody that shrimp fished pretty much in McIntosh county and what we did as young boys in the older days...we would go from dock to dock and try to make money heading shrimp, so this dock would have where you can work five, six, seven hours. Wow, we would go there just to make that money heading shrimp, because shrimp was super abundant in the day. Sixties, Seventies...I mean you could work until eleven o'clock at night...I mean start in the afternoon, four, five o'clock and just work through the night heading shrimp. So it was a social gathering, and also you can make money. So it was fun...parents would let you out the house, you know if you were young and you wouldn't have to struggle trying to make it back home because the dock manager would have a truck to come by and pick you up and the truck would take you back home. And uh so most of the strikers were African American as I said, if not all and then of course just like any job you would learn everything there is on the boat. So then some of those strikers that started out...uh begin to be fishermen and I think that's gon' start in the Fifties. I was a very young fella then, but I want to say in the Fifties, and in the Sixties, some of those fellas I knew that's maybe ten years older than I am, fifteen, twenty...their parents...I remember Bing, we called him Evans, they call him Bing. What his real name is, I don't know, because we have a lot of basket names and uh nicknames. Most people don't know Clarence Thomas is a part of the fishing industry and his nickname, most people would not believe and I would not recommend anybody saying it besides his friends and family...his nickname is "Boy", or basket name...believe it or not, "Boy". And I can relate because in my community we all head shrimp together and uh Johnny Cuspard had a son in there and his name was Johnny and we never called him "Johnny", we would always call him "Boy." So he's uh older than I am, so if I see him now, I say "How you doing, Boy!" To him would be okay because we are friends, we grew up together. But not even I would call Clarence Thomas, "Boy," but that's his nickname in Pin Point, believe it or not, with his friends...most people don't know that, but he's Gullah Geechee of course. And uh they just dedicated a uh...a oyster plant and if you go online and you see the Pin Point historical marker and you see Clarence Thomas, look to his right or left you're going to see Griffin Lotson...so I made it my business to get close to

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. But he is a very nice gentleman, especially if you come from the angle of what you're talking about and if you say that you are Geechee, so that was my way into getting him to lower his guards with secret service standing there, I let him know that I was Geechee too and the world changed...he uh he was not Supreme Court Justice anymore, he was just a friend. So he is very rooted in his own culture now. But he was like myself, being a Gullah Geechee when you were...he's about five years older than me...we did not own up to it when we were younger because it was something that they taught you not to be proud of, so as we matured now we are all proud of our culture. So it's a strange phenomenon, but that's the way it was.

JM: Yeah, can you speak a little bit more on that in terms of identity as Gullah Geechee versus being an African American fishing community? Uh, just that sense of identity, um in terms of the fisheries.

GL: Yeah, in the fisheries in the...back in the day and even now, but it's a little bit easier now...people are beginning to identify themselves as Gullah Geechees, wher back then, and I'm talking one-hundred percent. No one. If you were recognized as a Geechee, it was more of a fun, joke thing and the words I always tell uh new media and people like you uh, I always say it because I want to stay true to history...and they would say "Boy, you're too Geechee!" and they would say in the Geechee accent like you're from the islands... "*mon' ya know.*" And the say "Boy, you're too Geechee!" and what they meant by that is the way I act, they way I talk, and it was not cool or not a good way to get ahead in society...um you have to lose that accent, you cannot do the ways of the Gullah Geechee, because you could not get the better jobs; so then you have to learn how to speak proper if you most possibly can and change your dialect a little, and uh, so we spent a lot of time trying not to speak Geechee or Gullah, even if now and at my age I would say "*I'ma.* I am going to," and most people don't know what I mean by that. I heard myself say the Geechee word "*I'ma,*" which mean "I am." But I would say "*I'ma*" and very quickly I would say, "I'm not supposed to say that. I'm supposed to say, 'I am. '" And that's done in less than a second, because I know that's what they would say not proper grammar and I'm supposed to lose it, but it's in me so it comes out so...and a lot of Geechees do that, a lot of Gullahs do that, even today no matter what jobs they're on. Clarence Thomas learned the art of not speaking, and he will tell you he just learned not to speak. He would listen, he would listen, because when he talk he was too afraid his dialect would come out so strong. Now, of course of where he's at he pretty much learned, like I have to learn a different language, the proper English grammar; which I have never learned it yet. Ah so, he had to learn that, but he also when he's with his buddies, pals, and friends in Pin Point he can go back, you know. He can go back to it very quickly and I found that out with a lot of my Geechee and Gullah friends, they can go back when we are amongst ourselves, but when we are in a different crowd we quickly (snap), just like any language (snap) you snap back you know? And uh you try to talk proper. So that would be the difference, back then you were just known as African Americans or Black, never mentioned as a Gullah or Geechee. Zero. Now we're scratching the surface where some will recognize themselves as Gullah Geechee, still not prominent in any big way.

JM: Right. Do you have any idea as far as where that chan...that shift is coming from?

GL: Uh, yes. To me it's a little easy, because I would say the last almost twenty years of my life,

it goes back further but... uh back then when I moved from a Gullah Geechee corridor area and lived in Washington, D.C. I spent a lot of my time trying to talk like the people in Washington. A lot of my time trying to lose uh my heritage uh to get a better job, uh to meet certain individuals and things of that nature. I wasn't very successful with it a lot because most of the people would say, "Well, where are you from?" and I just knew I'd sounded like a New Yorker, but they can always...like you can easily pick it up; I can't because it's just in me and uh so, I would say the change started some, in a small way...in the Nineties and the by the time you hit two-thousand it bumped up pretty fast a little bit because of some historical information uh for our community, *The Language You Cry In* out of Harris Neck and the Gullah Geechee connection in West Africa, Sierra Leone, and places of that, that area. That bumped up, even though Lorenzo Dow Turner did a book on it uh...[inaudible] uh, historical, historical uh authors and people that read that part or love history, they knew about it but the bulk of us didn't know and didn't care about that Gullah Geechee stuff. And the of course I think the big, big one that pushed us forward was the congressional act. I think that took us to the top and then the real big one after that, that the Gullah Geechee people are pushing is the fact that Michelle Obama, after uh she became first lady, people did more research as they do to find out who you really are. They found out, "Wow, she's of Gullah decent." And out of um, I tell people, out of eight, nine-million people in the state of Georgia um I selected to be on the Presidential float, the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor float. Nine-million, I got on it mainly because I was on the federal commission and who would want to pass up that opportunity, and as I tell people we just hoped that we would have gotten in the parade and in the back, anywhere. Our application get accepted and thousands were rejected. To our surprise we were put in tier one uh... Chicago, where Barack is from that area and Hawaii...no, yeah Hawaii and Michelle from the Chicago are where they live. We were put up in tier one with those individuals and trust me it was nothing we thought we would have ever accomplished, but because of Michelle's heritage, it bumped us up there. And so I think that's when it really beginning to take off, but as I tell people, those of us on the inside of the Gullah Geechee...um it appears that a lot of people know but I think we might be at two-percentage of America's population, you could stretch it to five-percent that know about Gullah Geechees. At large most people don't know, very little to nothing about it and some will say, "I've heard it. I've read it somewhere." So, but to us it's like it's millions and it might be within the culture now, I'm going to take an easy guess, I'm going to say three-million counting everybody that head about it and read about it, because in Georgia there's a lot of articles out now. CNN have done reports on it and um matter of fact, my little group that I manage, the Geechee Gullah Ring Shouters was in New York Times, simply because we had the title Geechee Gullah Ring Shouters, someone mentioned some things about us and we made it into that. Al Jazeera network. Simply because of the name, and that's why we named ourselves that because we knew it would catch on fire.

JM: Right. Right. How does that translate into the fishing industry, do you think more people recognizing that will maybe push some people back to that fishing industry as a profession, rather than trying to disconnect from maybe fishing being a Gullah Geechee profession?

GL: Okay, I think it's bringing it together, because as I said, back in the day no one recognized themselves as Gullah Geechee and when you ever heard it, it wasn't in a positive way. Now, people are beginning to say, "Yeah, you know, yeah, I'm a Geechee." Which to me, I can smile,

because I'm one of the guys that's been in the trenches in it for a couple of decades now. And to even smile when I hear people saying, "Yeah, I think my grandmother was a Geechee." To me that's huge 'cause back in the day, you would, No... you wouldn't let anybody know your grandmother was a Geechee. Now, the pride is moving in. They don't even know their parents are... were Gullah or Geechee, but the fact that they think they are is almost like the fad of the days of old, you were happy to be one-ninth Cherokee. You know the Indian thing, where everybody was like, "Yes, I got some Indian blood." Very big back in the day, and even so, more so now. So, but yeah I think it comes together. I talked with a couple of fishermen, I mentioned to one the other day, I said, "Well yeah, I have a university..." and he said, "Well, let them know." And these guys been fishing since I was a boy and they're older than I am and they're still in the industry, because they love it and I think that's all they know.

JM: Right. So, would fishing be a profession characteristic of the culture? What does fishing mean to you?

GL: It's definitely a part of it. Most people made their living. It provided for their families. They bought their homes, uh this is what they did and I think of the Evans boys, as I called them, they encouraged me to get a nice house, because it wasn't too many African Americans or Gullah Geechees that had very nice houses. The downside, the shrimp fishermen made great money compared to the guys on the land, unfortunately... it appears with... I'm going to say seventy-percent, could be eighty, but seventy-percent of them, they didn't do very much with the money. They would make good money. Let's just say the guy on the land made back in the day three-hundred dollars a week, which would have been very good money...uh, they may make nine-hundred or a thousand, but they also wouldn't do the right thing with the money. You know, they didn't buy beautiful homes, of course everybody would get a nice car. And uh I didn't see a lot of them doing that, I seen a few do that, like I said the Evans. And I said, "Wow, they got a nice house, they did the right thing with their money."

JM: Now this would be in the Seventies?

GL: Yeah, that would be the Seventies. Uh like I said almost everybody was a shrimp fisherman back then.

JM: Right. Were they boat owners, or were they just fishermen?

GL: Mostly they were strikers, and then uh Eighties uh...even back in the Seventies, a few of the individuals would have their boats, but most of them would work for the uh...we called them "buckras" or Whites. They would own the boat, and they would hire the Blacks to strike and then they would hire the Blacks to run, because they finally learned how to do everything, but they couldn't afford to purchase, and banks would not loan. You know you got to deal, you got to deal with the Seventies, they were trying to keep the Black uh behind, and in saying that, trying to keep them behind that's uh, you couldn't get loans.

Part II

GL: Out of the shrimp fishermen that are out there, which is nowhere near as much as it's heyday, um they either have owned or own their boat. And then when the shrimping industry

took a nose dive... a nose dive as it did with the market of housing um... it was rough on shrimp fishermen. You would want to go to the bank and it was like Dracula, you know you could not get a loan. No! ut a lot of these men had put their homes up and everything because this is their only livelihood and I've seen some sad stories, lost their boat, they lost everything and the banks just won't give them any money because they became a high risk and this is when the African Americans... and of course during the Seventies uh segregation and things of that nature kicked in, so it was difficult for the African Americans to maybe get the big loans to get ahead of the other guys that were White, that were making all the big money. You just stay as a striker, but they were able to break through that, um to be able to get money to buy their own boats. Buy secondhand boats of course and then move your way up to maybe getting a new boat. I don't know of too many that boat a new boat, but I'm sure when you get with the shrimp fishermen, they can tell you all those guys that did buy a new boat.

JM: Right. So, in terms of technology, was it only shrimping, the shrimp boats or were there other ways that were passed down in terms of, you know, cast netting? Is there the history...?

GL: Yeah, and I did some cast nestings... cast netting to catch shrimps and of course go out and get the crabs right off the banks. Uh, things of that nature and you can go out and pick the oysters. My sister herself, talk about, "I'm 'gon go pick some oysters. I'm not supposed to, but if they don't catch me..." you know, she said that just this week and uh so, everyone knew how cast net pretty much. Most of the guys, uh learned how to cast net and go out into the rivers and as... as Clarence Thomas even said, "Catch a mess of shrimp," which is a terminology for a good meal. So it's not like a box of shrimp, we would call it a "mess of shrimp." I was surprised he knew that word himself, but like I said, he's a real Geechee. So yeah, we all knew that part of shrimp fishing and of course the guys on the boat, again uh moved along with the modern technology, being able to navigate through the waters. The captains knew it so they had to learn, 'cause you know, the boss didn't want to work hard so he had to teach the strikers. They became like family. Even if you go back to the slavery days, you know, some people seem to think that the slave masters beat them all day long everyday, uh you couldn't do that with all the slaves because them you've pretty much killed them and they can't work, but they would set examples of course so with the slave masters back in the day then and then moving forward, not slave masters, but the boat owners built a friendship. And of course trained them how to do everything, because of course there's weeks that the boss man needs to be off of work, do things with family and the strikers would be glad to uh you know captain the boat, and uh make money, More money, so they learn it, learned it all, all of the new equipment and the modern technology that followed it too. As I said myself, I don't know how to navigate the waters, but some of the other shrimp fishermen that you're probably going to talk to; they know it like the back of their hands and uh yeah I talk with them like, "Wow, how do you guys do that?" But they know how to do it, they've learned it without... even if the equipment go bad, they know how to go through the sounds, low tide, no ti... high tide, buoys, different areas to stay away from, uh I am not the one to talk to about that, 'cause I don't know that part.

JM: Yeah, but in general it was just shrimp and oysters or were there other species or...?

GL: You had shrimp, oysters, fish. Shrimps were the major part, and of course the strikers and the captains would allow them to uh give fish away... uh some... to family members. You know

they really look out for if you did some work on the car or you know someone, somebody say “Well, when you going fishing?”...”Well, I’ll, I’ll, I’ll bring you a mess of shrimp. I’ll see if I can get you some fish.” So it was pretty liberal that families would receive uh fish and shrimp, I mean, mostly fish, crabs, and when they can slip you some shrimps, they would slip you some shrimps. And what I mean slip you some, maybe take a little bit, maybe they not have supposed to have taken it, and I’m sure every captain knew that. Uh and that was allowed to do, but the main money in my day and I’m talking the late Sixties and Seventies. I stopped in the Seventies and it went on through the Eighties and then it took a nose dive downward, uh was the shrimps. And now there are other things that they catch and when the shrimps started going way way down the horseshoe crabs, I remember that was kind of big at one time; and of course they call it the jellyfish or jellyballing now.

JM: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

GL: That’s uh...yeah I can give you a little...again...uh African Americans are jellyballing. I’m going to use this new term, they call it “jellyballing.” But jelly uh... ‘cause they look something like a ball once they...you know. We know it’s almost nothing, but it’s such a delicacy in uh...in uh...Asian countries I guess I should see that they use it like we use caviar. You know, fish egg is caviar, fish eggs! And uh, so and it’s expensive so the jellyballing for another country is very expensive and it’s a lot over here and so now it has become a big boom. You get this little nothing, almost that floats and when it dries up, it’s really nothing, but they use that to put on salads and various other things and it costs a gazillion dollars to get that special. And I think it’s also proven as a medical usage in a major way, don’t ask me the exact medicine. I do a lot of the Gullah Geechee herbs, and I just learned about the jellyballing, the jellyfish is major for healing of the body and uh so maybe there’s a niche market for that too, that they use it as an herbal medicine.

JM: So are the African American fishermen going into that using the same technology as shrimping?

GL: Uh, they are using it to make it for money. In the past, even when I went out on the boats and get on the boats, when they come into the dock, they have the last, what we call drag. Which they drag and they pull the nets up and when they come in everything is still on there and they’re still separating, throwing overboard, scraping, getting rid of. Jellyfish, they would throw away back then because there was no money in it. Throw it overboard! Horseshoe. Throw it overboard! And smaller shrimps, throw it back overboard! So a lot of things they threw back overboard, even the crabs and stuff because the big bucks was in the shrimps. So you didn’t have time waiting over here to make a few dollars, you go for the bigger bucks as you can for the little bit of time that you’re out there on the water, you want to get as many boxes as you can, so the rest of that just went back. They could have made money, more money, but this is top dollar. So now jellyfish is major, shrimping is not as much...nowhere near as it used to be so, hey they’re going to catch those uh jellyfish.

JM: Jellyball.

GL: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

JM: And I was reading, there's a processor here in Darien?

GL: Yes it is. Yes it is.

JM: Is that, you know, economically the direction the Gullah Geechee fishermen are going into?

GL: Uh some of them are in it, I know several of them that uh that's what they do.

JM: Only? Or in addition to shrimp?

GL: In addition.

JM: Okay.

GL: Uh but there are specific boats that go out there and whatever nets, special nets there is to catch it, that's what they do because that's where the money... the money is big and they know how to catch those types of fishery. But yeah it is major, yeah because money in it now, and it's huge, huge money in it.

-----End of Interview-----

Reviewed by Nicole Zador 10/08/2024