

Facts about this person:

Age: 79
Sex: Male
Occupation: Retired Boat owner
Home ports: New Bedford
Residence: Fairhaven
Ethnic background: Danish

Interviewer: Millie Rahn (MR)

Also present: Kirsten Bendiksen (KB)

Transcriber: Sarah Smith

Place interview took place: Fairhaven, home of Ole Andersen

Date and time of interview: November 9, 2006

INDEX / KEYWORDS

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Denmark; Norwegians; swordfishing; overfishing; technology; drugs; global warming; New Foundland

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- [00:00] Born in 1929 in Denmark; grew up in fishing and farming village
- [01:45] Went to sea at fourteen in Baltic traders; sailed on bigger ships after the war, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish ships; came to America and sailed in American ships in Korean War
- [04:33] Had bad weather one time coming back from France and the propeller fell off; worked on deck on these boats when he was seventeen or eighteen; went from one ship to another and then got US visa
- [07:18] Shipwrecked on a reef one time off Hawaii; another time was on a lobster boat that started filling up with water; did ground fishing and then swordfishing; stopped fishing about ten years ago; fished mostly out of New Bedford
- [10:40] After getting shipwrecked in Hawaii went to New York to work on a scalloper; he got the job of cook when the cook didn't show up; moved to New Bedford in 1957; lots of Norwegians in New Bedford; New Bedford was a good place to be; only a few Danes here
- [12:59] Fished on mostly Norwegian boats with Swedes and Finns; Norwegian boats were good because they would eat lots of fresh fish; Newfoundlanders like to eat salt cod; went to New Foundland a few years ago on vacation; MR and OE talk about New Foundland
- [16:23] Went two or three hundred miles from New Bedford fluking; Newfoundlanders had lots of superstitions; Newfoundlanders would come to the boats dressed up; they looked at him funny for being Protestant; Newfoundlanders were good people but drank a lot
- [19:59] Never been on a steel boat; would pursue something else if he had it to do again; OE and KB talk about the Lillian B; you were a good fisherman if you didn't drink too much and showed up on time; need to do a bit of everything; only knows about fishing today from what he reads in the paper; read there will be no fish fifty years from now; no fish in Nova Scotia or Newfoundland, and aren't fish in New Bedford like there used to be
- [23:57] Future of the fishery looks grim; OE and KB argue over the evidence; not bringing in fish like they used to; now with these modern boats the fish don't have a chance; fishing very different today; fishermen killing themselves with technology; almost wiped out the fleet in Boston; slept through a hurricane once while at sea
- [27:20] Lots of scallops here, but scalloping comes and goes; now there is global warming; fish buyers who own twenty boats and won't give the highest price for someone's catch; corruption on the waterfront; drugs are dark secret of New Bedford
- [30:25] One time pulled up an airplane with two decomposing bodies in it; only ever seen one sea turtle; used to see a lot of sharks, but there are no sharks anymore; sharks used to bite the cod end of the net and eat the fish; one time caught a lot of sharks, so traded them for swordfish; there are no swordfish now – they have to go to Flemish Cap to catch them
- [34:19] Lived well fishing; never had to go out on Sundays back then; this was one of the best places in the world for fishing; just makes things for boaters now, and works on his house and boat; keeps a 28 foot boat; would take the dog on the boat all the time; people don't take their dogs on fishing boats
- [37:45] Doesn't talk to many fishermen these days
- [39:15] When he was fishing there was a lot of talent on the boats; you don't see that today; KB and OE discuss shore supply businesses in New Bedford; when he started fishing there was no nylon, and wooden rollers and doors
- [42:36] Fish don't have a chance today; they should have a quota; there are too many boats today; people are greedy and want what others have; it would be devastating to New Bedford if the fishery shut down; closing remarks
- [44:19] End of Audio