

Name of person interviewed: Antonio Perreira [AP]

Facts about this person:

Age: 68 born 1942

Sex: Male

Occupation: Plumber

If a fisherman (if retired, list the ports used when fishing),

Home port: New Bedford

Residence (Town where lives): New Bedford, MA

Ethnic Background: Portuguese

Interviewer: Markham Starr

Transcriber: Laura Orleans

Place interview took place: Fairfield Inn, Working Waterfront Festival

Date and time of interview: September 25, 2010

ABSTRACT

Antonio Perreira also known as “Tony the Plumber,” has worked as a full-time pipe fitter on the waterfront since 1976. Originally from Portugal, he learned his trade through a traditional apprenticeship after working as a pinner in a textile mill and as a construction worker and laborer. He has serviced both scallopers and draggers in the New Bedford fleet for the past 34 years, primarily working with Portuguese owned vessels. He talks about his childhood in Portugal, his experience immigrating to New Bedford at the age of 13 and his work history. He discusses the impact of regulations on his waterfront plumbing work and the idea that fishermen should be allowed to retire after a set number of years fishing, regardless of their age because the work is so physically demanding. He also lists off numerous boats, captains and engineers in the Portuguese fleet.

INDEX (minutes:seconds) / KEYWORDS

KEYWORDS: New Bedford; Portugal; Boat Names; Nicknames; hydraulics; Regulations; Retirement; Whiskey Fleet;

[Start of Interview]

[00:00]

Birthplace, from interior of Portugal, coming to America saw ocean for first time.

[3:00]

Lists many fishing vessels, captains and engineers whose boats he worked on

[9:00]

Mentions the “whiskey fleet” owned by Biff MacLean

[15:01]

Talks about how difficult it is to be away from family. Father worked mining in Portugal during WWII. Mother’s family were farmers and sheepherders in Portugal.

[20:00]

Talks about experiences as a teenager in New Bedford in North End (McCauley Field, Coggshall St.)

[23:00]

Talks about working as a laborer at UMASS and becoming interested in learning a trade.

[27:00]

Tells story about working through the night to finish the job and the boat carpenter making breakfast for him at 3:00 a.m.

[30:00]

Discusses the challenges of plumbing in a salt water environment.

Tape 2

[000]

Talks about mitigating vibrations and about making adjustments to plumbing according to the wishes of the captain and crew when they return from a trip.

[3:00]

Talks about his son and daughter, neither of them are working in plumbing.

[6:00]

Impact of fishing regulations on his work (because boats are out fewer days, they require much less maintenance work and many are doing their own plumbing now. Also talks about the introduction of PVC to replace metal piping.

[9:00]

Discusses the idea that fishermen should be allowed to retire after a set number of years of fishing