

Name of person interviewed: Woody Bowers [WB]

Facts about this person:

Age unknown

Sex Male

Occupation Former Fisherman and Captain

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

Home port, New Bedford, MA

and Hail Port New Bedford, MA

Residence (Town where lives) North Dartmouth, MA

Ethnic background (if known) Nova Scotian

Name of person interviewed: Sue Murray [SM]

Facts about this person:

Age unknown

Sex Female

Occupation Daughter of Woody Bowers

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

Home port,

and Hail Port,

Residence (Town where lives) South Dartmouth, MA

Ethnic background (if known) unknown

Name of person interviewed: Rodey Murray [RM]

Facts about this person:

Age unknown

Sex Male

Occupation Fisherman and Captain

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

Home port, unknown

and Hail Port unknown

Residence (Town where lives) South Dartmouth, MA

Ethnic background (if known) unknown

Interviewer: Millie Rahn [MR]

Transcriber: Millie Rahn  
Erin Heacock

Place interview took place: New Bedford Harbormaster House

Date and time of interview: Sept. 25, 2004

## INDEX/KEYWORDS

### KEYWORDS

New Bedford; Massachusetts; Nova Scotia; World War II; Merchant Marines; Prohibition; Georges Bank; Fishing Families; Weather; Superstitions; Nationalities; Regulations; Turtles; Lawsuits; Conservationists; Scallops;

### INDEX

[Start of Audio]

- [00:00] Woody introduces himself; Tells about time in the Merchant Marines during World War II;
- [05:25] Returned to Nova Scotia after World War II; Worked at the Halifax Naval Yard; Immigrated to the United States in 1948 or 1949; Went to Gloucester first, then to New Bedford; Fished for 17 years, then traveled internationally, and returned to occasional fishing trips;
- [09:50] Fished for many different types of fish; Regulations then allotted certain amounts of each type of fish; Fished on Georges Bank; Knows where to fish from experience; New Bedford used to be the number one port for landings; Retired over 10 years ago; Used to still go out during the summer;
- [13:01] Thinks the regulation has helped especially the 200 mile limit prohibiting foreign vessels taking fish and regulating amount landed;
- [13:40] No children are in the business; Plenty of other people in the business, Portuguese, Newfoundlanders, Nova Scotians; Fished on boats with mixed ethnicities; Average size crew is half of what it used to be; Shares are bigger;
- [16:35] Bad weather experiences; Stays on the lee side of the wind on Georges Bank to avoid shoal water;
- [17:59] Superstitions on boats; Cats and dogs on boats; Dogs were helpful as radar in fog; Hand cranked fog horns and lack of radar in old days; Never was on a boat that sank;
- [21:27] Sue speaks about what it was like growing up the child of a fisherman; Continued discussion of superstitions on the boat and ashore; Counteractions to superstitions
- [23:50] Sue married a fisherman; Rodey Murray enters discussion on superstitions;
- [24:43] Rodey grew up in Fairhaven in a large fishing family; Related to many of the fishermen in New Bedford; Family from Newfoundland; Newfoundlanders live long because of rum, salt, or whiskey;
- [26:05] Woody tells a story of his father bootlegging rum in Nova Scotia and running it down to New York during Prohibition; Boat was seized by Coast Guard and sunk at the dock; Father and partner were sent back to Nova Scotia;
- [28:04] Woody tells story of arriving in New Bedford; Was waiting for a sailing in Boston to go out which never did; Traveled by train to New Bedford with only 40 dollars; Joined a poker game and won about 50 dollars; Next morning went down to the dock and had a job; Uncle fished on same boat at one time;

- [31:27] Discussion on Nova Scotians; Many stayed in Boston; Many crossed open border into US, worked the summer, and returned to Nova Scotia for the winter; Many also stayed in Gloucester;
- [33:19] Rodey is a scallop boat captain; Good changes in the fishery was the money; Bad changes is the rules and regulations; Fishermen know best; Thinks there's more fish now;
- [35:45] Woody and Rodey discuss differences in the fishing industry, particularly mesh sizes;
- [37:41] Rodey talks about the future of the fishery; Waiting on the opening of the closed areas; Can't work in the meantime because he doesn't know how long he can work before back to fishing; Scallopers and draggers are organized separately; Contributes to the Fishery Survival Fund, which represents boats from Maine to Virginia in lawsuits from conservation groups; Currently all about the turtles; Has caught 4 turtles in the last year; Hudson Canyon where they are forced to fish has the turtles; Has 100 days a year to fish;
- [42:09] Impact on families; Fishing is a job and a way of life; Expensive to fish now; Closing remarks;
- [44:36]  
[Conversation continues on an unrelated topic.]  
[End of Audio]