

Name of person interviewed: Bernice Calnan [BC]

Facts about this person:

Age:

Sex: Female

Occupation: fisherman's wife, mother and daughter

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: Madeleine Hall Arber

Transcriber: Laura Orleans

Place interview took place: Fairfield Inn, Working Waterfront Festival

Date and time of interview: September 25, 2010

## **ABSTRACT**

Bernice Calnan of New Bedford is a fisherman's daughter, wife, mother and grandmother of fishermen and scallopers. Her parents came from Newfoundland. Her husband is now retired, her sons continue to fish and own boats. She talks about growing up in a fishing family and gives a good sense of the New Bedford fishing community in the 1960s. She was an active member of the New Bedford Fishermen's Wives which was instrumental in protesting to get the 200 mile limit. She discusses closes calls, safety at sea, changes in technology and parenting.

## Index

000-3:00

Father was a boat cook on a dragger F/V Adventurer, all Newfoundland crew. Tells about their encounter w/ German sub during WWII.

3:00-6:00

Husband Donald Calnan started work in mills, learned engines and eventually went into fishing working his way up from crew to mate to boat owner and captain. Family owned 11 boats over years. Describes close call.

6:00-9:00

New Bedford Fishermen's Wives Organization fought w/ GFWA for 200 mile limit. Group also participated annually in Memorial Day Parade w/ elaborate floats. Talks about challenges of parenting when husband is out to sea.

9:00-12:00

More on parenting in a fishing family. Typical size of boats. Unfair reputation of fishermen as drunks b/c of swagger when they get into port.

12:00-15:00

Typical duration of trip. More on NB Fishermen's Wives and 200 mile limit

15:00-18:00

Got real estate license when kids were teenagers. Discusses regulations and drug activity

18:00-21:00

Family tradition of fishing.

21:00-24:00

Vessels they have owned or part-owned. Currently Kerry Ann is captained by son, Donny C is owned by son-in-law.

24:00-27:00

Interaction between commercial and recreational boats.

27:00-31:04

Story of husband falling overboard. Changes in technology. Story of pleasure boats following husband's F/V into harbor in thick fog.

000-3:00

What makes a good fisherman

3:00-6:00

Fishing in popular culture (t.v., movies). Loss of community/inactivity of fishermen's wives organization. Christmas parties of past (organized by fishermen's wives org.)

6:00-9:00

Unusual catches, weird fish/sea monster

9:00-12:00

Crew member who had fatal heart attack out at sea. Importance of having an education to fall back on.

12:00-15:00

Importance of having an education to fall back on

15:00-18:00

More about family, heritage, values. Uncle's boat used by U.S. government during WWII

18:00-21:00

Fishermen and swimming. Coast Guard rescue of husband's boat

21:00-24:00

Communication during stormy weather. Safety at sea and survival suits.