

Name of person interviewed: Barbara McCarthy [BM]

Facts about this person:

Age:

Sex: Female

Occupation: Boat owner/Fisherman's Wife

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

Home port:

Hail Ports:

Residence (Town where lives): East Providence

Ethnic Background:

Interviewer: Lynne Williamson

Transcriber: Sharon Pollard-Waldron

Place interview took place: Working Waterfront Festival

Date and time of interview: September 26, 2009

ABSTRACT

Retired boat owner, business woman, mother and fisherman's wife, Barbara McCarthy, shares her knowledge and experiences from throughout her lifetime in the commercial fishing industry. Barbara, who has a family background in fishing, shares her stories of raising seven children while remaining actively involved in her husband's fishing business as well as in the Fishermen's Wives association, the Blessing of the Fleet Fair and in various market ministries. In this interview, Barbara discusses her involvement and shares the concerns and stories of a fisherman's wife regarding her husband's close calls at sea and shares her knowledge of the safety procedures and practices used during her husband's days as a fisherman. Barbara also reflects upon a life of happiness and hardship which she has faced in making a living in the fishing industry, including the challenges of her husband's blindness and illness, along with her observations of fishing out of various ports in Massachusetts and Rhode Island throughout the decades. In addition, Barbara describes her family's relationships with other fishermen and fishermen's wives as well as different aspects of ship construction and ownership which she has learned and some of the changes which she has noted in the industry throughout the years and into her retirement.

INDEX (minutes:seconds) / KEYWORDS

KEYWORDS:

Family member; Boat ownership; Socialization/training to be a fisherman; Relationships with other fishermen; Informal rules and regulations; Gender roles; Women; Fishermen's Wives; Family; Family involvement; Making a living; Seasonal round of fishing; Beliefs and belief systems, religion; Festivals; Ceremonies, Blessing of the Fleet Fair; Farmers markets; Retirement; Regulations; International treaties and agreements; Weather; Ship construction; East Providence, RI; Nantucket Sound; Alaska; New Bedford, MA; Dartmouth, MA; Cape Cod Bay; Financing; Woods Hole; Kelly's shipyard, Fairhaven, MA; Electronics; Boat engines; Quahogging; Cod; Flyfishing; Communication out at sea; Business and economic effects of regulations; Illness;

[Start of Interview]

[00:00]

Personal background information; Boat ownership; Fisheries replacement loan process; Buying a new boat; Shipyard fire; Fishing profits and price changes; Doing everything else while husband does the fishing; Crew;

[5:34]

Fishing out of New Bedford, MA port; First husband's diabetes affecting fishing; Electronics on boat; Husband's family background; How husband got into fishing; Woods Hole; Quahogging in the late 1940's; Meeting husband; Cape Cod Bay coast guard giving him a receiver; Edging a boat up to Nova Scotia;

[9:59]

Fishing as a family business; Quahogging in Nantucket Sound during 1920's and 1950's; Buying a new boat; Effects of diabetes causing husband to go blind; Selling boat; Raising seven children while husband out at sea; Trip lengths; Different types of fuel tanks over time; Hard times;

[15:32]

Living in Dartmouth, MA and East Providence, RI; One son in fishing in Alaska; Husband teaching son to mend twine; One daughter into flyfishing; Husband leaving chore lists while out at sea;

[19:48]

Communicating with husband while out at sea; Sankaty Head Light; Hard life; Cooking; Crew; Husband fishing alone; Background with father's boat; Father being cautious to avoid mishaps at

sea; Father's background in fishing; Blindness causing husband to no longer fish; Going to Carroll Center to get help and training while living blind; Difficulty of not being declared blind for first year; Husband's kidney failure and going on dialysis;

[25:03]

Husband's death; Involvement in fishing industry since husband's death; Regulations; Helping husband with net mending; Joining Fishermen's Wives; Being a business woman and helping out; Business employees; Looking over all of their work;

[30:09]

Relationships with other fishermen's' wives; Fears and worries; Northwest Gale story; Disappearance and sinking of *the Lynn*; Interview with safety officer; Mistake of mixing different material piping; Seamen's Bethel; Learning various things by asking the right people;

[34:42]

Retirement and ability to share knowledge and experiences with others today; Farmers Markets; Difficulty of selling fish at open air markets; Involvement in market ministries; Story of serving fisherman at market ministry; Cooking and preparing fish when husband was fishing; Finding restaurants today that sell fish; Story of husband's close call at sea;

[40:12]

Husband's love for fishing; Help maintaining boat during wintertime; Drastic changes in fishing industry; Uncertainty about the future of the fishing industry; Passing laws in 1977 which still affect the industry; The problems with regulations; Fewer people fishing today; Foreigner factory boats and passing the 200 mile limit; Retirement of all of the fishermen they knew;

[45:22]

Not seeing as many boats today; Story of selling boat after husband died; New owners flipped boat leaving one woman husbandless; Declining settlement; Naming of the boat, the *Lark*; Size comparison of *the Lark* to the larger *Shamrock*; Ways of knowing how to find the best fishing grounds; Using a sounding lead;

[49:53]

Weather; Avoiding serious storms; Happy life in the fishing industry; Involvement in the Blessing of the Fleet Fair; Religious beliefs; Positive effects of the publicity festivals bring; Parting words of wisdom;

[End of Interview] [54:52]