

Interview with Betsy Pye

Narrator: Betsy Pye

Interviewer: Julie Olson

Location: New Bedford, MA

Date of Interview: September 23, 2007

Project Name: The Working Waterfront Festival Community Documentation Project

Project Description: This project documents the history and culture of the commercial fishing industry and other port trades. The project began in 2004 in conjunction with the Working Waterfront Festival, an annual, educational celebration of commercial fishing culture which takes place in New Bedford, MA. Interviewees have included a wide range of individuals connected to the commercial fishing industry and/or other aspects of the port through work or familial ties. While the majority of interviewees are from the port of New Bedford, the project has also documented numerous individuals from other ports around the country. Folklorist and Festival Director Laura Orleans and Community Scholar and Associate Director Kirsten Bendiksen are project leaders. The original recordings reside at the National Council for the Traditional Arts in Maryland with listening copies housed at the Festival's New Bedford office.

Principal Investigator: Laura Bendiksen, Laura Orleans

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Abstract

On September 23, 2007, Julie Olson interviewed Betsy Pye as part of the Working Waterfront Festival Community Documentation Project. Betsy shares personal anecdotes from her childhood in New Bedford and her perceptions of the waterfront as an outsider. She describes meeting her husband when she was 19, and chronicles his family's history, his work as a boat engineer, and her involvement with the local fishing community after their marriage. Deb Schrader, and her involvement in advocating for the fishing industry, served as a role model for Betsy. In the interview, Betsy says of Deb, "But she has no fear, it seems to me, of standing up and saying what she thinks about just about anything. I admire that in anyone, but I especially admire that in a woman because the odds are sort of stacked against you that you're going to be heard." Becoming involved with advocacy work, Betsy participated in meetings and rallies in support of groundfishing. She details the challenges and joys of being a fisherman's wife, and her involvement in the community, like her work with the New Bedford Oceanarium and Shore Support. Reflecting on the future of New Bedford, Betsy remarks that, "New Bedford is a city that has always gone to sea, one way or another," highlighting the potential for research and advancement beyond today's industries.

Julie Olson: For the record, could you say what your name is?

Betsy Pye: My name is Betsy Pye.

JO: And we could just start with a little bit of your personal history. Are you from New Bedford?

BP: Born and bred in New Bedford. My maiden name is Hemingway. My family owns a rather rich company in New Bedford and I lived on Maple Street until I was in the 4th grade. Then we moved to S. Dartmouth and moved onto Elm Street. Then after a year at Boston College, I came home for the summer and I met my husband and he was in the Sail Loft Bar in S. Dartmouth, which was an infamous watering hole. I saw him on the other side of the room and I said, "Ooohh, who's that?" And someone said, "That's sweetie pie." I said, "No, no, what's his name?" "Sweetie Pie." Which was what everyone called Jimmy Pye. So that's more or less how we met at 19. I was 19 and he was not, he was older, and I guess you can say we've been together ever since. Except for 2 years we didn't speak because of a blond and you won't take that personally. We were married in the Seamen's Bethel in 1980 and christened our first and so far only child there 17 years later. So here we are.

JO: Was the company your family owned a fishing related company?

BP: Not at all. It was transportation, but not of perishables.

JO: So you are completely new to the whole fishing community?

BP: Oh, I hadn't a clue about fishing, not at all. On Sunday's after church my father would take us all for—I'm one of 7 children—a ride, for a Sunday drive and we always came down to the waterfront. When I grew up in New Bedford, around the block I was on Maple, on East Clinton, was the Saunders Family. As my family grew larger, as theirs did, they ended up with 9 children, and Paul Saunders was a little bit of everything I guess to the waterfront, but I don't think he ever went fishing. I'm not certain about that but Paul Saunders is an infamous character down here on the waterfront. He owned, with a brother, a fuel company and he may have been part of a consortium, what was known then as the "whiskey fleet"...*Chivas Royal*, *Crown Royal*, and I don't know if there were any others but those were the vessels and there were nicknames. The "Whiskey Fleet" and every once in a while there would be a cookout at his house and there would be lobsters and things that we never had at home. Through the Saunders family I met Larry [Chungalitus?] whose the city harbormaster and he was a character as well and apparently still is. But that was my only relationship with the fishing industry, was Sunday drives down on the docks and the Saunders Family.

JO: Your husband is a fisherman himself, is that correct? Is he from New Bedford?

BP: Yes, his family grew up in the south end. They were English immigrants who worked in the mills. Then his father and his father's brother, his uncle, Herald, were plumbers they got into trades, building trades. And Jim's mom's mother married a fisherman who adopted her daughter. So while Jim's mothers an adopted daughter of the fishing industry so to speak, Jim was named for that grandfather and for some reason, in addition to the name, took up the livelihood. When he was in the service, my husband, in the navy in 1971 perhaps, was AWAL, because he'd come home on leave and decided to go fishing and the boat didn't get back in

time for him to meet his ship in Norfolk, VA. But he did call and he let the captain know he was on his way. The captain said, “Well, that’s ok Pye-face, just bring me some lobsters.” So he didn’t get any brig time that time, but he saw plenty of brig time, but that’s another matter.

JO: Well it’s handy having access to the sea. So his family is from England, that’s unusual to have immigrated from England.

BP: Oh, there were quite a few English in the south end of New Bedford. The Washington Club, which still exists, was founded as a social club from White Anglo-Saxon Protestant English immigrants, and most of them, of course, worked in the mills. They attended Episcopal Church when they attended church. His uncle, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather are all past presidents of the Washington Club. Now the Washington Club has relaxed its membership rules, and I understand the current president is either Italian or Portuguese. But in any event, it was an Anglo-Saxon institution. In fact, Jimmy’s great-grandmother was paraded around the south end in an open vehicle because of her striking resemblance to Queen Victoria. So whether it was Victoria’s b-day or jubilee, she was paraded around in the Queen’s absence, for all the English to come out and cheer for. So there is a very strong English community in New Bedford. As there is an Irish, and ... of course we can’t touch the Portuguese, but....

JO: I guess I don’t hear that much about the English, I know the Norwegian fairly well and of course you hear a lot about the Portuguese.

BP: I’m sorry, Ms. Olson...(laughs)

JO: Actually, Swedish, but I fake it. So about what time period would this have been, 50s?

BP: Jim’s great-grandmother was running several businesses during the depression, so let’s say the late 20s early 30s. Before the 2nd World War took her... well, no one died in the War... I have to think about this... Jim’s father, uncle, and grandfather all served in the U.S. Navy in World War II. That would be great-grandmother’s son and grandsons. They were all in the Navy. Jim’s father was in the U.S. Naval Armed Guard, which was slightly different. They were aboard the Liberty ships and freighters to make certain that the material needed for the war got through. They guarded the ships which were actually manned by merchant marines, kind of a complex...It was a branch of the Service that was developed or christened or invented during WWII and in that war's end it was disbanded. So there are very few Armed Guard veterans still living and when they are gone, so will probably memories of the U.S. Naval Armed Guard be gone.

JO: I guess they would have known about shipping...?

BP: Well, mostly they were gunners. The Merchant Mariners took care of the vessel and its cargo. But the gunners that the US Navy placed on these vessels protected the cargo. They ran armament to England, that was called the [Mermax Run?] it was the deadliest run in WWII across the N. Atlantic because the German U-boats just lay and wait for them and pick them off like ducks, but anyway. We certainly are at maritime here, aren’t we.

JO: Oral history, and that’s all...

BP: Setting the stage for Jim’s going out to sea. I’m sorry, out the window, it’s not because I

don't want to look at you but it's sort of a distraction. So where were we?

JO: You're not the first person I've met who is sort of an advocate in the fishing community but didn't actually grow up in the fishing community. I talked to Debbie Schrader before, who also didn't grow up around fishing. And I'm wondering who's been a role model.

BP: It has to be Deb Schrader. I met Deb Schrader, I attended a forum at the Whaling Museum that the Standard Times sponsored. There was a panel of fishing industry representatives, but mostly there were attorneys from such organizations as the Pew Foundation. I don't know if Oceana was there... and I'm having trouble remembering who they all were. Brian Rothschild was definitely on the panel from SMAST, there was an attorney from the Pew Foundation and unfortunately a young woman in the audience who may have been high or something, stood up and started screaming at this panel because none of them, as she said, had been fishing. She so distracted everyone from what was supposed to happen at the forum, that they actually had a second one to sort of regroup. But after this woman's outburst and tirade, Deb Schrader got up and spoke. And I was so impressed. She knew the Mag-Stevens Act inside out, backwards and forwards. She went toe to toe with the attorney from the Pew Foundation on some minutia and she is highly regarded by a male-dominated industry but also male-dominated scientific community, male-dominated legal community, male-dominated councils, I mean she has the respect because she takes the time to learn. But she has no fear, it seems to me, of standing up and saying what she thinks about just about anything. And I admire that in anyone, but I especially admire that in a woman because the odds are sort of stacked against you that you're going to be heard. So I introduced myself to Deb after that. We started to trade emails, she started to refer me to different resources, materials, and that sort of thing. At that time, there were lots of meetings and rallies, and such in support of the groundfishing industry that I attended and I helped make posters, and marched from Pier 3 to Fairhaven where there was a Council meeting at one time or another. Just generally got involved and my husband actually sent me a card—well, he didn't send it through the mail, we don't waste a lot of postage, he just left it, thank you for trying to save the fishing industry. He's not an active participant himself but he obviously gives a lot of thought to what's happening and right now it isn't a pretty picture for the fishing industry. So, as his partner in life, I do what I can but part of that was getting out in the front lines, well certainly not in the front lines but in support of the front lines. I was doing what I could because I thought that's what I should do. So that's how I got started.

JO: What fishery is your husband and yourself involved in?

BP: He's still in the groundfishing industry. Cod, haddock, and flatfish. Their days are reduced to in the range of 50 days he can fish in the year. His boat has dual licenses, it fishes in the winter and then goes scalloping for the summer. My husband, the advanced age of 58, is not planning to learn how to scallop, it's back-breaking, mind-numbing work that is best left to younger men.

JO: So, his boat goes scalloping but he doesn't?

BP: He does not. Every year since our son was born, he's had the summers off, and efforts to find a site on another boat are more and more fruitless. I mean he's actually had opportunities in the past to go fishing but for one reason or another might have said no I can't because something is happening in our lives, or there is something coming up that he just can't miss.

And so he feels that he sort of has the option to say no. Were there any sites available the last couple summers, I would say that he probably would not have turned them down, but they simply are not available. And there has been certainly an affect on our lives. I would say our marriage as a result. There have been more hard times, more rocky moments than we had thought. There would be as we got older, and that there had been in the past and could have dealt with them differently. Getting out of the business is a very difficult decision to face at 58 but it's one we're talking about more and more seriously. And probably will be affected within the next year or 2. At an age when he should be thinking of retirement, he's going to have to retrain for another industry. And I work for a non-profit, and if there was ever a family in need of career counseling, it's us, but we're hanging in there, that's where we are today.

JO: So you own the vessel.

BP: Oh my goodness no. My husband is the boat's engineer. He's just a member of the crew.

JO: So that makes a much more unstable position in the industry.

BP: Oh yes. (long pause). Oh well, so went from way up here to way down here very quickly, how much more time do we have?

JO: What's it like to be in a fishing family, which I would call you a fishing family, as a woman?

BP: Actually, the first ten years I have to say it was, well more than ten years probably, it was wonderful. I always worked, but when Jim came home, it was a mini-honeymoon, or a wonderful romantic weekend or mid-week break or something. But then we bought a house, and there is nothing quite like a 25 year mortgage to settle a guys down. Then we had a child, and so we have more and greater responsibilities, and of course reduced circumstances and we age, but there was a certain freedom the first ten-fifteen years that not just because I became a mother, is gone, but for instance, I had to take over purchase of the health insurance for the family because the old days the boats provided. But as I can't even imagine the administrative nightmare it must have been for those who took care of benefits for boats when the crews would turn over. I mean a person might fish on a boat for 3 months, pick up the insurance after 1 month, and then be gone in 2 months and you'd get a new person who after a month would be eligible for insurance and then you'd cycle... I can't imagine what that was like to do. So fewer and fewer boats offered insurance as time went by and of course insurance went through the roof. So it became more important for me to have a real job, I worked in restaurants, I've worked in small businesses, but I had to get a little more serious. So some of the freedom I enjoyed at the beginning, I had to get a real job, and real benefits, and so I had to knuckle down and grow up. As I say it, we bought a house and had our son. We're knuckled down now, we're real 9-5 kinda folk. Even Jim, when he's out fishing, I'm mom and dad and dishwasher and auto repair and everything else, but when he's home, we have to make certain that Jamie is up and out to school. So, if you have an image in your mind of a fisherman who sits in the bar until midnight, that's not us anymore, that might have been once but it isn't anymore, because life settles you down. And what freedom you had when you were young, I suppose it happens no matter what you do, they dissipate and you are happy sometimes to exchange them for the responsibilities that you have and I suppose that's the case here. I have no idea what your question was or if I answered it. I am just talking.

JO: Oh, we're just talking. I wonder one thing that would be interesting to hear your perspective on. There is this idea of the typical woman in the 1950s was the wonderful *Leave it to Beaver* housewife, and then the 21st century woman is the working mom doing it all...Is that historical change and that experience of being a woman different for someone who is married to a fisherman of who is part of a fishing family would you say?

BP: I have a feeling that even in the whaling era, wives of men who went to sea were, for all intents and purposes, feminists. Or modern women because they had to maintain the home and that meant the books. And they had to make due with what the husband left them with when they went away. In many cases they ran businesses and did things outside the home that perhaps their contemporaries and peers didn't because it was unseemly or women didn't do it or they didn't have to. But necessity is a mother of invention, and if you have to because there is no one at home to do it with you or for you, then you do it. And you simply just get out there and do it. I believe I am a feminist and I have no trouble whatsoever doing what has to be done. Or finding someone who can do it for me. I think my husband is confident that in his absence that everything is going to be just fine. He trusts me I think with his life. I take care of things when he goes fishing because they need to be done, it's not because it's my job or his job, it's just something that needs to be done. And that's just part of it. I think most women do whose husbands are at sea, or whose partners are at sea. That said, I didn't drive until I was 28 years old. I was married for 3 years, and finally Jim said I'm really tired of going to the grocery store and laundry mat when I come home from fishing. So maybe it's time to consider you getting your license. I was the middle child of 7, I still am the middle child of 7 and it didn't occur to me to get my license because there was no car I would have had access to. And there were all these drivers. I said, "I don't need to learn how to drive." I rode my bicycle everywhere. Even as an adult, I had a job cooking at UMASS Dartmouth. I rode my bike from S. Dartmouth to UMASS and home because that's how I got around. It was my choice but I did finally get my license and relieved him from having to go to the grocery store and laundry mat.

JO: What's it like having a fisherman in the family?

BP: Well, you'd be surprised how nice people can be to you when they think you're going to get a free lobster or some scallops or fillets. But seriously, my family even though we were raised Roman Catholic and fish on Fridays, my mother is deathly allergic to fish. So nobody in my family ever cooks fish, so if my husband brings home fish it goes to his family because back in the Depression, his great grandmother had not only her own husband and children to feed, but as her children got older and they married, for some reason they all ended up back at her house. So she had an extended family to feed. I guess she was adept at taking something like a fish, and she could probably get three meals out of it. One of the businesses she ran during the Depression, she had a fish and chips store, and I guess the English style, so they grew up eating fish. Jim's mom, a widow now, still loves fish and prepares fish. Lobster would be a treat for her today because it's more than she can eat and crack open, but it's still something she enjoys. So I suppose that the benefits of having a fisherman in the family are access to fresh seafood because it's fresher than you'd ever find in the store.

JO: So growing up in the area but not part of the fishing family, did you have certain ideas about what fishermen were like?

BP: Oh sure. Well, there is the unmistakable, shall we say, air about the docks that permeated the home who got off the boat and smell that badly. But I did know Mr. Saunders, he got his kids off to school. I did know that his mother, I mean his wife, the kids' mother probably did most of the work, but then again I'm not certain he ever went to sea. But I know that he was a good provider because his kids always had good clothes and they lived in a nice house and he had a big Cadillac. That was a big thing... really big Cadillac with big fins. Let me see, what else did I think when I was growing up, about fishermen... That's probably about it. Well you know, being a Catholic and going to Church, there was the whole... Peter the fisherman, they cast the nets off one side of the boat and caught nothing so Jesus instructed them to throw.... So I mean there was that biblical kind of image of fishing, fishing for men. That would be driven home at the Catholic grammar school that I attended, it was very strict. Kind of reading of those sorts of things. But they didn't apply it to Pier 3. When we took a ride down there on Sunday after church, I didn't make the real connection to that industry that looked dirty, but when you see pictures of Jesus throwing a net over the side of a dory in the Dead Sea or wherever on earth he was, it didn't look quite like that. So, kind of a mixed bag of images but I didn't have the negative image that many people do. I didn't think of them as nasty drunks, or pirate, or what have you. I don't know where those images came from but it wasn't my experience. We didn't talk about fishermen or think of them like that.

JO: We probably sort of covered this already, I'll just ask the question directly. How do women who work in the industry and also as an advocate, not just a fisherman, how do you balance that with family?

BP: I'm not actively engaged in anything directly tied to the fishing industry, except that I'm on the Board and Secretary to the board for Shore Support. We're supposed to meet quarterly but I know we missed a meeting this summer. So there is not a heavy burden related to that. I was, until this year, the volunteer coordinator for this festival and that took quite a bit of my time but my work is getting busier and busier. I work at the New Bedford Oceanarium, which is in the process of developing and getting ready to open an Ocean Explorium which is a very different educational institution that will have exhibits related to water, marine life, the oceans, working waterfront... But use them in a way to teach people about all of those things and perhaps stewardship. I am just busier and busier and busier. I did tell the Working Waterfront Festival back in March that I would be unable to help this year, because we anticipated being open. We didn't make the opening for the spring, so we're shooting from next spring. We'll have a softer opening for education program development either this Fall or early Winter. That's building an institution like this, even though we've been at it awhile, as you get closer, it gets busier and so that's why I'm not volunteer coordinator this year. But I have dedicated quite a bit of time in the last 3 years to doing that, and being on the grounds, picking up trash and whatever else was required. It feels very different this year to be here and not be working but it also feels very good. [laughs]

JO: Ask questions about New Bedford. You talked about the images you had as a child growing up about fishing, how would you say New Bedford as a whole views fishing, perhaps 30 years ago as compared to today.

BP: Truthfully, as a child of course, you don't read the newspaper. Perhaps kids today —although for instance my son is 10 and he doesn't read the newspaper, nor do I read the newspaper to him. But I have to say that our newspaper in this city is not doing the working

waterfront any favors at all. I know that the past editor and possibly the current editor view the waterfront as a den of iniquity and a source of all things bad... drugs, alcoholism. I mean certainly not gambling, but just know they'll tie drunken fishermen to the gambling casino that there is a distinct possibility will be here soon. They take great pains to paint a really bad picture of the waterfront when ever they get the opportunity. I have a little bit of a reputation as a letter writer. Years past, I'd write a letter to the editor because there was some egregious error and I would attach my resume, and I don't lack for ego. I'd be asking for a proof-readers position or an editor position. I'm certain they have a file just for me, but the last few years, probably since I met Deb Schrader and got involved, I can see that skewing a story for instance, I know this has happened many times. A person who has broken the law and they'll be a story in the Standard Times. If he's a fisherman, it's the headline or the first line of the story will say a NB fisherman did this. But he/she was a plumber, it would simply say so and so did this. Now why do they constantly drag in that occupational note. To put it together with the crime. We've all written letter and called and suspended our subscription to the point where they actually, I know Deb Schrader told me the story and perhaps I shouldn't quote her, but there was a series of articles on the waterfront that dragged in the mob, and allegations of drug abuse. Yes, there is drug abuse in this city, it is not all on the waterfront and it doesn't just involve fishing industry people. But you wouldn't know this if you read the Standard Times. So this 3-day series went on and on about the sins and crimes committed around the waterfront. And I wrote a letter to the editor, and said that wasn't news and it wasn't new, but I guess it sells newspapers. A lot of people allied to the industry called and cancelled their subscriptions. When Deb Schrader said when she called the woman on the phone said, "Oh, another one," and hung up on her. So the Standard Times isn't doing anybody any favors. Thankfully, I don't listen to talk radio, I'd of died a long time ago of a massive coronary if I had, but I suppose if you read the paper, you get a very negative image of the waterfront. See I am coming around now to your question. Whereas when I was younger and I assume its true today for those same sage groups, you don't read the paper, you don't get that negativity unless someone is spoon-feeding it to you.

JO: Do you think that kind of negative exposure affects your work trying to get the Oceanarium going? Do people say, "We're not going to fund that down there?"

BP: There may be some of that but we're going to skirt that issue. There are a lot of people who have a negative image of the Oceanarium Project for one or another reason. Many of them are tied to the fact that it was going to be built, our original vision, at the NSTAR plant down the way, the old power plant, and without knowing what the plans were for the Oceanarium, because it was directly impacting the waterfront and access to the docks, even though they had not been used by the fishing industry there was some who advocated against the Oceanarium based on the assumption that these docks would not be available to the fishing industry. They never had been. There was a plan to open up but based on that assumption and some other assumptions and allegations and other stuff I don't want to go into, there were people along the waterfront who made it their business to advocate against us, very, very strongly. So we tried to keep our chins up and carry on and eventually NSTAR did sell the site, because we couldn't get the financing to put a spade in the ground. The sold the site to [Sprague?] Oil and so careful what you wish for, now you have coal and oil and barges carrying the same in and out of the harbor when it might have been something very different.

JO: I'm curious since your husband and you are involved in the groundfish industry, what are

the relationships with scallopers, is that friendly?

BP: Truthfully, the only scalloper I know is Deb Schrader's husband. They are like two distinct communities. They share a lot in terms of... here in the city they probably buy their oil and ice and fuel—I should say and ice and grub, from the same sources. They may even go to the same bars, churches, social events, but they are two distinct communities. To my mind, now Jim's boat, the captain is the captain when they go dragging and when they go scalloping, but it's a completely different crew—with the exception of one man, Vietnamese immigrant who goes dragging and he goes scalloping. But he and the captain are the only two cross-over crew members. I understand that neither is the fastest cutter in the fleet but they get the job done and do what they have to do. I don't know why that is. Why are there two distinct... they buy different gear, they fish in different areas. What they have in common, going to sea, facing the dangers, and the rewards, because at one time dragging was a rewarding occupation, is probably outnumbered by the things that make them different. Or those things that are different about the two industries, and they are so distinctly different. The gear, at one time scallopers took 14-15 men, and they had two watches of cutters and now they're restricted to seven and everybody cuts. I'm sure that there are risks involved with a crew that is half as large as it used to be, but there are also tremendous rewards that come with being one of seven men splitting the value of your now much more expensive catch or valuable catch, rather than splitting it 15 ways. So there are rewards to that. And dragging on the other hand, they may have reduced crew size by one, possibly two but there never were more than seven men aboard a dragger, if there were ever seven. I think crews of six in my memory sounds about right. Maybe seven if you took a kid who wanted to learn the ropes and you paid him a quarter share or half share, maybe you'd take a 7th.

JO: Does your son have any interest in fishing?

BP: My son, I'm not sure where we'll end up with that but I doubt that he'll ever go to sea. First of all, I think dragging, the fleet is going to be so diminished and the numbers of jobs available are going to be so few when he is of age to go to work, that that won't really be an option for him. But he's terribly bright, he started sealab this past summer, he's interested in science, he works with me on the NB Oceanarium's "Wow-Mobile" which is here, which I have to go visit, which is a mobile marine science program vehicle which takes stuff to schools and venues such as this festival because when you have a tank of critters, everybody becomes animated, life speaks to life and that's the beauty of aquaria and touch tanks and all those things that we'll have at the Ocean Explorium but you need to tie all of that to education. So teaching people what these creatures are, what they ate, how they reproduce, where they live, why we need to make sure we protect where they live, is all part of the message. It's not just, let people come in and see a tank full of fish. You gotta give them something to take home with them, something to think about, and a reason perhaps to come back. So he's always done that with me. Probably, he'll have an interest in the ocean, in marine life, but I doubt very much that there's even a fisheries related future there. I mean if he is, it will probably be in the science education fields, but not at sea, not at winter...

JO: You speak as a mother.

BP: You darn right! I'm not going with him. You know, I was 43 when I had him, I'm more protective than some moms but I would hope that he didn't go to sea.

JO: I guess it's very different for children of fishermen who have a boat as opposed to children of fishermen who don't. What about their future in the fishery must be very different.

BP: You're probably right there in that there is a sense of legacy and tradition where for us, it would be for Jameson, a job like daddy's, but there is no assumption there that he would necessarily go into that.

JO: Now listening to you talk before about some of the work you've done at the Oceanarium, you seem to have your foot in both, you've got it in fisheries science and fishery industry.

BP: Well, I would say education around the ocean including fisheries science but also for instance...we're going to have an exhibit called science on a sphere. NOAA developed it, and it's a sphere hung in the dark in a box and they project images derived from data. So when NOAA collects data on weather, you have a visualization of hurricanes forming off Africa, moving across the Atlantic to do what they do. And you have images and I don't even know how they did this but do have the data on plate tectonics, or they came up with the imagery for that data, and so what they actually have how the continents formed in another program, or El Nino, and La Nina, one is feminine and one is ... negative.. ahh, negative, ohhh, masculine, that was Freudian (laughs). But you know the imagery, and of course it's all very colorful and it catches your eye and holds your attention, it's pure science in a delivery mechanism that is very attractive, and this is going to be our centerpiece exhibit. So it's not just fishery science but science related to our oceans and this will help, and everybody has said this, I think every Mayoral candidate, and administration since probably John Bullard certainly... help place NB as a center for marine science and industry and research and development because you've got an arm, Woods Hole at the fingertip and you might have NB in the middle and all the way over to URI which is a huge span of geography and coastline and an area that is very attractive, with SMAST and the University and others for research and advocacy, the Coalition for Buzzards Bay is doing great stuff down here and helping with the barge legislation, so they are accompanied when they go through Buzzards Bay because of the delicacy of the ecosystem. I mean, there are a lot of people working for those issues and concerns, and we are just part of the puzzle.

JO: It's funny if you read the newspaper you hear a lot about an antagonist between fishermen and fisheries scientists...

BP: Not fisheries scientists. Fisheries scientists for the most part align themselves with fishermen against those who feel that it's an all or nothing equation. That in order to sustain fisheries you have to stop fishing altogether. And scientists, they say, well you know... I know there are scientists that work for those foundations, organizations that have very deep pockets and appear a staff of attorneys only, and their position is that they sue because they'll say that that activity is against the law as they interpret Magnuson-Stevens Act or some fisheries regulation that by continuing to fish, the law is being broken, rather than allowing the fishing to continue because it's actually an important part of the data gathering. Fishermen work with scientists, they bring them out there, they tag cod, my husband has tagged more than his share of cod, now they are going to start tagging haddock... and this is all to help themselves in the final analysis because without the data you can't write laws, you can't legislate. But there is an antagonism between fishing industry and some of the scientist, against those whose only tool is

the lawsuit because a judge probably isn't the person who should decide whether the fleet in NB can work or not. It just doesn't seem right. Some fishermen have become very adept at advocating for the industry and for themselves. Maybe a little too late, but it's kind of an amazing thing to watch.

JO: For all the people who are coming to the Waterfront Festival, not all of whom may know that much about fishing, is there something that you would want them to leave the Festival knowing about or being aware of.

BP: Hmmm. Well, I would say NB is a city that has always gone to sea, one way or another and whether, for instance, the groundfishing industry is able to sustain itself or if it has to be diminished for some length of time before perhaps it might flourish again, well, so be it. There are other reasons to go to sea, and there are other businesses and industries and livelihoods that will take the place of groundfishing. Maybe data gathering, maybe support for some scientific endeavor that I have no clue might be around the corner. I would hate to see exploration for gas and oil offshore, but I know that exploitation of resources is probably a necessary evil because of our lifestyle. We're gas guzzling and I'm looking at a highway for heaven sakes. That would be awful to see, but NB would be poised to be a support center for whatever those engaged in those activities might need. But I lean towards the research and development. I would hope that that's what NB engages in in the future as it continues to go to sea. We don't know anything about the ocean, the bottom of the ocean like we do our land geography. We know our land and our geology, our dry geology, but we don't know much about what's out there. That would be something NB might look forward to, being the center for that sort of research.

JO: So you would hope people would leave with a feeling that NB, the whole industry is forward-looking.

BP: Yes, let's look forward. Let's look forward to what our harbor may offer for the future and it's not just this industry and its never just been whaling, although that was a huge industry in its day, but there is a future here as well. So keep coming back and see what it is we are up to, next year and the year after.

JO: That's a very positive message.

BP: I'm a very positive person!

JO: Is there anything that I should have asked you that should be part of the record?

BP: Well, I'm going to be part of a panel at 3pm on wives, daughters and mothers of fishermen, and I'm kind of nervous about that, like I was nervous about this. I have the feeling that I'll just babble on and on and not come around to the question that was asked. Oh... I didn't know this was Deb Schrader's office... it says right here... hi Deb.... Anything you might have asked... I think we got most everything covered and if you didn't for me, you'll get it from somebody else.

-----End of Interview-----

Reviewed by Nicole Zador, 12/09/2024