

Interview Subject: Mildred Boone  
Interviewer: Kristin Meewen and Logan Collins  
Project: Dock Stories  
Transcriber: Blake Pavri  
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Others Present: N/A  
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Place of Interview: Boones Seafood, Darien, McIntosh County GA.

00:00

KM: Then I want to just make sure I get you and put it really close to you. Okay. So, this is an interview with Aunt Mildred Boone on February 28, 2025, and the interview is being conducted in Darien, McIntosh County, Georgia, and we're at the dock called Boone Seafood, and it is part of a research project, an interview collection titled dock stories and the interviewers are Kristen Meewen

LC: And Logan Collins.

KM: All right. So, first big question, tell us about your connections to the dock.

MB: Well, after I graduated from high school, I met my husband and we got married so. And his mom and dad bought the dock.

KM: Okay, so he was already fishing at that point?

MB: He was already- they were all fishing

KM: Gotcha. When did you first come to be here at this dock? When did you get married

MB: We got married on November 4th in 1961

LC: How long had his parents had the dock before you got married?

MB: I'm not sure if they had it before we got married or right after we got married, but I know it was within... I think they bought it before we got married because I know one day Dan wanted me to go out shrimping with him, cuz he couldn't get a striker, and we were left out in this dock.

KM: Did it have a different name before your husband's parents purchased it? Do you know?

MB: I'm not sure what the name was, but it was my mother-in-law's first cousin that owned it, and he wanted to sell it, so they bought it

KM: okay.

LC: And it's always been Boone Seafood since when you first- when the parents bought it?

MB: Yes.

KM: So, it sounds like you've been connected to the dock for decades. [laughing] What was your? What was your primary role here?

MB: I never had anything to do with it, you know, as far as working or anything I'd come down here and- And stay, and then go home and stuff. But as far as working, I didn't have anything to do until I think in the 80s I worked here as a secretary for a few years.

KM: In the office?

MB: Yes.

KM: Who was running the office then, when you were the secretary?

MB: Well my in-laws owned it and then, of course. I, she was a secretary, my mother-in-law was, and then they. A few years later, they [leased] it out for. I don't remember how many years, and then they took it back. And then she ran it until sometimes in the 80s, and she asked me to help her out.

KM: Gotcha. Is this dock- would you say it's similar to other docks operating in Georgia?

MB: I would really think so.

KM: Okay, is there anything unique about it?

MB: I don't know it. This is the only one I've rarely ever been to much.

KM: Gotcha, okay

LC: Is there anything that you find special about the dock just because it's special to you?

04:06

MB: I do because my husband did a lot of work. They did a lot of hauling dirt and down here and build it up and see me in it and put the new building on. So, I guess, with him being a shrimper and having a shrimp boat meant a lot to him so

KM: And how long did your husband fish for? Did he- What age did he start fishing?

MB: He was probably about 15 or 16 when he went on a boat with a guy. And then I think he said he was like 16 or 17 when he was striking on the boat. And then, of course he bought his own boat before we got married.

KM: Nice. What was the name of his boat?

MB: [Joe Jett]

KM: What has the dock been through over the years?

MB: What has it been through?

KM: Yeah, yeah

MB: Well. They've had their ups and downs and... I don't know. I know with the shrimping has been up and down.

LC: So, when you say ups and downs, do you mean financial ups and downs?

MB: Oh yes, I think so. Of course. They had [tradfisher] moments that come in and unloaded during the spring, while in the winter time. And my husband was a hey- hey [shadfish] too. [laughs]

KM: Yeah, did he do that on the shrimp off seasons?

MB: Yes

KM: Yeah.

MB: Well, back then they didn't fish until I think they all quit shrimping, like at the end of December.

KM: Okay,

MB: And now, it's just about all year round. By they I mean, they have to go to other places.

LC: You said you started doing secretary work in the 80s. How long- when did you stop doing that secretary work?

MB: Ah, it was in the 80s. I can't remember exactly what year, but...

LC: Who did you work with during that short time? As a secretary.

MB: Well. My mother-in-law wanted me to work down here and. Of course. She would come down sometimes, cuz they live right there and she would come down and help out and..

KM: But you only helped in here. You didn't help out on the shrimp boats or on the floor or packin', none of that.

MB: Nah, yeah. [We'd have] sales ramp sometimes.

KM: Would you do that here at the dock?

MB: Yeah

KM: Okay.

LC: Did your mother-in-law help you get adjusted to being a secretary? Was she training you at all?

MB: She did a little bit to start with, but not a whole lot.

LC: What is being a secretary at a dock, what is that? What do you do during that role?

MB: Now what?

LC: What do you do? What work gets done as a secretary? What were your duties?

08:07

MB: Well, figuring the boat's checks and. And paying the bills.

KM: Their financial manager [laughing]. Can you tell me about some of the people that you've worked with at the dock, like anybody stick out?

MB: They'll probably- they'll really know of.

KM: Okay. No funny characters.

MB: Sometimes you have all kind of people coming in and out and.

LC: Do you have any funny memories from working at the dock or just being around the dock at all?

MB: Fond memories?

LC: Fond memories or funny ones.

MB: Not really. Because I don't come down here, a whole lot even back then. I had to stay home and take care of kids

KM: Gotcha.

LC: Did you ever bring the kids down here?

MB: Oh yeah, I used to when my oldest one was twins. I- on a saturday. That's when my husband would always be in, and I would go buy groceries and they would take my groceries home and put them in the refrigerator, and then I bring my boys down here and stay until Dan got ready to go home. And then we got home.

KM: Did your boys also- are they also in the fishing business?

MB: I had my youngest one. He's ramp fished. But my older two, they didn't do much of it.

KM: No. Why? Why didn't they do?

MB: I don't know they, like, they're in construction. And they got in the construction. Well, one of my twins went in the Navy. And when they graduated from high school in 80. And when they come back, he got in construction. They never have really done no shrimping. Except my youngest one.

KM: Is your youngest still in it or he's out?

MB: He's out

KM: Gotcha.

LC: Did they enjoy being around the dock when they were younger?

MB: Do what?

LC: Did they enjoy being around the dock?

MB: Oh yeah, they all enjoyed it.

KM: Has anybody ever fallen off the dock out here?

MB: Oh yeah. We've had at least one that drowned it out here.

KM: Oh, no,

MB: But he went swimming and couldn't get up.

KM: Oh, I see.

MB: And then one of my nephews. He, uh, fell over. Out there and then one of my nieces told him when they got him up, says, uh, did you see any fishes down there? Of course, you know how the water is, so you think? But that was funny, though, you know, to hear that I wasn't down here during those times.

KM: Yeah. What about do you have a favorite memory down here at the dock?

12:14

MB: Not really, just. Just being down here means a lot to me. Course now that I'm by myself, I come down here a lot just to sit around and talk to Holly or if she's not here, I go ahead and go on back up the hill.

LC: So, with your time being connected with your husband and this family, what changes have you seen in the industry over the years?

MB: Now what?

LC: What changes have you seen in the shrimping industry over the years?

MB: Well, there's been some challenges, but I can't remember exactly.

KM: What's different that they do now than from when your husband was shrimping?

KM: Well, I know back then, they headed their- well, They'd bring the shrimp in, and they'd head them down at the dock. And now, the shrimp if they don't head them, they sell them with the heads on

KM: Okay.

MB: And back then, we had a bunch of headers come down and had the shrimp and then we'd have to pay them.

LC: What about in the weather? Have there been any changes in the weather?

MB: Yeah, the weather makes a difference in them shrimping, too. If it's a bad Northeastern, they can't. It's too rough from the fish.

KM: Have you noticed changes in those patterns of like Nor'easter storms like, are they less? Are they more? Are they stronger? Are they weaker?

MB: Well, some of them are stronger and some is not.

KM: What about the water? Has there been any changes in the water here?

MB: I don't think so.

KM: Okay.

LC: What about the sea life they're bringing in? Are they bringing in any new kinds of fish recently? Or anything like that?

MB: No.

KM: What's like, what's the typical fish you'll see in the shrimp bycatch?

MB: I don't know. It's a bunch of little trash fish [giggling]

KM: Trash fish!

15:33

MB: I know my husband right after we got married. When he couldn't get a striker to go out with him, I went out with him, which I didn't want to. But he wanted me to go, so we get out there and. And of course, I've never been on a shrimp boat so and didn't know what to do, and he'd always tell me what to do and all that. And one time, he put the tri-net out to see how many shrimp that they could catch and when he pulled them- the tri-net up, He wanted me to pull it to the side of the boat and then pull it all in. And I said, Dan, I can't pull it in, and he'd come back there. Some little Weasley, somebody, and when he did. He reached down to pull the Trinet in, and he, it almost pulled him over, and we had over a hundred pounds of shrimp in the tri-net

KM: Wow!

MB: And so he's fished a little bit. And he said, we better take up, says, I don't know how many we got. When we left that day. We come in with over 900 pounds of shrimp. Well, back in the six late sixty ones, they weren't catching shrimp like they do now, and we wasn't- didn't go that far out, and everybody says, well, you must have bought him, brought him good luck, said he

caught some shrimp, nobody else come in with [200 3 boxes]

LC: [Well he caught it all!]

KM: Were you, his good luck charm? Did you go out with him again?

MB: No, I never did go out with him again.

KM: Yeah.

LC: We talked about it a little bit with the financial ups and downs, but what hard times has this dock experienced?

MB: I don't know.

LC: Was it affected by covid at all?

MB: With covid? It probably did some, but- But I don't- I wasn't down here a whole lot during that time.

KM: Were there any historical events that may be like disrupted the business a little bit or anything like that?

MB: I don't think so.

KM: Okay, y'all are pretty resilient.

LC: Did Hurricane Helene affect down here at all?

MB: I don't think so. I mean, they couldn't fish, but

KM: Yeah. When you think about the future of commercial fishing in Georgia, what do you think today's docks need to be successful? Y'all have been here a long time.

MB: I don't know. I tell you with all this new rules that they're getting round to the fishman's is kind of putting a hardship on them.

KM: What kind of rules?

MB: Well they, I don't know. I hear 'em talk about the rules that they're making them all that and. And then them, letting all these foreign shrimp in. It's hurting the shrimpers a lot. They're not getting a good price and...

LC: If you can invest in something in the dock...if we gave you a check to build something or improve something on this dock, what would you use it for?

19:41

MB: Well, one thing we need a new [top], because that leaks real bad. Not out of the office, but the

KM: Okay

MB: Over the whole building.

LC: Has... The time that you've been here, how many times has this dock had maintenance work on it or been rebuilt in different ways?

MB: I don't think it's been a whole lot. It probably has, and I don't know a lot of it.

KM: Was it always set up like this when you were doing the sectarian here?

MB: Uh, not the office I had was out on the other side.

KM: Okay, the other room over there.

MB: Yeah,

KM: Okay.

MB: And then they had one room. They had ice put in it.

KM: Okay

MB: And then later they put the cooler over here, which now they don't use it for the cooler. Then, they put this office in

KM: Gotcha. So some changes. What about with the actual dock out there? Is that the same or has that changed at all?

MB: Pretty well the same.

KM: Okay.

LC: So the room that we're sitting in right now has not always been here.

MB: No, this one hasn't.

LC: Do you know when they added this room in?

MB: I really don't. It's been within the last. Well, Holly was here when they had it already open well before she started working. My sister in law was working and.

KM: Who's your sister-in-law?

MB: Taffy Pierce

KM: Okay, we heard about Aunt Taffy

MB: Yeah, when I left the dock, she took over okay.

LC: Did you enjoy the work that you did when you were here?

MB: I enjoyed it.

KM: What did you enjoy about it?

MB: And well a lot of it is being around the people and a lot of people coming in buying shrimp.

KM: What are some of your recommendations for the future of commercial fishing?

MB: Mmm, I really don't know. I won't be around to know any of it [laughing]

LC: Do you think this dock will be successful in the next 5 to 10 years?

MB: Probably will. I know we got more boats than we ever have.

KM: Oh, that's good.

LC: Why is that? What do you think you have this [inflation]?

MB: Well, really. There's more, the family that's got boats down here. Then, of course they have some of the North Carolina boats that comes in and fishes during the time when they can't catch them up there.

23:24

KM: So, most of the boats out here are family owned.

MB: Yeah, a lot of them are

KM: [inaudible] in the family.

MB: And now that the dock next door is closed, and then all of those boats got to go somewhere, so they want to come over here, but we don't have room for 'em.

KM: Oh, what's next door?

MB: Thompson Seafood

KM: Thompson, yeah. Are they- they're closing?

MB: Yeah, the man that, uh, run the place. Well, he leased it out. He and his wife is retired

KM: Gotcha.

MB: And they want to either lease it out with somebody or... or either sell it.

KM: And were they here when you were working in the office here?

MB: That was somebody else on the dock then.

LC: What about where those hotels are now? What was there when you were working here?

MB: There really wasn't anything, except they had an ice plant up there. And then they had the railway. And of course, and then they did have a dock that they unloaded shrimp and jelly balls up, there, and they closed all that down. They cleaned it all up and. Got it just for the motels and all so.

LC: Do you feel like having the motels right there has impacted this dock at all?

MB: I don't think so.

KM: How long ago were those built because they looked pretty new.

MB: Yeah, they've been within the last 10 years. I can't remember this one.

KM: Okay.

LC: If you had any advice to give to any other dock workers or like secretaries and docks, would you have any advice to give them?

MB: Um, I don't think so.

KM: What about if a future storm or a really bad flood comes or something like that? Do you think the dock will be okay?

MB: It's hard to say. If it's a bad storm? I know, one year, we had a hurricane that came in, and it brought a lot of water into the dock.

KM: How much water would you say?

MB: It was 'bout up to here in the office.

KM: In here?

MB: In here. It was...

KM: Wow

MB: I didn't come down till after it was all over with.

KM: Oh, I'm sure there were animals in the water too.

MB: I come down after the water had settled back down, and I went to come into office, and Matthew was coming in, and he said Aunt Mildred, I don't think I'd come in here if I was you and I said, well, I'm not because it was mud all in here, and it could slip- be slippery and all that. They had to redo all of the bottom walls.

KM: Oh, okay.

LC: How long did it take to get repaired from all that damage?

27:02

MB: I don't know it. Because they had to tear all that down and by the material and put in it.

LC: Did- sorry.

KM: Go ahead.

LC: Did you come from a shrimping family, or did you just marry into one?

MB: I just married into one. I lived on a farm.

LC: Okay. Ah, that's a change from Farm and [inaudible]. Talk to Farm and Shrimp.

MB: Yeah.

LC: Do you think, how do you think having a family dock like this has impacted the Boone family?

MB: Well, it's really helped 'em out, because then it, you know, it just keeps going on down the line.

LC: Do you think having family-run docks like this is important for Georgia?

MB: I would think so.

KM: Why do you think it's important?

MB: I don't know, it just keeps the family fishing and...

KM: Keeps you connected.

MB: Yeah.

KM: What about the surrounding community? Are they? Is it also- do they keep you? Are you also connected to the surrounding community through the dock or?

MB: No

KM: No.

LC: Do you have any ideas on how to build that connection with the community at all?

MB: Not really. Because right now, I just had my routine on days when I come to town.



LC: How many times a week are you coming down here?

MB: How many days?

LC: A week.

MB: Most time it's two and three times a day. Or a week. And, and if I come down and Holly's not here, I turn around and leave. I don't like to sit down here with these men and listen to them talking.

KM: So, you've worked mostly with family here at the dock, then nobody, no strangers?

MB: No.

LC: Since you grew up on a farm, what have you learned about the shrimping industry? With your time at the dock.

MB: Well, farming is like shrimping.

KM: How so?

MB: Well, shrimping is seasonal and the farming is seasonal. And my daddy [grew] tobacco and cotton. And [corn]. Which he had the corn for the animals. Because I worked in all of it on the farm.

KM: What kind of animals did you have on the farm?

MB: We just had- we had two mules and then the cows and hogs. And then the winter time Daddy would kill the Hogs. That's where we had a lot of our meat from.

LC: Did you prefer Farm work over dock work?

MB: I guess it will be about the same because I haven't done farm work after I got married. Which farm work was sometimes sun up to sun down. And then we had our chores to do- there was 9 in our family, plus Mom and Dad, so. There's a lot of chore work to do.

KM: Wow, you have nine sib- you have eight siblings? Oh my.

MB: Course three of 'em passed away now, so. And part of that time, when we were growing up. We didn't have electricity. And that was kind of hard. And then we got electricity and.

KM: How old were you when you got married? You said out of high school?

MB: 20.

KM: 20.

LC: What did your parents think about you getting married to a shrimper?

33:01

MB: They didn't say anything.

KM: They liked Daniel.

MB: I know one of my sisters. She went to college in Tennessee, and she told him she had a brother-in-law, had a sister that married a shrimper and his name was Daniel Boone. And they said, I didn't know, uh, Daniel Boone lived that long ago. Of course. I mean, my husband's descended down from Daniel Boone's brother

KM: Gotcha, okay. So were the Boones well-known for seafood when you married in or?

MB: I don't know if they really well known, they, you know, just made from Brunswick and got a little dock and. And that was, of course, before we got married. And I went down to the other dock they had, but it was about ready to fall in then.

KM: Where was the other dock?

MB: It's on the other side, the bridge.

KM: Okay

MB: So...

LC: Was that one also called Boone Seafood?

MB: I don't know. Because they moved down here, I guess. I'm not sure if they moved down



here right before Dan and I got married or right after, but I think it was, but right before. But it couldn't have been, but probably a month or so.

KM: Is the old dock still over there or

MB: No. It's been down a long time ago.

KM: What's over there now?

MB: Well, they had two more other docks that was over there, and they closed down and one of them spilled into a restaurant and then the other one- they- people bought it, and they'd gonna make it into a museum like

KM: Okay

MB: So, actually, we're the only dock on this Waterfront.

KM: Are you?

LC: What other changes have you seen in this area? Besides docks disappearing.

MB: I don't know. [I noticed] a lot through town. They've been a lot changes in it.

KM: Like what?

MB: The- like a lot of them that they're not very many buildings left that they were when I first come down here.

KM: Where they just tore down or what happened to them?

MB: I think they kind of tore them down and built new businesses and stuff like that.

LC: What do you think about those changes? Do you think those were good for the community to put those businesses in, or do you think leaving the house is a little bit better?

MB: Nah. I think it was good for the community because of- it makes it look better.

KM: So, we asked you a lot of questions. I know, is there anything that you want to tell us that, like, we didn't ask you about? Any stories you want to share?

[37:12](#)

MB: [Not any I know of.] In my age, I forget a lot of stuff.

LC: I just thought it's so interesting that it's a generational family dock. Did you ever [inaudible] of your grandkids anything down at the dock?

MB: Yeah. I got a grandson that's a shrimper.

KM: Okay

MB: Of course. I met [Pip pop]. Well, y'all [new] aren't you? No, y'all were here last time- y'all might have met him last

LC: I think I spoke to him last time.

MB: Brandon.

LC: I don't think I got his name, but I think yeah. Holly son, right?

MB: No.

LC: Oh! Yes, I think we did talk to him.

MB: But he's the only one of my- Because all my children are, you know, got construction jobs except my daughter and then Brandon's the only grandson that's shrimping.

KM: The only one, huh? Why do you think that is?

MB: I don't know all the others got jobs at other places, well, the girls. I got four granddaughters, of course, you know, they're not into it and then, I got three grandsons and one, he went into the Navy and he's got out and living out of town. Then the other grandson. He's kind of in and out, but not with fishing. Because he works over Sea Island,

KM: Okay. What does he do there?

MB: He- they do something with... can't even think of the name. [inaudible] the little boats. Well, I know it's- it concerns with fishing and stuff like that. He's-

KM: Okay.

MB: And then my youngest grandson, who's never been into it.

KM: No? I wonder why?

MB: I don't know

LC: Did your daughters or granddaughters ever take turns secretaring down here? Working down here

MB: No.

LC: Was it just a lack of interest, or why did they not work down here?

MB: Well, really they didn't need to work down here and. I got one granddaughter, she's office manager for the company she works with

KM: Okay.

MB: And then the other one. She, the eldest one, she works with Navy Federal Credit Union so. She was a manager of the Dairy Queen until she says, well, I can't make it on what I'm making here and says, and I need- Because she went to college, but being a boy into bookkeeping and stuff like that, so she went in and took the test and all that, and she's got up into the Navy Federal Credit Union. And then my other granddaughter. She's over in Texas going to college to be a physical therapist.

KM: Sounds like you've got some good ones.

MB: Yeah.

KM: All right. That's all we got for you. So you got any- any last stops that you want to add?

MB: Not that I can remember.

KM: If you do remember, just call us later. I'm gonna go ahead and stop this. And then let me grab this one.

LC: And I will unclick it.

**41:53**

Ends interview