

Interview Log

Interviewee: Capt. Bob Jobes

Tape #: MAAF/KF/MD/FT12.1.98.319/229

Interviewer: Kelly Feltault **# of Tapes:** 1 of 2

Date: 12/1/98 **# of Sides:** 2

Location: Havre de Grace MD; in Capt. Jobes' decoy studio

Topic: haul seine fishing, decoy carving, hunting, market gunning, regulations

Corresponding Photography Log #: MAAF/KF/MD/PS12.1.98.232-240; & 679

Comments: File name: Mdft319.doc. See Fieldnotes: FN120198. *Italics* indicate emphasis; [brackets indicate additional information not on the tape or asides by fieldworker]; "quotations indicate direct transcription."

This is tape one of two, see Mdft320.doc for the second portion. I met Capt. Jobes at the Easton waterfowl show on Nov. 14 where he and his brother Joey had their displays. Both are watermen, carvers and hunters, though Joey is known as the better of these Bob is the talker. Present at the interview was Clarence "Titbird," an older gentleman who apprenticed with Madison Mitchell at the same time Bob's father did, and who was also a market gunner.

Both men painted mini mallards the entire interview.

BEGIN SIDE A

[radio going in the background, rather loud. Turned off in a minute]

Bob about "Titbird"; helps him out; worked for Madison Mitchell off and on for 32 years;

Harry Robert Jobes Jr.; everyone calls him Bob
Clarence "Titbird" Bower

Painting mallard miniatures; xmas mallards;

BJ: grew up with dad and working in Madison Mitchell's shop; grew up making decoys; played in sawdust; nailed wood together; get in the way; never thought this is what he would do for a living but that is what's left now; worked on water but now a "has been"

BJ: working on water: upper bay means striped bass or rockfish; gill netting and haul seine; spring is shad fish; drift net for those on the river; susquehanna; eeling; 10 years

crab potted; but at mercy of the weather up here, don't get crabs unless it stays dry like this year; rain or floods then no crabs; got a go down the bay, done that too much work driving; 16 hour days; sold crabs at the house live; used to be a few fish houses around but gone now; Owens' fish house in perryville gone;

Before his time was a lot of fish markets; one in Havre de Grace; one in North East; no more now; when caught 250 lbs of rock recently and nowhere to sell them; have to sell directly to restaurants or take them to Cambridge to Kool Ice; long drive with all that fish;

No longer taking your catch to market and then you're done;

Never did Shad plankings; used to salt shad; Havre de grace was a big shad and herring place; used to be pound nets everywhere and catch those fish by tons; by tractor and trailer loads; main food then;

Gill netted for them and anchor netted for them on river and flats; 1979 took state biologist out shad fishing; didn't catch any, Dale Weinrichs was biologist and after several trips told Bob had to recommend that they close shad fishing down

"well that's real nice pay Dale after I took you out a dozen times now you going to close Shad fishing down, that's nice." Closed since.

Upper bay doesn't have oysters, clams, crabs seasonal; so you have perch in the spring time; white perch; so limited on what you can catch by nature

Not many people eat fish anymore; everything must be froze or come out of a can; nobody has time to cook it; nobody eats shad anymore;

Titbird: can't get the anymore

BJ: get in DE;

Titbird: had one this summer; son-in-law got him one in DE
[how is food like a memory object, what is the symbolism behind giving some one a fish that is no longer caught in the local waters but that they grew up eating?]

didn't catch any rock this winter; bought all the tags and everything; spent \$400 a license x the 6 people who work the haul seine; only caught 500 lbs of fish and had to clean half of them and put them in the freezer because no buyers; got a \$1.00 a lb for what they did sell; went in the hole this year; last year pfisteria meant you couldn't sell them; because have to go south to sell;

had bad experiences in Rock Hall so don't sell fish there; not dealing with someone daily so they don't know you; states got it so you can fish but you don't make any money; 10

more years and it will be over; Larry Simns would not agree with me on that; he doesn't want people to say that, try to stay positive

[customer comes in; Bob gets up to help the customer, I talk with "Titbird"]

Titbird: started working with Madison Mitchell at age 12; worked with Jim Curry before Madison Mitchell; Jim Curry was bad pay; at age 6 started sanding heads at Curry's got same pay of 1 cent no matter how many he sanded could get 6 Mary Janes for 1 cent then;

BJ: fishing Monday after Easton and didn't see a fish or even a duck; never see a canvas back anymore; now only see ducks around the shore line with the grass; no more grass on flats; no more ducks; haul seine on flats but gill netted from the Bay bridge north;

[customer returns]

story of going to Bay bridge with boat load of net; 18-20 boxes of net; everyone catching rocks; laid out anchor nets; then snowed 2.5' then Bay froze over;

[customer has questions]

"hold up Titbird" [Titbird is painting too fast]

[pause tape as the finish helping customer]

back to story: 20 boxes of net; anchored; "visions of sugar plums dancing in our heads" then snowed; boat in Back River near Baltimore; Bay froze right over; everything in the water; thinking tons of fish; week went by and waterman in Baltimore county, Danny Beck, called his wife on radio and she called me on the telephone, put the two together and he said `you want to get this net you better get down here now it just opened up' so went down; ran through 18 miles of ice to get to the bridge; had ice hawks go under the ice and get your nets and buoys; everything scattered; net everywhere; got 16 boxes of net back, lost 2 but only had 50 lbs of rock, didn't make much money that week

"but that was when you could make it up on another day. When you fished you had good days. Now you get your bad days and you can't make it up with good days because you can only catch so many, and only when they tell you when you can do it."

Haul seine thrown under pound net regs; same dates as pounds but cut back by recreation anglers who don't want to see you out there catching fish when they are there; if they'd had their way a few years ago they'd have haul seine banned from the flats, "that's what they wanted" proved them wrong on grass study

Grass study: MSSA got bill sponsored to ban haul seine on Susquehanna flats; claiming they were killing grass; went into committee and did study; Bob took them out; \$150,000 later found out that they were not killing the grass; "As I said, when we find the results

we're going to have a party." Doesn't want to completely blame the recreational guys because he's a recreational fisherman too; "I don't want to say recreational because I'm recreational too, but it's just these few fanatics who get out there and they're going to save the world. But they want to save it because they want everything that's in it for themselves. They're not rational; they don't want to sit with you and listen to your side. They want it their way.

Always been that way; the way you say it is commercial against recreational; not everyone thinks that way;

But they claimed that the haul seiners destroyed grasses, years ago flats loaded with grasses; only place you could haul seine was where there wasn't grass; now can haul seine anywhere because there is no grass

Used to be one place that they always haul seined in that had no grass and now it's full of grass and can't fish there anymore;

State went out fishing with them everyday, every haul; still has the papers; marked every haul, took aerial photography of the flat; looking for "net scars" claiming that we drug it across the bottom and left scars in the bottom and ripped the grasses out; "you people are nuts"; people in charge of study at DNR: Bob Bockman, Harley Spears; Bob Jobes told them they were wasting everybody's time and money; predicted the results as did other watermen

When lay a haul seine out in grass it rolls up; it doesn't do what the recreational guys say it does; and they found we weren't destroying anything;

Description of haul seine and how he works it; [has photos of them all fishing]; lot of things got to be right to catch a fish in a haul seine: not like a gill net or pound net;

First: find the fish

Second: conditions: tide, depth, bottom has to be right; if hooked on a log won't work; had tons of fish in net but hooked on log and then have to let them go;

Third: dip fish out

Do own mending;

Anecdote of father yelling pull it in when net hung on log; rips bad then mending for several days;

[finds pictures]

funny story but have to turn off tape [turn off tape]

grass stuff started when David Craig elected; yrs ago had closed flats to haul seine because guy caught 50 ton of rock here near the museum; Titbird was there

Titbird: yep, Frank Beck; Danny's father, he lives in Essex

Because he caught so many; throwing the really big ones back because couldn't keep them; Titbird there collecting the overboards and taking them home; selling for \$5 pc at diner

From this wanted to ban haul seining; it was Labor Day in the 1950s; big legend around here; how his father caught a large haul

Father ran a boat for Aberdeen proving ground; always fished and worked for Madison Mitchell too; in 1970s ran the boat at Aberdeen; when coming in came across a large pile of rock; Bob was 9 then; dad called home and had guys bring boat and all the net; Bob went; it was around cherry tree; laid out gill net and net floated back to top with rock; caught 10 ton over night with gill net; lot of picking fish out of the net; doesn't happen everyday

Hear everyone tell you about the big catches but don't hear about all the times you're out there and you don't catch anything

Make money only in early season; thing about haul seining is finding the fish have to look and look; spend days looking before find them; this year didn't find any;

Looking for fish: out on flats haul seine; best way is hook and line; look for the signs of fish: sea gulls feeding; looking for swirls; listen when you stop "you listen for the fish, and you can smell them. When you find a big bunch of rockfish you can smell them."

Story of taking neighbor out; asked when they'd get back and bob replied when we get back; went out; all looking for fish; two brothers fish with them; all in own boats looking for fish; dad tows the seine boat; 3-4 looking for fish; tide goes out; lots of sand bars and he runs aground; he and neighbor get out and push it off the bar; brother Joey just below them; it was flat calm and bob saw a little splash below Joey; called on radio to alert him; 2 min. later Joey on radio says "I got them right here" caught like 2300 lb that day;

Clues to look for, got to think like a fish to find them

Gill netting you use the weather to detect fish; NW wind you know they're going in deep water; nice day S wind they are going ashore; but with this warm [80 degree] weather in Dec fish are probably confused and swimming in circles; where do you go

Commercial fishing is over; losing wholesale houses to sell fish; averaged 40 bushels a day crabbing; made nothing; \$6 for bushel of 2s; \$18 for 1 s and \$5 bushel for females only way made any money was selling them at the house; had 800 pots in 1987; then had to make the decision to make ducks or crab; put ban in effect up here for rockfish then that killed the upper bay fishery; had bought a brand new boat year before; \$20k in boat then ban rock; with that no seasonal fish anymore: no shad, no rock only crab; can't go from one thing to another like shad to crabs to rock; lost it around here; decided to carve

instead; lots of people don't have that option; crab pot rig best ever had it; took years to get all that equipment; less variables in making ducks

Why haul seine has lasted; more work than pound nets; can leave those; haul seine you have to there and work it;

END SIDE A

BEGIN SIDE B

Titbird: born two blocks from Bob's house; 1924; grandfather made decoys to gun with; played around and made small carvings; making since 8 or 10 years old; play in Jim Currier shop; sanding heads; when a teenager worked for Madison Mitchell; started off priming then painting; then balancing;

for 25 years Madison Mitchell never touched a black duck; only signed them; Titbird painted everyone of them; called them funeral ducks; Madison Mitchell was an undertaker and when working on a funeral titbird would paint black ducks; give him something to do; won't make a full-size black duck because everyone thinks it's a Madison Mitchell duck; but it's a titbird duck;

made own decoys when gunning; quit gunning when canvasbacks went down to one; had a bushwhack rig; not worth it to put out 125 decoys to kill one duck, used to killing way over the limit; never got caught; he was market gunning;

description of bush whacking;

[Bob gets out an article of them fishing from the 1980s on their crabby; all have big beards]

Bob worked for Danny Beck one year; crabbing and fishing;

Shad fishing: better than anything; like salmon fishing in Alaska; competition; everyone wanted the first drift; had to sit on a rock and hold your boat there to be the furthest one up the river; mark out your place; spring would be a dozen boats in the river, all shad fishing; lantern on each end to mark; lay out net; description of net flow and river flow; had to get the nets up before the 95 bridge;

How titbird and his dad remember before the 95 bridge; could let net drift longer; if not up before the bridge then wrapped around bridge and lost; "but that was fishing there"

Book in library of the lanterns on each net;

Put lantern on each end of the net and somebody still run through it;

Lots of good stories during that time; spring had everyone from down the bay come up the bay; fishing for rock and shad;

Rock hall and tilghman island all came up here; lots of brawls going on out there; competition;

Titbird: guys from Tilghman came up to party; steady flow of beer cans going down the river from those guys; throwing them overboard; get them in your net;

BJ: old enough to see the tail end of it and what was happening; more lantern stories trying to keep it alight; used to be able to sell all that fish but now can't sell them, nobody wants them; don't know what to do with them; rock only 90 cents now that's 1970s prices

Yellow perch: big thing now; Joey does that; Bob never did the fyke nets or pots;

Hunting guide: dad took out lots of gunning parties; now need special license \$200 guide license; how they caught his brother Joey, 15 days in Kent County detention center; story of this; Joey as the outlaw of the family; undercover investigation on flats for illegal waterfowling activities; went on for 2 years; lawyer friend who they took body booting and how telling him that for the last two years no game wardens out there at all; Joey likes to hunt alone; out body booting with lawyer and 2 game wardens come up on their decoys about 100 mph; writing them tickets for shooting after hours just for picking up their decoys after hours;

"I had friend who is a lawyer and he kinda helped me out a little bit, couple little matters. I asked him 'you want to come up and go body booting with us?' had said yeah, love to. So he brought his friend up from Annapolis, so we went out body booting. I tell him, 'Mike, you know what, I said something awful funny here, you know the last couple years we ain't there ain't been a game warden out here, nobody's been out here. I hunted with my other brother Charles a lot and Joey, he's like the outcast, he does his own thing that's the way he likes to do it. Himself, he don't like to fool with nobody.

So we're out there body booting. All of sudden here comes 4 comes game wardens in a boat about 200 mph right for the decoys right. And I'm like 'what the hell these assholes doing?' what we're doing is body booting and I'm getting ready to bring the decoy boat out which we're towing with another boat. It just so happens a couple days before that, the motor broke down and we had to go in early. I get to the decoys and my brother Charles says, 'might as well anchor the boat.' I says, 'for what?' 'writing us all tickets.' I says, 'for what?' 'gunning after hours' I says, 'gunning after hours, what the hell you talking about? Anybody shoot anything?' 'nobody's even shot!' I says, 'was the guns loading when they came in here?' 'nope!' but they're writing us tickets. These are the state guys. So I says, 'look' and there's one game warden from here and my brother Charles looks at him and says 'dave what the hell's going on? With these guys over you you can't talk? You know we ain't done nothing wrong.' He says, 'Charles I can't say nothing. You guys were gunning late the night before.' Then the crap really hit the fan. I said, 'Bullshit! You seen somebody out here but it wasn't us because we left early.' Well, my buddy the lawyer says, he pulled his credentials out and everything. They said 'meet us back at the big boat.' I said, 'glad you're going to let us get the decoys up while

it's still light, otherwise we aren't going to find them.' So we went back and they changed their minds, now they're just going to write us warnings. Well my brother is still flipping out. 'we aint' done nothing wrong.' I don't know why.

But that didn't have anything to do with the 2 year undercover investigation. That caught 18 people which unfortunately my brother [Joey] was one of them. They entrap you though."

KF: "well how do they catch you"

BJ: "here's what they do; slow down a minute Titbird" [painting too fast]
"they entrap you, they come in-Titbird can tell you another one about the peanut salesman.

Titbird: yeah that salty dog

BJ: "They come in and pretend to be somebody that wants to go hunting or your friend or something like that. And they say take me hunting and you take them hunting. 'well I got a friend that wants to go hunting too' so you say yeah. When the guide licenses went up to \$200-I had one when it was like \$50 just to have one and I took out a few parties-when they went to \$200 I said, 'I'm not paying \$200 for a guide license, that's stupid.' When you're body booting, there's little groups of guys and this little group hunts together and that group hunts together-everybody knows everybody right. So they say, they get to know you, and they say will you take us hunting? Yeah, I'll take you. 'here you go, here's some money for taking us hunting today. We want to go again, had a great time today.' And they come back and back, trying to get to know you real good.

"this is the tail end of the deal, nobody knew anything about it. My brother Joey calls me up and says, 'I'm going down the pit tomorrow, I got these friends of mine that want to go hunting will you take them?' I said, 'yeah I guess, if you know them.' Tell them to call us up and meet them at the dock at 4:30 a.m. on Saturday morning. The guys never call us back to go. My brother Charles gets on the phone on Thursday because we haven't heard nothing from them. Calls the guy up, wife answers the phone and Charles says, 'rick's supposed to go gunning with us tomorrow, is he coming?' 'no they changed their mind, they're not going.' So we think what the hell's going on? We should have known this. So Saturday morning rolls around and here's Joey and Budda Stealman, Johnny Sempers, they're down the park. So since these other guys cancelled it's just me and Charles and my brother-in-law. And we say, 'why don't you guys just gun with us today there's only 3 of us.' 'no we got these guys from Baltimore gonna take them gunning.' O.K and me and Charles look at each other.

"so they gun, killed some geese. Budda comes running up to the boat, 'you guys going in?' we ain't killed nothing. Yeah, we're going in. 'take these geese in for me, these guys want to kill some more geese.' Ok, we don't have our limit, we'll take the geese in. so we go in. well little did they know, that day was all federal agents gunning with them.

So later on, I had a falling out with some guys that I was taking and said I was gunning by myself. Went out, last day of the season. It was dead calm where I was, but they were killing the hell out of some geese up the river. Dead calm flat, not a breath of air. Budda, John Sempers and them, they were down by the battery island gunning. And little did they know who was with them.

"so here it is just about dusk, right. Sun's down. You know the best time for hunting is 15 minutes after sundown. And you hear, boop... boop ... boop, hoop, booop. That's what you hear on the flats, you hear it echoing across the water. Well they must not be shooting geese but ducks. Duck season's not in. and there goes another round of shots. They must be knocking the hell out of them down there. So we come into the park and here come old John Sempers he's in a little old aluminum boat running full speed, eeeiuill, full the park. I said, 'john's up to somehting.' Said how'd you do john? 'oh man we knocked the hell out of them ducks. We got about 15.' Goddamned federal guys is with them the whole time! The whole time!

"then the shit hit the fan about 2 weeks after that season. The federal guys come in with everybody and round up everyone. Yeah they caught some guys shooting out of season. But they got my brother for guiding without a license. And one day it was blowing so bad, you can't go body booting like that so Joey had some goose pits, and they said, 'come on man, take me down to your pit. We want to hunt today.' So Joey takes them down to the pit and they give him \$100 for taking him-guiding without a license. Hunting over a baited field. He had 8 charges against him. Somebody had 18 charges and he walked free. Got a job working for the federal government afterwards, too- won't mention no names. Budda went to jail for 30 days. My mom was so upset, god."

Never go out there to purposefully break the law, but it's easy to get caught breaking it; shooting out of season and over the limit is worse than guiding without a license, especially since they offer you the money.

"oh they had a phonograph with them. That didn't go over too well. That works better than any damn goose call you had in your life.

Titbird: "you ain't kidding"

BJ: "phonograph and you hook it up, call them right in." how bob made a decoy that was cut out and hollow to put a phonograph in once. If someone had one on the flats you could hear it for miles and any goose coming was going there. Geese were after the canvasbacks; bushwhacking with his dad;

Titbird: how Bob's dad got him a ticket one day hunting;

KF: now what was this about a peanut salesman

Titbird: "eeuugh" [makes a face too; everyone laughs] "man he got a bunch of them that dude did. He go around and buy ducks, all the ones he could buy. Back in the 1950s, off

the market gunners. He never got me, thank God. I didn't have no ducks when he come around, or I'd a sold them to him. He got Eddie Malden, bill Baldwin, Murry Lauder, everybody.

BJ: he was going around posing as a salesman

Titbird: yeah he was selling peanuts. That's how he got murry. Selling peanuts to Murry.

BJ: Murry Lauder had a store here in town and they had everything. And he bought and sold ducks. The store's still there and his grandson still has it. Bill lauder; he still picks geese. Nobody goes there anymore. Bill fishes with us; it's 2 blocks down.

How progress is killing everything not the hunters or watermen; killing ducks for food rather than money; only sold canvas ducks; bigger and taste better; wild celery on the flats now gone; hurricane Agnes tore it up and destroyed it; had grass before Agnes too; also the damns have blocked the water flow so no grass

Titbird: glad he's going out of this world instead of coming into it

Changing of cycles; how in 1920s didn't catch fish; didn't kill ducks; but came back; everything cycles around; but now with the environment the way it is and how things are set up once it cycles to the low can it bring itself back up? With no waterflow etc; damns are bad;

Things declining when damns put it; shad hatchery put in same time too; why put it in? if it wasn't going to *affect* them;

Carving: learning from dad; [customer walks in]; dad would make him whittle the backs Qfbpads and get paid; wanted to be like the other guys; around it all the time;

[] " to custqTFF]

ENIWA\ E

Interview Log

Interviewee: Capt. Bob Jobes **Tape #:**
MAAF/KF/MD/FT12.1.98.320/230

Interviewer: Kelly Feltault **# of Tapes:** 2 of 2

Date: 12/1/98 **# of Sides:** 1

Location: Havre de Grace MD; in bob's shop

Topic: decoys, hunting, haul seining, sense of place, narratives

Corresponding Photography Log #: MAAF/KF/MD/PS12.1.98.232-240; & 679

Comments: File name: Mdft320.doc. See Fieldnotes: FN 1 20198. *Italics* indicate emphasis; [brackets indicate additional information not on the tape or asides by fieldworker]; "quotations indicate direct transcription."

this is the last part of the interview. Titbird leaves for hutch during this time and afterwards Bob and I go to visit "Rooster" Potter in Perryville. See Mdft 321.doc for that interview.

BEGIN SIDE A

[they are still painting ducks, mini mallards];

what I'm doing with the materials;

haul seine study story: senators and DNR reps coming down on the bus with recreational hook and liners to see them fish; how they had their quota caught for the year and were working in the shop on decoys. About 10 get call that bus load of them are coming down to go fishing at lunch-too late to fish and already had quota. 15-20 people to go fishing, too many. Hadn't taken the net off the boat yet, thank god. Coming at lunch, tide not right etc. didn't pay any attention to the factors involved. How they only had 2 hours to do this had to do it when *they* wanted to do it; called family up to meet him at boat.

Said they would pay them but knew that they *had* to do it no matter what because everyone was there. Wouldn't believe them ever again if didn't take them out. Capt. Harry starts yelling, "2 thousand dollars we'll take ya" and he's serious. How MPT shows up and starts interviewing everybody-except them-and by now they are just fed up with the whole thing. Hook and liners giving MPT propaganda.

Took them out. Brothers go find some fish, conditions weren't quite right but still caught 100 lbs of rock. NWT had underwater cameraman there to see if they were ruining the

grasses. Made them all get in the water and work the net. Doesn't like WT. DNR has good tape of them haul seining. Call Bob Beckman or Harley Spears about that.

Back to carving ducks and learning; working on the backs of heads; what it was like growing up in Madison Mitchell shop

"what you had is that you are losing the heritage of duck hunting anymore. There's no heritage of duck hunting cause grandfather's and their kids and grandkids they all went duck hunting on a Saturday morning, on holiday weekend going duck hunting. You don't have this anymore, there's no place to go there's no ducks to go shooting for."

"I thought about this Thanksgiving morning. Every thanksgiving, *Every* Thanksgiving morning I was hunting. I couldn't wait to come home and eat turkey and then fall asleep on the couch. The best feeling there ever was. To be hunting all morning, you've been out in the cold, you eat your hot turkey meal and then you're just ready to take a nap. This thanksgiving morning I was sitting here painting ducks. We used to body boot or go to a duck blind. We used to have some goose pits. So what you're losing is the heritage of taking your kids hunting. There's not going to be this in the next 20 years."

KF: what will happen to the decoys then?

BJ: doesn't know; but making cork decoys for hunting; the mystique and nostalgia is coming back all want wooden hunting decoys when they go now. That's the way it was they want to say; used to gun over them when we were kids and gunning over them now. After that, I don't know what will happen. Cork decoys \$50 each. His memories of hunting with his dad body booting or bush whacking. Kept records of hunting. Story of last time they body booted.

"The sad thing is not shooting any geese, the sad thing is not seeing them at all."

In the 1970s used to be 50-60,000 geese on the flats, now not on the flats at all. "Now look around you see about a hundred. Of course, look also at what's being developed- which is good for duck collecting."

[customer comes in looking for pair of wood ducks.]

the apprentices he has working for him: Doug and Jimmy. Both have other jobs. Firemen. Everyone starts learning the same way: want to make some to hunt with so come to the shop and learn a few things.

Madison Mitchell had 15 people working for him; geared more toward gunning ducks; didn't work year round; only in the fall, from Aug to Jan. you would work for him in the summer cutting bodies, then put up to dry out. Then August Titbird would start carving out heads; bushel baskets of heads. Bob started working for Madison Mitchell at age 11; only got paid once a year, at xmas time. Titbird worked for gov't other months. Bob

started "draw knifing duck heads" and that's the key, gotta have a good head guy. Got to have good heads.

Bob's dad quit working for Madison Mitchell in early 1970s and went out on his own. Wanted bob to work for him so bob split time between dad and Madison Mitchell. Madison Mitchell was extremely patient with you, showed you how to do things, dad too; on Saturday mornings out running around looking for cedar telephone polls used on bodies; scrounge those up;

"going back to how you learned, you're around this all the time, the elders are doing it that's all they're doing. And that's what you're trying to do you want to try to be like them." How they would duck hunt in the a.m. and then carve in the afternoon.

How neighbors are calling the police on you now for noise and smoke. How he got the police called on him last week for having the wood stove going. "You know, we've got city slickers living here now. You live in this town all your life and you get somebody to move in 2 doors down from you and all of sudden they've got *smoke* coming in their window, so they called the police. And the police come and look at me like there's nothing we can do about it. I said, 'look, I've been living here all my life. This house that I live in was my great grandfather's and he lived here and my grandfather and father lived here. I've been in this house since 1980."

Titbird remembers Bob's great grandfather.

Decoys are supporting his family now. Very few watennen who just work on the water now.

How carp used to be a big thing to catch, everyone carp hauled; sell to Jews in Philly; want them alive; how to catch carp is to bait carp in with corn

Titbird: "bait those carp in and kill a lot of canvas backs we did, oh boy." [used to be legal to bait ducks in with corn too]

Fishing for carp; experiences and stories; techniques

Would run the net out around the carp once baited. Had to be very quiet as one man walked net around the school of fish. Danny Beck and he used to do that.

Titbird gets up to leave now; has to get to bank

Talking of historical decoys. Other community scholars in area; John Sullivan

Who's the most expensive decoy in the area to buy, ratings for others; Charles bernard probably the most expensive; Bob's dad started carving with him first then went to Madison Mitchell; how his dad got into Madison Mitchell shop

Very close families now. Spent xmas eve at mitchell's house; godfather of brother.
Some family history

Pricing of decoys; diff between decoy maker and decoy carver: carver is carving ducks
he's carving a bird. Maker is making a decoy that will actually work. Grew up as
makers not carvers.

What makes your duck worth something is being published in some big-time
magazines-you may not even be any good. But people will want it.

Rather be working on water; you're outside, more active; use your head more, have to
think; working against nature and think like a fish.

[alarm goes off]

water started declining in late 1970s; declining fish market; how the rock were back
before they closed the fishery; pulls out shad records, has all fishing records.

END SIDE A

BEGIN SIDE B

Lower bay gets lots of attention but upper bay never gets any attention

Leads: Pipp Pratt, Dickie Gestiwich, Rooster Potter; all net fishermen; fyke, pound etc.;

nobody every talks about the shad or herring fisheries of the upper bay; canning factories
in the area;

go over now and talk with Rooster

more on leads; Dickie doesn't talk much, Pipp does all the talking

other fish coming into the area: wall eyes,

END TAPE