

Interview Log

Interviewee: Maynard Lowery

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Interviewer: Shelly Drummond
Pete Leshner

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Comments: Had to salvage document as text file. May have lost some formatting. Will try to upgrade to current Word version and correct formatting before completion.

BEGIN SIDE A

S.D.: With Mr. Maynard Lowery and Pete Leshner, and we're doing a recorded interview for the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Okay, Mr. Lowery, would you tell me a little bit about growing up on Tilghman?

M.L.: Well I can remember back quite a while, and it, to me, was a self-sustaining village. We had industry here, and we had a church, and doctor, and we had drug store and an elementary school and a high school, and a self-supporting little village as far as I can remember, and now we've gotten modern, we don't have nothing. We've got to go 15 or 20 miles to get a haircut.

P.L.: Can you tell us a little bit about the family that you grew up in here?

M.L.: Yes. My grandfather, he was a Civil War veteran, and of course when I was a little boy, I was told about his journey in the service and the Union Navy. And then I had a lot of uncles that were boat builders. And my father was a boat builder and a waterman, and I listened to their tales of building and sailing on the bay, and that was - I have many stories that they've told me which, of course, fascinated me. But I question some of them now. They were probably stories. It was a little stretch.

S.D.: Well do you remember one of them in particular?

M.L.: Well I remember about my grandfather, and it is factual, I think it's pretty well substantiated. He was at the battle of Fort Fisher, that's a fort down on the North Carolina or South Carolina coast, and he went ashore with the troops to take over the fort, and he told a story about putting a tourniquet on a wounded confederate soldier. And years passed and he was here with his wife and children to build a canoe, and he had seen these big pine trees being advertised up in another county, and he went up there to look at them for the canoe logs, and the farmer that owned them had a conversation and they got talking about their services, and it turned out to be the farmer was a confederate soldier. And he told a story about the battle at Fort Fisher, and this sailor bound his wound with a tourniquet. And low and behold, it was the grandfather. And they had a big get-together and a big feast to celebrate that occasion. And grandfather was a captain of his, one of his schooners out of Baltimore for his father, as I understand. He must've had a couple freight boats, and he got blown in here by storm in the harbor at Tilghman, and that's where he met my grandmother. He fell in love with her, and had a whole bunch of offspring, and here I am.

S.D.: And that's when he moved to Tilghman.

M.L.: Well he moved to Tilghman, and I was born at Tilghman. But, see, he was a captain of his father's schooner freighting. He came in here during a storm at Dogwood Harbor, and he happened to meet my grandmother. He fell in love with grandmother, and he decided to make this his home, and he lived here till his demise. So that's how he came to come here, but he was originally from Baltimore.

S.D.: You talked a little bit about your dad being a boat builder. What was his shop like?

M.L.: Well in those days, it wasn't many shops. People wanted to build, wanted a boat built, they'd go down on the shore, which seemed like nobody owned it. The shore was there, and they'd get their keel and their lumber and, naturally, they û somebody owned some of the property, had to get permission to do it, but they'd build a boat anywhere that was convenient to build it, you know. And he never had a shop or a business of his own, but he worked with Mr. John B. Harrison, which did have a shop out on what we called Devil's Island. When I grew up, it was a little oyster shell island out there, made over a period of time out of oyster shells. And my first recollection of that place, my father was building, helping him build this boat for a wealthy man out of Charleston, and it was named the *Sea Cloud*. And it was a 50-foot frame built, seagoing boat. And I used to go down there and watch him work on it, and his name was Hawkins. And the boat was launched, it was a great day, and it was all kinds of treats and everything for us kids, and of course, all the men, they had Apple Jack and such as that, but I remember that was the most memorable launch, it was one of the first launches I ever saw of this great big boat. And when she went down the skids into the water, she just kept shrinking and shrinking. I was surprised how small she got when she got in the water. But it was a rather large boat. And my father sailed south on her a couple trips with the owner. And he came back and forth through a number of years, and I was really fascinated by the owner because he was a flyer during the First World War, and I was crazy about airplanes. And inasmuch as he'd been a flyer, he was a hero to me. And I wanted to build a model, and he said boy, he says I'll give you a piece of wood to build that model. I wanted a piece of white pine. And I took and went down there one day, and I said, Mr. Hawkins, can I have a piece of white pine to build my model? He said sure, boy. And it was a big piece of timber laying over the edge of the dock. The bulkhead around the island was such on this pile of oyster shells, and this timber was laying over the end of it, over the edge of this bulkhead. And he said, boy, I'll get you a piece, I'll get you a saw to saw it off, and whatever length you want. My land, there was about a 6 by 8 piece of white pine, 6 inches thick, 8 inches wide, and he brought me this saw that had these teeth in it about an inch and a half long, great big old teeth. Well I'm back with this saw, you know, and I'm going to show this man how I can saw this piece of wood off. Well the teeth hooked up in

the woods, and I went over, blum, blum, blum, down in the shell pile, and all them men stood there and laughed at me. My father had to saw it off.

S.D.: How old were you?

M.L.: I was about 8, 9 years old, something like that.

P.L.: This boat, the *Sea Cloud*, was built out on Devil's Island?

M.L.: On Devil's Island, yeah. It was one of the great boats that Mr. John B. built. But she was plank, oak, and she was edged off by hand. The planking varied in thickness. My father used to come home and talk about how much work it was, edging this whole boat before they planed it. But I don't know whatever happened. I'm sure she's gone now, but that was in 1927 when that thing was launched.

S.D.: Did—what was the first boat that you worked on? You said you carried your wheelbarrow up and down.

M.L.: Yeah. Well one of my memorable times is I was a kid in the back yard on Cooper Town Road, and it was a man and wife lived next door, and he was a police captain in those days. They were just water police captain. I don't think the Natural Resources was even formed. And his name was Mr. Jake. And they didn't have any children, so Mr. Jake saw me out one day with an old orange crate, and in those days orange crates were wood. And I was knocking the orange crate apart. I was going to build a model like you do a real boat out of thin boards and bend them around. So Mr. Jake said, boy, what are you doing there? I said I'm going to build a boat. He said you don't want to build it out of that. Said I'm going up the road tomorrow and I'll bring you some lumber to build a boat. He had an old Whippet with a rumble seat, and the next day he arrived with these nice little boards, 8 feet long, ½ inch thick, 6 inches wide, cypress, sticking out the back of his rumpled seat with a bag of nails. He said here, boy, you build a boat out of that. So I built the boat, it was 8 feet long. It was like a little skiff. Painted it all up and named it *The Bullet*. I don't know why I ever named it *The Bullet*, but I named it *The Bullet*. And I was proud as a peacock of that boat. And years went by and I got in here building boats, and I'd be in here till maybe, I don't know, May, April or May with a mountain of work trying to expedite a big job for a man, and it was getting hotter and hotter, and Jake had retired, and he'd come in and set on the work bench. And I used to fuss and growl with Jake. I said if it weren't for you, I wouldn't be in this mess. You're the one got me started building boats. And that's a true story, that's how I came to be a boat builder. That was my first boat. Old Jake.

P.L.: Do you remember—if you were out on Devil's Island when that *Sea Cloud* was being launched, you must've been around too when the storm came in that really cleaned the place out.

M.L.: Oh, yeah. I remember it well. Yeah. Those days, most of the boats that were out there in that harbor were on stakes. The watermen would stick their stakes in the bottom and tie the boats to it.

P.L.: Set up a mooring anchor.

M.L.: Yeah.

P.L.: Uh-huh (affirmative).

M.L.: And the harbor was, the harbor was full of boats. And this storm was coming on, and it was getting worse, and worse and worse, and we saw the boats out there, the tide—the tide was coming up. And a boy that grew up with me, Buddy, Buddy and myself we were watching. First thing you know, we seen boats starting to break loose. They couldn't get out there to them. And they were hitting the shore and busting up. When we were looking at, we were down on the point, it was over here next to the harbor, and we looked, and the whole steamboat wharf was coming around the point. It was a wooden wharf that went out to Tilghman Packing Company, and the pier head was where the steamer landed. And it was wood, you know. Well the whole thing was coming around, and it got deeper and deeper and deeper. Well boats were up near about to the main road on Harrison's property. It's Harrison's now. Chesapeake House?

P.L.: Yeah.

M.L.: It was boats nearly on that main road. But my uncle, he had a number of boats out there. And over on one of the shores was a lot of stone, Dr. Reeser, he lived over there, and I seen—her name was *The Victoria*. And the old *Victoria*, she broke loose, and when she hit the stone, she broke all to pieces. It was a lot of boats damaged, and a number of them that was destroyed. But that was a storm, I don't know that we've ever seen any worse around here than that. I don't know whether that was the year '32 or '33.

P.L.: August '33, I believe.

M.L.: '33, yeah, August. We used to call it August Storm. In those days, we thought it was a northeaster come in. We didn't know it was a hurricane. We thought it was a northeaster. Well it was a northeaster all right. One of the worst we ever saw.

S.D.: Who taught you how to use the tools?

M.L.: Well I grew up around people that was using tools, and I don't know, I guess it came natural. I started to do little jobs, hammer or saw, and I had an old grandfather over—my mother, she was from Neavitt, and Grandfather Newnam, which was his name, his last name, he built boats too. And he passed away, and he had a tool box with some tools. And so I fell heir to the tools. And I kept them neat and clean and oiled and everything, and war was coming on and I had to go in the service, this was 1939, '40. And so I took off and left my tools, picked them up when I came back, what was left of them.

S.D.: Do you still have them?

M.L.: I have a couple of them, still have a couple of them. He had a little special square I still got. But, you know, when you grew up around that stuff and you liked to watch it being done, and you like to copy, you start using you tools. And then I'd get jobs working with—when the old man built his shop here, Captain Benny Fairbanks, I was just a young boy, and I get a job with him. And I'll tell you this tale. Captain Benny we called him, he had this shop here, and he was building boats, and Captain John B., he had the old Devil's Island, and he was busy. And Captain John Berridge (phonetic), he had a boat, and somebody ran into it and broke the side, busted the side of this boat. And John B. had hauled it up on his railway, and Captain Benny said to me, said boy, said you've got to go down there and try to fix that boat for Captain John. Said you can do it. Nobody's got time to do it. So I went down there, and there was the old boat sitting on the railway. And the wharf came down and went around the railway into the shop. And it was about 1,000 feet long, this foot wharf that Old Man John B. would leave home and walk out there to that island. Well I was there working, and I seen Old Man—and we were scared to death of Old Man John B. He was a super-duper man, and he looked rough and everything. And we, we kids, we were very careful around him. Well anyway, and we knew he was super. You know, he was top boat man. And if we were doing anything, and we were doing it wrong, or he didn't like the way we were doing it, he'd rip you out, you know, give you a reprimand. So I was working on this boat, and I had taken this plank out and I was taking what's called a spiling (phonetic). And Old Man John B. was coming down with his pipe, and I looked, and I seen him way up close to the land, he was coming down. I thought, oh, it's Old Man John B., and I'm smart, I'm taking a spiling. Everybody knows how to take a spiling for this plank. So I was working away, and I made out I didn't even know him, that he was coming. And Old Man

John B. got just off abreast of me, and I was working. I sensed him behind me. He was standing up on that wharf. He said oh, boy, says you're a left-hand jass-ack. Said you ain't no good to yourself or anybody else. Boy, took the wind out of my sails. I thought to myself, boy, I was going to impress him. When he called me a left-hand jass-ack, my feathers fell. Another time, we had a storm after the '33 storm, and it was a great big piece of timber wound up on my uncle's property, and I wanted a piece of it to make a keel for a boat.

P.L.: Just washed up from the storm?

M.L.: Well it washed up from the storm, yeah. But it was a nice piece of timber. And so I decided I was going to chop off a chunk of it. I only needed about 12 foot. I was going to build a 12-foot boat, and this thing was about 30 or 40 feet long. So I pulled and hauled on that piece of lumber, and I got the damn thing up on the shore, and I rolled it out underneath the old grape harbor where I was going to build this boat, and I was chopping away, and it was a lot of bush and brush and stuff around. And I heard something coming, and I looked, and it was Old Man John B., and he looked, he said oh boy, you ruined me. He lost his piece of timber from out there on Devil's Island, and somebody told him it went ashore. And he was hunting for his piece of timber, and he tracked her down to me, and he seen that I cut a hunk of it, I'd cut his spar up. He didn't reprimand me, he just said oh boy, you ruined me. Turned around and away he went. That's my experience with Old Man John B. I was scared of him.

S.D.: This is going to sound kind of like a stupid question, but what was it that made John B. such a good boat builder? What were the characteristics that you—

M.L.: Well he just recognized as a master boat builder from years of producing boats prior to my coming along, he just had that reputation. He built a lot of boats. He built, supposedly, the *Lockwood* up there and many other bugeyes and nice boats, and he was recognized as a master boat builder, which he was. And when I came along, as a young boy, I soon found out that Captain John B. was a top notch boat builder. And to me and to a lot of us, he was a special guy, you know. And we used to get a lot, hear a lot of things about him, and we were kind of afraid of him because—and I'm sure when he told me I was a left hand jass-ack, he was chuckling when he went by me. You know, I didn't know it, but I thought to myself, man, he meant that, but I'm sure he was laughing to his self when he went on by. He was a nice old man. Wasn't nothing a matter with him. But even some of his, you know, adult help, they were scared to death of him. One story was this guy was caulking in this boat one day, and he was using the dumb iron, and he wasn't dumbing the seam open hard enough. A dumb iron is an iron that, you may know or may not know, it's a caulking iron. And if you got a tight seam and you're going to caulk it, you drive it in real—it's blunt, and it opens the seam. And the nature of the

thing is to dumb her hard and caulk her hard. And Old Man John B., he come by and he says oh, dumb her hard and caulk her easy. Yes, sir, Captain John. Dumb her hard and caulk her easy. Nobody ever said whether he was right or wrong, you know. Dumb her hard and caulk her easy. Truth of it is you got to caulk her hard.

S.D.: What about the lines of the boats that the different boat builders made? Some of them pretty—

M.L.: Well in those days, primarily they designed boats, whatever they had in their head, they'd make a model, a half model. And they'd make it to scale, and they'd take measurements off of it. That was used primarily around here through early years. But when I joined the service and got involved with lines of ships, architectural lines, and learning about displacement and floatation and displacement and all that, then I got interested in naval architecture. And I started to teach, you know, read books and teach myself about it. And so when I came along, I decided to draw whatever I was going to build. Now even to this day, occasionally I'll make a half model, not because I—the only reason why I do that is simply because if I'm going to use plywood say for a bottom like that little boat out there, you can't put a compound curve into plywood. Well you can bend plywood, but you've got to know how to bend it. And I don't know how to design the lines. It's done, it's called conical, and I don't understand, I've never studied conical design. But I've done enough work with other people's designs and boats that I've designed to know that it's beneficial to have a half model to study the curvature, especially in the bow which you're going to bend. So once in a while, a half model is beneficial. And I have a bunch of them up here like that. Now this model here, a man by the name of Smith, he wanted a rowing skiff. So for him to see what I would draw, he wouldn't see much, so anyway, I whittled this out. And I told him, I said this is what I designed for you, and it was a 14-foot skiff model, and he was tickled to death with it. But that's to give him a picture of what I would design or had in mind to build. And so but if I'm going to build you a big boat or a yacht or something like that, I would build a model.

P.L.: Just working drawings.

M.L.: Yeah, yeah.

P.L.: But you would do this half model, in some cases, for your own benefit to study the bow, but in other cases, just for the customer.

M.L.: Yeah, yeah. The only time I build half models is for like if I got a plywood bow bottom, I want to put, I want to look at it before I get too far advanced. I was just going to see if I had a

drawing here. Well that's not what I'm looking for, but that's—I never worry about construction drawing, but because I know what I want to build. If I was going to sell you a set of drawings, I'd have to make construction drawings, but this is profile and lines of form. Now all this is mathematically figured, and the paper's just thrown away. But anyway, I don't have my hands on a drawing that is more thorough in whatever it is. Well here's one here. Here's a boat that I built. And there's the arrangement and the profile and lines of form. And when you get started, all you need is lines of—I mean most important is lines of form. Well there's a displacement figure to support the weights that you're going to carry in the thing. And that all has to be figured. And there's a center of gravity figure, and there's a curve of area displacements, and a number of others, lateral plane. But it doesn't show the figures, mathematical figures, but you have to do that to have a proper boat. But I used to sit down for hours and draw this stuff and then have it blueprinted. And you used to have to, before copies could be made from, quick from a machine, used to take and make this with this rice paper and put these lines on it and send it to a guy and it would be blueprinted, or it would come out blueprints. But you don't even have to do that no more. You can just draw it on one piece of paper and take it to somebody, and he'll make you a copy right quick. Anyway, I spent hours down here in designs of boats. And like I say, those days, the half model was the major thing, and the rest of it was to the eye, whatever is suited to the eye. And if he wanted a 12-foot cabin, you'd put a 12-foot cabin, if he wanted 8-foot, you know.

S.D.: A couple more. Tell us about the first boat that you built by plan.

M.L.: By what?

S.D.: Using a plan, a design, the line design instead of the half model.

M.L.: Well I knew, I thought I knew what to do so I designed this boat. It was right after the war, this is the one that sticks out in my mind, and I was—I just got out of the service, I put five years in the service and I came down there, had a wife and a little boy, and this guy came to me, says Maynard, I want you to build me a boat. He was about my age. And nobody knew that I could build a boat. I could build a skiff or a little small thing, you know, when I left here. So I had to build him this 38-foot boat, workboat. So I designed it, by lines, and I had a nice keen bow because I didn't want her to be too wide forward. I wanted her to be able to dive in a wave so the—jarring your head off and all that stuff. It was a plane hull, similar to the boats you have around here now. Anyway, as I got ready to launch her, I started questioning my figures. I had figured the waterline on the thing, and I didn't want her in—some guys would build a boat and the bow set too low or it didn't look right, it didn't set in the water like they planned. Well, according to my drawings and figures, my boat was supposed to set just right. And I started

doubting my figures. That would be, when you finally get the thing done, your center of buoyancy is like a seesaw. Well if the center of buoyancy is too far off center, one end is going to go down, the other end's going to go up. Well my center of buoyancy was supposed to be on a mark. And as I get closer to the day of launching, I thought, man, I started getting scared. The great day came, had her all on the skids and she was to slide down the waves, and I thought man, that bow, the more I looked at the bow, the skinnier it was. It's going to go down. It ain't going to set there the way it's supposed to. And down and away she went. And when she went off, skids pulling down in the water, and she bounced up. And low and behold, my gosh, the bow was just like it's supposed to be. Man. Well I still wasn't so convinced. The next boat had a little more, a little braver, but I still questioned my figures. And finally, I got to the point where I knew they worked. After a number of boats, I figured, well, a little more confidence in myself. But that's part of it, growing up, working in this stuff. He'd have a guy come along, and he wants to put the motors in the stern with about 500 gallons of fuel. You got to know how to figure to get the center of buoyancy. And another thing, if you have a guy come in here and he brings seven drawings and he wants his boat built, and a naval architect drew the thing, you got to know how to copy that. You just can't—I remember an occasion way back in the early 60's. I had a friend I grew up with was in the Maryland Pilots Association. The Maryland Pilots, they had a mothership at the capes, and they had a couple, they had small boats called cape launches that they had built out of wood to put the pilot aboard the ship, go in or out, taking him off in rough weather. So they came down here to me and wanted to know if I'd want to bid on these boats. They wanted two of them. I think it was three. Anyway, I never figured to build around—this was around—plane boat. And I had not too much experience with that type of instruction. But they brought the drawings. It was their drawings. And I went ahead and figured it. And it was a man in—up at the head of the bay, he had a bid in, and an outfit in Baltimore, they had a bid in. – Unger & McMahan, a man by the name of Stevens and myself. Well I was—Stevens was the low bidder, I was second and Unger & McMahan was top man. Well he was out because he was high bid. But in the meantime, the president of the association, he lived in Wittman, and he went around to a builder around there, and he wanted to know if he would want to build. He was a boat builder. And he said yeah, yeah, I'll bid on it. And so he pulled his drawings out and said here's the drawings. He looked at it. He said oh, I don't need that. Just need a picture. Well right away, the man knew that he didn't know what he was talking about, so he was out. But I brought that in to tell you that if you don't know what you're looking at, you got to have the drawing to know what the man wants. And to continue with the story, first thing you know, I was told Stevens was scared of his bid, and he decided he didn't want it. He was low bidder. So anyway, they told me that I got the job. Well I was busy building a boat, and I couldn't start for a long time, and they were in desperate need of a replacement, so they said well, tell you what we'll do. We'll give you one to build, and we'll give Unger & McMahan, the high bidder, the other one. Well Unger & McMahan was supposed to be a big time boat builder

in Baltimore. So they went their way, and I started ordering material. And it was an old guy came down here, he was inspector. His name was Shult (phonetic). And old man Shult came down to look at the lumber that I was going to build this boat out of, and he said I'm not going to use, let you use this mahogany. I said why? It was supposed to be mahogany plank. He said because I don't like it, don't do it. I said well I'm complying with the specifications. It says mahogany plank. I don't care. You're not going to use it. I said, man, I'm going to lose 10 percent on that. He said can't help that. Said not going to let you use it. So I had to order some other mahogany. Well I found out there was three grades of mahogany, hard, medium and soft, and he wanted a harder grade, and he wanted genuine mahogany instead of Philippine mahogany, so which is not mahogany anyway. So I couldn't fight the system. And he was going to be the inspector as everything I did, and I had—and he was a hard-nosed old guy. And so but I found his weakness. He liked corn and tomatoes. Finally, he come down here—I had a load of corn, nice garden tomatoes, I fixed him up. Everything turned out right. But anyway, I finally went to work on the boat, and we had to steam these frames, wooden frames in this boat. She was only about 26 feet long and diesel powered, but she was rugged. And I steam my frames one hour to the inch with kerosene in the water. Well Unger & McMahan, they were building their boat, they were way ahead of me, and they started steaming their frames, and they had a man watch the steamer 24 hours. And when they put the frames in their boat, well they bent like spaghetti, went right in there. And when it dried up, they all fell apart. Well instead of going ahead, my boat was done and in service before they ever got theirs done, and they started way ahead of me. And that's the way that program went.

S.D.: Were they just not steaming them—

M.L.: Yeah, they cooked their wood to death. You don't do that, you know. Somewhere I knew that you, I picked up the information that an hour to the inch is sufficient, and if you've got a two-inch board, you cook it for two hours, but you don't cook it for 24. Anyway, that's some of the experiences I've had with this stuff.

P.L.: When you did a job like that—

(END SIDE A.)

(BEGIN SIDE B.)

P.L.: —were you working pretty much on your own? Did you ever hire assistants?

M.L.: Oh, yeah. I had men with me. Most I've had here is three men, just steady for the major part of the boat. I'd start off, initially, I'd have to work at the laying out of the keel, and the stem and all that, and it would work me hard because they'd be standing around waiting for me to give them a job, and they couldn't do what I was doing, and I'd have to work real hard for them to start pulling their weight. And after a while, then they started working out some stuff that I lay off and give them, but initially, it was a pretty hefty amount of work I had to do before they could come in.

S.D.: How about like the caulking and painting and stuff?

M.L.: We do it all. We caulk, paint, installation of machinery, motors, wiring, anything. When the boat—most of the time years ago when the boat went out, she was ready to step on the starter and go.

S.D.: How about in the past, like John B. Harrison?

M.L.: Primarily, when the hulls went over they were basically the same way. But I don't think John, he didn't get—well in those days, there was very little bit of electrical work. But as far as machinery and the installation and such, I don't recollect that they did too much. They had—Fluharty's over here next door, they'd go down there and hook up the engine, and John B. would make the engine bed or something like that, but—and somebody knew a little bit about wiring, but I'd have a boat under contract initially when I started, and I'd go to Fluharty's and I'd say when I'm ready for you to help me wire this boat, will you do it? Yeah. Well when I was ready and I wanted to expedite, I'd go over there, and they were too busy to do anything for me. And, finally, I started to do my own, and I did it all. I didn't wait on nobody. So I was forced to learn the whole bit because to expedite and get your money and satisfy the customer, you had to produce. When I got out of the service, the first—after the—when I first got here, I had a local man, waterman, wanted a boat. He just wanted the hull and the cabin. So I built it. I think I built it for \$2,000. And I had \$200 over and above the cost. Man, made 200 boats. First thing you know, I had seven boats to build. Two seven's is 14. \$1,400. Man, I'm going to get rich. Well it wasn't long before the nails were costing more money, the boards were costing more money, the labor was costing more money. When I got the second boat built, I was going to make this \$1,400, I just about broke even. By the time I got the seven done, I was in the red. I had told them I was going to build it for this amount of money, you know. And I was getting wise, but I was paying for it. It was costing me.

S.D.: You talked about the first boat. How did you get started building boats when you first got back from the service?

M.L.: This one guy come out of the blue and wanted me to build him a boat. And he was just about my age, and the old men around here said that boy, he don't know how to build a boat, can't build no boat. Well I did. I built the *Patsy*. And it was a success. That was the boat that I'd figured mathematically to set on the waterline, and he used her for many, many years. And I think the boat's still going.

P.L.: Did it have a regular dead rise for the boat?

M.L.: Yeah, yeah.

S.D.: Were you the first person on Tilghman to be using the line drawings?

M.L.: I would venture to say yeah, yeah. John B. may understood it, I'm sure he understood it. And, occasionally, he'd have somebody from New York or somebody come down with a set of drawings, architecture drawings, and I've heard this quoted before. And they'd say Captain John, said I want you to build me this boat. And, you know, look at things, yeah, I don't want to build that thing. If he didn't like the looks of it, I don't want to build that thing. And he got to roll the drawing up in a book. But I'm sure he understood the drawings.

P.L.: One thing that I've seen in a number of your boats is that they're strip planked. Can you tell me how you got into doing that?

M.L.: Well it's a method of construction that's been used for years and years and years. But I never grew up with it. And as time went on, I decided that I'd try it, incorporate it inside, because what it would do, you could pick out the best of the material. By cutting it up in strips, if you had a knotty piece, you'd cut the knot out, you know. If you got a load of lumber, and if it's got a lot of knots in it, you got to cut the board out with the knots, the board and knot and everything. And I wanted to try it, and I found out that it wasn't a whole lot of difference between the strip plank and the strips. When you first start and you go to an inch and a half strip—crap, we'll never get to the top of this boat with this thing. But you'd be surprised when you play with it some and learn what you have to do, it would take normally a day, we'll just say a 40-foot boat, it would take a day to get out a plank to go around her, a six-inch plank or a five-inch plank to go around the boat. It would take all of a day, if not longer, to get that plank cut out, beveled and edges dressed and put on the boat. And sometimes, you couldn't do that. Well you can almost do the same distance in height, 6 inches, 5 inches, with the strips. But one of the advantages is that strips you don't have to caulk. And you're still not done as far with to carve a plank as you are with the strips when you get it, when you look at it that way. And it

make a smoother boat, and maybe a little problem if you ever have to repair it, puncture or something like that. But that, I started, I started that back in the early 60's, the strip planking.

P.L.: Okay.

M.L.: And prior to that, it was all carvel. And it worked well. And another thing, around some of the bows of the boats that were pretty blunt and flarey, you could bend them little strips where you'd have to steam the carvel plank. So it eliminated some of the steaming too.

S.D.: How about the cat boats?

M.L.: The cat boats, I was always partial to cat boats as a little youngster growing up. And I built some flat bottom cat boat rigs and designed and built them when I was—before the service. And there's one down to the dock now, I built that in about '60, in the early 60's. And I wanted the cat boat for myself, I built it for myself. It was 14 foot. And somebody came along very soon and bought it. And so I never got to thinking much about cat boats because I was very busy. And one day, I don't know, it was in the 70's, I had picked up a magazine, it was a yachting magazine, and it had a beautiful drawing of a cat boat by Fenwick Williams, a drawing. And it was about a 1950 issue, I think it was. And this was in the 70's. So I thought to myself I'm going to write this man and see if he would sell me the drawings up. It was 21 foot. Well, sure enough, he was alive and he answered, Marble Head, Massachusetts. And he sent me the drawings, sold me the drawings, and I started to build it. And I got the thing nearly built, and I said man, I don't want a boat that big. It's too big a boat for me. This is an article that came out in *The Democrat* in 1980 when I was building it. And there's some pictures of it. But anyway, that was done by Ann Stinson in 1980. And that was the 21-foot cat. And in corresponding with him, I told him I was going to sell it and I wanted to build a smaller one. So he went me a drawing of a 16 foot, gave it to me. The old man's passed away now. And, man, I fell in love with that drawing, and I built four of them. And the last one I sold, I had, and I sold it to John Miller. And he tells me he's just crazy about it, him and his wife. I don't know whether you've seen it or not.

P.L.: I haven't yet, no.

M.L.: I think he—I don't know whether he hauled it up with his—I'm sure he hauled it out this spring because he wanted to know about the bright work, and I told him to use—what I'd used on it. And he said, he came down here, I got him a quart of this, well it's not varnish, but it's similar to varnish, something or other, takes place, shows the bright wood. And he just, him and his wife, they're just tickled to death with it. Well anyway, I got the patterns and drawings in

there, and I thought to myself I might try to even build another one just—I don't know whether I'll survive to finish it, but I might consider building one when I get straightened out here. I have a lot of people ask me about cat boats. I'm supposed to be the cat boat man. They didn't know the cat boats were built this far south. They were built up in New England—

P.L.: Right.

M.L.: —and New Jersey and whatnot. But anyway—

S.D.: What was it that you liked in particular about the cat boats?

M.L.: Well I like the sail pattern of them, I like the—I just like the shape of them. And I read stories about the cats. They just appeal to me. They're—if you want the fastest racing boat in the world, you don't want to go out and get a cat boat, but for a comfortable day sailor or cruising, a cat boat's a nice boat. And it's a centerboard boat, and it's good for shallow waters, and you can upset them, but if you know what you're doing, you don't have to necessarily capsize. They're a big little boat. They've got a lot of room for their length. I mean 21-foot cat boat, that's a roomy boat. They're wide, half as wide as they are long, you know, about that. Sixteen foot cat boat, 7 foot, 6, they're about 8 foot wide. That's one of them up there.

P.L.: That's one of the 16 footers?

M.L.: Yeah.

P.L.: *Cat Napper*?

M.L.: Yeah. Yeah, I built the *Cat Napper*, and the last one I built was the *Cat Nipper*. She was the deluxe model. That's what John Miller got. And he came down to get me when I was weak. I wasn't going to sell her, but I did. One reason why, my wife was sick and I had a lot of responsibility on me, and I just wanted to get rid of the responsibility. And so I sold it. But I had—and my knees were bad, but I could sit in that boat and I could do everything without putting my strain on my knees. If I had a boat that I had to walk around in and the sea hit me, could throw me and I could hurt myself. When I had the 28-foot *Honeydew* that I sold, guy up there in St. Michaels, we used to fish in her a lot, and it got to the point where if I wanted to walk from the aft helm to the forward helm and see, didn't have something to hold onto, I was hurting. And so I got, decided wasn't too good a thing for two old people to be into, so I got rid of that. But you have to do that when years go by and you don't, you can't do what you used to. I have a lot of people come in here that love sailboats and had a sailboat all their life, and first

thing you know, sailboat's too much for them. They can't hack it. So they wind up with an outboard running around a little bit.

S.D.: Do you have any stories of like close calls, or an accident, or a particularly good boat that you—

M.L.: Well I'll tell you this story. I built this boat for a man by the name of—let me try to think of his name. He was instrumental in establishing the museum, and that was in the early days when they first decided they were going to have a St. Michaels Maritime Museum up there. And he came in here, and he wanted me to build him a boat similar to this boat that was popular up in New Jersey. I don't remember, but I designed the boat to suit him. It was a 32-foot boat. And he lived on a point up here up the Tred Avon River. Nice place, great big place. Well-to-do man. And his wife was right stouty. And the day of launching came, and I was—I practically built the boat by myself, and I got her down out of the back of the shop close to the water ready for Barnard is his name, Mr. Barnard. Mr. and Mrs. Barnard come down for the launching. Well I didn't have any help, and the day had arrived, and Mr. and Mrs. Barnard were supposed to be here at high tide, and I look coming around the corner of the shop was my father, was aged, and my old uncle. And they came around and I said you're just in time, we've got to launch this boat. Okay. But I said we've got to have two more people. So I look coming around the marsh. In those days, Coast Guard station's up here by the bridge. And here come two brawny Coast Guard guys. And I said hey, how about helping me launch this boat. Sure, Mr. Maynard. Yes, indeed. Well Mr. and Mrs. Barnard arrive. Mr. Barnard, he had his camera, movie picture camera. So he got up against the back of the shop and he started taking pictures, and Mrs. Barnard got in front of the boat with her bottle of champagne, and the boat was called the *Lady Nell, Lady Nell*. And I get down under the bow with my jack to start the boat. And the two Coast Guard boys was on one side, and my uncle and father was on the other to hold her on her feet while she went down. They really—she'd almost balance herself, but they were there. That was the setup. So I said all right, Mrs. Barnard, and I started pumping on my jack, and Mrs. Barnard says I christen you the *Lady Nell*. And I heard this bottle got over my head, it didn't touch nothing. Man, it just whished by me, and Mrs. Barnard, in her lace undergarment and everything, she rolled over in a ball in the marsh grass. And Mr. Barnard's camera was still going. He never -- old Mrs. Barnard rolled up out in -- she had one of these fancy petticoats on, what we used to call, with lace on the bottom of them, you know. Oh, my gosh, oh, Miss Barnard. Man, I had to get up and try to get her on her feet. And first I looked at the boat, and the boat was laying over on its side, and two men were saying let us up, let us up. It was uncle and my father, the boat was over against them, they were down under the boat, and Mrs. Barnard was rolled over in the brush. And Mr. Barnard was sailing away with his camera. And I got her on her feet. She wasn't hurt. And I said pull down on that boat, pull down on that boat,

you Coast Guard boys. And they finally got her on her feet, and the old men got out. Brushed everybody off and, finally, we got the boat launched. I told the Coast Guard, I said look, you don't shove sideways on this thing, you shove down. Well that was a memorable launch. Mrs. Barnard didn't get hurt, but I can see her now. Man, she was plump enough that when she rolled, she rolled like a ball. And what did you ask me?

S.D.: That was along the lines. Any stories of accidents.

M.L.: Yeah, yeah.

P.L.: You mentioned your wife a few minutes ago. You told us a story last time about a boat that you built for a customer over in Baltimore. And I wonder if you could tell us that story again.

M.L.: Yeah. Well after the war, I just got out of the service, I was living in Baltimore, and this acquaintance of mine, well he married a cousin, he was a machinist and he was doing war work, and he wanted to know what I was going to do after I got out. And I said well I don't know. And he said well I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll build a boat. He said it's going to be a big need for pleasure boats. We'll build a boat. I said okay, so I designed this boat, and I started against this wooden machine shop in Brooklyn. And one night, my brother-in-law came in said the whole works had burnt up. Well this guy had been coming back and forth from the shipyard. He worked down the shipyard, and he saw me, and so he wanted me to build him a boat. So on that site, I started to build him this boat. I had -- didn't have a job when the shop burnt down. Burnt the boat up. And I needed a job, and it was a big outfit in North Baltimore, yacht builders, and I went out there and applied for a job and I was going to go out there, but this man came along, wanted me to build this boat. So I took the job of building this boat. And his wife was named Sarah. It was a 36-foot boat. It was sort of a pleasure boat. And that's -- there it is right up there.

S.D.: Right up next to the light bulb.

M.L.: Yeah. And so I got the boat built, and years went by, and Sarah died, and he came down. He always kept in touch with me. We were friends. And he brought his boat down here one time, introduced me to his new wife. And he went his way, and one day Mrs. Hall called me up and wanted to know if I would help her sell the boat. Mr. Hall had died. And I told her I would. Well I didn't have much input in that. But she told me also she had a lot of things up there that he collected, and I might be interested in some of them, so I went up there with a friend of mine. So we bought some stuff. He had loads of stuff, and she wanted to get rid of it. Didn't

mean nothing to her. So anyway, she fixed us a cup of coffee, and away we went. Paid her, and we came back here, and it wasn't long after that, she wanted to know if I -- she called me up and wanted to know if I would sell some things for her. I said bring them down, yeah. So she drove up in her Oldsmobile, and her shapely leg would come out with a pretty skirt on. You know, just another woman. I was free. No problems. But anyway, she kept coming, and coming, and coming. Every week, she'd call me up. So one day, I took her out in the cat boat, and she was impressed so that she had a hold of my hand down there by the old pine tree. And after I -- well the telephone saved me. She was clutching me, and I got -- she let me go for the telephone. And I thought, well I'll take advantage of this and get her in her car so she can get up to Baltimore and get rid of her. Well she had designs on me, and I was too old to run, and I had to capitulate. She got me. But the thing that really convinced me that she had designs on me, she said -- we're walking through the shop one day. She says you know what? Said the cupid has shot an arrow in my breast. I thought to myself dumb old me -- got something to do with romance. Cupid and the arrow. I've seen that picture before. Golly day. After she left, I said to my brother, I said you know that woman's got designs on me. Daggone it, I don't need no woman. And then I got inquisitive. I thought to myself, I'd like to see whether that arrow went in or not. And that done me in. She was a deceptor. It was no arrow, no scar there whatsoever. It was just as smooth, pretty, wasn't no scar.

S.D.: Let me stop the tape for a little bit.

(OFF RECORD.)

S.D.: Okay, this is Shelly Drummond with Pete Leshner and Mr. Maynard Lowery, and this is the second disk. Today's November 4th, by the way. I forgot to add that the last time.

M.L.: Yeah, today is the 4th.

S.D.: You were talking about your shop, that it belonged to Captain Benny Fairbanks.

M.L.: Yeah.

S.D.: Did you come down here when you were younger? Do you remember?

M.L.: Oh, yeah. Well, you see, when they dug this Narrows out in about 1932, before that, this Narrows, this Knapps Narrows was like a ditch. It wasn't very deep. And if they were going to have a Norwester where they blow the tide down, the watermen would, out on each end of the Narrows, the river and the bay, would stake their boats out in deep water and come ashore in a

skiff. So tomorrow morning when they got up and the tide was so low, their boat would be on the bottom if they were in the Narrows tied up there. So they'd get in the skiff and shove her out to the ditch, out to deep water so they could go out and crab or oyster or whatever you want to do. Well it was a known fact that Knapps Narrows had to be dug out. So in 1929, prior to 1929, our main road down through the island was an oyster shell road, nothing but oyster shells. And when Tilghman Packing Company would produce the oyster shells, they were green, such as -- they weren't dried out. And when they'd spread it out on the road, certain times of the year, you got so damn many flies that you could hardly walk. And I remember one little day I was going to school, and I was walking down this oyster shell road toward the school. We walked to school them days. We didn't ride in buses. And I had a pair of clod hopper shoes on, and I looked down in front of me, and I saw his bag of sawdust laying right there on these oyster shells, this old oyster shell road. And I was great for kicking anything, football time, you know, we were kicking things, footballs and soccer balls and stuff. So I started to speed up with my little lunch box and my books, heading for school, and I started weaving, I was going to kick this here bag of sawdust clean over in the boon docks somewhere. Well when I connected with that bag of sawdust, I was stopped stalk still for a long time on the shells I went. It wasn't a bag of sawdust. You know what it was? It was a bag of sand. It wouldn't move. Like to broke my leg, my sandwich fell out of my lunch box, and the books was all over the place, and man, I looked all around to see who was going to laugh at me. I finally got myself together. I never kicked no more bags of saw dust down this road, but anyway, they made a cement road, about 1929.

And then they started, going to build a new bridge and dig this channel through. And when they did that, all this land that we're sitting on now was nothing but marsh. It was a rather narrow strip up there where these houses on the road was built, but all the rest of it was marsh so they pumped all this stuff on this side of the Narrows and built this land up. The people really benefited that owned property on this road, they wound up with acres of ground that wasn't here before that. And so as that ground settled here, and the sun shone on it and dried it out, Captain Benny, he didn't have any shop, but his daughter got married into a family that owned this piece of ground. And they had quite a few acres more than they did before they dug the channel to. So Captain Benny, he came down here and he was going to build a boat right out in the open for some man. And he had another, he had two boats going down right down here at the time, right on this bear ground, sun shining down on him. And one was for a senator, and one was for a local man that had a trucking concern. And his wife was pregnant, and it turned out that she had a little baby boy, so they named that boat *It's A Boy*. And the senator, he came along and he said he wanted that boat finished by graduation time, his daughter, he wanted to give it -- that was going to be her present. So it had to be done by the spring. And he told Captain Benny, he says money's no object. You or anybody that can help build this boat, you get them. Well he had everybody. He had one guy down there had a hammer with a chair rung into

it for a handle, and he had all kinds of people working on his boat, and he got the boat done, and I guess the senator paid him. But after that, he decided he was going to build a shop on this property. So I think this old building was an old metal building that was brought down from Baltimore after it was dismantled, and he -- well I'd say just the skin, the corrugated metal, because it's tremendously heavy in thickness. So it was some kind of commercial building that he bought and had it brought down here, and he built this, and he started building boats inside of it, and it was -- wasn't very big, it was 20 by 40, the original building. And as he got to a point in life where he couldn't work no more, I went to his daughter and I asked her about building boats down here. And so I moved down here in 1950, and then I put as much floor space on it as he originally had and electrified it. It wasn't no electric or nothing down here, and so I was a modern shop for a while. But now, as you can see, the shop is wore out and so am I, but we're going out together. That'll give you a little idea how this came about.

S.D.: Is there a season, a particular season that's better? I mean I know it's easier to work when the temperature is more comfortable.

M.L.: Well normally, in years past, my experience, if anybody was thinking about boats, they would approach you in the fall, and they'd want a boat for the coming spring. So, naturally, orders would materialize for a boat in the fall of the year, and you'd expedite in the spring or as early as you could. And real hot summer months, July and August, if you could afford to, you'd kind of take it, kind of slack time, kind of take it easy. So to answer your question, that's basically the way I found it through the years. Winter was the most productive part. And from the standpoint of physical activity, you could produce more in cool weather than you could real hot, sticky weather.

S.D.: The last time we were talking to you, you talked about the airplanes that you owned.

M.L.: Yeah, yeah.

S.D.: We need to get some more on that.

M.L.: Well I was always fascinated with airplanes. I grew up in time of Lindberg and all those guys. I was fascinated by airplanes, and built model airplanes, and as I got older, I was under the impression that to be a flyer, you had to be a college graduate or something or other, and I didn't aspire to be a college graduate, so I never thought much about flying until my service time was out, and I was home here. A friend next door, he'd started flying a little bit, and he wanted me, wanted to know if I wanted to fly down to Norfolk to look at some surplus material the government had. This was early 50's. So yeah, I'll go. So we went down there. On the way

back, I said to the guy, I said let me try to fly, let me feel this thing. Used to boats, but I'd never had control of an airplane. So I did, and when I got back to Easton, he said why don't you start taking some lessons flying. Oh, no, I'm too old for that, you know, I was 36, I think. I was getting to be an old man at 36. So he said no, he said you ought to take some lessons. So I started going up there. Got a physical and learner's certificate, and I started taking lessons. And after about eight hours one day, out there on a beautiful sunny day, it was Sunday, I landed the airplane and he was behind me in the seat behind me, and he said stop her a minute. So I put on the brakes and stopped, and he got out. I thought what in the heck is he doing getting out of this thing, looking around for something. I thought maybe something happened in the back he wanted checked. And he said, he was fixing up the strap in the back and he said look, he said time for you to solo now, and I'm going to let you go. Man, no, I ain't going to go up in this thing by myself. No way. He said look, you're ready to go. I want you to go. And it dawned on me. Man, if I don't fly this airplane now, I'm going to get out of this thing and never get back into it. So he shut the door, and I shoved the throttle ahead. And the next thing I know, the ground was way down there, and I didn't have nobody behind me, and I had to land the damn thing. So I flew all around and come on in, landed her. And that was my solo flight, first solo.

P.L.: This was out of Easton Airport?

M.L.: Yeah. And then I took and -- I had a lot more flying to do, finally. I had to go on a cross-country flight. And that was an experience. Lindberg didn't -- Paris didn't look any better to Lindberg than Easton looked to me when I made that solo cross-country flight. But it was fun, and I enjoyed it, and I enjoyed working on the airplanes. So I got to the -- the type of airplanes I flew were so much related to the boat work that I was doing. And I had built many, many models of airplanes. So I was familiar with all the nomenclature of names of -- and the incidence -- the parts of the airplane. So it was really a wonderful experience, but all I did was just private flying. And then the day came when I bought my own airplane. But I found that I really didn't have a whole lot of time to do it. And the airport was roughly 25 miles away, and after a hard day's work and you want to fly, you've got to ride all the way to Easton to fly for an hour or so, you know. And so after a while, it got to the point where you couldn't justify the cost. So I told my interest. But I've got log books with the time from my first flights right on up.

P.L.: Who was your instructor up there?

M.L.: A number of them. Buck Fluharty was my basic instructor. He was the one wanted me to fly to -- he got out of the service, and he took lessons, and he got private pilots, and he got instructor's license. And he encouraged me to fly, and he was basic, my basic -- but I had two or three others at times that he wasn't there, you know. Go up there and fly around. And I had to

go to -- the first test that I took was 50 questions, true or false, simple. Nothing to it. But I had to take a flight test within so many days for that to be valid. And I got involved in a lot of boat work down here and I didn't get -- due to the weather and stuff, I had to get a flight instructor to go with you, and I never did get hooked up to one right. Low and behold, the next thing I knew, I had a whole new set of rules. I had to go to Baltimore to take a test, which the maximum time was four hours. And I'll never forget that. It was a guy up there. Him and I was going to Baltimore to take the exam. I was going to take a private pilot's exam, and he was going to take a multi-engine pilot's exam. And I was in the left seat to get radio experience going into BWI. And low and behold, it turned IFR, Instrument Flight Rules. In Instrument Flight Rules, you've got to fly instruments, and I was a private -- well I was just VFR, Visual Flight Rules. So he had to get in the left seat, and here we were flying all -- we didn't really have, he thought he had to get in the left seat, but he really didn't. And it was dangerous. Well anyway, he wanted to get where I was sitting, in a tight airplane. Well I tried to get under him, he tried to get over me, and here's the damn airplane up in the air flying along. We finally, we finally manage. If we got stuck, I guess we -- with the crash. Well he finally got in the seat and he took over the instruments. And before we got there, it was VFR again. But anyway, we landed, and we -- but I broke me plotter. I had a plotter, I broke that. But anyway, I got -- I took my test. And but I just brought that little story about the silly thing we did to take a flight test, and it might've been our final flight if we got -- done something -- we were lucky. But I enjoyed fixing airplanes and flying them. And if I hadn't got so old, and we got too many toys, sailboat, motorboat, airplane, and you can't do all three one time, so I sold the airplanes.

S.D.: I have a question. Okay, wooden boat building. You talked about your son does some repair and stuff out there.

M.L.: Uh-huh (affirmative).

S.D.: Is there -- are there people still around doing wooden boat building on Tilghman, or what do you think about that as an art form?

M.L.: Other than David McQuay, I don't know of anybody that's still doing wooden boats. Well—

(END TAPE 1)

(BEGIN TAPE 2)

M.L.: There's Kinnamon up here. He does the fiberglass. But there's not many, not many wooden boat builders around. I guess, I don't know whether David's built any boats from scratch up. I don't know. I know he's done a lot of repair work, excuse me. Anyway, I don't know what he's built. I have lost track of him in years past. He probably built some skiffs or stuff like that, little stuff. But, no, it's not many -- it's not a -- the fiberglass technology has took over, and people have been sort of, I guess, educated to the point where fiberglass boats are almost no maintenance, maintenance free, but that's not true. You've got to put -- on the bottom of a fiberglass boat. If you want her to look like she's got a brand new paint job, you've got to polish her. The onliest thing I can say for the fiberglass—and it's good fiberglass boats, and cheap fiberglass boats. I mean some of them are just shells that are really not anything to crow about. Now but a good, a good wooden boat that's seasoned and, you know, if any major repair has to be done, it will develop in the early part of its life. And once any sap wood turns to rot and you clean that out, you pretty well have -- that boat down there, that sailboat down there, I built that in 1960, and she hasn't had a rotten piece of wood spec in her all those years. She's built of nice cedar, oak framing. Now I did -- the glue in the garboard's kind of cracked, and it had to be just—the glue in the seam, it had a little repair to do that. But a good wooden boat will last a lifetime if it's properly maintained. And that's no more than sanding it a little bit and putting a coat of paint on it. And if you get too much paint, you want to take it off because that's detrimental to the longevity of the boat. If it builds up and blisters and cracks -- and dampness gets under it and it can't dry out, then you've got a situation which might develop into deterioration. But it's too many wooden boats in late years prior to fiberglass was built, and they wouldn't put compounds on their moldings. They wouldn't bed the wood all like around the sheer and the toe rail and stuff that should be put together in that manner. Water would get in there. I've seen very expensive yachts, relatively new, come over here, whole sheer is rotten due to the fact that they never put anything under the guard to keep the water out. And when you've got two piece of wood that water can get in there, and sun shines on it and steams it and drives it in, and another thing, you take and put paint on the outside of a plank, and you put paint on the inside of a plank, and if you get a rupture on the outside, dampness gets in there. It can't breathe through and dry off. So I never encapsulate a plank whenever I— unless I absolutely had to, I never encapsulate it in paint on both sides. I'd put something thin that could breathe like wood preservatives, something like that on the inside. But that's my experience with wooden boats. And I've had a lot of people, have gone out of wooden boats into fiberglass boats, and they've gone back into wooden boats because it's something about a wooden boat they like better. Now there's circumstances—carbon fiber racing hulls, stuff like that, that's strong, superior to wood, sure. But that's a different world all together.

S.D.: Well is there anything, we've talked about a lot of things. Is there anything that you'd like to add? Something we might have missed that you think is important?

P.L.: I'm curious if there's anything that you did in constructing boats that was sort of a signature of yours that other builders don't usually do.

M.L.: Well I don't know. You kind of get to the point where you don't want to -- I don't want to be a bragger -- you know, I feel like I've contributed a lot to the basic construction of boats over and above my forebears. I could expedite, produce -- my basic concern was to expedite, to give a quality boat and do it as quickly as I could, not only for the monetary benefit, but it's just a challenge to be able to do something over and above an old method. So I was, you know, concerned about producing something more efficiently. And I -- it's a lot of detail that I've done that I could speak about that wasn't done before, and I think it was, it was beneficial. It's more efficient by far. But to give you an answer to your question, I, you know, there's other people done the same thing to some degree, I guess. And there was Cutts and Case over there, Eddy Cutts. Eddy Cutts is a very competent man, and Eddy Cutts, I'm sure he's a man that is an innovator, and it's beneficial to him to produce something more efficiently than the old standard way of doing things. And that's about all I can say about it. I've always tried, for my own benefit, as well as the owner's benefit, to produce a product more efficiently.

P.L.: Okay, well thank you very much.

S.D.: Yeah, thank you. We appreciate it.

M.L.: Well it's been a pleasure.

(END OF INTERVIEW.)