

Interview Log

Interviewee: Miss Shirley

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Topic: growing up in Rock Hall, fishing, working on the water, waterwomen, eel pots, crabbing, children

of CDs: 2

[Part 1]

JB: Here we go.

SA: Like I say I never went out as far as going out to help him fish the nets and things like that I never went out and did that and another thing he went on the tugboats.

JB: Mhm he was a captain of a tugboat.

SA: When we first got married he worked on the water but it got to be slack time and we had a family and so I remember that. Did I tell you this before?

JB: Nun-huh [negative], no.

SA: He and Glenney Edwards, Glenney was a young boy at the time and they were eeling up the bay. Well I now see that was something I did, I helped him make the eel pots sew the funnels in and all that and he didn't really like for me to do that because I was faster than he was but anyways we had had a very good year when he was oystering and that was my part. I took part of the money because I paid well I did that until he died because he never knew whether we had five dollars or five million. He just knew that when he came home and asked for money that I would have it. I don't know where the hell he thought I kept it but anyways he and Glenney went up the bay eeling and they'd leave at two o'clock in the morning because it was a long hike. So every day they would come home early in the morning bring the eels home and I would take them down to the seller that bought them and they would salt them down and then they would sell them to crabbers and Billy would go to bed. So every day they came home they would bring me a few eels but when they got ready to go back that night I had to give them money for gas and bait things like that and like I said we did have a very good oyster season and I saved that money so I said to him one day, every day I'm giving them money to go back to work. So I said to him, "Guys it is time for a little round table." I said, "You're taking me broke we've got a long summer ahead of us and I don't see any light at the end of this tunnel. I mean you come home and bring the two or three eels and I have to give you money and after a while my money is going to run out." So Glenney said I went in the

Marines. He loved to tell this story. When they had his fiftieth birthday party he said I got a story to tell you. He said we worked like God damn dogs and weren't making anything and taking Shirley money home back with us. He said and Shirley sat us down to the round table and this is coming to a screeching halt. So I went in the Marines and Billy went on the tugboats and that's the end of that story. So that's what I did tell him. I said this is too much I've saved this money all winter and now you're taking it back and not bringing any in. So that's when he went into the Marines and like I said he was a young boy. Well Bill wasn't that old either so anyway that was the end of the eeling career.

JB: Did he ever try crabbing or anything to make money in the off season instead of eels?

SA: Oh yeah, oh yeah but it wasn't anything to that either.

JB: Hm.

SA: The water business at that time was at a very low scale and I said we just can't keep, I'll be broke and we won't have a damn thing to show for it only a lot of work and that is what it was. So darling went and stayed on those boats for forty-five years before he retired.

JB: Do you remember when the oyster ban came on?

SA: No, no I remember it I guess at the time. I remember having the ban on the oyster but we weren't involved in it at the time.

JB: Do you remember hearing, I was told a story by someone else that the women in the town got really angry when the oyster ban came on because they could only catch, watermen could only catch fifteen bushels...

SA: Yeah

JB: Which they would catch in a couple of hours....

SA: Yeah

JB: And then they went to the bar had a good time...

SA: Yeah

JB: And the women were like what's going on.

SA: Oh yea, that went on a lot of times let me tell you Julie because they worked like hell and that was their release but where was ours? You know. Now Billy did work during that time on that water at that time I guess maybe they were slow tug boating I don't know but he did do that. He owned a boat or we owned a boat and in-between times when he wasn't working he would come home and he would go to work on the water but it wasn't our main source of living.

JB: Mhm [affirmative].

SA: But it held us over until he went back to work.

JB: When were the other times when the women kind of said something when...

SA: Oh they said it a lot.

JB: They said it a lot.

SA: They said it a lot and a lot of times they said a lot.

JB: Do they still say it today?

SA: I don't know that.

JB: You don't know that.

SA: I don't know that they young people today work different then the way our men worked.

JB: How does your daughter Andrea work differently then you did?

SA: Well see she has a crab sloughing business and now Jimmy is off the water. He works for Southern States but he made a good living. Jimmy made a good living he could catfish. He never did much crabbing I don't think but he catfished and he made good money but then that kind of petered out and he went to work for Southern States and now he works for full-time for Southern States. At first he only worked liked in the summer and then the fishing and hauling in the winter. He's a good boy too. He's a good boy, the boy's a good man he's not a... their all boys to me you know. They are really, they're all boys to me. Some of them just don't do right but who the hell is right all the time anyways. I'm sorry I didn't mean to say that on that thing.

JB: That's ok.

SA: But anyway I raised half of them because my kids were home and the other kids were all always here. I always had a house full.

JB: Last time we were talking a little bit about your son, Scratch, and about all the wives he's had.

SA: Well some of them weren't wives but they were living with him anyways.

JB: And he said that he gave away a couple of houses to them.

SA: He did.

JB: Has that changed like when you were growing up did your parents go through multiple partners? Or is that it is just random people? Is that something that happens here in the community?

SA: Well I guess it happens everywhere Julie.

JB: Yea

SA: But I don't know. We used to call this little Peyton Place, you know, the fellas would go in the service and women would run around some of them not all of them but like little Peyton Place I guess.

JB: Yea I just was wondering if it was different in Rock Hall then you see other places.

SA: No, it's not a bit of difference in it only it's a small town and everybody knows everyone else's business or they take it upon themselves to know. I can't be worried with that. I don't care what the hell is going on. I said I was never going to be a gossip because can't remember what people tell me anyway because I'm not interested in it. I don't care who runs who as long as they aren't sick I don't care what goes on really.

JB: Did ...

SA: So I can't keep that up here I have a very small place up there and I can't keep all this in my head so I just let it go on through.

JB: Do you think most people met who they were going to marry in school around here when you were growing up?

SA: I didn't hardly know Billy when I was growing up. He lived in Pinney Neck and that was like a whole, Pinney Neck and Skinners Neck are just like far in the county to me and the only ones I knew where the ones I went to school with and I didn't know them very well because they had a school of their own both Pinney Neck and Skinners Neck. Well then they didn't have enough students and some years down the road they closed those schools and they came out to Rock Hall. They bused them out to Rock Hall. I knew Billy in passing but to me he was always a Pinney Necker when I was in school you know so.

JB: How did you start dating?

SA: Well I was working in Baltimore and would come home on weekends and I was going with another fellow. He was an Ashley also but a different set of Ashley's and I don't know I just migrated to Billy I guess somehow or another I don't know and then we started dating. So I would have had sixty-five years with Billy if he had lived so must been a good thing that I did.

JB: Yea it was a good migration.

SA: Yea it was. We had a good time, had rough times but good times the good out weights the bad.

JB: Mhm. When you were raising your children, did they go out on the water for fun like did Andrea go trotlining or did Billy, "Scratch"?

SA: Billy did but Andrea never went out like that but we used to crab out here. See we have water down here this is part of the bay this is a hunting field down here and I used to go with them we'd go dip netting, crabbing, all summer, took all the kids and the dogs and we went crabbing. So they came up on the water, all of them came up on the water.

JB: Mhm.

SA: And they still enjoy it, Candy not so much she never she was the baby and she never cared that much for that but I had two dogs one of them was a good crabber. He could catch as many crabs as I could in his mouth. That's the truth. He was a schooner I guess but he was a wonderful dog and his name was Sundown but anyway he'd go along and he never got in front of me. He always stayed right back alongside of me and he'd go along. He'd catch a crab go right back to basket put it in lift the screen. One day we had a beagle too and they were buddies and so but the beagle never wanted to go in the water. So he would go along the shore, follow along on the shore. So one day Sundown decided he would too, he would go up with the beagle and I hollered a shore to him and I said, "Hey if you are not going to crab. You can go home there is no need for you to stay down here and stay on the shore" and he got right off that shore and went right on out on crabbing again. He's like a water dog, he was part waterdog I don't know what the hell the other part was but he was a wonderful dog. He got electrocuted down here.

JB: Oh no.

SA: We had a thunderstorm and my father lived with me and he used to take both dogs for a walk every morning, take them down to the shore. Well we didn't even know the lines were down and when they were coming back. Sundown went into one of the places down there and stepped on a wire and killed him. It was a sad time around here then I'm telling you. That beagle came up that road and my father wasn't really well and I'd thought something had happened to him. She came up that road and run into the door and just carried on for me to come and I thought something had happened to my father down there and I got the car to go and when I did daddy was coming up the road and he was a wreck 'cause he had seen that. See if that had been I'd have tried to get that dog off that wire and I would have gotten killed but my father had sense enough not to do that and he died. Died right there on that, just blew him to pieces. So it was kind of a sad time around here for a long time but nobody else knew that the wires were down there because we didn't lose power or anything. It was, I guess it was just those couple of houses down there.

JB: Sure, that's hard to know.

SA: It was really bad but anyway that had nothing to do with this, you got me reminiscing now.

JB: When you were growing did you go out on the water and trotline?

SA: Oh yea

JB: And soft shell crab?

SA: Mhm [affirmative]

JB: Did you do that your father?

SA: Mhm [affirmative]

JB: Did you have a dog that goes with you?

SA: No we didn't have a dog then. We had a dog I'm sure 'cause we always have a dog but no we didn't have a dog that went with us then.

JB: What was it like going out there when you were a child?

SA: Well it was, I guess we made kind of an excursion out of it. Mom would pack us a lunch but he'd crab differently.

JB: Your father did?

SA: Uh-huh. He had a, he would stand on the bow of the boat and with his dip net and he pushed along with the handle of the dip net. Now he could catch as many crabs standing up there. I could never see them, standing up there. I had to wade in the water to go crabbing but he could catch as many. He could see them down there. That always amazed me how he could do that because I couldn't see a thing down there but he could.

JB: You were out on the boat with him or did you walk beside?

SA: Yea but we were just, we had like a small boat.

JB: Like a skiff?

SA: No, like a bateau.

JB: Oh ok.

SA: And he'd stand up on the bow of it and he would crab along like that and we would go behind him in the boat. I guess I must have been the only one did that. I was like a little tomboy when I was a kid and my sister was more of the crochet type and sewing. That didn't interest me at all when I was growing up.

JB: Did your classmates, your female classmates, do a lot of stitching type of work?

SA: I don't know, I don't remember that.

JB: Ok

SA: I know I didn't get really good marks in school in home ec I know that. I remember that because see my home ec teacher always said you are not like Audrey and I thought thank God for that. So I never go

the marks that she did one time. One time we were making, I don't know what the hell I was making, a blouse I guess and that home ec teacher couldn't tell me, she couldn't get it straight. We had what they called a gusset in the sleeve, under your arm and she couldn't even get that damn thing in there but when I brought it home little sis did. She got it in there. So that tells you what a seamstress she was and she was like that all her life.

JB: Mhm

SA: But like I said I was like a tomboy you know I didn't do that kind of shit.

JB: Did you go out with any of your friends crabbing?

SA: I don't remember doing that no.

JB: Do you remember your daughter going out crabbing with friends?

SA: When she got older I guess yea.

JB: Ok like high school, college?

SA: Yea

JB: Ok

SA: But when she was little like that no, I guess I wouldn't let them go anyway.

JB: Why wouldn't you let them go?

SA: When they were little because I was afraid that something would happen to them.

JB: Ok

SA: When they were out doing anything like that I was with them. I guess I wouldn't let them. They used to go swimming and things like that was happening but I wouldn't go let them go I guess for the whole day crabbing or like I say when they older I guess they did, Andrea did. I don't remember Candy doing it.

JB: Well if Candy didn't like the water it would be weird if she went out here with her friends.

SA: I guess she liked the water she liked to swimming and all but it didn't have the fascination that the other children had she didn't and she wasn't very sports inclined either. Like they all like to play ball and things like that Candy didn't. It takes all kinds you know.

JB: Sure, yea.

SA: She is a wonderful girl she really is. She came along a long time after the others did.

JB: Sometimes it's really nice to get another baby along the way.

SA: My sister said, "Why are you not screaming and hollering. All the other kids were in school and kindly out of the way and why aren't you not screaming and hollering." I said, "What the hell would that do? I am already pregnant it's not like there is anything you can do about that" and she has been my salvation believe me. She's the one you can really count on for anything.

JB: Is she still in the area here?

SA: Oh yea.

JB: Does she work around here?

SA: She works at the Sailing Emporium. She has been there almost thirty years.

JB: What does she do for them?

SA: She works in the office.

JB: Ok, is she married?

SA: Oh yea.

JB: Do you have grandchildren by her?

SA: One, she only had one child and he was and still is apple of my eye. I raised him from the time he was three weeks old and she went back to work and she just brought him just like she took him out of bed that morning and he stayed with me until Billy got sick. He was fourteen then, when he got sick, old enough to go home but he used to come home, come here with me. After school the bus left him off here after school till Billy got sick.

JB: He'd just spend the entire afternoon.

SA: I just played with him.

JB: That's fun.

SA: I had more time then, then when I did when mine were coming up because there was too much to do at that time but then I would let things go and he and I would play, you know. Yea he is something else.

JB: What is he doing now?

SA: He is working with his father.

JB: Oh he is? What does he father do?

SA: His father's a bricklayer.

JB: Bricklayer, okay.

SA: He is getting ready to tomorrow to go back on the tugboats. He worked on them for a while. He got his license. Do you smoke Julie?

JB: No, I'm ok thank you.

SA: You don't smoke?

JB: No

SA: Good, don't ever start. I smoked for sixty-five years so I'm not quitting now. I told the doctor that.

JB: What did he...

SA: I have COPD and I know it is bad for you but what do you think my nerves would be like after smoking for sixty-five years? What do you think my nerves would be like if I gave these cigarettes up now? I told her are you crazy. Well you know should Miss Shirley. I said yea I should have done a lot of things that I don't.

JB: That's funny.

SA: Now Julie.

JB: Yea

SA: What do you want me to tell you about that you haven't heard?

JB: I have a whole list of questions.

SA: Ok. Go for it I don't know if I can answer it.

JB: That's ok, a lot of them are comparison questions, so how you grew up and when you were having children verses your daughter. Do you think more women work in like the fishing industry and by that I mean anything in the shucking houses or selling fish or even out on the water, mending nets then when you were growing up?

SA: I don't think there much of that goes on now at all. Well they may work, mostly colored people work in the shucking houses and crab picking houses like that. That's what they did. Most of them don't do that anymore. That's almost a thing of the past anyways but I guess I don't remember what they did when I was a kid. I guess I wasn't interested in that but in my era a lot of white people worked in the shucking houses and in the crab houses picking crabs and so many of them geared net for the men now I did that.

JB: Geared net?

SA: Uh-huh

JB: Did you work in the shucking houses too?

SA: But I used to gear net out here on the porch. Andrea and I geared net.

JB: What does that mean gear net?

SA: That is making the net.

JB: Making the net?

SA: You buy the net in hanks and then you have to stretch that out and whatever type of fish that you are going for, say you are going for perch or rock or shad whatever you have to make the net so they can put it overboard and catch the fish. It doesn't come already made.

JB: Oh ok

SA: The net is there but you got to gear it according to what kind of fish you are going after to catch, some of them are bigger and some of them are smaller and then you hank it up and they put it in a box and put it overboard.

JB: How did you learn how to gear net?

SA: I don't know I guess it came naturally, I don't know.

JB: Oh ok I am just wondering because if you didn't really do it, if your mom didn't do it.

SA: No she didn't do it.

JB: Was it like a class or a book you just did it and whatever worked work and then you taught Andrea?

SA: Well I guess we learned together Julie 'cause she and I worked together gearing net. I paid for the first cruise Billy and I took. I paid for that cruise from gearing net and we didn't get the money then that they get now.

JB: So you, I mean you geared net for a lot of people then?

SA: Oh yea different people.

JB: And they told you what size fish they wanted to catch and you would do it.

SA: Mhm and we had marking where to put each cork and each ring for the size of fish they were going to go to catch. Of course you stand on your feet all day long but like I said it was money in it at the time but I mean they make money gearing net now.

JB: There is a lot of money in it now?

SA: Uh-huh

JB: Who does it now in town?

AS: Well I don't know if anybody does it in here. Andrea used to gear in the wintertime. She and Janet geared together too. I got too old for that I can't stand up all day long on cement floor and gear net and I don't have to do it either. You know?

JB: Sure

SA: And if I did I wouldn't do it because I couldn't stand up there all day long like that. I'd gear all day when Andrea was working she worked in the bank and I'd gear all day long and then she got off work and we gear half the night.

JB: Wow that's a lot of nets. This was in the 80s? The 70s-80s? When is this that you geared net?

SA: I guess I never paid any attention to the years or the times, days or the times I just went with the flow.

JB: Mhm, yea. Where there any women who worked on the tug boats with your husband?

SA: One woman that I know of and her name was Judy.

JB: Judy?

SA: Mhm

JB: Ok

SA: Don't ask me the last name all I knew was Judy and she worked just like the men. She could get down there if there was something was wrong with engine she could get down. It wasn't like they had to hire some women like there is today. They have to have so many blacks, they got to have so many females, they got to have so much education. She of course took the test and passed it but she was so kind of gal. I mean rough I think she came from Massachusetts. I'm not sure about that.

JB: And she moved out here to work on the tugboats?

SA: No she never moved here. She always worked away but see my husband did too. He never worked here on those tugboats.

JB: Where did the tugboats work?

SA: Well they are anywhere where there's dredging to be done or boats to be moved from one place to the other or boats to be carrying people to work on the dredges and things like but seems like Billy was always away

from home. I always said I raised my kids by myself because he was gone you know he worked from Florida right on up to Maine.

JB: Wow how long of a stretch was he gone for at a time?

SA: Well depending where he was at the time, when he was in Louisiana he worked like two weeks on one week off and he'd work twelve hours a day. When he was in Maine I guess he worked the same. No, I think he worked sixteen hours a day and then he'd be off thirty-two hours but he couldn't come home from Maine because you couldn't get here and back in time for his next watch but around New Jersey and New York and like that he would be home every day sometime during the day and he would work but you see the kids were in school and sometimes it would be a week before he could see them because he'd be home, when he came home they'd either be in school or in bed and by the time they got back he'd was gone. So sometimes it would be a week before they could even see him. It's rough sometimes when you had decisions to make and not wanting to do them on your own for fear of what would happen. So but we had to make a living.

JB: Right

SA: So you do what you have to do.

JB: Yea so what is he doing on the tugboats is actually very different with what watermen do because...

SA: Oh yea

JB: Most watermen come back every night so.

SA: Oh yea that was a lot of different.

JB: Where there a lot of tugboat captains and tugboat workers around here.

SA: Oh there is, they all belong to the union

JB: There is a tug boat union? Here in Rock Hall there is a representative?

SA: Nah-huh

JB: Where did all the tugboat workers come from?

SA: All over the country.

JB: Ok

SA: All over the country.

JB: That explains why the woman, Judy, came from Massachusetts then.

SA: Yea, yea.

113: I wonder if she followed her husband or boyfriend.

SA: She wasn't even married. She had one girl, one daughter, who lived on an island up there. She followed in her mother's footsteps and she became but I didn't know her. I didn't know her.

JB: Do you know what island it is? Nantucket or Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard.

SA: No I don't.

JB: Ok, I used to living on an island off of Massachusetts.

SA: Did you really?

JB: I used to live on Nantucket Island.

SA: No kidding.

JB: Thirty miles out to sea.

SA: Did you like it?

JB: I loved it.

AS: Did you really?

JB: I did.

SA: Was your parents associated with that?

JB: Yea I am actually descended from islanders, my grandfather's grandmother was born on the island.

SA: Is that right?

JB: So my grandfather bought a house on the island when my parents were young, oh, my mother was young and we go back every year.

SA: Oh that is wonderful, that's wonderful Julie.

JB: it's nice although you are lucky your family is all around here.

SA: Well not all of them but the best part of them. Yea I am very lucky Julie. My kids come in the morning and have coffee with me and we have a little round table discussions every morning. Of course now they are in the act of telling me of what I should be doing and what I shouldn't do and all that good shit you know. It used to be that I told them but now they tell me I don't do it but they tell me to do it anyway. I am going to have surgery on Wednesday on my shoulder. I have a torn ligament in my shoulder and I've had it for a long time and I just never did anything about it, just suffered through it until it got too bad and I had to go to the doctor. So now I am going to this good damn hospital on Wednesday. So hopefully he will sew it together and I won't that

rotator cuff or whatever it is called, so that I had a dressing down over that. I should have I should have been going to the doctor for a long time and I had that spiel every morning but I did go when it go to be so very bad. I had to go and maybe it would have been easier if I had gone but I still have a mind of my own [laughter]. Although I'm eighty-one years old I still got a little bit of it left not all of it but a little bit. Julie, have you got coffee?

JB: Yea, I'm good thank you it's nice and warm.

SA: It is cold out isn't it?

JB: It is cold.

SA: It was fifty degrees when I got up this morning. That's pretty damn stiff for October, the first of October.

JB: Is it the first of October already?

SA: It was yesterday.

JB: Oh it's the second today ok. It is, it's not even Halloween yet. It's not supposed to be cold yet.

SA: I always said we used to always buy these costumes or made these costumes for these kids and they always had to have a coat on to over them up so you know but that is another month, or almost a month away and here it is like this and I hate it. I don't have much blood and I get cold very easily.

JB: Well it is nice and warm in the kitchen.

SA: It is nice and warm all over in here let me tell you. Except upstairs I don't have heat and I keep the window open in my bedroom. So it's pretty chilly in there and it's a little early to put my electric blanket on. So I'm bundled up with all these blankets on top of me.

JB: I am too. I have four blankets on my bed right now including one wool one.

SA: Do you? Well you're living on that island though I guess you grew up with it being damn cold.

JB: Right now I live in Cooperstown, New York. Since that's where my school is so I'm in the mountains.

SA: Are you? Pretty damn chilly up there and you have a hell of a winter up there too.

JB: Yea, it has been raining and raining and raining.

SA: It has here too.

JB: Yea, have you seen that the bay has been rising lately because of the water, has it changed?

SA: Only during the storms.

JB: Only during the storms ok.

SA: Only then

JB: I wonder if I know that the rain affects the fish and the migration of the fish. I wonder what happens during the storms.

SA: I don't know because so many things, I blame it all on them going to the moon because the moon governs the water and the weather and I blame it that. I said if they leave that god damn moon up there and just let it shine on people at night we would be better off and a lot of people don't agree with that but that's my theory. It governs the tides and damn well everything has gone to hell in a hand basket let me tell you since all this moon thing goes on. So it's got to be something to it.

JB: Yea so.

SA: Who the hell knows I'm not a psychic or anything but I have been through a lot of different changes.

JB: Yea.

SA: So.

JB: What do you think the biggest change, what was the biggest change in Rock Hall?

SA: When all of the people from Pennsylvania moved to Rock Hall.

JB: For their summer homes?

SA: And then they just stayed and raise hell. We got a fellow now that came from Pennsylvania and he goes to the town meetings. He wants to have the Lord's Prayer taken from the meetings. He doesn't want that to happen. I said well tell him go back to Pennsylvania and maybe he can be heard there. They have raised hell with that fellow. Well he's nuts, he's got to be nuts, but you know what Julie what really pisses me off, they come here, they love it here because everything is laid back here and they just love this type of living and as soon as they get here they want to change it? You know? And I have a lot of friends in Pennsylvania I really do but they aren't that kind of friend I can tell you that.

JB: Yea they've changed the waterfront a lot around here right?.

SA: Yea

JB: 'Cause when I walked down there I noticed there was a bunch of sailboats and pleasure boats. You don't see the work boats you used to.

SA: Because they had to leave, they had to leave here.

JB: The work boats?

SA: Yea

JB: Where do they go?

SA: On land jobs most of them because the living is not there. They've got so many things that have changed that they can't do this and they can't do that and they can't do something else. Well if they can't that's their way of life. You know and if they can't make a living they have to go somewhere to make a living.

JB: In twenty years do you think people will still be working on the water?

SA: I doubt it, I doubt it. If there is it is going to be the pleasure people you know.

JB: Mhm

SA: See that used to be a booming business. Bill used to carry fishing parties and he was booked for every day. Well you don't see that many fishing party boats now because they all came down here and established themselves and they all have their little boats and they go out on their own but Billy was booked every day of the summer.

JB: Your son or your husband?

SA: My husband and he was carrying fishing parties every day and every day I would have to call around and see if the other captains all had books for that day. So if they didn't, we would give them that party but it was very few days that Billy wasn't book and if he wasn't it was because we were going to be doing something else and he would take that day. Now that was a booming business at one time. I think it's only two boats now that take parties. I don't know I guess it is three or four but they are part-time, they don't work every day of the summer. So it's made a lot of difference in that and like I said they all bought boat they've graduated and they think they are so smart now that they can do it on their own that's the one, one thing. Like I said they come down here and went on the fishing party boats or they bought a summer home and they were here and then they just stayed but oh it's a battle [laughter] and a lot of them are good people. I have some very good friends in Pennsylvania in fact I have a couple that are down now. They are here, they have a boat of their own but they never ran fishing parties anyways but they bought a boat but I call it a yacht. I tell them they are my rich friends of Pennsylvania.

JB: So going off the water now.

SA: Oh ok.

JB: We'll be on land for a little bit.

SA: I can probably do a little better with that maybe not.

JB: What did you do for fun when you were raising your kids?

SA: Well I guess the fun came from having the children.

JB: Hm.

SA: Because with, I never went anywhere without Billy, you know, that just wasn't a thing for me. I didn't enjoy that at all. He and I would go to dances and things like that or we would, wasn't much fun except with the kids. I don't know [laughter], I don't know but you know what I'm telling I have got a lovely neighbor here who are young people they don't have any children yet. In fact when they bought this house that's when they got married and they're always out camping and things like that and I say go now because if you save that money and you think you are going to save that for your retirement there is no fun then. There's no fun because you are old and you don't want to do those kinds of things. You'd rather be sitting back watching the television so go and do it now don't save that money for your old age because there's not going to be any fun to it all, have your fun now. You know I do, I tell them that and they do it that and I think it's wonderful. You are only young once.

JB: Yea

SA: Most of the time when you are young like that you don't have the money to do the things you do but when you saved your money all your life so you can do it. Of course we had a lot of good times when we got old.

JB: Did you have a group of friends that you hung out with, with your children?

SA: Yea and we had a group of friends that we didn't include the children. Like every Friday night and they're all dead now but two of us, three of us, so they are not here to enjoy things. That's why I told the kids to do it.

JB: Mhm

SA: But every Friday night we went out to dinner and that same group of people it was six or eight of us and every Friday night we went out to dinner and then went dancing and we had a ball. That was our thing for the week. Now like I said they are all dead there are three of us here out of that group. When I look back at that that's pretty sad you know.

JB: It was a completely different group that you hung out with kids?

SA: Oh yea, yea. Well you see Julie most of us were related in some way or another. We were either relatives or we had kids their age and so we would do things with them because they had their kids and of ages of mine, you know, and then we did things anything we could do, that we

could afford to do with all the children. We had those things just for the kids. You know we took them on excursions like all the, what the hell they call them, amusement parks now we did all that with them you know. And on little trips that were history that you could take them too, it wasn't a lot of money.

JB: Mhm.

SA: 'Cause when you have four children you don't have a lot of money to spend on pleasure you know.

JB: Sure.

SA: So we had a really good time as the times were.

JB: Sure

SA: You know, kids today say their bored. Well my kids were never bored. I was never bored in my life. I can never remember, I am bored a lot of times now but I never remember ever saying I was bored and my children never did because if there wasn't anybody around here form them to play ball with or do something with they'd go out in those woods and they would build a tree stand and build a... when Billy, first went, Billy "Scratch", when he first went on a fishing party boats he was out when Glennny came to get him to see if he would go, if I would let him go on those fishing parties. He was out there building a tree house I had to call him out of the woods. So I mean they would never or they would get a game together in the neighborhood and they might have to ride three miles on the bicycle but they would all get together and they'd played ball. You know my kids never sat in the house and watched television. At night time they did, in the day time they didn't even think about turning that television on. I guess I would have killed them if they had you know?

JB: Mhm

SA: But they were never bored I never knew what that word meant really. So it's a lot of difference with the kids today.

JB: Yea

SA: They didn't and when Wayne was here if he didn't have anybody to play with we had a dog. So he played with the dog he was never bored. He went out in the wood too. I had a big holly tree right next to the garage out here. He had every damn thing in that thing he had them on pulleys. He had tables; he had everything in the world up in that tree. He'd play in that tree all day long and he was right here, you know, close so I could see if anything was wrong. So he was never bored. I just don't understand these kids. Today my grandkids say that I'm just bored. Get out there get the hell away from that television and go do something. There got to be something for them to do to keep them from being bored except drive all over for hell and creation to take them somewhere. You know?

JB: Mhm

SA: I get very disgusted with that but we didn't even have television when I was growing up but I never remember ever being bored. I had little chores that I had to do that I was big enough to do but they didn't amount to back breaking fun either. I was telling somebody the other day we always had hogs when I was growing up and hog killing day was an experience because all these colored people would be here killing the hogs and we always saved the bladders.

JB: I'm sorry the card people?

SA: The colored people.

JB: Oh ok.

SA: Blacks.

JB: Yes

SA: We called them niggers or colored people. To their face we called them colored people but see I've got a whole neighborhood back here, that grew up back here and they were a whole different set of people. They were people that knew that they were black and we were white. You didn't intermingle with and they didn't come into your house and play with you. Now they might have played ball with you out in the field but that was it and no one ever came and sat down and had a cup of coffee like you and I. My mother had a cleaning woman and when it was time to eat she ate too at a little table to herself. She never sat at our table and ate. They just knew there was a difference. In fact they told me one time when they integrated the schools there was going to be trouble. The black people themselves said that and it's been trouble ever since because now they all think they're white and it is a wonderful thing to be white and now they've take over the whole God damn county. We even have a nigger president so there you go now you see.

JB: So on hog killing day they would come over and that was the one time the two groups could be together?

SA: No they worked.

JB: And the white people didn't work?

SA: No they might help with that and guide them and tell them what to do with the hogs after they killed them but the black people always killed the hogs and then they, this was one of our toys. They saved the bladders out of those hogs and we blew them up when they dried. We blew them up and that was our ball. I'm not kidding you Julie, I know this sound ridiculous but it is true.

JB: Ok

SA: We saved those bladders, we blew them up, and they became just as stiff and hard as a ball. It would get like this.

JB: That is a pretty good size.

SA: We used to have a ball with them until it would hit a stick or something in the yard. Oh Christ that was a tragedy. If they did then they would pop and they wouldn't anymore good and we lost our ball for the day, you know. Today if we did that if you had to put your mouth on that hog bladder well Christ you'd die of some kind of disease. Well I am eighty-one years old and I did that. It didn't bother me one bit.

JB: You just blew them up with your mouth?

SA: Yea

JB: And they were just stay full until they dried?

SA: Yea, no they weren't full. No, they weren't full. They drained that bladder and then we would blow it up but if that hit that stick that day our day was ruined.

JB: Would it pop?

SA: Yea the air would go out of it.

JB: Like a balloon?

SA: Just like a balloon.

JB: Huh

SA: And we had a hell of a time with them. So like I said we had no reason to be bored we could make fun out of nothing. When you can use a hog bladder for a toy you can make all kinds of things and do a whole lot of things to keep you from getting bored.

JB: What other toys did you make?

SA: Well we didn't make many of anything and we ate the hog meat. We made our own lard. Went to school, everyone smelled alike though because everyone was killing hogs at the same time. In the year they always killed the hogs in the fall and so we'd cut this fat up. Everybody took part in it, made the lard. When you went to school you all smelled just like that grease cooking you know but who cared everybody smelled alike you know.

JB: Right sure.

SA: And everybody had a job at hog killing time. See we were on the land still and you are trying to get something about this watermen thing.

JB: No, no this is perfect what was your job killing the hog?

SA: Well mine was cutting up the fat for the lard and mom cooked that and

then we had a press and when you got, drained all of the liquid off that you could get off out of the kettle [cough], excuse me, we put the rest of that in a press and a lard press and we drained off what came out of that, the rest of it. It was already cooked they called it cracklings.

JB: Cracklings?

SA: Cracklings and that was already cooked so you could eat that then. It's a wonder people didn't die. See today the cholesterol would take over but we didn't know anything about cholesterol I still don't know anything. I don't know if I have high cholesterol or none at all. I don't know, I don't want to know. I'm going to eat whatever I want whether it is good for you or bad for you I'm going to eat it or I'm not going to eat it if I don't like it and I don't give a damn how good it is for you, you know. But we would eat that. I can see my father now crumbling them all up and putting them in bean soup.

JB: Crackling in bean soup?

SA: Yea that was one of his favorite dishes. He'd put those cracklings in there. I don't remember how else we ate the cracklings if we did I guess we did because you never threw anything away. I don't know how else we ate them but I remember him putting them in the bean soup. Were you out all night lastnight you're yawning?

JB: I know it is Sunday morning [laughter]

SA: You are supposed to be in bed?

JB: I am.

SA: But you have to do what you have to do.

JB: And you know I love this town I think it is great

SA: Do you?

JB: And I'm not from Pennsylvania so I don't know if I can move here.

SA: You're not going to move here but I hope you will come back to see us though.

JB: I will definitely

SA: Now what is this you are working on?

JB: I'm going to stop the recording real fast here.

[Part 2]

JB: Ok

SA: A chicken necker is somebody who comes from Pennsylvania and that's what we call them because when they first started coming down here crabbing and things like that they used chicken necks for bait. Now the Rock Hall people when they're trotlining a lot of them use chicken necks but that's what all of them did. That was that was just a chicken necker.

JB: Chicken necker

SA: And they are still called that every one of them whether they are good, bad, or indifferent they are all chicken neckers.

JB: So am I chicken necker for coming down or do you have to live here to be a chicken necker?

SA: No, no you don't have to live here. They're especially the ones that don't live here that come down that they are called chicken neckers. These people across the road said when were they going to get the name of chicken necker. I said I am not going to give them your names so they can call you that because I like you and I don't want you to be called that.

JB: So it is a derogatory term?

SA: Yes, it's not a nice term at all. No you won't be a chicken necker.

JB: I'm the random girl who walks around with a recorder.

SA: Yea

JB: Ok thanks. We are going to stop this there.