

Howell, Tom&Judy-210629 0018-EDIT

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . this and then we can get into the nuts and bolts of it. And first . . . and I've already forgotten the date . . . I'm going to say that this is Jenifer Dolde. It is Tuesday, June 29, 2021, and I am here with Tom and Judy Howell at their home. It's the Cambridge address?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:00:21] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, it's a Cambridge address. But starting with you, Judy, would you just tell me your full name and your date of birth?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:00:30] Sure. Judith Richardson Howell, 06/06/46 after the big war ended.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's right.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:00:38] So that was me.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, Tom?

TOM HOWELL: [00:00:42] My name is Thomas Andrews Howell, and I was born June 8, 1945, so I'm 76 years old now.

JENIFER DOLDE: Time keeps passing, doesn't it?

TOM HOWELL: [00:00:56] Yes.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:00:56] It does.

JENIFER DOLDE: And like I said, it's somewhat atypical to interview two people at once, but we will work it out, so I'll do a little bit of this back and forth. Do you have a

timeline you need to get moving? You don't like to sit still.

TOM HOWELL: [00:01:09] Well, I —

JUDY HOWELL: [00:01:10] And our son is going to come through.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:01:12] I've got a haircut appointment at four o'clock.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, all right, well, I think we should be fine.

Oh yeah. Okay. Well, why don't we start with you, Judy?

Why don't you tell me a little bit about your growing-up years? We know who your father was, but tell me about your parents and your daily life.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:01:36] Yeah. We were very fortunate in our parents. We were born when they were in their forties, just 39 and 40 for the two of us. My brother was much earlier, and he was struck by lightning at a . . . after a sailboat race where he was at the log canoe and so that shaded our lives somewhat. I don't remember him at all because I was only two. And we lived in our bathing suits all summer long. We had a skiff, it was my sister's skiff, and we were allowed to go anywhere we could row so that was pretty limiting. [laughs] We didn't row to Cambridge.

JENIFER DOLDE: Even around here?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:02:22] Here, right up the road. My parents'

house is still standing but has not been cared for by the people who own it. And so there's still the interior with the wood-paneled living room and all that sort of thing, it's still there. And when I was a child, my father . . . a young child, my father worked after World War II when all the boat building stopped because he worked at the shipyard during the war and they did search-and-rescue craft . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: In Cambridge?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:02:57] In Cambridge. And he went to work for a bottled gas delivery company and so that was his job until he opened his own boatyard here. And he always had a small boatyard because he had built Hamptons, racing Hamptons for years in the little shop that's now falling down. And then he built a big shed, and the *Dove* was built in the shed and *Mr. Jim* and several other name-worthy craft. And by then, I finished college and was teaching in Prince George's County for a couple of years, and on one Fourth of July met Tom on the beach. We were sailing the *Jay Dee*, and that's how he got his first glimpse at a log canoe and how many people it can hold, which is about 40, and so . . . then I taught school here until 10 years ago. I taught here for . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Did you really?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:04:03] . . . forty years, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Until 10 years ago. Backing up a little bit, and I actually was reading an old interview with Lila Line who did some interviews with your father that he went for . . . maybe it was just a summer to work in DC for someone who was building houses? Is that something that you . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:04:21] That would've been in the early '30s.

JENIFER DOLDE: Not something you were . . . he talked about much?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:04:25] No.

JENIFER DOLDE: And do you remember what year he stopped working for someone on the outside and opened the shop here exclusively?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:04:34] Well, he always had a small shop, and he built Hamptons in the little shed that's falling down now, and he would build two at a time. And that was during the time that I was a child so that would've started in about 1950, but it wouldn't support a family. My mother was an RN and did private duty, and she hardly ever had a rest between a case because she was excellent at her job. And so he built there until the . . . I guess until the Dove project started coming along.

TOM HOWELL: [00:05:10] Oh, he built a bunch of skipjacks.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:05:13] He did, yeah. He built pleasure-sailing craft up to 42 feet, it wasn't the largest one . .

. 42 feet, and it had two masts, and they moored here in the creek. There were some that were 28 feet as well, and one of those lived in Annapolis, and you could see it every time you cross the Severn River Bridge just looking up the river.

TOM HOWELL: [00:05:40] He built some 34 footers too.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:05:43] So see I don't remember . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Right, no, sure. So were these based on particular designs, where they his designs?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:05:49] Yeah, his.

TOM HOWELL: [00:05:50] They were his designs.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:05:52] One person could sail them . . . sail with three sails all raised . . . and so they were practical boats. They had hard chines where they didn't have a rounded bottom. It [the curve] came to a stop and then turned in and so they were hard to turn over. And a lot of people who were not skilled sailors spent years enjoying their boats even though they were talked about as they sailed out because they didn't sail the way that he would have sailed. But he built several of those as well . . . doctors, lawyers, people like that.

JENIFER DOLDE: Mostly people from all over, locally, regionally?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:06:35] Both, probably Maryland and Virginia mostly. And they were people that had always wanted to

sail and . . . oh, Delaware, several boats went to Delaware, but they also had waters like ours and so they were comfortable sailors.

JENIFER DOLDE: He grew up sailing?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:07:00] He grew up, yes, right up the creek, right up the road here. My grandfather built a house there which David Wheatley who has . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:07:11] Generation III.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:07:12] . . . Generation III is my first cousin . . . second cousin. And so David has the grandparents' house, and this was a family farm except from the road to the north . . . to the east. And we bought this land, and he bought the head of the creek land for his new boatyard because he built the *Dove* on the right side of the road.

TOM HOWELL: [00:07:41] In that big building.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:07:43] In the biggest building, which is still there and empty, and you can walk in, and it's like, oh, we're waiting for a boat to start here. You know, it's like he just walked out of . . . sort of. and the rest of it has been allowed to grow up. The person who inherited it does not have a habit of property maintenance and so that is . . . that's hard on those kinds of buildings. But then he worked for . . . he went to South Carolina and

built the . . . what's the one that's . . . *Adventure* in
South Carolina

TOM HOWELL: [00:08:20] No, he built that here . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:08:21] Here and took it down.

TOM HOWELL: [00:08:22] And they took it down there, but he
went to down there to rig it I think.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:08:26] Yeah, because he and a bunch of guys
rented a house that had belonged to his cousin, and it was
a 1920s bungalow kind of thing, but they were from the
Eastern Shore, that was no problem. And other than that,
he did things for the Smithsonian. Howard Chapelle was one
of his best friends, and they had met during the war. And
Howard Chapelle was the curator of transportation, so he
maintained several of the exhibits in the ways that the
builders themselves whether an Indian or anyone else . . .
everything from Indian canoes on up in the manner in which
they had been built, so he could do that. And he loved
people, if somebody came to see him, he would sit down and
talk to them forever, you know, sort of thing, so he was
very gregarious.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, I was wondering, you know, it sounds . . .
to what extent would you consider him an educator as well?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:09:30] Oh, my goodness. Anybody who builds
wooden boats and came from the Cambridge . . . Cambridge

not south Dorchester but Cambridge . . . [telephone rings]

JENIFER DOLDE: We'll just pause for a second.

(break in audio)

JUDY HOWELL: [00:09:43] Oh, Tom will remember all the names better than I. Freddy Asplen and there were some girls who came through, and they all were hard workers and felt that they were continuing his legacy on. My brother-in-law Jim Brighton worked for him for a while and then Tom was . . . maybe Jim was still here while we were in the big shop, but they built a bigger shop for the bigger boats, and that's the one that is still there now. It has a collection of artifacts in it not necessarily nautical right now . . . some special old cars and things like that.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's not the same property as your father's parents' house?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:10:32] No. David Wheatley who runs that boatyard has that house.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, I'm sorry, no, actually, I meant your parents' house, the house you grew up in. Is the shed on the same property?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:10:42] No.

JENIFER DOLDE: No, okay.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:10:43] No, it's . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: It's a big space I could tell.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:10:44] Actually, it's a wedge from the water.

From our property line there on the water between our house and our grandparents' house, it was a wedge all the way up to the new boatyard a little bit past it. He bought these two lots and we bought the woods lots after us, so we owned out to the Radcliffes. But David Wheatley who has the boatyard in town really feels that he has inherited the mantle, although his work is a little different than my father's.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah. Did you and your sister, did you grow up .

. . did you sail as well, was that part of it or . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:11:32] We had rowboats, and I had a little sailboat. A man had ordered a sailboat, and there were two guys that wanted sailboats for their little kids, and one of them cancelled his order. I was early in college by this time, and my father said . . . because I would help around down in the boatyard, and he said if I would finish them both, I can have one, so I took the one that was an inch longer, (laughs) and we still have it. But it can be sailed by one person, and I didn't sail it all the way to Cambridge but almost. And it's just beautiful lines and a light, little boat and lots of fun, so we're looking forward to our grandchildren sailing it.

JENIFER DOLDE: But that's your father . . . was your father's

design as well?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:12:19] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: And what was the length?

TOM HOWELL: [00:12:22] Eighteen feet.

JENIFER DOLDE: Eighteen feet, oh, it's a good size.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:12:24] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's a big boat though. But you were . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:12:25] Big enough, and I could take a friend with a lunch and so we . . . so that happened a lot. But it was fun just to be out, and you could row it home if the wind died. It had no motor and a tiller and the rudder and just one sail; it didn't have a jib.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you mentioned that you did help out in the boatyard.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:12:48] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: So tell me what you actually did.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:12:52] Well, the little things, the little detail things. Girls were good at putting in the plugs. After a thing was screwed together, you wanted to plug it with a wooden plug, whatever the size of the things they were working with. And being a detail person, I always lined up the plug with a grain of the wood, that sort of thing. I did that kind of stuff. Some light painting, I didn't do nameboards or anything like that, but I could

crawl around and things. And so in the summers I would work for him, not every summer, but I guess I was about 20 . . . 22 when I got my sailboat, you know, and worked there in the shed. Well, one of the workmen was famous for saying, "Judy, when do you go back to college?" (laughter) because I was participant I thought in whatever they were talking about. And most of his craftsmen were from south Dorchester and so they understood the wooden boat thing and the lines of the boat and that sort of thing. But he did building . . . build according to the desires of whoever the owner was. He just hated to build an ugly boat because an ugly boat would not sail well. The two were linked in his mind. What was a pretty boat was one with good lines, which would sail well, so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: And you never had ambitions to do more in the yard or that just wasn't what was . . . ?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:14:33] No, I didn't. I can do things, I can paint and varnish and I can do plugs and I can do some of those things but having married a person who is also skilled, my skills are not always called upon, and that's fine, but I can varnish like mad, you know. And the problem with me is I sand it almost off and do it again and sand it almost off and do it again because your layers of varnish building it up is what makes it better. And there

comes a time when you say, okay, five coats is enough sort of thing.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah. It still sounds like a valuable skill.

Obviously, you went off to college. Was that always goal? What were your goals and your parents' goals, tell me about how you . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:15:26] Well, I was going to be a nurse, my mother was a nurse, an RN, and I worked for a summer in a big city hospital. And of course I was new as the nurse's aide, they trained us as nurses' aides, and worked every weekend, and I had lived with that. Well, when Mother did private duty, she did seven days a week. They didn't get a day off, and there would be three of them that would take a case. Jay Harper's mother was one, and I had the name in . . . a minute ago, but another nurse was with them all the time, and they worked as a team. You hired the three of them generally. And so we were used to her being gone a lot, but there's always an adult around on the farm. And any adult on the farm felt free to correct us or feed us or whatever, you know, if we showed up kind of favorably at lunchtime sort of thing. So we were in a family culture here, and our grandparents were right next door, so we also helped in running errands for them. Grandfather had a big garden, and so we could work in that and help them with

things. They didn't die until they were 95, and they stayed home until then. They were cared for right there, and that's the house David Wheatley lives in.

JENIFER DOLDE: I didn't ask, I'm sorry, about your mother. Was she from this . . . born and raised in this area as well?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:17:00] Well, she grew up in Hurlock on a farm. She was the oldest of 10, and she had 5 or 6 sisters, and all but one became nurses, and all but Mother married doctors, so . . . (laughs) And Mother and Daddy met at a . . . one of those country parties that neighborhoods would have. The man to have the girl as his date that night had to bid in the lunch that she had made or the supper she had made, and that's . . . that was their first date so, yeah, the rest is . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: She was all the way from Hurlock because you know it's . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:17:39] Yeah. But she was working in town at the hospital and she lived in town, and so . . . and she went to St. Paul's Church, and a lot of the people who went to St. Paul's had been friends of the Richardsons, so all of that mixed together, that's how they found out.

JENIFER DOLDE: I trust she was too busy to be involved with the boatyard, but what was her feeling about the family business as it were . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:18:02] She did the books. Yeah, she was integral to it, and once in a while, she would be able to hold a person to the price that they had agreed to. And if he said, "I can do that for a thousand dollars," she would say, "It'll be 1500," right there, and he would not contradict her. But making money was not his goal ever, he just liked the work, but he thought he ought to make money. But every time he would cut a price down, then she did more nursing hours sort of thing.

JENIFER DOLDE: And then perhaps his perfectionism kind of escalated costs sometimes?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:18:45] He wanted it done right, but he . . . well, when he was carving nameboards or something like that, the details were very important. In building a boat, the fits of things and the materials that should be used were the most important thing. He didn't carve his name in every boat somewhere hidden like some people do and that kind of thing. He didn't have ego invested in that, but he did feel like that he was a skilled boatbuilder.

JENIFER DOLDE: He had confidence in his work.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:19:21] Yeah.

TOM HOWELL: [00:19:21] He was pretty skilled.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:19:23] Yeah, and Howard Chapelle was one of his best friends. When Howard . . . he was curator of

transportation at the Smithsonian during the time I was in high school and college and so on. They had a place in Alexandria and a place here on Town Point, and when he couldn't be home during the week, I would stay with his wife, so . . . the good friends that he had were very close, and we felt like family with all of them, but he had a gift for people, and if . . . even if he was not impressed by the person, he . . . one of his skills was sarcasm, which the other . . . listener would not recognize as being a sham on him, so . . . he wasn't ever cruel about it, but he enjoyed people, and he'd put down what he's doing and sit and talk until they were ready to go home or bring them up for lunch. And mother was always looking at the road to see how many people were in the car to know how many places to set for lunch. And Jane and I might eat the second lunch whatever it was because our plate would go to them, you know. But she served it on a plate, that's what you got, and she was a good country cook and an excellent baker, her pies were amazing. And she really made it possible for him to do what he was doing, and if he cut a bill too much then she took a nursing case, that sort of thing.

JENIFER DOLDE: So there were periods in which maybe she didn't have to work as much and she was running more?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:21:11] Right.

JENIFER DOLDE: I see, mm-hmm, yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:21:13] But people like to have her as their nurse and so she was called by anybody who knew. Sometimes it was they're going to die tonight, please be with them, and they would live six months because she just had a peace about her that made it okay. And so she was often on long cases, and they didn't have weekend substitutes. She would work the seven-day-a-week thing until they got better or died kind of thing, yeah, or went to a nursing home. Sometimes they went to a nursing home, but the hospitals then would keep people forever, and they don't do that anymore. She was head nurse at a nursing home, the one in Glasgow that used to be . . . she was there for a while while I was in elementary school, so she did a varied group of things.

JENIFER DOLDE: But it sounds like there was no resentment of the boatyard, it was . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:22:07] Definitely not.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . just it was part of . . . everybody works.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:22:09] They were such a team, such a team, and part of that happened because of the death of their son, and that brought them even closer together than they had been, so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Was he the oldest?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:22:25] He was the oldest; he was 13 when he was killed.

JENIFER DOLDE: And you were the youngest?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:22:33] I'm the baby.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. How much difference between you and your sister, age difference?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:22:38] Two years, two years. She has all the talents, every talent there is and I have . . . well, she can't write, but I have all the practicality, so it got divided up. She became a nurse eventually, an RN but I pre. . . I worked in a big city hospital that first summer and didn't tell my parents that I had changed my major to English until I knew the grades were in the mail. And they didn't care what I did, but I had to finish. And so I student taught at Prince George's, in Prince George's County for that year and then was hired by them for two years.

JENIFER DOLDE: And where did you go to college?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:23:21] An Adventist college in Takoma Park called Columbia Union College, and I was an English major and then did education as a minor. And I don't know how long I would've taught there if Tom's father hadn't bought the Garden of Eden and he came sailing with us one day.

JENIFER DOLDE: And that's a lovely transition. I think quite frankly we could talk a lot more about growing up, and maybe we'll get back to it, but I want to be mindful of our time and turn to you, Tom, and talk a little bit about where you grew up in your family and how you came to be here in Dorchester?

TOM HOWELL: [00:23:59] I grew up in Northwestern New Jersey, and it's pretty hilly up there.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:24:07] Very close to the border of Pennsylvania not just western but very western.

JENIFER DOLDE: Was it near a town or . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:24:14] A little town in Hunterdon County called Califon. I failed sophomore year in high school, so I went through the next four years, and when I got out of school, I got drafted, I went right into the army, and I was an MP in there. And when I got out of there, Judy and I got married.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:24:51] (laughs) Not quite, you had already been to college, you'd been to FIT.

TOM HOWELL: [00:24:54] Oh, yeah I went down there to FIT.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:24:57] For . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: On GI Bill or . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:24:59] Yeah, I was on the GI Bill.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, great.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:25:02] FIT is Florida . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:25:03] It paid for most of it.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:25:05] . . . Institute of Technology.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think I figured that out, but thank you for specifying. Backing up a little bit, so did you have a connection with the water or . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:25:16] We always had boats.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:25:19] Which you sailed on.

TOM HOWELL: [00:25:20] And . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: You did sail?

TOM HOWELL: [00:25:23] Oh yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Where?

TOM HOWELL: [00:25:27] Either Spruce Run or Round Valley Reservoirs.

JENIFER DOLDE: Different sailing but big, okay, I'm not familiar with that.

TOM HOWELL: They were big.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:25:34] Yeah, big, lake-like things.

JENIFER DOLDE: What kind of boats?

TOM HOWELL: [00:25:39] My father had a little sailing dory that was about 19 and a half feet long, and we had a duck boat that we sailed that was about 20 feet long.

JENIFER DOLDE: And what did your father do for a living?

TOM HOWELL: [00:26:06] He was a farmer, pretty much most of

his life.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:26:10] He grew up on Long Island Sound and was sailing there so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Tom's father?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:26:17] Tom's father. So they had that tradition in their family already that the boys would sail, not the girls, just the boys.

TOM HOWELL: [00:26:29] Yeah, he grew up on a little island called Ram Island, and there as only one house on it and a great, big boathouse. And there were apartments up over top of the boathouse for the . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:26:53] Staff.

TOM HOWELL: . . . staff to . . . I mean they had a lot of staff in the big house and . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: So they owned the house or your family . . . they . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:27:08] They owned the house.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, okay.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:27:10] And the island.

JENIFER DOLDE: And the island. That sounds lovely.

TOM HOWELL: [00:27:14] It was nice.

JENIFER DOLDE: And you visited there, but they were still there when you were growing up, and you were able to go there?

TOM HOWELL: [00:27:20] Well, they sold the island and the

house and the boathouse, and somebody told my uncle John that there was a boat in the boathouse that belonged to the Howell boys.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:27:38] So come get it.

TOM HOWELL: [00:27:39] So my father and I took a trailer and went out there and brought the boat home. And it was a big log canoe, 20 feet long, made out of mahogany, and it was about that wide and deep.

JENIFER DOLDE: Like a three-log canoe or . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:27:59] No, it was a one-log canoe.

JENIFER DOLDE: A one-log canoe.

TOM HOWELL: [00:28:01] One-log canoe.

JENIFER DOLDE: There's more to that story? Where was it built?
I hear you're pro. . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:28:08] It was built for my father and his two brothers in Venezuela, and my grandfather had it built for him. He was in the sugar business.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:28:22] In?

TOM HOWELL: [00:28:24] In Santo Domingo. He had 45,000 acres of cane sugar.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:28:35] So the old Jack Frost Sugar Company.
Your parents would . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes, well no, I'm familiar with it, I mean it's .
. . yeah, okay. That was the family business? Okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:28:46] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: But a lot of connection obviously to water both
in their home and their farms and . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:28:56] Yeah, we sailed all the time.

JENIFER DOLDE: That was the family legacy, so, and . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:29:01] And then I went to FIT, Florida
Institute of Technology, and I became a commercial pilot
there. And then I came home and did some charter work at
the airport in Cambridge and then I went to work for Jude's
father at the boatyard, and I stayed there quite a few
years.

JENIFER DOLDE: So that's an interesting transition. Was there a
reason why you gave up flying to work at the yard?

TOM HOWELL: [00:29:40] Well, her father asked me to come work
for him.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:29:44] And Vietnam had ended, and there were
lots of pilots with thousands of hours available, and so .
. .

TOM HOWELL: [00:29:52] So I worked at the yard and then they
asked me to come over to the maritime museum. Jim Holt
asked me to come over there.

JENIFER DOLDE: So, I'm sure I can look this up, that would've
been in the early '70s? What year was that?

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:07] Early '80s.

JENIFER DOLDE: Early '80s, okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:10] And I worked over there for about 20 years.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, well that . . . and I see that timeline, okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:16] With Mark Adams.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:30:18] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: I overlapped a bit Mark in just my one summer, but the stories continue.

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:24] You know Mark.

JENIFER DOLDE: Your stories continue. I mean I met him way back when, and my brother probably knows him better, my brother is a bit older than me. Did he work with the city?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:30:34] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, that's how my brother got to know him. My brother's an engineer.

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:40] So anyway.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, so, and that was a happy transition for you, you were glad to go and . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:47] Yeah, it was nice.

JENIFER DOLDE: You had to learn those skills? I mean did you already . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:54] Well . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . have the hand skills in woodworking . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:30:56] . . . I had all the skills for doing
that kind of work already.

JENIFER DOLDE: How did you acquire those?

TOM HOWELL: [00:31:04] Working for Jim.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, no, I'm so. . . so I am talking about when
you started to work for Jim, what were your skills, how did
. . . you know, did he teach you?

TOM HOWELL: [00:31:15] Well, we always had a big workshop up
on the farm, so I knew how to run saws and band saws. I
had a lot of experience up there on the farm, so it just
was a natural thing to come down and work on boats.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:31:35] And then I had like five years off and
then I went crop dusting for 10 years.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:31:51] My last 10 years of work.

JENIFER DOLDE: Before you retired you mean?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:31:57] Yeah.

TOM HOWELL: [00:31:57] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, that's interesting.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:32:00] It worked out for us because I was the
old-fashioned kind of English teacher where I read every
word. If I signed it, I read it, and that took immense
time, just immense time.

TOM HOWELL: [00:32:13] And then I started teaching people how

to be crop dusters.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:32:16] Oh, gosh.

TOM HOWELL: [00:32:17] That was a little scary.

JUDY HOWELL: (laughs) [00:32:21] You may want to push your
button.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, why don't we take a pause for a second.

This will be chitchat as well, so . . .

(break in audio)

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, well, I think we could talk a lot more
about background, and please feel free to bring anything up
especially if it's relevant. But, you know, I've wanted to
move into the *Maryland Dove* project, and you're my first
interview, and I figured you'd be a great pair to help me
understand more about the background, so . . . and either
of you can weigh in on this.

TOM HOWELL: [00:32:54] I . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Before . . . I'm sorry, go ahead.

TOM HOWELL: [00:32:56] Yesterday I talked to the . . . I
think he's the head of the boat shop over in Saint
Michaels.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, Joe Connor, at our . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:33:05] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . boat shop?

TOM HOWELL: [00:33:06] Yeah. And he's told me that the new

Dove was not the original *Dove*. It doesn't even look like the old *Dove*.

JENIFER DOLDE: No, they've done a lot of work. Well, and that's one of the questions I had for you. I know there were compromises made for those purposes. We are doing the best that we can to base it on research, but also, it needs to be a coast-guard-inspected vessel because it's for educational purposes and so, you know, those compromises are still being made. I don't know how much you know about the design and William Baker. What did you know about *Dove* going into the project back in the '70s?

TOM HOWELL: [00:33:56] I knew William Baker pretty well.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:33:58] He was here a lot.

TOM HOWELL: [00:34:00] And he was here quite a bit. He went over to England and researched the *Dove* and found drawings of it, and it's the original *Dove* that's over at St. Mary's City now.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:34:18] The one that they built, the first one.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure.

TOM HOWELL: [00:34:20] And this new one isn't even going to look like the *Dove*. It's just going to be coast-guard inspected, so people can get on and take rides on it.

JENIFER DOLDE: Right. Well, so they are actually basing it on

some actually newly discovered research that they believe will make it closer in its . . . it's particularly the rigging to the one from the 1600s, from 1634, so it will look different from the 1970s version. They cut down some vessels in 1934 to make replicas of the . . . they weren't even replicas, representations of *Ark* and *Dove*. And so actually kind of sorting through these various iterations of it is . . . I don't want to belabor it, but it's part of the story. And so as you remember meeting William Baker and as they talk about the design, and I know there were debates with the folks at Historic St. Mary's City and William Baker and potentially with Jim, do you remember any of those conversations or any of the decisions or compromises that might have been made?

TOM HOWELL: [00:35:34] I don't think they compromised on anything. I know that they didn't put an engine in it and then later they put an engine in it.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:35:44] That was the later edition.

TOM HOWELL: [00:35:47] And that was probably couple of years after they had it sailing. They had to tow it around everywhere they went. Now, there's an engine in it. Is the new one going to have an engine in it?

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, I believe so, yeah, I believe so. If I'm wrong, I will be correcting myself.

TOM HOWELL: [00:36:14] I think it probably will.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think for all those reasons we just were talking about, maneuverability and getting to the next port on time, things like that. And maybe you remember this better, Judy, how . . . who was instrumental in getting your father to work on this project?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:36:36] Howard Chapelle. They were really good friends from the war on. They had a place in Alexandria as well as one down here in Town Point, and when he couldn't come home, I would go over and stay with her because they were elderly really by the time I knew them well. I called them Chappy and Zayma without understanding. And I was with a group of friends from college, and we were at the Smithsonian when he walked by, and I just went up and greeted him and hugged and kissed him. And he was leading a group of dignitaries, (laughs) and he turned and he had kind of a gruff way, and he said, "My best friend's daughter, you know?" kind of thing. (laughs) That was just how it was. They were close friends for . . . since the war, since World War II.

JENIFER DOLDE: And how did they meet during the war?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:37:40] Boat designs. They built search-and-rescue craft here in Cambridge, and they were very fast, and I think Chapelle had something to do with the design.

And certainly, the people here would have felt that if they could improve upon the design, they would to make it faster or more bay worthy or whatever. Howard Chapelle was very careful about the historical accuracy of whatever he was doing but this was [for?], you know, and you wanted the boat that could do its job fastest and most safely and so that's what they did.

JENIFER DOLDE: So what was the connection in . . .? So Chapelle . . . I . . . was he involved with the planning with Historic St. Mary's or he knew Baker?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:38:31] He knew Baker. He didn't have anything to do with St. Mary's that I know of.

JENIFER DOLDE: I didn't think so.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:38:38] But his maritime experience, he's written lots of major books about sailing craft, and that's why he was there at the Smithsonian. But I think that during World War II, he was also here. I'm not sure when they bought that house but from the . . . and I was born in '46, so they had had it by the time I could remember, by 1950. They had been there for a while down Town Point Road and there on a creek from the Little Choptank. And so they had been close friends for . . . of my parents forever and as far as I was concerned. I've always known them kind of thing and very interesting, both of them were very, very

interesting.

JENIFER DOLDE: So that he basically served as the connector and then he knew Baker professionally as well?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:39:37] Right.

JENIFER DOLDE: Or did your father know Baker previously?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:39:39] I think that Chappelle introduced him to Bill Baker . . . William something Baker.

JENIFER DOLDE: With an a, I think Baker . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:39:46] Super nice guy also.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, I was wondering, yes, so you got to meet him, what were . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:39:50] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . your impressions of him?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:39:51] Very skilled, very professional, and super nice, just as nice as he could be. And he and his wife would come in, you could . . . we had a back porch that faced the river and was the place where people came and relaxed. And of course the conversation was always interesting if Daddy was there, and it was mostly interesting people who came. He didn't have a lot of patience with . . . well, he had patience with them, but he judged them also if they were boring people or stuffy or something like that. You could always tell because he would . . . he . . . they would correct him on something,

and he would drop to a very elementary level and thank them for informing him about this, sort of thing and . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: But William Baker wasn't like that?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:40:49] No, no, no, he was wonderful. They were great people and good friends.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do you remember much about Baker's personality or interactions with him? What was he like?

TOM HOWELL: [00:41:00] He was real easygoing, but he was a perfectionist when it came to boat design.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:41:08] He's a detail man.

JENIFER DOLDE: And so they would get together here, and would they be talking in depth about, you know, the plans as they evolved?

TOM HOWELL: [00:41:21] Yeah, they talked about the *Dove* a lot. He would come down every couple of weeks from New England somewhere.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:41:30] The talk came first and then he would go home and do what he knew was the correct plans for the *Dove*. And then he'd bring them down, and my father would see how much wiggle room he had in anything that he thought could be better done even if it wasn't as historically accurate because this was going to carry people.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you have a sense of what kinds of changes he was suggesting?

TOM HOWELL: [00:42:01] Well, once he made the original plans,
he didn't change them.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:42:06] But Baker didn't ever sail it and he .
. . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:42:13] He was here when he . . . when we
launched it.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:42:13] Yeah, but he didn't take it out for a
weekend or anything like that to see how she handled or any
of that. He knew what he was doing as far as his designs
went. He . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:42:29] Do you know Rad Wheatley?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:42:30] Radcliffe Wheatley?

JENIFER DOLDE: No, I don't.

TOM HOWELL: [00:42:33] Him and I made all the masts and spars
for the whole boat.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, that's not a name that's come up.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:42:41] He's a country boy. He is my aunt's
nephew, so he was here on the farm a lot. You know, David
Wheatley in town?

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:42:53] They are cousins also. I'm not
related to Rad but David is.

JENIFER DOLDE: Is he still around?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:43:00] I think so.

TOM HOWELL: [00:43:00] Oh, yeah. He's around.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:43:03] And . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:43:04] He's getting kind of old, and he doesn't do much anymore.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:43:08] He's younger than we are. (laughs)

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh. Well, that's interesting that you added a name to my list. So it sounds like Baker and Jim worked closely and worked out . . . you don't necessarily remember any specifics that they worked out but . . . things to make it more buildable, more sailable, that's your impression?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:43:30] And it was going to carry the public. So the coast guard has requirements and so fitting those into the design that would still be accurate was most of what the wiggle room was, what they worked on to compromise.

JENIFER DOLDE: And did your father have more of a sense of the coast guard end of things or not necessarily? They kind of worked those things out together?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:43:54] Probably they worked it out together, but he was not beyond doing what he knew was best and not talking to anybody about it. And once the thing is built and it sails like this, the coast guard said, "Oh, okay, that works."

JENIFER DOLDE: I see, rather than running plans by them and

things like that . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:44:11] No, none of that . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . which . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:44:12] . . . that didn't . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . may or may not fly today.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:44:14] Right, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: I see, yeah, very pragmatic. Do you remember if

. . . how much interaction Jim had with the folks at St.

Mary's City, the researchers, the historians, the

administration? He talks a little bit about that in his

own interview but . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:44:34] Yeah.

TOM HOWELL: [00:44:34] He was down there for a couple of

weeks finishing the boat, right.

JENIFER DOLDE: But even in the planning stages?

TOM HOWELL: [00:44:42] Even the rigging and sails and stuff.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:44:44] Well they knew what they wanted, and

he tried to work around what he knew would be the more

accurate thing while still satisfying them. And he had a

skill of dealing with people where they didn't know if they

had changed their minds. That, "Oh, yes, this is what I

really meant" when it was the opposite of what they had

said, but when they saw it and saw this is what this kind

of sailboat needs, then it was okay, and they would never say, "Well, I think that's wrong." But he tried to finesse all of the requirements into what they wanted as well.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:45:28] He's very good with people.

JENIFER DOLDE: It sounds like it. It sounds like perhaps it was, you know, he and Baker working those things out and then settling it as it were or, as you said, finessing it to the folks that . . . at St. Mary's, interesting. Were there any major disagreements that stand out?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:45:49] Do you know of any?

TOM HOWELL: [00:45:49] Uh-uh. No.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:45:53] He didn't focus on disagreements, he focused on how to get it to work his way without the person understanding that they had been finessed, and he was pretty good at that. He never built a boat that wasn't safe, and that was one of his major requirements just in his head. And he had raced log canoes, they've turned them over many times and that sort of thing, and he really knew about what a boat could take and still work at its maximum.

TOM HOWELL: [00:46:29] They put gravel in the bottom of it for ballast, the *Dove*, it's probably still in there.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:46:39] Well, some is probably still in there no matter what they changed it because it would go in the .

. . all the little spots. And to make it . . . one of the things is putting a boat overboard and having it sit on the water as it should, and that's where the ballast comes in. You know, sometimes the bow is way up and the stern is heavier, and you plan your ballast based on how the ship should sit in the water and . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: So it's loose gravel?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:47:08] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, wow, okay, right.

TOM HOWELL: [00:47:11] But little stuff, so it would pack together better.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, interesting.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:47:17] And as the boat moved, it . . . you know, the longer it sailed, the better it was packed together. But we grew up with lots of boats that had iron ingots between the frames and that sort of thing. Or lead, lead ingots?

TOM HOWELL: [00:47:35] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:47:35] It's lead, yeah.

TOM HOWELL: [00:47:37] We put lead in *Mr. Jim* up in our bow to bring the bow down because it was way high.

JENIFER DOLDE: So . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:47:45] . . . when we launched it.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . you had said you came to work at the yard

in the early '70s, '70 . . . do you remember the year, '72
or '73?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:47:55] Seventy-two or three.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. And then *Dove* was started in . . . oh
gosh, no . . . '70. . . ?

TOM HOWELL: [00:48:06] Seventy-eight.

JENIFER DOLDE: Seventy-eight, it was about 18 months, right?
What was the project that directly preceded the *Dove* build?
Actually, wasn't there a project put on hold? Was it . .
.?

TOM HOWELL: [00:48:19] No, we built a boat called the [*Antho*
M?], a great big powerboat . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:48:26] Have you heard of . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:48:27] . . . for . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:48:27] . . . William Combs, Bill Combs?

TOM HOWELL: [00:48:29] . . . for William Combs, Bill Combs.

JENIFER DOLDE: Um . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:48:32] He financed a bunch of maritime things
around here during those years.

TOM HOWELL: [00:48:39] And that was a nice boat.

JENIFER DOLDE: The legend is that he was . . . that your father
was coaxed out of retirement, and I mean that's repeated
over and over and over again. Had he ever really retired?
Then I kept saying, "But he was still doing this and he was

still doing this." I mean to what extent do you believe that's . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:48:58] He was . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . true?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:48:58] . . . at the point where he could choose who he would work for so that's . . . that was retirement to him, and if he didn't want to do it, he didn't do it. Mother had been the RN that had the stable income that we could predict. With him, she had to work with him about not cutting prices when people complained, and often people got really good bargains because he was not one to argue with someone. Now, he judged them and not worked for them again but he never . . . I don't ever remember him haggling about a price, and sometimes he would just say, "No, I can't build it for that," and be done. And that would be motorboats as well, so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, sure, yeah. The project immediately preceding was a powerboat, um . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:49:54] It was called the *Antho M* . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, yeah. And so when the *Dove* project started, were you . . . was there other . . . were there other projects going on at the same time? To what extent were you involved in the *Dove* build on a daily . . . I guess maybe a daily basis?

TOM HOWELL: [00:50:12] Well, I really didn't do much on the
Dove except build all the spars and the mast and stuff.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:50:20] He was in the big shop at that time,
and the Dove was across the road.

TOM HOWELL: [00:50:25] I was building the *Mr. Jim*. I built
the *Mr. Jim*.

JENIFER DOLDE: Right. Well, so tell me about that project and
was there . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:50:33] That took two years to build.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:50:36] And in the big shop.

TOM HOWELL: [00:50:38] The Dove took about two years to build
too, and we launched them pretty close together at the same
time.

JENIFER DOLDE: Was there an overlap of who worked on what, or
were there pretty much designated crews for each project?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:50:52] Different crews mostly. You didn't
have any girls on your team.

TOM HOWELL: [00:50:59] No. And I don't know, we . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, were you working with your brother-in-law?
Was he working with you on *Mr. Jim* or was he . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:15] No he worked on the Dove.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:51:16] Yeah, and Freddy Asplen, Fred?

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:18] Yeah, Fred Asplen, Fred Pomeroy.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:51:22] Davis, did Fred work any?

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:25] No.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:51:26] Fred didn't.

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:27] What was the girl's name?

JENIFER DOLDE: Are we talking now who's on the . . . who's on
Dove or who's on . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:51:34] Yeah.

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:34] Yeah, the Dove . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . Mr. Jim?

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:35] the Dove.

JENIFER DOLDE: So Freddy Asplen was on Dove. There's June
Wingo.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:51:39] June.

JENIFER DOLDE: And there's . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:39] June Wingo . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . there was Kathy Moore?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:51:42] Kathy.

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:42] Yeah, Kathy Moore worked on the Dove.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:51:45] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, I mean I have a whole list of names that
I've . . . I'm trying to track down. Do you know anything
about Kathy Moore? Somebody thought she was deceased.

TOM HOWELL: [00:51:56] She married one of the guys who worked
up there on the Dove too.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, I thought so but then that's Jim Elk but

then somebody said, "No, it wasn't Kathy Moore, it was
Cathy Kiorpes . . . oh, . . . K-I-O-R-P-E-S?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:52:16] Yes. That's the . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: So there were two different Cathys?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:52:20] See I don't remember Kathy Moore. I
just remember . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: You remember Cathy.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:52:24] . . . the other Cathy.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, that may be something. We don't need to
get into the weeds with that. Freddy Asplen is somebody
I've been trying to find contact information for, so we can
maybe talk about that later. So, you know, I appreciate
that you worked on this distinct part of *Dove*, and that's
fine, that doesn't mean I . . . I'm not interested. So *Mr.*
Jim was a substantial project as well. To what extent was
Jim involved in that build, or did you pretty much run that
with . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:52:58] He made a model about that big of the
Mr. Jim, and I built off that model.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you pretty much ran that build?

TOM HOWELL: [00:53:10] I ran the build totally.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:53:12] He had a whole team. Did Radcliffe
Wheatley work for you?

TOM HOWELL: [00:53:19] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, so you're working with him, and that's why you two were with . . . would then put on the spars and the rigging project?

TOM HOWELL: [00:53:28] *Mr. Jim* I think went out first and then we had the shop open except I was building a 37-foot sport fisherman in there then.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:53:44] For [Mr. Bounds?]?

TOM HOWELL: [00:53:46] No, for me.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:53:47] For you.

TOM HOWELL: [00:53:48] And that's the boat I sold when we bought these woods.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's a lot of boats. Tell me about the building of the spars and the rigging. Where were you sourcing your material?

TOM HOWELL: [00:54:12] We got all the material from Spicer's down in . . . down below Church Creek.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:54:19] Mm-hmm, and they . . . Spicer was always our source for anything that we could get that needed this . . . the lumber from around here. And the . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:54:29] Billy would always pick me out the best logs.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:54:32] They were excellent sources.

TOM HOWELL: [00:54:34] You know, real tight rings and . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:54:38] They understood each other. Billy knew, what, the quality of things that needed to happen.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, well, and no issues in getting things of the proper size at least not back then.

TOM HOWELL: [00:54:47] No.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, it's getting more of a challenge . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:54:50] So . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . all the time.

TOM HOWELL: [00:54:52] . . . I gave him a list of the spars we needed, and he called me and said, "They're all gathered up here together," and he brought them up on a tractor trailer and unloaded them.

JENIFER DOLDE: So . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:55:09] And then I chopped them all out.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, and then, so you were . . . you made the . . . all the blocks were made out of wood, you were . . . everything was made?

TOM HOWELL: [00:55:17] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: [00:55:18] Well, the mechanical parts of the block, do they come in a kit or something? Did you have some iron eyes in there? Did you do those things as well?

TOM HOWELL: [00:55:28] No, we all made them out of wood.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:55:36] And what were your source for the rigging? Whiting?

TOM HOWELL: [00:55:41] Well, . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:55:43] Where did you buy the rope and stuff
for the rigging?

TOM HOWELL: [00:55:47] I guess Whiting's. [What do you?] . .
.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:55:49] Do you know Whiting?

TOM HOWELL: [00:55:51] William H. Whiting Company.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:55:52] They were in Baltimore.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, they're in Baltimore? Okay.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:55:54] A maritime supplier, all kinds of
boats, right?

TOM HOWELL: [00:56:00] And we had to get cable for the stays
and . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:56:08] You did the welding for the metal
parts on the mast, the iron parts at the top?

TOM HOWELL: [00:56:15] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:56:16] And so did you have to weld the ends
of the stays yourself?

TOM HOWELL: [00:56:22] No, we just wrapped them around one
time and then clamped them and brought them down to the
dead eyes.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:56:29] Mm-hmm, dead eyes are these . . . you
know?

JENIFER DOLDE: Right.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:56:33] Yeah?

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah. So you mentioned no women on your crew, from what you know . . . both know about the *Dove* crew, so why was it such a different crew? Why do we have . . . you know, did he . . . there's . . . you called them the hippies?

TOM HOWELL: [00:56:52] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:56:52] They were.

TOM HOWELL: [00:56:52] We called them the hippies.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:56:53] Truly, Alicia, which the men called Delicious, she was a blonde, pretty girl, but very hippie and June Wingo . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:02] Alicia worked for me.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:03] Alicia worked for you?

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:04] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:05] Okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:07] She helped built my sports fisherman.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:10] Did she have a boyfriend here, is that what brought her here in the first place?

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:15] Uh-uh.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:16] Okay, she was not from around here.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, no, okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:20] They came by boat from Trappe.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:24] And June Wingo . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:25] They lived on Trappe Creek and came .

. . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:27] . . . was here.

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:27] . . . by boat every day.

JENIFER DOLDE: Who, Alicia and somebody else?

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:31] Alicia DuPont.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay.

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:38] And her sister came with her

sometimes. But . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:41] I don't remember her name.

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:42] . . . she . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: They were from Talbot County, or they were just

had . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:46] Yeah, they were from Talbot County.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:57:47] But they're real DuPonts but pretty

far out

JENIFER DOLDE: I live in DuPont . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:53] And . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Country up in Cecil County there's a . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:57:56] They moved away from here somewhere

down South I think, down into the Carolinas.

JENIFER DOLDE: How long did she work for you?

TOM HOWELL: [00:58:06] About a year.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. And thinking about the . . . both men and women who worked in . . . on the *Dove* crew, anybody stand out, you know, where . . . somebody that you wouldn't have expected who became pretty skilled or, um, that was a major contributor?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:58:27] Did Fred Davis work on that?

TOM HOWELL: [00:58:29] I don't think so.

JUDY HOWELL: He just had his own boat?

TOM HOWELL: [00:58:32] Yeah. He was building his own boat over there on the other side.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you . . .

TOM HOWELL: [00:58:38] . . . while we built the *Dove*.

JENIFER DOLDE: I'm sorry. You did say they were hippies in every sense, so what do you mean by that?

JUDY HOWELL: [00:58:47] Personal cleanliness, it was not based on regular showers. Long hair, very natural foods, a certain judgment of those who were more civilized. They just didn't get it, but they had a good work ethic. They worked hard and were curious to learn the skills that they didn't have because June Wingo didn't come with any skills. You know, she was used to making her own things and that all works together. If you're weaving your own baskets, then shaping wood is not so alien to you.

JENIFER DOLDE: Again, I haven't gotten to know or talked to many

of them yet. I've talked to June a bit, she's so . . .
some coming locally and some coming from elsewhere, just
sort of transient? What was your impression about where
people were coming from to work in both sides of the . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [00:59:43] Where does June live now?

JENIFER DOLDE: She's in Maine.

TOM HOWELL: [00:59:45] Oh, really?

JENIFER DOLDE: Living a homesteader kind of life, but I think
she and her partner built a log house, and, well, I will
learn more, I'm talking to her a week after next.

JUDY HOWELL: [00:59:58] Freddy Asplen, did he work . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:00:02] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:03] . . . there? Freddy was part of her
social group. Radcliffe Wheatley worked for you some?

TOM HOWELL: [01:00:12] Rad worked for me for a long time.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:15] And he's a local Wheatley that goes,
you know, all the way back.

JENIFER DOLDE: Mm-hmm.

TOM HOWELL: [01:00:22] He lives on Cassons Neck.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:24] Who else, Tom?

TOM HOWELL: [01:00:30] I don't know, I didn't have very many
people.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:33] Jim, who was the short little Jim guy
that was with the attractive blonde?

TOM HOWELL: [01:00:44] I don't know.

JENIFER DOLDE: Over on *Dove*?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:45] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, so we have . . . I have Jim Elk.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:48] Yeah, Jim Elk.

JENIFER DOLDE: I have well Jay Dayton?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:53] Uh-huh.

JENIFER DOLDE: Joe Balderson?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:00:56] Mm-hmm.

JENIFER DOLDE: Paul Hawkinson who I talked to last night who's
now in Virginia I think building boats.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:01:03] He's . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, he's super nice. His parents are still . .
. I hope to see them later today. They have photos from
the '70s.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:01:09] Oh, good.

JENIFER DOLDE: Jack Krolak who then went and worked in St.
Mary's and worked for Calvert Marine Museum.

TOM HOWELL: [01:01:15] Yeah, that Jack worked on the *Dove* a
little bit.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, yeah. So really even if they . . . you
know, the . . . even if they only worked on it a little
bit, I'm still interested. And Freddy Asplen is somebody
I've not been able to contact information for, so . . .

Bill Slacum was around. Did Bill work for you?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:01:32] Yeah, not for you . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:01:34] No, he didn't . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:01:33] . . . for daddy.

TOM HOWELL: [01:01:34] . . . work for me.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, I see him in pictures.

TOM HOWELL: [01:01:37] I don't think he worked on the *Dove* much either.

JENIFER DOLDE: It's funny because maybe he did for a particular period in time because he's in lots of the Robert de Gast photographs. He was my next-door neighbor growing up, so.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:01:47] Okay.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, so that's why . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:01:48] So you know him.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . I know him, and I also remember him doing . . . just doing these strange things. What is he working on when he was on working parts for . . . I assume for *Dove*, but it could've been for other projects as well. Okay, so Ed Farley?

TOM HOWELL: [01:02:06] I don't think he worked on the *Dove*.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think he might have been around. You know Ed's working on the new *Dove* and he's . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:02:12] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . he's . . . yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:02:13] He has status on the new *Dove*, he does have status.

JENIFER DOLDE: I do understand, and you tell me if this is true, to a certain extent, there were people who were just around, you know?

TOM HOWELL: [01:02:25] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: [01:02:25] Maybe they were helping a little bit. Is that your impression as well?

TOM HOWELL: [01:02:31] Yeah, I think Ed Farley and what's his name, the other fella's name?

JENIFER DOLDE: Which one, Bill? No, not Bill Slacum. . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:02:44] Slacum?

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah.

TOM HOWELL: [01:02:46] I don't think they worked on it very much.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:02:48] Well, they got paychecks but not . . . I don't know how much or how often, how long they worked. Because there were people who had seasonal jobs other places and would come and drop in and work, and if my father needed them, he took them.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, and so . . . and I'm just interested, did they show up and say, "Do you need any help?" or did your father have feelers out in the community . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:03:13] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . that said . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:03:14] It was friends of theirs that told them they ought to go down and talk to Mr. Jim.

JENIFER DOLDE: They would show up and say, "Do you need anything done right now?" and then . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:03:22] Yes, I can do this. Often he'd ask to see their tools, and that was the key to him if they were serious marine carpenters or not, what kind of carpentry they had done before. Because house carpentry everything has to be straight and the corners have to be right angles, and on a boat, nothing should be. So that's the . . . that was one of the things he was looking for if they had a mindset that could work with boats because otherwise, it'd be a fight the whole time.

JENIFER DOLDE: So he'd figure that out by asking to see their tools and then his very perceptive conversation?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:04:02] Yeah, yeah. Now I'm not talking about anybody that we have talked about now. Now, he's very patient with fools. Anybody who thought that they knew more than anybody else they had ever known. Of course they didn't realize that he had been friends with Howard Chapelle for 40 years, and he knew the high end of boat building as well as the country end. He would just go to whatever level he figured they were on, and if they were

going to instruct him on something, he'd say, "Oh, do you do it like this?" and they'd say, "Yes," and then they leave and say how much they had taught the old man. And he was fine with that because he did it on purpose rather than be impatient. He was never rude except if you didn't understand what he was saying, you didn't know you had been put down totally, and they would go off thinking they had a wonderful time and the guy really liked him and that sort of thing, but he was never unkind. But he had no patience with people who were going to tell him how to do it.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, that's interesting if it's somebody who's just coming and doesn't work for him. But if you worked for him and he needed to correct what you were doing, can you tell me what he was like as a teacher or as an instructor and how would he do that or how would he correct?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:05:31] He would say, "Let's try it this way." He never said you were wrong and you were stupid, but you felt wrong and stupid when you realized how totally different it was from how it should have been, you know? He coached me in building my sail skiff and was always very patient, you know, just . . . of course I had grown up in the boatyard

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, so that's how he was with his daughter. Was

he the same way with his crew? Was he equally patient with those who worked . . . ?

TOM HOWELL: [01:06:02] I heard him say a couple of times,
"The job you're doing is ugly, start over."

JUDY HOWELL: [01:06:11] And ugly meant it was wrong.

JENIFER DOLDE: And that's as harsh as it got?

TOM HOWELL: [01:06:16] Yeah, . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:06:16] Well . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:06:17] . . . that's pretty much his
(overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

JUDY HOWELL: [01:06:18] If your boat is not pretty, it's not a good boat.

JENIFER DOLDE: So everyone who knew him knew that coming from him, that was . . . ?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:06:25] Yeah. When I did something totally wrong, he would just say, "You dumb cluck," and go on and show me how it should be. And often I had to do it wrong to get him to show me right because just thought if he knew it, everybody knew it.

JENIFER DOLDE: And he would literally show you, like demonstrated?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:06:46] Yeah, or help me as I was laying it out or whatever. But I had grown up with Jane's big . . . my sister's big birthday present was her own skiff. She

had a cedar skiff, and we rowed that to . . . all over Castle Haven, etc., and so we knew how a boat should be, I mean we lived in it in the summers. And so that we weren't as hard to instruct as some people who hadn't ever been in a boat. But there would be people who would present themselves as boat carpenters who really had no experience on the water, so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: So you probably didn't have the same experience because you knew boats and you had skills, but can you remember something in particular that Jim taught you or?

TOM HOWELL: [01:07:31] He taught me a lot of stuff.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, what, tell me something early on and maybe something and . . . when you thought you already knew quite a bit.

TOM HOWELL: [01:07:38] Well, we built all our boats upside down, and even *Mr. Jim*, which was 53 feet long, we had to turn that over in the shop. So we put telephone poles up into the peak and brought them down on an angle. And we put big chain falls up there and picked the boat up. We drilled a hole through the keelson, and we picked it up with the big bolts like that and flopped it over and set it down on blocks again. That's how we built the bottom.

JENIFER DOLDE: And that was something that wasn't unusual to you

that you . . . he walked you through that you did together
and . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [01:08:40] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Wow.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:08:42] I remember some boats with the stem
actually in the ground.

TOM HOWELL: [01:08:46] Oh, yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:08:48] And upside down of course in the
ground, and you built back from that. And of course that
held it steady, and it gave . . . your line was always the
same, it didn't matter how hard the wind was blowing or
anything like that, and that's . . . that . . . and then
you turned it. One of my jobs in the summertime was to
caulk between the bottom boards and things like that
because girls were patient. He didn't care how long it
took, and I'm a detail person, so I would be in there with
my little caulking iron and my little hammer or mallet and
do that, and it was fine with me and so I heard a lot. I
was also the errand girl, and Phillips Hardware was where I
went for almost everything that we needed. And they let me
drive when I was 15, and I just drove the backstreets and
parked in the back of Phillips and walked in barefooted and
said, "This is what I need." The guy says, "Are you here
again, Judy?" and I said, "Well, this is what I need."

He'd give it to me, and they just kept a charge account there, so it was . . . they carried the things that we knew that we needed for boat building at that time, so . . . it was . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:10:06] Jude, I've got to get ready to go get a haircut.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:09] Okay.

JENIFER DOLDE: Is that late?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:11] What time is it?

JENIFER DOLDE: Wow, I'm not watching the time.

TOM HOWELL: [01:10:16] I'll tell you, I can tell you.

JENIFER DOLDE: I know, I've got it right here. It's about three o'clock. Do you have 10 more minutes so we can . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:23] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . ask . . . I want to . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:25] Isn't your appointment at 4:00?

TOM HOWELL: [01:10:27] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:28] Okay, 10 minutes.

JENIFER DOLDE: It is in town.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:31] Yeah, but that's uphill. (laughter)

JENIFER DOLDE: I know, we talked about our trips to town once a week when I was a kid.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:38] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Now, we're really getting to the heart of it, and

we've already covered a lot of these things. There were several public events during the build. I guess maybe there was a keel laying ceremony, there was the launch, there were school groups coming . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:10:56] School groups were there all the time.

JENIFER DOLDE: So talk about any of those, and maybe we'll focus on Tom. We can come back to it maybe?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:11:03] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do you remember any of those ceremonies or . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [01:11:08] Most of the school groups were first graders, and they had no teeth just because in first grade, you lose your teeth.

JENIFER DOLDE: They're whistling in between their . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:11:21] Well, if there was a ceremony that was very official, there would be somebody like Chapelle or William Baker or somebody like that. And the press would be here because it was good for Dorchester County that these things were happening, and they were going to be nationally recognized. The papers worked with him, and he was very photogenic, and he always was cooperative. He wasn't always so pleased when we talked about it later but, you know, he suffered fools gladly and . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: He wasn't pleased when you talked about it later meaning like . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:12:05] It . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:12:05] . . . had felt like a waste of his
time or they didn't know what they were doing or that sort
of thing. The people that he dealt with . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: He . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:12:12] . . . well didn't have a clue.

JENIFER DOLDE: Right, well because he had to go back to the
basics and probably give a lot of the information, same
information over and over again.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:12:19] Well, they'd ask stupid questions and
. . . but he was always very patient. And if you left, you
just were sure that he loved you and was pleased with
everything you had said but . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:12:34] Most of the *Dove* was made out of oak.

JENIFER DOLDE: And that was also sourced . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:12:40] Spicer's.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . from Spicer's?

TOM HOWELL: [01:12:43] No, we got that from Easton, the saw
mill up above Easton, whatever the name of that place is.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:12:52] Is that still there?

TOM HOWELL: [01:12:52] I can't remember the name of it.
Yeah, it's still there.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:12:55] Okay, well we could find that out.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, well and, of course, with all the shipbuilding that went on around here, we exhausted a lot of our supplies of oak.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:13:04] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did Jim take front and center with the press, did other members of the crew . . . did you have occasion, did you talk to people and helped field questions at any time?

TOM HOWELL: [01:13:15] No.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:13:15] Mostly . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:13:16] We had the press down there when we were building *Mr. Jim*, and when we launched it, the press was there.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:13:25] Yeah, they were invited and told when to come and that sort of thing. His personality attracted people, and he had a way of making people feel glad they were there even if he wasn't all that glad. He was always patient; he had a soft voice. When the minister wasn't around, he often preached the sermon, he had a background. Even though he didn't graduate from high school, he had a background in the King James version, so he had a vocabulary that was higher than the usual high school dropout, and he was a reader. He loved good biographies, good history. He didn't have any patience with fiction. Maybe Tom Sawyer but otherwise . . . maybe Mark Twain, but

he didn't have patience with the trash we were reading sort of thing, and it was pretty trashy. What does a teenage girl read, you know?

JENIFER DOLDE: So if you think about the *Dove* as a project, do you think about it when it was launched in the '70s? We'll start with that. Did you have a sense then about how important it was to Maryland? You mentioned that Dorchester, I mean did you have those kinds of reflections that you'd done something that was big?

TOM HOWELL: [01:14:51] Well, this was the second boat that he built. The first one went South Carolina.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:14:57] The *Adventure*.

TOM HOWELL: [01:14:58] And this was the second one, so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: But it was closer to home, it was . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:15:05] Right.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . you know, our state.

TOM HOWELL: [01:15:06] My brother worked on the one that went to South Carolina quite a bit, and he actually took it down there . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:15:18] With the . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:15:19] Navy tug took it down, and the navy tug took the *Dove* over to St. Mary's.

JENIFER DOLDE: You already were building traditional Chesapeake boats to a certain extent anyway, but did you . . . did it

feel like you were preserving heritage? I mean was that kind of reflection you know, then or now? Because then you went on to do the same thing at the Maritime Museum.

TOM HOWELL: [01:15:50] Yeah. Well, I thought it was a pretty neat project, and I don't think I ever thought about it being . . . preserving history or anything but . . .
(laughs)

JUDY HOWELL: [01:16:03] But he is a reader of history. He likes fiction, but he likes good history as well and . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:16:12] I read the story of the *Ark* and the *Dove*.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:16:15] Yeah, so that was all part of it.

JENIFER DOLDE: Back then, you read it, or you read it more after the fact?

TOM HOWELL: [01:16:21] I read it when we were building the *Dove*.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, and so it did have some meaning to you.

When you think about now . . . so the *Dove* became . . . it wasn't the last boat. I guess was *Jenny Norman* the . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:16:38] *Jenny Norman* was his last . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: The last . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:16:40] . . . boat, wasn't it?

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . big boat. To what extent did you think it was part . . . you know, that . . . was it creating a

legacy and was there . . .? Maybe people aren't self-aware in that point in time about what they're doing and what it may mean later.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:16:55] He was aware.

JENIFER DOLDE: He was aware, so you . . . well good, I'm glad that he was. Did you feel that way that you were part of . . .?

TOM HOWELL: [01:17:04] No, I didn't feel that way. I didn't have much to do with the *Dove* except building the spars.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:17:09] But the *Jenny Norman*, you didn't have anything to do with it either, did you?

TOM HOWELL: [01:17:14] I helped him on that some.

JENIFER DOLDE: But then again, so you did move on to the museum where the work was . . . well it was restoration of traditional so bay boat. So at some point, you know, . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:17:28] We did a lot of restoration over there. We rebuilt the whole *Martha* . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Still floating.

TOM HOWELL: [01:17:34] . . . and . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:17:35] And he became really good friends with Captain John Larrimore. I don't know if you've met him . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Not met.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:17:41] . . . because he died, yeah, he has

died, so. He was a lovely man and very courtly like my father but knew everything about the bay, and he had been a dredger.

TOM HOWELL: [01:17:52] And we went fishing with him a few times.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:17:53] Yeah, we did. Tom is from a family with a lot of history, and he doesn't even think about how he fits in the timeline.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's fair enough.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:18:07] Yeah, so.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah. So you know a little bit about the current project. It must be hard in a way to think about the boat being . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:18:23] the *Dove*?

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . essentially replaced, yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:18:25] It's a wooden boat.

TOM HOWELL: [01:18:28] We went over and looked at it, two of us went over there, and we looked at it, and the keel is supposed to be one long piece of oak, and it was seven pieces.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:18:47] Right away you know that this is not going to be the same as . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:18:53] So the *Dove* is going to leak like a sieve. And then the keelson inside was six pieces, and

they're both supposed to be one long piece.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you're looking at it from . . . of a craftsperson's standpoint and knowing what floats and what leaks and what doesn't, and you're able to, unlike the visitor, to point out and see all those things. So okay, well (inaudible). But sentimentally, it doesn't sound like you're too sentimental about it.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:19:35] No. No, I would have been more sentimental about the *Jenny Norman* than anything.

JENIFER DOLDE: So when you think about your father's legacy, Dove is not necessarily the first vessel that comes to mind?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:19:49] Not the first one but I . . . he went to work for himself when I was about six, and he started out building Hamptons. And a lot of the Hamptons that were sailed here on the Choptank were the things that he had built and then moved up to the little two mast, the skipjacks that were family sailors. And I always got to be the one who crawled around inside and did stuff, but I was interested, and I was happy to be with him doing that. Then as the boats got larger, we knew the people and we knew where they were going to go and that sort of thing. And then when St. Mary's got started, that turned a corner because he had worked on historic dredge boats always, and

I understood them from the stem up because often when something was too small for a man to get into, I could caulk. I had caulking iron and the caulking cotton, and I could caulk those places. I'm a detail girl, so I had . . . you know, I earned my little spot there but . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:20:59] We caulked it whole inside of this log cabin.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:21:02] Yeah. You can see it . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: With those skills, I see, I do see. So he was building recreational pleasure boats, small to then larger but also workboats, working boats as well or where they . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:21:16] That was so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . workboats that were used for pleasure?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:21:19] No, not as many workboats. The workboat builders were Bronza Parks and people like that. And they weren't as a big a project, and it wouldn't have been as big a profit nor is it interesting a job. He didn't like to be bored and so he took interesting jobs even if Mother despaired because he was not the one who cared about making a profit, and she was the one who did the books.

TOM HOWELL: [01:21:45] I built a big workboat for a man named [Gene Bounds?] from Salisbury.

JENIFER DOLDE: What design was that?

TOM HOWELL: [01:21:54] It was like 47 feet long. It had two
big Caterpillar diesels . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:03] Engines . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:22:04] . . . in it, and he wanted to put his
Volkswagen on it and take it out to . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:11] Holland's Island.

TOM HOWELL: [01:22:12] Holland's Island, he owned . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:13] He owned . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:22:13] . . . Holland's Island.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, okay. It was to be a workboat as well?

TOM HOWELL: [01:22:19] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:20] Well, as in fishing and anything you
needed, use it as a ferry, anything that you needed. It
had to be sturdy enough to run the bay no matter what the
water was.

JENIFER DOLDE: Not harvesting in particular but providing a
serviceable utility.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:35] Yeah.

TOM HOWELL: [01:22:36] It was a big boat.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:39] And beautiful and fast and fun, you
know, and they were . . . he had a moving company or
something.

TOM HOWELL: [01:22:45] Yeah, yeah, Dennis Storage.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:47] And . . .

TOM HOWELL: [01:22:47] . . . moving storage.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:22:48] . . . he was tall, and his son was even taller, and they liked a boat that would do what they needed it to do, and it was very, very handy on the Chesapeake even in the worst weather. And that's the kind of thing that he built aside from historical things.

JENIFER DOLDE: Right, so and that was . . . in the context of Mr. Jim's yard, or is that on your own?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:23:14] That was on his own.

TOM HOWELL: [01:23:16] And then we built the windmill.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:23:18] Jim was still . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:23:19] He was still alive, and he was alive of course when the windmill was built. And he . . . didn't he make the teeth?

TOM HOWELL: [01:23:26] He made the teeth and the big wheel inside.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:23:28] Yeah, of the windmill.

TOM HOWELL: [01:23:30] But I built most of the rest of it.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, so I was going to ask in his last years, was he able to work the . . . you know, up until he passed or . . . ?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:23:42] He had the Parkinson's shake . . .

(telephone rings) hold on, and so . . . but when he . . .
when the chisel touched the wood, it was okay . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: I see.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:23:56] . . . because he could dive it with
the mallet. But when he signed his name, it would be shaky
and that kind of thing, so . . . he didn't climb in the
windmill or anything like that, but he was very much an
advisor on it and did a lot of . . . did he make the teeth
for the wheel?

TOM HOWELL: [01:24:22] Yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:24:22] That kind of thing where the shape had
to be exact and they all had to be the same or the thing
wouldn't work right, you know. And so that was the
mechanical job done in wood.

JENIFER DOLDE: And my impression was he had done some of the
research to understand how it would've worked and how it
would've been designed, or did someone else do that work?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:24:40] Well, when he was a kid there were
windmills here, and he had memories of them, but he hadn't
been inside them or anything, so . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: You need to get moving?

TOM HOWELL: [01:24:53] I've got to get going.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. So I don't know if maybe you had more. A
lot of my . . . the questions I was asking there at the end

were reflection kinds of questions, big-picture questions about legacy, about what *Dove* meant locally and what it meant to those who worked on it. Did you have any thoughts . . . we can break that into sections . . . about those kinds of things, ideas about legacy on . . . in various levels?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:25:29] One of the ways that I'm very fortunate is that my parents were very special in different ways. My mother was known as the very best private-duty nurse you could get whether the person was going for surgery or a baby or dying. And if they were dying, she went and then they lived six months because she had a calmness about her. My father was special and his personality in particular. People gravitated to him because he had a sense of humor. What they didn't realize that was that often what they took to be absolute truth was sarcasm on his part. And if someone was treating him as if they were very much more educated than he, he would drop down to say, "Oh, like this, is this how I should do it?" And they would think that they taught the old man a lot by the time they left, and it was fine with him. They got what they wanted and he was . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: He wasn't aggravated by that?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:26:28] No, he was . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . at least not to their face?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:26:30] He was amused, he was very much amused.

JENIFER DOLDE: So very much self-possessed and confident in his own knowledge and his own . . . ?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:26:37] Right, mm-hmm. Because his son was killed by lightning in a sailboat, there was a sadness in them that I always understood, particularly him because he felt it was his fault, and it was. He had been working down the river shore from the yacht club and didn't pay any particular attention to the storm. And he just assumed that the people Rich was wailing with, they called him Richie because he was Jim III.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:27:16] And so he had been there and didn't know that his son had been killed until they came to get him. And it was at the yacht club, people that he trusted were in charge, and they sent him out to bail the boat, and lightning struck the top of the mast, and he never knew it, and that's the mercy of it. But my father never really got over it, and I had a sense of that, which somehow I related to better. My sister, he was . . . he liked all of her talents and everything she could do, and she was more outgoing than I was, and he admired her and all her skills

as well. But I felt closer to him in that I understood the pain that he felt for a misjudgment that changed his life.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do you see that reflected in his care making sure a boat was properly built? You mentioned safety a couple of times, I mean is there a tran. . . does that translate into how he . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:28:30] I don't think so unless . . . he built some small sailboats for little kids to learn to sail with, and I was not present whenever he had a heart-to-heart talk with the parents. I think that he built for people that he thought would understand that if there is a thunderstorm, get the kid out of the boat. He assumed that people would know that, and he had assumed that himself of his friends, and it hadn't worked out that way. But he wouldn't work for someone that he considered foolish or who would not be careful with the safety of not only the boat but its crew. He wanted it to be taken seriously. Sailing was a serious thing because you can get killed in a couple of ways.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's interesting. So can you think of an example, I mean without necessarily naming names, of somebody who he chose not to work with because he thought they were foolish?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:29:35] Well, lots of city people. There were people that came and talked down to him, and that wasn't

going to happen. He did not suffer fool gladly at all and then when they were telling . . . he would come home and imitate them and say what . . . how they set the old man straight sort of thing and that would be the last we'd see of them.

JENIFER DOLDE: He just declined the job?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:29:56] Yeah, not even get to the point where he would consider it even if they were very wealthy and would throw money at it. He only would work for people that he respected, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, I think there is a connection there.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:30:14] And a lot of the guys who worked for him were south Dorchester watermen, and they knew boats from the inside, so he didn't have to explain things. He was not good at explaining it because he thought if he knew it, everybody knew it.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, that's why I wondered about the hippies.

You know it sounds like the *Dove* project maybe was an exception that there was these people that came in who really didn't have a basis of knowledge and I . . . I was just curious and I'll ask them how they . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:30:43] Yeah. Well, my impression of them is that they were very impressed with him and wanted to please him as well as have the status of working on the *Dove* and

helping to build the *Dove*. But they were all strong individuals as well or they wouldn't have been labeled the way that they were, all natural everything, no deodorant, all that kind of thing. He didn't buy into that lifestyle, but he understood them wanting simplicity, and a lot of boatbuilding is the simplest thing. You've got to do it perfectly or nothing is going to work.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you really perceived those who came in who were not boat builders by trade and not maybe watermen were coming in for . . . sort of do something hands-on, to learn through doing to exercise . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:31:39] Yeah, yeah, and they believed in what . . . it was a historical thing. They believed in the history of it, and they wanted to do it like the old folks had because they really didn't buy into modern culture and so that for them was fulfilling in several ways. So he appreciated the ones that had that purity of purpose even if he wished they had a little more finesse in their approach and that sort of thing.

JENIFER DOLDE: I assume some people who started on the job didn't make it or were only . . . only worked . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:32:10] Didn't realize it was going to be hard work.

JENIFER DOLDE: It's not that he let them go, they maybe just

kept moving?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:32:17] I don't know that he ever fired anybody, but he could give you a look that made you . . . he could give me a look anyway, and he didn't ever say anything that . . . his worst thing to say to you as you dumb cluck, and you knew you had done it all wrong. When I had my little sail skiff, it was the first that I had sailed by myself. I sailed with people on like the *Jay Dee* and that forever, but it was the first time I had sailed by myself, and I had sailed back and forth in front of the house and around it in a creek. And when I came in and tied up the boat and went in the house, then he would tell me all the things that I had done wrong.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, he was watching from the . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:33:01] Oh yeah, he was. Our porch faced the creek and that . . . I didn't go past [Chrysler's?] then, I stayed in Lecompte Creek because I could walk home from there if I needed to at low tide. I never went farther than I wanted to row home because I never had a boat with a motor. And so we played on our . . . he made a very light cedar skiff for my sister when she was about eight or nine, and we rowed that all over the place, anything we wanted to see, but it was never out of sight of the house. The head of the creek is pretty far way up at Castle Haven, but

there wasn't anything interesting up there anyhow, so we didn't go very often. And we often rowed to the . . . to Chrysler's across the creek because they had a steep drop-off, and you could dive off the beach. And if you hit the tide right, you didn't have to row that hard either way, so . . . he's very patient with people who wanted to learn and then he was just sarcastic with people who thought they were teaching him something, and they went away thinking the old man had learned a lot.

JENIFER DOLDE: So there are men and women working together you mentioned at the adjacent yard not so much; although I guess there was the one, one woman Alicia.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:34:23] Mm-hmm. June Wingo was another one, and she's from a local family.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, yeah.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:34:27] She [Alicia] was not from a local family.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:34:29] She was from Talbot County aristocracy.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes, hence the last name. But everybody . . . you know, but I think what I'm hearing from you though is that the young women tended to have different jobs?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:34:48] He felt that women could do the detail

work, and he liked a woman's varnish because we didn't put
up with beads in the varnish. [telephone rings]

(break in audio)

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . remember where we were. You know, I'm
interested in the male-female dynamic, and I will ask the
men and women who worked on the project. On our projects,
the women shipwrights are full participants and so I was
curious to what extent . . . you know?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:35:20] The girls were June and . . . what was
her name . . . Catherine, the other girl with . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: And this . . . and we think . . .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:35:28] (overlapping dialogue; inaudible) . .
.

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . Kathy Moore because I have another Cathy .
. .

JUDY HOWELL: [01:35:32] That wasn't her name then. Her last
name was not Moore then.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, so maybe it is . . . there's a last name,
like it's K-I-O-R-P-E-S.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:35:41] Yes, that's her.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. Somebody said, I think it was Paul
Hawkinson if you remember that name said Jim Elk fell in
love with her and then she went away to college up north,
and he followed her, so that's why he's up there and he

runs the spar and boatbuilding shop in Maine as well. So I will sort those details out.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:36:02] Yeah, that's the only Catherine that I know.

JENIFER DOLDE: So those are the two women, and that's the main two that I have.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:36:07] Yeah, June and . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: . . . here.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:36:09] . . . Cathy Kiorpes or whatever

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah. Okay. Well, we can certainly revisit some of this. I wanted to spend the extra time with you talking about growing up and before the project, and that's to me just as valid as some of these others, but was there . . . is there anything else you wanted to add as we . . .?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:36:33] No, the growing-up part was amazing. You could go into anybody's house and ask for an apple or whatever because Dick Hubbard's father had the house across the creek. It was called Melody Point and . . . because his sister was a piano person. And we could go anyplace that we wanted to. We didn't go in people's houses except for our aunts or cousins or something and say we wanted to drink or did they have a cookie today kind of thing. We were free, and we took correction from anyone who was around. If they thought that we were being . . . that a

storm was coming and we should get home, then we got home. And we didn't have anybody in our lives that didn't care about us either as a neighbor or our parents' kids or who we were ourselves and so we were very, very sheltered in that way. And I went to Academy School, which has been three forevers, and I tried to get history on that for . . . I worked with retired teachers for about 10 years, I've kind of let it go now that I have grandchildren here. But that school was ancient and lots of people's grandparents went there. And the rooms were still the same, and they put an addition on when the baby boom came, so sixth grade was the addition, they've taken that back off now. And just things like that, that interests me but . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: And your parents were the same way, they treated other people's children, and it was very much a community raising each other as they're helping to . . . ?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:38:21] Yeah. And both of them were valued for what they did in the community. And somebody would call and say, "My father's in the hospital, he's had a heart attack, and he's not expected to live through the night," and she'd go right there, and she had a calmness about her. She was deeply loving and just a wonderful person, not as polished as I thought she should be later because she said, "He don't," which made me nuts. But she

grew up in Hurlock as the oldest of 10. And of the sisters, five of them became nurses, and four of them married doctors kind of thing. When Daddy, I heard him tell the story of my brother's death to somebody out on back porch, and I sat in the living room and listened because the door was open. Never heard him tell it before, and at the end he said, "And she never blamed me," and that's their marriage. She knew that he had . . . was bearing as much hurt as he could bear. And the last two houses as you go around the boulevard that Dawson Richardson's house, and the one next door that the Slagles lived there. And Mrs. Slagle did a painting from his last . . . from Richie's last school picture, and that always hung over our fireplace. And they just pulled together and got through it, and we didn't even realize that something that major had happened because I was two and Jane was four. And he built us a skiff to play in and . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: They passed away with the short time of each other, is that correct or . . . your parents?

JUDY HOWELL: [01:40:19] Well, yeah. She had been in a car accident and had brain damage from that, and he was her major caregiver. Jane and her husband had moved in . . . and with their two kids, and it's a whole different thing, but it was just so completely negative. Their

grandchildren knew them and valued them, and that was one nice thing about Elena and Andy being that old and Jimmy and Susan Brighton . . . Susan Banks are the other two grandchildren, and they valued them. But it was really too much for people of that age to have a whole young family in a six-room house . . .

JENIFER DOLDE: For sure.

JUDY HOWELL: [01:41:09] And my sister worked at the state hospital as a nurse, and she never was one who cared about the details of housekeeping or meal getting or any of that, so all that fell on Mother. You're doing pretty good.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think we're good. I think we're good. I'm . . .

END OF AUDIO FILE