

Dayton, Jay 6July2021

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JENIFER DOLDE: I'm going to hold you right there. Let me just as a way of getting started.

JAY DAYTON: Let you do your thing.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes, this is Jenifer Dolde it is Tuesday July 06, 2021, I'm here at the Maritime Museum with Jay Dayton, and you've already--tell me your full name again and your date of birth.

JAY DAYTON: [00:00:19] Leonard Dayton, Jr., 12/01/53.

JENIFER DOLDE: Perfect thank you so much. Well you were talking to me about the mast of *Constellation* and I'm going to make a note of that, but I would love if we could back up a little bit and you can tell me, um, where you grew up and a little bit about your growing up years.

JAY DAYTON: [00:00:38] I was born in Cambridge, my family landed in Elliott or on Elliott Island, in Dorchester County in the late 1600s. So I have generations of family in the area. I guess at age five my dad went to work for **Maryland Creative Finance Corporation** in Easton and so we moved from Cambridge to Easton, and I went to **Ottawa** [Idlewild] Elementary School there and then when I was ten we moved back to Cambridge, so I basically grew up in

Cambridge, graduated from the old Cambridge High School. And I guess after going to college I thought I was going to go to medical school, went to University of Maryland, got disillusioned with that. After college I decided to go out west for four years. So I skied for three years in the U.S. and one up in Canada and then figured maybe I needed to get a real job. And so came back and got interested in working on boats. Went to work at Richardson's Boatyard and I guess I stayed in the boat industry for about 11 or 12 years, worked there for four years, five years with Jim Richardson and Tom Howell, and then I came to work at the Maritime Museum and participated in the rebuild of the *Edna Lockwood* and some other projects. And then went to work for Crockett Brothers Boatyard in Oxford where we built a couple of small fiberglass boats. And then went to work for Dickerson Boat Builders in Trappe where we built a lot of boats, we built 25, 37, Dickerson 37s worked on a couple of 41s which were an older build, built two Dickerson 50s, two Southwest Harbor 42s, and two Southwest Harbor 52s, and we built 24 for Iowa race boats, Kevlar race boats which was really quite odd. And then things turned south in the boating industry in the mid-'80s, between interest rates going from 8% to 21 and Congress foolishly putting a 10% luxury tax on all major luxury items both airplanes and all

those things. Most builders went belly up including Dickerson Boat Builders. So I looked around for jobs in the boating industry and they were slim to none, and a friend of mine had gotten into the insurance business right out of college so I thought I would give that a try thinking that I could always come back to the boat business if I didn't like the insurance business and I'd been in the insurance business for 35 years, primarily specializing in marine stuff, boats, yachts, marinas, boat builders, boat dealers, anything that was boat oriented because of my history really.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well that is just a great, great overview and I want to try to pinpoint some of the timeline for that. But tell me before you started working in the boatyards, before you went off to college did you grow up sailing, what was your connection to sailing as a young guy?

JAY DAYTON: [00:03:54] Yeah I, my family belonged to Cambridge Yacht Club, and so I started taking junior sailing lessons at age eight and I've pretty much sailed my whole life other than the three or four years when I was out west, I didn't do much sailing there, but I missed that and that's one of the main things that brought me back to the Eastern Shore, and thinking that I needed a career, you know, something that was more focused than skiing and having fun

all day every day. So, that's really what brought me back to the Shore in the late '70s and I've been here ever since.

JENIFER DOLDE: So, you mentioned your father was also I'm sorry in business, what was his occupation?

JAY DAYTON: [00:04:38] Well my dad was career Air Force; he had I guess he spent 16 years in active duty and 15 in reserves. And so when I was a kid he was stationed at Andrew's Air Force Base, in the reserve, so he only went, you know, weekends here and there. But he had a business in my teen years, my late teen years in Cambridge called Dayton Oil Company. He bought a Union Oil distributorship from one of the local guys, I forget who it was, and occupied and operated that for years. And so my brother and I worked there some, and worked at various places, and then once you know obviously you go away to college you get involved in all kinds of other things.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you have a brother, any other siblings?

JAY DAYTON: [00:05:29] I have a brother who is younger than me, I had a sister who unfortunately passed away about five or six years ago. She was nine years older, and she was born when my parents actually were in active duty and moving around, she was born in Mobile, Alabama, because my

dad flew B52s and that was the main B52 base in the United States was in Mobile back in those days.

JENIFER DOLDE: Both of your parents have a connection to Dorchester?

JAY DAYTON: [00:05:53] Mm-hmm. My mother grew up in Cassons Neck, her family maiden name was Wilson, and my dad's you know by the Daytons if you, you know, I said our history goes back to the late 1600s. And if you go to Elliott Island there are two main graveyards there and there are predominantly four families that make up 95% of the gravestones and they are Dayton, Hurley, Bramble, and Foxwell. And so those families intermarried for God knows how many generations which I guess is what occurred back then. So, you know, when I see someone's name Dayton a lot of times people think we aren't related, we're all related, there are no Daytons in the United States that didn't start here to my knowledge, which is kind of interesting when you travel around and see who is out there.

JENIFER DOLDE: You were sailing Penguins, did your father, did you learn at the yacht club, did your father teach you to sail, was it a family activity?

JAY DAYTON: [00:06:59] No, my father was never a sailor, I'm not even sure my father really was a boater, but he knew that my brother and I were very interested in boating and

so we had a little power boat from when we were teenagers, and we went water skiing and enjoyed the Choptank, and it was a great way to spend summers. And I'm not even sure how I got interested in sailing, but I did, I guess probably from my neighbor, I had a neighbor across the street Robbie Lecompte who was a Penguin sailor and he sort of got me interested and I started taking sailing lessons down there and have sailed on any number of boats over the years and more recently I've owned a Shields which is a 30 foot daysailer for 16 years and raced one design in that at Tred Avon Yacht Club. So, sailed my whole life, done a lot of offshore sailing, done eight or nine Newport/Bermuda races, eight or nine Annapolis to Newport races, hundreds of deliveries just always liked being around the water.

JENIFER DOLDE: What about the hand skills, the woodworking, that kind of thing was that something that you came to before you went to college?

JAY DAYTON: [00:08:14] Not really, I think I learned the majority of it from you know Jim Richardson and Tom Howell. I mean I've always had mechanical skills and so I don't know I've always built things. I've always you know as a kid I always tinkered with things and had mechanical skills and I guess it was just the natural thing. And I forget exactly when it was, maybe when I was at Dickerson Boat

Builders, we took, the owner at the time had all of us that were in production take a test called the Johnson O'Connor test which is a test that takes three days to take, but it supposedly nails down your natural skills and aptitudes. And after three days of testing it said my perfect aptitude and skills would be a mix of the sciences and artistry which is boatbuilding, I mean that's exactly what it is. So, it's kind of interesting that that's what occurred, and I suspect had the marine industry not taken the downturn that it did in the mid-'80s that I would still be in the boat business. I've been in the insurance business 35 years, and I still miss the boat business.

JENIFER DOLDE: What year did you end up coming to the Richardson Boatyard?

JAY DAYTON: [00:09:37] I would say it was probably '75 or '76, I don't know exactly, I don't remember but it was in that range, and it was before the *Dove* project started, but it was pretty close to when it started.

JENIFER DOLDE: Right, so do you recall coming in whether they were discussing it, did you know anything about the *Dove*?

JAY DAYTON: [00:09:58] I didn't, you know, I really I don't even remember exactly how I got introduced to the boatyard, frankly. I lived in Church Creek and...

JENIFER DOLDE: Where did you live in Church Creek?

JAY DAYTON: [00:10:14] There is a farm on the righthand side if you go two lanes down to maybe three lanes down on the righthand side, there's a big farm that is owned by Ralph Jackson.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, just before Church Creek itself, Church Creek proper.

JAY DAYTON: [00:10:27] Yes, before you go into Church Creek you take that road there which is I can't remember the name of it, but at any rate that's a, it's a big brick farmhouse with a couple of barns, it sits back on that creek that comes up off the **[inaudible]**.

JENIFER DOLDE: So I grew up in Church Creek, my dad was the mayor of Church Creek for 30 years, four houses before the firehouse and my great grandfather's house he was the captain of a three masted schooner. So I have my own, yeah well and then the family has been there since the late 1600s so old familiar story. Not my dad's side of the family though.

JAY DAYTON: [00:11:00] You know, and I think it's been in my family since the beginning, I mean I'm told that the captain of the ship that brought my family and many other families here was Captain William Dayton and that was a lot of generations ago. So I don't know maybe you just have

things like that in your blood and you have an affinity for those things, I don't know.

JENIFER DOLDE: You started at Jim Richardson's yard putting aside *Dove* project for a second, you know, how did you begin to learn, what do you remember about him as a teacher and a mentor?

JAY DAYTON: [00:11:40] Well just he...

JENIFER DOLDE: Or others maybe.

JAY DAYTON: [00:11:41] He was, Jim was very interesting, he was quite a character. And some of the things he would say and do were very interesting. But he was definitely a hands-on guy, he would give you the tools, show you some basic stuff and put you to work, and then maybe check in on you every once in a while to see that you hadn't cut off a finger or done something really stupid. But a lot of the early work that we did was adze work which can be kind of dangerous, and I told you one of the projects that we had was building this mast for the *Constellation*. We chopped on that for months.

JENIFER DOLDE: Was that before *Dove* or at the same time?

JAY DAYTON: [00:12:29] I'm just trying to remember; I'm thinking it was before *Dove* but I can't be certain that that's the case.

JENIFER DOLDE: I'm a little unclear on the timeline, I think others have mentioned it.

JAY DAYTON: [00:12:39] And so we built the main mast, the topmast, and a top galleon for that, and I think overall it was 160 feet tall and then installed it, which was a pretty big project for a small boatyard. But he had a knack for things like that and people knew he had skills; he was building the *Jenny Norman* the whole time we were there. He would just tinker on that in the evenings and afternoons, and plus between that and the boatyard because Tom Howell was running the boatyard and Jim Brighton. And there were about 33 skipjacks back then and the yard maintained virtually all of them, so there were skipjacks coming and going all of the time, and the occasional bugeye. And so it was not only new construction it was a lot of maintenance and upkeep like I mentioned that we built a buy boat replica called *Mr. Jim*, and that was way after the *Dove* project, but there were always projects like that coming and going out of the yard just because he had the reputation, people knew him far and wide. And I think that was the third, at least the third generation of boat builders there, I think his father was a boat builder.

JENIFER DOLDE: So, do you remember when the *Dove* project started, I know you probably weren't part of the planning,

but I know William Baker visited, I know there were probably folks from St. Mary's, do you remember any of that planning process?

JAY DAYTON: [00:14:16] I don't really, I wasn't really intimately involved in the planning meetings, but I remember it was like a you know constant parade of people coming and going, some from the State and some from other organizations, because it was a State-funded project and a big deal for Maryland, and Jim Richardson had quite the following and was very well known in a lot of areas, so it just was a normal thing for us and we just did our jobs and worked and we were all pretty young.

JENIFER DOLDE: You didn't have particularly have interaction, do you remember any of the personalities, somebody like Baker, I know Paul had at least one memory of a Baker visit?

JAY DAYTON: [00:15:02] I don't remember, I mean we may have had interactions, but you know that was fifty something years ago.

JENIFER DOLDE: I get it.

JAY DAYTON: [00:15:14] or not quite 50 years ago but close.

JENIFER DOLDE: As far as building this, you know, you said you were thinking about going to medical school, so it sounds like you were a student. As far as being a student of history, understanding, have a family with long connections

to Maryland, you know, did being part of the Maryland *Dove* build mean anything to you in that sense?

JAY DAYTON: [00:15:33] Yes it was, you know I've always had an interest in history and my father had a big family, nine brothers and sisters, a couple of which were very interested in the family tree and tracing family history and all that. So I was sort of steeped in those things, and so the Dove Project was a pretty big deal back in those days for Dorchester County and for a small boatyard. So it was fun to work on it and fun to have the skills, to learn the skills to do with working and as I said I ended up bringing those skills here to work on the *Edna Lockwood* and some other projects here. And so they were good skills to know, and I think I've always had a connection and an interest in doing things with my hands that were creative, hence the testing the Johnson O'Connor test that said that was the perfect thing for me, a mix of the arts and sciences.

JENIFER DOLDE: What part of the process did you enjoy the most? What job, what skill, what kind of tools, or all of the above?

JAY DAYTON: [00:16:34] I loved the adze work, I just thought you know, and we were using all hand tools, you know, drawknives, adzes, spokeshaves, all the basic stuff. It

was pretty rare for a power tool to be put into play other than occasionally we'd have a big timber to saw or whatever and we needed the bandsaw. Or I remember a few times that I was on the sawmill with Jim Richardson and that was interesting because it was a rickety old thing, and it was barely together. And so the facilities there were just what was needed to get the job done, they were not fancy, most of the big power tools, the big bandsaws and planers and stuff, they ran by a belt in the John Deere tractor, what we called Popping John. So it was basic, very basic stuff, but you learned all of those skills and how to do those things by hand and frankly that's a lot of how that vessel would have normally, you know, originally been built. So I loved those, I loved working with the adze and working on different projects. One of the projects that a couple of us did, Paul Hawkinson and Joe Balderson and I were to make all the deadeyes and cleats for the whole boat. And that was a fun project, and the deadeyes were, you know, a lot of the materials that we used were either black locust or you know even some of them were lignum vitae which is the densest wood on earth, extremely difficult to work with, really hard on tools, but Jim really liked to work with natural things that made sense for their function. And I don't even know if those things

were mandated by you know the naval architect or those were just the things that he knew should be used for a particular thing.

JENIFER DOLDE: I've talked to others about the sourcing of the wood, but that one in particular which is...is that something that's available retail?

JAY DAYTON: [00:18:39] No, lignum vitae is from South America, and I don't know where exactly he got it, but I know there was a massive piece of it, and it is incredibly heavy and dense. In fact it doesn't float it's that dense. So, but he used a lot of natural woods, like black locust is a very common wood in and around and Jim always used to say, he always had a quip for this or that and he said, "Yeah black locust is pretty hard, if you make a fence post out of it it's hard as stone and will last two years longer." That's the kind of stuff he always, he had all of these one-liners for everything. So we made a lot of things out of the naturally occurring materials, some of them are great, some of them not so much like he liked to use longleaf yellow pine which is fine from the original stuff that was planted, you know, decades and decades before, but a lot of the longleaf pine, loblolly pines that were planted and available when we built that boat were

rapid growth pines. A lot of sap and no hardwood, or very little.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's probably what came from Spicer?

JAY DAYTON: [00:19:54] Yes, and so it's also what we used on the *Edna Lockwood* which didn't last very long because, you know, those woods weren't great, because that's how things were grown back then.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well it changed; we depleted the natural hardwoods in this region.

JAY DAYTON: [00:20:10] Yeah if you could get longleaf yellow pine from Georgia or somewhere that's what you'd be using, but it's hard to come by and it's very expensive now because of that. So you tend to use what you have available. So the whole process was really interesting and it's a very interesting family, the whole dynamic that was down there then.

JENIFER DOLDE: There's a good transition I was going to ask you about, you know, we spent the preview to this interview talking about people that you worked with, but you know talk to me about the division of responsibility if there was one and who worked on what and some of the people that you remember.

JAY DAYTON: I'm sure in his mind, in Jim Richardson's mind there were probably divisions of responsibility, but I

never sensed them and there was never really a supervisor. You...basically whomever was working on the project rose to the top of their abilities and level and he recognized it and he would put someone who was really good at something on a particular job. I mean I remember, you know, Freddie Asplen and June Wingo were incredible with an adze and a broad axe, they could move some wood. And so if that's the project that needed to be done they were the two to put on it. But that was the way they were, Freddie was a ball of fire, he was unbelievable no matter what he worked on. And so I suspect that different people rose to become you know more of leaders in certain portions of the project and what not, but we did whatever we were asked to do.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you didn't necessarily work with one particular group or team of people?

JAY DAYTON: [00:21:59] No, whatever needed to be done, whether it was firing up the steamer and steaming a plank and putting it in place or whatever, I mean we all worked on everything kind of, at least that was my recollection of the experience.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, as far as your position you were sort of kind of in the middle, there were people like Paul who was very young and fresh out of school, maybe even less and you were, you know...

JAY DAYTON: [00:22:27] Yes, it was a mix, I mean I think a lot of us were fairly similar ages, maybe different from a year or two here or there. But there were people that came in with clearly advanced woodworking skills, Bill Slacum was a really advanced woodworker, he knew his stuff, whereas many of us were just sorting all that out. So, there were clearly people who rose to the top when it came to skill levels and I'm sure Jim recognized that and put those people in places where they could be the most useful.

JENIFER DOLDE: But you felt like you did quite a few different jobs not just, you know, one.

JAY DAYTON: Did a lot of things.

JENIFER DOLDE: What about when it came to the men versus the women on the project. I've already heard, you know June's ability is kind of legend at this point, but you know any differences in the jobs they might have been assigned?

JAY DAYTON: [00:23:24] I mean if there were I didn't really take note of it, I don't think that...you know any woman that was willing to work on that project, because it was hard labor and hot as fire at times, and you were out in the sun all day every day. You would respect just the fact that they were willing to step up and deal with it, so I didn't see a whole lot of difference, maybe there was I just didn't think down of it if there was, other than

people like June who was unbelievable. She was a powerhouse.

JENIFER DOLDE: If you're willing to...and I'm not just going to ask you about the women but tell me what you remember about different people who worked on the project. So you talked a little bit about Bill, you mentioned Bill, Cathy Moore what do you remember?

JAY DAYTON: [00:24:11] I didn't work with Cathy much she was pretty quiet back in those days. I worked with Paul Hawkinson a bunch, I worked with Joe Balderson a fair amount, Jack Krolak was a character, I liked working around Jack. You know everybody had their own personalities and was different about how they interacted with others. But it was a pretty happy go lucky group, I mean I think, I can't speak for others, but I think most of us felt pretty honored to be working on that project. So it was I think once you got into it, and you realized you were working with Jim Richardson, and you were working on a major project that was historic in nature it meant a fair amount to a lot of people I think. But like I said I can't speak for others, but that's how I felt.

JENIFER DOLDE: It's interesting, and yet you can't remember exactly the circumstances under which you came to work there, but it was obviously meaningful to you.

JAY DAYTON: [00:25:14] Well I had to meet someone who suggested that I go to work there, but I don't remember who it was, and I remember I lived in Church Creek and I was commuting back and forth for a while by bicycle, I rode my bike a lot back then, but it wasn't uncommon for me to ride 30 or 40 miles at a crack, that's just remember we were teams in our twenties and fit, and loved doing those things, and that's just what you did. June and Freddie also commuted by bike, they lived on I forget the name of the road, it was about halfway down towards Richardson's, anyway don't remember the exact name of the road, but they lived closer than I lived by probably six or eight miles, but even still was just one of the things you did, you know, so.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's really interesting so collegial definitely is something that I've heard described people spending time with each other outside of work.

JAY DAYTON: [00:26:23] No question, after a period of time I also moved over to the farm, Fred Davis, which was you know right next door to the boatyard, and I lived there for a period of time as did Cathy Moore, Jack Krolak, I think June lived there for a while, Jim Elk lived there, Catherine Kiorpes lived there, it was a monster farmhouse.

And it just made sense for a lot of people to live in one place and have their work right next door.

JENIFER DOLDE: Was this an extra structure or did Fred live there as well?

JAY DAYTON: [00:26:57] No, Fred lived there, Fred was quite the character, he I think his family was pretty wealthy on the western shore it was my understanding that they owned an enormous farm that became Alexandria, Virginia, so you can imagine what that was about financially. From a financial standpoint I don't know that Fred worked a day in his life, that I saw, but he was a super interesting character, he was involved in all kinds of projects, building boats and a great musician, and had a brain that was amazing, could remember anything. I think he had a photographic memory, there wasn't much that was said or done that he didn't remember for years. So he was an interesting character and therefore sort of brought a large group of people together, and so it was quite the experience.

JENIFER DOLDE: He was friendly with Mr. Jim?

JAY DAYTON: [00:27:59] Everything that I gathered he was.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did he learn to build boats?

JAY DAYTON: [00:28:05] I don't think he...if he did I didn't know about it, I think his boatbuilding skills came from

somewhere else and woodworking skills. But like for instance there was another guy, John Scrivens, Long John we called him, Long John was probably six-six and skinny as a rail, but he was very smart technically and mechanically and so John and myself and Jack and a bunch of guys built a sawmill on the property. And so, you know, we would hear about a tree that blew down somewhere, we'd go, he had a big truck, we had all the equipment we needed, we'd go get the tree, bring it back there, and saw it into lumber. Just skills that you learned back then, and that was there on the farm with Fred. We once heard of trees that needed to be removed on **Bruss** Island, and **Bruss** Island is an amazing property, these trees were probably 250 years old, maybe 300, they were massive, eight feet in diameter, massive, you know, we had a, I guess it was a poplar probably a tulip poplar that was a hundred feet tall with no branches, eight feet in diameter, so we cut it into ten foot logs. A ten-foot log was a complete load on the farm truck that we had, we'd get one log on it and time to take it back. Anyway those were the kinds of things that we stumbled into back then and had the time to do, and did, and so it was just building more skills as far as woodworking and boatbuilding stuff.

JENIFER DOLDE: Side income was that what it was for, was it for Fred, was it for Mr. Jim?

JAY DAYTON: [00:29:49] No, it was just for fun, I mean yes there might be some income out of it, we sold lumber, we kept lumber, we built stuff, you know, it was just part of what you did.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's a lot of wood you had to do something with it.

JAY DAYTON: [00:29:59] There was a lot of wood, yes. We had thousands of board feet of wood stacked around here, there, and wherever. But that's what you did when you were a woodworker, that's kind of what you do, so.

JENIFER DOLDE: Stockpile wood, yes. Do you know whatever happened to Fred Davis?

JAY DAYTON: [00:30:15] He moved down to Onancock, Virginia, I haven't heard from him for years. I don't know if he's still alive, he was older than most of us, but the last I heard he was down there. And so some of these characters may know if he's still around and have had contact with him.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think Judy mentioned him and I didn't push her too much but you're giving me a little more story, kind of information.

JAY DAYTON: [00:30:45] Oh Fred is quite the character if you could interview Fred you would have something interesting.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did you guys have titles do you remember what you were paid?

JAY DAYTON: [00:30:57] I have no idea it was probably nothing. You know back in those days in the '70s you didn't make a whole lot of money and it really wasn't about the money, it was about the experience. I don't think I made a whole lot when I worked here at the museum, but you know if it was about money you wouldn't be building boats you'd be doing something else. But I remember at the end of my boat building career when I worked at Dickerson Boat Builders and it started to fall about I looked in Maine, because there weren't a lot of places that were offering jobs, but Hinckley in Southwest Harbor was. And so for me to stay in the boat business and go to work for Hinckley I had to take a 50% pay cut and move to Maine, and that didn't seem to make a lot of sense to me, so that's why I thought well I'll try the insurance business, if it works great, if it doesn't I'll do something else. And it's unfortunate that that all occurred because I think we lost a lot of very skilled craftsman when that whole thing went down. There were 82 people working at Dickerson when I was there, and we worked seven days a week, three shifts a day,

seven days a week, 24 hours a day, because we were that busy. Yet, you know, by the early '80s they were gone, they were out of business, well mid-'80s I shouldn't say early '80s, mid-'80s, '86 I think is when they went belly up, '85. So, a lot of those people might have gone out and continued to work on boats or you know become craftsman, building homes, or whatever, but I think the industry, the boating industry, lost a lot of very talented, very skilled people by the issue with you know a lot of those businesses going belly up.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do you have a sense of where the Dickerson folks in particular went, did they stay local, did they move away?

JAY DAYTON: [00:32:55] There's a few around still, some of the older guys I don't think are with us anymore, I think they ended up you know whether a painter, woodworker, whatever, went out on their own. A few stayed, because what happened with Dickerson is they went into Chapter 11 bankruptcy, they couldn't make it, so a guy named Dennis **Bloyer** from Baltimore bought it, he really messed it up and ended up losing it, defaulting on the property and John Shanahan bought it. So he bought it out of foreclosure and he's still operating it. So some of those people, Alan Willoughby and others stayed there, but like John Cornett

was a major player there, John went on to be...he's still in the boating industry, but you know, he's worked as a salesperson, wholesale salesperson for Paxton and others. So different people either went into different industries or just ended up doing different things. But I think a lot of those people are still here, still around.

JENIFER DOLDE: Had they been from here, or they came to this area from all over to work at...

JAY DAYTON: [00:34:03] I think most of them were from the area, there were a few that came from far and wide, like when we had the Farr Project there were some, you know, management people that were from New Zealand and what not because that's, you know, Bruce Farr was from New Zealand. But most of the people that did all the labor were from here.

JENIFER DOLDE: I'm curious in all of your boatbuilding experience how many black workers there were local...okay, zero.

JAY DAYTON: [00:34:38] Maybe one, maybe two, I don't know.

JENIFER DOLDE: Judy remembered somebody who did caulking because she...

JAY DAYTON: [00:34:45] Yeah, there were a few people that came and went, I don't know if they worked at Richardson's, but you know there were a bunch of other boatyards around

then. Down the road towards Cassons Neck there was a guy that had been in business for years, his last name was Ruark, I can't remember his first name, but he was a big time boatbuilder and he did projects. Like he would come to Richardson's and work on things because he could caulk like nobody had ever seen. So there was still a mix of other area businesses that you know probably absorbed some of these people and most of them I don't think are still around.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you were aware of black people working in other yards but not directly with you?

JAY DAYTON: [00:35:36] I don't think there were, if there was I don't remember it.

JENIFER DOLDE: And what about other women because you know it seemed relatively unique, you know?

JAY DAYTON: [00:35:47] It was pretty unique, and there might have been women that worked, there were women that worked in other boatyards. I know when I worked at Crockett Brothers there were a couple of women that worked there but they were, you know, they were painters. And you know everybody has skills that they're really good at, but as far as boat building goes, I'm not aware of a lot of women that were working in boat building then, it may be completely different now, I don't know.

JENIFER DOLDE: It is at our yard, but we may be unique as well.

But I guess what I am gathering from that is that the period of time when there was at least three women working at Jim Richardson's yard it was kind of rather unique. The cliché is that he called the people that worked at the yard the hippies.

JAY DAYTON: [00:36:36] Well we were hippies.

JENIFER DOLDE: In what sense, it seems a little late for hippies actually.

JAY DAYTON: [00:36:45] No, not really, I mean again I don't know but in the '60s and '70s there were plenty of hippies around, hippies that maybe had different lifestyles, had long hair and beards, whatever made them appear to be a hippie.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well that's what I guess I'm trying to explore is like what do you think about that group of people made them unique, made them interested in doing this?

JAY DAYTON: [00:37:07] You know I mean just the circumstances, the fact that you had a group of like-minded people who lived together at Fred's place. I mean that, you know, I suspect in town in Cambridge they called that the commune or something like that because we were all living there together and we had gardens and we worked at the boatyard and all that, who knows. But that was a fair

portion of the working group back in those days in boatyards, and so again I think it was maybe driven by it being an artsy sort of way to make a living, I assume, I don't know, who knows, just pontificating here, but...

JENIFER DOLDE: I'm just I'm truly interested in your perspective because you throw around a word like that and I'm thinking are they...what did it mean in reality, no it's just a word. Mr. Jim didn't hang out with you all, what was the relationship like in general between him and everybody else?

JAY DAYTON: [00:38:08] I mean it was cordial, and all but none of us, you know, Jim Richardson or Tom Howell, none of us were social together. But you know the Richardson family lived down there, so Jim was, Jim's house was right down the road, his sister I think it was sister and brother-in-law were you know as you came in the road, as you went further out the road was the Wheatley family, which was part of his family, Jim Brighton lived there, Tom Howell lived on the way in, I mean it was a whole family thing for them. But they were, you know, it was a conservative bunch so I'm sure they viewed us as the hippies, because we had long hair and beards and all that stuff. And so I would, again I don't mean to speak for them, but I would guess that's what they were speaking.

So, but you know you worked on whatever you...was available. I mean I helped Tom Howell build his log home there, worked on it for a while, as did Jim Elk and some others, because that's what needed to be done at the time, so you did whatever, you know, whatever paid the bills and what was available, and very interesting stuff.

JENIFER DOLDE: It sounds like it. Talking, we talked about materials, I have some questions that came from the current captain Will Gates of *Dove* I said if you have anything to ask the people who worked on the project what would you ask them. He was particularly interested in he talked about steaming, so what kind of setup did you have to do that process?

JAY DAYTON: [00:39:37] It was just a big, long box that you know you could slide a plank into and get the heat up. It wasn't fancy, there was a gas burner and sort of, I'm going to call it a pot that allowed for steam to go into that box, it was not fancy. But nothing there was really fancy, but it was super effective. So, and you know we used primarily treenails, what they call tree nails, they were made out of black locust and that's what you fastened everything with. So those were all turned on a lathe by hand, hundreds of them, maybe thousands.

JENIFER DOLDE: You did some of that as well I assume?

JAY DAYTON: [00:40:20] Oh yeah, everybody spent time on the lathe. But you know it was very interesting using all those natural products, most of which grew in the area in Dorchester County. And so you know it was quite the interesting process and those skills allowed me to come to a place like this or then go to Crockett Brothers and then to Dickerson Boat Builders, and they were, you fine-tuned those skills as you were building you know finer boats and yachts and what not, but they were still the same basic skills and use of your hands and what not, so I learned a lot of that stuff here, once I went from Richardson's to here I learned a whole lot of other things.

JENIFER DOLDE: What about moving big pieces into place, jigs, bending things, do you remember any kind of unique solutions?

JAY DAYTON: [00:41:14] It was all super basic stuff, but if we needed to move something large we probably were moving it on the ground with just I don't know with trees basically, you know, you cut stuff to the right length and you would roll things, we'd move, you know, pull with the tractor if it was super heavy. Use all sorts of levers and leverage if you needed to get something into somewhere, because there was a lot of heavy stuff. But again very basic things, no high tech tools, or types of construction,

it was all super basic. But again they were the things that had been done for generations, and those things work.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do you remember any challenges or problems that came up something that had to be changed, tweaked?

JAY DAYTON: [00:42:09] Sawmill, the sawmill was dangerous, it was scary. Every time I worked on it it was scary, it was rickety, and it was put together with wedges and this, that, and the other thing. But I remember a day when I was working with Jim on the mill, we were on a fairly large pine tree, and the I don't know how it happened, but the actual track came off of the timber and he hit, I guess it was the axle off of one of the cars with the saw blade. And all 52 teeth came out of that blade and ended up raining down on Tom Howell's roof next door. So you know somebody could have been hurt or killed if they were standing in the room place when it happened. So that was a little, there were some things around there that were a little dicey let me put it that way.

JENIFER DOLDE: But there were no serious injuries from you or any others?

JAY DAYTON: [00:43:12] No, there were a few people that messed up and ended up hitting their leg with an adze or something, you know, your shin. Some people wore shin guards, some didn't wear shin guards, but that can be

fairly severe. We kept all the tools super sharp, so if you had an issue it was going to be a serious issue.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did you acquire tools? Did you use his tools?

JAY DAYTON: [00:43:40] No, they were all, you brought your own tools, or you acquired them along the way. So you know we'd all go to if there was a...we heard of a farm sale or an auction or whatever you'd always go to it and see what you could acquire. I still have the tools, I still have a massive toolbox between there and here I never got rid of any of those tools, I still have every one of them.

JENIFER DOLDE: I'll make a note of that because we do want to show the tools, and we have tools in our collection, but if there are tools that you think you used on this project...

JAY DAYTON: [00:44:11] Oh I used them absolutely on this project.

JENIFER DOLDE: To have that context is really great.

JAY DAYTON: [00:44:16] And I suspect if you, I don't know how many people you'll interview, but I suspect if you talk to most of these people they still have the tools, they've used them their whole lives.

JENIFER DOLDE: Paul specifically mentioned an adze that he got just before I think he got as a graduation gift, and he said Mr. Jim fixed it for him, like it didn't have quite

the right curve and so he fixed it for him, and he still has that and it's something he really treasures.

JAY DAYTON: [00:44:37] I've still got all my stuff. Now I would have to really think hard about trying to use the adze again at this point in my life because those are skills that you learn how to be proficient with them, and when you're not proficient bad things can happen.

JENIFER DOLDE: How do you get up to that level though?

JAY DAYTON: [00:44:59] You just do it, you know, in the meantime you wear shin guards and be careful and all that stuff. But it's like anything you just have to learn how to use the tools particularly when they're hand tools and you know, whether it's a plane or a spokeshave or an adze or whatever it is it just takes time to build the skills.

JENIFER DOLDE: Muscle memory and all that.

JAY DAYTON: [00:45:21] Yeah, smarts, the dos and don'ts.

JENIFER DOLDE: Not assuming we can be casual about it, always purposeful.

JAY DAYTON: [00:45:33] you can't be casual about most of it. And even with power towels I mean I am incredibly careful, when I'm using my table saw, it's a very nice table saw, but I am fully aware of the fact that you can lose a finger in a heartbeat if you're not careful. So I just, I am very focused when I'm using the chainsaw, I've cut down hundreds

of trees, but every time I pick that saw up and start it I am super focused, because it is a tool that is incredibly useful, but if you have a problem it may kill you. So you've just got to focus on those sorts of things.

JENIFER DOLDE: One of the things that I was interested to learn about is kind of the...you mentioned a little bit about the parade of people that came through, so reporters, journalists, but also schoolchildren. Tell me what you remember about the school groups, about the reporters, anything like that, your attitude toward them?

JAY DAYTON: [00:46:30] It was a little difficult at times because you're working in a boatyard and you're doing things that are somewhat hazardous sometimes. And so it's a little difficult to have, you know, schoolkids and others who are completely unaware of the dangers to be there when you're using the tools and doing things. And so you just had to be as careful as you could and mindful as you could, but at times it was difficult to do some things because there were a lot of people coming and going.

JENIFER DOLDE: Were the kids interested in what was...

JAY DAYTON: [00:47:07] Some were, it's like any group of kids, some get it, and some don't.

JENIFER DOLDE: Reporters, I've heard some stories about Mr. Jim and reporters, were you privy to any of those conversations?

JAY DAYTON: [00:47:21] Well again he was such a character, you never knew what he was going to say, and he had a very dry sense of humor. And so there were times when he said things which I'm relatively sure they had no idea what he was talking about, but we did, and it was like oh I can't believe you said that to her. Anyway it was...

JENIFER DOLDE: Sort of they didn't know what they were talking about.

JAY DAYTON: [00:47:48] They had no clue, and you know as I said Jim had all these one-liners that were hilarious. If you worked around him and you knew the situation and the tool and what he was having a one-liner about it was funny, but most people would have no idea what he was talking about.

JENIFER DOLDE: You can't give me one example?

JAY DAYTON: [00:48:09] Well I just did the one about the locust post. That was a classic, so he was a neat guy and I think it was super interesting that he could interact with so many different types of people and still be very interesting and still be...I mean he was quite the gentleman, I don't know how long I worked there two or

three years, I never heard a curse word or anything like that come out of his mouth ever. He just, he was quite the gentleman.

JENIFER DOLDE: And physically very capable?

JAY DAYTON: [00:48:51] Even in his old age, and he knew his limits, he knew when to ask for help, but I would see him do things and think I don't think I would be doing that at his age. Because everything that he worked on was heavy duty, it was big heavy timbers, and there was nothing small, but you know he'd been doing it his whole life.

JENIFER DOLDE: As you were finished up and were working on *Dove* what was...people that you knew, people who were outside of the boatyard, friends, family, did they kind of, were they asking you about it, did they have a perception about what you were doing, were they interested?

JAY DAYTON: [00:49:34] They were interested to a degree, but you know again remember you're in a very conservative part of Maryland, the Eastern Shore, Dorchester County, and you know, it was kind of viewed as the hippies that were down there making this thing. And so I suspect there were all kinds of attitudes about various pieces and parts of it, I mean the other day, or I shouldn't say the other day, a month or so ago I don't know what I was looking at, but it might have been on YouTube or something like that, and

there was an interview of me that I have no recollection of. It was Jim Richardson and I and a reporter, and I do not remember it.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think I know, was it put up on that Facebook page?

JAY DAYTON: [00:50:23] It might have been on the Facebook page.

JENIFER DOLDE: I have that, I'll be talking to the guy who put it up.

JAY DAYTON: [00:50:26] I swear I have no recollection of that occurring.

JENIFER DOLDE: It was done by I think the Dorchester library public access channel.

JAY DAYTON: [00:50:34] It was when we had the boat in Cambridge on Long Wharf and it was, I don't know we were showing it, I think we were sort of finishing up a few little projects, prepping it to go to St. Mary's and there was an interview about something. And I'm not sure why it was that I was in the middle of it, but I was.

JENIFER DOLDE: You were, did you help take the boat, were you part of the crew?

JAY DAYTON: [00:50:56] Mm-hmm.

JENIFER DOLDE: So Paul was telling me a little bit about that, what do you remember about that experience?

JAY DAYTON: [00:51:04] It was just interesting, none of us had ever sailed on a square rigger, you know it's just not something you have experience with, but it was just a matter of trying to get the boat to do what you wanted it to do. I had sailed on some large vessels most of them after that. When I was at the Maritime Museum, one of the last things that I did prior to leaving was there was a large topsail schooner named the *Western Union* that would come here regularly, it was a big schooner, 165-170 feet, that was built to lay cable in the Windward and Leeward Islands. And somehow it ended up in Baltimore and they were running charters, they were running crews, well they would come to the Maritime museum regularly on the weekends and I got to know the crew, and very interesting and they were getting ready to leave to go to Florida and then the Caribbean and needed crew. So I ended up leaving my job here and going with these people to the Caribbean, it was very interesting. Again, a whole mix and match of people from all over the place that did this, but it was super interesting.

JENIFER DOLDE: I know what I was going to ask you, so it was the perception that the community had of the group there at the Richardson yard, so do you have any knowledge of what other boatbuilders speaking of people being traditional and

conservative I mean were they skeptical or negative toward the work that was going on?

JAY DAYTON: [00:52:40] I have no idea. I never heard of any negativity.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do you know if he got...did he get along well with other boatbuilders in the area or collaborate with them?

JAY DAYTON: [00:52:49] Yeah, he collaborated, like with Mr. Ruark down the road I can't remember his first name, but anyway they had known each other for decades and he helped with planking, and caulking, and all that stuff because he was very good at it.

JENIFER DOLDE: I've got his name on there.

JAY DAYTON: [00:53:09] And there were others Galen Mills was down the road, he was very helpful at times. And so most of the older knowledgeable boatbuilders I think he interacted with very well. There were probably some maybe that he didn't, I don't know, who knows, I can't speak for him.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well you know my preconceived notion is that everybody, that he was legendary, that everybody admired him, but of course sometimes that's not necessarily true, and I just was curious.

JAY DAYTON: [00:53:37] And it's not necessarily a good thing either, you know, people have their own perceptions of others, and so I always thought that people admired him a great deal, and that he was a legend and all that, but that's not necessarily how everyone saw it. We all have our view of things.

JENIFER DOLDE: For sure.

JAY DAYTON: [00:54:03] But for me it was a great experience and working here was a great experience, it was sort of an extension of Richardson's. Because after *Dove* I worked for Tom for a while, and then when things got a little slow there I found out about this project about the *Edna Lockwood*, and I made some enquiries and got hired and came here and did that. But, you know...

JENIFER DOLDE: Of course Tom eventually came here did you overlap with him here?

JAY DAYTON: [00:54:30] Yes, and his brother whose name I can't remember right this minute was on the board here at the same time, he has an older brother, well you could look back and figure it out I'm sure. Yeah, Tom interacted here quite a bit and I don't recall that...I guess he was more of a management; I assume he was more in a management position here, but I forget.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think, I mean he ran the boatyard so I think
yeah he may have managed some of that.

JAY DAYTON: [00:55:08] I don't think he was running the
boatyard when I was here, I'm trying to remember the name
of the guy that ran the boat shop Mark...

JENIFER DOLDE: It wasn't Mark Adams was it?

JAY DAYTON: [00:55:19] No.

JENIFER DOLDE: Rich Scofield's brother was there for a while.

JAY DAYTON: [00:55:24] Both John and Richard were here, and
they both worked in the boatyard at the time, but they
weren't running it. There was another guy, I'm thinking
his first name was Mark, but I can't remember, I can see
his face, but I can't remember his last name.

JENIFER DOLDE: Somebody else will remember, not me. It is
interesting though that the work that was done here very
directly correlates to the work that you did at the
Richardson yard.

JAY DAYTON: [00:55:51] No question, the same skills.

JENIFER DOLDE: I mean is that how you got the job, or did you
seek it out for that reason?

JAY DAYTON: Here?

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes.

JAY DAYTON: [00:55:57] You know just to continue being able
to work on large vessels that were of heavy construction

and then the same sort of skills I think was what appealed to me. And while there were a few more power tools used here than there I still did a lot of adze work and a lot of hand tools, because it was big heavy timber work. The *Lockwood* was a really neat project, and we didn't do the logs, the bottom, that's what you guys just did, but we did everything from the logs up and it was a neat project, and Paul Hawkinson worked on that, he worked here too, he came from **Kemps** to here and a couple of other guys. And so Paul will likely remember the name of the guy who was running the yard at the time.

JENIFER DOLDE: And he may have even said it and I've just forgotten. Well what do you remember about the *Edna* project, that's in here too?

JAY DAYTON: [00:56:50] It was great, it was a really fun project. A lot of that project was in the winter, and you know it was cold. I've told a story a number of times which may or may not be appropriate but all of the guys that worked in the boat shop did chew, you know. And so they were always putting it in, spitting it all out, well I didn't do any of that stuff. Well one day, I think it was Paul Hawkinson that finally talked me into trying it, big mistake. It was a cold winter day, I think it was only 20 degrees out, we're working outside, you know, we had a big

frame and plastic over it working outside, and so we're all in coveralls and all this stuff and we're working, and I try some. And I don't know about an hour before lunch I started just sweating like crazy, I'm thinking something's not right here, and I ended up throwing up, and I was sick for an hour, and it was from that. You know they all used Copenhagen which is very powerful stuff, and I didn't even smoke, I didn't use any tobacco products or anything, and so I don't know why I let them talk me into it, but after egging me on for a year I finally felt I'd give it a try big mistake. But that was, you know, one of those things that I remember from that project. But we worked with some pretty nice lumber, not all of it was perfect because some of it was Dorchester, what I call Dorchester pine, but a lot of it was pretty nice. I think the challenge then like it is now is finding good lumber, it's not easy to find and it's probably worse now it's probably pretty expensive.

But a great group of people, a lot of fun, we had a lot of fun, we worked hard but we had a lot of fun.

JENIFER DOLDE: You're talking about here as well?

JAY DAYTON: Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Going back to your interest in history you worked on you said a number of skipjacks, other traditional Bay

boats, did you...we're very focused on mission and preservation was that something that was emphasized?

JAY DAYTON: [00:59:03] Absolutely, the fact that this was the only nine log bugeye in existence when we rebuilt it, and I'm sure it's the same deal. That's kind of a big deal if you're into boats and history and all that you know it was a big deal. Plus there was a pretty big log canoe fleet back then even larger than today and there were a lot of those boats being worked on, at about the same time I was working on the *Lockwood* a group of us were also helping Sid Dixon build a log canoe, again another complete and total character.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well and my understanding is that I have his name on a list of somebody who was hanging out at the yard and sort of learning things that would work on his own boat.

JAY DAYTON: [00:59:47] And Paul Hawkinson's father Dr. Hawkinson and Sid were building this boat, but a number of us would come and go, you know, helping with the project, building a mast, whatever where he needed more hands, and so you can learn some things down here not all good.

JENIFER DOLDE: Paul was given the names of some of the log canoes that were worked on here, you mentioned skipjacks, do you remember some of the specific boats?

JAY DAYTON: [01:00:16] Well you know we did a major restoration of what we called the *Minnie V* I suspect it was the *Minnie Five*, but we did a major restoration of that boat, and I don't think it's even in existence, I think it rotted and fell apart, unfortunately a lot of the older boats didn't make it to restoration status. The *Rosie Parks* was here when I worked here and yet it just got redone, right, okay that's what 40 years later. So, you know, the circumstances have to be right and get funding, grant money, whatever to rebuild those boats. And so sometimes they just fall apart before that happens, unfortunately.

JENIFER DOLDE: And it's a constant process.

JAY DAYTON: [01:01:05] It's a constant process.

JENIFER DOLDE: You're going to have to do it again if you don't...

JAY DAYTON: [01:01:05] Well that's the thing I mean what's it been 40 years since we did the *Edna Lockwood* and then you know I just did it again, but you did a different portion of it, you did the logs, and we didn't touch the logs. So, hopefully the top portion of the boat was still in fairly decent shape, although I suspect you had to redo some of that as well.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did you follow that project?

JAY DAYTON: A little bit, yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did you come in person to see that?

JAY DAYTON: Mm-hmm.

JENIFER DOLDE: Good. And have you been to see the work on *Dove*?

JAY DAYTON: [01:01:35] Oh yes, I pop in all the time.

JENIFER DOLDE: I'm glad to hear it because I was going to say we should certainly go out there today if you want to.

JAY DAYTON: [01:01:42] We were here for the small boat festival, my girlfriend has a little 17 foot skiff called a **whirlwind** which is a mahogany boat that were built up in Catonsville, Cokeville sorry back after the war. And she was thinking about selling it so we got it put together nice and it was over here in the area where you can sell boats, but I was down here for that, and I walked over and just watched what was going on. But you know I don't like to poke in and be in the way because they're all working and they're doing things that need focus and so it was just like you know the kids and visitors coming to Richardson's you've got to focus on the job that you're on you can't be talking to people.

JENIFER DOLDE: It's true, although that's part of the job too, but no I feel the same way when I go there, so to be respectful.

JAY DAYTON: [01:02:36] I try to watch from afar and be respectful and not stick my nose in where it doesn't belong.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think they you know, and I don't know if you've ever introduced yourself.

JAY DAYTON: I haven't, but I'd be happy to, I just...

JENIFER DOLDE: We could do that. So you came to CBMM in maybe '80?

JAY DAYTON: [01:02:56] It was probably late seventies, '78, '79.

JENIFER DOLDE: So, not too long after *Dove* was completed.

JAY DAYTON: [01:03:02] No right, after well again I worked for Tom Howell a little bit longer and started the *Mr. Jim* and then ended up coming here after that, so I don't remember exactly the timeline but I'm guessing it was '78, '79, maybe even '80. Because about that time I went to work for Dickerson Boat Builders. And maybe I went to Crockett Brothers first for a year or two and then went to Dickerson's, because I was only at Dickerson for four years so that would have been '82-'86 because that's when it went belly-up.

JENIFER DOLDE: So the tall ship was kind of a short term thing.

JAY DAYTON: [01:03:42] It was a short term, I went down with them, I hung out down there for a month or two and I don't

know for whatever reason it wasn't working out the way I thought it was going to work out and so I came back and ended up going to Crockett Brothers I think.

JENIFER DOLDE: That was also a relatively year or two or?

JAY DAYTON: [01:04:01] Yes, it was short duration, there were a couple of boats, they were essentially Robbins hulls from **Caesar** Robbins in Dorchester, and so I think there was a 34 and a 40 that we built there, and I don't even know why he did that. Phil Connor owned it at the time, and it was an operating boatyard and fairly busy, but for some reason decided that he wanted to build one of these boats, two of these boats, two different models. So I worked there for a little while and then went to Dickerson, because that was the happening thing at the time, and that was neat.

JENIFER DOLDE: It sounds like you enjoyed working at Dickerson.

JAY DAYTON: [01:04:38] I loved Dickerson; it was the best job I've ever had.

JENIFER DOLDE: But it was a different type of boat construction?

JAY DAYTON: [01:04:44] Yes, because they are fiberglass boats, all fiberglass, you know, and there's plenty of teak and mahogany trims and all that, but you're shifting gears from timber construction to fiberglass. And then even more complicated were the Kevlar boats that we built for Bruce Farr. Kevlar is very difficult to work with, and I never

did any of that work, I was all woodwork focused, so even when I worked at Dickerson I did woodworking and I guess maybe for a year I ran the rigging shop because they needed somebody to do that, and then for a year I ran the actual service portion of the business. There was a charter fleet, had 19 boats in charter and the service on those, and I did that. And then that's when you know things went belly-up. So I took with the new owners this guy Dennis [Bloyer?] that bought it, I took a deposit for a major refit on a boat and when I went to draw money out of the account to pay for the work that we had done it was gone, and I said that's it for me, I'm out of here. That was Dennis [Bloyer?]. So it was unfortunate, but we did some neat work there in the service yard we did a major refit on a Bermuda 40 which was really neat, and I just saw the people this past week and it capsized and they're in their late eighties early nineties and they just sold the boat. So we were lamenting about that whole experience, and it was a cool project. A lot of fun stuff over the years.

JENIFER DOLDE: It sounds like it. When you think about the work that you did it seems like an obvious, because you already said, how did it change your life, how did it sort of direct the rest of your life including now?

JAY DAYTON: [01:06:40] I think it gave focus to doing something creative. I've always liked doing creative stuff and as I said I didn't know why, just knew I liked this stuff. When I took this Johnson O'Connor test it said you are 95% aptitude for a mix between the arts and sciences, so boat building is that's the lane. It could have been also woodworking, it could have been anything that where you're mixing arts and sciences, but boatbuilding was one of those things that they said was definitely your lane. And so even in the insurance business that's what I focused on, I have insured a ton of boatbuilders and people that are doing you know high end restorations of things in service years and things of that nature because I know that lane.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do they ever see, you know, when they don't know you first they see you coming and they're like oh the insurance guy. And then you surprise them.

JAY DAYTON: [01:07:38] All the time, well I make a case, when I'm going for a new account that has no idea who I am or what my experience is that the average insurance agent does not know a thing about the marine business or building or maintaining boats. They might know a little bit about the insurance part of it, but I bring skills to the table that are just not common for an insurance agent in that lane, in

that type of industry and business. And so it has helped and once you get the opportunity then they get it.

JENIFER DOLDE: What are your thoughts I mean about the new *Dove* and the fact that the old one will be retired as it were?

JAY DAYTON: [01:08:28] It's unfortunate but I, you know, I'm not shocked. I mean a lot of the lumber that got put in that boat from the beginning was not super high quality and so you know materials like that don't last forever. So you know if you put pine in a boat that is not really high quality like if you have a pine that's mostly heartwood instead of sapwood you can't expect it to last forever. Even a lot of the faster growth oak is just not going to last like the old stuff, I belong to Tred Avon Yacht Club, and we've done a couple of pier and dock projects down there, and we recently I think it was in 2019 and 20 we pulled out a timber dock that had been there for 65 years. Well those trees once they were pulled out of the mud looked like they did 65 years ago, they were perfect. Now there was a line where they'd been eaten and worked on pretty hard in the tide line, but those are trees that are no longer available, if they are they're in extremely short demand because they were slow growth pines, they were also treated with creosote which lasts forever. The stuff that's put out there today in ten years it's shot, it's

fast growth pine treated with whatever the new treatment is for preserving wood and it doesn't last. So, it's fairly obvious that if you can use old growth material it is so much better and will last so much longer, and probably why a lot of boats that were built back in the 1800s were still around, because if they were built with the stuff that we're using now they might last 30 years, maybe 40, that's it because we just don't have the materials that we had back then. Or you know they may be available but they're probably incredibly hard to find and may be very expensive.

JENIFER DOLDE: We're sourcing from all over the country, at least up and down the East Coast for sure.

JAY DAYTON: [01:10:51] And there's probably some longleaf yellow pine that's still available down in the south and there's probably some live oak and others that are still available, maybe some cypress, you know, at Richardson's Boat Yard we used cypress wherever we could. Cypress knees we'd go down and harvest them from down in Pocomoke. So he tried the best he could to find very natural occurring materials that would have some longevity, but on the pine side it's just hard, it's just not there.

JENIFER DOLDE: Osage was he using any osage?

JAY DAYTON: [01:11:26] There was a lot of osage, yes, a lot of black locust, cypress, but you know the vast majority of

the wood that was used was pine or oak, and so you know you can only get so much high quality materials in those, in pine and oak. So, you know, if you could use some of the timbers that are probably still available from out west, you know the northwest of Canada, fir, slow growth fir and stuff like that, that would be great, but that's not the common material that would be used for construction of boats. The trees that we got for the *Constellation* mast were what they called Oregon pine, but they were Douglas firs, and they were very old growth, very tight growth rings, and so they'll last a hundred years.

JENIFER DOLDE: Remind me so *Constellation* you said you remember doing that as soon as you got there, or it was kind of ongoing?

JAY DAYTON: [01:12:41] I think it was before the *Dove*, but I could be mistaken, it might have been after, I'm sorry I can't remember.

JENIFER DOLDE: I need to write a timeline out for myself and compare notes.

JAY DAYTON: [01:12:53] Somebody that you're interviewing will have a better memory.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well I'm sure I can probably verify that externally as well. Well am I missing something, I think we can start to wrap up, I mean I...

JAY DAYTON: Not that I know of.

JENIFER DOLDE: I tend to at the end ask these sort of legacy big picture questions and you know I think you've offered me some interesting insight on the legacy in the community but not always being maybe the mythology that we all remember. Do people still, do you still talk about being involved in this project and about *Mr. Jim*?

JAY DAYTON: [01:13:32] Not really, I mean occasionally, but it's rare.

JENIFER DOLDE: And when you do do people...is there recognition?

JAY DAYTON: [01:13:40] For some, you know, I think there were a lot of people in Dorchester County that had no idea what was going on down there, just didn't have a clue. And Jim was not a guy that would seek out a lot of publicity, it would find him because of his reputation but it's not like he was looking to make it known to the general population in Cambridge or in Dorchester what was happening. It's probably the knowledge of it is probably more prevalent now than it was then I would guess, there's a Richardson Museum.

JENIFER DOLDE: Right, which is relatively recent, I mean the last 20 or so years a little more than that.

JAY DAYTON: [01:14:28] And he built some pretty interesting stuff, the *Jennie Norman* was a really interesting boat, and

I don't know if she still around or not, but she was a round stern bugeye and it was heavily built, I mean it was massive timbers in that boat, for a boat that's as small as it was.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did you work on that at all?

JAY DAYTON: [01:14:46] Very little, that was his boat and his project, so occasionally if you wandered down there in the afternoon when you weren't working on something else and he needed help, you might. But he didn't focus on that, he focused on the things that projects that he had that he was getting paid for and that we all were working on. And so there might have been others I think Jim Elk worked on it more than probably most, and there may be others in this group that did work on it more. But, you know, we all drifted in different directions too, like I went to work for Tom Howell, and not everybody did that. I think some worked for Jim Brighton, I never worked for Jim Brighton, I knew he was there, and I knew he worked on projects and all that, but I never worked on anything with him. So it just, everybody had different directions.

JENIFER DOLDE: As far as keeping in touch it sounds like you've kept in general touch with many.

JAY DAYTON: [01:15:42] The best I can like you know I would like to have had better touch with Jack Krolak, and Fred

Asplen, I have no idea where Fred ended up I think in Kentucky, or Tennessee or somewhere, I did connect with Jim Elk and June Wingo up in Maine but that was 15 or 20 years ago, I just happened to be in Maine and looked them up. It's hard to keep track of people particularly when you're all going off in different directions, I haven't seen Bill Slacum in years, I assume he's still with us, but I guess probably when I came to work at the Maritime Museum from there forward I have been in Talbot County, I've not left. And because I've worked in the industry that I'm in in insurance I travel a lot, and so I've had fairly little contact with Cambridge and Dorchester because of that. A little bit here and there, but not as much as you know I previously did particularly when I lived there. It's easy to lose track of people, you know, it's actually hard to keep track of where everybody is.

JENIFER DOLDE: And it's been a while, I am hoping, my plan is to I've talked with our development office, we'll invite everyone to the launching and see who can show up.

JAY DAYTON: [01:17:17] Yeah, I don't know where Paul Hawkinson is now, he was down in Irvington, Virginia working in a boatyard for a long time, but I'm pretty sure he's not there anymore. So I don't know where he is.

JENIFER DOLDE: North Carolina.

JAY DAYTON: [01:17:30] Yeah there you go. So, you know once people, you can track people for a little while but once they've moved three or four times it's kind of hard to keep up. So hopefully you've gotten what you needed or wanted to have today.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think so. I'm going to go ahead and stop this for now.

END OF AUDIO FILE