

Reid, Jeff - 210713 0029

REID: [00:02:47] We didn't belong in the country club, but I used to spend a lot of time there because my friends were there as kids. Like, they'd be going to camp, so I'd just tag along when it was appropriate, and when it wasn't, they'd say, "All right. You've got to go now," and I'd probably go jump in the water for an hour then come back.

DOLDE: So the country club was on the lake?

REID: [00:03:07] Yeah, yeah. They had sailing lessons and stuff like that, which I never took as a kid. But I was around it a lot and saw it and rode about some boats, you know, a lot. And I think it's in your psyche. You know, you see that... you see it. Definitely did some ice-skating out there.

DOLDE: Friends had boats, or friends' families?

REID: [00:03:29] Yeah. Friends' families had boats that I would... we'd waterski and sometimes sail little boats.

DOLDE: Little bit of sailing, then.

REID: [00:03:37] Yeah. Little bit. But didn't really learn until I was an adult, truly, to sail.

DOLDE: What did your parents do for a living?

REID: [00:03:47] Mom was a nurse, and my father is probably... a pretty long story, but he was... retired from

the operating engineers. But he was also a pretty... kind of a motorhead. Was into mechanical stuff a lot.

DOLDE: I'm sorry. The what engineers?

REID: Operating.

DOLDE: Oh, okay. Operating.

REID: [00:04:09] Operating engineers, so heavy equipment.

Operating heavy equipment, and, you know, did some trucking. Was an owner/operator for a while. Back when the Teamsters were striking, I remember that. Yeah. So school was pretty good, I think. I was pretty interested up until high school and I started sort of losing interest and started getting interested in like playing music and, you know, sports and working with my dad a lot.

DOLDE: So yeah, was your dad a hands-on kind of guy? Did he build things? Did you work together?

REID: [00:04:51] Very, very much so, yeah. He's sort of a jack-of-all-trade kind of person. I would say he's a better mechanic than I'll ever be in a sense. And I don't know that he was a great teacher at it, but I... a lot of it is sort of osmosis, like you're just there, and you might be interested or you might not be but you're... you know, "Hand me the screwdriver and hold this," and sometimes he'd turn around and be, "Where'd he go?" You know, and you're off... the next lot over, bouncing a ball

or something.

DOLDE: What would he be working on? Primarily mechanical kind of things?

REID: [00:05:29] Yeah. We rebuilt some engines together and often... a couple times I got to ride in the truck with him, which was kind of eye-opening. Traveling around, you know, like, one summer I got to go to a big loop from Syracuse out to Chicago and up to Milwaukee and down through Pittsburgh and Philly and then up to... I think it was the first time I went by New York City and saw that.

DOLDE: So he was a long-haul trucker at that point?

REID: [00:05:56] Well, independent, so he... it was sort of everything and anything. Sometimes close, sometimes long. He'd end up in Texas, Canada or something like that. But yeah, I'm just thinking, like forming, you know, your future and what you're after, my... we... the house we grew up in was quite old. 1830, I think it was built. Actually it was built across the street from where it was when we lived in it, and they still live there. But there was some, I think back on sort of the art of boatbuilding, like the interest of sort of shapes and different things. We had a curved staircase going up to our bedroom, and at some point in time, my mother decided she was going to take all the paint off of it, and did... got someone to like show

her what to do. You know, wanted to hire someone and that person was like, "Oh, you can do this," and so she started doing it, and us kids jumped in and we started digging and scraping and pulling things apart to sort of refinish it, so that's sort of an old memory of, like, oh, some like old antiques...

DOLDE: How old were you when you worked on that?

REID: [00:07:17] Probably eight years old. Something like that. And...

DOLDE: Well, that's what occurs to me when you said you grew up in an old house is an old house always needs work. So was that the only... were there other projects?

REID: [00:07:28] Always, absolutely. Like that whole house, my father's completely... you know, the jack-of-all-trades. It's almost a completely different house. But... and it took, you know, they're probably still working on it now. Yeah, sort of going through it all. And so that's... yeah, I found myself, like, I'm sort of drawn to the old... like I like old music, I like old instruments, I like old boats, I like, you know, it's something that... that, you know, I like. I don't know that everyone does.

DOLDE: Well it sounds like you have an appreciation for the form as well as the function?

REID: [00:08:07] Yeah. Yeah. And maybe the story as well

that goes with it. It's interesting to me. From there, I ended up going... ended up going to college. Got a degree in wood products engineering with a focus on construction management as well, so that... that sort of was somewhat following in my father's footsteps in a sense. Like getting into construction and was interested in wood and woodworking and projects and restoration. Which I did with my dad some in high school and sometimes.

DOLDE: Wood materials engineering?

REID: [00:08:51] Wood products engineering.

DOLDE: Wood products engineering. So what does that entail?

REID: [00:08:56] It's biology and, you know, the science of trees and... I think it can diverge, of course. Like there's, you know, some of the students end up working in forestry. Some of it ends up being, you know, the manufacturing and sort of an environmental sense. You know, building some of the modern materials like plywood or oriented strand boards or things they can make out of even byproducts of creating timber. Trying to do it sustainably. And also some geodetic surveying, which is sort of like the park services, I suppose. Inventorying what they have for, you know, different trees and how much and what... yeah, what resources are out there.

DOLDE: It sounds very wide-ranging. And what does... what

school was it?

REID: [00:10:03] It was Environmental Science and it boasts the longest name of any school in the nation, apparently, but it was the State University of New York Environmental Science and Forestry School at Syracuse University.

DOLDE: That is a long name. (laughs)

REID: [00:10:20] Yeah. Relatively small school, but it was like Environmental science. Chemistry. Forestry.

DOLDE: How did you... I mean, what made you go to school for that? I mean, there must have been something. That's a very specific, you know, place to go.

REID: [00:10:40] It is.

DOLDE: What was driving you?

REID: [00:10:43] At that point... well, that was where I finished. I should say I actually started... I started in a curriculum that was just a construction management. Kind of lost interest, just sort of had to get my ya-yas out, maybe, and there was a point in time where my parents couldn't afford... like, I was borrowing money and... as well as them. You know, helping out. I came home one Christmas and my mother said, "I can't afford... we can't afford to send you back again." So I ended up going to community college for... and I got into architecture, which was interesting to me as well. Like, that... thought that

was an extremely large body of work as well to study and, but it was kind of a logical progression. And from there, I actually decided to completely bail out for a little while and do a little traveling and so I made it out to the west coast. And I think that was an impetus to realize life. I wasn't going to really get a job I wanted without going back to school and finishing what I started. And I knew I kind of had to lean on my folks to do that as well. So I ended up going back to the east coast and met someone who went to ESF, they call it, the Stumpys, and yeah. I was interested in the wood science part of it and found out about that program, and so that was just sort of a logical progression right there.

DOLDE: But it was a commutable distance from whom? From your...

REID: [00:12:20] Yeah, as well.

DOLDE: That's great.

REID: [00:12:23] As well. And quite affordable. I think about it, I go, wow, I got away easy. From there, I tried to get... you know, a lot of my colleagues were graduating and not getting jobs in their field. Ended up like painting houses or doing whatever they could to, you know, just keep looking. Working in restaurants and stuff. So I... I ended up following a lady down to the Big Apple,

and was trying to get a job there, and which I found to be quite hard knocks. And ended up a bit disillusioned down there. Maybe humbled by sort of going, "All right, I'm going to..." I didn't want anyone to like cut me a break or open a door for me at first. But then realized, like, well, maybe... maybe I just need to get in the door and then prove myself. So my father told me he had some, you know, connections with people in construction I was trying to get into. Bridgebuilding interested me. Ended up working in the bridge construction industry for about six years. Learned a lot in sort of administrative side, you know, the construction management side of it.

DOLDE: Is that what you were hired to do or you didn't...

REID: [00:13:44] That's what I was hired to do. I was an assistant superintendent on a New York State Throughway contract job. We were rebuilding some bridges there. Building and rebuilding. I think that job taught me... oh, actually, well while I was in New York City I took a job in Brooklyn in a cabinet shop, and we were really building sort of commercial, what I would call sort of garbage. But you learn how to put it together and I also was able to do some installation. So it doesn't matter, you know, the material. Like, installation was like problem solving. Using your hands. Started to learn how to, you know, use

some of the tools and some of the tricks of the trades.

DOLDE: Was that your main introduction to doing that level of, you know, working with tools, or had you... it was already pretty familiar?

REID: [00:14:39] That was maybe a main introduction because I was, you know, definitely employed as opposed to like helping someone. And then that might have been a main introduction. And I also have a memory of one of the guys there, I was really intrigued. I was probably in my mid-20s. I was the youngest person in the shop, and they ended up hiring someone younger than me that came in and was like running the shop. And I thought, wow, like, how does this work? It sort of didn't seem right to me but it, you know, in hindsight it was. And this fellow just had an uncle who he had worked with since he was knee-high and knew a lot of... had a lot of skill in building and installing, different things. He handed me a magazine that I hung onto for 10 years and then ultimately like full circle came back and started building some of the stuff in that magazine. So that... that piqued an interest...

DOLDE: So like one of those magazines that has projects...

REID: [00:15:41] Yeah, yeah, it was some sort of, it wasn't like fun woodworking but it was something...

DOLDE: What did you build?

REID: [00:15:47] I built a Shaker table out of some California bay laurel that we had actually harvested when, you know, 10 years later I was in boat school out on the west coast and we learned some timber harvesting and some of the wood we were, you know, they, the teachers were like, "Make some stuff. Use it. Whatever you want to do." So I built something that's in my living room today. My wife loves it. It's sort of like a little jewelry box of wood. But I think I digressed.

DOLDE: Well, that's okay. We skip... we probably skipped a step because I was intrigued with you building something. So you were working at the cabinet shop. Getting your hands-on skills.

REID: [00:16:35] Yes. Really crude, I would say, like looking back, like pretty crude. But, you know, it all, you know, every trick you learn it's like you can apply it. Every single one. If you hang on to it, remember it, and think about it. And use it.

DOLDE: So did you go from there to boatbuilding school?

REID: [00:16:55] From... no, from there, that's when I... that's when I went back... ended up going back up to central New York. Got into bridge construction, and I was starting to say that that was the job that being administration and working at a desk every day, at first it

was like sort of out in the field. We had an office next to the bridge. But then they shifted me into a different department in the company, and we were doing highway guardrail, and I was doing like inventory and shipping and scheduling, and, you know, management. That kind of stuff. And I was approaching... I was between like 25 and 30 years old, and I just felt like maybe comparing myself to my dad, the jack-of-all-trades, because I didn't really know anything as far as like really how to use my hands and really problem-solve on a, you know, just on a day-to-day level, as, like, hey, fix your car, change your tire. You know, the door won't close or the dishwasher's broken or just fixing, you know, being able to like be the sort of master of your own universe. And I think I decided, like, yeah, I want to get, like, I want to get out of this. I want to go use my hands and really learn to... learn to do some stuff with my hands. Didn't know what that was going to be. Had no idea. I think I made a decision, within a year I decided. I was sort of like just opened the door, like, okay, I'm going to... I'm going to quit this job and I'm going to, the next thing is going to come up, and I don't know what that is. I had a couple buddies that were building a tortured method kayak in the basement. And I would show up there on the weekends and hang out with them

a little bit. And we'd go fishing and they're sort of messing around with this kayak. And one day, they handed me... there was a wooden boat magazine in the basement. And I had never seen one. And... a wooden boat magazine, that is, as opposed to a wooden boat. And I opened the back in the index, and there was education, and I thought, wow, really, you can go to school for this? Interesting. Okay. So that was... that was where I made up my mind. And I chose to look at... I think maybe three different schools. One in Maine. One in California. I knew about the one in the northwest but I never really got there, didn't take a look at it. Had been... because in my college career when I sort of ran away to the west coast for a while, really loved the Bay... San Francisco Bay area because of the, like, the people. It was so eclectic to me. It seemed like there was everything there. There was, like, every religion, every color, every shape and size. And it seemed pretty progressive in that it was, like, do your thing. Everybody was, like, cool with whatever you were, you know, your thing is. So that really, that really, I don't know, it just kind of opened... I was sort of wide open to it. So when I came back and decided I was going to go for an apprenticeship in boatbuilding, I was sort of secretly hoping that California was the right

choice, because I knew my parents would... my family, even, my family would be like, you know, Jeffrey's off again to like three time zones away. I knew they wouldn't be psyched about it. You know, they'd probably try and say, like, well can't you go... my dad even took me up to Kennebunkport to take a look at The Landing School, which is where Joe and Matt and some other folks went. I went up there and it was interesting, and what construction management had taught me was that now I know I'll put it in words, like I'll fast forward to that. One of my mentors said, "Sailing makes you a better boatbuilder. Boatbuilding makes you a better sailor. Building boats makes you a better designer. Designer makes you better builder, makes you a better sailor." Like, so all those things rolled into one. Accentuate, and when I was in the construction management industry, I kind of understood that, like, the engineers really weren't understanding the buildability, like how the team was building things, and the builders maybe weren't... hadn't learned... studied enough to understand the engineering, not that it was over the head, but they hadn't actually, like, immersed themselves in it. And so when I went to the Landing school, it was like you choose between small boats and big boats. And then if you choose big boats, you choose

building, you choose design. And the school on the west coast was like, we are going to teach you marlin spike, we're going to teach you timber harvesting, we're going to teach you bronze casting, we're going to teach you lofting, we're going to teach you hand tools... and so it was like this whole ball of wax that I was like, yes, that's what I want. I want to kind of be able to come at it from all sides. It was only one year, which is a very short time, as you know, like, because it's a lifetime of learning. But it also was a small student body, and the price was right. So it was like a no-brainer. Bam. I'm off to the west coast.

DOLDE: And what's the name of the school?

REID: [00:22:44] The Arques School of Traditional Wooden Boatbuilding.

DOLDE: Is it still in existence?

REID: [00:22:49] It's still... yeah. And old codge who was a Navy guy, I think maybe Coast Guard, but I think he was Navy, grew up in San Francisco, his father had boatyards in Marine County, and when he came back from the war, the Second World War, the government was selling off property at like, you know, 10 cents to the dollar, and he went over there and bought a bunch of property. And was a made man just by that one sign of paper. Like eventually, you know,

fast forward 30 years, like the property's worth millions and millions of dollars. So he started... I think it was when he got the property, I'll say it was sort of the hippie heyday, and his boatyard really became an enclave of artistry and boatbuilding, and he was not that generation, he was older, but he was the kind of person that, if you had a project, you had something in mind and you wanted to do it and you needed some space, he was like, "There you go." Just... you can do it. Do it right here.

DOLDE: Was he also a teacher?

REID: [00:23:56] No. He is... the school's funded. You know, so through his estate. So when he died, he said... I never met him. I think he died 10 years before I even got there. He left in his will that he wanted this... some of this money, the property to stay maritime, and that some of this money would go to starting a school to foster the skills and appreciation of the tradition. So the traditional and the wooden boat thing really tripped my trigger as well. So I went out there and spent a year doing that, and my family at Thanksgiving, before I left, got together. And my father has five brothers. So six of them were all there at Thanksgiving, and after dinner, they... I remember hearing one of them say, "Where is Jeffrey? Get him in here?" And they kind of put me on the

chair and said, "So you're going to California to learn boatbuilding. What are you going to do after that? What are you doing?" kind of thing. Like, they didn't understand it. And my answer was, "I don't know." I said, "I haven't done it yet. I don't even know if I like it." So... and, if I like it, of course I'm going to get a job. You know. That was my answer. So. And that's what I did. So I went. I took off. Through a couple lucky strokes of people, you know, meeting people at the school and, I got a chance right out of school to go work in a boatyard, and on the project, which eventually turned into more employment in the same place, and met some... just got hooked in with like the right... looking back, it was relatively small. I think there were like five people working in the shop. Had a good name for traditional restoration, as sort of the bread-and-butter as opposed to building, these days. Moreso. And I, once again I was the youngest person on the team. So I just kept my mouth shut and my eyes open...

DOLDE: What was the first shop you worked in?

REID: [00:26:18] Loved it. It was the Richardson Bay Boatworks. And... which is right there on the side of the San Francisco Bay. And the fellow who was running the ways... we had a railway similar to what's here. We had two cars so we could haul two boats. As long... as well as

dock space and, you know, from there, while I was working there, I decided, you know, housing is difficult all over the country and it was particularly difficult there. And after living with people a bunch, I decided, you know, hey, I want to get a boat of my own. And I can live aboard. I don't have to live with anybody. And so through that employment, they knew I was looking, and one of the old... old guys connected me with someone, and I ended up with an old 1939 Danish-built sailboat and was living aboard. And, yeah, and just learning everything I could from these guys.

DOLDE: Were you doing... were you sailing at this point?

REID: [00:27:21] Not a lot, I'll say. I was jumping aboard.

I didn't... I would say my sort of formal... might have been like five years into it, I started sort of restoring this, got into like owning it, right? And so all boats, oh, jeez, I need to rebuild the mast and rebuild this. So it was a lot of projects. People say, you know, a fiberglass boat, you might be off sailing it, where a wooden boat, it might be on the dock a little bit more. So I did get, you know, I did get to jump in. I was in an area where I could go sailing and different people were offering me rides. So I did get into it a little bit. Started getting into it. At some point, not long thereafter, I met who would be my wife. I met Jessica, and

she had grown up sailing but didn't have a lot of confidence, and so we decided together to get in... we took a sort of a formal program to learn, we started with small boats and then got into intermediates and then, you know, you do offshore stuff. So that was fun. That's a whole other thing. Pushed out of that shop, eventually. You know, wanting... wanting more money and kind of maybe hitting the ceiling or, you know, whatever. Just got...

DOLDE: What kind of boats were they building there?

REID: [00:28:53] Got itchy to keep going.

DOLDE: They were wooden.

REID: [00:28:56] Wooden boats, yeah. The first... we did a complete rebuild on a Lake Union boat, which is from the northwest. Lake Union is up in Seattle. There's a boatworks up there, or there's a bunch of boatworks up there. Well, there's a bunch of boatworks up there. But that one was a... didn't start out as an entire restoration, but at the end it was an entire restoration. So it was almost like building a boat in a bottle. They tried to save the framing and replank it, and the boat actually came in because it was leaking. So it was like, oh, let's fix the leak. Okay, we've got to replank it without reframing it, and then ultimately, it got entirely reframed, and it was sort of the house structure was...

some of the house structure, the sides were original. And the rest of it, the keel and everything, ran on to a new engine, ran on through. Fifty-footer. So that was interesting. And yeah, there was some of the local boats out there, there's sailboats. Farallone clippers. Bear boats. Bird boats. These are all old, sort of west coast designs that we did a lot of restoration on. And I started to say from there, I always, even when I was working there, pretty quickly I started maintaining my own shop. So I could sort of do my own projects, and also owning the... you know, my own vessel, living aboard it was a place to do my own projects. When you start out, you're hungry. And so I was working all the time. I wasn't saying no to anyone. Anytime anyone asked me to do something, I was like yes. And I was working kind of 24/7. But young. And able.

DOLDE: This is probably before you were married.

REID: [00:30:49] Before I was married. Very interested in, you know, I just wanted to get my hands on it. I was really keen. I never before, even when I started playing music, I got really, as I said in high school, I got kind of lost interest a little bit in the books and really was interested in playing music. And just like, it was passion, you know? You can feel, you know, you can't get

it out of your head. Just, you're thinking about it all the time and really excited about it. And when I got into the boat thing, I got that excited about it. And having an opportunity to work in the big yard with the big... big dogs, and on the big boats. Whatever. And then having my own shop. Ultimately, when I've really pushed out of the shop I started in, didn't burn my bridge at all, but, like, just, I had some offers and things to do that could get more money, and they were my own projects, so I was proud of that, and excited to be able to steer things. And it was in a place that was... it was the old boatbuilders' co-op. So it was like a boatbuilders' co-op. It was there when I first went to the school. The co-op was there, and they got into some beef with the landlord and got thrown off the property, and someone took that shop and I was always... I had my eye on that thing for years. And it went vacant suddenly, and a buddy of mine and I snapped it up as soon as we could. And then I started working out of that shop, which was pretty much adjacent to the yard I worked in, which was adjacent to the school I went to, which was adjacent to the dock that I...

DOLDE: So physically you didn't go that far.

REID: [00:32:42] I was right there. It was like being the mayor. You know, like you couldn't go anywhere without

like knowing everyone. Still, almost to this day when I go back there it's like, hey, aren't you supposed to be in Australia? Or, weren't you building... or, you know, everyone in the hardware store and the restaurants and everywhere.

DOLDE: Still remembers you.

REID: [00:33:01] Yeah. It's pretty small. Which fit, you know, coming from the small town in central New York. And there was a lot of, you know, there's a lot of wealth out there as well, so there were opportunities to work on some more yachty, impressive, you know, pedigreed boats. So I did get a chance to jump in. And my time there... I guess I spent 15 years there in the Bay Area. And it seemed like I ultimately had a chance to work with, you know, 60, 75 of the... of the talent in that area. All around the Bay. Ended up working up in Napa and San Rafael and, beating the docks, you'd work on the docks and come back and build things in the shop and take them down to the docks. And all the different yards, end up working in the different yards as an independent contractor. So Gypsy Carpentry.

DOLDE: Okay. So you're doing your own projects but also kind of contractual, you know. Like you said, Gypsy.

REID: [00:34:12] Independent. Moving around a lot. Ended up in... did some projects way up in northern California. Did

some projects in Alaska. Did some projects, trying to figure how far south I went. But yeah. So it took me around a bit. And then, I mean, I can answer some more questions about that era, but I don't know if it's anything super significant. Ended up back in that old, you know, the original yard as well, doing a lot of collaboration with that yard. You know, didn't... when they needed somebody, and if I was available, I'd be right back in that yard working. Got a bunch of projects, started maybe spreading my wings a little bit by hiring some people. Not necessarily full time, but like project based. And putting jobs together and managing, you know, dealing with customers and making sure everyone else is paid. Has, you know, knows what they're doing and has everything they need.

DOLDE: Well that's back to desk work. Was that a happy evolution, though?

REID: [00:35:20] I was definitely on the tools still. I wasn't, it wasn't that far off. Maybe a little bit more, you know, at home for free sharpening your pencil, trying to estimate projects. You know, it sort of goes back to the construction management start of things. So it all ended up being, at the time it was sort of like, didn't seem necessarily logical, but as I'm, you know, as I sort

of tell the story, it's all, it all does connect and all those skills, even, you know, when you're sitting in 10th grade math going, "How am I ever going to use this?" And then you use it, you know, somewhere. I was... I did decent in math and I liked it. I guess you like what you're good at. You know, if you're not good at it, it's, you kind of go, ugh. And from there, it was fun making connections with international people as well. Like, one of my best colleagues is the shipwright who was hired at that first shop as an apprentice, and they put her, you know, being a female that was kind of exciting for her to push into the industry, which is sort of a bit of a male-dominated industry, as, you know, construction in general can be. It's really nice here that we're sort of really trying to keep it open. And she was from Germany as well. So had, like, different perspective on some things. We taught each other a lot of stuff, and...

DOLDE: So you were at boatbuilding school together, or you were at that shop, or...

REID: [00:37:02] At that shop, yeah. She was volunteering... she had a really cool background of design, and then her father was actually a naval architect in Germany, and they had to do apprenticeships, and so she did a carpentry apprenticeship, but ended up in San Francisco doing graphic

design, and similar to me, she was like making... she was like, "I made so much money, I... I didn't even need to work," but go to the point where she was like, I want to use my hands. I want to... and started volunteering at the park service. And then someone met her and then word-of-mouth, and bam. We ended up doing a bunch of projects together. And threw each other a lot of different projects back and forth. Trying to think of what other stuff is...

DOLDE: Were there other... other women you encountered along the way before you came here in boatbuilding?

REID: [00:37:57] Boatbuilding? Yes. Not a lot. But some. In Sausalito. So it was, yeah, it was more of the exception for sure. And then the story will move on to where I, you know, ended up in Australia. And there, even less, I would think, women in the industry, but not entirely like I did... I was able to come across one or two in my experience. I was only there for five years, but. Yeah. It seems crazy to, you know, have some. All... everyone should be able to get into it and try their hand.

DOLDE: So you left California... you're married now, and that's when you left for Australia?

REID: [00:38:51] Pretty much. We... we ended up, I ended up with another boat. That's kind of a whole other chapter. That's kind of a good one. Ended up with a bigger boat,

and owning it with my wife before we were married, we... we were... we, I don't want to get into all the minutiae of it, but were caretaking it to start, and then the owners wanted to get out from under it. We ended up buying it together. This was... we weren't even... we were a couple, but we weren't married. And that was, jeez, we owned it, oh gosh, we owned that for 15 years. We lived aboard for 10 years. And that was, you know, I often say to people that are interested in boatbuilding even here, you know, either one of two things or both. Like, if you're really excited about learning and you're keen on just building your skills and all that, working is great, but it's almost, wasn't diverse enough for me. Like you almost need to like go get your own gigs and like keep, even if it's small. Like, you should be working on the side, and then you're... then you're doing different things. It's, you need exposure to... it's not rocket science. So it's, it's really just getting exposed to all of it and trying it and doing it and having a chance. Having a chance to do it, you know? That's why this museum is fantastic, because there's this big fleet that needs a lot of love, and if you stay here as an apprentice for three or four years, you get a chance to work on a lot of different aspects of, you know, the boats. Whether it's systems or engines or wood

or glass or metal or, you know, there's all kinds of canvas and, you know, it goes on and on.

DOLDE: Different designs. And whereas in a one... in a shop that's maybe doing the same kind of work all the time, your daily routine is very similar? Is that...

REID: [00:41:00] It can be. I mean, you know, case in point. I've been planking the *Dove* since November, probably. And I'll probably be planking it for another month, month and a half. That's what I've been doing. Like, pretty much almost exclusively. But I'm okay with that because I'm, you know... I've been bounced around on every other thing. You almost used to get upset about it as a beginner, where I'd get really excited, like, oh, yeah, I get to work on this piece of wood or something. And then they'd be like, oh, no, we need help over here. And it's like, no... wait... I'm trying to wrap my head around this. And you get bounced around. A lot. As some of the apprentices, you know. Mattie, for instance, was, you know... I just wanted to finish this. But no, got to go do this. I said, "Get used to it, buddy."

DOLDE: Well now you're mastering the planking, right?

REID: [00:41:54] Yeah. Yeah. That's true. Trying to think where we...

DOLDE: Well, we were... you were on your way to Australia, but

you did buy... you said you had bought that larger boat.

What kind of boat was that that you lived aboard?

REID: [00:42:09] We ended up with an Island Clipper 44, which is a sloop. It was built in southern California. It was built in 1946. All wooden boat, and all the bells and whistles, like, you know, spruce box mast, teak decks, mahogany. Diesel engine. You know, sails big, sail... big rig built for southern California. So I got that together and did some racing in that. God, that's a lot of boat.

DOLDE: Did some racing? That's a long... that's a long way from not having sailed much at all into your 20s, so.

REID: [00:42:46] Yeah, yeah.

DOLDE: You guys got... got very experienced.

REID: [00:42:49] Yeah. Got into it. Yeah. It's a lot. We sold... we sold that boat last... this past fall. We put it up for sale when we left the country, but it was a good place to land because I did... I did a lot of bouncing back and forth from north to south hemisphere when we left, and so it was a great place to land because I could land right there, stay aboard, and could just make a phone call and they'd say, "Sure, we can keep you busy working for the next three months." And then... and then I'd head out to Australia again. But what was nice, I will say, for all builders, I mean, a lot of people know this, but it's a

confidence-builder doing all this and taking the skills from, you know, my wife... I met my wife, we were together for not quite 10 years and I asked her to marry me. She said yes. We took care of that. And shortly thereafter, not having kids, she said, "You know, we should... we don't have any kids. We can do anything. We should have an adventure." She kept talking about New Zealand, and I said, "Wow, that sounds great, I've never been." I have no idea... you know, a lot of people say it's the gem of the planet, really. And she came home one night and said, "Hey, I found job. They're building a natural history museum in downtown Perth, Western Australia. You want to move to Australia?" And I said, "Yeah!" I mean, literally just said yeah. And then was like, what did I just say? So it took us a year to get out of town and to make the transition. I went there with no employment at all, but I had a working visa. Showed up in town and just started beating the docks, and though, oh, I'll go to the... I saw a brokerage. I thought, oh, brokers know all the builders. They know all the owners. They know all the harbors. They know everything in and out everywhere. So I walked into a broker and said, "Which way? Where am I going to get a job?" And sure enough, the guy, he wrote down, the first guy I called gave me a job at the Fremantle Shipwrights,

and the story there was sort of that it was great to know that you can take those sets of... this set of skills and kind of go any... you know, if there's water, there's boats, or really even housing, you know. I mean, construction. You can take it on the road and survive. So from nothing. From knowing no one, right? So I did a bunch of repair there. It was a fantastic experience to see how they do it in the southern hemisphere. I think it's pretty often said in this career that if you ask 10 boatbuilders how to do something, you'll get 10 different answers, and none of them are right and none of them are wrong. It's like, everyone's got their way of doing it. Everyone's got their influence. Sort of like baking a pie, you know? Like, how does your grandma do it? My grandma makes the crust this way. And so I always, back in San Francisco, like getting around the Bay and working with the different yards was fantastic because everyone's got their own tricks. And it's just, it's almost a system of like stealing tricks from everyone, you know? Even here. You know, we're all trading tricks. And going, oh, look at that, look at... oh, he's got that tool, look at... oh, oh, okay, yeah. And seeing the southern hemisphere, it was so interesting just being so far away and things being done so differently. And then appreciating my approach. There

were some wooden boats, thankfully. Like at first I thought, uh-uh, there's not a whole lot of wooden boats down here. But then I was really... I got a real lucky break that sort of kicked me out into a different yard that was sort of a Mecca of wooden boats in that area. And it was a yacht club full of raceboats and old river cruisers and they had their own boatyard, and I ended up in that one. So that was a lot of fun. Different crew. Different people. And yeah, I was going to say, different wood. Because the wood in Australia is... when you go to Australia, you realize, like, every single plant and every single animal is different. They don't have, you know, deer like we have here, and we don't have, you know, kangaroos or echidnas or, the spiders are different. The snakes are different. The fish are different. The, it's the... the fauna. The flora, the fauna are all... so the trees, all of a sudden it's completely different wood. You're not saying, oh, yeah, I'm going to steam vent some... well let's find some black locust or let's find some white oak. You're not finding that. And so it was a joy to really work with some different wood and learn, you know, that... what that wood's going to teach you about its properties and what's joyful about it and what's hateful about it. Whether it's going to dull your tools or break

your tools or work nicely with edged tools, or it might, it might float. It might steam bend. It might rot. It might... you know?

DOLDE: Right. And you had to learn all that kind of through experience and from scratch. Behaved... different names, different woods, but they... the spectrum is kind of the same, right?

REID: [00:48:43] Yeah, yeah. The qualities, you're still looking for those like stability and rot resistance and durability and bendability and all those things. Yeah. And accessibility. Sometimes, like, some of the woods we love using as boatbuilders, you can't go to the lumberyard and buy them. They won't... they're not going to have a rack of Wye Island Osage orange, or even black locust. So that was... that was a joy. I actually ended up building a small (inaudible) down there out of all local woods and...

DOLDE: Side project, of sorts?

REID: [00:49:25] Yeah. Just in the backyard. My wife was always me, she wanted a peapod, and I said no, you don't want a peapod, you want a sailboat. So we built a catspaw, a 13-footer, and it was... that was a joy as well, because I got to meet, there was a story that, you know, a boat, all of a sudden all these things start falling in front of you because you're building a boat. People start turning

you on to, whether it's someone that's a great sailmaker or someone that has a good stash of when pine, Tasmania, or, yeah, just places to do it. Or all kinds of things.

DOLDE: It's becoming apparent to me that one of the greatest resources that boatbuilders need are... is that network of other boatbuilders. And people in the maritime trade in general.

REID: [00:50:16] That's true. It is totally true.

DOLDE: From the skills to the materials to the connections, it all seems to...

REID: [00:50:25] Yeah. Yeah. It is. Because it's such a lifetime of knowledge that, you know, I'd definitely say I was... I felt awkward about accepting a position that was title master shipwright, because it's like, woah. Hold on a second. You know? There's so much more that, you know, I haven't been exposed to let alone know or am an expert at. So it's sort of humbling, but then you go, all right. We need some leaders. These are, you know, it is... it is a ship that we're building, so shipwright applies. But yeah. We need... we need each other to get through it. You know, make it happen. Try and think. I guess that leads us to, okay, our visas are going to run out in Australia. What are we doing now? And I think when we left for Australia, my family tends to get along. My

wife's family, she's... she has more interesting family, I will say. My family is boring. We all get along. We actually get together on holidays and talk to each other. And so she wasn't drawn to being closer to her family which is here on the east coast, but I was, and when we went to Australia, just sort of drove home that distance a little bit more. At the time... the time element, it was hard. And my folks, especially, are in their mid-80s, and I adore them, and, you know, told a lot of people, like, that's the reason I wanted to come back to the east coast. The time is now, and if I don't do it I won't. I'll, you know, I would just kick myself if I didn't do it. So I started looking in this area. Meaning this time zone. And from everywhere, you know, New York State, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and just seeing what's available. And as you know from the story, I think, that really, all my experience started three time zones away and really remained there and got further away. So it's such a small world. Like, the boatbuilding world, I'll say, it's such a, you know, the world is smaller today with information, of course. But it's a niche market a little bit. So it's not shocking that when I got here, you know, Michael Gorman grew up in the next county from where I was from and ended up... I met him before I ever came to St. Michael's because

I was coming through from San Francisco and he took a job there. You know, I have colleagues from that area that ended up eating in the northwest school, and we have apprentices who were under those people, and, yeah. So it's all sort of incestuous, if you will. I took a look at the *Mayflower* and they just, it wasn't the right timing or it just wasn't the right fit. But I was looking all around here and I'm just happy to say that when I... I landed upon a job that was posted here that was not the *Dove*, and applied... well, I was thinking about, maybe it's time to get off the tools a little bit. It was more my wife, I think, talking to me, said, "You need to..." You know, "How long do you think you can keep doing this?" And to my delight, I mean, it's all sort of meant to be, that job was... by the time I applied for it was filled, the position was filled, and they said, "Thank you. We're really... you know, we really appreciate your application but we're no longer accepting applications for that position, but we see your resume here and we sort of... we have this other project, if you'd be interested in talking to us about it." And so then I started learning about the *Maryland Dove*, and I had... and I had researched CBMM and I just had... I had no idea they were building this or hiring or anything.

DOLDE: Okay. So you researched the project or the *Maryland Dove* historically, or the current...

REID: [00:54:49] I researched CBMM. Just online. And I looked, and the master plan and some of the other things that were on there made me look at this museum differently, like, I thought, wow, they really, online, appeared to have their ducks in line. And this, you know, future master plan with the vision and a whole, you know, thought process and money and, you know, resources put into growth. I was like, I was very impressed. I'd looked, you know, I'd been in touch with a few other museums but I'd never worked at another museum, except I did do a restoration job out on the west coast before, a children's discovery museum, I restored a boat for them, which was fun. But my wife's in the museums, so I'm a little bit, you know, familiar with the nonprofit, sort of side of things, through her. And you know, thought, yeah, I'll give it a try, and knew there would be much more sort of educating, teaching people, as opposed to in the past, you know, I have to say, I really liked the mantra of one of my... one of my mentors told me, "I never hire anybody that's not at least as good as I am, and that way I don't... I don't have to, like, take care of anybody," and it's just... it was his, one of his, you know, keys to success. And I thought, wow, that's really

good. You know, I kept that. I remembered that, and I kind of tried to do that for the longest time. But then, you know, then you... I guess as you progress, you get older, and you realize, you know, there are people that need... people need breaks. You know, someone gave me a break, and someone else is going to need them to, like, they need to just give them a chance. Give them a chance to fall on their face and let them fall on their face and then if they get back up and keep going, then... then they'll prove themselves, and that's all I need is just someone to give them a shot. And in talking... once, you know, with the interview, knowing the job description was, you know, there's apprentices involved here, there's, you know, there's master shipwright and there's associates and apprentices and volunteers and all of it. And so it's kind of great in the sense that I ended up in this position because it's pushing my horizons. It's not my comfort zone. It's... it's way harder. It's way harder. It's funny. I don't know, in so many ways. I think working on a, working with a big crew is much more challenging. I have worked on big crews... with big crews, but maybe not for years and years. Not for like multiple years. And not in any sort of leadership role. And so I'm really appreciating that, yeah, it's just way harder. It's way

harder. And I'm sure... I feel like I'm not good at it,
but I'm sure I'm way better at it than when I came in here.

DOLDE: Well, you're acquiring a new skill, right?

REID: [00:58:27] Yeah. It's all different muscles.

DOLDE: Mentoring... it's so interesting to me that you talk
about, I don't know whether this was universal, about the
one boatyard owner who only wanted to hire people who were
as good or better than him. I mean, was that true?
Because yeah, otherwise how do people learn? How do they
get that break?

REID: [00:58:47] Well, he, you know, he didn't own a yard but
he just, he was an older gent that, he was really excited
to do projects still, and he was getting on where, you
know, just getting closer and closer to retiring. You
know, and we don't get rich boatbuilding, so we generally
don't retire at 62. But so he was pushing on and was
really excited to have some, you know, younger energy. And
I mean, he kind of broke my chops the day he hired me. I
went in and I told him I had a degree in construction
management and he was just like, he's like, "Maybe I should
work for you." You know? And he wasn't being sassy. He's
just... he just was... he's got a great sense of humor.
You know, and, but yeah, just work for him. He just wanted
to... he wanted to be the liaison between... he wanted to

do cool projects that he could talk to the owner and he could make a few bucks on everyone's head but do like as high a quality work as he could. And, you know, there is... that's a big thing in this industry, because there is... you know, there is some money to be made. There's... and you... there are many different levels in... when you work in the boat/maritime/building and/or repair industry, or maintenance, there's recreational boating and there's commercial boating. So those are two different categories. You know, the boatyards, like, oh, you want to haul your sailboat out so you can race? But Joe over here has got his charter fishing boat? Well the charter fishing boat's going to get precedence. And what they need and how quickly they need it and how cheaply they need it, because they're trying to make money with their boat, is totally different than the guy that's like, this is my love or I like to race this or maybe it's your home. You live on it, you know. It's important, but different levels. And then there's people that have, you know, it really is... they don't live on it, it really is a luxury item. And some of them are like extremely luxurious, and they want, you know, top, top, A work. And you can charge for it in some places. So there's those levels. And then additionally, like when you're teaching, you can't... I suppose you can,

but if you, you know, as they say, good, fast, and cheap is what everyone wants, but you can only have two. You can't have three. So when you're teaching, in general, you can't do things fast. Because you're teaching. Like, first you need to teach someone to do it well. And then they know, oh, okay, now I know how to do this and I know how to do this right and I know how to get from A to B. And so now I need to figure out how to get from A to B quicker. That's all. And so when you're teaching, it's, yeah, it just... that's a whole different thing too. Because you have to be okay with, like, hey, maybe this isn't A-plus quality. Hey, maybe this isn't happening fast... as fast as I'd like it, and you just have to be, like, that's all I have. It's going to get there and we need to be patient and...

DOLDE: So your previous experience had mostly been, like you said, all those various levels from the recreational to the commercial, you know, as a business. So then coming to a museum with the educational aspect, both education... educating our visitors but also educating apprentices, really is a huge departure. But it's taking... it's applying all the same skills. You know, that you learned, but slowing it down.

REID: [01:02:43] And everyone... everyone has different teaching styles, of course, right? And everyone has

different learning styles as well. But... and it's...
yeah, it's been a tough one for me because some of what...
this is a very interesting situation that I... we, or I am
in, in that we're in a nonprofit museum and we are an
educational facility, but we are building something that
is... it is not in a nonprofit. Like we have a contract
with the State of Maryland to do something for a certain
amount of money that's going to be of certain quality.
It's going to be Coast Guard-certified and to Lloyds of
London standards. So it's kind of like all of it. And
it's quite challenging. Luckily, you know, but I think
those guys, well I don't know about, yeah, I guess the 70s
guys are the ones that built the original boat. I hadn't
talked to any of them, but I spoke to John who was on the
Sultana.

DOLDE: Swain, John Swain.

REID: [01:03:53] John Swain, who is our quality assurance
officer. And he's jealous of us because we have the
budget. He didn't have a budget like we have. He didn't
have, you know, 15 people for three years, you know.

DOLDE: So there's challenges and opportunities.

REID: [01:04:19] Right. So when I gripe about it, I got, you
know, but we got a pretty boss set of tools out there. We
got a pretty boss shop. And, you know, so I try... I'm

always, like, I'm a pretty positive person, so I try to really appreciate, you know, and I want everyone to be happy, so I'm always trying hard. You know. Keep... keep everyone happy, and just look for the good. You know. And keep going for the good. And it's as hard as I'm told people... I think this, I'm not sure. I mean, I'm in it, and COVID also was a big factor, but this may be the hardest job I've ever done in my life. And it seems kind of crazy to say that. It's like, you're building a boat, like you're living the dream. You've got, like, you're in this high position, but all those things that we talked about are the reason, you know, and more, I supposed. But, like, it's, there's a lot to it.

DOLDE: Well, usually I start with asking those big-picture reflective questions at the end, but you've... you've done them in the beginning, which is great. So now let's talk a little bit about the nuts and bolts of what you do on a daily basis. So you are... you're hired as a master shipwright. But... you're laughing. Well-earned. Well-earned. So tell me, since the project began, sort of... you know, what your day-to-day responsibilities are and what parts of the project you've worked on, or at least the highlights.

REID: [01:05:49] Okay. I think I got what I want to say

there. From my perspective, the way I see it, I'm kind of comparing myself to my wife, who... not just to talk about her, but I'll explain that she's a person that tends to fill voids. So if there's a need, it's like, who's going to do this? And it's like, she just naturally like, without anyone even saying something, it's like, oh, you're doing this. Was this your job description or are you supposed to be doing this? And not necessarily to a degree. I don't know. I would... yes, I will say, but maybe just to a degree, I feel like I have filled that... I don't know, that mentoring part of it to... at least to some degree. I'm getting, you know. I'm being funny. I don't know where... how you're using this information or where it's going to end up, as to like how I say this, I'm just trying to be a little careful, but...

DOLDE: I will be generous with it. I mean, this is your perception. And honestly... do you need to pause for a minute?

REID: [01:07:05] May I?

DOLDE: Yes.

REID: [01:07:06] Yeah. Just for... okay. So we were on...

DOLDE: We were just talking about the role that you... that you fill and sort of what, you know, what portions of the project you have... you were talking about filling in what

was needed.

REID: [01:07:22] Yeah. So I feel like, since I've been here, I've had a chance to work on... when I first got here, we were setting up the backbone for the boat, so it was really large, heavy timber. And it made the boats seem like it was going to be really large, even though it's not even 60 feet long, you know? It's not that big. But it's going to weigh a lot. But once we started framing and planking it, we were like, wow, this isn't that big of a boat. But that stem was huge. Anywho, it was fun to jump in and work at a different proportion, you know, like the scale is just larger. You know, we're using forklifts to turn... you know, you work on a piece of wood and then you turn it over. Well, you turn these pieces over with forklifts. You know, it's so heavy and (inaudible). So got to... got to work a bit on the lofting, which I love. I love being part of, like, involved with some of the design.

DOLDE: You hadn't done much of that before, lofting?

REID: [01:08:29] Yeah, yeah. It's something I just really like. It's one part of boatbuilding I just really love, because it's... I don't know, it's just this connection to how to get to... from two dimensions to three dimensions. It's quite fun. And it's a little bit complicated, but it's just... I like it a lot. So it was fun working a

little bit on the lofting, working on the backbone. I think right off the bat, Joe plugged me in as kind of like just going to be a lead role in certain aspects, and currently, that's planking. But previously it was framing. And, you know, everyone's gotten to rotate in to framing and planking, I believe. Maybe some exception. Probably is with planking. But the framing was kind of fun because it was like, here we go. We're figuring this out. Working out the process. We have [Clara?] as the official apprentice on the job. I was really stoked to meet her and find out her background and that she was... she was just, you know, she's a lovely person, and, but it was enjoyable to work with as well. I thought it was great that she had, and I say had because she's off the project now, but she had a great attitude. Always came to work with a good attitude. Was, like, ready. Like, what are we doing? Let's go. Prepared to jump in. And fearless as well, which was awesome. It's probably one of my, you know, being a man, I'm like, oh, okay, you know, special treatment. You know, maybe this woman's going to be afraid of, this saw is 16-inches large, and man, she'd jump in and pull the trigger and go and I'd be like, holy mackerel, this is great. You know, wow. I'm sure she has fears just like me. I was afraid of, you know, something's going to

bite me. But it's, you know, super gung ho. So it's been a blast working with her, and I think she kind of gravitated to me as well on the, you know, in the two years we worked together. Because we also got to make music together and we, you know, had a friendship outside of work. But also tried to have fun together at work and keep things going and teach each other stuff. You know, I learned... I tried to learn some stuff from, you know, being in this... these new shoes, learn from the people you're trying to shed, you know, info on. So I got to do that. Mattie came in as sort of the youngest team member. And he jumped in with us and was... I adore that guy. Even still to this day, I don't get to work with him as much, but when we were working together, he was, at first he was extremely challenging and I just had a hard time. It was like my own hard time, and it made it tough, but I didn't, like, I wasn't like holding it against him. And I think he worked through some stuff too, even, in that process. And he came, he has come back with a vengeance. He was almost on the verge of leaving here, and now he's back and he's staying and he's all good. I don't know what was under... under his skin, but he, yeah, he seems... he's grown a lot, and so it's been fun being, mentoring him a bit.

DOLDE: What's your teaching style?

REID: [01:12:05] I don't... I don't even know, because I'll say, like, this... I probably... maybe I'll even digress back to like teaching. There is my friend who's from Germany who was put with me as well in this boatyard to, like, oh you're going to work with Jeff. My teaching style is basically just to kind of share, treat people like people and I would just try to explain everything I was doing. And why, you know, almost too much sometimes. I probably like slow things down, because I might say, like, okay, we're going to fair this plank out, and I might even start talking about other woods and saying, like, well this wood is really hard and so you might want to set your plane this way. And I'm, you know, I'm going to reach for a power plane because, or... and I just try to almost evaluate and break down everything that I'm doing. So I'm trying to show and tell. I guess that would be a good way of explaining my style. I think... I think there's another... this guy I worked under who really is someone who gave me the opportunity first out of school to work in a boatyard, who I still work with and work for and we still stay in touch. Fantastic shipwright, always thought he was like the greatest in the world. And realized, I think, my father and he both rarely would show and tell. Rarely would say, "This is what I'm doing and this is why I'm

doing it." Rarely would ever, like, kind of say, like, "I'm going to talk to you now and teach you how to do something so that you can do it when I'm done talking to you." My dad never did that. And my mentor never did that. It was, like, if you want to learn something, he was obviously, like, some people are, it's almost like being coordinated. Like, sports. You know, like you're sort of a natural. I feel like he's sort of a natural, and everyone's like, God, he's really good, you know? But he'll never tell you anything. He'll never... he's not a teacher. And maybe doesn't want to be. But he... you know, he wanted me to work for him, and so I don't see why he wouldn't want to... you know, and if you really wanted to understand, you've just got to like really watch. There's no listening. It's just, like, watch. Which I've learned that, in the Japanese culture of apprenticeship, that's how they operate. They'll be like, someone said, like, you'll work for someone for years and they actually expect you not to speak, like, just watch. See what I'm doing. And so I'm not so much like that, although I was going to say, I'm going to contradict myself somehow, that he really is a huge mentor for me. So my respect for him is that, if you're, if you're not sure how to teach someone or maybe... I'm not... I'm not really, like, I don't have a

lot of tough love in a sense. Like, I'll give someone a lot of soft love and not so much tough love. I don't want to bark at someone and say, like, "Come on, move," or like, "Do it faster, work harder, show up, work longer."

Anything that, like I'm kind of pushing somebody, and so my style is to lead by example. You want someone to do it, it's like, you know. They're going to... God, that guy works hard. I'm going to try and keep up with him. I'm going to try and do what he does. So that's another style. Some. You know, kind of got to weave it together.

DOLDE: What you maybe missed out on and what you, what you would like to model for other people. It sounds like you've come up with your own style, which is perfectly valid. That's all right. It's a good answer.

REID: [01:16:20] That's a tough one.

DOLDE: This is not a test.

REID: [01:16:22] I know. Well it's funny...

DOLDE: This is not a test.

REID: [01:16:26] You don't always know the answers in words and you've got to put it in words.

DOLDE: Very true. Very true. So what has been the main challenges so far, and you're a wood guy, so I know there's been very specific choices made with woods. Were you part of that decision making, or had some of that been done

before?

REID: [01:16:46] Yeah. It all was really done before... even the order and, like, yeah, there was... I'll say the *Dove* was underway for probably a solid year before I showed up.

DOLDE: Had you worked with any of the exotic woods that were using previously when you were in Australia?

REID: [01:17:03] I will say that live oak, that frame, the wood we're using for framing, is probably, I had never used it. It acts more like eucalyptus, which is Australian, than any other wood I've ever encountered in North America. Which was interesting. And so it was great to learn that. My first teacher in woodworking said, like, "If you want to know about wood, work it. Use it. It'll tell you. You'll find out. And quickly." And so now I know all about live oak. Which is cool. But no, I didn't get a chance to... I wasn't part of the decision making on it. But I understand why, you know, they chose certain things. All those attributes, design criteria, of keeping weight low. Keeping lighter weight woods aloft. You want strength. You want rot resistance. You want durability. You want bendability. Sometimes you want... I mean, the reason, I don't know if this is the reason, but I thought the reason we were using white oak on the topsides was because it was... it would look more as though we're replicating a

17th-century vessel. Like there's no way we would ever plank the topsides with Angelique. It would be like, that's not a 17th-century British replica. So. So I understand that.

DOLDE: You're doing a lot of the steambending currently, yes?

REID: [01:18:38] Yes.

DOLDE: Yes. So tell me about the process, because I've been asking the 70s guys a lot about what they used as a very rudimentary process. Tell me about your steam box.

REID: [01:18:50] Yeah. It's still pretty rudimentary. The only thing we are adding that's kind of modern in the steambending is the fact that we're plastic bagging it. So the vessel that we put the wood in is plastic as opposed to traditionally they... they would build, often they would build a box out of wood and try to insulate it however they can, and put the wood inside that. It was... it's been a pleasant surprise. I've never done it before. I had seen it... I had seen and heard it done but never actually did it. Until I came here. And I'm really glad we are, for a couple reasons. I don't know if you want to hear it, but.

DOLDE: Sure, please.

REID: [01:19:39] Our timbers are so large and heavy, and, you know, if you're framing the *Delaware* out there, that tugboat, and your frame is two-by-one, and it might be 10,

15 feet long at the most, which is something that you or I can easily pick up and stuff into a 15-foot box. Well, our planks are, you know, we're getting our planks out of 16-inch stock sometimes. By the time we shape it, we need that width to get the width of the plank plus the curve of the... of the plank. So it's quite wide. It's... some of them are 25 feet long. They're all two-and-a-quarter thick, and they're all white oak. So they weigh, these large ones weigh, you know, more than I can pick up, myself, even. And if you can envision yourself like, "Quick, get the plank out of the box! It's ready!" and you, like, if it was a frame, you'd pull it out quick and you're like, "Quick, stuff it in, get the clamps on and go fast and move," and these things are heavy. And so we're able to actually... not even almost, but in some cases, on the topsides, I have literally been able to, like, put two fasteners in the front end of the plank and then pull the bag over it and steam it right there. And that plank's not going anywhere except for exactly where it is, and when it's ready, we remove the bag, and we start winding it in with clamps and hydraulics and every other wedges. Smoke and mirrors, everything we got.

DOLDE: How are you generating the steam?

REID: [01:21:16] So we're just using... we're burning wood.

It's mostly off cuts of what we're generating from building the boat, which is kind of cool. And so that's not, you know, there's nothing modern about that. And it's... it is a boiler. I don't know that they would have, 17th-century, probably not, had built a boiler. Although...

DOLDE: I don't know the answer to that. That's not my expertise. Do you... what... do you know much about the construction? You've seen the 1970s stuff? It was...

REID: [01:21:49] I was on it and I also looked at the *Sultana*. From the dock I looked at the *Sultana* and was very impressed, actually. So no, I've learned a tremendous amount about these types of boats since I've been here, and...

DOLDE: Just curious of what your perception are the differences in how you're building it. Sounds like there's some similarities in technique. But just a comparison, do you get visitor questions? You're interacting with visitors? You get lots of visitor questions about the '70s *Dove* or...

REID: [01:22:29] It does come up pretty often. I think, you know, we're sort of... we're sort of pumped to do our, you know, I mean, there's a lot of information we learn and then we do bestow it on people who ask questions. But what I know about the '70s *Dove* is kind of like, based on what

we're sort of fed as our elevator speech, you know, as, hey, this is the *Maryland Dove*. It came over in 1634. What's the... oh, well I hear there's a *Dove* that was built in the '70s. And you can say, like, okay, well it's become antiquated. It's in need of some upgrading and repairs. And I don't know if I'm, you know, never get the, let the truth get in the way of a good story, but it made sense to me that they kind of looked at it and evaluated it and said, well, it's going to cost us X, and if we're going to spend that, we're going to spend it on a vessel that's not Coast Guard-certified, and... or maybe they said, well, we need to do all of this to get it Coast Guard-certified, and then they go, jeez, we've got to spend all that to get it Coast Guard-certified? We can practically build a brand-new boat for half... half... half the boat for that, or whatever it is. And so that reason and the other one is that, what I've learned since I've been here, really, through Joe and the rest of the museum, is that maritime archaeology has come a long, long way in my lifetime, 55 years. And so when they built that boat, they didn't have the archaeology history that they have now. And what's... what the largest different, you know, in lay terms, I've tried to just tell people the biggest difference in the '70s *Dove* and this *Dove* is the rig. And, you know, I don't

know that I could actually even draw the rig of the '70s boat, even though I've seen it in pictures and in person, but I know this one. You know.

DOLDE: People usually satisfied with that? I'm just curious whether you're getting people that were around in Cambridge or in the area during that build who maybe have a sentimental attachment to it. So that's not a big topic that comes up?

REID: [01:24:48] No. No. There are definitely some sentimentals I've met. Some people who have been... who've sailed on the *Dove*, and people whose families have been connected with it. Locally. Not necessarily building, but in its use. And I also, you know, being able to say that, usually we try to explain like, why are you building that when you already have one? The value, to me the value of, you know, having it Coast Guard-certified so that you can actually take the public and schoolkids out sailing, to give them that experience, as opposed to just bringing them on board and saying, "Hey, folks, this was... this is the replica, this is what it was like in 1634." You can climb around and envision how many people and what they might have worn, and the life. You know. So that's my reason for doing it. And personally, my reason is always passing on the skills, teaching. Learning. You know. The

experience of actually building it for 15 people has been good. Or big. Or it definitely has impacted us. Good, bad, or indifferent, it's changed us all. For sure.

DOLDE: Well you answered some of those questions, big-picture questions, again, without me asking. What do you think the legacy of the *Dove* build will be actually to this institution, though? Because I think this is a... you know, it's a shift in some sense.

REID: [01:26:29] It is, I'll say it's a little tough only in that... because I feel like that has changed since I've been here. Like I feel like...

DOLDE: It could be what you personally hope, what you think will happen. You know, there's no... no one way to answer this.

REID: [01:26:47] I think when I first... maybe the first year we were building it, I got the sense that, you know, this is a first for the museum. It's definitely expanded our horizons. What we can do and to be able to do another one or, and hopefully get to the finish line here and be able to say, "That was a success." Like, even if, in some way, even if it's like, we didn't lose money on it. You know, we made not have made money but we didn't lose. Maybe we didn't make money, even. But... and to have the experience, you know, the feather in our cap to be able to

go forward saying, you know, we've done this before. We know we can put this together. Something of this size. So I feel like... I think it's a wonderful legacy because of our mission statement for the Chesapeake Bay Maritime and all its heritage, and it's very significant in my mind. I'm not... I'm not that much of a historian. And... I was going to say geek, but I curbed that. (inaudible) But... and I... I even had to... I feel like I had, you know, I had my reasons for coming here to work. You know, I had these skills. I could get a job here. You know, this was like, oh, wow, it's a two-year contract. Great location. I was impressed with the museum. Da da da. I have to say, I don't want to necessarily apologize because it's like, yeah, it's okay. I was... in my... I was never enamored of just like these types of boats were never sort of my thing. You know, like some... some people are like, you know, I'm going to... I'm going to become a schooner bum and I'm going to go sailing on these, you know, or tall ships and all that stuff. And to me, it was... maybe I just wasn't in that part in my career about teaching and learning, because I feel like that's a big value in this. And I just, I didn't hold it highly valuable. The, like, just, like, you know? Someone said, "Who gives a rat's ass about the *Maryland Dove*?" I might be like... I might struggling

with trying to say, "Oh, this is very important." Now I... now I have more of a perspective to compare it to and look at other tall ships, and more knowledge, too. I mean, you learn about something and then you become more interested in it, right? Like even Australia. I didn't know anything about Australia when I went there.

DOLDE: But the value, it sounds like, you're finding is in the process. And in the teaching.

REID: [01:29:43] The value is definitely... yeah, one of them is definitely in the process. One of the values. And also, I guess, so I think the tie between the city... the historic city of St. Mary's and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum is now more significant. I think they'll be talking about us and we'll be talking about them, you know. And I started to say that, like, if this was the first year we were building this, I kind of felt like it was more of a... it felt like was going to be, maybe the museum was going to use this to leverage more projects. And I'm not sure, at this point, I don't know where the museum necessarily stands on that. Maybe they... maybe COVID kind of squelched some of that. Maybe they're... maybe they learned something and they're like, eh, one's good, we don't have to do that again. Financially, I'm not sure if it fits into their, or if there's another vessel that's

actually that significant. You know, there was some talk about some other boats that maybe were from Europe, and, does that align with your mission statement? Maybe not. You know, but Maritime and passing on the skills does. I see that value. And so that's kind of... I guess it's to be seen, but definitely, I think it's a good, yeah, it's a good relationship for the city of St. Mary's and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.

DOLDE: Absolutely. And I think, like you said, there's a whole, like in your career. A whole number of possibilities that are opened up by this new experience. The museum has done something new. And now, you know, we've, you know, acquire skills and experience that will send us one direction or another into the future. So it's not... I think, akin to how a shipwright learns their skills. You're trying something new and then moving forward, perhaps, with something different. Or, you know. So we shall see.

REID: [01:31:47] Yeah.

DOLDE: All right. I think we can wrap up, unless there's something you want to add. So you were telling me a story about, you know, the characterization of boatbuilding as a dying trade. And then you had a... your reaction at the time was different. So tell me about how that, how you

thought about that then and later on.

REID: [01:32:12] Okay. I was saying that my mentor in... when I did my one-year apprenticeship at the Arques school had said to us that, you know, it is, boatbuilding wouldn't... traditional wooden boatbuilding is a dying trade, and at that time in my life, I didn't necessarily take it seriously. I didn't quite buy it. I think is how I felt about it. And it seemed like there were a lot of people interested in getting into this trade. Looked around and there were all kinds of boats and wooden boats and it just seemed like a sea of... of people and vessels. And then by the time... because I spent 15 years in that area, I was familiar with what really was there. And in that time, I started to see a lot of wooden boats getting cut up. And in my thought, I was like, well, people are... they're really not, you know, nobody's building new ones. Barely. It's quite the exception. So it started, you know, this time in life it hits home more that it's more... potentially is a slippery slope in the sense that things can sort of skirt off and be lost. So preservation has become more believable. That it's... yeah. A sticker my friend gave me. (inaudible) "Preservation is noble." Preservation is noble. And yeah. So now I'm... now I'm more of a believer.

DOLDE: And you... do you feel like you're playing your part in helping to preserve a dying trade? Or you don't...

REID: [01:34:08] Yes. Yeah. Yeah. I feel like, you know, ultimately, there's a time in your life where you're just like, you're grabbing, you want to learn, you're hungry. And then at some point in time you're like, ah, you know? How many times am I going to do this and then, but you realize, like, well, I'd better, you know, if it goes unsaid or untaught or unexposed, then it goes. So you've got to pass it on.

END OF AUDIO FILE