

Swain, John - 210719 0037 EDIT

JOHN SWAIN: For me, went and worked on the *Dove*, Martin Hardy, and John Scrivens -- I think was there --

JENIFER DOLDE: They called him Long John.

SWAIN: [00:00:13] Long John Scrivens, right. And who else was there? Freddy Asplen, I think. And Freddy, I think, went up -- is building -- no, that's Jim Elk. Jim Elk was another one that went up to -- you see his ad in *Woodenboat Magazine* for Elk Spars now.

DOLDE: Yes. Let's -- this is wonderful. Let's pause for a second just so -- I'm going to add -- put the basics in, which is, this is Jenifer Dolde. It's Monday, July 19th, 2021. I'm here in Millington, Maryland, with John Swain. John, would you mind giving me your date of birth just for the recording?

SWAIN: [00:00:56] November 23rd, 1945.

DOLDE: Okay, wonderful. Thank you so much. So, this is -- I want to back up a little bit. But while we're talking about, you were just talking about the boatwrights -- the carpenters that worked for you first, and then went on to the *Dove* project. So -- and some of them I'm already planning to interview, or have been in touch with. Who

else can you remember? Bill -- Bill Slacum was one of them.

SWAIN: [00:01:24] Bill Slacum. Yeah, June Wingo -- she didn't work for me, but she was one of the -- she worked for Jim on that project.

DOLDE: But Jim Elk, Fred Asplen, had worked for you?

SWAIN: [00:01:42] Yeah.

DODLE: Before?

SWAIN: [00:01:45] Before. And they all kind of were in that area. And I had -- whoever had projects going on at that time, I was building -- I was building two or three boats at the same time there. And so, I had a lot of people working for me. And then, in the 80s -- anyway, things happened and I went out of business. And I was building a boat in the shop -- a 38-foot Mason design -- and there was another -- there was a couple other guys -- I don't think I can remember their name or not. Anyway, we built the hull there. And then, as soon as we did that, the guy that was building the hull for, he bought all equipment, we moved everything over to Galesville and finished the boat. I finished the boat at his farm in Galesville. So, that's when all those guys moved and we down and worked for Jim Richards on the *Dove*.

DOLDE: Okay. We'll come back to that. But let's -- let's take a step back right to the beginning, if we could. And talk to me a little bit about where you were born, and your childhood, and maybe your connection to the boats and to the water.

SWAIN: [00:03:10] Let's see, I was born in Dover, Delaware and always -- I always messed around with boats. My brother, who is four years older than I am, played with airplanes, and he became a pilot. And [laughs] anyway, when I was eleven, we were -- my father was transferred to Buffalo, New York, and I went up there and I think we lived there for like eight years. And while I was there, I developed an interest in boats and building them -- not building, so much as -- just in boats. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do at that point. And then, my senior, he would -- my father was transferred to Albany, and we went to a school up near Saratoga. And I had a teacher there, Robert Nevin -- Prof. Nevin -- who taught architectural design. And I went -- I told him, "Could I build a boat instead of a house?" And so -- and they were doing -- you'd design a house and make a model of it, in his class. So, I built a -- did a design and made a fiberglass model, of all things, out of that -- for that project.

DOLDE: This was still high -- this was high school?

SWAIN: [00:04:44] This was high school.

DOLDE: And your father was in the Airforce?

SWAIN: [00:04:48] No, my father was -- he was a manager for an ice company. [laughs]

DOLDE: Okay. You're talking about being transferred a lot and it made me think -- and being in Dover -- I thought maybe he was in the Airforce.

SWAIN: [00:04:59] Oh, no. And then, when I graduated from high school, I was kind of casting around for what I wanted to and I heard about a school in Minneapolis that taught architectural -- what is it? It's not architectural. Mechanical drawing, basically. And so, I went out there and I studied there for a year, came back, got a job in Troy as a draftsman for a civil engineer. And while I was there, I had a friend that lived on Saratoga Lake, and she used to get the *Baltimore Sun*. And [clears throat] in there was an article about Curtis Applegarth from Oxford. And I thought, "Wow, that's what I really want to do. I want to build boats." And so, my wife -- my new wife -- and myself -- I'd just gotten married. We drove down to Oxford and I talked to Mr. Applegarth, and I got a job with him. My wife got a job at the hospital in Easton. We drove back to Oxford, found an apartment, arranged for that, and drove back all in the same day.

DOLDE: Oh, my goodness. [laughs] Now, what do you -- about what year was that?

SWAIN: [00:06:39] That would have been in -- that was '66. It was '65, '66.

DOLDE: So, why boats? I mean, had you grown up boating or sailing or anything like that?

SWAIN: [00:06:52] When I was in elementary, I used to draw boats. So, I was oriented that way.

DOLDE: Was something in Dover? Did you spend time in the water?

SWAIN: [00:07:02] No. We lived in Clayton, and we had a cottage on Stillpond Creek. So, I messed about in boats ever since I was a little kid. And my -- there were skiffs there and I would row around in skiffs. And actually, the guy that we rented the cottage from rented boats, and I helped him rent boats and bailed them out and did that sort of thing. Always interested in boats. So, as my expertise grew, I became more confident. I started -- [Sam Rabel?] had a little boat called the *Pickaroon*, and I had started that boat in a warehouse where my father worked up in Albany. And I'd got it in frame, and my -- when I came -- and left that in frame, and then when I moved down and started working for Mr. Applegarth, within a year or so I realized I made a lot of mistakes on that. [laughs] And I

just basically took it apart, because it was -- but I -- I had framed up and I'm bending joints and that sort of thing.

DOLDE: And this you had done from your book learning, your drafting?

SWAIN: [00:08:25] Drafting.

DOLDE: You learned it all sort of on your own? Or did --?

SWAIN: [00:08:29] Yeah, I didn't go -- there were -- as far as I know, in that time, I don't think there were very many schools on boat building. So, you would apprentice. And basically, that's what I did. I apprenticed to -- I was making -- I made \$1.45 an hour starting work for Mr. Applegarth.

DOLDE: Had he had other apprentices previously?

SWAIN: [00:08:56] Well, he had people working for him. Back then, it was -- apprentice was not -- you just, you got a job doing it, and that's what I did. And for four years, between Mr. Applegarth's -- and then I went to Dickerson Boatbuilders in Trappe. Well, actually, at the time, they were in Church Creek.

DOLDE: That's right.

SWAIN: [00:09:21] Yeah, you would have been around about then.

DOLDE: Yeah. Maybe. I don't remember it.

SWAIN: [00:09:28] But you're right next door to Bill.

DOLDE: Yeah, so the [inaudible].

SWAIN: [00:09:31] So, you were right in the downtown area.

DOLDE: Yeah. Kind of the fancy porched Victorian that was built by my great-grandfather, who was the captain of a three-masted schooner. Which is what we were talking about. So, around the turn of the 20th Century.

SWAIN: [00:09:49] So, anyway, Dickerson's was a whole new level of boat building there. And --

DOLDE: Well, so, what kind of boats was Applegarth working -- I mean, we have Applegarth boats in our collection.

SWAIN: [00:10:04] Yeah. Mostly those little skipjacks that he did. I think he was building -- when I started there, he was building two of the little 20-foot, maybe 25-foot, skipjacks.

DOLDE: And these were his pleasure boats?

SWAIN: [00:10:27] They were all pleasure boats, yeah. And then, he built one -- he built a powerboat -- almost had his name there -- for a guy that had -- it had a double cabin, and built that in the big shop in the front. And it was about 30, 32-feet, something like that. Well, would you know, about three years ago, that boat came into a marina just outside of Chestertown -- I'll think of the name of it. My names -- I'm having a harder time these days remembering names. Anyway, it was minus the aft

cabin, but I recognized the boat right away. How about that? All that time. So, anyway -- so, from Dickerson's -
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DOLDE: And what did they build at Dickerson's? Much bigger -
-?

SWAIN: [00:11:29] They built a basic -- there was a 40 and a 35, basically either ketches or sloops. Mostly ketches. They were strip-planked, mahogany. They -- the molds were set up -- they had molds that were for the two -- so, there was a process of you set up the molds, you bend the keel over it -- and this is upside-down -- and then you bend the frames over the molds -- over the strip -- over the faring strips on the molds. And then, they would take it off of that, move it over to the side, turn it right-side up, and then they would plank it. And then, that boat, after it was planked, you'd sand it off, and you'd move it back in the line. So, there was always one, two, three -- there were always four boats under construction there. And when I came there, Dickerson built -- there were fifteen men working there, and they built fifteen boats a year. So, that's basically a 2,000 hours per boat. That's pretty good.

DOLDE: How many people worked at Applegarth?

SWAIN: [00:12:54] Applegarth, there was -- let's see, there was Buddy, and -- one, two -- there were three plus Mr. Applegarth -- so, there were four people there.

DOLDE: Do you -- I know your remembering names. Do you remember the names of some of the people that worked there?

SWAIN: [00:13:14] Buddy Jones, who has a double amputee. He got -- when he was a teenager, he got hung up on a combine and lost his legs up to there. And massive hands and massive arms. He could walk around on those. He was great working underneath of a boat. And what was the other one? The other one was a house carpenter. He was a wiry little guy. Oh, shoot. I'll think of it.

DOLDE: That's fascinating about the guy that was the amputee. Wow.

SWAIN: [00:13:52] Yeah, yeah. It was -- he didn't have much education, but he was a worker. And he could get things done, yeah.

DOLDE: Amazing. And what was -- how did you learn from Mr. Applegarth? Was he a teacher, did he explain, did he demonstrate, did he throw you into it?

SWAIN: [00:14:18] I just worked with these guys that had worked with Applegarth -- Appy, as they called him -- for quite a few years. And knew how things -- how Appy did things, how he put boats together. And so, I'm just in

there working with him, learning. And the other thing that he did was he did repair work. And repair work was -- has been -- all my life, has been a teacher, because you see how other people put things together and you learn from that.

DOLDE: That was a lot of work boats?

SWAIN: [00:15:00] Work boat, mostly. A lot of his boats that would come in -- that he had built before that would come in. He had a railway next to the shop, there. I think it's still there. And so, you would go out and work on the railway. I remember -- what was his name? There was a Black guy that worked there and he would -- we were painting the bottom of the boat, and he would go along and he was painting -- I was underneath and he was painting the sides of the bottom. And he would pull the stops underneath the boat out from underneath of it so he could paint it. And he was going down there and he [laughs] -- he pulled the last one out and I'm underneath there and I saw my brush just sort of go [blows raspberry], like that.

DOLDE: Oh, no.

SWAIN: [00:15:54] I shot out from underneath of the boat and hit the side of the building. But it -- and the boat fell over and he hadn't pulled the one all the way out, so it dropped about that far. So [laughs] --

DOLDE: That's scary.

SWAIN: [00:16:09] Yeah, it was scary.

DOLDE: That brings up an interesting question. Were there many Black community members working in the boatyards?

SWAIN: [00:16:19] At that time, not -- I wasn't aware of too many. At Dickerson's, there was Johnny -- I don't know what his last name was -- and Buster. They were -- those two were Black guys that worked there. And Buster did just about anything, but mostly he did the fiberglass cabin tops and that sort of work. Johnny worked on -- all around. He was just an all-around when you needed somebody there to -- he didn't do a lot of carpentry work, he did a lot of other things. He would pour the keels; he did that sort of work. But that's the only two that I was aware of, then.

DOLDE: And the guy in the Applegarth yard was mostly painting?

SWAIN: [00:17:17] Yeah, Pinder was his name. Pinder. Pinder [laughs] -- I don't know -- anyway, Pinder had a problem. He had a drinking problem. And so, Appy would hire him and he would come in and he would come -- the first week, he would work Monday through Friday. And the second week, Tuesday through Friday. And then it would be -- until you got down to Friday. And then, he would be gone for a couple of weeks and then he would come back. He lost his

life -- he was -- one of the watermen was towing a boat around and he -- it was half-sunk, and he was towing it, and Pinder was sitting up on the cabin top, and the guy slowed the boat down and all the water from the back came to the front, and it submerged -- it went down like a submarine. And he couldn't swim, it was cold weather, and that's how he lost his life.

DOLDE: Goodness, that's terrible. So, Applegarth to Dickerson's. You were at Dickerson's for several years, as well?

SWAIN: [00:18:24] I was at Dickerson's for about three years. And I was only at Applegarth's for about a year. And we moved from Oxford to Cambridge. And my wife got a job at the hospital in Cambridge. And [clears throat], of course, Dickerson's is over there, and then they moved over to Trappe. And so, I drove back and forth to there for a while. And then, [clears throat] I got an idea that one of the -- Cecil Robbins, who was another boatbuilder that worked at Dickerson's -- he and another guy decided that they would go out into business for themselves. And so, they bought a place down at Drawbridge -- it was an old canning factory. And I got -- was talking to somebody who wanted a Chesapeake Bay work boat, and so, I decided that it was time for me to go on my own. And so, I got a job --

got the contract to build this 35-foot work boat. And talked to Cecil Robbins, and he rented me a place right next to his place. And I moved all my stuff -- which wasn't much -- moved all that down there.

DOLDE: So, where was it?

SWAIN: [00:19:57] In Drawbridge.

DOLDE: Okay.

SWAIN: [00:19:58] It's on the Chicamacomico River, which empties into the Transquaking, which empties into Fishing Bay.

DOLDE: Yeah. I'm familiar with Chicamacomico and Transquaking, but didn't -- off my radar.

SWAIN: [00:20:17] And at Drawbridge, there's this bridge -- it's wooden -- at that time, it was a wooden bridge. I don't know, I haven't been down there for a long time. Oh, and by the way, when I was down -- went down to visit Dickerson's about ten years ago, there was a cherry tree about that big around growing right in the middle of where we used to build boats down there. But anyway, there was this bridge that went over the Chicamacomico, I think it was -- I don't think it had gotten into the Transquaking yet -- but anyway, it -- when you built one of the -- a big enough power boat down there, if you had a flying bridge on it, you had to either not put the flying bridge on, or --

Cecil did this once, he floated the boat down, a bunch of us guys got on the bridge, and they passed the flying bridge to us. We carried it over the flying bridge, and handed it to them when they went underneath. [laughter]

DOLDE: Better to find that out before you try to get that under the bridge, than after.

SWAIN: [00:21:24] Right. So, that's -- how many boats did I build there? I built probably -- one -- built a sailboat, another 38-foot boat -- somebody brought me a -- there was a boat company over in Pasadena that built plywood boats, and I had a fire, and this guy came to me with a U-Haul trailer and he said, "I went through the factory and picked up all the parts that looked like they belonged to this particular boat. Would you put it together for me?" I said, "Well, do you have a plan?" He said, "No." [laughs]

DOLDE: Oh, my gosh.

SWAIN: [00:22:13] So, we did. We put it together and he went away. It was the darndest -- it was the flimsiest thing I've ever seen, but we put her together and he ran her around. Had a good time.

DOLDE: The other boats -- what designs were they? Were they --?

SWAIN: [00:22:32] They were Chesapeake Bay -- there were party boats -- I have an album, I don't know if you'd be

interested in looking at that, or not. But they were mostly Chesapeake Bay party boats and work boats, mostly. And 35 to 40 -- the biggest one I built was 45 by 15, which was a big work boat. And then, I moved from there to the ferry boat marina -- I can't remember what year that was. It would have been probably '74, '75, somewhere in there. [clears throat] And --

DOLDE: Were there other boatbuilders in that complex? That has been such a multi-use space over the years.

SWAIN: [00:23:38] No, there wasn't. The closest one -- it's going to take me a few minutes to think of his name. He built up near Trappe, right on 50. He built several Chesapeake Bay work boats up there. And you'll have to excuse me, I'll take a bit -- in a bit. He had just a little shed, it's nothing there. But it's right near where that big tower is. It's just a plot of grass there, now. Damn, I hate it when I can't -- because I know I know his name.

DOLDE: That was the only other person operating about that time?

SWAIN: [00:24:23] In that area.

DOLDE: In that area. Composite Yacht is right by there now.

SWAIN: [00:24:27] Well, Composite Yacht -- you mean Martin Hardy. He came to work for me when he was -- he was just

out of school and just back from -- I think he'd been either in Scotland or Ireland. And he came to me for a job and I said, "Sure." And so, he had been working for me, I don't know, a couple of weeks or something. And his mother came to visit him. And when he came to me, had a tie on and a shirt. And he started getting his clothes out of the rag bag. And one day, his mother came to see me and [laughs] she looked at me and she looked at him like, "What have you done to my son?" [laughs] But Martin -- Martin was one of a kind. He was one of the best students -- or people that I hired to work for me. I knew right away that he was just special. And obviously, [laughs] with the way it's turned out for him, yeah. And his son. So, anyway --

DOLDE: And so, we were talking about the yard or the shop that you put up at the ferry boat. So, tell me about what you began building there.

SWAIN: [00:25:47] Well, the first we built there was -- I had built a 36-foot [clears throat] kind of a modified sharpie at Drawbridge. And I built a 30-foot kind of a modified skipjack hull there, also. And the sharpie was pretty much done, except it didn't have the mast in it. But it had an engine. So, we loaded all my equipment and everything in the hull of the 30-footer, and left there and towed it around to the chop tank and into the river. And I finished

the 30-footer -- *Charming Nancy* was the name of that boat. And the -- finished that one. And then, I think we started a [inaudible] -- I was there for eight years. And so, we built quite a few boats in there. And mostly -- once again, mostly Chesapeake Bay-style boats. Some yachts. I built two *Blue Moons* there.

DOLDE: Who were your customers primarily?

SWAIN: [00:27:08] Some of them were -- I built one for Danny Muffoletto, which was a work boat. I built one for Mr. Creighton, it was a kind of a fishing party boat. He worked for -- what was it? -- Wirecloth. And just that was mostly local people. Except for ones like the *Blue Moon*. A couple of the party boats for people over in Baltimore. A guy that had a battery company. The *Blue Moon*, that was crazy little guy that lived under a piano up in Baltimore somewhere. [laughter]

DOLDE: So, most of the boats you built for local folks were work boats, worked for charters, and then people away were more pleasure boats.

SWAIN: [00:28:17] Right, right. The last one I built there was a 38-foot Mason design that we built the hull there, and then that's when I went out of business and the owner bought all the equipment and we moved it over to Galesville. And finished -- I finished it there. That

boat is still going strong. It's out in California now. I heard, about two years ago, that a friend of mine who does electronics moved out there, and he was installing electronics on it. He emailed me and told me he was working on the boat, and it was in really good shape.

DOLDE: Oh, well that's good to hear.

SWAIN: [00:28:58] Yeah, yeah. It makes you feel good.

DOLDE: So, you were saying at about the time that shop went out of business, a number of these young men who'd been working for you, moved on to Jim Richardson's?

SWAIN: [00:29:11] Right. And he was building the *Dove* there at the time.

DOLDE: Did you -- what did -- did you know much about that project? Had you heard about it? Was --?

SWAIN: [00:29:20] I had. Since I knew the people, I would go down there occasionally and check it out. I knew Mr. Jim pretty well. We were friends with his daughter and son-in-law, Jim Brighton. And they'd have parties, sometimes. And there was a big old farmhouse right next to the yard, and we'd -- they'd have meals and dances and stuff like that there. I went to that a couple times.

DOLDE: Yeah, I think a number of them were living there. That was at the Fred Davis, place?

SWAIN: [00:30:01] Right, right.

DOLDE: Yeah.

SWAIN: [00:30:03] I remember one time they had a square dance going there, and we were all in the middle of the living room doing the dance, and the floor cracked and went -- sagged down like that -- and everybody kind of stopped and then they all just kept dancing [Dolde laughs].

DOLDE: That's a great story. Did you know William Baker or any of the people involved with the --?

SWAIN: [00:30:29] No, I never did. I never met him. I've studied some of his drawings. That design right there is very, very similar to the one that he did for the --

DOLDE: The shallop?

SWAIN: [00:30:41] Yeah, the shallop. He did one for the *Mayflower*, I think? Or one of those. And I just -- for what we were going to use it for, I extended the lines some. But it's pretty close to what his boat was. And did some research on that and -- I can't remember all the names, but Gosnold -- a guy named Gosnold also did a boat -- they were over in the Delaware -- no, the Chesapeake Bay area, I think it was. Anyway, he came over and took a boat out of his -- out of the hold of his boat, and put it together. And then -- and he talks about that, taking each half out. And there was another one -- I can't remember

what that -- there was two that did that. Gosnold was on both of those trips.

DOLDE: So, you're talking about going back to the historical record and kind of justifying --

SWAIN: [00:32:00] [inaudible]. Because that's what we thought -- that's how they got that boat over there, to Jamestown.

DOLDE: Somebody said that Jim Richardson also built a shallop, which is not something I was -- had realized.

SWAIN: [00:32:17] He might have.

DOLDE: He might have. He did some work for the Smithsonian, I know.

SWAIN: [00:32:20] Yeah. He might have, I'm not -- I'm not aware of that.

DOLDE: I'll have to explore that further.

SWAIN: [00:32:25] Yeah, that would be interesting.

DOLDE: Yeah. What do you remember about him as a fellow boatbuilder, as a person?

SWAIN: [00:32:35] Just a very gentle man. He was very patient, willing to share, and knew his trade pretty well. Built good boats. So, I remember I built one of those Chesapeake Bay work boats, but it was pretty gussied up. It was -- and -- I can't think of the name of that boat now. It went down to -- what's the -- when you're going,

you're going to go towards the neck down there, and the you could go the other way. Anyway --

DOLDE: The neck toward where he lives, neck [inaudible] versus down to --

SWAIN: [00:33:38] Well, no.

DOLDE: No.

SWAIN: [00:33:40] No, that would be towards Hudson. If you're going down -- you where Spicer's Yard used to go by --

DOLDE: Well, there's Church Creek, and then you get down -- you're headed down towards [inaudible] Island --

SWAIN: [00:33:49] Toddville.

DOLDE: Toddville, [inaudible]. Okay.

SWAIN: [00:33:50] Yeah, you could go to Toddville or you can make a right and go to -- what's that island that's on the --?

DOLDE: Hoopers Island.

SWAIN: [00:33:58] Hoopers Island. Okay. That boat eventually ended up in Hoopers Island. And I took it around -- after I built it, I took it around to Lloyd's Creek and showed it to Mr. Jim. I was pretty proud of it. And he was complimentary. It wasn't anything like what he would do, probably. But it was -- I was proud of it, because it was a pretty boat.

DOLDE: What were the primary differences in how you built a boat, versus how he was building a boat?

SWAIN: [00:34:29] I think mine might have been a little lighter. His had -- were -- had more mass to them, if you will. I don't know if that's a good word or not. A little bit the way that Bronzie Parks built boats. I mean, his -- I'm working on a Bronzie Parks boat right now. And his boats were -- they're work boats. And he built a boat like a work boat. But he also built -- there was one that was there a couple of -- two years ago, I think -- maybe it was even last year. A power boat that Bronzie had built, that was all cedar, just the way that the *Barbara Batchelder* was built. Inside, the interior of it was all cedar and very pretty varnished. Nothing fancy, but fancy. And they all had the same look and feel to them.

DOLDE: And that was a Bronza Parks?

SWAIN: [00:35:36] Yeah. If took one of their boats -- a Bronzie Parks boat, and let's say a Chris Craft, there would be -- the difference would be -- it would be the difference between a gentleman's launch and a work boat. But a work boat that was well-built and the substance was there. The other one was fancy and looked really nice, but it didn't have the same substance that either a Bronzie or a Jim Richardson boat had. So, I always felt like if I had

my choice between the two, I know which one I would take, because it's just more there. It's going to be with you longer. And the maintenance is less on it, too -- on something like that.

DOLDE: So, you've shed some light here. My understanding -- I had thought that for a lot of these young people going to down to Jim Richardson's, that they -- it was their first job building boats. But that's not true for several of them. And Bill worked for you as well. Bill didn't go on to build boats. So, they all worked for you about the same amount of time?

SWAIN: [00:37:02] No. I think like Long John and those guys, they worked on, I think, one or two projects that I had, and then moved on. Bill Slacum was there for a long time. Martin was there for quite a while. I had another guy from Tilghman -- I can't remember his name. And, oh, I had Bill Whittington, who was a Black guy -- and where was Bill? He was from -- I'm not sure exactly where he was from, but I think he was over towards -- if I had to say, somewhere near Trappe.

DOLDE: And what did he do for you? Everything?

SWAIN: [00:37:59] He was a painter. Yeah. He did most of my painting. I've got a picture of him in the album up there, which would give you an idea of -- kind of an overview. I

had whole boats that I built and never took a picture of.

[laughs] It's just another boat, right?

DOLDE: It sounds like you had some forethought to take the pictures that you did. So, not everybody actually has that. Going to back to the -- to *Dove* for a minute. You kind of said you were down there from time to time, keeping tabs. What do you remember about how that project progressed? And maybe -- I know that there were designs, but then also there was practically and departing from that. Do you have a sense of choices that were made and what you observed as another boatbuilder?

SWAIN: [00:38:57] Well, it was -- it certainly wasn't anything like what they're doing at the museum now. It was much more rural kind of boatbuilding. And he was able to do things with what normally some people wouldn't be able to do things, with what they had and with what he had. It was a -- his equipment was pretty -- I wouldn't say crude, but it certainly wasn't up to the standards that the museum stuff is. His bandsaws were -- I have one of them right now that actually -- we built *Sultana* with the ship saw that they loaned us for that. And --

DOLDE: That the museum loaned?

SWAIN: [00:39:53] That Richardson.

DOLDE: Oh, Richardson did. Okay.

SWAIN: [00:39:55] Well, not Richardson. Jim Brighton actually owns it. And it was down at Richardson's yard. And we took it from his yard. Actually, it might have even been the one he used for the *Dove*, because it was in the same shed that was next to where they built the *Dove*. So, that's probably -- that's probably the one. I never thought of that.

DOLDE: So, you said something about the rural way of doing things, meaning improvisation? Or --?

SWAIN: [00:40:26] Right. The way that would either steam things, that way that you would cut things out, and a lot of adze work -- more so than now that we would use electric planes. And you would actually use the adze. When they moved the boat, they moved it on wooden rollers over to the water. He didn't use a crane. So --

DOLDE: I understand when they turned the boat, it was kind of a hairy experience. You weren't there for that, were you?

SWAIN: [00:41:14] I wasn't there for that, no. I was there when he had moved it -- it was over the road right actually, when I saw it. He hadn't -- so, they were in the process of moving it and I was only there briefly for a few minutes, came down. So, I didn't really see how they got it -- I know they used rollers to get it over to the railway. But [laughs] --

DOLDE: So, you probably were sourcing material from many of the same places that he was for his projects. What were the sources and what were some of the challenges in what you could get and what you could not get?

SWAIN: [00:41:57] Well, Spicer's was in -- was working, then. And so, you could call Spicer up and order a keel and a set of sides, and they would send you a 40-foot-long piece of pine, 24, 30 inches at one end, and 12 to 18 inches on the other end. And several boards that were cut from that same long, so you could use those for chine stringers and sheer stringers, and that sort of thing. And oak -- most of my oak came from Linkwood, was where I got oak from. And then, I got a couple of loads of oak from up here in Millington, when there was a mill up here. This area has some of the best white oak around. People from Trumby used to get oak from over here.

DOLDE: I didn't realize. So, you were always satisfied with the wood that you could get?

SWAIN: [00:43:17] Oh yeah. At that time, yeah. I sold a boat to a guy that -- to an architect that -- it's really bad when I forget his name -- Eric Steinlein.

DOLDE: Oh, yes.

SWAIN: [00:43:36] Eric Steinlein wanted a little 33-foot bugeye that he designed. And he stopped by my yard, and I

had cedar stacked out there, and I had oak stacked out there -- I always bought ahead, so that I would have season stuff. And he came back and he looked at my woodpile and -- and this is what he told me. He said, "Okay, this is where I'm going to have it built, then. Because here's -- the materials are here" -- and even though the boat was built out of plywood mostly, but it had oak frames and oak keel, and that sort of thing.

DOLDE: Okay, so you built some traditional boat types, but with slightly modified --

SWAIN: [00:44:21] Yeah. This one was his own design. He designed the Solomon's Island cruise-a-longs, which were plywood boats and kind of his shtick.

DOLDE: And this was at the ferry boat site, because I think Bill mentioned this to me.

SWAIN: [00:44:35] Right. I've been meaning to stop in and see Bill, but I heard that his health isn't really good.

DOLDE: He seemed to be doing -- the day I saw him, he seemed to be doing pretty well. He was getting around pretty well. Certainly, his remembering things very well. So -- I did a little challenge to get him on the phone, but I kept trying and I'm sure he would -- he seemed to really enjoy the conversation.

SWAIN: [00:45:01] Yeah. I wanted to stop by and see him,
because we're working on a boat right there in Cambridge.

DOLDE: That's right, yeah.

SWAIN: [00:45:07] His son came around to the yard last year,
when we were working -- what do you call it? It used to be
called Peeler, I think. Or something like that.

DOLDE: Oh, Sam? Sammy?

SWAIN: [00:45:22] Yeah. And Maryellen, is she still --?

DOLDE: Yep. She looks the same as I remember her, which, of
course, is not probably quite true, but she really does.
And they didn't live in Church Creek my entire childhood,
but --

SWAIN: [00:45:37] Yeah, they moved back to Cambridge -- I
can't remember -- one of the streets off of School Street.

DOLDE: Yeah, they're still -- that's where they still are.
I'm trying to remember the name -- off of the [Henbrooks?].
It's still in that area. They're still in the same -- that
house. No, they're very well. And -- but I simply did not
realize that he had worked for you and that you had been in
that immediate area. So, that combine with your -- with
you advising us on the current *Dove* project -- so, now you
do have a perspective on both. I mean, count the
differences, there are so many. But what would you point

to as the major differences between the '70s *Dove* and the *Dove* we're building at the museum now?

SWAIN: [00:46:34] I think the major difference is the materials. They're using a lot of South American woods and, of course, she's planked with white oak above the waterline. I would -- the materials and the ballast -- the ballast, I think, is different. I can't attest to how much outside ballast that they had on, but I think there's more on this one. Fasteners are probably different. I don't remember what they fastened the original with, but if I had to guess, it was probably galvanized iron.

DOLDE: I think they did. So, they -- you know, I didn't -- they did use some trunnels, because somebody talked about making black locust trunnels. But then, I guess, supplemented with galvanized. And that's one of the things that started to fail.

SWAIN: [00:47:36] Yeah, I don't -- I remember June Wingo did a lot of the caulking on the boat.

DOLDE: My understanding is she did everything -- she did a lot of things, not -- she was a full participant, in other words. And which actually is all the more amazing, given that -- I think she truly came in without -- she had worked for Mr. Jim for a couple years, I guess before. At least a year or so, with Fred Asplen, because they worked on the

Constellation mast. So, she was -- but still, she had been a -- worked as a waitress and --

SWAIN: [00:48:13] She was one of those people who could do anything she put her mind to. So, garden -- they had a nice garden out there. Was it Freddy Asplen? Who was it that owned that house?

DOLDE: Oh, Davis. Fred Davis.

SWAIN: [00:48:30] Fred Davis. Fred Davis was building a little skipjack down there named after his grandmother, I think -- or somebody like that. Right. And was -- Mr. Jim was counseling him on that construction.

DOLDE: That seems to have been the case -- I think, Sidney Dickson was working on *Spirit of Y-Town* at some point in time -- it was a similar kind of situation. Was that standard practice? I mean, did people come and pick your brain about stuff, and then go off and do their own thing? Or was that a Mr. Jim thing?

SWAIN: [00:49:04] No, that happens to me all the -- the older I get, the more boats that are out there. That's kind of the neat thing, too. You'll get a phone call, somebody saying, "I just bought a boat and I think you might have built it." And so, you look up your records, and sure enough, yeah. So --

DOLDE: That feels pretty good.

SWAIN: [00:49:23] It's like your children are out there. I know where two of them -- there's a *Blue Moon* -- the first *Blue Moon* I built is somewhere in a field right now not doing real well. I don't know where that is. And then, I had a little skipjack that I built for a guy named Luthy -- he was a farmer down in Cambridge -- Paul Luthy.

DOLDE: Okay. Probably the same family as my best friend from childhood, he was John Luthy -- Jacque -- maybe that's his brother.

SWAIN: [00:49:50] Okay, yeah, yeah. He -- well, there were a bunch of Luthys down there. But he had me -- [laughs] he and his wife were sort of having problems. And I went to get my final cheque from him, and his wife was sitting in the living room and she said, "You're only building that boat so you can take me out and drown me. I know what you're doing." [laughs] So, you sort of walk out gingerly. And that boat ended up in Chestertown and -- by one of the guys at the college. Anyway, he had put a pump on it, and the pump must have malfunctioned and caused a fire in it. And it smoldered -- he had it closed up really tight -- and it smoldered for long enough that it ate all of the area around the mast. And the mast eventually just kind of fell over. And that's how they knew there was something going on, because that added air to it and it started smoking.

Anyway, it completely ruined that boat. So, that's -- and what's the other one I just heard about recently? There's another one that -- anyway --

DOLDE: Did you -- we'll move on to what you -- where you went next. But did you still stay in touch -- Mr. Jim was already pretty old when he did the *Dove* project -- and then *Jenny Norman* and the windmill and things like that. But did you stay in touch? Or did you know him in his later years?

SWAIN: [00:51:51] Yeah, yeah. I stopped down there and visited him when I could. I'd moved away at that point. I moved -- when I moved -- I got divorced -- let's see, that was shortly after -- that was in '78, I got divorced. And the project that we were -- the last project we were working on in the shop, the guy took it to his farm over in Galesville and we worked on -- we built a shed over it, and it was just him and I working on it. I lived on the farm with my son. And then, in -- kind of in the middle of that -- he was a commercial contractor -- built a hospital down in Southern Maryland, and so, he had to take some time off. And so, I went down to -- what's the name of that? There's a yard across the creek there in Solomon's, and there was a steel boat that needed a new deck on it. And I worked for a summer on that. And then, we went back to work on Phil's

boat -- Phil Lavallee. And then, I got a call from our guy who left a note -- I was living on a boat in Archie's yard, and I got a call from a guy in St. Michaels that had the St. Michaels marina. And he wanted a manager for the yard there. And I thought, "Well, why not?" And so, I went over there and --

DOLDE: So, this is not Higgins, this is the St. Michaels --

SWAIN: [00:53:56] St. -- it's St. Michaels Harbour Marina.

It's just across --

DOLDE: Right across. Still there.

SWAIN: [00:54:06] Yeah. And -- but it's -- all those buildings that were there when I was there are all gone. They've built it all up. It was strictly a transit yard.

DOLDE: Sure, sure. One other thing I wanted to ask you about is, there was a lot of talk about the hippies working on the *Dove* project. What do you think -- so, you're a boatbuilder in the community, what do you think the community's perception was of what they were working on there? Do you think they didn't understand it? Were they interested? It seemed like a lot of the attention came from the outside. But what about the people from the local community, were they interested in what was going on there?

SWAIN: [00:54:50] Well, they were -- Richardson's yard was pretty isolated. And some of them were -- if anything was

going on down there, it was right next the yard. The only time I remember any of that being any kind of a -- was when that whole group kind of lived in the yellow house in Oxford. And Martin was living there, and Jim Elk was living there, and -- Lord, who else? I went to a couple of parties there. And that was the only time that I was ever aware -- oh, and [inaudible] worked for me for a while. And they were -- those people turned around and became commissioners in Oxford later on -- some of those guys.

DOLDE: Oh, yeah?

SWAIN: [00:55:57] Yeah. I'm trying to think who that was that was part of that --

DOLDE: So, that was after the *Dove* project, they kind of moved to --

SWAIN: [00:56:07] Well after.

DOLDE: Okay, they moved on to --

SWAIN: [00:56:10] Yeah, well after. They became solid citizens in Oxford [Dolde laughs]. Two or three of them. I wish I could remember the names of those -- Martin -- I'm sure Martin could tell you who they were. [laughs] But at the time, yeah, they -- that was -- what was that? That was in the '70s -- that would have been in the '80s, I guess, then. Yeah.

DOLDE: Okay, well, anyway, so, you then ended up in St.
 Michaels. This is also the '80s at this point, when you're
 --

SWAIN: [00:56:46] Yep. And worked at the marina there. And
 -- [laughs] then what happened then? Yeah, what happened
 then?

DOLDE: Well, when -- *Sultana* was -- is '90s.

SWAIN: [00:57:14] *Sultana* was '97. We started talking about
 it and -- I lost some years there.

DOLDE: Yes, we lost about a decade. So, don't let me rush
 you. [laughter]

SWAIN: [00:57:29] I need to get something.

DOLDE: All right, let's -- we'll pause for a minute. I
 actually --

[pause in audio]

SWAIN: [00:57:36] This is one that we built in -- there's
 Bill.

DOLDE: There's Bill.

SWAIN: [00:57:42] That's the guy from Tilghman that I can't -
 - and Bob Ferguson.

DOLDE: And this is at the ferry boat?

SWAIN: [00:57:53] This is at the ferry boat marina. This is
 -- that's the next boat that we built. Anyway, that's me.

DOLDE: Oh, goodness [Swain laughs]. I never would have guessed. [laughter]

SWAIN: [00:58:08] So [inaudible]. That was down at Drawbridge.

DOLDE: Okay, and some of these previous ones were at Applegarth.

SWAIN: [00:58:23] Applegarth, yes. That's some of the skipjacks that he did. That one was at Drawbridge. That's an experimental boat for the Coast Guard. We did a bi-boat. We built that. Oh, this -- this was -- no, when I hurt my back -- that's high school. That's boat I built in high school.

DOLDE: You don't remember which bi-boat that was?

SWAIN: [00:58:49] Yeah, it was the *Dorothy*.

DOLDE: Okay.

SWAIN: [00:58:52] It became the *Beehive* -- I think it was called. I did awful things to that boat in the name of money. Anyway, I hurt my back real bad when I was working at Dickerson's. So, I went to making models. And this is some of the models.

DOLDE: Just during your off period as you were recovering?

SWAIN: [00:59:13] As I was recovering. This was the model I did of the -- which I just saw about two years ago. Somebody bought it and told me --

DOLDE: So, models -- not working models, but decorative models.

SWAIN: [00:59:25] This was the model that I built for Dickerson, so they could take it to the boat show. And you could see the interior and all that. And some more model work. That's the model that's on the Hudson River -- no, not the Hudson, the Mohawk River in New York. And here's some of the -- that's a trawler that we did. A little skipjack called the *Swingsong* that I designed. That's a 16-foot boat I built while I was working for Applegarth -- on my own. That's it there. And that's one I built at the -- at Chicamacomico.

DOLDE: Sharpie sailing skiff. Oh, a Chappelle design, yes.

SWAIN: [01:00:14] Yeah, that was at -- that's a Wittolz design there. And this is that boat that you saw that first picture of under construction. And there's some more. There's the boat that came to me in the trailer.

DOLDE: Oh, the -- yeah. The party boat with the plywood.

SWAIN: [01:00:42] And that's the first Chesapeake Bay boat that I built. One I started off with. And that was another after that, and another one after that.

DOLDE: But those were your own designs.

SWAIN: [01:00:55] Yeah.

DOLDE: Like a modified look.

SWAIN: [01:00:58] Each time I had a half-model that I worked from. And each time I got -- shaved a little more off of it until I got it down to where I thought it was a good boat. More of those. This is a hull based on the same design, except I raised the sides and the guy made a cruising boat out of it. And that one is -- I'm pretty sure that that's Mr. Creighton's boat. This is the -- this boat -- this is a *Blue Moon* that went down to the Dominican Republic and came back eight years later. And this is that plywood boat that I --

DOLDE: Oh, yeah.

SWAIN: [001:01:48] There, that's Tony. Tony Widdington, that's his name.

DOLDE: Widdington, yes.

SWAIN: [01:01:54] Yes.

DOLDE: Oh, you said Bill. So, it's Tony.

SWAIN: [01:02:00] This guy lived down in Hudson. That's John -- it'll take me a while. Anyway, we were building a Chesapeake Bay work boat. You got it upside-down and turned it over.

DOLDE: Right. No, these are great shots of the construction and the process.

SWAIN: [01:02:17] And this is that boat -- the last boat that I built at the yard there. That's lead keel.

DOLDE: Yeah.

SWAIN: [01:02:32] [inaudible] interior. The guy had seven daughters.

DOLDE: Oh, my goodness. *Santa Maria*?

SWAIN: [01:02:43] That's me.

DOLDE: So, *Santa Maria* is -- so, that's a cruising --

SWAIN: [01:02:53] Sailboat, yeah. I did say a while back -- I'll think of it again. His wife made the sails for it. She worked for a sailmaker and learned how to make sails and that. This is when we went to St. Michaels. And St. Michaels said to me, "We want to have a boat that we can go out and pull boats in when they get disabled, or whatever." And I kind of drew this up on a pad and said, "Is that what you're looking for?" And he said, "Sure."

DOLDE: This is when you worked for the marina.

SWAIN: [01:03:28] Yeah, right.

DOLDE: And so, you were managing the marina, but you also -- they also built this -- okay. Awesome.

SWAIN: [01:03:36] That's Peyton Hurley, he's from Cambridge. And that's St. Michaels Harbour Marina.

DOLDE: There it is.

SWAIN: [01:03:48] And that's the skipjack that burnt. This is one I built -- this is the one that I -- we put all the equipment in and towed it around from [inaudible]. And

then, I went to -- and here's what -- the missing link is in here. That's Wittolz design. After I was at the -- we'll go into that -- but I worked for Don Lowry. We built the --

DOLDE: After St. Michaels?

SWAIN: [01:04:30] After St. Michaels. We built -- this is a fiberglass boat that we built. I was just carpenter working for Don Lowry at the time. And then, we built a boat for a guy in Oxford, Dale Denning. And that's the hull -- this was in the Brookletts building in Easton.

DOLDE: Okay.

SWAIN: [01:05:02] I cut the brick out for that boat to go out there. A bi-boat I used to own. I used to own a little [inaudible] that I got from Baltimore. And this is the boat that we lived on when I came across to St. Michaels. And this is my little -- the little boat I built when I was just starting with Applegarth. The little skipjack. And that's the *Ellsworth*. And little did I know, that I would rebuild -- completely rebuild the *Ellsworth* when that boat was sitting next to --

DOLDE: Yeah, wow.

SWAIN: [01:05:45] And that's it.

DOLDE: That's a great record that you've kept.

SWAIN: [01:05:48] Yeah. Well, it's not all of them.

DOLDE: Right, that's just up to the -- what -- the early '90s, late '80s, early '90s?

SWAIN: [01:05:55] Well, not even all of those, because I -- yeah.

DOLDE: So, you worked for Lowry for several years?

SWAIN: [01:06:07] Yeah, I would say that probably -- well, let's see, I met Melinda then. And we were married in '82. And it was '78 -- '78, '79, '80, '81 -- so, it's four years that I was working with Don, I think. On two boats.

DOLDE: Okay. Was that the same time that you were at St. Michaels? Or that was after?

SWAIN: [01:06:36] I went -- I left St. Michaels Marina and went to work for Don. And we were living -- we were living on Chew Avenue in St. Michaels. So, my two sons were there. And in-between that time, I'd moved off the boat and into another house. And then, I met Melinda, and we got married, and then we moved to Chew Avenue. So, there's all that going on. And all that time, I was working either first for the marina and then for Don Lowry. And then, after Don Lowry, we moved up here. I built this house while I was working for Don. It took me a year of two-day -- of three-day weekends to build the house.

DOLDE: That's pretty -- that's still pretty impressive. Okay, so you've been in this house for that long. Okay.

SWAIN: [01:07:38] Almost 40 years. It's amazing.

DOLDE: It's a good spot.

SWAIN: [01:07:46] It's grown up around it. It wasn't -- 40 years and a lot of growth has happened.

DOLDE: Sure. Well, what -- I mean, I want to learn about some of the big projects that you've done, but I don't want to skip over anything. Should we -- so, you were -- you're building a lot of Chesapeake Bay-styled boats, traditional wooden construction, some fiberglass -- just a very small amount?

SWAIN: [01:08:16] Two boats. That was the one sailboat and the power boat that I worked with Don Lowry on in Easton. And that's pretty much the limit of the fiberglass boats that I've done.

DOLDE: Do you care for work -- did you get --?

SWAIN: [01:08:34] No, I don't.

DOLDE: [laughs] Don't care for that at all. Okay.

SWAIN: [01:08:37] It's not my medium.

DOLDE: What is it that you enjoy -- I mean, I'm hearing this time and time again from wooden boatbuilders, but what is it that attracts you so much to working and using wood?

SWAIN: [01:08:52] It's just a friendlier -- I know it. I know the different woods and what they're good for. And it's something that -- I don't know, it's innate in me that

knows what wood can do and what I can do with wood. And fiberglass, I know what you can do with it, but it just doesn't have the same feel to it, to me. Or smell.

[laughs]

DOLDE: Well, there's an interesting, I think, kind of parallel. For a while there, Mr. Jim was the guy that people went to, maybe because of Howard Chapelle and the Smithsonian, to -- "Let's build a replica of this or that," culminating with *Dove*. And then, somehow that became you, as well. So, tell me about how that came about.

SWAIN: [01:09:47] Well, *Sultana* came about because we went over to Holland several times. We had a friend that we met here who lived in Holland. His family was from Holland. And so, we went over there and visited. I went over once and built a third-floor apartment right in Amsterdam with him. And that was a fun experience. And while we were there, we saw the *Batavia* being built. And it was huge. I mean, it would dwarf the *Kalmar Nyckel*. And they were doing it as a project not just to build the boat, but to train people in woodworking skills. Not necessarily to build boats, but woodworking skills. And they were doing it on a [poulter?] that had just been claimed from the sea. And so, there was nothing around there. There were no trees, there was nothing. It was just bare land that had

been dredged up and made into a land area that was still below sea level, but hard land. And so, they started that boat -- and there's a little town that's grown up since then, around there, and there's a museum there. And they were starting another one. I'm not sure where they are with that -- the *Seven Provinces* -- they were thinking about building another huge ship. And while I was there, I went to the museum in Amsterdam, and I found a book by Harold Hahn called *Colonial Schooners*. And the *Sultana* was in there. And I had seen *Sultana* in Chapelle's books. And she was one of several different Colonial -- American Colonial schooners that he had taken -- he had found the lines for. And they were in the Department of Records over there. They're always looking -- they wrote everything down. We -- they even gave us the original -- didn't give it to us, but they -- we took it to a table and set it down -- the original log from the *Sultana*. So, with that in mind, I thought, "This is a project that would be the right scale for Chestertown."

DOLDE: Were they looking for a project? Because I don't -- I mean, I was in school in Chestertown, and I remember this just sort of happened. So, I wasn't sure if they were looking for something to --

SWAIN: [01:13:10] No. I knew I had -- I was rebuilding the *Ellsworth* for Echo Hill, and I was also working on the *Annie Dee*, and Drew was thinking about leaving Echo Hill and going to an archaeology college down in South Carolina, North Carolina, somewhere down there. And so, he was thinking about leaving. And one day, after I came back from Holland, I'd gotten the drawings for that, and I'd had them enlarged. And -- it always reminds me of that picture in *Woodenboat Magazine* with the guy's standing there, he's kind of looking around, kind of a shady character, and he opens up his shirt and there's all these women in there and it's [laughs] -- and so, I kind of pulled one of those on him.

DOLDE: Except it was a boat drawing. [laughter]

SWAIN: [01:14:23] A boat drawing exactly.

DOLDE: If you love boats.

SWAIN: [01:14:28] And he said -- basically he said, "You're crazy." And we let it go at that. And then, about a week later, he came back to me and we talked about it, and he said, "You know, they're thinking about it. I think I'm in, let's do it." And so, I knew that by myself, not doing a chance, because I don't have the skills to organize, to fundraise, to do any of that sort of thing. And Drew -- and the other thing was, you just can't be -- you just

can't go build a boat and then, "Well, what are we going to do with it?" You know? Once you build it, what are you going to do with it? And it has to have a purpose. And that's where Drew came in, because of those skills, and also his knowledge of what the school would look like if you were going to use a boat as a school. So, with that in mind, we had a purpose for it. And so, Drew sat down with me, and for about a month, I just sat there and we built the boat on computer. Just, "What are we going to do with this? How much is this going to cost? What are we going to do with that?" All the little --

DOLDE: So, spreadsheeting, not drawing it. Not --

SWAIN: [01:15:53] Right.

DOLDE: -- costs and planning.

SWAIN: [01:15:57] Planning so that we could take it to somebody and say, "This is what we want to do." And know what we were talking about. So, about that time, the Chester River Craft and Art had started up, and they were working on getting a 501(C)3. And they -- we went over and talked to -- well, we talked to several people and they all pointed us to Chester River Craft and Art. And we went to talk to Mike [Delke?]. And Mike said, "Well, we're having a board meeting at such and such a day. Why don't you come by?" And so, we did. And they were -- Joyce -- let's see,

it's Joyce Huber-Smith now. I think she was -- she had a different last name, then. Anyway, while Drew was talking, I was looking around the room to see who was falling asleep or who was [laughs] -- you know -- and nobody was falling asleep. And Joyce was -- you could see this lady really liked this project. And from the very get-go, she's been the person that made it happen, as far as I'm concerned, because her -- not only her expertise and her energy and everything else. And she knew the right people in town -- how to fund for that. And so, we did our first fundraiser under organizational skills. Drew and I stood on the back of a Ford pickup truck and gave our spiel to people standing out on the grass. And --

DOLDE: Just right there in town?

SWAIN: [01:18:14] Right there by where those -- where the train station is there. That field right there.

DOLDE: There in Chestertown.

SWAIN: [01:18:21] And at first, we thought we might build it there. But that didn't happen. And I think they raised \$40,000 that day. So -- and that got us started.

DOLDE: Now, Joyce was not affiliated with a particular organization at that point? Was she with Chester RiverArts?

SWAIN: [01:18:40] She was with Chester River Craft --

DOLDE: She was.

SWAIN: [01:18:42] And Chester River Craft and Art was started to help artists to -- they're traditionally bad business-people. And so, they wanted -- they could find places for them to do their work, find materials, find educational projects that they could be doing. There were even -- they were thinking of a cooking component, and that sort of thing. And they were having a hard time finding people that could -- what direction -- say if you wanted to do a cooking component, what would it look like? You would have who? Almost like Schindler's doing now, here, in town. They couldn't find anybody like that. And then, Drew and I walk in the door, and we've got this thing. It's all planned, we know how much it's going to cost, how long it's going to take, what it's going to do. I mean, there it is. And so, they were kind of excited about it. And so, that's how it got started.

DOLDE: Wow. Well, that's -- and so, really, it all started with observing another being built, and finding some plans, and making those connections.

SWAIN: [01:20:07] Yeah. All the other boats that were being built at the time -- the *Pride* -- what were some of the other ones? I can't think of any others right now. But they were built by shipwrights to -- they wanted to get

them out to sea as, "Let's build the boat" -- and *Pride* was built as an ambassador to -- for Baltimore. And -- which worked for several years -- as long as Baltimore funded it, it was great. But the one that I saw over in Holland -- the boat -- the ship was being built as an educational tool in itself. And that's what attracted me to what I thought was different about it. And what happens when you do it that way -- and I noticed that the *Dove* is getting ready to do that with -- I saw an ad where they're going to have people -- 50 bucks, you can come in and work with one of the -- for a day or something --

DOLDE: The caulking.

SWAIN: [01:21:15] Yeah, great idea.

DOLDE: Yeah. So -- but the earlier *Dove* -- I mean, it did have an educational mission, but of course it was at dock. They couldn't bring people out on it. Would -- did that come to mind at all for you? Or something an improvement on that, or anything like that?

SWAIN: [01:21:30] No. Because of the way that Echo Hill worked their boats, where the boats were out with kids. It never occurred to us that it would a dockside attraction. It would be -- it would have to be a working boat. And the fact that her size was a consideration, the fact that you could have classes up on deck -- have part of the students

up on a deck and part of them down below -- was part of the plan, also. So, that -- the scale of it was -- that's why we chose that particular boat. She's a little deep for the Bay, but Chestertown is a -- was founded before the Revolutionary War, so she's right in there with the timing that Chestertown would have been -- she was on the Bay. We have a complete record of what she did from the time she'd join the Navy, to the time she was decommissioned. So, it's a great historical thing, as far as education goes. Easy to find information on it.

DOLDE: So, to what extent were you able to also have volunteers and/or people working on the boat and learning skills? Did that part of the project work the way you had hoped?

SWAIN: [01:23:03] We had -- right from the beginning, we had framing classes where -- we had our first class was four marine archaeologists that came in and wanted to experience building something that they see on the bottom of the sea -- parts of it. "Exactly, how does this work? How is it put together?" And so, they -- we would send them up to the loft, they would make a pattern of the frame, they would go out to the wood pile, find a tree, put the pattern on it. We'd run it through the mill -- mill it. They would run it through the -- make the frame and then erect

it on the keel. And that was a week-long class. We could do one of those a week like that. And then, when it came time to plank it, we had people signed up and pay us to plank. Spar-making had people making the [inaudible] spars. All of the upper spars are hollow laminated spars. So, it was all that. When it came time to rig, we had people serving the rigging. And we had a lot -- I don't know if you've ever seen -- there's the list of [dog barks] -- you know, she's out of the water right now. She's down at Georgetown.

DOLDE: Oh, I didn't realize that.

SWAIN: [01:25:11] You drive right by it, I think. Don't you?

DOLDE: I do. I didn't pay attention. I'm usually probably half asleep in the morning. I'll pay attention next time. I did not realize that. Well, what's fascinating to me -- I mean, yes, you're a master boatbuilder, but you're not a historian or expert in historic vessels. Did you find applying -- is it the same principles? Or was this a challenge for you that you were looking for?

SWAIN: [01:25:43] It was a challenge for me because I wanted to build it as authentically as we could build it. And I think we did a pretty good job of that. And fortunately, the -- they did a survey of the boat before they bought it -- before the British bought it -- and so, we knew -- we

knew how many -- they talked about how many bolts were in this, and how many knees, and all the -- it was a really pretty -- you knew what you had to do. And they found the original -- the drawings that the British had made of the interior. So, a Colonial-built schooner at the time, we didn't know what the inside looked like at all. And so, that was a real find. So, we know what it looked like.

DOLDE: Amazing amount of detail, which we do not have for Dove, but we're able to extrapolate.

SWAIN: [01:26:58] This is -- with the exception of about -- let's see -- let's see, there's one -- one, two -- there's got to be more than -- there's three -- one, two, three -- there's four crew that actually were the main shipwrights. There was Josh Herman on the back, and planking all over the place. I mean, he was -- Josh Herman, and -- God, I hate that. Jim Knolls -- he did the front; he was all over. And Rich and one other one -- A.J. Kolajowski. That was the main shipwright crew. All the rest were volunteers.

DOLDE: And how did you -- did you know those --?

SWAIN: [01:28:19] That's all the --

DOLDE: Okay, these are the names of the crew. Did you know these shipwrights ahead of time? Or did you recruit them?

SWAIN: [01:28:28] I recruited them. They come -- two of them came from -- Josh Herman came right from The Apprenticeshop. And he -- how did we find -- oh, we called The Apprenticeshop, and asked them if they had anybody that was interested in doing it. And he had just graduated from it. And he delivered a boat to St. Michaels and --

DOLDE: Stayed around.

SWAIN: [01:28:55] Stayed around, right. Anyway --

DOLDE: Well, one of the things I've learned is that the wooden boat community is very small. You spent most of your career -- or all of it -- here. But even talking to some of those who worked on the '70s *Dove*, who went other places -- there's one guy, David Westerguard -- I don't know if you knew him, he ended up in Nova Scotia.

SWAIN: [01:29:22] Yeah.

DOLDE: He's still in Nova Scotia building schooners.

SWAIN: [01:29:25] Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, David -- well, his brother, Westerguard, right outside of Centerville, they cut a mile of Osage trees down. And his brother cut a bunch of that stuff and sent it up to Westerguard up in Nova Scotia.

DOLDE: Yeah, I talked to him last week on the phone. And he's doing pretty amazing things. Yeah, so now --

SWAIN: [01:29:54] Anyway, that just gives you -- that's the main group of volunteers that were in -- they were there a lot through the whole project.

DOLDE: How long did the project take?

SWAIN: [01:30:11] Two-and-a-half years.

DOLDE: Two-and-a-half. And did you have a timeline, or --?

SWAIN: [01:30:16] Two-and-a-half years.

DOLDE: Okay. Didn't know if you -- of course, our timeline shifted because of COVID. But -- well, a timeline is both good and bad, right? So, you know, Jim Richardson had a timeline, it was a struggle -- and a budget.

SWAIN: [01:30:36] Yeah, the timeline and the budget can get in conflict with one another. Actually, we finished under budget and on time. And that was due to -- I wish I had that cartoon that Mark -- not Mark, but his son --

DOLDE: Ken.

SWAIN: [01:30:57] Ken made a cartoon of all of the different people in the yard. And he had -- Drew was a calendar with legs and arms and a head [laughs], because he was -- you know, he kept really close track. "We've got to get this going or that going. You can do this, you can hire that, but you can't hire this." And so, even though I was a contractor to *Sultana*, and he had me in a top hat with a magic wand in my hand. [laughter]

DOLDE: Were you -- I mean, so, were you pretty much there --
you were the lead -- the supervisor and the --

SWAIN: [01:31:50] Yeah. It was my company that built it.

DOLDE: Okay. So, it was the contract. Was it an enjoyable
process?

SWAIN: [01:31:57] Oh, God, yes. And every man -- if you went
to a man, would say that it was the best two years of their
life. So, that says a lot.

DOLDE: Sure does. It sure does.

SWAIN: [01:32:12] So, yeah. It was just a great bunch of
guys, we had a good time, we built a great ship, and you
can't -- it doesn't get any better than that. And on time
and under budget. So --

DOLDE: And that's why, when they talked about the John Smith
-- the shallop -- that's why they looked you up. Is that -
- how soon after completion -- not too much after.

SWAIN: [01:32:38] Of that? A couple of years, I think.
Maybe. Yeah. Something like that. It makes me sad to see
it sitting there just going to Hell in a handbasket. But -
-

DOLDE: Well, you know -- let me just -- out of the water, I
know it's not behaving the way it's supposed to. But I can
tell you -- and we've just added some new interpretation to
it. It gives people -- and I've treated it with boiled

linseed oil, and I need to do it again, just to slow things down. It gives visitors so much joy. They love looking at it, they -- it really helps them understand, as they go to see *Dove* -- you know, kind of the two parts of the ocean-going vessel, versus the inland exploration. So, as a boat that floats, I appreciate everything you're saying. As an exhibit and an educational piece, it's still doing wonderful things. So, please know that.

SWAIN: [01:33:30] Okay.

DOLDE: But, so, tell me --

SWAIN: [01:33:33] Sodium borate. Somebody I wish -- that's what -- we have not replaced any wood in 20 years on *Sultana*. And it's my mantra. And sodium borate -- now, she has been -- we use -- we had a blacksmith make the nails for that, and the pintles, and the gudgeon, and all that stuff. And that's all kind of going to Hell in a hand basket, because it just rust, that's what it does. But the rest of it -- it's not going to be there for very long if you don't treat with something like sodium -- but I knew you put linseed oil on, but that ain't going to stop it from rotting.

DOLDE: Well, maybe we can talk more about some technique. Because I, personally, was the one who did that. So, maybe we'll talk more about that.

SWAIN: [01:34:21] It helps. [inaudible] it helps.

DOLDE: Well, nothing had been done for quite a while, and it was something I could do pretty quickly.

SWAIN: [01:34:27] Yeah, I'm glad they took it out of the water, because it just wasn't -- it wasn't going to -- I built that boat to do what it did, and that's as much as -- and close to what I thought it -- how it would have been built back then.

DOLDE: Sure. Let's talk about that as we reach the 400th anniversary of John Smith's travels. How were you approached about building the shallop?

SWAIN: [01:34:56] I think that Drew got the idea to -- they wanted to recreate the voyage, and so --

DOLDE: So, *Sultana* became *Sultana* Projects or *Sultana* Education Foundation?

SWAIN: [01:35:13] Education Foundation.

DOLDE: And then, they -- was this their -- just the second project?

SWAIN: [01:35:18] It was like a second project, yeah. There are other -- and now, they've taken on -- anyway, they've got other things -- canoes, and kayaks, and they've expanded that and they've got the Laurence Project, which is a wetlands project that they're working on for their education thing going on. But *Sultana*, of course, got shut

down because of COVID, because it's pretty hard to socially distance on a sailboat like that. But that project, the shallop project, came along shortly thereafter, because it was -- it was in 2007, which was I think -- wasn't that the anniversary of that -- I think it was like that.

DOLDE: Or '08.

SWAIN: [01:36:11] Or, '08, yeah.

DOLDE: '07, '08, you may be right. Easy enough to check.

SWAIN: [01:36:17] And so, they wanted to have -- they wanted to recreate that, and he was working with another group that were trying to do the buoys that were around, that have -- you could sail up to a buoy and when you're in the proximity of it you can get a recording about where John Smith was. The John Smith trail. That was all part of what was going on at that time. And so, yeah, I started looking around for as much information on shallops as we could. And came up with that.

DOLDE: Now, was information on how to build a shallop easily found? You were telling me a little bit before we recorded.

SWAIN: [01:37:10] No. [laughter]

DOLDE: How did you locate that information

SWAIN: [01:37:15] Well, I went through a whole lot of research that people had done about boat building at the

time. But I can tell you that -- and Baker came -- ran up against the same thing. They were like the pickup trucks of the time. They used those boats -- like I said, when they came over here, they would bring them over and they use them to do exploration. And so -- and then they would just leave them. They wouldn't even bother to take them back. As a matter of fact, when they first came over here, the Indians had European boats, because fishermen had been fishing off the shores for years. And the boats had gotten away from them and come ashore, and they found the Indians with those boats. So, it was something that -- it was a common thing, these boats. And so, you know, "[inaudible]. And we don't need make a drawing of it. We can -- they're everywhere, they're always here." So, what I -- the -- there was a method of laying those out, though -- I found the whole molding method where you can take two or three arcs and you can build the whole boat in the field from those three arcs. If you have those -- to go out and find the trees to cut to the shape, and so, that's what we did. But set that up -- I have -- I remember Nick Biles and I trying to get that through our heads. Nick got it faster than I did, and said that we could lay this boat out with that method, without lofting it. So, you could just go out

and set up a straight keel on the ground and put your frames up, built from these [inaudible] and build a boat.

DOLDE: Very different from how you've always been building boats.

SWAIN: [01:39:52] Right.

DOLDE: Especially on the Bay.

SWAIN: [01:39:56] And if you do it right, it's easy to plank. That's the other thing we found out.

DOLDE: Now, because they were built -- as you said, at least some of them, to be taken apart in half, and then reassembled, and then maybe left on shore. The construction was perhaps not as substantial as it would be for something else.

SWAIN: [01:40:20] Well, and they talked about that where other people had taken boats and basically assembled them lightly down in the -- and taken them apart. And left as much together as they could. And there was talk about how long it took them to reassemble the boat once they got it out of the bilge when they were transported that way. In other words, they would have -- the length of the boat would be in there, and it would be knocked down to the point where it would just be some frames and that sort of thing. And they talked about how long it would take. When they brought these over, they talked about -- Gosnold went

ashore in half of the boat, and they got ashore, and they went into the land while the other people got the other half out of the [inaudible] and brought it over. And by the time they had come back, within the same day, they had put this boat together. And so, that told us -- gave us a whole lot of information about how they would have done that. And it was pretty simple. I mean, you just put two transoms in the middle of the boat, and you can float them.

DOLDE: They're like two little separate bathtubs that you [laughs] --

SWAIN: [01:41:46] Two little separate bathtubs, and you put them together, and you -- anyway -- and we did that. We took it down to Norfolk and put the two pieces together. And then put it in the water, let it sink -- fill up with water, and swell, and then they did their -- she sailed really well. They were pleasantly surprised about that. They even have a picture of them coming out of -- I think it's Fishing Bay. And they ran into headwinds and they have the -- their course is marked on a map, or on a GPS thing. And they're tacking. And they're fairly short tacks, and they're making pretty good progress with it. So, the [team rig?] worked really well. When they first put it on, they put it on upside-down and didn't know. It took them a while to figure that out, because it's just a

square -- almost a square sail with one little thing that sticks out.

DOLDE: I never asked, did -- are you -- you lived on a boat. Did you do -- have you done much sailing? Is that something -- or is that not your --?

SWAIN: [01:43:04] I've done a fair amount. I skippered *Jay Dee* for, I don't know, three or four years, I guess. Danny was away at school, and then I did it for maybe three years, and then -- what's his name? Corbin Penwell. He and I kind of alternated on it. And Corbin's a much better captain and skipper than I am. But I won a few.

DOLDE: [laughter] Good for you. Well, it all does come back to log canoes. And you got to know that community just in Oxford, from the time you were --

SWAIN: [01:43:48] Don Lowry introduced it to me.

DOLDE: Who did?

SWAIN: [01:43:51] Don Lowry.

DOLDE: Oh, Lowry, okay.

SWAIN: [01:43:53] Don was in with -- he did several cars for Judge North. Did the bodies, and he had gotten involved in doing some -- he put the glass on *Jay Dee* the first time. And I got involved by making masts -- I've made all the masts for the North fleet. And so -- and I worked my way

up from board man, to four-sheet tender, to back into those
-- back into the office back there [laughter] [inaudible].

DOLDE: Lowry, was he related to Maynard Lowery?

SWAIN: [01:44:43] No.

DOLDE: Okay. Curious.

SWAIN: [01:44:44] Different spelling. Different spelling and
a whole different guy, yeah. He was more into the glass
boats. High-end, just a really accomplished carpenter, not
even [inaudible]. He just great. I mean, the work he did
on those cars. You know Johnny Todd? Johnny Todd's
another one that -- that's right up there. He's done work
for Judge North on some of his cars. Just really first-
class craftsman.

DOLDE: I'm sorry, I didn't mean to get away from the shallop.
Was there more to say about that? I mean, that's another
legacy of yours that --

SWAIN: [01:45:36] Yeah. Got to row it the last half mile,
maybe mile -- probably not even a mile -- with them. And I
was really amazed at -- you could do -- you could row that
boat all day long and not get tired, the way that they did
it. And if -- the hardest thing was getting in-sync with -
- I've never done shell racing, but getting in-sync with
the other oars. And once you get that down, they would do
-- they would lift it up and they would give it a [hits

table] like that, and then raise it. And it would be like that. And you could do that all day long and not tire out. And once you get the boat moving, it's got enough mass that it just keeps going. And of course, they always tried to sail as much as they could, but [laughs] -- they all had good things to say about it. And it wasn't -- and that whole group of people, when they got done with it, they were all still friends. And of course, the captain and one of the -- I can't remember -- Ian and one of the other crew -- I don't think they're married now, or not, but they were -- they came to one of the galas a couple years ago, and they're still a couple.

DOLDE: That's a good sign. Well, not skipping ahead too much -- so, now you're consulting on our *Dove* project. You -- I've just lost my train of thought. Oh, you're working on -- so, we actually were on the board of the Richardson Museum in the late-90s, at the same time. I had just had a kid, so I didn't stay on the board very long, because I was driving an hour and a half to go to meetings. But I know you've been involved with the Richardson Museum off and on for many years. And currently, you're working -- have you done anything previous to the current restoration project?

SWAIN: [01:48:07] The *Martha Lewis*? Anything previous to that? It seems to me like there should be something down there, because --

DOLDE: I mean, they've had a number of boats in the boat works. But I'm not sure --

SWAIN: [01:48:22] In the boat works, right. I could lose whole periods of time. I can't think of anything that --

DOLDE: How long has *Martha Lewis* been going on?

SWAIN: [01:48:39] This will be the second year, I think. They've been -- they ran -- they needed to go back and find some more money. So, it's been sitting for the winter -- this winter -- and we stopped on it, I think, like in December, maybe. It was pretty cold when we were up there, the last time that we were working on it. We had put the cabin on -- new [carlins] cabin, and some of the deck -- put a centerboard well in it. And then, work stopped for me. And then, they've had -- volunteers have been working on it on and off since then. And now, we're going to -- we're planking the starboard side from the -- almost from the chine all the way up to the sheer strig. And then, I think they want to get it back into the water, and do whatever work -- do more work to it in the water, so she doesn't dry out. She's drying out pretty good.

DOLDE: And your role in this project is kind of both advisory and hands-on? Or --?

SWAIN: [01:49:55] More hands-on than advisory.

DOLDE: I mean, are they working on their own? Or they're only working when you're available?

SWAIN: [01:50:02] They're doing things like caulking.

DOLDE: I see.

SWAIN: [01:50:05] Yeah. And one of their volunteers is pretty good. He finished laying the deck. Once you're -- it's like --

DOLDE: Laying a floor, sure.

SWAIN: [01:50:21] And they haven't done anything to it since then. So, I got the feeling they were waiting for me to come back. And they -- the side planking is moving along now. We've got one full plank in, and we'll probably finish up with that probably sometime in August, maybe. June, July -- yeah, probably sometime in August.

DOLDE: And are you steaming for those planks?

SWAIN: [01:50:52] Don't have to steam.

DOLDE: Don't need to.

SWAIN: [01:50:54] We're doing it with -- we're doing two layers -- two one-inch layers glued together as they go around, and staggering the bust. So, it should be a pretty

strong job. But planks, it'll look like what it will be.

It's two-inch planking, so what do you want?

DOLDE: Right. And what is your role and what are you doing for *Dove* for Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum?

SWAIN: [01:51:25] As Steve likes to say, I'm another pair of eyes. I see my role as, I go down and I see what's going on, and I talk to Joe, and I give him advice -- as much advice as I can give him on some of the stuff. He's really good and very innovative. And that's what it takes. It's -- every project is different, and yet, it's the same. It's problem-solving. And so, if I see something I talk to Joe about it, usually.

DOLDE: How often do you go down?

SWAIN: [01:52:20] Once a week.

DOLDE: Okay.

SWAIN: [01:52:22] Was there today.

DOLDE: Were you?

SWAIN: [01:52:23] Yeah. I went in to talk to Steve. You must have been in a meeting or something.

DOLDE: Me?

SWAIN: [01:52:29] Or somebody was.

DOLDE: I was. I was interviewing one of the current shipwrights, actually.

SWAIN: [01:52:38] Oh, okay. Well, I went to talk to Steve.

There wasn't anybody in the office. And the door was closed to the main room, so I figured it must be a meeting going on somewhere along the lines.

DOLDE: Yeah. I saw him walk in later on. So, you go in once a week, you poke around --?

SWAIN: [01:52:55] Generally, go in on a Monday. They have a phone call on Tuesday. And if I feel like I've got anything to contribute to it, I'll get in on the phone call.

DOLDE: Well, would you say one of the biggest challenges with this -- unlike Jim Richardson's *Dove* -- is there's -- they're having to follow very closely to spec, Coast Guard certification, a whole other set of challenges. More modern amenities and engines and things to make it more of an educational vessel. What do you think makes it -- what part of that makes it more of a challenge than when Jim Richardson built the *Dove* in the '70s?

SWAIN: [01:53:43] The certification and the architect. We had a similar problem with -- and this is nothing -- I really like Fran -- what's his name?

DOLDE: Iver.

SWAIN: [01:54:03] Iver Franzen. I've done work with him before. But he's a yacht designer, and this is -- and even

though he worked for Gilmer, I -- this is a whole different -- it's hard for them to wrap their head around something that's built this way. And the only one that I can think of that's -- Delburn Smith was cantankerous and sometimes opinionated and hard to get along with, but he was an artist, and he could draw a set of plans that you could understand and work with. And he was -- I would work with a set of his plans anytime. And Iver has had a challenge, and I think he's working his way through it. As long as you two can have -- keep your communications together, then it all works out. But if somebody starts digging their heels in, then you're going to -- then you run into problems. And I haven't -- I've only seen a little bit of that every once in a while, and that's -- that all has to do with -- there's all kinds of -- there's other voices in the background that are going on. So, that makes it -- it's always -- I don't care what you do, I mean, when they built the *Titanic*, they had the same problems. So, it just -- it's a different -- this is a different animal than almost any other boat that you're going to put together, because this is from another century, and it's hard to visualize it until you see it there, to me. I would have the luxury -- we hired -- what's his name? Benford, who -- all I really wanted from Benford was, "Could you take these

lines that we have, that have been drawn, could you put those into your computer and give me a more recent set of lines with some measurements and all that?" And that's all I want. And it's -- the first thing that you have to ask is, "Will it do what we want it to do? Will it pass Coast Guard certification?" And so, he said, "Yeah, it will." Well, he didn't really know, at the time, because -- anyway, but, Benford had built yachts. And all I wanted was a drawing.

DOLDE: Benford worked with you on --

SWAIN: [01:57:09] On *Sultana*.

DOLDE: On *Sultana*.

SWAIN: [01:57:11] And all I wanted was a drawing. And what we got was a drawing of a yacht. And didn't want a yacht. So, basically, we just set those aside and proceeded to build the boat the way that we knew one of those boats would be built, using the scalings they were talking about at the time. And so, we were lucky. We didn't have another owner the way that they have an owner looking over their shoulder and saying, "I don't know about that." And all that sort of thing. So, Joe's had to -- it's been a job for Joe. And he's done well. He's done really well to make that -- it's coming together. And yeah.

DOLDE: And I think that's another primary difference, whereas Jim Richardson and William Baker conferred a lot. Then William Baker kind of went on and Jim Richardson took his knowledge and his experience and applied things in a more loose -- and I don't mean that in a negative sense -- but in a more interpretive manner. And like you said, we're being held very much to account by the drawings, by historic St. Mary's City, but all kinds of restrictions. It makes it more unique. You were, though, for *Sultana*, as well, though, weren't you? Wasn't it a similar situation? Not the outside, like St. Mary's City, but you still had -- you're Coast Guard certified, and you still had those restrictions.

SWAIN: [01:58:55] We had -- the Coast Guard came down and did inspections -- regular inspections. But we didn't have -- we didn't have an architect looking over us. At the time, the Coast Guard did not -- they didn't -- they weren't as meticulous as the lines drawings -- or, not the lines, but the drawings, and that sort of thing -- which, to me, when I see what's going on with the *Dove*, we never had that problem. We were able to pretty much build the boat the way we thought it should be. And I don't remember that kind of documentation being required at the time.

DOLDE: Interesting. Even 20 or so years ago.

SWAIN: [01:59:55] 20 years ago. Boy, that would have been -- yeah, it's almost 25 years, or so.

DOLDE: Sure. That's a really interesting perspective.

SWAIN: [02:00:02] And I wonder if Jim did -- Jim Richardson. He had Baker -- I'll bet you that the requirements were not nearly what you guys have to go through for that. That would be interesting.

DOLDE: Yeah, that's what I gather, as well. That not too many -- he was left to apply the drawings and the design as he saw fit.

SWAIN: [02:00:38] I don't know of any boats that have been built that have had -- usually it's an accident has to happen somewhere, and suddenly everybody says, "Whoa," and then you -- they come down and say, "Okay, well, we have to be more vigilant about how these things are built." Or whatever.

DOLDE: Well, like with the first *Pride* and things like that.

SWAIN: [02:01:14] Yeah, yeah. The second *Pride* was definitely, definitely a different ship than the first *Pride*.

DOLDE: So, what's next for you?

SWAIN: [02:01:28] Well, I'm still working. Dominic and I are working on the boat down there. I've got one in my shop that's been with us -- I've been here 25 or 30 years. The

owners died and their -- and it sat for a while, and then the kids decided that they were going to finish the job.

DOLDE: What is the boat?

SWAIN: [02:02:00] It's a Winslow Foursome. It's a 28-foot sailboat that was a real basket case when it came in. We replaced almost everything except the planking. And then glassed it. At the time, when I did that, I did that because the owner wasn't real good at taking care of that sort of thing. So, I thought, "Well, this will fix that." And then, he passed away, and eventually his wife did. And she -- and in the very last years of her life, finally told the kids where the boat was. And so, they decided to finish the job. And we just had a meeting with them last week. And we think we're going to maybe -- in September we'll maybe put a push on to get the job done. We'll see. So, that's the current project between *Martha Lewis* and that. And then, I don't know. I'm kind of thinking about a little -- maybe a 27-foot tugboat type, building one of those.

DOLDE: Just build it and see who --?

SWAIN: [02:03:22] No, for me.

DOLDE: For you?

SWAIN: [02:03:24] Yeah. I've got a -- you saw the picture of the sailboat in there. I've got a 36-foot sharpie schooner

that I built for myself. And it's getting so that --
trying to go out and find wind that's going in the right
direction now, just seems to be a hassle.

DOLDE: Where do you keep it?

SWAIN: [02:03:53] I keep it on Davis Creek. And Dominic and
I, the first of May, did around Delmarva in it. Been on my
bucket list for a quite a while. So, it took us ten days.

DOLDE: Dominic is --?

SWAIN: [02:04:17] He's the guy that -- he was a volunteer
when --

DOLDE: For *Sultana*?

SWAIN: [02:04:24] For *Sultana*.

DOLDE: Oh, yeah?

SWAIN: [02:04:26] And he worked for DuPont for a long time.
There's a great picture in here of Dominic. That's the
lady right there.

DOLDE: Let me see. Oh, yes. Joyce Smith.

SWAIN: [02:04:45] Joyce Huber-Smith. I don't know if you've
ever seen this before.

DOLDE: I don't know. I hope -- I think we have it in our
library. We have over 7,000 --

SWAIN: [02:04:59] You don't have it in the bookstore.

DOLDE: No.

SWAIN: [02:05:01] And you know what else you don't --

DOLDE: Is it still available?

SWAIN: [02:05:05] Yes, it's -- I believe so. You know what else is -- you don't have there? Is anything about -- that's Dominic. [laughs] Can't see his face very well. Can't see his face.

DOLDE: But you still remained close.

SWAIN: [02:05:29] Yeah.

DOLDE: After all these years. That's great.

SWAIN: [02:05:34] Is literature about the *Dove*. I went in there and asked for literature about the *Dove*, and --

DOLDE: Well, we do hand something out in the Welcome Center.

SWAIN: [02:05:50] Let me show you what --

DOLDE: It's just a page. I'm going to pause.

SWAIN: [02:05:52] Yeah, exactly. It's just a page.

DOLDE: Just a page, yeah.

SWAIN: [02:05:56] Yeah.

DOLDE: We should do more, is what you're saying.

SWAIN: [02:06:00] That's what I'm trying to say. [laughter]

DOLDE: I hear you. I hear what you're saying.

SWAIN: [02:06:05] Because there it is. It's right there being built in the yard.

DOLDE: Well, so part of --

SWAIN: [02:06:10] That St. Mary's, they're the ones that should be promoting that.

DOLDE: Sure, sure. Well, this -- part of this research and these interviews I'm doing will be an exhibition that will open as the boat -- as the *Dove* is being finished called -- we're calling it *Dove Tails*. So, it's about -- it'll be about the original 17th Century *Dove*. It'll actually be talking about the 1930s, where they just cut the two boats off and made fabrications of *Arc* and *Dove* for the Tercentenary. The '70s *Dove*. And then, looking forward a bit to our current *Dove*. Focusing mostly on the '70s *Dove*, since we're saying goodbye to that. But you're right, and we've done so much of this project during COVID and out of the -- with restrictions.

SWAIN: [02:06:57] She's not one that you have a lot of -- I don't think there's a lot of history -- or a lot of -- trying to find a design or the construction or all that sort of thing of that era. I think that Baker had a hard time finding stuff for that. And so, that part of it is difficult. But -- and I don't know what -- that's why I was looking for it. I would like to know what the story is that -- how much they know about her. And she brought people -- she brought settlers over and that sort of thing.

DOLDE: Yeah, there's some of that in our other exhibition building, over on the opposite side of campus.

SWAIN: [02:07:44] Oh, is there?

DOLDE: So, there's a big dome, we call it *Dove 360*. And there's a series of films. Some of them show the evolution of the boat build, but some of them also are from St. Mary's City that show the current vessel and what we know about it. We've had a couple of symposiums where the architect has come in, people from St. Mary's City -- I'm drawing on that for some of my research, as well. But, you know, for the -- condensing that down for the average visitor -- you would want to know more detail -- is something I think we could always do a better job of.

SWAIN: [02:08:19] Well, I'm just saying, I went looking for it. I'm not sure that I knew where to look, and I didn't ask enough questions about it.

DOLDE: Sure, sure. Did you -- anything you want to add as we wrap up here? I was going to turn that off and I can --

SWAIN: [02:08:36] No, that's it. We're up to present time.

DOLDE: I think so. Okay.

END OF AUDIO FILE