

Scofield, Richard - 21076 0033-34

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JENIFER DOLDE: ...never hurts to, okay. Jenifer Dolde. It's Friday, July 16, 2021. I'm here at Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum with Richard Scofield. Richard, your full name and your date of birth.

RICHARD SCOFIELD: [00:00:16] Richard **Gardiner** Scofield. May 10, 1954.

JD: Okay, good. I'm going to, I really want to do the full, you know, the full background. So we're going to start, we're going to begin with the beginning. And talk to me about where you grew up and your childhood.

RS: [00:00:33] I was born in Stamford, Connecticut. My grandparents had bought a farm outside of St. Michaels here, on Pea Neck Road, in 1940. So when I was growing up, I was going to school in Connecticut but spending most of my summers down here. And all our vacations were down here. I spent a lot of time by myself with my grandparents, being the youngest. My brother and sister were in school. St. Michaels always felt like home. But Stamford, Connecticut's a big city. My grandparents both died in '61. And after that, we came down. Every vacation was taking care of the house. It was down here, so we were

back and forth all the time. But I went to school in Connecticut. And my grandfather's brother, Al, had started a boatyard in Connecticut in the late twenties, I think. Scofield's Boatyard. And it became very well-known. It was probably the finest boatyard on the East Coast for wooden sailboats. Had a lot of tremendous boats there, from 12 meters and 100-foot schooners and all. Two railways. It was a big **yard**.

JD: Where was it in Connecticut?

RS: [00:01:55] In Stamford.

JD: In Stamford. But your grandfather was not involved? He was not a boat-builder, as well?

RS: [00:02:00] No. No, my family has always been involved with boats. But Al was the one that did it for a living. And Al's the one that said to me, years later... I said, Al, why'd you decide to start a boatyard? He goes, I didn't choose boats. They chose me. He said, someday you'll understand that. Your brother won't, but you will. He told me that when I was 20 years old. He knew.

JD: What do you think, I mean, why? What do you think he saw?

RS: [00:02:25] I don't know. I don't know. Well, I was, had another uncle that had a boat down there that my cousin and I would sail. And we were down there. I was 12 years old. And it was a Saturday. That must have been during the

week, because the whole crew was there. And so it was during the summer, I guess. And I was 12. And they lost a **halyard up a 60-foot** mast. And they're all looking at each other going, well, somebody's got to go up in the boatswain's chair and get it. Well, you're too fat. You know, you had donuts all morning. I'm not lifting you. I'm too old to be lifting you, you know. And Al looked over at me. He says, Rich. You wanna go in the boatswain's chair? I like heights. I said, sure. So they strapped me in the boatswain's chair. They take me up 60 feet. That was the coolest thing in the world. I loved it. I absolutely loved it. They had to bring me back down. Al pulls a wallet out, gives me five bucks, and says, let's not tell mom. Let's just let this be our secret. Cool. Better yet. So I would go down to the yard, you know, during the summer if Al needed anything. And when school started, on the weekends. And so I started getting paid to rig boats when I was 12 years old, you know. My mother found out about this many years later. She was, just shook her head because Uncle Alfred had done it again, you know.

JD: How long did he live? You said your grandparents died in '61.

RS: [00:03:44] Al died 1977.

JD: He was a big influence, it sounds like, in your...

RS: [00:03:51] Oh, yeah. Absolutely. He was an extremely good boat builder. We still have a couple of the skiffs that he built in the yard. He built a 44-foot lobster hall that he sailed, that he took up the East Coast, Hudson River, Erie Canal, Great Lakes, Mississippi River, back to St. Michaels again. He also bought a place to retire down here, on **Pea Neck Road**. So we would see him down here, in Connecticut, back and forth.

JD: What's the connection to St. Michaels with your family?

RS: [00:04:22] There was another cousin of those guys, my grandfather and Al, who had gotten sick in the twenties or thirties. And it was thought that going to a warmer climate would help. But my father thought that he had MS, and all they thought was a warmer climate was better. So they moved down to Oxford. And their last name was Judd, and Judds are all over Oxford. So my grandparents came down to visit them in 1940. And they suggested they talk to, if they like the area, to talk to a realtor and talk to the ferryboat captain, Captain Benson. He knew everybody. He was like a central authority on everything. So Captain Benson and my grandfather got along very well. And there was one realtor in Talbot County, one. And she set them up with two farms that were for sale on **Pea Neck Road**. They

put them together. It was a total of 240 acres, about two miles of waterfront. The house was built in 1720. There were two sets of barns. It was a magnificent piece of property we still have,[sold them for] \$16,000. So my grandparents, they would live here. And there was no electricity. There was no running water. We didn't get electricity on Pea Neck until '52 or '54, something like that. So they would live part of the time down here and then go back up to Connecticut, because Gar (my grandfather) was still working. Back and forth until my father started working with him in New York, in that warehouse. And then gradually retired and spent all his time down here.

JD: That was what you called him, was Gar?

RS: [00:06:11] My grandfather, my grandfather smoked cigars. And my brother, being the first grandchild, couldn't say "cigar," but he could say "gar. " And that's, my grandfather's name was Gar.

JD: What was their business?

RS: [00:06:23] They had Bruce and Cook, which was a sheet metal warehouse in Lower Manhattan, down near Wall Street. At a time when that was a working part of New York. And my great-grandfather had been involved in it, had owned it. And then Gar went with him, and he owned it. And then my

father went into it. Then my father had to make a decision to transfer the business to a small warehouse in Connecticut near us, because Lower Manhattan was becoming not a warehouse district anymore. So then it just, that type of business, that small type of warehouse just right up. And that closed down. So Gar, my grandparents started spending more and more time down here. And when I was a kid, when I was little, my older sister and brother were in school. My grandmother would take the train up to Connecticut and pick me up and take me on the train. My grandfather would meet us in Wilmington and drive us, drive back to the farm. And I would spend two or three weeks or a month with my grandparents. I wasn't in school yet. And then my grandmother was diagnosed with cancer. And she spent about nine months dying of cancer in Memorial Hospital in Easton. Had one last Christmas with us. And my, she died in March of '61. My grandfather died of a broken heart basically, two months later. But so most of my memories of those, of my grandparents were at the farm with them.

JD: Right. And you were pretty young, but it sounds like it's still strong memories.

RS: [00:08:04] Oh, yeah. Very vivid memories of them.

JD: Going back to your uncle and hanging out or working, rather, in his boatyard, tell me how, did you do things hopefully other than rigging? Or what did you...

RS: [00:08:19] Actually, mostly rigging. Then my brother started working there and was the head rigger. And I worked there when I was, full-time, I guess, the summer when I was 18, 17, something like 17, yeah. I'd be working now and again, but full-time at that summer. And then Johnny left the yard to work on a boat, and I became the head rigger at, I guess that summer I was 19. I was the head rigger at one of the most prestigious boatyards on the East Coast. It was kind of ridiculous. And there was a man that kept his boat there. There was a 33-foot cutter, sailboat, beautiful. Nice little boat. And he was a very wealthy lawyer in New York City, wonderful guy. And he would hire a crew to take care of his boat and then to go on a three-week cruise with him every summer. So the next summer, I worked for Skip on his boat. It was kept at Scofield's Boatyard, but I was more like working for the yard. I would help them during the week. I would fix the boat up and clean the boat and all, varnish, whatever Skip wanted. And then I'd work at the yard if they needed anything. Al, by this point, had sold the yard. But it was being managed by George **Stadel**, who was an old-time

friend of the family's. Was probably the most prestigious American designer of wooden sailboats in the latter half of the twentieth century. He was an incredibly talented draftsman. I can still see a boat sailing into this harbor, and I can tell immediately if it's a George **Stadel** design, if it has a look to it that are just spectacular. So George is running the yard. And then, and I work for Skip Palmer for two summers on his boat. I was in college.

JD: Okay. So you were just, this was summer.

RS: [00:10:10] Yeah. And then when I graduated college, two days later, a guy that had worked at the boatyard with us, was a mechanic and a sailor, had bought an old, ramshackle 12-meter. The oldest-sailing 12-meter in the world. And was in City Island, New York. So I graduated on a Monday. And Wednesday morning, I was in City Island, New York. And my brother was helping Bobby. They had worked on other boats together. And my brother just got burned out. It was a very hot summer, and he just said, I'm just done. Left. So I was Bob's first mate. And I sailed on *Gleam* for two or three summers, I guess.

JD: What was the name of the boat?

RS: [00:10:49] *Gleam*. She's 12-meter, US 11. Built 1937. She is one of the most famous boats on the East Coast. She's absolutely magnificent. And Bob was an unbelievably

talented carpenter, mechanic. He died of pancreatic cancer about 10 years ago. It was a huge loss to me. So we'd hire young girls, our second mate. And the three of us chartered a 12-meter that had never, had never been done before. They said, you can't charter a boat that doesn't have comfortable seats on the deck. Well, we did. And it was a huge success. And I was on that boat for two or three summers, I guess. And then I was a ski bum after college, during the winters. So I was on the boat in the summer. And I would come home in the fall and leave my summer clothes. You know, come to the farm at St. Michaels. My parents had moved down here by then, full-time. Get my winter clothes and go out West. Well, Vermont and Wyoming, Jackson Hole and Colorado and all. And live out there for six months. Then come back, get my summer clothes, and go up to the 12-meter. And after a while, I hadn't spent more than three or four days in St. Michaels in a number of years. Ridiculous. So I quit doing it. I quit the boat, and I was down here, worked a couple of summers. And stopped ski-bumming. I worked here [CBMM] the summer of 1980. Mark Brower running the boatshop. My brother was working here. *Edna Lockwood* would have been ceremonially relaunched in October of 1979. They just finished. My brother was hired to work on that

project by Mark, had been here a couple of years. They needed summer help at the boatshop. So I worked through the summer of 1980. And then went skiing again, and that was the last time I went skiing. And then I came back, and the museum offered me a little bit. But Dr. John Hawkinson's son worked, Paul Hawkinson, who had worked on the *Edna* project at the museum, was working at Higgins at that time. When he said, come work with us. So I worked up at Higgins. I worked there for four years. And we did a lot of restoration and rigging and painting. And Fred **Kemp** was there. He and I built a couple of boats, restored a couple of canoes. And 1985, they needed someone in the boatshop. And Johnny, my brother was still working. Tom Howell was running the shop then. My brother was still here. And said, why don't you come over, interview Tommy? So I talked to Tom. And he offered me eight dollars an hour. Wow. I was getting six dollars an hour at Higgins. So I went to Tad, and I said, look. The museum's offering me eight dollars an hour. But I'll stick here if you match that. Tad said, I can't afford that. I said, well Tad, you charge \$18 an hour for my labor. Charge \$21. I said, I'm good. I'm worth it. I said, you give me \$2, you get an extra dollar. He said, nobody's ever going to pay \$21

an hour for labor. I said, see ya. So I left. And I came here April 1, April Fool's Day -- very apropos -- in 1985.

JD: Full-time, yeah.

RS: [00:14:11] Full-time. And retired in February three years ago.

JD: Backing up, so you went to Bates, right?

RS: [00:14:18] Yes.

JD: And what, did you have different ambitions. What was, did you have a plan?

RS: [00:14:27] No.

JD: What did you study?

RS: [00:14:30] My parents had both gone to a liberal arts college. My mother went to Skidmore. My father's a Dartmouth graduate, very proud Dartmouth graduate. At the time, when Dartmouth was a much smaller school. And my brother, my sister was not a great student. She went to a junior college for a year, dropped out, got married. And she's absolutely the smartest one of us. She's still married. It's wonderful. But my brother and I both went to college. And the greatest gift my father ever gave me was a liberal arts education, without question. So I **was researching** in college. And I spent a couple of summers sailing the coast of Maine with my uncle, **John Elliott**, on his *Concordia*. Love the coast of Maine, spectacular.

Thought, that's a pretty cool place, you know. I did look at St. Mary's, but I thought, I want to go to Maine. I'm going to try that. So I applied to Bates and Bowdoin. My father said, you've got to apply to Dartmouth. I got accepted to all of them. I chose Bates. My father was kind of disappointed, but he understood why. It was the size. There were 1200 students at Dartmouth when he went there. It was, Bates was the first college founded co-educational in the United States in 1865. It's a great school. I would not get into it now. It's becoming a very... I had high SATs, and I had nothing else. And I kind of gravitated toward psychology and learning theory. Not psychoanalysis, but the acquisition of language. And certain people, they were teaching that, the development of perception in the brain. So I majored in psychology with a minor in art history. I was the first person to have enough art history courses to declare it as a minor. But absolutely no goal in mind. In the summers, I was working either at the boatyard or on Skip Palmer's boat. I graduated and went right to *Gleam* immediately. And after that, worked those summers and ended up at the boatyards down here. We kept *Gleam* at a boatyard in City Island. We were there for eight weeks all three years I worked on it, I guess, in the spring rebuilding it. So I kind of worked

at that boatyard in City Island, New York. And then came down here. I worked at Higgins. I worked at Scofield's. So I've worked at a bunch of different boatyards, very good boatyards. And I came to the museum.

JD: Well so all of your work is interesting. And I think you could go into how you acquired specific skills and people who taught you. But when you got to Higgins, talk to, tell me about... It wasn't really an introduction. You were already familiar with Chesapeake boat types. But there you were, truly hands-on for the first time. Can you characterize the differences between starting to work on Chesapeake boats, versus...

RS: [00:17:45] Well, when I came down from working at Scofield's Boatyard and City Island, I was, I worked on wooden boats. I didn't know anything about fiberglass and didn't care to. It's pretty close-minded, actually, but I knew... Al had a group of older wooden sailboats at his yard that were just tremendous. So I worked on a lot of older boats that way. And *Gleam* was 1937. And Bobby and I completely rebuilt that. So I'd done a lot of that work. So when I came to Higgins, I had to do my share of polishing glass hulls and all that sort of thing. I was also, they found out at Scofield's Boatyard years before, that I'm a really good painter. I am the fastest painter.

It's just, I can make a lot of money for a boatyard. I don't like it. Yeah, there's not much to it. But I can **solid** paint a boat. So they made a lot of money off me that way. But I gradually, at Higgins, Tad would turn over the wooden sailboats or the wooden powerboats to my care. Because I knew more about the maintenance of those than anybody. So I just kept doing that there. And at the end of four years at Higgins, it was doing more and more...

Jane McComas and I were working together a lot [Paul Hawkinson]. And we had gotten into spray painting, two part urethanes and all on masks, forced-air, the whole thing. And 40-foot boats, that kind of thing, spraying hulls. And we were good. We were very good at it. And I hated it. And **Jano** hated it. And **Jano** left the yard before I did. We were making a lot of money for Tad. There were people that brought their boat to Higgins because it was a wooden boat and I was there. And **Jano** and I together painting were there. Warty was a really good carpenter. We did a lot of really good work together. But it was getting to where using these two-part paints is not good for you. It's not healthy for you. And I didn't like living in a mask. So when I was offered, Tommy offered me the job in the boatyard, I was going to be rigger, obviously, and painter and shipwright. One of the

attractions was I got to choose my own materials. So I left the commercial boatyard then. And we did mostly traditional stuff out here. And I wouldn't use materials that were bad for the applicators, for those that were doing it. And that just led more and more into the tradition of what was traditional. And when I worked here in 1980, I met Joe Liener, who was a volunteer. Had basically shown the boys how to rebuild *Edna Lockwood*. Joe was the finest boat builder I've ever known or ever will know, without question. He's amazing. So even when I was at Higgins, Joe would come over and say, you know, we're going to start this thing called the Small Craft Festival. We're going to have it this coming weekend. You ought to stop by. So I've been to every Small Craft Festival they've ever had. And Joe'd come by, because he knew Warty worked at the museum, too, on the *Edna* project. So he'd come to Warty and I and say, he'd say, what are you boys doing Saturday? I'd say, I don't know, Joe. Why? He'd go, well, there's this boatbuilder down in Dorchester I want to go visit. Why don't you boys tag along? We'd go down to see O'Neil Dean or O'Neil Jones, or who knows which one it was. But Joe was a tremendous influence. And he taught me a lot of the old, traditional... Paints had obviously evolved. But the concept of red lead paint,

traditional bottom paints, what we used to call **mast glop** when we were on the Bugeyes and all.

JD: Glop, like glop, g-l-o-p?

RS: [00:22:00] Oh, yeah. The recipe's in the museum cookbook. The recipe's in there. And I stopped using that after a while. I started using the Vaseline. But a lot of those old, the rigging mix I used to the day I left here, and I have a small notebook. And Joe would come in. I'd say, Joe, what about this? And **I kept the notebook on him**. And I'd write all this down. And my rigging mix is traditional, because that's what Joe taught me to use. So that influence was tremendous. And the people that Joe introduced me to. Richard Dodds just retired at the same time I did, as curator of the Calvert Marine Museum. Had been our curator here. Joe and Richard Dodds started the first oral histories. He took Richard and introduced him to people that otherwise you would never, ever get to know. Boatbuilders and all these places. Joe brought us all to the boatyard say boys, Sunday afternoon, we're going for a drive. We'd go to some church where you, I don't know where in the hell we were. And they'd be having a church dinner. All you can eat for two dollars, you know. Well, we've got a bunch of young boys working on boats. We could

eat. But Joe would take us to these places. It was amazing. But I bet tremendous numbers of people knew him.

JD: Sure, sure. You know, tell me what you know about Joe. We can look this up, but I'm interested for you to tell us about his background and why you admired him so much.

RS: [00:23:33] Joe was from southern New Jersey, down in the marsh area. He'd been hunting all his life. His father had Joe pretty much apprenticed to a furniture maker who could make unbelievable furniture. But he kind of liked small boats. And when he was hunting, they would have, in that part of Jersey had **mellonseeds and** duckers. And Joe was kind of attracted to those. So much to his father's chagrin, he did not build furniture. He started building small boats. And he became, so Joe had been working on small boats and started working at the naval shipyard. Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. They moved a little further north. On the weekends, he would still go down to the shore, down in the marshes, and hunt. He eventually became the head of the wooden boat shop at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. He was the head of that shipyard during World War II. That shipyard produced more wooden boats than any of the other naval shipyards in the country, because of Joe. He had a book made. They would want to have a captain's gig made. They'd build wooden boats because you

couldn't attach magnetic munitions to them. So it was a captain's gig between boats in a fleet. It was safer. So they wanted to build two captain's gigs. So they sent word to all the naval shipyards. Well, Joe had a book. They built a captain's gig, and it was two and a half gallons of white paint, and it was four gallons of bottom paint. Everything down to the nails, everything this book book. So he could come up with an estimate, knowing **the price or the change**, whatever it was, instantly because he had this book. Well eventually, the navy found out about it. And they published eight copies of the book. Big, amazing. And they copied all the shipyards. But still, Joe got a lot of contracts. He was very innovative, had a great crew working with him. They started building... I asked Joe, have you ever built a strip-plank boat, like thin strips glued and nailed together. And Joe didn't like Epoxy. **He didn't like it much**, mostly because, with Epoxy, you don't have to make really tight joints. Epoxy can fill the joints. Well, Joe didn't believe in that. So he said, yeah, we build strip-plank boats. We would put a little bit of red lead paint in-between the layers and all. And he said, and then I... We started talking about **everything**. He said we were building these 30-foot boats, and he only had 20-foot-long lumber. So he found a way to... This is

during the war. He had to do things quickly. These strips are, say, an inch by an inch. They're only a square inch or a inch and a quarter. And to join them was a little store process. So Joe had... The shipyard, they had all these edging shops and machine shops and welders and everything, you know, everything. So he had the guys make up this S-curve track, like this. And two slots, where you put two pieces of this wood in like this, about an inch . And Joe took an old Yuban coffee can and put a motor in it with a collet from a drill. And he had to make up these straight, sharp-edged bits. So they put in this collet. It was upside-down like this. They had triggers on the outside like that. And they'd run around this S-track. And it would cut those pieces of wood in an S-curve, perfectly matching. Because the same bit on the same track did it. Take them to the boat. They'd match perfectly, and you'd go on. When you'd put them in, it'd take you like two seconds, whereas cutting a 45-degree , it'd take you 10 minutes to get it to fit right. I said, Joe, that's a router. Joe says, well, that's what they call it now, yeah. He had a picture of 1945, a commendation from the navy, of him and the guys in the shop, holding up this Yuban can with wooden handles on the side and a push trigger. It was the first router. Now, I also met a guy

in a tool show who worked for Black and Decker. And he said they invented the router in 1952. I said, no you didn't. He goes, oh yeah, we did. I said, think whatever you want. Joe had the picture. He was innovative. He was, Joe had a photographic memory. He would come into the shop before I ran the shop, and even after I ran it. He would come in Monday mornings to wind the... He wound the clock here in the library and in the lighthouse. That was all the volunteer were doing, except spending time with us in the boat shop at that time. And Joe was getting old at this point. He was in his [late] eighties. So he'd come in on Monday morning after winding the clock. We'd be out on coffee break. We'd start talking. And okay, boys. It's quarter after 10. Go back to work. And if Joe was talking, my crew knew, just go back to work. And I'd come when I could. There'd be days he would talk till noon. The knowledge, astounding. He explained to me one time... I didn't know anything about Philadelphia. I'd never been to Philadelphia. Joe says, well, let me tell you why Philadelphia's where it is. He explained why the city's where it is, why it's set up like it is, why Broad Street's what it is, where the boatyards were, everything. It was astounding. It was remarkable, remarkable, and memory. And taught me so much about boats, techniques. He was a

great teacher. You'd go, Joe, we can't figure out how to do this. And this, you know, we're [inaudible] [Lockwood?]. They'd say that. And Joe would go, well, you could do this or this or this. And there are three ways, you know. You'd go, wow. Which one's best? And Joe'd say, well, I don't know, he said. But if it were me, I'd do it this way, because it was so logical. And other times, he'd let you, he'd be watching you. And you'd be getting really close to the, fall off the edge. And you'd go, you know, I might not go that, do that. Because, and he'd explain. And you'd go, oh, man, I would have screwed that whole plank up. And he explained the better way to do it. But in a very not, my way's the right way, you know. It was so logical. I tried to pass that on to my apprentices. I tried to teach them, keep an eye on them, not let them... Because they'd come out of boat-building school. And they had a lot of skills but some misconceptions, maybe. But I tried to teach the same way that Joe did. Let them get to the edge before, you know. And then realize what the better way was and why, not just, you have to do it this way because I say so.

JD: Now, was it mostly verbal? Because that's one of the things I've actually been asking people a lot about Mr. Jim

and the way he taught. Did he talk through it? Did he physically demonstrate, or a little bit of both?

RS: [00:30:58] He would mostly talk you through it. Well, let me show you this. And he'd draw something. And I've got a lot of those pieces of paper in my notebooks. Yeah. Oh yeah, we can do that, Joe'd say. This, this, this, this, this. But he wasn't physically doing a lot of the work anymore. He did that for *Edna Lockwood*. But later on, as he got older, he wasn't. He was still doing work in his shop at home. I'd go down and spend time with him in his shop. Talking to somebody one time. I guess it was Wade Murphy. And Wade had his boat hauled out by Dave McQuay, down at Pot Pie. Joe lived right across the road from Dave McQuay's yard. And Joe would wander over. And Wade would pull up, and Davy's going to put a new bottom plank in. And there's the bad spot in the stem. And Joe was, what about that? And Dave says, yeah. I can get to that, but I got, you know, **I've got to get** to this first. And Wade says yeah, if I could. But I can live with that stem. Joe says, okay. We'll see. And he **walked out, looked out a couple** like that. **Fingers, Wade said he** measured with his fingers, didn't **need a ruler**. Just measured with his fingers a couple of times. Walked back to his house. Came back about three hours later with a stem cut that fit

perfectly. And Wade Murphy was not one to give praise to someone who wasn't born on the Eastern Shore. He said, Wade Murphy said, best damn carpenter I ever saw, you know. Joe had known, he knew John B. Harrison, who was Dave McQuade's great-grandfather. He knew so many of the **Great Boat Builders...** He knew Tom Gilmore that designed the *Pride*, the first *Pride*, who and later on ended up giving me and the boat shop a blueprint machine that we had in the boat shop for a while till Pete took it away. Didn't know how to use it, got rid of it. Introduced me to so many people. It was amazing, because he knew everybody.

JD: Well, how did he get down to Pot Pie or wherever...

RS: [00:33:07] He built a cat boat. You know, cat boats are big, beamy. Called his buxom lass. So and then he and his wife sailed it around. And he sailed down the Chesapeake. It's a pretty good choice when you're in southern Jersey. Come through the canal, down the Chesapeake. And decided, hey, I like this. Joe said things were changing a little bit in New Jersey, and he didn't like it as much. So they started spending more time. And then bought the house down in Pot Pie. And when Joe left the shipyard, they came down full-time. They didn't keep track of hours then. I know Joe, for a fact, had over 20,000 volunteer hours. Because

he was, during the **Enda rebuild**, he was there every day, five days a week, for at least half a day. It was amazing.

JD: So tell me a little bit more, based on the model that Joe Leiner was for you, your commitment and your approach to teaching young boat-builders, apprentices when you were here.

RS: [00:34:20] Well, I think Mike Vlahovich was the first to point out to me that... I had been taught by Uncle Al. My father was actually a very good [wood] worker himself. Joe Leiner, Mr. Jim, Tommy, a lot of these people were gone. And it was that if I had taken all the knowledge that they taught me, and if I took it with me without sending it on to somebody else, I was being selfish. And that's a very true fact. So Mike and I started an apprentice program here. Tom and I were having trouble getting people to, **summer help** to work on the railway with us. Because the museum didn't have the money to pay. You can make more flipping hamburgers at McDonald's. And there weren't too many people that wanted to do that kind of work locally. Because if they knew anything about boats, they're probably son of a waterman. And they can go make \$200 a day trotlining. Why work for five dollars an hour? So we went national with the apprentice program. And we drew people with interest in these boats from all over the country.

The idea was that a lot of them had been to either a year of boat-building school or had some sort of commensurate experience. I mean, **Donohue**, he didn't go to boat-building school, but he ran his own canoe repair business in Vermont. A lot had been to boat-building schools. There are about three or four that I consider very good schools in the country. But when you come out of boat-building school, you've learned how to build a small boat. You don't know how to do anything, really. You certainly don't know how to work in a boatyard. So we were like a graduate school. And you work with us for a year. We'll give you skills and the right attitude to work in a shipyard. And then you spin off and go. So I've got ex-apprentices all over the country, working in boatyards and museums and everywhere. But that became the idea, to... We also, we tried to, Joe had passed at this point. But we tried to introduce them to other boat builders. And Jerry Pruitt, down in Tangier Island, was a wooden boat builder. Mike V. knew him. So we met Jerry, and we'd get the apprentices down there, or Jerry would come up and visit us. And all, and talk to them. And other boatbuilders in the area. John Swain would talk to them. And we had like a **visiting** master's program kind of thing. So we're trying to teach them more skills that they needed to go out and work in a

shipyard. And you had to play each individual apprentice differently. Some, I knew were going to work in a commercial yard, maybe with more fiberglass and doing trim work, which is fine. And at this point, I'd learned enough fiberglass work and all, that if we had any work like that, I could steer them to it. Others wanted to be riggers. Others wanted to work **big timber**. [Booms]. Okay, **this time**, you put a plank in the bottom of a Skipjack, that kind of thing. So it became a matter of just trying to prep them, get them ready to go work in a shipyard. And we got good enough at it that boatyards would call me and say, got anybody **spinning** out? We need somebody to do some real nice cabinet work. I'd say, you know, I've got a guy who's really good at that sort of things. In a month or two, he'll be ready to go.

JD: They only stayed about a year, typically?

RS: [00:38:10] Well, we started to have a second-year apprentice. And the first-year apprentices were paid very little. It was below minimum wage, actually, until we realized that was illegal. But we provided a place to live, so that countered part of it. But if you stay as a second-year apprentice, you kind of became a leader to the apprentices. Because you've been here long enough I can trust you to do that job by yourself. You teach them how

to do it. And they got paid more, because they had more responsibility. And to put them in more leadership position, which you go to a boatyard, that helps, if you've run a small crew before or helped. So we did have some that had the skills and the temperament to become second-year apprentices. But it was at our discretion. If I decided Jen's okay, but she's not [inaudible], after a year, you left. But this guy over here, **Harry**, we kept for two years, two and a half years, as long as I could keep him. So some apprentices, Bob Savage started coming in. At that time, we started the apprentice for a day program. The museum, the office had been bitching at me for years, sorry, complaining to me for years that we weren't working on weekends. So we should have at least one person work on a weekend, because that's when the public's here. Keep the boat shop open. Because when the boat shop is closed on the weekend, doors close. You go up on the balcony. You can't see much. Okay, so I said, that's great. So if I'm working down below on Rose's cabin, I'm not in the shop anyway. And then I miss a day with my crew. So I fought this for years. We were not given the option anymore. So Mike V. came up with the brilliant idea that we would do small boat-building on the weekends. We called it apprentice for a day. And people would pay for one day, to

come. And they could come back 20 days, 20 times if they wanted to. And a set fee every day. And we would build a small boat. We'd be in the boat shop. That end of the boat shop became apprentice for a day. And we were there working when people came through. We could talk to them. So some of the apprentices, they weren't getting paid to work on the weekends. But they gravitated toward that program because they liked it so much. They were building small boats. How cool is that? Paid. So Mike V. and Mike Amory and I started that program. Then we started getting more apprentices. And the apprentices started spinning in. Bob Savage really took it and ran with it. And I made him the first apprentice for a day instructor, full-time. I was tired of working five and six days a week, sometimes, between it. So Bob took over. It was only on Saturdays. He'd work with the rest of the crew four days a week, and then he'd work Friday, or three and a half days. Because Friday afternoon, he'd get ready for the weekend. And then teach Saturday. And then Bobby eventually went to seven days a week. And then it became, he wasn't working with the crew at all because it took that much time for the, there was a lot of paperwork at this point. He had more people coming in. And we also had visiting masters working with them. And I would come in for a day, apprentice for a

day, to show them how to rig the small boat and how to **splice** lines and do all that, whatever it might be. Or I'd come in and show them how to hang a plank a different way or something. So Bobby became the first full-time apprentice for a day. And then usually you'd go through periods when people leave a lot, when there's, people get a little pissed off at the museum. We're going through one of those right now, I think. So Bob left to go back to California, to a job that he had had before. So **[inaudible] was working with me** by then. And we had an apprentice that had been working with apprentice for a day. We thought he'd be good. We put him in the position he was not ready for. As manager, that was my fault. You don't put someone in a position to do something where they're not **comfortable**. It didn't work. So I let Pete go. Had another apprentice that taught it for a couple of weekends, a couple of months, I guess. Did a pretty good job, until I could hire someone full-time. And Barto and I called Danny Sutherland. Barto and Danny were very good friends, and I knew Daniel from Small Craft Festivals and all. And **Mark** came in. He called me at home. He called me, and he said, Rich, Danny wants to work with us! What are you talking about? Well, he called Danny to say, have you had anybody working for you recently? Danny was in upstate New

York. Really good boat-builder. He was 10 years younger than I am. You had anybody working for you recently that might want to come down and teach this? And Danny'd had enough with... Barto had run his own business in Chestertown. You get tired of running a small boat shop. There's so much crap. They wanted to work on boats. They came to work on me, and they worked on boats. Danny wanted to do the same thing. So Mark **screams**, Danny wants to work for us. I said, you're kidding me. I called Danny. And as I said at his funeral, in my very rigid interview process, Danny, you want to come work for us? He goes, yeah. You're hired. So Danny Sutherland took over. He was, at that time, I considered Danny the best lap strake boat builder for small boats in the United States, bar none. He was legend. Incredibly talented. What a brain. It was amazing. So between Mark, Danny, and I, we've done a lot. Mark used to call us the rock stars.

JD: Do you remember what year? So early 2000s when the apprentice program started? Or was it later than that?

RS: [00:44:30] We started the apprentice program about, yeah, I'd say 2000, 2001, something like that. There's records of all that. And Danny was the first one to run the apprentice program that had not been an apprentice. And then Danny slowed down a lot all of a sudden, really bad.

And it turned out, he'd had a stroke he didn't even know about. And had a heart attack one evening and passed away recently. Forty-seven years old. So then I've got, I need to replace the apprentice for a day. Well, I had two apprentices at that time. Well, I had four apprentices, I guess. Five maybe, at that time. One was Chris Sanders, who is now working at **Mystic Sea** Port. And one was a young girl I hired as an apprentice. Her name was Jenny Kuhn. So I said, Chris, why don't you do, will you do apprentice for a day for this weekend? See how it goes. **I stopped in** a little bit. And I said to Jenn next weekend, you want to do apprentice for a day? Okay. I stopped in. Well, Jenn has degrees as an elementary school teacher. She's a great teacher. I think probably one of the best things I ever did at this museum was hire Jenn Kuhn to run that program. And she was tasked with... Danny was a boat builder and a great teacher. But he didn't run a program terribly well, and they weren't making any money on it. And the economy collapsed in 2008. They were getting ready to get rid of Danny, so we were doing outside work to support him. So Jenn was tasked with making apprentice for a day break even. And she did a remarkable job. At the same time, I had an apprentice go through before, when Barto was doing the floating fleet for me. His name was Michael Gorman.

And then Barto got himself in trouble. Well, there's other reasons for it, but he started drinking a lot. And he was belligerent and almost violent with a visitor one Saturday. And he was let go. He had to be gone. So now, I've got projects underway. And I've got no one to do it. Mark, at this point, I guess **that's** before that, Mark had not been the person I wanted to run the *Rosie* project. The museum would not make up their mind to start the project. And he said, Richard, I've got to know. And he was the one I wanted to have. He's still working at 40. He's really good. So I had to let him go, because he was offered to build a boat down there. And Barto said, I want that project. So I knew Mark could be a **problem** with the project. He could do it if he wanted to, but managing him was difficult. He was taken away from me. He was put under the president. Mark was hired. So I had to hire somebody to run the floating fleet. So I called Michael Gorman, who was up in Maine.

JD: He had been at the museum previously?

RS: [00:47:47] He had been an apprentice. He was one of my apprentices. So Michael came right down, took over the job, became head of the floating fleet. And a few years after that -- Barto was gone at that point -- I hired another ex-apprentice, Mark Donahue, to finish the *Rosie*

project. We had to have someone to head that up, finish that. So Donahue did that. And then Pete decided that I was going to be assistant curator of watercraft. And then Mike would be head of the whole boat shop. And it was another brilliant move, because Mike is really good. Michael Gorman is very, very good. Now, he's out in San Francisco, unfortunately.

JD: Well, tell me about your transition. Because of course, that's how I got to know you. And I think that was a great decision, as well. But how did you evolve to the point where you get the title of curator? So obviously, you've developed quite a bit of expertise about our collection and Chesapeake boat types.

RS: [00:48:48] My interest over the years was obviously with the floating fleet. And I [**let after?**] one of those boats. But I was also very much attracted to the small boats, the small craft. And if it was allowed, mostly winters... Summer was railway season. Before there were apprentices, when Tommy and I ran the shop, there were three of us in there, usually. One winter, it was just Tom and I. We spent years proving that you can't run this boat shop with three people. It can't be done. But if time would allow in the winter, we'd take a boat out of the small boat shed, and there were 23 boats in the small boat shed then. Bring

it over to the boat shop. And I'd restore it. If it was decided... There were certain boats that were not ever restored. The Striker boat has never had anything done to it at all. But the rest of them, I've done a lot of work on. My brother and I rebuilt Bessie Lee. So I worked on a lot of the small boats, and I have an affinity to that. And I really, Joe Leaner was explaining to me why that boat was significant. And I would do more research on that. He'd tell me books to read, people to talk to. And Richard Dodds trusted me a little bit. And then after he left, Pete was there. And Pete trusted me to make more and more decisions on the small boats and which ones should be restored. Pete and I had, years ago, made a list, this is what we're looking for. We can't just take all the boats anymore. For a while, this museum took, you got a boat? I'll take it, sure. We can't do that anymore. We have to be very specific what we get, as you obviously know. So Pete and I made a list, and I was part of that process. So when I was running the boat shop, we opened up At Play on the Bay. First, we opened up the Oystering building. And my crew had to go in there and help finish the exhibit, because it was never going to be done in time. And we would help Eric with the final installation of exhibits and all. And so I started working more and more with Eric, as

he needed me. And for that Play on the Bay, the boat shop was very involved. Because there are boats in there, as they were when we opened up the Steamboat building. There's the Push Boat still hanging, pulled up high. Used to be more visible. And the Dodge boat was in there, hanging. And one winter, I restored the Dodge boat entirely. And then they said to me, we decided to hang it. I go, what? Well, the building's not built to have a boat hanging there. So Mark **Adams** and I, he was head of B&G then, Mark and I figured out how to spread the load to hang this boat. And I made up all the stainless-steel cables and everything, and a stainless-steel plate **for the keel** for support. And we hung the boat, as if she's running on a **beveled** angle like that, toward the balcony, with the flag out. I had wires in the flag to make it look like it's moving. It was a good exhibit. So I've been part of doing exhibits that way. And the four boats that are in Play on the Bay had to be the *Star*, the *Comet*, the canoe. Had to be in there before they closed in the foyer. The *Owens* had to be there before they started the building. So they did the foundation, and they had the pit that became the boat house. And I had to have the *Owens* finished by then, which we did. We had her done. They picked her up with a crane. They put her in there. And the crew -- not

my crew, but the workers for the building -- built a wooden box, a plywood box around it to protect it. And they built the building around it. And then took the box apart. But I had to have the other three boats done when the interior was finished. Get the boats in. Then they would build the foyer and the ramp. That was all done afterwards. Those boats can't get out. This is what we've talked about before. You don't build an exhibit where things cannot change. You've got to tear that building apart to get them out.

JD: And then what...wait was it the *Comet's* mast? Or the *Star* boat's mast?

RS: [00:53:00] The *Star* boat's mast. I measured right. They didn't believe me. Architect was, oh. Well, you told me it was 35 feet. I said, it is 35 feet exactly. He goes, but it doesn't fit. I said, the building's the wrong height. He goes, no. The top of that building's 35 feet. I said, we're talking the inside. Oh. Oh, well that might be 33-5. Yeah, you think? So I've been involved, in that respect, with exhibits. And so Pete decided that there was a need for me to use my knowledge of the small boats of the entire floating fleet, and not worry with the day-to-day operations. So I became assistant curator of watercraft. And as such, I was more involved with... Eric Applegareth

is one of the most talented people I've ever known. He is a miracle of nature. But he doesn't interact on a normal wavelength. Eric's a little different. So there had been some people. **Chrissy** was there, and Forloney was there. And John Stumpf volunteered with Eric for years. Who had to interpret Eric for the world, kind of, when it came... When he started with folks right at the end of an exhibit, Eric was just full-tilt. Bam. And you had to go, okay, Eric. I can do this for you. And take it off his plate. So I became the Eric interpreter. And he and I worked a lot with the 1812 exhibit that we did together, and all exhibits.

JD: So exhibit installation, as well as boat-related?

RS: [00:54:45] Oh, yeah. Any exhibit. **I'd weld** it up. We had one of the canons that protected St. Michaels, and I welded up the frame that held the canon. Because it couldn't rest on the wheels, on its carriage. It was too fragile. So whatever Eric needed. And he would take the most bizarre things and say, I need this. Okay, Eric. And I'd explain to him, I can do this. And Eric would go, no. Eric would say, you mean like this? I'd say, yeah. I'd explain it. Eric couldn't...

JD: It was all visual.

RS: [00:55:15] It had to be visual. [inaudible] okay, that's good. Do that. The 50 exhibit, Eric and I worked together on that a lot. And then Eric left. So I was the exhibit department for six months, eight months, until Lee came. And then Lee and I worked together a lot, because Lee didn't know the museum. He had Great, as you know, he had tremendous skills. But Lee and I worked together. And then Lee left, and I retired about the same time. Shortly after I retired, he left. And they had an exhibit opening...

JD: And then we begged you to help us out. Yes, I do recall.

RS: [00:55:58] I was hired back as a consultant for that exhibit, on an hourly basis. And we did a hell of a job.

JD: And bless you for it.

RS: [00:56:06] So that...

JD: It was an evolution, in other words.

RS: [00:56:11] Right. And there are a couple of apprentices that have come through over the years that I've said to Pete, that's someone who could take over for me sometime in the future. Because they're interested in the small craft. They're interested in the history of boats.

JD: Well, and so one of the things... And we're searching for, I think, and now I think we hopefully have the ability to have someone in a similar position. But you also

established a routine for caring for the non-floating vessels, which is a huge undertaking, because we have so many. And it has to be done periodically and in rotation. Was that a hard lift? Were you given complete ability to do that? Because it doesn't happen as much anymore, for instance. And we're seeing the results.

RS: [00:57:03] When Tom was running the yard, Pete and I would talk behind Tom's back. He didn't like that. And Pete would say, you know, we really need to put a coat of paint on this boat or something. And I'd say to Tom, you know, after November, we get through the festival and the boats are done. What do we got lined up? And Tom said, well, we've got this and this. I'd say, well how about, can I have about a month in there? What are you doing? Tom would say. I'd say, well, Pete needs this painted. And Tom would say, you know. So I was the one that did the maintenance on the boats in the small boat shed, as it needed. And then when I became head of the boat shop, Pete and I went through all the boats. And at that time, we had boats in storage up in your building. And then we rented... When they rebuilt these office buildings, we were **closed** for two years. They lifted them up [inaudible] the whole thing. They rented what is now the community center and built the cubicle offices up there. They had a

[trailer?] over here for John Ford, LAD and Helen were in a trailer over here. And everybody else was up in what we called the bunker. And they ran underground wires, for computers and everything. Tied them together. It was very difficult. A lot of people quit because working in a cubicle, it's different than working at the museum. And the boats, they got stored. We had so many, and there was just a storage problem, for some reason, at the museum. Go figure. We put small craft up at the other end of the community center, on that end. There's room on the floor. There's a balcony up there, which I had helped build years and years before when I worked for a contractor down here. No climate control. The collection manager, at the time, and I were doing inventory of the boats for the five-year inventory. And it was in August. And I was up in that loft, and it was like 140 degrees. These boats are baking. It was awful. Cracks and top sides open. Oh my God, it was awful. So Pete and I had another talk. And we eventually rented the Pea Neck building as a place... At this point, Mike V. and I are running Skipjack restoration program. Plus we're planning to restore *Rosie*, plus we're planning to restore *Edna*. So we had, we bought 70,000 board feet of Douglas fir for the Skipjack program and all. And about 45,000 board feet of white oak. So the Pea Neck

building was for my wood storage. It was damp in there. It was a perfect thing. This is fresh-cut oak. If you put it outside here, it would twist and dry and be worthless. It was perfect for it. Well, then they finish up these buildings. They want to close the bunker. It's been there, [**closed?**] for a while, offices. They decide they're going to sell it. So the boats have to go. So we took all the boats to Pea Neck. And I watched them deteriorate down there. Because now, they're going from an oven to a humidifier. It's just awful down there. And Pete knew it was going on. I couldn't get anybody else to care. That was when the economy tanked. Things were bad. Langley was involved with, when he became president. Stewart, who the hell knows where Stewart was? Langley became very involved with the *Rosie* project. That became his thing. So then when Kristen came on, she wanted to be shown all these properties the museum had. We've got different properties here and there. So she goes down to Pea Neck, and she sees the collection boats. And she goes, what's this? I go, these are the collection boats. But they've got mildew on them. I said, damn right they do. Well, this was unacceptable to her. And God bless her for... Whatever anybody thinks of Kristen, I was head of small craft. And I still know more about those boats that are in storage

than anybody else does, probably other than Pete. I still consider them my boats. I've got 36 of them out there. And it was killing me. So Lad had taken over part of that building for his boat donation program, but his boats went in and out. My boats were there for years on end. So Kristen found us this place in Cambridge to put the boats. It was better. Pulled every boat out, scrubbed it with the proper kind of soap and freshwater, got the mildew off. Cleaned them as best as we could and drove them down to Cambridge, to a warehouse that was, we were given one section of it, 120 feet by 30 feet, I think. It was, the other half of this building, it was wide open. Was a car and truck business, repair garage. And they had a lot of diesels in there, a lot of commercial vehicles. And the air, diesel exhaust has oil in it, as we know. It's kind of bluish. That wasn't particularly good for the boats, either. But it was better than the Pea Neck. And then, right toward the end of my tenure, we rented this space from Jeff McGinnis. And then, as you know, we took -- as my back could handle it -- every boat from Cambridge, through all the backroads, wonderful drive through the counties, to Denton, where they are now. Where they are better. Still not perfect, but they are much better. The ones especially in Jeff's building, it's climate-

controlled. The other ones get pretty [inaudible] hot, but not nearly as bad as it was up there.

JD: But they've insulated, so it's actually, it's tremendously better now. We keep upgrading, so...

RS: [01:03:52] So they are much, much better now. But that has been, that was, it was just an affinity I had to those boats and the history of them. Because I knew more about them than anybody. That was kind of how I'd swing in that direction. And that, Pete realized that we needed someone to do it, to take care of those boats. And hopefully, there will be, at some point, a facility on campus where they can come home.

JD: Well, I'll tell you more about that. We're working on it. Before we move on, and I was going to move into just what you're doing with Doug now, and a little bit about what you, how you knew Mr. Jim. The Skipjack restoration project, how long was the museum involved in that?

RS: [01:04:37] That was a state-funded program. They had tried a couple of other times. They had tried in Baltimore with inner-city kids with some very good shipwrights. But the quality of the work was terrible. It was inner-city kids. The volunteer program that worked on it was terrible. So it was decided that they would fund a program to have legitimate shipwrights restore the Skipjack working fleet.

So the museum was decided to be the one that would do it. So we hired Mike Vlahovich. Amory and I were in the boat shop, Mike and I. And we hired Mike V. And I love these boats. Don't get me wrong. But Mike V. has just zeal for wooden boats. It's astounding. It's remarkable. The man is a powerful individual. So he became, it wasn't... The idea is we would do work on the boats so that they could get insured again. We would not do mechanical work.

JD: And these were working Skipjacks, so you were kind of subsidizing the ability to keep them, keep the working fleet going.

RS: [01:05:53] But we were not limited by the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines. So we could use Epoxy, we could, fiberglass. We could do anything we wanted. Just get them where they can be insured to go out on the water and make a living. So Mike V. at that time, and then Amory left. And Mike V. and I were there. That's when we started the apprentice program. We needed people. We needed people to work, and cheap. Give them a place to live, five bucks an hour. And go to church every day, work on Skipjacks. And we took them down to [inaudible]. We met the captain. The captains were supposed to spend time working on the boats themselves. Not many did. So the state put \$150,000 in this first year. And there was a whole Skipjack committee

of captains from the southern fleet, Deal Island. And Tilghman Island's skip captains. And Scott Todd from Choptank River. And Mike V. , myself, people from the state on this committee. And the captains would -- the committee, but most of the captains would -- decide which boats got worked on, how much, and which boats, and in what order. We tried to do a boat from Deal Island and a boat from Tilghman Island. A boat from Deal Island, a boat from Tilghman Island. Like that. [inaudible] So the first year, we were going to work on three boats. And we were going to limit it to \$50,000 a boat. So number one, we gotta get materials cheap. Would you donate to us? Come on, we're restoring the Skipjack. Come on. Black and Decker came down. They were making battery drills, or the battery drills we made in Easton at that time. And they had their international media for the corporation in Easton. And the president came down about a week early to tour the area and said to them, what do you do for this maritime museum? And they said, we don't do anything. So he goes, you will. Well, they gave me 12 battery drills, three battery saws in one day, just boom. Planers everything, boom, right there. So we got a lot of stuff given to us because of the Skipjack program. It was very well-marketed, advertised. And it was a state program. So

we did [inaudible] *City of Crisfield* had sunk at the dock in Cambridge. She became the poster boy of the whole thing. The state has still not released the funds. We're ready to go. They haven't released the funds. A reporter comes down from the AP. He was from the AP, but he also worked for the *New York Times*. And wanted to interview me about the Skipjack program. So I called John Valliant in the office here, the president. I said, John, what do I tell them? John says, tell the truth. I said, really? He goes, yeah. Okay. So in this interview, he takes a picture of me. I was doing some riggings. I've got a rope over my shoulder, covered in sawdust. And I said, we're ready to go. We have the manpower. We have the facility here. We have the first boat. It was sunk in Cambridge. It's ready to go. And the state has not released the funds. We're waiting. We're waiting on the state. Well, this article was picked up on the AP wire. My parents have friends out, who retired out in Arizona, California, Florida. Everybody saw this article. It was in every newspaper that AP is part of. And the state of Maryland got pretty embarrassed. So they had the money to us released like that. So we spent \$50,000 on *City of Crisfield*. Who was next? I can't remember. Went back and forth. But there were three boats that year. And if it

was more than \$50,000, the captain was supposed to kick in the money. Well, that didn't go over very well. And they could not sell the boat for five years. We did pretty good work. Mike V. and those apprentices, and I was kind of running the boatyard with them, but also I've got one or two guys, too. They're trying to run the floating fleet. And [inaudible] [**tore?**] top sides off and bottoms. We were using Douglas fir and [inaudible] whenever we could. We're glassing it. We're, [captain tops?]. We've got these boats going, back out there. About this time, I took about three or four graduate courses in historic preservation through Goucher College. I didn't go on to get my Master's in it, because I got the courses I wanted. And then I stopped doing it. But one of them I wrote a paper for, Bill Dudley was the professor. I had to write a paper about the Skipjack program. We restored these boats. But the captain's under no obligation to take care of it. *City of Crisfield* two years later, Pete and I went to Deal Island to look at a boat. And there's *City of Crisfield*, sitting in the dock at low tide. Her stem is pounded into the ground. It still had the same freakin' rusted cans that were on the deck when she left here. Not a bit of work had been done to the boat, except he'd go out [inaudible] to make money. Deal Islanders are notorious

for not taking care of their boats. This is to be expected, I suppose. But very disappointing. I wrote a paper about it. What are we doing?

JD: Yeah, what's the purpose? So was it only one year?

RS: [01:11:35] The next year, they had about \$100,000. We did what we could with that. The next year, they had \$50,000. Now, we started raising money. John Miller's raising money hand over fist to restore the Skipjacks. So we kicked in, the second year, we kicked in the next \$50,000. Next year, we kicked in \$100,000. We can't keep doing this, because after Mike V. left and I [inaudible], I said, stop. End of program. *Rosie Parks* is sinking, and the *Lockwood* is rotting to death. I've got boats... And I've got two men, with me, to work on the whole floating fleet because we're taking care of a bunch of Skipjacks that are going to hell the next year anyways. What are we doing? Now, we did some great work. We had Scott Todd going. His boat's still in good shape. We did deck work for Eddie Farley. Eddie takes care of his boat. He's a rare waterman. So the whole program, it just started, the state fell apart with the funding. And our fleet was falling apart. And I said, that's it. I'm ending it. I can't do this thing. Or if you want somebody else to run it. I'm outta here, cause I'm not doing this. I'm not gonna watch my boats die

because we're taking care of Skipjacks. That's not going to happen.

JD: I think that's an important perspective on CBMM, showing that they're committed to preservation. But ultimately, our fundamental commitment needs to be to our own collection. And it sounds like you really redirected us. If that's ever questioned, I didn't know why the program ended. I think it's important to know how that happened and that we really did a lot to keep it alive. But I do want to talk about Dove. So let's start, how did you first get to know Mr. Jim? Did Joe Leaner introduce you to him?

RS: [01:13:33] No. When they were building the first Dove, Jim had a crew down there. And I knew some of them, Wort Hawkinson, primarily. We had sailed canoes together.

JD: Which log canoe did you say, or a variety?

RS: [01:13:56] Well, I sailed for 10 years on Junior Marshall's canoe, *Rover*. She's no longer sailing. Wort helped build the *Spirit of Wyetown* with Sidney Dickson and raced on that. So Wort and I knew each other pretty well. And I'd go down there and see what they were doing. And I met Mr. Jim. And then we would, that crew was amazing. They would go, on a Friday night, they'd go to a farm. And they'd buy a couple of bushels of sweet corn, still in the husk. Take it to the old Portside when it was the Barroom, when the

cases of beer, you know, the paths going back to restrooms and all.

JD: Right at the Cambridge Creek?

RS: [01:14:39] Oh, yeah. The old one. And they'd steam up the corn for us, for free, in the kitchen there. And be corn on the cob for everybody. Then we'd drink all night, you know. They knew they were going to make money off of us. So I got to know that whole crew that way. It was interesting.

JD: So you hung out with them.

RS: [01:14:55] A little, yeah. So I got to know Mr. Jim that way. And when I started working here, Joe took me down. I got to know him more. And I helped Jim do some stuff once in a while. I used to be able to buy, actually it was a very good Lipped Adze head from *Woodcraft Magazine*. And I bought one of those. And same one Tommy had. Tom had the same woodcraft head. Tom Howell and I, Tommy's taller than I am. We can't use each other's adze. The handle, the head of the adze and the handle are at a different angle. And that angle can change by several degrees. You put wedges in to hold it at the angle you like. You put the butt of the handle here, and you make a mark on the wood, and you measure that. You can change that so it's three-quarters of an inch different. That makes a big

difference. So Tommy can't use my adze. I can't use his. But I figured out which one I liked, what the angle was. And I helped. I'd be down there doing something. So one day, Jim made me a handle. And then Tom mounted it. He figured out exactly the handle I wanted, and Tommy, he didn't mess around. Drove in wedges, poured the whole thing full of West System Epoxy, and there it was. That was my ad for years. And then the kids, when Matt was teaching his kids program, we were adzing out. We were working on the dugout with one of those kids and hit it over the edge of the boat like that and broke the handle. And Matt said, oh, I'm so sorry, Rich. See, he broke a handle. It was no big deal. And Wort's father, Dr. John. He was a volunteer in the shop. And I went over with the two pieces. I said, Doc, I broke my new... He said, oh, that's too bad. I said, old man Jim made this handle for me. Doc goes, that's irreplaceable. And I've gotten a new handle for it. It's fine. But things like that, I'm very sentimental about things like that.

JD: What do you remember about his personality? I think he had a lot of sayings.

RS: [01:17:13] Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. His favorite was, well, it all started with Columbus. Oh, man. Well, when he left, he didn't know where he was going. When he got there, he

didn't know where he was. When he got home, he didn't know where he'd been. It's been all downhill ever since. It all started with Columbus. He could tell jokes. He was a brilliant man. He was absolutely brilliant.

JD: My understanding is he designed a lot of the boats, other than the restorations. They were all his specific...

RS: [01:17:51] He designed and built boats, worked for the government during the war at the shipyard in Cambridge. He was sent to school, to a boarding school in Baltimore when he was younger. And during one of the summers, they were planning on having a lot of work done on the buildings by an engineering firm, a building firm in Baltimore. And Jim somehow saw the plans and went to the head of school and said, this is wrong. This won't work. You can't do it that way. Well, they called another engineer in. They asked him. He goes, you can't do it that way. This won't work. So they hired Jim, apparently. This is all coming from Tommy. They hired Jim that summer to stay at the school and help overlook what was going on. He was brilliant. He met, he was [**running?**] the yard. Howard Chapelle bought a place down there. Howard Chapelle started hanging out with Mr. Jim, had his boat kept there. So when the Smithsonian needed someone to build something for a display -- the big, wooden timbers and all -- they

came to Jim. His work got around. The Adventurer, the
Susquehanna Dam, the [inaudible], Jim built those.

JD: I didn't know that.

RS: [01:19:13] Yeah, he and Tommy. Tom had met Jude. Jude was
sailing *JD* by herself. *JD's* the biggest canoe out there.
You put the [main in and the fore partners. It was their
family boat. It was the boat that her brother was killed
on when, between races, a storm came up. They were in
Cambridge. You could not go into a building, into a bar
that sold liquor if you were under the age of 18. So he
went and hid. And there's a thunderstorm coming through.
He hid under the deck of the *JD*. Well, she's got rigging.
And he was leaning against the inside of the chain plates
and got hit by lightning. It killed him.

JD: So it was *JD*? I thought it was [**Cloud?**].

RS: [01:19:51] No, I think it was *JD*.

JD: I get confused about that.

RS: [01:19:55] So that was their boat. So Jude was sailing it
by herself and saw this handsome young guy visiting his
parents, who had just bought a place, the garden of Eden.
She said, you want to go for a sail? Tom said, I haven't
gotten off yet. So he was young, working with Mr. Jim.
And Tom's strong. Pound for pound, the strongest man I've
ever met. So they get these projects, and he and Jim

worked together doing it. But Jim was, he was brilliant. Tom is very well-educated. Engineering degree. Bill Coombs is down at the yard. Bill Coombs had a series of boats, was a very wealthy... Philadelphia. His wife was Edmee Schaefer Coombs, of Schaefer beer. Her brother, Rudy, had the schooner America replica built. He's down at the yard and says [inaudible] Bill Coombs, he was an unbelievable character that I knew. Bought myself an engine. Got myself this diesel engine. It's a big old son of a bitch. I don't know what to do with this thing. Jim says, well, you ought to build a boat. Well, what kind of boat? I'm thinking about a 30-foot. He says no, [inaudible] I picked up a piece of two by 12 off the ground, probably about this big. And he draws, kind of like that. And draws roughly the lines of Mr. Jim. How big? That big. He would say, about 50, 52 feet, something like that. He said, do it. Jim says, not me. Looks to Tom, goes, can you build that? Tom goes, yeah, I can build that.

JD: Well, that's about the time they were building the Dove, so that's why he was, yeah, yeah.

RS: [01:21:38] They were just finishing up Dove. Jim was launched in 1980. So Tom took this two by 12, drew the

plans up, the whole thing, and built the boat. Pretty good.

JD: Did you know about... So you knew about Dove. Did you... One of the things I've been trying to get at is that my perception, growing up in Dorchester, about Mr. Jim and Dove seems to be different than the picture, than the image that people from the outside had. It seemed to people from the outside, ooh, this is wonderful. This is amazing. Local people -- other boat builders, other watermen -- didn't understand it, didn't know what was going on.

RS: [01:22:22] Yeah. They knew Mr. Jim. He was a very well-respected boat builder locally. All those guys did. He's the one that went down to look at Bronza Parks' yard, at the boat, and said, the boat looks good to me. I think it's fine. The guy in the shop runs anyway. I mean, Jim knew them all.

JD: So he did get along well with them, as far as you knew.

RS: [01:22:44] But they didn't understand, they didn't have the connection with Howard Chapelle. So Howard came. The state of Maryland wanted... Jim had already built, I think he built the shallop first. He built the first shallop much better than the one's that out here. The tiller's still hanging in the boat shop, last I saw [inaudible] mindset. Jim carved that. So he had the tie with Howard.

They built the Dove. So Jim said, okay. He had already worked on another boat, down in South Carolina, the *Adventurer*. But these are boats, they're not local work boats. The other boat builders didn't, you know. They're building deadrise work boats. [Bronza's?] building Skipjacks. They didn't quite understand what he was doing. But he was building boats. He got paid to build a boat, and he built it.

JD: They just didn't understand the practicality of it. Why you would want to build...

RS: [01:23:45] Why the hell would you do that? Because they paid me to build it. You know, what the hell? When they built the first Dove -- in his defense, too -- the coast guard wasn't involved in stuff like this. There was no licensing. When I was sailing 12-meter up in Newport, none of us had a captains license. We're taking 16 passengers out on a 12-meter, out in the damn-near ocean off Rhode Island. We had no, you know, no license, no inspection, nothing. We just...

JD: Different, yeah. Not as stringent standards.

RS: [01:24:14] So the Dove was not built to what became standards that way. So then, when the coast guard started their inspections, the *American* got the first restoration, then the *Mayflower*. Then it became more common. Then

they're building a lot of these boats. And they're trying to sail them. And they built this one in Baltimore called *The Pride of Baltimore*. And she sinks. Then the coast guard gets really involved, because the coast guard reacts to the body count. That's all they care about. So people are dying. So then they start getting more and more regulations in. So the Dove cannot be used to sail with anyone aboard except the paid crew. And I think they're allowed to carry some volunteers who've been trained on the boat, who have signed a waiver, complete waiver and all. You can't carry kids, can't do any of that. So she's licensed by the coast guard as a dockside attraction.

JD: And our Dove will be quite different.

RS: [01:25:27] Yes. So that's, they've also historically, they've learned the design, part of... [inaudible] did a great job with that. For what they knew at the time. They know so much more now. This was in the mid-seventies. He's drawing these plans up. And we've learned how to make a boat like that survive. Sultana's the best example. Some have gone under financially immediately. *The Spirit of South Carolina*, gone. *Virginia*, gone. A well-known organization is a little better than that. *Pride 2* is still operating. So what I, when we went to rebuild *Edna Lockwood*, I made sure I said every single time, what we are

doing does not reflect on the skill of the boatbuilders that rebuilt this boat in the late seventies. It was crappy material. The decks were fir that was the old bridge across Oak Creek when it was a turning railroad-trestle bridge.

JD: [inaudible] Edna.

RS: [01:26:31] Yeah. They took it apart. It was brushed on creosoted timbers. So they cut the [inaudible] open. They ripped it up, and they cut a center into it. The wood wasn't good. The pine. We had to replace all their covering boards. They're pine. They were rotted. They were rotted going in. We knew that. But it's the only material we had. So what they're doing with the Dove now does not reflect on the quality of work that was done by Mr. Jim and the hippies. Because they did the best they could with what they had and the budget they had. Jim built it out of... He looked at these plans and said, okay. And he went to Spicer's and said, this is what I need. And they cut the wood. Now, they give Jim the best. And when Tom and I were running the shop, when Tommy was here, Spicer's called. They said, we've come across some real good pine. You want some? And Tom said, yeah. Give me about 20 [**flitches**?], 15 feet, 16 feet long. We had beautiful yellow pine. They could get good stuff. And

they'd put it aside for the boat builders. They knew what's good. But it's Eastern Shore yellow pine. It ain't gonna last that long.

JD: Well, the one comment was that Dave Westergaard said it was also pretty green. But they were on a timeframe, yeah.

RS: [01:27:45] He signed the contract. He had to have the boat done. And that's what happens. So it doesn't reflect on the skill of the boat builder. They did the best they could with what they had. But mostly, it's because... She needs the work, obviously. The captain of that, Will Gates, is a very old friend of mine. I've known Will for many, many years. So Will came up. They don't sail in too often. They sailed in one time, probably about 10 years ago now. And Will came in. And the next day, it was raining. It opened for the public, but it's raining. So Will comes up to my office and sits in, overlooking the harbor. We're sitting in my office, talking. And Will says, yeah. He says, we're thinking about building a new Dove. I said, really? He said, oh, yeah. She's got some rot problems and all this. He said, what I'm trying to do is, I want to build it down there. I want to get them to build a boat shop. Machinery [Redacted] and all. Then we can build it, and we can build small boats. We can take care of the boats. We'll have the materials there and all.

It's not a problem. And I'm trying to talk my board of governors into doing that. He said, but if I can't do that, could you build it here? I said, yeah. We can build it. All right, do that. So Will goes back. And he tries to convince his board of governors, and they didn't do it. So a few years later, Will calls me and says, you still think you can do that? I said, we can do that.

JD: I didn't realize it started that long ago, the discussion.

RS: [01:29:12] Well, it was just between Will and I. So and I went over here and said, what do you think? Langley said, I don't know. What do you think about that? Well, then Langley left, and Kristen came in. She was on it like white on rice.

JD: So you were doing some piece work for the build. Tell me what you're working on in the heat.

RS: [01:29:40] Joe has been trying to get me to do [**Refulaiz** Hoves?]. That's not going to happen. And Joe has been wanting [inaudible]. I've got some stuff. You're going to do some stuff for me, Joe says. When I first retired, they were just finishing up the *Edna Lockwood*. And the billethead from the *Edna Lockwood* was so old and so sanded, you could hardly see the design anymore. And it was just, it was rotted. You'd shake it. It would rattle it. So I carved a new billet head for the *Edna Lockwood*, and Pete

has the old one in the collection. And I carved [inaudible] originally. It's clean lines. That was my, last thing, I did on my own time after I retired. I gave it to Mike. He put it on the *Edna*. So Joe says, I'm going to get you to do some stuff. He keeps asking me this. He called me and said, you want to... Because I do a lot of work on the lathe. And I turned dead-eyes for *Edna*, I guess, a couple of years ago. He said, you want to turn the belaying pins for... Well, I had turned belaying pins for... We used to have schooners going down the coast that would stop in the museum. This was a place they could stop in for a couple of days with no dockage fee. If they were coming north from being in the Caribbean, they had to bring me and Robin each a bottle of rum. Had to have them sneak it into the country and give it to us. But it was a place they could come and work, if I knew the guys. I knew almost all the captains and all. They would use the shop. You'd have small repairs. You need the planer or the table saw. Use it. So where did I go with that?

JD: You were talking about putting in the belaying pins.

RS: [01:31:25] Oh, so one of them needed belaying pins. So I turned... And then they were leaving. They said, here's one. But we need a dozen more. So I took the lines off, and I gave them back. Took the lines. I said, okay.

Said, [inaudible]. They said, oh, that'd be good. So I turned it. It was one of those pieces of osage. It was bright yellow. I mean, electric yellow. And I turned these 12 things. And I'm going to charge them 100 bucks or whatever it was at the time. And we just got a tool from DeWalt. And it was in a bright yellow DeWalt box. So I put the bright yellow pins in the bright yellow box, and they thought it was great. [inaudible] So I turned belaying pins... Okay, I'll turn belaying pins for you. Joe says, well, there's a lot of them. He said, but I have money to pay a subcontractor. So I said, okay. I said, but Joe, I'm not worried about that. He goes, well, there's 57 of them. I said, oh, well, you're paying me. Yeah, I'll give you 10 or 12. I ain't doing more than that. So Sam Hildgarden, the rigger and I, are talking. And I did some research online and found a design of pre-1753... These are the proportions of belaying pins. The reason being, they're heavier than belaying pins you would normally make now. They look kind of stocky. But a rope at that time was hand-spun, hand-woven rope. And it was not as flexible as rope is now. So the belaying pins were bigger so that the rope didn't have so tight a bend. And that's why then, when they got machines in the 1750s, they could make smaller belaying pins that had better rope. So

we found all this information. So I made it. They gave me some [**blances?**]. I made a couple. Sam said, oh, those are great. They may not be big enough. So [inaudible], he gave me overall length, diameter of the head, diameter of the shaft. He said, the rest of the proportions are up to you. So I had a set of proportions from these old belaying pins. So I plugged his parameters into it and come up with this. And I told him, this is what you need for... He'd give me a couple of blanks, and I'd turn one of the small ones and one of the big ones. Sam said, perfect. That's what I want. So they cut the rest of the blanks. Sam and I tried to talk Joe into either Osage or locust. Joe wanted to go with the angelique. He's got a lot more of the angelique. So Sam's not a big fan of it. I said, it's your belaying pins. Whatever you want. So they cut me all these blanks of angelique. I should know better.

Angelique is a tropical wood from the Caribbean, in Central America. So I turned the first couple. I usually don't turn much in the summer, because my shop gets hot. I had put a portable air conditioner in the window recently. It's helped. But I didn't wear my mask that first day. And angelique turns, some woods turn a very smooth surface. Angelique, I had chunks flying off about half the size of your little fingernail. I could race this stuff off, and my

arm would be sharp. Race this stuff off. But it's leaving a rougher surface, even after I smoothed it all. So it had to be sanded a lot. So I'm sanding on the lathe, spinning both directions. Sixty grit 80, 100, 120, 150, 220, 320, and steel wool. A lot of sanding dust. That first day I didn't wear my mask cause it was hot. That's the last day I haven't worn my mask in my shop. The dust from that stuff is still in my lungs. That's why my voice is like it is. It's still raspy. There's never been... It's not like I've got a cold or something. It's a dry, rasping cough. And it's caused by that angelique dust. It's getting better, but it's been five weeks.

JD: Oh my gosh. Did you go to the doctor?

RS: [01:35:33] No, I haven't seen a doctor about it. It's known for doing this. And it does work its way out. So and I talked to my brother, who has done a lot of, after he left the museum, a lot of housebuilding. And he worked with Corey Penwell, furniture and all. And they've had to use some exotic woods. And Johnny said, angelique, oh yeah. He said, you can't breathe that stuff. I turned some wood. One of the governors' wives had this piece of dark wood, really beautiful, heavy wood. I turned that. I said, this can't be good. I put my mask on. But outside the mask, my neck, hives. Well, it's rosewood. So I went

to my brother, went up to Johnny. He goes, oh, you idiot. Rosewood is the worst. It's notorious. He said, remember about five years ago? I go, oh yeah. Johnny came home. He had a mask on and goggles, and everything else was blistered out. He said, that's rosewood. It's notorious. So I just have to be more careful.

JD: Are you almost done?

RS: [01:36:43] I've turned 14 small ones and 32 of the bigger ones. The small ones are 15 and three-quarter long. The biggers are eighteen and a half inches long. They want eight more of the bigger ones. But Sam wants the... These are going to be the lines that are under more constant strain. So he wants them out of black locust. He's like, I just don't trust the angelique for these eight pins. So that's fine. I'll wear my mask, but I'm not as worried because it's a local wood. Local woods are not as bad for you as these exotic, African and South American woods that are more dangerous. And Farley's ready to kick my ass, because he said, I warned you about that. I said, did you?

JD: So the major, one of the major differences I know is in the selection of woods. But as you said, we're making, CBMM is making conscious choices to make sure this boat lasts.

RS: [01:37:40] Yeah. It was... And belaying pins are, they're not a structural element. But they have to be strong. I

think the angelique will do for most of them, because they are fairly heavy [scalings?]. But the black locust will obviously be much better. This boat is not being built to the Secretary of the Interior's guidelines. This is a new design. With the knowledge we have now, Iver Frazen drew the plans up. We are not recreating an existing boat. We are not restoring it. So there are things they can do. Now, they're doing it traditionally. The trunnels and the whole thing, it's great. They're doing a great job. But it's like the *Kalmar Nyckel* or some of the things like that, the second *Pride*. You can use different woods. You don't have to use local wood. The Dove would have been built in England. England has no wood anymore because they leveled their forests. So the angelique is a South American wood. Live oak from South Carolina, Georgia. All these different kinds of wood. It's fine. I have no qualms about that at all. You want this to last. This is a historic representation. And it's going to be able to carry passengers and be coast-guard certified and all. You want this thing to last. The coast guard's going to go over this thing with a fine-tooth comb every freakin' year. And if they find rot, you're in trouble. So it behooves them to use this, do this type of wood, work. I think

they're doing a great job. The boat looks phenomenal.

Just don't breathe the dust at all.

JD: All right. Well, I'm sure we could talk about some more, and probably more specifics about the boatyard. But that's probably good enough for today. Anything you want to add in particular about Dove or Mr. Jim, which is...

RS: [01:39:51] You talked to Wort Hawkinson, right?

JD: I did.

RS: [01:39:56] Okay, Worty is very much like his father. Did you ever see Dr. Jon [Movequick?]

JD: No, not now especially.

RS: [01:40:04] He's a very pasty individual. So is Worty, that same way.

JD: Speaking to him, he was very measured. We were speaking online, and so I couldn't see him. And he would pause to think. And you know, you don't have that visual cue. So I kept interrupting him, and I felt terrible. And then I got used to his pace. Very thoughtful, very deliberate. He was wonderful.

RS: [01:40:26] We'd take the whole crew from here. I wasn't working on the [under?] crew at that time, the first rebuild. And we'd go up to Mystic for the wooden boat show there. And my brother and I and Wort, Mark Brower and everybody, Flash Foss. We'd take Worty up, and he was

still... Wort, he started young on these boats. He was still like 21 or something. It was like we'd go into a restaurant, and we'd order breakfast. I want eggs over easy. And then we'd stand back and watch the waitress talk to Wort. And Wort would go, well, I was thinking I might want some eggs. But then I was thinking I might like, them pancakes look pretty damn good, too. But I was thinking, I like my scrambled eggs a little bit runny. He's talking. And the waitress would just be shaking her head, like [inaudible]. God, I love the boy. He's wonderful. So when Mr. Jim's wife, Generva, had Alzheimer's. And it was a long, slow process. She stayed at home because the two daughters, Judy and her sister, were there. And she ended up in the fetal position, the whole thing. It was hard. So when Ms. Generva died, we thought the weight would be lifted off Mr. Jim. Well, like my grandfather, he pretty much passed away about four months later. Basically broken heart, you know. So in the meantime, just after Generva had died, Judge North knew Mr. Jim. So the judge drove down to Dorchester and got Mr. Jim one day and brought him up to the museum. I hadn't seen Jim in a while. We were talking. And we had *Edmees* in the shop. And a lot of the work had been done over at Higgins. And we're finishing up. Well, *Edmee* had been his boat. When they, you know

the houses down there are stone, right? Well, Tommy's is a log cabin, but the rest of them are stone. The women do the stone work. Well, you need sand to do stone work, right? So after working at the yard, and this was, I don't know when this was. Forties? Fifties? Sixties? I don't know. Jim would, one day after work, put a plank and a wheelbarrow into *Edmee*. Had a different name at that point. And sail her down to Cambridge. To the gravel yard. Put the plank out, load -- with a shovel -- wheelbarrows full of sand. Dump them in the bottom of the boat. Filled the boat up. Ms. Generva would drive the pickup truck down and pick him up, take him back home, have dinner. He'd work the next day. Ms. Generva, after work, would drive him down to Cambridge. He'd sail the boat back to the yard, put the plank out, load the wheelbarrow, and roll it down. And that's where they got the sand to make the stone houses. So that had been his boat. The boat was sitting there, not being used. And Bill Coombs saw it. Said, what about, you know, could that be a racing canoe? Could be. What does it need? Well, Mr. Jim said, new mast, this, that. Probably want to glass the hull or do what all they do now. They didn't glass the hull. Can you do it? Sure. So Bill Coombs paid to have it done, gave the boat to the museum. We worked on it a number of years,

sailing. Then it was, this boat needs some major work. We took it over to Higgins, glassed the whole thing. We laminated the decks, the whole thing. So we've got it over here, finishing up. And it's on a trailer in there. And the judge brings Mr. Jim down to look. Mr. Jim and I are talking. I said, you know, Mr. Jim, Wort works over there at Higgins. Wort did a lot of work on that boat, a lot of that. Mr. Jim goes, oh, Wort's a good boy. I always liked him. He said, I learned about him purt quick, though. What's that, Mr. Jim? He said, well, we'd go to move something, like say this boat. We'd go to push it on this trailer, down the other side of the yard. And I'd say, Wort, you come back here with me and push. Because I knew if we had him in front pulling, we'd run him over.

JD: Cause he was slow and deliberate.

RS: [01:45:30] But Jim, he was funny. Mr. Jim had a wonderful sense of humor. There was a picture that was on one of the cabinets of Mr. Jim, the buy boat, because it was named after him. Bill Coombs named it after him. And it was Jim with that pork pie hat with a shitty grin, just like that. He would turn out like that. The camera'd come out, and it didn't look like him at all, you know? But he'd flash that smile for the camera, take the picture. [inaudible] It was a perfect picture of him.

JD: Pretty much everybody said he dealt with the press, and they loved him. And he loved the camera. The camera, the camera loved him. But nobody else, it was kind of irritating, for instance, during the Dove project, all the...

RS: [01:46:17] There were so many people. And then when he was trying to build the Bugeye himself, which he put that aside when he did the *Adventure*. He put it aside, and he did the Dove. He goes back on the Bugeye. He built that Bugeye. She's planked in oak, planks that thick. And she's not the fine aft. She's more like a watermelon back aft, really full back there. He bent those planks in there by himself. I have no idea how he did it. There's a picture the artist did of him, sitting there with the young boy.

JD: Yes, George Ray.

RS: [01:46:48] That's one of his grandsons. But there were so many hangers-on [inaudible]. The old man would never say anything, but it was driving him nuts that he couldn't get enough work done because the hangers-on were there.

JD: But yet that did kind of seal his legacy, publicity, I think perhaps more so than others. I was wondering to what extent he came to represent a whole generation of boat builders. They talked then about it being a dying art. But we're still doing it. And I talked to somebody else

about this. Do you think that's why he became the legend he is? Or do you think it was...

RS: [01:47:30] Because he's a very good boat builder. It's a combination of the two. Because he was doing the stuff for the Smithsonian, articles were written about that. Because he did the Dove, articles are written about that. The *Baltimore Sun* had articles about it. Then the *Baltimore Sun* came back and did the article that I gave you about the sisters. So he became better... Oh, Mr. Jim. Oh, there's a guy on the Eastern Shore, young reporter. Gotta go talk to him about that project you were working on. Nobody came down to talk to Bronza Parks. He was just running a whole huge shipyard by himself, with his crew, cranking out boats. Nobody went to talk to a [inaudible] or anybody. But Jim, because the projects he worked on... And there may have been... I don't know whether there was... It's not jealousy. It's just people at the museum just shake their head. Because when Leslie ran the PR department, Leslie's a really good friend of mine. I was the poster boy of the museum. I was 35 years old. I didn't look like this all the time. I used to look good. Pictures, every picture. Then when Tracey took over, years later, nobody tells Tracey, you have to get the magazine out. It's got to go out in a month and a half. [inaudible] It's only like 12

pages, the magazine the first time, because she had no time to do anything. And oh, I got a picture. Pricel printed it. There were 12 pages to that magazine. There were 16 pictures of me. And people, they just laughed about it. My guys gave me a hard time about it. And the other boat builders probably gave Jim a hard time about it. But he was just the one that did those projects that got the spotlight. When I talked to the Judge [inaudible] thing that ended up convincing the museum to send the boat, the Flying Cloud to be done in Oxford, I said because if Freddy Kemp works on it, I have no qualms about it. Freddy and I worked together at Higgins, restored two canoes together. Freddy's the best there is. Nobody knows Freddy Kemp, because he used to work here. But it was long before the museum was famous of any kind. He just works down in a small yard down in Oxford. I happened to work in the museum when publicity became a big thing, so I'm known all over the place. Magazine articles and everything. Freddy Kemp is much better than I am. Nobody knows that. So it depends.

JD: Yeah. So a lot of people work, equally skilled, work not necessarily in obscurity, but work quietly. Pass on their skills, and others just seem to garner the spotlight for whatever circumstances.

RS: [01:50:15] You ever seen a picture of Joe Liener? No?

JD: I know who Joe... Yeah, I don't think I have. I'm sure there's one somewhere. His name is all over collections and work here at this museum, but I can't tell you I have an image to go with him.

RS: [01:50:30] In my career at the museum, as the boat builder and boatyard manager and curator, Joe was the single largest influence, by far. But don't take his picture. There is a picture. I said Tracey, don't show that, for God's sake. Good work on *Edna*. You don't pull the spars out on a Bugeye every year like you do on a racing boat or something. The spars are put in, and you caulk around the mast step. Right now, the partners on the deck are level, so it's water-tight there. And you go up in the boatswain's chair, and you deal with it. You wipe it down, and I Vaseline it every year. And I'll paint the white tips. But every about 10 or 12 years, I pull it out. So Tom and I pulled it out. We put it back in. We pulled it back out before the start of the rebuild, right? And I said, Tracey, come here. I've got the spars out there, laying on the ground. I said, look at that. And on the bottom of each of those spars is a silver dollar, 1889. Tracey said, you know, I said, don't take, don't you do that. You put it out there that's there 1889 silver

dollars, someone's gonna come steal them. I was serious. I thought they would. But there are a few pictures of Joe -- and I gave them to Pete, I guess -- that I found in my own pictures and going through stuff. There's a picture of Joe Liener with his Carhartts on, because it's wintertime. They're working, you know. And they just, they finished the masts. And he's got two silver dollars in his hand. He got the silver dollars. He found them. And he drilled the holes, and he nailed them in the bottom of the spars. There's a picture of him holding those two silver dollars. Then there's another picture, and it's a great picture. *Edna Lockwood*, under what was the pole shed we had then. And top sides are done. Decks are framed in. All blocked and no decking is up. It's all framed in. And my brother's standing in the bottom of the boat, so the deck beams are about this high on Johnny. And his hair's not even starting to go gray yet, so this is a long time ago. And Joe Liener is standing on the deck beams, crouched down next to Johnny, explaining something. It's a classic picture. Joe's teaching my brother something right then that he knows today and has used a thousand times, because Joe was the best there was. It's just a great picture of him as teacher. But there weren't many. He didn't like picture-taking.

JD: That's great. You ready to wrap this up for now?

RS: [01:53:14] Whatever you want. It's your game. [break in audio) for the museum. You're the first members. You owe me \$10. My parents are the first members of the Maritime Museum. Yeah, they were members number one. You didn't argue with Vipa. She said, you owe me \$10. That was it. So they started this museum. So my father, at this point, we'd cover the boat up. But still, it needed work. And we weren't [*dumb*?] enough. . At that point, I wasn't spending any summers down here, because my parents were both up in New York [Connecticut] working. So we didn't sail the boat at all. He called R.J. Holt to take over the museum as first director. So Dad called R.J. and said, we have scrappy cat number two. Oh, it's great. He said, do you want it? R.J. said, oh yeah, we'd love it. Here's where it is. Go get it. Oh no, you have to bring it to us. Well, we're in Connecticut. And it's my father with three little kids. And it just didn't happen. And another hurricane came, and she got washed further back into the marsh ... There's a little cut like that on the far end. We pulled it up. She got crushed a little bit. [and we were gone?]. Because R.J. wouldn't come get it.

JD: Right. So it was the result. We just have the rigging and the sails.

RS: [01:54:33] Yeah.

JD: Well, I'm hoping we can get it up and... Image of the receipt, the invoice for the sails from 1960 onwards.

RS: [01:54:43] And they are incredible boats. They are amazing boats.

JD: Well apparently. So that's a story in and of itself. But as I said, the connection, we found the connection with the [inaudible] Yacht Club, I think which kind of adopted it as one of their...

RS: [01:54:56] Yeah. They have three down there. And then Bill Lane was a member of the, not the Bill Lane that's on the board now. But his father, old Bill Lane had dated my mother years ago, before my parents married. Later in life, built a scrappy cat. And she was plywood hull, which is what you do with a scrappy cat, the hull shape. And laminated decks of fir and pine, I think, alternating stripes. And she was in the collection. So every small craft I'd get, Pete said, that's fine. If the boat's bulletproof, I'd get it out, rig it. We'd launch it over by the boat shop. I'd rig her up, sail her around. And we'd race her during small craft weekend. We had the most spirited races [inaudible] one time.

JD: But there's not too many, there's not many scrappy cats left now, right?

RS: [01:55:48] No, there are not. It's a shame, because it's a really, really nice... Of the old designs, comets were more, were better racing class, people thought. The scrappy cat was going to be a racing class for beginners because it was a cat boat rig, just one sail, no jib. That was the thought for a while, because they were easier for kids. But then it became that, well, you're not learning to sail a jib. What are you doing? So scrappy cats... They could also capsize. So a scrappy cat, we'd have these races between *Mary Ann*, the little canoe. I put that into the river every year, rigged. And John, Leigh Ann, and I would sail *Mary Ann*. And Bill Lane, the young Bill Lane and his wife would sail the scrappy cat. And forget everybody else in the small boat, the MASCF race. They didn't count. These two were the two fastest out there. It was like a canoe. Scrappy cat every bit as fast. It's amazing. We had races coming down through boats in the harbor like this, ducking in between these different boats. And they were headed, and we were headed. It was great.

JD: This was Small Craft Festival?

RS: [01:56:55] Yeah. Great, great races between the two. Festivals' over. Scrappy cat's still in the water. Robin and I are just starting to date, I think. And Robin, you want to go for a sail? Well, she'd never sailed small

boats. All she ever sailed was a big cat boat that was built by a friend of mine that her ex-husband had bought. It was a 26-foot cat boat, big boat, cat and the whole thing. And then they bought a 25-foot [inaudible] to see if she could sail that. She'd never been much on small boats. So I said, come on, let's go for a sail. So we go out. And they've done operations on both my hands. There's scars all around. They took my thumbs apart and rebuilt them, because it was osteoarthritis. So I had double operations. So my hand is in a cast to the elbow, right. I'm not supposed to get it wet. So Robin and me, and we get the ice to sail it and go for a sail. We're sailing downwind. It's blowing pretty good. We're down across the river. And I should have, I know it was blowing. And I'm not quite as agile as I should be, because I've got one hand in a cast. But of course, what do I think? I'm young and agile. What the hell? So I should have not jibbed. I should have chicken jibbed and tacked all the way through, all the way around. I did. We tried to jibe. Puff caught us. I couldn't release the line quick enough, because I had to reach because of my other hand. We capsized. We're across the river. It's six o'clock at night. So we get the sail down, get the boat balanced up. The *Patriot* goes by. They wave at us.

They didn't see what was going on. Get it bailed out part way, and then a wave would break. This is going to be a long night. So all of a sudden, this boat comes out of nowhere. It's a 1945 *Mathews*, coming up the river. We wave, and they see us. They come over. Well, Robin at this point, Small Craft is the first weekend in October. So it's the middle of October. It's chilly. She's shivering awful. So they take her on board the *Mathews*. Take a tow line, and they tow me. As they're towing, I can bail more and more. Now, I'm not going to capsize like that. I'm getting cold, too, but I kept my hand by the whole time, somehow. And I'm bailing with the other hand, getting bailed out. And they tow us in. My wife has still not forgiven me for that. She still remembers that moment, for some reason.

JD: So these are the sails that are in the collection. They were brand new, but they have been used. They were used on several occasions for...

RS: [01:59:35] No. That was Bill Lane's boat. That's the boat that Bill Lane built. And those are...

JD: His sails, okay.

RS: [01:59:42] The ones that, they were up... My mother died in 2014. It was not long before she went to the nursing home. We were cleaning some stuff out. It was like 2012, 2010.

We find this, Mom, those are the sails from the scrappy cat, which has been gone for years. I said, Pete might want this [inaudible] because they're Downs Curtis. We'd just gotten the Downs Curtis collection. So that's when she said, if Pete wants them, that's fine. So she gifted the whole thing, done. But when I think back, and I didn't know how old the sails were when they got them. But when I saw the invoice from Downs Curtis, and I saw the date, I showed it to my brother. And Johnny said, that's got to be just before Pol was diagnosed with cancer. And after that, they didn't sail. She was in the hospital for nine months. So I don't know if those sails were ever used on the boat that eventually died in the marsh. I know the sail's in good shape, because we had it on display. It was beautiful. But I think that's why. But I didn't know did Gar get them in '52 or '56? He bought them in 1960. And Pol died in March of '61.

JD: All right, well thanks for getting that in.

END OF AUDIO FILE