

OH Iris Robertson

SHEA: Let's just start. Ready?

ROBERTSON: [00:00:01] Yeah. Hi, my name is Iris Robertson.

I was born on September 27th in 1958, and when I was born to Bridge and Esther Hunt of Shelter Island, they named me Selina, S-E-L-I-N-A. And then my middle name was Wilson, in honor of my father's grandmother, and then the last surname was Hunt, my father's surname. My mom...my mother was...when she was born was Mildred Esther Hird, and she hated the name Mildred. So when she got married, she dropped it and became Esther Hird Hunt. So her father's surname, Hird, H-I-R-D, the "I" unusual. Most Hirds are H-U-R-D. But H-I-R-D. It was her father that built my family's boat, which I believe is the "Auspices" for this interview. So I've morphed from Selina Wilson Hunt to Iris Robertson. I'm married to a lovely man whose surname is Robertson, R-O-B-E-R-T-S-O-N, and I grew up on the east end of Long Island, New York, Shelter Island, concurrently with the suburbs of New York. My father worked in the city, and we grew up in Montclair, New Jersey during the winter months. And then we summered and vacationed out on Shelter Island. My great-grandfather had bought a house there back

in the 1880s, and my grandfather bought the house next door, and my mother built a property on the house next to that. So I grew up in an area almost like a compound, with this family...this bastillion of family households with the *Selina* floating out in front. *Selina* was my grandfather's yacht. He was a man of means, and he enjoyed his toys, and he had had a boat previous to her named *Selina* in honor of his mother, my great-grandmother. But that boat was long and skinny, and had rolled quite violently when they were on a family outing. My grandmother had the kids aboard. My aunt Elizabeth, maybe nine, Uncle Sam's maybe six, mother's an infant, one years old. And the boat got rolling so violently that a little water slopped into it, and I can only imagine that my grandmother said, "Get rid of the boat!" So within a year's time of that incident, my grandparents were invited to go sailing on a friend's catboat. Cat-rigged means the mast is all the way far forward at the bow of the boat, boom relatively long for the length. Traditionally, boats that carried the cat-rig were half as wide as they were long, and because of that width, they're inherently very stable. That made my grandmother feel comfortable. She encouraged my grandfather to have another boat built, and he went to the

boat builder that had built his first boat, pointed at a Crosby designed Cat and said, "I want one like that, but bigger." So he was a man of means. He liked his toys. He wanted a big catboat. The boat builder said, "Mr. Hird, I'd be happy to build that boat for you, but that's a catboat. That's a sailboat." And my grandfather said, "Yes?" He said, "Well, that means it has a centerboard. And centerboard trunks, they tend to leak. Uh-huh. And they're often a source of rot. And I've only ever been building power boats, and I don't know how to build them." My grandfather said, "We'll skip it. I'm not planning to sail the boat. I'm just getting it because the misses said I could." So *Selina* does not have a centerboard trunk. It did not rot out, and it is I'm pretty sure the main...well, it's a hugely contributing reason for why she's here. I think that the amount of repair work that would have had to have happened to make a boat survive its centerboard trunk problems wouldn't have happened. Trust me, there was enough work as it was without something like that. So that's kind of a fun...a mishap of history provided the outcome of longevity, where so many other older boats don't exist anymore. That, combined with the fact that my family was willing to roll up their sleeves. The boat had always

taken really good care of us, and then we took really good care of her. So it's been a symbiotic relationship through the years.

SHEA: How old is she?

ROBERTSON: [00:04:47] The boat was built in 1926. She was built on the east end of Long Island, on the north fork, a little town called Greenport, and she spent the first 75 years of her service on a mooring in front of my people's place, as I just said, in Dering Harbor. So my grandfather, her master from '26 when she is launched...and actually he and his brother shared in the project, but he was her master from '26 until '62. 36 years. Really quite extraordinary. And then my folks were her stewards from '62 until 2001. Comes through on my mother's side. So that's 39 years. 36 and 39. 75 years on the mooring in front of my people's place there. But I had escaped from Long Island in 1981 and emigrated to the eastern shore. They take your passport and they stamp it when you come here. [Laughs] I'd moved to an island down in Tangier Sound called Frenchtown. I'd made my home here, and 20 years later when it gets to be my watch, it's 2001 and it's my turn to take over the boat. I had a choice. I'm either going to move back to Long Island to take care of the boat,

or I'm going to bring her here to the Chesapeake Bay region where I've made my home. So to Chesapeake Bay she came. She was not in the best of shape when I got her, and I spent the first year refurbishing the boat. I had asked father at the time I picked her up, I said, "Pops," I said, "How much do you spend every year to maintain the boat?" And when he told me, I was like [gasps], "Oh my God." It was a huge number, and it wasn't big enough. The boat wasn't in the best shape. So I literally had to figure out how to float the boat, and I ended up doing what many people before me have done. You hang out a shingle that says, "Sailboat Rides," and you cut a deal with the boat. You say, "I'll keep you spiffy if you make nice with the guests." So that's what we've done. It was nine months with three men working full time at Mr. James Richardson's shipyard down in the Neck District off of Cambridge. Do you know it? Off the Choptank. And so she was there. Mr. Jim's son-in-law, Tom Howell, who had been the boat shop director at the Maritime Museum up until his retirement in the '90s, he took the project on, and helped me out with her. And we relaunched *Selina* in August of 2002. And I had a very abbreviated first charter boat season that fall out of Cambridge. I think I took about six paying guests,

to be honest with you. [Laughs] It might have been two or three trips, that's all the more it was. But, you know, an interesting thing about that was at that time, a man named Bill Meyer, who had crewed for my parents on *Selina* in the 1960s, had contacted me. He'd just retired from being a professor, an English professor...I can't remember. It was either Yale or Harvard, or it was one of the big schools up in New England. Anyhow, he'd retired from there, and he'd been teaching kids to write, and he thought, you know really, I ought to in my retirement have my second career and be a writer. And he thought, "What better way to start than to write about something I love, which are boats and their families?" And so he contacted me to do an interview, and I invited him down, and he jumped aboard the boat that October on the Choptank to do the interview, and relived so much of his youth. He had been in college. It was a college job for him, and he had come to Shelter Island. He'd gone to Tuttle's Boatyard and had asked Tuts for a job. And Alfred said, "Well, I've already staffed my yard for the summer, but you know, Mr. Hunt could probably use a little extra help with the *Selina*. She's got a lot of varnish on her, and I think he'd like to get that spiffied up." And so Bill Meyer, he contacted my dad and

said, "I'm looking for a summer job," and my dad worked out a relationship with him where they traded. And Bill Meyer stayed on the boat, became his domicile, in exchange for doing some updates on the boat. And Bill loved, loved, loved this boat. And so the funny story out of that was that after they'd got things going, one day Bill asked my father and said, "How about we take the boat out for a sail?" And my father looked at him and said, "You mean put the sails up?" And Bill said, "Yeah." And my father didn't know quite how to answer that because he really...nobody ever sailed the boat. They didn't sail the boat. She didn't have a centerboard. She leaked like a sieve. The stories of when she was new, sailing, was that the guy that built her hadn't been building sailboats, and he didn't know to put a rabbit in the keel, the keelson. And so the garboards weren't rabbited, and they leaked like a sieve. It took five men to raise the original long strand Egyptian cotton canvas. It weighed a gadrillion pounds. Plus it took five men on a bucket brigade bailing the boat while she was sailing because she leaked so badly. So it was a huge event in my mother's childhood. Maybe once a year they put sails up. And then after my folks took on the boat, it never occurred to them to go sailing.

It just...it just wasn't in the vocabulary. So Bill was relating this story to me...and in my childhood, it was a really big deal to put up sails, but Bill had showed up I'm going to say [sighs] I'm going to say it was the...maybe...maybe 1966-ish. It was in that timeframe. And the sails went up, and the boat didn't sink, and I think after that the boat was sailed at least once or twice a summer in my childhood until she came on my watch. And then after I'd refurbished the boat, I'm running her as a charter boat. We put up the sails four times a day. I sailed her more the first summer I had her than the 75 years combined beforehand. It was really quite extraordinary. My folks came down to visit me more after the boat came to Chesapeake Bay. And they came down, and we put sails up, and both of their eyes were huge. And my mother said, "I'd forgotten how big it is." And my father said something like, "It's just unbelievable this sails." So they're both goggling the sail, and then we put it down and come back in the harbor. I pick up my next guests. We go out. We put the sail up again, and my parents were just...it was like it was extraordinary. Twice in one day. They just couldn't believe I would go in and out of the harbor and put sails up and bring them down, and put sails

up, bring them down. So kind of a funny story. People often ask me how old the sail is. The sail she's carrying now...so this is 2023. The sail she's carrying now is in its seventh season. It was crafted up in Boothbay Harbor. A sailmaker named Nathaniel Wilson, and apparently his family's been making sails for a long time. At least that's my understanding. And this sail is crafted out of a fabric made from North sails called Oceana. Oceana was designed, developed to mime the hand, the color, the feel, the look, the performance of the original long strand Egyptian cotton canvas. I believe it was built for the historic boat community, and the sail has the original design, the vertical panels that go up, because in yesteryear, the fabrics weren't strong enough to sew the panels horizontally. So it's got the vertical panels. It has the row of reef points that the nettles, the little lines that come down that you tie up the sail into a package on the boom when you need to shorten the sail because of high winds, that's all on this sail. There's a bolt rope around the outside. Beautiful hand palm work on it. And occasionally people ask me, "How long do you think that sail will last?" And I said, well, that's interesting because when Mr. Wilson made the first sail for me, the

previous one to this, I asked him the same question. And he said, "Well, that depends." He said, "What's the maximum wind you'll ask the sail to perform under?" And I said, "Oh, that's...probably not too much. I have to think about that. Do you have any suggestions?" And he of course is talking about the size of the boat and the weight and if she's ballasted, and so on and so forth. And as it turns out, really, we reef...we do, we put our first reef in at ten. We put our second reef in really at 11, and by 12, there's a lot of wind out there, and *Selina's* 97 this year, and she's in really good shape structurally. But I like to be ladylike, and I certainly don't want to scare my guests. So we tend to offer the alternative mansion tour up Leeds Creek on the other side of the Miles River. But anyhow, he said, "Well, do you keep it covered when it's not in use? How much sun is it exposed to? How many hours a day are you sailing with it? Do you wash it in between seasons?" He basically interviewed me about all the parameters around what would happen to the sail. And he said, "Well, if the information you've given me is even remotely close to accurate, this sail should last somewhere between 12 to 15 years." And as it turned out, that sail gave me 12 seasons. And the end of its twelfth season, it

still had quite a bit of life in it, but not so much so that Mr. Wilson...because I'd taken it to him for repairs and to get it washed...and he said, "You know, if I were you I'd put this sail on the shelf and get a new sail so that if something happens to the new sail, that you can simply swap them out, and then you won't be out of work. You'll be able to meet your charter obligations, and you won't be under such stress with a sail loft to get the repairs done." And I took that advice. So we replaced that sail with the sail we have currently. I don't think this sail is going to last nearly as long because I've had relief captains, and they push the boat a lot harder than I do. At the end of its sixth season last year, I had to have part of the leech panel repaired where the cringle for the reef...reefing...was. It was all torn out. So I don't...I don't know that we're going to get 12 seasons out of it. But it...they...the story around the first sail actually is quite interesting. So that sail I mentioned, sailed but once a summer or not at all, really didn't see that much service, and it lasted a super long time. In 1976, the folks in New York City figured out how to have the rest of the world help us celebrate our bicentennial. Do you remember Op Sail in New York?

SHEA: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

ROBERTSON: [00:16:58] So Operation Sail [coughs] not only invited tall ships, the Class A boats were anything over 150 feet, so you had boats like the *Vespucci* and of course the flagship for the Coast Guard, the *Eagle*. But they also had Class D boats, anything between 70 and 150 feet, and then the Class C boats, anything under 70 feet. And *Selina* isn't super well known in historic boat circles, but she's known to some degree or another. And since she is the largest surviving catboat as best we know, and with the family story, she ended up with an invitation to go to Op Sail. And my father accepted and had a fabulous time. God, he just loved, loved that event. Before he passed away, I asked him about his career with this boat, and what was his favorite experience. And he said, "Oh, that's easy. Op Sail in 1976." But she still had her original sail then, so she's built in '26. It's now 50 years later in '76, and she's carrying her original sail. Well, it's long strand Egyptian cotton canvas, and the mildew was extensive, which made the sail quite dark. And if you look at photos from Op Sail, first off, she's the only boat to carry a single sail. Second off, the sail is almost a thousand square feet, so it's mammoth, and third, it was

basically black. So you look at this sea of white sails, and there's this dingy dark grey flag sail. [Laughter] And I don't know what the president thought, but the president was on one of the...one of the carriers that was there watching the parade go by, and my father dipped the peak down, which was the...it was like bowing to the king, right? Dipping the peak for the president. And what the...what anybody thought of this...I don't think it looked like a pirate ship, but this dark sail and then she's being...it's called scandalized when you drop the peak like that. Being scandalized passing by. They're like, "What the heck." [Laughs] But that sail lasted until 1984. After Op Sail, every seaport wanted their own festival because Op Sail had been so successful. So there was...there were Port Fests and Sea Fests and Parades of Sail and more Operation Sails. In 1981, there was one in Boston, and in 1984 there was one in Norfolk. And that is *Selina's* range. She's never been further north than Boston and no further south than Norfolk. But in '84 when my father was bringing her down to that Parade of Sail, he was out off the Jersey coast and had decided to put up sails. I couldn't tell you why, but he did. And the wind blew out the sail. So he gets into Atlantic City. They had put in

there for some reprieve, and my father takes...finds a sailmaker, takes the sail to the sailmaker, and the sailmaker starts handling the fabric, and it is disintegrating in his fingers. And he said, "Mr. Hunt, I'm so sorry but there's not...no fabric here that I can sew to. It's just...it's the whole thing is...it's melting. It's disintegrated. It's rotted through." So now my father's in a panic. He's taking the boat to a Parade of Sail, and he has no sail. But it turns out at that point in time there was an old catboat, a big old catboat, that had been pulled up on the Hard, and my father had noticed it, and he found out who the guy was that owned it and approached him about buying the sail off him. And the guy said, "I don't want to sell the sail because I'm planning to restore the boat." And my father looks over at the boat. There's a tree growing out of it. And it apparently was in really horrific repair. And my father looked at it, and looked at this guy and said, "I think you're going to need a lot of funding to fix that boat up." My father pulls a roll of twenties out of his pocket and starts peeling the twenties off. He said, "I don't know how much money you're going to need to..." but the twenties are peeling off the whole time he's talking, "But you're going

to need a lot of money, and I really need a sail. And plus, after you get that boat all fixed up, you're going to want a new sail so that it's beautiful. And I've got this old boat, and it doesn't matter. Can I not please buy that sail off of you?" And that guy relented, and my father took the sail and put it on this boat, and it didn't fit, right? So not one size fits all. And he had to take it into a sailmaker and have it cut to fit. But they managed to get all that done, and father took the boat and the new to him, new to *Selina* sail down to Norfolk, and they paraded with that. I believe that sail was either off of *Sea Fox* or *Westmoreland*. I believe there were only ever four cats built over 40 feet. *Selina's* 41-6 with on deck. She's 44 with the boom hanging out the back. Wilton Crosby built one bigger than her in 1901. Do you remember Virginia Martis. Anyhow, she...when I had...somewhere along the line, she interviewed me. She was a real old boat affectionado, and also a writer. She wrote for a magazine called *Good Old Boats* or *This Old Boat*.

SHEA: *This Old Boat*.

ROBERTSON: [00:22:52] *This Old Boat*. And when I had said *Selina* was the largest surviving catboat, that was like putting a gauntlet down for her. And she started digging,

digging, digging, and she found that Wilton Crosby had built one bigger than *Selina* in 1901, one that was 45 foot on deck but only 15 feet wide. And I don't know that cat's name. If Virginia knew it, I've forgotten it. But anyhow, there was the *Westmoreland*, which was a sister ship to *Selina*, and *Sea Fox*. Those are the names I know of the other big cats. And as best as I know, those cats are gone. I believe *Westmoreland* burned to the waterline during Prohibition. There was...at least the public statement was that she was hit by lightning, and the private sentiment on the street was that it was "white lightning" and the revenueurs were catching up to her, and they burned her to get rid of the evidence so nobody would go to jail. But anyhow...

SHEA: So how did you learn how to sail? Who inspired you?
How did you do it?

ROBERTSON: [00:23:54] Yeah. So, well Mother grew up sailing on *Selina*, and sailing little catboats and, oh, when I was little, what I remember was an Alcott Sailfish. And I was so jealous of the neighbors because they had Sunfish. Most people know the Sunfish. It's got a little well you can put your feet in. The Sailfish is a flat board, so your feet are straight out. It's not nearly as comfortable.

And I can remember whining. What a spoiled little child. Whining, "Why can't we have a Sunfish like our neighbors do?" [Laughs] But Mother would take us out when we were little, really itsy bitsy. We would jump aboard the Sailfish with her, and then somewhere along the line we got farmed out to a very fancy form of daycare called the Shelter Island Yacht Club Sailing Program for Kids. So I got on board a WoodPussy. It's kind of funny. I started out learning to sail on the smallest catboat there is, and I don't...I haven't seen a WoodPussy now in a long, long time. But they were called WoodPussies. And now I've ended up operating the largest catboat there is. Kind of soup to nuts. I had a little 18-foot Herreshoff America, the ones that have the America flag in the sail. I had that as a young adult, but...so I went small, medium, and now large [laughs] on the catboats. So I learned to sail from Mother, and then learned at the yacht club program. To be honest with you, I don't really remember learning to sail. It's kind of like walking and talking. It just came with the package. It's just all part of it. But I've been sailing for a long time now. You know, if I was solo, maybe eight years old. I'm going to be 65 in September. So I've been sailing 57 years. I got a few miles under my

belt [laughs] and I figure in another 10 or 15 years, I'll really know what I'm doing. I'm looking forward to it.
[Laughs].

SHEA: So what do you love about sailing?

ROBERTSON: [00:25:47] I think most people answer that question the same way, and I'm going to not be original. Every day, you learn something new. There's a different challenge. Mother Nature...there's always something that happens that hasn't happened before. So there's the challenge in it. There's a...I don't know, the connection with nature that's so solidifying that makes you feel like you're part...a part of the whole of earth, of nature, of...I don't know. It's just a...it feels really connected. I feel really connected.

SHEA: I haven't heard that before. That's nice. So how did you become a captain?

ROBERTSON: [00:26:31] Well, when I got the boat, I knew I was going to need to...well, let me back up. When I was a kid, I knew the stories of my grandfather having the boat. Having her not only built, but having her staffed. My grandfather was very wealthy. He was an industrialist, and he enjoyed the...he enjoyed a very affluent lifestyle. And so *Selina* had a paid captain aboard. Captain Frank Payne

was on the boat all the time. He would come down and bail her every day, and keep her clean and ready for the family to use. And those stories had been told in my childhood. My parents were wealthy enough they could keep the boat privately, but not staffed. And then when it got to be my watch, it turns out I am the staff. [Laughs] But I had had this idea that I was going to run the boat commercially so that I would have paid captains aboard and I would be like my grandfather, and I'd do the queen's wave. I'd just jump on the boat, and I'd have this yacht that was a captained yacht, you know. That's a fanciful thing that 12-year-olds do. But I conjured that, and I kept that idea with me through my...through my life. And now it gets to be time to get the boat, and I thought that it would make sense for me to get my own captain's license to get the business started before I hired other captains on. So that was the auspices for getting my license. And I really didn't...had no idea what I was doing. [Laughs] I guess I had some idea, but yeah. So I got my license and I started running the boat, and I loved it. I just love it. I enjoy having guests aboard. It's a joy to me to share her with people, and I ran her...I was her only captain from 2002 when she was relaunched after the rebuild up until I met my new

husband, hence the surname Robertson. And it turned out he liked me, and wanted more of my time, so I started looking for relief captains, and I found some. And they started operating the boat, and that gave me the opportunity to spend more time with my...my new sweetheart. And so that happened for I think it was four or five summers that I had relief captain, and I really have only jumped aboard as a guest, doing the queen's wave, I think maybe twice? Three times? With paid captain aboard, because I was running off with Kent and having fun and playing in other places. So...but that's how I got my license, was just...the concept was to start up the charter boat business and then transition to paid captains, which did eventually happen. But that didn't happen until maybe 17 years later, 16 years. [Laughs] And the...John Mara [?], that has the *Patriot* would always say, he said, "You're the hardworking-est captain on Chesapeake Bay." Because he'd see me on the boat in the morning getting ready, and we sail from 10:00 to 12:00, 12:30 to 2:30, 3:00 to 5:00. Then again 5:30 to 7:30, 7:30 to 9:30. We don't put the boat away and get leaving for home until at least 10:00 at night. So it's a 13-hour day, and I was on her seven days a week, six months

a year for however many years. 17 years, something like that. Yeah.

SHEA: So what's it like being a female captain?

ROBERTSON: [00:30:16] I think it's probably the same as being a male captain. My day...the only...the only difference I would say in terms of my gender is I don't have as upper...much upper body strength as men do, so it's much more difficult for me to turn a wrench on the engine. Engines are engineered and developed by men, and so when they are putting them all together, whatever they've got...I don't know. They probably have 250 pounds of torque on their arms, right? And I probably have, I don't know, 100? Something like that. So I need a lot longer bars for the leverage to move some of the...some of the nuts and bolts around. Sometimes I can't get them. I just physically am not strong enough on the engine to turn...turn things.

SHEA: How did you learn how to handle all the engine and all the...all the mechanics of the boat?

ROBERTSON: [00:31:13] So when I got the boat, I didn't know the first thing about engines, and the school of hard knocks teaches you some things, and then eventually you get tired of mechanics blowing smoke up your derriere. That's

a private part of my anatomy. I'm not so happy about that.

[Laughs] So I sent myself over to the Annapolis School of Seamanship and they have a three-day course on the basics of diesel mechanics. And that doesn't make me a diesel mechanic, but I certainly understand how the engine works, and what needs to happen when. It put me in a much better position to be an effective manager of the mechanics that work for me, as opposed to being at their mercy. I'm not at their mercy. And so I'm on top of that. And being able to bleed your own engine comes in really handy. Bleeding the engine's not hard. That doesn't take strength. It takes know...know-how. And so knowing how to bleed an engine, should it get an air pocket in it because...well I don't know. Because you ran out of fuel, because you were a dummy and didn't check your fuel tanks, or [laughs] or any...if it has lost its prime, again, for I don't know what reason, but various things happen. And probably in the 22 years I've had the boat, how many times have I had to bleed? One, two, three...I've probably had to bleed the engine four or five times. So once every...once every four years? Something like that. So when it's that infrequent, you don't have muscle memory around it, so I've got a really good set of instructions. I now have a video that I

can play of my mechanic bleeding it, and but yeah, being able to change the oil, change the impeller, make sure that the fan belt is on right, you know, it's just basic stuff. But between the school of hard knocks and the Annapolis School of Seamanship, and watching the mechanic...they charge extra when you watch, but I don't care. [Laughs] So that's been very useful. I've got some young kids that occasionally crew for me, and now I'm teaching them basics. The kid that's crewing for me now is 20, and he's never changed the oil on his car. And we changed the oil the other day, and so his eyes were so big. It was wonderful. You know, we're changing the oil, and getting it out, and how much you put back in, and we overfilled, and why that's bad for...I don't know if you know why it's bad to put too much oil in an engine, but it makes it froth, and frothing then doesn't provide enough lubricity for the engine. Anyhow, that's a detail. But that was like...so it was kind of fun for me, because I know about an 82,000th of what there is to know about engines, but I could share that with this 20-year-old kid. So that was fun.

SHEA: How about the boat maintenance? Did you know about that when you inherited her? Or is that another...

ROBERTSON: [00:34:12] Well, I had...I'd had an 18-foot Herreshoff America, and once one owns a boat, one finds out that there's maintenance, maintenance, and more maintenance. My husband calls it boat math, all right? Are you ready for boat math? There are 15 things on your list, and you get six done, so there's only 17 left to do.

SHEA: [Laughs] Boat math.

ROBERTSON: [00:34:38] That's boat math. Yeah, yeah. So, I knew that going into it. Did I know anything about wooden boat building? No. Did I know anything about diesel mechanics? No. You know, did I know anything? No. But you learn that as you go. So when I got her, I mentioned that Tom Howell took on the rebuild, and he was kind enough to let me work in the boatyard with him. So I worked side by side with Tom from when the boat arrived here on Chesapeake Bay, it was August 3rd. But I don't believe she ended up at Lloyd's until sometime in September. I don't remember the exact start date there. And then we relaunched in August the following year. So I was in Lloyd's, out at that...at that Mr. Jim's yard for that whole time. And it was fun learning about the original Dove. I don't know if you have any background on that boat, but they built a reproduction of her at the Museum

here recently. But she...the first reproduction of her was built down at Mr. Jim's yard there in the '70s with all the hippies. And so there I am in that yard for nine months, and I heard a lot of Mr. Dove's...excuse me, Mr. Jim and the *Dove* stories, along with all the hippies. It was fun. So the Maritime Museum had an exhibit about that. It was last year. And it was fun because I had never seen the photographs of the hippies. It was fun.

SHEA: They've collected a lot of their stories, that are in the folk life center.

ROBERTSON: [00:36:08] Oh, fantastic. Yeah. Yeah.

SHEA: So how did you become part of this Her Helm project?

ROBERTSON: [00:36:16] Oh, people contact me like...I mean, people contact me all the time about various things. So we just recently were on MPT's [Maryland Public Television] *Get Out of Town*. There's a series in Canada that came down and filmed, and that hasn't been aired yet, but that's going to be coming up. And I don't remember the name. I'm going to have to look it up for you. We've been in photoshoots for J.C. Penney, for...yeah, no, we've been in a lot of catalogs. People come down and use the boat for a photoshoot with the models. So we get contacted. I mean, she's...*Selina's* unique, and has become a bit of an icon

for Chesapeake Bay. Certainly for St. Michael's. If you haven't seen the letterhead for MPTTV, it's of *Selina*. If you go to the visitor's center up on 301, their windows, there's a huge photograph of *Selina*. So we're out there, and people are aware. So that would be the gal that did the photography for Her Helm was poking her noses around who are the women captains in the area? My name is going to come up. If you Google "female captains Chesapeake Bay," I'm going to be on that list. What was his name? Wrote a book about Chesapeake captains, woman captains.

SHEA: I know...I have that book.

ROBERTSON: [00:37:43] Yes. So that's how...

SHEA: Do I remember his name? No.

ROBERTSON: [00:37:45] Yeah...Don. Parks.

SHEA: Don Parks, right.

ROBERTSON: [00:37:49] Don Parks. I found it in there. Yes, so that would be...I mean, you know, if you're...if you're...if you're Googling Chesapeake women...Chesapeake female captains, that book's going to come up, and then there's that list of women. So that's how. She just contacted me and I said, "Okay. Okay, you can come take a photograph." And so she did.

SHEA: So your uniform that you have.

ROBERTSON: [00:38:11] Yes.

SHEA: What's the origin of that? And, you know, it was quite striking when I saw your photograph, and then the other day. It's quite lovely.

ROBERTSON: [00:38:20] Oh, thank you.

SHEA: I have an idea, but what is it?

ROBERTSON: [00:38:24] Hmm. Now you've got me curious what your idea is.

SHEA: Does it harken back to the...the people who would sail the boat for your father?

ROBERTSON: [00:38:33] No.

SHEA: Or your grand...no?

ROBERTSON: [00:38:34] No, it just is...so the...my grandfather's captain, Captain Frank Payne, wore a livery, like a chauffeur.

SHEA: Oh, he did? Oh.

ROBERTSON: [00:38:44] Yeah. That was the...that was the outfit from that era for a ship's captain. Very formal. Double breasted, black suit, black cap, right? No, the...the move to khaki pants probably happened in the '50s, '60s, somewhere in there would be my guess. And then a white blouse is cool and comfortable. I wear my collar up for sun protection. It also is a bit Katherine Hepburn.

And many people make that connotation, and in fact, I have people tell me that. "Has anybody ever told you you look like Katherine Hepburn?" So that, it just evolved out of...

SHEA: She sailed from Essex.

ROBERTSON: [00:39:33] Oh, I did not know that.

SHEA: Along the Long Island Sound. She did, indeed. Mm-hmm.

ROBERTSON: [00:39:37] Huh. Yeah, but that would be...that...that high collar would be a little bit that way. It just evolved. It evolved. Yeah.

SHEA: It's good. Your signature, yeah.

ROBERTSON: [00:39:48] Yeah. Well, and I always wear a very big brimmed hat because of getting so much sun, and despite the fact that I wear a number 100 sunblock and I have a four inch brim, look at me. I'm dark brown, right? Which is not great because the...I can...dermatologists are always yelling at me. What are you going to do? I'm doing my best, and if I die of skin cancer, you've got to die of something, so. Well, that's...it...that's likely going to be my route out because I'm out in the sun so much. You know, if you go to Florida now, all of the guides wear a face covering. You're seeing it now with the guys working

in the yards, mowing lawns and stuff. A lot of people are...have gotten the memo that melanoma is a really...a bad, bad deal. So, yeah.

SHEA: So what's next for *Selina*? How long do you plan to do this? Or what's your next adventure here? Can she go someplace else? What are you thinking?

ROBERTSON: [00:40:44] [Laughs] So I often get the question is there a fourth generation? And the answer is yes. I have a niece named Selina on their seven generations of women in my family that have carried the name. Her daughter is named Selina. Her middle name's Jane, so they...it's Selina Jane, or Jane. But my niece Selina is not a mariner in her own right. However, I have the crosshairs squarely on her and her family because her spouse, Jeff Truelove, is a shipwright...and excuse me, a ship's captain in his own right, and works for a very wealthy patron in New York who collects and races historic wooden sailing vessels. We're talking big boats. So there are a fleet of 39 boats under Jeff's command, and he is eminently qualified to take on one more. [Laughs] And so I floated that idea past them a couple of years back. I wanted them to start thinking about it. And they have finally wrapped their heads around it, and actually on

Mother's birthday...Mother just turned 100 on May 13th. And on her birthday, I went up to Shelter Island for the celebration, and I saw Jeff and Selina, and floated the idea again. And this time, I was a bit more direct. And what I had said was that I had gotten to a place where I'd made a decision about how long I was going to take care of the boat, and when I was going to retire, and what my plans for the boat were next. So let's do the math. My grandfather had the boat 36 years. My folks had the boat 39 years. 36. 39. 42. I looked at my dad. I said, "No." I said, "I'm not taking the boat for 42 years." I said, "Let's make it 25. I'll take care of the boat for 25 years." Well I got her when she was 75. She'll be 100 in 2026, and I thought, "That's a good time for me to...to pass the boat on." The last ten years or so that my grandfather had the boat, he had gotten old and tired, and he wasn't taking good care of her. So when my folks got her, she wasn't in the best of shape, and it took them quite a bit to get her back up to a place where we could use her as our family boat. And then when it got passed on to me, I've already told you. She was not in good shape at all. And so I thought I'm just going to cut the last ten years off. Instead of being her steward for 36 or 42

years, I'm going to take care of her for 25, and I'm going to do a spot on, Bristol-shape job for those years, and then I'm going to hang up my cap while the boat is still in pristine condition. And I still have some time left to go and play and do other things. [Laughs] Because I think both my grandfather and my father were both exhausted at the end of their lives, and I think part of it was that...the burden of taking care of the boat. There's a lot here. It's a lot of my time involved. And I love it. I feel honored to do it, but there's going to get to be a point where I'm going to be tired, and I'd rather spend some of that doing fun things like traveling and going to wineries and all the things everybody loves to do, which I don't do much of, or any of, because I'm working on the boat all the time. So I saw Jeff and Selina at Mother's party, and said, you know, 2026 is her centennial, and I have a choice. Either you guys take her, or I find a museum that will take her, in which case I'll probably have to come up with an endowment. I don't know if you know the story behind *Isabel* at the Maritime Museum, but I understood the museum wouldn't take her without an endowment because she's a liability. There's a tremendous amount of time, energy, effort, and money involved in

maintaining these old wooden boats. So museums won't take on that liability without an endowment. So...but anyhow, I said that to him. Or, just sell her outright. And my nephew-in-law Jeff said, "No, you don't need to do that. We'll be...we'll figure it out," is what he said. And then some more details around it. But that was a birthday party present to me on my mother's hundredth was that the next generation is going to take the boat. And I said to them, I...if it were me, I would take the boat in 2026 for a number of reasons, and that is if you're planning to use her commercially at all to help subsidize the expense of maintaining her, regardless of how you structure that commercial application. I would take her in 2026 because of all of the marketing potential around her centennial. It's the U.S.'s 250th birthday. It's going to be a celebratory anniversary year. There's going to be a lot of energy. I said, "Plus, that's three years from now." Because this is '23. '24, '25, yeah. That's almost four years from now. It doesn't seem like '26 is four years from '23, but if you use your fingers, it is. This is '23...including this year. '23, '24, '25. That's three years. So '26 is four years from now. I don't understand math. [Laughs] So yeah. So I'm hoping that they'll...that

they'll take her, and my grand-nephew is seven now. He'll be ten or eleven then. My grand-niece, Selina Jane, is two, so she'll be five or six, and that will give them both enough of their childhood to create a real deep seeded bond with this boat so that when they go off and have their adult lives, when they're in their mid-40s, they could potentially be the fifth generation. My grandparents were in their mid-40s when the boat was built. My folks were in their mid-40s when it came on their watch. I was in my early 40s when she came on my watch. Jeff and Selina are in their early mid-40s now, so they're going to be the...they're going to be a little bit older than everybody else who's been in their late 40s when it goes on their watch. And if they have her for 25 to 35 years, then Ernest would be in his early 40s. Selina Jane in her late 30s. It's just a cadence that makes sense. So I had encouraged them to take her in 2026. So that means that 2025 is likely my last year operating the boat, and I am going to make that a huge marketing campaign. I can't tell you how many people have told me, "I've always meant to go sailing with you!" People that are local in the area, and that will be their last chance to do it. So that's at

least...that's the crystal ball the way it looks today. I don't know what it looks like tomorrow.

SHEA: And you'll go sailing in the Caribbean.

ROBERTSON: [00:48:26] Well, maybe. Who knows.

SHEA: So what brought you to the Chesapeake?

ROBERTSON: [00:48:30] Oh, I escaped. I mentioned that back in '81. I wanted to live on waterfront property, and I didn't have a pot to piss in. And Tangier Sound, Frenchtown, the property values there are very depressed. You can buy a waterfront property very inexpensively there. And so that's what I did.

SHEA: So how did you find sailing on the Chesapeake compared to Long Island waters?

ROBERTSON: [00:48:57] You know, for me, it's the same. It's water. You've got your boat. It's water. I don't know. Get out and go. I would say the major difference is that there aren't any rocks here, so it's kind of...it's...you can be a little bit more relaxed because there isn't...you don't...there are not outcroppings of rocks that are...that if you hit them with your boat, you've got a hole, right? If you're on Long Island, in that area there's lots and lots of rocks. [Laughs] I don't know. I mean, Chesapeake is known for all of its nooks and crannies, and for gunk

holing, but you can gunk hole up and down the Connecticut coast, Long Island coast, on up into New England. I would say the major difference in the summers is it's bloody hot down here. I mean, it can be hot and sticky on Chesapeake Bay July and August, which is why a lot of people go to Maine in August, is to get away from the heat. I'd say the other big difference is that we have a much longer season here. I start sailing the end of April, and we go to the end of October. That's six months. On Long Island, it's a three-month season. You go from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and that's it. People don't sail before or after that, which I don't understand, but they don't. It's like a light switch.

SHEA: So have you noticed any changes in the bay in the years you've been sailing on her?

ROBERTSON: [00:50:29] Well, I think that...I think there is less and less courtesy from powerboaters and sail boaters. There's always been a conflict between those two cultures, but yesterday, for example...now, it was the end of Memorial Day Weekend, and everybody is peeling out of the harbor to go back to Annapolis, but there were a couple of boats that went by us. We're a historic boat. We've got full sails up. No courtesy at all. Did not come down. In

fact, I had one boat that had putt-putt-putted out of the harbor, but when they were about...I don't know, 150 feet behind us, and instead of getting 150 feet in front of us, to put their pedal to the metal, they put full throttle open and threw a huge, huge wake on us. And I managed it fine because I...we ended up pitching through it, but if they'd been any closer to us, I don't know if I would have had enough time. I had to turn engines on, throttle up to turn the boat around to get to where we could pitch so that we weren't rolling. Because if that...if that wake had hit us rolling, I don't know if we wouldn't have broken some equipment. So I see...and it's...when I say less courtesy, I don't think that that guy did that maliciously. I just think he was just brain dead and he just didn't have a fricking clue. Had no idea. So self-absorbed. He probably had his head down in his charts. When I looked over at him with this quizzical look on my face and I put my hands up like, "What are you doing? Like, really?" He didn't even look at our boat. He didn't even know we were there. And that's not uncommon. That's not uncommon. So I see that. I don't know, yeah. More powerboats, fewer sailboats. That slowly but surely has been morphing that way. People use the word like it's dirty. "Oh, this looks

like a lot of work." And I don't know when Americans became allergic to work, but I see that.

SHEA: So do you have any advice for future generations of female captains here?

ROBERTSON: [00:52:42] There are more and more women who are captains. It used to be the exception, and now it's not. I don't know. I mentioned this 20-year-old kid to you, Colin Hex who's working for me now. He's had...this is his second job working on a boat, and on his first job he had a female captain, and on this boat. So he said, "To me," because that came up, because I think I said, "Well, there aren't that many women captains, and there aren't that many historic boats, and you put historic boat and a woman captain together and we kind of stick out." And he looked at me. You've got to love kids. Out of the mouths of babes, right? He looks at me and he goes, "Well, I've only ever had two jobs on boats, and I've had two female captains, so I don't think it's all that unusual, Captain Iris." [Laughs] And I said, "Okay! Well, I guess not." So that's changed. There are more and more women captains. Right now, in this harbor, one of the captains on the harbor shuttle, Captain Emma, and last year Captain Joyce. So we do have more women captains. Do I have any advice

for women captains? People like it. I get a lot of people that bring young daughters to have a role model for women in positions of authority. I don't know. I mean, it's like...I wouldn't say it's just about being a female captain. It's just about people. What advice would I give young people coming up, regardless of gender and regardless of their jobs would be apply yourself. You know, be good at what you do, and be nice to other people. I know that sounds like the...[laughs] it sounds a little bit like a beauty contest answer. But man, people need to be nice to each other. I had a boat go by me, and it was very discourteous recently, and one of my guests started getting hot under the collar. And I said, "You know what? You've got to have compassion because we all start somewhere, and they probably just don't know." You know, it's like the guy that threw that wake at me. I'm not...am I going to get mad at him? I feel sorry for him that he didn't get the right training. I feel sorry for him that he didn't have the message of being conscientious and being courteous. I mean, how sad is it that that happened? So it's more about a sense of community, of comradery, of connection, as opposed to me. I'm right because I have a historic boat, and you're wrong because you drove your boat

wrong, and so therefore I have a right to be angry. Well, yeah, I do, but that's a lot of energy, and it doesn't serve me well, where compassion, I think, serves us all better. On a rising...you know, rising tide, all boats float.

SHEA: I could end right here, but I'm going to ask you two more questions.

ROBERTSON: [00:55:36] Sure.

SHEA: The other day, you were talking about this memory you have, this special memory, of being on the boat, really feeling at one. And I was wondering if you have any other memories like that?

ROBERTSON: [00:55:55] I don't remember the story I told you, I'm sorry. [Laughs] I do have other stories like that. I've got lots of stories like that. So I'm very connected to the boat. Really connected to the boat. But I think that's true for all captains and their...and their vessels. People know their boats. I don't know what that is, and it's more so someone and their boat than someone and their car or someone and their house, or...there's a much deeper connection. Why that is? I couldn't tell you, but it's there. It may be part of why we refer to boats as the "mother ship." I don't know. But I can tell stories all

day long about the communication between the boat and me. So when I got the boat, my father said, "Honey, talk to her." I'm like, "Okay, Dad." I'm thinking he's a little nuts. But I...over time, I got to understand what he was saying, and truly there is some kind of communication way beyond what you would think. And it's almost as if you're projecting this personality onto the boat, as if she's a living, breathing creature, and I think at the end of the day, that's really what it turns out to be. She really is her own living, breathing creature even though she's made of wood and metal bits. But, you know, the stories I can tell you are, for example, when I got the boat and we took her out of the water down to the boatyard at Lloyd's, and she had been put on a trailer. It was the first time ever on a trailer for the boat. She's 16 feet wide. You can't put...you can't go down a road with this. They moved the boat at 3:00 in the morning. They closed the roads. There's a police escort, and she'd never been on a...on a trailer before, and I think she thought she was on...in a parade or something. I could...I just had this sense that she's doing the queen's wave. She's on parade. "Oh, look at me. Woo. I'm up on a trailer here." We get to the boatyard, and they put her on the jack stands, and then

shut the lights and shut the door. And I'm telling you, that feeling that I had was this intense fear. And I don't think it was me projecting my own fear, because I didn't have any fear. I was so excited. I'd just gotten the boat. I'm going to be refurbishing her. I'm full of enthusiasm. And I feel this huge fear, and I was like...I didn't know what that was. I didn't think too much about it other than it was being weird. Well, I go off and I'm headed back down to Frenchtown, which is almost to Virginia border on the eastern shore. It's about a two-hour drive. And I got...I got down there and I got thinking that I hadn't locked the door to the shop. I was thinking...and I don't...I didn't know that community at the time. As it turns out, it wouldn't have made any difference, but I just didn't know that. And a neighbor who lived in Glenburnie but came down to Frenchtown on the weekends was headed down, and I called them and asked a favor. I said, "Is there any chance that you could check and see if I locked the door to the boatyard?" And gave him directions, and so he goes, and he calls me and he said, "I just want to let you know that I took care of the door." He said, "But I have a really weird question for you." I said, "What?" He said, "When I got to that building," he said, "I

just...there was this wall of fear that hit me. I could feel." He said...he said, "I hope you don't think I'm too weird." He said, "Could the boat be frightened?" And I said, "Well, yeah, I guess so." I'm thinking maybe he was right because I had the same feeling. So I came back up to the boat, and I slept on her for three nights, trying to calm her down. And there was no calming her down, and there was just this intense fear out of her. She...all of a sudden she's in a building she's never been in. She's surrounded by people she doesn't really know. She's up on jack stands. There's no water to be seen anywhere because Mr. Jim's yard had completely filled up, right? And she was in really bad shape, really bad shape. And I think she thought she was done, that she was done for, right? And, I mean, what are you going to do? Right, you're just a boat. You're wood. You can't do anything. You have no defense system of your own. So I slept on her for three nights. I was trying to calm her down. But then the guys started working on her, and there was a problem.

ROB: [01:00:57] I'll go get something to eat.

ROBERTSON: [01:00:58] Okay, great. That's my crew, Rob. So yeah, I've got two different mates. One works three days, one works four because we work 13-hour days and that's a

full-time job, three days and four days. So to hell with my seven day, I'm working two full-time jobs. [Laughs] But the men start working on her, and she had gotten rotten at the stem where the hood ends of the planks tie in. And they were repairing it by taking a chainsaw and cutting right through everything. And so they took a chainsaw, which is hard to watch, when somebody takes a chainsaw to the front of your boat and cuts it off. They took a chainsaw and cut the bow off. And that was it. The fear stopped. I'm thinking, "Oh my God, they killed her." I mean it was...it was bizarre, but it just stopped. It completely stopped. So we're working on the boat for nine months. There's not a peep out of the boat. Nothing. We get to a point where we're getting down into the keelson and the...there's rot in places, and Tom Howell, the shipwright, said to me, he said, "I'm going to be doing blah, blah, blah tomorrow, and I need you to be thinking about if I find rot under there, if you want to continue on or not because this is going to go from a big project to massively large, and you need to figure out what you're going to do. If you can...willing to spend that kind of time and money." So he wanders off, and there I am, and I'm talking to the boat. My father said talk to her, and

there I am talking to her, and I haven't, like, "I don't know if you're still with us or not because I haven't heard from you in a long time, but I'm here to tell you right now, I can't go any further, and you'd best not have any rot there because I'm not going to be able to save you if you do." And so that was the conversation. It was a dictum. "If you have rot, you're done. You are done." And I came back the next day, and Tom said, "Well I'm really surprised, but there's no rot there." I was like, "Yes. You go girl." [Laughs] So we relaunch her, and it was August of '02, and I fully expected when she was going to get launched that she was going to...that I was going to hear from her, right? Nothing. And we're on her for a week or so, and then we moved her up the Cambridge Creek to Mid-Shore Electric, right? It's right there on the waterfront. And we tie her off, and I'm into...I'm at my two-hour drive back down to Frenchtown. We're about a half hour into the drive, and my head whips up, and I suck air like [gasps] something's wrong with the boat. And my husband looks over at me and said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I don't know what I mean. I can just...I just know it. Something's wrong with the boat." And this guy looks over at me, and he says...what do you need?

SHEA: I'm just making sure.

ROBERTSON: [01:04:11] He says, "You've just spent a year working on this boat. You've just spent all of our money working on this boat, and now when we're going back home, finally, you're telling me to turn around and go back to the boat. Are you fricking crazy?" And I said, "I don't know, but," you know, I don't want to piss him off, but I know something's wrong with the boat. I really knew it. Lo and behold, we get back to the boat, and the line on the capstan had failed. It had a double half hitch on it, and it had slipped. It was slipping. And the boat had slipped back into the...into the pilings where she was tied up and was pounding her stern, the brand-new stern that we'd just replaced, and doing a lot of damage. And I knew it. So the only time she really says anything to me is when she needs me, but when she needs me, she lets me know. So let's fast forward to that winter. She's finally in the water with a winter cover on, at rest, and I'm down in the Bahamas, fly fishing. A very intense sport called bonefishing, and really focused on that. In the middle of nowhere, another one of...my head jerks up, and I'm sucking air. I'm like [gasps], "Something's wrong with the boat." And this time, hubby doesn't give me a hard time. He said,

"Do we need to go back?" And I said, "I think it's going to be okay until we get back afterwards." You know, why did I say that? I don't know where that came from. We get back to shore. It's 5:00. I run for the phone, pick it up, and call back to the United States. The same friend on the way from Glenburnie down to Frenchtown. I said, "Can you check on the boat? I think something's wrong. I think it's the battery." And what the heck...where did that come from? It's like, I'm in the Bahamas. I've got no connection to the boat, and I think it's the battery. So he gets on board the boat. Lo and behold, the freshwater pump, the hose had come detached. The pump had run endlessly and worn the battery out. Without the battery, there's no bilge pump. Without the bilge pump, the boat is sinking. And she quote unquote called me for help. She let me know she needed help. I mean, how...how amazing is that? So fast forward a couple years, and I have one of the volunteer firefighters in Easton, Mike Zeigler [?] is crewing for me, and he has a job over on the western shore...a regular job, a nine-to-five, Monday through Friday. And he was on the Bay Bridge. He's crossing over on the bridge, and I get a phone call from him. I never get a phone call from Mike, right? Ever. I get this

bizarre...I'm staring, like, I can see on my phone it's Mike Zeigler. I answered the phone and said, "Hey Mike, what's up?" He said, "I don't know." He said, "But I just had this feeling something's wrong with the *Selina*. You need to go down and check on her." "Okay." So apparently she tried to call me, and when I didn't answer the...you know, when I didn't answer the call for help, then she checked in with Mike, and Mike physically called me on the phone and got me down to the boat, and she needed me. How, I mean, how amazing is that? I mean, I don't know how it works. I've got no clue whatsoever, but I just accept that we're very connected and that for my time as her steward, that I take care of her, and she lets...she lets me know. She...sometimes she dope slaps me. Sometimes she asks for help. I mean, but there's a connection here. I can't explain it. It's beyond words. I don't know. But my father was quite right. He said, "Talk to her," and I talk to her all the time. I have people walk along, and people say, "Oh, isn't this a beautiful boat? Look how pretty she is." But sometimes there are people that are by themselves walking by, and I hear them talking to her like they're having a conversation with her, which is really quite stunning, you know? So there was one guy walking by one

time, and he's having a conversation. I can't hear what she's answering. I can only hear what he's saying to her, but there's this long conversation that he's having with her. He's very smitten. And the next day, he brings his wife down to see the boat, and she got really jealous of him and how he was talking about the boat, and she's dragging him off. She did not like the fact that that man was so taken with this boat. It cracked me up. Did that answer your question?

SHEA: Yes. Yes. So before we end it, is there anything else you'd like to add to your story?

ROBERTSON: [01:09:11] I have a ton of stories. We could do this for hours. I don't know which stories you want to hear.

SHEA: Or if there's anything just about your experience that you think we haven't captured. I mean, I really sense this...it's what you said on the boat the other day, that she's taking care of you, and you've taken care of her.

ROBERTSON: [01:09:30] Oh, yeah. Definitely a symbiotic relationship. This boat was built to make my grandmother feel safe, and she has done that, and takes...I think she takes that job very seriously. She's always gotten my family back to the dock safely, even when she coulda,

shoulda, woulda sunk, right? And I mean, I don't take that for granted, but it's...it's really quite extraordinary what this boat has done. After 97 years, there are stories. Hurricanes. She ended up on Big Rock, I think it was after Bob, and they managed to float her off. She had quite a bit of a hole in her from being on a rock, and they patched it up as best they could. They'd put sump pumps on, and she was really sinking, being towed over to whatever lift was going to take her out and do the repairs, and she was really sinking. And I can't remember the details around that, but apparently at the end of the day, they got there without her having sunk. She managed to pull through for them despite having a hole in the bottom of her, you know. So how's that work? I don't know. But it's, you know, it's certainly a testimony to the people who are aboard, and their skills to keep the boat floating. But she has a...she has a...she has a spirit. She has a wonderful spirit.

SHEA: And so do you. Thank you. Thank you, thank you.

ROBERTSON: [01:11:00] Well, thank you.

END OF AUDIO FILE