

OH 521 Hubbard, Richard

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. This is Jenifer Dolde. It is Friday, October 6, 2023. I am here at Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum with my colleague, Gabriella Cantelmo, and... Your first name and last name, and your date of birth, please.
[laughs]

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:00:21] Dick Hubbard, 4/12/1945.

JENIFER DOLDE: Very good, very good. And your full... Your complete... You're Richard?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:00:29] Richard Hubbard, yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, very good. And where... Where were you born?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:00:33] I was born on the... in Easton, Maryland, 415 North Washington Street. And grew up there, and lived there all my life.

JENIFER DOLDE: Were you born at home?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:00:45] I was born in Hoopers Island, actually, because my mother's uncle was a doctor down there, and all the children would... She would take all the children, the three of us, and we were born down there. And my aunt's two children were born down there, which is different. [laughs]

JENIFER DOLDE: It's actually a very interesting story. What was

the... what was the uncle? Was he one of the Cannons?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:01:11] He was... No. Trying to think of his name is. Hmm. I can't think of it right now.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, no, if you think of it. That is a very interesting bit...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:01:26] I'll bring it, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: So, you know, as soon as there were signs that the - the baby was on its way, you went down there, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:01:30] Yeah, they would go down and stay with...with relatives, and then have the child... Children down there. Doc Meade. His name was Doc Meade. He was like a... He had married an aunt...

JENIFER DOLDE: I see.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:01:47] ... back, you know, like a great-aunt, I would say. Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Right. Very good. And so we're going to talk a lot about your family, but I'm very interested... We're interested in you, as well, and your perspective, and how maybe what you did later, you know, help us, maybe, reflect on this time. But so tell me. You know, growing up, your mother was... Did she keep home... House, or...?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:02:11] She was a... She stayed at home and raised the family. And my father was the manager of Sinclair Oil down Easton Point. And later on, as a hobby,

I guess, he started... He built a wooden boat in the basement. And it was ply... I'm assuming it was plywood, and... Let's see. It would have been, I guess, in like '56 or something in that area, I'm guessing. And he built the boat down there and didn't have a way to get it out. And they broke a hole in the basement wall and carried the boat out. And he used to race it locally. I'm assuming they were... I think they were small engines, you know, like 8 or 10 horsepower or something like that. But they were starting to race. I remember vaguely, I think we went down... Came down to Miles River Race, and he took me another place. And he put the boat on the roof of the car, and we went on a family vacation to Florida. And we pulled into a store, and a pharmacist in there saw the boat and bought it from him. Why he took it down there? I think he just... Not really to sell it, but they guy made him an offer, and he came out with a bag full of cash. So...

JENIFER DOLDE: Right.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:03:45] ...that was his... The first boat that he had built that I remember.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure. Well, so, if that... You're remembering that as '56, but the other business started in '56, so maybe...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:03:55] Well, then maybe it was...

JENIFER DOLDE: ...so maybe it was a little...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:03:56] ...it must have been a couple,
three... Two or three years...

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:03:58] ...maybe a couple of years
earlier than that, I would guess.

JENIFER DOLDE: So as you recall, he raced it for maybe a couple
of years [both speaking-unclear].

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:04:04] Yeah, he... It wasn't a lot. He
did it some. And...

JENIFER DOLDE: Was it like... It wasn't a hydroplane. It was
a...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:04:10] No, it wasn't. It was a... I
can't... And truthfully, I wish we had a picture of it.
But it was, like, I... You know, I don't really remember.
It was a small, little race boat, obviously, if you just
put a 10 horsepower on it. But that was, you know, the
going horsepower back then, before they started making
bigger engines.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, it's interesting, because we actually...
We might pull up a picture here at the end. We have a
boat, *Big Bad Sid*, in our collection that is a small...
From a similar era, very small, lightweight thing. And I'm
curious whether it reminds of you of that one.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:04:42] Oh, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: So we'll show it to you before you go to see if it's... You think it might be similar. That visual memory sometimes is...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:04:49] Mm-hmm.

JENIFER DOLDE: ...is pretty powerful, and you were young at the time.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:04:51] Yep.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, before we move on, onto that, I'm just... I'm also curious about, you know, what your growing up years were like. You have two sisters?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:05:01] I have two sisters. Anne was seven years older than I, and Joyce was four. And we lived the whole time at that North Washington Street. And my oldest sister is deceased now. She died about three years ago.

JENIFER DOLDE: What... So what did the family do? It sounds like you did... You did spend time on the water. But tell us what you did for...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:05:28] Well, my parents were very active in bringing the... It was the Methodist church, and they brought together the St. Mark's. He was one of the principals to build the St. Mark's Church in Easton. Let's see. He... I remember, you know, them working on it quite

a bit, and a lot of his friends, you know, signed notes to build that church. So...they were very active in that.

And Dad, he worked... As I said before, Sinclair Oil. And he...then he started... I truly don't remember the whole process now, but he started to build the Skipper Craft boats, and with... Joe Harper was the neighbor near us.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you... What about his father? What did he do, your father's father?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:06:27] My father's father, he had a lot. He was a carpenter. He built the barracks at Parris Island, he told me. He was... You know, I guess they sent crews down there. But actually, I don't remember what...

JENIFER DOLDE: Being in the service, or did they...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:06:47] No, no, no. He was hired to build.

JENIFER DOLDE: I see.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:06:49] And they built the barracks and stuff. I guess they had just started it. But I truly don't know. I just remember him saying he went there. And then he... Back then, they had sewing factories. They were down to Hudson, and they... Every little town would have a sewing factory, and they would make shirts, and pants, and whatever. And he used to manage that. He brought the first electricity to his house in Hudson.

Didn't have running water, but it had lights. And...

JENIFER DOLDE: So interesting. Both sides of your family started in Dorchester.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:07:32] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. Because I did want to ask, and you shared with us the last time you were in, about your mother's father. That's Irving Cannon?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:07:40] Irving Cannon.

JENIFER DOLDE: And his... He was involved with building boats and had a packinghouse? What can... Tell us about that.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:07:47] Yes, he had... My great-grandfather owned a railway at Hooper's Island. And he built boats there. And then the two boys, Irving and Preston... Let's see. When... I've got that right, I think.

JENIFER DOLDE: So your grandfather was Irving. Yeah, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:08:16] Wait. Wait a minute. I think... They called him Hoss. I can't remember what it... Anyway. My grandfather and his brother took over the railway, and then eventually the nephew took it over. And they built... Repaired boats. I don't remember whether they actually built skipjacks. They may have. I don't know. And then my grandfather owned seven at one time, and he fixed them up and sold them to local watermen, and would hold the

paper, and then, you know, they would bring back their products to him to process. He also had some crab houses. He had one in Crocheron, Fishing Creek, I believe. And the other one, I don't remember it, but my aunt told me it was right there at that bridge in Cambridge. Not the one from Talbot to Dorchester, but in town there.

JENIFER DOLDE: The creek, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:09:25] It was on the right, she said, where those condos are, that at one time, that he had it there. And the time periods, I have no idea, [laughs] so...

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, I... Some of these places are documented, and I've seen records of them, so it's nice to make a connection with your family, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:09:41] Right. Yeah, yeah. I never saw it, but yes, yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Absolutely.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:09:44] And...

JENIFER DOLDE: So that connection to the water has been... Was there for a long time...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:09:54] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: ...and certainly, being in Dorchester, the packing houses. He was not... But he was never... Your grandfather was never a waterman himself, or...?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:10:01] No, he was more of a businessman.

Now, my grandfather Hubbard was. He worked on the water some. You know? He did... Like I said, he did a lot of little... a lot of...different things.

JENIFER DOLDE: What was his first name, Grandfather Hubbard?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:10:14] Hamilton.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay. And so as far as you know, oystering as well as crabbing, or are you just not sure?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:10:22] My grandfather?

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:10:23] He... I know... Hmm, I know he mostly was a summertime. He would crab. He would actually pole in a skiff and dip the crabs that way. And I know... I remember him having big floats down there at Hudson, and going to the floats. He would go through, you know, a processor of shedding soft crabs. And then he would... They had a little icehouse in the back. It was... we called it a icehouse. There was a little stream that went through a little building, and the water from that stream somehow helped cool that building down. And I remember... they would deliver ice in big chunks and put it in there to help... And he would keep his crabs and whatever. And then, like, on Saturdays, they would go to Cambridge to sell their...their... His product, you know, soft crabs or

whatever he was selling.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's a very interesting perspective, where...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:11:33] It was in... I remember he took an old Model T. [laughs] And he cut the back of it off and made like a pickup truck. And I remember riding the back roads [laughs] to Cambridge from Hudson. But that's just a memory, you know, [unclear]. [laughs]

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh. That's a... Obviously it sunk in, because you... You're still... You still recall it.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:11:52] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: So... And so that was when you were visiting them, but most of your childhood memories are from Easton, which is a bit different. So what do you remember about the Easton community in your earliest years?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:12:09] [laughs] Just growing up in Easton, it was... Oh, I was on a baseball... Some of the first baseball, Little League, teams in Easton. There was the VFW and the Elks. I'm trying to think. I'm not sure about the American Legion. But anyway, they had about four or five teams that we were... in that. Just growing up in the neighbor... The old-time neighborhood. The kids would play, and get in a yard and play baseball, or they'd get together and... Until dark, they'd whistle for you, and you could come home. So it was very safe. And I

remember... Oh, the... Of course, it was shortly after the war. They were building all the houses back, Mount... Like Mount Pleasant area. Tom Cover, well, he was living in the main house back there. I think it's off... I'm not sure whether it was Wrightson Avenue. But that was the main house. And our house on Washington Street was there, and a couple others. And I remember the bulldozers going in and making all those side streets. There was nothing there but fields. So...

JENIFER DOLDE: Was boating a big part of what you... So, you know, I think about working the water and maybe what life was like in Dorchester, and versus, you know, living in Easton and boating maybe being more of a recreational pastime. Was that something your family did, and was it what lots of people were doing, or was it unique?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:14:01] Not really. You would see some... Obviously, people would, you know, go out on the water and... We... Of course, when Dad had his boat, he... You know, the fact... The company, we would go out. He would take me waterskiing. Numerous days of the week we would go out and ride, and he would take me. But as far as a lot of people on the water? I guess my parents, what we... Our social group did, but I'm sure there was still others that... I... Going back to my grandfather Hubbard,

I remember Dad saying that he used to catch fish trawling on a sailboat. You know, that's... It didn't make any sense, you know, I mean, but that's... But it does make sense when that's the only way they had of power to move the hull. So...

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, I asked the questions about, you know, boating for fun because, you know, we do see that there's a transition, right, where you... Boats are just for work or transportation, to people, you know, using them for fun, which is what most people now experience on the Bay. And so... But the first boat you remember owning is that one from... Built in the basement?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:15:17] That's... Yes. We didn't have any boats. And of course, you've got to remember, they were just bringing in the outboard motor then. I mean, you know, I don't remember the way it was, but they were getting more and more popular then. So a lot of them were skiffs that people used to crab and row. [laughs] So...

JENIFER DOLDE: So a lot of people were, you know, kind of, recreational fishing, not just going out for jobs or...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:15:42] Yes, yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:15:43] Yeah. And I... And I remember going fishing with my grandfather Hubbard. But as far as

spending a lot of time on the water, until later on in life, I don't remember a lot.

JENIFER DOLDE: So we've talked a little bit about some... You know, building that first plywood boat in the basement. Do you... What were...what were his motivations for starting the company? Do you think his ability to sell that little one was, like, the seed?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:16:11] I don't... I think that started it. And he probably got... Probably something he wanted to do, and... I... It... I tried to think about when it... The transition to when he started doing the Skipper Craft, but I can't. Just can't remember. All I remember is, you know, they started the company, and they started building these Skipper Craft out on Cordova Road. And...

JENIFER DOLDE: Was he a hands-on... I mean, he built the one boat. Was he, kind of, a hands-on... Like his people before him, a carpenter, anything like that? Or was he more of a businessperson?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:16:47] He... More of a businessman, but he was a farmer way back during the War and shortly thereafter. So he obviously knew how to handle tools and stuff, you know. And he was always tinkering in the... Working with tools, and he taught me a lot. So... But...

JENIFER DOLDE: I just lost my train of thought. Sorry. Oh, I

guess what I was thinking about is whether he kept his job at Sinclair while he was starting the company.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:17:36] He was. He was working... I think they had just started it, and it wasn't long. He resigned and went full time into the company. And Joe Harper was more of the manager of the plant, as far as the employees. I don't think Dad did much, he may have, of hands-on working. He was more of a, you know, a... The president of the company and...

JENIFER DOLDE: Paperwork, financials, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:18:11] Paperwork and sales. I guess he was probably in sales and things of that nature, getting dealers.

JENIFER DOLDE: I mean, again, you were pretty young at the time. Was this... Do you remember it being exciting? Was it stressful? Was it... Maybe you don't...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:18:27] I don't remember. I mean, as far... I do remember the... You know, didn't see much of a change in our family perspective of what was going on.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, just that entrepreneurial spirit that stuff... Just doing something like that is quite... You know, it seems like, you know, it can be quite a leap for someone.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:18:51] Yes, yes. And Dad was the

principal in the company. He had the most stock. And it was pretty much his idea, I guess with Joe, but you know, I think Dad... It was really his thing to get it together and start the company.

JENIFER DOLDE: What... Well, so he was a... Joe Harper was a neighbor. What was their relationship like? Do you remember much about Joe Harper?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:19:14] Yes. He had three sons, and they lived around the corner. Can't remember which street it was. And they obviously were friends, and they just must have got together, and things worked out, and they did it.

JENIFER DOLDE: And Harper, he... Again, was he more inclined with the hands-on kind of thing?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:19:36] He...

JENIFER DOLDE: That's why he did that part?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:19:38] He did. I don't know what his prior employment was. I don't know, but he pretty much took care of running the production part of it. [cell phone rings]

JENIFER DOLDE: Pause that for a second. [both speaking-unclear] [recording paused] We promise. [laughter] Well, you know, I was interested in the relationship with Joe Harper. And is any of that family still around?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:20:06] No, they moved. Unfortunately,

the youngest son, which was my age, Donnie, he got hit by a car and died. It was tragic. And then the two boys worked... Actually, worked into the... And then they worked probably in the summer at the company.

JENIFER DOLDE: So they were a bit older than you.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:20:29] Yes, yes. They were, yeah. And they all moved to Arizona years later.

JENIFER DOLDE: So in the records that you provided to us, we get... We've gotten some clues into the management and how the company was funded. But, you know, as much as you can, tell us what you know about how the business was set up. We saw stockholder certificates and things like that. Do you understand how... You know, how it was structured?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:20:59] Not other than what you see there in the paperwork. They sold shares, some of... I don't know how they... They'd have done probably word of mouth or in... You know, they sold... Most all of them or all of them were local people. Trying to think. Some of my family, my father's family, my... You know, his aunt... I mean, his sister and brother were stockholders.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did your father have a lot of contacts in the community that he... That became part of that? I mean, I don't know all of the names [both speaking-unclear].

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:21:44] Well, John-Clarence... John

North was in there, and Rogers Morton. They were stockholders. And after the company failed and was closed, they started a cabinet company. They, kind of, formed... They transitioned how they did it. You know, they pretty much came and bought the company, and built cabinets, custom cabinets, kitchen cabinets.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, sure. Well, it certainly... You know, they must have had some confidence in the idea and your father to become involved to begin with.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:22:29] Right. And then Wilmer Edgell was a stockholder, in Talbot Bank. But he used to be, like, the head clerk, which was a big deal back then. He was in the top echelon at Talbot Bank. And I think my aunt, my... My dad's uncle Edgar was one of the principals in Talbot Bank way back, and he owned the Glebe... I'm going back and forth, [laughs] but he owned the Glebe Farm, which was where Dad, Mom, and I was a baby there. I forgot to say that. He... When I was born, they were on that farm. Dad was managing the farm and living there on the house. It was like a hundred acres. And then Uncle Edgar, which we called him, he had the main house up there next to it. It's still there.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's on Glebe Road?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:23:28] Glebe Road, yeah. You would go

down and go to your left, and there was the Willis Farm, and then there was this one. And it was like a big chunk of... It probably was... I'd be guessing, but maybe 150 acres or something, there on the water.

JENIFER DOLDE: So that's this time period, farming. He had a brother named James?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:23:54] Yes, James. He worked on the water. He was a waterman. He was pretty handy, too. He... Trying to think, basically, what he did [laughs] for a living. But...

JENIFER DOLDE: We did see his name in some of the paperwork. I can't remember the context. So that's why we wanted to get... [both speaking-unclear].

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:24:14] Yeah, yeah. I don't...

JENIFER DOLDE: And we've still...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:24:17] And he was from Hudson, too. He lived and died down... The family lived... Stayed there.

JENIFER DOLDE: So one of the interesting things that we just got... We're just beginning to understand is about how the different components of the Skipper Craft were sourced and then put together. So... And that's, kind of, a... That's a big part of what we want to talk to you about today, so we can take that at any... In any order you want. What do you know about how the parts were sourced?

We've seen... You know, we know... Talk about the hulls, and the engines, and the fittings. What do you know about that process?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:24:53] It... All the above? You mean, what [both speaking-unclear]?

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure. Start wherever you would like.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:24:57] I truly... All I know is, they would buy the hull. They were molded plywood hull. And they would... They put their own transoms in and built...built them in the factory. The engines... I think two of them, Evinrude and Mercury, would give them... Let them have a demonstrator engine and anything they wanted. Naturally, Dad would get the biggest engine he could. [JD laughs] And I truly don't know about the other components, you know, where they got their [unclear] or anything.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure. Some of that's in the record.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:25:48] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: See, we thought that that demonstration engine thing was really unique. So the idea was that they would provide the engines in the hope that that would be the one that would be sold with...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:25:57] I don't think they sold it. They would just loan it to them to use as a demonstrator. Maybe it... Maybe even... You've seen pictures of them. Maybe

they were... I don't know why they... [laughs] Why they were generous in that, but...

JENIFER DOLDE: Were the... But the Skipper Craft were sold with an engine or without an engine?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:26:14] With... Well, they... As far as we were concerned, it was... They had dealers. You know? Dad had to set up some dealers, and they would probably put the engines in. But no, we didn't have anything to do with providing engines. They had... They just loaned them the engines for demonstrations and things like that.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, the demonstration. So that, kind of, gets me to this... Yeah, this... The advertising. What we... You know, what we can see easily in the pictures. It sounds like, you know, your sister... Both sisters, or at least the one sister, was...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:26:51] Joyce and I were mainly in on it. I don't remember Anne being but in one picture standing by the boat there. She, for some reason... I don't remember why she...

JENIFER DOLDE: So we see, sort of, casual snapshots that are quite well done, that seem like they... Even those were used for advertising. But we also saw evidence that some professional commercial photographers were brought in to take publicity shots. So do you remember going out for

photo sessions?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:27:17] [laughs] I don't remember. The pictures bring it back, but I just don't remember the event, like the day and all. But obviously, my sister and I, and my brother-in-law. I think my brother-in-law, Pete Bailey, was in... Was in some of them.

JENIFER DOLDE: So from your perspective, you had just gone out for a day of boating, and it was...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:27:37] Going out for a day of boating. It wasn't any exciting event for me, I guess. They probably put my best clothes on, and shorts or whatever else [laughs] and went out.

JENIFER DOLDE: Because, yeah, I mean, they're very... You know, and so where did you primarily take the boat out, or was it all over the place? What locations [both speaking-unclear]?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:27:56] Mainly we... When... Again, when Dad would take me out waterskiing, we'd go down Easton Point and put over. That was the main... We always did mainly.. where... Tred Avon River.

JENIFER DOLDE: Trailered? You put trailers [both speaking-unclear]? Okay, mm-hmm.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:28:12] Yeah, yeah. All of them, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: I didn't know if anybody... If you kept any...

It looks like there's some images that were taken at... By the... Near the Miles River Yacht Club?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:28:21] Yeah, I think that was just a day. Truly, yeah, I think that was just a day. We thought that might have been John-Clarence North's property, but I'm not sure... Positive of that.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think we think it is, yes.

GABRIELLA CANTELMO: It's on Judge North's property.

JENIFER DOLDE: Judge... Yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:28:35] Judge North. I'm sorry.

GABRIELLA CANTELMO: And there's two John Norths we've found.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes. Well...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:28:37] Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

JENIFER DOLDE: And did you ever spend any time in... So they... The factory was in old chicken houses.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:28:49] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Any particular reason? Was there a connection to... Did they buy or rent the property, or... They're certainly big open spaces. Did...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:28:56] I think they rented it. And I was thinking the other day that it seemed to me that two of them ran side by side. And then they... I think they put a bay that connected them, and that's where they would

paint, spray paint, you know. I remember them in there with the plastic or whatever, you know, and then spraying, spraying the ply boats, or clear coating them, whatever they did with them. I know they... I'm 90 percent sure they didn't buy the property. They were renting that. And it's right near... Right about where Hyde Park is off of Cordova Road, off to the left there as you go heading towards Cordova.

JENIFER DOLDE: I presume those buildings are no longer there.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:29:49] No, they're not there.

JENIFER DOLDE: And so you were there from time to time, but how [both speaking-unclear]?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:29:53] Yeah, I just would be there, you know. I never worked there. And then just to go with Dad.

JENIFER DOLDE: Do you know about how many employees the company had when it... At its busiest? I mean...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:30:08] [laughs] No. I would guess...

JENIFER DOLDE: Two or twenty? [laughs]

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:30:11] I would say probably 20, I would guess. And it is a guess. I think some... Like the Harpers, they may have used schoolboys off season. I truly don't remember. I know... Oh, hmm. Vic Horn [?]. You saw a picture of him in there. He was an employee. And Paul Martin from Oxford was an employee there. And I think...

I was trying to think of some of... I remember some of the fellows that were like my older... My sister Joyce's age worked there part time, but I couldn't remember their names.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, so there were some skilled people, and then there were some people who just were told...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:31:06] Probably just... Right, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: ...instructed on what...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:31:08] Yeah, they put them all in different areas of doing stuff, you know, with the...

JENIFER DOLDE: Any women working there?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:31:15] No.

JENIFER DOLDE: Like painting or anything?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:31:16] Mm-mm.

JENIFER DOLDE: And were there any Black employees?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:31:20] No.

JENIFER DOLDE: That you know of, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:31:24] That I know of.

JENIFER DOLDE: Mm-hmm. So we talked a little bit about the publicity photos, and again, this might not be something you were completely privy to, but do you have a sense of how they... How did they sell boats? How were they marketed? Who were they trying to sell them to, and how did they try to get customers?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:31:49] Again, they had dealers. I think there was a pamphlet that... With a map, that they had different places that... I don't... You know, how they got the dealers, I don't know. But they had different dealers, and they would buy the boats from the company, and then they would deliver them to them. I think there was a picture with a bunch of trailers, not just one. One end of the stack...I'm not sure.

JENIFER DOLDE: I don't remember.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:32:20] I can't remember. I think they did buy some trailers, so they may have bought... You know, sold them as a package, you know? Because I remember them being stacked up and brought in, so they must have been at least selling some of them with the trailers with them. That would make sense, you know. If the dealers wanted one, they would have been delivered or have them pick it up. But again, that's guesswork. I don't know that for sure.

JENIFER DOLDE: Geographically, do you have a sense of how the... You know, furthest north or south, or how... What their range was?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:32:56] No, I do not know that.

JENIFER DOLDE: We certainly may be able to find that information.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:32:59] Yeah. And again, it was... I saw on that map. You know, I think it was parts of Virginia, but I'm not sure.

JENIFER DOLDE: And you don't have memories of your father being on the road to go talk to dealers or...?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:33:09] No. No, I don't. And he may have. I don't... But I don't remember him, like, say, going off every other weekend, off to see dealers. No, I don't remember that.

JENIFER DOLDE: Were there boat shows or anything like that then that you...?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:33:25] Not that I remember. There wasn't any.

JENIFER DOLDE: Interesting. And your sense is that the dealers... It wasn't a consignment kind of thing. They bought the hulls out... Uh-huh.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:33:39] I think they bought it, and... Yeah. I think they bought the boats and then...

JENIFER DOLDE: So that was a... They had to believe in it in order to that step, mm-hmm.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:33:44] Yes, I think that's the way it worked.

JENIFER DOLDE: What about magazine advertising? We were... We had thought about checking some of our local publications,

because there's some pretty sleek photographs, you know, that were taken. So we know they were used for brochures, but we wondered if there was any, you know, regional or other magazines, or in even any of the bigger publications, that they tried to advertise?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:34:07] I don't think there were, but if... You know, again, I would have thought he would have put them in that, you know, with his collection of stuff, if he'd have been advertising in magazines and whatnot.

JENIFER DOLDE: We certainly... We may check. There's a local magazine from that era that's devoted to boating on the Bay, and we thought it was worth at least a check, but I didn't know if you had a memory of that. The one photographer we found some photos of, Morris Rosenfeld, is extremely... I don't know if you're familiar with him, an extremely well-known commercial photographer up and down the East Coast. So it was, you know, it... They are high quality marketing photographs. Do you have a sense of who the Skipper Craft, you know, appealed to, who they were trying to target? I talked a little bit in the beginning about people boating for fun, you know, versus boating to work, and you talked about the start of the engines, you know, becoming more readily available. So that was a big change. You know, who could buy a Skipper Craft? Who

would be interested in a Skipper Craft?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:35:09] Just the... I guess just the average Joe that wanted to go out on the weekends, you know, for pleasure. Not... You know, most... Most everything back, old watermen and whatever, they had skiffs that they'd made, as you well know. They'd build them, you know, like the... And swell them up, and put them in the water, and that's what they used in the summertime. I would assume it was just... You know, it was a, kind of, like, a new thing that they were bringing out for people to go out on a weekend. I know at the end there, Dad said a lot of the dealers were complaining that we had... Every weekend would be a rainy weekend, and that's when they... You know, people were in the mood to buy when it's a sunny day, and that certainly didn't help them when... The sales part of it. And fiberglass was starting to come in, you know. That... they lost the... I think they lost two companies for the hulls that they were having. One of them was in Canada. I think it burnt... It caught fire and burnt down. And I think there was another one showed in Texas, but I might be wrong. Was that one?

GABRIELLA CANTELMO: Texas, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:36:24] Now, whether... Getting the hulls was a problem there at one time, I think.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's actually very interesting. You also mentioned you were seeing... Your sense is, there was a transition to fiberglass versus...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:36:37] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: I mean, obviously, molded plywood is still around, but for...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:36:40] Right, but that's... You know, in a way, that was the modern thing, was the fiberglass that was coming in.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did any of the people that you knew in the community buy Skipper Craft? Were they... Did you see them on the water, neighbors?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:36:57] We'd see them out, yes. And I... My brother-in-law bought one. Of course, well, that was later on. I'm sure he bought it used. But the... I don't remember any of my friends' parents buying them or whatnot.

JENIFER DOLDE: Did they have other boats, other models of boats? Did they have other... Did people have boats, that you knew?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:37:20] [sighs] Some. You know, I... They weren't on the water all the time, you know. I mean, a lot of the people worked, and on weekends, they would, you know... I truly don't remember. You know, like, we would spend a weekend on the boat, you know, is mainly I

would go with Dad when we would just go out and ride. I did take a trip with him. We took boats down Hooper's Island and the backwaters through that area. But other than that, no.

JENIFER DOLDE: It didn't seem like other people were doing that [both speaking-unclear].

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:38:02] Well, there were... Some people had, you know, cruisers, and they'd go out on the weekends or just go out for rides and stuff. But...

JENIFER DOLDE: But not maybe as much as we... in later years.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:38:16] Not... No. Not like they do nowadays. Not in my environment. Now, I don't... You know, in...

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, it's just funny, because, you know, you're still very close to the water in Easton, but you're not, maybe, as close to it as you are in parts of Dorchester County, depending on where you are, right in town.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:38:36] Right.

JENIFER DOLDE: And I wondered if it was just... And also, I don't know. It was a middle-class neighborhood, the people that you knew?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:38:44] Oh, yeah, definitely. Yeah, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: And was that... I guess, was it more of a upper

class, yacht club kind of group, and then you have the working people?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:38:54] Well, there was that, obviously, in Oxford and St. Michaels. They had the yacht clubs and the, you know. They were more into the boating. We weren't, and my friends weren't, really, as far as going out. You know, like in later life, we'd all get together and take the boat out for the day. And they... I think that was just starting to come in. Again, we're going back to the powerboat. You know, the engines were starting to come out. As I remember, most of them were 10 horsepower. I don't remember any, except for what Dad got, you know, when he... I think they went up to 50 horsepower or 60. I don't remember. I would guess that's about what they were. But most everybody that had boats had a little 10 horsepower. That was about it.

JENIFER DOLDE: And the yacht club segment was not... That was not the Skipper Craft audience, you don't think.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:39:49] No.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:39:50] They're mostly sailboats and things like that.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure, sure. Well, so I think we have about three years that the business was in operation, maybe slightly a

few months more. What do you know about the reasons why it closed... at the time? You mentioned a few things, but what else do you...?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:40:08] Well, again, the sales fell, I think, was the main thing. And they, a lot... Again, they were complaining about, you know, the weather was bad. And it might have been the transition from the... You know, the fiberglass was coming in. It might have been a combination of a lot of things.

JENIFER DOLDE: The supply chain... The supply issue [both speaking-unclear].

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:40:32] Supplies might have been an issue, you know. I think the sales hurt them... as bad.

JENIFER DOLDE: Was that a... I mean, I assume it was. Was that a stressful time? Do you remember that, or was it just...?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:40:48] Well, it's stressful, yes, because that was his main income. But there wasn't a whole lot of extra money around, you know.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, and he took a risk. And, you know.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:41:01] Yep, yep.

JENIFER DOLDE: That's a tough thing.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:41:04] And after... Luckily, after the business, he worked a little bit for the cabinet company, but then he was hired as the manager of Blue Cross and Blue

Shield in Easton, and he stayed there until he retired. He was a manager there.

JENIFER DOLDE: Mm-hmm. Well, and then he...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:41:29] He was the mayor.

JENIFER DOLDE: He was the mayor.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:41:30] He was mayor... Mayor of Easton for 10 years. He was... He was elected president of the town council, and the mayor died, and he filled his term. Must have been two years. And then he was... Ran and went through two terms, which would be 10 years.

JENIFER DOLDE: It wasn't too long after the business closed that he became involved in the town. We see at least a quote from '63?

GABRIELLA CANTELMO: Yeah, '63.

JENIFER DOLDE: About 1963. He... That was the time of desegregation in Easton.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:42:11] Yes.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sounds like he was a... Had, you know... Was in support of that, and was vocally...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:42:18] Yes. Even... The community... Well, they were having the Freedom Riders and whatnot, and the community... You know, like Dorchester refused to serve people in restaurants. Mainly. in that period. And he got the local businessmen, called them all together, had

a town meeting. And they talked about it, and they decided that they would serve...serve Black people in the restaurants. And that saved a lot of problems.

JENIFER DOLDE: We were just... It showed some leadership. We noted that as we did a little bit of research.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:43:15] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: What was the... What was your dad like as a person, just personality-wise?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:43:23] He was very well liked.

People... He loved to talk. He loved people. He'd go out. We had a little teeny yard there, and he'd go out to cut grass, which should take a half hour. He'd... You'd look out there, and people would stop, and he'd be sitting there talking to them and talking to them. He'd be out there for the longest time. But he loved that. He loved his church. Mom and him, like I said before, worked hard at the church. And his community.

JENIFER DOLDE: What led him... Is that what led him to run for council? Did someone try to convince him, or...?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:44:04] That, I don't remember about that.

JENIFER DOLDE: Just curious.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:44:06] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: I mean, somebody usually has a personally like

that... Personality like that, others are saying, you know, You should...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:44:12] Yeah, because I don't remember him really being in politics at all, other than... He just truly... He wasn't a politician. He was more of a... Somebody who wanted to help the community, and he did. So...

JENIFER DOLDE: Did he... I didn't ask about either... Anyone in your family. Did... His education level. Did he go to college?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:44:39] He went to Strayer Business College for a short period. I can't... I think it was mainly because it was during the Depression and whatever. There wasn't much money there. And he... I think the money was a lot to do with it, why he didn't go on.

JENIFER DOLDE: Sure. Well, it sounds like he made a lot with the opportunity that he was given.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:45:06] Yeah, he did very well.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah. We have a Skipper Craft here. Are you aware of any others that exist anywhere?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:45:15] No. I was looking for one. [laughs] I was hoping to pick one up sometime and refinish it, you know, but I never did find one.

JENIFER DOLDE: Huh. When's the last time...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:45:25] And I don't know of any that exist, or I would have...

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah? And not... For many years, you've not known of one that existed?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:45:31] I've not known of any, and I've never heard of... A friend of mine said that he saw one in a barn, and I'm wondering whether it was the one that was donated to you, you all, because there couldn't be that many that are sitting. If I ever... When I see him, I'll ask him where he... Was that for local... That you...

JENIFER DOLDE: You know, we can track down those details for you. That's a good question. I mean, it would be something if we have the only one. It really... It elevates its importance even more to us, because it's such a great local story. But I can find out where it was... Probably, in our accession files, where it was donated.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:46:08] I saw an article. I saved it. It was like one of these *Shore* magazines or something about this guy, I think he's in Virginia, that they collect a lot of... I'm sure you know who it is, but I don't. He collects a lot of boats, and old wooden boats, and stuff like that. And I was going to email him and ask him if he'd ever run across another Skipper...

JENIFER DOLDE: Another museum?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:46:30] No, it's...

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, okay.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:46:31] I think it was more of a... I think partly it was, but they were restoring older wooden boats and stuff like that. I've got... I'll have to look it up.

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, if you ever have any hints or leads like that, I mean, we would be interested in knowing...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:46:44] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: ...if there are others, or if we have the only one. It makes this story even more important.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:46:51] Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: So what did you do after you... After, you know, childhood. Did you go on to school?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:46:58] I went... Just went to high school, and then I joined the military. I was 82nd Airborne. And came back and worked for a post office in Easton. Then went on. I was postmaster at Queen Anne, probably 12 or 13 years. And they offered an early retirement, and I took it. And I started what's now become popular, flipping houses. I had done carpentry work and, you know, so I would... Every two years, I'd sell it, and then move in. It was... Worked out great.

JENIFER DOLDE: So you have those hands-on skills. You didn't do

any boatbuilding or anything like that yourself as a young person?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:47:56] I had a lot of wooden boats, and you know what that means. [laughs]

JENIFER DOLDE: Yes, it means you do a lot of [both speaking-unclear] wooden boats.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:48:00] Lot of work. I've done it all. Engines, you know. I've done...

JENIFER DOLDE: So the boating life has definitely become part of your life, especially...

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:48:11] Yes, I... Later on, I spent a lot of time on the water. And... With boats. Hunting, fishing, cruising. I've had a cruiser. I've had a trawler. I took it to Florida twice by myself. Except for a short period, a week or two, I'd get somebody to help me to come across Lake Okeechobee. It was something I didn't want to... It was something about going through the locks by myself. I could have done it. A lot of people do it. But being in a lock with a... And all these expensive boats getting in, and not being able to keep control of them, can get hairy.

JENIFER DOLDE: What was... So what was your first boat?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:49:01] I had... Actually, [laughs] it was, like, a little... My grandfather Cannon had this boat

up in his attic. It was a, like, probably an 8 to 10...

Probably 8... I wouldn't think much over 8 or 10 feet.

What they used to use for hunting, like a sneak boat.

JENIFER DOLDE: Yeah, yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:49:23] And then Dad helped me redo that.

We fixed that up and put a little motor on it, like a 6

horsepower, and that's what I would use for hunting and

just running around. And then I had a number of 14-foot

aluminum boats. I always did like those for hunting,

and... And then I had a, oh, 1970 Chris-Craft, glass hull

with wood up top. And I spent a lot of hours working on

that. And mainly we did the outboards. My dad and I had

outboards, you know, had runabout outboards, and 22

footers, and whatever. And now I'm down to a 22-foot

Chincoteague scow... I'm sorry. A skiff, Carolina skiff.

JENIFER DOLDE: Okay, very... Okay. [laughs]

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:50:24] Yeah, I'm... That's what I use,

and it's on a lift. I live off...

JENIFER DOLDE: Easy.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:50:31] ... Tred Avon right there, yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: Oh, very nice. Yeah.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:50:34] Trippe's Creek.

[recording paused]

JENIFER DOLDE: Well, that's... That's really interesting. Is

this... Thinking about the Skipper Craft and your... And that business, is that something that you think about often, or something that you feel... How do you feel about the fact that that, you know, that it's short but interesting?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:50:56] It was short but sweet, and, you know, it... In growing up with everything else going on, it was just a thing that happened. You know? And we... You know, obviously, we could see the sales going down, and finally the company closed. But I don't think a whole lot about it, no.

JENIFER DOLDE: Was it a tough subject for your father in his later years?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:51:19] I don't remember. No, no, I don't think so. Yeah.

JENIFER DOLDE: He moved on.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:51:23] He moved on with it. He was always forward looking, yeah.

[recording paused]

JENIFER DOLDE: Very good. I think we've gotten some good stories. I appreciate it. So is there's something else that I have not asked about that you think might be relevant?

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:51:39] No, nothing I can think of.

JENIFER DOLDE: I think this was great. Thank you so much.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:51:44] Thank you.

GABRIELLA CANTELMO: Yeah, thank you.

RICHARD HUBBARD: [00:51:46] I didn't have a whole lot...

END OF AUDIO FILE