

QUONOCHONTAUG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Oral History

MICHAEL WOOD

October 15, 2014

Interviewed by Leah Bradshaw in Charlestown

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Q: This is October 15th, 2014. It's Leah Bradshaw and Michael Wood. Mike, what is your full name, date of birth, and place of birth?

A: Michael G. Wood. My date of birth is November 1st, 1959. I was born in Westerly Hospital.

Q: Has your family always lived on Route 216 as long as you remember?

A: My dad, my grandmother, and my grandfather moved from Ludlow, Vermont in 1932 to the residence where I live now. Then my father and mother married in 1951 and they both lived there until they passed away.

Q: They stayed in their house their whole lives?

A: Yes. They were very lucky.

Q: When did your dad pass away?

A: March 13th, 1990.

Q: And your mom?

A: February 6th, 2008.

Q: Was her name Mary?

A: Marguerite.

Q: Was she ever called Mary?

A: No. They used to call her Mag once in a while, but Marguerite for the most part.

Q: Approximately when did your father, George Wood, begin working in Quonnie?

A: He started working with John McGlone in 1937.

Q: What did Mr. McGlone do?

A: Mr. McGlone was kind of like a handyman. He took care of just about all the cottages at that time. He had several big homes out on the front until the hurricane hit in 1938 and it washed them all away, unfortunately.

Q: Was that all three beaches, East Beach, West Beach, and Central Beach that they worked at?

A: Yes.

Q: Did all three beaches have houses then?

A: I'm not 100% sure. I know Mr. McGlone had houses down where the parking lot is. Right now, for the beach over here, on West Beach, there were three houses there that were washed away. Mrs. Varr's house sat right next to Nelson Thorpe's, and that was washed right across the pond and over to where it sits now. Of course, you would never know it now, because it's been added on. It's a big, sprawling, huge mansion now.

Q: Did it end up in Weekapaug?

A: No. It ended up right on—I don't know the name of the street where Brad Fisher's house used to be—on that street right there. That big, tall house at the end for years from Mrs. Varr's.

Q: Ninigret?

A: Is that Ninigret?

Q: Is that Central Beach.

A: Yes. Central Beach.

Q: When you said it went across the pond, it wasn't the Quonnie Pond; it was Fresh Pond?

A: It was Fresh Pond.

Q: So, your dad and Mr. McGlone worked at all three beaches?

A: Yes.

Q: What did your dad do?

A: In the beginning, it was probably just laboring work: shoveling, mowing grass, painting and things like that. Mr. McGlone was great friends with a wonderful carpenter. His name was Has Burdick. My dad worked with Has quite a lot. That's where he actually learned the trade from. Has Burdick died very young, but he left my father a set of books that I still have from the 1920s or '30s about building—framing and structures. My dad read those books front to back several times. Every time that he had something where he was challenged, he'd take those books with him when he built something. He never got into the building trade on his own until the early '50s. He always worked for Mr. McGlone. Mr. McGlone decided to retire in the mid-'50s—'54 or '55 right after the hurricane.

Q: Hurricane Carol?

A: In 1954. I think the year after that, he retired. He gave all of his cottages to my father, and my father started with just a few places and it kept multiplying and multiplying. Brad Fisher really had the place all sold up when my dad started down here in the early '50s.

Q: Was Brad Fisher building houses?

A: Nelson Thorpe would sell the property, and Brad would build the house. Brad built 90% of the second-generation homes down here. Harris Taylor built the original homes—most of them; not all of them. Charlie Hall built Danny's mom and dad's place. I think he told me it was Charlie Hall. Charlie Hall or Charlie Link. I'm not sure. Look at that.

Q: That was before the '38 Hurricane. We're looking at a map from Ann Doyle's book before the '38 Hurricane. The next map we have is 1964, but it just Central Beach. If this is before the hurricane, this was before Nelson Thorpe got started.

A: I was told by my father that old Howard Thorpe bought what was a farm located here at the beach.

Q: The Sheffield Farm.

A: I don't know the name of it. But it was a farm. The only place that was here was Slater's old place. Howard Thorpe bought that to develop into what we have here today. The lots were 60 feet wide and 100 feet deep. That was the original plan. That's what I was told through the years from my dad.

Q: One of the maps I saw had a 60-foot spacer on it.

A: This would have been Mr. Twinham. This would have been Merrill cottage. That's Fuller's.

Q: This is Surfside down here.

A: Yes. This is Surfside down here. This is Betty Jones' place. Then this would have been Wolf, Guernsey, Blackall, Red Top. Was it Stall? Mr. Stall [Should this be Stah?] was over in the corner.

Q: I thought Morris Point originally belonged to Chester Morris, and he lived here, but that's way back. Then Barnacle.

A: Barnacle would have been over in this area somewhere.

Q: Right here was the Carriage House. I think Mr. Peet bought this house and this lot.

A: The house is there now.

Q: But I think that he bought it from a man named Brown, but I could be completely wrong.

A: In 1964, this would still have been Todd's, but this would have been Breck that owned this. Mr. John Breck owned this in 1964.

Q: I remember the way that went around like that.

A: Yes.

Q: And Jack Young ultimately bought that house on the corner.

A: No. We're talking about the second one in here. This one on the point was Mrs. Todd. This started out as Mrs. Burdick. Mrs. Burdick sold it to Mr. Anderson. Mr. Anderson sold it to Mr. Breck. Mr. Breck, in 1965, sold it to Mrs. House. Mr. House sold it to Mr. Campbell in 1987, and Mr. Campbell tore it down right around 2000 and built that big home that's there now.

Q: And that's lot 108?

A: Yes.

Q: So, the Brecks did own that?

A: Yes. What happened was in the fall of 1959, Howard Thorpe went to John Breck and said, "I'm going to sell this piece of property, John. Would you be interested in it?" And John Breck said, "No. I wouldn't be interested. Why would I want that piece of property?" He said, "Well, Betty Jones is going to build a house there." "Well, I don't care what she builds." He came back in the spring and said, "See how she built the house? She built the house on an angle." There's no way he can see the water now.

What he did was he moved up to this area up in here and bought this and all of these lots here, and the house behind him, which is—was it Tetlo?

Q: I thought the house behind was Boulder Cottage.

A: Boulder Cottage is over here. That was George Saunders originally. Then George Sanders sold that and built a place right here.

Q: Breck's house—the driveway was over here.

A: The driveway was over here, but this is definitely their house right here.

Q: So, they had a double lot then?

A: Yes. And he also bought the lots in front so that no one could build in front of him.

Q: Let's see what it says for 119.

A: 119 and 118. It's telling. The writing is so bad. But I know that that's Breck's place right there.

Q: And it still is to this day?

A: Definitely. That's the last house that Hitchcock Lumber built. Hitchcock Lumber used to build houses. They not only sold lumber, but they had a whole framing crew, a finish crew, a cabinet crew that built houses. A fellow by the name of Jim Campbell worked for them. Jim Campbell was sick, so when Byron Hitchcock took his contract to build this house, this was the last house Jim Campbell built. Jim Campbell died shortly after this house was finished. Peter Pelham went in—I don't know when it was—and put that big addition on top of Breck's, because it was just one story. Now there are two stories. Peter Pelham did that job several years later. It was quite recent.

Q: This house right behind—

A: This is Miss. Isaacson on the corner here. It's not Miss Isaacson anymore. It was Don Collins.

Q: And then it got sold again.

A: Yes. I don't know who owns it now. But that was Miss. Isaacson at the time. The next house over, Mr. Breck rented this to a fellow by the name of Doherty. Mr. Doherty rented that place for years from Mr. Breck. Then Mr. Doherty and his wife moved somewhere. I don't remember what the deal was exactly. That was around 1977, '78. A gentleman by the name of Mr. McMann moved into this house and lived in it. But Breck still owned it.

Q: And that's lot number 90?

A: Breck bought this property, these two lots and these two lots.

Q: That looks like 114 to me and 115.

A: It very well could be.

Q: Do you see where it says Breck? I can't read that.

A: This might be Breck here, because it's got all the numbers beside it where he owned all these different lots.

Q: That's right.

A: I can remember his as a boy telling my dad, "Nobody will build in front of me now." He moved from here to here, and in '65, he sold this to Robert House—this house. Then Mr. House kept it until 1987. In 1972, Mrs. Wolf decided to sell this place. She decided to sell. Her and her sister weren't going to come anymore. They were too elderly.

Q: That's lot 21?

A: They were too elderly. They decided to sell the place. She only gave them \$65,000 for that house in 1972. That was a lot of money then. But Mrs. House bought that. Mr. House didn't buy it. Mr. House owned this one.

Q: That tiny, little house is Mr. House's house?

A: Mr. House owned this one, and Mrs. House owned this one—the one that is there now. Tall Point, they call it. We did a lot of work on that. We put a big addition on the front of it. Then we put an L-shaped addition on it in 1978 on this side here. I worked for Mr. House right up until practically when he got sick and passed away in 2010.

Q: That house is now for sale, which is sad.

A: They're asking three million dollars for that.

Q: From 65,000?

A: That's all they paid for it in 1972. I remember her telling me that herself.

Q: Moving away from Breck's, is that—

A: This was Mr. Carly. Then there was an open lot where there's a house now. There's a house there now. That big square one that looks like three boxes that sit on top of each

other. Brad Fisher built that a round 1976 or '77. Then there's Mr. Doll. Brad added onto Mr. Doll's house right around the same time.

Q: Walter Doll.

A: This place was a gentleman by the name of Four. We worked for him. We put a big porch on in the winter of 1978 into 1979. It would be the fall of 1978 to '79.

Q: Then that was bought by Jarvis at one point.

A: Yes. And then Mr. Jarvis built a big, huge house right in front of it.

Q: Which took out our view entirely.

A: Unfortunately, you're right. The next one over was Merrill Cottage. That was Danny Race's father-in-law, Mr. Windgate.

Q: Peggy Race.

A: Yes.

Q: That went away, and the VanPelts bought it.

A: VanPelt bought it and demoed it right to the ground. That house had beautiful, gorgeous 1 by 12 V-joint pine boards. You can't even buy them today. I wish I had known they were going to demo it, because I would like to have gone in and just taken the boards down and saved them for my own use. They didn't tell anybody anything. I went by one Friday it was there, I went by the next Friday and the only thing that was left was the concrete foundation. They tore it right to the ground.

Q: That is space 102, 3, which is now occupied by the VanPelts.

A: This used to be Mr. Twineham. Do you remember Mr. Twineham?

Q: Yes.

A: He was a miserable old cuss. His wife was the nicest woman. I don't think in the 30 years I knew the man that I ever saw him smile. Brad built that house. Brad took care of that house until Brad retired. When Brad retired, Mrs. Twineham called my dad and said, "George, will you take the place over for us and drain it and take care of issues and things?" Dad said, "Sure." So, we picked up another one when Brad retired. We took care of that one.

Q: And that is now Nathanson.

A: Charlie Nathanson. He used to own a place years and years before over on Bay Street. Him and his brother-in-law, Bobbie Richmond, owned houses side by side over there. Mr. Check and Mr.—I worked for the other guy. It will come to me. He lived in Rumford, Rhode Island—this guy did. Mr. Kilpatrick. Mr. Kilpatrick owned one. I don't know if Charlie owned Kilpatrick's or if he owned Mr. Check's. But Bobbie Richmond and him were brother-in-laws, and they both owned a house over there. Then Bobbie sold his, Charlie sold his, and then years and years later Charlie bought Twineham's place.

Q: And this is Mace on the corner.

A: Yes. That was Dr. Mace. Then there was Mr. Gufstedder.

Q: Then Anderson.

A: Is that who bought it after Gufstedder?

Q: Yes.

A: Then there was Mr. Spring. Then there was Jack Lodge. They don't even have Paul Monahan's. Paul Monahan's place is here, isn't it?

Q: Treasure House.

A: Yes. Treasure House.

Q: I think it's right there, 130.

A: No. I think it is this one, because he bordered Mr. McGuire. Mr. McGuire was here, and Mr. Monahan was right next door. They were great buddies.

Q: 129 would be Monahan, which is now Treasure House, the Angels. But wasn't the house on the corner always Thornton?

A: No. Thornton bought that in 1973 from Mr. McGuire. Now, that's a house that changed hands several times. Mr. Barstow owned it.

Q: No. Barstow lived over here.

A: Right. But he owned this place at one time too. He rented this place.

Q: That would be 129 and 128. That's lot number 128.

A: Mr. Waite owned that house too. He owned the one right next to your house on the corner. Mr. Waite also owned Mrs. Matthew's at one time. When my father got married in 1951, that morning him and Jack were going to put a picture window in that house.

Then he came home and got cleaned up. Mr. McGlone got cleaned up, and they drove together up to North Kingstown. My dad got married to my mother at 5:00 in the afternoon. The reason he did that is because he knew he had that job with Mr. McGlone that morning. That's how dedicated my dad was down there.

Q: The house that you're pointing at is on Surfside, right?

A: This would have been Mr. Murray. The one next to it used to be Matthews years ago. I think her name changed to—

Q: To Adams. But I don't think it's that house. I think it's this house because this is Batista. Murry sold to Batista, and Adams is right here. Barbara Adams was her married name, but her name before that was Matthews.

A: Yes. And then we've got Clayton Roberts next door.

Q: Those were the Sears Roebuck houses.

A: I didn't know that.

Q: They came in a kit—those little boxy ones. They came in a kit.

A: This was Ernie Gee up here. On the corner was Miss Hasbro and Miss Sapio. They were great friends with Miss Cotton and Miss Bragg that sold to Mr. O'Neil and Mrs. O'Neil. They were all music teachers from the Carolinas. I'm not sure if it was North Carolina or if it was South Carolina. It was one of the Carolinas. In the end, Miss Hasbro was the only one. She passed away down here, in fact. My dad bought her car. She had a Dodge Dart with 40,000 miles on it.

Q: That's 42.

A: Yes. That's Miss Sapio, Miss Hasbro, Ernie Gee, Clayton Roberts, The Matthews, Troy Murray, Graham.

Q: And Missleglow.

A: I never did know who owned this house. My dad never worked for these people. I don't know. There was a big bald-headed man with glasses when I was a teenager that owned it. He had Tom LeMay work for him a lot. Tom LeMay was Brad's ex son-in-law. He married Susan Fisher, Brad Fisher's daughter. On the corner was Mr. Glasson. It probably wasn't then, but it was Mr. Glasson in later years.

Q: Mr. Glasson is on the corner. I don't know who's next to him.

A: I never know the man. We never worked for him. My father may have worked for him way back when, but he didn't work for him then.

Q: This at one time was called West Street, and now it's the continuation of Surfside Avenue.

A: You're right.

Q: I don't know when it became all Surfside.

A: I don't either.

Q: Did you do any work along the first block?

A: No really. The only one we took care of was Pomeroy, Brown and Claypool, which would have been this house here—the second house in. They were related to the Browns that lived up near where Brad Fisher lived. He was next-door neighbor to him. His name was Brown too. It might have been this place. I'm not sure of that. It would have been this house right here that's right across from where Riley's would have been. Riley's was built in '65, so it didn't exist yet. This was Paul Carney's place at one time.

Q: 254 for Carney.

A: And this one here was Mr. Nording.

Q: 262 for Nording.

A: And this was the McGlone's on the corner. This was Mr.—your friend owns the place now. They tore the house down. Stanton Globa owned this place right here. Then if you go up here, one of these was Mr. Schafer. One was Mr. Porter, which is right across from George King. George King was in here.

Q: Mr. King is 151, and Schafer 171.

A: I'm not sure that Schafer owned it then, but that's who lived there when I remember the place. This was Mr. Porter, who became Mr. Farrell. I believe Mr. Farrell married Mr. Porter's daughter a long time ago.

Q: If Farrell married Porter's daughter, then wouldn't they become Farrell?

A: It could be Farrell now. I don't know. This house here is Pete Skipper. He gave this lot to Jan Shield in 1973, and My dad built that. That's the only complete house my dad ever built down here on Central Beach.

Q: He gave the lot away?

A: He gave that lot to Mr. Shield, because they had something to do with each other in the old country. Mr. Skipper came here from—I'm not sure exactly where he came from, whether it was Holland, Sweden.

Q: It was Holland.

A: But Shield was his childhood friend back in those days, and he gave him this lot. My father built Mr. Shield's house in 1973.

Q: That would be 175.

A: It looks like 175.

Q: That would have to be contiguous, right?

A: Down here, they're all single lots.

Q: Wouldn't the numbers be in a row?

A: Maybe it's 75. 76 goes this way, and then 77.

Q: Maybe this is 174.

A: Maybe it is.

Q: 175 and 174 for Mr. Skipper.

A: Then this was Mr. Cannible up here. He gave a piece of property—Jim Blair owns the place now—to his sister, Mrs. Kale. Mrs. Kale built on that piece of property. The house went this way, the long way on this piece of property.

Q: That is a Central Street address.

A: No. I'm wrong. It doesn't show Mr. Cannible's house yet. Mt. Cannible had the two lots here, and this lot when he bought.

Q: Which would be 176 and 177.

A: Yes. And the next one over, because he gave that big chunk of property to Mrs. Kale so that she could build her house. Brad built that one too. Brad built Mr. Cannible's house too. This is Mary, Mr. Lockwood's sister. Mary Phillips. This is Mary Phillip's house. And this was Mr. Lockwood's house here.

Q: Mary Phillips sold to Marjy Healy.

A: Yes. What's-his-name's sister.

Q: Bill Myer's sister.

A: Myer's sister. That's right.

Q: And this very large house belonged to Lockwood?

A: This large house belonged to Lockwood. It's got a stone front on it. He not only owned this house, but if you go down here and around and over here, he owned this house too.

Q: He owned the little red house?

A: That was a summer cottage. This was a winter cottage.

Q: No.

A: Honest to God. They stayed here until the middle of May or Memorial Day, and then they moved all the way down to this cottage. It doesn't make any sense, does it?

Q: No, it doesn't.

A: This started out as Mr. Gongowhere. Gongowhere sold to—

Q: Are you talking about Aqua Marine now, or are you talking about the little red house?

A: This place here. Mr. Shulties. This was a cement block house. Henry Lloyd built it for him. A very popular mason down here at that time. He built that house. And he built another one for—I know where the house is, but I don't know what the street is. It's not Neptune. It was right on the corner. Over here would have been Mary Varr's. Down around the corner here, this was another cement block house. The house next door was Melvin Wood. He and his mother owned that house.

Q: Any relation to you?

A: No. His mother was great friends with my Grandmother Wood. They used to go to the Central Baptist Church together up in Bradford. He sold this piece of property to Steve McAndrews in the 1980s, and Steve built his first house here. Now, Steve lives over where the old Seabreeze Inn used to be.

Q: He lives on West Beach Road.

A: Yes. Right next to Leblanc, who has got Nurmi's old dance hall too. Do you remember the Seabreeze Inn?

Q: I remember the Seabreeze Inn. Did it catch on fire?

- A: They tore it down and they did a controlled burn on the backside of it.
- Q: As a practice for firemen?
- A: Yes. Mr. Nurmi couldn't make any money with that place after all the cottages were built down in this area.
- Q: Is that because people wanted to stay in cottages?
- A: Right. In some ways, it was Mr. Nurmi's own fault, because he never upgraded the place. It only had a men's room on one end and a lady's room on the other. They were complete bathrooms, but the individual rooms didn't have their own bathrooms in them.
- Q: And that's what people wanted?
- A: Sure. I went all the way through the place with Mr. Barstow with my dad, because Mr. Barstow at one point thought about buying that place and refurbishing it, but there was way too much work to do. He would have had to re-pipe the whole place, put a new roof on. It would have had to have all the windows—just more money.
- Q: When did it stop being the Seabreeze Inn?
- A: My dad said the year after the '54 Hurricane. In 1955, Mr. Nurmi closed it. It sat there about fourteen years before they tore it down. It was in the late '60s—'68 or '69—that they tore it down. I can remember them tearing it down. That much I can remember. And I can remember them burning the little building behind it.
- Q: I can remember as a high school student walking through it and being terrified.
- A: I can understand that. It was a scary place.
- Q: Holes in floors and broken windows. It got to be an eyesore.
- A: The dance hall—I think Mr. Nurmi hung onto that until he sold it to Leblanc, but I'm not sure of that.
- Q: I don't know, but there was another house that was Nurmi's house, which is now a dark house. It was under trees. It's on West Beach Road.
- A: Right next to where the dance hall was. Was that Nurmi's at one time? I didn't know that.
- Q: I believe so.
- A: A fellow by the name of—a huge name. He was out of New York City. He owned a place on East Beach Road too. It will come to me. I can see him. He was a big, round

man. How we got acquainted with him is he was he rented the place one winter to a Section-8 lady, and she destroyed it inside. She punched holes in the walls.

Q: Which house?

A: I didn't realize it was Mr. Nurmi's house right next to the dance hall. Wasn't Mr.—he lived over on East Beach. My dad and I built a porch for him in 1983. He died. John—it wasn't Hall. His son bought that place. He was a fisherman. He's got a fishing boat.

Q: There's a boat there, and he rides his bike down to the beach. I think he's a lobsterman or a fisherman. He used to be friends with Jane Nording.

A: Yes. He was friends with Jane Nording. You're right.

Q: That house was a Nurmi house.

A: I didn't realize that. We shingled the dance hall in 1978 for Mr. Nurmi. Mr. Nurmi lived in Norwich. That was his primary residence. That's where he lived, and came here in the summertime. But we shingled the roof for him on the dance hall in 1978. Then we never heard from him again. Then Leblanc bought the place. He cleared it. All the way to Sunset Drive, you can see the pond.

Q: He bought all the way back.

A: Yes. I believe he did. John Lane. This guy's name is Lane that owns this place now—the fisherman. I don't know his first name, but his name is Lane. Kenneth Fitzenmeyer—that's the guy that owned that house. He got a hold of us through Neal Thorpe. Neal Thorpe recommended us.

Q: There was Howard Thorpe. Were his sons Neal and Nelson?

A: No. His son was Nelson Thorpe, and then Nelson's son was Neal Thorpe. Now Neal's son is Howard. Howard runs the business. I think Neal is retired. But Neal wound up with Howard Thorpe's house, which is over off of Sunset Drive. It used to look like a log cabin. It had log siding on it for years.

Q: That would have been East Beach, right?

A: No. That's still West Beach, but they didn't have a water system over there. They still don't. The water system doesn't run outside of the perimeter of the beach. They're on their own wells over there in that area.

Q: Sunset Drive should be on this map.

A: Maybe they hadn't developed over here yet. This has got to be it here. This is the four corners. It comes down and then jogs onto Old West Beach down here, correct?

Q: It's just not labeled. That's Sunset.

A: There may not have been any places there at that time. Number five is Jared Babcock Farmhouse. I wonder if that's Whispering Pines now.

Q: It could be.

A: That's a very, very old home.

Q: Whispering Chimneys. Isn't that up here at 11?

A: That says King Cottages. That was probably George King's family's property because they owned property on the breachway, which is right here. George King's property was right across from Porter's on Neptune. Right here was George King's property. He built that house in 1939.

Q: It was across from Porter's and not across from Schafer's?

A: Right. Across from Schafer's is Mr. Leaky. Then O'Brien is up there at some point. I don't know if that's O'Brien's or not. Is there a lot between O'Brien and Leaky? Maybe Leaky wasn't there. I'm not sure.

Q: It's Culka [Kulke] now, and then comes O'Brien, then comes Glover, then comes Waterman. That's Harriet Waterman.

A: Yes. And then Dr. Waterman was on the corner at the time. Harriet Waterman's and Yale Carter's house were built by the same contractor out of Providence, Rhode Island. Back in 1947 those two houses were constructed. The same contractor built them. Miss Waterman never stayed down here in the wintertime. She lived in Westerly on Granite Street Hill in a little apartment on the second floor. My dad and I used to move her back and forth. We did it for years. In fact, until she got sick and died.

Q: Why didn't she stay down here?

A: I think it was too destitute back in those days. The late '60s and early '70s there weren't that many people who lived here year-round. There was Mr. Conrad up here, Dick Henry, the Barstows moved in t198.

Q: The Maces

A: Yes. The Maces over here. That's about it. At that time there weren't a lot of people who lived year-round. Mr. King didn't live year-round until 1971. They moved here in 1971. They lived in Florida. They came originally from Elizabeth, New Jersey. They were both teachers. He was a Latin teacher, and she was a mathematics teacher. They never had any children. They moved here in 1939 and built that house the year after the

hurricane. He bought that piece of property, and he built that house. They would travel from Elizabeth, New Jersey to the house every spring and open it. Then they'd come back in the summer when school was out. When they'd have to go back in the fall, my dad would drain the place. They both retired in 1970, and on the back of that house was an open porch. My dad closed it in and made a big bedroom and put a bathroom up there for them so that they didn't have to travel all the way downstairs, all the way through the kitchen and all the way out to the bathroom, which was where the other bathroom was located. So, he put a bedroom and a bathroom in for them where that closed-in porch was. He closed it in and put a big flat roof on it. Downstairs in that house in the living room there was a large area, and then there was a small dining room and a kitchen, and then a hall where they went down and out to the garage. That's basically all the house was. You went upstairs and turned right, up another set of stairs and there was their big bedroom, and there were two little bedrooms in the front, but the slant of the roof was there, so they were really useless. My dad used to say, "Geez, Mr. King, if you're ever going to use them, you better put dormers up." "Well, we're not going to have any company, so there's no sense in that." Mr. King was a nice man. He left my father \$5,000 when he died. He's the only person down here that left him anything. But he left him \$5,000.

Q: The Vanburens gave your dad a car, right?

A: Gave me the '68 Checker station wagon. Dr. Vanburen bought that brand new, and they drove it for years. They left it up here. They had a '64 Chevy Impala, and Michael got in some sort of a jam, so Doc gave it to him and he wrecked it. The next car to come here was the Checker. He was hinting around for the Checker, and it was right after my father died. I think it was in September of 1990. He called me out of the blue, and he said, "I want you to come down to the cottage today. I need to talk with you about what we're going to do this fall." I said, "All right." So, I went down and we got through talking, and he handed me the set of car keys. He said, "Take the Checker with you. It's yours." It had all the paperwork and everything. I said, "Geez, thanks." I drove it five years. What happened was the Checker Motor Company didn't make their own parts. They bought parts from everybody. The only thing they designed was their own body. Fisher Body company designed the body for them. It had a splined rear axel, and the spline broke. It cost an awful lot of money to fix it. I didn't have the cash, so I said, "I'll get a rear axle out of a passenger car." That was too narrow. And the ones out of the pickup trucks were too wide. So, the thing sat in my garage for years. I sold the engine, the transmission out of it. It sat there and got loaded with stuff and covered with stuff, and then in 2000 my son said to me, "Dad, what are you going to do with that Checker?" and I said, "You've got to find a rear axel for it." "I've got a friend who's in New England Tech, and he says for his project for high school that he can make an axle for that car." I said, "Fine. But you've got to remember something. If you give him that axle and we don't get it back, you're done. I don't know where you're ever going to find another axle for it." He came down with his buddy, they worked one afternoon cussing and swearing. They finally got the axle out. The kid took it with him. By God, he made a brand-new axel for it. He slid back under the car. Now I've got to put an engine and a transmission back in it, because I promised it to my son if he could ever get it together. He got it

together, so I put the transmission in. My son drove it for another five years. He got in an accident in Nashville, New Hampshire with it and totaled it, so that was the end of it. So, for ten years on and off we had it. It had a good lifespan.

Q: Have you inherited or taken over your father's business here?

A: Yes. I took over Dad's business in 1984. My father retired. He worked for me from 1984 until his death in 1990.

Q: You must have had a good working relationship.

A: We never had an argument. In my entire lifespan that I lived with my father and my mother, I never argued with either one of them. He was the boss, and I just listened to what he had to say. They were very good parents. Times were different, I guess. I couldn't have asked for better people that I had ever lived with. My father was a great teacher. He could teach you anything. Outside of his working relationship with Has Burdick and with Mr. McGlone, he never worked with any other builders. He kind of taught himself what he knew. But he could cut rafters and stairs and all sorts of things with all those books that old Has Burdick left him.

Q: So, you did take over your father's business?

A: Yes. I'm still running it to this day. I still have his six original cottages that he started out with.

Q: What were those six?

A: There was Dr. Vanburen. At that time, it was Dr. Vanburen's mom and dad. Then there was Mr. Shulties. Mr. House, which was Wolf in the beginning. I have Dave Prendergast down in Old Quonochontaug. Then Kendal Beamis, which would have been Lloyd Wiland originally. Then Dick Rizzo, which was Sherman Brown originally. Luckily enough, I work for you.

Q: When you say Beamis, I went to a lecture by David Brown, and he made reference to an original water system there before Central Beach Water came in that your father maintained.

A: Yes. It was a system that was designed by an old gentleman by the name of Albert Pendleton - worked just in Old Quonochontaug. He designed the system from that well that I was telling you about, which is up behind Beamis'. No one uses the well now. It's abandoned. It was on David Brown's property, and Sherm Brown's property right up there. At that time, that well fed all the houses on Old Quonochontaug. My father would go down—it was just summertime residents at that point. My dad would go down and help out. They'd put the water on in all the places, and get the system up and running. If Albert had trouble, he'd call Dad, and Dad would go down and work with him and help him. They maintained it. There was an enormous pump. It ran off a belt-driven pump

that sat in the pumphouse where Lloyd Wiland's place is now. The pumphouse still exists, but there isn't any pump in there. There hasn't been since 1994 or 1993 when Mrs. Brown finally had a well drilled when she sold the place to Dick Rizzo. She couldn't sell the place to Dick Rizzo unless it had a well on the property, so she hired Ike Hawkins, and Ike Hawkins drilled the well, and they abandoned that one. But at that time, there was this big, huge pump. It had to be serviced every day. It had to be checked every day. Back in those days things weren't as automated as they are today. They were more mechanical. So, you had to make sure that the belts were tight, and everything was greased and oiled. We took care of all these houses, and all these people depended on that water.

Q: Was that an above-ground system?

A: It was just below the ground. It was all galvanized piping. We'd never use that today. You'd use plastic. But at that time, that's what was available. As the houses down in that area became so—they started digging their own wells, and in the late 1980s the only person that was using that water was Sherm Brown. Sherm would never put a well in. Every year it would take my father and I two or three days to get the water to his house, because that line would be frozen and broken. It broke in the road one year. We had to hook a piece of new pipe to the old pipe, and pull the new pipe out from underneath the road. It was a terrible mess. It was always breaking. And you were pushing it at 750-and-some feet from where the pumphouse was to Sherm's house. Every fall my father would say, "What do you think, Sherm? Are you going to put a well in this year?" "Yeah. Probably in the spring, George." The spring would roll around and it would take us forever to get it going. We'd go all summer. It would break down two or three times. He burned out two or three pumps. The pumps back then were \$600 or \$700. That was big money. "What do you think, Sherm? Are you going to put a well in?" "Maybe in the fall, George." And that went on for years and years and years. Finally, he passed away, and she decided to sell the place. Whoever the realtor was—I don't know who he dealt with for a realtor back then, but the realtor told her, "Look, you've got to drill a well on this property. You can't sell this house with a well that's 1,000 feet away. That's impossible." So, she put the well in. I went to put the water on, and I saw this tank sitting in the basement. Hallelujah. Somebody put a well in. And they got one heck of a vein. They got 13 gallons of water a minute—Mr. Rizzo does. And he made a deal with Kevin Diggles, his son-in-law, who built this big, huge house where Chancy Marsh's place used to sit two houses over from—it used to be Sherman Brown's. He supplies water to them and to the old Hershell cottage and to his cottage. He came out smelling like roses on that deal.

Q: Pumping 13 gallons is a lot.

A: That's a lot of water. When they went up and drilled that well, he pulled his bits out and they went to put the cap on, the water was coming right out of the top of the well head. I had never seen that before. It was like he hit oil.

Q: So, it had pressure?

A: Continuous water, which is great.

Q: Especially now.

A: Yes. It's so dry.

Q: What are some of your earliest memories of working in the Quonnie area?

A: I can remember my father putting water on in the spring, and going with him on the weekends. My dad would work all day on building projects. At night, I'd go back with him. We put the cottages on together. Mrs. Crowder, Mr. Glover, the O'Briens—we put that one on—George King, Mr. Skippers, Dave Rose.

Q: Would you go up and down stairs and into crawl spaces?

A: I'd get anything he needed—tools. In the fall he used to hand me a hand Pitcher pump and a bucket, and he'd say, "Pump all the toilets out." So, I'd do that first and get that done. Now he said, "Take the crescent wrench and take all the plugs out of the traps underneath the sink, and put the plugs in the sink." "All right, Dad. We can do all that." Back in those days, we would put kerosine in the bases of the toilet, because that would keep the smell from coming back. The kerosine was good for cesspools, because the kerosine loosened up all of the solids and stuff that would stick on the side of the rocks and make them drop into the cesspool and deteriorate. You couldn't do that today.

Q: Over the winter?

A: Over the winter. You couldn't do that today. You'd get arrested if you put kerosine in that.

Q: Because it could explode?

A: That, and it's supposed to harm the environment and all that stuff. But we did it. My father did it for 40 years down here, and nobody's well ever got tainted. Nobody's septic system ever exploded.

Q: I thought that there was also a practice of putting yeast down.

A: With a cesspool, that's the best way to go. Yes. It breaks all the solids down. You just flush a yeast cake down once a season or twice a season. It helps out a lot to break all the solids down, because that's what kills a cesspool. The solids get up into the lines going out to the leach field and clog them, and then nothing drains anymore. That's what the problem is. Today's systems are a lot different.

Q: The above-ground ones?

A: Yes. They've got these kiddy boxes, they call them. They build these wooden boxes, and they fill them full of stone. But I want to see if this works. No one has ever proven that it works. Let's see if they go 50 or 60 years like the cesspools did.

Q: What are some of your memories working here? Do you remember any hurricanes or disasters or accidents? Do you remember any funny times?

A: Yes. I remember the summer of 1973 when we were just finishing Mr. Shell's house. Brad Fisher used to put the water system on. Brad took care of the water system right up until he retired, and then Danny took it over. You've got to remember that up until 1984, this was a summertime system. They drained it in November. So, if you didn't have a well—your mom had a well here, so she still had water. Mr. Waite had a well, so he still had water. Dr. Vanburen dug a well. He had water. But if you were House, Wolf's place or Betty Jones or any of the places that didn't have a well, after a certain time in November, you didn't have any water. It used to leak. It was a cement pipe, which was state-of-the-art in 1940 when they put it in. It was the best stuff you could buy. Mr. Wolf supplied all the fittings and the pipe for the original water system. Ed Green dug it, and Howard Thorpe and my father and another fellow—I think it was Arthur Singer from Westerly. I'm not sure. My grandfather was a licensed plumber from Ludlow, Vermont, so my dad learned all of his trade on the plumbing end from my grandfather. My grandfather, if it had any push and no drive, he wouldn't do it. My father would take the jobs at fifteen and sixteen years old, and my grandfather would go down and help him do them and show him how to do them. But he didn't want any part of being in business. He'd go in and do the legwork for you, but he didn't want to be in charge. "I don't want to send out bills and deal with people, George. You do that." So, that's what they did.

Q: Did your mother do the billing?

A: My mother did all of the billing for my dad.

Q: Mrs. Mace was telling me that she was going to try to look for an old bill that your mother had done, because your mother would write down item by item by item.

A: She itemized everything.

Q: They were detailed bills so that you knew what you were paying for.

A: And you would know how much the elbows cost, you would know how much the copper tubing would cost, you knew how much the valves cost—right down the line. Ma would itemize everything. She had an old typewriter that did it in script instead of printing. It looked like it was written. I've still got the old typewriter. We were working on Mr. Shell's place, and Brad comes tearing up, gets out of the truck and he says to my father, "I need you and Mike's help right now." The old man said, "What do you need help for?" He said, "I've got a leak." We came down around the corner here, right down in front of McGuire's place. The water was almost up to McGuire's garage door, and it's bubbling right out of the ground. So, my father said to Brad, "You're the water

commissioner. Shut the water off.” He said, “I can’t find the valve.” “Oh, for Christ sakes, it’s right up in Miss Isaacson’s yard. It’s right on the left-hand side there.” He said, “You know everything in the world. Turn it off.” “Well, I can’t find it. There ain’t no valve in Isaacson’s yard.” My father said, “Oh, Jesus Christ.” He ripped the wrench right out of Brad’s hand, and he’s cussing. He walks right up to the spot, pulls the cover off, drops the wrench in, turns the valve and the water shut off. “Now you’ve got to get somebody down here with a pump to pump all that water out. McGuire will need a rowboat to get to his garage.” That was one time I can remember. That was funny.

Q: What happened to cause that water?

A: The cement pipe was only good for 40 years. It was like 35 years, and it started to crumble. Danny had the same problem. Right down across from what used to be Brad Fisher’s house, Mr. Burns lived on the corner, that was Brad’s original house. That was the first one he built when he came here in 1953. He built that house, and him and Betty lived there. But he sold that to Mr. Burns, and he moved up to the other house that he built. And then somebody bought it and tore it down. It was an empty lot for a long time.

Q: Was it Steve Long?

A: I don’t know any of those people. At any rate, right down there was a big puddle one day. Danny came along, and Jack Frost used to help Danny a lot. Jack came down with his backhoe and they dug it out.

Q: Bob Frost’s son?

A: Was that his name? I knew his last name was Frost. They had these big, huge adapters with clamps that would slide over the cement pipe, but you couldn’t tighten them too tight, because you’d crush the pipe. You had to tighten it just enough so it wouldn’t leak. Then they’d put a piece of PVC in, and they’d turn it on and leave it open overnight. They’d cover it up so nobody would fall in the hole. They would come back and check it the next day. If it was all right, they’d cover it with sand so that it wouldn’t crush it. But finally, in 1984, they hired Eddy Bragger out of Warwick, Rhode Island, and they started digging right at the well house. They dug right up past Getty’s place, past Mrs. Varr’s all the way down around, back down your street and they laid 4- or 6-inch PVC for the main lines.

Q: Right in the middle of the street?

A: Right in the middle of the road, which was the smartest thing they could have done, because when they jugged off to each house, it was an even amount. If they had done it on one side or the other side, somebody would have had a long piece of pipe running across the road. That piece of pipe driving over it all the time, you’re going to have a problem. That’s why they went right down the center of the road with it. Dick Henry was in charge back in those days. They bought what’s called SANS valves. They were good

valves. The problem is they don't make them anymore. They didn't make them after 1984. Bragger got a hell of a discount on them. the problem is there's no curb-stop keys to shut them off. All the original curb-stop keys that are made for Westerly, Groton or any of these other areas, the keys are too big. They're like this big. Our key is like a half an inch in diameter, so you can't get a normal key down to shut the water off. Dick Henry only had two keys, and he wasn't going to let anybody else have a key. That's it. I went over to see him. I said, "I've got all these places that I've got to turn the water off." "I don't care what you have," he said to me. "I don't care. There are two keys. You'll have to borrow, and you'll have to get in line to borrow like everybody else does." I said, "All right. If that's the way you want to be." I left. They were finishing up in early April, and we had a hot day. It was like 80 degrees, and his poor guys—he had his poor guys shoveling. They were sweating like pigs. I had somebody give me a case of beer. Now, I'm not a beer drinker. I don't drink anything. But I had it in the truck with me. It had been in a cooler. It was cool. So, I rolled up alongside them. I looked at the back of the truck, and they've got four of these keys back there. "Boy, it's hot, isn't it?" The guy said, "Hot? Jesus Christ, it's hot. I'm dying. I'm shoveling. Working a Saturday. The goddam, stinking boss makes us work all the time. He don't care anything about us." "An ice-cold beer would taste good right now, wouldn't it?" "Oh, boy. We can't leave the job." I said, "Here. Here's a whole case of beer. You can have that." I said, "I'm going to give you \$20, and I want to walk away with one of them keys, and you're not going to say a word to anybody." "Take whichever one you want. Take all four of them, if you want them." I'll never forget that. So, I grabbed a key and I left. Well, now they've got this ruling that you're supposed to call this Mr. George Prior. He's supposed to know when you shut the water off. I never call him. I just do it myself. It drives Myers over here crazy, because he can't figure out how I'm getting the water one and off. There are still only two keys, and the one I have. He would say, "How did you get that water on?" I said, "I turned it on on the street." "Did you come borrow the key?" "Yes. I borrowed the key." I said, "I borrowed a key 30 years ago." And I've had it for 30 years.

Q: Do you have any memories of any disasters or hurricanes?

A: Hurricane Belle in 1976 did a lot of damage to the beach. Not really any damage to the cottages. It wasn't that severe of a hurricane. The one that I can remember, though, is the most recent one: Super Storm Sandy. I've never seen Red Top wrecked as badly, or a house wrecked so badly in my life. It was destroyed.

Q: It was red tagged. It was the only house that was red tagged.

A: And Mr. House—I felt sorry for Marsha and for Betsy, because they just bought a new washer and dryer that fall. Betsy had it at her place at Heritage Drive. I said, "You ought to leave them there for the winter. Just put them in in the summertime." I want to put them in now. I don't have any room." I said, "All right." I put them in, and it ruined both of them, and the hot water heater. When I went in that garage, the water heater was sideways. The pipes were all bent and twisted. It was sitting on top of the bench. You could see the dirty water line. It was up a good 4 ½ feet in their basement.

- Q: The next day when we all walked around, it was a sunny, warm day. We all came out. They had feet of water, and things floating in it, like chairs and beachballs. It was so sad, because their garage was a little bit lower, so stuff just floated in there. I think the door was propped open.
- A: Yes. It was pushed in on the bottom. It ripped off all the shingles across the front of the addition that my father and I put on. It did a little bit of damage. But I had called her the Friday before, and I said, "We ought to board that place up. You don't have shutters no more. Your father had to get rid of the shutters years ago, and I don't blame him. There was no sense of paying me the labor to put the shutters on the place." They never had a storm for years. But I said, "I'm going to go get Plybase." I said, "You really need to put the investment in this time, and cover them windows, because if you don't and we get a super storm, you're not going to have no windows."
- Q: Did she tell you to do that?
- A: She said, "Let me call my brother real quick." I said, "Call me right back." And she did. She said, "Rob said that's the best thing to do, Mike. Go ahead and do it. We'll just pay you." So, I went right do the United Builders then, grabbed all the Plybase. My stepson and I worked until dark.
- Q: Was there a run on that plywood?
- A: Not at that time. Most people didn't even put shutters on. Mr. Campbell never put his shutters on. The fellow that bought Betty Jones' place—it wasn't supposed to be that big a deal. What happened was all those storms came together. They didn't expect that. Nobody got any significant damage, except Red Top.
- Q: And Pete's. The two houses. The Morris Point house.
- A: This one got destroyed too?
- Q: Yes. Red Top is here. Then there was a house here. That got a lot of water. And this one lost some front steps, and had a lot of destruction.
- A: She got a hold of those people that come in and clean—disaster people. They've got the green trucks. I can't think of the name of the company. ServePro. She got a hold of ServePro, and the owner of ServePro called me, and he said, "Can you put the water on?" because I had drained the water. This was in the early part of November. I said, "I can give you cold water. I can't give you no hot water, because the hot water heater is sitting on top of the bench." But I said, "I can give you cold water." "That's all we need. We've got to go in there and wash everything and clean everything up." And so, that's what we did. And she called me the next night and said, "Go down and take the old water heater out, and you can take the old washer and dryer out."

Q: Was that Miss House?

A: Yes. Betsy House. "You can clean everything up, because they can't save any of that stuff. In the spring, we'll just put a new water heater in," and I did that for them. I put it up higher that time. When you're oceanfront, there's only so much you can do there. That's the worst one I can remember. I can remember my father telling me about the '54 Hurricane. The day of the hurricane, he was putting shutters on Mrs. Todd's house. He had just got a new panel truck. Not new, but new to him. It was only a couple years old. Mrs. Todd would have been right here. His truck was parked here, and the water came right across and went right over his truck. He couldn't get it started. Now he's in 2 feet of water.

Q: Why didn't he go before that?

A: I don't know whether he was rushing or what the problem was. But he was getting ready to take all his tools out and put them on the top floor of Todd's house figuring that that's what would be the safest. Ed Green came by in an old dump truck. He hooked up to the front of him, and he dragged him all the way up here. And when they made this curve to go up West Street, which is now Surfside Avenue, to leave, the waves were slapping against the back of my father's panel truck. When they came up through this area up here where that low land is, where the swamp is on either side on West Beach Road, there was a foot and a half of water across the road then. But Ed's dump truck was so high, he was able to pull my father right through. When they got up on Route 1, my dad got out and dried the truck out the best he could and got it started and got it home. But that truck rusted after that. Wow. He ran it for twelve years, but there wasn't much left.

Q: So, it was exposed to salt water?

A: Right. Plus, my dad never washed nothing in his life. A car to him was nothing. "It gets washed when it rains," he said.

Q: So, water came up over the top of his truck?

A: It went right over the roof of it right in here, and then it went out. When it came back in, it was about 2 feet of water here. His tires were under water.

Q: It happened so quickly.

A: It did. That was the last house he had to shutter up. He had shuttered up Mr. Anderson's. Then he shuttered up Mrs. Todd's. That was the last one he had to shutter up. He was leaving, but he got caught.

Q: What was Ed Green doing with a dump truck?

A: Ed Green would come down in any storm and ride all around the beach to make sure somebody like my father wasn't around getting stuck.

Q: So, he towed him out?

A: He towed him all the way up West Beach Road, all the way up to the end of the road, out to where Brightman's store was. Brightman's store at the time had a big lean-to, and he dragged my father's panel truck right underneath that lean-to. They went into Brightman's store for a while and let the truck dry out. Then the old man got it fired up and drove it home up 216 to our house.

Q: Was it raining?

A: It was raining so hard you couldn't see. The rain was coming sideways and every other way.

Q: So, he couldn't leave, because he hadn't finished his job?

A: Right. He wouldn't leave until he got everything done.

Q: It's too bad that he didn't move his truck somewhere else.

A: I often said to him, "Why didn't you pull up this way, Dad?" He said, "I had just done Mr. Anderson's, so I just pulled up alongside to grab the tools to put hers on."

Q: The street is very low.

A: During the super storm, there was a huge puddle in the street—a giant puddle.

Q: I think Ninigret starts here and goes up here.

A: This house right on the corner was Mr. Burns. Brad built that originally. Brad sold that and moved up to—his house must have been this one, because this had to have been—

Q: Let's see what this says.

A: This was 1964. That's 50 years ago.

Q: There's C. Fisher. That would be Chet. And there's a B Fisher. For Brad, it says 264, 265. Is that what it says?

A: That's what it looks like. It would have been here. 64 and 65. That would have been Brad's house.

Q: That was when his house was built.

A: Yes. That's where Brad's house was.

Q: And this was the blind people.

A: Yes. They were nice people.

Q: They were really nice people.

A: Yes. They were very nice people. I wonder if this was Mr. Shendley. Mr. Shendley's house was there then. That's the big, long house that they have remodeled since then—many, many years since then.

Q: That's Niantic Avenue.

A: Yes.

Q: That would be across two lots.

A: Yes. As you come out of Lucas, this is Mr. Shendley's.

Q: That's a very long one.

A: Yes. This is Mr. Shendley's house, because that lady lived here. I can't think of her name.

Q: Mrs. Pitcher?

A: No. I can't think of now.

Q: I'm in the wrong block. This was Neptune.

A: This was Stanton Glover here, and this was Crowder right across the way. Stanton Glover was here where your friend is now. Now they've got a new house here too. This was McGlone right here on the corner of the ball field.

Q: And now that is Diane McEnroe. This is Sue Wilson that you worked for.

A: Yes. In fact, I've got to go back over to her place to flush out her toilet. She says she's still having a little trouble with it.

Q: Do you have any other memories that you want to share?

A: Brad Fisher had a terrible temperament at times. His brother Chet was a very nice man. Chet would help him put the water system on.

Q: I remember Chet and Norma.

A: Is that what his wife's name was?

Q: Yes.

A: In 1975, Mr. King had a terrible problem with his septic system. When Charlie Hall built the place, all he did was dig a big hole and roll a bunch of stones into it and put a pipe into it, and that was it. But you've got to remember, in 1949 it was just a summer cottage. So, if it filled during the summer, it all dissipated throughout the winter. Well, he was having a problem. Dad and I decided that we would go out and dig a huge leach field on the side of it. Right around that time, the state was kind of frowning on cesspools and leach fields and that, and they wanted things designed and all that stuff. So, Brad goes by and he sees us digging in the back yard. He goes and calls the state and tells the state that we're digging a cesspool in the back of George King's house. We were careful. We went out and cut the sod really, really neat all the way around, and moved them onto a drop cloth so there was no dirt showing. We put another drop cloth down, and we dug the hole, Buster Crews came and dumped the stones, and we put the pipes in, dumped the stone and put the sods back in place, and then Mr. King mowed the lawn. You would never had known that it was there. Then myself and another one of the fellows that worked for my dad started putting stone around the house so that there would be a stone burr. These two fellows showed up from Providence. They got out of the car. He said, "What are you guys doing?" I said, "We're putting stone around the edges of this guy's house so that when he mows the grass, the grass won't be up against the foundation. "You're not doing a septic system?" "No. We aren't doing a septic system." I said, "We're just putting the stone around the house." He said, "I'm going to kill Brad Fisher. I came all the way down here in the middle of the summertime," and he was going on and on and on. At that time, Brad Fisher pulls up. He went over there and yelled and hollered at Brad. He said, "Don't call us anymore." They got in the car and they left. Brad didn't talk to us—he didn't even look at us for a month. He'd drive right by. He had a terrible temperament—Brad did. Some days he'd yell and holler and scream, but other days he was nicer than pie to you. You couldn't really judge the man. I've had a lot of good times on this beach. I hope I have aloe more.

Q: Which beach do you like? Do you have a preference?

A: Central Beach is my favorite area. I do a lot of work now in old Quonochontaug, more than I ever did. But this has always been home to me. It always will be. I can remember all the old folks and all the old people. I don't know many of the new ones, but as far as knowing what the beach was, it's still with me.