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Subject: Charles Lowell
Transcriber: Zoe Rosenberger

Alex Lowell: Do you want me to (*Muffled speech*).

Charles Lowell: Whatever, whatever Phil wants.

Odenca: You're certainly welcome.

Alex Lowell: Cause I could interject some things if I think dad is making a mistake with a name or something, but I don't know a whole lot more than he does.

Odenca: Yeah, okay. No, no, stick around. Okay, uh, so this is Phil Odenca. We've got Charles Lowell and Alex Lowell. Uhh, it is the 24th of July, not August, as I told Larry Tye, that's why Larry couldn't be here today, cause I, I messed up the date. And, uhm, so this is the, this is a series of oral histories we're recording for the Historical Society. (*Rigsby whimpers*). Oh, I'm sorry. And Rigsby is here too, making noise. Okay, Rigsby you got to sit down and be quiet. Sit, sit, okay.

Uhm, this is for the Historical Society. And we've done, we've done about a dozen so far, uhm. And more, more to come. And at minimum, these go into the records of, they're getting digitized. They, we're doing a digital recording, at minimum they go into the records of the Historical Society. But Larry and I are also talking about doing some kind of, uh, written piece, maybe from what comes out of it. Uhm, and Larry's actually a fairly noted author. I don't know if you looked up any of his stuff?

Charles Lowell: I don't know him.

Odenca: But, but he's done some, uh. Yeah, he's done some great biographies, the most, most recent one on Joe McCarthy, which was quite interesting.

Charles Lowell: Ohh, I'd like to read that.

Odense: Yeah, yeah. No, it's quite, quite good. So, uh, yeah, we've talked to a lot of folks, and it's been, uhh, sort of a mix of people who are more summer-oriented and more, more full-time oriented, uhm. And, uh, you know, mostly getting perspectives and memories of old Cotuit and certainly, you know, the Lowells are a big part of Cotuit history. And, uh, and we don't, we haven't really talked to anyone of your family. So, uh, it's great that you're, you're willing to do it. So I guess a, you know, a good, maybe a good starting point are your early memories of maybe your earliest memories of coming to Cotuit.

Woman: Sorry, guys, the chair arrived, but it'll be a two minute pass through, and then we won't have any more disturbances (*chuckles*).

Lowell: Can I, I came here summers for as long as I can remember...

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: ...and before I can remember.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And, uh, we lived as, as in the compound, there were, uh, four houses.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Uh, and they were just summer houses. And when I was here, I don't know how much further you want me to go back. But the, originally in 19-, uh, 1907 or thereabouts.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And three houses were built.

Odense: Right.

Charles Lowell: And we had the two front houses that were on the view, and a larger single house behind. And, uh, that gradually evolved to be all of us living everywhere.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: So they split the back house into two houses, and put garages on those two houses.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And so for a long time, ever since I could remember, which is, uh, this split was probably done in 1930 or so.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Or maybe '25.

Odense: Yeah.

Alex Lowell: '33.

Charles Lowell: What?

Alex Lowell: '33.

Charles Lowell: '33, uhm. So uh, the, the, uh, the houses were separated and, and as I say they added garages to them. I'll stop for a minute here (*Chairs pass by*).

Odense: Alright, so we've got, we've got a mover coming through with a chair, so. Alright, I think we're good. So the, the, uh, back, we're at '33.

Charles Lowell: Right. So they were split and, and, uh, modified, and became two houses, two separate houses.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: The front two houses were mirror images of each other and the back house was a mirror image of itself, you might say. You could split it in two, and have two similar reverse halves. And so that's, was, (*Rigsby barks*), uhm.

Oden: I'm sorry, let me get the dog. (*Brief pause*). Okay.

Charles Lowell: And the property was owned by all of the relatives, my, my four, uh, uncles and father.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: My three uncles and father, and, uh, my, aunt. So, uh, let's see the.

Oden: And your father was Francis?

Charles Lowell: Francis Cabot Lowell...

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: ...named after the older Francis Cabot Lowell.

Oden: And Mariana Barzun was his sister?

Charles Lowell: Mariana Barzun was Mariana Lowell.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: And she married Jacques Barzun.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: And so then we had.

Oden: Guy Lowell was the other?

Charles Lowell: Guy Lowell was not part of the compound when I was alive.

Oden: Okay.

Charles Lowell: I don't know when he sold out, but it was before I was born.

Oden: Okay.

Charles Lowell: And he had what became the old rail house.

Oden: Right. Right. Right.

Charles Lowell: And the Ropes, uh, were on the other side of us. They were also relatives. And...

Oden: Yes.

Charles Lowell: ...that piece got divided off. So we were in the middle of this, of the entire beach. And I don't know how equal the pieces were. But I think that there may have been one more piece because, because the president of Harvard, uh, A. Lawrence Lowell.

Oden: A. Lawrence Lowell.

Charles Lowell: That piece, I guess that would be this. Uhh, or right around here might, might have.

Oden: More that way, but yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: I don't know about that.

Alex Lowell: There was also a piece up by Lowell, before you were born, uh, with a small cabin on it, I think.

Charles Lowell: Well, well, I'm not sure about that. My parents owned a piece of swamp, Fullers Marsh.

Oden: Oh, right, right.

Charles Lowell: Yeah. I don't know where that is, I've never been to it. But they were being taxed for it year, year after year. And my dad was a doctor and a biologist, and very interested in growing things and swimming things in ponds. And so he loved the idea that that we had, uh, some ownership of this Marsh.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And somewhere along the way, it turned out we didn't own it anymore, but we'd been paying taxes for it. So that kind of went away.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And I don't think there was a cabin on it. That was the cabin that I think Alex is thinking of the cabin that my.

Alex Lowell: No, there's a Lowell Road out by Lu-.

Charles Lowell: Okay, well, then maybe I'm wrong. I don't know about that.

Oden: Well I think, I think there was a hunting lodge of sorts that was down towards the Lloyds that was, that was the Lowell's family.

Alex Lowell: Well yeah.

Charles Lowell: I know nothing about that.

Odense: I think it was, where it became Richard Lloyd's house. And it's sort of between the, what was the Lloyd big house and, and Oregon.

Alex Lowell: Yeah, that's what I'm thinking of.

Odense: Yeah. And Fullers Marsh is sort of down that way. But you know, off towards the Shoestring Bay side.

Charles Lowell: That makes sense, I see.

Odense: Yeah. Yeah, there is a Fullers Marsh Road back there.

Charles Lowell: Oh, there is?

Odense: Yeah.

Alex Lowell: Okay, well I should go look someday.

Odense: Which, which I don't think you can drive along. I think it's a, I think it was a dirt road and I think it's, it's cut off now. But it sort of goes from like Rush-, Rushy Marsh pond and angles, you know, angles over towards, towards Popponesset Bay.

Alex Lowell: And I had heard, if I'm not interjecting too much, that the piece that we owned that we were paying taxes on was Lovell Island, in Popponesset. And there was a confusion about the spelling and that's why.

Odense: Oh Lovell, and Lowell, okay.

Charles Lowell: Yeah.

Odense: Okay, hm. Well, this house was, uh, was, uh, Andrew Lovell's house, where he lived after, after I guess your great, great grandfather, Ja-, Edward Jackson Lowell...

Alex Lowell: Yes.

Odense: ...lived in the red house on Putnam.

Charles Lowell: Yes.

Odense: That had been the Lovell house.

Alex Lowell: Oh.

Odense: Andrew Lovell moved from there to here in 1867. And then that's, that's when the Lowells bought, around that time was when the Lowells bought the red house.

Charles Lowell: They, the, uhm, the person we need here most is Paul Noonan who, uh.

Odense: Yeah, I don't think he I don't think he's gonna make it.

Charles Lowell: Yeah, haha.

Alex Lowell: He called that the Putnam house.

Odense: Right. Well, later there was a, there was a Dr. Putnam later after, after the Lowells I think. And that's how Putnam Avenue got its name, yeah.

Alex Lowell: Yeah.

Odense: Yeah. So, so that's great, great context. So you, your family was just coming here every summer?

Charles Lowell: Yes, and my dad had too.

Oden: And, and, uh, was he able to spend most of the summer here or was he sort of?

Charles Lowell: I don't know how much of the summer he spent here.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: But that would have been, uhm, probably before he was married.

Oden: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: I think the property was bought sometime at 1885, 1890, 1895.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Somewhere back there.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: So it had been, had been around for, for a while before they built those four houses out there.

Oden: Yeah, Paul told me 1864.

Charles Lowell: Well, that's even better (*laughs*).

Oden: And was it, was, uh, Concord where you grew up?

Charles Lowell: Yes.

Odenca: Okay.

Charles Lowell: Concord, MA.

Odenca: Yeah. And was it when, I mean, I did come by your house at some point. And actually, before we go, I should show you, we've got your, the big version of the biggest skiff race picture.

Alex Lowell: Oh, right. Oh, that's right. The one that was in the show.

Odenca: It's framed and displayed in that room there.

Alex Lowell: Oh, I'd love to see it.

Odenca: Yeah, we have to look at it before you go.

Alex Lowell: It's the biggest picture I've ever printed.

Odenca: Yeah, yeah. Well, it's the biggest picture most people have ever printed probably. (*Alex laughs*). But, uh, we did come by your house once. So did you grow up in the house where the same house that I?

Charles Lowell: Probably judging from the timing, no.

Odenca: Okay.

Charles Lowell: Uhh, the, the, the house you visited, uh, was it sort of tan colored?

Odenca: I'm not remembering.

Charles Lowell: Was it right near Garfield Road?

Oden: It seemed like it was near the. Yes, near Garfield Road.

Charles Lowell: Okay, that was, that was the house that my wife and I built in...

Oden: Ah, okay.

Charles Lowell: ...in 1987.

Oden: I see.

Charles Lowell: And I grew up in a house on the same property, or what was the same property, that was bigger when my grandfather and grandmother...

Oden: Wow.

Charles Lowell: ...uh, Frederick E. Lowell, who was the painter...

Oden: Right, right, right.

Charles Lowell: ...among other things.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And his wife, uh, Isabel Shaw Lowell. And, uh, her middle name, Shaw, had been her, her original name. Her brother, Thomas Ma Shaw, who was an architect, lived next door and built the house that we grew up in, as well as his own on the property in Concord. That has nothing to do with Cotuit, but that gives you some history.

Oden: Wow.

Alex Lowell: Well, he designed these houses in Cotuit as well.

Charles Lowell: Yes, and that is a.

Alex Lowell: And it has architectural features that are similar to the house that you grew up.

Oden: Oh, interesting. Okay.

Charles Lowell: One of the my, they were rearranged the houses over on our property if you come and look.

Oden: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I snuck in.

Charles Lowell: But the house I have has a little portico over the front door.

Oden: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And the house I grew up in in Concord that was built in 1910 had that same style portico, but just much larger.

Oden: Oh, interesting.

Charles Lowell: And, and the flared roof, that was another feature of his.

Oden: Oh, interesting. So, uhm, so when you were, when you would come in the summer, was at always you'd, school would be out and you'd pack it up, and?

Charles Lowell: Yup, and stay for the summer.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And, uh, back in the, I can remember one of the trips that we made. My mother drove us down, uhm. I'm sure she drove us down many times. But the occasion I remember was, was, uh, we left Concord towing a trailer with a 1949 Plymouth, uh, that was two or three years old. And the trailer was one that my father had bought, so we could move things around. Because in those days people didn't have station wagons. So if you wanted to bring something, you got a trailer.

Oden: Right, right.

Charles Lowell: And it was before Route 3 was finished, I think you could get on 128 to the beginning of Route 3, and then you had to turn off and go through Kingston and all those little towns, and pick up again, uhm, uh, down fairly close to the canal, rejoin Route 3. So the middle section for years was not finished, and, uh, you got to go through all the little towns in-between. And along the way, uh, it was a really hot day, my brother and I were in the car. I don't remember whether my younger brother Tom was there. But my older brother Pete was.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And the trailer developed a bearing problem. And we pulled into a gas station and it turned out, it had overheated and the man was able to fix it.

Oden: Oh, wow.

Charles Lowell: And that's why I remember it because it was, it was a, it was sort of an event.

Oden: Wow. And new bearing or just, uh?

Charles Lowell: I don't know the details but I've certainly been through that with my current trailers. And, uh, my mother was a very capable woman. She was grew up knowing how to do carpentry and play the viola, could build things and kayaks, and so on. So, uh, she, she had a good idea of what the problem was and even though she didn't fix it.

Oden: And your mother was Elizabeth?

Charles Lowell: Elizabeth...

Oden: Okay.

Charles Lowell: ...Shurcliff Lowell

Oden: Yes.

Charles Lowell: The daughter, one of six, the daughter of Arthur A. Shurcliff, who was a landscape architect.

Oden: Ah, okay. I had a sense for her from her, her later years.

Charles Lowell: Yeah, she was.

Oden: Seemed like a capable woman, at the helm of a skiff even, hah.

Charles Lowell: Right, haha. And, uh, what else can I tell you?

Oden: Well, it's interesting. There's a lot of architecture and, and, and artistry in the family. that are true or destroyed family.

Charles Lowell: Well that's true, but it is my, an interesting connection before the parent families ever met, with my mother, my mother being a Shurcliff, and my father being a Lowell, was, uh, through Williamsburg because Thomas Mott Shaw, uh, was the landscape architect for Williamsburg.

Oden: Oh, wow.

Charles Lowell: When the, when.

Alex Lowell: No, Arthur A. Shurcliff, your mother's father was the landscape architect.

Charles Lowell: Right. I'm sorry. And, and Thomas Mott Shaw was the building architect.

Oden: Okay, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And it was Perry Shaw and Hepburn, was the, the, the architectural firm and my, my grandfather's name was, (*sighs*) there was uhh, it had another Shurcliff in the name. But anyway, they worked side by side. And there was a picture painted of them, too, Rockefeller funded it, I guess.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And there was a picture painted of them all together, they Perry, Shaw, and Shurcliff. And so that, I think that's hanging down in the, in the museum. And for some reason Shurcliff was eventually painted out of the picture.

Oden: Oh my.

Charles Lowell: Because you can find an earlier version of the picture on online where he's in it.

Oden: Oh, isn't that something.

Charles Lowell: And if you look now he's not in it. (*Oden chuckles*). And the story I heard was it was because his, he was the only one standing, that the Perry, Shaw, and Hepburn were sitting at a table like this.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And, and Arthur Shurcliff was standing with his hand on the back of a chair. And it looked like he was running the meeting. And obviously they didn't like that, so he was painted out.

Oden: Hah, wow.

Charles Lowell: I don't know what the rest of the story is beyond that.

Alex Lowell: That's a good story.

Oden: So, uh, you'd come and you'd get out of school, you'd come down. What, what were your typical days like, as a kid?

Charles Lowell: Just rattling around, playing in the boats, swimming.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Getting fed by, we had au pairs or what the equivalent was then. College girls who, who the Lowells would hire one and the Barzuns would hire another. And they just come and stay for the summer. And take care of us in the back house, and our parents would live in the front house.

Oden: Okay, yeah.

Charles Lowell: So it was, we had friends down. And then later on, when I was about 15, we, we both the Barzuns and the Lowells rented their back houses, to help pay the tax bills and generally fund things. And so we all lived in the front houses, and had some very nice tenants that, we, came year after year that were just great.

Oden: Huh.

Alex Lowell: Including, the Gould's, that was their introduction to Cotuit.

Charles Lowell: I guess that's right.

Oden: Really?

Alex Lowell: And they were renting the Barzun's back house. And uh, so, Jim, I guess, being partly the inspiration for this project, started his, uh, life in Cotuit, in one of our.

Oden: Ah, I didn't realize that.

Charles Lowell: He's, he's the genealogist if you need one, you know, he knows more about.

Oden: He's, he's passed away, I don't know if you know that.

Charles Lowell: I gathered, yes. But he wrote a lot about, he would call up all my cousins, uh, including one cousin that lives in the West Coast named Shaw, and wanted to see how she fit into the story.

Oden: Oh, interesting.

Charles Lowell: So he went way, way out.

Oden: Yeah, yeah. Well, he, of course, wrote a paper for the Historical Society called the, the "Literary Lowells."

Charles Lowell: Oh, I def-, I should read that.

Oden: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: Uhm, anyway, so we just rattled around and my parents, uh, the, the. My mother was always the inspiration for, for doing anything adventurous. We, the Lowells had lived, uh, sitting on the bluff, looking at the view and maybe sailing a skiff or two. Uh, we had a Scherbak skiff.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Number 28.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: The first one didn't work out very well. So my parents went back to Mr. Scherbak, and he made a second one. And that one was great. And I think, and we gave that to, uhh...

Alex Lowell: Dave Scherbak.

Charles Lowell: ...Dave Scherbak, uh, about 10 years ago in terrible shape.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: I think it's in even worse shape now. It's probably not worth saving. But it was number 28.

Oden: Yeah, it is next door, I believe.

Charles Lowell: Oh, okay, hah, falling apart. We certainly got every last ounce of use out of it.

Alex Lowell: And I think ours was unique in being a black and white, uh.

Charles Lowell: Well, the Barzuns was the same.

Alex Lowell: Yeah also, but, uh, as far as I know.

Oden: The strikes.

Charles Lowell: Yeah.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: We always painted them identically so that when they sat off the pier on either side of the pier, so you couldn't tell one from the other unless you saw the number.

Oden: Hah, hah, interesting.

Charles Lowell: I don't know who built the Barzun's, but it was not Scherbak, it was somebody else.

Oden: And I think they had a Bigelow, which, which we bought.

Charles Lowell: Oh.

Oden: '66 was original, the original 23.

Charles Lowell: I thought that was, oh, and then they bought a Peck.

Oden: And then they bought a Peck. That's right.

Charles Lowell: Which wasn't as nice, right.

Oden: Well it was nice, but it wasn't as fast, I think. (*Everyone chuckles*). I think. Yes, my, uh, I think we paid the handsomely sum of \$175 for 66. But it did include a new sail, so it was a good deal.

Charles Lowell: I see.

Oden: That was 60-, I think it was in '66, probably that we, that happened.

Charles Lowell: So but backing up, my mother was the adventurer.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And she decided shortly after she married my father that she would learn to sail. Now she had grown up summering in Ipswich.

Oden: Aw, okay.

Charles Lowell: On an Ipswich Creek and my aunt, her sister had a small sailboat, called a fish boat, which is somewhat like a skiff in that it's about the same length, but it's slightly rounded bottom.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Sort of, sort of what do you call it when it's planked? It's not.

Oden: Yeah, I know what you mean. And more like a beetle cat or something.

Charles Lowell: Well, yeah, but it did, it had. It was made out of flat sections. It wasn't very, wasn't developed, or whatever you call it.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And it had a Marconi rig, but it was otherwise similar in some respects to a skiff. So she had, she knew what sailing was.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And David Ebeling was teaching. Does that name mean anything to you?

Oden: Sure. Oh, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And he was teaching, doing the Cove series teaching of that year.

Oden: Oh, right, right, right.

Charles Lowell: And it was being held at our Pier...

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: ... because the yacht club had no beach or Pier. And so the.

Odenca: And the cove was in here and the, the rest of Yacht Club was running out by Lou. Off of Sinclair's.

Charles Lowell: Oh, I guess that's right. I guess that's right.

Odenca: Yes.

Charles Lowell: And so she went down to the beach and sat among the eight-year-olds and learned to sail.

Odenca: Hah, super.

Charles Lowell: And so then she told my father and her sister-in-law Mariana that they should get a Wianno Senior, or some other larger boat, and go somewhere.

Odenca: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And so we, they decided to join the Bi-Wianno Senior number 60. Which, uh, and, uh, then she, she said, "But let's not just sail around Dead Neck, let's go to Nantucket." So they did.

Odenca: Wow.

Charles Lowell: And they slept, the three of them, Mariana, my father, and my mother, on a boat that was never intended to be cruised on.

Odenca: Absolutely.

Charles Lowell: It has, it has a tinsy cabin. Should I stop?

Odenca: No, no, I was just making sure it was going.

Charles Lowell: And so, uhm, and so they would, uh, go to somewhere like Tuckernuck, and, and anchor the boat off the beach and row ashore and camp in a tent.

Oden: Okay, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And the idea of sleeping on the boat had not occurred to them. And then when us kids came along, we still had the Wianno Senior and my mom and dad and the three of us kids did sleep on the boat. Dad in the cockpit and the rest of us in the cabin, jammed in between the centerboard box and the.

Oden: Oh, I've slept on a Senior before.

Charles Lowell: Oh, you have? So you know you can't even sit up.

Oden: Yeah, yeah, it's tight.

Charles Lowell: And we cooked on a sterno, uh, that my Dad and Mom bought, a sort of a baking dish.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Put the can in, and put a grill on top of things.

Oden: Yeah, wow.

Charles Lowell: And, and, uhm, the thing I hated most about cruising, I really enjoyed it. But the worst part of it was, was carnation condensed milk on cornflakes. I felt that was just inedible. My dad decided to bring extra water, uh, and rather than in bottles because if you put them in the bilge intact they'd break. He brought them in beach balls.

Oden: Oh, interesting.

Charles Lowell: And the beach balls gave off a horrible plastic smell, so the drink water was almost undrinkable, but at least it was there. And so we cruised around the islands, cause we had

Odense: So mostly the Elizabeth Islands?

Charles Lowell: Yeah, and the Vineyard and then Nantucket, and we ended in Hadley's harbor.

Odense: Wow.

Charles Lowell: Yeah, they got around and, and my mother became a really good sailor, having not really gotten interested in it until she was 17 or 18.

Odense: Yeah, and I remember her, you know, being quite competitive in the old lady's race. Had she.

Charles Lowell: Oh, she went out with Harriett, yes.

Odense: Had she raced at all?

Charles Lowell: Not much. But, but she was, she was a competitive person. She was a good tennis player, she knew how to win tennis.

Odense: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And, and she heard her mother, Margaret Homer Shurcliff. Margaret Nichols Shurcliff, sorry, uhm, was uh, MHS, that was Margaret Homer Shurcliff, was, uhm, uh, let's see, where I was, where I was going with this?

Odense: Tennis.

Charles Lowell: Tennis. She was a really good tennis player. She played it at Longwood in long skirts and won a number of tournaments.

Odenca: Wow, isn't that something.

Charles Lowell: So, so my mother and all her kids got, learned how to play tennis.

Odenca: My memory of your mother was excellent posture.

Charles Lowell: Haha, yes.

Odenca: That's the one thing that stood out. I've never seen any, well, actually, Buddy Bailey, I think probably was the only other person who sat up as straight sailing a skiff.

Charles Lowell: She, uh, she went to Windsor, I think that's right.

Odenca: Ah, okay.

Charles Lowell: And became the captain of so many of the sports teams that they had to make a rule about how many ca-, teams you could be Captain of.

Odenca: Isn't that something?

Charles Lowell: And then she went to Bennington, and it was the, and it was the first graduating class.

Odenca: Oh, really? Wow.

Charles Lowell: So, she was she entered in the freshman, and it was, that, that was the only class they had. And then as each.

Odenca: They added one more grade. Wow.

Charles Lowell: And she, uh, she decided when she went to college, that she was going to stop being a tomboy. And so she didn't play any more sports. I suppose she might have played an occasional tennis game, but she decided to become a student. And one of the things she decided

to do is take up the violin. And guess who her teacher was, her future sister-in-law Mariana Barzun.

Odenca: Oh, is that. Right, right.

Charles Lowell: Who was Mariana Lowell.

Odenca: I remember hearing that she taught at Bennington, huh.

Charles Lowell: So my mother and her future sister-in-law met before my dad married Elizabeth.

Odenca: Wow. Yeah, that's quite something.

Charles Lowell: Now I don't know how much this relates to Cotuit. It's getting pretty far away.

Odenca: No, no, it's good. It's, it's good stuff. So you know, there was, there's some recordings that Betty Peck did in '78 and one, one of them was with Mrs. Cabot. And then we talked to Joan Bentinck-Smith. And one of the themes that came through, and not just from them, but from some others is Cotuit seemed to be a little more neighborhoody than it used to. Like, uh, Mrs. Cabot said in her childhood, they sort of never left that, you know, that part of town and talking to Eddie Henderson, you know, she was not allowed to come up towards this end of town. So people tended to stay where they were. Were you, was that the way it was for you, sort of mostly in your neighborhood?

Charles Lowell: I suppose we'd walk down to the village and get an ice cream cone.

Odenca: Right, right.

Charles Lowell: Uh, but we mostly stayed on the compound, which was large.

Odenca: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And also we, I was one of three, Pete, myself, and Tom.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And we lined up very close to the Barzuns.

Oden: Barzuns, yeah.

Charles Lowell: With Jim, Roger, and Isabel, so we were all playing together all summer. We didn't have a lot of other friends. But we did.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: For a while, we, we, uh, Harry Clifford would come over periodically. He's, as you know, tragically died at, uh, age 18 or 20.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And that's about it. I don't remember many other people like, uh, I guess Roger knew Terry White.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: And, and others of the Whites.

Oden: And were you getting involved with the yacht club at this point?

Charles Lowell: I wasn't particularly. But Isabel, my cousin was a good sailor, and I would crew for her and for Warren and...

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: ...I always tell them that if they needed my.

Odenca: Warren Wheelwright?

Charles Lowell: Yeah.

Odenca: Okay.

Charles Lowell: To win the races, they needed my help. (*Odenca chuckles*). I don't know to what extent that was true.

Odenca: Yeah. But, but, uh, Alex mentioned that you were competitive in the obstacle race.

Charles Lowell: Yes, I, I, Leonard Peck insisted on, on having the finish line be you sail backwards. And I got very good at sailing backwards. And I've since told Michelle and Alex that you could win in our rows, that you can actually just barely make it to windward going backwards. You wouldn't think it was possible. I didn't think it was but we tried it and we could do it.

Odenca: Really? Wow.

Charles Lowell: It just, just a little above wind beam you can get the boat to sail backwards. Now, this is a row, not a skiff.

Odenca: Right.

Charles Lowell: Probably got too much sail.

Odenca: You got two sails to play with.

Charles Lowell: Well, no you'd have to douse the jib.

Odenca: I see.

Charles Lowell: The jib's very hard to, can't seem to cooperate.

Oden: Okay.

Charles Lowell: The schiff, the sail's too big. The top would fall off enough, so that you couldn't do it.

Oden: Yeah. Well I was interested because I, you know, the obstacle race has been spotty in recent years. But I did, I've competed in it a few times. And one year, I was way out in front and I spent 15 minutes trying to back over the finish line and couldn't do it. And Kip Gould came in, up into the wind, backed over, cause he'd practice this, but I should have come to you, hahaha.

Charles Lowell: I've watched a lot of people on a race when I was doing the photography.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: Uh, and I happened to be out there one day when it was the obstacle race and two out of three boats paddled their way backwards. It seemed to me that was cheating, pulling out of nowhere and paddling backwards.

Oden: Yeah, no that's, that wasn't the intent, not Leonard's intent.

Alex Lowell: But part of the reason you were so good at it, Dad was that you and, and Tom and Pete spend a lot of time hacking around in boats.

Charles Lowell: Yes, absolutely.

Alex Lowell: And not racing particularly. Uh, but I don't know if there's anything you can tell Phil about just generally, how much of your summer was occupied with messing about in boats and the sort of crazy things you would do that partly?

Oden: And you're quoting somebody, right? There was a?

Charles Lowell: "Messing about in boats?" It's E.B. White.

Oden: Yeah. Was it E.B. White? Okay, yeah.

Charles Lowell: Well, I, I, uh, we had the hermit at one point.

Oden: Yeah, yeah, I remember the hermit.

Charles Lowell: And then a few years later, my parents bought a 28 foot sloop, a little wooden boat, which handled terribly. It had attached rudder to the keel, and it just...

Oden: Ah, okay, yeah.

Charles Lowell: ...it was very hard to manage. But it sailed nicely. But, but you couldn't go backwards. (*Oden chuckles*). But you could do other things. And so we discovered that we could spin it around. And we had always sail off the mooring and sail back to the mooring. And everybody else we knew would motor out of the harbor and then put up the sail.

Oden: Sure.

Charles Lowell: We thought the whole point was to get out of the harbor under sail.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And so we were always running aground and, uh, and cutting things close. And pulling maneuvers that that other people might think were a little bit risky, but we got away with it. And we got good at it because you learn the limits of what you can do by trying everything there is to try.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And, uh, Alex is somewhat the same way. We've sailed our roads, uh, into uhm, uhm.

Oden: Cupid's Cove? Oh, Prince Cove, okay.

Charles Lowell: Cupid's Cove. What do I mean? The one on Dead Neck?

Oden: Yes, Cupid's.

Charles Lowell: When at high tide, we managed to sail in and sail out.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And you can't, I don't see anybody else doing that with the exception of a skiff about three years ago.

Oden: Oh, I've do-, I mean, I tend to give it a go every other summer or so, myself. But, uh, yeah a skiff's not quite a Rhodes either, haha.

Charles Lowell: Right, and, and. But, you know, we're sailing in eight inches of water and we're managing to pull it off. And of course the wind has to be right, the tide has to be high, the few requirements.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Anyway.

Oden: And Alex mentioned birds.

Charles Lowell: I, I my dad was interested in birds and other creepy crawly things and we had a small pond near our house in Concord. So he was always looking, you'd find him lying down on his stomach with his head about eight inches above the water, just watching and you'd see all these various creepy crawly things swimming around in the water. The, those bugs that have two arms and look like oars on them.

Oden: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And I think they are called oarsmen, and fairy shrimp and all sorts of things in the pond, tadpoles. He knew lots and lots about what was there. And, uh, and somehow, when I

was about eight or thereabouts, we ended up with three pet crows. And I think what happened was, a farmer in Concord had cut a tree down. This is my guess, I really don't know what, how we arrived with them.

Oden: Yeah, with a nest.

Charles Lowell: With a nest in it.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And they probably didn't know it was there because they're really hard to find, even when they've got young in them. It's just about impossible to find them. They're really quiet, and they're really careful. But anyway, so my dad had always been interested in birds, and had raised a few birds himself.

So he brought down to the Cape three, actually, we were in Concord, three baby crows could not fly, but were close to flying, at the perfect age. And we fed them, and they, and they grew up and learned to fly and we kept them outdoors in Concord. And they would fly in and sit on my grandmother's porch, among other places. And she didn't like that so she would get out her broom and sort of sweep them out. (*Oden lightly chuckles*).

And then we went down to the Cape in June or June 15, or July probably, with all our crows and they, we lived here for a month. And around that time, my grandmother decided to pay us a visit from Concord and drove down and got out of her car. And as soon as he got out of the car the three crows started dive bombing.

Oden: Hahaha, they remembered her.

Charles Lowell: They remembered her. Anyway, they were wonderful pets, and we, we kept them outdoors and they were lots of fun to play with. They'd, they'd, hide things and do all sorts of clever things. And we'd often walked down to the village to Perry's which was prior to the Kettle Ho...

Oden: Oh, right, right.

Charles Lowell: ...to buy an ice cream cone. And the crows would be up in the trees, above us, following us along. Birds have an amazing ability to identify people. Though people who go outdoors don't realize that but...

Odense: Oh, how interesting.

Charles Lowell: ... birds can, can tell who's who very easily if they want to. And they can keep track of us with no trouble at all.

Odense: Wow.

Charles Lowell: So that was, that was a lot of, I had lots of other birds, Blue Jays, starlings, a couple of seagulls, a common tern...

Odense: Really? Wow.

Charles Lowell: ... that I arranged through the Audubon Society, for which they got in trouble.

Odense: Oh?

Charles Lowell: Because they weren't, they were supposed to be protecting the birds, not making pets out of them.

Alex Lowell: Oh, ironically, that was around the time that you were employed to protect the sanctuaries.

Charles Lowell: Yes, I was the tern warden.

Odense: And how old were you then?

Charles Lowell: 19, probably, 20.

Odense: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: I don't know, I graduated from college, or was at the end of one of the terms, but it was, it would have been I would have been around that age.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And I talked to Alan Morgan, who was then the president of, or running Lincoln, the Lincoln version of Audubon.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And he said, "Yes," he would allow me to take one baby tern, uh, which I did. And I took an umbrella and I took my cousin Jim Barzun who was really interested in birds also. And we used the umbrella to keep the birds from hitting us on the head, which they otherwise would do, they get very upset. And we crept up to the edge of the colony and found an egg that was hatching. And I took that home and it turned into this adorable little bird, which it took me about six hours of trying to feed it cause it, it depends on the parents' red spot on its bill to.

Odense: Oh, to identify.

Charles Lowell: So I had made in preparation a minnow catcher, and had lots of minnows ready to feed it. But, uhm, it wasn't until I, by some luck. I got a minnow headfirst into its mouth while it was peeping, and suddenly we were off and running.

Odense: Oh good.

Charles Lowell: After that moment the bird would eat happily and every minnow went down headfirst, no matter how it picked it up, or how you handed it. It wouldn't pick up anything, you had to feed it manually. And it became just a delightful little bird that stayed with us for most of the summer. And then I think it was killed by somebody down at Ropes, probably a child. Because it would land on the beach next to you, and it didn't develop any fear of people. So that was too bad. That was just a wonderful pet.

Odense: Yeah. What, what?

Charles Lowell: And the gulls were not, they were just, all they wanted was food.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: They'd squawk at you until you fed them.

Oden: What, what did you do as the tern officer?

Charles Lowell: I basically told people not to, not to let their dogs free. I think they didn't, most people knew not even to bring dogs.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And not to walk around in the tern colony and to stay on the beach. But it was, it was mostly a presence. They wanted the boat had a sign on it. And maybe they still do that, the Mass. Audubon Society.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: On both sides, it was a little whaler. And I just puttered around and made my presence known, uh, as a, to show people because the beach was mobbed, I guess it still is, but it was just mobbed in those days. Everybody was there on the weekends.

Oden: Huh, and this, so the Bailey's had owned the island and this.

Charles Lowell: Samson's?

Oden: Yeah, and this must have been just after they sold it to, uh, David. David, I think they sell it.

Charles Lowell: In 60-, [6]2, or [6]3, or [6]4.

Oden: Yeah.

Alex Lowell: My grandma, Elizabeth Lowell was a conservationist. And she, I think, was part of the, uh, movement to get Samson's into the hands of, uh, the Audubon. And I think we may have some documentation of hers, uh, letters of hers that she'd written, things like that.

Charles Lowell: It was very important too that the gulls not to take over the island before the terns arrived, they arrived two weeks earlier or so. And they developed, they put in their nests, and then the terns would have nowhere to go. And Samson's was a, was somewhat unique in that it was one of the few places that terns were nesting. And so there was an effort to, to discourage the gulls, so that the terns could move in. And, uhm, the terns have since been crowded out, for whatever reason.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: I think the gulls aren't there either. But, uh, so I don't know what's happened, but there's no colony there now. But there was the thriving colony there.

Oden: I, you know, I think with the, the recent dredging, and then they built up what is supposed to be tern habitat, I don't know how successful that's been. And I know that there's.

Charles Lowell: Well also wolves, or dogs are getting across. I think maybe coyotes are swimming across and, and raising havoc.

Oden: I know they swim, yeah.

Charles Lowell: Yeah, and I think, I don't think they were a threat then, cause there, they at least had terns out by the cut, and they're not there either. There's nothing nesting on Dead Neck now. And they used to be tons of gulls. You could hear them squawking every night of the summer. Well.

Oden: Oh yeah. Well I recall going you know, I lived at that end of town and I recall going down to loop and the gulls would pick up shellfish and drop them in the parking lot to break them and swoop down and scoop out the innards.

Alex Lowell: But you told me once dad that you thought that when they closed the open landfills at some point somewhere that the Gull population was much reduced.

Charles Lowell: Yes, that was one of the problems was the dumps, uh, feeding the gulls. And so the population was huge.

Oden: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: But, but I, as I say it's unfortunate but there are no terns, and I haven't seen any for years. But they used to fly along our beach all the time.

Oden: Yeah, I've seen, uhh, you know, I walk the beaches a fair amount and I do remember seeing some down towards Oregon last in May. It was probably offseason. But I saw, I saw, I saw some, and it was remarkable because I hadn't seen 'em in.

Charles Lowell: I heard one I think yesterday or the day before I mentioned it to you, Alex.

Alex Lowell: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: It's the only one I've heard all summer.

Oden: Behold, the old Tern Warden has the ear (*Charles laughs*), the tuned ear. Alex said you also remembered, uh, about that, that timeframe, Jackie Kennedy visits?

Charles Lowell: Yes. It was, uh, they visited a number of times. I, I, I can remember about three, but I'm sure there was it happened more often than that. And the Kennedys had a boat called the Marlin, which was a handsome 45-ft powerboat.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Uhh, just, just the right sort of classic boat that one ought to have in that position. And, uh, Kennedy would, would sit in the, in the stern, in a very comfortable rocking chair, uh, upholstered big chair.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: I guess he had a bad back.

Oden: Oh, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And he had a hard time so. And, uhm, they've come from Hyannis, go through the cut and come through spuit and anchor in the harbor and then go out and through around Samson's Island or maybe back through the spuit. And they, there was always three or so small police boats that buzzed around, kept everybody. You probably remember this too?

Oden: Well, I, it's how I heard of the Secret Service.

Charles Lowell: Oh.

Oden: I remember my dad and being intrigued, like, getting the secret service. Just the name sounded so cool. And he pointed out some guys on the beach who weren't really in beach attire and were keeping an eye on things. (*Charles laughs*). But.

Charles Lowell: Anyway, uh, the, there were two stories that I think are fun. One is that my brother Pete was sailing. Although this may not be, this probably, I guess this isn't to do with the Kennedys. I should leave that one out. But the other is Leonard Peck, uh, having to, uhh, being asked to tell Jackie not to water ski.

Oden: That's, that's what I heard, yeah.

Charles Lowell: Yeah, at Harbor.

Oden: Because Leonard was Harbormaster.

Charles Lowell: Harbor, and they were supposed to do it in North Bay.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: I don't know whether he actually told her not to or not. Uh, but otherwise the day, it was interesting that, the, it was so casual in those days, that the boat would arrive, you'd see them.

Oden: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: I don't think you could possibly get away with that now.

Oden: No, no.

Charles Lowell: And people would wave and, and keep their distance, and be quite respectful.

Oden: Yeah, yeah, it was a different time. One of the other subjects that Alex mentioned was Hurricane Carol. That was that was the '54 Hurricane?

Charles Lowell: Yes.

Oden: And one of the most powerful storms to ever hit New England I think, is that right?

Charles Lowell: Yes, I was pretty young in '54, I was, would have been 12. And, uh, the eye of the storm went right over Cotuit, if I'm thinking of the right storm, and I don't, I don't remember a lot of the details but it did a lot of damage to our bluff.

Oden: Huh.

Charles Lowell: It washed away a certain amount of it at the bottom. And a lot of, a great many boats ended up on our beach, even though there weren't as many boats then as there are now.

Oden: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And Hurricane Bob, a great many boats ended up on our beach, but there were a great many boats on the harbor.

Oden: Right, right, so proportionally.

Charles Lowell: I think they all ended up on our beach after Carol, because that was the direction of the wind.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And it looked very similar in terms of just wall-to-wall boats all the way down the beach. And my, uh, we owned the Wianna Senior at that point, and it got washed up on the beach. And we called Cosby's to come and pull it off, because it was, it was probably 10 feet above the high tide line.

Oden: Oh, wow.

Charles Lowell: And Cosby said, we won't be able to get to it for a month because we're, we're just too busy with everybody else's boat.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And the Wiannas are pretty tough and they don't have much of a keel. So it wasn't injured. It just got pounded up the beach. So, uh, it was still rigged. The mast was still standing and it was otherwise in reasonably good shape. So my dad decided he'd get it off the beach. And he, uh, and the Barzuns at that time had a, a, this you ought to ask Roger about this. But they had a, a caretaker for the kids called Florence, Flowy. I don't, I think, I don't remember her last name. And she got intrigued with this as well. She was probably, my dad was probably let's see what, what 54 minus nine is. So he was probably in his late 40s, early 50s. And Flow might have been 60, or she seemed like she oughta be 60. And, uhm.

Oden: Ancient, haha.

Charles Lowell: Ancient by a kid's standard. And they, the two of them went at it. She during her off hours digging holes and putting in boors and getting rollers and...

Oden: Oh really?

Charles Lowell: ...they got it off the beach, after about a week's work.

Oden: Oh, isn't that something.

Charles Lowell: Just unbelievable.

Oden: Wow. That's great. Oh, Roger would be a good one to talk to you too.

Charles Lowell: Yes, he would know a lot of this. And then the beach was seriously damaged, uhm, the bank. If some of its I guess it slid, and as many banks they got hit hard. And the question was what to do about it. And the town, or the Conservation Commission, or whatever it was, whoever was in power in those days, said they would allow a one-time restoration of beachfront property.

And so, uhm, we decided we would get a steam shovel to pull sand out of the, out of the harbor below the low tide line and dump it on the beach and then have a bulldozer push it off the bank and I have some pictures of this as it was happening. And they dredged a lot of sand out and about, if you, if you wait for low tide and then walk out about 10 feet, that's where what we call the trench, which is perfectly positioned to bring a boat up to the end of the dock, cause if you get into the trench then the water was deep right up to the dock.

Oden: Right, right. Oh, great. Was that when all the posts went in, the ones that?

Charles Lowell: No, I, those were way before that. Okay, those. Alex might, you looked into that a little bit, but those were all much earlier.

Alex Lowell: We're not certain about it. And we have some hypotheses about how it is that they got covered up. And then recently re-exposed.

Oden: Yeah.

Alex Lowell: Uhm, but from the pictures that we have, from when dad was a kid, maybe around five years old, or even earlier, uh, they were present and visible. So they must have been installed, uh, in the '30s, before dad was born.

Charles Lowell: They was just hold the bottom of the bank...

Oden: Yeah, okay.

Charles Lowell: ... at the time, and they stuck up out of the sand. At least in the pictures, I have about six feet.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: So they were big chunks of tree.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Anyway, we, uh, pushed the sand up the beach, up the bluff and, uh, we created two thirds of the bank at a shallower slant. And, uh, that sand has been there, uhh, ever since. If you look along the bank, now you can see the remnants that comes out of a fairly steep angle, then it goes out a little bit, and it drops because of the cutaway. But, the, uh, we used to have about 30 feet of beach or at least 20 feet of beach from the bottom of the bluff to the water. And then and then there was a dip about a foot, and then, then you started down to the water. So there was lots of beach that never got hit by water except in the storm.

Odense: Yeah, huh. You remember that Big Sandy spot on the bluff on Grand Island?

Charles Lowell: Yes.

Odense: It looked like a whale.

Charles Lowell: Well, it was sort of down near the, near the entrance to the Narrows.

Odense: I don't think it was down that far, but that side.

Charles Lowell: Cause it was, it was a bank that was always sliding. And that look persisted through the '80s, I was there, at least the '70s.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And then they built a big house there. And I think they've stabilized the bank.

Oden: Okay, is that what happened?

Charles Lowell: But my dad was always trying to keep our bank from sliding.

Oden: Yeah, I just remember sort of a big bald spot.

Charles Lowell: Yeah, I think it persisted for years.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Dad was always planting things and fertilizing the bluff, and trying to get something to grow on it, so it wouldn't keep moving. And he says he did. It's, that's why there's a.

Oden: There's a fair number of roses in there now, right?

Charles Lowell: Yes, those were taken from Harriet's property...

Oden: Okay.

Charles Lowell: ...before they removed the tennis court.

Oden: I just, just this year, I'm, I noticed the beautiful white blooms. I think it was probably late May or early June.

Charles Lowell: My mom and dad have transplanted every one of those, haha.

Oden: Yeah, yeah. They're very nice, huh.

Alex Lowell: And dad, was that around the time that grandma had the idea of painting the houses green? Because so many trees had been destroyed in Hurricane Carol.

Charles Lowell: I don't know, you mean the green trim?

Alex Lowell: We still have a green trim leftover. But I'd heard at one point that she had...

Oden: Cause it was so dull after the?

Alex Lowell: ...decided to paint the front of the houses green because they were so visible from the water.

Oden: Oh, I see, I see.

Charles Lowell: Did, did they actually do that? I don't think so.

Alex Lowell: I think so. And, and now we have the green trim leftover.

Oden: Interesting.

Charles Lowell: I don't recall that.

Oden: So just, we're coming up on an hour, which is about the, you know, about the high end, but a couple of questions. One will be on Larry's behalf. But mine is, do you, who were some of the like older characters in town? Do you remember any characters in town from your youth?

Charles Lowell: Yes, uh. There was a man, Finney? There was a guy who, who rode around on a tricycle with a 100 horsepower..

Oden: Oh, uh, uhm, uh. Foster Nickerson.

Charles Lowell: Foster Nickerson, yes.

Oden: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: He had trouble speaking, and he had a tiller steering range to get around.

Oden: Right, right. Yeah.

Charles Lowell: I always thought.

Oden: Cerebral palsy, I think.

Charles Lowell: Is that what it was?

Oden: I think so, yeah.

Charles Lowell: He seems really unfortunate. But he seemed to make the best of it in the most amazing way.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: It was a, it was a gasoline powered tricycle. And it looked, I suppose there was a manufacturer involved, but it almost looked homemade.

Oden: Oh, it was made by David Leland...

Charles Lowell: Oh.

Oden: ... who was a local, uhm, I don't know, metal worker sort of guy and I'm said sure exactly what it looks like.

Charles Lowell: I see.

Oden: I'm not sure exactly what his.

Charles Lowell: That's more or less what it looked like.

Odense: And, and funded by Miss Riley, I believe.

Charles Lowell: But it was, it was remarkably functional, it worked for years.

Odense: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Alex Lowell: Who was the guy who made some wooden toys for you and?

Charles Lowell: Fred Savory.

Odense: Oh, I've heard that name, yeah.

Charles Lowell: He was a local carpenter.

Odense: Right.

Charles Lowell: A very good one. He did a lot of work for us and he would help build our pier every, every spring.

Odense: Ah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: My dad and he would go off into the woods and cut down some pitch pines and put a point on the end, and use some new pitch pines along with many other ones that were left over from the year before. And make a pitch pine dock, which was sort of traditional.

Odense: Sure.

Charles Lowell: They've been doing that since 1910, or whenever.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: Because my grandfather Lowell, uhm, who died in the '30s, has a painting of the pier. And it, and the one I remembered in the '60s...

Oden: Looked just the same, haha.

Charles Lowell: ...looked just the same. Just the same.

Oden: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And I remember where the, where the branches or the trunk sprouting little.

Oden: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: And they, you had to be careful not to get some pitch on your hands when you grabbed the post.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: It was both rickety and charming and very functional.

Oden: Right.

Charles Lowell: We never, it'd always wash away in a storm, but then that happens anyways, so.

Oden: And it was sort of built, built for that sort of, haha. So if Larry were here, he'd asked everybody what I think is a very tough question. But it's what, what do you think makes Cotuit special?

Charles Lowell: Oh, boy.

Odense: Because it is, it is a very different place than anywhere on the Cape or anywhere, you know, most of us have ever been.

Charles Lowell: Well what I think makes it special now is the lack of shopping anywhere near it.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: And I don't know whether that's luck or design. But, but not having a shopping mall nearby I think is a huge advantage to that character.

Odense: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: Or at least it makes it unique and different. It may be worse from many people's point of view, but it's certainly different. There's the post office, there's the Kettle Ho. And is it and the Crookers, I guess...

Odense: Yeah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: ...those are the three and, and, and they all they did in the last 50 years was move the post office.

Odense: Right, right.

Charles Lowell: Well, I guess this is a real estate. You just after the road turning left for the town landing is, you're heading to our loop. There's a little house that used to be, uhm, a ice cream parlor.

Odense: Oh, right. Right. Right. Right.

Charles Lowell: And it had a, uh, uhm, a, uhm, a pinball machine in it. One of the old fashioned ones with the flippers.

Odense: Boose's, or something like that? Was that it? Bursars, I think.

Charles Lowell: I don't remember the name of it. You could buy a 5, 10, and 15 cent cone. It was one, two, or three scoops.

Odense: Hah, yeah.

Charles Lowell: Uh, I don't know it makes it unique. And I always feel slightly embarrassed because it is unique. And to what extent is it is that undemocratic, I call it but I'm not objecting.

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: It's, it's a wonderful town. It, it, it doesn't have much of a focus. It's just, it just sort of has a feeling of being forgotten rather than...

Odense: Yeah.

Charles Lowell: ... having a center with a quadrangle.

Odense: And some of it may too be, it's not really on the way to anywhere.

Charles Lowell: That's got to be a big plus, yes.

Odense: Yeah, you can't, you don't really stumble on Cotuit.

Charles Lowell: Right, right.

Odense: You have to sort of know about it.

Charles Lowell: That's true. Yeah. That's interesting.

Odense: Well, good. Look, thank you very much.

Charles Lowell: You're welcome.

Oden: It was a, it was a terrific talk. Larry sends his regrets. Alex, thank you for participating as well.

Alex Lowell: Yeah.

Oden: And we'll, we'll, we'll call it a day here, and one more for the archives. Thanks.