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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

Tye
Turn this on now and see whether the lines are moving. They are? Okay, can you start out by just telling us at the beginning of the interview who you are, what your connection, your lifelong connection, to Cotuit is.

Peck
All right. I'm Geoffrey Peck. First name David, go by Geoffrey. Grew up on the Cape. Born in 1955. I'm the third son, last surviving member of the family. So I grew up here -

Tye
Third son and third child?

Peck
Third child, yes. Yeah, grew up here, starting in 1955. Moved away in the 80s for my professional life and moving back soon, I hope.

Tye
You were here from '55 to the 80s

Peck
To the 80s, yeah.

Tye
Full-time?

Peck
Full-time. Went to college in **Worcester**, Massachusetts, but other than that, yeah, here full-time. Went to school here.

Tye
And came back and did what, from the time you finished college to the time that you left for college?

Peck
I worked for five years in a family business after college. It was Peck's Boats. Out on Route 28. I was involved in selling boats and running the store. My brother, my middle brother, ran the service part of the yard, handling boats, fixing them. Moorings. He didn't do the mooring business so much, my dad had done that. So I did that from '78 to about '82, '83.

Odenice
And you were the retail guy?

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

Peck
I was the retail guy. I dealt with customers. I cleaned up my brother's mess for the customers.

Odenice
Well, and your father's.

Peck
Well, my mom cleaned up after my dad though.

Tye
So he started it?

Peck
He started the business. I can back up and talk a little bit about that. From what I know of it, because most of this was set up before I was born, it started as a summer job for my dad getting Cotuit Skiffs ready, sanding, painting, and getting them ready, and launching them. He worked out of the waterfront down by Ropes and started in the spring and then hauling them in the fall. He took to organizing the hurricane response and getting all the boats hauled and that grew into a business after the war.

Odenice
At the time, they were rented before, correct?

Peck
They did summers - rent that. God, I'm not sure how many years they did, but I know my brother Bill had memories of that and there were stories told about when Bill was there. John, I'm not so sure. They built the house on Piney Road.

Tye
So, for somebody who's dumb like me, for the people on the tape, the Porter Cottage is where?

Peck
Offshore Road. Yeah you can throw a rock from here.

Odenice
So we're sitting in - for the tape - this is Phil Odenice. We're sitting at 15 Offshore Road, fairly near where we're talking about, so it's the one really close to the road, right next to Ropes beach?

Peck

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Geoff Peck
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Really close.

Tye
So great location, generally in a perfect location if your business is -

Peck
Yeah. So that grew into the business out on Route 28. When we built the house on Piney Road, right across from the Haydens' house. Bob Hayden and my dad were good friends and Bob Hayden owned all that property out on Route 28 that is now retail property and where the mall is and the Stop and Shop and the bookstore and Peck's Boats, and he had an enterprise, a moving and wrecking enterprise. He would move houses and he would take down houses and resell parts of the timber and stuff, but he was the guy who moved buildings around, old buildings around.

Tye
I keep hearing stories about him moving the buildings and that still is a little bit of miracle, that you can actually move buildings. Did he do any from the islands here or here at the island?

Peck
I don't know about that. He might have, but the first building that became Peck's Boats was an old railhouse from town of Barnstable, Barnstable Village. He moved it somehow and put it on that piece of property, I think, for my dad to run his business out of, and so, for the first 20, well I don't know, from early 50s to mid-60s, late-60s, we rented that land that Peck's Boats is on now from Bob Hayden, and **Coach Bluntnudge** pleaded for him to sell us the property, which eventually he did, on return. So, and then we added more buildings through the 60s as the business grew and sort of expanded. My dad started building Cotuit Skiffs in the 50s. You probably know more about when he started and when he finished, and then when we decided to introduce Optimist Pram.

Tye
One second. Cotuit skiffs - they were in existence before and he continued building him or he had pioneered it?

Peck
No, no they had been existence since the late part of the 19th century.

Odenice
1906 is when the first ones were built.

Peck
But they had earlier versions of them before they were raced. Basically flat-bottom, you know, **quahog**.

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Oden

And Leonard came here as a kid and sailed them?

Peck

Yeah, he was from Philadelphia and would come up here, because - I meant to go back and read my dad's book to get some of the details on this, but his aunt Lily was a social worker, and I think, helped school little - school the children of rich people that are learning machines or something, so she would come here with one of the old **Brahmin** families that came to Cotuit in the summer. And then invited my dad and his family to come too, and my dad, as an adolescent, fell in love with the place and learned how to sail, and it gave him, his life, a little bit of balance, I guess.

Tye

It's good work.

Peck

So he raised skiffs, got the bug, and then, after the war, he got a teaching degree, which was, you know, a cash enterprise in wintertime, but he really wanted to just be here in the summertime and so he found a way to be active doing that. This became his business.

Tye

And so, he moves here full time in?

Peck

Sometime after the war.

Oden

Before you were born?

Peck

Yeah, long before I was born. Sometime after the war, he got married. He was living in Cambridge most of the time, and summer in here. Had their first son while they were living in Cambridge. That was Bill - William - and that would have been 1947. Something like that. Bill was born.

Tye

Was he teaching in Cambridge?

Peck

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Geoff Peck

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Yeah, he was teaching he was teaching in Newton first, and then he got a teaching job on the Cape at Harwich, and by the time I was born, he was teaching, I think, in Harwich, and then he started teaching at the community college a little bit.

Tye

And always thinking for a way to get back here?

Peck

Yeah, always looking to just make a little bit of money to supplement the business, which wasn't really making a whole lot of money. Didn't start doing that, I think, until my mom decided to come in and make it a business and not just a theater for my dad.

Odenice

Eventually there was enough for him to do in the winter that he was able to -

Peck

Yeah.

Tye

And the business is still there?

Peck

It's still there. It's run by my brother John's widow. And she's doing her best to try to keep it going, growing in certain ways.

Tye

All boats, no moving.

Odenice

There's still moving.

Peck

They're still - yeah, John made that a livelihood based a lot on his ingenuity making equipment work.

Odenice

Moving boats?

Peck

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Moving boats. And so, they're still trying to do that, because there's a tremendous need for it. So they're trying to learn the things that John just knew in his head and how to keep the equipment going.

Odenice

He was a brilliant engineer.

Peck

Yeah, he was not trained as an engineer, but was an intuitive engineer. And he had a lot of the Hayden sense for keeping equipment going, you know, long after anyone else had given up on it. I don't know where he got that from.

Odenice

Some of that equipment is still going.

Peck

Yeah.

Tye

So one of our early interviews and to me, one of the most fun, was with Jane, and one of the things that we do with these is, when tragic things happen, like her dying, at least it gives the family some voice, of course, to share with later generations. So, when you think of Cotuit, you clearly know well from living here full-time and have a passion to come back. This is where you want to be when you can. Why? What is it? The question that we started this whole thing with is – we think Cotuit is maybe the most special place on the planet and why?

Peck

Well, it was a wonderful place to grow up and I'm not sure that place still exists, but it was a wonderful place to be a kid. I remember the winters here, skating on the ponds, and the swamps even. And just going down and skating all day long and coming back exhausted. And I remember just riding my bike everywhere in the summertime. I have this silly memory of kicking off my shoes on the last day of school in the spring and looking for them again in September. I'm sure that isn't true, literally. But that's how it felt. Yeah, and just riding everywhere on my bike, no helmet. Probably no reflectors, none of that stuff. Playing in the dirt. You know. It was a very safe place. I had a paper route when I was 10 years old for a couple years and just riding around the village, kind of knowing everybody, none of whose names I can recall now, but that was the kind of place it was.

Odenice

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

How sparse were things? You had some sense of it because you were delivering papers to houses?

Peck

Yeah, I wasn't paying attention to the houses that were closed up but a lot of them were. A fraction of the population you have in the summertime, but even the summer population was much more easygoing than it is now, I think. You know, I love the winters. I love the snow. It didn't feel all that cold. It feels colder now even though it's probably less cold, but that's because I've lived in a different climate for a while.

Oden

You went to school in town?

Peck

Yeah, went to school in Cotuit, which I guess you don't do anymore either. I remember riding my bike to school. Sometimes because it was cooler to take the bus but that kind of wound all around the place. Quicker to ride your bike.

Tye

Can I push back for a second? You and I are the same age, and my inclination is to look back at everything that I did as a kid and think, that's missing. Something about the care for you. There's something about whatever. But what is it more specifically you don't think is here now that was here before?

Peck

Well, I was just thinking. Silly little things, like I remember the summertime, swimming off the town pier. And the teenagers who climb up the pilings and dive off our pier. Wow, I can't wait until I can do that. And I can and I did. That was fun. I don't think people do that anymore, though. Maybe they do. But the harbor is way more crowded than it was back then and the streets are more crowded.

Oden

I think that's the biggest change.

Peck

Yeah the harbor, it's pretty crowded and it feels it sometimes. But I guess you can do a lot of the bike-riding around but it just feels a little bit less - maybe I just don't know people like I did back then. And everybody I knew, you know, except for Phillip, is gone. The Haydens are all gone and dispersed and they were our neighbors across the street and we had neighbors everywhere, the **Wraps, the Goldricks**. The **Wraps** are still there. But you know, I don't see that. I don't see my generation so much anymore.

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Tye

Can I ask you about a few things you just talked about? It's ironic - the one person that I would think would like a more crowded harbor is somebody who was in the boat business, but it doesn't have the serenity that it did before? It doesn't have the intimacy? What is the - ?

Peck

Yeah, well, I'm not in the boat business anymore. I'm totally out of the business, but it's much harder to, you know, get a mooring and get room around your mooring, because of other boats, so it's just a lot more competitive.

Oden

I think the Pecks are perfectly capable of selling a lot of boats and then complaining about how crowded the harbor is.

Peck

Yeah that's true. You could do both. Yeah, it's just harder. Everything's a little bit harder than it used to be. More competitive.

Tye

So in most places in America, if you were to look back to the era that we're talking about when you grew up here, they would say, "Geez, it's gotten more commercial." Cotuit's gotten less commercial over that time, but it's gotten more expensive. Has that changed the tenor of the place that -

Peck

Well, you know, when I was a kid, commercially there were a couple of real estate offices. There was the **Kettle Ho**, which was really a restaurant. It had a counter and sold hamburgers and hotdogs and ice cream, and there was the Coop, which was a full grocery store, a little less boutique than it is now and sold pretty much everything, but a little bit more expensive than stuff at the supermarket, **so, you know, we'd buy a lot of stuff at the Coop. Often, I asked for the big stuff.** But it was much more commercial, I'm told, in my father's generation. There were more shops and a lot more stuff going on commercially.

Tye

So you're saying, in your generation, it really didn't look a whole lot different and not -

Peck

Well there's a gas station too. The gas station across - where there was a parking lot, there was a gas station.

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Geoff Peck
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Odenice
Yeah, the only thing other than that, was that the Cotuit Inn was there. But really most of the decline of the commercial was before Geoffrey was born.

Peck
No, the harbor - I'm not sure what it does now, but it was a functioning hotel, I think, resort hotel, and, before I was born, there was another resort out Oceanview Ave.

Odenice
Yeah, the Pines.

Peck
Yeah, yeah. And those are all gone as commercial entities now.

Odenice
And you know there was one right there? Santuit Hotel had the first summer resort on Cape Cod, right across the street.

Tye
First summer resort?

Odenice
Yeah.

Tye
That would have been before my time.

Odenice
Yeah.

Tye
What is it that makes you want to come back?

Peck
I still have friends here and it's still a familiar, congenial place. I'll get to know more of the people here when I'm up here full-time and some of the people I've lost contact with.

Odenice
And you have a band.

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

Tye
You have a band? What you do you play in the band?

Peck
I'm the bass player. I play some guitar and do some singing.

Tye
I want to thank you. Were you out here – yeah, you guys were great.

Peck
That was a fun day.

Tye
When did that band start?

Peck
That was a high school garage rock band in the early 70s. We graduated from high school and we scouted the piano player, who was really the musical mind, talent of the band. Went to high school and went to college in **Worcester Mass**. The drummer and I went to college, also **Worcester Mass**, different campuses, but he got playing with jazz players out at Holy Cross when he went, and we got involved in playing with him. And he also got involved with some singers, so we got drawn back together in college, and we've kept playing jazz music, mostly, since then.

Tye
Fifty years.

Peck
Yeah. 51 now and then about 2015, we started adding blues into it. Got another guitar, got some horns, so we do a wide range of stuff now.

Tye
When did you get in?

Odenice
I joined about four years ago.

Peck
Well, yeah. I forget when exactly. We should write these things down.

Odenice
Yeah, no, I figured it out. I looked at my credit card bill for I started buying guitars.

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

Tye
So you're a good storyteller. What are the stories about Cotuit? Things going right, things going wrong?

Peck
Oh, well, I think I'll figure some things, you know, probably after we after the talk, but those were sort of the main streams of my memories that we talked about.

Odenice
We touched on your mother, but we should talk about her history.

Peck
Yeah, so she met my dad, I guess in Philadelphia. She was from upstate New York, western Pennsylvania. Left home to get a job in the war economy in the city and met my dad. Her name was Margaret Elizabeth Snover. They called her Betty. Met my dad and got married quickly. The idea was, this is wartime you know, things happen quick, not that my dad was about to be shipped off. So he brought her to Cotuit. And I'm not sure she fell in love with it immediately. She said at one point that it took 20 years for anyone to accept her as a local, but they did eventually and there was family here. In the 1960s, after I was born and kind of on my feet, she started working again. The boat business was not exactly a moneymaker even in those simple times, so she got involved in trying to make it more of a business and making sure bills went out and bills got paid.

Odenice
Well, and established the retail frontend, right?

Peck
Yeah, no, we had a store before, but the place was really more a little local theater from my dad to be to be who he was.

Odenice
And employment for a lot of Cotuit summer kids.

Peck
Employment for summer kids, boys and girls.

Tye
You've talked about theater twice. Who was he, what did he – ?

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Geoff Peck

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Peck

He was a bit of a showman. He cultivated his persona very carefully. He had people that just loved sort of hearing him go and he loved performing for people.

Oodence

He wore sort of pseudo-military.

Peck

He wore khakis 12 months a year and a captain's hat. He was a licensed commercial captain for a very small boat carrying very few people but it was a captain's license. And by the way, I remember he had a boat that he used to support the boat business. And he was the Harbormaster, the local Harbormaster, I guess, technically a deputy Harbormaster, for Cotuit - the Harbormaster being Barnstable town. I don't know how things were administered back then, but he had sort of quasi-police powers in the harbor, which you were likely basically responsible for the moorings and safety of the boats. He had a little boat called The Big Wheel, which was a navy lifeboat which he put a diesel engine in and decks and eventually a little cabin that looked like the tugboat. And actually, it had a permanent slip on the town pier, so it didn't even need a mooring. And I remember, the teenagers loved to harass that boat on Halloween. I think that, more than anything else, got it moved up to a mooring.

Oodence

And he was instrumental in supporting the Yacht Club as well.

Peck

Yeah, he would run the races on weekends with that boat and he had a big cannon. It was a ceremonial cannon which he used to start the races.

Oodence

Yeah, used a shotgun.

Peck

With shotgun blanks.

Tye

He wouldn't have been Harbormaster in the days - we've heard fun stories about rum runners. I presume that was before his time.

Peck

Yeah, that would have been during Prohibition. That would have been before his time. Yeah, he might have been drinking the rum, but -

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

Odenice
He was born in '24?

Peck
No, he was born in 1918, I think. Little story about my dad - he was in a line of German Austrians and the tradition, the naming tradition in his family was to alternate between the names of Leonard and Adolf. And when he was born, he was due to be named Adolf and his parents at the time – World War I was just getting over. They go, well, Adolf is a little too German, so they named him Leonard William. Good thing.

Odenice
Yeah, geez.

Tye
None of the siblings were Adolf-named?

Peck
I think his grandfather would have been Adolf. His turn to be Adolf.

Tye
So his father was a Leonard?

Peck
Something like that. Yeah.

Odenice
He had a well-known half-sibling.

Peck
Yeah. His older half-brother was John Carradine. His mom's first husband had been - what was his name? Was Carradine – I forget what his first name was. They were about 14 years apart. But my dad, when he was in high school, he was a rebellious type in Philadelphia. He dropped out and went out West to hang out with his brother, who was, at that point, a rising actor. He was a Shakespearean actor but getting into movies and so he sort of hung out there and got jobs as a stand-in for his brother and a stunt double in one point. So there are stories about that.

Tye
The Lloyds came from Philadelphia? Was there much of a Philadelphia-Cotuit connection?

Peck

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

Apparently there was. There was a Philadelphia connection. There was obviously a Boston connection. Presumably New York as well. Though, you're right, I think we think more of the Philadelphia connection and the Boston connection.

Odense
And there's some Cleveland and St. Louis.

Peck
Yeah, that's right. There are people from all round. Then there was some Florida people that were involved in Cotuit the 60s that came out. In fact, it was the **Chesneys** who were a Florida family, who introduced Optimist Prams to Cotuit. It was, you know, over drinks some night one summer, probably around '60, '61 that they talked about bringing them in and my dad would build them, and so he got some funding from some others and then he started building some Optimus Prams as a winter occupation.

Tye
What do you do in Washington area?

Peck
I'm retired federal employee. I'm still doing consulting work.

Tye
From where?

Peck
CIA.

Tye
So you don't have to answer questions, obviously. I'm intrigued by a CIA connection in Cotuit.

Peck
Yeah, we sort of talked about that. I'm interested in whatever you've dug up. There was no connection from my perspective. There were rumors of people who had connections, but I landed on that kind of on my own as the process of going to grad school down there and making professional connections and getting recruited.

Tye
Were you at headquarters or in the field?

Peck

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Headquarters mostly, had some tours overseas as well, and a little time in the war zones.

Tye

The CIA connection that I know about, and Phil probably knows, like he does about everything, more than I do, but the CIA connection is just a mention that our neighbor was the husband of a 90-something year old - who lives here now - had some spy connection. We assume it was CIA, and why I am blanking on the -

Odenca

When Gabe Lloyd told us that his father was part of OSS.

Tye

We did, and there was something also - I'm blanking on her name, the woman who -

Odenca

Who you talked to -

Tye

Yes.

Odenca

Starts with an "M." It's a funny name. **She's Cuban.**

Tye

It is - Mutual Spring. Yeah, Mutual Spring was talking about her neighbors, but - so your thing was accidental.

Peck

Yeah. In my case, it was accidental. **H.G. Lloyd**, you know, might have had contacts who drew him in, you know, maybe they were local, but -

Odenca

Tom Burgess mentioned that **Mr. Northey**, Robert - was that - Northey? - I can't remember his first name but anyway, an older gentleman sort of that World War II era. And evidently, he was in the business and he would have friends - colleagues - come down to the **town**, so I don't know more than that. But we got to talk to Michelle and see what she knows.

Peck

There's one other name that I know, who I met when I worked there, who was in the Office of General Counsel, who lives in Cotuit and was retiring here.

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Tye

You still got a connection here?

Peck

I don't know. I haven't seen him here. And that was, you know, 10, 15 years ago that I knew him, but you could look them up if you're interested. But I don't know how deep his roots are here.

Odenice

What was his name?

Peck

George Gameson.

Odenice

I haven't bumped into him.

Tye

So I have a theory as a CIA thing. But I'm saying on the connection here to Cotuit, which is that there are certain professions that have more per capita than probably anywhere in the world. It's got more retired journalists and people from the publishing world. And for some of the same reasons, I would think that people from the CIA, I think of as being interesting people who have backgrounds that have got to have been diverse for all the different kinds of work that they do, and who want to, in summers and maybe in retirement, escape that world to just come to somewhere more carefree, because they've been living in a high-stress world **and that Cape Cod**. And the other weird theory is, so I did a wonderful biography on Bobby Kennedy. As you know, his family lived over the hill from the CIA in McLane. But he had a million spy connections in his world. He was undermined, he felt, by the CIA in the Bay of Pigs, so he appointed lots of his people on there by the time of the missile crisis to change things around and a lot of those people, he made the Cape into America's playground - this image of that and a lot of those people came here. I don't know if that's –

Peck

Well, the main demographic reasons, I would say, is that the first generation of CIA officers were recruited heavily from Northeastern elite schools. And so there's a natural geographic center of gravity and many of those families you know, wealthy families had ties to the Cape. So I think that's one reason. I don't know how many of Bobby's, of any of the Kennedys', professional connections, were on the Cape.

Tye

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

So you're partly right in that they weren't, but they made it so attractive that people started living here. They wanted to be near the Kennedys and afterwards, they had this – and maybe even today - did you keep a place here?

Peck

My family does, yeah. That's the house I'm in now.

Odenice

So I think your brothers both have kind of interesting stories.

Peck

Oh yeah. My brother Bill grew up in and left the Cape. He was a naval officer, so he was involved in that for a number of years. I guess that would be the early to mid-70s. And then he went to law school.

Odenice

And he ended up pre T-boat?

Peck

Yeah, which I never got to ride on, though I know you and your dad did, but somehow I missed that trip. So then he became a reserve officer and got a law degree and practice admiralty law in New York and then in Washington.

Odenice

So was he reserve to the JAG?

Peck

No, I don't think so. He got involved in small boats support special operations and then had a career as a lawyer in New York and Washington. It was through him that I had my first exposure to music because, if you haven't talked to Betsy Siggins, you should.

Odenice

We have.

Tye

Just one quick Betsy Siggins story. I'm trying to remember the name of the musician, but some well-known Boston musician died this past week, and Betsy was on WBUR commenting on the musician and -

Peck

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

So she got herself involved in the folk music scene in Boston. And ultimately, married one of the musicians there, so my brother and me to some extent, but my brother got drawn into that and learned to play guitar and banjo, and he was a marvelous musician. I remember hearing him play songs and marveling at how he fingerpicked.

Odenice

And your family was very close to my family.

Peck

Yep, so her dad was Frank Meyer, one of my dad's best friends. He was killed in a car crash in early 60s, and Betsy became sort of a sentimental, adoptive daughter.

Odenice

Into your house.

Peck

Yeah that's, right. And so the families have been close. But I'll always think of her when I think of those early memories of music I heard. I mean, the first music I've heard that wasn't off a record was my brother playing, music influenced by those people around him and that was a music scene that I grew up in. I didn't understand it very well, but I do a bit more now in context.

Tye

One of my regrets with Jane, who was sick around the time that we interviewed her, is that she had offered to show me her dad's collection. He apparently had an extraordinary collection. I'm working on a book now with Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Count Basie, and he apparently was in love with Armstrong and anytime he was doing anything doing there and the Cape had a much bigger jazz scene than –

Peck

Yeah, the Cape was oddly cosmopolitan in certain areas like that, but that's really more a function of some of the interesting people that we had here. It was a cultural backwater in the 60s. Other than that, I think, I mean, the winter folks were local folks. Their interests were pretty local, but then there was this infusion from Boston and Cambridge and elsewhere that brought in these other the things. Yeah, I had forgotten about Bob. My mom loved jazz. My dad wasn't strictly musical, but he was all about literature and theater, so I grew up with that around me.

Odenice

But I've just been thinking, your dad was a square dance guy.

Peck

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Yeah. I don't know where that came from. But yeah, in those in those days, the early 60s, Cotuit had this bizarre square dance tradition. All the people with nice big houses with lawns like this would once or twice a summer host a square dance, and all the summer people would come. I can't imagine there were any winter people involved in this, because summer people would arrive, you know. We'd do barefoot square dancing with lots of beer. And teenagers and everybody took part in this. It wasn't hokey. It was pretty cool.

Odenca

Some of the root of it, I believe, was the Pines Hotel, the resort. The family running it – the Crawfords were at that point running it, thought it would be nice for the guests and I think Leonard was part of getting that going and they'd bring in some of the local kids to help teach how to do it.

Peck

So my dad had this collection of records and square dance records and played them and instructed the teenagers on how to do it. And yeah, it was wonderful. It got closed very quickly in the late 60s, early 70s. That's when the tenor of the place started to change. I think that more than anything else, was sort of symbolic of it. People call the police because of the noise, and the police would put the hammer on it, see the beer and say, "you can't do that", see the teenagers.

Odenca

But Tom Burgess still carries the traditional on.

Peck

Yep.

Odenca

Probably every two years these days, maybe not during COVID. But yeah, he has.

Peck

But it's a legacy of what was once a pretty roaring tradition.

Tye

Pre-pandemic, I'm trying to think how many times a month, first Tuesdays or something at Freedom Hall, they had country dances.

Peck

Yeah, that was a different tradition that came from somewhere else. But yeah, that -

Odenca

So that gets us to your brother.

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

Peck
Yeah, and John would take part in them.

Tye
So when you come back, you've got to revive the square dancing.

Peck
Right? Yeah. I was a little too young to really appreciate how much fun it was.

Odense
So John.

Peck
Yeah, John. Four years older than me. He was much closer to my dad than my other brother or I, and, for better or worse, sort of got caught up in what interested my dad, which was mechanical things. And he had a real aptitude for machines and making things work and keeping them running. So he went to high school, graduated from high school here, though he didn't spend most of his high school here. Joined the Coast Guard, enlisted during the height of the Vietnam War, got technical training and radio telecommunication that kind of thing. Left the Coast Guard as soon as he possibly could and went to work as sort of the outboard motor mechanic at Peck's Boats, and then as my dad - the business was sold in 1973 to Bob Bowden, who got some financing from his relatives and he started running it. So from '73 or '72 to about '77, he was running it. The business failed. Those were pretty hard times, you may recall, to be running the business, so since we had sold it for mortgage, we re-acquired it in '77 and that's why I worked there from my graduation '78 to '83, '82 and I went to graduate school.

Odense
What did John do during that period?

Peck
He started running the boat-hauling, storage part of the business.

Peck
Okay, working for Bob?

Peck
No, working for my dad.

Odense
Oh sorry, I meant during the Bob-period?

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Peck

He would have been in the Coast Guard - yeah, he would have been in the Coast Guard then and away from home. And then when we got the business back, he took over all the boat-hauling stuff. And the mechanics of which - he never really - he didn't really like working on outboard, so he got out of that as soon as he could. And the business segwayed from motorboats to sailboats, so there was there was less mechanical work anyway, and he focused on hauling the boats. And that, he really enjoyed, it seems. He was very good at it. He could maneuver huge boats out of tight spaces, around corners, into people's yards, garages. Stuff that a lot of people couldn't figure out how to do.

Tye

Did he take over the business?

Peck

He took it over. Well, my dad was slow while I was there, and I think the idea was for my brother and me to run it after my dad was phasing himself out. But I had other things to do, and I didn't think it was going to work, as supporting two families. It could support one, so I moved on.

Tye

And his wife now does it?

Peck

His wife now does it. Some people she's hired kind of do it. Several people do the work that John used to do himself.

Odenice

Other than your father, who we talked about, and I guess Bob Hayden, who we touched on, who were some of the other local characters from your youth in Cotuit?

Peck

Well, I remember mostly those folks who were parents of my contemporaries. So there were the **Wraps** that we were pretty close to for a long time, and we would get together with them quite a bit. I learned how to ski, going up with them. When I was 16 years old, they had a little cottage up in Vermont and I learned to ski from them. The Haydens, we talked about. The McGoldricks were another family we were close to. Frank Meyer, I remember, but I was pretty young when he died. You know, the summer folks who'd come in - I'm blanking on the names but, you know, the Hendersons and the Jacksons, of course, but all the families as well - the Bowdens?

Tye

How much of the split when you were growing up - between summer and winter?

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Geoff Peck

Transcribed by Emily Yang

Peck

Yeah, that was interesting. There weren't that many people that straddled the two worlds. Not many families that did. And they were very different people. You know, those are my friends going to school with -

Tye

Did you straddle both worlds?

Peck

Yeah, yeah, I have friends on both camps, but it's funny. They didn't really intersect. So now Phillip knows the friends that I grew up with, now, from the band. I don't know how many of them you know as a kid here but there was so much -

Oden

Well, it's from the band then, I guess. In the '70s, that's probably how I met most of your local buddies.

Tye

So as somebody that started out coming here occasionally and now, come here 95% of the time, my attitude has changed. I used to not pay attention to differences and now I feel like summer people are interlopers, and I wish the quiet would be maintained year-round. Is it inevitable or is it that they come from different socio-economic and other worlds or what is the?

Peck

Well, my sense is that there's more mixing now than there was back then, but maybe you're a better judge of that than I am. But yeah, different socio-economic worlds and different interests. The winter people, unless they fish, don't go on boats. They're much more land-oriented. Summer people, most of the recent ones I know, were all about getting out on boats.

Oden

And I think that's evolved. That's why there's so many boats on the harbor. It's that winter people got boats.

Peck

I remember getting Stewie Wrap on the boat once, and how strange that seemed for him to be in a boat. One of my best friends, Doug Nickerson, I actually got him sailing. He used to crew for a little bit, but he never would have gotten on the boat if I hadn't dragged them out into it.

Oden

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

So funny to think. I mean, he lived a five-minute walk from the harbor.

Tye
I think the difference is, I don't have nearly enough roots here to be able to make a reasoned or intelligent judgment, but I think it's never a bit, because an awful lot of the year-round people that I know now, started out summer people. People really dream about being back here because they had such great memories here.

Peck
Yeah, you didn't see that so much when I was a kid, summer folks settling in here. Yeah, like the Hendersons and Jacksons sort of retired here later in life, but they were off Cape. Summer, they were off Cape.

Tye
What else you got?

Odenca
I think we're pretty good. We noted some things I wanted to make sure we touched on. I think we've gotten most of it.

Tye
What time's the rehearsal?

Peck
I gotta get them over there as soon as I can and start setting things up a little bit, because space has been moved around and scrambled, with the repairs.

Tye
You managed to come back for every concert.

Peck
Yeah, the band doesn't seem to practice unless I come down and so that's -

Tye
How many are left of the 50-year people?

Peck
Well, the people that transitioned from high school band were the three of us. Yeah, we're core of the continuing band.

Tye

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Geoff Peck
Transcribed by Emily Yang

So my only last thing is to say –