

Edie Hurlburt, Brian Delorey, Matthew Winkler

Hurlburt

You've heard his story 1000 times, it doesn't matter. Listen again and write it down. And that's what I'm guilty of.

Tye

So we all are guilty of that. And that is, um, so I want to, um, I turned on the tape recorder, and I'd like to just start off by asking you what your history is in Cotuit, when you first came here and sort of give us a little bit of what we would read if we were reading your bio.

Hurlburt

Okay, well, I was born here, 1943. My father was born here. My mother from Dorchester. Um, I, other than that, that's, that's my history.

Tye

Could you state your name so we have it on tape here.

Hurlburt

My name is Edie Hurlburt. My maiden name was Turner. Pardon me, lovely time to lose my voice. My maiden name was Turner. My father's name was Stanley Turner. And so, our family—

Tye

He would've been born here what year do you think?

Hurlburt

1908.

Tye

1908, wow.

Hurlburt

And he was born in Tommy and Peta Burgesses house. That was, the Turner house.

Oodence

So your your aunt is Mrs. Turner to the French teacher?

Hurlburt

Peggy Turner, who's just recently passed in her high 90s.

Odense

Yeah.

Hurlburt

So, um...

Tye

We just did an interview with Tommy and heard a little bit about the house. And I think that the uh

Hurlburt

Fabulous job they did just holding on to that house, every bit of it that they could without changing it. Yeah.

Tye

Any idea what brought your father here in 19, uh, what brought him here

Odense

Haha. The storm it sounds like.

Hurlburt

Well, my father was born here.

Tye

Right, but what brought his family to Cotuit?

Hurlburt

His, uh, I don't know exactly. His father was not a whaler, but operated coasting, schoo, schooners out of Cotuit. Carried lumber spices.

Odense

And he's Elihu Turner. Is that, or is that your the grand, your fathers grandfather?

Hurlburt

That's my father's father.

Odense

That is his father, okay.

Hurlburt

Right. I believe his name was Charles. There were five brothers. They were all born in that house.

Tye

Hm. Wow.

Odense

So, but your father's grandfather maybe was Elihu? Who, but that's the name on the house, E-L-I-

Hurlburt

Yes, yes.

Odense

Okay, so that would've been

Hurlburt

My great grandfather, yes, yes.

Tye

And the schooners operated out of Cotuit harbor?

Hurlburt

Well, his was in the, in the harbor, in any case. There's the Historical Society for I haven't been there in a long time, but had quite a large oil painting of his schooner above the fireplace, I believe it was. I don't remember what the name of it was

Odense

I'm scratching my head too. I was looking at it last night.

Hurlburt

I was gonna say tansy bitters, but that was another one.

Odense

That was, that was another.

Hurlburt

That was another one. Yeah, but it's down there. And who operated that ship, the name I believe it was Charles, before my uncle Charles, who lived across the street from from Tommy and Peta.

Tye

Is that where you grew up in that house?

Hurlburt

On Main Street, no, I grew up in a house on, um, School Street that my parents sold, they there was a stint where back in the 40s where they motored to Florida in a little in a little travel trailer thing with three girls and a pregnant cat. And we stayed there for eight years before we came back so that that was what we would call The Turner House. I don't know who lives there. It's just recently been sold again.

Oden

Do you know the number or?

Hurlburt

I do not know.

Oden

Or maybe rough location?

Hurlburt

I, I, yes, it's right across the street from Piney Road.

Oden

Okay.

Hurlburt

On the corner of Piney Road and School Street. But one more over.

Oden

Oh, okay. So the northwest corner?

Hurlburt

Right.

Oden

With the angle, the driveway that angles across the corner?

Hurlburt

Yeah. And I can I can Peter Taylor. That was Peter Taylor's house and Peter Taylor sold it maybe three years ago. Um, let's see what else.

Tye

So what did your, when your parents came back here after those years in Florida, what was your father doing here and mother doing here?

Hurlburt

My father then worked for Easter Harvest. Before that he worked for the water department for a short stint anyway he was superintendent of the water department here in the village. When he got back, he worked as the head greenkeeper over at Oyster Harbors golf course, that sort of thing. My mother came here as a nurse and worked at the Pines hotel. And that's where they

Odenca

Interesting.

Hurlburt

Yeah, and that's where they met.

Tye

As a nurse at hotel or?

Hurlburt

No, no, it was just her profession, a practical nurse, mostly childcare and that sort of thing.

Tye

What did she do at the hotel?

Hurlburt

I think she was a laborer. I think she was a chambermaid type. And she met my husband, I'd love to know, and I somewhere maybe in my in my stuff, I can come up with a wedding date. I was trying to put it together that if he was, she was born in 1906, he in 1908. My oldest sister was born in 1932. So there's a time span there when they married. But I don't know exactly what that is. Yeah.

Tye

So can I ask without meaning to suggest that there's anything wrong about being a chambermaid, going from being a nurse to chambermaid suggests that you really want to live here and that maybe it wasn't so easy to find a job as a nurse?

Hurlburt

Not necessarily, I think it was a summer situation.

Tye

So it was just—

Hurlburt

She might have been in school at the time and came down for summer. She talked about getting off the, off the train in Sandwich and actually taking a horse and team over to Cotuit.

Tye

That's great. And the, so many people did, came by train and ended up here with... So if you're spending eight years in Florida, and you're coming back here, it suggests that there was a magnet bringing you back here.

Hurlburt

My father's heritage, I'm quite sure.

Tye

Yeah.

Hurlburt

And I might have been 13, maybe 13. When I came back, I was just getting ready to go into high school. There was no middle school, then.

Oden

You went to Barnstable high?

Hurlburt

Went to Barnstable high. Yeah.

Tye

And you're born, the end of the war in what must not have been an easy time here. What do you remember about early memories about what this place felt and looked like?

Hurlburt

Oh, it was wonderful, because, well, it's more of a feeling that the freedom you got, as a kid, seven years old, seven or eight years old, I walked the town.

Tye

Never, no fears, no nothing?

Hurlburt

There were there was no phone. No nothing. But kids would go out at seven or eight o'clock in the morning or whatever time they were released, and would not come back until supper time.

Tye

Wow

Hurlburt

Nobody knew where we were, what we were doing. Or not doing.

Tye

And the presumption was it was safe because it was Cotuit?

Hurlburt

Yes. It was safe because it was Cotuit and everybody was your parent. And you didn't get away with much. Does this ring a bell?

Odenice

Yeah, I mean I was a summer kid, that was the same thing for me.

Hurlburt

Exactly. Exactly. And and so we went to the beach alone.

Odenice

Yup.

Hurlburt

Always we swam alone, we went to the beach alone. And there was never, presumptuous, I suppose, of any parent, but I know that there wasn't too much my parents didn't know about by the time I get home in the evening and word of mouth, like the tin can with the rope on it. Everybody, everybody was into everybody else's business. And they knew what your kid was doing and what they should not be doing. And discipline was up, uh, it takes a village as they say.

Odenice

Absolutely.

Hurlburt

Yeah.

Tye

So what did the, I'm intrigued by that partly because I can imagine in the era of the telephone, that kind of word about what you kids have been up to, but in an era with no phones, people were just talking to one another over the rose bushes or?

Hurlburt

Well, yes, that and and husbands coming home from work and all the husbands ended up at Ropes' Beach, where there was an apple tree that sat there for years right where the ramp is now and finally, maybe seven or eight years ago or more got got cut down. But every father, every husband, father that I knew made the rounds at the end of the day. Checked the tides. Checked the tides.

Oden

We never heard that from anybody else.

Hurlburt

Yep. And just my father used to say check the water and see if it's still there. Yeah.

Tye

So what were they were they actually checking, were they just was it a way of socializing and getting to see people?

Hurlburt

Precisely. Yeah. And networking. And they all had I'm sure they had their little flask under the seat. I'm sure my father did. And just yeah, get together and reconnoiter, so to speak. And

Oden

Was was going to the post office a social thing in your memories?

Hurlburt

Oh, gosh. Yes. Yeah.

Oden

[unintelligible]

Hurlburt

Wonderful little post office. Yeah. Well, I remember that because I worked there back then. I've worked at the post office for I don't know, when I finally retired, it was about 38, 38 years I spent down there.

Oden

In that, and you started in that one?

Hurlburt

In Cotuit, yeah.

Oden

But the one on Knoll Shore?

Hurlburt

Yes. Well, no, not the one on Knoll Shore. The one, it's the one on School Street where the old elementary school used to be.

Oden

Right.

Hurlburt

Right.

Oden

So when was that built?

Hurlburt

59 I think.

Oden

Yeah, okay. So it was later.

Hurlburt

Yeah, it was later. It was later. Right.

Oden

Because I'd heard about the old one people, I guess, in the afternoon, they'd open the, you know, open the windows for the post and people would kind of hang around and talk there.

Hurlburt

True. They did. And that wasn't the only one you were talking about the one Knoll Shore. The other one was right down in the middle of the green, the Village Green.

Oden

Right. Right. Right. In that in that

Hurlburt

Right. It was her Herb Longs grocery store. It was the post office and a, um, barber.

Oden

Yeah.

Hurlburt

Manny the barber.

Oden

Right, right.

Tye

And it was only, Phil said, open the window in the afternoon. Was it only limited hours in terms of when the public, was it?

Hurlburt

It was almost a catch-as-catch-can. Not that we're on the subject of [unintelligible] but very recently, that that changed, but the post office was actually out of somebody's kitchen and you walked in the kitchen, got your package and walked away. There was a lot of trust in the post office. Even in my day.

Oden

Yeah.

Hurlburt

People would walk right through the back door. My little dog used to come in and sit while I sorted mail. Yeah, yeah.

Tye

And so when you said you went to the beach, was it Loop, was it?

Hurlburt

Mostly the loop because my grandmother, who was also a Cotuiter, lived on C Street, where Sandy—

Oden

Hey Brian. Morning

Hurlburt

Pounded on the door, couldn't get anybody to listen to me. So, um, where where Sandy Floren has passed but where her house is. That was my grandmother's house. And I grew up in that house in summers.

Odence

And what was her name?

Hurlburt

Her name was Harriet Fox.

Odence

Okay, yeah.

Hurlburt

She was not a native Cotuit. She she hadn't been here her whole life. She was also Dorchester. A little something that I don't know about is yes, my mother came down here. My mother's mother, Harriet Fox also came down whether it was during that same time or one enticed the other. But that just comes up for me. You asked what what might have brought her down.

Tye

So I'm gonna interrupt for one minute, just to say, Brian, could you say your name and just the

Delorey

Sure. Brian Delorey, next door neighbor.

Tye

And we are we explained, um, to Edie that we are doing this, this was something that was inspired and it's become our obsession, because Jim Gould passed it on as his obsession, when he left town in terms of the history of Cotuit. And what we're doing is just talking to people with deep roots here, trying to assemble some tapes, and then transcripts for the Historical Society. Maybe someday, if we find the energy trying to write them up for a Globe or Times magazine piece, and maybe public radio at some point if we really get energy. But the, this is all trying to do two things. One is preserve a little bit of the history of Cotuit. And the other is answer one question. And if there's one question, that's sort of driving the whole inquiry, it is what makes Cotuit not just the most special place on Cape Cod, but maybe on the planet, and trying to understand generally, from the Cotuit story, what gives a place a sense of place and of uniqueness. But also there is, it starts with the bias that there is something not just different, but really special about this village and if we understand what that is, we might understand a little bit

more of how to make community in other places. So we're also, we've got a tiny grant and we're trying to use what is happening in Cotuit as a template for other villages and towns and cities to do something similar. So we did a presentation at the JFK museum a week ago with Dr. Rapp, talking about the process of oral history. And I think everybody should do, what everybody says when you tell them about doing oral histories. That's a great idea, we should do it and then they never do it. And we're just trying to do it. So we, we've been hearing what drew Edie here, she was born here, what drew her father here who was born here. And I would love to just ask before we loop Brian into it. When you think of you, she was describing how growing up here, it was a special enough place that you can safely go out for in the morning and come back at night. And your parents would partly trust that you were safe because it was Cotuit. But also because by the end of the day, they would have known what you were doing all day because word spread. When you think of what the village was then, this strikes me as one of the few places anywhere where over the years it's gotten less commercial. The world tends to have more hotels and more stores and whatever, in Cotuit it seems like, tends to become even more a special non commercial place. What was here when you were growing up here that's not here in the center of town now?

Hurlburt

Well, the grocery store and the, um...

Tye

The grocery store meaning it was more of a store than what's here now as Cotuit Fresh Market?

Hurlburt

Different. Different.

Tye

So different how?

Hurlburt

So well, the Cotuit Fresh Market or Herb Long's store was always special to everybody. Everybody went in there. Do you remember? Uh, not Herb Long. So...

Odenice

Milton Crocker.

Hurlburt

Milton Crocker, do you remember Milton?

Odenice

Of course. Yeah, yes.

Hurlburt

And so it was a different experience, Herb Lo— and I believe Milton Crocker was still there for many years after the grocery store disappeared. I don't know who the grocery store belonged to. I do know that the barber shop—

Oden

When you're talking about Herb Long, that that was on the corner of School Street and Main Street.

Hurlburt

Okay, that would have been that would have been Herb. Yeah, my my best friend Dottie Long's father, but then there was the barbershop, Manny Rebello I think. And another wonderful person to talk to about that would be Cathy Campbell.

Oden

Yeah. She's on the list.

Hurlburt

Is she? Good. Because Cathy's father and my father played ball together. They were they were they were the original Cavaliers before it was Cavaliers. Right. Fierce teams. They traveled everywhere. They, you know, were fighting men and, off off off the field they were best friends and on the field they were a force to be reckoned with. So yeah, that that would be and Manny the barber would be a great uncle to Cathy maybe. I can't remember how that goes. So yes, that that was a bustling little, across the street from that. Just as you're going down to the town dock, we'd be on the right hand side was a a soda shop. Jukebox, comic books, booths, teenage hang out, loud. The littlest of us were not allowed to go in there but we did anyway. There was also a variety store on the other side of the street where Ronnie Mycock's real estate is now. And it was also a restaurant for a little while, so there's there's history there and that has all changed although the stores stay. It was, the park was full of rather stately buildings I want to say. You walked up several steps to get into the post office and and in the barber shop and the whirly thing that went around and yeah, yeah.

Tye

And bar? Was there a bar when you were growing up?

Hurlburt

No.

Tye

Hacks was later?

Hurlburt

Hacks. Well, Hacks was always there. I didn't consider them a bar but yeah, all right. Hacks, Hacks I think belong to the hotel across the street, the Harbor View inn I think was Hacks bar. I'm not sure. But I never could, yeah, I get, it wouldn't have been my early days. Maybe my teenage years Hacks was still there.

Tye

Was the hotel there from your early days?

Hurlburt

Yes.

Tye

And it was a place that you'd get together for the restaurant and other things or what, how much a part of the community was the hotel?

Hurlburt

It wasn't a part of my community. It was upscale. It was a place where you, think Newport or or um... yeah.

Odenice

And you're thinking Harbor View when you're saying this. Not the Cotuit Inn?

Hurlburt

Correct.

Odenice

Okay, cause I think the Cotuit Inn was there too.

Hurlburt

Yeah, you're ringing some bells with me. But no Harbor View was what I was talking about.

Odenice

Yeah.

Hurlburt

So Hacks Bar then was the Cotuit inn and not

Oden

Yeah.

Hurlburt

Yeah. Okay. I've got the two mixed up. Sure.

Oden

There was the bar, the Harbor View was called the Down Under.

Hurlburt

Right. Okay. I remember. Yeah. But yeah, that wasn't a part of my, or or my family's life at all. We were not of that ilk, if you will.

Oden

You described your father going, going down to Ropes and maybe having a flask under the seat of the car. Was that, that was more where

Hurlburt

That was where

Oden

The locals would go for a drink?

Hurlburt

The locals would go, and these were men that all depended upon one another for I've got a, I've got a chicken and you've got potatoes. And help me out with this. And I'll give you some scrap metal to to to, right.

Tye

So it was an exchange as well?

Hurlburt

It was an exchange. It was a barter system with them. And they knew all their children. And this even, this even goes back to and I can't give you particulars on it. We actually had rum running going on out in the harbor.

Oden

Yeah.

Hurlburt

And whether they chose to admit it or not. Three quarters of the men in Cotuit had something to do with that. Either, either rode shotgun or I don't know.

Oden

Do you know a 100 year old bottle of rye washed up, like two years ago.

Hurlburt

Oh that would be fabulous.

Oden

[unintelligible] posted a picture of it.

Hurlburt

Oh, that would be oh my gosh, what an artifact that would be fabulous. But, but yeah.

Tye

Who told us a story, was it Wingate Lloyd or somebody told us this extraordinary story where they took over, the rumrunners took over their family house.

Oden

Oh, I think it was Vicky Wesson.

Tye

It was Vicky Wesson. Okay.

Hurlburt

I wouldn't be surprised.

Tye

So they were a force in town? I mean, they were, they happened, and, um..

Hurlburt

We all had secret cellars.

Tye

Mmm. [laughs] Okay, great.

Hurlburt

Under the rugs. So and some folks said it was the Underground Railroad. Was it? I don't know. The house next to Sandy Florence on Main Street, the big house on Main Street. Had a, uh, and

my parents lived in there for years. And they pulled back the rug. And sure enough, there was a trapdoor that went to, went to nowhere.

Oden

I think that's the Cashin house now.

Hurlburt

Is it?

Oden

They've been there for a while. My grandparents lived across the street from the corner of Nickerson.

Hurlburt

Really?

Oden

Yeah.

Hurlburt

Yeah.

Oden

That's where my father grew up.

Tye

So can we talk about, I'm intrigued by if you say something like secret cellar, it raises all sorts of interesting issues other than maybe some rum during Prohibition. I thought of secret sellers from that era, being, um

Hurlburt

Underground Railroad.

Tye

Um, well Underground Railroad, I thought of something more prosaic, which was just being fallout shelters in an era when people were building but the idea that you had other things going on in secret cellars, what happened in secret cellars?

Hurlburt

I have no clue. Nobody ever found out.

Tye

It was a secret.

Hurlburt

It was a secret. I'll tell you that Ann Barrett's house up on route 28 has a real honest to goodness, what they considered to be hiding places for Underground Railroad. Also had, um, Hinckley, Sally Hinckley Ropes, had some interesting places like that.

Tye

For runaway slaves?

Hurlburt

Possibly. I can't tell you that for sure. But possibly.

Tye

Wow.

Hurlburt

Because my daughter hung out with Bart, uh, Bart Burgess and Ned Hinkle. And my daughter were a team. And they hung out at the Hinkle house a lot, and they just there was just all all kinds of trapdoors, and yeah.

Oden

You know, I don't think there was ever any great conflict with the Native Americans but in, I know in New Hampshire, there's houses with hiding spots that was that were there. So you if the Native Americans were attacking, that was the idea you could, you could hide.

Hurlburt

That's an interesting theory.

Oden

I kind of doubt that's the case here cause I've never heard of-

Hurlburt

We're a pretty peaceful lot, yeah.

Tye

So, Brian, first memories of Cotuit, when did you? You came before you had connections to Cotuit it before you were next door?

Delorey

No, I'm an interloper. Summer kid at Oyster Harbors.

Odense

Your whole life there?

Delorey

Yeah.

Odense

Okay.

Delorey

And that Raif Wiano seniors over there. And so I knew landmarks here. But I was also in New York for 10 years, and I'd only come up to race on the weekends. And, um, my family had a house on West Bay, on Oyster Harbors that's been torn down.

Tye

At, in Oyster Harbors from when? When would they have first gotten there?

Delorey

Um, you know, 60s. And one of five kids. And I only knew Cotuit, and we were just summer people, lived in Boston rest of the time. And I had an Alden Shell. And I rode in college. So I would row and row round Samsons, and then I would come and be sweaty, and take a dip at the beach at, um,

Odense

Riley's Loop?

Hurlburt

I was gonna say—

Delorey

Riley's and Loop and just, you know, and walk it off and walk the sweat off.

Tye

So this was good because you were rowing at Harvard?

Delorey

Yeah.

Tye

And this was good training?

Delorey

This was this was, but this was after Harvard. This was after New York I'd, you know, exercise and, and it's, you know, the boat is made for waves. And so I didn't know Cotuit. And so when I cooled off I'd walk around the neighborhood, and I happened upon, um the house I'm in by by walking, and it had a sliding glass front porch with psychedelic curtains. And it was kind of rundown, and I didn't think much of it. But that was my routine. And then my family sold the house on West Bay and I wanted to continue sailing. So I asked around, and someplace, you know, that I could live. And they were going to build another house. And they actually, well this is this is right. They actually rented a house for I think two years on Little River Road by the Oyster Company. Um, that's a modern one story house.

Tye

They being your family?

Delorey

My parents.

Tye

Your parents, yes.

Delorey

And we were also out of school. And they kept a place in Cambridge. And, uh, so I got to know Cotuit better. And so I asked around, and there was a very nice guy who I think Edie knows. Eric Michaelson, who is

Hurlburt

I love him, yeah.

Delorey

A photographer and a framer. And I used to bring him stuff, all the family stuff was falling apart. So he'd reframe it and remat it. And I said, do you know of anything that's for sale that, you know, haven't got much money, but I'd like to look around here. And so he said, Yeah, Anna Marie just died. And her son is taking care of it.

Tye

This is late 70s, uh late 90s?

Delorey

Mid 90s, I think.

Tye

Mid 90s.

Delorey

And so I drove over, and it was the psychedelic house. And I got out of the car and John Murray was there. And I said, I don't mean to be a interloper. But you know, I'm looking for a house, and I hear this might be for sale. And so he and I exchanged numbers, talked, came to a fair price. And I bought the house. And, um...

Tye

So can we just say one thing about the house because we keep hearing in the tapes about these houses, this constellation of houses here. That was the ship?

Delorey

Yeah.

Tye

And the, can you explain what you know about the we heard when Edie Henderson died, her kids gathered one day on the porch and told stories about [unintelligible], we interviewed her. And then they told stories about their recollections of the house, and the groovy room and all the things that went on here. What, what do you know about the history of your house?

Delorey

It was, I think that in this house, your house, the parents lived. And the kids were all over there from all the [unintelligible]. And so there are at the the kitchen is an addition. And it's quite a big kitchen for a 19th century house, and there are rooms upstairs, some with sinks. And it was obviously kids rooms. And, um, so it was the kids place. And I just heard the legend. I never met her, of Anna Marie, that with Edie's point on the rumrunners, the story was that either boat ran aground with champagne, and that they all went out and scavenged. And they buried it in my backyard. But but but Anna was very thrifty. And as you can tell our land slopes way down. Yours is much more level. Mine's an old fill. I mean, that you see in an old picture. And it goes almost straight down. So apparently, she used to flag trucks coming down the road would fill and direct them into the back. And so it became more level, where you see it's level, that's all filled

Tye

So if we were to dig there, do you think we'd find champagne?

Delorey

The dog keeps sniffing around out there.

Hurlburt

It would be worth it. Take one of those things

Tye

Exactly. Metal detectors.

Hurlburt

Yeah.

Delorey

Yeah. But I've just sort of heard the the legend of Anna Marie. And actually the when you mentioned and Edie mentioned the Cashon house, um, Mrs. Cashon would be a good person for you to talk. She's 95 or six. She rented and then bought that one. And her son Dick is my classmate at college. And was a great oarsman.

Odenice

Went to the olympics?

Delorey

Yeah.

Odenice

Yeah.

Tye

So when you say she rented, uh, bought and rented that, it was pre-Anne Marie?

Delorey

No, she didn't rent. Anna took them under her wing. She I think they rented Al Courtine's house for a while.

Odenice

But the house that he was referring to is the one on the northeast corner of Sea and Maine.

Hurlburt

So Mrs. Courtine was the mother?

Delorey

Yes.

Hurlburt

Yeah. I remember that. She was for whatever the reason friends with my mother.

Delorey

She was a lovely woman.

Hurlburt

Yeah. They spent a lot of time together. Those two.

Tye

So when you both, you were attracted to Cotuit because you were born here and there was family heritage here and staying had an attraction for that reason. You got to know it, um, paddling around and then walking around the village. When you think about, I was explaining the driving question is ,why is Cotuit different than other places on Cape Cod or other places? What, what has it preserving this sense of specialness over generations, that you hear the same stories. When you read, one of the things that we have taken as our sort of starting point is nearly 100 years ago, President Lowell wrote a 20 page monograph of Cotuit history and the and his sense of what was going on there at the time, but before him, and there is a lot that was very different. A lot of supplies came in rather than coming from Boston, they came from Nantucket, which was a great center of commerce, and people would ship things over here. But there were still, there were things about it that ring true of today, and there aren't many places on the Cape that have probably changed as little as Cotuit has in 100 years. What is it about this place? You are two smart people who know it well, what is it about this place that makes it somewhere unusual and gives it a special character?

Hurlburt

It's, that's a difficult one for me, because I never knew anything else. I have nothing to compare it to. Right? And of all of these things I took for granted because I've never lived in the city. I've never, you know, I I knew nothing about rapid transit.

Tye

But you know about other parts of, you went to Barnstable High. And you know about other parts of the Cape, I presume well. Better than probably any of the three of us. What is it that makes it different in terms of a special place on Cape Cod different than the other villages of Barnstable or than other parts of the Cape?

Hurlburt

Well, we were small and intimate, and everybody knew was up in everybody else's business. And so it was a safe, very safe place to be. I don't know of any other village that would really have, it could be, but but that had the privilege of just walking around, going everywhere, doing everything swimming, swimming over to the island, doing naughty things. And you were safe here.

Tye

So is it then one of the things that strikes me about Cotuit is the idea that we're not on the way anywhere, you've got to be wanting to come to Cotuit to end up in Cotuit. Is that, does that make it safer and different? Or what do you think about?

Hurlburt

I've drawn a blank, I'm gonna have to give it, I'm gonna have to give to— Y

Odense

Well, it's a tough question.

Hurlburt

Yeah, it is. It is a tough question. It's all you've ever known, and uh...

Tye

So think about it. But can I, before I ask Brian the same question can I ask you about the, I don't mean to zero in on the naughty. But that also tells the more people have described the fun and sort of naughty things that go on here, the more that gives to me a sense of what this place was like. The idea that there were secret basements that maybe had rum or maybe something else was going on. What kinds of things did kids do that they might not have wanted their parents to know about that suggests what Cotuit was like?

Hurlburt

I don't know. But but as you're speaking things like Freedom Hall comes up. Now Freedom Hall back when I was a kid, always had variety shows. Do you remember those?

Odense

I don't.

Hurlburt

So the variety shows were, were, anybody that had a talent, anybody that didn't have a talent, went up on stage and made complete asses of themselves. And the village would show up for that, and they would roast one another.

Tye

What kinds of things can you tell, did you do anything?

Hurlburt

Oh, my gosh, I wish my cousin Marilyn were here. She, she, she'd be wonderful at this. And and was it was it something you had to pay to to come into? And was it a donation kind of thing? I have no clue. I just know that everybody in town showed up. And anybody that had a musical instrument, and I had three, showed up whether you could play well or not. There were plays, act out plays, everybody dressed in costume. Everybody in the village that that was even remotely odd, or what you might consider to be odd, was roasted in one way, shape or form. I don't know if any other maybe Osterville, maybe Barnstable has had these things, but that was ours. And Freedom Hall was was the place to go and be. And right up until a few years ago, it was just open. You just went in there and did your thing. You want to go in there and sew, you want to go in there and have a conversation? Freedom Hall was open. I even used to take my canvas work in there and lay it out on the floor.

Odenice

Oh really? Huh.

Hurlburt

Because

Odenice

Because you could

Hurlburt

Because I could, right. And work on it and put grommets in it and so forth. So Freedom Hall was a very big part of the social part part of Cotuit and in that, that time anyway, and I should have grabbed my cousin Marilyn Turner. Again her, Charles Turner, across the street from Tommy and Peta.

Odenice

Yeah.

Hurlburt

Nifty, nifty lady. She's a social worker to the nines and, and she remembers all of this and, and has some great stories to tell as well. But, yeah.

Tye

So as a very late comer, I miss, one of the things I most miss in the pandemic here is Freedom Hall having anything going on there. But you're saying it was my memories of it having contra dances and other things like that, that that's a limited thing that they used to have all kinds of

Hurlburt

All the time. All the time.

Tye

All year round as well? Not just summers.

Hurlburt

Sure. Yeah.

Tye

Wow

Hurlburt

And it was, it, maybe other villages came in and joined it. I don't recall that. It was just village people getting out and making fools of themselves.

Tye

Was there a big separation when you were growing up here between summer and year round people?

Hurlburt

Yes.

Tye

What kind? What was the difference?

Hurlburt

I'm well, for one thing, unfamiliar, unfamiliar. Although my daughter, who grew up in the in the 70s around here, was great friends with with all of the summer people. Bart, I think was summer at that point.

Odenca

Yep.

Hurlburt

Ned Henkel was summer. All, all of these young people and they hung out together so there was a winter crowd and a summer crowd.

Oden

Did she do the sailing program?

Hurlburt

She did not, she was involved in it, but she didn't she never had a skiff, nor did she ever have any formal sailing lessons. I was, you know, too busy delivering the mail among other things, but anyway, so yes, as time grew on, it was a welcoming of these people, but when I grew up, we had our own little niche of, uh, townies, you want to call them townies that's a good thing, or not not inappropriate, I suppose but but people stuck to their their own working class and so forth. And so I sort of grew up with the feeling that summer people came in and and yes, you always appreciated them, they brought with them revenue and money and so forth, but we're not unhappy to see them go and and never the twain shall meet. That's sort of what I recall from my parents and from my experience. Yeah.

Tye

I'm doing important work here.

[Unknown Speaker]

Sorry to interrupt your work, Nellie, but it's time to go out.

Tye

So was it, was it on both sides. Was it that you felt summer people were?

Hurlburt

Of a different class. Of a different class.

Oden

Snobs?

Hurlburt

Maybe, but you're looking at it from a 12, 11, 12 year old. Certainly not now. I mean, we we all mature out of that stuff, but and whatever gave me that idea that is that these were lovely people. I know that back in the day, I I heard stories of the farmers and the working class people in

Santuit and beyond had all the wonderful soil. And it was trucked in to Oregon beach for nicer gardens. That was just a story. [unintelligible] true.

Tye

But it doesn't matter. The story says something about a truth whether [unintelligible]

Hurlburt

Right, yeah.

Tye

Wow.

Hurlburt

And that the other thing that the Grange Hall, there was a lot of stuff that went on at the Grange hall that I was never a member, but that of course has maybe nationally died out. I don't know if there's such a thing as a Grange anymore. Or maybe in the

Tye

Only in farm kind of. And so one last thing. Since we're talking about these houses here, did you ever know this as the groovy room?

Hurlbert

No.

Tye

No. Okay. By the way, Edie Henderson denied that she ever knew there was anything going on here. And her kids not only talked about what was going on here, but said she knew everything that was going on.

Hurlburt

Well. I knew, I knew nothing about the groovy room. I do know. I don't, [unintelligible] out of school? I don't know, I do know that there was a connection between this house and the Giggs. And the Giggs were down where, uh, who the heck owns it now.

Odenice

Nancee.

Hurlburt

Really?

Odense
Jim Nancee.

Hurlburt
Yeah, Jim still does?

Odense
I think so, yeah.

Hurlburt
I thought that it had sold or whatever. But that that was a wonderful old house, big grand piano. It was a family home, I remember, the walls of that house being wallpapered in all the family photos. I mean, just like postcards, ceiling to floor.

Tye
So the Giggs, to explain to anybody who's listening to just this tape. This is when Edie became a Gigg, um. left, she and her husband split up.

Hurlburt
That was that was what I think the big controversy was, but I couldn't remember that for sure. But yeah.

Tye
So when you think about you, you're a traveler and a liver in lots of places around America and the world, when you think of what has drawn you to Cotuit and what makes this place different, what do you think?

Delorey
Well, the first thing that appealed to me was that I could afford it. I mean, that I could buy Anna Marie's house, I bought it with my sister. And I worked in the government, so I wasn't paid a whole lot.

Tye
For State Housing?

Delorey
For Boston Redevelopment Authority. And and the house was decrepit, and, uh, that it was, you know, older people that couldn't keep it up. And so I could afford it. And you know, there was none of this escalating prices and...

Odence

This is a historical retrospective. It's not

Delorey

Yeah. This is Yeah, yeah, it, it, John and I, you know, over a conversation arrived at the price. There was no bidding or anything. And luckily, my father had a good sense of design and was handy. And he took an interest in bringing it up to date a little bit. And so it was affordable. But it was also, I thought it was a lovely place that I could walk down, jump in the water at Loop, put the shell in, could still race Wianno seniors. But it was far enough away from, you know, Osterville, Wianno, um, used to be a different world. And that that was Palm Beach. And that was well, you know, we grew up that way. But you know, I, it didn't appeal to me really. And, or I had enough of it, or I could come, come and go as I please. So it was and so I really didn't know anybody here but for people who sailed seniors, Shortwood, um, Henkel. And so it was was enough different than, you know, parts of the cape that were exclusive. I mean, and that it also had the reputation of them. Long time ago, little Harvard, there was a academic place. And that wasn't why I came but it was great. And you all, you might want to talk to, there's a wonderful woman who's a friend of mine named Carol Bundy. And Carol is a historian, and she's a Lowell. And I think her grandfather died down here. And

Tye

She's here?

Delorey

No, she's in Cambridge.

Tye

She's in Cambridge. Carol Bundy, oh great.

Delorey

And so I think that they have some of the Lowell stuff. But, um...

Odence

What was your impression as a as a young guy racing seniors in Wianno, I mean did you have preconceived notions of what Cotuit was like or what the people were like here?

Delorey

Yeah, bohemian.

Odence

Oh, interesting.

Delorey

Again, yeah, I mean, we were

Hurlburt

Haha, guilty as charged.

Delorey

We were buttoned up across the water.

Odense

Yeah.

Delorey

And yeah, we thought it was bohemian. And, and I got, uh...

Hurlburt

That's, that's a wonderful thing to know.

Delorey

Well and that that just, and I mean it in the most loving way after all these years. The brother Paul Noonan, who was a character. He picked me as being social, I guess, and that he would tease me all the time. And I remember Jerry Henderson was very nice to me when I first came here. And Jerry died. And I had to go back to Oyster Harbors to get a blue blazer, and I stood in the back of the church. And I guess I irritated brother Paul so much, that in his eulogy to Jerry, he said, Jerry saw the good in everyone, including the right wing crank Brian Delorey.

Hurlburt

But that was Paul.

Delorey

That was—

Hurlbut

And I don't think there was a thing personal about that, he just—

Delorey

Some say he had a crush that was unrequited. But I didn't speak to him for a while. Until we

Hurlburt

Well—

Delorey

Made up years later.

Hurlburt

He never forgave my daughter, um, never forgave my daughter for not going to what a, the, the Indian, no, what what was the?

Odenice

The powwow?

Hurlburt

No, not the powwow. I want to say Barnstable, what was his religion? Quaker?

Odenice

Yeah, he was a Quaker.

Hurlburt

He was a Quaker.

Odenice

Became a Quaker. I think he still—

Hurlbut

But it was all you know, he called her a Presbyterian every time she went down the road and in a very large tone of voice. And she'd yell something back at him. And, uh, you know, that was Paul.

Delorey

Yeah. And I wasn't very smart.

Hurlburt

Yeah. And Paul would call me on the phone and tell me some naughty thing my kid had been doing down on Main Street. Yeah, all right. I'll deal with it, you know.

Tye

So something that you mentioned. So I love the word bohemian to describe it and clearly, as a Lowell vestige of whatever reason, academic and arts oriented and other things. But you're talked

about being affordable. Is Cotuit changing to the point, when you look at what prices are for everything today,

Delorey

Yes.

Tye

It's a different world here. It's a different world all across the cape. Has it changed, the tenor, is it too recent in terms of the incredible price inflation of houses to do it? Is this a threat to it? I mean everything has gone crazy in the last couple of years here in terms of real estate prices. Is that a threat to Cotuit?

Hurlburt

Yeah, I mean, I would think it was. The other thing is that if there's nothing to keep it, in this day and age, you have to make a living. And if there's nothing to keep a child here, the first thing they want to do is clear out. Go somewhere where there's opportunity.

Tye

Have your kids stayed?

Hurlburt

I have one daughter, she's no she's been gone since she was 18. She couldn't get out faster. And it wasn't like she didn't like Cotuit, she just needed to go somewhere. Although I must say I haven't seen her in seven years so she's not [laughs]. She's not that homesick, but prices are going up, people are coming in. Other families are spreading out and moving. And so the heritage or the children, I suppose there will always be a place for them in Cotuit but they're not here anymore. They've gone somewhere else. My daughter has been on the west coast for 25 years. And she almost came back a couple of months ago, things aren't great out there. But nope. Wasn't gonna wasn't gonna happen. You have to have a salary if you're going to own a home in Cotuit.

Tye

Do you worry that what you did here

Delorey

Isn't replicable?

Tye

Isn't replicable.

Delorey

No, and, you know, the the [unintelligible] road, Edie clued me in and I drove down and it's a disgrace.

Hurlburt

Yeah, that's a disappointment. I will say that's a disappointment.

Odense

The the one right by

Hurlburt

The whole

Odense

The whole collection of houses?

Hurlburt

Well, and all of the trees being cut down and there was

Odense

Oh, I know where you mean. [unintelligible]

Hurlburt

Yeah. Popponesset Bay, and there's there's one driveway that's going into a brand new house being built down there that's double barrel. It looks like Route 28.

Odense

Yeah.

Hurlburt

Biggest, did you see that?

Odense

Yeah, it's kind of crazy.

Hurlburt

Biggest darn thing I've ever seen. I have, the only good thing I can think of is that I am benefiting from all the oaks that were cut down. They're all in my [laughs], keeping me warm.

Delorey

And Edie shares some wood with me.

Hurlburt

Yeah, and keeping us warm. But but yeah. That, again, that was a place we would go down back in the woods and come out on the other side where it was rocky and light a fire and cook a lobster and nobody cared and just clean up after yourself and, and these these kinds of things, just yeah.

Delorey

No, and they're ugly.

Tye

And they're ugly. So we heard a interesting bit of railing about that, and I think her selling her property was part of the deal, but from Vicky Wesson who was the

Hurlburt

Yeah.

Tye

And ironically, probably somebody who can afford to keep the trees and other things is McCourt. And we may look back at him as instead of the great destroyer, some of the preserver of

Delorey

He's a savior.

Odence

I think so.

Hurlburt

Maybe

Delorey

No question. No question.

Hurlburt

Because that's a beautiful piece of land he has there.

Delorey

Could have been a golf course.

Hurlburt
Absolutely.

Tye
It could have been a golf course and maybe, yes, ah. So what other thoughts you've got, both of you have a million things that you know about this place, when you think if you were describing to one of these, um, true interlopers who came new to Cotuit and you said, this is what is the soul of Cotuit that we hope you will understand and preserve, um, assuming anybody like that would ever go to the Historical Society and listen to any, what would you say this is what you really have to realize that you have to change to accommodate to this place rather than making this place.

Hurlburt
Something else?

Tye
Something else.

Hurlburt
Yeah. I want to I want to work in the Cotuit Mosquito Yacht Club at some point or another, um...

Tye
Is that one of the things that makes it special?

Hurlburt
Oh golly, I have always thought that.

Tye
So what—

Hurlburt
Long long before I put my knuckles to the to the grindstone and started making [unintelligible]. Yes, always. It's a gathering of people, and the optimist friends and the rowing club and that's that little hub of any, you know, everybody's welcome if you can get your hands on a skiff I suppose and, and learn how to, you know, compete, which I never did. But these are these are all things that I would like to think will never go away. And I've lost track of a good many wonderful things too, Coop for example, I haven't been in there years. Why? I don't know. Life goes on and you're sailing out of town and you don't go in there anymore but for no other reason than pure laziness. And a friend the other day said, for heaven's sakes, stop your car and go in

there and get some and introduce yourself while you're a [unintelligible]. I'm Edie Hurlburt, I've lived here for 70...

Odense

You would be welcome with open arms.

Hurlburt

78 years. Yeah, 78 years and and thought I'd just drop, stop, off course I go back to to Mr. Crocker, and I lived there, then I lived in that place.

Tye

When you were growing up, and there was a Coop, and all the other things that you were describing that were in the center of town, could you be self-contained in Cotuit?

Hurlburt

Yes.

Tye

And not have to go anywhere?

Hurlburt

Correct. Right. Right down to the the Coop. I I was too young to know about the grocery store. And I knew about it, certainly went by it, but I wouldn't have been shopping there, you know. But penny candy and all the little things you'd go out on a Sunday afternoon to go for a walk. Would always be Mr. Crocker's, The Coop, always.

Odense

We should we should insert because you've made reference but your your handiwork on sale covers intense, adorns most of the skiffs in the harbor in the summer these days.

Hurlburt

Well, it seems to yeah, it seems to. But I just mean that that's that is a steady on piece of history that I don't see going anywhere ever.

Tye

Hopefully.

Hurlburt

Right. Well, as long as there's enough tenacity involved in that group of people, I would like to think that it will go on.

Odense

Yeah.

Tye

When you think of things, if you were doing a tutorial for new arrivals, and you said, this is what you gotta get if you're coming here.

Delorey

I think it's always wise to step back and, you know, try and not compel your presence, so much as take in what the atmosphere is that, that this is the way people here like to be, and you don't sort of, you know, "Look at me Look at me," you know, sort of which goes on in every community now. I've got the biggest house, I've got the biggest boat, I've got the, etcetera, etcetera, and it's trying to fit in. And the, you know, be neighborly, be kind, be, you know, thoughtful. And stay out of each other's way, as best you can. And I think that's, you know, the the good thing about the town is that it's respecting of, you know, people's lives and character that are maybe different. And the, you know, the biggest house, the biggest boat isn't an emblem of sanctity, it's what it is. And I think that that's in any community, that's what you really look for.

Tye

So it strikes me that something that is implicit in what you're both saying, and that you mentioned explicitly, we heard stories about the various major hurricanes over the history of Cotuit that destroyed, that tore up most of the trees that were there and how they were replanted. And that the, when you see the trees that are here, and you realize they haven't been here forever, they were here since Hurricane 50 or 70 years ago. And you think, people tearing those out of the ground now seems to me something that ought to be against the law almost because the, they really are, the nature is part of the place. Are you worried about it being denuded of the nature that makes it what it is when you go out and see the the houses?

Hurlburt

Now this is, this is pretty selfish of me. But what I see when trees come down and roads go in, that's where I used to pick blueberries, and nobody kicked me off their land. I mean, really, that I think that that's what it comes back to. The other thing that rings a bell and I'm, I'm not in this one way or the other personally, but the sayings or the attitudes in the recent past in in the recent past, you know, people come here. They think it's quaint, they love it. They liked the laid back atmosphere and so forth. But the minute they get here, they want to change the government. They want to change the way people do things in the village. They want to add this and take away that to make it more like the place they came from.

Delorey
Stop signs.

Hurlburt

Well, yeah, I mean, I'm getting used to that. But but yeah. Really. There again didn't I, course, back then there were rumble seats and cars that didn't go over 40 miles an hour. Like it or not. So perhaps it was

Odense

I think stop signs are the symptoms of the cars going over 40 miles.

Hurlburt

Well, this is true. This is true. And no, do I like it now? For heaven's sakes, grab your kid's hand and wait and look both ways before you cross the street. Makes sense to me, but but really, that that's the that's what comes up for me. And I think the main thing back in the day was, and the minute they got here, they changed the fire, Cotuit fire district and it was no longer volunteer. Well, we've got, we've got one of the best fire departments and rescue squads in all of probably the East Coast, but certainly Massachusetts. So I don't know, you know, should we complain about that? Well, I don't know. But that's the whole thing. If you love it, come in, and enjoy it, don't try and change it.

Tye

So I want to say one quick thing about the stop signs, which is whether we need them or not. It is ironic, because the way you were describing cars are safer today than they ever were. And you could argue we need them less than ever, rather than more than ever, because the cars are safer. And we will have some device telling us there's a car encroaching on your, and it will beep. And so I want to just say the, I promised we would get you out of here in an hour, and we've kept you a little longer than that. The, if you think of anything that you wish you had said, or people you wish you had mentioned that we should talk to, this is an ongoing thing. And especially now that we're out of a, or hopefully coming out of a COVID period, and it's safer to get together, we're going to be doing these perpetually. And we would love to sit down with people. So if your cousin or the person that you mentioned in Cambridge who's a member of the Lowell family, or any of those kinds of people come to mind, we'd like to hear about them. Because the point is to get as many people down, and when you paste it all together, if you're pasting together 100 interviews, we're probably up to about 30 so far, and with another 30 people on our list of people who we want to talk to, but we'd love to hear about more.

Delorey
Great.

Tye
Great.

Delorey
Thank you.

Hurlburt
It's strictly anecdotal, you know, with me, I can come up with stories and things that we did as children and, and so forth, whether in the overall scheme of things it's worth it, if it's of value, in other words.

Tye
So the only value of any of this is good stories. And that's what and some of the stories turn out to be true. Hopefully, most of them turn out to be true. But they are, as Phil was saying, people's impressions and memories of them are as important as whether there was in fact, the Rum Runner who took over Vicky Wessons, you know, she remembers that as a kid and sort of [unintelligible], essentially that they were told that if they didn't make any trouble, and didn't try to go anywhere for a couple of days they'd be safe there. Now that makes for a dramatic story, and it may be true.

Hurlburt
Indeed, yeah.

Delorey
Well good for you guys for doing this.

Tye
Any last questions?

Odenca
I'm sensitive to being over time. But could you just do a minute on Mrs. Turner? I lived across the street from her in her later years.

Hurlburt
Um...Peggy Turner?

Odenca
Peggy Turner. Yeah, I mean, she was a, I thought she was an interesting character.

Hurlburt

Well, Peggy Turner was was an interesting character. I had, uh, um, there are some folks that have had problems with her and her daughters aren't, maybe maybe this isn't for tape. Maybe this isn't for tape. She was very, very well educated. Dogmatic personality. I gave her a wide berth really.

Oden

And she [unintelligible].

Hurlburt

She was she was she was a, she spoke fluently in French. She was a, uh, an engineer by trade.

Oden

Huh, wow.

Hurlburt

Oddly enough. She came from New York I think in her early days. She married my uncle.

Oden

Yeah, I think she went to college in New York. I think is what I read in her obit. And do you know what brought her?

Hurlburt

No, I don't, but I can find that out.

Oden

Oh, interesting. I should've asked her.

Hurlburt

Yeah, well, Peggy's got one daughter left.

Oden

Yeah.

Hurlburt

Anne Marie passed away, oh I don't know, maybe seven or eight years ago. So Susie Bailey who lives in Dartmouth and I, I talked to her. Susie now owns the house that Peggy

Oden

The green one?

Hurlburt

The green one. The the cottage.

Odenice

Yeah.

Hurlburt

Right, she now owns that. And so I've got the keys to it, and we're fixing it, fixing it and what have you, but she would be a good one to ask. And I can contact her for that.

Odenice

I'm just curious, I'm just curious.

Hurlburt

Yeah, yeah, she was just kind of different. Very different than than Kenneth. He was a very meek, mild.

Odenice

Oh, really? Yeah, interesting.

Hurlburt

Yeah. Unless, unless it was town meeting and town meeting would be, if you could get somebody that could go back to those days, town meetings were very heated and very lively in Cotuit. And he he was just a very quiet, quiet, dignified, meek guy that could blow the windows off of Freedom Hall. He was he just, he changed personality when he when he went in there. Yeah.

Tye

So it's interesting also, who in a town or a village has most perspective on what else goes on in the village and the the session that we did 10 days ago at the JFK Museum, Dr. Rapp came. And as good as he was in our interview, there he was even more extraordinary. You realize that somebody he was before he became a radiologist the village doctor, was the, um, GP and you realize they know everybody's stories. And the and the older they get, he's now wonderfully lost any of the filters that would have just tackled his patience.

Hurlburt

Oh he's just, my gosh Dr. Rapp is amazing.

Tye

He is amazing. So we're about to do the first multigenerational, Jessie, his daughter is going to sit down with him and her mother and do a an interview.

Hurlburt

Oh, fantastic.

Tye

Fully because he he was a character and he had people in stitches at that session.

Oden

Yeah, it was amazing

Hurlburt

Oh, absolutely. You know, not not only that, but he's a fantastic woodworker, he's just multitalented. I love that guy.

Tye

And he, I hope that, um at age, he's 94

Oden

Older I think.

Tye

Maybe 96. I hope