

Subject: Larry Odence  
Transcription: Daria S. Tehrani

Tye: So we don't have to worry that- it's-it's a tape recorder that, um-

Larry: Oh yeah, look, as far as I'm concerned, you- I- you wouldn't have caught me, uh, doing any of this except for pressure from Phillip.

Tye: (laughing) Okay.

Larry: I'm one- I'm one that uh, thinks that the privacy left in life, that- Anyway, I-

Tye: (overlapping) So ca-can I-

Larry: -I'm here to try and be helpful.

Tye: Um-

Larry: So let me just give you what I can. Phillip has posed some-some questions and asked about, uh, things during the war. And, you know, I-I-I'm terrible about childhood memory. I don't remember a whole lot, but, um, I'll tell you a few things that I remember, for instance, we all know that there were landing crafts in the North Bay that went out every day along [1:00] the shoreline towards, uh, Poppeneset what have you. I don't remember seeing - in my mind - seeing the boats, but I remember, uh, the smell of the diesel and the smoke.

Phillip: Yeah. They say-they say your sense of smell is, has a longer memory than any of your other senses.

Larry: Oh well- Well, that's it. I remember the smoke. And so that-that was one thing that, uh, certainly, uh, was, uh, something I remember from the war.

Phillip: Well, I remember you telling me that there just wasn't a lot of boat traffic, 'cause you tipped o- You told me about tipping over once. I think you were, you know, out-outside the Island and you tipped over and there was a, you- there was a concern just because there wasn't a lot of boat traffic around.

Larry: Yeah, probably I don't- I remember at the end of, uh, [2:00] Main Street right there, where you turn into the so-called Oregon Beach, you know that entry, to the right there at night, there were, um, tremendous big, uh, searchlights searching the sky for, uh, planes. Uh, and I can't tell you when that was - 42, 43, 44 - but it was certainly in that period.

Tye: Planes that they ever found or planes just to be safe. And, then-

Larry: 'Scuse me I-I-I'll turn my-

Tye: Do you think that the- Did any planes- Were any planes ever sighted or the- This was just to be safe and give people a sense of security?

Larry: I just don't know.

Tye: Ah.

Larry: I just don't know. I can say this, that I could remember one summer, uh, [3:00] With Lee Burlingame, and we-we'd go- It was like a Sunday night. We'd go to the firehouse and we'd just look at the sky and see if we saw any planes. And if we did, we had a number to call, a telephone number, and then I think that our code to locate us was something like Darby 102.

Tye: X.

Larry: So That's that I remember, but-

Phil: I think you told me too, that gave you some kind of guide with silhouettes of different kinds of points.

Larry: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's right. I-d-I'd forgotten that. But, uh, we probably saw a plane or two, but I don't remember anything.

Phil: Where was the firehouse then?

Larry: Pardon me?

Phil: Where was the firehouse then?

Larry: Where it is.

Phil: Oh yeah? Okay.

Larry: Yeah. It was where it is.

Tye: And back then, [4:00] you were here just summers?

Larry: Yeah, well, yes, but all off-season too. Uh, but it was basically just the summer, uh, certainly, uh, exercise at the firehouse with my friend Burlingame was-was on Sunday night in the summer.

Phil: His family moved here full-time, but- when he was going into high school, but he went to prep school at Tabor, so he was sort of here off and on.

Larry: Uh, the, um, uh... there were a lot of military families, uh, that rented here in Cotuit, and I would say more 42-43. Uh, my sense is that they were officer families, uh, maybe at Camp Edwards, they were- gave the GIs and their families, uh, facilities over there. [5:00] I don't know,

but that-the- There was, uh, certainly, um, military families and-and houses all over Cotuit. And how that affected the summer people, I'm not quite sure because I suppose the summer of 42-43 maybe 43-44 that these families must've still been at these rental houses.

Tye: (overlapping) And how old would you have been-

Larry: I just don't.

Tye: How old would you have been in 42-43?

Larry: Uh, oh let's see, I turned 12 at 41. So 12-14 that area.

Phil: Do you know that the, I don't know if I ever told you this, that the Holsteins rented this house. I think it was summer of 42.

Larry: That could be.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: That could be. Their house [6:00] there was a military family in there on, uh, Putnam Avenue.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Uh, first house to the left as you turn. Um, and they were there a couple of years. There was a girl, young girl, that Lee liked and he named his Cotuit skiff after called Ginger.

Phil: Oh, Ginger.

Larry: Yeah.

Phil: Okay. I wondered where Ginger came from.

Larry: Um-

Tye: Can I ask you, when you were at Tabor, were you-were you ever worried that Tabor- Were, um, were they preparing you- That all of you as high school kids might someday have to go off for the war effort?

Larry I don't remember any of that.

Tye: Mm.

Larry: Um, I had- I can remember I had a-a friend during that period who was from Louisiana. He was from- And I always regretted losing that contact for some reason. But I don't remember all that much. [7:00] Um, during the Old Post Road was, uh, closed off because of the military

down there, except the families that had houses there like the Almy's and what have you, they were able to go back and forth. So there weren't- Not complete restrictions on that.

Phil: Uh. That was an army base, right?

Larry: Y-y-yeah, supporting the, uh, the landing craft.

Phil: And did the Navy run the landing crowd?

Larry: No, I-I don't think so-

Phil: 'Cause you-

Larry: the Navy, the-the Navy lady that lived behind us, one summer [brought?] the kids. I don't know what brought her here. Her husband was a submariner.

Phil: Okay. But there was- Not that there were any Naval operations here?

Larry: If there was, I don't remember.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I don't remember. [8:00] I do remember the poor woman, uh, would- was all by herself. I think she probably was depressed. And uh, here I was as a little kid and going out one night, there, she was as naked as a jaybird with all the lights on in the house.

(laughter)

Larry: Her kids put to bed. A couple of boys, little boys, what's going on in here. It was funny. Um..

Phil: You should read the story the summer of 42.

Tye: Yes.

Larry: Yeah.

Phil: There was a similar story, except the kid went in and while- well I won't ruin the ending.

Larry: There was a- There was a family, uh, that came to Cotuit in the 30's and I don't know how long into the 40's, um, they were able to come. They came from the canal zone. The father was in charge of buying shoes and I don't know what else for the [9:00] military down there. And they came here in the summertime and they had one son who was fascinated with airplanes and he made wonderful models and sometimes he would have them all ready and then he would torch them- and let fly out over the-.

Phil: (overlapping) Geez.

Larry: Over the ocean, what have you.

Phil: Huh.

Larry: But he also had-had some with the engines and stuff, but I remember that.

Phil: What were they- What was their name?

Larry: Moo-moot.

Phil: Huh. I like that.

Larry: And, um, the, uh, they cocktailed it pretty heavy.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: And Bill Sinclair and I both have vague rememberances of going up over the Moots and seeing what we could pinch as far as a little snort or, you know, or a cigarette or something like that.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Bill might remember better.

Phil: Yeah.

[10:00]

Larry: He'll be 92 this, uh, this week.

Phil: Wow.

Larry: Yeah. Um, so that-that's sort of the, uh, the, uh, the story of the plane spotting you might remember in the military, I guess. Uh, the, um, uh, I'll tell you about Cotuit Downtown that I remember. There used to be three old guys, one named Hall. There was a blind guy named Baker. I think they called him Blind Chet Baker and Carl Burlingame, maybe-maybe others. And they would hang around on the, uh, at the basis of-of School Street, it was a little, uh, variety store called [Burge's?].

???: Mm

Larry: And they'd hang around there. [11:00] They were there every day commiserating with each other-

???: Ah.

Larry: -standing or sitting. And next to the store was a big green sign about the Kettle and the purchase of the Kettle or what have you. And that must be documented some place.

Phil: Ah. That's interesting.

Larry: Yeah, it must be in-in-in Grasseti Gould's? book, or what have you.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: It must be in there.

Phil: You don't remember a stoplight there, do you? They had a stoplight at one.

Larry: No. The only light I remember is at Putnam Avenue and Main Street. They had a blinker.

Phil: Huh, okay. This might've been a blinker too. It was out in the middle of the street. I've seen a picture of it.

Larry: Oh, it could be.

Phil: But I think that was more in the 20's.

Larry: I don't remember. But, uh-

Phil: (overlapping) Yeah.

Larry: I certainly remember that, now that you mention it, there was a blinker right in the middle of the road at-

Phil: Yeah

Larry: At, uh, Putnam Avenue and Main Street. [12:00] Um, on the 4th of July, the local teenagers would have, uh, firecracker wars across between [[Burge's?] little store and that was another store where the Kettle Ho is now called Gibb's Sandwich Shop. And they would shoot rockets at each other back and forth and what have you. And during that period, uh, Phillip went ahead and reported some place, an indiscretion of mine, which I certainly wouldn't own up to except that it's public record now in terms of some kid, teenager [taught?] me to go into the post office, which was right next to the-the park now. And.. [13:00]

Phil: There's that set of buildings we were talking about that got xx xxx.

Larry: There were three buildings: a grocery store, a barber shop, and, uh, the-the post office. And the post office boxes, most of them are glass windows and there was one that was busted. So I put a cherry bomb and it blew the door off.

(laughter)

Larry: It came out and I guess I couldn't have been more than 12 if that. What a dumb kid I was. I was going to, you know, be supportive of this teenager and, uh, xxx it came right in the hands of-of Seabury Childs who was a constable here. But I don't remember anything about getting into any real trouble or- And here I was, destroying government property. [14:00]

Phil: Was that your only felony you can remember?

Larry: What?

Phil: Was that your only felony that you can remember? (laughing)

Larry: No, I get to another one.

(laughter)

Larry: Uh, so any- you, know, I just don't remember.

Tye: Do you remember- Was the Constable based here or based, um, in- Where was the Constable?

Larry: [Right around?] Cotuit. He was a Cotuit guy.

Tye: He was?

Larry: Oh, yeah. Uh, his, uh, family still owns the house. Uh, you-you know, uh, what's the name. Um, uh, [Le Clare?] is that house? It was..

Phil: I don't know. What house is that?

Larry: Well, you got the fire station.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: And then there's the field there. And then it's that house belonged to Seabury Childs. [15:00] who was part of Dottridge- Part of the Dottridge family somehow. That's where he-he lived. The poor guy, he would just xxx in Cotuit and I think just in the summer.

Tye: Hm.

Larry: And he was el- quite elderly and there was a lady, who was a bit of a-a, uh, heavy duty drinker, and I think she knocked over one day with her car. This was some years later. Mrs. [Laquer?].

Phil: Oh, geez. Yeah.

Larry: Yeah. And he got up shaking her hand so he wasn't hurt but he-he-he was a nice old gentleman.

Phil: There was almost no Constable police presence here when I was a kid even. There was- there- they have like maybe one-one rented cop, but the main purpose was like parking and stuff. There were never really any police cars in town.

Larry: Um. [16:00] The Kettle Hall didn't exist. Uh, not Kettle Hall, the Cavaliers. But they did have baseball. It was local kids and they competed around the Cape and what have you, but it was all local stuff.

Phil: And they weren't- And they weren't called the Cavaliers?

Larry: I don't think so, but if they were, I don't remember, um... Now there were animals in Cotuit. Uh, certainly people kept chickens and-and cows and-and what have you. Um.. there was a family by the name of Susan that was on the corner of Shell Lane. That-that house to the south of Shell Lane-Shell Lane coming out [17:00] and he had, uh, cows and, uh, I guess chickens and what have you. And my family bought my brother a cow that this guy kept, but I think it was a bull i-in reality, but I have a vague remembrance of going over when they were milking the cows that were there and squirting.

Phil: And they were back behind that house along Shell Lane?

Larry: Yeah, I guess.

Phil: (overlapping) Down towards that house xx xx?

Larry: (overlapping) Yeah, I think he owned a lot of land in the back there.

Phil: (overlapping) Yeah.

Larry: Yeah.

Tye: Where were you then? Where was your family here in Cotuit?

Larry: Oh... I'm not dead sure which house it was. We were wh-where we are where they lived later. It could have been, um, where, um, uh, Hank Walcott- [18:00] Do you remember? Hank Walcott? Okay, well. Do you know [Terry Segan?]?

Tye: I don't know.

Larry: Okay. Well, it's-it's a couple of houses in this direction from, uh, uh...

Phil: The one right next to Craig Burlingame's?



Larry: Right next to Burlingame's. (overlapping) Yeah.

Phil: (overlapping) Yeah.

Tye: So you were- When you were coming down as a child, different [summers?] were renting different places?

Larry: For a while.

Tye: Mm.

Larry: Not.. But by 1944, they were at Scott's. My mother ma-made an arrangement with her friend, Wyeth Willard, who ran Camp Good News. And, um, she had permanent arrangement there until she died.

Phil: Which is the corner of Nickerson Road and Main.

Tye: And you were coming here from, was it New Jersey or where?

Larry: No, no. We lived- My family lived in the Loop area. [19:00] Yeah. No, I came- I- When I got married, I lived out in-in Moorestown, New Jersey, near Philadelphia, for more than 30 years.

Tye: But never stopped coming here summers?

Larry: Oh. Some summers maybe for two weeks and we'd stay at the Centerville [Mariners? Motor?] Lodge and stuff like that.

Tye: Hm.

Larry: Anyway, let-let's go on. Uh... um, the- I remember the Burlingames who were my friends had two boys. There was an oldest sister who was a nurse, but she was out of the picture and she, uh, and they had pigeons, you know, uh, racing pigeons-

Phil: Huh.

Larry: And they had chickens. [20:00] And I remember, I guess Mr. Burlingame must have dispatched a chicken and Lee and I had to, uh, after, putting it in hot water, what have you, had to pluck it. And I pulled a feather and then air made it go "wah".

Phil: (laughing)

Larry: (laughing) You know? Out of the gullet and I ran like hell.

(laughter)

Larry: Yeah. I could r- I could remember that.

Phil: Lee- Lee's father was, uh, a good skipper. Is that right? Is that what you told me?

Larry: Lee's father was, uh, a professional skipper [way?] on

Phil: In the [sea?] years?

Larry: XX a couple of ladies and, uh, he was a, uh, school teacher, he shot- he taught manual trading at Milton Academy. Uh..

Phil: But-but the, uh, the, yeah, the skippers. So that, I mean, these were guys who raced- [21:00] They'd raced seniors for families that owned the seniors? Is that..?

Larry: With the-with the families.

Phil: Oh, okay.

Larry: When the families would be normally, uh, sailing the boats.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: And the skipper would be in there.

Phil: Huh.

Larry: And so for instance, Joe Burlingame, back in the fifties or late forties, he went out with Bill Sinclair on his senior.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Uh, and gave him some advice.

Phil: Yeah. How did he learn to sail?

Larry: What?

Phil: How did- How did Joe Burlingame- How did he get so good?

Larry: I don't know, making-making boats.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Ooh, that reminds me. I forgot about that. Joe made a boat for Lee, a little sloop [called?] "So what?"

Phil: Huh. [22:00]

Larry: And, um, Lee and I, I was maybe eight or nine maybe..

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: We went sailing. He took me sailing. I didn't know how to sail very well. Maybe I was 8 even..

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I was getting lessons later..

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: On sailing skiffs. And the whisker pole which pushed out the jib and what have you..

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Fell overboard and he told [Vid?].

Phil: (laughing)

Larry: There I was to-to fish him out..

Phil: Wow.

Larry: So he gave me instruction.

Phil: Wow.

Larry: And-

Phil: You're outside off Loop somewhere or-

Larry: No. It was off of Hayden's? Beach, I think.

Phil: Okay. Yeah.

Larry: And yeah. I'd forgotten about- So that was my first experience really skippering.

Phil: Wow.

Larry: That I remember..

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: You know. I might've been taking skipping lessons. I don't..

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I just don't remember a lot of it. [23:00] Um..

Phil: I think you're doing pretty well. (laughing)

Larry: The, uh, uh, another experience besides plucking chickens was digging a hole of a Burlingame property xxx. And I have vague recollection of, uh, putting building blocks and building a cesspool.

Phil: Oh, huh.

Larry: Which was- You didn't hire people to do that stuff. You did-you did it yourself. Did you sell them? Uh, and, uh, there's one-one, uh, story that I do remember pretty detailed. I wasn't.. And that involved the- an Edgartown Regatta at 1941, which was the summer I was 11 and I turned 12 that summer. [24:00] And three boats went over skiffs. Uh, after that they did the war and what have you, they [never went?] but again skiffs were more de rigueur. I don't think over xxx. But I remember my mother didn't know any better and she let me go and I went with a teenager called Harrison Bracket, which is the name, by the way, the name of the cow-

Phil: Cow.

Larry: bull that my brother had some. He named it Harrison Bracket. So Anna Murray was out on the end of xxx, direct-directing us to go down the short thumb with xxx across, but Harry and I were smarter than that. We went out straight across [25:00] uh, uh, at, uh, which was stupid, but it was okay. He was 18 or 19 and I was 11. And, uh, we got, uh, becalmed and anchored somewhere-

Phil: Out in the middle of the South?

Larry: Yeah.

Phil: Wow.

Larry: And then we- And then the breeze came up and we continued and we-we were three hours ahead of the other two boats going into Edgartown. And I remember we- there was Jerry, Henderson, Harry, and myself and I think another guy who crewed for [Faith?] Madison stayed in what was to amount to a chicken coop. And I had my comic books and, uh, Joe Burlingame was over there and sort of, I think probably made sure. I was-

Phil: I thought-I thought what you told me is your mother had lined up a hotel room.

Larry: Oh, she had.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: She had. But we, some of the ladies, uh, young girls took over [26:00] over that hotel room.

Phil: Okay.

Larry: And, uh, so we were at this chicken coop and, uh, about midnight, I got bored [trying to read?] my comic books and went out to the yacht club and I, yes, I must have shown the boys, Jerry and what have you, back to where we were staying because by then they were well refreshed.

???: (laughing)

Larry: So th-this I remember pretty well.

Phil: Yeah.

Tye: Nice adventure.

Larry: Yeah, it was a good adventure.

Phil: So Gerry was maybe like 18 at the time?

Larry: Um, yeah, maybe 17-

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: 18-19, something like that.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Let's see, Edie was born [One? What?] 24?

Phil: 23 or 24, yeah.

Larry: Seventeen.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: So the only [27:00] other thing that I can, uh, relate that's of any interest really is the, uh, other indiscretion as a child. And I must've been about 10 maybe and another kid whose father was the caretaker of Ms. Riley's which was a big operation in those days. She had animals. I think she certainly- big gardens and what have you, and-and this kid and I went across the street,

Main Street, uh, into the woods located probably, I'm trying to think, you know, where the pillars are, these big stone pillars down Main Street?

???: Mm.

Larry: Near where the Riley's estate was. [28:00] Well back in the [Westley?] direction.

Phil: So right behind Jim and Betty Sousa's?

Larry: Y-yeah, but slightly wh-where, uh, the Boden's were. (overlapping) Where the Boden's were.

Phil: Hull Lane.

Larry: Hull Lane.

Phil: Okay. Yup.

Larry: And back in there, we decided- We came across some wet rugs or blankets, we must add matches. We were going to make smoked symbols like the Indians did. And, um, we made smoke signals, alright. We started a big fire and fortunately, Mr. Coot's other son, Stuart, I think his name was, followed us and went home and told his father. And so, I don't remember what happened. I don't remember how the fire got put out. I don't remember if we had been punished, but I'm sure I was. [29:00] I don't remember any- But I do remember, I can vaguely remember, it's vague, a vague recollection, really. Uh, and setting the thing on fire.

Phil: You said Coot, but it's-it's <oot, right? It's-

Larry: What?

Phil: Is it the same family from the canal zone?

Larry: No, that was Moot.

Phil: Okay. (overlapping) This was Coot.

Larry: (overlapping) No, this was, no, this was Mr. Coots w-w-was the, uh, caretaker of miss Riley's.

Phil: Oh. Okay. Okay. Got it. Got it. Got it.

Larry: And, uh, anyway, that was another bad behavior. Uh, I don't remember how much trouble, uh, I got into. So that was my vague recollections of those pre-war and during the war days. [30:00] As I said to you early on, I don't have good memory at all of my childhood. I don't remember anything, uh, basically before the mid-thirties even. First grade, second grade, none of that. I don't remember.

Tye: When you think of what Cotuit was like growing up during the war years and the time that you're describing as a pre-teenager or teenager, was the town small enough that people tended, especially summer people, tended to know one another? Did it have- Now it's big enough that if you know, um, neighbors and a few friends, it's a big deal. Can everybody can to know everybody then?

Larry: Um, I would say who we knew as- were majority summer people, a few where it was- [31:00] that were involved in the ya- two of us in the yacht club. That would be my-

Tye: [Circle?]

Larry: But I would say people who lived here year-round, um, grew up here, all knew each other. It was small enough that I think the winter population wasn't much over 3 or 400 people in the late thirties. Somebody could verify that.

Tye: Mm.

Larry: But that's my impression. But no, none of this, across 28, very few people.

Phil: Oh, even off Main Street, very few people.

Larry: Yeah. Well, over by the firehouse and what have you (overlapping) there were people.

Phil: (overlapping) Yeah. Yeah, high street, but-

Larry: Yeah, high street, that area.

Phil: Yeah, not much more than that.

Larry: But back where the golf course is, what have you, that didn't exist. [32:00] That didn't exist. Those were back in the- Those were dirt roads.

Tye: But the center of town had more- It's ironic because it was a lot smaller village. And yet there was a lot more going on here with the store and with other things. Did it feel like more of a vibrant center or... was still small?

Larry: I-I-I don't remember much. I mean, there was a gas station certainly, uh.. On Halloween, I think poor Walter Scudder, or, uh, uh, people would put wagons and what have you on the roof of his gas station and stuff like that. Uh, but, um, yeah, there were a lot of stores, but I think it was- It didn't have the access to Hyannis or [33:00] Osterville and- People had cars, but maybe it was different then. Certainly during the war, people didn't have gas.

Phil: People tended to shop locally.

Larry: Yeah. They didn't have gas.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: So they could go. You had the Cotuit Grocery, which was a big operation. I mean, they had a meat counter and a butcher and, you know, and, they had a gro-grocery store in the corner and... they even had a tailor, Holtzman the tailor. And-

Tye: Right in the center of town here?

Larry: Yeah, he was, you know where the architect is?

Tye: Mm.

Larry: It's either that building or a building that was next to it. How a tailor could survive in Cotuit, I don't know.

Phil: There was a bowling alley at one point. I think- I think the uh-

[34:00]

Larry: The Kettle Ho.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: At one point had a, uh, on the far side, had a pool.

Phil: Pool room. That's- There was a bowling alley, but that's what I-I was thinking about.

Larry: But that was- That-that pool room, I think, was not when [Mr. Gibbs?] zoned it. I think it was when, uh, maybe when it was [Ann's?] sandwich shop.

Phil: Right. I think you're right.

Larry: But I'm- Or maybe even later,

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Maybe this was after the war. I'm not sure.

Tye: When [Tommy Burgess?] does his walking tours, he talks about a bar that was in the center of town. Heck's, I think it was. Do you remember a bar there?

Larry: Yeah, there was. It's-it's where the Cotuit Inn was, uh, you know, the condominium-

Tye: (overlapping) Sure, right the condominium.



Larry: Up the hill to the right? It was there.

Tye: And was it a, um, a lively bar or just a local place or what was it?

Larry: I think a little bit of both.

[35:00]

Tye: Mm.

Larry: I didn't spend much time there, but those [Heck's?] bars is where we went. We weren't here very much [by?] comfort. A couple of weeks, I stayed [in the center?] xxx. Uh-

Tye: Mm.

Phil: I was probably in my teens when I was here and they weren't.

Larry: Ted Kennedy used to hang out there, they say.

Tye: That's what he said. Yeah.

Larry: Yeah. But I-I was in a Hack's Bar.

Tye: They said that it was a good place for, um, Ted Kennedy to come with women who weren't his wife and nobody would ever talk about anything. It was just, it was an out-of-the-way good bar, I don't know if that sounds-

Larry: That may have been poetic license on Mr. Burgess's part. That Kennedy was bringing girls. I'm not sure that was right, but maybe it was. (laughing)

Tye: Why- So coming here from, um, Luton was easy. [36:00] Coming from New Jersey would have been a bigger deal. What was it about Cotuit that made this place special that you're back here today and that you come back continually?

Larry: The childhood associations and sailing, I guess, really. (short pause) You know- Not all of them are still around of my friends. At 91, you know- most of- a lot of them, but the kids are around.

Tye: Was- Marion's father was your brother?

Larry: Yeah.

Tye: Older or younger?

Larry: Younger.

Tye: Younger?

Larry: Much younger. Not much younger, but he died much younger.

Tye: How long ago did he die?

Larry: Oh my God. He died at age 56, 5.

Tye: Wow.

Larry: So. That was (overlapping) 86.

Phil: (overlapping) Yeah, well, during the election when Dukakis was running, [37:00] 'cause he was- That was supposedly his last words were, before they put him under anesthesia, they, for his heart surgery, they said, "Don't worry about a thing." He says, "How could I not worry about a thing when Dukakis is running for president?"

Larry: (laughing)

Phil: So that-that places it in time.

Larry: Anyway, that's- I don't see anything else here that is worth even talking about it.

Phil: One of the- One of the things I asked about were who some of the characters were in town, like I was- So one that had occurred to me was Mr. Post who- What was- Do you know the story with Mr. Post? Who he was, where he lived. I just remember seeing him shuffle down the street at [old age?].

Larry: I don't know. That's.. Yeah. He shuffled down the street.

Phil: Do you know where he lived?

Larry: No, I don't-I don't remember.

Phil: Okay. Uh, any, uh, like, did you have any memories of Congressman [Gifford?] or uh.. [38:00] Or uh..

Larry: Well, I went to school with his grandson.

Phil: Yeah. (short pause) But I was thinking like the [Terse and Tenny?] area when the town was in the fifties, or you don't remember any?

Larry: I don't remember.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I don't remember.

Phil: How about Mr. Garciar? Do you know anything of what-what his story was? Did he live-

Larry: He was a nice old gentleman that kept chickens, and he lived in a house on Nickerson Road, uh, with his goats. And he didn't smell very good.

(phone ringing)

Phil: Yeah. And did he grow up here?

Larry: I don't know.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I'll call you in a little while. Oh, okay.

Tye: When did you move here full-time?

[39:00]

Larry: 99.

Tye: And was it a really different experience being here all season?

Larry: (short pause) No. You know, I mean, it was-it was different. I was married. It-it-it worked out fine, you know, I don't- Nothing remarkable in terms of... I don't think of anything special. I will say one thing about the 1944 hurricane, which I didn't mention before. Uh, Phillip asked, "Were the boats pulled before as we do today?" The answer was no. Uh, for two reasons. [40:00] One we didn't know any better then, and by the time the hurricane came, the boats- the Cotuit skiffs had been all pulled for the most part. The fewer left, including one that I own-

Phil: Oh, because it was just after the season.

Larry: Yeah. It came through the 15th. The hurricane hit here about the 14th and 15th.

Phil: Of September.

Larry: Of September. And, um. Um. A lot of boats had been pulled out of the water. There was, uh, one boat, I don't know if it was a skiff or what have you, turned upside down. It was a problem because the mast got put in the mud, and the tide went out, basically the boat was..

Phil: Suspended.

Larry: Heh, suspended.

Phil: But I don't remember what boat it was or anything like that. [41:00] My boat, uh, ended up inside of Ms. Riley's estate up on the end. We made the mistake of getting it repaired to outlast the pyramids and by then, I was older and should be able to do better and by then it was heavy as hell. The Crosby Yacht had repaired it and put oak in. As, uh, consequence, it wasn't very swift on the water, but, uh..

Tye: Any other memories of the hurricane?

Larry: Uh, no, not too much. No. You know, by then it had-it'd petered out some. By the time it hit here, it was no longer a number-a number four hurricane. I remember walking around afterwards. I've got photographs of-of, uh, you've seen the photographs.

[42:00]

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Of Lee Burlingame sitting on a potty down at Riley's Beach.

Phil: No, I don't remember that.

Larry: Xxx well-

Phil: It had been, uh, a pot, a-a-a toilet that had been washed xxx?

Larry: I think it was [brought?] maybe from her boathouse?

Phil: Oh, it was all that was left.

Larry: Yeah.

Phil: Oh so he was just goofing around?

Larry: Yeah, just goofing around.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: But, uh, I don't remember too much about that hurricane. Later we learned, back in the fifties, we learned that after one hurricane where we lost 10 boats, pulling 'em up on the back by the loop, that this isn't gonna work. And so we- After that, we learned to pull them.

Phil: Where would boats be normally launched and pulled?

Larry: Um.. [43:00] Probably at the Loop.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Probably at the Loop. That's where the wall was. All the fences were all there.

Phil: Oh, okay, yeah.

Larry: And as I recall there were two ways that Cotuit skiffs were transported to the water. One was on the skids, which was basically, uh, a-a frame that sat on the street and you just pulled it, uh, set the boat on this frame.

Phil: Did you like leapfrog 'em? You'd take one skid, put it in front, then-

Larry: No, just one. One skiff long. Two by fours.

Phil: [He'd?] pull it off, put it on the street, then xxx?

Larry: He had lifted it a little water.

Phil: Okay.

Larry: As- I guess the other one was the Madison's had a great big, uh, set of wheels, [44:00] which must've come from a carriage.

Phil: Yeah, Edie's got a picture of that.

Larry: Yeah.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: And, uh, they would put it on there and push it in the water right by the, uh, Loop Beach. The beach next to it, belonged to the Madison's then.

Phil: Yeah, right.

Larry: And- But that's the way they would transport it. I don't remember taking them down to here or anything like that.

Phil: Did anybody go to the other beaches? I mean Loop is certainly all I remember, but did people go to Riley's for-

Larry: Riley's beach was used by the help of the hotel xx a lot.

Phil: That's why it was called [Maid's?] Beach.

Larry: Oh, is that right?

Phil: Oh, you never heard it called "Maid's Beach"?

Larry: No.

Phil: Yeah. That's what some folks call it.

Larry: And here, uh, local people would use this beach here because it was safe. [45:00] But then- I think the-the problem xxx might've come after the war.

Phil: Okay.

Larry: Right. The swimming [nutsos?] lived here.

Phil: Did anybody go to Oregon?

Larry: I don't remember it.

Phil: It was probably not for [trees?] then. Loop was good and it wasn't crowded and-

Larry: No, it wasn't too bad. Dogs were allowed. And our dog and the Henderson's dog would go down there in the morning and fish all day long, and just wander through the flats and..

Tye: It's a dog's dream.

Larry: And they were there all day and have a wonderful time.

Phil: They'd get fish like how big?

Larry: Oh, they were going after the little ones

Phil: Yeah. And they'd eat 'em?

Larry: No, just-just for looking at them basically.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I-I guess, but after, uh... [46:00] Sometime after the second World War, they were chased away.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: It was getting crowded. Oh, one thing you asked about the hurricane that is documented in these, probably, photographs, but, uh, they still had prisoners. I assume it was 44. I don't think it was 30. No, it must have been 44. Still had prisoners at Camp Edwards.

Tye: Mm.

Phil: German-German xx.

Larry: German prisoners of war. And they, uh.. did a lot of the cutting trees that, you know, had fallen, loading them up in- The parking lot at the Loop was full of uh, trees. That's where they deposited them.

[47:00]

Phil: Huh.

Tye: So they had them do some of the cleanup work.

Larry: Yeah.

Tye: Mm.

Phil: Was it the, uh, one other question I'd put, it was about the town dock. Was the town dock more or less the same as it is today?

Larry: Smaller, I think.

Phil: Smaller. Active at all? Was it- I mean, there used to be a big, you know, like, real commercial operation.

Larry: Yeah, no, th-there were fishermen. They were going in and out. There was a guy with no teeth, maybe shanks. Nickerson xxx xxx fish.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Lumberjacks like Geoff Jackson would go out with him, but this probably wasn't [known?] just after the war, but it might've been before.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I don't remember.

Phil: Commercial Fisher.

Larry: Yeah, yeah. But there were- There was activity there and there was a lady who worked for the Schwab's [48:00] and for the Cobb's named Tessy or Tessa, something like that, who used to be down there all the time at August fishing for snapper blues,

Phil: Really? Huh.

Larry: With the gentlemen who lived near the coop by the name of [Thomison?] and-and they they'd be down there fishing all day long for snapper blues. There were a lot more snapper blues here in those days than they seem to be now.

Phil: They're very active at September, but not certainly not in the summer.

Larry: Well, but you know, off the town dock, i-if you went down there, you'd catch, a couple hours, you'd catch 50.

Phil: Really? Yeah.

Larry: 100.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: You know, it was a lot of them. Not later.

Larry: But I remember exactly the timing. [49:00] You'll be- You'll talk to some of the local people that-that really would have good memories I think.

Phil: Who do you think should be on the list? We got Keith-

Larry: I-I suggested Mrs. Hadley.

Phil: Yeah. Right.

Larry: And I suggested [Joan Bentinck-Smith?].

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: And she-she was a summer person basically but-

Phil: Was she- Did she come before she married into the family?

Larry: She never married.

Phil: Oh, she never, I thought she married into the Bennett-Smith family.

Larry: No, she was a Bentinck-Smith.

Phil: Okay. Okay.

Larry: She was- The old-

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: family is now across from the cemetery. She lives next to the cemetery and she must be about 95 or 96.



Phil: Yeah, she's definitely on the list.

Larry: 12. Let's see, let's see. 12.. (counting) [50:00] She should be about 96.

Tye: Mm.

Larry: And her family came from some place around Boston. She was-she was taught I think at Radcliffe maybe.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: She's a smart lady.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: And probably still alert. Although I gather she doesn't drive anymore.

Phil: Okay.

Larry: But she-she'd be interesting to talk to too and I told you that I'm pretty sure Lee Burlingame.

Phil: Yeah. We were trying-

Larry: And Louise Harmon.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: -made a-a tape recording of their recollections as children.

Phil: Yeah. We're trying to track that down.

Larry: And uh, Louise's, uh, daughter, granddaughter still lives here.

Phil: Yeah.

[51:00]

Larry: Uh, Linda Harland. And Anne might be able to tell you about Lee had, when they did this about, I don't know, 15 years ago, maybe.

Tye: Mm.

Phil: I think Lee's been dead longer than that.

Larry: Oh, see, that's- I told you my memory's bad.

Phil: (laughing) I'm not sure of that but..

Larry: You may be right.

Phil: Yeah. But it was a while ago.

Larry: Well, yeah, let's see, he's been gone at lea- Yeah, he would be... Gone at least 20 years. You're right.

Phil: Yeah. So he probably did it before that.

Larry: It's 'cause he would have been 92 now.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: And he, uh, died at 70. So it was before that.

Phil: Yeah. Yeah, there's a couple of, uh, couple of cassette tapes at the historical society that his name's not on it, but we'll listen to them and see and then we could, we could try Anne or-or, uh, Linda Harmon.

[52:00]

Larry: I think it was recorded, but I don't know.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: But Mary-Anne [Rebellow?] might be able to help you.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: I just don't know.

Phil: Is she in town still?

Larry: Oh yeah. She's here. She lives on the corner of Lake Street and, uh, or near the corner of Lake and, uh, Highland.

Phil: Oh really? Okay.

Larry: You could, uh.. contact her. She's got children here who I know pretty well.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: You know, Kathy-

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: -Campbell and Debbie Campbell.

Phil: I was- So you had, uh, uh, [53:00] Mrs. Hadley as a Campbell, I think-

Larry: That's what you told me.

Phil: Yeah. Do you think it's the same Campbell's or just, I mean, it's not that unusual name.

Larry: Well, I think it's, I don't know because, uh, uh, Kathy's married to a Campbell-

Phil: Right.

Larry: And Debbie is married to a Campbell and I don't think they're related.

Phil: Oh, really?

Larry: Distantly, maybe.

Phil: Oh, that's funny.

Larry: So I don't know.

Phil: Yeah.

Larry: Anyway, you trapped me only because of him-

Tye: Him xxx and the- This was- So your memory, um, was a lot better than you suggested. And the, and I love how, um, uh, the, you must've been quite a character. The, um, uh, you had a lot of adventures.