

SAMMY LEE

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Interview of: Sammy Lee at home on Woods Wharf Rd.
Shady Side, Maryland

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Transcribed by;

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JL: Mr. Lee, could you please tell me if you were born in Shady Side?

SL: Yes, ma'am

JL: Would you mind telling me what year?

SL: 1908

JL: Uh, exactly where in Shady Side?

SL: Right here in this house.

JL: In this house that you're living in now?

SL: Same house.

JL: UH, would you mind telling us what your parents' names were?

SL: William A. Lee and Liza Mae.

JL: OK. Did you have brothers and sisters?

SL: I had two brothers and two sisters.

JL: Uh, would you mind telling me what their names are?

SL: Henry, Henry Lee and Alvin Lee, and my sisters, Grace K. Lee and Helen V. Lee.

JL: Are they still living?

SL: Yes Ma'am.

JL: They all still living. Uh, could you describe to me a little bit what your home life was like?

SL: [Laughter] Well, it was good.

JL: Well, could you tell me a little bit about what it was like?

SL: It was very tough at times, especially when it comes to living. It wasn't always good.

JL: What did you and your brothers and sisters do for entertainment when you were little? What did you used to do?

SL: There wasn't much to do, just playing and playing around, that's it.

JL: Uh, did you play out on the water or did you have games?

SL: Played around in the creek and all crabs and stuff like that ... when we were young.

JL: I see, and you went to school down here.

Lee, Sammy

SL: Went to school at Shady Side Elementary.

JL: Uh, could you tell me who your teacher was?

SL: Miss Ethel Andrews, Miss Helen Dawson, Miss Mamie Bast and Miss Whit was my teachers.

JL: When you were going to school who were some of your best friends at school, in elementary school?

SL: Well, the ones I went to school with; the boys I went to school with were all kind of older than me. Went to school with Rich Crandell, Howard(?) Mulligan(?), Ennis Wheeler, Mel Carter, Jack Nowell, uh ... Iris Leatherbury, Margaret Nowell, Augusta Wilde, Augusta Heinrich, Freddie Heinrich, Jakie Linton, Johnny Grinder ... all of them went to school.

JL: Uh, could you tell me how many years you went to school in Shady Side?

SL: I went to the seventh grade.

JL: You went to the seventh grade, well that's it, that's fine, that's fine. And then did you start to work?

SL: I started to work when I was 12 years old.

JL: And what did you do?

SL: I went to work with Frank Crandell helping him carpenter, start carpenter's work.

JL: Uh, were you building homes:

SL: I started work with him building houses down in Cedarhurst. I helped to build the third house in Cedarhurst when I was 12 years old.

JL: The third house?

SL: That was built in Cedarhurst.

JL: Do you know the names of the people who lived in Cedarhurst at that time?

SL: Mae Curren ... they own the old hotel and Lanahan, he was a (fire) chief, he built a house there. I worked on. Chief Schrom, the place there and all the farmers. And the one that I worked on the first house that I worked on was Chief Rice. He was a fireman from Washington, cause it was the first house I worked on down in Cedarhurst.

JL: Uh ...

SL: Worked with Frank Crandell.

JL: And you and Frank Crandell were the only ones that were building on the homes or were there other people?

SL: Well, the people around them, but him and I worked on that.

JL: I see. And how many years did you work as a carpenter?

SL: I took retirement, when I was seventy, when I was uh, let see it was '70, I wasn't seventy-two when I retired. I retired in '72. I was sixty-two when I retired.

JL: So you were a carpenter all those years?

SL: Um huh. And still they call me no carpenter.

JL: They still call you a carpenter...?

Lee, Sammy

SL: No carpenter [laughter on tape].

JL: No carpenter, no carpenter, I see. Uh...

SL: Somebody laughed about that one ...

JL: When you were growing up down here and then in your teenage years, what did you do for entertainment down here?

SL: Well, we used to go up on the corner up there and there used to be a ... Mary Nowell had a store up there and I danced a bit and that's where we used to go all the time.

JL: Were you a good dancer?

SL: Oh well, I used to try anyhow.

JL: OK. What type of dances, I mean what, what, what were the dance steps called? What type dances?

SL: Well, there's the Duke or the Fox Trot, Creeps, um the waltzes and stuff like that.

JL: Someone told me that the dance hall down here was called Shimmy Hall.

SL: Oh, they had one down here, Shimmy Hall, I was too young to go to that.

JL: You were too young to go to that?

SL: We used to go down there and put ... [laughter on tape] and play tricks on the older ones.

JL: Well, what did you used to do, Mr. Lee?

SL: Try to smoke 'em out ... and all that kind of stuff.

JL: You, how did you try to smoke 'em out?

SL: Go up on top the roof and put a board or something over the chimney. [Laughter on tape]

JL: And what else did you used to do to it?

SL: Everything ...

JL: Can you think of anything else in particular?

SL: Naw, we didn't do anything destructive.

JL: Oh, I'm sure you didn't, still ...

SL: Devilment, that's all.

JL: Just Devilment?

SL: Um huh. _mumble_____.

JL: Could you tell me what else you did in your youth down here Mr. Lee?

SL: Me?

JL: Yes sir, um, did you used to skate?

SL: Well, I used to try. I could skate a little bit, not much.

JL: Did you used to go skating often?

SL: Every time we had ice.

Lee, Sammy

JL: Every time you had ice. Did you ever skate all the way across the West River?

SL: Oh yeah, oh yeah, we used to skate towards the West River and follow oysters up and down the West River on dregs and all that stuff.

JL: Dregs on the ice?

SL: Yeah.

JL: And did you take them over to Galesville or ...

SL: Took them over to Galesville, bring them into Parrish Creek, down to my uncle's, he had a oyster house down here.

JL: Uh, where did your uncle have a oyster house down here.

SL: Down there where Backyard Boats is now.

JL: Uh, what was his name?

SL: Robert Lee

JL: Robert Lee?

SL: And Ralph Lee.

JL: Uh huh,

SL: We got 'em oysters. And we used to could take and put Model T Ford trucks with a dreg behind 'em with 25, 30 bushels of oysters on 'em on the ice and come up and down the West River with 'em.

JL: Well! Whose truck was it that you used to use?

SL: Well, they said people had to the truck of their own. Little old Ford trucks what they own that they would pull them with. Ice was that thick.

JL: Oh, I see, I see.

SL: It was in '34.

JL: I see. Speaking of that somebody told me that there was a hurricane that went through here in 1933

SL: That's right

JL: Do you remember it? Could you tell me a little bit about that?

SL: What about the '33 hurricane?

JL: Yes sir.

SL: Eveyrbody says ... [something dropped loudly] the tide was high, it was 1933, August the 23rd. The tide was the highest tide we were ever know to have in this vicinity.

JL: How high was it?

SL: Well, I don't exactly know, but it leave a mark.

JL: And did it, did the hurricane destroy anything around here, and I'm sure it destroyed the shoreline, but homes and so forth?

SL: Well, it moved Captain George Proctor's house up in a field. And I helped to move it back and put it up on extra blocks right down on Parrish Creek.

Lee, Sammy

JL: Any other damage did it do?

SL: Well, it didn't do much damage only moved the house about, well it moved it from his property over to the Grinder's property and then he bought s piece of land from the Grinder's that we didn't move it quite far enough and , and , put his uh, put his house on land, back on land.

JL: Did it ruin any of the boats that were tied up around ...

SL: Not in the creek. We didn't have any trouble with boats in the ... now Charley Larson had an old boat called 'Titanic' that broke loose up in the West River and come ashore and mashed up.

JL: Um, any other, anything else you can tell me about what the hurricane did?

SL: Of course it mashed a couple of boats down on the beach ... but ... my father found one of them that was mashed up down at the beach and built that.

JL: How long did the hurricane last, was it just a day or all the troubles that were down here, how long did it last?

SL: I don't remember how long it lasted, it was, well the wind didn't last too long, but it lasted two or three days, it was a couple days.

JL: Un huh, um going back to your growing up down here, uh, could you tell me what you recall of some of the stores that were down here at that time?

SL: The only stores that I know that was down here then, was Mr. Will Owings' store and Mr. Darnell's store, that was Mary Nowell's and Mr. Owings and Mr. George, he, G. C. Hopkins bought from Mr. Owings, that was after the war, I was about 10 or 11 years old. G. C. Hopkins had it, then he sold it to Mrs. Fox, they had it, and Fox sold it to Swinburn.

JL: Could you tell me a little bit, maybe what the store looked like on the inside? Do you recall?

SL: The one up at Swinburn ... up at, uh, uh, up there looks something just about like this day.

JL: I mean on the inside, what did the inside look like?

SL: Shelves all around, it had counter on each side, one side the store was dry goods side, and the other side was canned goods, and, and um, bags of sugar, potatoes, and a barrel of molasses sitting in the middle of the floor.

JL: I was going to ask you did they have ...

SL: A big pot stove sitting there, that kept you warm.

JL: And everybody would go in there and ???

SL: They'd sit around the pot stove and uh eat peanuts and chew tobacco instead of wearing shoes.

JL: Oh, I see. And what all did they talk about when they sat around that stove?

SL: Good God! Everything. [Laughter on tape]

JL: Anything in particular come to mind?

SL: Well, they worse than everything, they cut more horses up there sometimes, than they maintence(?) catch me two weeks.

JL: Oh, is that right, they were telling stories?

SL: Catch that many horses that night, didn't do much that day though. [Laughter]

Lee, Sammy

JL: OK, I see, alright. Um, who were some of the people that used to go in that store that you recall sitting there and talking?

SL: Olan Grinder, Mr. Charley Grinder, Jack Nieman, John Nieman, George Proctor, William Crandell, of course some of them are dead, most of them, all them people, I used to sit on the side follow them right in about 12, 13 years old.

JL: But they'd sit there and laugh and have a good time and tell a lot of stories?

SL: Told lies mostly.

JL: Were they all true?

SL: Not all of them, they didn't stretch them too far.

JL: Can you remember maybe one of the true stories that they were telling. Something come to mind that was particularly funny or something that went on down here?

SL: No. Not right off hand.

JL: Not right off hand, well that's OK. Uh, could you tell me, uh a little bit more about your home life?

SL: My home life?

JL: Yes.

SL: My home life was pretty good. I used to get my tail beat one in a while, but that wasn't too bad.

JL: Well, I imagine we've all had our behind spanked from time to time.

SL: They didn't promise you in them days, they did it.

JL: They did it, oh, I see, uh huh, I see.

SL: You go to school and get a whipping that day, you got another one when you come home that night,

JL: You never got whippings in school though?

SL: Sometimes, not too much.

JL: From Miss Ethel?

SL: No she never did ...

JL: She never did ...

SL: Miss Mamie, Miss Mamie Bast, she'd tear you up ____? ____ I seen her slap ... slap Thalbert Wilde ... 'em on across the temple with a switch _____ over that stove.

JL: Well, I guess you really had to mind her in school then.

SL: Did you talk to him? Thalbert Wilde?

JL: No sir.

SL: Don't know him?

JL: No, I don't know him, but I'll have to talk to him.

SL: He lives down there ... Idlewilde ... right towards the ford were merchants is now.

JL: OK, Thalbet Wilde. Ok, I'll have to remember that name. Um, anything else you uh did down here for entertainment or recreation? Did you used to go to the movies down here?

Lee, Sammy

SL: When they was here, Frank Dudlies(?) down here, we used to go to the movies. We used; a lot of times sneak in, didn't have the money to pay the way in. Go in a window or something like that.

JL: Uh huh, Um, ...

SL: And he knew it most of the time, but he never said nothing to us. He didn't care.

JL: Uh, could you tell me a little bit about some of the boarding houses that were down here then?

SL: Boarding houses up here always used to be packed in the summer for a long time. When boarders used to come down I used to play, fool around the boarders all the time.

JL: Un huh, so you got to know a lot of 'em?

SL: Oh yeah.

JL: Did any of the boarders that used to come down here; did they, some of them decide that Shady Side was such a nice place to live that they came here to live?

SL: Well, I don't remember if any of them coming to live, but I remember a lot of them that used to come back and see me.

JL: Oh well, how nice.

SL: Mrs. Parrish and Mrs. Parrish and her family, they were down about six or seven years ago to see me, I might imagine they're dead by now.

JL: And where did they live?

SL: Baltimore.

JL: Baltimore?

SL: They used to come back and see me and I was a little boy when they first started coming down here.

JL: Well that's nice that they'd come to see you all these years.

SL: I know. Of course they stopped coming after, you know, Miss Ethel quit taking boarders up there.

JL: Do you remember any other boarding houses down here?

SL: Captain Charley Hartge, he had one down here and the Foxes, they had one, and Nemyers down there; they had one, Captain Bill Nowell had one down Idlewilde. Used to be Idlewilde Hotel. That was a long time ago, I was a little boy.

JL: You were a little boy? Do you have any recollection of the Shady Side Beverage Company?

SL: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

JL: Could you tell me what you remember about it?

SL: I used to go with them to deliver sodas.

JL: How did they deliver, house wagon or ...

SL: Oh no, they had a truck.

JL: Truck?

SL: A Model T Ford truck.

JL: Uh, who owned this truck?

Lee, Sammy

SL: Who owned it?

JL: Yes sir.

SL: Olivers, they owned it. They bought that Ford for the beverage company.

JL: What type of beverages did they make?

SL: they used to have orange soda, and um cream soda and orange soda, and cream soda and I think that's about the only two kinds they sold, orange, well they had lime, I think. It used to be pretty good.

JL: When they delivered it, where did they go to deliver?

SL: They used to deliver as far as Marlboro, I used to go with them as far to Marlboro, it didn't go over too good, they didn't make much money.

JL: How many years was it in operation, do you recall?

SL: I say about three or four years.

JL: Three or four years?

SL: Then they tore that building down and moved it down to where the Churchton is, you know where that bakery is Churchton?

JL: Yes sir.

SL: Well that's the bakery, that used to be the old beverage building.

JL: Is that right?

SL: Well took that building and built that building out of it. Took some of it ...

JL: I didn't know that.

SL: I don't know whether they moved some of or what, but they took that building and built it, some of the bakery out of it.

JL: Do you recall a saw mill being in Shady Side?

SL: Un huh,

JL: Could you tell ...

SL: But that was a long time ago that was right up there where Sis and Alan's house is and used to be another one down, one down at Idlewilde.

JL: Who owned that one down at in Idlewilde?

SL: Who owned it? That's Dick Trott runs it.

JL: And were you down there as a child?

SL: No, the reason I know it because my father cut some of the timber from this house that was sawed over down there for the...

JL: Was the timber for this house?

SL: No, no ... for that house down there.

JL: Oh, I see.

Lee, Sammy

SL: It was cold when this house was built, from the timber ... it was sawed out of the woods down there and that the road was cut through ...

JL: I see.

SL: My father helped to cut it. You could do anything for a living then, you know.

JL: Why, I,fl I guess so, I heard that there was ... most the majority of the people lived on the water down here.

SL: Yeah, well we worked on, my father worked on the water too. I worked on the water too some.

JL: Well we gonna ask you about that on the other side of this tape. We're gonna get you to tell me about your father's boat building business. Um, could you ... um... tell me, maybe, what went on at Halloween down here?

SL: Halloween?

JL: Yes sir. What mischief did people get into?

SL: Well mostly ... all I ever seen ... got into ... went to school, they had Halloween parties at school or something. Of course we used to go out and run around place and uh, you know, play the tee-toe on a ... or run rosin up to somebody's house, or something like that. You know, taking and putting cotton under weatherboard and get off and run rosin on it and it would make a real screechy sound in the house when you heard it, you've heard of that ain't ya?

JL: No sir. But that's ... [laughter on tape].

SL: But that sound mournful inside the house. [Laughter] Indeed it does. [Laughter]

JL: What else did you used to do on Halloween?

SL: Well, I tell you, I never did too much, cause I was pretty scary all the time when I was a young boy at the night time. I didn't do too much of the devilment things.

JL: When they had the Halloween thing at the school, did everyone go in costume?

SL: There was a lot of people did. A lot of children, it was more for children in them days.

JL: But you were a child, then did you used to go in costume?

SL: No. I never ...

JL: You never went in costume?

SL: Sometimes, uh, once or twice I might have dressed up as a niger, [laughter], I wouldn't dare do that today, I'm liable to get shot.

JL: Well, you might ... [laughter on tape]. Uh, anything else you might want to tell us about your youth down here?

SL: No, I better not tell too much on myself, I might be put in jail or something...

JL: Oh no, no sir. [laughter on tape]. These things are not going to go out of Shady Side, so ...

SL: ... that tape on me, if I see her I'll be up niger house direction ... [laughter].

JL: Oh no sir, oh no sir. These aren't going to leave Shady Side. They're going to stay right here. Can you think of anything else that maybe you and your brothers did together?

Lee, Sammy

SL: I can't ... it been so long ago. When we used to travel around all up and down the road, walk all over the place.

JL: Well, I heard it was just dirt roads then.

SL: Well the dust would get on that deep.

JL: Good heavens.

SL: The dirt would leached in between your nose and hair, to right when you went to bed that night.

JL: Could you tell me a little bit, maybe what you remember of the 'Emma Giles'?

SL: 'Emma Giles'? I remember the 'Emma Giles' good, she used bring in / come in here three times per week. Monday, Wednesday, Friday or Friday ..., Monday and Fridays. She used to come twice a week, I think. Used to meet her down, I used to go down Steamboat Wharf and help to get the stuff off.

JL: How many passengers did the 'Emma Giles' carry?

SL: I really don't know, used to carry a few not too many.

JL: Did you ever ride on the 'Emma Giles'?

SL: No, No

JL: Never rode on the 'Emma Giles'?

SL: Uh uh, No never. I'd just go down and meet the 'Emma Giles' when it drop the store up mumbleing ... helped to load it on a chuck to take it to the end of the pier. Help load it on the wagon bring it on to the store help to unload it...Mr. Linton. And uh, the 'Emma Giles' they used to bring it from this side to Mr. Will Crandell's store, up the road here used to be up Deep Creek, up by Deep Creek Airport, that used to be Will Crandell's store up there. I sold that place, was mine.

JL: Was yours? The property was yours, honest?

SL: I sold it. It was left to my wife and I... just sold it.

JL: Could you tell me what your wife's name was, her middle name and her maiden name?

SL: Her maiden name?

JL: And what was her first name your right?

SL: Ann Elizabeth Dawson, her mother's name was Dawson, she came from Churchton,my, her name was Lee, married a Lee.

JL: Did you meet her down here?

SL: In Churchton.

JL: In Churchton? What year were you and your wife married?

SL: '44

JL: And you told me your wife ... How many years were you married?

SL: 33

JL: And do you have children?

SL: No children.

Lee, Sammy

JL: No children?

SL: Got way 25th of August; by 7 years ago.

JL: When you were married and come to live in Shady Side, where did you come to live in Shady Side?

SL: Right here.

JL: In this house?

SL: Never moved out of it. I told you never moved out of this house.

JL: You just stayed right in this house?

SL: My mother, my mom and father lived with me when we first got married. I lived with them we all lived cause after my father died see, I taking care of my mother, I lived here with my father and mother, I taking care of my mother and father and myself, after my father died, and then of course, I just stayed right here, I never, and my wife when she come here with me we just all stayed together.

JL: I see.

SL: We never, we never moved out.

JL: When you and your wife were married and lived down here who were some of your closest friends of you and your wife?

SL: Um,

JL: Yes, you and your wife when you were first married and moved here, who were some of your closest friends? Of you and your wife?

SL: Their all dead now. Lot of them.

JL: Who were they?

SL: Well, Gladys Wood, who used to be Gladys Crandell, and Gladys Crandell, Benny Crandell and _____.

JL: They all used to come and visit your wife and you from time to time?

SL: Yup, we all used to visit each other, they were sworn mates, they were my cousins too. [mumble] Bill Addison and my wife.

JL: Uh huh,

SL: and uh. Mrs. Gladys Crandell, she died, she was 37. She had diabetes – mumble- and she just – mumble.

JL: Too bad. So when you and your wife were married you were still a carpenter, still working as a carpenter and you did that all of your life until you retired?

SL: Yeah,

JL: Um, Mr. Lee, when you were a young man down here, a little child, who was the oldest person you can remember living in Shady Side?

SL: Oh, the oldest person I can remember that was living in Shady Side?

JL: When you were a young child.

SL: Old man Doc. Franklin.

Lee, Sammy

JL: Where did he live down here?

SL: He lived right up there, right across from, um, Miss, um, McCracken lives in the house now. Not McCracken, but uh, what's her name? Ferris.

JL: Ferris?

SL: Lives in his house now.

JL: And this gentleman was a doctor?

SL: Naw, they called him Doc Franklin, but he, they used to own, he used to own the , um, Franklin Manor ... the whole Franklin Manor.

JL: I see. Alright. And how old a gentleman would you say he was at that time?

SL: He was around 80, 90 at that time, he was 80 or 90 at that time.

JL: That is the only, that's the oldest person you can remember down here:

SL: At that time.

JL: At that time, I see.

SL: Of course, a lot of people was close to him, but not, he the oldest one I could ever think of.

JL: I know that's a strange question to ask, but that does place some people down in Shady Side, you know, various times,

SL: I know a man down at the Deale now, right now, that's a hundred and one.

JL: Who is this gentleman?

SL: Huh?

JL: Who is this gentleman?

SL: Mr. Johnny Parks, a hundred and one on the sixth of August, he was.

JL: And he's still in good health?

SL: He fell about two years ago and broke one hip and he got over that and was walking again and he fell and broke the other one. Now he's in a convalescent home, but he's walking with a walker, he's not walking with a walker, but he, they put him in a wheelchair and he rolls himself all around the house with it.

JL: Now, that's ...

SL: Well that's really good community

JL: That's good.

SL: He's not gonna take his wife convalescent home.

JL: I see.

SL: I don't want one.

(End of Side 1 of Tape)

SIDE 2

SL: Well, let's get this over with, huh.

JL: Now, Mr. Lee, would you like to tell me about your father's boat building business?

SL: Well, I tell you, ain't a whole lot I know about it, but he worked at it, quite a few years.

JL: How many years did he build boats?

SL: Um ... I don't know, quite a few. Let's see, First World War to ... till he died, when's that ... 1918? He was building them when I was a boy so, that's a good while.

JL: Uh, what type of boats did he build?

SL: Work boats and pleasure boats.

JL: Were the work boats called the 'deadrise'?

SL: Many deadrise bateau, um ... we still got some floating now, they're still floating and he's been dead for years.

JL: Did you ever help him build some ...

SL: Oh yeah, oh yeah, I worked with him.

JL: Could you tell me about it? Did you work, work with hand tools?

SL: Um, hand tools, didn't have any power tools, no, everything he done was by hand. All the ripping, all the cutting, was by hand. With adz, hatchets, and the axe. Cut the keel out with the adz and all this stuff. And, uh, all, everything was done by hand. Hand plane, nothing, no electric nothing.

JL: How long did it take him to build a boat?

SL: He could build a 40foot boat in 4 weeks. That was a work flat tow. By hisself he could do it.

JL: Uh, did he just, he didn't work from any plans, he just knew it in his head, how to put it together?

SL: Everything, everything he did it, did it direct through his head, everything.

JL: How many boats would you say your father built in his lifetime?

SL: I say quite a few. I say, I know a hundred or more. More.

JL: And were all the boats sold to people in the area here, or did some of them go out ...?

SL: Un huh, here and places, other places, he built them for people all around.

JL: Uh, could you remember some of the people that he sold his boats to down here? That he built boats for?

SL: Oh yeah, he built boats, built one for Niemans, and built, built one for Norman Webb, built one for, um, George Proctor, built one for, he built one for Ernest ?, he built four or five and built all for different people around through the creeks, work, uh, work boats. Built one for Woodfield's, and uh, built one for Eddie Bast, he built plenty of them for different people like Ed Nieman.

JL: Was the boatyard right here on this property?

SL: Right here.

Lee, Sammy

JL: Right here. Uh, was there a railway?

SL: No, we didn't have any railway, built up here and hauled them to the shore.

JL: I see.

SL: Built them up in the yard. Called them "back yard boats" then. They called them back yard boats.

JL: That where the name, see, did they stole, did they take your name?

SL: My name?

JL: Did they take, Backyard Boats down here, did they take that name too.?

SL: I don't know what made them take that name [laughter].

JL: Could you tell me more about your father building boats?

SL: Ma'am ...

JL: So about your father, you and your father building ...

SL: Did I tell them? Over there?

JL: No would you tell me about your father building boats, some more about it, could you tell me some more about your father building boats?

SL: Well, recon he built quite a few all I can tell you, he built a good boat, I know that, I just got one over here at Cook's now, 50' long that he built, think it was in '36 he built that so, so Cook boys got it over there right now, that he got from Hallock, that he built for Duneset(?) and Duneset has been dead quite a few years.

JL: When your father got the lumber for his boats did the lumber come from this area or some other area?

SL: It was acquired from Johnson Lumber Co., it come from out wesr.

JL: I see, what type of wood was it?

SL: Cypress and fir and cedar. The boards were 50 foot long and 18 inches wide and 1 inch and a quarter thick, without a knot.

JL: And probably when they put them together they fit just as tight as could be.

SL: Always, always tight and another thing with before you could get anything you want in lumber for a leese, for little but now you can't get anything. You could built a 40 foot, one 40 foot long deadrise batteau oyster boat for, you could built it that time for \$450. When he was building boats to make small starvation(?) out of it you could look at it that way.

JL: Uh, when you helped your father build the boats what work did you actually do yourself in helping him build it.

SL: I helped do everything

JL: Built and did everything?

SL: Un huh, and then I built boats, myself too, after that.

JL: Ok, could you tell me how many boats you built.

SL: Oh, I built, I know I built 50 to 100 easy, easy that many.

JL: And on this property as well?

Lee, Sammy

SL: Yeah.

JL: And did you sell them to local people?

SL: Yeah, local and, and uh, people around Washington, Baltimore, and places like that.

JL: Were they work boats and pleasure boats?

SL: Most of mine was pleasure boats, couldn't get material for all the work boats.

JL: What were the type of wood were the pleasure boats made from?

SL: They were all built of mostly cedar and oak and mahogany.

JL: How long would it take you to build a pleasure boat?

SL: Well, it would take, because of the way, the way we built them, it would take me quite a while to build them because of, take anywhere from two to three months because you get the, so much more finishing work on them than there was on a work boat.

JL: Did you build them to peoples specifications or did you just build the plan ...?

SL: Build them on order, no, I built them, drew my own plans. Drew my own plans.

JL: And I'm sure you always had satisfied customers.

SL: Well, sometimes. We had a lot of customers with soda water pocketbooks and champagne ideas. I know what they're getting on that.

JL: Uh huh ...

SL: They took care of that.

JL: Could you tell me of some of the boats your built are still down in Shady Side now?

SL: Oh yeah, we have still some around Shady Side now.

JL: Could you tell me who have them, who has them?

SL: No, right off of hand I can't tell you not today because there's one down in Deale, I don't know exactly, there's one or two down in Deale, I don't know exactly where it's at. It was down Deale and then I got one I built for myself, that's down in Chrisfield somewhere or another. I sold that a couple of years ago.

JL: the one you built for yourself, could you tell me how, what size boat it was?

SL: That was 43 foot long, and 13 foot wide. It was a, I built it for patent tongs ... that was a, net 13 tons it was.

JL: What name did you give this boat after you built it?

SL: My wife named it 'Ann's Pride'.

JL: 'Ann's Pride'?

SL: My wife named it, yeah.

JL: Uh, I'm, I'm sure that when you built all these boats, you said you built nearly a hundred, they were like your babies, weren't they?

SL: Well, I soon built all I could get rid of em.

Lee, Sammy

JL: You liked to get rid of them?

SL: Yeah, by the time I got finished, I like to get rid of them. You like them till you get them, but after you get them, you don't want to take them, keep 'em.

JL: How many years did you build boats?

SL: Oh, around twenty, twenty-five but I built them all my life, I mean I been working on them off and on all my life.

JL: Um hum.

SL: I also worked at Coast Guard.

JL: Oh, you worked at the Coast Guard?

SL: For three years.

JL: I see. What did you do there?

SL: I worked on shipwright ... I was sitting right there working on boats.

JL: Um hum.

SL: Worked on the big boats, real big boats.

JL: I see.

SL: I worked at Annapolis Yacht Yard. Worked on sub chasers there, 110 footers. They were all planked out on two inch fir, ___ fir, oak and fir.

JL: Yeah, I was gonna ask you, because I don't know anything about these building ... that's, that's why I want you to tell me ... I'm learning a lot.

SL: Well a lot of Eastern shore men was out there too.

JL: A lot of Eastern shore men, huh? OK

SL: You know and uh ... Howard Heidaman and, man, almost can't think jof his name now, I know like I do my own ... he's dead. Oh man ... can't think of it.

JL: Well, that's ok.

SL: Old man uh ... uh, what is his name, he's from the Eastern Shore ... he's from down Tilghman Island. Whittington Worth.

JL: So you must of liked building boats, if you did all of that ...

SL: Oh I did, I liked building 'em. There was, you stayed in one spot, you didn't have to run all over the world. Like uh, like uh, house building and um,... construction workers, moving too much. And not too much climbing, a lot of climbing.

JL: Uh, then you really learned your trade from your father?

SL: Most of it, yeah.

JL: Um hum. Oh did uh ...

SL: My father did a lot of thing ... construction worker. Pile driver, worked pile driving, worked everything.

Lee, Sammy

JL: Did you put any wharfs in around Shady Side?

SL: Oh no, I put in bulkheads.

JL: Bulkheads, where, where was a bulkhead that you put in around Shady Side?

SL: I worked with the Crandell boys, W.C. Crandell on the first bulkhead they put into Shady side, put it in Idlewilde. Idlewilde bulkhead, 1930 ... '36, I think it was. '35 or '36. The first bulkhead that was put in down there on creosote 13 step.

JL: When you built boats and you sold them to people you didn't give them a name, the people who bought them gave them their names, the boats?

SL: Most of them, yeah.

JL: The majority of them, but you never named any of them?

SL: No I never, I only named my own.

JL: You only named you own, ok. I just thought you had some pet names for them since you took so long ... [laughter]

SL: ... since you took so long in building them.

JL: No, I didn't make you say that, that's ok, if you want to say that you just go right ahead.

JL: Um, didn't people used to come down here with uh, once the boats were built, how were they removed from your property, on boat trailers?

SL: I moved them on trailers.

JL: You moved ... you moved them?

SL: I moved them on trailers down to the shore.

JL: You moved them down to the shore?

SL: I moved them put 'em in the water.

JL: Um hum.

SL: Yeah, I moved quite a few of them. Didn't have much to move them on, but I moved them.

JL: I think I heard somebody say one time that ...

SL: I've moved a couple by your place since you've been there.

JL: Oh you have. Oh ... I heard somebody say that when your father turned over a boat down here everybody would come down and help him.

SL: Oh, that's right, yeah.

JL: Could you tell me about it?

SL: Well, people would, you know, one day and time you got to say well, we got the boat, we're going to turn it over to put the bottom on and, uh, you just tell one person and tell them what time you're going to do it and want to do it, and by the time you got ready to do it, you have enough that eat it, to eat it not only turn it over. And people would come from, you know, all around, to come and help you do it.

JL: Uh, when you were building boats did people come and help you do it too?

Lee, Sammy

SL: Oh yeah.

JL: Who were some of the people who came and helped you?

SL: Well, of course most all of them are dead now.

JL: But, who were some of the people?

SL: Well, most all the, most all the people, um, we all were friends. Of course, that was them days, now it's a different type, different thing.

JL: So I hear. I heard everybody ...

SL: We used to pull boats up on the shore on skids before we had railway. Then they'd pull a boat up and you'd see all them people, of course, they was all people that live around the shore, but when you get ready to pull a boat up you could see them getting the scow or something and start paddling across the creek to come and help to pull your boat up. When one sees each other getting ready to pull the boat up they go and help each other.

JL: That's nice, people should help ...

SL: That, that was them days. But, uh, now I bet you could pull your heels off and wouldn't nobody come, come and help ya.

JL: Well, I suppose you're right. I suppose you're right. Also uh, uh, some of the boats that went out of this area, uh, that you, that you sold out of this area, do you know whether they're still operational?

SL: No.

JL: You don't know, it's only the ones that stayed...

SL: Only the ones that's around through here.

JL: I see.

SL: Cause see, uh, you know, when people get a boat now they'll have it for two or three years, the first thing you know they'll let that go or sink; they get them fevers, you know. Then the first thing you know, they have it somewhere and run a big bill on it and then somebody else will take it over that's the way things they work.

JL: Um hum. When you built boats, you built them all by hand as well ...

SL: Um hum ... yeah.

JL: Do you still ...

SL: Up towards the last now, up towards the last now I had power tools. I've had power tools now for 35 years, but at first I didn't have none.

JL: Would you still have some of the tools that you used to build your boats with when you built them by hand?

SL: Still have? Oh, I still have all of them.

JL: What, could you tell me a little about what they look like some of those tools?

SL: Hand tools ...

JL: Yes sir ...

Lee, Sammy

SL: I had my adz, I had my planes, and I had all that stuff ... saws and stuff like that, hand saws and stuff ... I still have all that, yeah I've got a whole box full of tools I'm gonna keep.

JL: Well, I would too, my goodness.

SL: I've got 5 or 6 hulls hanging out here on the porch, I ain't gonna get rid of them.

JL: Well of course not.

SL: I don't know what I'm gonna do with them anymore, I don't know if they'd do me any good any more, but I don't know what to do with them and I'm not gonna give away.

JL: Um, hum.

SL: If I give them to somebody, I don't know who to give them to.

JL: Uh, did you say that, I mean you, you, built those, but did you also work on the, maybe work on the water from time to time?

SL: Oh yeah ...

JL: Did you used to oyster or crab?

SL: Oh yeah, I used to work oyster in in the winter time, that's all cause during the summer, you know, one of them days you had too much work, in the winter time on boat building, but nothing else. In the summer time, it's spring a year, and then when fall of the year comes, alls you have to do is go back on is oystering. So we didn't have to get hang of oystering from September on.

JL: Uh, when you used to oyster did you sell them to houses around here or to buy boats?

SL: No, we sold them to buy boats and house too, we sold them.

JL: How much did you used to get for a bushel of oysters?

SL: Sometimes, depends on, sometimes, we'd get ... spring of the year, the early part of the spring get as low as 20 cents a bushel, that just think now, just think as low as 20 cents a bushel, and high as a dollar, in the fall If you got a season that you got a dollar a bushel, you had a good season.

JL: And how much would you get for, um, crabs? A bushel of crabs?

SL: On day in time, they never sold crabs by the bushel, they sold them by the barrel.

JL: By the barrel ... Ok, how much would they be by the barrel?

SL: For and a half, about four, four dollars and a half a barrel. And you couldn't catch a barrel hardly. A barrel of crabs was hard to catch. I heard my father say, him and Mr. Charlie Grinder crabbed together, they crabbed together, with trout line, and shipped 17 barrels of crabs to Baltimore on the old 'Emma Giles'. Got a bill back for freight, that they owed freight. Didn't bring enough money to pay the freight. So think about that. Now crabs \$35 and \$40, \$50 a bushel, ain't that something? Durn ...

JL: Yes sir. That is something.

SL: I tell you, man wants a crab mighty bad to pay a dollar for him, too, because he ain't worth no dollar, he ain't got that much meat in him.

JL: That's right. Ah ... you just were talking about your father, can you remember any stories or, that your father might told you when growing up? What went on down here or some people that your father knew?

Lee, Sammy

SL: I heard my father say many, many, many times from oystering that they didn't have at times, sometimes they couldn't catch enough oysters to sell them that day, they'd have to keep them in and work the next day so they'd catch enough to make it, to make it to market. And they'd catch them, they'd count 'em across it.

JL: Any other things your father told you that, uh, maybe something about somebody down here, I don't mean anything bad, I mean, you know something interesting that might of happened, or some maybe some funny thing that happened to him that he told you about.

SL: Oh, there's quite a few things round here happens ____.

JL: Could you think of any in particular?

SL: No, not right off hand I can't. I'll show you a picture of my father.

JL: You were just showing me a picture of your father here, is this picture taken ...

SL: It was taken around the about '38.

JL: And, uh, was it taken on this property? Is this his boat yard?

SL: Taken right here.

JL: Taken right out there?

SL: Uh huh, that the shop there, and there was a tree that was there, it blew down. And another over here blew down across the shop.

JL: And it, does this shop where he built all these boats?

SL: Well, he did towards the last build some in there, but this was, they built this on the outside. I mean they built it on the inside, moved it on the out, just rolled it outside.

JL: Your father was from down here?

SL: Oh yeah, um huh.

JL: Uh, do you have, do you remember if your father ever told you what year he came to live in Shady Side?

SL: Um... I think my father was born in Shady Side.

JL: You think your father was born here?

SL: Not my father's father, he was born in Clinton, I know by his birth certificate.

JL: Oh, is that right

SL: Um huh, that's my namesake.

JL: You also told me something about... your father told you something about sailing vessels ...

SL: Oh yeah, it's been so long ago, I don't remember a whole lot of what he said. Now, only they used to just have a lot of wind and all, they used to sail, like a sail, on sailboats, working on sailboats on it.

JL: Uh huh ...

SL; And they'd tell me about blowing the mast out and all that stuff ... wind would take a mast right out of the boat.

JL: Oh, I, I'm sure it would. I'm sure it would.

Lee, Sammy

SL: I think it was taken about '39.

JL: That's a very nice picture. That's ... good, this was his own boat he was building or ...?

SL: No, this is built for a fellow in Baltimore. He built that for a fellow in Baltimore, built that for a crabber.

JL: That's a nice looking boat.

SL: That's a nice boat for crabbing, too.

JL: Yes sir, yes sir.

SL: He built it for, you know, crab pots and stuff, I don't know whether it's crab pots or crab lines. I don't know if they had crab pots then, when he built this.

JL: Uh, is there anything else you would like to tell us about Shady Side or your reminiscence of Shady Side, we can have on this tape forever?

SL: I really don't know a whole lot and I almost talked myself out ...

JL: Oh now you haven't you've got about 10 minutes left. So you must of liked it in Shady Side then, if you've lived here all your life.

SL: ...now, I'm gonna tell you something ...

JL: Tell me something, sir.

SL: Now what's the use of me, or anybody else, actually got something, get rid of it, go for something, go in debt, give this away, go in debt for something else and they have to work yourself to death to pay for it and then still won't have it.

JL: You certainly do have a point.

SL: Huh? I say it like this, I was born and raised here, you know, ain't enough money to buy this. Not from me, not now. Could what I would I want with something else? Where would I go get something as good as this is? Where could I go and find a place where for an acre and a quarter of land with a big shop out there, shop out there, and a, anything, three pretty cypress trees out in the front, and all that kind of stuff. Where would I go and find it for the money I can get for this?

JL: And you probably wouldn't find the friends that you have here either would you?

SL: No, that's it. And I throw dishwater out my door and it won't touch nobody. And you go down Franklin Manor and down Cedarhurst and you buy a place for \$50,000 or maybe more and you can't open your door and throw dishwater out without throwing it in somebody else's face, see?

JL: That's right, that's right.

SL: And that place you got out there, you got it the same way.

JL: That's right.

SL: You keep apart.

JL: Exactly.

SL: I hope you don't get your sewer down there real quick, 'less you want it. You ain't in a hurry for that?

JL: No sir.

Lee, Sammy

SL: Your septic tank working all right, ain't it?

JL: Yes sir.

SL: Ok then. If don't, you clean it out once every four or five or ten years, how many times you cleaned out since you been there?

JL: Twice.

SL: Twice. I've cleaned this out twice in 32 years, let me rap on wood. [laughter]

JL: Uh, so you said that this, fa, uh, this house belonged to your father?

SL: Um huh, built it.

JL: Oh, he built it, he built this house?

SL: Now ... does that _____ ... that's the old part there. That's the first part of the building, this, I built this, helped to build this, me and my father. That, the kitchen and that part was built in 1944. This was built in 1930, '30 something. But that was built in, when he first got married. Like the old nigger told me, he says: if his father and mother had 14, the 14 in the family, and they had a four room house and they tore that down, tore that four room house down and built another one, same thing, four room house." [Laughter]

JL: Well, if that's what you want, I guess that's ok.

SL: Now them's true. Like the old woman said, you kiss the cow according to your taste.

JL: Yeah, I suppose you do. [Laughter] So you still have a lot of friends down here now?

SL: I hope so. I think I have.

JL: I think you do too. You're a pleasant man to talk to.

SL: Huh?

JL: You're a very pleasant man to talk to.

SL: I hope so.

JL: Well, I have enjoyed this conversation very much.

SL: Well, I imagine you have.

JL: Anything else you can tell us about uh, Shady Side?

SL: Oh me ... mumble

JL: What did you used to do, um, before they had the fire department here?

SL: I never fooled around the fire department much.

JL: No, but I'm saying what happened if there was a fir when there was no fire department?

SL: Same thing happened when the fire department was here. The house burned down, just like it does when the fire department's here ... the house still burns down. [Laughter]

JL: Well, if your house was burning, did you run to your neighbors for help and they helped you with the bucket brigade, or ...?

Lee, Sammy

SL: That would probably be just as good, but things used to when a house caught on fire, too late to help each other cause the house would burn down before you'd get a hold of the water.

JL: I see. I see. Uh, do you remember when electricity came to Shady Side?

SL: I don't exactly ... around 19, ... it was in the '30's. Cause I put it in right after it came in. It was in the '30's. Do you remember?

JL: Oh no sir, I didn't live down here then.

SL: I mean has anybody said any ...

JL: Oh well, different people have said, I just wanted your opinion.

SL: I think it was around in the 30's. I don't ... it was, I think it was before Roosevelt.

JL: Do you recall when they had the fair down in here in Shady Side to put a paved road in?

SL: I had, yeah I recall when they had the carnival out there in that woods out there

JL: Could you tell me about it?

SL: Uh, they called it the carnival out there. I was a little boy, I was about 7, 8 years old.

JL: That was to raise money to put in a paved road?

SL: A paved, shell road.

JL: Shell road, I see.

SL: All shell, brought from Henry Bast from down the oyster house. Hauled by Captain John Atwell ...[laughter] ... horse and wagon. They had to put on the road that thick but, next year it would be mashed up and blowed away, gone back to where they were.

JL: Could you tell me a little bit about the carnival at the time?

SL: Well, it had a little, they had a little frequency like the horses riding in the, push it, what you call it, that thing through the ring? What do you call it?

JL: Oh, brass ring, brass ring?

SL: Yeah, they had, they had that. I remember them doing that and , uh, of course they had a little games out there like pitching pennies into a, in these rings or pitching dimes in it. And then if you pitch them, you get like a, stuff like that.

JL: You're a dear, Mr. Lee. I thank you so much for talking to us, we really do appreciate it.

SL: You ... Glibert Leatherbury ... him and them boys, they had a cable from one tree to another one and had a chair like on a pull and used to pull that thing from the bottom to the top and let you go and they called it the 'shute to shute'. And you'd go real fast from there clean on to the bottom, right straight on down. They had that out there, I seen the place too.

JL: We're about ready to run out of tape, Mr. Lee. I thank you very kindly, I really do appreciate ...

SL: Very, very welcome. Very, very welcome.

JL: Thank you.

