

QUONOCHONTAUG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Oral History

GERALD PITCHER

April 25, 2011

Interviewed by Anne Doyle

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Q: Today is Monday, April the 25th in the year 2011. This morning I am talking to Gerald Pitcher. His family started coming to Quonochontaug in the '40s or '50s.

A: I think it was 1947.

Q: Gerry will talk about his life down here at Quonnie, and a little bit about his family and where he came from. Gerry, state your full name.

A: Gerald Kennedy Pitcher. Born October 29, 1937 in Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey. Or close to it. I can't remember the exact town.

Q: I thought you were born in Connecticut.

A: No.

Q: Who in your family were the first to come to Quonnie? Was it your parents?

A: Yes. That's the first.

Q: Where were you living at the time when they came here?

A: Danielson, Connecticut.

Q: How did they find out about Quonnie?

A: Eventually there was a large group of Danielson people—the Danielson crowd. But the first were the Korabs—Marguerite and Johnnie Korab. Johnnie was a chief petty officer in Charleston Naval Station. He was in aircraft maintenance. His wife, whose maiden name was Marguerite Wizard, and they lived in Danielson. Her father was a lawyer in

the same firm as Dak Wizard and Sam's father. That's how it all kind of came together. From that came this push—these good things about Quonnie that were being told, and people started coming down—the Lodges—there are probably seven or eight of them. The Becks.

Q: Did you know them back in Danielson? Did you know Sam?

A: Yes. He was four years younger than I was. I saw a lot of Sam in Danielson. We'd shoot baskets together. We'd watch basketball games on his television set and stuff like that. There was a gap there. Sam went to grade school in Danielson, but then they sent him off the Andover. There were a few years that I didn't really see him.

Q: Did you go to public school in Danielson?

A: Yes.

Q: Where did you go to college?

A: Yale.

Q: Sam also went there.

A: Yes, he did. His father went there too.

Q: But you weren't in the same class.

A: No. When I was a senior, he was a freshman.

Q: When you were down in Quonnie as a teenager, were you both included in the same group of guys?

A: Yes. Sam was mature for his age. He was okay with people a few years older than he was.

Q: What did your father do for a living?

A: He was trained as an architect, but never practiced it. After the war, he took a job working for my mother's father in a coal and lumber company in Danielson. He stayed there.

Q: Did your mother work?

A: No. I don't think she ever did.

Q: When they first started coming to Quonnie, had you been born?

A: Yes.

Q: Where did you stay in Quonnie?

A: I think in '47 you'd call it day trips to East Beach and the Blue Shutters. Maybe stop in see somebody that they knew here on the way out and the way home. Do you remember the Sarsey cottages?

Q: Yes.

A: We first rented a Sarsey cottage in '48 or '49. That continued. Other Danielson people were in the Sarsey cottages.

Q: You are the first person that I've talked to who has gone there.

A: Yes. Other names are coming back from Danielson people. The Howards. They had a pair of twin boys. Handsome boys. Three or four years older than I was. They both ended up playing football at Columbia. They were nice kids.

Q: Can you describe what a Sarsey cottage looked like?

A: Simple. The interior walls did not go to the ceilings. It stopped. If you were in a bunkbed on the top—I had the top bunkbed in a room for kids. You could sit up and look over into the living room and spy on the parents at night and hoped they didn't see you. Or you could hear everything. Everything that was said in that big room could be heard everywhere.

Q: Did it have a kitchen and all that?

A: Yes. A bath. Just an outdoor shower. As I recall, no hot water in the outdoor shower. You moved quickly.

Q: Did you ever meet Mr. Sarsey?

A: Yes. They lived in the cottage at the top of the sequence closest to Route 1. By the time we got there, they owned four or five cottages side by side all the way down and would rent them.

Q: Some of them are still there, but they've been renovated.

A: Yes. I don't recognize them anymore.

Q: I've been trying to determine which ones were the original Sarsey cottages by the foundation.

A: Hard to say. We were in the one that was farthest to the east in that group.

Q: Did you ever bring a friend from Danielson with you?

A: Yes. The kid that lived next door.

Q: What was the sequence of events from the Sarsey cottages? How did you get to Central Beach?

A: I think my mother figured it out quickly that this was where the action was and where she wanted to be. We rented the little cottage across the street from where Jack Young lived. I think we rented there. Eventually we bought it.

Q: That's what I remember.

A: I think within a couple of years we purchased the place. Then my mother fixed it up inside. It was Quonnie simple. She had to spruce it up a bit with rugs and things.

Q: Did they entertain?

A: Yes. We did. I think their best friends were from East Beach. The Larsons. Ellen Larson and Norman Larson. There was a Larson girl. Ellen Larson was the girl. Alice was their mother. And there was a boy that I didn't know too well, but he was five or six years older than I was. The daughter was two or three years older than I was.

Q: Once they owned the house, would you come down for the whole summer?

A: We'd rent until we bought that place. I don't think we ever rented it. I think we used it pretty much all summer. We would come down here in the beginning of the season. My father would come down on Wednesday nights. We could get to Danielson in an hour then. And he'd come down on the weekends.

Q: Was your mother left here without a car?

A: No. We had two cars.

Q: That was a typical way of living down here where the wife was dropped off with the kids.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember the vegetable man and used to come around selling vegetables?

A: That was Sam. Yes, I do. He appeared two or three times a week. We patronized him. We bought stuff from him. He had pretty good stuff.

Q: Who were some of your friends down here as you were growing up?

A: Bernham. Maxie Hitchcox. Charlie Roberts. That was the crowd. There were some that you may not have known. Sam Hoyt. The Hoyts came for several years. There was a whole contingent of Met Life people.

Q: Were they also from Danielson?

A: No. The only connection was that my step father, George Davis, was a Met Life man too. They had all met there, including somebody who was—it will come to me. There were a whole bunch of them. They started talking about this place, and the Met Life people started appearing. There was one—do you know where John Sherman used to live right across from the Vars? Then they sold it, and the people that bought it were Met Life people. I can't remember their last name. They would come down for the whole summer, or at least she would. He'd arrive on weekends. They'd drive down and pick him up at the Westerly Train Station and take him back Monday morning. I can't remember the name. They bought the house from the Shermans.

Q: Is that where the Beaches used to live?

A: The Beaches were her parents.

Q: George?

A: Yes. It was George.

Q: Can you tell me a little bit about Bernham? What was he like?

A: He was skillful at handling parents. All the parents liked him. They really thought a lot of Bern. They didn't get worried if I went out with him at night. We'd go up to the Rathskeller and drink and take steam baths, and come back at 1:00 in the morning probably a little tipsy. Bernham was very good with adults. Much more so than Danny. Bernham was good with his father. I forget the father's name. Bernham was the favorite. He was bright. He went to Moses Brown. There were a whole bunch of Moses Brown kids. Knight was a Moses Brown guy. Do you remember Tom Knight?

Q: Vaguely.

A: He went out with Janet Saunders for a long time, as many of us did. But Tom went out with her for a long time. I lasted maybe a year with her until Tom came and pushed me out of the scene. Curly Saunders. He was a character.

Q: They had a place in Westerly.

A: Yes, they did. I think he worked for Cottrell.

Q: I don't remember the parents, but there was a younger daughter that was more my age. I remember her. One of them still lives in Westerly. I think her name is Maggie. There were three daughters.

A: Yes. I have forgotten the names.

Q: I met her in the last few years.

A: Are they all still alive?

Q: As far as I know. I'm not sure about that.

A: Janet, Maggie, Margaret.

Q: Sally Saunders.

A: Yes. The pretty one. And the youngest, I think.

Q: What are some of your very first memories of being down here?

A: It was fun. The softball games were fun. The guys were fun. The beach was fun. The place wasn't crowded then. There were parts back here that were vacant.

Q: Tell me what you position you played in softball.

A: I played short stop for the boys. The short stop for the men was a very good player. He lived across the street. He had a son and a daughter. The daughter was pretty. The mother was good looking. He was a Holy Cross guy. He played baseball for Holy Cross. He had great hands. He was a great short stop in softball. Even with those bad bounces. He'd come up with the ball and he would knock it down and try to scramble and throw him out. He'd catch it and throw them out.

Q: Were these serious games, or were they fun? Were they more casual?

A: They were fun. The boys wanted to win. The men's teams were good. There was a guy names Vanost. A bit guy. He was a crusher. He was good for two or three home runs every game. He was an automatic home run. He was left-handed, and he would hit the ball where the pumphouse is. It was very short down that line. Even if it hit in center field, it would be out in the swamp where you'd have to go find it. We seldom got him out. We just had to score more runs than he got.

Q: Was there ever a problem getting enough guys together to play?

A: No.

Q: You remember when the ball field was over near West Beach Road or Central Street.

A: That's right.

Q: Can you describe that?

A: It was in terrible shape. Bounces were bad.

Q: Did you help fix it up?

A: I don't think we did. When they moved down there, it got better. That was a nice field. We had a place to store the bases, the bats and the balls in the shed. There was a better place for the fans to sit up on the rim of it. We had a backstop so the balls didn't go. We didn't have a backstop at the other place. If the ball got through the catcher, we had to go look for it. We had a whole bunch of us. I mentioned the Hoyts. Sam Hoyt played.

Q: Did Bernham play softball?

A: Yes.

Q: I know he played tennis.

A: Tennis was his sport. Nobody beat him.

Q: Did you play tennis?

A: I did. He was the last person to beat Joey Cavanaugh. Joey was younger. When Joey was twelve, Bernham beat him in the tournament down here. A close match. Joey was a terrific athlete. That was the last time anybody beat him in tennis. He was something. Bern was the guy that did it.

Q: Did you play in the tournaments?

A: Yes. I played in singles. They had men's doubles. I played that. Mixed doubles, I'd find somebody to play with. Yes, I did. It was a fun thing. It was the treat of August. It really was.

Q: As I remember it, everybody wore white.

A: Yes.

Q: It was somewhat formal.

A: Yes, it was. The guy—I'm trying to think—who kind of pushed the tennis was also the short stop in baseball. He gave tennis lessons. I took lessons from him. Fogarty.

Q: Jerry?

A: Jerry Fogarty. Yes.

Q: Was it Jerry, or his father?

A: His father. Nice man. He was impressive. He made an impression on kids. A good athlete. Jerry was a little different. He always seemed like he was trying to find himself.

Q: We saw him at the gathering.

A: Yes. I talked to him. It was good to see him. I thought he was a better person than he was when he was a kid. He's grown up.

Q: I never felt like I knew him at all, even though he was across the street.

A: I know. I don't know why that was. I think he had a difficult mother. Pushing all the time. Pushing for him to get ahead. "Be this. Be that. Get to the right college." That kind of thing. She was a driver. The pressure was on. He probably didn't handle it as well as his sister did.

Q: What went on at the beach when you were there? Did you have a rubber raft?

A: There were some. Most of us were body surfers. Maxie was good at it. I got fairly good at it. Charlie Vars was the first guy to show up with slippers, and then he started spearfishing on the rocks. He had a Hawaiian sling, or one of these spears.

Q: Did you do that as well?

A: I went out there and looked at it. I really didn't want to kill fish. I went out there and looked at it and came back. That was it. There was only about 8 feet of water. It wasn't far down.

Q: Did you use a snorkel?

A: Yes. A snorkel. I had a mask with a couple of valves that shut off when I went down.

Q: Did they actually catch fish there?

A: Yes.

Q: Was it black fish?

A: Pretty much black fish. Do you remember the Donovans? Sheila and Neal?

Q: Just the name.

A: Neal was with me with a spear trying to fish. He had the spear down, and a wave caught him and he accidentally—he was trying to get his balance, and he went down. He put the spear right into the calf of his leg. Do you remember that? He had to hold the thing and walk out of the water. He just laid on his back on the beach. We called an ambulance. They came and kind of lashed the spear him so it wouldn't be moved while they were putting him on the gurney or stretcher. Then they took him to the hospital. It was kind of messy, because there were three prongs in that thing. They had to make three slits to get the barbs out.

Q: Did that put a damper on spearfishing for a while?

A: As I said, I never really did it, because I just wanted to see the fish.

Q: When you went down, did you actually see several fish?

A: Yes. It was a busy place.

Q: I don't think they're there anymore.

A: They might not be. I would not be surprised if there were few or none.

Q: Charlie Vars was one of those guys.

A: Yes. He would catch fish. He was good at it.

Q: Can you tell me a little bit about Charlie?

A: Bernham called him Rip Shape. That was his nickname for Charlie: Rip Shape. Charlie was chunky. Charlie was a character. He was fun. For a while, I went out with his sister. While I was doing that, I would get invited to the Vars' house for dinner sometimes with Marion, who was his mother, and his father—I forget his name—Raymond Vars. His mother was really nice. She was wonderful with children.

Q: I see Ruth—I see her mother in her. I don't know whether you do or not.

A: Yes, I do.

Q: I hadn't seen her for a long time. I remember her mother—not in detail.

A: A warm person.

Q: Yes. They lived in Westerly as well.

A: Yes. I went out with Ruth while I was in high school. I invited her to my junior prom in Danielson. Her father, Raymond, didn't really know us. They summered down here—

brought her up to Danielson, because they wanted to meet the parents. Make it clear that they were bringing their precious in the arms of this heathen.

Q: Did they let her stay?

A: They let her stay. And I brought her back the following day to Westerly.

Q: That was your high school prom?

A: Yes. I went out with her. I went out with a lot of girls. Janet Saunders for a while, maybe my freshman and sophomore year. The Saunders entertained a lot. They always had a Christmas party. Sam and I would be invited to the Christmas party. I'd drive down.

Q: So, you used to come down from Danielson to a Christmas party here in Westerly?

A: To a Christmas party. There as an inn next door, which they'd get a room for us to spend the night. We'd go back the next morning.

Q: That was a big house that they had.

A: A beautiful house. Apparently, he was a character.

Q: Wasn't he a politician?

A: He worked at Cottrell. He may have been. He had political instincts I thought. He was good with people. His wife was nice. There were a lot of girls.

Q: You remember the girls.

A: Yes. Particularly Margaret.

Q: You had the cottage down at the corner of Surfside and Ninigret.

A: Yes. 50 surfside, or something like that.

Q: When did you move to the other corner of Oceanview and Ninigret?

A: My father died. He died young. He was 47. That house was built by—the name escapes me now. They built a house. They came down for maybe two summers, and then they split. She was kind of an attractive woman. He owned a company in Providence. I forget what they did. He also had an aircraft pilot's license, so sometimes he'd fly down here on weekends and fly back from Westerly to Providence. My mother bought the house from them. She proceeded to remake it inside. She was a terror on redecorating.

Q: Did you have a large house in Danielson? Did she also have that decorated?

A: Yes. When the war was over, we rented a 200-year-old inn on the other end of town. It was a duplex. There was a family in the back, and we were in the front. But then in 1948 or so, my father was an architect by training, and designed and built a house in Danielson. They started building that house. It took a couple of years. We moved there. The house is still there. We sold the house to John and Margaret Korab. After my father died, my mother met a guy named George Davis through people. She met him at Quonnie. She married him. He lived in New York. She went to be a New York City dweller.

Q: She met him here in Quonnie?

A: Yes. He was a friend of the Hoyts. He'd come down and maybe spend a weekend here once a summer. That's when my mother met him.

Q: There was another couple that used to live near the Phillips that were somehow connected with your family.

A: The Roberts. They were from Danielson. He died fairly young also. He was a banker. She remarried a Roberts. But they owned a house that eventually the Curtis bought.

Q: That's who I'm thinking of: Curtis. The man that wore those rings.

A: All those rings. Yes. Harold and Winnie Curtis.

Q: Are they related to you in any way?

A: She is a second cousin. She is related on my mother's side—somewhere up there with a family called Hopkins. My mother was a Hopkins. That was the connection that came down—the Hopkins and all that.

Q: You were here after World War II.

A: Yes. Maybe '47 was the first year after maybe day visits.

Q: Do you remember any remnants of war activity around here at that time? Do you remember the planes?

A: Yes. TBF Avengers

Q: What does that mean?

A: Torpedo bomber fighter. During the war, they were stationed there. They were designed primarily to carry torpedoes against surface ships, but they were not really a fighter. They had guns and they could deal with slower planes in the air.

Q: Was that type of plane that was going out of—

A: Yes. A constant droning circle. During the war, there were planes there. That's how everybody found this place. Johnnie Korab was stationed here at the end of the 2nd world war. He married a girl from Danielson. Eventually we all started coming down. The Becks—the whole bunch.

Q: Mr. Korab started everything?

A: Right.

Q: Did he tell stories about the war?

A: He was a Red Sox fan, and I was a Yankees fan. He spent much time trying to wean me from the Yankees to be a Red Sox fan. We had endless discussions in which he explained to me that the Yankees were a bunch of jerks, bozos and clowns, and the Red Sox was the true team.

Q: Did you ever switch your allegiance?

A: Yes, I did. After I started living in Massachusetts, I became a Red Sox fan, and I still am.

Q: You graduated from Yale. What was your degree in?

A: Mechanical engineering.

Q: What did you do after you graduated?

A: I was a Holloway Plan ROTC guy. I got a scholarship to Yale. It was an easy ride for my parents. It was called a Holloway Plan. My senior year, the first thing you had to do was take a test. The tests were held all over the place. I took an IQ test. If you got through that, you had to go talk to somebody. It was usually a naval officer or something. They tried to shake you up. You didn't know what you were doing. You didn't know what you were getting into. Somehow, I got through it. They shook me a little. So, I got the scholarship, which was pretty good. They paid the whole room and board. They gave me \$50 a month for books and other incidentals. They paid the tuition. There really wasn't much of a load for my parents at all, other than they gave me a little money for living and what have you. It was a great scholarship. In return, they wanted four years after school. I was in the Navy for years.

Q: When you were working in Newport, what was that all about? When I first moved here year-round, that's where you were. Was that related to the Navy?

A: Yes. I worked for the Naval Underwater System Center. That was later in life. That was my last job. I worked there for eleven years and retired from that.

Q: Were there other jobs in between?

A: Yes. My first job I worked for Honeywell in Boston for three years.

Q: I didn't realize you were in Massachusetts.

A: I took that job coming out of the Navy. I stayed there three years. I decided that I wanted to do something else. It wasn't a bad job. The first jobs never really last for people. So, I went to work for Phillips in the New York City area at their research lab as a mechanical engineer. I stayed there twelve years. That was a great job.

Q: Did you live in the city?

A: No. We lived in Chappaqua. We bought a small house in Chappaqua. We moved down there.

Q: Did you always return to Quonnie during the summer?

A: Yes. At some point. I always came back to Quonnie in the summer.

Q: Was it a centering for you?

A: Yes. Even when I was in the Navy, if I was off for a week, sometimes I'd come up here.

Q: The other thing I wanted to ask you about was Hurricane Carol, because I know you were here during that in '54. What do you remember about the hurricane?

A: No warning. I think it was a Saturday. My father was down at the beach. The wind started coming up. Suddenly a neighbor came over. We lived next to the Syberts. They rented the farmhouse there, which is just called the farmhouse. We lived—as you came to the road that went straight to the beach in East Beach, when you turned the corner, we rented that house on the corner. It is all changed now.

Q: Was this before you were on Central Beach?

A: Yes. We started on East. Next door were the Syberts. They rented—we called it the farmhouse.

Q: Was it the Buddington Farmhouse?

A: That's right. They rented it for the month of August. That's when I met the Sybert girls. We were in the little house on the corner, which is gone now. It's been remade. It's the Gitwell place. It was kind of windy in the morning, and suddenly the Syberts next door heard on the radio that this was going to be a hurricane that's coming. We didn't think it was going to major, so we stayed. All the parents went over to the Syberts and they drank all afternoon. The kids went up the second floor of the Sybert's house. We could

hear them partying downstairs, but we could look out the window and watch the surf starting. At that time, there were several houses on the front on East Beach. They all moved back. We could see them moving slowly, slowly, crunching into other houses down there.

Q: Were you nervous or afraid?

A: No. We could see the water. Although it came up almost to the Sybert's house, it was not a threat. When the storm was over, we went down and saw where those houses had been dragged. There were huge [inaudible 40:58] through the road like a tractor had pulled through it. Gouges in the road.

Q: Sam was down there too at that time.

A: He was with us on the second floor. All the kids were there.

Q: So, you had a good time?

A: Yes. I think the next day, Sunday, we went back to the house. Everybody did.

Q: So, you had no problems getting out of the roads?

A: I think West Beach Road was badly flooded. I think we went out through East Beach Road. I think it was a few days before the water on West Beach Road, which is right where the pond gets close to the—I think it was maybe a foot-and-a-half deep there, so we went out the other way.

Q: Did they have guards at the end of the street?

A: Yes. No problem getting out. They just asked a few questions.

Q: Did you help people try to find some things that were lost?

A: The next day, everybody was just packing up and moving out.

Q: You didn't own the home, so that was a different story for you than people that did own places.

A: I don't think we owned it. What year was it?

Q: '54.

A: We owned that house.

Q: On East Beach?

A: Yes. Right across from Jackie Owens. We bought that in '48 or '49. We owned it. I think that school was going to begin the next day, or the day after.

Q: Right. It was August 30th.

A: So, between that and it being a Monday, there was a convoy of cars getting out. Trees were down in the northern areas of Rhode Island, too, as I we went home.

Q: Was your home in Danielson okay?

A: Yes.

Q: I remember the strength of the wind and trying to walk against the wind.

A: Yes. I guess it got to 105 or 110. It wasn't a force-4 hurricane, but I think it was force-2.

Q: Nowadays, they would evacuate. We were not evacuated during that hurricane.

A: You're right. In later years, the cops would come down here and try to ratchet it up. Then they'd come down again if you hadn't left. They would really get nasty about that. Some people would just drop their shades and don't stick your head out. The cops wouldn't know you were here, particularly if you'd hide the car in a garage or something.

Q: You and Cathy were down where your mom still lived at Central Beach, and then you decided to move to Green Hill.

A: Yes.

Q: I wanted that on record that you made the decision to find a new home.

A: Yes. I got into woodworking. I had to drag all these machines off to the side of the garage, and then pull the cars out and drag it out so I could do stuff. I decided I wanted to add a smaller garage in front of the existing garage. It was going to be a two-car garage, and I was going to convert the old—it was basically a two-and-a-half-car garage. You could get a sports car between two cars in that garage. I was going to put doors and have the new garage go into it, and then that was going to be—I had heat in there, and I was going to make that a wood shop. I couldn't get it approved.

Q: So, that forced you into making the decision?

A: Yes. I wanted a wood shop. I handled a few tools that I had to drag to the side of the garage, and it was getting crowded with stuff.

Q: Do you have a wood shop in your new home?

A: Yes.

Q: Are you continuing to do work?

A: Yes. I still do. I'm always beginning something.

Q: I saw the tray that you made when Cathy came the other night. That was nice.

A: Yes. I get some woodworking magazines. If I see an article in there about something I want to make, I copy it and save it on the computer—page 1, page 2, page 3.

Q: Do you have any ideas of what you might like to do in the future?

A: More of the same. We finally put a ping-pong table in the room down there. At one time I had planned to move in there and put more tools in there, but the ping-pong table undid that.

Q: Was that your ping-pong table?

A: We bought it a couple years ago.

Q: You're still involved with paddle tennis, right?

A: No. I quit. This was my last year.

Q: Can you speak about playing paddle tennis?

A: I learned to play in Chappaqua. There was a hotbed of paddle tennis down there. Paddle tennis was created in the White Plains area. The game was invented there. Every town had three or four clubs with paddle courts. We'd play interclub matches. I really got into it when we moved down there. When I saw Jim put those paddle courts up, I knew that I could live here, because there would be some place to play. There was nothing else. You had to drive into Connecticut to find a paddle court.

Q: Did you have anything to do with him building those?

A: They were there. I saw the courts from the road. I went in. I had never met Jim. I just went in and said, "I want to talk to the guy about those courts." I found out what I needed to do to join, and I did. I played there for ten or twelve years.

Q: How often would you play?

A: In my younger days, I probably played three times a week. Twice there. Do you remember Pell and Joanne Brown? They lived in Watch Hill. He was at the Misquamicut Gold Club. There were courts there. On Sundays I would play with Pell. I don't know if you knew Chuck Buffam.

Q: I know of him.

A: He was a good player. I guess it was Mell Makin. Mel and I would go down and play those two. We had some great matches.

Q: So, this was your last year?

A: Yes. Most of the players that I played with left. They went to Florida in the winter and we lost them. Randall, Makin and there were others. Suddenly I had to find new players. Jim was good at that. He found games for me. But finally, this year I decided that age was catching up with me. Some people can live their game disintegrating when they age, but I said, "No, I don't want to play anymore." I quit.

Q: But you also had your woodworking. It's not like you didn't have anything to do.

A: That's right. Cathy and I still play a little tennis in the summer at the Green Hill courts.

Q: Did you get into any trouble down here with the guys?

A: No. I never really did. My mother had expectations for my behavior, so I was not a hooligan at night. Probably the biggest thing we ever did was the overnights when we went down to—a whole bunch of us—ten or fifteen guys, organized by Howie Randall, we'd go down to the beach on the other side near the breachway, and we'd camp out for the night. We'd have a fire. Make some hamburgers and crawl into our bags, get up the next day and leave. We had three or four cars.

Q: Did you ever go over to Bills Island and camp there? The little island off of our launch area.

A: No. But I'd sail my little Sunfish out there and beach it and walk around.

Q: So, you were on the pond?

A: That was my father-in-law's Sunfish. After he died, I inherited it. That was my boat for years. I thought it was a nice combination of something that was portable that I could drag in myself. It was not too heavy.

Q: So, you didn't keep it over in the launch area?

A: I did. I can't remember if they built me any racks there at that time. I just dragged it up and left it in the tall grass.

Q: I didn't realize that you did sailing.

A: There is more to it. I had a little boat with a 6- or 8-horsepower motor on it. The first one was a small one with a 4-horse. I sold it to somebody on the beach, and I got a

somewhat bigger boat with a deeper hull with a 6-horsepower motor. I could go pretty fast, but when I had people in it, I couldn't get it on a plane. We'd have weekend picnics. We'd take the boat and go down to one of these beaches.

Q: Do you mean on the pond?

A: On the pond.

Q: Did you go out the breachway?

A: I did it with my mother once, and she said she never wanted to do it again. But I used to go out. Somebody explained to me how to do it. You go out and you turn a sharp right and go. So, I would go out on the open ocean. In fact, I went as far as Block Island once and came back. That was kind of silly. It took a long time.

Q: Did you go fishing?

A: No. I wasn't a fisherman. We could go all the way to the pond down there and pull it up on the beach and just walk over to the other side and have picnics. We'd swim and come home. I'd bring my mother along. That was with my second wife.

Q: Is there anything else that you can think of?

A: We've touched on quite a few of them. The Sys. When he died, she married [inaudible 54:48] Roberts. Of course, the Becks. There are more. I thought of them before I came, and now some of them have dropped out of memory.

Q: It sounds like Quonnie was a very big part of your life, and you had mainly positive memories of it, especially when you were growing up here.

A: Sure. I did. Then Quonnie slowly changed.

Q: Is that something that you want to talk about?

A: No. It's just dirt that I'd throw at them.