

CIGAR DAISEY
April 29, 1998

Interviewer:
Transcribed By: Shirley Fauber
Cigar Daisey: Cigar Daisey
Interviewer: Interviewer

=====

Tape, Side B (1st Side):

Interviewer: Today is April 29, 1998. I am sitting here with Cigar Daisey. Cigar, why don't you go ahead and start by telling me a little bit about yourself, your full name, date of birth, and a little family history.

Cigar Daisey: I was born March the 6th, 1928. On Snotty Ridge. That's – today they call it Ridge Road you know how things change.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: That was – during that time you talked about politics – you'd never believe how Chincoteague was.

Interviewer: Really.

Cigar Daisey: Plenty of resources, but – like oysters and clams and fish and crabs and ducks and everything like that, it was abundance of it. But wasn't no money. Most people were real poor and – my Father in 1933 went into the poultry business, that was probably the best job in that day at that time.

Interviewer: What was his – what was your Dad's full name?

Cigar Daisey: Herbert L. Daisey.

Interviewer: Okay. And your Mom's name?

Cigar Daisey: Emma Jane Daisey. She was raised on Assateague.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Right there – right there where they turn - down below where the Fish and Wildlife is now, used to be a house on the hill, that is where she was raised.

Interviewer: All right.

Cigar Daisey: She lived over there for I don't know, years. She lived over there until the – old man Oliphant wouldn't let 'em cross the land there where the – by the pony trail.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: So they could get to Tom's Cove. See you used to go to Tom's Cove and go to work - Daddy'd go in the horse cart. And they'd catch oysters and clams and put – and old man Thornton – old man Tellie Thorntons had a boat out there and he would bring 'em in and sell 'em.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And he'd give him part of the money ya see.

Interviewer: So her Father – your Mom's, your Grandfather was a fisherman then?

Cigar Daisey: My Grand – no, no, my Grandfather was in the seafood business, Daniel Daisey. But he died when he was about 28 or 30 years old.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Cigar Daisey: He had a real short life.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, all right.

Cigar Daisey: He got – he got – ever body on Chincoteague them days died with a – what was that disease that come along and killed all them people? You had a real high fever you know?

Interviewer: Tuberculosis?

Cigar Daisey: No. It was somethin' they got from eatin' . . .

Interviewer: Cholera?

Cigar Daisey: No, I can't think of that to save my life now. Idn't that somethin'. (pause)
Typhoid fever.

Interviewer: Oh, typhoid.

Cigar Daisey: Typhoid fever. That's what he died of. They packed him in ice at the last and then that was the end of it.

Interviewer: Huh. Typhoid fever.

Cigar Daisey: Typhoid fever.

Interviewer: Now on your Father's side of the family, where was your Dad from?

Cigar Daisey: My Dad was from Chincoteague. He was born here.

Interviewer: His Father?

Cigar Daisey: His Father was born here, yelp. The first Daiseys was here were John and Mary Daisy – D-a-i-s-y. It was 17 - well I can't – go back to 1773.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: In 1800's, I guess it must been a year or two before 1800, they registered six sons that they had, no – no girls you know, all sons. And see that was the first census that took place in this country, was 1800 census. That was the first.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Okay.

Cigar Daisey: And that's the reason we know - you know - how many there were. Anyway, then they changed it to D-a-i-s-e-y.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: They changed the name. And the old man Dave, Dave Daisey, he moved to Delaware and he married an Indian, an Indian Squaw, and at that time it wadn't no Ocean City Inlet.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: Ocean City Inlet didn't come 'til 1933.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: So he come on down the beach with her and he lived on Assateague.

Interviewer: Uh.

Cigar Daisey: Moved back over to Chincoteague. Well he's my closest relative of the day.

Interviewer: What year was that do you think?

Cigar Daisey: I don't know. I did have a somethin' on it, but I don't know where it's at now, it's been many many years ago since I've seen it.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: But it was – he was a young man in 1800. So you can figure, you know, he was a young . . .

Interviewer: In the year 1800?

Cigar Daisey: In the year 1800. Yeah, that's right. He was a young man. And he was registered in the census in that year.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Okay and he come down from Delaware?

Cigar Daisey: Come down from Delaware and had an Indian Squaw. They always told in the country store that he – he rode the horse and she walked behind him. So we'll never know about 'dat. That's questionable. You know.

Interviewer: (Laughing) Okay. And so your Father – what kind of business did your Dad do?

Cigar Daisey: My Father went into the poultry business in 1933.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Okay.

Cigar Daisey: He was practically the second one I know of on Chincoteague – Chincoteague at one time was the poultry capitol of the world.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: More poultry on here than anywhere in the world. That's hard to believe. Such a little place. I'm talkin' 'bout per square mile you know.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Ever body - my Father was I think the second person I know of in the poultry business. And he was pretty lucky. He was in the seafood business too for many years.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And – and I come along you know, raised right up in – amongst it all you know. All I wanted to do was hunt, fish and trap you know. All I give a damn 'bout.

Interviewer: Now how many brothers and sisters did you have?

Cigar Daisey: I had two brothers.

Interviewer: Two brothers, okay.

Cigar Daisey: Gary, he was born in 1938. And Herbert Lee, he was born five years later.

Interviewer: Gary and Herb?

Cigar Daisey: Gary and Herb that – born '42 – '38 --- '43.

Interviewer: Okay. Are they still alive?

Cigar Daisey: Gary, he passed away – he passed away – let me see what year that was now. There it is right there I can't hardly see it. 1958 – he was . . .

Interviewer: I can't (pause) - 1994.

Cigar Daisey: 1994. He was 58. Yeah, he was 58.

Interviewer: Okay. Where is your other brother, is he here on the Island?

Cigar Daisey: He's still lives on the Island. He carves decoys.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, okay.

Cigar Daisey: My Mother, she's got a little place down there where she sells 'em for him you know.

Interviewer: And how old is your Mother now?

Cigar Daisey: My Mother, she'll be 89 come September the somethin'.

Interviewer: Huh.

Cigar Daisey: Middle of September, the 14th I think.

Interviewer: Okay. She'll be 89 years old. All right.

Cigar Daisey: She can still kick a football. You aint ever gonna believe it but she can.

Interviewer: Your Mom?

Cigar Daisey: She's that active. She is just – has the best mind, her mind's just as sharp as it ever was in her life, she's real active. And I told her one of these days I'm gonna bring one down 'ere and set it up for her and let her take out runnin' and get a picture of it you know.

Interviewer: (Laughing).

Cigar Daisey: Kick that football.

Interviewer: That's great. Now when you were – when you were young growing up around the chicken houses, tell me about that. Did you work with your Father at all?

Cigar Daisey: I helped him some.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And then I went to live with my aunt – who wadn't my aunt.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: She married my uncle.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And he died and I – I stayed with her. I lived with her 'til, well I lived with her clean up 'til 1960.

Interviewer: So she was on the Island also?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Snotty Ridge?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Same place.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, she lived on Snotty Ridge.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: So you lived with your aunt. All right. And what about your Dad's seafood business, did you work with him in that at all?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah, yeah. I helped him in the seafood business.

Interviewer: What would you do, what kind of seafood business?

Cigar Daisey: He was in oysters and clams – plenty of clams. And he had shucked oysters so I opened oysters.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Cigar Daisey: Shuckin' houses. Had 'em in the backyard and had 'em both places – he had several shuckin' places.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, okay. Now, Snotty Ridge, what are some of the other names around here besides Snotty Ridge and the sections . . .

Cigar Daisey: Well, it was – there was Deep Hole and there was Bear Scratch, that used to be Eastside - they always called that Bear Scratch.

Interviewer: Why did they call it Bear Scratch?

Cigar Daisey: Oohhhh, they were tougher 'en hell up there in them days you know. People was a fightin' and a raisin' all kind a haiti you know. You'd just never believe you know how - the way it was you know.

Interviewer: All right.

Cigar Daisey: Didn't want no part of it.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: It's always been characters since the beginnin' a time.

Interviewer: On the Island?

Cigar Daisey: It's just a new crop of 'em ever year now.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: But now a-days it's a little different you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: They were - it is different today I think.

Interviewer: So the other – the other parts of the Island, what are some of the other names, it was Tick Town?

Cigar Daisey: It was Tick Town and there was – let's see, up the neck they called it, up the neck, that was the north end of the Island.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And they had all kind a streets, Bean Street, and ever other kind a streets you could mention you know.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: People just picked a name right outta the clear blue sky and that was it.

Interviewer: What about Bunker Hill? Where did that name come from?

Cigar Daisey: Well that come from – that was down there on where Beebe's ranch was.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: It was a barb wire fence just a north of it. I used to catch red foxes on the edge of that hill.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And it was called Bunker Hill. Today it's all been pushed down. Eddie Tull owns it today and he rents spaces there, but it's all been pushed down. That was – I imagine after the ice age – that's what made that such a big hill there.

Interviewer: Yeah, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And, of course, it had – was no vegetation on it to mount to nothin' 'cept two or three mulberry trees in my lifetime 'cause I used to sit there and shoot the air rifle and kill cat birds and burn _____ or somethin'. I ought not tell you 'bout this, but when you a boy like that you don't know no better, you know.

Interviewer: Talk about it all.

Cigar Daisey: You do things like that.

Interviewer: On yeah. Now, when you – when you were a kid what did you – what did you do for entertainment? What did the young kids do on the Island for entertainment?

Cigar Daisey: You gotcha gun and went in the woods huntin'.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: That's 'bout all there was to do.

Interviewer: All right.

Cigar Daisey: There was an old movie theater if you had money enough, but if you didn't have no money – if you had no money you could buy you three gun shells for ten cents and go in the woods huntin' you know.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: You could get three gun shells for ten cents and that was more fun than anything else.

Interviewer: And what did you hunt when you hunted?

Cigar Daisey: We hunted ducks, don't matter winter, summer, when it was. I mean ducks or shore birds, one or the other. I shot many a shore birds in the glades.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I'd shoot shore birds just like you know – yellow legs is protected.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: So, the birds that you shot, did you – you sold 'em, or your family ate some of them?

Cigar Daisey: Eat 'em - if you could sell 'em, you sold 'em. If you could sell 'em and get you some money so you could go again, that's what you done, but if you didn't you eat 'em.

Interviewer: All right.

Cigar Daisey: You didn't waste 'em, that's for sure. And back in there - in them days, see ever thing was clean then through the whole Island. Wadn't no volume of people.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And if you stop to think about Chincoteague – the way the good Lord made it, or the way the ice age fixed it, it was a ridge, a chain of glades, a ridge, a chain of glades, right on through 'til you come to Main Street.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And what happened in the summer time when it would dry up, all the – all the pollution or whatever it was would dry up and dissipate. You know, go away you know. But today, what they've done now, they've gone through there and drained – they drain ever thing now. They probably destroyed ever thing around here to tell you the truth if you dig into it.

Interviewer: Now you remember – what were the roads like around the Island when you were a kid?

Cigar Daisey: It was shell roads and dirt roads. Down on – down on Ridge Road where – where I was raised it was a dirt road.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Great big ruts in it.

Interviewer: Ah.

Cigar Daisey: And wadn't many cars. A car was a rare thing.

Interviewer: Huh.

Cigar Daisey: When I went anywhere I went on a horse. I rode a horse anywhere I wanted. Wanted to go to town or wherever I wanted to go I road a horse.

Interviewer: You had a horse, what was the horse's name?

Cigar Daisey: Oh, I had a little – a little bay mare, and I had a horse named Gray Boy.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And I had one named Virginia Best. That was a good bred horse. I had lots a horses I did.

Interviewer: Were any of these Chincoteague ponies?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, I had Chincoteague ponies.

Interviewer: And you rode them?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. Yeah. They were all right, but they wadn't - hay – Chincoteague ponies don't show me much tell you the truth when it comes to horses.

Interviewer: Right. Right.

Cigar Daisey: They're –they'll bit ya, kick ya, or do any damn thing to ya, you know what I mean . . .

Interviewer: Now did your brothers – did your brothers ride horses too?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Growing up?

Cigar Daisey: Yes, they sure did.

Interviewer: What about your Dad? Did your Dad ride a horse?

Cigar Daisey: No, not much, he didn't fool with 'em much, no.

Interviewer: Did they have a car back when you were young?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, my Father had a car. He had an old car, yeah. Yeah, he had an old Buick, one of them old road – one of them old big funny lookin' Buicks.

Interviewer: Buicks, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: I 'member that. I tell ya there wadn't many cars around the Island. Most the time the people up town – you see recently in the last few years they've annexed stuff.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But they didn't want nothin' to do with us – them – at that day and at that time – 'cause we were poor as hell and they had it all you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And they'd go through there in their old big cars and rub their nose on their sleeve like that and called us Snotty Ridgers, that's all they had to do. We'd throw a stone or brick or any damn thing we could at 'em if you know what I mean.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: You know – we just didn't tolerate 'em you know. But they enjoyed it too, they thought they were havin' fun with it.

Interviewer: Right. Great.

Cigar Daisey: But it was poor down there man – it was poor down there.

Interviewer: Snotty Ridge was considered poor?

Cigar Daisey: I tell ya the poorest place – there was – well all the way over the whole Island. Ever body died they died with tuberculosis.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Ever body died. See, ya didn't have no hygiene, I mean no bathrooms or nothin' like 'at, nobody had heard a nothin' like 'at.

Interviewer: There were outhouses?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, you better believe it. It was – I'm tellin' ya man, you just won't believe how it was.

Interviewer: Um. How did they get water in the old days?

Cigar Daisey: Well, when my Father went into the poultry business he had one of the first chicken houses and him and two or three more people that went into the poultry business bought some pipe and – at the town – in the town part - they had water that they got from the main land.

Interviewer: All right.

Cigar Daisey: And if you'd buy the pipe they'd furnish you water for a dollar and a half. Dollar and a half a month - use all you want.

Interviewer: Wow.

Cigar Daisey: Dollar and a half a month, that's what you paid. Use all the water you want. And that's what happened. My Father bought the pipe at that time and run it down Ridge Road.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Two or three more people chipped in 'ere with him you know, helped him out.

Interviewer: So it was a well then, a deep well?

Cigar Daisey: That was from the air base – that was comin' from – now the – wadn't the air base then, it was called Hickman's Hill.

Interviewer: But before . . .

Cigar Daisey: Oh, we had a pump. Where I lived with my aunt we had a pump in the damn – in ya kitchen you know where you pushed down in the kitchen. We'd pump water outta that kitchen, that water was just as rusty as iron – just like iron rust like you'd never believe.

Interviewer: So it's old well water, rusty and a lot a iron in it?

Cigar Daisey: Ooohhh – we had a pump, we didn't have no – wadn't no well – just crank that pump and save you some of that nice water. And sometimes you had to be careful 'cause it would get cold at night and freeze in the house you know. And if you froze 'at pump up you knowed you was in a scrape you know.

Interviewer: What did people do for heat – what kind of heating systems did they have in the old days?

Cigar Daisey: Well – a lot a people if you could afford it – tried to get 'em an old coal stove and get 'em a ton or ton and a half of coal stove from Jake Bunting. Get 'em a ton and a half a coal and that would – they could burn wood and get the wood fire goin' and then put coal on it you know, get that goin'. And that would last over night. But a lot a people was real poor had to burn anything they could in an old knot stove they called it. They were real thin, made outta tin.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: You could buy 'em up Charlie Golds for what I would say today a little a nothin' but then it was a plenty.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And you'd throw pine cones and pine needles and branches and stuff ever mornin' you know. That thing would jump right up and down in the middle of the floor like you aint gonna believe. I aint kiddin' ya.

Interviewer: (Laughing). So . . .

Cigar Daisey: Burnt sea wood, wood you find - drift wood you find on the beach ya know.

Interviewer: Pull it up?

Cigar Daisey: You'd take an ole ax, chop it off, pull it off, wadn't no chain saws a course.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: Wadn't no chain saws.

Interviewer: So most people got around either by horseback or walking?

Cigar Daisey: That's right.

Interviewer: Weren't that many cars?

Cigar Daisey: Well, when I first went to school they did have a bus. They come out with a little bus like.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: They picked us up and that and that was say 'bout 1935.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: A little bus. I think the first bus man I 'member, his name was Arthur Leonard. Donald Leonard's father I think drove the bus. He was the first man I knowed drove a school bus.

Interviewer: Okay. All right. He had the fish house down on the water from you?

Cigar Daisey: Well, no, that was his brother.

Interviewer: That was is other brother.

Cigar Daisey: Well – he might a been – might a been – that was Lucky.

Interviewer: Lucky.

Cigar Daisey: Lucky yeah. But he might a had somethin' – be part of it too – I really don't know that.

Interviewer: Okay. Now as you got older as a teenager, what about socialing, meeting girls, that kind of stuff. Did they have dances around here?

Cigar Daisey: No, not really.

Interviewer: Huh.

Cigar Daisey: The only dance you had was when you went to school. You had the high school dance you know.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: That was in the 40's. But it was – you had dance halls now. You had dance halls where you could go where they sold the strong drink there to – they had a great big one 'ere where Buck Cameron's place is today.

Interviewer: Oh yeah?

Cigar Daisey: Where he's got them boats and stuff 'ere you know.

Interviewer: Oh yeah?

Cigar Daisey: That was called the Sea View Casino. Sea View Casino. And next door was Pony Pines. Pony Pines been here since – since Abraham – you know back – I tell ya the truth you aint gonna believe how long that's been here. That's been there you know goin' strong since then.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And you had – you had the – Mack Turner had the – what – where the Chincoteague Inn is today you know.

Interviewer: Yeah. That was another dance hall over there?

Cigar Daisey: There was another dance hall over there.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: And then you had a right many bootleggers. Had a lot a bootleggers.

Interviewer: Oh, did you?

Cigar Daisey: See ya didn't have no state liquor store in 'em days.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: And people went to bootleggin' to get their liquor you know.

Interviewer: All right. So there were bootleggers selling alcohol around?

Cigar Daisey: Oh, you better believe it. That's – that's an old profession, bootleggin'.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Bootleggin'. Ever body wanted – sold liquor in 'em days. Well, ever body – I'd say it was about seven or eight sold it I know off.

Interviewer: Okay, and – so you continued to hunt then – when you were a teenager then?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah. I hunted all – right on through.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Hunted right on through. Hunted right through. Sold ducks. You sold ducks just like you would anything else. I mean if I went in the glade and killed five or ten ducks that night I'd go out to the country store, if somebody 'd give me fifty cents for 'em I was proud as I could be sellin' 'em to 'em you know.

Interviewer: Which ducks – which ducks brought . . .

Cigar Daisey: Black ducks.

Interviewer: more money?

Cigar Daisey: The cheapest I ever sold 'em was fifty cents. 'Bout fifty cents a pair. For two.

Interviewer: For two?

Cigar Daisey: Right, for two.

Interviewer: Okay. And so black ducks, you made more money than the other ducks?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah. Well, that was the main duck we had, was black ducks.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: See you got to remember, if it hadn't a been for World War II I think we'd a been a long time ever comin' outta the Great Depression. We got ours late, where up north I guess they got it real early.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: But even – just as soon as World War II started I was trapin' muskrats. I was trapin' 'em for forty or fifty cents – for each ya know. And then I got nearly Three Dollars – Three Dollars and Eighty-five Cents during World War II you know. First part of World War II.

Interviewer: Were you trappin' them for the pelts or . . .

Cigar Daisey: For the pelts . . .

Interviewer: were people eating them too?

Cigar Daisey: You could sell the meat in 'em days, you got Fifteen Cents for the meat. Aint that funny, Daddy'd get more for the meat than he did for the pelts, idn't that funny.

Interviewer: (Laughing).

Cigar Daisey: 'At's somethin' idn't it.

Interviewer: How'd they'd cook them, what did they make fried muskrat?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, they'd fry 'em for dinner and – they'd cook 'em all kinds a ways.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But mainly, I was interested in the pelts you know.

Interviewer: Right. The skins, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And I used to sell 'em to Sears & Roebuck.

Interviewer: Oh, you did?

Cigar Daisey: Sears & Roebuck was a big fur market.

Interviewer: Sears & Roebuck bought 'em.

Cigar Daisey: You better believe it.

Interviewer: Now where was that at that they . . . ?

Cigar Daisey: You sent 'em - I believe it was Baltimore, Maryland where you sent 'em.

Interviewer: Oh, you shipped em?

Cigar Daisey: You shipped 'em, yeah shipped 'em.

Interviewer: And how did you get paid?

Cigar Daisey: They sent ya a check, a nice check and if you didn't like it – if you had to discuss it with 'em, need to straighten it out with 'em you know. They were pretty fair. I tell you one thing they were fair.

Interviewer: So you basically – how did you package – pack 'em, to ship?

Cigar Daisey: Well, you put 'em in a cardboard box and took 'em to the post office and they'd tell you how much it'd take to send 'em 'ere. And they were greasy pelts, sometime you cut out somethin' similar to the shape of the pelt and put inside of it, make it hold fur.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: But ya dried 'em well before you sent it there and then you took old rags and wiped the grease off of 'em you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: So that they – in transit – it was only a few days though to get 'em wherever they had to go – it was either Philadelphia or Baltimore, I forget where it was now where it used to be where it was.

Interviewer: So shippin' pelts through the mail?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, I've shipped 'em- I've shipped 'em - man I've shipped 'em like you wouldn't believe through there. He stayed in the fur business 'til – right good while, then all of a sudden he got out.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: See when the Yankee people come in I don't think – I think they got outta business you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Okay. Now . . .

Cigar Daisey: I got Three Dollars up in 'em days for a red fox. I never will forget it, for a red fox. The first fox I caught, I caught in 1939.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Right where you go up to Wildcat today.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: Grier Derrickson's place, right there where the old fence used to be. I caught 'em on that hill. A red fox.

Interviewer: You got a red fox . . .

Cigar Daisey: I had a little black pony, had a little black pony, had a job after I killed that red fox, had the greatest job in the world to get 'em on that pony. That pony was scared to death of that red fox for some reason, I never could figure that out.

Interviewer: So fox then brought more money.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, I got Three – well I got Three Dollars for 'em, that wadn't a whole lot a money but it was – it was somethin'.

Interviewer: Good for those days right, good for – that was a lot of shotgun shells?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah, but that wadn't where the money was. See after the War got well underway, in the summer when I come outta school I would go down – I'd go down the bay – what they called down the bay – that was Metompkin Bay.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: In an old boat with my aunt's husband and I worked with him and I'd make me Eighteen-Twenty Dollars – that was the most money as ever heard of you know.

Interviewer: What . . .

Cigar Daisey: Wadn't no clammers then, all the boys was – of any age – was in the service.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: And all the rest of 'em was real old men – you're either old – old – or you're too young or too old.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: You know what I mean. And that was the most money that I've seen in the seafood business in them days at that time.

Interviewer: So what were you doin' down the bay, what were you after?

Cigar Daisey: I was catchin' clams in Metompkin Bay.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But at low water Jim Lang would come out 'ere and shoot the hell outta you, you know. Like you'd never believe. He claimed all them bays you know. Them people down there all – if you worked on the water. Yeah. Yeah.

Unknown Person in Background: (inaudible)

Cigar Daisey: If you – if you worked on the water they called ya a thief ya know.

Interviewer: Right, is that what happened, they called you a thief?

Cigar Daisey: Uh-huh. Yeah, they'd shoot you away from there ya know. They'd shoot and bangin' at ya and drive ya off. We would go down there clammin' on a Monday and sometimes Wednesday night we'd leave – we'd get underway after we worked the tides Wednesday – and start towards home. Then there was a lot a guts, little creeks like over on the mainland.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: That somebody probably claimed – they didn't own. We'd stop there and work the nights' tide. And them guts – them guts in the night time and catch 'em clams and sometimes you'd catch you a thousand or twelve hundred right quick ya know. Go on out. And then just as soon as it cracked daylight you'd get underway and come on home.

Interviewer: Now, how were you catchin' the clams?

Cigar Daisey: With you're feet. With moccasins on your feet, treadin' 'em. They called it treadin' em.

Interviewer: Or wading?

Cigar Daisey: Or wadin' clams, that's right.

Interviewer: All right. And in those days – is it true that the bigger the clam, brought more money?

Cigar Daisey: That's right. The bigger – if they were two hundreds, you got more than you did for three hundreds, and five hundreds, and then eight hundreds and thousands and fifteen hundreds and whatever you know. They sorted so many to a bag ya know.

Interviewer: Right, and now today it's the other way around isn't it?

Cigar Daisey: Now today, now they want fifteen hundreds, top necks they call 'em, and the rest of 'em is just so-so.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: They could care less 'bout 'em you know.

Interviewer: So now the smaller the clams . . .

Cigar Daisey: Times change. I don't know – I don't know how things change like it, but that's the way it was I mean. People wanted somethin' for their money you know.

Interviewer: Yeah. True. So now you guys when you went down the bay you spent a couple days there?

Cigar Daisey: Oh, we spent Monday – we spent the whole week – we spent Monday 'til Wednesday night sometimes, Thursday mornin' we'd start for home. Sometimes you would spend Thursday night down 'ere.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Between here and Wallops Island. And then you would – you would be home Friday mornin'. You had to be home Friday mornin' to put your clams out, get ya food aboard the boat so you could go next week see.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. How many guys in a boat?

Cigar Daisey: Most times three or four, sometimes six or seven on a right good size boat.

Interviewer: Where did you sleep, right on the boat?

Cigar Daisey: Well, you slept up in the bow, up under the bow lockers, then you slept in where the engine was, next to the engine, and all back under – they had places underneath the stern where you could crawl back up there. You curled up like I don't know what.

Interviewer: (Laughing).

Cigar Daisey: You aint gonna believe the way people slept and the way they done.

Interviewer: And – and how – how did you guys eat, what did you eat?

Cigar Daisey: We'd open up cans of stuff you know. Then you'd steam some clams, cook some clams or some oysters or anything you could get – anything you could get a hold of, you'd try to eat it.

Interviewer: And that was just for the week?

Cigar Daisey: That's right. If you killed somethin' with a gun, that was great you know.

Interviewer: So you brought guns?

Cigar Daisey: Getcha a pot - yeah, and maybe throw you some taters in there you know and throw you some shore birds in 'ere – eat shore birds like you wouldn't believe.

Interviewer: All right, so you cooked shore birds up? That's great.

Cigar Daisey: Good Lord, I even fried shore birds like you wouldn't believe. I mean dowitcher particularly.

Interviewer: Dowitcher?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. Dowitcher was a good bird to eat. And robin snipes, a lot a robin snipes.

Interviewer: And so while you were clamming down the bay then you would go ahead and shoot a few?

Cigar Daisey: When the tied was up the water was too deep for you to clam. You'd take the little boat and go ashore and find the little knolls – just covered you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And them shore birds would get right on top of that knoll and shoot right down there and make a grocery shop I called it you know.

Interviewer: (Laughing) A grocery shop?

Cigar Daisey: Seventy-five or a hundred of 'em at one shot you know.

Interviewer: With a shotgun?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, shoot right down 'ere.

Interviewer: So that'll load you up. Now did you – did you eat seagull eggs?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, I've eat gull eggs, I've tried 'em. But we eat real bird eggs more than anything.

Interviewer: Oh.

Cigar Daisey: We'd go rail birdin' – anything that had five or six in it, we'd take 'em. But anything with eight or ten or twelve or more in it, we'd leave 'em alone.

Interviewer: Why is that?

Cigar Daisey: 'Cause they were just 'bout due – you know – they'd probably been settin' on 'em.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Cigar Daisey: Chances is – when they first start landin' it's pretty good, but when – when there's any chance of 'em bein' settin' on, you just wastin' 'em you know.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Sometimes you'd break one and look in 'ere and see if there was somethin'.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: But marsh eggs, we eat 'em all the time.

Interviewer: How did you cook those?

Cigar Daisey: But I'm gonna tell ya somethin' else that happened just 'bout that time – that's got some bearin' on this. In the early 1940's these beaches was lined up with K rations and C rations and powered eggs and ever thing you ever seen in your life.

Interviewer: Washed up?

Cigar Daisey: What happened – they would throw 'em – thrown overboard off these ships, loads of 'em, they'd wash up on the beach. They had two little chocolate bars and hard candy and ever damn thing you could mention in there you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And we'd go along the beach and when the high tide pick up four or five of them candy, you'd get two chocolate bars out of it, and sometimes we'd just take nothin' but the chocolate bars you know, whatever you wanted. Sometimes you'd find a great big thing of powered eggs.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Well we'd mix the powered eggs with – with good eggs you know, and you couldn't tell a whole lot a difference in 'em. They were pretty good.

Interviewer: So it was – these are K rations?

Cigar Daisey: Now this is in the 40's now.

Interviewer: Right, during the war?

Cigar Daisey: Early 40's, during the war.

Interviewer: There were K rations that washed up on the beach?

Cigar Daisey: Oh, the beach was loaded with 'em.

Interviewer: Now I heard that they – during the war there were even some submarine sinkings out here?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah! Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you remember hearing about that?

Cigar Daisey: I was to the fish docks one mornin' when they brung in the boat with bullet holes all through her.

Interviewer: Uh.

Cigar Daisey: Or they didn't – after they sunk the ship they machine gunned the life boat . . .

Interviewer: The crew?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, the crew.

Interviewer: U-boat killing.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, that's right. I was to the fish docks one mornin' when they were over there.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: See when I was a boy – when I was goin' to school when twelve o'clock come we'd go downtown, grab us a bun and a drink, go downtown and go to the fish docks you know what I mean.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Always interested in fish.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: And we'd stay there 'til just before the bell ring and run like hell to get back for school. You know you had to try to get there when the bell rung you know.

Interviewer: What were – what were some of the fish that came up on the fish dock in those days?

Cigar Daisey: Mostly mackerel. Three thousands boxes at a time I've seen come from over there.

Interviewer: Gosh.

Cigar Daisey: Three thousand boxes a day come from over there. You wouldn't believe the truck loads.

Interviewer: Unbelievable.

Cigar Daisey: When I say a box I mean a hundred pounds.

Interviewer: Right, a big wooden box.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. And this would be just while you were there. I don't know how many, boat after boat comin' in, loaded right there with 'em, like you wouldn't believe.

Interviewer: Uh.

Cigar Daisey: There's no – never see that today.

Interviewer: No.

Cigar Daisey: All over.

Interviewer: All over. Now what about other species, like black drum, red drum?

Cigar Daisey: Well, the fish pounds, the fish pounds was the ones that caught the drum. Now, as late as about 1960, Old Man Miles Hancock told me, he said "Cigar if you want to catch black drum you can gill 'em." Catch 'em in a gill net. I said, well, I'm gonna try. So he said here's what you get. Get you some thirteen inch and get ya some sixteen inch sturgeon net. I said all right.

Interviewer: That's the net mesh?

Cigar Daisey: That's the net mesh.

Interviewer: There's thirteen inch and sixteen inch.

Cigar Daisey: So me and Miller Jones were the first two people ever to gill net successfully black drum.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: We started out that year and we caught – we had eight black drum nets, we had eight sturgeon nets. All with fifty fathom shots. We set 'em off there – the rockets – there at NASA, you know, off that beach. We'd go 'bout a thousand yards from the beach and drop her in you know and set 'em off there. And we caught a hundred and sixty black drum a day.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: That's a lot a black drum. That's a lot a weight.

Interviewer: That's a lot of weight.

Cigar Daisey: It weighed forty-seven pounds and a half a piece.

Interviewer: Wow.

Cigar Daisey: It would average 'bout forty-seven and a half pounds is what you'd average.

Interviewer: That's a lot a fish.

Cigar Daisey: And if it was a gale of fish . . .

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: A gale of fish – the sixteen inch sturgeon nets would catch 'em.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And then you got drum weighing eighty-ninety pounds, you know what I mean.

Interviewer: That's right.

Cigar Daisey: You talkin' 'bout big drum. You – then you doubled the size of it.

Interviewer: Was there a good market for drum?

Cigar Daisey: I had all my – we got eight cents a pound.

Interviewer: Eight cents a pound.

Cigar Daisey: Eight Cents a pound is what we got from it.

Interviewer: Now, the drum sold local, were they eaten local, was that a favorite?

Cigar Daisey: Well, a lot of 'em were, but they sold 'em ever where.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But, like I say, I think most of your average was eleven hundred and some. Eleven hundred and some drum and I caught – the biggest sturgeon I had – had eighty-seven pounds of caviar out of 'em. I made eighty-seven pounds of caviar out of 'em.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: But I caught a lot of sturgeons with thirty-five, forty, fifty, sixty pounds of caviar.

Interviewer: Wow.

Cigar Daisey: I caught a lot of little sturgeons. But you know what, I hate to tell you this part of it, we annihilated the sturgeons.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And in the next six or seven years the sturgeon was gone. So you couldn't even catch one.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And sometimes I would catch forty or fifty a day 'bout fifty pounds, even they were gone. They used to say he's such a good guiller, he gills, he's got all that armor plate in 'em and he travels pretty fast. When he hits that net even if he's too small, he wraps up in it you know and you get him anyway whether you want to have 'em or not, you get him anyway.

Interviewer: What did you do with the fish itself? Did people eat the fish?

Cigar Daisey: We – we got eight cents for them too.

Interviewer: For the meat and that was shipped out?

Cigar Daisey: We chopped their head off.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And we'd cut that fish and cut a piece of beef steak right a top his head and it's just like beef steak.

Interviewer: Huh.

Cigar Daisey: And we saved that for our self to eat you know. And we'd sell the sturgeon, gut the sturgeon and sell 'em. You left the scales right on 'em you know, that old big long plate, and chopped the tail off. That's all you done. Of course today their illegal to use 'em like that.

Interviewer: Right. So when you took – when you opened him up you took the roe out, how did you – how did you handle the roe?

Cigar Daisey: I'd take the roe and I had me some quarter mesh screen boxes built and I'd – first thing I would do when I come ashore I'd open up the sturgeon and take as big a pieces I could and put it in tubs. I had some bath size, brand new baths we bought. And we would put it in that and put some salty brine on it.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And then we would go on in the house and get our breakfast and get us some lunch – get us somethin’ to eat or somethin’ you know and then we’d come back and form it up. I then I’d cut it in chunks about the size of my fist. And it’s in a membrane like.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And you take this – and you get a feel for it sooner or later.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And you put it in the palm of your hand and when you rub it like that, it’s just like a shop droppin’ through this quarter mesh what ‘cha call it and it drops down . . .

Interviewer: In the washtub?

Cigar Daisey: I’d have fresh – brand new lard tins. Brand new lard tins never been used before, I let it drop down in there see. Well after you’ve rubbed all the roe – we called it rubbin’ the roe – we rubbed it all out.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: We would take – I always had me a box a crackers and I’d stick me a cracker in it and if it weren’t salty enough to suit me – I’d take a handful or two of salt and put in it – and when it goes around your arm you stick your arm from your elbow on down – on up – down in it and you’re makin’ that roe, you can feel them going through your fingers if you spread your fingers just like a shot.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: It’d get that firm. That firm.

Interviewer: That salt.

Cigar Daisey: All right. Then after it got good and firm like I wanted it, I had stainless steel mesh boxes made for it you know. I’d pour four or five pounds in it – put four or five pounds in it – four or five pounds in it – and all the juice would run out.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And leave nothin’ but the roe settin’ up there right – right gray lookin’. A gray lookin’ roe, it’s good.

Interviewer: Did anyone around here eat any roe?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: You did?

Cigar Daisey: I used to sell - had a few different people here liked it. But most time I would send it to the market. We'd put it in them cans and send it to market. We'd get about Two-Fifty a pound for it, which wadn't a whole lot accordin' to what you can get now a days.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: But about Two-Fifty a pound.

Interviewer: Now, in the old days Cigar, when you were growing up, what did people eat around here?

Cigar Daisey: They eat oysters, clams, crabs, fish, chicken.

Interviewer: Chicken and dumplings?

Cigar Daisey: Stuff like that, and they were tickled with that. And ducks. Ducks was a staple you know, particularly at that time of year.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: And a lot a people raised them a hog or two.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Raised 'em a hog and in the spring they killed her – in the fall they killed their hog – called a hog killin'.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And they had a place where they salted their meat good and in the winter that's what they lived off. You know a barrel of flour.

Interviewer: Yeah . . .

Cigar Daisey: Get 'em a whole barrel a flour.

Interviewer: And that lasted during winter. Now what did they do – like when you were growin' up - where did your Mom go shoppin – was there a local market?

Cigar Daisey: Well, Pocomoke was a big deal in them days. Went up to Pocomoke.

Interviewer: What about on the Island here?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, you shopped on the Island. They had stores all over the Island here.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: But most of 'em, Charlie Gauze and Dale Mitchell's and all them places – all them places then – but a lot of 'em would go to Pocomoke.

Interviewer: Pocomoke.

Cigar Daisey: You'd go to Pocomoke. If you had an old car you'd go to Pocomoke.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: Go up there, twenty mile. And they had lot more stores up there.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. We were talking before about the beach and finding stuff on the beach, were there many ship wrecks at all around? I mean – did you . . .

Cigar Daisey: We never – we never paid any attention to a ship wreck. Once in a while a mackerel boat would come ashore on the beach busted all to pieces you know. We didn't pay no attention to that you know. No big real ship wrecks.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Now we did have a big ship come ashore down here to Gargatha. Loaded with soap and medicine and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: You aint gonna believe this. About, I don't know how many years it's been now, it was boxes a stuff on 'at boat like you wouldn't believe. And I went to a sale down here at Daugherty and you know them people down 'ere had collected some of that soap and had it.

Interviewer: Recently you've seen some of the soap?

Cigar Daisey: It's been in the last twenty years I think now.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And this I'm goin' back to – hay I'm goin' back before 1945 when she busted up.

Interviewer: And they still had some of the soap?

Cigar Daisey: They still had some twenty years ago, some of that soap. There was an old colored gentleman there and he - I told him 'bout that and he said "I don't think you're that old." I said I think I am 'cause I went with Clarefield Thornton - and with Freddie Thornton. Freddie Thornton, I 'spect you might know Freddie.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I said Freddie - Freddie was younger than I am you know. Clarefield was his father. Me and him went down the bay together in 1945 you know. We - me and him I trapped ducks there to - to Cedar Island and we trapped ducks there to Assawoman. That's how come me to be with 'em you know - with the soaps.

Interviewer: Yeah. Were there . . .

Cigar Daisey: And medicine - medicine, little vials of medicine.

Interviewer: Medicine huh?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, come ashore there. But that's the only two I remember, only two I remember.

Interviewer: Now were there many - in the old days were there many black families here on the Island Cigar?

Cigar Daisey: It was a few, nicest people there ever was, nicest people there ever was.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. So there's always been a few as long as you remember?

Cigar Daisey: Fine people, right.

Interviewer: Now where did they . . .

Cigar Daisey: I rabbit hunted with 'em, I rabbit hunted with 'em and if I had muskrats they wanted I give 'em to 'em you know. We always got a long good.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: No problems with 'em.

Interviewer: Where did they live at on the Island?

Cigar Daisey: They lived in Ticktown most of 'em.

Interviewer: Okay. That's Willow Street?

Cigar Daisey: And Joe – where Joe Logan and ‘em lived up in – up in’ ere where Jake Ross’ trailer camp is now, right behind there. That street, wherever it is, where the Mayor lives.

Interviewer: Taylor.

Cigar Daisey: Taylor Street, yeah.

Interviewer: Nice street.

Cigar Daisey: Nice people, all of ‘em was. I liked ‘em.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Let’s see, how . . .

Cigar Daisey: I used to shoot with a black gentleman and he used to get me to put shoes on his horse. See I was a black man when I was younger too.

Interviewer: Oh, you were a blacksmith?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah. I was a horse shoer. I shoed horses, mules, any damn thing, didn’t matter what.

Interviewer: Did you really.

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah. Raised horses, ever thing. I’ve tried ever thing.

Interviewer: So a lot of people rode horses in those days?

Cigar Daisey: You better believe it.

Interviewer: What about horse and wagon – were there still a few around?

Cigar Daisey: There was a few around. Old man Charlie Clark had one.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, old man Charlie Clark, he lived right there on – well I can’t hardly tell ya where – you know where Betty Ray’s Flower Shop is?

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Right there – that third house – second house down, that was old man Charlie Clark’s house.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And he had an old big horse cart and a mule. And Cudd Mears used to come get me to put shoes on that mule. I had a seventy-five pound animal you had to come and get me in those days if I wadn't doin' anything.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Mr. Clarence Tarr he had a mule. Up there where _____ lives today. I put shoes on his mule. And Linwood – Linwood Logan, he had a mule.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I shoed his mule you know. Of course, there's all the ridin' horses and stuff like that. Wadn't too many mules as it was horses you know.

Interviewer: Right. Now to this day, how old are you now?

Cigar Daisey: I'm 70 plus.

Interviewer: And to this day you still don't have a driver's license, is that true?

Cigar Daisey: No, no don't have no driver's license.

Interviewer: Never had one?

Cigar Daisey: I'm gonna wait 'til I'm eighty.

Interviewer: (Laughing).

Cigar Daisey: And then I'm gonna get me some.

Interviewer: Why did you never get a driver's license?

Cigar Daisey: I don't know. I really don't know to tell you the truth. It's times that I probably needed to drive.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I really don't care a whole lot about it.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: If I had my day I would a been borned about 1800's. I think I could enjoy myself better.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I'm not mad at volumes of people or nothin' like 'at, but I just don't – I can't say I enjoy 'em.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, right, right.

Cigar Daisey: I can't say I do. But – I can't say I enjoy progress.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: It's a – sooner or later it's gonna – it'll destroy ever thing, I know that.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Just like the Island here. At one time this was probably the nicest place it was on earth – at this point - a garden, like Euphrates and the Tigers where they come together or somethin' similar to that who knows.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: At one time. But today . . .

Interviewer: It's changed hadn't it?

Cigar Daisey: It's changed, it certainly has and – when they put that bridge to the Refuge, that was the end of Chincoteague as been named. It's been a nice place to live now as far as makin' money for the tourist.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, people give money, them tourist.

Interviewer: But the bridge through Assateague is what you think caused the change – the big changes.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, it destroyed the Island. It might even a hurt the Refuge. Might even a hurt the Refuge. I believe this – and I have no way a knowin' – I don't have any way in the world a knowin', of course you worked there you know somethin' about it too.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I expect they spend more money on tourist than they do on ducks.

Interviewer: Yeah, oh yeah. Now you worked over there doing some trapping at one time at the Refuge?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, I trapped for the Fish and Wildlife.

Interviewer: So you've got – you've got a good reputation as being a good trapper, is that true, how did that . . .

Cigar Daisey: Well, I'm the only trapper see. See I trapped all my life. If you want to go back to 1938 or even earlier than that I trapped muskrats, that's the way I made a livin'. And I wanted to go its - degree, I wanted to get all I could – learn all I could and I used to buy books and that was long before tapes come out you know.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: By professional trappers and I wanted to learn the main way they done things.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And I learned a lot. You have to – knowin' – in trappin' you gotta learn a lot of it yourself.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: You gotta teach yourself what you done right or wrong. And in order to make an animal put his foot where you want it, you gotta know somethin' about him. And once you learn somethin' about him, he's in trouble.

Interviewer: And you got - you became good enough that the government hired you as a professional trapper?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. But you gotta remember 'bout that. I trapped it illegally all my life.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: And the last goin' off when they couldn't do no better.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: They had to yield to me I guess you call it. (Laughing) Whatever you want to say about it. But I don't – I don't you know – hey, I aint got a thing in the world against the Fish and Wildlife, I think it's the greatest thing in the world and I think they do a wonderful job.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And I'm not mad at no body.

Interviewer: But the trapping you started as a young man?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. I do say this – it should be tougher on the animals. We know for a fact if you read your DU magazine, or whatever it is – I was partly responsible for that ‘cause I told a lot a prominent people in Washington one time about that – about trappin’. If you want a lot a ducks you can’t have foxes and damn ‘coons and ever thing else in one pin. You can’t raise ‘em all there together. You got to eliminate somethin’.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Or you gotta cut ‘em down so they’re scavengers instead of predators. There is a role there for scavengers you know.

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. That’s a good point.

Cigar Daisey: But – really – it’s really what - what affects the . . .

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: the evolution.

Interviewer: Okay, so trapping has been something you’ve done for a while?

Cigar Daisey: Uh, I’ve done it all my life. I’ve done it all my life up ‘til the last few years and now I don’t want to. I’ve trapped otter and ‘coon and fox and muskrats you know all my life. I really don’t want to catch otter no more they’re too pretty.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: At one time they – they helped me make a week’s work, so I – you know I’d be cruel to them too if I was gettin’ maybe a week’s work on ‘em.

Interviewer: We were talkin’ before about – if you could change anything, what would you change on the Island – in regards to the - you were talkin’ about the bridge?

Cigar Daisey: Well. . .

Interviewer: If you could change anything, what would you do?

Cigar Daisey: I don’t think you can stop progress. So I would say, would I like to have a bridge, the answer is no. But I know it’s gonna be.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But you – you can't stop 'at. It's inevitable. It's gonna be, always will. And I don't think you can change nothin' really. Not a thing. I mean (pause).

Interviewer: Now value systems in the Island have changed quite a bit haven't they?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: The value today is different from what it was?

Cigar Daisey: Well, you could a bought where I'm livin' here now, at one time when Hawkins left here in 1960's for 'bout Thirty Thousand Dollars.

Interviewer: Yeah.

(End of First Side – Being Side B, Start Second Side, Being Side A)

Cigar Daisey: In 1946, John H. Buckalou was Refuge Manager.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And I think it was '46, I'm pretty sure it is. Any way, he was – I went over there that night and robbed his duck traps he had. Was loaded with pintails. I think I stole seventy or eighty pintails with Mark and George and Uncle Fishy. All we could carry. We took all we could carry. And the reason – while I was in there chasin' 'em down I lost these cigars. So the next day Buckalou, he – he goes down to see Harry Birch. Harry Birch is in the Coast Guard Station. Down to Assateague Coast Guard.

Interviewer: On Assateague?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, on Assateague. And he asked Harry Birch – anybody down there smoke cigars – he thought they were Coast Guard boys that robbed him you know. No, he said, they're too poor to smoke cigars, that they would steal food and carry it to old man Scott when he lived on here now, 'bout that day and that time you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: They would do 'at you know. Give to Mr. Ben Scott – anyway, finally Harry figured it out just like that, he knowed me you know see. Harry knew me real well. So he used to kid Norm Jones. Norm Jones is who took care of the Lighthouse at the time.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: And he said now I want to tell you that you stole Buckalou's ducks. He said no, that's Cigar's ducks. You know that – that was me 'cause - well that Sunday I rode over there on my horse and rode down there and seen all them pintails in that trap. And I said when it gets

damn good and dark I'm gonna go over there and clean him out root and branch like you wouldn't believe. (Laughing) That's been a many a day a go. So that's what I done you know, got the boys to go with me 'cause I said boys it's more 'an I can tow - get away with - gotta get all we can tow you know.

Interviewer: So then . . .

Cigar Daisey: So after that the name "Cigar" was - actually John, whatcha call it . . .

Interviewer: Buckalou.

Cigar Daisey: Buckalou started it you know.

Interviewer: Started callin' you . . .

Cigar Daisey: But you know I wanna tell you somethin' . . .

Interviewer: Started calling you that - but he knew your last name?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. Let me tell you 'bout John Buckalou while I'm on the subject of 'em.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: He's a fine man.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: To this day I hold nothin' against John Buckalou.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: He's a hell of a good Game Warden and he was the best that ever was. I believe he treated ever body right.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: He told _____ I'll never know the ends or outs of it and I'm just gonna have to let that go, for they had problems . . .

Interviewer: Walt Clark too?

Cigar Daisey: And Walt Clarktree. Walt shot 'em you know and was later - you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But see as far as I'm concerned, John Buckalou treated me fine. The only time they ever took me to court that day, he was nice to me. He was – he was – what I would call accordin' to the law.

Interviewer: What – what were you caught for?

Cigar Daisey: I wadn't really caught for nothin'. They started – they tried to inspect me and I had been shootin' red breasted mergansers. It was a real calm mornin' and as the good Lord would have it I didn't kill but one.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: And most time you killed thirty-five or forty you know, mornin', but it was one of them slick calm mornin's like you wouldn't believe and they wanted to inspect me and I wouldn't let 'em do it. I run from 'em and if you run from the law, they get you for resistin' inspection.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Then they got me 'cause I had a pocket knife in my pocket, carryin' a concealed weapon, endangering government property - and possession of migratory game birds outta season. And he couldn't prove a damn one of 'em.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Today you know what they'd do, they'd run you outta court so quick it's pitiful.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: He couldn't carry you to court with nothin' like 'at today.

Interviewer: Nah.

Cigar Daisey: Man, it would be a big joke.

Interviewer: So now you . . .

Cigar Daisey: At that time you could get away with it see.

Interviewer: So now you were – you were also kind of at the tail end of market hunting? Were you – tell me about the market hunting.

Cigar Daisey: I sold ducks from before 1940 clean up 'til the 1960's.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Any time I wanted to. Hundreds and hundreds of dollars worth of black ducks.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: That I sold people.

Interviewer: On the Island?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, on the Island. I had 'em – I sold em off the Island, I sold 'em to undercover agents, through a third party – through another party.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Undercover agents for the Fish and Wildlife. Joe – Joe what's his name, Joe somebody out 'ere – Joe Withers, Joe Withers, was in charge of it. He knowed they were Cigar's ducks, but wadn't nothin' he could do 'bout it.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: And that went on and I sold – one day Clarence come there and brung a man by the name of – oh, I don't know what in the world his name was now.

Interviewer: Clarence Clark brought him over?

Cigar Daisey: He brung a boy – a man over there one day. I was sittin' eatin' a little bit a lunch, wanted to know if I had any ducks, I said yeah I took 'em up Marvin - go get – get whatcha want of 'em and pay Marvin. So he went on up 'ere then, undercover agent went on up 'ere and got Marvin.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I always used a go between.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: That's the reason why I never did get in no trouble.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. So now how - how were you catchin' the ducks, were you shootin' 'em?

Cigar Daisey: I would catch 'em in traps.

Interviewer: Traps. Okay, what was the trap like? What . . .

Cigar Daisey: A trap – a three by four, three feet wide and four feet long, with a “v” type funnel.

Interviewer: Made of what?

Cigar Daisey: Made of chicken wire, inch mesh chicken wire, two-inch mesh top. Or I made my tops outta net 'cause they used to tear my hands up and bein' a net man I made my tops outta net you know so they - it would be easy on my hands. Easy on the ducks when they jumped up too.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Didn't beat 'em or bruise 'em or nothin' you know. And I would – I would catch – I would catch 'bout eighty or ninety, two traps right side one another, three by fours. Eighty or ninety, three by fours.

Interviewer: Um!

Cigar Daisey: Aint a very big space now.

Interviewer: Uh, uh, uh.

Cigar Daisey: I've seen 'em pack on one another's back so they didn't have a damn feather on 'em.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: It – they worked the feathers right off one another's back.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Particularly if they got a little muddy.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: A little bit muddy. But most of the time when I went to a place where I was gonna trap I'd take my feet and stomp – I'd take my hands and tear all the grass down, stomp it down good, and then take my scoop that I bale out my boat with and wash it down until I got it just as clean as this floor.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: So then I put my trap down.

Interviewer: Now where did you put the traps – where was the best place?

Cigar Daisey: On the edge of the gut.

Interviewer: By a gut?

Cigar Daisey: By a gut, a little creek, that was the best place. In a pond - in a pond you caught 'em all night long.

Interviewer: Huh.

Cigar Daisey: 'Cause the water didn't rise or fall see what I mean. And that - that would put you 'tween the crack of daylight 'fore you could fish the traps and try to get home, see what I mean, stretched your time. You'd be better off to go off and work the tide you know - get the tide. When the tide come up the ducks come in, went in the trap, you went in 'ere and got the traps and you were home - you'd be home by maybe two or three o'clock in the mornin' see. Eight hours a night.

Interviewer: What did you . . .

Cigar Daisey: He who likes darkness better than light his deeds is evil, you gotta remember that.

Interviewer: (Laughing) Now, you - you primarily set the traps but you worked them or fished them up so to speak.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Took the ducks out at night?

Cigar Daisey: Took 'em out at night.

Interviewer: You ran no lights on the boat?

Cigar Daisey: Nope, no lights on the boat. Wadn't such a thing as a light on a boat.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And I'd go right on in there right on up to the trap. Most - sometimes you'd - if you were a little suspicious you'd cut 'er off.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And you'd - just before you got to where the trap was you'd strike on the boat two or three times and then they'd jump up in the air 'cause for ever one you caught you had two or three there you didn't catch.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Cigar Daisey: So then there'd be a big bunch. And then you'd know nobody hadn't been there, but if somebody had been 'ere previous to you it wouldn't be no ducks 'ere. Then you were a little bit shy.

Interviewer: Okay, so you'd bang on the side of the boat?

Cigar Daisey: That's right. You'd - donk-donk-donk on the side of your boat you know.

Interviewer: And ducks would get up and fly away?

Cigar Daisey: Ducks would jump up and fly away when you got close to her.

Interviewer: Okay. That's good. And - now what did you use for bait?

Cigar Daisey: Corn. If you wanted to catch teal and stuff like 'at you had to use weed seed and smaller grains.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But I was mainly interested in black ducks.

Interviewer: Was that the big market duck?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Black duck?

Cigar Daisey: Black duck was the big market. This was the black duck capital of the world. From this bridge to Wallops Island bridge today, was the black duck capital of the world.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: And you could catch teal, you'd get Three or Four Dollars a piece for them. People that raised ducks in captivity would give you that much for 'em.

Interviewer: For a live one?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, for a live one, yeah. For pintails you'd get Five Dollars a piece for them.

Interviewer: Wow. This is back in the 50's?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: That was good money.

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah, it was –even ‘fore then.

Interviewer: Yeah, that’s good money. So basically the trap was put up in these guts, you worked the tides, and used corn for bait?

Cigar Daisey: That’s right.

Interviewer: And trapped your black ducks?

Cigar Daisey: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: And then you’d take all the money you’d made and shoot it up in gun shells – you know what I mean.

Interviewer: (Laughing).

Cigar Daisey: When you come out with it, this market huntin’ deal you didn’t – wasn’t a whole hell of a lot.

Interviewer: No.

Cigar Daisey: The year was over, you didn’t have no money left ‘cause the first windy day you bought all the shells you could buy with what money you had and shoot ‘em away you know. (Laughing)

Interviewer: That’s right, that’s right.

Cigar Daisey: Man is somethin’ you know. He’ll destroy hisself if you let him go. Let him go long enough.

Interviewer: So now, when you were shootin’, were those birds sold too?

Cigar Daisey: I sold ‘em, yes I did.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: You got Twenty-five Cents less for each bird, but you sold them too.

Interviewer: Okay. Twenty-five Cents less when they were dead?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, yeah. At that time you’d get a dollar and a quarter for a good corn-fed black duck with no shot in it.

Interviewer: How did you – the ducks were in the trap, what did you do when you took ‘em out?

Cigar Daisey: I put ‘em bags, put fourteen or fifteen in a bag.

Interviewer: Did you ring their necks first?

Cigar Daisey: No. You put cha – you tied – what cha gonna tie the mouth of the bag with you put here in your shirt.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And reach up ‘ere and get cha one and then tie the bag and chuck it one side to your left, being right handed.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And then you’d load up another bag and chuck it to one side like ‘at you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And then you’d take ‘em on home alive.

Interviewer: Ah-hah.

Cigar Daisey: And keep ‘em ‘til ‘bout two or three o’clock in the evenin’.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Where that corn burns out of ‘em.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And then you crank their necks.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Cigar Daisey: And you’d throw ‘em in somethin’ soft. If you don’t they’ll bruise their self. They’ll bruise their wings.

Interviewer: Wow.

Cigar Daisey: Uh-huh.

Interviewer: So what do you mean somethin’ soft?

Cigar Daisey: I had a little ole' boat there that I used a lot a times with hay in 'er you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Put hay in 'ere and I'd just chuck 'em over 'ere.

Interviewer: Oh.

Cigar Daisey: I gave 'em two cranks like 'at and throw 'em in 'ere. I cranked a hundred and two one mornin' and shuckin' out the wheel barrel. It was so quick you just wouldn't ever believe it. The people just – they were handin' em to me and I was crankin' 'ere heads you know – give 'em two cranks and throw 'em in the wheel barrel. But they would bruise their self in that wheel barrel.

Interviewer: Would they – yeah?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. 'Til you got a cushion in 'ere.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Okay.

Cigar Daisey: See ya didn't wanna bruise their self 'cause the wings would be dirty.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: Brownish lookin'.

Interviewer: Okay. All right. So now your scrapes with the law . . .

Cigar Daisey: I had many a scrapes with the law – but I always seemed to come out on top.

Interviewer: I mean they chased you?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah and I'd always get away, get away. I've had 'em lay to my traps and I went right close to my traps and I'd see 'em and tell 'em – you wait you son of a - and I'd let myself go you know.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, I had all kinds of scrapes with the law.

Interviewer: So they were tryin' to follow you?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. They hated me like you'd never believe. Particularly the Grayson feller, Old Man Grayson.

Interviewer: Grayson Chesser's dad?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, yeah. He offered money for me and ever thing in the world – he give the boys money for me and ever thing in the world. To get me in and ever thing.

Interviewer: So there was a price on your head then?

Cigar Daisey: Always – always seemed like - let me tell you somethin'. I don't think I was smart but I was 'bout like the red fox, I was scared to death.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: As long as you are scared, you'll always look around, behind ya and ahead of ya and ever where in the world.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And I think 'at's what - what was my salvation, was I had fear from it. I knew they could catch me if they done it right.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: Most people'd say – ah hell, he can't get me you know, but he can. Aint no doubt.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: My fear of them probably was my salvation.

Interviewer: Okay. And so these guys – would follow you out from the dock at night when you – when you . . .

Cigar Daisey: No, no.

Interviewer: They'd lay up there and wait for you?

Cigar Daisey: They'd – a lot a times they would try to figure out where your traps were – what area you were trappin' in.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But see I used a pretty good system on 'at.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Anybody tongin' clams or oystering in the area I would always contact with them. That day – have you seen Jim Williams? Jim Williams was the big time man to find duck traps.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Well, we seen him down here yesterday. Well just as soon as you seen him in a certain area I knowed what he was gonna do. I knowed him just like a book. He was goin' in the area with the tide up and go up ever little gut and trickle lookin' for duck traps.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Just as soon he went up to that duck trap and left and went on out I'd go in 'ere and throw me some corn and start puttin' me one behind him. See, I was – I was just like playin' behind him all the time.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: And if he – I knowed he was gonna find where I was – where I was if he kept goin' see.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And then I would just not go 'ere no more.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And I mean wire was cheap and wadn't no need to go no more and once in a while I'd stay out 'ere with the tide up high and look all around and throw some corn just for the hell of it – worry the hell out of 'em you know. Keep him goin' back and back and back lookin' for me 'ere and I was never gonna go 'ere no more no way. I didn't give a damn anyway.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I'd take whole ears a corn and put wire around 'em and stick 'em down in the marsh you know there and get 'em comin' and he said I know he'll be back here some day, but I never done it.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Actually he retired . . .

Interviewer: So you threw him off your trail?

Cigar Daisey: After he retired he come over to see me one day and he said, “son, you don’t know how many times I’ve been close to ya.” I said Mr. Williams I always figured you were close to me. And that’s the reason why you never got me, that’s for damn sure.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: The last day he was game warden me and Adrian Darby we was gonna kills some robin snipes and we went on down to that shoulder off of Wallops Island.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And I was – first thing we done though was – where the boat basin is today, the marsh was right short there.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And we sailed up ‘ere and it was two or three big ole curlys there and Adrian let go through ‘em and killed a couple of ‘em. I jumped right out and got ‘em, brung ‘em to the boat and we looked out ‘ere and there was corn and Asher - I said Adrian that looks like the damn game warden. He said, “no, that’s the Eastern Shore Public Service.” They went around - telling - in the car you know. I said no, I think it’s the game warden. Well see, he had a radio man, you can’t beat them radios.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: You can’t run away from them radios. But we let ourself go to Wallops Island, we get off that big shoal. Robin snipes is on that shoal like you wouldn’t believe you know.

Interviewer: Now what year is this?

Cigar Daisey: God, I don’t know it’s been so long. It was probably early 1950’s.

Interviewer: The 50’s?

Cigar Daisey: Probably early 1950’s. Whenever Jim Williams retired. That was the last day he ever worked. Find out when he retired and you’ll know what day it was.

Interviewer: So then you went after those robin snipes?

Cigar Daisey: So anyway, I was a shootin’ em and Adrian was out ‘ere with a bushel basket and me and him out on that shoal a pickin’ em up you know. Had a bushel basket. We had to have a bushel basket for to get ‘em. When I looked over – here’s an airplane just ‘bout high as a telephone pole.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Just goin' round and round, just goin' round and 'round, an airplane. Bain I think his name was at that day and at that time. You could probably figure out the time when Bain was the warden up 'ere. Bain I think his name was.

Cigar Daisey: Anyway, I said boy we are in a mess now. We're in a hell of a mess now like you aint gonna believe. Well, we picked up all them birds and when – when he made a pass over us like 'at, goin' right over top of us, I knowed he couldn't see me 'cause he couldn't look behind where he was goin' ahead. The water was rough and choppy that day and the wind was blowin' a right good breeze. I turned this bushel basket of birds over.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Basket over top of them birds. Adrian took his pocket knife out stuff and cleaned the boat out just as clean as it could be. There was – a scoop full of water you know up in 'ere, wash it all out you know and I'd scoop it out the stern. Well, when we come to – we were goin' through the old canal, goin' to the western comin' on through this a way, we went on around it where them shoals is today – you couldn't do 'at today, the shoals just aint 'ere. But we went around this a way and when I did I come out – a big high powered outboard motor boat runned up along side of us. He said that's all for today boys. Adrian said, "Cigar don't say a word, just let me do the talkin'." And I said all right. I'll let you do the talkin'. He grabbed a hold of my bow line and towed us in 'ere to the canal. The canal 'ere.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: He was tellin' us 'bout shootin' 'em birds and I never said a word. Adrian said we didn't shoot no damn birds. We had our shotguns and 'bout a hundred fifty gun shells. Automatic shotguns and 'bout a hundred fifty gun shells. They took the shotguns, they took the shells. Carried 'em out 'ere and layed 'em 'cross the hood of one of the cars. And then the game wardens started comin' up, 'bout sixteen or seventeen of 'em all together. Jim Williams too and ever body else comin'. Never seen nothin' like 'em in your life. The last day Jim Williams ever – ever was a game warden.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: So – so anyway – anyway they fooled and talked you know to their self. Finally they come back to the boat and they said well, you're gonna be hearin' from us. And I thought to myself, that aint very good news, I'm gonna be hearin' from 'em. But anyway, they brung the gun back, they brung the shells back and put down in the bottom. And one man threwed a box of shells down in the boat and busted it. The shells went all over the place.

Interviewer: Uh.

Cigar Daisey: And I really think he was a little bit irritated. I would use another word but I won't.

Interviewer: Right, right.

Cigar Daisey: I think he was a little bit irritated.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Busted that box a shells when he throwed 'em down in the boat. Anyway, we come on home. I never heard nothin' from 'em. So I guess maybe two or three months passed by, in the spring or somethin' or 'nother, or this was later in the summer. This was in the spring when we went robin snipe huntin'. Jim Williams come 'ere to see me, he said, "son I wanna come see ya." I said well, Mr. Williams you're certainly welcome. I was never mad at 'em or nothin'. I aint mad at none of these people. Hold nothin' against 'em whatsoever.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: Anyway, he said, "well Cigar I got somethin' to tell you." He said, "If we'd a had any evidence we'd a put it to you." I said yelp, that's what I figured you know. But he said – you know – you didn't have no birds - no birds, and that was all it was to it you know.

Interviewer: So all those robin snipes then you just threw 'em overboard?

Cigar Daisey: Just threw 'em overboard with the basket upside down in the choppy water.

Interviewer: And it sank.

Cigar Daisey: Seas were rollin' 'bout 'at high.

Interviewer: Yeah, so they sank.

Cigar Daisey: Couldn't tell 'bout it.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: That's the last time I think I ever talked with 'em.

Interviewer: Was it?

Cigar Daisey: He told me that day, he said "son" he said, "I been so close to ya at times it's pitiful." He said "you'd never believe it."

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: I said you probably have Mr. Williams, but I got news for you, I said on the northwest side of your house where 'at big patch a honeysuckle is in 'ere I've layed in 'ere a many a night and watch you come home.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: I'd lay in 'ere in that honeysuckle and watch him come home you know 'fore I went off on the water 'cause I knowed he would be the man was gonna try and get me.

Interviewer: Sure. I'm sure he liked to hear that.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, yeah – that's the rest of the story. That's the Paul Harvey story you know.

Interviewer: Now, you don't – you don't hunt any more?

Cigar Daisey: Oh no.

Interviewer: When did you – when did you stop hunting?

Cigar Daisey: Well, 'bout seven or eight years ago. Once in a while somebody comes by, wantin' me to go with 'em, I'll go with 'em. I just go for just – be a companion, talk with 'em and I could care less 'bout killin' a duck.

Interviewer: You still buy a hunting license then every year?

Cigar Daisey: I buy a huntin' license. I tell ya somethin' else, I'm probably the oldest person that you'll meet, includin' Moose Reed, that's bought a continuous fishin' license – commercial fishin' license in the State of Virginia.

Interviewer: Oh, okay.

Cigar Daisey: I bought 'em in 1945. Year I graduated.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: I was in Archie Birches old clam house and Old Man Will Steelman come over 'ere and he said Daisey Boy, he said you're out a school now, he said I want cha to come getcha license. Prior to that he'd let me catch jumpin' mullets and spot and didn't have to have no license.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: So I've owned a continuous commercial fishin' license since 1945, but you know they won't give me rock permits.

Interviewer: Why?

Cigar Daisey: Well –

Interviewer: For striped bass?

Cigar Daisey: For striped bass. Because a few years before the striped bass fishin' was over I quit foolin' with striped bass, you know what I mean.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I'd catch striped bass that was sixty–seventy pounds.

Interviewer: Wow.

Cigar Daisey: Damn if that aint a big one buddy. I'd catch a lot of 'em fifty-seven/fifty-eight pounds.

Interviewer: That's a big fish.

Cigar Daisey: You'd better believe it. He was the biggest one I'd ever seen. He was damn near long as me or you to tell you the truth.

Interviewer: That's a big fish.

Cigar Daisey: You'd better believe it. He was slim and long – in the spring of the year too like that.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: I caught 'em in a sturgeon net, now you know what a sixteen inch sturgeon is.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: You know what the hell he is.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's a big fish.

Cigar Daisey: So – but to this day I can't get – see I quit for the years and when I didn't apply for 'em – when they come out with this card deal you know, I didn't apply for 'em – and they just wouldn't let me have 'em.

Interviewer: Yeah, but you don't – I mean . . .

Cigar Daisey: I'm not gonna do it any way, but I think – I think they ought to have some kind of a grandfather deal if I wanna rock – go catch me a rock, you know what I mean.

Interviewer: Right. Having a license . . .

Cigar Daisey: I'll go do it anyway – I'll be very damn - tell you the rest of the story. If I want me a rock I'll go out here and catch me a rock, I'm gonna bring 'em home and I'm gonna eat 'em.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: I'm gonna take anything that I want to eat.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I'm not gonna waste nothin'. I'm not gonna abuse nothin'.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: But I'm like the damn Indian. I'm gonna do just whatever I'm gonna make use of and that's it. They can call me a law violator – call me anything they want to.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Don't make no damn difference. Only Jesus is the man I got to answer to on the day of judgment.

Interviewer: That's right.

Cigar Daisey: And I'm sure he aint gonna have nothin' to say about it.

Interviewer: That's true. Do you miss those days of hunting Cig?

Cigar Daisey: No.

Interviewer: You don't?

Cigar Daisey: Rainy days, windy days, I'd rather be in here where it's warm than be out 'ere and bein' colder an' hell, you know, bein' cold like you wouldn't believe.

Interviewer: Yeah. Did you do any guiding at all – hunting guide?

Cigar Daisey: No, no I quit many years ago.

Interviewer: So you did a little bit?

Cigar Daisey: I guided for many years. Oh, I guided for 'bout twenty years.

Interviewer: Oh, you did?

Cigar Daisey: Twenty years, somethin' like 'at.

Interviewer: Who were the sports that came down?

Cigar Daisey: I – I guided down 'ere at Chincoteague Yacht & Sportsman's Club.

Interviewer: Where was that at?

Cigar Daisey: Yelp, at the south end, where Burton's Campground is today.

Interviewer: That was the hunting club?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, Chincoteague Yacht & Sportsman's Club, yeah, it was.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: Old man Walt guided 'ere, Clarence guided 'ere, little Walt, oh man it was a bunch of 'em guided 'ere.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. I worked 'ere for – I worked 'ere 'til they closed it. Matter of fact I was in charge of it when they closed it.

Interviewer: Um. When did that close, do you remember?

Cigar Daisey: No, I don't.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: I'll tell you what I think – after 1960.

Interviewer: You're talkin' about Tom's Cove Campground?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: That was it.

Cigar Daisey: After 1960, Mr. Tolliver was gonna sell it. He wanted to sell it for A Hundred and Forty Thousand Dollars. Where the hell you gonna get A Hundred and Forty Thousand Dollars in 1960?

Interviewer: In 1960, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And that's the rest of the story.

Interviewer: You know what it's worth now.

Cigar Daisey: Oh my God man, aint no way. But anyway, I worked 'ere and I took care of the place for him and – uh – when it was closed up he give me a lot of the decoys. He give me a whole lot of the decoys.

Interviewer: Now speaking of decoys, let's talk about that because now obviously this is your – your claim to fame, you're one of the best there are. Tell me about when you got started.

Cigar Daisey: Well, I had many jobs that I could do. You gotta remember one thing – I worked as an instrument man on a survey crew for thirteen years.

Interviewer: Um-huh.

Cigar Daisey: That's 1945 to what 'bout '60 – '58, '59 I think. '59 was the last job I took. I was – I was lucky enough to always get me a job.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: In the meantime I would work 'til - most times it was summer jobs and I would work in the summer and just as soon as fish season come around, August, September, somethin' like 'at, I'd quit.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Sometimes a little bit later. But – it was never a winter was I gonna work, not when I could hunt for ducks and stuff you know. And then I made decoys on the side. This was somethin' I could do when the wind blowed hard or anytime else I didn't have – the first decoys I made was 1941. Me and my Father made a rig.

Interviewer: Oh, your Father was a carver?

Cigar Daisey: Yes, my Father was a carver, yes he was. I found – I went on the north end of Wallops Island – used to be an inlet 'ere, called gunboat inlet. They used to have ships layin' 'ere then – boats layin' ere then, guardin' the inlet, keep from German spies comin' a shore here then years ago, that's right I aint kiddin' ya.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Right 'ere – right straight on out where the end of that whatcha call it – right straight on out through that – today the sands up 'ere a mile.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: You'd never know it was 'ere – in my day and my time.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Anyway, I found a raft on 'at beach, one of them rafts like they put boards off on them submarines or ships.

Interviewer: Right, balsa.

Cigar Daisey: Balsa.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And I told Clairfield and my Father, I said I know where a raft is. I found it up 'ere but I can't – I can't budge it, it's too much for me you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: So we took one of them old saws with a – wood saws you know, went in 'ere and sawed it up in chunks.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: We towed it a crossed the beach and put it in the boat.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: And me and him made it up in black ducks and hairy heads – which is hooded mergansers.

Interviewer: Right, right. So that was your first set of rigs.

Cigar Daisey: First rig of ducks we had.

Interviewer: Now your Dad – so your Dad carved just for hunting rigs or he sold some too?

Cigar Daisey: Just huntin' rigs, never sold none then. He never sold ducks 'til I guess it was 1970 probably before he sold ducks.

Interviewer: Do you still have any of your Dads?

Cigar Daisey: Not a one in the world of 'em.

Interviewer: Oh, you don't have any of your Dad's decoys?

Cigar Daisey: No, I don't.

Interviewer: That's too bad. So that's when you started then, just doin' a little bit part-time?

Cigar Daisey: One thing you gotta remember 'bout decoys is this – at 'at day and at 'at time – I'd go shoot a black duck, after 1945 and get a dollar for 'im. The most you'd get for a decoy was a dollar and a quarter.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: It's easier go through a bunch, get twelve or fifteen man, you've made a bunch – see what I mean?

Interviewer: That's right.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, that's the way you gotta look at it.

Interviewer: That's a good point.

Cigar Daisey: That's the way you gotta look at it.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And – I wadn't – in 1950 some I made fifty-two or fifty-three, first come out with a little tonight plastic decoy like.

Interviewer: Right, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And I took and made some wood like 'em.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I liked 'em, I took and copied 'em, made some wood like 'em. I said boy – they were nice - made some blue bills. I made a bunch of stuff. But anyway, decoys didn't – at 'at day and at 'at time hold much for ya. Wadn't much you could do 'cause they weren't worth nothin'. A dollar and a quarter, a dollar and a half at the most.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: I made as late as 1963 – a dozen mergansers for Thirty-six Dollars.

Interviewer: Wow!

Cigar Daisey: Sold ‘em to Little Walt.

Interviewer: Oh, did you?

Cigar Daisey: Today you can get – God man you can get Twelve or Fifteen Hundred Dollars a piece for ‘em.

Interviewer: Laughing.

Cigar Daisey: That’s right I aint kiddin’ ya.

Interviewer: Um. Now, when did you start carving full-time then?

Cigar Daisey: Uh – early 60’s.

Interviewer: In the 1960’s?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Demand started. When did . . .

Cigar Daisey: Well, when I got so that I could make me some kind a livin’ at it – I just started you know - I decided was gonna follow through with it.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: But until then I just couldn’t do it. I had to go fish my nets, work fishin’ you know.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: Do all I could do and then do this on the side.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: But I didn’t have – do ever thing I could do and then come in here and make ducks you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I combined it with other jobs.

Interviewer: Right. And then I think – when did – when did your decoy carving take off, was that after that National Geographic?

Cigar Daisey: No, no, my decoy carvin' took off in 1966. I started gettin' a Hundred Dollars for a duck. That was a lot a damn money man.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: That was a lot a money.

Interviewer: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And when I started gettin' a Hundred Dollars for a duck then the whole thing started just goin' and goin'. I could afford to make 'em then you know.

Interviewer: Yeah, sure, sure. But that was the beginning of it?

Cigar Daisey: That was the beginnin' of it, 'bout 1966.

Interviewer: And you've been written up in a number of magazines?

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah, well that didn't hurt cha but the main thing I tell the boys you gotta have somethin' to sell. Publicity is one thing, but you gotta have somethin' to sell.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: You got to produce in other words. Produce stuff and have it available to sell to the general public.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: They'll decide whether they like it or not.

Interviewer: How many decoys do you think you've carved now?

Cigar Daisey: 'Bout eighteen thousand.

Interviewer: About eighteen thousand, that's your estimate?

Cigar Daisey: Right.

Interviewer: All right.

Cigar Daisey: I think that's somewhere close to it.

Interviewer: That's amazing. And didn't you tell me once that anybody could carve a duck, but the painting is really . . .

Cigar Daisey: I say I can go get an ole drunk off the street. And make him a decent carver, but when it comes to paintin' it's another ball game.

Interviewer: Another story.

Cigar Daisey: Another story.

Interviewer: That's all right, that's okay.

Cigar Daisey: Separate the man from the boys.

Interviewer: Is the painting?

Cigar Daisey: That's right.

Interviewer: Okay. What – what's your favorite duck to carve?

Cigar Daisey: I don't know I've made probably more – I've made a better livin' off ruddy ducks than anything.

Interviewer: Off ruddy ducks, that's your signature duck isn't it? That's your famous . . .

Cigar Daisey: Well, it's somethin' ever body wants.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And I – and I never could make enough of 'em.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: I could sell all I made.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: But you know – your limited to what you make with your hands. You can't make too much stuff with your hands – they'll fool ya.

Interviewer: Yeah. So the ruddy's then okay – that's your famous duck. Now John Maddox has a museum here in town and you're the – the in-house resident carver?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. And he has probably one of the largest collections of your – your decoys I think?

Cigar Daisey: Probably 'bout seven or eight hundred.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. He's probably got the most. And who are your most – who buys most of your decoys from you?

Cigar Daisey: Uh – dealers.

Interviewer: Dealers do?

Cigar Daisey: A dealer 'ill come in and buy 'em from me and then he'll resell 'em.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: He'll get the money and I do the work.

Interviewer: So they'll buy a couple a dozen . . .

Cigar Daisey: He'll get the money and I do the work.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: I aint kiddin' ya.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: A lady come here last year and she had two pair of my ducks. She bought 'em from Decoys, Decoys, Decoys over 'ere.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: She paid Eighty-four Hundred Dollars for 'em.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: I got a – I got a pickup truck load a sand and Three Hundred Dollars for 'em.

Interviewer: Um, um, um.

Cigar Daisey: She paid Eighty-four Hundred Dollars.

Interviewer: That's right, they made the money.

Cigar Daisey: I got a pickup truck load a sand, Three Hundred Dollars and she paid Eighty-four Hundred Dollars.

Interviewer: Unbelievable.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, it is unbelievable. It's hard to believe but . . .

Interviewer: Well it's a compliment to you though.

Cigar Daisey: Well, I – at least the Internal Revenue man aint gonna chase me, 'cause he knows damn well I didn't get the money – he knows damn well I didn't get the money out of 'em.

Interviewer: That's right. That's right, this is true. But decoy carving's been good to you?

Cigar Daisey: It's made me a small livin', that's all I need you know now.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. You've done well, you've done well.

Cigar Daisey: Small livin' is all ya need. Seems like – when you get – as you get older you won't have a great desire for a lot a things.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I don't care 'bout boats and motors. I don't care 'bout guns any more. I don't care 'bout things that I used to like you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I got more shells then I'll ever shoot.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And it's just you know, there comes a time when you know that's it.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Tell me about where we are sitting at right now. Describe your shop.

Cigar Daisey: Well, it's just a little ole place similar to the last one I had.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I moved up here ten years ago. 'Cause they were gonna build townhouses all around me and I says I aint gonna live 'ere you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: So I bought this place you know. I sold what I had down 'ere and moved up here.

Interviewer: Right. I remember that. So you are – you are still on Piney Island?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, I'm still on Piney Island, just moved a little further north up along the water.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: I like it here better. It's cooler here and the air – the wind blowin' over the water in the summertime is cooler than blowin' a crossed the water.

Interviewer: You got some breeze, you got some shade trees here.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now this shop is your – most of this is your original shop from the other place isn't it?

Cigar Daisey: No, I've – I've tried to make it just like it 'cause I didn't see nothin' wrong with the other one, so I tried to make it just like it.

Interviewer: Oh, so you didn't move the shop?

Cigar Daisey: No.

Interviewer: This is a new building?

Cigar Daisey: I took the door. Man called me and told me to get the door. Had a lot a writin' on the door. Other than that. . .

Interviewer: The door.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, the old door. But other than that aint nothin' no part of it.

Interviewer: Where is the old shop at? Still there?

Cigar Daisey: I think they tore it down.

Interviewer: They tore it down? Did he really?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: That's too bad. Okay. This is a nice comfy shop.

Cigar Daisey: But I had six or seven shops in my lifetime.

Interviewer: Uh-huh. Have you really?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: This is nice big wood shop.

Cigar Daisey: It's all you need. You don't need too big a place.

Interviewer: You got a lot a memories in here.

Cigar Daisey: Ah, yeah I have.

Interviewer: Gotta lot a memories. All the people who passed through that door, right there?

Cigar Daisey: It's a lot of prominent people.

Interviewer: Um-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And you know the sad part 'bout now and then? Was a - most of my friends are dead.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Time has a way of – when you get to be seventy plus, hey you've lost a lot a your friends.

Interviewer: The earth reclaims them?

Cigar Daisey: I guess so. That's a good way to put it I guess. But I – I still miss 'em, just like doin' this show this weekend. I asked different ones 'bout that one, no, he's gone.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: And I seen some lady runnin' up to me and told me 'bout her husband you know. Different ones. I said well, I guess that's the way it's supposed to be, but it's hard aint it?

Interviewer: It's very hard. Yelp. We're the only animal that can reason, figure it out.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: But yeah, you've got some good memories here in this wood shop for sure.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. I've met a lot a nice people in my lifetime.

Interviewer: And they still come.

Cigar Daisey: Oh yeah.

Interviewer: All the time.

Cigar Daisey: I had – I had – for years I had 'bout three thousand a year come see me.

Interviewer: That many people?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah. I don't have that many now. As you get older, you'll have less.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Just remember that.

Interviewer: Yeah, right.

Cigar Daisey: But them old people were more dedicated than – I mean – it was somethin' for them to come see ya. Now the youngsters don't – really don't give a damn.

Interviewer: So the – you're sayin' the old heads or the old timers . . .

Cigar Daisey: As they die off, you'll have less.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: I don't give a damn if you're Elvis Presley, you'll have less people when you get old.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: For it's just a certain amount of people they just . . .

Interviewer: I think people - get back to value system you know.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now the last fifty years, what kind of changes have - have you seen on Chincoteague? What are some of the big changes that you've seen Cig?

Cigar Daisey: Well, I think the main thing is – is the volume – they say it's approximately the same amount of people, but I still don't get it, 'cause look at all the homes and when I trapped north through the woods and ever where wadn't no homes and now there's buildings back 'ere.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: And uh . . .

Interviewer: But no people in 'em.

Cigar Daisey: A lot of 'em – no people in 'em, that's right. A lot of people – lot a strange people can afford two or three homes and they live away you know. They really don't give a damn 'bout roads or don't give a damn 'bout nothin', all they want is a place to come down for two or three weeks or so.

Interviewer: So basically – the development here is one of the biggest changes you've seen?

Cigar Daisey: I think, yeah I think the development is.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: The way I got it figured, if you want to get right down to it, about - just a few people is the majority of what money comes here with the tourist business.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Just a few people. I don't sell tourist nothin'.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: They don't come buy nothin' from me.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Uh – the – I would say – six or seven or eight percent of the people get all the tourist dollars that comes here.

Interviewer: Um. Right.

Cigar Daisey: I'm not sayin' that the girls don't get a few dollars for cleanin' the rooms, but figure – less figure in terms of dollars.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: Not speakin' 'bout terms of people, I'm speakin' 'bout terms of dollars.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: That's 'bout what it is so.

Interviewer: So you've seen a lot a changes?

Cigar Daisey: It means my food is higher, it means my gasoline is higher, ever thing I use is higher.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I don't get nothin' from 'em.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. I see what you're sayin. Now, do you ever – if you ever moved from here Cigar, what would be your fondest memory? If you lived somewhere else and looked back and you were gonna tell somebody, one of the fondest things I remember about Chincoteague? What would you tell 'em?

Cigar Daisey: My boyhood days in the glades that was full of cattails, rabbit and muskrats and enjoyin' things. Today – today - 'bout two or three years ago Randy and myself went back in the glades where I used to trap. I wanted to go back in 'ere 'fore I died.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: And looked and they are full of fox tails now. Pragmites, pragmites you know.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Ever thing has changed man. I don't care what you talk about, ever thing has changed. Cattails has all gone.

Interviewer: Yeah, not many left.

Cigar Daisey: Disappeared, not many left. There was – places like 'at, was really somethin' – just thriving with 'em.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Today it's all together different. The – where it used to be a glade, today there's a house.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Of some kind you know and a business or house or somethin' whatever. Where the banks are over here, that was all glades. Ever bit glades, one hundred percent.

Interviewer: Right.

Cigar Daisey: I caught my fish right underneath the damn bank like you wouldn't believe. Cattails with water up to your rear-end you know. You'd just never believe it. No - it aint gonna be the same and you aint gonna stop it.

Interviewer: Huh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And you aint gonna change nothin'. And in the end just be higher taxes and more buildings and more people.

Interviewer: Right, right, I agree. Now we need to talk about your wife Lucy, you gotta tell me about Lucy and you.

Cigar Daisey: Me and Lucy got married in 1960.

Interviewer: You and Lucy got married in 1960.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, in 1960, June of 1960.

Interviewer: And she's a local, what's Lucy's maiden name?

Cigar Daisey: No, Lucy was – Lucy was – she was a Wolfe – W-o-l-f-e. She was born in Point Farm in Quinby.

Interviewer: Ah, okay.

Cigar Daisey: Quinby. Then she moved up to Wachapreague. And she lived there a while. And then she moved up here to Chincoteague.

Interviewer: Where did you – where did you meet Lucy at?

Cigar Daisey: Down to the old Yacht & Sportsman Club.

Interviewer: Oh, you did.

Cigar Daisey: She was a waitress down 'ere. Yeah.

Interviewer: Oh yeah. Okay. So when you were a guide then that's when you met her?

Cigar Daisey: I was a guide down 'ere, yeah, that's right. We used to go down 'ere and do a little tall drinkin' I call it.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: And some of the others . . .

Interviewer: And a little tall talkin' too . . .

Cigar Daisey: Tall drinkin', tall talkin'. The people I worked with you know, see I had a lot a – a lot a nice fine elderly gentlemen to guide you know. And they'd always ask for me you know.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: Lot a times I eat – eat with 'em at night you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: After a hard days huntin' you know. Cold and ever thing.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Eatin' and do some alcohol consumption you know.

Interviewer: Yeah. Ease the pain a little bit, warms the bones up.

Cigar Daisey: That's right.

Interviewer: So she was a waitress down there?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, she was a waitress down 'ere, she took care of me.

Interviewer: How many – how many children do you have?

Cigar Daisey: I got one.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: She had one by a previous marriage.

Interviewer: Okay. All right. And Dora is workin' for the Fish and Wildlife Service?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did Lucy work at all on the Island after you got married? Did she continue working?

Cigar Daisey: No – she worked - yeah she worked at the shirt factor ‘ere for a while.

Interviewer: Oh, did she, over on Church, by Church Street?

Cigar Daisey: Over on Church Street somewhere ‘ere.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: For a few years, then after we moved over Piney Island she couldn’t work.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: She didn’t work no more.

Interviewer: Where did you – where did you live before Piney Island?

Cigar Daisey: I lived down ‘ere on Ridge Road.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: There a side where by Mother lives today.

Interviewer: Down on Ridge.

Cigar Daisey: That ole house ‘ere. Yeah, I lived ‘ere.

Interviewer: Okay.

Cigar Daisey: I’ve toted a many a ducks through that glades, that glades there goes through Memorial Park. See my Uncle, Al Barrett, I say my uncle called him uncle, he was my Mom’s stepfather.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: He offered to give her all ‘at property down ‘ere to the Memorial Park. She didn’t want it.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: ‘Cause all you had to do was pay taxes on it, you didn’t have no money to pay taxes on it.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: 'Course today, you know how people are fightin' for land by the water. Mom sold the whole – the whole front down 'ere where preacher Stout lived, you know where preacher Stout lived?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Mom sold ever bit of 'at for Thirty-three Hundred Dollars.

Interviewer: Aaahhh!

Cigar Daisey: I'm a tellin' you now. See - I told her the other night, I said Mom you sold a Million Dollars worth a property for Thirty-three Hundred Dollars.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, that's hard to believe.

Interviewer: That is hard to believe. Yelp. She's doin' good, she's doin' good.

Cigar Daisey: And look - most of its washed away.

Interviewer: Has it?

Cigar Daisey: Most of them – don't know nothin'. I go down 'ere and tell 'em what they own. They won't believe me. See I knowed where the lines was 'cause I had horse – horses, barb wire down 'ere and irons and ever thing and knowed where the lines were.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: It's all changed man.

Interviewer: Yeah, oh yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Over the period a years, ever thing changes.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: See, I can't get it in my mind that things is gonna change. In the next twenty-five or thirty years I can't visualize what's gonna happen when it comes to change.

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, it'll keep changing that's true, but at least you grew up during an era before . . .

Cigar Daisey: Best time it ever was!

Interviewer: Before tourism . . .

Cigar Daisey: Best time it ever was. I tell you why I say so – I grew up when – if you wanted to go somewhere and you could get you an outboard motor, you could go.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: You couldn't go a long ways. Prior to 'at you couldn't get 'ere.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: If the wind blowed hard or somethin' you stayed home.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: You didn't go huntin', didn't go huntin', blowin' too damn hard, you couldn't go.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: See what I mean.

Interviewer: That's right.

Cigar Daisey: I used to pole, me and Leroy Daisey used to pole - Memorial Park, had a little ole bateau thirteen foot long. We poled – we paddled and poled all the way down the channel. Go all the way up 'til we hit Tom's Cove, and go down where the stone pile was. You remember where the stone pile was?

Interviewer: Yelp.

Cigar Daisey: Right there at the stone pile. Worked the tide. Then we poled all the way down to Southern Beach by the Coast Guard Station.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And take a five minute - most time - most time the wind was prevalent – in the south in the summertime you know.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: We'd take a southerly wind skull, we'd skull.

Interviewer: A skull?

Cigar Daisey: He'd paddle and I'd skull.

Interviewer: I see you movin' your hand. You remember how to do it?

Cigar Daisey: That's right. Oh man, I could skull like you wouldn't believe.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Anyway we'd skull a crossed 'at Cove and come on in with 'at little old bateau and the water run right up along her gunwale she had 'bout 'at wide, the water would run right up 'ere where we had so many clams in 'ere like you wouldn't believe.

Interviewer: Uh, uh, uh.

Cigar Daisey: And would I do 'at today, hell no I wouldn't dare to do it, no way under this sun would I do 'at. It just aint no way man.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: Because when the outboard motor come along see and ever body could – I could leave home in about three – well in 'bout seven or eight minutes I would be at the stone pile, you know to the stone pile.

Interviewer: That quick?

Cigar Daisey: That quick.

Interviewer: But in the old days, yeah you skulled and poled along didn't you?

Cigar Daisey: We skulled and poled. That's all we did.

Interviewer: What about . . .

Cigar Daisey: I'd skull 'til I'd get so tired man I kept – thought I'd never get a crossed 'at channel. I've seen it so rough we'd probably go fish our duck traps over 'ere by – where Mike McGee's got 'at flat now.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And we'd put the ducks out in the flat and we was scared she was gonna sink 'at little bateau.

Interviewer: Um.

Cigar Daisey: I'd put me up in the bow with a paddle, paddlin', and him a skullin' just as hard as we could skull tryin' to get back home by the crack a daylight. Blowin' a gale like you'd never believe. In a thirteen foot bateau.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: And durin' the middle of the day when the tide would – when it would die down, we'd go back and get our ducks and bag.

Interviewer: You'd go back and get them?

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, go back and get 'em you know.

Interviewer: Were there any sailboats around in those days, Cig?

Cigar Daisey: They had 'em but they were dangerous. See you wouldn't dare to use a sailboat at wintertime. Summertime you'd take a chance on 'em.

Interviewer: Did you run aground?

Cigar Daisey: No, them son-a-bitches would turn over with ya and ever thing.

Interviewer: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Yeah, that was the bad part of it.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: She'd turn over with ya a lot a times.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: Or she'd knock you overboard when she'd flip around or somethin'. All kinds a ways a sailboat would put you overboard.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: In the summer (there goes the pair a geese that comes in) – but they uh – it's just different now – I guess it will be from now on out you know.

Interviewer: It will be. Why don't you go ahead and carve a little bit, let me hear it. Pick up a little carvin'.

Cigar Daisey: Well . . .

Interviewer: Let's hear the sound of the knife goin.

Cigar Daisey: Well, I been a widdlin' on this piece of . . .

Interviewer: What are you makin'?

Cigar Daisey: I'm makin' a little ruddy duck. I promised a man over the weekend I would make him two of 'em. It's a piece of tupelo, it's as tough as it can be. It's light. Real light in weight you know. Yeah, carvin' 'as been a lot a fun.

(Pause – sound of Cigar Daisey carving)

Cigar Daisey: But if I had it to do over again, I think I might a been a collector. See, I bought decoys from Bill Mackey and all the great collectors all my life.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: And I'd buy 'em for Six or Seven Dollars and they'd give me Eight or Ten and I thought I'd made all the money 'ere was in the world.

Interviewer: (Laughing)

Cigar Daisey: And now there worth thousands of dollars.

Interviewer: That's right.

Cigar Daisey: And see that's where I could a really shined see – if I'd a – hey man, you can't look back I guess in a way.

Interviewer: You can't look back, that's right.

Cigar Daisey: (Pause - sound of Cigar Daisey carving)

Interviewer: You got your old carvin' knife there.

Cigar Daisey: It's just an old knife I bought from this man for not much.

Interviewer: You'll never get caught up in carvin' will ya?

Cigar Daisey: No, I'm not gonna work 'at hard from now on.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Cigar Daisey: I really aint.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cigar Daisey: All I want to do is come out here and make me a little somethin' or 'nother so people don't say I'm lazy. And drink me a cold beer once in a while. END OF TAPE.