

Researcher: Darlene Clyne

Tape 65; 1

Interviewed: February 26, 1976

MACHINIST: Mr. Charlie Hogan,
464 Duncliffe Street,
Steveston, B. C.
274-2891

- Arrived first on the West Coast in 1923.
- Got off the steam boat at Bella Bella where Gus Mallard Cannery was.
- Worked at machine shop at Bella Bella, Rivers Inlet at 13 years of age in the summer time.
- Mentions a lawyer that took to the sea to become a fisherman.
- Talks on the old engines, that didn't have the best of care.
- Mentions the salt, water being very hard on them.
- Salt water cooling in the older engines.
- Rudder shoes in time in salt water would wear and had to be replaced.
- Some canneries kept their boats up very well; some canneries just kept their boats running.
- Finds it very distressful that Namu Cannery closed down, the fish are held over so long that by the time it gets down to Imperial Cannery, that its not in the shape you would like to see it go into a can.
- Fish are held too long by the time it is caught and by the time it gets into the can.
- Did a lot of work for any cannery boats that were fishing in that area.
- Spent 33 years at Bella Bella in engine machinery repair.
- There were up to 3,000 boats at Rivers Inlet at one time.
- Believes a lot of canneries closed down because of overhead costs.
- Says the small canneries had a much more friendlier relationship between management and employees.
- Talks on the old canning methods at the Gus Mallard Cannery.
- Used to have old wooden floors whereas they have cement today.
- The canneries were very drafty, you could see right down to the beach through the wooden floors.
- The Offal from the Iron Chink where the fish were cleaned, went down a rough chute onto a scow where it was taken out to bay and dumped.
- A lot of it drifted back to the cannery again, and sometimes the smell got quite high.
- Back in the 20's and 30's the seine boats were very old but as long as they could float and hold a net, they went out.

- The living quarters weren't up to much, a little hole up in bow to sleep in, short bunks.
- Mentions the time when he was twenty and went fishing on summer.
- Because salt water and fish slime was so hard on linen, nets had to put them in "blue-stone" solution.
- You would see these black wooden barrels all along the wharf where the nets were soaking in this "blue-stone" solution to kill the bacteria and keep the nets from rotting too much.
- The seine boats used cotton nets but had to be tarred first.
- The smaller boats were mostly simple one cylinder engines, some had two cylinders, as time went on they got up to three cylinders, but that was largest they used in the gillnetting boats.
- In war time, the automobile type engines came in.
- The six cylinders ones, Chrysler, seemed to make the first inboards on them up there.
- Before that if fishermen's engine wore out, he couldn't afford to have another one, he would send down to the wreckers to pick up a auto engine for \$72.00 or \$100.00, and get somebody to convert the transmission.
- Quite a few of them were used, it was hard times, and it got the boat along.
- With salt water they didn't last too long but you could get two or three years out of them.
- They didn't cost too much to run.
- Names some of the engines: "Frisco Standard" was one of the oldest ones, old gas engine used to ignite the ignitors on them instead of spark plugs.
- Union made a good heavy engine.
- Says Palmer engines quite popular back then.
- Some of the engines did quite well, but most of them had major weak spots in them.
- Mostly in the cooling system, the pumps not too good.
- Then the salt water would go in through them and was very hard on the cast iron; it would get soft and in a while you ^{could} cut it with a knife "just like cheese".

- Back in the 20's and 30's there seemed to be a wealth of fish.
- Remembers at night time could hear them splashing all over the bay, the waters were just alive with fish, later on towards the fall, late summer.
- Tells story in the late 30's of the B. C. Packers building a cannery in Johnstone Channel, just north of Bella Bella at Walker's Lake.
- They had closed it up at the end of the season, they^{were} washing everything down and putting it away.
- One of the seiners seen a school of fish right out side the elevator, so he wrapped a seine around them and bailed them right into the elevators, coming up the cannery floor they were still kicking when they were going in the iron chinks.
- It was said that they had a little trouble with that pack, they were canned too fresh.
- Overhauled engines in the winter time.
- Recalls hump-back being 3¢ a piece.
- There was lots of fish but price for them was not good, so fishermen never made much money.
- Back in the 30's, 12¢/pound was the most I ever got for a red spring.
- Names all the different canneries along the West Coast.
- The Indian men worked on the fish boats and the Indian women worked mostly in the cannery washing fish and filling cans.
- Namu had two large bunk houses for the women at one time.
- Namu had bowling alley, shows, dance floor; was very nice.
- Started working at Imperial, mostly maintenance work, was shop-foreman.
- Talks of small cannery at Bella Bella, three lines, that in 1937 put up one hundred and five thousands cases that year.
- Believes the canneries look after their fishermen; if the fisherman needed money in the winter, the company would advance it to them.