

Interviewed: February 19, 1976

Mr. Ron Sparrow Sr.,

5236 - 4th Avenue,  
Delta, B. C.

- Born in Chilliwack, raised in the lower mainland.
- First boat when he was 16 years old, bought one of the boats confiscated from the Japanese.
- His father fished with a gas-engine gillnetter up north at Prince Rupert.
- Not much fish after the 1913 slide.
- His first boat was a gillnet, later (in '63) he switched to seine boats.
- Boats became more mechanized over the years, made the fishing easier, sonar, radar, etc.
- He has new aluminum seine boat since his seine boat sunk last year in the herring fishery in Barker Sound.
- Mainly fished the Prince Rupert area during the 40's.
- In early 50's came to the Fraser River and Rivers Inlet.
- 1954-67 fished part time, operated a shake mill on the North Arm of the Fraser.
- Wood boats are not so good nowadays, because the wood is not seasoned properly.
- Discusses the pros and cons of aluminum boats.
- Amount of fish in Fraser, he feels is not going down but remaining constant if not getting better.
- Pollution of the Fraser River does not seem to affect the fish, because they are not in the river that long.
- Seiners stay out in Juan de Fuca Straits and Johnston Straits but are not allowed in the Gulf of Georgia.
- Fraser River has changed with the building of the jetties.
- In the 40's there weren't that many canneries operating on the river, a few around Ladner, were not operating at Steveston - Canadian Fish Co., Imperial, Todd, Nelson Bros., and Queen Charlotte showed up later.
- The centralization of the industry has been for the good of the industry, costs have been cut and everyone benefits.

- Started with 13¢-18¢/pound for sockeye; 3¢-5¢/pound for pinks and chums.
- Sockeye is no longer the highest price fish, chums or springs are the best now.
- The union had quite an effect on the raising of the prices for fish.
- Union keeps everybody honest.
- Discusses the Native Brotherhood and the union; one was not any different from the other.
- He is now member of the Boat-Owners' Association which usually goes along with the prices set by the union.
- There is more independence now, in the old days many fishermen were in debt to the company and if it hadn't been for the company, many fishermen would not have made it.
- He sees no need for a reduction of the fleet, there's always been a lot of boats.
- Trouble is that the boats are too efficient.
- Buy-back made more salmon licences available to halibut boats and they in turn sold the licences to the salmon fleet and the net result is a large seine fleet and slightly smaller gillnet fleet.
- Fisheries have done a good job of bringing the fish back.
- He works the whole coast from here to Prince Rupert and he has never had a bad year.
- There's still lots of Indian fishermen....they account for half the catch.
- Fished for the Co-op in Prince Rupert.
- Advantage of the Co-ops is that when there is a strike, the Co-op continues to fish because they are fishing for themselves.
- There has been an increase in Co-ops on the coast but they too will reach their limit.
- The fishing business has always been competitive.
- The seine fleet is more inclined to help each other whereas the gillnetters are more individualists.
- Discusses the return of the Japanese after the war.
- While he was young teen-ager he experienced "Pro-Japanese" sentiments among Japanese people in Prince Rupert and he feels that the

internment was justified.

- Some Japanese returned to Japan to fight and they left all their belongings behind.
- Today they form a large part of the gillnet fleet.