

Researcher: David Stevenson

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Joe "Wind-jo" Yarmish 278-2753

- Started fishing 1926, went over as boat puller with a Japanese fellow.
- Worked in the Imperial Cannery, unloading fish, off Packers, throwing them in the elevator, then he'd rush inside to feed them to the "iron chink".
- "Iron-Chink" is described, as a great improvement
- Ken Fraser is mentioned as very knowledgeable about history of canning.
- Worked for 20¢/hr. sometimes 12-14-16¢/hr. a day.
- Hours were not regular, Chinese contractor hired people to work in the cannery----Chinese, Indians, Whites, all worked together with no problems.
- Worked in cannery every summer while attending school.
- Worked at brick plant "Steveston Sandline Products"
- 1930 went fishing with his brother-in-law, fished up North.
- 1938 He got his own boat.
- Early boat was an old life boat: 4 cylinder, Easthope with a long pole to steer with since there was no clutch.
- Drums were invented in 1933 by a fellow on Sointula Island, Joe saw it in 1934.
- Fished 5 days a week, long hours.
- No facilities on the old boat---just a stove for coffee, fished in the mouth of the river.
- Sockeye paid the best, in the 30's---pink's were 1¢ a piece; 10¢ for sockeye one year; 3¢ for chum.
- Next boat was a 28' gillnetter, with an old 4 cylinder Buick engine--fast boat--kept it until 1942 then he went to Canadian Fish Co.
- Discusses mechanical-aids--still need experience.
- Can lose your net if you don't know what you are doing.
- The river has changed a lot since he started fishing----wing dams----rock jetties, used to fish on the south flats, not any longer, too shallow.
- Pollution is bad, his nets came up an awful mess, need rubber gloves to clean it.
- Nets have changed, they are much better.

- Gear is so good, only fish two days a week now instead of five days.
- You can still make a good living, fishing.
- Regulations are a necessary evil, he's in favour of conservation and critical of the federal buy-back program.
- There are more boats now than before.
- Should license the man and not the boat.
- Many more seiners now.
- Joined the union, good for increasing the price of fish.
- Companies paid what they felt like paying.
- Unions made considerable difference in prices.
- Strike at Rivers Inlet, 1936, recalled.
- Comments on Japanese Internment...too bad that they took the boats and houses because they worked hard for it.
- Boats were sold for less.
- Many Japanese fought for Canada overseas...there were no problems when they returned after the war.
- Lightship was an old sailing ship, Captain James was on it, he was a remarkable man, who taught Joe navigation, lightship used to drift up on the Flats after a good blow.
- Story about submarines off the West Coast of Vancouver Island, one which ripped his net when it started to dive.
- There was more involvement with the company in old days; these days there are more fellows that are independent.
- More romance in the industry.
- Fraser River is an awful place now, lots of dead-heads now...logging company should be liable for damage done by logs.
- Future of the industry; the problem is overcrowding, not enough fishing time or enough fish.
- The superstition that you have to cross a Charlotte Sound by 10:00 is not true...no big wind.
- Story about dangerous fire he had on the boat.
- Fishermen are less helpful nowadays with each other.
- In the old days, you always helped somebody out.
- Never been in herring fishery.
- Halibut fishing is described...one line has 500 hooks or four or five skates of 500 hooks each.

- Talks of early days in the Imperial Cannery.
- Cans were done by hand.
- He used to write for "The Fishermen" under the name of "Wind-Jo".
- Story about how he got the name from the Vancouver waterfront.
- None of his family went into the fishing industry.
- Talks of fishing with his son.