

Interviewed: February 1, 1976

FISHERMAN: Mr. Ron Malcom,  
994 #1 Road,  
Richmond, B.C.

277-7454

- Started fishing in 1935.
- He was 23 years old then.
- His father was an engineer for the Gulf of Georgia Cannery.
- He has always had his own boat.
- Several of his childhood friends became fishermen also.
- Mr. Malcom was born in Cranbrooke.
- Once when Mr. Malcom was fishing he slipped on a slimey deck and broke some of his ribs.
- Mr. Malcom started fishing in a skiff powered by oars, he then moved to a powered boat but still had to pull the net up by hand: "It was a real hard job".
- Describes two types of early stern rollers.
- In the early days the boats used to have what is called a <sup>combination</sup> ~~compromise~~ stern. (Describes)
- Describes the various functions of a combination boat.
- He went long lining for dog fish when they were in demand, only the dog fish livers were produced.
- Dog fish were in demand around 1948.
- The average catch of dog fish in the initial stages were caught by the ton, but they were severely reduced in numbers by the fishermen so that the latter catches were only in the hundreds of pounds per days catch.
- He fished for dog fish at the mouth of the Fraser with a sunken net for as long as that practice (nets) was allowed.
- He long-lined for them in the Gulf.
- The wharves in Steveston have changed. The boats are more protected now, also there is a break water.
- Mr. Malcom believes that the electronic technology now on the boats is too efficient. It has cut the days, one can go fishing down drastically from 5 to 2 days.
- Monofilament nets are illegal to use in this country but they are legal for the fishermen in Japan.

- Generally, the number of fish in each run is down.
- He attributes this drop in numbers too, logging over fishing.
- Mr. Malcom refers to and discusses the abstenion line which Japan has posted in the mid-Pacific.
- Mr. Malcom discusses his views of Canada getting a 200 mile off limits fishing boundary.
- The Japanese are the best fishermen in the world.
- Mr. Malcom discusses how the Russian fishermen who are very proficient with their large ships catch fish by the ton while Canadians catch smaller quantities.
- Canadians have 100 ft. draggers whilst the Russians have freighters.
- Canadian draggers may pick up 3 tons of fish whereas the Russians will pick up 25 - 30 tons at a time plus the Russians work 24 hours a day: "Fishing can't stand that sort of thing".
- Canadian fishermen can't go off the Coast to catch salmon.
- Discusses the difficulties of establishing international fishing regulations.
- States how the federal fisheries minister is rarely present on the B. C. Coast.
- About the internment of Japanese-Canadians during the war: "There was confused feelings....they were our friends"; "It was a shame the way they made a mess of their boats."
- There was a meeting of Steveston residents to protest this action by the government. Mr. Malcom was present.
- Mr. Malcom was getting 50¢ a piece for sockeye in 1935.
- Discusses and gives an example on the high mark up of fish prices between the fisherman and the consumer.
- Deckhands used to be called partners or boat pullers, they got about one third of the profit.
- Mr. Malcom remembers the first strike he was involved in: "In those days the strikes were more violent!"
- If a fisherman went out during the strike, others would get two rocks with a rope tied between them and drop it over the guys net who was fishing thus causing the net to sink.
- There was also fights.

- Discusses the various improvements the union has made: "Without the Union the fishermen would have nothing!"
- Log barges pollutes the water with wooden needles that get in the fishes gills and kills them.