

VOICES from
the FISHERIES



Voices from the Fisheries Oral History Database Project (VFF)

Preserving the Heritage of the Nation's
Marine and Great Lakes Fisheries and
NOAA's Fisheries Service (NMFS)





What is an oral history?

Definition: *Information about the past that is transmitted by word of mouth rather than in written form, usually recorded on audio and/or video tape, and as the result of a planned interview.*

Sometimes this kind of interview is focused on eliciting specialized knowledge about aspects of the natural environment that are...

- ✓ Gained over a lifetime, e.g., commercial fisherman, Local Fisheries Knowledge (LFK)
- ✓ Multiple generations in the case of traditional communities, e.g., Alaskan Inuit, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)

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The VFF Database is...

A new national database that is a central repository for consolidating and disseminating oral history interviews related to marine and Great Lakes commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing in the U.S. and its territories.

The VFF Project goal is...

To make available to the public existing marine and Great Lakes focused oral histories and to inspire new collections

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VFF Project Origins

- Began in 2007 with NOAA Preserve America award, and NMFS/ST funds and IT expertise
- Partly outgrowth of Local Fisheries Knowledge (LFK) 2003-2006 Pilot Project



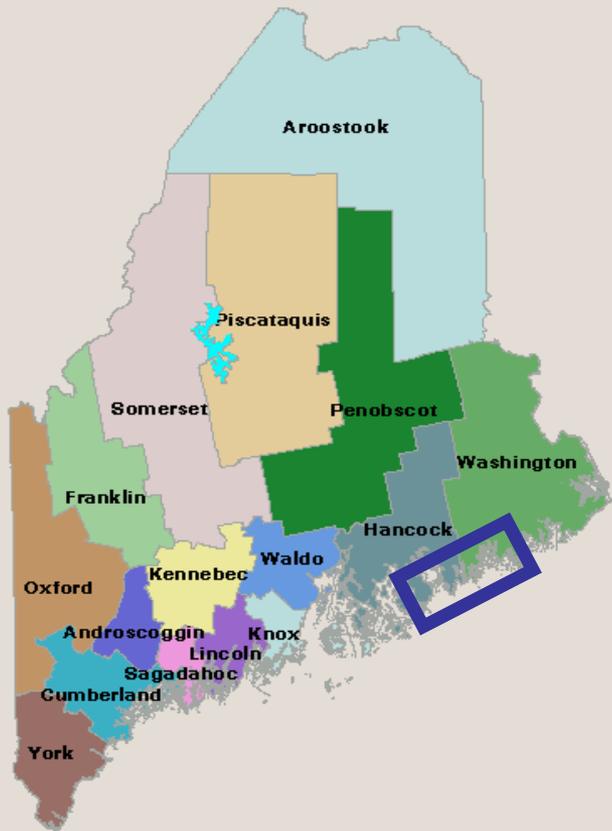
The LFK Project: Maine, 2003-2006

- Combined fishing community outreach, introducing youth to marine-based careers with preservation of local fisheries knowledge
- Rural School and Community Trust  partnered to provide expertise in place-based learning in K-12 schools

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Ellsworth H.S., Hancock County



Jonesport-Beals H.S., Washington County





**Scenes from April, 2003
Community Meeting
Jonesport/Beals High
School**



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Windows Internet Explorer browser window showing the NOAA Fisheries website. The address bar displays <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/voicesfromthefisheries/>. The page features the NOAA Fisheries logo and the project title "VOICES from the FISHERIES" with the subtitle "ORAL HISTORY DATABASE DOCUMENTING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE OF THE FISHERIES OF THE UNITED STATES". A navigation menu includes links for "About the Project", "How to Participate", "Frequently Asked Questions", "Search Collection", "Add Interview", "Project Partners", and "Related Links". An image shows a group of people at a fishing gear store.

The VFF Project Details

www.voices.nmfs.noaa.gov





Project Partners

- **NMFS:** *Patricia Pinto da Silva* (NEFSC),
Susan Abbott-Jamieson (HQ-ST)
- **Non-NMFS:** *Madeleine Hall-Arber*, MIT Sea Grant; *Bonnie McCay*, Rutgers Univ. Human Ecology; *Laura Orleans*, New Bedford, MA, Working Waterfront Project; Commercial Fishermen of America

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Some Current Participants

- Southern Foodways Alliance, Long Island Traditions, Florida Institute for Salt Water Heritage, Delaware Bay Museum
- NOAA projects: NOS Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary; PIFSC (Samoa TEK project); AFSC (Inuit TEK project); SEFSC/Beaufort Lab (NC fishermen); NEFSC, New England fishermen and wives oral history project



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We have...

- Launched VFF web site and database, & completed Phase 2 updates
- Located dozens of collections throughout the USA with >4000 interviews
- Added >250 interviews to VFF DB for public use
- Added a Project Manager, Jessica Bailey
- Contracted for 30-40 2 min. themed podcasts for the next upgrade of the web site

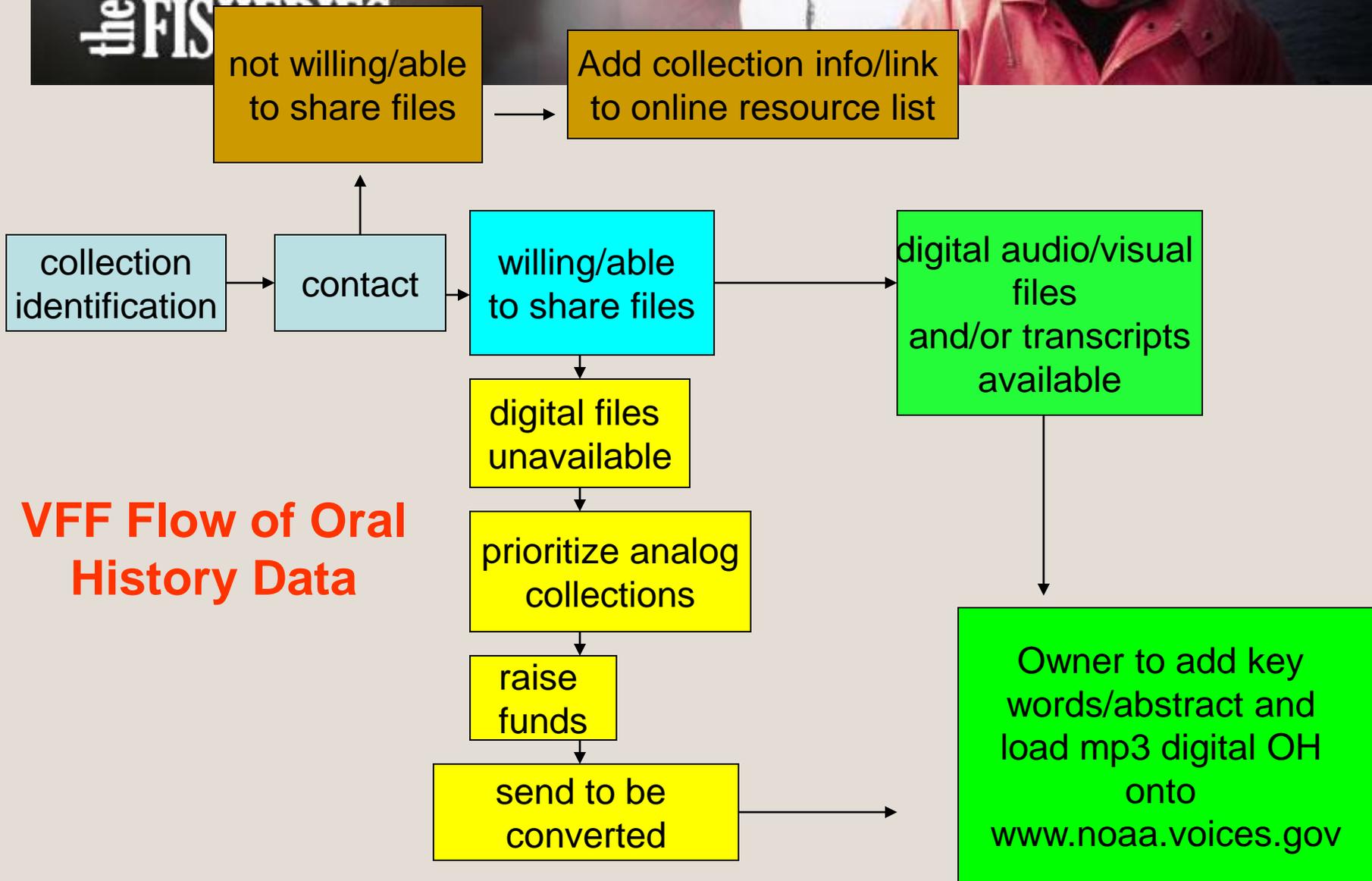
VOICES from
the **FISHERIES**



A Walk through the Process for Establishing New Projects for Inclusion on the VFF Database



VOICES from the FISHERMEN



VOICES from the FISHERIES

ORAL HISTORY DATABASE DOCUMENTING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE OF THE FISHERIES OF THE UNITED STATES

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VFF Web Site Home Page
www.voices.nmfs.noaa.gov



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How to Participate

Who can participate in this project?

Participation is welcome from anyone who is interested in helping preserve our Nation's marine fisheries heritage by conducting, recording and donating oral history interviews with those who have been involved in some aspect of our nation's marine fisheries, other marine resources, or our coastal zones. We encourage teachers to participate through developing a related oral history project in their school; student participation is valued. We encourage everyone who has an existing marine fisheries, marine resources, or coastal zone related oral history collection to consider donating a copy to the Voices from the Fisheries Database.

Who can you interview?

You can interview fisheries managers and scientists, and others who work to conserve and preserve our nation's marine resources and coastal zones. Other possibilities include commercial, recreational, or subsistence fishermen; businessmen who

Useful Documents

You will need Acrobat reader (free on the Web) to read these PDF format files.

- **Voices from the Fisheries Project Information Form**
Required form for becoming a Voices Project participant.
- **How to Participate in the Voices from the Fisheries Project**
Instructions for participating in the Voices Project.
- **Release Forms**
Copies of Voices from the Fisheries Release Forms for new projects
- **Voices from the Fisheries Handbook**
Helps you design and conduct your own Voices from the Fisheries Project.
- **Voices from the Fisheries Users Guide**
Step-by-step guidance for uploading interviews to the Voices Database.
- **Topics for Coding Interviews**

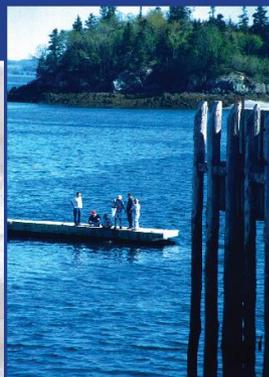
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Voices from the Fisheries Handbook

Preserving Local Fisheries
Knowledge, Linking Generations, and
Improving Environmental Literacy

Julie Bartsch
Susan Abbott-Jamieson
Joyce Whitmore



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE
Science, Service, Stewardship

U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | National Marine Fisheries Service



We Provide a How-to-do-it Handbook





VFF Handbook

- **Audience:** Individuals, community groups, teachers, other educators
- **Some topics covered:** Getting started; Building partnerships; Ethical and legal issues; Recording technologies; Interviewing skills; Archiving; Assessing outcomes; Curriculum integration

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VOICES from the FISHERIES

ORAL HISTORY DATABASE DOCUMENTING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE OF THE FISHERIES OF THE UNITED STATE

Voices from the Fisheries System Version 2.1 Users Guide



NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
Office of Science and Technology

Document prepared by
Science Information Division
Economic and Sociocultural Analysis Division
1315 East West Hwy, SSMC Bldg 3, F/ST
Silver Spring, MD 20910

We provide a
VFF Users Guide
to help those who
are setting up new
collections and
uploading
interviews.





Some Types of People to Interview

- Fisheries managers
- Fisheries scientists
- People involved in all aspects of the Nation's marine and Great Lakes commercial and recreational fishing industry
- Subsistence fishermen and marine resource harvesters
- Families of fishermen and marine resource harvesters



Some Topics for Interviews

- interviewee's role
- fisheries management
- habitat & other environmental characteristics
- species types & characteristics
- business & economics of fishing
- gear & fishing technology
- social & cultural characteristics of fishing
- general social & cultural characteristics

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Voices from the Fisheries Handbook: Preserving Local Fisheries Knowledge, Linking Generations, and Improving Environmental Literacy NEW

Date updated: 16-Dec-2009

The Voices from the Fisheries Project does not verify the accuracy of materials submitted to us. The opinions expressed in the interviews are those of the interviewee only and are made available to the public with their consent.

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Accessing the VFF Oral History Collections
www.voices.nmfs.noaa.gov



VOICES from the FISHERIES



[Search](#)

Collection Name	<input type="text" value="Select"/> American Samoa Elder Fishermen Interviews Baymen's Oral History Project Bayou La Batre	Year Interview Conducted	<input type="text" value="Select"/>
Region	<input type="text" value="Select"/> ALASKA NORTHEAST NORTHWEST	Sex	<input type="text" value="Select"/>
Occupation	<input type="text" value="Select"/> Commercial Fisherman-Active Commercial Fisherman-Retired Commercial Fisherman-Unemployed	Age Range	<input type="text" value="Select"/>
Ethnicity	<input type="text" value="Select"/> African-American or Black African Asian-American		
Grade Level	<input type="text" value="Select"/> Not Applicable Elementary School Middle School		



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First selection screen

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[Search](#)>Results

Collection Name	Interviewee Name	Region	Interviewee Gender	Interviewee Occupation ^A	Primary Language	Interviewee Ethnicity	Abstract	Grade Level	Age Range
Working Waterfront Festival Community Docu Project	Diane Flynn	NE	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		European-American or White	Abstract		Not Known
	Eva Liput	NE	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		European	Abstract		Not Known
	Janice Marshall	NE	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		Don't Know	Abstract		Not Known
	Lynn Selboe	AK	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		European-American or White	Abstract		Not Known
	Moe Bowstern and Johanna Reichold	AK	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		Don't Know	Abstract		Not Known
	Sarah Broadwell	NE	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		European-American or White	Abstract		20-29
Long Island Traditions	Flo Sharkey	NE	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		European-American or White	Abstract		50-59
Lobstering: A Friendship Tradition	Suzanne R	NE	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		European-American or White	Abstract	Elementary School	12-19
Women in the New England Fisheries	Shareen Davis	NE	F	Commercial Fisherman-Active		European-American or White	Abstract		40-49

→ 1 - 9

Internet | Protected Mode: On 100%

Second selection screen



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Search > [Results](#)

Interview #	Interviewee Name	Interview Date	Gender	Occupation	State/Region
896	Antje Nieuwenhuizen	05/31/1980	F	Other	New York, Northeast

Abstract: Dutch immigration to Long Island, from a woman's point of view. Antje Nieuwenhuizen and her daughter, Grietje, reminisce about emigrating from Ymuiden, on the northwest coast of the Netherlands, to West Sayville.

Topics	Sub Topics
Role General Social and Cultural Characteristics	Family member Family, family roles, family organization, Community (structure and organization), Ethnicity, ethnic Identity, Gender roles, Place names, Social networks (family, friends, neighbors, co-workers)

Available Interview Files

[Interview \(Portable Document Format File\)](#)

←

[Interview \(MP3 Audio File\)](#)
[Interview \(MP3 Audio File\)](#)

Collection Provider Information			
Name	Job Title	Organization	Organization Type
Arlene Balcewicz	Museum Registrar	Long Island Maritime Museum	Other

Citation: The Baymen's Oral History Group of the LIMM was organized in 1977 and continued through 2002. The original members of the group were West Sayville residents of Dutch heritage, many born in the 19th century, who shared their unique narratives of the maritime history of the Great South Bay. They shared their experiences and recounted with gusto anecdotes of their lives and relationship to the water. These memoirs vividly portray a sense of community that no longer exists and a way of life all but forgotten. Initially begun by Research Associate Jack Kochiss, these interviews were designed as a means of authenticating and documenting artifacts in the Museum's collections. However, during the course of the project, it developed that these reminiscences were in fact, even more valuable as irreplaceable links to our maritime history.

Third selection screen

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Working in Partnership with the NOAA Preserve America Program we have...

- ✓ Participated in creation of a NOAA Oral History Interest Group (NOHIG), and

Helped with...

- ✓ NOAA Oral History Workshop, May 2009

Are planning...

- ✓ NOAA Oral History Boot Camp, June 2010





Challenges

- **Time and money – of course!**
 - Identification of additional collections – particularly in regions beyond the NE.
 - Assistance for collection holders
 - Funds for conversion where especially relevant collections are found.
- **Long term sustainability**
 - Who will continue this effort over time?

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**Wouldn't you like to save a
Voice from the Fisheries for
the next generation?**

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Thanks for Listening



**Jonesport-Beals
High School. ME
students after
an interview in
Jonesport, ME.**

Photo: Linda Church