

Key Information

Name: Ed Fahnoe and Chris Hinds

Age: 70's

Current Cabin: 28

Date of Interview: 3/22/15

Interviewer: Renee Deanne Meschi

Ethnographic Preface

I came expecting to interview only Ed, but Chris (Ed's wife) was present and asked if she could "tag along" while she worked on her knitting. I agreed because Chris and Ed have both been living here for nearly forty years together, and their lives are thus inextricably shared. Like many long term partners, Chris and Ed pulled one another's stories along, offering details, corrections, and fill-ins of forgotten information. Chris ended up being central to the interview; Ed is very soft spoken and modest, but Chris would fill in when she thought Ed's modesty might be getting in the way of the relaying of factual detail. An example of this is the sheer extent to which Ed has shaped both the aesthetic of the Salmon Beach community with his carpentry, as well as the community that has grown nearly tenfold since the day he moved in to Cabin 28.

Chris herself has her finger on the pulse of the social climate of Salmon Beach, and was extremely adept at contextualizing Ed's comments. I get the feeling that Ed sometimes knows what he is talking about so thoroughly, he becomes less thorough in telling the story. Chris picks up on this, and adds in details that are helpful to someone hearing the story for the first time (like myself). I would recommend that Chris be present for future interviews with Ed, though it might be interesting to conduct a follow up with Ed alone in order to see if he becomes more talkative without Chris. Either way, I would recommend numerous follow ups with both of them, since forty years on the Beach is a lot to unpack. Ed mentioned, for example, that when he first moved here he met people who had been living on the Beach since 1918. I didn't probe further about this, but I think someone should.

The interview is loosely structured to talk about Chris and Ed's life before the Beach, changes they perceive presently, and what they think the future holds for this community. We touched upon craftsmanship, birth, illness, death, and safety. We talked about old maps of the Beach, challenges in rebuilding damaged houses today, and the likely disappearance of the Beach with the rising tides of global warming. Above all, I was seeking to uncover what exactly Ed did to transform this strip of coastal houses from barely inhabited, dilapidated vacation homes to a thriving and unique beachfront community. More than a builder of houses, it turns out, Ed and Chris have built connections that have made Salmon Beach become a community in the classic sense of the word.

Transcription

C: So does everybody have a different person to interview in your class, or ... so how does that work?

R: Yeah so we were all given um ... Andrew Gardner kind of has this working list here ... you can see my scribbled notes on it (laughs)

C: Okay, oh, wow...

R: Thank you so much. And I guess my interest in this project has been; and ... Professor Gardener is interested in raising children here, and what that looks like,

C: Yeah, yeah ...

R: ... and so that's one of the main focuses of what this project is

C: Oh cool!

R: ... but what I'm hoping to add to this is what he's calling "deep history," I think you saw on there, but also just trying to understand what made this place what it is now. How did it actually become this? Um, and that can help inform some of the other interviewers when they're trying to answer the questions of like, what is it like with newer generations coming in? But there's a lot of history embedded here, and it's living history, it's ... that's what I think is really beautiful about it. So, um...yeah. But I know you also have grandchildren here, and you're also a part of that, so, if you want to talk about any of that we could.

C: Great, cause ... Yeah, cause we raised our son, he was raised down here, and Rowan was essentially born here, was born up the hill but...um...but we boated him around.

R: And what was that like, uh, for you, raising him here? I mean, because there's even a physical barrier between here and up top.

E: Uh, well you know, it's really cool because it's like when he was like, uh, five years old, he had...An old friend of mine, who lives down here too, Kelly Raynolds (sp?), his son was one of his best friends, right? So we set him up, he had a little black dog like that --

C whispers: Jasmine.

E: there were about, maybe, I don't know, 15 houses at that time, or about 20 lived in full-time, year round, and uh...he wanted to go by himself. But uh, we used the phone, kept track of him...it took him about oh, 45 minutes to an hour to get there of dicking around, looking at everything, and finally got there ... but you know, people just watched him all the way. And so, it got to be a habit of all the kids down here, the adults paid attention, but the kids got to run pretty free, and uh ... so they had a wonderful time, just tearing around.

R: So that's interesting, oh I'm sorry to cut you off --

C: Go ahead

R: So I guess I was wondering about ... um, you say that they get to run free, and that it feels somewhat safer, like you wouldn't see that, you know, in a subdivision maybe up top-

E: Yeah.

R: Um ... What are the hazards that you would say they are more free from down here?

E: Falling in.

R: Yeah?

E: Well Jesse fell in, Um ...

C: Twice.

E: once off the back deck, once off the trail, and once off the front deck. In between the two, I had a space between the deck out front and the little deck there, and uh ... actually, I was here, and somehow I got in the water, I was in the water before he even popped up, and I got out so fast the cards in my wallet were still dry.

R: Mm, wow!

E: But um, that was it, uh, we make sure they know how to swim ... Jesse still has the little boat we built when he was a kid. That he kinda ... It was unsinkable, we toiled around on ... so they'd be in the water until they were blue, and then they'd jump in the shower and turn the water on until it was gone.

R: And so you built that boat with him?

E: Yeah

R: Really? What kind of boat was it?

E: It was fiberglass ... and foam.

C: It was really more of like a paddleboard, almost.

C: I think the thing about ... so when I met Ed, I was a single mom, I was divorced, and so Jesse was probably four ... probably about five, when we moved down, five or six, when we moved down. And I think the huge difference, I think, is being able to just kinda let the kids tear around. All the adults here know the kids, well, you know, pretty much..and, so, our kids grew up, and grow up, being very comfortable with adults, I think, in a way that not all kids are. Um, traditionally, whenever we had Salmon Beach parties, they were like, they were never just adults only parties, they were always, and they still are, you know, the kids are always you know, the kids and the dogs

E: The (kids would be upset) if they ever thought they weren't invited too.

C: Yeah and so Jessie grew up seeing his neighbors get pretty loose sometimes and you know, we had conversations around that. And so I think just a that is much more like a small town ... in a lot of ways, for better, and for worse, because there are certainly some aspects of small towns that aren't that lovely. But as far as raising a kid, it was an awesome place to raise a kid.

I think it's hard for toddlers; It's usually like if a family can get through the toddler stage and still be down here and not go up the hill, then they're gonna stick around, but I think it's hard, especially when you have two little ones, when they're tearing around and they don't have the good sense not to fall in. Um ... So like with Rowan, we've always kept the deck just like this because Ed brings in a lot of stuff from the beach, and from the water ... so Jesse and Kat, his ex-wife now, they just live four houses down, they totally enclosed their deck with mesh so that he would be safe until he was walking decently. And for us he was over here like almost every week. And so he just wouldn't go on the deck until, you know, until he was safe to do it. And so that's part of raising a kid around here, you know there are some restrictions on toddlers, you don't have to worry about kids falling in the water in other places, but once you are beyond worrying about that, they can really, they can just tear around. And now there are more kids paddle boarding, kayaking, things like that, than when Jesse was growing up. But I think it's really the community aspect that's different.

E: You know, it's kind of like a really cheap social life, you know ... (laughter) When I first moved down here, you know, no one had any money. And so what we'd do is, if we had money we'd buy materials for our houses, and if we didn't have work to do, we'd work on our houses. And if we wanted to drink beer, we had to make it. It wasn't always good, but ...

R: Nice. And so that's interesting, you say "Back then, nobody had money." Have you seen that dynamic change a bit?

E: (laughter) Oh Sure.

C: It's pretty obvious!

E: Yeah ... Going price for ... I got a falling down shack, and we didn't own the land then, and I paid \$370. And then a house that you could actually live in was like \$2,000.

C: Well tell the story, and so how did you find your house? Was it some guy you met at the Lobster Shop?

E: No, uh, I was working at the Top of the Ocean, which is ...

C: This was his first wife. Brief first wife. [Laughter from R and C ... but E ignores it]

E: ... which is no longer there, either ... but uh, he's heard about it, I Think it was Jim Ehrler (sp?), architect, who used to have a place down here, but uh ... I just I walked down here, and I met my next door neighbor and said "Gee, I could live in this," so this place used to be owned by a cop in Puyallup, asked if they wanted to sell it, just a fall down shack, had no water, no electricity ... it had windows, no insulation, nothing else. Only thing that stayed were the beams and the floor.

R: Yeah.

C: So was it that part of the house right there?

E: No, it was just this (battle?) strip all the way down. So the original ... I've met people who lived here in 1918.

R: Wow. And so when you said you found this place and started living here what year was that?

E: 1971.

R: That was 1971, okay. And that was the time when this house was \$370 and \$2,000 for maybe a more livable house?

E: Yeah. There were only about 10 houses that were lived in year round at that time.

R: So it was more of like a seasonal ... fishing community, would you say?

E: Well originally, the first impetus down here, you know, people used to build cabins in the woods on the shore and that was their vacation, my grandfather had one when my parents were growing up...

C: But not here.

E: There were communities like this on the other side (motions to the island across the Sound) ... There was even at one time a house out at the end of Point Defiance. And the guy got out there walking at low tide or by rowboat. But right next door here originally was the boathouse, and the tunnel coming in, the impetus was finished in 1917, 19... something like that, and then ... the Depression.

R: Yeah ... Oh ...

E: And if you look at maps you'll see that the houses here were actually three deep. There was one in back, the original one, and used to be one in front of this one, and one time there was one in the back, behind it. And there was a trail in front of houses, and then ... that was a boathouse, where they rented rowboats, and beyond that was the store.

R: The store was here when you moved down, or was this just on the old map, that there was a store?

E: The store had been torn down just a year or so before, and uh ... actually Roger Edwards still has the original sign from it.

R: WowHow do you think a store would do now, if there was a little one put up?

E: Um ... I don't think it would do, I don't think it would make it.

C: Yeah most folks work, so we go up the hill, you know, anyway, pretty much daily. I know one of my neighbors a few years ago before she had her baby, she got an espresso machine, Marcy; and she was selling espresso in the morningsand so I think something like that, possibly periodically might do, but I mean folks it's easy to go up the hill. It's not quite as easy as when you live up the hill, and you can just pop in your car if you forget something and zip out and get it, but ...

E: Yeah a lot of people didn't have cars, like in the Depression times ... and then the stores were not that close, anyway.

C: Right, we were more, it was more isolated.

E: I think probably when they ran the store, and Roger Edwards would know much more, but they mighta brought some of the stuff in by boat, but ... you know.

R: So you said when you moved here, if you wanted beer, you'd make it ... is there still some kind of like uh, maybe not a store down here, but like some kind of local barter economy, maybe?

E: Oh yeah ... sure, It's kind of like, I wouldn't say a barter economy, but we help each other. It can be work, or sharing meals ... actually, it started about ten years ago that pregnant mothers, you know, when they had their baby, would get two or three more weeks of meals every night, from the neighbors ...

C: Everybody kind of signs up, I'm sure you guys will hear about this from other folks, too, but Oscar or Willy or somebody will organize some of the younger folks, and yeah, it's really cool. I know Jesse and Kat didn't have to cook for a months when Rowan was born, everybody brings some food, so ... And I don't know how much this is happening but we have a stained glass window upstairs that was done in what, maybe in the mid 70's? Maybe a little later, the 80's? Well it was a barter, it was a trade, because Pete lived down here and you made him a built-in cabinet, and he did the stained glass...

E: But you know neighbors are always helping each other down here. There's a lot of things you can't do yourself, heavy lifting, but ... just grab your neighbors.

R: I've heard stories.

E: Oh yeah. It happened just about a month ago when that float came in, we were playing Bridge, and this concrete float comes under the neighbor's house ... big ... it was a homewrecker! We stopped playing Bridge, put boats in the water, and got it out [Note the house was #92, Andrew Gardner's house].

R: Did you see it when that happened or how did you find out?

E: We were there, we were watching it.

C: But they'll certainly, especially when storms happen, folks will just call up and down the beach ... Jesse will get a call from somebody down that way, and we'll get a phone call there's kind of a phone tree saying "there's this really ugly snag coming down." The same thing happens when anybody sees whales, because that's always really exciting.

R: ... or possibly dolphins [referring to the a recent dolphin sighting in the Sound Chris had mentioned before we started the interview]

E: Yeah, I just got a log this morning. Sitting out back.

C: Sitting out back. yes. Orcas are the ones that we see the most. Sometimes gray whales, but the orcas...there's that one pod, is it the J pod, that goes through here?

E: J is the most frequent, I think.

R: So we talked about how there are other communities like this, that somebody had a house up on Point Defiance that they could only get to by rowboat, for example, or along this coast here ... Um, why do you think this one stayed, and the other ones didn't?

E: Well ... I mean, you know, this one ... actually, it was all, you know, mostly ... well did you know that they tried to kick everyone out after the earthquake in like '46, or something like that, after there we had a big landslide down on Point Defiance? And so actually couple of houses were moved off of the beach. And then there were only ... well ... there was one famous photographer down here in the 1950's, Verna Heyfer. Roger has some of her slides, but uh ...

C: Beautiful, those slides are beautiful..

E: When I came here, maybe 10 houses lived in full time, and you know, if you mentioned up the hill you lived at Salmon Beach, people would just look down their noses at you. But you know it was definitely affordable, and you know, if you had any idea you know, being able to work on your house you could do it.

C: That's a really interesting question. Um, I wonder if part of it ... wasn't that it is a little more easily accessible to Tacoma, it's just up the hill, it's kind of right there. I don't know if it was part of, just by happenstance that in the 70's a bunch of hippies discovered it and just hung with it, you know?

E: I mean, Roger Edwards is down here ... and, I don't know if you know Jean Shank? She died about five years ago, but she lived down here, from the time she was 16, and uh, not full time, and she was a very well known nurse and instructor at the ... when Tacoma had a nursing school, and uh ... she lived down here all those years.

R: So if she was sixteen what year would that have been?

E: Oh gosh back in the thirties.

C: So we had a few folks...When I met Ed there were still some folks who were original, Gene Shank, (vanderberg?) who had been down here since their teens, maybe. Which is really ... those folks are no longer with us. So I guess we are kind of, we're now the old timers, I guess. But yeah that's something to think about, is why ... Maybe it's just because it's so much closer to the metropolitan ... to the city.

E: It didn't matter so much where you lived, but you know, definitely proximity to jobs.

R: And also you said that back then if you had an idea of what you build you just build it --

E: Well ...

R: ... which I know is increasingly with bureaucracy and codes being pushed out.

C: We have many generations ... I'm sure you'll hear many stories about the building down here, we have a long sad history with permitting (laughs) or not, down here.

E: Also if you had a boat, great access to materials, because all my foundation, the pilings, the beams, it all came off of the water and the beaches. Actually a lot of the living room here, the logs in there I sent off to have milled.

R: That's amazing. And I met somebody um ... this is embarrassing. Their dog's name is Digby.

C: (Laughter) Oh yes, south end, yes

R: He sells real estate.

C: Oh, is that um ... is that ... oh, what's his face?

E: Not sure about Digby, but Roscoe is Steven's ...

C: No, our realtor down here. They've been here forever. Oh god this is totally a senior moment.

R: Well I just met him a couple of days ago so I'm also having a moment, because I can't remember his name, only his dog's name, I'm so ashamed (laughter) [editor's note: his name is Dave Peterson]

C: So that could actually be a whole subset of stories down here, is the animals stories here. The animals have also been a part of the beach.

E: So we did census in the 70's, and we had more dogs than people.

R: It does seem like a great place for dogs.

C: Yeah once they get over ... they can get territorial. Once they get over that, they're good.

R: You said his name was Doug Peterson?

C: Dave Peterson? Dave and Jennifer? Maybe ... those are the ones who have been here a long time.

E: Actually until they built their own house, they raised two daughters in a house that was only 700 square feet.

R: Well whoever this person is said that you built their house.

C: Well you did. You built Peterson's house.

E: I did.

R: Which is interesting, so what all have you worked on here on the beach, that has shaped the aesthetic of?

E: Well some of them it's a lot, some of them I did the foundation on...the third one down, I built that house, I don't know, I've done a fair amount of work on a lot of houses around here, could be anything from piling work to foundations of the house itself, or cabinets, or stuff like that.

R: And so who else, I imagine when you first moved here, if someone wanted to live here they would have to know those skills, you know, if they wanted to make a house livable they'd have to know how to do that

E: (laughs) Well an awful lot of people would learn, I wouldn't say they had those skills, but yeah you could always ask your neighbors, you know. But yeah, we've passed a lot on. But there are some awful good carpenters down here.

C: Well and I think Ed is really modest, and I would say that there's hardly a house down here that he has not had a hand in one way or another. And I think that the aesthetic that Ed has that he's probably brought to some of his work, he has great common sense and he's very practical, but also his background is as a shipwright, so as you can see everything in this house Ed did, so um, when he does cabinet work for folks, it's beautiful and it's simple and it's like something you'd find in a well crafted yacht. And I think that the open...when we first moved down here the original cabins were pretty small and often quite dark. And so as they would hire ed or they would talk to Ed about how to open things up, and I think he brought early on the aesthetic of openness, and taking a small space, and now it's very common, but having one big room downstairs, which is where you live, and where you do stuff. And so I think he's brought that down here.

R: You know the aesthetic of openness is something that I feel like you get you get here just by having this outside (referring to water) we don't get much of that up top anymore, it's very clustered.

C: And it's awesome, No matter how horrible the weather is or how dark it is in the winter you still, you know There's always some light and some movement out front, which makes all the difference in the world.

R: Ah, yeah, it seems less gray that way, if you think about it. And the water just reflects the sky, and doubles it. So, let's talk about life before Salmon Beach. You were a shipwright?

E: Uh yeah, actually that was after I got here, after I got here to Salmon Beach. But uh, no, I grew up in Jersey and Ohio, and I went to college in Ohio, and I joined the Peace Corps.

C: He was one of the early, early Peace Corps dudes.

E: That was in 67. Living down here now, two of my fellow Peace Corps workers, we were in Micronesia together. We trained together, and we all play Bridge together.

R: Cool

E: That's Kelly Raynolds, and Hugh Mitchell

R: And you met in Micronesia?

E: We met in San Francisco

C: In training

E: That is where we started out, yes. Training in the same district, different islands. He was in Atol (sp?), and I was on high island named Cushai (sp?).

R: And what did you do there?

E: Kelly was a lawyer, Hugh and i were economic advisors, but one thing I did was I built the house, and that was a matter of going out, and I had help, and that entailed going out to mangrove swamps, and cutting trees, and cutting leaves for thatch, lay it on ...

R: Is that something you learned from them then? Like in the process of ...

E: Yeah.

C: Is it Ted Segrest(sp?), that helped you?

E: Yeah.

E: So yeah I, then I came back and I taught for a couple of years, and then I turned 26. And see back then when you turned 26, you were no longer eligible for the draft. So that was a big deal

C: You got your life back!

E: So until you turned 26 you did not have a life. So it was either get a deferment, or get drafted. I had friends who were drafted and it did not work out well.

R: So you had to get a draft or what else did you say you had to do?

E: Get a deferment

C: And if you get a deferment, you'd get it medically, and some folks could figure out a way to get a deferment like that or ... Peace Corps was a deferment, right?

E: and after Peace Corps I got a deferment for teaching, for two years.

R: So you were 26, you were living in Tacoma ... where in Tacoma?

E: And so I loaded up the two dogs, and ...

C: (whispers: that was the first wife!)

E: And so Kelly and Hugh were actually here, Hugh was in the Preacher Corps and so Kelly was a lawyer with Eisenhour & Carlisle (sp?) downtown, looked around the Northwest, and it wasn't probably more than about six months before I found Salmon Beach

C: You came out here to visit Kelly?

E: Yeah I didn't want to live on the East Coast anymore. I couldn't ... I had a hard time relating to what people relate to there, which was your job your money, whatever else.

C: Still do..

R: Interesting...

[Ed puts another log on the fire]

R: And so around that time what were you doing, Chris?

C: Let's see, so I grew up in Wisconsin ... came out here to go to UPS ... cause I was just so sick of Wisconsin ... in like 1969. I came out as a Junior ... my family let me do it cause my brother in law and sister uh, he was in the army, so he was stationed out here at the time, and they ... had the mistaken belief that I was, would be ... that there would be family to watch and make sure I wasn't getting into too much trouble (laughs) ... but instead I basically just never saw my sister and brother in law, and just came out to UPS and just partied like crazy (laughs). It was like 1969 and everything was happening, much more was happening out here than was happening in Wisconsin when I left, so ... I had a blast, got married in 1971, had Jesse ... got divorced about ... it was a sad, sad short marriage. And then for a couple of years was on welfare, single mom on welfare, food stamps, the whole nine yards, just scrambling ... worked at the Tides Tavern ... finally got like, there used to be these jobs called 'Seeded' jobs which were government funded jobs for low income ... got a seeded job ... and then about that time, so this is a Salmon Beach connection, so one of the women that I met when I was married is this lady named Sue Maxwell, who was the girlfriend of a guy named Dave Maxwell, who was a friend of my ex-husband's. They had gone to Olympic College together. So, Sue Maxwell was also a single mom, although Dave was her boyfriend. So they ... Dave bought a place down here back in ...

E: '72, January of '72 ... Again, it was a house that uh, had been knocked in by a slide. Paid about \$75 and went to work ... and they still live down here.

C: ... still live down here. So Sue and Dave were hanging out, they were a couple when I was married, and they continued to be a couple after I was divorced ... Sue had kids about around Jesse's age, so we hung out; Sue and I hung out together. Sue and Dave decided ultimately that they were going to get married, they had a wedding at which I was the Matron of Honor, and that's where I met Ed.

R: Ooooh

C: It was a big Salmon Beach wedding, a lot of folks from Salmon Beach, um...and Ed invited me down for a boat ride, and as my friend Sue likes to tell the story, when she came back from the honeymoon I was still down here. It wasn't quite like that, but it was pretty much like that (laughs). He invited me down for a boat ride and I stayed for a few days.

R: Aw, yeah...

C: And that was kind of it! And so we dated, and hung out, for a couple of years, and then he got to know Jesse, and Jesse got to know him, and ultimately moved in with my kid, my little dog, and my guinea pig (laughs).

E: Actually, we got married down there on the front deck. And our son got married down on the front deck. And the minister, our friend from the Peace Corps was our minister.

C: He got wind of one of those ... kind of ...

E: Universal Life.

C:...Universal Life Minister-by-Mail ... it was awesome.

R: Wow! And what was the wedding like?

E: It was a party!

C: Our wedding was a blast! (laughs)

C: Yeah, we had a neat little ceremony, wrote our own vows, Jesse was like our Best Kid ... you know, I mean, he was a part of it ... we didn't have like Best Man but Jesse, he was maybe about 6 or 8 when we got married?

E: Yeah

C: Yeah, 6 or 8. And we had ... we had kind of a jug band ... it wasn't a jug band, but kind of a 'banjo' kind of a band down here, and danced on the front deck, and had a potluck, and ... it was fun!

E: Yeah!

R: Who all was there?

C: Oh, golly ...

E: A lot of people from down here! Some friends up the hill ...

C: My mom and my grandma who raised me, I was raised by my grandparents ... and so we boated her in, and winched her up (laughs) in a chair (laughs) ... was that? Yeah that was for our wedding, yeah.

R: Oh yeah, so people who couldn't do stairs would boat in?

C: Yeah, we'd bring 'em in by boat, yeah.

R: Is there anybody ... this is kind of a side subject, but is there anybody who lives on the beach who doesn't take the stairs, or who can't?

E: Oh yeah, yeah ... well

C: Who can't? No ...

E: Actually Jean Shank, a couple of years before she died, she actually ... and then, she had ... people eventually they were relatives, staying in the house next door, and they did the shopping for her, and then ...

C: And the neighbors like I know the Gattis are on your list there, and the Gattis are near neighbors of hers, and they took a lot of care of Jean.

R: Interesting. So it was mainly just other people would bring supplies down. There's not really like ... I guess there's not like a boat taxi or anything like that?

C: No ... no ... and like right now, so our neighbor two houses away, Henry, he's in his 80's and he's been pretty ill. He's got Guillain Barre, something that's really affecting his heart, and his ability to get around. So, he's got some ... he is, has some ... guy from New Zealand who's staying with him, as well as he has a daughter who is here a lot, but he just found some young kid who's kind of there, you know, I think doing grocery shopping and stuff for him. Um, he's fairly housebound, although he does go up the hill, but oh, it's painful to watch. It takes him a really long time to get up the hill, and it looks just painful, and dreadful.

R: Interesting. (pause). Yeah I always wondered what would happen if somebody were to get injured, or something that would affect your ability to walk ...

E: Well, we've had people get hauled out in the fire boat ... I was one of them.

C: Ed was one, yeah

R: What happened if you don't mind my asking?

E: I was on the deck, and lifting up plywood with a davit and the whole deck flipped.

R: Oh wow!

C: The whole deck just came off of the house. That was not Ed's workmanship! (laughs)

E: I built the davit, though!

R: So that was not your craftsmanship..

C: No! (laughs)

E: No.

R: ... but I imagine, I guess I do wonder about ... building codes down here sometimes. I know a lot of their ostensible reasons for having them is safety, but ...

E: Oh I would say everything we have done now is ... people are doing it to code. and stuff like that, but you know, codes make sense, it's not like ... it's not ... it's not following the code that's the problem, it's getting the permit to build. It's not building to code. That's no problem.

R: Ooooh, okay. And so the permit, how is that different?

E: Well you have to go through so many agencies ... that ... you know, you might have to have an archeological study ... you know ... Indians and whatever, you know, shoreline, Army Corps of Engineers, which can take years ... ecology ... you name it.

R: mmhmm. Interesting.

C: We can't ... any of the open spaces ... we can't enlarge the footprint anywhere. Everything has to stay as it is. And if ... so, when we had the 2001 earthquake, and there were, what, three houses that were wiped out?

E: Two.

C: Two. And folks were really concerned with whether or not they would be able to rebuild. But ultimately they were. But you know, it was a very laborious process for them.

R: I heard that ... the reason why there is gaps now is because people are no longer able to rebuild?

C: Right. Well, those are all pretty old gaps.

E: Well they go back to

R: Interesting. Let me check how we're doing on time. Okay. So ... I guess we've talked about some of the history, and a little bit about what it's like now ... but I'm interested in knowing what you ... what you see the future of Salmon Beach as, like where do you see it going?

E: Well, global warming is gonna finish Salmon Beach someday. If they allow us to permit, and lose our houses, some people have done it, we'll do that for a while, but eventually, you know, sea level rises much more than about three or four feet, that's about as far as you can go.

R: Yeah.

E: So.

C: Mmhm.

R: Mm. And then I guess there'd be ... a lot of the coastline would be compromised..

C: Right.

R: I'm not sure how far up it would go, but yeah ... huh ... (we all look out over the water). And I guess, like ... living down here and watching all of the changes ... you're both from ... you're from the East coast, and you're from the Midwest, yeah ... do you go back to visit there from time to time?

E: Mmhm. I have a brother and a sister, and yeah ...

R: So you've seen a lot of changes in those landscapes too? I'm from the Midwest myself, so every time I go back, I definitely notice...

C: Yeah I don't go back, I don't have a reason to go back anymore. So yeah, I haven't. Although I'm pretty sure the small town I grew up in, the last time I was was there, you know, which was, you know, thirty some years ago, there were a lot of changes, even at that point. So, yeah ...

R: So, if people were allowed to rebuild, and if global warming does take this stretch out, what do you think um, are some things that would be lost here? I mean obviously besides property and land, but ...

E: Well you're going to lose a whole community. And I mean community in the sense that you know, the way people work with each other down here, and you know relate to each other, and enjoy each other.

C: Would you ... our friends Steven and Rosemary who are ... who I referred to earlier, son of our friend Kelly, so Steven and Rosemary have two daughters around Rowan's age, and they moved up the hill a few years ago ... after having lived down here for a while. And I know in talking to Steven particularly, he said "You know, I think they would still like to figure out a way to get back. And they live in ... it's beautiful, you know by the Weyerhaeuser Mansion up on Stevens in that bend there, it's a gorgeous little neighborhood. And I know they like it because it's convenient for the kids who are getting into a lot of activities ... which is one of the disadvantages down here, once your kid hits middle school, if they're into lots of sports, you're having ... not just to haul them around, but haul them up and down the hill all the time in the car. But I know that Steven has talked about how he misses the community and ... even if you've got good neighbors, it's different. And I think that's really true and I think that's definitely what's unique ... I mean, we have, certainly, our inner-Beach squabbles and issues, but it is very much a community, and especially ... you see it especially like you do in small towns, like when you read about Osa, and how people came together around the landslide, I mean ... thankfully so far a smaller scale, but in that same way, when we had the earthquake in 2001, or any time we have big slides that you know, block people's access, or take out the backside of their house, or whatever, I mean ... the whole ... the community gets together to fix it, and to help ... and we had the earthquake here, and you know ... Ed had a shop, a big two-story shop out back, and we had to dismantle it really fast ... because it was

moving toward the house here ... it was the weight of the dirt was ... pushing it toward our house. And you know, it happened in like two days. Right?

E: Well, three or four.

R: Yeah.

C: So that's ... I think that's why people stay. Is I mean, besides that its gorgeous. You know, we have, like, whales in your front yard, you know ... but it's that, just the ... it feeds your soul, living down here. I mean the water, and just the calm of it. But the other piece of that is the community.

E: You know, fishers are out fishing, and they're not actively catching fish, so they'll root the boats and up top maybe drink beer, and drink wine, and whatever

C: Yeah, the floats..

R: Do you think disasters bring people together?

C: Oh yeah, I think they definitely do. I mean we all ... it's kind of like we're all in the same boat. If it doesn't happen to us, it could happen to us (laughs) you know? So yeah.

R: Seems like up top, disasters are a little bit more ... they happen in isolated ... kind of pockets rather than something that affects a whole stretch, I don't know ...

C: But I think because, ... you know there's a commonality to stuff that we have to deal with you know? When there's a big storm, and tides are in and the wind is blowing, we're all having to deal with it, and deal with you know, the potential for a big giant log to get under our house, or our neighbor's house, or whatever. And so we all have...we all have these almost common threats. You know, slides, and high tides, and all that. As well as common pleasures.

R: Yeah. Yeah the ocean itself seems to be emerging as a character in this story.

C: Yeah, yeah, absolutely!

R: Because it's predictable in a sense, but...

C:But not...yeah

R: But definitely not predictable and chaotic in other ways. And then with global warming, it seems to become a little bit more.

C: Yeah! That's definitely added to the things that wake me up at 2am that I can't do anything about (laughs) It's like, really? Yeah ...

R: Mmm. So do you think any other community that's on the water might have to deal with those things, or is it ... the geographical kind of like, Salmon Beach seems to be a little more geographically isolated than a lot of other beach communities because of the hill in addition to just being here ...

C: And with this kind of shared history

R: Yeah

C: And I think that's part of it, that the historical aspect of the beach may be somewhat unique. I don't know about some of the other communities. I wonder sometimes if like, the Lake Union House Boats, you know ... I sometimes wonder if they have a similar sense of differentness ... and community, I mean that's ... I don't know.

R: I mean, just as a housesitter for a week I noticed I almost felt like people were introducing me to what it was here, you know? I didn't just stay here, people tell me certain etiquette things, or certain, you know...it definitely felt like entering a very well defined community, not just staying in a place.

C: Mm-hmm I think that's really, I think that's accurate.

R: And they've kept up that definition of community through the years.

E: Yeah, and well you know it's easy, if you walk the beach, I mean, people doing stuff, you know, cutting firewood, doing a little gardening, or whatever

C: Once the sun comes out

E: And you know people do stuff and talk, you know? And you know, people are gonna have to go by your house to get to their own houses or to get anywhere, you know? So people say hi, they talk, and they, you know, they share things. And that's...it makes it really easy. It isn't like you can be driving into your driveway, and ignore everything else. You can't.

R: Yeah!

E: So, I think the hillside makes a big difference that way.

R: Yeah. The face to face interaction that used to be more commonplace everywhere has maintained itself here.

E: Yeah

C: And if you happen to have a next door neighbor that you can't stand, you've got to figure out a way to deal with it because they're like right there. So it's not like, and I think that a tolerance...and you know, you just kind of let things go. Living peacefully is pretty important to most of us down here (laughs). Right?

E: Yeah

C: We've been lucky, I mean, other than when there were renters from ... the renters from Lakes High School a few years ago...

E: More than a few years ago

C: A certain amount of years ago, next door, that was hell. That only lasted for a few months.

E: Before that house was there. They had ... we watched wrestling.

C: (laughs) Cause we couldn't sleep

E: Cause they'd be barfing on the deck, sixteen kids over there, all drunk, barfing ... so ...

C: But that was like, I think your description of what happens when folks come down here, they were just using this as a rental place, and it was just a party place, so it wasn't like they were any valid part of the community, so thank God they went away.

R: This is interesting because you said when you moved down here there were 10 places where people would be living, right, and it had been summer homes, so you kind of watched the community craft itself, right, would you say, like you've watched the evolution of it becoming what it is that is now maintaining itself?

E: Yeah

C: Mmhmm

E: Definitely houses are bigger and nicer than what they were (laughs). But you know, people believe in something, and then you know, and if they like it they're gonna invest in it.

C: And once ... what really changed ... started, I think, the change, was when we bought the land that our houses sat on. And then that meant that you could actually, you could kind of figure "okay, we'll BE here..." Up until then, it was what, a five year lease?

E: Three year.

C: Three year lease. So, you know, you could buy your place really cheap, because you might be evicted in three years. So, once that changed then people started paying more for places down here and, it's just kind of gone from there.

R: So how do you feel about the ... the sort of economic changes of who lives here now? You said now people are being able to afford buying homes, it's certainly not \$2,000 homes anymore.

E: You know, certainly, you have to have, you know ... a well paying job or two to even buy a place down here now. But, you know, I kinda miss the aspect of you know, being able to you know, start out with very little and then work it up. There's still houses like that that are, that it's going to happen to ...

C: I think it does lessen the ... the diversity down here. I think it's ...vand, we've got awesome new neighbors and we've gotten awesome new neighbors for years, and you know, cool people down here, but ... maybe a little less interesting?

E: Mhmm

C: And that's just me. Yeah I mean you don't have a lot of scrambling folks being able to ... you know, scrambling young artists or anything (laughs) you know, unless they're renting. We do get some cool renters down here.

E: We have had just a boom in the number of children down here which we just love. Which we've had like 33 or 35 for Halloween.

C: Yeah, that's a lot for us!

E: And now we have like 45 or 50 down here now. Which is just great.

R: What do you do for Halloween?

E: Uh, we make cookies.

R: Okay

C: That's another cool little difference, you know, we can actually do, you know, homemade stuff

E: Joan Rutherford down in number one, she makes donuts

C: She's made donuts since Jesse was a kid. Donuts and pomegranates. She started to do pomegranates because she decided that every kid needs to experience a pomegranate. So it's become like this tradition.

R: That's cool!

E: That was a lot of cookies. (laughs) And you give them little baggies with four cookies in it, and it took ... I was baking for two nights, you know!

C: They're really good. They're really good cookies!

R: What kind are they?

E: This year we made chocolate chip, and then other years I do Garbage Cookies. That's kind of like a macaroon, that I add all kinds of stuff, and I add in currants, and dates, and nuts...we also like to take those with us on ski trips and stuff like that – for Energy Cookies.

C: Those are really good.

E: We tell the new kids they're Garbage Cookies, and they say no, I don't want them (laughs). But still you know, three or four of the adults down here, or more ...

C: yeah!

E: ... were kids down here, and THEY want cookies, so I've gotta make cookies for them too.

R: Yeah! Do you fish from here? Do you fish from the Sound?

E: I...I haven't as much lately, I used to ... well back in the seventies I used to fish a lot ... and ... smoked salmon, and my son Jesse ... probably for about 20 years he didn't like salmon

C: (laughs) because he had it so much!

E: He has since realized that it's really good! But he ate so much of it ... but right now, I've taken my grandson out a few times, I'll probably get a license again this year, and take him out. Cause he gets his license for free, I don't. We didn't catch anything. And then I grow oysters,

R: Oh! Neat!

E: And other people do down here too. We started about, oh, six, seven years ago?

C: Yeah! Right around when Row was born is when we had our first ones. Because he really likes them.

E: He sucks down raw oysters. And you wouldn't believe ...

C: We really, I mean we really have to move him away from the raw oysters so he will leave some for the adults.

R: Yeah I've seen the oyster shells on the beach. I've never had an oyster.

C: Yeah, they're pretty good, you've got to try them!

E: (walks to the window) You can see the bags down there, actually, I've got to get them.

R: And you say you 'grow' oysters, how does one do that?

E: You buy them, put them in little baggies, they're about that big, and a thousand starts for bout 50 bucks ... But you have to buy the bags, and uh, anchor em down with ropes, and wire tie them, then you ... actually, I haven't had to worry about the starfish because they've been ...

C: Yeah the poor starfish!

R: Oh, that wasting disease?

C: Yeah!

E: Used to have to check them for starfish that'd get in there, and it takes about ...

C: We haven't seen them, I mean it was really noticeable.

E: (motioning with hands) ... It takes about ... at about a year they're like that ... two years they're like that ... I got some three year, and four year ones ...

C: Those were pretty big. Yeah, those were really big.

R: Do you ever get pearls in there? Are these the kinds that do that, or is that ...? Forgive my ignorance!

E: I, I have gotten two of them ... and uh, I found them by eating them. (laughter from everyone).

R: Interesting ... you might have swallowed some and not realized it (laughter).

C: But yeah, that's something too, a couple of changes that I think we've noticed over the years ... well, certainly the starfish over just recently, cause we used to, you know, they'd just be out there, and they're certainly not ... I didn't see ANY last summer. And octopus. We used to see octopus.

E: Actually, somebody saw one just recently. We used to see them more frequently, but its kind of an up and down thing, not sure what it is.

C: Boy it's been ... I just remember when I first started hanging out with you, you know, we'd see octopus out front fairly often and boy I haven't seen them in a long long time.

R: Yeah ... Have you ... I know it's far from here, but ... have you heard about or noticed anything with the Fukushima disaster affecting the Sound? Do you know ...?

E: The what?

C: The ... The...Fukushima disaster in Japan, the atomic ...

E: Oh yeah ...

R: Yeah I guess somebody tested some seaweed in Olympia, and it tested positive for the Cesium 137, which is the specific marker for what is coming over from Fukushima.

C: Yeah so we do have a neighbor, little guy who was playing with Rowan when you first got here, his dad is very involved in the environmental movement, and he's been doing annual surveys of plastic and other waste along the coastlines from ... and you know tries to identify ... I think it started with the Fukushima waste ... then he's kind of expanded. I mean he's really focused on just the total amount of plastic that washes up on our beaches.

E: He used to do kayak trips down the west coast of Vancouver Island then up the Southeast of Alaska doing water studies and stuff like that. And I think he's back in school, for Environmental Studies.

R: And what was your degree in?

E: Uh, Economics.

R: Economics, oh right, Economics.

E: Minor in Biology.

R: I think my brain registered the "eco" part (laughter from all).

E: Oh, that's from the Peace Corps thing, okay

R: Yeah, which I guess they can fit in, I know some environmental ethicists have tried to look at the environment in economic terms, and add up ... you know, the value of maintaining things to try and make an argument.

C: Right. Well it seems to be the only argument the politicians will listen to.

R: Right, unfortunately. Unfortunately. Um, well I think I want to be respectful of your time. We just came upon an hour, since we started ...

C: This is fun! We can talk, we can probably tell Salmon Beach for ... on and on ...

R: I would ... well, if you're interested in telling more stories, I would definitely love to um...I don't know, even come back and maybe do a subset, or a follow up ...

C: Sure!

E: Actually, it'd be kind of interesting if you got Kelly, and Hugh, and a bunch of people together, and then uh, give them some beer (laughter from all)

C: See and our son, for his bachelor party, that's exactly what he did. He wanted nothing more than to get Kelly, and you, and Hugh, and who all else ... Galen, maybe ... I can't ... I mean you know, just ... some of the kids have grown up on the beach but particularly folks our age to just tell Salmon Beach stories, you know ... which I thought was just lovely.

R: That sounds really lovely, actually ... I saw they were building a fire down on the beach earlier. I was invited to split wood (laughter from everyone) I was like oh, maybe later!

C: (laughter) maybe later!

R: But that sure looked fun. Um ... do you know, and this is kind of off the subject, but ... so there are renters on the beach?

E: Yea, and also very good ... some of their problems is they can't find a place where they can afford ... but uh, yeah actually my next door neighbor, he's a little bit younger than my son Jesse, but he grew up down here too, in an A frame, he's Maxwell's son. He's a son of Dave and Sue

C: Yes he's the son of the folks at whose wedding we met. Lots and lots of different ties down here.

E: He does lots of fishing and crabbing and stuff down here, and fishing and mountain rescue and stuff too. He's also a carpenter.

R: right ... and you have a business, right?

E: No, not anymore.

C: Well you kind of do.

E: Kind of ...

C: You still kind of work. You don't have an official ... what, license.

E: No. I don't have a contractor's license.

R: Would you ever, or do you ever take people on in like an internship capacity, for some of the stuff that you do, or...do you ever like, lead classes, or show people things ...

E: No, but you know I mean actually, now that some of the UPS guys down here, I mean this was twenty some years ago, but they started living down here when they were still in college, and they never left. So I hire them, and then they'd ... a couple of em, that's what they're doing now!

C: So the guys ... well, go ahead.

E: yeah.

C: Chris Brooks and Chris Carrick (sp?) will be hired by folks down here, or will work with Ed. Carrick works with Ed a lot. It is very unofficial, but he has definitely mentored and apprenticed a couple of guys down here.

R: Yeah, and your shop looks. I've only seen from the outside, but ...

E: Good guys, and good carpenters, you know. I mean it's amazing, you know, the quality of work that people can do down here. Really, really quite good.

R: And when you say down here, I noticed, and I guess this is a part of woodworking in general, you're working with an organic material that's grown a certain way, so you have to have an interplay with what that material's own life was ... like this one right here, you said it was growing like that, so that's what informed your design (referring to the spiral staircase).

E: Well, yeah. Kind of constrained my ... use ... originally we had the upstairs before Chris and Jesse moved in, and so ... it was just basically first a ladder, and then I didn't like the ladder, so I added another stairway that was alder, it had a curve like that but it was steeper. But it was full of beetles, so there was all this sawdust on the ground.

C: (laughing) and so you'd come down the stairs in the morning with this pile of sawdust and it'd be like "oh shit! it's getting a little scary!"

R: And so what's the story behind this fish sculpture?

C: Oh so that's a little bit of my story. I was principle on Vashon Island for like, 8 or 9 years in the 90's. And um, so Vashon has just all these awesome artists, and that was one of the artists on Vashon, who did like a sabbatical in Bali, and learned and got all of these cool techniques and designs and so ... that's what she does, she makes fish lamps. Um, cause it's a lamp. And she has a bunch of different molds that she made out of wood, and I got to go to her shop, and her shop was just full of shells of beautiful hand made paper from all...everywhere...just gorgeous, gorgeous, gorgeous, it was so much fun. And so, I got to kind of talk to her about what I wanted. And so yeah, that's a fish lamp from Vashon. I got a couple of...I got that and I have a really beautiful um ... drum ... that a parent named Israel Shotridge who was a Native American parent of Vashon, he made drums ... it's like a beautiful drum from him. Yeah, a couple of...one of the things we love is we love art, and particularly love ... art where we know who the artist is. And just kind of let them go and do what they want. Yeah. Um, so.

E: But the quilts are all Chris, we have many of them.

C: And yeah that's one of the things ... that's the other baby thing that we do, is uh, starting ... a few years back, we didn't have as many babies ... I make a quilt for every beach baby. Um I'm right now, although I'm behind at least two, cause Galen's baby ... I don't know when Galen's baby is due.

E: April.

C: And then Morgan's baby which has already been born a while ago. So I'm behind, but yeah.

R: Are babies when they're born ... are they born like here, here?

C: It depends, like ... there's some moms who will do them here, some will like ... when Rowan was born, um, Jesse and Kat went up the hill, he was born up the hill at St. Joe's I think ... or was it TG? I can't remember which.

E: Actually ... remember the Sandwich Company?

R: Sure

E: Well Tammy runs that, and she used to have a place down here, and Dick Meyer, who used to have a place down in Olympia called Traditions ... they're together, and Dick was one of the ones at college with me, and he had a place down here ... and then they got together, and they had two daughters, beautiful daughters, that were born down here.

C: And they were home births I think.

E: Yeah, they were. So he's ... you know, they live out in Olympia now, but they used to have two houses down here, and they moved together, eventually. For the girls, for school ... that's why they moved to Olympia. Former beach people there ... they come and visit ... get them to Salmon Beach sometimes too.

R: Interesting. I guess I'm wondering if you're laboring, what the walk up the stairs might be like. (laughs)

C: (laughs) yeah well we got to watch ... I will always remember, because what was Jesse's bedroom and is now my sewing room upstairs, the back window you can see the trail, and I will always remember watching them go up the trail. Like about 6am it was. It was pretty early in the morning when she was in labor. And they called and let us know that they were heading up, and I watched them go up, slowly slowly slowly.

E: I got to bring Rowan home by boat. And I got to bring my friend Chris and Jean's daughter home, their first daughter home by boat. And that was really cool.

C: My friend Sue McComb (Sp?) who has not lived on the beach for a while, she had a great story about going up the hill in labor, because she was heading up the hill in labor at the time when our then next door neighbor Dave Grau who was quite the party guy ... well so she and her ... now ex were heading up the hill about 7am or something and you know, laboriously in all meanings of the word, and Grau's heading down, and assumes they're going up to a party (laughs) and he starts yelling "Heeey enjoy the party!" And she's thinking "Oh Grau, shut up and let me keep walking!" (laughs) But yeah, that is something I missed. I didn't have to deal with the hill in labor.

R: Yeah, yeah, oh my goodness. Well especially if something were to go wrong. That would be interesting, to say the least. I don't know, I guess there's an emergency...you said fire boat, right? like an emergency boat?

C: Yeah, and it gets here pretty fast. What was it that...oh, when we had the fire a couple of weeks ago ... took what, ten minutes?

E: I don't know, but Salmon Beach has already had it out.

C: But yeah, I mean, we just got defibrillators down here.

R: Oh, where are those housed?

C: Oh I'm not sure where they're housed.

E: One of them is down underneath the stairs at the North End.

R: Okay, they're AED machines?

C: Yeah.

E: The other one is down at ... what 39 or something like that?

R: That's a good investment! Who funded that?

E: It was anonymous!

C: It was an anonymous donor. And we also have ... our son was at one time an EMT. We have a couple of people who recently bought a place down here. And they're both firemen. And women. At the other end of the beach, another fireman. So we have some people that have some skills. And ... there's a doctor or two down here too.

R: Interesting. And so you have almost like an apocalyptic safety net down here

(laughter from all)

C: Yeah! Right!

R: You've got the defibrillators, the EMTs, doctors, carpenters, you've got all kinds!

C: It took a while to convince the older folks that the defibrillators aren't something that we're going to kill ourselves with, they're designed to be pretty foolproof.

E: If you don't mind I think that tide's up far enough, I'm gonna go clip a bag of oysters and bring them up. And I can deal with it. Cause what I do ... I haven't had the chance ... my bag down here, I have one hanging down that I can reach any time, and it's got only a few left in it, so I need to get a few more out.

C: You wanna go watch?

R: Yeah actually, that sounds pretty neat.