

Interviewee Name: Dan Harriman

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Interviewer(s) Name(s) and affiliations: Galen Koch (the First Coast), and Matt Frassica (The Briney Podcast)

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Interview Description:

Dan Harriman

Cape Elizabeth, ME

Mackerel Fisherman

Interviewed by Galen Koch

Dan Harriman is a fisherman who operates the state's last mackerel weir in Cape Elizabeth, ME. His family came to the US from Denmark in the 1980s. He speaks about his experience fishing and discusses the issues he sees in the fishing industry such as unsustainability and lack of access. He believes these challenges stem from knowledge not being passed between generations and suggests that change needs to come from the bottom up.

Collection Description:

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Transcription by: Galen Koch, The First Coast

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[01:04:54.00]

GK: Galen Koch (Interviewer)

MF: Matt Frassica (Interviewer)

DH: Dan Harriman (Interviewee)

PS: Patrick Sheperd (Also in the room)

MT: Mike Thalhauser (Also in the room)

[00:00:00.00]

(Laughter and setting up)

(talking about beer)

(setting up)

GK: Who are you talking about?

DH: My father, yeah he was the town drunk.

GK: Where?

DH: Cape Elizabeth the most affluent town in Maine, it was hard growing up as a kid with an old man as the town drunk.

GK: Yeah i bet it was.

DH: Yeah it is what it is.

GK: We've got this rolling so the only organizational thing we need is your name.

DH: I'm Dan Harriman. (laughs)

[00:01:19.13]

DH: Aka Oliver Sutton, Oliver Sutton he was here, Oliver Sutton he was gone. A couple more of these and I will be. Oh shit.

GK: Dan where are you coming from?

DH: I live in Cape Elizabeth, my family came there in 1890s from Denmark. One lives on one side of me and the other brother lives on the other side, we ain't made it very far but I think they picked a pretty good spot. I like it. I like it a lot. Pat here has been pound net fishing with me, wouldn't yah think?

PS: Probably one of the funnest fisheries I've ever been part of. I first started working with Dan... well I had a job at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute

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And it was an internship , it just lasted through the summer and at the end of the summer I didn't want to leave Portland, I'm from Maine and um... I didn't realize - I kind of fell in love with Portland just the hustle and bustle of it all, it's a lot busier than where I'm from in Stonington. So I stuck a handmade sign on cardboard, cork board at Portland Trap Company down on the wharf and this guy called me one day he was like "You Pat?" ..."Yup, yup, this is Pat.""Did you put a sign down to Portland trap?" ..."Yup." ..."You want a job?""Sure, yeah what do you do?" ..."I'm a lobster fishermen, meet me at 5 o'clock in the morning down on Deakes Wharf." ..."Okay."

[00:03:12.25]

So, I go down, it was the first time I met your son, too. Get down to the dock, 5 o'clock in the morning. 5:15 rolls around, 5:30 rolls around, 5:45... I'm like this guy... I got the wrong dock. The Deja Vu is sitting' right beside me, was his boat, and there's another green Novi boat sitting' beside that I was like "I must have it wrong." And a red truck pulled down and a guy jumped out - a young guy jumped out with Boston Celtics ummm... pajama pants on.

DH: That would be my boy.

PS: And a ripped up Carhartt sweatshirt with bleach stains all over it.

DH: One sleeve?

PS: Yeah it had two sleeves but they weren't full sleeves.

DH: That's cause nobody would pass him the paper when he got on the bucket, they just laughed at him.

PS: And he had his lunch in a grocery bag.

[00:04:10.13]

and I said "Are you Dan?" And he said, "HA! No I'm not Dan, you mean Danger Dan?"And I'm like... oh Jesus. He's like "Dan's my dad, he'll be down in a few minutes." And so then you came down over the wharf in an old rack body truck and jumped out, walked past me without saying a word. And just climbed down over the ladder and jumped on his boat, I'm like... "Okay. I guess this is it." And so I dunno that started a pretty cool friendship I think.

DH: You pissed me off right off. About 20 minutes, half an hour into going he's back roping up got all the bait set, everything lined up and ready to go and I just didn't have anybody to scream at, it pissed me off. I stuck my head over the wheel house, "You gotta straighten up, you haven't given me a reason to scream all mornin."

[00:05:08.13]

(You wanna do two mics?)

(setting up extra mic)

DH: I was thinking about John, he was a piece of work.
[00:05:53.24]

PS: I don't think there was a day he came without some sort of sweatpants, pajama pants and his lunch in a god damn Hannaford bag.

DH: And he only wore them to the boat, he would take off the pajama pants and go in the oilskins in his

PS: In his boxers

DH: In his short drawers. Yeah.

GK: This is your son?

DH: He was a piece of work, crashed everything he ever drove in his life, right from the get go, right from the kindergarten tricycle crashes on Munjoy Hill to -

PS: He put his boat into the Back Bay Bridge

[00:06:29.22]

DH: Ran into the railroad trestle.

GK: What? Tell that story! He put his boat into the Back Bay Bridge?

DH: He learned to operate by me, you drive a little bit and you fill a bait bag and you drive a little bit and you straighten out the crew and you drive a little bit and you come back and scream at the crew cause they're not doing it the way you want and you drive a little bit... well he got up to the bridge by B&M Baked Beans and right in the corner and the tide caught him, hooked him into the bridge, tore a hole in the side of the boat big enough that when he figure out there was water coming in he put it on the beach just turn it around just drove her on the beach knew enough not to say... calls me up and says "Dad, I got a problem there's a hole in the boat."

[00:07:13.26]

PS: Working on the mackerel pound though that was a lot of fun, the mackerel pound is this big square net and it's designed to catch mackerel while they're following the shore in a southwest

wind. So they'll follow the - oh do you have it on here... Richmond Island, so Saco Beach is just down below this...

(looking through charts)

DH: MY family's fished or trapped on Richmond Island, I dunno we're guessing somewhere around 180 years. 130 years. 1890 I think they came over. See there's no real good detailed charts in the area. I think it's the most sustainable fishery going. What we catch if we don't want it we can release it alive.

[00:08:31.04]

GK: This is the mackerel pound? Is that what you called it?

DH: Yeah it's a fish trap, like a weir, except there's no poles it's...

(looking for pictures for a bit)

GK: So are other people doing this?

PS: He's the only one doing it in the state of Maine.

DH: Active. My town told me "Nobody lands any finfish in Cape Elizabeth." And I went and pulled all the recorded landings and my son and I landed 240,000 lbs of fish with two 30 foot lobster boats. It was a busy year. Lotta shoveling.

[00:09:34.20]

GK: Can one of you describe the setup of it like what it looks like?

PS: Waiting for the boss...

DH: the main box of the trap is 70 feet by 90 feet with a 600 foot leader going to shore like the lead on a weir. You know what a weir is?

GK: Tell us

DH: It's an enclosure with a v-shape funnel entrance that allows the fish to come to the - the fish swim along the shore and then they hit the leader and they think it's the shore, they just follow it, follow the leader, what we catch in a pound net is schooling fish, they're following the guy in front of them's tail. So if they're all moving in a group, and that's really how the trap works.

[00:10:25.29]

They'll just swim into the trap and as long as they stay in the circular schooling motion they'll stay in the trap because they stay away from the funnel, it turns them away but you have to get there very early to get there before the...

PS: If you look at the trap from above it looks like the shape of a heart. And so the opening is up at the peak of the heart. They call it the heart of the Chesapeake, right?

DH: Yeah the heart is the first - I've got a half a heart - that's what my wife says, anyways.. But a typical pound net the leader leads into the middle of the trap and fish can come from either way but my site it's pretty much direction specific so the leader just runs to one side of the mouth. So I only have a half a heart,
[00:11:24.13]
out on that side.

GK: What! Is that a shark?

DH: No that's a sturgeon, the dinosaur fish. They're near extinct... we had 13 that day. That size.

GK: wow.

PS: They're probably the coolest fish you'll ever see.

GK: Coolest. Yeah, cool.

PS: And we had to pick them up by hand out of the pocket of the net. so you have to handle them very... sometime you can dip the corks under on one side of the trap and let 'em swim over the top but when they spook they like to drive down so you actually have to grab them by the tail and pull them out of the pocket and manhandle them until you can get them to the side of the boat to release them so you don't hurt 'em.

[00:12:25.01]

DH: My buddy - the sharks will get up into the twine and start tearing at the twine so I get real upset about it and try to get 'em out of there, this is 1/8th of an inch mesh, this is tiny stuff. So one day I holler at my - not that I scream or anything - but I'm screaming at my crew guy "Get him out of there, just grab him and"... and he reached over and grabbed the shark and it's trying to bend around and bite him so he starts swinging it to keep the centrifugal force and he's swinging it around his head and he chucks it. So we decided he was the shark wrestler, the shark wrangler, he gets different names. Those are the kind ones. And that's him chucking the shark out over the corks. Over here and that's a sand tiger, I actually had the opportunity to sell one to the New England Aquarium and they had the permits for Massachusetts and they could get the permits for the state of Maine but they couldn't get the permit to drive the 17 miles through New Hampshire so the little kids didn't get to see a sand tiger shark and I didn't get the profit from the shark which I held for a couple of days

[00:13:30.17]

and then finally decided, I can't do this we gotta let it go. But that's bureaucracy and paperwork.

MF: You couldn't take it by boat?

DH: I dunno you know it was a logistics thing, they were only going to give me 300 bucks and I'm trying to keep this thing alive in a damn lobster tank and I'm feeling bad because the thing is supposed to be free and wild. And I'm gonna bring it, I love the New England Aquarium, I'm gonna bring it in this big tank and everyone's gonna see it and it's gonna be great. After about three days I threw it over and let it go but that's just bureaucracy. It's tough being a small scale it doesn't matter if you're sustainable the government and all these agencies are working on how we're gonna fix the way we fish. Well the problem is the way we fish doesn't work. That's why the fishery collapsed, that's why we're in the mess we are now.

[00:14:29.18]

I really believe that true and enduring change is gonna come from the bottom up. The crap they we're talking about in that meeting, going out with one boat, catching a small amount of fish, and selling it for a premium so it becomes economically viable. We're not gonna fix the draggers. If they would just open up the damn fishery to hook fishermen, sustainable fisheries, the dinosaurs those big 100 foot steele... they're gonna be dinosaurs. They're gonna be gone cause when diesel fuel hits \$5 a gallon it's not gonna be economically viable. They're gonna face the same challenges I face - can I do this? If I can burn ten gallons worth of fuel to go over and dry up a pound net with five guys representing three or four families and catching 5,000 lbs of fish

[00:15:29.24]

How are they gonna compete with me? Burning 3,000 gallons of fuel to go the Grand Banks or Georges or offshore and the maintenance and the insurance and help is a huge issue in this business. There isn't many people willing to go to that fishery, they're making real good money but who's willing to go spend 7 days, yah know? So they have drug and alcohol problems and other related issues that I believe, I really think that if we opened up the fishery to sustainable means that the large scale operations are gonna meet their own demise, it's just not gonna be economically viable to have a 10 million dollar boat burning huge amounts of fuel and trying to get help for people that you know who's gonna be willing to go for next to nothing

[00:16:30.09]

because fuel ate up most of the profit of the trip and the company wants the other part and it's just, I think they'll be their own demise, I really do. But if we're gonna have a reliable sustainable source like these guys are talking to the restaurants and stuff you've gotta have fish. You don't have fish to sell then you're not gonna be in business. The guy from Red's - if I don't have fish sometimes I gotta, or the guy that runs offshore, Tim, "If I don't have fish for the markets, they're not gonna stay with me for very long. No matter what a story I have and what resource I have and how sustainable I am. They're not gonna be there." So I just think maybe that's hope. There's hope that it will shake itself out that there is enough people that just want to go down to the sea and fish but who's gonna teach the next generation, who's going to if we don't know

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how it was done in the past, how are we gonna learn our way in the future? And that is being lost at a breakneck speed, the basic knowledge of how to go catch things in a sustainable way. I went to school with a bunch of guys and I thought I was Joe fishermen because I knew how to

go fishing, it was my heritage. These guys went down and ended up in the wheelhouse of these hundred foot steel boats, you know why? Because they knew how to turn the damn electronics on and somebody showed em plots on a piece of paper where the fish are - go there and go around and you're gonna make money! And they did. I was stubborn and stayed in my little boat, I'm kicking myself now I'm 60 years old, I want to go in to the wheelhouse of one of those draggers and just retire but I've really come to the conclusion that isn't really where I want to be [00:18:30.08]

I don't agree with it, even though it's my family history, my people came from Denmark in 1890 to run steam powered beam trawlers, that's why they came here. There was real money in fishing, reel opportunity here, opportunity enough to leave your heritage and your family of 13 and pick up and say let's go give it a shot, I think we can do well. So it's funny how things play themselves out how it's kinda come full circle from steam powered beam trawlers to destroying the fishery back around to the eldest of the two brothers that came that started doing fish traps, I'm still fishing off the same beach, the same site that he set on. He found the fish, he fished seven traps, I fish one. Near kills me.

[00:19:29.06]

And this was the hot spot, that's what I inherited is just the knowledge, I gained that, this was the best out of all the sites. Cause pound netting is a site specific fixed gear fishery and I'm so fixed it isn't like gill nets and I can set 'em here and they're gonna be fixed. No, I set on the side of Richmond Island on the north end of Saco Bay if the fish come to me, I make some money. If the fish don't come, sometimes I lose money cause I gotta keep the crew and fuel cause they ain't gonna be back tomorrow if they ain't got any gas in the car, that's how it is. They've gotta have groceries enough to keep the old lady shut up long enough to go out and try to haul the damn thing again. Why we would do this again it's pitiful, it's desperate sometimes. I've been weeks without fish and I talked to old Tommy Coffin, he's a stop seiner in Harpswell and I said something about "God we're starving.

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I need a piece of twine to patch up my net, we're starving." He said, "Kid, you don't know starving, I went almost two years without a fish. It got to be the point where the local store shut me down on credit. I couldn't get a can of beans anymore. And the local store was owned by my cousin." That was it, that was shut off. "And we had a set and we pumped for four days carrier after carrier after carrier and I went up and put down the down payment in cash for my new truck. Paid off my bills, cleared up with the bank." And he grinned at me, 80 year-old Tommy Coffin, he had a gold tooth in the front with a little diamond set in the middle of it. It freaked me out! I just didn't know what to think. The guy smiles, he hadn't broke a smile the whole time and he smiles at me and he's got a gold tooth with a little diamond set in it

[00:21:29.16]

that's the kind of thing we're losing, I wish you could have interviewed him because he was a piece of work. He just...

GK: He was stop seining, when was that?

DH: This was, that was 20 years ago and I think he was 80 then, he had a brand new boat, he still wanted to go he built a brand new strip boat and had it down on the bank in a cradle and

had it so long down there he built a roof over it, an actual carport roof down at Gurnet was over his stripbuit boat and I says, "I wanna go down and look at it." He said, "You told me you ain't got no damn money, there ain't no sense in going down there." I says, "I'd like to look at it anyways, I might get a set you know." He says, "Ok kid go ahead but take your damn shoes off I just vacuumed it out again."

[00:22:18.06]

And it had been down there for eight or ten years, somebody bought it, he had the engine sitting up on the shore told me how he'd been rollin' it over so the valves didn't stick. I couldn't get by - after I met him that first time I couldn't get by Gurnet without stopping in to see how he was doing because I knew he had a story.

GK: What were they talking about in there?

DH: Just trying to make it sustainable you know how to market your fish either direct to restaurants, how to - what the value is in these fish we catch and short term, short trip fisheries should bring up the value incredibly because it isn't a week old and been in a fish hold and pounded around for that week and sold in bulk, it's caught today. One of the speakers is trying to do added value fisheries

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but the target is for the way we fish the big boats - the crews are making a hundred grand on deck in 8 or 10 months, do you think you're gonna get them to slit each one's throat and cut its tail and stick a little rod up its spine, that isn't gonna work for them. they're making 100 grand. You gotta target from the ground up if you want truly lasting change in the fisheries, you have to start with the guy that ain't making it, he's going out and catching 50 lbs of cod fish or 50 lbs or whatever. BUt he loves it and wants to do it but he can't make it work, who's got the time with 50 lbs to prepared the fish and handle it in the means necessary to get top dollar? I just really believe that you can give a guy a fish and he'll eat for the day, you teach him to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime

[00:24:40.06]

and all his damn neighbors too. Most of the community. It's just that's where it's gotta come from it's gotta come from us the fishermen, the guy we have to realize that there is a different way of doing things, it may not be as profitable. They're making 100 grand on the deck of these steel boats. I have a friend of mine 118 grand he said he made in 10 months. Took a month off for Christmas and took a month off and went to Cancun. Why would you change what you're doing if it works? If it ain't broke don't fix it, but a lot of us don't want especially you young guys coming in that have a family and kids they don't want to miss their kid growing up but they don't want to miss going fishing. They don't' want to go to work for Gulf of Maine Research Institute.

[00:25:35.24]

Or NOAA - my son bailed on NOAA, I sent him to school for marine biology and he graduated and worked for NOAA as an intern through the whole time and they offered him \$67,000 starting pay and he decided to say no... I wanna go fishing. And if he took the job with NOAA he had to give up his fishing rights. You can't be a fisheries regulator and a fishermen, too. You can't. You can't do it. You know? Hard choices. What do you really wanna do, where do you really wanna

go? What is it really all about? There is a point to all this, quite often we miss it. Tragically we miss it.

MF: What's the point for you?

[00:26:36.15]

DH: Right now? Access. Not just access to the water but access to knowledge. For entry level people there wasn't a lot of talk about it today but if you're a young guy and want to get into fishing there's a lot of struggle, there's a lot of effort, some of the guys actually talked about it today is permit banks and ways to do this and how do you get to get into the 50 foot boat with the gill nets and make it economically viable but I think there's actually the options of going hook fishing and I really believe if the government would just see that if we change the way we do things, if we're gonna open up access to more quota,

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more fish it has to be at least a portion of that has to be given to innovative, sustainable fisheries. Hook fisheries, whatever it is, pound net fisheries, I don't know. I have some knowledge about how things were done in the past you know if we had been pound netting this whole time the mackerel wouldn't be collapsing. It wouldn't be... you know it wouldn't be in the state it is now. If we stayed with purse seining, there's a reason the guys left from Ireland and different places in the world and set up mid water boats because we left the door open and they had already killed everything where they were. They couldn't make money at it anymore. There was no opportunity anymore but so they looked just like my ancestors - "Where are we gonna go from here?"

[00:28:28.27]

We're not gettin' rich. Let's try some place else. Let's try something different. What are our options?" And I'm just heartbroken that there's very few options in sustainable fisheries in either you're constrained by quota or you're strained by price and the ability to catch fish or constrained by simple knowledge, "How do you catch fish?" There's a... I bet you there's a bunch of people that could teach you how to go out and drag a set of doors and ground cables and pound the hell out of the bottom, not so many that could teach you how to set up a weir or a pound net or how to jog fish or how to trap black backs or track rock hunter. I've got people asking me - about Chinamen coming up from New York - Cunner fish, Cunner fish, I'd like to buy some. But I don't know how to build a Cunner trap. I know stories about how the lobstermen and stuff in days gone by

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when there was no bait would go catch crabs, they'd take what little bait they had, put it in a crab trap, go catch a crab, then crush the crabs up put it in the cunner trap then they could haul the cunner trap and they'd have lobster bait. That's how it worked, it was a long process but if there's no other option and you got one chicken leg, they're trying to catch something and you can't bait 20 traps with it, what the hell do you do? You put the chicken leg in, you go catch a bucket of crabs, you take the bucket of crabs and bait ten cunner traps and you've got enough cunners to bait your traps. There's a way to do this, a lot of it we've forgotten or ignored or... I'm really excited about what you're doing here because hopefully there'll be tidbits of knowledge

that get preserved for the future about different ways of looking at things. Most people say I'm crazy.

[00:30:28.29]

I got to agree with them but there is a point and I don't want to miss it.

GK: I had a question in there.

MT: I gotta head.

GK: Oh yeah you guys have been here for a while. I have to dig into my brain because I get distracted by your mesmerizing tone, you have a great voice.

(laughter)

GK: You're so emphatic.

DH: You're using big words!

GK: That just means you've got a lot of emotion in your voice. I'm feelin' it, Dan! I was curious if some of these uh questions of like sustainable fisheries does it have to do also with the way that we eat - you said we could feed your neighbors but are your neighbors eating the mackerel that you catch or what does that look like for you?

DH: At times and sometimes

[00:31:41.09]

it's odd and sometimes its developing markets like I can sell my squid hands down two dollars a pound right off the boat for big ones cause in America we want large lobsters, we want big squid, we want big fish. There's even a mention on that that you know you can sell the big pollack hands down but what do you do with it's cull run so it brings your price down. But with a little bit of creativity I sell all the good ones to the restaurants and then I call my asian buddies that buy the green crabs and say "I got a hundred pounds of squid, a buck a pound and you could own it." And they have - there's many qualities that we've lost when I don't know whether it's our culture or that we've lost some

[00:32:38.03]

by becoming independent Americans, just an example my brother sold a couple buckets of crabs to a guy and he keeps trying to give me the 20 bucks, here give this to your brother and I'm like "well, I'm not gonna see - you hang on to it I'm not gonna take his money." He says, "When you get home you give this to your brother." "I'm not gonna see him." "You're not gonna see your brother when you get home?" I said, "No he lives in Standish, I live in Cape Elizabeth." And just questions once I got close enough to the Khmer people, the guys that were running the fish plants. They asked me questions, "So you take your children, you leave them with a stranger?" And I says, "What do you mean?" And he says, "You go to the uh, what do you call it, the care? The day care? You take your children, you leave them with a stranger?"

[00:33:29.18]

And I says, "No my wife's actually a stay-at-home mom. She watches the kids." "Oh good, I don't understand you take your children you leave them with a stranger. How about your mother. Where do you leave your mother?" And I says, "Well what do you mean." "I hear you take your mother and you leave her some place." I go... "I don't understand." I go, "What are you talking about what do you do?"

"My mother watches my children."

It's a different concept, we look down upon some of these cultures that 12 people live in a three bedroom house but when mom and dad go to work, gran watches the kids and prepares the food and it's a different culture and we've lost something by this wealth and this thing that somehow we're superior because we can go off on our own and live in our own house and move to another state and follow our dreams and... there's a difference in the culture

[00:34:34.00]

so quite often I'll call one asian and say, "I've got a hundred pounds of squid, how much do you want?" And quite often, "Well, how much? a dollar okay a dollar a pound I'll take it all." But they don't want a hundred pounds, they have five other friends that they can give 20 [pounds and 20 bucks to give a 20 pound bag of squid to your neighbor or your friend or your - it's a different way of looking at things so quite often it's easier to sell to them because one or two people will take the whole catch. They don't come and buy "Well this is for ME. I'm gonna buy 10 pounds for ME." It's no - this is a good buy, I can be the big man in town if I bring 10 pounds to 10 of my buddies.

[00:35:24.08]

GK: And they know how to cook it.

PS: I think our culture has gotten lazy, people don't know how to cook whole fish anymore. And nor do they have the time to or want to take the time to learn. They want their fish.

DH: Their portion.

PS: Their portion.

DH: Frozen so I can take it out when I want it.

PS: Packaged. They want it shipped to their door with a recipe

DH: If you buy the whole fish there's a commitment, I can't change my mind on f the way home and decide to stop at the bar and have a few with the boys. I have to go home and prepare this fish so maybe it's a lack of commitment that i just don't want to be that committed to this whole process that I'm committed to this. With a frozen product you can pull out - that's laziness you can just pull it out, okay, I can take two portions. You came over too so we're good.

[00:36:19.03]

It's simple, it's easy. Well simple and easy isn't always best, maybe. Yeah I don't know.

MF: And with something like a CSF you're committing to

DH: See you're using big words, acronyms, even. Holy shit. Phew.

GK: That's a seafood thing.

MF: That's a Community Supported Fishery.

DH: where they buy catch shares of how much you catch or

MF: But you've got like whatever 100 lbs over the month I don't know how much but you spend quite a bunch up front.

DH: Yeah but some fisheries and some of the more sustainable fisheries are so unpredictable, I couldn't sell 1000 lbs of 100 lb catch shares because I've gone years where we didn't catch nothin. I'm talking, well I told Tommy Coffin that I was starving, he told me I was a liar that it was only one season

[00:37:17.08]

"You don't understand, kid."

MF: And Pat you are involved with helping set up those kind of hook fishermen with some catch, right? Some share, right? Because otherwise there isn't a way for them to enter the fishery, is that right?

PS: Yeah so we own two permits at Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries and we use the access right on those permits to allow the fishermen that want to fish. In addition to that, we've been starting these fundraising events where we'll hold a dinner event at a restaurant, people will come they'll spend 60 bucks on a ticket but with that 60 dollar ticket they not only get dinner for the night but they get fed with all this knowledge throughout the course of the evening sort of educating them on sustainable fisheries, every course that comes out the chef and a lot of times the fishermen who caught the fish will explain how the fish was caught and then the chef will explain how the fish was prepared

[00:38:25.15]

and a lot of times it's whole fish and you'll get a whole fish on your plate, a whole red fish. And people don't see whole red fish on their plates anymore they see a little piece of a fillet or you know a fried whatever and the chefs will explain the chefs will even explain to people how to cook it at home if they want to cook it at home so it's a way to support our fishermen and also educate the community on how to buy, how to get access to whole fish and how to cook whole fish.

DH: I went to Venice, Louisiana with my Khmer buddies cause it was just after 9/11 and they only had green cards and they thought coming up the whole east coast from Venice, Louisiana 480 miles south before you can even start coming north and we had a little

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food kind of enlightenment. I went and bought boxes of cereal and milk and they bought eight flats of eggs, four dozen on each flat and lots of noodles and a couple of bags of rice and a rice cooker and some fish and my buddy says when we were got there: "Tonight I will cook you fish for dinner." And I says, "So how you gonna cook it?" "I'm gonna cook it in the oven." He says. But I says, "How are you gonna cook you, you gonna bake it? You gonna broil it? You gonna stuff it? What are you gonna do with it?" He says, "I'm gonna put it in the pan and I'm gonna cook it in the oven." And he took out a great big sheephead or something from down there and threw it in the sink, in the galley sink. Put some water in there and let it thaw out. He threw it on a cookie sheet and he put it in the oven and he baked it. Never scaled it, never skinned it, never touched it, other than washing it, swimming around in the sink for half the day. And at dinner time we ate.

[00:40:24.27]

And I peeled back the skin, it was the best fish I ever had in my life it was sealed in the skin and the juices and it never got ripped or gut and just the flavor was spectacular and they ate everything there was nothing but the carcass left and I understood true using all, I mean all of what you cook. But it was a lot of fun, coming up with those guys and spending a few - you know we spent 13 days, 24/7 hand-steering, no autopilot and just learned about our cultures and how, I think that's when we had the talks about "Oh you leave your children with a stranger?"

GK: Where were they from.

DH: Khmer- when the French made a colony out of Vietnam, before the Vietnamese war and all of this the French come in

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well the Europeans made a colony - anything they thought they could make some money out of they made a colony. We're gonna take it over and put in some army guys and they took Vietnam but they also took a big chunk of Cambodia on the western side, they took into the mountains. The problem was when they pulled out, Vietnam kept that chunk of Cambodia, so you had the traditional vietnamese people living in the wetlands and the deltas but then you had the Khmer people that lived in the mountains on the western shore. The Vietnamese hated the Khmer and the Khmer hated the Vietnamese but they're all Vietnamese, it even came down to the Khmer people that ran the urchin shops tried to hire a few of the Vietnamese to come in and help them out, they fought all day, nothing got done and the next day nobody showed up. Because they weren't going to work for those - they spoke different languages

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the Khmer speak Khmer, the Vietnamese speak Vietnamese. Same nationality but totally different peoples. I mean they integrate but they struggle with it, so. I call 'em Khmer because they're Vietnamese but they're Khmer people they're a different subculture.

GK: I wasn't familiar with that term I just wanted to check.

DH: YOur've heard of the Khmer Rouge that's because they're the Khmer people and the Khmer Rouge were trying to cleanse the society of all those but the Khmer people. I really had the idea

when I met these people, because they didn't speak english well, they had strange customs, 12 of them would live in a 2-bedroom apartment that these people are like ignorant and rude. Until I started to get to know them. I struggle with English. Sometimes people use terms and now I stop and say "wait a minute, I don't fully understand what you're saying so I wanna know what those words mean, what that acronym means or what..." these people speak three languages, read four or five or six... and I somehow thought that I was more educated. I spent half of my life trying to get out of school and one of my closest friends

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that ran one of the urchin shops says... I says, " You speak three languages, how did you learn so much? You must have gone to school a lot." "Yeah I go to school as much as I can. But I don't like it when they beat you." And I go, "What do you mean they beat you at school?" "No, you don't understand, I grew up most of my life in the camp." I go, "What do you mean the camp?" "In the refugee camp in Thailand." They walked out of Vietnam and they ended up in a refugee camp and if you wanted - their highest hopes was to come to America and if they wanted to go to school they had to sneak up to the back door of the hut that they were having the school in and if you didn't pay you listened at the back door and there was a paid guy that came around with a stick and would beat the kids away from the back door because they're not paying.

[00:45:01.21]

GK: Dan wait you can't just leave you gotta do something for us.

PS: Yeah you gotta tell the squirrel story.

GK: No you gotta, well you can tell a squirrel story but I gotta get you to sign - something - and I need you to...

DH: If it's crude, please, please, please.

GK: You did a great job. Thanks so much for sharing that with us.

(nothing here, recorder is on while we are chatting... I don't think the rest of this can be on the record because I think we forgot to turn the mic off)

End [00:52:38.09]