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Transcript of A Fish Story of Fish Stories

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Title: A Fish Story of Fish Stories

Storyteller: Mike Cellers

Interviewer: Casee Clark

Interview Date: 2011-06-30

Collection: *Launching through the Surf: The Dory Fleet of Pacific City*

Repository: DigitalCommons@Linfield

Transcribers: Whitney Weber, Andrea Snyder, Mary Beth Jones

MIKE CELLERS: Michael Cellers. In about 1958, why I started fishing with my grandpa.¹

Steve [Rice]² and I have probably one of the strangest stories about getting' towed in that you'll ever hear. We were—Sally and I and, Steve and his wife, we were fishing out, just about off of the halibut bed out here and, Steve had limited out on salmon and we still had a couple to go, so he comes in to, inside the rock, they wanted to bottom fish a little bit you know, so. He called us and he said, "Guys," he said, "the bass are really bitin' in here," he said. He and [Jerry] Johnson³ had commercial licenses for, uh, for bottom fishing but they couldn't—you can't have salmon and stuff aboard when you're doing that, so. He said, "Oh my God, we're catching everything—would you come in and get the women and the fish and put 'em over in your boat so that we can, keep, uh, bass fishing in here?" So we go in and, I get the women, and I get all the fish and everything over in my boat and by then—they had probably already had about a hundred pounds of bass 'cause they'd been catching 'em. We sit there and well then when I get everybody over in my boat well then the women decided they want to fish for bass too, they don't want to go in, you know and so, I said,

“Okay.” I’ve never seen a bass bite any better than this and you could literally hold the jig about a foot above the water and they’d jump out after it. I mean it was just crazy. And so, Steve breaks down; his outdrive, blows up in his boat and he’s out there so. We fish and so then I tow him up past where the fish are and I let him go again and he drifts down [Laughs] through the—we did this about, I don’t know how many times—he’s broken down but, he wants to keep fishing. [Laughter] So I’m towing him up, up there and I let him go and it takes maybe 15, 20 minutes he drifts back down you know. And finally, I told Steve, I said, “We’d better take you in,” because the surf it, it was pretty smooth ocean but I said, “We’d better do it before the surf gets rough,” so. We finally hook up to him and we tow him around the corner and he rows in and it was no big incident because it was a good ocean, but. I think he ended up with 450 or 500 pounds of bass. [Laughter] And then my boat with these women in the—in that hour, in about an hour and a half they had caught 90. Took me three and a half hours to filet out all those bass after we got back here and then we had all the salmon to clean and everything else but oh my God that was the story; I mean that was a fish story of fish stories. It was just such a perfect ocean too, but. It was a killer. [Laughter] It was a kick.

NOTES:

¹ Al Cellers

² Steve Rice is one of the Dory Project’s storytellers.

³ Gerald (Jerry) Johnson is one of the Dory Project’s storytellers.