

Oral History Interview – Fran Schonenberg

Isle au Haut Historical Society

Date: August 21, 2012

Location: the 'Ark' – summer residence of the Dice-Little-Schonenberg families

Interview included: Belvia MacDonald

Interviewer: Kris Carlson-Lewis

Written transcription by: Kristen Carlson-Lewis

Note: Some changes to the oral history interview were made in the written transcription per the request of Fran Schonenberg.

Kris: This is Kris Carlson-Lewis and I am here at the Ark, the Dice- Little-Schonenberg home, one of their two homes here on Isle au Haut and we are doing an oral interview for the Isle au Haut historical collections. I have the great privilege of speaking with Fran Schonenberg. We also have Belvia MacDonald here. I wanted to first of all ask, where and when you were born?

Fran: I was born in Boston, Massachusetts because my parents lived in Andover, Massachusetts. My grandmother lived in Wellesley Hills and so Mother was attuned to the Boston hospitals. It was on June 8, 1929, three months before the depression. I have a brother who is 16 months older, John D.C. Little. My sister Margaret (Little) Dice, whom we called 'Peggy', was born on the day after April Fool's Day in 1924.

My mother was Margaret Norris Jones before she married. What I am leading up to is her mother, Margaret Atwater Jones. My grandmother, Margaret and her husband, Dr. Gilbert N. Jones lived in Wellesley Hills. He was a country doctor and the summer heat was hard on the ladies in our family. They kept coming to Maine looking around and visiting Squirrel Island, Swan's Island and so forth looking for a place where maybe they could settle down.

They eventually came to Isle au Haut. Grammy and Granddaddy knew some of the people at Point Lookout. They came and looked around. At some point, she was offered a choice of one acre or part of an acre at the Point Lookout complex or five acres over at Moore's Harbor where she had apparently been looking. She chose Moore's Harbor. Peggy discussed this too, so I'll leave the rest to her memoir. As years went by, we had no complaints.

Kris: I wouldn't think so.

Fran: We liked Moore's Harbor, we liked the cottage. I began by liking it because I had never seen anything like it and I was there with my family. It was great and I continued in that happy state for some years.

Belvia: You said you were ten when you first came?

Fran: I think I was ten, yes. It would have been Mother and Johnnie who came with me. He came once with our grandmother and that was not too great. We explored some, but except when you make friends, you don't explore much. My mother was lucky in that when she came as a twelve year old in 1906, she had her mother. There was usually another mother and a girl her age but in between, she had Charlie Collins who was the son at the farm that the Bergesons have. That was a life saver. We have pictures of Charlie with fond, fond memories from Mother of that experience. Grammy came for years, often with friends; she ordered everything up from S.S. Pierce and so forth. Peggy was born in 1924 and married in 1944.

Kris: She would have been about 20, 21 years old?

Fran: She was a month under 20 when she married. She and John Dice came up as soon as they could. I don't remember when it was, after the War [World War II] probably. He passed the Moore's Harbor test or the Isle au Haut test.

Kris: He did?

Fran: Absolutely. My father had passed it. The fishermen said my father was an adjective I can't remember. What they meant was he was really restless and bottled up energy right after the war [World War I]. First, he walked around the island and then 'what can I do'. Then, he started to build a boat.

Kris: Oh my!

Fran: Well, he was a doer. He was just recently back from World War I.

Kris: Did he have the skills?

Fran: No, he was more the creative writing type. He did something. He talked about himself during the Depression as being a one man on a one-man farm. We had chickens during the Depression and we had a garden and so forth. It was not his pleasure but he could do it.

Kris: You would have come up first in the mid-30's?

Fran: It would have been the late 30's. I did come up occasionally after that, but not regularly. Mother had three children. By that time, Peggy was in high school doing things and this was complicated. My father commuted to Boston on the train. I don't remember the details on that. I remember coming with a neighbor. Mother came with other teachers. I think Peggy covered this a little bit. Anything that got one of us to the island was great.

Kris: Okay.

Fran: Mrs. Tyler [Winifred or 'Winnie' a neighbor from Andover] would go around. She cut off the top of a tree that blocked our view of Seal Trap.

Belvia: Who did this?

Fran: Mrs. Tyler did it. She was mother's age and was energetic. Mrs. Tilney [another friend from Andover] was also energetic. They were really fun people to be with. They would do trails. I don't know how many trails we did. When I finally came back with my own children, I felt pretty new at it. I didn't remember an awful lot so and...my little sons. First, I came with the older boys. Then, there started to be small children coming up, small boys. We reached the point where Bob and Mark and Eric were there. Bob, John and I we were talking in the front yard one time and we heard this voice. Mark was way up a tree.

Kris: How old was he at the time?

Fran: Three or four. He was small. But they were limber. We sent Bob who was the lightest of the adults up to get Mark. Eric wasn't quite old enough to do it. Years later, Mark was re-roofing a rental house in Wisconsin and he was babysitting Daniel his son down on the ground. He heard this little voice, 'Hi, Daddy.' Dan had climbed the ladder.

Kris: Right behind him?

Fran: Yes, Dad to the rescue.

Kris: It sounds like you have a very physically skillful family? So, did you have three children?

Fran: I married somebody with two children, John Schonenberg which was just fine because the doctor told me I couldn't have children probably. So, I only had two more.

Kris: Only had two more? You had two and two.

Fran: They were all boys. By then, I was in the groove and I really didn't want a girl. Of course, I changed my mind later. Ancestrally, that's how it went. Our grandfather [Gilbert N. Jones] didn't come as often to Isle au Haut. But, he clearly was fond. When he came, he was here 100 percent. I have a picture of him stepping out of a row boat on some shore with his doctor's bag, a black bag. He made house calls while he was on vacation.

Kris: Wow, he was dedicated.

Fran: He delivered somebody around here. Well, he was a country doctor. He died before any of the three grandchildren were born. So, we just know that everybody told us he was a great guy.

Kris: I know in Peggy's summary, she mentioned how your grandparents used to go canoeing around to the different islands which I thought was really interesting to hear about.

Fran: He developed and created a tent that suited them. I think Mother had a little separate tent when she went along. Its remains are still folded up in a trunk in the cottage. That's history.

Belvia: Yes, that's what we are talking about.

Fran: Yes, indeed. Peggy married somebody whose father had spent years doing zoological research in Alaska, a Ph. D. So, John Dice was the kind who would say, "Let's go," and they went. They walked, as

the children were born. They walked, they hiked. They did this, they did that. They were comfortable with boats. Actually, Mother was comfortable with boats. As I grew up with Mother, I was comfortable. I became less so after I went to Michigan and didn't do it much.

Kris: So, that must have made it more difficult to get here having moved westward to Michigan.

Fran: I had the Dices as my example. John Dice, once all the existing kids were at a certain age would just take off. They would stop in Andover, Massachusetts where we grew up and scoop up my mother and take her with them. So, when John and I started going with children, we started scooping Mother up in A. [Andover] and taking her along.

Kris: What were some of the things you remember doing when you first came out with your children? Sounds like you hiked a lot of the trails here on the island.

Fran: John was more of a doer; he was not a trail hiker. My family, blood and otherwise, cuts down trees. Really!

Belvia: Really cuts down trees!

Fran: This was a forest from here to the thoroughfare. John Dice would cut down a few trees and Peggy would say, "Okay." He would get rid of those. He would cut down a few more trees, "So, how about this?" After all, he takes a lot of pictures and he needed some picture trees. So, he cut down a few more trees. Actually, his oldest child was a son and Jack Dice was good at cutting down trees, too.

Kris: You have a lovely open view of the thoroughfare now and you can see the lighthouse.

Fran: He did a good job, exactly. We can see the thoroughfare down to Kimball's. He was persistent, he was a good man. Actually, on Moore's Harbor, it really was the same thing. It grew up because Grammy was not a 'cutting down trees' person. Mrs. Tyer didn't cut down big trees. We pulled and cut down little ones. Oh, we pulled trees like mad, hundreds and hundreds of spruces growing all over. Then, we cut back bayberry and then raspberries. And then it grew back. But, that's the story of Isle au Haut living.

Kris: It's true; we never finish in our yard. It's an endless task.

Fran: Sometimes the deer help you.

Kris: Oh, yes they do, especially with the apple trees.

Fran: I saw several deer in your yard.

Kris: There seems to be no end of the deer.

Fran: We don't have so many apple trees out that way, leftover from the settlers. I know we would see them on walks. Yes, we took walks. I just don't remember them very much for some reason, I just know generically, sure," Here's a map, let's go!"

Kris: Did you boat much while you were here at least? You said your mom was very comfortable?

Fran: John and I didn't. I would take my mother out if she was with us and the boys. They got good. One of my secret weapons with my boys, when the younger boys grew up, was Danny MacDonald.

Kris: Was he good at exploring and raising all kinds of...

Fran: Was he ever! He was great. He was the ideal. Mark and he are still best friends. Eric and he liked each other and Eric did some things with them and some not. Eric is a different personality. Danny was the life blood.

Kris: So tell me between the two of them...

Fran: I sort of liked his parents, too.

Belvia: She had an active son and there's somebody who would take this active son and keep him busy which was what Dan did.

Fran: I made a few remarks to your son about the time I saw him and my two sons on the ledge together.

Belvia: Which?

Fran: The inner ledge at Moore's Harbor. He said, "Oh, yeah!"

Belvia: So, what's the problem, right?

Fran: Well at that point, all I did was keep my binoculars close and wait.

Belvia: I think it was Mark who helped him try to clog up this culvert right down here between you and the park ranger's cottage. They filled that right up. They had that almost ready to...

Kris: What did they fill it with?

Belvia: Trees and stumps and rocks and anything they could find. The goal was to make the water go over the road. But, I caught them too soon and interrupted.

Kris: Was this an afternoon project?

Belvia: I think it was like 3-4 days it took them. Branches, anything they could collect.

Fran: I only saw them playing harmlessly at the end of the road. Oh Bell!

Belvia: I think he was part of that. I am sure my daughter was there, too. I think it was a joint adventure.

Fran: There were three of them working on it. Mark wouldn't have been able to resist.

Belvia: Of course not.

Kris: I wouldn't have been. What a wonderful fun thing to try and do when you are a child.

Belvia: Unclog that!

Fran: And there were other things. Somebody either Danny or Mark mentioned recently another thing. It's probably a good thing I have forgotten.

Belvia: It's a good thing we didn't know at the time probably.

Fran: Were you talking about...oh, I don't know. We're innocent. What next?

Kris: I was going to ask you what some of the different activities they did when they were here. That was just an example of one. Did they ever go walking around the island? Or go out on the boats?

Fran: They must have walked but that would have been quite tame.

Belvia: We took them to the pond swimming. They went fishing off the dock. Probably the thoroughfare, they did lots of investigations and stuff I'm sure. Back then, you could just say, go have fun and you knew you didn't need to worry. Everybody looks out for your child if they were closer to the kids than you were. That's the joy of Isle au Haut.

Fran: I would say, "Which direction are you going?"

Belvia: Danny was very good about saying, "We're headed up to the dock or up to the ball field to play ball."

Fran: That was when they had nightly baseball.

Kris: I remember that happening in years past but it doesn't seem to be the favorite pastime these days.

Belvia: A newer generation.

Fran: Things go out of fashion [and] can come back in.

Kris: I am glad to see them playing volleyball a lot at the town hall. And I understand they are using the field to play soccer. I'm not sure how often they are using it.

Belvia: Ages 2 through 80 is what I remember for the people playing. What we always did: 2 through 6 years old if they hit the ball anywhere. Whoever was to catch it was to drop it, and kind of stumble and let them get to first base. We always let them get to first base. Do you remember that?

Fran: I do.

Belvia: They felt so proud they made it to first base. They may not have made it to home but they made it to first base.

Kris: I like that rule. It really builds sportsmanship versus competition.

Fran: And Skeet was there, of course.

Belvia: Skeet was the 80 year old.

Fran: Skeet was the other bracket. You adjusted your supertime around the ball game.

Belvia: After supper, they rushed to the field probably 6'ish. Back then, people ate around 5 to 6.

Fran: Eating around 5 was good but eating around 6 was what John was used to. Our system was to get something in their stomachs and worry about the rest later.

Belvia: Kids can thrive.

Kris: Did they have 2 teams? A really good set of two teams?

Fran: Did they divide up every night?

Belvia: I daresay there were at least 25 people up there and that's not counting people watching. There was always 6 – 10 cars watching on the sidelines.

Fran: How did they choose their teams?

Belvia: Oh, there were would be one leader or two leaders. One would stand over here and then one would stand over there. Okay, you're on my team and then the other leader would choose a person. Well, they could choose the biggest hitters first and then they would get down to the young kids who can't do much. They knew they had to choose them, they couldn't leave them out.

Fran: I knew there had to be a system. But, was it always the same ones?

Belvia: Probably so. I am sure Danny was one leader. I don't remember who else at all. But it was good fun, clean fun.

Fran: I really didn't go often but I really loved it. I think Jack went too.

Belvia: Oh, yeah, Billy Barter and Payson.

Kris: What about evening entertainment during the summer time?

Fran: We were card game players and played board games as kids.

Belvia: Cribbage.

Fran: Oh, Ralph Chapin. My husband was a cribbage player and he thought he was pretty good. And so he met Ralph Chapin. And Ralph said...

Belvia: Ralph being a brother to Mabelle's husband Gordon.

Kris: Okay.

Belvia: Did I say that right? Was Ralph related to Carroll? I don't think it was Gordon, I think he was Carroll's brother. [confirmed]

Fran: I have a chart in the original log. I don't have those years here.

Belvia: I am pretty sure I am right because Gordon had no siblings. Gordon was a lone child. I am pretty sure it was Gordon's father and Ralph who were brothers.

Kris: And where did he live?

Belvia: Ralph Chapin? The Bergeson house. Carroll Chapin, George Cogan's house. And they also had the 'Willows.'

Fran: Ralph Chapin was down at the farm.

Belvia: Isn't that what I just said? The Bergeson house.

Fran: Yes, thank you.

Belvia: Carroll and Lyda had what's now George Cogan's house between the schoolhouse and George Cole. They also owned the 'Willows' which is the Sibbald's house. Gordon and Mabelle had what has just been bought, Woody Small's house. That was their summer place. So, for the Chapin family, the 'Willows,' was Central City. You had Carroll and Lyda, Gordon's parents in the fall would move to the 'Willows.' Mabelle and Gordon in the Small house, they moved in the fall to the 'Willows.' And all four of them moved to Stonington in the winter time. This was the fall and spring house, the 'Willows.' They had a winter house in Stonington. Every spring, the four of them would move to the 'Willows' and then summertime, Carroll and Lyda here and Gordon and Mabelle over here.

Kris: Oh, isn't that fascinating.

Belvia: Mabelle says, "I've been moving all my life."

Fran: Was Carroll Chapin a rather powerful personality? He sounds it. His wife had to have been.

Belvia: His wife Lyda was fairly powerful. He was the master behind the whole thing of course. There were rules.

Fran: Poor Mabelle! Mabelle is my age I discovered. Phil Alley was her big brother.

Kris: Other than being a mom and keeping an eye on your children, how did you spend your days when you first started coming out here?

Fran: You had asked another question. Basically, what did we do indoors? With the Littles, it was cards.

Kris: Board games you mentioned.

Fran: Jigsaw puzzles, too. We have some neat old jigsaw puzzles. When my granddaughter, Brianna came with me for the first time, we did jigsaw puzzles. She was eleven. We would get out the jigsaw puzzles. We would make them one after the other and then I would take a picture of her. I sent her the set.

Kris: That was special.

Belvia: Was reading books a lot too?

Fran: Somebody Granddaddy knew reviewed books for some Boston newspaper. We got a whole lot [of books] passed on to Granddaddy that ended up here.

Belvia: Because he was given them to read or proof read?

Fran: They were reviewer's copies so there are quite a few of them up on the shelves there moldering away. Every now and then, someone younger would come along and make a few books vanish or a lot of books vanish.

Belvia: The book gremlin!

Fran: Hair mattresses! We burned a few of those at times as people died and we emptied houses of mattresses.

Belvia: The library provides a lot of good reading. Even back then they did.

Fran: We have patronized the library from the beginning yes.

Belvia: So what else did you do days?

Fran: Card games, cribbage. Now, I play 'King in the Corners' with my Connecticut grandchildren.

Kris: I am not familiar with that one.

Fran: It's a kid's game. And it's a fairly semi-widely... I found another area of the country that knew the name, children did. But, we would roam.

Belvia: Would you go out fishing for flounder? In Moore's Harbor? Back then, they were there.

Fran: Yeah, we had flounder to fish for.

Belvia: Did you lug water by hand?

Fran: Yes, we did.

Belvia: That tells me we have one more hour before we have to leave to go to lunch. [timer ringing in background]

Fran: The last flounder I had was here on island and Bel invited me to dinner. Danny had caught a flounder. So, we shared the last flounder I'll ever eat, I guess. Flounder were great.

Belvia: That's right. They get caught in seine nets before they get to the shores. Out in the deep water they get caught up and they never get to us. That's what happens.

Fran: Blankety-blank seiners.

Fran: Do you need anything more on what we did indoors?

Kris: No, I think that fulfills that one.

Fran: John Dice is a heck of a game player. They play 'Oh Hell.' I didn't know why it was named that until I was saying it. You have skittles down here.

Kris: You have what?

Fran: What we picked up from our parents. This is part of that. Grammy was an artist so her first interest was to paint. She was crafty also; she did crafts but she really was a professional painter. She went around with her traps out to Seal Trap, Trial Point, here and there, interesting trees, interesting brooks. She did some nice ones I swear of the trail to Duck Harbor from Moore's Harbor. There is one stretch when I get to it that makes me feel really good. I know why, we have a painting.

Kris: Her major interest was landscapes and the sea?

Fran: She did close-ups of trees and she did people. She painted me. She was painting me on Pearl Harbor Day.

Kris: Oh, my.

Fran: The painting is not exciting but boy, I remember that I was twelve.

Kris: That's pretty special.

Fran: Yes, I remember what I was doing when Kennedy was killed. Yes, I remember what I was doing when the airplanes hit the towers. But I remember that too.

Kris: Do you feel a lot of the changes that have occurred on Isle au Haut since you first started coming have been really significant?

Fran: Let me talk about my grandmother's point of view. She died in the late 50's. Her point of view would have been, any change would be not too good. But I don't remember it as being inflicted on me. I think that was her approach. Mother was really much more "Enjoy, just enjoy what we have. Things come and go, maybe you can get eggs. Maybe you can't get eggs." Peggy recorded when they finally got a refrigerator because they were tired of having food spoil. By the time I got there, we were taking water from the brook, but I don't remember storing in a brook. So, that must have been before John and I were married.

Belvia: You probably had the gas refrigerator.

Fran: There was almost a fifteen year span there.

Belvia: A gas refrigerator.

Fran: And those changes we thought were just lovely, thank you.

Kris: I can imagine it would make life much easier.

Fran: The road improvements we welcomed. I was perfectly fine to have it easier to go around the island without breaking an oil pan on somebody else's car.

Kris: Did your family have a car?

Fran: No. When John and I were first here together, that's when the oil pan broke. We rented Stanley Dodge's car.

Belvia: Did you?

Fran: No, it was Noyes car. Noyes McDonald. On the other side of the island, the oil pan went.

Belvia: That was Benny's grandfather.

Kris: Okay. So was the road not paved at all back then? And was it in worse shape?

Fran: We didn't have any paving.

Belvia: There was the Magic Mile of pavement when I came.

Fran: When you came? That must have been '59.

Belvia: '59.

Fran: So, the Magic Mile we thought was lovely but of course, the Magic Mile deteriorated. We had no complaints about convenience. And I'm sure the Dices appreciated being able to get their van with four kids, to get the van places. The Dices didn't go to church much but they were active in the community and the children went to the dances and so forth. Peggy and John Dice both wanted to know Islanders better and succeeded.

Belvia: Did they have dances when you first came? Do you remember when the dances started to happen?

Fran: I don't know. Were they there when you got there?

Belvia: I'm trying to remember but you go ahead. This is your story.

Fran: Peggy and John Dice both danced and their children as they grew up would have danced. If anything was there, they would have done it.

Belvia: But you?

Fran: I had two left feet.

Belvia: But you didn't go to listen to the music?

Fran: No, I couldn't carry a tune. No, I didn't go listen to the music.

Belvia: I didn't even know if they had started having dances then.

Kris: Is there anything else special about the island you would like to share?

Fran: The whole island.

Kris: I know... it's beautiful. Is that what you appreciate?

Fran: When I come back, what do I want to do first?

Kris: What do you most appreciate about being here on Isle au Haut during the time you are here?

Fran: You see people unwind.

Belvia: Can you unwind yourself?

Fran: Yes, you see other people also unwinding and relaxing.

Belvia: So, it's the enjoyment of coming and having a slower pace of life.

Fran: The pace. One year, John got a telegram from Blue Cross/Blue Shield and it took two days to get here, of course.

Belvia: They probably had all it solved by then.

Fran: He called back and they were pretty unhappy.

Belvia: Back then, there were no phones. So, the boats, the lobster boats had radios. There was a Rockland marine operator. And so they'd get aboard a fisherman's boat. Do you remember that?

Fran: Oh, yes.

Belvia: So, they get aboard a fisherman's boat and go out beyond the thoroughfare so that the signal would get to the Rockland operator. You remember that? Then, they called the Rockland operator and the operator would send them by line to wherever they needed to call. Remember that?

Fran: I don't remember the details.

Belvia: That was when I came.

Kris: I didn't realize it was so complicated.

Belvia: Nothing on Island living without electricity and power or phones. I mean, you know...

Fran: That tells us why, one reason John Dice stepped forward to volunteer on the phone committee.

Belvia: Sure. There were a lot of people who wanted phones by then. That's part of getting young people here, to move and live.

Fran: Yes.

Belvia: Back then that's what there was.

Fran: We didn't pay much attention to the school but the school was obviously incredibly important.

Belvia: I was thinking about Jini [Virginia MacDonald] telling me that when she came here. If you needed a doctor, someone lit a fire on top of the mountain, Mt. Champlain and sent up a smoke signal. The doctor would find a fisherman to bring him down here to see whoever it was that was sick.

Kris: Down from where?

Belvia: Stonington.

Fran: I'll be darned, I never knew that.

Kris: So, there was always someone sort of on lookout for something like that?

Belvia: Well, you can see from Stonington. The thing is any island that has smoke on it, there will be an alert by all fishermen. We have had one or two fires. Fishermen have picked up and said, "Hey, there's smoke up on the mountain."

Fran: In your memory?

Belvia: Yup. He said, "You better go check it." It got checked out. It was a camper or a fire started by a lightning storm.

Fran: It was? And they caught it fast?

Belvia: Well, it put itself out is what happened. But, we sent up a whole boat load of people, kids with a few of the firemen down here. They trailed, walked up the back of the mountain, got to the spot and no fire.

Fran: Which mountain?

Belvia: I think it was the back of Champlain but I don't remember the exact position.

Fran: Bald...

Belvia: Ted could tell me 'cause those sailboats that come from Rockland. Now, I think they are out of Camden. I don't remember which one it was now.

Fran: The cruise ships? Jack Dice was married on one.

Belvia: I can't remember what they called them.

Fran: Unfortunately, I've forgotten.

Belvia: They had a bunch of kids on it. He was one of the supervisors on the trip. He got all those young people to go with him and Jack. And they had the old fashioned fire pumps that you put on the back of your shoulders.

Fran: I have only seen them in pictures.

Belvia: Well, we had some and they went trouncing up around. And finally it got dark. The funny story is when they got to the site, it had put itself out. By the time they got back out of the woods, Jack said, "I am so tired, this water is so heavy." His tank was empty as it had a leak. Everyone else's was full and they weren't saying, "I'm tired." But he did.

Kris: And he didn't even have the load of water left.

Belvia: He didn't even have a load of water just the tank.

Fran: Your Jack?

Belvia: Yes. Oh dear.

Fran: The big fire, you probably have it in your records, but in the 1890's I believe.

Belvia: I don't know anything about that, a little before my time.

Fran: The photographs you see of Moore's Harbor, it was barren as of say 20 years earlier so the trees were small and there was lots of grass, maybe even 10 [years].

Belvia: There were many places had sheep and goats and that kept the trees from growing. That's really far back.

Fran: There were cows down at the farm. There must have been sheep.

Belvia: There were, that's the stories I've heard.

Fran: Not just on York Island?

Belvia: No, no. That was when you had no park and there were just people living here.

Fran: As we would take the Seal Trap trail, somebody would tell me that up on the right the hill, that hill was called Bald Mountain.

Belvia: Probably. I have no idea.

Fran: In the early 1900's, yeah? When my brother first started bringing his children here, his oldest son got injured on quote 'Bald Mountain' end quote which was by no means bald. Do you have records and acknowledgment of the fishermen being so helpful in taking people, helping people get out of trouble and getting them to shore?

Kris: Umm.

Fran: If you don't, it is vital to the island. My mother was taken off the island. She got paralyzed and she was carried off on Gus Eustis's back to the boat.

Belvia: Jack MacDonald was called an ambulance with his boat many years.

Kris: I know the lobsterman still help out when the EMTs need to take someone off island.

Belvia: They do, they always will.

Fran: They got Jack Little down and a lobsterman came but they did decide that the lobsterman didn't have to take him across. They could do it themselves or something. There was backup there as they were trying to get him down.

Belvia: There has never been a time when a fisherman didn't. I remember the story about [Minot] Connery. He lived in Bill and Peggy Stevens' house on the East side, he and his wife. I think it was him. I know it was him. I may be wrong but I think it was him that cut the artery in his arm. Stan Dodge which was Dottie's husband put a tourniquet on there and got him up the bay. The doctor was in Stonington then so he fixed it up and he lived. There have been heart attacks gone up across the bay, too. Sure. No matter what time of day a fisherman will take somebody that needs to go off. George Cole has done it with his fancy boat.

Kris: I think the fishermen are a key element of the community.

Belvia: Absolutely.

Fran: Absolutely essential. When I was young, I remember admiring the many island women, the year-rounders who knitted and did other handwork for sale. I was delighted when Joan at the lobster clambake Sunday purposely wore this gorgeous sweater that Mabelle had made and Mabelle was there.

Belvia: Joan Tilney?

Fran: Yes, Joan Tilney.

Belvia: She would do that. She is very thoughtful.

Fran: She did. Bob is her son, and someone said, "Bob, where is your sweater?" He said, "I am going to wear it such and such a time. It's too warm today." But, he was lined up. They were both so important.

Kris: They are.

Fran: Where do you want to take it?

Kris: I really appreciate you sharing your time and sharing so many wonderful memories. Unless you have anything else to add, I think we are all set for now. Thank you so much Fran; I really appreciate.

Fran: You're welcome, very welcome.