

INTERVIEW with ROE “Duc-Man” TERRY

Date March 7, 2015

Location: Roe Terry’s home
Main St.
Chincoteague, VA 23336

Interviewer 1: Ennis Barbery, Museum of Chincoteague Island

Interviewer 2: Dr. Kristin Sullivan, Curator & Folklorist, Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art

Transcription: Andrew Marshall and Rachel Downs, Salisbury University

Barbery: Alright, so today is March the 7th. My name is Ennis Barbery from the Museum of Chincoteague Island, and this is an interview for the Museum of Chincoteague Island, and for the island—Chincoteague Island Library, and it’s also for the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art today.

Sullivan: Yes.

Barbery: And Kristin Sullivan’s here, she’s a curator/folklorist at the Ward Museum, and we are interviewing Roe Terry in his shop. What’s the name of your shop?

Terry: Duc-Man Decoys.

Sullivan: There you go.

Terry: Been calling me Duc-Man since the old CB days: Citizens Band radios and everybody had a handle, and one of the carvers here on the island died, they called him the duck man, and after he passed away I took it.

Sullivan: You took it? Nice. Everybody has a nickname on this island it seems.

Terry: Pretty much.

Barbery: So when were you born?

Terry: Born 5/19/53 in Whidbey Island, Washington. Washington State.

Sullivan: When did you move to Chincoteague?

Terry: Well, the boys say I’m not a Chincoteaguer; I wasn’t born here. But there isn’t a whole hell of a lot of people that were born here. They were born at the NASA base, or they were born at NASA Wallops, or Salisbury, Maryland. So that makes them a local and me not. My dad was aviation ordinance, Navy. And I was at the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington. So, as soon as I was born, dad got transferred to the Naval Air Station Chincoteague, which is now the NASA base. I’ve been here all my life, but I don’t remember anywhere else; but I’m still not a local. I’ve only been here 61 years out of 61 years.

Sullivan: Yeah. Well they say Roy Jones isn’t a Chincoteaguer because he was born on Assateague.

Terry: There you go. [laughter] Old Jonesy. I know him well.

Barbery: So what was it like growing up?

Terry: Well, it was fantastic. Even though I didn’t have a dad to take me out and do stuff every day I was--. I lived in a very good section of Chincoteague, lived down South Main Street, and of course nobody had any air conditioning or anything then. Summertime my bed had a window right facing the Chincoteague Channel, and the guy that pretty much raised me was Doug Jester, Jr. His son didn’t carve or go on the water or anything with him, I didn’t have a dad to take me. So they tell me I was about four years old and I walked in the back door one day and I had

Doug by hand and I said, "This is Doug, can I keep him?" And he was a neighbor, and Doug was just a--. "Young Doug," they call him, Uncle Doug. Quite a bit younger of course than the old man who was born in the 1800s, his dad. But Doug was a true waterman, hunter, fisherman—waterman all his life, and just loved kids to death. I think the gentleness of him was because he never looked a kid in the eye. Little kids could walk up to him and this big strong man would just always be laughing and talking and chopping up ducks with a hatchet but he never made the eye contact with the kid so he didn't instill any fear into them. I really believe that. Because then a kid could come up, and normally a big person, an adult, goes up and grabs them and hugs them and wants to scream at them, "Hey I love you!" And the kids don't understand that. So Doug would just move around them and had that hatchet flying, and ducks flying, and kids would just line up and loved him to death. And [he] took me on the water clamming, fishing, hunting--. And in the summertime you can watch the down the bay boats. You were talking about old Roy Jones, Old Jonesy. I lived right down the shore, I saw him all the time. On a Monday morning, there'd be a half a dozen of you, thirty-four, thirty-five foot gasoline scows, they'd call them, towing the little boats behind them, and they'd be heading from Metompkin. And they would tow these boats all the way down behind Accomack and they would stay there from Monday to Friday, wading clams. And they would come back on Friday morning, and when I'd see Doug's boat coming by I'd run down the shore to his house, and he'd bring the boat on high tide up to the dock, unload his clams, and he'd have a clam box, a little box underneath the bow of the boat. Every Friday full of what they called buttons: these little clams about yea big, as big as a button. He knew that's what I liked. And he'd say, "Here, bud." And there'd be about a hundred of them in a little box. And I'd go home and steam my little clams. And he just thought that was great, to save them all; he'd save them all week long, those clams that were too small to sell. And he started making me decoys. He'd break the limb off a tree in the back yard, take a hatchet, and chop a duck out of it. No pattern, no nothing.

Sullivan:

Really?

Terry:

He was unbelievable, and I kept watching him and I said: "I want to do it." I was in my filing cabinet the other day here--this is my filing cabinet. It's where every note and every important thing I got gets stuck. This was young Doug right here.

Barbery:

Which one is he, on the left?

Terry:

Yup that was Uncle Doug right there, and myself and my son. He made that boat, he made that skiff.

Sullivan:

That's real nice

Terry:

I was about five or six years old. They got me a BB gun when I was six and I killed my first duck at seven. It was a brant; it was out of season. I guess that was my first downfall of the law. Down on South Main Street at the time all the brant, huge flocks of brant would come up by the edge of the road all winter long: I mean January, February, March, just hundreds and hundreds of brant right by the road. Mom and dad gave me this gun; it was a Daisy pump and it was too big to for me to cock run so I'd get Doug to cock it for me I'd run across the street and I was shooting into these brant and I'd run back and he'd cock it for me again and I'd come running in I was seven years old I said, "I killed me a duck," he said

“No you didn’t.” I said “Yeah I did, I killed me a duck.” Mom said, “Doug, look out that window” and there was this brant floating upside down. I shot into him, shot him right upside the head, killed him graveyard dead. Doug ran out, got him, cleaned him for me and we ate him. That was out of season, I had no license, shooting from the road over a highway. I broke every law I could think of and I was seven years old. I thought “This is a good start,” and I kept right on going. Didn’t get into too much too bad too many times. I learned that I wanted to carve ducks, I wanted to eat them, I wanted to kill them, shoot them, carve them. I got to fifteen years old and I was watching Doug and he said, “You can do it,” took his chopping block and hatchet started chopping and carving and I got one of them in the house today, the first thing I ever made, fifteen years old and I kept right on making them through the Navy days and now roughly ten thousand pieces later, it’s been a good life. Growing up on South Main Street, all the clams and fishing you wanted none of these motels, no McDonald’s, which pretty much leads to another story. I went over to see Cigar [Daisey] one day, a bunch of us stopped in after a pony round up by boat, and the old Captain Cig would always be telling us stories. This has been fifteen, eighteen years ago I said, “You know Captain, you lived the good old days didn’t you?” He threw that hatchet down on that chopping block he said, “Man what are you talking about?” He said, “This is the good old days,” he said. “When I was being raised I was making two dollars a day, lucky if you had a car, no heat for your house, slept in four or five quilts,” he said, “Look at you people now! You’ve got a house, a summer house, boat, car, truck.” He said, “Man you’re living the good old days!” That was only about fifteen, eighteen years ago. You know how people say the modernization of Chincoteague, and the bed and breakfasts, and the three story motels is bad but it brings us a good class of people. We don’t see the sunset go down as much as we used to from Main Street, but Chincoteague’s still been a good place to be raised and it’s still a great place to live in.

Barbery: Going back a little bit, you talked about going clamming with Doug. How did you guys clam did you sign or wade? What did you do?

Terry: Man I didn’t know what I was getting into. All I knew was cutting grass for a summertime job sucked. I still won’t cut grass. I hated cutting grass. My buddy Jimmy who you just met, Jimmy Whealton, we’re like brothers so I’m brother Roe he’s brother Jim whenever we talk. He was with Doug first and he came in one week and I said “How’d you do?” and he said “Well I went down the bay with Doug for a week and I came home with three hundred and some dollars.” He said, ‘I looked at Doug, I said, ‘Dougie, what am I going to do with all this money?’ and Doug says ‘Here’ and took two hundred dollars. He said ‘now the rest is yours,’ he said ‘but this, we’re going to start you a bank account.’ And Doug took him to the bank and started him a bank account. When I found out how much he made I thought ‘man it can’t be that hard to go clamming.’ So I told Doug I wanted to go down with him. He said ‘okay, you got you a boat?’ I went and got me a little scow, a thirteen foot scow with a thirty five horse [? 10:50].... Clarence Clark had built this engine, it had two engines, he was a local Mercury

dealer here on the island. So he put this motor together and the boat was a thirteen foot scow. You would tow them behind the big boat all the way down the bay. You would get there Monday about noon and you clammed as long as the tide would permit you to. Now when the tide was falling, when it first started falling, you jumped overboard about chest deep with these cotton flannel moccasins and you held onto your boat and you waded them, you caught them with your feet, slid them up your leg and threw them on the boat, one after the other, you kept wading backwards, sliding your feet. Now when it got too shallow for you to wade because you didn't want to break your back while bending over, when it got to shallow, at the back of your boat you had your clam basket and your gaffe hook, a little two pronged hook, and you waded to shore where the mud was dry and you sign them. And you signed and you dumped them out and made piles, and when you started covering the flap, you waded offshore and got your boat, waded it in, piled your clams in the boat went back over and started wading again until it was too deep to wade them. So you cover two and a half tides. It was about sixteen hours a day.

Sullivan: Wow, that's a long day.

Terry: Yeah, that's why I thought this clamming was going to be an easy job. So we got in the boat and the first night, I'll never forget it, I sat down and we were in the cabin and the cabin was about eight feet wide, even long enough for two people to sleep, and Doug had a fold down bed. I said, "What are we eating for dinner?" and Doug had that little two burner gas propane stove and one frying pan, and he put that pan up and he reached underneath the stern, we had no refrigeration, had a cardboard box underneath the stern, July, he had this rag bologna. It was bologna covered in a canvas jacket, called rag bologna. He'd cut you off a slab about that thick throw it in the frying pan, and my buddy Jimmy, brother Jim, said "We're having down the bay strawberries to go with it." And I said, "Damn, down the bay strawberries? That's got to be good." They're called baked beans. [laughter] When the meat got warm, you'd take the baked beans and fry them up, it would have rust all over the can, and they worry about dates now, good God. Throw them baked beans over top of that bologna, stir it up, get it hot, put it on your plate and that was it. Give you a piece of bread and some black molasses. That line on the jar, old thick black molasses, God, give you indigestion like you won't believe. And that was it, a piece of bread, some black molasses, and beans and bologna. That was the main meal he cooked. He went to sleep, and Doug had his a clock set, he knew when low tide was going to be, either might be two in the morning because tide's every six hours, so it might be two in the morning, three in the morning, and that old Big Ben clock would go off and Jimmy would tap on the bunk and he'd say, "You think he heard it?" and I'd say "God damn, I hope not, son, I hope not." We'd lay there about five minutes and pretty soon you'd see that match go off. Doug smoked like you wouldn't believe. He'd be laying there in the bunk and the first thing he had to do was have a cigarette so when that match went off you knew you'd have to go to work. So you got up, two, three o'clock in the morning and he'd say "Get your clothes boys" and you went on top

of the cabin, the clothes you had been wading in the day before that were soaking wet, you laid them on top of the cabin to start drying. Well guess what? Two o'clock in the morning, they weren't dry. You were putting on cold wet clothes. He'd give you an apple, a piece of bread, Pepsi Cola, a pack of cigarettes, and that was it. If you wanted to make ham sandwich out of that rag bologna that's up to you; Doug wasn't your babysitter. He wasn't your mama or your daddy. Jumped in the boat, we started going off to the flaps and we started jumping overboard and wading. Three o'clock in the morning, pitch black. You'd see these old big sea turtles coming up, sharks everywhere, bull fish, stingrays. So we did this summer after summer and I was talking to Jim about it the other day. One morning, the sun come up, and I was sitting on the bow of the boat, my boat, and I could hear Jim throwing his clams in one after the other and he said, "What are you doing?" I said "Jim, I'm eliminating jobs." He said, "What?" I said "I'm eliminating jobs, I'm done. I ain't going to be a clammer the rest of my life." I said, "This ain't what it's cut out to be." As a waterman, you're up against the elements, you're up against the weather, the tides, the wind, you're fighting it all the time. And I knew right then. I put this in the old bank here; I thought, "I ain't going to be a clammer all my life, there's got to be a better job."

Sullivan: It's a hard life.

Terry: So that was one of the last times I went down.

Sullivan: Wow, do you ever sign or wade clams for fun now?

Terry: Sign them, all the time now. I got a wife; she's the best clam signer in the world, loves it to death. Wading them? No. I know what's under the bottom now, I know there's all these creatures floating around, slipping around. I've been hunting sharks all my life, me and Jimmy. When Jaws came out and we saw the movie, when they harpooned him, God, we had been doing that for years. The big sharks would come up in these bays with two feet of water to spawn, to have their young ones. But we didn't know they were having young ones we just wanted to kill them. Six, seven, eight foot long and we killed the hell out of them, and we killed a lot of sharks. That was the same water we was wading clams in. So now days, hell I'd go down to one of these stores and buy me twenty clams it's a lot easier than catching them, wading them. No, it would be fun to do it again if I knew a good place where I wasn't going to cut on and stung and bit and eaten up, just had enough of it.

Sullivan: So Doug Jester Jr., that you said was yours, he's the son of Doug Jester senior the old time carver here, right?

Terry: Yup.

Sullivan: Did you ever know him?

Terry: No, I didn't know the old man. He died in '61 and I would have been about eight years old then. I probably met him with Doug in the younger days but just don't recall it. I didn't want to be messing around with the other guys; I wanted to have Doug.

Sullivan: But you knew Mr. Miles, right? Hancock?

Terry: Yup.

Sullivan: What was that like, did you watch him carve or what did you do?

Terry: Yeah, by then, right after the flood of '62 we moved up to Ocean Boulevard, which was putting me a whole lot closer [to Miles Hancock]. I mean you were walking back in those days, bicycle or walking, so it put you halfway across town, and I went up to Mr. Miles' terrapin farm where he carved, and we would go there day after day after day. At that time I was probably about nine, ten, eleven, twelve, about that age up till about fourteen and of course he died in '74. I don't think I really wanted to be a carver then as much as a hunter, fisherman, and to raise terrapins. I kept asking him, "How do I do this?" He had a barn that went out into the water. It was an impoundment, like a building, and the sand would ebb out at low tide. He could go in that door, and close that door I don't know if it's a vibration or what the turtles felt but he would have four or five hundred turtles in this barn that went overboard, fenced in and here they come like D-Day, come crawling out of the sand. And he would be throwing some kind of pellets or food or something out to them I don't know what he fed them with but they could feel him walking or the door, the vibration whatever it was, and here come all these terrapins out and he was potting most of them out in Oyster Bay: Little Bay. And he was telling me that the bay couldn't be so deep that the pot would go under water because I thought turtles could swim under water and could live there all their lives but they've got to breath. So when you pot them they have to be able to poke their heads up and get fresh air. So he was telling me all where he goes and the nets he used and the pots. Watched him carve, the nicest gentleman, again they hardly ever looked at you; they would be working and chewing. His wife came out one day, and he was chewing that 'bacci. And boy, she didn't like that at all. She came out and gave him hell for chewing that tobacco and he would wipe his beard and his lip and she took all his 'bacci and yelled at him and in the house she went. He laughed at me, didn't get mad a bit. Stood up, reached up over the doorsill, reached down and he had four or five cigars. He took that cigar in that plastic, bit it in half, and he said, "She don't know about these," and he put it back. He was chewing cigars! I mean he didn't have any quality tobacco; he would chew that and he'd spit in that can, just like you'd saw in those old western days – ping – right in that can every time. He was just something else. He was selling me his miniatures, his little miniatures, kept them in the house. In the summertime, he had a towel over top the oil stove, and had them all there, and they were three dollars apiece. I was buying them; I was a decoy broker at the time. I don't know why I was buying them, but I was buying these little

miniatures for three dollars apiece and I bought them and bought them and I went there one day, this was after he had his leg cut off, had half his leg amputated, I think diabetes. So he's sitting there on the couch and I said "Mr. Miles I want to get some more miniatures." He said "Well there you are son, pick out what you want." He said, "But I had to go up," he said, "they're five dollars now." I said, "Good Lord, five dollars?" I said, "I'll take one, but I can't afford no more." And that was the last miniature I bought from him, for five dollars. He was selling me life sized decoys to hunt with for three dollars apiece.

Sullivan: Wow.

Terry: At the time I was fifteen and I told mom I wanted a dozen dippers and a dozen shell ducks to gun with from Mr. Miles. She said how much are they? I said, "They're three dollars apiece. They're thirty-six dollars a dozen." She said, "Well if you want them that's all you're going to get, you ain't getting nothing else. I've not got that kind of money." So she got them for me, and I got a picture I'll show you in a little bit, of me opening them up under the Christmas tree. And she got me a dozen dippers and a dozen shell ducks, and I thought, just like right now if you go to an auction and somebody consigns a Miles Hancock, it might be a Mason [factory] decoy body, it might be a Doug Jester body. Miles would tell us, he said, "You boys can't afford these high price ducks." So he would put his head on anybody's body. And back then we gunned with all wooden birds. You broke the heads off all the time. Threw them in the corner. Next summer you make a bunch of heads and re-head them. So Miles wasn't selling people fake birds.

Sullivan: Right.

Terry: In his mind, he made the body, he made the head, he painted them, he fitted the head on, but the body could be Sears and Roebuck, it could be a Pratt or a Mason, or anybody in the world, could be upper bay body, and this picture I've got, what I thought were all original Miles Hancock's, half of them were machine made bodies.

Sullivan: Masons and so on?

Terry: And he put his head on it, and it could have been a bluebill, a black duck, anything. If you wanted dippers, they were going to be black and white.

Sullivan: He painted them as a dipper.

Terry: It was painted, and some were that big and some were that big. But they were dippers. And you wanted shell ducks, he put shell ducks in it, it could have been a canvasback, but now it's a shell duck. And he painted it like a shell duck.

Sullivan: Well the ducks probably didn't care.

Terry: No they didn't! They would kill all kinds of birds over them. I kept them for years and years and years, and I don't have any of them right now. There was an auction at Zeb Barfield's last week, and a boy bought a bufflehead, a factory-made bufflehead with a Miles paint job and it looks just like one I used to have. And he's going to sell it to me.

Sullivan: Oh nice.

Terry: Yeah. But he was a super guy.

Barbery: Do you ever have any memories of going to school on Chincoteague, what that was like? Trouble you got into?

Terry: It was the good old days. That was the good old days because I watched this morning some little youngin' about six years old just got suspended because he did that in class. We're letting these damn supervisors and school board people dictate what our kids are going to think, what they're going to eat, how they're going to dress, everything. You can't do that in school. We were building guns in school. In shop class, our shop teacher taught us how to build a crossbow. We built a crossbow that could shoot a thousand yards. I mean Bill Crispin, best shop teacher in the world... I've got a handmade longbow. He built a press. We were making bows and arrows in shop and we never killed nobody. We went hunting before school, we went hunting after school, we had our guns in our cars, shotguns, rifles, had racks right in the back. Nobody cared.

Barbery: After you graduated, did you go into the Navy after that?

Terry: Yep. I wanted to go in the Navy. Did not want to be home.

Barbery: Where'd you go in the Navy?

Terry: I went clean across the big water. Clean across the Chesapeake Bay. All the way across Norfolk.

Sullivan: The big water.

Terry: All the way to Norfolk, yep. Everybody says, "Where'd you go." "All the way across the big water." I'd only been to Norfolk two or three times. So that's a big deal. I became a... last thing, I hated math, I hated science in school, I always failed, I always took double up, I wanted to be the smartest math person, smartest science person in the world. So I failed Algebra I, and took it again along with Algebra II. Then I failed Geometry so I took that the next year along with Algebra II, and then Geometry... I just kept taking every one double that I'd failed the year before. Science, general science, biology, I failed it one year, doubled up next year. I joined the Navy, took the aptitude test, I scored above average in math and above average in science. I didn't want to do that. They made a radioman out of me.

Sullivan: They made a what out of you?

Terry: Radioman.

Sullivan: Oh, radioman. Ok.

Terry: Radioman. Yep. I didn't want that, I wanted to be on a gunboat or doing something with weapons, and they made me a radioman. So then they sent me to school, I didn't want to go to college, I didn't want to go to school. So I had to. So I became a radioman, I got stuck at a place called COMSUBLANT, we monitored the submarine broadcasts from the whole US Atlantic fleet, and off of Virginia. It was called neutral duty at the time, so it wasn't sea duty, it wasn't shore duty. So when my two years was up, I was married, I had a youngin', and they said, "Now you can go on a Med cruise, on a destroyer or something, be away for an extra year and a half, or you can just finish out right here." Well, I never knew my Dad, he was twenty-three years Navy. Got Lou Gehrig disease before he retired, right out of retirement, and he got it when I was six and died when I was nine. So I never knew him because of the US Navy. He was always gone. So I said, here I got me a little son, and I want to leave him for a year and a half? Ain't gonna happen. So when my four years was up, I got out with no job, I was supposed to start as a guide at a hunting lodge, at the Pope's Island Hunt Club, and I was

going to start on Monday, and I had put in for a job at NOAA, about six months before that, and they called me on Friday, ten o'clock at night. A man had just retired, they didn't want to pay transfer or travelling fees and all that, and they said, "You still want that job as an electronics technician?" Tracking satellites. I said, "Yeah." I said, "When?" He said, "Monday."

Sullivan: Of course.

Terry: That was pretty good. So I went up to the guy who was going to hire me, old Bill Savage, and he said, "Son, I ain't... my feelings ain't hurt a bit." He said, "Take the government job." I lasted five years. Couldn't do that. Ended up going back and retiring from it, now things turned out perfect.

Sullivan: And you are retired now?

Terry: Yeah. I retired September of '13.

Barbery: I wanted to go back to, how did you meet Monnie (?), did you meet her in school, your wife?

Terry: High school, yep, she was the prettiest thing I ever seen in my life, and when I went to boot camp she said she'd wait for me. I thought, we both thought we might get married someday, but being away from somebody, they talk about absence makes the heart grow fonder, or stronger or something, I called her from boot camp and I said, "Let's get married." So on my boot camp leave, I'd been gone nine weeks, December I got home, got home December 23rd, got married December 24th.

Sullivan: Wow.

Terry: And that's been about fifty years ago.

Sullivan: That's sweet.

Barbery: So you quit your government job for a while though to carve?

Terry: Nine and a half years.

Barbery: Let me talk about that again, because I know we talked about it before we had the camera.

Terry: Yeah. Back on... the kids nowadays that want to be carvers, I mean I knew I was artistic, I wanted to be a Cigar Daisey. I used to go to Cig's all the time, and my buddy would take me over, he had bushel baskets of heads, bushel baskets of bodies, and I look at them and I thought, "You put them in the water, a duck flies by thinking it's a real thing, comes out to it, kill 'em..." And I wanted to... like hunting, I knew that I could make a decoy. And I made this bird, and it was the best thing I thought I'd ever made, of course I only made about six of them, I was fifteen, I took it to Captain Cig, and I said, "What do you think of it?" He says, "Well, you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." And gave it back to me. I was fifteen years old, I said, "Do what?" He said, "Well, you're trying to make a nice bird. A nice detailed bird." I said, "Yes sir." He said, "What'd you use for wood?" I said, "Cottonwood." He said, "You can't do that." He said, "You've got to have better wood." So the sow's ear was the cottonwood. And I was trying to make a silk purse out of it. You can't do it, you've got to have better wood. Now you know what Cig was using? Cottonwood. That's all he was using. But he knew some things about it that I didn't. About being green, about being dry, about hollowing it out, sealing it. There was a lot of things I didn't... Cig would say, "I'll tell you everything you want to know." Well you had to ask the question. If

you didn't know how to ask the question, then, you know the old saying is, "I taught him everything he knows. But I didn't teach him everything I know." So he's the one telling you what you asked him. And he'd kinda laugh and you'd come back and he'd say, "Why'd you do that?" I said, "Well I thought you said..." He said, "No, no. I didn't say that. You said can I do this? I said sure you can do it. You went ahead and did it, and it was wrong." "You son of a bitch, you've done it to me again." So... he could have been the best carver, I mean he won best in world for working decoy, but he could have been better than anybody. A lot of people will doubt, they'll say they differ with me, they've got to remember. Cig was doing it for a living, Lucy his wife, she didn't work. He was trying to raise a household, I mean I know what he went through because I did this for ten years, my wife didn't work, I had two kids, house payment, electric bills, I maintained my health insurance, I did everything. I paid everything. I didn't go up to DC and say, "I'm entitled to some free money because I made a stupid move." I became a carver. You can be anything in this world you want, just put forth a little bit of effort. So Cig had to put forth the effort. He carved, he fixed nets, he fixed duck traps, he did anything he could for a dollar. So he didn't have time to make a really good bird. He made a nice bird. And he made a lot of money at it and he always--. He never did, when I say I didn't learn from Cig, I learned so much that that's why I've been successful doing this. He never showed me carve here, carve there, paint here, paint there. I want to do my own style, Cig would always tell me, I'd go to shows and he'd sit behind the table with me, and I'd say, "Cig, what do you think about that?" He'd say, "Yeah. Looks like shit. But it looks like you." I said, "Do what?" He said, "It looks just like you." He said, "I can tell your bird from a mile away." He said, "But that's good because they look like your style." He said, "Now, the shit part..." if you want to edit that out or whatever, "the bad part about the bird, the white is too white." He said, "You need to tone it down with some brown. You need to make the bill a little bit shorter, the head a little bit of this..." That was... he said, "But these birds, your style, they look like Roe Terry's birds." And that's what I've always strived for, I didn't copy off nobody, I wanted my birds to look like my birds. Cig's had his own patterns, he drew them all and they looked like his birds. They looked like real ducks. He could have made them look like they were flying, but he didn't have time. He'd say, "Boy, you can make a living out of this." He said, "But you've got to hundred dollar 'em to death." He said, "Anybody..." He said, "Listen to these women, watch these women on TV. And the husband says or the boyfriend says 'How much did that dress cost?'" He said, "'Oh, it was only \$99.99.' 'Oh, ok, you didn't spend a hundred dollars?' 'No! I didn't... Nowhere near a hundred it was only 99 dollars!'" He said, "Do the same thing with your ducks." He said, "You break that hundred dollar mark your clientele's going to go down. Break the two hundred, have your birds a hundred and ninety. Have them ninety-five, don't break the hundred!" Well they'll come in here now and I know a lot of the shorebirds I'm doing should be a hundred and twenty-five, a hundred and forty dollar birds. Now I'll sell two a week. But I can put ninety-five on them... I made these, I made this since Monday.

Sullivan:

Wow.

Terry: I can make forty, fifty birds within a week. Now I can't paint them all that quick. But in two weeks I'll do fifty birds or so. I do them... Highest I ever did was just over eight hundred pieces. In one year.

Sullivan: Wow.

Terry: And the only reason I did eight hundred is because I was trying to catch Cig. And Cig still swears he made 1100 pieces one year. Eleven hundred. Let me tell you something, I tried to catch him. And it's impossible. It's impossible. So, anyway, back on these young boys, the new breed of carvers we got. I've tried to tell them how, any way I can, I'll tell them anything. Give them the wood, knives, anything. But they know they can't make a living out of it no more. It's impossible. You can't start in two thousand and fifteen and become a... I'm saying you can't because making a living carving... There's people that can say, "Oh, I just started carving a few years ago and I'm making a living at it." I said, "Well how old are you?" "Uh, fifty-eight." "And are you retired from anything?" "Oh yeah, I'm an executive from General Electric, and I took seventeen classes with Pat Godin" and you know... "Oh, so you're making a living. Uh-huh, yeah, okay, tell me about it." This guy come in from Louisiana, Alabama a couple of years ago, him and two of his buddies, and they'd been guiding, they'd been hunting, down here hunting ducks with Grayson Chesser. And the guy started bragging, he says, "I make ducks too, I do it for a living." I said, "Do you now?" "Yeah..." He said, "I get a thousand dollars apiece for my decoys." I said, "You're pretty damn good." "Yes sir I am." I said, "You do it for a living?" "Yeah." I said, "How many ducks do you do a year?" "About thirteen, fourteen." I said, "Do you now?" "Yeah. A thousand dollars apiece." I said, "Wait a minute now, let me get my math..." And I said, "You make about 13000 dollars a year. You do it for a living." I said, "I'll bet you're married aren't you?" "Yeah." I said, "What's your wife do?" "Oh, she's a lawyer." "Heh heh no shit. And you carve ducks for a living. For a living." Well his two buddies were backing up farther and farther. They were turning heads, laughing, I gave it to him up one side and down the other. Needless to say, he never been back.

Sullivan: Really?

Terry: Yep. Never come back. A thousand dollars apiece. I'm getting a couple hundred. And he does about thirteen ducks a year. I blow more sawdust out of my nose than he carves in a year. Yeah, don't tell me about making ducks and making money. It's hard to do. There's too much competition, you guys are affiliated with the Ward show, go to the Ward Foundation, go to any show in the world now. There used to be three or four shows a year. Virginia Beach had the Back Bay Wildfowler's Guild, Louisiana had one, Salisbury, the Ward Foundation, that's been everywhere, Ocean City, there was a few shows. Now there's one, there's ten shows a month, a week, everywhere. Everybody's got a show. You go to a show and these tables are lined up end to end to end. I got a bafflehead for twenty dollars, you're next to me and you've got one for eighteen, and you're next too and you've got one for fifteen. Well let me tell you something, between fifteen and twenty it's five whole dollars. And they're going to buy the fifteen one, most of the time. It's competition. Everybody is doing it. So it's not like the old days. I was lucky, I got started at the right time, the late sixties, early seventies is when it

started, that's when it really just took off. I was buying Ira Hudson decoys for eight dollars apiece in the seventies. Man came up on Sickle Bill Lewis, stopped me on my way to school. Me and my wife were riding around before school started and old Bill pulled me over and he said, "Boy, I heard you're buying decoys." I said, "Well, Mr. Bill, when I can." He said, "Well I got one here you might want." He reached in the back of the truck and he had an Ira Hudson pintail. I said, "What do you want for it?" He said, "Ten dollars." I said, "Ten dollars, are you crazy? I ain't got that kind of money!" He said, "Well how much you got?" And I reached in my pocket and I had eight dollars. He says, "I'll take it." And I bought my first old decoy for eight dollars, an Ira Hudson pintail.

Sullivan: Do you still have it? Or did you sell it?

Terry: I sold that about ten years later, maybe ten, I sold that for a hundred dollar bill. And I said, "You know what? There's money in being a dealer." And Cigar went and told me too, he said, "Boy, buy a duck for ten and sell it for twenty. It beats the heck out of doing this all day long." Band-aids all over your thumbs, and shoulders, had this shoulder done two years ago, rotator cuff surgery. Surgeon went up to--. I was up to six months after I had it done, no, let's see. March, April, the month after I got out of my sling--I was in a sling for six weeks--and I was at St. Michaels, and a surgeon, found out he was a surgeon, come up to the tables and he wanted to know about me and about carving, and I told him I was a carver now and recuperating from rotator cuff surgery, he said, "You'll never carve again." He said, "You chop ducks up with a hatchet?" "Yes sir." He said, "You'll never chop again." He said, "That's called blunt force trauma every time that hatchet hits." And I do every one of my ducks right now, I'm taking that thing and I'm chopping every duck, bam bam bam, there's baskets of them. Every time you hit it, he said it's called blunt force trauma. Six months after I got my operation, I was down in Louisiana, pulling alligators, and by Christmas I was making ten, fifteen, twenty ducks a week. And this is how I--. I band saw them out, get a rough shape on them. And I sit here, and that's how I take the wood off, all day long. Duck after duck after duck, and after a while the old shoulder gets torn up.

Sullivan: How's it holding up now?

Terry: Right now it's doing excellent. I had a man named Dr. Brandon up at Peninsula Orthopedics--give them a little plug there, he's my newest best buddy. I sent him a letter after I got done and like I said, six months after I got done I was pulling in four hundred pound alligators over the bow of the boat in Louisiana.

Sullivan: That's amazing.

Terry: That guy that said I'd never chop again, it'll be two years... what is today? Three days ago, March 2nd. Been two years since I got cut on. Now this one's shot.

Sullivan: Starting to act up?

Terry: Oh it's bad, I go back the 26th to see him, to see what he's going to do. I mean even holding this and trying to squeeze, it's cottonwood logs, splitting them. Me and my buddy put away five hundred blocks, last summer. I figure I've still got a couple thousand birds in me. But this shoulder now is... that's as high as it goes. Right there.

Sullivan: It looks painful watching you.

Terry: They drill in there and put these drywall anchors and Kevlar string and all that stuff, sew it back up, and you're in the sling for six weeks. And then the therapy starts and then you're back chopping ducks again.

Barbery: What kind of wood do you use, cottonwood?

Terry: This is white cedar out of New Jersey and the rest of its cottonwood. I use cottonwood and white cedar, doesn't really matter. The white cedar I'll buy... it's green when I buy it, air dried. So I never know if it's completely ready to go, so I put it away for like five years, and in the meantime the cottonwood will dry in about two years, so I rotate them. So those mergansers, those bodies are cottonwood, the ruddy ducks beneath them, little ducks, are cottonwood, and the bluebills are cedar and the egrets are cedar. It doesn't matter, either one, I like them both.

Barbery: Do you have any supply questions?

Sullivan: Supply questions? No. So if I recall correctly you helped to start the Carver and Artist's association. Is that right? Do I want to be asking you about that?

Terry: Me and Reggie Birch started that together. It was pretty much our brainstorm and it just didn't pan out the way I thought it was going to pan out.

Sullivan: What were you hoping for when you started it? Or why did you start it?

Terry: I wanted to start it--. Me and Reggie sat down and we started this contest and we were going to have awards for a head whittling contest, and a body making, a working decoy contest, and we were going to call them the Doug Jester award, Miles Hancock award, Ira Hudson award. I said we can have dues, take the dues money and buy truckloads of wood and that all the carvers who are members divvy it up. Because you buy bulk, instead of paying four dollars a foot, you might get it for a dollar and a half a foot. I said you can do that - you can buy paint, and knives, and help the decoy. We thought it was the carvers' association. Now it's a carvers' and artists', and all the young--. It was all Chincoteaguers pretty much, all the carvers, we had a good group of them. We've lost a lot of them, died off, but then we had a good group of carvers on here, and I kinda think that's why they joined then initially.

Sullivan: Did you go to any of the carving shows or competitions before the Chincoteague Carver Association ones, like the Snow Goose, or was that before your time?

Terry: No, I got my first ribbon, was... I had my first ribbon. Used to be here, somewhere.

Barbery: If you find it, we can take a picture of it, too. And I can add it in to this part.

Terry: Well I'll be darned. Yeah, I've got it somewhere. I've won over three hundred ribbons, and my first one was dated, I'm pretty sure it was dated 1971. So they go back a pretty good ways. That was here at the greater Snow Goose show.

Sullivan: What did you win it for?

Terry: Bufflehead, the one that Cig said you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

Sullivan: Haha, nice.

Terry: Yeah. But of course, see, it was honorable mention. And of course, going to school back in those days, the art teacher would give you first, second, third, and everybody else got honorable mention. Or a bunch of them. They wanted to keep you interested, to keep you coming back. So I either got fifteenth or sixteenth place and didn't know it, I thought I got fourth place, and was probably fifteenth

or sixteenth. But the next year I went back and won third. Then I went and won a second. Then a first. Then I started winning best in division, best in shows, I flew to California and was a judge out there, I judged all over the place, and judged with Cigar many times. So I won over three hundred, over a hundred blue ribbons, and now I tell them I don't collect silk ribbons, I collect dollar bills. They'll go a lot farther. But you've got to collect the ribbons before you collect the money. You've gotta pay your dues.

Barbery: What kind of decoys do you use to hunt with?

Terry: I used to hunt with the plastic stuff. I still hunt with some plastic decoys now. They're more durable and the conditions we have now, when the bay freezes up, making ice all over your decoy, you can settle up and take a shoving pole and smack them and bust the ice off them. My decoys are running two to four hundred dollars apiece now, my working decoys, and I ain't going to smack those with no shoving pole. They just won't stand it. I like using my own working decoys.

Sullivan: Do you still hunt over them? Over your own?

Terry: I've got a hundred and seventy right there, you want to get a picture of those sometime, and that's the one's I hunt over. I love shooting over the real thing, I like how the... to watch the reaction of the birds when they land. I usually don't make rigs of decoys for people, they're quite expensive, but I've got a good following that will come in to buy a pair every year, maybe twice a year, and after five or six years they have a nice rig of handmade hollow working decoys, and they hunt with them a few times, or they put them away, for speculating.

Barbery: What's your favorite thing to carve these days, what kind of birds?

Terry: Probably hooded merganser, the "hairy head," we call them. I love making them, I'm fascinated by them, I've got a place where I shoot a lot of them. I can put them out in the pond, you watch them land, see their reaction. They can put their head in a hundred different positions. God, it's unbelievable what they can do with that little bit of crest, hens, and the drakes. So I've got fourteen of them over there, I'm trying to make one of every head style, there on the right hand side over that filing cabinet...

Sullivan: Oh, ok. Yeah, yeah.

Barbery: I'll get a picture of those too.

Terry: And they're really fun to shoot and hunt, and they're a pretty little bird. And they sell great.

Sullivan: You get into some decorative painting; do you ever do any decorative carving?

Terry: I did, see, again, when I started off I thought you had to make this Ward Foundation stuff. I'd go up there to the show and my god, seeing the life size swans and turkeys, everything, with inserted feathers; I thought that's where the money was. But I figured out that my time is money. Your time is money, I mean you can't go to work all day long and not get paid for it. And the decorative stuff, you're doing a bird every month, every month and a half, with primaries inserted, basswood veneer and all that stuff, using your burning tools to burn every little feather, somebody gives you a thousand bucks for it. Again, back to that other guy that was making them, you know, a thousand dollars a duck, and making twelve a year, I'd rather make two hundred and get a couple hundred a piece. It's just my clientele, you're separating the rich folks from the poor folks. And the average

person comes in, they'll spend a couple hundred dollars. I've done all kinds of wood ducks and teal, and everything with every feather burned into them. But I don't do them anymore. Painting now I use all acrylics, ninety-nine percent acrylic, I will paint some oil painted birds in the summertime, I've got the propane heater here. I don't like using all the dryers and the oil paints in the wintertime where it's closed in, there's too much chance for fire, and for the fumes of it. So if I'm going to paint with oils, I save the birds up, and I paint a big oil bird, I'm doing about twenty buffleheads right now. I'm making them, and all of them are painted in the oil paints. But by the time I get them done, well, it might warm up this summer. I'm not even sure if it's going to warm up by July. After the winter we've had I'm not too thrilled about it. But I will paint oils in the summertime outside, let them dry.

Barbery: Oh, I just thought of another question. Have you worked with dogs, do you use dogs in your hunting?

Terry: No, I've always had red labs for like twenty-six years, three of them that overlapped each other, and I was a hunting guide for ten years, and the people would come and bring their dogs and you'd be eighteen degrees, and the water chill was probably down to twelve, and dogs would jump in the water, and coming back shivering and shaking and making ice and the guy would go... I'd say, "Isn't that cold on them?" "Oh, no, they like it!" And that lab's just shaking there, like that. And I thought, you know what? I ought to throw your ass overboard and see if you like it. And the oyster shells for labs here, we've got a lot of oyster rocks, and cutting their pads, they're jumping all through the decoys to get a place that's out of the wind. I mean, they're great dogs, they do a great job retrieving, I do a lot of field hunting with my buddies, they use labs, they're great, I think that's a place for them. I just don't... again, I'm not no expert on the labs, maybe it doesn't bother them. But when I see how cold it is... I've always had labs, and there was an old carver here named Corb Reed. J. Corbin Reed. He was probably in his eighties, and he came, I mean he was a good friend of mine. I'd be at his house, or he'd be at my house. He'd come shuffling in here, he was about eighty pounds soaking wet, he'd pull up, and he walked in one day, and I had an oil stove right here. And the last lab I had was asleep. I mean she was, her hair almost burst into flames, that's how close she got to that heater. He come walking in and the dog lifted his head up and looked at him and put his head back down. Old Corb stood there and he said.... So old Corb comes walking in and he goes, "Hey boy." He goes, "Does your dog hunt?" I thought, oh man, I'm going to be embarrassed now. I said, "No Mr. Reed." I said, "She doesn't like loud noises, doesn't like the cold, and doesn't like water."

Sullivan: Bad combination for a hunting dog.

Terry: He put his hand and he rubbed that chin, he went, "Eh. Smart dog." Best answer I could hear.

Barbery: Cute.

Sullivan: Nice.

Terry: "Smart dog." He came, sat in the rocking chair, and the dog never got up. So, maybe what I'm saying about labs isn't too far off because boy she loved it in

here. I had a couch there, she'd come in here and jump on that couch and she'd snore for eight hours a day. Go to bed at night and sleep eight more.

Sullivan: Nice life.

Barbery: Nice.

Sullivan: Now Corb was a good carver, did you carve with him much?

Terry: Corb was something else, he was a character. Yeah, he was a... I carved with him, and it'd be just better to leave it at that.

Sullivan: Haha ok.

Terry: He was a character. He was something else. I sanded a lot of ducks for him with a drum sander. He didn't have a sander, and he had a lot of secrets he that wouldn't pass on to anybody, including me. But he wouldn't let you watch him paint, but he was something else. He taught me a lot about working decoys, about cork, he had a lot of cork birds, about how to seal them, and the bottom board to use, and dowel the heads. I've shot over rigs of Corb Reed decoys, he was a great guy.

Sullivan: Now was he the one who made the hollowed out goose decoys for Tom Reed?

Terry: No, no. Ira Hudson made them.

Sullivan: Oh, ok.

Terry: I think Ira made them, I think Miles made some. But old man Tom Reed's the one that had them.

Sullivan: Ok. Do you have any outlaw gunning stories that you can share with us?

Barbery: On camera. Perhaps off camera.

Sullivan: Put it another way, are there any stories that may or may not be yours? They may be other people's that you can share. They may be tricks or stories that you've heard.

Terry: Good God. I've been hunting all my life, I mean I went out with a guy, I was probably eighteen or so, and during our hunting that one day we came up on five duck traps. Now this was just, this was probably '69 or '70. The Chincoteaguers were still trapping ducks. Some people said, somebody said, "Oh, there was no way they were trapping ducks that late, in the sixties and seventies." There was still a load of duck trapping. Now I'm not going to say who was doing it, but I know who it was. I came up on five duck traps in one day, I don't know how... Every day you went off, the biggest thing me and my brother Jim had was always using the excuse we ran out of gas to get out of school.... The law was getting bad in the late sixties, early seventies. Been checked numerous times, only paid a few fines, don't do real good with game wardens unless they're doing their job right. I feel, I'm a firm believe that if I've done something wrong I'll pay the price. But don't get in my face and eyes and shove a gun at me and act like, you know, some FBI agent, it's uncalled for. And too many of them like that. Had some bad experiences that way, and it worked out alright, but I mean nobody got shot, but you just don't have to act like that. People know... young carvers, and the hunters my age, they know who they were, we know the names, and I don't want to put it out to the families, they know who they were. When I guided, you take somebody out called a sport. When they booked their hunt, they're a sport. And they call you up and they say, "What do we need to hunt with?" I said, "Well you need a gun, you need your boots, and what you're going to eat. I provide everything else." And these sports are right out of L.L. Bean catalogue, most of them. And they

show up, and they've got a gun, they don't know how to load it, they've got their boots on, like what you've got, and I say, "What've you got on your feet?" "That's my boots, you said wear boots." I said, "Son, we're not going deer hunting." These little leather short boots, I said, "We're going in the water, in the mud." They wouldn't even have boots, rubber boots. Take them out, I had... I took a party of three people out one day, and I was on the point of marsh, behind it was a gut with a lot of mud in it, I said, "If you shoot something, don't go get it. I'll retrieve everything. Do not go get it." Well they shot some birds, they flew over the point, fell over the gut, on the other side, I went to retrieve some of the other birds, came back, one of them was on the point of the marsh, he's yelling, "Get my buddy, get my buddy!" I pulled the boat over, and he had tried to walk across that little gut. It was that much water, and four feet of mud. He did just what I told him not. These guys now, they're rocket scientists, they've got master's degrees, they're city sports. They've got more money than god. And they don't know how to use it. So he walks across this gut, gets halfway. He's up to his waist. And he's screaming at me. By then I'd parked the boat and walked up, I looked at him, and he's screaming at me to help him. I said, "Son, what do you want me to do?" It's like quicksand. "You got to get me, you got to..." I said, "Didn't I tell you..." Well I started giving him hell for going in the mud. He's sinking, and I'm yelling at him. Needless to say, I didn't get a tip that day either. So he says, "Well what are you going to do?" I said, "Hold on, just quit shaking and moving." I walked all over the marsh and found these old boards and poles and laid them out in the mud, like a platform, and walked out, pulled him out of his boots, then he wanted me to take him home to get washed up, dried out, buy new boots, and go back out hunting again. I refused, because he wouldn't listen to me in the first place. Again, no tip that day. Another day I took three guys out. One of them had one arm. I don't know if he got it shot off in Vietnam or what, but he had one arm. He had a twenty gauge over and under, and he could break that gun down with his right hand, flip her down, he had a plastic, he didn't have a... he had a hook, he had a hook here. So it was like a plastic piece, and he'd throw that twenty gauge over and break her down and shoot the shells out, reach in his pocket and throw two more in. Snap her up, lay her across his arm, and shoot like any of them. I mean he was something else. And just as fast as he could do it. Man he'd pop them, flip her, shoot the shells out, cross his arm, two more, and ready to go. So we hunt all day long, and that afternoon I'm picking some decoys up, and what's he do? Now I said, "I'll get the decoys you just sit there in the boat and let me get them." Because most times they break the heads off them. They want to grab me their duck, and start wrapping the string around it, and they drop it, and they break the head off it. So I said, "Leave my ducks alone, I'll do it." Well he gets up and decides to help me do it, the guy with one arm. So he gets up and slips. Headfirst, he goes overboard. Five foot of water. Four and a half, five foot. He falls overboard. He's hollering, his two buddies are hollering, I'm trying to calm everybody down, he needs to get something with his arm to get a hold of. I've got a shoving pole in the boat. So his buddy grabs his shotgun and shoves it barrel first into his face. Now here's a guy with one arm overboard in the cold winter holding a double barreled shotgun in his face. I don't know if it's

loaded, he doesn't know if it's loaded, and they're pulling each other with a shotgun in his face. I pushed the guy back, grabbed the gun, the guy with one arm sinks, it wasn't a real good day.

Sullivan: I guess not.

Terry: Needless to say, I got the gun down, got the other guy away, and had to get the one armed man back in the boat. Didn't get a tip that day either. I do a lot of hollering when things don't go right. So being a guide, hunting, I can tell you stories of killing fifty ducks a day, seventy-five, a hundred. Some people wouldn't believe me, the game wardens might. So I'm not even going to tell you those kinds of stories, some wouldn't believe them, the wrong people might believe them, people on the island know I'm the Duc-Man. They know I've killed a lot of ducks. There's three or four of us left, that's it. There's not many of us left that hunted like we did from the late sixties on all through the seventies and eighties. My lands, we killed some ducks. There were some people on here, and I'm not going to name their names, they know who they are, and they're some good old boys. But we killed a ton of ducks. Would I do it now? Because of the environmentalism and trying to help ducks out and all that, yep, sure would. If I could get away with it, I'd have to do it again. I'm honest too, I'll tell you the truth. I've always told my wife, she keeps saying when I comes home, "You're going to jail. You're going to jail, you're going to pay a big fine." I said, "Honey, I'll pay one big one. I'll pay one, but that's it. I won't pay two." That'll break me. And that's just the way, and pretty much... You want another good story? I'll just say his first name was Mel. I won't say no last name.

Sullivan: This is a warden or somebody?

Terry: Uh, it could be, it could be a warden, or an ex-warden. Years ago, old Big Mel.

Sullivan: I know who you're talking about.

Terry: He, uh, my son was out hunting and he come in, I won't say it was at night time, it was late in the afternoon, and he come in and he's about twelve or thirteen years old. And he came in in the boat, and he had two buddies with him, two of my good buddies, and Big Mel pulled him over. He said, "I'm going to write you up for shooting after dark. Attempting to hunt after hours." So he started writing the citations, and he looked in the floor, he had a trash bag, and he said, "Ryan..." He said, "What's in that... looks like a load of beer cans in that bag." He goes, "Yes sir, I cleaned the blind out." I don't know who's been hunting my blind, and my son hadn't been drinking, he's way too young for that. So he said, "I cleaned the blind out when I came out. I don't know who's been gunning it. But they're not ours, I just cleaned the trash out." So Mel writes them all these fines for what they did, for what they didn't do, he comes into the Redeye, the hunting club we own, and my son tells me what happened. So I come home, I was right smart upset next day, called him up. I said, "What's going on, big Mel?" And he told me how he was attempting to hunt after hours. I said, "Well you checked him, was his gun in the case or out of the case?" He said, "It was in the case." I said, "Was it loaded or unloaded?" "Unloaded." I said, "Well how the hell did you, did you see him shoot?" "No." I said, "Well how the hell do you figure he was attempting to shoot after hours?" "Well he was in the blind at six o'clock that night." I said, "Yeah, we do that all the time. We observe where the birds are going that evening for to

be ready the next day a lot of times, it was a pretty night. Pretty evening.” So, I said, “Mel, I can go out there at midnight tonight, spend the night in that blind, my gun’s not loaded you can’t do a thing to me, nothing.” I said, “Well I’m going to tell you something right now, buddy. My lawyer is going to see your lawyer in court. And you’re going to feel like a fool when I’m done with your ass.” That’s just what I told him. He said, “Well let me see what I can do about this.” I said, “You do what you want.” I said, “We’ll see you in court.” Well, he called me back an hour later. He said, “I want you to know all charges have been dropped.” I said, “I thought you’d see it my way.” I went right to the Salisbury mall about a week later and there was this guy making up bumper stickers in the mall. For ten dollars he’d make anything you wanted. Printed out just like that. I told my wife, “I’ve got to take care of something.” She said, “What’re you going to do?” I said, “Watch this.” Told the man, I said, “I want you to make me a bumper sticker that big.” He said, “What do you want on it?” I said, “Would you put ‘Mel sucks?’” He says, “What?” I said, “Just do what I tell you, son. I’ll give you the money, just put ‘Mel sucks.’” He says, “Ok.” Gets it done, wife says, “What are you going to do with that?” “Don’t worry about that.” I come right home, I had an eighteen foot Chincoteague scow, had a fifteen foot Mercury. Center console. Peeled her back, right on that console. ‘Mel sucks.’ It stayed there for five solid years. The next game warden that checked me looked at that and after he was, he didn’t write no fine that day, but he checked me and looked at my console. He said, “Roe, don’t tell me. Is that who I think that is?” I said, “I didn’t say nothing. You just make your own mind up.” He said, “You’re riding around with that on your console in front of a Federal game warden.” I said, “You better believe it.” Well that went on, it stayed there, and I mean it was the best bumper sticker this guy could ever make in the world, it wouldn’t peel off or nothing, didn’t fade... I was up at the redeye one day, and old Cigar was coming up in his boat, in a new Mereck. And he walked down the dock and he stopped and he went back, he said, “Hey, boy, come here.” He says, “That sticker you got on your boat, ‘Mel sucks.’” He said, “Is that...” And he said his name. I said, “You better believe it.” I said, “You know what happened.” He said, “Son, I’m going to tell you something right now. You’re either the bravest man in the world or the dumbest son of a bitch that ever lived.” And he walked away. We were using that same boat for the pony roundups, when the Federal game warden was there, and my son wouldn’t drive my boat until we put a jacket over the console because he was scared he was going to get wrote up. And when I sold that boat, it still had that sticker on there. But yeah, I’ve had a lot of... I’ve had some good times with the game wardens.

Barbery: Those are some good stories. Are there any other things we’re missing that you want us to add?

Terry: Tons of stuff, I could write a book.

Barbery: Yeah? We’ll have to come back for a follow up. But, anything else for today?

Terry: Yeah, one more thing, I want to wish a happy birthday to Captain Cigar Daisey. He was 87 years old yesterday, he’s been an integral part of the decoy world. There was an article written on him a couple of years ago in *Decoy Magazine*, and it was entitled “Man of a Few Words.” And evidently, the guy that wrote that never knew Cigar Daisey. [laughter] If you could go back to some of your

predecessors at the Ward Foundation, and ask you tell some stories about old Captain Cig. And he was not of a few words. I could write a book on him. But happy birthday to him, and thank him for helping me, for steering me and guiding me, I attribute everything in my decoy business number one to my wife, for sticking with me, and Doug Jester, Bobby Umphlett, and Cigar Daisey. Yep, they were the ones who got me started and kept me going and taught me enough so that now I can teach somebody else.

Barbery: Well thank you for doing an interview with us.

[end]