

Interviewed: February 13, 1976

FISHERMAN: Mr. Harry Sameshima,
361 Regent Street,
Steveston, B. C.

- Started fishing in 1938.
- Had to evacuate in 1941.
- Was in Alberta for 10 years.
- Came back in 1950, has been fishing since.
- Was 17 when he started fishing in 1938.
- His father was a fisherman, he fished in Steveston.
- He was born in Steveston, has two brothers who are also fishermen.
- Many of his childhood friends became fishermen.
- He has had no serious accidents whilst fishing.
- Boats never used to have sounders, radar.
- His boat has 4 phones and 2 depth sounders.
- He had a boat that had 7 HP engine; his boat now has a 160 GM diesel.
- Boats used to be mainly made of wood, his present boat is made of fiberglass.
- Fiberglass boats need less upkeep than the wooden ones: "you don't have to paint them, you can just wash the dirt off".
- He was getting about 50¢ a piece for sockeye in 1938, he's now getting 80¢ a pound.
- The average weight of the salmon he caught in 1938 was about 6 lbs. on sockeye, dog salmon - 12 lbs., humpback - 5 lbs. average.
- He has gone shrimping; there used to be lots of shrimp.
- Lots of boats used to go to the island to fish shrimp.
- 15 years ago they used to get 35¢ - 40¢ per pound for shrimp.
- He used to work 4 days a week, 24 hours a day "without the union maybe we have to quit fishing".
- In 1953, a strike year, Mr. Sameshima built his house on Regent Street.
- He had lived in the houses provided by the company for about 10 years.
- The only payments they made were the light bills and the land tax.
- Before the war, if there was 100 fishermen only 3 or 4 of them owned their own houses.
- After the war, only half the fishermen lived in cannery houses.
- Now there are no fishermen renting cannery houses.
- About racial prejudice against the Japanese fishermen, he says; "There used to be but not anymore, it wasn't too bad though".

- When he came back from the Interior, he says "The cannery was very good to us when we came back from the Interior".
- Before the war his brothers owned a boat and he fished with them.
- They lost their boat during the war.
- About the price they bought their boat for and the price they got it for during the war "that's pretty hard to remember those things you know, it's about 40 years ago".
- "Those things are all forgotten now".
- Deckhands used to get 10% of the catch, with 3 years experience 15% of the catch.
- There hasn't been much change in the wharves and piers in Steveston.
- There used to be a lightship anchored at the mouth of the Fraser, it was a ship with lights on it.
- He has fished for B. C. Packers since 1950.
- He fishes on the west coast of Vancouver Island.
- He has not noticed any change in the quality of fish.
- There was a time when the average boat brought in about 3 or 4 thousand sockeyes a year, now the average is about 1500 to 2000 but the price has gone up substantially since 20 years ago.
- The overall catch is down "the fish are getting scarce every year"; "That's why they got limitations of licenses."