

Timed Summary

Interview with Bryan Wiseman

OH 889/2

Interviewer: Lianne Gould

Date:

Note: Key words shown in bold.

START TIME	SUMMARY
00.00	In the introduction there is an explanation that Bryan will tell a few fishing stories. As a child he had access to a boat and he used to fish after school and would not arrive home until 8.00 pm. He knew all the spots to fish. His uncle Sam Wiseman had a flat-tray cart in the 1910's that he used to sell fish from at the Thursday markets for the local farmers. He did this for years.
2.19	Bryan had to fight the sharks on a regular basis to be able to catch fish. On one occasion he lost 20 snapper to catch 11 and lost most of his hooks and sinkers to the sharks. The shark swam under his boat and bumped it, and when he tried to pull up the anchor the shark attacked and bit the boat leaving three teeth in it. In 1964 a shark bit a hole in the boat of Frank Stocker – he put a lead patch on it and went out again the next night.
7.48	Bryan describes another incident when Leon Jackson was fishing. A shark jumped up to take the fish and landed in his boat and put a two foot hole in it and the boat sank, other boats were nearby and saved him.
9.20	One night Bryan was fishing with Ross Turner and Vaughan Williams in bad weather. In spite of the sharks he caught 1100 pound of fish but Vaughan had his anchor line bitten off. He lost about 400 pounds of fish as well as a lot of gear. Sometimes sharks would jump over the boat chasing a fish.
13.15	When fishing with Shane a shark jumped out to grab a fish and the hook went straight through his thumb to the bone. Another time the shark jumped out the water and was eye to eye with Shane, he was only aged about 13 at the time.
16.17	Another night a Mako shark jumped out of the water and nearly knocked the outboard off the back of their 12-foot dinghy. The shark was swimming after the boat watching his movement and swimming under the fishing line. Bryan lay down in the boat to avoid going over the side.
18.58	Bryan says that he dreams of being chased by white pointer sharks. A white pointer sank Leon Jackson's boat. One night several boats went out and they lost sight of Des Wren and after several failed searches they called in a search plane from Adelaide to look for him. They were able to locate him and save him, but his boat had sunk.
26.40	Bryan describes the way that Pilot whales came up the Gulf every year in the 50's, several hundred at a time. They ate all the fish so there was no point taking out the boat; the snapper disappeared for several years and the big groups of sharks did not return. The snapper also altered their course and moved in increasing numbers to the Wallaroo side of the Gulf. People dumped rubbish to create artificial reefs. In two nights 30,000 pounds of snapper were caught, at an average weight of 11 pounds. He caught several weighing 28 pounds, one at 32 pounds and one at 40 pounds.

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32.14	One night he was out with Lianne's father but he was not a good navigator and motored three miles too far. Another time they got bogged and had to wait for the tide to go out to dig themselves out.
33.57	Bryan speaks about jealousy of some other fishermen and the "laws of the jungle" about appropriate behaviour when several boats were out together. Most abided by the rules. When fishing for whiting a white pointer came alongside and it was longer than the boat, which was 17 feet; it swam up to the rudder and started to circle. He motored off with the anchor still down and the shark followed him for one and a half miles. It was only a light aluminum boat.
39.30	At night a pilot whale came alongside the boat and blew air through its spout and it was very frightening. He went to Gibbon on his own but there was a whale there so he couldn't fish. He doesn't see whales nowadays but there are still a lot of sharks which follow the schools of snapper and will take the fish off the lines.
44.44	One day Bryan recalls that he went fishing earlier than usual and was in shallow water. A shark took some fish then swam into the side of the boat five times. There were many frightening incidents with sharks. Another time one knocked out the rudder for no reason as there were no fish there. A shark will tackle anything that moves and they have had a shark in the boat many times. Sometimes sharks will take the whole catch off the boat. They also attack at Pt Lincoln to get the tuna when they are poled. They are very unpredictable and will go into feeding frenzies.
55.57	One night Bryan describes that the boats got separated and the fishermen only had walkie talkies to keep in touch; they stayed out in the bad weather and got a big catch. The average catch would be about 1,000 pounds on a good day, at least once a week. The average over a week would be 300-400 pounds. The statistics from the Department of Fisheries for Stock and Jackson recorded 55,000 pounds each month from November to January. He now only fishes at weekends and catches about 16,000 pounds.
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