

Margie Abraham

Margie moved to Port Townsend when she was 3 years old. There've been a lot of changes since then. She met her life-long best friend Donna, in first grade, at the same time as her future husband Glenn who was in second grade. In 1962, the Abrahams, the Daubenbergers and the Scheyers ordered 3 Thunderbird sailboats which became the foundation of the nascent sailing and racing culture that Port Townsend is now known for. Sailing was a family passion. They cruised extensively and raced competitively, often inviting school friends of their daughter's to be crew. Active in the yacht club, the events were legendary. In this conversation, we sat down with Margie, her daughter Annie and granddaughter Glenna and caught a glimpse into a different time. I'm Diana Talley.

Diana:

So, in 1962, the Abraham's and the Daubenberger's, and who else? There was another family.

Margie:

Scheyer

Diana:

Scheyer. Got together, put your heads together and decided to bring a fleet to town. Is that correct?

Margie:

Yes.

Diana:

And what was it? It was the... All three of you commissioned, was it Seaborn, to build you the T-Birds, right? Three T-Birds-

Margie:

1962.

Ann:

It was Nottingham.

Diana:

Oh, Nottingham.

Margie:

Right, I forgot about Nottingham.

Diana:

And so, were you the first real sailboats in town, do you think?

Margie:

There were two others. One, the-

Margie Abraham

Ann:

The Takewon.

Margie:

The Takewon, which was a big clunky boat.

Ann:

It was a Tahiti Ketch.

Margie:

Oh.

Ann:

It belonged to Bob Jones and Robert Porter.

Diana:

And then there was another one too, you said. So there were five sailboats in town. Do you remember the other sailboat?

Margie:

I don't.

Diana:

So essentially, you guys started the sailing community?

Margie:

Yeah, Glenn and Jim started teaching kids.

Diana:

Oh really?

Margie:

And then they started with women.

Diana:

Teaching women?

Margie:

Teaching women. And-

Diana:

Margie Abraham

Did you take those classes? Tell me about you and Donna taking those classes together. What happened?

Margie:

We didn't do very well.

Diana:

Oh, you didn't? Because you were out learning by racing, right?

Margie:

Well, we'd raced big boats, but when it came to little boats, that was another problem.

Diana:

So when you didn't do well, what happened? You sailed back in and who was waiting for you on the dock?

Margie:

Our husbands.

Diana:

And what did they think of your performance?

Margie:

They were not pleased.

Diana:

Oh, and what did you do? You just laughed, didn't you?

Margie:

We just kept doing it. Yeah.

Diana:

I think that's great. You guys knew how to have fun.

Margie:

We did. We had a good time.

Diana:

So all of a sudden, women and children are joining the sailing community through the help of Glenn and Jim who taught classes. And did more sailboats come to town because of that, do you think?

Margie:

Margie Abraham

Oh, I'm sure. Yeah.

Diana:

How long did you have your T-Bird?

Margie:

1962. Got it in 1962.

Ann:

Let's see, I was in junior high. You probably had it until '71, maybe? '70, '71. Does that sound right?

Margie:

I think so.

Diana:

Did you guys decide to get a bigger boat?

Margie:

We always wanted a bigger boat, but whether we could afford it or not was the big question.

Diana:

You sold the T-Bird in '71, is that right?

Ann:

It's around there.

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

Is that when you got Taku?

Margie:

Yes, it is.

Diana:

Oh, I happen to know that boat.

Margie:

You do.

Diana:

Margie Abraham

Yeah. That's pretty great. So I know a little history about it because I ended up owning it also. But she came from San Francisco. She was a racing... Let's see, she was a sloop, as I recall, down there. Is that right? And when you got her, it was a yawl?

Ann:

When we got her, she was actually a sloop and we didn't know.

Diana:

Oh, I see, I see.

Ann:

But how did we get that mizzenmast, Mom, for Taku? I think you got a phone call.

Diana:

Someone changed the rig, as I understood it, to make it more competitive because, for her time, she was a fast boat.

Ann:

I think somebody called and said there was a mizzenmast that belonged to the boat, right, in storage?

Margie:

Oh yes.

Ann:

Do you remember that?

Margie:

I do now.

Ann:

I don't remember how that happened, but you probably do.

Diana:

So you got Taku, which was a 36-foot Bill Garden yawl that then you had more room on board to take your family cruising. Is that right?

Margie:

I think so, yes.

Diana:

As well as racing. I know you were racing it too, weren't you?

Margie Abraham

Margie:

We were, yes. We had Ann and Glenn were the racing crew.

Diana:

Oh.

Ann:

And you and Susan would go.

Diana:

So you were the Decorettes, right? That's what I call them.

Margie:

Decorettes, yeah.

Ann:

Oh, they raced.

Diana:

Oh, I'm sure. Was it mostly locally racing?

Ann:

Yeah. Susan, under much protest, but she did go because there was ice cream at the end.

Diana:

And so, was it like regular races like they have now where they call them, I think they call them the beer can challenge on Wednesday nights. Was it stuff like that?

Ann:

Yeah, it was only on Friday at that point. Friday and some longer ones like to Ludlow, Family Cruises, Mystery Bay, Clam Bakes, that kind of thing.

Diana:

Oh, Clam Bakes. That sounds like fun.

Margie:

And Port Ludlow.

Ann:

Long cruises every summer. Two weeks of hell on the boat in Canada.

Diana:

Margie Abraham

Two weeks of hell on the boat in Canada.

Ann:

No, it wasn't.

Diana:

Family cruising. But you also took it around Vancouver Island, didn't you?

Margie:

Yes.

Diana:

You circumnavigated Vancouver Island.

Margie:

That was a good trip.

Diana:

I'll bet.

Margie:

600 miles.

Diana:

Did you go in tandem with anyone else or was it just you?

Margie:

Daubenberger's.

Diana:

They came also? You guys were good pairings. The two families. And so, you had two daughters, Annie and Susan, and Annie took to sailing.

Margie:

Yes.

Diana:

Still is a sailor.

Margie:

A good sailor. I had to say that. You're here listening.

Margie Abraham

Ann:

I know, Mom. It's okay.

Margie:

Okay.

Diana:

I think that's pretty grand. I think raising children on the water and exposing them to sailing or racing or even beachcombing is just so instructional to their development. And I always think it's pretty special when children grow up to embrace that and continue. Do you know what happened to Caveat when you sold her? Did she leave town or did she stay in town?

Margie:

She stayed in town.

Ann:

Do you remember who we sold her to?

Margie:

No. Who?

Ann:

Campbell's.

Margie:

Oh, Jim Campbell.

Diana:

And he kept it for a while and was part of the racing, because it's a racing boat, right?

Margie:

Yes, it is. We had that for quite a while.

Ann:

And then I know who it went to after that.

Diana:

Where did it go after Campbell's, Annie?

Ann:

Janet Hoffman.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

Janet Hoffman.

Ann:

She's the one that lived on it?

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

Wow. Someone lived on it.

Ann:

And I'm not sure after that.

Diana:

And then somewhere along the line, it got donated to the Maritime Center. Is that right?

Margie:

Joe Daubenberger. Wasn't that Joe?

Ann:

No. I believe the people lived in maybe Anacortes or up that way.

Margie:

Really?

Ann:

No. It had been renamed like Island Passage or something.

Margie:

Oh, yes.

Ann:

Donated back to the sailing program at the Maritime Center.

Diana:

In good shape. Was she donated in good shape, do you know?

Ann:

I think so.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

I kind of remember when she came to town.

Ann:

She'd been cruising, primarily cruising, an older couple.

Diana:

And they used it for their sailing program, I guess, for a while. And then-

Ann:

They never got that far.

Diana:

Oh, they never got that far.

Ann:

At the time we had gotten Scheyer's Thunderbird, so theirs was 241. Daubenberger's was 242, and we were 243.

Margie:

Oh, nice.

Ann:

And so, Doug and I had gotten 241 back, bought it from people in Bainbridge, actually. And he was working on that. And somehow he and Piper and Joe Daubie were able to swap Scheyer's Boat for Caveat, and we got Caveat back.

Margie:

Yeah, they went to quite a bit of trouble to do that for us.

Ann:

Yeah. And they did that at a memorial that we had or some kind of honorarium for... Ed was still alive. Ed Barcott was still alive, I think. And Jim Daubie. And they talked about it. And then at the end, they presented us back with Caveat, cried and cried and cried.

Diana:

Something about getting your old family member back.

Ann:

Yeah.

Diana:

Margie Abraham

Yeah. And so, now Annie has it and she's restoring it.

Ann:

Trying.

Diana:

Yeah, that's a good story. So you took your family out on the boat as often as you could, right?

Margie:

Right.

Diana:

Because you loved it, right? It's a great lifestyle.

Margie:

It is.

Diana:

I was thinking, I remember, recently, well, 20 years ago now. Gosh, that's all relative. Reading that, didn't you set up a scholarship through the Yacht Club for a high school kid?

Margie:

We did our own.

Diana:

It wasn't through the Yacht Club?

Ann:

No.

Diana:

I think that's pretty great. And it was for a Sailor Boy, wasn't it?

Ann:

Yes. It was ,, for students graduating from Port Townsend with a preference to those who were sailing.

Diana:

Yeah.

Margie:

What was wonderful was when a young woman stepped in the bow of the boat and it started going down. We just watched it go down until she was...

Margie Abraham

Diana:

Oh, in one of those little boats you were sailing, right?

Margie:

Uh-huh.

Diana:

She didn't understand buoyancy and foot pounds, I think they called it.

Margie:

No. And there was nothing we could do except just watch it sink.

Diana:

And that was when you and Donna were still taking lessons, perhaps? Isn't that right?

Margie:

Yeah. Our husbands were really proud.

Diana:

There was something else that you're really known for and you're known for a lot of things, Margie, but arguably, I think you're also known for having the best set of legs in town.

Margie:

Is that right?

Diana:

Yeah. And because you were a dancer. For how long? How long did you dance?

Margie:

Oh, a long time.

Diana:

Here with the dance...

Margie:

Dance studio. Joan O'Meara's dance studio.

Diana:

Yeah. You and Donna and Susan and Jan Boutilier and all kinds of people.

Margie:

Right.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

I think I saw you in your last performance, were you Mame? Was that it?

Margie:

Mame? Yeah. That could be.

Diana:

Up at the high school.

Margie:

You have a better memory than I do.

Diana:

And another thing I remember hearing you and Donna doing is, didn't you plant trees all over town?

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

On Water Street.

Margie:

Oh, and the fort and all over-

Ann:

Trees for Port Townsend.

Diana:

Trees for Port Townsend.

Margie:

About 500 trees.

Diana:

500 trees. There's some up at the library too, I think, aren't there? Yeah.

Margie:

Some of them up there, and yeah.

Ann:

All along Lawrence Street.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

All along Lawrence.

Ann:

Lawrence and Water.

Diana:

Lawrence and Water Street. How long ago was that? Was that like 30, 40 years ago? Something like that, maybe?

Ann:

It was in the seventies. I was in high school.

Diana:

Oh, wow. You just took it upon yourself.

Glenna:

Well, you went to the Chamber of Commerce, right, Gram? Didn't you ask them to plant trees? And what did they tell you?

Margie:

Chamber of Commerce and they said it wasn't possible.

Diana:

Oh.

Margie:

And so, we said, "Okay, we'll do it ourselves." So we did.

Diana:

That's the way to get things done, isn't it?

Margie:

Yeah.

Glenna:

And how did you raise the money for the trees, Gram?

Margie:

Can you remember?

Ann:

Margie Abraham

Well, you had house tours.

Margie:

Oh yes.

Ann:

And quilts.

Margie:

We had quilts that we...

Ann:

Raffled.

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

Did you make the quilts?

Margie:

So we all did.

Ann:

Everybody did a square.

Diana:

Oh yeah. I see.

Margie:

We had our mothers did a square and our friends did a square. And so...

Diana:

Then you would raffle off the quilts to raise money to buy trees. 500 trees.

Ann:

And then the house tours.

Margie:

Yes. Oh, we did house tours. And this house was the...

Ann:

Margie Abraham

The tea house.

Margie:

The tea house.

Diana:

Charge people to come in.

Margie:

And they were on the tour.

Diana:

Very nice.

Margie:

And so...

Diana:

Well, and I remember seeing plaques on some of the trees in memorial for special people too.

Margie:

And that's how we raised some money.

Diana:

And you did that just because you knew it would help the community.

Margie:

Yeah, it just felt good to be doing something.

Diana:

Yeah. I like that. What else did you do that you're proud of?

Margie:

That I'm proud of?

Diana:

Yeah. You have a lot to be proud of.

Margie:

I'll think about that.

Diana:

Margie Abraham

I always thought of you as a community builder, someone who accepted everybody and put your arms around them, metaphorically, and brought them into our community. The sailing community. You did that to Rick and I. I'll never forget it.

Margie:

Oh. It was just a good way to meet people and just get acquainted.

Diana:

Boats are good for that, aren't they?

Margie:

They are, yeah.

Diana:

Do you miss having a boat?

Margie:

Very much.

Diana:

Yeah. You miss going out on the water?

Margie:

Yeah.

Ann:

When we relaunched Caveat, Mom came down and was in the boat a little bit. Remember that?

Margie:

I came down?

Ann:

You came down. And during Wooden Boat that year, we went out and did the sail by and looked at everybody. Remember doing that?

Diana:

Oh, fun.

Margie:

Oh, yes. Yeah.

Diana:

Margie Abraham

And I remember when Rick and I relaunched Taku, we only spent seven years getting her rebuilt.

Margie:

Oh God.

Diana:

I know. Seven years of saying, no, thank you. I can't attend your dinner party. And then when it was time to relaunch her, you were the only person we invited and you did the honors and it was really special.

Margie:

I got to send them off.

Diana:

A little appropriate.

Margie:

That was good of you.

Diana:

Well, it was good of you. Yeah. You were a real inspiration to us. You still are.

Ann:

I think what the sailing thing, Mom. I think it started with the three T-Birds, and then other people came in with their boats, like Thomas's and Earl's and...

Margie:

Oh, that's right.

Ann:

It kind of pulled people in as it went, right?

Diana:

You mean starting with the T-Birds, everyone saw how much fun it was and then they got their own boats and that built the sailing community.

Ann:

Yes. So people crewed and then they would go out and decide to buy their own boat. Usually something bigger and nicer than a T-Bird for cruising too, because pretty much everybody had families.

Diana:

There's not much room on a T-Bird for a family.

Margie Abraham

Ann:

No. Although we cruised on it as a family of four for way too many years.

Glenna:

I can't believe the Daubenberger's put six people on one of those.

Ann:

Yes. With four kids. But it seemed like the T-Bird started a lot of that.

Margie:

More people interested and women could-

Diana:

Well, they're easy to handle, so women can handle them easier than, say, a bigger boat that's more complicated. It's a very simple boat. And then look what's happened now, isn't Port Townsend anecdotally the center of the universe for Thunderbird owners? I mean, there's more Thunderbirds lining our docks than anywhere else in the world.

Margie:

Now that's amazing.

Diana:

Yeah. So see what you started?

Margie:

It's good.

Diana:

Yeah. Were you ever commodore of the yacht club?

Margie:

No.

Ann:

Dad was.

Margie:

Yeah, Glenn was.

Diana:

That's right. He was in 1969.

Margie Abraham

Margie:

They didn't have women at that time.

Diana:

Well, their loss.

Margie:

Indeed.

Diana:

But things have changed now. Yeah. And you helped build that too, so that's pretty grand. Anything else?

Ann:

What was the highlight of your sailing career, Mom?

Margie:

Sailing around the Vancouver Island.

Diana:

That was the highlight. Yeah.

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

600 miles. That's a long trip.

Margie:

It is.

Diana:

So when you went around, did you poke into all the inlets on the outside?

Margie:

Quite a few. We'd go in at night and then the Japanese were there and we'd go in with them. Yeah. And I remember Donna Daubenberger wanted to see what they ate and figuring that they would eat something quite different. And of course, it wasn't.

Diana:

So when you say the Japanese were there, that was, you mean on boats or they were living on the outside of the coast?

Margie Abraham

Margie:

They were on boats.

Ann:

Were they fishing?

Margie:

Oh, they must've been fishing. Yeah.

Diana:

But they would pop into these inlets also. And so, you came in and checked out their cuisine.

Ann:

Were they eating hamburgers?

Margie:

I think they were. And that really disappointed her.

Diana:

I remember you guys always went crabbing too. I remember you always had crab on board.

Ann:

And cocktails, crab and cocktails, right? What else do you need?

Margie:

Nothing wrong with that.

Diana:

Yeah, that's right.

Margie:

Yeah, that was good.

Diana:

And then so after you went around the island, how old were you, Annie, when that happened?

Ann:

We weren't with them. That was a parent cruise.

Diana:

Oh, cool.

Margie Abraham

Ann:

I was in college.

Diana:

Oh, you ditched the kids?

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

That's why it was your favorite trip.

Ann:

Yeah. Probably.

Margie:

It was good.

Ann:

We had been up the outside as a family in a horrible storm.

Margie:

Oh my. Yes. They had helicopters lifting the people off the boats because they were sinking and it was a really awful storm.

Diana:

And you didn't have to be saved. And you still went out, right? You still kept going sailing even having gone through that. Because those things happen. Well, it was a good boat then, yes?

Margie:

Yes, it was.

Diana:

Yeah. Yeah. It can get pretty gnarly out there off the west coast, especially up in the higher latitudes.

Margie:

It really was. And we lost the deal that raised the sails.

Ann:

The winch handle.

Margie:

Margie Abraham

The boat handle overboard.

Diana:

Winch handle. Oh, dear.

Margie:

That was not good.

Diana:

No. Then you have to revert to brute force.

Margie:

Yes.

Diana:

And were you out there on that trip? Just you and Glenn? Oh, and the kids. Were the Daubenberger's in their boat also with you?

Margie:

Mm-hmm.

Diana:

Oh, I see.

Ann:

Who else? Who else went?

Margie:

Scheyer's. Scheyer's had a Thunderbird and-

Ann:

No. On that trip, they had that big, beautiful yawl, I can't remember the name of it. Thomas's. Earl's?

Margie:

Yeah.

Ann:

Alex and Bill...

Diana:

So how did you guys find time to go cruising? I mean, people have to work.

Margie Abraham

Margie:

Set aside a month.

Diana:

A month. Oh, that's nice. Just cross it off on the calendar.

Margie:

It was the only way you could get in enough sailing time. Yeah.

Diana:

How long did you have Taku? Do you remember? It was 20-some years, wasn't it?

Margie:

A long time.

Diana:

So you got it in '71 and we bought it in '94. So at least 20-some years. Yeah.

Margie:

Yeah. Unreal.

Diana:

Yeah. It's a good amount of time and a lot of fun on it too.

Margie:

Oh yeah, we did.

Ann:

Can you think of anything else, Mom?

Margie:

Can you?

Ann:

Yeah. You used to have theme night parties where you would dress certain ways and do certain things.

Margie:

Oh, dress-up night.

Ann:

Yeah, on the boats.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

On the boats?

Margie:

On the boat.

Diana:

Do you remember doing that?

Margie:

I do.

Diana:

Was that always in the harbor or was that when you're out cruising?

Ann:

Oh, it was cruising. It was always cruising.

Diana:

You'd show up in Port Ludlow and you had theme nights.

Ann:

So do you remember about the black tie thing?

Margie:

Oh, yes. They said they had a black tie night and Jim Daubenberger arrived with just the black tie and no shirt. Seemed pretty special.

Diana:

What else did your mother do?

Ann:

How about when we went to the island with Kaiser? They had the island up in San Juans. What did we do? We always dressed up in a fancy outfit. Mom would put on a blonde wig.

Margie:

Oh, yeah. We planned to have a costume. So some of them were pretty good.

Ann:

Yeah.

Margie:

Margie Abraham

I liked the gray wig.

Ann:

Gray wig. Okay.

Margie:

It was better.

Ann:

We had lots of celebrations while we were out cruising too. Anniversaries and birthdays and things.

Diana

That would be a good excuse to get out on the water was let's go celebrate someone's birthday.

Ann

How about when we pulled into customs, Mom? What did they do?

Margie:

Oh, they went all the way through and up in the bow of the boat where they hid things.

Ann:

Well, we didn't hide things.

Margie:

Donna did and she got caught.

Ann:

What did Donna hide?

Diana:

Liquor.

Margie:

Yeah.

Ann:

What did they say when they were going through her stuff? No, they'd open the drawers and they'd say everything was always dirty clothes.

Diana:

That's one way to hide contraband. And that was going into Canada or coming home?

Ann:

Margie Abraham

It was going in.

Diana:

Yeah. So you would go up north plenty often.

Margie:

Every year.

Diana:

Every year. Wow. Oh, gosh.

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

What a life. Sheesh. That's the way to cruise. Own a boat and take a month off.

Ann:

It was not horrible.

Diana:

It was not horrible. Nice.

Ann:

It was horrible for my sister, but not for me.

Diana:

Susan never took to it, eh?

Margie:

No. She'd rather have a cello.

Ann:

Or a horse.

Diana:

Or a horse.

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

Margie Abraham

Anything else, Annie?

Ann:

How many years did Dad do the junior sailing program, do you think?

Margie:

Oh, he and Jim did it. Oh, I could look it up.

Glenna:

Into the eighties, I think, at least.

Diana:

Into the eighties. And so, Jim and Glenn helped train all these children from Port Townsend. Many of them went on to either buy their own boats or work in the business.

Margie:

Or sail around the world.

Diana:

There you go. Yeah.

Margie:

Yeah. Which was kind of amazing.

Ann:

And you had to be 12. I remember I couldn't wait until I was 12, so I could do that.

Diana:

Did your dad teach you how to sail in one of those programs, Annie?

Ann:

Yes.

Diana

How was that?

It was not pleasant.

Diana:

Oh, I bet. He was harder on you than everyone else?

Ann:

Margie Abraham

That's what Ed Barcott said. Yeah. Said that he was harder on Susan and I than anybody else. They must have started in at least the mid-sixties because I couldn't have taken lessons until '69.

Diana:

So I don't remember who this was, but I remember someone telling me, and I thought it was Glenn who taught them how to sail as a young girl, probably 12, in one of those small boats. And they really didn't want to learn that it was something their parents were making them do. And then they met with Glenn, and Glenn would say, "They're after us", and go, "Who's after us?" "They're after us. We have to get in the boats and sail away." And so, all of a sudden it was fun instead of a chore. And it completely changed their appreciation of learning to sail. Is there anything else you can think of, Annie?

Ann:

Do you remember about the yacht club stuff and going over and doing the clam feeds and stuff like that? Going to Mystery Bay and all of those things, taking all the boats over?

Diana:

Where would you get the clams for these clam bakes, Margie? Did you dig them over there?

Margie:

Yeah. They had a space on the island.

Diana:

That you could go dig clams? So you could all go raft up maybe, anchor out, and then row ashore, dig your clams.

Ann:

Remember going to Mystery Bay and doing all those things?

Margie:

Yes.

Diana:

Would you spend the night over there? Probably, huh?

Ann:

And then they had stag cruises.

Diana:

Stag cruises. What are those?

Ann:

Do you remember Dad going on stag cruises? So tell them what those are like.

Margie Abraham

Margie:

Just men.

Diana:

Left the wife and children at home.

Ann:

They'd usually go to Ludlow and I think it was a big overindulgence of whatever. Lots of testosterone...

Diana:

It was a good thing they left the family at home, A?

Ann:

They would schedule those on the calendar. They would schedule the family things on the calendar. Opening day was always a big deal.

Diana:

And this was through the yacht club.

Ann:

Talk about opening day. What did we do?

Margie:

We did a sail by.

Diana:

Strafing downtown.

Ann:

By the Commodore. And we always had-

Diana:

Did you have scrambled eggs?

Ann:

We always had matching stuff. Matching uniforms.

Margie:

Yeah. Susan didn't care for it. But you liked it.

Ann:

Yes.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

So back then when you had opening day, because I watched the parade here sometimes now. Was it pretty well-attended back then?

Ann:

Oh yeah.

Diana:

A lot more boats were in attendance for opening day, weren't they?

Ann:

The parade was a big deal and every boat had usually matching shirts or whatever with maybe the boat name on them, or at least all the same color. The last one I remember for Taku was we were all in yellow. Oh, talk about the Easter egg hunt. That's probably something they maybe don't know about.

Diana:

The Easter egg hunt.

Ann:

On the water.

Diana:

On the water.

Margie:

On the water. Where they drop Easter eggs.

Diana:

Do they float?

Margie:

Oh yes.

Ann:

And it was through the yacht club. Sponsored by the yacht club.

Diana:

Well, that sounds like fun too.

Ann:

A plane would come over and fly low over the bay and they would drop all these floats with numbers on them. And then depending on the number, they had prizes and some were like a grand prize thing. And

Margie Abraham

some were just a bag of, it's like peanuts and a candy bar and an apple or something that you turned in. And then they had different prizes. So that was pretty fun. Everybody would go out with their nets.

Diana:

And who would be the pilot, do you suppose? Was it someone in the yacht club?

Ann:

It was usually Scotty McFarland. Was he in the yacht club, Mom?

Margie:

Mm-hmm.

Ann:

Okay. But that was pretty fun. It was a big thing to look forward to. So all the guys that had boats would load up their boats with kids and go out and they would just net eggs until they had enough to take the kids in. I won one year.

Margie:

Yeah. Power boats were pretty hard to [beat]...

Ann:

Well, it didn't really matter because they were random numbers that you picked out and there were plenty of floats. But the power boats were... I remember being in the T-Bird to do that.

Diana:

Closer to the water though.

Ann:

Yeah.

Diana:

I just keep coming back to the fact that you were brave enough to take two young girls out on the boat and expose them to the hardships and joys of sailing.

Ann:

Brave was not the word my grandmothers used.

Margie:

The grandmothers were really upset, I'm sure.

Diana:

And they turned out okay.

Margie Abraham

Margie:

Okay. Yeah, I remember them sliding down after dark in white pants.

Ann:

Oh yes. That was Zee.

Margie:

That didn't work.

Ann:

Where were you?

Margie:

Port Ludlow.

Ann:

Yeah. Why was that, Mom?

Diana:

Well, that's the other cool thing about being in Port Townsend is within a really short distance there's lots of places you can pull into. Port Ludlow, Mystery Bay, Mats Mats. Did you ever raft up in Mats Mats? It's a great place to go. Yeah, I suppose it's changed, and Port Lud low's changed. My gosh. The anchorages there were stunning.

Ann:

We used to go behind the island...

Diana:

Yeah, that was my favorite anchorage in Port Townsend. I mean in Puget Sound.

Ann:

Now it's all covered in houses.

Diana:

It's all right. We had our time, didn't we?

Margie:

We did.

Ann:

Where was your favorite place to go on the boat?

Margie Abraham

Margie:

On the boat? Probably Pirates Cove.

Diana:

Where's Pirates Cove?

Ann:

It's in Canada. I can't remember what island it's on. We went aground there.

Margie:

We had to get out in a rowboat and pull us off.

Ann:

Dad did. So why did you like Pirates Cove?

Margie:

Well, because it was kind of difficult to get in there and get out of there.

Ann:

Why do we call it Pirates Cove? Do you remember?

Margie:

Because of the pirates.

Ann:

Well, okay. It had a skull and crossbones painted up on the rocks on the side of the ...

Diana:

Oh, so this was just your own name for this cove?

Ann:

No, I think it was really named that.

Diana:

I'll be darned. I'm looking it up when I get home.

Ann:

And what did the kids do in Pirates Cove?

Margie:

They went ashore.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

Yeah. Camped on shore and left the adults alone on the boat.

Margie:

And so, everybody was turned into bed and we had to get...

Ann:

So we were in Pirates Cove and all the kids would go ashore and you guys would...

Margie:

And we'd just all turn in and then we'd hear, "Mom".

Diana:

And you're anchored out, right?

Margie:

"Dad".

Diana:

Would you go ashore and see what's up or just tell them to deal with it?

Margie:

We went ashore. Yeah.

Diana:

Oh, I see. And you were always anchored out, right? In these coves?

Margie:

Yeah. Pretty much. Yeah.

Diana:

You got a lifetime of memories, Margie.

Margie:

Yes. And Pirates Cove was just so neat. And there was a big rock in the middle of the entrance that we had to avoid.

Diana:

But you went aground there once, right?

Margie:

Yes. We went aground in a lot of places. No, we tried to be good. We were pretty good.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

Speaking of which, how many times did you hit the buoy when you were at the helm out there? The red can off of Point Hudson.

Margie:

The red. Yeah. I think actually only one really hit it.

Diana:

Was that when you were racing? Cut it a little too sharp?

Margie:

Yeah, we had a women's night.

Diana:

Oh, perfect.

Margie:

Yeah.

Diana:

Didn't do any damage though, right?

Margie:

Nah.

Diana:

Women's night. That's great.

Ann:

Did you and Dad ever disagree on racing?

Margie:

Are you talking to me?

Ann:

Yes.

Margie:

Yes. You and Dad would argue.

Ann:

I was talking about you and Dad, not me and Dad.

Margie Abraham

Diana:

So did you and Glenn disagree about when you were out racing?

Margie:

Oh yes.

Diana:

Was he a risk-taker?

Margie:

Not really. I don't see him as that.

Ann:

He always told me, "You can't beat them if you're following them."

Margie:

And you and Glenn would have disagreements on what way to go and argue. And then you get off the boat in arm and arm...

Ann:

We did disagree a lot.

Diana:

So Annie, as a child growing up in a sailing family, what was your favorite part of it? Did it make you feel more closer to your parents?

Ann:

Well, I didn't have a choice.

Diana:

True. But you took to it. You took to it.

Ann:

I did. I liked the boat part. I loved going cruising. I loved being on the water. I loved the racing, but we did fight all the time.

Margie:

Oh.

Ann:

It was never a nice calm race ever. And Dad would put me on the helm. He always told me because I had a light touch on the helm. But I think it was because I was a girl and not as strong as everybody else. We

Margie Abraham

generally had a bunch of high school kids that were friends of mine and my sister's on the boat sailing with us.

Diana:

That's amazing.

Ann:

And Dad would just tell them.... We had one kid who sailed with us a long time actually on Taku, who would go out and hang under the bow sprit. Do you remember the Summers? They lived in town. They lived at Arcadia. Lance Summers was his name. He sailed with us a long time. But Dad and I disagreed a lot. At the time, it was just the way it was. We did it. Daubenberger's did it. Scheyer's did it. Thomas' did it. Earl's did it. We all did it. And you don't really appreciate it until you leave. And you don't have that. So yeah, it was great. I never fought going. I don't think ever, did I, Mom? But Susan, my sister, didn't really care for it.

Margie:

She'd rather have a cello.

Ann:

And a horse.

Margie:

And a horse.

Ann:

Crocheting to do.

Diana:

Well, it sounds pretty special.

Ann:

Leaving and coming back was an eye-opener.

Diana:

Oh, you left town thinking there was someplace better to go and then came home?

Ann:

Yeah, in Eastern Washington I had a boat, but it was on a lake. I was on Lake Pend Oreille and it's just not the same at all. So when I moved back, I brought my sailboat back and then sold it and ended up with Caveat finally.

Diana:

Full circle, Margie.

Margie Abraham

Margie:

We're pretty good.

Diana:

I want to ask you something really personal. Can you tell me how old you're going to be on your next birthday?

Margie:

98.

Ann:

You just had a birthday. You turned 98.

Margie:

98.

Diana:

So next birthday you're going to be 99, eh? Congratulations.

Margie:

Well, thank you. Yeah.

Diana:

Thank you for your time, Margie. Thank you for giving us your time.

Margie:

Oh, you're welcome. I wish I had more to volunteer.

Diana:

Oh, you've done plenty. And a long life of service to this community.

Margie:

Yep.

Diana:

Thank you. I'm really glad to know you. And thank you, Annie.

Ann:

Sure.

Margie Abraham

This recording was made in December 2023 in Port Townsend, WA for the Maritime Voices Podcast and the Jefferson County Historical Society.