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Date: Interview recorded in 2010 about events on Swans Island between 1960-1970

Description: Interview with Swans Islander Myron 'Sonny' Sprague about Clyde Torrey.

Interview with Myron 'Sonny' Sprague about Clyde Torrey, 1960-1970

Everybody knew Clyde. (Accordion music in background) Always had a cigar...drooling down his chin (Clyde talking) Lot of people kind of laughed at Clyde, in a way, he was an old hermit more or less and in winter time when it was cold, he'd live in the car. Clyde didn't have much but he was Clyde (Clyde talking) He use to play the accordion but he'd play and sing and the people we'd all go down. The time we'd call them 'hootenannies' over to Clyde's (accordion music).

I got to know him like when I started scalloping I went started and I couldn't catch nothing so I took a drag I had over and pulled in the door yard and said Clyde can you take a look at my scalloping gear. He said, "Oh sure, sure." And I remember him saying to me he looked at it and said you fool, you fool, you god damn fool (laugh) he said hydraulics boy hydraulics. (Clyde- "I'll, I'll fix it bye and bye. I'll fix it bye and bye.") Clyde always told ya what side of the toast to put the butter on. He use to have an ox and a horse he's been out here mowing hay on the back field and he spent a lot of time over there singing and what not ...country and western and swing music more or less. I remember one time when I went in the army someone said Sonny there's a sign up on the telephone pole. I think Clyde's got a sign up. Go look at it. It said hootenanny tonight in honor of Sonny Sprague going into the army. Clyde's my friend. (Accordion playing)

And the one thing I remember about Clyde is that one thirty at night there'd been a dance, calls comes in there's a fire at Clyde's house. Can you get the truck and they don't know where he is. Well we went over and the house was totally engulfed. Ha, god it was awful. We fought the fire and saved the cellar. About 3 o'clock, 4 o'clock in the morning Clyde showed up from someplace, we don't know where. And he's standing there, didn't have any hat on and I went over and I said "Clyde is there anything I can get ya?" And he pointed to his hat. Hat, hat like that. So here was Johnny Wheaton standing over there, standing on the side. I said, "Johnny, Clyde needs a hat." He took his hat off and he said, "Right here."

I went over and give it to Clyde and he put it on. And I said, "Clyde how that?" And he said 'perfic.' That was his answer. He was satisfied he had a hat. He'd lost his home, but he had a hat.

He suffered on the end of day and he was sick. He died. And they were bringing him home and he been away to the funeral parlor and all that they were bringing him home to be buried. I went to the ferry boat to meet the hearse. I'll never forget he always use to play the Blue Skirt Waltz and I never heard the Blue Skirt Waltz on the radio. Never heard it. So I went to Atlantic there weren't so many tree then. I could see the boat coming round the point and the Blue Skirt Waltz came playing on the radio. (Music in the background) and I'll never forget it. NEVER! Makes you think. (Accordion music) It was

good. He just was Clyde. He just was a character. Back then everybody made do with what they had. So everybody didn't turn out exactly the same but they came out being a character more or less, a little bit different. But just as good as could be. Just as good as could be. (Accordion and Clyde singing in the background)