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## Patrick Crowley, interviewed by Alan Comeau, Part 1

Patrick Crowley

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Pat Crowley Tape  
Interviewer - Alan Comeau

I: Alan Comeau  
P: Pat Crowley  
B: Background people

I: 21st, Tuesday, at 7:45, I'm at the Shuffle Inn with Pat Crowley and this interview is for the Islands and Bridges Project in Old Town and it's covering people who've lived on French Island and well, why don't we start with just the basics. Where do you live on the Island here?

P: On Front Street.

I: Front Street?

P: Yeah, right up the street from here, four houses up.

I: That must make it convenient...to be so close to work. Did you always live in that home?

P: Yes, French Island has always been where I live. I was born here in Old Town... at the time at the Home Private Hospital.

I: Where is that located?

P: On Seventh Street, I believe...

I: Yeah...

P: No, was it Seventh or Fifth?

I: My mom's talked about it, I think...

P: It was the Home Private Hospital which is now a rented apartment house... and from then on I've never left here. I've stayed right here. My wife and I are both were born and brought up... Bonnie St. Louis, and lived here. She has all her relations come from the Island. Paradis, Cote, and St. Louis. Mine are all Lavoies. My father was from Bangor, who was an Irishman, but he married my mother who was one of the big Lavoie families from this Island.

I: So that's why you have the Irish... the clover with the frog on the?

P: Yes, the French Frog and the Clover for the Irish which are

- both green in color. So that's why this dining room is both green and white to represent both the Irish and the French.
- I: Convenient, huh? [chuckle] And the Old Town Indians too. Why don't we just... maybe talk about just like family connections at first, like maybe your children... Names and everything... if you want to talk about they are married to. Just kind of record that and then maybe talk about the names of your parents.
- P: Who do you want to start with? The parents first?
- I: Okay, yeah.
- P: Okay, my mother was Corinne Lavoie, from the Lavoie/St.Peter family who are well known here on French Island. They have... every five years they have a reunion which involves 600-700 people at the reunion... which is an all weekend affair.
- I: Do they have it right here on the Island?
- P: Actually, it's too small here on French Island, so it's usually located at the St. Joseph Hall and it starts on a Friday night with a gathering... Saturday all day at Sewall Park and then a big banquet on Saturday night... which in the past three reunions which is... we got three for five. When it originated Gloria Thornton, myself and my wife were involved in the actual food production.
- I: Now, that's a big production.
- P: Gloria is also my cousin because her mother was a Lavoie and she was a Michaud which is... she's a sister to Albert Michaud.
- I: Al Michaud, now that's a name that was brought up today.
- P: Yeah, he's French all over.
- I: Does he sing?
- P: Yeah...
- I: Would he be the guy... I think he might be the guy we talked about today.
- P: Al's... his sons are Billy, I: Oh, okay. P: Chris...so anyhow, we have this big reunion. And, Saturday night the priest has a mass just for the Lavoie/St. Peter family... because there are so many ... 600-700 of us attended. Then we honor the old people at this banquet... that are still remaining... the original... Lavoie people that are left which there's just three people remaining.

I: You mean that are 100%.

P: Yeah, originated the family that we reunioneze.

I: So that is ...

P: That's on my side.

I: That's your side, now Bonnie's side... that was St. Louis.

P: That was St. Louis, and then her mother was a Paradis and her grandmother was a Cote... all from French Island. The Paradis are like Yvonne Paradis, and Gary and them. Her grandfather was Henry Paradis and Rose Paradis... then the St. Louis' was one big family which was Cyke St. Louis, (??), Jim St. Louis..

I: Would Dave be in there somewhere?

P: He's her cousin.

I: Okay.

P: Yeah, they are all cousins.

I: Okay, and your kids. I think it would be good to record that. Your children.

P: My children? All right. I have four of my own, and we have one which we raised since she was two days old. She goes by St. Louis because she was my wife's sister's daughter. Her and her mother came to live with us when she was two days old, and her mother died before she was two years old so we've had her ever since. Now she's 22. And then I have my four, Jeff... who's the oldest, he married a Frenchwoman from Lewiston that he met in college at Husson. Jacqueline who married a Lavoie, that's in the family. It's funny because her husband's grandfather and my grandfather were brothers.

I: Oh! [laughter]

P: So she goes back to the old Lavoie family on my mother's side.

I: Oh wow, so how's that work out? It's not like a cousin thing or anything like that?

P: Well-- it is but it's distant without any problem.

I: But.. it's like far removed. Yeah.

P: And then there's Larry, he married a girl from Garland. Her mother was a Lavoie.

I: [More laughter.] Different branch?

P: Yeah, but her grandmother was originally from Old Town. She owned a store here in Old Town... Lavoie's. And then Roger who married a Lord, but is also a relation to the Littlefield's who are also from Old Town.

I: Right.

P: So, the only one who married from outside the Old Town area was Jeff.

I: But he married a French girl.

P: A French... Bouchard from Madawaska.

I: Madawaska? Almost more French than most of the people around here. Now-a-days... they still speak..

P: Yeah, they are. They are all French-speaking people. Her mother was a Mavor from Madawaska.

I: Mavor, how do you spell that?

P: M-A-V-O-R.

I: That's not a name from around here, though, is it?

P: Well, her cousins lived around here, Ross. He went to Old Town High School. Ross Mavor... From Milford.

I: Oh, doesn't ring a bell with me. So, when you were growing up... now you've done that... I think it was good to record that. When you were growing up on the Island, you'd didn't live in the same house that you live in now, did you?

P: No. It was on

I: What part of the island?

P: It was on Heald Street, in my grandparents' old home. They let us live there, and they bought a home here on Union Street.

I: Your mother and dad's name were... again?

P: My mother was Corinne Lavoie and my father was James Crowley from Bangor.

I: Right, the Irishman! (Laugh)

P: He was a graduate from John Bapst and my mother was a graduate from Old Town High.

I: They lived down on Hill Street... Heald Street.

P: Heald.

I: Heald, Heald Street. B: Some guy just left without paying..

P: Just keep a slip on him...

I: Just keep the tab going, huh? Charge it to his account. I know other people have talked about this but like the businesses on the Island when you were growing up. What do you remember?

P: Well, we had a lumber mill which was on Hildreth Street, Baker Lumber Mill. And we had... the foot of the hill we had a bar which was from the old bridge. Remember the old bridge?

I: Down over the hill? Right down on...

P: Actually, it was directly on the bridge... before the new bridge was erected.

I: Really.

P: Yeah, which was Landry's. He was from the Island. And then we had one on Poplar Hill which was Russell's.

I: Another bar?

P: Yeah. And then we had a T&K Store... which was right across the street from my present house. And coming down Theriault's owned a candy store right here.

I: I remember that. That must have even...

P: No, Theriault, I think he was pretty old by...

I: I guess I'm thinking of that store maybe across from that way. I think Larry...

P: On Union Street we had three stores and a barber shop.

I: Wasn't one like... maybe just a general store? Is that it?

P: That's Taylor's Market General Store. We had IGA which was in the center of the street, and then it was Arthur St.Louis' before Shorty Richards owned it.

I: Okay, wasn't there an ice place. A place that sold ice?

P: No. And then we had the barbershop which was right next to Taylor's Market.

I: Cyr Bus? Did Cyr Bus start on the Island?

P: Cyr Bus was right off Bosworth Street. And then we had LaBree's Bakery down on Bodwell Street. Then we had a barbershop down the street too on Front Street.

I: So there were two barbershops on the Island?

P: Three, the guy who owned the candy shop also cut hair.

I: So basically, people...when you were a kid or growing up...did you go off the Island much or was everything here that you needed?

P: We went off the Island because we all were involved at St. Joseph' school. We were involved with the parochial school. That's where we attended school, then we'd... in the winter we'd cross the ice and in the summer we'd walk around. Parochial schools didn't bus them you know, they it was walk in the summer and walk in the winter. You could come home during lunchtime, you didn't have a regular session. So you came home during lunch period. And then we had the skating rink that the Brothers ran, at St. Joseph's parking lot. They had a little cabin there where they burned wood.

I: So you could like... you could skate there and then walk across the river home.

P: Yes, which we did. And then, when we were kids by Thanksgiving time the ice used to freeze over good. And, the city right back of my house, we used to hook up flood lights and we'd have bonfires and stay right on the ice at Thanksgiving time. In the summer, we learned to swim by riding logs down the river, down to the boom. There was a log drive then.

I: The booms, where we they located down there?

P: Right by the mill.

I: Right near the mill? The damn wasn't there?

P: It was there but that's what held back all the...

I: Okay, so that's where it would back up, right?

P: And the booms were there to direct the logs as they came down. People were trained to ride... walk those booms...and with picks...

I: Picks? So you used to watch them do that?

P: Oh, yeah. We used to swim down there or ride a log down there. They were color marked by the different companies that owned the logs that was coming down. I Really? P: They were color coordinated for each cut, and they could tell which



company to credit the log to.

I: Really? I didn't know that.

P: Then we had Sandy Point which was right before you got there. That's what we called "Point aux puces" ... in French... thats where we'd swim a lot there.

I: Sure, that was like a beach there, right?

P: Yeah, there was a beach there?

I: Do you have any stories about anybody having any trouble when you guys used to go out... or everyone was pretty smart? Because I know my dad said that every once and awhile there would be someone ...

P: Not really, no more than what you see today. Just kids growing up. We got in our share of trouble. We had swim holes like the dock over in the back. We had tarzan swings all around. Every year my grandfather would make a flat bottom boat to use to go around the Island. They made their own designs in boats. We'd call them flat bottom because there was no point on either end.

I: Just a square or rectangle thing?

P: Yeah, and you could row around the Island.

I: What was your grandfather's name?

P: Rudolph Lavoie. Anything you needed here... they did their own carpenter work... they did their own repair work around the house. They were not finished carpenters, but they did their own plumbing work, so ...

I: They took care of everything.

P: Yeah, they did everything themselves. You just didn't call people to come in and do your work for you.

I: Right. Now, how about in the winter? I'm curious about this. I don't think kids go in the river or on the river as much...

P: They can't, the ice doesn't freeze as much.

I: Oh, really? It must have been colder or something?

P: Of course the weather was different. We had blizzards continuously when we were younger. There was... actually, I think there was nothing in the water to clean them up... which kept from freezing. Like now there... you know, they are more or less are treating the waters, for anti-pollution and all



that stuff... And that stops the freezing to a point, I believe.

I: So it effects the water?

P: Yeah, and we're not having the winters that we did as a kids.

I: No, no. Even I remember that.

P: When we walked to school, we really literally froze on the way. We had to walk backwards to stay away from cold... so you could breathe.

I: It really wasn't that far either.

P: It was a mile walk.

I: Is it a mile to St. Joseph's School from here?

P: Pretty close.

I: Now brothers and sisters, I didn't ask you about them. How big is your family?

P: I have three sisters and one brother that died. I was the middle child. I have a sister younger and two sisters that are older.

I: And their names are?

P: Frances.

I: The oldest?

P: Yeah, Jackie, the next one and Marilyn the youngest. I had a brother Jimmy that died. He was a year older than me.

I: How long ago was that?

P: He died at eight months old... Spinal meningitis. Back in the 40's, they didn't have no cures for spinal meningitis. What they did was put them in an institution, and isolate them... so that it was... It was contagious. When he died, the back of his head was touching the back of his heels, and it had broken his spine. They buried him without letting our parents know because it was so contagious, and buried him right off before anyone knew he was literally dead.

I: Things have changed so much.

P: Yeah. But now they have cures for spinal meningitis. They can treat it... back then they didn't.

I: So you were...? P: The second boy. I: So you were born

after...?

P: Him... Yeah. We're all... the first and second were two years apart and then from number 2 to number 5 they were all one year apart.

I: I'm just going to talk about when you were younger for awhile, and then we'll talk about everything else. Who did you hang out with when you were younger?

P: Mostly all kids from the Island. Gene Fadrigan, David LeBlanc, Jimmy Jones, David Cates (who was my cousin). God, we were all people from the Island... Victor Bouchard, Bobby Doucette, Bobby Tinkham...

I: So, you had a whole crew, huh?

P: Most of the kids all got together. Because we all went to school together.

I: Right, but say, you know, when you went to school... in Old Town but after school did you come right back to the Island usually?

P: Yeah, a lot of us belonged to the Y... as we got older...

I: And that was down on Main Street. South Main there?

P: Yeah, it was were 3-E is located now.

I: So you'd go down there and hang out after school?

P: Yeah, played ball a lot. And then there was a pool room right at the end of the Island bridge. A lot of us hung around there. We had some friends also that weren't from Island like Ronnie Thibodeau from Eaton Street and then there was Charlie Burr... as we got older. I went my freshman year to Bapst, Wilfred Raymond was my best friend. He was from the Island. He is now a priest. And then Michael Lacadie was in our class... he's been away since graduating from college.

I: Did you keep going to Bapst?

P: I got done after my freshman year because I couldn't afford it. They were charging tuition then, and you had to wear a uniform. We were not rich. All us kids worked to help my mother. She was alone... my father had left when we were real young and we never heard from him after that for about 25 years. My mother literally, with the help of my grandparents, raised us four kids from shoe shop work.

I: Can I ask you about that? How old were you when he left?

P: I was eight. I: You were eight... that's just at a bad time.  
P: My sister was just seven. My mother was making \$27 a week at the time at the shoe shop and trying to raise four kids. My grandparents had bought another house... bigger... for us to live in... and payed for the oil. All us kids started working since we were ten years old to try to help out with the bills.

I: What was your first job? Do you remember what that was?

P: Yeah, well I always had a newspaper route, since I was eight years old actually. And then at ten years old, the Silver Slipper had then turned... Gloria Thornton had bought it, and raised chickens there... broilers... the upstairs and down. We had 8000 chickens there. So at 5 in the morning, I'd go feed chickens and then at 5 at night... with wheelbarrow and take a shovel and ... I: Yeah. Dump it. P: With the (?? ) and you'd wear gumrubbers because they'd peck at your feet. And when they were 'x' amount of age people would come in and shoot pellets in them so they wouldn't grow anymore. Because they were raised as broilers.

I: Shoot pellets, into their food?

P: No, the back of their necks, they'd take each chicken individually so they wouldn't grow anymore, they'd just fatten up.

I: That would cut the growth somehow?

P: Yeah, that's how they grew their broilers.

I: That's weird.

P: So there were 8000 of those. I was getting \$3 a week.

I: And that was on the Island? The Silver Slipper?

P: No, the Silver Slipper was right in Milford.

I: I don't remember that.

P: It was a skating rink at one time. A rollerskating rink.

I: But she raised chickens there too? P: They closed that when she bought it and started raising broilers. I: Oh, she changed it. So you were doing a paper route and then doing that, and then?

P: Working at the grocery store here on the Island.

I: At the IGA?

P: No, at Taylor's Market.

I: Taylor's Market. So, you didn't have a lot of free time.

P: Oh, you made time. Academically, I didn't have problems with studying. I was always a good student academically, without little effort. So I had time for the things I wanted to do. The money my sisters or I had, I'd say 3/4 of it went back into our own household, we'd pool it. Cripe, I was 14 before we got a telephone in the house. We all decided that we'd put 'x' amount away a week so we could afford the telephone.

I: How about TV and stuff, radios...

P: Actually, my grandparents bought us our first TV for the house.

I: How old were you then?

P: About 13. We used to watch it over to her house until she... That was our Christmas present for the family at one time... she bought... My grandparents literally helped raise us financially.

I: So they were real good.

P: Oh, they were just like our own parents. Anything we had ... my mother or us kids... we owed directly to our grandparents. And our aunts in the surrounding neighborhood helped us a lot. Whenever they saw we needed clothes or anything like that, they literally ...

I: Was that Corinne's brothers or...

P: No, they were her real aunts and uncles. She was an only child so they were my great aunts and uncles.

I: Okay, so you still called them your aunts and uncles.

[Pat talks with some customers]

I: Can we talk about like when you were younger and then a teenager and stuff, too... like the holidays, what they were like... like talk about Christmas and Easter... were those the two biggest... or?

P: I would say that Thanksgiving was the family one... as far as us all getting together. It was French tradition that everyone gather at the grandparents' house no matter what family it was... Everybody went to the grandparents'... because they did all the baking and cooking.

I: Yeah, did they live right beside you?

- P: Right...directly... just like the next driveway. And most of the people around here... that's how it was. Everybody stayed right here within the Island. No matter what house you went into, it was either a relation of my wife's or mine. No matter what house you went into on French Island. I grew up with my wife just up the street. I've known her since childhood, since 2 years old I think.
- I: That's good. This is kind of jumping around a little bit but ... when did you start like dating her or whatever?
- P: I think in grammar school, off and on. In childhood... going skating together... stuff like that.. playing together around the neighborhood... childhood things. The Island school was closed but the building was still there, and everyone gathered at the Island school to fool around at night and, I mean literally, fool around. So, things like that.
- I: So you guys kind of were connected there.
- P: Interjected, connected, whatever you want to call it.
- I: So when did you get married? How old were you, I guess, or whatever.
- P: I had turned 17 in January and we got married in May. She turned 16 May 2nd and we got married May 5th. And she lost the baby in July. And she was pregnant again in March.
- I: So you started...
- P: Well, I didn't, we guess He did (assuming pointing up to God)...
- I: So blame it on the Big Guy.
- P: Yeah.
- I: Wow, sometimes that makes me feel so weird... because sometimes I think ... cause Chris and I have been dating since we were pretty young and some people say 'oh my God' you know but, hey, when you...
- P: Roger and Anna, my youngest one that just got married last week... They were in sixth grade when they started going out together, and they went all through junior high, all through high school, all through college...
- I: You know, some people just meet...
- P: And then two years after college.
- I: That's a long time... some people just meet the right person young, what are you going to do?

P: Well, I don't know if we've found the right one yet? We've only been married 31 years. It still a trial period...

I: Well, things seem to be going okay.

P: You know it's funny because at the time we were getting married, of course my mother had by then married her father (Bonnie's). Her (Bonnie) mother had died when she was ten and my mother was divorced, naturally. So my mother had married her father seven months prior to us getting married. So we were living together as one big family. I had three of her sisters living with me, plus I had one of my sisters...

I: Yeah, I get it. So you...this was your grandparent's house that was given to you? Were you staying there?

P: That's right. We moved out of her father's house because it was too small and moved into our house.

I: So how many people?

P: There were four of his kids, two of ours... that's six and the two grandparents... eight of us.

I: Wow, lots of privacy.

P: Yeah.

I: But you still managed to have four kids.

P: We partitioned off a couple of rooms so that's how we could make more rooms, but it was easier to use the big house than it was their house. So they got married in October, and we got married the following May. [Speaking with waitress.. Mary, Would you get me a coffee, please?]

I: So what was Christmas like?

P: As a child?

I: Yeah, I guess growing up.

P: There wasn't much money... but the money that was there was either from my grandparents or aunts and uncles. And from what other kids generated [coffee arrives..oh, cream and sugar], and they'd get us the things that they thought we needed and wanted. We were always satisfied with what we got, very much so.

I: Do you have any memories of Christmas that would really stick out?

P: The midnight mass... because it was such a festive thing with our parochial school... us marching, carrying down the Baby



Jesus, and our parents being there to watch, my grandparents were there, our Godparents were there who lived on the Island...they were all relatives ... and, I think it was it was the glory of being involved through the school of being in these festivities, as a Catholic. I think that was just as important as the next day opening the presents, because we were going to be in midnight mass. I was always in choir and an alter boy as well. I was an alter boy all through high school. To me, that was...most of the kids enjoyed that... the Christmas plays at school... the parents would come to that.

I: So the reason why it was so good was because it was a real praying together of the familys, right?

P: It was. Christmas and Thanksgiving were...Thanksgiving plays were just as important as the Christmas plays because the interjection of God again, to thank Him for what we had...it wasn't just the pilgrims finding the land, it was about God giving us the land to live on and the food that we had on the table. I guess that would be the best part of parochial upbringing was the fact that there was a Savior, that there was a Giver of all of this. You had something to look forward to, if there was a need... and, I think in our case it worked for me and my sisters because we were brought up before the [ ]. In them days, that was bad, my mother was excommunicated from her religion for twenty years. She couldn't receive of the sacraments because of the old Vatican rule and literally ... with all those children ...

I: So somehow it was her fault that he (the father) left, or something like that?

P: Well, the thing is that people didn't separate in the eyes of the church. You were married for life... no matter what, for better, for worse. In them days... the relatives... you're not getting a divorce. And, often..."You're getting a divorce!" You just didn't hear of that.

I: So did they get divorced?

P: Oh yeah, right off. Which us kids were glad because of the nature of the living that was going on that people didn't even know about... The beating up and no money and drinking and so on. I think she did it more for us kids than she did it for herself. I think she could tolerate what happened on a routine basis, but to see us kids go through it killed her. She just couldn't tolerate it anymore.

I: So she told him to ski-daddle?

P: Yeah, but I think he was ready too. Because he took off and we never heard from him for twenty years. Now he's my best friend. He came forward after I was married and had my first



child, and he lived at my house. When he had a heart attack we went to Connecticut after him, and he's worked with me here. Just.. you know... you've got to forgive.

I: Family.

P: He's still my father, and he's a very good father. His mistakes... I'm no better than he is. Down deep he's paid for it more than we have. We didn't go without, we had our grandparents, we had my mother... we had surrounding family that helped us. He lived a skidrow life that he had to pay for and suffer through, and now he's a good man and hasn't drank for 30 or 40 years.

I: Did he live in Connecticut?

P: Yeah, we had not heard from him and didn't know where he was. We knew he had remarried. So, he literally suffered more than we did. So his suffering was enough punishment, he didn't need more when he came back.

I: It must have been hard for him to come back. I think he was probably wondering ...

P: I think so. I think of the excitement of coming back to be with his family and he had other family that had evolved from it made him happy. There were no grudges held. My mother and him are good friends. So I think that...because God gave him his own punishment in his own way...we are not his judge and we are not his punishers.

I: Wow, it's true.

P: He had a heart attack after that, and we went to Connecticut after him. And he lived with us for a year until he could get him into a senior citizen housing.

I: Is he still living?

P: Oh yeah, still driving 18-wheelers. Part-time job plus he's shacking up with a woman, not bad for 75 years old.

I: [laughter] Does he...

P: Lives in Charleston with his girlfriend.

I: In Charleston...cool. [chuckles] How old's she?

P: I think she's just 68.

I: Oh, she's a young girl.

P: He must be doing something right, he's keeping her. More than I can do. [laughter]

- I: Have any ideas... or anything... of what you want to do?
- P: Really wanted to be a priest when I was young. And I think today I still tell my kids that if anything ever happens to your mother prior to me, I can still do something. I don't say I'd be a priest because I couldn't. There's no one worse than me, but I think I could be of benefit to the church.
- I: A deacon or something?
- P: I don't know what it would be, but I would involve the church. Definitely. I'm not a religious person by no means, you know, solid...but I believe in it a lot, and not.. don't go by that that's the first thing I reach to and then before retiring. I guess it's screwed up because my kids are not very religious. They've been brought up with their religion, but when the chips are down the first thing they do is call and say "Dad, light your candle, I need this." They've always been told that it doesn't work unless HE wants it for you, if you don't get it there's a reason and which has happened and they accept it.
- I: Do you have a prayer candle?
- P: Yeah, always have. But I can see doing some sort of church type of work. I'm getting away from... I guess, the outside life and more towards the secular life. It sounds funny because ... [Someone in background shouting: Pat the Old Town PD is out there. P: I didn't invite them].
- I: What prayer do you say?
- P: I say my rosary every night.
- I: The whole rosary?
- P: Yeah, if I fall asleep, there was a saying when we were kids... the nuns used to tell us that if you don't finish it, Mary will finish it for you during the night so don't worry about it.
- I: Do you go to church?
- P: Regularly. Sometime daily.
- I: Yeah, I thought you did.
- P: Always did. Either at the Newman Center... wherever I can make it. Whatever mass... St. John's, I'll drive all the way to St. John's if that's the only mass I can make.
- I: St. John's in Bangor?

- P: Yeah, wherever I can make it at the time that I'm off.
- I: Yeah, what does that do for you? Is it just something you do or is it something that you really look forward to, you know...
- P: I always look forward to that. Then when I can't make it, I feel like there something... a void. Constantly, because it's something that I've always done since childhood. Secondly, it's like if I don't do it, I have no right to ask Him for anything. If I'm not doing something for Him, how can I ask for something? But He'll always provide anyhow. He always has. Sometimes He doesn't always answer right off, He's got no calendar or watch so...
- I: When you were...Well, let's see... I don't know about that one.
- P: When Me and Bonnie got married, our pastor had just come two weeks before we had gotten married. Her side of the family, which was her grandmother and aunts, had talked to the pastor and said, "Don't marry them. They're too young. It will never work." But at the same time, my mother was signing for me, because you needed your parent's signature at that age, and her father was signing her. So my feeling on this.. the pastor had no right to listen outsiders... even though they were relation... if our parents consented. So he refused to marry us which because of the nature of our marriage... that was taking place for her being pregnant and that...{starts speaking with customer}...So any how, we got married through the JP because Bonnie was pregnant and we wanted to... so four months after that I had wrote to the Bishop explaining that we were brought up in Catholic homes, we went to parochial schools, I went to a Catholic high school, I was always an alter boy and went through the whole spiel that why was I excommunicated from my church, and forced to be into a marriage by a JP because of a pastor who didn't even know who I was and our parents had consented to the marriage, but because of her relations saying that he shouldn't marry us, and I went on like that. This is very brief... but determined, you know why did you excommunicate me when I was such a firm believer in my religion and avid attender of the sacraments and now I couldn't receive them. And that wasn't right. That isn't what God had said. There was nothing mentioned in the Bible about age, and so I mailed it on a Wednesday and Friday night at 7 o'clock, the pastor called my mother's house because we didn't have a phone... Bonnie and I in our apartment. We never lived with her. We got our apartment right off. He said, "Tell Pat to be in the church at 4 o'clock tomorrow (it was Friday for Saturday) and I would bless their marriage at 4 o'clock. The Bishop has ordered me to bless their marriage right off, not delay, he wanted it done before the end of the week."

- I: But the question of having a child out of wedlock, was that the problem to them?
- P: No, it was the age of marriage. How long would it last..
- I: But would the Catholic church...
- P: The Catholic church would but being a new pastor in the parish, he listened to Bonnie's relations saying that it won't last. They're too young. It will just end up in divorce. They wanted her to give up the baby for adoption. Her parents.
- I: Like you guys couldn't deal with it or something?
- P: Yeah, which was logical.
- I: Because he didn't know you.
- P: Exactly.
- I: Not to harp on it, but I'm just curious...they didn't like the fact that, the Catholic church couldn't have like it that you weren't married when you had a baby though.
- P: We didn't have it yet, she was pregnant.
- I: Oh, so that's okay if you get married afterwards.
- P: Before, we were getting married before. She was pregnant when we got married, but she lost it when she was four months along.
- I: Right, but she was pregnant when you were married.
- P: Yes...
- I: That's what I'm trying to say, is that a big thing? Or no?
- P: No that wasn't the factor. The fact that they wanted parenthood, your pregnant...hey...Do something about it... because the Catholic parents would raise it... you know.
- I: Okay, I didn't know.
- P: We were refused marriage in the church because of age.
- I: So the Bishop must have called the pastor...
- P: Well, I explained that to them but by then she had lost the baby... Which I explained to him...
- I: Right. That happens with first pregnancies.

P: At a young age. I'm sure, she was just 15, and I explained this to the Bishop. But I couldn't understand why I was getting refused to get married because... and I explained to the Bishop it's a chance you're taking no matter if you are 30 or 10 and to this day some of the relations are still living, and they say, "Gee, 31 years, who would have thought at 16 years old."

I: How did you get along with those certain people after it was all said and done?

P: Oh, that was their way. They did what they thought was right.

I: But they accepted it afterwards?

P: They had to. You know, reality is an acceptance. But prior to the reality, you try to interject. It's working... so far, it's worked out. It's still a chance... it's just something that, you know... and we had our struggles... raising five kids and working two or three jobs... both of us... putting four through college. Four went to college... one didn't.

I: Hasn't been easy, has it?

P: I was old when I got my degree. The only reason I got mine was because I was getting free tuition, and I was working at the University. And then I only have an associates' degree.

I: So let's kind of talk... okay so you guys were married, what year did you get married?

P: 1962.

I: So, well how old were you in 1962?

P: 17.

I: Okay, so you missed the Vietnam War by about 7 years as far as getting drafted right.

P: Yeah.

I: What was it like growing up then. Now you were in your 20's when you and Bonnie were just getting married and stuff. What was it like around here. What did you do for a job first.

P: First three months I worked at the shoe shop.

I: Which one?

P: Bangor Shoe. And then I got a job to the University, and I was there ever since..

I: No kidding, that's how...holy smokes.

P: Short of three months, my whole married life was at the University.

I: And you started at Stewart as a baker?

P: No, started as a porter.

I: A porter, you started as a porter.

P: And that same year they offered me a apprentice baker.

I: So that didn't take long.

P: Then I moved up from apprentice baker to baker, and then to head baker, and then from head baker to administrative baker which was in charge of all the bakers on campus... which was in charge of all the bakers on campus... and in the same time I was doing... of course, then there was no time and a half...there was no personnel office on campus. It was straight time when you worked... and so I'd also do the office work too which meant supervision and the payrolls and stuff like that so it was easy for me to step into management... once my kids were older...It was nice... because my wife was there in the morning, she worked the late shift. She went in at 10 in the morning, so she was there to get the kids off to school in the morning, and I was home by 11:30 or 12 [noon], when they got home from school, and I stayed for them in the afternoon, so when they came home they had fresh baked goods.. and start supper and get the wash done and get them ready for bed at night and do the dishes. And when she come home we got to sit down together... and we got to see the kids for a half an hour or so... we'd put them to bed. So she did what work she could do in the morning before she left, plus get the kids ready for school and I did the other shift.

I: Worked pretty good, didn't it.

P: Yeah, and then when they got older enough when they didn't need me anymore... and some were already graduating and into college... Then I had a chance at full-time manager... I was already doing the part-time plus baking. I went into full-time management.

I: Was that at the club? No that was just at York.

P: At York. Then I got away from the 3 o'clock in the morning baking. Although I loved baking, the first 19 years on campus were baking.

I: Then you moved into the management at York.

P: As full time management. And then they asked me to go to the club because they had no one. They had nothing up there... So they asked me to take that over to see if I could do something



with it.

I: What year was that?

P: '86 and I stayed there until 1991.

I: So that was kind of short in comparison with the other stuff you had done.

P: Yeah, but it was the best years of my college life.

I: You liked it the best?

P: I loved it the best. That's why when they asked me... "We're going to give you a party... you can't say no, where do you want it held." I said, "Any place ... the faculty club because those were the best years of my life and it was. I loved the place. And I got to meet a lot of good people, and I think I handled them pretty well. I had good rapport with most of them. They supported me fully in the bad days. John Repstock days. And that's how I got to meet a lot of the administrators and ... Dale Lick even came in and had lunch and said good-bye to me before he left and his wife...and thanked me for things I had done... my tenor there at the club. So it's things like that. The public was good to me when I left... the University was good to me when I left, they bought all my chairs.. a lot of stuff for here. I've been fortunate with my tenor at the University. People used me good down there.

I: Treated you right. Pretty good.

P: And, they still frequent the place... a lot of them.

I: Who comes over?

P: Quite a few, Chuck Laskey, a lot of the deans, Charlie Tarr and Karen. They come for lunch a lot... for the specials. And from the Botany Department, and Plants and Soils, and the engineering... oh God, we get so many.

I: That's really neat that they come over here, you know. I bet they never were on the Island before.

P: Until I bought the place. Elaine Albright from the Library ...the bookstore crowd all come...

I: Well, a lot of the bookstore club would be from around here anyway right?

P: Well, some of them aren't. Colleen had just left... oh, we get some [??] from the college.

I: Colleen Gagnon?



P: Yeah,...

I: How do they pronounce it?

P: Gagnon. GAG-NON.

I: I can't say it except for the French way. I always get it screwed up. I never know how to ...was Greg with her?

P: Yeah, Greg and the kids. I like Greg, he's the nicest guy.

I: I haven't seen her... Well I've seen her a little bit up to the Y... but we don't see them as much. We used to hang around with Jim and Betty Campbell, more than we do now because he was my karate teacher... but yeah, I like Colleen. She's got a lot of energy. Oh, geez, let's see I'm going to look these over. I don't know.

P: You may want to take a second interview.

I: Actually yeah, they do that.

P: Things I may have... through your questions... you may want to interject a...

I: Tell you what, why don't we call it good tonight and actually you know what though, one thing I didn't get is ...I said Pat Crowley but how old are you?

P: 48. I was married for 31 years and I was 17.

I: Okay, I thought you were a little bit older than that. I think all the basic stuff we covered tonight. You know... relations ...

P: You know that by the time I was 23 I had five kids.

I: You just lived a lot for 48 years, that's all.

P: Knowledge.

I: Big time. Okay, well this is the end of the first interview and we'll probably be back. I think that will be good. Thanks.

I: So this is Alan Comeau. It's October 20, 1994. I am talking for a second time with Pat Crowley here at the Shuffle Inn and tonight we're just going to talk about ... maybe tell some stories about when he was growing up or maybe a little bit about the Shuffle or anything. We'll go from there. So, I don't know where to start. Do you have any things? I don't know... I mean you always tell the stories.. just start.

P: When we were young, we didn't have a refrigerator. We had ice boxes on the porch, and in the summer we'd chase the ice man around getting pieces of ice until my mother could afford to get a refrigerator. By then she was separated from my father, bringing up four kids alone, and working in the shoe shop and had no vacation pay, no holiday pay, nothing. They closed at 4th of July week, and the people had to take time off on their own with no pay. Which meant our grandparents helped support us. They lived next door, And they bought us a house to live in to help my mother out. All of us kids worked, we all had jobs by the time we were 10 or 11 while we were going to school. We didn't have a tub or bath, all we had was a flush toilet. So we had to take little tubs, portable tubs into our bedroom with hot water and do our baths on Saturday night.

I: From the stove?

P: Yeah.

I: Kettles like?

P: Yeah, fill the tub up and then two of us would take each end and empty it after into the toilet after the last person was done taking their bath. This was done ritually on Saturday nights, fine comb your hair because in them days there was lice and stuff like that.

I: Yeah, still is.

P: Take our Father John's every night. We had to take that before we went to bed That was the going thing. Father John's was a cold medicine That helped prevent colds or that was the belief of most of French Island... all took Father John's. If you took it every night it would help you prevent colds.

I: How'd it taste?

P: I liked it.

I: Really?

P: I really did. It was like a coffee taste. Eventually we got our bathrooms put in, and refrigerators. We all worked together, my sisters and I (I was the only boy) cut wood for the wood stove in the winter, and then in the house that my grandparents had bought us, we'd close up three bedrooms and all sleep in one room because the living room stove was underneath that one bedroom that was heated with a hole in the ceiling and the floor, and we'd all move our beds into there and sleep in that room during the winter... My mother four of all us kids. Two of the girls and my mother slept in the big bed and my younger sister would sleep in the small bed and I would sleep in a small bed. That was all you could get in the

bedroom.

I: Yeah, you had all those beds in there?

P: You'd rush down through the hallway to get in front of the stove, open the oven door and put your toes on top of the stove... with cocoa stuff in the morning.

I: So who tended the stove at night?

P: It was an oil burner. The wood stove would burn through the night and then restarted in the morning.

I: Oh, okay, so no one had to get up.

P: No. It was an oil burner that just maintained enough heat so the pipes wouldn't freeze, but the bedroom would, of course, be cold by morning. And then we'd relight the stove and get it going good and then leave to go to school. It was usually safe enough to let it burn out while we were at school, and my mother was at work.

I: Any good stories about being at school? Oh, maybe who was the bully...or stuff like that.

P: See, we went to the Catholic schools, so we was with the nuns all through grammar school. We started out in the old school.. and we went to daily masses, we were all alter boys.

I: Did you ever do stuff that the priest didn't know about.. that he wouldn't have liked?

P: You mean, like drink his wine, take a handful of the hosts before they were blessed out of the safe, wherever they locked them up and take them home with us. We got a lot of those. We'd get the dimes out of the candles... where they used to have vigil candles that people burnt, there'd be a slot that we could get them out of there, if we wanted a dime to go to the movies because the movies then was 13 cents in those days.

I: So a dime was quite a bit.

P: Yeah, and it cost a dime... well the usual donation was a dime but people gave what they could to light a candle for a special intention. And to this day my kids still call me when they need a special intention and tell me to light my candle which I do.

I: You have one at home right?

P: Yeah, and I light whenever there is a special we need... or an answer to. So we maintain the old ritual... even though they took them out of the churches because they felt it took away from the adoration to God himself in his own house.

I: They still do that ...

P: Yeah, they do but American Catholics felt that too much attention was drawn towards the saints and the novenas versus God Himself in His own house. Vatican II recommended that candles be removed from the churches and let them do it in their own houses if they wanted to. So that the primary attention went to God because that was His home, that's His house, in the tabernacle where he rested daily. That was the concept of taking the candles out of the church. But most of us maintained that ritual when we needed something, the prayer accompanied the candlelight and it's proved out.

I: So, when in your life has it proved out? I know you have some really good stories about things like...

P: Financially, the children, sicknesses, and one thing we don't do ... we don't pray for money, we pray for a means to get it through your own work, but even in the Bible it says you work for your food and you never pray for money... and we only pray for things that you think are right. Even though it may seem bad at the time, whether it's death or sickness or whatever, there is a reason for it and it will come to light why it has happened.

I: Give me some specific times...because I know, I remember working at the club with you, you told me a couple of things...

P: With financial matters, we were down and out and I was in dire need of two or three thousand dollars and all of a sudden the money was there.

I: Bingo, wasn't there a bingo thing?

P: Bonnie won \$2000 at Beano the week before Christmas. I had just gotten out of the hospital. We had no money... just my weekly check coming in because I had sick leave at the college, but there was no extra to buy the gifts or to even pay some of the bills. And all of a sudden she went to Beano and won \$2000!

I: How long, that wasn't that long ago was it?

P: Two years ago. Right before I bought the Shuffle. I had come out of the hospital then. And there was \$2000 five days before Christmas. I didn't pray for money, I just asked for rationale, how to cope with it and how to solve the solution financially, whether it be...you know, but there were gifts right there, and that's just one of the answers. Even growing up with my mother and us kids, we'd run out of oil... and we had practically lived off my grandparents and we were always fearful. "Geez, we've got to go and tell them now we need some more money." But they always seemed to know it before we

- I: So was it Shuffle In, stagger out?
- P: Yeah, I guess. He got the name from a Boston bar when he was living down there, this Bob Famiglietti... he was an Italian.. and he didn't want to attach an Italian name to a French Island establishment where there had always been a French Island name to it so he attached the Shuffle In to the bar he had known down there... and it became the Shuffle In... since the 50s... early 50s... I was just a kid.
- I: So when was your first experience here?
- P: Back when I was about 16 or 17, I worked for the owner out back doing dishes and helping her cook and stuff like that.
- I: Here?
- P: Yeah, and then what happened was Bonnie and I got married and we lived across the street so worked part time here as well as down the college.
- I: Now, while you were a kid did you ever come in here for anything?
- P: All the time. We used to come get my father most of the time. Tell him it's time to come home. I remember they'd send us up... I think the biggest for any French Island kid growing up was that you couldn't wait to be 21 to go and drink beer at the Shuffle like his parents, and his grandparents, and his grandparents before that.
- I: It was 18 then though, right?
- P: No, 18 didn't come until the late 60's.
- I: So it was 21 before, then 18, and now its 21 again.
- P: Yeah, I had to wait until I was 21 but I was drinking here at 17 ... because I worked here and what happened was everybody came here with their parents and there was a lot of take-out ... and they was always known for their fried clams, hamburgers and stuff like that. They only opened six days a week, and the kitchens were open until 1:00 in the morning. Every night of the week. Because you had your bars... there were about twenty bars in the local area, right here in town that people frequented... and as soon as the bars closed they'd come here to get something to eat... even though this was a bar it was more of a restaurant... a family type restaurant like it is now.
- I: What were the names of the other bars in town? You going to name us a couple of them?

- P: There was the hotel... which was the Northview Hotel, there was the Townhouse, there was Ken Dumont's, there was the Bucket of Blood, there was the Church's in Bradley, there was Northend, there was.. this place.. Perley Nadeau's, Landry's down at the bottom of the Island hill... Petit Landry's.
- I: The only one that's left is the Northend, right?
- P: In that area, yeah.
- I: The Welcome Inn's new.
- P: That used to be the VFW until they built their new hall. That was always the VFW.
- I: So the only old bar around is this one and ...
- P: And the Northend.. And then there was Birchmere in Milford, and then there was the Anchorage...
- I: The Anchorage? Where was that?
- P: Where King's Wok is.
- I: I remember that.
- P: Yeah, they had strippers in those days.
- I: Oh, I don't remember that.
- P: My first encounter was when I was 18... I served up there seeing strippers. A bunch of guys, everybody...I got married so young that by the time I was 18 or 19, people used to figure I was 21 and never questioned it... because I had been married so long and had kids growing up... they never even said, "Where's your ID?" because the local people knew... God he's married and got kids. It never even dawned on them...
- I: Right, if you can do that stuff, you can drink...right?
- P: They never questioned the age because of the fact of my background and because of what I had already established as a parent and a married person and all the time I was just 18 years old. I had already been married two years by then!!
- I: So you could get away with stuff, so like you'd go up to the Anchorage...
- P: Yeah. They never questioned the age because of the fact of my background and what I had already established as a parent and married person. And all the time I was just 18 and 19. And I'd already been married two years by then.
- I: You were getting away with stuff. So you'd go up to the



Anchorage...

P: I knew the people that owned the place.

I: So, what happened this first night? ... This first encounter.

P: Well I had seen them at the carnivals but not like this... this was professional. In those days, the Anchorage was in them days considered a night club.

Tape ends.