

Oral History of
Robert Haines

Interview conducted by Laura Harkewicz

20 March 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT and INTERVIEW HISTORY	3
INTERVIEW: 20 March 2007	
Photo of Robert Haines, 1954	4
Coming to Oceanography and to Scripps	5
From Able-bodied Seaman to Captain	7
The Life and Work of a Ship's Captain	10
The R/V <i>Alpha Helix</i> at the Great Barrier Reef	12
Operation Ivy	13
Family Life	15
The Instability of R/V <i>Stranger</i>	18
Working as a Captain Outside Scripps	19
Shipboard Activities and Conflicts	20
The "Golden Years" and R/V <i>Alpha Helix</i> , Part I	25
Operation Wigwam	29
Working at a Ship's Scheduler	30
A Return to Sea	32
The R/V <i>Alpha Helix</i> Part II	33
Master of the Ship	35
Scripps' Success and Threats to its Success	38
Changes in Requirements for Ship's Personnel	40

ABSTRACT:

Robert Haines was born in Vallejo, California on August 21, 1926. He served in the Navy in the Pacific in World War II. After the War, he trained at the Naval Academy Preparatory School in Bainbridge, Maryland but did not graduate. He started work at Scripps in 1950 as an able-bodied seaman aboard the R/V *Horizon* and worked his way up the ladder to become a ship's captain aboard the R/V *Paolina-T* four years later. He served as captain on a number of Scripps research vessels (R/V) including: *Stranger*, *Dolphin*, *Oconostota*, *Alpha Helix*, *Thomas Washington*, *Melville*, and *New Horizon*. He also served as captain on several ships for other institutions as well as gambling ships. He has been around the world serving on Scripps research cruises. In addition, he worked as ship's scheduler for Scripps but returned to his duties as a captain because he preferred the position. The interview focused on Haines work as a ship's captain and his interactions with scientific and ships' personnel. He stressed his attachment to the R/V *Alpha Helix* and the work that was done with this vessel. We also discussed the impact of his career on his family life. He concluded that he felt he had retired too young and missed his work.

INTERVIEW HISTORY: The interview took place on an early spring morning in the Archival Storage Office at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Library. We talked for approximately two hours and were interrupted twice—once by maintenance, the second time by a power failure that lasted for approximately one hour. The final fifteen minutes of the interview were recorded after the power failure.

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April 17, 2007



Robert Haines in skiff with sea turtles, 1954.
Scripps Institution of Oceanography Archives, UC San Diego Libraries

INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT HAINES: 20 March 2007

Harkewicz: This is Tuesday, March 20th. This is Laura Harkewicz. I'm in my office at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Library Archives in La Jolla, California. And I'm speaking with Captain Robert Haines this morning. Good morning, Dr. Haines.

Haines: Good morning.

Harkewicz: Captain Haines. Good morning. So what I need from you, first of all, since we have little information, can I get your date of birth and your place of birth?

Haines: My date of birth was 31st of August, 1926, in Vallejo, California. That's V-A-L-L-E-J-O, California.

Harkewicz: I'm familiar with that. And how did you come to Scripps? How did you come to a career in oceanography?

Haines: I heard about it through some high school friends of mine, probably back in 1949-1950. It sounded interesting and I've been around boats and the sea all my life. My dad was a career naval officer and so I came over and applied. I'm not sure whether it was on the campus up here at Scripps or down at Marine Facilities.

Harkewicz: Did you have a career in the Navy, yourself, prior to coming to Scripps?

Haines: I did. I spent two years in the Navy during World War II.

Harkewicz: And where did you serve in the Navy then, at that time?

Haines: In the Pacific, the Battle of Leyte Gulf in the Philippines. I served on the battleship *Iowa*,¹ and then the carrier *Yorktown*,² and destroyer *Stockham*,³ and after the peace treaty was signed I came back to the US and went into the Naval Academy, a preparatory school in Bainbridge, Maryland.

Harkewicz: Is that where you were before you came here, then?

¹ *Iowa* (BB-61) was launched August 27, 1942 from the New York Navy Yard. As flagship of Battleship Division 7, *Iowa* departed the United States on January 2, 1944 for the Pacific Theatre.

² USS *Yorktown* (CV-10) was launched January 21, 1943 in Newport News, Virginia and served during World War II in the Pacific, earning eleven battle stars, and later served in the Vietnam War.

³ USS *Stockham* (DD 683) was a Fletcher class destroyer launched June 25, 1943 in San Francisco and served in the Pacific during World War II, earning eight battle stars. She supported the landing at Leyte Gulf on October 20, 1944 and screened the carriers during strikes on southern Luzon and the Visayans. She joined most of the elements of the Third Fleet in meeting and defeating the Japanese Northern Force during the Cape Engaño phase of the Battle for Leyte Gulf. She was recommissioned and served in the Korean Conflict in 1951.

Haines: Yes.

Harkewicz: So you came here from Maryland at that time? What was San Diego like at the time that you came here?

Haines: Well, I first arrived in Coronado, where I lived, when I was two weeks old. And *[laugh]* that's more or less my home. I call myself a native. But . . .

Harkewicz: Okay. So, you came down from Vallejo soon after you were born? *[Laugh]* Okay. And it was a pretty small town at that time then, I guess, right? Let's put it this way, when you first came to Scripps, what was it like around here?

Haines: When I first came to Scripps?

Harkewicz: Yeah.

Haines: Coronado was pretty much the same. It hasn't changed that much except for traffic now, and of course it's more crowded. But we didn't have the bridge then. We rode the ferry back and forth. Marine Facilities was up on top of Point Loma. It wasn't down where it is right now. But other than that, we tied the ships up at the Naval Electronics Laboratory piers there. We didn't have our own piers like we have now. But other than that it's pretty much the same. Different ships, of course, . . .

Harkewicz: Did you always live in Coronado, then, even when you were working here at Scripps?

Haines: Yes.

Harkewicz: Was that a hassle taking the ferry, or anything like that?

Haines: Pardon me?

Harkewicz: Was that a hassle taking the ferry back and forth?

Haines: No. It was fun. *[Laugh]* I thoroughly enjoyed it. And I didn't want the bridge.

Harkewicz: Yeah. *[Laughter]* So how did you get here this morning? Did you take the bridge this morning or did . . .

Haines: Yes. *[Laughter]*

Harkewicz: I guess you needed your car, right? So.

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: So, when you first came to Scripps, what position did you have? What were you working as when you first came here?

Haines: I was an able-bodied seaman.

Harkewicz: Okay. What does that mean? I'm not really familiar with that.

Haines: Well, that just means that you do the maintenance aboard ship, you handle lines, you stand watches, of course, at sea and sometimes in port. It's just a general seaman's duties. They had the old *Horizon*. They had the *Crest*. They had the *E.W. Scripps*, the *Paolina-T*. And that's about it, as I recall.

Harkewicz: So you say you were in the Naval Training Academy, in Bainbridge, did you say?

Haines: It's the Naval Academy Preparatory School. It's a school to prepare you for the entrance exam to the Naval Academy in Annapolis.

Harkewicz: So did you stop at a certain point, then?

Haines: Yeah. I just didn't like the regimentation. And I just didn't care for it.

Harkewicz: Because I was wondering how you ended up, you were at the Naval Academy and then you ended up as an able-bodied seaman. So I wondered if there, if that was a transition there? *[Laugh]*

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: So how did you work your way up, then, from being an able-bodied seaman to a captain?

Haines: I just worked my way up. Became a mate—I went from a seaman, able-bodied seaman, to a mate. I think a third mate, probably, and second mate, and then a chief mate, and then I made captain. The marine superintendent then was a fellow by the name of Clem Stose.⁴ That's S-T-O-S-E. And he offered me the position of being the skipper of the *Paolina-T*, which I jumped at. I think I was, I don't know, twenty-seven or twenty-eight. I was the youngest person on board and I had all these old fellows that had been around for a long time and probably knew more than I did. But you know, it's a bit awkward at first but it worked out okay.

Harkewicz: You're talking about your crewmembers, then?

Haines: Uhm-hmm.

⁴ Clemens W. Stose (1887-1974), ship builder, yachtsman, and Commodore of the San Diego Yacht Club, was hired at Scripps Institution of Oceanography in 1937 to convert a movie star's yacht into the research vessel *E.W. Scripps*. He served as master of that vessel. He served as marine superintendent, in charge of all of the vessels of the Scripps Institution, from 1950 until his retirement in 1953.

Harkewicz: So—you said it was awkward and it worked out. How did they just get used to you after a while? Or . . .

Haines: Well, you can't read people's minds, but I think it was probably the third or fourth trip, maybe the fifth trip I'd been on—we were on our way down to the Gulf of California, I believe, and about halfway down I got a weather report that said there was a hurricane coming up the Mexican mainland coast.⁵ And so I stopped in Turtle Bay and kind of tried to wait it out, and I guess we were there for a day or so and the scientists were really getting antsy. So the weather reports in those days weren't very accurate, and they had the hurricane going up the Mexican mainland coast and going into the Gulf of California. So I said, "Well, maybe I'll be all right. I'll try and get down to Magdalena Bay," which is another sheltered bay on the Baja Coast. And so about one o'clock in the morning I got a call from the fellow on watch who said, "You better come up here. It's getting pretty windy." Well, by that time the wind was up to about sixty knots and so we just had to heave-to there. We were probably off of Cape San Lazaro, maybe twenty or thirty miles, and the eye of the hurricane went right over Mag Bay, which was about forty miles away, and so we got a pretty good beating there. And as I say, here poor little old me and all these veteran chief engineers and other seamen who had been doing this for a long time were kind of looking to me for leadership. And we got through it fine. *[Laughter]*

Harkewicz: So you think that helped you in leading these men then because they saw you as being able to survive this particular incident?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: That's good.

Haines: But it was an unpleasant experience. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: A baptism of fire, so to speak, huh?

Haines: Yeah. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: So if there's these older guys, who you were a captain over, what was it that kept them being seamen, if you can venture a guess, as opposed to working their way up the ladder? Do you think they just were happy doing what they were doing? Or . . .

Haines: I think we only had probably three in the deck force. *Paolina-T* wasn't very large. I think it was only about eighty feet long, and we had, I think, three on deck and two in the engine room, and a cook. So that's six. And I think as far as the deck department is concerned they just didn't want the responsibility. They

⁵ This incident occurred on R/V *Paolina T*. Capt. Haines recalled it was just before Operation Wigwam, May 1955.

had been doing what they were doing probably most of their lives and they were happy in doing it. And but I think that's pretty much it. .

Harkewicz: You said that was when you were twenty-seven that you became a captain?

Haines: I think twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Somewhere in there.

Harkewicz: So that would have been about 1953 or so?

Haines: Fifty-three, '54. Somewhere in there.

Harkewicz: Somewhere in there? Okay. And once you were the captain on the *Paolina-T*, did you normally have like the same crewmembers then?

Haines: Pretty much the same.

Harkewicz: From cruise to cruise?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: So you developed a relationship then, with them?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: Did you ever do any, like, socializing with these people off ship?

Haines: No.

Harkewicz: No?

Haines: Never did.

Harkewicz: Did that seem peculiar or was that just you had like this one personality onboard and . . .

Haines: Well, you know, they had their group of friends and I had mine. And I lived here and they lived there. We just, I don't recall ever doing it. I mean, I certainly didn't ignore them, I mean, we were friendly and that sort of thing but we just didn't socialize.

Harkewicz: So tell me a little bit about what it was like to be a captain, I guess. Because, you're talking about the weather reports being bad and, you know, finding harbors to sort of find safety in. So you would have to know like a lot of geography of the areas, Would you have to know something about meteorology or something to that effect?

Haines: Well yeah. There's a book, a famous kind of a manual of the, they call it a "Bowditch" and it's the *American Practical Navigator*,⁶ and it's probably three or four inches thick and it's kind of the bible for a seaman. And it covers everything, navigation, weather, ship handling, all those subjects.

Harkewicz: So you just memorized that book, then? *[Laugh]*

Haines: Well, you try to, but it was very technical. Before I made captain I was serving on the old *Horizon* and the skipper there was a retired Navy chief boatswain's mate, who was a wonderful navigator and a great guy. His name was Frank Miller.⁷ He's the one that taught me how to pilot, which means taking bearings. It's kind of a rudimentary method of navigation, but I didn't know celestial navigation, which is shooting the stars, and the sun, and that sort of thing. And he taught me how to do that and he taught me very well, and I took a lot of pride in that. But still, nobody knows everything and there's always something a little bit more to learn and you usually find it in Bowditch.

Harkewicz: Okay. But you did learn a lot from other people through your training?

Haines: Absolutely.

Harkewicz: Do you think you had to have a certain personality to be a captain, as opposed to being a crewperson? I mean, you were in charge of everybody, so I assume you had to make sure that people got along, so to speak?

Haines: I never had any real problems, you know. I'm easy to get along with. And there's, you know—I'm not sure I should say this but—*[laugh]* there are some people who, I'll say "some captains," who will go ashore with the crew and they'll go to the nearest bar and they'll have a lot to drink and raise hell and—but I, I never did that. I don't know why. It just didn't interest me. And if you're in a foreign port someplace, the captain's job in a foreign port is a lot more busy than it is at sea because you've got to monitor everything, you've got the provisioning, and fueling, and all the paperwork that's involved in entering a ship into port, and then clearing it out of a port, and just making sure you're ready for the next leg. I was always very busy in port, so I just didn't have time and really didn't care for that. Not that I had my nose in the air or anything, but I was just busy.

Harkewicz: Did your crew normally go out and . . .

⁶ *The American Practical Navigator* by Nathaniel Bowditch (1773-1838) was first published in 1802. The 2002 edition is available online at http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_American_Practical_Navigator .

⁷ Frank Miller (1902-1990) served in the US Navy from 1921 to 1949 and joined Scripps Institution of Oceanography as an able seaman in 1949, retiring in 1970 as a captain. He served as master on virtually every vessel of the Scripps Institution, undertaking the shakedown cruises of R/V *Alexander Agassiz* and R/V *Ellen B. Scripps*. He was master of R/V *Stranger* on Naga Expedition.

Haines: Oh yeah. *[Laughter]*

Harkewicz: They enjoyed themselves, then?

Haines: When you spend thirty, forty, fifty days at sea, when you get in port you want to blow off a little steam.

Harkewicz: Yeah. Well, I know, I was talking to Deborah Day, the archivist, and I visited MarFac when I first started working here and, a couple of the captains took us up onboard like the *Roger Revelle* and the ships that were in port at the time. And I know that they were complaining about the pilots at these foreign ports and how they have to go onboard. Is this—this is my understanding. They go onboard your ship and direct it into port, is that correct?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: And I know they had some negative comments about them. Nothing specific or anything, but I just wondered if you ever had any problems with these pilots that, for the ports?

Haines: Well, the pilot is, except in the Panama Canal and perhaps the Suez Canal, the pilot is an advisor only. The skipper is in charge of the ship and it's his responsibility. So if the pilot says do one thing and the captain doesn't necessarily think that's the right thing to do, he has the perfect right to say, "No."

Harkewicz: So the captain is the ultimate authority, then?

Haines: Absolutely.

Harkewicz: Yeah. Okay. Did you ever hang out with other captains from Scripps?

Haines: Well, very seldom we had two ship operations. I have done that, yes, but there have been times when two Scripps ships have been in the same port at the same time, and of course we—but you know, he's busy, too, and I'm busy, and so it was, there wasn't too much mingling there.

Harkewicz: Didn't have time to do that? Even when you were back here in the San Diego area?

Haines: Well, I don't recall. I mean, there may have been one or two social events or something, but not very many.

Harkewicz: Okay. So how much time did you normally spend out at sea once you were a captain?

Haines: Well, I'd say sixty percent—I've never thought about it, but a ship is just like an airplane. It doesn't make any money. Of course, Scripps ships aren't in the commercial business, but if you're not doing science those expenses are going on, the crew's salary is going on, the insurance, all that stuff, you just have to keep moving. And I would say sixty or seventy percent of the time I was at sea.

Harkewicz: And then you, did you have a family back here?

Haines: Yes.

Harkewicz: And what was that like for your wife and children?

Haines: It wasn't good, but she understood. And we have four kids and it was kind of hard on her, but it's just one of those things.

Harkewicz: Did they ever get to travel with you anywhere?

Haines: The first time that happened was, I think, in 1966, when I took the *Alpha Helix* over to Australia to the Great Barrier Reef.⁸ It was about an eight-month expedition over there and it looked like I was going to be gone the whole time. And so after I'd left I sent her a message, I guess, from Honolulu or someplace like that and said, "Pack up the kids and come on over," which she did.

Harkewicz: So they were with you for the eight months?

Haines: They went over there and we put the kids in school over there. It was a spur of the moment thing. We rented a little house in Cairns, which is up in North Queensland, which was our base. I mean that was our home port but we were never there. And the kids, to this day, talk about it. It really made an impression on them. But you know, as I say, spur of the moment.

Harkewicz: Do you think they had a better idea of what you did then for a living once they . . .

Haines: I think so. The ship was anchored about two hundred miles north of Cairns, up at Flinders Island, and I took my son up there for a couple of weeks just so he could see what was going on. He was probably eleven years old then. Everybody enjoyed it.

Harkewicz: So was that unusual, though, an eight-month trip like that? Was that a . . .

⁸ R/V *Alpha Helix* was a National Oceanographic Facility of the University-National Oceanographic Laboratory System (UNOLS) for experimental biology, owned and operated by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography from 1966 to 1980. From March to November 1966, scientists aboard R/V *Alpha Helix* conducted biological and physiological research at the Great Barrier Reef of Australia on Billabong Expedition.

- Haines:** Yeah. It's unusual. It's an usual ship. The whole program was unusual, and it was by far my favorite time here, the *Alpha Helix*. But that's getting ahead of the story.
- Harkewicz:** Yeah. Okay. *[Laugh]* Let's back up a little bit. Correct me if I'm wrong, I believe you were on the *Horizon* during Operation Ivy? I think you were first mate? Is that correct? The first hydrogen test in the Pacific?
- Haines:** I thought it was the *Spencer F. Baird*.
- Harkewicz:** Okay. You were on the *Baird*. I know there were two ships involved in the Capricorn Expedition.
- Haines:** Yeah, the *Horizon* was already out there, and it was the *Spencer F. Baird*. I think that was the beginning of Capricorn Expedition.
- Harkewicz:** Right. So, you were on the *Baird*? I know that, well I'm not sure, I know that the *Horizon* had fallout from the test? Did the *Baird* get any of that at all?⁹
- Haines:** Not that I recall.
- Harkewicz:** So when . . .
- Haines:** We were anchored, I think, in Bikini Atoll and they tested the first hydrogen bomb, I think. It was at Eniwetok. And we saw it, but we were upwind from it. So I don't think we got any contamination.
- Harkewicz:** Okay. I know that was a secret test. What was that like for you? I mean, if . . .
- Haines:** We didn't know anything about it until we got there.
- Harkewicz:** Until you saw it? *[Laugh]* Okay. So it was a secret? All right. I wondered if cruises that involved the Navy's needs, like Ivy, now you were talking about Capricorn, which was the Scripps scientific end of the cruise. But I'll ask you this anyway. Were cruises that involved the Navy's needs different than ones that were strictly scientific, from your end, either as a first mate or as a captain?

⁹ Operation Ivy was the first thermonuclear test conducted by the US government. On 1 November 1952 at 0714:59.4, Mike was detonated on the surface of Elugelab Island in the Pacific Proving Ground at Eniwetok Atoll. The Scripps Institution of Oceanography had already planned Capricorn Expedition to the Pacific for the fall of 1952 and received a contract from the government to undertake a bathymetric survey and install monitoring equipment in preparation for the test. Scripps vessels R/V *Horizon* and R/V *Spencer F. Baird* were involved in the operation. At noon after the blast *Horizon* was hove-to (as ordered) at 46 nautical miles northeast of seamount 72, about 100 nautical miles northward of Ground Zero when it began to drizzle and fallout was detected. The vessel was washed down, but for the remaining twenty-six years of Scripps service she was unable to accommodate experiments involving low-level radiation counting.

- Haines:** Well, I think they had to do with submarines a lot, sonar and that sort of thing. But in those days I really didn't understand too much about the scientific program. There was a lot of security and that sort of thing but other than the science itself or whatever they were doing . . . *[Recording paused.]*
- Harkewicz:** Recording again. Okay, so you said other than some secrecy there was, pretty much your job was about the same between them?
- Haines:** The same.
- Harkewicz:** Okay.
- Haines:** Running the ship, doing what the scientists wanted to do.
- Harkewicz:** So, okay. So there was no, like, Navy personnel, per se, onboard for these Navy operations?
- Haines:** There may have been a naval representative aboard but I don't recall anything specific.
- Harkewicz:** Okay. We were talking about your crew before and I wondered if, as the captain, you had any input as to your crew members. Did you do the hiring or did you just end up with people?
- Haines:** In those days, no, but towards the end I'd say, well, towards the late seventies, early eighties, the captains started to interview and do their own hiring through Marine Facilities. They'd make their recommendations. And that was a good move, in my opinion, because, you know, if you happened to choose a bad apple it was your fault, *[laugh]* not somebody else's. *[Laugh]*
- Harkewicz:** And you're stuck with them too, then, I guess?
- Haines:** Yeah.
- Harkewicz:** What kind of things were you looking for in people, if there's anything specific?
- Haines:** Well, just general knowledge, and personality, and ability to get along. Close quarters, you have to get along. That's about it.
- Harkewicz:** I know that the scientists didn't go out for any tremendous, huge periods of time unless they were like the drilling teams, but how long did you usually go out? I guess, you said sixty percent of your time was at sea, so how much—would you be out for an extended period and different scientists would fly in at ports? Is that how it usually worked?

Haines: Well, in the old days the ship would go out for maybe thirty or forty days and with the same people aboard and then come back to San Diego. They'd have long expeditions. I think Capricorn was the first long expedition, I've forgotten how long it was.

Harkewicz: Three months or something?

Haines: Three or four months. But usually, they just come aboard in San Diego and we go out for thirty days, or whatever period of time, ship time, they had, and then come back. Gas up and take on another group and go out again.

Harkewicz: What did you do when you weren't out at sea? *[Laugh]* There wasn't much time left, I guess?

Haines: No. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: That's how you ended up with your four children, I suppose. *[Laugh]*

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: Did you have your own ?

Haines: Helped with the family and that sort of thing.

Harkewicz: Did you ever have your own boat, ship, whatever?

Haines: I've had boats, sailboats mostly. I think the first boat I owned, first sailboat I owned, was bought along with a friend of mine in 1972-73. We kept that for, I guess, ten or twelve years. And then my son decided he wanted it so he bought it. And I was at sea all the time. So those are the only boats that I can remember that I actually owned. I sailed on a lot of them.

Harkewicz: Did any of your children get involved in any of this kind of seafaring . . .

Haines: Pardon me?

Harkewicz: Did any of your children get involved in these things . . . ?

Harkewicz: My son, I got him into sailing at an early age. And, in fact, on Lusiad Expedition, and I don't know—I wrote some of this down.¹⁰ Lusiad was from June of '62 until February '63. That was an around-the-world expedition, the first one Scripps ever did. And on that cruise one of the engineers and myself built two small sailboats aboard the *Horizon*.

¹⁰ Lusiad Expedition of 1962 was the longest Scripps cruise to date and was part of an international effort to explore the Indian Ocean. Scripps vessels R/V *Horizon* and R/V *Argo* sailed around the world to study the Indian Ocean, its currents, and map its seafloor.

Harkewicz: Really? *[Laugh]*

Haines: They were small, about eight-footers. They're called sabots, S-A-B-O-T, and we built those. We took all the material with us. We had the sails made before we left San Diego, and we launched those in the Suez Canal when we were going down into the Indian Ocean. And we used them in various ports, and that sort of thing. And when we got back to San Diego, why, I took my son from Coronado to Point Loma where the ships were and we put it in the water and we sailed it back to Coronado, the two of us. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: Great.

Haines: And he got very interested in sailing and has been very successful since then. He won a gold medal in the '84 Olympics, and right now he's making a movie in Hawaii, a sailing movie.¹¹

Harkewicz: Excellent.

Haines: So, he's . . .

Harkewicz: Well, that's nice?

Haines: He's strictly a sailor.

Harkewicz: That's nice.

Haines: He doesn't do anything else.

Harkewicz: So you have a legacy, then?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: That's good. *[Laugh]* That's great. So, what was it, how did your job differ from ship to ship? I know you were talking about the *Alpha Helix* before.

Haines: Well, *Paolina-T* was the first one, and then I went up to Adak, Alaska and relieved the captain of the *Stranger*, which was a converted yacht with questionable stability. And I was on the *Stranger*, I would say maybe two or three years as skipper of the *Stranger* going, you know, all over the Pacific, and down to Panama.

Harkewicz: But you said stability was a problem. So what was it like to work on something for two or three years that you had those feelings about? *[Laugh]*

¹¹ Robert Bentley "Robbie" Haines, Jr. (1954-) won a gold medal at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles in the mixed 3-person keelboat event and subsequently broke two time records for sailing to Hawaii.

Haines: Well, the ship just had a very uncomfortable motion. No matter how rough it was, if you just laid in the trough, stationary, it wouldn't roll at all, but as soon as you started moving and you got the sea back on the quarter or astern it would just roll very slowly and it would go over there and it would stay there. And you wouldn't know, really, whether it was going to come back or not. Obviously it did, but it was questionable. And finally, just before a trip down to Panama, we had the vessel inclined, which means we gave it a stability test in San Diego, and right after that we left and went down to Panama. And then we left Panama on our way home, and I think we were on our way to Cocos Island, which is off Costa Rica, and I got a message from the marine superintendent that the ship would be unstable, which means, you know, it wouldn't come back when your fuel got very low. And our fuel was going to be very low by the time we got back to San Diego. The chief scientist, he wanted to go farther out to sea and I decided that I wasn't going to do that. I was going to just make a beeline for San Diego, but we would stop and take observations or whatever the chief scientist wanted to do, but I was not going to go further out to sea. Well, we got back to San Diego and chief scientist—Roger Revelle¹² was director then—and he, the chief scientist, said, “This guy's got to be fired. Get rid of him. He screwed, fouled up my whole program. It was a waste of my time,” you know, on and on and on. So I got wind of this, of course, from the marine superintendent. So I went to the Coast Guard, the OCMI, which is the Officer in Charge of Marine Inspection, Coast Guard, San Diego, and explained the situation, then asked him what he would do, on an informal basis. He said he would have gone right into the coast and just gone from harbor to harbor to harbor all the way back to San Diego. So, I felt that I'd done the right thing. Anyway, I probably got a letter or censure or something from Revelle, but I don't recall that it affected my career.

Harkewicz: So did you feel like there was anybody at Scripps that would support you in a situation like that? I mean, you said, you didn't go to somebody at Scripps to tell them your story, you went to the Coast Guard?

Haines: Well, the marine superintendent at that time was basically inexperienced. He was a retired Navy officer and I think he started out in the Navy as an electrician. He was a good administrator and a very nice person, but he wasn't that familiar with ships. I don't know if I should say that or not, but that's my opinion.

Harkewicz: You didn't name any names or anything. You could if you want. *[Laugh]* That's entirely up to you. I'm trying to see how this all worked because I'm afraid I don't really totally understand how it all worked. But I was talking to Robert Fisher,¹³ who was the ship scheduler for a time period, and I wondered, you know, as the captain of a ship, did you have interaction with these people that were scheduling or that, you know, sent certain ships in certain areas. I mean,

¹² Roger Randall Dougan Revelle (1909-1991), director of Scripps Institution of Oceanography 1951-1964.

¹³ Robert Lloyd Fisher (1925-), research geologist at Scripps Institution of Oceanography and associate director of Ship Operations and Marine Technical Support.

how much did you get involved in any of the planning, or were you just told where you're going to go and things like that?

Haines: Sure. When you're running the ship, ship scheduling makes out the year's cruises, and gets funding for them. He doesn't get funding for them, but I mean the principal investigator does. But we have nothing to say about where we go or how long, as a captain.

Harkewicz: But in a case like this where you have to determine if a ship is seaworthy in a certain place, who decides that kind of thing?

Haines: Well, I think after the *Stranger* thing, people started paying more attention to stability. And I don't think that was a problem. I was—well, I'm getting ahead of it, though. I was ship scheduler myself for five years.

Harkewicz: Oh, you were? Okay.

Haines: Yeah. Working with Bob Fisher.

Harkewicz: Okay.

Haines: Yeah. But that's kind of getting ahead of the program.

Harkewicz: I know, we're sort of, *[laugh]* we're kind of all over the time frame. So what happened to *Stranger* after that, though?

Haines: I think they sold it and they got, probably got something to replace it, but I cannot remember what that ship was. It may have been the *Hugh M. Smith*, which was a converted fishing vessel. But I just don't recall what replaced the—it may have been the *Spencer Baird*. It could have been the *Spencer Baird* replaced the *Stranger*. But I'm not sure.¹⁴

Harkewicz: Have you ever captained any ships other than Scripps ships?

Haines: Yes.

Harkewicz: And how did that. . .

Haines: That's after I retired.

Harkewicz: So how did that compare? What kind of work did you do then?

¹⁴ R/V *Stranger* was built as a yacht in Seattle in 1938. She was used by the University of California Division Of War Research (UCDWR) in San Diego under the name *USS Jasper* (PYC-13) and was acquired by Scripps Institution in 1955. There were lots of complaints about stability from those who sailed on her. The vessel was sold in 1965. R/V *Spencer F. Baird* did not replace *Stranger*, but the Institution acquired R/V *Ellen B. Scripps* a few months after *Stranger* was sold.

Haines: Essentially the same kind of work. It was the R/V *Thomas Thompson*, from the University of Washington. I was relief skipper on that, and also the R/V *Maurice Ewing* from Lamont. I was the relief skipper on that for, I'd say, a couple of trips.

Harkewicz: Did you notice any difference in how your work was with these different institutions?

Haines: It's essentially the same.

Harkewicz: Okay. What about the scientists that you dealt with?

Haines: Well, you always have prima donnas. Most of them you get along with. Some of them you don't. *[Laugh]* That's a touchy situation sometimes.

Harkewicz: Well, can we talk about that a little bit—I don't want you to make you uncomfortable. But it is an interesting situation. I mean, you said, and my understanding is what the scientists have told me is, "The captain's in charge of the ship."

Haines: That's right.

Harkewicz: So what does that mean, though? Obviously you had this one situation in particular that probably wasn't the only time where you had a certain amount of conflicts with a . . .

Haines: Well, I think it, you know, you can't get along a hundred percent of the time, but there are certain things. You know, you're in charge of running the ship and providing a service for the chief scientist, and you're more or less obliged to do what he wants to do, unless in some way it endangers the ship or the people on it. And that's where your authority is what they call "supreme."

Harkewicz: I don't suppose you can compare it at all to your experience when you were in the Navy? I know you had a different position and everything when you were then, so you can't really?

Haines: There's no comparison. No.

Harkewicz: So you never had a job where you weren't working with scientists, then, on a ship?

Haines: Oh, after I retired, I ran a few yachts and that sort of thing but, no, I think probably ninety-five to a hundred percent of my time is with Scripps and with scientists.

Harkewicz: How much interaction did you actually have with the scientists? Was it basically a business type situation where they wanted you, they needed something?

Haines: Well, we'd usually have a meeting before the cruise and they lay out the program and ninety percent of the time I would have no comment. If that's what they want to do that's, it's their business and I'm here to serve them.

Harkewicz: I guess, we sort of asked this but I'll ask it directly: did the goals of the ship's personnel ever conflict with the goals of the scientists, other than what you've talked about already?

Haines: Goals of the ship's personnel? What do you mean by that?

Harkewicz: Oh, I guess we're still talking about conflicts again. And I guess, you tried to give them what they asked for, is what you're basically saying, unless it endangered the—okay. Were there certain people, certain scientists that you liked working with or didn't like to work with that you'd like, anything you want to share with us about anybody, maybe?

Haines: Well, I guess you could say I got along better with some people, with most people. I would say ninety percent of the people, but there were a few that kind of rubbed you the wrong way, prima donna type, I think.

Harkewicz: I know that I spoke with a few scientists who were out at sea who would talk about some of the activities that they would do at sea or in port, and you talked a little bit about your crew people in port. Were there any kind of activities at sea where there was interactions between the scientific staff and the crew staff that you were involved with, or was everybody just too busy doing their work?

Haines: I think everybody was pretty busy doing their job. You know, you're four hours on, eight hours off, and you try and get as much rest as you can when you're off duty. And there's not much recreational things to do aboard ship, other than to watch movies, or card games, and stuff like that.

Harkewicz: So obviously you couldn't work twenty-four hours a day, as the captain. Is the first mate the person that would take over then when you would sleep or something? Who took over for you when you were . . .

Haines: The watch officer. On the larger ships there's three watch officers: first, second, and third mate, and then there's a boatswain [bo's'n] on the larger ships, at least there used to be. I don't know if they have it now. And then, four seamen, five seamen. But . . .

Harkewicz: Was it pretty much compartmentalized? If somebody on the scientific staff had a problem with one of your crew people would they come to you and then you'd

talk to them? So it wasn't like they would go and say anything directly to your people?

Haines: No. They would probably come to me.

Harkewicz: Would your crew people ever complain about the scientific people and, I mean, would you ever, would the reverse happen, too?

Haines: Oh yeah. I would say the majority of the lower ratings, and I think the mates, understand where the funding comes from for the ships, but I don't think a lot of the crewmen realize that the chief scientist has to write up a proposal to do a certain project and he has to get that approved by the funding agency, whether it's the Navy or the National Science Foundation, and that money pays their salary. They think they just get paid out of the state general fund, which I don't think is true. I think it's money that the scientists generate and it's all put together in a whole yearly program and their salaries come out of that. I mean, it's part of the proposal, I think. I guess the marine superintendent makes up a yearly budget, and it's going to take so many dollars for fuel, so many dollars for food, so much for insurance, so much for maintenance, all those things. But that all comes out of the scientists' money. I, on occasion, have tried to explain this to people but they don't seem to get it.

Harkewicz: Okay.

Haines: So they have some rather harsh words for the scientists [*laugh*] sometimes. If you've got a guy that's kind of picky—and you know how that goes.

Harkewicz: Okay. So, you're thinking that if they understood that their money, that their salary was coming from—they might have . . .

Haines: And it's our job to please them. And that's our job. If you don't like the job, move on.

Harkewicz: Okay. [*Sigh*] So, in regards to like the equipment—you were in charge, I mean, you and your crew were in charge of the ship's equipment, correct? I mean, operating the ship itself? But the stuff that the scientists used, don't they have lab technicians, or something, that handled their equipment? I mean, did your crew ever have to worry about—well, I want to say “dredging.” I know they had those big things that they used on like the *Horizon* and the *Baird* a lot, where they would go down, they would lower something down. And was that something . . .

Haines: Drag up rocks from the bottom?

Harkewicz: Right. Was that something that your people, that your crew members handled or was it scientific personnel?

Haines: It's mostly scientific. I think the resident technician is more or less in charge of all that stuff. We've had those type of people for as far back as I can remember. And I think as far as putting the equipment aboard is concerned we, the ship's company helps, with that. And the chief mate, one of his responsibilities is to make sure that everything is secured properly for sea. But other than that, they bring graduate students with them and the crew, I think, probably on occasion gets involved, but not very often, handling the scientific equipment.

Harkewicz: So, people had their own positions and they pretty much stayed there?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: Okay. Well, this is a really broad question, but I'm going to ask it anyways. Can you describe a typical day at sea, from your point as the captain? If there is such a thing as a "typical day" at sea?

Haines: Oh, I think so. I usually get up early and go up to the bridge and see how things are, then I go down and have a cup of coffee, *[laugh]* and probably breakfast. And then I probably go back up to the bridge and check on things. And let's see . . . we may or may not have a meeting with the chief scientist, and I spend a fair amount of time in the lab making sure that everything is okay—all over the ship. And I have lunch, sometimes, and then I'll take a nap in the afternoon, maybe, then have dinner. If we were going to have a movie, or maybe we won't. I don't know. Going back and forth on the bridge a lot of the time. Frequent visits to the bridge. And then maybe go to sleep about ten o'clock at night, something like that. But often I'd get a call in the middle of the night. I'd have to go back up to the bridge and tend to whatever situation is, there is. But I think that's probably a typical day.

Harkewicz: It would seem to me that you would have to have a certain type of personality to deal with something like that. I know some of us who have had experiences like carrying pagers, if we were on twenty-four hour call. Or, I know that my experience with that kind of situation there's a certain amount of stress involved with that. But how did you get used to always being, having to be ready?

Haines: I don't know. *[Laughter]* It seemed to come naturally. I mean, you're on-call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. But I don't know that there's any special preparation.

Harkewicz: Maybe it is a personality thing—

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: —maybe if you're . . .

Haines: I think so.

Harkewicz: Did you find it difficult to give that up when you were at home? I mean, were you . . . *[Laugh]*

Haines: Well, no.

Harkewicz: No? You could leave it onboard ship, then?

Haines: That's your territory. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: Okay. You were talking about the bridge and I wondered about your equipment changes? How did things change as far as like navigational equipment and stuff over the years that you were a captain?

Haines: Well, in the old days we had very little navigational equipment, and we had to do everything by celestial navigation, which was really difficult in those days. They'd want to survey a seamount or something like that, and they'd have to crisscross it this way and that way, and every time they crossed a previous sounding line the soundings had to agree. And they very seldom did, and we didn't have GPS in those days. We had strictly dead reckoning. And it took hours sometimes trying to get a smooth plot worked up based on a navigational fix in the morning, if there were, if it wasn't overcast, shooting a star. And then you'd get another one at noon, and then you'd get maybe, if you're lucky, you'd get another star fix at night. And you've got three positions and you've been running, going like this all day long, back and forth. It was just a bit of a mess and it took a long time. I remember when I was a chief mate that was my job, trying to work out or give the chief scientist a smooth plot. But nowadays it's a piece of cake. Nothing to it.

Harkewicz: Okay. I talked with Bob Fisher a little bit about something like this and he was talking about how you didn't know where you were at, you know, how it was a big deal to figure out where you're at like you just said.

Haines: Exactly.

Harkewicz: But I guess I, maybe I got the impression from him that the scientists were more involved in that than you make it sound like, in a way. Was it more of the ship's personnel that were in charge of that kind of activity?

Haines: Well, they had no means of knowing where they were, down in the lab. They depended on the bridge. And I would perhaps make up a plot, "This is what I think we did yesterday," or something. And I'd give it to them and they may, I don't know what they did with it. They'd say, "Well, this is no good at all. We don't like this." You can't change it. I mean, the data, the fixes are there and you just have to kind of try and move things around to make them fit. It's like a big jigsaw puzzle. But, as I say, scientific people had no means of navigation

then, other than the fathometer, the contours of the bottom, and maybe they crisscrossed the same place twice or something and they recognized it. So they knew. And maybe the fixes weren't that accurate, you know.

Harkewicz: But, the important thing is that they wanted to know where they were at and you wanted to know so that you could—because otherwise the data would be irrelevant?

Haines: That's right.

Harkewicz: Okay. But what about as things got more technologically advanced with your equipment? How did that change your job?

Haines: Well, that made it just a whole lot easier. The GPS is plugged right into their sounding machines and, you know, it's right there. It's just child's play nowadays. I won't say "child's play," but I mean so much easier than it was in the old days.

Harkewicz: Did you feel like anything was lost? You must have developed a certain amount of expertise?

Haines: I can't evaluate that. I don't know. Maybe they thought everything that I did was no good at all. *[Laugh]* You know, they never said so, but you never know what people are thinking. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: I had a couple of questions here that I thought about when you were talking. You mentioned before about a lot of the activities you had to handle in port and things like that. And I wondered, when you went to other countries I know there must have been like a lot of paperwork involved. Did you have to take care of that? I mean, that was your job, right?

Haines: Well, every time you go into port you have what you call a "ship's agent." In a foreign port, you've got a language problem. And, theoretically the ship's agent speaks your language and can interpret for you. But depending on the country, a lot of the customs officials, they want a little something from you. It's either cigarettes, or a bottle of booze, or something, and we didn't carry any booze. We only carried so many cigarettes for the crew in those days, but sometimes they would go down to the storeroom where the cigarettes were locked up, because they were under bond, and say, "Well, I want so many cartons of this and so many cartons of that, or I won't clear you." So you just have to. You have to, unless it's unreasonable, then you just have to turn it over to the agent and say, "No." And that is a big hassle, and papers get lost, and you know, delays.

Harkewicz: But that was something you were counted on to take care of somehow or other? It sounds like you'd have to have your own, like, stash some way or other so you

could make sure everybody was happy or something? *[Laugh]* That sounds very complicated.

Haines: It was a problem sometimes.

Harkewicz: I also wondered when you mentioned about all these places that you traveled to, and I had asked someone who was one of the drilling technicians also about this, when you would go from place to place, or beyond it being the tropics versus like Antarctica or Alaska, could you really tell once at sea that you were in different places? I mean, did it feel different to you? I mean, it's not like going country to country and experiencing different cultures, exactly. I mean, what was it like to go on a world trip and never actually get off the boat, so to speak? I mean, what was that like for you? Did you feel like you saw the world in your experiences as a captain?

Haines: Oh yeah. I suppose at the time—the only time I really got upset was on the Lusiad Expedition on the *Horizon*. We were, I think we were in Mauritius in the Indian Ocean in the Cuban Missile Crisis. And what word we got was sketchy and it sounded just awful, and we were going into an atomic war or something and, I said, “Here I am halfway around the world. No way of getting home,” and that sort of thing. So I kind of got upset with that, but I got over it. But, other than that, you don't see as much—you go into a foreign port you're just so busy, if you're only in port for two or three days you just don't have the opportunity to get around because there's just so much going on - as the other crew members. They have to stand their watches but, you know, they have a fair amount of time off. So. But, a new place is always interesting.

Harkewicz: Even if you don't get to see very much of it?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: What about when you were in Australia then for that eight months? Did you get anymore experience seeing the country at all?

Haines: Well, I didn't get home that much. We were on station sometimes for two months at a time, sixty days, and the whole *Alpha Helix* program was, I call it my “golden years at Scripps,” because I was interested in the science they were doing. I could understand it more than some of the other things we did at Scripps. And, the people were absolutely wonderful, and the ship was comfortable. I just thoroughly enjoyed it, more so, much more so than any of the other ships.

Harkewicz: Well, I did want to ask you about that, which ships you liked to be on, or which ones you didn't like to be on? So if you can talk about that any? I mean, you mentioned *Alpha Helix*. Is there other ones that you . . .

Haines: Well, I have a list of them here. *[Laugh]* These are all the ones that I was skipper of.

Harkewicz: OK, but did you have any particular thoughts about any of these . . .

Haines: No. You know, some were small. Some were larger. Some were medium size. I mean, they're all different. But, the *Alpha Helix* just did something completely different from all the others. It was a wonderful little ship and it was kind of like a yacht, and . . . well, I'm kind of at a loss for words. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: Well, you said you were interested in the science that they were doing. How did that affect what you were doing?

Haines: Well, because I didn't actually get involved in the experiments but I went with them when they were collecting material on the Great Barrier Reef, which was the first major expedition for the *Alpha Helix*. They were over there for almost eight months, and as I say, in a minor sort of way I just got involved with the scientists, helping them collect, and doing things like that, which I enjoyed. And on the second expedition, I think down at the Antarctic in 1970.¹⁵ They had a bunch of penguins onboard that were running around loose *[laugh]* and they were using them. They had a license to take so many penguins. And they'd strap a radio, a little tiny radio with an antenna on the back of the penguin and let him loose and then they could follow him. I mean, just things like that *[laugh]* that were really interesting, rather than just taking water samples up and down, and drilling holes, or taking cores, and all that sort of thing. It was just completely different.

Harkewicz: Right. Well, it was more of a biological collection?

Haines: A medical/biological thing.

Harkewicz: Yeah. Andrew Benson¹⁶ mentioned, I guess, something about a Navy icebreaker and the *Alpha Helix* in Antarctica. He said that you could tell the story better. In this email he mentioned it. Do you remember that at all?

Haines: Well—Navy icebreaker? A Navy icebreaker? There was a Coast Guard icebreaker. I'm not sure . . .

Harkewicz: Well, he said it was a "Navy icebreaker." You were off the coast of Antarctica and there was something about drifting or something like that?

Haines: Drifting?

¹⁵ Antarctic Expedition (1970-1971) on R/V *Alpha Helix* consisted of a number of legs with different chief scientists that took the ship from San Diego through the Eastern Tropical Pacific, into the South Pacific, and down to Antarctica studying the biology and physiology of marine mammals, marine environments including corals, and studies of sharks and other marine life.

¹⁶ Andrew Alm Benson (1917-), professor of biology at Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Harkewicz: Drifting. Yeah—I don’t want to give you the story—but, if you can’t remember it, I guess you can’t. It was something about that the Navy called you and said you were going to hit this iceberg or something like that, and you said that they were going to hit it? That you weren’t drifting, they were? Let me see if I can find my—I’ll see if I can spur your memory here. Okay, he says that, “Anchored off of Rocky Island off Antarctica near a huge Navy icebreaker, the Navy bridge called *Alpha Helix* with an urgent warning that, ‘You are drifting dangerously.’” And you checked the position and you said, “No sirs, you are adrift.” And the skipper of the Navy ship instantly lighted his engines and escaped disaster. Does that remind you? *[Laugh]*

Haines: Vaguely, I remember something like that, but it was a Coast Guard icebreaker. It wasn’t Navy.

Harkewicz: Okay.

Haines: Yeah. The Navy doesn’t have icebreakers.

Harkewicz: So, he said it was a good story, but I guess, *[laughter]* you don’t remember it. So it wasn’t as memorable to you as it was to him.

Haines: I vaguely remember now that you mention it, but at first I didn’t recall that. I think we were anchored in, in . . . I can’t remember the place now. Palmer Station. Did he happen to mention Palmer Station?

Harkewicz: No, he didn’t mention Palmer Station. I interviewed him several months ago. So this was just an email that he had sent in relation to something else.

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: He also mentioned, though, a woman who taught your children from Bella Coola, when you were in Australia? She had been their school teacher? I guess you ran into her, or he ran into her . . . well that’s not . . .

Haines: I remember vaguely, but I think she was a part of the scientific program on the *Alpha Helix* and I think it’s either when I had my youngest daughter aboard or my son. I can’t recall which, they got to be very friendly and she, I think it was my son, would go and help her with experiments and everything. They got kind of close.

Harkewicz: Oh, well that’s neat.

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: So, it sounds like the *Alpha Helix* was your favorite ship then?

Haines: Yup.

Harkewicz: That's it? Was it any different to captain it than other ones?

Haines: No. No. The only difference is that I had to stand a watch on that because we only had two deck officers and myself, and we have three watches. So I had to stand a watch which was fine. But, other than that it was—and we were kind of somewhat privileged when we were in port here in San Diego, as to who would make modifications or repairs and how they would do it. It wasn't like the other ships where the marine superintendent or his assistant would come down to the ship and say, "Do it this way," and the crew wouldn't have anything to say about it. That's the way it was done. But for some reason, and I'm not quite sure how it all worked out, the captain approved all modifications or anything that was done on the ship, and more or less had a free hand.

Harkewicz: Do you know why that was?

Haines: No.

Harkewicz: Hmm. Interesting.

Haines: Well, *[laugh]* I can only guess, but I think the marine superintendent was told that, "This is the way it's going to be," by somebody above him.

Harkewicz: But you don't know who that would have been, either?

Haines: No. I have an idea.

Harkewicz: Okay. I guess, you know, you're captaining the ship. I mean, did you feel like it was your ship all the time or just when you were at sea? I mean, how did that work?

Haines: No.

Harkewicz: Were you responsible . . .

Haines: As long as you're assigned to that ship, whether you were in port or at sea, it's . . .

Harkewicz: I mean, even when you came back here?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: You were? Okay. So you'd come back from a long cruise, say, what would your day be looking like then when you were here waiting to go on out in another . . .

- Haines:** Well, just doing things we couldn't do at sea. More or less just general maintenance. But you know, maybe an engine had to be overhauled, or one of the winches broke down, or something like that. But other than that it's just general maintenance, getting ready for the next cruise.
- Harkewicz:** So was that sort of like a separate entity down there at MarFac or, did you interact with people up here at all? You mentioned Roger Revelle with this whole incident on the *Stranger*. Did directorships, as far as from your standpoint, do you think the changes in directors made any difference to you?
- Haines:** Not really. Not the whole, general, running of the institution. I mean, some directors were more popular than others, but no, it's pretty much the same.
- Harkewicz:** Well, you mentioned, too, about the funding issue before and how the scientists got the funding. Did you notice a difference when, you know, right after World War II there was a lot of Navy funding, through ONR and things like that. From your standpoint, did you notice any difference when things shifted more to NSF and those kind of organizations?
- Haines:** No.
- Harkewicz:** It didn't affect the ship?
- Haines:** But just thinking back now, over the type of work we were doing, I think a lot of it was Navy, more so than NSF.
- Harkewicz:** Uhm-hmm. Why do you say that? I mean, is there something that makes you think that?
- Haines:** Well, we were in a Naval facility, like Naval Electronics Laboratory there. And thinking back on some of the things we did, I think a lot of it had to do with submarines, sonar, and that sort of thing.
- Harkewicz:** But you really didn't have knowledge of that? So if there was secret work, would you, would that affect how you did your work at all?
- Haines:** Well, in the Operation Wigwam, prior to that, I guess maybe a year or more prior to that, on the *Paolina-T*, and we were long-line fishing.¹⁷ They sent us out on long-line fishing and what they were looking for, we'd go out for thirty days at a time and set these long lines every day, all the way from, I guess, about the latitude of San Diego all the way down to Cabo San Lucas—and maybe out four or five hundred miles—looking for an area that had no fish. Because they knew they didn't want to contaminate the fish with this explosion. And so we did that for a long time. Prior to that . . .

¹⁷ Operation Wigwam was a deep underwater test of an atomic weapon conducted by the US government on May 12, 1955, 400-500 miles southwest of San Diego, California (about 29 Deg. N, 126 Deg. W).

- Harkewicz:** So, Wigwam was the nuclear blast, underwater nuclear blast, off of San Diego?
- Haines:** Yeah.
- Harkewicz:** Okay. So, did you find out about these things like afterwards, after the fact, what they were actually doing?
- Haines:** Why, we all wondered, “Well, why are we doing this?” Nobody would say.
- Harkewicz:** So how would you find out about something like that, through the grapevine? Read about it in the newspaper? *[Laugh]*
- Haines:** No. No. I think a bunch of security stuff came in and I think that’s when we found out.
- Harkewicz:** So the captain really isn’t in the loop of these kind of things?
- Haines:** Oh, I think he is when it’s necessary, but it wasn’t necessary at that time. For that. The more people know the more chance there is *[laugh]* of a leak. *[Laugh]*
- Harkewicz:** That’s right. Exactly. And, “Loose lips sink ships,” right, as they say? *[Laughter]* So, I don’t know if I’m jumping ahead, but I wanted to ask you about your time as a ship scheduler. You said you worked with Robert Fisher. What did that mean to you as a captain and was that something you did on the side?
- Haines:** Well, the job was open and my friend Jim Faughn,¹⁸ who was captain, the first captain of the *Alpha Helix*, who I thought a lot of, wanted to retire and they offered me the job. And that would mean I would be able to spend more time at home with the family, and that sort of thing, so I said, “Sure. I would do it.” I think it lasted about five years. I can’t say I enjoyed it because I don’t enjoy sitting behind a desk, but you know I had to feel my way into it. But I think I did a decent job.
- Harkewicz:** Was that at the end of your career here at Scripps or did you go back out to sea?
- Haines:** No, it was about, I think about 1975 to about 1980 or ’81. And I’m not sure what the circumstances were but George Shor¹⁹ came up and said, “Do you want to say

¹⁸ James Lawrence Faughn (1910-1985) served in the US Navy from 1927-1942 and worked at Scripps from 1947 until his retirement in 1974 as an engineer, captain, ship scheduler and staff officer. He was succeeded by Captain Haines as master of R/V *Stranger* on Naga Expedition. He oversaw the construction of R/V *Alpha Helix* and served as her captain, succeeded again by Captain Haines.

¹⁹ George G. Shor, Jr. (1923-) got his PhD in seismology at California Institute of Technology and joined Scripps Institution of Oceanography in 1953 as a research geophysicist. He held many positions at Scripps including directing the Ship Operations and serving as assistant director of the Scripps Institution from 1968 until his retirement.

here or do you want to go back to sea?" And financially it was better for me to go back to sea, as far as retirement is concerned, so I said, "I'd like to go back to sea." So I did, on the *Melville*.

Harkewicz: Can you explain that a little bit? Did you work more hours or something when you're out at sea so that you made more money? Or . . .

Haines: No, it was, the salary was better.

Harkewicz: Oh, okay.

Haines: And it's based, you know, on your salary, and I was thinking about retirement and that sort of thing. So it was just more financially beneficial for me to do it that way, and I enjoyed it.

Harkewicz: Did it change the way you did your job at all, you think, having been a ship scheduler? I don't know why it would, exactly, having experienced that?

Haines: No, but I was more familiar with how everything worked, you know, the funding and a lot of things that most people down in the Marine Facilities don't know anything about.

Harkewicz: Okay. So then some of these . . .

Haines: I don't know whether that was an advantage or not, but I mean it, I understood it, the whole program, a lot better.

Harkewicz: So earlier you mentioned about how the crew people didn't understand that they were getting paid by these scientists funding the missions, or whatever. Did you know that at the time or is that something you learned going through ship scheduling?

Haines: I think so. Yeah. You know, if a crew member had a problem with a particular scientist, or visa versa, I'd just sit down and talk with the crew member and say, "You're kicking the guy that's paying your salary. You know, we're here to do that and if you don't want to do that, and you can't get along with them, well then you should go someplace else."

Harkewicz: But that was after you . . .

Haines: That's the way it worked.

Harkewicz: Yeah. But that was after you had had this experience yourself?

Haines: Yeah.

- Harkewicz:** So when you were doing this scheduling thing, were you actually working with scientists then, at the time?
- Haines:** Yeah. I got to know a lot of them. I was working for Bob Fisher. He was associate director, associate director for what, SOMTS, or S-O-M-T-S?²⁰
- Harkewicz:** S-O-M- T-S, yeah.
- Haines:** Yeah. No, I learned a lot.
- Harkewicz:** So, was that working down at MarFac then, or was that up here?
- Haines:** Up here.
- Harkewicz:** Okay. Was that, that must have been odd though, too?
- Haines:** Different.
- Harkewicz:** Yeah.
- Haines:** I knew a lot of people by then. I mean, the scientists.
- Harkewicz:** Do you have any stories you want to tell us about anybody? I mean, it can be good bad, or other.
- Haines:** Nothing I can tell. *[Laugh]*
- Harkewicz:** Nothing you can tell? Okay. All right. For the audience, I can see a little twinkle in Captain Haines' eyes.
- Haines:** It's all about personalities, you know, and you want to leave that out. *[Laughter]*
- Harkewicz:** Okay. Well, all right. You know, you talked about the *Alpha Helix* and, I'm not that familiar with what it's like to work aboard a ship and be a captain. Is there any particular things you could tell, you would like to share with people that maybe they don't know about your having worked on a ship for so long?
- Haines:** It's all pretty much the same, I mean, from one ship to the other. The ships are different and you've got a different number of people that you manage, but nowadays, I mean, it's pretty much all the same science. I mean, from my view. I mean, it may not be. It may be completely different, you're either doing a lot of bathymetry, or you're doing a lot of chemical oceanography, or you're doing stuff

²⁰ Ship Operations and Marine Technical Support (SOMTS) was created in 1974. It was the technical support division of Scripps Institution of Oceanography. SOMTS provides ship scheduling, foreign clearances and marine technical support. It includes Shipboard Technical Support Services and the Chester W. Nimitz Marine Facility. Dr. Robert L. Fisher headed SOMTS from 1974-1980.

in the air. But I suppose the smaller ships, like the *New Horizon*, the CalCOFI²¹ program, I guess that's still going, isn't it? There's that sort of thing, which his really boring. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: Because all you're doing is collecting samples from different areas?

Haines: Yeah. Just doing the same pattern, every month, the same thing. And that's been going on before I started working here, about 1949, maybe even 1948. A long time.

Harkewicz: So okay, you mentioned CalCOFI is just going around, back and forth through the same areas picking up the samples and stuff, and you mentioned about earlier, sort of this grid-like process, trying to find your location and over seamounts and things? So was there something unique about *Alpha Helix* that you experienced from your end that made it special to you? I mean, I know you said the science was interesting to you, but did the things that you have to do as the captain, or the ship did?

Haines: We didn't do anything at sea.

Harkewicz: You didn't do anything at sea? Okay.

Haines: That I can recall. We might have taken a net tow, but I mean that would be the only thing that we did. We'd either go to the Barrier Reef and anchor or we'd go to Antarctica and we'd anchor, or we'd go up the Amazon River and anchor. That was our thing.

Harkewicz: And yet you thought that was the most interesting? Hmm.

Haines: Fascinating places. But almost everywhere we went we would have a shore camp. We'd have, when we went to Australia we took a Jeep with us. We had a Jeep in the cargo hold. We had portable laboratories. We had all the scientific equipment, besides what was being used aboard ship. It had to be transferred to our camp on the beach. And that had to be built. We had to supply electricity for the camps. And you know, it's fun. When we were up the Amazon River that's when Bill Nierenberg was director.²² We chartered an amphibian aircraft that could land on the river, and he came down and visited the camp once. And there was just a lot of things going on all the time, particularly on the Amazon because we had a Brazilian naval officer aboard and everything we wanted to do we had to go through him and then he'd have to radio his superior and say, "Well, they want to do this. Is this all right?" And it just, it was back and forth. It was just really busy, but fun.

²¹ California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations.

²² William Aaron Nierenberg (1919-2000) physicist and director of Scripps Institution of Oceanography from 1965 to 1986.

- Harkewicz:** So, would you say that even though the ship wasn't going anywhere you had more like human interaction with scientists or with people ...
- Haines:** Yes. Because I wasn't driving the ship. We were anchored. And so I would get involved in a small way, but it was interesting.
- Harkewicz:** Did you ever want to expand on that in some way? I don't know exactly how, but I mean, did you ever want to, in your spare time, go into any kind of scientific activities or anything that might be related to some of this stuff after learning about it?
- Haines:** Sure. Down in the Antarctica I remember getting involved, I was holding a penguin while, I think they anesthetized him or something and they had to drill holes down into his brain, and they would put these tubes down there that circulated different temperatures of water trying to make him perspire, and do that sort of thing. So we had all these little penguins running around with all these little caps on top of their head *[laugh]* and we put them on treadmills. We had a treadmill, *[laugh]* trying to make them walk, and you had to kind of goose them a little bit if they stopped. And just things like that. I mean, it was nothing technical.
- Harkewicz:** So what role did you play? Were you just observing or were you helping out?
- Haines:** Oh, I was helping out, as I recall.
- Harkewicz:** Uhm-hmm. And that was a unique experience in those particular ...
- Haines:** Pardon?
- Harkewicz:** When you were on these other cruises you were probably more involved with maintaining the ship itself as opposed to ...
- Haines:** Yeah.
- Harkewicz:** So, it offered you an opportunity then to do this.
- Haines:** Yeah.
- Harkewicz:** Hmm. Interesting.
- Haines:** Yeah. That's ...
- Harkewicz:** A fascinating area. So, when was the last time you went out to sea?
- Haines:** For Scripps?

Harkewicz: Yeah.

Haines: I did a relief job on the *Melville*, I don't know, maybe it was five years ago, I guess, down to Samoa, and we worked out of Samoa for thirty days and then ended up in Honolulu. That was the last time. I'm getting too old. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: Well, was it boring to go back to just being your ship's captain after having worked on the *Alpha Helix*? No?

Haines: I retired much too early.

Harkewicz: Really?

Haines: I retired when I was fifty-eight, and I miss it to this day.

Harkewicz: What kind of things are you doing to occupy your time now?

Haines: Playing golf. *[Laugh]*

Harkewicz: That's right. You said, what, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or something like that?

Haines: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Harkewicz: *[Sigh]* I don't know, can you relate your golf experience at all to your shipboard experience?

Haines: No.

Harkewicz: Nothing about guiding the ball in a certain place. . .

Haines: No.

Harkewicz: Okay. So as the science changed, did you notice your job at all changing?

Haines: No. I don't think so. The one trip, or one of the trips that I made for Lamont on the *Maurice Ewing*, I think they had three or four chief scientists, and I got together with them in a meeting and they said, because you have to communicate between them, and I said, "I don't want to have to communicate with four people that are perhaps saying different things." And, "I want to talk to one person, and it's up to you all to pick who that person is going to be." Because you're trying to deal with four different people that want to do, that are doing four different things, and you're kind of in the middle. And I said, "I don't want to put myself in that position." So it happened that way, but still, the other people would come up to me, one of the four, and say, "I want to do this." And I said, *[laugh]* "But the other guy says he wants to do that," and you know, so, but it worked out.

Harkewicz: Did that happen often where you would have to have at least a couple of people come up and say . . .

Haines: No. Not if you start out right. Because usually there's only one person, the chief scientist, but sometimes you have more than one chief scientist.

Harkewicz: This time with the *Stranger* and the stability issues, were people pretty willing to listen to you in regards to, like when you said you couldn't do something for some reason? Did you feel like they gave you the ultimate authority?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: Or did you feel like you were always butting heads with them?

Haines: When they say, "All right, you're now the master of this ship, it's yours." Of course, sometimes you might get some maybe unwanted advice from the marine superintendent, but still it's up to you to make the decision and to do what you think is right.

Harkewicz: What do you mean, some "unwanted advice from the marine superintendent?"

Haines: Well, if you have a situation, you know, I don't know what it would be. And I would have a big decision to make. Sometimes I would seek the counsel of the marine superintendent and say, "This is what has been proposed and I'm not really comfortable with that, or this. What do you think?" This would all be in confidence. And . . .

Harkewicz: This is like over the radio, or something like that?

Haines: Yeah. It would be over the . . .

Harkewicz: Because they're back here.

Haines: Not speaking; back in the old days it would all be Morse code. But you get in a situation like that and you're not quite sure, you're not comfortable with it, and so you can discuss it with your boss and come to some decision.

Harkewicz: Well, there must have been other times that you ran into like weather problems or things like that where you had to change plans?

Haines: Sure. I'd have to cancel it. Shut down the scientific program. That happened to me on the *Melville* once up north of Tahiti. We were coming back. We had been working on the equator and we were on our way to Tahiti and I got a distress message from a yacht, because a cyclone had gone through there and they thought maybe that the yacht had sunk. And they sent a French frigate out from Papeete to

search the area, and we were going right through there so we kind of joined the search, and while we were searching I knew that the cyclone was farther west. And I was in touch with the Navy people in Navy Weather Central in Pearl Harbor, and they said they had lost it overnight. They didn't know what it was doing. And what it did, it turned around at night and came right for us, and in the early morning hours it just hit us and we went right through the eye, and it did some damage to the ship but it was scary. But in situations like that you just shut down the program, pull up your gear. As a matter of fact, on my last trip on the *Melville*, with a chief scientist here, the weather map showed another cyclone developing near Samoa. And I told the chief scientist, "I'm out of here." Or, "We're out of here. Pull up your gear." And there was a real fuss. But they pulled everything up, and we just took off and got out of there. As it turned out it wasn't a cyclone at all. But these ships are not fast, you know. You can't outrun a cyclone. *[Recording paused.]*

Harkewicz: So, we're back. We had a brief break from a power outage. So we're back here recording. Captain Haines drew up a list of the ships that he was captain of, and what I'll do is—I don't know if this will stir anything up by my just reading them, since you wrote them down. But if there's anything particularly that you think of about any of these that you might want to share, let me know. So, there was the *Paolina-T*, which was the one that you said was your first ship, right? *Stranger, T-441, Dolphin, Oconostota*, is that right?

Haines: Yeah. That's right.

Harkewicz: Okay. The *Hugh M. Smith, Alpha Helix*, the *Thomas Washington*, the *Thomas Thompson*, which was the one at University of Washington you were talking about, the *Melville*, the *New Horizon*, and the *Maurice Ewing*, which was Lamont, and the *Ellen B. Scripps*. Are these the particular, sort of in the chronological order?

Haines: No.

Harkewicz: No? Just as you remembered them?

Haines: No, they're not. Except for the first one.

Harkewicz: So, you wrote these three expeditions down here at the bottom, too: Northern Holiday, Capricorn, and Lusiad. Those were the ones that just came to your mind, then, is that what . . .

Haines: That's the only ones that I can remember but I just know that there were so many more that, I can't recall the names.

Harkewicz: Right. So anything about any of those ships that comes to mind as we try to wrap things up here a little bit?

- Haines:** Not really . . . of course I may think of something that might be of interest, and if I do, why, I will call you or . . .
- Harkewicz:** Okay. Well then, I guess I, you know, as I said I didn't have too much more that I was going to ask you particularly, but I do have sort of a few standard questions that I ask everybody, which may or may not apply to you as a captain as much as maybe some other people. But one of the things I wondered is: were there aspects of your job that you would have liked to change? Things that you didn't like about it?
- Haines:** There was—what about my job?
- Harkewicz:** Aspects of your job?
- Haines:** Oh, aspects of it? No, I don't think so. I can't think of any.
- Harkewicz:** Okay. So, this is hard, this might be a hard one since you—well, I'll ask it. I'll just ask it. The question I ask everybody is, in your opinion, what made Scripps succeed?
- Haines:** Wow. I think I'd have to go back to the science end of it. In my particular field I don't think there's anything that I can think of. I think it's the science that was produced over the years that's what made Scripps succeed. But nothing as far as the ships' are concerned, that I can think of.
- Harkewicz:** Do you feel like you were a contributor, then, to the whole success?
- Haines:** In a small way.
- Harkewicz:** And you said when you worked for the University of Washington and Lamont, that you didn't particularly see much of a difference between the way they did stuff and the way Scripps did stuff?
- Haines:** No. I didn't. Nothing comes to mind.
- Harkewicz:** Okay. Well then I have the other side of that success story. You were going to say something?
- Haines:** Going back to the question before the last question.
- Harkewicz:** The aspects of your job that you'd like to change? Yeah.
- Haines:** Something that I tried to do that wasn't that successful, and I'm not sure where this comes from, but I tried to get the ship's officers, particularly the deck officers, to wear some type of uniform, particularly in foreign ports. That never

really happened. I got it going a little bit on the *Melville* for a while, just khakis, something to distinguish them. But it just always kind of bothered me, particularly in foreign ports when some shore person would come aboard, perhaps even some dignitary, which we had aboard occasionally, ambassador or something like that. The deck officer would be out there in jeans in flip-flops and a t-shirt. And that bothered me. But I didn't want to make a big deal out of it. But I think that that's something that would maybe help a little bit, you know, in the long run, particularly in foreign ports.

Harkewicz: I can see that. I guess what I wanted to ask you, too, though. You know, nowadays there's a lot of work with satellites and some question about how important ships are still to oceanography, and I wondered if you had any opinion on that?

Haines: Well, I'm not really knowledgeable about that. I mean, I'm not sure what a satellite can do and what it can't do. It certainly can't take a water sample. I suppose it can take temperature. I have no idea of the accuracy of those observations. They can't take samples off the bottom. I don't think they can map the bottom. There's probably a lot of things they can't do, but I don't know.

Harkewicz: Okay. Just was curious about that. The one other thing I wanted to clarify, I just want to make sure now—you said you captained for Lamont and you captained for the University of Washington. Did you ever captain for something that wasn't scientific at all? I don't know what that might be, a commercial venture or something like that?

Haines: Well, I captained a couple of gambling ships and private yachts.

Harkewicz: That's right. You did say that. So what was that like? What was it like to be a captain for a gambling ship as opposed to a . . . *[Laugh]*

Haines: It's just, they just did a different thing.

Harkewicz: Okay. *[Laughter]* From your, you're just like driving the ship, then?

Haines: That's right.

Harkewicz: Okay. *[Laugh]* Okay.

Haines: What they do down below is their business. *[Laughter]*

Harkewicz: I understand. All right. Okay, so then the other side of Scripps' success is what do you think may have threatened Scripps' success?

Haines: A recent director was all for eliminating the ships because he thought that everything could be done by satellite, and I didn't go along with that.

Harkewicz: So, you think that would threaten it?

Haines: Yeah.

Harkewicz: Okay. So, the last question I ask people is, what did Scripps mean to you?

Haines: It meant a working lifetime of great pleasure and meeting wonderful people. I don't like to keep going back to the *Alpha Helix*, but the years that I was involved in that program was certainly the brightest in my whole career here. That's about it.

Harkewicz: Okay. So, as I said before we started recording here at the end, I wondered if there was anything I had left out. This is your chance to spill the beans, or add any last final words that you think that, or fill in some gap that I may have left.

Haines: I don't think so—you've covered everything. It's just trying to put things in order. That's what kind of bothers me. But other than that, why, there's not much more I can provide in the way of information.

Harkewicz: So. . . .

Haines: Without getting into personalities.

Harkewicz: Without getting into personalities. I understand that. So you said you occupy your time with golf, and do you still sail, then?

Haines: No. Not competitive. Yeah, I have a boat, a motorboat, but I don't sail competitively. And in fact, I hardly sail at all anymore. But I kind of follow my son around. I'm going out to Hawaii next summer to watch, because he's going to be in the race, the Trans Pacific Yacht Race from LA to Honolulu this summer. And I'll hopefully be over there when he arrives. But other than that, why, my golf takes up most of the time.

Harkewicz: That's good, though.

Haines: Yup.

Harkewicz: But something we talked about when we had to pause for the power outage that maybe you can enlighten a little bit, we were talking about the fact that there's all these requirements now for captains, or—is it strictly captains or is it sailors of all sorts?

Haines: Deck officers and, yeah, mostly I think most of the officer corps and the merchant marine.

Harkewicz: And there's like lots of written things they have to learn and . . .

Haines: Well, there's just new things coming out all the time. A lot of them have to do with port security and some kind of communications stuff, and it's just getting to the point where it's just prohibitively expensive for a person to even upgrade their license. So I mean a third mate going up to a second mate, and a second mate to first mate, and then first mate to master. It's just terribly expensive and sometimes the companies will help them and sometimes they won't. And it just seems like the, some organization, I don't know whether it's the Coast Guard or who it is that's just trying to do away with the merchant service. The unions, years ago, just about annihilated the American merchant marine, because they upped the salaries of the merchant mariners to the point where the companies couldn't afford it. Now you very seldom see an American cargo ship. They're all foreign, and a lot of the cruise ships are foreign because they just can't afford the salaries of the US Merchant Marine. It's just, it's kind of disappearing.

Harkewicz: Do you think—is that . . .

Haines: I'm down on union. *[Laughter]*

Harkewicz: I see that. Does that affect Scripps or facilities like Scripps at all? Or it will?

Haines: We've never, the unions have tried to get in but they didn't here. I think if they ever did, you know—they've tried to, because they couldn't get personnel. They try to up the salaries to the point where they'd be fairly competitive with the union scale, but I don't know where it is right now. But, I think the unions have done a real disservice to this country. But that's my opinion.

Harkewicz: Okay. All right. Well, I appreciate you taking the time to talk with me today, and if you think of anything else you want to discuss, please let me know.

Haines: I will.

Harkewicz: And we will have a follow-up visit, or something.

Haines: Okey-dokey.

Harkewicz: So, thank you for talking with me. Sorry for the interruption before.

Haines: Things happen.

Harkewicz: Yeah. *[Laugh]* All right.