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COMMUNITY STORIES

new bedford
whaling museum

SOUTHCOAST Artists Index

This story was collected through our partnership with the SouthCoast Artist Index, led by Ron Fortier.

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Storyteller Name: Don Hoaglund

RON

I want to welcome you to our podcast. You're our first jeweler. I want to get those terms straightened out, but before we go that far, your name?

DON

Don Hoaglund.

RON

Okay is Hoaglund. A lot of people actually look at me funny when I say this is Hoagland pronounced correctly?

DON

Yes.

RON

All right, it wasn't, you know, a lot of a lot of people have last names. And they because they've been anglicized or whatever. So sometimes they recognize sometimes it's kind of funny. You know, is it "Who-glund"? (Laughing)

DON

Oh (Laughing)... That's how they say it over --

RON

Really? (Laughing)

DON

At my mother in law's (Laughing)

RON

Good - good guess. So, Don, what I was talking about terms is are you a goldsmith and silversmith, a jewelry maker, a jewel, jewelry craftsman. That's like a, an occupation that has like, must drive you crazy,



DON

it's like, I do all those things is, it's often hard to describe, when somebody asks you what you do, because you kind of have to have some input from them on what it is that they're expecting. And so, but no, in what I do is it has a range, and I wrote down all of the skills that I have acquired in the years that I've been doing this, and I, I filled the whole entire page, considering the different types of situations that I've been in. I've done work in manufacturing, I was with an international jewelry manufacturer as master craftsman for about 10 years over in Rhode Island. And I _____ businessman as well. So it's it's, you can imagine the range of skills and my customers have come to my patrons clients. That's also a little ambiguous.

RON

Exactly.

DON

When you call the person that requires your skills. And I a, like I say, you have to sort of have some idea of what these folks are expecting. And I've I think quite early in my career, I took the attitude that yes, I can do that. And so I've worked on projects that are obviously from gold wedding rings, a gold engagement rings, diamonds and high very high end types of jewelry forms as well as a small objects attracted to small, small things, even in the work that I do like muscle, also painter.

RON

Ah, see, I didn't know that about you.

DON

Yeah, that's how I started in the outfield in my education of art.

RON

Well, let's stick with that for now. Well, where did you go to school?

DON

UMASS.

RON

Okay, was it SMU? Back then was--

DON

It was New Bedford Tech.

RON

Woah! You really go back. Who was the who was the chair of the department? You remember? Was it Ed T_____?

DON

No, no, I didn't meet _____ until after I was in service, I was in the Coast Guard during the Vietnam era, got out of that in 1970 and returned to what was then I believe it was SMTI Dartmouth where they had that one building out there and I approached well in New Bedford Tech. It was Margo Neugebauer, and--

RON

I had her for a jewelry instructor --



DON

And Mr. Booth, who I believe was a staff artist for The Standard Times as well.

RON

Do you remember his first name?

DON

No, I'm sorry.

RON

That's okay. That's part of this whole thing is bringing these people back from the dead. I know it sounds crazy, but yeah. Yeah, go ahead.

DON

And so I returned that well, before I went into the coastguard, I guess that was in 66. I had thought that art would be a career for me, and but I really wasn't able to nail it down to exactly what it was that I should be doing within art. And so I, I gravitated towards painting. And knowing that they did, when I got out, I have you have some sort of educational opportunity within my means. And so I studied all the time that I was in the Coast Guard and I, it, I began to feel more and more comfortable in and began to accumulate terminology and my studies and the dictionary here and the art book here, theory, art theory, and so I returned to to SMTI and in the painting department, and I had been painting all along while it was whenever I'd had time when I was in the service. And so I had accumulated pretty good skills as far as the materials of art painting. In particular,

RON

Who are your instructors? If you don't mind me asking?

DON

Well, _____, Frank Coy.

RON

Was Herb Cummings there at the time?

DON

Yes, yes. I think he was the head of the department, but I never had him as an instructor.

RON

And it was probably too early for Elliot. Elliot didn't come in until

DON

Elliot was there. Yes--

RON

He was there.

DON

He was there. I remember we had a sophomore review or something like that.

RON

He was he was brutal.



DON

It was very insightful. Yeah, it was a it was a help for me to have have his input. And so but

RON

Wow, we were we were we were schooled by the same same four, same guys. Yeah.

DON

Well, I, I was having been kind of nailed down in the service, I was wanting to expand myself and kind of free up myself in that. I was thinking that I began thinking about a career in the future. And so I, I looked around at my class, and I noticed there were 20,20 or so people in this class who were all painting majors, and I imagined that in a few years, these painting majors were going to graduate and go out into the world and be painters, along with myself. However, at the time, I still am I was married, and I had a child. And so you making a living seem to be something that since my wife, she wants to stay close to a family here in the city and I needed to find something that was going to become I was going to be able to have as an income while just on, on as a means of that, I took up scrimshaw. And I did we did well with it with the screenshot we did. I get a lot of things and we and we were able to travel. And in this travel, we met people who were running their own shops. Primarily, we time to time we would get an account that was like a major account like a Long Jewelers in Boston. And we would meet with different people in different kind of they are someone was a merchandiser. Someone was a silversmith, somebody was a leather worker. And in those days, it was the crafts were in a major resurgence. So in our travels, I kind of was able to acquire a journeyman, excuse me, a journeyman kind of education. And continued with the scrimshaw and I also that's when I took my first jewelry making class with Margo and it was in the basement of that whatnot in the one group one building and she showed me how to solder. I went, "Oh, I can do this. This is this is just the 123 way". And it took off in my had a little, had drawing table in my house. And I had a Bernzomatic torch and a little asbestos pad. And I'd started. "Well, I can do that. Can you do this Don? Oh, yeah, I can do that." And we developed this. My wife in particular. And I developed a jewelry party plan. And that involves going to people's homes is kind of like Tupperware.

RON

Yeah, exactly.

DON

And we had invested in a, I had an a basket, but they were they were agates. They were polished agates. And most of them were about the size of lima bean. And we would bring them to the parties and the women, particularly with they would go through it and it was delightful, they would have had such a great time looking at these stones, and then they choose a stone. And they will, I would, I would set it in ring, or a pendant, or whatever, the person. And in the meantime, there were other people who wanted much more elaborate pieces of jewelry. And my motto was "I can do that". So it's kind of kind of went from there. And so my son became school age and traveling kinda have to be curtailed. And so we decided that we would do this around the time that we bought our house on Seventh Street, where we would open a retail type of operation. And it didn't work. It was just we were it was too obscure. And we didn't have the funds to put into major advertising the ways that our business should have. And we really didn't want to take on a lot of debt for it. Because is it gonna work or not. We kept up with our parties and different kinds of things, people would come in with different kinds of jobs here and there. And, of course, I was keeping up with the wholesale work that I had been doing. And we decided to the Vault Building, which is now the New Bedford Art Museum was being renovated and also a group. And they were going to the plan was to put a restaurant in the basement. The first floor was going to be shops sectioned off shops. And the third floor was to be the offices. And so I had gone down and just went in on a whim and there was a space available that was perfectly suited for our needs. It was a vault that it's the very end of the first floor. And it had security and it was a vault was one inch thick. So we figured this might be this might be something that would work. And it did. It introduced us to because the place was new, I believe we'd be able to



have people coming in from all over the country and saying, "Wow, this is this is New Bedford is going to be it's been doing great here."

RON

That's the old New Bedford Five, right?

DON

No, it was it was called.... Merchants it was called. I'm sorry,

RON

That's alright. I thought it was New Bedford Five. Because my old next door neighbor, Mr. Grieves, was the I think the last president of that bank.

DON

Oh that, was that's Greasy Luck now.

RON

Okay.

DON

That's around the corner.

RON

All right.

DON

Terrific. facade, by the way.

RON

Yeah, yeah. The Art Deco. Yeah.

DON

We were right on the corner of William and Pleasant.

RON

Yeah, that was one of my dad's accounts, because they were The Vault was a restaurant. They they had the restaurant and then after that it was Diligenders. And it just seemed for some reason I don't it was a great concept. And Dave Nelson had his bookstore in there. I think he was one of the partner, Paul Pearl. There's another name.

DON

Oh, yes, that's right.

RON

It's coming out of my head-

DON

Construction guy.

RON

Let me go back a little bit. 1776 -was that the name of the place up in Boston where we get the gemstones?



DON

Oh, no, that was 1766 --

RON

1766. That -- okay.

DON

That's in, that's in Uxbridge.

RON

Okay.

DON

And they are now more commonly known as Suchura. Suchura.

RON

Suchura. Okay, yeah. Okay.

DON

And the, they've got the gems there. They've got all kinds of anything.

RON

He was always. It was always a fun trip.

DON

That's where we get to agates.

RON

Yeah. Pegasus. When did that come in?

DON

Well, that was--

RON 15:24

--the name

DON

That was has we were preparing to go move to The Vault. Excuse me. We we need a name. And one of the things that we thought was, well, perhaps this will turn into something will down the line, turn into something that's valuable that entity. And so we started..."How about this? How about that? No. That's how too much. How about Donald Hoagland?" No, because if it does turn into something, maybe it would be a valuable thing someday when we're going to retire. And so I was looking, I had an interest in constellations in this stars and celestial kind of events. And I had a star finder book, and I went through it, because I was also mythology, interested me as a subject. And we found the Pegasus and I was like, "Pegasus." And so that's that that stuck. And it seemed to work well, it was things that we found out afterwards. Yes, Pegasus is often the a indicator of artistic endeavors, or a promoter, like, as a patron. That type of thing for artists,

RON

I thought you're going to tell me you rolled up into a mobile station, and went, "Oh, wow, what a great idea!" That was the old the old brand for mobiles.



DON

I have a fellow student in painting. And he he decided to do some very realistic paintings of different mundane subjects. And one of them was a landscape, so to speak, but it was the landscape of a garage bay and the mobile station. And so we wound up doing a trade for that. I've got that painting. Mobile horse.

RON

And one more question. Because, you know, right now you're in The Vault and I know you went down William Street around the corner was that Cardiers at one time?

DON

No, it was an optometrist or I don't remember his name. But he was there for a long time and

RON

Yeah, yeah, because I don't we had like Cardiers. We had a couple of other like high end jewelers in the city at one time. Alan Scott. Does that ring a bell?

DON

Yes, certainly.

RON

It's a sad story.

DON

Yes, it is.

RON

He was a scrimshandur as well.

DON

Yeah.

RON

He was in my class.

DON

Oh, is that right--

RON

And then it probably wouldn't be good for this podcast but after we're done I'd like to ask you about what happened because I want to verify him... he had a couple he was a couple of easels over for me being a Green Berets Special Forces my god like i But what a craftsman I can still see him and Marie with a baby--

DON

Mary--

RON

Mary...with a with a pram and--

DON

Son was Travis --



RON

Travis.. Yeah--

DON

Travis who we've seen Travis is he's doing quite well for--

RON

Good. Good. going that's another story but I just sort of curious so now you're in The Vault and how did that go?

DON

As well from The Vault, The Vault building closed. Excuse me. And so we were forced to find another location and luckily it was right around the corner.

RON

Would you like some water? Not a problem. There you go. In fact, is it -- Alison Wells is in that place now. Right or? Okay.

DON

We I went in and single handedly I tore the place apart and rebuilt it. And I had I did all my casting there. We were there, I think, probably seven years. And it was, it was a delightful beginning. It was in the first early days of Freestones. And so we were a community in the downtown area. And one of the things was we always believed in the downtown area to be on a resurgence, which it is, but some things take a little longer than you hope. And so it wasn't all it wasn't always great. And they were, they were problems, as well. But we managed to establish ourselves as ongoing business where we could be approached, like could be approached to do any kind of jewelry here from baby spoons to tiaras, if that was the case. And I, as time went by, I became a little bit restless, too. I didn't feel that we were moving forward quickly enough. And my dad had this had a big Pontiac, and he was moving up in automobiles. And he said, "Would you like to have that? Pontiac, he says, Give me \$1." And I got the big Pontiac, and it was, gave me mobility. And so I picked up the Providence Journal one day, and I read an ad that a jewelry instructed needed at the Jewelry Institute in Providence, which was set up by MJSA, Manufacturing Jewelers and Silversmiths of America. And I answered the ad, and I was hired. And I was hired to teach general jewelry making in the beginning, and I had about maybe six hours a week. And that was great for me, because I still had customers that I could refer I no longer had the store, but customers that I could refer to my studio at the house. So I, I taught at the Jewelry Institute for about a year. And I went from the six hours to about 50 hours. While I was teaching day and night. And I taught, I taught a jewelry making. I taught modelmaking. I taught jewelry repair. And those were the night classes. Lots of folks wanted to know, the jewelry was becoming more and more and more popular gold and that become replacing the solid silver, turquoise kind of jewelry, people might go moving into the goal. What else do I teach? I also taught masterclass for MJSA and modelmaking. And actually, I was requested by the students, it was very flattering. And but it was sort of towards towards the end of the year, I had imagined that I'd just be going along as the school and a friend of mine. He was in yacht business. And he was I think he was more like a salesperson for Cape Dory in Taunton, and he gave me a call one night and he said "Oh Don, I've had a customer here today he's buying. He's buying this terrific boat- a great deal." And he I asked him what he did for a living and he said, "Well, I'm a jewelry manufacturer." And his name was Steve, Steve Morgenstern. And he I had made my friend a ring, gold signet ring. And he showed it to Steve and Steve said, "Wow, that's that's a nice job." He says "If you can do that, I'm looking for somebody said ask him if he wants to leave the school. Tell him to come by and see me here." So I had been hoping for raise at the school, but that was not forthcoming. And so I decided, "Well, you have nothing to lose here. Let me go and see what's going on". Because part of the reason that I left New Bedford was I wanted to see the world of jewelry anyway, I wanted to get more and more experience in different parts of it and he showed me around the factory and it was about we had about maybe 14 people working there. And it was beautifully newly set up in a big



cinderblock building in Johnston, Rhode Island. And we went in the office after, after this kind of interview and the tour of the factory. And he said, "Well, how much you making?" And so I said, I just told him how much I was making. And he grabbed his calculator. And he did this, and he said "How would you like to make this much?" And so it was kind of like, "Oh, give me one minute to think about that." So it was, it was quite an experience. Going from being a craftsman one person at one bench, or maybe more, you know, helpers, you'd have helpers, I would have apprentices as well. And going from that to going to work in the manufacturing field, where a lot of it was from same thing, day after day. And it was really was not my idea of where I wanted to go in the jewelry business. But it was an excellent salary.

RON

Yeah.

DON

And so I continue to, but I, I got to the Providence Journal a couple of times a week, and searched the ads. And I went on interviews, I was going on every every week of the year, I was going on interviews at different places. And so in a way, even though none of them were able to match that salary, I got experience with all these folks that were in had been had been maybe born into the industry. And I it was a terrific experience. I also got a lot of freelance work, my modelmaking and different things like well, I did some things for one company, they were a pewter casters, and they had a commission with a museum or a number of museums to make small busts of JFK. So they didn't have a model for it. So "You can you make those busts?" so I made the bust and cast it in bronze and they used it to make their molds with a pewter. And after that it was Ben Franklin and several other different things that I made for them globes and things that came apart..that was the exciting part of my time that I spent over there in Rhode Island..of course I did not like the commute.

RON

Oh, it was horrible back in. It's bad now. It was horrible, then it's really, I guess you could say it's a little bit better, but it's still you... Well, you've got to get into the driving.

DON

Those days. 70 miles an hour was fast (Laughing.)

RON

Yeah. Yeah. It's not like today I know. Of all the places in the world. You could have landed, so to speak or hung around. It's almost like a triangle. Attleboro, Taunton, Providence. They, you know, they're the Silver City Taunton, Attleboro Balfour's still there, I think Johnston's and then Providence itself and then their connection to the Italian goldsmithing and jewelry. There's deep connections there because of the Italian heritage there.

DON

Yeah. Well, the, the Jewelry District has been what do they call it?

RON

National Register of Historic Places.

DON

It is yes. But it was upgraded to what? What do they call it -- gentrified? I think gentrified, and with the restaurants and much more. It's much more friendly to average people. And of course, it's an kind of an entertainment center now. But the stories were that the new building that I was working in at the time, one day, well, in precious metal business. Everything is support has precious metal involved in it, whether it's the vacuum cleaner bag, or the bench or even the woodwork. So boss and I were talking one day and I mentioned something about refining, because that's a big industry over there. And there's a number of refiners that you can take



everything from paper towels and _____ like I said, he said, "Well, we are our business originally was on over in the Jewelry District and it was on the fourth or fifth floor. And my friend owns a refinery down in Cranston." And he said, "When the landlord came to us and said he was going to make the place into condos, and we had to get out, I was kind of at wit's end, and didn't know what we were going to do." And we were cleaning up some scraps. And my friend sent his team in. And he decided to do some drill tests, drill holes in the floor, because the company had been there for 100 years. He said, "Well, you see, you see this building that's around you right now? Yeah. You see my Mercedes out there, and my wife's Mercedes out there? And you know, that, that yacht that your friend sold me? And he said, that all came from the floor."

RON

Oh God!

DON

He took the floor up, replaced it with a plywood floor. And that was, you know, in code and everything and they burned the floor. And they yielded--

RON

Yielded at all--

DON

All of the all the gold that had been fallen, and all those years, a little splash of plating solution, a little dust grinder.

RON

Oh, yeah, the polisher tool. Yeah.

DON

Yeah, a lot of companies over there, the they're very, very aware of the, the scraps. And so when you come in, you just walk in, when you go out, it's go like, it's almost as bad as airport security--

RON

Really--

DON

Because you'd get dusted off, you get w_____, you gotta go through the portal--

RON

Yeah--

DON

And then your shoes get vacuumed. And any way that they can. One place I went on an interview was, I think it was called Imperial Pearl. They went on and on several interviews to meet the higher-up guys and, and they tell him show him what I can and so on. The first I think his first two or three interviews, I went in the front door and went out the front door. On the third interview, I was told "Well you gotta go around go around the back to employees entrance." So I went to the employees entrance and it was a waiting room and it was a guard at a desk and on the desk was a black box with a you know, with like a cloth have a hole in it. And that hole had like a sewn into the like a sleeve one of those expandable sleeves and a jacket and so I sat there for a while and the person I was supposed to meet was like they were busy on a phone call or something like that and I'm sat waiting and waiting and I said to the guard he said "What what's the box all about? She said come here and check this out.' So she opened the box and it were these clothes pins and all of the clothes pins with natural color except for several



that were red. So I said "Oh, that's interesting. What does this mean? She said, Well, this is the exit for all the employees. And when you are leaving, we require each employee to reach into the box and take out closed pin. If you get a natural color close button, you can leave but if you get a red closed pin you are searched." So as a means of control

RON

Control, yeah..

DON

Little tiny things it's easy enough--

RON

Yeah--

DON

In your pocket or something and you shoot and some of the stories that I heard from guys that were like did that-

-

RON

I always want because I know you know having Margo as an instructor I remember you know cutting you know and have your your bench your your vise and your cutting and there was like a little canvas thing that that held all the dust because even you know she was it that just is not saw dust, that this is this is you know, this is valuable stuff. In your time in Rhode Island and such, did you ever run across a gentleman named Tim Doyle. He was a layout artist. He did a lot of the jewelry catalogs back in the day.

DON

No.

RON

Okay, was just sort of curious. Were you also a part of the Massachusetts apprenticeship program? At any point?

DON

No. I was a member of the Cultural Council--

RON

The Cultural Council?

DON

The Cultural Council. Rosemary Tierney's administration?

RON

Yeah, because I know, I know, from a furniture maker that I once knew that the state did have an emperor - apprentice program for crafts people. And let's get back to that back to terms and such. I mean, there's a lot of there are a lot of there's a lot of art in jewelry making, as well as craft. Could you describe your your definition of art versus craft? Because I mean, surely ranking goes back 1000s of years?

DON

Yes, sure..Probably

RON

One of the earliest forms probably?



DON

And technology. Excuse me. The lost wax process probably is probably 12,000 years.

RON

Could you explain what, what lost wax is?

DON

Sure. lost wax the process is, I believe it's called sir_____. And I think that's French.

RON

Yes.

DON

And the concept is to create a model that would be in the exact shape of the finished product. So if you want a ring, you would make take wax, and you would create a ring type--

RON

A little sculpture--

DON

A little small sculpture. Sure. And, of course, there is industry nowadays, they've come up with all these different kinds of blends. And you can get waxes that do all kinds of things. Besides that, there's now plastics that can be used in the same, same way. Because what, what we do with the wax is, we actually and embedded in a, it's similar to Plaster of Paris. But it's Investment is what it's called. And it has a combination of gypsum and pumice and different, once again, industrially, these days... nobody wants to make a mistake, especially if it's a model that you've had to sit there for several hours.

RON

And that's beeswax, correct?

DON

No, it's specially formulated for, for the next phase, which is once it's embedded, it's, we've placed that it's it's like a imagine a stainless steel can with no top or bottom on and waxes a mountain on a rubber base, that this can fit snugly over around the base. And we fill it up with the liquid Investment which hardens Plaster of Paris. And that once it's hardened, we take the rubber base off of it, and we put it in the oven. And the oven has what's called a burnout cycle. And there's lots of different ways that people treat it, we had one in in the factory, well, in my studio, I do it by eye...I know how long it takes for this so and so for how many I can do about, I can do about maybe as many as eight flasks at a time in my oven, which is small in comparison to industrial, and so I know how long those take and I do just my temperatures. So that because this specific temperatures for doing actually doing the casting, putting the metal into that so the heat of the oven melts the wax out at least the cavity in the Investment of the what what we want. And when I first began, I was like well 1-2-3.. here you go and let's see what this does. And my results were less than satisfactory often, because I had to do a lot more finish work on these things to get them to look like what, what I wanted them to be. And so I it's probably best to do your best and most detailed work within the wax. And like, I said there's different formulations of waxes-- some are meant for very delicate structures and some are meant for more bold and blocky structures and they they handled different ways. And one thing is that imagine a ladies engagement ring, that's going to hold diamond. And you want to be able to get one, I often compare this work to building a bridge. These, these pieces, like in particular, like, let's say, a lady's engagement ring that has a lot of open work to it, it has to function in very much like a bridge, because whether you realize it or not, you pick up the groceries or you move furniture, or you get the car door, moving this thing or that thing, this ring flexes these things, flex, they have a kind of like, you sit on the



Tobin Bridge.

RON

Yeah.

DON

And you get that in the bounce-like and so that was that was part of. that's part of, the, the making of this model. And so you want to, in order to make it more easy on yourself, when you get to the finishing part, you want to complete this as close as possible to what that finished product is going to be like. And it's very big, become very, very delicate. Because you can imagine the weight of the wax and the weight of the gold. It's a factor of 14. So for 14 karat, so your wax is zero, basically. And so in order to determine how much material we need, we don't want to waste anything. We don't need more than we need. And we weight the wax, multiply it by the whatever factor at right now I'm working on a couple of 20 carat wedding bands. And so is that

RON

Is that very soft gold when it's--

DON

The, the idea of, I think soft is probably not the best word to use for hardness. Although it's, of course, in in Britain, 20 karat is a traditional metal for wedding bands. But in a way, what we use to test gold is called a touchstone. That's one time, there's electronic ways nowadays. But we use, traditionally it's called a touchstone, and it's a black, either slate or something like that. And we in conjunction with the touchstone, we use test needles, which are a set of little needles, kind of like remember the sparkplug gauges.

RON

Yes. Yeah--

DON

Fan out--

RON

Yeah.

DON

Well, the each to each little finger of this that has a tip on it, that's a certain carrot of gold. So you've got from 24, all the way down to nine. And so you suspect that you've got a ring, a ring like this, which I know is 14 karat, I rub it on the touchstone. Now the touchstone actually makes a mark a lot like a crayon or pencil. So I think that when it comes to the title about the hardness of softness of the of the gold and the karats, it's more like 20 karats is much more easy to make a mark. Okay, and so it's not that it's necessary. I mean, you could probably dent it with a little less force, but still, it's, it's a very practical, very sturdy material. And things like wedding bands.

RON

Yeah. Because I mean, people will realize that you can use gold strands or pieces of wire and silver, silver point and gold point that many drawing, drawings have been done with, with that, as well. What would you like to be remembered for? Or how would you like to be remembered?

DON

I don't know. I guess I hard to say, I didn't, I don't. I don't really know. I guess I'd like to think that all the stuff that I leave behind isn't going to get just tossed in the dumpster. And maybe, maybe it will be of interest to somebody. I've done some things that I feel are very valuable as well. That I think that, that could I keep just



things, I keep because they were for my own pleasure, probably not to make them and they, they represent the way that I think they represent things that our channel hunching to me as well. And I have all the time that I spend, I spend the most, making some kind of art form. Whether it's painting, which I still paint, whether it's a sculpture, which I've done quite a lot more--

RON

Yeah, that's one of the aspects of jewelry making--

DON

And I have drawings, drawings and drawings. And I think through the drawings, I'm most experimental. And I able to somebody just--

RON

Like opened up your head kind of thing--

DON

--Let's try this. Let's try this today. Or what happens if I do, I've done drawings, like in this manner, with this technique. And I, but something new happens. And the newest, the most recent one, and it's like, "Well, I think I might try that again." And so, I think that as far as the drawing, because it's, it's, it's not an expensive thing to do. I am able to explore and I like things like sometimes I like to primary abstraction in my two dimensional okay. And I do like those -sailboats.

RON

Yeah. Have you ever exhibited?

DON

I have a little bi--

RON

I mean, your paintings and or your jewelry?

DON

Yeah, I have at Gallery X I have.

RON

Okay.

DON

And, but pretty much that's. That's about it. Oh, I did. Matter of fact, there was a fella who worked at Cherry's down when Cherry's were in --

RON

Cherry n' Webb--

DON

Yeah, Cherry n' Webb. And on the third floor, he would put on art shows, along with whatever else was going to merchandising that they were doing up there. On third floor and sorry, I can't remember.. Silva. I think it was Silva--

RON

Louie, Louie Silva, Sylvia?



DON

Might be, yeah.

RON

Or, is it mostly scenes of the harbor with whale ships and that--

DON

Oh, no, no, no. This was, this gentleman was a appreciator of the arts.

RON

Okay.

DON

And he felt that he was manager type at Cherry n' Webb. And he would. It was display different people's art. Maybe monthly change? Yeah. It was like, it wasn't like particularly well known as a gallery or anything but I think that's one of the first places I showed paintings.

RON

Name another jeweler like you, and I will, still I'm still having trouble with that term. What are you Goldsmith's silversmith jeweler?

DON

All of the above.

RON

Name another guy like you in town?

DON

Well, he's not in town anymore, but Brad Washburn.

RON

Brad Washburn.

DON

Yeah. Brad Washburn once ,he was trained at Bennet Street School. And he was a he was a caster, primarily casting. And we were great pals. And we would share jobs. I, I have an, I had my first apprentice was my cousin. And his name is Russell Mello. And Russ Mello has gone on to have a very good very good business. He works ,his work is primarily with other ,other jewelry. People selling jewelry-

RON

Did he have an office on top of the.. the towers there..

DON

No --

RON

No, that's just not the same guy. There was there was a jewelry gemologist...

DON

Appraiser. Yeah, I'm sorry. I don't remember his name.



RON

Yeah, okay. I can't even remember the name of the building. But that was a really great, there was Cerilli's Italian restaurant was up there at one point. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, T,he Regency towers. I think that's the Regency Yeah. And then five final question. Do you believe you, you not only have made a good life and you've become an institution, along with Gallery X, The Star Store, Cherry n' Webb, No Problemo of all places, Freestones, Arthur Moniz, The Peanut Store. I mean, these you do believe that you've carved out a little niche Just a little bookmark in the history of this area?

DON

Well, I guess that I do I have folks that I've worked for generations of people doing different things, and they come back and although I think in my own mind, it's, I'm like just my job,

RON

Just a job--

DON

--my job and I want to do it well, I want to make, I want to make objects that are going to function, going to be beautiful. And it's been kind of my privilege to have been able to fit in.

RON

Great.

DON

It hasn't been easy, great to be to be an artist in New Bedford without any kind of affiliation to schools. or income, although I've been fortunate, I've had a still, do lots of jobs for other jewelers, all the way over to Providence and that is a community in itself --

RON

In itself--

DON

And I do feel I have a lot of respect in that community.

RON

Great. Great. Well, Don Hoagland, thank you so much. Master Jeweler, Master Jweler. I'm Ron Fortier, the host of this podcast. Until next time, thanks for joining us and we hope you enjoyed it. Bye bye!