

## 2665\_MarshallPrado\_11-29-2022.mp3

**Aimee Lusty** [00:00:00] Today is Tuesday, November 29th. My name is Aimee Lusty. I'm the archivist at the Montauk Library, and I'm conducting an oral history interview with Marshall Prado. This interview is part of the Montauk Library Oral History Program. We're conducting this interview from the Sound Studio at the Montauk Library in Montauk, New York. Would you mind pronouncing spelling your first and last name?

**Marshall Prado** [00:00:21] Marshall Prado. M-A-R-S-H-A-L-L, Prado P-R-A-D-O.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:00:30] And where were you born and what year were you born?

**Marshall Prado** [00:00:34] June 14th, 1946, at Southampton Hospital.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:00:40] And what were your parents' names?

**Marshall Prado** [00:00:42] My father's name was Marshall Prado, also. And my mother's name was Eleanor Prado. Her maiden name was McDonald. She was one of the French Canadian McDonald's that came down from Canada.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:00:59] Can you tell me a little bit about your family heritage and where your parents and ancestors came from?

**Marshall Prado** [00:01:05] Well, my father was born in Spain and came here as a young boy. We're not exactly sure of the day, or the year. And he, their family wound up in Maryland after Ellis Island. They were in that area because of work that involved paper mills and steel mills. My father wound up working in a steel mill where he lost his left hand as a young boy and somehow wandered off into Ohio. And we're not exactly sure how that happened. And at that point, he ran into Carl Fisher and he wound up working for him. And that's how he got to Montauk. And there he met my mother, whose family had, like I said before, come down and migrated from Canada looking chasing codfish, actually. And they met at the Montauk Manor and got married and had a family and started a business there. And here we are today, still here, most of us.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:02:14] And what were their occupations at the time of moving to Montauk?

**Marshall Prado** [00:02:18] Well, my father came down as Carl Fisher chauffeur, and my mother was she she was working at the Montauk Manor as a waitress, and that's where they met.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:02:30] And do you have any siblings and what are their names?

**Marshall Prado** [00:02:32] Ah, yes, I have a brother, Robert Prado, a sister named Carmen Prado, and a younger brother named Edward Prado.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:02:43] Do they also live in Montauk?

**Marshall Prado** [00:02:44] They all live in Montauk, yes.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:02:48] And where was your childhood home?

**Marshall Prado** [00:02:50] It was the first home we had was in Lower Shepherds Neck, one of the Fisher English Tudor houses. And in 1952 we moved up to Essex Street, which are dramatic for us as kids because all our friends are still in Shepherds Neck. Yeah, but my father finally got his dream house, and it was. It was a big move for us.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:03:14] What was it like growing up in Shepherds Neck?

**Marshall Prado** [00:03:16] Well, Shepherds Neck, everyone was there. So it was it was very close to the school. We were just and down the hill from the school. And it was, we knew everybody and it was, it was good. Anyway, we didn't we didn't realize how good it really was, but it was good.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:03:36] And what are some of your earliest memories of that neighborhood at the time?

**Marshall Prado** [00:03:40] Well, just growing up with your parents, friends and their kids, we were all of we all seem to be the same age. And, you know, we all hung out with each other. In the winter we did a lot of ice skating on the Fort Pond. We played in the woods a lot. And, you know, we to we just had a good time and we didn't know the difference from what was really going on in the world. We were just quite content.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:04:10] And have you seen that area change over time?

**Marshall Prado** [00:04:13] That area has had everyone that was there basically moved to other areas in town and then was replaced by other people. It hasn't changed a whole lot, except there's not as many young kids there as there was when I was there. It's it's become it's become a cute little village and it's in the in itself down there. And we do business with some of the people there. And I absolutely love these old 1925 English Tudor houses, and they have improved upon them and it still looks pretty good down there.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:04:51] Yeah, that's interesting that you get to kind of revisit those homes after time.

**Marshall Prado** [00:04:55] Yes. In fact, we did some work at the house that we were all born in. And it was. You know, it was interesting.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:05:01] Wow. And what does your family do for recreation when you were a child?

**Marshall Prado** [00:05:07] Recreation was not a big deal then because it was a very tough place to be to live for them. But when they did enjoy recreation, it was it's a fond memory in my mind that they would always get all dressed up and they would go to the neighbor's house and there would be different houses that they would go to. And they were like getting dressed up to go to a ball in the White House, and they were only going a couple blocks away. They actually made the absolute best out of that here. And I feel that they enjoyed themselves here. They it was very difficult. The work was hard. The weather was much different than than it is now. It was more severe. And they just got through it. And I you know, you could see some some of the pain that went along with it, but they didn't seem to let that get in the way and they did enjoy themselves.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:06:09] Was there ever talk of leaving or.

**Marshall Prado** [00:06:12] Never.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:06:12] Were you always planning to stay here?

**Marshall Prado** [00:06:13] Never. Not with our family anyway. Some families left, but, you know, we were here for the long run.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:06:20] And where did you attend? Elementary and high school?

**Marshall Prado** [00:06:23] Elementary school was in Montauk, and at time it was a four classroom, two bathrooms, an auditorium that was also slash gym. The principal's office, the nurse's office and downstairs were two locker rooms, and that was it. So there was two grades in each, each class. It worked.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:06:49] Do you remember any classes or teachers?

**Marshall Prado** [00:06:53] Well, Bob Fisher, who was the principal, and Hank Zebrowski, who was the seventh and eighth grade teacher and the sports administrator. They stand out in my mind. Yeah.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:07:08] Were you active in any clubs or sports as a child?

**Marshall Prado** [00:07:12] Well, we had a rifle club where we learned how to shoot 22s into a into a target box in the auditorium. And, you know, all the boys did basketball and baseball and and the trampoline. That was another sport that we liked, that I liked anyway.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:07:34] You shot 22s in the auditorium inside?

**Marshall Prado** [00:07:37] Yes. We there were a couple of people from town that were in the program. Bob Fisher, the principal, was also involved. And we learned how to take the gun, take the rifle apart and clean it and shoot it and line up the sights. And we had target practice and you earned different medals. It was quite fun.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:08:02] Were you part of any other clubs like Boy Scouts growing up?

**Marshall Prado** [00:08:06] Oh, yes. Vinnie Grimes. Who just passed away about a year and a half ago or two years ago. He was the scout master and he was pretty tough guy because he had just gotten out of the Navy. And he he was he was pretty good. You know, we went out and learned how to do knots and Morse code, and so it was good.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:08:33] And did you attend any continuing education, trade school or college?

**Marshall Prado** [00:08:37] Well, I went to a business school after high school in East Hampton, and then I had a short stay at Syracuse, and then I was drafted in the Army.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:08:48] And where did you serve?

**Marshall Prado** [00:08:49] I wound up serving in South Carolina for basic training. Then I went to San Antonio, Texas, for medical training, and then I got stationed in Heidelberg, Germany, for the remainder of the time.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:09:05] And do you remember what year that was?

**Marshall Prado** [00:09:09] 1968 to 1970.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:09:14] That was one of my questions. If you served in the in the military or army and do, what do you remember from that time?

**Marshall Prado** [00:09:22] Well, I remember not wanting to go, but I knew that it was going to happen. I think the only reason I didn't want to go was, you know, I just didn't it didn't sound appealing at that moment. And I was, I had this really beautiful girlfriend. I really didn't want to leave her, but I knew I was going to go and I kind of wanted to go. And when I got drafted, that was that was the call that said I'm going.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:09:52] Did any of your brothers get drafted?

**Marshall Prado** [00:09:54] My next brother down for me was went in a little, a year before me. And he wound up going to Vietnam.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:10:04] And he came back.

**Marshall Prado** [00:10:05] Yeah, he came back.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:10:07] And so I'm going to move on to Marshall and Sons. Can we talk about when Marshall and Sons was founded?

**Marshall Prado** [00:10:16] Well, Marshall and Sons were started by my father, without, when we weren't, when we were in the army, we came home and there was "and sons" on these trucks. So that was a decision he had made more than we did. I mean, we knew we were going to come back and work for him and with him, but he kind of did that. And we all went along. He he first started up at the Montauk Manor. There was a garage up there, and he was taking care of all the chauffeur cars over there, all the cars that were driven in by the various chauffeurs. And then he got into the cab business. So he had the only cab service and he had a contract with the Long Island Railroad. So he had the exclusive rights to the picking up all the passengers at the train station. And then he added a bus and he ran the bus service in Montauk. And then eventually he got in. Then he got this gas station during the war, and it has been in our family since. And we wonder why sometimes. But it's there and that's that. And then he started the oil company. In those days it was pro it was kerosene. And then we switched into fuel oil and now we're going into propane also. And it evolved into plumbing and heating and air conditioning, what it is today.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:11:50] And when did you move to to main, the main street location?

**Marshall Prado** [00:11:54] Oh, I'm not exactly sure, but it was in it was in, I would say the late thirties, early forties.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:12:05] And what are some of your early memories of the shop?

**Marshall Prado** [00:12:09] Of the years? The shop. Well, it was it in those days, cars were different. So there was five shops in Montauk because cars only got maybe ten, ten miles to a gallon. So, you know, you sold gas, you did tires the old fashioned way with tire, tire irons. And it was, it was difficult to was it was only to two other mechanics in there. And my

father really wasn't a mechanic. He kind of ran the thing. And it was it was interesting because in those days we had there was a lot of people that drove out here to go fishing and we would deal with those people in the afternoons on their way back fixing, trying to fix their car, getting it back. And cars were very simple then. So it was easy to do nothing like today at all. And the other I think the other fond memories I have is we met just about everybody in town would stop by for one reason or another, even if it was just to say hello. And at the holidays, maybe they just have a drink there because that's what they did in those days. And it was, growing up here, it really was kind of magical. And it took me a few years to realize as I got older how, how good it was. And I think that's probably the reason I came back. It was, it was a very strong community. Not everyone loved everybody else, but no one really fell through the cracks. You had. We had multiple parents because everyone kind of watched out for you and didn't think twice to come on up and kick in the butt because you were doing something wrong and that was just that was how it was.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:14:00] And you're right on Main Street. So you have such a, you know, eagle's nest view of the changing town and the people coming in and out.

**Marshall Prado** [00:14:09] Yes. The town in those days when we were kids wasn't changing that much. It was as we were getting older, the sixties, it began a little bit that we would notice it, and then the eighties had a real boom. And then what's going on now is we're not exactly sure what's going on now, but it is changing dramatically. It's almost unrecognizable from comparing it to, you know, 40, 50 years ago.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:14:41] And what has your, what were your kind of early roles and responsibilities with the company? And how has that changed over the years?

**Marshall Prado** [00:14:48] Well, in those days, you worked for your father and there was no such thing as hours or discussion of pay or vacation. You just did what you were told to do. And that was that. And that's how we all grew up, all the other kids. I was a little barbaric, but it was explained to us that we're lucky to have a job and lucky to have what we have. Shut up and do it. And that's what we did.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:15:22] Can you talk a little bit about what it was like working closely with your father and brothers?

**Marshall Prado** [00:15:30] It was okay. There were difficult times as, as I got older and my father got older. Then there was a little bit of head, head bucking then, but it did. The day came when we had to decide who was who was going to go home. Of course, it was my father who was at that point 80, almost 85 years old. And he it was we all had different ideas. So I worked with my brothers. We we each had our own responsibilities and and did that every day. And that was it was there was really no grand plan of where we were going to wind up later on. It was. Montauk was at at that point still I felt we were still in a survival mode. It just kind of went to work and you were thankful for what you got that day and you went home. And our goal then as kids was to get our own homes and start our own families. And and we all did. And that was we were all grateful for that.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:16:42] And as Montauk has changed, you've adapted the business to evolve, to meet the different demands of the community. Can you talk a little bit about that?

**Marshall Prado** [00:16:49] Yes, we we realized that that the seasonality of Montauk, which was always in your way, and that's why to this day, we still have we now have five

corporations down there and they feed each other. And you have to make sure that you have enough to do all year long. In the summer, the gas station is always very busy. And then in the winter time we had a fuel oil company and we evolved into plumbing and heating and air conditioning. A couple of years ago we put the building behind us and that was rented as a bakery. And we have plans now to put another building up as a rental. So you had to you had to try to cover as much of the year as possible. And that was that was the problem that everybody was up against. Either that or you had that, or you became a snowbird and went to Florida. And now it just it just wasn't there for us because the family was too big. And you we couldn't you couldn't just close down.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:17:59] And do you employ other family members like son, your sons or children or grandsons of your brothers?

**Marshall Prado** [00:18:05] I have two daughters in there now that are pretty much pretty much running it. They have a whole different idea of how to do it, and they have adopted very well. And we have some some grand nephews in there.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:18:23] And in your time here, have you witnessed any other family owned or locally owned businesses kind of with the similar challenges and hardships close or move?

**Marshall Prado** [00:18:35] Oh, absolutely. I think, you know, most of them most of the families have stayed here and gone and gone into business, ran into the same walls that we did. It was just a very difficult place. And today it's even harder because it's harder to get help and because they have a hard time living here and it has become way too expensive. So that's our biggest challenge at this point. But the other families like the Gosmans, like the Darenbergs, like the Grimes, we all have shared the same problems and it's just how we attack on them. We're still attacking them. See if we can solve some of this. And it the challenge actually is getting a little a little heavier now than it was before, mostly because of the cost of living here and the new attitude of a lot of the younger people who really are not interested in working the way we did when we were kids.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:19:39] And do you, have you come together with any of these other families or organizations to talk about it?

**Marshall Prado** [00:19:44] Or we talk about it all the time? Yes. Yes. It's a common conversation we all have. We even sometimes share some of the employees different seasons. You know, we can take them on and let them go and go back to where they were from. It is really something I have to sit down and think about how you're going to tackle this and what the future is going to be. And this is a little difficult to.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:20:14] Yeah. And in addition to being an active in the community as a business owner, you've also been involved as a volunteer and member of different local organizations. Can you tell me about some of your involvement with different groups around Montauk?

**Marshall Prado** [00:20:30] Actually, I haven't been that involved in a lot of those organizations because we don't have a lot of time off. But both my brothers and my father were heavily involved in the fire department, and my brother was head chief. My father was a chief, a commissioner. I volunteered wherever I could, but I just didn't have a lot of time.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:20:56] But you've done resource sharing, as you said, with these other kind of families and businesses.

**Marshall Prado** [00:21:01] I'm sorry.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:21:01] You said you've done a resource sharing with these other families and businesses.

**Marshall Prado** [00:21:07] Oh yeah. That is something that's relatively new. We can always use drivers in the wintertime, and if they're closed, part of their business in that time, we we try to get some of their employees to if they want to stay here. Mm hmm. And some of them do. Right now, most of our employees are living as far away as Hampton Bays, which makes it difficult. East Hampton Springs. So we're also 24 hours. So where we have people on call, it's hard to have anyone on call if they live in Hampton Bays.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:21:46] Especially in the summer, having to drive.

**Marshall Prado** [00:21:50] In the summer, it take you know, it's an hour and a half ride each, each way. So that creates a little bit of a problem also. So we're always looking for the town to help them come up with some solutions for, I hate to say, affordable housing because I make it gives it a little stigmatism to it, but I'm not too sure exactly how we're going to solve this problem. I mean, I would like to see some all year round apartments come available and there are people who would like to do it. But, you know, you get up into the bureaucracy of the town and it becomes difficult. Now, this is a problem that not only Montauk has, its Amagansett, East Hampton, Southampton, Bridgehampton, the whole area is experiencing this problem and we're all talking about it.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:22:44] Absolutely. So I'd like to segue to talk about you and your family. Are you married and do you have children? You mentioned daughters.

**Marshall Prado** [00:22:56] Yes, I have two daughters and a wife, of course. And both. Both my brother. My brother, Bobby is married and he has two kids and I think about six grandchildren. My other brother's married. He has two kids and two grandchildren.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:23:17] And what's your wife's name?

**Marshall Prado** [00:23:18] On my wife's name? Linda. She, let me see, she grew up well, she was her father was an Army officer during World War II, so they moved all around. But her last place where she grew up and went to high school was in Massapequa and then to Wagner College.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:23:41] And when and where did you meet?

**Marshall Prado** [00:23:42] Out in Montauk. She came out to, you know, with a lot of many other young people that age, came out to surf and enjoy the beaches. And a lot of them stayed.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:23:57] And what year was that?

**Marshall Prado** [00:23:59] We got married in 1985.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:24:03] And what did she do for work?

**Marshall Prado** [00:24:05] She was managing a couple of restaurants, and then she was working in our office. And then she, uh, she retired to take care, took care of her mother and our uncle and they've since passed. And she helped me take care of my mother and father. And she's still here. She loves it here. She's not moving. I asked. She said no. I think when you grow up in a place like Massapequa and then live in Montauk, there's no moving.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:24:40] What are your daughters' names?

**Marshall Prado** [00:24:42] The oldest daughter is Dana and the youngest one is Briana. Both went to school out here. Both wind up going to college in New York. One went to NYU, one went to Hunter and in between that, they all tried a couple other colleges and that's where they graduated from.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:25:04] And we talked about your your childhood home, but where have you kind of lived since then and where do you live now? What neighborhood?

**Marshall Prado** [00:25:11] Well, now we live maybe a mile up from where we grew up. We're up near the manor, not even a mile, actually. It's Fairlawn Drive, it's right on the golf course. And we love it up there. It's it. I think the reason I love it so much is it reminds me very much of the old Montauk and it's, it's right off the the they had a race circuit here at one time we ever heard of that called Fisher had its little Formula one circuit and I lived right off of that. So I have a good feeling about Montauk. The golf course is it's still beautiful, you know, it's just state owned now, but it's still nice. And see the manor that's, you know, I love I love that building. And in fact, just yesterday I met for the first time my first, my oldest and first cousins, children who are now 67 years old. And my first cousin is now 95 years old. And they came up from Texas just to check in on some of the relatives they haven't met. So we got together last night with about 20 family members from Montauk, and we met them and had dinner at my house. It was nice.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:26:32] And did you show them around?

**Marshall Prado** [00:26:35] Yeah, well, they just arrived yesterday afternoon. When I leave here, we're going to. We gave them a little itinerary for today, and then we're going to go out to dinner tonight and tomorrow. We're going to drive around a little bit.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:26:47] That's great. And then they'll fall in love with Montauk and they'll move here.

**Marshall Prado** [00:26:52] So far, what they've seen very like ,they're one of the, they have a son who's working in Brooklyn and that's they did this sightseeing thing in Manhattan and out here. And they what they've seen, they like.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:27:06] And you sound busy with work, but what do you do for for fun?

**Marshall Prado** [00:27:12] We work a lot. I have a few beehives in a backyard and I take care of it on my day off. I take care of the yard and the house, and that's pretty much it. I shoot at the gun club and I'm, I'm still into shooting. So from when we started as kids. And that's about it.



**Aimee Lusty** [00:27:33] And that's interesting to hear that you learned how to shoot in elementary school indoors.

**Marshall Prado** [00:27:42] Well, it was it was the fifties and. That's what boys did. Then we had to actually have a couple of girls in the class, too. And some of the older men wanted us to learn how to shoot. And everybody had a 22 in those days or 410. And so we learned how to do it. You know, it was interesting. I was a lot farther ahead of people. And when I was in the Army who had never seen a rifle or shot a rifle, but, you know, I knew all about the safety of it and it was very safety minded and it was just about developing your skills at target shooting.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:28:22] Yeah. And it's interesting with Montauk's history as a gunner's paradise and hunting hunting haven.

**Marshall Prado** [00:28:27] Yeah. Now, I never really became a hunter, but a shooter I am. I like to shoot at targets and but I've never shot a deer and I have no interest in doing it. I've hit a few.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:28:45] When did you get into beekeeping?

**Marshall Prado** [00:28:48] My cousin Jimmy Grimes did a job at our house. He's a landscaper. And when he left, he left the beehives. So I said to him, I think you forget something here. And he said, No, you need something else to do. So we developed into I'm still a very novice to beekeeping, but it's interesting.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:29:09] That seems like an interesting hobby.

**Marshall Prado** [00:29:12] And it's rewarding you get honey. I sell some of the honey. I give most of it away. It's just it's. And after a while, it became fascinating to watch how that society operates and takes care of their very their problem, very similar to human problems. And I like the way they handle it, that it's just very disciplined and everyone has a job. If you don't do it, consequences if you do it right, there's the sweet rewards.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:29:45] Now, what is your garden like?

**Marshall Prado** [00:29:48] My wife takes care of most of that and she's very good at it. And we have various vegetables and fruits, some raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, and we do potatoes and garlic and onions and tomatoes and lettuce and it's very good.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:30:08] And it's happily pollinated.

**Marshall Prado** [00:30:10] And it's pollinated. The bees help. Yes, there was another reason when we put them back there.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:30:17] And how have you seen that, that neighborhood that you're in now kind of change over the past?

**Marshall Prado** [00:30:22] Well, that neighborhood was, when I moved in, I actually bought the lot there when I came home from the Army in the seventies. And we had a really good deal. Frank Tuma, I'm sure you've heard of him. He he owned it at that time. And he was very generous to all the young, young boys that come back either from school or the Army. And he gave us a really good price on there. And the only restriction was that

if we defaulted on it and there was a home on it, that would be reverted back to him, which was fair enough, and we had to do it, the road improvements. So it was an undeveloped area. He grew up on the other one end of it as a kid, him and his sister. And it was, I would say, I think a little bit bigger than a half, half acre each or a third of an acre. Price was perfect. He gave us terms. I think if it wasn't for Frank Tuma a lot of us would not have been able to to get a house.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:31:33] And what was the lot like when you first purchased? Was it dune or forest, wooded?

**Marshall Prado** [00:31:39] No, it was so. But, you know, woods covered with what was going on. The times, you know, there's a bunch of Shad trees, which I tried to save as much of those as I can. You know, it's basically the old grasslands beginning to grow up because there was no more cattle or sheep here for years. So it was starting to fill out. And it was a nice just a nice piece of property. And all you had to do was really just pay it off and do the improvements. And then we built on it and I since have bought one behind me also. That's where we have our garden and things. I'm perfectly happy up there. And, you know, there's it's not a it's not a lot with a view of water and but it's fine. I love it.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:32:27] And did you camp on it first before building a home?

**Marshall Prado** [00:32:29] No, but my wife and I spent many a day trying to figure out she was very big on having the sun light up the house. So we we must just we must they ate tons of meals there before we realized how we had to put the house and it worked perfect. Yeah. So we, we had an area that we knew where we're going. I've actually put a pool in and that's totally covered with sunn. And so the house is very good, both summer and winter.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:32:56] That's smart to spend time on the land and kind of learn.

**Marshall Prado** [00:33:00] We had to go there early in the morning, at night when the sun was going down in the morning before it came off and we figured it out.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:33:07] And did you design your own home?

**Marshall Prado** [00:33:10] No, that's interesting. I one night went on a call. A man had no heat and it was on the Old Montauk Highway. And he was a friend of my father's. And when I went in, I said, Wow, I really like this house. This is quite charming. So we got all done and he was talking to me about my father. And at the end he said, he said, Hold on, I have something for you. So he came out of his library and gave me blueprints. I said, What is this? He said, Well, if you like this house. He said, You're going to build one. Build one like this. I said, I can't take this. I said. He said, No, you're going to I'm going to I'm going to demand that you have them redone. So you I'm not going to give that other man's work away. And I copied that pretty, pretty close to it, to his house. And I we made the changes that we want and I couldn't thank him enough. Yeah. So it was. And we built that. You can drive by and there's three of them in town and you can tell they're from the same basic set of plans. That's why I went back to the architect that drew them, and I explained to him that it was a gift and he was he was okay with it. And I said, but we have to change it. And I mean, I can build that same house. So he was he was fine with it. And we we built it and how it goes. It was one of those very Cape Cod. So you can add on to it easily and you keep the integrity of the look. And it's perfect. I would do I would do a Cape Cod again if I was going to build another house.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:34:53] And do you remember the architect's name?

**Marshall Prado** [00:34:56] Uh, he was from Amagansett, and his name was off the top of my head. I don't, but I. I might come up with it. You might even come up with it. He was from where you grew up.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:35:09] And he was. Yeah, he was local to Amagansett.

**Marshall Prado** [00:35:18] I'm not sure, but it'll come to me.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:35:20] Okay. Yeah, that's interesting to hear that, because there are a lot of, you know, around Montauk, like the kit homes or the catalog homes. But it's interesting to hear that it is, you know, built off and designed off of one that was already existing that. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Marshall Prado** [00:35:35] Well, it's the kind of house that fits in Montauk. You know, I've seen some of these kit houses that would look fine, maybe down in Florida or somewhere else, but not here. This has its own Montauk has its own flare even from the rest of the Hamptons. It's it's always just a little bit different. And that's. I like that.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:36:04] And we've talked about how Montauk has changed and certain things that are, you know, negatively affecting the community. But I wanted to hear from you kind of what are some positive things that Montauk is doing, right?

**Marshall Prado** [00:36:18] Well, it's it's opening itself more to a more wholesome lifestyle outside. Surfing, which some people look positive upon and some people look negative on. At least they're out there enjoying the water. And they have a whole different way of looking at Montauk, where, you know, in the old days it was a fishing outlook and a bit of a Western flair to it because of the ranch, which was kind of an exciting place. But the newer the newer people seem to enjoy the beach and the surfing more than I would have ever imagined. Most of them are pretty nice people. Some of them are, I don't care if they don't ever come back. But you know, that's how it is everywhere, I guess. But I think that would we're getting a younger, more positive outlook on things. I think it's a little easier to to live here now than it was when I was younger. I also noticed the people that are coming out here seem to have enough resources to enjoy it more than we did years ago.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:37:29] Did you ever surf?

**Marshall Prado** [00:37:32] No. Surfing was a you know, again, when we were kids here, we you had to work. Everyone had a position in your family. When I say that survival mode, it was that's really what it was. So we were working a lot. I did try it when I was young. It didn't it didn't kick in with me as well as it did with other people. I did enjoy the ocean when I was young, but we would body surf and I never that was about as far as I went with it.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:38:04] Do you find time to fish?

**Marshall Prado** [00:38:06] Well, I've had a couple of boats and we fished a little bit and fishing didn't really connect with me. I liked having a boat. But mostly what we did is just to go to other you know, we go to Sag Harbor once we went to Connecticut and it was Block Island, just. Just to be in on the water.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:38:32] So what are some organizations or people that you're proud of that are shaping kind of Montauk community right now?

**Marshall Prado** [00:38:40] Well, number one, you have to give a lot of credit to the Montauk Fire Department, which also does all the medical calls for us. Without them, we would really be in trouble here. And they volunteer their time, you know, with no question. I mean, you call them and they're there. There's someone there. And they've saved a lot of lives. And they they give to charitable organizations here. They sponsor a lot of girls softball team, boys little league teams. They do senior citizen dinners. Without them, it's it's, we'd be in a tough position and they're having a hard time getting members too. Some of the other organizations I like, I like the food pantry to make sure that no one really goes, you know, goes hungry. That's that's important. Some of the other organizations I'm not as fond of is because they become a little more, you know, a little too self-centered, too. For me, it's it's mostly about them. But there's not many of those most of most of the organizations here are good. The organizations that oversee some of the problems in Montauk, like CCOM and this airport thing, sometimes they go a little too far. I mean, I, I feel we need these we definitely need an airport and need the gun club in East Hampton. And I don't like the groups that just fight to have everything like it was 200 years ago, it's not 200 years ago. And we have to live in today and develop it the way the way I think it should be here today. But all those groups have their position and their point, and they they do help to keep an eye on things.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:40:37] Mm hmm. And you've been here how many years?

**Marshall Prado** [00:40:40] 76.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:40:41] 76. So you've witnessed a lot.

**Marshall Prado** [00:40:43] I've witnessed a lot of change. Yeah. Yeah. I think the the thing that bothers me the most is I'm still I'm still pretty happy with Montauk I'm I'm very happy with Montauk. I I'm a little unhappy that the community spirit has diminished a bit. When I grew up here as a kid, of course, there wasn't many people. We knew everybody. Everyone helped raise you, correct you when you were wrong, complimented you when you were right, helped you learn how to do things. But today it's it's not that it's too many, too many people out here for other reasons. And now, they call it progress. I call it, you know, I don't know what that what it's called, but it's it's different. And one of the things that attracted me back here was the fact that it was a very warm feeling here, that community mindedness, people were very, very aware that they had to support the local businesses. They had to keep an eye out for people who may have had medical problems that they needed help with. You know, there wasn't a lot of money, so you had to you had to help people. And there was help always there. And I like that. And that's not there so much now.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:42:10] And as a child, could you just roam through town and you always kind of had someone watching you?

**Marshall Prado** [00:42:15] You go to in the morning, you took your dog, you took your bike, you took your baseball bat, and off you went and you came home for dinner. You didn't have a cell phone to call. And, uh, the dog went his way he would be home for dinner also. And, uh, yeah. Growing up I don't think you could have a, you couldn't draw on better place on paper. This was, this was terrific. And we just know, not only did we

know every one in Montauk, we knew most of the people in Amagansett. And almost everybody in East Hampton, you know, all the store owners, they know my parents. We knew them then went by the time we went to high school, East Hampton was a little bit bigger but the same, same kind of deal.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:43:04] And you had a did you have a bus service to go to high school?

**Marshall Prado** [00:43:11] Yeah, we had a bus. It was the bus that my father had started and he sold to a man by the name of Cliff Windsor, who eventually sold it to the McCoys in Bridgehampton, who just sold it to the Montauk School. So it's the same. It's the same bus service and it's still going.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:43:35] That's interesting to see all the kind of webs from when your father moved here and his business is starting and how it's kind of branched out into different areas.

**Marshall Prado** [00:43:45] And a lot of those businesses, it's the sons and the son's sons. And it's it's still going on. I like that. A lot of them have, you know, have sold out to the to the bigger companies that are trying to reach out everywhere in the world. But there are still some that are hanging on, and it's difficult.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:44:08] Hmm. And what are some of the other businesses around Montauk that you've kind of grown up with and have worked alongside of now that you've been, you know, running your own business?

**Marshall Prado** [00:44:18] The other gas station, you know, one of them was the Grimes's. The other one is Martell's right down the road here. I mean, we knew their families. Just pretty, you know, everybody we weren't really, we were competitors, but not really. We were we were still and most of us are related. So, you know, it couldn't have been too bad you couldn't compete too bad. But it was, it was just a small town with a different flavor to it than we have now. You know, we were competitive, but you always knew there was a line you didn't cross.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:44:55] Yeah, because you'll be running into that person right the next day. Yeah.

**Marshall Prado** [00:45:03] I think and I think the thing that attracts me the most and I seem to mention this to more people than any other subject, was the fact that it was such a strong community that was so important. I mean, and you just we didn't know the difference from rich or poor, black or white, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish. We didn't it just did not come into the picture. It was no, we there was no need to even think about it. You know, we all we were all kind of in the soup together. And it was we didn't know about these problems until we got older. There's not many places that can say that. And I think that's the draw that brought a lot of us back.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:45:55] It brought me back here.

**Marshall Prado** [00:45:57] I mean, you know where else you live that you that, you know, people, even if you don't know them that well. I mean, you see him, you say, hi, you stop, you talk to him. They're sharing something that you're experiencing also. And so you can relate to, you can relate to that person a lot easier and you learn from them. That's that's how you grow. And that's to me, it's very important. That's why I'm a little nervous about

today's younger people who don't communicate very well, except when they're on their phone or their laptop. And, you know, to me, that's you kind of losing that there. But that's a whole other subject.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:46:37] We could go off on that tangent for another hour.

**Marshall Prado** [00:46:39] Then we'd have to stay here for two days talking about that.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:46:43] Well, I'm to the end of my questions. One of my last questions is we had Thanksgiving last week, so I just wanted to close out and ask you what you're thankful for.

**Marshall Prado** [00:46:52] Well, I'm just thankful that I'm still here. Still here, able to work. I have my family. I have what I call my town. I like to see it improve a little bit, but I'm I'm thankful for for this. I wish there was I wish the world was in a little different position. That's going to take some work. But generally, I'm a happy guy. I've always said if I die tomorrow, I was not cheated out of a day. Everything has been good. Been some ups and downs here. But that's everybody. That's life.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:47:30] And is there anything else that you'd like to add or clarify that we didn't cover in the interview?

**Marshall Prado** [00:47:34] Not at this time. But I mean, we could do this again.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:47:37] We can also. Yeah, we can have a follow up interview.

**Marshall Prado** [00:47:40] Yeah. I mean, if anything comes down I'll jot it down and we'll. Yeah. I mean, there's so much to talk about because I think one of the things that that we missed here is the history of Montauk. Montauk has got a very, very rich history going back 400 years. And the war, World War II had a big impact here. The Roughriders were out here. Uh, Washington put the lighthouse out here, and it just. It goes on and on and on. You know, settlers were out here and. We could, we could spend two weeks just talking about some of the, some of the things that have touched Montauk that are gone that no one even talks about anymore very much. Carl Fisher of course had a huge impact. Bensonhurst from Amagansett, he had to impact on it. And it was you know, we were at one time the capital of the sports sportsman fishing industry in the United States. I mean, everybody came here and it was it got so good that we fish at all out. The haul seiners were another a another group that I like to talk about that when I when we were kids, we used to watch them on the beach. They were, it was that was good, they worked hard and they were their own breed.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:49:10] And did you have any family members participating in that?

**Marshall Prado** [00:49:13] No. No, we were always downtown working. That was our thing and you know, we complained a lot about it, but we're still doing it.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:49:23] So something must be working. Well, thank you and we'll have to have you back.

**Marshall Prado** [00:49:33] Anytime. I'm not very far away.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:49:34] Okay, great.

**Marshall Prado** [00:49:36] Thank you.

**Aimee Lusty** [00:49:37] This is the end of the November 29th interview with Marshall Prado. The interviewer was Aimee Lusty, and this recording can be found in the archive collection of the Montauk Library.