

## Ep. 4: Lamb Curry and Sleeping in the Dishwasher

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**JON LYNCH**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 1)*

My name is Jon Lynch.

**ADAM**

Unfortunately, the audio from his interview was quite damaged, and it's really hard to understand him. So, for the rest of his interview, my friend Nick...

**NICK**

Hello, I'm Nick.

**ADAM**

...will be providing the voice of Jon Lynch. We're still using Jon's actual words, we're just making them a little more understandable. Anyway, Jon was a cook on the Preston.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 3)*

Oh yeah. I've been a cook for 23 years. In the army, I cooked, and now here.

*(JLynch.pdf, page 1)*

I've been working aboard the PRESTON for 12 ½ years. Started on the 30th of May, 1969-terminated without prejudice the 30th of October, 1981.

**ADAM**

By terminate, he wasn't fired, that was the day the Preston was decommissioned.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 1)*

I've done a good job, I suppose. Had good people to work with, I suppose from time to time.

**ADAM**

Jon started his interview talking about how difficult baking pies were on the Preston.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 1)*

Oh yes. They're impossible, just impossible.

They either burn or they come out raw. That's it, they just don't work at all. It doesn't heat evenly. Never has. You can adjust it several ways, but it just never heats properly so it's just very difficult to bake anything in there other than just bread.

**ADAM**

It wasn't just baking that Jon did, he could whip you up anything you'd like.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 2)*

Meat, potatoes, salad, vegetables, gravy, sauces, soups. Pretty much whatever you would have at home only more so.

**ADAM**

If you get a chance to walk through the galley on the Preston, you'll notice there's a dumbwaiter in one of the corners.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 2)*

Its operated by a rope, and I just bring it up or let it down.

**ADAM**

The dumbwaiter connects the galley with the mess on the main floor. Pretty handy to get food down and dirty plates up for the crew. Although...

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 2)*

Once the rope broke, about 10 years ago, it was quite a mess down below. I was letting lunch down and the rope parted. So then I went down and cleaned up the blooming mess.

**ADAM**

Jon would set the menu for the crew.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 2)*

Of course I have to take into consideration what the guys on board like.

**ADAM**

Of course.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 2)*

I can't go around buying okra if nobody will eat okra. But pretty much I get what everybody likes, and I know what they don't like. They don't like turnips, they don't like rutabagas, but that's about it.

**ADAM**

He also liked to push the crew some.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 5)*

I think I like lamb curry best of all. I could eat lamb curry 5 or 6 times a week. The hotter the better.

*(JLynch.pdf, page 3)*

When I first came to work here the guys on board flat refused to eat lamb in any way, description, or form. But I convinced them that loin cut lamb chops were quite a delicacy.

**ADAM**

Jon seemed to have a good handle on the meals, though there would be the occasional item he'd run out of.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 3)*

Occasionally I might run out of batter, like on a Monday morning breakfast. Occasionally, maybe milk, once in a while orange juice. I seem to be running out of a lot of orange juice just lately. I don't understand that, but whatever.

**ADAM**

When Jon started there were two cooks assigned to the Preston.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 4)*

Normally, in the past there have been 2 cooks. One was a 2nd cook, a scullery, or whatever you want me to call that person who did pretty much of the cleaning. Then the other cook did most of

the actual cooking.

**ADAM**

As the Preston got near it's decommissioning, funding began to dry up, and positions weren't rehired. So Jon ended up spending the last six months as the sole cook on the Preston.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 4)*

When I came to work here, the understanding was that meals and quarters were provided 7 days a week. Anytime anybody that was crew on board here wanted to stay onboard or eat, they were authorized. But in the last 4 years that's been different weekends and holidays there hasn't been any cook available. Primarily because of the cost of paying overtime. So the crew has been denied those rights and benefits that have been provided in the past.

**ADAM**

The cooks were also required to clean the officer's floor bedrooms.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 5)*

that's been part of my job. In the wardroom, skipper's quarters, the mate's, and engineer's. That's always been my job, cleaning and anything having to do with maintenance of the quarters up above here.

**ADAM**

In episode two, Captain Morgan tells about a harrowing trip across the Puget Sound from Everett to Port Townsend. Jon talks about the same experience, but from the galley.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 5)*

There was once, when we went to Port Townsend about 6 or 7 years ago. It really became rough. This boat does not take any kind of weather at all, and it was rough. I wouldn't be surprised if some of the guys were seasick. It was really

surprising how much this boat took. And it was really difficult to work on the stove. Everything is sliding back and forth. We don't have any guardrails on board that stove. So, it was interesting holding everything on there without having anything fall to the deck. It was really interesting, but I managed it.

**ADAM**

Considering how bad that trip was from Captain Morgan's perspective, I was struck with how nonchalant it was the Chef Jon. From his perspective, it was rough, but he was too focused on keeping all the pans in place to notice the seeming chaos elsewhere on the ship. And though he did a valiant job keeping destruction at bay during the Port Townsend crossing, the kitchen wasn't always so fortunate.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 6)*

we have a Kitchen Aide dishwasher. It's fairly new, it's only about 3 or 4 years old. Before then—well, originally I had asked for a top-of-the-line Kitchen Aide dishwasher. But naturally they went out and bought bottom-of-the-line Sears. It lasted for about a year I think. The door was sprung somehow, and I'm not sure but I think that someone tried to sleep in there once. After that it was a piece of junk. After that they went out and bought the top-of-the-line Kitchen Aide, and we haven't had any problem with it since. I wasn't on board that night. But some of these evenings get pretty rowdy, and I wouldn't be surprised that somebody tried to sleep in there.

**ADAM**

OK, if I'm honest, I was expecting more stories like this when I started this process, but this does seem like the exception, rather than the rule.

**ADAM**

In late October, 1981, the crew sat down for their last meal together, one of the only times the entire crew all at together in the officer's wardroom.

**JON LYNCH (NICK)**

*(JLynch.pdf, page 6)*

We had a bottle of booze, we had expensive steak, and we had 8 oz. lobster tail imported from Maine. The steak was 10 oz. each. I'm not sure how well it went over down at the office when they saw the bill for lobster. We had never had lobster on here before, and they're never going to have it again. I imagine those people down at the office were slightly stunned to see \$99.28 for lobster. Then, one bottle of booze does not go around this table with anything left over. That was it, one small drink a piece to say Bon Voyage. That was all, that was the end of the game.

*(JLynch.pdf, page 7)*

So the day of the old sternwheelers is over. It's sad, it's really sad to see this thing go because if it was properly maintained, this old boat could be working for another 50 years. Our grandchildren, and perhaps their children could have enjoyed hearing this old steam whistle that we have on board blowing as it chugged up and down the bays. It's a sad day to see this old boat gone.

**ADAM**

Jon was right, that kind of was the end of the sternwheeler, at least in this part of the world. And, while many new and wonderful things things were on the horizon, but this piece of history was coming to a close. This podcast was created by Adam Farnsworth and Sonic Bazaar, with sponsorship by the Anacortes Museum Foundation, in conjunction with the Anacortes Museum and The Maritime Heritage Center. Our theme song is Dill Pickles by Heftone Banjo Orchestra, and is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike License. The W. T. Preston is an active museum boat and can be visited and toured. To find out more about the Preston, please visit: [www dot Anacortes W A dot gov slash 379 slash W T hyphen Preston hyphen Maritime hyphen Center](http://www.dotAnacortesWA.gov/slash379/slashWThyphenPrestonhyphenMaritimehyphenCenter). Thank you.