

NEW BOSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEW BOSTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

MEMORIES OF NEW BOSTON: OLD-TIMERS' TALES

250th ANNIVERSARY

Panel Discussion

June 22, 2014

New Boston Community Church

THE PANEL:

JIM DANE
VERNA ELLIOTT
ALFRED WOODBURY
FRANCES TOWNE
HOWARD TOWNE
ALICE CURTIS
BOB TODD
WILLARD DODGE
CLEM LYON
JERRY KENNEDY
ANDI CARD
JANET NIXON
WALTER KIRSCH

THE MODERATOR: LEE NYQUIST

VIDEOGRAPHER: DAN ROTHMAN

TRANSCRIPTION: THERESA MCGUIRE-HARKINS, RPR

(At the New Boston Community Church, New Boston, New Hampshire, at 2:10 p.m.)

DICK MOODY: I'm going to read this because I'm going to forget it otherwise. I'm Dick Moody, president of the Historical Society. Is that all right?

Thanks for coming. Boy, I'm glad to see so many. This is the biggest event we've put on. And I'd like to take a moment to salute the flag if possible.

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

MR. MOODY: The Society thought, as a continuation of the 250th anniversary of the Town, we should get some of our oldest citizens who have been here most of their lives to give us their memories of growing up and living in New Boston. Time is marching on, and we didn't want to lose these memories, so we've gathered you to reminisce.

After the discussion is started, memories will come; and I'm sure many will have different memories of the same episode. This will be a lot of fun. Lee Nyquist has volunteered to keep the discussion on track and moving forward. Most of you know him as the town moderator.

I'd like each of these folks here to introduce themselves and say how long they've lived in town. For many that's their age. Anyone in the audience who has lived in town 65 years or so, feel free to come up and join. Okay? Sorry. We might have missed some folks. We tried to pick on as many as we could. I think it's going to be a lot of fun. Thank you.

LEE NYQUIST: Thanks, Dick.

When Dick called me for a very brief conversation, probably at the end of April, I just immediately said yes. I just couldn't believe my good fortune to be able to be here with you all and share in these great memories. It's a wonderful organization. It's an incredibly hard-working organization. I've also taken the time to go online, and I'm sure that many of you have. I know that Dan Rothman and probably some others have had a lot to do with that amazing web site which already contains some detailed and very comprehensive and unusual information about the Town, much of which I didn't know.

I've lived here 25 years now. We just celebrated 25 years. My wife, Leslie, and her mom, Janet, who's here today, moved here in 1960. So, we have some roots; but we don't get back to 65 years, as many of these folks do.

And the other thing, before we get started, that I have to note, especially looking around the table and knowing most of these people fairly well, is that they may be, some of you, the oldest citizens in the community; but I can assure you, based on my experience, that's only chronological. These people are as energetic and wonderful as any of the youngest people in the community. And I'm sure that we're going to get a real flavor for that today.

In order to get everybody comfortable, I am going to do, as Dick suggested -- and starting with Mr. Jim Dane, who is to my immediate left -- ask him to introduce himself and how long he's been in town; and maybe we can figure out how old he is when he does that.

And then we'll go back to Mr. Dane, after everybody has done that, and ask each individual, from left to right, to share, at least briefly, with us a story or something they just want to share and make sure it's part of this wonderful New Boston recorded-history project.

So, starting with Mr. Dane, you can all just introduce yourself. You're going to probably just pass this down to the left. Be careful when you're doing it, because we have water and all that kind of stuff here.

JIM DANE: Most of you know me anyway. I think most you know me. A lot of you people here I don't know. Somebody's laughing at me back there. I should know him. I think that's Ray. I think that's who it is.

And it's good to know that there's this many people here that are interested in coming and telling about some of the things we used to do many years ago. I guess that's the idea of it anyway. I'll pass it along down to Verna.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: How many years in town?

MR. DANE: What?

LEE NYQUIST: Number of years in town?

JIM DANE: Oh. How long I've lived in town? Well, just about all my life, so that would be about 87. Don't it, Roberta?

(Applause.)

VERNA ELLIOTT: Hello. I'm Verna Elliott, as you probably all -- most of you know. I'm the wife of Bib Elliott, and I've been in town 67 years. So, I thought, gee, why are they asking me to come? I'm not a native. But I guess I've been here quite a while. So, 67 years. And I'm 85 and I don't mind saying so, and I don't mind saying I'm looking forward to 86.

AL WOODBURY: My name is Al Woodbury. I've got a cold. And I've lived here approximately 60 years. I was born here, and I went away to work and I returned.

So, I've been here around 40 years, roughly.

FRANCES TOWNE: Good afternoon. My name is Frances Towne. I'm one of that Byam clan that you hear about every now and then in New Boston. And I was born here on South Hill, on South Hill Road. The house is no longer standing, but it's just a little ways from Lester Byam's. And I guess that I will be 87 this year, so that's how long I've lived here.

(Applause.)

HOWARD TOWNE: Good afternoon. Can you hear me? Okay. Well, to begin with, I was born in 1919; but I've only lived in New Boston 92 years. I got pulled out for three years, so I'm just 95 now. I've lived here all those years, and I've seen the town change and seen the people change, and I am a stranger now in town.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: Oh, never.

HOWARD TOWNE: That sounds better.

But I have to blush when someone comes speaking to me suddenly and says, "How are you?" and all of this and I don't recognize them. It's happened this week, twice. I get acquainted with some old people that know me; but the town has changed, as I said before, completely. We went from horse and wagons and oxen.

FRANCES TOWNE: Pass it on. *(referring to the microphone)*

HOWARD TOWNE: I think you know my name, Howard Towne. Nice to have you.

ALICE CURTIS: I haven't been here anywhere near as long as most of these people. I was brought up in Mont Vernon. My children went to school here in New Boston. My name is Alice Curtis. I am also part of the Byam clan, and I'm glad to be here today to see all you folks. And I don't have as many stories as most of these people have; but again, I'm just glad to be here.

Thank you.

BOB TODD: Good afternoon. I'm Bob Todd. I'm 74 years old, and I was born and brought up in New Boston. And my genes have been hanging around this town for almost 200 years, actually. So, this morning I was at a committee meeting with the rest of the family members that are involved in this committee that is planning a 200th anniversary of the Todd homestead. We've been talking history all day, and I'm pleased to know that we're going to be hearing some more this afternoon from you folks.

WILLARD DODGE: Good afternoon, again. My name is Willard Dodge. I've been in New Boston all my life, since 1940, with the exception of five years when my former employer made me live in the town of Candia for five years. Other than that, I've been here.

I'm pleased today to see that I have two of my classmates sitting here on the podium with me, with Bob Todd and you'll hear from Jerry just shortly. They're still healthy and still working and doing fine. We're glad to be here.

CLEM LYON: I'm tickled to death to be here. New Boston is a special town, as far as I'm concerned. I wish that I could say I have lived all my 90 years here; but after -- let's see -- the early '40s and -- 1923 to World War II -- and, of course, I was gone three years in the navy. And then, after that, it was back home to New Boston. My folks lived here then still. But it was college and then off into the big world. But I have kept in touch with everything that has gone on in New Boston. I subscribe to your monthly paper. That keeps me up to date. And I belong to the Historical Society, and I have been very active in planning for school reunions. And, yeah, we're still having those.

It's the greatest town; and it's just something that I -- this is my hometown; and I just love it, love you all.

JERRY KENNEDY: Hi. I'm Jerry Kennedy. I'm 74. I've lived here, except two years I was in the service. I was telling Clem I haven't seen him since I was in high school, when we worked for Fred Cann after school. We'd go up and pick apples, and I think we used to get -- what? -- like four cents or five cents a box.

CLEM LYON: Nickel a box.

JERRY KENNEDY: Thank you.

ANDI CARD: I'm Andi Card. I live in Goffstown now. But I grew up here in New Boston. I graduated from New Boston High School. That's when we had the high school here. Thank goodness. And I just love New Boston. There's no town greater to grow up in than New Boston. And also, a lot of fantastic athletes have come from New Boston. Even when I was in school, we had great athletes; and they're going off to other schools now. So, New Boston is a wonderful town.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: All right. Thank you very much. That was pretty easy, I think. Right? Great job. We appreciate it.

This is an absolute true story. You may think the reason that I have a coat and tie on today is that I was asked to be the moderator and that I thought that would be the appropriate dress. But it's not. I go to church, not as often as Howard Towne; but when I do, I notice that Howard has essentially the same suit and tie that I have on here today. And I was absolutely convinced that Howard would show up dressed exactly as I am. And I made it a point in church that -- I felt bad for Howard -- but he looks great, of course -- I don't want him to be the only person that looks like this. But now I'm the only person.

WILLARD DODGE: It's okay if you take your jacket off. We don't mind.

LEE NYQUIST: Fortunately, it's a good day to wear a sport coat. Anyways, in order to keep this moving right along and make it easy for everybody, if you could start thinking -- and, Jim, you better think quickly -- to come up with that one anecdote that's kind of special to you about your life in New Boston or something about the town or some event, anything at all. But just focus in on one item for a minute or two, starting with Jim and moving down the table. Each one of you can highlight something that you would really like to be a part of this recorded history. Okay?

JIM DANE: Well, what shall I talk about? Riding my bicycle to high school, I think, the only wheels I had back then, either that or walked three miles, that was a good time. We used to raise a little hell, but most of the time we behaved ourselves. I can remember one winter we had a lot of snow. They had a lot of wind to go along with it. And it filled the roads right full of snow, you know. We didn't have much of the road edge to get -- whoops -- to get the snow out of the way for cars, so I ended up doing a lot of shoveling, especially up my way. Up that way there, the wind would blow like the dickens; and it would cover up everything; and then it would -- it was so hard that the old tractor that they plowed the roads with would ride up on it, instead of plowing it.

So, guess what? All the neighbors got together, my father and I, Roger Houghton, Fred -- what's his name? -- Fred O'Neil; and we would shovel across the flats and up the hill so that the tractor could get into it and get to plowing and then right up on it again and we'd have to do some more shoveling. That was a great day, no school. And I don't know. I don't remember much else going on. Any time I wanted to go anywhere in the wintertime I walked. Of course, that kept you

warm. But summertime, of course, bicycle wheels were going all the time. We had a lot of fun. I used to go down -- I heard them talking about picking apples over there. I remember, Clem. He kept a lot of boys. Howard Woodbury and Robert St. John and I were picking apples for Fred Cann over here, and it was good going. It was small trees. We were having a great time. We'd pick a hundred boxes a day. That was great back in -- when was that? 1940 --

CLEM LYON: Early '40s.

JIM DANE: Yeah. I mean, ten bucks a day, for high-school boys, was pretty darn good pay. Had to be. That's all the money I had for the next year. Things like that that I remember particularly, you know, that was a fun thing, as well as hard work. Some of it was hard work; and, you know, you always had chores at home. So, you -- after high school, every day after school, you were expected to go home and take care of animals and do things that you're supposed to do; and if you didn't do that, well, you know, there was some responsibility that went with it.

So, I don't recall. I probably maybe will, some of the things we get to talk about tonight. But it was a good life back then. We -- I had that whole hill up there to myself. There wasn't another house anybody lived in for a mile either way. So, it was pretty handy for me, especially hunting season. I had it all to myself, even though I couldn't hit nothing. I had a lot of fun. And what was I going to say? I forget. Where did I leave off? Oh, yeah. I was talking about -- I was thinking about this the other day. You know, it was nothing then back in those years to carry your shotgun with you when you went to school. You might see a deer on your way, going in or going home. So, you made sure you had that and a few shells in your pocket. You walk into school with that shotgun on your side there, and you hang it up in the corner along with other coats and stuff. Nobody thought a thing about it. Had your pockets full of ammunition. So what? Who's going to worry about a kid that's 16 that wanted to go hunting? Nobody. Nobody worried about them. It was a great time. It really was a great time back then, when you could walk around like that and nobody worried about you.

Oh, yeah. We had a real cold spell one year, and some time the school didn't get quite warm enough to hold school. When it was 20 below zero, I'd walk to town, expecting to go to high school. No school. So, I'd hang around the store a few minutes and then walk back home. What else was there to do?

It was fun; and I enjoyed, I'm sure, more than I realize now, the difference in schools today. And in high school, especially back then, they didn't have any transportation for high-school kids. It was up to them to get themselves to school the best way they could if they wanted to go to school or if they had to, in my case. I was told I had to. And, you know, the elementary kids, they had -- they had their buses, like they do today, I suppose, but it's a little different. But high school, you got there or forget it. Well, that's the way it was. I went to high school because I wanted to and because I had to, and it was a good thing for me that I did. At least I learned a little something, I think.

(Applause.)

JIM DANE: I guess I'm rambling. So, I'll just pass it along.

VERNA ELLIOTT: Just in regards to what he was saying about carrying the gun to school, because Bib told me that's what he did. I said, "You what?" And I said, "What did you do with it?" And he said, "When you get into school, you just put it in the corner." I couldn't believe it.

But in regards to something that Bib was telling me that he thought was pretty neat. Homer Dodge allowed the school boys to have their lunch in his -- the back room in his facility there. They could have their lunch there. But he said no girls were allowed. Big deal.

AL WOODBURY: Well, I had a lot of fun in high school. We had a basketball team, baseball team; and we really had good teams. And I think I was in my senior year that I was invited to practice for the major leagues in Manchester, professional baseball; and Josh Strong was also invited. We went down. I was pretty proud of that. What happened was they sent me home, and I never touched a baseball. That was pretty discouraging. I was able to run so many feet in so many seconds, and a lot of us didn't make it.

Outside of that, I had a bicycle. I liked going to school, because I always rode my bicycle to school. I put a gasoline engine on the back of my bicycle. I enjoyed that. That was a lot of fun. All in all, I enjoyed the school. Thank you.

FRANCES TOWNE: Well, Jim's five months older than I am, so he remembers more than I do. But our high-school years were different than the years previously or after we graduated. We were freshmen in '41, when the war started; and we graduated in '45, just before the peace was signed. So, there were a lot of things we couldn't do that classes before us and after us did have.

For example, our principal thought it was too frivolous if we had formal gowns for the junior prom. That was not allowed. We had a different principal when we graduated, and we had formal gowns for our senior prom.

But Jim talked about picking apples. It wasn't just the guys that picked apples. Anyone who was a junior or senior who were excused from school to go and pick the apple crop, because there were no men left around here to go and do the picking. So, I picked a lot of apples, too. I never picked 100 bushel a day, like Jim said he did. But I picked about 50. So that put five dollars in my pocket. And that was hard work. But at one time we picked up, at Cann's, for some of the big trees, so they paired us up with a girl and boy. The boy did the tree-climbing work, the ladder work, and we picked from the ground. Our numbers went into your boxes, and it was split in half at the end of the day. So, that worked out very well.

But we didn't have the things going on that nowadays, it seems to me, anybody who's got a child in school is running up and down, up and down, to Goffstown with everything that's going on. We didn't have that much going on. But we did have our senior play, a play every year, whoever the senior class was, to earn money for the class trip. There were no class trips to Washington, D.C., but we did go on the train to New York City. Of course, it was totally blacked out because of the war, but we got to see the Rockettes and couldn't go out to the Statue of Liberty. But we saw the sights in New York and had a good time.

Alfred's brother, Howard, was in our class; and we lost him in New York City. We were traveling around on buses, of course; and sometimes we would all get on the same bus. Our principal and his wife were our chaperones. And we got back to the hotel and no Howard.

Well, we weren't too sure what to do. But we knew Howard was pretty self-reliant. We knew he had some money in his pocket. He could take a cab if he had to. So, Mr. Stevens, our principal, went and sat down in the lobby to wait for him to come in. The rest of us went up to our room. Pretty soon Mr. Stevens looked over at one of the couches. Howard was sitting there, sound asleep. He got back before we did.

We used to have school dances. You'd never guess where they were. They were in the classroom in the old schoolhouse. We would have a record player, and we would go up there and

have our school dances. So, we did have a lot of fun. But being school students for the full four years of it, being wartime, it was a different type of world.

Nobody had much gasoline. There were no nylon stockings for us girls to wear; and also, however, we had the bombing range; and they had lots of good-looking sailors and soldiers over there. Naturally, one of our classmates married a sailor from over the bombing range. Her name was Leland. Her dad ran the telephone office. So, her name was Ginger; and, actually, she came to see me just a week ago, from Indiana. We keep in touch constantly, and she remembers a lot of the people here. But I don't think there are too many people here now that remember her, because they moved to Indiana 50 years ago. But we never lost touch.

So, the friendships continue after you separate and go your separate ways in school. So, we still miss our old high school, but I guess that's called progress. So, I don't know of anything else to say about school at the moment; but when I get home, I will.

HOWARD TOWNE: Well, good afternoon again. And it's odd but everyone's been talking a little bit about school; and I thought, when I got here, maybe I could do that instead of all of them. So, I just -- if I get involved, I don't know when I'll quit. But that's one reason why I didn't wear a jacket and tie, because any time I'm in a conference where I might get a chance to speak, I'm not allowed to go over three minutes. And the signal is a pull on my coattail, so I just felt it was better to come with just a shirt.

I would like to talk about the school. Maybe I can make it fast enough so you won't leave, but I spent all of my school years right here in New Boston where the fire station is now. And I've seen the school, I believe, four times updated.

When I first started there, there was a fire stove in -- a wood stove in every classroom, upstairs, downstairs, and everywhere. And we had no regular water system. You didn't have a fountain where you could go to get a drink when we first started school. When I left, we had it. It has been changed, I think, four times. They took windows out that used to face over here and put a blackboard on so they could teach us something. Things like that changed through the school.

And I was lucky also to have a chance to take a different class than everybody else. A few of us could. And we had a couple of us that tried to take French. Arthur Daniels and I, first day of school, went into the classroom for the French instructions. Well, we sat there probably about ten minutes; and everybody was gabbing -- not everybody, but the old students that were in the classroom -- were gabbing in French. We didn't understand whether they were talking about us or not, so we asked if we could leave; and the teacher let us go; and we never did go into a classroom speaking French again.

But we did sign up for the agricultural class and, well, Mr. Lyons left. He was prior to my getting into high school. So, Mr. Nadeau was our leader; and it was a wise option, really, because we did get a chance to do things that the other students didn't even know what we were talking about. And we still had some of the things that they had. We had junior business and all of that to go along with our class work. But in the aggie class we got a chance to go pick apples. We didn't get paid for it. But we took the money -- the school took the money that we sold the apples for to send us on trips, paying for the gas and the driver and so forth. So, it was worthwhile. In fact, it was well enough done so that we went to Kansas City, Missouri, for the Future Farmers national organization convention. So, it took us out of New Hampshire, out of New Boston. It was the longest trip I ever took until I got into the military. So, it was worthwhile.

But aggie class taught us a self-sustaining life on the farm. You raised -- I raised potatoes, peas, dried beans. Others raised pork and milk cows. We had a variety. So, it was a versatile

class; and the things that we did learn there took us almost well enough educated to go anywhere outside of New Boston to find a job; and, for myself, I had a lesson that was worthwhile.

After I got in the military, I had to go to school, of course; and I was being preached about mechanics, because that's what I wanted to be; and the instructor was telling how to do a soldering job. Well, he shouldn't have, because it embarrassed me. He was going through, explaining how to take two pieces of metal and heat, whatever you had to; and I just broke in and said, "Sir, that's not the way it works"; and he wasn't very pleased with it. And he said, "Shut up." And he says, "I am your instructor, and you don't say anything like that again." And I never did. But that was another lesson you get.

Anyway, that's what the aggie class was. We had been taught so many things that almost anybody could make a mistake trying to tell us something. I enjoyed it.

And I've often thought about a friend of mine, Bob Walter. I talked to him on the phone one day; and he said, "I wish I had taken aggie, like you." And that's because of the variety of things that I was taught that he wished he had. But he had a good job.

But the school was only one of the things that I would like to talk about. Talking about shoveling snow, I shoveled snow, too. I had to, to get to school. And coming to school, we started out being brought down with my dad's horses to go to the mill over to the creamery, because the creamery was running. So, we would ride down when he brought the milk down and go to school, and then we'd walk home. That changed a little bit because he was working away with a team; and we had to get -- it must have been fifth grade or something like that. So, we'd hitch-hike home with a fellow that had a Nash -- I can't remember the year of it -- coupe. It was a nice little car. And he couldn't hear well. But anyway, we got started walking up the hills towards or past Clem's house; and he'd come along and ask us for a ride and we would accept. And he'd gun that engine because he couldn't hear it, and it sounded like a buzz saw. We didn't mind. We got in, and he'd take us up to the corner of Beard Road and dump us off. But that was another way of getting to school until -- I forget what year I ended up.

Oh. I know. I was going to school in high school, and I knew the teacher down below because she was teaching my sister. And she was teaching my sister to dance after school one night, and her car was over to Smith's garage just across the street. And I said, "Why don't I go get your car." And she said, "Oh, good." And she let me go after her car over to Smith's garage and I came back. Then we were going to have to walk home that night and got over to Dodge's store, and my mother was standing on the porch. She said, "How come you took that car over?" I said, "Well, I volunteered." She says, "That's it. Until you've got a license, you don't touch another automobile."

There are things that happened in your life that are unusual, and you don't plan them. But those are some of the things that were interesting to me. But doing several other things, I could -- I'm getting my coattail pulled. There are things I wish I could spend the rest of the afternoon chatting with you about, but I guess I had better quit now. And thank you very much.

(Applause.)

ALICE CURTIS: Well, if he talked for longer than he was supposed to, it's because I told him to take up my time. I used to work for Homer Dodge, and I worked in his store for about eight years. This is when my kids were growing up. I have to say he must have been a lot more mellow as he was younger, because I remember him kicking the kids out of the store, not allowing them to eat. They weren't allowed to be on the porch. They came every day, and he kicked them off every day. I don't know. I think that was just -- I think he enjoyed doing that.

Anyway, my kids, like I said, did grow up and go through New Boston school system. And it was much different when they went to school here in town than it was when these other lovely people did. I was going to say, if I handed my kid a shovel to shovel, they would ask me why I was asking them to do it. You know, they didn't really know what good old hard work was, like most of these people here did.

So, anyway, you know, I've enjoyed New Boston. I've come and gone a couple times, and I was in Goffstown for a while. But I guess New Boston is home because I came back and I plan to stay. Thank you.

(Applause.)

BOB TODD: The memories that rest in my heart all these years since I was a youngster, teen-ager, have involved my classmates, Willard Dodge, Jerry Kennedy, and the many others that are not here today, and especially those memories associated with the sports that we partook in. I will never forget those. I think that, in life, the learning from sports is a key to success. I mean, I really believe that. And, in my case, the friendships that were forged in those years are, I think, stronger than the other friendships that we gain later in our years or even in those times. And I can't -- even this spreads to our opposing teams that we played against. Right, Jerry?

JERRY KENNEDY: Yeah.

BOB TODD: We remember those folks all the time. We see them still, today; and we have strong bonds. I also enjoyed the years after we got out of high school. Jerry and I played on a Legion team together. We played with some great players, Joe Clement being one; and there were numerous others. Great times. There were also some sad times; and I can't get over the memory of losing our friend, Richard Whipple, probably one of the best athletes I ever played with. Would you agree with that, Jerry?

JERRY KENNEDY: Yes.

BOB TODD: That's been a terrible memory. But I'm pleased that I was one that he mentored; and I'll never forget those occasions, particularly one night we were down in Townsend, Mass., playing basketball in a tournament. Do you remember that?

JERRY KENNEDY: Yes.

BOB TODD: We played a tournament down in Townsend, Massachusetts?

JERRY KENNEDY: Yes.

BOB TODD: We got halfway through the game, and we were so far ahead of the other team. I had been sitting on the bench. Jerry played. He was better than I was. And Richard Whipple was playing, and he asked the coach if he could sit down and I could play. And I thought that was the greatest thing that ever happened. Well, as it turned out -- I don't know why -- but at the end of the game I was chosen as the best player in the game. I couldn't figure that out either.

But the whole Whipple family were a tremendous part of my youth; and, in fact, Denison Road was one of our playgrounds. There were only two farms and two houses on that road, the old Denison farm, from which the Whipples were descendents from.

The Whipples' mother, Sylvia, who played a great part in my life, because she helped getting me to respond after I went to visit my wife after she had the first baby. I walked into the room and, all of a sudden, fainted. So, Sylvia said, "Well, we've got to get you straightened out before we can get to her." But she was a wonderful nurse; and she was also a -- one of the head nurses in the Moore General Hospital, which is no longer there.

She raised five of the craziest boys and the finest little daughter, Dottie, that my kids just loved. They loved to have her come over and baby-sit. But the boys were a wild bunch. And we

spent a lot of time up and down Denison Road with our slingshots that we made, and we made some great ones. We would, of course, pick a branch that had the right curves in it; and we used to cut up old tires for the elasticity of them. And we would shoot rocks. And I don't think the chipmunk population was very high on Denison Road for many years. We'd go out on a hunt and our trophies were about seven or eight apiece. That was a great sport.

We used to play baseball. I think that's where I first played baseball, is up on the Denison farm cow pasture. That added a different dimension to the baseball game, because we could find enough dried cow flats for bases; but you had to be very careful when you ran the baseline, because you can take an awful slide when you hit one of those fresh ones.

And then there was Minnie Chandler. That was Sylvia's mother. And her brother, Arthur Denison, married my grandmother's sister, Emma. So, I was kind of in the family there, too. And Frank Chandler was a character, too. I'll never forget his laugh. He had the most boisterous laugh of anybody I've ever heard. And it didn't take much to make him laugh. He had a hard time holding his pipe in his mouth. He didn't have very many teeth. So, what he did was wrap several wraps of string around the mouth end of the -- whatever you call the thing, the stem of the pipe, I guess; and he used to smoke that pipe. I always thought that was an odd situation. But he had a great sense of humor, and he passed that on to Minnie Chandler.

Minnie was a great lady, too. That's Sylvia's mother. And she had a milk route in town, and I think that was a Model A.

CLEM LYON: Model A.

BOB TODD: Model A, right? And she had a little box in the back, and she put the milk bottles that they had from their home dairy in that, and she peddled that all over the town. Then when she got ready to go home, there'd be at least three Whipple boys and myself that needed a ride home. So, we'd all jump into the back of that Model A, in the box, and she would take us home. And that was great. We had a wonderful time with her.

She was a great cook, too. And I never could figure out why, when there was a bunch of us in the area next to the home, she would always put out a pan, cookie plate, I guess you'd call it, or cookie dish, that would be full of doughnuts right out of the kitchen; and she'd put them out there. In a while, Richard went over, and he'd put on as many doughnuts on his fingers as he could. But, you know, I think she did it on purpose. It was a great way to feed us. So, I have some great memories up there with the Whipple family. I'll never forget them.

(Applause.)

WILLARD DODGE: I didn't know this was going to be this much fun. I was supposed to be out of here at 3:00 o'clock because my nephew is up on Hooper Hill baling hay, and I was supposed to be picking up. But I'll stay a little bit longer.

Bob talked about how important the sports were for him in school. For me, because I had to work in the family farm, what was important to me was the FFA, Future Farmers of America; and I think Jerry and Bob would both agree it was an extremely important thing in our careers in New Boston High School. Everybody belonged to the FFA; and everybody in those years probably did a little bit of farming, even though very few went on to be farmers.

But that's not what's significant about it. What was important was the leadership qualities that it taught us. I can't even begin to tell you how much it's meant to me over the years. The training I got from the leadership, not just learning agricultural things that Bob talked about or Howard talked about in school, but parliamentary-procedure contests that we went all over the state of New Hampshire to compete with other teams. You can't imagine what a training exercise that is. It was very, very important in our lives.

And there's no question it did a lot for me, between the FFA and being involved in the Youth Fellowship in church here in town as a young student, which was really the only thing we had going. I went on all the way up to become state president of that organization. I was awarded the Northeast Star Farmer award; and I found, when I went to Thompson School of Agriculture how it really, really helped me out. It helped me to stand up in front of a group and talk to people.

And, as I said before, not just the agricultural things, the mechanical things that you learn, there was dealing with people. Being state president was an important thing for me. In fact, when Arlene and I were on our honeymoon, I had to -- we were down in Washington, DC; and I had to write my speech for the national convention -- for the state convention while we were on our honeymoon.

ALICE CURTIS: And you're still married.

WILLARD DODGE: We're still married. But it did me well through school. It did me well through the two years of the Thompson's School of Agriculture that I attended, and my eventual career, as a -- when my brother got out of school, he wanted to stay on the family farm. There wasn't room for both of us. I was at the time a part-time police officer in New Boston, still working the farm, fire chief in New Boston. And I decided that I was going to go into the state police and, fortunately, did make it. And I can guarantee you that, all my way up through my career in the state police -- I rose all the way up to captain in charge of all state investigations in the state of New Hampshire -- I owe it to this, being involved in this. There's no question about it. So, that, to me, was very significant.

And, as I said before, almost everybody belonged. We all got something out of it, whether you were in agriculture or not. Yes. I'm still associated with agriculture, still with the family farm. But most of them went on to other things, as I did. But it did a great deal for us.

And two people the most influential in my life was Neil Andrews, the former principal and AG teacher, and George Kittredge, who was also an AG teacher, that had so much to boot me in the butt when I needed it, make me do what I had to do, and, I hope, become a better citizen. And I went on also to be a selectman in the Town of New Boston for eight years. That was all part of being part of that. It meant a lot to me.

(Applause.)

CLEM LYON: Boy. What a hard act to follow. This has been great. I'm down here at the end of the line, pretty near; and what can I say?

Tom Brokaw was a newscaster several years back; and he wrote a book, "The Greatest Generation"; and it started in down with the early '20s and went up through World War II. And most of us up here are part of that generation. You're looking at quite a group of people. We're a part of that greatest generation. We've experienced depression, prosperity, wars. You name it and we've lived it. And New Boston is very typical, I believe, in towns around America. We're a great country. We're a great state. We're a great town.

And I just want to reflect a little bit about the people, some of the people. And they were alluded to, like Homer Dodge and Ben Dodge. I had the opportunity of working in Dodge's store as a kid, summers and after school and so forth, going down in the basement and filling the cider jugs and filling the molasses quart jars and so forth. It was a great experience.

The Pitman orchards, I think I followed Howard Towne around in his work on the Pitman farms. Howard worked up there, of course, before I did. It was a -- it was the big business in New Boston. We did have a small industry that came into town, a necktie factory. The old creamery building, when my wife and I were first married, the third-floor apartment was where

we lived. That was owned by Fred Cann, part of the Pitman farms; and that was part of my salary.

And also Frank Chandler was mentioned and Minnie Chandler. As kids most of the jobs we had were working on farms. In town it was mowing lawns. But I would work for Frank Chandler. He was the greatest guy that ever lived, and Minnie Chandler with the meals she put on. You'd work on the farm for a dollar a day and your dinner. It wasn't much, but back in those days it was a lot. It's been just a great life that I have lived, and I don't know what more can be said for it. But this is just a typical town and a great town, and this is my hometown.

(Applause.)

JERRY KENNEDY: Well, mine was baseball. I was manager of the Tri-Mountain League from '58 to '63. It was made up mostly of people that lived in town. It was the Kennedys, the Daniels and the Houghtons; and Wally Kirsch, he was on the team. We won a lot of championships, and one year we played in the states and we come in second. But I meet a lot of the guys now, and there are still a lot of great friendships.

And my other one is when, about '58 or '59, Dave Whipple and I had Joe Thompson make us up a cannon. So, I worked for Daniel's Garage, and I had access to most all the black powder you'd ever want to get ahold of. So, the first one, we went up behind the town hall above the swings; and we set it up, put in about a pound of black powder; and we put on a long fuse. And they had the 4th of July dance upstairs in the town hall. Dave and I, we snuck up in there, waiting for it to go off. When that thing went off, that building rattled. The band stopped playing. Everybody on the dance floor stopped; and Dave and I, we snuck out.

And Charlie Davis was by the fire station. He put on his blue light and sirens; and he went down to Daniels, drive up the hill. Dave and I, we hid behind the church about an hour. Then we went over, and we sat on the steps of Dodge's store. And, all of a sudden, Charlie comes right up. He says, "Did you hear that blast?" "No," we says, "we just come back from bowling." "Well," he says, "Somebody is trying to blow this town up." That's all.

ANDI CARD: I just want to show this. Willard was talking a lot about the FFA. This is George Whipple. He was the second oldest of the Whipple boys, and he received the first-place ribbon for dairy cattle showmanship. He won the 12-state competition at the Eastern State Exposition in Springfield, Mass. George scored 98 points out of a possible 100 and represented the Piscataquog Chapter of FFA. Presenting the ribbon is none other than George Kittredge, who Willard also spoke of.

And on the other side, I have a picture which shows Willard and his dad. This says, "A first of a kind in New Hampshire, Willard Dodge of New Boston is holding Balance Star Zodiac. Oliver Dodge, Willard's father, is at the halter of the mother..." Globus? Was that the cow's name? Poor cow. "The calf was born January 8th. It's the first offspring of any animal in New Hampshire and a special program for 4H Club members sponsored by the Sears, Roebuck." Willard could probably tell you a little bit more about that.

One of my -- I have two fantastic memories of -- I have several of New Boston. But one of them -- and I'm going to show you this picture, because it was a fun time here in New Boston every year, especially in front of the high school -- Halloween, because the next morning, Halloween, you'd come into school; and this is what it looked like in front of the front steps and in the front door. This was just a few of the hell-raising boys that got together; and this is what they did, which I'm sure all of you boys remember.

JERRY KENNEDY: The big tires come from Daniels Garage.

ANDI CARD: You weren't supposed to tell where anything came from. But it was a lot of fun; and -- you know what? -- the teachers expected it. Nothing was ever done. A few of the boys, and maybe a couple of the girls, also had to clean up; but it got done.

The other thing -- and Willard and Bob and Jerry will correct me on this if I'm wrong. If I remember correctly, was it Theresa Beauchemin and Lucy Moss, the only two girls, that I remember anyway, that ever took FFA, were in the FFA club, organization. Oh, gosh. I've stumped them all.

BOB TODD: Theresa Beauchemin?

ANDI CARD: Theresa Beauchemin and Lucy Moss. And then -- there's a lot of memories I've got written, which I can pass around. One of the other things is all the history that's in the town hall, which is now pretty much, I guess, office buildings; but that's where all our basketball games were played Tuesdays and Friday nights, boys' game at that time. Us girls, we only played half court. And either our junior or our senior year is when they began to let us have one roving forward. Now the girls play the entire court, as you all know. But back then, the girls' game played first. The boys played after us. We always had our own cheering squads; and there were many parents, like Leon and Ella Daniels, Howard and Stella Prince, Sylvia Whipple. There were several. The majority of the town showed up for all the games. My dad didn't go. He didn't like basketball. He always called it "foul ball." But we managed to get him to go once in a while.

All the school dances, records hops, proms, were all held in the upper town hall; and all our graduations were held in the upper town hall with the stage. And then we also -- downstairs, we could use as putting on card parties; and we had, believe it or not, home-cooked, hot-lunch meals. And Stella Prince, at one time, was head cook; and I remember that Mrs. Colbert was one of the teachers -- I mean cooks -- as was Mrs. Werner. And I'll tell you: We probably had some of the best home-cooked meals that any of the kids could ever want. I think every one of us up here that has attended New Boston High School -- and, to me, it's still a sad note that they ever made the mistake of tearing that high school down, because there was a lot of history in that high school. The fire department could have built where the old one was. But there's a lot of memories there, and I think we all shared the same memories. And what a wonderful town New Boston really is and still is today.

Thank you all for coming.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: Okay. She said thank you all for coming, but we're not done yet. But before we continue -- there's been a lot of cheering, but why don't we give them one long round of applause.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: Willard needs to go haying, as he's been doing for a long time. It smells great around town. I don't know if you've noticed. They started the haying -- what? -- yesterday or Friday. It's just fantastic out there. Now, you're going to be baling the hay; is that right?

WILLARD DODGE: They're baling now. I'm supposed to be picking it up.

LEE NYQUIST: All right.

WILLARD DODGE: I'll stay until 3:30. Then I've got to go.

LEE NYQUIST: So, before you do that, I'd like you to think quickly about maybe one or two experiences that either you've or that somebody else has had that you saw firsthand or secondhand in town government. You know, fill us in on that. We haven't really talked too much

about the governing process in New Boston; and between you and Bo Strong and a few others, we have a fountain of knowledge and memories; and I'd like to have -- maybe you could address that.

WILLARD DODGE: How do you talk about small-town government? Like many of the people in this room, even though I think we all recognize it wouldn't work today, you've got to say you miss the old town meeting.

(Applause.)

WILLARD DODGE: And even if, towards the end of it, we were having two-day affairs -- you'd be there until midnight, 1:00 o'clock in the morning -- Lee's father-in-law used to run a good show when he was moderator. That's probably one of the greatest memories I think I have in New Boston, those old town meetings. And we were still having them, even when I was a selectman. But, as a result of that -- I'll tell you one of those stories -- and it was going to be part of what I was going to talk about today.

In 1964, we decided -- as I say, I was on the fire department. I happened to be chief at the time. The only new truck the Town had that I could remember was a 1937 open-cab Ford fire truck. From 1937 to 1963, we thought, "Jeez. It's about time we get another good one." So, I had broken my leg in the fall of 1963. Back in those days, I spent three weeks in the hospital. It was the femur, the upper bone. Of course, you don't do that nowadays. But I'll never forget, when the fire department decided we had to have a new truck, my job, because I couldn't work at the time, was to try to round up the facts and figures of whatever you needed. So, I started. And all through this period of time -- now, remember, we're a small town. We weren't very many people back then. Everybody said, "There is no way you are ever going to get that through this town meeting. Too much money."

So, I kept working, got the facts and figures; and it turned out we put it on the town warrant; and, actually, on the 1964 town report, there it is, that brand spanking new Howe fire truck. But what's significant about it is that, up until the day of town meeting, I was convinced that all my work was for nothing. I got up, did the presentation -- I was still on crutches -- in front of the town, figured I was going to have solid "no" votes. There was only one comment.

And for a lot of you people, this won't mean much to you; but to a lot of us, it does. It was one of New Boston's great guys, a New Boston character named Fred Chancey. The whole part of the Chancey clan is good friends of all of us here, still around today. Fred stood up and he says, "You know what? I would vote for this thing if you'd make it an International, instead of a Ford." Believe it or not, as I recall, other than that comment, it went right through. There wasn't one no vote, and we had our brand new Howe fire truck.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: I've been asked to mention that the New Boston Historical Society is going to have a float, not surprising, but exactly what the theme of the float is going to be. And so, I would like to do that. And the Historical Society has entered "Old Folks Day" into the 4th of July parade to honor our old folks. The Society wants us all to know and appreciate -- and I'm going to read this, because it is comprehensive, yet brief.

"The tradition of New Boston's 'Old Folks Day,' for those age 70 or older, was established in the late 1880s and continued for many years. Elders and those formally of New Boston reunited and celebrated during the day-long event. Hundreds arrived by train, automobile, and carriage to the town hall. The events started early, with welcoming remarks, prayer, and singing. A dinner was served midday, and the afternoon was filled with

reminiscences, speakers, and more prayer. The day ended with singing 'Auld Lang Syne' and the hope all would enjoy good health and return the next year."

What a great tradition, and it's going to be part of the 2014 parade. Any chance -- I mean, this spoke of the late nineteenth century, but is there any chance that this continued into the '20s or '30s or '40s? Anybody here have any memory of "Old Folks Day," or is this a thing of the more distant past?

FRANCES TOWNE: Fourth of July used to be like "Old Folks Day."

HOWARD TOWNE: Yeah.

FRANCES TOWNE: Everybody who moved away came home for the 4th.

LEE NYQUIST: Sounds like it may have merged perhaps into that. Yeah. Good.

You know the Grange and 4H has been just a remarkable aspect of New Boston and New Boston's history. Many of us just have experienced it every fall, when the great 4H fair comes; but it's been so much more than that for so much longer. And I'd like to give Frances Towne, and anybody else who wishes to talk about the 4H and the Grange, a chance to really describe what it was like for her growing up and what it's meant to her in the town over the course of her life.

FRANCES TOWNE: Thank you. I assume you're speaking about the fair. The first fair was the Grange fair in 1877; and I have read old records of when the Grange was chartered here in New Boston, which was in 1875. Obviously, it's the oldest continuously functioning organization in the town. But those people started their fair; and they said, "We ought to have a fair." So, they appointed their committees; and they put three people on each committee as far as different phases of agriculture, which, originally, the Grange was based upon completely. Now it's more community oriented. And two weeks later they had the fair. They had 300 exhibits, all different kinds of grains, fruits, vegetables, what you find at a fair. But they did this in two weeks. Their committees just went out and said, "We want exhibits from you and you and you," I guess. And they also had interesting handiwork.

One of them I found most interesting was they had doilies made out of hair. Now, I don't know whether it was horse hair or what it was; but they had handiwork that was made with hair. Now, I don't know if it was all hair or just hair incorporated in it. But it was interesting.

But our Grange has continued to function all these years. There have been a few times when they weren't too sure. The membership was down; or if the membership wasn't down, the attendance was down. But it has been in constant operation here. And I want to tell you a little bit about during World War II when there wasn't much to do. You didn't have gas to go to the movies in Manchester and so forth, but most of the young people -- and Roberta will remember this, I'm sure, and, Jim, you will remember, if you're not asleep.

Actually, the young men who belonged to our Grange, off they went to the military; and our Grange kept their dues paid during the whole period of time that they were gone. So, they didn't lose their membership by not being available. But Roberta Cramb, sitting over here -- she was Roberta Frederick -- and her dad was a great square dancer. So, when it was time for the Grange meeting, we'd have our meeting. When we closed, he would bring his record player. He would play square dances. He would call them. Mrs. Frederick would tend to the records and so forth; and we'd have ourselves a square dance after the Grange meetings, which made Grange meetings a lot of fun to go to. So, the Grange had kept very active.

Well, the fairs have changed over the years, and it got so there were not enough Grangers to continue. It was held on the playground over here. Exhibits used to be in the schoolhouse or wherever, the town hall, of course. We used the town hall and wherever you could find room to

put up exhibits. The school children brought in their papers for people to see and all that sort of thing.

But it just got so we didn't have enough members, so they invited the Future Farmers to come and join in the fair. Those young guys could do a lot of the work that the Grangers weren't able to do. So -- which they did. They joined them and it worked out great. So, then they asked if the Future Homemakers to come, and the 4H was asked to join then. And that's what brought the fair along and kept it going.

But the Grange was the original -- had the original fairs year after year. I have that at home, the dates that these things changed and when they invited the other groups to join them; but I don't have it here. But they did have a big help to have the young people involved; and, of course, when the school closed, away went the aggie boys and the FHA. But the 4H has always remained as part of the fair, too. But we still have a couple of directors on the fair committee from the Grange, so we have a little input; and we have a good fair still. So, thank you.

(Applause.)

FRANCES TOWNE: And don't forget. The Grange is always welcoming new members.

LEE NYQUIST: I became the moderator of the Town of New Boston in 1992, and I've been doing it now for a long time. One thing about the town moderator's position is that it seems that, once you get it, you keep it. I think that's because it's such an honor and you like it so much and everybody else doesn't realize that it's an easy job. So, it's been a great honor for a long time; and I don't intend to give it up, no matter what the future brings.

We've only had seven town moderators in the 20th century and that includes me. So, that means that we had seven in the 20th century and the seventh one is still town moderator in the 21st. Of course, the name "Fred Cann" is memorable to me. I know that he served as the town moderator. Roland Sallada did it for many, many years; my father-in-law, Dave Nixon, for 28 years. So, it's just that kind of a position. And we do miss the old town meetings, but it seems that the political landscape has changed permanently in that respect. I think I did five or six town meetings, and now it's a whole different process.

Two of the people in particular, Willard here, one of them, and, right to my left here, Jim Dane, is the other -- are the two people I probably remember most fondly, not only from town meeting days, but also from our deliberative sessions, when each would rise -- and I'm going to concentrate on Jim now. After a period of time when the meeting went by, Mr. Dane would rise; and he would say, in a serious tone of voice, "Mr. Moderator." And I was always proud to look down at him and say, "Mr. Dane." And now I get to say it again, Mr. Dane.

I'm going to ask you to think fast on your feet and think about a moment in town-meeting history, as Willard did earlier, and maybe discuss one of your memories, fond or otherwise, but one that really comes to your mind as something that you could share, because probably more than anybody in this room -- I hesitate to say that, because I'm sure that Howard and Frances are right there, and maybe some others -- you've attended more of these meetings than anybody. So, if you could help me in that respect, I'd appreciate it. Mr. Dane.

JIM DANE: Thank you. I don't think of anything in particular offhand now. No. You're right. I felt -- I always felt that the right way to address the moderator at a town meeting was to say "Mr. Moderator"; and that was ever since the day I was 21-years old and able to vote.

Now you can vote when you want to, any old time, I guess. You don't have to wait until you're of majority age. Majority age was always 21. When they changed it to 18, they made a big, big mistake, as far as I'm concerned. You think a little more about what you've been doing the past three years perhaps between 18 and 21. You think more about what is going on around

you and what has happened and why it has happened. Now, it's -- everything is -- seems to me anyway, that you're taught at school, you're taught at college; and sometimes it's good; sometimes we wonder. Now, there's a little -- did you mention that? A little while ago, I had read something in the paper about how the moderator was supposed to take the ballot and put it in the ballot box when you voted. So, I brought it to Lee's attention, and he checked it out in the legislature; and they had changed that. That no longer was concerned for certain things.

So, I was glad that, you know, something like that, that I read about, is cleared up in my mind; and I appreciate the fact that the moderator took the time to look it up and do it for me.

(Applause.)

JIM DANE: I don't know. I don't have anything else to talk about. I like this historical society that we belong to now. I appreciate the things that have been done recently and continue to be done all the time. Years ago, I kind of got interested in it. Someone -- Rena was active in it. Roland was president of it.

But the girls that work on Thursdays now do a lot of the work that we used to do then. I kind of took it up around when my wife didn't need me quite so much anymore, and so I was able to get a little more involved with the association, and it's been good for me. I hope I've helped them just a little bit once in a while.

(Applause.)

JIM DANE: But, to review a lot of things that have happened back years ago, you know, you forget of a time. You forget a lot of things that might have been a lot of fun then. You forget about them; and now, all of a sudden, you remember again; and you remember particularly some people and what they can do for us. Everybody works together. Everybody seems to know each other.

And it's a wonderful thing really, this historical society. I love it. I like to go to the meetings that we have. Dick has done a great job of getting meetings going for us almost every month; and things that a lot of times you wouldn't really think about ever doing or worried about anything else about it, yet, there it is. It's something that's been right there. All we had to do was stop and remember. Isn't it great.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: Okay. We do have a few minutes left. But Willard is going to be off, haying.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: When you are the town moderator, it is great to have the opportunity, you know, officially, to come into contact with these great individuals, all of whom are sitting before you, many of whom are in the audience; and of course, Willard Dodge, who has contributed so much. Did you have a comment? You have to take the mike if you're going to talk. Okay?

Come right up. Come right up. My mother-in-law, Janet Nixon. Nobody can hear you.

ANDI CARD: But your mother-in-law is a grand lady.

LEE NYQUIST: That's for sure.

(Applause.)

JANET NIXON: Not grand, but --

ANDI CARD: Oh, yes, you are.

JANET NIXON: Because of the stories being told about the difference in how guns were allowed to be brought to school and the stories about Homer Dodge, I just have to tell this one. I live up on Old Coach Road, and just below my house is the brick house where the

Normandins used to live. But, back in the days when the Kuhblanks were there, one day, during hunting season -- and, of course, not only were kids allowed to bring guns to school; but just about every man in town had a gun on a rack behind his driver's seat.

Well, these two guys from Massachusetts had been driving a deer all morning long. They ended up in Kuhblank's yard; and Mrs. Kuhblank saw what was happening; and she came out with a tin spoon and the dishpan and "Clang, clang clang, clang, clang."

And the deer ran out into the road. And Homer Dodge was driving by, took his gun, and that was it.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: I think I'm getting a better understanding of something.

JANET NIXON: No one called the police or anything.

LEE NYQUIST: Everybody said, "Thank you, Homer." And that's the way it was. But you'll recall we had, I think, three sessions and then a report several years ago on forums on New Boston's future; and I went to at least two of the three forums that they had; and we were talking about New Boston and its uniqueness; and I think the question came up, you know, talking about how it differs from Bedford.

And one gentleman stood up and said, "Let me tell you what's different about New Boston. You know what's different about New Boston? Why is New Boston different from Bedford? You know what it is? You know what it is?" And everybody was just kind of looking around. And he goes, "Hunting." I know that some of you were there, and you probably remember that. I didn't know how to take it at the time, but right now I'm feeling a lot better about it.

We haven't talked that much about this wonderful building that we're in, the Community Church of New Boston, which has been so meaningful in the lives of many of us in this room, certainly including me. And I joked a little bit about the regular attendance of Howard and Frances Towne earlier and bringing good style, so I thought I'd start with Howard. And Howard, as always, I can tell, he'll speak only as long as Frances thinks it appropriate.

So, tell us more on the meaning of the Community Church of New Boston to you and your family and to the community, a little bit about your experience over the years here. I know that you were married here by a gentleman in 1945, was it? So, just talk a little bit about the tradition of the Community Church of New Boston, especially since they're hosting us here today.

HOWARD TOWNE: I gather this should be an easy topic, the first memories that I have of going to this church; but I remember that, when we were kids, we walked to the church, because the only thing they had for transportation was work horses; and my mother couldn't settle work horses; and my father didn't have time to come to church, apparently; and we would walk down to church and walk back. And things changed.

Well, at the time, Reverend Swanson was the minister here; and he was, you might say, part of a family in the town. He visited all of us all around the country. You wouldn't know he was coming, but he would come rap on your door and say, "Can I come in?" or chat. He'd come into our house, sit and chat a while, and leave. He'd do it almost every year.

But, going back to the church, we would go to Sunday School; and, well, we were taught the Bible; and there are things in the Bible that, if a child is too young, they probably don't understand; and the one that always sticks out to me is our teacher -- I can't remember who he was -- was telling about going to heaven; and he mentioned the ladder or something like that. And, anyway, the next Sunday you came back, the first question I asked him is how tall did I

have to make the ladder. I've never forgotten that phrase because: How long does it have to be? And he didn't have an answer anyway. But, for some reason, that stuck.

We continued to come to church as we grew up. We would hitch rides until -- well, I guess it finally ended up with a car once in a while. That's another thing that happens in the lifetime. My father had a '21 Dodge that he bought in I think it was '25 or something like that, or '26, beautiful, remodeled Dodge. I remember him driving it in. But, anyway, he would register that; and maybe we'd drive it a couple years and, all out of money, couldn't afford it anymore, couldn't register it. So, it would sit in the shed. Then maybe five years later or three years later, we would register it again. But the Dodge ran fine until 1938. When I became old enough, why, I drove that until it quit and brought my mother and sister to church. And I always think of the church -- my mother would always put in a quarter; and, in Sunday School, we would put in a dime, in the collection. And that's the way that they had money to service for the Sunday School.

As I said before, the minister was like part of the family; and he would preach like part of the family. So, you were interested in church work. And I was always amazed -- I forget how long ago it was; but they appointed me to be a steward or something in the church; and I started to take the collection. But, anyway, someone says, "You can't do that." I said, "Well, I'm all set." "You cannot do that." When I asked why, they said, "You're not a member of the church." All those years, going to church and everything, we were not members of the church, unless you joined the church, which, apparently, my mother didn't know or I didn't know as I grew up. But I was shocked, to sit down and not be able to do something in the church after all those years.

But the church follows you. Like they preach -- some preach anyway -- if you don't have a roof on your church -- you are part of the church. And it comes to being known that, especially if you're in the military, you're nowhere near a church, yet you have church services. So, you still go to church. So, the church sticks in your mind and that's where your church religion goes. It doesn't matter which religion you have. Your religion is up here, and it's there because of your preachers who formulate what a good mind has to be.

And it's just unusual to come to church as often as we do and see the attendance vary like it does. We wonder what's missing that attendance falls off this Sunday or that Sunday or a year ago or something somewhere goes -- we don't know if it goes haywire or what you want to call it. But I feel that, as the young people are so involved in school activities nowadays, that the church becomes secondary. When those children need to go out and play baseball, like they were today, the church attendance was low. The families are over watching their kids play baseball. And there's really no harm in it, because they've been to church the Sunday before and they listened to the Bible. So they have it, been tested; and as a result, some has rubbed off on them.

I don't know how to keep talking about the church, except to say this is unusual, this building here. Never would I have thought, as a kid, that I'd be sitting in this new section of the building, talking to people. It's just unbelievable; and I just feel that it's the center of town, the things that happen in this room, meetings that people have. It's just unbelievable that it's here, because it does help the town. I can go on all afternoon talking about it, about why the church is very important. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: You don't have to come up. I don't mean to put you on the spot; but, Walter Kirsch, would you like to share?

WALTER KIRSCH: I had a lot of things to say, but time is getting --

LEE NYQUIST: I don't think anybody has left, except for Willard; and we know why he's gone.

WALTER KIRSCH: I'm Walter Kirsch. I was born in 1932 and lived in New Boston until 1956, when I graduated from pharmacy school and took a job down in Nashua, ending up in Concord; and I've been retired now for 16, 18 years. I spend a lot of time in Florida, right near Bob Kennedy, who is Jerry's brother, of course. And this picture was taken from the air, obviously; and this is the town down here. This is Mont Vernon Road. This is Route 13, the Piscataquog River. And my father had a woodworking mill here. It was originally the Marden Mill; and then Mr. Sutherland had it until 1941, when he died; and Mrs. Sutherland, who lived in this -- you can look at the thing after, if you'd like -- lived in this house right here, which somebody else, Ted Fisk, lived there. I don't know if that name is familiar to people. Will Dodge lived right here, and this is the Will Dodge sand bank across the road.

My father and his family lived in this house, which was called the Woodbury house; and we paid Paul Allen \$12 a month to rent this house, the barn, and probably 30 or 40 acres right here. But twelve dollars was one week's pay, so it was one quarter of a month's pay.

In 1942, my father built this house right there, later put in a tennis court; and for some reason, while I was away at pharmacy school, my father ended up selling the mill. I never did find out why. It would be interesting to know what ever happened, but I never did find out.

The mill was torn down, the machinery taken out of it, three stories. You could see a canal coming down at about almost half a mile up here. There's a dam up here, which is still in pretty good shape. I saw it a few years ago. It's remarkable. It was probably 60-plus years ago that it was worked on, repaired; and it's still actually backing up water. It turned into a -- it was really a finishing mill in the old days. My father made it into a box factory. We used to make apple boxes.

At that time, there were a lot of different apple orchards in town. He made boxes. Gosh. I can remember Fred Cann, of course, was the biggest purchaser, like 15, 18,000 boxes, I think, he would take per year. And the old -- it was run by water for many years, and water would go down to the water wheel, and the water wheel is still there. I walked down -- off the road and parked and walking down you see the cellar hole, where you can still see the old water mill, which is kind of interesting.

That's all I've got to say about that. There are a lot of other things I could talk about, but time's a wasting. Thank you.

JERRY KENNEDY: What year was that tore down?

WALTER KIRSCH: I don't know. It was sometime when I was in school.

LEE NYQUIST: Okay. At this point, there are some folks who haven't said as much as others; and I know that all of you have at least as much to say as the others. So, this is the time when we spend a couple of minutes looking for volunteers on the panel who have only spoken a couple of times. And if we don't hear anything, we're just going ahead and go from left to right, starting with Verna Elliott, with one final observation. And I think maybe that's what we're going to do.

VERNA ELLIOTT: I just wanted to mention -- I'm sure this is -- you people would remember this -- New Boston had a barber that came from Goffstown probably two times a week; and he was located up in that room up above Homer Dodge's store. And I remember taking my little boy for his first haircut, climbing up those stairs in that wonderful room; and the -- this fellow -- his name was Don Bissonnette. And Henry Hunter also, I understand, cut hair up there.

WALTER KIRSCH: Frank Church.

VERNA ELLIOTT: I wanted to bring that up because I thought it was important. We had to import the barber.

The other thing was I remember B.H. Dodge, Homer's father, used to deliver groceries; and you'd put an order in and they would tell you how much it came to; and you'd have the money ready; and he would bring it a certain time. And I remember the first time he delivered groceries for me I was, you know, with three little children. And I heard this horrendous roar; and I looked out and it was B.H. Dodge, delivering my groceries. And he got cut kind of short when he came into the driveway; and he got kind of hung up on a drainage thing, one of Bib's inventions. I said, "Oh, my goodness," but he floored it and he got out. I thought that was kind of interesting.

And I don't know how long it lasted, and I just wondered if any of you know, natives here in New Boston, would remember B.H. Dodge doing that. I don't know if it lasted very long or not. But it was wonderful for me to get -- and for Bib too, because he was busy doing chores and, you know, couldn't always go down to the store to buy those, what he needed. Anyway, we had help.

(Applause.)

LEE NYQUIST: Al, could you give us some final thoughts perhaps?

AL WOODBURY: Well, I would like to tell you a story first. This story goes back a while. It goes back to 1941. In the area in New Boston in the spring and in the summertime, when it was rainy season, the road would wash out; and you wondered what to do, how to cure it; and where that road is is up on 77. It's just beyond Dodge's ice cream stand.

And so the people get together; and they thought, if they could bring in gravel to raise the height of the road, it wouldn't wash out so often. So, everybody agreed on that. And so a while later, they started bringing in gravel on dump trucks; and one of the drivers was George -- his first name was George -- I can't think of his last name. Anyway, he was unloading the gravel on the road, and his truck seemed to start shaking. He couldn't understand why. He got out and looked; and lo and behold, the road was sinking because of the weight of the gravel he was putting on and the gravel truck was very heavy. And he didn't like what he saw, so he started running up the road.

So, anyway, the road did cave in for a length of about 150 feet; and the truck also caved in and went right to the bottom; and the truck, we think, is down there about 20 feet. Nobody could figure out how to get the truck out, and my father always told the story that that truck is still down there in the bog. I'm sure a lot of you people don't know that story, but it is an honest story.

LEE NYQUIST: That was great. Would anybody else at the table like the microphone?

ANDI CARD: Could I have it for a second?

LEE NYQUIST: We'll let ladies first, and then we'll go to Clem and Bob.

ANDI CARD: I brought my scrapbook with me, and I just came across this picture. "(inaudible) are these grads of New Boston High School, who gave the varsity a lesson in the fine art of ball handling and shooting last Saturday night. Shown front row..." this is a couple of the guys here "...left to right, Dave Whipple, Jerry Kennedy, George Whipple, Charlie Houghton, back row, Vic Daniels, Bob Todd, Ken Barss, and Robert Kennedy." New Boston always had some great sports teams, which I had mentioned before.

The other picture that I want to show you, I can't take it out of this dumb book, which is very heavy. When I graduated high school here in 1962, this was Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. This

was taken over on the playground up on the hill there. So, I thought you might be interested in seeing some of these old pictures that were taken. Thank you. I don't know -- Bob?

(Applause.)

BOB TODD: As you probably know, there's been more stories told in Dodge's store than any other place on earth. Some of them are fit to retell and others aren't. I think I can tell one that's not too bad. Willy Nickerson and Homer were in the store. They weren't very busy that day. And this car from Massachusetts pulls up out front, and they're obviously bird hunters. And you know that Homer and Mr. -- what's his name?

JERRY KENNEDY: Nickerson.

BOB TODD: -- Nickerson were great bird hunters. At least, they thought they were. So, in come these folks. You could tell that they had the most expensive gear and a very expensive car. And they asked Homer, "Do you have shot for grouse?" And Homer looked at his buddy there; and he says, "No. But we've got cartridges for partridges."

CLEM LYON: I would like to add I lived on 77. As you drive out of New Boston village by the old telephone office, Billy Leland's place on the left, and you get up to where the dentist lives and the Atwood house. At the fork in the road there, you can go left and you go to Frankestown; and you go right, you go to Weare and you go by the Whipple farm where one of the Daniels lives. Right?

ANDI CARD: Yeah. Wayne.

CLEM LYON: Yeah. And up the hill, at the top of the hill, is where I was brought up; and that didn't always used to be a tarred road. It used to be dirt. And every thunderstorm we would have, there'd be huge gullies develop in the road.

Finally, the State did see fit to pave it; but beyond the Woodburys, there was a section called the bog, and it didn't have a bottom. It just bottoms. And many -- well, I hope it wasn't horses or -- but many vehicles, I imagine, are buried underneath that road. Finally, it worked up to the point where the State took over; and it doesn't happen anymore, I guess.

But I'd like to get back to Reverend Swanson, because there isn't enough that can be said about him. He was the instigator/starter of the playground association, and there are so many things that Reverend Swanson did for the community. Those of us that were in the service in World War II would receive our monthly -- I believe it was a newsletter of what was happening back in the old home town. He was just a wonderful person, wonderful person. There's a lot I'd like to say, but you'd be here all evening. Who's next?

JERRY KENNEDY: I got one more story about Homer Dodge and Bill Nickerson. They used to go out hunting; and whoever missed the first bird, they would -- when they got done at night, they would have to throw their hat up in the air three times and the other guy would shoot at it. And if they missed two birds, he had to take his vest off and he could fire twice at the vest.

So, when Homer was changing the post office from one side to the other, he asked me to come down because the guy from Connecticut was coming up to give the final approval. So, around 9:00 o'clock, one of his kids was supposed to come and take care of the store while he'd go around with the inspector. Homer kept calling. So, finally, the inspector and I went around the building for about half an hour, talking about the different stuff.

All of a sudden, here comes Homer. Well, he put on that hat and that vest that they had shot out; and there was all kind of feathers coming out of his hat. And the inspector looked at me and said, "God. Can this guy afford to do this job?" So, the inspector said, "Mr. Dodge, do you realize what you're getting into? It's going to cost you between 60 and \$70,000 to do the

improvements for bringing it up to the government's specs. Homer took his hat off; and when he did, the feathers come out of it. He said, "Sir, the money is not a problem at all."

(Applause.)

FRANCES TOWNE: I have one more story about Homer. Many years ago, of course, when my mother was living out on South Hill Road, there was a pheasant that came to the field right across the house. And, naturally, she didn't make a pet of it, but she loved that pheasant, because he'd come every day. And Homer came up the road bird hunting, and he shot the pheasant.

Well, my mother, who was about five-feet tall, went out there; and if she didn't give him a Scotch blessing.

HOWARD TOWNE: Rest of the afternoon? No. There's just been something on my mind about this meeting. They say, "Boy. You're going to talk about the town and so forth." There is something that very few people here are aware of, and that's the roads in New Boston. If you look at an old map -- and I would say probably 70-years old or somewhere -- you would find that the roads in New Boston are like a cobweb. You could go anywhere around New Boston and not come to the center. You could go north and take a left and go up to Francestown. You didn't have just main roads. You had what we call back roads.

And those roads were serviceable for many years; and I forget the year that they finally decided, because of the help you had to get from the State, the aid, those roads were covered in at the time. And the selectmen formed the committee and took the names of the roads and put them up for having them discontinued. There were No. 6 roads, and they wanted them No. 5s or something like that. I don't know, technically. But they studied the whole thing, and they cut so many roads out that it's almost impossible to not have to come to the center of New Boston to get home in case you've got bad weather or something like that. Those roads are no longer taken care of by the Town. Many of them exist out there. And people like to buy land. You'll hear them talk about it, but they wonder about the road. But I just wanted to say that the spider web is what it used to be. You could get home, no matter where you were.

And talking about the roads, like they were talking about the bog, my grandmother used to live in Weare; and she would walk down the road where the bog is. In the springtime, it was flooded always. She'd take off her shoes and stockings and lift her skirt up and march through that and come visit us. I always remember it. When he mentioned that, I said, "I've got to tell them."

ANDI CARD: Lee, can I say one more thing? I think we've all forgotten who our postmaster was, Gus Andrews, and that I think that everybody needs to know what a fantastic postman he was and a gentleman. He knew everybody. He knew everything that was going on in New Boston, and I just think that Gus Andrews definitely has to be remembered.

(Applause.)

MR. NYQUIST: Thank you, Andi. That brings to a conclusion this remarkable afternoon. I want to, obviously, thank this extended panel for their wonderful remarks and also a great crowd. The record will probably show everything, except what a fantastic June 22nd New Boston day this is outside. It's perfect, in reminiscing about New Boston, a day when it's about 70 degrees and perfectly clear, just a wonderful, wonderful New Boston day all around. We have wonderful refreshments and drinks that have been prepared by the members of the Historical Society. I'm not privy as to exactly who should be thanked the most, so I apologize if I leave anybody out. But I know that Dick Moody is the president of the association and has been incredibly involved in this function here today. I know that both Lisa and Dan Rothman have

also been incredibly involved in this. We have Betsy Whitman, the vice president. We have the directors here. Jim Dane, I believe, is one of the directors. We talked about what a wonderful experience he has had, and now I've had a terrific experience with the Historical Society as well.

And, in conclusion, I would urge you to look at the photographs of Kennedy and Todd from 1958. We're lucky to have them here today, because, after I look at those, I figure that they would have been off to Hollywood the next year for screen tests. I'm serious about that. But they've spent their lives in New Boston and told us about them today.

Dick, do you have any words in closing?

DICK MOODY: No, no. Just thank you very much for coming. It was a great experience for me, and I hope it was for all you folks. And we'd love to have you partake of our refreshments and reminisce amongst yourselves. Thank you.

(4:14 p.m.)