

Bill-Elder_Interview_9-24-25

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Transcript

Liz

Okay, so now this is recording our voices. This is actually the best voice recorder. And then we'll put another one. Here comes Matt. Okay, continue.

This is Bill elder let's go around first and and just introduce ourselves but this is Matt and this is Bill Elder.

Matt

So how do you do yeah I don't think we've met before, right?

Bill

No, probably not. Yeah, okay.

Ken

He's a Florida man.

Bill

Yeah.

Liz

Half and half.

Bill

The others are over on the Hanover side of Goose Pond.

Liz

Oh, nice. So why don't we just go around. Matt, do you want to sit and join us, or are you going to?

Matt

Yeah. OK for a few minutes. Okay.

Liz

So, why don't you just say your name and that way the recordings will, you know, we can identify.

Bill

William Elder. Best known as Bill Elder or Willie Elder. And right now I live in Florida about seven months out of the year and five months a year I live in Hanover on Goose Pond. My wife's name...

Liz

Let's not give all that yet just just and we'll just say who we are then we're gonna go through and talk about all that stuff so okay.

Ken

Ken Pelton

Norma

Norma Pelton

Dick

Dick Baughman

Ron

Ron Farr

Ellie

Ellie Farr

Liz

And in the background over there is Matt. Okay. Good. Okay.

Bill

Does Matt live in...

Liz

He lives here, yeah, yeah, he lives here. You probably remember this house as Maggie Bridgeman's house.

Bill

Come here all the time, share the water and place right here.

Liz

Oh, I would love to talk about what the changes in the house have been since her death. So do you want to, maybe start just by telling us a little bit about yourself, because we're here all the time, but since you're only here until the end of the month, we'd like to hear as much from you as we possibly can, right?

Bill

My history.

Liz

Yeah.

Bill

I was born and raised here in Etna, went to school in the Etna schoolhouse from the first grade to the fourth.

Ron

What years would that have been?

Bill

Fifty. Oh. Let's see.

Liz

50? Yeah. 50. 1950.

Bill

1951, 50, 10, somewhere around.

Norma

We went to Hanover in, what, 54 in our class. Our class was the last one to go four years here.

Bill

Graduated from Hanover High School, two years at New Hampshire Technical Institute in Manchester. Then I went to work at the Enfield Woollen Mill for three years, and the last 37 years of working, it was at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital in Hanover as an electrician. I retired, bought my folks house in Florida after they deceased, and remodeled it, and had a house here on Goose Pond, and then we're still over there. Nice. Do you want me to go down the list here?

Liz

Well, I don't know, I mean, yeah, sure, just tell us, we're interested, what we're doing is really just trying to get oral histories of, you know, people's experiences when they were growing up, you know, just before, you know, before they're lost, too. And their family history. Yeah, family history is good, yeah, tell us about your family.

Bill

While my family, my father and mother, my father was born in Hanover Center. My mother was born in Lyme Center. My father went to eighth grade, and I think it was in Hanover Center, at the age of seven. He had polio, and he had to walk about a mile in the wintertime and on crutches and stuff to go to school, no bus service.

Liz

What was his name? Cliff. Okay. We've heard about Cliff Elder from all of these folks here, you know, a lot of the discussion. And also some of our meetings up at the Trumbull Hall, you've heard, talked about Cliff Elder. Okay. Yeah.

Bill

They run the store here and there.

Ron

Do you know when they started the store, how that started?

Bill

My mother started on the porch, and after a few years it kept getting bigger and bigger.

Liz

So this is the house that was right across the street here. That was the store. Yeah, the one that was just renovated. Yeah. Yeah, that's right.

Bill

I was raised there, didn't have far to walk to school across the place.

Ron

You were in 4-H.

Bill

Yep. When I got a little bit older, I was in the 4-H Club. The 4-H Club in Etna was very big at that time. The boys' 4-H Club was the Moose Mountain boys, and girls were

Norma

The Etna 4-H girls.

Bill

Yeah, so... My father was a 4-H leader for a while, and then Sarah Robes took it over. At that time, I'd done gardening and stuff, and I won a trip to Chicago and gardening for the 4-H.

I also showed cattle at the fair. When I was in my teens, I guess my folks thought that I ought to have something to do. So we did, at one time we were milking six cows. Cross the road. Cross the road. Reno Hoyt's place. Where Chickering's live. Okay. Yeah. I had a barn there.

And we used to ship milk by can to Lutrix Creamery in Lebanon.

Ron

How many cows did you have to milk?

Bill

Six. That was just to keep me out of trouble.

Ron

I think that's where I met you was in 4-H, one of the fairs, probably.

Bill

Yeah, I used to go to all the fairs, Tunbridge, Hartland, Vermont, Canaan, Plymouth, North Haverhill, Lancaster, showing cattle.

At that time, when I was in 4-H, the Hanover Lions Club bought me pulled calf from the University of New Hampshire, and by pulled calf it had no horns, it was an Ayrshire with no horns. And I know the Farris had the same Ayrshires too.

Ron

Elmer Dana did.

Bill

And Dean had a few. Dean Croall.

Ron

Yeah it's interesting you milk you said six cows. Today they milk a hundred or more.

Bill

Five, six, hundred?

Ron

The only thing they do is milk cows.

Bill

They milk around the clock, some cows nowadays they milk three times a day, but they force feed them.

Cow's expectancy on these big farms is only about five years. Yeah, they use them up. They use them up. Oh, poor animals. Because they push them to produce milk.

Norma

We had true family cows. Yes. I remember. No, I said we had true family cows. They were pets. Yeah.

Ron

We milked about 25, 30, something like that.

Bill

But that was more or less, I'd done most of the work there when we were doing that. Father, he dealt hay and stuff like that.

Ron

Where did you hay? What fields did you hay?

Bill

Oh, we had this one here. Up back in the hill here. Now, there's an easy field to do.

And all the way back to the schoolhouse, all those things. Loosehay? Loosehay. Yeah. For a while. Then we finally got into Dean Crocombe once, and we had round bales, and then we went Howard Reed. We went to square bales, which was a lot easier because on loosehay's, we'd have to pitch it off the wagon. Oh, I know. We went up into the hole, and it'd be about three people to get it way back to the bottom. And it was warm up there sometimes.

Ron

I grew up, we hated all these other fields, a lot of fields in town, from my earliest memories of haying. I was too small to lift a bale, so I had a cordial hook, and my grandfather had built a hay loader bolted on the side of the truck, so my job was to run around in front of that and straighten the bales out so that we'd lift them up.

Ken

But his father, his father, we'd all help him. Hey, Cliff would drive the tractor with one hand running the brake, one hand running the clutch. The other one would be up here shifting. Oh, geez. It was amazing.

Bill

I remember my father, he had a saw on the back of a, well it was a Model A engine with a flat belt pulley, and he'd start down to Cutting's Corner where you lived, and everybody'd have the woodpile up, and the town would all get together, everybody lived in the town, and they'd go up through cutting wood all the way up.

Ellie

I didn't know that, I didn't know that either.

Bill

Everybody's have it in four foot lengths. Yeah, but he had the old...

Ken

There was a guy who lived on the corner of Greensboro Road with a white horse that used to come up and mow with the horse. Well, it was too old. Wallace?

Norma

He cut on the sides of the road and the sides.

Ken

The house there is full of crap and everything else. Oh, that guy, yeah.

Ellie

Well, there's lights on, I don't know, there's lights on there every night.

Bill

I saw another interesting thing. Right here in back of the house it was two wells and just where the culvert down here there was a big watering trough for the horses and stuff.

Liz

Those wells are still back there. Dug Wells.

Bill

Are they? There was two of them. Dug Wells, yeah. There's fencing around them. There's fencing around them, but yeah, there's still this. Just so nobody... I thought they all filled in. No, no. We wanted to...

Liz

We don't want kids to fall in, so that's why the fences are around them, But no, there's water in them. There was a dead beaver in one of them or something, or a dead raccoon or something. It fell into one of them, yeah.

Bill

I thought they'd probably all be filled in.

Liz

No, they're still there.

Ken

And then we, Willie and myself, Freddy Colwell, forget who else it was, we built a ski jump behind your house here and opened up the stone wall so we could go through it. Man, I used to have some, my father brought home a pair of skis from Dartmouth and I was gonna give them a try. Well, they were three times the size of the jump we made. You know that, so I landed, came down the hill, couldn't make the hole, ski stuck. Oh no. Broke it, right down through, okay.

Liz

The ski broke, not your leg.

Matt

Was it a wooden jump you built out back?

Ken

No, we would just pile up snow and pack it, but the skis were probably twice the size of the little jump we had, so yeah, I never should have done it, but... You were a kid.

Liz

Yeah, we could say that about a lot of the things we've all done.

Ron

My brothers and I, we build a ski jump.

Bill

The other thing, my mother, she was a postmaster. It was in the Elder family tree for a hundred years. It was my great-grandfather, Spencer, and then it was coming to Hewes.

Ron

What was your mother's maiden name? Hewes.

Liz

I see. So they were postmasters here.

Bill

The last one was my brother, Stanley. Stanley, yeah, we remember.

Liz

He was here when we moved in.

Ron

Were you related to Howard Hughes and those Hewes up there?

Bill

Uh distantly yeah if you go to Lyme at the old at the church up there if you look where the horse stables are yeah yeah the fourth one is Hewes.

Liz

Oh wow. Yeah. Oh.

Bill

I don't know, great-great-grandfather.

Norma

My mother was an Elder. Willie and I are cousins. Oh, okay. Okay. Aww.

Ken

And then when they were 4-H leaders, after we had the meeting, Cliff would get down on the floor and wrestle with us, and he'd be wrestling, three of us at a time, but he had a grip like no tomorrow, and he'd get you right behind the leg, and he'd be a following.

Ron

I remember going to dances with him. He'd pull the chair out in the middle of the floor and he had a grand time.

Bill

Well, when we played all the music up here. Yeah, and the Hanover Center, where the school is in Hanover Center, they had a dance club there.

Norma

Square dance school. Yeah, square dance school.

Bill

Every Friday night and he played records. It was all done by record. Are we sure?

Ellie

We had an album full of square dance records.

Bill

There was just room enough for four, two sets of four, for square dance.

Ron

So your mother was an Elder? Yeah. Okay.

Ken

Then we moved to Trumbull Hall, you know, Trumbull Hall had the square dances there.

Ellie

That's how we met, at Grange meetings, and afterwards they had a tape recorder, and somebody would call.

Ron

He had a tape recorder. After the meeting he would play square dances. So we were both 14 and we were the youngest ones there. So we got stuck dancing together.

Ellie

That's what we always said.

Ron

We, we went, I went to a lot of Grange meetings around with, Leonard Palmer was the, it turned out to be my, our brother-in-law, and so I would go with Leonard to down to Springfield to the meetings down there where, but then when I got my license, I disappeared, but when I was in the Navy, we got reacquainted. My mother was in the hospital, Frannie, her sister was a nurse, and she said, write to Ellie. I'd write to anybody would write back because I didn't have a girlfriend or nothing, and that's what happened. We were married a year or so later, weren't we?

Ellie

About six months later.

Norma

They think all his local grocery deliveries are something new. Willy's mother used to take orders up through town one day and the next day she would deliver to everybody.

Bill

She take orders from Greensboro Road all the way up through, and she'd take orders one day, deliver the next day, and then she'd go up here to, I think, the Thompson's, I don't think she went to Hanver Center, but I don't think so, Thompson's, and take her down too, because at that time, most of us, just the men working, the women were home,

Norma

They didn't have cars. Yeah. No. No.

Ellie

How did she deliver?

Bill

In a car. In a car. Oh. We had a car.

Liz

So where did she get all of the food or whatever she was delivering?

Bill

uh, grocery chain, grocery stores. Oh, okay. They'd come and the same with beverage truck would come. Same thing they do nowadays, actually.

Norma

Oh, it was the regular groceries. Oh, because you had the groceries here. Yeah, she had it supplied there. So she would fill orders from the store, yeah.

Bill

Also at that time, the townsheds were here in Etna, back of where the fire station is now, and we had a gas station where the store is. Right. I remember that. That's right when we moved in. She sold gas to the town of Hanover for the trucks in the wintertime, and sometimes at three o'clock in the morning, they'd stop outside, toot the horn, and put the pumps on, and they'd fuel up, no matter what time it was.

When they first started, it was open from 6 in the morning till 10 at night.

Ellie

Oh man, a long day. Seven days.

Bill

Seven days a week while Sunday she'd take would close at noon and open at six

Norma

And the post office used to be in the same building.

Ellie

when we first moved to town, I needed gas in the car. He was working, of course, and I had the kids, so I came up to the store to get gas, and I had no idea how to pump it or anything, and Cliff came out on his crutches, and I felt so bad, because I didn't know him, and he came out and pumped my gas, and I thought, here I am, an able-bodied person, and he's on crutches. Well, Cliff considered himself able-bodied. Oh, yeah.

Ron

He did everything. He loved to fish, he loved to hunt. He's a shining example of what you can be.

Liz

Yeah, right.

Ken

I remember when we were kids shingling the roof over there and he climbed the ladder in my hand.

Bill

A 40 foot ladder to get up on the roof.

Bill

His legs were bad, but it didn't bother him.

Ron

I remember a story about Cliff when you kids would go out helping the garden and in the early days you'd sit down like he did and he had to teach you to not sit on the floor and feed. Yeah, yeah.

Bill

Yeah, he raised a lot of strawberries in the fields across, by where the school is. We'd take them to different places, over in Enfield store and all over the place.

Ron

Do you ever think about writing some of these stories down?

Liz

Well, that's what we're doing today we're recording them.

Norma

Your folks had the sugar house up in Hanover Center.

Bill

For quite a few years. Norma's father used to help my father. They had doodle bugs. Of course the roads were all muddy from the Etna cemetery up through.

Ron

Do you remember the blacksmith shop that was here? Yeah, the blacksmith shop. Was he still working in it when you were young?

Bill

Uh, Ed Bacon had that, and I can just barely remember it was the blacksmith's shop.

Bacon was another good village person. You know, you always, if anything you wanted, you'd get down to see Ed and he'd help you out because he had a welder in a blacksmith's shop.

Ron

He probably made those doodle bugs, and I always had a doodle bug as well. Yep, yep.

Norma

Daddy had one. Yeah.

Bill

We all had one. My father had one.

Ken

Of the game back then, there was no... Yeah, that was a...

Bill

We finally had a Buick with a chain drive to the rear end.

Liz

So these doodle bugs they're like what did you call them Matt? You were calling them like a little um there's a name for that what you were saying we should get out back here a little gator? A gator so is it like that with like a like a box an empty box in the back

Liz

Very small, but with the place in the back, yeah, the box.

Ron

You go into the shop and you'd take off all the packs that had a truck. And when you get all done, you got a truck. Defenders would go, the body would go. Yeah, okay.

Bill

Lots of times they move the wheels up closer.

Ron

Yeah. Okay. Yeah. And then put another transmission in. Oh, okay. Okay. And then you have a place where you can... I made one with one of your boys. Scott. We made one with a fixed one. I don't remember.

Dick

There were several.

Ken

Alan Gardner made one that he put two transmissions in. Yeah. Double. Yeah. And the thing would just crawl by itself because we'd be haying in the field and he'd just let the hook the steering wheel so it didn't turn and just let it go. Yeah. Just let it go. Throw the bales on. Oh, gosh.

Ron

I remember filling up a gas can down here at the store on a dollar bill.

Ken

\$0.50, \$0.35 to \$0.55.

Bill

So soda at that time was a nickel. Yeah. Yeah.

Norma

Going in the store, there was the penny candy counter, and the cookies, there was boxes of cookies, and you could just go in and pick two of these or two of those or whatever.

Bill

All in a paper bag. We don't know. It wasn't very sanitary.

Ellie

As with today. Today's standards. But we're probably healthier than our brother.

Ron

Probably picked up bottles.

Bill

Yeah, we did get a few cents to buy candy with two cents a bottle, a regular bottle, and five cents for a quarter bottle.

Ellie

Yup, y

Ken

And then you'd run right over to the candy place and I'd pick out.

Ron

Did you go to the movies in Lebanon? Yes. How did you get there?

Bill

I went to the Cutting's Corner and got a bus.

Ken

25 cents to ride down to a movie.

Ron

It cost you almost a dollar to go in the movies then, to get in I think was 12 cents as I remember it. Yeah, wasn't very much. And a popcorn was a nickel, and then you had to put a quarter on top of that to get back home. Was it?

Bill

I think it was.

Liz

Where was the movie theater in Lebanon?

Ken

Right where it is now, well, not now, the Opera House.

Liz

Right there on the Lebanon Opera, okay, on the green, yeah.

Ron

On a Saturday, every kid in the area was there.

Ken

We go up and sit in the balcony.

Bill

And at that time, they were all Western movies. Westerns.

Ken

The Lone Ranger.

Ken

Yeah, what was the one that came out with with all the crows and Alfred Hitchcock the birds the birds. Yeah scary one. We all set up in the back. Yeah

Liz

I remember going to the seventh voyage of Sinbad that my father and mother or my father took all the kids to it and I was so scared from that one.

Ron

These stories about the village, it's like an envelope that takes you in and covers you. They're beautiful. We don't have that anymore. That kind of community anymore.

Ellie

When we moved here, when a car went by, you'd get up and look out the window to see who it was. Because you knew everybody. And now, before they put that stop sign in, we couldn't even get out of our driveway hardly.

Bill

I can remember growing up like Grandmother Hughes, who was a postmaster before my mother took over. I'd sit on the arm of the chair, and we'd count every night just about, I'll count the cars coming up the road, and she'd count the cars going down the road, and we'd do that for a couple hours, and we'd have five or six. Yeah, we'd see who would get the most cars to going which way.

Ken

The other crazy thing we did, this guy and Freddie Caldwell built, I think the first bicycle built for two.

And also, also here in the schoolyard we made a jump and he and Freddie would come down up the hill, oh yeah, across the road and get the speed going and jump two or three of us would lay down on the ground and they would jump over us.

Bill

Oh, my father called us. Oh, gosh. I had to put that up. Yeah.

Dick

He's been pretty conventional in his old age.

Ken

Freddie would, the story I remember about him was at the house every night there was a mouse coming out and getting stuff. So Freddie took an alarm clock and set the alarm, hooked a string on it, and hooked that to the mouse trap. When the mouse dragged the trap, it set off the alarm and he got up and smucked it.

Ron

When did you start driving, I mean, on the road?

Ken

I don't know. Seven or eight? The tractor?

Ron

You were big enough to operate it. Yeah. I think I...

Bill

That probably was 10, somewhere in the 10th, yeah. And I'd go from where the store is across the bridge that way.

Ron

I we hayed up here at Remsons. Yeah, and I left at home with the tractor cuz I raked I grew up on a rake and so the deal was coming down King Hill there. The tractor was too slow. So if you push the clutch in you go like oh geez, you're not supposed to do that. But I did it anyway. Yeah, and I'm going lickedy split and so Billy Connors is coming up and he looked and he stopped and he turned around. Oh, no, I'm I'm in trouble. So he ducked into Carter's barn and hid.

Ellie

You were about to get your license.

Ron

I had to see him that winter to get my license. He didn't put two and two together.

Ken

And we used to have ski areas too on this hill and

Norma

Our Ford Sayre skiing things like over there yeah behind the store yeah

Bill

Where we all learned to ski.

Ken

You started here as beginners and then you moved over to the steeper hill as you got better.

Liz

A friend of mine who grew up in Norwich said that they used to ski on the hill going down through where the 91 goes through now, but that wasn't there. There's open fields, and they skied all the way down that hill. That was where they used to get the Ford Sayre.

Bill

Well, Mrs. Nutt and Mrs. Bette were the ski instructors for Ford Sayre. And I couldn't remember. I wasn't even in first grade, I was in kindergarten, but as soon as they'd had that, I'd take my skis and go skiing and... Because somebody had it all packed for you? No, no. Until they'd catch me while I was there. Nice. But they were real nice. Yeah. Yeah.

Ron

Can you list your siblings? Who is the oldest?

Bill

Victor Elder. And we all graduated from Hanover High School. It was Victor, Stanley, my sister Marguerite, and James, and myself. The only one now is my sister, Marguerite, lives in Missouri. She's 90 years old, and the rest of them are deceased.

Norma

It's like the Thompsons, when he's the only one left out of his family.

Bill

The Elder House, where my father was born, in Hanover Center, is where the Conrad used to live. That was the elder, my grandfather and grandmother come from Canada down, instead of Andrew and I can't even think of her name, but I will in a minute.

Liz

But wait, so in Hanover Center, you mean you go through Hanover Center and down the other side in that house on the left? Yeah. That's right. They're quite cool.

Ken

Who owns it now?

Ron

Howard Frost?

Bill

Yeah, that was it. The old homestead.

Ron

Did you spend time up there when you were a kid? Yep. I remember discussion one time at the fireman's meeting. You and I forgot who else it was. There was a discussion about where you could get water at the foot of the hill and you insisted that there was a hole there at the brook

and there was you get water there and there was an argument over it. I remember that. That's how you knew that there was water there. Yeah.

Bill

Well, of course, and just beyond that, my father went to the sugar house, just beyond it a little bit, and then he sold it, and he had a sugar house over and back to the school here in Etna, until he went to Florida. And you used to have a snowmobile and you'd get on the snowmobile and putt over there.

Ellie

How'd he gather the sap?

Bill

Yeah. Yeah. By hand. They'd all get together, Norma's folks and Frank and we all, I had a pair of yolks but on my shoulder, two pails for walking and I can remember, darn I didn't step in a hole and fall over in the water and put it in your boot and you'd be soaking wet.

Dick

You haven't said anything about people who lived at our house.

Bill

That's Will Hart's.

Liz

Yeah, the Harts.

Dick

Was he gonzo before you were growing up?

Bill

Ah, I can just barely remember him, yeah. And then there's Fred Hat, who lived across the road, Fred and Helen, and three kids.

Dick

You've got all these other stories.

Bill

And Ed Bacon, the one that owned the Blacksmith Shop, was just above the house.

Ken

So, right across from Nichols's, yeah. Did you?

Liz

Yeah, where was that?

Norma

That's the white house. The one that's been all redone, McConnell's.

Ken

Oh, McConnell's, yeah, McConnell's house, yeah.

Liz

OK, I know that.

Bill

That was Ed Bacon's. He's the guy, he's the one who owned the blacksmith shops.

I can name up most of them all the way up through Etna. Starting down, Scott's corner, where Scott lived, Clarence, and Ruth Scott.

Ron

Was the corner down there referred to as Cutting's Corner? Yes.

Bill

Yes because Ralph lived above where you live and the other side.

Ellie

That's what I always try to call it.

Bill

And on the other side, of course, there was the Sherman's, lived down there. And then Saversons is where—

Norma

Creare is.

Bill

Bomhowers and Roy Stevens, Stacy McAllister, Hamels, Fred Hart, Coburns, oh, wait a minute, one in between, yeah, Holland. All the way up through.

Ellie

Who was between Ralph and Bomhowers? Nobody. Anybody? No. Okay.

Ron

It's a vacant lot.

Bill

Then they come up through the Coburns, and then Trotters lived in the White House on the corner down here, and then my folks owned the two houses.

Norma

Evan's right across the road. Yeah, Evan's.

Bill

And the Camps lived up here.

Ron

Is there a map anywhere that shows this?

Liz

These places? Yes. I don't know if we have the names, but yes, we have.

Ron

That might be a project.

Dick

We have several old maps and you and I've talked about, we've talked about a lot of those old maps.

Liz

Actually, up at the library now, we've got a bunch of notebooks, like three or four notebooks, three ring binders. And we have one or two that are histories that people have filled out when they were celebrating the 250th anniversary of Hanover, or something like that. Two hundred, was it? I don't know. Anyway, people filled out forms about the history of their houses, so we have that street by street. But then we have old maps and old census data, things that have just been collected. I think Tom Byrne collected a bunch of it and gave it to you, and you gave it to me, and I organized it, and I gave it to Jeff. So he's got it up there, so it's all organized. And so we have paper documents, and then he's also got a lot of stuff on the website that he has scanned and labeled. So yeah, he's been really good about organizing and collecting things. He's been great.

Bill

A little bit about my mother, she graduated from Lebanon High School.

Liz

Oh, because she's from Lyme Center, I thought.

Bill

Then they moved over – who was the veterinarian in Lebanon - McLeod, coming back this way down in the ...

Ellie

Mm-hmm. Who lives? Riverside?

Bill

No, coming towards the Laramies.

Ron

We can't picture it coming towards you.

Bill

Okay. No. You go up further, you know Dr. McLeod lived at the last end, the Red House. Just go past Hampton.

Ron

Oh, then I knew it as the Kidder Place. Okay. That in the Hollow there?

Bill

Yep. That's my mother lived there.

Yeah, and she graduated from Lebanon High School and went to work for, I think it was, Clough. They're in Lebanon, they sold coal and wood products.

Ron

They had that big facility there, right in town. Yep, right in town. Oh boy. They had a giant mountain of sawdust there where the CCB is. Oh. There was a mountain of sawdust bigger than that building.

Norma

They had a big ice house down there, ice packed in all the sawdust. Oh, wow. Yeah, that's why.

Bill

We used to go to Lebanon to get ice, put in ice cooler to keep the soda cold.

Ron

Yeah, I'll refrigerate that at one time. I think I'm not positive. Oh, yeah. I think that is about Jerry Bettis's family I'm not sure it was the name with Bettis or not. We used to get fertilizer. Lime would come in on railroad cars and you're parked there and we've been on the truck and unload the railroad car of in sacks and haul it up and spread on the field about it. I Don't remember ever hauling sawdust this from there. Did you ever know we used to go to Canaan in Enfield?

Bill

My mother used to work there for a few years, then the store. That was a full-time job, she...

Ken

How did she meet your father?

Bill

Good question.

Ken

I never, never heard the story.

Bill

I'd probably have heard it, but I'd have to think about it.

Norma

Yeah, my mother worked at the store around Greensboro Road there, yeah Where Patton is - the one that's got all the cars and everything the next little house.

Ron

And he used to be the one next door here, too, at John Camp's. Well, there was a huge store right next to the Birnies, between us and the Birnies.

Norma

That was my grandfather's.

Bill

This place, I used to go and do all the work for her when she was older.

Liz

Maggie. Yeah.

Ken

She and Art Melmore, I think, we're good friends.

Bill

She'd call and want something at the store and run up on it, but she was real nice.

Liz

Well, so she lived here and Norma Gray lived over in the Chickering's house and Norma took care of Maggie and so Maggie left the house to Norma, you know, it's vague, you know, we've been looking through, some of us have been looking through Bob Coburn's daughter Ruth and I have made, spent a lot of time, you know, researching up in North Haverhill and, you know, and with this house there's a bit of a gap, it's kind of vague in terms of Maggie Bridgman going to Norma Gray, you know, in terms of, you know, like documentation, I mean it's sort of what we know happened but, and it was...

Bill

There was a gentleman that lived here, Dexter Deans.

Liz

Uh-huh. Did you ever hear that? No. No. He lives here someplace. Is he after Norma? No. Oh, he was long before. Long before. Yeah. Okay. Dean. Yeah. No, I think I can't remember the name. I have a list of the owners upstairs, but I don't remember that one. Dexter Dean.

Bill

One time my brother Stanley, high water, he fell into the brook next to him, jumped into the brook, saved him. He was in the downstream. Really? Yeah. He probably jumped into the brook.

Ron

He probably played in the brook as kids. Oh. Oh.

Bill

And at that time it was everybody's sewer. Oh sure, I know. And we had beautiful fishing, a good swimming hole down by Collins.

Dick

It smelled so bad in the spring, all the way up to my house.

Liz

But there were so many dams, probably, you know, were they still there when you were growing up?

Bill

No, they were pretty well added.

There was big pools where they were.

Ken

Yeah, down behind the Poland's place, that's where, uh, Dennis and... and we all went fishing.

Ron

Do you remember the Cutting's barn? It was down by the time I came around.

Dick

I think that went down in 1938.

Ron

It was still there in pieces when we moved there and Scotty burned it up. Every year he burned a little more, you know, he took his wood out of there. And then the town would dump, they'd take a tree down there and leave it there for Scotty. And now it's a lawn. In fact, her shop is set right on the ramp that goes into the barn. When I built that, I got, I think I have a foundation for this building and I thought, well, I don't want to spend the money on the work on it. But that ramp is all granite, all stone. I've got a cement block down, it's been there 50 years. Anyways. The town would probably poo poo it.

Bill

Now who lives next door to you?

Liz

A young couple, Katie Ahlers, not Elder, and Jeff Kratz. Did they buy it off of Harris? No. So Heather Drinan lived there for a while, and she made a lot of improvements, but before her was Jan Wright, Jan Wright, lived there, she was there.

Bill

Jan Wright must have bought it off from Vince Harris. I don't know.

Liz

No, no, yeah, she was here when we moved in.

Ron

Was that ever a store?

No. The way it set up, it could have been a store, I always thought it might have been.

Liz

Yeah, it had a porch or it used to have a front porch like a Victorian looking porch on the front, but I think Heather took that off. Kind of bay windows kind of. Yeah.

Norma

She always used to come across the store and get hot dogs for her cats. Jan? No. Oh, no, Merle Harris.

Bill

It wasn't her, it was a woman that lived there. Yeah, she was a woman who cared for cats, you know, that was her kind of thing.

Liz

Yeah. Now, here's a question for you. Was there a walking path or a road for any kind of vehicle that started on Trescott Road and came through the back, through the woods, and then turned and came down here into Etna Village for people, for kids to go to the school? You know, if you walk back here, there's very clearly an old trail, an old, old trail. And there's a bridge that puts a dam there. Yeah, there's an earthen dam, but if you go beyond that... Well, it's a swamp up here, right? Yeah, there's a swamp. Yeah. Go beyond that. This trail turns, it turns, and it is straight, and there's a row of trees and a stonewall.

Bill

I can remember that. It looks like an old road by the pond and kept going right straight out through Kubeo Pond.

Matt

I think Bob Adams told me he walked on that trail to come to school here. I think that's Paine Road you're talking about.

Bill

Probably the same road it goes out by Bob Jones's, up on Dogford, by Dr. Kroll's and out through there. Yeah, it probably is.

Liz

The Paine Road, you know, they've opened, well, you probably know this, they've opened up the Hanover Trescott Waterlands now for people to walk. And there is a Paine road that starts there and goes all the way out to... Dogford Road. Yeah.

Bill

Yeah.

Liz

This one would be like parallel to that I think in it, but it looks so much like an old road because of the It's straight. It's wide and there's this line of trees So there's something called highway 38 that's over by your house. Is it 38?

Ron

Yeah. And it comes out on Greensboro.

Dick

That's very different. Thirty-eight was the road to the big house up there. Oh, come on. They just built a new house down behind.

Liz

Bob Adams' house? Yeah, Bob Adams' house.

Dick

So I think that was town road 38. It could be. It was before my time, I guess. The land was being subdivided and so forth, the town had to put a new town road 38 further down this way. Oh, okay. And it's got a place where you get maps and so forth. Yeah, yeah. They have a kiosk now.

Ron

When they laid them out. They made range lines like this and lot lines. So a lot of those roads followed along those stone walls, that's what the stone walls are.

Bill

Over in Hanover on the east side of Moose Mountain, the road that goes through there, my father and J.O. Dana, there are still piles of rock with the old tractor piled up there going out through. There was just a kind of a path, old path, and then they made it into a road so they could get their Model A's and Model T's through and stuff.

Ron

JO was an old man by the time I came to town.

Bill

I worked for the town of Hanover in the summertime, I think three years for Alan Gardner.

Ron

your dad drove tractor for the town

Bill

Yep for 11 years. That was the best tractor. Oh, yeah? The name was Bessie.

Ron

There's a picture, there's history of Lebanon. The Valley News put out the memories of something like that. There's a nice photo of him on that tractor.

Bill

Yeah, yeah, him and J.O. pulled rocks and big piles of rocks are still there if you drive out.

Liz

Where's this? On Dana Road or no?

Bill

No, this is on the back side of Moose Mountain.

Liz

Okay, yeah, I know that there's that road that goes along there.

Ron

Does that place have a name over there?

Norma

They call it the Tunis district. Oh, Tunis, you're right, because they call it the Tunis schoolhouse over there.

Dick

The Tunis schoolhouse has been rebuilt and very nice. Yes, and you can visit it. Yeah, I think.

Ron

Your mother lived up in the North neighborhood, and your mother did too as well, can you say? She went to school in Lebanon? Yes. Well, she graduated from Lebanon. Your mother told me stories about boarding in Lebanon, and Elmer Dana did too, by the way.

Norma

She did on South Street in Lebanon. So your mother must have done the same.

Bill

Well, she lived in that house that I was talking about on Hardy Hill.

Ron

Oh, up at the Kidder's place, what I call the Kidder's place. Well, they still had to go, kind of ways to go to school. Yeah. And then didn't have a bus in those days. No.

Norma

my mother went to North neighborhood school and then went to high school down in Lebanon. She only went a couple of years, but my dad used to walk from here to Lebanon to court her and back.

Liz

Oh my god.

Ellie

My dad went from Grantham to Springfield. Through the woods.

Liz

Yep. Oh boy.

Ron

And Ellie has her parents' love letters that they wrote back and forth, and they're beautiful and they're innocent. They're just beautiful.

Ellie

And what do you do with them. The kids don't want them.

Ron

They'll probably wind up in the historical society down in Springfield. They have an excellent one.

Dick

I tell you, my early years with Cliff Elder, when I hadn't lived where I was very long, but in the little red barn there, I had a shop in the evening. So I was in there one evening, and I heard screeching tires coming from Hanover Center down. And I said to myself, that son of a bitch is never going to make it. So I went in. Mila was in the kitchen. I said, we're going to have an accident out here. Shortly after that, the lights went out, and I said, maybe I think he might need some first aid. Maybe I can help. So I got out. I thought it was going to Lebanon, probably, so I drove down Lebanon, couldn't find anything, and gave up. Well, it turns out he'd gone down around by George Levitt's.

They still have new and used telephone poles and so on. So I knew it was a problem. Well, maybe it would be good if the Etna Fire Department wanted a physician. So I talked to Cliff, and Cliff said, Sure, we'd love to have you. Well, I thought that was an honor, but it ended up he liked taking me in his car. So when the alarm would go off, he could be out dressed in the car, he'd get me into my driveway.

Bill

And if his line went off, he'd be down them stairs and his clothes on and braces and... Really? Yeah. Yep, down to the stairs he'd go right now. Cuz he had to go down on his rear.

Ron

So you grew up in the fire department, both of you guys.

Bill

Yeah, I was, even before I was, I was 16, I think.

Ron

What can you tell us about when Etna and the Precinct separated? When was that, in the 50s?

Norma

54, wasn't it? Because that's when I think they closed the school down here.

Bill

Oh, in 54? I think so. That's when the town went into the precinct. Is that what you're saying?

Ron

Yeah, because Etna used to govern itself in the precinct, the town did. Yeah, but then it all joined together. Yeah, around the 50s sometimes. Oh, really?

Norma

Because we had three selectmen, I had our own selectmen out here, Niles Lacoss...

Ron

At that time, the fire station was a little bit lower, and you had the truck that's still there. Model A, I think it is. Yeah, there was that and the whole floor.

Bill

48 or something.

Ken

And we had the fish and game down underneath it

Ron

Was the downstairs finished off?

Bill

Upstairs they had seats around the walls.

Ken

Downstairs they had benches or something and we'd go for meetings for the fish and game and

Ron

And Etna's town sheds were up and back in the fire station? Oh yeah.

Bill

Yeah, they burned down, they were. Yeah, oh yeah.

Ellie

That's when they moved down to the corner.

Bill

Yep, that's on there, that burnt down. They were, I think Alan Gardner was doing some welding or something.

Liz

When was this fire, the new fire station, built in the 60s sometime or in the 50s?

Bill

Yeah.

Norma

Because we were still in 4-H.

Ron

Camp had a store up there right?

Norma

Yes, next to us.

Bill

Yeah, there was a store there and sold gas, we sold gas.

Norma

The kerosene, they'd come in with it.

Bill

We never seen Nick when it was a glass jar. Can you imagine that today doing that? Yeah, and we walked back and we had a tank with a pump. Yep.

Ron

We'd buy a popsicle for a nickel. Yeah. I remember that.

Norma

That was my first job. Yeah, Glenna and Cora worked at the Camp store, when they were growing up. Two stores in Etna. Well, then there was one on the, down there on, the Greensboro Road.

Ken

A question, you know, in all the research you've done, did you ever come up with anything on how the town of Etna was named?

Liz

Oh, yes. Yes. I think the theory... It used to be Milltown. Yeah, Mill Village. Yeah, and I think it was a postmaster. Was it one of your... Was it your mom or what? Someone who saw it on the calendar, Etna, and decided to remove the A? That's what your brother told us when he was here, he told us that when we moved in.

Ken

The rumor that we had heard was the lady that lived here sold insurance, Aetna insurance, and when they had a meeting on how to name this town. She left off the A and just called it E-T-N-A.

Ron

That came at the time this rural-free delivery came in to do the mail.

Liz

So what year was that? I wonder who that was, because Maggie was here. It was before Maggie, right? It was in the 1800s.

Ken

She had to, the insurance company Aetna insurance, is what we heard.

Liz

Yeah, I do have a list of the names of the people who lived here and I'm pretty much back to the early 1800s, but the town records say that the house was built in 1792 and I can't figure out where that came from. And so I think I'm going to ask Jay Barrett because he seems to have a way of knowing, you know, some of these things.

Ron

one part and then another part add it to it. Yeah, that's the original. This is the original.

Liz

Yeah, and you guys might remember because I think that this maybe where we're sitting was the original structure and then there was another structure over here and they were joined together. You know, you can sort of see that, you know, and these beams I think were put in for decor at some point.

Ron

Is there a cellar under this space?

Liz

It's just a crawl space. But this was, I think it was another building that was added and the front was moved out. I mean, just from what we can tell from pictures, but I don't know if it always looked this way in your memory or...

Bill

Okay, that's a post.

Liz

It's actually yeah, this is over at the store. I mean it's a post office.

Bill

That's the same one.

Liz

Yes, this is over at the, yeah, I'm looking at some of these names here. Well, you have to look. Hewes.

How did you spell Hughes? H-E-W-E-S? Hughes, okay, I was thinking H-U-G-H-S. Okay, but Hughes, H-E-W-E-S, you see? Yeah. And then Spencer and then Nolton, yeah.

Bill

Yeah, Spencer.

Norma

Is that the sign down at the post office? Yeah, that's the same one. I didn't know if she...

Bill

I haven't been in the post office, so I should have had, but I didn't.

Norma

I didn't know that sign was there for years.

Ellie

Where is it in the post office?

Norma

Going up to the counter right on the right-hand wall. But they haven't updated it since Jean Temple left. And how many years ago was that? I don't think that... Quite a few years ago. How does it have...

Bill

Jean took over for my brother.

Liz

Oh, Jewel, she's on it. She is on it, okay. Your picture doesn't have Jewel's name on it, I think. She came from Lyme Center. She was the postmaster there, and then she moved down here when she left.

Bill

I can just barely remember on the Etna Common, they used to have the Etna fair there. Oh boy. Everything there was done by the merry-go-rounders of cows, pulling around.

Ron

I didn't know about that. No, I didn't mean that. Who sponsored that? The church?

Bill

They used to be a men's club here in Etna, and the men's club put up all the street lights. They used to have the fair to raise money and stuff, but it was just a men's club. A picture of the men's club somewhere. There was quite a few of Stebbins, he was there on it, and they're the ones that put all the street lights up that we used to want to do. And that used to be one of the annual events.

Matt

I think it was your mother I talked to years ago who said that you used to have gas lamps for street lights and someone lit the lamps.

Norma

Yeah. I don't remember it but I know they did.

Matt

So you don't remember the gas lamps?

Norma

No.

Ken

There were a lot of things going on.

Ron

Childhood in this community was very different than the way I grew up. I grew up at the end of a dirt road. We didn't have playmates.

Ken

We pretty much...we used to have friends. We were all getting together.

Bill

The first 4-H kept us together. The store was Sunday morning. That was the big gathering.

Norma

Well, your father had the local barber shop. Yep. Oh, really? Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Ken

That's where we got our hair cut. Come down and see Cliff.

Ron

He did the haircuts too. Yep, but he charged 50 cents or something like that?

Bill

Nothing, something like that. Just do it for him.

Norma

Just lean up against the kitchen sink.

Ken

Yeah, up against the sink, set us on one of them high chairs.

Ron

Yeah. If you could capture that period of time. That would make a wonderful movie. Like the Waltons.

Bill

Well, I'll tell you, when I was growing up, my mother, the wash, we used to go down to the brook, get water, lug it up Sunday night, she'd put it on the wood stove, heat the water at night so she could do the wash, and all it had was a ringer with a two-set tub.

Norma

Oh yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Bill

And then put it across the brook in the middle of the winter and it'd freeze up like that.

Norma

Ugh!

Ellie

I broke both arms. That was from a little washer. Is that right? Yeah. This one went up to here, trying to get a red string off it.

Bill

But we used to have to lug water in the middle of the winter.

Ellie

Yep, we did too.

Ron

So you didn't have running water in the house? No.

Bill

And our well it was downstairs.

Liz

Oh, under the house.

Bill

Yeah, in this house. Under the house.

Ron

You didn't have a pump upstairs?

Bill

At that time we had to be very careful with that and we had the old we had a three-holer in the store. We'd have to clean it out every spring. Oh yeah. Put lime, put lime on it to keep it.

Norma

We had a two-holer.

Ellie

We did too.

Bill

You didn't when I was young before we got the bathroom and stuff. You didn't spend much time out there.

Ron

It wasn't a reading room.

Bill

Oh my gosh, I can remember, I can remember, boy, being a draft, awful.

Ron

That was the norm. Yeah, that was the norm.

Norma

Well, my grandmother had the rooming house next to the library, and she had an outhouse there too. That one.

Liz

When you say the rooming house, because the house that you lived in, there's an apartment down below, but where was the rooming house? No, that's where I grew up. My grandmother had the house on the other side of the library. Oh, where? The Clarksons. Okay, where the Clarksons live. Okay.

Norma

Yeah, and she took people in, room and board. Yeah.

Liz

There was a hotel, when we were researching some of the older, you know, owners of this house, Ruth and I, and around here, was there a hotel? Was that it? There was, like, in the 18th?

Norma

No, hers wasn't a hotel. It was, okay. She just took in rumors, yeah.

Liz

That's what my grandmother did. My grandmother had rumors of staying in her house, too. But, okay, that must have been, you know, another time that they were talking about some hotel or somewhere in Etna here.

Ron

I've never heard anything about that. Your dad was the fire chief. Were there any cops or sheriffs or law people in those days?

Bill

Well, they'd come out of Hanover. There was nothing in Etna, actually. We were all good people.

Norma

Law-abiding.

Dick

We had our own special arrangement with the police department. They were at our house all the time. I had a lot of my training at Boston City Hospital. And I never saw as much domestic violence as I saw in Etna when I got here.

And it was a very sad state of events, and there were things—one of my most famous one was, see, the man of the house was an Afro-American postman. Did any of you ever know him?

Ron

No, I forgot his name.

Norma

Where'd he live?

Ron

Right across from Doc.

Liz

The house that's sideways to the road? That house?

Norma

Where Helen Hart lived.

Dick

Yeah, right up, yeah, in the house.

Liz

And the barn is right up close to the road, yeah.

Dick

So anyway, when I was moving in, I was standing by the little red barn and seeing if you can guess who said this to me, but my former rubbish collector, who was very tall, with his pants - Eddie Carr - who down here in the driveway said, hey Doc, nice house you got here. Too bad there's niggers in the neighborhood. There were these three little girls who were very nice, but domestic abuse was at its height. And one night, they threw him out, and so one night, no it was in the morning, I was coming up from Route 120, and I saw this guy walking up toward Etna from, you know, down where all the stores are now, and bandage on his head, arm in his spine,

limping up and up the road. So I like to help the handicapped. Here it was, my across the street neighbor. He and his ex-wife had come together the night before, went down to Nashua, and something bad ensued, and she was pounding his head. This was domestic violence, and so at that point, I decided either I had to gain access to the house across the street, or we probably should move, which pronounced somebody in the fire department to say, I understand if you don't like your neighbors, you buy them out. You didn't say that. Anyway, I could have. So, but Etna was very different then, but I had never seen domestic violence like that, and anyone, either the three little girls or anyone else, could come over. One of the adults, whoever got the worst of the fight, would come over, and we'd call the police.

Norma

They weren't natives.

Dick

One of them was a native Vermonter. The black guy wasn't.

Ron

No, I was going to say. We had, down in our neck of the woods, Ralph Cutting liked to tip a few. Oh, Ralfy? Yeah. And then-

Bill

He was on Truth or Consequences by the way. Yes, really. And then Leslie's wife, Florence, she liked to tip a few.

Ellie

Leslie's wife, Margerie.

Bill

That's a bad real act. Yeah. So there are all kinds of stories about that.

Ellie

I don't know what to say. And then up the road.

Ron

Billie Lacount. No account, no account, no account Lacount. Oh yeah. They used to sit in the kid there shooting the pistol. Bullets were overhead. What the hell was this? They were terrible.

Ellie

But then he got drunk one night, was walking down the road, screaming and hollering and then, in the middle of the night.

Ron

What they used to do was, Billy LeCount, the old man, I don't know what his name was, he was a drunk, he was a drunk drunk, and he'd run out of money, so he'd take his water pump out, and pawn it, Ralph would give him money for it. So he'd take his water pump out, Ralph would give him ten dollars for it, and then he'd go buy some more beer, and when he'd get some money, he'd buy his pump bag. His poor wife had to live, and they lived in that chicken coop, remember that? Wow, that was really brilliant, and I felt sorry for her, they were abusive to her.

Dick

But it was a very different place, I mean, you missed that phase. So in 1960, when we moved in. You moved in, I think. We come to town, dear. No, 65. Sixty-five. Sixty-five. We're moved to sixty-seven. That's what, sixty-nine.

Bill

When they go back to Florida, I've got some pictures, old pictures. Maybe you'd like.

Liz

I'd love them, yeah, that would be wonderful. In fact, if you can send them to me, I can scan them and send them back.

Ron

We've got an e-mail address, Willie.

Bill

Yeah, uh, WLEOELDER@aol.com

Ron

W-L-E-O-E-L-D-E-R

at AOL.com.

Bill

I think I got one, I did have one of my, we used to sell show gas down here, and my father doing a handstand up on top.

Ron

And he was a... Strong guy

Bill

Well, it was all upper body. And Sunday morning was always, when I was growing up, we had a pot bellied stove, and everybody and all the men folks had to come down. Oh yeah. And that's where I learned a lot of the things I shouldn't. Yeah.

Liz

That was the men's club, the men's club that you remember.

Ron

The braces he had on his legs Niles made.

Bill

Yep and Niles used to repair them all the time.

Ron

After Niles died, after he moved to Florida, I modified them one time. Were you with him? I know Stanley was. Stanley came down and had the plates on his shoes and stuff.

Ron

Yeah, the other one was peg leg, uh Hewes.

Bill

Charlie. Charlie Hewes. Yeah. He had a wooden peg leg.

Ron

Yeah, he, when he came to the shop, this was after Niles was gone, it was pretty serious. I mean, he brought the boys with him and the boys were standing around and looked and they wouldn't say a word. Charlie's the only one who talked.

Ron

I got to know Steve. He's passed, you know.

Bill

They're starting to clean it up.

Ron

Yeah, I've seen that last time we went by.

Bill

Well, today I went by and they've got an excavator and I don't know what's going to happen. Who is that, Will? I was on the Goose Pond Road where Charlie Hewes used to live.

Ron

So who owns it now? His kids?

Bill

One of Steve's kids.

Dick

Is this the Hewes farm?

Bill

Not the one that had the blueberries.

Ron

That's Gerald's place.

Everybody came to shop one time or another.

Bill

Gerald's used to truck my cattle a lot of times.

Ron

I'm sure he did us too. I remember going to the fair in Plymouth, riding on the platform on the top of the cab. Is that right? Show boxes up in the bale of hay and two or three kids would sit on that.

Norma

Right to the fair. Yeah.

Bill

They wouldn't like that now.

Liz

I remember when our kids were little, going on the fire truck rides, you know, after the Halloween party. They would not allow that now anymore, I am sure.

Norma

That started in the fire station with just a handful of kids, and then we moved up to Trumbull Hall. Then they had to move up the hall. When we were in 4-H, they had a field day for several years. The girls' team and the boys' club, it was field events. We won it the first year, and they said, Well, if anybody can win it three years in a row, you get to keep the plaque. Oh, wow. We won it the first three years we had it. They gave us a ride through town on the fire truck. Oh, nice. Yeah, big deal. Thank you.

Ken

Speaking of wild rides. I remember a guy that had an old Ford convertible, 41 Ford convertible, and we were riding Trescott Road coming back, and I'm telling you that corner used to go shh, shh, I guess there was no roundabout. And this guy said, we'll take this corner a little bit quick and floored it, and we spun around and went off in a culvert, I think, and it reversed the springs. It was an old spring like this. The top was down, and we were all in there was sunny, and all of a sudden we were sitting way to help in the air like this. Don't remember how you got it back down.

Bill

You remember, did you know Dr. Sibley? Sure. Well, Freddie and I used to have these soapbox derbies, and we'd get up here at the beginning of the hill, and we'd wait for Dr. Sibley. He'd come along, and he'd hook our ropes on the back of his car, tow us up the hill, and he'd speak it around. Oh, yeah.

Ken

Yep. Yep. And you'd come down over?

Bill

Down across the bridge sometime on her driveway before we made it.

Dick

Well, last I knew his wife was still alive, I don't know. Does she still live up there? I think she is. You think she is? I think she's still alive. Because I didn't know she died or anything.

Norma

One of the sons, I think, lives right next to her, a daughter or something. That's up King Road Yes, yes. Yeah, we'd go right to the top. Oh, geez. Oh, I can't imagine. I can't imagine.

Bill

We got down to the bottom one time in Mrs. Tibbetts' mother lived there. Yeah, in the little house. In the little house. And Freddy and I, and Freddy had whole spoke baby carriage wheels, and they got down there, and the thing collapsed, and he went sideways, and I was looking back, and I ended up in a ditch, and she always went with a cane, and she'd come running out without any cane. You guys all right? Yeah. Oh boy, we headed for home. We lost a little hide, but other than that, we're alright.

Ellie

How old were you then?

Bill

So, probably eight, nine.

Ron

I remember building them. I always had my eye out for wheels. In fact, I got a pile of wheels out back, I haven't got over that, than I collected. And the carriage wheels, they wouldn't take those sideways for us.

Bill

Also, when I was growing up, in the wintertime, the hill, we'd slide, we'd go way up to the Hamill place, pretty near the top, and my right, Hamill, would feed us cookies and stuff. And we'd get warm, and we'd slide all the way back down to the river to the ground.

Ron

Is that where Reverend Gold lived? Yes.

Bill

That's where Hector and Myra lived until they moved.

Norma

I remember in the winter, Myra and Hector, when they couldn't make the hill, because we could sit at our house and watch cars go up the hill, if they made the corner up top, then you figured, well, they're okay, they'll make it the rest of the way, and sometimes get slippery. They'd back down to the—Myra would get out on the back end for weight, and Hector would get in to drive, and she'd ride the bumper up the hill.

Bill

He might have taken a nip once in a while.

Dick

Speaking of people who drank a bit, we were sitting out back there and Hector and Myra came home from shopping and so she took a bunch of bags he got out had a bunch of beer was following around the back fell hit his head on the fender of the car I can hear it bang. "Hector you drunken son of a bitch."

Norma

Usually she would drive because he wasn't in any condition but she didn't want him out on the bumper so she'd get out on the bumper and he'd drive. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ron

Lots of people in town. When did they work for the college and the hospital?

Bill

College, most of them. Trumbull Nelson, yeah Trumbull Nelson was a big was the big one.

Dick

He's walk around carrying big pieces of glass. If he'd ever fallen he would have cut his arm off.

Bill

Yeah, most of them worked for the college.

Norma

Out from out here were mostly tradesmen that worked in town.

Ron

And a lot of farms were still and going at that time too. Yeah.

Bill

Oh, yeah a lot of those tradesmen years ago, the people that lived in the village had done most of their own repairs. Oh, really? Oh, yeah. They didn't hire anybody to come in and do anything. One way or the other, they'd do it, or their neighbor would help. And they used to have my father and Niles Lacoss and Dana's, when they get in the fall, and Dean Croall, when they'd do corn for silage, they'd all get together, work as a team. They'd go from one farm to the next.

Norma

And you'd have the husking bee.

Ron

I remember the husking bee up Elmer Dana's.

Norma

Yeah, every year. Yeah, you've talked about stuff.

Bill

He used to have it up here all the time.

Ken

If you got a red ear or whatever it was you get it you kiss your favorite girlfriend

Bill

If you got a red ear, you could kiss a girl, woman or girlfriend or whatever. And they'd put up a raffle and met some of them.

Norma

A lot of the farmers worked for the town, too. A lot of them were the ones that worked for the town.

Ron

It was a steady drip, drip, drip, the farm's failing and the men had to get, and these guys had operated successful farms and got to where they couldn't and they ended up working as janitors way beneath their abilities.

Dick

You think you could put this verbatim in your book?

Liz

Well, I'm not doing a book, but anyway, I can take all of this though and just, we'll turn it into text and I can send it around to people to see. Send it to me and I'll do whatever I can with it. Yeah, we can do, yeah. It's really been wonderful.

Bill

I've got some pictures.

Liz

You can send them to me if you want and I can scan them and send them back or you can scan them.

Ron

We'll take them right off.

Liz

Yeah, if you have scanned versions of them, you can send them by email. But I have a scanner upstairs, so, you know, that's...

Ken

if I ever did one of our family or, you know. Yeah, we haven't. Yeah, yeah.

Liz

Yeah. We have to do you guys. Both of you. Yeah.

Ron

You haven't read a unique story, the guy to marry the girl next door, you and Tim both.

Liz

Yeah.

Ron

Yeah, yeah, right. And childhood in town.

Bill

Oh Tim, he's been great.

Ron

I jokingly say, if Tim don't know about it, it didn't happen. Yeah, yeah. He's just studied so much. But he won't write it down.

Ellie

So what, he's a lot younger than you and in like 10 years or something.

Ken

Not that many.

Liz

I think he's my age, our age, I think.

Bill

I always remembered Tim's mother because she taught me how to ski.

Dick

Did you think of having Jay Barrett come to one of these meetings

Liz

He came to one of our meetings, but I'd like to talk with him again, just some questions about...

But he was good. He answered a lot of questions. He was such a fountain of information. Yeah.

Ron

He can focus in a direction.

Liz

Yeah, no. So we are going to have another meeting soon, I guess. Jeff said he would organize it because I haven't done it. So he wants to keep the meeting. Jeff at the library, Jeff Metzler, is going to contact you, Norma, I guess, to set up another meeting for our group.

Bill

Did you ever work one of those drills? The breast drill, yeah. Yeah, no. I did, one time.

Ron

You had to lay down.

Liz

They lay on it and they put the other way.

Ron

My father just told stories about drilling through metal with them when they built on truck body. I can imagine how long it took.

Ken

What's the, uh, what's the little handgun?

Liz

That's called a pepper box. It's from, supposedly it was from the Civil War. I don't know, my father was a gun collector. And a tool collector, kind of a jack of all trades. Yeah. That's a good use though.

Bill

Well, you know, I feel I'm pretty fortunate because... if anything I want fixed. It's like running or something. We know how to plumb electrical and all of that, you know, switches.

Ron

The horns of dilemma are if you're handy and you can fix things you have to and you can have a tendency to push it away because it's not that big a job and then your pump blows up.

Bill

Oh, are you waiting till the last minute. Oh, your PM system is a good preventative maintenance.

Ellie

At our house, if somebody else had it, that would be different, but we wait.

Ron

Well, if I didn't, couldn't fix stuff, I wouldn't live like we do, because I never had a big income. That's right.

Liz

Well, we always used to do a lot of our own fixing, but now we're getting to the point where you're just a little, yeah, yeah We're getting a little shaky

Ron

Get out on the bank there, I can't even do that.

Liz

Yeah, well, we're getting a little shaky now.

Ron

You did it so well. That's a tough job.