Newmarket Stories
From the 1930s to the 1980s

Edited by Karen Schuster and Kris Carmichael

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements
Introduction
Our Narrators
Ancestors

Early Days

Playtime

Grades 1-8

High School

Working Teens

Downtown Businesses

Entertainment!

War!

Another Look At The Past & A Message
For The Future
In Memoriam
Our Donors And Sponsors
The Newmarket Story Project Team

INTRODUCTION

As Newmarket approaches the 300th anniversary of becoming its own parish, from its 1727 separation from Exeter, we find ourselves looking at this milestone with a desire to preserve the memories, stories, and voices that shaped our town across multiple decades, not just the far distant past. In a time when communities everywhere grapple with rapid change, we felt it was important to capture some of Newmarket's recent history before it slipped away.

To do this, we turned to some of the people who know Newmarket best: long-time residents who have walked its streets, built its traditions, raised their families here, and lived through its transformations firsthand. We call them our "Narrators." Their lives span eras of hardship and hope—years marked by economic shifts, world events, changes in local industry, and the everyday joys and challenges of small-town life.

We sat with 35 Narrators to listen, learn, and record their recollections, which took us into kitchens warmed by woodstoves, onto busy mill floors, and through neighborhoods where everyone knew everyone else. These interviews highlight not only personal stories but the identity of the town itself.

Whether recalling wartime fears, the rise and decline of the mills, family immigration stories, or the simple joys of gathering downtown on a Friday night, our Narrators remind us of this town's remarkable resilience, and its ongoing sense of a community drawn together.

This book is not a comprehensive history, nor is it meant to be one. It is a celebration of the people who have carried Newmarket forward and a way to strengthen the ties between past and present. This work offers today's residents, and future generations, an intimate look at critical decades in our town's history.

We are deeply grateful to the Narrators who shared their stories. Their generosity made this book possible. We also wish to acknowledge the organizations whose support helped bring this project to life: the New Market Historical Society, the New Hampshire Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Newmarket 250/300 Committee, and the Newmarket Business Association. Their commitment to preserving and celebrating local history continues to inspire us. I am extremely grateful to the members of our Newmarket Stories Team, Kris and John Carmichael, Patti Blanchette, and Michael Provost, who spent many hours interviewing the Narrators and writing

up their stories, and to Tim Cremmen, who videotaped the interviews and created a documentary.

As we look ahead to Newmarket's tricentennial in 2027, we offer this book as a tribute: to the town, to its people, and to the stories of who we have been, who we are, and what we will continue to build.

Karen Schuster

OUR NARRATORS

Born in the 1920s

TERRY MCGRATH BOISVERT (TERRY): *I wanted to move out of here so fast, but my husband wouldn't let us. Oh, he likes a project, and he was a Newmarket man. He knew everybody, every house, every family, and who was related.*

BERTRICE DENNETT JENNISON (BERT): *I lived on Ash Swamp Road, and it was a two-mile trip to town. A group of us, including the Hamels and the Schandas, would walk there. There were two clothing shops, Moreau's for women, and Priest's for men.*

Born in the 1930s

JOANNE REARDON DESJARDINS (JOANNE): *I just love the memory of the whole town coming together on Friday nights. Music was playing from the bandstand and there were singers who would sing along with the bands, like Lucille Hamel, Joe McGrath, and Arlene Babineau.*

ROGER DESJARDINS (ROGER): *There was Mr. Sopel, the iceman. When he came to deliver ice for the icebox, we kids would run after him, and he would chip off a piece of ice and toss it to us on a hot summer's day.*

LEO FILION (LEO): *Our parents rented a summer cottage on the bay, which had no electricity for a while and no running water. Our father would bring fresh water from town on his way home from work. There was a big tank in the basement that collected rainwater, and a pump in the kitchen to wash dishes and clothes.*

LORRAINE LABRANCHE LAPOINTE (LORRAINE LAPOINTE): *When I was in Jr. High, my friend and I decided to go to a Halloween dance at St. Mary School. We were walking through the parking lot, and we happened to have some rotten tomatoes with us. We saw a car going by and we threw tomatoes at the side window.*

JOE SCHANDA (JOE): *People need to remember the mills and the saving of*

our history up there, on top of the hill in that beautiful building. To me, that's very important. Very, very important.

PRISCILLA KARABELAS SCHANDA (PRISCILLA): *I was one of 12 children, and all my brothers and sisters and I spoke Greek in the home growing up. My father spoke both English and Greek, but my mother spoke mostly Greek.*

LORRAINE LANGLOIS SHELTON (LORRAINE SHELTON): *I love dancing. In my early years, when we lived on Central Street, my bedroom was on the third floor, and I could see the top floor of the Polish Club. On Saturdays, they were all there for the dancing. I would watch them doing the polkas and all that.*

RICHARD SHELTON (RICHARD): *My father taught me to fish and would bring me up to the camp in Pittsburgh that he bought with two of his friends. I even had a Fishing Permit from Rexford Avery (NHS Principal from 1950-1955), which got me out of school. I've saved it all these years.*

LEE RYAN SZELIGA (LEE): *It certainly is different now. When we moved here in 1940, we lived on 1, 3, 5, and 7 Cedar Street. It's four houses, really, and my dad could have bought it for $1700. Now you have to pay $1700 to $1800 a month to rent one of them.*

GEORGE WALKER (GEORGE): *Being the youngest (of seven), my father and mother were very strict about not letting me go out after dark. One time, I sneaked out to go swimming at night, and I got caught. I wasn't able to sneak out again.*

SHIRLEY ROPER WALKER (SHIRLEY): *In the summer, our parents didn't know what we did all day, as long as we came home for dinner and supper and returned before dark.*

Born in the 1940s

CANDY PHILBRICK BAILEY (CANDY): *I remember the colored baby chicks you could get at Marelli's at Easter time…and my mother saying no, we couldn't, because they'd just grow up and be brown. But they were so cute, who wouldn't want one?*

CAROLYN FILION BARNES (CAROL): *We had a rowboat on the bay, and once my brother Leo rowed across the bay to Portsmouth to join his friend Norman Langlois and his brother Jigsaw. He came back at 3 in the morning, singing at the top of his lungs.*

GLENN BERGERON (GLENN): *We came together because of sports. After school, we would gather at Beanie Howcroft field and play baseball. As we were*

walking to the field, we would see kids from other parts of town who would be riding their bikes or walking to the field.

JOHN CARMICHAEL (JOHN): *Television came in about that time. On wrestling night, all the neighbors would come to our house. Mrs. P. was demure and tiny, but you get that woman in front of a wrestling show and she would yell so much that her husband would have to take her home.*

RAY GAGNE (RAY): *I feel fortunate that I was born in the time that I was born, in the place that I was born, and in the town my parents grew up in.*

BRUCE HAWKINS (BRUCE): *Everybody knew everybody else, and they looked out for each other. If you went downtown from the New Village, your parents would know about it before you got home.*

PATSY LANG HAWKINS (PATSY): *Live your life because you get to be old way too soon. And you don't realize it. All of a sudden, it's there.*

JUDY REARDON KOSKI (JUDY): *What I remember about the Lamprey is that my dad used to catch eels with my uncles. They would bring them to my Aunt Dot's house on Bay Road and fill the bathtub with them. I ate them when I was young, but when I realized what they were, I wouldn't eat them anymore.*

BARBARA GAZDA PELLETIER (BARBARA): *My residence has always been here in Newmarket, and much of it has been in the same house…. During the hard times, other family members and cousins somehow managed to fit into that house, even though it was unfinished on the top floor.*

DONALD PELLETIER (DONALD): *I remember the first time I took my bike out I was riding down Spring Street and had to go to Nichols Avenue. I went right across Elm Street. I didn't remember how to put on the brakes, and I just went right through. Thank God there were no cars coming.*

DONNA STEVENS REDFERN (DONNA): *I like that we had that close community, and you know everybody, and it's familiar. It's like a warm hug coming back.*

Born in the 1950s

PATTI JENNINGS BLANCHETTE (PATTI): *I wish that everybody alive now could have seen how times have changed and how far we've come, because I think they'd have a new appreciation for the town.*

DAVID BROWN (DAVID): *Of all the decades, I liked the 60's the best. A lot was going on in the world and in the country. After the "Incident in Exeter" in 1965, we drove around looking for UFOs but never saw any.*

JANICE GALLOWAY (JAN): *I didn't come to Newmarket until 1985, when I*

went there to visit a friend who had been my neighbor in Exeter. I looked around and decided I really liked this town, so I ended up buying a home here. I've lived here about 40 years now, and I love Newmarket!

LINDA BENTLEY HOPEY (LINDA): *On Sunday you'd have that one meal, like a pot roast. Monday night you'd have pot roast again; then Tuesday post roast came back on top of toast with gravy. Mothers learned how to stretch meals.*

PAULINE ARSENAULT LABRANCHE (PAULINE): *My dad only weighed two pounds at birth. My grandmother used to say that she could put her wedding ring on his wrist. They kept him alive by turning the oven on low and opening the door. They put him in a shoe box and rested it on the open door so he would be near the heat.*

DAVE LEGAULT (DAVE): *My mother met my father at the Rockingham Ballroom. Back in the day, when the passenger trains were running, the Rockingham Ballroom was a very active place that had Saturday night dances.*

RON LEMIEUX (RON): *I remember coming out of St. Mary's school at the end of the day and walking to my dad's store, Rainbow Shoes, where Jade Gardens is now. He would give me a nickel, and I would go around the corner to Adrien's Lunch and buy him his afternoon coffee.*

JON OTASH (JON): *We had everything we needed here in Newmarket. We had about five barber shops and plenty of grocery stores. You couldn't walk more than 10 feet without coming upon a new grocery store. We had a clothing store, a shoe store, a five and ten, a bank, and a movie theater.*

MICHAEL PROVOST (MICHAEL): *In Newmarket at that time, everyone looked out for everyone else's kids. You had 30 sets of parents, because if you did something wrong, your parents were going to find out about it. You were getting in trouble.*

TED SHARPLES (TED): *Living in Newmarket, you're close to everything. We could walk and bicycle everywhere without fear of trouble. There was very little crime so we could go wherever we wanted, whenever we wanted.*

Born in the 1960s

ROCHELLE GINGRAS SHARPLES (ROCKY): *Newmarket is a great community to bring up your family. Sports were and are huge, especially basketball. It's a small community, so when we need to pull together, we do. We become one, and it's a good feeling.*

ANCESTORS

Among our narrators, over half mentioned an immigrant ancestor not too far back on their family trees. While French-Canadian and Polish forebears were most often mentioned, Irish, Greek, and Bohemian popped up, too. New Market Historical Society records show that a number of Italian families lived here as well.

The French Connection

For well over 50 years, French-Canadian families headed south, looking for improved economic opportunity. **Michael's** French-Canadian ancestors were among the earlier arrivals:

…my father's relatives immigrated from Canada in the 1860s, around the time of the Civil War.

Ray described his grandfather's journey to Newmarket:

My maternal grandfather was born in 1864, and he emigrated in the 1880s. They arrived by train to Newmarket. There was a bit of a hitch because when he arrived, he believed that the depot in Rockingham Junction was the only train depot for Newmarket. He didn't realize that there was another one, so he and his family got off the train and walked from Rockingham Junction into downtown Newmarket.



Ray's Maternal Grandfather Gideon and Maternal Grandmother Julienne Labranche & Family



Train at Newmarket Depot, early 1900s

Dave noted his grandmother's motivation to immigrate: *My grandmother, Claire Roy Hamel, (from Canada) came here primarily to work in the mills. She was 13 years old when she started working, and I suspect she had to lie about her age to get in.*

After the British takeover in 1759, the Roman Catholic hierarchy in French Canada employed a strategy called the "revenge of the cradle." To increase the French-speaking (and Catholic) population, priests actively encouraged their parishioners to have large families. Over a century later, this mindset was obvious among the migrant families from Quebec.

Jon's French-Canadian forebears were no exception:

...my grandmother, Severine (Rondeau) Neal had 11 brothers and sisters. Ten of them were born in Canada and my grandmother and her brother were born in the US after their parents left St. Apollinaire in Quebec to work in the textile mills here in Newmarket.

Leo and **Carol** descend from another large French-Canadian family:

Our grandfather was Joseph Ambrose Filion. He and my grandmother had 13 children, four boys and nine girls. The boys were Louis, our father, Teddy, Tom, and Bobby. The girls were Mary, Eva, Mabel, Edith, Diana, Rose, Florida, Melina, and Helen. They lived on Spring Street and the kids slept dormitory style in two or three rooms upstairs.



Grandfather Joseph and Grandmother Marie (Belanger) Filion, 1912

Donald's immigrant ancestors' experience was different, in that the whole family did not stay together:

Around 1905, my great-grandmother moved from Canada, coming down here with nine of her children, without her husband. He and three other children remained in Canada, and they took care of the farm. There was a lot of work down here…and her seven sons and a daughter worked in the mills until they got married and moved out. [My grandmother] spent the rest of her life here.

And the family she left behind stayed in Quebec:

Her husband never came here from Canada. He stayed there until he died, and their three daughters stayed up there also.

More Immigration Stories

It's one thing to get on a train in Quebec and head south with a large family in tow. The challenges for the Eastern European immigrants were different: they had to find the funds for an ocean voyage that could last a couple of weeks. Steerage (way below deck) was the cheapest travel option, with cramped quarters, little ventilation, and limited access to the fresh air on deck above.

At the turn of the century, the Newmarket Manufacturing Company actively recruited workers from Eastern Europe, especially if they had any experience in weaving. Instead of the large families from Quebec, many of these workers were single. Some were teenagers, and nearly all came from the same general area in Poland, where there was a weaving school near Krakow..

As recent arrivals settled into their new lives, they encouraged others from the old country to join them. Many helped fund the ship passage so that Polish relatives could join them. The Newmarket Manufacturing Company helped, too. According to **Michael**:

My grandfather Zych worked in the mills. His sister brought him over from Poland, and
because he was a skilled worker, she got a bounty from the mill owners. His dream was
to have his own farm.

In 1902, **Richard's** grandmother arrived in Newmarket thanks to her uncle's help. Julia Wajda was 14 years old when she started working in the mills. Two years later, she married Frank Bargiel at St. Mary Church, and they went on to have eight children. But it seems that the long ocean voyage didn't stop them from returning to Poland. In 1911, they went back:

My mother was born in Poland. Her parents Frank and Julia Bargiel were from around Krakow. As a matter of fact, she was born on the ship when it was ready to come to the United States. [Mary] came here as a baby and ended up living in Newmarket all her life. As a child, she went to the Durhamside School where Great Bay Dental is now.

Richard's father took a different route to Newmarket. Charles (King) Shelton was born and grew up in Kentucky, where his father had a horse farm.



Charles (King) Shelton, Richard's father

According to Richard*, my dad went to school only through the fourth grade. At that very early age, his mother passed away. At age 16, he left home and…that was about the time when schools were putting heat in their buildings, so he started working in that business. He got married and had three children, but during the last birth, his wife died.*

With three young children to support, he got another job.

Working for the American Bridge Company, he was in a rivet crew, and he traveled all over.... When he came to build a bridge in Manchester, he met my mother. They got married in 1930 while he still worked for the Bridge company.

Newmarket was one of many New England mill towns where immigrants moved from place to place as work opportunities arose. And mill work was not

the only game in town. **Lorraine Shelton's** French-Canadian paternal grandfather was a barber who moved to Newmarket from Waterville, Maine—another mill town.

Eugene Thibeault, **Lorraine's** maternal grandfather, immigrated from Canada to Newmarket to work in the new Mill No. 8 – the Weave Shed—until the strike.

When the mill closed, they moved to Sanford, Maine, and worked in a carpet manufacturing mill there. My mother, Rose, actually started off as a nun at about the age of 13 or 14. Her mother had died and the nuns who ran the school there recruited her and other young girls, put them on a train, dressed them up as novices, and they ended up in San Francisco. My mother loved it out there. But she didn't fit in. She loved to play tennis and do other things – she was just a young girl, so the sisters sent her back to Maine.

She had to make her way back alone, on a train, cross-country. My mother lived in Exeter for a while with some relatives and worked in some of the shoe shops there. She later moved into an apartment in Newmarket with her sister, Yvonne Thibeault, who never married. My mother was still a teenager...



Rose Thibeault in nun's habit at age 13 or 14

In Newmarket, Rose met and married the barber's son, Ernest Langlois.

At that time, all young Catholic kids went to Forrester's Hall, upstairs at the Stone Church, to dance. Well, my mother loved to socialize, and she ended up going to the dances where she met my father. My father at that time was working with his father as a barber and didn't make much money. Now, my father didn't dance, but he would drop her off and pick her up – to make sure that he was the only one to take her home.



Rose at age 18

They had four children: Bobby, **Lorraine**, David, and JaniceAnita. The photo on the left is from 1939. The one on the right is from 1946 and was taken by Bobby.



Ernest, Lorraine, Rose, Bobby, and Janice

Priscilla grew up in Dover, but has roots in Greece:

My father was Dion, and my mother was Stella (Aloupis) Carabelas, and they lived in Dover. They had 12 children, and I was the second from the last. Both of their parents came from two small towns in Greece that were about 15 miles apart.

Ray described how his paternal grandfather found work first in present-day Rollinsford:

He came from Rimouski, Quebec, on the south shore of the Saint Lawrence River, almost up to the Gaspe Peninsula. ... He got a letter saying that there was a job available at the Salmon Falls Manufacturing Company. The position was that of a fireman -- not a fireman who puts out fires, but one who maintains the factory heating system. He came down, and they made their home in Salmon Falls until the late 20s, when he got a similar position offered to him in Exeter.

Joe's father, Frank, immigrated from Bohemia before World War I.

[He] came to the United States in 1910 to New York City, where he worked as a taxi driver. He never talked about his home life back in the old country… not to us. He had a brother, Carl, whom I met. He had another brother in the Air Force who was killed in the war -- shot down over France by the German Air Force.

Then Frank met Mabel Morrison, a young runaway from Canada.

My mother was born in Nova Scotia, and she ran away from home. Across the border. How she got across, I don't know. After her mother died, she was relegated to one of the relatives. She was treated pretty badly ... One morning, she just snuck out ... up and over the mountain and down the other side and took off for the United States. She eventually went to New York City, and that's where they met.

They were married in New York; then they moved to Utica, NY. In 1920, they sold their little farm in Utica and moved to Kingston, NH. In 1929, they bought another farm here on Grant Road, where most of us were born. Back then, it was Epping Road.

Having a farm was a goal for many immigrants as they settled down and saved money. Both sets of **Michael's** grandparents were dairy farmers—the French-Canadian Provosts and the Zych family, which was Polish.

Death and its Disruptions

While Mabel Morrison Schanda was the only ancestor we know of who ran away from home after her mother died, several narrators mentioned the challenges arising from the untimely death of a parent.

Barbara: *Before my grandmother and grandfather came into town, they had been living on a farm, but they weren't making much of a living. It was 1923 when they came into town, and my grandmother worked in the mills. My grandfather lived here on Elm Street for about three to four months, and then he passed away. My grandmother had five children that she brought up basically on her own.*

Ray: *My paternal grandmother, Celenese (Lagasse) Gagne, died in childbirth in 1914. My father was five years old at the time. My grandfather, now a single person, had a house and worked all day to support the family. Times were very tough, so my father and three of his siblings were put up at St. Charles Home in Rochester – an orphanage.*

My oldest uncle, Malcolm, would have been old enough to get working papers… and get a job. My aunt Georgeanna was taken in by a relative, so she didn't have to go into the orphanage. My father at the time was an impressionable child, and he felt that it was very unfair: "Why do we have to go to the orphanage, and she doesn't?" When I asked my Uncle Arthur about the orphanage, he said "Well, it wasn't the best place in the world, but it wasn't bad. You know, they took care of us, they fed us, you know." [But to my father] it was a prison.

When my Aunt Ida was old enough to assume responsibility, the kids in the orphanage were able to reunite with my grandfather in Exeter. Ida became the matriarch of the family.

Rochelle:

My father's mother died when he was very young. She was originally from Poland. His stepmother, Clarice, who was from Canada, became my grandmother. She lived in Newmarket, married my grandfather, Alfred Gingras, and raised his children. She walked into a marriage of 13 kids. God bless her!

Bert: I *was 10 when my mother passed away in 1938. Two years later, my father married her sister Helen.*

Back in Poland, **Richard'**s maternal grandmother, Julia Bargiel, had to work at a very young age. After her father died and her mother remarried, she and her sisters ended up with a stepfather who refused to support them. We don't know how old she was when she started, but Julia worked (and may have lived) outside the home up until her emigration at age 14.

It's nice to know that Julia's daughter, Mary (Richard's mother), treated her own stepson better than her mother had been treated back in Poland. (Charles's Kentucky son James became part of his father's new family.)

On a brighter note, **Pauline** tells the story of her father's incredible survival as a newborn.

My dad was born in Berlin, New Hampshire, and he only weighed two pounds. My grandmother used to say that she could put her wedding ring on his wrist. They kept him alive by turning the oven on low and opening the door. They put him in a shoe box and rested it on the open door so he would be near the heat.

Early Arrivals / Those Who Came Before

For those whose ancestors arrived earlier and had continued in the country for longer, there was less talk of the immigrant experience. A description of where their parents came from or how they met seemed enough.

Patti: *My parents are Tom and Jean Jennings; my maternal grandparents were John and Annette Jordan. My mother grew up here in Newmarket, and she went through the Newmarket School system.*

She went to nursing school at Saint Joseph's Hospital in Lowell, Massachusetts. At that time, the nursing students stayed on the grounds of the hospital all the time. My father's sister was a patient at the hospital, and my mother was her nurse. She invited my mother to dinner one weekend, and that's how my mother met my father. He moved to Newmarket to be with her and then worked for and retired from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.





Patti's mother Jean in her nursing uniform

My maternal grandparents owned Jordan's Restaurant at 98 Main Street in Newmarket. My grandfather did most of the cooking, and they lived upstairs over the restaurant.



Annette and John Jordan with Patti on Prom Night

My father's parents, Edward and Rose Jennings, first lived in Ipswich and later in Haverhill, Massachusetts.



Patti with her paternal grandparents, Edward and Rose Jennings

Bert: *My parents were Marion Langley Dennett and Burleigh Dennett. My father came to Newmarket from Sutton, Vermont. He was painting a house near where my mother lived on Ash Swamp Road, and they met there. He was seven tyears older than she was.*

Patsy has ancestors who go way back in Newmarket. Her grandfather had a successful blacksmith shop downtown in the late 1800s, and her own father made his living via another historic trade:

My dad was an iceman. I remember going to Newfields with Dad to see the ice cakes. They were covered with sawdust. It was the coolest place.

Bruce: My *father came from Center Harbor, New Hampshire, and my mother was from Warren, New Hampshire. They moved to Lee before I was born. When I was in 5th grade, we moved to Newmarket. We lived in New Village on Grape Street.*

David: *My father was a doctor. He worked at a hospital in Rangeley, Maine. Someone told him that Newmarket would be a good place to work because of*

the mill population, so we moved to Newmarket in 1951. He was the only doctor in town. His office was across the street from the mills. We lived first on South Main Street, and later on Grant Road.

Linda summarized just how far one line of her family extended:

First, there's the Willey area of my genealogy. The Willey family arrived in Durham around 1627. We arrived in Durham by the Langley farm on Durham Point Road, and we tended to migrate from there, first over to the corner of Durham Point Road and the Newmarket Road, and then into Newmarket on Dame Road and Bay Road.

The family had lots of veterans: Robert Willey was a patriot from 1776; Mark Willey was in the War of 1812. In 1864, Charles Willey died in a prison camp. Many aunts and uncles were all part of World War I and World War II.

War was also responsible for **John**'s forebear's arrival:

The first Carmichael in the New World was a Scots soldier impressed by the British Army during the Revolution. After the war, the British, not wanting their Scots veterans returning home, gave them land in Nova Scotia. Carmichael soon brought his siblings over from Scotland. During the American Civil War, one descendant headed south to fight, settling afterward in Braintree, MA. His grandson served in WWI as a motorcycle courier taking messages to the front, causing him to suffer "shell shock" after the war. Doctors said, "get out of the city", so the family moved to Nottingham, NH. . My father grew up there, and went to Newmarket High School, where he met John's my mother, Ruth Ham. They were married during WWII, while he was on leave as a Navy SeaBee.

Languages Spoken—at Home, in School and on the Streets of Newmarket

By the 1960s, most people in Newmarket spoke English, even though French or Polish could still be heard in stores and on the street.

Barbara learned English when she learned to read:
A lot of the family continued to live in the house and stayed until they could get on their feet and move out. Everyone spoke Polish. I didn't learn English until I started school, and that was hard at first. The school is how I gradually learned how to speak English.

Several others described the generational slide into English:

Jon: *My grandmother Severine, and her younger brother Wilfred, spoke French and English perfectly, with no accents. Most of their older brothers and sisters could speak English-- with a very strong accent. Her parents, who lived here for 55 years, couldn't speak English at all.*

Ray: *…growing up, we spoke only French in the house. My mother would have me say my prayers only in French. When I was outside with friends, I spoke English. I picked it up like a sponge. Then shortly after I started school, things changed, and we spoke English.*

Priscilla: *All my brothers and sisters and I spoke Greek in the home growing up. Many families back in the 1930s spoke both languages. My father spoke both English and Greek, and my mother spoke mostly Greek.*

Dave: *My siblings and I only spoke English, but my mother used to speak French with her mother. When they were on the telephone, they would switch back and forth between English and French and it was kind of comical to listen to them. My grandmother, being French Canadian, was more fluent in French. She did master English, but I think her preferred language was French because she grew up with that. My dad had a French background, but he spoke English all the time.*

Pauline: *My parents spoke French at home, but they spoke English too. Although I could understand some French, I never really spoke it.*

Even though **Donald's** parents were bilingual, his path to speaking English was a bit more convoluted:

My grandparents spoke French constantly; my grandfathers spoke some English so they could communicate on their jobs. My grandmothers, being housewives, only spoke French. …By the time I was four years old, I only spoke French.

The first time I heard English was when I went to a babysitter who was Polish. Because she didn't speak French and I didn't speak Polish, she spoke to me in English. Although we spoke French at home, I would begin to answer in English. By the time I was six years old, we all started to speak English at home. Eventually, I lost my French dialect. Even at ten years old, when my grandparents came to visit, my mother would translate what they said into English, even though six years earlier, I could fluently communicate with them.

Terry (of Irish lineage) faced another linguistic challenge when she married Normand Boisvert:

In those days, people married their own kind – you didn't marry out of your own nationality. So Norm's mother didn't enjoy that he married me. She'd look me in the face and talk to me in French. I told her and told her that I don't speak French, and she'd keep on rattling off.



Terry with children Kathleen and Normand (Chip), Eva Boisvert (sister-in-law), and Grandmother Arthemise Perron Boisvert

Early Days

When asked about early memories, a number of our narrators described where they lived and how their families happened to be there. We also learned a lot about what they did as a family—and what they ate.

Where they lived:

Several in-town areas popped up—one being New Village. Built by the Newmarket Manufacturing Company during the World War I era (1916-1919), this development was originally intended for mill supervisors. After the mills abandoned Newmarket in 1932, the town inherited New Village and slowly sold off the individual houses, duplexes all.



Duplexes on Beech Street in New Village, 1920

Donna recollected:

...when my sister Joyce was born, we moved down to Grape Street in New Village. And that was the best time ever-- because we had so many friends who are still our friends after all these years.

That family atmosphere was quite real, according to **Candy**:

I lived on Forest Street. We lived in a duplex, and on one side of the house was my father's sister. On the other side, in the next house, the Carmichaels lived – my mother's cousin.

Judy agreed:

My grandparents Hargreaves, lived with us. They used to live on Elder Street, also in New Village, and then my parents bought the house on Grape Street. That was all around the time of World War II, and they lived together.

Candy elaborated on what that was like:

All the mothers took care of all the kids. If I was at John's *house, Ruthie would take care of all of us. And you never said that Mrs. Cardin gave me a hard time because of something I was doing… because my parents would say "good! You must have been doing something wrong."*

John's family was the first in New Village to acquire a television:

On wrestling night, all the neighbors would come to our house. One neighbor, Mrs. Pratt, was like Miss Mousey, never saying anything. She was demure and tiny, but my God, you get that woman in front of a wrestling show and she would yell so much that her husband would have to take her home.

As these families grew, many of them would move on to another part of town: Both **Candy's** and **John's** families moved over the hill onto Elm Street, and **Donna's** family headed over to South Main Street.

Patti also started out in New Village, but didn't stay too long:

When I was first born, my parents lived on Beech Street … Then they purchased an apartment building at 18 Exeter Street. We lived there until I was in the third grade, when we moved to Packers Falls Road, where we all lived for the duration. My brother… still lives there.



Patti's first home on Beech Street

Donald and **Barbara** lived in New Village for several years, raising their own children during the 1970s. They then returned to the Gazda home on Elm Street, where Barbara's widowed grandmother and her children had worked so hard to survive. **Barbara** recalled:

During the hard times, other family members and cousins somehow managed to fit into that house, even though it was unfinished on the top floor. Somehow, they moved in and made divisions in some of the bedrooms so they would be private. They didn't move out until they were able to make it on their own. It was truly a family house; 2023 marked 100 years in our family.

Not far away from Barbara's family home was another busy section of town, with housing built by the Newmarket Manufacturing Company. It was next to

the factories, close to downtown, and people could get what they needed by walking. For many years, it was known as Little Canada.

By the 1950s, there were plenty of families living near Lower Elm Street (Nichols Avenue, Washington Street, Spring Street, and Central Street). Some parents worked in one of the shoe shops that had replaced the textile mills; others provided services—stores, barbershops, and the like.

Donald started out there:

I've lived in Newmarket all my life. We started on Washington Street…When I was three years old, we moved over to Central Street, across the street from the Polish Club, and I lived there for the next 15 years until I got married… I've moved four times, all within a half-mile radius.

Glenn lived at 5 Spring Street:

My paternal grandparents lived on the bottom floor, and we lived on the top floor. They used to come upstairs for suppers or for dinners. We had a commanding view of the whole square from up there.

He also mentioned an interesting building nearby:

There used to be a small barn on the property…. Grandfather called it a cub barn. I didn't realize it at the time, but my grandmother went to school there. It was a one-room schoolhouse way back in the day.

That little schoolhouse, known as the Spring Pump School, dated back to the mid-1800s—built by the Newmarket Manufacturing Company to accommodate the first waves of mill workers' children.

After her first few years on Rock Street, **Linda** grew up at 37 Elm Street:

… right next door to my grandparents, who lived at 39. Those were my best years, roaming around Elm Street, Elm Court, the woods, and the ball fields.

As with the New Village kids, she spent a lot of time outdoors:

On Elm Street, I was allowed to go up to the Philbricks and Dosties. I was not allowed to go up as far as the Carmichaels. I could go down to the end of the street to Al Zych's store on the corner of Spring and Elm, and Mrs. Ryan's store across the street. I could go to the end of Elm Court and look at Spring Street, and that was kind of our territory.



The Bentleys lived at the Harvey house before the move to Elm Street (names?)j

According to **Leo**, whose family lived on Nichols Avenue…

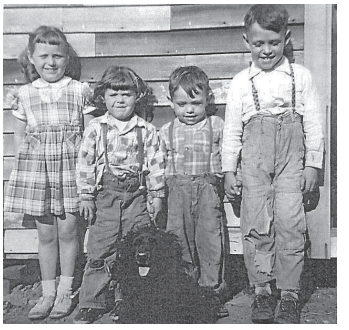
That whole street was French Canadian except for a couple of Polish families.

Before his family moved over the town line to Durham, **Michael** was one of the Nichols Avenue kids:

Ron Lemieux became a close friend who lived in my neighborhood. As a matter of
fact, our tricycles were run over on the same day because we left them in the middle of
the street.

According to **Ron**,

In the 1950s… we counted 50-60 kids once, in the Nichols Avenue, Lincoln Street, and Washington Street area. The largest family was the Arsenaults, who had eight children.



Valerie & Dawn Clark, Spot, Ron & Roy Lemieux

One of those children, **Pauline,** described how she came to live there:

I grew up near where the old Health Center used to be, in a green house on the corner of Washington and Lincoln Streets. A long time ago, that house and two others were brought there on rollers…so the Mills could be built. My parents always used to talk about that.

An old man named Joe Roman owned the house... Somebody else wanted to buy it, and even though they had plenty of money, he would not sell it to them because they had just one child. He said our family had lots of kids and we really needed a place to live, so he sold it to my parents. They took a loan from Saint Mary's Church to buy the house.

My mother always spoke about going down into the cellar, and all she could see were little brown things. She thought the cellar was full of bugs. But Joe Roman used to stand his beer bottles up to put his wood on. As the wood crumbled and rotted, all you could see were the tops of the beer bottles.

Ray described how his parents bought their Nichols Avenue house:

My Uncle Alcide knew a lot about real estate. In 1940, he found out about this duplex that was for sale. He grabbed my father by the arm and yanked him up to Nichols Ave. He told him, "You can get this house; you can buy it!" My father was absolutely flabbergasted because the day he signed the papers, the realtor handed him a check for the rent from the other side of the building that was already occupied by renters. My father shook his head and said, "All I did was sign my name to a piece of paper and somebody handed me a check!"

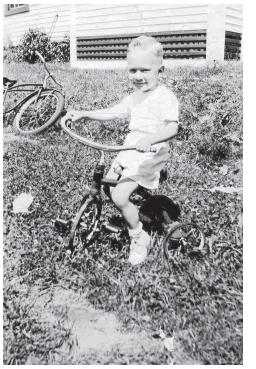
Not far away on Central Street, **Lorraine Shelton** grew up. As a child, she had some health problems, but she did manage to roam:

When I was really young, my grandfather had the barbershop downtown, and they had comic books. I'd go down and sit in the barbershop, and I would read my favorites -- Wonder Woman and Gene Autry. I think to get rid of me, my grandfather would give me a few pennies. I'd make my way to Benny Kendrigan's barber shop because he had a peanut machine. So, my penny went, and I would get a handful of peanuts. He called me Peanut Girl and didn't mind me being there.

Young **Lorraine LaPointe** grew up nearby on Elm Street and found another place to spend her pennies:

My father got paid on Fridays, and that's when my sister Bernadette and I went to Ryan's store and bought penny candy.

Both **Richard** and **Ted** grew up over the bridge in Durhamside (so called because that part of town had been part of Durham until 1871). Both men had mothers of Polish descent, and there were a number of Polish families who lived there.



Ted on a tricycle about 1954

George grew up on South Main Street:

We lived on the outskirts of Carpenter's farm, and I spent a lot of time there when I was growing up. My brothers and sisters were all much older, so I played with the kids in the neighborhood, many of whom lived on a farm. Being the youngest, my father and mother were very strict about not letting me go out after dark. One time, I sneaked out to go swimming at night, and I got caught. I wasn't able to sneak out again.

Downtown, downriver of the mills, was a hilly area where other youngsters roamed.

Rochelle recollects:

When I was 10, we moved to Newmarket, on Prescott Street, which many old-timers used to call Pork Hill. Apparently, there was a pig farm on top of the hill. We lived in a little neighborhood where I could walk to school and walk downtown. There was a large network of kids, in all different age groups, on the hill. The older ones always loved helping the younger ones.

In 1947, our eldest narrator, **Terry,** married a young man from the Pork Hill area. She met Normand Boisvert downtown at the First National Grocery Store. She was Irish; he was French. Over his mother's objections, they got married and settled in his grandmother's house. She lived there for the rest of her life.

He bought it from his grandmother. When he grew up, it was always understood that one of them would buy this to help the grandmother out. There wasn't any Social Security then…the old folks didn't have it. And they sold it for a reasonable price.

Several narrators grew up on Ash Swamp Road. **Bert** was one of them:

… I was born right there at the house. I spent a lot of my younger years with my neighbors, the Hamel kids… They had a farm, and their father delivered milk and produce. They had a lot of kids, so I was always down there.

Dave's mother, Lucille, was one of the Hamel kids, and **Joe** was another neighbor who hung out with her and her siblings. Joe's parents had a farm out that way too:

I remember the farm in the 30s. Now, this was during the Depression, and so things were pretty bad. We had no problem 'cause my father was a great farmer, and my mother was a great canner. We had all kinds of stuff for the winter, because of what they raised during the summer.

Shirley started out as a farm girl too:

Our family lived on Packers Falls Road, on a big farm called Rivers Farm. There were nine of us living there: my parents, my maternal grandmother, and six of us kids. We had lots of animals and two huge gardens. We had a milking cow, hens, and a pig.



Shirley, brother Sam, Ollie, and cat with kittens on the Griffith farm

Shirley's earliest memory was of the hurricane of 1938: *"I was only two years old, and I remember a lot of trees being down all over."*

Joe also remembered it:

I was a boy. We had a battery-operated radio… Listening to the radio and the wind. That rain -- coming straight across. And that big maple tree right in front of my window fell right over like nothing. Everything's flying everywhere. We got through that storm pretty well without much damage. Amazing!

Other narrators had childhood memories of fires:

Linda *watched the A & P burn down…*

Pauline's experience was too close for comfort:

We saw our neighbor Marcel's big barn burning. I remember we couldn't even touch our windows, they were so hot.

Hard Times & Food:

Comments about food often reflected the era. Between the lack of funds during the Depression and the rationing of World War II, gardening and preserving were important.

Terry was young during the Great Depression:

You had to make things do. If you had a roast on Sunday, with plenty of meat left over, you'd have a beef stew for the next few days. We ate well because we had a little farm in Reading… and later a little farm in Lee. My father grew the nicest corn, and he had a little stand up there. Jeannie Filion would come every year in the summer, and it seemed as though she was always pregnant, she had five and they were all close. And my father always gave her an extra ear of corn for the little one.

Shirley described what her mother did to feed six children:

My mother did a lot of canning…One year, she put away over 90 quarts of wild blueberries, so we had a lot of blueberry muffins and pancakes that year. We had a separate garden across the road, where my father planted potatoes, corn, and Hubbard squash. Besides her work on the farm, my mother walked to Durham several days a week to clean houses.

George's recollection was similar:

We grew all the vegetables we needed for the year and kept them in the cellar. We hung the onions from beams and had wooden barrels of carrots and beets. My father grew beans, and we would thresh them and put them up for the winter. My mother put up jellies, jams, piccalillis, and relishes. The bin for the potatoes was kept in what we called "the dark hole." With only one small light bulb, it was scary going down there....

1938-1948 encompassed both the Great Depression and World War II. Those years encompassed the first ten years of **Joanne's** life. Here's how her parents coped:

We had Chop Suey a lot, but also deer meat and raccoon. My father would go out hunting with my mother's cousins, and they would bring the raccoon to the house for my father to skin down in the cellar. My cousins and I would sit on the cellar stairs and watch him. Then my mother would soak it overnight before seasoning and cooking it—all dark meat but delicious. She would stuff it like she did a chicken. Then she roasted it.

My mother would cook eels too, but she didn't eat them. My sisters Judy and Joyce wouldn't eat them either. But my father, my brother Eddie, and I always ate them. They're kind of bland.

For those who grew up after the war, talk was more about the foods their families ate, rather than what had to be done to acquire it.

Linda mentioned something she didn't like before describing a usual menu.

Onions, terrible!
On Sunday, you'd have that one meal, like a pot roast. Monday night, you'd have pot roast again; then Tuesday, pot roast came back on top of toast with gravy. Mothers learned how to stretch meals. You had a sandwich for lunch… Kool-Aid was a real treat. Breakfast was cereal, except on weekends when you managed to get eggs. Whatever Dad was eating, you got to have.

As a kid, all **Donald** wanted was a hamburger. **Barbara**'s diet was a little more varied, reflecting her Polish background:

My mom used to cook lots of Polish food like golabki and pierogi. Between the Polish food and her pies—apple and blueberry, there were always great smells coming from the kitchen. But there's no better smell than homemade bread, especially cinnamon rolls! She would set the dough to rise in the warmest room in the house—the bathroom.

Ted had a similar recollection:

My mother and her mother were great cooks. They fixed lots of Polish dishes. We had a tradition at Christmas Eve where the whole family would get together and celebrate a typical Polish gathering.

With a French-Canadian background, **Roger** grew up having a lot of soup, the French meat pie called "tourtière," and the savory ground pork spread called "creton." These were served alongside the turkey at Thanksgiving.

Some narrators recalled treats from grandparents—nothing fancy, but special to a youngster.

Donna recalled:

My grandmother would make tomato soup, and then she would cook macaroni separately; I could take my fork, put a noodle on it, and dip it in my tomato soup.

When **Patti** visited her dad's parents in Haverhill, MA…

They would take me blueberry picking, and then we would make blueberry muffins and pancakes. They sometimes took me downtown for ice cream …

Ray's earliest memory about food was being immersed in it:

My mother had me set up in a highchair on the back porch, and I had a big birthday cake sitting right in front of me… I guess I got a little rambunctious, and I kind of stuck my head into the cake.

PLAYTIME!

Where They Played

In a word…outside! **Rochelle** spoke for the school-aged kids:

We came home from school, changed into our outside clothes, and had our snack before heading outside.

Linda described a typical summer day:

We played in the streets—kickball, dodgeball, hopscotch, marbles. You knew that at lunchtime the mill workers would be getting out of work, and that was the time for you to go home and have lunch. When they went back to work, we'd hit the streets again—till we heard Mrs. Averill calling.... And everybody knew it was time to head in again for supper.

Shirley: *My brothers and sisters and I played in the barn and in a shed on the hill that we thought of as our playhouse… My friends and I played hide and seek, jacks, hopscotch, and ring-a-levio. In the summer, our parents didn't know what we did all day, as long as we came home for dinner and supper and returned before dark.*

Donald was one of those kids who went out after supper:

I used to have a lot of friends in the Nichols Avenue-Elm Street area, and we would play Kick the Can until dark… with the can right in the middle of Elm Street. There weren't a lot of cars. And when they came by, they didn't hit it—they'd just kind of roll past the can where we had it—in the middle of the road.

Patti commented: *You don't hear the term tomboy used as much now … but when I was growing up in the neighborhood, people played football, kick the can, and climbed trees. We lived on the river, so we were fishing and camping out and doing all those things which at the time were "boys' activities" rather than "girls' activities."*

Rochelle described something more organized, up on Pork Hill:

There was a large network of kids in all different age groups. On Saturdays, the older kids would collect 25-50 cents from the younger kids; they'd go down to Rollie's store and buy a bunch of penny candy. There were all kinds of things there, and they would buy prizes too. There was a little trail at the top of the hill and a big field, and they would hide things along the trail for a scavenger hunt. One time, they hid a little army guy with a parachute, and that was the big prize.

Local woodlands came in handy for all sorts of make-believe activities. **Ron** recalls:

We built a lot of forts and cabins, some at the end of Washington Street … and some in the woods between the Nichols Avenue ball field and New Village. We'd go around scrounging up nails and boards, never realizing that we may have been infringing on other people's property. But our neighbors were very gracious. We even built a go-kart with the boards and nails we found in the neighborhood.



Homemade go-kart with neighbor boys and Ron

Judy remembered:
… we used to have little camps in the woods up the hill, and we would roleplay different things. We had a Mickey Mouse Club when Mickey Mouse was the big TV show. And one of us would be Annette Funicello. You couldn't be yourself. It was all role-playing and always group play.

Whenever the Jimmy Fund started up, the girls would have shows, like a backyard Carnival. Everybody would be involved somehow …. We would sell Kool-Aid too…not lemonade… Kool-Aid. It all went to the Jimmy Fund.

Donald had a different inspiration for his role-playing:

We played Cowboys and Indians, especially after the matinees on Saturday afternoon, with Roy Rogers, Gene Autry or Randolph Scott. We would see the movies in the afternoon, and then later in the woods, we'd reenact the whole thing.

Barbara's role-playing involved a memorable toy:

…a stick horse that my grandmother made with a broomstick. She would design the head of a horse and stuff it, and she would put corn silk on it. We would ride around the back woods playing Cowboys and Indians on our horses.

For many of the girls, dolls were a part of the picture.

Pauline: I'd *be outside for hours with my friends playing with dolls, probably right up until freshman year of high school. Norman Langlois' daughter lived across the street, and Jerry Langlois and his family lived nearby. He had a daughter, too, so there were three or four of us who were always out there playing with our baby dolls.*

Linda: Sheila *Brooks was across the street. And there was Debbie Magoon and the Jabres. We all had Barbie dolls. Those were the new "in" thing at the time.*

Rochelle: We *also played with Barbie dolls. Everybody had some type of accessory. I had the Barbie airplane, someone else had the camper…*

While there were few indoor activities mentioned, during the 1940s **Joanne** loved this one:

We used to have comic book night in New Village. There was one night a week when you took your comic books and went to all these houses and exchanged comic books. Then you didn't have to buy so many. Ronald Cote was an only child, and he had the most, so everyone wanted to go to his house to exchange our comics.

Where They Went

Bicycles! Once they got them, they took off! In New Village, they could drive around a lot and still be close to home.

Donna: *That's where I got my first two-wheeler. I was so excited! We'd put our baseball cards in the spokes with a clothespin, and it would make a lot of noise. You could go on different streets and find so many friends to play with.*

But they didn't stay close to home forever:

George: *I lived on South Main Street, and if I climbed up our maple tree, I could see if anyone was playing baseball in the field. If they were, I'd tell my mother where I was going and pedal on my bike to go join them.*

John: *Once you got your bike, you were gone; you'd grab a cousin and head off to the river, Sinclair's… Big Tree… you're halfway to Durham before you realize you've got to ride back.*

Pauline: When *the weather was good, my brothers, sisters, cousins, and I used to ride our bikes to Exeter on Route 108. Our cousins in Newmarket had cousins in Exeter, and we went to visit them.*

Joanne: *It was big and heavy, but I would ride it to visit my grandmother in Durham, a few houses up on Old Landing Road.*

Bicycles were central to **Dave's** childhood out on Ash Swamp Road:

We had 10 acres of land–partly field and partly wooded. My brother and I made a place in the woods that we named the traffic circle, where we rode our

bikes. We made roads throughout the woods, with all kinds of paths. We had all kinds of fun.

Dave's mother had some fun with it, too:
When our friends and relatives came over, my mother would tell the parents, "The kids are all playing in the traffic circle."
Dave's mother (Lucille Hamel LeGault) had grown up nearby and used to play with **Bert,** who described life on a farm during the 1930s and 40s:

There was plenty to do as a kid, but it all happened next door because my youngest brother was nine years older than me, and he didn't want me tagging along after him. The Hamels, Lucille, Leo, and Anna, were around my age.

In the summertime, after the chores were done, we would go swimming in the brook. ... or play hide and go seek. At night, after the cows got milked and were let back into the field, they were surrounded by an electric fence. We would hang on to each other and the fence, and the one on the end really got it.

Michael called his outdoor activities "range roving":

My grandparents lived on a farm…and there were plenty of woods and fields to wander in. My Zych cousins and I would follow the high-tension line or walk on the railroad tracks and follow the river. My mother would pack us lunch, and off we'd go. We knew we had to be back for dinner.

Sometimes my uncle would give us a bunch of hot dogs, and we would have lunch on an island in the river. There was a tree we crossed to get there. We cooked our hot dogs, wandered some more, and then went to my grandmother's. She would call our parents and say, "They're here." We'd stay there for supper and often stay overnight. She would put all five of us in one bed and cover us with quilts so we couldn't move.

Sports

In Newmarket's free-wheeling outdoor life enjoyed by so many youngsters, several sports were mentioned. **David** played golf, and **Rochelle** went through a tennis-playing phase, but baseball was the hands-down favorite, from the Depression years through the 1970s.

George recollected: *When I was young, there was nothing designed by the town for kids to play on, so we devised our own games. We played a lot of baseball, with broken bats held together with screws and tape and baseballs covered with friction tape.*

Roger explained further: *No leagues, just us kids, we used to play ball in the field by the old train station where Haines had his big storage tank. We'd play there until he kicked us out. We'd also play in the ball field off Nichols Ave.*

Nichols Ave. was the place to go for sports—organized or unorganized—according to **Ted**:

It didn't matter where you came from, everybody got together at Nichols Avenue and played baseball, soccer, and pickup football. People came from all parts of town.

Ted learned how to play baseball from his older brother Phil (Moocie) and their neighbor Walter Lizak, in 1959.



Ted, Phil (Moocie) Sharples, and Walter Lizak

Donald agreed:

We'd go to the ball field on Nichols Avenue. Every morning during the summer, I would go there, and if there were one or two guys, we'd just play catch. If there were three or four, we'd play some kind of baseball. We couldn't afford baseballs, so we had to wrap whatever we had with electric tape. In the evening, the town teams used to play there, and I was one of the ones who shagged all the foul balls that went out into the bushes. I would retrieve them, but I'd always leave one as if I couldn't find it. Then the next day, I would go back and pick that one up, so we kids could use it. Whenever I came up with a baseball that looked pretty official, I was the hero!

Water, Water Everywhere

Ron: *The Lamprey River was huge when we were growing up. It really gave you the flavor of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. My family didn't have a car, but we did have a boat docked in the back on the Lamprey River. When the shoe shops closed for two weeks in July every year, we would pack up our family, get in the boat, and go up the river and camp for two weeks along with other Newmarket families—the Provosts, the McDougals, and many others. We would live in our bathing suits for two weeks up at the Boy Scout Camp or on Picnic Island. We could swing out on the rope at Big Tree or explore Beaver Island.*



Donald & David Pierce, and Ron on the bottom
Ward children on the top

My grandparents and parents did a lot of camping on Picnic Island. I have photos of them bringing large boatloads of lumber up there to build picnic tables and other items for camping. There's a boat on the cover of a book about Newmarket that my grandfather converted from a sailboat into a motorboat, and he had that up on the Lamprey River.

Michael supplied some history of that area:

In the 1930's that area was known as Crystal Springs. They had a pavilion up there, and they'd go roller skating in it.

Ted added: Whether *it was in one of Baker Lepage's canoe rentals or our old motorboats, we water skied, ice fished, skated, and made good use of it.*

Leo said that his uncle Tom helped the Boy Scout Master, Phil (Poppy) O'Connor*, build the Boy Scout Camp… Unfortunately, some kids who were not scouts burned the camp down, and it was never rebuilt.*

Ray, another Nichols Avenue kid, had a small amount of shoreline in his backyard:

I spent a lot of time on the river with my cousins, Albert and Alfred Hill. One day, we found an abandoned boat.

There was nobody's name on it…no number, nothing. We paddled back to my house. We went down to the police station… and told Everett Ryan how we saw that boat go by and how we hooked it and pulled it in…

He says, "You hold on to the boat. If nobody claims it in a month or two -- it's yours."



Alfred Hill, Ray, and Albert Hill at Bay Road residence

We were over the moon. "We're gonna get our own boat!" Nobody ever did claim it. It was an old beat-up thing anyway, but we thought it was fantastic. Now, we could go fishing in a boat instead of from the shore.

Shirley and **Ted** had similar river experiences, paddling around in found boats, and catching frogs and tadpoles. However, not all river creatures were wonderful:

Both **Donna** and **Shirley** got blood suckers on their legs.

Ray (with his newly found boat): *Every once in a while, we'd hook an eel. But I didn't want to have any part of them because the eel looked like a snake.*

Rochelle: In *the summer we would swim in the river when I was younger, but when I found out there were snapping turtles there, that was the end of that.*

But below the dam, **Rochelle** had a better experience on the water:

My parents were good friends with Dick and Barbara LaBranche, who owned Marcotte's Market. They also had a boat. One time they invited us to lunch. We took the boat … to the Great Bay and docked at Newick's Restaurant in Dover, NH.

Some families were fortunate enough to have a cottage on the water.

Linda: My *grandparents, Ruth Willey Lambert and Arthur Lambert, had a camp on Pawtuckaway Lake, and we spent our summers there. Shortly after school got out in June, we'd leave with Carol and Roger Monroe, and their three kids. We all packed up, and we lived in a two-bedroom cottage with no running water and an outhouse. We'd move back home on Labor Day.*

Patti: *My parents bought a camp on Wheelwright Pond in Lee. We would leave on Friday nights, and drive to the camp. We did a lot of fishing, boating, and swimming. We didn't really have traveling vacations.*

Leo*: We rented a summer cottage on the Bay from an old bachelor, Charlie Randall, who lived in an old house on Bay Road. It was on a peninsula, so we had water on three sides. Behind us was a long, long dirt road from Bay Road that wrapped around apple and peach orchards and strawberry fields. Charlie Randall would collect the fruit and sell it downtown on a cart.*
The cottage was a finished building, but there was no electricity and no running water. Our father would bring fresh water from town when he came home from work. There was a big tank in the basement that collected the rainwater and a pump in the kitchen to wash dishes and clothes. My mother never complained about these primitive conditions. She just got things done and then sat happily under the big tree down near the water.

Carol: *We had a rowboat on the Bay, and once Leo rowed across to Portsmouth to join his friend Norman Langlois and Norman's brother, who had the amusing nickname of Jigsaw. He came back at 3 in the morning, singing at the top of his lungs. We could hear him coming across the water.*

After Charlie died, his property was sold for $4000. My father didn't buy it because it had a muddy beach -- a poor place for swimming when the tide was out. That's when we bought the cottage at Bow Lake in Strafford. I was only eight, but I missed the Bay—it was so big! And we could see boats travelling to Portsmouth.

Richard: *Growing up, I did a lot of fishing. My father was an avid sportsman, and he taught me. In my younger years, I would go up to Pittsburgh to his camp up there. He, along with Mr. Moisan and another gentleman, were all joint owners. They would go out fishing in the spring and then hunting in the fall.*

When I was 13, my dad had to go to Canada on business…. My mother, my younger sister, and I went, and we ended up on the Matapedia River, northeast of Quebec City. It was known for salmon fishing. There was no public fishing, but we certainly did a lot of salmon fishing before we came home. My father had connections with the doctor who owned the property, and he gave us permission to fish in five or six of his pools. This doctor liked me and told my father that I could fish there as much as I wanted—we just had to pay for the guide. Those guides were good. They never looked at a watch; they just knew the time. Just before it started to get dark, they headed back.

But I fished close to home too; I even got a permit from school to go fishing, and I've kept it all these years. It was from Rexford Avery, the NHS principal from 1950-1955.

Wintertime

Once cold weather arrived, the river became a new center of activity. Everyone skated on the river. At night, there would be bonfires on the ice. There were also various ponds, as well as several areas flooded to create skating rinks—in New Village, near Maplecrest, and on the baseball field at Nichols Ave.



If a snowstorm messed up the fine skating, kids got creative, as **Ron** explained:

One time, the Arsenaults and a group of us devised a plow for clearing the ice. We had a wheelbarrow, and we would put one kid in the wheelbarrow holding up a 1930s Chevy door to act as the plow blade, and another kid would get behind the wheelbarrow and push it to clear the snow off the ice and make a big skating rink.

Sometimes there were mishaps, though. **Ray** remembered one:

I was out skating, and I had this brand new white sweater on, with a big V on the front. I was something… really trying to look cool. But I slipped and fell… Deviated septum. Blood was everywhere…all down the front of my new white sweater. It looked like somebody had shot me!

Over on Ash Swamp Road, there were other icy attractions:

Dave: We *were friends with the Hauschel family, who owned the golf course, which made a great playground. After an ice storm, we would skate everywhere on the icy crust.*

Bert: *We went skating and sliding. From the back of Hamel's Pond, we could slide down their hill, go across the river, and up the hill on their neighbor's property.*

Patti and her sister played in a snow fort out in front of their house:



Patti and her sister Sue

Even closer to town, kids found places to go sledding. **Donna** noted that:

… when we lived in Maplecrest, Pigeon Hill was still a big hill before the development. We could take our flying saucers out there and slide down the hill.

And certain streets were popular, like up on Pork Hill. **Rochelle** described how that worked**:**

In the winter, we would slide down the hill on our sleds. We would start way at the top and go around a sharp corner. Sometimes the plow trucks would come by, and we would have to get out of the street. When they disappeared, we went back on the road to slide.

Joanne grew up in New Village during WWII, when lots of people worked at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard:

We would go sliding all the way down Park Hill on Elm Street. But we had to be off the hill by four o'clock because the men would be coming from the Navy Yard on the 4:00 bus… There were no cars that bothered us, just the Navy Yard bus.



Navy Yard bus parked at Filion's Store

According to **Ron**, the other side of Park Hill was another popular sledding spot:

... going down the hill on Elm Street to Nichols Avenue. After a good snowstorm, we'd climb up to the top of the hill and post lookouts down at the intersection of Nichols and Spring Street to make sure no one got hit by a car. It was crazy. ... but we managed to do it without any serious injuries.

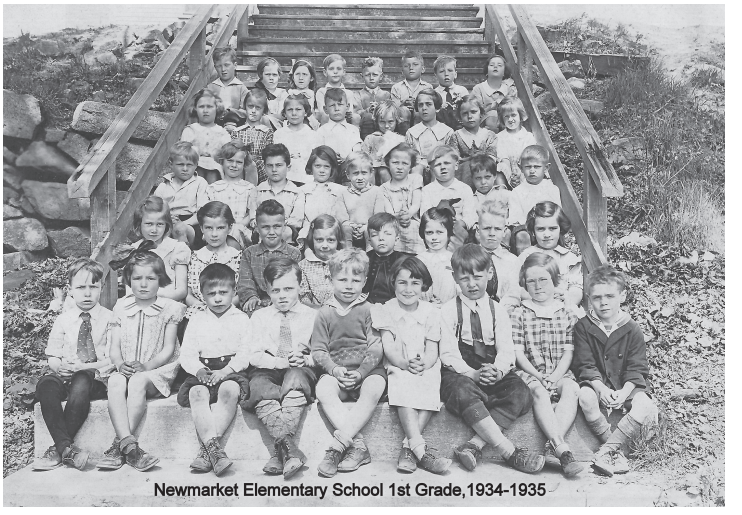
Grades 1-8

For early education, attendance was split pretty evenly between public and parochial schools.

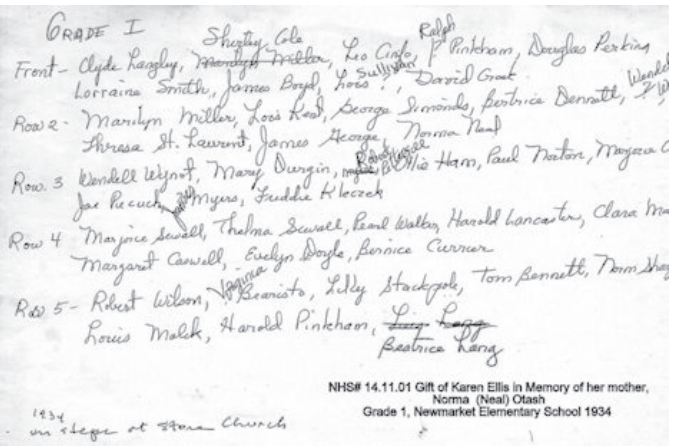
Public school attendees moved around between school buildings during the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. During the 1940s, grades 1-4 attended the brick school on the corner of South Main and South Street until it was damaged by fire in 1948. During the 1950s and up to 1966, those classes were held in the "old" high school at the top of the hill near the Stone Church. What seemed to be a constant during the 1950s and 60s was that fifth and sixth graders attended the Stone School, where Mrs. Robie and Mrs. Rooney ruled. Seventh and eighth graders headed to the high school. **Patsy** commented about that:

I went to school from 1st grade to 12th grade in Newmarket. It's important to have that continuity.

Bert attended grades 1-12 in Newmarket's public schools, which had some very large classes. Here's a picture of her first-grade class that was taken on the steps of the Stone Church. **Bert** is in the second row, 4th from the left. The children's names appear on a handwritten document given to the Historical Society by Karen Ellis, in memory of her mother, Norma (Neal) Otash, who was at the end of the 2nd row on the right-hand side. Norma is also **Jon's** mother.



Newmarket Elementary School 1st Grade,1934-1935



St. Mary School did it all in one building—the current Town Hall.

While a few students transferred from St. Mary to the public school, there wasn't much interaction between Newmarket's public and parochial school students, and there was some name-calling, as **Joe** mentioned:

When I was a kid, I can remember walking down past Saint Mary's, and kids on the playground had a name for us that they called out from behind the fence when we walked by. We used to poke back at them and call them "Kitty-Kitty Convent!"

Terminology could be confusing, according to **Ron:**

I used to think that the parochial school was the Catholic school, and the public school was the Protestant school.

St. Mary School

Jon and **Ron** attended St. Mary School, along with many other children, and were both in the same grade. Their 6th grade class picture shows **Jon** in the top row, 3rd from the left, and **Ron** in the third row down, 4th from the left. All the students in that class are identified in the list below the picture.



#5 St. Mary 6th grade class 1963
Boys/Back Row L to R:
Lucien Hayes, Vincent Jarosz, Jon Otash, Michael Bernier, Michael Ledger, Norman Bonenfant, William Fickett, Unk

Middle Row: L to R
Leo Cinfo, Maurice Baillargeon, Gary Grochmal, Gerard Gagne, Steve Duffy, Ronald Hayes, David Portyrata

Front Row L to R
Robert Williams, Michael LaRocca, Phil Bernard, Ron Lemieux, Glen Filion, John Ziemba Daniel Toland

Girls Back Row L to R
Kathleen Boivert, Pauline Hamilton, Paulette Pelletier, Sharon Chantre

Middle Row L to R
Gail Jarosz, Kathy Kartachewicz, Pamela Tourney, Catherine Miesowicz, Janette Beauchaine, Janet Randall

Front Row L to R
Claire Emond, Regina Bosinger, Linda Birmingham, Shirley Gonet, Linda Pratt, Florence Proventure, Sharon Latour

St. Mary's 6th Grade-1963

Understandably, those who attended St. Mary School had a lot to say about their teachers, the Sisters of Holy Cross.

Lorraine Shelton: *There were 16 nuns here…They had all different assignments: teaching different grades, some taught music, choir, piano… The grade that I remember most was fifth grade. Sister Monica was a wonderful woman, so much so that I named my daughter after her, because she really made an impression on me.*

Barbara: *I can recollect one teacher who was my favorite. She was Sister Rita. She taught piano lessons.*

Ron: *One of my favorite teachers was Sister Phillips, my first-grade teacher. There were 50 kids in that first grade, so it was packed. There were three Ron's or Ronnie's, and I think I got named little Ronnie because I was the smallest of them all. In the fifth grade, Sister Charlotte was another favorite. She was very*

cool and knew how to relate to the kids. She wasn't overly strict, but she wasn't lenient either. One time she disciplined a couple of tough kids in the class and made one of them cry.

Jon: Sister *Charlotte was probably one of my favorite teachers of all time. She was very funny and very involved with the kids.*



L-R: Sister Lucy, Sister Superior Helen, Sisters Jacqueline, Pauline, Mary Ann, Lorriane, Rachel, and Pauline

Donald: *We had no favorite teachers, they were all disciplinarians, and they weren't sociable at all…. Teachers back then never yelled. If they needed your attention, they had "clackers" in their hands, and when they started with them and looked at you, you knew that you were caught doing something wrong. They would just point at you, and that would be it.*

Linda described recess at St. Mary School: *During recess, the boys played on one side of the parking lot and the girls played on the other side. If the boys' ball came into the girls' side, you couldn't touch it. You had to wait for a nun to take it and bring it back. And don't cross the imaginary line!*

At the age of six or seven, many of the St. Mary students made their First Communion. Here are pictures of a few of our narrators in their First Communion finest.



Donald's First Communion



Donald with Grandparents



Linda and Tom Hendrix's First Communion



Little sister Donna, Grampa, and Linda

Patti gave us this picture of the class from 1959.

In addition to religious training, there was the French component of a St. Mary education.

Lorraine Shelton: *... those of us with the French background, we had half a day in English and half a day in French. ... We were taught all about Canada and Canadian history -- of the missionaries sent there and their whole history… All our books were in French.*

Kids who were from the Polish families had a separate classroom in the afternoon… continuing learning and speaking in English.



Barbara (right) and her sisters in Polish costumes, 1958

Ron commented on that experience:

They had us speak French every afternoon…from grades one to eight. It just never took with me, even though I was raised in a French-Canadian family and I was told I knew French before I knew English… the nuns were trying to teach us Parisian French in school…so it just never stuck.

St. Mary, like the public schools, responded to the Cold War era and current events. **Jon** remembers:

I was in first grade in 1957, and I remember doing atomic bomb drills. In case of nuclear war, we were going to shelter under our desks and be safe.

[In 1963] we were all in school when President Kennedy was assassinated. can remember being dismissed from school, and we all went to the church next door to pray for him. We had been pretty thrilled that he was the first Catholic president.

The Public Schoolteachers

Newmarket Elementary School generally got good reviews—from first grade on up. **Candy** had a story about that:

I remember going to first grade and thinking that Mrs. Witherall was about 85; she probably was 42. One day I apparently had dipped my hands into some

purple dye, and I had refused to go to school, so my father drove me there. I was terrified [about] the purple hands and afraid of being humiliated in class. But Mrs. Witherall was so nice to me at the time that she became human that day. And I thought—wow! So she went from being 85 down to maybe 70. I never recall any corporal punishment or anything untoward by any of those teachers.

Several elementary school teachers lived in town, and some were neighbors with their students:

John: Mrs. *Nesbitt, the second-grade teacher, lived across the street from us, so we grew up with her.*

Donna: Mrs. *Nesbitt was really nice. We went on a train ride from Newmarket to Durham to see the cows and make butter. Mr. O'Connor was in the fourth grade. He lived next door to us on South Main Street, so our next-door neighbor was also my fourth-grade teacher, so I had a good time at school.*

Joanne: *When I was in the third grade…we had this beautiful teacher. I can't remember what her last name was, but everyone loved her… She was so nice, and she rented a room from Mr. and Mrs. Brandt, who lived next to my parents' house in the Village, so I got to see her a lot.*

But a teacher didn't have to be a neighbor, according to **Bert**:

We had Miss Walker in the sixth grade. She came from Barrington, and she took the train down to Newmarket. She stayed at the Willey Hotel here in town during the week and would go back home for the weekend. I don't know of any other teachers who would do that.

Teachers connected with their students in a variety of ways, as **Dave Brown** noted:

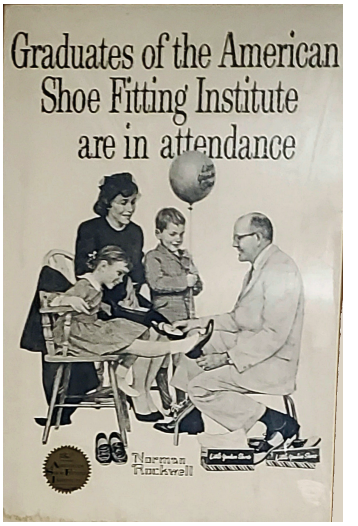
My fourth-grade teacher was Ed O'Connor. I was scared to death of him, but he let us watch the World Series in our classroom.

Ed O'Connor later became Newmarket Elementary School's much-respected principal.

Other School Adventures in a Shoe Shop Town

During the 1950s and 60s, Sam Smith's Little Yankee Shoes was a major employer in town. Because of that, some kids got free shoes. **Jon** was not one of them.

A man named Ross Tennant worked for the shoe companies here in town. He used to come to the school annually and measure all the kids' feet. At a later date, some of the kids got free shoes. I think he was looking for kids who were in need of shoes, but I really never knew what the magic formula was. I never got free shoes, and my mother told me it was because my feet were too big.



Commissioned from Norman Rockwell for Sam Smith's office

There are many stories about the disciplinary tactics at St. Mary's, but public-school teachers knew very well how to discipline. **John** described Mrs. Rooney's management of a sixth-grade class trip:

We went to Kingston State Park. And there was a rumor that some of the kids were running off to the icehouse to make out… I never saw a woman her size run as fast as she did with that lariat swinging on her. And then she was blowing on that whistle, to warn anybody in that icehouse to clear out!

But to really prepare **John** and his fellow sixth graders for Jr. High, Mrs. Rooney had other plans:

For some reason … we had to learn how to dance. Mrs. Rooney would teach everyone how to waltz-- especially the boys. I'm short now, but I was much shorter then, and Mrs. Rooney was very well-endowed. I was eye level to her chest when we were waltzing.

So they waltzed off to junior high, and in 7th grade, **John** did get disciplined:

I remember Mr. Antonopoulos in Junior High. I used to talk a lot, and he put me under his desk during class as a punishment.

But **Donna** loved Junior High:

It was always interesting to see the upperclassmen when you were in your homeroom.... They would be doing office duty with the principal and come in to get the attendance report. And if there was a note during the day, a high school student would bring it in. Seeing these older students, I thought-- I want to be like them someday.

During the first half of the 20th century, eighth grade marked the end of formal education for many youngsters throughout the country. Mill towns like Newmarket had many newly arrived immigrant families who had come to work in the mills. It was quite common for their children to head to work after the eighth grade.

By the late 1950s, this trend had faded, with more students continuing on to high school. With little fanfare, Newmarket public school students simply moved into the main part of the high school building. But St. Mary's students always had a celebration, as **Barbara** described:

We wore graduation attire, a cap and gown. St. Mary's colors were gold and blue ... We marched into the church where graduation was held. And then we came back for pictures right up on the stage, all lined up. After graduation, we always went home--or I did anyway. My mother had a banquet set up for all the relatives, and we partied after graduation.



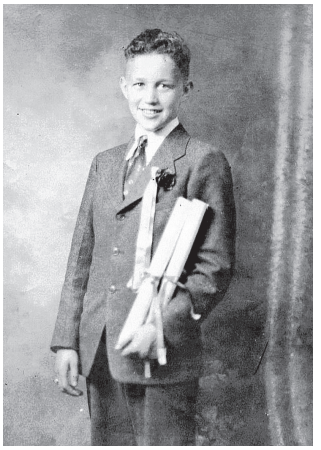
Barbara's 8th-grade graduation, 1962

But after 1959, St. Mary's students who completed 8th grade had to make another decision. Over on Dover Point Rd., a new high school opened in September 1960—St. Thomas Aquinas, staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. With St. Mary Parish helping out with the tuition, Newmarket's Roman Catholic families were encouraged to send their children, and several of our narrators went there. *So that's where I went,* said **Barbara**.

Lorraine Sheldon: *not always willingly*.

Ray Gagne: *When I left grammar school most of the kids I knew were going to Newmarket High School. There were only some of us going to St. Thomas. I thought, "Gee, do I really want to do this or not? Do I want to stay with my friends in Newmarket?" But my mother decided I was going to St. Thomas.*

Leo and Roger were also 8th-grade graduates from St. Mary School.





Lorraine Lapointe had it rough. She "*didn't get along with some of the teachers"* at St. Mary, but her parents made her stay. Then they "*moved back to the farm [which] had no running water or indoor plumbing. We had to walk down the road to the spring to get our water and carry it home in buckets.*

She must have been ready to rebel.

One day I came to town for a Halloween party and dance at St. Mary School. I planned to stay overnight at a friend's house. We were walking on our way to the dance, and we happened to have some rotten tomatoes with us. We saw a car going by and we threw tomatoes at the side window. Two high school teachers, Mr. Marcoux and Mr. Jackson, were in the car. They immediately called my folks, and my father picked me up, and I missed the dance. The next day, my friend and I had to wash the teacher's car at school.

This is how Newmarket dealt with teenage high jinks and rotten tomatoes.

High School & Beyond

Over the years, lots of things have changed at Newmarket High School. One thing that hasn't changed since the 1940s is sports. Some of our narrators were in high school during World War II. Another post-war group (1946-1954) went to a school that had not been renovated or expanded since its construction in 1924. The 1954 addition of a gymnasium made a world of difference, and narrators who attended during the late 50s and the 60s spent more time describing teachers and activities.

World War II

Priscilla: *I went to school in Dover and graduated from Dover High in 1948. There were 12 students in my graduating class.*

Post-war

Leo: When *I was 17, I went into the Navy. I got my high school diploma [there]. I was in the Navy from 1949-1953. After I got out, I took plane geometry and English at Newmarket High School, which I needed to get into the University of New Hampshire.*

Bert: My *favorite subject was Home Economics. I also liked English and regular Math, but I didn't like Algebra or History.*

Lee: I *graduated second best in my senior class at Newmarket High School. I played basketball and softball, and I was also a cheerleader.*



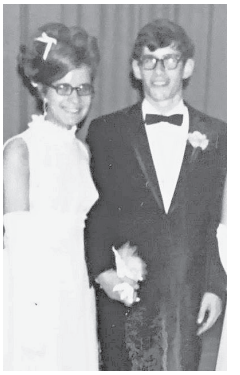




Roger: *I went to high school for my freshman year. When I was sixteen, I left school to go to work for Sam Smith Shoe Shop. That would have been about 1950.*

Lorraine Shelton: After *eighth grade, I went up to the high school for a couple of years. There was dancing there and at the Stone Church. I went there for the dancing…*

Speaking of dancing, **David** and his date had a wonderful time at the 1969 prom.



George: Newmarket *had its own high school back then, and kids from Durham, Lee, and Nottingham had a choice of attending school here or going to Dover High School. High school kids got out of school at 1:45 so the 16-year-olds could work in the factories to replace the soldiers. This time was still in effect when I graduated in 1954. I don't know when they got out of that wartime schedule.*

[School events] included … a sophomore hop, a junior prom, and a senior prom (similar to a senior reception). The sophomore hop was at the old Eagles building; the junior and senior proms were at the Rockingham Ballroom. Graduation for us was either outdoors in good weather or in the Star Theatre. Ours was the last class to graduate from the Star Theatre, to play basketball in the Town Hall, and to have our senior reception at the Rockingham Ballroom.

1955 and After

Joanne: *In high school, we had a business teacher who lived in Durham. She was really a good teacher, but she used to send us downtown to buy hamburg for her from Marcotte's Market.*

Carol had a different route to Newmarket High: *My sister Lucille and I went to a Catholic boarding school in Nashua. Neither of us liked it, and we both ran away. They caught Lucille and brought her back, but she ran away again. I only went there for one semester. Later, I went to Newmarket High School…to take courses I needed to get into the University of New Hampshire.*

Donald: M*y sophomore year, Mr. Fisher was my science teacher and basketball coach. He was one of my favorites. He told me, "You know, I'm not making enough money teaching... next year I'm going to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard." He worked there for a few months…he got on the Thresher when they went out for the test dive. And he never came back. That was in 1960. It hit the town pretty hard.*

The picture below was taken in September of 1960, atop a railroad bridge on South Main Street, with St. Mary School in the background.



Bruce: Our *principal at that time was Leo Landroche, who made a big impact on the students. The Leo A. Landroche Memorial Field is named after him. Our families were close, and his son was godfather to my son.*

One of my favorite teachers was Lou Kasaras, my English teacher. He taught us all about Latin and Greek roots that were in prefixes and suffixes. I used this knowledge all my life. I did some stand-up comedy when I was in school, and Lou wrote jokes for me.

Judy agreed about Mr. Kasaras, adding: [*He] treated us like we were special… and had us come to his home, to ensure that we got things done. And Miss Houle, the drama teacher, was amazing-- a little tiny woman, but boy was she powerful, and you did what she told you to do for sure. And I'll always remember Mr. Connealy; he was the most handsome.*

Jon told a new story about Leo Landroche: [Coming from St. Mary], *we were new to the system, and as part of our introduction, Mr. Landroche selected me to demonstrate what would happen if we broke the rules. He had me stand in a corner on tiptoes with my nose planted against the wall. It seemed like a long time before I was allowed to sit down. He later told me that he chose me because he knew I could handle it.*

My favorite teachers were Peter Jordan (history), Elliot Bosinger (chemistry), Ethan Pearson (biology), and Mel Cross, who was the athletic director, coach, and gym teacher. I later got to work with him before he retired.

John: *What was interesting about Newmarket High School back then—and perhaps it still is today--they got young teachers right out of UNH to teach--cheap. One of those was Maggie Moody, who was here my Junior and Senior years. There was a connection that she had with the kids, perhaps because she was so young. In my case, that friendship has continued. As a matter of fact, she met her third husband when I cast them in a show together…They've been married for nearly 30 years now, and we visit each other whenever possible.*

Ron: One *of my favorite teachers was Mr. Cotton. He taught Civics, which I really enjoyed. It got me involved in politics, on both the town and national levels.*

Linda: *Jack Brown (English) and Art Proulx (math) were great. Mrs.Tripp taught typing and bookkeeping, and Mrs. Robinson taught Home Ec. We were one of the first classes that allowed boys to be in Home Ec.*

Rochelle: *One of my favorite subjects was German history because it was different and went back to World War II. My favorite teachers were Mr. Proulx for math, Mr. Otash for social studies, and Mr. Thayer for biology. I also liked Mr. Kouvliotis, the soccer coach and U.S. History teacher. I wasn't a big fan of English. My teacher was good, but she was tough. A lot of the teachers were there for many years.*

Other High Schools

Michael lived just over the border in Durham: *I attended Oyster River High School… Durham was kind of a different community— more white-collar, stratified, made up of professors and professionals and their children. You kind of felt like you were "a little less than" if you came from blue-collar workers, like farmers, fishermen, or shipyard workers. I remember being discouraged from taking college prep courses because they thought I wouldn't be going to college.*

Pauline made a change after her first year at Newmarket High: I *felt like I was not popular and didn't fit in. I transferred to Dover High… Back then, we could*

transfer to a different school for vocational programs. I took hairdressing and I also received a degree in accounting… Four of my family members graduated from Dover High School.

For some narrators who had attended St. Mary School, 1960 was a time when a choice had to be made. The new St. Thomas Aquinas High School was opening in Dover, and Newmarket's St. Mary Parish urged students—and their parents—to take advantage of this opportunity. Local parishes helped to pay tuition, too.

Glenn was enthusiastic: *My father asked me, 'Would you like to go to St. Thomas?' I said yes because that was trendy back then-- to go to a new high school. I had to take an entrance test, and I passed. [About three-quarters of the kids in our 8th-grade class at St. Mary went to St. Thomas.*

St.Thomas Aquinas

Ray: *We were the second class to enter St. Thomas—the Class of '65. Because of the distance, transportation was an issue. I wanted very much to try out for the baseball team. I couldn't keep it up, though. My only transportation was to hitchhike back and forth to the high school… One of the things I regretted was going to that school.*

Dave attended STA: *The bus picked us up on Route 108 by Rockingham Country Club…It was a long ride, because we were typically the first ones on and the last ones off.*

Barbara, STA Class of 1964, also had to take the bus, which limited after-school activities: *My parents worked, so I couldn't stay for activities like drama or sports.*

Patti's dad wanted her to go to St. Thomas, but… *I didn't want to remove myself from the kids I saw every day. I refused to take the test, so I didn't go. I graduated from Newmarket High School in 1970…I think it was the right decision.*

Extracurricular Activities

Patti's passion turned out to be for politics: When *I was 15, I fought to give 18-year-olds the right to vote. The voting age was 21 back then. That year, I testified before the New Hampshire House of Representatives in Concord for the first time.*

I was working with David Batchelder from Hampton and Bob Cushing (later the Democratic Leader of the House). Nobody told us that you couldn't go to the State House and show up at the Speaker's office, but that's what we did. We also visited the President of the Senate… I don't know if they were impressed or in shock, but next thing you know, we were speaking to the entire House of Representatives. It was a thrilling experience.

Patti's after-school activities continued to focus on politics: *George Griswold was the chair of the Newmarket Planning Board. He was interested in getting young people involved on community boards. He asked me if I would be the Student Representative to the Planning Board, and I said, "Sure." I didn't know what I was doing, but I learned so much about the town just sitting there.*

For **Bruce**, it was music: *I played the keyboard when I was in high school. When I graduated, I heard that a band of UNH students were looking for an organist. I joined the Spectras in 1965 and we were the only house band to play the Casino at Hampton Beach. We played all over New England and made a record that topped the charts. In Newmarket, we played at the Band Stand, the High School field, the gym, and for Olde Home Days. We kept playing until 2014.*



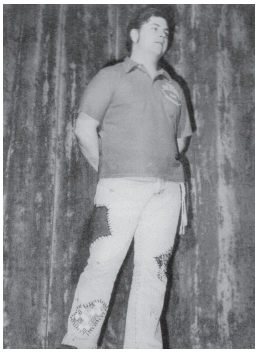
Bruce playing with the Spectras in 2014

David remembers hearing the Spectras at the Casino. Among his other recollections:

We celebrated Earth Day by reading books under trees, and after the "Incident in Exeter" in 1965, we drove around looking for UFOs but never saw any. I was not very political at that time. My father was the rare Republican in the neighborhood. He'd put up a poster for Goldwater, and it would be gone the next day!

Michael got involved in service: I *was very active in Boy Scouts and the Order of the Arrow, an honorary campus society. I enjoyed weekend trips to conferences in different locations.*

When he wasn't busy with the scouts, **Michael** was active in theater productions, both in school and in town. He belonged to the Lamprey Village Players and was the director of Lil' Abner.



Michael in Lil' Abner in 1970

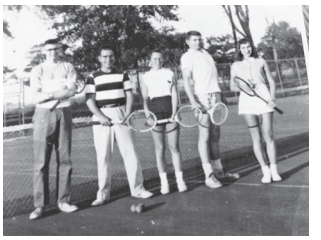
For many interviewees, sports had a special place in their memories.

Shirley played basketball at the old Town Hall and spoke about some of the challenges that girls faced:

We had to play half-court back then because it was thought that girls … couldn't run the whole distance back and forth. Then there were the radiators right next to the sidelines: if you took the ball from there, wearing shorts, you had to be careful not to back into a radiator and get burned.

And there was no place for the girls to change. We had to make do—especially if you played basketball and were also a cheerleader. The old janitor, Grover, liked to peek at the girls when they changed. We girls used to laugh about it, but it was kind of spooky.

Shirley also played tennis at UNH with some of her classmates. Their teacher, Mr. Crocker, drove them to the tennis courts and drove them back to the high school afterwards.



Louie Lavoie, Mr. Crocker, Shirley, George, and Harriet Lavoie

Lorraine Lapointe also played half-court basketball at the Town Hall. She added:

The balcony at one end of the gym got in the way all the time.

Lee was another Town Hall basketball player: *Girls' rules were different back then. We couldn't dribble the ball; we just had to pass it. Later on, they let girls have one bounce; sometime after that, we could dribble the way they do today.*

Donald: We *played every sport there was available. In the fall, we ran cross-country, in winter we played basketball, and in the spring, we played baseball. Then again in the fall, we played soccer.*

Rochelle: *I was on the cross-country team. My first two years, the girls ran two miles, and the boys ran three. After my second year, the rules changed, and we both ran three miles.*

Ted: *I lettered all four years in baseball, basketball, soccer, and cross country. In addition, I was active in student government and prom.*

Linda: *Everybody was into the Drama Club, the French Club or other things of interest. Sports were big, and pep rallies were huge.*

David: *Sports were a big time of my life… They were fun to play and fun to watch. Newmarket had pretty good teams and often participated in the state tournaments. Basketball, especially, was a community-wide thing. The gym would be full, and there would be a lot of parents and kids watching and cheering.*



NEWMARKET — M

Seated: Glen Ernest, Joe Bukowski, Bruce Pohopek, Ron Hayes, Bruce Hodsdon, Ted Sharples. **Standing:** Tom Zych, Dick Dupes, Dick Pettengill, Dick Schanda, David Brown, Coach Mel Cross.

White	Black		Height	Weight	Grade
34	33	Bukowski, Joe	6-1	185	12
14	13	Brown, David	5-7	135	11
30	31	Dupes, Dick	5-11	152	12
4	3	Ernest, Glen	5-9	149	12
40	35	Hayes, Ron	6-2	196	11
20	15	Hodsdon, Bruce	6-1	150	12
12	11	Pettengill, Dick	6-1	166	11
42	41	Pohopek, Bruce	6-1	178	12
32	5	Schanda, Dick	5-10	148	11
22	21	Sharples, Ted	6-1	157	12
24	23	Filion, Dale	5-7	150	10
10	25	Zych, Tom	5-7	142	11
24	23	Zocchi, Paul	5-11	160	9

Seated: Ted (22), Standing: Dick Schanda (32). David (14), Coach Mel Cross

Richard: School was not my best, but I got through it fine. I was on the basketball team and the track team. During one race in my senior year at the halfway mark, I was leading, but then my leg was giving out. I had a hurt muscle, but I did finish the race -- and in the top 10. When we raced against Phillips Exeter Academy, we had a real super team and placed the first five people. We beat them 15 - 0.

Graduation!

Lorraine Lapointe: *I went to Newmarket High School for grades 9-12. I liked sports, dances, and being with the kids. We lived in the countryside then, on Ash Swamp Road, and I missed some of the activities that happened in town due to a lack of transportation. I would walk two miles to town during the day, but not after dark. I graduated from Newmarket High School in 1952.*



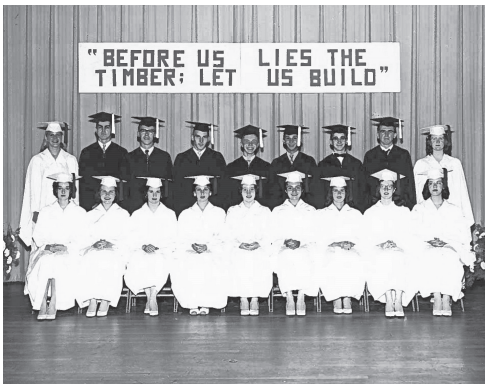
Lorraine (LaBranche) Lapointe is second from the right in the top row

For years, Newmarket High School had a unique graduation tradition where very young girls or boys would come out and give a bouquet of flowers to the graduating senior girls. Usually a younger sibling, niece, nephew or neighbor would be all dressed up in their Sunday best. They would be greeted with oohs and ahhs for a minute when they handed over the flowers.

It was a big deal for the youngsters too, as **Joanne** commented:

Betty Shelton was in my third-grade class when her sister Pat was graduating at the Star Theatre. Betty got to leave school to go practice… We girls were all so upset, because she got to get out of school to be her sister's flower girl.

Joanne probably had a different point of view when her class graduated nine years later, on June 17, 1957.



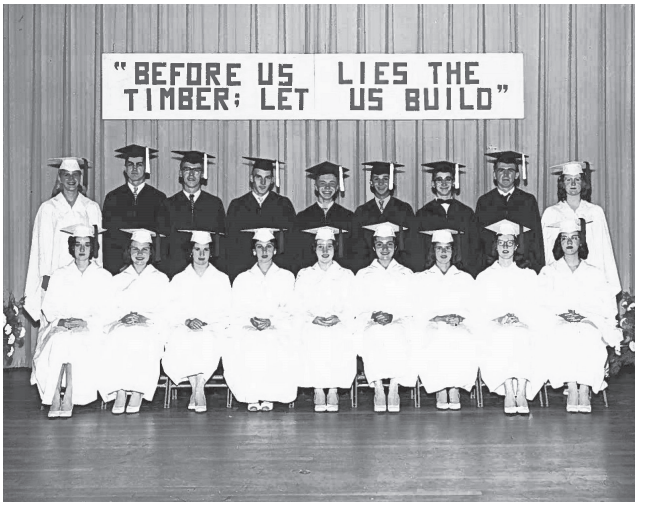
Joanne is second from the right in the first row

As class sizes grew, the backstage antics of a couple dozen little ones must have been a challenge. Even so, this tradition continued through the 1990s. Now, graduates present a flower to someone in the audience, usually a mother or grandmother.

In the 1960s, classes were still small, but the unique Newmarket traditions continued.

Bert described it, along with another tradition, when she graduated in 1946:

The day before graduation, our class got together in front of the other kids. We all got a little gift. Mine was a little house. The next day, our graduation ceremony was held at the Star Theatre in the afternoon. Young flower girls gave each of the graduates a bouquet of carnations after we received our diplomas. There were only 29 of us because it was a few years after the end of World War II, and a lot of our class had gone into the service and didn't return.



Other Memories—of High School and Beyond

David: *I graduated from Newmarket High School in 1969 and went straight to Dartmouth, following my father and brother. I majored in English and thought I'd go into teaching. I had an offer to teach in Australia at double the salary, but I decided to go to Law School instead and enrolled at Boston University.*

John: *During high school, I worked part-time at Bayside Distributing. You didn't have to be 18 to load beer on the truck or help with deliveries. It was often on weekends. They had Pabst, Schaffer, and Rheingold. One Christmas, I was making deliveries and found a rum-soaked cigar under the seat. My father always smoked cigars, but I wasn't tempted. Years earlier, he had caught me and my cousin smoking cigarettes. "You want to smoke? Okay. I'm going to show you the manly way…" He made us smoke cigars! We got so sick, we never smoked again.*

Roger: In *1954, I went into the US Air Force for almost four years. I was sent to Germany during the Occupation. I liked Germany. When I got out, I came back to work in Sam Smith's Shoe Shop.*

Lorraine Lapointe: When *my dad got home from work, he'd put the car in the garage, and that's where it stayed. He was too tired to drive us. I was a member of the National Honor Society, and when the yearbook came out, my picture wasn't there, and next to my name it said "absent." Dad wanted to know why my picture wasn't there. It was because they took our pictures at night, and he didn't drive me there.*

During my high school years, I mowed lawns in the summer and babysat every Saturday night for Ronnie and Connie Bloom and for my cousins Ricky and Charlie Belmont. I would babysit all night for $1.50.

Ron enjoyed political things: *I was on the Budget Committee first; then I served for 25 years as the Town Moderator— an interesting job. At the first meeting I moderated, I knew almost everyone by their nicknames. At that time, I was working with Jerry Langlois at Seacoast Beauty Supply. When he raised his hand to ask a question, I pointed to him, saying, "Yes, Mr. Jigsaw." That was Jerry's nickname. He looked at me, mortified—and the whole room burst into laughter.*

The Class of '64 went to the World's Fair in New York, and that's when **Patsy** and **Bruce** began going out. In many ways, it was a pivotal time in her life:

We sat together on the bus. We went to the Billy Graham Pavilion, and I sat and watched the whole film. Then I went in the back and accepted Jesus as my savior. Bruce waited for me the whole time. The other kids were kind of grumpy because I was taking so long. You'll think it's silly, but I swear God said, "You'll be with him from this point on."

Later, I called Bruce*, and said, "We're going to the prom together." That wasn't like me to be so forward. He already had a date for the prom, and I did too, but we broke up with our dates and went together.*

Ted: After *I graduated from high school, I went to the Thompson School at UNH for food service management. That was a two-year program, and I graduated in 1970.*

Michael: I *graduated from high school in 1970 and that was an interesting time. I had long hair, and my father hated it. He said, "Get a haircut," and I said, "No." We had a big argument. I had been a reporter, a member of the Arrow, and a Boy Scout—a goody two-shoes—so that surprised him.*

Candy and **John** were interviewed together, and this brought out two other aspects of life in early 1960s Newmarket—the 9:00 pm curfew horn and a much-feared town character:

Candy: *I had a friend who lived on New Road, and to be home at 9:00, I would leave her house at 8:45 and walk to town from New Road, then up Central Street and home. The closest way home to Elm Street would have been Beech Street Extension, but with Mary Moonshine living there, you didn't tempt fate!*

John: *After play rehearsal, we'd always linger on the streets until the curfew went off. And once, when you weren't aware of the time, that thing went off… You went down on your knees and screamed. It was like the air raid drills we used to have at school, where you put your head under the desk. There you were, screaming in front of what used to be Varney's luncheonette.*

Working Teens

Patti: *I've always worked. It was just what we did. All the kids worked…*

Shoe Shops

After Newmarket Manufacturing Co. abandoned the town in 1932, it took several years to find businesses to occupy the empty mills. The arrival of shoe manufacturingTe heSam sho sho in the mid-30s was a beginning, and by the end of WW II, Newmarket was once again a mill town—not with textiles, but with shoes.

Twelve people mentioned working in "the shoe shops." For many—whether at Rockingham Shoe, Newmarket Shoe, Royce's Shoe Shop, Abington/Timberland or Sam Smith—it was primarily a job for after school or for the summer.

Some worked there for a while after high school. **Linda** stated, *I went and did payroll at Abington Shoe. Timberland was just starting out when I was there, as a division of Abington Shoe… I was there for about four years.*

Like **Linda**, who left work after the birth of her son, **Bert** *"didn't go back to work at Sam Smith's Shoe Shop*" once she started a family.



Yankee Shoemakers sign in the Stone School Museum

Some, like **Ray,** only lasted a couple of days: *It absolutely drove me insane. I worked at a machine all day long, doing the same repetitive motion…*

Despite the shops being hot, noisy, and sometimes dangerous, people put up with it, as **David** commented: *The mills hired 20-30 high school kids each summer. When I was 17, I worked in the shoe factory from 7:00 am - 3:30 pm every day. Although it was hot and noisy, I liked it because most of my friends*

were there. I'm glad I didn't have to work on a machine because that looked really scary. Instead, they gave us different jobs to do. The shoes had to go through a big heating system on a conveyor belt, and we had to take them off. It was really hot, and I was glad just to take a break. There were not many safety rules at that time.

Donna recollected her three summers in the shoe shops: *I got to learn a lot and see a lot. Being under 18, I couldn't work on any machinery, so the first year was piecework. I had to line up the notches on the half soles to make a pair and put them together.*

Both **Donald** and **Barbara** worked summers there as well. **Donald** recalled: *When I turned 16, my father got me a job at Rockingham Shoe. I made a dollar an hour, which was minimum wage at the time. I also worked when we had a school vacation. The following year, I worked at the same place and got $1.25.*

Judy wonders now how she had so much energy. *I used to work every day in the shoe factories—Rockingham Shoe and in Newmarket Shoe—wherever and whenever I was needed. I would go there right after school and work until it was time for play rehearsal, if we had that. I'd work Saturday mornings too.*



Rockingham Shoe at the corner of Spring and Central Street

Sometimes the energy and enthusiasm of the youngsters in the mills ruffled a few feathers, as **Barbara** noted: *There were a couple of us girls, and we worked hard… and we worked fast. Of course, the people who were there didn't really appreciate that …*

John used his summer earnings for college expenses: *If you lived at home and commuted to school, you could work a whole summer at Sam Smith Shoe and pay the entire tuition to UNH.*



Christmas Party at Sam Smith's, 1958

Ted learned how the company dealt with national marketing issues*: Sam Smith's Shoe Shop was engaged in big operations back then, shipping shoes all over the world. There was some trouble selling the Little Yankee shoes to the southern states because inside the shoe, there was a label that said Little Yankee. One of my jobs was to take a Little Debbie sticker and paste it over the Little Yankee sticker.*



Little Yankee sign in the Stone School Museum

Ron's family was immersed in the shoe industry, so it's no surprise that he had experience there too: *Back in the 50s and 60s, the Sam Smith Shoe Shop was in the stone mills. Their claim to fame was that they were a Union Shop. As an 18-year-old, I was hired in the summer of '69 to clean out the Sam Smith Shoe Factory. You could see all the memories in a lot of the pictures and objects that were left behind.*

And Sam Smith wasn't the only shoemaking game in town. **Ron** explained: *When my dad closed his shoe store, he went to work at Rockingham Shoe. My mom was already working there... They both worked there their whole lives. We*

lived on Nichols Avenue, and Rockingham Shoe was close, so they would walk to work.

My uncle, Joe Butler, had a cobbler shop next to my dad's shoe store back in the 50s. He later became Head of Maintenance at Abington Shoe, located where Rivermoor Landing is now. I ended up working there myself. I got to spend a year interacting with Herman and Sydney Schwartz, the owners of Timberland.

However, that year working in the shoe shop gave me the incentive to make my career in insurance. Whenever things got low, I would always think, "No, I'm not going back to the shoe shop," and I got my butt in gear to do more sales.

Other ways to make a buck:

Not everyone spent summers at a shoe shop. A few lucky ones got jobs at one of the beaches. Easier to find were babysitting and lawn-mowing jobs, especially for the younger ones.

Terry had grown up during the Depression in Reading, MA. Her family moved to Lee after the end of WWII.

It was not unusual for you to rinse out a cotton dress the night before and let it dry. And you'd get up in the morning and iron it for school--to have something clean to wear. I didn't have pretty clothes like a lot of people, but I wasn't envious. I just figured that's the way it is.

My parents never expected us to turn any babysitting money over to them. "As long as you use your babysitting money to buy your stockings," my mother said. The stockings in those days had a line up the back.



Terry enjoying the sunshine in Boston

During the 1950s and 60s, several eateries hired teenagers:

John would come home reeking of grease after working at Charlie LaBranche's, grilling hamburgers, pouring coffee, and stocking shelves.

Michael's grandparents owned Pop's Snack Bar on Rte.108, and he worked there. At the age of 14, he worked at Huddleston Hall at UNH, washing dishes for 75¢ an hour.

Rochelle worked at several places that involved food—Marcotte's Market, the Rockingham Ballroom, and Mastin's Catering. The picture below was taken at the 50th anniversary of the Rockingham Ballroom in August of 1984.



At the age of 15, **Joanne** got a job at Rexall's after school and on weekends. Mr. Rousseau was the manager: *Sara Record and I started there on Memorial Day! Oh my God, the streets were full of people! The big parade was coming, and people were streaming into the store to get ice cream. I was like, "What am I doing here?" It was horrible! I went home and told my mother, "I'm not going back!" But I did go back, and I was there for 12 years.*



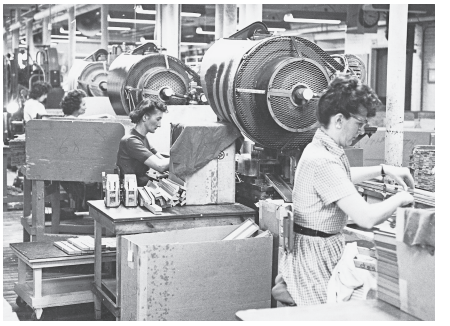
Memorial Day Parade in 1947



Inside Rexall's in the 1950s

Pauline had quite a schedule as she worked and went to school. Her day started with making breakfast for the elderly Armand (Baker) LaPage. *His house was just over the bridge going toward Durham, across from the cannon on Bay Road. When I was a sophomore, I would walk over there in the morning, give him his breakfast, then walk down to the bowling alley to catch the bus to Dover High. After school, I was dropped off at Newmarket High School, where I would clean for a couple of hours to make extra money. Afterwards, I'd walk back to Armand's, make his dinner, and then go home.*

Lorraine Shelton had to leave school and start working at 16. By then, the Macallen Company had arrived, and Lorraine's father was working there. *He got me an interview, and I got the job. You're supposed to be 18 years old to work on a machine, so I probably was the youngest one who ever worked there. For five years, I spread mica on a sheet as it rolled out. Others would put it on a lathe, and they would cut it for insulation parts.*



Women working on machines at Macallen's

Ray also worked a summer at Macallen's. *To get the job, we were told, "Don't ever tell them you're going back to school, because they probably won't hire you." I got the job and was paid $2.00 an hour! I thought I was really knocking down the change!*

Other summer jobs included delivering beer for Bayside Distributing (**John**), working at a plastic tubing factory (**Dave**), replacing guardrails for the N.H. State Road crew (**Ray**), and supervising younger kids at a playground (**Shirley**).

A few narrators had more unique summer experiences—some due to motherly nudging:

When she was 15, **Candy's** mother brought her up to the Highland House in Durham and left her there for the summer to be a chambermaid. *On Thursdays, we washed clothes and hung them out with bluing. So, at seven in the morning, you'd go out to hang them up and get bluing all over you.*

It was a wonderful house—and so pretty. I loved how every room was different. And I met some interesting people; some who came for vacation probably had been coming since the 1930s.

Patti had a different opportunity: *As a junior and a senior in high school, I worked in the Cardiology Department at Exeter Hospital, where my mother was the Department Head. I attended UNH, and during the summer I continued to work there as a Cardiology Technician. Doing that, I supported myself through college.*

We don't know if **Lee's** mother knew that she fibbed a bit to get hired at the Star Theatre, but after that, she relied on her skills: *The man in charge needed someone to take care of the counter and sell candy bars. He asked if I was 16, and he gave me the job. I was really only 14 at the time, but I did that for two years. Then I worked selling tickets.*



The Star Theatre



Poster from 1939

In high school, I took a course that taught all the things necessary to run an office. A lawyer in town, Russell McGuirk, had an office over the bank, and he interviewed three of us from this class. He chose me, and I would get out of school at noon and walk to his office and work for him until 5 o'clock at night. I didn't get paid until after I graduated. Then he paid me $17 a week.

Lee went on to work for Kingston-Warren. In 1961 sShe went onwas hired to work in the Town Clerk's office in 1961;, becoming she became the Town Clerk in 1968 and the Town Tax Collector in 1973. She worked for more than 20 years for the town Town of Newmarket before she retired.

After her retirement, Lee could be seen enjoying life in her backyard, riding on her tractor and working in her garden.



Lee at home on her tractor

Hanging Out

Our teens worked hard during the summer and before and after school, but there were plenty of places in town for them to hang out with friends and have fun.

Except for **Linda**, whose mother made her come right home, several of our narrators used to hang out at Rexall's after school. After **Lorraine Shelton** outgrew her Peanut Girl days, she came there too: *They had the best soda fountain. If you could manage about 25 cents, you could get a banana split and was that a treat!*

Farther down on Main Street, teens often gathered at Bouras's (AKA "Nick's"). During their interview, **Roger** and **Joanne** recollected:

Joanne: *After the basketball games at the old town hall, everybody would run across the street to Bouras's.*

Roger: *For us, Bouras Ice Cream Parlor was the place to go. We used to hang around Malo's store…but then we'd go to Nick Bouras's until he'd come up waving an ice pick and kick us out.*

Joanne: *What did you do to have him chase you with an ice pick? You probably made a lot of noise. He didn't like a lot of noise. There was a jukebox, and he didn't like it loud. He was good though, and his wife Jenny was the kindest, sweetest lady. But if all the booths were filled and some adults came in to have ice cream, you'd have to leave. Otherwise, she would just mix in with us young ones. Nick's specialty was something like an ice cream bar.*

George was an avid consumer. His description is in the Downtown Walking Tour at the New Market Historical Society: *Nick would take a cone-shaped paper cup from the dispenser, fill it with ice cream, and stick a wooden dowel into it. After freezing it, he removed the paper, dipped the ice cream in melted chocolate, and then refroze it until the chocolate was firm — and voila —" The Mountain Top"! They flew out of the freezer in the afternoon as soon as the High School let out."*



Lining up for the Mountain Top at Bouras's

During World War II, when their son Aristotle Bouras was 14 years old, he became the youngest newspaper editor in the state. Bouras's doubled as his after-school office for the Newmarket News.

After Nick and Jennie retired in the 1960s, it became Ken's Spa, continuing as a teen hangout. Another option was up the hill in the old school building, downhill from the Stone Church. It was called The Morgue, and **Ted** hung out there with his friends. Today, this is Newmarket House, which contains apartments for older residents.

Donald and some of his friends were photographed on top of the railroad bridge on South Main Street, with St. Mary School in the background.



L-R David Bergeron, George Rousseau, Donald Pelletier, and Ralph Jackson, 1960

Dave described another hangout, a short walk across the bridge on North Main Street: *My wife and I first met at Friendship Lanes, the bowling alley which is now Rumors. Back in the 1950s, Pop Jabre and Grams bought bowling equipment from a bowling alley in Massachusetts. They ripped it out of the building, moved it to Newmarket, and put it into that location, which used to be an auto garage. Those 10 lanes and all the equipment are still there today…*

Learning to Drive

With so many places of business within walking distance, it was not until after World War II (when both gas and tires were rationed) that people had automobiles. Both **Roger** and **Joanne** learned to drive in the 1950s. **Roger's** first car was a 1939 Chevy—not exactly a recent model, but a point of pride all the same. **Joanne** took lessons, but never learned to parallel park, and it probably wasn't necessary: *Being in town, you just walked.*

By the mid-60s, driving was a rite of passage for high schoolers, and parallel parking was still a challenge. **Barbara's** father taught her: *He used to take me to the empty high school parking lot and put up some markers for parallel parking. At my driver's test, I was nervous because some of my other friends hadn't passed because of that parallel parking thing. As I drove around with the instructor, there was an empty spot. He asked me to parallel park, and I told him that the spot was too small. He agreed, we drove away, and I passed the test on the first attempt!*

Donna learned with Mr. Hopey, who had an old car with a three-speed stick shift on the column: *I wanted to learn to drive a standard because then I could drive anything. He would take me driving down Bay Road … And he'd say, "Okay, now stop on a hill, park, and shut the engine off. And then start it up again." With all that clutching and shifting on the column… somehow, I did it.*

Bruce needed his license to manage his busy work and social schedule: *At 5:00 p.m. I would drive to Somersworth to do the dinner dishes for my father's restaurant, Babb's Café. When I was done, they would pack me a couple of cheeseburgers, and I would drive back to Newmarket to attend games or hang out with my friends, then drive back to the restaurant in the dark to do the rest of the dishes.*

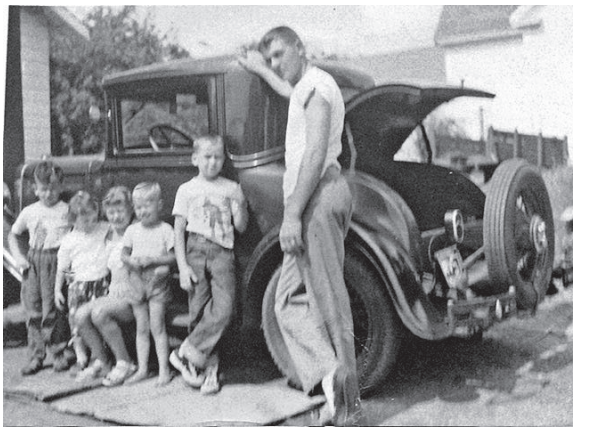
George recalled accompanying his father to a field where there were beans to be harvested. To keep the youngster occupied while he picked the beans, Mr. Walker plopped him into the driver's seat of his 1926 Model T Ford, and told him to keep driving in a circle. George did as he was told… for a while. For some reason he strayed from his circle and ended up driving straight toward the nearby Kimball house. Fortunately, his father got to him in time to turn the steering wheel. And 8-year-old George did get scolded!

Donald was too young to get a license, but that didn't stop him. *I was about 14 years old, and we had a job at the Rockingham Ballroom on Sunday mornings,*

taking all the garbage from the Saturday night parties and putting it in garbage cans to bring to the dump. I learned to drive on a 1953 standard Chevy pickup truck. That was quite a thing to drive standards at the time.

The year after that, my friend Charlie Belmont had a 1954 car that was a standard also, and he would let me drive that thing all over town. We'd go to Epping, Nottingham, and Northwood. I paid him for gas – it was 25 cents a gallon, and he let me drive all night.

Somehow, his parents never heard about these adventures: *When I turned 16, my father kind of pushed me to get my license… because every Saturday he would have to take my mother shopping in Manchester or Dover. She didn't drive, and he didn't want to spend the afternoon waiting for her. After he took me out a couple of times, he told my mother, "I can't believe how good he can drive. He knew exactly what to do. He's just a natural, I guess."*



George with his 1930 Chevy, in 1955

Downtown Businesses

Getting the Staples

Our narrators were asked about Newmarket's downtown businesses, and among the 50 different places mentioned, there were ten grocers. **Lorraine Shelton** lived on Central Street and knew most of them very well:

I loved to go grocery shopping, and I still do… I started off with LaFrance's, which was next door. Down on Main Street, one of our biggest ones was the First National. Then you had a fish market that was run by the Brissons. After Chapel Street, there was an A&P, and farther down by the bank, you had the IGA. And of course, you had Marcotte's up the street.

Being downtown and centrally located, the First National and the IGA were mentioned most. **Terry**, newly arrived from Massachusetts, met Normand Boisvert while shopping at the First National. They married a year later.



LaBranch's, the IGA, and other downtown stores in the 1950s

Kids often did family shopping in neighborhood grocery stores like Marcotte's, LaFrance's, Neal's, Ryan's, and Al's Superette (Zych's). And the shopkeepers knew their customers, as **Linda** recalled: *Al Zych would say to me, "Linda, your mother does not buy baloney from me. She buys boiled ham." I guess I wanted baloney for lunch.*



Neal's Grocer with Jon Otash's grandparents, Severine and Ned Neal, standing in front of it

But the laid-back approach to customer service at Ryan's became too much for **John,** who lived a stone's throw away on Elm Street: *Frances Ryan was a cat lover, and … a cat jumped up on the counter as she was weighing out hamburger. She rolled up a little meat and threw it for the cat to catch… the cat ate the hamburger and came back up. I said, "That's it--I'm not coming back!"*

Donald lived on Central Street, three houses up from LaFrance's: *My father had a running tab; whatever we needed, my mother would send me down, and I would get it and just bring it home. They got paid … Somebody took care of it. My grandparents shopped there too. They lived out by the library and spoke only French. They always went to LaFrance's because everybody spoke French. They didn't go to Ryan's or Al's, which were closer.*



An early 1900s picture of LaFrance's with Babe the horse and driver Clyde Blanchette

A downtown fixture for decades, Marelli's Fruit and Real Estate was unique. Even the name prompted a lot of comments, as **David** noted: *I had friends from out of town who thought that was the funniest sign they had ever seen. They said, "You could go in and buy bananas and a house."*



Inside Marelli's with a shopper and Louise Gilbert, owner

Marelli's also had a number of seasonal attractions; there was one that **Candy** wanted so badly: *I remember the colored baby chicks you could get at Marelli's at Easter time…and my mother saying no…because they'd just grow up and be brown. But they were so cute, and who wouldn't want one?*

The most frequently mentioned business in downtown Newmarket was Bob's Shoe Store. It seems that everyone went there for their shoes.

Judy described the experience: *Our whole family bought shoes at Bob's. I don't remember going anywhere else except there, and Bob Rousseau was the nicest man. We would buy those Buster Brown shoes or saddle shoes. You didn't have to look through boxes. He would measure your feet and bring out some samples to choose from.*

Dave mentioned another aspect of visiting Bob's Shoe Store.

Bob Rousseau was also the Town Clerk for many years. People used to go into the shoe store to do business with the town clerk.

Novel's—owned by **Lorraine Lapointe's** Aunt Evelyn— was an attraction for women and girls. And Evelyn knew her clientele—from **Terry**, who bought dresses to wear to the Rockingham Ballroom, to **Linda**: *Dad would give me and my sister each a dollar and say, "Go buy your mother a Mother's Day gift or a birthday gift," and that woman was so good. She'd… show us what we could buy with our money. My mother probably got more fancy handkerchiefs than she would ever know what to do with!*

Although she once had to go to Novel's to get her mother a Maidenform bra, **Donna** will always associate Novel's with Exeter Hospital. *When I was in the fourth or fifth grade, I was out trick-or-treating with my sister. My dad was also a part-time police officer, on duty during Halloween. When we were done trick-or-treating, we got to ride in the cruiser with him… But in the police car, I started feeling unwell.*

The next day, Dr. McGregor said, "You need to have your appendix taken out." That meant going to the hospital and sleeping over. But first we had to stop at Novel's to buy a bed jacket, something I'd never heard of. There in Exeter Hospital, after I had my appendix out, I wore my new bed jacket.

Priests—a men's and women's clothing store—was mentioned, but not with much detail. Its location is where Good Juju by Ceci is now.



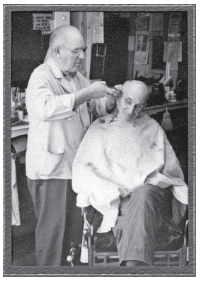
Priest's Christmas Windows in 1919

However, barbers were another story. People mentioned six different ones, including the Jacques Barbershop, MacDonald & Gagnon, Sam Langlois, "Zip-zip" Tierney, Pete Levesque, and Benny Kendrigan. At least one (Henry's) had a bookie operation in the back room. Another managed to sell fishing/sporting goods as well (in the space occupied by Jade Garden in 2025). That was Pete Levesque.

Donald went to several barbershops. This one seemed different to him: *With Zip-Zip Tierney (I don't remember what his real first name was), you went to get a haircut, with all men and boys, and his wife would sit there in a little rocking chair, knitting through the whole thing, just listening to the whole conversation. She never said a word… That was strange.*

Girls visited barbers too. Two women mentioned Benny Kendrigan's. **Judy** went several times: *My mother used to take me there to get these little Dutch boy haircuts. I looked just like the paint can and I used to get so upset every single time. But that didn't deter her at all. I had thick red hair, and she never knew what to do with it.*

According to **Lorraine Shelton**, barbershops offered more than haircuts: *My grandfather* [Sam Langlois] *had the barbershop downtown, with comic books. I had a couple of favorites -- Wonder Woman and Gene Autry. I'd go down and sit in the barbershop and read the comic books. I think to get rid of me, my grandfather would give me a few pennies. I'd make my way to Benny Kendrigan's barber shop because he had a peanut machine. So, in my penny went, and I would get a handful of peanuts. He called me Peanut Girl and didn't mind me being there.*



Barber Benny Kendrigan cutting Frank Willey's hair

Not only did he provide peanuts, but Benny was an accomplished musician who always had his violin handy. He was known to interrupt his barbering on occasion to join whoever was playing across the street at the Bandstand.

So much flexibility! Barbers could be bookies or fiddlers or sell sporting goods, and Marelli's could sell apples (or chicks) and rent out apartments. And **Roger** mentioned another place: *Lindy's Bleach…on Main Street opposite where the laundry is now, in the back of the tall 3-story apartment building. It was also a bicycle shop where he repaired and sold bikes.*

Lunch

In addition to all the grocers, clothing establishments, and barbers, there were numerous family-owned establishments where mill workers could get a quick lunch. Charlie's, Varney's, and Jordan's were ready to serve. **Patti** often walked down from St. Mary School to eat lunch at her grandfather Jordan's.

Kingman's (AKA Rexall's) was mentioned the most. The building (the 2025 location of Crackskulls) was a hub of activity for years. The Masons were on the third floor, and the second

* floor housed offices. (Drs. Brown and Getchell began their practices there, and in the 1970s, Lamprey Health Care got its start there.) On street level, the Rousseaus owned a pharmacy/lunch counter during and after WWII.

At some point, the pharmacy closed, but you could still get a prescription filled. **Joanne** explained: *Did you know that the Rexall Store had a bus stop? Michaud Bus Lines. Other than the train, that's how we went to Dover or Exeter. And it was the only bus line that would stop here on the way to Boston. People used the bus a lot, and we sold the tickets at Rexall's.*

When I worked there, we didn't have a pharmacy, so when someone needed a prescription… we would give it to the Michaud Bus driver when he stopped. He would take it to the Thompson Drugstore bus stop in Exeter. It would be filled by that pharmacy and then given to the next bus driver to deliver back to the Newmarket Rexall Store. Some of it had to be refrigerated. Mr. Labonte, for example, had insulin, so we had to put it in the candy case refrigerator.

Lorraine Shelton had fond memories of another downtown establishment: *Blanchette's Bakery had the best Napoleons and the best cinnamon rolls! They just don't make things like that today!*

Not only did the bakery sell day-old goods at half price, but it also offered other benefits, as **Donald** mentioned: *During the summer, every Saturday, because it was hot, my father would bring down a pot of beans and Mr. Blanchette would put them in his ovens and cook them all day. At 5:00, my father would go down and get his beans, and that's what we would have on Saturday night.*

Breakfast was also available in some of the restaurants, and one that is remembered by many residents is Joyce's Kitchen, which was located on the waterfront by Schanda Park.

Rochelle has fond memories of her time working there*: In 1985 I went to work at Joyce's Kitchen for seven years, waitressing and working in the kitchen… I met a lot of great people, and I still know a number of them to this day. I enjoyed seeing the kids and how grown up they are now. I remember one little girl turned one, and I brought out a blueberry muffin with a candle, and we sang happy birthday to her. The kids who used to come in there now have kids of their own*.

The Filion Businesses

Filion siblings **Carol** and **Leo** described several family businesses, including Filion Lumber and Filion Oil.



Advertising some of Louis Filion's businesses

There was also a family business that ended suddenly, as **Leo** described: *Uncle Teddy owned a restaurant downtown near the Five and Dime. One night, the stove in Ted's Lunch blew up and the building caught fire, along with the Five and Dime. They both burned to the ground.*

31 people living in the Ruth Lee Apartments above the building had to flee. The building shown in the pictures was rebuilt and is now an apartment building to the right of La Catrina Restaurant on North Main Street.



Before the Fire at the Ruth Lee



After the Fire at the Ruth Lee

Leo says that Carol *remembers seeing the flames from our house on Nichols Avenue. I walked down to see what was happening. That night I had a terrible nightmare that I got caught in a fire.* Carol *says that I tore the mirror off my bureau and threw it down the stairs. I remembered none of it.*

The Filion family had a couple of other enterprises that evoke earlier times. Back in the early 1900s, a small racetrack was located in Hall's Park, the site of agricultural fairs and harness racing.

Carol explained her family's connection to Hall's Park, which is now the location of Trotter Park.

My father and some of his friends were involved with harness racing in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s. Joseph LaFrance, James Phelan, Roy Kent, and my dad (Louis Filion) got together and built a (larger) half-mile racetrack and several barns off Packers Falls Road. They stabled and trained the horses there. Every Memorial Day and three or four times a year, they would hold races at the track.

Leo recalled the era before refrigerators:

From the 1920s to the 1950s, my father, Louis Filion, had an icehouse off Nichol's Avenue, at the edge of the Lamprey River. The building was 30 feet tall, and they would cut big blocks of ice and stack them up about 20 feet high. They'd cover it all with sawdust, and when they went out to deliver the ice, they would uncover a 3'x 6'x 1½'chunk and push it down the slide. There was a pump at the river's edge where they would wash the sawdust off before sliding the ice onto a horse-drawn truck. They would cut chunks off the large block upon delivery to each house. Later, they used gas-powered trucks.

Downtown Employers

While none of our narrators were around when the Newmarket Manufacturing Company abandoned Newmarket, many had parents or grandparents who knew the story all too well. The mills sat there until new industries began to take advantage of a workforce looking for work. Shoe shops (Yankee Shoemakers/ Sam Smith, Newmarket Shoe, Rockingham, Royce, Abington/Timberland), a distillery, and Richard Gallant's Pioneer Manufacturing (synthetic fabrics) filled

the vacant buildings. Kingston-Warren also started here before moving to Newfields, and by 1950, Macallen's had set up shop.



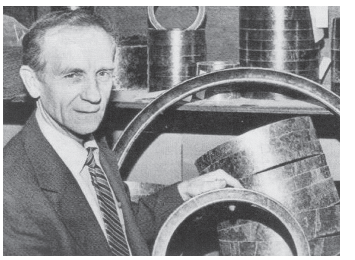
Leo's wife Jeanne Filion, left, and Lorraine Lapointe, right, in Macallen's office in the mill building

Yankee Shoemakers was here for 18 years, and it seems that they made use of everyone who walked in looking for work, full or part-time. The owner was Sam Smith. During the 1930s, he was a US-based salesman for a Czechoslovakian shoe company. Smith was nearly trapped there when Hitler invaded the country in 1939. The following year, hoping to focus on the New England shoe market, he opened the Yankee Shoemakers here in Newmarket. During World War II, he had to produce military boots for the government, but after that, his Little Yankee shoes hit the market. Until 1967, Sam Smith continued to provide both shoes and employment for many local folks.

Several women—like **Terry**—mentioned working until their first child came along. She worked in the office at Yankee Shoemakers.

Lorraine Lapointe had a similar situation: I *worked in the office at Macallen's for four years, until I became pregnant with my first child. I made $150 a month before taxes. I bought my grandfather's car, an old Hudson … that my grandmother sold me.*

Macallen's was eventually acquired by Sufflex, which changed its name, but not the workers. **Priscilla** worked under both companies. *I worked at Macallen's for about 25-26 years. They had lots of machines, and it was a very busy and noisy place. After that, I worked at Sufflex from about 1976 until it closed in the early 1990s. After my boss passed away, I became a supervisor. When it closed, I retired.*



Priscilla's husband, Richard Schanda, displays a mica ring at Macallen's

Back at Yankee Shoemakers, while **Ted** changed labels from "Little Yankee" to "Little Debbie" so the southern customers wouldn't be offended, the shoe shop podiatrist went hunting for models with the right size feet. According to **John**, *Doc Tennant, the Sam Smith podiatrist, often looked for kid models. Alan Knight was chosen because he was cute, young, and small. He got free shoes, had his picture taken, and became a model for Sam Smith. A lot of the models for Sam Smith were kids from Newmarket; their photos were seen throughout the country in their advertising.*

Linda recollected: *For shoes, I was one of the lucky ones. When I went to school here at St. Mary's, there was a nice gentleman who would come down, looking for that perfect-sized foot. I had it. I got free shoes from what was Rockingham Shoe. There'd be a whole group of us walking down the street to get our brand-new shoes.*

The Unnamed Businesses

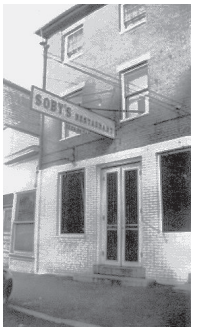
Our narrators made little mention of drinking establishments, although Newmarket had a reputation for having plenty.

Terry certainly seemed to think so: *[Downtown] was quite the dump. How scary! An awful lot of the stores were for nothing but beer drinking… They often said that shoe shop workers were drinkers, and they spent their money on their booze…*

Shirley made a similar observation: *The Beech Street Extension today was called Dump Road back then because the dump was located there. In 1949, there was an article in the Manchester newspaper saying what a terrible town Newmarket was. It was still trying to recover from the mills leaving back in the 30s. It was better during the war because there were jobs available, but there was still this gap regarding the lack of activities for the kids and the kind of businesses there were in town. For a small town, there were a lot of taverns because Durham was dry, prompting students to go to Dover or Newmarket to have a night out. But in 1955 the town added a gym to the High School and made some other changes and the Union Leader published another article about how much the town had improved.*

John has quite a story about a building on the American Legion side of Main Street. *It was called Soby's Restaurant…. more of a bar than a restaurant. In1951, Hollywood shot a couple of scenes in town for the movie The Whistle at Eaton Falls, which featured Lloyd Bridges, Ann Francis, Dorothy Gish, and Ernest Borgnine. Although the actors never came to town, the film crew did. The movie told the story of a small New England mill town with big union troubles. They wanted a seedy looking bar for a fist-fight scene, and they found it at Soby's.*





After WW I, William Sobozenzki took over his father Felix's restaurant/bar on Main Street which featured Utica-Club beer. Army Veteran and Sharpshooter "Soby", as he was called, had been featured for his shooting skills in "My Company" an award-winning WW I work of non-fiction by Capt. Carroll Swan about the Yankee Division battles in the trenches of France. In March of 1955, Soby turned the bar into a private club, the Y.D. Club, a fraternal organization of the Yankee Division Veterans of the 101st Engineering Division.

Shirley remembers leaving the old town hall after a game and going to Bouras Ice Cream, but they *always crossed the street before they got to Soby's because ... well, you know --its reputation. Soby's, later the Y.D. Club, was destroyed in the 1968 Creighton Block fire.*

On a more positive note, we can only hope that drunk driving was not very prevalent because so many families could walk to a store.

Ray: *Every once in a while, my father would get a six-pack of beer. One time, he wanted a case of beer, because he didn't want to have to go out, back and forth so often in the wintertime. He took me along with him--me in my sled and him pulling it. We then left the store and walked back home together, with him pulling the sled, which now held his case of beer.*

Gambling was another unnamed business. While it was never listed in the Yellow Pages, there were several places in town where people (men) would gather. **Richard** willingly shared a story:

Sure, gambling was happening, and it was here. For a period of time, it was almost every Friday night. After I owned the auto repair shop on Exeter St. for some years, we would play poker in a paint room. We set up a poker table out back, and local people came in.

One night, Bob Hammer was still working out front on a car in the shop, when all of a sudden, the front door opened up. It wasn't even locked and in comes a bunch of sheriffs. They raided us, and it cost me a $200 fine to play a $50 poker game. I think most of the money was taken off the table by the time the sheriff came in. The guys were putting it in their pockets, but there was some left in the

middle. I don't remember how much they confiscated in the end, but most of the guys had put some into their pockets.

They held court right there in the Town Hall that same night, and Mr. Edgerly was the associate judge in town. They fingerprinted all of us, and that was the end of it. And Russell McGuirk said to Frank Schanda, "Why didn't you call me?" He said he would have squashed that right that night, and it would never have happened. But anyway, it happened. And it was just local people.

And there were other places in town where gambling had been going on for years. Above Charlie LaBranche's store, and another was the pool room in the bowling alley above Brisson's Market.

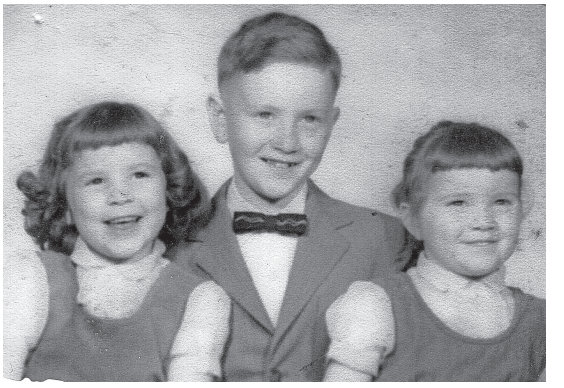
Richard's wife **Lorraine** provided another point of view:

Late one Friday night he hadn't come home yet. I called the police station and told Bill Ball-- the policeman at that time--that I had an idea that he would be at that pool room. I said, "Go and check to see if he's there, because I called at the IGA and left an order for groceries that he was supposed to pick up." Well, those groceries didn't get home, and I bet he was next door over Brisson's. And he was.

Not all gambling was illegal. With Newmarket's own Hammerin' Hank Wajda, a successful jockey who often raced at Rockingham Park in Salem, NH, many townsfolk enjoyed betting on the horses. But that meant a trip to Salem. It was much more convenient to walk to Henry's Barbershop to place their bets in the room out back—even though off-track betting was illegal.

John recollected how a well-placed bet often benefited the young Carmichael family:

Bert was a family friend, and when he was lucky at the track, we all got new Easter outfits in the spring.



John and his sisters Jill and Janice in new Easter outfits

Planning for the Future

By the 1970s, Newmarket—like so many other towns—began to lose its manufacturing base.

Ron reminisced about this: *Back in the 50s and 60s, the Sam Smith Shoe Shop was in the stone mills, and their claim to fame was that they were a union shop.*

He saw the changes up close: *When Timberland moved out of Newmarket in the mid-80s, I was fortunate to be a part of the real estate agency that listed all the condos that went into that building, where Rivermoor Landing is now. It was a very hot market then. Our agency put 72 units under agreement in 16 hours! We made the Channel 9 News, and Fritz Wetherbee came out to interview us.*

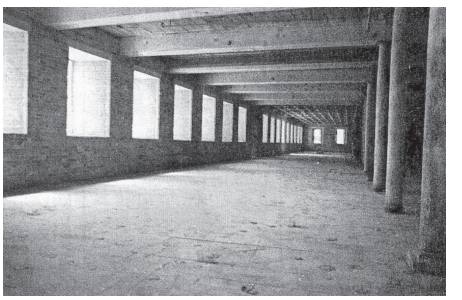
I think that's when the Renaissance of downtown Newmarket began. Once that first mill building was renovated into condos, there was a progression of activity. The icing on the cake was when Chinburg renovated the stone mills on Bay Road.

And **Michael** spoke of one initiative:

The Community Development Corporation was formed in 1975 to help plan for the impact on the town after the mills shut down. There were many public hearings, and the CDC set up a Planning Charette so the residents could discuss what needed to be done.

Michael explained the input and planning of the CDC:

The CDC examined the zoning, the fish ladder and salmon runs, and retaining open space in the middle of the mills. It was very powerful to stand at one end of the mill and look all the way down to the other end. They decided that the bell was to stay in the mill tower with the weathervane on top of it. The idea was to preserve the public's access to history and the things that made the mill yards what they were. They had to remove the old Rockingham Shoe building and the Eagles building to provide parking. That was all necessary to develop the space.



Empty Mill Building

The CDC also mandated the preservation of the original doorway in Mill No. 2, with its worn granite threshold—now visible about 10 feet up.

What Goes Around Comes Around

In 2025, the Newmarket Main Street Corp returned Timberland to Main Street with a statue of the classic boot, honoring Timberland's beginnings in Newmarket. The attached plaque recounts the story of how Ukrainian-born shoemaker Nathan Swartz relocated the Abington Shoe Company to Mill No. 6 in 1969; and the Timberland boot was born there in 1973.



Monument Celebrates the Birthplace of the Timberland Boot

Entertainment

The Rockingham Ballroom

During the 1930s and 1940s, little Newmarket managed to sustain two entertainment venues. Despite (or because of) the Great Depression and World War II, people still wanted to dance and go to the movies. The Star Theatre had been around since 1914, but the Rockingham Ballroom was built in 1934; **Glenn** related the story of how Urban Fellows built both the Ballroom and the Rockingham Country Club:

He thought he could attract UNH students who drove by on their way to the Casino in Hampton Beach. Sure enough, they started stopping right at the ballroom. He had all the big bands that were playing back then, and the kids didn't have to travel so far. He even had Glenn Miller in 1938, before he became popular. [Notice the admission price on the poster: 30c plus tax.]



Glenn Miller at the Rockingham Ballroom



Guy Lombardo and the Royal Canadians

Bob Shaw, the Ballroom owner during World War II, sold it to George Bergeron in 1950. George's son Glenn described what it was like then:

To cater to college kids, it was set up with a stag line, with all the guys lined up on one side of the hall and the girls on the other side. The guys would go over and ask the girls to dance. The problem was that they had a lot of fights. My father said, "You know, maybe we should try to clean up this business a little bit, to get rid of the riff raff."

Back then, cabarets were starting to become popular around the country, so my father ...got in some card tables and put them on the side of the ballroom. He had one section that just had card tables and chairs. If a guy came in with a date, they would put him in that section, and the single guys would be in another part of the ballroom.

But after a few more fights, the decision was made to stop all the single dances and go full cabaret—with sturdy wooden tables:

My grandfather, my father, and a few other people built all the tables [which] are still in the ballroom, being used today. … People started coming in droves. The big bands were back in style and the crowds were getting larger and larger. We were getting 550 people every Saturday night… We had Duke Ellington, Count Basie, the Glenn Miller Orchestra, Benny Goodman, Vaughn Monroe, Harry James, Guy Lombardo, Dion and the Belmonts, and a whole lot more. Business was so good, my father paid off his 20-year mortgage in nine years.



Glenn with band posters



A more recent look at the Ballroom

In the 60s, he started bringing in the rock bands, with four or five musicians and a female singer, and it became even more popular. Our New Year's Eve shows were selling out a month or two months in advance.



Leo and Jean Filion on New Year's Eve

The Ballroom also hosted Newmarket High School proms and hired locals to help out. This would be where 14-year-old Donald emptied the trash on Sunday morning and learned to drive to the dump. Rochelle worked there during high school, and during the 1960s, Donna's entire family got involved.

My father was the policeman, and my mother was a hostess. Joyce and I worked there, and I would do hat and coat check. This was during high school. After everyone left and we'd cleaned the tables and put the chairs up, we got to hang out with the Bergeron—George, Jeanette, David, and Glenn--and enjoy a little reprieve, having ice cream and saying how that night went.

But during the 1970s, according to Glenn,… *entertainment was changing. People were going to the movies more and going out to eat. They might stop by for a little dancing, but they wouldn't … have the big dance parties like they did in the past.*

In 1982, George died suddenly, leaving Glenn and his mother to run the Ballroom until they sold it in 1987. He reflected:

It had been in our family for 37 years… when people asked me if I missed it, I said no. After growing up in the business and working there every weekend, my brother and I had missed a lot of high school activities… and lots of other things. We were ready to give somebody else a chance to run it.

Michael was the next owner:

The big recession of 1987 hit right after we bought it. We ran it for a little while, but it wasn't meant to be. We had to make the decision to sell it, and then I went back to school at UNH.

The Star Theatre

Any townie born before 1950 knew what it was like to have a movie theatre downtown. It's hard to believe that the Star Theatre and two other buildings were crammed into the Main Street parcel of land between Chapel and Church Streets. It's harder yet to believe that it had once been bedecked with steeples and called the "Jewel of Newmarket."

Built in 1872, it housed the Methodist Episcopal Church for over 30 years. In 1907, the Methodists found the building too much to support and joined the Congregationalists across the street—just as motion pictures were becoming a sensation. After several years, the vacant church became another sort of temple —just in time to offer entertainment that even a mill worker could afford. And just in time to inform the public as the country edged ever closer to the war in Europe. This was before people had radios, too.


STAR
THEATRE - Newmarket, N. H. - Tel. 170-130
1939
Wednesday, Thursday, Nov. 29, 30
THE REAL GLORY
Friday, Saturday, Dec. 1, 2 Double Feature Program
EVERYTHING'S ON ICE
Sunday, Monday, Dec. 3, 4
BABES IN ARMS
Tuesday, Wednesday, Dec. 5, 6
MAN IN THE IRON MASK
Thursday, Dec. 7 - Cash Night - Cash Prize of $70
FAST AND FURIOUS
Friday, Saturday, Dec. 8, 9 - Double Feature
BAD LITTLE ANGEL

Movies shown at the Star Theatre in Nov. and Dec. 1939

Whether it was during the Great Depression, World War II, or after 1950, our narrators remembered the Star Theatre fondly. And it was a real treat for **Bert,** who lived outside of town:

I went to the Star Theatre every Saturday. My father would give me a quarter, and we'd stop at one of the stores. I don't remember the name, but … it had a counter, and when you lifted up the cover, it was all penny candy. We'd spend a dime there and 15 cents for the movie.

And her neighbors would have been there too—like **Joe**:

Every Saturday. We were always trying to get down there. Walk. Three miles to get there, one way - which was nothing! I used to like the warmups, "The Three Stooges," and things like that. And the Tom Hicks movies were really, really good—boy, they drew me!

Shirley, over on Packers Falls Road, loved it too, and sometimes she walked—or tried to:

One time my sister Ollie and I wanted to go to the Saturday matinee, but we had to go over to our neighbor's house (the Gliddens) to get their kids to go with us. Their mother said we had to put the pigs in their pen first. Somehow my sister Ollie severed her Achilles tendon.

When she healed, she needed to get up on a bike to get her leg moving again after being in a cast for six weeks. Dad said he'd take her to a movie once she was walking really well. We finally went, and she made it up all those stairs at the Star. But afterward, she must have stiffened up because he had to carry her all the way down. But we all got to see a wonderful movie that Saturday.

The price of admission stayed pretty stable. A quarter continued to provide both entertainment and snacks, and **Lorraine Shelton** loved it. Her mother must have liked it too.

It was 10 cents for the movie and 2 cents tax; and the rest was for popcorn and a drink. I loved the movies. During wartime, on Thursday nights, it was ladies' night at the theater. My mother and a few of her friends always went because they had a raffle, and sometimes they got a free dish.

Donald also got a quarter…

It cost me 17 cents to get in. I stopped at Blanchette's Bakery, and he had day-old doughnuts for sale. For 5 cents, I got five jelly donuts... I don't know what happened to the last three cents.

As far as refreshments were concerned, **Judy's** father helped out too:

He used to make this big vat of popcorn before we went! He'd fill those paper lunch bags for all the kids in the neighborhood, and after we got them, we'd walk down. At the movies, nobody seemed to care that we weren't buying it at the snack bar.

Some narrators mentioned the people who worked there, but nobody busted the underage **Lee,** who may have sold them candy!

Newmarket librarian and musician May Gordon continued playing the piano even after silent films were a thing of the past. **Richard** commented:

My God she could play! When they destroyed the place, I ended up with the little round seat that she sat on when Turcotte closed the hardware store.

And there was someone to keep the youngsters in line, as **Joanne** noted:

The kids from the Village sat out back. The bad boys sat down in front, and when they got noisy or rowdy, Mr. Martel would send them out.

Rowdy **Roger** agreed:

Oh yeah. The Man, Mr. Martel, would keep us in check.

Before Newmarket High added a gymnasium, the Star was also used for graduations. Other special events were held there as well. **Ray** recalled one in particular:

The Star Theatre always used to put on a Christmas Party for the kids in town. It was kind of a talent show as well. I remember Bobby Lou Pelletier got up on stage and sang a song. And for singing that song, she got a prize. I thought to myself, "Boy, if I wasn't so untalented, I could get a prize."

At these Christmas parties, there was a guy who lived down at the end of our street. His name was Red White. He was one big brawly guy—and he was Santa Claus. I was amazed! I had Santa Claus living on my street!

Barbara recalled more details about the Christmas parties:

It was always fun to see a movie--black and white--and then get a bag of candy. And I remember going up on the stage and getting a toy-type gift. My godfather worked and helped out there, and once he asked me what I would like from the toys displayed and I said I would like that iron. And sure enough--that's the toy that I got. It had a big plug on it, and I brought it home and tried to plug it in, and I was a little disappointed. It didn't work like my mother's. But still it ironed my doll clothes, so I was happy with that.

Donald wasn't so lucky:

The Christmas parties that we had there were quite hectic at the end when they would give us toys. They would have boxes and boxes of toys. All the kids were running out, and you could see the things you wanted. But they were just dishing them out and keeping the line moving. So we were disappointed a lot of times.

When the Star finally closed, it was for the second time, as **John** explained:

Turcotte, who owned the movie theater (and the hardware store beneath it)*, had just let it go to hell and closed it. But then George Pelletier (who had been a POW), Charles Marelli, and the Gliddens (a father and son) all pooled some money. Together with the Legion and the VFW, they opened up the Star for matinees and family nights in 1952. It gave the kids something to do. You'd go*

up those big stairs and get your tickets and your candy (unless you already had Mr. Reardon's popcorn or day-old jelly doughnuts from Blanchette's) … and go in for the movies.

It ended as more and more people in town purchased television sets. When Turcotte started displaying color tv sets in his downstairs showroom window, that ended movies at the Star for good. Now you could watch westerns in color from your sofa. Older teenagers, those with wheels, drove their Saturday night dates to the drive-ins! It finally closed in '54.



The Star Theatre, right before demolition

Friendship Lanes

One of **Dave's** favorite teenage hangouts was a major attraction for years:

The Jabre family ran the bowling alley for many years, with Pop's son George eventually taking over. They had lots of leagues for adults and a Saturday league for kids, which got a lot of kids interested in the game. They encouraged children with disabilities to come in and bowl as well. Over the years, people in the men's and women's leagues would turn in their trophies and they would give the trophies to the kids so that they had something to take away. It used to be packed all the time.



Standing: Leo (Beezo) Filion, Vincent Lugg, and Ernie Currier
Kneeling: Gerard (Jigsaw) Langlois and Robert (Fibber) Filion

Patti brought to light another aspect of the bowling alley:

Friendship Lanes was also the home of Polly Jabre, who won the Women's World Bowling Championship in 1963. Her competitions appeared on television and brought some fame and notoriety to Newmarket. Townspeople loved to watch her and cheer her on.

Polly's interests expanded well beyond bowling; around 1972, she formed a Newmarket Girls Baseball Team for Jr. High girls. She is still admired for her leadership and mentoring.

Today, Rumors Sports Bar and Bowling is in that location, offering bowling leagues, parties, karaoke, live music, and activities for the whole family.

Entertainment Meets Volunteerism

The US Bicentennial in 1976 was celebrated in various ways, but one group in town captured the imagination of all: Men and women, young and old, donned colonial attire and joined the First New Market Militia. **Linda** thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

We spent many years as part of the Newmarket 1st Militia - those were fun times.
Traveling all around New England, Philadelphia, Gettysburg, marching in parades and doing reenactments of colonial times with so many wonderful people.



First New Market Militia marching in downtown Newmarket

Participants learned about colonial life on many levels—clothing, weaponry, medical practices, and the gender mores of the times (women and children were always "camp followers" who marched at the end of the parades.) Some of the younger men were assigned to be scouts, but others started out at a lower rank, like **Michael**:

I started as Private, then was promoted to Corporal of Artillery under the command of Bob Willey (which was a hoot). We laughed a lot, and he was quite a character. Our cannon shot was Minute Maid OJ cartons full of cement. They did quite a mess of the plywood target when we were practice shooting up in the field by Red Schanda's.

Along with her husband Richard, **Priscilla** was a major force in organizing and outfitting the Militia. In the early 1970s, fellow Militiaman Col. George Hilton was Superintendent of the Rockingham County Jail, and when the regulation green cotton prison attire was abandoned, Priscilla seized the opportunity—and the uniforms. Using authentic colonial patterns, she transformed them into militia garb for many of the participants, stressing the fabric so that it wouldn't look too modern.



Richard and Priscilla, getting ready for target practice

Meanwhile, other town organizations, like the Conservation Commission, were busy as well.

Richard: *... Chris Schoppmeyer was the Chairman, and I was Vice Chairman, and we started the Kids Fishing Tournament. We didn't know where to hold it, and Herbie Richmond said we could use his pond on Lang's Lane. Amanda, Herbie's granddaughter, owns the land now. That's where it started, and it's been there ever since. The first Fishing Derby was held in 1989, and we gave prizes. Every year, we'd go to auctions and always have an eye out for something we could give out for the Fishing Derby. I ran it for 20 years and then it was time to pass it on. It's still going strong…*

The Main Street Corporation brought Newmarket the Heritage Festival. **Michael**, **Dave**, **Jan** and **Joe** were all involved.

Michael: I *was a volunteer, and they wanted to do a special event. I was the only one on the board at the time who had experience doing something like that. Basically, I created the Newmarket Heritage Festival, and that became my master's thesis project.*

Dave: *Around 1999, the first annual Heritage Festival took place, created to fill the void left by the end of Old Home Weekend, which had run for about 25 years and eventually ran out of volunteers. The Heritage Festival celebrated all the different ethnic values and people that we have in town, which are very diverse. The first one was held by the Lamprey River, in the parking lot for Rivermoor Landing. The festival kept growing and was very successful. That was our main event, and it took all year to plan it and raise the money to do it. That ran for*

about 15 years, until we ran out of space for the vendor booths due to the redevelopment of the mills into retail and residential space.

Jan: *The first activity I was involved in was the Newmarket Heritage Festival with* Dave *LeGault and Suki Casanave. I really liked working with them and putting a program together that people would enjoy... We did it for quite a few years in different places in town: in the mill buildings, in the parking lot beside the church, and then we had a big one up behind the library in that parking lot.*

The people who volunteered were wonderful, but it was very hard to get volunteers because the programs were so good, everyone wanted to go and see them rather than stay in one place for most of the day. One year we had a blacksmith who did demonstrations, along with a barrel maker and a man with an 18th-century printing press, along with all the vendors and activities.

Joe skippered a boat and gave historic tours of the Lamprey River, going out to the Bay:

I always point out the Weir to everybody as we're backing out. I point to that one ring and say I'll show you a number of these all the way down the river and explain to you what they were used for. And it's an amazing story. Those things are still there right now and could be used again. They're rugged… in there for life. Going downriver—off to the right, I point to that ring and explain how they were used with ropes to pull the ship through the narrows. You hook up to another ring to pull either up or down through the river--- which is very narrow for the size of those ships back then. The rings were the important thing that I pointed out. People don't even know they're there until after you point them out and explain what they were used for.

In 1823, there was a rock right after the falls that served as a geographic marker for several deeds. But it impeded ships along the wharf, so the mill management decided that they wanted that rock out…and they blew it out. Then there was trouble because of the deed markers. It was called "Bryant Rock".



Joe giving a Lamprey River tour



Joe with Alan Knight

WAR!

World War II

The Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, marked the US entry into World War II. And the war transformed our town:

- By then, Newmarket had several industries residing in the old mills that had been abandoned in 1932. The US government could—and did—require factories to manufacture products needed for the war effort.
- Over 400 Newmarket men and women enlisted in a branch of the armed services.
- Back in town, the soldiers' parents, siblings, spouses, and children coped with their absence. They replaced them in the mills and dealt with shortages and rationing.
- Being so close to the Seacoast, the need for civil defense preparedness arose.

Joe was too young to join, but he had five siblings who served in World War II. They are shown in the picture below, taken at the end of the war.



Karl (Navy), Katherine (Wave), Frank (Marine), Marie (Wave), and Richard (Navy)

Donald's grandfather, Alexis Pelletier, had seven sons in the military; he was considered the "service father" of the town.

Others who served were **Bert's** three brothers, **Joanne**'s father and uncles, **Lorraine Shelton**'s uncle and cousins, and the future husbands of **Terry** and **Lorraine Lapointe**. The fathers of many of our Baby Boomer narrators also served.

Those left behind faced their own challenges. With their children, **Joanne**'s mother and aunt moved in together to economize, and **Lorraine Shelton** mentioned food rationing and homemade clothing.

There were times when the American Legion and other organizations stepped in to provide food for hungry families.

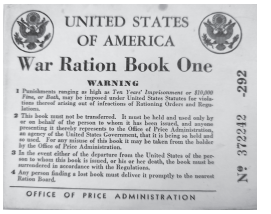


American Legion Food Distribution at Main and Exeter Streets

Roger described the scene downtown:

We had to collect fat. When you cooked and you had fat, you put it in a can, and when it got cold and solidified, you took it to the store, and they would pay you for it. In the war, everything was rationed. You had ration coupon books you took to the store to buy sugar and flour. People would stand outside Malo's store, underneath the telephone exchange, with bottles. There would always be a long line of people standing, waiting to get cigarettes, as they were hard to get. And if you heard someone say they got nylons at another store, then the line would move. People were crazy because nylon stockings were awful hard to get, so the line would move to the other store.

Linda donated her father, Joseph Bentley's, ration books to the New Market Historical Society. We can tell from his ration book that he would have been a boy then, as his height is listed as 3 feet, 9 inches, and his weight as 48 pounds.



UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

War Ration Book One

WARNING

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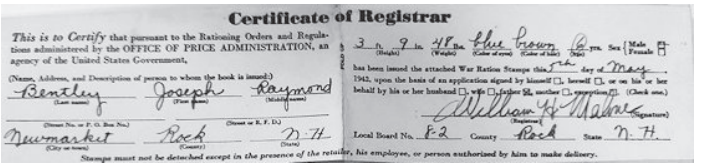


Certificate of Registrar

This is to Certify that pursuant to the Rationing Orders and Regulations administered by the OFFICE OF PRICE ADMINISTRATION, an agency of the United States Government,

(Name, Address, and Description of person to whom the book is issued)

Bentley (Last name) Joseph (First) Raymond (Middle name)

(Street No. or P. O. Box No.) (Street or R. F. D.)

Newmarket (City or town) Rock (County) N.H. (State)

3 ft. 9 in. (Height) 48 lbs. (Weight) blue (Color of eyes) brown (Color of hair) 6 yrs. (Age) Sex {Male ☒ Female ☐}

has been issued the attached War Ration Stamps this 5th day of May 1942, upon the basis of an application signed by himself ☐, herself ☐, or on his or her behalf by his or her husband ☐, wife ☐, father ☒, mother ☐, guardian ☐. (Check one.)

William H. Mahar (Registrar) (Signature)

Local Board No. 82 County Rock State N.H.

Stamps must not be detached except in the presence of the retailer, his employee, or person authorized by him to make delivery.

Joseph Bentley's Ration Book

Joe Schanda used to go around and pick up old toothpaste tubes, which had lead in them in those days.

George added:

Everyone crushed their tin cans and gave them to the war effort. My dad built a special tool to do this. We kids collected the white feathers in milkweed and brought them to school to be used as kapok in life preservers. Butter was rationed, so instead everyone got margarine, which came in a plastic bag with a red pellet. You kneaded it and it turned yellow, so it looked like butter and not mayonnaise.

Always the war effort! **Lorraine Shelton** explained:

My father worked at Sawyer Mills in Dover, manufacturing uniforms for the Navy. And the shoe shops, Sam Smith in particular, although they were known for their children's shoes, also made military boots for the army.

According to **George**,

High school kids got out of school at 1:45 so the 16-year-olds could work in the factories to replace the soldiers. This time was still in effect until I graduated in 1954.

When war broke out, **Richard**'s father owned several car dealerships:

He went to the bank… and asked to borrow $100,000. And they asked, "What are you going to do with it?" He told them that he was going to buy cars off of those kids going into the service. When asked, "How are you going to pay us back?" he told them, "Well, if we lose the war, you ain't going to have any money anyway."

They loaned him the money. My dad then bought all the cars off the service guys for $25 apiece. In 1941, that was a lot of money, and most of those cars were old anyway. … In those years, everything was rationed, and you couldn't buy rubber for tires. Well, he was ok 'cause he had all those cars—and all those tires stored away.

To all those guys going into the service, he said, "I'll pay you $25 now for your car, and when you get back--if you're lucky enough to get back--I will allow you $50 towards a new Hudson as long as you buy it off me." He kept his word, and those guys were grateful. After the war, his business expanded quite rapidly.

The first soldier to buy a Hudson was **George's** uncle, Tommy Walker.

Joanne's earliest recollection said it best:

Going downtown, all people talked about was the war.

News from the front was prized and shared. **Lorraine Shelton's** mother…

… wrote to a lot of servicemen, her nephews, local friends, and those in town. And it was always wonderful when we got any mail and read how they were doing. There was the old Post Office with all those boxes that you had to use a code to open. Especially during the war, we really looked forward to any kind of mail. But we didn't want any sad news. I remember the time when Leona Butler—she was married to Joe—there was a problem with him…

[As a Marine stationed in the Southwest Pacific, Richard "Joe" Butler was in the first landing wave at Guadalcanal. Over the course of the war, he was wounded five times and was awarded a Purple Heart. He was later reassigned the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard as a military policeman.]

In addition to having six children in military service, **Joe Schanda's** mother, Mabel, was a volunteer on the home front:

She got an award because she was the chairman of an organization of women who went out and collected silk nylons. She collected two 100-pound bales of nylon stockings for the war effort.

But the Schanda family received an unanticipated blow in 1943:

*I came home from school and went to a 4-H Club meeting at Pete Hamel's, on Ash Swamp Road. And we were all sitting outside like you do in a 4-H meeting. Then Mrs. Hamel came outside and said, "*Joe*, you've got to go home now." But she didn't tell me anything else. I cut across the fields …and when I came out onto the road, there came my brother Karl driving. He picked me up, and said, "Did you hear about Dad?" I said, "No, what happened?" He said, "He died in the field." When I got home, I got out, and I just ran out into that field. It was pretty bad.*

Other youngsters were anxious about the war. **Lorraine Shelton** recalled:

I was about seven years old. You had to have those black shades on your windows. It was scary. If you heard any planes come over… It was scary because we didn't know if it was going to hit us.

Shirley's fear was more specific:

I had the worst nightmare… I saw Hitler on a motorcycle, in full uniform and helmet, riding around our house. Nothing happened to me, but it was so vivid, I still remember it today.

Fears of invasion were not just idle chatter that scared children. **George** described the local response – part of what became the Civil Air Patrol:

I was young, but I heard there were German U-boats going up and down the coast and we were always on the lookout for boats and planes. There was always a lookout stationed on a tall hill nearby to search for enemy planes. The car headlights were shaded so the light hit the ground and couldn't be seen from the air. People covered their windows … with black oil cloth whenever they got

a signal. My father was an Air Raid Warden, and he knocked on doors to alert people to cover their windows.

Now, about those German U-boats… **Richard** had a story:

My father bought a second home right on the water at York Beach, Maine, up on Nubble Light. One evening, my brother Bob and I were lying in bed, and it was dark. We looked out and saw a raft coming to shore. Some men got out, and we watched them; they went up onto shore. Not sure where they went, but after a bit, they got back in the raft and went back out to sea. The next day the Coast Guard had about three boats circling the whole area all day. We assumed it was a German sub out there…

[Later] they found a German sub and brought it into Portsmouth Harbor. Joe Butler was on board, and when the Marines asked the German captain of the sub if he wanted the Americans to take over and steer it in – he said, "I've been in many times, I know how to get in and out." The German person in charge of the sub brought it into the Portsmouth Navy Yard. Yes! They had been here before!

Korean War

Leo joined the Navy in 1949 when he was 17. After Basic Training in Illinois, the Navy sent him to a number of places for training as a medical corpsman. He ended up in Vallejo, California. In June 1950, war broke out in Korea.

From Vallejo, I boarded a transport ship for Japan, where I joined the USS Repose. It was one of four hospital ships at that time. During the Korean War, we sailed up and down the coast of Korea, picking up wounded soldiers, sailors, and marines from the U.S., Great Britain, and Australia. We patched them up as best we could, then sent them along to Japan, to the army hospital in Yokohama. We spent a good deal of time docked at Pusan Harbor (now Busan), Korea, waiting to pick up more wounded men.



Gerard (Jigsaw) Langlois, USMC, and Leo Filion, USN, in Korea, 1950

I came home on leave in 1952, and my eight-year-old sister Carol saw me and yelled to my mother, "Hey, it's Bee!" (My nickname was Beezo, after Bezou Chantry.) I didn't tell anyone I was coming home, and they were surprised. Uncle Joe and Aunt Helen Proulx were there too, and Papa was sitting in his chair in the living room.

Ma said, "No, it's not!" She couldn't believe it.



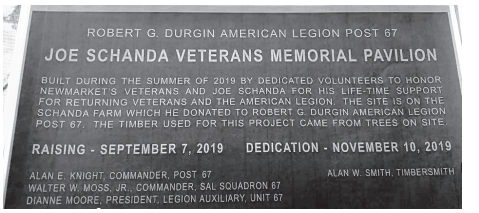
Leo back home on Nichols Avenue in 1954

Other Newmarket residents took part in the Korean conflict. Both of **Patsy's** brothers, Ted and Charlie Lang, served in Korea. **Joe** and John Schanda also served in that conflict. Their pictures were added by the family to the portrait shown earlier of their brothers and sisters after World War II.



Pictures of Joe (Navy) and John Schanda (Army) inserted on either side of Frank

Joe served in the Korean conflict, and when he returned to Newmarket, he joined the American Legion, where he became very involved in helping local veterans. In the summer of 2019, he was honored by Newmarket's Robert G. Durgin American Legion Post 67 for his lifetime support for returning veterans and the American Legion. The plaque shown below rests on land where **Joe's** house had stood. In 1955 he had purchased the 18th century home of Washington and Abigail Folsom Haines (19th century owners of the adjacent mill at Crow and Eagle Falls). **Joe** had slowly rebuilt and updated the structure, but it was destroyed by fire in 2009. He later donated the property to the American Legion Post 67.



Plaque at Veterans Memorial Pavilion on Schanda Farm



Joe with Admiral Michael Maclellan at the dedication of Joe Schanda Veterans Memorial Pavilion

The 1960s and Vietnam

Unlike World War II and the Korean conflict, involvement in Southeast Asia started slowly. During the early '60s, as the spread of communism continued to be a major concern, the nation slowly became aware of the war in Vietnam.

According to the American War Library, in 1960, the US had 900 troops in Vietnam. That number had increased to 23,300 by 1964, when Newmarket's first Baby Boomers graduated. A year later, the troop size increased eightfold, and it peaked in 1968 with 536,100 troops serving in Vietnam.

As casualties rose, support for the war began to erode. Newmarket's tradition of military service was put to the test, as young men faced the draft board. About a dozen of our narrators came of age during this era. Some joined enthusiastically, while others managed their draft cards in various ways.

After graduating from UNH, **John** enlisted in the Air Force and spent his fourth year overseas—in Spain, as the Historian for the 98th Strategic Air Command. Although he didn't serve in Vietnam, he had strong opinions about the war….
For those of us who remember the tumultuous years of the 1960s and early 70's, we were all affected by Vietnam. In my Newmarket High Class of 1964 (the school's first official class of baby boomers), one-third of the graduating class either enlisted or were drafted into the Armed Forces.

At the beginning of the War, at the time of the first advisor in civilian attire, and up until July 1965, the American dead for the whole war were fewer than 400. By September 1966, the figure climbed to 5,130 -- an average of 100 per week.

When Bob Hope played his first Christmas Touring Show in 1964, there were 20,000 American Troops there. By Christmas 1966, there were 400,000, which did not include the super-secret buildup in Thailand, which everyone knew about, but no one talked about; that's where my friend and classmate Larry Smith was assigned.

Unlike our fathers' wars in WW II or Korea, this war's conflicts and savagery were broadcast daily, reaching television sets throughout the country. Previously unheard-of places were now the cities and towns where other classmates, Johnny Munroe, Terry Zych, Gary Dubriel, and Lenny LaBranche sweated and fought.

Despite what Saigon claimed, in the countryside, government ended at the village gate. There, the elders and the 3 Rs ruled – rice, religion, and relatives. We were fighting a stealth Viet Cong, a fanatical enemy who hit and ran mostly at night using terror, bombings, murder, kidnapping, and torture. This was a war with no front, no rear, no fixed military objectives. Whatever objectives the Pentagon issued, they shifted with overriding political agendas, and those agendas changed with public reactions to varying TV broadcasts.

Newmarket only lost one soldier to this war -- Marine Corporal Kenneth White, killed in action in 1967. Although he was about six years older than we were, almost everyone knew Kenny. He graduated from St. Mary's and then Newmarket High School, Class of 1959. He was a volunteer on the Fire Department and a foreman for the old Tiger # 1. He worked at almost every muster, pumping that old hand tub for all he was worth.

Men who were married, with—or expecting—a child **(Donald**, **Bruce,** and **Ted)** were exempted from the draft.

Bruce … *was still in college at that time, also. My draft number never came up in the lottery, so I was never drafted. Some of my friends were drafted and they served in Vietnam. Most of them made it back, but a few did not*.

On another note, Bruce's involvement with the Spectras could have opened doors in the music world. After being invited to tour with the Beach Boys in 1969, members of the band decided to turn it down: the risk of losing their college deferments was just too great. Bruce reflected on that decision:

We always wondered how that would have affected our lives if we had gone on tour.

Both **John** and **Ray** served during the Vietnam era, and both avoided the Army draft by volunteering for another branch of the service.

Ray:

I graduated from high school in June 1965, and on October 5th, I was sworn into the US Navy. I was in the Navy from '65 till '69. This was during the

Vietnam War, and the draft was still in place. Either you're going to spend four years by enlisting, or you're going to get drafted for two years in the Army.

We were a Navy family: my father worked at the shipyard, my oldest brother Richard was a submariner, and my sister Gloria was a WAVE. My brother Roger was the oddball who enlisted in the Army and became an MP.

After boot camp, I was assigned to a school in Millington, TN. Now, wouldn't you wonder what the Navy is doing that far inland? Since my rate was in Naval Aviation, I went to an Aviation Structural Mechanic School as an Ejection Seat Specialist. If Navy pilots have to eject from an aircraft, their seat is going to go out of that aircraft with them. The school dealt with specific training in the structural mechanics of that seat.

Then I got sent to Norfolk, Virginia. The day I walked into the Personnel Office, they looked at me and said, "What are you doing here? We have no aircraft." Then they found out that I had a Government Driver's License, and they said, "Great! Until we find out what we're going to do with you, you'll be in the motor pool.

So I became a driver. Then the Admiral's driver got his wish to become a Swift Boat Commander on the Mekong Delta. But then--who would drive the Admiral around? ME! That's what I did for the remainder of my tour.

The guys in my barracks used to complain because I didn't have to stand inspection every month like they did. I told them, "Are you kidding? When you drive for an Admiral, you have to stand inspection every single day…and if you're not squared away, then you won't be driving for an Admiral for very long."

David was in high school and college throughout the Vietnam years. He saw the war from a different perspective.

Of all the decades, I liked the 60s the best. There was a lot going on in the world and in the country. The Vietnam War was going on, and we'd read about it and talk about it in class, but we didn't do any protesting. We did write letters to our Senators and Congressmen against the war.

Linda had a cousin who served in Vietnam. …

I remember when he came home, and his parents brought him to the lake. We were having corn on the cob, steamers—the whole kit 'n caboodle. We all wanted to hear stories from him. And he said how nice it was to have food without bugs in it.

Donna had many classmates and several relatives who served there. And she also pondered some of the aftereffects of the war here in Newmarket.

What riveted me was all the Laotian people who came to settle in Newmarket because of that war. Growing up, we had just the French and the Polish and

us–the English, as "Americans". When the Laotian community moved into town, it was really interesting to learn about their backgrounds and how hard they worked. They were like the hardest-working students in school. I think they didn't take it for granted. They appreciated what they could do with what they had when they came to New Hampshire.



Donna (left) and her family in 1963



PAGE SIXTEEN

NEWS FROM BOYS IN SERVICE

Enjoying a furlough of 31 days at his home is PVT. ALFRED GELAR, USA, who has returned to this country after three months' overseas duty in Europe. He holds the European theatre ribbon and Good Conduct medal, and has served in Germany, France, Austria, Belgium, England and Scotland.

Private Gelar entered the Army in November, 1944, and left for overseas service in April of 1945. He is to report to Fort Devens, Mass. at the expiration of his furlough, for shipment to Camp Cook, Cal., for jungle combat training.

* * *

PVT. ROBERT G. STEVENS, USA, son of Mr. and Mrs. John A. Stevens of the Plains road, is spending a 16 day furlough here. Formerly at Camp Blanding, Fla., he will report for further duty to Camp Rucker, Ala.

A graduate of Newmarket High school in the class of 1944, he entered the service in November of that year.

* * *

Now located at a Naval Air base in Texas is OSCAR ROY, Seaman 1-C, USN, son of Thomas Roy of 63 Exeter street.

A member of the Naval Air Corps, Seaman Roy is expected home on leave in the near future.

Smith Shoe corporation. He came to Newmarket from Athol, Mass.

* * *

When the National Automobile Dealers' association set out to recruit an all-volunteer ordance outfit for the Army at the outset of the war, it was decided that Tennessee, the "Volunteer State," was the ideal hunting ground. The association was right, and the 3264th Ordnance Base Depot company was the result.

This company, composed of 11 enlisted men and six officers, is on its way back to the United States via Camp Miami in France, with a brilliant record of servicing American armored divisions.

Since April 1, the unit has worked in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Holland and Germany, keeping the armored forces rolling.

Among men in the company are PFC. LEO J. PELLETIER, USA, son of Alexis Pelletier of 7 Nichols avenue, Newmarket.

* * *

ENSIGN ARTHUR R. BEAUCHESNE, USN, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert H. Beauchesne of 11 Chapel street, has been at his home recently on a three-day delay en route.

He has been located at Detroit, Mich., and is now at Camp Edwards until his shipment to overseas duty.

Stories From the Front

The above clipping shows a snippet from the Newmarket News, August 3, 1945. It's a section called "News from Boys in Service." The arrowed selection pertains to **Donna**'s father, Robert Stevens.

John reflected on changes in how wartime news has been delivered in our history.

Since our country's founding, local newspapers have carried the names and personal news of our servicemen. The New Hampshire Gazette, (published in Portsmouth 1763-1776) was read in taverns throughout the colony, and is considered by some as the nation's earliest newspaper. It reported the

December 26, 1774, Royal Proclamation of Treason against all those involved in the raid on Fort William and Mary—a precursor to the American Revolution.

During 20th century wars: WW I & WW II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War, Newmarket had a local press where servicemen and women would write letters directly to the Editor for publication. Families also shared letters and news with the publishers. That local connection ended with the last copy of the Tri-Town Transcript in 1998.

We have lost that shared link. We have lost the reliable, corroborated eyewitness accounts from those at the front—news that folks back home could trust. News today can be both discouraging and deceiving. In this age of spurious AI, slanted cable news, internet blogs, TikTok, etc., stories from the front are now more suspect than ever.

Another Look at the Past & A Message for the Future

The Past

In each interview, we asked this question: "**What makes Newmarket, Newmarket?"** It was usually toward the end of the interview, so responses often summed up what had been said before, eliciting a comparison between what Newmarket had been and what it is today. According to **Lorraine LaPointe,**

When I was little, I knew everyone in every house on the street. Now I hardly know anyone. I don't even know my neighbors.

Others saw this from a geographical perspective, speaking of its uniqueness as a small town situated along the Bay, with little room to expand, or as a mill town between the more prosperous towns of Exeter and Durham. For **Ray**, Newmarket's underdog reputation got personal:

My future sister-in-law was meeting with us one time, and we happened to be discussing the towns that we grew up in. She said, "By the way, does anybody know about dumpy little Newmarket?" Everybody else around this table knew that I grew up in Newmarket and they all busted out laughing. To this day, I will not let her off every time I see her.

Michael had a more historical perspective, describing how immigrants had shaped our town:

It was a melting pot. The mills drew people of many different nationalities and ethnic origins to the town… It wasn't always easy. When the Irish first came, they weren't welcome. And there are stories of the French-Canadian kids sliding down the hill into the Polish area. And the Polish kids would beat them up. Then, when the Polish kids would go up to the top and slide down, the French-Canadian kids would beat them up. But over the course of time, everyone was welcome.

There have been changes, but not all changes are bad. When we were kids, everyone knew just about everyone in town. Now we have new people with new ideas coming to live here, and that's exciting.

Dave expanded on that thought and observed Newmarket's more recent development:

…an ethnically blended workforce made up of waves of French Canadian, Polish, and Italian immigrants. I don't want to leave anybody out, but there has

been a lot of diversity over the years. During the 1970s, Father Bruni, the pastor of Saint Mary Church, brought in Laotian refugees during and after the Vietnam War, to give them a place to get reestablished…

Newmarket has managed to maintain its friendly small-town character. Redeveloping the mills has been helpful, bringing a lot of people downtown.

As for **Ron's** last comments, we'll let his 2023 Facebook post speak for him:

My Newmarket is where the Lamprey River flows into Great Bay, and the ghost of Chick Hayes can still be seen fishing for eels, alewives, and smelt. My Newmarket is where white collar workers live in the granite and brick buildings, where blue-collar workers once made Timberland boots. My Newmarket is where "everybody knows your name" at the PAC (Polish American Club*) and Legion. My Newmarket is home of the NHS Mules, who kick ass wherever they go in the Granite State. My Newmarket is home of the Stone Church, where for over 50 years the music has not died. My Newmarket is where people came to live for a short while and are still here 30 years later. And, finally, my Newmarket is that no matter where I "Live", it will always be my hometown.*

Patti comments on Newmarket's hard-working citizens and the inclusiveness of the town:

There's room for everybody… And Newmarket rewards hard work. Maybe that's from the foremothers and forefathers from which we came. Maybe it's from the history of the mills. I don't know where it came from, but… when I was the state Representative, my politics were more liberal than many of my constituents, but they elected me because they felt that I worked hard for them.

Also, the town is tolerant. You could go into any restaurant downtown and see all kinds of people interacting. We had university professors and folks like my parents who worked out of town. We had people working in the mills, long-haired people and crewcut people--all kinds. Everybody managed to get along.

And Newmarket folks not only got along; they took care of one another. **Glenn** said it even happened on the sports fields:

There were only about 2000 people at the time, and all the kids knew each other and used to play together. We would gather at the Nichols Avenue field, now called the Beanie Howcroft field, and play baseball.

The unwritten rule was that anybody who was already playing had command of the field. If we got there when younger kids were playing and we wanted to use the field, we wouldn't try to bully them. We would say, "You've got a bunch of kids here. We want to play baseball. How would you like to play baseball with us?"

When we played, we let them hit, and instead of trying to get them out, we'd flub the ball a little bit just so they could get on base. It was sports that pulled us all together.

And perhaps they all learned it in school. **John** seems to think so:

More than anything else, what makes Newmarket, Newmarket is our own school system, because it's so small. The teachers know everyone, and everybody knows everybody else. For the most part, everybody is supportive, and it's not easy to fall between the cracks. That hasn't changed.

Pauline spoke of how much that support meant during the summer when tragedy struck her family:

If something happens, people are there for you. When our daughter Kelly died, they rallied around, and we felt part of a close-knit community. I can't tell you how kind everyone was. We received money from the American Legion, the Polish Club, the Eagles, and all those places that we weren't even a part of.

When Kelly was in the hospital in Boston, our neighbor, Stephanie Miller, said, "What can we do? What can we get her to make her more comfortable?" The doctor said that she could use a pair of high-top sneakers to keep her feet pointing up. And Stephanie Miller said, "Yep, I'll get those for you."

Our narrators still see that close-knit, caring community here. Many comments started out with "the people." **Priscilla** didn't beat around the bush:

The people are close. It's always the people.

Patsy went into more detail:

It's the people. People will just start talking to me, and they might say, "I knew your father," or "I knew your brother." People will know me just by looking at me. They'll say, "You're a Lang. I know who you are." It's like a continuing story, from our younger days all the way up until we get to be this age.

Jan, a more recent resident in Newmarket, commented:

First, the people. Wherever you go, people are nice. I'm a talker and when I walk down the street, I say good afternoon, or how are you doing? And most of the time, people answer me back, and we have brief conversations.

And the restaurants are wonderful-- both the food and the staff. My former student, Derek Fisher, owns Wing-itz. That's really special. When we have ties with people, it brings us closer together.

Longtime resident **Richard** is still making friends here:

Back then we knew everybody in town. Now, we don't know a lot of people, but the new ones we have met have been gracious and friendly. As a matter of fact, we met a beautiful couple at Thanksgiving dinner …at the Community Church, and I would imagine that they will remain friends.

Barbara described Newmarket's welcoming atmosphere:

I can walk downtown and not see anyone that I know anymore. That's probably not a bad thing because it's welcoming a lot of younger people into Newmarket. And the growth… just watching the mills turn into something nice, beautiful, and usable…

There are a lot of activities that you can join if you don't know people… lots of ways of meeting people in a church or an organization. There are enough ways to make friends.

Even though **Linda** admits to getting perturbed about new folks in town claiming to be native, she understands where they're coming from:

I'll say, "Do you know where Poor Town Road is or Epping Road?... No? Then you're not native."

But I've learned that I have to give them a little grace, because they're trying to become a part of what we once were, this nice little community of people caring about each other. And after the recent fire on Lafayette Street, you can see that people really do care—and I think that's what makes it a great town. People are willing to help other people even though they might not know you.

It's been years since **Donna** has lived here, but…

It will always be home. And as I get older, I find out more things that I didn't know about Newmarket. … This is where I want to be, still learning new things about it. It's just such a warm community. You may not see somebody for a long time, and then when you do see them again, it's like you were just with them yesterday.

Judy is another townie who keeps coming back:

I was brought up here, and I lived here for many years. But once the kids were all out of college, we moved to Dover. I still do everything in Newmarket because it's a unique community, … There are so many new people, and when I rejoined the Community Church, I thought I was going to be on the outside. But it's not like that at all. It's a whole new group of friends and people who have a lot of varied interests. I love that … everyone still seems to care about each other.

*Unlike other places where you go home and go to bed, Newmarket is a place where you go to live.***

** In 2025, Judy moved back to Newmarket.

A Message for the Future

When asked to share a message for future generations, many narrators took the opportunity to summarize what they liked about growing up here. Their comments revolved around some familiar themes: the close community and the sense of being "rooted" in town.

Others used Newmarket's past as a springboard for some advice.

Ted: *Appreciate what's here and don't try to make it what you see somewhere else.*

John: History *isn't dead. It's a living, dynamic experience you can share if you make the effort.*

Pauline: *Help your neighbors. Be there for people.*

Rochelle: *Be kind to each other. The world is so different now, and we're all different. Be responsible—and try to be a good person. Last of all, make good choices.*

Jan: *Everybody needs to help each other to survive.*

Shirley: *Care for your family and other people. Almost everybody needs some kind of help sometimes.*

Patti: *Don't complain. Get involved. There's room for everybody to make a contribution. You can find out by coming to a Town Council meeting or a Budget Committee meeting. You'll be able to make a real difference in your time. I think it's been that way as long as I can remember, and I hope it always stays that way.*

Michael: *Be active in your community and volunteer. It's a lot of work and it's not always pleasant, but it will pay back a thousand-fold.*

Carol: *Respect the clean water, the remaining forests, the land, and the histories of the people who worked in those mills and raised large families.*

Dave: *I would like to see Newmarket continue with its tradition of being a family-friendly place to live and work with a good school system. As much as we like history, we also have to change with the times and adapt to different conditions to be effective. If we continue to adapt and maintain our presence as a historic community, I think we'll be around for many years to come.*

Lorraine Shelton: *Enjoy life. Enjoy what you can and whatever you're able to do. Live life to the fullest and participate in everything you can.*

IN MEMORIAM



Theresa (Terry) McGrath Boisvert, 1921-2024

Terry was affectionately remembered for her warm hospitality towards friends, neighbors, and the children in her neighborhood. She opened her home to them and was proud to say she was "keeping the children safe and out of trouble." One of those children, Pauline Riley, called her Mrs. B and said, "I especially remember the fresh-baked cookies when you walked in after school. We girls would spend hours poring over the latest Sears catalog. As we passed into adolescence, she never complained about the loud music coming from her living room."

In her early years she was a secretary at the Macallen Company, a volunteer for the American Heart Association, and a Lecturer for the Catholic Daughters of America. In recognition of her remarkable life and many contributions, Terry was awarded the Boston Post Cane by the Town in 2019, honoring her as the oldest resident of Newmarket.

Joseph (Joe) Schanda, 1930-2024



Joe was born on the family homestead in Newmarket, where he was one of eleven children. He was a lifelong resident of Newmarket, graduating from Newmarket High School in 1948 and entering the Navy that same year. He served in the Navy from 1948 to 1952 and was a Korean War veteran. Joe loved to hunt and fish, and he loved the Great Bay where he spent time oystering, lobstering, and clamming.

Throughout his life, Joe was an active member of the Robert G. Durgin American Legion Post 67, where he served as Commander and Chaplain. In addition, he served two terms in the New Hampshire House of Representatives, where he made significant contributions to state legislation. His commitment to public service led to his appointment to the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee under the Fish and Game Commission, a position he held for 16 years.

Bertrice (Bert) Dennett Jennison, 1928-2025



Bert was born in Newmarket and graduated from Newmarket High School in 1947. She married her husband Roger Jennison that same year. She worked in Sam Smith's Shoe Shop after graduation but didn't go back after her three children were born. She moved to Barrington in 1956 with her husband and returned to Newmarket in 2005 after his passing. She was the proud grandmother of six grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.
Bert enjoyed socializing and building friendships. She held a 50-year membership in the Order of Eastern Star, Crescent Chapter, where she served in various roles, including past Grand Ruth of the Grand Chapter of New Hampshire. She was Queen Mother of the Red Hat Society, a former member of the Newmarket Militia, a member of the New Market Historical Society, and an active participant in the Newmarket Senior Citizens Group that meets at the Sunrise Sunset Center.



Michael A. Provost, 1952-2025

Michael was a past President of the New Market Historical Society, and he dedicated his life to historical preservation in many forms. As creator and guide for Lamprey Heritage, Millyard, and Halloween Mayhem Tours, Michael shared lesser-known aspects of the town's history with residents and visitors alike. He was involved in economic development initiatives with the National Main Street Program, focusing on revitalizing local businesses and fostering community pride. Michael served on many town boards and committees, volunteering his time for over 50 years.
He was a founding member of the New Market Militia as well as a member of the Newmarket 250th Committee in 1977, which was the basis of his vision for Newmarket's 300th Anniversary. He was our Subject Matter Expert for the development of this book, and one of our Interviewers and Narrators. His knowledge and dedication to the many initiatives he created or supported will be greatly missed.

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New Market Historical Society

The New Market Historical Society contributed many of the pictures and some of the anecdotes that are in this book. Several of our Narrators and four of our Interviewers are members. We are grateful for their participation and support.

In 2027, Newmarket will be celebrating its 300th Anniversary of becoming an independent parish, separate from the town of Exeter. Newmarket Stories was written to preserve the memories and voices of those who shaped our town from the 1930s to the 1980s, and to honor the 300th Anniversary.

300 Years AT THE RIVER'S EDGE NEWMARKET, NH | EST. 1727

NEWMARKET BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The fiscal agent of Newmarket Stories, the Newmarket Business Association provided in-kind promotional services for the book and the ability to collect donations so more copies of the book can be produced.

The Newmarket Stories Team—Our Process

This book is the culmination of a 3+ year effort. In 2022, Karen Schuster shared her idea for a book on Newmarket based on interviews—focusing on the 50 years stretching from the 1930s during the Great Depression (and after the Newmarket Manufacturing Company had declared abandonment) through Newmarket's gradual rebuilding and revitalization as a shoe shop town.

Both Karen and I had only lived in town since 1973, but three in our group were Newmarket natives: Patti Blanchette (Lawyer and NH State Representative Emerita), John Carmichael (President, New Market Historical Society), and Michael Provost (President, Newmarket 300). All three are narrators as well as interviewers. Newmarket Media Services Manager Tim Cremmen completed our group.

We started meeting early in 2023, with Karen leading the way. During the first months, we pondered whom to ask and what to ask. Michael was especially knowledgeable about the target population, as we sought to interview people who had been born before 1940, as well as including younger narrators born 20-25 years later. Our list of narrators kept growing as word of the project spread.

The list of questions grew too, with topics ranging from the dietary to the philosophical. The group began interviewing in May of 2023, learning along the way the intricacies of the video process and how to transcribe audio into print format. While many interviews were filmed in the Town Hall, Tim often hauled his equipment to various places as needed.

Sometimes we did pre-interviews or provided a list of questions in advance. And we learned how helpful it was to have a personal connection to a narrator before starting the interview. After the interviews, many narrators received drafts of their transcripts; that opened the door to more clarification and detail. Calls, visits and email correspondence after the initial interview became a part of the conversation.

It took well over a year to complete all the interviews, during which time we also checked out publication possibilities, sent out requests for donations, and applied for (and received) a New Hampshire Humanities Grant. This prompted our participation in Oral History Workshops, sponsored by the New Hampshire Humanities. (The common wisdom at the workshops suggested starting out with six or seven interviews; and when Karen mentioned that we had interviewed over 30 narrators, they were amazed.)

By September 2024, interviews were done and we began to put the book

together. While this book focuses on a specific 50-year period (1930s-1980s), the topics that had emerged from our interview questions became a template for presenting these stories. Karen excerpted and organized topics from each interview, I wove the narrations together for each topic, and John provided additional historical background.

We all chased down photos. Giving tacit acknowledgement that not everyone is comfortable in a digital world, Patti visited many narrators' homes to fetch and return their photos. Once a photo was deemed relevant and sufficiently in focus, it was digitized to publishing specifications by John. Most of the photos in this book came from the narrators, but the Historical Society collection came in handy too.

For the video presentation for Newmarket Stories, Tim has worked to highlight the most memorable stories, spoken by those who lived them, with pictures of the town and its people.

Several of our narrators passed prior to the publication of this book. We are especially grateful to have their stories here.

Kris Carmichael



Front row, L to R: Kris Carmichael, Karen Schuster, Chair, Patti Blanchette

Back row L to R: Michael Provost, Subject Matter Expert, John Carmichael, President New Market Historical Society, Tim Cremmen, Media Services Manager

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