

Oral Histories of Life in the  
Newfound Watershed  
*The Newfound Watershed Master Plan*



To: The Newfound Watershed Master Plan  
Brian Eisenhauer  
June Hammond Rowan  
From: Marcia Schmidt Blaine  
Re: report on Oral History project  
Date: January 2, 2008

In the fall of 2007, students in the New Hampshire and New England History class conducted interviews with 30 people who are in some way connected to the Newfound watershed region. Many references within the interviews show the deep connections between the people in the region. They value and wish to preserve the personality of the lake region. In this report, I have included the analyses students conducted after their interviews and after reading other interview transcripts, a CD with the interview transcripts, consent forms from each person interviewed, and a sampling of useful quotes from the transcripts that may be useful in your final report.

All of the interviewees appreciate the region they live in. They value the people in the region and, even when they disagree with their neighbors, believe that all are trying to do what they think is best. The controversy regarding the extension of sewerage lines to the lake is a perfect example. Each side strongly feels that their ideas will be most effective in keeping the lake clean. Most interviewees enjoy year-round outdoor activities and mentioned the thrill of seeing otters, mink, beaver, moose, red fox, and bear in their explorations of the area. While some trust the depth of the lake and the many springs that flow into the lake to protect it, most believe that varying degrees of increased regulation are necessary to preserve the area.

Almost without exception, the interviewees all listed growth as the greatest challenge facing the watershed region. It seems that for many the condominiums that sprang up in the 1990s awakened them to the threat of losing what they valued: the pristine beauty of the region. Many people suggested that what is needed is a regional approach. One interviewee, a member of a local select board, mentioned that there are now meetings of regional select boards. Yet, because of the authority granted town boards as opposed to some sort of larger geographic area, it's clear that much work must be done on a town-by-town basis rather than the region. For some, this is quite frustrating. Residents worry about the loss of the rural nature of the area as the high ground is now being cleared and lake-view houses built. They fear that the region will eventually be caught in the Winnepesaukee effect with increased traffic, commercialization, and environmental degradation. At the same time, they do not want the area to suffer economically. They seek some sort of balance that will preserve the timelessness of the region. Is education alone enough to do this?

A note about the attachments:

1. Each entry in the sampling of quotes includes the interviewee's name, the date they were interviewed and, in parentheses, the name of the interviewer. Interviewees' birth years are also listed. Students interviewed people ranging in age from late teens to early

90s. Excerpts from the interviews that may be useful for your final report are on the CD (title: 'oral histories – excerpts') and paper.

2. There are two exceptions to the consent forms: the interviews of Mason Westfall and Richard Cowern. I have included their complete transcripts and excerpts of their transcripts in your documents but, without the consent forms, you cannot use their information in the report unless you obtain permission.

3. The student's papers are based on at least five interviews: two they conducted and three of their classmates. They were instructed to find a theme within the interviews and to focus on that. You will see from their titles that they have chosen many interesting avenues to pursue.

**Every Acre Counts: Newfound Watershed Master Plan - Oral histories  
Conducted by the New Hampshire and New England History class at Plymouth State  
University, Fall, 2007 under the direction of Prof. Marcia Schmidt Blaine**

**Bruce VanDerren, October 19, 2007 (Christine Celeta)**

b. 1953.

[Most important issue facing the region] BV: making sure that the development is well planned...welcomed but incorporated with the watershed needs.

BV: I sense there's people who have the budget to buy a million dollar house have the budget to hire a lawyer and do what they want .... the towns don't have that kind of control. I think we've got to incorporate change in a way that preserves the sense of timelessness here.

BV: You know one minute you've got - you know a farm, and that's you know maybe for fifty years, and then it's a campground for light seasonal use. The next think you know, it's gonna be covered with trailers and traffic and it just goes to show that nobody understands "how did that happen?".... I mean there's a way to find the middle ground.

BV: I'm a selectman of Bristol, and I can count on one hand the number of times our Selectboard has talked to the other Selectboards, so we just started having Selectman Summits..... trying to see if we can start a dialogue about how we can keep this place as nice as we want it to be, but I am concerned that you know within a couple miles of each other, we've got one town that has no zoning.... . I guess that's what concerns me is that as you go from one town to the other.

**Helen Robinson, October 19, 2007 (Christine Celata)**

B. 1930

HR: My father - bought property before I was born (laughs) in 1927 on Newfound Lake and he founded a boys', traditional boys camp which he, with my mother, ran until 1942 at which time he closed the camp because the war (pause) prevented him getting counselors and food and everything....and then, just by a crook of fate, he let someone stay in one of the cabins that the boys would traditionally stay in - just as a favor, and he could see the idea of converting the cottages into housekeeping cottages for families to rent. So, in 1942 or 3 it became what it is today and has been operating - with the same (laughs) - some of the same cabins that were put up in 1927 and added onto -electricity put in them, running water and screen porches.....so.

HR: it's physically beautiful and I think it's a little more off the beaten path.

HR: the answer I got was: everything in my life changes; this is the only thing that doesn't change.

HR: there are more boats, there are more houses on hills. Um, I notice there's a change in the, the lake it's still clean but there are plants growing on the bottom.... Not algae, I don't know what it is, but they get washed up on the beach...and they were never there before and I'm told that one reason we see it and...I row rowing shells so I go out and I look down and they said that the water that comes in from the Fowler River, which is that river kinda near Wellington State Park.... it comes in and because it brings silt with it, that's why plants are growing, see they dredged it so boats could get up there to the Marina.

HR:

Yeah, I honestly think that the State should have, everybody's crying about not having enough money and I honestly...yes the water belongs to people of the State, I understand that, but I think they should, they charge for people to go into Wellington to swim, why don't they charge for you to put your boat in?

Interviewer took photos of her photos – included at end of interview transcript.

**Gordon “Buddy” MacDougall, November 7, 2007 (Patrick Leahy)**

b. 1914 Native – b. in Hebron

GM: Newfound Lake is better than most of the other lakes around here, but still its going, it's soon going to lose its identity in a few years, can't help it. Every cottage that's built - every house that's built on Newfound Lake has to have a sewer system. Okay, so they have these experts that come around and lay out the sewerage system that gets okayed by the state, but down the road, ten years from now, these septic tanks that have been put in, whether its 500 gallons or whatever, unless they pump them out every two years or three years and keep the junk out of them, stuff that shouldn't be there, they're not going to operate efficiency, and will have floods and when we do, that stuff has one place, just one place, and that is Newfound Lake. No place else to go, because everything is downhill from here to Newfound Lake.... I would like to see a sewerage system around Newfound Lake, every damn cottage would have a system.

GM: Well one thing about Newfound Lake that it has got, it is, that is pretty darn good, that the fact its spring fed pretty much. It has some brooks, but mostly, and I know this because from being in Newfound Lake, you would be swimming along in the lake, the water would be fairly warm, and you would all the sudden hit a place that feels like ice water. You hit a spring, and its cold, yea, and I know this because I've swam in Newfound Lake, and been in it so much. The lake itself, has got these springs of cool water, I've got the affects of one of those right here. If you go over to my sink, and you turn on the cold water, it will only take a little bit for that water to come from my 200 foot well, which the water will be just as cold as it will in January as it will in August. You don't have to put any ice in it, it's beautiful. You try glass of this water; you won't find any better water in the state of New Hampshire.

GM: I traced that thing back up to Bungalow village, not in, but next to it, and there were these people who had this cottage, and they had trouble with their sewerage system, so they disconnected their pipes that went into the septic tanks, and ran it down into the brook that went down to the town beach.

**Gillian Reise, November 5, 2007 (Kyle Clark)**

b. 1979.

GR: GR: I remember canoeing out there a lot when I was a kid. Actually I guess we did kind of live on the lake. We owned Fowler River Marina its now the Newfound Boat Club; it's over on West Shore Road over by Wellington State Park. And we used to canoe from there. And we could go straight out to the lake. My parents actually built the marina; there was nothing there.

GM: [re: population growth] That's definitely helped with the lake building up. It's that we have businesses that have definitely improved, you know you have a lot more people. And you know a lot of people that love the area too. You know people coming is not negative because they love being here. So it's not like there coming up to trash the place, they're coming up because they really enjoy coming up and the lake.

GR: For us with businesses in this town if the lake wasn't there what would we have? What draw would we have to get people to come up here? Yeah it's still beautiful you got the mountains but that lake really does it for a lot of people.

GR: I've never been down there but years ago they tried to move a hotel with oxen. I mean it was like a long time ago.... from one side of the lake to the other and it feel right through.... I don't know if it was in the twenties I know it was way back. There's also a mail truck down there I guess there's a lot of boats because a friend of mine scuba dives; I never have but he said there a lot of stuff.

GR: and I'd say they all work together pretty well. If something happens everyone would be there to work together and try and figure out a solution rather than not care.

GR: I like to see a lot more businesses going in. You know maybe people study their demographic a little better. It's hard because summer this place is mobbed but then you get to

November and December and its like where is everyone? Well they are home because there is nothing up here. So it would be nice for there to be another draw to the area other than the lake. It would be nice to have more activities for people to do. I've been thinking about that for along time I don't know were to go with but I think it would be good to have more attractions in the area.

**Larry Cushman, November 1, 2007 (Sierra Poole)**

b. 1925

LC: Well ahh we like a, we liked the lake. ... it was it was better before the summer people arrived. so that would be spring, spring fishing ... up until say July. And then once ... the tourists showed up, they make, although it is not terribly busy in comparison to say Winnepesaukee,...it got busier. And ... they were, I felt, they were fairly dangerous. They drank too much. They ran their boats too fast. Ahh, and so on. And, but then in the fall, when they were gone it would be nice again. But I think that this is almost a history that many of our lakes have....

LC: And man has a tendency to over do things and, and that does not usually do well for nature. Newfound has the same situation. They have a beautiful lake which for the most part is not terribly overly used. But I can remember what Newfound looked like thirty years ago, and.... Around Newfound what it looks like today, because it is just condominiums as far as you can see. And I know because I am a biologist and I know that water runs down hill, And all those people have toilets. Now they have septic systems, but a septic does not stop the water from flowing down hill.

LC: And what happen is most of this work is volunteer work. And you just do not get the numbers of people that are willing to ... to put a certain amount of not only their time but their brain, their thoughts into where they live; most people just sort of leave this up [to] some body else - they don't know who but some body else.

**David Switzer, November 2, 2007 (Katy Thurman)**

b. 1934

DS: And Ambrose Adams and his brother and two other guys were the orchestra. They sat in the stern and all the *Stella Marion* people were dancing on there. And when that barge wasn't used for dancing, it was used for carrying cord-wood. Piles of, ya know, cord wood cut to probably three or four foot lengths. And then it did more with lumber, there were lumber mill—there were saw mills... or no, I don't want to say saw mills. There was a lot of lumber being ex—being cut down on Tenney Mountain by hand. And then they would bring the lumber, or the-- the trees down to the lake. They worked them all together into a group and they would have what was known as a log boom. So the outer logs surrounding this were all linked together. And so it was the steamers job to pull the log booms down the lake to the saw mills in Bristol, some of which ran off the river that runs through Bristol, the Newfound River.

DS: The boat [*Stella Marion*] was just a small boat about 14 feet, but on the weekend there was so much traffic on the lake going very, very fast that the waves made a, a, a distinctive pattern that was going this way and that way. So that if you were in a small boat you found yourself just bouncing around. So if, it was more fun to go out on the weekday.

DS: go out on the lake and go from north to south and look at the shores and see the amount of buildings, see the amount of construction, see the amount of development that has, I would say appeared in the last 6 years - which gives cause of concern, I think. Uh not so much I think because all towns, Bridgewater, Bristol, Hebron, and so forth all have requirements for the septic systems and things like that. But lakes can only hold so many people, I mean comfortably. I mean they can hold hundreds of people, but really I think, it could undermine the tourist business if - if it becomes too populated. And that brings up the question: whose gonna say that it's going to become too populated? They say, you know we talk about sprawl, we usually think of sprawl

outside of an urban area where big store developments are taking place, but there is lake sprawl too.

DS: about the Newfound lake? My favorite thing? I think when you're on the lake there are great views. Looking north and looking east, and to a certain extent looking west. And I think that is a positive thing.... a lot of people take the lake for granted. And uh, I mean - it's there and we - we don't think about it as something special because we're, we're so used to it.

Photo of the drawing of what's left of the Stella Marion at the end of the transcript.

**Katie Foster, November 5, 2007 (Justin Foster)**

Age 17

KF: There's increased tourism into the area which causes car pollution and brings in people who will litter and leave trash not only at the beaches but on roadsides and in the woods. At the beach alone, I see overflowing trashcans, people leaving their waste and I've even found trash in the water. Not only is this pollution hurting the environment but its hurting the people and the animals. The animals get sick from eating left over trash and then they die which depletes the beauty of the land even more.

KF: We really need to take the proper precautions to ensure the environments clean and to keep the lake region beautiful so people will want to come back and visit the lake. We need to keep it clean so it can become a popular tourist attraction.

KF: I really love the area and would hate to see it get hurt due to the fact that people are lazy and decided something superficial is more important than the land we've all made our lives on.

**Laurence Sharp, October 9, 2007 (Mike Holt)**

b. 1939

LS: Oh yea, we've had some floods. Only one forest fire that I can remember. Which wasn't big, it only consisted of probably twenty-five acres. We had to lug water over a mile with Indian tanks to put it out, so it was quite an event at the time. Anything else, we'd have a flood and wash the roads out, then put them back. Nothing weird, nobody got washed away or nothing.

In your opinion what are some of the most important issues facing this area?

[LS]: Well you know there is a lot of things to consider, water pollution, how many people can you have around, there is some instance timber harvesting, cut a lot clear cuts and create a lot of runoff, creates problems. A lot of different issues

**Bill Drake, September 29, 2007 (Tami Melendy)**

b. 1984

TM: How many boats do you think you work on in a given season?

BD: I would say we have at least 15,000 people in the data base at the Marina, customers wise. Any where in between some people have more than one boat so it can be up to 18,000 boats we see in a summer.

TM: How many other marinas are around the lake?

BD: There is only one other Marina, it's on the opposite side of the lake we are on. We don't really have too much competition with them.

BD: The only change I have notice in the past two years actually, was when we had the flood. Not last May but I think the May of 06 we had a huge flood and that messed up the lake for the whole summer. The sandbar was all sticks; it wasn't nice any sandy like it usually is. It is back to normal this year but, that is the only time I really noticed a significant change.

**Jeff Shackett, September 25, 2007 (Tami Melendy)**

b. 1975

JS: it has changed a lot in that I don't think that it is affordable for people to own, for local people to buy lake front property now. My parents sold our house about 15 years ago because the taxes were so high. The value of lake front property has just escalated so much I think that it has become pretty hard for local people to actually own lake front property.... the demand for lake front property has escalated so much it has become unaffordable. I'm one of the more affluent people in the area and I can't afford to buy property on the lake so.

JS: My grandfather used to say we have three seasons here, July, August and winter and that's really the nature of my business. Certainly if it weren't for tourists I wouldn't be here, because I do so much business with them.

JS: I think it is important to keep these bodies of water accessible to everyone in the state not just the people who can afford to have water front property. I was a huge advocate for that but, I don't think the lake quality has suffered at all, I haven't heard that it has. You know, I go to Winnepesaukee and I see the weeds growing up through the water and we don't have those here, thankfully not yet. I believe it is one of the cleanest bodies of water in the state if not the country.

JS: I can remember a flood when we were living over on the lake; my parents owned a cabin colony over on the other side of the lake. I think it was 1975, the front row of cottages that set on the edge of the lake were floating. My father had to sand bag them and tie them to trees so they wouldn't float off their foundations.

JS: if we were just to sewer the Bristol part of the lake, which is the scope of their project because it is being founded by the town of Bristol and the grant is being written by the town of Bristol.

All that affluent or whatever would certainly end up down here, from the surrounding towns. I think if we could sewer the whole lake that might help but, I think that sewerage this lake is a huge waste of money.

JS: Newfound is a huge watershed area. I think for every inch of rain we get it raises the Newfound Lake a foot. So, Newfound Lake, doesn't just, the quality of Newfound Lake doesn't just consist of the people who live directly on it or next to it. It has a huge watershed area, so what occurs in the pretty distant radius of the lake affects its quality.

Photo of Jeff Shackett included in the CD.

**Marcia Morris, October 26, 2007 (Matthew Hunter)**

b. 1958

MM: when I was little it had a much more rural feel to it, and I can remember - I don't know how old I was when - it must have been in the '80s, I think, there was like this big real-estate boom and these huge condominium developments started going in on the lake.

MM: It's all sort of more developed than I'd like, but I think the northern end of the lake is - we're very fortunate to have a number of conservation properties that have been put together and some land owners who um have a lot of fore front land and who take care of it very well, so that it remains a really beautiful kind of space. If you're kayaking out on the lake, which I do all the time, you know you see a lot of wood, wooded frontage and that's really, really nice on the northern part of the lake. The southern part of the lake obviously is you know little miniature cabins all over the place but - it's just a different nature of the beast.

MM: I didn't really understand but it was a beautiful, beautiful feeling of, you know, being under water and how beautiful it was to be under water. It was a very pleasant experience and I've never forgotten it. So that's a good way to bond with the lake over time!

MM: There's all these great events that happen and all of them are fun, and all of them help create a sense of community around the lake, which I really like.

Morris: I think everybody will tell you the same thing, it's kind of cliché. Smart Growth.

MM: I actually care a lot about the people who live in this area who have lived here for generations, many whom are not wealthy. I'm a little bit concerned about all these wealthy people

moving up from, you know, New York and New Jersey buying, building these mega mansions and stuff and how that's going to effect the older timers who were here, who don't have a little money. Their job base is shrinking, and I just want to make sure that this is a place where everybody can live and live productively.

**Mary Hazelton, October 24, 2007 (Mike Holt)**

b. 1945

MH: But we do end up on the lake sometimes if we take the canoes down the river from here. Right down on the edge of the field you can walk to the river and put the canoes in or the kayaks in. Sometimes we will go down the river and end up on the lake that way,

MH: Well, growth I think. I feel, I don't know if other people think it's an issue. But I think it's a shame seeing all the houses going up on the hillside. Just for the view and so on. It's a problem I think, they get a beautiful view, but everyone else has to see them.

MH: So you have to be maybe more aware of the fact that if your water is degrading because of too many people you have to do something about or people are not going to come. So it's kind of a balancing act.

MH: I'd like it to maintain a rural character.

**Richard and Flora Braley, September 25, 2007**

b. 1913, 1918

FB: So we, we would just slid down the road from up near Spectacle [?] Pond, down to where my folks lived in the Village.

EJG: So, you would go down a big hill....

RB: I use to go ice fishing on the lake in the winter. I had a bob house that we owned and we use to go down and fish....

FB: You had one big one. It weighed twenty-six pounds!...

FB: Things have grown up a lot. People use to keep all the road sides free of bushes that came up. And now they grew up and we don't have all the views that we had. When we moved up [in 1946], all those trees down there were not big like that. We could see right over on Tenney Hill and see the cattle in the pasture.

**Doug Robertson, December 7, 2007 (Kyle Clark)**

b. 1949

I learned to swim in Newfound when I was in early grade school, at Wellington beach.

DR: From when I was thirteen or fourteen to when I was in my mid twenties our family ran the Hillside Inn. Which is at the north end of the lake.... there was a big red barn.... That was run as an inn, as a resort and we ran it. Our family ran it for about thirteen fourteen years.

DR: Well how has it changed? Well one of the things that's changed which is really nice that's changed is there more sailing on the lake. Because when I was a kid there weren't until Peter Brown came around there was not a lot of sailing on Newfound Lake. People considered it too windy to sail on. A long time ago. But now there is more sailing going on which I think is a good thing. The thing that I don't think is good is that the size of the power boats has become so large that it's quite ridiculous. I mean I don't mind water skiing. You know boats that can pull a water skier. I don't mind powerful boats, a small boat. But they got some boats on the lake that are powerboats that are like offshore racers type boats that are fifty feet long.

DR: Let's see what else, what else has changed. The water is still, one thing that hasn't changed is the water is still beautiful and clear. That's really something that I value and treasure [pause] a lot.

DR: . I enjoy early morning over there when the lake is flat- you can go out and water ski and it's like glass, its really cool.

DR: We then went further up on the property we owned. I don't know if it still is but it was owned at the time by the resort. And up on the side of the mountain we found a spring. We found a spring by divining.... You ever see someone take a crooked stick, hold it between their hands. And when the stick goes down, there's water and when it doesn't there no water.... It's called a divining rod and the best sort are made out of apple. Well, that's something I can do is find water that way.... So I walked over the side of the hill up there and about a half mile up onto that hill. I came across a water source.

DR: much of the lake is fed by springs in the lake. And that's what keeps it purity. It's interesting to know that certain springs like the one I found on the hill, doesn't necessarily have to be in the lake. The aquifer was up there - the other thing that interesting is at the south end of the lake, there is actually a true artesian well.

DR: And so we cut a road up in there. Like a logging road. Pulled our backhoe and bulldozer up there along with some other fill and we dug this spring out.

DR: The other thing I that needs to be thought of is the amount of - How do I say it? It's looking at the lake from the aquifers that feed it. You have to look at what happening to those aquifers with all the construction are tapping into those too much.

DR: some of the hillsides are being stripped of their forestation so people can have better views. Those actions have consequences on the land. And people should be educated about that.

**Joe Denning, October 2, 2007 (Sierra Poole)**

b. 1942

SP: What do you know about the watershed?

JD: Not as much as I should. I find that, the more I look around the less I know. I don't think it's in trouble yet. But I think it could be. Right now it's pretty much uncontrolled growth. Particularly in the hills that surround the lake. I also understand that it is a very fast lake for water.

JD: We need to do things more regionally, and with that our Bristol selectman have started to regularly meet with other selectmen from other towns, to work on some regional issues to see what we've got. Hopefully, we can do something.

JD: It is hard to be connected, when we need to connect all of the time. That is the difference between a community and a successful community.

**Mason Westfall, Fall, 2007 (Hillary Hyson)**

b. 1938

HHH: What would you like to see done with the lake? Would you like this new watershed project to go through or do you have concerns about that?

MW: I don't have a problem with a project; what I have the biggest problem with that I've seen over the years is that we study things to death. And it's wonderful to identify problems and identify ways of perhaps solving problems but very seldom are solutions ever implemented. And if rules are established, very seldom are they enforced. So, when it gets to the point where monies need to be spent to make something happen the idea seems to get lost and that's sad. Because many of us realize what the things are that need doing and we say gee, it should you know, you should do this and try and educate the public as to what they should and shouldn't do. And most people are conscious and are going to do that anyways. But those that aren't, there's very little that can be done to make they do what they should, if they are doing what they aren't to do. But that's my biggest concern about a project like this, is that we can identify what's going on, good and bad and I think we need to accent those good things that are happening. The thing is follow up and see that something positive happens for the study I guess, that's what really important.

**Edward ('Ned') Gordon, October 13, 2007 (Justin Foster)**

b. 1948

NG: it's part of your life, something that's available to you at all times and you feel so fortunate to have it, it just adds to wealth of life to have a lake in your backyard.

NG: Bristol itself is a mill community and even though a good portion of the lake lies in Bristol, the town of Bristol itself really got its beginning because of the river that runs out of the lake and the river drops a couple of 100 of feet between the lake and the Pemigewasset, and in doing so it offered mill power, water power to mills and from the very beginning of the settlement of this area there were saw mills and grist mills in this area up until recent history which was a large part of manufacturing largely because the Newfound River, not because of the lake.

NG: ... the concern that a lot of people have over the development of the lake. Not necessarily on the lake itself, but on the tributaries to the lake in the watershed. In particular there are very few land-use regulations in place in towns such as Groton and Alexandria. In those 2 towns in particular they have the most tributaries to the lake.... [O]ur whole quality of life is affected by it, so we have to protect it or we're going to pay the consequences.

NG: There are already lake quality issues simply due to the fact there is more users. You might go out there 10 years ago on a Saturday afternoon and see half a dozen boats and now you go out there on a Saturday afternoon and because all of the boats you have to be careful.

### **T. Holmes Moore, September 18, 2007 (Matt Hunter)**

b. 1920

Hunter: What would you say, how have things changed in the past 50 years since you've been here over the course, having to do with the lake, the area itself.

Moore:

THM: So, you can get, that'll give you some kind of idea of the pressure that has been put on Newfound Lake from developers and one of the reasons that I'm really interested in helping NLRA is to - I know that you can't, you can't keep the lake from being developed, that's not possible. So I think that NLRA is a great organization to help control that growth, to protect the quality of that lake. The economic engine of the area, in the summer, is Newfound Lake. And if you just look at the development that has already taken place and that I'm sure will continue to take place, really needs to be controlled. I think that NLRA has in place a lot of the, the things that need to be in place in order to control that. And if NLRA can - NLRA in itself doesn't make decisions, but it can influence the select boards of the nine towns around the lake, in terms of their regulations, and help them in adopting regulations which are going to keep density down and not pollute the lake, and not decrease the water quality, which to my mind is taking away the economic livelihood of the place partly, not to mention the aesthetic things. So that's really why I'm helping NLRA, I think it's a really important thing to do.

THM: Well because I think the lake is the part of the economic engine of [the region], but that's sort of a side reason; [the] most [important] reason that I'd like to see the lake maintained is the quality. I would not like to see it become Coney Island or the Weirs. I'd like to see it have the character it has now - preserving the beauty of the lake and just making it possible for people to really enjoy that and enhance quality of life for people who live around the lake. It just makes a lot of sense to me to do that.

THM: Development [is the most important issue facing the region], I think that the developers are doing their job. They are in the business of making money and they will, I don't really want to run developers down but many of them don't care about the environment. They don't care about what they are destroying to make their developments to make money on it. I think that's the major, major problem that we face because even if you get back from the lake several miles there are things happening in the streams two or three miles away from the lake that have an impact on the lake. ... It's really difficult for that guy who wants to have a nice lawn right there and waters it everyday, fertilizes it, puts the fertilizer in the lake, doesn't help the lake, so NLRA is the only agencies totally devoted to trying to keep that from happening. Got a huge job ahead of itself.

**Victor Field, September 27, 2007 (Patrick Leahy)**

b. 1948

VF: we have been in the past blessed being 20 years behind the times. It was a smaller area; it had a low profile and seemed to attract people who enjoyed a low profile. Which kept things more the same for longer, and we could look to other areas, and see things changing and know that it could take ten or fifteen years before that occurred here....

VF: the water doesn't care what town line it crosses, and it's not an infinite, and is in fact a finite, resource. The surface water can be contaminated and the ground water can be contaminated and other areas, if we work together smartly we can maintain a lifestyle we enjoy before we get in trouble, and also continue growth so that the people who rely on a different kind of economy can make a good living, but it takes bringing towns together, includes people currently in government or planning boards zoning, who are volunteer positions and other people who may wind up in those positions because people there now may in fact move and retire. ...so it's a real concern to have everyone understand that we're not trying to undo a problem, we're trying to prevent one.

VF: In even like today with the thunder storm, when I'm coming down here, where there is construction, the roads that aren't paved, because of the construction, have huge rivers of brown running down into the lake, that is nutrient loading. And the people who are building those places, in the future, and it isn't just today's event, it will take a number of these storms, will wonder why they have so many weeds growing at the shore line. The reason is, its fertilized it, its nutrient loaded with top soil, off their construction site, and that's where the weeds are going to grow, cause it's rich soil. And when you drive around now, and they'll be out with the front end loaders scraping it clean because it's building up; it won't last long, but it's so intense, it's washing part of the hill down. Those are the kinds of things we want to go out as the lake association and talk to people about, and say did you know that, and the reason is, and you can help that slow down by, so its an educational purpose.

VF: the work that needs to be done, is up the hills, so it doesn't get to the water. Alexandria and Groton is one the most prime bio diverse pieces of environment of the state of New Hampshire. It is rich in diversity of plant and animal life. And that reason alone should be protected.

VF: ... there are about 8,000 residents in that area. You don't need all 8,000 clearly, but you want to influence people, and it doesn't matter if they live on top of the mountain, or at the edge of the water. Their interests in fact are the same. Once they are all in the same boat, we will get somewhere if we all row together in the same direction. It's never easy, but it will be easier.

**George and Marilyn Blaisdell, October 1, 2007 (Elizabeth Gagnon)**

MB: Ice skating, you could see to the bottom, you know, even if you were far out.

GB: Yeh, if you get a freeze before the snow came and you went out skating about one hundred yards, you could look down fifteen feet and see every rock clears as day.

MB: There are parts I think that there are weeds growing. I don't think they're bad weeds but there is something growing in parts of it.

GB: ...And you get a lot of beach traffic in the summer and yet you go into that lake and its still very, very, very clean. It's also most pristine and I think the lake association has something to do with that. Like Marilyn said people monitoring it and volunteering at the boat launch to make sure there aren't any weeds brought in. you know or basic plants brought in. also monitoring conditions on the lake. We have friends that do that every week. They are out there taking samples and monitoring, so that's good....

EJG: What are some of the most important issues facing the region today?

MB: I'd say too much growth or builders that want to build on land that wouldn't be appropriate. That would send run off down into the lake some people are building on very small [inaudible] of land and have to put their septic systems to close to the lake. So I think its important towns to be very strict and monitor that kind of thing....

GB: ... But the controls make perfectly good sense, for the protection the lake and watershed....

GA:... people kind of look out for each other.

**Al Faro, September 27, 2007 (Tami Melendy)**

b.1961

AF: We would spend pretty much every weekend of the summer up here. It was kind of the big thing. I couldn't wait to get out of school all week to get, 3 o'clock on Friday afternoon, you know and wait for my dad to get home, pack the car and drive, forever again to get to where we wanted to go...

AF: It was just - look around. It was a great place, it was better for the kids to grow up; the ultimately it is the environment is just so much better up here.

AF: it was probably a half a mile you had to go through to get to the marina. It was really neat; you expected to see alligators coming off the side. It reminds, looking back of Africa or the Everglades or something like that, creature coming in, we never saw anything, but we hoped we did, but we never saw anything. It was just totally different; to have it part of the lake was amazing because it was so different. It was dirty and there was fuel in the water and I have not idea how it didn't get into the lake, it just seemed like when you go to that spot where you looked for, that is where it would start and when you got out of it into the lake it stopped, it was gone. It was clean, it was strange that it would separate like that, that is what I remember about going into there.

AF: That's another part why, I think myself and the boys both, as I get older and they were growing up didn't use the lake that much, because it was just so congested. It was packed, there was a lot of people out there, a lot of people that didn't care what they were doing out there as long as they were out there.

AF: I can remember at the lake, where my mom's house is, at the foot of the lake, you could walk out as far as you could walk and then some and it would just be sand, it would just be sand on the bottom of the lake. Now you walk out to you waist or you walk out ten or twelve feet and the bottom is kind of brown. I don't know if it is leaves or what, but we had leaves when I was growing up I'm sure we did, but they weren't there in the water, when you were getting in the water, so it is kind of silty and mushy on the bottom now, and it never was when I was a kid. So, I assume the impact the people around the lake have had, I think it must have something to do with the people, the more people that are there.

AF: Everything would have been different if I did not have the opportunities I had growing up, being up here in Bristol and at the lake. That's why I am who I am.

**David Powden, October 3, 2007 (Katy Thurman)**

b. 1936

DP: It's not as special as it used to be. To be point blank. But, uh, it was a wonderful town to be brought up in because everybody knew everybody else. They don't know that now. Umm, they uh, if you stole flowers out of the flower garden, then she would uh, tell your mother and then, we meet and correct you. we would be out at night until the street lights came on and we would go up to Roundtop and built forts and everything. We would have a wonderful time.

DP: (pause) Trying to get Bristol back on it's feet again - and... getting some people involved in the community, as far as selectmen and things like that. Having enough gumption to bite the bullet. Get lighting in the streets. Do the - get street lights for the streets. And stop talking about the mundane things, things that will take care of themselves anyway. Ever since we went into the building of the condominiums and everything else, Bristol has gone down the tubes. And it's - Bristol's still got the spark. There's a spark there, ya just got to fan it.

DP: once the condos came, there is two parts to Bristol now: Newfound lake part and the Bristol part. And you can understand the reason why Newfound lake wants everything, because all their condos and everything are right there, while Bristol is left out in dark. I want them to bring Bristol back in... they haven't made it yet.

DP: They're building major houses along the lake... if they don't stop building they are going to ruin the lake.... Because... they are building all along the mountains, and you know what happens to the surge. It all runs downhill. And they have to have room for their boats. So many boats on the lake and the lakes not that big.

DP: The lake actually made Bristol, but the water from the lake made Bristol. And Bristol used to be a real wonderful town. It had all sorts of mills, paper mills, clothing; they made scented toilet paper (laughs). They had tanning mills, they had - it was really active. And then it just goes down, down, down, down, down.

**Ken Weidman, October 15, 2007 (Shea Daly)**

b. 1939

KW: then it wasn't probably till - late '60s or maybe '70s, yeah maybe mid '70s, that people started to keep their cottages open year round and winterizing them and using them for snowmobiling, skiing or as a place to come in the winter. So that it - it - more and more people started using their cottage for that purpose; more and more of the roads would be plowed by the town. Originally the road where our cottage is wasn't plowed at all, because there was no one down there at the time, so it evolved into the more of a four season area around the lake that occurred very, very slowly. Now you go down onto that road and of the 50 lots down there, there is probably - 15, maybe 20m are now year-round homes - making their home there. A lot of people then converted their cottages as they got older - to year-round homes - putting foundations under them, moving them but basically keeping them pretty much in the same status they were in, which they were built and modifying them to some extent. Then I would say the phenomenon of the '90s came along and people started buying these little cottages and tearing them down and - not putting McMansions on them but larger more expensive homes. There can't be anymore land on the lake so it is limited by its shoreline, so as people wanted to acquire these homes, it pushed the prices of the lots up.... Because the lake has been transformed to some degree of a lake that was a summer lake, very much family and now it is more and more year round and instead of people coming up in their Chevys, they come up in their Escalades. It's - the lake is populated with people from Massachusetts - where the economy is good down there. Fortunately it has not happened to the degree of other lakes like a Winnepesaukee.

KW: there is the Shore Line Protection Act, which - that involves the development on the shore line so that's state and all of the towns have developed codes for monitoring and allowing building. But the problem is the towns are small and they don't have the initial resources to police their own codes. So most of the towns don't get a code enforcement officer, if they have a building inspector its part-time person and the level of expertise is not, is not very high. And there needs to be, in my opinion, collaboration of the towns, So that they can hire and share the cost between them to monitor the towns around the lake. How things get built, not in accordance to original plans and nothing is done.

KW: I suppose it's somewhat the whole watershed issue that is very political. I think the towns need to adopt stricter building codes is political or maybe the development in areas where the slope is too steep which hasn't stopped the strip logging that is occurring. Obviously if you build a house on the side of a - well, it happened here. We bought this lot and built on it, it was already cleared. But when it is cleared all the trees are taken away, when it rains it all washes down instead of getting absorbed when it was before so as that happens more and more its going to have an effect on the runoff and what's going down into the lake.

SD: What do you hope for the future of this area?

KW: Well I hope very much that it does not become a commercial area, that it be non-commercial with more responsible building codes adopted by various towns so that when an area in the watershed is developed that the first thing is done - it's developed in an ecological safe way, using cluster development, using techniques that will not destroy land. There is an awful lot that can be done.

KW: I think that it is easier for someone who lives on the lake to see the impact that the watershed has on the lake and understand the potential of invasive species getting into the lake running down or sediment and carcinogens that may get into the lake, having an impact because they are sitting there looking at it. So there is that population that is right around the lake. That is generally where the more expensive real estate is so there is probably an assumption that is where the wealth is, into the areas around the lake and the hills there are many permanent residents and people who have been born in the area or raising families in the area and their interest and priorities does not center around the lake. Although they use the lake and have boat and fish and use the lake every day. Selling the watershed plan to a town means you got to sell it to the people who live on the lake and the hill country.... Our interest is to sell this plan to all the towns to change their building codes to align with what the lake association is trying to accomplish. It has to be sold based upon the influence of the residents and you have to understand if I am sitting here and all of the sudden I change the topography of this so that the water is running off in a different course or I use turf builder it is not going to impact me it's going to impact the people down there. How do you sell that, there is different personalities.

**John Stokoe, October 16, 2007 (Shea Daly)**

b. 1935

JS: Actually, I think that the quality has maintained itself to be very, very pure. The - the lake, we have a - very active lake association as you know and the lake association monitors all the boats that come through Wellington State Park for exotic weeds and milfoil, etc. and I think that have been doing a very, very good job - as far as I know and as far as the lake association has stated. We have no milfoil in the lake, therefore in my particular area, the bottom of the lake is clear and I have a boat, powerboat, that is moored about 55 feet from shore in about 20 feet of water and on sunny day I could look out and I can see the bottom of the lake clear as a bell.

JS: Well uh there's been several incidences that I have been involved in on the lake, in a sense that, I am not sure the year but we had hurricane Floyd came through and I am not sure the date but in the '90s I believe, but I believe the figure was about 60 boats that were capsized or broke loose from the mooring buoys because the lake rose so fast - a couple of feet, that my particular power boat the bow chain was too short and when the water came it pulled the bow down subsequently flooding the boat and actually ruining it.

JS: a few issues ago in Yankee magazine, they had a big article on Newfound lake with a double page picture of the lake, which I said to my wife, we don't need this kind of publicity, let Newfound Lake be a silent partner here. But it is getting to be well known and well that's just the way things are going to go.

JS: Well, I know that in especially one area of Hebron, In Hebron, they have a very good zoning area I think, there was a bunch of trees cut down on the west side of West Shore Road but it was an area that was sloping and they wanted to put up condominiums on that area and housing and the town decided it was too much of a factor for erosion and things like that and they killed it and I think that if your town is strong and they have zoning and the rules apply, it doesn't have to be strict zoning but it at least has to have some kind of zoning to eliminate that kind of thing which could be very detrimental to the watershed.

**James Freidline, October 27, 2007 (Gregg Vigliotti)**

59 years old in December

JF: New Hampshire is a wonderful place. The diversity in the surroundings is amazing, you can hunt, ski, hike or just relax, plus it is a good place to raise a kid.

JF: At my uncle's place in Bristol, it was different. He had a boat on Newfound, nothing big by any means but it was a boat. I'd bring a friend up for the week and we would take the boat and row out to the middle and try and fish. We never caught anything 'cause we were fishing in the

wrong spots, but it was a real fun time, plus the lake was so big. We'd row for hours and it'd seem like we weren't even close to being in the middle.

JF: I guess in short the overall scenery drew me back to NH. Even the drive up here was beautiful, you couldn't beat it, this area is the best of New England in my opinion. If you're an outdoor buff then this is the place for you.

JF: so the woods used to be so huge that you could get lost real easy, but as time went on they got smaller and smaller. More houses started to be built across from the lake going into the woods and with that more roads to get to the houses.

JF: I forget when the condos went in around the lake in Bristol but those changed the scene a lot more than everything else. It changed the summer attitude a lot, bringing in a lot of people, mostly from Mass. Most of the people with the condos just came up for a little period time with rentals you know? They didn't have a huge connection to the place so the way it was treated changed during the summers.

JF: Sculptured Rocks is one of the most beautiful water flows I've seen in the north and it has stayed preserved ... and is still pristine. The natural beauty that surrounds the area changes with the seasons and never gets old. I consider myself lucky to be able to live here near the lake and the mountains. I just hope the lake stays beautiful and pristine for ever.

### **Charlie Huntoon, November 1, 2007 (Gregg Vigliotti)**

35 years old

Newfound: since childhood - fishing since growing up in area

CH: We spent a lot of time in the Newfound region because of the tributaries, especially for fly fishing; those are some of the best streams and creeks to fly fish....

I love fishing Newfound because it is so big and can be accessed at all corners of the lake really easily. You can fish all your life and never fish in the same spot if you're tried hard enough.

CH: it's THE lake to fish, at least to me.

CH: I live in this little cabin in Groton, it's a cool place, we have a bunch of land and our privacy so we can do what we want without being hassled. It's nice too because, don't get me wrong, I love the lake and I would love to be a little closer, but once you're within seven miles of the lake then things change and it gets a little less natural to me. The northern country in New Hampshire is still pretty wild if you live or go to the right place, but there's no sense living in a developed area when you can live 15 miles away from it and feel like you're actually in the wilderness.

**CH:** [CH is a fishing guide] I've started to notice a lot of erosion around a lot of the streams near Newfound Lake. The erosion is causing the streams and creeks to change their flow and this is definitely bad for everyone. Because the streams are changing it means the level of water is changed also. It doesn't keep the same height in certain areas as it used to because the streams are getting wider and wider as the access gets greater and greater.

CH: Things change when there are people coming to visit this area and stay for a short period of time. They don't put much effort in not leaving a trace.... I don't know if they don't realize that it will do great harm to the eco-system or if they just don't care. They probably just think that one person leaving a piece of trash won't harm anyone, but it adds up, especially when there's more and more tourists coming into the Newfound Region every summer.

CH: I think they are starting realize that if they keep adding on more condos and cutting down more land and being more lenient in boating regulations that they'll just end up shooting themselves in the foot. These people are businessmen but they also live in the region so they know what's at stake, they won't ruin it for themselves. It's the people who don't live in the region who own businesses that tend to scare me a little.... Because they don't really have a connection with the area except financially.

### **Lisa Carpenter, Fall, 2007 (Amy Carter)**

91 years old (fall, 2007)

Property on Newfound in the family since 1895.

LC: to help preserve the lake, our property over there across the road, ... protects the watershed since no one lives there. I forget how many acres protects and conserves the land and keeping it for the future generations benefit....

LC: every year we have a bruiser bass that lays its eggs at the end of our dock, you probably know all of this.... The female goes off the male patrols and protects even though he'd probably eat them given the chance... and ... when you're swimming he'll come up and WHAM! Bumps into you.... we were amazed to see an otter sitting on the end of our dock one day with the beavers.

LC: and that otter is just a beautiful creature and that was the year that the lake never froze over and there were little patches of water so the otter would swim around. There was an eagle that commuted 8:30 am who flew around and was hoping to find a fish....

AC: Why did you become a member of the Newfound Lakes Region Association?

LC: Just because we're into the welfare of the lake particularly in keeping milfoil out. That's why we work so hard on it. We used to get up early in the morning and volunteer to check the boat going in Wellington Beach for milfoil coming in and out. Now they have a paid host; we got very interesting in the ecology of the lake. ...

LC: there was a small house an original stage coach inn. Someone tried to move it across the ice, with oxen. I talked to a diver who took great delight in telling me it was still down there, you could see the curtains in the windows and all.... that was a joke of course. They got only to the edge of the lake and fell in. The whole place fell apart, but the oxen didn't fall....

LC: Well I don't think I ever expected to retire up here and as a summer resident, it's... you know just a few people. Now we just adore the ... vicinity of the people year round. Having lived in D.C. and New York having the thrill of ... calling the post office and having them know your voice on the phone is great....

LC: Strong feeling of home and family. I have a big sense to preserve it. I hope it lasts.

### **Richard Cowern, Fall, 2007 (Amy Carter)**

b. 1933

Newfound since a boy - "about 1939"

Moved to Hebron 1966. Town selectman for Hebron.

RC: The Lake has changed a lot - a lot of rentals. Newfound Lake was the poor man's lake by my estimation. Not the wealthy, more blue-collar workers, the upper end of the blue collar workers. That has all changed: many more professional workers and successful business [people]. why do you care about the lake so much.

DC: I'd like it to stay pristine and also it's a huge resource. We don't have any bad growth, I think it's important....

RC: Pontoon boats were even larger when we had our marina. Salmon was great, everyone would come and someone opens the lake for commercial smelting and that ruined the population. The smallmouth bass gobbled up the fingerlings.

RC: In general people are very protective of the lake.

RC: My wife and I put on a show about some of the funny things that happened to us during our Marina days at the historical society.

RC: Zoning is snobbish not but probably is to a degree, you have to give up some to get a little a lot and you are giving up some of your rights as a land owner. But it preserves and protects the land for a long time. The state doesn't have enough people to enforce the rules, and you see violations everywhere, we need to be able to get enough people to investigate. People do what ever they want on the lake.

RC: Salt of the earth people around here, by in large good people. I mean we have our weirdoes but so does every town.

**Sherwood Kidder, November 15, 2007 (William McNally)**

b. 1931

SK: And we used to have floods ‘cause there was a brook right near our camp there, near the gas station and everything. The flood waters would come down through there and they would wash out the bridge by the road, and that was it for a while for the road.

SK: the brook that currently runs down through the area is the same brook that was there at the time I am talking about, and it used to flood out the road way and things below. So the state put in a cement retaining wall, I don’t know probably a several hundred feet from where it ran underneath the bridge and the road. And it ran up stream and contained a nice pond of water in there which was just great for fishing and swimming. I learned to swim in there. [“near where Auto Air Garage is today”]

SK: basically it was a core of natives that had been here a long time, you generation after generation, and you don’t get that anymore, or you don’t see much of that anymore.

SK: Well, see, growing up as a young lad here, I loved the winters because early in the fall I can remember quite clearly going out in back of the house and up on the slopes that crossed the brook where we cut small trees and things down and made ski trails.

SK: land is being developed now that wasn’t even considered accessible in the past ya’ know.

**Phil and Betsy Twombly, October 11, 2007 (William McNally)**

b. 1922, 1925 respectively

BT: Well, having come up here so much as a kid, I just got to really, really like the outdoors and the peace and quiet. And the lake, it is a beautiful and clear lake, you know, one of the clearest in the country, and it’s a thing to satisfy what I feel the need of.

BT: people are discovering Newfound Lake and it is a really nice place to live so people are buying and building here and they always want to have a view so they are trying to build up on the top of the hill and cut a big safe and put up a big house and paint it white so you can see it from everywhere.

PT: we’re trying to control growth as best we can through changes in our zoning bylaws which we have been aware of and keep track of. . . . we have tried to keep our ordinances set so that we don’t have a huge amount of buildings on steep slopes. And which we are worried about erosion and runoff and . . . um because we are in a very tight valley with a sixty somewhat thousand acre watershed and we worry about fertilizers and septic system failures and so on.

PT: It’s a place where you get the real sense of community, everybody knows everybody. Most all the folks are active with town meetings, we still have open town meetings and we also have a community breakfast once a month at the church. We have a historic society which has a monthly potluck supper, and we have a snowmobile club that has fund-raising dinners regularly. There’s just a lot of really good things going on amongst the community folks and it is just good fun.

BT: We’re getting together in a week or so for a party that is being given by a neighbor across the lake, and it’s a story telling party. Everyone has to come prepared to tell a story.