

**Interviewee: Norm and Rita Marcotte**

**Interviewer: Dorothea Penar**

**Date: February 21, 2002**

**Location: Marcotte Residence, Shelburne Village**

**Norm and Rita Marcotte have been supplying with people of Shelburne with both home appliances and farm equipment for years. With these two essential product lines, the Marcottes pretty much know everyone in town.**

**Topics discussed: farms, Shelburne farming families, Saint Catherine's Church, Marsett Family, Father Lamothe, Shelburne doctors, St. John the Baptist Hall, Ticonderoga, Shelburne buildings, moved buildings, school families, Shelburne Farms**

Dorothea Penar: When and where were you born? Just give us some of your early history.

Norman Marcotte: I was born in East Charlotte, July 2, 1931. Born and brought up there for twenty years, moved to Shelburne after that.

DP: When about after that?

NM: Well we moved in Shelburne August 25, 1951. At that time we built the house right across from the Shelburne Museum, and that whole piece of ground at that time was completely farmland, no other buildings on that.

DP: After you got married, you moved?

NM: I built the house before we got married, started building in March and we moved in after we were married.

DP: Now where was Rita from?

NM: Rita was from Winooski and she was born on June 2, 1930. She went to the Winooski Schools, eight grades, and I went to eight grades in the Charlotte school.

DP: Now how did you meet?

NM: At St. John the Baptist Hall, years ago, you know on weekends, people went dancing, and this where we went and that's where we met. St. John the Baptist in Winooski.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dancing was on Saturdays from 8:00 to 12:00 PM

DP: Tell me a little bit about when you were a boy in Charlotte. Did you have connections with people in Shelburne? Was there a kind of mutual community?

NM: No, when I had my heart set on Shelburne it wasn't because I knew anyone in Shelburne, I just figured I wanted to build a house, and it came to mind that Shelburne was probably where I wanted to build. So I stopped in and visited with the farmer that owned that land and he agreed to sell me a lot for \$500. That was the beginning.

DP: Who was it that owned that land?

NM: Ralph Marsett, well his father Bert Marsett.<sup>1</sup>

DP: So that is basically where the Hillside neighborhood is now?

NM: At the intersection of Marsett Road and Route 7, where the big white house is, that's their farmhouse, and there was a barn just east of that. So I stopped and visited with him on the farm and he agreed to sell me a lot. I was kind of surprised.

DP: So up to this point you were doing farming with your family?

NM: Farming and I was doing a little handy work for the neighbors. If people had a problem I would go help them out either carpentry or even some electrical work.

DP: Was the school you went to a one-room schoolhouse?

NM: A one-room schoolhouse. It had eight grades, about twelve children in that one school.

DP: And Shelburne seemed like a big community to move to, relative to that?

NM: Yes it was, but it was fairly quiet in Shelburne at that time. Of course we drove around to different places, you know, Spear Street, places like that. Naturally everybody wants to build up on Spear Street, but it didn't fit our budget so we didn't. I'm kind of glad that we made the move we did.

DP: Now were you part of the parish of the Catholic Church in Charlotte, up to that point, and then when you moved here you became a member of St. Catherine's?

NM: Yes, by the way, I was baptized in St. Catherine's because at that time Charlotte was a mission of Shelburne. I think it was Father Cain who was here then, but yes I was baptized in Shelburne.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Norman Marcotte bought the land from Bert and Mary Marsett in 1951. Bert Marsett (1875-1952) served the Shelburne community as auditor (1906-1912), School Director (1908-1935), Town Representative (1915, 1941, 1943), County Senator (1946) and Selectman (1942-1952).

<sup>2</sup> Father Cain served at Saint Catherine's Church in Shelburne from 1934-1953.

DP: Now where did you get married, which church?

NM: St. Francis Xavier in Winooski.

DP: In March of 1951, you started to build the house. What were you doing for a profession at that point?

NM: I started selling barn cleaners actually even before I was married. So it was maybe a year or so before. I started selling them for a dealer in Burlington where Friendly's is now on Williston Road. He used to sell (barn) cleaners and I worked for two years just part time, selling and installing. Then when I was twenty-one I became a dealer. I'm still with the same company.

DP: When did you sort of blossom into the whole appliance business?

NM: Appliances we started in 1952.

DP: Where did you deal with that, did you have a store?

NM: No just from that little house across from the Shelburne Museum. Finally we got pretty crowded...

DP: When did you move into the house that you are in now?

NM: We moved here in December of 1959.

DP: This was just open field back here too?

NM: No that building was there at the time. Of course all the buildings were the same except for the barn out back. All these other houses were built back there. Now before we bought this place here we were looking, in fact we had a deed drawn up for our business, which would have been where the Christmas loft is. We had bought that land and they had the deed drawn up, and I chickened out of it, I decided well, maybe that's too big of a move. So then we heard about this place and the also the one where Harrington's Antiques is, and came awful close to buying that one, but then somebody told us about this one, so we stopped in here and we decided to buy this house.

DP: Who did you buy this house from?

NM: We bought it from James Byrnes, who lives up on Spear Street.

DP: Now how long did he own this property?

NM: He bought from the Chittenden Bank and he probably only owned it about 3 years. He more or less bought it for speculation.

DP: Do you know any history of this home?

NM: I do, because there used to be a Dentist Drew that used to own this, and when he passed away the Chittenden Bank, I think, took care of the estate. If we had not bought this house when we bought it, the Shell Oil Company would have owned it and torn it down to build a gas station.<sup>1</sup>

DP: Do you know when it was built?

NM: I think it is about 1885, and there is a house in Charlotte that was built by the same people and it is almost an identical house as this one. They've got the records of what it cost to built that house in Charlotte.... labor and material was \$2500.<sup>2</sup>

DP: So you know a lot about the last part of the century in Shelburne. You've seen a lot of changes, especially because of the farm business that you were in...

NM: Also, before we get into that, I should mention that Father LaMothe and I are probably the only two people in Shelburne that were baptized in this church that still live here. As far as we know, and I remember going to Catechism classes in the summertime up in Hinesburg (because it was Hinesburg, Charlotte and Shelburne), and Father LaMothe and I were just a year apart as far as classes. So that goes back a long time. We used to have summer school for two weeks up there.<sup>3</sup>

DP: So where did he go to school?

NM: He went to school in Shelburne, a one-room schoolhouse.

DP: So the village has changed a lot since you've been here.

NM: It has grown tremendously. The whole of Shelburne hasn't changed a whole lot.

DP: We've had a lot of discussions before about buildings moving around. I thought you could think of some of those interesting buildings that have been moved around, where they went.

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<sup>1</sup> The house was built for Charles Russell. He and his wife had 2 daughters. One daughter married Doctor Drew and lived in this house until they both passed away.

<sup>2</sup> The Marcottes were the third family to own the house.

<sup>3</sup> Father Lamothe was the son of Philiza and Blanche Lamothe who owned a farm on Dorset Street.



**Figure 1 Shelburne buildings being moved**

NM: Probably the biggest building that they moved was the building that used to be where the Mobil station is. That used to be what they called the Shelburne General Store. That was a brick building. That's where the Post Office was also. They moved that, probably in 1955 or 1957...



**Figure 2 Old Shelburne Post Office**

DP: That was moved to?

NM: The Shelburne Museum. That went up Route 7 on two sets of railroad tracks. It probably took them three to four days to go from here to the Museum.<sup>1</sup>

DP: You mentioned one that was near the Museum property?

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<sup>1</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> Shelburne Post Office is now the Children's Shop located next to the Shelburne Inn. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Shelburne Post Office is now Gillian's restaurant (located at the front of the Shelburne Shopping Plaza). The 4<sup>th</sup> Shelburne Post Office is located on Falls Road and the 5<sup>th</sup> Shelburne Post Office was built in 2002 on Falls Road.

NM: There was four houses, three of them on the west side of Route 7, they got moved across the road, up the hill a ways, off the museum property, and two of them were put together on the east side of the road, just past what's now the Citgo station. That's now the flower shop, and then the other two were moved up the road a little bit further, as separate houses. One of them is at the corner of Meadow Lane and Hillside Terrace and the other one is just down below. All on the east side because they moved them from the Museum property across the road. They put two houses together, which back in those days was a lot of work and then they moved another big house which used to be the Dubois property, Richard Dubois' grandfather, and that got moved all the way down on Mount Philo Road.

DP: Where was that originally?

NM: That was just past what they call the "Saw Mill", I guess. On the museum property just up past that a little bit. That went from the museum property all the way across the fields and ended up on Airport Drive.

DP: The museum did a lot of moving around.

NM: Of course moving the Ticonderoga, when they moved that it had to be again about the same time between '55-'57.

DP: So tell me about some of the old farms that we should remember that are no longer here, especially the ones that probably still have the farmhouses around but no longer are farms.

NM: Well, the first one is Bert and Ralph Marsett which is where we bought our first lot from, now it is all Hillside [neighborhood]. The house is still there, the barn is taken down. The next one is Tinker Strong, that's where the Shelburne Shopping [Center] now is and where the sandwich shop [Gillian's Restaurant] is, that building is the original building and that's still there. The brick house up here that's still called the Strong House, that was their original house.<sup>1</sup> The other one would be the John Clark Vermont Stock Farm which is where the Vermont Teddy Bear Company is now. That farmhouse is a day care center now. The original barn burnt, then they built a new barn which is still in existence out back which they use.<sup>2</sup> And Eustace Thomas, that's down on Thomas Road, and that house and that barn are still in existence. Now there's lots of other houses... they haven't developed the whole thing but their still building house up

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<sup>1</sup> Nasan and Florence Strong purchased their 150-acre farm in 1949 from the Thorp family, who had been on the land since 1894. The land was sold to the supermarket in 1966.

<sup>2</sup> See Sally Martel interview. John Clark inherited the land from his father in 1960. The 423 farm originally belonged to Colonel LeGrand B. Cannon, a civil war veteran, who was the president of the Champlain Transportation Company and stockholder in a large horse breeding association. Cannon also owned the 60-acre Overlake estate in Burlington. The day care center is located in a c. 1830 farmhouse that once belonged Ziba Pierson who was the son of Moses Pierson, one of Shelburne's first settlers.

there.<sup>1</sup> Fred Thomas....the barn is no longer there but the house is still there, and that again is on Thomas Road and that's next to Tim Thomas.<sup>2</sup> He built a small barn there and lives in that area, not in that house, though right next to it. Another one which now is James O'Brien. That's a horse farm and also a bed and breakfast and they've also sold a lot of building lots on that land. The original house is still there. The original barn which was connected to the barn that's there now was taken down, but the barn that is there is one that I built back, probably back in '57 or '58. That's on Dorset Street. That barn now is a horse barn. They also sold a lot of house lots. The house itself is used as a bed & breakfast.<sup>3</sup> Then George O'Brien's farm, that's on the corner of Barstow Road and Dorset Street, the big brick house. That was the original O'Brien property. That house is still there. The original barn, which used to be on the east side of the road, I believe it that burnt or got torn down, and then he built a new, more modern free stall barn and milking barn. We supplied a lot of the equipment for that barn. The Sutton Farm that's still the still original barn and the original house is still there, and that's also on Dorset St. in between the two O'Brien farms. The land is being taken care of by the Bailey's farm. Those are the original buildings; they have been there for quite a while and they are still there. We supplied just about all the equipment for that barn. Noel Gauthier, which is on the property which they call Shelburne Limestone Quarry. That's still the Shelburne Limestone Quarry plus they built a lot of houses on that.<sup>4</sup> That house is still there but the barn got blown down. John Senesac, that's on the road to go to Hinesburg towards CVU. The next farm over from the Palmer's Sugar House. That original house and barn is still there.<sup>5</sup> And, Tom Bushey, that would be on Pond Road. The original house is there, I think the barn is newer than when they first bought the property. It has been used by the LaPierres, off and on, as a second farm, and right now I guess that has been sold for development purposes. And then Arthur Auclair, that would be on Route 116, and they have a tack shop up there, just north of the Cheese Factory Road. I think that house there, wasn't part of the original Auclair farm, but it became part of that farm, and the barn of course burnt down and they built the new free stall barn. His son, Tony Auclair, still runs that farm. The brick house is the original house. Of course, you got Dunbar Bostwick's farm which is between Route 7 and Lake Champlain. Part of that now is the Wake Robin, and of course they have big plans for the rest of the land towards the lake. We did a lot of equipment installation on that farm when they were still farming. Unfortunately, some of it they only farmed five or six years

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<sup>1</sup> See Colleen Haag interview. Eustace Thomas came to Shelburne with his parents in 1901. He went to high school at Saint Michaels in Winooski. Eustace served the community in a multitude of ways. Eustace Thomas served on the school board from 1929 to 1961 and he also served as Shelburne's Town Representative in 1961. He and his wife, Lena, ran a farm (the former Andrews Farm) near the junction of Spear Street and Thomas Road. Over the years, the farm grew to over 550 acres and it had over 400 apple trees.

<sup>2</sup> Fred Thomas was Jerrold Thomas' father. The Thomas family owned three farms along Thomas Road: the 87-acre Kate Hennessey Farm, the 92-acre George LaLanne Farm and the 25-acre Apier Farm. These were the names of the farms when the Thomas family purchased them.

<sup>3</sup> See James and Pauline O'Brien interview

<sup>4</sup> Noel and Joan Gauthier purchased the 200-acre "John Kelley Farm" from Edgar and Joyce Guilmotte in 1957. Approximately 9 acres was deeded to the Vermont Marble Company prior to their purchase. During the early 1980s, the Gauthiers sold much of the farmland that sat north of Bishop Road.

<sup>5</sup> The Senesac family started farming the land in 1946.

after we had done all that work. So you hate to see something like that stop. Then Warren O'Neil, which is where O'Neill Dog Kennel is on Bishop Road. That again used to be an operating farm. His brothers had a farm down in Charlotte, about two neighbors from where I was born. That's no longer being farmed either.<sup>1</sup> Now another one that is interesting is on Mt. Philo Road, is Arthur Stebbins farm. That house, I think now may be a bed and breakfast also. The original barn is still there. They built some houses, and where the airport is I'm sure that was originally part of that farm. When I was a little kid, probably eleven or twelve years old, I used to work there in the summertime drive horses for the haying. I used to live with the mother and father and sisters on that farm. I used have to walk cows in the morning all the way up from that farm to near the Marsett Road. I would bring the cows up the road, and let them go to pasture, and then go back at night and get them again. Back in those days I always felt it was kind of scary, not because there was a lot of traffic because there wasn't hardly any traffic, but just the fact that when you had to go out and get the cows in the woods and bring them up the road and then make sure they got going in the right direction back to the farm. I did this many times. One of his sisters was also a schoolteacher. She was a substitute schoolteacher for us in Charlotte. The other teacher we had in Charlotte, which was our main teacher, was Freda Morrow, which was Freddy Morrow's aunt... Rupert Morrow's sister. She was our main teacher for many years. The last teacher we had in Charlotte was a St. George.... Joe St. George's aunt. She was the last teacher that I had in Vermont. Brad Caldwell's Farm, that's where the golf course is now on Spear Street

DP: Where's the farmhouse for that farm?

NM: That would be the one the barn's on the right and the house is on the left on the corner [of Webster Road]. Then the other one is Lamsons that was up again at the top of Marsett Road on the corner. That was on the west side of the road where the Museum is now. That building I believe was torn down in the early fifties.<sup>2</sup> So those are no longer being farmed anymore. We've only got eight farms now that are in Shelburne that are still farming. One of them is Claude LaPierre up on Route 116. They just had a big fire on their farm. I think they are probably going to rebuild. I haven't been told for sure. Then there is the Leduc farm which is on Cheese Factory Road, and that was the father's farm and now his two or three boys own it in a corporation. Leduc was actually my father's second cousin. Of course, Tony Auclair's farm which was further south on Route 116. That one there, the barn I think burned down and then he moved over to his father's side. That original house is still there but no longer farming. Then of course

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<sup>1</sup> Warren and Jeanette O'Neil purchased the 174-acre Bishop Road Farm in 1960 from Lillian Bishop who bought the land with her husband, George, in 1914. Evidence from 1857 and 1869 maps indicate that this land once belonged to SW Payne, the grandfather of Lillian Bishop. Not included in the 1960 agreement, was the small c. 1915 cottage that was built by George Bishop and sat directly across the street from the homestead. The O'Neil's subdivided much of their land for the Beaver Creek development. Today, Margaret Libby owns the land and the property consists of a c. 1815 brick farmhouse, a c. 1850 barn, a c. 1900 barn and c. 1940 dairy bran that was converted into a dog kennel in the 1970s.

<sup>2</sup> George and Jeanette Lamson bought their farm in 1932. They sold a large tract to the Shelburne Museum in 1954 and 180 acres to John Clark and Allen Clark in 1954.



Shelburne Farms now owns all this property down towards the lake and Shelburne Point, not all of it but most of it. That's still farming. After that we have Jim Meilleur's Farm which was Father LaMothe's old place, and they've done some remodeling with barn in the last couple of years, so I guess they are going to be farming there for a little while.<sup>1</sup> Then Wayne Barr, Richmond Barr's son, and that's on Pond Road, and that's still farming. We remodeled that barn last year, put in new stalls, jacked the barn up and moved the steel columns. That was a nice fun project, probably my last big one.

DP: How old was the barn?

NM: Back in the 1850s'. That's the second barn on that foundation. The first one burnt, and that one might have been that old and the second one, they built that one probably more than fifty years ago. Bernie Guilmette, is the next one. That's also on Pond Road. They just built a new big free stall barn so I think they are going to be in there for a few years. The original farmhouse probably is not there anymore, but the homestead farm, that they built is fairly new, it's been there a few years. They still live in that same house.<sup>2</sup> Then of course we have another farm, which is kind of a hobby farm, is Mike Deavitt up on the Falls Road going towards Hinesburg. He works for UPS so he just farms it as a hobby

DP: They are in the process of renovating their farmhouse?

NM: Yes, they have done some work on those houses. There are two houses up there. Of course, his father used to work for the Town of Shelburne at the school, George Deavitt. That was a tragic loss when we lost him. Well, that takes care of the farm history. There's probably more that I don't know about.

DP: Well, we know who to come to about barns because part of our project is to see if we have missed any sites especially the out buildings where we don't know the ages. Some of it is hard to tell and know the history, so if we have any questions we will come to you.

DP: You mentioned Dunbar Bostwick...did you know him well?

NM: We got to know him quite a bit in the last few years. In the earlier years we knew who he was, but we didn't have any close contact with him, but then when he got where he was remodeling the barns and needed some new equipment, we got to meet with him quite a few times and he was very pleasant. He was an interesting person to talk to and visit with. Chris Davis, which is his grandson, is still overseeing the property and the transition in the sale of it, and he's quite an interesting person too. He lives in Charlotte now. He was with the Shelburne Fire Department for quite a while.

DP: Let's talk about your children, how many children do you have?

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<sup>1</sup> Jim and Marguerite Maille (Lamothe) inherited the land in 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Bernie and Joann Guilmette owned 10 acres near the intersection of Pond Road and Route 116, 83 acres on Bishop Road and 102 acres on Irish Hill Road

NM: We have four children. Our oldest girl was born in '52, her name is Norma and she lives in St Albans. She has a day care business and her husband used to work for the highway department, and now he works for the INS.<sup>1</sup> They've got two boys. One of them, two years ago, graduated from Northeastern University and now he is working in Washington D.C. as a Civil Engineer and his wife is an Electrical Engineer. So they've both got pretty good jobs. They wish they were back in Vermont, but I guess when they get the education they have to go where the jobs are. She works for the Navy. Our next child was our oldest son, Roger. He was born in '54. He works with us here in the business with Hot Point appliances and GE. He lives in Williston, and he has three boys and a girl. So they've got a good family started. Then our next son is Gary and he was born in '58 and he works here for the business here as well. GE and Hotpoint. He has three children, two girls and a boy. The boy's kind of into the music, so he's done well with the school system here, in music. He's going to pursue his career in music, next year probably in college, out of state. So he's got goals set aside for himself. Our youngest daughter is Julie Kent. She was born in 1960. She is a registered nurse at the Medical Center. Her husband, Jon, works at the Shelburne Museum as a carpenter. They live on Mt. Philo Road.<sup>2</sup>

DP: They all went to the village school then?

NM: Yes the village school, then the middle school here, then they went to CVU.

DP: I know you are very involved with St. Catherine's, the church, when you moved here did you just start going to St. Catherine's and then just start getting more involved?

NM: Well, we've been at St. Catherine's ever since we were married back in '51. It was only a few years after that when I was asked to help as an usher for collections, which I started doing. At that time it was Ervin Viens that was basically the only usher, and he used to work for the Water Department & the Sewer Department.<sup>3</sup> So I've been ushering I guess from that point on, and I remember when we used to take up the collections. We used to take the seatings after people were sitting in church. We would go around and it was 15 cents per seatings and you had to go around and make change at the beginning of mass. After that they brought it up to twenty-five cents and they still did that in church after mass had started. Then they stopped that and they did it coming into church again at twenty-five cents a seating, and we had to make change then. Shortly after that they decided, well, now the people can put their twenty-five cents in the basket at the offertory and no more collections at the door, and its been that way ever since.

DP: So you've seen quite a few pastors. Who was here when you first came?

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service

<sup>2</sup> Julie and Jon Kent have two children and live in Shelburne

<sup>3</sup> Ervin Viens served this position from 1957 to 1974.



DP: Rita is joining us. Rita, tell us when you were born and where, and some of your early childhood.

Rita Marcotte: I was born in Winooski, Vermont on June 2, 1930. I lived in Winooski until I was married. I was educated at St. Francis Xavier School, did not go to high school, but I did one year of child care or day care for one year, and then I went to work at the University of Vermont in the Waterman Building, I worked there four years and changed to go to Grant's Department Store because of the different hours it was a little bit easier for me to take a bus to go to work. I met Norm in 1949 in Winooski at St. John the Baptist Hall where they have dancing. I was going there with one of my cousins, who was my same age and she knew Norman's family because she used to go dancing before I started to go, and got to know the family, and introduced me to that family. Then Norman started to go every week, so I started to go every week. One time when my cousin was getting married she was going to have a reception in Morrisville, and Norman was invited to go also for the reception. So Norman asked me if I could go with him, and I told him I was going to the wedding which in the morning, but I would meet him there at night for the reception. So I was with Norman, but also his sister and then another family. We were friends until we were married in 1951.

DP: What was your maiden name?

RM: Rita Poirier. We were seven girls and one boy in my family. I was the fifth child.

DP: So you looked around and you decided to settle in Shelburne?

RM: Well Norman and I both thought that he did not want to live in Charlotte and I didn't want to live in Winooski so we compromised. Shelburne was close to Charlotte, but it was easier at the time for Norman to work at his father's farm, that's where he was working, and also selling on the side.

DP: Now when you got married did you work still?

RM: I did until December, which was four months. Then it created a problem (traveling) back and forth to work. So I just quit working and stayed home because the house was not completed, and almost not completed after we sold it (laughing). There was a lot to do. Then I had my daughter the following year.

DP: Now have you always participated in the business too?

RM: He would go out and do his service calls and repair and installation during the day. So I was home in case a customer came to pick up parts or something like that, but I was never a seller, quoting price and all that, I never wanted to get into to that.

NM: She used to unload the trucks when they delivered appliances

RM: In those days they didn't come with a big truck. They would come with six, seven appliances and I would help them unload. We moved here about nine years later.

DP: We were talking about St. Catherine's and the social life. Where there special organizations that you were involved with through St. Catherine's?

RM: St. Catherine's Society. All the parishioner women belonged to it. At the beginning you had to belong. Every year they had, like a chicken barbeque and all that or they had bingos and all that sort of stuff, what else did they have? dinners. But I used to help more when the kids were younger, than when got older and it was harder. I guess because we had the business too.

DP: Are there any other organizations that you belong to outside of St. Catherine's?

RM: He [Norm] never belonged to the Fire Department, but my two sons did. The oldest son, when he moved out of Shelburne when he was married, he couldn't be a fireman no more because he moved to Williston. He never joined it over there. Gary stayed in Fire Department, but he also took on Rescue, and then after a few years he left the rescue. Now he is in the Rotary.

DP: Who were some of the folks that you remember who lived in the village at the time?

RM: Mrs. Lull

NM: Yes, Dr. Lull. He was the principal at South Burlington. Was he a principal in Shelburne too at one time?

RM: I think, but I'm not sure.<sup>1</sup> She worked in this office. Their daughter is Danyow.

DP: Did you go to any doctors in town?

RM: Dr. Holden was my first doctor.

NM: Before that we had to go to Hinesburg, Dr. Wainer.<sup>2</sup>

DP: That was the closest one?

NM: Yes, and then Dr. Holden came here, then Dr. Ryder. They opened up here. Then we started going here.

DP: Where?

NM: At the Creamery.

RM: Well, it wasn't there before. It was that little house where that big apartment is.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Lull was the Superintendent of Schools during the 1950s.

<sup>2</sup> Both Doctor Holden and Doctor Wainer served as the Shelburne Health Officer during the 1950s and 1960s.

NM: This side of the Creamery. There is big white house.

RM: Dr. Holden was downstairs and he had an apartment upstairs. He used to live in the big house. Not the red one but the other big house. There is the brick house after the gas station and then there is the other big house, that's where Dr. Holden used to live in the big house.<sup>1</sup> There is a lot of apartments in there now. He had built that house for his office, and then I guess Dr. Holden did live there long enough to go into the Creamery. I don't remember if he did, I think he did.<sup>2</sup>

NM: Yeah.

RM: After, he left to go to New York, Dr. Ryder was here at that Creamery. Then there was Mrs. Harrington. You know where the antique place is? Now it's her granddaughter that has the house. Then of course you have the Websters.

NM: Then there was Jimmy Barnes that used to be our first sheriff in Shelburne. He became constable then became, well they didn't call it the police department then, but he was the only officer in town to manage all the disputes, traffic violations and everything else. He was pretty aggressive. Now we have twenty people in the police department. I guess there is no way they could do it with one or two people nowadays.

DP: Do you remember any special events?

NM: Back in '63 they had what they called the Bicentennial. We had the Bicentennial Parade. The Earl of Shelburne was here from England. And they had quite a parade quite a doing on that, floats and everything. We had a Hot Point float. Our oldest daughter, back at that time she would have been eleven years old, she was on that float. That was the same year they built CVU School. So we had a couple stoves on that float that ended up at CVU.

DP: In the Home Economics Dept?

NM: Yes.

DP: Then we have the Halloween parade...

RM: The Christmas Stroll.

NM: The last five or six years. Then they have the Sidewalk Sale in August.

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<sup>1</sup> The Tracy House

<sup>2</sup> The Creamery building was constructed c. 1919 on land that once belonged to Benjamin Harrington, one of Shelburne's first settlers. Through an organization known as Shelburne Offices Inc, Doctors Holden and Ryder as well as Beaudin-Moulton Associates renovated the 10,000 square foot building in 1970 and converted the creamery into professional office complex.

DP: Its pretty recent they started doing that?

NM: Yes, the Shelburne Business Committee started that. Corinne Bissonette was one of them that got the thing going. That's grown quite a bit.

DP: How about musical events?

RM: They used to have Cakewalk at UVM.

DP: That was a play. The Beans were telling me about that.

RM: They were older people in that, although there were some kids, mostly older people.

NM: We had a Sled Dog Race a few years back in Shelburne.

DP: Where was that?

RM: At the middle school.

NM: At the middle school and then it used go all the way down to the harbor or down on the landings at the lake, you know the fishing access.? They went from here all the way down across to the fishing access on the lake and back. It had to be what ten years ago...fifteen years?

RM: Oh more than that because Julie's been married twenty years and she wasn't even married then.

NM: It was a good size event.

RM: Could be twenty-five years. Now I 'm old!

DP: How about special ghost stories, superstitions, haunted houses anything like that?

NM: The big house across the road which was originally the Strong property. They used to hide the Underground Railroad, where they used to hide slaves and bootleggers.

RM: They would meet them at the wood over here, or at the underpass out by the Falls. They would get the Indians who would come down the River. In fact, my daughter in law, Diane, she could tell you a lot about the Indians

NM: She's done a lot of research on it.

DP: We talked a little bit about transportation, or lack of it in earlier times. Did you go into Burlington much?

NM: We used to have to go to Burlington for all of our shopping.

RM: They had the IGA here, but....

NM: We still went to Burlington for a lot of shopping

RM: Yeah, groceries we always got there and of course my parents still lived in Winooski.

NM: We used to have a nice men's clothing store right here in Shelburne, where Companions is now. The fellow's name was Chittenden, Tom Chittenden. You know, Chittenden Cider Mill? One of their sons. He was excellent, he had an excellent quality of clothes and he knew how to fit a suit for a person, and he was here probably for what, four or five years then I don't remember...

DP: When we first moved here there were three hardware stores.

NM: We had our Hot Point appliances over there in one part where Companion is now for one winter because we were remodeling in the shop here and we wanted to try it out over there. It was kind of nice, but a little inconvenient having all of our paperwork here every time you go over there you would have to bring your paperwork there. That was before the computer age. We were there for one winter; we were at both locations, tried it out.

DP: How has your business done with all the big stores coming to Williston? Has it changed?

NM: No! In fact actually it's kind of interesting. They just can't give the people the service they need. In fact our sons right now are doing most of the service for these stores, and they shouldn't be doing it really. They should leave them suffer, and take care of their own responsibilities. When you buy an appliance today you buy it with the idea that GE is going to service it for you. Well GE calls up whoever they have got set up for servicing people, and some of them aren't even capable of doing it, so now they turn around and they call up here, to have Roger go out. So Roger is doing all the hard work of all these other people that are in the business because they don't do refrigeration, they don't do this that and that, and they call up Roger and he goes out and does it. Well its not being very fair. When I started with appliances, we bought it from GE or Hot Point and we were responsible for the service for the first year, it just came out of our profit. If we didn't have any calls we just kept the profit. If we had calls we took care of them. We didn't have to get rebates back from GE. Now every time you buy an appliance, whoever sells it isn't responsible for the service, GE is responsible. Well they have a list of dealers they call, and half of those dealers can't do the work so they end up over here. So it's getting to be right now, too much

RM: When the company calls to see if you want to go and do the service, they are not in town here, they could be anywhere's. There is a person that has a dishwasher problem, now would you be able to go and service that? It doesn't matter; they even call on



Saturday. I say I don't know I don't make the appointments. And one time they say well this is in Newport, and I said definitely not. I said this is quite a ways, that's close to Canada. They don't know or they don't look. No way! They would give him \$34 to go to Newport.

DP: So business has changed?

NM: A lot of people now, respect the fact we service, and they buy here rather than buying from the big stores. You still get some people who buy from the big stores because they think: well, I'm going to save money over there. Sometimes they end up spending more money than they do over here.

RM: And then when they need service they and they get us they say we didn't realize you did the service. I do what I can, but I take care of my customers first, you know? It wouldn't be right for us to sell appliances and then to say to our customer, well I need to go on this service call because whoever sold it too them don't have service.

DP: Are you still doing the farm work too?

NM: I got 100 accounts still on farm equipment.

DP: When you retire from here, do you think anyone will take up this business?

NM: Either they got to get more help or it is going to be impossible for them continue on. Eventually the service work is going to be so much that even Roger and Gary aren't going to be able to keep up with it. They need to be training younger people now. In fact, all the years that I was in business I always had young people working for me, and they were learning while they were working, so after a while they got to where they new stuff pretty well. You just can't wait until the day you need them and then go out and hire them. You got to continue training them from the beginning because if you don't eventually your are going to end up without the help.

DP: Do you have connection with CVU or the Tech school?

NM: We've tried, but we haven't had very good luck.

NM: We haven't been able to get too much that way. We've gotten a few and some of them stayed for a while and some of them went out on their own, and went working for somebody else. When you get somebody you don't know if they hang on for a while. If you have them for a year or two, sure they are not going to know everything at the end of two years, but they are going to know more than when they started, and this is the part that hurts right now is to be able get people, and get them trained and get them to stay long enough.

NM: Big turnover of labor.

RM: In my time if you had a job you didn't give it up. You were assured the money.