

Sept. 13, 1993

Well, I'll start out by telling you that my family goes back to the Georges, Frances (Stevens)'s family; Em George, he was on the lake in a steamboat...but anyway, I started out in steamboats in the '50's, in about '52. My first engine is there, which my son is building a boat now for this engine to go in. And the boat that this is going to go into was a 1904 wooden hull, which was all rotted away, and we saved, last winter, and took it to Rhode Island and made a plug, made a fiberglass mold, and now they produce a brand-new 1904 fiberglass boat. And so we've got about number 7, out of the mold, which this engine will go into, which will be kind of a fun thing to see go. They make many steamboats at Beckman, Limited. You can buy whatever you want for a brand-new steamboat, believe it or not; you can buy it right off the shelf, or you go in and they'll build you whatever you want. You can go to the West coast, Elliott Bay, in Washington State, same thing. Walk in the door and they'll build you a steamboat. So, steamboats aren't dead, you know; they're still out there. We had our annual steamboat meet here at Lee's Mills this past weekend, we had about 1500 people, and we had 56 boats, so there's a lot of interest in steamboats, still. It's really a growing, growing hobby.

Getting into the older boats, I have a painting of my last big boat. This boat was 47 feet long. We gave up running this boat in '89. And the reason we gave it up was strictly that the State got to the point, it was costing \$317 to license the boat; we didn't warrant the cost of the license and the maintenance. It was costing us about \$1500 a year just to keep this thing floating in the water. So, we still have the boat-I'd like to donate it to you people! This boat was built in 1909, came to the lake in 1911, and was used on the lake until we gave up with it, due to cost. Strictly just cost; that's the only thing, and we've got one of these new 22 foot fiberglass steamboats like everybody else, and we haul it all around the countryside. It was quite a nice boat. Question-When was the painting made? D.T.-I don't know. My wife had it done for me at Christmastime. I

have another painting-most of you are probably familiar with this boat, which was the Swallow, from Swallow Boat-house. This was the boat which went with Kona Mansion. This boat was used at Kona Mansion up until the Depression, about '29, when things came hard, and then it was sold to Nat Goodhue, in Wolfeboro, and he proceeded to use it as a passenger boat and excursion boat, and when the Second World War came along, all of a sudden this boat was in great demand. They used it towing logs-they towed logs down the lake, they'd tow about 100,000 feet of lumber into the local mills. There was no gasoline, no trucks, during the war; they needed lumber. And in the daytime they used the boat to go to the camps. They hauled supplies to a lot of the summer camps; they went all over the lake. They made two or three trips a month just to Bald Peak, to take the people at Bald Peak out, and they used this boat just continuously all during the war. And then, right after the Second World War, the use of the boat kind of fell by the wayside. They took the steam out of it, got diesel-ized, and just gradually went downhill until it was pretty much in ruin. Nat Goodhue called me one night, he said, "Would you like to buy the Swallow?" I hadn't seen the boat for ten years. Stuck my neck out, yes, I'll buy it. I go down, the boat's down there, just a big pile of rotten wood, and we ended up just burning the boat, because it was totally far, far gone, beyond ever fixing it. But it was a beautiful boat. It was built in 1890, and it was the East Boston Yacht Club flagship when it was brand new, and they brought it here to the lake in '97, and it served Kona Bay, down at Kona Mansion until Goodhue got it and ran it commercially.

Also, of course, during the '40's, the steamboat Moultonborough, or Center Harbor, however we want to call it, was very active on the lake. They had barges and all kinds of things. The Uncle Sam was still kicking around in steam.

And that ran and did all kinds of things, carrying the U.S. Mail, and doing everything else. Most of the commercial boats died in the '40's. This is when they died on the lake.

The Mount Washington almost...they discontinued running it, took the boilers and the engines out of it for the war. After the war, they put the diesels in it, and started running again. But most all of these big commercial boats all fell by the wayside by the Depression, and then after that the Second World War came along, and they converted most of these boats to gasoline, and they just fell by the wayside. So, about all your big boats on the lake died in a short time period of about 20 years. They just were zip! gone. This particular painting was done by a man, Richard Mitchell-great steam man, done great things for the steam hobby. I persuaded him to do this painting for me, and it took many days of persuasion, but finally he did it. And he wrote numerous books and articles for everybody, all over the world. I'm very happy to have the painting. Some of this wood was from the Swallow, and that's why it hasn't got much of a frame; I just put it in the way the wood was, that was kind of the best of the wood that was left in the boat when we got it, inside of the cabin, and as you can see it was bleached out and very poor wood at that time, but I saved that much of the thing. And I have the pilot wheel, and numerous parts and pieces of the boat.

Question about picture-D.T.-The picture was taken at Goodhue and Hawkins. Well, not taken. The original picture was taken that he painted it from, Dick Mitchell took in about 1944, at Goodhue and Hawkins Navy Yard, in Wolfeboro, on Truell Street. And the yard is still there; I don't know whether they still call it Goodhue and Hawkins, or what it's under now, probably it's still Goodhue and Hawkins.

Is there any particular questions anybody would like to ask concerning steamboats? (Question concerning fuel). D.T.- Yes, but you've also got to remember that most of these boats (that) have gone from burning solid fuel are very small boats. We take numerous cruises now, we go to Maine, we go to Vermont, we go to New York, to Canada, with all of our trailer boats. And a lot of these fellows can't carry wood enough on their boat to run six or eight hours, so they're forced into using either LP gas, or oil, or some other fuel. The larger boats like the Swallow, you could put a ton of coal, she had two big coal bunkers on each side you could fill these things up and run for several days. But the smaller boats today, most

of the boats are going to be on somebody's trailer behind their car, and they just can't carry the fuel. If you're going to Canada and you're going to steamboat for two weeks, it's pretty hard to two weeks' worth of wood in the back of your car for your two-week ride. So, that's the reason that they have gone to the gas, but the majority of them are still solid fuel. Now, when we had our meet here, we had two cords of wood for the fellows to burn. In four days, they burned two cords of wood. They gobble it right up.

Question concerning a steamboat hulk at Lee's Mills in the '50's. D.T.-That was the Center Harbor, or Moultonborough. After the boat was all gone, and it had been burnt to the waterline, the crankshaft was in the boat, which weighed probably a thousand pounds, or 800 pounds, it was a big crankshaft. The original engine was a Paine engine, it came from the Eagle, and they took the engine out of the Eagle and put it in the Center Harbor, because they needed more power. I went over and decided I wanted the crankshaft, because that's about all there was left of the whole thing; so, I couldn't figure out, at about 14 years old, how am I going to put this crankshaft in a rowboat-I can't pick it up because it weighs about 800 pounds. So, immediately I decided I would sink the rowboat, roll the crankshaft in the rowboat, and then I'd bail out the rowboat, get the rowboat to float, and then I'd row home again. So, this I proceeded to do, but I didn't realize the rowboat was only good for 700 pounds. So that wasn't a very good thing, so then I had to go get a bigger rowboat, after I started to leave the scene, I sunk, and I went and got my grandfather Em George's 12 foot rowboat, which mine was nine or ten feet, and I got the bigger rowboat and got the crankshaft-same thing, sunk the boat, got the crankshaft in it, got the crank back to the edge of the beach, sunk the rowboat, got the crank out, ended up getting Verne (Richardson) to come down with his wrecker and he graciously picked this thing up, hauled it up to my house for me, free of charge, and I've still got the crankshaft.

Question concerning the name of the Center Harbor/Moultonborough steamboat. D.T.-Supposedly the boat was built in Center Harbor. A lot of people in Center Harbor always referred to it as the Center Harbor. The people in Moultonborough always

referred to it as the Moultonborough. And nobody really wanted to lay claim to it because it was such a bloody old piece of crap in the best of it's days. It had tarpaper decks, a tarpaper roof, everything about the boat was tarpaper. I mean, it was a workboat, strictly a workboat. That was the way it was. And as a kid, very young, the last time I remember the Center Harbor, we were living in Wolfeboro, I was down by Goodhue and Hawkins, and the State came in to do a big job, and this was about '46 or '47. And they went out of the bay towing the big steam crane, and that's the last. They brought it back here. The boat had a big bow, the way the keel had been built, and John McKinney said, "We don't need that bow in the keel." So, he straightened the cradle of the boat. Well, they pulled out this boat and it probably weighed 40 tons, and of course, the keel buckled, the boat fell off the cradle, and that's where it ended up. It just ended up there and never went any further.

Question concerning old boats at Lee's Mills. D.T.-
 No, when the town dredged out, this was all taken out. The New Hampshire was still there, the Black Brook was still there, and the Undine. And they just literally dredged these boats out and they're part of the landfill. (Question-inaudible)-
 D.T.-All except the Black Brook. The Black Brook was Will Raymond's. And they got in a big argument on the way home, and he says, "When you get the Black Brook back, you run her up on the mud, and that's where it's going to stay." And they run it up on the mud, and it was the best boat they had of the three boats. They had the Beatrice, the Center Harbor, and the Black Brook, and the Black Brook was the best of the bunch. But he got in a big fight with the crew, and he said, "Put her in the mud", and there she laid and rotted away. And the engine was taken out in the Second World War time, and the boilers, and they went for the war effort. And Will Raymond did a big drive for the war effort, he went all around the shore of the lake, at one time, and I can remember seeing them barges just piled with steam engines, boilers out of everything they could get their hands on, and they were sold for junk for the war effort. There was a guy by the name of Ginsberg that came down there, I can remember, he came in there and loaded that stuff up with a big steam crane, on his trucks, for as much as a week, and this is why the steam stuff is gone.

Because the war effort took it away. This is where we lost a lot of our history in this country. We lost water mills, we lost a lot of stuff. Anything that was iron went for the war. We had to win, and so we lost a lot of our stuff.

Question-There was a machine shop, or some kind of a shop in Lakeport-MacDuff-did they make steam engines? D.T.-Not that I know of. (Further question)-D.T.-The steam engine patterns were H. Bickford. And they made their own engines right here, in Lakeport, for this lake. And H. Bickford made lots of engines; a steamboat by the name of the Bullfrog, that the Hanson's had, that had H. Bickford engine in it, and they had a brand-new one somewhere in storage, a spare engine, and that was kicking around. I don't know what ever became of those things. There was a guy in Krainewood that came by one day, and said he had both of the engines from the Bullfrog. I don't know. It's a rumor.

Question-What area was dredged out at Lee's Mills? D.T.-Well, the town had a piece of property, as you drive down, and that was the small dock that always was there, and Will Raymond had a building, and Em George had a building, and the Fales'es had a boathouse. And it was all marsh, all as you drive down to the landing now, everything from the Port-a-pot, everything from this side over is all dredged-in land. They just dredged around there. Not much wetlands in those days; it was the early '60's, '58, something like that. They just went in, and nobody really cared in those times, they just dredged and made all that property over there, which the town needed badly, and they need more down there today. That's all there was over there. But today, it would be "Save the Toads", and you'd never do the job. There were big snakes. My father ran over a snake, he had a 1936 logging truck, a Chevrolet with dual wheels, and he run over this snake in the road, and the head was on one side, and the tail got rolled with the other set of duals. These things sound outrageous, but these things weren't outrageous, as Bob or anyone here that's ever been down there in the early days, these things were for real. They were there.

(Inaudible remarks from audience). D.T.-They weren't poisonous, but they'd do a number on you. I've seen one of the young guys get struck in the leg, and his leg was like a football by the time we walked back up to the village. They weren't poisonous, as venomous, killing snakes, but they're not nice guys, either. They're quite aggressive in the water. Even now, if you're in the water and one of those water snakes comes by, which they still do, but not the size they used to be-if you see a three-footer, you've seen a big one, now-and if they come by, if you're in the water, they're going to try and get you. Try to stay away from them. Kind of like my grandson. He was out on the steamboat with us, in the spring, we're coming in, there's a big snapping turtle, a big one. Just laying on top of the water, so I pull up to show him a turtle. My little grandson looked at me, "Oh, no, Grampy, I hate the turtle! Take me home!" And to this day, I can't get him back in the steamboat.

Question-Did you ever hear of a boat called the Iroquois? D.T.-Yes, I have. Questioner-It used to pick up people from trains at the Weirs and take them and bring them to the various places on the lake. (Mentions the Governor Endicott). Speaking of the Governor Endicott, my father bought the tenders off the Governor Endicott, I'd say about a 12-13 foot boat, a pumpkinseed, with a MacDuff engine. And I used it all the time I was growing up. D.T.-The Governor Endicott is probably the only one of the steamboats left in existence that could be saved, if they would let you save it. It sets down there where Laconia picks their water supply up, and her roof, at low water, is just kind of kissing the pond, you know it's there. And just out away from it, I don't know what their theory was, they took the triple-expansion engines out of the boat, and filled the boat full of rocks to sink it, to make up for the weight of the engine, and then they put the engines in the lake. So, you can go out, early in the morning on a good, clear day, and you can look down, and here sets these two Paine triple-expansion engines, about 12 feet long, and so high, big, big engines, and there they set. I've thought seriously of getting them, but the water supply people down there, they

really frowned on me. I wanted to resurrect the boat, get a big thing started and get the boat up. The boat was sunk by Lavallee, in the beginning, and the only reason he sank the boat was, the Depression came, and the boat was making no money; it wasn't generating any money. So, he said, "When this depression passes, we'll run the boat again." And the old-timers, very frequently, would take the powerplant out of their boat, sink the boat in the winter, get it up in the spring, and put the powerplant back in, because they didn't have any capabilities of pulling them out. So, they did the same thing with the Governor Endicott. They put it back in the water, took out the floor, took out the engines, took the boat over near the shore, and proceeded to sink it, right where it was easy to get at. And sunk it with the intentions of getting it back up. And when the Mount Washington burned, the old Mount, why he didn't just get the Governor Endicott back up and get it going, I don't know. I do know, from Ray Husband, who had run the engines, he said the engines were made by Paine, and they were wicked light-built, and they continuously worked on the engines, that they were junk right from Day One, when they were brand-new. I think this is why they didn't bother. And at the same time, they found the Chateaugay up there for \$20,000, and that was the way to go. They brought her down and put her all together. And I was talking with David Witham, at our steam meet, and and he has just completed a lot of research. He'd be very interesting for you people to talk with some evening, because he's got pages and pages of pictures of constructing the old Chateaugay, which is the Mount Washington. Right from one of the head guys that was on the building of the boat, and he's gone and spent all this time, and got a big stack of stuff, and he's compiling it, and it would be an interesting evening, because he could tell you, from the start to the first day it steamed here on the lake. The new Mount was under steam, on the lake, until the war really got into it, and they took the engines and blowers for the war effort. It ran about two years under steam. (Question)-D.T.-Well, that was the old Mount. She burned at Lakeport (really at the Weirs). But the new Mount was

under steam for the first two years of it's life, here on the lake, with the triples and the water-tube boilers. And David Witham said that when they put those boilers in the new Mount, the boilers were so bad, there were holes rusted in them, and to get these boilers going, they drove pine plugs in these boilers, because they were on a deadline to get the boat going so that they could carry passengers that summer. And the first summer, they carried passengers with wooden plugs in the boilers. The boilers were repaired that winter, and put into good working order the following year, in 1942. And I don't know whether it ran a full year in 1942 or not, but it did run in '42 some, and I think it ran most of the summer in '42, and in '43 some time, the government took out the boilers and the engines, and the first trip out, the first trip out the engines went into a minesweeper, and the first trip out the minesweeper was sunk. That ended the engines out of the boat. They were gone. They were supposed to get the engines back, after the war, but the government I guess gave them those Liberty diesels, and they put them in, and of course they're much more practical today. Insurance would be terrible on it, a steamboat today to carry passengers. There are some in operation, but they pay dearly .

Question-Why is it so expensive to license a steamboat?
D.T.-It's just the liability of it. Actually, a tank of gasoline in your automobile is much more dangerous than a steamboat. The explosive power in a tank of gasoline, if you ever realized what you're riding with, is a scary thing. And everybody sees a steamboat, and they see this boiler sitting there, and think, "Oh, it's going to blow up!" "It's going to kill everybody!" All of the real early boiler explosions occurred on the Mississippi River, and on the rivers in the West. And they had a lot of alkaline in the water, and they didn't understand treating the water for the boiler, to make a long-life boiler. And I've studied this with Lewis Hunter, who's dead now; he was a great authority on boiler explosions. And the only thing that anybody can come up with, is when you first start an engine, it has a big demand, and it has a tendency to pull all the water to one part in the boiler.

All these boiler explosions, when the boat started, within a few feet, the boiler would blow up. And this was what happened. They started the engines, it sucked all the water away from the boiler, this piece of steel got red real quick due to the real extreme heat, and when the water came back, it flashed, and the boilers were not constructed of good material anyway, in those times, and they just cut loose. We had the Red Hill, right down here at Lee's Mills, do the same thing. They built a brand-new boat, put a brand-new engine in it, put in a second-hand boiler, they started it up, the thing blew up right there. And that was the theory. That was what they thought happened to that boat. And the engineer, it blew him right straight through the side of the boat, and he lived through it. And the theory is that when this explosion occurred, you had just a split second there, as the wood is leaving, and the guy is coming through. The wood happened to leave at the right time, so the guy could pass through. It didn't do him any good, but he lived through the thing, anyway. I've heard lots of stories about the explosion of the Red Hill.

Question-about how the explosion takes place. D.T.-
To get a little technical, if you get into a water-tube boiler, and all of a sudden you blow the whistle, and you pull water up through the pipes, and if you're down in the engine, the engine starts pounding. This is what was occurring. These big boilers on these Mississippi boats were fire tubes. They were mill boilers, to start with. They weren't designed for a ship. They weren't a Scott marine boiler. So, when they started these things, the fire was in one end of them. The demand was so great on these great huge pistons, because they had say, three pistons, and they traveled at such a slow speed, at low pressure, that the demand was just super. So it just literally, off the crown sheet, sucked off all the water away to the upper end of the boiler, to feed the engines. And in the few split seconds while the water was gone, and the steel wasn't of good quality, not good stays, or designed properly, and the minute the water came back, this steel had reached just the right temperature, so when the water did come back, you got this flash of steam, and all of a sudden in these boilers, which

would be as long as this room and probably eight or nine feet in diameter, when all this water came back to the other end of it, you had an explosion you just didn't want to know about, it just blew the whole boat to Kingdom Come. This was Lewis Hunter's theory, and Professor Lynwood Bryant's theory, and my theory. This is just theory.

Further question concerning cost of operating, insurance, etc.
.....End of side one.....

...and you can build a brand-new unit, and pressure-test it at 1,000 pounds, and tell them you want to carry 100 pounds, but if it doesn't have so-and-so's fittings, and codes, and all that stuff, it's no good. It's just a vicious circle.

(Question)-D.T.-Ray Husband came to this town, I believe when he was 16. And he went to work on the lake, working on these steamboats, and he worked on steamboats right to the day that steam went away, and then he proceeded to work on the lake, almost until the day he died, he was still, right up to the end, involved with the lake. And Will Raymond was the same type of thing. He was probably the biggest man on the lake, in construction. He had a big steam crane; he had 90-foot barges; he was the big head wheel of construction on the lake. There were lots of other people that did stuff, but nobody did it at his scale. And nobody has ever done it at his scale since. (Voice)-He lived right across the street (from the Historical building). D.T.-Yes, the Carl house. Ray Husband was on the Randall Road.....Many, many days, when I was a kid, Sunday afternoon, the wheelbarrow was here, and Bill Glidden was filling the coal bunkers on the Center Harbor, with a shovel, one scoop at a time, walk up and dump it in. He wouldn't run the wheelbarrow up the plank and put a whole wheelbarrow-load in. Will Glidden worked on the lake all of his life as far as I knew, and the man never could swim a stroke. And a lot of the guys, the actual men that worked on the lake, couldn't swim. Russell George, Frances' brother, worked on the lake for years, with his father, couldn't swim a stroke. And most of these guys couldn't.

Voice-They used to go out for a whole week, didn't they?

D.T.-The Center Harbor had a galley on board, and a head, and the whole thing, and they lived right on the boat. And

normally there were four men in the crew. There would be Ray Husband, Bill Glidden, and normally they just hired a couple of whoever, to do real labor-work. Anybody. They just hired kids for the summer, same as a lot of people do today for things. And they'd be gone for the week. They just went off by the job. In those days, if you went from Lee's Mills to Wolfeboro, you were looking at a six- or eight-hour cruise. You didn't get in your gas boat and drive down there in half an hour and come back if you've had lunch. You went somewhere, it was a big thing. The lake was a big thing, it wasn't small. We've gone away from the horse and wagon. We don't go to Center Harbor in four hours, anymore; we zip over in two minutes. And this is the way it is on the lake. I really wish they could do something on the lake, to get the lake back to the beauty that it really is. Limit some speeds and some power, before we really have serious problems.

Voice-They used to cut the lumber up on the mountains and haul it down to the lake, and they would raft those logs and haul them to the mill...four miles an hour, or less. It would take a week...say you wanted to take a raft of logs from Lee's Mills down to the Weirs ...D.T.-When they talk of rafting those logs, too, you would think all these logs were tied together, but normally they weren't. They just had this outer perimeter of logs that were tied together; their boom was tied together with rafting irons. They normally ran two long ropes to the boat, and normally they steered with these ropes; they'd either shorten one or lengthen one, and make the boat go where they wanted. And this was standard procedure, and they would take, just as an example, a cord of wood in fuel to take 100,000 feet of lumber from Moultonboro to Laconia. I daresay, the same amount of fuel today, you can't move 100,000 feet of lumber from Moultonboro to Laconia. So, these guys had something. When they took the church down here, and put it on the ice and moved it down to Tuftonboro, they had something on the ball. Voice-remarks about log rafts. D.T.-And, naturally, you probably only had one other man on the boat. And the guy couldn't leave the boat. So, if you fell into your raft of logs, it was like committing suicide. And normally they didn't light the lanterns, because they didn't want to waste the oil. It would have to be pretty dark before

the lights were lit.

Voice-They took them into Lakeport, rafts of logs? D.T.-They took them to Lakeport, they took them into Wolfeboro, there were several places. Voice-How did they get under the bridge? (at the Weirs). D.T.-Well, of course the bridge was quite high, and they went right under. They towed right into Techwood. Techwood was basically where Burger King is, and they towed logs into Techwood at that time. They had to have the tows reasonably narrow, or they couldn't even get out of Lee's Mills bay with them. Of course, the tow would reach a quarter of a mile in length, this 100,000 feet of lumber. Adele (Taylor)'s father started on the lake. He was towing logs with Em (George)

Question-D.T.-Bob could probably tell you more of the history of Lee's Mills than I can. There was a big mill there; they sawed lumber. Bob (Lamprey)-They did just like you said. They took all the steel out of the mill. I came back, I said, "Where's the mill?" They said, "Well, we needed the steel, for the war effort." They took the steel, the big saws; there was a lot of iron in that thing-stuff going back and forth. Just like my father. They went all out for the war effort. A lot of them had sons. Even if they didn't a fellow like Will Raymond, Captain Raymond was all out for it. He was U.S.A. ...The mill sat across the bridges. You can see where the mill sat. It was granite on both sides, and I have pictures of it, with the men standing there on top of the chutes where the chains went around and pulled the logs up into the mill, on either side-from the millpond on one side, because they had log drives coming down the Red Hill River, and on the other side out of Lee's Mills Bay. And I can see Bob Blanchard out there, running across the logs. You only see these things once, because two years later, the revolution had changed the whole things. Gone. You do it different. But at that time, Bob was out there, running from log to log, and he was always way high in my regard. I sat and talked to him on many occasions. I just want to say one thing about my father. My father's father died as a result of a log breaking off up on Ossipee Mountain and coming down upon him. That left my father, the oldest boy in the family at 13. He went with all

those fellows. They logged all winter, and aboard the boats in the summer, like you were talking about. My father, therefore, was a 13-year old boy. He went aboard the boat, and he was out there six weeks at a time, before they hit shore. They were out there logging, and they didn't come back in, and you have to believe this, because that's the way they did it. And he did this until he was 19 years old, and finally his mother said, "We've got to do something different. We can't survive here any longer with four kids, and they went down to Boston, and he got a job there, met my mother and came back here.

Voice-Lee's Mills used to generate our electricity, in the village, here. D.T.-Yes, they had, I believe it was a ten-horse generator. The cement pad is still there, where the generator and stuff was. Bob knows right where it is. (Inaudible remarks from audience). Frances Stevens-The first mill was built by David Lee, and it was built before the town was incorporated, because they had to have it. A mill, a church, so many acres of cleared land, so many families; there were specifications. And then later, Isaac Adams (of Sandwich) rebuilt the mill and enlarged it, about 1815. (Sandwich Historical Society published a biography of Isaac Adams in their 1993 booklet.)