

## **A Walk Through New Preston in the 1960's**

**Written by W. Douglas (Doug) McHan Jr.**

The Pavilion Hall/Boys Club is my first stop. I don't remember the Post office being there, but I remember someone selling fireworks in front of the building! I do not know who this benefitted, do you?

On the left front part of the building, the fire truck was stored. When the fire siren was sounded, I sure knew about it. We lived two houses up at 30 East Shore Road, and my bedroom was on the south side, which was in line with the cupola. More often than not, Bill Jesson was the first to reach the firehouse/Pavilion. He operated the package store in town and lived next door. He could really run for a big guy! When the siren sounded a light would light up, and the first one there would answer the phone, then write the address on a chalkboard for the late-comers to see. Whoever was there would jump on the fire truck and go. If the battery was dead, they would push it down the short grade, just outside the barn doors, to jump start it. I was lucky enough to be there the day Ed Meeker had installed the 2-way radios, and was showing the firemen how to use it. The only thing I remember him saying was 'Nope, it won't work on Bee Brook Road, no reception'.

My earliest memories of the Pavillion Hall: Ralph Swanson was the caretaker of the Hall. He kept the coal stove going. The neighborhood boys would open the coal chute door and make ghostly sounds, then he would respond "Close the door, its cold". He had a dog named Zip who was his constant companion. Zip was a nice dog.

Another memory is the play put on by the New Preston Congregational Church with Janet and Phil Young, who were still in school at the time. The curtains on the stage had a painting of the lake, and around the edges were white blocks with advertising on them. "Norman W. Couch" and "Couch Brother Garages" were on them. I do not know who painted them or what the other advertisements were, do you?

Even before the Boys Club opened, we were sometimes allowed to go in and play basketball. Dorothy Averill and some of her friends came up with the idea of a place where boys could go, play and stay out of trouble. Mr. Mason rented the downstairs apartment in the Garnett's house, which was the second house towards the lake from the boy's club. He was the first director of the Boys club and was a good choice for the job. He asked a bunch of us kids to pick up, clean and paint the building. Bobby Gillette was the first to sign up as a member. I was number 13 and I still have my membership card. One time I made 23 baskets in a row, from the corner, but I never learned how to dribble the ball. We played pool, ping pong, watched television or a movie. Sure wish the kids today would get together at the Club and do all these things. The New Preston Congregational Church held rummage sales here in the spring and fall for many years. I bought a small mantel clock from Hattie Smith for twenty five cents at one of these sales. If anyone has pictures of the inside of the building, could I make a copy?

Jerry Smith was the janitor and also worked for Bob Woodruff at the mill. In the summer evenings a group of older men would gather on the steps of the Hall, or on the porch of the Supply Co., to talk and tell stories. Ralph Swanson, "Stomper" Swift, "Banjo" Servides and Jerry Smith were the main story tellers. I don't remember any of the many stories I heard, but I do remember they never swore in front of us boys.

In more recent history, when some boards were being replaced from the right front part of the building, I was able to save them. I made a frame to fit over a copy of the July 4, 1984 issue of the New Yorker that had an artist rendition of the Pavilion Hall with the lake just outside the rear of the building. Jerry had a very bad leg that turned in when he walked. Heard at one time he was a "barn stormer". It never slowed him down one bit. He lived a stone's throw from Woodruff's mill. Jerry sang in the New Preston Church choir.

I don't remember much about the library, except that Hatty Smith, Jerry Smith's sister was the librarian. She was so nice. I went to the library as a young boy with my mother. One of the double-sided bookcases is still used at the Pavilion Hall. This building was moved to a private home off Gunn Hill Road, then again to a house near the Lake Waramaug State park. I would love to see it.

Across the river from Pavilion Hall was Swanson's. Before my time they were a trucking company, delivering coal, a livery service, taxi, had gas pumps and many other services. We have a picture of my dad, Wes McHan standing in front of the gas pumps. We also have his gold wrist watch from when the business closed. Clifford and Anna Wright (she was the town tax collector) lived there with Leo and Eleanor "Toots" Pickett, Mill Wright, their daughters, along with Toots and Leo's children. Before dad married he also lived there. I believe some other boarders were Al Anderson and Charlie Pitts, who both worked for the state highway department. I spent a lot of time playing there with my cousins Leo and Jim Pickett. They must have played a million games of Wiffle ball with the doors of the small roadside garage doors as a back stop. There were too many windows, the river and the road to play hardball. They had a 16" bike that many kids in town learned to ride on. Near the end of the walkway there was a flat spot and before my time there was a newspaper stand. It was great for coasting right down to where they kept the New Preston town trucks. There were two diamond "T" dump trucks and Leo Pickett drove the International pick up, which was the first one I ever saw with a dump body. The trucks were kept in the big barn straight ahead on the property from the road. They kept the road grader in the portion of the barn backing towards the river. The New Preston town crew I remember are Nort Ives, Jim Gillette Sr., my future father in law Buck Butler, and the grader operator was named Peter or Pete. I believe he lived at the end of Baldwin Hill Road at Peterson's Overnight Guests. Between the two garages you can still see the foundation of the icehouse. I can remember going once with dad to deliver ice somewhere around the lake. We started out on the left side, West Shore Drive, hearing a noise, dad pulled into the end of Tinker Hill Road just in time for us to see the sea plane land on the lake. Swanson's property was where the E.J. Kelly Bus stop and turn around was. They came two times a day. We became friends with the driver and found out he and his son repaired bikes. I think his son was in a wheelchair. I thought it was great they would pick-up and deliver right to us, so I didn't have to

bug dad to take bike stuff to Johnny Bongerno's Western Auto on the green in New Milford. Leo and Toot's oldest son Orv had an English 3 speed bike. That was the first one I ever saw. After Orv bought his first car, a 1962 Buick Special convertible, we got to ride the bike. It didn't have brakes but we would put our heel on the frame and rub against the tires. Not very good for the shoes though.

One of the dumbest things I ever did was take my sled up New Preston Hill Road and slide down the gutter to the bridge. New Preston Hill had a huge field where Clyde Coles, with his Chevy coup, and Richard Stuart, with his Oldsmobile, would drive us kids around. I don't remember sledding there, but after Clyde and Richard got their licenses, they left the Oldsmobile hood behind. It was all we could do to pull it up the hill with a piece of clothesline. Was that worth it! It went very fast and would sometimes spin around.

Krasselt's store was run by Alvin and Pearl Krasselt in my day. They were great people. Alvin was a little rough around the edges but a good man. They had candy, car magazines, comic books and soda. What more could a young boy need? Back then, everyone in town would send their very young children with a list to the store. The kids would give it to Alvin and he would get the items together, which may have included cutting meat to order. The kids would come with the money or their Dad's would come the next day to pay. My dad would stop every day to get the "Daily News" paper. Things were different on Sunday. The front counter would be cleared to make room for the many Sunday papers. Corky Krasselt and "Buster" Daigneault (Sounds like "Dano") ran this operation most of the time.

Somehow we kids found out about Mountain Dew soda slogan: "It'll tickle your innards". We pestered Alvin until he bought it. We hated it!! Once, Pete Smith and I were asked to help unload the weekly delivery of the Bossutto's trailer truck. We had a lot of fun throwing boxes, and most of the time catching them. I don't think we were ever invited back to help.

Alvin and Pearl's apartment was upstairs along with, I believe Alvin's mother. His mother was blind. To get around the apartment she counted her steps and turns. One day Donny Wescott was visiting, I think watching television (a 4" screen), leaving his feet in the walkway, she tripped. She was okay in the end. If you crossed the bridge you could see the toilet flush directly in to the East Aspetuck River. When I think back, playing with the Pickett boys in the river, it sure wasn't a good idea. But in those days, just about everyone on the river did the same. I can't imagine the hardship it must have been when the State came in, poured colored dye down the toilets, and then watched the river to see if it came out, because you had to fix the problem. I would imagine this is why Alvin and Pearl moved into the "old, old" barber shop building, which used to stand across from Pavilion Hall. Homer Underwood moved it onto the hill that stands between Main Street and Schwab Road. The only items we have from the store are a "Honey Stoeffler" photo and some comic books.

We always called the building across the river behind Krasselt's, "Fannie's". I believe the full name was Fannie Heft (sp.?). Before my time, there was a restaurant on the main floor. My mother told me that in the small room on the right side of the building was the doctor that

delivered her. Billy Bader had a picture of him in his carriage. In later years, Skip Showalter was running threaded rods through the building to hold it together and found spoons in the walls. Clifford Wright had the biggest collection of tools he kept downstairs in this building. I think it was the best one I've ever seen. The upstairs was used for storage by many people in town. "Toots" Eleanor Pickett let me go "shopping" for furniture when I bought my house in 1980. Shortly after, the building was taken down. I still have an enameled bed pan and a few other things.

The first section of the Washington Supply Building was the "Singer sewing machine man". His name was Donald Simpson. He lived on Route 47 heading towards Woodbury. He was a tall man and very soft spoken. I believe he sold and repaired the machines. We have a thimble from there. In the next section of the building was the barber shop. "Rocko" was the first barber I knew. I assume he and Norman Erickson worked together for a while as there were two customer chairs. Then it was sold to Norman. Norman sold "Knapp shoes" on the side. There was always a Knapp calendar hanging on the wall. When Norman wasn't busy we would gather on the end of the Supply Co. porch to talk about last week's races in Danbury, Connecticut and make predictions on the upcoming week of racing. We have the motorized Barber pole and clock from the barber shop. Before this pole they had a half round enameled barber pole.

The New Preston Branch of the Washington Supply Co. was a place I went often. I couldn't tell you the number of times I went there to have Harold Connerty or Albin Peterson get me a half pound of ten penny nails for the latest addition for the tree house I built, along with much help from Billy and Irving Wyant and Chick and Bobby Pinney. The tree house had three rooms and a workshop under it. We used to buy "domes of silence", furniture feet, to be used as cheap cleats for our shoes.

The right side of the building was where the deliveries were made. We called it "the feed room". Yes, we did have farms back then! My father, Wes, who only had two jobs in his lifetime, made the deliveries from the store in Washington to New Preston. The rest of the store was filled with rows of shelves and tables full of anything you would need. To me, the best part was the boxes of model cars stacked in the right front window. I would study them all calculating which one to get next, with my thirty five cent allowance, earned from lawn mowing and snow shoveling. Sometimes the chrome pieces would be taken or missing from the boxes. They would be marked "NG", and moved to the office shelf. If I was lucky, Harold would give them to my Dad who would give them to me.

The Washington Supply Company purchased the D. Burnham General Store in New Preston in 1944 and opened up the New Preston branch of the Washington Supply Company. It closed in 1973 and the building was vacant for three years until Leonard Nelson purchased it in May 1976. It had been in decline and was in disrepair along with other shops left vacant in the 1970s in New Preston. By 1977, he had created a thriving mini-shopping mall that included the following stores: The Village Upholstery Shop, The Clock Shoppe of Bill Mueller, Sports Traders, Cindy's Boutique, the barber shop of Norman Ericson, The Ice Cream Parlor, Nelson's own

business and a real estate office of his wife Della. In 1983, Craig Nelson, Leonard's son, opened a store at the back of the building called the Village Barn. At the time there were a lot of Lake Waramaug tourists and the Village Barn contained a gift shop for them as well as a candy counter, Craig's antique business where he specialized in antique lighting and a local art gallery for a few years. The store closed in 2010.

When Craig Nelson was closing his store, The Village Barn, and moving items out, he took pictures of the floor in the left rear section of the building, where there was a row of different size holes. The Supply Co. kept the coils of rope in the basement to save room on the counters. The rope was threaded through these holes. Craig also found a two by ten foot Supply Co. sign in the basement which he was kind enough to give to us. We have two yardsticks from the Supply Company. One is a John Deere. The other has the three digit phone number and on the back a "measurer" for dipping into your oil tank, as they sold home heating oil at that time. The Supply Company eventually sold that section to Hoffman Fuel Company. The porch on the left side of the building was put on after the Supply Co. was gone. Harold used to park his car in this alley.

One story I heard about Albin Peterson was of him parking his 1950 Plymouth business coupe in front of the Supply Co. One day he pulled up to the curb, misjudged the distance, hit the curb, and hit his head on the horn button. Albin was very height challenged. If you have a copy of the Washington Volunteer Fire Department book (1926 – 2001), on page 25 you will see Albin's 1950 Plymouth in front of the New Preston barber shop. You can also see the library in the corner of the parking lot. Does anyone know whose car it is next to the library in that photo? The short pointed sign, I believe is for the New Preston Congregational Church. The small car to the right of the Hall is Charlie Gross's "Singer" automobile. Charlie had an art gallery two houses behind the Hall. The sign said "Galley". His specialty was carved Sandpipers. I sure would have liked one of them. In the upper right corner of the same photo is the home of my parents and is the home I grew up in. It was the only home they owned.

Now would be a good time to talk about Halloween. The village came alive. The windows in town would be soaped or waxed, the wax being harder to get off. When the town got the first police car, a 1964(?) Plymouth; I saw someone talking to the driver while soaping the rear side window, right in front of Dowler's garage. Later in the night the "big guns" would come out to decorate. Most of it would come from the farmer's junk piles. All kinds of items would be found on the roof of the Supply Co., and the balcony of the "Pavilion Hall". Eggs and pumpkins would be smashed everywhere. One of the wildest pranks I saw was when someone shouted "watch out!" as we turned and looked; we saw car tires being rolled down Route 45 by the Hall towards the center of town. Two men had loaded up their station wagon with tires from Norman Couch's garage tire pile. They would have to park just so, as the car had no reverse gear! I can't believe the tires never hurt anyone or took out store windows. It was also one of the places we waited for the school bus. I believe every year a carriage or wagon was placed on the roof of the barber shop. I never saw it being done, but apparently they were masters of rope rigging. One Halloween my cousin and I went to the drugstore and got some Nixon-Lodge

bumper stickers from Dutch Stoeffler. There was a small arrow shaped sign for "Just a mere Fruit Farm". We took the sticker and covered the words "fruit farm", so it read "Just a mere Nixon-Lodge". Can't believe we did something so dangerous!

One morning I was late and missed the bus. Louise Pitts had just dropped off her daughter Jeannie and was talking to her brother Bill Kurze, the carpenter. She asked Bill if he would take me to school in Washington. When we got to the school I opened the door and out rolled a beer bottle. At that age, it was the most embarrassing moment of my life!

Just inside the doorway at the New Preston Pharmacy there was a shelf for magazines. This was also the place we got on the bus. Mostly girls would be in the drugstore and mostly boys would be on the porch or inside the Supply Co. One morning a boy came to the bus stop complaining of a sore throat. He came into the drugstore and asked Dutch Stoeffler to make him an ice cream cone. He seemed to think it would get rid of the sore throat. I remember Nancy Pickett, my older cousin, behind the drugstore counter making cherry cokes and ice cream sodas. Another memory was the table lamp that sat on the left showcase they used for a night light. I believe it was a "Chanel No. 5" advertisement. Leo Pickett III and I got the job of helping "Honey" Harold Stoeffler remove the soda fountain and other items. One winter I had the job of shoveling snow off the sidewalk in front of the drugstore. When Honey cleaned the basement out, when the business closed, many items were donated to the New Preston Congregational Church tag sale. Yup, there were the whipped cream canister and aluminum bases for ice cream sundaes, just calling my name....

On the left side of the drugstore building was Ed Meeker's T.V. and radio repair shop. Back then he would make house call repairs. People would leave their doors unlocked back then. When Ed would come to my parent's house he would use his big box of television tubes to protect himself from our dog Cindy, a toy fox terrier. She wanted no part of letting him in the house. I have been reminded by Duncan Woodruff that there was a clothing store, named The Corner Shop operated by Mrs. Irene Letterman, after Ed Meeker moved his store to Washington Depot. But I do not remember this. I believe it was women's clothes only. Does anyone have photos?

When I got my driver's license in 1966, gas was 32.9 cents per gallon at Dowler's garage. They sold Esso gasoline. The car lift was just inside the front left window, so when a car had to be put on it, the other cars would have to be moved outside this area. Just outside this area was a pan full of water to test tire leakage. Harry and Marty Dowler allowed us to check our bike tires there. The right side was the office and behind that was a small parts room. Harry always had a small squirt bottle in his shirt pocket to wash your windshield. I always decorated my bike with flags, lights, bottle caps between the spokes, old motorcycle license plates and reflectors. Marty Dowler used to tease me about the latest additions to my custom bike. One story I heard, was when Joe Young bought a hearse and took it to Dowler's, asking them to remove the casket tracks, etc., to give him extra room. Mr. Johnson, who lived across from Bee Brook Rd on Route 25, worked for Dowler's at the time, and said "You're not getting me to work on that".

Glenn Gollsneider was the only “outsider” that I ever knew who could pump his own gas there. He was a friend of Marty’s. I thought it was pretty cool.

I owned a 1956 Dodge I bought from Bill Jesson for \$100. Bill said it was okay except for “cancer on the rear fenders behind the wheels”. I was having trouble with the brakes so I brought it to Dowler’s. I parked it outside the garage and when Marty moved it inside, one of the lines blew. No brakes. Not quite sure how he stopped it as I didn’t have an emergency brake. We have a windshield ice scraper, an owl key chain and a road map from Dowler’s garage. Downstairs in the Dowler garage building was Bob Nelson’s plumbing business. He was the first person I knew of with an answering machine. He had it in his home on Baldwin Hill Road. My father called it “Bob’s mechanical man”. He was very helpful, even if you called him on a Sunday morning. He would meet you at his shop or his home to get a faucet washer to fix your own sink. Storage for the New Preston Church tag sale would be here also. There were many cars stored there and my favorite was the 1950 Chevy hot rod.

I don’t remember much about the package store as a kid. I do recall going in once in a while with my Dad. Bill Jesson and his wife lived in the first part of the building and over the store. When Craig Nelson sold the business in later years, he gave me a can and bottle opener still in its box. Also, from my parents “bar area” we have an empty clear bottle of vodka that has a “Lake Waramaug” label on it.

Crossing over Route 45 onto Main Street “extension” was Lyman’s store (I have a print of a 1944 picture of him in front of his store), then it was Bud Gilbert’s (who lived across the street in the little red house that became Agards). The Gilbert’s moved to California. The store was then owned by Kelly and Abe Zinick. Eventually it was solely Abe’s store. Yes, there were two grocery stores in town in the 1960’s. Abe’s was much bigger than Krasselts. As a young guy I worked there for a short time, sweeping floors and stocking shelves for \$1.00 an hour. On Wednesdays I helped put away the delivery after school. The toughest job in the fall was the 20 cases of Campbell’s tomato soup, as they had to be carried up the stairs to the top floor to be stored. Boy, were they heavy for a guy weighing 85 pounds! The shelf behind the cash register was full of Cascade dishwasher powder. I always wondered who in town had an automatic dishwasher, because I had never seen one. At the top of the stairs on the upper floor there was a flat door; a “secret door” straight ahead. It had about one inch cut off, and book binding was completely covering it. I wonder why they did that. There was a trumpet on the upper floor. As I said earlier, Abe Zinick ran the store when I was there and he said his youngest daughter liked to play with that trumpet.

At the end of this building was the post office. We had box number 134. Either Dad or I would go almost every day to check on the mail. It was open between Zinick’s store and the post office until later years when they put in a door. If we forgot to go to the post office on Saturday, Abe would open the door between on Sunday mornings. We have a photo of the inside of the post office in the 1940’s, which came from Jerry Smith. It looked pretty much the same in the 1960’s. One day just before my birthday or Christmas, Mom told Billy Wyant and I to take my little red wagon down to the post office to pick up a package. Turned out to be a Mark’s train set. That

was among my best gifts ever! One of our favorite pastimes was to look at the “wanted” posters in the post office. We always said “I think I saw him”. Louise Miller worked here; felt like forever. Her husband Charlie had a store in Marbledale. They lived on Flirtation Avenue. There was always a problem parking there, especially in the winter. Joe Martin said it was one of the many reasons they needed to move the post office to Marbledale. Joe was one of my bus drivers and a janitor at school. Another reason was that the Zinick’s wanted more space in their store.

Across Main Street was Camp’s barn, which is now “The Village Smithy”. When I was a kid, Norman Couch’s garage stored many items there. Camps stored their personal items upstairs, plus the leftovers from when Bill Jesson’s father used the building as his blacksmith shop. The Gunn Museum has a picture of the building when he owned it. On the building you could see a poster from “The Great Danbury State Fair”. The fair was a big deal even for those in our town. My father, while working for Swanson Trucking, helped deliver vegetables to the Big Top for Arlene Yalpal (sp?), who was in charge of that section. Sometime in the 1960’s the Camps let the New Preston Congregational Church use their section for storing tag sale items. The Camps would donate one oxen yoke per year, for years, as there were many of them. In later years, when Norman Couch’s business closed, the church was allowed to use the lower level of the barn. There was an old pick up stored in there. Does anyone know about this? There were other automotive items too. I remember two complete sets of glass bottles with metal spouts and carriers. That was how they used to put oil in autos. Sure wish I had gotten one of them. When Norman Couch used the lower part of the barn they had removed the upright beams that supported the upstairs floor. Maybe to give them more room? The floor started to sag about a foot. The rear “dry” stone retaining wall had moved in about one and a half feet. Looking back, I now see how dangerous it was to be in there. When the “Smithy” took over the property, they tore down the old building and built a new one. I don’t know if any of the wood from the old barn is around, but I wouldn’t mind having a piece or two.

The Ole Town Shed was owned by Joe Young. It was another place I don’t know much about. I think there were a number of restaurants in this building that over looked the falls. The view from the downstairs restaurant was unbelievable, as you looked up at the falls. I know there wasn’t much parking for this. I had only been on the upper floor at Halloween, when they served cider and donuts. The night before the building was torn down Craig Nelson and Dean Fraley took a chain saw to the building and saved the restaurant sign “A Place to Eat”. Years later Craig gave it to me. An unusual mill stone was found when the building was being torn down. It was made in many pieces. The last time I saw it, it was on a skid not far from the side of the road. I wonder where that ended up. I feel it should have a place of honor.

Down Lyman’s hill, Route 45 (I assume named after Mr. Lyman who owned Kelly/Abe Zinick’s store), how many remember the state park at the base of the hill at Route 45 and then Route 25? The parking area is still there, as is the bridge to cross the East Aspetuck to get to the larger section. There were picnic tables and fireplaces on both sides of the bridge. It was nice, very well kept and used a lot. One of our favorite summer time activities was to ride our bikes there at 5:00pm on a Sunday afternoon, sit on the tables, and watch the hot rods and flat towed race

cars on their way home from the drag races in Dover Plains, New York. There was another pull off, on the left, near Hipp Road in New Milford. It was very common to pack a lunch for a trip or Sunday drive.

Across the (now) Route 202 was Norman W. Couch's garage. It was a large Quonset hut with a windowed showroom added on. The Texaco gas pumps sat right outside the showroom. I always thought that was a good idea to have your gas pumped, oil checked and windshield washed while you look at all the new cars. To help airplanes find their way, "New Preston" and a north facing arrow was painted on the roof. The new and used cars and trucks were kept on the left side. They had Chryslers, Plymouths, International trucks, Scouts and Saabs. They were the sixth oldest dealer of Saabs in the United States. On the right side of the building they kept their wrecked cars and cars that were not for sale. If you go to this property now, the only thing left of this business would be the cement base for the street light, on the right side closest to Christian Street. One of the biggest events of the year for teen age boys was the delivery of the new cars. The showroom windows were soaped over on the inside before they had the grand reveal on television during the Dinah Shore show. You had to go inside to see them. They "hid" most of the cars at Alan Couch's house, which was over the bank from the old New Preston School, the Cannavaro property now. When word got out the cars had arrived we would make a "bee line" to take a look. We weren't brave enough to go down over the bank though. Back then there wasn't much to see or do locally. Same thing if an accident happened. There would be a gathering at Couch's to see it. One time Alan Couch was willing to give me a 1950 Studebaker two-door. After Dad took a look he said "You don't need that piece of junk". I worked there for a week, starting the day after I got my license. I was too scared of damaging the cars, so I guess that's why they didn't keep me. We have an ice scraper from there.

At the corner of Christian Street and Route 202 was James E. Curry Real Estate. I knew Mr. Curry from New Preston Congregational Church where I think he was in the choir. He lived in Woodville. I heard from Vi Dalation, who owned the business after Mr. Curry, that the building used to be a tobacco barn. What I remember most was the sign below the left front window, "If you lived here, you'd be home now". People have read that and said "What the heck does that mean?" In 1980, Vi, who now owned Shepaug Valley Real Estate, was my real estate agent and found my house for me. We have a key tag that was changed from Curry's to Vi's Real Estate. I also have the "sold" sign she never came back to claim. Does anyone else have either a Curry or Vi's real estate sign?

On the bank at the end of Christian Street was Beck's kennel. I would like to know more about this. By the amount of dogs barking, it must have been a good sized business. I do remember being told the well for the house was on the hill behind the house. It was gravity fed; nice, no pump to deal with.

Just west of there, was the Green's Antique. I barely remember this and don't remember the name of the business, but in later years I believe he was a janitor at the New Preston School. He was a very nice man and lived in the last house on Anna Jay Lane. Next was the lamplighter, owned by the Fynn family. The son Pete had racing boats and a corvette, so that is why I

remember him. I think he moved to Maine. I have a nice picture of the building with the two "caddies" out front, thanks to Honey Stoeffler.

Down the road, to the west, was Dave Zinick's store. The main reason we took the bike trip down there was because cokes were 10 cents at Krasselt's store and 5 cents at Dave's. If they weren't busy, they would be sitting at what we called the ice cream table and chairs. It would be Dave, his son Max and sometimes Jerry Smith. That would have been a long walk for Jerry with his "bum" leg. I guess you would call Dave Zinick's a tiny general store. He sold Gulf gasoline at his pumps. I heard a story that some boys were bothering him once so he shot gasoline at them. I don't know if that was true. I believe he sold some pre-made sandwiches and had something to heat them up. I think that was because it was a Greyhound bus stop. A later owner, Ritchie Miesner, gave me a Greyhound time table with Dave's name on it. Does anyone have any pictures of the store or gas pumps?

Last stop is Ernie Vincent's to get eggs. I think it was Sunday morning Dad and I would go there. If you think the driveway to the Stone Mill Common is steep and curvy, you should have driven his driveway in the winter. You can still see the driveway where Cook's Antique Lumber sign is. Hard to believe the barn is still being used and the chicken coops are by the river. I don't remember if he had more buildings, but his house was at the far corner from the Stone Mill Commons building parking lot. I thought the road, before Route 25 dipped so the house was at road level, but have since learned, the house was moved down when the road construction happened.

Now I will start back at the Pavilion Hall going towards Lake Waramaug. Across Route 45 from Pavillion Hall there used to be an apartment building (in recent years restaurants). The Colters lived downstairs. I don't remember the mother's name, but the father's was Sam. According to my parents Sam was the best and fastest house painter in the area. He must have painted my parents' house at least twice over the years. They had three daughters, Susan, Carol (who was my age), and Ellen. I don't know who owned it back then, but Homer Underwood owned it in the late 50's early 60's, cause my wife's parents and two siblings lived there when my wife was born in 1961. At night after supper, from my parents' house, you could hear Homer with the backhoe and bulldozer until well after dark. That man was such a hard worker. And in the late 1970's when I was looking for a house, Homer gave me many tips on what to do and look for.

The next house towards the lake was located where the driveway to the apartment/restaurant driveway is now. I was told the earlier barbershop was located in the downstairs, but I only remember it vacant. The Cole family lived upstairs. They loved to sit on their upstairs porch. They had a tiny Rambler with 12 inch tires and a spare tire on the back, which was painted black and white. Most of the time they parked the car in the Pavilion Hall parking lot. When the son, Clyde was about 16 years old, he bid on and won a 1956 Black Chevy that Cliff Couch donated to, what I believe was the Lions Club auction, held in Titus Park, about where The Pantry is now.

The first people I remember living in the next house on the right towards the lake were the Smith's. Don, the father ran the Gulf station in Washington Depot. We have the plastic

advertising horseshoes from there. "Gulf No-Nox puts extra kick in horsepower!" Don had the first garden tractor I had seen. I spent hours watching him plow gardens and snow, spraying fruit trees, mowing grass, etc. Anything with wheels always captures my attention. I heard his wife was one of the first German war brides. This house eventually became the Garnett's home. The next house on the right was where I grew up. Before my time the Adams brothers owned Mom and Dad's house and the Smith's next door. Janet Young told me the large barn that can be seen in very old pictures of the Pavilion Hall, was the Adams brother's construction business.

So, this is my story. I can't believe how much I enjoyed writing this. I may have gotten some facts wrong, hopefully not many, but these were my memories. Sometime in the future, I plan to write a little story about the houses, since torn down, from the river side of Route 45 from the mill road to the Beeman/Woodruff mill dam. Keith Hinckley took some great pictures before they were torn down. If anyone has any old pictures you would share, I would love to copy them. If you have any papers, signs or "New Preston stuff" I would love to add it to my collection. After I'm gone, my collection will go to the Gunn Museum. Wouldn't it be great to have rooms upstairs at the museum for each of the villages of Washington? Would anyone else be interested in writing a short story about their memories growing up here in one of these towns? Lastly, I want to thank Robin, my wife for her help keeping me on track to finish this story and edit it.