

# **WHITES POINT QUARRY AND MARINE TERMINAL**

## **TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE CONSULTATION REPORT**

By

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## **1. SCOPE**

In 2005, Elgin Consulting and Research (Elgin) was contracted by Bilcon of Nova Scotia (Bilcon) to gather information associated with the cultural and past economic uses of the Whites Point property and the surrounding area. As there had been an extensive historical and archaeological review of the property, it was determined that in addition to primary and secondary source literature, it was desirable to collect oral history from persons who had knowledge of the area. The scope of the review was limited to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Fifty-seven interviews were conducted between April 15<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005. With respect to identification, each participant was assigned a number. The interview summaries, Appendix A, are by necessity, devoid of specific identifying information. As confidentiality was assured, ages and locations of participant's current residence are not exact. For the purpose of this report the western part of Digby Neck is defined as west of and including Sandy Cove. The eastern part of Digby Neck is east of Sandy Cove to Seabrook.

Bilcon refers to the project location as Whites Point; the community, hence the participants refer to the area as Whites Cove. Throughout this report the two designations are interchangeable.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

Contacts were made with older citizens who had knowledge of the Little River community and the Whites Cove property. As the Whites Cove Quarry and Marine Terminal initiative has been the subject of strong feelings and some controversy, this consultation was carefully conducted so as to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the participant. Participants were asked for their assistance and if they agreed to share their memories, they were presented with several options. Some interviews were conducted over the telephone, while others were in person. The participant was asked if the conversation could be taped; if they declined to be taped, and then notes could be taken. In three cases the Elgin interviewer had to rely totally on post-interview notes. In every case the participant was given a clear understanding of Elgin's association with Bilcon.

## **3. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

Contact was initially made via telephone and it was determined when Elgin and the participant would meet. The interview could best be described as a kitchen table discussion that was directed not by Elgin's interviewer, but by the participant.

Confidentiality was assured and the purpose of the interview was explained as an attempt to understand the history and the culture of the communities adjacent to the proposed development. Basic demographic information was obtained; i.e. age of the participant, place of residence, marital status, occupation and number of children. A total of 57 persons were interviewed.

Three open ended questions were asked and prompts were tailored to enhance the descriptions.

1. What are your memories of the Neck/home community from your childhood to present day?
2. What are your memories of Whites Cove and what influence did it have on the adjacent communities?
3. What is your impression of the proposed Whites Cove project?

#### **4. MAJOR THEMES**

As a result of the 57 interviews, some commonalities were noted. Recurring themes are noted below.

1. The effects of Highway #217 improvements in the 1950's.
2. The effects of changing methods in traditional industries.
3. The effects of technology, i.e. refrigerators, radio, television, computers.
4. The reduction in the number of children in the area since the 1950's as reflected by the number of grandchildren who no longer reside in the area/province.
5. The change in the social structure that has resulted from items 2, 3 and 4.
6. The need to remember the history of the citizens not only of the Whites Point property but the entire Digby Neck.
7. The Whites Point development with respect to the credibility of Bilcon.

##### **4.1 Highway #217**

Prior to 1950, the route down the Digby Neck was a gravel/mud road that was subject to considerable issues such as washouts. Between 1950 and 1955 significant improvements and route alterations were completed. The primary effect of this development was to increase accessibility to the Town of Digby and other areas of Nova Scotia.

As a result, many goods and services that were available in the individual communities prior to 1950 vanished. One clear example is the advent of the modern supermarket grocery stores in Digby. It gradually became common-place for people to 'go to town' to get their groceries. Hence the small general stores gradually converted their inventories to reflect the convenience needs of their customers.

Families on the Neck were self-sufficient. In all cases the participants recollected that each of them had access to sufficient land resources to grow most of their own produce. Many spoke of the livestock, i.e. chickens, cows and pigs that were maintained by their

families. In most cases it was reflected in their commitment to their assigned chores. Some noted that after the advent of the modern grocery store with specialty meat cuts it was not as critical for families to maintain their own animals. It is also noteworthy that there were many farming operations that ceased to exist.

The decline in the family farm is a universal debate, but the participants here were specific in their thoughts as to why the small beef, sheep, and dairy operations have all but disappeared on the Neck and Islands. It was felt that the costs associated with the farm made it uncompetitive, hence unprofitable. Further, in many instances the younger generations had no interest in continuing in the business.

Additionally, behaviour patterns associated with recreation/entertainment shifted to reflect the increased ease of accessing the town. There were many conversations about the old movies at the theatre. Specifically 'Abbot and Costello', the 'Three Stooges', and 'Cary Grant'. Meals outside of the home were no longer limited to picnics and community suppers. As we move into the 1960's and 1970's there are comments about going to restaurants as a treat.

It is also noteworthy that in the 1960's on the Neck, as in other parts of rural Canada, there was a strong desire to obtain "new and modern stuff" #'s 6, 18, 19, 30, & 36 and "get rid of the old junk" #'s 6, 28, 19, 30, & 36 that was passed on from previous generations. That is not to say that there was not an appreciation of the heirloom nature of some items, but the modern chesterfield replaced the hard backed wooden sofas. One participant was very specific and stated that she could "put that damn silver away" #2 and use "the new stainless" #2. The improved road facilitated the acquisition of the "new stuff" #2.

Highway #217 also brought more tourist traffic. Although seen by many as an economic opportunity, some of the participants did not agree. They were very resentful of the influx of tourists. They perceived this as an intrusion into their lives. "Tourists are so newly (nosey) #7". Many women expressed some distress over the lack of clothing displayed by the ladies as they rode bicycles. It was often felt that these tourists "expect too much" #8 and "as a result, prices jump in town to get as much as they can off these folks" #8. It was further noted that many tourists expect something for nothing and all too often they get just that. There were several stories about seniors who sold pieces of furniture etc. for very little only to discover that it was worth so much more than they were paid.

## **4.2 Technology in Traditional Industries**

Conversations in this area were all associated with the fishery. As noted, there were some discussions associated with the decline in the family farm but it was noted that technology had significantly changed the nature of the fishing industry. Nineteen of the participants were involved directly in the harvest of lobster, ground fish, and herring. An additional five of the participants were involved in processing as labourers.

The increase in the size of the boats, and the increased efficiency of the gear was certainly central to these discussions. Fear was expressed that the current lobster fishery was at risk because of the potential of over-fishing. Several participants, #'s 17, 27, 28, 40, 47 & 55, noted "Now that all the other fish are gone the only thing left is the lobster". Following

this statement an explanation was given. This is best summed up by #53 “They have drug up the bottom and soon nothing will be left”. All of the participants placed the blame almost equally between DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) and the fishermen themselves.

In the conversations, there was an increasing fear expressed by those who had previously been involved in the fishery that current harvesters are ignoring or hiding the presence of the widely reported onset of a shell disease in the lobster population in order to maintain their market share.

### **4.3 The Effects of other Technology i.e. Refrigerators, Radio, Television and Computers**

One woman (#6) remarked that “The world is a smaller place.” This individual, who was in her late sixties, was speaking about the seniors and their reluctance to see things change. Many of the participants still liked to bake in wood-fired stoves, although very few had that option. It was also evident that the need to preserve was not as critical as it had been when they were children. When speaking of Elgin’s interviewer #19 said “Your generation can get things at the store that we never saw”. She continued “You don’t have ta bake or lay in jars”

Many of the participants spoke of sitting around the radio during World War II and listening for news of the war. #27 “Now ya just turn on the TV and it is there whether ya want it or not”. Many felt that the television was not a good thing. Program content, specifically the proliferation of sex and violence, was demoralizing and unnecessary. Often their viewing was limited to the game shows, news, and a few soap operas.

It was felt that the need to “make your own fun” #31 was gone and that as a result #31 “People don’t talk.”. Many spoke of family outings/activities that no longer occur as people expect to be entertained. # 42 “We used to walk for miles to get places, the fun was getting there.” The significance of places “ #31 “like Whites Point where people went to be together as a family is now lost”.

When the participants spoke of outings to the shore they expressed their desire to have that sense of closeness again. However, many realized that those “times can never be again” #4. “Things have changed, back then we worked hard. Today ya just flip a switch and it is done for ya. Fishermen were real men. They fed their families out of small boats and they worked at everything. Now ya work just long enough for stamps (Employment Insurance) and sit on your ass.”

Many of the men interviewed spoke of working in many fisheries, tending gardens, raising livestock and taking other jobs on land. #25 “Everybody worked - the kids, the wife and it was hard just to get by.” They felt now it is easier to preserve food with the processing methods and refrigeration. #57 “Machines do all the real work now.”

Education was another area where they reflected on technology. #21 ‘My grandson can sit at his computer and find out stuff in no time.’ They noted that education was a privilege

and now it is taken for granted. #31 “Kids do not really have to read to do research as we once did. I can see a day when libraries have only computers and no books.”

#### **4.4 The Reduction in the Number of Children in the Area Since the 1950's as Reflected by the Number of Grandchildren who no longer reside in the Area**

Many of the participants expressed a feeling of loneliness associated with not having their children or grandchildren close at hand. #48 “They have had to go away to find work.” and #16 actually stated “There is nothing here for them.” #15 stated that “My children phone me every night since their dad died”. She went on to say that “in the past you never moved very far away and families were close”.

The increased mobility and educational opportunities as well as a lack of viable employment opportunities are all factors in this situation. Many spoke of schools in Freeport, Central Grove, Tiverton, Little River, Mink Cove, Sandy Cove, Lake Midway, Centreville & Rossway. In the 1940's it appears that there were over 600 children in the small schools. In 2005, there are less than 180 students in the two remaining consolidated schools.

#### **4.5 The Change in the Social Structure**

The participants are all aware that there are an increasing number of older and retired individuals living in their communities. In the past, older people were cared for by their families and could remain in a family home. Three of the participants who now live in seniors' housing lament the fact that they have to pay for help and that they do not have much space. #56&57 “I have to get strangers to help me with my bath. The young are so busy with their lives that there is no time for us, even if they did live here”. #39 “Our kids can make more money in the city so they leave. They might come back when they retire but then who's going to look after them?”

When speaking of the current community #55 stated that “Anyone who could go has gone and those who stayed are living on the edge.” He continued “We have a lot of folks on welfare or UI (Employment Insurance) for most of the year. None of my kids are here; they are all working away. Christ, I left when I was in my 20's and just came back to retire. If nothing changes in terms of employment, who is going to drive the fire trucks?”

Also noteworthy was the perception of the people who reside on the Neck. At the turn of the Twentieth century, the class structure was as evident as it is today; however, there has been a shift as a result of the incursion of the outside world. The participants spoke of the community leaders of the past as being the Pastor/Minister and those who were educated, i.e. teachers and physicians. Today, they indicate that the class structure is more strongly associated with personal wealth. #29 “There are those with money and those who are gettin' by and not much betwin” he continued “All us retired folks have a livin' but if yer goin' to raise a family ya can't stay here.”

It was evident that what employment opportunities still exist on the Neck and Islands are controlled by a small number of individuals. To quote #38 “You piss them off and you're done. All you'll have is welfare.” This was a fear expressed by a number of the

participants. It was noted by #3, #11 and #55 that some of the individuals who are most vocal about the proposed Whites Point Project are also persons with licences and plant operations.

The position of the Church as the centre of the community is also gone. Some spoke of abuse scandals in recent history while others referred to a lack of good upbringing by young parents. Little River was a Baptist community. Sandy Cove was more denominational, encompassing Presbyterians, Anglicans and Baptists. It was very unusual to have a Roman Catholic family on the Neck. If somebody married “one of those” #54 then they kept to themselves.

In the early 1960's there was a furor in the community over the release of the first three publications associated with the Stirling County Studies by Dr. Alexander Leighton & Dr. Jane Murphy (Leighton) of Cornell, Harvard and Dalhousie Universities. This professionally acclaimed body of longitudinal research has provided mental health professionals with significant information on prevalence rates of depression/anxiety. The site of the fictional Stirling County is Digby County which includes the Digby Neck. Dr. Murphy recently noted that there have been significant changes in demographics of the area since 1948-1952. This area has “borne witness to the social trends that typify the North American experience more generally. Its standard of living has risen, its health care delivery improved, and its primary industries declined. Reliance on family and religion is down, and crime and drug use is up. Everything we can think of across North America has happened there, I don't think we could have ever foreseen that, but it does make it an all the more valuable laboratory" *Harvard Public Health Review, winter 2002.*

The recently published (2000) instalment of the study noted that the prevalence rates of depression in the area have remained relatively constant at about five percent. This was in contradiction to many other epidemiological studies that have indicated there has been an overall increase in the prevalence of the disorder in the North American population. One explanation put forth in September 2000 by Scott B. Patten in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal, 163, (6) 1* was that this discrepancy could largely be explained by the demographic shift that has occurred in the area. Rates of depression are increasing in females under age 50 and males under age 45. This population group in Digby County has steadily declined, possibly as many participants indicated, due to the lack of family-sustaining employment opportunities. Most of the participants expressed feelings of loneliness and isolation as a result of their progeny leaving the area to access opportunities not available in the local area.

#### **4.6 The Need to Remember the Past History of the Citizens on Whites Cove and the Entire Digby Neck**

This was a difficult concept for many of the participants. The way it was and the fact that it will never be that way again is distressing. ‘Change is difficult’ was a common theme. There was recognition that the activities of daily living are easier, but the question as to whether or not it is better now was debated by the participants. Several expressed a fear that the traditions and history of this area are being lost and not enough is being done to preserve the memories and the sites that are part of our heritage.



In this discussion many participants felt it would be possible to collect artefacts, publications and ‘memories’ relevant to the Neck and Islands that could be preserved for future generations. Several of the participants indicated that if the opportunity existed they would be very willing to contribute to a facility that would restore and maintain them for future generations to see.

Participant #32 is an amateur historian who is now very involved with the collection, restoration and preservation of artefacts and oral history. She is deeply aware that “Much has already been lost and there is a need to preserve the memories for future generations.” Quoting from Winston Churchill, ““Those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it’ ”.

As author Anthony Davis asserts in his publication *Dire Straits: The Dilemmas of a Fishery, the Case of Digby Neck and the Islands*, there are commonalities existent in this area that would portray the significant milestones of many of the fishing communities that are inherent to the Canadian Atlantic shores. In *Dire Straits* he profiled the intended and unintended consequences of change, with a focus on the local level perceptions and responses. Participants #13 and #32 who are aware of this publication indicated that preservation of the Neck and Islands history would be of value to those persons with Atlantic Canadian Fishing community roots.

#### **4.7 The Whites Cove Development with Respect to the Credibility of Bilcon**

This was determined to be the key factor in the opposition to the Whites Point Project. Key issues are outlined as follows:

- a. In response to a defamatory statement in which Bilcon was alleged to be acting in contravention of the Cemeteries Act of the Province of Nova Scotia, Bilcon launched a defamation suit against a person who resides in Little River.
- b. An initial Canadian partner who is no longer involved in the development, made several visits to older residents to purchase land. There were a number of stories, particularly from persons who reside on the western end of Digby Neck about heated conversations which were not very tactful. This caused the elders great distress.
- c. Further, the current Project Manager is strongly associated with the former Canadian Partner. For the purposes of this report, it is sufficient to say that there are some issues regarding the past conduct of one of the initial developers of this project.
- d. There are also some concerns regarding Bilcon’s nationality. The “Americans want our trees; our water and now our rock and they’ll get it” #32. Conversely #3, #8, #7 and #11 were annoyed that many members of the quarry opposition were also American and they resented “these come from away's telling them what to do with their resources”.

These issues have a profound impediment on the willingness of individuals to speak freely about their concerns associated with the proposed development. There were a multitude of questions associated with the effects on the water table and the detrimental effect of sediment on the fishery, but the feeling was that they could not trust the answer even if they felt they could ask the question.

They also felt that there was a significant element of truth to the Little River Community residents' assertion that there had been people buried on the Whites' Cove property. Dr. L. R. Denton, who has given Elgin access to his unpublished manuscript, *Homestead in the Valley*, stated that it was "always my belief that Whites Cove was called Whites Cove because of all the whitewashed rocks that were painted every year as a memorial to the residents of the Whites Cove community who died there". He related that members of the Little River community, during his time, always ensured the rocks were painted just south of Harvey Denton's Camp on the Whites Cove Property.

Dr. Denton was also aware of the "closed nature of small communities". Any outside influence is threatening and he reminded Elgin of the dynamics of change. "If the developer has any questionable behaviour, then it is likely to nurture opposition". On several occasions, participants, particularly those nine who reside on the eastern portion of Digby Neck spoke of another American developer who is attempting to set up a water bottling facility in Gulliver's Cove. This Proponent had met with members of the local community at the Rossway Hall and described his development a certain way and provided the community with written handouts. However, when his application was submitted to the regulatory authorities the application was for a significantly larger project. This according to some participants (#14, #17, #18, and #57) has added to the suspicion associated with the Whites Point Project and Bilcon.

## **5. Consolidated Oral History of Whites Cove**

From the fifty-seven interviews a picture of the Western end of Digby Neck began to emerge. In evidence was a community that had undergone many changes as a result of a multitude of factors. Yet, it was also evident that a certain quality of life has been perpetuated regardless of outside influences. There was a sense of security in knowing their neighbours and feeling they could trust their own people (people from the Neck).

There were many who wanted to clarify the name. The cove on the proposed quarry site has been called Carty's Cove, White Cove and Whites Cove. There is, according to Church's map of 1867, a White's Cove near what is now Gulliver's Cove. There was also a Cove Blanc near Meteghan.

Prior to 1900, there was a small settlement on the Whites Cove Property. The participants varied in their perceptions of three to seven homes, but it was obvious that people inhabited the area. It was never an incorporated village, but a settlement nevertheless. Several of the participants had ancestors born in the community. It was a difficult life by today's standards. There were subsistence farm operations for each family and the primary occupation was fishing in dories off the coast. The last remaining family lived in the William Hersey home which burned in the late 1890's.

Over the mountain and on the Little River side there were remembrances of several dwellings that were occupied at various times by different families. One story from three sources was of a family who resided in one-half of a barn in the late 1940's. This dwelling also burned and the occupants initially moved to Mink Cove, then to Digby.

Economic activity at Whites Cove continued well into the late 1950's when, for a multitude of reasons, the location became almost forgotten. As long as the 'Lunenburg Dory' was the primary fishing vessel, the site had a number of fishermen using the cove. Hence the Federal Government placed a winch on the shore for the use of the fishermen. With the increased use of the engine-powered 'Cape Islander', which necessitated a wharf structure, the man-powered dory as a primary fishing vessel disappeared.

In the late 1940's and all through the 1950's, the Whites Cove property was used as a working gravel pit. It was related by individuals who were involved in the construction of Highway #217, the only main thoroughway on the Neck that most, if not all, of the gravel for the road west of Mink Cove came from Whites Cove. The construction firm for Highway #217 was based in Sluice Point, Argyle, NS and most of the supervisory staff was imported from that community. Many of the crew billeted with families in Little River and Sandy Cove. This road construction was seen as extremely positive, as many local men got full time employment with good wages as general labour. They also noted the economic boom associated with the construction crew's use of the local stores and rental fees.

Another economic use of the Whites Cove property was as a summer pasture for sheep and possibly cattle. This was prior to the 1940's. It was said that it was more or less used as a common pasture.

It is also clear from the interviews, that Whites Cove had social uses for the surrounding communities. There were many stories associated with the family picnics, lobster/corn boils, and leisurely afternoons at the shore. It doesn't appear that many chose to swim in the water as it was always cold but wading was common. Many also reported picking berries on the property. Cranberries and gooseberries were harvested primarily by children as a treat for the family. One participant, #15, also indicated that plants were gathered for (herbal) medicine by her grandmother.

Elgin also reviewed primary written sources including; Dr. L. R. Denton's unpublished manuscript of his memories of Little River, his genealogical work on the Denton Family, and his other unpublished material associated with the area. Also reviewed was Isaiah Wilson's History of Digby County.

Dr. L. R. Denton makes many references to Whites Cove. He clarifies that this was a Denton property, but he was well aware that members of the community used the site. One story from his youth describes an event organized by his first cousin Harvey.

"Tom and Pearl's only son was later to become the Rev. Harvey L. Denton, after whom Denton Hall in Wolfville is named. He was not around much when I was growing up in the River, but would sometimes vacation there in the summer. Harvey built a camp at White Cove over at the Bay of Fundy. At the Bay, he would catch pollock that he would "gut", split, salt, and then put out in the sun on slatted benches called "flakes". I remember one time when he was readying the camp for a visit of several of his preaching colleagues and had invited me over to stay the night before their arrival. After getting my mother's permission, I was full of excitement about this rare adventure; and an adventure, it was!

The first task given me, upon arrival at White Cove and climbing the steep and rocky path to the spot where Harvey's shack sat on a cleared knoll surrounded by woods, was to cut some fir boughs. I, looking puzzled at this request, Harvey added "It's for your mattress, Len". (I felt ten years older when he called me Len, for others used to call me Lenny). The boughs were to put on the wooden bunks which were to be our sleeping places. At this point, I wasn't quite as excited as when I had left home, but set to work bough-cutting. The night was rough on the hard wooden foundation for the fir-boughs mattress, and the next day after the jostling and noisy crowd of soul-savers arrived, I was glad to pedal back home on my bicycle."

The Cove as a social place for use of members of the extended Denton Clan is well documented by the participants, however, since well over two-thirds of the population of Little River had familial/genetic relationships with the original Denton settlers (#13) that certainly reflected the desire to claim the Cove as a pivotal community gathering location and a centre for family-based activities. Paraphrasing #13, it is highly understandable that the use of the property for profit of persons not related to the original Denton settlers is considered to be objectionable by the Little River citizenry. Added to the frustration (#13, #55) is the fact that one of 'their own' Allen Denton sold this treasured location to "Come from away's who were Americans" #52.

“Robert (Dr. Robert Denton, cousin to L.R. Denton) also tells of a duck-shooting expedition with Harvey at White Cove. They were about to shoot at a flock of ducks when Robert slipped and accidentally discharged his gun; the ducks took flight. Robert said that he feared that Harvey (Rev. Harvey L. Denton) would shoot him. I guess the air turned blue. Harvey was at Acadia studying to be a minister at the time; the words that he used were quite out of context. The incident apparently became village news, as Dr. Doug Denton told me this story before I had read Robert’s autobiography. Robert further recalls Harvey catching a silver cross fox one time.” (L. R. Denton 2002 Homestead in the Valley).

There were three reports of persons being posted during the day hours during the Second World War to observe the Bay of Fundy for possible U Boats. There is no doubt that war debris washed up on the shores as several individuals reported that they, or a family member, had acquired a piece of something related to a downed vessel. L.R. Denton relates a story about his brother, Chip, in this excerpt.

“Going along the shore of Tommy’s Beach or White Cove, searching for pieces of board, old boxes, or whatever might have washed ashore with the tides, was a real fun-time. However, I recall the Sunday afternoon that this was not the case with my brother Chip and one of his buddies. They came running down the west side-hill, coming from Tommy’s Beach theys was, Chip’s face as white as snow, in spite of his a-runnin like a bat out of hell. Chip had a slight stutter when he was a youngster, usually noticeable when he became exited. Well, this day he stammers out, “We fa-fa foun a da-da-dead ma-ma-man’s boh-boh body back there!” My mother had to get him to slow down before she could understand what Chip was trying to say.

It was wartime, and the body was thought to have been that of a war casualty. Once the men of the village got news of the gruesome find, everything was hush-hush. They took over the situation and did whatever was the proper thing to be done. I think that the police were called in because, later, from where I was sitting on the front lawn, I saw a police-car going ah blue streak down the main road. To this day, I don’t know what took place before or after that. Chip wouldn’t ever talk about it; and I never heard anyone else say anything about it either. I recall feeling that it was something that we kids should have nothing to do with. I think the women were excluded as well. It was men’s business.” (L. R. Denton 2002 Homestead in the Valley)

## **6. Other Digby Neck Memories**

It was difficult to focus only on Whites Cove and Little River as the communities of Tiddville, East Ferry, Whale Cove, Mink Cove and Sandy Cove were all interconnected.

The community now identified as Tiddville was actually the site of the mining industry that has been associated with Little River. There was one participant who insisted iron was mined for blacksmith use in the mid 1800’s although no other source was found to collaborate his contention. There is however, extensive documentation of the dolomite reserves that were mined extensively into the twentieth century. (#3, #7, #9, #16, #27, #29, #56)

It appears that Mink Cove was originally Mint Cove in reference to its fragrant wild mint that grew along the shore. Depending on what story you wish to subscribe to, it was either an over-zealous highway worker who changed the “t” to a “k”, or a map maker with poor penmanship. Regardless, the name has stuck. Mink cove was the location of the first phone service on the Neck. Two Gidney brothers established phone service for the Western Neck long before other areas had the technology. (#14, #19, #21, #40, #48)

Sandy Cove was notable as the location for two respected former summer camps on the Fundy shore. Several of the participants were employed there in many capacities. The sites of these abandoned camps have substantial quantities of sand. At one point Nova Stone Exporters Inc. had an option to buy on these properties. The thought that these properties were at risk for sand pit development significantly enhanced the opposition to the Whites Cove Project in Sandy Cove. It was considered to be unacceptable that any company would commence a major sand extraction operation so close to the village. By association with Nova Stone Exporters Inc., Bilcon was stereotyped as thoughtless and opportunistic. (#18, #24, #25, #26, #52)

Lake Midway now has a provincial picnic park and a few remaining homes. This area was identified as an agricultural site. Apparently there were several successful farming operations. Most of what was pasture is now overgrown. (# 17, #44)

Centreville, which still has a fisherman’s wharf at Trout Cove on the Fundy side, had many fish processing facilities as well as several stores and churches. Very little remains of these once vital commercial enterprises. In 2000, one of the last remaining fish plant structures located near the present wharf, succumbed to years of neglect and decay. (#12, #17, #18, #44, #51)

Also reported was an active ship building industry in Sandy Cove, Little River and Centreville. It was common practice in most Atlantic coastal fishing communities, to build fishing craft locally. The craft could be customized to fit local conditions as well as the needs of the potential user. Several participants had in their possession, specialized hand tools that had obviously been well used. It was related that plans were drawn up collaboratively between the builder and the user. The user was very often involved in the construction. The interviewer got the impression that it was not like going to a car dealer and picking a craft from a lot, each boat had an owner before construction commenced. (#7, #8, #9, # 52)

There was also a proliferation of fish processing facilities in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's. It was related that there were plants in East Ferry, Little River, Whale Cove, Mink Cove, and Centreville. The work, which was labour intensive, employed a phenomenal number of individuals. It was commonplace for children as young as twelve to work six full days a week. This was the stated reason that many discontinued their formal education prior to entering high school. The work was hard but the rewards were judged to be considerable. (#5 #27)

The processing of fish is a highly skilled occupation. It takes great patience and dexterity, honed by substantial experience to adequately skin and fillet in a manner that will maximize the commercial value of the finished product. Many of the most talented

workers have retired or have retrained to other occupations. As younger individuals were encouraged by their elders not to enter this profession, there is a significant workforce shortage in the processing sector. (#5, #27)

There was also a thriving sheep industry on the Neck and lamb was a common meal. It became increasingly impossible to market the wool or the local lamb as a result of the encroachment of 'modern civilization'; consequently, the industry died. It was fascinating to view some of the items that were made from local wool (c1880). (#17, #27, #44)

## 7. Fog Magic

This book written by Julia L. Sauer is considered by many Digby County residents to be associated specifically with Whites Cove. Thus it is particularly relevant to review this engaging Newbery Medal Award children's publication.

First published in 1942, *Fog Magic*'s main character is Greta Addington. The plot centres on her adventures as a child in the mythical fog-bound community of Blue Cove. Lost communities that were magically accessible were a common theme in the literature of the period in which this book was written. Two such mythical communities are featured in two very successful Broadway plays which later became award winning films, *Lost Horizon* and *Brigadoon*.

Woven into the *Fog Magic* story are several aspects of Digby County folklore. For example in *Fog Magic* the story of Anthony is a reiteration of the widely known story of Jerome who was a castaway found on the Sandy Cove West Beach either in September or October of 1854 or 1863. The sources vary.

On the website of the *Old Village Inn in Sandy Cove* the following appears:

"Jerome"      Mystery Man of Sandy Cove      1854-1912

*"It was an early October morning in Sandy Cove, a fisherman who had gone to the shore to gather rock weed noticed a dark figure along side a big rock on Bay of Fundy beach. As the fisherman got closer he saw the huddled form of a man. Both legs had been amputated just above the knees and beside him was a jug of water and a tin of biscuits. His legs were only partially healed but were obvious later on that they were amputated by a skilled surgeon and the stumps were bandaged. The man was also suffering from cold and exposure. The fisherman recalled a ship the day before passing back and forth a half mile off shore on the Bay of Fundy side and decided that the man must have been brought in from the ship after dark and thrown overboard.*

*The castaway was then carried to the home of Mr. Gidney in Mink Cove where he was wrapped in warm blankets and given hot drinks. Through the moaning and muttering, only one word was understood, "Jerome". So they called him by this name. The fishermen, boat builders and families took care of Jerome but soon learned he was not going to talk and was taken into the home of the lowest bidder.*

*Jerome seemed fond of children and wary of strangers but in appearance and manner was a gentleman and easy to care for. He got so he could move nimbly on his stumps but sat most of the time. It was soon realized that Jerome was there to stay so the Provincial Government contributed to his keep, \$2.00 a week. Sailors of many nationalities were brought to Jerome to see if he would speak their language.*

*He still did not speak but some believed that through his expressions he was familiar with European languages. He also became very angry when any such visitor mentioned Trieste. Some believed him to be*

*from noble stature and that he once must have been an officer. From his foreign looks, and dark complexion they felt he must be French, or possibly Italian.*

*The people of Sandy Cove looked after him for a long time and then the Government had Jerome taken to the home of John Nicholas in Meteghan, who spoke several European languages. Mr. Nicholas tried to break Jerome's silence but failed. Jerome conducted himself with dignity and when offered money he would appear humiliated. However, he would accept gifts of candy, tobacco and fruits. He spent most of his time with children and seemed to enjoy watching them play. Jerome spent 7 years with Mr. Nicholas and the remaining 40 years of his life with Deider Comeau and family at Alphonse de Clare.*

*Many attempts were made to find an identity for this mystery man but none succeeded. Jerome died in April, 1912 and took with him the secret of his mutilation and of his mysterious arrival on the Bay of Fundy shore. He is buried in Meteghan."*

Or this excerpt from *The Municipality of Clare* web site

*"The castaway we've come to know as "Jérôme" in the Clare area has been a mystery from the moment he was found on the shores of Sandy Cove, September 8th, 1863. A few local men from Digby Neck were walking along the beach when they spotted something on the sand. As they got closer they saw that it was a man. Both of his legs had been surgically amputated above the knees and the bandages were soaked with blood. His clothes had been carefully stripped of buttons and any other items that could serve as identification tools. Next to him lie a jug of drinking water and a package containing ship biscuits. The stranger was unconscious and once brought to, he could not or at least he would not speak. Shortly after this discovery Mr. John Nicholas, a Clare man who spoke seven European languages, interviewed the castaway. After the one-sided conversation, Nicholas announced that by the stranger's reactions to the questions and different languages he thought that the man was most likely Italian but seemed to understand French. He also mentioned that when asked his name, the man muttered a word sounding like "Jérôme" and this would become the stranger's name until the end of his days.*

*For the next seven years Jérôme lived with Nicholas family and it was soon concluded that he kept silent not because of some physical limitation, but for another reason known only to him. When caught off guard Jérôme would answer questions. Once when asked the name of his home, Jérôme answered "Trieste" which is a city in the Northern part of Italy. He also answered "Columbo" when asked the name of his ship. After being tricked into speaking, Jérôme would become furious and shut himself up in his room. Stories circled the town about Jérôme's life, his silence and the reasons why he was deliberately left on the shore. Although Jérôme never had a very good relationship with adults, he got along very well with the local children. They would visit him, bring him candy and eventually he became quite fond of the sweet gifts.*

*Jérôme moved to Saint Alphonse to live with the family of William Comeau and while there received a visit from two strange ladies. The ladies asked if this was where they could find the man with the amputated legs. Once the women were in the house, Jérôme led them into his room and a long conversation followed in which he took an active part. The family listened outside the door, but could not understand the language being spoken in the other room. After the meeting, the two ladies left the house without another word. They then conversed outside and seemed to be of the impression that Jérôme was being well taken care of and they were to leave him where he was. The ladies never returned.*

*Another strange occurrence added more mystery to this silent man's story. Charles, William Comeau's son, had gone to Boston for work. While there, two women came to visit him from the Southern United States. They had read in the papers stories about a man with amputated legs who was found in Nova Scotia. The woman proceeded to tell him that the unfortunate man's name was Jeremiah and that he came from Alabama. They handed him a letter to give to "Jeremiah" and asked him to deliver it for them. Upon his return to Clare, Charles did as he had promised and handed the letter to his father's border. Jérôme took the letter looked at it from every angle and then threw it into the fireplace. The family was shocked and disappointed with this and the story of "Jeremiah" was never known.*

*The man we came to know as Jérôme passed away on April 19th, 1912. A monument dedicated to Jérôme was erected by the Société Historique de la Baie Sainte-Marie in August of 2000 in the Meteghan cemetery where Jérôme is buried along with all the answers to our forever-growing list of questions."*



The *Fog Magic* story of a character named Mrs. Stanton is based on local folklore. The Prince in *Fog Magic* is Queen Victoria's father H.R.H. the Prince Edward, Duke of Kent; who while in Halifax with his companion, Madame Julie de St. Laurent, was known to have glorious social gatherings at what was called the Prince's Lodge. The Duke of Kent was said to have, on many occasions, interceded on behalf of widows and orphans.

The location of Blue Cove has been ascribed to Whites Cove; however, the description of the village is incongruent with historical sources. Blue Cove in *Fog Magic* had a significant number of houses, a school, stores and a church. From all indications including Church's map of 1867 this was not the case in Whites Cove. The description in *Fog Magic* of the funerals where the bodies were buried over the mountain as it was not possible to dig a grave in Blue Cove is logical and fits with the Whites Cove site.

*“There's our School and there's our Church,” Retha said. She pointed out the little white building across the end of the street next to the next church with its neat steeple.*

*The shore curves in here, and there's another bay down there where you can find all sorts of things to play with. Our Church is nice. Sometime maybe you'll be here on Sunday so you can see it inside. There isn't any burial ground,” she added. “It's all rock here and we can't have our own. When folks die they have to go over the mountain to be buried.”* “ Julia L. Sauer *Fog Magic*

Several of the participants in the Traditional Knowledge Consultation (#3, #27, #45, and #55) suggested that the author of *Fog Magic* derived her description of Blue Cove and the events from a collection of elements that are characteristic of many Neck and Island communities. Perhaps this is the case or maybe it is just appropriate to take the book for what it is; a delightful piece of fiction that portrays aspects of life on the Neck and Islands during the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## 8. SUMMARY

From the perspective of most of the participants, the Whites Point Development will have some far-reaching effects on the current residents of the Western Digby Neck. The establishment of another industry employing 30 or more individuals at a living wage will result in an increase in younger people working and staying in the area. Some of the long-abandoned or vacant housing will become desirable for these employees who choose to live closer to their employment. In small communities, the focus will change from the retirement mode to a working community, hence more traffic and more children, (#1 #3, #5, #12, #27, #35, #39, #44, #55).

It is also the perception of several of the participants that the projected wage rates at the quarry will have an effect on the traditional processing industry. It is believed that since the wage rates will be significantly higher than that of the current wage levels at the two remaining fish plants in Little River, this could lead to an exodus of experienced personnel from this processing sector.(#3, #4, #17) This could potentially affect the current power structure in the community. Those individuals who have control of the population through their economic authority could feel threatened. (#3, #55) Twenty-one of the participants felt this was probably a key factor in the opposition movement. Many mentioned Michelin Tire and the opposition to this industry in the Digby area was associated with the wages that would be paid. “They would have lost their best workers. #27”

One felt that the cultural arguments were a “smoke screen to get emotions riled” #45. It was reported that the widely read children’s book *Fog Magic*, written by a summer resident of Little River was not specific to any of the Neck locations, but was a combination of all of the communities that were part of the Neck. That is not to say that any of the participants were unaware of the significance of this piece of literature to future tourism potential (#5, #11, #14, #15, #21, #45, #46).

The quality of life which is reported by many to mean a slower pace with a sense of security is to them a perceptual reality, a very nebulous concept. Since the completion of a paved road down the Neck and the encroachment of modern ideas/technologies, it is increasingly difficult not to have these factors change. Credit at the country store is also becoming a thing of the past (#1, #2, #19, #21, #39, #27, and #46).

One of the factors employed to sell this area as a tourist destination is the pastoral nature of these villages, according to six participants. There are quaint fishing communities, but as #5, #6 and #21 observed, “The tourist traffic has been declining in recent years.” For whatever reason, high gas prices, the increased value of the Canadian Dollar, or a change in consumer demand; it’s their perception that the tourist dollars spent are declining.

The perception is this development will also have an effect on the summer resident. It has been said that the population of the Neck and Islands doubles in the summer. Many of these individuals have ancestral links to the area, but many are individuals looking for a quiet retreat from the city lifestyle. Some are planning their retirement in which they will eventually reside in their summer homes. This caused some resentment among many of the participants. “These outsiders come here and tell us what to do and how we should be

living.” #24 There were many stories (#15, #17, #21, #27, #45) with respect to some Come from Away residents making demands and “messing things up” #24.

There is no doubt that this area has experienced change in the past and this development will bring further change. It is the perception that this particular industrial development will be quite dramatic. It is not fishing, farming, or logging, yet it is still a resource-based industry and compatible with the concept of the area as self-sufficient, deriving its economic strength from the land and sea, (#16, #26, #35, #45, #55).

Many participants, particularly #3 and #55 hypothesized that these communities, like many other fishing villages along the Atlantic shores, are in the process of dying. Failure to adapt to the ever-changing technological world has left this area with a large retired senior population which has by definition, high social, psychological and medical needs. Regardless, the declining work force age group, coupled with the lack of natural supports such as younger family members, will inevitably lead to the extinction of these quaint and pastoral communities. If this area has any hope for survival, there must be a significant diversification of the economic base.

The participants were pessimistic about the proliferation of aquaculture and the technology- based industries, such as call centres. In many, there was a strong feeling of regret that greed and progress, particularly in the fishing industry, had destroyed what they perceived as a more “humane way of living” #39.

In keeping with the context of this consultation, there were some consistent suggestions from the participants that Bilcon could adopt. It was felt that these would be of mutual benefit to Bilcon and the Digby Neck communities.

Approximately three quarters of the participants felt that all communications from Bilcon with the Digby Neck and Island residents should continue to be clear and timely. Continuation of the practice of periodic newsletters was considered to be useful, but just one method. It was noted that Bilcon has not been as prolific as the opposition in the production of mail drop material. Several participants stated that they have noted some discrepancies in the information provided in the Partnership for Sustainable Development notices, in Hello Digby Neck or in Passages and Bilcon’s newsletter, Whites Point Bulletin.

Three of the participants, (#24, #44, #49) who had attended several of the Partnership for Sustainable Development public meetings at the Sandy Cove School felt that this forum was not very effective as they were reluctant to seek information associated with their concerns. Much of what was discussed in this format was not applicable to their particular interest. Nineteen of the participants felt that the individual contact with Elgin’s interviewer was very helpful as their questions were immediately addressed and they were given an opportunity to speak freely. It was felt that there should be a concentrated effort to make information available through increasing individual personal contacts.

It was also suggested that Bilcon should commit to supporting a heritage facility based on the theme of life on the Digby Neck circa 1900 to 1950. The focus could potentially include Fog Magic or Homestead in the Valley, collections of artifacts specific to a particular aspect of Neck life, personal histories (oral & written), and other literature associated with the Neck in that era. It is noteworthy that many expressed concerns about the condition of existent public buildings that have historical significance. Several noted the state of disrepair of many of the churches in Sandy Cove. One (#27) was distressed by the condition of the old Little River School House.

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## APPENDIX A

WHITES POINT QUARRY AND MARINE TERMINAL

**TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE  
SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS**

**DIGBY NECK AND ISLANDS**

By

**Elgin Consulting and Research**

5862 Highway #217

Mink Cove, NS

BOV 1EO

902 245-8879

Interview #1 Fisherman/WWII Veteran/General Labourer

Age: 80's

Western Digby Neck

April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

Four interviews were conducted over a two-week period. Initially there was a reluctance to be taped and the recorder was turned off upon request. This individual stated, "Can't see what a quarry would hurt".

### **Whites Cove Memories**

Ancestors of this person came from Whites Cove and migrated to Mint (Mink) Cove in the early 1900's. He has memories of traveling to Whites Cove for family gatherings and was shown on many occasions where the ancestral home was located. He states that he never fished out of Whites Cove (he referred to it as Carty's Cove), but he had relations and friends that did. He described the government winch that never had any gas. It was common practice to siphon gas out of a truck to power the winch.

He remembered "the girls picking berries", he thought cranberries, but he never liked doing that. He was very happy to just lie on the rocks when they went for picnics. He liked watching the birds. He remembered Harvey Denton's Camp that was used by the Denton's and others as a spot to visit.

### **Neck Memories**

His family was involved in farming and some fishing. They had what we would call a small farm in Mink Cove, but he said that at the time he thought it was huge. They raised cattle for milk and beef, chickens and they had a large vegetable garden. They sold their surplus, which he believed to be quite substantial. His father also fished out of a Dory. The primary harvest was white fish, pollock, hake and haddock.

He attended school in Sandy Cove. He didn't much like it, although when he got into the Air Force he was pleased he had done so well. He was to be trained as a pilot, but it was discovered that he was colour blind and he became a navigator. He relates that there were about sixty others in all grades in the school.

He married after the war and he and his wife had several children who lived to adulthood. He made his living as a fisherman. He fished out of Sandy Cove in a dory, and talked about how they loaded the traps on the boat and how hard it was to lay them. "Without a motor, you relied on manpower", it was in-shore fishing. He also caught white fish by hand line. His wife did not work outside of the home, but she often took in boarders, particularly older people who needed care. This extra money helped to make ends meet with a large family.

The paving of Highway #217 was, in his estimation, a real change for people on the neck. Many of the folks here had not been very far away now they could go to town much easier. "After the War many of us had seen parts of the country and the world that you only read about. So it was good for the children to see how things were in other places".



He spoke extensively about the changes that have occurred in the fishery, the larger boats, and the improvements in the gear, and the amount of fish that could be caught. “We all got greedy and our children are paying for it.” He lamented that the supposed improvements led to the downturn in the fishery stocks. It was his contention that this is why there is only lobster left. We killed off all the rest. He also felt that if we were not careful, we would have the same thing happen to the lobster.

### **Quarry Development**

The quarry development was not a significant issue in his mind as “they have been digging up gravel here for years”. He was, however, concerned that the jobs at the site would first be offered to local people or to people from here who want to come home. He indicated that he had several family members: grandchildren, who would love to work in the area, but are now away. It distressed him that so many young people have gone and that there is not much to keep them here.

He spoke of Little River in not-so-kind terms. He harboured some resentment that the people there often let on they were better than others. He is a devout Christian and was frustrated by some of the people’s attitudes.

### **Suggestions for the Proponent**

He felt that if the quarry company would take an interest in preserving some of the history of Whites Cove and Little River that this would soften the opposition. He also felt that it was important to communicate “the truth”. Some of the stories that he has heard were quite different than what he saw at the Proponent’s office.

Interview #2 Homemaker/Mother  
Age: 80's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

Four interviews were conducted over a two-week period. She was often nervous about how she sounded on tape, as she was not well schooled.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

These were limited to visits to the shore to see relatives and her parents' friends. She remembers picking berries and she gave Elgin several really good recipes for cranberries. She also was aware of a settlement from stories of her parents and grandparents who had Whites Cove relatives but she was unsure of the number of homes. "If there were people buried there I'd have loved to see it! That place is just a big rock." She felt that most of the people were not Baptist and were probably buried in Mink Cove.

#### **Neck Memories**

She spoke candidly about her youth in Little River and then Sandy Cove. She also indicated that her family had left the Neck and "went to the States" (Boston) for work during the depression. Upon return to the Neck, her father was a fisherman and they had a small farm operation. She was very distressed by the way that the Little River folks treated people. She indicated that she felt, at times, they were quite mean. "When they wanted somethin' they could be nice, but they didn't give ya the time of day if they didn't need ya". She married her husband in 1946 and they had several children. Only one currently resides in the area and his children have left to find work.

She often took in elderly boarders who required care. She remembers one lady from Little River whose two sons had left the area to find work. Her boarder had been a schoolteacher in Little River. She related third hand stories about the pranks that the children played, the condition of the building, and the poor wages that were paid to teachers, particularly if they were married, as her boarder was.

She vividly remembers when they finally fixed the road so "that people could get good stuff from town". She was so pleased to finally "stop polishing silver" and she praised the benefits of stainless steel. "We got rid of some of the old stuff, but we did not have a lot of money, so we made do with what we had." She talked at great length about all the early tourists who came to the camps at Sandy Cove. "They were all well heeled and you knew it."

#### **The Quarry Development**

"I think if it doesn't hurt nothing, then let it come." She was distressed about the lack of opportunity on the Neck and the disappearance of young people. "That last storm (November 2004) when we lost power (four days), there was nobody in better shape than us to call to get help with anything". She felt that this was a grave concern, as when she was young there were always younger people who could help with chores for the older people. They did have an alternate source of heat but they did not have sufficient wood close at hand as it was "not quite real winter". She feels that this project will create

needed employment and keep younger families on the Neck. She discreetly noted that there had been “talk in the Village about the young fella that was starting this thing” but she was now aware that the Proponent was solely Clayton Concrete Sand and Block from New Jersey. She indicated that she has tried to tell others that they are wrong and “the boy is not part of this, but they believe what they want”. “People can be so set in their ways.”

**Suggestions for the Proponent**

“Once there are people working all this will go away!”

Interview #3 Male  
Age: 70's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant was conscious that he had not gone very far in school and declined to be taped. He felt that his poor education would show if Elgin had to use the material. He offered to speak to the Panel and he has since, with the assistance of his daughter-in-law, written a letter to the Halifax Herald in support of the quarry development. Although his privacy was assured, he indicated that he required no such guarantee. Three interviews were conducted over a two-week period. One of which included his wife who had family connections to Whites Cove.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

He agreed that there had been a settlement and that he often saw rocks covered with white wash, but "How do ya bury folks in a few inches of dirt?" He was aware of the fishing activity that occurred there, but he also knew that since there was just a haul-up, no motorized craft were used. He was also aware of the camp that Harvey Denton owned and how that was a place for people to gather, particularly the Denton family and their friends. He has more vivid memories of Sandy Cove on the Fundy side, a place he called Sandy Cove Back. He was very aware of the logging and quarrying activity that occurred on the site and the role that the quarry played in the paving/construction of Highway #217.

#### **Neck Memories**

He married in his early 20's and his wife was from Little River. They had several children, some of whom have found employment in the area. He concluded; "It won't be the same for my grand kids". He remembered his childhood and helping his family raise a few vegetables and animals, but "we traded fish for most of what we needed". He fished for over fifty years. When he retired he left the Neck and resides in Digby County. He attended school briefly, but "money was good from the fish and a strong back was your ticket." "They talk about the good old days, but they were tough."

#### **Current Concerns**

He feels that very soon the lobster will be going the way of the other fishing industries. He related that he was well aware of the shell disease that had been on the news and it is his belief that "it is here and the fishermen are keeping it quiet". He knows that the young people are leaving and he has lost hope. He spoke of the Michelin Tire plant that went to Bridgewater and he is worried that this "may be our last chance to attract a good company with good wages".

Interview #4 Homemaker

Age: 80's

Eastern Digby Neck - Formerly Western Digby Neck

April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

This consultation took place on three visits to the home and one telephone interview. The participant permitted only one taped session after two previous home contacts.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant was a lifelong resident of the Digby Neck and has roots in Little River, Sandy Cove and Gulliver's Cove. She remembers picking gooseberries and cranberries on the Whites Cove site. She remembers it as White Cove. The Whites Cove she knew was further down the Neck. She shared with Elgin some really good recipes for salt & smoked fish, as well as cranberry chutney. She also remembered the boat haul-up that was not acceptable; she felt that there should be a wharf off the point so that "real boats could use the cove". She related that she was aware of a settlement, but that was "way before my time". She remembers the white wash on the rocks but she was never sure as to why this kept happening.

### **Neck Memories**

The communities of Little River and Sandy Cove were quite insular until the road was paved in the 1950's. It was not a common occurrence for the communities to mix at social functions, with the exception of weddings and funerals. She remembers "the young folks would spend some time at the beach or at church". The "War (WWII) saw so many of our boys go away and a lot didn't come back".

She was deeply disturbed by the lack of young people left in the communities. She indicated that she was lucky, as her grandson resides with her but this was not the case for many others. She said, "The next thing ya know is that they are goin' ta close schools". She has memories of iceboxes and seemingly endless days in a hot kitchen preparing the vegetables that were needed in the winter. She never liked to prepare green and wax beans, as they were "too fussy. In those days if ya didn't make it ya didn't have it". She was pleased that "you can now go to the grocery store and pick what you want". She does not purchase beans.

The TV was the biggest change in her mind. As she is currently housebound the television is a great entertainer. "Sure a lot of what's on it is garbage but I enjoy it".

Interview #5 Fisherman/Labourer  
Age: 80's  
Long Island  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This interview was conducted over two sessions. The participant initially agreed to be taped but, after a playback, he did not like the sound of his voice, so notes were taken.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

It wasn't a place that he visited. He remembers using the shore as a locator but he has no memories of using the site himself. He knew of others who fished from the area. He was also aware that the site was used as a quarry during the paving of Highway #217. "There were pits everywhere." He related that the road on the Neck required a lot of fill, as there were many uneven spots.

#### **Neck & Island Memories**

He grew up on Long Island and as a young man, left to go to the United States where he worked at a large quarry site. He returned home after the war and got a government job on the ferries. He also fished as "most of the people did then." He has memories of social events, "the church suppers, community teas and the like." He was very clear that the completion of Highway # 217 with the addition of the ferries that had their own engines had a significant effect on the Neck and Islands. "It was so much easier to get places and to have stuff delivered." He remembered a degree of closeness that is not really possible now as there are so many outside influences. When he was young, the church had a strong influence in the community that no longer appears to be the case. He was also very aware of the number of children who were residing on the Islands and the Neck. He indicated that during the "bad times people left here for work but when things picked up again they came back."

#### **Quarry Development**

He has significant concerns about this development based on his experience working in the United States. He saw practices that were questionably associated with dust and blasting. This was prior to World War II and he "can't imagine that things have changed much." He sees this development as a problem to "the only industry that we have left" which he described as the lobster fishery.

#### **Future of the Neck & Islands**

The participant has been actively involved in the tourism sector since his retirement and is pessimistic about tourism as he is aware of the problems associated with this seasonal industry. He discussed at length the cost of fuel; and how he was contemplating a choice between maintaining his home and putting gas in his car. He contends that there has been a significant decline and that this trend will continue. He feels that after he is gone there will be nothing left, even though there has been an influx of absentee landholders from Europe and the United States who see this as just a summer home. "They'll stop commin' once they can't buy a loaf of bread."

Interview #6 Female  
Age: 70's  
Long Island  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant was interviewed at the Bilcon's office in Digby, her home, and via telephone. She has been a lifelong resident of Long Island. She has no opinion about the proposed project. She can't see the harm, but she knows that people are upset.

#### **Neck Memories**

She has memories of the barge that connected the Island to the mainland when she was growing up. It had been very difficult to access the Neck and Digby, up until they improved the roads and provided the self-propelled ferries. She indicated at that time, the Neck communities did not often mix with the Island communities. She had friends on the Neck but she was involved with her family on the Island.

She had never heard about Whites Cove until the "fuss about the quarry started". Then she started to talk to people at the Super Seniors Group and became aware that there was once a settlement at the site. She stated that the people, who seem to know about it, are all from Little River. She was also puzzled that "if it was so important, why was it sold off in the first place".

#### **Whites Cove Project**

She is aware of the need for more employment in the area, but is very concerned that this fight associated with the development of the project is hurting the communities. She was also aware of the initial work done by the entrepreneur who brought the Proponent into the project. "He wasn't well thought of by people". She is also aware of the quarry development in Tiverton and "nobody has said a word about that mess". She is very pleased by the improvements at the Tiverton Harbour. "It is so good for the fishermen. They needed a better place." "When I was young, Fog Magic was always about Little River." She elaborated that the lady who wrote the book summered in Little River. She hypothesized that "people were always going to the States to work and they left family there" as a reason for the frequency of New England summer visitors.

#### **Suggestions for the Proponent**

She suggested that the Proponent could make some contacts with historical societies and help them collect artifacts and perhaps provide financial support for restoration. She further suggested that the Proponent consider dropping the defamation suit. She was very pleased to hear that the restoration plan did not include the use of waste material, as she had been told. She was also very pleased that there was only one Proponent.

Interview #7 Fisherman/Labourer (Retired)

Age: 70's

Western Digby Neck

April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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### MEETING NOTES

This series of interviews was conducted in the participant's home. For two of the sessions, his spouse was present. The participant gave Elgin an opportunity to look at some artifacts that are indicative of the early dory fishery on Digby Neck. Further, he showed Elgin some tools that he alleges were used for mining in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in Little River. The participant declined to be taped and although he indicated that he did not mind Elgin taking notes, there was obvious discomfort, hence, few notes were taken during the course of the interviews. It could also be speculated that this individual could neither read nor write very well.

### Neck Memories

His family had always been very hard workers and he remembers that, at a very early age, he "discontinued" his formal education and went to work. He was employed in the fishery, as general labour and as farm labour. He has no real memories of anything from his childhood that would resemble play. He married and had children. He had a strong association with his mother and remembers that she "worked hardest of all of them". He spoke of the mining that occurred in Little River and alleged that there was an iron mine in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in addition to "the dirt mine". Of note is a collection of photographs that is part of the Municipality's heritage project that shows two early photographs of iron miners. He worked at the "dirt mine". He indicated that it went down "quite a ways". He was so pleased when he got his first truck and could easily access the town. He and his wife had saved to purchase things like a refrigerator and a radio.

He expressed annoyance over the recent power outages as he had gone to great lengths to replace his stove so that his wife could have a "modern electric" one. He expressed some concern over the lack of preparedness of some of his neighbours. "I got me a generator and it is just out back". People "have forgotten how to look after themselves." He continued that when he was growing up you relied on "yourself and each other".

### Whites Cove Memories

He was aware that there had been a small settlement at the cove, although he was only aware of that through stories of his friends' parents. He also concurred with other participants that there had been a significant dory fishery based out of the cove. However, his strongest memory was of the quarry operation that existed there when the government paved and improved the highway. He indicated that he had been to Whites Cove more in the last two years than he had been in all his life prior to the announcement of the proposed quarry.

### Whites Cove Project

He is not sure that this would be a good thing for the area. He was under the impression that there would not be local labour used for the work. Further, he was very concerned by what he had heard about one of the initial developers. He was told that this person had threatened old people and tried to get them to sell their land. He wasn't even sure that the



Proponent was entitled to the lease, as he thought that the current landowners had also been coerced into making a deal with the quarry company. He was also concerned by what he had heard about the potential destruction of the fishery and the loss of “all the well water on Digby Neck”. He was told that he would “never be able to have another good cup of tea from his own well” as the development would “make all the water salt.”

As there was obvious anxiety, Elgin shared with the participant some of the information regarding the project using Bilcon’s newsletters, project maps, and description. The participant was encouraged to address his questions to the Proponent for more clarification. Elgin offered to make arrangements for a meeting. He expressed some distrust associated with the current Project Manager, as he, in the public perception, is closely associated with the “young fella.”

### **The Proponent and the Community**

In his opinion, there was very little that the Proponent could do to roll back the clock, but he felt that there should be public meetings in each of the adjacent communities so that “folks could talk just like we’ve been talking.” “You could have coffee parties and invite neighbours so ya just had five or six in a room”. “You know ya are never goin to please the folks in ‘squirrel town’” (Little River).

Interview #8 Fisherman  
Age: 70's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant was very familiar with Elgin, but he was extremely reluctant to have Elgin come to his home or to be seen being interviewed. Two long telephone conversations were followed up by a brief home visit to look at some photographs of his family. Permission to use an audiotape was not granted, consequently, the only record is hand-written notes.

### **Memories of the Neck**

They all had gardens and you “kept yer own birds.” He indicated that his chores included the tending of the garden and the feeding of the chickens. He has few good memories of his days in school, as it was “not practical”. As soon as he was physically able, he joined the others “fishing the Bay” (St.Mary’s). He described the ground fish catches as plentiful. “They were big fish not like the minnows that they catch at the wharfs today.” He explained that the reason that there are no fish like that today is likely due to the efficiency of the gear, the size of the boats, and the greed of the fishermen. He also placed a lot of blame on the “government for bein’ so free with the money so that people got bigger than they needed to be.” He was also very distressed by the widely publicized Marshall Decision that gave the aboriginal fishermen “rights where ya never would have seen them fish ...never”.

Surprisingly, his memories of the depression echo many of the other participants, in that, in his opinion, this area fared better because each family “had means to get by”. He remembers transients who came through looking for a meal and some rest, but he feels the people of the Neck fared relatively well. He remembers the War years with some anxiety. “A lot of good men left and never came home.”

One of the high points in his memory was the paving of Highway #217. “Now instead of a dusty long bus ride, ya could get in yer truck and go to town for what ever ya wanted”. He delighted in the movies, especially the snacks. He was distressed that television today did not have some of the “good shows like when it first came out”. He described ‘Ed Sullivan’, ‘Wayne and Schuster’, and he was very fond of televised hockey. He made some disparaging remarks about the cancellation of the 2004-05 hockey season.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

He was aware that families lived there but well before his time. However, he clearly remembers the “gravel pits for the road” and the government winch to haul up the fishing boats. After that, the next thing he heard was that “some Americans were goin’ to blow up the mountain and that “everybody should be fightin’ against it”.

### **Whites Cove Project**

There was a petition circulated a couple of years ago that he signed, but recently he has become aware of other factors that lead him to believe that he does not have the full story. He indicated that they have been “diggin rock out of the mountain for as long as I can

remember”. He was given a ball hat by the Proponent, but even though he likes it, “it’s a good hat” he would “not wear it around the river”. He feels that there has been a significant opposition from some of the more affluent people, some of whom are his relatives. He is concerned about his neighbours knowing that he has no real problem with the idea of a company creating work, as “the young folks need it.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

The participant strongly recommended that the Proponent drop the suit against the Little River resident. He described the defendant as “sensitive and frail”. He further recommended that more effort be placed in getting the “truth about the quarry out there.” It was his impression that only the “loud mouths” were getting their message on the CBC. Radio coverage is poor on the Neck; as a result CBC Halifax is frequently the only radio station clearly available.

He felt that whatever the Proponent did, it would “never suit everybody”, but if they were to “give some money to the area for a good cause that might help’. He stressed that this was not the time to do that, because it would leave the impression that the Proponent was trying to “buy their way in”.

Interview #9 Fisherman/Labourer  
Age: 70's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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### MEETING NOTES

This was a very difficult interview, as the participant was deeply concerned about the impression his neighbours might get. He felt very strongly that the quarry should be allowed to proceed, but he “kept that to himself”. He declined to be taped and after a brief telephone conversation, he agreed to meet with Elgin in Digby.

### **Neck Memories**

The participant was very clear that the “good old days were not so good”. He related stories of long workdays and little financial compensation. He remembers walking miles to work early in the morning and back late at night only to wake up and start all over. He states that the “first decent wage I got was when I got a job building the road” in the 1950's. Like many other participants, he was not particularly fond of the classroom. He also related stories of hunting every fall. He has several trophies, including the head of a buck that he had “stuffed”. His memories of the depression are clear, but he states that the only real impact he was aware of was associated with the influx of “all kinds of fellas looking for work”. He was also aware that real hunger existed, but that it was quite common for people to help out others in need. He feels that this would not be the case today. The advent of the modern welfare system has taken away what was considered the responsibility to care for others and given it to the government. He feels that people have lost touch with their neighbours and “they’ll talk about ya but don’t expect them ta do anything”. The next event of great significance was WWII. He remembers seeing people leave and never seeing them again. He also has vivid memories of listening to Winston Churchill or MacKenzie King. The period after the war represented, for him, a time of great change and freedom. The acquisition of personal transportation a truck or a car after they “actually made a decent road” was an opportunity to get away from the area.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

He knew about the ‘village’, which he described as “a few small houses”. He also remembered fishing boats using the shore, but his most vivid memory is of being on “a crew that got rock for the road”. He said that he is puzzled about furor; it was his opinion that “if the Dentons were doin’ it, you would never have heard a word”.

### **The Whites Cove Project**

His perception of the quarry is: “A quarry with good jobs”.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

“Get it started and all this stuff will go away.”

Interview #10 Fisherman/Labourer  
Age: 70's  
Western Digby  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant was worried that people would know he was talking positively about the quarry. He was assured that his name would be kept confidential. He requested that Elgin not take notes or tape this interview.

#### **Neck Memories**

The participant has memories of his school days. In the winter the only source of heat was a small stove and it could get really cold. He reflected on the recent winters and remarked that we “have all become too soft”. He could remember times when the snow was much deeper than it was in recent times, and it was so much colder. He drew comparisons between storms of today and the Ground Hog storm of a few decades ago. “Now that was a storm!”

The depression and the war were not topics that he wished to dwell on, but he enjoyed talking about the building of Highway #217. He went into great detail about how they moved houses in Sandy Cove to straighten the road and bring it closer to the shore. He described the techniques used and appeared to be quite fascinated with how it was done. He explained that with today’s equipment and technology, moving a house is much easier, but that “back then a lot of sweat went into the job”.

#### **White’s Cove Memories**

Other than the fact that he was aware of the existence of a very early settlement and the use of the Cove for the dory fishery, his strongest recollection was of the use of the property for Highway #217.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

“Good Luck!”

Interview #11 Retired Professional Male  
Age: 80's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

This participant was reluctant to be taped, as he has relations that may be distressed, however, he was very candid and he wanted to indicate his support for the development. He was also very instrumental in locating other participants who had more detailed knowledge of the community. He allowed his name to be used as a reference.

### **Neck Memories**

There was very little mixing of the people from the Islands, the Neck and the surrounding towns until the highway down the Neck was made more passable in the early 1950's. After that, the residents of the Neck villages were seen in town frequently. The perception of the Neck citizenry by town folk at that time was questionable. For the most part they were thought of as rowdy and difficult. He did, however, remember that some of the villages - Little River and Sandy Cove - were considered to be far more cultured. People who came from there often had money and were regular attendees at Church. He spoke of the influx of New Englanders who were relatively well off and who attended the summer camps in Sandy Cove.

### **Whites Cove**

There were stories about Church meetings at Harvey Denton's Camp at Whites Cove. It was considered to be a retreat of sorts. He was aware that there had been economic uses of the site for fishing and the gravel pit, but he only had anecdotal information from others about the pre-1900 settlement.

### **The Project**

"If an economy is to grow, then it must diversify." He was well aware of the economic crisis that occurred with the collapse of the ground fish stocks and felt that it is just a matter of time before the lobster fishery will be going the same way. "Any resource-based industry is cyclical and we have had a few too many good years." He expressed his hope that the Proponent would continue to develop the project and that very soon young people from the area would be working on the site.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

He felt that the major problem the Proponent has had is the reputation of the initial developer. Further, he has heard stories in the community about the strong association between that entrepreneur and the current Project Manager. Citing what he believed to be credible sources, he felt that it was a positive move to add to the public face of the Proponent a person who actually resides in the area where this development is going to occur. This reinforces the perception that this company will be hiring "real locals".

He suggested the Proponent "ditch the law suit" and present to the Neck communities, a plan to re-invest some of their profits in the area. "The fact that a royalty is not being paid to the Nova Scotian taxpayer could be softened, if the Proponent set out specific projections of how it will enhance the 'social' aspect of these communities."

Interview #12 Retired Professional Female  
Age: 80's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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### MEETING NOTES

The participant was having voice problems due to a recent illness and declined to be taped, but over the course of the three meetings, she provided Elgin with some interesting insights into the Neck communities. She was from a very large family and many of her female relations married into Neck families. She was also involved in direct selling of products on the Neck with her spouse. Her anonymity is being maintained, although it was not her request.

### Neck Memories

The Neck was in her opinion, relatively progressive. She spoke in detail about the telephone system that was set up by the "Gidney Boys of Mink Cove". She also remembered that the churches were always the centres of each community. "You had real doctors that made house calls in all kind of weather." She lamented that the churches have gradually gotten lost in modern society and she made reference to an abuse scandal on the Islands that had far-reaching effects. The most trusted member of the community was often the Pastor; however, now questions were being raised. It was also her recollection that after the war, when women like her started to work outside of the home, Sunday very quickly became a day to catch up on housework not to go to church.

She remembers that the most dramatic event in recent history was the paving and straightening of Highway #217. "You think it is bad now you should have seen it then." In the spring, Seawall was often under water and that "went on for years after they actually paved it until they got the drainage right".

"People were hospitable." She related many stories about staying in homes overnight and "teas with egg tarts and fancy squares". She related that the women really "knew how to cook". Most of her recollections were associated with events that included meals and special foods. She also remarked that there were many more retail establishments in the early 1950's and 1960's. She sold to some of these stores and she regrets that they can no longer survive with the proliferation of the larger retail outlets. Once the trend was established "people got used to going off the Neck to get what they needed".

### Whites Cove Memories

She was aware of the pre-1900 settlement, but she felt that, at most, it was four or five houses with "too many mouths to feed with no way to do it". She was also aware of the fishing activity and the use of the site as a quarry for the completion of Highway #217. She also knew of hunting camps, such as Harvey Denton's, but that was "what they were, shacks rather than tents"

### Whites Cove Project

It was her contention that the "Denton's sold the land and that they should not have a say in what the new owner has decided to use it for". She was very annoyed by the "hogwash" associated with the Fog Magic story. She continued, "For years we never

heard about the place, now it needs to be preserved?” “It is just a gravel pit for God’s sake.” She conceded that it was a large quarry but she felt that this was a good use for that “hunk of rock”. She feels that the opposition is very short-sighted and that if they “do not wake up no one will be left in the area”.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

She was aware that the Proponent had, in the recent past, contributed to a number of worthy causes and had not requested recognition. She was also aware that this was common practice for the Proponent. She was introduced to the father and son when they visited Nova Scotia in the spring of 2004. She felt that the suit against the Little River resident should be dropped. That would end some of the discussion associated with the “big American company doing as they please”. She concurred that the statements were objectionable, but explained that the party in question was the youngest, and was considered to be “quite high strung”. She felt that if it was the heritage that they wanted to preserve, perhaps the Proponent could provide this potential.



Interview #13 Male, Professional (Dr. Leonard Robert Denton)

Age: 78

Originally from Little River

April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

As this participant has provided Elgin with unpublished manuscripts and extensive historical data associated with the Denton Family, it was agreed that he would not require anonymity. Dr. Denton lived in Little River year-round until he was 14 years old. After that time he spent his summers with his family and returned on several occasions for summer work while in college. Further he has maintained strong ties with his relations. As Elgin had worked with Dr. Denton in a professional capacity both in private practice and in a mental health setting, much of the conversation was related to their respective professional disciplines. The contact included many telephone conversations and one-to-one interactions in the Proponent's office in Digby.

#### **Neck Memories**

The conversation centered on the book, Homestead in the Valley, which he co-authored with his nephew Paul Denton. The collaborating Denton genealogy and the narrated DVD were invaluable to the interviewer. Although it could be argued that this written record is one person's perception, Dr. Denton is a well-respected scientist. It is obvious that he has made a concerted attempt to subjectively portray the community as he remembered it in the 1930's & 1940's; however he has been careful to include "local colour" and objectively review the quality of life that he experienced while in Little River. This reference material is available for review by permission from the authors or Elgin Consulting.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

Dr. Denton was aware of the painted stones at Whites Cove and for a time it was his belief that the cove was named for the stones. He was also aware that the Denton family owned the property. He remembers the many economic uses of the site; fishing, pasture gathering, and hunting. Both his cousins Robert and Harvey were fond of hunting there. Dr. Denton believes that this site has a special significance for the children of the late Rev. Harvey Denton, as they would strongly associate the property with their father. He also feels that the larger community, out of respect for one of the "most famous residents", would have a special association with the place that once housed Harvey Denton's camp.

The actual settlement was long gone before the early 1900's and he believes that there were several houses. It was his contention that "those hearty souls who actually lived on the shore" were almost forgotten until the controversy about the quarry development brought this part of Digby Neck history into the mainstream of thought. He thought that perhaps the burial sites had long disappeared or perhaps they were not yet discovered. He was pleased with the Proponent's choice of archaeologist, as he was aware of his reputation. He had also been a teaching colleague of the historical researcher, Dr. Barry Moody, while he was a professor at Acadia University, and felt Dr. Moody was an excellent choice.

### **Whites Cove Project**

Dr. Denton was very clear that he felt there was a need for local employment opportunities; however, he was deeply concerned that all of the appropriate scientific investigation is complete and a full accounting was made of all the potential negatives and positives. During his professional career, he was often in the position of “leading the charge for change” and he was cognizant of how difficult it can be to alter the perception of something that individuals felt strongly about as it is very difficult to see the positives when “you feel that your perception of the status quo is threatened.” He related that he had sold his property to Alan Denton and that if he “had known he had lots of that Basalt at the shore of that property” he would have sold it to the Proponent.

He recalled the furor over the Stirling County Studies and how this was considered by many to be an act of betrayal. Dr. Eric Cleveland, a colleague of his at Fundy Mental Health was involved in data collection and they had several discussions about the effects of these documents. He also remembered many “outside influences that were, for the most part resented by the folks.”

### **The Proponent and the Community**

It was suggested that the Proponent drop the suit against his cousin for two reasons. The first and most significant was that this would be perceived as a gesture of understanding particularly if it could be agreed that the Proponent would make some effort to establish a “vehicle of remembrance” associated with the property. Secondly he felt that this one act more than any other had soured his family on the viability of the project. He stressed that due to the closed nature of the community there are “very few left that do not have a Denton root in their tree”.

He had also heard the rumours about the “young fella” who started this project and how it was felt that if he was involved “it could not be good.” Dr. Denton felt it was good planning on the part of the Proponent to put a community face on the project with the inclusion of members of its workforce who have a “respected profile on the Neck”. He remains interested and he would like to be kept informed of the process.

Interview #14 Female Homemaker  
Age: 70's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

There have been many contacts with this participant. Elgin was given several names by this individual with whom she could speak to acquire specific information. Contacts were in person and on the telephone. On several occasions the conversations between the interviewer and the participant were of a purely social nature.

#### **Neck Memories**

This person has never resided in Little River although she had many friends and acquaintances that live there. A great deal of time was invested in the history of the various churches that are existent on the Neck. She felt that they are in need of repair and restoration. She was from a large family. "All the families were large so you had enough people to work." She spoke of infant mortality being high and that it was common before the advent of modern medicine for "things that are cured easily today with pills were often fatal" in the 1930's and 1940's. In speaking of the changes that have occurred on the Neck over the last six decades she remembers the war years and the construction of Highway #217. She remembers the schools "busting at the seams" and lamented that this was no longer the case.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

She related that it was not uncommon for her father to suggest that the family go over to the shore when they had company. The shore could mean Whites Cove or Sandy Cove Fundy side. She had clearer memories of the stories associated with the mysterious legless stranger, Jerome that was found washed up on Sandy Cove Beach. She knows that she picked berries there, but very little else.

#### **Whites Cove Project**

She is certainly surprised that the red "'stop the quarry' signs did not disappear during the first Halloween after all this stuff started." She can't see the harm in having a few more jobs other than fishing on the Neck if "it isn't going to hurt anything." She indicated that she has kept her opinion to herself as "you just get people mad." She was also aware of all the rumours that are floating around the community. She feels that the whole thing got off to a bad start with the initial developer and the school-based public meetings. She referred to the play that was highly critical of the development which one of the teachers wrote and had the children perform.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

She suggested that the development "has to go forward" if there is no reason to believe that there will be serious harm to the water table, the lobster and the communities of the Western Neck. She fully supports the concept of preservation of history but there are many more significant sites that need to be looked at for their impact on the history of the Neck.

Interview #15 Female Homemaker  
Age: 80's  
Formerly Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant had recently suffered significant health problems. Many contacts were made and these contacts were kept short so as not to strain the participant.

#### **Neck Memories**

The participant left Little River when she was married, but she kept in touch with family, particularly her sister who has since passed away. She had fond memories of long walks and sunny days, but she also remembered that there was a significant amount of work to be done on a daily basis. She spoke of methods of food preservation and “leftovers were what you fed the animals. You rarely had to eat yesterday’s meal”. She attended school in the two-room building in Little River and was quite distressed at its current state of disrepair. She indicated that there were all grades in the school, even high school but this runs contrary to other records that indicated the country schools only went to Grade X. She remembered the long days the women put in caring for a large family, there were “no washing machines, dryers, microwaves or electric stoves in those days. You grew most of what you ate or you bartered for what you needed”. She lamented that she was now alone and that even though she had frequent contact with her children, they were still very far away. “They left to get good jobs and they call often, but I miss them”.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

This participant, with her sister, was involved in whitewashing the rocks at Whites Cove. It was her recollection that this gesture was for the “babies and children who died in Whites Cove”. She was not very clear on the location on the property. She was aware that there had been extensive gravel and crushing operations at the site during the time that the Government was paving Highway #217. She stated that she had a number of conversations with a local researcher from Barton who was collecting information to stop the quarry and she was “surprised by the things that she had forgotten until she was reminded”. She felt badly for not coming forward to corroborate the story about graves but even she wasn’t sure where they were. “Somewhere around what we called hells gate” is her memory. She remembered Harvey Denton’s Camp on the hill and a number of gatherings at that location. She was aware that it had burned many years ago.

#### **Whites Cove Project**

She was distressed by the defamation suit and felt that this was just one more example of someone trying to get his own way. She had no knowledge except for the fear that graves had been disturbed.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

She did not voice any suggestions except that she felt that the Proponent should look at going somewhere else as they had upset so many people.

Interview #16 Male  
Age: 60's  
Formerly Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

### **Neck Memories**

This participant worked on the Neck for many years until he sold his interests and moved to Digby. He is semi-retired but he has many business and real estate interests. He remembers the family home and his mother making tasty treats for community suppers and events. He remembers a large school population that was managed by an “ever-so-strict teacher” who he indicated was not one of his favourite people. He remembers an incident about a family who were not as “clean” as the community demanded and as a result “their home burned”. This family were forced to relocate to Mink Cove and then finally to Digby.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

He remembered Harvey Denton’s Camp and he was aware that there had been a settlement previously, but there was little else until the development of the quarries that paved Highway #217.

### **The Quarry Project**

After extensive conversations with Elgin, he is not as concerned about the development as he had been. He was looking for information associated with the water table, as he still has family in Little River. The defamation suit was cause for concern and he had heard many of the stories about the conduct of Nova Stone personnel with some of the older residents of Little River.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

He clearly stated that he felt the two big factors associated with the opposition were the law suit and the previous involvement of Nova Stone, both of which need to be addressed. “Ditch the law suit” and make a concerted effort to distance the Proponent from the original developer.

Interview #17 Male - General Labourer  
Age: 70's  
Eastern Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This participant has been a vocal supporter of the quarry and although it may not be necessary to maintain the participant's privacy, Elgin felt that the information shared was, at times, highly personal, hence, the designation.

#### **Neck Memories**

The participant was placed as a small infant in a foster home on the Neck as his mother had a questionable reputation and "the welfare couldn't trust her to feed us". His foster mother was a kind lady who "took in a whole crock of kids in her time". From a very early age, he was taught to be self-sufficient and in his early teens, he worked in the "river" which was the term used by locals to denote Little River. The Cove is known most often Sandy Cove, Seawall as Waterford and the Ferry as East Ferry. He attended school as "long as possible" then he began "takin work" in many capacities. He left the area briefly for "Upper Canada" (Toronto), but returned later to marry and raise his family. He remembers many large families who attended school. He also remembers many "thriving" agricultural operations. "Everybody had gardens, hens and cows." He also spoke of the large sheep operations that existed in Centreville and Lake Midway. The wool was separated from the lanolin in Centreville.

#### **White's Cove Memories**

The participant had clear memories of White's Cove being a place for the Denton family outings. "It was Denton land so they made the plans." he remembers men fishing the cove, and drying flakes for pollock, but it was his observation that this had stopped by the time they started to use the area for rock to build Highway #217.

#### **The Current Project**

"Bring it on, we need the work"

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

He had some concerns about the conduct of Nova Stone personnel and the negative perception of the Proponent's behaviour within the community. He was aware of the stories that had circulated about one of Nova Stone's personnel and how some people felt that he was inappropriate and heavy-handed. He suggested that the only thing that to quell the controversy is to have people working on the site.

Interview #18 Female  
Age: 70's  
Eastern Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant has lived in the area for most of her life. She married and raised her family on Digby Neck.

#### **Neck Memories**

The participant attended school in Centreville and upon leaving she worked several summers at the camps in Sandy Cove. She has fond memories of the people who came from the United States to enjoy the summer in Sandy Cove. She remembers a strong sense of community and she is somewhat concerned this is no longer the case. She is also distressed about the many unused churches on the Neck. She attributes this to disturbing trends in today's society.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant has no clear memories of Whites Cove other than what she has been reading in Hello Digby Neck, a local publication circulated by the Digby Neck Community Development Association. She was aware that there was fishing activity on the Fundy side and she may have picked berries at the site as a child but her best recollection of the site was during the construction of the "good road" (Highway #217).

#### **The Proposed Development**

She has been relatively supportive of the creation of employment opportunities as she sees this as necessary if the area is going to survive. Despite this she invariably "keeps quiet" as she feels that her opinion would not be well received by some members of the community.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

"Once the work starts, the controversy will minimize. There will always be people who resent this project because of the history of the development, but there is nothing you can do about that."

Interview #19 Female  
Age: 70's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant has lived in the area all of her life. She married and moved very close to her family home. She raised her family and continues to be close to her siblings. She is opposed to the quarry development as it will be an “awful big hole.”

### **Neck Memories**

The participant has memories of growing up in the small community in which she still resides. She discussed some of the changes that have occurred and many of them were negative, in her opinion, “Families don’t do things together like they did.” Everybody worked hard because they had a significant farming operation, but there was always time to eat meals together, go to church and enjoy picnics in the summer. She is delighted with her refrigerator and her microwave but “food doesn’t taste the same now.” There was a discussion about the flavours of milk and eggs since the advent of the modern grocery store. She also has strong memories of the dust and mess associated with the paving of the main road through the Neck (Highway #217). “It took years and we lived with it.” While she agreed improved access to the Neck was positive, she felt the improved road brought more “newly (nosey) tourists.” Although she is aware that over the years the children have had to leave to find jobs and raise their families, she feels it has a lot to do with a change in perception of what work is valued by society. Parents wanted an “easier life for their children.” They encouraged their children “to get educations and get good jobs” that did not require hard or dangerous physical labour. Both farming and fishing industries have significant occupational hazards and she spoke of many men lost at sea and the pain of the families left on shore.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant had clear memories of Whites Cove and Sandy Cove as places that her family gathered to enjoy picnics. She also remembers the whitewashed rocks. She was older and was often in the position of supervising younger children as they picked berries at Whites Cove. She remembers Harvey Denton’s Camp and how people “from away” gathered there for hunting and fishing. She also remembers the crushers that were used to make paving rock for Highway #217.

### **The Proposed Development**

It distresses her that “Americans are going to take the rock.” “That is not right.” She has heard stories about what will be used as fill for the restoration. She “doesn’t want American garbage to be dumped here, we have enough of our own.” She was under the impression that the Proponent was going to turn the site into a landfill after they mined the rock. This is a pervasive rumour on the Neck. She was also quite distressed by what she had heard about Nova Stone; in particular the law suit, as she and the defendant are close friends. After some of the misconceptions were dealt with in the conversation, she remained apprehensive about the project. She has a genuine distrust of developers. This



was reinforced by the behaviour of a developer who wanted to start a water bottling operation in Gulliver's Cove. "They said one thing and did the other."

**The Proponent and the Community**

It was her opinion that any attempt by the Proponent to provide for the community in any way would be suspect. She spoke of the need for funding for the playground and some of the historic churches, but she asserted that there would always be the perception that the Proponent was "trying to buy their way in"

Interview #20 Male, Former Developer  
Age: 70's  
Digby  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant was not originally from the Digby Area, but he was heavily involved in the fish processing industry on the Neck.

#### **Neck Memories**

The participant was aware of the “boom” during the 1950's & 1960's in the processing industry. He was also aware of the incentives to increase production and create employment opportunities. At the time he was involved, there was a concerted effort to create employment, regardless of the “other effects” He had vivid memories of the community concern associated with the unpleasant odours and processing by-products that were dumped in the ocean. He makes reference to being in contact with the Municipal Council of the day and their response to his complaints; they responded, “We are a fishing community that is what we do”.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

He was only aware of the “gravel pit” on the site. He explained that he knew of no other use for the site.

#### **The Proposed Development**

He was very sympathetic to the Proponent. It was his opinion that “developments in the past had not been as responsible as perhaps they should have been.” He feels in response to the inappropriate practices in the past, “the pendulum had moved too far to the left.” It is his opinion that a balance can be maintained by responsible development so that there is “significant benefit for all.”

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

He was a strong advocate of “responsible investing” in the community “in which you operate your business”. He suggested that contributions to worthy causes in the area would help with the perception of the Proponent.

Interview #21 Male  
Age: 70's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant has lived in the area all of his life. He married and continues to work in a community within fifteen miles from where he was born.

### **Neck Memories**

The participant has worked hard all of his life. His family memories are consistent with this work ethic. He has memories of significantly more children residing on the Neck. He spoke at length about the current state of the many school buildings that in his youth were central to each community. "Now there are so few kids that they have to bus them to get their schooling." He has memories of more general retail outlets existent on the Neck. "People started to travel to get things cheaper and the stores closed."

He spoke of the early mining in Little River. He has several samples of the product that was mined. He said that he thought they went down about thirty feet. He blamed the decline of the Neck's economy on the downturn in the fishery. Like many of the other participants, it was his opinion that the blame could be placed equally on the mismanagement of government agencies and the greed of the fishermen, processors and the community at large. He stressed, "We thought that there would always be fish." Like many of the participants, he was sceptical of the government and their assurances. "When I was young there were lots of fish of all kinds." The advent of the larger boats and the increase in quotas associated with the larger boats, in his opinion, lead to the end of the lucrative fishing industry on the Neck.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant had clear memories of Whites Cove and the Denton Camp. He remembers being told of the settlement and he remembered the fishing operations including the flakes for drying fish. He also remembered the "pit" that was used for Highway #217. He elaborated that there were many places that "the road builders got fill and rock at that time."

### **The Proposed Development**

Like many of the participants, he has heard stories about the conduct of Nova Stone. He is worried about the fresh water supply to the Western Digby Neck. He is aware that many deep wells have been drilled and those wells produce brackish water. It is his opinion that a large part of the opposition is the conduct of the initial project developers. He is aware that high-profile citizens in Little River, including the School Principal, are actively working to quash the development. This has increased the community's apprehension that this development will have an irreversible effect on the environment.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

He felt the current practice of having an office in the community was a way of becoming "part of the area." He stated that he really liked the ball hats that the interviewer had given some people, but he did not feel comfortable wearing his out in public.

Interview #22 Professional Female  
Age: 70's?  
Digby County  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

Late in the process of gathering this collection of memories, Elgin attempted to make contact with a few of the individuals who had been involved in the collection of traditional knowledge for the opponents of the Quarry. This particular participant's name came up frequently in many conversations. She has no personal memories of the Digby Neck, but considers herself an amateur historian.

#### **The Discussion**

The protocol was abandoned and the conversation centered on material this participant had acquired about the rich history of Digby Neck. Elgin had been told that a book was in progress and some of the information gathered by this individual would be included. Elgin offered to collaborate by providing initially anonymous material and then with the other participant's permission, source interviews after the panel process was complete. The participant expressed "no interest in collaborating with Elgin and further, "all I have, I have given to the Panel." She was talkative although guarded.

Interview #23 Male  
Age: Late 50's  
Eastern Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant has lived in the area all of his life. Although relatively younger than other participants, he possesses a wealth of oral history that has passed down through the generations of his family. He has made his living by weir fishing and harvesting “winkles, weed (dulse & rock weed) and clams.”

### **Neck Memories**

The participant has a strong work ethic. He acknowledges however, that he has had to rely on his spouse to help feed the family because there were times when the “whole family worked just to get by.” In this respect, he feels that he is much the same as his forefathers who had to diversify to make a living. His family had significant land holdings that, over the year, have been either sold or logged to bring in needed income. He went to school in Digby and asserts that he didn’t learn much in school, but has made sure that his children “tended to their homework”

### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant had no clear memories of Whites Cove. “The first I heard of it was when they wanted to start a quarry.” He has spoken to older relatives and has since gotten a perspective of the very active and vital community before the turn of the twentieth century. He respects the memories of the older members of the community, but stresses that “you can’t eat history”.

### **The Proposed Development**

“If it doesn’t hurt the fishing we have left then what’s the harm in a few more jobs on the Neck?”

### **The Proponent and the Community**

It was his impression that there was so much misinformation and bad feeling that only time and the project start-up would heal the situation.

Interview #24 Male  
Age: 60's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant and his spouse have lived in the area all of their lives. His wife is from a large family. He was involved in many fisheries and has made a good living. His children reside very close, but he has fears that this will not be the case for his grandchildren. He has been a strong advocate for diversifying the economy and increasing opportunities in the county for younger citizens so that they can “build their lives here”.

### **Neck Memories**

He remembers the current Sandy Cove School, when it was built, had a large enrolment and that there were significantly more children in the community. There were many classes for almost every grade. That appears to be his most significant memory. He spoke at length about the decline in the numbers of young family units and the influx of retired people, particularly those who have no real roots in the community. He remembers the paving plant, located near the current school, used to build Highway #217. He remarked that nothing has really been done to the road since it was first paved in the 1950's and feels the current road is not much better than it was before they paved it. He described the “good old days as not so good.” He was a fisherman and, as he explained, had “done it all.” It was “hard and dangerous work then and it still is that way.” He remembered the large catches and indicated that he became aware of the stock decline well before the “scientists started to tell people.”

### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant was aware of the significance of the Whites Cove property to the people of Little River. He recalled that approximately ten years ago there was another developer who wanted to quarry near Little River at Eastern Head. Eastern Head is the rocky precipice that borders Little River on the East. There was an outcry and a campaign launched to prevent this development. The developers “walked away.”

### **The Proposed Development**

If it can be demonstrated that local people will get the jobs and there will be minimal effect to the environment, then he sees no difficulty with the project proceeding.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

Although he was critical of the conduct of Nova Stone, he was pleased by the Proponent's attempt to meet with the fishing community to try to develop strategies that co-exist with the current industry. He recommended the Proponent focus on keeping this sector informed of all developments. He further stressed that concessions in this regard would be of benefit to all parties.

Interview #25 Male  
Age: 80's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

This participant has been in business in Digby County for many years with an emphasis on real estate. He has purchased and sold land on the Neck and the Islands and at one point was interested in the Whites Cove property. He was concerned by the condition of the access road and did not pursue this venture.

### **Neck Memories**

He had very little contact with the Neck in his youth. He met and had social contact with people from the Neck and the Islands, but did not travel “down there.” Like Interview #20, this individual was actively involved in economic development and investment. He remembers the “boom years when there was lots of work, lots of fish and there was plenty.” He was distressed that the Government did not have the science or the foresight to establish sustainable quotas so that the fishery did not collapse. He placed the blame firmly on “gutless politicians who were more concerned with votes than the future.”

### **Whites Cove Memories**

His memories are confined to his own real estate speculation. At the time that Whites Cove was on the active market he felt it was too costly.

### **The Quarry Project**

He sees this as viable economic initiative provided the regulatory agencies are vigilant and that the Proponent is responsible.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

He feels the lawsuit put a “sour taste in people’s mouths.” He has “used this tactic to deal with inaccurate and inappropriate comments” but wished that he hadn’t as it created a lot of problems for him in the community.

Interview #26 Male  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant has resided in various areas of Digby County all of his life. He was a labourer “in the fish.” His family resided in Little River, Mink Cove and other Neck locations for a time in his youth.

### **Neck Memories**

He did not like living on the Neck. One of his earliest memories is his home burning in Little River and having to stay with people he did not really know. Elgin was left with the impression that he was angry or hurt by the way he and his family were treated by the citizens of Little River. The discussion centered on the changes in the fish processing industry. He remembers that there was plenty of work in the Digby plants and he made a relatively good living, but now he finds that it is no longer possible.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

He remembers gathering firewood and berries there, but little else.

### **The Proposed Development**

The participant was puzzled by the opposition “It is just a big gravel pit”

### **The Proponent and the Community**

He did not have any suggestions.

### **Interview Notes**

During the process of two other interviews this individual was suggested as someone who lived on the Whites Cove Road in the 1950's. The description of the family home burning was also relayed in another interview. The participant was a member of a large family with little financial resources.



Interview #27 Fisherman/Fish Processor  
Age: 80's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

Elgin met with the participant in his home on three occasions. There are two hundred and twenty-six minutes of taped conversation. The participant was a life-long resident of the western part of the Digby Neck. He was guaranteed that his identity would be protected.

### **Fishing Industry**

The participant assisted his father with many fisheries from the time he was a young boy. He was aware of fishing activity at Whites Cove; a place that he said was often called Carty's Cove. He has no memory of a motorized craft out of Whites Cove although he does remember when the government installed the gas-powered winch. He has no memory of weir fishing at Whites Cove but recognized the boat launch was designed for a Lunenburg-type dory used in the harvesting of haddock, hake, Pollock and lobster. This was a labour-intensive fishery.

He spoke of Raymond's, Lord's, Hersey's, and Thibodeau's all fishing out of the Cove. He recalled that this type of fishing was largely discontinued in the late 1940's. In the early 1950's, there was only one fisherman who used the Cove to haul up his boat.

In Little River, there were two active fish processing plants that primarily dealt with white fish, specifically haddock. He noted that there was a scallop processing plant in East Ferry. The plants in Centreville and Whale Cove were for white fish. He spoke of the abundance of fish in St. Mary's Bay, inshore of the Bay of Fundy. When he spoke of the decline, his remarks were focused on the proliferation of larger boats and the ready accessibility of funds supported by government to increase the size of the vessels.

Lobster was not processed extensively on the Neck but many fish plant operators were also involved in buying of lobster. He recounted his own trips to Connecticut selling lobster and other fish to New England buyers. In the 1950's, lobster sold for sixty cents (CAD) a pound. It is noteworthy that at that time the Canadian dollar was valued higher than its USD counterpart.

Speaking of the contemporary fishery, he was concerned that there are not as many people working today at the two plants as there had been in the past. "There is no fish. Lobster will eat anything. That's why there is more lobster; there are no other fish to eat the food". He further elaborated on the two current operations. The fish plant operator "buys fish from everywhere". "There are only three boats that go out from Little River for the plants."

### **Family Life**

We spoke about the area in terms of decades, as his memory would permit. He spoke of his early youth (ages seven to twenty, when every dwelling had a kitchen garden for produce. Most families had animals that were grown specifically for meat, chickens, pigs, and beef. Further, "if you were lucky, you had enough land to support dairy cattle".

Locally produced milk was sold at the Little River Stores. He has memory of two major stores, where people bought basics like flour, sugar, tea, but grew everything they ate or traded with other folks to get what they needed. He has vivid memories of milking his father's cows and collecting eggs. It was his job to trade or barter with the surplus production of these commodities

He remembers going to school in Little River. The building had two rooms, one for elementary, the other for high school. He recalls that there were "thirty or so" children. The depression was felt here but not as badly as in urban areas. He said there was a sense of the people who were "hurting" and "we took care of that".

When he was twenty-two he married a woman who was also from his home community. She died less than a year ago. They raised their children who reside within a sixty-kilometre radius of the family home. All of their children initially entered into fishing-related occupations, he indicated, however, that some of his grandchildren have had to leave the area to find employment and "build their own families".

He stated that there have been a lot of changes since he was married. He identified that the improvements in the road, Highway #217, was one of the first in his memory. With the road improvements, it became easy for people to travel outside the area to obtain goods and services. He also found that there was an increase in processing and selling of product, as it was now easier to get it to markets.

The second change was the collapse of ground fishery. He believes that the loss of the stocks can be directly attributed to the change in gear and the increase in the size of boats. He retired several years ago and sold out his business ventures.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

He stated that there were "quite a few houses over there" but that "they were gone well before I was born". All I remember is a couple of fish shacks and Harvey Denton's camp. He remembers going there to watch the whales and to picnic, but only when his children were young. "When they paved the road (Highway #217), they had quite a few crushers in there for gravel." he continued, "The road (Whites Cove) was real good then". He has memories of the children picking gooseberries and cranberries as an activity to "keep them busy". In addition to the discussion of the shore area associated with the fishing industry, he remembers the upper part of the land area being used as a summer pasture, specifically for sheep, but "they could have had cows there, I'm not sure".

### **Whites Cove Project**

He was aware that there were potential positives for this development but he had significant concerns regarding the possibility of damage to domestic water sources. If he could be assured that there is minimal risk to wells in the area, he could not see why the project should not proceed. He was under the impression that all three hundred acres were to be quarried. When he was informed that this was not the case, he made reference to one of the 'Stop the Quarry' newsletters. He questioned Elgin about the Proponent and was surprised to learn that Clayton Concrete was the only Proponent. He had some obvious concerns about one of the original developers. He had heard stories about older people being bullied to sell their property near the road. He expressed mistrust of some

of the current project staff, and the government-regulatory agencies. “DFO let them mess up the fish. Now there is none left”.

**Future of the Neck**

He spoke of the need to have more children remain here. He feels that in a very short time there won't be a Little River. “When we die it will die.” He felt that most of the fish are gone and the lobster industry is the next casualty of over fishing. “Tourists ain't goin' to come if there is nothing to do and no place ta stay. Gas isn't cheap and they say it'll go higher.”

**Direction for the Proponent**

He indicated that he felt that the Proponent should make it clear that they will be looking for local people to be employed at the project. He said that this process is taking too long and that it “gives those guys more time to think up stuff wrong with it”. He was very clear that even though he was not sure he was totally in favour of this project proceeding, he felt that it should be given a chance to get started.

Interview #28 Fisherman  
Age: 80's  
Long Island  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The interview was conducted over the telephone on three occasions. The participant's family members are opposed to this development as is the participant. However the participant is a firm believer in sharing his oral history.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

He was aware of fishing activity at Whites Cove. He indicated that he felt the site was used well into the 1960's for drying fish. He also is aware of the use of this site as a "marker to figure out where you were on the water."

#### **Neck & Island Memories**

He grew up on Long Island and he only left to serve during World War II. He was employed in many capacities in the fishery. He spoke at length about the good times when there was "plenty of catch." He was aware that the stock decline had a dramatic effect on the county. He talked about the closure of CFB Cornwallis the same time "that they were handin' out the TAGS". This had a profound effect on the incomes and morale of the community. "To my mind the beginning of the end was the Ground Hog Storm." The participant was referring to a catastrophic storm that happened on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1977. The shoreline communities were devastated as a result of significant property damage. Many of the processing operations never fully recovered and closed as a result. He spoke at length about the destruction and the mass exodus of citizens following the storm.

#### **Quarry Development**

The participant was distressed that this is an American development. Further he had "heard it all." He reflected on conversations in the community regarding; the nature of the fill being used for reclamation, the problems that would occur with the water, the behaviour of Nova stone, the destruction of the Bay and the end of the tourism industry. He was sure that the Proponent was going to "cart the whole North Mountain to New York."

#### **Future of the Neck & Islands**

The participant feels that it will not be long until the area becomes strictly "a retirement community with a few tourists now and then." He lamented that most of the land on the Islands and the Neck is now owned by "foreigners." He accused them of artificially inflating the prices so that local residents can no longer afford to purchase property.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

It was felt that the "damage is done" and the Proponent should "perhaps look for another place to get their rock".

Interview #29 Male  
Age: 60's  
Formerly of Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This participant was interviewed over a period of two weeks. There were telephone contacts as well as two in person contacts. He is supportive of this development.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

He has vivid memories of an active fishing industry located at Whites Cove. He is aware that the site was a place where children picked berries. He remembers the white washed rocks but he never really knew why they were painted. He also knows that the site was previously quarried. He went into great detail about hunting on the property. He said “rabbits seemed to like it there.”

#### **Neck Memories**

He indicated that there have been a lot of changes on the Neck since he was growing up. First and foremost there are not many young families with children. “People are not having kids the way they used to. Time was that everybody had four or five.” He attributed this to the need to have a large family to look after all the chores. He also noted that when he was a resident there was a lot of operating fish plants. He spoke at length about the plant in Mink Cove that was notorious for the “stench that it created.” The Mink Cove facility could be best described as a rendering plant. During that time, either scrubbing technology was not available or cost prohibitive. He remembered that the people in Little River were not very sympathetic to the plight of those persons in Mink cove and Sandy Cove that had to deal daily with the unpleasant smell from the plant.

He remembered some of the members of the construction crew that came from the French shore to build Highway #217. He also feels that it is time for the road to be rebuilt.

#### **The Quarry Development**

He sees this as a positive development although he feels he would not say that if he were living on the Neck. “I’d think it but I wouldn’t say it”

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

“Once it gets going you’ll never hear about it from most people”

Interview #30 Female Homemaker  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant resided for a time on the Eastern Digby Neck and now lives elsewhere in the county. She was joined by a friend who also had some knowledge of the area. It was difficult to ascertain the source of the memories, as it was obvious that they had commenced talking prior to the arrival of the interviewer.

#### **Neck Memories**

During WWII, a lot of the young men enlisted and, according to the participants, more of the daily chores were assumed by women and boys who were too young to join the forces. Ironically, as this is a fishing area, she reported that most of the men she knew did not join the Navy. It was reported that most families had vegetable gardens and some livestock for food. It was rare that an individual relied solely on a wage or one occupation. If a woman worked outside of the home it was in a profession such as teaching or in a domestic capacity. This rarely happened if the woman was married. There was a lively discussion of the definition of housewife or homemaker. It was their perception that the work done by women in the home was valued more than it is today. There has been a decline in the respect afforded those women who devote their lives to their children's' welfare and the care of others. This was one of the factors that they felt contributed to a decline in church attendance. "Women's liberation means that women work twice the hours and never really feel that they have accomplished anything." They noted that today a lot of what was spread over the week is done on Saturday and Sunday. There were also some informative suggestions about how to preserve fruit and vegetables. Regret was expressed that young women today are not familiar with many of the domestic arts: i.e. cooking, needlework, quilting, dressmaking and knitting.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant remembered that the Whites Cove property was used extensively for the fishery. There were family based memories of flakes that were used for drying the fish that was caught. They also recounted stories about the abundance of berries on the property.

#### **The Quarry Development**

Neither woman was particularly pleased with the idea of the American involvement. They were aware of a number of little pits on the Neck but the idea of "losing a whole part of the mountain" was distasteful. It was obvious that many of the stories circulated by project opponents had caused great anxiety. They had heard that this project would have a significant effect on the environment. Further they were convinced that Highway #217 which is already in bad shape would be ruined by the traffic. It is widely known that the rock will be shipped, but there was still the perception that there would be an increase in truck traffic on the roads. The development process has caused great anxiety. They were aware that people who had stated they were open to the development had been ostracized by their neighbours. It was their impression that a division had occurred on the Neck. People on the eastern end were relatively supportive whereas people on the western end

and indeed the Islands were firmly opposed. There was a discussion as to whether or not this was always the case.

**The Proponent and the Community**

It was felt that it would be a positive thing if the Proponent would find another location to build their development.

Interview #31 Professional Female  
Age: 60's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant is a relatively young retiree. She is active in the historical society and provided many good contacts. She is distressed by the controversy that this development has initiated. She feels that this has divided the community.

#### **The Discussion**

The interview protocol was abandoned in this contact as the participant was acting in a facilitative manner. She was informed by the interviewer that the purpose of this consultation was to obtain accurate and open memories from older citizens who had knowledge of the Whites Cove area. She was assured that all the participant's identities would be kept confidential. There were frequent contacts between Elgin and the participant for clarification of roles of a participant, relationships between participants and historical locations that were discussed.

The participant was very helpful to Elgin in understanding the genealogy and in suggesting sources for further research. The participant would like to have the oral history information that is being acquired by Elgin at a later date. "When the dust settles on this quarry process it would be good to have any information that you discover." Elgin shared the acquisition of the Denton manuscript and some of the contents. The participant indicated that she felt that the reasons for the strong opposition to the quarry were varied but that key in this was the nationality of the Proponent, the early conduct of Nova Stone and the lawsuit. There was also a discussion of the dynamics of change and the fear of the unknown.



Interview #32 Male  
Age: 80's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant was very reluctant to be interviewed. He was assured that his identity would be protected.

### **The Discussion**

Much of the conversation was not relevant to the current investigation. Overseas wartime experiences, although very important, were not within the target of this project. The participant was very clear that his memories of Whites Cove were associated with the fishery and the recollections of his family about the settlement that was existent prior to 1900.

### **The Project and the Proponent**

The participant was concerned by the stories he had heard about the conduct of Nova Stone and the lawsuit. He was brought to the point of tears by the television reporting of the defendant's ordeal.

Interview #'s 33, 42 and 43 Former Crewmen for the Construction of Highway #217  
Age: 80's  
Sluice Point, Meteghan and Saulnierville, Nova Scotia  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

A recurring theme in many of the interviews was the paving and improvement of the only thoroughfare down the Neck, Highway #217. It was also evident that the Whites Cove property had played a role in this development. As the current development is a quarry Elgin felt that it would be beneficial to get the perspective of some of the people who were involved in the highway work. All three of these men were at some time part of the construction crews who during the 1950's were employed by a highway firm based in Sluice Point/Yarmouth County.

### **The Discussion**

The discussion centered on the extensive rerouting of many parts of the road. The original road down the Neck was in very poor repair and subject to washouts. It was dry and dirty in the summer, slushy in the spring and in their opinion often impassable in the winter. They billeted with locals while they worked and it was often the case that they became accepted by the families. They spoke about the meals that they had while they boarded and they were all very complementary about the quality of the food. It was clear that in their opinion the "Women could cook." They also noted the large number of children who resided in the villages.

In Sandy Cove, houses had to be moved away from the shore to accommodate the move of the highway closer to the water. It appears the original route went by the three churches on what is now called Church Hill Road. This happened again in Mink Cove. It appears that this was the ditch for the original route through Mink Cove. In Little River the dirt and gravel back road into Little River was the original main access to the village. The current paved road was narrow, but widely used. Whites Cove Road is accessed via the paved road but prior to the construction it was the equivalent of a town street.

The participants reported that extensive amounts of crushed rock and fill were required and in addition to the Whites Cove property, there were pits everywhere. They indicated that anyone who could use a shovel had work. There were discussions about the improvements in the machinery since the 1950's. There was also a discussion about how young people have become less able to do manual labour.

There was a great deal of discussion surrounding patronage and the role that partisan politics played in road construction. Elgin asked if this made it difficult to get jobs completed, and the response was "I suppose.... but that was the way it was. You got your best work when your party was in power." There was also a strong association between the party representations and whether or not the riding that one lived in got significant improvements. If the MLA was from a different party than the one in power then you could expect a significant decline in infrastructure improvements.

Interview #34 Fisherman  
Age: 60's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant is a life long fisherman and his family has been involved in the industry for many generations.

#### **The Fishing Industry**

Most of the conversation centered on how plentiful the fishing was and how it is regrettable that the only lucrative fishery today is the lobster. The discussion was predominately about the improvements in boats, equipment and other gear that made it possible to have larger catches. It was felt that the reduction in the ground fish stocks is largely attributable to government mismanagement. Blame was also placed on the foreign fishing fleets that have so depleted the stocks that this has had an effect on the inshore fishery. There was also a feeling that there is a need for a seal cull as they are too plentiful. The voracious appetites of the seal were considered to be a problem with respect to the decline in the fish harvest. There was also a discussion of the Native/Aboriginal fishery and the effects of the Marshall Supreme Court decision.

#### **Whites Cove**

There is a fear that the Whites Cove development will have a significant effect on the lobster fishery. It is also evident that there is phenomenal concern about the effects of this project on the water table. He was concerned that all the water would be "sour." The reference is to the brackish water that has been discovered in the area as a result of deep well drilling. He was aware that this site was a settlement. He also knew of people who fished out of Whites Cove, but that was "before my time."

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

The participant is firmly opposed to the development as he is concerned that it will affect "the only industry left on the Neck."

Interview #35 Professional Male  
Age: 80's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This gentleman has been very active in community affairs. He has significant knowledge of the county and although he never resided on the Neck or Islands he had very close friendships/associations with persons who were life long residents. He attempted to provide Elgin with an objective perspective.

#### **Neck Memories**

It was evident that each community was perceived to have certain character traits depending on your own place of origin. For example citizens of the town were frequently quoted as saying that citizens of the Neck or the Islands were not as enlightened. It was noted by some Neck residents that the town's folk were not as cultured. Much of what he termed elitism could be attributed to community pride. He was aware that there were also strict social lines often associated with the perception of education/wealth. Those who were well off resided within the villages of Sandy Cove and Little River, while those who were not so well off lived in Tiddville, East Ferry, Mink Cove, Centreville and in between. For many years the annual influx of American tourists was perceived as a social coup.

As a result of the travel limitations associated with poor roads and the expense of vehicles, the communities were quite insular. The increase in mobility brought on by easy access to other areas of the county and the province has had an effect on the population demographics. The consolidation of school populations and bussing of children from a distance has also had an effect. Children were exposed to other communities/opportunities through their friendships. He noted that the current Digby Neck Consolidated School would have replaced seven or eight community schools. He also noted that the introduction of Neck children into the town-based high school was initially met with some opposition.

He remembers the furor that engulfed the entire county including the Neck in the 1960's when Cornell researchers published the Stirling County Studies. People felt betrayed. He feels that this has had an effect on the ability of the long-term residents to be flexible and open. Further that has increased the suspicion of outsiders. He recalled that life on the Neck and Islands was much more difficult than it was for the town folk. It was his perception that much of the economy was labour intensive and resource based. Neck people, in his opinion, were better prepared as they had developed a self-sufficiency that was useful to them in the event of economic hardship.

#### **Whites Cove**

The participant was aware of the publication of Fog Magic. He had always attributed the location to the Village of Little River, as that is where the author spent her summers. He was well aware of the Denton family and their impact on the community of Little River. The Dentons had the means to formally educate their children. They also were supportive of the education of women. He was very respectful of the accomplishments of Rev. Harvey Denton. He knew that Whites Cove was the location of his hunting camp on the

shore. He questioned however, the significance of the white washed rocks. He knew the stories that were recounted recently in the media but he felt that it was very unlikely that this was the case. “Even if there were people buried there it would have had to be well before 1900”. Whites Cove, in his memory, was one of the sites for aggregate for the work that was done to improve Highway #217 in the 1950's.

### **The Project**

The participant is aware of current regulations and legislation with regard to developments that have far ranging environmental effects. He understands that people are suspicious of governments at all levels for what he perceives as good reason. The loss of the fishery, the closure of CFB Cornwallis, the Digby Wharf divestiture, the long history of partisan based patronage and the perpetual scandals that are invariably reported by media sources are all fodder for cynicism. He is however, confident in the ability of the regulatory agencies, provided the community remains vigilant.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

It is felt that the Proponent would be wise to make strategic gestures of good faith. For example, if it appears that one of the major concerns is the loss of a potential heritage site, then it would be advantageous to establish some interpretive facility or support the efforts of a recognized historical organization. It is his perception that since aggregate is not subject to royalties then the Proponent would be wise to set up a charitable trust in which a small percentage of the value would be held for contribution to worthwhile initiatives. He cited the example of J.D. Irving and the development of the New France site as well as their contributions to the schools.

Interview #36 Female Homemaker  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant worked out of the home briefly in her youth as a nurse. She married and became a homemaker. She describes herself as a news hound and is an avid reader. She is from a large family and although she never actually resided on the Neck she had family who were associated with the communities.

#### **Discussion Points**

The participant kept to herself when she was raising her children. Her spouse's occupation necessitated that she relocate often. She recalls that the active correspondence with her family who remained in the county was a great source of comfort. She delighted in hearing about the "goings on" in the area. When she returned to Digby she found that many things differed from her childhood memories.

She described the train station and how the Dominion Atlantic Railroad met the Saint John boat and the Princess Hellene at the ferry terminal, which was once downtown but is now located out by the Digby Pines Resort. It is her perception that this area, which once had a thriving fishing industry, is now a "shadow of what it used to be." She believes that the same is true of the Neck and the Islands. The active fish processing plants have all but closed and it is very difficult to get good-sized fish. Her children all reside out of the area and it is her belief that there are limited opportunities for young people.

#### **The Project**

"God we have to have some jobs here!" She realizes that there has been great controversy associated with the development but she feels that "people have to be realistic." She is aware that a development of this size will bring some changes, but she equates it to the reopening of one of the closed fish plants. She continued "not long ago we had hundreds of people employed in the fish, now all I see is our young leaving for jobs in the city."

Interview #37 Female  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant has been very involved in the community. She was often employed out of the home but considers herself a mother/grandmother first.

#### **Discussion Points**

The participant was very candid in her discussions. She had friends and was involved in community causes that included the Neck. She spoke of many missed economic opportunities. It is widely known that a major tire manufacturer wanted to locate in Digby. Further, she believes the dismantling of supporting infrastructure at the municipal airport was extremely near-sighted. She described what she believes is a defeatist attitude. "It appears that we seem to oppose almost any opportunity". She believes that much of the processing of trees and fish that are exported to other locations could be done here.

"It is very difficult to get people to work together." She was speaking specifically about the tourism sector but she was aware that this statement could be applied to other sectors. When asked why she thought this was the case, she replied, "It could be the wages, it could be a fear of change or the unknown." She is greatly distressed by the demographic shift in the population. She sees most of the little communities as retirement villages, but it is her belief that this area does not have sufficient supports or basic resources to provide for the aging population. Public transit consists of a bus that only travels the Highway #1 (#101 in places) and there are few taxis in the town. People will have to move closer to the hospital and the stores as they get older, which means that the small settlements will cease to exist. One has only to count the empty houses in the rural areas to discover the trend. A large number are summer homes and she is aware that many of the owners, in response to their failing health, have ceased to return.

#### **The Project**

She is aware of the media reports. She perceives the law suit as "very heavy handed and an over-reaction." She explained that this was a tactic to "rally the troops to the opposition." In her opinion, it worked. She was concerned about the suggestion that the development would damage the environment of the Bay of Fundy and somehow affect tourism, but she was not clear how this could be the case. She concurs that this area needs economic development but not at the expense of the current economic mainstays.

Interview #38 Male, Labourer  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant has family that married residents of the Neck and who now reside there. He was a lifelong resident of the county and claims both Loyalist and Irish heritage. Many generations of his family have “worked and prospered in” this community.

### **Neck Memories**

As a youth he remembers, “Hanging out with Neck fellas and raisin hell.” It was his perception that some of the communities “down there don’t have much of a sense of humour.” He also remembers what he believes to be a hypocritical piety that was “conveniently evident when they needed it.” He remarked that “in his day the Neck girls were pretty and they could cook.” He remembers “hanging out with some fellas and his mother was not pleased as they were a particular Neck family.” “You didn’t see much of the Neck and Island folks until they completed the paving” of Highway #217. “Then they were in town much more often.” “You know there is money in Little River and they wanted it kept there.” He remarked, “There were a few families that were really well off but most of the “workin stiffs just got by”.

### **Whites Cove**

It was his impression that Whites Cove was no different than any little inlet on either the Bay of Fundy or Saint Mary’s Bay. He contends that when they were fishing out of small boats people lived near where they worked and he suspects that along the shore if there was any beach at all there were boats launched by fishermen. As there was a concentration of population in Little River, Mink Cove and Tiddville, there were more people that used Whites Cove. When they rebuilt and improved the wharf structures. Whites Cove was no longer a logical location. “Gulliver’s Cove and Centreville had just as many boats and there are still people living there”

### **The Project**

Members of his family are disturbed by the potential of water problems associated with blasting at the quarry. He too has seen it happen that “somebody blows up something and bingo, yer well is gone.” He is also aware of rocks landing on the rooftops of homes from nearby blasts. The quarry in Seabrook (Parker Mountain) has had to rebuild some hunting camps that they toasted.” He is aware of several blasts in Seabrook that caused “shakin here in Digby.” He doesn’t see problems with the shipping and he is unaware of how it could affect the lobster fishery. Further, he feels that since there are already visible quarries on the Neck one that cannot be seen from the highway is not a tourist problem.

### **The Proponent**

Upon completion of the interview, the participant requested that Elgin provide him with “another one of those nice hats.” He felt that it was important that the name be out there. He feels he would like to see the jobs and the hat has become a conversation piece. He has given several away to people who requested them.



Interview #39 Male Businessman  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant has significant family roots in the area. Both he and his spouse claim to be of Loyalist ancestry. He was part of a large and extended family that “had relations throughout the County”.

### **Neck Reflections**

During the summer in the 1940's and 1950's it was not uncommon to see large numbers of Americans traveling to the Neck for extended periods of holiday time. There have always been close links between this area and the New England States. “They are our natural trading partners.” It was not uncommon for young men and women to leave here to work in the United States and then return home once they had some savings. Some never came back. In recent years, genealogical exploration has become a common hobby, in some cases an obsession. He noted, “There are many who come here to retire after they discover that they actually have some family roots here”. He feels that this migration has both positive and negative elements. The “returnees have a perception of a quiet pastoral haven that economically functions in a vacuum.” They often do not stay year round and really “do not understand that the locals have to make a living.” Many come “with large and secure incomes from pensions and investments.” They find that their money goes farther because goods and services are less expensive than they have experienced. He related the story of a young English couple that, upon selling their house in Britain for what they described as an “obscene” price, had sufficient resources to purchase a property here and wait patiently for the immigration process to run its course.

### **The Project**

It is hard to say what this development would do to the area. There are some who see the “lawsuit and the previous conduct of Nova Stone” as a validation for “healthy scepticism”. Yet he was supportive of the potential for employment opportunities. He expressed anxiety associated with the water table, and confusion over what has been stated associated with the detrimental effects on both the fishing and tourism industries.

### **The Proponent and the Community**

The participant was very pleased that the Proponent has taken a visible role in the Digby and Area Board of Trade. He feels this demonstrates a desire to be part of the wider business community. He is also supportive of the many open houses and public sessions that the Proponent has offered. He has not been able to take advantage of them all but he has frequently requested clarification of project plans such as the water table and the reclamation process as well as time lines from the Proponent’s office. He sees this proactive stance as useful. “You are still there and yer not going away. That says something.”

Interview #40 Fisherman  
Age: 80's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant has been a lifelong resident of Digby Neck where he married and raised his family. He continues to supplement his retirement income with fishing.

#### **Neck Memories**

This participant felt the “good old days” prior to the road being paved were difficult. The economic boom that saw large catches of many species of fish being landed and processed here were what he defined as “good days”. He related that work was plentiful and people made a good living. Now this is not possible. “It is just us old guys with pensions”. He feels the opposition is largely “people with not much to do, too much time on their hands.” He remembers the schools were full and houses were built and in good repair. Now as he drives down the Neck, with the exception of the properties of the summer residents, most of the homes are in disrepair. “Money is tight for most people”. He was offended by the CBC documentary filmed in the spring of 2004 that focused on a Whale Cove Fisherman as having the “last weir in Nova Scotia.” He felt it made the community look backward and uneducated. Although he declined to actively participate in formal academics, he made sure that his children “did their lessons.”

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

He feels the “hoopla about Whites Cove” is ridiculous. He related some bitterness associated with many projects and concerns that affected other Neck and Island communities where Little River was of no help. “Goin’ to the shore” could have meant Whites Cove to Little River citizens, but there were many who sought out the sandy beach in Sandy Cove on the Fundy side. He feels that this was a Denton property and that it was used by members of the extended clan, particularly Rev. Harvey Denton. Like several other participants he was aware that the property had a proliferation of “rabbits and other meat.”

#### **The Project**

He feels that this development will not hurt anything and that there is a need for jobs. “Even one job is welcome”. He has also heard the stories about Nova Stone and the law suit, both of which he believes soured people’s feelings about the project. He made the comment that the Nova Stone person was “the wrong person to sell anything here.”

#### **The Proponent**

He was clear that he felt the Proponent should start the work and let the “chips fall”. Elgin attempted to explain the environmental approval process which he then described as “bullshit.” He blamed government and politicians for the loss of the fishery and the closure of CFB Cornwallis. He stated “they passed out licenses and quota to anybody who could walk.” He continued “licenses were got for less than a couple of bucks, now they are worth hundreds of thousands.”

Interview #41 Male  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant was interviewed on two occasions with his spouse present. He was not originally from the area but relocated with his spouse whose family has lived here for many generations.

### **The Discussion**

In the opinion of this person, there is a need for jobs. The project will not really hurt anything. The opposition consists of “a group of do-nothing retirees that have no respect for the people who live here year round.” They are only interested in “what is good for them so that they can be comfortable”

### **The Project and the Proponent**

The participant feels that the Proponent should “cut the crap and start something”.

Interview #44 Farmer  
Age: 80's  
Eastern Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant has been a lifelong resident of Digby Neck. He has relocated several times within a twenty-kilometre radius.

### **Neck Memories**

This participant has seen many changes since he was a boy. He noted that there are not as many children and the industries that were integral to his youth no longer exist. He was involved in farming. He said there were a number of larger agricultural operations that supported a many farm-hands as well as the family unit. He has vivid memories of sheep roaming the hills. He related that the wool was sheared and sent to markets using the Princess Hellene out of Digby. It was not uncommon for people to buy a dressed lamb butchered by the farmer. He feels with the advent of the modern grocery store, refrigerators and just “plain progress”, farming on the Neck ceased. He remarked that there are still some beef operations but with one notable exception in Rossway, these will soon be gone. “We all worked hard to see that our children could have it easier than we had.” Those who got educations left because the work has disappeared.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

He was aware of the settlement and the fishing industry associations and of Harvey Denton’s Camp. He felt there are many old places with historical roots like the old churches and schoolhouses that should be receiving the attention the “hunk of rock on the bay” is getting.

### **The Project**

He is supportive of the project but has been told that he “had better keep quiet or he could lose his windows.” He thinks that this development, although larger than most of the quarries, is no different than any other gravel operation. He is pleased that the rock will be shipped as Highway #217 is “in very hard shape already.” He rejected outright the suggestion that when the property was sold to the Johnson’s and Lineberger’s the Denton’s were assured it was for cottages. “People have been selling their land to Americans for years to the point that most of the good shore property is owned by people who do not live here.” He continued “Nobody ever asks what they are going to do with it... they just take the money”

### **The Proponent**

He knows that people have a problem with how the project got started and he feels this is a reaction to the perceived “success of the opposition to a development at Eastern Head” near Little River. He feels the community of Little River has always been favoured as “they had most of the money.” There was a feeling that some of the opposition claims should have been taken “head on” but he is opposed to the current legal activities. “That just makes bad feelings.”

Interview #45 Fisherman  
Age: 70's  
Long Island  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This interview was conducted at the participant's request. He had heard that Elgin was soliciting opinions about the development at Whites Cove. Elgin explained that, as part of the cultural review, memories of Whites Cove were being collected for the purpose of understanding the cultural and economic significance of Whites Cove to the Neck. This was a twenty-minute conversation with notes only.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

He had no memories of the land. He sailed by there and noted the shack as a marker for when he was on the Neck. "Nobody knew anything about Whites Cove until somebody wanted to do something with it. This is a bunch of #@#@#@#." He related that "if it had been any place but 'Squirrel town' (Little River) you'd be OK."

#### **Neck Memories**

The "people of Little River are all good Church goin' types on Sunday, but they will cut your head off any other day of the week and maybe Sunday even afternoon". "When we were growin' up, it was important to know that ya didn't go there."

#### **The Quarry Development**

"I can't understand the fuss. We have quarries all up and down the Neck. If it is work, bring it on."

The discussion was very clear about his opinion of economic opportunities and he was not aware of any real negatives now that "the young fella was gone and this was Clayton's operation". He had met the Proponent briefly when he visited the Neck & Islands.

Interview #46 Fisherman  
Age: 60's  
Long Island  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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## MEETING NOTES

The participant is a life long resident of Long Island and claims ancestry from both the Loyalists and the Acadians.

### **Whites Cove Memories**

He has no memories of the Cove with the exception of sailing by. He is familiar with the stories that have been circulating about the significance of the property to the economic and social well being of the community of Little River. He felt that as time passed the memories have been enhanced or tailored to reflect, "What people would like to remember".

### **Neck Memories**

As an Islander he was not in contact with the people from the Neck until years after Highway #217 was paved and the ferry replaced the barge that connected Long Island to Digby Neck. At that time he remembers the fish plants were able to employ 'Neckers'. There was resentment about the Neck folks coming to work on the Island, but at that time there was "more than enough work to go around." He always felt the people of Little River were "snobby for no reason." He understood the effects of technology and modern appliances on lifestyles, and agreed with many of the participants that bread baked in a wood stove could not be duplicated by either an electric or propane oven. He is keen on any type of modern technology as long as he does not have to operate it. He explained that his grandson sets up his VCR. He believes the changes that were brought on by the bountiful days of the fishery have caused much of the problem with economic development today. Perhaps "in the minds of some people the fish will come back and with that all the industry."

### **The Quarry Development**

He understands there are concerns about the potential effects on the fishery, tourism and the whales, but he is unsure how a "big gravel pit on the other side of the mountain will affect these industries". He would be more concerned about the water table for the people who live in Little River. He has heard the stories about the Proponent and he also noted the lawsuit was a bad idea no matter what was said. "If an outsider attacks one of our own then you can expect" regardless of the circumstances "that people will support them." It is distressing that it has taken so long to get an answer from the regulatory agencies, as it appears that this has "just prolonged the pain." Divisions have occurred and many no longer express any opinion, as more than likely they would be with someone who differed from them.

### **The Proponent**

Hopefully there will be a project with good jobs, but if it does not happen "it will be just one more thing lost".

Interview #47 Homemaker/Mother  
Age: 60's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

These conversations took place over a two-week period. Often her spouse who is relatively supportive of the potential development was present.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

These were limited to stories told by relatives and her parent's friends. She remembers picking berries but she is not sure if that was at Whites Cove. She was aware of the history of the area as she frequently reads Hello Digby Neck and it has been discussed in the community.

#### **Neck Memories**

She spoke candidly about her youth on the Neck. She felt that she was fortunate as she grew up after the hard times of the depression and the after effects of World War II. In her youth the fishing was plentiful and there was plenty of work. She also has few memories of the paving of Highway #217, as she was more interested in her dolls. "The boys liked that stuff." Her mother was very active in the community and the church was integral to her well being and social status.

#### **The Quarry Development**

Like many other participants she has grave concerns about the increase in retired people and the decline in school aged children. She was distressed about the lack of opportunities but is not sure that a quarry will blend with the existing economic base. She is optimistic about the tourism sector.

#### **Suggestions for the Proponent**

She felt there should be more openness on the part of the Proponent. She had heard many stories about Nova Stone and the lawsuit. She feels this has created a great deal of the controversy.

Interview #48 Homemaker, Mother  
Age: 60's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

These conversations took place via the telephone over a three-week period. She was very helpful in locating other participants.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

She remembered childhood stories told by relatives about the fishing on site and the events at the Harvey Denton Hunting Camp.

#### **Neck Memories**

She remembers her school experiences and traveling by bus to Digby for high school. She also has fond memories of community suppers and family days after church at the beach at Sandy Cove called Jerome's Rock.

#### **The Quarry Development**

Like many other participants, she is hoping that the quarry development will not proceed. She has fears about the fishery and the tourism sector.

#### **Suggestions for the Proponent**

She would like the Proponent to drop the lawsuit.



Interview #49 Homemaker, Mother  
Age: 60's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

These conversations took place at a social gathering with others in attendance.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

She has few memories other than what the older people talking about. She knows that there were houses and a government winch.

#### **Neck Memories**

The Neck has always been a safe place to live. She felt that it wasn't necessary to lock things up. She is fearful that changes in traditional livelihoods will bring a change in lifestyles.

#### **The Quarry Development**

Like many other participants, she has concerns about the impact that blasting and the quarry operation will have on the water table. She hangs her clothes out on the line and since the closure of the gurrey plant, this has been possible. She worries that dust from the quarry will force her to use the clothes dryer.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

The whole idea of an American firm exploiting the resource is objectionable.

Interview #50 Homemaker, Mother  
Age: 60's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

These conversations took place at a social gathering place with others present.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

The conversation focused on the reported memories of others that had circulated in the community. The participant felt without the current controversy the site would have remained forgotten.

#### **Neck Memories**

She recalled many community concerts, particularly the pageants at Christmas time. She felt the community was supportive and forgiving. She perceives her childhood as very happy. She grew up during the time when the fish were plentiful and there was sufficient work. Her perception is that things are tougher now because of the loss of many of the fish plants and the work that went with those plants.

#### **The Quarry Development**

A major industrial development of this type is not appropriate for this area.

#### **Suggestions for the Proponent**

She would prefer the company not proceed with the project.

Interview #51 Homemaker, Mother  
Age: 60's  
Western Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

These conversations took place at a social gathering place with others present. Elgin made it clear that their memories would be included in some of the ongoing research associated with Whites Cove.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

It was difficult to ascertain whether or not these were actual memories or if they were extrapolated from the publicity associated with the opposition movement. She related that there were six or seven houses and dozens of men fished from Whites Cove. She referred to a photograph that circulated around the community, of what was allegedly laundry on a line. This was later identified as a photograph of buoys hanging from a fisherman's shack at Whites Cove in the 1940's. This photo has been used by the opposition to indicate that there were year-round inhabitants of Whites Cove in the twentieth century.

#### **Neck Memories**

Joining with the others, the conversation was focused on food, Christmas concerts at the church and school. There was also a passionate description of the exemplary quality of life that existed and hopefully will continue on the Neck and Islands.

#### **The Quarry Development**

She is concerned about the potential loss of jobs in the tourism sector. She is aware of the recent closing of a restaurant in Sandy Cove and several bed and breakfast establishments. She is fearful that more will follow if the quarry goes through and the tourists stop coming.

#### **Suggestions for the Proponent**

She requested that they reconsider their plans to quarry on the Digby Neck.

Interview #52 Male Labourer  
Age: 50's  
Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant was very hesitant to talk about the development for fear that others might find out that he is not concerned about the project. Elgin explained that this consultation was focused on the memories of the past and how lives were affected by the Whites Cove Property.

#### **Neck Memories**

He remembers his elders discussing the old days when all of the fish harvesting was done using Lunenburg dories and Whites Cove was obviously part of that fishery. Further he remembers a time when the only way you would miss church services was “if you were dead or dying.” This participant is deeply religious and expressed sorrow that the churches are no longer full on Sunday and what he defines as the Christian way is not more openly practiced. He believes people should be more forgiving like they were when he was young. He remembers the Neck as a busy place with lots of children and lots of work for those who were willing.

#### **Whites Cove**

He is of the generation that had no personal recollection of any activity at Whites Cove. He knows that there was a small gravel pit there as one of his uncles obtained some rock from that location.

#### **The Quarry Development**

He has no difficulty with the development of this project. He feels that there are many who would like the employment opportunity. He is aware of some of the modern technology that would minimize dust and noise, and is familiar with blasting techniques that are designed to minimize what he called aftershocks.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

He suggested that it would be helpful if the Proponent had a drop-in office on the Neck so that people could see that they were here to stay. He also suggested that it would be good if they dropped “the law suit against the Reverend’s wife.”

Interview #53 Fisherman  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This participant has been actively involved in many fisheries on the Neck and Islands. He has knowledge of weir fisheries as well as lobster, finfish, scallops and urchin. He and his family continue to farm on a limited basis.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

His memories are limited to what he has heard from others. He knows that he has sailed by and perhaps even fished off Whites Cove but he has no personal knowledge of the community that existed prior to 1900.

#### **Neck Memories**

The discussion centered on what he knew of the fish plant operations. He was critical of the behaviour of the Government with respect to the regulation of the fishery. He expressed apprehension about the effects of the fishing technologies like draggers that in his opinion destroy more than they catch.

#### **The Quarry Development**

He believes this is inappropriate development of the Neck. When asked how he came to that conclusion he responded "Fishing for lobster is all we have left." He explained that he was convinced that the run-off from the blasting and the quarry dust would poison the Bay of Fundy in that area. He was worried about the few remaining weirs that already have significant competition from the large herring boats that actively work the mouth of both the Bay of Fundy and Saint Mary's Bay. He had heard there was a plan to use Saint Mary's Bay to ship rock. He was assured that this was not the case with this Proponent.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

"Surely there are other places that they could go"

Interview #54 Male  
Age: 60's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This participant was originally from outside the area, but married a local person and settled in the county. This conversation took place in the presence of his spouse who provided supplementary information.

#### **The Discussion**

His interactions with the Neck were strictly on a social/professional basis. He has an interesting perspective. It is his opinion that people from away have bullied some of the local residents into believing that they neither need nor want economic growth. The ever-growing retirement community is deeply distressing to him as he sees this as a “slippery slope.” He is familiar with what has happened both in the Newfoundland out ports and the Town of Canso.

He firmly believes that it important to responsibly use the environment and to preserve one’s history or heritage, but not at the expense of the current and future generations. His wife however, was very concerned by the lawsuit and the conduct of Nova Stone.

Interview #55 Businessman  
Age: 60's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

This interview was conducted at the participant's request. He has been a vocal supporter of the project and it was his opinion that if Elgin spoke only to 'Neckers' then the report would be biased by what he perceives as inaccurate or embellished memories.

#### **The Discussion**

He is perplexed by the controversy. He is concerned that there is not enough work in the local area to employ what workforce is left. His children have sought employment opportunities in other locations. He has felt that the area has missed too many opportunities for economic development and is cynical of businesses such as Convergys call centre in Cornwallis, enjoying government incentives. He feels that the current high-tech push of the Western Valley Development Authority is not appropriate to our current workforce. These "jobs are size ten shoes for size seven feet."

He is also pessimistic about the growth potential of the tourism sector. He feels this industry has been steadily declining due to; high gas process, United States elections, 911 World Trade Centre tragedies, Canadian taxation (GST) and the expensive costs of accommodations and meals. He thinks that people need to "Wake up and smell the coffee."

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

He feels that the process has been a "comedy of errors brought on by" what he detailed as the conduct and history of Nova Stone in the area. He related a personal story in which he felt that he was not appropriately treated by personnel from this company. It is his belief that the Proponent should get more litigious. He feels that the opposition should be held accountable for the lies that they are spreading.

Interview #56 Homemaker, Mother  
Age: 70's  
Eastern Digby Neck  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

These conversations took place in the presence of her spouse who is guardedly optimistic about the development.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

She remembered childhood stories told by relatives about the fishing on site and the events at the Harvey Denton Hunting Camp.

#### **Neck Memories**

She remembers her school experiences and traveling by bus to Digby for High school. She has fond memories of community suppers and family days after church at Jerome's Rock, which is the beach at Sandy Cove on the Bay of Fundy side.

#### **The Quarry Development**

Like many other participants she is hoping that the quarry development will not proceed. She has fears about the fishery and the tourism sector.

#### **Suggestions for the Proponent**

She would like the company to drop the lawsuit.



Interview #57 Female  
Age: 70's  
Digby County  
April 15<sup>th</sup> to May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005

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#### MEETING NOTES

The participant was very reluctant to participate but she indicated that she trusted Elgin and was confident that her identity was protected.

#### **Whites Cove Memories**

The participant went into great detail about what she believed to be the link between the book Fog Magic and the imagery in that book which echoes Brigadoon's mystical village. Several of the Denton and Addington relations insisted Whites Cove, which was a 'ghost village' while the author visited Little River, must have been the inspiration for Fog Magic. Whether or not this is accurate is debatable according to the participant, but it certainly merits investigation. To suggest that Fog Magic could potentially be the next Green Gables obsession is very unlikely, but the book is certainly a delightful literary excursion. She respected the assertions that this property has an arcane quality that is difficult to understand. In her opinion, it is regrettable that the property was sold to an entrepreneur but she understands that since the early 1920's, the site has had some very practical uses including the role that it played in the development of Highway #217.

#### **Neck Memories**

In her opinion the Neck and Islands are very special places that can provide for the receptive individual, a protection or insulation from an ever-increasing complicated technological world. The people here respect each other. It was her opinion that "we look after our own in need." She asserted that this was always the case. Ironically, in the process of this investigation, Elgin was able to identify many cases where those persons deemed to be unsuitable due to economic circumstance or state of personal hygiene were unceremoniously removed from several communities. This was not addressed with the participant but it appeared to be a significant contradiction. It was necessary to exercise the principle that a person's perception is their reality.

The participant was sceptical of the information gathering process. It appeared to her, that as part of the Stirling County Studies, medical and mental health records were used without the informed consent of the subjects. The participant was bitter about the research that, in her option, painted Digby County as an area populated with moronic, psychotic, uneducated individuals.

#### **The Project**

It was determined though the conversation the participant felt an industrial development was not congruent with her perception of the area.

#### **The Proponent and the Community**

She felt it was vital that the lawsuit be extinguished. She also felt that it was time for the Proponent to move on to another location.