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Interview
Pat Swanson
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Interview conducted by Nancy Earsy
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PS: Before I moved out of Lexington I lived here for forty-five years [and have] been very involved. First I was a young mother, and not involved. Eventually I got involved in being a Town Meeting Member for many, many years. Eventually I was on the Recreation Committee and quite involved in local issues and local matters.

INT: What was your first impression of Lexington?

PS: Of course it was much smaller. Everyone seemed to know everyone. It was very friendly, a nice community, and we enjoyed it very much.

INT: Why did you pick Lexington?

PS: We had been born and brought up in Arlington. My husband also. So when we were looking around for a house after we got married it was a logical place to look and to live. And, of course, being familiar with the whole area, that was one of the reasons we moved to Lexington.

INT: How did you get involved in the community?

PS: That's rather interesting because my son came home from school one day and I was hanging up his jacket and I always turned the pockets inside out to get rid of the dirt—if you know how it is with little boys. To tell you the truth, there was a paper there from the SDS¹. I don't know if anyone remembers how long ago that was, but it was a kind of a strange organization, and it had been passed out in school to my son. I read it. Fortunately, he hadn't even bothered to read it, but I was just incensed with what was in the paper. Then I noticed there was an address, someone on

¹ SDS stands for Students for a Democratic Society, a politically radical student group of the 1970's.

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Follen Hill—can't even remember the name—but they were having a meeting somewhere. So I went to the meeting. I was very concerned about what they said, and that they were communicating directly with students. Then, about a week later, I read the *Minuteman* and found out this individual was running for Town Meeting. I didn't even know what Town Meeting was at that time, and I went to the next Town Meeting to see what it was. I thought, “God! This person's running for Town Meeting, and I'm staying at home minding my own business and letting somebody like this be involved in my government!” So a neighbor and I decided to run for Town Meeting, and that's how we got involved in local affairs. We were quite appalled that people like that could run for Town Meeting and nobody would even know what was going on. We worked very hard to defeat the person who was running. He did not get elected, and my neighbor and I did, so we both served as Town Meeting Members for a long time after that, but that's our initial entry.

INT: What were the SDS positions you found so objectionable?

PS: I can't even remember what they said but it was a very radical group. I can't remember. Of course being a conservative person myself...but I think anybody would have found them quite radical, and it bothered me greatly that anybody like that would be allowed to hand things out to school children. I guess that bothered me more than anything. That appalled me, because it was a very political group. I honestly can't remember even what the SDS initials stand for at this point of time [Students for a Democratic Society]. But it was very contrary to everything I believed in.

INT: What were the important issues in town government at the time you became a Town Meeting Member?

PS: I think it was a lot of budgetary things. Then as time went on there were a lot of concerns about the schools, what was happening in the schools.

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At that point in time I was working as a financial manager for a private school up in Concord, and I felt that that background—between financial and aware of what good educational programs were—qualified me to get involved in running for School Committee. That is why I got involved in that area, because I felt being involved in a private school that had to have good education programs or people wouldn't go there, and also being the financial manager of the school, I felt I was qualified. At the point of time, when I ran for School Committee, it was very definitely a concern because a lot of things were changing drastically. We had “open campus” on a much more wide-open thing than we have now and there were a lot of issues that bothered me and other people. I think the School Committee was quite controversial at that point in time.

INT: The time frame?

PS: It had to be in the 1970's..

INT: You mention “open campus.” What was the concern there?

PS: “Open campus” was being presented as an educational program, and I really didn't feel it was. I think it was a solution to overcrowded classrooms. They were calling a very liberal way of letting kids make their own choices, doing their own thing and leaving campus, an educational program. I objected to that because it really was because of overcrowding. They were trying to deal with those issues and I just felt strongly that very [small] percentage of youngsters can handle a lot of free choices when they're in high school. I think a certain percentage can, and we have some of those students in Lexington, but the vast majority have to have a little bit more structure, a little bit more discipline, a little more control. At least that's the way I felt, and I found that a lot of people agreed with me. I think that was one of the big issues, about the lack of structure for some students that we were starting to lose at that time.

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INT: Any other issues?

PS: A lot of it was financial. The community was growing and we needed more schools. There needed to be more space, so it was a combination of the change and how we were treating our education programs. A lot of it was financial because the growth of it that started to take place in the community at that time.

INT: What were your goals for the Lexington Schools?

PS: I thought we had to get the budget under control, at least know more what we were doing. I was very supportive of the schools, yet it bothered me—it bothers me to this day—that when people's children are through school they no longer feel an obligation to support them. I disagree with that strongly. At the same time I do believe that people are entitled to get good value for the money they spend for schools. I felt I could contribute in that way because I was used to handling budgets for schools.

INT: What would you consider to be good value?

PS: I think people like to know what the programs are and what we're supposed to be turning out. When people felt they were paying a lot of money and students were just allowed to choose to not do certain things that they didn't want to do. I think that you have to have more ways of evaluating what teachers were doing, and how they were doing, and the end result—although you can't always blame the end result on the teacher. A great deal depends on the home. I just always felt the parents had to work more closely with the schools and the schools had to be more responsible to the needs of the parents.

My own son did not have a good experience in Lexington schools. Not because of the school system. It was because nobody let me know he wasn't doing what he should be doing. And they made the judgment that... In fact the Superintendent at that time told me that Lexington was a very liberal

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community and people didn't want a lot of discipline in the schools. I disagree. I don't think that liberal parents care any less about good discipline in the schools than anybody else. It really bothered me that that was the attitude at that time, that they didn't let people know what was happening. There just needed to be more structure for most students—not all of them—for most of them.

INT: What were community expectations for the schools?

PS: I think everybody expected the students to be able to make their way in life, and be able to write and read to a certain level. At that point in time we were very involved in programs for the very gifted, and focusing a lot on the children who were having real problems. The vast majority of the middle were allowed to just drift along. They were promoted whether they passed the grade or not. I know it's very painful to keep children back, but if you haven't passed the grade you do them a disservice to let them keep going and going. At that point we were graduating students who could not read to what I would find an acceptable level. But we just pushed them along and pushed them along, and I just felt we were failing a lot of average and capable students who didn't fall into the very gifted, or the troubled and disabled kids. I thought we were neglecting a lot of middle, average students. I don't know whether we are now or not. I hope not.

INT: What was town government like? The typical Town Meeting?

PS: It was the same as it probably is now. There was a lot of concern about finances and it was really changing at that time. More and more affluent parents were moving in and wanting to change a lot of things we felt had made it an attractive community for people to move into. That happens everywhere. People move into a community that's attractive and want to change things. And that was happening. A lot of people of average income were finding it harder and harder to stay here with the demands that were

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being made on different things, but I think that's always true. As a community grows there are very serious issues that come up that affect people who have lived here for a long, long time, and nobody likes to see change, even when it's change for the better, and I think it was happening then.

INT: Examples of change?

PS: I think it mostly went back to financial a lot. I think they wanted more and more services and more and more of this and that, and things were getting to be costly and people were fighting some of the changes. As the community grew they had to have some of the more expensive and costly things but at the very beginning of Town Meeting I can't think of too many specifics, but I think a lot of it was presenting a problem.

INT: What groups or viewpoints were influential at that time?

PS: One thing that bothered me at Town Meeting—and it probably one of the reasons that I stayed after to try to get other people—was that a lot of the newer people were the ones who were getting involved in government. Some of the people who lived here for years and years were not—that was their fault and I didn't blame anybody else but them. It's really hard to consider a more liberal point of view, but I do think it was going from a community that had been very, very conservative, up to a certain point, now was getting a more liberal point of view. It was probably good to have a change. At the same time I found that that new viewpoint was mostly the people getting in government and the others were not. I found that sometimes the Town Meeting was a little bit unbalanced because of that. That was more the fault of the people who were not running for office rather than the ones who were.

INT: Was there a sense of conflict, of divisions among groups at that point?

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PS: Very definitely so.

INT: How would you characterize them?

PS: You mean as what kind of groups? Or what were the differences? It's hard to think of particular issues, but it bothered me in Town Meeting that it really got to a point that it was almost a we-they between the newcomers or the liberals, and the old timers and the more conservative. Sometimes in Town Meeting it didn't really matter what the issue was, it was who presented it. I would find with some people that had a very good proposal, when they were the ones who stood up and made it, the other people would not even listen. It really was a bad period of time. I found people were not objecting about the issues, they were more involved in who presented it. Sometimes you had to force yourself to sit and listen and try to be objective. But I really found that some good ideas were rejected without even listening to them because they were either the liberal group or the conservatives, and the other people would not even listen and try to analyze and say whether it was good

INT: What was your approach to the different groups?

PS: I certainly was considered a conservative, still am, and guess I always will be, based on my background and my experience. At the same time I was fortunate on the School Committee to serve with people, whether I wanted to or not, who were elected. From some of them, I just admired the...got to be very good friends. I could sometimes change their minds; they could change my mind, but I was lucky enough to be able to have that exchange with them. Maybe if I hadn't, I would never have met them on a social level because they were not in the group that I interacted with. But being on Committee, and serving with them—some of them I didn't learn to respect, others I did. And that was very good for me because some of them are just really great.

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Is it all right if I name a specific? I worked so hard not to have Jim Beck elected to the School Committee. I didn't know Jim Beck. I just didn't like Jim Beck, which is symptomatic of the way people felt. Well, on the Committee I really got to know him very well and I would say we're very, very good friends. I admired him and I think he respected me too, and that was a good experience for me. A lot of people didn't have that. They were in their little groups, and they stayed in their little groups, and never interacted. It was really valuable for me to meet people like Jim and others. Even the Butters. I don't know if the Butters are still here, but they were great, they really were, when I got to know them through knowing Jim Beck. So I benefited from that and a lot of people didn't have that opportunity.

INT: Do you recall any local protests regarding the Vietnam War?

PS: No, I don't.

INT: Particularly in 1971, do you remember how you learned that the VVAW planned a protest on Memorial Day weekend?

PS: I honestly don't remember how I learned about that. All I remember—and I'm trying to think how I even happened to be at Town Hall, because I was. I did speak, even at the original meeting when it was pretty chaotic. My recollection is that they had a subsequent meeting where people were asked to speak in a more formal way and I participated in that. I don't remember why I was there. I have a feeling that somebody called me and said, "There's something going on in the Town Hall and we'd appreciate your coming up," because I don't remember reading about it in the paper or even being concerned about it one way or the other until I heard that something was really starting to present a problem.

INT: Do you recall your reaction?

PS: No, I was just interested in what the furor was because when I first heard the Selectmen had voted not to let them use the Common [the Battle

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Green] I didn't see anything wrong with that. I probably would have made the same decision if I had been in that position because it seemed to me an inappropriate use of the Common. I felt if the Selectmen had been asked to make that decision—I didn't know what had been presented to them—but I did know that I felt that were different people on the Selectmen [Board], it was not straight out all one group. And I said, “Oh, they must have decided on whatever [was] presented to them not to let them camp along the Common.” I felt that was quite the right decision to make at that time.

INT: You mention some meetings, one before they camped. What do you remember?

PS: You know I really went to that meeting to see what was going on. I really have no recollection as to who called me. But somebody had to make a contact because there'd be no reason for me being up to the Town Hall other than that. When I first got there I just wanted to see what was going on. I still felt the Selectmen were right in saying it's an inappropriate use of the Common. I didn't get the feeling they felt anything hostile against the veterans, they were just saying it was an inappropriate use for the Common. So when I first went up there, I thought that's all that was happening.

I thought people were so terrible to the Board of Selectmen that night. I felt a great deal of hostility toward those people, having nothing to do with anything except the way they were speaking and attacking the Board of Selectmen. Now Natalie Riffin was, as I recall, on the Board of Selectmen, and she had even voted against their using the Common, so I didn't think it was a we-they, you know, reaction. The Board had said—the whole Board, including Natalie who I thought was a great person. So I didn't understand why people were so hostile. I ended up by feeling quite hostile toward them not because of the Common, but because of the way they were conducting themselves. I guess I felt a certain amount of hostility at that point of time

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toward them. I particularly resented the implication that everybody who thought it was wrong to camp on the Green was for the Vietnam War. I mean, my son was seventeen years old at that time. I certainly was not supportive of any war anywhere. But they really made everybody feel that anybody who agreed with the Selectmen was somehow in favor of the Vietnam War. The issues all got tied up in different things, which made me angry because I resented everyone telling me I was in favor of the war simply because I thought people shouldn't camp on the Green. I think there was a lot of hostility that had nothing to do with the issue, to tell you the truth—that's the way I felt that night. I was angry because of the way people were behaving and they were not behaving very well in some instances.

INT: And, without naming names, who was present?

PS: It was mostly townspeople. If there were veterans there I wouldn't know who they were and I don't think they would have attacked the Selectmen. It was mostly townspeople who obviously were very anti-war. I don't have a problem with that at all. If that's the way they felt, that was fine. I just felt they were very...attacking anybody who didn't think it was right for the veterans to camp on the Green.

Now my understanding was that they eventually offered them an alternative site which they chose not to take, and I really believe in retrospect that the Vietnam veterans were probably very happy that the issue became what it did because it gave them more publicity, which of course is what they wanted from their march. I understood that that's what they wanted, and I think it did give them more publicity, more of a highlight, because of what had happened. But I still would like to believe that the Selectmen simply said, "It's an inappropriate use of our Green because for years people have almost revered the Green." You couldn't do things you like to do, like picnic and all that stuff. It was a different time. But the

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hostility to me was from some members in the audience, but they were townspeople. I know when I did stand up to say something, they were very hostile to me until I said, "Look, I've sat here for a long time listening to you, and you're just going to listen to me." They didn't want to, but they did.

INT: What do you remember about the veterans who were protesting?

PS: I don't remember because I really didn't see a lot of them. They were not at that meeting. That was probably to me the worst time, which was that night. The next night, when people came to speak in a more formal basis, I think everybody was very respectful of each other. That first night they weren't. But I don't think the veterans were terribly involved from what I could see. I think it was more townspeople than anything else that were the people that I remember.

INT: What was the purpose of that first meeting as you recall?

PS: I don't know whether somebody was trying to change the Selectmen's minds. I would assume that would basically be the reason. Or whether they felt it would be good to have everyone vent their opinion. Sometimes you really feel better if you have a chance to speak your piece and to see if people could just really talk things out a little bit better instead of just screaming and hollering, which is basically what it was the night before. It was terrible the night before.

The next time when people at least stood up and had a chance to say what they thought of the situation—even at that meeting I had no hostility to the veterans at all. I didn't have any problem with people who were adamantly opposed to the Vietnam War. I didn't. That wasn't the issue I saw. I just thought that the Board of Selectmen had been elected to make decisions. And I assumed that the information was presented to them. If they unanimously decided not to do it, I think that's the way it should have been. I mean, that's what our government is all about. We vote people into office

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to make decisions. I don't see anything wrong with letting them know they made the wrong decision, but you have to do it in a civil manner, and the night before it was not done in a civil manner.

INT: If I told you that two Selectmen made a motion to reconsider—Natalie Riffin and Allan Kenney—would your reaction be the same?

PS: I don't know. I would never have had a problem to reconsider it, and talk it out further, and look at it further. I think that's a good thing to do. I did not know that. It did not come up at the meeting that night, but if somebody had said, "Well, reconsider," I don't know if anybody would have changed their minds or not. But I don't think reconsideration would... It would be a very good thing to do. To say, "There is something here that you're missing." And to say, "Should we do this?" At the same time I don't know if I were on the Board of Selectmen, pressure—I mean logic or reason might have made me change my mind—but pressure that people were going to demonstrate probably would not have. So I don't know, but I think reconsidering something would have been a wise idea and I don't ever remember hearing that said. Whether that happened or not that was not made clear at that meeting, that that was done.

INT: It was reported in the paper. Possibly things moved quickly, and the tone, as you describe it, was such that people couldn't hear. What were your friends and neighbors saying in the weeks immediately after the protest?

PS: I think there were a large number of people who felt it was an inappropriate use of the Common and I would probably say I would be amongst them. I think most of the people I came in contact felt that way. Particularly when we felt an alternative site had been offered to them. I don't think the veterans wanted that, which lead me to believe that they

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enjoyed the confrontation. And I understand. That's not a criticism. I understand why they would have enjoyed that because it would have put them more in the limelight. So most of the people I came in contact with still preferred to have them not use the Common. I think that we were all concerned that it got to be such a divisive thing. But I think that also was not all the fault of the town or the Vietnam veterans. I think Lexington at that time was very polarized. There were the "liberals" and the "conservatives" and it depended which group you came from. So the town was very polarized to me long before this issue came up. This got to be an issue for people to rally round strongly on one side or the other. I think it polarized it much more. But in my estimation it's totally unfair to blame it on that particular time because it wasn't. It was just an issue that gave people a chance to vent their feelings that were quite divisive at that time. I don't know if it's still that way. It's unfortunate, but that's what happens in communities.

INT: Did you talk with anybody who was arrested?

PS: No, I did not.

INT: What was the role of the churches?

PS: I don't know what their role was. I can't see that they would have had a role. I mean, you have opinions and if it's related to moral values and certain things, I think the church is an issue. But I don't think the church should have had an issue on whether the Vietnam War was right or wrong. And I think that you'd find a division. Whatever my priest said, I don't think that would affect me, unless he could convince me on a moral ground.

I feel really badly that people were serving in that war whether we supported it or not. If I were a person who had had a son over there, I would have been very upset with what happened, I really would have, because I think the way we treated the vets that came back after serving over there was

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more deplorable than anything and I don't think anybody made much of an issue over that. It's very complex. I understand why people were opposed to it and as time goes by we wish more and more that we never got into it. But history could almost repeat itself with the position we're in right now. Lots of people in this country think we should go right into Bosnia and get involved, and the other half know darn right...well, maybe we should have learned a good lesson. But I think the issues were so complex, and people tend to oversimplify them. But I don't think the church has had any position on what happened here in Lexington at that particular time.

INT: How do you see the Green?

PS: We always treated the Green almost like a shrine in a way, the way we've celebrated the reenactment...and we think of it as sort of hallowed ground in a way. I think if the veterans had asked to camp on any of the school grounds, or any of the open areas, it would have been great. Here they were trying to demonstrate and prove a point and they had to have places to stop and rest and so forth. It could have been any place except the Green, and I think the Green is a very different spot. We've always made a big deal of it in our history and I guess I think it's rather special.

INT: Some people who demonstrated thought that in the 1700's what happened on the Green was a protest against the British, so that therefore the protest was fitting. How do you react to that?

PS: I can understand their thinking that. I just disagree with it. But I do understand that they're putting the two together and saying...but I guess they're probably making the assumption that everybody agreed with their protest. Maybe everybody didn't agree with their protest against the Vietnam War even though I can't believe anybody wanted it. I can understand their thinking, I just happen to disagree with it. I just think it's a special thing in Lexington because of what happened there, and having

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started in Lexington that Revolution went all around, but our Lexington Green is where it started. This protest was not where it started. I feel a vast difference between the two demonstrations so I can understand their feeling that way. As I say, I just disagree with it.

INT: Why did the Selectmen take the position that they did?

PS: I think they probably felt the same as I felt, that it was not the right place. I don't think that demonstrated that they were disagreeing with anything except that that was not the right place or the right use of the Green. I do think that perhaps, sometimes you get involved with establishing a precedent—every group that wants to protest feels that their protest is very, very valid. They feel very, very strongly about it. Maybe they felt this is very important and these people feel strongly about it and there are going to be other groups, and before you know it this is going to be the place people come to demonstrate. I don't know whether that would be in the back of their minds, but I do feel they just simply felt it was inappropriate use of the Green.

INT: Do you think there were some other choices available?

PS: I think so. You mean other places for the Vietnam veterans to camp?

INT: Other options for the Selectmen.

PS: I would hope they would have suggested, “Why can't you use the...”—what's the place up in back of the Green? Hastings Park, is it? I don't know if they made other suggestions or not. If I were on the Board of Selectmen I would have said, “Look, there's the whole Hastings Park. There's here...” Hastings Park is a stone's throw away from the Green, if that's all they wanted to do, then that would have been the ideal place. There's lots of open land right close to the Center and I'm sure they would have been welcome. Their supporters would have made them feel very

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welcome and it would have been fine. That's where I come down with—why was it so necessary to make such an issue over using the Green? I don't think the Selectmen—maybe they should have reconsidered—at the same time it seems to me somebody was pushing unnecessarily for the other part. They were in Concord. They could have come down to Hastings. There's lots of places. I don't they would have wanted an alternate, because I think this made more of an issue the way things turned out.

INT: Why did the veterans make the choices that they did?

PS: I think they wanted more publicity and pushed the issue, but I don't know any more. You see, I think both parties could have been a little more conciliatory. I don't think either one of them did much to help the situation. At the same time, I have to admit if I thought somebody was pushing me, I would get a little bit more stubborn. That's probably not the right way to go, but if I thought they were really trying to take advantage of me rather than just trying to work things out, it would have been pretty hard, too, to change my mind. At least, I don't find it easy. One of my faults.

INT: Was there any immediate impact on the town after the arrests?

PS: I don't think, so except to polarize people a little bit more than they already were which I don't think benefited anybody. But I don't think it had any impact other than that.

INT: Any long-term impact?

PS: No, I don't. But that could be a problem of the people I am closer to than the others. No, it just increased the polarization that I already saw happening which I don't think helps anybody. That was the impact that I saw.

INT: If a similar situation came up now would the same thing play out?

PS: I think it all depends on who's in charge of making the decisions. That's what it comes down to. If you elect people to have that responsibility

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then you have to let them handle that responsibility. Now if you had other people who were more conciliatory, or more open to that and did that, you would have the same problem. Other people would have been screaming and hollering because they let them use the Green. It's not [that if] they [had] let them use the Green there would have been no problems, because that's not true. It just would have been the other group screaming and being very upset about what happened. I don't know if it would have been as bad, I don't know if it would have been as long lasting. It would not have been any more peaceful. I don't really believe—I could be totally wrong—but I just think no matter which way they went there would have been the same conflict of one group being unhappy. It depends on who would have been on the Board at that time. But whatever decision was made you would have had a large segment of the community very upset.

INT: Do you think the events in Lexington affected national opposition to the Vietnam War?

PS: No, I don't. I can tell you from my own experience that when you get out of Lexington there's a lot of people who don't even know. Every time I say I'm from Lexington, in Florida, everybody thinks it's Lexington, Kentucky. We are very used to thinking everybody knows Lexington is where the shot was fired that... that isn't true, unfortunately. I think it's surprising how little people know about this community and other communities. It's surprising to me how little people know about the history we know and revere and think is so important. I think it's a shame. It's too bad that they don't know more about it but it's quite surprising when you get outside of Lexington to find out how little people know. I wonder if it even played out too much in other papers, other than local papers. I can't remember reading that much in the paper at that point in time, but I don't know.

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INT: I've finished the main questions. Is there anything you want to add?

PS: One thing. I was impressed with one of the articles you sent me that had been printed somewhere about the professor somewhere deploring the lack of knowledge of our history. That is just so sad. I don't know how you rectify that. Because even this, I don't think this had anything to do nationally, and I don't think it changed anything anywhere, but people should know that it happened. They really should know. When you hear people say that school students don't know any of these things—not this, because I don't think it's in the larger scheme of things but other history—they don't know. Right now, the generations that were here in World War II, they're going to be pretty soon gone. Then you get into the Vietnam War, and they're going to be gone, and it's too bad that they don't know more, because as they say, if you don't know history it's going to just repeat itself. That's kind of scary, if you don't have people passing these things along.

INT: Do you have any thoughts on LOHP?

PS: I was surprised to hear at first that you were doing it. I think the oral history project is really good, the idea is really good. This particular one did not seem to me in all fairness to be that significant because I don't think what happened at that time in my estimation—I think it was the polarization of the community that was involved more than anything else. But I do think it's important, even if people believe that it was the polarization of the community. That causes serious problems when people get to the point where they don't respect each other's opinions and needs and problems; that's important. See, I may look at this project from an entirely different point of view than you are, because I don't think it's important for what happened to the Vietnam veterans. I'm much more concerned about those poor veterans who were over there, came back, and were treated so

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disrespectfully. That bothers me more than what happened on the Green. But it does bother me when I see communities get to the point where they don't really listen to other people because they don't like their philosophy. That really bothers me and I do think that's what happened in Lexington more than anything else. When I've gotten outside this community—this is more polarized than most communities I've seen, and [more polarized than] where I live now. And it's because of a strange thing, and it's a good thing, because here people are very involved. So that you know what their philosophy is because they are involved. They're making statements and they're doing things. And that's a wonderful thing. Sometimes, like where I live now, other than myself and a few others, I've carried my involvement with me. A lot of people don't have a clue as to what's happening. So there's not the same problem as in Lexington because the people aren't as involved. So it's a sort of Catch-22. Which do you want? You do want an involved community, but you sure should try to have a community that understands that there are other people with ideas and some of them are good ideas. And that sometimes doesn't happen. You know me at Town Meeting—sometimes it depends on who says something, as to whether you listen or don't, and that's kind of a bad thing, I think.

INT: Is there anything you'd like to add?

PS: No, not really. I miss Lexington, you know, 'cause as much as I get agitated with some people, I miss people that get into things, and are interested, and care about their community, and do things, you know—contribute. That's the way a lot of places are really, especially when people get to be my age and they feel, "Well, I'm going to enjoy my life and not get involved." I find that very hard to do. But a lot of people do, and I think it diminishes a community to have people like that. So I do miss Lexington from that point of view. But I was also kind of sorry to see it

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change so drastically when I was here. I felt sort of sorry to see that, too.
But anyplace has to change. There's no way to stay static.

END OF INTERVIEW