

Lunch Chat

By Robert Hood IV

Eva Ricker has been feeding all of the students of Chelsea School for almost twenty-six years. She has been a very tolerant woman to deal with all the headaches of our students every day. When I go to lunch, I get in line and chat with Eva and every day she gives me my food with a smile. She is the backbone of the school and I thank her for supporting the school for so long. Recently, I sat at lunch and chatted with her.

“Describe your high school experience at Chelsea” I ask her. She then tells me “Well, when I went to school here, the school was only the white building. There was no hall or anything there. The four grades in high school were on the top floor while the other eight grades were on the second floor. There would be two grades to a room and one teacher to each room.”

I then ask her “What kind of student were you?” She tells me “Average. I didn’t excel in anything but I didn’t stay back. I was never expelled.” I laugh and say “That’s good.” She then says “I was never suspended. When I was in school, I respected the teacher, and that’s really lacking in school now. You were only allowed to go over street if you lived close to the school, so you could eat lunch at home and such. When I was a freshman, I was kept back after school for chewing gum. I had to walk three miles to get to my house.”

“How would you describe your life now?” I ask her. “Busy and boring. One moment bored out of my mind, and then busy as I can imagine. Cathy works the hell outa’ me.” She says with a little chuckle.

I question her, “What is one memory that stands out to you the most in your high school experience?” She says “My senior year, it was the day before graduation. All us girls came into the school wearing flannel shirts and jeans and were sent home immediately, because girls were expected to dress in a decency of skirts and such. The principal told us that we could come back if we came back wearing decent clothing, but if we didn’t, we wouldn’t graduate. We changed in a hurry and got back to school. We then graduated the next day.”

“What do you feel Chelsea Public School has done for you?” I ask. “A job I guess. A job close to home. My diploma didn’t affect my job decisions.”

I follow up asking “What jobs did you have previously?” She replies, “I worked in the nursing home for sixteen years, house work, I worked in the office at the jail.”

“Is there anything else you’d like to share about your experience?” I ask. “When I went to school, if you were told to do something, you damn well better do it. When you were in eighth grade, one kid would put down the flag and you’d best fold it right. We didn’t have random field trips like now. But when we had our class picnics, a local farmer would lend out his truck and the kids would ride in the back on the way to the picnic hooting and hollering. We learned the Gettysburg Address and would memorize it. Do you have to do that now?” I reply, “I’m not sure.” She then says “Did anyone notice that the bell upstairs hasn’t been rung this year? Someone would ring it every morning and now they don’t. We could always hear the bell downstairs in the cafeteria when it was rung.”

For such a quiet lady, she has so much importance to be recognized. She may not believe this, but all these life lessons that she has told us are very important to recognize. After my conversation with Eva, I felt wiser. Eva Ricker is a great role model to follow, showing discipline, respect, tolerance, obedience, and much more. She is such a nice lady, and I appreciate her giving her time for me, not only for the conversation, but also for serving my meals to me daily and making me smile. I hope Eve Ricker can stay here at Chelsea School for many years to come. She is a sweet lady and I care for her dearly.

80 Flashback

By Anthony Spinella

For years I've seen my uncle Bill Presch at family gatherings and on weekends. I've known that he graduated from Chelsea High School in 88' but that was over 20 years ago! How was Chelsea High School in the 80s? I soon found out.

Bill had a wonderful high school career at Chelsea. He was a slightly above average student, having started schooling in Chelsea back when he was in kindergarten in a one room schoolhouse. This unique experience led to his class being the last class in the one room schoolhouse before it closed. Bill then moved on to the newly built Chelsea Elementary and worked his way up to high school.

He says his experience was good at Chelsea; it was nice being in a small school because he knew everyone including the teachers, and they knew you back. He reflects that the "small school appeal" still had cliques, but nothing like it would be in a bigger school. He didn't take any "extra" classes like music, French and debate, but he was athletic.

Bill enjoyed and played all the sports at CHS. His junior year the soccer team made it to the quarter finals, the farthest any Chelsea soccer team had gotten before! Making it to that playoff position was good for Chelsea's image as a school, thus making the experience one of Bill's fondest memories. Another one of these memories is when he and his class graduated. He remembers the feeling of joy of moving on to his career as did others. He also thought the K-12 experience at Chelsea was unique and that not a lot of people can say that they had it.

Bill now works at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center in the Vascular Surgery Department. He says his life is admirable now. He has a beautiful wife and kids (not to mention nephews) and is fortunate that his family and relatives are so close. Looking back at his time at Chelsea he says that the small school really helped out in his life. The small and intimate school allowed him to build bonds and to stay close with other kids and teachers, teachers who remember your name even after graduation, instead of just becoming a number like in bigger schools.

After the interview, via iphones, we talk about the Celtics game and then we hang up. He's got work in the morning and I have school, where 80s Chelsea High School is no more.

A Little Bit of Knowledge

By Hannah Braman

My mind immediately jumps to my father Kevin Braman when I find out I have an interview to do. I know he is going to be a good person to pick. He graduated from Chelsea Public School in 1975, and now lives on a big farm as a logger. As the television show switches to a commercial I start my first question of the interview.

“Describe your high school experience at Chelsea Public School.”

“Well, I learned to manage time with chores, sports and school. My experience was great, the social aspect with different people.” I glide my pencil across the paper and pick the lead up and ask the next question.

“What kind of student were you in high school?”

“Average. I followed the rules, did my homework, pretty straight. I hung out with the sports and other interests, (snow machines and farming) groups.” I finish writing and go on to the next question.

“How would you describe your life now?”

“Time is moving way too fast. I’m concerned about the future. I feel very fortunate about what we have. Happy with working outdoors, I love it.” Now I ask the fourth question.

“What are one or two memories that stand out from your high school experience at Chelsea Public School?”

“Going through the woods and surveying the trees and being able to connect with teachers.” I ask my penultimate question.

“What do you feel CHS has given you that has helped you in your life?”

“I learned a lot about respect. The knowledge learned to get along with people. I valued the smaller school, more one-on-one attention.” I finally ask my last question.

“Do you have anything else you would like to share about your experience at Chelsea Public School?”

“I liked the different teams of sports, the getting along with students and teammates. What hard work can do for you.”

My dad has accomplished a lot in his life, and is very grateful for what he has. He gets frustrated when people get lazy and don’t put forth their best effort. He is a big nature lover and will do anything to protect land. I am definitely proud to call him my dad.

Interviewing the High School Life of Kathy Doyle

By Brandon Frost

Kathy Doyle is a nurse who graduated from Chelsea Public School in 1992, and she is a nice lady who loves her family.

The first question I asked Kathy was “Describe your life in high school” and she told me “High school was hard and confusing.”

The second question I asked her was “In high school what kind of a student were you?” and she replied “I didn’t do so well the first couple of years but in my junior and senior years I got in gear.”

The third question I asked Kathy was “How would you describe your life now?” and she replied “Hectic and hard, but I’m enjoying it.”

The fourth question I asked her was “What were one or two memories that stand out from your high school experience?” and she said “I was happy to graduate, I loved prom and I loved playing basketball.”

The fifth question I asked her was, “What do you feel that C.H.S. has given you in life?” and she said “School gave me the math and people skills to graduate nursing school.”

I learned more about Kathy just by asking her these questions. Kathy is now a mother of three and has a husband.

Back in 2006

By Katelyn Churchill

I interviewed my sister Alex Griffen. She graduated with a big class for Chelsea. There were seventeen people in the graduating class of 2006. Alex participated in basketball and also in cheerleading. She seemed to like to have fun doing these activities with her friends.

Describe your high school experience at Chelsea Public School.

High school was interesting and fun sometimes annoying like all typical high schools.

What kind of student were you in high school?

With the exception of freshman year I was overall a good student and when I couldn't excel I tried my hardest.

How would you describe your life now?

Semi average college student with the exception of raising an eight month old.

What is one memory (or two) that stands out from your high school experience at Chelsea Public School?

My most memorable moments were in classes where teachers were not only good but respectable like PCal, Mr. Steckler and Valz.

What do you feel CHS has given you that has helped you in your life?

Good friends and a respectable education.

From everything I was told it sounds like Alex has good memories from her high school experience. She seems to have a good life now and she still talks about the good old days from Chelsea Public School.

Advice From the Experienced

By Hannah Braman

I rest my chin in my hand as my mind wonders about whom to interview. A light bulb goes on in my head as I think about Ashley Grote. I am her younger sister and we are ten years apart. Ashley was a student here at Chelsea from kindergarten until she graduated in 2004. Ashley's class was fairly large compared to the numbers today. She was on student council and participated in a lot of activities.

During the interview I ask her how her Chelsea Public School experience was and she replies by saying "The hallways were always packed, P-Cal's was the place to be, that's where all the "cool" kids hung out. It was good to be on the sports teams and to be part of different groups. Overall, it was good and fun, especially going over street." I have another question to ask her "What kind of student were you in high school?" She laughs and says "I always was the person trying to do extra credit and being part of school activities. I really focused on working hard and trying to do better than my best."

My next question is "How would you describe your life now?" She quickly answers "Good, awesome. I'm really happy to be married and to be starting a life as a married couple. It's an adventure. Also, I have a good job and it's professional, which is nice."

I ask the next question wondering what her response is going to be. I ask "What is one memory that stands out from your experience?" She ponders this for a minute and then says "I remember that the whole school was called out to the baseball field and the principal told us about the twin towers. Also, being part of the first team to go to the championship and winning it for the first time in lacrosse."

My penultimate question is "What do you feel CHS has given you that has helped you in your life?" She answers by saying "The support. With the small classes you're closer to everyone and able to branch out and not be afraid of failure like in big schools."

My last question of the interview is "Do you have anything else you would like to share about your experience at CHS?" She answers "Things always change, they change all the time. Working at Chelsea Public School I can see how much things have changed since I was there, it's crazy."

I ask her if she can give me a few sentences of how she would describe her life now, "I live in Bethel but planning to move really soon. My sister Michelle is pregnant and our family is getting bigger. My work is good and I enjoy it. My life is at a good place right now and I can't wait to see what the future brings." My interview with Ashley has given me helpful advice that I can use in my high school career, and I can even use the information in my future after I graduate.

Enjoying High School

By Courtney Griffen

Brittany Driscoll graduated in 2005 with 46 students in her senior class. After high school she worked at a daycare in Barre for a while then she had her first baby boy Jacob and a couple of years later she had her baby girl named Emily.

Courtney- Describe your high school experience at Chelsea Public School.

Brittany- I had a good experience at CHS. I got along with everyone and enjoyed that it was a smaller school. Although I feel like the education could have been better. I feel like I could've used extra help with certain areas and the school didn't take the time to give extra help.

Courtney- What kind of student were you in high school?

Brittany- I was an all right kind of student. I struggled with academics.

Courtney- How would you describe your life right now?

Brittany- I have a great life. I have two beautiful children with my high school sweetheart and we live in our house in West Fairlee.

Courtney- What is one memory (or two) that stands out from your high school experience at Chelsea Public School?

Brittany- Meeting my boyfriend freshman year.

Courtney- What do you feel Chelsea Public School has given you that has helped you in your life?

Brittany- I can't think of anything really that CHS helped me with that benefits me now besides education.

Brittany has been around our family for years because she's best friends with my cousin Alex Griffen. She has given me a lot of much needed advice about school and told me to keep my grades up and have fun in school. She is definitely an honest, good hearted girl that has helped me a lot and keeps me motivated with where she is today. She's got a wonderful boyfriend and two very beautiful kids that she loves dearly and that is my inspiration to move on with school.

Returning to the Past

By Brandon Poulin

I chose to interview Chelsea alumni, Vince Vermette. Vince graduated from Chelsea in 1984. I have known Vince for many years, and my younger sister attends Vince's wife's daycare.

I first asked Vince to describe his high school experience at Chelsea. Vince said it was a good experience, he had fun and learned. Next, I asked Vince what kind of student he was in high school, and he said he was an average student. Then I asked Vince to describe his life now and he responded by saying that it is very good. After that, I asked Vince to share a memory he had at Chelsea. Vince said that he remembered one day when he was in a class and two kids pulled up in a truck to try persuading him into going turkey hunting, and the principal came out and saw, so the kids in the truck told the principal that he was trying to go hunting. The principal then said, "Why don't you go, if I could go right now I would." Lastly, I asked Vince what Chelsea had given him to help him in life. Vince said "Having good friends through school."

Interviewing the Past of Cathy Johnson

By Brandon Frost

Cathy Johnson is the hard working, nice kitchen manager at Chelsea Public School, and I interviewed her. We talked about many things like her experience at CHS and her family. I interviewed Cathy in the lunch room while she was working. When I first met her this fall, I could tell right away that she was different than other lunch ladies because of how nicely she greeted us in the lunch line.

This first question I asked her was “Describe your high school experience at Chelsea Public School.” She started her high school years in 1989. She said she was a tuition student, and she was in the last senior class before block periods started which was in 1993. The second question I asked her was “What kind of a student were you in high school?” and Cathy said “in the top of the third of my class.” She had to work hard to get to the top third of her class.

Then we talked about her family and personal life so I asked her to describe her life now and Cathy said “Well and successful.” Cathy is raising a family and her two kids go to Chelsea Public School. The fourth question I asked was “What was one memory or two that stands out from your high school experience at Chelsea Public School?” She shared with me that she enjoyed being in a small school and enjoyed the times she had with her friends.

The fifth question I asked her, and her answer stood out a lot, was “What do you feel CHS has given you that has helped you in your life?” Cathy replied, “Being your own individual and being yourself.” In other words, being yourself could get you more friends and keep you out of trouble. The sixth question I asked her was “Do you have anything else to share about your experience about CHS?” Cathy said “When I graduated in 1993 I received the Principal’s Award.” Cathy was honored to get this award.

From this interview I learned a little bit more about this school and Cathy Johnson, and I am new here and getting to know Cathy has made me less nervous.

My Neighbor Down the Road

By Brandon Poulin

Before interviewing my friend and neighbor, Cheri Galfeti, a 1983 graduate from Chelsea Public School, I am curious to find out what her experience was like at Chelsea Public School.

To start the interview, I ask Cheri about her experience at Chelsea School and she replies, “The school was very rewarding, everyone knew everyone, so it was like a family, and with that everyone accepted each other.” Cheri also says, “There was a lot more going on such as business programs and tech sections.” Lastly, Cheri says, “The teachers were really easy to work with and learn because of how close I was to the teachers.” Cheri’s graduating class had somewhere around twenty to thirty kids, a lot more than we have now.

When I ask Cheri what kind of student she was in high school she replies, “I was a good, average student.” She also says she attended the business and college prep programs. Cheri was also interested in Miss Vermont agriculture. Miss Vermont Agriculture was very similar, but not connected to the farm show because it dealt with the outdoors and farming. The goal was to win the title Miss Equis. In order to compete, you had to have won another title such as Dairy, Maple, or Grain. Now-a-days, students compete for Agriculture Ambassador since guys are allowed to compete. Lastly, Cheri also states that she was very athletic and played on many sports teams.

I then ask Cheri to describe her life now and responds, “It is very successful, busy and full. I have a large family and a good life. Cheri also has a son who attends Chelsea High School.

When I ask Cheri about some memories that stand out from her high school experience she has two fascinating memories to share. First, Cheri says that her debate and forensics team won the debate that was based on various categories – she thought this was great! Another memory Cheri has is making it to the championship game for field hockey and losing by one point against Stowe.

I also ask Cheri how CHS has helped her in her life and she responds, “It gave me self confidence, an education to succeed and was a way to find out who I am.”

Lastly, I ask Cheri if there is anything else she want to share about her experience at CHS and she shares, “Chelsea is a very special place, it has a lot to offer such as academics and sports. Overall it is a great school.”

At the end of my interview I was very pleased with Cheri’s responses to my questions, and I really enjoyed interviewing her. She provided very good details in her responses which made the interview go well especially over the phone. It was great being able to interview Cheri since she is my neighbor, and I have known her for a while. Overall, Cheri definitely had a lot to say about her experience at Chelsea Public School.

Experiences at Chelsea Public School

By Kimberly Bartlett

I interviewed Mindy Farnham about her experiences at Chelsea Public School.

Mindy is currently a school counselor at Chelsea Public School. Mindy did not attend Chelsea until her eighth grade year. She was part of a small senior class of only thirty-six students – the class of 1996. During her freshmen year she took on a role of leadership when she was the class president. She also worked at the store across the street from the school part-time throughout her high school years. Lucky for her, her parents owned the store. One important memory that stands out for her from her high school years was the World War II interview project where students interviewed local veterans.

Mindy cares about this school so much and that's why she came back to work here. She liked how happy the environment around her was when she was a student and enjoys working in the same environment today. One tip she shared with me when I interviewed her is to always be your self. Work hard and it will help you achieve your dreams.

I think Mindy is a kind and caring person. She knows her goals and how to achieve them; she also gives good advice and is just a positive person to be around. I think she is a big influence in the school and to the people around her. It's almost like her happiness rubs off on people around her. I would like to thank her for giving her all and caring for people around her at Chelsea Public School. Thank you Mindy.

Valedictorian of '97

By Andrea Neville

You'll find Kelly Doyle in her computer chair, Bluetooth in her ear, hands typing, and of course always looking nice to represent Chelsea Public School. She puts a smile on her face every day of the week to greet all who enter. Kelly is the Administrative Assistant here at Chelsea Public School where she graduated fourteen years ago in 1997 with thirty-four other students.

What kind of student were you in high school?

I was a dedicated student in high school. I strived to earn good grades. I was a part of student council, the prom committee, and yearbook. All of my hard work paid off, as I was the valedictorian at my high school graduation and earned several scholarships.

How would you describe your life now?

My life now is quite different than I thought it would be three years ago. Before I had children, I worked at a large company in Hanover, NH commuting an hour each way and working very long hours. My career was very important to me. After the birth of my second son in March of 2010, I decided to make a very tough decision. I was going to put my career in Human Resources on hold and work closer to home. I accepted the position as Administrative Assistant here at the Chelsea Public School. Looking back at the change I made in August, I don't regret a thing. I am enjoying my new job and trying to learn the names of all of the students here.

What is one memory (or two) that stands out from your high school experience at Chelsea Public School?

Math was my favorite and best subject. I will never forget Mr. Callens' (as we called him then) ability to take songs and turn them into new songs with math rules built in. To this day, when I hear one of those songs on the radio, I can still remember the words he created.

What do you feel Chelsea Public School has given you that has helped you in your life?

The self confidence to know that I can do whatever I put my mind to.

I am glad I was able to interview Kelly Doyle and learn so much about her. Hearing that all of her hard work paid off and she graduated as the valedictorian of her class gives me hope for my future.

Digging up Memories

By Taylor Brinkman

I chose to interview Tracy Crocker, my mom. After traveling in the U.S. to visit many states during her childhood and also living in the Florida Keys for a few years, her family moved to Chelsea, Vermont. Vermont stood out to them on their travels and my grandfather wanted my mom and uncle to go to a good school. Chelsea was one of the top schools in the state so they moved here when she was in the seventh grade. She graduated in the class of '84 at Chelsea High School six years later.

My mom describes her high school experience at Chelsea as knowing everybody including the students and teachers on a personal level because the school was small. She says she was a pretty quiet and studious student. She took her studies seriously because she wanted to get into a good college and it paid off because she received early acceptance at UVM. When I ask how she'd describe her life now she says that it is very busy because she's currently raising a family and working.

One of the things she remembers the most is having a lot of school dances in the gym which is where they held their prom every year. They would always spend hours and hours every spring decorating the gym and trying to make it look like anything but one. They strung lots of crepe paper and decorated with balloons. She liked that the dances and proms really offered a social event in a small town where there wasn't much offered to students. Another part of Chelsea that stood out to her was the opportunity to play on sport teams. My mom didn't start playing sports until after she came to Chelsea, where she enjoyed playing them. When I ask what she feels Chelsea High school has given her that has helped her in life, she thinks that the school provided a community for students. A place where you could walk down the halls, everyone would know your name and care about what happens to you, which seems to be still true today.

To end the interview I ask if she has anything else to share about her experience at Chelsea High School but she thinks she's covered it all.

Thanks for your time Mom I know you're busy!