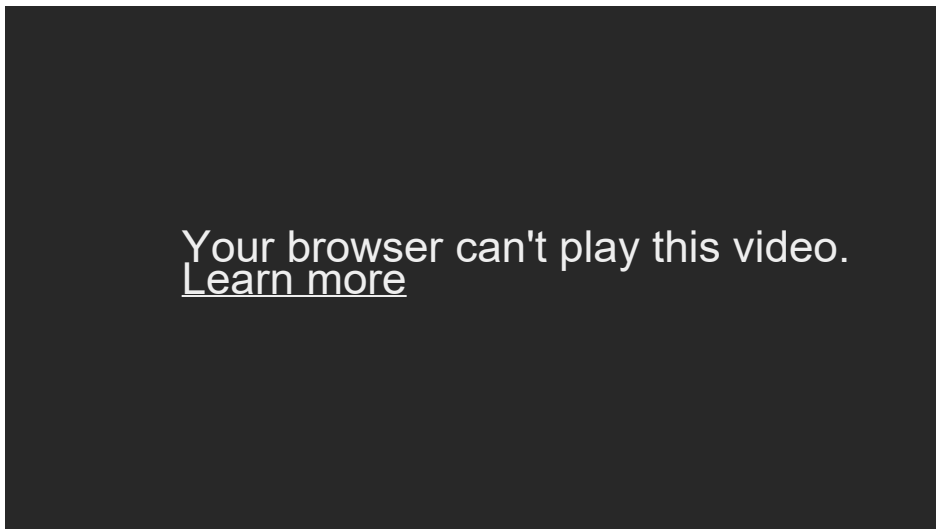


# Football's Fish

**UNH 1953 alumnus heads up cannon crew that announces touchdowns**

Tuesday, November 28, 2017



It's to [Wildcat Stadium](#) what the fish flung on the ice of Towse Rink is to the Whittemore Arena: a Revolutionary War-era cannon that fires after every touchdown the UNH football team scores. Since 2003, Dick Dewing '53 has headed up a cannon crew for the Wildcats' home football games, firing off blank shots from his black powder cannon at the beginning of the game, after the Wildcat Marching Band plays the "1812 Overture" and then again after each UNH touchdown.

An artillery officer with the First New Market Militia, a

SERIES:

[UNH MAGAZINE](#)

[WINTER 2018](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO THE UNH TODAY NEWSLETTER](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO UNH TODAY RSS](#)

## RELATED LINKS

**What a Weekend It Was**

**The Girls in the Boat**

**A Nose for the Goal**

**Sports Shorts**



local American  
Revolutionary War  
reenactment group, Dewing  
came up with the idea while  
brainstorming ways to add  
excitement to a 'Cat Club  
golf tournament some 15  
years ago. "Someone  
mentioned a shotgun, and I  
said, 'How about a

cannon?'" Dewing recalls. As a member of the militia, which goes into local schools to teach students about 18th century life, marches in parades and greets tall ships coming into New Hampshire's port, he knew where he could find one.

A UNH football Hall of Famer and a member of the 1950 team that went untied and undefeated, Dewing had worked for years as a member of the Cowell Stadium chain gang, measuring first downs and the location of the football after each play. It was a coveted role, but one that he willingly gave up for the opportunity to add a little drama to UNH's football season. Dressed in full regalia, Dewing and his cannon crew — three of his fellow militia members — have been on the sidelines for every home game, regardless of the weather.

"Some days it's pretty wicked. It might be raining or there's snow on the ground," says Dewing, who is 89. "I don't heat up like I used to. I'm starting to look for continuation when I'm gone."

For now, though, he's got the cannon in his garage and, with help, gets it into a truck and down to the field two hours before kickoff, a maneuver that on a few occasions has not gone smoothly. "Once we got behind the band as they were walking down and we had to hustle like the dickens to get there on time," Dewing says.

Dewing pays for the cannon powder out of his own pocket; it runs about \$17 a pound and four rounds can be fired with one pound. During the game, he and his crew wait until they see a UNH touchdown confirmed on the videoboard before they light the linstock that ignites the powder and brings the cannon roaring to life.

That's because the cannon's location, on the north side of the field and cordoned off for safety, prevents them from knowing if there has been a flag on the play.

"Every now and then there's a mistake. You have to read the crowd," Dewing says. "There's a lot of validity in the crowd noise."

Dewing and his wife, Mary, met at UNH and married the week after they graduated. He was commissioned in the Air Force in June and went on to train as a pilot. In 1967, Dewing moved his family back to Durham before being sent to Vietnam and was later stationed at Pease Air Force Base in nearby Newington. He retired in 1973.

He subsequently served on the MUB advisory board and was secretary of the UNH 100 Club and its successor, the Wildcat Athletic Council. He's still on the ROTC alumni chapter advisory board and is a member of the 'Cat Club, the football team's alumni network and fundraising group.

"Athletics is a good addition to the education process, but it's just that, an addition. It's all about the education," Dewing says. "It's not only about good sportsmanship or being a good player but whether he's done his homework."

Dressed in full regalia, Dewing and his cannon crew have been on the sidelines for every home game, regardless of the weather.



COMMENT ON THIS ARTICLE

Originally published in [UNH Magazine Winter 2018 Issue](#)

WRITTEN [Jody Record '95](#) | Communications and Public Affairs |  
BY: [jody.record@unh.edu](mailto:jody.record@unh.edu)

PHOTOGRAPHER: [Loren Marple '13](#) | Communications and Public  
Affairs | [Loren.Marple@unh.edu](mailto:Loren.Marple@unh.edu) | 603-862-0600

VIDEOGRAPHER: [Scott Ripley](#) | Communications and Public  
Affairs | [scott.ripley@unh.edu](mailto:scott.ripley@unh.edu) | 603-862-1855

UNH MAGAZINE WINTER 2018

RELATED ARTICLES



November 30, 2021 | SPORTS

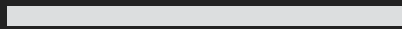
## A Season to Remember

---



January 3, 2022 | UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

# So Much To Celebrate





March 22, 2022 | NORTHEAST PASSAGE

# At the Top of Their Game



**University of New Hampshire**

UNH Today is produced for the UNH community and for friends of UNH.

The stories are written by the staff of **UNH Communications and Public Affairs**.

Email us: [unhtoday.editor@unh.edu](mailto:unhtoday.editor@unh.edu).

**MANAGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION**  **CONTACT US**



UNH Today • UNH Main Directory: 603-862-1234  
Copyright © 2022 • TTY Users: 7-1-1 or 800-735-2964 (Relay NH)

[USNH Privacy Policies](#) • [USNH Terms of Use](#) • [ADA Acknowledgement](#)

