

ON BEYOND EXETER BRINGS ALUMNI/AE AND FRIENDS BACK TO THE TABLE



RANDI SHERMAN (2)

Over the years, Rhona Nunez has heard a lot about Harkness teaching. She grew up in Exeter, married an Academy graduate and then sent four of her children here. “They were so enthusiastic about their courses,” she says, “it made me want to experience a Harkness class myself.”

Last July, Nunez finally got her turn at the table, thanks to ON BEYOND EXETER, the new program of Harkness classes created specifically for alumni/ae and adult friends of the Academy community. For one week—in readings, discussions and field trips to places like Portsmouth’s Strawberry Banke Museum and the Isle of Shoals—she studied the critical role that Exeter and the surrounding area played in the formation of the early republic, as part of The History and Culture of Northern New England, taught by Rick Schubart, Exeter’s Bates Russell Distinguished Faculty Professor.

Seated with her at the table was her husband, Charles Nunez ’57, who wanted to re-experience the “knowledge, integrity and kindness of Exeter teachers. As soon as I heard about the program and Rick’s class, I was excited.”

Their classmate Rick Smith ’66 shared their excitement. As a longtime alumni volunteer and a former trustee, Smith had remained actively involved in Academy life. But ON BEYOND EXETER was, he says, “my first chance to come back to the classroom and engage as a participant. I found it enormously rich.”

In all, several dozen students took part in ON BEYOND EXETER’s inaugural session, which also featured a two-part Harkness course taught by Jack Herney, the Robert Shaw White Professor in History, and Karen Burgess Smith, art history instructor and director of the Lamont Gallery. The course explored critical turning points in their respective fields: Herney, D-Day and the Battle for Normandy, in Art, War and the Human Spirit; Burgess Smith, the dawn of Impressionism, in The Art of Manet and Monet.

Doug Rogers, the Cowles Professor in the Humanities and the director of the Exeter Summer School, was pleased by the participants’ enthusiastic response, but not necessarily surprised. “Our teaching conferences have shown us how wonderfully satisfying it is to bring adults to campus and let them share in the resources of this place,” he says, resources that include full use of Exeter’s facilities, including the Academy Library, athletic complex and dining halls. Participants had their choice of accommodations: they could stay in an Exeter dorm or down the street at the Inn of Exeter. Laughs Charlie Nunez, who roomed in Peabody Hall, “It was the first time at Exeter that I had a woman in my room.”

For Nancy Judge, ON BEYOND EXETER was a chance to walk briefly in the shoes of her son, Clark, now an upper at the Academy—and to briefly keep student hours, when she found herself staying up late to complete an assigned reading. She left, she says, “with a renewed respect for the kids, and for Exeter.”

(Above, left) Last summer marked the debut of ON BEYOND EXETER, a weeklong program of Harkness classes created specifically for alumni/ae and adult members of the Academy community. Shown here are members of Rick Schubart’s “The History And Culture of Northern New England”: (clockwise from left): Alex Brooks ’62, Charlie Terry, Rick Smith ’66, David Sullivan, Jim Morton ’69, Bruce Sherman, Nancy Judge, Rhona Nunez, Abby Goldman, Charlie Nunez ’57, and Rick Schubart.

(Above, right) ON BEYOND EXETER gave alumna Randi Sherman ’95 (right) a chance to share the Harkness experience with her father, Bruce (left).

On Beyond Exeter 2007

Looking for a way to take part in the 75th Harkness anniversary? There’s no better place to celebrate than in a Harkness classroom, as part of ON BEYOND EXETER’s second summer session. To be held July 22-27, 2007, ON BEYOND EXETER will feature a week of seminar classes led by some of Exeter’s most distinguished Harkness instructors, including Peter Greer ’58, Harv Knowles, Jack Herney, Nita Pettigrew, Rick Schubart and Charlie Terry.

For more information, contact Kate Auger at the Exeter Summer School at (603) 777-3488, or email summer@exeter.edu.