

A RESPONSIBILITY, AND A PRIVILEGE | By Principal Tyler C. Tingley '48, '64, '01 (Hon.); P'99

One of the feature stories in this issue of the *Bulletin* is an extended excerpt from a Principals' Panel that took place on October 30, 2004 (see page 24). The panel was part of our on-campus celebration of The Exeter Initiatives, the Academy's new \$305-million capital campaign.

It was my great pleasure to spend an hour on the stage of the Assembly Hall with my two immediate

and robust institution thanks to their stewardship.

Steve presided over one of the most important changes in the Academy's history: coeducation, which had begun a few years before his arrival, but which was fully implemented during his tenure. The transition was not always an easy one, but throughout the inevitable ups and downs, Steve remained committed to coeducation and dauntless in his efforts to make it work. Thanks to his commitment, current students often forget that Exeter didn't always have female students and faculty members.

Monetary pressures were also a feature of Steve's time at Exeter. The energy crisis and uncertain financial markets took their toll on school endowments everywhere, including Exeter's. With the help of dedicated trustees, Steve pulled the Academy back onto firm financial ground.

Both Kendra and Steve saw the potential for Exeter to become a more nurturing place, and they worked to make sure that promise was realized. Steve credits the advent of women and girls at Exeter for some of the improvement.

Kendra furthered this work in both deed and word, including her memorable "beast in the bricks" speech, in which she challenged the prevailing wisdom that "a certain amount of gratuitous suffering was a necessary part of an Exeter education."

In the early days of the technology revolution, Kendra presided over the wide-scale introduction of computer technology at the Academy, an initiative that has become integral to the school on all levels.

As you read the excerpts from the panel, I hope you will sense the high regard Steve, Kendra and I have for one another. We all have had the responsibility, and the privilege, of heading up this incomparable institution, and we have each built on the foundation of past principals. Kendra put this well when she observed, "I think the three of us, and those who will lead the Academy in the future, really take Exeter as it is at the moment and do what has to be done. The institution goes on. We are just here to serve."

When I was named the 13th principal of Exeter, the school was flourishing. This has enabled us to plan boldly and to launch The Exeter Initiatives to increase student financial aid, to improve faculty and staff compensation, and to strengthen our sense of community, both in and out of the classroom. Your support will make these bold plans reality for a new generation of Exeter students. As I've learned from Kendra and Steve, my work as principal is not only to provide for Exeter today, but also to prepare well for its future.



With former trustee Rob Shapiro '68 (left) serving as moderator, Principals Ty Tingley, Kendra Stearns O'Donnell and Stephen Kurtz reflected on the role of "principal instructor" during a special panel discussion held during last fall's on-campus celebration of The Exeter Initiatives.

predecessors: Principal Emeritus Stephen G. Kurtz '44, '46, '78 (Hon.); P'77, who led the Academy from 1974 to 1987, and Principal Emerita Kendra Stearns O'Donnell '31, '47, '63, '91, '97 (Hon.); P'00, who served from 1987 to 1997. With former trustee Rob Shapiro '68 serving as our moderator and skilled tour guide, we ranged freely over our three decades at Exeter, reflecting on the challenges and the very special rewards that come with being the Academy's "principal instructor." It was a conversation marked by serious thought, deep feeling and, I'm happy to report, frequent laughter.

Sitting there, listening to Kendra and Steve speak with such undiminished affection for the Academy, its mission and all the people who sustain it, I was struck by how fortunate Exeter has been in its leaders. Not for the first time, I was struck as well by my own good fortune. When I arrived at Exeter in 1997, I found a school that was thriving in all ways—the result, I soon came to realize, of countless careful decisions and considerable hard work by Steve, Kendra and other members of the school community. Today, Exeter is a vital