



Coming Full Circle - an alum entrenched in history

DAVID RICHARDSON '30 lives in Hanover, NH. I met David for lunch to learn his story and discuss CRS's early years. Each time we got up to leave the restaurant, other patrons came over to comment on how interesting his tales were. They thanked David for their lunch experience and the history lesson they overheard.

As the Charles River School approaches its 100th birthday in 2011-12, some of the alumni members who were around at the very beginning of CRS have a lot to look back on. This is true of Richardson who was one of seven children from one of the original founding families. The life that Richardson went on to lead sets quite a precedent for current students to aspire to as they grow up.

David came from an impressive family. His grandfather was H.H. Richardson, the architect known for the Trinity Church in Copley Square, who, among hundreds of other achievements, also designed the library at the University of Vermont. His mother, Anne Blake Richardson, was one of the four women (along with Mrs. F. Murray Forbes, Mrs. Moses Williams and Mrs. Hugh Scott) whom we credit for starting Charles River School, as the school began in an out-building along the Charles River in Needham. Anne believed that "the school should suit the child," a philosophy that could be said to persist at CRS today with its rich and challenging curriculum. All of the Richardson children went to CRS before they then split off to many different secondary schools.

David says, "Charles River School gave me the best education you could imagine, since we were taught to think. 'Think right and you'll get an A' was Miss Algie's philosophy." Yes, in the 1920s and 1930s CRS gave grades! In 2010 we still believe a hallmark of a CRS education is teaching children to think.

David tells stories of the early days of CRS, including one about the much-feared principal Miss Winona Algie, who performed the first "inverted fraction" with his brother Francis: instilling the idea in the child by physically turning him upside down -- when you divide by a fraction, you simply invert and multiply. David played a lot of sports, which were casual; everyone played in an area bordering the cemetery. Latin started early at CRS, and David loved it. Years later, in his eighties, he was part of a study group that read and translated Latin classics at sight. This is the kind of permanent love of learning that we hope to instill in every student at CRS!

David finished Harvard in three years, attended Harvard Law for six months (not the career for him!) and in the summer of '41 took a Williams College seminar on Latin America to prepare people to work for government or private enterprise, improving relations between Latin America and the US. A call from Nelson Rockefeller to join the Office of Inter-American Affairs led Richardson to Bogota, Colombia until 1943.

As WW II raged on, Richardson trained and served as a naval air combat intelligence officer in Quonset and in Florida. His naval career finished with six months reviewing court marshals for the Atlantic sub, surface and air operations.

Out of the Navy, Richardson returned to Massachusetts and soon joined the US civilian committee in Boston to promote the Marshall Plan under Mrs. Harvey Bundy, Sr. Once the Plan passed, Richard Bissell, the main administrator, invited him to be one of his three assistants in the Marshall Plan. David was a troubleshooter who took care of sudden crises until the Plan ended in 1952. Later, in the role as a civilian economist, he helped to establish NATO, determining the military contributions from each country.

David continued his global involvement working with Jean Monet on the European Coal and Steel Community initiative to pool/integrate those industries in France and Germany and later other European countries. He was the principal lender of US support for the effort. In 1955 his talents were needed with the Colombo Plan which had been established to strengthen the economic and social development of member countries in Asia and the Pacific. David negotiated loans from the US to Poland to lessen its dependence on Russia; loans were also

made to Yugoslavia. Later, as an employee of the World Bank, David continued working on education, infrastructure and agricultural loans for Yugoslavia, then Turkey, Egypt, Greece and Cyprus. He retired in 1983.

The Richardson family is still involved with CRS, bringing full circle the dedication to the school started by his mother. The architecture gene has been passed down to David Richardson's grand-niece Emilie Pickering CRS '01, who attends Boston Architectural College. Her mother, Alison Richardson, continues the family tradition by consulting and drawing landscape plans for our school campus. In his private life, David became, on top of everything else, a bookbinder. He amassed an impressive book collection, of which — completing another circle — he has given nearly half to the library designed by his grandfather at the University of Vermont.

How many others, with the same foundation at Charles River School, will lead such an interesting life?

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