



SAMUEL RANKEN ROBERTS

“Spirit of ’51” Award

Sam, on a warm September evening 58 years ago you went to Grand Central Station to join other excited boys aboard a Pullman car leaving for White River Junction. Many had fine luggage. But you stood out – you were the only one carrying a backpack – for you were headed for Dartmouth College, and you already had the Dartmouth Outing Club and its freshman trip squarely in your sights.

In that fall of 1947 you had hit a virtual trifecta: admission to Dartmouth, your first choice; a Navy ROTC scholarship to pave the way financially; and a wonderful sweetheart, Nancy Horlacher, whose company would greatly enhance the Fall House Party, Winter Carnival and Green Key weekends for your next four years.

Your time on campus was rich indeed. English was your major and you thrived on intellectual exchange. While outside the classroom, you hiked, camped, headed the key Cabin and Trail operation for the DOC, and directed the center campus snow sculpture construction for our senior-year Winter Carnival. At the Theta Chi House, you managed to be both a hail fellow and fine role model, persuading the brothers to keep the place at least a little bit neat and in decent repair. And so there grew within you a love of the College and its wondrous North Country setting that endures to this day.

Commencement in the Bema passed in a blur, for you married Nancy in Philadelphia four days later, and soon after set up housekeeping in Norfolk and began your three years of Navy active duty aboard the transport USS *Alshain*. You were away two-thirds of the time, enjoying liberty in the best – and worst – ports in the Mediterranean while Nancy kept the Tidewater home fires aglow. The Navy wanted you to make it a career and you were tempted, but finally returned home to join your father’s brokerage firm and ultimately become chairman of it. You’ve been a solid “name” on the Philadelphia financial scene ever since, and you’re still working as a valued advisor to a pride of pension plans. You’ve been president of the Philadelphia Securities Association, the Investment Association of Philadelphia, the Bond Club of Philadelphia, and governor of the Stock Exchange.

You and Nancy raised five splendid children who lovingly remember their father as a kind, patient teacher and friend (they’ve forgiven that bit of foolishness with the Canadian Air Force exercises). Even now, around home and at the shore, they would hardly recognize you without your green baseball cap with the white “D” on it.

Besides work, long hours of cheerful voluntarism have been the rule for you – Boy Scout leader, finance chairman of the Little League, director of the Philadelphia A Better Chance effort. You’re a pillar in the Wayne Presbyterian Church, once a deacon, now a longtime elder, and author of a history of the church’s last quarter century. You hung in with the Navy, attending Naval Reserve meetings and summer cruise sessions from 1954 to 1974, earning the high rank of Captain before retirement age. Nowadays the “leisure” time at your Jersey shore cottage actually involves many, many volunteer hours as a trustee of the Wetlands Institute whose mission is to preserve the coastal ecology. “He feels that what goes around comes around. He is extremely generous and believes in giving back,” says your daughter Gina.

When it comes to Dartmouth, Sam, that is true in spades! Your alma mater has sought many things from you, but over 54 years, you have given much more than she asked, and you have never turned her down. No one can remember the last time you and Nancy missed a ’51 event, be it in Hanover or San Francisco. You’ve served on the class executive committee and as a Dartmouth Club officer. You’ve been a diligent Alumni Fund agent most of the years since 1956 and filled a major supporting role in raising our great \$6.4 million 50th Reunion Gift. You were registration chair for the 25th and 30th reunions and chairman of the memorable 35th. And here, today, you are co-chair and most gracious co-host to your classmates for this fine mini-reunion in your historic hometown.

These things you have done with the humility, grace, gentle good humor and unfailing kindness which make you supremely popular with all who know you, particularly your old Dartmouth friends, who are still your best friends. And so, Sam, for an exemplary life, for outstanding citizenship, for all you have done for others and for Dartmouth, we are pleased to honor you with the 2005 “Spirit of ’51” Award.