

January 13, 2009

To the Valley News Editor:

The letter from Dartmouth graduate Don Goss ("Robert Frost in His Proper Place", *VN* 12/18/08) generated several interesting comments on the placement of the life-size bronze sculpture of Frost on the College campus. As officers in the Dartmouth Class of 1961, which commissioned and donated the work to the College on the occasion of our 35th Reunion in 1996, we'd like to offer a few remarks of our own, which we hope will be dispositive. Our class overwhelmingly approves of the current placement of the Frost statue, up near Bartlett Tower, on the edge of the wooded glade running down to the Bema. The setting fits the sculpture – especially its unique depiction of the great poet – better than would almost any other location on the campus.

Prior to beginning the work, noted American sculptor George Lundeen conducted extensive research on Robert Frost, which included meeting with several Dartmouth faculty members who taught Frost's poetry. They urged the sculptor to depict Frost not as the aged, white-haired man that our class had met several times during campus visits, but rather as the vigorous young farmer who created most of his great poetry at that period of his life. Lundeen visited the Frost farm in Derry, NH – where Frost lived for 10 years – and learned that Frost often went on walks in the fields and woods with a unique writing board that he had devised, sometimes sitting on a rock or a log and drafting lines that eventually became his poetry. Lundeen chose this representation for his design.

Accordingly, the Robert Frost sculpture at Dartmouth represents much more than just a static image of the poet. In its bucolic setting, it captures the artist in a moment of creativity, surrounded by the natural environment from which Frost drew so much inspiration and which figures in so much of his poetry. The statue would lose much of its artistic impact were it moved to a more public place on the campus.

Arthur Kelton, Jr. (Class president 1991 -- 1996)
Roger McArt (35th Reunion Chairman & current class president)
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