



HARVARD '60 TOURS "NEW"

DUNSTER

After fifteen months undergoing extensive renovations, "New" Dunster was opened to students in September, 2015. Four hundred workers, carpenters, electricians, painters, and more, had carefully renewed Dunster's 183,060 square feet: 57 chimneys, 56 suites with common rooms, 10 common rooms on the residential floors, and 863 windows in anticipation of the arrival of the 327 students who make Dunster House their home at Harvard.



Therefore, a Greater Greater Boston Area luncheon was scheduled for Friday, December 4, 2015 to afford Harvard Class of 1960 classmates an opportunity to experience the result as well as to enjoy each other's company.



Current Dunster house residents, Colette Bishogo and Claire Worley, both of the Harvard Class of 2017, each conducted a tour. A dozen H'60 classmates joined Colette prior to our luncheon and nine joined Claire after our luncheon.

We toured the main floor and the lower level (the former basement). December 4 turned out to be the beginning of Harvard's reading period; so, the students' rooms were not available for the tour. Indeed, so many Harvard alumni have desired to see "New" Dunster that students' rooms are generally not included on the tours. However, we were told that the layout of student rooms has been changed -- that bedrooms are a little smaller and that bathrooms are now communal bathrooms, each for six or seven students and with men's rooms and ladies' bathrooms separate (though from year-to-year interchangeable with very minor adjustments). We were also unable to see the new horizontal hallways that enable students to traverse some of the upper floors from rooms in one entryway to rooms in the other entryways. Heretofore, the entryways were independent silos; to get from one to another, it was necessary to trek outside the building.

Note: Also, we were unable to learn the cost of the Dunster House renewal, though we did learn that the renewal of all thirty-seven buildings (including the upper class houses) on the "renewal" list is estimated to be approximately \$4.5 billion (presumably, in 2015 dollars).

By eliminating some student residences and redesigning the main floor common area, new spaces -- for example, an 80-person courtyard lounge that opens onto a spacious veranda set against the backdrop of Dunster's main lawn and the Charles River, a small dining area serving as an adjunct to the main dining room, and a recreational area including a pool table -- have been created to facilitate student social interaction and small group studying. Interestingly, the Junior Common Room and the main dining hall and its associated servery appear to be unchanged.



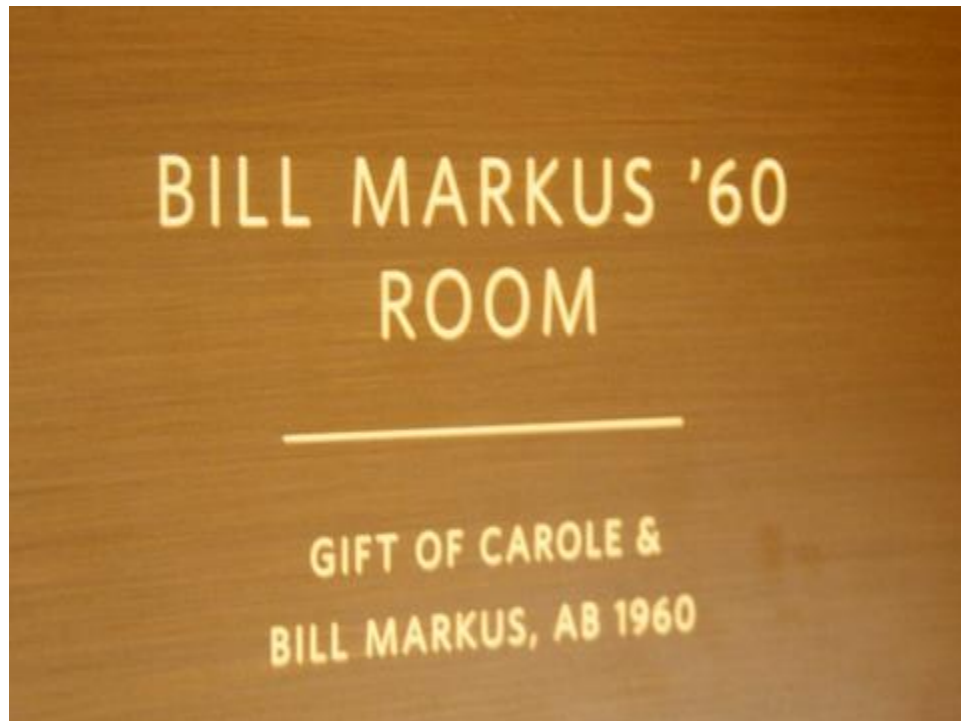
However, in the dining room and the library (which we did not see on the tour), carved-wood fireplace mantels and walls have been carefully restored, each leaf and scroll burnished to original glory, making them look much like they did when the House opened in 1930. But look closely, and you'll see that the nicks and lines from use by generations of students reveal the age of the old wood. Also, the walls of the new areas throughout both the main floor and the lower level are covered in polished wood. The deep-brown panels were once wainscoting in the Dunster student rooms, now repurposed and renewed.

Sustainability is key to the renewal of the houses. Energy-efficient technology and resource conservation permeate Dunster. During construction, the project team was able to recycle 96 percent of the existing materials (walls, flooring, and roof) throughout the historic structure. Sustainability features include a water-

retention system and better-insulated walls and windows that have the dual benefit of reducing energy use and improving student comfort.

On the west side of the lower level, a high-tech, "smart" classroom will give faculty the opportunity to teach classes in the building. Along the north corridor, an art studio and three soundproof music practice rooms were created. Instead of eight basement squash courts, Dunster House now offers a gym, including cardio equipment, free weights, a yoga studio, and one remaining squash court (also with a basketball basket). There is a new student grill and some added kitchen space.

Of especial note is that our classmate (and Dunsterite) Bill Markus and his wife Carole, in recognition of Bill's surpassing experience living at Dunster (and as a reflection of his extraordinary commitment to Harvard), have sponsored a new seminar room at Dunster designed to foster student-faculty exchange. As Bill put it: "[T]he House system was a big part of [my] preparation for life. It's wonderful to have the opportunity to support the future of the Houses".



Harvard Class of 1960 classmates (24 in total) attending the luncheon in the (too) Small Dining Room (SDR), with most participating in the tours as well, included Dunsterite Irwin Avery, Dunsterite Tom Bertone, Peter Chen, Ron Goodman, John Hedreen, Hank Keohane, Gerry Levenson, Dick Lindzen, Jim Low, Dunsterite Henry Marcy, Dunsterite Bill Markus, Joe Murphy, Peter Papesch,

Don Quinn, Larry Rappaport, David Ries, Dunsterite Jerry Rogoff, Dunsterite John Strand, Dunsterite Wally Saxe, Ed Tarlov, John Vernalia, Henry Wadzinski, Steve Weddle, and John Wilson. Joining us was Mary Preston of the Harvard College Fund liaison to the Harvard and Radcliffe Classes of 1960 (succeeding Evan St. George) and her colleague Emily Walkenstein. Amy Luskin of the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences facilitated the tours and was present at the outset of our time at Dunster.



**[Peter Papesch's](#) photos of the December 4th Dunster House Luncheon: PW
H-60**