Medalist Precedent?
Retired Harvard Corporation fellows usually receive honorary degrees for their service—especially the senior fellow. But Robert D. Reischauer ’63 (who stepped down in 2014, having guided the epochal reform of University governance announced in late 2010) was awarded a Harvard Medal instead (see page 73). Given the Corporation’s enlarged membership, the self-effacing, institutionally minded Reischauer might have sought to set another precedent by undoing the assumption of nearly automatic honoraries. He is shown at the chief marshal’s spread, after the Morning Exercises, with President Drew Faust and his living predecessors as senior fellow, James R. Houghton ’58, M.B.A. ’62 (seated), and Charles P. Slichter ’45, Ph.D. ’49 (standing to the left)—both doctor of laws honorands.

Dunster, Unhoused
Introducing the final honorand, Deval L. Patrick ’78, J.D. ’82, Provost Alan Garber ’77, Ph.D. ’82, invoked old College ties, recognizing “the seventy-first governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts—and, of at least equal note, a fellow alumnus of Dunster House....” The timing was ironic: Dunster is currently houseless, during renovation, a community dispersed to swing spaces. Relocating the chief marshal’s spread to Widener Library (see right) freed that event’s customary site, the lawn between Lamont and Loeb House, for Dunster’s lunchtime diploma ceremony for undergraduates and their families.

Print Persists
It may be an electronic era, but at least one print vestige remains, and looms large, for the College class of 2015: the enormous Harvard 379 yearbook, some 528 colorful pages, weighing in at 5.5 pounds. (And yes, according to the production credits, it was “designed on Apple Mac OSX’s, using Adobe InDesign CS6” software—and then published, on expensive paper.)

Diploma Double-Dipping
It takes considerable knowledge to read the meaning of Commencement regalia. Joint-degree candidates are entitled to two sets of embroidered crow’s-feet on the facings of their gowns, one set per school. Erin Patten, M.B.A.-M.P.P. ’15, of Houston, for instance, sported medium gray for the Business School and peacock blue for the Kennedy School.

Boston, Today and Tomorrow
University admissions and development officers hate talk about Harvard being “old and cold” versus Stanford. Yet in her Bacca-

SILENT PROTESTS. In a year marred by the deaths of unarmed black Americans at the hands of police—an issue mentioned most prominently in Deval L. Patrick’s afternoon address—many graduates wore BLACK LIVES MATTER signs on their mortarboards. Advocates of divestment from fossil-fuel investments held in the endowment did not conduct protests during Commencement, but large orange buttons supported that cause—and fiftieth-reunioner Elizabeth (Betty) Block ’65, down from Ontario, endorsed other messages of ambiguous political meaning.
“TIGER CUB” PINNED. Yale Law School professors Amy Chua '84, J.D. '87, and Jed Rubenfeld, J.D. '86, attach second lieutenant’s bars to the uniform of their daughter Sophia Chua-Rubenfeld '15 during the ROTC commissioning ceremony. Chua is known for her book Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother; she and Rubenfeld are the coauthors of The Triple Package: How Three Unlikely Traits Explain the Rise and Fall of Cultural Groups in America, published last year.

perspective, Latin Salutatorian James P. McGlone, an historian and classicist, imagined a future traveler coming upon the antique ruins of Harvard, “the statue of John Harvard lying on its back” like some fallen pharaonic colossus—which McGlone mimed, not missing a (Latin) beat. No one present seemed to associate such upheaval and ruins with an earthquake in, say, Palo Alto.

Provosts Rock!
Provost Alan Garber, who has a quick, dry sense of humor, had a big day introducing the honorands at the Morning Exercises. Reeling off Yale president Peter Salovey’s academic posts, he noted, “And, of course, the exalted role of university provost.” He also worked in a reference to CS 50, the introductory computer-science class, Harvard’s largest course, which joins the curriculum in New Haven this fall, and Salovey’s origins as “a native son of Cambridge.” And he paused perfectly after “What’s that smell?”—the first line of his remarks about Linda B. Buck, who co-discovered the biological mechanism of the olfactory system. When she shared the Nobel Prize in 2004, Garber deadpanned, “she discovered the sweet smell of success.”

Degreed
Harvard conferred 7,768 degrees and certificates, according to the annual news-office compendium: 1,612 from the College, 993 from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (including 583 Ph.D.s), 918 from the Business School, 752 from the Extension School (one more than the Law School)… and so on down to 75 diverse graduates from the School of Dental Medicine.

Swelled Heads Department
As the graduates basked in Crimson glory, outsiders lauded Harvard on Commencement day. The MacArthur Foundation reported that College alumni had won 72 of the fellowships (so-called “genius grants”) it awarded between 1981 and 2014—followed by Princeton (28), Berkeley (20), and Yale (19). And the University of Oxford announced that Louise Richardson, Ph.D. ’83, would become its vice-chancellor (the equivalent of president). The former executive dean of the Radcliffe Institute, now principal and vice-chancellor of the University of St. Andrews (whose 600th anniversary she oversaw), she will be the first woman to lead Oxford, recognized as a universitas in 1231.

Music-Making
After honorand Renee Fleming sang “America the Beautiful” (page 19), soprano Asia Stewart ’18 at least held her own as the soloist during the Commencement Choir’s rendition of the spiritual “This Little Light of Mine.” She is a member of the Harvard LowKeys, an a cappella group. At the honorands’ dinner Wednesday evening, Sasha Scolnik-Brower ’17 performed three movements of Bach’s Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major—and was congratulated, as he left the stage, by audience member Yo-Yo Ma ’76, D.Mus. ’91, likely the world’s most acclaimed master of that instrument. But Yale president Peter Salovey, founding bassist of The Professors of Bluegrass, did not get to strut his stuff; the otherwise obscure reference in his honorary-degree citation (page 18) had to suffice.

Computer Science
Highly compensated jobs on Wall Street and in consulting continue to lure College graduates: one-third of the 760 respondents to The Harvard Crimson’s senior survey are headed to those fields, the highest proportion since 2008. Meanwhile, “47 percent of respondents reporting that they would make $110,000 or more” after graduating were computer-science concentrators. For comparison, families with incomes at that level qualify for generous financial aid if their children attend the College.

SENIOR REUNIONERS. Three hardy members of the class of 1940 (right to left)—Stanley Geller of New York City (95 and four months), Hobart “Hobie” Lerner of Rochester (two months shy of 96), and Leon “Lee” Starr of Rye, New York (two weeks shy of 97)—gathered at the Tree Spread to celebrate a seventy-fifth reunion convened at their prompting with aid from the HAA. The seventieth reunion is typically the most senior quinquennial gathering, but after Starr, a former Allied Stores executive, and Lerner, an ophthalmologist who retired last December, inquired separately, and Starr suggested linking their celebration with the class of 1945’s, all fell happily into place.

Reprinted from Harvard Magazine. For more information, contact Harvard Magazine, Inc. at 617-495-5746