



Welcome to Exeter, NH

Our History

The Squamscott Native Americans, a subsection of the Pennacook Nation, inhabited the area that is now Exeter. They enjoyed the fishing around the falls where the Exeter River becomes the Squamscott.

On the third of April 1638, Reverend John Wheelwright and others purchased the land from Wehanownowit, the chief of the Swamscott tribe. Wheelwright had been exiled from Massachusetts Bay Colony for showing dissenting religious views of the colony. It took about 175 people to establish a town he named after Exeter in Devon, England. In 1639, 35 members signed the *Exeter Combination*, written by Wheelwright, to establish their own government. During the American Revolution, Exeter was the capital of the state. On January 5, 1776, the first New Hampshire Constitution was created in Exeter, and in 1853, The United States Republican Party was established. The new Republican Party rallied behind Abraham Lincoln, the first Republican President of the United States. The Lincolns also visited their son, Robert Todd Lincoln, a student at Phillips Exeter Academy.

During the first century after the establishment of the town of Exeter, the town thrived with established industries around the river grist mills, sawmills, lumber yards, textile and cotton mills. A prominent Exeter business family, the Gilmans, donated the land in which Phillips Exeter now stands.

Education grew rapidly in Exeter. Dr. John Phillips opened Phillips Exeter Academy (PEA) in 1781, which has grown into one of the most prestigious and oldest private college preparatory high schools in the country.

The Original House

The property where The Exeter Inn now stands was purchased from William P. Chadwick. The Chadwicks lived in the original house for many years. He and many of the members of his family studied at Phillips Exeter Academy.

Chadwick's Spar

William P. Chadwick left Exeter to travel on his ship, the Sunbeam. In 1870, this vessel caught fire in the South Pacific. A spar saved Captain Chadwick, his eldest son Alfred, and the first mate as they clung to it waiting to be rescued. A replica of Chadwick's spar can be seen today next to the gardens of The Exeter Inn. The original spar was the only remaining piece of Captain John Chadwick's ship. Captain Chadwick had the spar added to his gardens after he retired to Exeter.

In 1983, the flagpole on Pine Street side of the Inn was restored and reinstalled near where the original pole stood in the garden. The crosspiece is a replica of the original spar. The restoration was financed by the Chadwick family, the Exeter Historical Society and Phillips Exeter. Many of the original Chadwick historical items were loaned to the Exeter Inn and placed in the Chadwick Room. Some of these items were stolen. Fortunately, the items were returned to the family and some were put into storage of the David Library in 1969. Unfortunately, the picture of the “Burning of the Sunbeam” that hung in the Chadwick room was inadvertently sold for gallery renovation funds in 1979. It is unclear if the Chadwick family was aware of the sale.

In 1890, the property was sold to Edward F. Gale and the PEA class of 1890. The Chadwick house became the Academy Graduates House and was considered the most attractive residence in the area. The residence doubled as an inn with spacious reception rooms and the 25 boarding rooms for visitors. Initially, the Inn was established to give alumni of Exeter a warm and cordial welcome for overnight accommodation and entertainment when Exonians returned for visits.

The Exeter Inn

The Exeter Inn that stands today was built in 1932 after the generous donation to The Phillips Exeter Academy in the name of Mrs. William Boyce Thompson and her daughter, Mrs. Anthony J. Drexel Biddle Jr., after the death of Colonel William Boyce Thompson in 1930. The Inn was built and donated to the Academy to host and accommodate visiting dignitaries, families of students and the young ladies who came to visit Academy students.

Colonel William Boyce Thompson is a familiar name around the campus and known for his philanthropy to the Phillips Exeter Academy and many other organizations across the country. He donated two million dollars to the school in his lifetime, including one million dollars at his death. His actions not only helped build The Exeter Inn but also funded the Boyce-Thompson Science Building, a new gymnasium, squash courts, baseball field, sports cage and other facilities.

When the new building was constructed and opened, the Exeter Inn was known for having attractive rooms, comfort, and great taste. Many writers at the time called it the most beautiful inn in New England.

By 1937, the Inn had grown to such popularity that many people who were traveling to New Hampshire would stop-over at The Exeter Inn. The Inn took pride in serving the best food around with fresh vegetables, fruits, meats and fish, while the outdoor seating allowed for a casual dining experience.

In 1997, a 75-year lease from Phillips Exeter Academy was turned over to the hospitality group Someplaces Different. This group started the restoration project to rehabilitate the Inn. In 2008, Hay Creek Hotels was brought in to renovate, modernize and bring the Exeter Inn to a modern day hotel for Phillips Exeter visitors, business travelers, and anyone who wants to discover and explore the seacoast of New Hampshire.





The Exeter Inn & Epoch Restaurant

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Telephone 603.772.5901
Toll Free 800.782.8444
Fax 603.778.8757
Website www.theexeterinn.com
Social Media: <https://www.facebook.com/ExeterInnEpochRestaurant>
<https://twitter.com/epochrestauran1>
<http://www.pinterest.com/TheExeterInn/>
<http://instagram.com/epochexeterinn>

General Manager Jeffrey Sellers
Director of Sales Laura Sterritt

Amenities Available:

- **Express Check out**
- **Extended Check out on request**
- Complimentary room upgrade (based on availability)
- Turndown Service each evening with an evening indulgence
- Complimentary Mid-week Newspaper
- Plush Pillow top bedding
- LCD/HD TV
- Free high speed wireless internet
- Ghilcrest & Soames in room bath amenities
- Room Service
- On site Fitness room
- On site dining in Restaurant/Tavern

Golf: Exeter Country Club ~ Exeter
Kingston Fairways Golf Club ~ Kingston

Beach 10 miles Hampton Beach

Airports Manchester Airport 34 Miles
Boston/Logan Airport 53 miles
Pease International Airport 17 Miles