

Mary Jo Shorrock has spent her life around universities

By: LaRAYNE WATTS

Mary Jo Shorrock was born in Seattle and grew up in Raymond, living with her grandparents, Lee and Julia Ferrier.

She graduated from RHS in 1949 and said, "As I remember, our class had 37 seniors. It was a lively group with several students participating in athletics, band, or choir."

She remembers three of her high school teachers as being special. "We had an inspiring English Teacher, Miss Joyce Scheid," Mary Jo said. "Mr. Askegaard was an out standing math and band teacher, and Mr. Flem was a fine chemistry teacher and also our principal."

After graduating from RHS, Mary Jo attended Stanford University, majoring in modern European history. She graduated in 1953 and then spent a year in England studying modern British history. She said, "Modern British History at that time was history up to World War I. After 1918, we were in what was considered the realm of current events." She enjoyed her time in England. She recalled, "Being a foreign student was exciting, and occasionally frustrating. It was a pleasure to meet students from many different backgrounds and countries."

She married Charles Brand in Raymond on August 7, 1954, while he was a graduate student. Charles was drafted in 1955, and the couple lived in Louisiana for a year while he served at Ft. Polk.

After his discharge they returned to Massachusetts where he finished his degree. Their daughter, Catharine Lee, was born in Boston in 1960, and son Stephen Carl arrived two years later. Charles began teaching at San Francisco University in 1962 and they moved east to the Philadelphia area in 1964.

Her husband taught medieval history at Bryn Mawr College until his retirement in 1999. Mary Jo enjoyed entertaining students over the years. The couple also enjoyed traveling in Europe when Charles received grants to study in Greece.

Mary Jo completed a Master's Degree in Classic Archaeology. Since then she has worked as a legal secretary and administrative assistant, as well as doing research on medieval topics for her husband.

Both of their children have graduated from college and taken graduate work. Catharine is nearing the end of a program in computer science, and Stephen is trained as an organic chemist. Cathy is married and has three children.

Mary Jo and Charles continue to enjoy traveling and exploring new places. Mary Jo says, "Our most recent trips were a tour of Caucasia (Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan) sponsored by the Textile Museum in Washington D.C., and a visit to Northern France with our daughter and her children. We rented a van and drove around the Loire Valley and Normandy before visiting Paris. Seeing Omaha Beach and the World War II Museum there were most memorable experiences."

When asked about her advice to this year's seniors, Mary Jo replied, "I would like to emphasize the value of unexpected opportunities and new ventures. Learning experiences seem even more fun now than they were fifty years ago. So don't be afraid to try something new or to live in a different place."



RHS Alumnus Mary Jo Shorrock Brand, 1949