

Katherine “Kitten” duPont Gahagan



Katharine duPont Gahagan, granddaughter of the Founder of St. Andrew's School, Alexis Felix duPont, was born in 1933. She attended Wellesley College and then married William Gerli Gahagan and the two of them settled in Long Island. They raised four sons, Lexi, Hoyt, Robin and Terry, avid ice hockey players and sailors.

It was not until her father, Felix duPont, Jr. asked Kitten to join the Board, that she became acquainted with St. Andrew's School and realized just what an incredible institution her grandfather founded. Kitten joined the Board in 1981, became it's Chair in 1996 and named Chair Emeritus in 2011.

Throughout Mrs. Gahagan's 35 years of service to the School, she has seen many changes. The moment that stands out most notably she says, was the selection of Tad Roach as fourth headmaster of the School. According to an article in the Spring 2010 SAS magazine, Kitten writes: "After a long meeting of the Board in the DuPont Hotel, the decision was unanimous," recalls Gahagan. "We had decided that we had the very best candidate right at St. Andrew's, we offered him the position without resorting to an outside search." Gahagan fondly recalls the emotional meeting in the Chapel where Jon O'Brien's retirement was announced and followed by Tad's appointment. "It was such an important moment in the history of the School."

While Kitten obviously has a deep family connection to the School, the time she most enjoyed was while her granddaughters (her son Hoyt's children) Grace '10 and Amanda '11 attended SAS. Now living in Wilmington, Delaware, she visited often, attending their soccer, basketball and lacrosse games as well as concerts. She very much enjoyed getting to know their friends and their friends' parents. Mrs. Gahagan attends commencement every year to present the Founders' Medal to the recipient.

In addition to being an active member of St. Andrew's Board, Kitten is vice-president of the Chichester duPont Foundation, serves on the Board of Trustees at Children's Beach House in Lewes, Delaware and a Trustee Emeritus at St. Anne's Episcopal School located in Middletown, Delaware.

The Gahagan Room, located in the O'Brien Arts Center, was named for Katharine duPont Gahagan in 2004, at the time of the building's completion.

Her portrait hangs in the dining hall along with other former trustees of the School.