



Back: Ted Tierney '17, Chris Tierney '79, Andrew Tierney '80, Megan Tierney '19; Front: Isabel Tierney '21, Bettina (Hartley) Tierney '52, LuLu Tierney '23

Remembering Potomac

Bettina (Hartley) Tierney '52: Potomac Alumna, Parent and Grandparent

What are some of your favorite Potomac traditions?

I loved the music we used to sing at Potomac. It was the source of many of my favorite traditions, such as the Christmas Play, which would be performed by the fifth grade and accompanied by angels from the sixth through ninth grades. We sang unusual English carols and songs. After the play, alumnae would gather in the Square and reconnect. My last involvement with Potomac music was for the School centennial in 2004. I collected a small group of faculty and alumnae, printed some books of School songs, including the original School hymn, and serenaded the passersby. John Langstaff in, I believe, his last appearance, gave his blessing.

Which values did Potomac help shape in you?

We were taught to treat other people with civility and respect. Thoughtfulness, honesty and treating each child as an individual were important. At the California Street School — up to 1951 — Catherine (who served as receptionist, nurse, monitor and friend), started us off

“A child is an innocent vessel,
and you pour things into it. You
nurture your children from birth up;
then, if you send them to Potomac,
I think they’ll make it.”

—BETTINA TIERNEY '52

in life with this approach: She knew everyone. We were important. So was our mother, our dog, our stuffed animal. Sent off with this security, how could you fail? I see these same qualities in my sons (**Chris '79, Andrew '80 and David '82**); all of them are kind and thoughtful people, each in their own way. My children loved Potomac, as do theirs (**Lulu '23, Isabel '21, Megan '19 and Ted '17**).

Aside from attending the many events for your grandchildren, you remain involved as an alumna, a member of the Grandparent Annual Giving Committee, a two-term member of the Alumni Governing Council and a member of the Second Century Legacy Society. Why?

Potomac was — and continues to be — a family; even if you went away for a while, when you came back, invariably there was someone you knew on campus. I feel that it's a home, still. I continue to care for it. I'm a traditionalist, and I like going back to the same place. I still enjoy staying involved.

Membership in the Second Century Legacy Society is open to everyone.

For more information about planned giving opportunities, visit www.potomacschool.org or contact Potomac's Associate Director of Development, Jinene Christian, at (703) 749-6326 or jchristian@potomacschool.org.