

“I Know My Mom Would Really Be Very Pleased”

Lindesay Holdsworth Aquino '65

The next time you merge onto Georgetown Pike from Route 123 and head west, take note of the large white house with the wraparound porch on your left, just beyond the Langley Mart. This property and its former owners have played a significant role at The Potomac School for more than five decades. In fact, the family's gift of the Holdsworth home has made construction of the Flag Circle building possible. The family's generosity to Potomac also included the establishment of the School Archives, helping to ensure that the history of the School is preserved and accessible to all for generations to come.

Built sometime between the late 1840s and early 1850s, the house at 1101 Chain Bridge Road was used during the Civil War as a headquarters for a New York battalion, as well as a hospital. The attic and one of the bedroom walls were covered in pencil signatures of the military men who were either patients or soldiers there. Later, the house served as a post office and general store for the small community of Langley. The property was believed to have been an inn at one point, due to its location as the last toll stop on Georgetown Pike before Georgetown. Farmers traveling to and from Georgetown to sell their wares would stop at the house during their travels. The small toll house across the street remains today.

David and Ray Holdsworth moved into the house with their three children Lindesay '65, Kim '68, and David '70 in 1957. All three attended Potomac, as did their granddaughter Belen, who graduated in 1999. As a Potomac grandparent during the 1980s, Mrs. Holdsworth began volunteering her time in the Development Office, assisting with stuffing envelopes and assembling mailings. Her interest in preserving the history of the School motivated her to take an Archives class at the Library of Congress.

At the time, Potomac's Archives consisted of several boxes of materials, including photographs, objects and documents dating to the School's founding in 1904. These boxes were stored in a small storage closet off the Preston Gym. Mrs. Holdsworth and a group of dedicated volunteers took charge of sorting, identifying and organizing, until they outgrew the space and moved to the Seth-Smith Building (razed during the 1988-89 academic year), which provided almost triple



the space of the storage closet. For the better part of a decade, Mrs. Holdsworth and her volunteers worked to set up Potomac's Archives, currently located in the Engelhard Performing Arts Center.

The spirit of community was thriving at Potomac. Mrs. Holdsworth enjoyed the personal connections she made with parents, alumni and her children's former teachers. Daughter Lindesay '65 recalls, "She loved the Archives. She had such fun. She got so much pleasure out of it."

Mrs. Holdsworth worked on the Archives until the early 1990s, when illness prevented her from continuing. As her

illness progressed, she was faced with the decision of what to do with her house. After consulting with her children, Mrs. Holdsworth decided to leave the house and grounds to Potomac. She worked with the School to craft an arrangement that would allow her to transfer ownership of the house to the School, but live there for seven years and receive an annual income. Mrs. Holdsworth died in 2009. The sale of her house became the lead gift to Potomac's Flag Circle Building campaign.

It is fitting that the Flag Circle Building will house the Archives that Mrs. Holdsworth established years ago. The building's central location will make the Archives accessible to our many alumni and visitors. In recognition of Mrs. Holdsworth's dedication to Potomac and extraordinary generosity, the School is pleased to name the Archives in her honor. This new, larger space will allow her work to continue in a facility that has been designed specifically for the purpose of preserving and displaying the history of Potomac School.

Ray Holdsworth was the second generation to be involved with Potomac, as her mother, Mrs. Edward A. Bacon, donated Graham Field (our football field), in honor of her father, Dr. Edwin Graham. All of us at The Potomac School would like to express our gratitude to the Holdsworth family. Their generosity and deep commitment to Potomac will benefit students, faculty and staff for generations to come.

Gifts of real estate, bequests, and other planned giving arrangements afford significant tax benefits while allowing you to establish a lasting relationship with The Potomac School. For more information, please contact Jinene Christian in the Development Office at 703-749-6326.