Although the statement, “I am Bishop’s,” is one of the School’s themes for the centennial year, the spirit of that motto has rung true for generations. Adele Weidenkopf Kayser ’45 adamantly proclaims that her best friends are not those friends she made in college, not those girls from a sorority or any other part of her life, but rather those girls she met and boarded with at Bishop’s. “There is just something special about Bishop’s,” Adele says, “that seems to instill friendship and caring about other people.”

As a boarding student at Bishop’s, Adele and her friends would make up plays for Saturday night entertainment or learn a one- or two-act play, since they weren’t often allowed off campus. It was also at Bishop’s that she learned aqua ballet and sang in the Glee Club, which she continued through college. One of her favorite stories happened during dinner at the table of a very stern Headmistress Caroline Cummins while Bishop Stevens was visiting. They were eating ox tails and parsnips and as this was a new dish to Adele, she wasn’t entirely sure how to eat it. As she was trying to cut or find some meat on an ox tail bone, it went flying right off of her plate and hit Bishop Stevens directly in the chest and made a mess on his shirt. Adele sat “quaking in her boots” as she feared expulsion or worse. Graciously, Bishop Stevens merely laughed and said, “Sometimes these things just happen.”

Always one for humor, in Adele’s senior will she wrote, “Adele wills to Marjorie Ting her antics and facial expressions in hopes that she will use them to their best advantages and keep the School in stitches.” This expressionist nature is true in her love of theatre, reading, and American History. It was a Bishop’s teacher, Miss Ruth Bourne, who inspired Adele to take every American History course offered at the University of California, Berkeley, where she attended college.

Although Adele’s years at Bishop’s were made difficult by World War II, she and her fellow students coped well “with the guidance of those wonderful spinster teachers that were always there.” Adele wouldn’t trade her years at Bishop’s, her favorite place in the whole world, “for all the tea in China.” A strong love for her alma mater and 60+ year friendships are part of the journey that has been Adele’s life. It’s a life that she has shared with her three daughters, who are Bishop’s graduates - Robin Kayser ’70, Alysun Kayser-Mead ’79, and Wendy Kayser Lesie ’79.
Her love of music and of American History was sparked at Bishop’s and it was those Bishop’s experiences that has fueled her passion through college to the present. Sixty-three years after graduating from Bishop’s, Adele and her Bishop’s best friends truly exemplify “I am Bishop’s.” We are proud to honor Adele with the Alumni Award for Distinguished Service to Bishop’s.