

# LIBBY DAUGHDRILL AWARD

Given to Mrs. Graham Burns  
Thursday, April 30, 2026

*Introduction by Chief of Staff Thomas Hayes '88*

Elizabeth Gay “Libby” Daughdrill was married to Jim Daughdrill, Class of 1952 and President of Rhodes College, and the mother of Hal Daughdrill, Class of 1973, and grandmother of Jim Daughdrill, Class of 2005. Her children established the Libby Daughdrill Award in order to honor and recognize annually a female member of the McCallie School community who has made a significant and lasting impact on the life of the school and its students.

The recipient shall be someone who has demonstrated a commitment to the mission of the school and who embodies its values in her personal life. The award may be granted either to any current or former member of the faculty, administration, or staff, or, like Libby Daughdrill herself, to someone who impacted the McCallie community because of the way she so faithfully lived as wife, mother, or grandmother of McCallie men with the result that her love of them became inseparably entwined with her love of and favor toward McCallie.

This year’s recipient comes from this latter, richly meaningful category of McCallie women. Born in 1939, over the course of her long life, she is one of the few people who personally witnessed the coronations of Queen Elizabeth in 1953 and King Charles in 2023, but she is unique in this: she is the wife of an alumnus, daughter-in-law to a legendary associate head of school, mother to a trustee, a head of school, and multiple McCallie alumni and day camp campers, and she is the halloween treat-, Easter-basket-giving grandmother to a third generation of McCallie men... in all, nine different men whose McCallie connections span 1916 to the present.

A graduate of the GPS class of 1957 where she served as president of the student council, she went on to attend the University of North Carolina where she served as honor council president and was named Outstanding Junior and Outstanding Senior Woman. In 1962, she married alumnus Arthur Burns Jr., Class of 1955, and since 1962, she has rarely missed a McCallie home football game. She has attended countless McCallie events of all types. The amount of time she has invested supporting McCallie and McCallie men and GPS and GPS women is staggering—in fact, when you aggregate the lives impacted just in her immediate family, her positive influence spans 288 years.



Of this year's recipient, Carter Newbold writes: "She has been watching over McCallie like a combination of a protective mother and a guardian angel for more than half the life of the school. That's true blue. What makes all that 'ministry of presence' even richer is the manner in which it has been given. Over the course of literally hundreds of days and games and events, [she] has presented a crystal clear picture of what it looks like to believe in the mission, and people, and future of McCallie."

And, Pulitzer Prize winning member of the Class of 1987, Jon Meacham, adds this: "There can be no more fitting recipient of this award...I often think of [her] as the Queen Mother of McCallie School... [She] is an invaluable part of the McCallie story. She has been wise, supportive, and forgiving—I will not go into the specifics of why the last one is so important, but there were moments in the Age of Reagan when some members of the Class of 1987 might have tried her patience. I am among the many who owe [her] a great debt, and I thank her for her lifetime of service and of grace."

There is no better word to end on—She is full of GRACE.

The award comes in the form of a Magnolia flower—symbol of beauty and strength. It goes to a woman who has championed the values of Honor, Truth, and Duty, who has lived out and shared our motto: "Man's Chief End Is To Glorify God And To Enjoy Him Forever." It is my great honor to present this year's Libby Daughdrill Award to:

MRS. GRAHAM BURNS.



