

Katherine Ann Hagen died on July 20, 2026 in Cannes, France, in the arms of her devoted husband Ralph (Peppy) and children, Kristina and Ralph Jr (PJ). She was a wonderful mother and stepmother to Ralph Jr., Kristina, and Becky, and a loving wife to Peppy. She dedicated her exceptionally impactful professional career to championing cross-cultural understanding and global collaboration.

The daughter of medical missionaries, Katherine grew up in Minnesota and in India, a “global nomad” upbringing that informed her lifelong wanderlust and a deep-seated commitment to fostering diversity.

With an undergraduate degree in government from Oberlin College, and doctorates in both international relations (SIS-American University) and law (UNC-Chapel Hill), Katherine launched her professional career as a college professor and community leader before winning election to the North Carolina State Senate in 1974. In 1979, she moved to Washington, DC to serve as a White House Fellow under President Jimmy Carter – a role that she especially cherished.

Later, as a senior executive in government relations at AT&T, Katherine fought for pension reform and for civil rights. In 1994, President Bill Clinton appointed her to serve as deputy director general of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland, a role that enabled her to rally governments, employers and workers to advance policy dialogue on global workforce participation initiatives.

After she left the ILO, Katherine and Ralph launched a consultancy and founded a global NGO, the Global Social Observatory, specializing in multistakeholder dialogue on a variety of issues including international labor standards and global health. Their next project, the Council for Multilateral Business Diplomacy, hosted major multinational employers, government representatives,

academia and civil society for a monthly series of robust conversations on global priorities.

In retirement, Katherine was an active participant in groups such as the Paris Peace Forum and the Council on Foreign Relations. She organized a book club and an art club, bringing together friends to participate in shared learning and growth. She took part in countless cultural events near her beloved home, Villa Ndio, in Grasse, France, where she also taught English as a foreign language to adult learners. In her free time, Katherine played the piano, cycled and swam, read avidly and shared in-depth commentaries on world events online for professional audiences as well as for family and friends. She enjoyed sharing her love of art, especially the French Impressionists, with those around her. Christmas was an annual extravaganza as she filled Villa Ndio with decorations and baked traditional Scandinavian cookies in honor of her Swedish origins to share with neighbors and friends.

Known as Kathy within the family, she was ever the globetrotter with her favorite travel companion Ralph, whether visiting family or discovering new horizons. She relished her role as mom and stepmom to Kristina, PJ and Becky. Her grandchildren Remy and Kaia were a source of great joy. She is remembered for her gracious manner, a hearty laugh and her enthusiasm for hosting large gatherings.

Kathy is survived by her husband Ralph Doggett, her daughter Kristina Hagen, son-in-law Julian May, grandchildren Remy Hagen-May and Kaia Hagen-May, her son Ralph (PJ) Doggett Jr and daughter-in-law Sarah Boddy, her stepdaughter Rebecca Doggett and stepson-in-law Scott Krombein, her elder sister Elizabeth Smith and brother-in-law Wade Smith, and her younger sister Janet Hagen, as well as countless other friends and relations whose lives she enriched.

The family asks that any donations in her honor be directed to the American Civil Liberties Union or the White House Fellows Foundation and Association.



A Celebration of Life
Katherine Ann Hagen
9 July 1944 - 20 July 2026

Honoring her memories from:
North Carolina Legislature ~ White House Fellows
ILO and other UN Colleagues
HRI and GSO ~ Friends and Family

We extend our gratitude to all guests who came from near and far, as well as those who are here in spirit. Please share your thoughts in the guest book and please take a decorative apple from Kathy's collection as a token of her beautiful memory.

