

LOYALIST HALL OF HONOUR: AGNES MCCAUSLAND RICHARDSON ETHERINGTON

Agnes McCausland Richardson was born in Kingston on September 27, 1880 to George Richardson and Agnes McCausland. Her father ran James Richardson & Son, which was an exporting firm that had been established in Kingston by her grandfather. She grew up in the family home located on the campus of Queens University. As such, the family had a strong connection to the university. Her younger brother, George Richardson, graduated from there in 1906 and was a well-known hockey and football player, but was killed in action in 1916 during WW1. Richardson Stadium on Queens University Campus was named for him in 1921. Younger brother James Richardson would serve as Chancellor for the university from 1929 to 1939.



As a young woman, Agnes wanted to become an artist and travelled to Europe to study. Her parents decided it was not a proper undertaking so she returned home to Kingston. She then became involved in life at the campus. She was married on May 17, 1921 to Frederick Etherington, who was in a professor or surgery and later dean of medicine at the University. They moved into the family home on Queens Campus.

Agnes focused on creating interest in the fine arts for Queens and the Kingston community. During the 1930s and 40s she hired area artists to create a Summer School for the arts, and brought artist Andre Bieler to Kingston. Agnes and Andre established a plan to establish an art gallery for Kingston.

When she died in 1954, her will stipulated that the family home in the centre of Queen's Campus would be donated along with her property and fund to establish the Agnes Etherington Art Centre. The building opened to the public in 1957 and as the collections grew, it was expanded in 1962, 1975, 1978, and 2000.

The facility today includes the original historic Etherington House, nine galleries, a studio, atrium, publications lounge and the David McTavish Art Study Room. It houses works of art from major European masters to modern Canadian and world-wide artists. Etherington Hall on campus was named for her husband.

Agnes died in Kingston on December 17, 1954 and her husband Frederick died November 10, 1955. They had no children. Both were buried in the Richardson family plot in Cataraqui Cemetery in Kingston.

Agnes McCausland Richardson was a descendant of Loyalists Captain Michael Grass UE, Barnabas Day UE, Peter Wartman UE, and Nazareth Hill UE. She was inducted into our Hall of Honour by Brian Tackaberry on September 14, 2024.