



Inducted: 2006

Born in 1903 in Ekfrid Township near Appin, Marion Campbell became very involved in agriculture with her father, Duncan Campbell, after he lost an arm in a farming accident. They were prominent breeders of Lincoln sheep which she exhibited at international fairs. She was dedicated to the family farm, working beside her father. She married William Gates in 1937, and continued her generous service to the community in various agricultural groups, as well as volunteer work with fairs, plowing matches, federal and provincial party politics, church work, and canvassing for charity groups. Just two months before her 100th birthday, Marion Gates walked in the annual Hip Hip Hooray fundraiser, collecting major donations for research and hospital equipment.

**MARION (Campbell) GATES
1903 –2007**

In an era when women were seldom seen taking a hands-on role on the farm, Marion Campbell was a very active farmer, working along side her father. Marion became invaluable for her work and also for her knowledge of their Lincoln sheep breeding operation and cash crop farming.

Marion (Campbell) Gates, born July 19, 1903, was the oldest of three children born to Duncan and Margaret Campbell. She attended S.S.# 3 Ekfrid public school and completed grade 10 at Melbourne Continuation School. One of her earliest memories is of attending the very first Melbourne Fair in 1910. By age 11, Marion was competing at school fairs throughout the area. Eventually she left school to farm with her father full time. Tragically, he had lost an arm in a farming accident and needed assistance with many of the chores. When the automobile age arrived, Marion chauffeured her father to his business meetings. She soon became very familiar with all the roads of Ekfrid Township, as she learned about her father's work with insurance and politics.

In 1924, she initiated the organization of Middlesex County Junior Women's Institute, becoming the first president at their inaugural meeting. She now holds the title of Honourary President of that group. During the 1920's, she showed and judged baking and needlework at local fairs and the Middlesex County Farm Show. She also judged at Western Fair. She attended the first International Plowing Match held in Middlesex County in 1928.

Among her interesting achievements was being recognized as a skilled competitor driving horses. She was selected to drive a twelve-horse hitch at that plowing match held near Arva in 1928.

She was the first woman on the board of directors of the Middlesex County Federation of Agriculture.

In addition to her involvement in the agricultural community, Marion has been active in many other organizations:

- Member of the Eureka Club of South Ekfrid that raised funds for the World War I effort
- Catcher for the Appin Ladies softball team
- Active member of the Appin United Church since 1937
- Active in party politics, both provincially and federally
- Canvasser and fundraiser for charities such as the Cancer Society and the Heart & Stroke Foundation
- Supporter and participant in the Hip Hip Hooray Walk annually since 1995, after her knee replacement in 1994. She was one of the oldest people to successfully have this operation

Marion married William Edward Gates on November 20, 1937. They were married 59 years, until his death in 1997. Her interest in agriculture continued throughout her married life, as she worked with her husband in various farm organizations, such as the local fair board, Soybean Growers Marketing Board, sheep organizations, and municipal politics. They raised three children: Duncan Gates, Lynda Shaw and Sheila Whitney.

For her ability to close the historical gender gap in agriculture, and her devotion to many community activities as well as her generosity in fund raising, Marion Gates is deserving of her induction to the Middlesex County Agricultural Hall of Fame.