

Founders of Queen Margaret College and the Edinburgh School of Cookery to be honoured



The founders of Queen Margaret College and the Edinburgh School of Cookery, Louisa Stevenson (1835 – 1908) and Christian Guthrie Wright, (1844 – 1907) are to be celebrated with Scottish colourist Francis Campbell Boileau Cadell, (1883-1937) in the first year of Scotland's Commemorative Plaque Scheme.

The announcement was made by Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs.

The Commemorative Plaque scheme is designed to celebrate the life and achievements of significant historic figures, through the erection of a plaque on their home where they lived, or the building that was particularly synonymous with their achievements.

The nominations were submitted by the public and the final twelve chosen by an independent panel of experts with the first year of the Commemorative Plaque Scheme celebrating the Year of Creative Scotland.

Ms Hyslop said: "The Commemorative Plaque Scheme highlights the range of incredible creativity shown by the talented people of Scotland, celebrating individuals such as Cadell, one of 'The Scottish Colourists, renowned for his stylish portrayals of Edinburgh New Town interiors and paintings of Iona.

“Louisa Stevenson and Christian Guthrie Wright were pivotal women who not only founded Queen Margaret College and the Edinburgh School of Cookery, but they also had a vision for a creative, fairer and healthier society.”

Professor Petra Wend, Principal, Queen Margaret University commented: “Louisa Stevenson and Christian Guthrie Wright were two remarkable women who essentially founded Queen Margaret University in 1875 when they created the Edinburgh School of Cookery. Supporters of the mid-Victorian women’s movement, they campaigned for improved career opportunities for women who were at that point excluded from higher and technical education, with an inevitable consequence being widespread female poverty.

“Their vision for a fairer and healthier society and their contribution towards enhancing the lives of others has survived and flourished to this day.”

Alan Welsh, who nominated Cadell said: “Cadell revelled in the northern light of the Scottish capital, the beauty of its architecture and the elegance of its inhabitants, making them the subject matter of his art.

“After the war, Cadell was no longer attempting to capture images of fashionable society, but instead was concerned with an almost abstract concept of space and perspective, creating some of the most remarkable paintings in British art of the period. These are unprecedented and are the most colourful paintings of any of the Scottish Colourists.”

Ms Hyslop continued: “The Plaques Scheme also commemorates historic figures who have made a significant contribution to Scotland and the world including television pioneer John Logie Baird, steam pioneer James Watt and Archibald Findlay, Fife potato geneticist who produced the first blight-resistant potato, making the food safe from disease.”