

# Dorothy Rungeling fonds, 1887-2018, n.d.

RG 517

Brock University Archives

<b>Creator:</b>	Dorothy Rungeling
<b>Extent:</b>	45 cm of textual material 5 scrapbooks 2 sketches 2 slides
<b>Abstract:</b>	The fonds contains material about the activities and accomplishments of Dorothy Rungeling. Material about Dorothy's adoptive mother, Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald, and the Rungeling (Ringling) family is also included. Most of the materials are books, scrapbooks and news clippings.
<b>Materials:</b>	Books, scrapbooks, news clippings, correspondence, certificates.
<b>Repository:</b>	Brock University Archives
<b>Processed by:</b>	Chantal Cameron
<b>Last updated:</b>	March 2018

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<b>Preferred citation:</b>	RG 517, Dorothy Rungeling fonds, 1887-2018, Brock University Archives, Brock University.

**Acquisition info.:** Most of the material was donated by Dorothy Rungeling in 2014. The correspondence between Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald and Dorothy Wetherald was donated in 2016.

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**Administrative history:**

Dorothy Rungeling was born in 1911 and raised in Fenwick, Ontario, by her adopted mother, Ethelwyn Wetherald. After graduating high school, she attended Fort Erie business College. She worked briefly in Toronto and then Hamilton, but eventually took a job with Brown Brothers' Nursery in Pelham to be closer to home. Dorothy pursued many interests, learning to play the violin, saxophone and clarinet. She met her husband Charles at a local dance where she was playing. In 1939, they opened an automobile and farm machinery business in Welland. In their spare time, they were active in skeet and trap shooting, for which Dorothy won many trophies. In the early 1940s, Dorothy developed a passion for horses, training and showing them in addition to teaching riding at the Welland Riding Club, as well as judging at horse shows. By the late 1940s her interest in horses was waning, but she soon after discovered and pursued a new interest: flying. She joined the Welland Flying Club, obtained a flying licence, and in 1949 purchased her first plane. She proceeded to obtain a Commercial Pilot Licence in 1951, an Instructor's Licence in 1953, and a Senior Commercial Licence in 1954.

She participated in many air races in the 1950s, including the All Women's International Air Races, the Women's Transcontinental Air Races, and the Canadian Governor-General's Cup Air Race. Some of the most notable races were the 1954 International Air Race, where Dorothy met with President Batista of Cuba, and the Governor-General's Cup Air Race, where she won 1<sup>st</sup> place in 1953 and 1956 (and was the only woman competing). In 1958, she was also the first Canadian woman to solo pilot a helicopter. That same year she obtained her Airline Transport Licence. She also wrote several articles on aviation, contributing to publications such as *Canadian Aviation* and *Air Facts*, a U.S. aviation magazine. In addition to these articles, Dorothy authored several books about her life, as well as a selection of poems and articles by Ethelwyn Wetherald.

As planes became more expensive, Dorothy spent less time flying, instead pursuing an interest in sailing. She and her husband bought a sailboat and became members of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Sailing Club. In 2003, Dorothy was awarded the Order of Canada for her accomplishments. She also wrote a regular column for the *Voice of Pelham* in 2012-2013, called A Century in Pelham. Dorothy celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2011, and remains an active member of the community.

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**Scope and content:**

Fonds contains material about the life and activities of Dorothy Rungeling. There is also material about Dorothy's adoptive mother, the poet Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald. This includes books and other material written by Ethelwyn, as well as material about her life. There are also some books and genealogical information about the Rungeling (Ringling) family, of the Ringling family circus. Most of the material is books, scrapbooks, news clippings, correspondence, and certificates. Duplicate items have been removed and discarded. Within folders, material is arranged chronologically.

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**Organization:**

The records are arranged into three series:

Series I: Dorothy Rungeling material, 1901-2018, n.d.

Sub-series A: Publications

Sub-series B: Scrapbooks & memorabilia

Sub-series C: Notes

Sub-series D: Correspondence

Series II: Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald material, 1887-1992, n.d.

Sub-series A: Publications

Sub-series B: Wetherald family history

Sub-series C: Scrapbook

Sub-series D: Sketches

Series III: Correspondence, Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald to Dorothy Wetherald, 1928, 1936-1939, n.d.

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**Inventory:**

**Series I: Dorothy Rungeling material, 1901-2018, n.d.**

**Sub-series A: Publications, 1901-2018**

- 1.1-1.5 News clippings, 1951-2018. Contains news clippings about Dorothy's accomplishments. Also contains a photograph of a scrapbook page about Dorothy Rungeling from the Canada Aviation and Space Museum's collection [2010].
- 1.6 News clippings—*The Voice of Pelham*, 2012-2013. Contains clippings of a regular article written by Dorothy Rungeling titled "A Century in Pelham" and published in the *Voice of Pelham*.
- 1.7 News clippings—Ringling family, 1985-1997. Contains clippings about the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, Florida.
- 1.8-1.11 Magazines, 1956-2013. Contains magazines with articles featuring or written by Dorothy Rungeling. Some of the titles include *Canadian Aviation*, *Canadian Flight*, *International Women Pilots* and *Canadian Aviator*.
- Box 2 Books, 1901-2006. Includes books with biographical information on Dorothy Rungeling (*Women of Action, 1876-1976*; *No Place for a Lady: the story of Women Pilots, 1928-1992*; *Canadian Ninety-Nines 2006: Here & Now*); books about the Ringling family (*Ringling Museums: John Ringling: Dreamer, Builder, Collector; the Circus Kings: Our Ringling family story*); a book with information on the Wetherald family, *Rockwood: a Mosaic of Memories*, and other books, (*Hometown [Welland]*, 1959; *General Membership Book of Knowledge of the Ralston Health Club*, 1901; *Thoughts from Eden Philpotts*, n.d.; *the Humour of Barry Pain*, n.d.; *the New Testament*, n.d; and *the Tree Guide: trees east of the Rockies*, 1916).

**Sub-series B: Scrapbooks & Memorabilia, 1943-2011, n.d.**

**Scrapbooks, 1943-1970, n.d.**

- O.1 Contains a scrapbook of news articles written by Dorothy Rungeling about horses and horseback riding, 1944-1951, n.d.; and a scrapbook of family photographs, 1943, n.d.
- O.2 Two aviation scrapbooks documenting Dorothy's accomplishments as a pilot. One scrapbook is dated 1948-1953 and the other dated 1954-1970. The scrapbooks contain photographs, an invoice for the first plane purchased by Dorothy, copies of her pilots licences, news clippings, articles written by Dorothy,

telegrams, letters, certificates, flight record sheets, a map, charts recording the placement of participants in various air races and details of their flights, and air race programs.

**Memorabilia, 2002-2011**

- 1.12 Awards, 2002-3. Contains material relating to the Order of Canada, awarded to Dorothy in 2003, including correspondence from Jean Chretien, Adrienne Clarkson and Joe Clark. Also contains some material relating to the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal.
- 1.13 Commemorative stamp, 2010. Contains a sheet of commemorative stamps honouring Dorothy Rungling as Canada's first woman to solo a helicopter, and as a member of the East Canada section, Ninety-nines, on her 99<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 1.14 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, 2011. Contains certificates of congratulations from Dean Allison, MP, Niagara West-Glanbrook; Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada; Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario; Tim Hudak, MPP, Niagara West—Glanbrook; Gary Burroughs, Chair, Regional Municipality of Niagara.
- O.1 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, 2011. Certificate of congratulations from Dave Augustyn, Mayor of the Town of Pelham.

**Sub-series C: Notes, 1940-1983, n.d.**

- 1.15 Horsemanship classes, 1940s. Contains typed and handwritten notes on horses and horseback riding, as well as anatomical illustrations of horses.
- 1.16 Flying, 1950s. Contains material written by Dorothy Rungeling and used to teach flight at the Welland Airport, Girl Guide Air Rangers, and Ground School. Also contains a series of illustrations and cartoons related to Dorothy's flying experiences, dated June 23-July 4, 1955.
- 1.17 Sailing, 1966-1969. Contains two notebooks with sailing notes.
- 1.18 Rungeling family history, 1916, 1983, n.d. Contains correspondence, photographs and genealogical charts.
- 1.19 A brief biography of Dorothy Rungeling written by Sherry Culbert, n.d.

**Sub-series D: Correspondence, 1952-2004**

- 1.20 Correspondence, 1952-2004. Contains mostly letters of congratulations for Dorothy's various flying endeavours.

**Series II: Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald, 1887-1992, n.d.****Sub-series A: Publications, 1887-1931**

- Box 2 Books, 1887, 1902, 1916, 1931. Contains three books by Ethelwyn Wetherald, *An Algonquin Maiden* (written with G. Mercer Adam), 1887; *Lyrics and Sonnets*, 1931; and *Tangled in Stars: poems by Ethelwyn Wetherald*, 1902 (enclosed in an engraved leather cover labeled *The Radiant Road/Ethelwyn Wetherald*, dated December 25, 1904. Also includes a copy of *The Beech Woods* by Duncan Armbrest, in which he thanks Ethelwyn in the introduction; *The Ontario Public School History of Canada*, 1916, in which Ethelwyn is mentioned as a prominent modern Canadian poet; and *the New Testament, 1818*, inscribed to Agnes Wetherald from John Yeardley.

**Sub-series B: Wetherald family history, 1992, n.d.**

- 1.21 Rockwood Academy collection, 1992. Contains a description of the Rockwood Academy collection, which includes materials documenting the history of the Rockwood Academy in Rockwood, Ontario, as well as the genealogical research performed by Yosef Drenters on the Wetherald family.
- 1.22 Diary of Joseph Wetherald [photocopy], 1835-1842. A copy of the diary of Joseph Wetherald, giving an account of his movements while living in Wilmington.
- 1.23 A brief biography of Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald written by Sherry Culbert, n.d. Includes an obituary of Ethelwyn Wetherald.

**Sub-series C: Scrapbook, 1890, 1915-1940, 1967, n.d.**

- O.1 A scrapbook about Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald compiled by Elsie M. Stevens, Archivist, Women's Literary Club of St. Catharines. Contains photographs, news articles, and copies of Ethelwyn's poetry.

**Sub-series D: Sketches, 1907**

- 1.24 A sketch of a man, 1907. The inside of the front cover is inscribed "To Bel Thistlewaite with affection from E.A. Thomson". The bottom corner of the sketch is inscribed "To the Walker Household, Christmas 1907". An unclear signature appears below the inscription.
- 1.25 A sketch of Earl Grey, Governor General of Canada, 1907. This sketch was autographed and presented to Ethelwyn Wetherald in appreciation of her poetry.

**Series III: Correspondence, Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald to Dorothy Wetherald, 1928, 1936-1939, n.d.**

- 1.26 Correspondence, 1928. Contains 1 letter.
- 1.27 Correspondence, March-June 1936, n.d. Contains 10 letters.
- 1.28 Correspondence, January 1938-September 1938, n.d. Contains 10 letters.
- 1.29 Correspondence, January 1939-March 1939. Contains 7 letters.
- 1.30 Correspondence, n.d. Contains 3 letters. Also includes two slides in an envelope labeled "E.W. @ Pinehurst, 1000 Islands". One slide shows a house and trees, and the other shows a raccoon eating from a table.

**Related material:**

RG 84, Agnes Ethelwyn Wetherald fonds, Brock University Archives, Brock University.

It's fun to grow old! / by Dorothy W. Rungeling. [Ridgeville, Ont.] : Dorothy Rungeling, 2002. **SPCL FC 3159 P4 R859 2002**

Life and works of Ethelwyn Wetherald 1857-1940: with a selection of her poems and articles / by Dorothy W. Rungeling. [Ridgeville, Ont.] : D. Rungeling, c2004. **SPCL PS 8495 E79 Z85 2004**

The flying housewife: true experiences of the author / by Dorothy W. Rungeling.  
Ridgeville Ont.: D.W. Rungeling, c2003. **SPCL FC 3159 P42 Z49 2003**

The road to home: tales of rural life in the early 1900s / by Dorothy W. Rungeling.  
[Pelham, Ont.] : Pelham Historical Society, 2001. **SPCL FC 3159 P4 R86 2001**