

The former Maltwood home in Royal Oak, currently the Fireside Grill, has long been a favourite painting venue for our club, with which it has some interesting historical connections.

As a recently built replicated Tudor Hall House, with a short-lived life as the Royal Oak Inn, the house was purchased by Katharine and John Maltwood in 1940 following their arrival from England in 1938. It reminded them of an English manor and they named it “The Thatch” (pictured below). Katharine, born in London in 1878, had aspirations in poetry before turning to graphic arts and sculpture. Drawn into the Arts and Crafts Movement which was fashionable at that time, she studied in Italy and London’s Slade School of Art and became a noted sculptor, antiquarian, and scholar of the occult, exhibiting regularly at the Royal Academy during the inter-war period.



In Victoria she was encouraged by the influential Ina Uhthoff of the Island Arts and Crafts Society to join the local art community and she contributed two pieces of sculpture to the Society’s annual exhibition in 1941. Katharine was a keen sketcher, and was influenced by Emily Carr, from whom she bought a number of paintings. Through her many small drawings, she was able to capture the Pacific Northwest landscape in her uniquely mystical way.

Katharine died in 1961, and three years later her husband bequeathed the estate, which included an extensive collection of antiques and artwork acquired from the couple’s global travels, to the University of Victoria. The house thus became the University art museum until the art museum was transferred to the Gordon Head campus in 1977, and the house sold to the Saanich Municipality in 1980.

During our club’s Centennial Year in 2009, the VSC worked closely with the Maltwood Museum through its Director, Martin Segger, and several events, including a curated exhibition, were hosted there on our behalf.

The University’s Maltwood Museum closed in 2011, with its core collection transferred to the Legacy Gallery, housed in a Yates Street building donated by local philanthropist Michael Williams. Thus continuity has been ensured as a testament to Katharine Maltwood’s considerable contribution to Victoria’s artistic and cultural development.



Trees Over Water,
c. 1939, by Katharine
Maltwood, Maltwood Art
Museum and Gallery