

# Museum rediscovers gem: A.J. Casson painting on display in Jordan

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JORDAN – The Jordan Historical Museum has dusted off a \$16,500 Group of Seven work of art.

The painting of a Mennonite chair by artist A.J. Casson was put on display Monday.

"The painting has mostly been in storage, so people weren't aware that we had it," said Helen Booth, the museum's director. "Now everyone can appreciate the value of what we have, both culturally and financially."

Officials from the McMichael Gallery in Kleinburg, near Toronto, which showcases Group of Seven art, authenticated the 1953 painting of a Mennonite chair on a porch overlooking a farm.

The artist's daughter, Margaret Casson, attended the Jordan ceremony.

She was delighted to see her father's painting again after so many years.

"When there are 3,500 or so paintings my dad has

done, it's hard to remember the exact details."

Casson's daughter explained how the artist used to accompany his cousin, a doctor, on rounds to farms in Vineland, where he would have seen examples of the area's Pennsylvania German Mennonite heritage.

She said although the style of the painting is typical of her father's work, the subject is quite different from his other Group of Seven paintings.

"In the '50s, he was doing a much more simplified style. Here, you see how he's eliminated some of the details in the painting."

The painting, donated to the museum in 1988 by a local collector, will be hung on permanent display in the Fraktur Room of the Heritage House exhibit.

Booth said the museum has no intention of ever selling it.

Alfred Joseph Casson was born in Toronto in 1898 and grew up in Guelph and Hamilton. He died at age 94 in 1992.