Agnes Myklebust

June 13, 1907 – September 8, 2002



Myklebust and his wife, Agnes, had a great interest in botany, as seen in this 1973 clipping

Agnes E. Myklebust, beloved wife of longtime SDSD superintendent Arthur S. Myklebust, passed away on September 8, 2002, in Minneapolis, MN, at the age of 95. A memorial service was held at Christ the Victor Chapel of First Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, and she was laid to rest at Hills of Rest Memorial Park. Miller Funeral Home handled arrangements.

Born on June 13, 1907, in Pierpont, SD, Agnes was raised on a nearby farm and later attended Augustana College in Sioux Falls, where she met her future husband, Arthur. They married on June 21, 1933, in Pierpont. After earning her teaching degree, Agnes began her career in a one-room schoolhouse near her hometown.

In 1939, the Myklebusts moved to Sioux Falls when Arthur was appointed superintendent of the South Dakota School for the Deaf—a position he held for 34 years. While Arthur led the school through its most transformative era, Agnes quietly became the heart of the campus.

She could easily be considered one of Sioux Falls' first teacher's aides. One year, when teacher Flora Grinde had a large class, Agnes volunteered every morning to assist her. During the war years, she taught homemaking classes and planned meals for the SDSD dining hall. She organized school social events, starting with a 40-person Christmas buffet that eventually became a two-night celebration for over 100 staff. She hosted annual fall picnics and senior receptions, all while raising her two sons.

Outside of SDSD, Agnes was just as committed. She served two years as PTA president at Bancroft Elementary, secretary of the city PTA council, three years as state PTA treasurer, and three years as membership chair. She was a Den Mother for her sons' Cub Scout troop and a faithful contributor to First Lutheran Church.

A feature written near the end of Arthur's tenure perfectly captured the magic of their home and their partnership:

"When our friends and their children from California visit us, the youngsters always say our home is like an old castle," sparkled Agnes as she relaxed in the antique-laden apartment at SDSD.



PHOTO BY JAN BURI

Putting on the finishing touches to her Norwegian tablecloth, Agnes Myklebust relaxes on a refinished red velvet love seat. This is one of the handsome antiques that adds charm to the Myklebust's apartment.

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“My first impression of the apartment was how much room there was. I recall that this room we’re in was once an old classroom—with hardwood floors, cracked plaster, and French doors. When it snowed, we had drifts coming in under the 8-foot windows.”

Over time, that drafty old classroom was transformed. The floors became plush with gold carpet. The windows draped with flowing white curtains. The walls filled with keepsakes, portraits, and warmth. Her refinished walnut hutch overflowed with cut glass treasures, and beside her velvet chair lay unfinished scrapbooks and a knitting project—signs of a life deeply lived and shared.

“After 84 years, a castle reflects the nature of its king and queen,” the article concluded. *“Thus, Arthur and Agnes Myklebust.”*

After Arthur’s passing in 1978, Agnes remained in Sioux Falls until 1999, when she moved to a nursing home in Minneapolis to be closer to family.
She is survived by two sons, Robert of Walkersville, MD, and John of Pasadena, CA; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; and her nephew, Norman Larson Jr., a well-known member of the Sioux Falls Deaf community.
Agnes will be remembered not only as a devoted wife, mother, and educator, but as the heart of the SDSD community—an ever-present figure of warmth, hospitality, and service. Her legacy lives on in the lives she touched and in the castle she helped build.

