



# The Egg Crate



Volume No. 1 Issue No 4 Dec 2006 © 2006 John Crawford

## A note of apology

I want to apologize to all of you for the extremely long delay in getting this newsletter to you. I feel that I have let you down but believe me, that will never happen again. I have decided to do the newsletter each quarter with a double issue in November and December. With working on the family tree, which is growing every day, and a few other Betty related projects; I am going to be rather busy going from one project to another.

## Happy Holidays

I want to wish all of you a safe and Happy Holiday Season. Here is a special Christmas treat for every one courtesy of Dorothy and Chris Gold-smith. I want to thank Debbie Scott for resizing it, as my scanner is no longer among the functional.



(Photo courtesy of Chris and Dorothy Goldsmith)

## Betty's Golden Egg

This issue will deal, in part, with the infamous "Egg" trial. I am going to do my best to present the information to you, much of which I have taken from actual newspaper accounts from the time, along with several articles that were written decades after the trial. If there are any discrepancies in my information I am sorry, I am only going by historical newspaper and magazine article accounts.

In July of 1945 a publishing phenomenon occurred in the form of a little book called "The Egg and I" by an unknown author from the great Pacific Northwest, Betty MacDonald. Within four months of publication, "The Egg and I" sold one million copies and was only in its fourth printing - a publishing record that remained unbeaten until the 1966 release of Jacqueline Susann's *Valley of the Dolls* hit the bestseller list 21 years later.



The Egg and I  
(cover courtesy of John Crawford)

In 1949 Mr. Albert Bishop and seven of his children filed a libel lawsuit against Betty MacDonald in the (Seattle) King County Superior Court, claiming they had been portrayed as the bumpkin Kettle family in Betty's bestseller, *"The Egg and I."* They further claimed that the publication was not only libelous, but had exposed them to hatred, con-tempt and ridicule, and had invaded their right to privacy. Judge Hugh Todd ruled that the Bishops did have a cause of action, and allowed the case to go forward. A claim by Mr. George Shold who supposedly appeared as "The Rawleigh Man," was dismissed. Mr. Shold claimed that in 1921, not only was the Bishops customers of his but so was the Heskett's. I wonder how this could be as Bob and Betty didn't move there until 1927?). Finally, a Chimacum resident named Raymond Johnson also filed suit, claiming that he had been portrayed as the Native America, "Crowbar." He sought \$75,000 in damages, and each member of the Bishop family sought \$100,000. At \$975,000 it set a record as the largest civil lawsuit filed in the state of Washington up to that time.

Judge William J. Wilkins, who also presided over the infamous Nuremberg trials, presided over the trial, which began on February 5, 1951. The papers followed the case daily. The courtroom was jammed, and the colorful Bishop family – all except the father, Albert – took the stand.

Betty testified, too. She denied using the Bishops as models for her Kettle family characters. Betty stated that her descriptions in the book were "composites" of the area and people around the Olympic Peninsula farm where she had lived between 1927 and 1931. Betty went on to testify that she was only 19 years old when she married Robert Heskett and moved to the farm. She said that the Bishops were not the family she had called the Kettles.

After two weeks of testimony (and even an episode where Betty fled the court room in

tears), the jury returned a verdict of 'Not Guilty.'" A relieved Betty left the courtroom smiling widely, on the arm of her husband Don MacDonald. I have heard that Betty offered to pay the Bishops' attorney fees. I don't know if it's true, but if so, how like our Betty to turn the other cheek.

## A word of thanks

Those of you who know me know that I have been beside myself trying to find information on Don. Well, thanks to one of our members, Barry, who happens to be a relative of Don's, I now have sufficient information on Don that will enable me to begin researching him, and fill out his side of the family tree. "THANK YOU, BARRY!!!"

## Reader participation

Debbie Scott has submitted this story for our winter reading enjoyment. She just couldn't resist looking for that deserted mansion!

The Deserted Mansion  
© Debbie Scott – 2005, 2006

*It was almost dusk when we got back to Discovery Bay, but Bob insisted that we stop at the "mansion," a decaying and deserted old estate sprawled along a bluff overlooking Discovery Bay and facing the Crow's Nest. It seems that years and years ago a lumber king for some strange masculine reason thought this spot would be a fine place to bring his young South American bride; but she (and I don't blame her) stayed two months, said to hell with the good neighbor policy and ran home as fast as her little South American legs would carry her. The lumber king, hurt and bewildered, closed up the estate and never came back. (The Egg and I, pg. 185.)*

They are only a few paragraphs in that marvelous book, *The Egg & I*, written by humorist Betty MacDonald some sixty years ago. Those words created in my mind a vivid image of Betty and her husband Bob wandering through a once stately old abandoned mansion somewhere on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington state. The book said the home

had “about twenty” bedrooms, but only one bathroom; a stately ballroom; stables and barns, all covered with vines and cobwebs. Even more intriguing was the book’s retelling of the rumor that a wealthy lumber baron had built the estate for his beautiful South American bride. But she had refused to stay and, heartbroken, he’d abandoned the once-stately home, leaving it to decay.

I lived on the Olympic Peninsula and couldn’t help but wonder if the old mansion story was true. I knew Discovery Bay well and was curious to see if the house was still standing. I knew that *if* this part of the story were true (the book is fiction, after all), Betty and her then-husband Bob would have been exploring its rooms and hallways in the early 1930’s. So a home in disrepair then, built around the turn of the last century, quite possibly had been destroyed, the land sold, and a new home – or many homes – may be standing in its place now. I wanted to know. I wanted to find it. I was sure I could.

According to the book, Betty and her husband Bob Heskett, together with Bob’s sister and brother-in-law, had been driving back from a day’s outing on the western side of the Olympic Peninsula when they stopped to explore the old house. Where did they stop; were they an hour from their home in Chimacum? Two hours? Just down the road? I re-read the pages in the book for clues, and a visit to the local historical society helped me narrow the search. Best of all, it convinced me that the mansion really had existed at one time. A letter in their files, one that actually criticized Betty’s description of “Anderson’s place,” was all I needed to get the ball rolling. Looking at an old map of Discovery Bay, I saw something that made me nearly jump with joy (bearing in mind I was in a library). There, along the coast of the bay, was a large plot of land with the notation “Anderson’s Duck Sanctuary.” Anderson! He must be the wealthy “lumber king” Betty mentioned in the book. But it

seemed almost too good to be true. Could the old site really be right in the town were I worked five days a week, and just a few miles from my office? Could it really be that easy?

I was working in a small town called Sequim (pronounced “Skwim”), on the northern end of the Olympic Peninsula. Sequim is about 40 miles from the Egg and I farm, and Bob and Betty would have passed through it on their way back from their visit to Lake Crescent that day. From the description of the area, I was sure the estate – and I was now convinced it had existed – had been on Sequim Bay, at a spot along the coast called Port Williams. Port Williams had once been an active fishing port with a cannery, company store, large pier, and several homes. A large, white mansion once had stood on the site. Could that have been the Anderson estate? A trip to the Sequim Library gave me some answers, but there was no mention of a man named Anderson. I decided to drive out to the area still known as Port Williams, a short drive from my office.

At the end of Port Williams Road there is nothing to indicate it once was a thriving village. As a matter of fact, there was nothing at all except water, sand, and a monument to a fallen hero from World War II. No mention of the cannery, no remnants of any homes, and certainly no large estate. It is a beautiful, peaceful spot, and I made a mental note to bring my grandson here one day soon. Then I turned around and drove back toward town. On the way, I noticed a side road, which turned sharply in front of what looked to be a gated driveway. I turned onto the road and pulled up to the gateposts, which clearly had once held large iron gates. Now they merely stood as sentries to guard a tree-lined lane which led to a wildlife pre-serve. Could this be the Anderson Duck Sanctuary I’d seen noted on the old map? I cautiously turned into the driveway, driving slowly, and found a small “compound” of buildings at the end of it. There were two

homes, one quite small and one a bit larger, though clearly not an “estate.” But there were very large barns and several stables and sheds in the compound. No people were around, but a dog barked at my car.

I turned around and drove out before the dog got any more upset. I was confused. The description of the area matched my notes perfectly, but there was certainly no “20-bedroom” estate here. Had it been torn down and these smaller homes and barns built in its place? Their age was hard to determine, but they looked to be at least 40 years old. I drove back out the tree-lined driveway and noticed a sign that said “Graysmarsh Farm.” I know this is a large “U-Pick” lavender and berry concern in Sequim. My first summer on the Peninsula I’d cut a beautiful bundle of lavender in their field. But was it somehow connected to this Anderson fellow? Probably not. I drove to my office to call the main office of Graysmarsh and see what I could find out.

*To be continued ....*



*(photo courtesy of Debbie Scott)*

I have several other short stories that I want to share with you that I am going to put together as an addendum to the newsletter sometime in early January. So all of you who sent your stories don’t think I haven’t forgotten you because I haven’t.

## In Memoriam

November 21st marked the 31st anniversary of the passing of Donald C. MacDonald. I would have loved to interview this man!



### Rite set for Donald C. MacDonald

*“ Services for Donald C. MacDonald. Husband of Betty MacDonald, author of children’s books will be at 11am today in the Saint Dunstan Episcopal Church, Monterey, Calif.*

*Mr. MacDonald, who attended school in Seattle and lived for many years with his wife on Vashon Island, died November 21 of a heart attack. He was 65. In recent years, following his wife’s death in 1958, he raised cattle in Carmel Valley Calif.*

*Mr. MacDonald attended Roosevelt High School and the University of Washington in the early and middle 1930’s. He and Mrs. MacDonald were married here in 1939.*

*He was an engineer with the Boeing Co; she wrote “The Egg and I,” and the Mrs. Piggie-Wiggle series and other books.*

*He is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Joan Keil, Medina, and Ann Evans, Stimson Beach, Calif., and two sisters, Mrs. Harold Laughlin and Mrs. Gordon Severson, both of Seattle. (November 30, 1975 Seattle Times)*





Don and his Sister Allegra circa 1917  
(Courtesy of Joy and Barry Miller)

### **BLANCHE CAFFIERE PASSES**

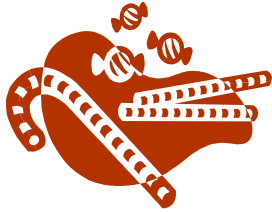
Sadly on November 19, 2006, Blanche Caffiere passed away; she was 100 years young. I spoke to Blanche on the phone a year or so ago and found her to be a delight-full woman with a mind as sharp as a tack. I want to thank Dorothy Goldsmith for sending me the obituary.



Blanche Hamilton Hutchings CAFFIERE  
10/22/1906 - 11/19/2006

Blanche passed away peacefully in her sleep after a brief illness, surrounded by family and friends. Born in Rockport, Indiana, she moved with her family to Seattle at the age of six months. Her family lived near Green Lake, where she learned to swim. She developed a lifelong passion for the water, even swimming across Lake Washington as a young adult. She lived happily for many years on Vashon Island. Blanche graduated from Roosevelt High School in Seattle, class of 1924, along with her dear friend, Betty MacDonald. She earned degrees at Western Washington University, and Lewis and Clark College in Portland. An elementary

teacher and librarian for more than fifty years, she began her career in the Nooksack valley continuing it in Oregon, Washington, London, and Sierra Leone. She remained in contact with many former students, and was delighted to receive a special note from former student, Bill Gates, on her 100th birthday. While living on Vashon, readers of Betty MacDonald often knocked on Blanche's door to talk to her about her late friend, Betty. This led Blanche to buying a computer, and at the age of 84, she learned to use it to write a book about their friendship, "Much Laughter, A Few Tears," was published in several countries. Blanche accepted an invitation to a book launch in Prague and traveled there at the age of 94, where she was the toast of the town. Writing was one of Blanche's many pleasures; she published several books and stories about her life in Seattle, and her travels abroad. Active in many groups, clubs and associations, she never received an invitation she didn't accept with pleasure. She was a life long Christian Scientist, and involved in many activities until the end of her life. She attended her 100th birthday party accompanied by family and friends from throughout her life, and had a wonderful time. The last six years, she lived at Daystar Retirement Village, and was a special friend to many of the residents and the staff. She was preceded in death by husband, Cyril, in 2001. She is survived by daughter, Jill Andrews (Murray), son, Keith Hutchings (Vicky), grandchildren, Katy Brandenfels, Eric Brandenfels (Melissa), Emily Mora (Marc), John Brandenfels II (Chris), Craig Hutchings (Adria), and Jill Hutchings, along with 9 great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, and dear friends. No services at her request. Donations in her honor may be sent to the Vashon Community Care Center, 15333 Vashon Hwy. S.W., Vashon, WA, 98070, or Vashon Island Pet Protectors, P.O. Box 245, Vashon, WA 98070. (Seattle Times November 26, 2006)



## Recipes

Christmas will soon be upon us and already the smells of holly and pine permeate the air and thoughts of sugarplums are dancing in our heads. What would Christmas be like without those sweet sugary treats to enjoy on those cold winter nights as we gather around the TV watching our favorite Christmas movie (mine is A Christmas Story)?

### Old Fashioned Fudge

- 1-1/3 cups milk or evaporated milk
- 4 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons corn syrup
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

Get out a large saucepan, 3 or 4-quart sized. In it combine the milk and sugar. Start heating the mixture over medium heat. Stir in the cocoa, salt and corn syrup. Mix very well to dissolve the cocoa. Bring the mixture to a boil and allow it to cook until it reaches the Soft Ball stage when a small amount is dropped into a bowl of cold water, or 234° on a candy thermometer. When it does, remove the pan

from the heat and place it on a dishtowel or cake rack to cool down. Add the margarine and vanilla, but don't stir.

Remember, Don't stir it yet. Just let it sit by itself in a corner, almost forgotten. Let it cool until the bottom of the pan is barely warm to the touch, or about 110°. When the fudge has cooled, start beating it with a spoon or whisk. Very quickly (sometimes less than a minute, sometimes a couple of minutes) it will start to lose its glossy, shiny appearance on top. When it just begins to lose this reflective quality, immediately pour it into a pan greased with margarine. You should grease the pan ahead of time, while the fudge is cooling in the pot. Shake the fudge in the pan to spread it evenly. Or if that doesn't work, try to spread it out with a spoon. Allow it to cool and harden, and then cut it into pieces. I use a 7 by 10-inch pan to set up this fudge, a 9-inch square pan would work too, as would an 8-inch square pan, although the pieces would be a little thicker.

Don't scrape the sides of the pan while you are making this recipe. The sugar on the sides of the pan will cause the whole batch to crystallize and it will still taste good, but have a grainy texture. I really recommend a candy thermometer for candy recipes. The cold water test is a skill that takes a lot of ruined batches to develop. This recipe makes about 2-1/4 pounds of fudge, it is so good I can't even

tell you, you have to make it for yourself. Makes an excellent gift. I like to add different flavors such as peppermint or cherry.

## December Contest

Congratulations to Suzan for winning the August contest. Not only did she name the entire Kettle children but the Bishop children as well. For this she will receive a copy of the play "Onions in the Stew." For getting the entire Bishop children correct she will also receive a 5x7 picture of Betty.

This month's contest will be a bit easier, and the winner will receive their very own copy of the "Western American Literature" featuring the article, "It's About Time Somebody Out Here Told the Truth: Betty Bard MacDonald and North/Western Regionalism," by Beth Kraig.

This month's question is: What did the judge in the "Egg" trial require the jury to do before they deliberated?

Remember to put your name and mailing address in the email, along with the date and, your answer so I can mail your prize to you. **DO NOT** post your answers in the forum or send a private message. All answers must be emailed to me at [johnftwa48in@yahoo.com](mailto:johnftwa48in@yahoo.com).

## Family Tree

Now that I have everything I need on Don MacDonald and his side of the family I can continue work on the tree. There are a few of Betty's family members that I need complete information on, but I am sure that will come to me in time.

## Trivia

Did you know that on September 12, 1918 Darsie Campbell Bard registered for the draft? He listed his home address as 2212 13<sup>th</sup> No, Seattle, WA and his place of business as Ladysmith Smelting Company located at 2105 L. C. Smith Building, Seattle, WA. Maybe someone would like to visit these locations to take some pictures and share them with us in the next newsletter? If you do I will try to locate some original pictures of the structures and then we'll have before and after pictures!

## Afterthought

2007 will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Betty's birth (although it will be celebrated in 2008 as our Betty, in true feminine fashion, made herself younger). Keep an eye out on the web site for information on the celebration of this special day. Also July 2007 will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of "Anybody Can Do Anything." A lot of great things are in the works so keep an eye out on the FOBM site. I would like to mention that I now have a blog that is independent of the FOBM site. It is just a general discussion site on the Anne and Joan interview that was on a common reader. You can find it on <http://vox.seattlepressonline.com/crawfordj/> the site that carried this interview (A Common Reader) is no longer operational. I have taken it upon myself to not only preserve this wonderful interview on disk but to make it a center of discussion.

Until February 2007 I want to wish all of you, my good friends, the best Holiday Season ever.

*John*

