

THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER

VOL VI NO 5 JULY 7, 1988

"A robin is perched overhead.

"Today is today -- I love it!

"And 'springtime' sings my heart

"Over and over." ... Vera Wardner Dougan

"... they shall mount up
with wings as eagles; they shall
run, and not be weary; and they
shall walk, and not faint."
... Isaiah

The Empty, Empty
Nest



VWD:1895-1988

I'VE LOVED LIFE," SAID MOM. "I DON'T WANT MY FUNERAL
TO BE ALL WEEPY MOURNING. I WANT IT A CELEBRATION!"

AND MOM, IT WAS! IT WAS!



The rest of the poem from the mast head:

Earth's green, sky's blue above it

There's crocus and there's clover.

The future's far away, the past is past,

It's present now, and spring has come at last.

Wild songs are singing and ringing within me;

The earth's born anew, and there is no sorrow;

So come, let us dance, and not think of tomorrow!

Advocate of music dies at 92

Vera Dougan, 92, of Route 1, Beloit, known throughout the country for her work with the National Federation of Music Clubs, died Monday at Beloit Memorial Hospital. Arrangements are pending at the Rosman-Uehling-Kinzer Cranston Road Chapel.

Not the least of her activity was her work to open opportunities in music to the



Dougan

young people of this area and the nation. She was a major force in the Beloit Treble Clef for many years as well as in district, state and national music organizations.

In 1958 she took a leading role in a dispute over pending legislation concerning payment of "performance fees" for the use of records in coin operated phonographs, testifying before a senate committee on the "juke box bill."

Her concerns went beyond the borders of this country as she worked for the collecting of good music and instruments to send to France, Greece, Poland, Korea and other countries whose music libraries and symphonies were depleted.

On 1969 she was honored with the Governor's Award in the Arts determined by the Wisconsin Arts Foundation and Council. She was often lauded at testimonial affairs in all parts of the state and nation.

Mrs. Dougan was a driving force behind the national observance of National Music Week. Her influence

was felt here as she encouraged good music, especially charging parents with the responsibility of exposing their children to good music and training in the home to counteract outside influences.

A woman of broad interests, she also supported the Daughters of the American Revolution, was a director of the Community Concert Board for 20 years, president of the Beloit Federation of Women, First District Federation, Beloit Altrusa and Parliamentary Law clubs. She was a charter member of Fine Arts Club, and chaired the music committee of the First United Methodist Church.

She chaired Young Artists and Student Musicians auditions, Junior Festivals and American Music and Composition. She founded the Wisconsin Composers' League and compiled and edited the Wisconsin Composers brochure. She also edited the music federation's State Bulletin.

Mrs. Dougan studied piano and voice at the American and Mac Murray Conservatories of Music. She taught piano and concertized prior to her marriage. She was director of recreation, including music, dance and drama, at Chateau-Thierry, France, where she and Mr. Dougan met. She was a student-faculty member of Mac Murray College, and later taught French and music at Winchester, Ill., High School.

She was a member of Sigma Alpha Iota Musical fraternity, PEO, National Association of Music Therapy, was in Who's Who in America, was a patron of Beloit Art League and Beloit College Players.

Her hobbies included poetry writing — she had a volume published — and fishing and swimming.

She and Mr. Dougan had four children, all musicians as well as in teaching, medical, writing and other professions, and several grandchildren.

(A complete obituary will be published Wednesday.)

Beloit, June 27. Estelle Needham woke Dad to say that Mom was having trouble breathing. They called the Dr., the paramedics came, rushed her to the hospital where they aspirated her, gave her oxygen, & she seemed to be breathing easily, & sleeping, when Dad & Jo left (Jo'd come down.) They returned to the farm, thinking she was OK, fixed lunch, & at 1 PM the hosp. called & said Mom had just died. We think peacefully, in her sleep. Jackie was just changing planes at Toronto, at the moment of death, & arrived from O'Hare at 6 PM to hear from Jo that Mom was gone.

(cont p. 5)

The sunset sea is calling me—
The waves of the sunset sea.
My bark I glide across the tide
To the waves of rose and gold—
The sunset waves of gold.

Shines dimly far a silver star
Above the sunset sea;
Its constant light gleams cold and white
O'er the waves of rose and gold
The sunset waves of gold.

Ah! In the swells contentment dwells
Waves of the sunset sea;
Love in the rose and warmth in the glows
Of the waves of rose and gold
The sunset waves of gold.

I guide my bark but the waves grow dark;
Oh where is the sunset sea!
It has vanished away like the light of day
And the waves of rose and gold
The sunset waves of gold.

The sunset sea is calling me
But the star above is bright;
The warmth and the love only come from above
From the sky and the pale star light.
And the sunset waves are cold.

VWD

Minnie EnKing of The Beloit Daily News wrote the above, the day after Mom died, in lieu of the usual death notice. On the following day, this editorial appeared, written by Editor Bill Behling. —>

DANSE DE LA LUNE

I was dancing, I was dancing
To a lilting, fragile tune,
My slippers were of silver,
And I, — I was the moon.

I glided out above the sea
And mirrored there my face;
The wind caressed me lovingly,
I knew the night's embrace.

I ballooned among the clouds,
Pirouetted on a star,
My filmy scarf of moonbeams
Floating out afar.

I was dancing, I was dancing,
To a lilting, fragile tune;
My slippers were of silver,
And I, — I was the moon!

- VWD

Vera Dougan

She used her talents to enrich the lives of others.

THOSE FORTUNATE enough to possess special talents can expend those gifts in many ways. They can acquire wealth and power and prestige. They can waste their talents simply by neither developing them, nor using them for any real purpose.

Or they can use their gifts to enrich the lives of others. That is what Vera Wardner Dougan did. This community, this country, owes her much. Though she died on Monday, the repayment on that debt will go on, so long as there is music in the air.

Vera Dougan's life could be likened to a concert by a great symphony orchestra: Filled with variety and stimulation and feeling and melody. She was a musician and a teacher and a helpmate and a mother and a poet and a leader. Her greatest love, next to her fine family, was helping others — the young especially — acquire an appreciation for the finer things of life, principally music.

A warm, sharing lady of quality was she; enriched lives are her legacy.

Beloit Daily News

WILLIAM D. BEHLING
Publisher and Editor

June 29,
1988

WILLIAM R. BARTH
Managing Editor

BELoit DAILY NEWS, Wednesday, June 29, 1988

Obituaries

Dougan

Vera Wardner Dougan, Route 1, Colley Road, Beloit, died June 27, 10 days short of her 93rd birthday.

Though she had been bedridden at home since last summer, her bed in the living room was the hub of family activities, and she did not enter the hospital until her final morning.

Vera Dougan was born in Chicago July 7, 1895, the youngest child of Dr. Morton Smith Wardner and Evaline Anderson Wardner. She had a sister, Olive, and a brother, Horace, both predeceased.

From childhood she was an eager student of piano and ballet, studying at the Haylett School of Dance and the American Conservatory. After graduation from high school she did social work at the Association House in Chicago (similar to Jane Addam's Hull House).

She also continued her musical studies. She and a small coterie of volunteers were on call at the Chicago Opera as "interpretive dancers," as the opera had no official ballet at the time. She danced, too, for the budding Essanay movie studio in Lincoln Park at a time when there were few movies of any length or known stars. She danced, as a wood nymph, in more than one movie with the young Charlie Chaplin.

She also traveled for a time as pianist for "The Maraschel," Catherine Booth-Clibborn, daughter of General William Booth, who was conducting evangelistic meetings in America.

She was offered a combination scholarship and teaching position at MacMurray College, then Illinois Women's College, in Jacksonville, Ill., and so while earning her B.A., was also a faculty member teaching ballet, swimming and coaching sports. She won high honors and created some of the loveliest pageants of that era. Her alma mater, in 1955, honored her with a doctor of music degree.

After graduation she taught French, English and music for a time at Winchester High School. In 1923, she received two opportunities: to return to MacMurray as a faculty member, or to do reconstruction social work in France,

similar to our Peace Corps. She chose the latter, and spent a year in Chateau Thierry, on the staff of the Methodist Memorial, where she taught ballet, piano and English to French children.

It was there she met Ronald Dougan, a Northwestern student doing boys' work in scouting and recreation, and also teaching English. They were married in Chateau Thierry May 3, 1924, with Dr. Joseph Harker of MacMurray performing the ceremony.

The couple returned to Beloit in the autumn of 1924. Vera Dougan became active teaching dance and participating in community activities, as well as bearing four children by January of 1930. Her dance recitals on the lawn of the Big House at Dougan Dairy, and at Theodore Lyman Wright Art Hall at Beloit College, are still remembered. She was also the director, in the '30s, of several city-wide pageants.

In Beloit, Vera Dougan wanted her children to have the musical opportunities she herself had had. There was then no string program in the schools; she imported a teacher from Rockford by rounding up a day's worth of students, including the Dougan children.

This was the start of strings in Beloit; the schools eventually began string programs, the Dougan daughters and others, went on in string teaching, and the fruition of the string activity made possible the Beloit-Janesville Symphony, founded by Lewis and Pat Dougan Dalvit in the early '50s.

Vera Dougan was instrumental in beginning the symphony's supportive women's guild, and the symphony's concertmeister's chair is endowed in her name.

Vera Dougan found, on coming to Beloit, a splendid and strong music club, Treble Clef, which she joined as a solo ballet and piano member. She was its president in 1937. Through Treble Clef she became acquainted with the Federation of Music Clubs, accepting offices first in the Wisconsin Federation, then the Central Region, and ultimately, after being on the national board, became national president in 1955.

She served two distinguished terms. She remained active in the National

Federation of Music Clubs, holding continuing posts of responsibility, until near her death. She was publishing articles in the NFMC "Music Clubs" magazine through the summer of 1987.

The June 28 Beloit Daily News article on Mrs. Dougan has given many of Vera Dougan's activities and honors in Beloit, the federation and elsewhere.

She is survived by her husband, Ronald; four children: Joan Dougan Schmidt of Madison, Patricia Dougan Dalvit of St. Andrews, New Brunswick, Canada, Jacqueline Dougan Jackson of Springfield, Ill.; and Dr. Craig Dougan of Portland, Ore.; 18 grandchildren: Peter, Jeremy, Daniel and Thomas Schmidt and Katherine Schmidt Yde, Jacqueline Dalvit Guthrie, Stephanie Dalvit McPhillips, Damaris, Megan, Gillian and Elspeth Jackson, Richard, Bart, Trever and David Dougan, Cynthia Dougan Meiners, Lisa Macdonald and Dana Macdonald Wood.

There are 16 great-grandchildren: Jenny, Matthew, Karl Andrew, Sarah Joan and Kyla Schmidt, Sonja, Joshua and Benjamin Yde; Ann and David Guthrie; Sean and Kristen McPhillips; Cressida Broten; Enoch, Adam and Jennifer Dougan.

Visitation is Thursday 7-10 p.m. in Rosman-Uehling-Kinzer Cranston Road Chapel. The funeral service is Friday at 11 a.m. in First United Methodist Church with the Rev. Lance Herrick officiating. Burial will be in Oakwood Cemetery.

Those who wish to honor Mrs. Dougan's memory by continuing her work of encouraging and training young musicians may contribute checks made out to the "Vera Wardner Dougan Memorial Music Scholarship Fund," and send them in care of Mrs. David Collins, Route 1, Colley Road, Beloit, Wis., 53511.

53511



Mom dancing
with grandson
Tom at Katy
Schmidt & Dick
Yde's wedding.

THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER VOL VI NO 5 P 4

A CELEBRATION OF LIFE
honoring
Vera Arloulne Wardner Dougan
July 7, 1895 - June 27, 1988
First United Methodist Church of Beloit
July 1, 1988 11 O'Clock A.M.
Carol Hackbardt and Lance Herrick, Pastors

Gathering

Preludes Eileen Currier and Judith Paddock
"Panis Angelicus" Franck
"Ave Maria" Bach-Gounod
"Meditation" Massenet
"Sanctus" Gounod
"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" Bach

Song "The Last Spring"

***Processional** (*Please stand as able)

***Words of Grace and Greeting** The Pastors

***Hymn #38**, "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

Prayer (All uniting)

Gracious God, we have not sought this day or this hour, but we gather as a grateful people to praise you and honor you for sharing the life of Vera Wardner Dougan with us across many years. We bring our memories, fond memories. We bring our music, music inspired by Vera's deep love of melody. We bring our words, kind and thankful words. And with all of this, we celebrate the life of one who loved life and lived life to the full. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pastoral Prayers

Proclamation and Praise

Song "Abide with Me" Eudora Shepherd

Scripture Readings

Karl Schmidt
Selected verses from Proverbs, Psalms, and Revelation

Song "Psalm XXIII" by Creston Mr. Herrick

Reading "The Courtship" Mr. Schmidt

Hymn "We May Not Climb the Heavenly Steeps"

Reading An Excerpt from "Lovingly, Ron" Mr. Schmidt

Song "But the Lord Is Mindful of His Own" from "St. Paul" by Mendelssohn Helen Buehl

Witness "I Loved Life"

Offering of Life

Duet "Andante" from Concerto for Two Violins by Bach Joan Schmidt and Lola Yde

Pastoral Prayers and Our Lord's Prayer

***Hymn #536**, "For All the Saints"

***Benediction**

***Recessional**

Postludes Mmes. Currier and Paddock
"To God All Praise and Glory" Lorenz
"My Heart Ever Faithful" Bach

The Committal Service will be held at Oakwood Cemetery. You are invited to join the family there and then for a meal in Fellowship Hall here at the church.

I Loved Life

Vera has given us her own epitaph. In talking about today--though neither she nor Jackie knew the exact date when they talked the night away last summer--Vera said: "I don't want a solemn funeral. I loved life, and that's the mood I want." Indeed, Vera loved life and filled it.

I have had the privilege to hear a lot of the story of Vera and Ron's courtship. I have had a look at the snapshots taken in France. I am sure that she must have been as surprised as anyone when she returned a bride from that venture of investing a part of her life serving others. I can only imagine the spunk she must have had as a young woman, spunk to take on and live happily with Ron.

Vera was a creative person: dance and music were her special gifts. And the gift of music lives on in our own community. She indeed loved life. But she did not hoard it. She did not cling to it.

Jesus said to his disciples that anyone who loved their life would lose it, but that anyone who lost their life for the sake of others would keep it to eternal life. Vera loved life and was the source of life. She enjoyed giving life away. And perhaps that is why, in spite of our grief, we can so fully enter into a celebration of life. Vera loved life. She lived life. And by faith she lives even now!

The funeral program (reduced) is above, and right, the basis of Lance Herrick's remarks. He spoke extemporaneously, briefly and beautifully. The whole service was a beautiful celebration. You readers recall from last summer's ENNL that Mom told me in the middle of the night how she wanted her funeral: the music, scripture, hymns, that Edie & Helen should sing, Wastzie to sit with the family. She wanted us kids to play, & to did, the achingly lovely and movement of the Bach Double, with Lola Yde, who loved Mom, is grandmother to three of VWD's great-grandchildren, & is also Federation. We added the "Hymn to Joy," & the Vaughan Williams "For All the Saints," & Lance Herrick's splendid 23rd psalm. And we added my Round Barn story, on Dad & Mom's courtship; people not only laughed but guffawed. Karl read, as only Karl can, the scriptures, the story, and then parts from Dad's letters home from France, where he describes Mother and prepares his parents. People chuckled a lot, but not without tears. I was v. glad to have both Lance & Carol Hackbardt (cont p.5)

The earth is good, with growing things to touch;
A freshly opened leaf; a fragrant flower;
Pungent loam upon my hands; - so much
These draw ^{upon} my heart this ^{lonely} hour, -

Dreamed this were a garden, and that I
Could kneel in gratitude for soil and sun;
Could hold this changing beauty ^{til} I die,
And know the earth and God and growth are one.

Y.W. (D)

PSALM

The beauty of Thy day has surcharged my soul, O God!
 I will stand silent and know the serenity
 Of the clouds in the bosom of the sky.
 I will move my arms with the wind
 And feel the freedom of its motion—and sing.
 I will lift up my dull heart and open it to the wonder
 Of the sun, and exult with all my being.
 O, turn the light of Thy radiant presence
 Into the innermost recesses of my heart,
 That I may dispense with that which cannot live in Thy
 sight.
 The beauty of Thy day has surcharged my soul, O God!
 I will be still . . . and know Thee . . . VWD

Mom's Funeral (Cont from p. 4.)

officiating at the ceremony. Lance's lovely singing and remarks, Carol's voice of ringing joy on the prayers & benediction. I was also v. glad to have a woman minister! She was especially sensitive at the family visitation, as Lance had been at the house. Beloit's First Meth. is fortunate in their clergy. Eudie Shepherd made a special arrangement of Abide With Me, the organ carrying the tune in Vs. 2 while E. sang a kind of descant. And changed keys, Vs. 3 & 4. It was lovely & moving. And Helen B. on Mom's Mendelssohn, also lovely & moving. The organ & piano combo of preludes & postludes, dittos, & To found a tape of The Last Spring, which Mom had always wanted. We think Mom would have been delighted (was!) with the spirit of her funeral, all the beauty. It truly represented her. The pall bearers were son-in-law, Craig & Karl; dear friend David Collins, and grandsons Peter, Dan & Tom Schmidt. A 7th pall bearer was Karl Andrew, who trotted along beside his Daddy, and was absorbed with the entire funeral. He had been carefully & lovingly prepared by Dan & Julie. At the grave, where not one speck of dirt was in sight & the hole covered w/ astro turf, Damaris & Suzie had brought a Dougan milk pail filled with garden dirt from Chez Nous - and hand towels. Lance told the group that Protestant funerals had become so sanitized - and at the committal, all were welcome to take a handful of dirt & lay it on the casket. At most everyone did, and most patted it down: a final, loving, participatory gesture. And then we left Mom's body, & returned to the church: a good luncheon prepared by the church women. A sad, glad, wonderful, terrible day. To said at one point, "This would all be intolerable -- if it weren't going to happen to each of us." Mom would have been happy in knowing her Federation friends came - and so many others. The whole church ceremony was taped on church equipment, sure we'll have tapes to share. Just write. The picture to the left is Mom at 7 on her way to church: hope it reproduces. And the poetry throughout is Mom's. I'll give more of it from time to time in ENNL.

Mom's Death (cont from p. 2) . . . It was so considerate of Mom to wait till then: On the England trip, my co-teacher Mary's father had died on the 6th day of our 20, & she'd flown home, leaving me in charge of both classes & the tour. Had Mom died a week earlier, or 10 days, there'd have been no way I could have left the 20 students in England w/out a teacher. Dad says Mom knew where I was each day of the trip. Pat flew in Tues. from New Brunswick, & Craig from Portland. Other family able to come were Peter & Pamela Schmidt, Katie & Dede Yde, Dan, Julie, Karl Andrew, Sarah Joan Schmidt, Tom Schmidt & fiancée Theresa, Damaris Jackson & friend Suzie Hudge, Elle Jackson, Dorothy Kirk Weken from California and Stephanie Ball from McHenry, IL. Paul Campagna was in Italy, & missed, as were Mig, El, & all missing dear ones, friends or family. Did I omit Karl Schmidt? Very much there! A joy of funerals & an easing of grief is having so much family there, sharing. And friends.

If I could give to you one only gift
 To hold forever, in remembrance of me,
 'Twould be the peace that enters in the heart
 When love comes there to dwell, all silently.

I'd wrap it in the silver of the moon
 I'd tie it with the distant purple haze;
 I'd seal it with a baby's little smile
 And send it so, to gladden all your days.



THE RAIN CAME

Belair. Many bits worth recording from Mom's death till now. As soon as Mom died, it rained - "She's up there setting things right," Pat said. Someone said, "She's up organizing the angel choirs." Responded another, "She's federating them!" There was the coincidence of the Federal Express truck with Mom's dress honking me on the highway (he was lost) + insisting he hadn't honked till I braked ahead of him. (I braked at his honk) "However it happened," I said, "you've got my mom's dress in your truck," and he did. We figure Mom knew what dress was the best for her to wear, + she was seeing it got there in time! (I'd taken it to Spfld to wear to graduation, but then hadn't.) -- At the funeral home, after making the various arrangements, + being then shown the casket room, Pat burst out, "They're all UGLY! Like ostentatious curs! I don't want to bury my mother in any of them!" (She apologized later) The cheapest looked like a flocked Xmas card. We chose simple grey, white lining, next cheapest, + it was entirely appropriate. Lauce H. says pine boxes are available but you have to insist on seeing them. (Hidden in the basement, no doubt!) I said to Dad, in that room, "You see how hard all these decisions are on the family - while we're here, why don't you pick out the casket you like, + spare us this later?" Said RA, "Just dig a post hole + rain me in." A bit later he said, "Maybe I can be lost at sea." Pat said, "Come back to New Brunswick with me and I'll see if I can arrange it!"



Mom, maybe 14 - she sewed on all the hearts for a valentine dress. It was cut out + pasted in her h.s. memory book. I enlarged.

I came to "Abide With Me" I hesitated, knowing this was in her funeral plans, + wondering whether to bring these thoughts to the fore. But, I decided to go ahead, + began. Instantly Mom said, "I want that one at my funeral." "I know it, Mom," I replied. "It's all written down, and on my dresser up stairs." And then we sang it, + another hymn or two before we went to sleep. Last fall, I think I reported, I returned 3 wks after Mom had come home, + I said, "Well Mom, have the horrors of the hospital + the nursing home begun to fade?" "Why, I thought we had quite a nice time!" Mom said. I do think she'd say, if she could, (is saying?) "Why, I thought we had quite a nice funeral!" If ever there was a celebratory one, hers was it.

INEVITABLE

A stream is singing lullabys,
Its song has reached my ear;
And though I'm far and far away
How can I but hear?

Violets are blossoming,
Their hue has come to me;
And though I'm far and far away
How can I but see?

A heart is holding tenderness;
Mine once it set aglow;
And though I'm far and far away
How can I but know?

From Lauce Herrick: "Grief is
the price we pay for loving."

As you know, RAD had a prostate operation just before I went to England, + I stayed a week at the farm. On Eula's night off, I slept beside Mom in the recliner, + before settling down I decided to make another try at getting Mom to respond: she'd been sleeping almost all the time, + didn't seem too aware I was there. "Mom," I said, "let's sing some hymns," + I took the Meth. hymnals + began going thru it, singing the ones I liked. After two or three verses, Mom began piping in with me. We sang and sang, maybe half an hour. When

O, I can laugh with lips and eyes
When little joys are come to me;
My heart can show its happiness
In little ways, so easily;

But when the ache of ecstasy,
The pain of perfect joy is mine,
Then I am silent - for my soul
Is hushed, and in a place divine.

JOY - by VWD

Knowledge (VWD)

I did not know my arms were made
To hold you in their warm embrace;
I did not know these eyes of mine
Were supposed just to see your face;
I did not know that this my heart
Was given life to thrill with thine;
I did not know that all of me
Was yours - and nothing mine.

I cannot understand, Love,
The Why, or yet the How -
But knowledge lies within my breast;
I did not know, 'till now!

From Mary Coffman's father's funeral, June 18, '88: Mary was my co-teacher called back from England. Rueven, 15 or so, asks his father in Potok's The Chosen, what is the use of life. The father:

"Human beings do not live forever. We live . . . s than the time it takes to blink an eye, if we measure our lives against eternity. So it may be asked what value there is to a human life. There is so much pain in the world. What does it mean to have to suffer so much if our lives are nothing more than the blink of an eye? I learned a long time ago that a blink of an eye in itself is nothing. But the eye that blinks, that is something. A span of life is nothing. But the man who lives that span, he is something. He can fill that tiny span with meaning, so its quality is immeasurable though its quantity may be insignificant. Do you understand what I am saying? A man must fill his life with meaning, meaning is not automatically given to life. It is hard work to fill one's life with meaning. A life filled with meaning is worthy of rest. I want to be worthy of rest when I am no longer here."

When Mary's supervisor at Danville Area Comm. College asked if we wanted to do the England trip again next spring, Mary replied, "Oh, yes! We each have a surviving parent!"