



THE EMPTY NEST NEWSLETTER

VOLUME XVI NUMBER 1, '97

"The birds did chant their cheerful lays..."

- anon

ELLE + ROYCE: 1 YEAR!

"BY EMPTY NEST STANDARDS, OUR WEDDING IS
STILL RECENT NEWS!"--ELLE



MR. AND MRS. ROYCE DEBOW

JULY 20, 1996



From a letter to my editor, after I got back to Vermont after Elle and Royce's wedding:

"Elle's wedding Saturday was one of the loveliest I've ever known--a syvan setting with Lake Michigan visible through the trees, perfect weather, and I have never seen a more beautiful and radiant bride. She wore my wedding dress. Cress was a bridesmaid, and she was beautiful too. Many friends and family participated in the service. Elle and Royce had planned the weekend with lots of different activities surrounding the wedding itself, and it was fun from start to finish. A classy, joyful, comfortable event. Elle walked down the aisle alone--she said if Grandpa had lived, she'd have had him roll her down. He did meet Royce the week before he died, and by saying, 'I like that young man, she ought to marry him,' in a sense sped up the courtship--especially as it was intensified by the two week death-burial we all went through, and Royce was there the whole time. (He and Elle had been with Dad only an hour before his aneurism, and Royce stayed with Elle and me that whole night, till he died). Royce bonded with everyone: by the end of that depth event, he was like one of the family."

The wedding was held on the woodsy and small-streamed lawn of a big old frame building (once a VFW hall or some such, now converted into a great place for a festive gathering such as a wedding). Out in the country, about a block from a Lake Michigan uninhabited beach via a dirt road. Lots to do and see outdoors. And indoors, the food for both the rehearsal dinner, and the dinner after the wedding, was spectacular. Among Empty Nest readers who came to the wedding were Jerry and Debby Dougan, Jo and Karl Schmidt, the Ydes, the Dan Schmidts, Paul Campagna, Phyllis Walden, Carol and Sara Dell, Bill and Melanie Hamblin, the Veaches. Cousin Dorothy Lueken was due from California, but became ill. We missed you!

Elle had five bridesmaids: two friends from college, two from Beloit, and Gillian's daughter Cressida. Her sister Megan was matron of honor. (Sisters Damaris and Gillian read portions of the service.) The bridesmaids, lovely in cornflower blue frocks and straw hats, came down the aisle and one by one took their places in a row on the wooden step. Last came Megan, who went up past the step onto the platform and stood alone. Her four-year-old son Mark's clear voice called out to her, "Megan! There's room there, beside Cressida!"

Royce's adorable little niece was flower girl. At the start of her big moment she froze. Her mother leaned into the aisle from the head of it and beckoned to her encouragingly, whereupon Alana sped down the aisle clutching her hat and not dropping a single flower. A photographer caught the blur.



The Celebration of Marriage

between

Jacqueline Elspeth Jackson

and

Royce Kingsley DeBow Jr.

July 20, 1996

Cedar Beach
Belgium, Wisconsin

Minister:

Gilbert Church

Parents:

Jacqueline Dougan Jackson
Robert Jackson & Geraldine Parker
Donna and Royce DeBow

Matron of Honor:

Megan Ryan

Best Man:

Timothy Rinn

Bridesmaids:

Shannon Miller
Melissa Lindberg
Mary Stelter
Sherry Gathof
Cressida Broten

Groomsmen:

Matthew Leonard
James DeBow
Paul Peplinski
William Cruz
Gary Wernette

Flower Girl:

Alana Houston

Readers:

Gillian Jackson
Damaris Jackson
Pamela Houston

Soloist:

Erika Donnelly

Violinist:

Holly Schuh

Guitarist:

Jim Waller

Prayers:

Donna DeBow, Robert Jackson, Doris Sexton,
Rebecca Veach, Jacqueline Dougan Jackson,
Les Shafer, Sara Dell, Sue Reagan,
Steven Houston



ELLE and MEGAN
JACKSON RYAN

Miles Andrew
Ryan, 3



MARK ALLEN
RYAN, 4



ELLE and JAY MAXWELL
RYAN, age 1





Donna DeBow gives Elle "something borrowed" in the dressing room before the wedding.



Alana sprints down the aisle!

Some of the fun things: The wedding party went horseback riding in the morning, before the ceremony. And remarkably, no one hobbled down the aisle, grimacing, or was bowlegged! After the reception there was bowling; Royce and Elle had reserved several lanes. Next morn, those still in the vicinity met at Royce's parents' home, enjoyed brunch on the sunny patio, and watched Elle and Royce open presents. Most of us stayed at the same motel; that made for lots of interaction. The wide lawns of the wedding site gave room for the little kids to run, and people also wandered down to Lake Michigan; some even waded.

The First Reading: From *Standing by Words*, by Wendell Berry

The meaning of marriage begins in the giving of words. We cannot join ourselves to one another without giving our word. And this must be an unconditional giving, for in joining ourselves to one another we join ourselves to the unknown. We can join one another only by joining the unknown. We must not be misled by the procedure of experimental thought: in life, in the world, we are never given two known results to choose between, but only one result that we choose without knowing what it is.

Because the condition of marriage is worldly and its meaning communal, no one party to it can be solely in charge. What you alone think it ought to be, it is not going to be. Where you alone think you want it to go, it is not going to go. It is going where the two of you--and marriage, time, life, history, and the world--will take it. You do not know the road; you have committed your life to a way.

The Second Reading: A poem by Walt Whitman

I do not offer the old smooth prizes,
But offer rough new prizes,
These are the days that must happen to you:
You shall not heap up what is called riches,
You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve.
However sweet the laid-up stores,
However convenient the dwellings,
You shall not remain there.
However sheltered the port,
And however calm the waters,
You shall not anchor there.
However welcome the hospitality that welcomes you
You are permitted to receive it but a little while
Afoot and lighthearted, take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before you,
The long brown path before you, leading wherever you choose.
Say only to one another:
Camerado, I give you my hand!
I give you my love, more precious than money,
I give you myself before preaching or law:
Will you give me yourself?
Will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?

Below:
Elle, Royce,
Donna, Royce
DeBow



MOSAIC MEDIA, INC.: New Venture for E&R

Royce is in business television: he's a producer of corporate video communications (mostly for Allstate) and educational videos (mostly for GE). He lives and works out of a farmhouse on a horse farm above Milwaukee. He and Elle (and Elle's 3 retard cats) rent the first floor. He hires crews wherever in the country he goes to do a job. During the past year Elle's been working with him some, learning the business. She's also done substitute teaching, but not much because the other jobs are frequent, more lucrative, and allow her to work with Royce. Both she and Royce continued their forensic coaching of high school kids this spring; meets kept the weekends busy. Now the two of them, with another couple, have formed "Mosaic Media Inc." They'll continue to work with GE and Allstate--and other businesses--and Elle is now officially a producer! I asked her for specifics of the work, her reply: "The work is interesting, but not very interesting to describe."

Gillian
Damaris
Megan
Jackie
Elle
Royce



Elle and
Aunt Joan
Schmidt

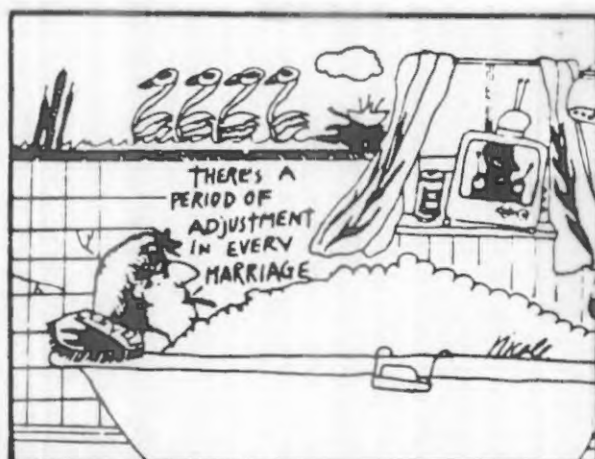
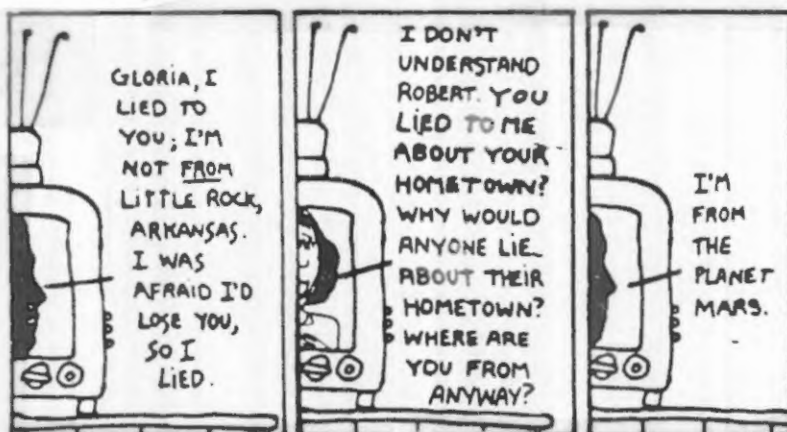
Elle with
Carol and
Sara Dell



ELLE MARRIES A HORSETRADER

The summer (and fall) of '96 were almost one long holiday: Elle and Royce first flew to Ixtapa, Mexico, for the official honeymoon. Shortly after their return they towed Royce's two horses to N. Carolina, and traded them for one horse (sounds like Jack and the Beanstalk, doesn't it!). They then flew to Vermont and spent several days on the lake with Jackie, as well as hiking mountain streams with Demi. Later in the fall they had a working holiday at Palm Springs. This summer they've had only one vacation trip: to visit Royce's grandfather in Georgia.

I asked Elle for a word to ENNL readers. She said, "Tell everybody we've made it to our first anniversary!"



SO WHAT ELSE IS NEWS? THE BOOK!!

Okay, folks, here's the scoop. **Stories from the Round Barn** will be published October 15, and it's absolutely beautiful! I reproduce here the publisher's blurb. (Brag, brag.) (It's only taken me all my life to write this book.) There'll be another Empty Nest, SOON, telling how you can order it. I expect of course that you'll all buy it, or I'll break your leg. Seriously, I'm interested in volume, for if the book sells well I'm assuming the press won't have any hesitation about going on to publish the HUGE, 2000 pp. book (which I won't bend your fingers about, I promise). (Not that my editor has even hinted this, but I worry.) Here's what you can do: 1. Ask your bookstores to stock copies. 2. Ask your libraries to order it. 3. Ask your high

school libraries to order it. 4. Send me the names/addresses of friends and relations you'd like me to send publicity to. And 5: **If you plan to buy more than one copy** (and think of HOLIDAY GIFT NEEDS, BIRTHDAYS, WEDDINGS, ETC: it's a good gift for any age, sex and occasion, except it's not a young children's book, it's got too much sex and violence; you know farms!) then let me know, and **I'll share my publisher's discount with you.** Or, another option: we may be using the book as a fundraiser for saving the actual round barn, and if you pay full price, 40% of it will go to preserving the barn. This isn't all set up yet. There will be more Round Barn news SOON, in a SPECIAL ISSUE!

STORIES FROM THE ROUND BARN

Jacqueline Dougan Jackson

A MOVING TRIBUTE TO THE
LEGACY OF GENERATIONS PAST,
MIXING BIOGRAPHY, ORAL
HISTORY, AND CREATIVE
NONFICTION

First publication



ILLUSTRATION FROM THE BOOK.

TRIQUARTERLY BOOKS
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY PRESS

October 15,
November 1997

WORLD

7 1/2 X 7 1/2 / 300 PAGES

53 PHOTOGRAPHS AND LINE DRAWINGS

ISBN 0-8101-5072-7 CLOTH / \$24.95

Told in the inimitable, animated voice of Jacqueline Dougan Jackson, *Stories from the Round Barn* is an affecting addition to the canon of the American memoir of rural life.

Using stories, anecdotes, history, and even veterinary science, Jackson braids together a series of dramatic fragments and episodes to vividly recreate life on the Dougan Guernsey Farm Dairy.

Founded in 1911 by W. J. Dougan near Beloit, Wisconsin, the Dougan farm, with its unusual round barn, is symbolic of a vanishing era. A renowned farm which was among the first to introduce many aspects of modern dairying to its operation, the Dougan farm eventually became a victim of agribusiness-style dairying and was closed. As Jackson charts the history of the farm from founding to decline and end, her deft characterizations make the farm come unforgettably alive. She gives us a profound understanding of a life marked by hard labor, disappointment, and danger, as well as by satisfactions and adventures; of the place where parents and children, hired men, relatives, and neighbors strive together for a life worth living.

As Jackson recreates the texture and tone of life on the farm, larger themes emerge: the constant balancing between material life and spirit, the quest for humane values within a hard world of business and labor, the difficult lessons fundamental to childhood. A fascinating mixture of biography, oral history, and creative nonfiction, *Stories from the Round Barn* is a moving tribute to the legacy of generations past, and definitive proof that, as Jackson says, "everything, in all directions, in all dimensions, is bound together."

The book includes fifty-three photographs and line drawings.

JACQUELINE DOUGAN JACKSON is the author of several children's books. She teaches at Sangamon State University, Illinois at Springfield.



ILLUSTRATION FROM THE BOOK.

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