

Remembering Betty

By Connie Olhausen

It was my pleasure to know Betty Eeten for more than 50 years. During that time we shared a close association as nurses, employed by first the Hand Hospital and later the Hartley Community Memorial Hospital, for a total of 20 or more years.

I worked the evening shift for most of those years while Betty usually worked nights or the “graveyard shift” as it was called by many. It seemed that those hours suited her well, because babies had a habit of arriving during the night, and Betty was definitely a baby person. Assisting a delivering mom and then caring for the new baby were her favorite tasks at work. She had a wonderful, caring disposition, and the nursing profession suited her perfectly.

But the story that comes to mind about Betty occurred in the kitchen of the house where she and Harry lived just across from the cemetery. I happened to be there one day when Betty was mixing a “made from scratch” angel food cake. As a young bride, I considered myself something of an expert in crafting “scratch” angel food cakes, because my thoughtful mother-in-law, Leona Olhausen, had given me a Betty Crocker cook book at a bridal shower. It was the only cookbook I had, and I considered it the bible of superior recipes and infallible methods. Betty Crocker’s method of transferring the angel food cake batter from the mixing bowl to the cake pan was to carefully place it in the pan, run a knife through it again and again to release trapped air, and then carefully place it in a pre-heated oven.

You can imagine my reaction of shock and horror when Betty slammed the filled cake pan on the edge of the table-twice. “What are you doing, I gasped?”

To which she replied, “Getting the air out.”

I said, “Oh, my Betty Crocker cookbook says to run a knife through the batter to get the air out.”

With that, she laughed and banged the pan on the table once more as a possible show of contempt for Betty Crocker and her methods. After that, whenever angel food cake came up in conversation, she

would laughingly inquire as to whether I had ever tried banging a cake pan on the table before putting it in the oven.

As a true disciple of Betty Crocker, I never have.