

## Margaret Raymond August 22, 1901 - January 19, 1989

2-6-89

Who can find a wife with strength of character? She is far more precious than jewels... she is like the merchant ships; she brings her food from afar. She rises while it is yet night and gives food to her household, even a portion to her maidens... she sees that her merchandise is profitable; her lamp does not go out at night... she opens her palm to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy...

Strength and dignity clothe her and she laughs at the future. She opens her mouth with wisdom and gentle teaching is on her tongue. She looks well to the ways of her household and eats no bread of idleness. "Many daughters have done nobly but you transcend them all." Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who reveres the Lord will be praised.

--From Proverbs, Chapter 31

These words from the Old Testament recapitulate the life of Margaret Raymond and her 52 years as owner and operator of the Maple Crest Motel in Medina. The Rev. James Connelly of St. Mary's Church noted in a eulogy for Margaret that there were many times when he had asked her to give lodging and food to someone in need. And of course, Margaret and her devotee, Grace Weatherbee were always there to provide. I can just hear Margaret saying to some indigent person, "Now darling, you just come right in, we'll take care of you." Somehow Margaret felt obligated to care for those who needed special attention. Last spring I asked her if she was going to be open to serve diners on Easter Sunday. She replied, "Oh, honey, I

have to because many of those older people come to expect it and some have no place to go." The Maple Crest has been a home to many who needed it for over a half a century. There were times when tenants couldn't or just didn't pay their bills and of course, Margaret would extend more credit and sometimes never got paid at all.

It's interesting too, that Margaret was not only concerned for her numerous clientele but also had a heart as big as gold for stray and homeless cats and dogs. Trixie and Princess always greeted you and Margaret frequently had a tale of woe to tell about some poor kitty she had found in the alley.

Since 1957 the Maple Crest has been home for Grace Weatherbee who had worked hand and hand with Margaret - "My Grace" as Margaret would say. I know Margaret thought of her like a daughter and together they served the most attractive and delicious meals. Creamed codfish on Friday night was a favorite of many. One time after having "finger food," Margaret brought out finger bowls. Such little things as this bespoke of the fact that she knew how to do things with a touch of class. I was impressed! But it wasn't just the meals. It was Margaret and Grace together that truly added to the charm and very personal touch you got when going to the Maple Crest.

Frequently Margaret would reminisce about her mother, her growing years, her husband and establishing and running the Maple Crest—her home, her life. Prior to moving to Medina in 1936 Margaret ran the Raleigh Hotel in Lockport. She always said the reason she came to Medina was



so that her mother Johanna, would have a nice home to live in rather than the hotel in Lockport. It seems they lost their family home located near Barker in a fire which destroyed everything they had. When Margaret got to Medina she really had to start from scratch to establish a home for herself and her mother. In 1945 Margaret married Peter Raymond, who died in 1955. Her mother, Mrs. McChesney, died in 1961 at the age of 99 years. Margaret's father, William Fritze, died in 1903, when she was only two years old. Her mother later married Frank McChesney, whom Margaret thought of as her father. He died in 1929.

1936, Margaret named her hotel and restaurant the Maple Crest because of all the maple trees surrounding it and because many of the leaded windows in the building display a crest design. It was an institution and a segment of Medina's history which stretched over a half a century. This past November Margaret Raymond was stricken with three successive strokes from which she never recovered and so ended an era within itself, seemed like a time lag. An era of gracious hospitality which will be missed by many. I often said, "The Maple Crest is one of Medina's best kept secrets." Another patron recently said, "Yes, and now