

H.C.C. - Thursday - November 12, 1998

**ETHEL REBECCA
MCDOUGALD RHODEN
1908-1998**

Longtime Valdez resident Ethel Rebecca McDougald Rhoden died quietly in her sleep early Tuesday morning at Valdez Community Hospital where she had resided for the past 20 months. Mrs. Rhoden was 89.

Graveside services for Mrs. Rhoden will be held Friday afternoon, Oct. 9, at 3 p.m. at the Valdez Cemetery.

A native of Houston County, Ethel attended Barber College and became the first licensed lady barber in Houston, in 1927. For 20 years, 1934 to 1954, she owned and operated a four-chair barber shop in downtown Houston.

She moved to Alaska in the summer of 1957 to settle in Old Town where she operated a barber shop in the Gilson Building. Two years later she opened her own shop which she named - with a sense of humor - The Clip Joint.

All of her efforts were wiped out, however, in the Great Earthquake of 1964 which destroyed her home and business.

Undaunted, she moved to New Town Valdez where she re-opened her barber business in a back room of the Club bar owned by her friends, Larry and Pearl Parker, before moving to a new location next to the Glacier Bar in the small mall owned by George and Mary Gilson.

In 1975 she retired after 47 years in the barbering business. She then worked in the gift shop at the Sheffield House (now the Westmark) which was operated by her friend, Thelma Christofferson, then later at the Valdez Museum during the summers from 1979 to 1993.

Up until 20 months ago when she moved to the hospital as a convalescent patient, she was still active in town. Her head swathed in a colorful kerchief, she was frequently seen driving her battered old pickup truck with the sign "Ole Betsy" painted on the rusty door.

She drove around town at a top speed of 5 to 10 miles per hour, the old truck never out of second gear.

Ethel loved to travel, and her voyages carried her across the U.S.

and Canada, twice to Europe, and through the Panama Canal. But Valdez was her home and like a dedicated Valdezian, she enjoyed the rain and snow.

Mrs. Rhoden is survived by her two children, David H. Rhoden, III of Waco, and Dian Rhoden of Valdez, Alaska; four grandchildren, Dalon D. Vculek of Anchorage, Alaska, David H. Rhoden IV of Dallas, Janel R. Vculek of Valdez, Alaska and Ashley T. Rhoden of College Station, also survive, as do her brothers, Oscar Lee McDougald of Crockett, and K.D. McDougald of Hockley.

Ethel was a member of the Pioneers of Alaska, Auxiliary No. 2 in Valdez as well as a member of the Eastern Star Chapter in Houston.

For many years, she had the distinction of being the oldest of the Old Town residents living in new Valdez.

**Witzleben Family Funeral
Home & Crematory in
Anchorage.**