

Pearl & Bill's 50th Anniversary: 15 Jan 1944 - 1994

(Speech read at the celebration by Wendy Baker)

Ladies and gentlemen, could I have your attention please?

The time's come to pause for a few moments to reflect on the fifty years of Pearl and Bill's marriage. Fifty years is a long time; half a century. That's why it's such an important occasion. It's wonderful that Mum's bridesmaid, Joyce, can be here today.

Mum and Dad were, perhaps, an oddly matched couple. Dad was a farmer's son; Mum did not particularly like the country – well, at least she didn't go much on blowflies, spiders, dust and corned mutton! Dad was quiet by all accounts, while Mum was a real "people person" – she still is, and that's obvious because so many people have come today to wish them congratulations. Mum and Dad had a few mutual interests however; roller-skating, ice-cream, chocolates and each other.

In fact, they met each other at Our Boys Institute roller skating rink in Adelaide, which I'm sure some of you will remember. They had to wait for real chocolates until after war-time rationing was over.

Pearl Aileen Hastwell and Robert William Clark were married on 15th January 1944 at the Plympton Methodist Church, as it was then known, on Marion Road. Their honeymoon was a three day visit to Victor Harbor, travelling by steam train for several hours to get there. The Pipiriki Guest House where they stayed has long gone, the site now of half a dozen modern townhouses, but the marriage that began that day is still going strong.

Their first home was a rented house in Torrensville from where Dad rode his pushbike daily to work as a cabinet-maker. After three years their first baby was born and a little later there was a traumatic upheaval when the house was taken back from them by its owner. Mum's aunt, who had raised her from infancy, took the family into her own home at Plympton. Living with in-laws was never easy though, and it was a great achievement when Mum and Dad were able to move into their own newly built home, which they designed in I think, 1950, and they've lived here ever since.

Their second baby, my sister Lyndell, was born in 1955.

Mum and Dad always worked together, whatever the project, whether it was digging drainage bores in the clay soil of their block, sewing curtains, or making new interior linings for their first car. Dad used the skills of his trade to make beautiful wooden toys for us children, and to sell. When finance was limited Mum sewed buttonholes for extra cash, and Dad used his home-made portable dark-room cabinet to develop black and white photos for people.

They have always helped each other; Mum the one with the bright ideas and Dad the one to patiently plot the best method of execution. It would be silly to say "... and never a cross word" because it's a part of human nature that when two people live together there must be exasperations and frustrations as well as joy and happiness.

But the underlying love they have for each other has helped them through the rough patches of Mum's ill-health.

Pearl and Bill are fortunate to have been able to share in the pleasure of both their daughters who have grown up, married and given them three grandchildren who are themselves now young adults.

And Lyndell and I are fortunate to be able to be here today to share in the pleasure of Mum and Dad's golden wedding anniversary.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join us now in congratulating Pearl and Bill on their fiftieth, and may they have many more happy years together.
