



Royal Hampton turns Platinum for Double Wedding Anniversary Celebration

Royal Hampton put on a sparkling celebration for two devoted couple's celebrating their Platinum wedding anniversaries at Royal Hampton home in Ponteland.



ABOVE: John & Mary Southwell met on a blind date whilst they were both working for the LMS in Crewe and are celebrating their 70th Wedding Anniversary.



ABOVE: Dr Victor & Norma Harrison met when Victor a successful young medical student asked a vivacious young lady out for lunch. She had no hesitation in accepting.



After they were married in 1947 John took up a post as a lecturer at Wolverhampton Technical college. In 1956, John, Mary and their 3 year old daughter, Victoria went to Ghana where John had a lecturing post in Mechanical Engineering at Kwame Nkrumah University in Kumasi. Their second daughter, Sarah, was born during this time.

After a brief spell at home in the 60s, lecturing at Rutherford College of Technology (now part of the University of Northumbria) and living in Ponteland, John went overseas again to work at Singapore Polytechnic.

Leaving Singapore in 1970, John worked for the British government, working for the Ministry of Overseas Development, advising on technical education Burma, followed by further postings to Nigeria, Jordan and other Middle East countries.

In 1976 John was awarded the OBE for services to technical education in Burma. Mary accompanied John on all his postings and was a great support.

John retired in 1983 and the happy couple lived in Alnwick for 20 years before moving to Royal Hampton in 2016.

Lara Masucci, Home Manager at Royal Hampton said:

"We're really delighted to share this story. We like to make all our residents feel at home by keeping to any traditions they have and taking the time to celebrate special occasions, birthdays and anniversaries.

Everyone had such a fantastic time, and it was an honour to celebrate this impressive milestone with the couple."

Not surprisingly the short courtship led to a proposal in marriage and they married in 1946 at St Helens Church in Low Fell, Gateshead and are celebrating their 71st Anniversary.

Dr Harrison has been a GP at Tyne Dock his whole career and Mrs Harrison was a full time housewife and mum, they had three beautiful children, Nigel, Victoria and Vanessa.

The end of the war gave birth to new beginnings for everyone. It was an exciting time to be young and Newcastle was just as vibrant then (in its own way) as it is today.

The first two years were spent in Germany where Dr Harrison was an Officer in the RAMC - attached to the Guards Regiment and Mrs Harrison enjoyed the life of an Officers Wife.

Then they came back to South Shields where Dr Harrison took up the mantle of following his father as GP in their Tyne Dock practice. Not only was the GP role very different in the 50s and 60s from today, but that of the GP's wife was very different too.

Their life together has been described as always a close togetherness, everything was a team effort.

1946 was certainly a year for great movies like "the Best Years of our Lives" it's a Wonderful Life" and "the Big Sleep". Music centred around Frank Sinatra, The Ink spots, Bing Crosby, Perry Como and The Andrews Sisters (Dean Martin only made a fleeting debut that year). Celebrities like Lauren Bacall, Ava Gardner, Betty Grable and Veronica Lake filled the big screen. The UK in 1946 had a King and a certain Princess Elizabeth was yet to marry her Prince Charming.

Both couples, all residents at the home celebrated their landmark platinum anniversary with family, friends and their fellow residents.

Each couple received a card and best wishes from the Queen in acknowledgement of their anniversaries.