



By Dick Wallace of The Free Press

Janet Morrison, 89, who marked her 72nd wedding anniversary with husband Tom, 91, on Thursday, proudly displays an old iron scone skillet she brought to Canada from her native Scotland.

'Stick together'

Childhood sweethearts married 72 years

By Penny Gudgeon
of The Free Press

WARDSVILLE — If wife-swapping ever occurred to 91-year-old Tom Morrison, he admits it's too late now.

"I kept her too long. She's too old," he deadpans. The group on the veranda, including wife Janet, 89, breaks into another round of laughter.

Married 72 years, Tom and Janet are out of style — and loving it.

Their anniversary rolled around Thursday and though neither wanted any fuss, neighbors and family dropped in throughout the day with flowers, cakes and best wishes for the couple "whose door is always open."

Don't ask the Morrisons what they think of today's spiralling divorce rates.

"I think if you're foolish enough to get trapped you should stay in the trap," Tom says — and though the words are flippant, the message seems to be that people don't try to stay together these days.

And don't ask Janet what she thinks of women who keep their maiden names when they marry.

"Why would you want to get married and not change your name?" is as far as she will comment on that.

Childhood sweethearts, the Morrisons were married in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1906.

By the time they settled in Alvinston in 1913, looking for "a better life," there were four children. Eight more would come.

There are 34 grandchildren now and "we've lost count of the great-grandchildren," Janet says.

"They're coming every week," says Tom, deadpan again — but everyone else's laughter cuts the country stillness.

It wasn't until 1919 that the Morrisons could afford their first farm near Wardsville — 115 acres they still own near what is known as the Big Bend conservation area.

The house was destroyed by fire 24 years later, along with most of their possessions.

But some things were salvaged. Still hanging in the farmhouse the

Morrison moved into after the fire is the huge griddle Janet had brought from Scotland.

There were countless scones to make for the burgeoning family, cows to milk and 32 loaves of bread to bake each week. No time, say the Morrisons, to find fault with each other.

"Stick together and do the best you can," is what Janet says she would tell a young couple these days. "Never pull against, pull for."

It was 30 years before the Morrisons got back to Scotland but there were four or five more trips after that. The most recent was two years ago on their 70th anniversary.

They are thinking of taking another one. Maybe next year, on their anniversary, to avoid the "fuss."

Tom says he would like to go to Jerusalem, to see the old buildings. Might have gone this year, he says, but the passports had expired.

Someone on the veranda points out helpfully that they can be renewed.

Janet beams.

"What about it, Pa?"



John and Mary Anne Carmichael

The marriage of Mary Anne (Auckland), Daughter of Edward and Katie (Lamont) Auckland to John Carmichael, son of James and Mary Jane (Marsh) Carmichael was performed by Dr. J.A. McLean at the Largie manse on September 12, 1934. The attendants were John's sister and husband who were married on April 21, 1934 - Annie Belle (Carmichael) and John D. Gilchrist of Dunwich. The two couples travelled to London for a meal following the ceremony. The couple honeymooned in Toronto, Hamilton and Niagara Falls travelling in a Model A Ford.

They resided on the "Bolting Farm" across the Thames River on the "Big Bend" in Middlesex County until the following June. They returned to the home farm across the Thames in Aldborough Township where the Carmichael family was living. Here they lived and farmed, raised good crops and registered Hereford cattle and led a busy life until the fall of 1972. After building a new house east on the concession A closer to Graham Road (76 Highway) on a farm they owned, they moved there.

By the spring of 1983 Marion's health gave out and she spent May to November in Beattie Haven, Wardsville. After breaking her hip in November, she was admitted to Four Counties Hospital, Newbury, in November 1983.

On September 12, 1984 the Newbury Hospital set aside a room for a few hours so friends of the Golden Wedding couple could visit. Marion sat in a chair throughout the visits and a light lunch was served by two neices of John's - Mary (Gilchrist) Nethercott and Annie Isobel (McCallum) Tait. Marion and John received many congratulatory messages from the Prime Minister and provincial leaders. The following day, September 13, 1984, Marion was 80 years old.



The 50th Wedding Anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. A. McMurchy

On November 15th 1934 Archibald Douglas McMurchy, only son of Mr and Mrs Archie J. McMurchy and Gladys Catharine McLarty, daughter of Mr and Mrs Frank McLarty, both of Aldborough Township, were united in marriage by Rev. Dr. J. A. McLean, minister of Argyle church Crinan. The attendants were Archie and Marjorie McLarty.

They were blessed with four children, Frank of Aldborough Township, John of Toronto, William on the home farm concession 4 Aldborough Township, Helen, Mrs Bruce Beaty of Vernon, British Columbia. They have five grandchildren, Douglas, Steven and Sharon McMurchy, Colin and Tannis Beaty and two great-grandchildren, Elizabeth and Kenneth McMurchy.

Frank McMurchy and his wife Rose hosted a family dinner for their parents, a surprise party was held the evening before, when their neighbours called to offer their congratulations. Congratulations were received from the Governor General, Madame Suave, Premier William Davis and James McGuigan, M.P.P. for Elgin-Kent.

Livingstones celebrate golden wedding anniversary

Douglas and Georgina (McCallum) Livingstone of Wardsville celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at an open house on September 12, 1986.

The couple were married on September 12, 1936 at the bride's home in Aldborough Township. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dougald M. McCallum.

The couple were wed under an arch covered in autumn flowers by Dr. J.A. McLean of Argyle Presbyterian Church.

Witnesses to the wedding were the bride's sister Sarah McAlpine and the groom's brother Gilbert Livingstone. Mrs. Bruce McLean, sister-in-law of the bride played the wedding march and Mrs. Allen McLean was the soloist.

They took a wedding trip to Muskoka and then settled on the groom's farm at Crinan until 10 years ago when they moved to Wardsville.

The couple has one daughter Barbara Taylor and four grandchildren, Elaine, Janice, Bob and David.

The open house was held in the afternoon and the evening and about 250 people called to give the couple their best wishes. People flowed in and out of the house enjoying tea and a light lunch.

They received several cards and gifts and Barb Rey craft presented them with plaques from her husband Doug, Middlesex MPP, and the Ontario Premier David Peterson.

In the afternoon the guests were treated to a few songs on the pipes by Lachlan McLean, the son of the soloist at the couple's wedding.

Mrs. Livingstone said at first she didn't want to do anything about the anniversary but she's glad her daughter and her husband talked her into it because now she has many cards and memories to remind her of a lovely day.



50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY - Douglas and Georgina Livingstone celebrated their anniversary by hosting an open house for over 250 friends and relatives. tfp photo



McGill 50th Wedding Anniversary

On July 12, 1947, John Duncan McGill and Norma Eileen Richardson exchanged their wedding vows in Salem United Church near Wallaceburg. On July 13, 1997, their family arranged a family gathering to mark fifty years since their marriage.

A bountiful buffet dinner was served on beautifully decorated tables set on Brian and Nancy's lawn. The centrepiece was a lovely floral arrangement in colours of pink, gold and maroon, while gold candles, gold accents and a three-tiered anniversary cake completed the setting.

The family presented their father and mother with a set of lawn furniture. Pictures taken by photographer, Bonnie McGill, captured memories of the day for future years.



Ed and Anna McCallum.

Ed McCallum and Anna Ross were married at the Baptist manse, Rodney, on May 31, 1947, by the minister Rev. Frank Ward.

On May 31, 1997, they celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary at the West Elgin Legion, West Lorne.

Ed and Anna have five children and twelve grandchildren.

Douglas and his wife Carol have three children - Alan, Brian and Tammy.

Luann and Louie have three children - Rene and twins Pamela and Paula.

Lonne and Theresa have two children - Lisa and Cody.

Duncan and Tracey had two children - Malcolm and Jamie. Since the anniversary, Jamie has passed away.

Daniel and Patricia have two children - Jessica and Maggie.

A great grandson, Keifer Van den Borsch has been born to Rene.

- Anna McCallum