

LIFESTYLES

Bridges couple celebrates 75th wedding anniversary

(The following article is reprinted with permission from the Forest City Daily Courier).

By JEAN GORDON
Daily Courier Staff Writer

ELLENBORO — When Fadie Bridges and Georgie Bridges exchanged wedding vows nearly 75 years ago, they traveled to Gaffney, S.C. and said vows before a judge at the courthouse there.

Bridges was 20 years old and his new bride, whose maiden name was also Bridges, was 15 years old.

Accompanying them to Gaffney were friends the late Clarence and Myrle Owens.

Traditionally back then, Mrs. Bridges said, newly married couples moved into the home of the groom's parents, so Mr. Bridges' boyhood home with his parents, the late Mark and Zudie Ledford Bridges, became his first home with his bride.

"That's what you did back then," Mrs. Bridges said from the couple's comfortable wood frame home in Ellenboro recently as they discussed the longevity of their marriage.

Who would have thought that after that Gaffney wedding in 1932, the couple would celebrate 75 years of marriage?

When they were married there was no such thing as a honeymoon, so they spent their wedding night at the Bridges home, where their company included several younger brothers and sisters who also lived there.

"The next morning, someone came by our room and knocked at the door and told us to get up for breakfast," Mrs. Bridges quipped.

The couple met when she was 13 and Mr. Bridges was 18. He went to her house to visit her brother for supper one night.

About a year later the couple began dating.

Both had to quit school because of home responsibilities, a necessity common to people who farmed.

A year after their wedding, they welcomed their first child, a daughter, Louise, and also moved out of the family home into a small farm house of their own.

The Depression had taken its toll on the country and there was no money and few jobs.

Mr. Bridges would take in odd jobs anywhere to earn money, including going with the thrashers to cut cord wood - anything to make a dollar.

"We bought a mule to farm



MR. AND MRS. BRIDGES NOW

with and fertilizer for a cotton crop on credit," the couple shared. "Our crop came up and looked really good. In July of that year, a terrible hail storm came through the area and wiped out everything the farmers had.

"There was nothing left of the cotton crop except stalks.

"The vegetable garden was also ruined.

"Later that same summer the mule got sick and died and we had to start over again ... and were still in debt for the mule, cotton and fertilizer," Mrs. Bridges said.

Left with nothing, the young couple moved back into the Bridges home.

In 1936, the couple had their second child, a son, who lived just six weeks.

Although life went on, the sorrow of losing their son would linger for years.

As textile mills began to come to the county, the couple got a job at the Ellenboro Mill and spent their working days in textile plants in Ellenboro, Kings Mountain and Shelby. That first textile job paid Mr. Bridges \$9 a week.

Fadie retired in 1977 and Georgie in 1985. The couple's Ellenboro home is very cozy with pictures of family, friends and other memorabilia of their 75 years together.

Among a favorite is a framed lithograph of a painting by W. Hunt, "Found." The lithograph was a Christmas gift to Georgie their first Christmas together in 1932.

"Fadie thumbed his way to Forest City," Mrs. Bridges began, "where he bought it at a dime store for 35 cents."

The story of the lithograph is

printed on its original paper on the back of the frame as well as the price tag of the piece.

The story is of a shepherd dog and a helpless lamb caught in a blizzard. The dog finds the lamb and sends out a call for help as it stands "fearlessly and faithfully" guarding the lamb until the master comes to the rescue.

"What a wonderful lesson in trustworthiness, fidelity, faithfulness, tenderness and perseverance," the story said.

Mrs. Bridges paralleled their long marriage to those words.

The key to a happy and long marriage is respect for each other, she continued.

If they were advising any couple today who is about to be married, the best advice: Respect your partner.

Through the years there was little time for vacations during their years working in the textile plants except the week of July 4.

They also went to the beach with Louise and her family.

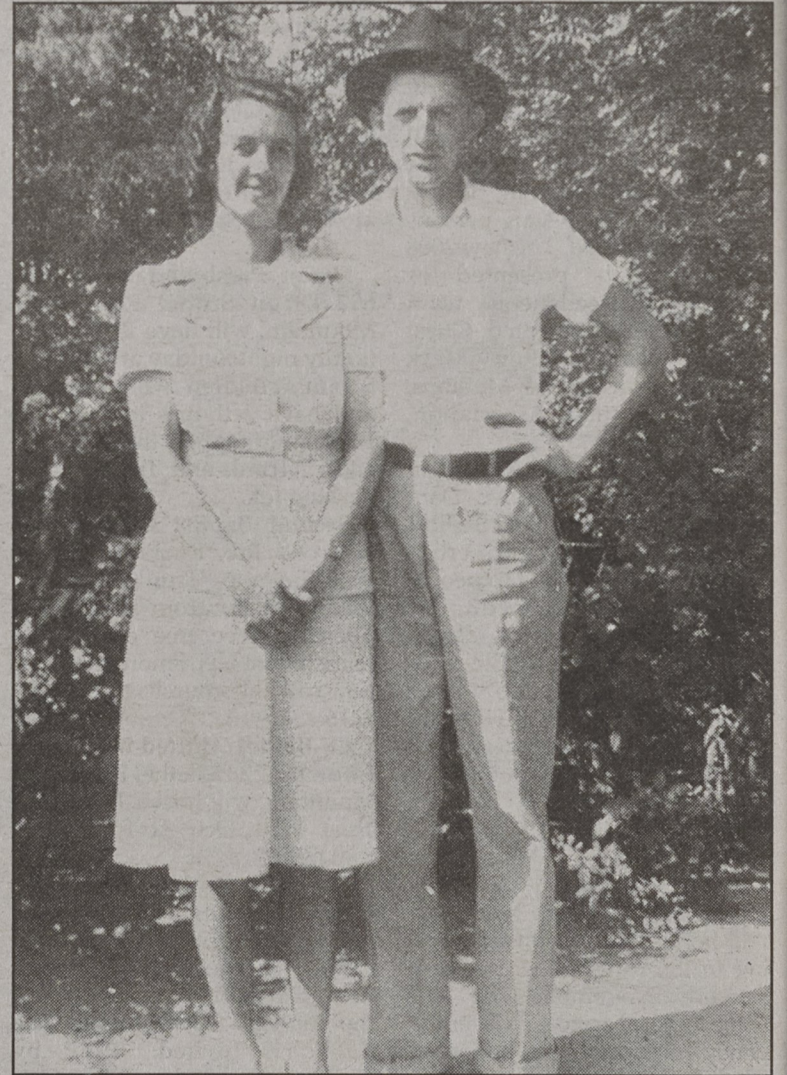
After retirement they enjoyed lengthy vacations, but now at ages 90 and 95, they stay pretty close to home.

They have a hearty breakfast cooked each day by Mrs. Bridges; sandwiches for lunch and another home-cooked meal for supper also prepared by Mrs. Bridges.

They watch the news, "The Price is Right," "Jeopardy," and "Wheel of Fortune."

The couple was also very active in their church, Bethel Baptist.

Mrs. Bridges explained that during their marriage there were times when life was very, very difficult. They lived through the Depression; the loss of their son; having no jobs and no money; and later in life they cared for aging parents until their demise.



MR. AND MRS. BRIDGES NOW

But today caring for one another is pretty much all the responsibilities they have, and that is a good thing. Daughter Louise and her husband, Frank, granddaughter Lynn and her husband, Jessie, who all live in the area, and grandson, Jeff, of Kings

Mountain, visit them regularly. The couple also thoroughly enjoys their time with their great-grandson, Colt, and their 15-year-old cat they adopted.

"These last years have been the best years," Mrs. Bridges said.

**Save up to \$1,100
cool cash on our
coolest system.***

Now thru October 31, 2007

If you should ever have an emergency with your heating and cooling system, let our trained technicians put it right - right now. No matter what brand of heating and cooling system you have.

Cool Cash

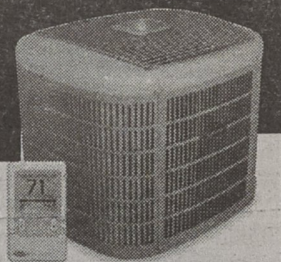
Our Carrier technicians are the most qualified repair technicians in the business, trained and equipped to find the problem quickly and fix it correctly.

So, for fast, expert service on your heating and cooling system, call us...we're happy to help.

**SHELBY
Heating & Air**

704.739.5166

www.shelbyheating.com



Carrier
Turn to the Experts