

## VALENTINE COUPLES

# Kisers celebrate 75th anniversary

Wesley and Pearl Kiser celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary Jan. 25 at a party at Summit Place in Kings Mountain where Mrs. Kiser is a resident.

Family and friends helped the Kisers celebrate with a birthday cake provided by Linda Martin and party refreshments.

Pearl Dixon and Wesley Kiser were married on Jan. 27, 1940. Wesley was 20 years old and his bride was 18. They rode to Gaffney, S. C. in a Model T Ford to exchange their wedding vows. Mr. Kiser remembers there was ice on the ground. A World War II veteran, Mr. Kiser served in France and Germany. He retired from the textile industry.

Wesley Kiser, 95, and Pearl Kiser, 93, are parents of two sons, Steve and wife, Dot, of Rutherfordton and Keith and wife, Evelyn of Waco. The family also includes four grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren.

The Kisers are members of Second Baptist Church.



MR. AND MRS. WESLEY KISER .. on their wedding day Jan. 27, 1940



MR. AND MRS. WESLEY KISER . . . on their 75th anniversary Jan. 25, 2015



WESLEY AND PEARL KISER with their family at a birthday party at Summit Place in Kings Mountain.

# 50 years – a marriage endures and grows

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On Jan. 29, Linda and Gary Smart looked back on 50 years of marriage that has its beginning in lunch-hour dates at Payne's Store when the pair were classmates at the former Central School.

Sweethearts during their school years, the young couple got married about as soon as they could – he at 18 and she just a week shy of turning 17. And for the Smarts it's been a sweet marriage that's lasted – through children, a move or two, job changes and the arrival of five grandchildren.

When asked what has helped sustain it through five decades, Gary demures.

"I believe the biggest thing is I got a good woman," said the 68-year-old Smart, who spent a long career in textiles and is now a part-time sports photographer for the Herald. "I don't believe anyone would have put up with me but her."

The couple had a chance to reflect on the bond they've formed while celebrating their 50th anniversary while dining at Cracker Barrel in Gastonia, one of their favorite restaurants, said Linda, who worked on and off in the textile industry before retiring about 15 years ago.

"I guess we started off good, being friends at Payne's," said Linda, who is 67. "We'd throw our books



The Smarts recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

down and take off to eat lunch. Gary would have a booth for both of us."

A few years later, while the couple was still dating, Gary would decide to leave school and see what the working world held for him. By the time the two had decided to tie the knot – in 1965 – Linda opted for the life of a young homemaker and left school too.

Those early days of marriage, they said last week, were about getting to know each other and learning to live with one other. They recall encountering few obstacles.

"We had to really get to know one another," Linda said. "We did everything

together. Gary fished a lot. I went along with him and read a book or a magazine."

Through the years, the two have golfed together (Gary still hits the greens; Linda gave up the sport a few years back) and both have embraced the Internet, using Facebook to keep up with friends and family who have spread out geographically. And they both dabble in collecting. For Gary that means old cameras and fishing equipment. For Linda, it's pocketbooks and china. They both enjoy their fair share of bargain hunting, hitting the local flea markets and discount malls, where Linda can scope out deals on pottery.

Gary remembers having a happy young married life with the only woman he'd ever dated, but he also remembers it as a time of growth.

"I was kind of stupid," he said with a laugh. "I didn't know how to manage

money. I guess I would say that getting married is an education itself."

In fact, Gary's advice to young people that are today in the same position he was 50 years ago is about schooling.

"My advice to young

couples in love is to finish school before you do anything," he said. "You've got plenty of time. They need to get their schooling and be patient."

Eventually, Gary took

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