

make a foursome. The Eatocks agreed.

After the front nine, one of the gentlemen stopped playing and sat in the golf cart. The other man explained that his friend had Alzheimer's and would get tired or confused and sometimes could only go for one round and would just ride for the second. Gladys asked how often the two played.

Everyday for 18 holes was the reply and it made a big impression on Gladys.

"Now that to me signifies friendship," she said, "and that sparked my interest."

She's been a volunteer with the group in Belleville since 1995.

And just what were they doing in Utah? And how did a kid from the Maritimes end up marrying a guy she met at a dance, who ended up on a United Nations peacekeeping mission in India in 1959?

You have to go way back for the answer.

Gladys grew up in Halifax, the youngest of five girls and a boy. She completed high school and then went to business college in Moncton, N.B. Next, she went to Edmonton, where a sister lived and became a reservation agent with Air Canada.

"It was TCA (Trans Canada Airlines) in my day," she said. "I loved it."

She flew on a free flight to Calgary where she and a friend went to a dance. She met a dashing young man — Gladys remembers the date was April 17, 1954 — and was smitten. And did Jack return the feelings?

"I think he did," she said, with a big grin. "We were married in Edmonton. He was a captain in the Royal Canadian Engineers."

In 1959, Jack was made part of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in India.

Gladys was left to fend for herself with three children aged three and under. It proved her mettle.

"I figured if I can do that, I can

do anything," she said. To prove the point, she learned bridge while he was gone.

The couple ended up with four children, two boys and two girls, in that order. They now have 12 grandchildren, too.

There were other military stops along the way and Gladys acquired a taste for a summer and winter sport.

She was a competitive curler — she took part in a national bonspiel championship in 1990.

She and her husband have been avid golfers (Gladys hit the links when she was 18) for decades.

Jack retired, first from the military and then from the federal department of transport. In 1990, they were in Ottawa and Jack suggested selling the house and getting a motor home.

They did and went all over Canada, the United States and parts of Mexico. They sold that when then-premier Bob Rae said Ontarians had to have a permanent address here to get OHIP coverage.

They set up full-time in Belleville because there were a lot of golf courses here, Gladys said.

"I've met some wonderful people," here, she said.

She is an avid reader and a fantasy junkie — she has read 10 novels in the Robert Jordan series *The Wheels of Time*.

She is active in four bridge groups, including two marathon bridge players who travel with partners from house to house.

But besides Jack, the kids and the grandchildren, the big love of her life is Wally, a 11-year-old purebred red Persian cat.

Holding the cat so the two of them could be photographed together, the feline tried to break away at first.

"Come on, Wally, don't be a stick in the mud," Gladys admonished her feline friend.

Contact Barry Ellsworth at: newsroom@intelligencer.ca