

Lawn mower won't deter 60th

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There have been some tense medical moments in the past few months for Ivy and George Maskell, both 86, but the day that nearly took the cake out of the 60th wedding anniversary plans for Ivy was the day she found George laid out flat on his back with the lawnmower on top of him.

George has always loved yard work to set Ivy's gardening skills to best advantage at their Percy Street home. One morning, he was determined to trim the grass on the hillside beside the house. The lawnmower wheels spun on the wet grass, George lost his footing and the lawnmower rolled back on top of his chest. Miraculously, he wasn't chopped to bits.

"He cracked three ribs, and had a few bruises, but it could've been a lot worse," Ivy says with only the very slightest hint of reproach. "He shouldn't have been doing it."

Not to do something of service is against the very natures of both

Ivy and George Maskell. Throughout their 60 years of marriage, they have dedicated themselves to community service and support, be it in the organized agencies, or in their quiet, generous letters and phone calls to shut-ins and friends.

"If you can brighten somebody's day, you should do it," Ivy says simply.

Ivy was born in Canada. When her father died, she and her three sisters and a brother were on their own. Ivy, as the youngest, was raised as an orphan, moving from home to home, often treated as nothing more than hired help, told to eat in the kitchen separate from a family.

"At the age of 16, they no longer had the say," Ivy says. "I got a job and saved my money to make the trip to Canada," she recalls. Her siblings, who she had lost contact with, were in Canada. Once in Toronto, the Salvation Army made the connection between Ivy and one sister, May Branigan who lived on a farm in Cramahe Township.

"I came down to my sisters farm and I met all my sisters and brother," Ivy notes.

While visiting here, she met George. George had emigrated from England with his mother and two siblings in 1919. His father had died in World War I and his mother remarried a Canadian soldier.

"I was wearing short pants and socks in March when we landed," George recalls. The family, told of a farm home awaiting them in Canada, landed north of Bancroft.

"It must have been an awful way to start life for my mother," George says now, "but we kids thought we'd died and gone to heaven. One fall, my father came to pick apples in fall for Fred Morrow east of Colborne. He was a good worker, so Morrow asked him to stay on and we moved to Colborne."

The family settled in a house across from what is now Fox's IGA. George's stepfather died of tuberculosis in 1931, and George's mother and the three kids dug in to support themselves.

For several years, Ivy and George kept up their acquaintanceship between Colborne and Toronto, visiting back and forth. Ivy eventually relocated to work as a waitress in Cobourg at the then British Hotel across from Victoria Hall. In 1939, when they were both 25 years old, they married at Trinity Anglican Church in Colborne. If there has been one constant fixture in their lives since, it has been Trinity church.

Ivy's co-workers gave the couple a night in the honeymoon suite of the Genosha Hotel in Oshawa. Returning to Colborne, George recalls with laughter, they were so broke they shared a sandwich for lunch.

"But a lot of people at that time didn't even have a job," George notes. The newlyweds were actually quite pleased with their lot.

For the first 10 years of their married lives, they lived in half of George's mother's house across from the IGA. George signed up with the RCAF; son George was 2 and Reg 1. George Senior went overseas for 3.5 years.

"It was lonely, but so many were doing the same thing in those days," Ivy recalls. "And, financially, it was the best we'd ever been."

Ivy had remained work at the British Hotel when they were first married, and then worked for 10 years United Car electronics at Salem. George worked for the former Crane Foundry in Port Hope for 28 years when the industry suddenly closed, leaving retirement funds almost non-existent for most of the workers. He

went on to work 10.5 years at Eldorado until his retirement 17 years ago.

"When I first started working, I made 15 cents an hour, 25 cents an hour when we married," George recalls. "It's hard for people to believe that today."

Ivy had worked for \$7 - a month! - in England.

With the end of the war, George and Ivy qualified for veteran's housing. Their brand new \$6,000 home made the front pages of the local newspaper when it was built in 1950. It is the same house they continue to live in today - several renovations and a beautiful sun room later. Ivy has always gardened - with magnificent results. George, until this year, maintained the vegetable garden.

The Maskell's have shared their love of life and all their talents and capabilities with the greater Colborne community. George has driven thousands of miles for sports organizations, raising funds for the Colborne Cramahe arena, delivering care packages of soup and vegetables, taking seniors and shut-ins to appointments and visiting. Ivy has shared in the caring and support work, volunteering thousands of hours for the church, for the horticultural society, for seniors, with shut-ins, bundling up care packages of baked goods and bouquets of flowers. The walls of their home are lined with awards and certificates of honour and appreciation for local, provincial and federal organizations.

Asked for the secret of their



IVY & GEORGE MASKELL
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