

Special Valentine's Day couples

Commitment and devotion keep romance vibrant



Harry and Laura Moss

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

Harry and Laura Moss have the commitment and devotion that makes love and marriage so special. Despite a massive stroke that's left Harry in need of specialized care, it's obvious their romance is as vibrant as ever.

The pair, who've lived together for 38 years, are now separated by the stroke since Mr. Moss is a resident in the chronic care wing at the Bennett Health Care Centre.

However, they're together more than they're apart. Mrs. Moss visits her husband four times a week and together they play cribbage, talk and remember the days when they danced in each other's arms.

It was at a dance where the couple first met. Young Laura was planning to attend the Annual Royal York Railway Dance when her date cancelled. Wanting to go, but needing a date, her cousin rounded up a railway man to be her blind date. It was Harry.

They dated in Toronto, where they both lived with their families back in the 1940s, until Laura and her family moved to Georgetown. But being a railway man, Harry would ride the trains to visit Laura in Georgetown and she would also make the trip to Toronto.

For four years, the dating continued until Christmas of 1942 when 35-year-old Harry presented 32-year-old Laura with an engagement ring. They were married the next August.

For several years, the couple lived in Toronto before moving to Ostrander Street in Georgetown so Harry could walk to the railway station where he was still working. Laura was busy teaching dressmaking at night school.

Soon Harry and Laura got involved in dancing which soon became a favorite activity.

"We really loved to dance. Every Saturday night we would go dancing with the Brampton Promenaders Square Dancing club and if there was some dancing event going on during the week, we'd go there to," remembers Mrs. Moss. While talking about the past, it's obvious Mr. Moss remembers such good times as he gives an expressive laugh and looks at his wife.

"We would go to conventions at the Royal York where we'd dance the whole weekend," said Mrs. Moss, "and I mean the whole weekend."

The couple moved to Barrie after 27 years in Georgetown where they soon made lots of friends and began a tradition of spending winters in Florida.

Then, suddenly 10 years ago last September, Harry suffered a massive stroke.

Their life took a drastic turn as the couple were separated while Mr. Moss remained in hospital. Mrs. Moss found her life lonely as most of their friends would leave for Florida during winter and she could no longer go. When the Bennett Centre was built, they decided to move back to Georgetown.

The couple has to adjust to the change in their life. Though Mr. Moss is mentally capable of many tasks, his physical limitations mean he must make use of a wheelchair. Because his limbs aren't very pliable, he cannot go outside the hospital without use of an Activan.

But the couple has found new ways to enjoy each other's company. The pair often play cribbage, which Mr. Moss revealed, with a mirthful laugh, he taught his wife on their honeymoon.

Adjusting to this change in their life isn't easy, but Mrs. Moss says it's just something they have to deal with.

"People ask me why I visit so often but I know he would do it for me and I want to do it for him."

"I love him. He's my boyfriend. That's what I call him and he calls me his old girl. 'We've never had a falling out or trouble between us,'" she said.

"We've had a perfect marriage."

Marriage predicted by Patti

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

When Patti Knapton (nee Gordon) was in kindergarten class at M.Z. Bennett Public School in Acton, she had a sleeping partner named 'Jimmy'. One day she came home and told her mom "I'm going to marry Jimmy."

Twenty-five years later, Patti married Jimmy.

Of course, Patti couldn't remember what she said to her mom all those years ago. It was Jim's father who teased Patti about it while she was in her teens.

After that prophetic statement Patti made in kindergarten, the young couple forgot about each other as Jim's family moved away from the area. It wasn't until 1978 when 18-year-old Jim and his family moved back to live on Churchill Street they became reacquainted.

Patti found out he was back because he was soon dating a good friend of hers who worked with her at Home Hardware. She got her first glance of Jim when he visited his girlfriend at the store. It was around this time that Mr. Knapton would come in to the store and tease Patti that she used to be in love with his son.

Well, Patti was about to fall in love with Jim all over again that summer. One day, while at Acton Park picking up her sister, she saw Jim, who had by this time broken up with his girlfriend.

"He was there, we kind of met and we went over to the swings and he started pushing me on the swings," Patti remembers.

But he didn't ask her out then. One week later, she met Jim in an unusual manner. He was taking her sister home when he got pulled over in their driveway by a policeman for illegal passing.

Though he didn't impress Patti's parents too much that day, he did impress Patti, who agreed to go out with him the next day when he asked her out over the telephone.

Then, came the famous statement again. The day after her date she was in the kitchen with her mom and she said, "I'm go-

ing to marry that man."

"He was hooked before he knew it," jokes Patti today.

But the weekend after they went out, Patti moved away to Toronto to start college which lasted for three years. They would date on weekends when she came home and three years later to the day they dated, he asked her to marry him.

That was Sept. 8, 1983 and they married on Sept. 8, 1984, at St. Joseph's Church in Acton.

The couple lived on Main Street

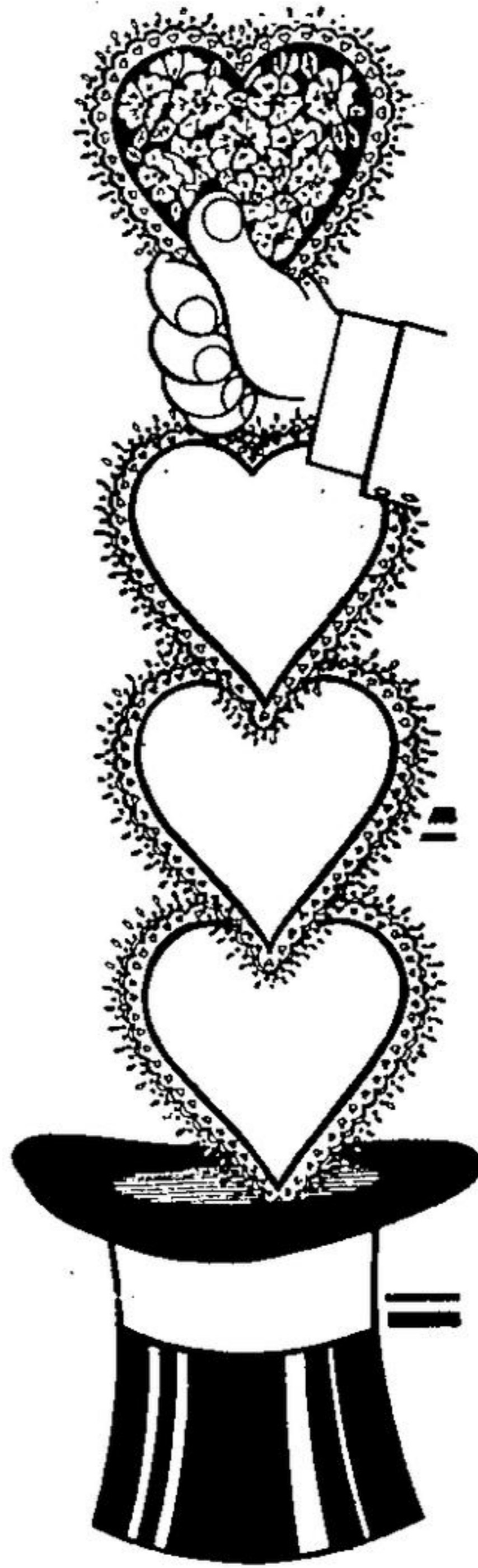
in Acton for three years but now reside on Bower Street with their two children, two-and-a-half year old Kurtis and four-and-a-half year old Meghan.

Patti is a professional housewife while Jim is in partnership with his parents in A-1 Sanitation, a company in the business of transporting hazardous liquids.

Jim says "we have a house, healthy kids and we're together. How much more successful can you be?"



Jim and Patti Knapton



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