

Congratulations to Bill and Doreen Castle!



The date is 11th January, 1947. The time is 1pm. The venue is Holy Cross Old Church.

In this photograph, taken surreptitiously, the scene is the wedding of Doreen and Bill. The Rector, Fr. Ronald Dix, officiates. Bill and Doreen are obscured by kneeling bridesmaids. The old Church still has the pews which were soon to be sold to St. Mary, Northolt and replaced with modern chairs!



So, on 11th January, 2007, Bill and Doreen will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary, a diamond jubilee which gives them a sense of satisfaction and pride, a long marriage which has experienced trials and sadnesses as well as joys and happiness, but which has sustained them both continuously and still continues to do so.

Bill, looking dapper in his military uniform, had just returned home after active service in the Middle East and the Greenford weather was bitter cold. He is still smiling though!

Doreen's father worked for the Railway and so lived in a cottage near Greenford Station. Then, one day in 1939, a new family moved in next door. At first, Doreen didn't think much of the young man of the family. Then one or two of her friends expressed an interest and Doreen's view changed. Bill was 17, Doreen was 14.

Doreen and Bill credit the longevity of their marriage with an ability to express one's feelings, even bad ones, and not bottle them up. But they never go to bed still feeling anger. It is always worked out. Doreen's mother asked her "Can you face seeing him over the breakfast table every morning for the rest of your life, even when you are feeling tied and irritable?"

Doreen moved to Greenford in 1929 which is when she started attending Holy Cross Church. She started at Betham School at the same time. Looking back on this 80 or so years, it is the 1940's that prove to be the hey day, with the spirit of togetherness, the building of the New Church, the separation from Bill because of the war, and then the marriage soon afterwards. Sad memories are the death of their daughter Lillian who was born with a congenital heart condition and died within a year of birth. Nowadays, such babies are operated on immediately and survive for a normal life.

Doreen has fond memories of her school days. She recalled Ascension Day when it was customary for pupils to come to Church and then have a day out and a coach trip. When she was only 5 or so, the trip was to the newly opened Whipsnade Zoo. Doreen remembers it to this day!

Bill commented that they had been lucky with friends and that the 60 years have gone very quickly.



Doreen cherishes a link with a pen-friend, Jean Kenna in Australia. They wrote to each other for many years and now Jean's daughter Helen continues the tradition. Helen has visited Greenford and of course, Bill and Doreen have visited Australia several times.

In 1972, Bill and Doreen celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary at the Russell Hotel with family and friends.

In 1987, the 40th wedding anniversary was celebrated at the London School of Economics, where Doreen was a valued member of the staff.



So, everyone at Holy Cross Church will salute the Castles, our longest standing members of the congregation, on Sunday 14th January, 2007, welcoming many of their family and friends to join us at the Parish Mass.

It is a great achievement and we all want to celebrate and share in it.

Neil Richardson