

## THE LITTLE FAMILY

### *Then and Now*

*A while ago we invited members of Transfiguration's "Little Family" (i.e., all the couples who were married here) to share some of their life experiences with us. We were thrilled to receive so many responses, especially from couples married here in the 1940s and 1950s, but also from other decades, even the new century. We quickly realized that we would have to devote more than one newsletter to our "alumni." We hope you enjoy this latest installment!*

#### **August 23, 1945 ~ Peggy and Adolph Walter III**

Peggy Walter notes that she and her husband dated for seven years before their wedding! Adolph Walter III and Peggy Nimmo met in 1938 in the high school band, where they both played the clarinet. The two dated throughout high school and continued their relationship after Adolph graduated in 1940 and went to the University of Illinois. When Peggy graduated a year later, she first attended MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Illinois, before moving to New York City in 1942 to study nursing.

Meanwhile, Adolph joined the ROTC. He finished his degree in 3 years and was then sent into the field artillery. Adolph was able to visit Peggy a few times in New York, and the couple became engaged over Christmas in 1944. In January of 1945, Adolph's unit was sent to Europe.

In August, after the war in Europe had ended, Adolph's unit was shipped back to Kentucky, with the expectation that they would soon be sent to Japan. They were given 10 days' leave and Adolph came up to New York, where he and Peggy were married by Father Griesmeyer. Peggy wore a blue silk dress she had purchased from a store on Fifth Avenue for \$49.95 (a huge sum at that time!), as well as a hat given to her by a friend. She was also able to obtain a pair of real silk stockings. There were 17 people at the wedding, including her parents-in-law, who had been able to scrape together enough ration tickets for gasoline and tires to make the trip from Illinois.

After a week's honeymoon in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, Adolph proceeded to California with the rest of his unit. He was discharged in January of 1946 and he and Peggy returned to Illinois. Adolph worked in the family hardware business until 1965, when he and Peggy began working together as Kentucky Fried Chicken franchisees. After they retired in 1985, they travelled extensively, visiting every continent except Antarctica.



*Peggy and Adolph Walter III on their wedding day*

Sadly, Adolph passed away in August of 2012, shortly before their 67<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Peggy continues to live in the house they built in 1953, and enjoys quiltwork, beadwork and cooking. She has three children, three grandchildren and one great-grandson.

#### **July 16, 1955 ~ Dorothy and Edward Allwine Jr.**

Edward Allwine Jr. and his buddies often went to Lake Harmony from their home in Allentown, Pennsylvania, for an evening of music and dancing. On the night of November 6, 1954, he met someone who would change his life forever: Dorothy Fox. Edward asked her to dance and, after three or four dances, asked if she would be willing to go out on a date with him the following weekend. Dorothy demurred, saying that she wouldn't be there next weekend, but Edward was persistent. He told her the place didn't matter. Dorothy was from New York City, and the next weekend Edward drove from Allentown to Manhattan to take her to dinner.

Edward knew quickly that he wanted to marry Dorothy. Within weeks, he proposed, and Dorothy accepted. Both of their families were supportive of their

whirlwind romance, and although Edward's mother kept asking him if he was sure this is what he wanted, she gave him one of her own rings to be used as an engagement ring.

Dorothy knew when Edward proposed that she wanted to be married at the Little Church Around the Corner. Edward notes that she "could not have made a better choice." They had a "very pleasant" wedding, with about 75 guests, and afterwards held a reception at a nearby hotel. For their honeymoon, they went to Florida and then on to Cuba. Edward remembers all the cars in Cuba being U.S.-brand cars, and very well maintained.

After the wedding, Dorothy and Edward lived in Allentown for two years, then moved out to the country, living in a farmhouse built in 1860. Edward worked at Western Electric, a subsidiary of AT&T, while Dorothy was in nursing. They had four children, Edward, Walter, Bryon and Valerie, and a grandson, Spencer.

Sadly, Dorothy passed away in May of 2012, only weeks shy of their 57<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Edward misses her deeply, and visits the churchyard where she is buried two or three times each week. Edward, "with the grace of the man upstairs," remains in good health and continues to live in the home he shared with his wife.

### **November 24, 1990 ~ Charlene Landis and Thomas Leslie**

When Charlene Landis' dating service membership was about to expire in the late summer of 1989, she decided to pick out a few final prospects to talk to. As was customary, the dating service notified these potential suitors and gave them her phone number. All but one of them called her. Knowing that she would be soon be busy with a visit from her mother, Charlene decided to take the initiative and called the remaining person: Thomas Leslie. Thus began a beautiful romance.

Charlene and Tom spoke for two hours on that first phone call, including about their travel interests: they both had upcoming vacations in Central America. They decided to meet for dinner later that week at a Manhattan restaurant located midway between their two apartments, and both knew fairly soon that this relationship was "qualitatively different" from others they had had. After seven months, they became engaged.

One of their close friends knew Bill Seebeck, a deacon at Transfiguration at the time, and so Charlene and Tom decided to get married at the Little Church. Charlene had dreamed for years of the wedding gown she would wear, and her dreams became reality when one of her friends, a costume designer, designed her dress. Charlene also remembers the organist objecting to having secular music as part of the service, but agreeing to play a processional from "Le prophète," an opera by Giacomo Meyerbeer.



*Charlene Landis and Thomas Leslie, November 24, 1990*

After the wedding, Charlene and Tom continued to live and work in New York City. They retired several years ago, but both keep busy: Charlene is a docent at the Museum of Natural History, and Thomas works as a volunteer in Central Park. They also continue to enjoy travelling. Several years ago, they walked the Spanish pilgrimage route from Leon to Santiago de Compostela, and recently, they spent five weeks exploring India. Wherever their travels take them, though, they keep a special place in their hearts for the Little Church Around the Corner.

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