



Bob and Shirley Anderson

*will Celebrate their 73 Wedding Anniversary
September 22*

They were married in a small ceremony at Shirley's parent's home up the Big Thompson River Canyon in Colorado.

Shirley had spent the war years in Hanford, Washington working on the atomic bomb project, then returned home temporarily to run the family cafe and single gas pump. Bob had served in the USMC as an SBD dive bomber pilot in the Pacific theatre. He had returned to finish his BA at Colorado State University, Aggies. After graduating his intention was to make his way up to Alaska where the fishing was awesome and Bush pilots were in demand.

A farewell fishing trip with his college buddies up the Big Thompson Canyon interrupted his future plans when they pulled up for gas and Shirley came out to the pump. The guys had a powerful hunger when they saw the sign for "all the steak you can eat". Of course Shirley was the chief cook, waitress and bottle washer. Bob's friends were football players at Aggies. They ate, and ate, and Shirley cooked and cooked. By the end of the meal Bob had somewhat proposed. He needed a few weeks to think about it. Shirley advised him if he thought too much she might be gone. Three weeks later they were married.

Bob had signed on with the US Gypsum in Missoula, MT selling building materials. The new couple said goodbye to their families and headed for the Big Sky Country. They lived in a small cabin up Rattlesnake Creek where their two oldest

kids, Karen and Nels were born. Shirley was isolated with two babies, pregnant with the third, and Bob gone working M-F. Two of her sisters and her mother had relocated to Washington. She strongly encouraged her husband to take an offer of a partnership with her brother-in-law Ted Andersen in a Firestone store in Enumclaw, Washington. There the last baby, Kristin, was born.

It's possible Bob had had enough of Shirley's family after five years prompting him to take a job with U. S. Gypsum Company in Pilot Rock, Oregon. Karen and Nels started school in the old, two story schoolhouse. Kris was home with mom while the other kids were in school. Shirley had a giant garden, fruit trees, canning and cooking and laundry but still, something was missing. Shirley had a plan. When Kris was old enough she would go back to college and get her teaching degree. That all happened but it took some time and another move to Golden, Co.

Bob had been beckoned by his father, a Swedish immigrant that had partnered with two other Swedes at Silver State Laundry and Dry Cleaning in Denver. Grandpa Eno was retiring and needed his only son, out of six children, to take his place. Of course that move had some amazing opportunities for Shirley. She started taking night classes at CU in Boulder. By the time her youngest was in junior high Shirley graduated with a teaching degree. Shirley started teaching, Bob was reviving the Laundry business and the kids grew up. And Bob and Shirley

eventually retired and moved back to Montana where their marriage began, completing a circle of love and living.

Throughout all of their married lives one thread remained essential. Shirley had no religious background when she met Bob. One of Bob's two "requests" for their marriage was that she be educated and baptized in the Lutheran church. The other was she learn to make lutefisk for an annual Christmas Eve dinner. She successfully fulfilled both. There is no doubt that Shirley had confirmed her own set of promises from Bob but they aren't part of family lore. Their church family has always been incredibly important to them no matter where they lived. For the last 30 years they have been active members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Kalispell. For the last five years they have enjoyed living in their own apartment at Immanuel Lutheran's Buffalo Hills Terrace. Bob will be 98 in November and Shirley will be 96 in April, 2021.

There is something to be said for not having a long engagement. All successful marriages take hard work. The Bible says there are three things necessary for a foundation to support a solid marriage; "Faith, hope and love." (And humor!) After 73 years Bob and Shirley are living proof this recipe for marriage is solid and sound.

We three kids, grandkids, and great grandkids and scores of their church family say, "You are both amazing! We love you! Rock on!"