

Chance meeting on Valentine's Day leads to whirlwind courtship

Reta Lou Robinson of Murray, Ky., was a freshman at Murray State University when she met her future husband, William Fred Hancock, who grew up in Powderly, Ky., but was attending the university.

Hancock had already received his degree and had been teaching school for three years when he decided to take a leave of absence in the 1970-71 school year to finish his master's degree and his year above his master's toward a doctorate degree at MSU.

The two met for the first time on Valentine's Day.

"I was loading a tarp on my 1965 Corvette convertible because of weather warnings of snow. She was walking her two young nieces down the street in Murray and stopped to talk to me. I talked to her later and set our first date the following Thursday to attend the opening performance of Campus Lights at Murray State," Hancock recalled. "After that, we were together most every day."

He said they had a whirlwind courtship.

"We enjoyed cruising in the Vette, movies, restaurants, etc. I took Reta to Calloway County High School parking lot and Kentucky Lake in the Corvette to teach her how to drive a stick shift," he said.

"We both realized very early in our courtship that we would be together forever. I, personally, felt like a complete human being for the first time in my life when I was with her. Personality-wise, we are both total opposites, which is good because we complement each

other with our strengths and weaknesses. On the most important issues, we are completely in sync with each other, spirituality, raising children, handling money, etc. Our courtship was only 4½ months from the time we met until the day we married. Maybe that worked so well because we saw each other almost every day during those 4½ months and because I was much older being almost 26 when we married while Reta was 18," Hancock said.

The couple married July 2, 1971, only three months after being engaged.

The late Hollis Miller, minister at University Church of Christ in Murray, conducted the service. The bride's sister, Cindy Robinson Garrett, served as her maid of honor and the groom's brother, the late Don Hancock, served as his best man.

The bride's parents, Josephine Robinson of Murray and the late J.D. Robinson, and the groom's parents, the late Thomas Noel and Hazel Mitchell Hancock, attended the ceremony.

"An unusual thing that occurred in our wedding was that me, my brother and the preacher could not hear the music where we were waiting. As a result, the entire wedding party, including my wife, was halfway down the aisle before we realized the wedding had started. When we came out, I'm sure that was a relief to my bride, who probably thought I had skipped the country. Afterwards, we had some tell us they had never seen that done before and thought it was sort of neat



MR. AND MRS. FRED HANCOCK



and different. I wasn't sure if I needed to tell them that it wasn't in the plans," Hancock said.

The newly-wed Mr. and Mrs. Hancock went on two "very cheap honeymoons," he said, adding they didn't have any money because graduate school had "wiped that out." First they went for a weekend to Beech Bend Park in Bowling Green, Ky., followed a couple of weeks later to Mammoth Cave, Ky.

"I have been blessed to

give my bride many vacations during our marriage," he said.

The couple have lived in Union City since 1977.

He is semi-retired after three careers: the first as a band director for eight years in western Kentucky, the second as a regional manager for three years with CPS Inc. and, finally, as a franchise owner and independent advisor with Ameriprise Financial. After 32 years, he sold the franchise in January 2011.

Mrs. Hancock has been a lifelong homemaker, which has offered her many opportunities to serve helping many non-profit organizations, including Agape House, Chimes for Charity and Main Street-Union City.

They have two daughters and a son-in-law, Christina "Christa" (Hancock) and Ty Inmon of Fayette County and Heather Hancock of Union City; and five grandchildren.

Hancock's advice on mak-

ing a marriage last would be to "marry someone who is in sync with you on the most important issues, spirituality, raising children, handling finances, etc. Understand that you will get on each other's nerves because you are different people with different backgrounds. If you think about it, that is what attracted you to each other. You must have humor and be able to laugh at yourself. Guys, always remember, the phrase 'Yes, dear' and apply it quite often."

Correa proposed to Miss Rhoades during church Valentine banquet

Gabriel E. Correa of Union City recalled being in the hallway at church one day when a beautiful girl flipping her long hair caught his eye.

That girl was Judy L. Rhoades.

They dated for a year and a half while he went to Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Mo.

"I proposed to her on Feb. 14, 1975. It was at the youth Valentine banquet at church. The youth voted us as king and queen," he said.

They married Nov. 22, 1975, at Union City Baptist Temple, with former pastor Charles Smith performing the ceremony. Smith now resides in Knoxville with his wife, Joanne.

The bride was given in marriage by her brother, Kenneth Rhoades of Union City.

Nancy Rhoades, sister-in-law of the bride, of Union City served as matron of honor. Carol Slocum Bosh, sister of the groom, of Belleview, Fla., and Debbie Dillon Cardwell of South Fulton were her bridesmaids.

The late Mike Cary of Union City was the best man and the groomsmen were Bob Smith, cousin of the bride, of Powell and David Farmer of Indianapolis.

The bride's niece, Sherry Rhoades Koon of Union City, was the flower girl and Kirby Dickerson of Houston was the ring bearer.

The couple honeymooned at Lake Barkley State Resort in Kentucky.

"On the way, my car wasn't hitting on all cylinders, so I stopped at the Hopkinsville, Ky., dealership. They told me 'somebody crossed your wires,'" Correa said, adding after he told them they had just gotten married, they did not charge them to make the repair.

"After the Lake Barkley stay, we went to see the Jefferson Davis Monument in Kentucky and took the elevator to the top and looked out. From there we went to Nashville and stayed at the 12 Oaks Motel right next to the 100 Oaks Mall and shopped," he said.

Mrs. Correa's parents are Geraldine and the late George Rhoades of Union City. Correa's parents are Minnie Slocum Lyons of Lake City, Fla., and the late Carl Lyons.

The couple has two children and a daughter-in-law, Christy Correa of Memphis and Gregory and Gregory and Mandy Griffin Correa of Obion. They have two grandchildren.

Mrs. Correa worked for Dr. Grover Schleifer as a licensed practical nurse for 18 years and is now retired.

Correa is retired from Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, where he worked for 35 years. He has had a computer business in Union City — GEC Custom Computers — for the last 12 years.



MR. AND MRS. GABRIEL E. CORREA



His advice how to make a marriage last is, "First and foremost is that you both know Christ as your Savior. I tell my wife I love her every day, and it could be at night or during the day, but she needs to hear that from you guys. Show them you care even in the busiest times, stop what you're doing and pay at-

tention to her. Share in the responsibility guys, don't let her do all the chores, give her a break every now and then. Take vacations with her and spend some more time together before the kids come. Pray together, for God honors that more than ever. I've learned that from God when we pray together,

God answers more quickly than if I were to pray by myself. Most important is that I thank God every day in prayer for my wife that I don't deserve, that He has given unto me."

Her advice is also to put Christ first in your marriage. "Show your love to your spouse daily and make them feel special.

Always lift them up with praise. We both feel we have a marriage made in heaven from day one and the love just gets sweeter and sweeter as the days go by. Make every day as special as you can, since tomorrow is not promised, and make memories that will last a lifetime to come."

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